THREE RIVERS DISTRICT COUNCIL

Three Rivers House
Northway
Rickmansworth
Herts WD3 1RL

POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Monday, 9 June 2025 at 7.30 pm

SUPPLEMENTARY PAPERS

The following papers have been added to the agenda of the above meeting. They were not available when the agenda was originally published.

Joanne Wagstaffe, Chief Executive

11. ABBOTS LANGLEY NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN REGULATION 16 CONSULTATION (Pages 3 - 742)

Abbots Langley Parish Council has formally submitted its draft Neighbourhood Plan to Three Rivers District Council. It is now a statutory requirement for Three Rivers to consult on the draft Neighbourhood Plan and this report seeks agreement from the Policy and Resources Committee to go out for consultation (Regulation 16 Consultation).

Recommendation

That the Policy & Resources Committee notes the report and agrees the Abbots Langley Neighbourhood Development Plan for consultation.

General Enquiries: Please contact the Committee Team at committeeteam@threerivers.gov.uk

This page is intentionally left blank

Three Rivers District Council

Policy and Resources Committee Report

Date: 9th June 2024

THREE RIVERS DISTRICT COUNCIL

PART I

Abbots Langley Neighbourhood Plan Consultation

(DoF)

1 Summary

1.1 Abbots Langley Parish Council have formally submitted their draft Neighbourhood Plan to Three Rivers District Council. It is now a statutory requirement for Three Rivers to consult on the draft Neighbourhood Plan and this report seeks agreement from the Policy and Resources Committee to go out for consultation (Regulation 16 Consultation).

2 Details

2.1 Neighbourhood planning was introduced through the Localism Act 2011. New powers allowed qualifying bodies (Parish or Town Councils) to produce Neighbourhood Development Plans (NDP). NDPs allow communities to set planning policies for their area.

2.2 Once adopted, NDPs become part of the development plan for the District and they must be considered when planning decisions are made, along with the Local Plan and national planning policy.

2.3 NDPs must be examined by a suitably qualified independent person, appointed by the Council and agreed by the qualifying body (Parish/Town Council). Neighbourhood plans must also pass a referendum of local voters by a simple majority. If a plan passes referendum, the Council must 'make' (adopt) it, unless it breaches EU obligations or human rights legislation.

2.4 The Abbots Langley NDP (the Plan) has been produced by Abbots Langley Parish Council (the Parish) in conjunction with the local community. The Plan does not seek to allocate sites for housing but provides policies which are to be considered in the determination of planning applications for development within the Abbots Langley Neighbourhood Plan Area.

2.5 The Abbots Langley Neighbourhood Plan Area was designated on 18 November 2014.

2.6 The Council has a duty to provide technical advice and support to communities producing a Neighbourhood Plan. Officers have assisted the Parish by providing technical advice, feedback on draft versions of the Plan and supporting documents.

2.7 In May 2025, Abbots Langley Parish Council formally submitted the Draft Abbots Langley NDP and supporting documents to the District Council. Where a qualifying body submits a plan proposal to the local planning authority, it must include:

- A map or statement which identifies the area to which the proposed neighbourhood development plan relates;

- A consultation statement;
- The proposed neighbourhood development plan;
- A statement explaining how the proposed neighbourhood development plan meets the 'basic conditions' as set out in the legislation; and
- Information to enable appropriate environmental assessments if required.

2.8 Officers have considered the submitted documents and are satisfied that the above legal requirements have been met. The Council is now required to undertake a statutory six-week consultation on the draft Abbots Langley NDP.

2.9 The consultation will be hosted on the Council's 'Have Your Say' consultation platform. It will be publicised in the Watford Observer, on the Council's website and social media platforms. Should the Community Council wish to further publicise the consultation they are welcome to.

2.10 Following this consultation, the Council will appoint an independent examiner who will consider the representations received.

2.11 The examiner will check whether the NDP:

- Has been prepared and submitted for examination by a qualifying body
- Has been prepared for an area that has been properly designated for such plan preparation
- Meets the requirements to:
  - specify the period to which it has effect
  - not include provision about excluded development
  - not relate to more than one neighbourhood area
- That its policies relate to the development and use of land for a designated neighbourhood area

2.12 The Examiner also has to consider whether a neighbourhood plan meets the "Basic Conditions". In order to do this, the Plan must:

- Have regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State
- Contribute to the achievement of sustainable development
- Be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the development plan for the area.

2.13 Following examination Officers will consider the examiner's proposed modifications and then bring a final draft of the Abbots Langley NDP to be agreed at Policy and Resources Committee and Full Council.

2.14 Following Full Council the Abbots Langley Neighbourhood Plan will go out to referendum, and if successful will be adopted by the Council as part of its development plan for the area.

3 Options and Reasons for Recommendations

3.1 It is a statutory requirement that the Council consult on the draft Neighbourhood Plan and as such there are no alternative options.

4 Policy/Budget Reference and Implications

4.1 The recommendations in this report are within the Council's agreed policy and budgets.

Equal Opportunities, Staffing, Environmental, Community Safety, Public Health implications

None specific.

5 Financial Implications

5.1 The consultation on the Abbots Langley NDP will be covered by existing Planning Policy service budgets.

6 Legal Implications

6.1 The report and recommendations outline the current legal position with regard to proceeding to the next stage in the process. The Council's discretion with regards to proceeding to consultation or otherwise is strictly limited by statute and in this case the requirements for proceeding to consultation are considered to have been met.

7 Customer Services Centre Implications

7.1 The Customer Services Centre will be briefed on whom to contact regarding the consultation.

8 Communications and Website Implications

8.1 Consultation documents will be added to the website and the consultation will be publicised through the Council's social media accounts.

9 Risk and Health & Safety Implications

9.1 The Council has agreed its risk management strategy which can be found on the website at http://www.threerivers.gov.uk. In addition, the risks of the proposals in the report have also been assessed against the Council's duties under Health and Safety legislation relating to employees, visitors and persons affected by our operations. The risk management implications of this report are detailed below.

9.2 The subject of this report is covered by the Planning Policy and Conservation service plan. Any risks resulting from this report will be included in the risk register and, if necessary, managed within this/these plan(s).

Nature of Risk	Consequence	Suggested Control Measures	Response *(tolerate, treat terminate, transfer)*	Risk Rating *(combination of likelihood and impact)*
Failing to consult would leave the Council vulnerable to legal challenge	Legal costs and reputational costs		Tolerate	6

9.3 The above risks are scored using the matrix below. The Council has determined its aversion to risk and is prepared to tolerate risks where the combination of impact and likelihood scores 6 or less.

Likelihood: Very Likely ▼ Remote	Impact: Low ► Unacceptable			
	Low 4	High 8	Very High 12	Very High 16
	Low 3	Medium 6	High 9	Very High 12
	Low 2	Low 4	Medium 6	High 8
	Low 1	Low 2	Low 3	Low 4

Impact Score	Likelihood Score
4 (Catastrophic)	4 (Very Likely (≥80%))
3 (Critical)	3 (Likely (21-79%))
2 (Significant)	2 (Unlikely (6-20%))
1 (Marginal)	1 (Remote (≤5%))

In the officers' opinion, of the new risks above, were they to come about, the following would seriously prejudice the achievement of the Strategic Plan and are therefore strategic risks. The management of strategic risks are reviewed by the Policy and Resources Committee.

10 Recommendation

10.1 That the Policy & Resources Committee note the report and agree the Abbots Langley Neighbourhood Development Plan for consultation.

Report prepared by: Aaron Roberts, Senior Planning Officer

APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Abbots Langley Neighbourhood Plan Submission Version
Appendix 2: Appendices A, B, C, F and G
Appendix 3: Appendix D - Abbots Langley Housing Needs Assessment
Appendix 4: Appendix E - Abbots Langley Design Guidance and Codes
Appendix 5: Appendix H - Abbots Langley Village Centre Masterplan
Appendix 6: Appendix I - Bedmond Vision and Aspirations
Appendix 7: Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) & Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) Screening Report
Appendix 8: Consultation Statement
Appendix 9: Basic Conditions Statement
Appendix 10: Map of Abbots Langley Neighbourhood Area

THREE RIVERS DISTRICT COUNCIL

This page is intentionally left blank

ABBOTS LANGLEY PARISH COUNCIL

ABBOTS LANGLEY NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN 2025 TO 2041

Submission Version Plan
May 2025

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY 5

2. INTRODUCTION 8

National policy 10

Local Policy 11

Key stages on how the Plan has been prepared 13

Sustainability of the Neighbourhood Plan 15

3. VISION AND OBJECTIVES 16

Introduction 16

Issues for the Neighbourhood Plan Area 16

Vision for the Neighbourhood Plan 18

Neighbourhood Plan Objectives 19

4. AN INTRODUCTION TO ABBOTS LANGLEY PARISH 20

Geography 20

A brief history of the parish 21

The Parish of Abbots Langley today 23

5. SPATIAL STRATEGY 27

Local Factors affecting new development 27

Policy AL1: Spatial Strategy: Location and scale of development 29

6. HOUSING 32

Policy AL2: Housing mix 32

7. LOCAL CHARACTER, HERITAGE AND DESIGN 34

Policy AL3: Character of development 34

Policy AL4: Design of development 42

Policy AL5: Environmentally sustainable design 45

Policy AL6: Heritage assets 48

8. LOCAL ECONOMY 51

Policy AL7: Abbots Langley village centre and other local centres 51

Policy AL8: Supporting recreation and sustainable tourism 56

Policy AL9: A safe, attractive and welcoming village centre 58

9. NATURAL ENVIRONMENT 59

Policy AL10: Natural landscape and environment 59

Policy AL11: Green and blue infrastructure and biodiversity net gain 62
Policy AL12: Locally significant views 67
Policy AL13: Local Green Space 70

10. LEISURE AND COMMUNITY 75
Policy AL14: Provide, maintain and improve public facilities for the community 76
Policy AL15: Allotments and community growing spaces 78
Policy AL16: Protection of public houses 81
Policy AL17: Safeguard and expand existing health services 82
Policy AL18: Safeguard and expand existing education provision 84

11. TRANSPORT AND MOVEMENT 86
Policy AL19: Sustainable travel 87
Policy AL20: Public parking 93

12. ASPIRATIONAL PROJECTS 95
Aspirational development sites 95

13. IMPLEMENTATION AND PLAN REVIEW 107

14. INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS AND PROVISION 108

15. POLICIES MAPS 109

16. NON-POLICY COMMUNITY ACTIONS 124

17. GLOSSARY 126

18. EVIDENCE BASE DOCUMENTS 129

APPENDICES (STORED AS SEPARATE DOCUMENTS FOR SIZE PURPOSES)

APPENDIX A: PROFILE OF ABBOTS LANGLEY PARISH
APPENDIX B: STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES, OPPORTUNITIES AND THREATS ANALYSIS
APPENDIX C: ANALYSIS OF PUBLIC COMMENTS VIA ABBOTS LANGLEY COMMONPLACE WEB SITE
APPENDIX D: ABBOTS LANGLEY HOUSING NEEDS ASSESSMENT
APPENDIX E: ABBOTS LANGLEY DESIGN GUIDANCE AND CODES
APPENDIX F: NON-DESIGNATED HERITAGE ASSETS
APPENDIX G: LOCALLY SIGNIFICANT VIEWS AND LOCAL GREEN SPACES
APPENDIX H: ABBOTS LANGLEY VILLAGE CENTRE MASTERPLAN
APPENDIX I: ASPIRATIONS FOR BEDMOND

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: Parish of Abbots Langley 6
Figure 2: Cover of the ALNP leaflet 7
Figure 3: Abbots Langley Neighbourhood Plan Boundary 9
Figure 4: The UK Challenge of meeting its Carbon Emission Targets 11
Figure 5: Current Green Belt land in the Parish of Abbots Langley, 2024 12
Figure 6: Abbots Langley Neighbourhood Plan Commonplace website 16
Figure 7: Green Belt around Abbots Langley 20
Figure 8: Abbots Langley circa 1904 21
Figure 9: Adopted settlement boundaries within the Parish of Abbots Langley (designations as per adopted Core Strategy 2011-2026) 31
Figure 10: Location of the fourteen main settlement areas in the Parish of Abbots Langley 36
Figure 11: Heritage assets and designations in the neighbourhood area 37
Figure 12: Character Areas in Abbots Langley Parish 41
Figure 13: The Bedmond Plateau (Hertfordshire County Council Landscape Character Area 9) 60
Figure 14: Map of local green and blue infrastructure in the parish of Abbots Langley 66
Figure 15: Map of locally significant views in the Parish of Abbots Langley 69
Figure 16: Local Green Spaces (1 to 4) 72
Figure 17: Local Green Spaces (5-17) 72
Figure 18: Green and Blue Infrastructure Map from the AECOM Design Guidance and Code for Abbots Langley Parish 73
Figure 19: Designated 'Open Spaces' in the Parish of Abbots Langley 74
Figure 20: Plan of Leavesden Country Park and key of its many facilities 77
Figure 21: Designated allotments in the Parish of Abbots Langley 80
Figure 22: Public rights of way, bus stops and public car parks in the parish of Abbots Langley 89
Figure 23: Proposed strategic and local cycle routes for the Parish of Abbots Langley 90
Figure 24: Policies map - parish-wide 110
Figure 25: Character areas map 112
Figure 26: Local Catchment Map for Key Facilities in Bedmond 113
Figure 27: Local Catchment Map for Key Facilities in Roman Gardens 114
Figure 28: Local Catchment Map for Key Facilities in Abbotswood Park 115
Figure 29: Local Catchment Map for Key Facilities in Leavesden 116
Figure 30: Local Catchment Map for Key facilities in Boundary Way 117
Figure 31: Local Catchment Map for Key Facilities for Coates Way and Bucknalls Lane 118
Figure 32: Local Catchment Map for Key Facilities in Hunton Bridge and Langleybury 119

TABLES

Table 1: Summary of local engagement activity 14
Table 2: Recommended housing mix for the Housing Market Area (source: South West Herts Local Housing Needs Assessment Update, 2024) 33
Table 3: Summary of the Character Areas of Abbots Langley Parish 38
Table 4: Non-Policy Community Actions 124

ABBREVIATIONS

ALNP The Abbots Langley Neighbourhood Plan
ALPC Abbots Langley Parish Council
CIL Community Infrastructure Levy
DMSH Discounted Market Sale Housing
LHNA Local Housing Need Assessment
NP Neighbourhood Plan
NPPF National Planning Policy Framework.
NSALG The National Society of Allotment and Leisure Gardeners
OAN Objectively Assessed Need (for housing)
SHMA Strategic Housing Market Assessment
SuDS Sustainable Drainage Systems
TRDC Three Rivers District Council

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group: Cllr Sara Bedford, Cllr Elizabeth Burns, Cllr Jane Lay, Cllr Alex Michaels (until March 2018), Cllr Robin Powell, Cllr Owen Roe, Cllr Jon Tankard, Gwendolyn Ball, Anne-Marie Fanton (until September 2017), Tony Gott (until August 2016), Brenda Kersey, Bruce Prochnik, Jan Smith, Peter Warman (Chair).
Clerk to the Parish: Tim Perkins (until September 2021), Isabel Montesdeoca (from September 2021)
Neighbourhood Planning Consultant: Alison Eardley, https://www.yourfriendlyplanner.co.uk/
Special Projects Consultancy: AECOM

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1. The Abbots Langley Neighbourhood Plan ('ALNP') covers the period from 2025 to 2041. On 18 November 2014, Three Rivers District Council, the local planning authority, designated the area for the plan to be the whole of the civil parish of Abbots Langley (*Figure 1*). A Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group, comprising residents and Parish Councillors, has guided the preparation of the Plan. In consultation with the community, this Group established the vision for the future of Abbots Langley and how this vision can be realised through planning local land uses over the period of the plan.

1.2. **Chapter Two** explains the planning context for the development of the ALNP and the key stages followed in its preparation.

1.3. **Chapter Three** explains the 2041 Vision for Abbots Langley with eight objectives to achieve this Vision Statement. These objectives are associated with:

1. Meeting local housing needs with the main focus on affordable housing.
2. Ensuring new development is good quality and sustainable.
3. Strengthening the local economy, including local retail and tourism appeal.
4. Protecting both the historic and environmental assets of the Parish, particularly its biodiversity, open spaces and Metropolitan Green Belt.
5. Ensuring the provision of sufficient school places, primary health facilities and mental health care services to match the needs of local residents.
6. Improving the provision of sustainable transport and assist in the transition away from the use of fossil fuel to electrically powered and hydrogen powered transport.
7. Exploring the potential for viable, locally based renewable energy projects.
8. Encouraging the production of local food including local farms, horticulture, community projects and private gardens/allotments.

1.4. **Chapter Four** describes the profile of the Parish with its varied communities. Abbots Langley is located in southwest Hertfordshire, in the northern part of the Three Rivers District. The area is situated between Watford, Hemel Hempstead, and St Albans. The Parish comprises the main village of Abbots Langley as well about thirteen other distinct communities within the boundary. The 2021 resident population is of the order of 22,000 living in about 8,800 dwellings (2021 Census).

Figure 1: Parish of Abbots Langley

1.5. The process of producing the ALNP has sought to involve the community as widely as possible. The different topics included in ALNP are matters found to be of importance to local residents, businesses and community groups. The ALNP Steering Group set up a Commonplace website in June 2015 as one of the processes to capture the views from local people about the area and how it should develop in the future. A leaflet explaining the work and how to access this website was distributed to every household in the Parish (*Figure 2*). There were a number of exhibitions and published articles to encourage public involvement in the ALNP.

1.6. There have been human settlements in the area for over 2,000 years. There are well-documented accounts of the physical and social changes that have occurred over the centuries. Significant changes have continued to take place in the last 20 years. These include the introduction of modern commercial industries such as Warner Bros. Studios, Imagination Technologies, RES (a renewal energy company) and other new businesses along the Gade Valley. Houses built in the Parish between 2000 and 2016 numbered 1,439 new dwellings, which is at least 50% of all new houses built in the Three Rivers District during this period. The Parish is less than a quarter of the land area of the District. As confirmed by the 2021 Census data, the Parish population has increased by 25% in the last 20 years, a significantly higher increase than in the surrounding areas.

1.7. Local residents believe that no major future new housing should be planned in the Parish until the capacity of its local public services associated with education, local health/social services and local transport networks are increased to meet adequately the current and any planned future demand. The local community places a high value on the area's designated open spaces and Metropolitan Green Belt land within the Parish. They do not want this land to be lost to development. However, there are undeveloped sites under consideration by the District Council for new housing in Abbots Langley that are located within designated Metropolitan Green Belt land. Also, development in the Parish must take into account the

impact of Climate Change, Brexit and the legacy of Covid-19 and make investments for the required adjustments in lifestyles and enhancing biodiversity.

1.8. **Chapter Five** provides the overview for the Spatial Strategy for the Parish and the location for any new development taking particular account of factors influenced by Climate Change. **Chapters Six to Eleven** explain the main policies of the Neighbourhood Plan. These chapters cover the key topics of housing, building design, preservation of buildings, stimulating the local economy, enhancing the natural environment, improving biodiversity, providing leisure facilities, fostering resilient communities, meeting healthcare needs, education provision, and providing sustainable local transport facilities.

1.9. **Chapter Twelve** suggests some Aspirational Projects of Interest to particular communities. **Chapter Thirteen** reviews the implementation process of the ALNP and the need for periodic reviews. **Chapter Fourteen** explains the possible investment priorities following from funds coming to the area as a result of levies placed on new development projects in the Parish. **Chapter Fifteen** shows the policies spatially on local area maps. **Chapter Sixteen** lists other Non-Policy Actions arising from the ALNP. A Glossary is provided in **Chapter Seventeen.** Background material for the ALNP is provided in a separate **Appendices Report** and in the assembled **Evidence Base**. The index for this material is provided in **Chapter Eighteen**.

1.10. **NOTE:** The informal Consultative Draft of ALNP was published in April 2021. This was followed by an informal six-month consultation programme with local residents and businesses. Two public exhibitions were held in the Abbots Langley Village and Bedmond in July and August 2021. The ALNP was revised in response to the feedback from the public.

1.11. This revised version was discussed and finalised by the Parish Councillors, the Parish Council being the Qualifying Body, in 2024.

1.12. The Three Rivers District Council published their Preferred Policy Options and Sites for Potential Allocation for their emerging Local Plan in Summer 2021 and held their Regulation 18 public consultation from 11 June to 20 August 2021. Due to the high number of public responses (20,000), the Council made amendments and consulted on the “Regulation Local Plan Regulation 18 consultation Part 4: Three Rivers’ Preferred Local Plan Lower Housing Growth Option - Protecting More Green Belt Land” between September and October 2023.

Figure 2: Cover of the ALNP leaflet

2. INTRODUCTION

2.1. This document is the Abbots Langley Neighbourhood Plan (ALNP) for the parish of Abbots Langley. It represents one part of the Local Plan for the parish over the period 2025 to 2041, the other parts being the Three Rivers Core Strategy 2011, the Site Allocations Local Development document 2014, and the Three Rivers Development Management Plan 2013. Three Rivers District Council (TRDC) is in the process of developing a new Local Plan, which will set out a development strategy for the district up to 2041.

2.2. As the local planning authority, TRDC designated a Neighbourhood Area sharing its boundary with the Parish of Abbots Langley on 18 November 2014. A Steering Group, comprising local residents and councillors, has guided the process locally.

2.3. The Plan is being prepared in accordance with the Town & Country Planning Act 1990, the Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, the Localism Act 2011 and the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended). The Steering Group has prepared the Plan to establish a vision and framework for the future of Abbots Langley and to set out how that vision will be realised through planning land use and development change over the plan period 2025 to 2041, to align with the timescales of the new Local Plan.

2.4. The purpose of the ALNP is to structure development within the parish and provide guidance to any interested parties wishing to submit planning applications for development within the parish. The process of producing the ALNP has sought to involve the community as widely as possible and the different topic areas are reflective of matters that are of considerable importance to residents, businesses and community groups.

2.5. Each section of the ALNP covers a different topic. Under each heading, the policies themselves are presented in the blue boxes. Beneath each policy, the Purpose of the policy is presented followed by the Justification, which provides the necessary understanding of the policy and what it is seeking to achieve. It is these policies against which planning applications will be assessed. It is advisable that, in order to understand the full context for any individual policy, it is read in conjunction with the supporting text and evidence documents that have been compiled to underpin the Neighbourhood Plan (see Chapter 18).

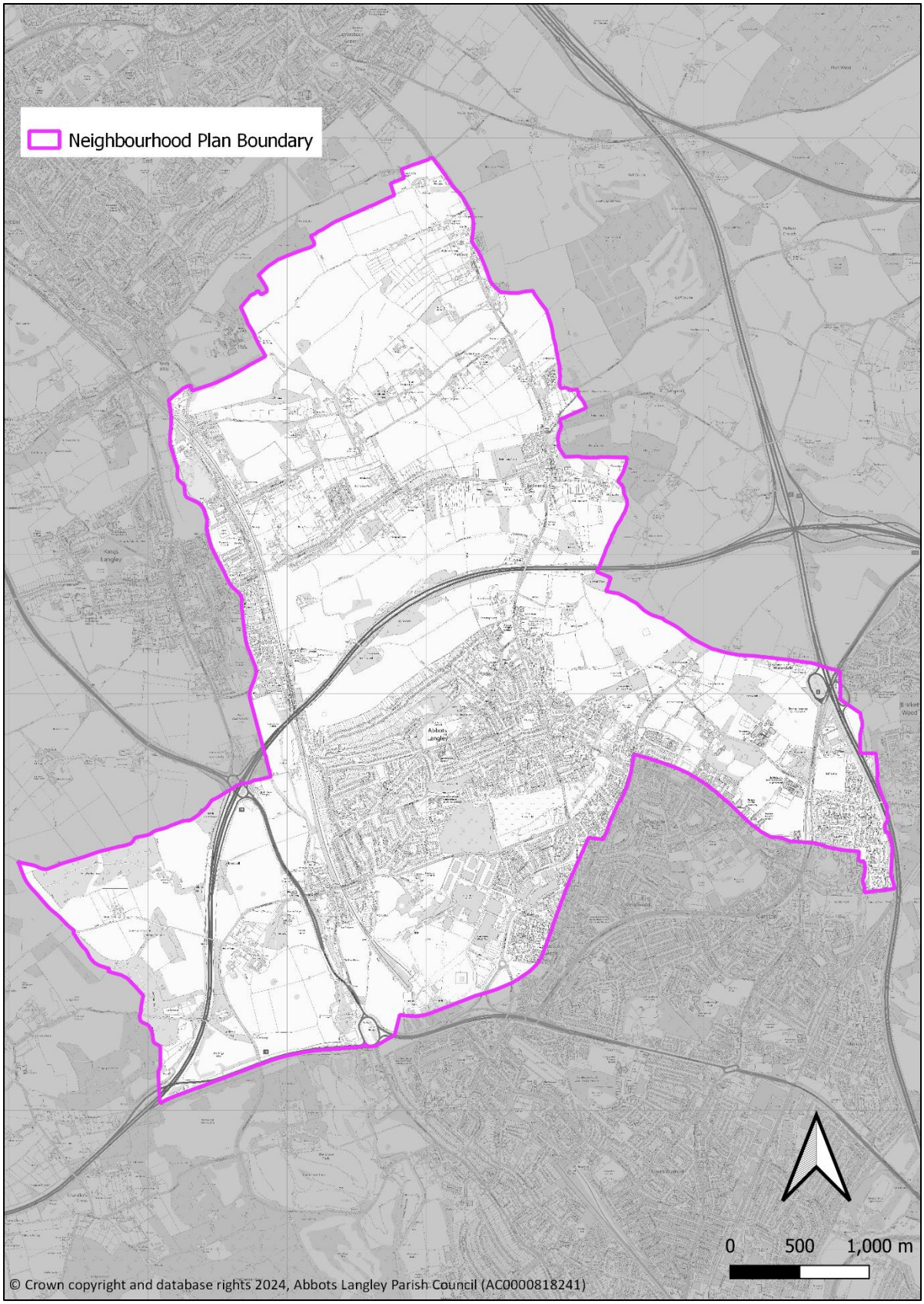
2.6. In addition to the policies, the Plan identifies a number of local needs and community aspirations that are not met through the planning system, but which are important to the well-being of the community. It is proposed that these projects will be met through community action supported by other organisations. The Plan also sets out the Community Infrastructure Priorities and a framework for monitoring and implementation.

2.7. *Figure 3* below shows the boundary of the ALNP designated area, which shares its boundary with the parish of Abbots Langley.

2.8. Throughout the document, examples of quotes taken from the comments received during the informal consultations are provided. Sources for these include the CommonPlace website, workshops and surveys.

2.9. The Abbots Langley Design Guidance and Code is an integral part of the Neighbourhood Plan, underpinning a number of the policies.

Figure 3: Abbots Langley Neighbourhood Plan Boundary



National policy

2.10. The Neighbourhood Plan must have regard to the policies set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

2.11. The NPPF was most recently updated in December 2024 and states:

"Neighbourhood planning gives communities the power to develop a shared vision for their area. Neighbourhood plans can shape, direct and help to deliver sustainable development, by influencing local planning decisions as part of the statutory development plan. Neighbourhood plans should not promote less development than set out in the strategic policies for the area or undermine those strategic policies. (para 29)

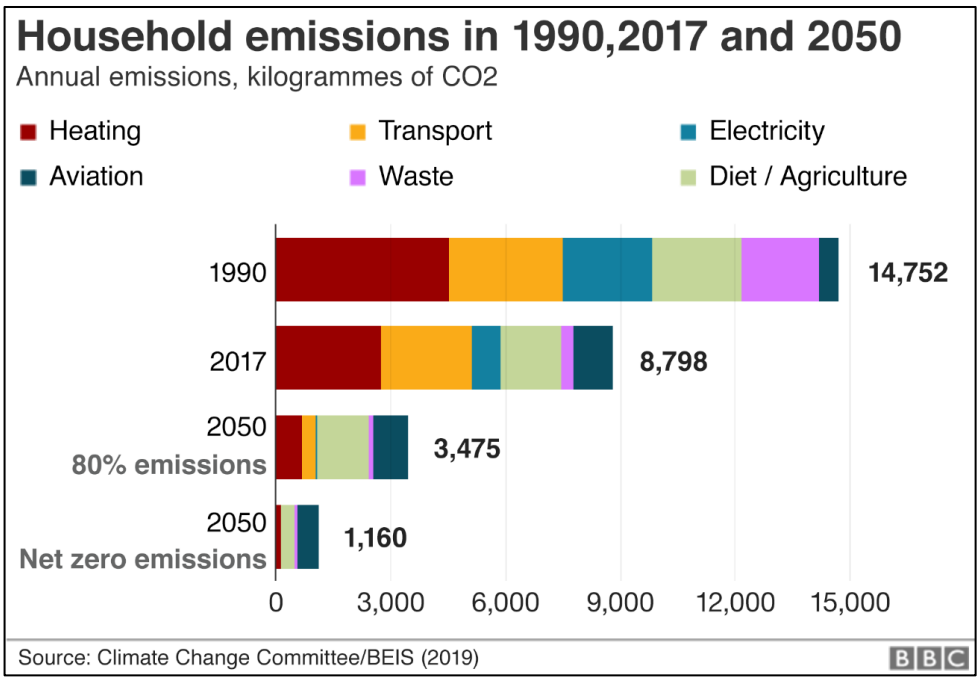
Once a neighbourhood plan has been brought into force, the policies it contains take precedence over existing non-strategic policies in a local plan covering the Parish, where they are in conflict; unless they are superseded by strategic or non-strategic policies that are adopted subsequently". (para 30)

Climate Change and Emission Targets

2.12. In the UK Climate Change Act in 2008, MPs agreed that the UK should reduce 80% of its emission of greenhouse gases by 2050. In 2017, the government raised its target to "net zero" greenhouse gases by 2050. In 2021, the government announced its intention to reduce emissions by 78% by 2035 compared to 1990 levels. This means emissions from homes, transport, farming and industry will have to be avoided completely or - in the most difficult examples - offset by planting trees or sucking CO_2 out of the atmosphere. This latest target was recommended by the Government's Advisory Committee on Climate Change. Their report said, '*if other countries followed the UK, there was a 50-50 chance of staying below the recommended 1.5C temperature rise by 2100.' 'A 1.5C rise is considered the threshold for dangerous climate change.'*

2.13. Over 300 Local Authority Councils have followed the UK Government's June 2019 declaration of a Climate Emergency. Practical plans to meet the specified emissions target are under development; this includes local initiatives by Abbots Langley Parish Council, TRDC and Hertfordshire County Council. Policies and actions in this Neighbourhood Plan wish to comply to these new environmental standards. The challenges of reducing emissions are illustrated in *Figure 4*. Achieving such targets must be taken into account when considering the use of land in an area and energy use associated with any new infrastructure and built development.

Figure 4: The UK Challenge of meeting its Carbon Emission Targets



Local Policy

Adopted Local Plan

2.14. The Development Plan for Three Rivers comprises:

- Three Rivers District Core Strategy 2011-2026, (adopted October 2011) and sets out key planning policies for the district.
- Development Management Policies (adopted) 2013)
- Site Allocations Local Development Document (adopted 2014).
- 'Made' neighbourhood plans
- Hertfordshire Minerals Local Plan 2002 – 2016 (adopted 2007)
- Waste Core Strategy and Development Management Policies 2011-2026 (adopted 2012)
- Waste Site Allocations Development Plan Document 2011-2026 (adopted 2014)
- Made neighbourhood plans

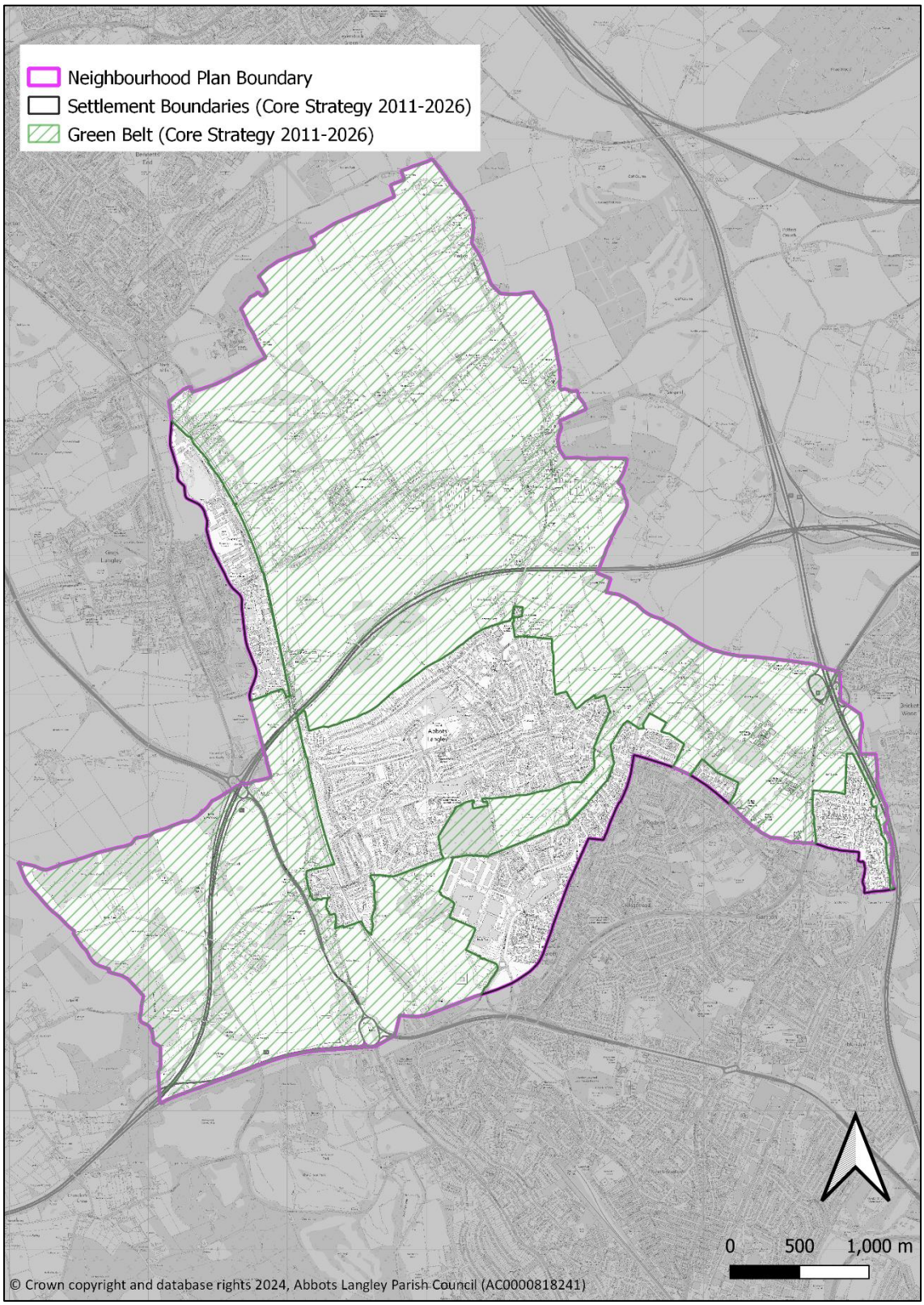
2.15. The ALNP must confirm to the strategic policies of the adopted Local Plan. The Core Strategy (2011) seeks to deliver 4,500 new homes between 2001 and 2026 and provide an additional 2,378 jobs across the district. It states that approximately 60% of housing need will be delivered in the Key Centres as well as housing sites at the most sustainable locations on the edge of existing settlements in the Green Belt.

2.16. Four settlements within the Neighbourhood Plan area are designated within the settlement hierarchy: Abbots Langley, Leavesden and Garston as Key Centres, and Bedmond as a

Village. Settlements beyond these, such as Hunton Bridge, are not considered part of the formal settlement hierarchy.

2.17. As shown in *Figure 5,* most of the area lies in the Green Belt, including Bedmond village, which is washed over.

Figure 5: Current Green Belt land in the Parish of Abbots Langley, 2024



New Local Plan

2.18. A new Local Plan to 2041 is being prepared. The Local Plan Regulation 18 consultation Part 4: Three Rivers' Preferred Local Plan Lower Housing Growth Option - Protecting More Green Belt Land ran from 27 October to 10 December 2023. The new Local Plan seeks to deliver 4,852 new homes over the period to 2041. However, this projected housing figure is being reviewed again in light of a potential new National Government housing target for the District of 13,300 houses.

2.19. The latest Local Development Scheme (December 2024), suggests that the new Local Plan will be published for consultation at Regulation 19 in February/March 2026 although following the Extraordinary Full Council Meeting on 7 January 2025, Members have agreed that officers should aim to publish the Regulation 19 draft plan by 7 November 2025. Examination is scheduled for summer 2026 and adoption anticipated at the end of2026. Work on the neighbourhood plan has been mindful of its emerging content.

2.20. **The Abbots Langley Neighbourhood Plan is not seeking to allocate sites for housing, a position agreed with TRDC. An early review of the Neighbourhood Plan is anticipated following the adoption of the new Local Plan.**

Joint Strategic Plan

2.21. In Spring 2018, Three Rivers, Dacorum, Hertsmere, St Albans and Watford Councils gave formal endorsement to begin work on a Joint Strategic Plan (JSP) for South West Hertfordshire. By working together, the South West Herts Councils will also be in a stronger position to deliver and better fund essential transport, health services and educational facilities that local people want to see alongside new homes and jobs.

2.22. Each Council will still be responsible for preparing its own Local Plan but the JSP will provide the platform to consider how the challenges of growth in the wider South West Hertfordshire area can be addressed in the longer term (i.e. to 2050).

Key stages on how the Plan has been prepared

2.23. The Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group comprised both individual members of the community and local councillors. The Group has developed the Neighbourhood Plan through extensive engagement with the community, summarised in *Table 1* below.

2.24. Meetings and liaison with TRDC have taken place on each of the topic areas covered by the Plan. In addition, regular updates have been provided by posting ALNP Bi-monthly Meeting Agendas and Bi-Monthly Progress Reports on the Parish Website since May 2016.

2.25. A Consultation Statement will be developed later in the process, to accompany the Submission Version (Regulation 16) Neighbourhood Plan as part of the ALNP submitted documentation; it will contain the full detail of what happened and how comments at various stages have been incorporated. A summary of the consultation received via the CommonPlace website is included in Appendix C. A fuller detail is provided in the Consultation Statement.

Table 1: Summary of local engagement activity

Date	Milestone	Key activity
2014	Parish Council decides to prepare a Neighbourhood Plan	• Terms of Reference prepared • Parish designated
2015	Hiatus in activity	
2016 to 2017	Initial community engagement to gather evidence on each topic Evidence base constructed	• Steering Group established • Contact made with TRDC for guidance and information • NDP publicly launched • Initial engagement including website, public exhibitions and presentations • Database of business and community group created • Database of public buildings compiled • Parish Profile assembled
2017	Continued engagement and evidence collation	• Leaflet to all households • Information included in the My Abbots newsletter • Public exhibitions • Stakeholder meetings • Surveys • Aerial photos
2018	Key themes, vision and objectives identified	• Commonplace feedback analysed to inform vision and objectives and topic areas • AECOM commissioned to undertake Local Housing Needs Assessment
2019 to 2020	Informal draft Plan written	• Informal engagement
2021	Public Consultation on the informal Draft Plan	• AECOM commissioned to provide Building Design Guidelines and evaluation of valued features of each settlement in the parish. • Focus Groups and exhibitions
2022	Village Centre Masterplan finalised	• Village Centre masterplan prepared in consultation with the community • SEA and HRA Screening prepared
2023 to 2025	Regulation 14 Consultation Regulation 16 consultation Examination Referendum	• Regulation 14 Plan • Plan finalised and submitted to TRDC • Plan ‘made’

Sustainability of the Neighbourhood Plan

2.26. The ALNP has been screened to ascertain whether a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and/ or Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) is required. The screening document was subject to consultation with Historic England, Natural England and the Environment Agency for five weeks in early 2023.

2.27. The SEA and HRA Screening Determination Statement, published February 2023, has concluded that the ALNP is unlikely to have significant environmental impacts and does not require either a full SEA or HRA.

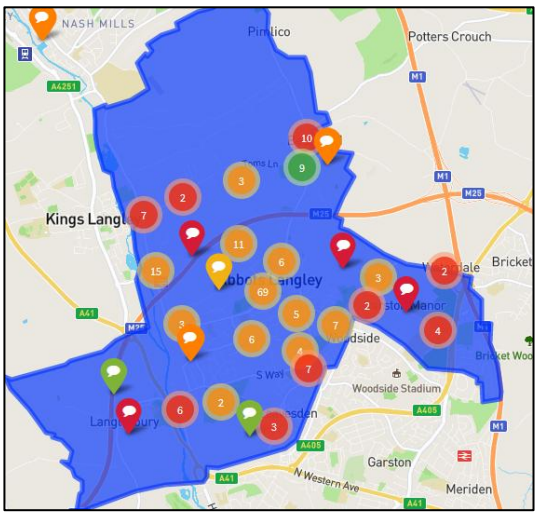
2.28. A copy of the Screening Determination letter and statement is available to view on the Parish Council website.

3. VISION AND OBJECTIVES

Introduction

3.1. The Abbots Langley Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group set up a Commonplace website to capture views from local people about the area and how it should develop over the course of the next 15 to 20 years (*Figure 6*). Views were expressed during the period that the Neighbourhood Plan was under development and consultation. Overall, 297 comments had been received and 476 'reactions' (for instance where support is shown).

Figure 6: Abbots Langley Neighbourhood Plan Commonplace website



3.2. These comments were analysed by topic and shown on the Parish Council website in the section on the Neighbourhood Plan. These have been taken into account in developing planning objectives and policies. Relevant quotes from local residents have been used in this report to illustrate their views. A summary and analysis of all the comments is given in Appendix C and all the comments can be read on the Abbots Langley Commonplace website.

Issues for the Neighbourhood Plan Area

3.3. The Neighbourhood Plan seeks to address, as far as is possible, the challenges that face the communities of Abbots Langley. In summary these challenges are:

- The majority of the parish lies within Green Belt. National planning policy now enables greater opportunities for Green Belt and Grey Belt developments, subject to criteria. The emerging Local Plan work indicates that changes to the Green Belt boundary would be required to accommodate the number of homes required across the strategic area. . Proposed changes are particularly important in relation to Bedmond, which is currently washed over by Green Belt. There is strong support locally to retain the washed over status.
- The parish has seen significant housing growth in recent years. A 25% increase in the parish population has occurred in the period 2001 to 2021. The strategic housing need for the district is set to increase, adding additional pressure for development. Any additional housebuilding in the parish will need to be done in a way that protects the rural setting

and historic character of the area and provides the additional facilities required, associated with healthcare and educational places. In addition, any new neighbourhoods will need to have measures incorporated to ensure their longevity, such as stewardship arrangements.

- There is a high proportion of semi-detached properties, many of which are 2- to 3-bedrooms. Homes to attract growing families – including affordable homes – will be needed to continue to meet the needs of families attracted to the area and for local people. The design of new homes needs to be high quality, providing sufficient space for home-working and meeting sustainable environmental standards.
- With larger retail centres nearby, it is important to retain the vibrancy of Abbots Langley village centre and ensure it continues to attract both residents and visitors. Equally, the role of the smaller, more local shopping areas in the parish needs to be sustained. Tourism is becoming increasingly important to the area and the impacts of this will need to be effectively managed.
- Protecting the natural environment and its key features is of high importance. Equally the built heritage needs to be maintained.
- Traffic congestion is fairly high at peak periods, exacerbated by the historic, originally narrow road layouts in the old parts of settlements, which are part of the valued local character in Abbots Langley. The ancient lanes, high levels of development locally, high car ownership, and HGV activity, added to the fact that the parish is situated between major transport routes and railway bridges, contribute to traffic congestion. Road safety has also been flagged as a major problem in some areas, which needs to be considered alongside the need to improve walking and cycling opportunities and infrastructure. The concentration of schools in the south-east part of the parish results in severe traffic congestion in this area, during the morning peak, disrupting other traffic movements on key routes in this area.
- Maintaining and improving the range of community services and facilities is going to be important as the population continues to grow. A key priority for residents is access to healthcare and education. There is a need to safeguard the existing provision. Then expand provision to meet the increase in local population and provide a wider scope of health treatment services locally to reduce the dependence on hospitals.
- There is also a need to ensure that provision of sports and recreational facilities aligns with anticipated future growth. These facilities can have a beneficial effect on the physical and mental health and wellbeing of the community.
- Out-of-area commuting to work is high in the parish, despite the presence of three multi-national companies. This could indicate a lack of starter units and low cost, flexible workspaces. Opportunities for home-working or working near home could be improved by the provision of local employment hubs with bookable desk-spaces. There is scope to expand the Warner Bros. site, which would enable greater numbers of jobs.
- There is a lack of secondary school provision in the parish, although this largely sits outside the scope of the ALNP.

3.4. An analysis of the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats associated with the spatial planning and land use issues in the parish are given at the end of Appendix B.

Vision for the Neighbourhood Plan

3.5. The following vision for Abbots Langley is proposed, which imagines what life in Abbots Langley will be like in 2041, having secured the policies and proposals of the Neighbourhood Plan:

In 2041, Abbots Langley is a predominantly semi-rural parish, its main settlements surrounded by Green Belt. Abbots Langley Village itself is a thriving destination, capitalising on increasing numbers of visitors to the parish and providing a range of shopping and eating opportunities as well as leisure activities. The historic core remains, and new developments reflect the local character of the area to maintain the village feel with sufficient local facilities to meet the primary retail, healthcare, child education and leisure/sport activities for local residents. The Abbots Langley Village Centre has been improved following proposals in the Masterplan.

Visitors are attracted by the continued presence of the Warner Bros. Studios, which has been expanded to provide additional facilities and opportunities for local employment. Additionally, the regeneration along the Grand Union Canal has encourage more canal traffic, and increased footfall in the village centre.

The development of smaller and more affordable properties, in-keeping with the local area, has enabled first time buyers and new families to move into the area, bringing renewed energy to the area and a perpetuation of local events and activities. Older people in the area have the opportunity to downsize to more manageable properties, freeing up homes for growing families. These families are attracted to the area because of the excellent schools, which have expanded to meet the local need and are more accessible with improved links east-west through the parish.

New homes have been designed sustainably to reduce their impact on the environment. Opportunities to enable people to work from home, should they wish, combined with the retention of a series of global businesses, has meant that fewer people are commuting out as jobs and training are available locally. Those that are commuting find it easier to get to Kings Langley station as the public transport, pedestrian and cycle access have been improved. Public transport services should be well maintained particularly local train services at Kings Langley Station.

The growing community's needs are well-met with an expanded medical centre as a District Health Hub, new playgrounds and leisure facilities and the ongoing resource offered by the Henderson Hub. The green spaces across the parish, well-linked by footpaths and cycle-paths, enable locals to enjoy the countryside on their doorstep. Equally these areas provide a haven for wildlife and native plants, increasing local biodiversity.

The parish has been able to install additional electric vehicle charging points at key locations and at new developments. A local car sharing scheme/ on-demand public transport /shared taxis services have reduced the need for multiple car-owning households and on-street residential parking pressures. This, in combination with the planting of trees and vegetation

along the main routes, has helped to reduce the air and noise pollution. Houses have been well insulated and implemented alternative heating systems with less dependence on fossil fuels.

The community is more balanced in the age groups living here.

Neighbourhood Plan Objectives

3.6. The Plan has the following eight objectives to achieve the Vision, which will be delivered in cooperation with relevant statutory and other agencies, including organisations in the commercial and not-for-profit sectors:

- **OBJECTIVE 1:** Influencing new developments to be sustainably sited and to contribute to both the local housing needs of the parish while helping to deliver the district-wide housing requirement, including more affordable housing (of all types) as well as housing that addresses the needs of residents of all ages.
- **OBJECTIVE 2**: Supporting new development that reflects the high-quality local context in terms of building style and materials and is sensitively designed to be attractive, to minimise flood risk, mitigate climate change, promote biodiversity and reduce our carbon footprint.
- **OBJECTIVE 3:** Strengthening, supporting and promoting local economic activity in all retail, industrial, commercial and professional activities and maximise opportunities for tourism including the regeneration of the Grand Union Canal.
- **OBJECTIVE 4:** Conserving both historic and the environmental assets of the parish, preserving the green setting of the settlements and the individual green spaces within them, ensuring that they are linked to create wildlife corridors. Maintaining as much as possible, the five distinctive statutory purposes of Green Belt policies in the Parish.
- **OBJECTIVE 5**: Encouraging the provision of local infrastructure and facilities including expanded primary health care facilities and sufficient school places to address the needs of existing and future residents.
- **OBJECTIVE 6**: Improving sustainable transport and movement across the parish, in particular through electric vehicle modes, on-demand services and public transport, specifically ensuring there is a safe environment for pedestrians and cyclists as well as motorists.
- **OBJECTIVE 7:** Exploring the potential for viable renewable energy projects locally, serving and ideally owned by the local community.
- **OBJECTIVE 8**: Encouraging the production of local food including local farms, horticulture, community projects and private gardens/allotments.

4. AN INTRODUCTION TO ABBOTS LANGLEY PARISH

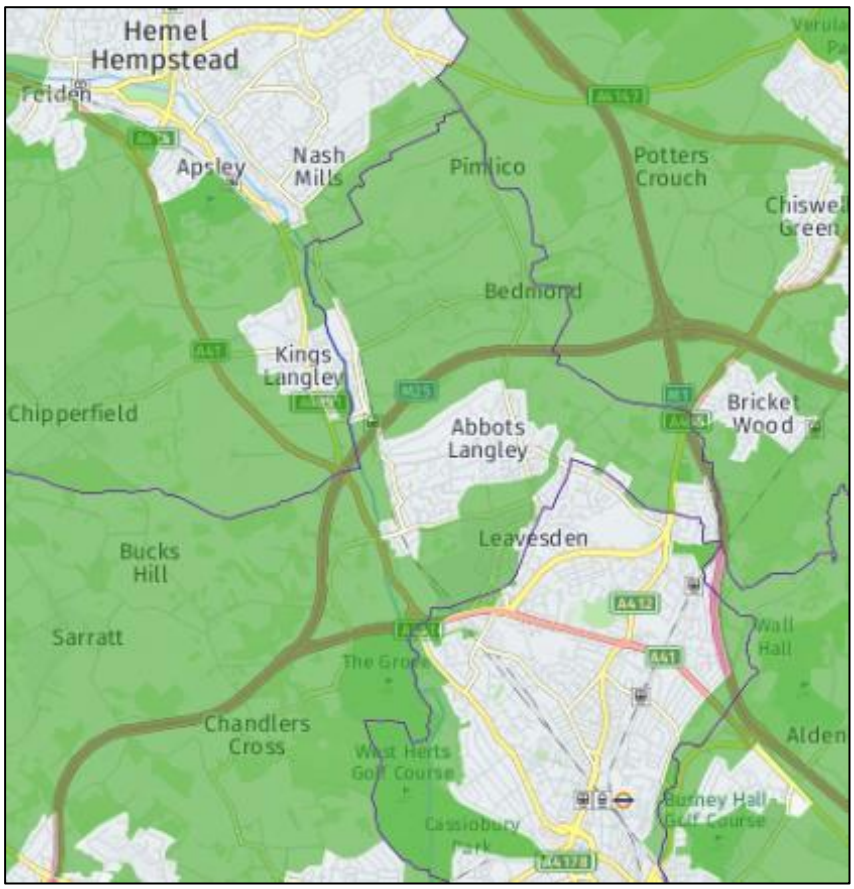
Geography

4.1. Abbots Langley is a parish in south-west Hertfordshire, in the northern part of the Three Rivers District. It is situated between Watford, Hemel Hempstead, and St Albans. The parish comprises the main village of Abbots Langley as well as a number of smaller settlements; in total there are about fourteen distinct communities within the parish boundary, which are home to approximately 22,000 residents.

4.2. Lying completely in the Metropolitan Green Belt (*Figure 7*) the northern part of the parish is in the Chilterns, where the ground reaches a height of 137 meters/449 feet in the north-east at Pimlico. The southern part is considerably lower. There is a general trend in the south and west down to the valley of the River Gade, which forms part of the western parish boundary. Abbots Langley was, as Domesday testifies, and still is a district of meadows and woods. The main village stands on high ground in the southern part of the parish.

4.3. The parish is crossed by the M25 through the centre and on a south-west axis. The M1 clips the south-eastern tip.

Figure 7: Green Belt around Abbots Langley



A brief history of the parish

4.4. The parish has a long history with evidence of human settlements from the upper Palaeolithic period onwards (10,000BC) in the Gade Valley. Flint tools from the Mesolithic period (8000-4000BC) have been found within the Parish. Celtic urns dating from the period between 10BC-AD30 are evidence of habitation by local tribes during that period. Tessellated paving and coins, dating between the period AD41-AD378, were found in the 1980s during the laying of foundations for houses near the station. These attest to Roman habitation.

4.5. The parish name itself can be traced back to at least 1045 when, it is recorded, a Saxon, Ethelwine the Black and his wife Wynfelda, gave 'Langelei' (denoting a long meadow or long lea) to the Abbot and the monks of the monastery of St Albans. The monastery played an important part in the affairs of Abbots Langley for several hundred years. The Parish Registers, which were started in the year 1538, as ordered by Henry VIII, are complete and very detailed. They reveal that the area was split into four manors: Abbots Langley, Langleybury, Chambersbury, and Hyde.

4.6. Abbots Langley has had a predominantly agricultural heritage comprising scattered farms during the 1700s and 1800s. However, the parish's close proximity to London led to a number of fine houses and estates being built as the area was considered to be a very attractive rural location but still within reach of London's high society. Many of the parish's historic assets remain today including Langley House (now converted to flats), the Abbots House (dating to the 1600s) and Hazelwood House (now Hunton Park Hotel).

Figure 8: Abbots Langley circa 1904

4.7. The advent of the industrial revolution made an impact on the parish, strengthened by the construction of the Grand Union Canal, which runs along the western boundary. It was at this time that the paper mills at Nash Mills, alongside the canal, were constructed, signalling a move away from agricultural work among locals and towards industry. By the 1830s, the railway had arrived, which meant that London was within very easy reach, providing a

catalyst for the future emerging role of the parish as a commuter village. The opening of Leavesden Hospital in 1870 facilitated another change as it imported a large number of patients and additional people moving to the area in supporting roles. The community, which had been concentrated largely around the main High Street, grew quickly during the late 1800s with the construction of new roads and terraced housing. In 1913, Ovaltine opened their factory in neighbouring King's Langley, providing work for locals.

4.8. The onset of World War II saw the demise of many of the historic buildings in the parish, including Manor House and Cecil Lodge. The Leavesden Aerodrome was established at this time to increase the supply of aircraft. After the war, the aerodrome was purchased by De Havilland, later acquired by Rolls-Royce, who used the site as a factory for producing engines for aeroplanes and later helicopters. From the 1970s, the aerodrome was also used by commercial small business aircraft, as the airfield was close to both the M1 and later the M25 motorways.

4.9. The M25 has had a significant impact on the parish, crossing east to southwest through the centre of the area. Enabling connectivity to nearby centres, it has crystallised the parish as a home for commuters, with the majority of local people working outside the parish boundaries. A knock-on effect of this has been the very high property prices.

4.10. By the early 1990s, Britain's manufacturing industry was in decline. Rolls-Royce sold their interests in the aerodrome site which meant that this large industrial area was disused. The nearby Ovaltine factory also ceased operating in 2002. Within this time, however, the former aerodrome site was purchased by Pinewood Studios who sought additional studio space. Rebranded "Leavesden Studios", the site has been used to film major films including James Bond, Star Wars: The Phantom Menace and Sleepy Hollow. In 2000, Heyday Films acquired the site on behalf of Warner Bros. The site was predominantly used to film the Harry Potter series of films, housing a permanent standing set during this time. By 2010, Warner Bros. completed its purchase of the site. They have invested in the region of £100 million to create a 'Hollywood' studio base in 'London.' The creation of the Warner Bros. Studio Tour London – 'The Making of Harry Potter' alongside additional sound stages has enabled approximately 300 new jobs in the local area and continues to expand. This investment has resulted in the Studio Tour becoming the biggest tourist attraction in Hertfordshire with a capacity of 6,000 visitors per day. Further expansion of the Film Studios is planned during the next five years.

Images show: Lych Gate at the Church of St Lawrence, Warner Bros. Studios, Leavesden and the green belt around the village

The Parish of Abbots Langley today

4.11. The 2021 Census revealed that there are 22,105 residents in the parish living in 8,855 dwellings. This has risen from 19,974 residents and 8,183 dwellings in 2011. The parish is a thriving community with many local facilities and amenities as described below:

4.12. **Primary Schools:** Bedmond Academy; Abbots Langley School; Breakspeare School (for special educational needs (SEN) pupils); Divine Saviour Catholic School; Tanners Wood; St Pauls C of E and High Elms Manor School (specialist school). Hertfordshire County Council has identified the need for a new primary school in the parish and has allocated a site on Woodside Road. No decision to build this new primary school has been made by 2022.

4.13. **Secondary Schools:** Breakspeare School (for special educational needs (SEN) pupils); Parmiter's School; Saint Michael's Catholic High School; and Garston Manor School (specialist for learning difficulties) and the Future Academies Watford (formerly Francis Combe Academy) straddling the parish boundary. With the exception of Breakspeare, the schools are concentrated in the south eastern part of the parish.

4.14. **Health:** There are no strategic health facilities within Three Rivers District. The nearest hospitals are at Watford, Hemel Hempstead and St Albans. There are three GP practices in Abbots Langley (The Vine House Health Centre, the Sheepcote Medical Centre and Abbotswood Medical Centre) and a nearby Watford Practice (Coach House Surgery). Other specialist units include: the West Hertfordshire Therapy Unit (Outpatient Physiotherapy Department), located at Jacketts Field, Abbots Langley and Warren Court, on Woodside Road, which is a residential medium secure service for people who have difficulty in learning - including those who need care and treatment in a safe and secure environment.

4.15. **Community facilities:** These include the library, village halls (at Bedmond and in Abbots Langley), youth club/community centre, and two other halls for hire owned by the Parish Council (Tanners Wood Hall and Manor House hall). The Henderson Hub, at the Henderson Memorial Hall, has been developed to be a focal point for the residents in Abbots Langley and surrounding areas. Local people can now access a fully refurbished, accessible space where they can experience a range of visual, literary and performing arts as well as its continued use as a village hall.

4.16. The Henderson Hub is managed by the community as a registered charity. It promotes and supports a wide range of arts related activities throughout the community. Abbots Langley has over 130 volunteer groups and charities that encourage a wide range of community-based activities (see ALNP Evidence Base for more details).

4.17. **Green Spaces**: Beyond the Metropolitan Green Belt itself, the communities within the parish benefit from many green spaces including: Tanners Wood, School Mead, Hazel Wood, The Dell, Leavesden Country Park, Horses Field and the Millennium Gardens. Within the built-up areas of the parish, there is a need to preserve these green spaces which are greatly valued by the community and, despite the pressures for development, should not be sacrificed.

4.18. There are 6.57ha of Public Rights of Way within the parish. The Parish Council has produced a twenty-eight-page booklet, detailing eight walks around the Parish.

4.19. Abbots Langley Parish Council operates four allotment sites: Manor House, Jacketts Field, Kingsfield (behind The Compasses Pub) and Primrose Hill. Allotments are an important community resource, used by local residents all year round to grow vegetables, soft fruits, and flowers. In 2021, all plots are in use. Additional provision of allotment space is likely to be required in future years with the possible addition of communal cultivation plots.

4.20. **Burial Grounds:** There are three cemeteries in the parish: Abbots Langley Churchyard, St Paul's Churchyard at Langleybury and East Lane Cemetery (North). Apparently, these are full and not open for new burials. Located in the Parish since 1959, the West Herts Crematorium serves five local District Authorities, including TRDC. In 2020 Dacorum District Council, in partnership with the West Herts Crematorium, provided a new cemetery just beyond the northern boundary of the parish.

4.21. **Sports facilities:** There are numerous playing fields for a variety of sports, including at Langleybury, Leavesden Country Park (including a multi-use games area), South Way, Horses Field, Primrose Hill, Manor House Grounds (including a multi-use games area and new skate/BMX area) and the Bedmond Playing Fields in Toms Lane, Bedmond (including a multi-use games area). The Three Rivers Playing Pitch Assessment Report (2019) reveals a shortfall in quality of football provision, notably in Bedmond, given the high demand for this activity. Parmiter's School sports facilities are used by local sport clubs at weekends. The Watford Woodside Leisure Centre and Swimming Pool and outdoor facilities, close to the southern boundary of the parish, is available to residents in Abbots Langley, under an agreement between the two District Councils.

4.22. **Play areas:** There are 13 designated play areas in the parish. In recent years these have been increased in number and upgraded with new equipment. New play areas have been created in Horses Field and Leavesden Park. A new skatepark for Abbots Langley village was built in the Manor House Gardens and opened in May 2019.

4.23. **Shopping:** There are numerous shops (including two post offices), public houses, and cafes / restaurants located in the various communities within the parish.

4.24. **Economic Activity**: Abbots Langley has a thriving large village centre, noted as a 'Key Centre' in the Three Rivers hierarchy of settlements. There are a few small industrial/business estates along the Gade Valley. Key employers in the parish and immediate environs include:

- Warner Bros. Studios, Leavesden - a 160-acre production facility that has been the production site of many highly acclaimed Warner Bros. movies. It is also a tourist attraction and has attracted millions of visitors since the Harry Potter studio tour opened. The site's expansion in recent years has been major boost to local employment training in the area. Some of the biggest productions employ up to 750 people on construction, with an average shooting crew of 250. Plans for new production facilities propose a further 40% expansion of local employment resulting in nearly 6,000 on-site jobs and increasing film and TV productions to 613.8m per annum.
- RES - one of the world's larger independent renewable energy companies with over 13 GW portfolios.
- Imagination Technologies - a technology company, focusing on semiconductor and related intellectual property licensing. It markets PowerVR mobile graphics processors,

MIPS embedded microprocessors, and is known for its Pure consumer electronics division.

Images show: Manor House modernised play area, the Community-led Henderson Hub, Leavesden Country Park, Imagination Technology Campus, Future Academies Watford (formerly Francis Combe Academy) and Primrose Hill allotments

4.25. The key aspects of the profile of Abbots Langley parish, as they relate to the Neighbourhood Plan, are below, based on 2021 Census data (statistical detail is given in Appendix A) available at the parish level.

4.26. Compared to the district as a whole, Abbots Langley has a **high percentage of residents of working age (25 to 64 years)**, amounting to approximately 55% of the local population. This age group has grown considerably between since 2001.

4.27. In contrast, the **number of older adults, aged 65+ is significantly lower** than the district and region. This age group, however, is rising and given the numbers of adults in the lower age groups, is anticipated to rise further over the period of the Plan.

4.28. There is a **higher-than-average number of children and teenagers** in the parish, with the parish being an attractive place to live for older families. Whilst the number of younger working adults is generally high, this cohort has grown the least, possibly as a result of rising house prices and inability to rent locally.

4.29. Abbots Langley has **higher than UK average levels of car ownership**, with 1.5 cars per household compared to 1.2 at the national level. 47% the households in the parish have at least two cars and 12% have no car. This is not unexpected in a largely semi-rural area.

4.30. The nearest mainline railway stations serving the parish are at Watford Junction and Hemel Hempstead although there are intermediate stations at Kings Langley, Garston and Apsley. The parish is fairly **well served by bus links** to several major employment centres. However, the vast **majority of those in work use their car to travel to their place of employment**,

with 10% of people working from home. This proportion has increased considerably since the outbreak of Covid-19 and its associated measures.

4.31. Abbots Langley **predominantly comprises of two-to-three-bedroom homes,** mainly semi-detached (34% of stock) and 24% terraced and 24% detached. 72% of homes are owner-occupied while the percentage of **social and private rented properties available are about average** at 26%, mirroring Three Rivers District as a whole.

4.32. The **majority of workers travel 5-10km to work**, which has a reach to The Warner Bros. Studio, Hemel Hempstead and Watford. Approximately **20% of residents work at least 10km away from home**, London being 30km away. This suggests that Abbots Langley has a large out-of-area, commuting population.

The Church of Ascension (Tin Church) – Grade 2 listed (Photo credit: K Herrington)

5. SPATIAL STRATEGY

Local Factors affecting new development

5.1. Abbots Langley parish has been the recipient of a significant proportion of new housing developments within Three Rivers in recent years. As confirmed by the 2021 Census data, the Parish population has increased by 25% in the last 20 years, a significantly higher increase than in the surrounding areas. The number of dwellings rose from 8,183 homes to 8,855 homes, an increase of 8.2%.

5.2. This growth has created additional pressure on local services, amenities and infrastructure. It has also reduced substantially the remaining available brownfield land suitable for development. As the parish population continues to grow, it will be vital to ensure that the area is able to house its residents in a way that balances the needs of young people, families and the retired and enables access to key services and facilities.

5.3. When considering future development, the public consultation process revealed a strong desire to keep any new development within the settlement boundaries, to protect the Metropolitan Green Belt and green corridors and to prioritise brownfield sites, wherever possible.

5.4. In its most recent consultation (Regulation 18 Part 4) the new Local Plan considered options to deliver approximately 11,466 new homes across the district in the period to 2041.. Further evidence will need to be completed prior to Regulation 19 publication in November 2025. This includes but is not limited to a Green Belt Review, Whole Plan Viability Assessment, Sustainability Appraisal and a Transport Assessment.

5.5. During the last ten years, new housing development along the western boundary of the parish, in the Gade Valley, has significantly increased the traffic movements along the two radial (north/south) routes (A4251, Hempstead Road and Lower Road/Railway Terrace/Station Road) with peak traffic congestion focusing on the M25 Junction 20 roundabout, where local traffic meets the regional traffic movements.

5.6. Also, the other north-south traffic movements between Hemel Hempstead and Watford via Abbots Langley pass along Bedmond Road/Tibbs Hill Road. This corridor is experiencing more traffic congestion during weekday peak traffic periods.

5.7. Local planning policies in the area to date have restricted development where it would generate additional traffic through the five narrow bridges under the West Coast mainline on the western boundary of the parish. To address the capacity restraints of the single lane railway bridges and the three north-south traffic routes across the parish will require significant investment, which private developers will be expected to fund. Such investments may require major housing developments of 2000+ units. This, in turn, would threaten the Green Belt areas within the parish.

5.8. The ALNP does not seek to allocate sites, rather it sets out a series of parameters to support the national and TRDC's proposed growth strategy, through:

- promoting and encouraging sustainable new housing on previously developed (brownfield) sites within the settlement boundaries.

- encouraging small-scale residential developments that are sympathetic to their surroundings.
- ensuring that new developments include a mix of housing to meet the needs of local people, taking into account the current and projected demographic of the parish.
- providing well-designed dwellings that are sympathetic to the character of the settlement.
- ensuring that new development is well-connected to the existing 'movement' network, supporting the Walkable Neighbourhoods concept and provision of public transport and infrastructure to support less-polluting vehicles. The larger settlements in Abbots Langley are well suited to follow these planning principles in developing its local economy. The practical implementation of this concept is explained in more detail in the Abbots Langley Village Centre Masterplan prepared by AECOM (October 2022 - See Appendix H) and in the individual settlement maps showing nearby facilities in the other communities within the parish. (See Chapter 15)
- ensuring that the overall quantum of development does not put an unacceptable strain on infrastructure capacity – while much of the infrastructure planning (e.g. schools, GPs) sits outside the scope of the ALNP, as it is the responsibility of other organisations, the ALNP seeks to ensure that all major development is carefully planned, with community involvement, to ensure that adequate facilities are provided.
- ensuring that new developments will be functioning as they were designed, for many years to come, to be able to benefit both the new and existing communities within the parish.

5.9. Given the major expansion being considered in Watford, Dacorum and St Albans, the Parish Council expects the Local Planning Authorities to measure the expected impacts of these developments on the local health, education facilities and local transport networks and facilities within the Parish.

5.10. Other areas that are supported, but which fall outside the remit of the ANLP include:

- national policies on food production to determine the long-term needs for food security, before removing productive land that could serve local requirements.
- address noise and air pollution from the major movement corridors. Building more houses near motorways without addressing the existing concerns of pollution is not considering the health needs of the expanding population.
- new housing locations should not restrict the future potential for redeveloping movement corridors (motorways and rail routes) say, as automated light rail solutions. These have greater potential to provide practical mass movement services for freight and passengers rather than automated road vehicles.

5.11. The potential impact of development on climate change is an issue that has been at the forefront of the development of the Plan.

Policy AL1: Spatial Strategy: Location and scale of development

POLICY AL1: SPATIAL STRATEGY: LOCATION AND SCALE OF DEVELOPMENT

A. Development proposals within the defined settlement policy boundary (as shown in the most recent development plan) will be supported where they comply with other development plan policies. Development proposals which make use of brownfield sites will be particularly supported.

B. Development proposals outside the defined settlement boundaries will only be supported where it meets the following criteria:

i. it is in accordance with national and Three Rivers Local Plan (or its successor) policies in respect of appropriate uses in the countryside and in accordance with the provisions of the NPPF in relation to development within the green belt and, where identified, grey belt; and

ii. it does not individually or cumulatively result in physical and/or visual coalescence of – and it enhances the separate identities of – the individual communities in the parish, notably Bedmond and Abbots Langley;

iii. it is of a scale and nature appropriate to the character and function of the area; and

iv. it maintains and, where possible, enhances the natural and built function of the area; and

v. where appropriate, it brings redundant or vacant agricultural/farm buildings or historic buildings of heritage value back into viable use consistent with their conservation with an emphasis on reducing car movements and enhancing sustainable modes of transport.

Conformity reference: NP objective: 1; Core Strategy: PSP2, CP1, CP2, CP11; Development Management Policies: DM2; Site Allocations Local Development Document: SA1; NPPF (2024): 7, 8, 29, 61, 73, 77, 82-84, 98, 111, 124-126, 129, 130, 135, 142-160, 187

Purpose

5.12. Policy AL1 seeks to ensure that development within the parish is focussed to be within the defined settlement boundaries. This will help to ensure that new development takes place in the most sustainable locations, near to local services and amenities. It will also protect the valued Green Belt, green space, and green corridors within the parish against loss, avoiding sprawl and coalescence of the individual settlements.

"The Green Belt prevents coalescence between the settlements"

5.13. In the context of the emerging Local Plan, it is considered that the settlement boundaries may evolve when the new Local Plan is adopted. While the current Local Plan remains in place, however, the identification of settlement boundaries in the ALNP will provide certainty to prospective developers, in the absence of an up-to-date Local Plan.

Justification

5.14. The majority of new development in the past within Three Rivers has been focussed on the Key Centres. Abbots Langley, as a key centre, has been the recipient of a significant proportion of this in recent decades. Whilst this has enabled greater numbers of people to move to the area and make a home here, inevitably it has created additional pressure on the local services, amenities and infrastructure. It has reduced substantially the remaining brownfield land that would be suitable for development. Finally, it has put pressure on green space, particularly in light of the fact that much of the parish is within the Green Belt.

5.15. Local engagement has indicated that protecting green space and, in particular, Green Belt is a high priority for residents. The adopted Core Strategy supports this as it seeks to protect Green Belt by focussing development within the existing urban settlements through development of previously developed land and appropriate infilling.

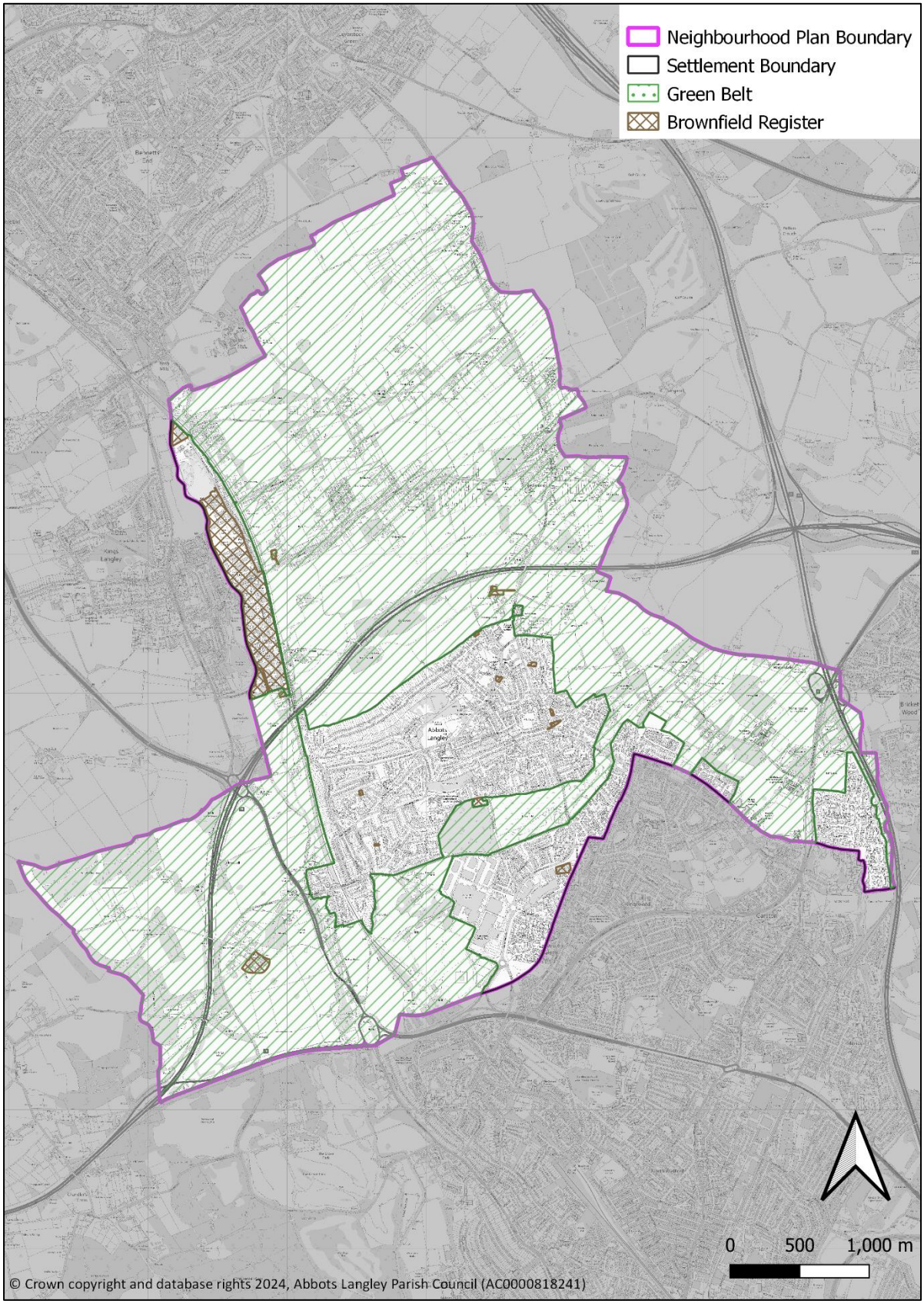
Images show: New housing recently built off Woodside Road - approved on appeal by a Government Planning Inspector despite objections from TRDC, as the site was previously Green Belt land; and latest local shopping centre associated with the new housing development (425 dwellings) in Leavesden (2016)

5.16. The ANLP proposes that priority is given to previously developed sites and in the most sustainable locations, which is within the settlement boundaries, where it can be conveniently located to access local services and facilities. This will also ensure that sprawl is avoided and coalescence between the various settlements. Furthermore, that development is well-designed to reflect the size and character of the settlements in terms of density and form. For greater detail see the 'Design Guidance and Code Abbots Langley Parish' by AECOM (November 2021), Appendix E.

5.17. It is noted that the NPPF has amended policy relating to Green Belt and, notably, the potential to identify areas of Grey Belt. It is anticipated that this will be considered further in the new Local Plan, which commits to a Green Belt Review.

5.18. The adopted settlement boundaries, brownfield sites and green belt are shown in *Figure 9*.

Figure 9: Adopted settlement boundaries within the Parish of Abbots Langley (designations as per adopted Core Strategy 2011-2026)



6. HOUSING

Policy AL2: Housing mix

POLICY AL2: HOUSING MIX

A. Other than in development designed to meet an identified specialist housing need, the mix of housing sizes, types, tenures, and affordability in proposed development should, in so far as is reasonably practicable and subject to viability, assist in meeting needs identified in the most recently available Abbots Langley Local Housing Needs Assessment or Strategic Local Housing Needs Assessment (whichever is more recent). As appropriate to their scale, nature, and location, development proposals for residential use should respond positively to the following principles:

i. the delivery of smaller (1-3 habitable rooms) and medium (5 habitable rooms) dwellings.

ii. the provision of affordable housing which meet with the requirements in the Three Rivers Local Plan. Affordable homes should be tenure-blind and well-integrated with market housing. The tenure of affordable units should meet the specific needs of the parish.

iii. proposals that enable greater affordability uplifts and prioritise local residents when it comes to allocating housing (such as the use of social rent or First Homes).

B. Residential development that is being built to meet the needs of older people (by virtue of its size and location) should demonstrate how it is reflecting the Housing our Ageing Population Panel for Innovation (HAPPI) principles, and the guidance contained in the RTPI's "Dementia and town planning: Creating better environments for people living with dementia".

C. Development proposals for self- and custom build housing will be supported where they otherwise comply with development plan policies. Medium (5 habitable rooms) dwellings will be particularly supported.

Conformity reference: NP objective: 1; Core Strategy: CP1, CP3, CP4; NPPF (2024): 61-68, 71, 82-84,156, 157

Purpose

6.1. It is important that any new residential development within the Neighbourhood Plan area addresses local housing need. Policy CP3 of the adopted Core Strategy (2011) states that *'The Council will* require *housing proposals to take into account the range of housing needs, in terms of size and type of dwellings as identified by the Strategic Housing Market Assessment and subsequent updates. New development will also provide a range of house types and sizes to reflect the existing and future needs of the Three Rivers population and the characteristics of housing in the area'.*

6.2. Policy AL2 seeks to ensure that new housing units provided within the parish primarily meet the needs of the local population and that a balanced mix of housing is achieved.

"A mix of housing sizes is needed, to cater for first-time buyers, growing families and downsizers"

Justification

6.3. At a District level, the South West Hertfordshire Local Housing Needs Assessment was published in March 2024, on behalf of Dacorum, Hertsmere, St. Albans, Three Rivers and Watford Councils.

6.4. It recommends a mix as shown in *Table 2* across the broad authority areas.

Table 2: Recommended housing mix for the Housing Market Area (source: South West Herts Local Housing Needs Assessment Update, 2024)

	Market	Affordable home ownership	Affordable housing (rented)	
			General needs	Older persons
1-bedroom	5%	20%	20%	50%
2-bedrooms	20%	40%	30%	50%
3-bedrooms	45%	30%	35%	
4+-bedrooms	30%	10%	15%	

6.5. For affordable housing, the report suggests a greater proportional need for one- and two-bedroom properties. However, there remains a need for a balanced mix of dwellings of different sizes to come forward; with delivery of larger properties being important in meeting the needs of households with an acute housing need and releasing existing properties for other households.

6.6. For the parish itself, the Abbots Langley Housing Needs Assessment (2017) (Appendix D), whilst some years old, identified needs largely in line with the broader area:

- smaller homes (1-3 habitable rooms) suited to both first-time buyers as well as those seeking to downsize and
- dwellings suited to older groups within the community, which is a growing demographic; and
- dwellings suited to the needs of younger families (5 habitable rooms).

6.7. Policy AL2 sets the expected housing mix for the parish, based on this premise of securing a greater number of low to median cost homes. The Abbots Langley HNA should be reviewed on semi-regular basis.

7. LOCAL CHARACTER, HERITAGE AND DESIGN

Policy AL3: Character of development

POLICY AL3: CHARACTER OF DEVELOPMENT

A. Development proposals should conserve and, where practicable, enhance the character of the Conservation Area and/or Character Area in which they are located (as shown on Figures 11 and 12, the Policies Map and as described in the Abbots Langley Design Guidance and Code, Appendix E.) Developments should reflect the architectural variety found locally and use materials that are in keeping with those found in existing buildings in the immediate locality. This will help to avoid building design that is inappropriate to the Plan area. Innovation in design will be supported, where this demonstrably enhances the quality of the built form.

B. As appropriate to their scale, nature, and location development proposals should strive to:

- **i. make a positive contribution to the visual impact of the main highway approaches into the settlements, as shown on *Figure 12*. Improvements and enhancements should include, where appropriate, additional tree planting, the enhancement of roadside green spaces (for instance through planting and street trees), the reduction/consolidation of road signs and other street furniture and wider green infrastructure improvements that are identified as being necessary;**
- **ii. follow the design principles included in the Conservation Area guidance where applicable, and the Abbots Langley Design Guidance and Code, Appendix E; and**
- **iii. protect views and vistas along the Grand Union Canal and River Gade; and**
- **iv. incorporate soft landscaping, including large canopy trees with sufficient root protection areas to ensure growth to maturity, and other boundary treatments to provide active frontages; and**
- **v. promote the use of sustainable transport and active travel through adopting a Healthy Streets Approach to street design; and**
- **vi. be in accordance with the Three Rivers District Council parking policy; and**
- **vii. ensure traffic generation and parking does not adversely affect vehicular and pedestrian safety.**

C. Where development sites abut open countryside, development on the rural boundary edge should mitigate any detrimental visual impacts on the countryside. This should be achieved through:

- **i. the siting of lower density development at the rural boundary of the site in order to provide a gradual transition from the built form to open countryside;**
- **ii. the inclusion of meaningful and characteristic landscape buffers to help ensure an appropriate transition from built development to open countryside; and**
- **iii. a layout that clearly minimises the visual impact of any larger buildings on both the open countryside and existing villagescape.**

Conformity reference: NP objective: 2; Core Strategy: PSP2, CP1, CP12; NPPF (2024): 73, 77, 84, 96, 109, 129, 130, 131-140, 187, 203

Purpose

7.1. This policy seeks to conserve and enhance the distinctive character and heritage of Abbots Langley so that its significance may be better understood, appreciated and reflected in new development. It is what makes the area distinctive and special. Given the existence of at least fourteen distinct communities/settlements across the parish, as shown in *Figure 10*, the application of this policy must be applied to the local character and heritage of each individual settlement.

"The neighbourhood plan should recognise the local significance of things. Too often, planning decisions are taken in the light of a national standard measure, which taken out of the national context, can lead to insensitive and inappropriate decision-making. e.g., the locally significant BRE houses in Trowley Rise. They may not register highly in the national consciousness or have superiority over the nation's high-profile historic buildings, but they can rate very highly and compare very favourably in the minds of local people. Local significance should be given consideration: what it means to the community and what it means in the context of the neighbourhood"

Justification

7.2. Both the underlying geology and landscape, coupled with the activities of past generations of people and development, have created the features that give the parish its distinctive identity today.

7.3. From a landscape perspective, Abbots Langley Parish contains four different landscape character areas: Area 7: Sarratt Plateau; Area 8: Upper Gade Valley; Area 9: Bedmond Plateau; and Area 11: Lower Gade Valley. These have, over the centuries, supported an agricultural landscape, dotted with villages and woodland, including ancient woodland.

7.4. There is evidence of settlements in the parish dating back over 8,000 years. This has left a legacy of built heritage assets of all kinds and of national and local importance, including Grade I and II Listed Buildings and Archaeological Notification areas. There are two Conservation Areas: Abbots Langley, and Hunton Bridge, each with their own Conservation Area Appraisals. The heritage assets and designations are shown in *Figure 11.*

Figure 10: Location of the fourteen main settlement areas in the Parish of Abbots Langley

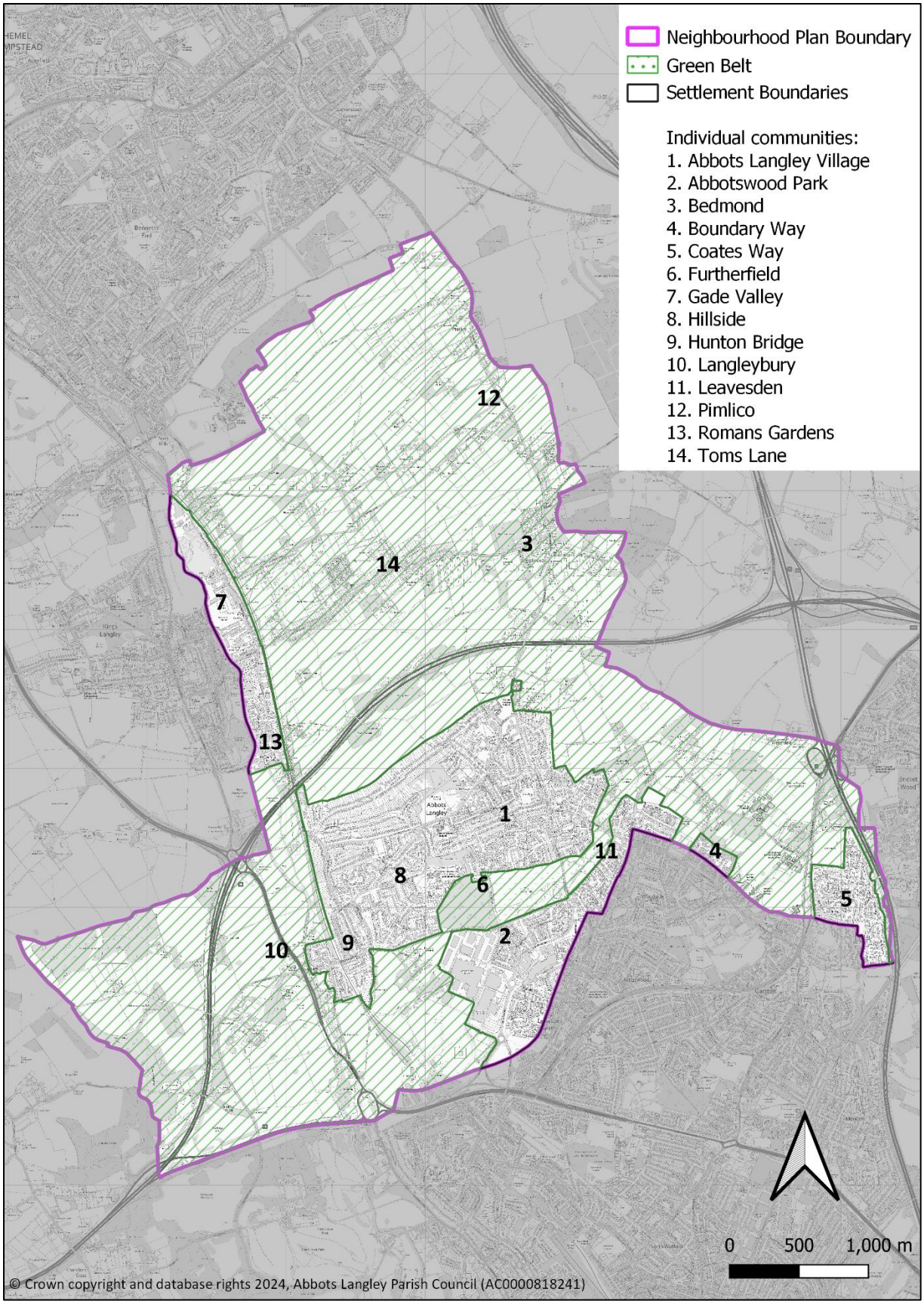
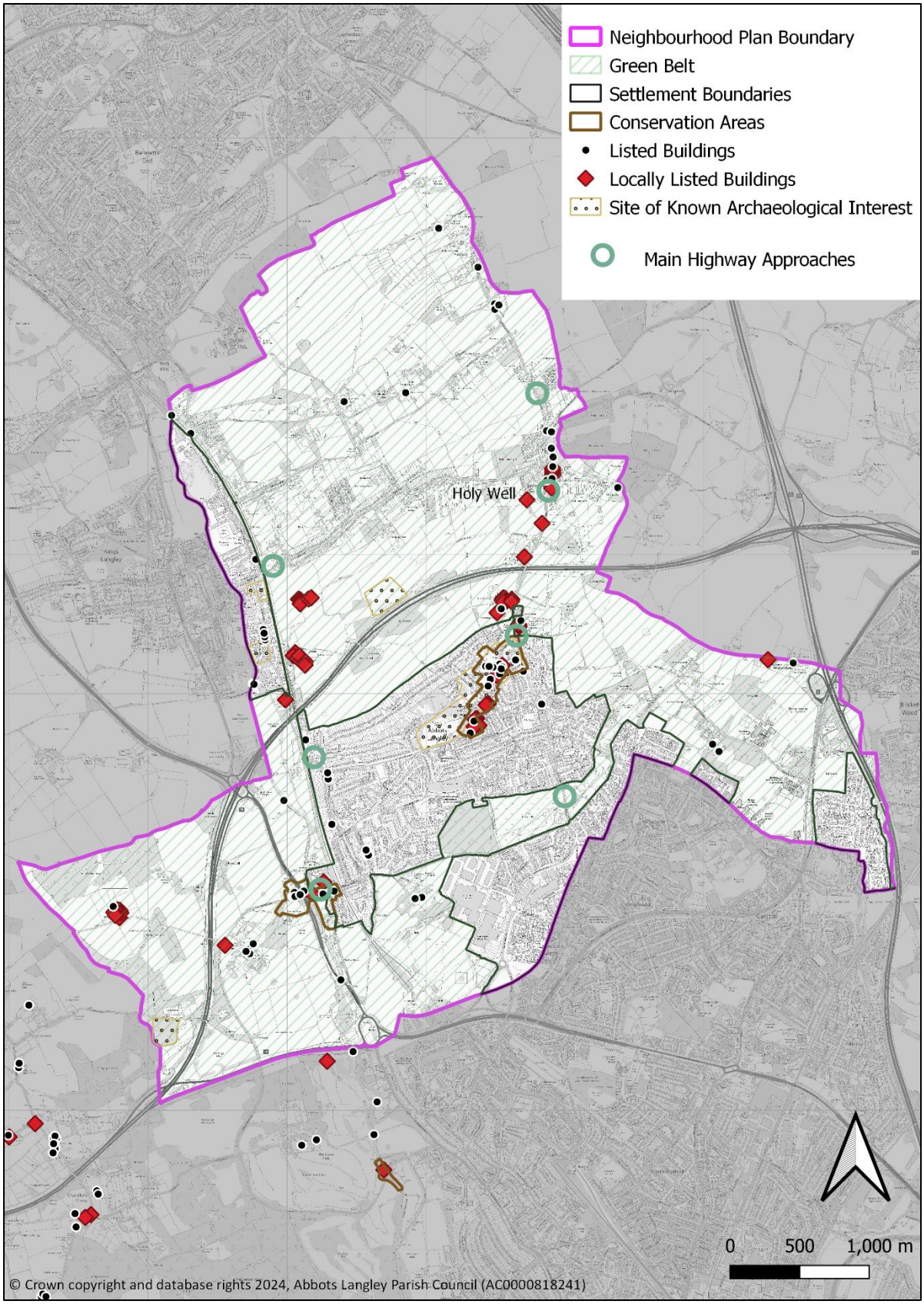


Figure 11: Heritage assets and designations in the neighbourhood area



7.5. To provide additional detail on local character, AECOM was commissioned to prepare, in consultation with the local community, a 'Design Guidance and Code' for Abbots Langley Parish. The document, published in November 2021, forms an integral part of the ALNP and can be found in Appendix E. The work identifies five Character Areas, which are considered to display characteristics unique to their boundaries. A summary of each is provided in *Table 3* and fuller descriptions are provided in the Abbots Langley Design Guidance and Code itself. The Guidance sets out detailed design considerations for each of the Character Areas, that should be taken into account within any development proposals. The Character Areas are shown in *Figure 12*.

Table 3: Summary of the Character Areas of Abbots Langley Parish

Character Area	Photograph
Pimlico and Bedmond: This area is focussed on Bedmond, Pimlico, and the eastern part of Toms Lane. A linear development runs along the three key roads of Bell Lane, Toms Lane and the High Street. The village itself is residential with a main General Store/Post Office and other local facilities, including a Village Hall, Sports Club and Primary School. Buildings tend to be detached or semi-detached, often set back from the road, offering space for off-street parking. Building heights rarely exceed 2-storeys, with hipped and pitched roofs. Materials include red bricks and clay tiles.	
Gade Valley: This area is focussed on the western part of Toms Lane, Roman Gardens, and Primrose Hill. The area is largely residential comprising detached and semi-detached homes. High hedges and low walls between properties are a common feature. While most older dwellings tend to be no more than 2-storeys in height, newer apartments are 3 to 4 floors.	

Abbots Langley Village: This area is focussed on Abbots Langley Village, and Hillside. The village is largely residential but is home to a large local centre with retail and other services. The layout of the roads comprises largely cul-de-sacs. Most of the dwellings date to the 1950s, which tend to be semi-detached. There are also plenty of detached and terraced homes. The majority of homes are 2-storey, but there are also bungalows and higher apartments (to 4 floors).	
Leavesden: This area is focussed on Leavesden, Abbotswood Park. Furtherfield, and Coates Way. The area is mostly residential estates, with educational facilities and shops. Warner Bros is located to the west, and Leavesden Country Park provides a much-valued open space and green corridor. Homes tend to be detached and semi-detached, with garden space at the front and back.	
Langleybury and Hunton Bridge: Langleybury is a very green part of the Parish adjacent to the small village of Hunton Bridge. There is a Conservation Area here. There is a good mix of detached, semi-detached and terraced homes, which tend to be no more than 2-storeys in height. Many are not too set back from the road. The cricket ground is a notable feature, as is the green walk/cycle way along the Grand Union Canal.	

7.6. The character across each of the five Character Areas ranges in style, age, size, and housing densities. For each area to maintain its character, a balance needs to be struck between the scale, bulk, density, and height of the built form and that of open green spaces and, where relevant, the countryside.

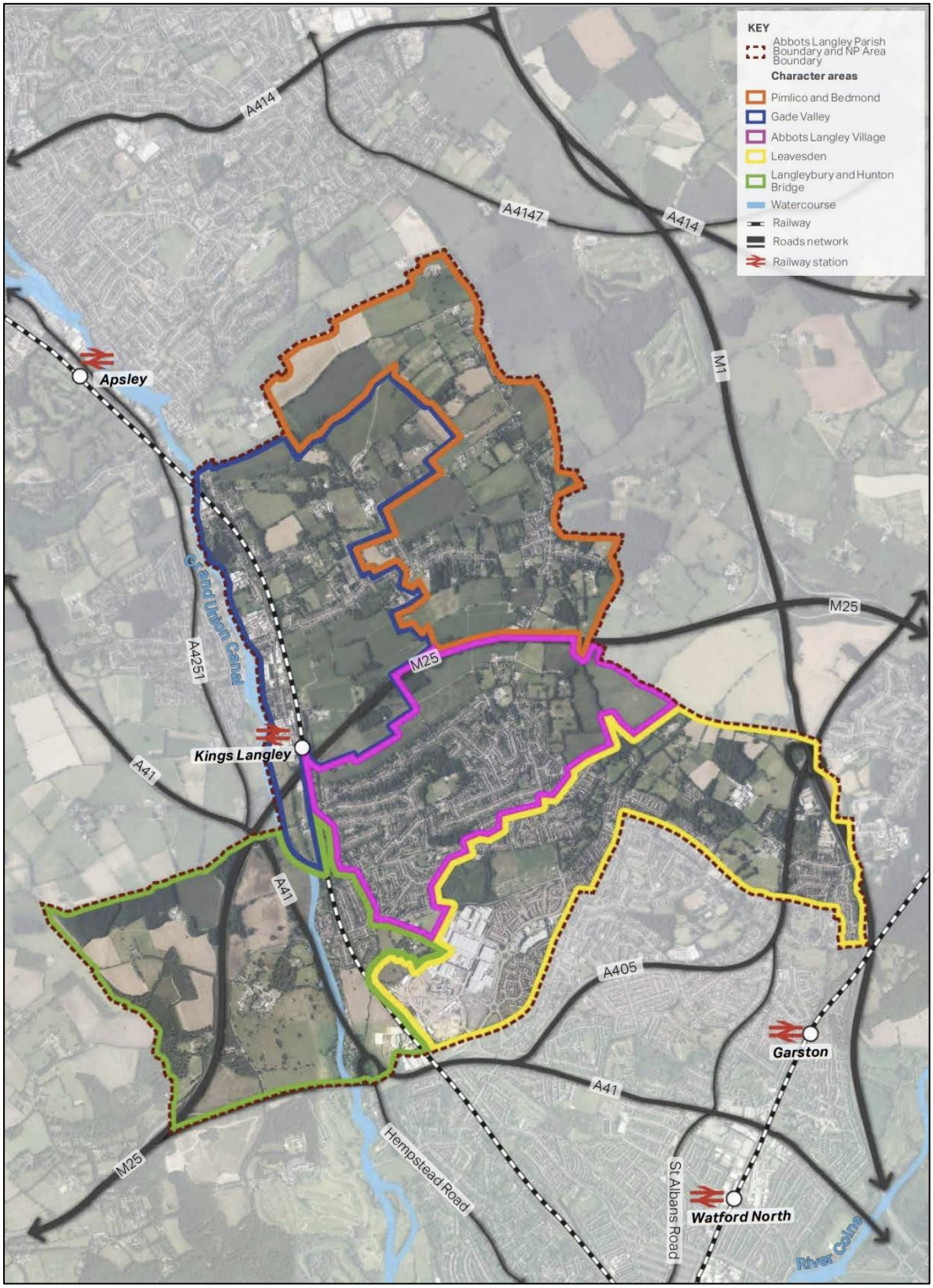
7.7. The Grand Union Canal contributes significantly to the character of the parish. Views and the vista along the Grand Union Canal and River Gade should be protected. Guidance for developments relating to the canal should be read in conjunction with Policy AL4 (Character of Development).

7.8. All development should be designed to a high quality and reinforce and enhance local character, heritage assets and the rural setting of the area. The density of development

should create a character that is appropriate to the site's context, including the landscape in which it is set, whilst making best use of the land available. Lower density housing should be located towards the outer edges of the settlement where it abuts open countryside, to maintain views from and into the individual settlements.

7.9. Development should have regard to both the character of the area in which it is set and to the character of the area overall.

Figure 12: Character Areas in Abbots Langley Parish (Source: Design Guidance and Code for Abbots Langley, AECOM)



Policy AL4: Design of development

POLICY AL4: DESIGN OF DEVELOPMENT

Development proposals should demonstrate a high quality of design, which responds and integrates well with its surroundings, and meets the changing needs of the population of the neighbourhood area. In addition, they should minimise their impacts on the natural and historic environment. Development proposals will be expected to demonstrate how they have sought to address the following matters:

i. **the guidance contained within the Abbots Langley Neighbourhood Plan Design Guidance and Code (see Appendix E);**
ii. **being guided by the principles of 'Building for a Healthy Life' unless alternative principles would otherwise result in a higher quality of design. Development proposals are encouraged to achieve the commendation;**
iii. **building height should be considered in terms of how it relates to the surrounding context of the character area within which it is located. Development of three-storeys and above on or adjoining the boundary of sites adjacent to the settlement boundary abutting open countryside should not be supported;**
iv. **the creation of variety through the use of a range of housing designs, provided that the predominant type of design reflects the character of the area;**
v. **dwellings designed to be suitable for older residents (aged 60 and over) are encouraged to reflect the Housing our Ageing Population Panel for Innovation (HAPPI) principles. Bungalows are supported where these would complement the established street scene;**
vi. **to design layouts of safe and secure dwellings that meet the requirements of 'Secured by Design' and minimise the likelihood and fear of crime;**
vii. **provide adequate cycle storage and off-road parking for residents, visitors and service vehicles in accordance with the Three Rivers District Council Parking Standards;**
viii. **when assessing new residential development against Local Plan parking standards, garages should not be considered as a parking space;**
ix. **development should provide Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) on site. Such development is encouraged to demonstrate the use of a wide range of creative SuDS solutions, for example through the provision of SuDS as part of green spaces, green roofs, permeable surfaces and rain gardens. SuDS provision must demonstrate how its design will enhance wildlife and biodiversity, as well as minimise the impacts of flooding. Development on brownfield sites must restrict their runoff to greenfield rates.**

Conformity reference: NP objective: 2; Core Strategy: CP1, CL2, CP12; Development Management Policies: DM1, DM8, DM9, DM10, DM13; NPPF (Dec 2024): 73, 77, 84, 96, 109, 129, 130, 131-140, 182, 187,203

Purpose

7.10. The purpose of this policy is to add a local dimension to strategic policy when it comes to the design of development, to ensure that it is in-keeping with the local context, adheres to quality and lifetime standards and considers specific issues raised as important by residents.

> "Abbots Langley suffers from surface water flooding. Solutions might include resisting the loss of front gardens to car parking, supporting the provision of permeable car parking areas, introduction of additional green verges where there is room/ on newly built roads"

Justification

7.11. Good quality housing design can improve social wellbeing and the quality of life by improving the built environment, reducing crime, improving public health, easing transport problems and providing supportive neighbourhoods. Housing standards should ensure high quality, sustainable housing that enables people to engage in healthy behaviours such as cooking meals, exercising and social interaction. An example of principles for healthy holes can be found in the Town and Country Planning Association's Healthy Homes Principles.

7.12. In October 2019, the National Design Guide was launched, forming part of the Government's collection of Planning Practice Guidance. It forms a material consideration in the decision-making process, particularly in the absence of local design guidance. The document sets out the ten characteristics necessary for creating a well-designed place, contributing to its physical character, sense of community and addressing environmental issues affecting climate. The National Design Code, published in July 2021, gives more detail.

7.13. The guide 'Building for a Healthy Life' (June 2020) is the Government-endorsed industry standard for the design of new housing developments. It can be used to assess the design quality of homes and neighbourhoods. The latest edition was written in partnership with Homes England, NHS England and NHS Improvement. Its criteria also link to other standards for housing design including the Housing Quality Indicators (HQI) Standards and Secured by Design. It provides a framework that stakeholders should use for development along with other policies contained within this plan for the Parish to achieve the industry standard's commendation. When building standards and guides are updated, this Neighbourhood Plan should use the updated standards for good quality, well-designed homes and areas.

7.14. In terms of designing out crime, proposals should seek to design schemes to remove the opportunity for crime to take place through the built environment. The following should be considered for new developments to build out crime: providing spaces that connect with residents, which promote a sense of ownership; and maintaining places to a high quality, multifunctional to attract multiple users and feel welcoming.

7.15. There have been instances of flooding events, notably surface water flooding. Fundamentally these are issues for the Environment Agency and the Local Lead Flood Authority to address. However, new development should be designed to ensure that surface water drainage does not add to the existing site run-off or cause any adverse impact to neighbouring properties or the surrounding environment/wildlife habitat.

7.16. The Abbots Langley Design Guidance and Code (Appendix E), produced by AECOM, includes locally tailored design guidelines for the Parish – some of which are relevant to the individual Character Areas, others which have a broader application. Applicants should work closely with those affected by their proposals to evolve designs that take account of the views of the community. When these building standards and guides are updated or superseded, applicants should use the updated standards for good quality, well-designed homes and neighbourhoods.

7.17. With an ageing population projected, it will be important to ensure that homes meet the needs of older people. Specialist housing for older people (including care and residential homes) is being considered at the strategic level. At the local level, improved accessibility and adaptability standards should be a key consideration for new homes (both market and affordable). The "Housing our Ageing Population Panel for Innovation (HAPPI)" has developed a series of principles for good design of housing covering light, ventilation, room to move around and good storage. They have particular relevance to older persons' housing. The ten principles are:

- Space and flexibility
- Daylight in the home and in shared spaces
- Balconies and outdoor space
- Adaptability and 'care ready' design
- Positive use of circulation space
- Shared facilities and 'hubs'
- Plants, trees, and the natural environment
- Energy efficiency and sustainable design
- Storage for belongings and bicycles
- External shared surfaces and 'home zones'

7.18. Such dwellings may also be suitable for younger residents and are not intended to be restricted in use.

7.19. Housing should also be designed to support the needs of those living with disabilities. The Royal Town Planning Institute's guidance "Dementia and town planning: Creating better environments for people living with dementia" should inform planning applications.

Policy AL5: Environmentally sustainable design

POLICY AL5: ENVIRONMENTALLY SUSTAINABLE DESIGN

A. Development proposals should incorporate design and environmental performance measures and standards to reduce energy consumption and mitigate climate change and prevent overheating homes in summer. They should have regard to climate change mitigation at all stages of the construction process. As appropriate to their scale, nature and location, proposals should demonstrate how they have responded positively to the following matters:

- **i. non-residential developments should aim to meet the Buildings Research Establishments BREEAM building standard 'excellent', and residential dwellings should aim for an EPC rating of B or above;**
- **ii. siting, orientation and design of buildings to optimise passive solar gain and avoid over-heating**
- **iii. the use of low carbon sustainable design to prevent or mitigate all regulated emissions using a combination of on-site efficiency measures such as:**
  - **a. a "Fabric First" approach to building design, which involves maximising the performance of the components and materials that make up the building fabric itself, before considering the use of mechanical or electrical building services systems.**
  - **b. energy efficiency measures such as loft insulation and double glazing.**
  - **c. low energy heating and lighting systems.**
  - **d. on-site energy generation and storage.**
- **iv. Fit water efficiency measures in all new dwellings to enable occupiers to achieve usage of no more than 110 litres per person per day, as required for water-stressed areas.**

B. Alterations to existing buildings, including the sensitive retrofitting of historic buildings and heritage assets, should be designed with energy reduction in mind and comply with current sustainable design and construction standards including Historic England's Advice Note 18: Adapting Historic Buildings for Energy and Carbon Efficiency.

C. Proposals for individual and community scale energy, for instance from wind, hydroelectricity, solar photovoltaic panels, and anaerobic digestions will be supported subject to the following criteria:

- **i. the siting and scale of the proposed development is appropriate to its setting and position in the wider landscape; and**
- **ii. the proposed development does not create an unacceptable impact on the amenities of local residents; and**
- **iii. the proposed development does not have an unacceptable impact on a feature of natural or biodiversity importance.**

Conformity reference: NP objective: 2, 7; Core Strategy: CP1, CP12; Development Management Policies: DM4, DM5; NPPF (2024): 136, 161-167

Purpose

7.21. Changes to the environment are already having a tangible effect as global mean temperatures rise. The design of development has a major role to play in reducing these impacts from adverse to neutral, and then moving towards the government objective of net environmental gain. Every development should therefore strive to become self-sufficient in energy input and waste output. That may mean being prepared to go beyond the current regulatory minimum in applying best standards and practice.

7.22. This policy seeks to promote development that has been designed to anticipate and respond to the effects of environmental change (especially climate change, preservation of biodiversity and water management) on local quality of life.

> "…green roofs, use of recycled or environmentally-friendly materials in building, water conservation and recycling, require the planting of native plant species, better landscaping to maximise biodiversity"

Justification

7.23. On 12 June 2019 the Government voted to amend the Climate Change Act 2008 by introducing a new target for at least a 100% reduction of greenhouse gas emissions (compared to 1990 levels) in the UK by 2050. This is otherwise known as a net zero target. This is a demanding target, which will require everyone to be engaged, from households and communities to businesses and local and national government. As part of this, the government has set an interim target to cut the country's greenhouse gas emissions 78% by 2035 compared to 1990 levels.

7.24. Being '2050 ready' means that new development will be required to have minimal energy use and net carbon emissions. Unlike Local Plans, Neighbourhood Plans are more limited in what they can dictate in terms of environmental standards, as they must confirm to the minimum requirements as set out by national policy and building regulations. The ALNP can, however, strongly encourage the design and layout of new development to maximise its potential to be as energy efficient as possible and to encourage the use of renewable energy.

7.25. The Future Homes Standard anticipated to be introduced from 2025 will require CO_2 emissions produced by new homes to be 75-80% lower than those built to current standards. Homes will need to be 'zero carbon ready'. Fossil fuel heating (such as gas boilers) will be banned in new homes, with an expected shift to reliance on heat pumps and heat networks.

7.26. Hertfordshire County Council declared a climate emergency in 2019, as a response to the need to act locally and in the context of climate change impacts being observed at the local level: dry riverbeds, reduced water supply, intense weather events, localised flooding and loss of habitats and species. The Sustainable Hertfordshire Strategy describes nine ambitions for the county council in enabling and inspiring a sustainable county and these have informed the ALNP.

7.27. The Code for Sustainable Homes was withdrawn by the Government in 2015. This has been replaced by new national technical standards which include new additional optional Building Regulations regarding water and access as well as a new national space standard (this is in

addition to the existing mandatory Building Regulations). In addition, the BREEAM is a widely recognised, accredited, independent method for assessing environmental performance of non-residential buildings. Until superseded by nationally prescribed standards, the BREEAM standards for non-residential and multi-residential buildings by nationally recognised certification bodies may also be accepted. For domestic dwellings, and on the advice of Hertfordshire County Council, it is considered that new home developments should aim for an EPC rating of B or above, as currently no standard is set.

7.28. There is an opportunity to improve and promote sustainability in the Parish by:

- following basic passive environmental design in a fabric first approach (maximising the performance of the components and materials that make up the building fabric itself, before using mechanical or electrical building services systems).
- integrating renewable energy systems into new development, including existing and new public buildings.
- reducing water consumption through grey water systems; and
- community energy schemes.

7.29. Policy AL5 seeks to encourage the most energy efficient development possible. Even small improvements on small developments become cumulative.

7.30. It should be noted that TRDC have been exploring options through Local Plan policy to go above and beyond building regulations requirements. Should this take place, these higher requirements should be enforced.

Policy AL6: Heritage assets

POLICY AL6: HERITAGE ASSETS

Designated heritage assets:

A. Development proposals affecting designated heritage assets, either directly or indirectly, should conserve or enhance the significance of the asset and those elements of the setting that contribute to the significance. This could include, where appropriate, the delivery of development that will make a positive contribution to, or better reveal the significance of, the heritage asset, or reflect and enhance local character and distinctiveness with specific focus on the prevailing styles of design and use of materials in a local area. These details should be explained in a Heritage Statement.

B. In addition, development proposals should demonstrate that they have considered the potential impact on above and below ground archaeological deposits. Where a scheme has a potential impact on archaeological remains (below or above the ground) a Heritage Statement or similar should be prepared to address how archaeological deposits will be safeguarded.

Non-designated heritage assets:

C. The Holy Well in Bedmond is identified as a non-designated heritage asset. Proposals affecting the non-designated heritage assets, including those on the Abbots Langley Local List, will be determined based on national planning policy.

Conservation Areas:

D. Development proposals in the Abbots Langley Conservation Area and Hunton Bridge Conservation Area should ensure that alterations and new developments contribute to the preservation or enhancement of the historic environment. Development within these areas and their settings should:

- **i. be guided by the relevant Conservation Area Appraisal; and**
- **ii. be designed to a high quality and preserve or enhance the character of the Conservation Areas and their settings; and**
- **iii. retain those buildings and other features, including trees and hedges, which make a significant contribution to the character of the Conservation Areas; and**
- **iv. protect open spaces and vistas important to the character and setting of the Conservation Areas; and**
- **v. where appropriate, make provision for the enhancement measures.**

E. A proactive stance will be taken to any heritage assets that may be at risk. This will include working with property owners to find a use that will enable them to be put back into optimum viable use.

Conformity reference: NP objective: 2; Core Strategy: CP1, CP12; Development Management Policies: DM3; NPPF (2024): 135, 202, 203, 206, 207-217, 219

Purpose

7.31. This policy recognises the important contribution that heritage assets – designated and non-designated – make to the local character and distinctiveness of Abbots Langley, both individually

and collectively. The policy identifies non-designated heritage assets; those which are not currently listed (either nationally or locally), so that the impact on them and their setting is considered as part of any relevant development proposals (see Appendix F).

"those with spiritual, historic and cultural significance in Abbots Langley, for instance St Lawrence Church, parade of shops between Henderson Hall and the Abbots House, buildings opposite St Lawrence churchyard"

"historic buildings are an important part of the historical and cultural fabric of the (Abbots Langley) village centre and should be given significance and protection in the Neighbourhood Plan. These buildings are part of our local identity, history and culture, and should be recognised as such"

Justification

7.32. The Neighbourhood Plan area has 74 listed buildings and scheduled monuments of which one is Grade I listed: the Church of St Lawrence the Martyr, dedicated in 1154. This Norman structure replaced an earlier Saxon Church on this site.

7.33. There are also two Conservation Areas : Abbots Langley Conservation Area and Hunton Bridge Conservation Area. The Conservation Area appraisals for these areas are now over 10 years old, with Hunton Bridge's dating from 2008. The 1990 Act requires local authorities to review their areas and publish proposals for their conservation and enhancement "from time to time". This is generally considered to be every 5 years, and an action will be to update the appraisals to ensure they provide a robust evidence base for the policies and proposals in this neighbourhood plan, as well as forthcoming local plan development. In the meantime, the Abbots Langley Design Guidance and Code provides information about these areas in relation to design and management.

7.34. In addition to these nationally recognised heritage assets, there are other non-listed buildings which are of local historical importance and contribute greatly to the history and character of the parish. Some of these are included in the Local List maintained by Three Rivers District Council, but not all, and the Neighbourhood Plan engagement process revealed that local people were keen to acknowledge those local buildings and other heritage assets considered to be important to the local community because of historical significance. The National Planning Practice Guidance supports the identification of such non-designated heritage assets through the neighbourhood planning process (Paragraph 018-039).

7.35. The Heritage Gateway provides a list of assets in the Parish that have been identified and collated by Historic England based on county-wide historic environment records. The record should be consulted by prospective developers.

7.36. One further asset, the Holy Well in Bedmond, is considered to be significant from a local heritage perspective and should be a non-designated heritage asset. Further detail about the asset and why it is considered to be significant from a heritage angle is shown in Appendix F.

7.37. In parallel with this policy, an associated action will be for the community to consider any additional assets that should be identified as non-designated heritage asset. It is proposed that these assets are considered by TRDC for inclusion on of the Abbots Langley Local List. However, the inclusion of any building or structure on such a register is not necessary for the application of this policy.

Images show: Church of St Lawrence the Martyr - Grade 1 Listed; and a commemorating stone of the birthplace of Pope Adrian IV in Bedmond, the only Pope born in England (Photo credit: G Ball)

Local Heritage at Risk

7.38. Historic England produces an annual Register of Heritage at Risk. Outside of London it does not include Grade II listings, apart from churches. On the Langleybury Estate, now part of the nearby Grove Hotel grounds, are proposals to restore fully the Grade Two listed building, Langleybury House, built in 1720. This is on the English Heritage Buildings at Risk Register. There are proposals also to replace the derelict Langleybury Secondary School that closed in 1996.

Langleybury House, Langleybury, Abbots Langley

8. LOCAL ECONOMY

Policy AL7: Abbots Langley village centre and other local centres

POLICY AL7: RETAINING AND ENHANCING THE VITALITY AND VIABILITY OF LOCAL CENTRES

Abbots Langley Village Centre

A. Recognising there is a need to maintain the economic health, vitality and viability of the Village Centre, as defined on the Policies Maps, in balance with residential development and infrastructure, development proposals that provide a balance of uses such as retail, leisure and community, commercial and residential - will be supported in principle. Proposals that add to or sustain the distribution of local neighbourhood convenience shops, located so that they are accessible on foot or by bicycle, will be supported.

B. Development proposals to enhance Abbots Langley Village Centre, as set out in the concept Village Centre Masterplan, will be supported where this will not have a detrimental impact on local heritage assets.

C. Development proposals within the following four areas will be assessed having regard to how the proposed design and layout has been influenced by the Abbots Langley Design Guidance and Code and the framework proposals set out in Chapter 5 of the concept Abbots Langley Village Centre Masterplan (locations mapped in the Masterplan):

i. Around the Library and St Saviour's Church

ii. In front of St Lawrence Church

iii. Main Shopping Parade

iv. Breakspeare Special School site

D. Positive consideration will be given to development proposals that improve the quality of shop fronts and signage in accordance with the advice contained in the Abbots Langley Parish Design Guidance and Code and the Conservation Area Appraisal.

Upper floor residential

E. Proposals that offer opportunities for housing on otherwise underused upper floors will be supported, both where separate access can be achieved and where these are shown to be no longer suitable for commercial use.

Temporary uses

F. The use of E, F1 and F2 premises for temporary uses will be supported in principle. Such uses include 'pop up' shops and cultural, creative and leisure uses introduced on a temporary basis or for specific events. Proposals must demonstrate that they will not have a detrimental impact on the amenity of neighbouring uses, particularly residential, through noise and pollution. Such uses will generally not be considered appropriate if the operation of the business requires a large number of vehicle parking spaces in order to function.

Re-use of heritage assets

G. The reuse of heritage assets within Abbots Langley Village Centre for activities that will enhance the vitality and viability of the Village Centre is strongly encouraged. Any alterations to non-listed historic buildings will need to be sympathetic to their historic and architectural character.

Eating and drinking establishments

H. The placing of tables and chairs outside eating and drinking establishments (Use Classes E, F1 and F2, including where consumption of food and drink is an ancillary activity) is supported in principle, subject to them not impeding pedestrian movement and subject to any necessary street café licence being obtained from the County Council.

Local and neighbourhood centres

I. Proposals which result in the loss of existing local neighbourhood convenience shops (Use Class F2) will not be supported unless it can be demonstrated that it is:

- **i not viable, or unlikely to become commercially viable, to operate the number of existing services/facilities within the locality; and**
- **ii it has been the subject of appropriate marketing for a period of at least 18 months.**

Bedmond Village Centre

J. To secure the ongoing vitality of Bedmond village centre, proposals which protect, enhance and promote a diverse range of village centre uses - including retail, leisure, cultural and community - will be supported in principle.

Conformity reference: NP objective: 3, 5; Sore Strategy: CP6, CP7; NPPF (2024): 85, 88, 89, 90, 96, 98, 101, 111a, 125

Purpose

8.1. The policies in this section seek to reinforce the role of Abbots Langley village centre, and the smaller local centres, to encourage the broadening of uses within them and maintaining them as places for community interaction and self-sufficiency for basic services.

"discourage change of use, promote the independent shops"
"tackle the empty shops"
"more pop-up activity and events"

Justification

8.2. Policy CP7 of the adopted TRDC Core Strategy classifies Abbots Langley as a 'District Centre', along with other places in the district such as South Oxhey and Chorleywood. Policy CP7 of the Core Strategy (2011) seeks to promote and encourage activities in these centres so they continue to be the prime focus for community life. This applies not only to Abbots Langley village, but to the rural areas and settlements it serves. Some of the rural settlements, such as Bedmond, also have small centres, which serve a predominantly local need.

Abbots Langley Village Centre

8.3. Abbots Langley village centre represents a focal point for the local communities in the parish, providing not only retail opportunities, but also a valuable social, healthcare, leisure and recreational components. It is home to the Henderson Hub, St Lawrence Church, St Saviours Catholic Church and the Methodist Church, all of which provide important meeting spaces. The self-sufficiency provided by such a vibrant village centre is highly valued among the local community. As spending habits evolve and competition from the internet and nearby centres intensifies, it will become increasingly important to make sure that the levers are in place to sustain these areas as vibrant and viable spaces that meet the needs of the resident population, surrounding communities and visitors to the area. The main concerns raised by the community are:

- **Protecting and enhancing the retail and services offer** - The loss of shops and services is seen by residents as a threat to the village centre. The recent loss of two local banks a travel agency, a dry-cleaning shop and butcher's shop has had a marked impact locally. Whilst the forthcoming changes to permitted development rights will make it easier for properties to effect a change of use to residential, it is felt that a more flexible approach to encourage the reuse of vacant shop units for continued retail, commercial or community use would be of benefit.

- **Expanding the village centre 'offer'** - An opportunity was seen in providing for more food and beverage establishments to make Abbots Langley village centre a more attractive place for tourists to visit, with an emphasis on 'longer stay' and the 'evening economy' as opposed to simply day visitors and shoppers. There are public spaces in the centre of the village that could be suitable for housing temporary events and markets. Finally, there is scope, as opportunities arise, to re-use both vacant buildings and buildings with historic value for community, cultural or village centre activities (as demonstrated with the Henderson Hub initiative by the community).

- **Public realm improvements** - Many people suggested that the village centre could be made more attractive, particularly as more tourists are visiting the area. Planters and trees could be added and there is scope to consider whether the pavements are wide enough in parts to enable shops and cafes to display/seat outside and enable on-street activities to encourage footfall. The 20mph zone in the village inner area was introduced in 2020 to increase pedestrian safety.

- **Signage** - Feedback has suggested that shop signage could be improved and made more 'uniform'. Signage of the key facilities and walking routes could also be improved.

- **Car parking** - There are over 120 free, off-street public parking places serving the village centre in addition to some designated free on-street parking. Electric vehicle charging points could be made available in the car parks to encourage more sustainable vehicle types.

8.4. To inform the future planning and land-use of Abbots Langley Village Centre, AECOM were commissioned to prepare a Masterplan for the village centre (see Appendix H). This report provides an evidence base and Masterplan for the Village Centre. It uses the 20-minute Walkable Neighbourhood concept and in consultation with the local community it presents

proposals for four different areas of the centre, focusing on enhancing its historic assets, improving public spaces, identifying areas for improved land uses and opportunities to promote increased footfall and sustainable travel. Maps, diagrams and photographs are used to illustrate each set of proposals.

8.5. The Masterplan identified the Breakspeare School site as an 'ideal site' to relocate the Health Centre and expand its facilities when the school relocates to new premises in 2026. Working with the existing Vine House Health Centre, a separate Feasibility Study was commissioned to evaluate the suitability of the site to become the new Health Centre.

8.6. The TRDC is expected to produce a new Local Plan that would plan for possibly 10,000 new houses to be built over the next 15 years. It seems, with this push for new housing, less attention has been paid to the comprehensive planning of the use of land, adequate infrastructure including schools, primary health services and the design of public realm along High Street. There are also concerns about the loss of green belt land for housing development.

8.7. The objective of the Village Centre Masterplan (see Appendix H) is to provide a high-level concept masterplan based on 'the 20-Minute Neighbourhood principles' for the central area of the village. This shows how the central area can evolve as future developments come forward. This Masterplan aligns with the Neighbourhood Plan and informs the emerging Three Rivers District Council Local Plan. The Masterplan provides an evidence base and proposals that should be read in conjunction with the Abbots Langley Design Guidance and Code completed by AECOM in June 2021 (see Appendix E).

8.8. The Masterplan shows the opportunities that exist in the central area of the village to support existing facilities and businesses and improve the public realm along the High Street. The key components of the scheme are as follows:

- To promote a highly distinctive local character that reflect the heritage of the village centre.
- To retain and create well-accessible green spaces.
- To connect the existing community facilities and businesses in order to increase patronage.
- Upgrade connections to the village centre for all residents.

8.9. The Masterplan sets out further details of the central area of the village including four detailed framework proposals in different parts of the central area. These sites are as follows:

- Area in front of the library and St Saviours.
- Area next to St Lawrence Church.
- Area in front of shopping parade.
- Breakspeare Special School Site.

8.10. This report encourages the village to be self-efficient by following principles set out in the 20-Minute Neighbourhood principles.

Images show: Abbots Langley Village centre; and Bedmond local centre (Photo credit: C Gardner)

Other local and neighbourhood centres in the Parish

8.11. Regarding the other smaller communities located in the Parish, individual catchment area maps have been prepared for:

- Abbotswood Park
- Bedmond/Pimlico/Toms Lane (east)
- Boundary Way
- Coates Way
- Hunton Bridge /Langleybury
- Leavesden
- Roman Gardens/Gade Valley/ Toms Lane (west)

8.12. These maps (see *Figures 25 to 31* in Chapter 15) show what community facilities are available to each community within an 800m distance from its centre, illustrating the extent to which they comply with the characteristics of a 20-minute community. Each community has a summary report listing any key issues and opportunities affecting the area. Furtherfield and Hillside are a continuous extension of the Abbots Langley Village and are not given separate catchment area maps.

8.13. Community profiles and an assessment of the local facilities serving the other communities in the Parish are discussed in Chapter 15. A more detailed assessment is provided for the Bedmond Village – see Appendix H. This explains the local aspirations for this village.

Policy AL8: Supporting recreation and sustainable tourism

POLICY AL8: SUPPORTING RECREATION AND SUSTAINABLE TOURISM

A. Development proposals for recreational and sustainable tourism activities, including additional visitor accommodation and a Visitor Centre, will be supported where all of the following are met:

i. there are demonstrable economic and social benefits of the proposals; and

ii. there is no significant detrimental impact on the existing community; and

iii. adequate provision for parking is included, particularly for proposals within or adjacent to the local centres; and

iv. they are designed in accordance with the Abbots Langley Design Guidance and Code.

B. The signage for visitor attractions and facilities should be clear and further detail is provided in the Place & Movement Planning and Design Guidance for Hertfordshire Part 4, which includes the criteria for brown tourist signs.

Conformity reference: NP objective: 3; Core Strategy: CP1, CP6; NPPF (2024): 85, 88, 89

Purpose

8.14. By 2025, Visit Britain estimates that the UK will have a tourism industry worth over £257 billion – just under 10% of UK GDP and supporting almost 3.8 million jobs, which is around 11% of the total UK number. (These are pre-Covid-19 forecasts that maybe over optimistic.) At the district level, the adopted Core Strategy does not include an explicit policy on tourism and the visitor economy. This is a growing sector in the area. This policy seeks to ensure that the parish capitalises on the benefits by encouraging developments promoting sustainable tourism.

Justification

8.15. The Global Sustainable Tourism Council states that the aim of sustainable tourism is to increase the benefits and to reduce the negative impacts caused by tourism for destinations. This can be achieved by:

- Protecting natural environments, wildlife and natural resources when developing and managing tourism activities
- Providing authentic tourist experiences that celebrate and conserve heritage and culture
- Creating socio-economic benefits for communities through employment and income earning opportunities

8.16. Three Rivers District's visitor economy is worth over £198 million after welcoming more than 3.3 million visitors into the county throughout 2017. Independent research commissioned by Visit Herts has revealed an impressive picture of tourism across the county, with strong visitor numbers, a high volume of day trips and overnight stays. The District saw 3.2million daytrips

and 100,000 overnight visits take place throughout 2017. The total value of tourism increased by 8% in 2017. Tourism also supports 3,353 jobs within the District with the industry now accounting for 8% of the District's total employment. The figures also show an 8% increase in the number of jobs supported by tourism.

8.17. Abbots Langley parish is well-placed to capitalise on this growing sector. It is home to the world famous Warner Bros. Studio Tour London – The Making of Harry Potter, which attracts both day-trippers and overnighters; in fact it is the biggest tourist attraction in Hertfordshire. In addition, there is extensive attractive countryside, woodland and parkland, and a wealth of heritage assets, as well as the village itself.

"encourage visitors to the Warner Bros. Studio to spend time in the village"

8.18. Development that supports the visitor economy, including the provision of additional visitor accommodation and a visitor centre – either in an existing facility or as part of a new development – is supported. Equally, Chapters 12 and 15 of this Neighbourhood Plan explore some of the specific projects in the parish that could be improved. One of these is the Grand Union Canal corridor, which has potential to be regenerated into a visitor hub and sustainable corridor for walkers, cyclists and canal boats.

8.19. The signage for visitor attractions and facilities should be clear and further detail is provided in the Hertfordshire County Council Highways Signing Guidance, 2012, which includes the criteria for brown tourist signs.

The Grand Union Canal - the western boundary of the Parish

Policy AL9: A safe, attractive and welcoming village centre

POLICY AL9: A SAFE, ATTRACTIVE AND WELCOMING VILLAGE CENTRE

Development proposals to enhance the public realm in Abbots Langley Village Centre, in accordance with the principles of the Village Centre Masterplan, will be encouraged, particularly where they enhance movement by pedestrians. In particular:

i. **the widening of footways and pavements;**
ii. **the provision of cycling facilities, including cycle paths and secure, covered cycle stands;**
iii. **the provision of electric charging points;**
iv. **the provision of information points providing guidance, information and news for visitors and residents.**

Conformity reference: NP objective: 3, 5; Core Strategy: CP1, CP12; NPPF (2024): 88, 90, 96, 98, 103, 105, 109, 131-141

Purpose

8.20. This policy provides support for initiatives that will enhance the village centre public realm.

Justification

8.21. Abbots Langley Village Centre has a high-quality historical core, most of which is designated as a Conservation Area, with 25 nationally listed and 21 locally listed buildings. This has served to create a high-quality shopping experience for residents and visitors alike.

8.22. Maintaining and, where possible, improving the public realm environment will help to sustain the Village's distinctiveness and appeal. Areas for potential improvement include:

- Accessibility – ensuring that the pavements are sufficiently wide to enable pedestrians, including those with additional mobility requirements, full access to the centre.
- Signage and interpretation – to ease wayfinding and provide information on the setting and historical importance of the village centre.
- Sustainable modes of transport – providing infrastructure to encourage cycling, such as safe storage and access for electric vehicles, bus provision, timetable displays and information to assist visitors and residents.

9. NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

9.1 The parish of Abbots Langley falls largely within the Metropolitan Green Belt; one of the few exceptions being Abbots Langley Village. It is this greenness that serves to create a strong sense of belonging and distinctive place among local residents. It brings multiple benefits – promoting recreation, wellbeing, protecting biodiversity and an attractive place to live and work.

9.2 Bearing in mind the level of development that has taken place over the last few decades, and that which is planned, it is vital that the remaining green spaces that surround and weave throughout each community are safeguarded, preventing them from coalescing.

Policy AL10: Natural landscape and environment

POLICY AL10: NATURAL LANDSCAPE AND ENVIRONMENT

A. Development proposals should conserve and, where practicable, enhance the natural environment, landscape character and rural setting of the Parish. Development proposals should be informed by, and where possible should seek to deliver the aims of, the Hertfordshire Landscape Area Assessment (Area 9), incorporating natural features typical of the parish, for instance trees, woodland, hedgerows, parkland, water sources (natural springs, etc.) and mature, planted gardens.

B. As appropriate to their scale, nature and location, development proposals should demonstrate that they have addressed the following matters:

Trees and woodland:

i. no loss of, or damage to, existing trees or woodlands during or as a result of development.

ii. where trees and/or shrubs are replaced with new plantings, native or locally appropriate varieties attractive to insects, birds and other wildlife must be used. Where possible, at least two trees should be planted for every tree removed.

Hedgerows:

iii. natural boundaries (i.e. hedgerows in preference to fencing) are supported.

iv. avoid the loss of, or deterioration in the quality of, hedgerows. Where access points to new developments involve the loss of a section of hedgerow, the access should include trees at either end of the retained hedgerow to aid wildlife to cross overhead from crown to crown.

Wildlife-friendly features:

v. provide suitable wildlife-friendly features (such as hedgehog holes in new residential fencing, bird and bat nesting boxes, swift boxes and ponds).

Conformity reference: NP objective: 4; Core Strategy: CP1, CP9, CP12; Development Management Policies: DM6, DM7, DM11; NPPF (2024): 103, 136, 187, 188

Purpose

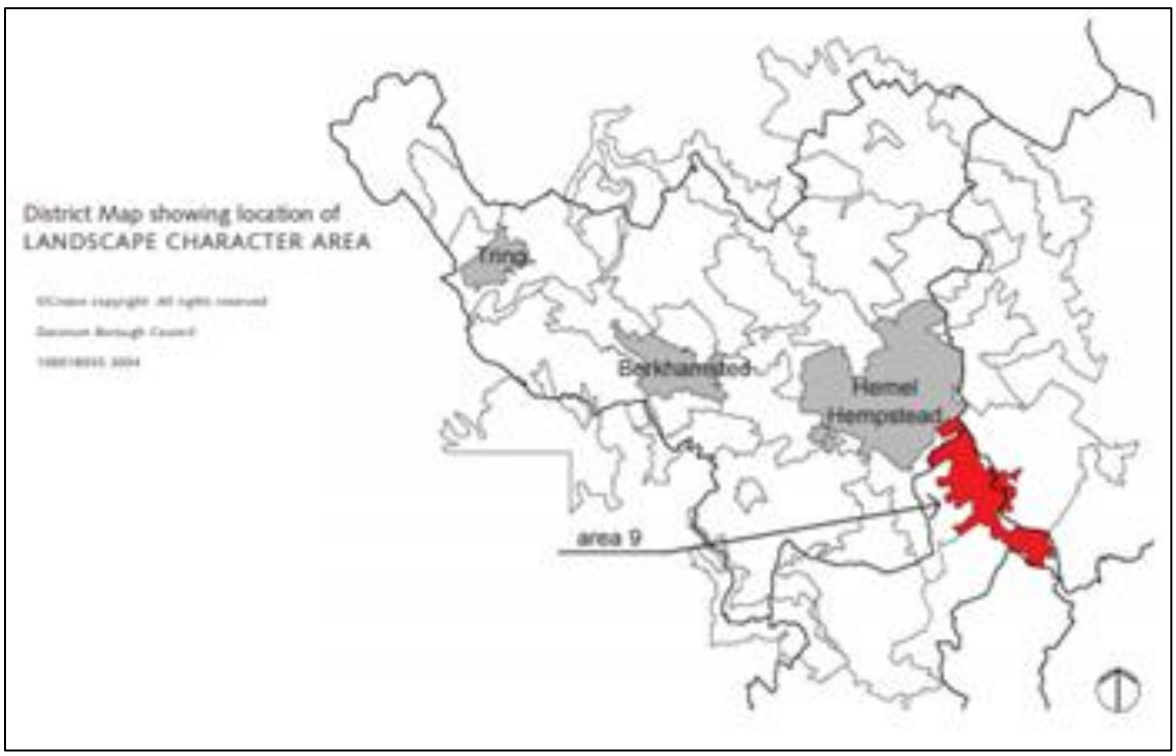
9.3 This policy seeks to ensure that important natural features that contribute to the character of the area are not adversely impacted by development. Such development should support and ideally enhance biodiversity.

> "farmland is an important local amenity; it is used all year round by many local walkers, cyclists and horse riders. It is also a haven for wildlife"

Justification

9.4 Protected natural assets in the parish include an area of the parish which includes Pimlico, Bedmond and parts of East Lane down to Leavesden. This is in the Chiltern Landscape Area (see *Figure 13*). The Bedmond Plateau (Hertfordshire County Council Landscape Character Area 9) is characterised by *"A gently undulating plateau area of small to medium-sized fields that are predominantly pasture. Woodlands are discrete and modest except for Hanging and Pie Corner Woods to the east of Bedmond. A visually contained and coherent landscape with a mature settled appearance arising from a number of traditional farms. Twentieth century development is chiefly residential ribbon development with long gardens"* (see the TRDC interactive planning map showing how Local Planning Policies apply to areas in the parish. See: http://www.planvu.co.uk/trdc/).

Figure 13: The Bedmond Plateau (Hertfordshire County Council Landscape Character Area 9)

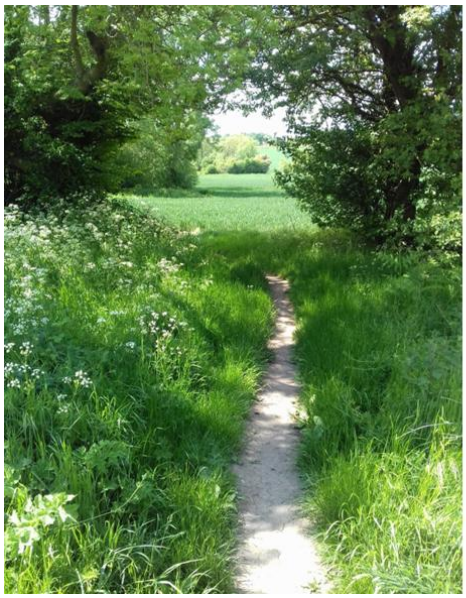


9.5 Some distinctive features of the area are not protected, yet provide vital habitats for flora and fauna, include trees, woodland, hedgerows, mature planted gardens, agricultural and grazing land. Hedgerows are a major part of the wildlife corridors that stretch across the parish.

9.6 Information and data on local species for the area are available from the Herts Biodiversity Record Centre. These habitats and species have evolved in response to local geology and land use. It may have taken hundreds of years to establish and cannot be replaced in any meaningful way.

9.7 Developments should therefore seek to protect and enhance these habitats where possible. This should include an appropriate landscape and ecological management plan which includes a list of trees and shrubs to be planted (to ensure the rural and green character of the parish) is enhanced and which should involve the planting of new trees and hedgerows of native species in gardens, communal areas or on roadsides where practical.

9.8 Planning permission should be refused for any development resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats such as veteran trees and trees of a high conservation value, unless the need for and benefits of the development in that location clearly outweigh the loss. In this instance, substantial compensation as quantified by the Defra biodiversity metric will be considered.



The rural character of the parish (Photo credit for left photo of footpath: G Ball)

Policy AL11: Green and blue infrastructure and biodiversity net gain

POLICY AL11: GREEN AND BLUE INFRASTRUCTURE AND BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN

A. Development proposals that seek to improve the connectivity between wildlife areas and green spaces will be supported.

B. As appropriate, development proposals should aim to deliver a measurable biodiversity net gain of 20%, where possible, but at a minimum, a net gain of at least 10%. Where biodiversity net gain units cannot be delivered on-site, they should be prioritised for use within the parish, focusing on maintaining and improving identified biodiversity opportunity areas.

C. Proposals that support the enhancement and management of identified Biodiversity Opportunity Areas will be supported, including linking these to the wildlife corridors. Proposals which cause unacceptable harm to such connectivity will not be supported.

D. Insofar as planning permission is required, proposals for the planting of additional native, climate resilient trees and/or continuous hedgerows along streets to provide wildlife corridors and to offset the effects of air pollution and to provide cooling and shelter for people as well as habitat for wildlife will be supported.

E. Subject to their scale, nature and location, proposals that respond positively to the Building with Nature 12 Standards (and any successor document) will be supported.

Conformity reference: NP objective: 4; Core Strategy: CP1, CP9; Development Management Policies: DM6, DM7; NPPF (2024): 135, 136, 187, 188, 192, 193

Purpose

9.9 This policy seeks to enhance the multiple benefits of green spaces, including their importance in combating pressure on wildlife, habitats, biodiversity and geodiversity as well as their role in capturing carbon to mitigate global warming. This applies particularly where individual spaces have a greater collective value as part of wider chains of green infrastructure.

"gardens, soil, farmland, woodlands, green spaces, more trees"

"Policies could also involve proactive action such as incorporation of wildlife crossing structures. There may be other opportunities to improve this habitat connectivity and help support nature (on which ultimately all human life depends). This connectivity is particularly important in Abbots Langley as the civic parish is bounded on two sides by the M25. What was taken for granted in the past cannot be so in future, e.g. hedgehogs are predicted to be extinct in Hertfordshire within the next 20 years. What was once common, will no longer exist."

"Climate change and habitat loss are putting species at risk including pollinators and pest controllers. Arable farming and growing-your-own are features of our neighbourhood which would be impacted. There is now an opportunity for initiatives like the Neighbourhood Plan to recognise and establish ways to address these issues."

Justification

9.10 Where possible, it is important to enhance the green (land-based) and blue (waterways and ponds) infrastructure assets of the parish. *Figure 14* shows the green corridors within the area. These are particularly important spaces to provide critical wildlife refuges and stepping-stones that prevent species becoming isolated. They are also valued by the local communities for recreational purposes and for visitors to the area.

Bedmond Horsefield -meadow habitat (Photo credit: J Smith)

9.11 *Figure 14* also includes the proposals set out in the Three Rivers Green Infrastructure Plan (2011) for increased greening in the parish. This seeks the creation of a green travel link between Leavesden Country Park and Longdean Meadows, which would provide a safe and attractive car free link between two significant semi-natural green spaces, and also an extension to the existing Health Walk at Leavesden Country Park.

9.12 Biodiversity net gain (BNG) is an approach to development, and/or land management, that aims to leave the natural environment in a measurably better state than it was

beforehand. The word 'biodiversity' comes from the term 'biological diversity'. The DEFRA biodiversity metric has been designed to determine and quantify existing biodiversity value, in terms of habitats, and the consequent measures required to ensure measurable net gain. Net gain involves a post development increase in biodiversity units of 10%.

9.13 Natural England considers this to be the most appropriate mechanism for determining current ecological value and delivering biodiversity net gain. Ecological assessment by suitably qualified people must utilise this metric on all habitats to determine net gain. Ecological reports must be consistent with BS 42020 Biodiversity – code of practise for planning and development.

9.14 The project would contribute to improving accessible semi-natural green space around Bedmond and provide alternative greenspace links in Abbots Langley (noting barriers to the South and the West Coast Mainline Railway). The project would provide enhanced information and interpretation of this asset and improved signage to the trail/route from Abbots Langley and Bedmond village centres. (See Chapter 15 for more detail).

9.15 If significant harm resulting from a development cannot be avoided (for instance by locating to an alternative site with less harmful impacts), adequately mitigated, or, as a last resort, compensated for, then planning permission should be refused. The green and blue infrastructure assets of the parish should be maximised and made properly accessible, where this would not put pressure on wildlife. Development proposals are encouraged to facilitate improved connectivity between wildlife areas and green spaces that are used by the community, contributing the delivery of the Green Infrastructure Plan proposals where possible.

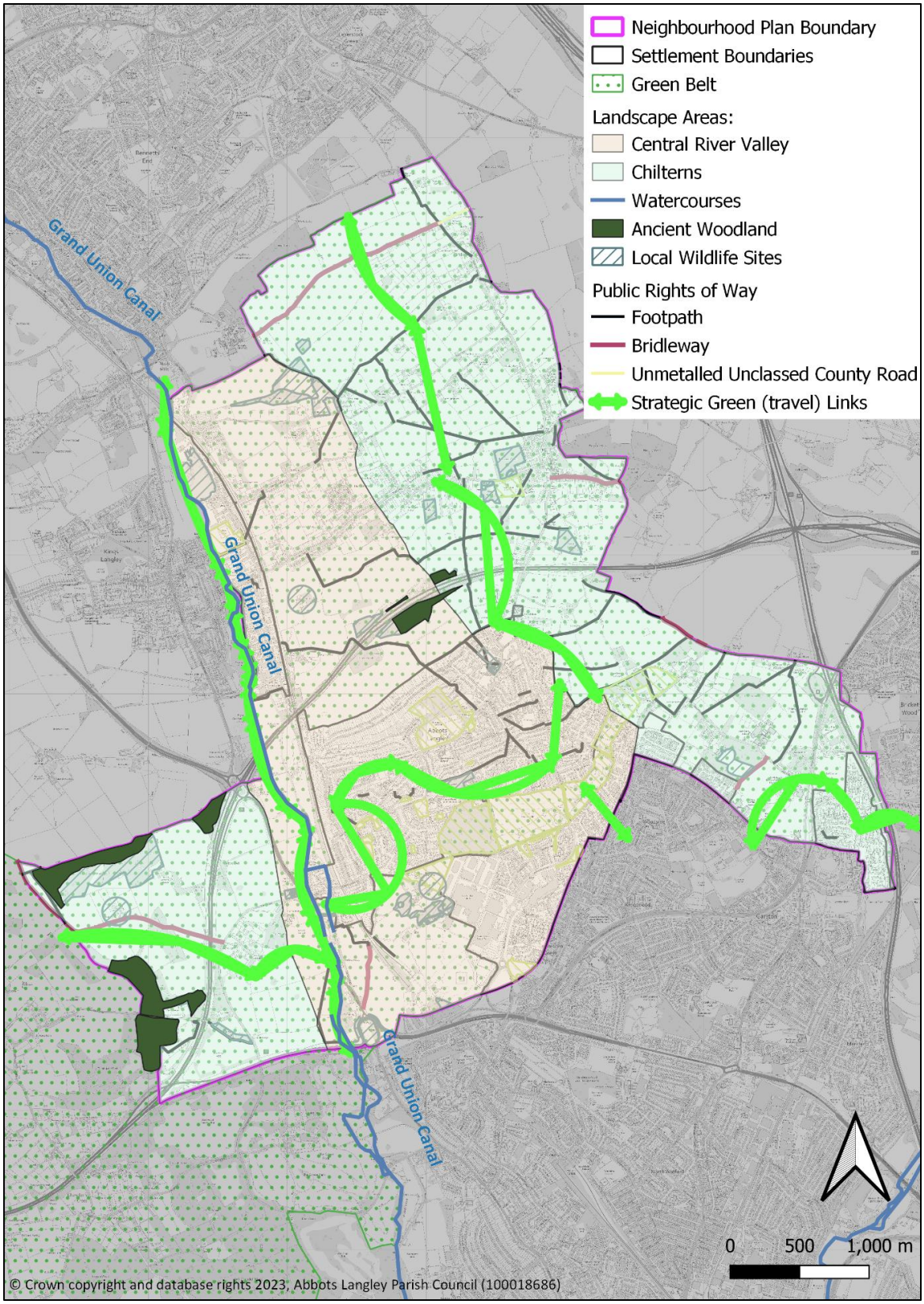
9.16 The Environment Act includes provision for a mandatory requirement for new developments to provide a 10% biodiversity net gain. Key elements of the Environment Act are now in place. As such Policy AL11 does not repeat the national requirements for biodiversity net gain. rather it seeks to identify a complementary policy approach. It supports an advisory uplift in biodiversity net gain, where possible, and in line with the aspirations of the National Wildlife Trusts. It also advises that where net gain cannot be delivered on-site, it should be prioritised to within the parish. Three Rivers's 2022 audit of BOAs, "Minor Greenspace Audit Identifying Opportunities" identifies a number of sites in the parish that could be suitable locations for improving net gain as well as the sorts of improvements that could be sought. Some of these spaces coincide with the Local Green Spaces identified in this ALNP. Others include Gypsy Lane (owned by Warner Brothers) and the Horses Field. Project 5 (Measures to enhance biodiversity and natural corridors in the Parish) in Chapter 12 sets out the aspiration to identify additional such sites.

9.17 The Act also recognises the need to protect what it describes as "Nature Recovery Networks", joined-up system of places important for wildlife on land. A Local Nature Recovery Strategy for Hertfordshire is being prepared and will inform opportunities for the parish in terms of supporting biodiversity.

9.18 Lastly, development proposals should be guided by the Building with Nature Standards to ensure that high-quality green infrastructure is integral to placemaking, putting nature at the heart of development in a way that is good for people and for wildlife. Developers are encouraged to seek the Building with Nature Award accreditation:

Building With Nature 12 Standards

Figure 14: Map of local green and blue infrastructure in the parish of Abbots Langley



Policy AL12: Locally significant views

POLICY AL12: LOCALLY SIGNIFICANT VIEWS

The Plan identifies the following locally significant views (mapped in *Figure 15):*

- **View 1: View to the north from Hyde Farm**
- **View 2: View to Potters Crouch Hamlet**
- **View 3: View to the Church of the Ascension and former White Hart Pub**
- **View 4: View from Longspring Wood to Local Wildlife Site and the Green Belt**
- **View 5: View of the Grand Union Canal**
- **View 6: View of St Lawrence Church**
- **View 7: View in Leavesden Country Park**
- **View 8: View to Chequers Lane**
- **View 9: View to Langley Lane Play Area and Horses Field**
- **View 10: View from Langleybury Lane to the open fields looking across to the River Gade Valley and beyond**
- **View 11: View through Longspring Wood Nature Reserve**
- **View 12: View from footpath 19 Overlooking Ovaltine Court**
- **View cluster 13a to e: Series of five long-range views across the Gade Valley**
- **View 14: Series of long views south towards Watford & N. London**
- **View 15: View of the Horsefield Meadow, Bedmond**

As appropriate to their scale and nature, development proposals within the shaded arcs of the various views as shown on *Figure 15* should be designed in a way that demonstrates how it has taken into consideration the importance of the locally significant view or views, in the layout, design or masterplanning of the site(s) and mitigates any adverse impact on those views.

Conformity reference: NP objective: 4; Core Strategy: CP1, CP12; Development Management Policies: DM7; NPPF (2024): 131 to 135, 187

Purpose

9.19 The policy seeks to ensure that adequate weight is given to conservation and enhancement of views identified as significant by local people and visitors.

> "It's vital we retain what is left of open, green spaces and fields in the area in order to retain its semi-rural feel and pleasant environment"

Justification

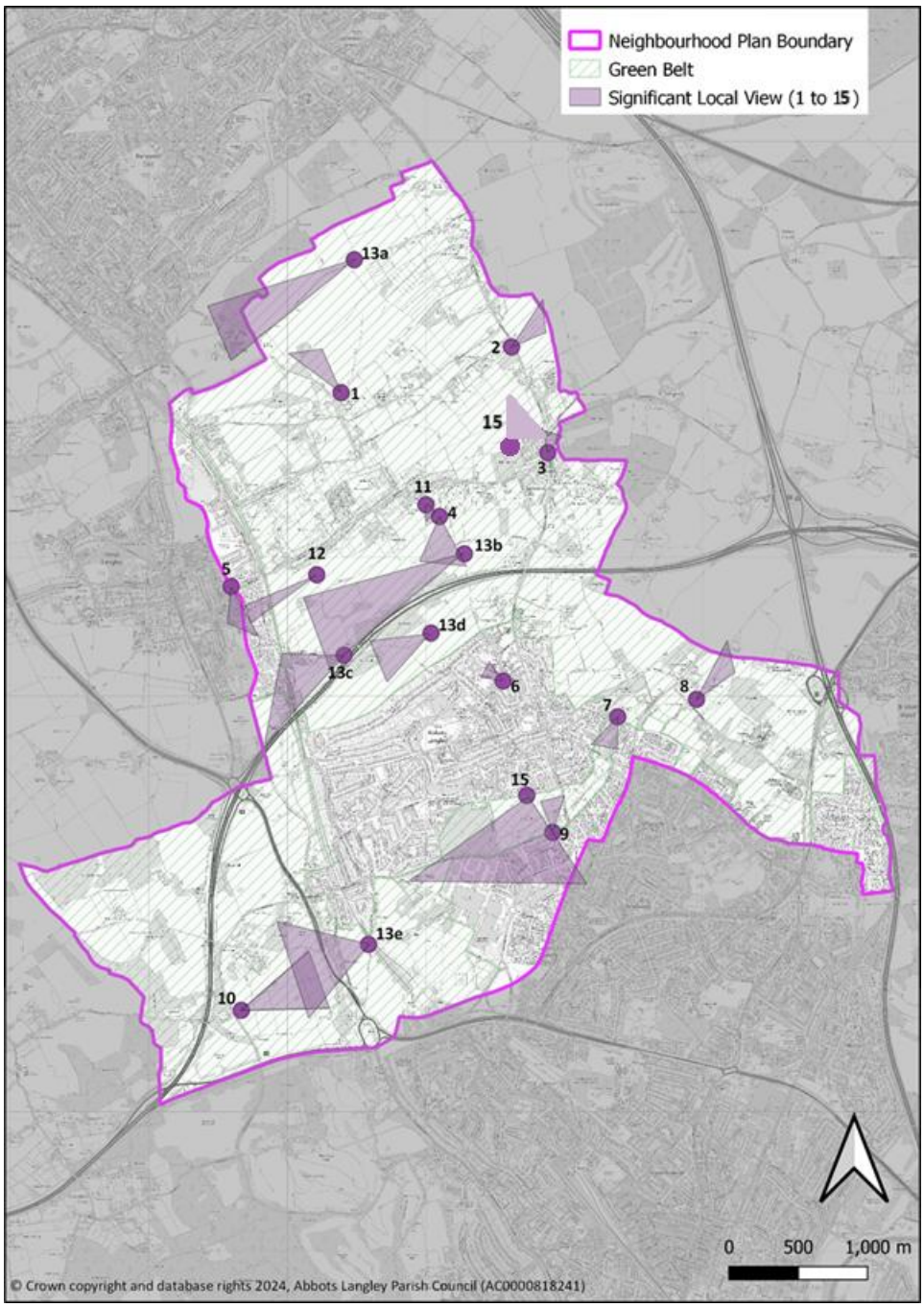
9.20 Views within and around the village are an important part of what gives the parish its distinctive feel. This is valued by both residents and visitors. The topography of the surrounding area means that there are some significant long-distance views which define Abbots Langley and make it so popular with residents and tourists alike.

9.21 While the parish benefits from a series of panoramas, the following views are considered to hold particular local significance, with many contributing to the significance of a local heritage asset and enabling greater appreciation of those assets and the wider heritage and natural environment. Therefore, they are worthy of protection. Full details of the views, including photographs and text explaining why they are special, are included in Appendix G. A map, illustrating the location of the views, is included at *Figure 15*.

9.22 Policy AL12 requires that development proposals are designed in a way that safeguards the locally significant views. It attempts to provide some flexibility for the wide range of development proposals which may come forward within the Plan period. In the majority of cases, proposals will be of a minor nature and will have little or no effect on the identified views. In circumstances where the proposed development is likely to have an impact on any identified key view, the planning application concerned should be accompanied by a landscape and visual impact assessment that is proportionate to the scale of the development proposed. Any appropriate mitigation measures should be incorporated within the design of the proposed development and captured in the assessment.

9.23 *Figure 15* shows a map of 15 locally significant views in the Abbots Langley Parish. These views are explained in greater detail in Chapter 3, Section 5 of the AECOM Design Guidance and Code for Abbots Langley Parish (see Appendix D) The views which typify the character of the Parish are not just landscape features but include some distinctive buildings.

Figure 15: Map of locally significant views in the Parish of Abbots Langley (numbering cross-references to Policy AL12)



Policy AL13: Local Green Space

POLICY AL13: LOCAL GREEN SPACE

The following spaces (including one cluster of sites), as shown on *Figures 16 and 17* and on the Policies Maps are designated as a local green spaces:

1. **Primrose Hill playing fields**
2. **Longspring Wood Grounds**
3. **Bedmond playing fields**
4. **Bell Lane Corner**
5. **Manor House Grounds**
6. **Millennium Gardens**
7. **Kitters Green**
8. **Tanners Wood**
9. **Hazelwood Lane/ Upper Highway (cluster of 7 spaces)**
10. **Tanners Hill Green**
11. **School Mead Green**
12. **Abbots Langley Horses' Field**
13. **Leavesden Country Park**
14. **Leavesden High Road / Aerodrome Way/ Halifax Close/ Westfield Close cluster**
15. **South Way Playing Fields**
16. **Langleybury cricket ground**
17. **Lower Field Warner Brothers**

Local policy for managing development on a Local Green Space should be consistent with national policy for Green Belts; proposals for development on Local Green Spaces will not be supported unless they conform to with national policy guidelines.

Conformity reference: NP objective: 4; Core Strategy: CP1, CP9; Development Management Policies: DM6, DM7, DM11; NPPF (2024): 106-108, 153 to 160, 198

Purpose

9.24 Protecting green spaces was consistently a top priority for residents in the engagement process for the Neighbourhood Plan. This policy seeks to designate a series of Local Green Spaces that are valued by the community, so that they can be safeguarded for future generations.

"Green space is important to us such as Jubilee Garden, Tanners Wood, Horses Field and provide more"

Justification

9.25 Under the NPPF, neighbourhood plans have the opportunity to designate Local Green Spaces which are of particular importance to the local community. This will afford

protection from development other than in very special circumstances. The NPPF states that Local Green Spaces should only be designated:

- *"where the green space is in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves; where the green area is demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance, for example because of its beauty, historic significance, recreational value (including as a playing field), tranquillity or richness of its wildlife; and where the green area concerned is local in character and is not an extensive tract of land."*

9.26 When designating Local Green Spaces, it is important to consider what protection is already afforded to an area and whether the designation will provide any further safeguard. Many of the green spaces identified during the consultation, for instance, are in Green Belt, and have therefore largely been excluded from the policy. 17 areas have been identified by the community as being of value to them and in need of protection. These are listed in the policy.

9.27 Details of how each one of the above sites meets the NPPF Local Green Space criteria is contained in Appendix G. *Figures 16* and *17* show the Local Green Spaces on a map. *Figure 18* is the 'Green and Blue Infrastructure Map' from the AECOM Design Guidance and Code for Abbots Langley Parish (Appendix E, F18 page 21.) and *Figure 19* is a map of the designated open spaces in the Parish of Abbots Langley.

Annual Summer Carnival on Abbots Village Park and Woodlands, Manor House

Figure 16: Local Green Spaces (1 to 4)

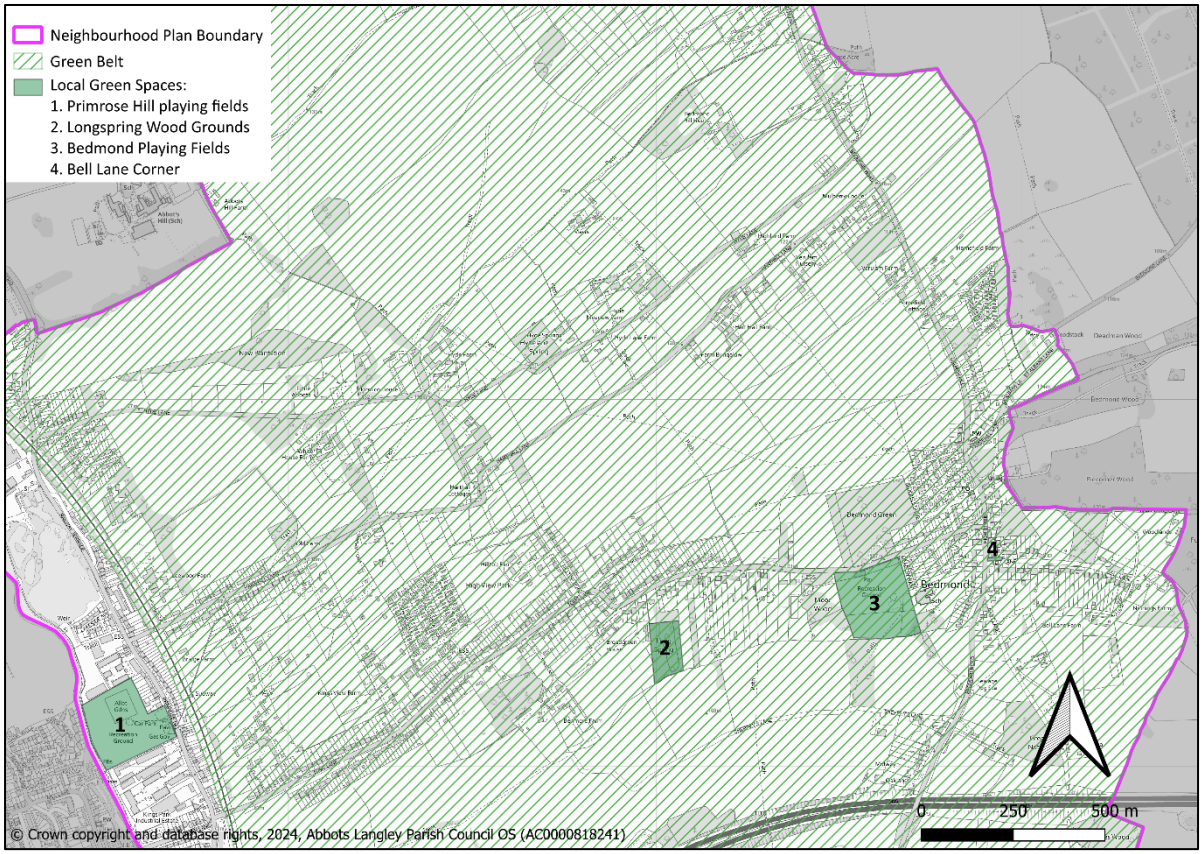


Figure 17: Local Green Spaces (5-17)

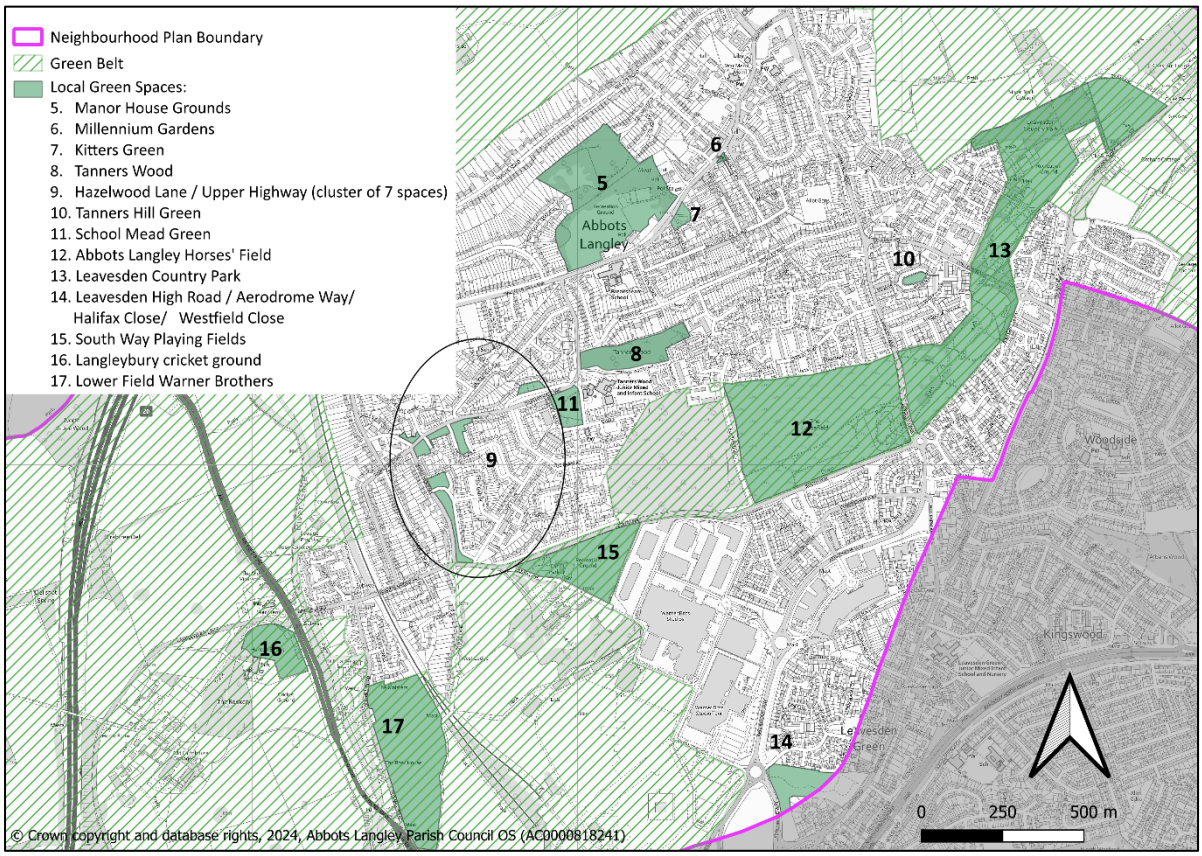
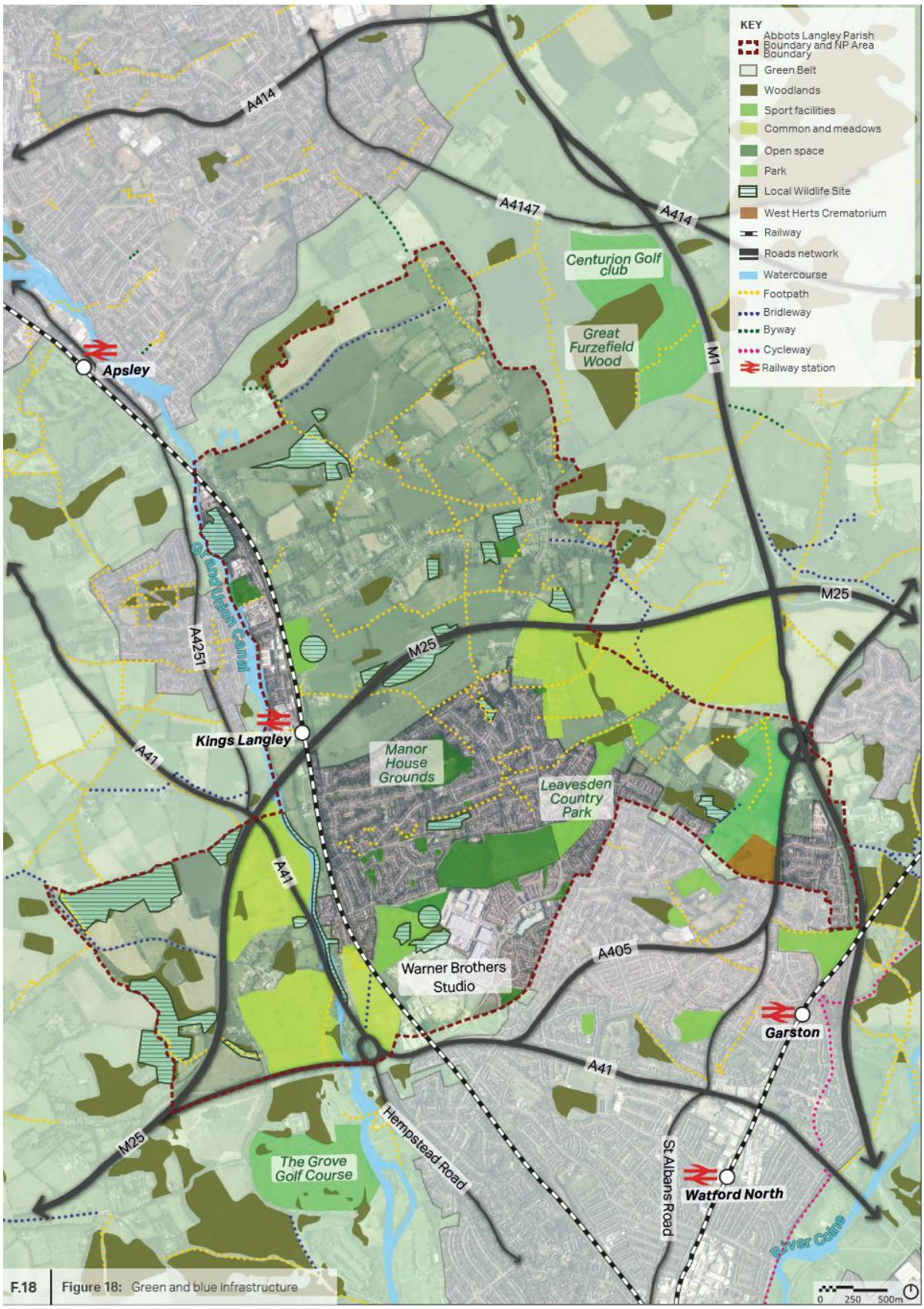
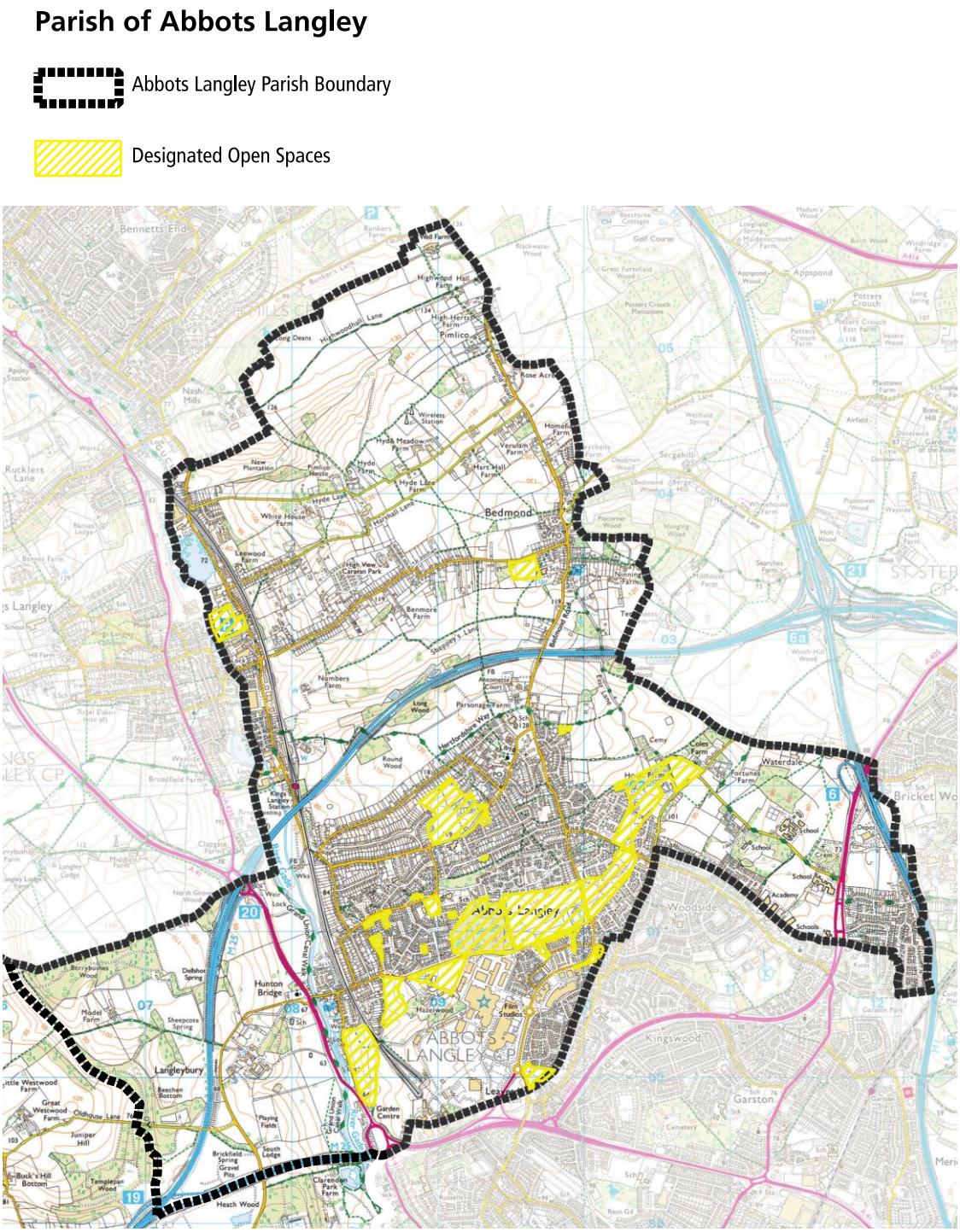


Figure 18: Green and Blue Infrastructure Map from the AECOM Design Guidance and Code for Abbots Langley Parish (Appendix E- F18 page 21)



F.18 Figure 18: Green and blue infrastructure

Figure 19: Designated 'Open Spaces' in the Parish of Abbots Langley (Core Strategy, 2011)


Parish of Abbots Langley
Abbots Langley Parish Boundary
Designated Open Spaces
Bedmond
Abbots Langley
Langleybury
Hunton Bridge
Kings Langley
Waterdale
Woodside
Kingswood
Garston
Leavesden
Bennetts End
Nash Mills
Pimlico
Appspond
Potters Crouch
Sarehill
Hillhouse Farm
Numbers Farm
Parsonage Farm
Round Wood
Long Wood
Heach Wood
Buck's Hill Bottom
Templepan Wood
Juniper Hill
Great Westwood Farm
Little Westwood Farm
Middel Farm
Sheepcote Spring
Delshot Spring
Berrybushes Wood
Beechen Bottom
Brickfield Spring
Gravel Pits
South Lodge
Clarendon Park Farm
Garden Centre
Playing Fields
Hazelwood
Fam Studios
Academy
Schools
Depot
Cemetery
Recn Gd
Sch
Cemy
Wks
Stn
Ch
Fm
Cott
Gdns
Pk
Wd
Hse
Mill
Lodge
Farm
Wood
Hill
Bottom
Spring
Pits
Centre
Fields

10. LEISURE AND COMMUNITY

On-going investments

10.1. The parish of Abbots Langley has benefited in recent years from public investment in leisure and community facilities. Examples include:

- The creation of Leavesden Park and its Heritage Trail (partly sponsored by the National Lottery Heritage Fund and Warner Bros. Studios) with added facilities including a café and improved sports facilities and playing areas.
- The Henderson Hub Arts and Community Centre.
- The modernisation of Children Play Areas across the parish.
- The creation of the new Skatepark in Manor House Grounds and the renovation of its outdoor courts for tennis, football, basketball and table tennis.

10.2. The Parish Council manages a number of public venues for hire. These encourage a thriving range of voluntary societies and clubs for all ages. There are over a hundred such organisations operating in the parish (see details in the Evidence Base, Chapter 18 of this ALNP). There is a major sports centre, public swimming pool and sports track on the edge of the Parish at Woodside. There are other playing fields for sports activities throughout the parish.

"More playgrounds to serve new housing developments like South Way"
"Improvements to the skate park, a multi-purpose floodlit sports facility in Manor House Grounds and a café at the Club House during the day"

"Community Events like Tough Ten, the switching on of the Christmas lights, the Fireworks, the Carnival, Autumn Fest, the Christmas Eve services at St Lawrence Church -All these events are well organised and bring the community together. They are part of what makes Abbots Langley a great place to live."

Policy AL14: Provide, maintain and improve public facilities for the community

POLICY AL14: PROVIDE, MAINTAIN AND IMPROVE PUBLIC FACILITIES FOR THE COMMUNITY

A. Development proposals for new and/or expanded community facilities should meet identified needs for leisure and social needs in the community that are not adequately provided for at present. They should respond positively to the requirements as set out in the latest TRDC Open Space, Sport and Recreational Facilities Assessment. As appropriate to their scale, nature and location, development proposals for such uses should:

- **i. not have significant harmful impacts on the amenities of surrounding residents and the local environment; and**
- **ii. not have significant adverse impacts upon the local road network; and**
- **iii. not have harmful impacts on the heritage aspects, including the setting; and**
- **iv. where relevant, the facility is fit for purpose and designed in accordance with Sport England's design guidance notes.**

B. Proposals that would result in the loss of community and leisure facilities will only be supported if alternative facilities are provided to the same standard, fully accessible to the local community.

Conformity reference: NP objective: 5; Core Strategy: PSP2, CP1, CP8; Development Management Policies: DM11, DM12; NPPF (2024): 96, 98, 101, 103-105

Purpose

10.3. To provide public facilities to meet the cultural, recreational, leisure and social needs of the community.

Justification

10.4. The Parish and District Councils have invested in leisure and social facilities in the area. The Parish Council and the community owns and maintains four halls for hire, three in Abbots Langley Village and the village hall in Bedmond. At the smaller scale, the Parish Council invests in public seating, drinking fountains and other street furniture around the parish for the use of residents.

10.5. A programme to modernise child play facilities in the local parks has been completed in recent years. This followed from a review of leisure activities and a planned investment programme by TRDC.

10.6. Leavesden Country Park (*Figure 20*) is location where sports and recreation facilities have been improved in recent years. The park covers an area of over 27 hectares and consists of walking/biking paths, heritage trail (with sculptures reflecting the local history in the area,) all-weather football pitch/basketball court, wildlife areas, tennis courts, a children's play area and an outdoor gym for adults. Built facilities include a Bicycle Hub and café.

10.7. A skatepark opened in May 2019 in the Manor House Grounds along with the upgrade of the all-weather courts for basketball, five-a-side soccer and tennis.

10.8. There is a wide range of sport and leisure facilities in the Parish including football, cricket and outdoor bowls clubs. Football is the most popular team sport, with of the order of 1,000 participants in organised teams. For example, the Evergreen Football Club (South Way Playing fields) have 37 teams registered with various leagues across Hertfordshire. They were the first club in Hertfordshire to secure their FA Charter Standard Community Club renewal. Recent investment in their facilities included a modernised Clubhouse opening in 2017. The club has excellent pitches and an all-weather practice area. The club includes five ladies football teams, in partnership with Watford Ladies FC.

10.9. Drawing on local feedback and evidence prepared by TRDC, including the Open Space, Sport and Recreational Facilities Assessment, the following provision would be supported locally:

- additional formal open space in Bedmond
- additional senior and mini football facilities, including exploring options for 3G pitch
- provision of purpose-designed storage units to house sports equipment near to the existing pitches and facilities used by the various sports and leisure groups.
- equipment that helps the Parish Staff maintain the sports facilities to ensure the pitches and courts are kept in good condition throughout the year.
- provision of team changing rooms at existing sports facilities, where required.

Figure 20: Plan of Leavesden Country Park and key of its many facilities (source: TRDC)

Policy AL15: Allotments and community growing spaces

POLICY AL15: ALLOTMENTS AND COMMUNITY GROWING SPACES

A. Development proposals that incorporate new community growing spaces of a size appropriate to the development and with access to features such as good drainage, light exposure and water/electric options, will be supported, in particular where these can be used to create attractive green screening, for example, car parking areas, roads, and commercial servicing areas.

B. Development proposals that would result in the loss of all or part of existing allotment spaces will not be supported unless an alternative site is provided of equivalent or larger area compared to the existing allotment provision. The alternative site must also meet the following requirements:

i. a location that is within or adjacent to the defined settlement as shown on the Policies Map and that is accessible by pedestrians and cyclists; and

ii. offers topography, soil quality and water supply that allows a choice of layout for good quality private plots and/or community growing space; and

iii. benefits from suitable on- and off-site parking opportunities, including on-site disabled parking bays.

Conformity reference: NP objective: 5, 8; Core Strategy: CP1, CP8, CP9; Development Management Policies: DM11, DM12; NPPF (2024): 96, 98, 103

Purpose

10.10. To provide support for the retention of existing allotments in the Parish and, support for additional growing spaces.

"We need to protect our allotments"

Justification

10.11. Many people wish to grow their own food. This provides exercise, social contact and reduces food miles. Local allotments have experienced waiting lists since 2021, demonstrating demand. There could be more pocket gardens and seating that would make the village centres more attractive and successful. Shared outdoor amenity space should be associated with new development wherever possible.

10.12. Abbots Langley operates four allotment sites at: Manor House, Jacketts Field, Kingsfield and Primrose Hill (See *Figure 21*). There is no provision of allotments in the smaller settlements in the parish. The Open Space Update, prepared by TRDC, in 2010 suggests that in the long term, additional provision should be sought in Abbots Langley as a result of the growing population and in order to meet the national standard of 20 allotments per 1,000 households as suggested by The National Society of Allotment and Leisure Gardeners.

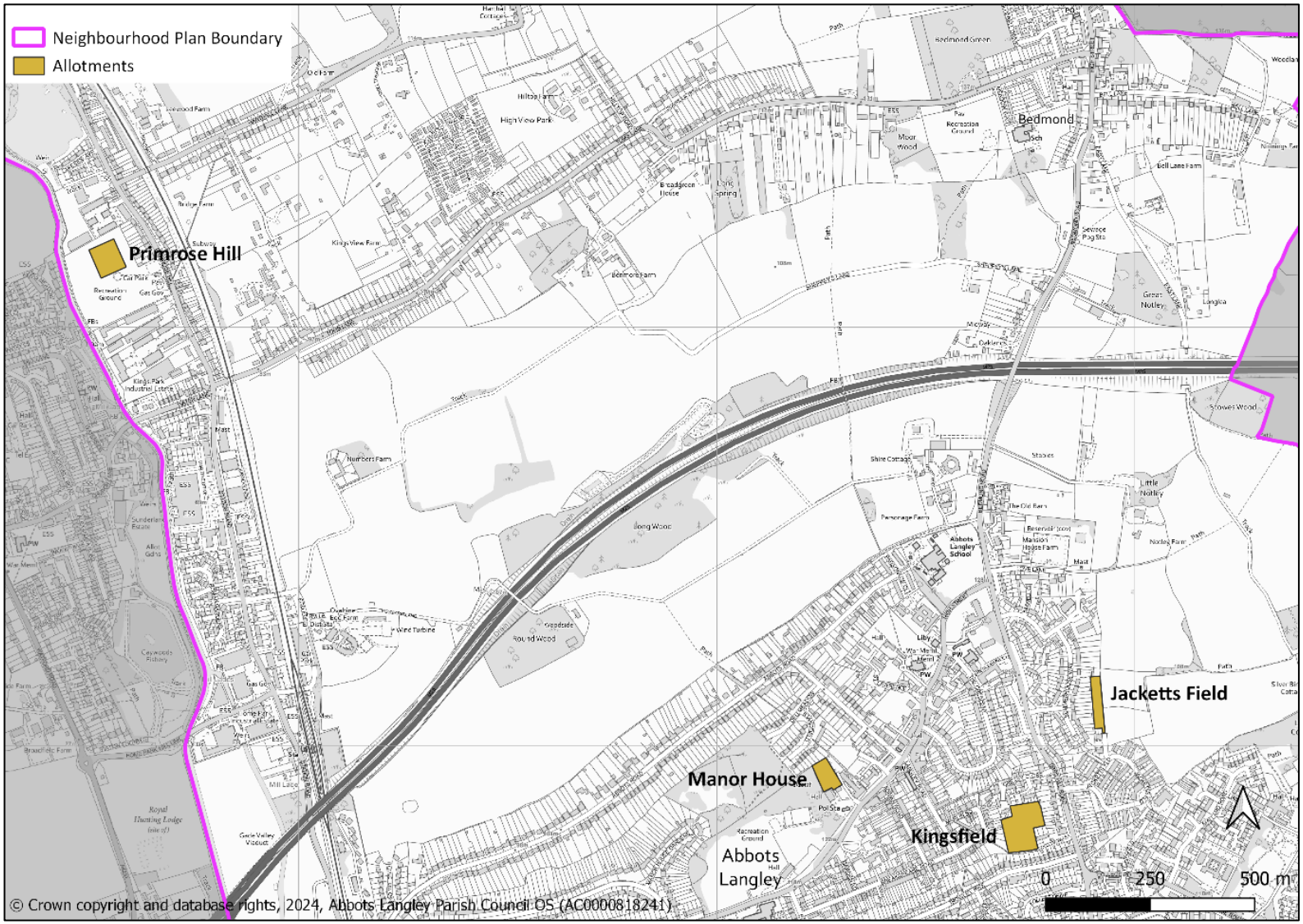
10.13. There is certainly a need for more allotment space. Between 2024 and 2025, the waiting list for a plot has ranged from 36 people to 50, which equates to a roughly 2-3 year wait. There are 127 sites available. One of the Aspirational Projects in Chapter 12 outlines potential for the creation of a community garden, which would help towards addressing need.

10.14. Whilst allotments are an important source of space for growing – which increases self-sufficiency, thereby reducing reliance on importing food and the associated higher energy costs of doing so – they are often not in the most convenient location for all users and plots are often too large for users' needs.

10.15. An alternative solution is community growing spaces which can be designed into new developments, meaning they are close to residents' homes and involve collective growing by residents that helps to ensure that what is grown is of the right quantity for those residents. The safeguarding of existing and provision of new allotments and community growing spaces will therefore be encouraged.

Images show: Community growing space in the village cared for by the AIMS volunteers and One of many of Abbots Langley's allotments

Figure 21: Designated allotments in the Parish of Abbots Langley



Policy AL16: Protection of public houses

POLICY AL16: PROTECTION OF PUBLIC HOUSES

A. Development proposals to change the use of public houses (Use Class sui generis) will be supported only if the public house is demonstrably unviable. In order to demonstrate this, evidence will be required to show that the existing public house has been actively marketed for a period of not less than two years at a market value comparable to the market values of other similar licences premises in the District.

B. Proposals for the expansion of existing public houses (Use Class sui generis) in the Parish to develop appropriate community-based activities, such as a restaurant, will be supported, subject to there being no adverse effect on the amenity of residential properties in the locality.

Conformity reference: NP objective: 5; Core Strategy: CP1, CP8; Development Management Policies: DM12; NPPF (2023): 96, 98

Purpose

10.16. To increase the viability of all public houses within the Parish by encouraging them to improve and expand suitable community facilities.

"Public houses need protecting as some have already been lost recently"

Justification

10.17. Over recent years, the Parish has lost at least two of its public houses. It is important that the community continues to be served by public houses or similar licensed premises. They have social or cultural value for particular groups in the community and provide employment opportunities.

10.18. Section 15 of the Neighbourhood Planning Act 2017 directs the removal of permitted development rights for the change of use of public houses to other types of use. This means that a planning application will be required in all cases where an owner wishes to change an existing public house to another use. CAMRA, the Campaign for Real Ale, is an independent, voluntary organisation of 192,000 members that campaigns for real ale, community pubs and consumer rights. CAMRA supports well-run pubs and believes their continued existence plays a crucial role in community life. It provides guidance about how the viability of a public house can be considered.

Policy AL17: Safeguard and expand existing health services

Policy AL17: SAFEGUARD AND EXPAND EXISTING HEALTH SERVICES

A. Proposals to enhance and facilitate the continued delivery of health facilities at key sites within the village of Abbots Langley and surrounding settlements (to meet the needs of the local population), will be supported.

B. Proposals for the expansion, and relocation locally if required, of these services, including the development of a new expanded health centre with a potential capacity for 20,000 patients to expand the facilities currently provided by the Vine House Health Centre, will be supported subject to the following criteria:

i. the proposal would not have significant harmful impacts on the amenities of surrounding residents and the local environment.
ii. the proposal would not have unacceptable impacts on the local road network.
iii. the proposal is located within or immediately adjacent to the settlement boundary as defined in Policy AL1.

Conformity reference: NP objective: 5; Core Strategy: CP1, CP8; Development Management Policies: DM12; NPPF (2024): 96, 98, 101

Purpose

10.19. This policy seeks to ensure the provision of adequate primary health services in the parish during the period up to 2041, safeguarding what already exists and supporting expansion or relocation locally where needed and subject to mitigating any negative impacts of this on the environment, road network and local community.

"health services are inadequate for the number of residents (and proposed new development)"
"access to existing services is difficult"

Justification

General Practice Facilities and Community Health facilities

10.20. The three Health Centres in the parish are all over subscribed. The GPs at the Vine House Health Centre would like a larger facility that would enable a larger range of health services to be provided. To serve their existing patients the Vine House Health Centre would like to maintain their presence in the central area of Abbots Langley village. By 2025, the NHS five-year plan suggests that Primary Health Care facilities in the community should be expanded in SW Hertfordshire to reduce the visits to local hospitals by 40%. It is the responsibility of the NHS to plan and finance the expansion of such facilities. The community has an increased and vital role to play in Public Health. The holistic health and wellbeing of residents is supported through integrated health and social care systems working effectively in conjunction with Third Sector and other community organisations enabling access to the wealth of support and resources available in the community. There are opportunities for social prescribing within the community and improved access to public exercise facilities and open spaces beneficial for health.

10.21. However, the availability of suitable sites in the central area of the Abbots Langley village are limited. Therefore, the Neighbourhood Plan commissioned a Masterplan in 2022 for the central area of the village to identify what future facilities are needed to serve the local community and support the area as a key settlement. See Appendix H. For example, the recent closure of St Margaret's House – a residential care home for elderly, presents an opportunity to provide additional community facilities rather than just a new housing development. This building is owned by Hertfordshire CC. Therefore, there is a need to create a Planning Brief for the central area of the village to identify what future facilities are needed to serve the local community and support the area as a key settlement.

10.22. Also, Hertfordshire CC decided, on 23 May 2022, to relocate the Breakspeare School to a new, purpose-built school, which will double its capacity. The new school will be located in Croxley Green. In association with the Village Masterplan, a feasibility study was commissioned to determine the suitability of the Breakspeare School site to become a new enlarged Health Centre, replacing the Vine House Health Centre.

10.23. The Feasibility Study concluded that the vacated Breakspeare School site would be 'ideal' to become a new multi-disciplinary Health Centre capable of accommodating the wider range of services and allowing the registered number of patients to be increased from 11,000, currently at the Vine House Health Centre, to possibly as much as 20,000. However, the Partners at the Vine House Health Centre have said that, under current NHS guidelines, they could not raise the capital funds required for such a project. Instead, they have decided to purchase their existing premises from their landlord and consider ways to expand facilities on the existing site.

Policy AL18: Safeguard and expand existing education provision

POLICY AL18: SAFEGUARD AND EXPAND EXISTING EDUCATION PROVISION

A. Development proposals which facilitate and enhance existing schools and associated playing fields, will be supported subject to demonstration that:

- **i. acceptable mitigation measures are offered to overcome access and unacceptable highway impact caused by the development;**
- **ii. the development would not result in a significant loss of amenity to local residents or other nearby activities; and**
- **iii. the development does not conflict with other Plan policies or proposals.**

B. Where a proposal for a new secondary school is recommended within the parish, it will be supported where it can be demonstrated that the catchment area for the school:

- **i. provides easy and safe access to pedestrians and cyclists and be conveniently related to bus routes with adequate provision for school buses to park where appropriate;**
- **ii. provides appropriate vehicular access and would not adversely impact upon traffic capacity;**
- **iii. does not result in a significant loss of amenity to local residents or other nearby activities;**
- **iv. includes the planting of trees and hedgerows to enhance air quality, and reduce noise; and**
- **v. does not conflict with other Plan policies or proposals.**

Conformity reference: NP objective: 5; Core Strategy: PSP2, CP1, CP8; Development Management Policies: DM12; NPPF (2024): 96, 98, 100, 101

Purpose

10.24. The provision of adequate education provision – both primary and secondary - is a key issue for the local community. This policy seeks to ensure the provision of adequate education in the Parish over the plan period, safeguarding what already exists and supporting expansion or relocation locally where needed.

Justification

10.25. The NPPF supports the provision of sufficient school places to serve the community and also protects school playing fields unless they are surplus to requirements or can be relocated to an alternative location or would be redeveloped into an alternative leisure or sports provision that would outweigh the benefits of the previous provision.

I'm worried about the availability of primary and secondary school places. Some local children are already being allocated to Hemel Hempstead Schools.

10.26. Hertfordshire County Council (HCC), as the Local Education Authority, is responsible for planning to deliver sufficient education places across the county. Recent figures indicate the pressure for school places in the parish, despite having three large secondary schools located in the Parish. High performing schools like Parmiters, who have an intake 208 pupils per year, received more than 1600 applications in 2021. Another of the secondary schools is St Michael's Catholic School which admits 180 pupils is also well over subscribed, not able to accept all pupils from the Catholic faith that apply.

10.27. Early years provision: The increasing population will serve to increase the birth rate locally. It will be important to ensure that the parish is well-served for nursery and pre-school places, in order to enable families to have the choice to both work and give their children the best start in life.

10.28. Primary Schools: There are five state primary schools in the Neighbourhood Plan area. The need for primary school places depends on the local child population. HCC advises that that demand within the area has fallen in recent years. Whilst new housing could increase demand in the future, the advice from HCC is that it has secured provision to ensure education demand can be met locally.

.

10.29. Secondary schools: In light of the revised national policy and any significant applications received, the County is expected to conduct a thorough review on the Regulation 19 version of TRDC Local Plan to assess the overall secondary school places requirement within the district, including Abbots Langley. The main requirement is to ensure the catchment areas for each school allows for all local students to be provided for and living within easy access - preferably by walking or cycling.

10.30. Special Schools: There two special schools serving children from a broader area with special needs. **Garston Manor School** is a Specialist School serving students aged 11 - 16 with Learning Difficulties, Autism and Speech Language and Communication Needs. The school is situated on a very large and pleasant site, having recently been completely rebuilt. It offers outstanding facilities. Pupils attend from a wide area which extends from Watford to Borehamwood and covers parts of Hatfield and Welwyn Garden City. **Breakspeare School** is a local authority day school for pupils aged 3 to 19, who have severe learning difficulties. Some have additional needs due to specific physical and mental disabilities. All students have an education, health and care plan that identifies their special needs. Located in village of Abbots Langley, the school caters for 75 pupils drawn from a wide catchment area - extending across the Districts of Three Rivers and Watford.

10.31. "Breakspeare School will close by 2026 and move out of the area.

11. TRANSPORT AND MOVEMENT

11.1. Despite its largely rural nature, the parish is dominated by some national transport corridors that both surround it and cut through it. The M25 divides the parish in half. The M1 is on the parish's eastern boundary. To the west, the Parish is bordered by the Grand Union Canal and West Coast Mainline Railway.

11.2. With the projected growth in the population that may occur across the district in the coming years, movement by all modes will continue to be a challenge at peak times. The key types of movement can be classed as 'local' and 'strategic':

- 'Local' movement is principally within the area, to key locations such as the schools, the railway stations, the community hubs, local shops and health services. It also includes people accessing community infrastructure and leisure activities – even as simple as dog walking.
- 'Strategic' movement is principally to or from areas outside the area, for instance out- commuting and through traffic to nearby towns or to access the strategic road network.

11.3. The bulk of strategic movement, and proposals to address this, are outside of the remit of a Neighbourhood Plan. However, before the expansion of housing development within the Parish and in the neighbouring urban areas, it is vitally important that the capacity of the local roads and rail services is fully evaluated, and investment made to overcome any predicted shortfalls in the capacity of the main movement corridors.

11.4. Local movement is certainly an issue that the Neighbourhood Plan can address, in terms of promoting more sustainable forms of transport, including walking, cycling, electric bicycles/scooters and public transport provision.

11.5. In raising their local concerns, transport issues accounted for 40% of the comments received on the Abbots Langley Commonplace website. (analysis of comments received is available in the Evidence database and Appendix C). It is hoped that Herts CC can address these issues.

Images show: Towpath and cycle path along the Grand Union Canal linking Watford and Hemel Hempstead and the M25, which cuts the parish in half

Policy AL19: Sustainable travel

POLICY AL19: SUSTAINABLE TRAVEL

A. To encourage healthy lifestyles and ensure that residents have a choice of sustainable means of travel to access local destinations such as community buildings, employment, schools, shopping facilities, public transport interchanges, open spaces, and other important facilities, development proposals should provide directly, or via financial planning obligations, safe pedestrian and cycle, both on- and off-site, to link up with the existing and proposed footpath and cycleway network defined on *Figures 22 and 23*.

B. In designing new and improved routes, Sport England's Active Travel Design guidance should be used to inform design and access. The following matters should be addressed:

- **i. pedestrians and cyclists should be physically separated from vehicular traffic and from one another in accordance with the County Council's standards;**
- **ii. where practicable, routes should be designed to be useable by people with disabilities, including users of mobility scooters.**
- **iii. walking routes should be well-lit, clear of obstacles and sign posted;**
- **iv. wide crossings are built on the same level which are well-lit and landscape to create safer crossings for residents;**
- **v. public transport should be prioritised in road layouts over cars to reduce travel times and make using public transport more appealing;**
- **vi. the use of 'landmark buildings' to help people navigate their journeys;**
- **vii. signs and seating on walking routes should be used to encourage more people to walk.**

C. The network of Roman roads and rural lanes across the Abbots Langley shall be protected or enhanced where possible.

D. Proposals to maintain and improve access by walking and cycling throughout the Parish, particularly in the parks and open countryside, should be encouraged to support safe, healthy exercise for all ages.

E. In respect to strategic-scale developments, financial contributions via a S.106 agreement may be required to establish new or extended local bus routes that could sustainably connect the development with employment and shopping centres, education, recreation facilities and transport interchanges. To encourage the use of buses, contributions should include (as may be relevant), the provision of bus shelters with seating and 'countdown' bus information displays.

Conformity reference: NP objective: 6; Core Strategy: CP1, CP10; NPPF (2024): 96, 105, 109, 110, 111, 115-117, 135

Purpose

11.6. If the population of the area is set to grow through the allocation of a number of significant housing sites, traffic and movement around and through the individual settlements will be an even greater issue for residents and visitors alike in the future. In particular, the speed and volume of traffic is of concern. This policy seeks to encourage non-car modes of transport to

access facilities within the area by identifying Primary Movement Routes and encouraging proposals that support or extend the existing network.

11.7. In addition, whilst active travel on foot and by bicycle has health as well as transport benefits, movement by public transport is also key to people being able to get around effectively and to reduce vehicle use. This is particularly so for those without access to a car but wishing to travel a longer distance than walking or cycling might allow. This policy seeks to ensure that adequate public and community transport options are offered.

11.8. *Figure 23* shows a map of the public rights of way, bus stops and local public car parks in the parish.

"The village is surrounded by glorious open spaces in the form of farm and parkland, which is easily accessed by an extensive, well maintained network of public footpaths and rights of way. We need to ensure that none of this is lost to development as it would adversely impact the feel of the area"

"Many pavements are in a state of disrepair and there is no pedestrian access under the railway bridge at the bottom of Toms Lane"

Justification

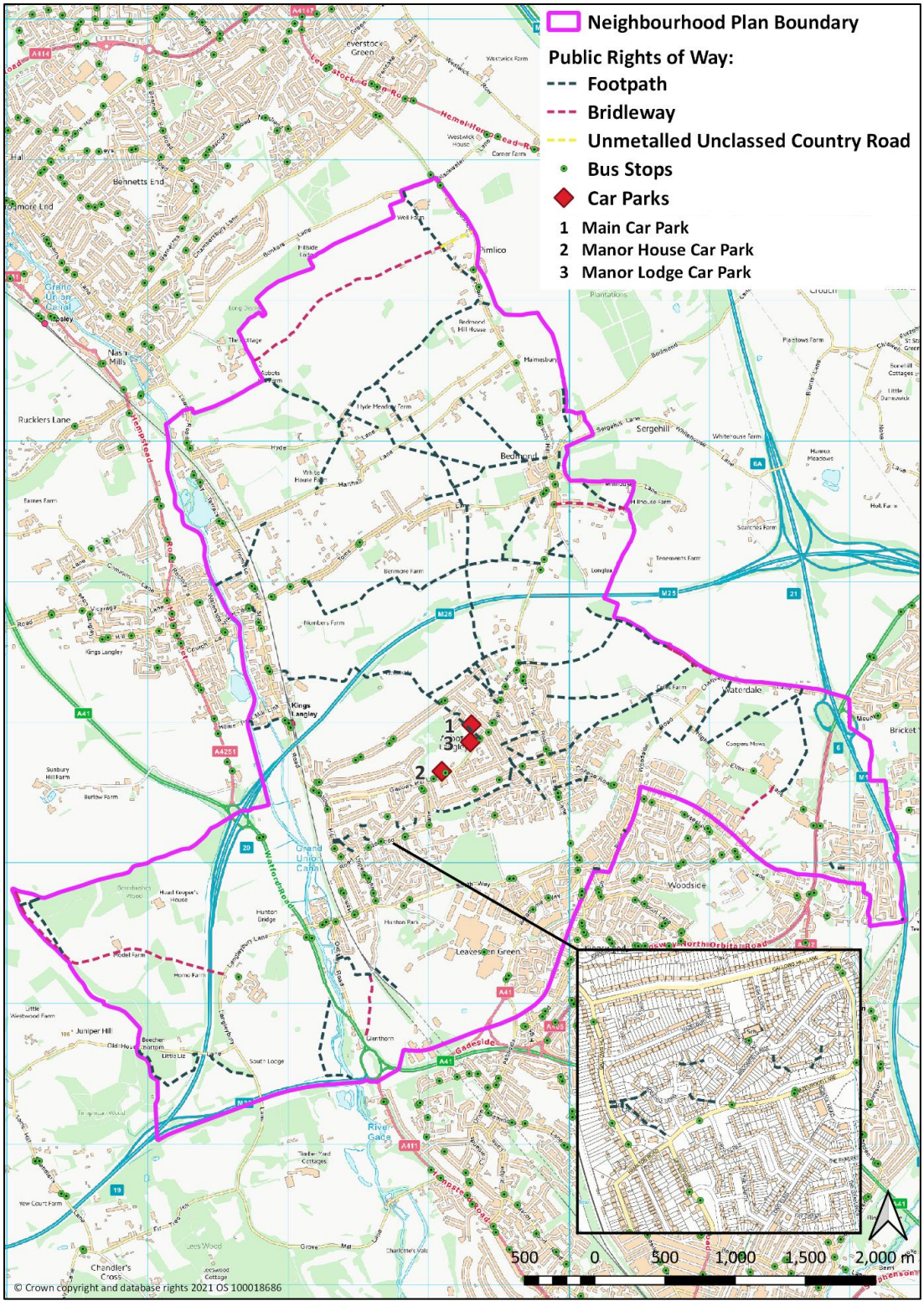
Active travel

11.9. The area has high levels of car ownership and suffers road congestion at peak times. It is important therefore that people are encouraged to use alternative modes of transport where possible. Walking and cycling in particular should be supported for their wider health and wellbeing benefits as well as environmentally friendly aspects. New development should seek to ensure that access to good pedestrian and cycling routes is provided - ideally segregated from the general traffic.

11.10. Feedback from the community during the Neighbourhood Plan process identified a high level of concern about the extra traffic that will be generated by the new housing developments using roads that are already considered by people to be congested at busy times of the day. Therefore, encouraging walking and cycling, particularly for journeys within the area, will be important. This includes linking the new housing developments with key facilities, such as shops, schools, medical and community facilities. A further resource to draw from is the "Traffic in Villages" toolkit developed by Hamilton-Baillie Associates in conjunction with Dorset AONB Partnership.

11.11. Whilst the Neighbourhood Plan cannot prevent people from using their cars for short journeys, improvements to Key Cycle/Pedestrian Routes will encourage short, local journeys to be made by foot or bicycle. Not only will this alleviate congestion and associated air pollution (particularly outside the schools and at the main junctions) but will provide regular healthy exercise. Linking both existing and new development areas into the network of existing pedestrian routes is vital to encourage more walking, less use of the car and connect residents to the key destinations within their area.

Figure 22: Public rights of way, bus stops and public car parks in the parish of Abbots Langley

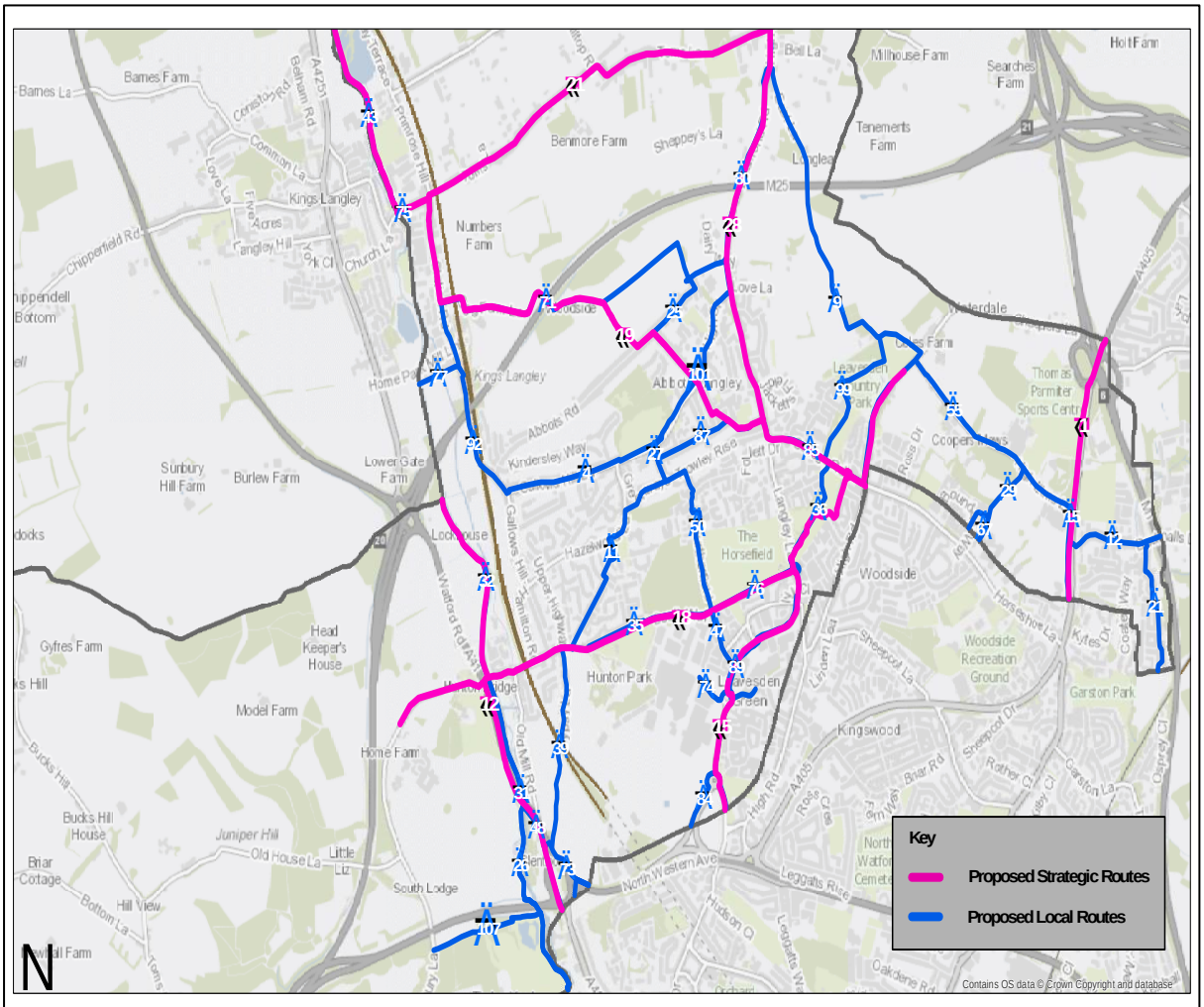


11.12. *Figure 23* shows the proposed strategic and local cycle routes for the parish of Abbots Langley. The District Council state that they have 'developed and promoted its Cycling Strategy since 1981 with visible success in creating and improving the cycle routes.' Examples include the Grand Union Canal towpath which provides a nearly traffic-free route that connects Croxley Green, western Watford, Hunton Bridge, Kings Langley and Nash Mills with 5 miles of wider, level, surfaced and well-signed paths. This links to the South Way Cycleway

which connects the improved towpath with Abbots Langley, Leavesden and into Garston on a nearly traffic-free shared footway and bridleway. TRDC LCWIP has been through public consultation in July 2023 and is in the process of being finalised for adoption later this year (2025). This has identified 5 priority routes across the district to develop and improve for the future. More information can be found at Three Rivers Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan.

11.13. Three Rivers District Council in partnership with Watford Cycle Hub and One YMCA launched a new Cycle Hub in Leavesden in 2018; providing a new 'one-stop shop' for everything to do with bikes. Located in the new Community building in Leavesden Country Park off College Road in Abbots Langley. The Leavesden Cycle Hub offered a range of facilities including servicing and repairs, bike hire, bike registering, reconditioned bike sales and cycle tuition for children and adults. However, in July 2023 this Cycle Hub was closed. The operations were consolidated at their Watford Cycle Hub.

Figure 23: Proposed strategic and local cycle routes for the Parish of Abbots Langley



Roman roads and rural lanes

11.14. There are a series of important older roads and lanes in the parish that contribute to local character. Many of these routeways have been in active use for hundreds of years. The Abbots Langley Local History Society has undertaken to map the Roman roads in the parish in their document Roman Roads Overlaid on a modern map of Abbots Langley (Copyright © Trevor Foulkes and Abbots Langley Local History Society 2000-2020). Examples of important rural lanes include those bordered by trees and hedgerows, such as East Lane, High Elms Land and the lanes in and around Bedmond. Some of these lanes are sunken and provide important wildlife corridors.

Rural footpaths and lanes criss-cross the Parish (East Lane) (Photo credit: C Gardner)

Public transport provision

"The bus service could be more reliable and frequent"

11.15. Whilst car ownership in the parish is high, the 2021 census revealed that 11.4% of households (977 households) did not have access to a car. The area has a basic network of commercial bus services, but this is less so for east-west movements in the more rural parts. There is a reduced service in the evening and at weekends.

11.16. The recent economic climate and COVID-19 has shown how expensive it is to run commercial bus services and significant numbers have been withdrawn since 2008. As bus services are reduced, re-routed or withdrawn, it has a significant impact on the community.

11.17. Aside from the commercial bus network, two community transport schemes operate in the area:

- Dial-a-Ride – a door-to-door travel service for people over 75 and anyone with a permanent disability.
- Hertfordshire Action on Disability (HAD) - a 24-hour accessible transport service to help disabled people to work, shopping, doctor's appointments, holidays and other leisure activities. This is a charged for service.

11.18. These are both very limited in what they offer disabled people. They are limited in terms of eligibility. Frequent, reliable and affordable transport is called for. Experiments in Demand

Responsive transport services have been being tried in Watford (e.g. Arriva Click). Such services seldom become commercial, needing subsidies from the Local Authority to continue. For this reason, Arrive Click no longer operates. It is important that all efforts are made to support the existing commercial bus and community transport services. This should ensure that it does not result in high increases in fares. Community bus providers, in particular, have reported that additional services could be provided as long as they can be publicly funded and there are volunteers to operate them.

11.19. Therefore, it is proposed that new major development contributes towards the financing of such expanded services, where appropriate, and improved infrastructure. For housing, major development is defined as where 10 or more homes will be provided, or the site has an area of 0.5 hectares or more. For non-residential development it means additional floorspace of 1,000m^2 or more, or a site of 1 hectare or more, or as otherwise provided in the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015.

Bus services, passing through Bedmond, provide a lifeline for those without private transport (Photo credit: G Ball)

Policy AL20: Public parking

POLICY AL20: PUBLIC PARKING

A. Development proposals that would result in the loss of existing publicly available off-street car parking spaces will not be supported.

B. Proposals that enable the provision of additional, publicly accessible off-road car parking spaces, to alleviate parking congestion near to businesses, schools and at transport hubs, will be supported.

C. Alongside any new public car parking provision, the following facilities will be strongly supported as part of that provision:

a. dedicated bicycle parking facilities, preferably with e-bike charging points, covered and secure; and

b. electric vehicle charging points.

Conformity reference: NP objective: 6; Core Strategy: CP1, CP10; Development Management Policies: DM13; NPPF (2024): 109, 113

Purpose

11.20. The Neighbourhood Plan first and foremost seeks to encourage sustainable modes of transport, for instance by improving active travel opportunities and encouraging more sustainable travel choices to railway stations and local amenities. Nevertheless, the area does have high car ownership and is a popular destination for those choosing to drive to the railway stations to commute out of the area to work. The issues of car parking, and particularly the availability of parking spaces in each of the settlements - including those with electric vehicle charging points - is a serious concern among local residents.

11.21. This policy seeks to ensure that there is adequate off-road public car parking for those working, shopping or visiting the parish. Also, with policies to encourage cycling, it is important to invest in cycle racks at key places across the network to ensure bicycles can be stored safely and deter theft.

"More people are using electric cars and we should install charging points in the village car park and outside Manor House'
'Can we have some more bike racks near to the shops, to play areas and other amenities?"

Justification

11.22. Residents and businesses have revealed a concern about the lack of public car parks near to the some of the main facilities, such as the Doctors' Surgery in Abbots Langley Village and Kings Langley railway station. This has led to increasing numbers of cars parked along residential roads during the day, which in turn introduces parking controls and can deny local people the opportunity to park near to their home during the day. Also, such cars in residential areas contribute to air pollution, congestion and can present a safety hazard.

11.23. It will be important to retain, manage and improve the quality of publicly accessible car parking areas, particularly within walking distance of the railway stations, key facilities and

schools. In addition, to consider where additional public car parking might be developed. This is important for the continued economic prosperity of the settlements as well as the convenience of residents, workers and visitors.

Electric car Charging Points

11.24. With the phasing out of new petrol and diesel cars by 2030 and new hybrid cars by 2035, a feasibility study is required to provide car charging systems for electric vehicles. Charging points at houses and offices with off-street parking are straightforward. However, in the parish there are many houses where parking has to be on-street and electrical connections to individual houses is not likely to be practical. A feasibility study is required to show how facilities for charging electrical vehicles at or near every house in the Parish and how the electricity can be paid for when not connected to the car owner's electrical supply. The study should take account that many houses may wish to own two or more cars per household and the demand for limited on-street parking may mean owners cannot park next to their homes without controlled parking schemes. See Chapter 12, Project 6, for more details.

12. ASPIRATIONAL PROJECTS

Aspirational development sites

12.1. Whilst the Neighbourhood Plan is not allocating sites for a specific development, potential development sites will come forward, as part of the emerging Local Plan. Locality's Site Assessment for Neighbourhood Plans Guidance states:

'Where you cannot demonstrate that a site is deliverable, for example, it may be in a good location but there is no evidence that it could become available, your plan can identify 'aspirations' for sites you would like to see developed and set out principles for each site linked to plan policies.'

'In order to demonstrate that there is a good prospect the site will be delivered, there should be evidence that it is suitable, available and economically viable.'

12.2. As part of the preparation of this Plan, thought has been given to potential sites that might come forward for regeneration and their optimum use. If such sites were to become available, development will be resisted unless it accords with the policies of this Neighbourhood Plan and aspirations for the sites, as set out below. The Parish Council will welcome direct involvement in the planning for any sites. In particular, it will emphasise the need to ensure that adequate infrastructure provision is in place to support that new development, including schools, health facilities, adequate parking provision, leisure and recreation, improvements to the road and footpath network and flood prevention measures.

12.3. There may be a number of specific sites/ areas that we could provide more detail in the plan – either to allocate them for a specific use, or to set out a series of overarching principles for their development should that happen. This is an on-going part of our work.

Six Project Descriptions that show how Policies could be Implemented

Project 1: Sunnyside Community Food Production and Training Project

12.4. A possible project to be located near to Abbots Langley Village could be a Sunnyside Initiative similar to their successful Northchurch Project. This is an example of establishing a Community Growing Space (Policy AL16) and creating viable employment/training initiatives (Policy AL8.) Once an appropriate site is found, the proposed project is to replicate the initiative provided for Sunnyside in Northchurch. From an initial discussion with the landowners, there may be an opportunity to set up this project on the Langleybury Estate. The business case and feasibility of this project can be developed from the experience gained in Northchurch and the other projects managed by this Trust.

12.5. Sunnyside Rural Trust primarily exists to offer training and support services to young people and adults with disability through horticultural activities. In recent years they have broadened their remit to include wider benefits for the entire community and environment.

12.6. Currently, they offer 150 'trainees' opportunities to build their work skills, self-esteem and work experience, every week. They focus on what people can do rather than their labelled

disability. Sunnyside employ 7 supported employees in their 42 staff members and have 38 volunteers supporting them. Their Chief Executive lives in Abbots Langley Village.

12.7. Sunnyside Rural Trust have three large sites (approx. 6 acres each), plus a small main office in Berkhamsted and a one-acre site in Bedmond. A new site is being planned with developers at Rectory Farm, Kings Langley.

Northchurch Project in more detail

12.8. To coincide with their 30th Anniversary in 2020, the Trust built a new facility at the first site that Sunnyside Rural Trust started, in the Northchurch allotments. It offers an innovative service to young people and adults with learning disabilities, as well as a range of services to the community. They commissioned an excellent local architect at D-Lab and local builders to realise their plans.

12.9. Their priority is to offer a safe and creative service to vulnerable young people and adults to benefit from training, confidence building and employment services. The development centres around a new stable block and courtyard to house a small number of rescued animals, including pigs, sheep, goats and feral cats. This means that trainees can benefit from the therapeutic nature of working with animals. This allows them to manage, sustainably, the land in line with Sunnyside Rural Trust's environmental principles. They foresee that the introduction of animals encourages the public to visit their site and the new farm shop. This offers and promotes retail experience for young people and adults with learning disabilities.

12.10. They have a successful farm shop at their Hemel Food Garden site. This has proven to lead to employment opportunities for individuals and provide a much-needed place to sell local goods.

12.11. There are accessible facilities for the trainees to enjoy. Everyone works hard at Sunnyside. Having a space to sit and enjoy the land they work and the animals they share it with, is therapeutic in itself. This project recognises how important it is that everyone has the opportunity to contribute to society. It celebrates what people can do rather than any disability.

Images of the Sunnyside Project during construction and on completion

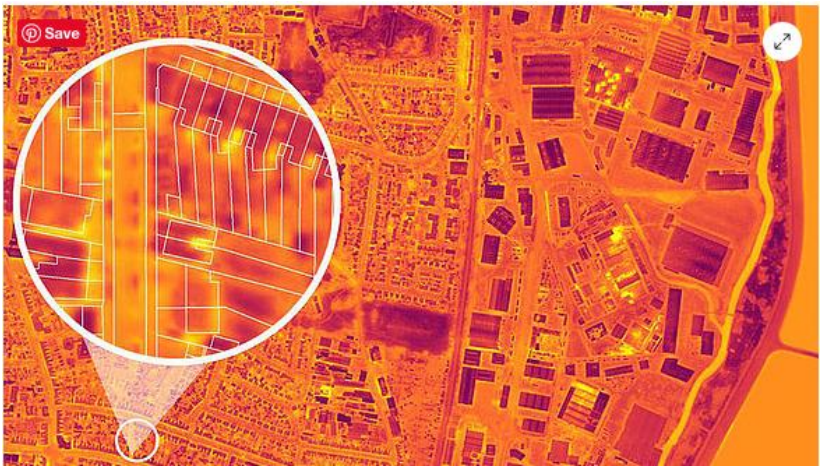
Project 2: Using aerial photography to measure factors affecting Climate Change across the Parish

12.12. To deal effectively with local issues affecting Climate Change in the Parish, it is important to have efficient means to measure some of the key factors that could reduce local carbon emissions. Three examples are to improve the heat insulation of buildings, increase locally generated electricity and protect/extend the tree and hedgerows coverage in the Parish.

12.13. Analysis using aerial photography is an effective tool to address these issues. The results from analysis, available from Bluesky, can show where investment should be directed to improve the insulation of buildings, add more solar panels to south-facing roofs and maintain and extend tree coverage in the area. Bluesky is the leading aerial survey company in the UK providing a range of survey, geographic and CAD data, including aerial photography and mapping. They provide the products to conduct 3D building models, National Tree Map™, topographic mapping, thermal surveys and a range of specialist data analysis. Bluesky are partners with Ordnance Survey.

a) Measuring Heat Loss from Buildings across the Parish

12.14. 'Bluesky uses a high-tech thermal imaging camera to measure heat loss from roofs. This identifies poorly insulated homes and other public buildings. The property level heat loss maps provide an accurate and up-to-date picture that can be used to pinpoint homes eligible for financial support, such as the UK Government's Green Homes Grants.' Bluesky International state: 'The intelligence we can derive from a thermal image can help target this money, highlighting at a glance, properties that would benefit from additional insulation and double glazing.' 'Bluesky have produced thermal maps for a number of towns and cities across the UK covering a significant percentage of the population.'



Colour coded thermal maps from Bluesky

12.15. Working with property owners, local authorities and energy companies, the colour-coded thermal maps, combined with other types of geographic data, such as local authority address database, are used to give accurate and up to date information to tackle fuel poverty, manage carbon emissions and improve energy efficiency.' 'Thermal surveys are flown in the winter months, during the evening and after sunset, in order to capture the widest variations in temperature that can occur as a result of poor insulation or excessive energy consumption. The data can be produced ready for use in a Geographical Information System (GIS) or Bluesky can produce a list of properties with high heat loss values.'

b) Increase locally generated electricity

12.16. One of the set objectives of the Abbots Langley Neighbourhood Plan is Objective 7 'Explore the potential for viable renewable energy projects locally, serving and ideally owned by the local community.' This is another aspirational project to assist locally to adapt to Climate Change. Examining aerial photography across the parish (say on Google Earth), it is clear that less than 1% of properties use solar panels on their south facing roofs. From the knowledge gained from their use in the area during the past ten years, it would possible to estimate how much electricity could be generated with the deployment of solar panels on most houses, commercial and public buildings. This would not necessarily involve owners investing in solar panels for their own premises, but this is one of the options. The project would examine the business case for widescale investment in solar panels, calculate the electricity that could be generated annually and the most efficient methods of implementing such a scheme.

12.17. Mounting solar panels on existing buildings seems a far better means of capturing solar energy than deploying arrays of solar panels across open farmland. There are local firms in the area that can provide the technical information to assist with this exploratory project. This may include RES.

12.18. 'The campaign for the Local Electricity Bill recently hit a milestone of 326 MPs (supporting the proposals in June 2024) which is encouraging - this is over half of the Members of the House of Commons.' This campaign states that 'there is huge potential for more community-scale renewable energy generation infrastructure to be built across the country.' 'The programme is blocked by the current market rules.' 'Legislation is proposed that could make it financially viable for current and potential renewable generators to sell locally generated energy directly to local customers.' In Germany, where this type of legislation exists, 'there are over 1000 supply companies (in comparison to around 50 in the UK) most of these are local, community-owned suppliers.' For more information see: https://powerforpeople.org.uk/blog/local-electricity-bill-briefing-for-mps

c) Understanding the location, size and height of trees/hedgerows across the Parish

12.19. Trees, woodlands and forests have a very special place in UK culture. They have provided us with many of the essentials of life throughout our history. Their health is essential for our wellbeing and prosperity. They shape our landscapes and street scenes. Our choices today will shape our future and the future of the environment.

Extract from the National Tree Map from Bluesky

"Plant more trees: There are a lot of 'bare' patches of grass; verges and other small pieces of open land dotted all around residential parts of the neighbourhood, many of them public or parish spaces. These are all potential opportunities to plant more trees in Abbots Langley, and this could be included as a policy in the Neighbourhood Plan. Trees provide a home and food for all kinds of nature and help to support the health and well-being of a local community and its quality of life. They help to keep environmental pollution in check. They give us oxygen to breathe in and they absorb carbon dioxide. Abbots Langley also has the air pollution impact of the M25 to contend with. Abbots Langley civic parish can have a role to play in supporting biodiversity and nature at local level, and trees can help to achieve that. There are many kinds of hardy native species of different shapes, sizes and features that could help to enhance the well-being our neighbourhood and also its appearance. Take a mental 'walk' around the local area and imagine all the trees that are currently there, not being there. How would it look or feel without them? What would be the environmental impact? We cannot separate the quality of our lives from the quality of our environment and the Neighbourhood Plan should do all that it can to improve the situation."

12.20. Lone trees, woodland and trees in hedgerows create important ecologies. For those who work in this sector, knowledge of the location of trees in order to manage and maintain ecological areas and habitat pathways is essential. The National Tree Map TM (NTMTM) has been used by organisations to help them understand and manage ecologically sensitive areas, and also to identify where habitat can be improved by replanting. Conversely, planting new trees too close to other established trees can lead to growth being suppressed and ultimately a tree failing and being removed. Using NTMTM to aid area planning and future expansion of tree planting can mitigate against such risks.

12.21. A map, detailing the location and attributes of more than 300 million trees, is being used to research the role of natural woodland in meeting climate change targets. NTMTM is a unique map which contains the location, height and spread of almost every tree in England and Wales. The map is already widely used among tree managers and practitioners.

12.22. The UK Government is pledging tens of millions of pounds for tree planting schemes. The Bluesky National Tree Map data is being used for Sustainable Land Use to understand where many thousands of hectares of new woodland could be located. Created from high resolution aerial photography, terrain and surface height data and colour infrared imagery, the National Tree Map accurately records the location, height and canopy for every tree in the UK over 3 metres in height.

12.23. Bluesky's National Tree Map is created using innovative algorithms and image processing techniques in combination with the most up-to-date and detailed aerial photography. In addition to the three vector map layers; Crown Polygons, Idealised Crowns and Height

Points, the Bluesky National Tree Map also includes an attribute table with unique identification for each crown feature, height attributes and area calculations. The data is available in a range of GIS ready formats on Bluesky's online Map Shop alongside the most up-to-date aerial photography, accurate height data and 3D building models.

Extract from Bluesky's National Tree Map

Project 3: Masterplan for Abbots Langley Village Centre

12.24. Land in the central area of Abbots Langley village has important assets for the wider community. The residents want the centre of the village to remain a vibrant place with a concentration of key facilities associated with retail, health services, communal gatherings and activities, restaurants/cafes, churches, etc. Opportunities to add to its value should not be missed when sites becoming available. Preparing a planning brief for this central area would demonstrate the potential opportunities that may be possible if sites become available. Such opportunities may be missed if no preparations are made in advance. The fate of the village centre is then left to market forces. 'If you **fail** to **plan**, you are **planning to fail**!'- a quote from Benjamin Franklin.

12.25. The current central area of the village focuses on the High Street extending from Margaret House to Breakspeare School. The brief for a local development plan for the area would be to monitor trends in changing land uses, maintain and improve the current range of land uses and services, and identify what new initiatives are required to enhance attraction of Abbots Langley as a Key Centre for the surrounding residential community.

12.26. A recent example showing the need for a Masterplan for the area is the closure of Margaret House in November 2020. Previously, this was a care centre for the elderly. This building is owned by Hertfordshire County Council and is located next to the Library and Abbots Langley Primary School.

12.27. Apparently, the County Council regard the site as 'surplus to its needs.' The site was sold in 2024 for housing development. Given its central position in the village on the High Street, there were missed opportunities for mixed development on this site.

12.28. Another example is the relocation of the Breakspeare School in 2024. This is another site owned by Hertfordshire County Council. The Masterplan has considered this vacated site's

suitability to redevelop as a new, expanded Health Centre to replace the Vine House Health Centre. See Appendix H for more details. However, at present, there are no known proposals for its redevelopment. Given its central location in the village, it is a valuable public asset and could be a mixed development, including facilities and services of value to the local community.

12.29. Health and well-being hubs are being developed by the NHS across West Hertfordshire. Four initial sites were proposed in Elstree, South Oxhey, Hemel Hempstead and Harpenden. These hubs are recommended to create a network of services closer to where people live, meaning in many cases people won't have to travel far to get the care they need. Health and social care teams will be based together in the same place to deliver more joined-up care, sharing information and decision making.

'Expanding care closer to where people live will mean high quality and safer services for local people. People will experience more joined up care as local providers will work together in a network of health, social care, wellbeing and community services, reducing the need for people to travel to hospital.' Dr Michael Van der Watt, Consultant Cardiologist, West Herts Hospitals NHS Trust

12.30. These hubs will offer services according to local needs including:

- Health promotion and prevention services, such as stop smoking and weight loss clinics
- Some GP, pharmacy, optometry and dentistry services alongside community and social care
- A range of tests and treatments traditionally offered in hospitals such as x-rays, ultrasound scans, blood tests, physiotherapy services, mental health services, minor surgery, rehabilitation services and outpatient clinics for children
- Health and wellbeing hubs will be able to offer urgent care too, helping to prevent many unnecessary journeys to an A&E department and even prevent hospital admissions

- In some hubs there will also be some community beds for people needing short stays before returning home; also, some urgent care services, for example to treat minor injuries
- We would like services to be located or linked with children's centres and voluntary sector organisations. This will help people access information about dance and reading classes, as well as support groups such as those for carers who look after someone with dementia or another condition.

Project 4: Community Affordable Housing Scheme

12.31. Development that is led by the community is very often driven by a need to secure affordable housing for local people in the belief that housing that comes through the planning system may be neither the right tenure nor price-point to be attractive to residents, especially those in the lower quartile incomes seeking affordable rented accommodation. It has the potential to address some common market failures, for example the poor supply of dwellings for the elderly, the need for key workers in areas of high property values and the importance of enabling those seeking to set up an independent home to stay in the area they know, close to valued social and economic networks.

12.32. Community-led models for developing affordable housing include:

- ***Community self-build*** involves local people, who need housing, building their own homes. In doing so, residents gain both a home and new skills. The end product is usually a self-build housing association or a housing cooperative. The homes can be either for rent, outright ownership or shared ownership. Self-builders normally purchase an equity stake of 50 per cent and pay rent on the other 50 per cent.
- ***Collective custom-build*** is another form of self-provided housing, where groups work closely with a developer who either builds the homes to a custom design or oversees the process, managing supply chains and facilitating access to financial advice and other professional support. However, sometimes group custom-builders choose to manage their own project, known as 'independent group custom-build'.
- ***Community land trusts*** are non-profit organisations controlled by their members through a democratic governance structure. Membership is open to anyone who lives in a defined local area, including occupiers of the properties provided by the community land trust. While it may provide homes for sale as well as for rent, a key feature of a community land trust is that the homes it provides are kept permanently affordable.

12.33. By bringing forward development, which is owned by the community, the community is able to set rents and/or mortgage payments at a rate that it feels is appropriate, for example, a Community Land Trust can link the cost of a mortgage to the area's average wage, and dwellings are not subject to 'right to buy' thus helping to ensure they remain in community hands in perpetuity.

12.34. The need to pass a test of viability is in many ways healthy. Crispin Kelly writes, *Community Land Trusts (CLTs) are a good vehicle for neighbourhood plan policies to be delivered. A CLT can agree with the owners of allocated sites to buy their land on a deferred basis and at a*

*discount to reflect the community's decision to allocate only land which can be bought cheaply. Out of every 12 homes built by a CLT, about seven will need to be sold to pay for the land and construction costs, with the balance owned debt-free by the community (*Crispin Kelly, Nimbys need to become Yimbys, and merely taking part in plan-making is not enough, Architects Journal, 17th April 2015 (Crispin Kelly is an architect and founder of development company Baylight, http://www.baylight.co.uk/).

12.35. The need to ensure viability leaves scope for not only market housing, but also other forms of 'alternative' development, for example self and custom-build units and co-housing projects. In addition, land may be allocated elsewhere within the NPA accompanied by a development brief which encourages alternative housing products as a share of the overall development. Including a Project that allows the community to take initiatives to provide affordable housing is required if other forms of public housing schemes fail to meet the local housing needs of the community.

12.36. In June 2011 TRDC published 'Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document with Proposed Changes.' This designated Bedmond as a rural village with 'Rural Exception Sites' for affordable housing. Dwellings built under the Rural exception Policy must remain affordable in perpetuity. The TRDC report explains how houses can be provided under this policy.

12.37. **The suggestions in this section identify that there are alternative approaches for the community to provide affordable housing schemes and, whilst beyond the scope of producing this Neighbourhood Plan, it is presented as an aspirational project for the community to develop it if the need for low-cost affordable housing is not met by private developers or Housing Association Projects.**

Project 5: Measures to enhance biodiversity and natural corridors in the Parish

Conserving and enhancing the natural environment

12.38. Nature conservation is an integral part of the planning system. As such, this needs to be taken into consideration in any development. We must ensure that future generations can enjoy the neighbourhood's rich geological and biological inheritance. We must continue to improve the protection and management of what we have today. In future we believe the planning system must give higher priority to maintaining and improving biodiversity.

12.39. **We believe that establishing a Local Interest Group of residents in the Parish to focus attention on local biodiversity issues would be helpful. The Hertfordshire Environmental Records Centre is the primary resource for ecological data for the County. Advice can be sought from the Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust.** There are many well-established Local Interest Groups in the Parish including the Gardening Society, Local History Society and the 'Abbots in Transition' Group. It may be possible to work with these organisations and harness their knowledge and interest in local biodiversity.

12.40. In addition, the Leavesden HIVE in Leavesden Country Park is another local resource that hosts a wide variety of community, heritage and wildlife activities. This eco-building creates opportunities for outdoor learning and environmental citizenship with the help of employed Park Rangers. Leavesden HIVE provides a home for a wide range of nature activities for the

community and educational activities for schools, a meeting point for the *'Friends of'* Leavesden Country Park and local Historical Societies and a focal point for the Heritage and wildlife activities throughout the year. The Hive could become a focus meeting point for this aspirational project.

12.41. The protection and enhancement of biodiversity assets is dependent on robust networks of Green Infrastructure which facilitate movement and genetic exchange. Green infrastructure is expected to contribute positively to the conservation, restoration, re-creation and enhancement of networks of biodiversity on a landscape scale. Provision of green infrastructure should be guided by the Hertfordshire Ecological Network Mapping dataset to ensure that it is strategically located and consistent with the habitat priorities for the location.

12.42. Buffering of watercourses is important to protect the aquatic environment from pollution and disturbance, and to create movement and habitat corridors for wildlife. Development will not be permitted within 8m of the top of the bank of a watercourse as a minimum, but a 15m buffer is preferable.

12.43. Lighting within and around development is expected to respect the ecological functionality of movement corridors. Certain species of invertebrate and mammal are highly sensitive to inappropriate lighting. In these circumstances, surveys are expected to determine where these movement corridors are. Measures are required that demonstrate how these corridors will be protected and enhanced.

12.44. Bat populations are particularly sensitive to development that severs or disturbs movement corridors. Where appropriate, flight corridors should be identified and protected or enhanced to ensure the ecological functionality of bat populations. Examples of suitable measures include green bridges, underpasses or tunnels that are situated on the exact traditional routes of bat populations and free from disturbance.

12.45. Development should always seek a net gain to biodiversity and to create opportunities for wildlife. Landscaping design can have a significant beneficial effect on wildlife. Tree planting schemes where the primary purpose is to provide ecological enhancement should maximise diversity of species. Species selected should be suitable to the soil conditions and be comprised of appropriate vegetation communities consistent with National Vegetation Classification communities (NVC). Naturalistic tree planting should not be in straight lines.

Project 6: Planning the completion of the off-road cycle and footpath networks and other measures to assist with the decarbonisation of private transport

12.46. In 2021 the UK Government is launching a Transport Decarbonisation Plan. Sustainable fuels are delivering the hard-to-electrify transport sectors, with biomethane or green hydrogen prominent for heavy vehicles such as buses, coaches and HGV's. However, a much wider evaluation of our travel behaviour is now in the spotlight, partly stimulated by Covid-19. As well as investing in changing vehicle technologies, new energy sources and the supporting infrastructure is required. We must consider the need to travel, the wide range of active (walking and cycling) and shared modes, the risks and benefits from a range of autonomous

systems, including unmanned drones. Our relationship with the physical world is blending with the digital and virtual environment in ways we never thought possible.

a) Completing the off-road Cycle / Footpath Networks in the Parish

12.47. In the Parish, we expect there to be a much wider role and usage of the off-road networks. Besides their use by pedestrians and cyclists, there will be more use of privately owned electrical bicycles and electric scooters as well as mobility scooters for the elderly and disabled. So, these networks can be designed for use by all ages with the primary safety requirement that the surfaces are well-maintained and separate from vehicular traffic. As shown in *Figure 23*, Three Rivers District Council has proposed Strategic and Local Networks for cycling in the Parish of Abbots Langley. Some of the links in this network are highways and therefore mixing cyclists with general traffic. To encourage much greater use of the cycle network by all ages, ideally the cycle network needs to be free of traffic. Therefore, further design work is required to achieve this with greater involve of residents who use their bicycles, electric cycles/scooters, mobility scooters, etc. **This aspirational project could be led by the Parish Council and set up as a Local Cyclists and Walking Group who would be encouraged to audit the existing networks and recommend where improvements are required for action by the Local Authority.**

b) Off-street and on-street electrical charging systems in the Parish.

12.48. With the phasing out of new petrol and diesel cars by 2030 and new hybrid cars by 2035, vehicle charging systems for electric vehicles are required. Charging points at houses and offices with off-street parking are straightforward. However, in the Parish there are streets where parking has to be on-street and electrical connections to individual houses may not be practical. **A feasibility study is required to show how facilities for charging electrical vehicles at every house in the Parish can be achieved.** Also, policies are required on how electricity charging can be paid for when not connected to the car owner's electrical supply. The study should take account that many houses may wish to own two or more cars per household. Limited on-street parking may mean owners cannot park next to their homes without introducing controlled parking schemes.

c) Shared Transport - Local Electric Car/Cycle/Scooter Clubs

12.49. By the 2030 deadline, methods to provide alternatives to multi-car ownership in a household will be introduced. Already the move towards car-leasing rather than outright purchase is widespread. Car and van hire companies are developing community car/van clubs where local residents can pay an annual membership fee and then rent a community-based car by the hour. Such cars are allocated parking places throughout the area they serve. Similar arrangements can be done to set up Cycle Clubs or Scooter Clubs. For example, in Watford see: https://beryl.cc/bikeshare/watford . These cycles can be powered by batteries, to make them more accessible for most age groups.

12.50. The viability of these 'mobility clubs' depend on attracting high usage. Therefore, at present, they are set up in the larger cities and not rural settlements. **The suggestion is to conduct a Feasibly Study to determine if it would be viable to operate 'multi-modal**

mobility clubs' in the larger settlements within the Parish and, if so, how best to deliver these services. This would require a survey via social media to determine the willingness of residents to pay for the membership of such services and test the local demand and viability for such an initiative.

d) Other future transport systems to aid carbon-free mobility: Self-Driving Delivery Robots and Automated Scooters

12.51. With a combination of mobile technology, autonomous robots and partnerships with stores and restaurants, 'Starship' robots make local delivery faster, smarter and more cost-efficient. 'Starship' robots can carry items within a 4-mile (6km) radius. Their delivery platform enables dispatch of parcels, groceries and food delivered direct from stores, at the time that the customer requests via a mobile app. Once ordered the robots' entire journey and location can be monitored on a smartphone.

A Starship robot in Milton Keynes, https://www.starship.xyz/follow/,
Photograph c/o: Starship Technologies; and Automated e-scooters by Spin

12.52. Starship's robots move at pedestrian speed and weigh no more than 100 pounds. According to the operator, these robots are inherently safe and can navigate around objects and people. By 2021, the system had made more than 1million deliveries worldwide, operating in many cities. Locally, the system has been in widespread use in Milton Keynes since March 2020. For security, the cargo bay on the robot is mechanically locked throughout the journey and can be opened only by the recipient with their smartphone app. The location of the robots is tracked, so you know exactly the location of your order and receive a notification at the time of arrival. The entire delivery platform is both energy and cost efficient. It can be used for a large variety of tasks. In comparison to more traditional delivery services, things such as groceries, packages and food can be delivered for less cost. As an electronically powered robot, the system is clean and green.

12.53. Applying the same principle for automating three-wheeled e-scooters for passengers is being introduced by a Ford-owned company, called Spin. The company plans to offer 'an in-app "scooter-hailing" feature later in 2021 for riders to schedule or request a real-time scooter pickup within a several-blocks radius.' See video demo: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_lB1K_ylig0

12.54. The examples provided by Starship and Spin show the opportunities that are possible for places that have a fully developed traffic-free network which, in turn, can reduce dependency on the private car for local trips. All deliveries could be consolidated at a local freight hub either for local collection or, where appropriate delivered to the home or business by a Starship robot. This would reduce vehicle traffic on local roads.

13. IMPLEMENTATION AND PLAN REVIEW

13.1. Abbots Langley Parish Council is the official body responsible for the Neighbourhood Plan. It established a Steering Group – comprising councillors and residents - to lead on the development of the Neighbourhood Plan. Once the Plan has been 'delivered', the work of the Steering Group effectively comes to an end. There are, however, a series of actions and projects that will need to be undertaken, not least the early review of the Neighbourhood Plan, in light of the emerging Local Plan. For this reason, the Parish Council might consider extending the role of the Steering Group, which could include the same members or provide an opportunity for new members to join.

13.2. Specific actions that will need to be undertaken are as follows:

- Pursuing the Non-Policy Actions detailed in Chapter 16 of this document.
- Comment on planning applications or consultations relating to the Plan area.
- Monitoring the application of the Neighbourhood Plan policies to ensure they have been applied consistently and interpreted correctly in response to planning applications.
- Maintaining a dialogue with Three Rivers District Council regarding the timing and content of the emerging new Local Plan.
- Initiating the Aspirational Projects described in Chapter 12, as funding becomes available.
- Working with Three Rivers District Council and Historic England to explore further additions to the Local List for Abbots Langley to include buildings noted as historically important in the Neighbourhood Plan engagement process. The application of Policy AL6, however, does not depend on the inclusion of the identified non-designated heritage assets on the Local List.
- Identifying areas / sites within the parish of potential biodiversity gain to officially designate as banked sites that developers can use to meet bio-diversity gains requirement.

13.3. This Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared whilst Three Rivers District Council is preparing a new Local Plan. The emerging Local Plan will cover the period up to 2041. The Parish Council recognises that it will be important to keep the Neighbourhood Plan up to date in general terms and ensure that it remains in general conformity with the wider development plan in particular. In this context, it should commence a review of the neighbourhood plan within six months of the adoption of the Local Plan.

14. INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS AND PROVISION

Financial Contributions from Developers with Projects in the Parish

14.1. Going forward, the Parish Council is keen to influence the way in which developer contributions are spent in the Parish to the full extent of its powers, under national legislation and planning guidance.

14.2. There are different types of contributions arising from Section 106 agreements, Section 278 agreements and the Community Infrastructure Levy. A Section 106 agreement (based on that section of the 1990 Town & Country Planning Act) or planning obligation is a private agreement made between local authorities and developers and can be attached to a planning permission to make acceptable development which would otherwise be unacceptable in planning terms. A Section 278 agreement refers to a section of the Highways Act 1980 that allows developers to enter into a legal agreement with the local authority to make alterations or improvements to a public highway as part of a planning application.

14.3. The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) is a non-negotiable charge on development based on a fixed rate per square metre of net additional development on a site and is levied by Three Rivers District Council (TRDC). Different charge rates apply for different types of uses and in different areas. The levy is intended to fund the provision, improvement, replacement or maintenance of infrastructure required to support development in an area as set out in its Local Plan.

14.4. This could include new roads and transport, local amenities such as parks, community centres, schools and health facilities. Affordable housing is explicitly excluded from the list of things on which CIL can be spent by charging authorities. Whilst CIL monies are retained by TRDC, the authority is required to put aside a 'neighbourhood portion' of the CIL collected in each neighbourhood – 15% of the amounts paid (capped) in respect of local development (and 25% (uncapped) in places where there is a Neighbourhood Plan). This portion is to be spent on infrastructure or 'anything else that is concerned with addressing the demands that development places on an area'.

14.5. Following the publication of the Neighbourhood Plan, the Parish Council will set out a Spending Priority Schedule for developer contributions to be spent on. This will apply to monies raised from development by any successor mechanism to CIL or other funding from developers e.g. Section 106 agreements or other planning obligations.

14.6. The Parish Council intends to regularly review the spending on CIL, and CIL priorities. Any proposed changes to the CIL spending principles or priorities will be published for comment by the community and other interested parties. Once finalised, any updated list will be published on the Neighbourhood Plan website and in relevant literature.

15. POLICIES MAPS

Key to Figure 24

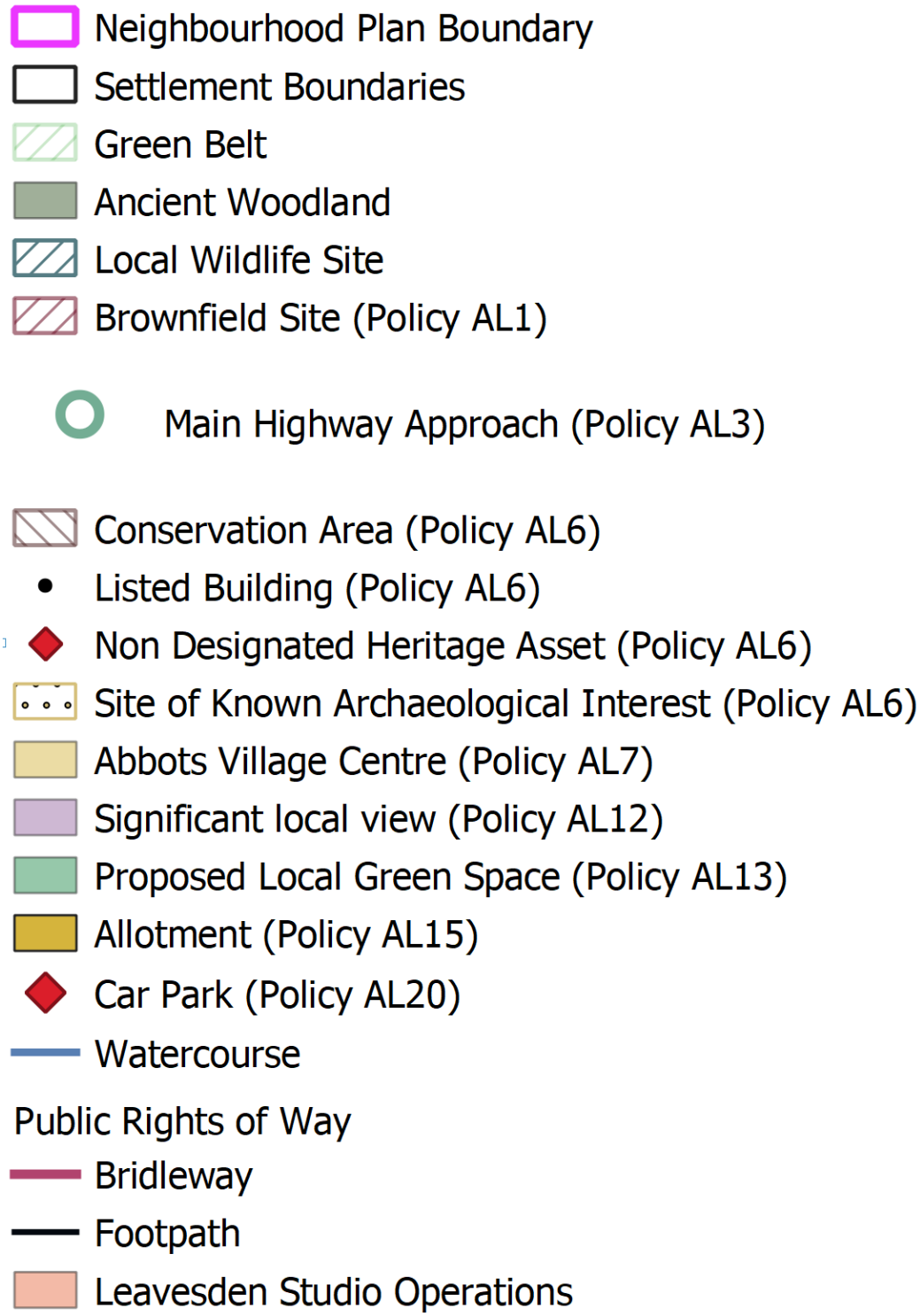
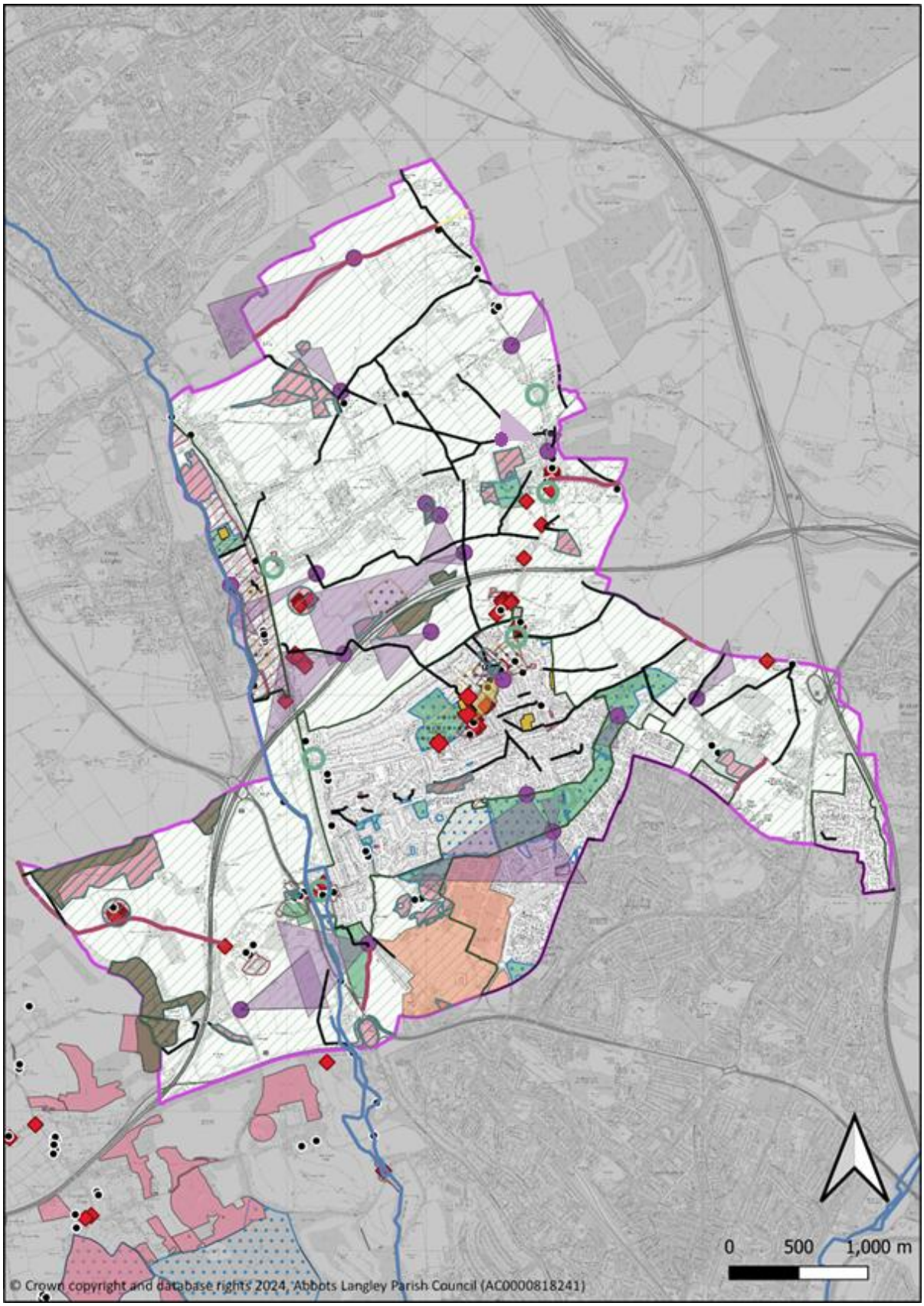


Figure 24: Policies map - parish-wide



Community Statements and Local facilities

15.6 There are fourteen distinct communities in the Parish of Abbots Langley. The 'Design Guide and Code' for the Abbots Langley Parish (Appendix D) groups the different communities into five distinctive 'character areas.' These 'character areas' cover the Parish and are shown in this report on *Figure 24.* These 'character areas' are:

1. **Pimlico and Bedmond**. i) Pimlico ii) Bedmond iii) Toms Lane (east)
2. **Gade Valley** iii) Toms Lane (west) iv) Gade Valley v) Roman Gardens
3. **Abbots Langley Village** vi) Abbots Langley Village vii) Hillside viii) Furtherfield
4. **Leavesden** ix) Abbotswood Park x) Leavesden xi) Boundary Way xii) Coates Way / Bucknalls lane
5. **Langleybury/ Hunton Bridge** xiii) Langleybury xiv) Hunton Bridge

16.6 In the following paragraphs, each community is reviewed to determine its self-sufficiency with regard to nearby basic facilities - associated with local shops, health care, education, leisure activities and public transport services. The intention is to show the extent to which communities can become '20-minute neighbourhoods' - with basic facilities serving daily needs within walkable distances. Maps have been prepared to show the locations of existing facilities relative to each community. See *Figures 25 to 31*.

Pimlico and Bedmond

15.7 As part of the Neighbourhood Plan, a report has been prepared on the 'Aspirations for Bedmond' - see Appendix I. Bedmond and the nearby small settlement of Pimlico are located in the north of the Parish. Residents believe Bedmond has sufficient facilities for its size and continues to serve its residents well. Facilities include the local primary school (Bedmond Academy), a Village Hall, the Church of the Ascension, Bedmond Stores, the Bell Pub, the Sports and Social Club, associated playing fields and children's playground and a number of local businesses. The community wishes to support and maintain these facilities rather than aspiring to increase the range of local services. There is a regular local bus service calling at Bedmond and Pimlico and linking these places with Hemel Hempstead, Abbots Langley Village and Watford.

15.8 Local residents wish to protect the local heritage and Green Belt status of the villages and the surrounding rural area. There is local pressure from developers to build housing on local farmland currently protected by the Green Belt. Improvements are required to improve the attractiveness of the public realm including village signage, more public seating and planting schemes. More effective measures are required to improve pedestrian safety resulting from traffic speeding through the villages and improved maintenance of some local drainage to protect against flooding in low lying areas.

Figure 25: Character areas map (from the Design Guidance and Code - Abbots Langley Parish)

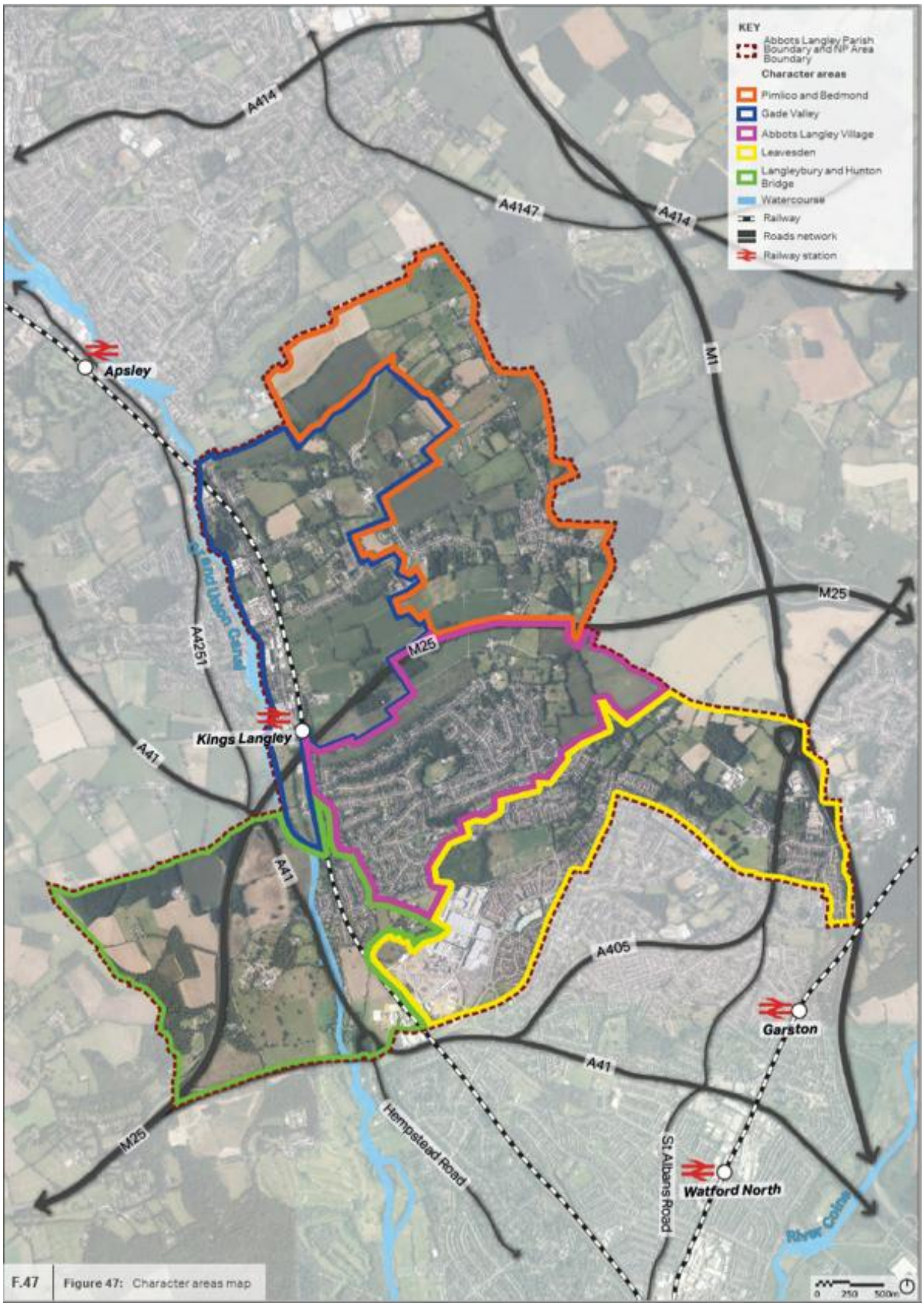


Figure 26: Local Catchment Map for Key Facilities in Bedmond

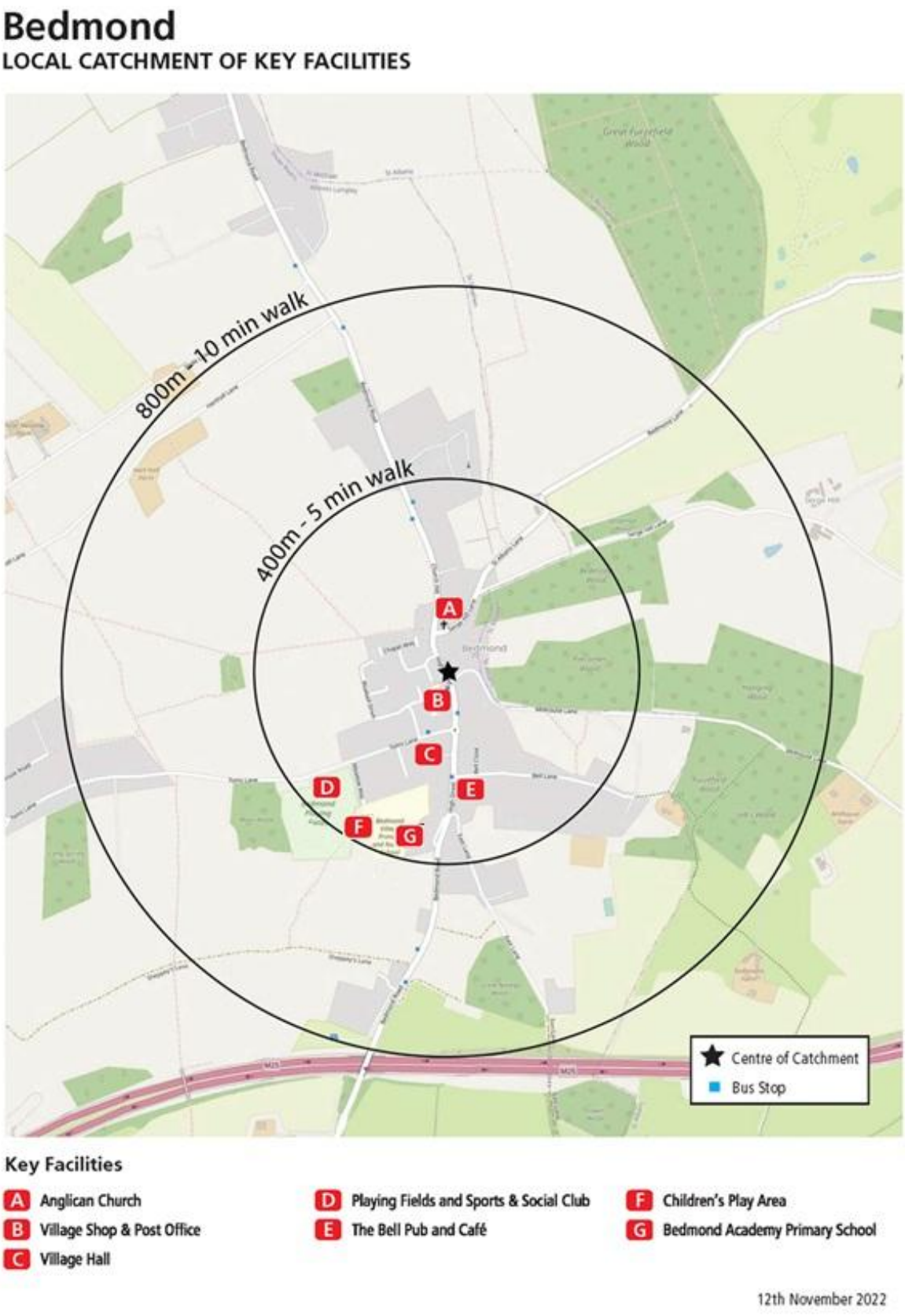
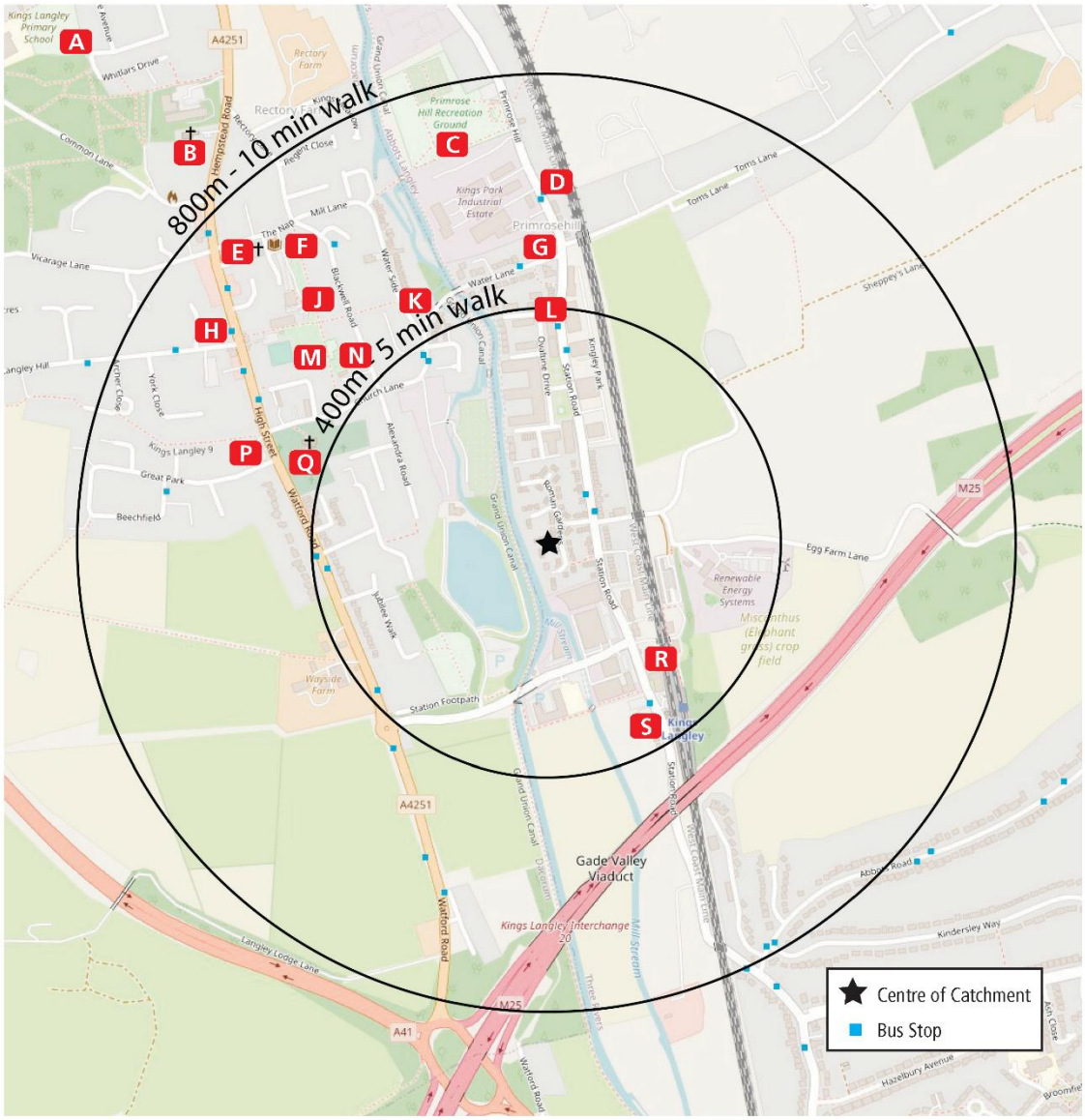


Figure 27: Local Catchment Map for Key Facilities in Roman Gardens

Roman Gardens

LOCAL CATCHMENT OF KEY FACILITIES



Key Facilities

- A Kings Langley Primary School
- B Methodist Church
- C Primrose Hill Park and Children's Play Area
- D Local Café
- E Baptist Church
- F Kings Langley Library
- G Fuel Station and Local Shop
- H Kings Langley High Street Shops
- J Kings Langley Village Hall
- K Local Barber Shop
- L Local Shop
- M Kings Langley Bowls Club
- N Kings Langley Guides
- P The Rose & Crown Pub and Restaurant
- Q Anglican Church
- R Local Shop
- S Kings Langley Railway Station

11th November 2022

Figure 28: Local Catchment Map for Key Facilities in Abbotswood Park

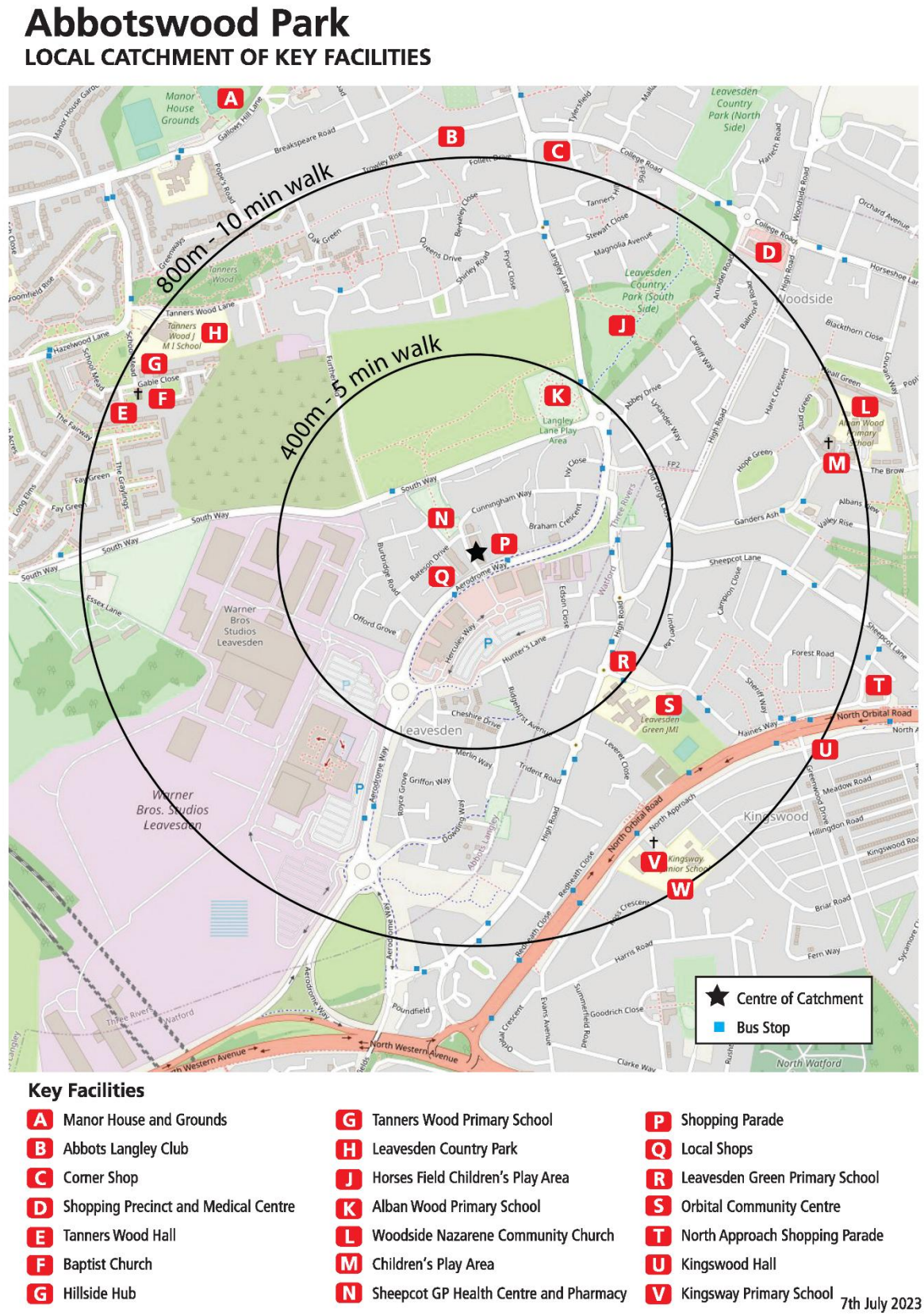
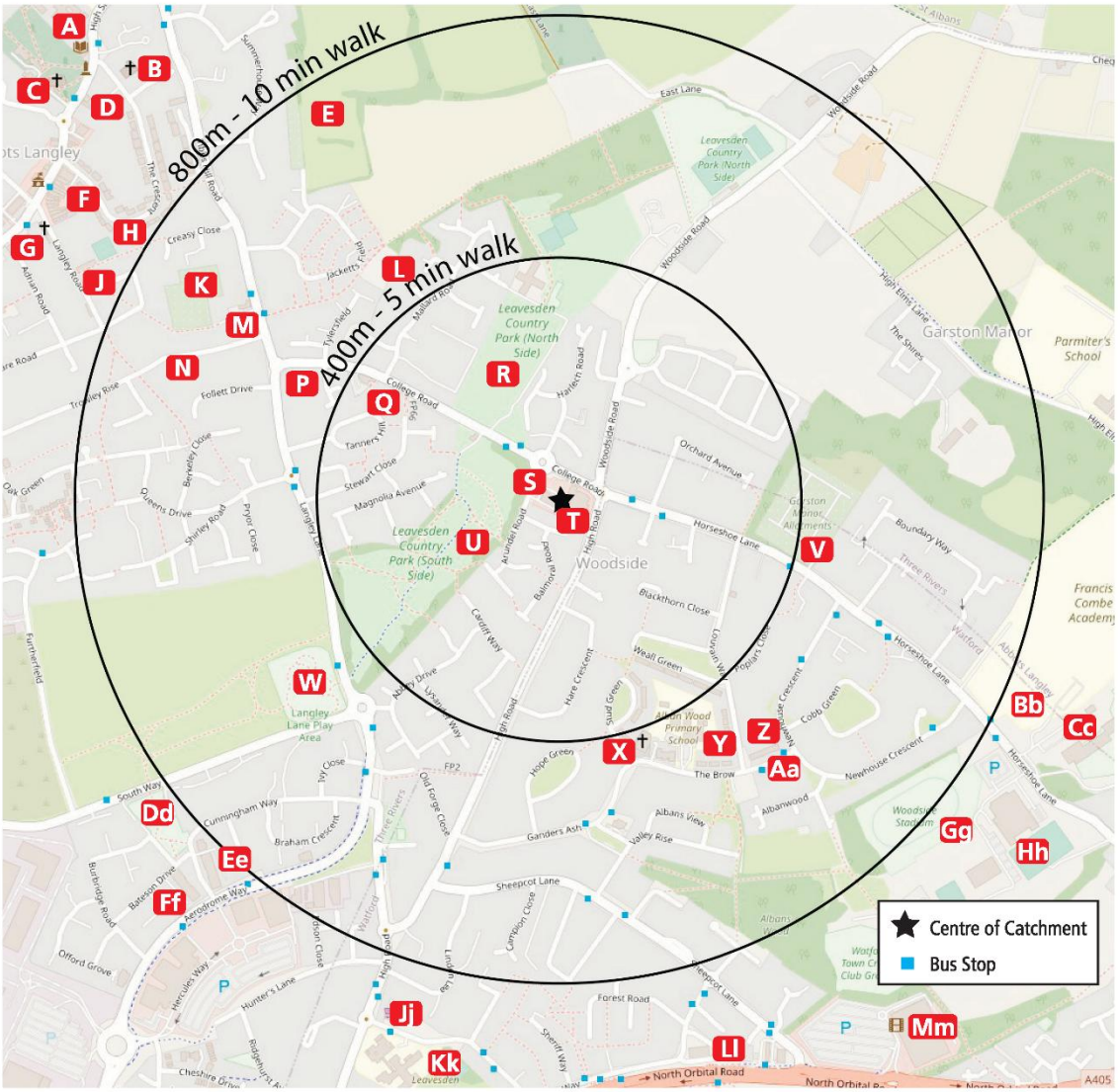


Figure 29: Local Catchment Map for Key Facilities in Leavesden

Leavesden

LOCAL CATCHMENT OF KEY FACILITIES



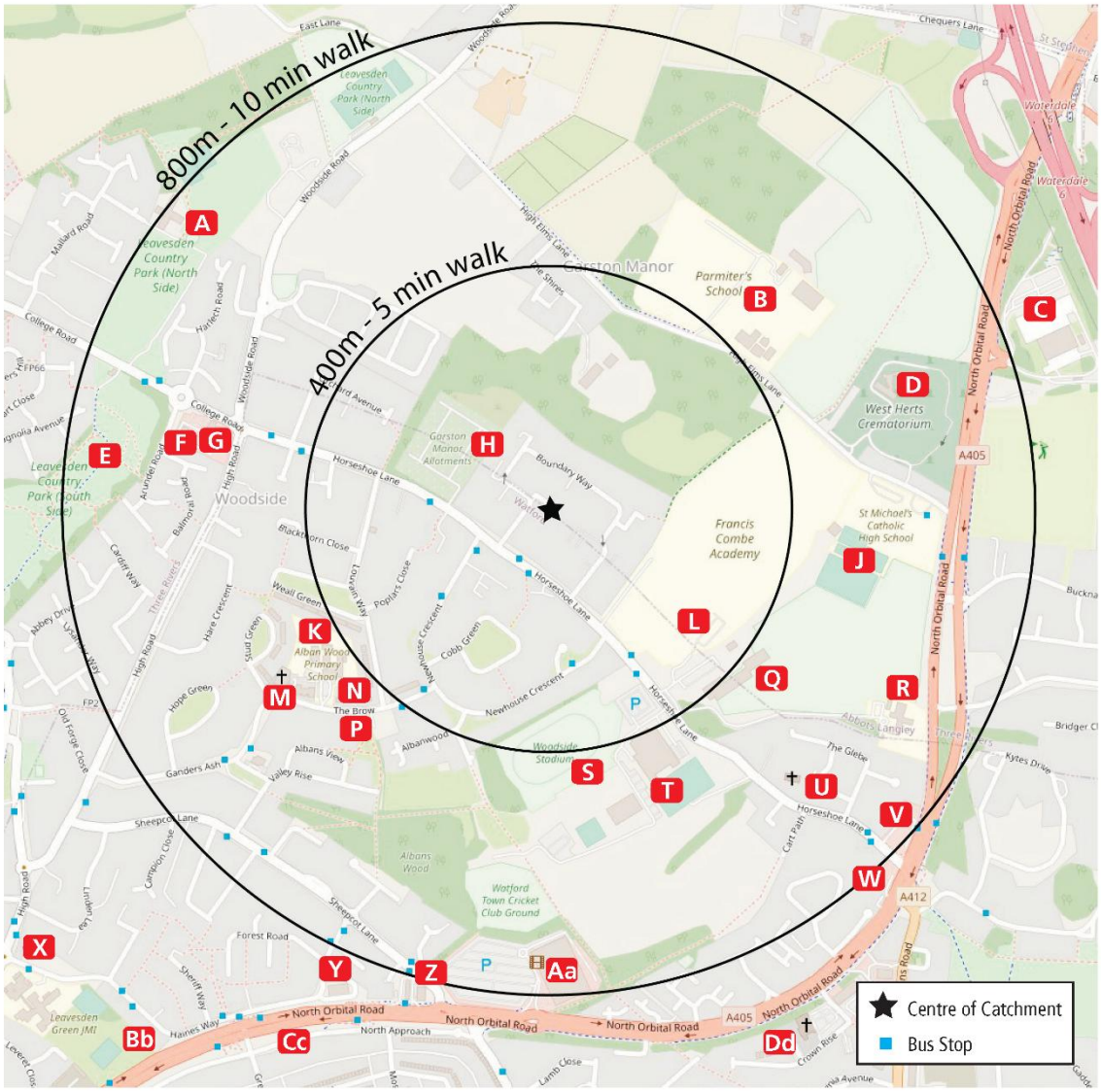
Key Facilities

- A Abbots Langley Library
- B Catholic Church
- C Anglican Church
- D The Boys Home Pub
- E Jackett Fields Allotments
- F Abbots Langley High Street Shops
- G Methodist Church
- H Abbots Langley Bowls Club
- J Abbots Langley Scouts
- K Kingsfield Allotments
- L NHS West Herts Therapy Unit
- M The Compasses Pub and Restaurant
- N Abbots Langley Club
- P Local Shops
- Q The Swan Pub and Restaurant
- R Leavesden Park (café, cycle hub, nursery)
- S St. Katharine's Place Shopping Precinct
- T Abbotswood GP Health Centre
- U Leavesden Country Park
- V Garston Manor Allotments
- W Horses Field Children's Play Areas
- X Woodside Nazarene Community Church
- Y Alban Wood Primary School
- Z The Brow Shopping Parade
- Aa Woodside Community Centre
- Bb Futures Academy Secondary School
- Cc Garston Manor School
- Dd Children's Play Area
- Ee Sheepcot GP Health Centre
- Ff Shopping Parade
- Gg Woodside Stadium
- Hh Woodside Leisure Centre
- Ji Local Shops
- Kk Leavesden Green Primary School
- Ll Orbital Community Centr
- Mm Cinema, Restaurant and 10-Pin Bowling

7th July 2023

Figure 30: Local Catchment Map for Key facilities in Boundary Way

Boundary Way
LOCAL CATCHMENT OF KEY FACILITIES



Key Facilities

- A Leavesden Park (café, cycle hub, nursery)
- B Parmiter's Secondary School
- C Hertfordshire CC Recycling Centre
- D West Herts Crematorium
- E Leavesden Country Park
- F St. Katharine's Place Shopping Precinct
- G Abbotswood GP Health Centre
- H Garston Manor Allotments
- J St. Michael's Secondary School
- K Alban Wood Primary School
- L Futures Academy Secondary School
- M Woodside Nazarene Community Church
- N The Brow Shopping Parade
- P Woodside Community Centre
- Q Garston Manor School
- R St. Catherine's Primary School
- S Woodside Stadium
- T Woodside Leisure Centre
- U Anglican Church
- V Three Horseshoes Pub and Restaurant
- W Local Shops
- X Local Shops
- Y Orbital Community Centre
- Z Fuel Station and Shop
- Aa Cinema, Restaurant and 10-Pin Bowling
- Bb Leavesden Green Primary School
- Cc North Approach Shopping Parade
- Dd Catholic Church

12th November 2022

Figure 31: Local Catchment Map for Key Facilities for Coates Way and Bucknalls Lane

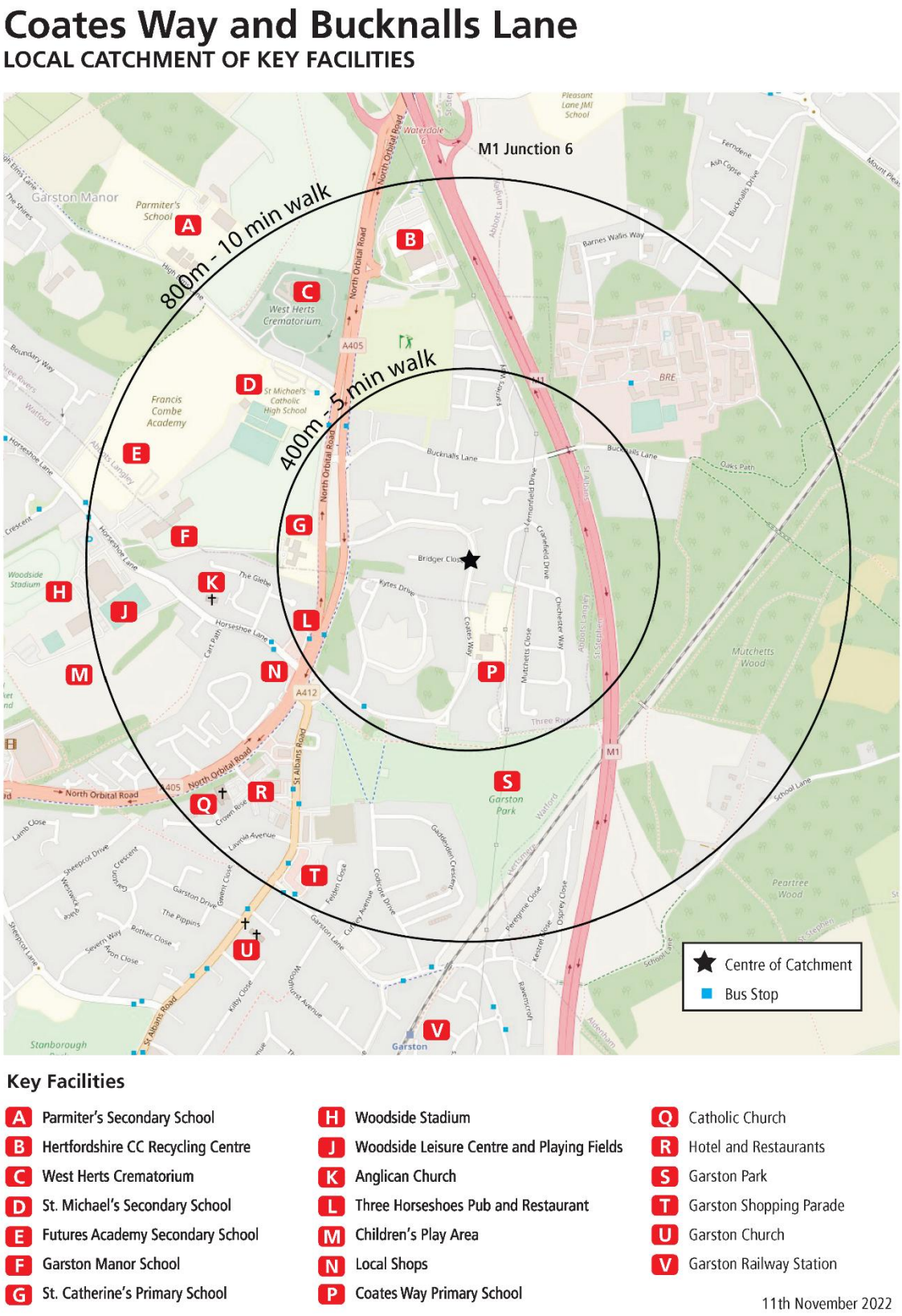
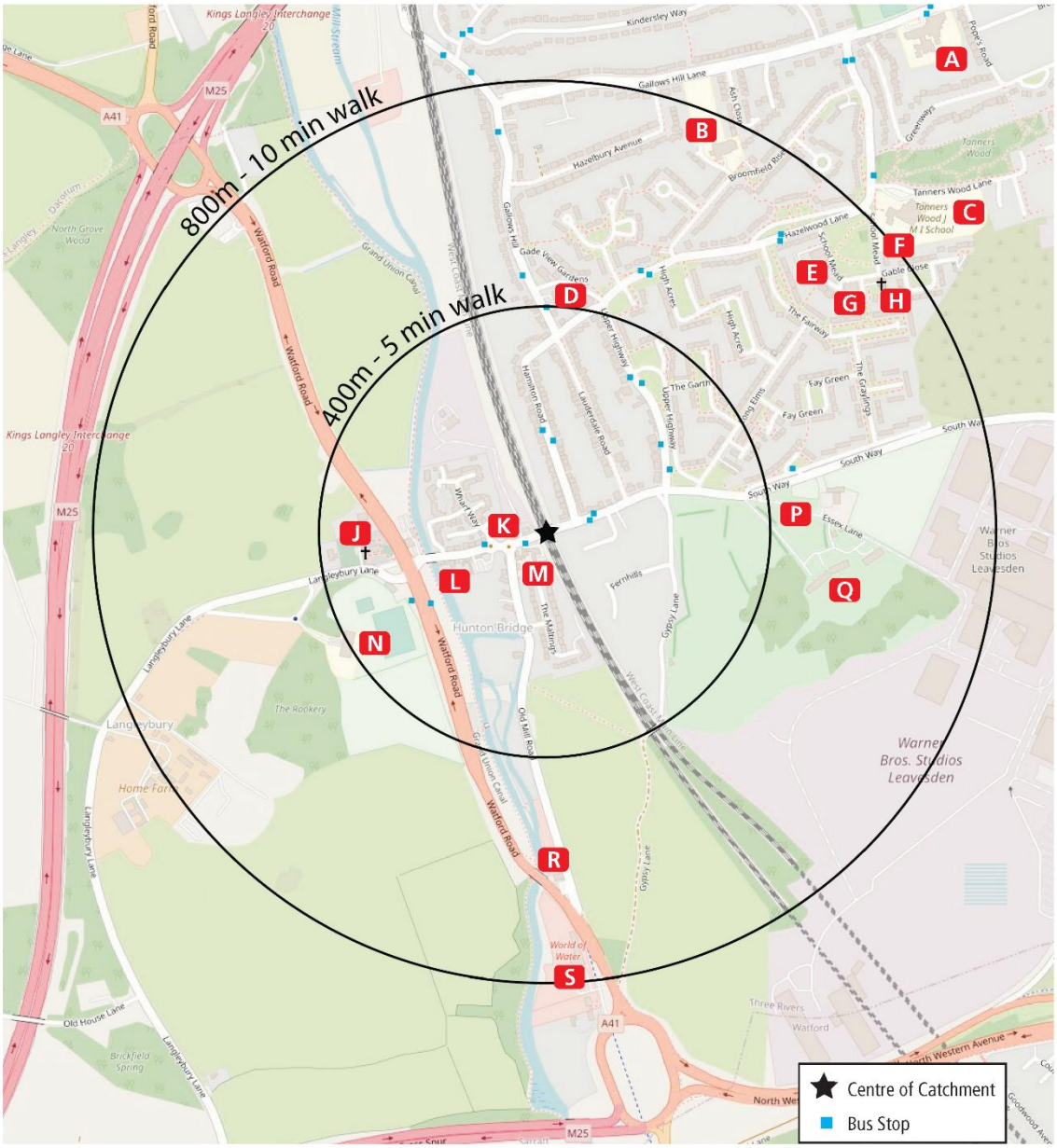


Figure 32: Local Catchment Map for Key Facilities in Hunton Bridge and Langleybury

Hunton Bridge and Langleybury

LOCAL CATCHMENT OF KEY FACILITIES



Key Facilities

- A Breakspeare 'SEND' Special Needs School
- B Divine Saviour Primary School
- C Tanners Wood Primary School
- D Langlybury Scouts
- E School Mead Shopping Parade
- F Hillside Hub
- G Tanners Wood Hall
- H Baptist Church
- J Anglican Church
- K Local Shop
- L Kings Head Pub
- M Kings Lodge Restaurant
- N St. Paul's Primary School
- P Children's Play Area
- Q Hunton Park Hotel
- R Shop and Fuel Station
- S Local Shops

12th November 2022

Gade Valley

15.9 The communities associated with Toms Lane and Romans Gardens are predominately housing. On Toms Lane this includes Mobile Home Parks. Romans Gardens is located off Station Road and is a small modern housing area built on the east side of the Grand Union Canal on the Parish boundary. These housing areas, together with the mixed development along the Gade Valley, orientate towards the Kings Langley Village - even though they are part of the Parish of Abbots Langley. Accordingly, most of their local facilities, within walking distances, are mainly beyond the parish boundary in the Kings Langley Village. In the last twenty years, significant new housing and office developments have occurred in the Gade Valley replacing older industrial and office buildings. The presence of the Kings Langley rail station in this locality makes the area attractive for rail commuters working in urban centres along this line, including London. The area is also well connected to the motorway network with the nearby M25 and M1. See *Figure 26.*

15.10 Local residents wish to preserve the local employment opportunities along the Gade Valley. They are concerned that commercial units near Kings Langley Station are being redeveloped to become new housing – mainly new apartments. There is concern that the Gade Valley, as a traffic corridor between Hemel Hempstead and Watford and a location for traffic to connect with the national motorway network, is experiencing significant traffic growth. Policies relating to the local facilities that serve the Gade Valley are mainly in the Kings Langley Neighbourhood Plan.

Abbots Langley Village

15.11 The largest settlement in the parish is the village of Abbots Langley, with the adjoining housing estates of Hillside and Furtherfield. Whilst the village is largely residential, the village centre provides an important focus for many of the community's facilities including shops, primary health care services, community halls, churches, public houses, schools, parks and recreation. Given the importance of the Village Centre to the Parish of Abbots Langley, the Neighbourhood Plan developed a new Masterplan for this locality. See Appendix H.

15.12 The last time an overall plan for the village centre was developed by the local District Council and Parish Council was over 25 years ago. The objective of the Village Centre Masterplan is to provide a 'high-level concept masterplan based on the 20-minute Neighbourhood principles'.

15.13 Having identified, in detail, the range of land uses in the village centre, the masterplan proposes how these facilities can be improved based on a dialogue with the community exploring the current constraints and opportunities. Proposals are presented in the Masterplan for four different areas of the village centre dealing with key aspects such as: the historic assets, land use, public spaces and sustainable travel. This work contributes to the Aspirational Project 3 - explained earlier in this document.

Abbotswood Park

15.14 This new housing area was developed during the last fifteen years, after Warner Bros Film Studios purchased the former Leavesden Aerodrome/Rolls Royce factory to develop their film studios. At the time, part of this land was sold for new housing, creating the Abbotswood Park community. The estate includes about 600 housing units with its own group of local shops - including a local supermarket, café, estate agent, pharmacy and Health Centre - forming its local centre. The adjoining Leavesden Country Park / Horses Field provides nearby recreational

facilities for all ages. In the early years of the development, space was allocated for a community hall, but this was not provided. The estate is bordered by office development across Aerodrome Way and the expanding Film Studios on its southern boundary. Warner Bros. Studios are planning a 40% increase in employment for their film and TV production activities, with over half of the jobs filled by local residents. To accommodate this, new sound studios and production facilities are planned with supporting infrastructure. See *Figure 27*.

Leavesden

15.15 The Leavesden area is south of the Abbots Langley Village and forms the southern boundary of the parish. Included in this southern boundary area are various housing estates, namely: Abbotswood Park, Leavesden, Boundary Way and Coates Way/Bucknalls Lane. South of this area is Watford, with its northern housing estates of Leavesden, Woodside, Boundary Way and Garston. The housing development extends continuously across much of parish's southern boundary with Watford.

15.16 The Leavesden Hospital was closed in 1997. Its extensive grounds and buildings were converted and developed as private housing, built around Leavesden Country Park up until 2010. This parkland of 27 hectares has been awarded Green Flag status for a number of years. The area consists of a network of walks and cycle paths, children's play areas, football pitches and tennis courts with recent investments from the National Lottery Heritage Fund to provide buildings for a café, cycle hub, a heritage trail and the Hive – a centre dedicated to local history and wildlife issues. A popular local shopping parade was created at Katherine Place, next to the park, and includes a Health centre, child nursey, supermarket with other shops and cafes. See *Figure 28*.

15.17 A site has been set aside for a new primary school off Woodside Road, although no timescale has been decided to build the school. Three secondary schools are within walking distance of this area. So, the area has good local facilities together with regular bus services for travel to Watford town centre, Abbots Langley village and Hemel Hempstead. Given the investment in Leavesden over the last 25 years, it is a well-planned and popular residential area with no additional facilities being demanded by local residents at the present time. However, residents are concerned to protect the Green Belt countryside on its border to the west. Some new housing is being considered for this area in the emerging Local Plan.

Boundary Way

15.18 The Boundary Way estate was built originally as public housing and, as its name implies, strides the boundary of the Three Rivers District and Watford Borough. Within the estate there are no community facilities. A community room that was provided originally for residents was incorporated with in-fill housing development by the local Housing Association. Good local facilities are accessible beyond the immediate boundary of the estate as shown in *Figure 29*. This includes the Garston Manor allotments on the north-west boundary, the Futures Academy Secondary School on the south-east boundary and the Watford Woodside Leisure Centre within a short walk. The Woodside Park Leisure Centre includes an indoor swimming pool, large gym, squash courts and other recreational facilities. The adjoining park include playing fields, the Woodside Athletics Stadium, Watford Town Cricket Ground and other sports club facilities. Beyond the Woodside Park, is an entertainment complex including a cinema and indoor child play area. A redeveloped local shopping parade, on The Brow, is provided within a five-minute

walk from Boundary Way, within the neighbouring Woodside estate and also at Katherine Place, as described above for Leavesden.

15.19 Boundary Way, with its recent investments, has no spare land within the estate for other land uses - given its high-density housing. Local frequent bus services to Watford town centre and Abbots Langley Village/ Hemel Hempstead operate on Horseshoe Lane, adjacent to the Boundary Way estate. No further local improvements are recommended for this area at the present time.

Coates Way/Bucknalls Lane

15.20 This area consists of a number of local housing estates located between the A405 dual carriageway and the M1 motorway on the eastern boundary of the parish. These include the former council estates such as Lemonfield (1950's) and Coates Way (1950's) and more recent private estates such as the Tudor Manor estate (late 1980's.) Bucknalls Lane was developed for housing from 1930's to 1950's. This area is on the edge of the parish. Its location means that it probably has more affinity with Garston and North Watford than Abbots Langley. It has a local primary school, within the community, on Coates Way. There are two nearby secondary schools, located across the A405 on High Elms Lane. There is a local park and children's play area on the southern boundary of the estates at Garston Park. Beyond this area, within a 10-to-15-minute walk, is the Garston Shopping Parade on St Albans Road and a number of nearby restaurants and a hotel. Bus services operate along the A405 and St Albans Road to Watford town centre and St Albans. See *Figure 30.*

15.21 In the emerging Local Plan for Three Rivers District Council, the former 9-hole golf course to the north of Bucknalls Lane is expected to be developed for housing, adding to development that has recently occurred off Farriers Way on the east side of the site. If more housing is developed, local residents are concerned about the build-up of traffic on Bucknalls Lane, accessing the A405 during busy periods of the day. This may justify another access point to the A405, from any proposed new housing estate. However, more houses in the area would stimulate a review of local community facilities and may result a few local shops and possibly some primary health care facilities in the new estate.

15.22 At the northern location of this area is the Hertfordshire CC Recycling Centre and Refuse Depot. This is being expanded and modified with the recent acquisition of the Mullany's Coach and Bus Depot. This is the second large bus depot that has been sold for redevelopment in the area. In the longer term, this could affect the quality and cost of local bus services and school transport in the Watford and Abbots Langley areas.

Langleybury and Hunton Bridge

15.23 Hunton Bridge is a well-established housing area on the west of Abbots Langley village with the West Coast mainline and the Grand Union canal on its western boundary. Hunton Bridge has been a settlement since the 19th century. It has recently expanded with new estates to the south and north of the village. In terms of local facilities, there is one general store, two pubs and a hotel. In the nearby Langleybury, across the A41 dual carriageway, there is a local Anglican church, an associated St Paul's primary school and the Langleybury Cricket Ground (owned by the Parish Council.) The cricket ground and surrounding woods provide good open space and, together with the canal, means local residents have plenty of opportunities for local exercise and dog walking. See *Figure 31.*

15.24 Beyond the school and cricket ground, is the Langleybury Estate, now part of the nearby Grove Hotel grounds located to the south of this area. The hotel opened in 2003 and is owned by Ralph Trustees Ltd. On this estate, there are proposals to restore fully the Grade Two listed building, Langleybury House, built in 1720. This is on the English Heritage Buildings at Risk Register. There are proposals also to replace the derelict Langleybury Secondary School that closed in 1996. The old secondary school has been used over the years as a favourite film location for TV series, etc. In the current Local Plan 2014, there is a Development Brief for the designated Grove Development Area enclosed by the M25, the link road at Junction 19 and the A41.

15.25 In 2022, proposals for the Grove Development Area includes a new Film Hub to support the local film and TV industries. See: https://www.langleyburyfilmhub.com. The web pages describe the proposals which include a Craft Campus with units for long term hire as well as a Film and Television Training Facility, workshops, sound stages and production offices. For the public, there is a proposed enlarged area of open parkland with tree planting, a joined up public foot paths and cycle network, improved facilities and relocation of the Children's Farm, additional parking facilities and a café in the restored walled gardens of Langleybury House. It is understood that the proposals have been developed in consultation with Historic England and could provide many benefits for the area, although, if approved, it would involve some development on Green Belt land.

15.26 Just off the A41, near the main roundabout for the M25 Junction 19 link road, there are two shops and a coffee bar. One of these shops, the 'World of Water' has been sold to Lidl in 2022 to convert the complex, with its car park, to become a supermarket. The public are concerned that the anticipated increased demand will exacerbate the current traffic issues affecting this busy area, including the generation of traffic queues attempting to enter/exit the site. A planning application was submitted in September 2022 to Three Rivers District Council. This application received planning approval in 2024.

15.27 With all the changes and investment occurring in this area, it would be opportune to review the potential of improving access and use of the canal for recreation. Whilst the towpath has been upgraded for the benefit of walkers and cyclists, there are other vacant sites along the canal that could provide visitor parking and enhanced visitor experiences to enjoy the heritage and wildlife along this corridor.

16. NON-POLICY COMMUNITY ACTIONS

The actions included in Table 7 are not planning and land use policies. Rather they are activities to be pursued, which have been identified during the Neighbourhood Plan process.

Table 4: Non-Policy Community Actions

Issue	Possible actions	Main partners
Need to keep up to date with policy change at the national and strategic level	Commit to a periodic review of the NP including once the new Local Plan has been adopted.	ALPC
Preservation of non-designated heritage assets	Apply to TRDC to add the non-designated heritage assets to the Local List.	ALPC, Local History Society, TRDC
Foster improved relationships between local businesses and other community organisations	Explore opportunities for a community partnership to be established that will seek opportunities for joint working between businesses, schools, community organisations etc. In particular, work with the Parish Council to implement the Abbots Langley Village Centre Masterplan, including improved primary care facilities.	Local businesses, schools, ALPC, community organisations
Improve shop signage	Explore options (including funding) to develop a local shop signage scheme to set out core principles to enhance the look and feel of the village centre.	Local businesses, ALPC
Address problems of littering, graffiti and fly tipping	Work with local sports clubs to explore what can be done post-events to target littering and fly tipping. Organise local litter picks and targeted litter action plans. Installing of additional bins – for litter and dog mess – at key locations identified as 'hot spots'.	ALPC, local residents, local sporting venues and teams ALPC, TRDC, HCC PROW team, local community, TRDC
Need to improve public areas	Continue programme of public planting and flower displays including a replacement tree at Toms Lane roundabout.	ALPC, local businesses
Completion of the park on Langley Way/South Way	Work with developer to set out timeline for delivery.	Developer, TRDC, ALPC
Need to promote low carbon transition in the parish	Work with local businesses and other partnerships to identify local actions that can be taken to help reduce carbon emissions.	ALPC, local businesses, TRDC

Need for continued co-ordinated events programme locally	Continue to seek volunteers and community groups to be involved in organising community events.	ALPC, local community organisations
Local desire for a community market	Explore options to periodically close the car park in the village centre in order to house a local market.	ALPC, TRDC, local businesses
Lack of public toilet provision	Consider developing a Community Toilet Scheme	Local shops, cafes, pubs, facilities, amenities, ALPC
Noise and pollution from M25	Liaise with Highways England to look at options to reduce noise and pollution levels, such as tree buffers alongside motorway, resurfacing etc.	ALPC, Highways England, local MP.
Overgrown and poorly maintained footpaths and ensure footpaths are kept open	Undertake an audit of the current footpath network and lobby for improvements.	HCC PROW team, PC, local walking groups
Cars parking on pavements and grass verges	Local communications campaign	ALPC, local community
Bus timetables not integrating with train timetables	Meet with rail and bus companies to explore options for greater integration.	ALPC, HCC, bus and rail providers
Congestion	Explore options to set up a Car Club locally.	ALPC, local residents
Speeding vehicles	Explore options for increasing the 20mph zones in the villages.	ALPC, local residents
Biodiversity net gain	Identify areas of the parish that could be 'banked' as biodiversity net gain priority areas and where net gain units could be spent, if on-site delivery is not possible.	ALPC, local landowners
Conservation Area Appraisals	Work with partners to update the Conservation Area Appraisals for Abbots Langley and Hunton Bridge.	ALPC, TRDC
Sports provision in the parish	Explore need and opportunities for enhanced sports and recreational facilities in the parish including, for instance, the development of a 3G football pitch.	ALPC, TRDC, Sport England, local organisations

17. GLOSSARY

- **Affordable housing** - Social rented, affordable rented, shared equity and intermediate housing, provided to eligible households whose needs are not met by the market.
- **Ancient woodland:** An area that has been wooded continuously since at least 1600 AD. It includes ancient semi-natural woodland and plantations on ancient woodland sites (PAWS).
- **Brownfield land registers**: Registers of previously developed land that local planning authorities consider to be appropriate for residential development, having regard to criteria in the Town and Country Planning (Brownfield Land Registers) Regulations 2017. Local planning authorities will be able to trigger a grant of permission in principle for residential development on suitable sites in their registers where they follow the required procedures.
- **Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)** – a fixed, non-negotiable contribution that must be made by new development. It is chargeable on each net additional square metre of development built and is set by the District Council. A proportion accrues to the parish council.
- **Community Right to Build Order:** An Order made by the local planning authority (under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990) that grants planning permission for a site-specific development proposal or classes of development.
- **Conservation (for heritage policy):** The process of maintaining and managing change to a heritage asset in a way that sustains and, where appropriate, enhances its significance.
- **Conservation area** - an area of notable environmental or historical interest or importance which is protected by law against undesirable changes.
- **Convenience shop:** A small retail store that stocks everyday items.
- **Geodiversity:** The range of rocks, minerals, fossils, soils and landforms.
- **Green infrastructure:** A network of multi-functional green space, urban and rural, which is capable of delivering a wide range of environmental and quality of life benefits for local communities.
- **Habitats site:** Any site which would be included within the definition at regulation 8 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 for the purpose of those regulations, including candidate Special Areas of Conservation, Sites of Community Importance, Special Areas of Conservation, Special Protection Areas and any relevant Marine Sites.
- **Heritage asset:** A building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest. It includes designated heritage assets and assets identified by the local planning authority (including local listing).
- **Historic environment:** All aspects of the environment resulting from the interaction between people and places through time, including all surviving physical remains of past human activity, whether visible, buried or submerged, and landscaped and planted or managed flora.
- **Local connection:** For the purposes of allocating affordable homes, housing shall be occupied in accordance with the District Council's standard allocation procedures with priority given to applicants who can demonstrate that they have a local connection to the parish of Abbots Langley at the time of occupation.
- **Local Enterprise Partnership:** A body, designated by the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, established for the purpose of creating or improving the conditions for economic growth in an area.

- **Local housing need:** the number of homes identified as being needed through the application of the standard method set out in national planning guidance, or a justified alternative approach.
- **Local plan:** A plan for the future development of a local area, drawn up by the local planning authority in consultation with the community. In law this is described as the development plan documents adopted under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. A local plan can consist of either strategic or non-strategic policies, or a combination of the two.
- **Local shop:** A retail store usually classified as Use Class F2, serving the needs of the local community. They would normally stock everyday items.
- **Major development:** For housing, development where 10 or more homes will be provided, or the site has an area of 0.5 hectares or more. For non-residential development it means additional floorspace of 1,000m2 or more, or a site of 1 hectare or more, or as otherwise provided in the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015.
- **National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)** – the national planning policy document which sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied.
- **Neighbourhood plan:** A plan prepared by a parish council or neighbourhood forum for a designated neighbourhood area. In law this is described as a neighbourhood development plan in the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.
- **Non-strategic policies:** Policies contained in a neighbourhood plan, or those policies in a local plan that are not strategic policies.
- **Older people:** People over or approaching retirement age, including the active, newly retired through to the very frail elderly; and whose housing needs can encompass accessible, adaptable general needs housing through to the full range of retirement and specialised housing for those with support or care needs.
- **People with disabilities:** People have a disability if they have a physical or mental impairment, and that impairment has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. These persons include, but are not limited to, people with ambulatory difficulties, blindness, learning difficulties, autism and mental health needs.
- **Planning condition:** A condition imposed on a grant of planning permission (in accordance with the Town and Country Planning Act 1990) or a condition included in a Local Development Order or Neighbourhood Development Order.
- **Playing field:** The whole of a site which encompasses at least one playing pitch as defined in the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015.
- **Renewable and low carbon energy:** Includes energy for heating and cooling as well as generating electricity. Renewable energy covers those energy flows that occur naturally and repeatedly in the environment – from the wind, the fall of water, the movement of the oceans, from the sun and also from biomass and deep geothermal heat. Low carbon technologies are those that can help reduce emissions (compared to conventional use of fossil fuels).
- **Rural exception sites:** Small sites used for affordable housing in perpetuity where sites would not normally be used for housing. Rural exception sites seek to address the needs of the local community by accommodating households who are either current residents or have an existing family or employment connection. A proportion of market homes may be allowed on the site at

the local planning authority's discretion, for example where essential to enable the delivery of affordable units without grant funding.

- **Section 106 agreement** - A mechanism under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 which makes a development proposal acceptable in planning terms that would not otherwise be acceptable.
- **Setting of a heritage asset:** The surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral.
- **Starter Homes** - Homes targeted at first time buyers who would otherwise be priced out of the market. Like shared ownership homes, these should be available to households that need them most, with an income of less than £80,000 (£90,000 for London). Eligible first-time buyers will also be required to have a mortgage in order to buy starter homes to stop cash buyers.
- **Supplementary planning documents:** Documents which add further detail to the policies in the development plan. They can be used to provide further guidance for development on specific sites, or on particular issues, such as design. Supplementary planning documents are capable of being a material consideration in planning decisions but are not part of the development plan.
- **Use Class Order** - The Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (most recently amended in 2020) puts uses of land and buildings into various categories. Planning Permission is not needed for changes of use within the same use class.
- **Wildlife corridor:** Areas of habitat connecting wildlife populations.
- **Windfall sites:** Sites not specifically identified in the development plan.

18. EVIDENCE BASE DOCUMENTS

18.1 This chapter provides an index of the main documents referred to in this ALNP report and the documents on the Abbots Langley Parish website. On the website documents include the main ALNP report and its nine Appendices. These can be accessed with other material under the seven topics (via the Abbots Langley Parish website in the Parish Section, Sub-section Neighbourhood Plan.) See: https://www.abbotslangley-pc.gov.uk/parish-council/introduction/. Information in relevant sub sections on the website includes:

1. Introduction.

Abbots Langley Commonplace Web site: https://abbotslangley.commonplace.is

Locality website: https://abbotslangley.commonplace.is

https://neighbourhoodplanning.org/toolkits-and-guidance/?type%5B%5D=key-documents

2. The Abbots Langley Neighbourhood Plan.

Main Documents and Appendices A to J: https://www.abbotslangley-pc.gov.uk/parish-council/draft-abbots-langley-neighbourhood-plan/

3. Parish Maps.

Abbots Langley Designated Area Map. https://www.abbotslangley-pc.gov.uk/parish-council/maps-of-abbots-langley-parish/

Other key Maps prepared for the ANLP.

4. Terms of Reference.

For the ALNP Steering Group. https://www.abbotslangley-pc.gov.uk/parish-council/terms-of-reference/

5. Agendas.

Neighbourhood Plan Steering Committee: 2016 to 2019. https://www.abbotslangley-pc.gov.uk/parish-council/agendas-for-the-neighbourhood-planning-team/

6. Other ANLP Documents.

Eight documents associated with a published ALNP Summary, Workshops, Public feedback from Workshops, Exhibitions, Presentations on ALNP and a New Local Plan Forum and ALNP Policy Development Summary (2018). https://www.abbotslangley-pc.gov.uk/parish-council/draft-abbots-langley-neighbourhood-plan/documents/

7.Bi-monthly Progress Reports on the ALNP work programme.

Over forty ALNP Bi-monthly Progress Reports for the Parish Council meetings from May 2016 to January 2023. https://www.abbotslangley-pc.gov.uk/parish-council/bi-monthly-progress-report/

18.3 Index of the main documents referred to in the ALNP:

- Abbots Langley Parish Design Guide and Code 2021 Abbots Langley Neighbourhood Plan.

  AECOM. See Appendix E

  https://www.abbotslangley-pc.gov.uk/parish-council/draft-abbots-langley-neighbourhood-plan/

- Abbots Langley Housing Needs Assessment – AECOM. See Appendix D. https://www.abbotslangley-pc.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/sites/4/2022/07/Abbots-Langley-HNA_FinalVersion.p- neighbourdf
- Abbots Langley Timeline. Prepared by the Abbots Langley History Society 2019 http://www.allhs.org.uk
- Abbots Langley Village Centre masterplan September 2022. AECOM. See Appendix H. https://www.abbotslangley-pc.gov.uk/parish-council/draft-abbots-langley-neighbourhood-plan/
- Adopted Development Plan for Three Rivers District Council. https://www.threerivers.gov.uk/egcl-page/development-plan
- Adopted Development Plan for Three Rivers District Council. https://www.threerivers.gov.uk/egcl-page/development-plan
- Aspirations for Bedmond- Abbots Langley Neighbourhood Plan -See Appendix I https://www.abbotslangley-pc.gov.uk/parish-council/draft-abbots-langley-neighbourhood-plan/
- 'A life on our Planet' 2020. David Attenborough. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/David_Attenborough:_A_Life_on_Our_Planet
- Breeam Certification on Sustainable Built Environmental Standards https://www.buildenergy.co.uk/services/breeam/what-is-breeam/
- Building for a Healthy Life 2020 https://www.designforhomes.org/project/building-for-life/
- Community Infrastructure Levy -Guidance – Spending the Levy https://www.gov.uk/guidance/community-infrastructure-levy#spending-the-levy
- Decarbonising Transport Setting the Challenge – Department of Transport 2020 https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/932122/decarbonising-transport-setting-the-challenge.pdf
- Economic Impact of Tourism 2019 Hertfordshire 2019 Results - Visit Herts. https://www.visithertsbusiness.co.uk/media/63227/economic-impact-of-tourism-hertfordshire-2019.pdf
- Housing Delivery Test Action Plan. Three Rivers District Council. https://www.threerivers.gov.uk/egcl-page/housing-delivery-test
- National Census 2021 https://www.nomisweb.co.uk
- National Planning Policy Framework, Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government. Updated December 2024. https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/67aafe8f3b41f783cca46251/NPPF_December_2024.pdf

- National Planning Guidelines, Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government, 2018.
- New Local Plan for Rivers District Council. -Preferred Policy Options and Sites for Potential Allocation. 2021. Three Rivers District Council https://www.threerivers.gov.uk/egcl-page/new-local-plan
- Progress Report to Parliament, 2022. Climate Change Committee. https://www.theccc.org.uk/publication/2022-progress-report-to-parliament/
- South West Hertfordshire Local Housing Needs Assessment. 2020 https://www.watford.gov.uk/downloads/download/45/south-west-hertfordshire-local-housing-needs-assessment-2020
- Strategic Housing and Employment Land Availability Assessment https://www.threerivers.gov.uk/egcl-page/new-local-plan-evidence-base
- The 20-minute Neighbourhood Guide https://tcpa.org.uk/collection/the-20-minute-neighbourhood/
- The Chilterns Beechwoods Special Area of Conservation Update 2022 http://aspect-ecology.com/march-2022-natural-england-introduces-a-12-6km-zone-of-influence-around-chiltern-beechwoods-sac-where-mitigation-will-be-required-for-residential-development/
- South West Hertfordshire Local Housing Needs Assessment. 2020 https://www.watford.gov.uk/downloads/download/45/south-west-hertfordshire-local-housing-needs-assessment-2020
- Woodland Trust: Ancient Tree Guide 4 https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/media/1836/what-are-ancient-trees.pdf

APPENDICES A, B, C, F and G

Contents

Appendix A – Profile of Abbots Langley 2
Appendix B – Strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats analysis 15
Appendix C – Analysis of public comments via Abbots Langley Commonplace website 17
Appendix F - Non-designated heritage assets 19
Appendix G - Locally Significant Views and Local Green Spaces 21

Appendix A – Profile of Abbots Langley Parish

The key aspects of the profile of Abbots Langley Parish, as they relate to the Neighbourhood Plan, are below:

- Compared to the district as a whole, Abbots Langley has a **high percentage of residents of working age (25 to 64 years)**, amounting to approximately 55% of the local population. This age group grew considerably between 2001 and 2011. This has remained largely the same in the period to 2021.
- In contrast, the **number of older adults, aged 65+ is significantly lower** than the district and region. This age group, however, is rising and given the numbers of adults in the lower age groups, is anticipated to rise further over the period of the Plan. This continues to be the case in 2021.
- There is a **higher-than-average number of children and teenagers** in the parish, with the parish being an attractive place to live for older families. Whilst the number of younger working adults is generally high, this cohort has grown the least, possibly as a result of rising house prices and inability to rent locally. This continues to be the case in 2021,
- Abbots Langley has **higher than UK average levels of car ownership**, with 1.5 cars per household compared to 1.2 at the national level. 47% of the households in the parish have at least two cars and 12% have no car. This is not unexpected in a largely rural area. In 2021, there are greater numbers of households with three or more vehicles.
- The nearest mainline railway stations serving the parish are at Watford Junction and Hemel Hempstead although there are intermediate stations at Kings Langley, Garston and Apsley. The parish is fairly **well served by bus links** to several major employment centres. However, the vast **majority of those in work use their car to travel to their place of employment**, with 10% of people working from home. This proportion has increased considerably since the outbreak of Covid-19 and its associated measures.
- Abbots Langley **predominantly comprises of two-to-three-bedroom homes,** mainly semi-detached (34% of stock) and 24% terraced and 24% detached. 72% of homes are owner-occupied while the percentage of **social and private rented properties available are about average** at 26%, mirroring Three Rivers District as a whole.
- The **majority of workers travel 5-10km to work**, which has a reach to The Warner Bros. Studio, Hemel Hempstead and Watford. Approximately **20% of residents** work **at least 10km away from home**, London being 30km away. This suggests that Abbots Langley has a large out-of-area, commuting population. Since Covid-19, a much larger percentage of people are working from or at home.

The following paragraphs set out the detailed statistics and trend data for Abbots Langley. The profile of the community has been drawn from the 2011 Census and 2021 comparison figures are provided where available.

Area:	*1,854 ha*
Total population:	*19,574 usual residents (2011)* *22,000 usual residents (rounded to nearest 100) (2021)*
Population Density:	*10.6 residents per hectare compared to 9.8 residents per hectare across Three Rivers District and 3.1 across the East region*
Households:	*8,183 (2011)* *8,900 (rounded to nearest 100) (2021)*

Population

In 2011, the population of the parish of Abbots Langley was 19,574. It has risen to circa 22,000 in 2021. Compared to the regional and district averages, it has a slightly higher proportion of working age people between 25 and 44 and a lower proportion of older people over 65 years, as shown in Figure A1. There is a higher proportion of children implying that the parish is popular with families. This is perhaps unsurprising given the good schools in the area as well as the plentiful work opportunities due Abbots Langley's well- connected location. The parish is comfortably commutable from London which is appealing to many seeking work in the city and would explain its attractiveness to this age group.

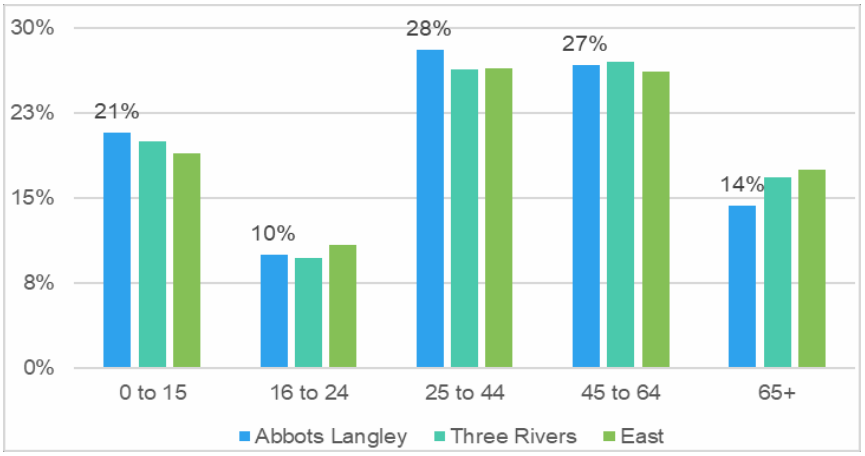


Figure A1 – Population profile, 2011

Between 2001 and 2011, the population of the parish grew by 2,296 persons, a 13% increase (Figure A2). This is significantly higher that the district, which increased by 5%, the region which increased by 9% (with the national figure being a 7.9% increase). This is reflective of the number of new developments that have taken place across this period within the parish; the number of households has risen, in this period, by 12% compared to 6% across Three Rivers District.

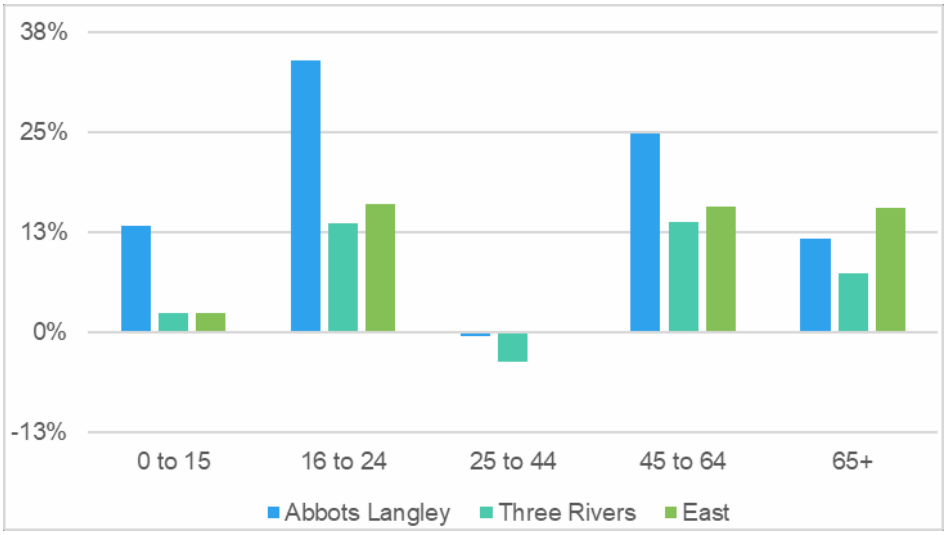


Figure A2 – Change in population, 2001-2011

This growth has been particularly significant in families with children and teenagers, most likely due to the proximity of work available at Leavesden and in nearby larger towns and the good commute to London.

Figure A3 shows the age profile of the parish in 2021, compared to across Three Rivers district.

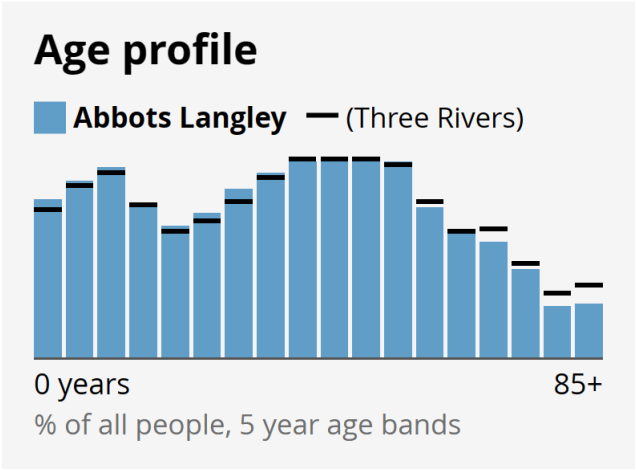


Figure A3 – Population profile, 2021

House prices in the parish are high compared to the nearest large settlements of Hemel Hempstead and Watford, but lower than nearby villages. It may be that house prices have been kept lower because of the relatively large number of developments that have taken place over the last decade. Whilst the overall numbers of over 65s is lower than the wider area, this is a growing sector and is likely to rise further over the Plan period as those in the 45 to 64 age bracket reach retirement. Figure A4 offers a comparison of average house prices at the time of print:

Settlement	Average house price
Abbots Langley	**£454,790**
Kings Langley	£507,397
Bricket Wood	£569,471
Watford	£437,129
Hemel Hempstead	£394,631
Leavesdon	£465,307

Figure A4 – Average House prices, April 2020-2021 Source: www.rightmove.co.uk (April 2021)

Housing

Figure A5 shows the types of housing that exist already in the parish. The most common type of properties in the parish are semi-detached and terraced. There is a particularly high number of terraced houses compared the wider area while the number of detached properties is notably lower.

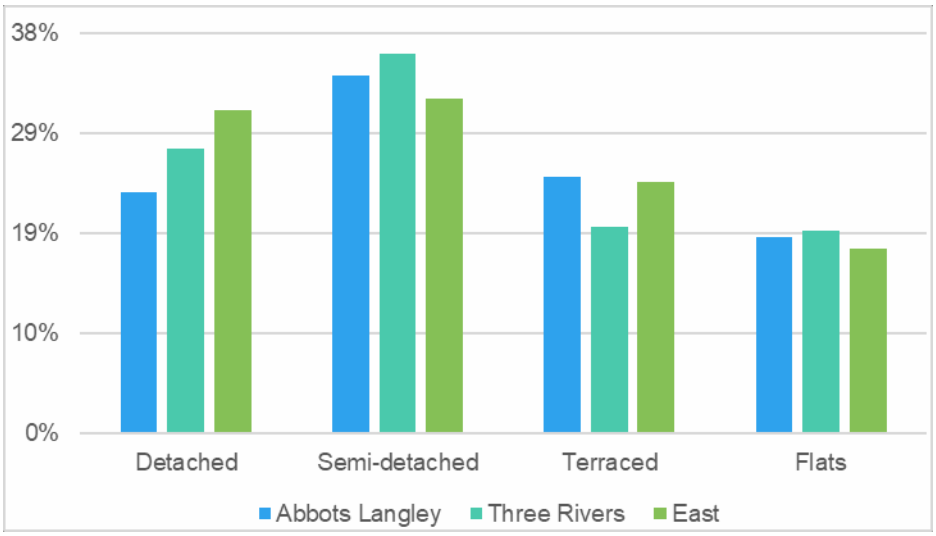


Figure A5 – Type of housing in Abbots Langley, 2011

The size of housing is illustrated in Figure A6, revealing that Abbots Langley largely mirrors the size of properties provided across the wider area, with the exception of those with 5+ bedrooms, for which the supply is significantly higher.

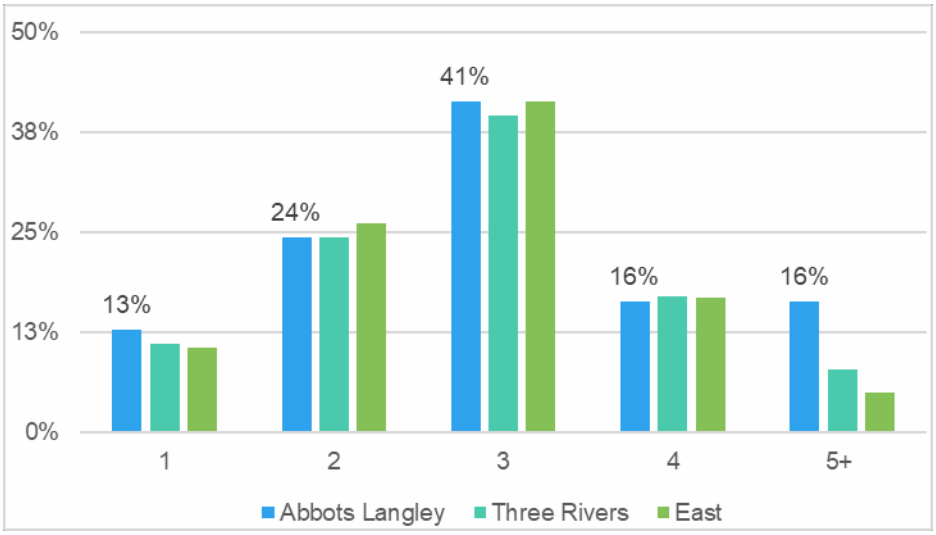


Figure A6: Number of bedrooms, 2011

The bedroom data for 2021 reveals a particular growth in the number of 4+ bedroom homes as shown in Figure A7, reflecting the need to potentially rebalance this going forward.

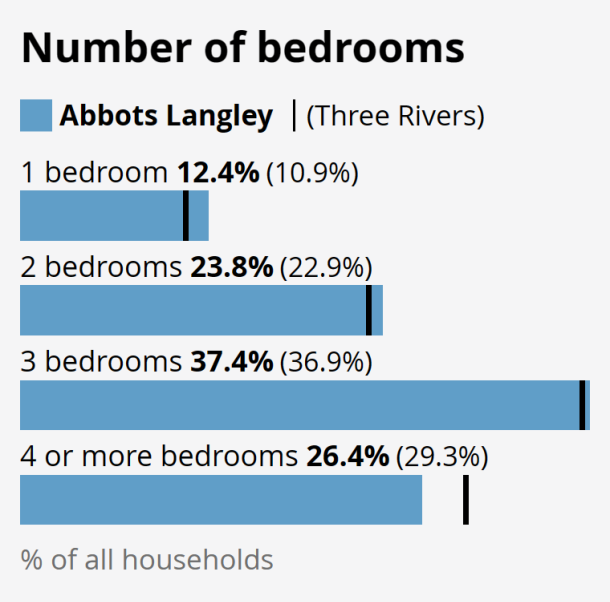


Figure A7: Number of bedrooms, 2021

In terms of home ownership, Figure A8 illustrates that the overwhelming majority (72%) of homes are owner occupied in the parish, slightly lower than at the district level. The proportion of social and private rented properties in the parish overall largely mirrors the district area.

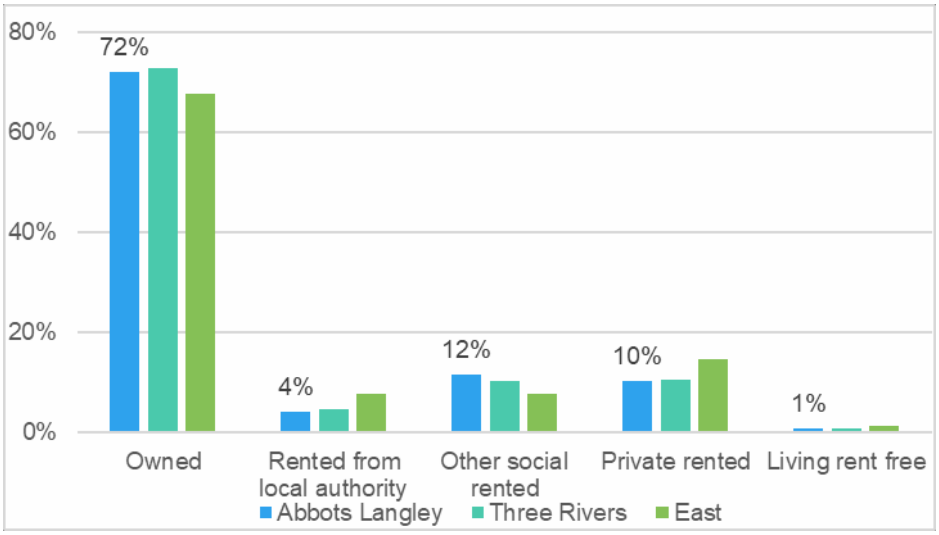


Figure A8: Tenure of households, 2011

Figure A9 shows the 2021 data on tenure. There has been a slight increase in the provision of rented accommodation, both social and private.

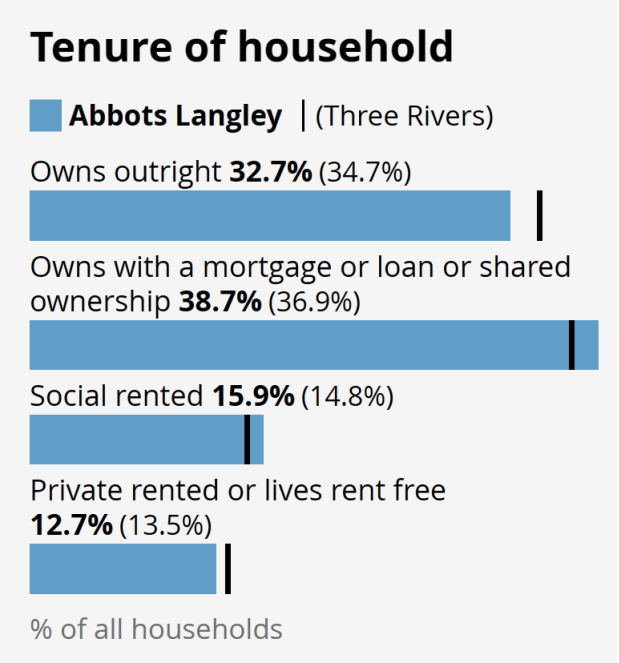


Figure A9, Tenure of households, 2021

Work and skills

Figure A10 shows that of the 16 to 74 year olds in Abbots Langley parish, 57% of people are in employment and 13% are self-employed. It will be important to ensure that the Plan makes provision for home-workers, whose needs will differ from those in employment. 12% of Abbots Langley residents are retired compared to 13% across the district, although with the large proportion of 45 to 64 year olds living in Abbots Langley currently, this is likely to rise significantly over the Plan period.

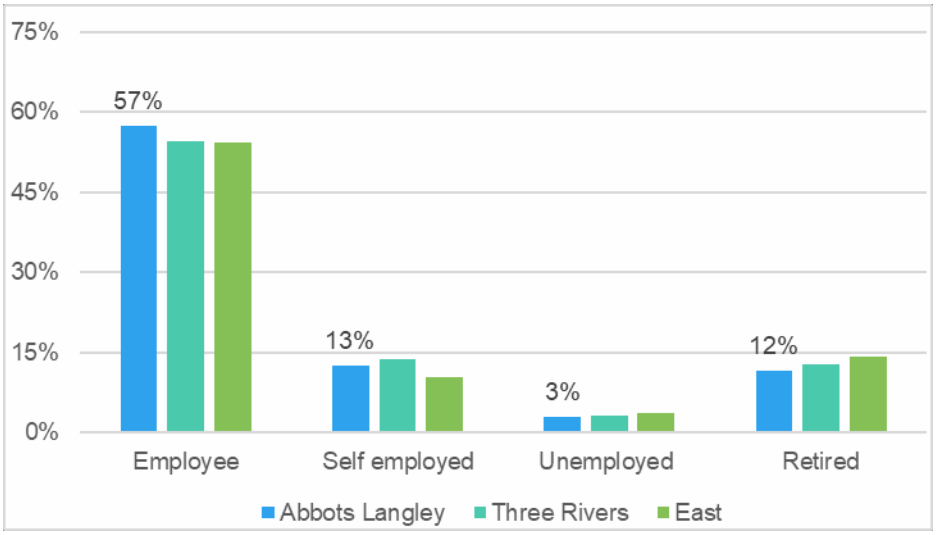


Figure A10: Economic activity, 2011

Figure A11 shows that in 2021, the number of those in employment has risen.

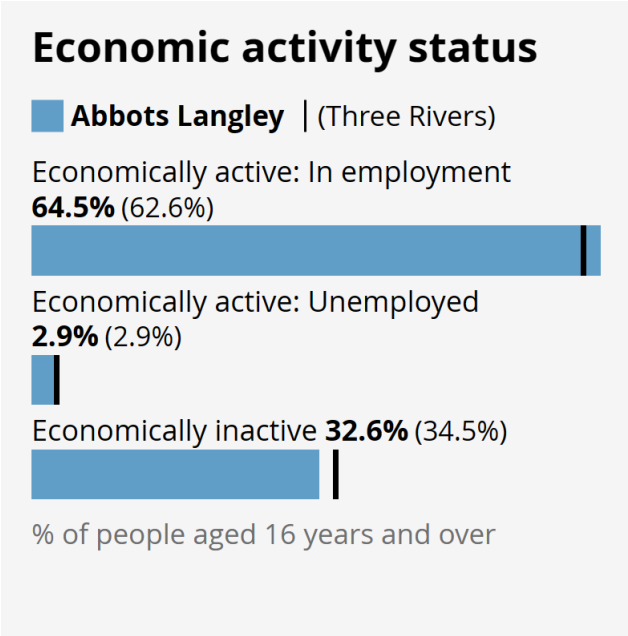


Figure A11: Economic activity, 2021

Understanding how people reach their place of work is helpful when considering the impact on local transport. Figure A12 suggests that 5% of residents are choosing to work from home. This is perhaps not unusual in a semi-rural location but again reflects a need to ensure that the working environment is in place to support these people. Half of workers are using their car to commute, although this might include those driving to nearby stations.

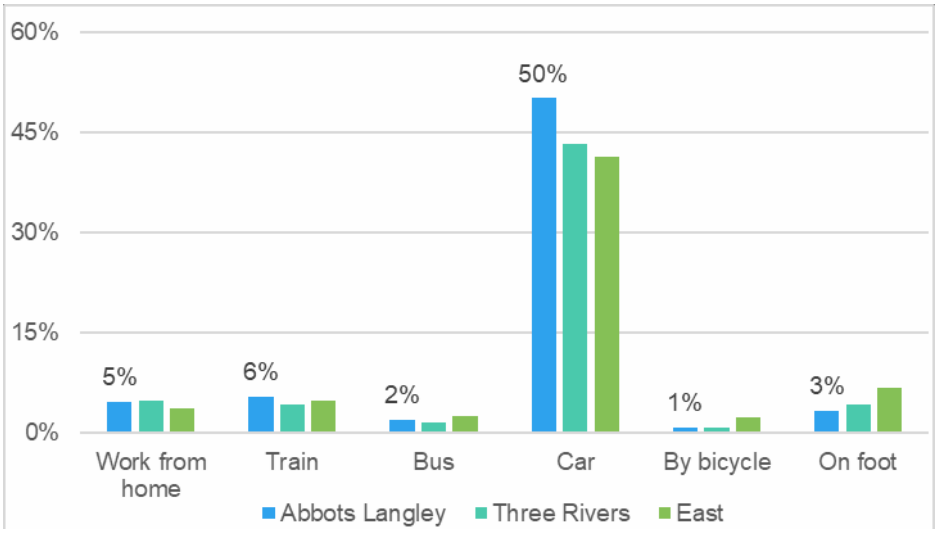


Figure A12: Mode of transport to work, 2011

Figure A13 shows the situation in 2021. The data appears to show a dramatic increase in the number of people working mainly at or from home, an increase of approximately 30%. This could be due to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic. It will be increasingly important for planning policy to take this into account in terms of space available for homeworking and the provision of accessible green space for those working from home.

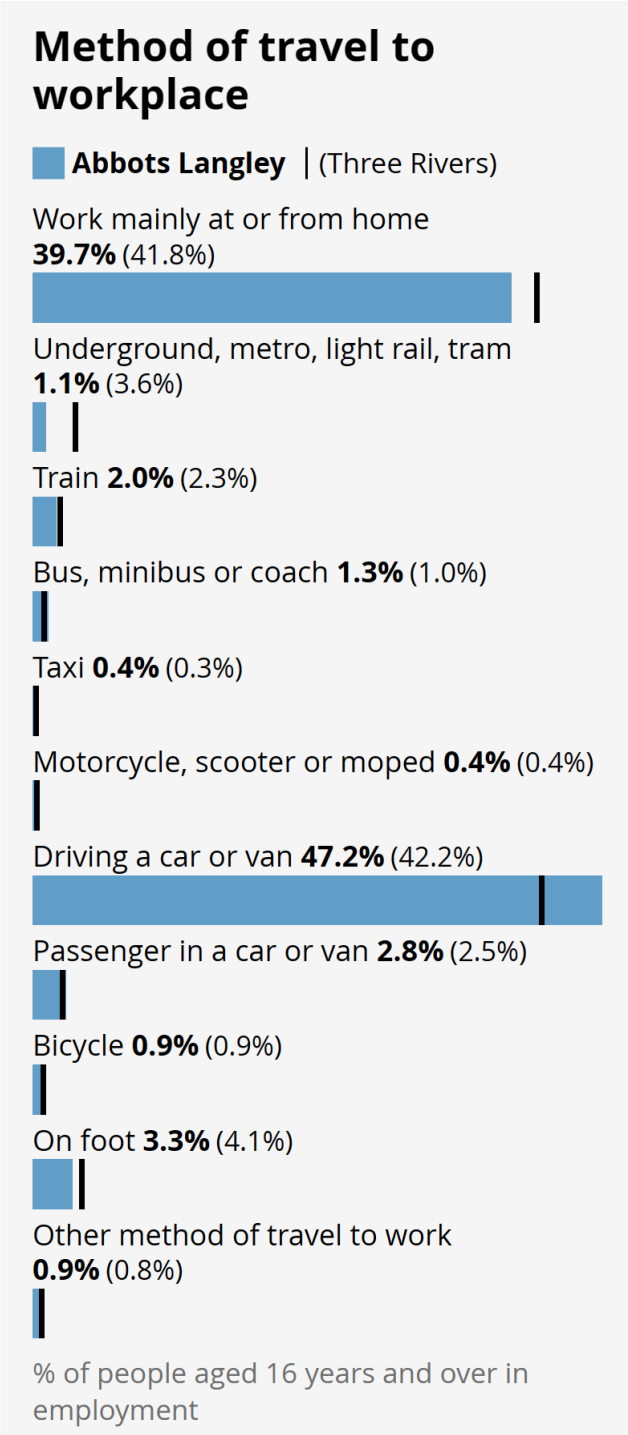


Figure A13: Mode of transport to work, 2021

In terms of how far workers are travelling to reach their place of work, the average distance travelled is 15.5km. Figure A14 illustrates this in greater detail, emphasising the predominance of out- commuters in Abbots Langley. One third of local residents travel at least 10km to reach their place of work. To illustrate this further, 10km includes a reach to Watford and Hemel Hempstead, while 30km includes central London.

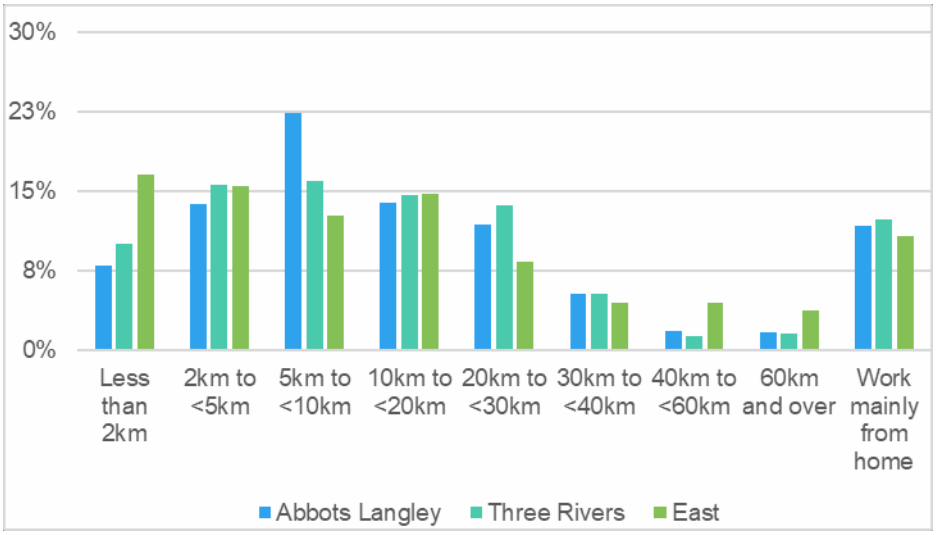


Figure A14: Distance travelled to work, 2011

12% of households in the parish have no access to a car which, whilst smaller than the district percentage, is significant given the semi-rural nature of the parish and the reliance of this section of the community on public transport. Figure A15 show that car ownership otherwise largely mirrors that at the district level.

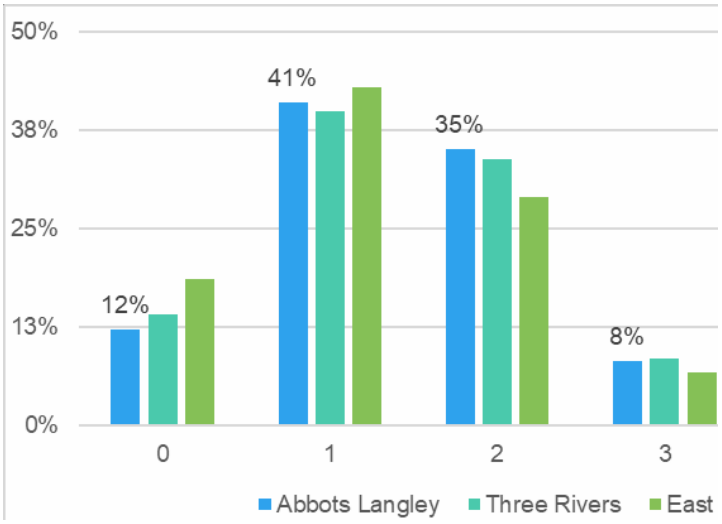


Figure A15: Number of cars per household, 2011

The 2021 data on distance travelled to work is shown in Figure A16. Again the working from home figures are higher than for 2011.

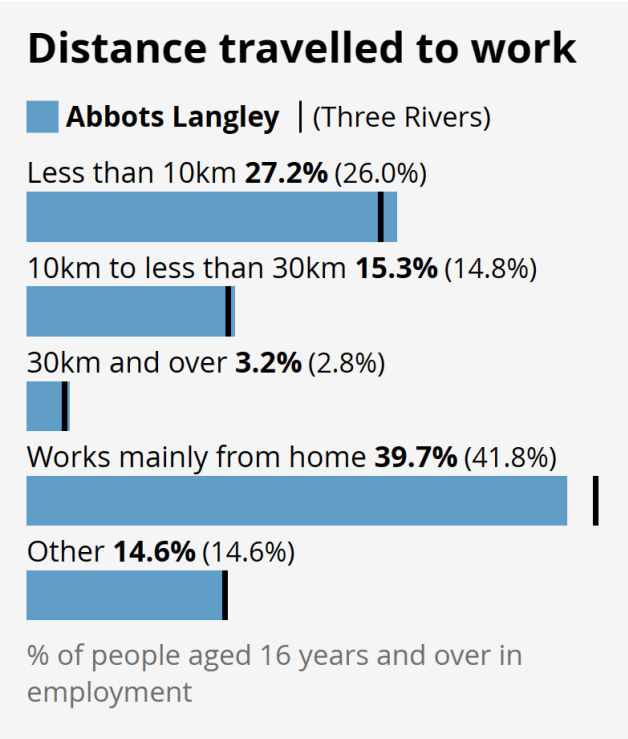


Figure A16: Distance travelled to work, 2021

The numbers of cars per household in 2021 (Figure A17) remains largely in line with the 2011 figures. The main change appears to be the rise in those households with three or more cars. It will be important for planning policy to explore how to shift the emphasis to active travel and, where cars are necessary, to less polluting forms of vehicle.

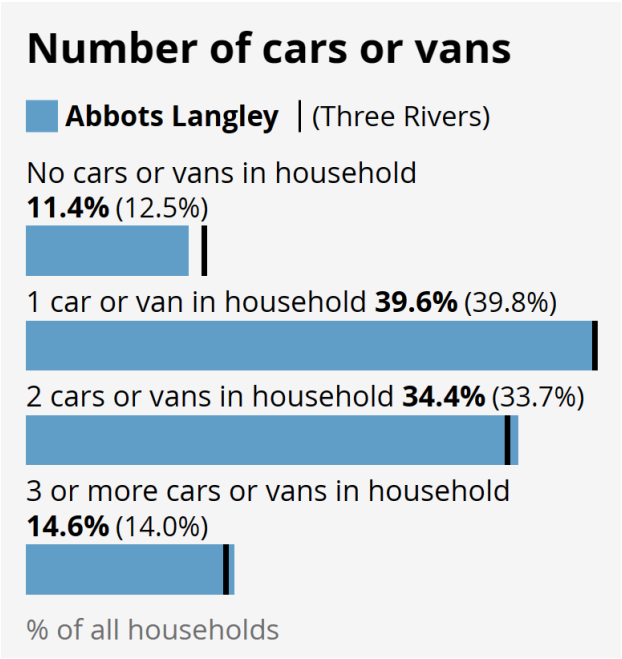
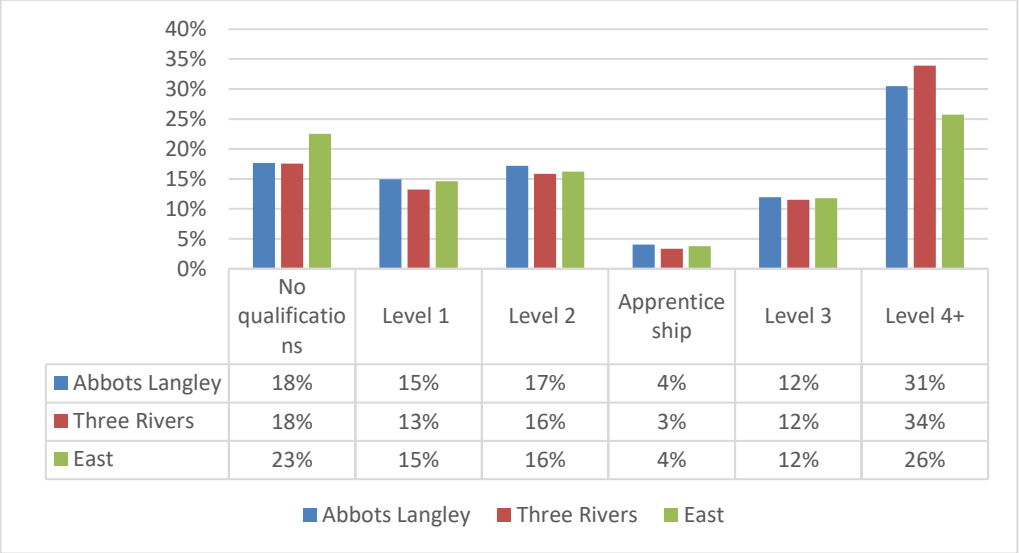


Figure A17: Number of cars per household, 2021

Figure A18 shows the qualifications of Abbots Langley residents aged 16 years and over. The figures are in line with the district as a whole, with approximately one third having the highest level of qualifications. That said, the numbers with no or lower-level qualifications roughly equals those who are well-qualified.



	No qualifications	Level 1	Level 2	Apprenticeship	Level 3	Level 4+
Abbots Langley	18%	15%	17%	4%	12%	31%
Three Rivers	18%	13%	16%	3%	12%	34%
East	23%	15%	16%	4%	12%	26%

Figure A18: Qualifications of residents, 2011

The 2021 data suggests a shift toward greater levels of qualified residents, as shown in Figure A19.

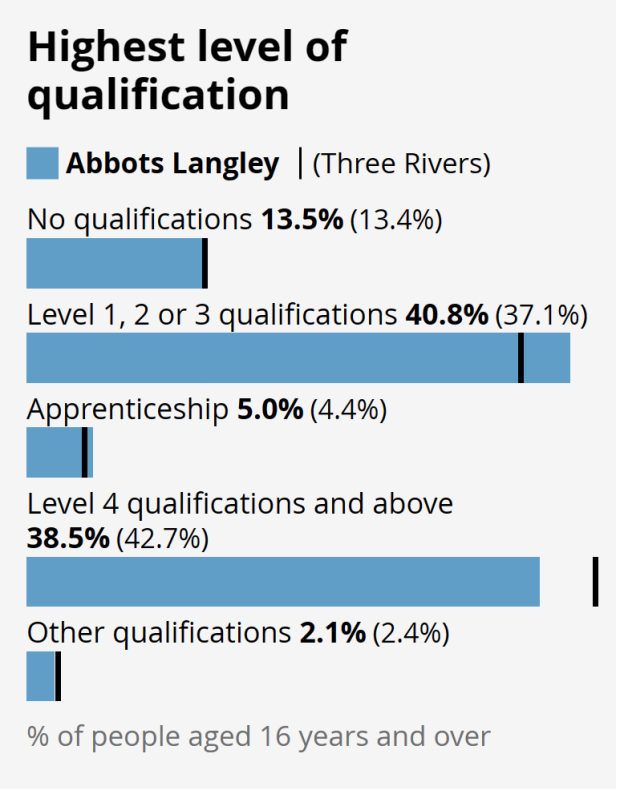


Figure A19: Qualifications of residents, 2021

Figure A20 illustrates the key employment sectors for the parish. Abbots Langley is over- represented in comparison to the district average in the wholesale/retail/motor trade sector, construction and manufacturing and transport. Comparative data for 2021 is not yet available.

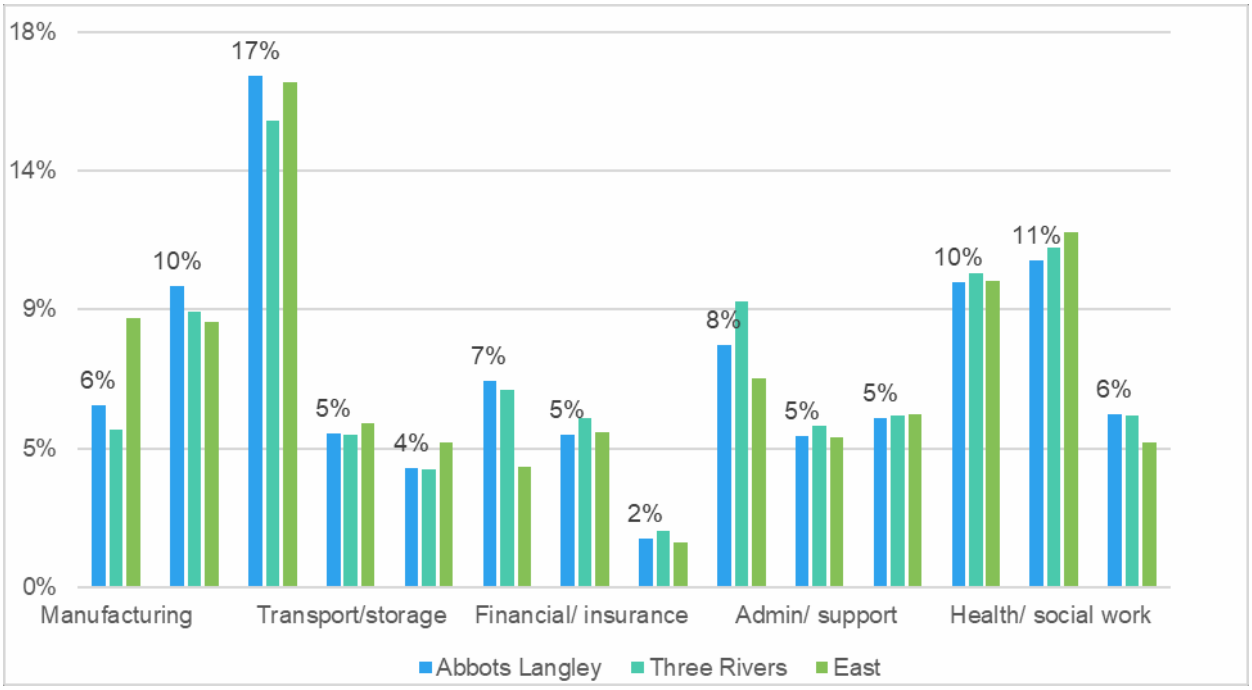


Figure A20: Main industry sectors that people are employed in, 2011

Health

Abbots Langley residents enjoy a good level of health, mirroring the district as a whole, as illustrated in Figure A21. The least deprived parts of the parish are within the village of Abbots Langley itself (ranked amongst the 10% least deprived neighbourhoods in the country). Others parts of the parish including to the north, the east and just south-west of the village, rank amongst the 50% most deprived neighbourhoods in the country. The 2021 figures reveal an overall very slight improvement in health.

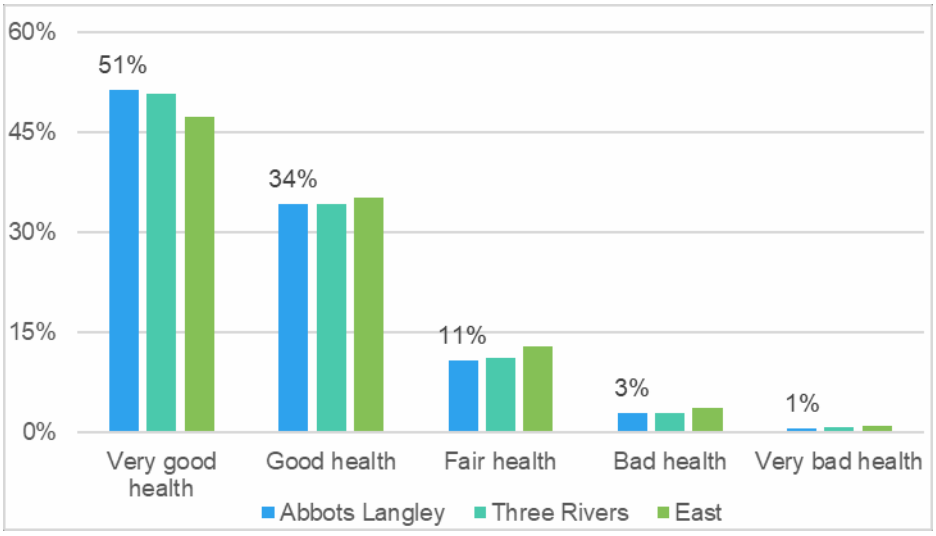


Figure A21: Level of health, 2011

Appendix B – Strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats analysis

The following Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats have been identified for Abbots Langley:

Strengths	**Weaknesses**
• Low crime rate and local police base. • Good community spirit and good range of community activities • Valued and well-performing schools • Attractive landscape setting including Green Belt, farmland and individual green spaces • Strong economic base with some large employers • Conservation area • Vibrant high street with good shopping offer • Good connectivity (proximity to motorways, railways) • Excellent access to nearby centres • Proximity of the Grand Union Canal • Established network of off-street footpaths and cycle paths. • Local Parish workforce to maintain the open spaces, woods and sports facilities	• Lack of school places available for local children as schools in Abbots Langley serve urban areas beyond the Parish • Narrow roads through bridges spanning the West Coast Mainline Rail services and the M25 cutting through the Parish reduces development opportunities for areas north of Abbots Langley village without major investment in new infrastructure. • Traffic speed, volume and weight • Inconsiderate car parking – around schools, along narrow roads, in historic settlements, on grass verges – leading to pedestrian vulnerability • Lack of facilities/services in more rural communities including Bedmond, e.g. seating, café, larger village hall. • Some infrequent public transport • Limited activities for older children • Lack of affordable housing • Loss of public houses • Environmental impacts stemming from proximity of motorway network – noise, air pollution • Surface flood water in specific areas
Opportunities	**Threats**
• Improve pedestrian safety and implement traffic management • Improve contact and service to elderly • Encourage use of renewable energy and environmental design • Encourage local businesses expansion	• Development pressures for new housing on Green Belt land • Loss of semi-rural nature of the parish • Danger of increased coalescence with neighbouring settlements

• Improve community facilities – playgrounds, burial grounds, Bedmond amenities (e.g. larger village hall, bus shelter improvements etc.) • Improve network, connectivity and condition of footpaths/cycleways • Provision of additional primary health facilities • Provision of improved housing mix to address local needs, particularly for social housing • Improvements to the canal to encourage leisure uses. • Promote tourism opportunities with the beneficial commercial effects for village centres and local businesses	• Impacts of climate change and not providing the sustainable policies to address the problems that are forecast. • Loss of biodiversity • Lack of supporting infrastructure (e.g school places, health facilities, parking demand, to keep pace with the high growth in local population • Significant growth in through traffic movements due to the growth in neighbouring urban centres and the inter-urban traffic movements that this generates through the parish. • Regional pressure from the London and the South East to undermine the Metropolitan Green Belt policies due to population demand for housing and employment. • Reduced agriculture/ horticultural land for local food production.

Appendix C – Analysis of public comments via Abbots Langley Commonplace website

The Abbots Langley Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group set up a Common Places1 website to capture views from local people about the area and how it should develop over the course of the next 15 to 20 years. The views are expressed during the period that the Neighbourhood Plan was under development and consultation. By April 2021, 198 comments had been received. Full details can be seen on: https://abbotslangley.commonplace.is/timeline

The comments were analysed by topic and shown on the Parish Council website in the section on the Neighbourhood Plan. These have been taken into account in developing planning objectives and policies. A short summary of the comments is given below:

General

- **Building height** - ensure that new buildings are in-fitting with the local context, for instance 3-storeys maximum.
- **Former Hertfordshire County Council rubbish site, Old Mill Road** – could this be used for something, e.g. brownfield development.
- **Bedmond** – needs improving in terms of range of shops, general upkeep and signage.
- **Improve the canal** – it is neglected in parts and could be better used to encourage more footfall into Abbots Langley. Parts of the towpath are not wheelchair/pushchair friendly.
- **Improve the links between Abbots Langley and Kings Langley railway station**.

Housing

- **No more housing** – the parish has had more than its fair share over recent years and it is important to retain the semi-rural feel.
- **Disruption caused by construction** – needs to be addressed when new houses are being built.
- **Housing mix** – A mix of housing sizes is needed, to cater for first-time buyers, growing families and downsizers.

Local economy and employment

- **Promote consistent signage across shops**
- **Provide additional car parking** - in the village centre to enable more footfall in the shops
- **Support village centre shops** – protect parking, discourage change of use, promote the independent shops.
- **Promote tourism** – to encourage visitors to the Warner Bros. Studio to spend time in the village.
- **Encourage pop-up events** – for instance in parking areas.
- **Address empty shops**

Environment, heritage and green spaces

- **Safeguard valued local green spaces** - e.g. Jubilee Garden, Tanners Wood, horse field and provide more.
- **Protect farmland** – e.g. between Abbots Langley and Tom's Lane, which is bisected by the M25, is an important as a local amenity as well as being farmland. It is used all year round by many local walkers, cyclists and horse riders. It is also a haven for wildlife.
- **Protect and enhance footpaths** – these provide cross country links from Abbots Langley village to Kings Langley station, Kings Langley, Hemel Hempstead, Bedmond etc. Example of the horse field which should have traffic free link both to Leavesden Park and the closed Southway Depot land

[1] https://abbotslangley.commonplace.is/timeline

- **Promote biodiversity/green wildlife corridors** – including gardens, soil, farmland, woodlands, green spaces, more trees.
- **Promote environmentally friendly design** - green roofs, use of recycled or environmentally-friendly materials in building, water conservation and recycling, require the planting of native plant species, better landscaping to maximise biodiversity.
- **Alleviate flooding** – Abbots Langley suffers from surface water flooding. Solutions might include resisting the loss of front gardens to car parking, supporting the provision of permeable car parking areas, introduction of additional green verges where there is room/ on newly built roads.
- **Protect local heritage assets –** those with spiritual, historic and cultural significance in Abbots Langley, for instance St Lawrence Church, parade of shops between Henderson Hall and the Abbots House, buildings opposite St Lawrence churchyard.
- **Mitigate noise and air pollution** – particularly from the M25, for instance through provision of soft surfaces and vegetation to shield and absorb noise.
- **Protect allotments**
- **Protect the Green Belt** – which prevents coalescence between the settlements

Transport and movement

- **Inconsiderate parking** - widen residential roads to stop cars parking on them, which destroys grass verges.
- **Speeding traffic**
- **Provide adequate parking as part of residential development**
- **Chequers Lane** – noted as unsuitable for HGVs and is inadequately marked as such. In fact it is basically unsuitable for two way traffic as in places it is only single lane with inadequate passing places.
- **Car parking in High Elms Lane** – is dangerous and needs to be addressed.
- **Provide more bicycle racks** – near to the shops, to play areas and other amenities.
- **Introduce a car club** – using electric cars and installing charging points (e.g. in the village car park and outside Manor House).
- **Additional bus services**
- **Toms Lane railway bridge** – is currently dangerous, especially for pedestrians, and needs addressing.
- **Improve pavements** – many in state of disrepair; no pedestrian access along parts of Toms Lane.

Local facilities

- **Schools** – concern about the lack of availability of primary and secondary school places, with local children already being allocated Hemel Hempstead Schools. Is there an option to expand Abbots Langley School?
- **Public houses** - need to protect these as some have already been lost recently.
- **Health** – health services are inadequate for the number of residents (and proposed new development); access to existing services is difficult.
- **Sport, leisure and recreation** – additional provision required including: improvements to the skate park, a multi-purpose floodlit sports facility in Manor House Grounds and also encouraging a café at the Club House during the day.
- **Lack of public toilets** – in the village centre and local parks.
- **Country park access via the football field and East** Lane - the existing informal steps accessing the football field and park at this point needs improving as it is currently steep and dangerous
- **Provide more water fountains** – at local facilities.
- **Additional play areas for children** – to serve new housing developments (South Way mentioned).
- **Burial ground** – the village has no designated burial ground for residents; could the Crematorium be granted more land to allow them to expand their memorial gardens?

Appendix F - Non-designated heritage assets

Non-designated heritage assets

The following historic asset is to be considered a Non-Designated Heritage Asset:

The Holy Well, Site of Breakspear Farm and surrounding Nature Reserve, Bedmond

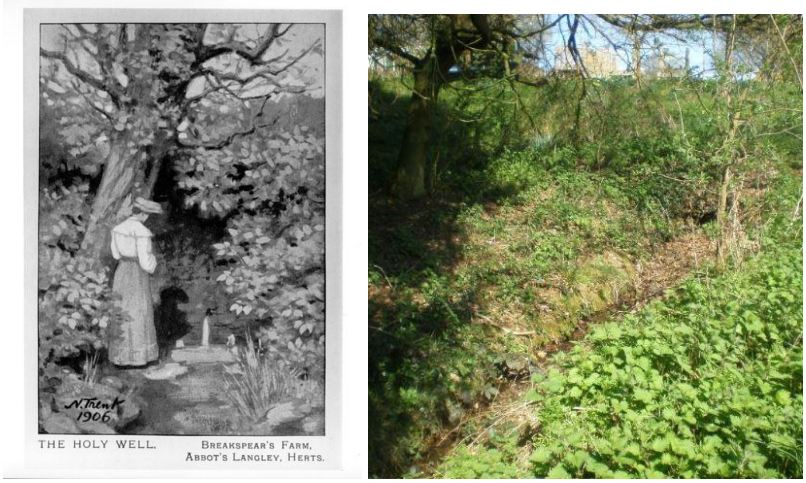
Address: South side of Bedmond Academy grounds, Medow Way, Toms Lane, Bedmond
Type: Historic well, Nature reserve, woodland

Public Importance: Bedmond was reputed to be the birthplace of the only Englishman to become Pope, Nicholas Breakspeare later Adrian or Hadrian IV (for more information visit Abbots Langley Local History Society). Local tradition records that he was born in a farmhouse in Bedmond around 1100, latterly called Breakspear Farm. Whilst the farm itself was demolished in the 1960s, the Holy Well, which would have provided a water source for the farm, remains. An account in Scott Hastie's 1993 Abbotts Langley – A Hertfordshire Village records:

"Breakspear farm was demolished in the 1960's to make way for a small crescent of modern houses, built off the Bedmond Road. Today only a concrete plaque commemorates the site's significance. Behind the old farmhouse was a well. This was said to possess 'holy water' which had special curative properties, particularly for the healing of the eyes. Throughout the centuries the well became a site of regular religious pilgrimage. …"

The Abbots Langley Local History Society visited the site in 2010 and their report can be found:
https://www.oldtimetim.com/notable_occupants/pdf_extracts/Holy%20Well%20Bedmond.pdf

Images:



Images above show: Holy Well at Breakspear Farm, Bedmond, painted by N.Trent RA, 1906 (Reference: 100047, Date: 1906, Collection: Parish Archive, Source: David Spain); and the Holy Well in recent years (source: Abbots Langley Local History Society)

Annual pilgrimage to Breakspear Farm in the 1930's.

Annual Pilgrimage by The Salvatorians in the 1930s from Scott Hastie's 1993 "Abbotts Langley – A Hertfordshire Village" Collection: Parish Archive, Source: David Spain).

Abbots Langley Parish Ordnance Survey Map c1879

Appendix G - Locally Significant Views and Local Green Spaces

Locally Significant Views

One of the distinctive features of the parish is the visual connectivity with the surrounding countryside from public places.

Resident surveys undertaken for the Neighbourhood Plan and responses to Three Rivers District Council consultations on planning applications have highlighted that parishioners value highly the visual connection between the villages and the surrounding countryside. Some views are looking outward from within the village built-up areas (sometimes far-reaching) whilst others are looking towards the villages at landmark features which form an important part of the village approach and setting.

It is recognised that whilst there are a significant number of views across beautiful countryside within it would be impossible to list them all. Rather, it is important to protect and enhance the natural beauty of the countryside more generally whilst protecting the footpaths which allow access to it.

How the views were identified: A number of important views were identified during the course of public consultation and at local meetings, where residents were invited to identify what was important to the parish and also to submit cherished views of the parish.

Members of the Steering Group undertook a number of visits to assess the views put forward. The identified views were examined in more detail, in particular where those views formed an integral part of the village Character Areas or approach/setting.

The Steering Group first ensured that the views were public, rather than private, views and visible either from the public highway, public footpaths, bridleways, public open spaces or space to which the public has access (such as the Churchyard). They were carefully recorded and mapped and assessed using set criteria consistently.

All the Views fell into two principal groups: those views looking outwards from the built-up area which contribute to the distinctive character and/or heritage of the parish and those views looking towards the village at landmark features which contribute to the distinctive character and/or heritage of the villages and their approach and settings.

The reason for the importance of each view is established by assessing their role in relation to the

character of the villages and local heritage as follows:

<u>Views looking out from the villages</u>

a) important to the character of the Conservation Area

b) important to the setting of a listed building(s)

c) important to a Character Area

d) important to the village approach and setting

e) important view of landmark feature, such as a listed building or woodland

<u>Views from the countryside of village feature, such as a listed building or woodland</u>

f) important to the character and setting of the Conservation Area

g) important to the setting of a listed building(s)

h) important to a Character Area

i) important to the village approach and setting

j) important view of landmark feature, such as a listed building or woodland

The views:

V1: View to the north from Hyde Farm

Footpath 9 is a pretty winding footpath lined with woods, fields and farmland leading to the panoramic views across open farmland and woodland towards Highwoodhall Lane in the north of Pimlico and sloping gently downhill west towards the valley of the Gade River and settlement of Nash Mills. Several listed buildings surround this site and the wooded area to the right is the local wildlife site of New Plantation.

This view is also noted in Appendix I: Bedmond Aspirations

Criteria met: d and e

V2: View to Potters Crouch Hamlet

This view forms part of the Bedmond Plateau in Chiltern Landscape Area). This is characterised by *'A gently undulating plateau area of medium-sized fields and woodlands. A visually contained and coherent landscape with a mature settled appearance arising from several traditional farms.'*

This view has multiple attractive angles. The view from Footpath 55 encompasses the farmland north to Pimlico with the Potters Crouch plantations on the right. The arable field which is also visible from the Bedmond Road occasionally has spectacular seasonal displays of field poppies drawing locals and visitors alike. The elevated view from this area of the Bedmond Road just south of Pimlico gives a stunning view back across this vale of fields towards woodland which stretches from the Bedmond Road to the Potters Crouch plantation enclosing the village of Bedmond.

The hamlet of Potters Crouch beyond is a conservation area: CONSERVATION AREA CHARACTER STATEMENT POTTERS CROUCH (stalbans.gov.uk)

This view is also noted in Appendix I: Bedmond Aspirations

Criteria met: d and e

V3: View to the Church of the Ascension and White Hart

The Church of the Ascension, affectionately known locally as the 'Tin Church' is a much loved historically important and unique Grade II listed building and one of the finest surviving examples still in use. It has a prominent position on the corner of Church Hill and Sergehill Lane in a beautiful green setting which comprises mature Yew, Oaks and mixed trees, The 'Tin Church' is a significant and very well known feature of the Village. The Churchyard is managed in accordance with the Living Churchyard Scheme providing a diverse habitats to benefit wildlife and an important wildlife corridor.
About The Church Of The Ascension | St Lawrence and Church Of The Ascension Bed (abbotslangley.org.uk)

The former White Hart Public House is situated adjacent to the 'Tin Church' and may have been an ale house from 1733 until relatively recently is a distinctive and important local historical building.
This view is also noted in Appendix I: Bedmond Aspirations

Criteria met: g, h, i and j

V4: View from Longspring Wood to Local Wildlife Site and the Green Belt

This view was taken at the top of the hill just behind Longspring wood. This view of gentle rolling hills provides a positive rural landscape for the community to enjoy and as local people go on their walks.

Long Spring Wood is a small pretty woodland owned as a Local Wildlife Site by the Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust which lies on the edge of the Kings Langley Estate. The back of the wood gives wide and open views across the land to Abbots Langley.

This view is also noted in Appendix I: Bedmond Aspirations

Criteria met: d and e

V5: View of the Grand Union Canal

This view was taken under the railway bridge on Water Lane on green belt land along the Grand Union Canal in Kings Langley. This area allows the community access to green spaces creating green routes for walking, jogging and cycling along the western boundary of the Abbots Langley Parish.
The view of the canal is cherished and should be safeguarded against any negative impacts of development.

Criteria met: g, h, i, j

V6: View of St Lawrence Church

This view was taken on the High Street outside The Boys Home public house. The church was built in 1154 to extend an existing Saxon church. Views of the church from surrounding areas are an important placemarker for locals. This particular view is a good example of the historic building in the High Street reflecting the character of the village centre.

Criteria met: f, g, h, i, j

V7: View in Leavesden Country Park

This view was taken at Leavesden Country Park outside the Woodlands Café located in the park. Leavesden Country Park provides a parkland rim as a southern crescent around the Abbots Langley Village. This is natural area provides the community with a healthy environment encouraging people to go on a walk, socialise and participate in reactional activities. Views into and within the park should be protected as it offers a distinctive feel when compared to the surrounding rural areas.

Criteria met: h, i, j

V8: View to Chequers Lane

This view was taken on the public footpath off High Elms Lane. This view is along a public footpath providing access to the nearby countryside away from busy traffic corridors. The view is valued by local walkers using this footpath.

Criteria met: d and e

V9: View to Langley Lane Play Area and Horses Field

This view is at Langley Lane Play area on South Way and provides the view of the Horses field to the left of the play area. The Horses' Field is a valued wildlife site which forms part of the Leavesden Country Park Management Plan. The play area provides safe community engagement.

During the summer months, a small number of cattle graze the field. This grazing helps the wildlife to flourish and prevents shrubs and brambles from taking over.

Criteria met: h, j , i

V10: View from Langleybury Lane to the open fields looking across to the River Gade Valley beyond

This view is from Langleybury Lane looking over the fields containing livestock. This is a significant view as it is a green space using the trees to promote wildlife and the land is being used for agricultural land.

Criteria met: d and e

V11: View through Longspring Wood Nature Reserve

This area offers a good example of Hertfordshire woodlands and a variety of wildlife. In the spring it offers a beautiful carpet of bluebells and a range of birds nesting.

Criteria met: d and e

V12: View from Footpath 19 Overlooking Ovaltine Court

This spot on footpath 19 offers a good view of the historic building which housed the former factory for Ovaltine at Kings Langley. A factory was established here in 1913. The Art Deco extension was designed by architect J.A. Bowden.

Criteria met: b and e

V13a to 13e: Series of five long-distance views (V13a to e) west across the Gade Valley

13a: This view is from junction PRoW 076 with the path heading South, viewing West over Gade valley towards Rucklers Lane. This is agricultural land in the green space.

13b: from PRoW 021 south of junc with PRoW 019 (Sheppeys Lane) – This view is along Sheppeys lane viewing west over Rapeseed fields towards the RES Turbine and across Gade Valley. It is a beautiful view which positively impacts the environment.

13c: This view is along Egg Farm Lane viewing West towards Gade Valley, showing the RES Turbine, the reformer Ovaltine factory and Kings Langley. This view allows the community to reflect on the beauty of Kings Langley.

13d: This view is from the middle point of the track across the field near Egg Farm Lane – view West, Long Wood on right, Round Wood on the horizon.

13e: This view was taken by Gypsy Lane bridge showing the view west across Gade valley towards Langleybury House. This view is stunning as it allows the public to see Langleybury House - a Grade 2 listed building.

The views all take in the distinctive landscape of the Upper Gade Valley. This is a sloping landscape that comprises woodland and farming and is much-valued locally.

Criteria met: d, e

V14: View south and SW towards Leavesden Studios and towards Watford and north London on the horizon

This view was taken at the top of the hill by Langley Lane playing area showing the amazing view of Leavesden studios, Watford and London, which shows the beauty of this specific spot being able to look down to London.

Criteria met: d, e

V15: View of the Horsefield Meadow, Bedmond

The field which borders the Bedmond Road and Footpath 18 known locally and affectionately as the Horsefield, is a very attractive undulating historical meadow full of wildflowers, wildlife and majestic Oaks, the very epitomy of a pastoral landscape important both for wildlife and the community. It is a fine example of lowland meadow habitat with indicator species, also containing a pond which is evident on old maps and seasonal bournes which form an important wetland resource for wildlife. Footpath 18 which lines the southern border of the meadow is a shady tree lined and very popular path which affords panoramic and ever-changing views of the Horsefield and gives interest through the seasons

Criteria met: d and e

Local Green Spaces

One of the distinctive features of the parish identified in resident surveys undertaken for the Neighbourhood Plan is the importance of open spaces within the settlements.

Through neighbourhood plans, local communities are able to identify for special protection green areas of particular importance to them. By designating land as Local Green Space local communities are able to rule out new development other than in very special circumstances.

Local Green Spaces should only be designated when a plan is prepared and should be capable of enduring beyond the end of the Plan period.

The Local Green Space designation should only be used where the following reasons apply:

- the green space is in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves;
- the green area is demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local
- significance, for example because of its beauty, historic significance, recreational value (including as a playing field), tranquillity or richness of its wildlife; and
- the green area concerned is local in character and is not an extensive tract of land

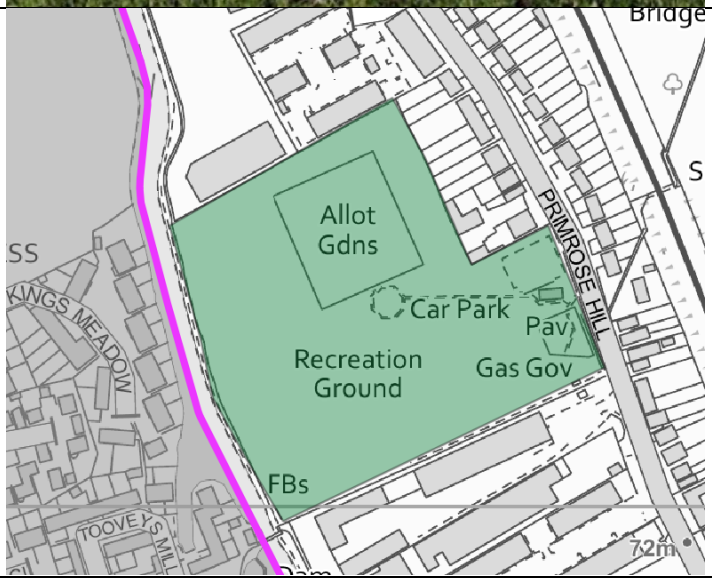
How were the spaces identified?

A number of open spaces were identified during the course of public consultation, for instance via the CommonPlaces consultations or at drop in events. In addition, the Steering Group carefully audited potential sites from local knowledge and using a map. This created a long-list of suggestions.

The Steering Group undertook a number of field surveys to assess the open spaces put forward. The majority of the spaces are located within the village built-up confines with a small number outside this. During the site visit, notes were taken alongside photographs. The majority of spaces are publicly accessible and in public ownership, with a few exceptions.

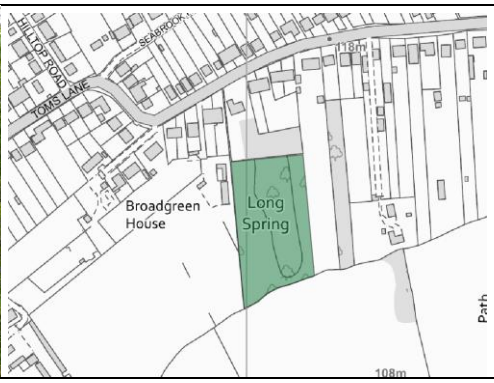
The shortlist of sites is shown below, with reasons provided as to how they meet the NPPF criteria.

LGS1: Primrose Hill playing fields

Address and location	Primrose Hill
Ownership details	ALPC
Description and purpose/ current use	Playing fields and allotments on site.
Any designations	Designated as open space by TRDC
Site allocations in Local Plan	No
Planning permissions?	No
Access & proximity including how close to the community it serves	Located adjacent to residential development, the site is important not only for Abbots Langley residents but also those living in the neighbouring parish of Kings Langley.
Demonstrably Special? Select one or more reasons and give details	**Recreation:** The site provides informal recreational space and a play area. There is a play area. A recent infestation of moles has left the space uneven for football. There are also 28 half plot allotment spaces here, which are much sought-after.
Local in character?	Yes.
Photo	
Location map	

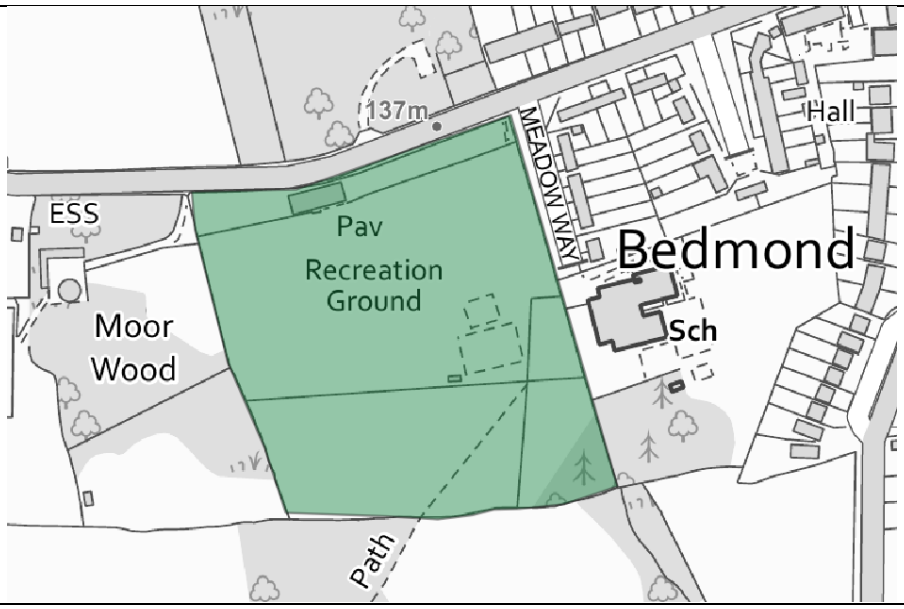
--

LGS2: Longspring Wood

Address and location	Longspring Wood, 185 Toms Lane, Bedmond, Kings Langley, WD4 8PA
Ownership details	Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust
Description and purpose/ current use	Local Wildlife Site
Any designations	Local Wildlife Site, within the Green Belt
Site allocations in Local Plan	No
Planning permissions?	No.
Access & proximity including how close to the community it serves	Accessible to the public. Site is situated in and accessed via Toms Lane. Close to Bedmond, Kings Langley and Abbots Langley.
Demonstrably Special? Select one or more reasons and give details	**Wildlife:** The site is important for wildlife and designated as a Local Wildlife Site managed by The Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust. Information from their website: Longspring Wood | Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust (hertswildlifetrust.org.uk) "About the reserve: *In spring the reserve has a mass of bluebells but offers a quiet refuge at any time of year. It is a good example of Hertfordshire woodland with oak, ash and hazel. In winter, flocks of tits and finches move through the wood feeding on seeds and berries.* *Seasonal Highlights* *Spring: Blackcap, bluebell, wild cherry.* *Summer: Blue tit, great tit,nuthatch.* *Autumn/ Winter: Goldfinch, King Alfred's Cakes* *fungi, long-tailed tit, wood mouse"* **Recreation:** The site is important for recreation, providing an attractive and tranquil woodland space for residents and visitors to walk around at any time of the year and particularly lovely during the Bluebell season. Sites like these were particularly important during the COVID 19 Pandemic. **Tranquility**: The site is located behind houses in Toms Lane and borders gardens to the East and West and the Kings Langley Estate to the south. It is a peaceful location in which to enjoy the circular path around the woods and affords extensive views across the Green Belt land of the Kings Langley Estate looking south towards Abbots Langley.
Local in character?	Yes
Photo and map	

--

LGS3: Bedmond Playing Fields

Address and location	Toms Lane, Bedmond, Abbots Langley, WD5 0RB
Ownership details	ALPC
Description and purpose/ current use	A recreation ground in Bedmond offering informal and formal recreation.
Any designations	Within the Green Belt and designated open space by TRDC
Site allocations in Local Plan	No
Planning permissions?	No
Access & proximity including how close to the community it serves	The space is in the heart of Bedmond and well-used by residents.
Demonstrably Special? Select one or more reasons and give details	**Recreation:** There are adult grass football pitches and associated changing rooms. There is parking available). There is a children's play area. The space is very well-used locally for formal and informal recreation.
Local in character?	Yes
Photo	
Location map	

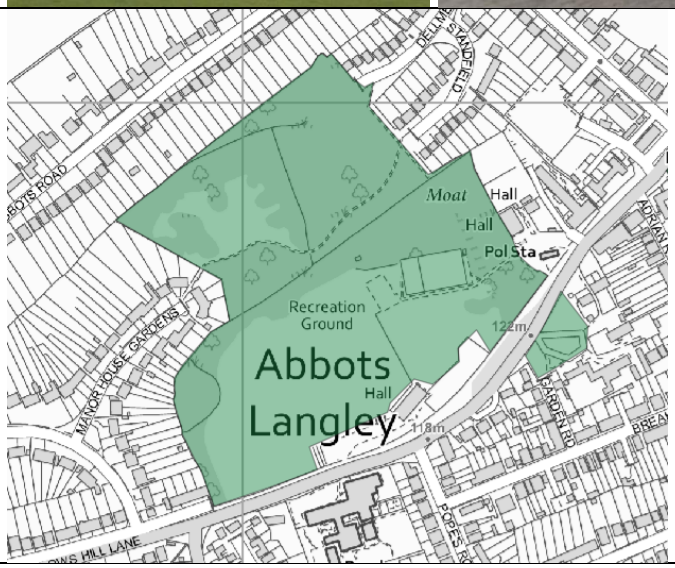
--

LGS4 - Bell Lane Corner

Address and location	Bell Lane Corner, High Street, Bedmond, Abbots Langley
Ownership details	Three Rivers District Council
Description and purpose/ current use	Open green space with public seating.
Any designations	No
Site allocations in Local Plan	No
Planning permissions?	No
Access & proximity including how close to the community it serves (in meters)	The site is fully accessible. It is situated at the entrance to Bell Lane, adjacent to The Bell Public House, next to the High Street Cottages, and opposite houses of the High Street and Bedmond Village Hall. It is quite centrally positioned regarding proximity to development.
Demonstrably Special? Select one or more reasons and give details.	**Recreation:** Whilst small, this is a delightful little area of grass and mature trees, situated on the corner of an unmade road, Bell Lane with places to sit giving a feel of a small village green right adjacent to the old Bell Public House. It is a small oasis of green next to the historically important cottages and pub characteristic of the old high street, affording an opportunity for residents and walkers alike to pause a while.
Local in character?	Yes, this is a small space nestled among housing.
Photo and map	

--

LGS5: Manor House Grounds

Address and location	Gallows Hill Lane, Abbots Langley, Herts. WD5 0DD
Ownership details	ALPC
Description and purpose/ current use	Recreation ground with opportunities for formal and informal recreation.
Any designations	Covers a site of archaeological interest and is also identified as an open space in the Local Plan.
Site allocations in Local Plan	No
Planning permissions?	No
Access & proximity including how close to the community it serves	The space is surrounded by residential areas and is accessed by the local community.
Demonstrably Special? Select one or more reasons and give details	**Recreation**: There is formal recreation here in the form of sports pitches, including tennis courts, with the Youth Football Club and Abbots Langley Cricket Club playing from this site. There is a skate park here and play area. This is a well-used local space that houses a number of local sports clubs. **Historic:** In the 17th century, the Manor House was built on a moated site with some surviving traces from the Elizabethan and Jacobean ages. This is roughly where the community centre is now. These are the grounds of the Manor House. The principal resident of the Manor House would have been the Squire of Abbots Langley and they would enjoy a social importance and an element of control over the affairs in the Parish.
Local in character?	Yes
Photo	
Location map	

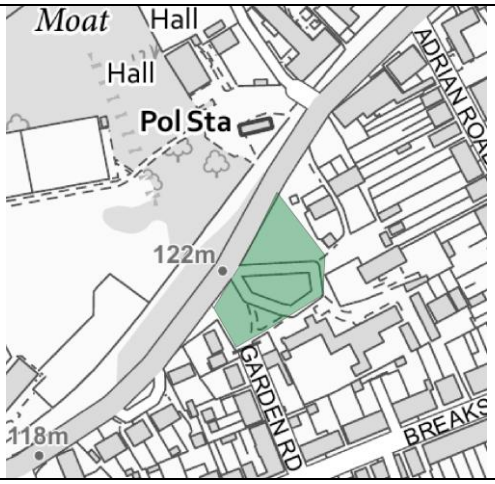
--

LGS6: Millennium Gardens

Address and location	Off Langley Road
Ownership details	ALPC
Description and purpose/ current use	A pocket of green space with benches and planting.
Any designations	Within an area of archaeological importance.
Site allocations in Local Plan	No
Planning permissions?	No
Access & proximity including how close to the community it serves	Yes, the space is in the heart of Abbots Langley village.
Demonstrably Special? Select one or more reasons and give details.	**Recreation:** The space provides benches to enjoy the maintained garden. It is a much treasured space in the village and is well-used. **Tranquillity:** It is a well-used space for those seeking a rest while visiting the village centre. **Historic:** The War Memorial is located here. There is also the old air raid siren still in place from the war. Poppies are planted here at Remembrance Day. There is a flag pole here, which has provided a focal point for special events.
Local in character?	Yes
Photo	
Location map	

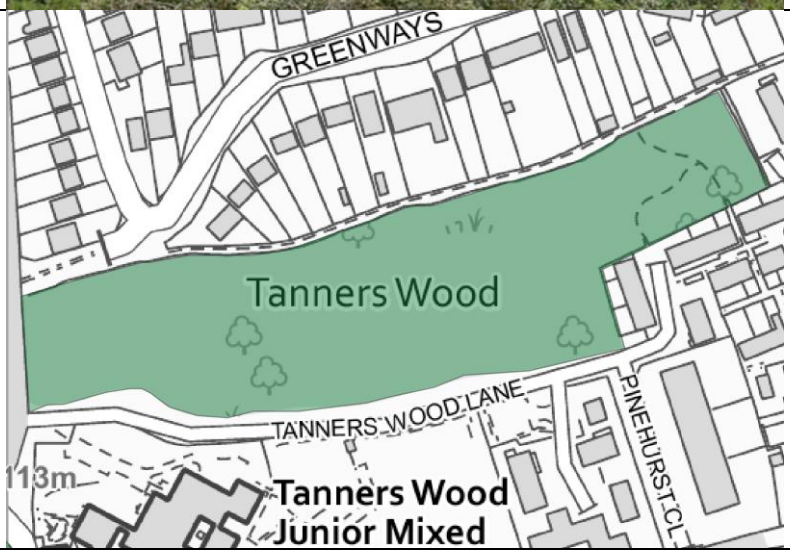
--

LGS7: Kitters Green

Address and location	Gallows Hill Lane
Ownership details	ALPC
Description and purpose/ current use	An area of green space with trees, flowers and benched, maintained by the Parish Council
Any designations	No
Site allocations in Local Plan	No
Planning permissions?	No
Access & proximity including how close to the community it serves	Yes, it is surrounded on three sides by residential homes and Kitters Green leads to one of the local public houses.
Demonstrably Special? Select one or more reasons and give details.	**Wildlife:** The space is home to a number of mature trees. **Beauty:** This historic space is planted and maintained and provides a picturesque spot within the wider settlement. **Recreation:** The space has benches and is used for informal recreation and as a place for local people to meet. **Tranquillity:** Whilst surrounded by residential properties on three sides and the main Gallows Hill Road on the other, the space provides a tranquil resting spot. **Historic:** Until 1866, Kitters Green was a separate village to Abbots Langley and focused around the Manor House. The labourers and groom lived in the flint cottages just by the present doctor's surgery. Pound Cottage is a timber framed cottage dating from the mid-17th century with 20th century additions. On the far side of Pound Cottage is a replica pound, provided by the Parish Council in 1984. Animal pounds were used to impound stray livestock (cattle, pigs, geese etc.) until claimed by their owners on payment of a fine or levy, or sold to cover the costs of impounding. They are known to date from medieval times and by the 16 century most villages and townships would have had one. They were the responsibility of a pound keeper who fed and watered the animals until they were claimed in return for payment. The original pound was not located here it was the area outside the Methodist Church. By the end of WW1 it had moved to Kitters Green.
Local in character?	Yes
Photo and map	 

--

LGS8: Tanners Wood

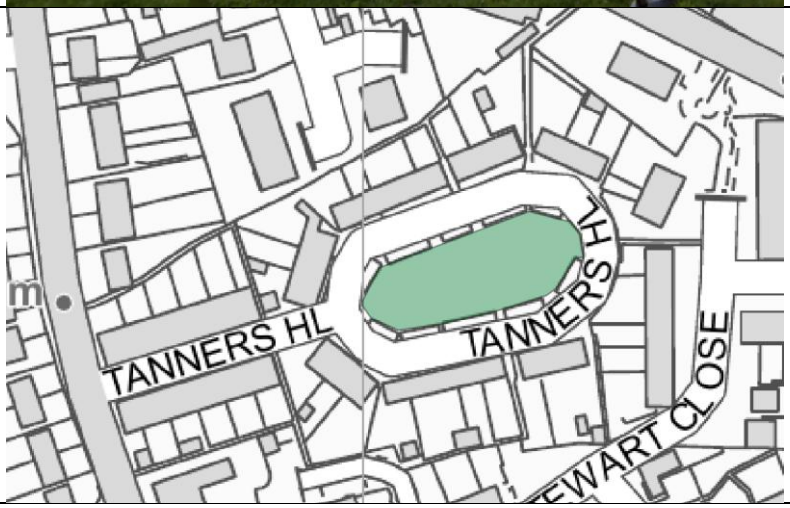
Address and location	Tanners Wood Lane
Ownership details	TRDC
Description and purpose/ current use	An area of woodland within an otherwise residential area.
Any designations	Local Wildlife Site
Site allocations in Local Plan	No
Planning permissions?	No
Access & proximity including how close to the community it serves	Yes, the woodland is located in an otherwise residential area and is fully accessible.
Demonstrably Special? Select one or more reasons and give details.	**Wildlife:** The wood is homes to a range of tree and shrubs species, which provide habitats for wildlife. **Recreation:** The woodland is located in the centre of an otherwise residential area and is often accessed by local residents including the neighbouring school.
Local in character?	Yes
Photo	
Location map	

--

LGS9: Hazelwood Lane/ Upper Highway (cluster of 7 spaces)

Address and location	Spaces located in the residential developments around Hazelwood Lane and surrounding roads.
Ownership details	TRDC
Description and purpose/ current use	These are more than simply grass verges. They are open spaces laid to grass, often with trees and other features, that were designed into the original state to provide places for informal recreation and to add to the overall green character of the area.
Any designations	No
Site allocations in Local Plan	No
Planning permissions?	No
Access & proximity including how close to the community it serves	The spaces are located among the housing.
Demonstrably Special? Select one or more reasons and give details.	**Recreational:** The spaces are large enough to provide places for informal recreation and play. **Historic:** The spaces were part of the original residential design and should be maintained as they provide access to shared open space and wildlife habitats
Local in character?	Yes
Photo	
Location map	

LGS10: Tanners Hill Green

Address and location	Tanners Hill Green
Ownership details	TRDC
Description and purpose/ current use	An area of grass located in the middle of this residential area. The space is maintained.
Any designations	No
Site allocations in Local Plan	No
Planning permissions?	No
Access & proximity including how close to the community it serves	Yes, it is fully accessible and surrounded on all sides by housing.
Demonstrably Special? Select one or more reasons and give details	**Recreation:** This green grassy space provides a shared area for informal recreation and is well-used by local residents including children.
Local in character?	Yes
Photo	
Location map	

--

LGS11: School Mead Green

Address and location	Corner of School Mead and Hazelwood Lane
Ownership details	Watford Community Housing Trust
Description and purpose/ current use	A large grassy area with some trees and natural play area.
Any designations	No
Site allocations in Local Plan	Open space in the Local Plan.
Planning permissions?	No
Access & proximity including how close to the community it serves	The space is located among housing and near to one of the primary schools. It is accessible.
Demonstrably Special? Select one or more reasons and give details	**Recreation:** The space provides a large grassy area for informal recreation and is well-used by local residents including children. There is a natural play area at one end. The space has local shops along one side.
Local in character?	Yes
Photo	
Location map	

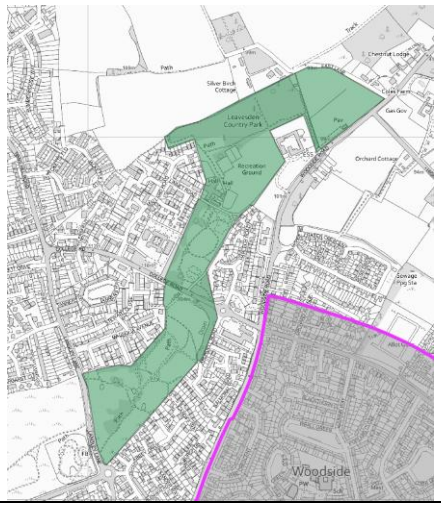
--

LGS12: Abbots Langley Horses' Field

Address and location	Between South Way, Langley Way and Furtherfield
Ownership details	TRDC
Description and purpose/ current use	This is a space left to wild, with intermittent grazing. It is managed by way of the Leavesden Country Park Management Plan.
Any designations	Within the Green Belt and open space in the Local Plan.
Site allocations in Local Plan	No
Planning permissions?	No
Access & proximity including how close to the community it serves	The space is nestled between residential areas at the western end of Leavesden Country Park.
Demonstrably Special? Select one or more reasons and give details.	**Recreation:** The field is open to the public and is used for informal recreation including dogwalking (on leads). **Wildlife:** The Horses' Field is a valued wildlife site which forms part of the Leavesden Country Park Management Plan. During the summer months, a small number of cattle graze the field. This grazing helps the wildlife to flourish and prevents shrubs and brambles from taking over. **Historic:** The Horses' Field originally comprised of four fields of arable farmland with a small wood. Local knowledge suggests that The Horses' Field got its name as it was used for grazing horses. In the 1930s the land was considered as a site for an aerodrome and in 1940 the Leavesden Aerodrome was built, opening in 1941. The site closed in the mid 1990s and over time the land became a film studio which is now Warner Bros. Studio Tours, Leavesden. This striking green space came into the ownership of Three Rivers District Council in 2011. It was part of the development for the former Aerodrome site, which included new housing, play areas, community amenities and commercial properties.
Local in character?	Yes
Photo	

--

LGS13: Leavesden Country Park

Address and location	1 College Rd, Abbots Langley WD5 0NX
Ownership details	TRDC
Description and purpose/ current use	Officially opened in 2019, Leavesden Country Park covers an area of over 27 hectares and consists of walking/biking paths, a football pitch, wildlife areas, tennis courts, a children's play area and an outdoor gym for adults. Leavesden Country Park is located off College Road in Abbots Langley. A successful National Lottery Heritage Fund bid has seen a number of improvements to the park. Visit the website below to find out more.
Any designations	Country Park, Green Belt, TRDC Open Space
Site allocations in Local Plan	No
Planning permissions?	No
Access & proximity including how close to the community it serves	The Park runs through the village of Abbots Langley and is very accessible to residents. It is extremely well-used.
Demonstrably Special? Select one or more reasons and give details.	**Recreation:** As described above, the park has numerous formal recreational facilities and also enables access to the countryside from the nearby residential areas for informal recreation. There is a sculpture trail, outdoor gym, BMX track, playgrounds, woodland and parkland. It is a much-valued space. There is a café in the park. **Wildlife:** The park effectively provides a 'green finger' running through the otherwise urban area. It provides a range of habitats (woodland, grassland etc.) for many species. The south side comprises of about 50 acres of typical English parkland along with a variety of apple trees, a pergola and the largest Monkey Puzzle tree in Hertfordshire. **Historic:** The park is formed on the grounds originally belonging to the Leavesden Asylum and St. Pancras Orphanage. The asylum and the orphanage were both constructed in 1868 and continued in various forms until 1995. Two of the original hospital buildings can still be seen from the north side of the park, which consists of two children's play areas, three football pitches, an adult outdoor gym, a BMX track and over 20 acres of woodland area.
Local in character?	Yes. Although the site is fairly large, it runs through the community and is accessible from many locations.
Photo and map	

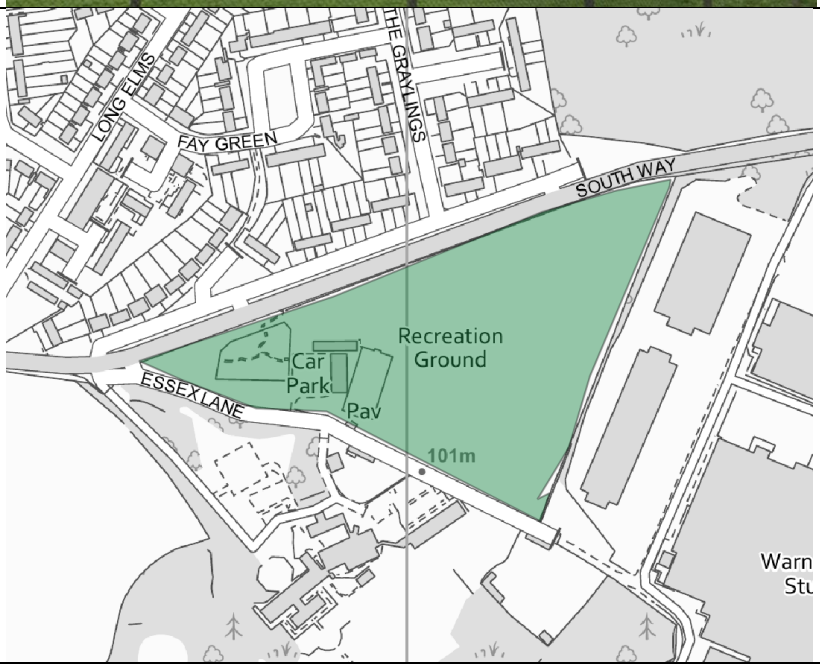
--

LGS14: Leavesden High Road / Aerodrome Way/ Halifax Close/ Westfield Close cluster

Address and location	Located along aerodrome away
Ownership details	Warner Bros.
Description and purpose/ current use	A large grassed area included in the original design of the housing here.
Any designations	No
Site allocations in Local Plan	No
Planning permissions?	No
Access & proximity including how close to the community it serves	The space is part of the overall design of the housing here. It is fully accessible with footpaths across it.
Demonstrably Special? Select one or more reasons and give details	**Recreation:** A large, maintained grassy area with footpaths and other facilities, including a playground and benches. It is used by local residents for informal recreation.
Local in character?	Yes
Photo	
Location map	

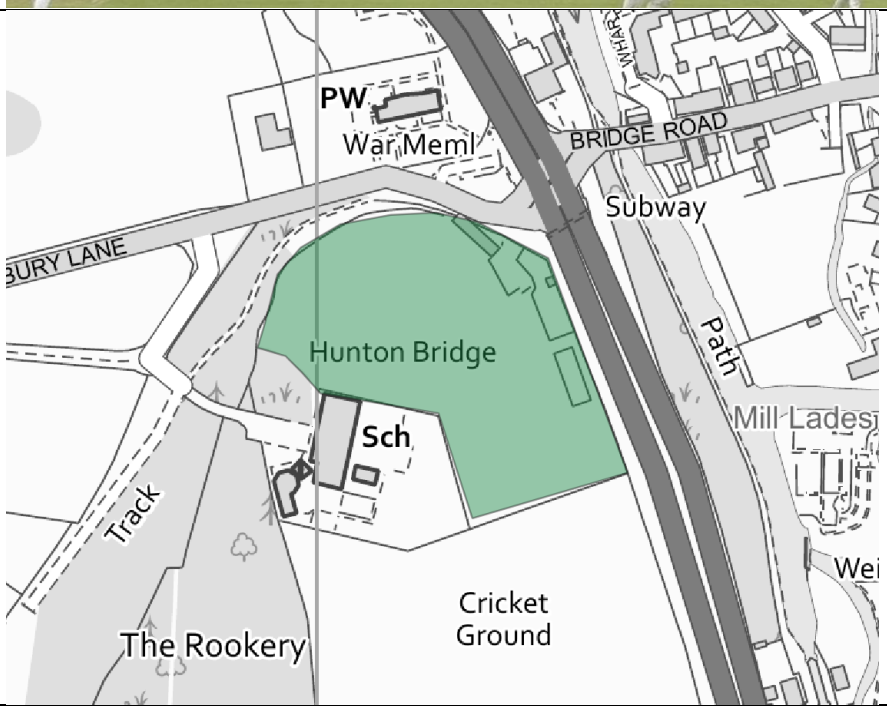
--

LGS15: South Way Playing Fields

Address and location	South Way, Abbots Langley, WD5 0JL
Ownership details	TRDC
Description and purpose/ current use	Formal recreation ground with grass and artificial grass pitches for mini, junior and adult football.
Any designations	Within the Green Belt and open space in the Local Plan.
Site allocations in Local Plan	No
Planning permissions?	No
Access & proximity including how close to the community it serves	The space is located opposite a residential area and is used by local sports clubs.
Demonstrably Special? Select one or more reasons and give details	**Recreation:** The space is a much-used recreational resource, notably for football. It is home to Evergreen Football Club.
Local in character?	Yes
Photo	
Location map	

--

LGS16: Langleybury cricket ground

Address and location	Langleybury Lane, WD4 8RJ
Ownership details	ALPC
Description and purpose/ current use	This is a well-used cricket club.
Any designations	Within the Green Belt.
Site allocations in Local Plan	No
Planning permissions?	No
Access & proximity including how close to the community it serves	A village cricket club located in the west of the parish.
Demonstrably Special? Select one or more reasons and give details.	**Recreation:** Junior and adult teams of all abilities play at the club. Aside from the cricket, Langleybury club hosts regular social events, including barbecues, quiz nights and fundraisers. The cricket club is affiliated to the England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB), the Hertfordshire County Cricket Association, and the Club Cricket Conference. **Historic:** The cricket club has been playing here for over 175 years.
Local in character?	Yes
Photo	
Location map	

--

LGS17: Lower Field Warner Brothers

Address and location	Adjacent to the A41 Watford Road
Ownership details	Warner Bros.
Description and purpose/ current use	The site is set aside as an Ecological area known as Gyspy Lane Ecological Park
Any designations	Green Belt
Site allocations in Local Plan	No
Planning permissions?	No
Access & proximity including how close to the community it serves	The space is accessible to residents living nearby and is also accessed by schools.
Demonstrably Special? Select one or more reasons and give details	**Recreation:** The space is used by local for informal recreation including dogwalking. **Wildlife:** The space has been largely left to wild as an ecological area.
Local in character?	Yes
Photo	
Location map	

This page is intentionally left blank

APPENDIX D: ABBOTS LANGLEY HOUSING NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Abbots Langley
Housing Needs Assessment

December 2017

Quality information

Prepared by	Checked by	Approved by
Ivan Tennant – Principal Planner	Jesse Honey – Associate Director	
Lachlan Anderson-Frank – Assistant Consultant		

Revision History

Revision	Revision date	Details	Authorized	Name	Position
1	November 2017	Research and drafting	IT	Ivan Tennant	Principal Planner
2	November 2017	Internal QA	JH	Jesse Honey	Associate Director
3	December 2017	Community Review	PW	Peter Warman	Chair, Neighbourhood Planning Group for Abbots Langley
4	December 2017	Final proofread	JB	Jessica Boekhoff	Consultant

Prepared for:

Abbots Langley Parish Council

Prepared by:

AECOM Limited
Aldgate Tower
2 Leman Street
London
E1 8FA
aecom.com

© 2017 AECOM Limited. All Rights Reserved.

This document has been prepared by AECOM Limited (“AECOM”) for sole use of Abbots Langley Parish Council (the “Client”) in accordance with generally accepted consultancy principles, the budget for fees and the terms of reference agreed between AECOM and the Client. Any information provided by third parties and referred to herein has not been checked or verified by AECOM, unless otherwise expressly stated in the document. No third party may rely upon this document without the prior and express written agreement of AECOM.

Table of Contents

1. Executive Summary 8
2. Context 17
   - 2.1 Local context 17
   - 2.2 Planning policy context 17
3. Approach 19
   - 3.1 Research Questions (RQs) 19
   - 3.1.1 Quantity 19
   - 3.1.2 Tenure 19
   - 3.1.3 Type and size 19
   - 3.1.4 Housing for specialist groups 20
   - 3.2 Study Objectives 21
   - 3.3 Relevant Data 21
   - 3.3.1 SHMA 21
4. RQ1. What quantity of housing is appropriate for the NPA over the Plan period to address housing need? 22
   - 4.1 Core Strategy 22
   - 4.2 SHMA 23
   - 4.3 DCLG Household Projections 23
   - 4.3.1 Home growth 2001 – 2011 24
   - 4.3.2 Home growth since 2011 24
   - 4.4 The Standard Methodology 24
5. RQ2. What affordable housing (social housing, affordable rented, shared ownership, intermediate rented) and market housing tenures should be included in the housing mix? 25
   - 5.1.1 Definitional issues 25
   - 5.2 Current tenure profile 27
   - 5.2.1 Age Structure 27
   - 5.2.2 Household composition 30
   - 5.2.3 Affordability 31
   - 5.2.4 Purchase threshold 35
   - 5.2.5 Income Threshold 35
   - 5.2.6 Over-crowding 35
   - 5.3 Housing Needs Register 36
   - 5.4 Market Segmentation 37
   - 5.4.1 Arrows Analysis 38
   - 5.5 What forms of Affordable Housing should be included in the tenure mix? 40
   - 5.5.1 Shared ownership 41
   - 5.5.2 Affordable Rented Dwelling (ARD) 41
   - 5.6 What type of market housing (private rented and housing for sale) should be included in the housing mix? 42
   - 5.6.1 Build to Rent 42
6. RQ3. What type (terrace, semi, bungalows, flats and detached) and size (number of habitable rooms) of housing is appropriate? 43
7. RQ4: Specialist housing (e.g., What provision should be made for retirees and the elderly?) 46
   - 7.1 Sheltered and extra-care housing 46
   - 7.1.1 Retirement villages 47
   - 7.1.2 Senior Co-housing 47
   - 7.1.3 Multi-generational homes 47
   - 7.1.4 Lifetime Homes 47
   - 7.1.5 Right-sizing 48
   - 7.1.6 Planning flexibility 48

7.1.7 Lifetime neighbourhoods 48
7.1.8 Age-friendliness 48
7.1.9 Housing for people with Dementia 49
7.1.10 The role of the Local Authority 50
8. Market Signals 50
8.1 Commuting and Employment 50
8.2 Housing Sales (Prices) 53
8.3 Housing Affordability 55
8.4 Migration 57
8.5 Overcrowding 58
8.6 Concealment 58
8.7 Rate of Development 59
9. Conclusions 61
9.1 Overview 61
9.2 Recommendations for next steps 66

List of Tables

Table 1: Summary of factors specific to Client NP with a potential impact on neighbourhood plan housing quantity11
Table 2: Summary of local factors specific to Abbots Langley with a potential impact on housing Type 13
Table 3: Relative proportional size of the urban areas of Key Centres in Three Rivers 22
Table 4: Tenure (households) in Abbots Langley, 2011 27
Table 5: Rates of tenure change in Abbots Langley, 2001-2011 27
Table 6: Rate of change in the age structure of the population of Abbots Langley, 2001-2011 28
Table 7: Population change 2013 to 2036 by fifteen-year age bands (2012-based SNPP) 29
Table 8: Projected Change in Population of Older Persons (2013 to 2036) 29
Table 9: Household composition (by household) in Abbots Langley, 2011 30
Table 10: Rates of change in household composition in Abbots Langley, 2001-2011 30
Table 11: Estimated change in households headed by someone aged under 35 (2013-36) – using 2012-based CLG household formation rates 31
Table 12: SHMA LQAR and MAR 32
Table 13: Household Income - Averages 33
Table 14: Household Income 34
Table 15: Property values in Abbots Langley (£,000) 35
Table 16: Trends in number of persons per room in Abbots Langley, 2001-2011 36
Table 17: Concealed households 36
Table 18: Market Segments 39
Table 19: Estimated Housing Size required by Household Type, by Age of Head of Household 40
Table 20: Accommodation type (households) in Abbots Langley, 2011 43
Table 21: Rates of change in number of rooms per household in Abbots Langley, 2001-2011 43
Table 22: Change in number of rooms per household in Abbots Langley (absolute numbers), 2001-2011 44
Table 23: Size of homes 44
Table 24: Type of homes 45
Table 25: Change in the population of over 75s between 2011 and 2032 46
Table 26: Distance to work, 2011 51
Table 27: House Prices in Abbots Langley, 2007-2016 53
Table 28: House Price Rises in Abbots Langley and Three Rivers District, 2007-2016 54
Table 29: Country of birth and length of residence, Abbots Langley 2011 57
Table 30: Number of persons per room in Abbots Langley and Three Rivers, 2001 and 2011 58
Table 31: Concealed families in Abbots Langley, 2011 58
Table 32: Growth in dwellings numbers, 2001-2011 60
Table 33: Summary of Key Factors 61

List of Figures

Figure 1: Dwelling projections for the Client NP Area, 2011-2031 10
Figure 3: Map showing coverage of Metropolitan Green Belt around Abbots Langley 17
Figure 4: Age Structure 28
Figure 5: Lower Quartile Affordability Trend, 1997-2013 32
Figure 6: Median Residents' Annual Earnings (Gross), 2014 33
Figure 7: Lower Quartile Residents' Annual Earnings (Gross), 2014 33
Figure 8: Median House Prices, Jan 2013 – Dec 2014 34
Figure 9: Dementia care chart 49
Figure 10: Main Destination of Employment 51
Figure 11: Commuting Patterns in Three Rivers District 52
Figure 12: Forecast Growth Rates for Comparator Areas, 2013-2036 52
Figure 13: Map of Hertfordshire Growth Areas 53
Figure 14: Median House Price Trends, 2008-2013 54
Figure 15: Inflation- Adjusted House Price Index 55
Figure 16: Ratio of house price to residence-based earnings in Three Rivers 55
Figure 17: Private Rents in Three Rivers District, 2012-17 56
Figure 18: Indicative Income Required to Purchase/Rent Without Additional Subsidy 56
Figure 19: Distribution of Household Income in South West Herts 57
Figure 20: Housing completions versus planned targets in Three Rivers, 2006-2014 59
Figure 21: Collated HMA Housing Completions against Targets, 2006-2014 59
Figure 22: Summary of local factors specific to Abbots Langley with a potential impact on neighbourhood plan housing characteristics 63

Glossary of terms used in text

ALPC	Abbots Langley Parish Council
AH	Affordable Housing (NPPF definition)
AMH	Affordable Market Housing
DCLG	Department for Communities and Local Government
GT	Gypsy & Traveller
GTAA	Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment
HNA	Housing Needs Assessment
LPA	Local Planning Authority [The local authority]
NDP	Neighbourhood Development Plan
NP	Neighbourhood Plan
NPA	Neighbourhood Plan Area
NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework
ONS	Office for National Statistics
PPG	Planning Practice Guidance
PRS	Private Rented Sector
RTF	Rural Town and Fringe
SHLAA	Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment
SHMA	Strategic Housing Market Assessment (2016)
SWHES16	South West Hearts Economic Study (2016)
TRCS	Three Rivers Core Strategy (adopted 2011)
TRDC	Three Rivers District Council

1. Executive Summary

Introduction

1. The 2011 Localism Act introduced neighbourhood planning, allowing parishes, town councils or neighbourhood forums across England to develop and adopt legally binding development plans for their neighbourhood area.

2. As more and more parishes, towns and forums seek to address housing growth, including tenure and type of new housing, it has become evident that developing policies need to be underpinned by robust, objectively assessed housing data.

3. In the words of the national Planning Practice Guidance (PPG), establishing future need for housing is not an exact science, and no single approach will provide a definitive answer. The process involves making balanced judgments, as well as gathering numbers and facts. At a neighbourhood planning level, one important consideration is determining the extent to which the neighbourhood diverges from the local authority average, reflecting the fact that a single town or neighbourhood almost never constitutes a housing market on its own and must therefore be assessed in its wider context.

4. The guidance quoted above on housing needs assessment is primarily aimed at local planning authorities preparing Strategic Housing Market Assessments (SHMAs), which are used to determine housing need at a local authority level. However, it helpfully states that those preparing neighbourhood plans can use the guidance to identify specific local needs that may be relevant to a neighbourhood, but that any assessment at such a local level should be proportionate.

5. Our brief was to advise on data at this more local level to help Abbots Langley Parish Council (ALPC) understand, among other matters, the type, tenure and quantity of housing needed to inform neighbourhood plan policies.

PPG-Based Assessment

6. This objective and independent housing needs advice note follows the PPG approach where relevant. This ensures our findings are appropriately evidenced. The PPG advises that assessment of development needs should be thorough but proportionate and does not require planners to consider purely hypothetical future scenarios, only future scenarios that could be reasonably expected to occur.

Summary of Methodology

7. Housing Needs Assessment at neighbourhood plan level can be focused either on quantity of housing needed, type of housing need, or both. In most cases, there is a need to focus on quantity where the housing target for the settlement being assessed is unclear, for example where the local authority has not set a specific target for the settlement, or where there is no local plan in place.

8. In the case of Three Rivers District Council (TRDC), the current adopted Development Plan, the Core Strategy (adopted 17 October 2011), sets a housing target for the district of 4,500 dwellings, or 180 dwellings per year between 2001 and 2026[1]. Abbots Langley is defined as a 'key centre' in this document. Policy PSP2 Development in Key Centres (as well as Abbots Langley, this includes South Oxhey, Croxley Green, Chorleywood, Leavesden and Garston and Mill End) states that Key Centres should provide ‘approximately 60% of the District’s housing requirements over the Plan period to include approximately 45% of affordable housing as informed by the Strategic Housing Market Assessment (2010).’ As a plan that pre-dates the National Planning Policy Framework, this cannot however be used as a reliable basis on which to calculate a suitable housing needs figure for the parish.

9. While TRDC is in the process of producing a new local plan, this is at an early stage of preparation, with no formal drafts published. While an Issues & Options (and Call for Sites) Consultation was published in July 2017, this document only goes so far as to outline a range of potential directions for housing policy and does not settle on specific housing targets for either the district or parish levels.

10. The SHMA, published in October 2016, provides the evidence base for the housing policy at the new Local Plan. This document does not however provide clear recommended housing targets at the parish level. The core purpose of this study is therefore to consider both quantity of housing needed, in light of the recently commissioned SHMA, identifying a housing needs figure for Abbots Langley, as well as type, in accordance with the wishes of the Parish Council.

[1] Three Rivers District Council Core Strategy, Adopted 17th October 2011, page 29

11. Notwithstanding the weakness of the policy context at the district level, it is important the housing needs figure arrived at is based on evidence deemed acceptable for plan-making purposes, and that inform housing numbers at the district level. This is because neighbourhood plans need meet the basic conditions and these are tested through the independent examination of Basic Conditions to be 'made' by the LPA. One of these, Basic Condition E, requires the Neighbourhood Plan to be in 'general conformity with the strategic policies' of the Local Plan. The Government's Planning Practice Guidance indicates that the level of housing development is likely to count as a strategic policy.[2]

12. In terms of the types of housing needed, there is generally more flexibility on what neighbourhood plans can cover. In order to understand the types of housing needed in Abbots Langley, we have gathered a wide range of local evidence and summarised it into policy recommendations designed to inform decisions on housing characteristics.

Gathering and Using a Range of Data

13. The PPG states that:

> *'no single source of information on needs will be comprehensive in identifying the appropriate assessment area; careful consideration should be given to the appropriateness of each source of information and how they relate to one another. For example, for housing, where there are issues of affordability or low demand, house price or rental level analyses will be particularly important in identifying the assessment area. Where there are relatively high or volatile rates of household movement, migration data will be particularly important. Plan makers will need to consider the usefulness of each source of information and approach for their purposes'.*

14. It continues*:*

> *'Plan makers should avoid expending significant resources on primary research (information that is collected through surveys, focus groups or interviews etc. and analysed to produce a new set of findings) as this will in many cases be a disproportionate way of establishing an evidence base. They should instead look to rely predominantly on secondary data (e.g. Census, national surveys) to inform their assessment which are identified within the guidance'.*

15. Compared with the 2001 Census, the 2011 Census gathered data in a number of new categories and across a range of geographies that are highly relevant to planning at the neighbourhood level and helpful if a PPG-based approach is being used.

16. Like much of the data forming the housing policy evidence base, the Census information is quantitative. However, at a local level, qualitative and anecdotal data, if used judiciously, also has an important role to play, to a perhaps greater extent than at local authority level. We have gathered data from as wide a range of sources as practicable in order to ensure robustness of conclusions and recommendations arising from the analysis of that data. Our conversation with local estate agents, Haart, Your Move, Connells, Proffitt Holt based in Abbots Langley, helped ensure our conclusions were informed by a qualitative, local perspective.

Focus On Demand Rather Than Supply

17. Our approach is to provide advice on the housing required based on need and/or demand rather than supply. This is in line with the PPG, which states that '*the assessment of development needs should be an objective assessment of need based on facts and unbiased evidence. Plan makers should not apply constraints to the overall assessment of need, such as limitations imposed by the supply of land for new development, historic under performance, viability, infrastructure or environmental constraints*.'

18. For this reason, we advise that the conclusions of this report should be assessed against supply-side considerations (including, for example, factors such as transport infrastructure, landscape constraints, flood risk and so on) as a separate and follow-on study[3].

Quantity of Housing Needed

19. Our assessment of a wide range of data sources identified five separate projections of dwelling numbers for Abbots Langley over the proposed Plan period between 2017 and 2032 based on:

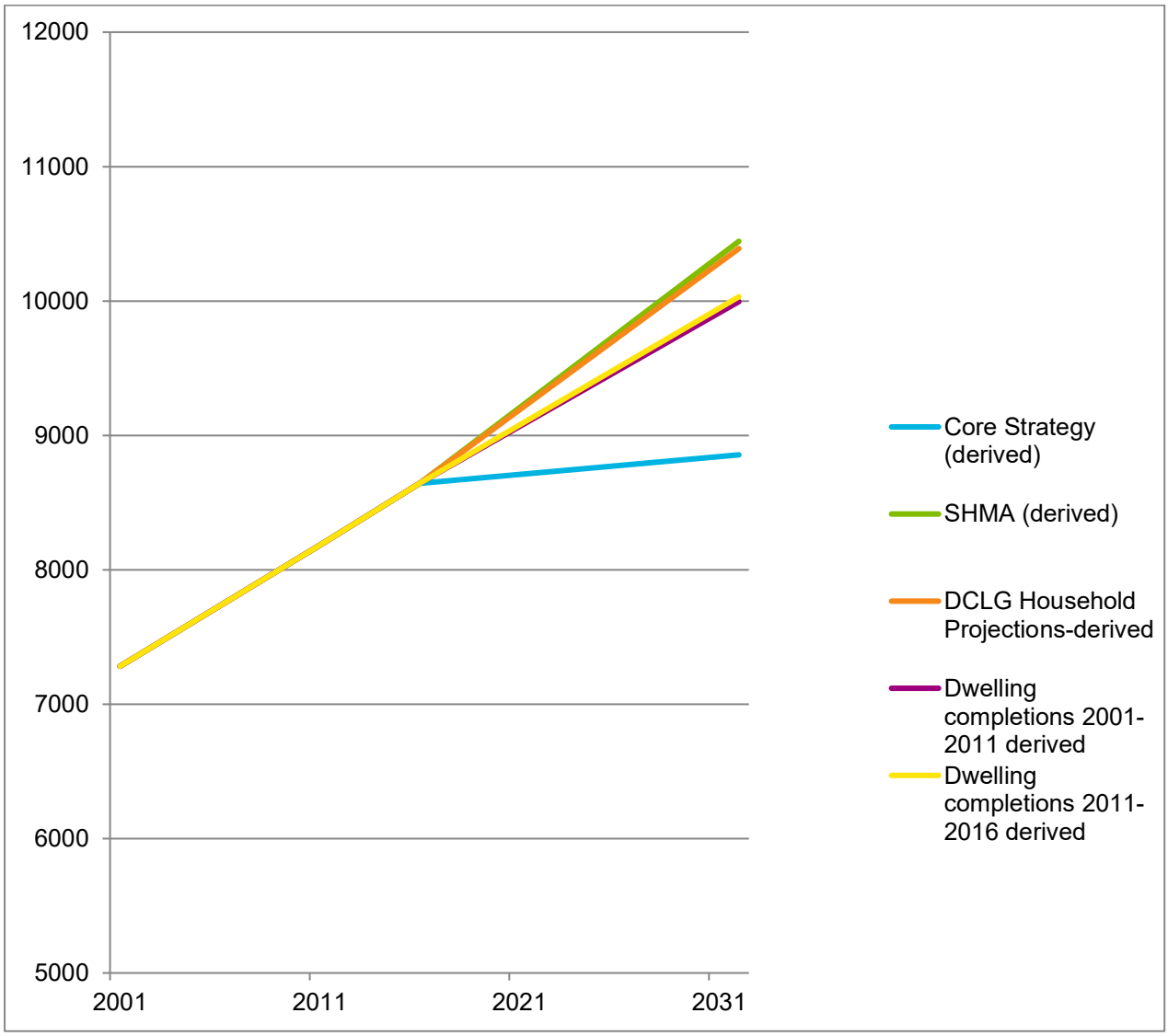
[2] See Planning Practice Guidance Paragraph: 006 Reference ID: 2a-006-20140306

[3] Such an approach, clearly separating housing need assessment from dwelling capacity assessment, was endorsed by the Government for calculating housing need at local authority level in the ministerial statement and press release 'Councils must protect our precious green belt land' (DCLG, 4 October 2014, available at https://www.gov.uk/government/news/councils-must-protect-our-precious-green-belt-land)

1. A figure derived from the current Core Strategy (adopted 2011) is **210 dwellings between 2017 and 2032 or 22 homes per year** (rounded);
2. A 'proportionate share' derivation from the 2016 SHMA, Objectively Assessed Need[4] (OAN) is **1,799 dwellings over the Plan period, or 120 dwellings per annum (rounded)**;
3. A rebased DCLG Household Projection-derived figure of **1,745, or 116 dwellings per annum (rounded) over the Plan period;**
4. A forward projection of net dwelling completion rates 2001-2011, produces a gross need for **1,350 homes or 90 dwellings per annum (rounded)**; and
5. A projection forward of net dwelling completion rates 2011-2016 produces a projection of **1,386 homes over the Plan period (rounded).**

20. These dwelling number projections are illustrated in Figure 1 below.

Figure 1: Dwelling projections for the Client NP Area, 2011-2031



Source: AECOM Calculations

21. The graph above sets out the total number of homes factoring in each of the projections we have identified in Abbots Langley. So, for example, factoring in DCLG derived data (orange line) to the number of dwellings that

[4] The OAN includes the baseline demographic need, plus any adjustments made to official forecasts to account for projected rates of household formation post 2021, past suppression of the formation of new households, the effect of past under-supply, employment forecasts, market signals and affordable housing need (as set out in paragraph ID2a-004 of the NPPG).

have already been built in the NPA between 2011 and 1st January 2016 (462) produces a total requirement that there should exist in the NPA 10,390 homes by the end of the Plan period (adding together existing dwellings, and new homes that are required to be built).

22. The starting point to arrive at an overall projection for housing numbers to be delivered in the NPA over the Plan period is the average of the five projections set out above; we depart from this approach if we have reason to believe a given projection should be awarded more weight than others, or should be excluded. For example, if the Local Plan was out of date in planning terms, or another was a clear outlier.

23. In the case of Abbots Langley, the current adopted Core Strategy was adopted before the National Planning Policy Framework and therefore provides an unreliable basis on which to arrive at a housing needs figure for the parish. We therefore propose to exclude this number from our calculations.

24. Moreover, of the remaining projections those based on projecting forward completion rates we see as 'supply constrained' in that they reflect the difficulty of delivering housing on the ground. Given this HNA is seeking to produce a naked expression demand that explicitly does not take these factors into account, these have been excluded.

25. These adjustments also reflect the authority that should be accorded the recently completed SHMA. Taking as our starting point to arrive at an the initial housing projection projections 2 and 3 above, we arrive at a range for Abbots Langley of between 1,745 and 1,799 dwellings to be delivered over the Plan period.

26. Moreover, a further assessment applied to this initial projection indicates that market signals (for example the economic context in which the NPA sits, together with the performance of the housing market) are likely to impact on it. We have applied our professional judgment on the scales of increase and decrease associated with each factor on a scale from one to three, where one arrow indicates 'some impact', two arrows 'stronger impact' and three arrows indicates an even stronger impact. Factors are set out in the table below in alphabetical but no other order.

27. We have applied our professional judgment on the scales of increase and decrease associated with each factor on a scale from one to three, where one arrow indicates 'some impact', two arrows 'stronger impact' and three arrows indicates an even stronger impact. Factors are in alphabetical but no other order.

Table 1: Summary of factors specific to Client NP with a potential impact on neighbourhood plan housing quantity

Factor	Source(s) (detailed in Chapter 5)	Possible impact on future housing need	Rationale for judgement
Commuting and Employment trends	SHMA 2016, Census 2001/11, Neighbourhood Statistics, South West Herts Economic Study (SWHES16)		Abbots Langley has been shown to have high rates of commuting, particularly to Watford and to Central London. In addition, a highly skilled workforce will support positive job growth of up to 0.8% per annum, higher than in many nearby economic areas within Hertfordshire. Future employment growth driven by infrastructure investment in Watford in particular is likely to significantly increase demand for housing. Overall, three up arrows is deemed appropriate.
Housing Sales (Prices)	Land Registry Price Paid Data for 2006-2016, SHMA16		Abbots Langley has been shown to have experienced significant price growth over the last 10 years, totalling 49% across all housing types, with most housing types experiencing far greater growth. Whilst this growth has broadly been in line with that of price growth in the district as a whole, this growth has been more significant, in the context of inflation, than in any other parts of the Housing Market Area, with absolute prices the second highest of all comparator areas. For this reason two up arrows has been deemed appropriate.

Housing Affordability	DCLG Live Tables on Affordability Ratios, VOA, SHMA16	↑↑↑	Abbots Langley has been shown to have had a significant worsening of the affordability ratio for both Median and Lower Quartile earnings and house prices, with the median ratio recently surpassing the lower quartile ratio. Furthermore, lower quartile rents in Three Rivers as a whole have been shown to have risen faster than inflation, with this quartile of rent now requiring an income of £31,000 per annum, which would be unaffordable for more than 40% of the population. For this reason, three up arrows is deemed appropriate.
Migration and demographics	HNHD15, SHMA 2009, Census data 2001, 2011	↑↑	Significant population growth in Abbots Langley has matched and even exceeded that experienced by London, and was more than double that of three Rivers District as a whole, which experienced growth more in line with the average for England. Such growth is indicative of the attractiveness of Abbots Langley as a place to live, explained chiefly by access to employment opportunities and its qualities as a place both to bring up a family and retire. In line with government policy to concentrate development in those areas with the strongest locational advantages two up arrows is deemed appropriate.
Overcrowding	Census Data 2001, 2011	↑↑	Abbots Langley experienced double the rate of increase in households experiencing overcrowding than Three Rivers over the 10 years to 2011. This is considered a significant indicator of increased demand, and as such two up arrows have been deemed appropriate.
Concealment	Census Data 2001, 2011	↓	Census data suggests that 87 concealed families exist in Abbots Langley. This rate is lower than in Three Rivers and England as a whole, and there for one down arrow is deemed appropriate.
Rate of development		↓↓	Three Rivers has been effective in meeting its housing targets in recent years, and furthermore Abbots Langley has over delivered, proportional to its population, in comparison with the rest of the district. Therefore two down arrows is considered appropriate.

28. The demand for housing is heavily influenced by the fact that Abbots Langley is with commuting distance to London; it therefore attracts people who are relatively well-paid, this is reflected in both higher average household income as well as higher house prices than the local authority average.
29. The Lower Quartile Affordability Ratio at 11.2 and Medial Ratio of 10.4 indicates a crisis of affordability at the lower income registers. This impression of strong demand is reinforced by evidence of the incipient over-crowding within the NPA.
30. The delivery of additional dwellings is the market mechanism that brings the housing market back into equilibrium, and should, subject to the principles of sustainable development, be allowed to operate. In this regard, it is important to acknowledge guidance from government, which it to strengthen the pipeline of development and focus development in those areas that are both most sustainable as well as offer the most compelling locational advantages.

31. Overall, the analysis makes a compelling argument for an uplift in dwelling numbers in the NPA. With this in mind, we recommend that the housing needs figure for Abbots Langley should fall into range of **1800 – 1850 new dwellings for the period 2017 to 2032.**

Table 2: Summary of local factors specific to Abbots Langley with a potential impact on housing Type

Factor	Source(s) (see Chapters 5, 6 and 7)	Possible impact on housing needed	Conclusion
Affordable Housing (AH)	SHMA, CACI, Local Agent questionnaire	Given the Lower Quartile Affordability Ratio (LQAR) of 11.2 and the Median Affordability Ratio (MAR) of 10.4 at the district level, affordable market homes (AMH) are out of reach to those on modest incomes. While median incomes may be as much as 30% higher and Lower Quartile incomes are 15% higher in Abbots Langley than the district average, and property is also substantially more expensive than elsewhere in the Three Rivers district. An entry-level dwelling in Abbotts Langley is priced at approximately £270,000; a similar property will rent in the area for around £14,000 pa; around 60% of all households would be unable to afford to rent at this level and retain enough income to cover other needs and allow for some discretionary spending. As a result, this HNA concludes that roughly 60% of all households are unable to afford suitable market housing (for either rent or purchase) without some form of subsidy.	While AMH in Abbots Langley is unaffordable to households with incomes around the median, the introduction of Discounted Market Sale Housing (DMSH) does offer a realistic means for those on incomes at this level to access the property market. We would therefore recommend DMSH form part of the AH quota within the NPA, with policy seeking to fulfil the Government's policy expectation that 10% of all new build dwellings are starter homes. Shared ownership dwellings have grown substantially during the inter-censual period and should remain a component of intermediate AH products. For Affordable Rented Dwellings to expand the choice of housing available to residents in the NPA, rent levels should be set substantially below the maximum of 80% so as to avoid competition with intermediate AH products; this will encourage 'true affordability,' providing a route to housing for households on lower quartile incomes. We note, however, that policy of this kind can only be devised where it does not threaten viability.
Demand/need for smaller dwellings	SHMA, Census, Local Agent questionnaires	Households headed by a person under 35 will gravitate more strongly to the Three Rivers district than the Housing Market Area (HMA) generally. There is a wide range of dwelling types and sizes in Abbots Langley. Of new homes built during the inter-censual period, large homes of 6 habitable rooms or more form the majority (51%).	Based on the evidence uncovered, the bias in favour of larger dwellings indicates a mis-alignment between supply and demand given the evidence we have uncovered of strong demand for smaller homes (1-3 habitable rooms) suited to both first time buyers as well as those seeking to downsize.
Demographic change	Census, SHMA	Analysis of the evidence gathered in respect of the age structure reveals a broadly balanced population with a substantial number of adults of parental	The ageing population points to a need to increase the provision of dwellings suited to older groups within the community;

Factor	Source(s) (see Chapters 5, 6 and 7)	Possible impact on housing needed	Conclusion
		age (roughly 55% of the population). Young adults are the age group with the smallest representation, despite a substantial uplift in their numbers during the inter-censual period. While the area did not exhibit a disproportionately large older-people's cohort at the 2011 Census, evidence presented in the SHMA describing change in age structure at the HMA and district levels points to substantial increases in their numbers in the period to 2036. This contrasts with younger age groups which show very modest increases in comparison, particularly the 30-44 age group whose numbers are estimated to grow by only 7.5% in the period between 2013 and 2036.	notwithstanding this, the neighbourhood plan should not lose sight of the need to maintain a balanced population, supporting the ambition of younger age groups to establish households in the neighbourhood.
Dwelling type		The types of dwelling for which there is the greatest demand are bungalows and semi-detached dwellings. Local estate agents suggest demand for flats is weaker than for that of houses, and there may be an over-supply of flats (Your Move, Connells).	These findings support the need, identified elsewhere, to plan to accommodate greater numbers of older residents, as well as sustain the neighbourhood's function as a place to bring up a family. Notwithstanding the reported preference for houses as a dwelling type, flats provide a route to affordable home ownership and should remain an important aspect of the housing mix.
Family-sized housing	Census, SHMA	Bringing together our findings relating to household composition, the NPA is popular for families, with 40.1% of all households including children, and this has strengthened during the inter-censual period. While district level data displays similar trends, they are more pronounced within the NPA. All households with families grew by 9.7% in Abbots Langley during the inter-censual period, as against 2.8% for the district. Those families with children grew by 19.3% in the NPA, compared with a district growth of 8.7%.	Dwellings suited to the needs of younger families (5 habitable rooms) should be a priority for development over the Plan period.

Factor	Source(s) (see Chapters 5, 6 and 7)	Possible impact on housing needed	Conclusion
Housing for independent living for older people	SHMA	SHMA data forecasts growth in older residents (aged 75-85), and in particular, the elderly (85+) population. These groups are forecast to grow by 57.6% and 136.5% respectively between 2013 and 2036 at the district level.	Using the Learning and Improvement Network's (LIN) recommendations for the number of specialist dwellings per 1000 population of those aged 75+, we have arrived at a need for: • 88 additional conventional sheltered housing units; • 176 additional leasehold sheltered housing units; • 30 additional 'enhanced' sheltered units, split 50:50 between those for rent and those for sale; • 22 additional extra care housing units for rent; • 44 additional extra care housing units for sale; and • 9 additional specialist dementia care homes. As noted previously, it is not necessarily the case that all of these dwellings would need to be or could be provided within the parish itself.
Tenure of housing	Census	There has been an increase of 901 dwellings during the inter-censual period and this has resulted in a large increase in private rented and shared ownership homes. These two tenures saw an increase of 236 and 69 units respectively. In 2011, however, the dominant tenure remains owner-occupation at 72% of all dwellings.	PRS will continue to provide a growing role in satisfying housing need in the NPA, given the shortage of shared equity stock and overall affordability of for-sale homes. As a result, Abbots Langley should seek build to rent (BTR) development, which may include an element of affordable housing in the form of Affordable Private Rent Housing (APRH).

Recommendations for next steps

32. This neighbourhood plan housing needs advice has aimed to provide Abbots Langley Parish Council with evidence on housing trends from a range of sources. We recommend that the parish should, as a next step, discuss the contents and conclusions with Three Rivers District Council (TRDC) with a view to agreeing and formulating draft housing policies, in particular the appropriate approach to identifying the level of need for new housing in the NP area, bearing the following in mind:

    - Neighbourhood Planning Basic Condition A, that it has regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State; Condition D, that the making of the neighbourhood plan contributes to the achievement of sustainable development; and Condition E, which is the need for the neighbourhood plan to be in general conformity with the adopted strategic development plan;
    - the views of TRDC– in particular in relation to the housing need figure that should be adopted;
    - the views of local residents;
    - the views of other relevant local stakeholders, including housing developers;
    - the numerous supply-side considerations, including local environmental constraints, the location and characteristics of suitable land, and any capacity work carried out by the TRDC, including but not limited to the SHLAA;
    - the recommendations and findings of this study;
    - recent changes to the planning system, forthcoming changes to the NPPF, as well as the implementation of the Housing and Planning Act, will continue to affect housing policies at a local authority and, by extension, a neighbourhood level; and,
    - the impact of the new Government proposed standard methodology on calculating housing need on the district and its neighbourhoods.

33. This advice note has been provided in good faith by AECOM consultants on the basis of housing data and national guidance current at the time of writing (alongside other relevant and available information).

34. Bearing this in mind, we recommend that the steering group should monitor carefully strategies and documents with an impact on housing policy produced by the Borough Council or any other relevant body and review the neighbourhood plan accordingly to ensure that general conformity is maintained.

35. At the same time, monitoring ongoing demographic or other trends in the factors summarised in Tables 1 and 2 would be particularly valuable.

2. Context

2.1 Local context

36. Abbots Langley is a large village, in the Three Rivers district of Hertfordshire near Watford, with the surrounding parish also encompassing parts of the villages of Leavesden, Kings Langley and Bedmond. The parish is bisected by the River Gad, running north to south, and by the M25 London Orbital Motorway running east to south west. It is also the home of the major film studio Warner Brothers, and sits in close proximity to the interchange between the M25 and M1 motorway, a portion of which passes through the eastern-most edge of the Parish.

37. There are five parish councils within Three Rivers, all of which are in close proximity to Watford itself, with Abbots Langley also bordering the town of Hemel Hempstead to its north. Significant areas of Abbots Langley are also designated as part of the London Metropolitan Greenbelt, as shown in the figure below.

Figure 2: Map showing coverage of Metropolitan Green Belt around Abbots Langley

Source: http://londongreenbeltcouncil.org.uk/threats_map/

2.2 Planning policy context

38. In line with the Basic Conditions of neighbourhood planning, Neighbourhood Development Plans (NDPs) are required to be in general conformity with the adopted strategic local policies. Consequently, there is a requirement for the relevant Local Plan to be reviewed as part of this HNA. The Three Rivers District Council Core Strategy, adopted in 2011, is the most up to date local plan for the area, and so is reviewed below. The emerging Three Rivers District Local Plan is at an early stage of preparation, with no formal drafts published, and is projected to be published in 2018[5].

39. However, an Issues & Options (and Call for Sites) Consultation was published in July 2017 on the emerging local plan. Given that this document only goes so far as to outline a range of potential directions for policies to travel in, it would be premature to consider these for the purposes of establishing conformity.

40. The 2011 Core Strategy sets out the settlement hierarchy for the district, taking into account settlement size, population, existence of and access to a range of services and transport infrastructure and importance in economic and retailing terms".[6] The document designates four settlements within the neighbourhood plan area of Abbots Langley: it designates the villages of Abbots Langley and Leavesden and Garston as Key Centres,

[5] Three Rivers Local Development Scheme, February 2017, pp. 2
[6] Core Strategy 2011, para. 3.12,pp. 16

Kings Langley as a Secondary Centre, and Bedmond as a Village. Settlements other than these, such as Hunton Bridge, are not considered part of the formal settlement hierarchy.

41. Policy CP2: Housing Supply further indicates a housing target of 4,500 units in Three Rivers for the Plan period, that is between 2001 and 2026, totalling 180 dwellings per annum across the district.

42. It should be noted that the recent SHMA (February 2016) prepared for the area by GL Hearn suggests an objectively assessed need of 514 dwellings per annum in Three Rivers (for the period 2013-36).

43. Policy PSP2 Development in the Key Centres (South Oxhey, Croxley Green, Abbots Langley, Chorleywood, Leavesden and Garston and Mill End), states that approximately 60% of this housing requirement will be met within key centres such as Abbots Langley and Leavesden, as well as approximately 45% of the affordable housing target for the district.

44. Policy PSP3: Development in Secondary Centres (Kings Langley, Carpenders Park, Eastbury, Maple Cross, Moor Park, Oxhey Hall) similarly sets targets for such settlements to provide approximately 24% of the District's housing requirement, including approximately 45% of the affordable housing requirement.

45. Policy PSP4: Development in Villages (Bedmond, Sarrat) establishes that such settlements should provide approximately 1% of the district's housing requirements over the Plan period and affordable housing to meet local need. It further states that development will be guided by a subsequent site allocations document allocating and releasing sites solely for affordable housing using a Rural Exception Site Policy.

46. Policy CP3: Housing Mix and Density states that the council will require housing to meet local needs in terms of types and sizes, including specialist housing for the elderly, with density relating to existing residential areas, except where transport, services and facilities might support higher densities.

47. Policy CP4: Affordable Housing states that the council will seek a target of 45% of all housing to be affordable, incorporating a mix of tenures with a view towards seeking 70% social housing and 30% intermediate housing. It further adds that site-specific targets will be sought via a future Site Allocations Development Plan Document, which in some cases may suggest a target of 50% or above. It also states that the affordable housing provided should reflect the mix of size and type identified as needed by the SHMA and subsequent updates and be provided on site, except on sites of one to nine dwellings, where offsite payments may be acceptable. It goes on to outline where the development of Rural Exceptions Sites will be acceptable.

48. Policy CP5: Gypsy and Traveller Provision sets out criteria for allocating sites for Gypsies and Travellers or Travelling Showpeople, including flooding, landscape importance, proximity to existing settlements, services and transport and access, onsite facilities, privacy and amenities and local need and circumstances.

3. Approach

3.1 Research Questions (RQs)

49. Housing Needs Assessments at neighborhood plan level can be focused either on the quantity of housing needed, the type of housing needed, or both. In most cases, there is a need to focus on quantity where the housing target for the settlement being assessed is unclear, for example where the local authority has not set a specific target for the settlement, or where there is no local plan in place.

50. Below, we set out the RQs relevant to this Housing Needs Assessment (HNA) as discussed and agreed with Abbots Langley Parish Council (ALPC). These have been arrived at the start of the project through discussion with the parish. They serve to direct our research and provide the structure for the HNA.

3.1.1 Quantity

51. The Core Strategy (adopted 2011) sets a housing target for the district of 4,500 dwellings, or 180 between 2001 and 2026[7]. Abbots Langley is defined as a 'key centre' in this document. Policy PSP2: Development in Key Centres (as well as Abbots Langley, this includes South Oxhey, Croxley Green, Chorleywood, Leavesden and Garston and Mill End) states that Key Centres should provide 'approximately 60% of the District's housing requirements over the Plan period to include approximately 45% of affordable housing as informed by the Strategic Housing Market Assessment (2010).'

52. The local authority is currently in the process of developing a new Local Plan; at the time of writing, the position of Three Rivers District Council is to treat the number of dwellings set out in the Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) as the minimum number of dwellings that should be delivered over the proposed Plan period. However, the council is conscious of the potential impact of the Standard Methodology for Accessing Housing Need (SMAHN) on their OAN. At the current time, therefore, there is a lack of clarity as to an appropriate housing needs figure for the NPA, making it appropriate that the HNA provide one.

RQ1. What quantity of housing is appropriate for the NPA over the Plan period to address housing need?

53. To answer this question, it will be necessary to arrive at an estimate for the required housing growth relying on a number of reliable sources; these are,

- A number derived from the currently adopted core strategy;
- SHMA - proportional share drawn from OAN;
- DCLG Household projections;
- Net dwelling completion rates 2001-2011; and
- Net dwelling completion rates 2011-2015.

54. We will also provide a projection based on the SMAHN on a 'for information only' basis, given that the policy is, at the time of writing, not yet resolved and subject to consultation.

3.1.2 Tenure

55. ALPC has expressed an interest in seeing more affordable housing in the NPA. This study will therefore explore tenure mix, with a particular focus on affordable housing, including the role of discounted market housing.

RQ2. What affordable housing (social housing, affordable rented, shared ownership, intermediate rented) and market housing tenures should be included in the housing mix?

3.1.3 Type and size

56. ALPC wishes to understand what type and size of dwellings is suitable given forecast changes in demography and household composition.

[7] Three Rivers District Council Core Strategy, Adopted 17th October 2011, page 29

RQ3. What type (terrace, semi, bungalows, flats and detached) and size (number of habitable rooms) of housing is appropriate?

3.1.4 Housing for specialist groups

57. ALPC is interested in the housing needs of older residents as well as newly forming households, and how these may be addressed over the Plan period.

RQ4. What provision should be made for specialist housing within the NPA, in particular:

- The needs of older residents, including those who need sheltered, extra care dwellings and those suffering from dementia; and
- Newly forming households?

3.2 Study Objectives

58. The objectives of this report can be summarised as:

- Collation of a range of data with relevance to housing need in Abbots Langley relative to Three Rivers;
- Analysis of that data to determine patterns of housing need and demand; and
- Setting out recommendations based on our data analysis that can be used to inform the Neighbourhood Plan's housing policies.

59. The remainder of this report is structured around the objectives set out above:

- Chapters 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8 which set out the data gathered from all sources; and
- Chapter 9, which sets out our conclusions and recommendations based on our data analysis that can be used to inform the Neighbourhood Plan's housing policies.

3.3 Relevant Data

3.3.1 SHMA

60. The PPG states that neighbourhood planners can refer to existing needs assessments prepared by the local planning authority as a starting point. Abbots Langley is located within a local Housing Market Area which includes the four commissioning authorities of Dacorum, Hertsmere, Three Rivers and Watford, together with St Albans District and the majority of settlements in Chiltern District.

61. In gathering appropriate data for this HNA, we therefore turned to the South West Hertfordshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment, published in January 2016, which covers Three Rivers and informs emerging housing policies at a local authority level, including affordable housing policy.

62. The SHMA draws upon a range of data including population projections, housing market transactions and employment scenarios to derive the objectively-assessed housing need. As such, it contains a number of points of relevance when determining the degree to which the housing needs context of Abbots Langley itself differs from the authority-wide picture.

4. RQ1. What quantity of housing is appropriate for the NPA over the Plan period to address housing need?

63. We have estimated the quantity of housing needed in NPA according to four different sources; these are,

- Core Strategy (CS);
- SHMA - proportional share drawn from OAN;
- DCLG Household projections;
- Net home completion rates 2001-2011; and
- Net home completion rates 2011-2015.

These calculations are set out below.

4.1 Core Strategy

64. As we have seen, policy PSP2 in the current adopted Core Strategy requires that the Key Centres, of which Abbots Langley is one, are a focus for development, and therefore fulfil a strategic function by addressing district level need as well as that emanating from their 'home' settlements. The relevant criteria are set out below:

- Focus future development predominantly on sites within the urban area, on previously developed land;
- Provide approximately 60% of the District's housing requirements over the Plan period to include approximately 45% of affordable housing as informed by the Strategic Housing Market Assessment (2010), Development Economics Study (2009) and Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment Update (2010), totalling 180 to 2026.

65. In order to arrive at a suitable target we have therefore arrived at an estimate of the relative size of the urban areas of these settlements, based on the settlement boundaries put forward by the Core Strategy, and used this as a basis for a 'fair share' calculation. These calculations are set out below in Table 3.

Table 3: Relative proportional size of the urban areas of Key Centres in Three Rivers

Key Centre	Urban Area	Percentage of Total
Croxley Green	2.687 km2	21%
South Oxhey	1.979 km2	16%
Abbots Langley	2.540 km2	20%
Chorleywood	2.965 km2	24%
Leavesden and Garston	1.146 km2	9%
Mill End	1.238 km2	10%
Total	12.555 km2	

Source: AECOM Calculations/http://www.planvu.co.uk/trdc/

66. We have calculated that the total area of all key centre urban areas is 12.555km2, with Abbots Langley making up approximately 20% of the total. The district's housing requirement over the Plan period is 4,500 dwellings, with 60% of this figure (2,700 homes) allocated to the key centres. Abbots Langley's 'fair share' of this figure then comes to 540 dwellings (20% of 2,700) between 2001 and 2026, or 22 homes per year (rounded). Projecting this figure forward a further 6 years to 2032 would yield 672 dwellings.

67. However, in arriving at a final total for Abbots Langley, it is important to take into consideration that 462 dwellings[8] were built between 2011 and 2016 in the NPA. Allowing for these completed dwellings, a housing target for Abbots Langley that is in conformity with the current adopted Core Strategy would be **210 dwellings (672-462) between 2017 and 2036 or 22 homes per year (rounded).**

[8] Email received from Martin Wells, Senior Planning Officer, Economic & Sustainable Development, Three Rivers District Council 20/09/17

4.2 SHMA

68. It is important to remember that the SHMA presents a demand-side only, or 'unconstrained' assessment of need (often identified as Objectively Assessed Need, or OAN[9]), as opposed to a final housing target. The final housing target will take into account a number of other factors, including for example the availability of land, viability, infrastructure and environmental constraints and the results of consultation.

69. The SHMA presents an appropriate starting point for deriving need at the NP level, because it is the most up-to-date evidence available, and importantly, because it takes into account the latest population and household projections, as set out in the 2014 Sub-National Population Projections on which the Household Projections are based, which the PPG guidance suggests should be taken as a 'starting point' in determining need at the local authority level.

70. The SHMA identifies an OAN for Three Rivers over the period 2013 - 36 of 514.[10] This was based on a preferred methodology which takes as its starting point the 2012-based Household Projections. These projections represent a reasonable trend-based demographic assessment of housing need. However, the evidence of affordable housing need, together with the analysis of market signals, point towards affordability pressures within the HMA. The evidence provides a basis for considering upwards adjustments to the assessed housing need to, on the basis of reasonable assumptions, improve affordability.[11]

71. To calculate the NPA's 'fair share' of this target, it is possible to use ALPC's proportion of all housing in the district[12]. At the time of the last Census there were 36,155 dwellings in Three Rivers, of these 8,183 were in Abbots Langley, or 22.6% of the total.

72. Taking the 514 dwellings as an annual target, it is possible to arrive at a OAN for housing to be provided between 2013 and 2032 at the district level of 9,766 dwellings (514 x 19 years). The 'fair share' for Abbots Langley will therefore be 2,207.

73. However, it is necessary to take into consideration homes built in the NPA since the base year of 2013. Based on data provided by the Local Authority, 408 dwellings have been built between 2013 and 2016. This produces a final target of **1,799 dwellings over the Plan period, or 120 per year** (rounded).

4.3 DCLG Household Projections

74. The Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) periodically publishes household projections. The NPPG recommends that these household projections should form the starting point for the assessment of housing need.

75. The most recent (2014-based) household projections were published in July 2016[13], and extend to 2039. Although these projections are only available at a local authority level, a calculation of the share for the NPA is nevertheless possible based on the NPA's household numbers in the 2011 Census.

76. At the 2011 Census, Abbots Langley had 8,023 households and the Three Rivers District 35,108 households, or 22.9% of the total (rounded).

77. In the 2014-based household projections, the projection for 2032 is for 44,248 households in Three Rivers. Assuming it continues to form 22.9% of the district total, the NPA's new total number of households would be 10,133 (rounded); therefore 2,110 new households would form in the NPA between 2011 and 2032 (or a rate of growth of 100.5 households per year).

78. Number of households does not, however, equate precisely to number of homes, with the latter slightly higher in most places. The NPA is no exception; in the 2011 Census, there were 8,023 households but 8,183 homes. This gives a ratio of 0.98 households per home. In the case of this NPA, then, a projection of 2,110 new households translates into a need for 2,153 homes (rounded to the nearest whole number).

[9] The OAN includes the baseline demographic need, plus any adjustments made to official forecasts to account for projected rates of household formation post 2021, past suppression of the formation of new households, the effect of past under-supply, employment forecasts, market signals and affordable housing need (as set out in paragraph ID2a-004 of the NPPG). This is sometimes described as 'policy off' because it does not take account of final policy responses as a result of taking into account capacity, environmental and infrastructure constraints.
[10] SHMA, January 2016, page 187
[11] SHMA, January 2016, page 186
[12] For the projection based in the SHMA we do not use proscription set out in policy PSP2 because this represents a 'policy on' approach.
[13] See 2014-based DCLG Household Projections live tables at https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/live-tables-on-household-projections

79. These figures are based on the assumption that 2014-based government projections as to household growth at the Local Authority level are accurate. As the annual mid-year population estimates have now been released for 2015, the 2014-based household projections may need to be 'rebased' for accuracy. The mid-2015 population estimates give the actual number of people in the NPA at that point, meaning the difference between the estimated and the previously projected number of households can to be taken into account in future projections.

80. The 2014-based household projections were based on the 2014-based Sub-National Population Projections, which estimated that by 2015 there would be 91,962 people in Three Rivers. The mid-2015 Estimates show that based on the latest information there were estimated to be 92,533 people, which is greater than the projections by 571 people. Assuming average household sizes remain constant (in 2011 there were an average of 2.44 people per household, obtained by dividing population by number of households) this equates to 234 more households across Three Rivers.

81. Taking 44,482 (44,248 + 234) as our revised household number at 2032, this equates to 10,186 households in the NPA (rounded), producing a revised growth in the number of households between 2011 and 2032 of 2,163. Taking into account the disparity between household numbers and dwelling numbers (2,163/0.98), this produces a figure of 2,207 homes. Netting off the 462 dwellings completed since 2011, we arrive at **a re-based household projections-derived outstanding dwellings requirement of 1,745, or 116 dwellings (rounded) per year over the Plan period.**

82. This projection is an entirely unconstrained, theoretical figure comprising a relative proportion of the overall projected increase, and thus does not take into account political, economic, demographic or any other drivers that might have influenced, or may in future influence, the Local Plan distribution across the District and hence any difference between this figure and a future Local Plan-derived figure.

4.3.1 Home growth 2001 – 2011

83. Consideration of home growth 2001-2011 provides a projection based on the rate of delivery of net new homes between the two censuses. As we have seen, there was an increase of 901 homes in the NPA between these two dates, or an average annual rate of increase of 90 homes (rounded). Multiplying this annual figure by the number of years remaining within the Plan period from 2016 **produces a gross need for 1,350 homes.**

4.3.2 Home growth since 2011

84. It is also helpful to consider a projection based on the rate of delivery of net new homes since the last census (2011), using data gathered and monitored by the LPA. As we have seen, between 1st April 2011 and the 31st March 2016, 462 new dwellings were completed[14]. This equates to an annual rate of delivery of 92.4 homes (462 divided by 5, the number of years elapsed). If this rate of delivery was continued to 2032, this would equate to **a projection of 1,386 homes over the Plan period of 2017-2032** (92.4 x 15, rounded to the nearest whole number).

4.4 The Standard Methodology

85. On September 14th, 2017, the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) published "Planning for the right homes in the right places: consultation proposals" (henceforth 'the consultation proposals'), a consultation on a new proposed Standard Methodology for Assessing Housing Need (SMAHN) for arriving at an OAN for housing for individual local authorities, thus avoiding both the expense of producing complex SHMAs and the disagreements surrounding their methodologies. DCLG has stated that "this consultation sets out a number of proposals to reform the planning system" including "how neighbourhood planning groups can have greater certainty on the level of housing need to plan for".[1]

86. Whilst the document is currently being consulted on at the time of this HNA report, it is important to consider the implications of this emerging policy guidance for potential housing need calculations in the NDP. Therefore, what follows is an assessment of the NPA's housing need based on the new proposed methodology, which, should the policy be put in place in its current form, will be the preferred figures for housing need in the area. This projection is included *for information only*, bearing in mind that the consultation makes clear that LPAs will have the option of using alternative methods of calculating their OAN, so long as the number they arrive at exceeds that produced by the new standard methodology.

87. Proposed updates to the PPG include a requirement that LPAs provide a housing need figure to neighbourhood planning groups, and that they may do this by making a reasoned judgement based on the settlement strategy

[14] Email from AREA Borough Council, 14/02/17

and housing allocations in their plan, so long as the local plan provides a sufficiently up-to-date basis to do so.[15] The starting point for using the SMAHN at neighbourhood level is therefore whether the current Local Plan was adopted before or after the introduction of the NPPF.

88. In the case of TRDC, the Core Strategy was adopted in October 2011 and is therefore out-of-date. It does not provide a reliable basis for arriving at a housing needs figure for the NPA. The indicative assessment using the SMAHN formula is 610 dwellings per year for TRDC. This is an uplift on the current figure of 180 dwellings per year set out in the currently adopted Core Strategy.

89. Clearly, this is a very substantial uplift in the housing numbers to be delivered over the Plan period. However, the consultation proposals put forward a 40% cap on any uplift that results from the application of the SMAHN. In is therefore necessary to calculate whether a cap will apply in the case of Three Rivers. The guidance on the application of the cap reads as follows:

"for those authorities that do not have an up-to-date local plan (i.e. adopted over five years ago), we propose that the new annual local housing need figure should be capped at 40 per cent above whichever is higher of the projected household growth for their area over the Plan period (using Office for National Statistics' household projections), or the annual housing requirement figure currently set out in their local plan."

90. As we have seen, the re-based DCLG projection of household growth to 2032 is 44,482, from 35,108 in 2011, an increase of 9,374, or 446 households per year (rounded), higher than the 180 dwellings per year set out above. The cap would therefore be set at 624 dwellings (rounded). Given this is above the 610 dwellings per year set out above, the application of the cap is not relevant.

91. It is therefore reasonable to assume at this point that TRDC will see an uplift in its housing need figure of 610 dwellings per year with the introduction of the SMAHN.

92. The next step in the process is to use the Government's proposed formula for arriving at a housing needs figure for NPA in these circumstances. This "*is simply to take the population of the neighbourhood planning area and calculate what percentage it is of the overall population in the local planning authority area. The housing need figure in the neighbourhood planning area would then be that percentage of the local planning authority's housing need.*"[2]

93. Using this proposed approach, we can estimate that the annual requirement for NPA, based on the proportion of the population of Three Rivers falling into the NPA (19,574 of 87,317, or 22.42%) would be 137 dwellings per annum (rounded), or 2,877 dwellings by the end of the Plan period to 2032. Taking into consideration the 462 dwellings build in the period 2011 to 2016, **a final housing needs figure based on the SHAHN methodology comes to 2,415 dwellings, or 161 dwellings per year.**

5. RQ2. What affordable housing (social housing, affordable rented, shared ownership, intermediate rented) and market housing tenures should be included in the housing mix?

94. The provision of affordable housing is critical to the continuity of most communities as viable settlements; it needs however to be understood in relation to other tenures. The PPG states that HNAs should investigate household tenure in the current stock and recent supply, and make an assessment, based on a reasonable interpretation of the evidence gathered, whether continuation of these trends would meet future needs or whether, on account of significant misalignments between supply of housing falling into different tenure types and local need/demand, policies should support a change to the profile of tenure within the NPA's housing stock.[16]

5.1.1 Definitional issues

95. It is necessary at this stage of the study to make clear the distinction between affordable homes as a piece of planning terminology and the colloquial meaning of the phrase. In the course of this study, we refer to Affordable Housing, abbreviated to 'AH'. We mean by this those forms of housing tenure that fall within the definition of Affordable Housing set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF): social, affordable rented and

[15] DCLG, planning for the right homes in the right places: consultation proposals, page 31
[2] Planning for the Right Homes in the Right Places, pp. 32
[16] PPG Paragraph: 021 Reference ID: 2a-021-20160401

various forms of intermediate housing. To distinguish this from the colloquial definition, we refer to the latter as Affordable Market Housing (AMH).

96. In this paragraph we briefly review the proposed reforms to the definition of AH set out in the Government's Housing White Paper published in February 2017. These reforms make clear the Government's commitment to home ownership but recognised the important role of affordable rent for those not currently seeking home ownership. The changes proposed would broaden the definition of affordable housing, supporting 'present and future innovation by housing providers in meeting the needs of a wide range of households who are unable to access market housing'. This would include 'products that are analogous to low cost market housing or intermediate rent, such as discount market sales or innovative rent to buy housing. Some of these products may not be subject to 'in perpetuity' restrictions or have recycled subsidy'.

97. The Housing and Planning Act 2016 made provision for a new simplified definition of affordable housing as 'new dwellings…to be made available for people whose needs are not adequately served by the commercial housing market'[17]. Secondary legislation is required to implement this definition, necessitating further parliamentary debate[18].

98. The Housing White Paper[19] confirms that a revised definition of AH will be brought forward through changes to the NPPF later this year, proposing a definition as 'housing that is provided for sale or rent to those whose needs are not met by the market (this can include housing that provides a subsidised route to home ownership' and which 'meets the criteria' for one of the following models[20]:

    - **Social rented housing**, defined as currently and owned by local authorities and private registered providers with guideline target rents determined through the national rent regime. It may be owned by other persons and provided under equivalent rental arrangements, as agreed with the local authority or Homes and Communities Agency;

    - **Affordable rented housing**, defined as currently let by local authorities or private registered providers of social housing to households eligible for social rented housing. Affordable rent is controlled at no more than 80% of the local market rent including service charges where applicable;

    - **Starter Homes**, as defined in the Housing and Planning Act 2016 and subsequent secondary legislation with an income restriction of £80,000 outside London. These homes are expected to provide a new low cost market housing product for first time buyers between the ages of 23 and 40 with a mortgage, sold for no more than 80% of open market value and capped at £250,000 outside London;

    - **Discounted market sales housing**, sold at a discount of at least 20% below market value with provision to remain at a discount for future eligible households. Eligibility is to be determined with regard to local incomes and house prices;

    - **Affordable private rent housing**, made available for rent at a level which is at least 20% below local market rent with provision to ensure that rent remains at a discounted level or alternative affordable housing provision is made if the discount is withdrawn. This is viewed as particularly suited to the provision of affordable housing in Build to Rent schemes; and

    - **Intermediate housing**, defined to include discounted market sales and affordable private rent housing – as outlined above – and other housing that is 'provided for sale and rent at a cost above social rent, but below market levels'.

99. A transition period is proposed to enable a review of local policies, with the revised definitions intended to apply from April 2018. The Government also intends to introduce a requirement for sites of 10 units or more to ensure that at least 10% of all homes are affordable home ownership products, including Starter Homes, shared ownership homes and homes available for discount market sale.

[17] Housing and Planning Act 2016, part 6, section 159 (4)
[18] Section 159(2) of the Act inserts '(3ZB) No regulations may be made under section 106ZB [which contains the updated definition of affordable housing] unless a draft of the instrument containing the regulations has been laid before, and approved by a resolution of, each House of Parliament'
[19] DCLG (2017) Fixing our Broken Housing Market (para A.120)
[20] Ibid (p100)

100. In order to make a judgement about the suitability of the tenure of the current stock, it is necessary to understand the nature of demand. We do this by seeking to identify both broad trends as well as specific market segments. This is done through an analysis of three principle drivers of demand trends, the age structure of the population, the compositional groupings that exist within it and, finally, affordability. Through a consideration of these trends and how they interrelate to each other, it is possible to arrive at recommendations as to how not only the tenure of housing in the plan area, but also type and size, should be modified through planning policy.

5.2 Current tenure profile

101. Before we present this data, it is necessary to present a picture of tenure in the NPA at the moment. Table 4 below presents Census data from 2011 that shows that the great majority of dwellings in the settlement are in owner occupation. The numbers show a very close correlation with the tenure spit for the district as a whole.

Table 4: Tenure (households) in Abbots Langley, 2011

Tenure	Abbots Langley	Three Rivers	England
Owned; total	72.0%	72.7%	63.3%
Shared ownership	1.0%	0.6%	0.8%
Social rented; total	15.9%	15.1%	17.7%
Private rented; total	10.4%	10.6%	16.8%

Source: Census 2011, AECOM Calculations

102. In Table 5 below we present how the tenure split has changed during the inter-censual period. The growth of shared ownership and privately rented dwellings is very striking; in terms of actual numbers, there has been an increase in the numbers of dwellings privately rented from 263 to 833, and in shared ownership from 17 to 82. The number of those dwellings in owner occupation and socially rented has seen a modest increase in comparison, by 236 and 69 dwellings respectively. Given the increase in dwellings across all the tenures recorded in Table 5, it is notable that 901 net new dwellings have come into existence over this period.

Table 5: Rates of tenure change in Abbots Langley, 2001-2011

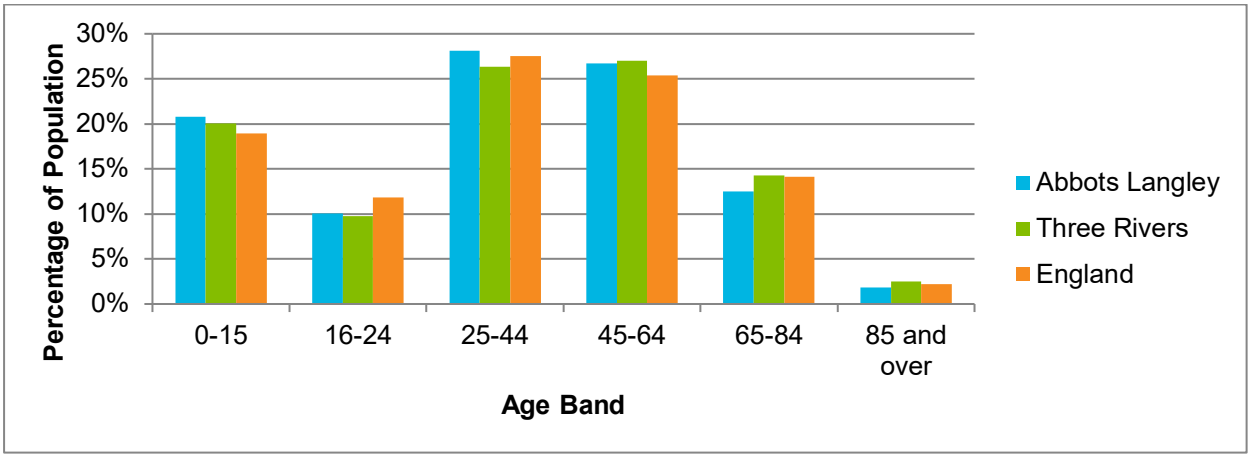
Tenure	Abbots Langley	Three Rivers	England
Owned; total	4.3%	-0.4%	-0.6%
Shared ownership	382.4%	47.0%	30.0%
Social rented; total	5.7%	0.3%	-0.9%
Private rented; total	216.7%	140.0%	82.4%

Source: Census 2001 and 2011, AECOM Calculations

5.2.1 Age Structure

103. In figure 3 on the following page we present the age structure of the population as recorded in the last census. As with the tenure split, the data for the district and that for the NPA are similar. Roughly 55% of the population are of parental age, and this is reflected in the high proportion of residents of school age. Young adults show a weaker representation, less than the England average by around 2%. As regards those aged 65 and above, again there are fewer falling into this bracket than for either the wider district, or the national average.

Figure 3: Age Structure



Source: Census 2011, AECOM Calculations

104. In terms of the way the age structure of the population has changed during the inter-censual period, the population has shown a reasonably balanced development, with no striking changes in any one age category. Two trends, however, deserve comment; firstly, the increase in the number of young adults. Given the relatively low representation of people within this age group in the 2011 numbers, the growth trend over the decade is a positive development. Secondly, the small fall in the numbers of those in the 25-44 age bracket. This indicates that, over the period, the NPA saw a small net loss of younger adults. Overall, however, this is very substantially off-set by increases in other age groups, producing an increase in the size of the population from 17,278 to 19,574 over the period, an overall uplift of roughly 22%.

Table 6: Rate of change in the age structure of the population of Abbots Langley, 2001-2011

Age group	Abbots Langley	Three Rivers	England
0-15	13.4%	2.4%	1.2%
16-24	33.9%	13.7%	17.2%
25-44	-0.4%	-3.6%	1.4%
45-64	24.9%	13.9%	15.2%
65-84	10.3%	5.6%	9.1%
85 and over	23.7%	19.1%	23.7%

Source: Census 2001 and 2011, AECOM Calculations

105. In Table 7 on the following page we reproduce Table 7 from the SHMA[21] that provides an indication of changes in the age structure at the Housing Market Area level over the period 2013 to 2036. Again, this suggests growth across all age groups; two factors stand out however for special mention. Firstly, the weak performance of younger adults and the substantial growth in the numbers of those of retirement age (60-74) and secondly the elderly (those aged 75+). This suggests a continuation of trends observed during the inter-censual period but also a rapid growth in older age groups; this is similar to other parts of the UK where the phenomenon of the aging population is pronounced.

[21] GL Hearn, South West Hertfordshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment Final Report , January 2016 page 44

Table 7: Population change 2013 to 2036 by fifteen-year age bands (2012-based SNPP)

Age group	Population 2013	Population 2036	Change in population	% change from 2013
Under 15	112,241	132,544	20,303	18.1%
15-29	98,110	112,339	14,229	14.5%
30-44	125,616	135,016	9,400	7.5%
45-59	117,771	136,568	18,797	16.0%
60-74	76,900	109,016	32,116	41.8%
75+	45,154	82,103	36,949	81.8%
Total	575,792	707,585	131,793	22.9%

Source: Office for National Statistics

106. Table 8 below, which reproduces Table 52 from the SHMA, set out how the increases among older age groups is sub-divided among different age brackets. This suggests the greatest rate of increase will be that exhibited among two oldest groups, those aged between 75 -85, and those aged 85 and above.

Table 8: Projected Change in Population of Older Persons (2013 to 2036)

	Under 65	65-74	75-84	85+	Total	Total 65+
Dacorum	12.5%	49.7%	60.8%	130.9%	21.2%	65.4%
Hertsmere	14.2%	50.1%	64.5%	143.4%	23.8%	69.8%
St. Albans	14.6%	40.5%	46.5%	123.8%	21.2%	55.0%
Three Rivers	14.8%	48.3%	56.1%	149.6%	23.8%	65.9%
Watford	19.3%	61.6%	64.2%	145.2%	26.3%	74.4%
South West Herts	14.8%	48.7%	57.6%	136.5%	22.9%	64.8%
Hertfordshire	13.6%	50.7%	57.6%	142.7%	22.2%	66.2%
Eastern Region	8.4%	39.9%	61.1%	155.3%	18.5%	62.6%
England	5.8%	38.0%	58.1%	143.2%	14.9%	58.6%

Source: derived from ONS data and demographic projections

107. A legitimate concern could be raised that, given the difference in geographies, changes in the age structure at the HMA level may not reflect future trends within the NPA. As we have shown in Figure 3, there is a marked similarity in the demographic profile between the parish and the district geographies. While the logic of the HMA provides some comfort that, broadly speaking, trends observed across these geographies will be similar, it is worth providing additional evidence that this is indeed the case. In Table 8 we show the growth of the population across the HMA broken down to the individual local authorities. It is worth noting the increase for Three Rivers is 23.8%, broadly similar to the 22.9% shown above. This suggests that the demographic trends across all three geographies will be broadly comparable.

108. Bringing together the data gathered thus far, there has been an increase of 901 dwellings during the inter-censual period and this has resulted in a large increase in private rented dwellings and shared ownership homes. These two tenures saw an increase of 236 and 69 dwellings respectively. In 2011, however, the dominant tenure remains owner-occupation, at 72% of all dwellings.

109. Analysis of the evidence gathered in respect of the age structure reveals a broadly balanced population with a substantial number of adults of parental age (roughly 55% of the population). This is broadly similar to trends at the district level. Young adults are the least well-represented age group, despite a substantial uplift in their numbers during the inter-censual period. While the area did not exhibit a disproportionately large older-people's cohort at the 2011 Census, evidence presented in the SHMA describing change in age structure at the HMA and district levels points to substantial increases in their numbers in the period to 2036. This contrasts with younger age groups which show very modest increases in comparison, particularly the 30-44 age group, whose numbers are estimated to grow by only 7.5% in the period between 2013 and 2036.

5.2.2 Household composition

110. In Table 9 we present the distribution of the population across the principle compositional groupings in the NPA; this data again shows broadly similar patterns compared with district level data. The family character in the neighbourhood is reflected in the majority of residents falling into one of the four family household types, with 40.1% of all households including children.

Table 9: Household composition (by household) in Abbots Langley, 2011

		Abbots Langley	Three Rivers	England
One person household	Total	29.7%	27.7%	30.2%
	Aged 65 and over	11.7%	12.6%	12.4%
	Other	18.0%	15.1%	17.9%
One family only	Total	64.5%	66.1%	61.8%
	All aged 65 and over	7.1%	8.9%	8.1%
	With no children	17.4%	16.5%	17.6%
	With dependent children	30.2%	29.8%	26.5%
	All children Non-Dependent	9.9%	10.9%	9.6%
Other household types	Total	5.7%	6.2%	8.0%

Source: Census 2011, AECOM Calculations

111. Over the inter-censual period, the number of households has increased in the NPA from 7141 to 8023, an increase of around 11%. Table 10 below shows how this increase has been distributed across the household types. A number of observations are possible; firstly, there has been a substantial increase (15.8%) in one person households, and the majority of this increase is accounted for by people below the age of 65. Secondly, the presence of families has grown over the period, with the largest increases recorded among families with children. It is notable that these changes outstrip the district level data by a significant margin. The increase in families with children stands out particularly strongly, registering an increase of 19.3% compared with district data of 8.7%. Finally, there has been an increase in 'other household types' in the NPA that is in contrast with that of the district. This will be made up of dwellings in multiple occupation, for example where a group of people other than a family share the same home, or extended families in which relatives as well as parents and children live together in the same dwelling.

Table 10: Rates of change in household composition in Abbots Langley, 2001-2011

Household type		Percentage change, 2001-2011		
		Abbots Langley	Three Rivers	England
One person household	Total	15.8%	8.5%	8.4%
	Aged 65 and over	-2.5%	-8.9%	-7.3%
	Other	31.8%	29.3%	22.7%
One family only	Total	9.7%	2.8%	5.4%
	All aged 65 and over	-5.2%	-7.2%	-2.0%
	With no children	0.6%	-4.6%	7.1%
	With dependent children	19.3%	8.7%	5.0%
	All children non-dependent	12.6%	9.3%	10.6%
Other household types	Total	27.0%	13.7%	28.9%

Source: Census 2001 and 2011, AECOM Calculations

112. As we have seen in our analysis of age structure, the SHMA indicates an increase in the elderly population. Notwithstanding the modest falls in the numbers of households aged 65+ during the inter-censual period, we must assume that in future years their numbers will increase.

113. As regards other household types, in Table 69, the SHMA forecasts an increase in the district of households headed by someone aged under 35 of 11.2%, or 510 households between 2013 and 2036. This data is reproduced in Table 11 on the following page. It is notable that the district data differs from the HMA as a whole by around 3%, suggesting the district is more desirable for younger households than elsewhere in the HMA, on average.

Table 11: Estimated change in households headed by someone aged under 35 (2013-36) – using 2012-based CLG household formation rates

Area	Households aged under 35		Change	% change
	2013	2036	(2013-36)	from 2013
Dacorum	9,493	9,978	485	5.1%
Hertsmere	5,923	6,799	876	14.8%
St. Albans	8,080	8,799	719	8.9%
Three Rivers	4,575	5,085	510	11.2%
Watford	8,168	8,498	330	4.0%
South West Herts	36,239	39,160	2,921	8.1%

Source: SHMA (derived from demographic modelling)

114. Bringing together our findings relating to household composition, the NPA displays a strong family characteristic with 40.1% of all households including children, and this has strengthened during the inter-censual period. While district level data displays similar trends, they are more pronounced within the NPA. All households with families grew by 9.7% in Abbots Langley, as against 2.8% for the district and those families with children grew by 19.3% in the NPA, compared with district growth of 8.7%.

115. Breaking this down to specific market segments, data from the SHMA is helpful, suggesting households headed by a person under 35 will gravitate more strongly to the Three Rivers district than to the HMA generally. This is, however, not to under-estimate the importance of the forecast growth in the older (75-85), and in particular, the elderly (85+) population, groups that are forecast to grow by 57.6% and 136.5% respectively between 2013 and 2036.

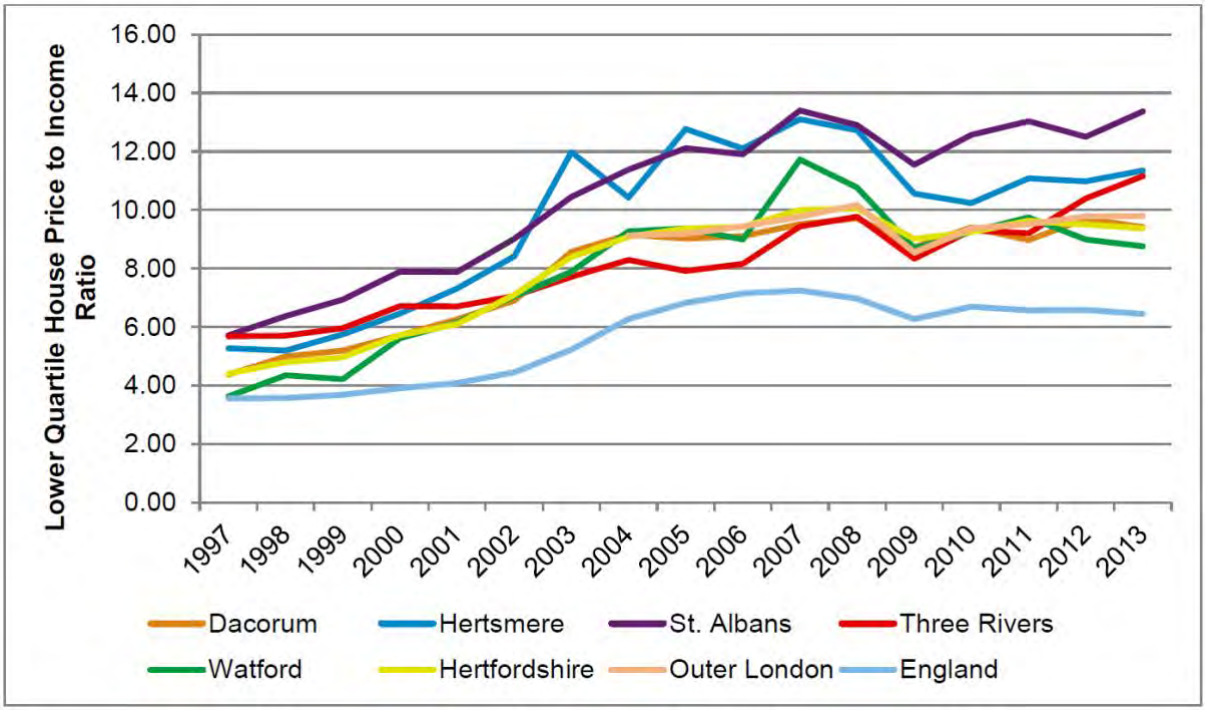
5.2.3 Affordability

116. In order to understand whether the tenure profile of the current stock reflects the needs of the population over the Plan period, it is necessary to consider whether this profile enables different target groups to access dwellings of a suitable type and size given their composition.

117. In line with the Planning Practice Guidance, we have considered evidence of affordability by looking specifically at the relationship between lower quartile house prices and incomes, as expressed in the Lower Quartile Affordability Ratio (LQAR). While this is a relatively crude measure of affordability, as it does not take account of the cost of servicing mortgage debt, it is a useful basic measure for benchmarking affordability changes over time.

118. In Figure 5 on the following page we reproduce Figure 34 from the SHMA. This shows that, for the district, the LQAR has increased from just under 6 in 1997 to 11.2; that is to say that, in 2013, lower quartile house prices were eleven times lower quartile earnings.

Figure 4: Lower Quartile Affordability Trend, 1997-2013



Source: DCLG Live Tables: Land Registry Data

119. In Table 12 we reproduce SHMA Table 20. This provides a comparison of the LQAR and the Median Affordability Ratio (MAR). While the LQAR considers affordability at the lower end of the market, the MAR provides an indication of whether people on median incomes can afford dwellings at a price that represents the median, or mid-point, in the house-price spectrum. In Three Rivers the MAR is 10.4. Given the LQAR of 11.2 in the district, the principal conclusion is that market dwellings for sale are unaffordable to those on lower quartile and median incomes, but that the inability to access Affordable Market Homes (AMH) is particularly acute at the lower end of the market.

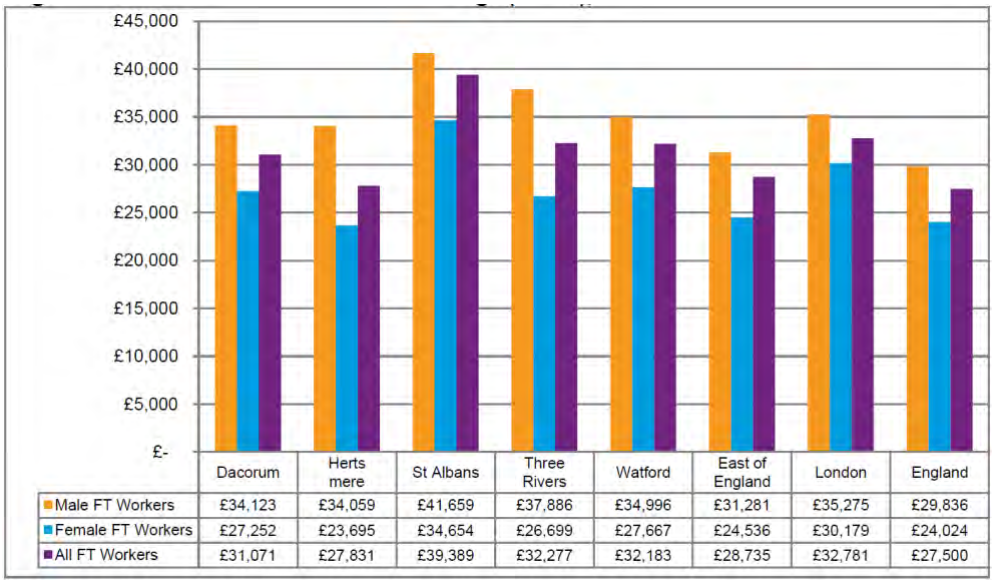
Table 12: SHMA LQAR and MAR

	Lower Quartile Ratio	Median Ratio	Difference
Dacorum	9.4	8.7	0.7
Hertsmere	11.3	10.9	0.4
St. Albans	13.4	13.3	0.1
Three Rivers	11.2	10.4	0.7
Watford	8.8	7.6	1.1
Hertfordshire	9.4	8.8	0.6
Outer London	9.8	9.1	0.7
England	6.5	6.7	-0.3

Source: DCLG Live Tables: Land Registry Data

120. To examine affordability more closely, it is necessary to consider household income. The SHMA provides data on median and lower quartile household income for the district. These are set out in Figures 5 and 6. In 2014, the median income in Three Rivers was £32,277.

Figure 5: Median Residents' Annual Earnings (Gross), 2014

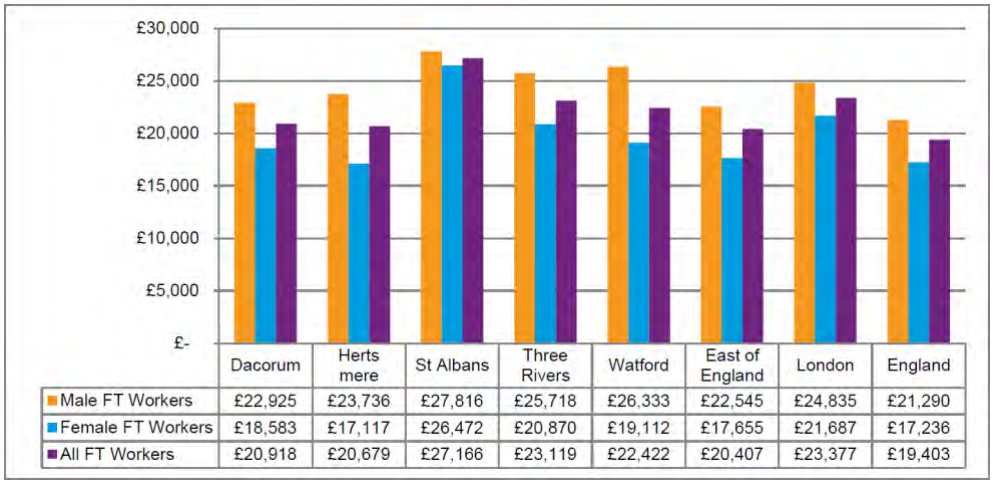


	Dacorum	Herts mere	St Albans	Three Rivers	Watford	East of England	London	England
Male FT Workers	£34,123	£34,059	£41,659	£37,886	£34,996	£31,281	£35,275	£29,836
Female FT Workers	£27,252	£23,695	£34,654	£26,699	£27,667	£24,536	£30,179	£24,024
All FT Workers	£31,071	£27,831	£39,389	£32,277	£32,183	£28,735	£32,781	£27,500

Source: ASHE, 2015

121. In 2014, the Lower Quartile Income for Three Rivers was £23,119.

Figure 6: Lower Quartile Residents' Annual Earnings (Gross), 2014



	Dacorum	Herts mere	St Albans	Three Rivers	Watford	East of England	London	England
Male FT Workers	£22,925	£23,736	£27,816	£25,718	£26,333	£22,545	£24,835	£21,290
Female FT Workers	£18,583	£17,117	£26,472	£20,870	£19,112	£17,655	£21,687	£17,236
All FT Workers	£20,918	£20,679	£27,166	£23,119	£22,422	£20,407	£23,377	£19,403

Source: ASHE, 2015

122. In Table 13 we set out household income at the parish level according to the 'standard' averages of mean and median. The terms 'Area' and 'Base' relate to Abbots Langley and England respectively. Making a comparison with district level data shown in the tables above, the relative wealth of the NPA comes across. In Three Rivers, median and lower quartile annual earnings amounted to £32,183 and £23,119 respectively in 2014, whereas in Abbots Langley the same averages in 2017 came to £46,538 and 27,249 respectively. The gap between them equates to roughly 30% for the former and 15% for the latter, a difference that cannot be explained through the different years in which the data was gathered.

Table 13: Household Income - Averages

	Area	Base
Mean	£54,059.90	£38,719.87
Median	£46,538.42	£31,591.03
Mode	30 - 35k	10 - 15k
Lower Quartile	£27,249.57	£17,845.10
Upper Quartile	£73,080.93	£52,529.37

Source: CACI

123. In Table 14 we show how households in the NPA break down into different income brackets.

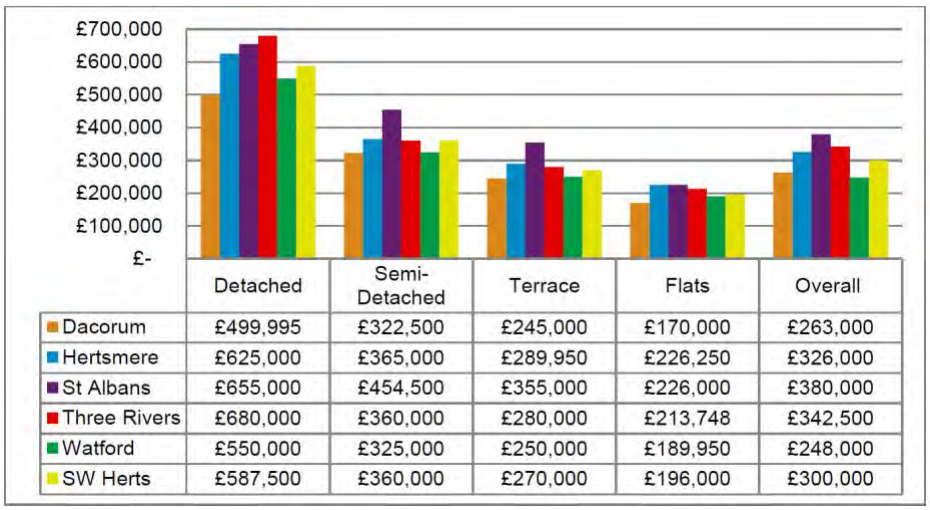
Table 14: Household Income

	Area Profile	Area %	Base %	Index av=100
0 - 5k	101	1.1%	2.4%	48
5 - 10k	339	3.9%	8.4%	46
10 - 15k	473	5.4%	10.2%	53
15 - 20k	541	6.2%	10.2%	61
20 - 25k	552	6.3%	9.1%	69
25 - 30k	579	6.6%	8.5%	78
30 - 35k	593	6.8%	7.7%	88
35 - 40k	551	6.3%	6.4%	98
40 - 45k	552	6.3%	5.9%	**107**
45 - 50k	489	5.6%	4.7%	**118**
50 - 55k	469	5.3%	4.2%	**128**
55 - 60k	430	4.9%	3.5%	**138**
60 - 65k	406	4.6%	3.1%	**147**
65 - 70k	344	3.9%	2.5%	**156**
70 - 75k	291	3.3%	2.0%	**167**
75 - 80k	249	2.8%	1.6%	**176**
80 - 85k	259	3.0%	1.6%	**184**
85 - 90k	235	2.7%	1.4%	**192**
90 - 95k	98	1.1%	0.6%	**198**
95 - 100k	147	1.7%	0.8%	**203**
100 - 120k	585	6.7%	3.0%	**220**
120 - 140k	206	2.4%	1.0%	**246**
140 - 160k	137	1.6%	0.6%	**263**
160 - 180k	92	1.1%	0.4%	**280**
180 - 200k	12	0.1%	0.0%	**292**
200k+	32	0.4%	0.1%	**302**
Total households	**8,763**			

Source: CACI

124. In order to gain a clear understanding of affordability, it is necessary to link household income to house prices. Data on house prices is provided in the SHMA; in Figure 8 below we reproduce SHMA figure 29 showing average prices achieved across the different types of dwelling over the period January 2013 to December 2014.

Figure 7: Median House Prices, Jan 2013 – Dec 2014



	Detached	Semi-Detached	Terrace	Flats	Overall
Dacorum	£499,995	£322,500	£245,000	£170,000	£263,000
Hertsmere	£625,000	£365,000	£289,950	£226,250	£326,000
St Albans	£655,000	£454,500	£355,000	£226,000	£380,000
Three Rivers	£680,000	£360,000	£280,000	£213,748	£342,500
Watford	£550,000	£325,000	£250,000	£189,950	£248,000
SW Herts	£587,500	£360,000	£270,000	£196,000	£300,000

Source: GLH Analysis: Land Registry Price Paid Data

125. In Table 15 on the following page we present feedback from local estate agents as to the value of different types of dwellings in the NPA. Each agent was asked to respond to the question, *'please can you supply approximate prices for the following different types of dwelling (by way of example properties sold in the second half of 2017)?'.* This suggests that property in the NPA is significantly more expensive than for the wider district of Three Rivers. The average value for a 2 bed house in the table below is £380,000; assuming a terraced house is a comparable dwelling, a similar property in the NPA is 25% more expensive than the wider district, although this difference can in part be explained by the difference in time between when the samples were taken.

Table 15: Property values in Abbots Langley (£,000)

Agent Name:	Haart	Your Move	Connells	Proffitt Holt
1 bed flat/house	195	220	220	250
2 bed bungalow	500	400	410	475
2 bed house	375	360	370	415
3 bed house	475	400	465	550
4 bed house	550	500	525	675

Source: Local agent questionnaire

126. For the purposes of our analysis it is necessary to arrive at a value for an 'entry-level' property[22]. Following discussions with estate agents, within Abbots Langley this is likely to either be a flat or home within a sub-divided house consisting of two habitable rooms (1 bedroom). Such a home would be suitable for a single occupier or a couple. Alternatively a new build dwelling of three habitable rooms (2 bedrooms) would be eligible for Help to Buy. From the data above (Table 15, Property Values in Abbots Langley) and further discussions with agents, the average house price for dwellings of these types would be in the region of £270,000.

5.2.4 Purchase threshold

127. Having established the value of an entry level home, it is possible to arrive at the purchase threshold; this indicates the minimum income level required to buy such a property. The purchase threshold is calculated by netting 10% off the entry level house price to reflect purchase deposit. The resulting cost is divided by 4 to reflect the standard household income requirement to access mortgage products. For a property prices at £270,000, the purchase threshold is £60,750.

128. This is helpful in determining the portion of households unable to access AMH without subsidy. As we have seen, the mean household income for Abbots Langley is £54,059. In 2017, the proportion of those earning £60,000 and above, and therefore able to afford AMH, came to 35.4% of the population of Abbots Langley. This indicates that a majority are unable to afford to buy a suitable market property without subsidy.

5.2.5 Income Threshold

129. In order to understand the affordability of dwellings for private rent the concept of the 'income threshold' is employed; this is derived from the annualisation of the monthly rental cost and then assuming that the annualised cost represents a maximum of 25% of annual household income. According to the Home.co.uk website, the average monthly rent for a two bedroom home in Abbots Langley is £1,161, or £13,932. The income threshold needed to afford a dwelling of this size is therefore £55,728. Again, referring to our CACI household income data, a minority of households (40.3%) would be able to afford a dwelling of this size.

130. Taking into account affordability issues, it is reasonable to conclude that roughly 60% of all households are unable to afford suitable housing without some form of subsidy.

5.2.6 Over-crowding

131. In areas where affordability is acute, over-crowding is common. In table 16 on the following page, we record changes in number of persons per room in the parish during the inter-censual period. The increase of 31.3% in those households showing over 1.0 and up to 1.5 persons is notable, and reflects an increase of 20 households (from 64 to 84) living in these circumstances. It is worth noting the difference with the data for the District where an increase in 17.2% was recorded. Nevertheless, the data is contradictory given the increase in 'under-occupation' also recorded; moreover, the data for number of households reporting the number of persons per room being greater than 1 is very similar for both the parish and the district at around 1%.

[22] Further intelligence suggests houses of 2 and 3 bedrooms are popular with first time buyers, but only those with access to other sources of money (for example, the 'bank of mum and dad'). Only new build homes are accessible to those without access to these super-normal financial resources given eligibility for 'Help to Buy'.

Table 16: Trends in number of persons per room in Abbots Langley, 2001-2011

Persons per room	Abbots Langley	Three Rivers	England
Up to 0.5 persons per room	10.7%	4.9%	7.9%
Over 0.5 and up to 1.0 persons per room	16.1%	5.0%	7.0%
Over 1.0 and up to 1.5 persons per room	31.3%	17.2%	27.3%
Over 1.5 persons per room	-5.0%	-13.8%	2.5%

Source: Census 2001 and 2011, AECOM Calculations

132. For thoroughness, it is also worth considering data on concealed households. Concealed households are family units or single adults living within 'host' households[23], such as a young couple or non-dependant son or daughter living with parents. Again the numbers are low for Abbots Langley, and comparable with the wider district.

133. However, it is important to note that each year the settlement will produce a number of 'new' households. If they are 'concealed' for more than one year it is likely they will move to another part of the country, so-called 'displacement.'

Table 17: Concealed households

All families: total	5,566	25,193	14885145
Concealed families: total	87	459	275954
Concealed families as % of total	1.6%	1.8%	1.9%

Source: Census 2011, AECOM Calculations

134. The 87 concealed households revealed in Census data therefore represent those new households coming into existence in the settlement who are unable to access suitable housing and who have, so far, have decided not to accept displacement. Unless steps are taken to enable these households to remain, the cumulative effect will amount to tens if not hundreds of households over the years.

135. Moreover, as we have seen, 12.6% of households have non-dependent children in Abbots Langley, as against 9.3% for the district. These could be construed as potentially concealed households, who have simply not yet self-reported as such.

136. In conclusion, it is initially difficult to reconcile our analysis of affordability, which points to the majority of households being unable to afford their own home without support, and the modest levels of over-crowding suggested by the lead indicators (persons per room and concealment). One possible explanation, however, is that of displacement. Indeed, data relating to age structure does suggest an exodus from the area of young adults, although the overall proportion of the population accounted for by this age group is not out of line with the wider district.

5.3 Housing Needs Register[24]

137. We requested data from TRDC's Housing Strategy team, for an assessment of the number of households currently on the waiting list that have expressed a preference for being located in the NPA. TRDC operates a Choice Based Lettings allocations scheme; this means it is neither possible to accurately report the number of people actively seeking to live in the Abbots Langley area as a personal preference nor state the type of property they are interested in. However the district authority has been able to provide the following data from the Housing Needs Register:

138. There are currently 54 households on the register with a WD5 (Abbots Langley) postcode. In terms of size of dwelling, these are broken down by bedroom need as follows:

- 1 bedroom - 24
- 2 bedroom - 19
- 3 bedroom - 11
- 4 bedroom – 0

[23] DCLG, Estimating housing need, page 5
[24] Data provided by Three River District Council by email 3rd October 2017

139. The priority bands for the 54 households are as follows:
    - A – 1
    - B – 21
    - C – 8
    - D – 15
    - E – 9

140. The waiting list is divided into five bands according to urgency of need. Council officers advised that bands A-D were categorised as priority need, whilst band E is categorised as being of least urgent need. Therefore, we have taken the approach that band E should be discounted from calculations of immediate housing need, as households in these categories tend to be on the waiting list more as an insurance policy against future need, rather than in immediate or urgent need. This suggests that 45 households are in priority need within Abbots Langley.

141. As we have seen, the current adopted Core Strategy sets out policy as regards affordable housing in policy CP4. It states that the council will seek a target of 45% of all housing to be affordable, incorporating a mix of tenures with a view towards seeking 70% social housing and 30% intermediate housing.

142. Although the waiting list is only a snapshot in time, assuming the parish is successful in achieving the dwelling numbers put forward in this HNA, there does not appear to be a requirement for the Neighbourhood Plan to set its own affordable housing target on the basis of this data. Nevertheless, it may reference the waiting list and mention the need to work closely with TRDC to ensure the needs of those on the housing waiting list continue to be met.

143. It is important to note that even after the Neighbourhood Plan is adopted, the TRDC's affordable housing policy will continue to apply, and it will still be the Council that will control the housing waiting list and negotiate affordable housing commitments with developers as part of the development management process.

144. Bringing together our findings relating to affordability, given the LQAR of 11.2 and the MAR of 10.4 at the district level, it is fair to conclude that affordable market dwellings are out of reach to those on modest incomes, and this is particularly true for those on incomes that fall into the lower quartile.

145. Incomes are higher in Abbots Langley than for the district; the data we have gathered suggests median incomes are 30% higher and Lower Quartile incomes are 15% higher than the district average.

146. Given the demographic profile of the area, a home suitable for two or three individuals is appropriate to use for the purposes of identifying an entry-level dwelling. A home of this size in Three Rivers is valued at approximately £270,000. At this value, around 65% of the population would be unable to buy a suitable home. A similar property will rent in the area for around £14,000 pa; around 60% of all households would be unable to afford to rent at this level. As a result, this HNA concludes that roughly 60% of all households are unable to afford suitable market housing (for either rent or purchase) without some form of subsidy.

5.4 Market Segmentation

147. Bringing together the evidence from our consideration of affordability, age structure and household composition, in line with PPG, we have sought to identify the different market segments in the population of Abbots Langley. We then use this understanding to put forward recommendations for policy relating to Affordable Housing as well as size and type of dwelling.

148. In order to understand the terminology surrounding size of dwellings, it is important to note the number of rooms recorded in Census excludes kitchen, bathrooms and toilets. In the market segments table that follows, 'dwelling size' should be translated as follows:

    - 1 room = Bedsit
    - 2 rooms = flat/house with one bedroom
    - 3 rooms = flat/house 2 bedrooms
    - 4 rooms = flat/house with 2 bedroom and 2 reception rooms, or 3 bedrooms and 1
    - reception room
    - 5 rooms = flat/house with 3 bedrooms and 2 reception rooms
    - 6 rooms = house with 3 bedrooms and 3 reception rooms or 4 bedrooms and 2
    - reception rooms
    - 7+ rooms = house with 4, 5 or more bedrooms house

149. The table on the following page indicates the different market segments, and the degree to which they are a growing, stable or declining group within the local population. One ‘up’ arrow indicates this grouping is growing modestly in the NPA; two ‘up’ arrows indicates strong growth, three ‘up’ arrows suggests very rapid growth in years to come. Where segments are falling in numbers, or not growing, neutral or down arrows are shown.

150. It is important to note that, as we have seen, the market is good at picking up growth trends. For this reason, policy intervention is only justified in the case of market failure (where the market is unable, for reasons of viability, or there are incentives, deliberate or otherwise, that drive the market not to respond to trends). Examples include the failure of the market to provide homes to those on low incomes and the under-supply of dwellings for the elderly.

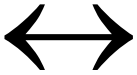
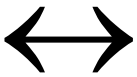
151. Similarly, because we believe in the capacity of the market to deliver the homes required for the majority of residents (either through for-sale dwellings or for-rent), policy intervention is only required where the evidence is both compelling and the circumstances it describes serious. This is because policies carry both costs and risks; they can distort the market, preventing it from providing homes (or they can encourage a position of market equilibrium in which homes are accessible to target markets).

5.4.1 Arrows Analysis

152. The arrows analysis brings together our findings relating to the three key indicators of age structure, household composition and affordability. It identifies the policy aims that ALPC may legitimately address in their housing policy.

- Demographic trends identified in the our analysis supports a balance of dwellings of different tenures, types and sizes in order to maintain the established function of the neighbourhood as a place to bring up a family. This is underlined by data from the SHMA that suggests the Three Rivers district is particularly attractive to those under the age of 35. In order to reinforce this trend it would be appropriate for the NDP to ensure a good supply of dwellings suited to young families. This suggests policy should support delivery of medium sized dwellings of 5 habitable rooms.
- While all market segments are forecast to grow, district level data reported in the SHMA suggests a strong increase in those aged 75+. This suggests smaller dwellings of between 2-3 habitable rooms would be appropriate to enable right-sizing on the part of older households, freeing up larger family dwellings to other household types.
- The need for smaller dwellings is reinforced by the indication in the evidence gathered that over-crowding is on the increase and the proportion of households with non-dependent children is greater than that for the wider district. It is therefore appropriate for policy to support the delivery of small dwellings of 1-3 habitable rooms to enable those households that are currently concealed to set up an independent home.
- Notwithstanding that, in general, households in Abbots Langley enjoy higher incomes than those in the district as a whole; less than half of all households can afford market dwellings in the area. The provision of affordable housing is therefore of paramount importance if the community is to maintain a balance of different income groups and ages

Table 18: Market Segments

Market segments	Income range	Tenure	Presence in Plan Area	Size of home
Young family where parents are aged 24-44 with 1+ children aged 0-15	Median	PRS, Social housing, shared equity, AMH		5 rooms
Professional Head of Household Young family where parents are aged 24-44 with 1+ children aged 0-15	Mean	AMH, Market Housing (MH)		5 rooms
Professional Head of Household family where parent are aged 44-64 with non-dependent children living at home	>Mean (equity rich)	Market Housing		6+ rooms
Lone parent (with 1+ children)	Lower Quartile (equity poor)	Social Housing		3 rooms
One person household aged under 65	Median (equity poor)	PRS, shared equity, DMH		2 rooms
One person household aged 65+ with wealth	Median (equity rich)	Market Housing		2-3 rooms
One person household aged 65+ without wealth	Lower Quartile (equity poor)	Social Housing		2 rooms
Young couple no children	>Mean (equity poor)	Market Housing, Shared Equity, DMH		4+ rooms
Concealed households	Lower Quartile (equity poor)	Social Housing		1-3 rooms

Source: AECOM

153. In table 19 below we provide a table, devised by Nathaniel Lichfield and Partners, setting out recommended dwelling sizes for different household types. This table has been defined on the basis of the following assumptions:

- Smaller apartments/flats or houses will be more suitable for meeting the initial requirements of married couples until they have a family. Those households without children could occupy either houses or flats of the appropriate size;
- Cohabiting couples and lone parents will want and require similar sizes of housing to married couples. Those households without children could occupy either houses or flats of the appropriate size;
- Smaller apartments/flats or houses will be more suitable to meeting the requirements of single person households;
- According to their composition, institutional accommodation such as a residential care home, hostel or purpose-built student accommodation may provide a suitable form of specialist housing for groups such as elderly people and students;
- Further qualitative allowances will need to be made for households at retirement age who are likely to continue living in their previous home unless more manageable two bed flats, houses and bungalows are available; and,
- The requirement for housing with care, including supported housing and extra care provision, is likely to increase at 85 and above.

Table 19: Estimated Housing Size required by Household Type, by Age of Head of Household

Age Range 2013	One Person	Married Couple / With 1/2 Children	Married Couple / With 3+ Children	Cohabiting Couple / With 1/2 Children	Cohabiting Couple / With 3+ Children	Lone Parent / With 1/2 Children	Lone Parent / With 3+ Children	Other Multi-Person
0-14	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
15-24	1 bed flat/house	2 bed flat/house	3 bed house	2 bed flat/house	3 bed flat/house	2 bed flat/house	3 bed house	1 bed flat
25-34	1 bed flat/house	3 bed house	3 bed house	3 bed house	3 bed house	3 bed house	3 bed house	1 bed flat
35-44	2 bed flat/house	3 bed house	4 bed house	3 bed house	4 bed house	3 bed house	4 bed house	2 bed flat
45-59	2 bed flat/house	3 bed house	4 bed house	3 bed house	4 bed house	3 bed house	4 bed house	2 bed flat
60-84	2 bed flat/bungalow [30]	2 bed flat/bungalow	3 bed bungalow	2 bed flat/bungalow	3 bed bungalow	2 bed flat/bungalow	3 bed bungalow	2 bed flat
85+	Housing with care	Housing with care	Housing with care	Housing with care	Housing with care	Housing with care	Housing with care	Housing with care

Source: Nathaniel Lichfield and Partners

5.5 What forms of Affordable Housing should be included in the tenure mix?

154. In this section we consider the different housing tenures, besides social rented dwellings, and their suitability given the evidence we have gathered relating to age structure, household composition and affordability.

155. As we have seen, the Housing and Planning Act 2016 (HPA) includes provisions to introduce a general duty on planning authorities in England to promote the supply of 'starter homes,' and a specific duty to require a minimum number or proportion of 'starter homes' on certain residential development sites. At the time of writing, however, the relevant legislative provisions are not yet in force and no specific proportion or minimum has been put forward.

156. The Housing White Paper sheds further light on the government's intentions in this area. It states that, 'in keeping with our approach to deliver a range of affordable homes to buy, rather than a mandatory requirement for 'starter homes,' we intend to amend the NPPF to introduce a clear policy expectation that housing sites deliver a minimum of 10% affordable home ownership units. It will be for local areas to work with developers to agree an appropriate level of delivery of 'starter homes', alongside other affordable home ownership and rented tenures.'

157. This is a substantial watering-down of the 'starter home' requirement as envisaged when policy contained in the Housing and Planning Act was first conceived. In effect, it leaves it to local groups, including neighbourhood

plans, to decide an appropriate level of affordable home ownership products, while taking note of the 10% policy expectation.

158. The decision whether to treat Discounted Market Sale Homes (DMSH) as affordable housing should be determined by whether lowering the asking price of new build homes to a size and type suitable for first time buyers (for example, by 20%) would bring them within reach of people currently unable to access Affordable Market Homes (AMH) for sale.

159. As we have seen the income required (purchase threshold) for AMH, defined for the purposes of this study as entry level family dwellings of 3 habitable rooms valued at £270,000, is £60,750. In the event of a 20% discount on this price, reducing the purchase price to £216,000, the purchase threshold would fall to £48,600.

160. Using the household income data set out in Table 13 and 14, it is possible to state, firstly that those households on incomes around the median would be able to access entry-level homes subject to the starter home discount and that, secondly, around 10% of households currently excluded from the market for housing would be able to access dwellings of this type. For this reason, we can conclude that DMSH do offer a realistic means for those on lower incomes to access the property market.

161. On the basis of the evidence we have gathered, we would therefore recommend DMSH form part of the AH quota within the NPA, with policy seeking to fulfil the 10% policy expectation. We note that 20% is a minimum discount and, of course, greater discounts will make the policy more effective in enabling households on modest incomes afford to buy their own home. The ultimate level of discount should be arrived at on a site-by-site basis and will be determined by viability as well as other calls on finite resources stemming from planning gain, such as other forms of AH and infrastructure requirements.

162. While the Housing White Paper does not specify scale of development (i.e. number of units proposed), it is appropriate for this to be taken into account when considering how the 10% policy expectation should be applied in practice. When the policy was conceived, it was linked to the notion of rural exception sites, land that would normally not be considered for housing, to bring forward substantial numbers of affordable dwellings where there is evidence of local need.

163. Given the projections for housing need over the Plan period are substantial, it is appropriate for the WTC to plan for ‘Starter Homes’ within their overall approach to meeting housing need in the community.

5.5.1 Shared ownership

164. As we have seen, the shared ownership tenure has seen growth in the NPA between the 2001 and 2011 Censuses. It is therefore worth considering its future role in Abbots Langley. Shared ownership involves the purchaser buying an initial share in a property typically of between 25% and 75% and paying rent on the share retained by the provider. Shared ownership is flexible in two respects, in terms of the share which can be purchased and in the rent payable on the share retained by the provider. Both of these are variable.

165. The share owned by the leaseholder can be varied by 'stair-casing'. Generally, stair-casing will be upward, thereby increasing the share owned. In exceptional circumstances (as a result of financial difficulties, and where the alternative is repossession), and at the discretion of the provider, shared owners may staircase down, thereby reducing the share they own.

166. Shared ownership constitutes a form of AH, targeting those on incomes around the mean; as such, it is termed ‘intermediate’ and is available to both first-time buyers, people who have owned a home previously and council and housing association tenants with a good credit rating whose household income does not exceed £60,000. Given these conditions, it is not surprising that it has started to taken root in Abbots Langley; on the basis of the affordability analysis discussed above, it should form part of the AH mix in the Parish.

5.5.2 Affordable Rented Dwelling (ARD)

167. Commentators have repeatedly raised concerns about ARD not constituting a realistic form of AH given that in many areas this reduces rents to levels that are still beyond the means of the target group: those on incomes substantially below the mean.

168. As we have seen in Table 13 (Household Income - Averages) the lower quartile income for households in Abbots Langley is £27,250. As a form of AH, it is households at this level that constitute the target group for affordable rented dwellings. Based on the income threshold principle set out above that no more than 25% of a household's income should be spent on rent, the most a household at this income level should pay is £6,813 or £568 per month if it is to be able to cover other expenses, as well as enjoy a modest budget for discretionary

spending. Given the rent for an entry level dwelling that has been identified in this study of £13,932, a rent set at 80% of this figure, or £11,147, would still be well in excess of what this household could afford.

169. For this reason, for ARD to add to the menu of AH available in the NPA, rent levels should be set substantially below 80% so as to avoid competition with intermediate products, offering a route to housing for households on lower quartile incomes.

5.6 What type of market housing (private rented and housing for sale) should be included in the housing mix?

170. Given the limited quantity of affordable housing in the NPA, the needs of the great majority of the people will be served by the market. People on higher incomes will be able to access a variety of market dwellings; their choices will be driven principally by how much they can afford to spend, the extent to which old age is driving their choice of home, and personal taste.

171. As explained previously, the operation of the market is the best means of addressing the demand for different types of housing for sale. It is important planning policy does not place unnecessary burdens on the market preventing its ability to respond to demand; this is, after all, the principal way equilibrium is achieved in the housing market and house price growth is kept in check. In this sense, the notion of viability is essential. It is important not to deter development in the context of clear housing need; to do so will not only frustrate the delivery of new housing but also may deprive the community of resources for infrastructure improvements.

5.6.1 Build to Rent

172. There is evidence of growing demand for private rented accommodation in the NPA. At the sub-regional HMA level, on-going changes to the benefit system and the way social housing is allocated are likely to increase demand on the private rented sector, especially at the lower-cost end of the market. Given the very substantial increases in PRS revealed by Census data, this trend is one shared by Abbots Langley.

173. The reason for the strength of this demand is that, for those households unable to access market housing to buy, and who do not qualify for affordable housing, private rented housing is the only remaining option.

174. Given the trends identified in this HNA, Abbots Langley should seek build to rent (BTR) development, which may include an element of affordable housing and is likely to be brought forward by specialist developers, or indeed by Three Rivers through a wholly-owned development company or similar vehicle, funded by debt and/or institutional investors. This will provide accommodation of consistently higher quality than is available through the traditional small private landlord.

175. As we have seen, the Housing White Paper proposed a number of modifications to the definition of affordable housing for planning purposes. One of these is Affordable Private Rent Housing (APRH); this is housing made available for rent at a level which is at least 20 per cent below local market rent. It is envisaged such housing would be delivered as part of BTR schemes.

176. Bringing the evidence together on housing tenure, as we have seen, while affordable market housing in Abbots Langley is unaffordable to households with incomes around the median, the introduction of Discounted Market Sale Housing (DMSH) does offer a realistic means for those on incomes around the median to access the property market. We would therefore recommend DMSH form part of the AH quota within the NPA, with policy seeking to fulfil the Government's 10% policy expectation. Shared ownership dwellings have grown substantially during the inter-censual period and should remain a component of intermediate AH products. For Affordable Rented Dwellings to expand the choice of housing available to residents in the NPA, rent levels should be set substantially below the maximum of 80% so as to avoid competition with intermediate products; this will encourage 'true affordability,' providing a route to housing for households on lower quartile incomes. We note, however, that policy of this kind can only be devised where it does not threaten viability.

177. The operation of the market is the best means of addressing the demand for different types of housing for sale. PRS will continue to provide a growing role in satisfying housing need in the NPA, given the shortage of shared equity stock and overall affordability of for-sale homes. As a result, Abbots Langley should seek build to rent (BTR) development, which may include an element of affordable housing in the form of Affordable Private Rent Housing (APRH).

6. RQ3. What type (terrace, semi, bungalows, flats and detached) and size (number of habitable rooms) of housing is appropriate?

178. As identified earlier in this study, PPG recommends a consideration of the existing housing provision and its suitability, having regard to demographic shifts in age and household composition as well as affordability, to address future as well as current community need. For this reason, we start with a consideration of the existing housing stock.

179. In Table 20, we set out the housing stock in terms of type at the time of the last Census. While the profile of dwellings is dominated by houses of the three principal types (detached, semi-detached and terraced), flats constitute a substantial proportion (16.9%) of all dwellings. It is also worth noting that, in broad terms, the spread of dwellings is broadly comparable to that of Three Rivers.

Table 20: Accommodation type (households) in Abbots Langley, 2011

Dwelling type		Abbots Langley	Three Rivers	England
Whole house or bungalow	Detached	22.4%	26.3%	22.4%
	Semi-detached	33.3%	35.0%	31.2%
	Terraced	23.9%	19.1%	24.5%
Flat, maisonette or apartment	Purpose-built block of flats or tenement	16.9%	16.7%	16.4%
	Parts of a converted or shared house	0.8%	1.1%	3.8%
	In commercial building	0.6%	1.0%	1.0%

Source: Census 2011, AECOM Calculations

180. In Table 21 we record the way the profile of the neighbourhood has changed during the inter-censual period. The data shows how the increase in the overall numbers of dwellings (901) has been apportioned across dwellings of different sizes.

181. From this, it is clear the greatest number has been allocated to the largest size, those of 7 and 8 rooms or greater. Overall, the data suggests that 51% (456) of all new homes fell into this category; the next greatest increase is smaller homes, particularly three room dwellings, these account for 29% (258) of all new homes; medium sizes dwellings, suited to young families of 4 and 5 rooms, account for the balance of 19% (172) of homes built between 2001 and 2011.

Table 21: Rates of change in number of rooms per household in Abbots Langley, 2001-2011

Number of Rooms	Abbots Langley	Three Rivers	England
1 Room	15.2%	-18.6%	-5.2%
2 Rooms	11.9%	17.3%	24.2%
3 Rooms	33.0%	20.4%	20.4%
4 Rooms	16.9%	0.3%	3.5%
5 Rooms	-1.3%	-2.1%	-1.8%
6 Rooms	-3.5%	-5.9%	2.1%
7 Rooms	27.6%	13.2%	17.9%
8 Rooms or more	35.9%	21.2%	29.8%

Source: Census 2001-2011, AECOM Calculations

182. Construction of new dwellings over the inter-censual period has resulted in a modest shift in balance of dwellings overall, an increase in smaller dwellings from 13% to 14%, and a fall in medium sized family homes from 41% in 2001 to 38% in 2011. The proportion of all homes of 6 habitable rooms or more remains constant at 45%.

Table 22: Change in number of rooms per household in Abbots Langley (absolute numbers), 2001-2011

	2001	2001	2011	2011
Number of Rooms	**Abbots Langley**	**Three Rivers**	**Abbots Langley**	**Three Rivers**
1 Room	33	183	38	149
2 Rooms	185	625	207	733
3 Rooms	701	2812	932	3385
4 Rooms	1163	6166	1359	6187
5 Rooms	1793	7709	1769	7548
6 Rooms	1663	7165	1604	6739
7 Rooms	711	3389	907	3836
8 Rooms or more	888	5390	637	2741
9 Rooms or more			570	3790

Source: Census 2001 – 2011, AECOM Calculations

183. Bearing in mind the conclusions from the market segmentation analysis, the question remains whether the size of dwellings available within the existing stock is sufficient to meet the needs of the population and the trends observed are likely to help or hinder the achievement of legitimate policy goals set out in the 'arrows analysis' above.

184. Firstly, the trend towards the largest type of homes is not consistent with our findings; based on the needs identified, the emphasis should be on dwellings of 1 to 3 habitable rooms and 5 habitable rooms if the policy goals, chiefly of the maintenance of a healthy balance within the population as a whole, together with planning for an older population, are to be achieved over the Plan period.

185. Furthermore, the interviews we have conducted with local agents reveal some clear trends as regards demand for market dwellings of different sizes. Table 23 below records responses to the question, *'what sizes of property are in demand from buyers? Please assign 1 to 5 for each size of dwelling to indicate the level of demand where 1 equals very high demand, and 5 very low demand'.* This suggests bungalows are in particular demand. According to local agents, this is explained by a shortage of retirement homes in Abbots Langley (Proffitt Holt) leading to demand for dwellings of a size and type midway between a family home and sheltered accommodation.

186. However, this must be tempered by other reports that bungalows tend to be on large plots, and the high demand is explained in part by interest from those looking to replace the existing structure with a larger home (Connells).

187. Nevertheless, agents' views support the conclusion the Neighbourhood Plan should plan for an increasingly elderly population.

188. Finally, the popularity of three bedroom homes supports the need for family dwellings typically bought by second-time buyers (dwellings of 4 and 5 habitable rooms).

Table 23: Size of homes

Agent Name:	**Haart**	**Your Move**	**Connells**	**Proffitt Holt**
1 bed flat/house	5	3	3	3
2 bed bungalow	1	1	1	2
2 bed house	4	2	4	3
3 bed house	2	1	2	2
4 bed house	3	2	5	3

Source: Local agent questionnaire

189. While the question put to local agents related to type *('What is the current demand (2017), in terms of housing types? Please assign 1 to 5 for each type of housing to indicate the level of demand where 1 equals very high demand, and 5 very low demand'*) revealed findings of less clarity with some inconsistency among responses from agents, we present the data below in Table 24; again, this suggests the most popular dwellings are bungalows, followed by semi-detached homes. Demand for flats appears to be relatively modest; one agent comments that the market 'is flooded with flats' and only larger new build flats sell quickly (Connells).

190. Overall, this provides additional evidence of the need to plan for a growing number of both older as well as family household types; in addition, while smaller homes are in demand, these should reflect a preference for houses rather than flats.

Table 24: Type of homes

Agent Name:	Haart	Your Move	Connells	Proffitt Holt
Bungalow	1	1	1	2
Flats	5	3	3	3
Semi-detached	3	2	2	2
Detached	2	2	4	3
Terrace	4	2	5	4

Source: Local agent questionnaire

191. Bringing together our findings on type and size, the majority of dwellings in Abbots Langley are houses of different types, but with a substantial number of flats. Of new homes built during the inter-censual period, large homes of 6 habitable rooms or more form the majority (51%). Based on the evidence uncovered, this suggests a mis-alignment between supply and demand given the preference for smaller homes (1-3 habitable rooms) suited to both first time buyers as well as those seeking to downsize, and dwellings suited to the needs of younger families (5 habitable rooms) .

7. RQ4: Specialist housing (e.g. what provision should be made for retirees and the elderly?)

7.1 Sheltered and extra-care housing

192. As we have seen, given the significant forecast increases in people aged 75+, it is appropriate for policy to provide support for a significant quantum of sheltered[25] and extra care[26] housing as part of the delivery of new housing. Table 25 below identifies the growth in the population of over 75s between 2011 and 2032.

Table 25: Change in the population of over 75s between 2011 and 2032

Age band	2011			2032		
	Population, Abbots Langley	Population, Three Rivers	Population of parish as a % of district/ over 75s as a % of parish population	Population, Three Rivers	Population, Abbots Langley/ population of those aged 75+ as a % of total district population	Projected 75+ population (district)
All ages	19,574	87,317	22.4%	105,405	23,611	
75+	1,321		6.7%	12,405	11.8%	2,786

Source: 2014-based Sub-national population projections, DCLG and Census 2011 (ONS) AECOM calculations

193. In arriving at an appropriate level of housing for older people of different types, we have applied the Housing Learning and Improvement Network's suggested numbers per 1,000 of the 75+ population[27]. The table above shows an estimate of the increase in the numbers of older people aged 75+ of 1,465 (2,786-1,321). This will result, over the Plan period, in a need for:

- additional conventional sheltered housing units = 60 x 146.5% = 88 (rounded)
- additional leasehold sheltered housing units = 120 x 146.5% = 176 (rounded)
- additional 'enhanced' sheltered units, split 50:50 between those for rent and those for sale = 20 x 146.5% =30 (rounded)
- additional extra care housing units for rent =15 x 146.5% = 22 (rounded)
- additional extra care housing units for sale = 30 x 146.5% = 44 (rounded)
- additional specialist dementia care homes = 6 x 146.5% = 9 (rounded)

194. Note that there is no obligation for these all to be provided within the parish itself. As such, these 339 specialist dwellings need not be thought of as all needing to be provided within the neighbourhood plan housing target-

[25] Sheltered housing (also known as retirement housing) means having your own flat or bungalow in a block, or on a small estate, where all the other residents are older people (usually over 55). With a few exceptions, all developments (or 'schemes') provide independent, self-contained homes with their own front doors. There are many different types of scheme, both to rent and to buy. They usually contain between 15 and 40 properties, and range in size from studio flats (or 'bedsits') through to 2 and 3 bedroomed. Properties in most schemes are designed to make life a little easier for older people - with features like raised electric sockets, lowered worktops, walk-in showers, and so on. Some will usually be designed to accommodate wheelchair users. And they are usually linked to an emergency alarm service (sometimes called 'community alarm service') to call help if needed. Many schemes also have their own 'manager' or 'warden', either living on-site or nearby, whose job is to manage the scheme and help arrange any services residents need. Managed schemes will also usually have some shared or communal facilities such as a lounge for residents to meet, a laundry, a guest flat and a garden. Source: http://www.housingcare.org/jargon-sheltered-housing.aspx (accessed 11/04/17)

[26] New forms of sheltered housing and retirement housing have been pioneered in recent years, to cater for older people who are becoming frailer and less able to do everything for themselves. Extra Care Housing is housing designed with the needs of frailer older people in mind and with varying levels of care and support available on site. People who live in Extra Care Housing have their own self-contained homes, their own front doors and a legal right to occupy the property. Extra Care Housing is also known as very or enhanced sheltered housing, assisted living, or simply as 'housing with care'. It comes in many built forms, including blocks of flats, bungalow estates and retirement villages. It is a popular choice among older people because it can sometimes provide an alternative to a care home. In addition to the communal facilities often found in sheltered housing (residents' lounge, guest suite, laundry), Extra Care often includes a restaurant or dining room, health & fitness facilities, hobby rooms and even computer rooms. Domestic support and personal care are available, usually provided by on-site staff. Properties can be rented, owned or part owned/part rented. There is a limited (though increasing) amount of Extra Care Housing in most areas and most providers set eligibility criteria which prospective residents have to meet. http://www.housingcare.org/jargon-extra-care-housing.aspx (accessed 11/04/17)

[27] Housing LIN (2011) Strategic Housing for Older People: Planning, designing and delivering housing that older people want, available online at: http://www.housinglin.org.uk/_library/Resources/Housing/SHOP/SHOPResourcePack.pdf

rather, there will be some overlap between these dwellings and the target, depending on the number that could be provided within the parish itself.

195. This specialist dwelling need is likely therefore to be split between the parish and the rest of the district, which will enable the elderly to live either within or as close to the parish as possible, taking account of the fact that Abbots Langley is unlikely to be able to provide many of the specialist housing types needed within its own boundaries- although there could be the potential for these to be provided at, for example, St. Albans or Watford, taking account of their higher levels of accessibility to services and facilities, which will help in the recruitment and retention of specialist care staff and enable economies of scale (e.g. a centralised dementia care unit or enhanced sheltered development serving a widely dispersed rural population from a single location).

7.1.1 Retirement villages

196. Projects that involve the delivery of multiple homes satisfy the desire on the part of many older people to live in an environment with people facing similar challenges; retirement villages are often a cost-effective means of delivering sheltered and extra care housing together with the facilities and services these settlements imply. Given the numbers of units that result from the LIN analysis, it would be appropriate to consider this approach to the delivery of housing for the elderly in Abbots Langley.

197. Such schemes should be explored through joint working with TRDC and other parishes to identify sites that could address collective need.

7.1.2 Senior Co-housing

198. Co-housing has been identified as being particularly suited to the needs of older residents. It offers a way for a group of people with similar interests and needs to come together to create an environment suited specifically to their requirements. Moreover, it can be designed to help address one of the most important issues for older people: isolation and loneliness. A number of successful case studies exist of both projects developed specifically with the needs of older people in mind, and others that encourage multi-generational housing, such as Featherstone Lodge in Forest Hill[28] and LILAC in Leeds[29]. In the first example, the design facilitated the creation of public areas that encouraged social interaction between members of the community, moreover, a ‘common house’ was built in the grounds of the scheme that provided a shared space in which people could come together for meeting and shared activities.

7.1.3 Multi-generational homes

199. Multi-generational living has been identified as a possible solution not only for older people, but all generations where it makes financial sense to share accommodation, particularly younger people who are struggling to set up their own households. This gives rise not only to designs for new homes, but conversions to existing dwellings, introducing internal subdivisions and peripheral extensions to create internal layouts that balance the private needs of different generations with the benefits of over-lapping, shared communal spaces.[30]

200. The phenomenon of the aging population has an up-side; with increases in the quality of health-care, older people are able to live active lives for longer, the so-called ‘third age’ after retirement when people still want to live fully active lives. Within a household or community where tasks and facilities are shared, they are in a good position to take on both voluntary and paid work, for example looking after grandchildren or taking care of the elderly.

7.1.4 Lifetime Homes

201. Many local authorities incorporate policy into their Local Plans that a proportion of new homes should be built according to ‘lifetime homes’ principles; these are ordinary homes incorporating a number of design criteria that can be universally applied to new homes at minimal cost, for example parking that makes getting in and out of the car as simple and convenient as possible and ensuring movement in hallways and

[28] http://www.featherstonecohousing.co.uk/ (visited 12/04/17)
[29] http://www.lilac.coop/ (visited 12/04/17)
[30] RIBA, Silver Linings, The Active Third Age and the City, Page 17-18

through doorways should be as convenient to the widest range of people, including those using mobility aids or wheelchairs, and those moving furniture or other objects.[31]

7.1.5 Right-sizing

202. As we have identified earlier, there is a need for a greater number of the type of dwellings that facilitate 'right-sizing' for older people. It is important to note, this does not necessarily imply moving to a smaller home. Many older people have the wealth (and the choice that comes with it) to create a home suited to having visitors and accommodating care staff, who may need to make over-night stays.

203. For this reason, it is important to recognise that different ages have different needs, thus in the provision of housing, choice is critical, catering for those with relatively modest requirements, to those who are more dependent on help. The provision of choice that responds to need is part of creating a smoothly operating local housing market in which older people are able move out of family homes when they wish, thus freeing up these properties for others.[32]

7.1.6 Planning flexibility

204. Planning policy can be mobilized to help properties to become more adaptable in the context of an increasingly elderly population. This includes allowing the conversion of conventional dwellings or groups of dwellings (for example terraced housing) into multiple homes, particularly where additional features are included to address 'lifetime homes' criteria and to encourage interaction with the wider community. This can incorporate bigger community open space as a result of joining up different gardens.[33] This is not dissimilar to the practice of 'alley-gating' where alleyways between the backs of terraced housing have been gated off, and turned into shared community spaces.

7.1.7 Lifetime neighbourhoods

205. Creating an environment in which older people feel both welcome and comfortable does not end at the front door. Research exists that considers life-time neighbourhoods, in which the public realm is designed to address the needs of older people, and activates the benefits they can bring in supporting local businesses and encouraging improved public realm for everyone, for example providing more greenery and more walkable, better connected places.

206. Given the expanded role of neighbourhood planning around design outlined in the Housing White Paper of 2017[34], a compelling notion is that of 'the amplification of impact of micro-environmental features' to describe that particular way in which we become more sensitive to the ordinary, smallest features of urban space as we age. This places a particular emphasis on care and reflection in how we design, for example paths and public seating; this, in turn, calls for the participation of older people in the process of design.

207. Design approaches exist that provide a starting point for locally informed policy development in this area, these include Manchester's Design for Access 2 and the work of Inclusive Design for Getting Outdoors (IDGO); IDGO have identified material features that make everyday negotiation of urban space that much easier for older people; these include wide and flat tarmac footways, easy transition level changes, clear, simple and visible signage, frequent warm and supportive seating and well-maintained, safe and open toilets.[35]

208. In addition, the notion of 'pensioner play-grounds,' 'green-gyms,' community gardens and various forms of guerrilla gardening (for example the Edible Todmorden project) encourage active use of public space and facilities on the part of an older demographic.

7.1.8 Age-friendliness

209. Since the millennium policy at the international level has been directed towards a more holistic appreciation of what an 'age-friendly' urban environment looks like. It has been remarked this should extend beyond physical installations, such as public seating and access to WCs, but embrace means mobilising civic

[31] http://www.lifetimehomes.org.uk/pages/about-us.html
[32] Housing LIN, New Approaches to Housing for Older People, June 2014, page 6
[33] Gobber, S, A Bright Grey Future, Urban Design Group Journal, Spring 2016, page 29
[34] HMG, Fixing our broken housing market, page 29
[35] RIBA/Age UK, An Alternative Age-Friendly Handbook, page 54/55

agency among older group to forestall incipient marginalisation, enabling them to continue to make a full and active contribution to community life.[36]

210. In 2006 the World Health Organisation (WHO) began developing the 'Age-Friendly Cities' movement, now a worldwide network of over 200 member cities around the world. They have produced a guide that offers a way of analysing the city from the perspective of older people, using a framework of inter-related domains: transportation, housing, social participation, respect and social inclusion, communication and information, civic participation and employment, health and community services.

211. Considering the housing domain, the WHO study identifies a check list of attributes necessary to foster a sense of belonging and well-being among older people. In addition to affordability and designing accommodation with the needs of older people in mind, the adaptability of dwellings is important, for example their capacity to accommodate chair-lifts that enable older people to continue to live in two-storey homes[37].

212. The WHO also identified access to services, particularly those that become increasingly important as people get older, such as places of worship and community centres.[38] Moreover, optimising well-being has much to do with being able to maintain links with existing networks, which is best achieved by enabling people to remain in their existing communities for as long as possible. In the Australian city of Melville small clusters of senior's housing with small gardens are made available throughout the city, so that older people are not isolated from the community and particularly from children.[39]

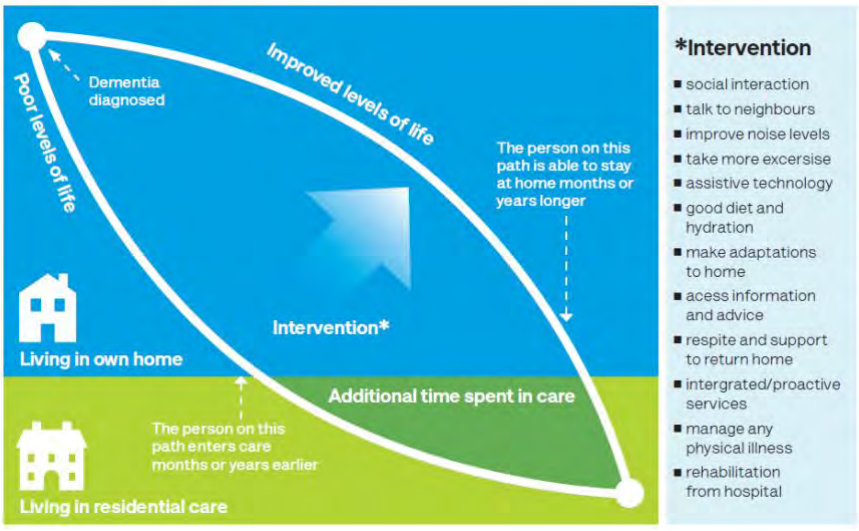
7.1.9 Housing for people with Dementia

213. Enabling people with dementia to live in their own homes for longer is critical to their quality of life as a result of the familiarity of surroundings and the help with retaining memories this facilitates[40]. The challenge with this is two-fold; firstly the lack of appropriate adaptations in properties and, secondly, the support required to ensure a home is safe and suitable.

214. Selwood Housing in the South West has pioneered approaches that help overcome these, for example the installation of property exit sensors to inform a monitoring centre when tenants leave their home and then not return within a pre-determined time.

215. In Figure 9 we reproduce a chart showing the impact that early and appropriate intervention can have on the prospect of people with dementia remaining in their own home for longer.

Figure 8: Dementia care chart



Source: Dementia Services Development Centre, 2013

[36] RIBA/Age UK, An Alternative Age-Friendly Handbook, page 16
[37] World Health Organisation: Global age-friendly cities: a guide, page 32
[38] Ibid, page 33
[39] Ibid, page 35
[40] Alzheimer's Society, Dementia-friendly housing charter, page 13

7.1.10 The role of the Local Authority

216. As suggested previously, it is appropriate for the neighbourhood group to work closely with the LPA to develop policy and approaches to addressing the need for housing for elderly people in the area. The LPA is under an obligation through national policy to address the needs of older people,[41] it is therefore appropriate they should play the strategic role in co-ordinating new efforts by housing providers, adult care services, primary care and health trusts, private and third sector organisations to meet the housing needs of older people across the district.

8. Market Signals

217. The PPG highlights the importance of taking market signals into account when assessing housing need, given they provide an indication of the balance between demand and supply. This is particularly important to consider given the significant and well-documented changes in the housing market over recent years, which were exacerbated by the economic downturn and subsequent issues in obtaining mortgage finance.

218. The PPG states:

> *The housing need number suggested by household projections (the starting point) should be adjusted to reflect appropriate market signals, as well as other market indicators of the balance between the demand for and supply of dwellings. Prices rising faster than the national/local average may well indicate particular market undersupply relative to demand.*[42]

219. These market signals relate to trends discernable within the housing market, and broader economic trends that have an impact on the housing market.

220. The PPG goes on to assert that where there is evidence of an imbalance in supply and demand, an uplift in planned housing numbers – compared to those derived solely from household projections – is required in order to increase the supply of housing to meet demand and tackle affordability issues:

> *This includes comparison with longer term trends (both in absolute levels and rates of change) in the: housing market area; similar demographic and economic areas; and nationally. A worsening trend in any of these indicators will require upward adjustment to planned housing numbers compared to ones based solely on household projections.*
>
> *In areas where an upward adjustment is required, plan makers should set this adjustment at a level that is reasonable. The more significant the affordability constraints (as reflected in rising prices and rents, and worsening affordability ratio) and the stronger other indicators of high demand (e.g. the differential between land prices), the larger the improvement in affordability needed and, therefore, the larger the additional supply response should be.*[43]

8.1 Commuting and Employment

221. Local employment trends can greatly influence housing needs as employment opportunities can stimulate demand in the plan area. It is therefore important to establish the employment sphere of influence experienced by the residents of Abbots Langley.

222. The table on the following page, comprising of census data, describes the extent to which the population of Abbots Langley commutes out of the area. While it is clear that growth in employment within Abbots Langley could lead to additional demand for housing, the table below indicates that employment growth in other locations, which may be suitable for commuting from Abbots Langley, may also impact housing demand. The table shows that broadly similar proportions of people work within each level of distance within Abbots Langley as in Three Rivers and indeed as in England, suggesting that the parish is relatively average in terms of its residents commuting patterns, with the most noticeable difference being that approximately 2.5% more commuters in Abbots Langley work within 10km than in Three Rivers as a whole.

[41] NPPF, para 50
[42] http://planningguidance.communities.gov.uk/blog/guidance/housing-and-economic-development-needs-assessments/methodology-assessing-housing-need/#paragraph_019
[43] http://planningguidance.communities.gov.uk/blog/guidance/housing-and-economic-development-needs-assessments/methodology-assessing-housing-need/#paragraph_020

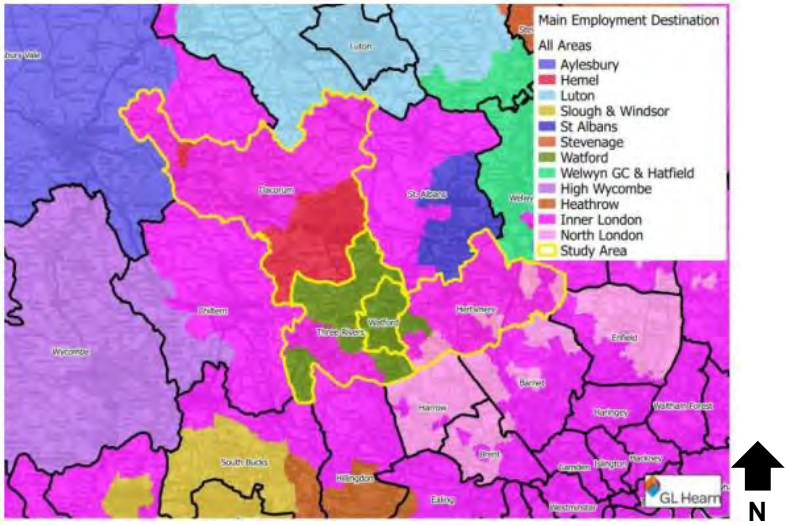
Table 26: Distance to work, 2011

Location of work	Abbots Langley	Three Rivers	England
Less than 10km	44.1%	41.4%	52.3%
10km to less than 30km	25.7%	28.2%	21.0%
30km and over	8.8%	8.2%	8.0%
Work mainly at or from home	11.7%	12.3%	10.3%
Other	9.8%	9.9%	8.5%
Average distance travelled to work	15.5km	15.3km	14.9km

Source: Census 2011, AECOM Calculations

223. This is likely as a result of the close proximity of Watford to Abbots Langley, in comparison with the rest of the district, as Watford is a major commuting destination, as demonstrated by figure 9 below, which reproduces Figure 16 from the South West Herts Economy Study 2016.

Figure 9: Main Destination of Employment

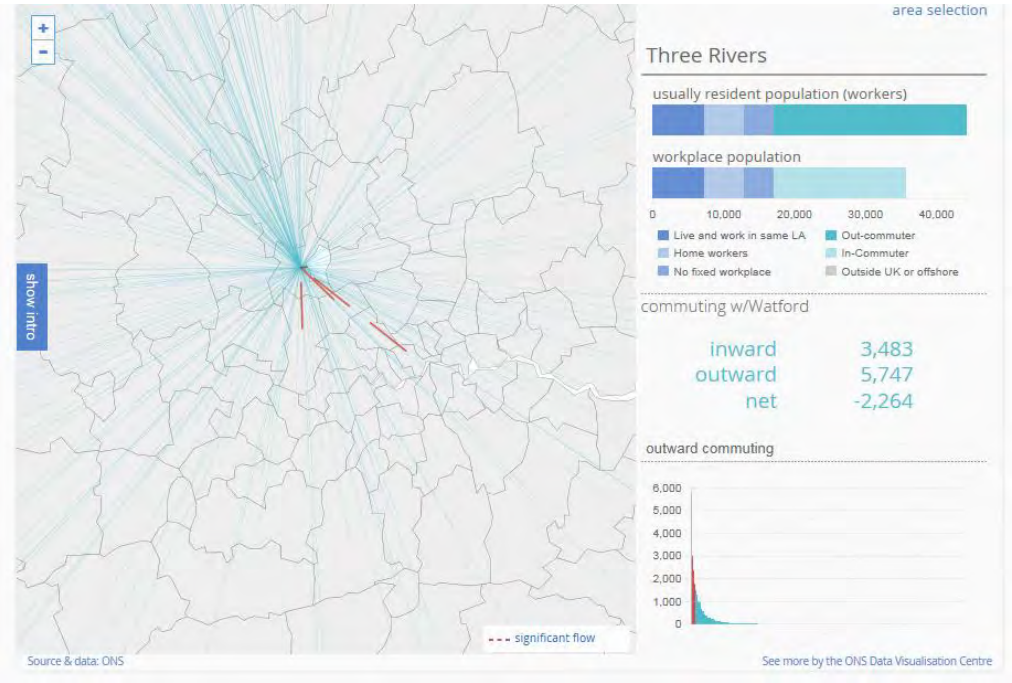


Source: SHMA 2016/ONS Census

224. Indeed, of 18,636 total out-commuters in Three Rivers District, 3,483, or fully 19%, commute to Watford, with a further 16% commuting to Westminster and the City of London[44]. As such, it is likely that growth in employment in Watford and London will have a positive impact on housing demand in Abbots Langley, and this is likely to have been the case since at least 2011, when the census data originates from.

[44]http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20151013153922tf_/http://www.neighbourhood.statistics.gov.uk/HTMLDocs/dvc193/index.html

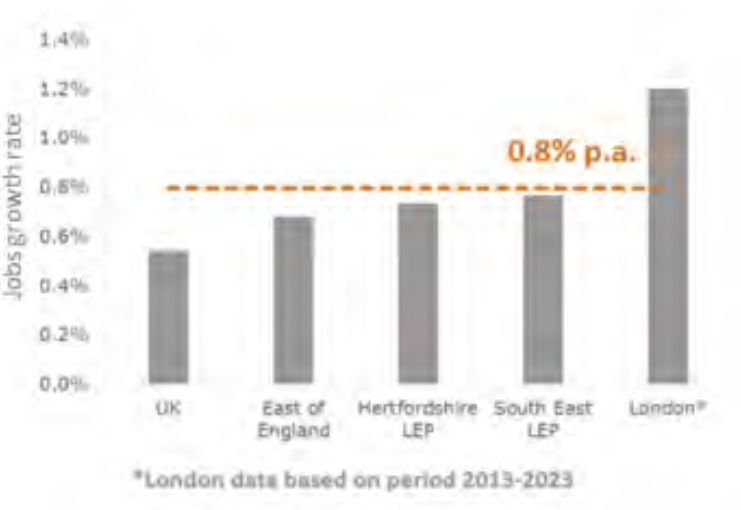
Figure 10: Commuting Patterns in Three Rivers District



Source: 2011 Census/Neighbourhood Statistics/National Archive

225. The South West Herts Economic Study 2016, which includes Watford, notes that the area benefits from "a highly skilled and entrepreneurial workforce, growing population and proximity to London."[45] Indeed, it is for these reasons that South West Herts is projected to experience growth in jobs higher than in comparator areas including Hertfordshire and the South East, though it will not experience the same levels of growth as in London. These projections are illustrated in the figure below, which reproduces Figure 6.16 of the SWHES16. These projects demonstrate that there are likely to be high levels of growth both across South West Herts and in London up to 2036.

Figure 11: Forecast Growth Rates for Comparator Areas, 2013-2036

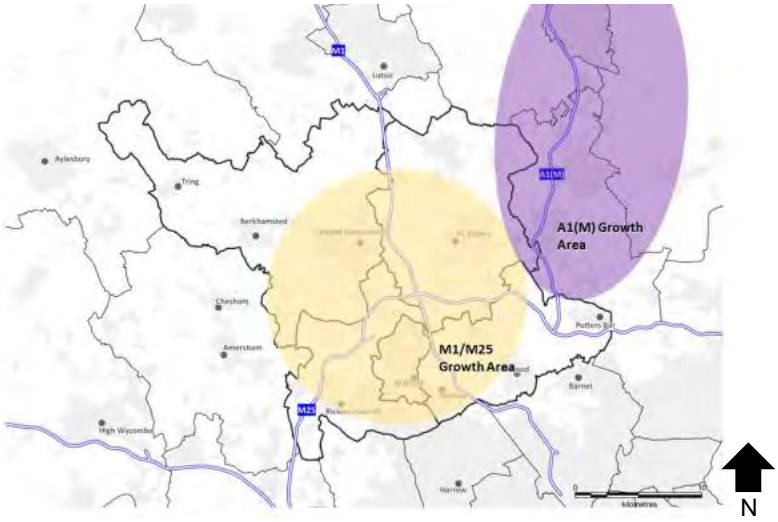


Source: SWHES16

226. Furthermore, the study identifies Watford in particular as a growth area, as shown in the figure on the following page, which reproduces Figure 2.4. It highlights in particular the impact of planned investments in transport as well as the temporary increases in demand due to HS2 Construction Compounds in the area.[46]

[45] SWHES16, pp. 82
[46] SWHES16, pp. 105

Figure 12: Map of Hertfordshire Growth Areas



Source: SWHES16

The study further concludes "Watford is a popular location for the office-based functions of large businesses because of its connectivity and large labour market catchment area, and the more affordable rents available while still being only 20 minutes away from Central London." (pp. 117), and that "feedback from commercial agents… notes that areas such as Watford are likely to see continued interest from investors looking for a more affordable location close to London or relocation of functions." (pp. 119)

8.2 Housing Sales (Prices)

227. The PPG advises that house prices should be used as an indication of the strength of demand for housing, and adequacy of supply to meet demand. The PPG states houses prices can be used to provide a 'market-base' enabling: "the identification of areas which have clearly different price levels compared to surrounding areas. The findings provide information about differences across the area in terms of the price people pay for similar housing, market 'hotspots', low demand areas and volatility."[47]

228. The table below shows average house prices for the years 2007-2016 for each type of housing recorded by the Land Registry. Where no sales of a particular category occurred, N/A is used. The table indicates that there have been significant price rises in Abbots Langley over the period, 49% across all house types, in spite of the national recession, which saw sales prices drop in some years, for example, detached houses in 2009, and semi-detached properties in 2011.

Table 27: House Prices in Abbots Langley, 2007-2016

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	GROWTH
Detached	452,500	N/A	350,000	656,152	430,708	537,679	650,342	589,336	519,481	798,780	77%
Semi-Detached	304,833	350,000	349,500	389,357	299,425	348,723	326,044	390,202	422,605	506,643	66%
Terraced	244,500	N/A	N/A	235,625	297,237	266,965	290,071	361,123	381,550	428,167	75%
Flats	N/A	N/A	N/A	113,417	189,602	185,073	185,727	202,766	253,776	278,775	N/A
All Types	309,333	350,000	349,800	415,217	286,453	337,650	358,182	375,110	366,140	460,964	49%

Source: Land Registry PPD

229. It is helpful to further contextualise the price rises in Abbots Langley noted above with those of Three Rivers district as a whole. The table below compares these data on price rises with the UK House Price Index for Three Rivers, and shows that for most housing types, these price rises were broadly similar, although data on the prices of flats was not available due to low sales volumes in Abbots Langley.

[47]Housing and economic development needs assessment PPG, Paragraph: 011 Reference ID: 2a-011-20140306

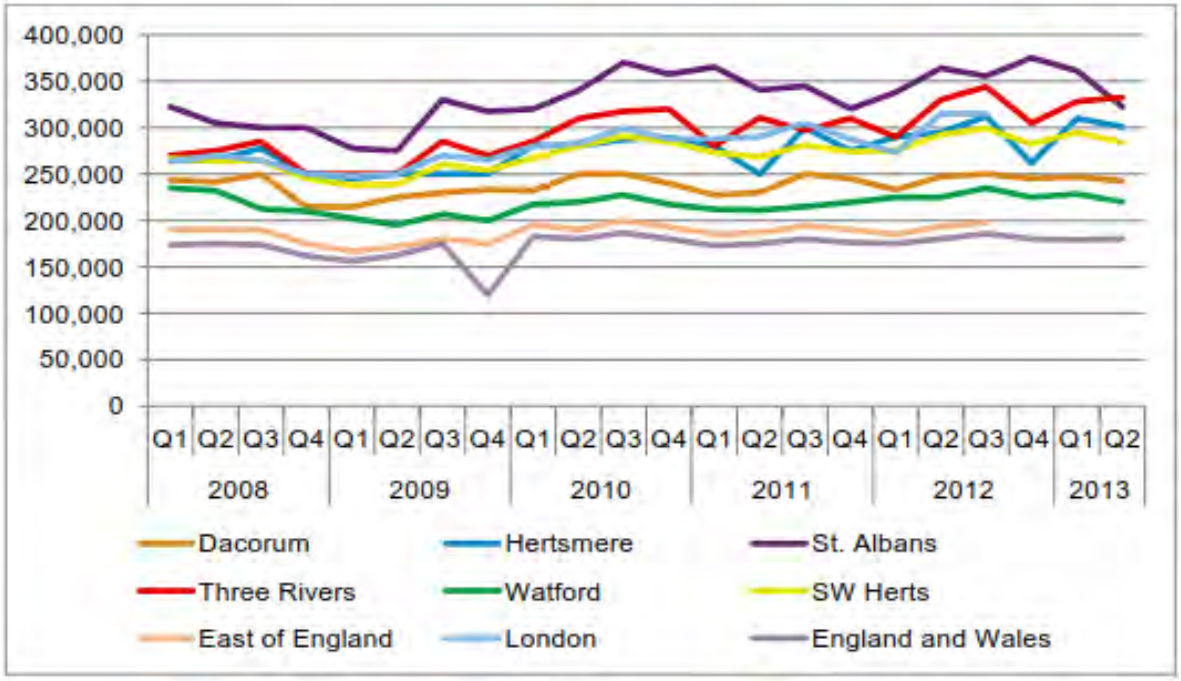
Table 28: House Price Rises in Abbots Langley and Three Rivers District, 2007-2016

	Abbots Langley	Three Rivers
Detached	77%	75%
Semi-Detached	66%	73%
Terraced	75%	68%
Flats	N/A	53%

Source: Land Registry PPD/UKHPI

230. However, data from the South West Hertfordshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2016, shown in the figure below, also shows that within the wider housing market area, encompassing Watford, Dacorum, and Hertsmere as well as Three Rivers, house prices in Three Rivers are relatively higher than in the comparison areas, indicating relatively higher levels of demand.

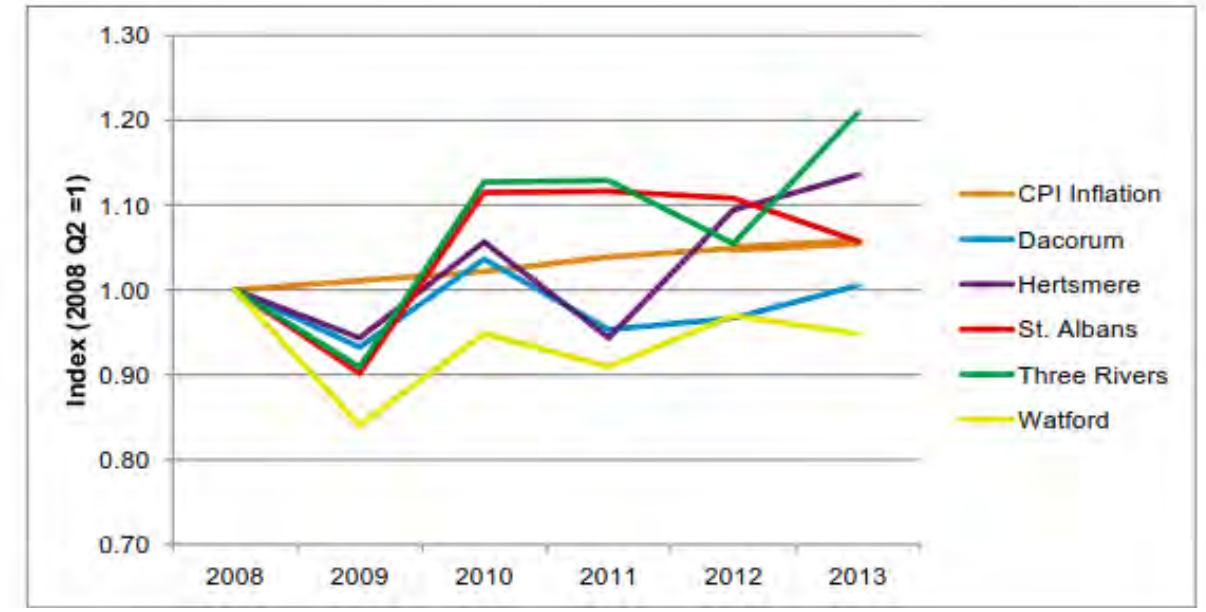
Figure 13: Median House Price Trends, 2008-2013



Source: SHMA16

231. Indeed, even when such prices are adjusted for inflation, as in the figure below, reproducing figure 28 from the SHMA16, Three Rivers is still seen to have some of the most expensive housing in the area, and indeed when adjusted for inflation, prices in Three Rivers dramatically increased in 2012/13 in comparison to the other areas. This further indicates the relative demand for housing in Three Rivers, in spite of the national recession.

Figure 14: Inflation- Adjusted House Price Index

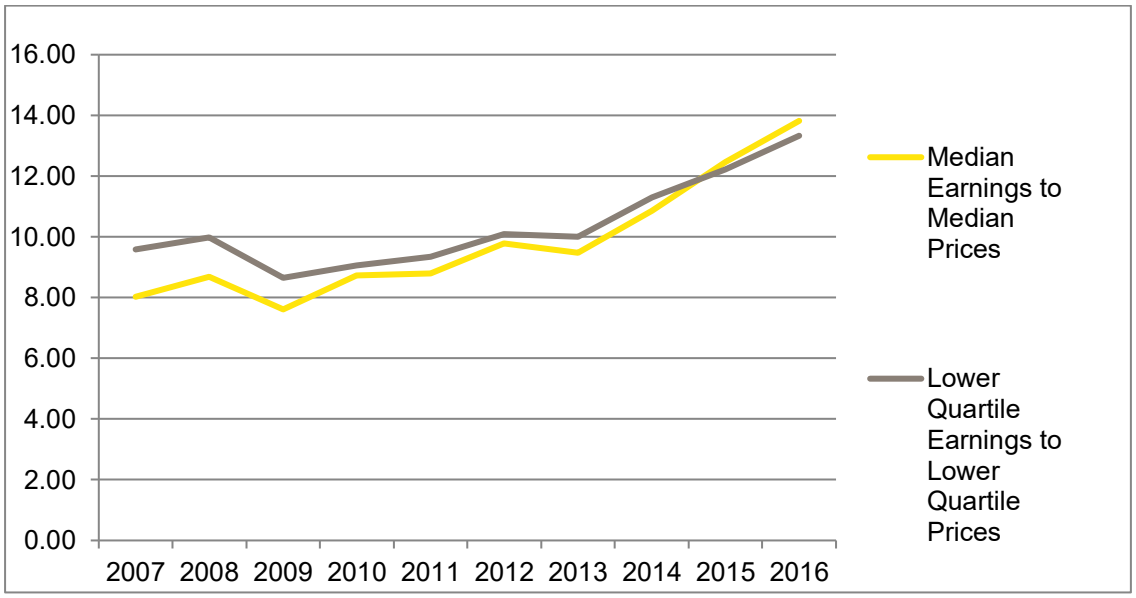


Source: SHMA16

8.3 Housing Affordability

232. The PPG states that housing affordability may be a market signal indicating an imbalance of demand and supply of dwellings. Whilst data at the individual parish level is not available, the figure below describes the affordability ratio, comprising the ratio between earnings and house prices for both the median and the lower quartile of both values. The figure below demonstrates a significant trend of worsening affordability for homebuyers, particularly since 2013, with affordability for median income earners actually worsening in comparison for lower quartile income earners.

Figure 15: Ratio of house price to residence-based earnings in Three Rivers

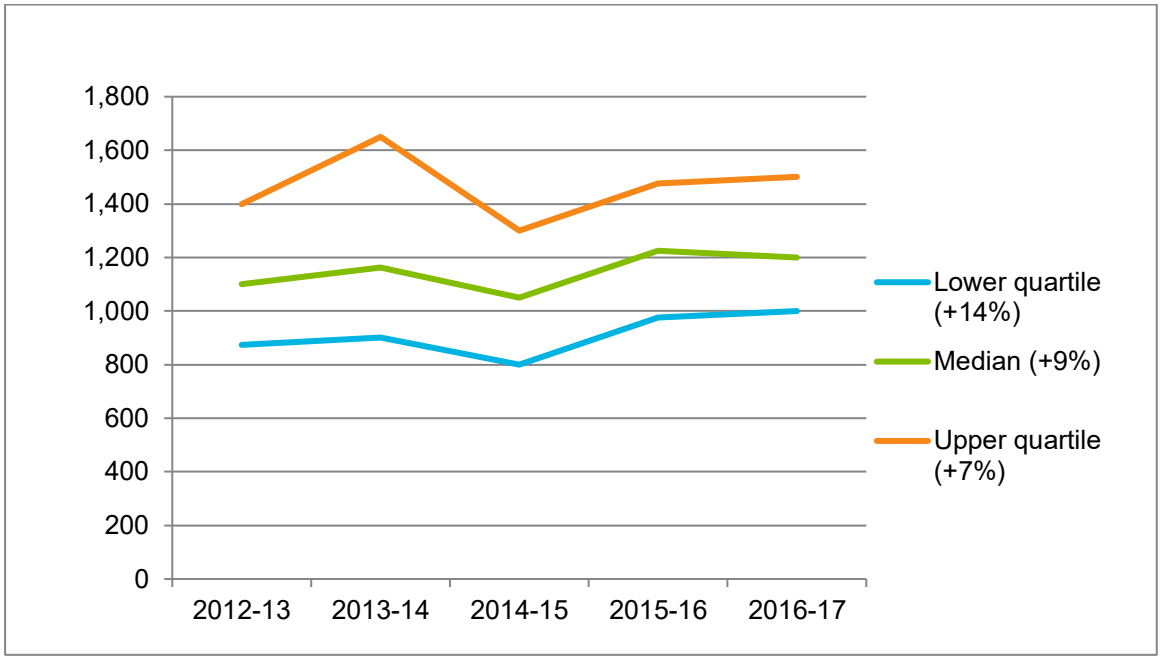


Source: DCLG Live Tables

233. This view of worsening affordability is further supported by data on private rental costs in Three Rivers, which shows increasing rents across all quartiles. However, the effects on private rental values of inflation alone, based on the Consumer Prices Index, would have accounted for an 11.6% increase in prices over the period March 2012-April 2017 (Source: CPI/AECOM Calculations), for which data was collected. As such, only the lower quartile of rents, that is those falling into the ¼ lowest price bracket, actually increased in real terms above inflation, equal to 3.4% above inflation, whilst the median and upper quartile price brackets grew by less than the rate of inflation.

234. This is significant because it is reasonable to suggest that those renting in the lower price quartile are most likely to be affected by price rises. As such, the effects of price increases on this quartile are mostly likely to translate into a reduction in the affordability of rents for people in the area. For this reason, it is suggested that the affordability of renting in the period has decreased, signalling market undersupply relative to demand.

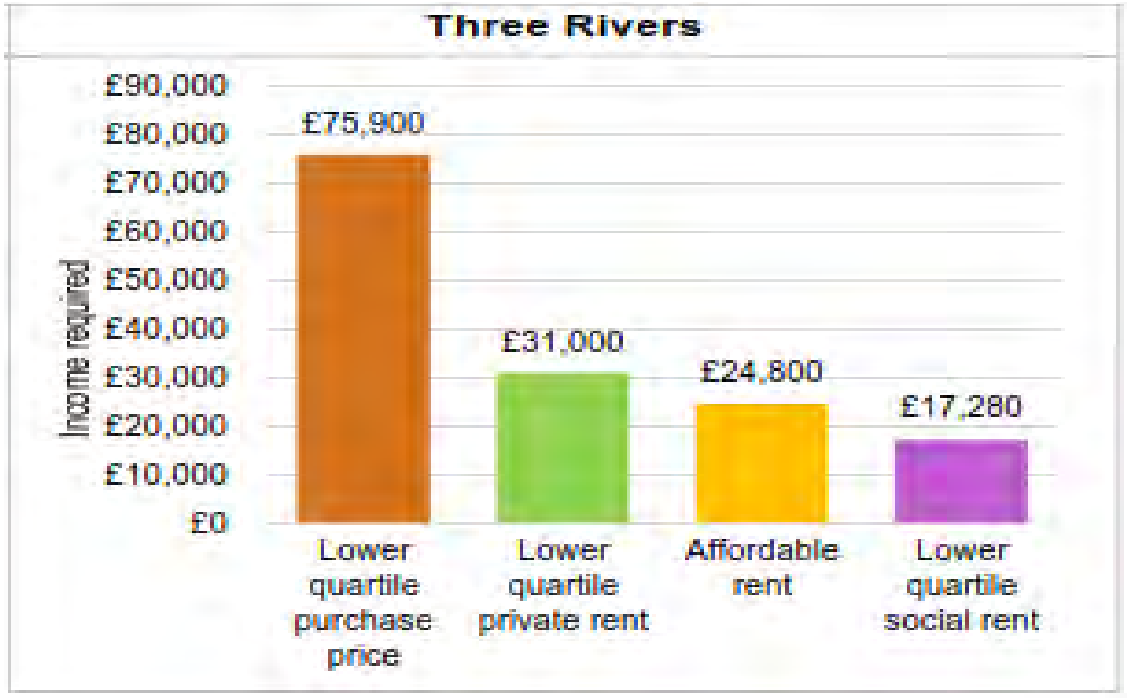
Figure 16: Private Rents in Three Rivers District, 2012-17



Source: Valuations Office Agency

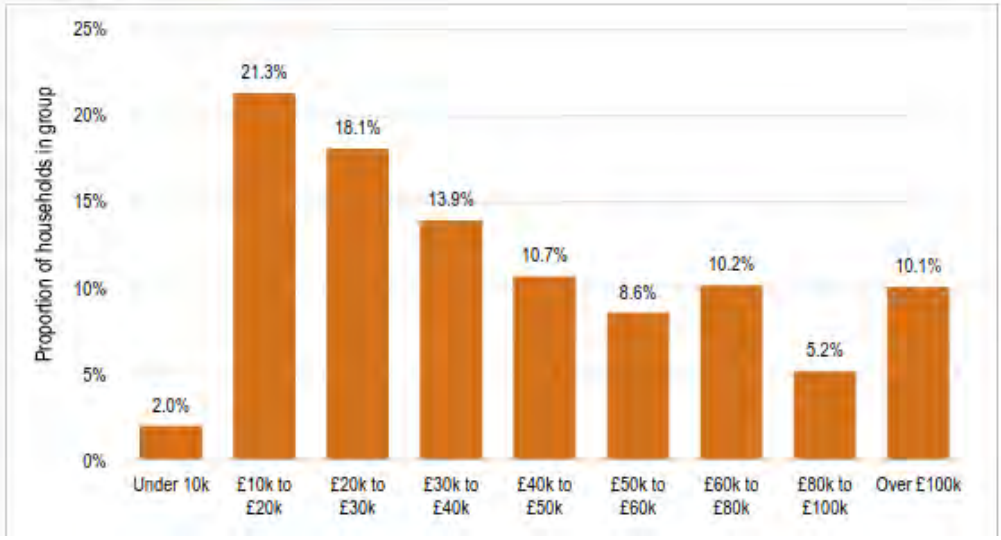
235. Indeed, the figure below, which reproduces Figure 41 from the Strategic Housing Market Assessment for South West Herts prepared by GL Hearn, indicates that within the district as a whole, an annual income of £31,800 would be required to afford lower quartile private rents in Three Rivers. However, Figure 19 on the following page makes clear that would not be affordable for up to 40% of the population of South West Herts, further emphasising the lack of affordable housing options in Three Rivers as a whole.

Figure 17: Indicative Income Required to Purchase/Rent Without Additional Subsidy



Source: SHMA16

Figure 18: Distribution of Household Income in South West Herts



Source: SHMA16

8.4 Migration

236. Migration into a local area, whether from abroad, or from within the United Kingdom, would also normally contribute to an increased demand for housing. Indeed, the population of Abbots Langley grew significantly, by approximately 13%, between 2001 and 2011. This was greater than population growth in Three Rivers, which increased approximately 5% in the same period. Whilst the population growth in Three Rivers as a whole was more in line with the average growth across England in the same period, which was 7.1%, population growth in Abbots Langley was much more similar to the population growth experienced by London as a whole, which was 12%. Such growth is indicative of significantly increased demand for housing.

237. Such levels of growth likely reflect both migrations from other parts of the United Kingdom as well as migration from abroad. Whilst data on percentage of Abbots Langley residents born outside of the UK is not available for 2001, the 2011 census did collect this data, and it is presented in the table below. The table shows that less than 10% of the population in Abbots Langley was born outside of the UK, with the majority of these, fully two thirds, having lived in the UK for more than 10 years, i.e. since before the last census. This data makes clear that migration into Abbots Langley has primarily been from other parts of the UK rather than from abroad.

Table 29: Country of birth and length of residence, Abbots Langley 2011

Place of birth	Population breakdown		Abbots Langley	Three Rivers	England
Born in the UK	Total		90.3%	86.1%	86.2%
Born outside the UK	Total		9.7%	13.9%	13.8%
	EU		3.9%	4.5%	3.7%
	Other		5.8%	9.4%	9.4%
	Length of residence	Less than 2 years	0.5%	0.9%	1.8%
		2-5 years	0.8%	1.2%	2.2%
		5-10 years	1.7%	2.3%	2.9%
		10 years or more	6.7%	9.5%	7.0%

Source: Census 2011

8.5 Overcrowding

238. Another indicator of demand in the housing market is the prevalence of overcrowding in the NPA. This is because demand for housing in the area can manifest itself in the over-occupation of housing stock. Such over occupation can be defined as households living with more than 1 person per habitable room, including living spaces. This data is collected as part of the census, and is presented in the table below.

239. The table below shows a significant rise in the number of households experiencing crowded conditions between 2001 and 2011, from 84 households in Abbots Langley living with over 1 person per room in 2001, rising to 103 households in 2011, an increase of approximately 23%. When set against the 11% rise in the number of overcrowded households in Three Rivers as a whole, this is a significant indicator of increased housing demand in Abbots Langley.

Table 30: Number of persons per room in Abbots Langley and Three Rivers, 2001 and 2011

	2001	2001	2011	2011
	Abbots Langley	**Three Rivers**	**Abbots Langley**	**Three Rivers**
Up to 0.5 persons per room	5083	24001	5629	25175
Over 0.5 and up to 1.0 persons per room	1973	9019	2291	9469
Over 1.0 and up to 1.5 persons per room	64	332	84	389
Over 1.5 persons per room	20	87	19	75

Source: Census 2011

8.6 Concealment

240. A second indicator which can be used to assess the relative rate of overcrowding, and thus increased demand, experienced in Abbots Langley is the change in the number of concealed families between 2001 and 2011, data regularly collected as part of the census. The table below shows there are fully 87 ‘hidden families’ living within multi-family households, in addition to the primary family, such as a young couple living with parents. Whilst this does indicate under-provision in Abbots Langley, the rate of concealment is broadly in line with the Three Rivers and England average in terms of the overall percentage. It does however indicate a latent demand for housing from families living locally in Abbots Langley.

Table 31: Concealed families in Abbots Langley, 2011

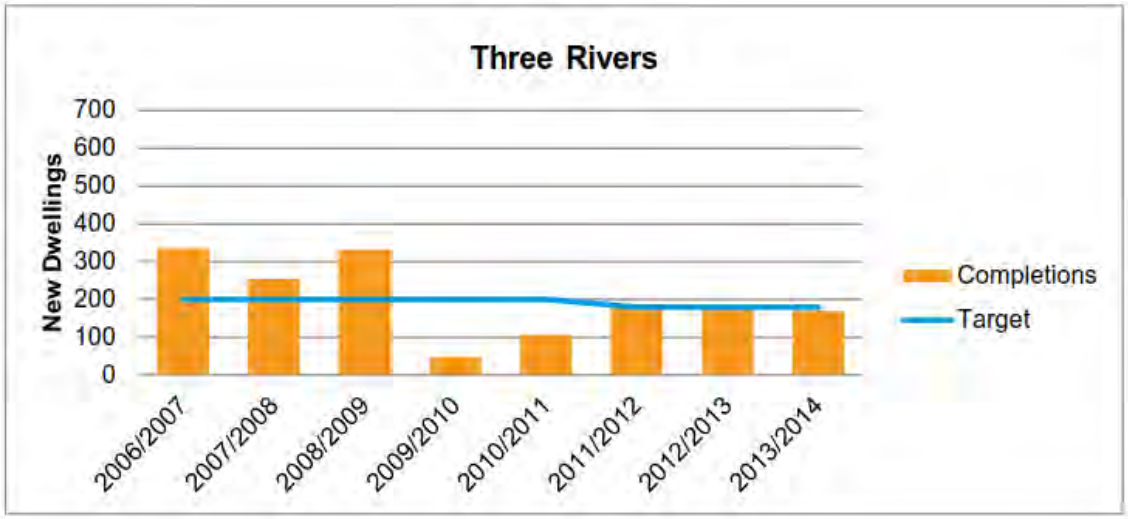
Concealed families	Abbots Langley	Three Rivers	England
All families: total	5,566	25,193	14885145
Concealed families: total	87	459	275954
Concealed families as % of total	1.6%	1.8%	1.9%

Source: Census 2011

8.7 Rate of Development

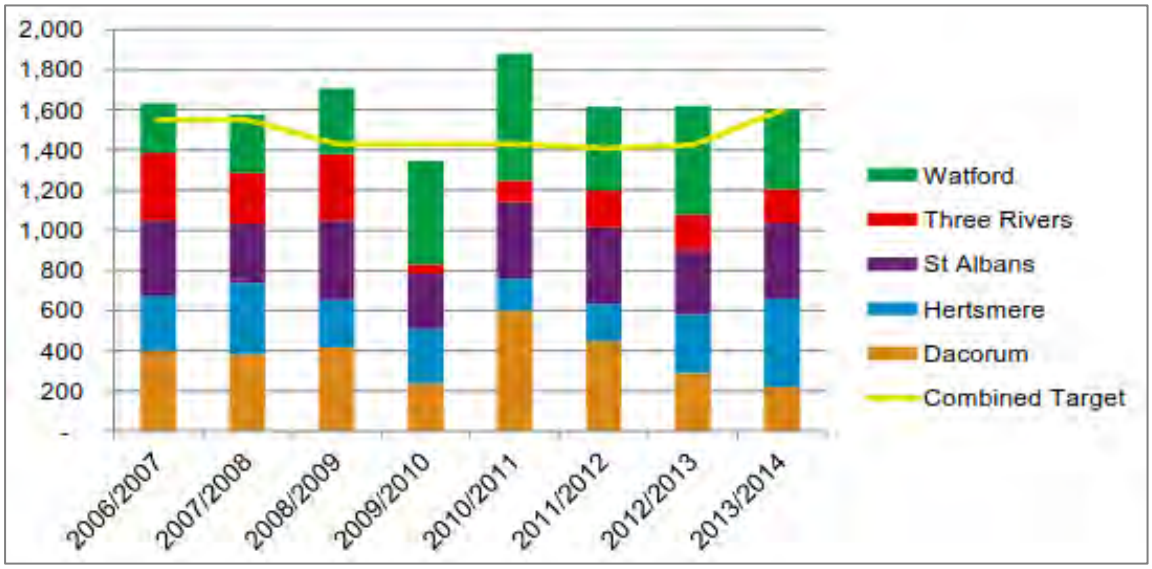
241. The PPG suggests that "If the historic rate of development shows that actual supply falls below planned supply, future supply should be increased to reflect the likelihood of under-delivery of a plan." [48] From the data assembled below, Three Rivers has been effective in meeting its housing targets in recent years.

Figure 19: Housing completions versus planned targets in Three Rivers, 2006-2014



Source: SHMA16

Figure 20: Collated HMA Housing Completions against Targets, 2006-2014



Source: SHMA16

242. Furthermore, it is relevant to consider whether the overall growth in numbers of dwellings in Abbots Langley has kept pace with growth in the number of dwellings in Three Rivers as a whole, between the two censuses. Indeed, Table 32 shows that growth in Abbots Langley dwellings numbers has been significantly higher, in fact double, that of growth in Three Rivers as a whole. This indicates that in fact, Abbots Langley has relatively over-delivered dwellings growth in comparison with the rest of the district.

[48] https://www.gov.uk/guidance/housing-and-economic-development-needs-assessments

Table 32: Growth in dwellings numbers, 2001-2011

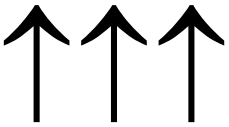
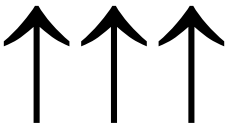
	2001	2011	Percentage Growth
Abbots Langley	7,282	8,183	6%
Three Rivers	34,171	36,155	12%

Source: Census 2001/2011, AECOM Calculations

9. Conclusions

9.1 Overview

Table 33: Summary of Key Factors

Factor	Source(s) (detailed in Chapter 5)	Possible impact on future housing need	Rationale for judgement
Commuting and Employment trends	SHMA 2016, Census 2001/11, Neighbourhood Statistics, SWHES16		Abbots Langley has been shown to have high rates of commuting, particularly to Watford and to Central London. In addition, a highly skilled workforce will support positive job growth of up to 0.8% per annum, higher than in many nearby economic areas within Hertfordshire. Future employment growth driven by infrastructure investment in Watford in particular is likely to significantly increase demand for housing. Overall, three up arrows is deemed appropriate.
Housing Sales (Prices)	Land Registry Price Paid Data for 2006-2016, SHMA16		Abbots Langley has been shown to have experienced significant price growth over the last 10 years, totalling 49% across all housing types, with most housing types experiencing far greater growth. Whilst this growth has broadly been in line with that of price growth in the district as a whole, this growth has been more significant, in the context of inflation, than in any other parts of the Housing Market Area, with absolute prices the second highest of all comparator areas. For this reason two up arrows has been deemed appropriate.
Housing Affordability	DCLG Live Tables on Affordability Ratios, VOA, SHMA16		Abbots Langley has had a significant worsening of the affordability ratio for both Median and Lower Quartile earnings and house prices, with the median ratio recently surpassing the lower quartile ratio. Furthermore, lower quartile rents in Three Rivers as a whole have been shown to have risen faster than inflation, with this quartile of rent now requiring an income of £31,000 per annum, which would be unaffordable for more than 40% of the population. For this reason, three up arrows are deemed appropriate.
Migration and demographics	HNHD15, SHMA 2009, Census data 2001, 2011		Significant population growth in Abbots Langley has matched and even exceeded that experienced by London, and was more than double that of Three Rivers District as a whole, which experienced growth more in line with the average for England. Such growth is indicative of the attractiveness of Abbots Langley as a place to live, explained chiefly by access to employment opportunities and its qualities as a place both to bring up a family and retire. As a result, two up arrows is deemed appropriate.

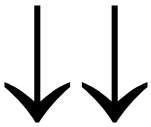
Overcrowding	Census Data 2001, 2011		Abbots Langley experienced double the rate of increase in households experiencing overcrowding than across Three Rivers over the 10 years to 2011. This is considered a significant indicator of increased demand, and as such two up arrows have been deemed appropriate.
Concealment	Census Data 2001, 2011		Census data suggests that 87 concealed families exist in Abbots Langley. This rate is lower than in Three Rivers and England as a whole, and there for one down arrow is deemed appropriate.
Rate of development			Three Rivers has been effective in meeting its housing targets in recent years, and furthermore Abbots Langley has overdelivered, proportional to its population, in comparison with the rest of the district. Therefore two down arrows is considered appropriate.

Table 34: Summary of local factors specific to Abbots Langley with a potential impact on neighbourhood plan housing characteristics

Factor	Source(s) (see Chapters 5, 6 and 7	Possible impact on housing needed	Conclusion
Affordable Housing (AH)	SHMA, CACI, Local Agent questionnaire	Given the Lower Quartile Affordability Ratio (LQAR) of 11.2 and the Median Affordability Ratio (MAR) of 10.4 at the district level, affordable market homes (AMH) are out of reach to those on modest incomes. While median incomes may be as much as 30% higher and Lower Quartile incomes are 15% higher in Abbots Langley than the district average, and property is also substantially more expensive than elsewhere in the Three Rivers district. An entry-level dwelling in Abbotts Langley is priced at approximately £270,000; a similar property will rent in the area for around £14,000 pa; around 60% of all households would be unable to afford to rent at this level and retain enough income to cover other needs and allow for some discretionary spending. As a result, this HNA concludes that roughly 60% of all households are unable to afford suitable market housing (for either rent or purchase) without some form of subsidy.	While AMH in Abbots Langley is unaffordable to households with incomes around the median, the introduction of Discounted Market Sale Housing (DMSH) does offer a realistic means for those on incomes at this level to access the property market. We would therefore recommend DMSH form part of the AH quota within the NPA, with policy seeking to fulfil the Government's policy expectation that 10% of all new build dwellings are starter homes. Shared ownership dwellings have grown substantially during the inter-censual period and should remain a component of intermediate AH products. For Affordable Rented Dwellings to expand the choice of housing available to residents in the NPA, rent levels should be set substantially below the maximum of 80% so as to avoid competition with intermediate AH products; this will encourage 'true affordability,' providing a route to housing for households on lower quartile incomes. We note, however, that policy of this kind can only be devised where it does not threaten viability.
Demand/need for smaller dwellings	SHMA, Census, Local Agent questionnaires	Households headed by a person under 35 will gravitate more strongly to the Three Rivers district than the Housing Market Area (HMA) generally. There is a wide range of dwelling types and sizes in Abbots Langley. Of new homes built during the inter-censual period, large homes of 6 habitable rooms or more form the majority (51%).	Based on the evidence uncovered, the bias in favour of larger dwellings indicates a mis-alignment between supply and demand given the evidence we have uncovered of strong demand for smaller homes (1-3 habitable rooms) suited to both first time buyers as well as those seeking to downsize.
Demographic change	Census, SHMA	Analysis of the evidence gathered in respect of the age structure reveals a broadly balanced population with a substantial number of adults of parental age (roughly 55% of the population). Young adults are the age group with the smallest representation, despite a	The ageing population points to a need to increase the provision of dwellings suited to older groups within the community; notwithstanding this, the neighbourhood plan should not lose sight of the need to maintain a balanced population, supporting the

Factor	Source(s) (see Chapters 5, 6 and 7	Possible impact on housing needed	Conclusion
		substantial uplift in their numbers during the inter-censual period. While the area did not exhibit a disproportionately large older-people's cohort at the 2011 Census, evidence presented in the SHMA describing change in age structure at the HMA and district levels points to substantial increases in their numbers in the period to 2036. This contrasts with younger age groups which show very modest increases in comparison, particularly the 30-44 age group whose numbers are estimated to grow by only 7.5% in the period between 2013 and 2036.	ambition of younger age groups to establish households in the neighbourhood.
Dwelling type		The types of dwelling for which there is the greatest demand are bungalows and semi-detached dwellings. Local estate agents suggest demand for flats is weaker than for that of houses, and there may be an over-supply of flats (Your Move, Connells).	These findings support the need, identified elsewhere, to plan to accommodate greater numbers of older residents, as well as sustain the neighbourhood's function as a place to bring up a family. Notwithstanding the reported preference for houses as a dwelling type, flats provide a route to affordable home ownership and should remain an important aspect of the housing mix.
Family-sized housing	Census, SHMA	Bringing together our findings relating to household composition, the NPA is popular for families, with 40.1% of all households including children, and this has strengthened during the inter-censual period. While district level data displays similar trends, they are more pronounced within the NPA. All households with families grew by 9.7% in Abbots Langley during the inter-censual period, as against 2.8% for the district. Those families with children grew by 19.3% in the NPA, compared with a district growth of 8.7%.	Dwellings suited to the needs of younger families (5 habitable rooms) should be a priority for development over the Plan period.

Factor	Source(s) (see Chapters 5, 6 and 7	Possible impact on housing needed	Conclusion
Housing for independent living for older people	SHMA	SHMA data forecasts growth in older residents (aged 75-85), and in particular, the elderly (85+) population. These groups are forecast to grow by 57.6% and 136.5% respectively between 2013 and 2036 at the district level.	Using the Learning and Improvement Network's (LIN) recommendations for the number of specialist dwellings per 1000 population of those aged 75+, we have arrived at a need for: • 88 additional conventional sheltered housing units; • 176 additional leasehold sheltered housing units; • 30 additional 'enhanced' sheltered units, split 50:50 between those for rent and those for sale; • 22 additional extra care housing units for rent; • 44 additional extra care housing units for sale; and • 9 additional specialist dementia care homes. As noted previously, it is not necessarily the case that all of these dwellings would need to be or could be provided within the parish itself.
Tenure of housing	Census	There has been an increase of 901 dwellings during the inter-censual period and this has resulted in a large increase in private rented and shared ownership homes. These two tenures saw an increase of 236 and 69 units respectively. In 2011, however, the dominant tenure remains owner-occupation at 72% of all dwellings.	PRS will continue to provide a growing role in satisfying housing need in the NPA, given the shortage of shared equity stock and overall affordability of for-sale homes. As a result, Abbots Langley should seek build to rent (BTR) development, which may include an element of affordable housing in the form of Affordable Private Rent Housing (APRH).

9.2 Recommendations for next steps

243. This neighbourhood plan housing needs advice has aimed to provide Abbots Langley Parish Council with evidence on housing trends from a range of sources. We recommend that the Parish Council should, as a next step, discuss the contents and conclusions with Three Rivers District Council with a view to agreeing and formulating draft housing policies, taking the following into account during the process:

244. the contents of this report, including but not limited to Tables 22 and 23;

245. Neighbourhood Planning Basic Condition A, that it has regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State; Condition D, that the making of the neighbourhood plan contributes to the achievement of sustainable development; and Condition E, which is the need for the neighbourhood plan to be in general conformity with the adopted strategic development plan;

    - the views of the Three Rivers District Council;
    - the views of local residents;
    - the views of other relevant local stakeholders, including housing developers; and
    - the numerous supply-side considerations, including local environmental constraints, the location and characteristics of suitable land, and any capacity work carried out by the Council, including but not limited to the SHLAA.

246. As noted previously, recent changes to the planning system, as well as forthcoming changes to the National Planning Policy Framework and as the implementation of the Housing and Planning Act 2016, will continue to affect housing policies at a local authority and, by extension, a neighbourhood level.

247. This advice note has been provided in good faith by AECOM consultants on the basis of housing data current at the time of writing (alongside other relevant and available information).

248. Bearing this in mind, we recommend that the steering group should monitor carefully strategies and documents with an impact on housing policy produced by the District Council or any other relevant body and review the neighbourhood plan accordingly to ensure that general conformity is maintained.

249. Most obviously, this includes monitoring the status of the emerging Part 2 Local Plan.

250. At the same time, monitoring ongoing demographic or other trends in the factors summarised in Tables 33 and 34 would be particularly valuable.

AECOM (NYSE: ACM) is a global provider of professional technical and management support services to a broad range of markets, including transportation, facilities, environmental, energy, water and government. With approximately 45,000 employees around the world, AECOM is a leader in all of the key markets that it serves. AECOM provides a blend of global reach, local knowledge, innovation, and collaborative technical excellence in delivering solutions that enhance and sustain the world's built, natural, and social environments. A Fortune 500 company, AECOM serves Clients in more than 100 countries and has annual revenue in excess of $6 billion.

More information on AECOM and its services can be found at www.aecom.com.

aecom.com

APPENDIX E: ABBOTS LANGLEY DESIGN GUIDANCE AND CODES

DESIGN GUIDANCE AND CODE

Abbots Langley Parish

FINAL REPORT | November 2021

Quality information

Prepared by	Check by
Hoorieh Morshedi	**Ben Castell**
Urban Designer	Director

Revision History

Revision	Revision date	Details	Name	Position
5	211108	Review	Mark Hughes	Director
4	211104	Research, site visit, drawings	Hoorieh Morshedi	Urban Designer
3	211017	Review	Peter Warman	Abbots Langley Parish council
2	210915	Review	Ben Castell	Director
1	210915	Research, site visit, drawings	Hoorieh Morshedi	Urban Designer
	210902	Policy review	Yanny Tsang	Urban Planner
	210821	Research	Daniel Mather	Graduate Urban Designer

This document has been prepared by AECOM Limited ("AECOM") in accordance with its contract with Locality (the "Client") and in accordance with generally accepted consultancy principles, the budget for fees and the terms of reference agreed between AECOM and the Client. Any information provided by third parties and referred to herein has not been checked or verified by AECOM, unless otherwise expressly stated in the document. AECOM shall have no liability to any third party that makes use of or relies upon this document.

Content

1. Introduction 5
2. Policy Review 11
3. Area analysis 14
4. Design guidelines & codes 49
5. General questions 120
6. Delivery 128
Appendix. Policy review 130

01 Introduction

1. Introduction

Through the Government's Neighbourhood Planning Programme led by Locality, AECOM has been commissioned to provide design support to Abbots Langley Parish Council. This document includes design codes for the five character areas covering the built up part of the Parish.

1.1 Process

Following an inception meeting, AECOM and the members of Abbots Langley Parish Council carried out a high-level assessment of the village. The following steps were agreed with the group to produce this report:

1 Initial meeting to discuss brief between AECOM and Abbots Langley Neighbourhood Planning Group. As this was during the national Covid 19 lockdown, three joint virtual site visits were carried out via Teams.

2 Urban design and local character analysis and a site visit;

3 Preparation of the design principles, guidelines and codes to be used to inform the design of the Parish and future developments;

4 Draft report with design guidelines and codes; and

5 Submission of a final report.

1.2 Objectives

The main objective of this report is to provide a bespoke design code and guidelines that future developments within the neighbourhood plan area must follow in order to respond to Abbots Langley Parish's special character.

01

1.3 Area of study

Abbots Langley is a large parish located to the north west of London and 4km north of Watford. The parish has a population of approximately 23,000 people.

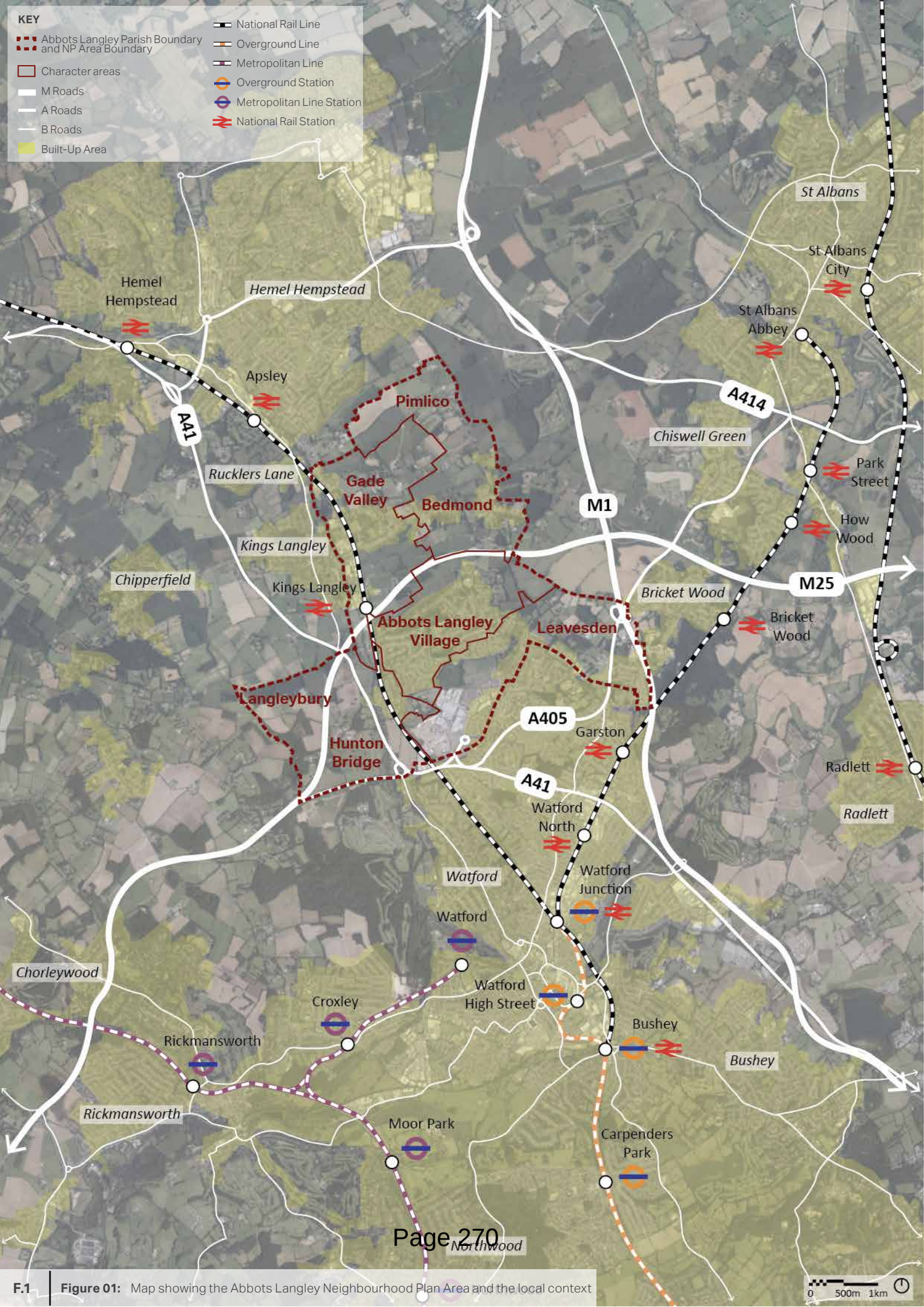
The name of the village of Abbots Langley dates from 1045. It is recorded that a Saxon, Ethelwine the Black and his wife Wynfleda, gave 'Langelei' (denoting a long meadow or long lea) to the Abbot and the monks of the monastery of St Albans, who for several hundred years played an important part in the affairs of Abbots Langley village.

The neighbourhood plan area is cut in two by the M25. While this creates a hard boundary between different parts of the area, the road is valuable in terms of connectivity. Traveling east on the M25 provides access to the M1 and the A1 towards the north. To the west, the M25 links Abbots Langley to Heathrow Airport.

The Parish is also served by Kings Langley Rail Station, providing good access to Central London which is well used by commuters.

Popular attractions within the neighbourhood plan area include the Warner Bros Studio Tour London, where visitors can tour the film sets used for the Harry Potter movies.

In terms of educational facilities, there are primary schools in Langleybury, Abbots Langley Village, Bedmond and Leavesden. There are three secondary schools in the Parish, located close to one another in the Leavesden/ Garston area.



F.1 | **Figure 01:** Map showing the Abbots Langley Neighbourhood Plan Area and the local context

F.2

Figure 02:
Church of St Lawrence, a Grade I listed building

F.3

Figure 03:
A two-storey detached house on Gallows Hill Lane

F.4

Figure 04:
Vibrant shops along High Street in Abbots Langley Village (Photo by Abbots Langley Parish Council)

F.5

F.6

F.7

Figure 05:
Breakspear Place, a Grade II listed building

Figure 06:
Recreational activity on Grand Union Canal

Figure 07:
Warner Bros Studio London Tour in Leavesden (Photo by Abbots Langley Parish Council)

02

Policy review

2. Policy Review

This section summarises the relevant design policy, guidance and evidence base produced at national, district and parish level which have informed this design code. It specifies how the relevant policies and guidelines have been incorporated in the production of the design codes set out in this document. **The Appendix** also provides a detailed review of the key planning policies.

National Design Guidance

2019

National Design Guide - Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government

The National Design Guide sets out the government's ten priorities for well-designed places and illustrates how well-designed places can be achieved in practice. The ten characteristics identified includes: context, identity, built form, movement, nature, public spaces, uses, homes and buildings, resources and lifespan. The Guide also reinforces the National Planning Policy Framework's objective in creating high quality buildings and places. The document forms part of the government planning practice guidance.

2021

National Model Design Code - Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government

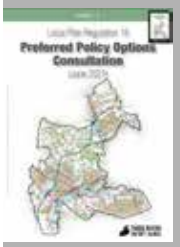
The National Model Design Code provides guidance on the production of design codes, guides and policies to promote well-designed places. It sets out the key design parameters that need to be considered when producing design guides and recommends a methodology for capturing and reflecting views of the local community. It forms part of the government's planning practice guidance.

2020

Building for a Healthy Life - Homes England

Building for a Healthy Life updates England's most widely known and most widely used design tool for creating places that are better for people and nature. The document sets out 12 considerations for creating integrated neighbourhoods, distinctive places and streets for all. While it is not part of national policy, it is recognised as best practice guidance in assessing the design quality of developments.

Various



Adopted and Emerging Local Plan for Three Rivers - Three Rivers District Council

The adopted Development Plan for Three Rivers comprises the Three Rivers Core Strategy 2011-2026 (adopted October 2011), Site Allocations Local Development Document (adopted November 2014), Development Management Policies (adopted July 2013), various supplementary planning documents and adopted neighbourhood plans. Hertfordshire County Council's mineral and waste planning policies also forms part of its Development Plan.

Three Rivers District Council is currently preparing a New Local Plan which will guide future sustainable growth in the District up to 2036. The Regulation 18 Preferred Policy Options and Sites for Potential Allocation documents were published for consultation from June 2021 to August 2021. In particular, Appendix 1 of the Preferred Policy Options sets out a range of design criteria for new developments in relation to privacy, prospect, daylight, sunlight and outlook, aspect, flatted developments, residential amenity space, built form, as well as servicing and ancillary facilities. The emerging Local Plan is planned to be adopted by Summer 2023.

In addition, Three Rivers District Council is also working on a Joint Strategic Plan (JSP) for South West Hertfordshire along with neighbouring authorities (Dacorum, Hertsmere, St Albans and Watford), which will guide longer term growth in the wider sub-region up to 2050.

The Appendix provides a review of key adopted and emerging policies relevant to this Design Codes included in this document.

2005

Hertfordshire Landscape Character Area Statements St Albans District (Hertfordshire Landscape Character Assessment)

The assessment evaluates and classifies landscape character areas in Hertfordshire based on work undertaken between 2000 and 2005. Area 9 of the assessment covers area to the north east of Abbots Langley and identifies key distinctive landscape features, their visual and sensory perceptions and visual impacts.

2014

Abbots Langley Draft Conservation Area Appraisal - Three Rivers District Council

Designated in October 1969, Abbots Langley contains a 13-ha Conservation Area at its medieval core, focusing on the Grade I Listed Church of St Lawrence. The Abbots Langley Draft Conservation Area Appraisal describes the special character and appearance of the Conservation Area that it seeks to preserve and enhance and identifies features of special architectural or historic interest by Character Areas. It also set out considerations for development. The document also highlights key views into and out of the Conservation Area, however overall it is found that these are limited by curve of the High Street, brick walls and extensive planting around the main entrances into the Conservation Area in the north and south.

03

Area analysis

3. Area analysis

This chapter describes the local context and key characteristics of Abbots Langley Parish. It considers the landscape character, mobility, green and blue infrastructure, housing, key views, heritage, flood risk and character areas.

1 LC. Landscape character

2 MO. Mobility

3 GB. Green and blue infrastructure

4 HO. Housing

5 KV. Key views

6 HE. Heritage

7 FR.Flood risk

8 CA. Character areas

3.1 Analysis

It is important that all development proposals in Abbots Langley are based on an understanding of the context of the parish. Development proposals should clearly demonstrate an understanding of that context and how it has been addressed in the preparation of the design and any related planning submissions. Context refers to the current (and sometimes future) conditions within an area across a range of issues including: the site, adjacent buildings, spaces and routes and the wider urban and landscape setting. The following pages in this section consider these matters, in the context of Abbots Langley Parish, in more detail..

1 LC. Landscape character

3.1.1 Landscape character (LC)

According to Hertfordshire Landscape Character Area Statements[1], Abbots Langley Parish contains four different landscape character areas (See Figure 11) as follows:

- Area 7: Sarratt Plateau;
- Area 8: Upper Gade Valley;
- Area 9: Bedmond Plateau; and
- Area 11: Lower Gade Valley.

The southern part of Abbots Langley Parish is adjacent to the Watford boundary, which has no defined landscape character area.

There are two types of soil within the county, alkaline or neutral chalky soil in the north and east of the county and more or less acid leached soils which can be found in the central and western parts of the county.

The key characteristics of each of the character areas are summarised on the next page.

F.8

F.9

F.10

Figure 08:
Grand Union Canal in Upper Gade Valley Plateau

Figure 09:
Bedmond Plateau Landscape Character Area

Figure 10:
A view to the open fields in Lower Gade Valley Landscape Character Area

1. Hertfordshire Landscape Character Area Statements

AREA 7

Sarratt Plateau:

- Extensive level plateau with considerable pastoral and equestrian land use. In addition, there is a mix of woodlands in the area;
- Narrow twisting steep sided valleys dissecting the plateau;
- Farms and historic villages settled around the greens and commons; and
- M25 and associated features serving the area, but in partial cutting.

AREA 8

Upper Gade Valley:

- The M25 cuts through the southern section of the area. Multiple arterial routes including roads rail and Grand Union Canal;
- Steeply sloping valley sides with secondary valleys running perpendicular to the River Gade; and
- Presence of woodland on steep slopes and edge of adjacent plateau, Pastoral slopes in the west and arable to the east and medium-scale parkland overlooking the valley.

AREA 9

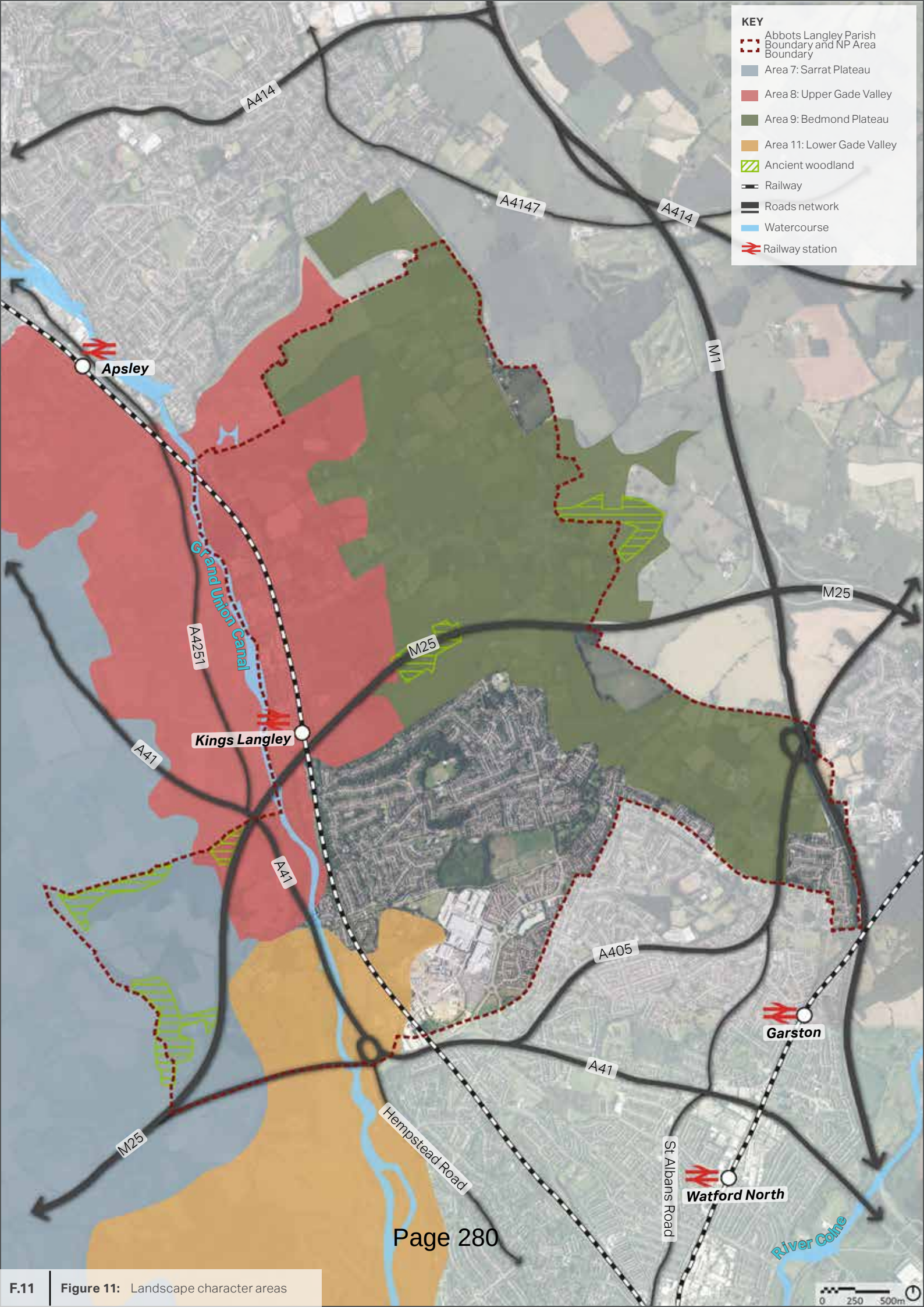
Bedmond plateau:

- The M25 goes to the area. The plateau is gently undulating with significant pastoral and equestrian land;
- Winding narrow routes to the east. In addition, there are discrete woodlands throughout the area including some ancient woodland;
- Coherent settled pattern of farms; and
- Small parkland areas in educational and institutional uses.

AREA 11

Lower Gade Valley:

- Narrow valley floor with wide canal and wetland habitats;
- Historic parkland landscape, some in declining condition;
- The M25 Watford spur passes through the area;
- Extensive public access to the south and important mosaic of wildlife habitats adjacent to urban population; and
- Individual woods within parklands.



F.11 | **Figure 11:** Landscape character areas

2 MO. Mobility

3.1.2 Mobility (MO)

The primary transport routes in the Parish include the M25 London orbital road, the M1 and the A41, both of which provide connections to central London and the north. The neighbourhood plan area has good north-south and east-west connections. These primary routes link to the various settlements via a network of B roads such as South Way, Horseshoe Lane and the High Road. The tertiary streets that make up the block structure have developed organically over time (see Figure 15, below).

With respect to public transport, there are several bus stops in Abbots Langley Village with services to Watford, Hemel Hempstead, Rickmansworth and Northwood. The Parish is also served by Kings Langley Rail Station, which supplies quick and efficient access to London and connections to the north, such as Milton Keynes, making it popular with commuters. East–west public transport from Abbots Langley Parish is limited and requires changing buses in Garston, Watford or Hemel Hempstead for access to, say, St Albans. Furthermore, travelling anticlockwise on the M25 allows motorists to get to Heathrow Airport in approximately 30 minutes, depending on traffic conditions.

Streets within Abbots Langley Village and Bedmond tend to have pavements and, occasionally, there are green verges between pedestrian and vehicular lanes. There are a large number of Public Rights of Way and other footpath walks[1] which provide sustainable travel routes for pedestrians, providing connectivity and helping improve physical and mental wellbeing by giving access to open space and countryside. There is, however, a lack of designated cycle lanes in the parish.

F.12

F.13

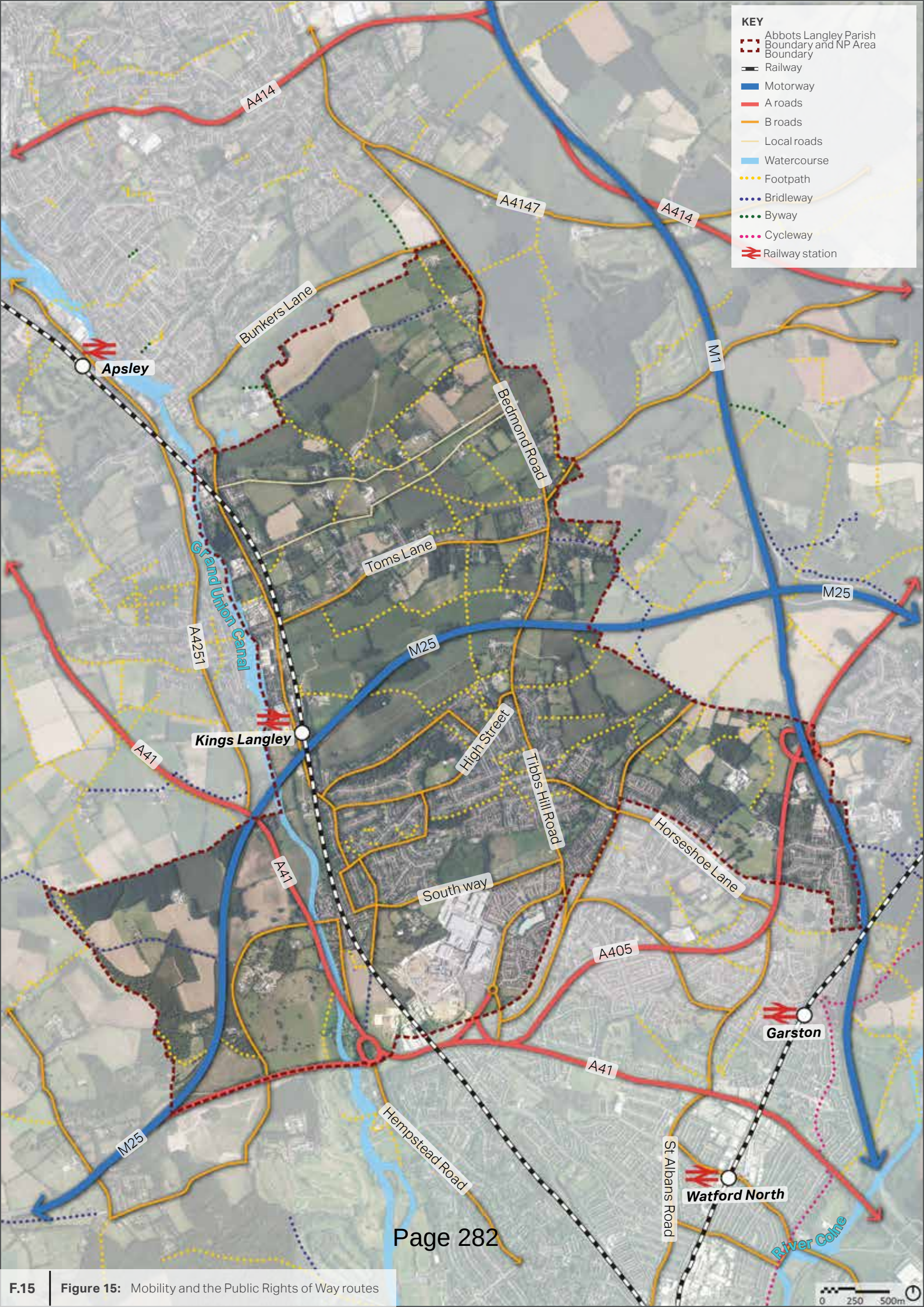
F.14

Figure 12:
High Street as B road and the footpath next to Kitters Green

Figure 13:
Bridge road, a tertiary road in Langleybury and Hunton Bridge Character Area

Figure 14:
A Public Right of Way on Trowley Rise

1. Abbots Langley Parish Council Website



F.15 | **Figure 15:** Mobility and the Public Rights of Way routes

3 GB. Green and blue infrastructure

3.1.3 Green and blue infrastructure (GB)

The majority of Abbots Langley Parish falls within the Green Belt, as shown in Figure 18. In the Green Belt Review Report commissioned by Three Rivers District Council & Watford Borough Council[1], it is proposed that the large settlement of Bedmond is inset from the Green Belt, thereby '*potentially providing a focus for modest development'.*

The Parish has a good variety of landscape features. In the north of the Neighbourhood Plan area there are arable fields mixed with areas of woodland. Most of this woodland is designated as priority habitat and some of it is replanted ancient woodland (located next the M25).

In some cases, the woodland has been used to the benefit of leisure and sport activities. Examples of this include the Grove Golf Course and the Centurion Golf Club, both of which are located just outside the site boundary.

Wildlife sites are scattered throughout the Neighbourhood Plan area with the largest of these being in the south west. These areas would require special attention if any development were proposed in close proximity.

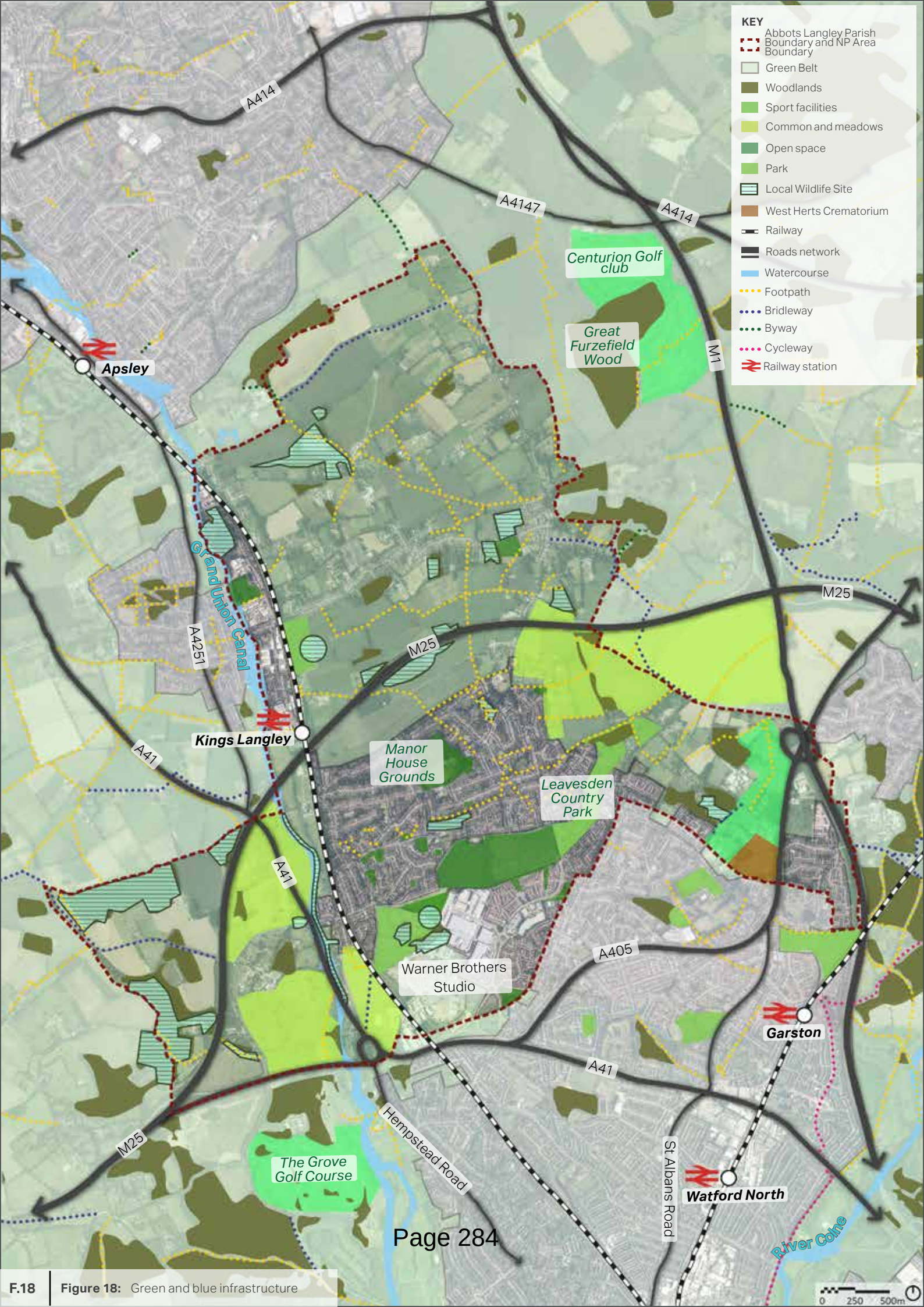
Finally, Leavesden Country Park is located adjacent to College Road, Leavesden. Country parks give people access to substantial areas of open space, with a mix of spaces and experience for both exercise and play, which is important for physical and mental health.

The Grand Union Canal flows alongside the western boundary of the north of the site and cuts through the Parish at Hunton Bridge.

Figure 16:
Abbots Langley Cricket Club adjacent to Manor House Grounds

Figure 17:
The footpath along Grand Union Canal and the surrounding housing

1. Green Belt Review by Three Rivers District Council & Watford Borough Council



F.18 | **Figure 18:** Green and blue infrastructure

4 HO. Housing

3.1.4 Housing (HO)

In the 18th and 19th centuries many fine houses and estates were being built in the local area. The land around Abbots Langley Village was then considered to be a very attractive rural location which was still quite close to London's 'high society'.

Since the start of the 20th century, settlements within the parish have expanded considerably. Hunton Bridge and western parts of Abbots Langley Village comprise early 1900s housing. A post-WWII council housing estate was built in Hillside, located to the south of Abbots Langley Village.

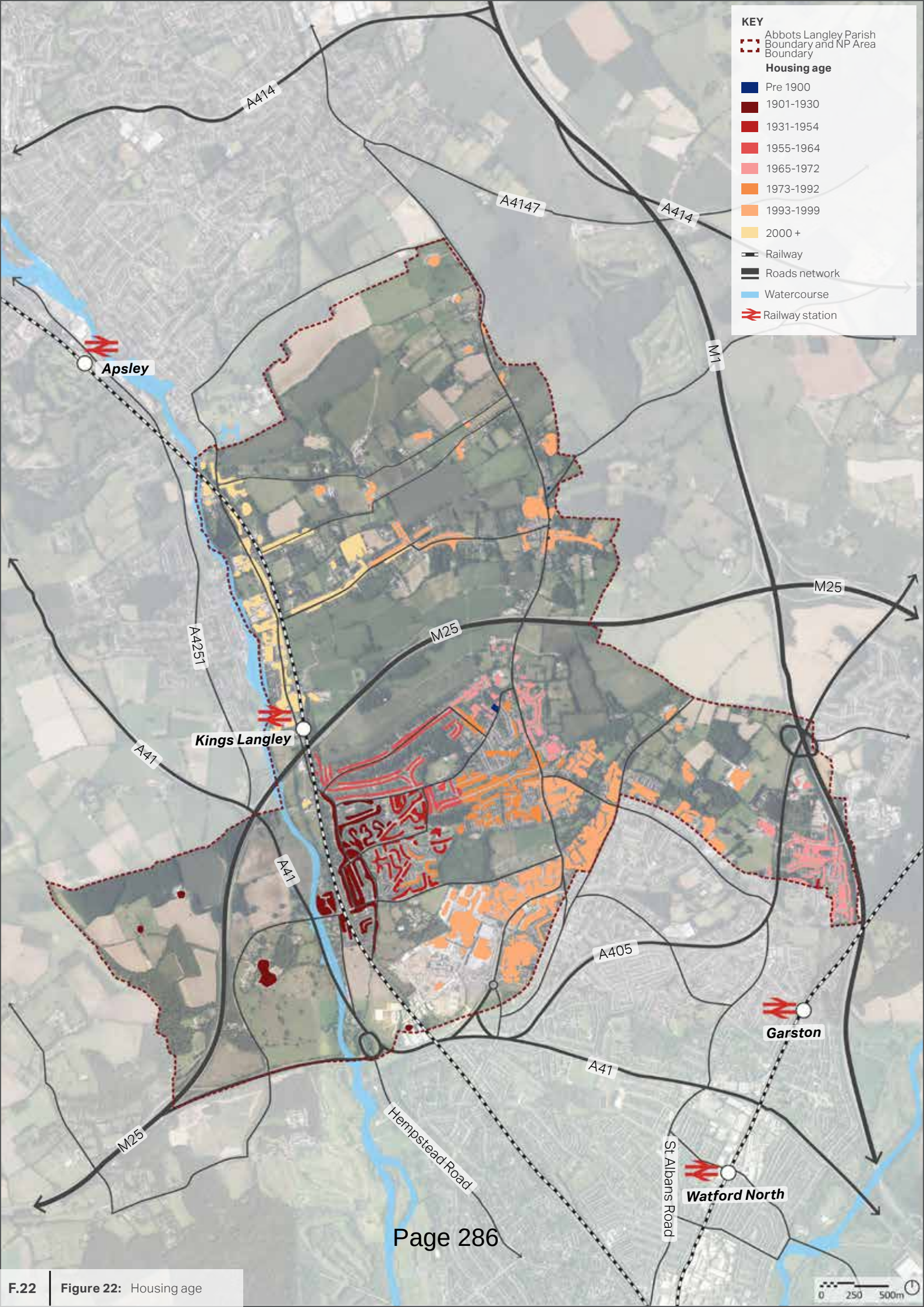
In the late 1960s and early 1970s, Abbots Langley Parish underwent urban expansion, with development from this period now making up a large proportion of the area (see Figure 22, below).

Dwellings in the Neighbourhood Plan area are typically detached or semi-detached, often with generous front and back gardens, although there are examples of terraced housing from different periods scattered across the various settlements.

Figure 19:
Terraced cottages on Bridge Road in Hunton Bridge on Hunton Bridge Conservation Area

Figure 20:
Timbered semi- detached houses on Toms Lane with bay windows

Figure 21:
Bungalows on De Havilland Way



F.22 | **Figure 22:** Housing age

5 KV. Key views

3.1.5 Key views

The various settlements villages are built on the rolling landscape that is typical of the parish. The highest point in the parish is in the north of the Neighbourhood Plan area at 140m and the lowest is near Hunton Bridge at 75m. These changes in elevation create the opportunity for specific views to be optimised.

There are various locally significant views within the parish. Some of these important views are displayed on Figure 31. View points at the end of Longspring Wood (just off Toms Lane) provide stunning panoramic views of the Green Belt. Another view of local significance is looking north from Hyde Farm.

In addition, the view from South Way to Langley Lane Play Area is another important long distance view within the Parish.

Figure 23:
View 1 to the north from Hyde Farm (Photo c/o G Ball)

Figure 24:
View 2 View to Potters Crouch Hamlet (Photo c/o G Ball)

Figure 25:
View 3 Church of the Ascension and White Hart (Photo c/o G Ball)

Figure 26:
View 4 from Long Spring Wood to Green Belt (Photo c/o G Ball)

The views which typify the character of the Parish are not just of landscape features, but also include some distinctive buildings. The Church of St Lawrence in Abbots Langley Village and the white tin Church of the Ascension in Bedmond are two completely unique buildings and, therefore, valued as landmarks by the local community. The lists of key views in Abbots Langley Parish is as follows:

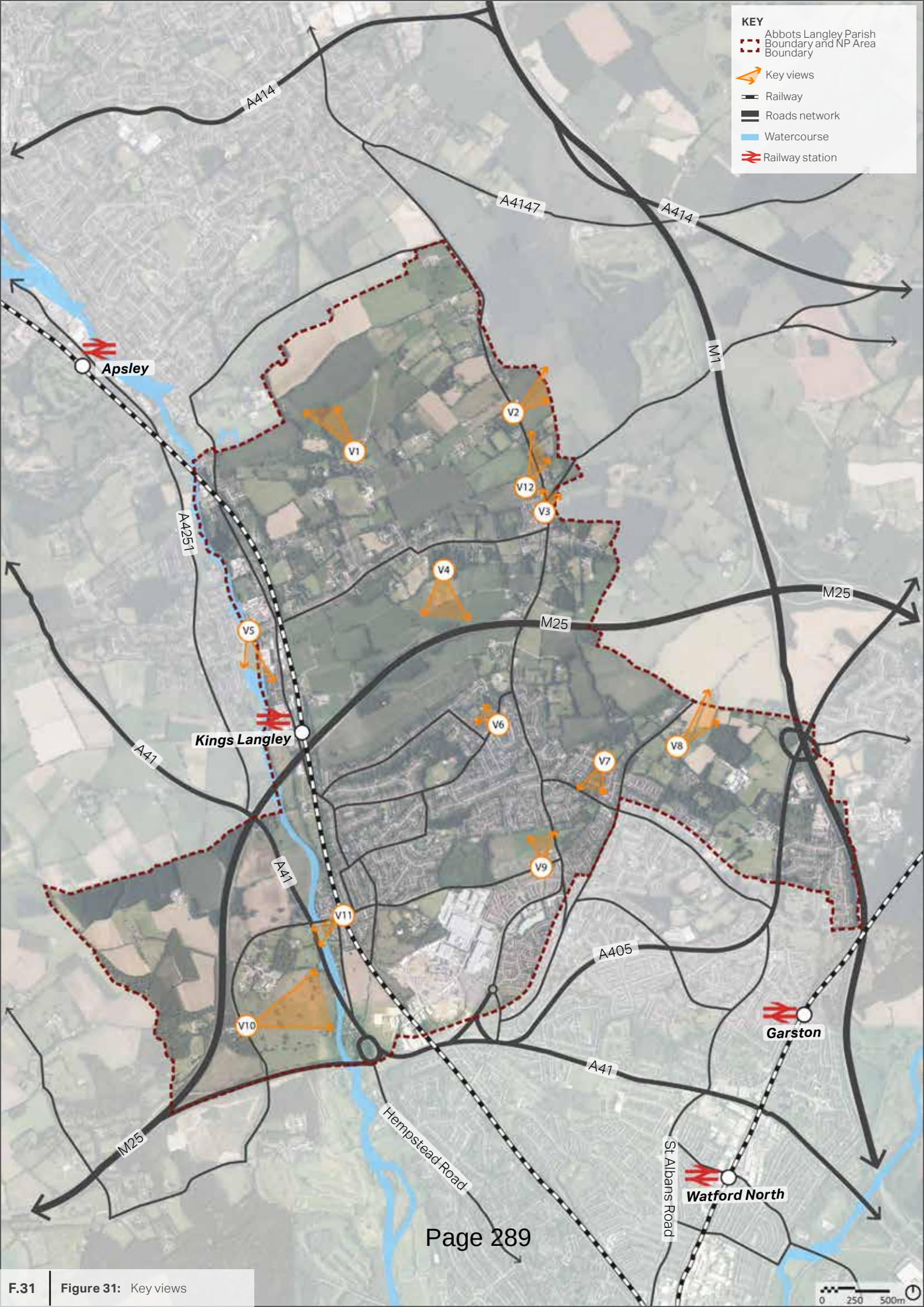
- View 1: View to the north from Hyde Farm;
- View 2: View to Potters Crouch Hamlet;
- View 3: View to The Church of the Ascension and White Hart;
- View 4: View from Longspring Wood to Local Wildlife Site and the Green Belt;
- View 5: View to Grand Union Canal;
- View 6: View to St Lawrence Church;
- View 7: View to Leavesden Country Park;

Figure 27:
View 5 Grand Union Canal from Home Park Mill Link Road to M25 viaduct (Photo by Abbots Langley Parish Council)

Figure 28:
View 6 St Lawrence Church Abbots Langley (Photo by Abbots Langley Parish Council)

Figure 29:
View 7 Leavesden Country Park (Photo by Abbots Langley Parish Council)

Figure 30:
View 8 View to Cheques Lane (Photo by Abbots Langley Parish Council)



F.31 | **Figure 31:** Key views

- View 8: View to Chequers Lane;
- View 9: View to Langley Lane Play Area and farmlands;
- View 10: View from Langleybury Lane to the Open Field;
- View 11: Gypsy Lane Railway Bridge; and
- View 12: Footpath 18- View of the Horsefield Meadow (Site CFS56), Bedmond.

Figure 32:
View 9 Nr South Way, Langley Lane Play Area to Horses Field beyond (Photo by Abbots Langley Parish Council)

Figure 33:
View 10 From Langleybury Lane to open fields (Photo by Abbots Langley Parish Council)

Figure 34:
View 11 From Gypsy Lane Railway Bridge westward towards Old Mill Lane and beyond (Photo by Abbots Langley Parish Council)

Figure 35:
View 12 Horsesfield Meadow, Bedmond (Photo by Abbots Langley Parish Council)

6 HE. Heritage

3.1.6 Heritage (HE)

The historical significance of Abbots Langley Parish derives from it being the birthplace of the only Englishman ever to become Pope. Nicholas Breakspear was born at Breakspear Farm, near Bedmond, in the Parish of Abbots Langley, in approximately 1100. He became Pope Adrian IV (1154-1159).

There are two conservation areas within the Parish. Abbots Langley Conservation Area is located at the heart of Abbots Langley Village with numerous listed buildings. It was designated by Three Rivers District Council in October 1969 and was one of the earliest Conservation Area designations in Hertfordshire[1]. Three different character areas identified in Abbots Langley Draft Conservation Area Appraisal. The areas have different, yet harmonious characters. These are Tibbs Hill to The Abbots House, The Commercial Centre and Kitters Green.

In addition, Hunton Bridge Conservation Area, designated in 1984 and subsequently extended in 1990[2], is situated to the south west of the Parish.

There are also some scattered sites of Archaeological Interest around the Parish. Some of the listed buildings within the Parish are listed on the following page.

Figure 36:
Church of St Lawrence in Abbots Langley Village

Figure 37:
Two-storey pink Grade II listed buildings on High Street

Figure 38:
Round Cottage in Kitters Green built in late 17th Century

1. Abbots Langley Conservation Area Appraisal, 2014.
2. Hunton Bridge Conservation Area Appraisal, 2008.

Church of St Lawrence with the List Entry Number (LEN) of 1296433 is a Grade I listed building dating back to the 12th Century. The Church is built by knapped flint with clunch dressings, some brick, tile hanging and rendering.

Pound Cottage (LEN: 1100888) is a Grade II listed building located in Kitters Green. It was built in the late 17th Century with timber and whitewashed brick infill and weatherboarding.

Yew Cottage (LEN: 1348204) is a Grade II listed building situated to the south of Kitters Green. The cottage dates back to the late 17th Century and constructed with timber, whitewashed brick nogging and roughcast. Tiled roof, casement with leaded lights are other features.

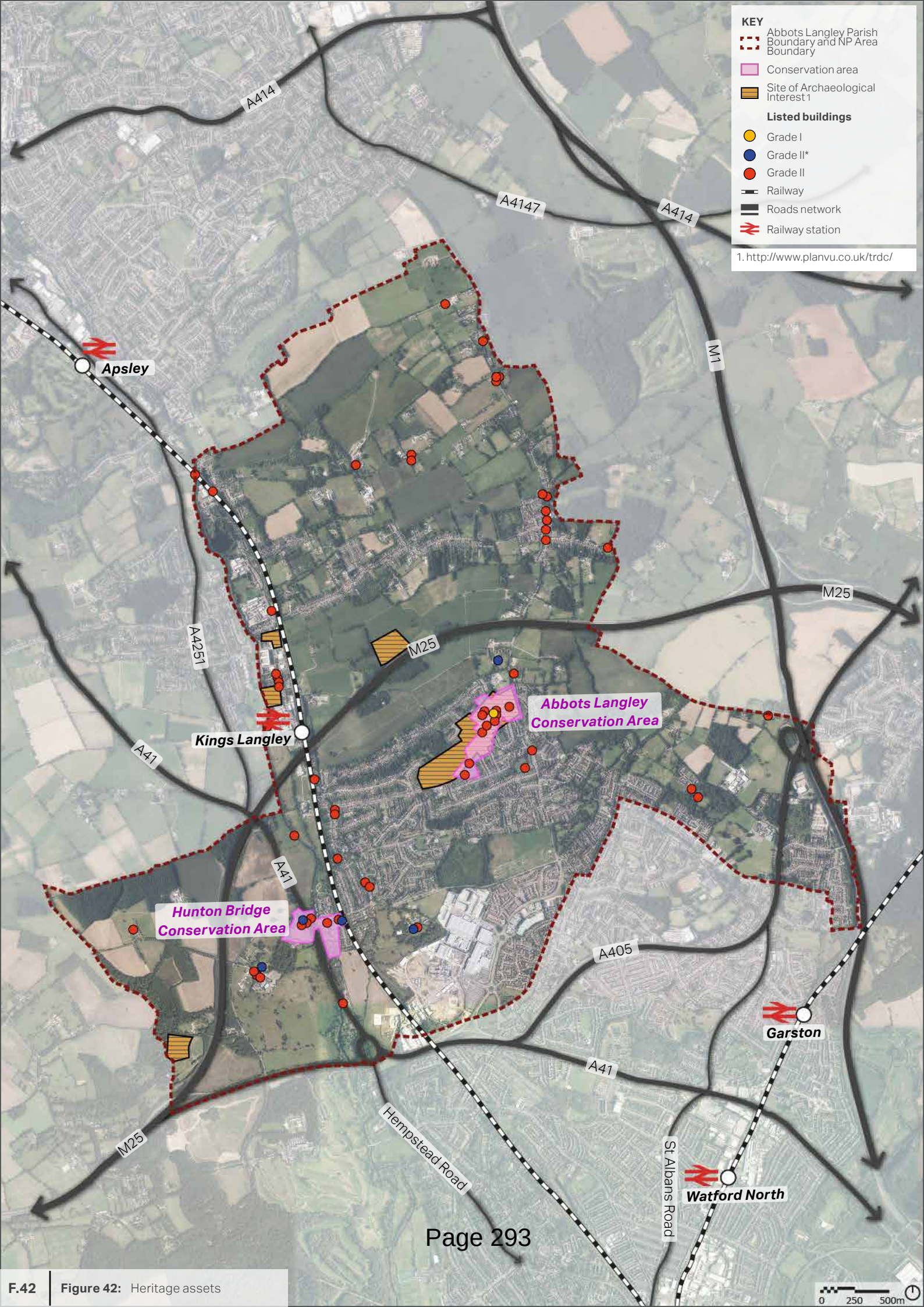
The Vicarage (LEN: 1100919) is a Grade II listed building. This is a large Georgian cottage built in 18th Century with whitewashed brick and tiled hipped roof.

Breakspear Place (formerly Breakspear College) (LEN: 1296407) is a Grade II listed building which was previously a large house, then a College and now residential apartments. It is built with rendered and roughcast brick, slate roof and sash windows.

Figure 39:
The Church of the Ascension, a Grade II listed building in Bedmond. Built in 1880, pre-fabricated in corrugated iron, walls painted cream on a rendered brick plinth

Figure 40:
The King's Lodge, a Grade II* listed building in Langleybury and Hunton Bridge Character Area

Figure 41:
Breakspear Place, a three storey building converted to residential apartments with sash windows in Abbots Langley Village



F.42 **Figure 42:** Heritage assets

7 FR. Flood risk

3.1.7 Flood risk

With the majority of the developed areas being located on elevated areas, away from the main water courses, there is currently minimal flood risk within any of the settlements. However, in the west of the Neighbourhood Plan area, along the Gade Valley, there areas of Flood Risk Zone 2 and 3 (see Figure 46, below).

The primary reason for these areas of flood risk is the Grand Union Canal, which can burst its banks in the event of a particularly heavy downpour. Furthermore, the orientation and extent of the surrounding hills make this area vulnerable to surface water flooding.

F.43

F.44

F.45

Figure 43:
A view to Grand Union Canal in Hunton Bridge

Figure 44:
View to Grand Union Canal from Gade Valley Character Area

Figure 45:
A property on Water Lane prone to flooding

F.46 **Figure 46:** Flood risk and watercourses map

8 CA. Character areas

3.1.8 Character areas (CA)

Following on from the analysis set out above, this part of the report focuses on the different character areas within Abbots Langley Parish. These different areas are characterised by (among other things) variations in land use, pattern of development, building line/ plot arrangement, boundary treatment, heights and rooflines and the treatment of the public realm.

While some of the character areas are clearly defined and have very fixed boundaries, there is often overlap and an element of mixing; future development needs to take this into account in any design proposal.

There are 5 character areas identified within Abbots Langley Parish which are shown in the table opposite and Figure 47, below.

The character areas recognise the fourteen existing communities in the Parish, and group them as follows:

1 Pimlico and Bedmond Character Area

Bedmond
Pimlico
East part of Toms Lane

2 Gade Valley Character Area

West part of Toms Lane
Roman Gardens
Primorse Hill

3 Abbots Langley Village Character Area

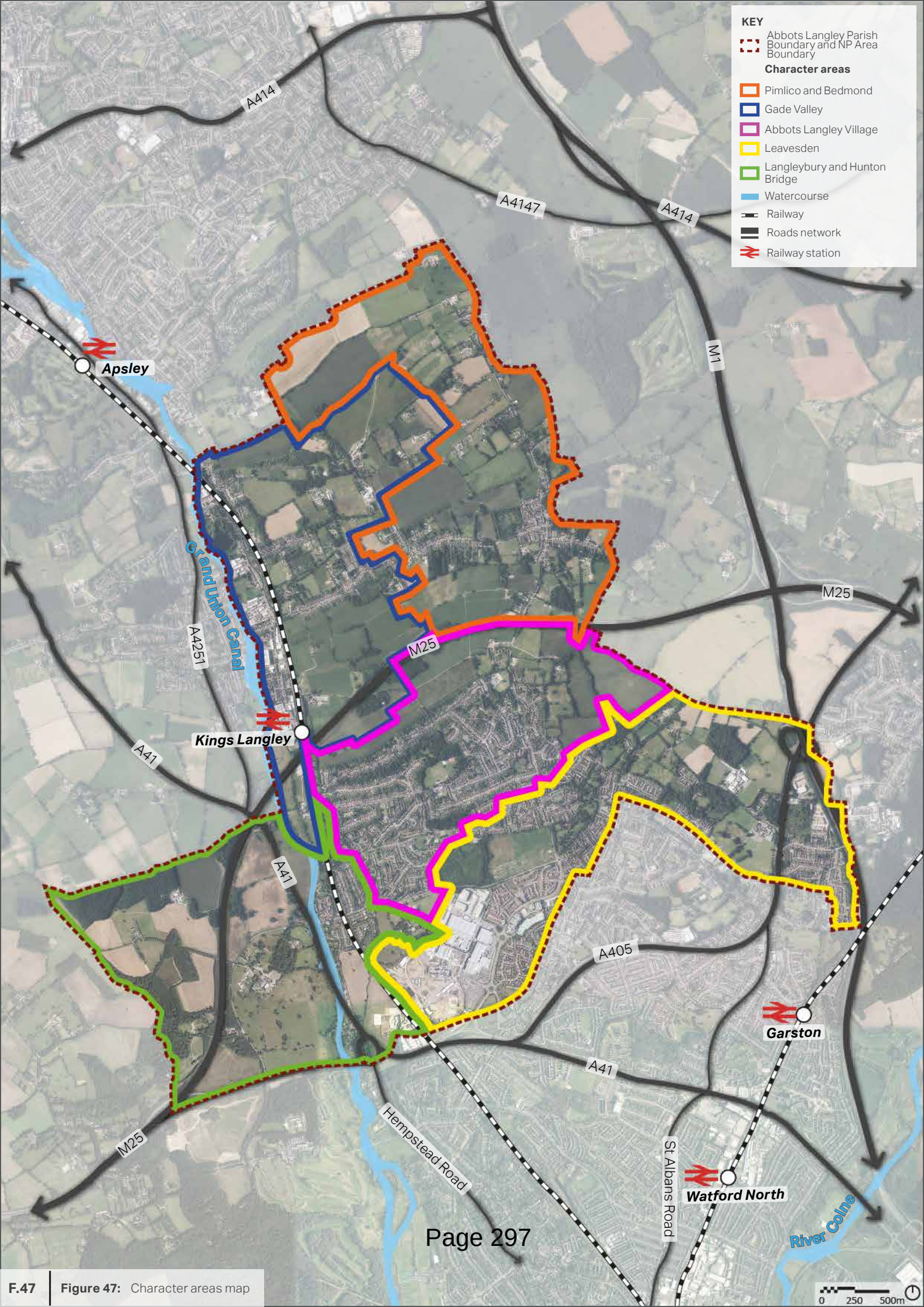
Abbots Langley Village
Hillside

4 Leavesden Character Area

Leavesden
Abbotswood Park
Furtherfield
Boundary Way
Coates Way

5 Langleybury and Hunton Bridge Character Area

Hunton Bridge
Langleybury



F.47 | **Figure 47:** Character areas map

1 Pimlico and Bedmond Character Area

Land Use	The village is predominantly residential with a shop, car dealership and a pub all on the High Street. In addition, there is the Church of the Ascension and a small primary and nursery school.
Pattern Of Development	The linear development runs along the 3 key roads which are Bell Lane, Toms Lane and the High Street. Several small cul-de-sacs lead off these roads. There is only one recognisable separate estate, which is down Chapel Way.
Building Line/Plot Arrangement	Buildings are either detached or semi-detached properties. The plots are given generous front gardens and in a lot of cases the building has a large setback from the road. This allows for space for private parking limiting the number of cars parked on the road.
Boundary Treatment	Boundary treatment in this character area is very consistent. Low walls, fences and hedges create a barrier between private and public spaces without creating completely inactive edges.
Heights & Roofline	While there are lots of different styles of buildings depending on the century they are built in, heights rarely surpass 2 storeys. A characteristic that is important to note is the red brick used on 18th century buildings with clay tiles as roofing material. The majority of the buildings are built with pitched and hipped roofs.
Public Realm	In Bedmond and Pimlico some of the pavements are quite narrow which limits walkability. Being a more rural part of the Neighbourhood Plan area, the surrounding countryside is very accessible. There is also a sports field in Bedmond and a play area; along with a purpose-built village hall on Bedmond High Street.

Figure 48:
The Church of Ascension in Bedmond built in tin, painted cream, on a rendered brick plinth

Figure 49:
A large detached house on Sergehill Lane with gabled roof and porch

Figure 50:
The Bell, a pub and restaurant on High Street

Figure 51:
Three-storey properties on Chapel Way

Figure 52:
The White Hart Public House, a Grade II listed building built in 17th Century

F.48

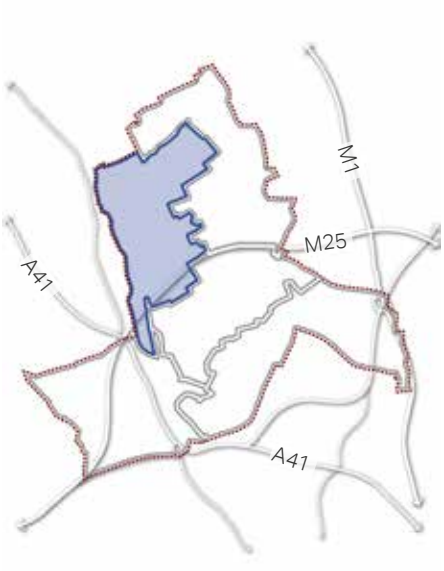
F.50

F.51

F.49

F.52

2 Gade Valley Character Area



Land Use	Along Toms Lane development is almost completely residential with some community assets in a linear development form. However, on the western boundary of the character area is Kings Langley Village and with this comes industrial and retail uses as well as the railway station. The majority of the land in this area is made up of arable and pastoral fields. There is a Mobile Home Park to the north of Toms Lane.
Pattern Of Development	Housing has developed almost all the way along Toms Lane between Bedmond and Kings Langley. There is very little in the way of backland development away from the frontage onto Toms Lane, with Hilltop Road and Seabrook Road being the exceptions. Roman Gardens located off Station Road is a small modern housing estate built on the east side of the Grand Union Canal.
Building Line/Plot Arrangement	The buildings in this area are predominantly detached and semi-detached. Plots in this area are characterised by large front gardens with trees overhanging onto the street. Plots face onto Toms Lane and back onto the fields behind.
Boundary Treatment	High hedges and low walls are the usual form of boundary between public and private spaces along Toms Lane, providing a smooth transition between private and public spaces, while also adding interest to this character area.
Heights & Roofline	The houses along Toms Lane are a mix of 1 and 2 storeys in height and the differing rooflines are representative of the mix of styles built throughout the 20th century. In Kings Langley, there is also a mix of rooflines, however, it is a much larger and more diverse settlement with apartment buildings up to 4 storeys.
Public Realm	Toms Lane can often have a lot of vehicular traffic, especially when there is congestion on the adjoining road network. Together with the narrowness (and occasional absence) of pavements, this makes for a more challenging environment for pedestrians and cyclists. There are community greens, significant trees, a sports field and a wildlife reserve which provide residents with access to open space. Flood mitigation needs to be considered around Water Lane where there is a combination of flood risk from watercourses and surface water run-off.

Figure 53:
Two- storey buildings built with timber and roughcast with bow window on Toms Lane

Figure 54:
The view to Grand union Canal from Pimlico and Bedmond Character Area

Figure 55:
Semi- detached houses with pebbledash and timber frame with deep front garden

Figure 56:
The two- storey building constructed with mix of roughcast and red brick used for walls

Figure 57:
The row of properties on Toms lane with sloping deep front gardens

F.53

F.55

F.56

F.54

F.57

3 Abbots Langley Village Character Area

Land Use	While the village is largely residential, there are retail and service areas, e.g., on the High Street, that continue to thrive and this is something that the community are looking to protect. Abbots Langley Village also has several educational facilities and an abundance of community halls/facilities.
Pattern Of Development	The village extends from the Conservation Area along the High Street and Gallows Hill Lane, which is the location of the retail and service uses as well as important buildings such as the Manor House. The first modern development, and by far the largest, was the post war 1950s housing development. There is a cul-de-sac typology that is prominent throughout the village. Three areas are identified in Abbots Langley Conservation Area Appraisal, and these are Tibbs Hill to The Abbots House, The Commercial Centre and Kitters Green. Pictures associated with each area are presented on the following pages.
Building Line/Plot Arrangement	As noted above, many of the residential buildings in Abbots Langley Village were built in the 1950s and are mostly semi-detached. However, with it being such a large village there are also plenty of detached and terraced buildings, as well. Plots are arranged back-to-back in order to maximise natural surveillance with typically large setbacks to provide space for parking.
Boundary Treatment	Given that Abbots Langley is such a large village, with development from different periods, there is a good mix of boundary treatments. There are examples of low walls, high hedges, open driveways and, in some cases, no boundary at all between the building and the public realm.
Heights & Roofline	Abbots Langley Village has a mix of building heights ranging from bungalows to 4 storey apartment buildings. Throughout most of the village, however, houses are 2 storey in height. Rooflines vary depending on the age of the building, although most of them tend to be pitched and hipped roofs.
Public Realm	The High Street has extensive, separated pedestrian spaces for people to congregate. Street furniture such as benches also helps encourage this. As for green spaces, the largest and most noticeable public green space is the sports field behind the old Manor House. Pocket parks are also scattered throughout the settlement ensuring good access to green spaces for all.

Tibbs Hill to The Abbots House

Figure 58:
St Lawrence Church on High Street

Figure 59:
A public space at the junction of Langley Road and High Street and next to a row of two- storey terraced houses

Figure 60:
Barber shop and some listed buildings on High Street

Figure 61:
A bungalow adjacent to Hanover Gardens and in front of Breakspear Place

Figure 62:
The development on Stanfield

F.58

F.60

F.61

F.59

F.62

The Commercial Centre

Figure 63:
The shops on east side of High Street give a vibrant atmosphere

Figure 64:
20th-Century infill to the western side of High Street with a row of shops at the grounds floor and flats on top

Figure 65:
Attractive row of Victorian shops on west side of High Street between Henderson Memorial Hall and St Lawrence Close

Figure 66:
A row of Victorian terraced houses built in 1880, which are locally listed. The buildings built with gaunt brick with red brick detailing and bay windows

Figure 67:
The public realm located to the south of the Commercial Centre

F.63

F.65

F.66

F.64

F.67

Kitters Green

Figure 68:
Pound Cottage and the adjacent green space

Figure 69:
The green space at the heart of Kitters green with various public footpaths run through the area

Figure 70:
The Royal Oak, a public house built in 18th Century in Kitters Green

Figure 71:
Number 97 Kitters Green a locally listed building built with mix of flint and red brick

Figure 72:
The footpath leading to Royal Oak Pub

F.68

F.70

F.71

F.69

F.72

Other parts of Abbots Langley Village Character Area

Figure 73:
The Compasses, a pub located on Tibbs Hill Road

Figure 74:
Manors House Grounds Play Area

Figure 75:
A two- storey property with built with the mix of red and yellow brick on Tibbs Hill Road

Figure 76:
Two-storey terraced houses on High Road

Figure 77:
Semi- detached houses on Pope's Road

F.73

F.75

F.76

F.74

F.77

4 Leavesden Character Area

Land Use	Leavesden is mostly residential. However, there are also educational facilities as well as shops and other services. Warners Bros Studio Tour London is located to the west of this character area. There are also public spaces such as Leavesden Country Park.
Pattern Of Development	A number of residential estates have been delivered to either side of the primary road network. Examples of this include the Lemonfield estate (built in the 1950s) and the Tudor Manor estate (built in the late 1980s). More recently there was development of the former Leavesden Hospital site in the mid-1990s and the Aerodrome Way Estate in the early 21st century.
Building Line/Plot Arrangement	Buildings tend to be detached and semi-detached in the estates of Leavesden. These plots are given back gardens and space at the front that can typically fit 2 cars on it. This is due to the generous width of each plot. The majority of plots are arranged back-to-back to maximise natural surveillance.
Boundary Treatment	Low walls and hedges are often used to create more formal boundaries between private and public space. At other times, simple changes in paving are used to mark out the edge of a driveway, the aim being to maximise space for cars.
Heights & Roofline	Houses in Leavesden respect a 2-storey height limit, although apartment buildings and commercial retail (with residential above) are sometimes higher, at 3 storeys. The typical roofline is pitched.
Public Realm	While there are small pocket parks within some of the estates, Leavesden is the location of one of the key public assets of the Neighbourhood Plan area. Leavesden Country Park offers outdoor space for exercise, but also is a green corridor that connects Leavesden with Abbots Langley Village. The Park has been awarded many Green Flags for excellence. The Sports Ground which is owned by Parmiters School is adjacent to the M1, and its facilities are available for hire by the public out of school hours. The Abbotswood development adjacent to Leavesden Film Studios is another important public space, with local retail provision (supermarket, pharmacy and cafe with outdoor space), in addition to the amenity space and play areas.

Figure 78:
Leavesden Country park Play Area adjacent to Woodlands Cafe

Figure 79:
Warner Bros. Studio Tour London, a walk through exhibition showing authentic costumes and sets utilised in the production of the Harry Potters films

Figure 80:
The Swan Pub on College Road

Figure 81:
Terraced houses on High Road with casement windows

Figure 82:
A view to the Abbotswood Estate (Photo by Abbots Langley Parish Council)

F.78

F.80

F.81

F.79

F.82

5 Langleybury and Hunton Bridge Character Area

Land Use	This part of the Neighbourhood Plan area is very green with the small village of Hunton Bridge being the only real settlement. By far the most predominant use is residential with a couple of pubs and a hotel. There is also a primary school just to the west of the village.
Pattern Of Development	Hunton Bridge has been a settlement since the 19th century and has only recently, in the last 40 years, expanded to the south, first, and then to the north with the development of two main estates. Hunton Bridge Conservation Area (see Figure 42, below) covers Bridge Road and some part of Langleybury Lane with a number of listed buildings and locally important buildings.
Building Line/Plot Arrangement	Despite the small settlement size there is a good mix of detached, semi-detached and terraced housing. The buildings tend to have a small setback from the road offering a buffer between the front door and public realm. Plots are tightly packed on Bridge Road although, in the estate to the south, they are given a more generous plot width.
Boundary Treatment	Low walls and hedges create a soft barrier between buildings and the public realm. This helps the area retain active edges at the same time as providing property owners with the reassurance that passers-by are not looking directly into the property.
Heights & Roofline	Throughout most of the settlement, buildings are 2 storeys in height, with a mix of different roofline types. The mid 2000s development to the north of the site is an outlier with some 3 storey buildings.
Public Realm	In Hunton Bridge, Langleybury Cricket Ground and an open space on the west side of A41 are the main open spaces. This area is used for dog walking and owned by the Parish Council. In addition, a green walk is provided along the Grand Union Canal. There are narrow pavements on Bridge Road.

Figure 83:
Bridge Road sloping from west to the east providing an interesting view

Figure 84:
K6 Telephone Kiosk, Garde II listed, located near junction of Bridge Road and Old Mill Road

Figure 85:
Brookside Cottages on Old Mill Road

Figure 86:
Elaborate Dutch Gabled property on Bridge Road with the red brick details on top of windows

Figure 87:
A view to Grand Union Canal from Hunton Bridge

F.83

F.85

F.86

F.84

F.87

04 Design guidelines and codes

4. Design guidelines & codes

The aim of this chapter is to ensure that future development within the parish is well designed and built to last. It provides direction as to how the distinctive features within the parish can be retained and enhanced by new development that creates high quality places, thriving communities and prosperous places to live. The following pages set out the design principles for Abbots Langley Parish.

4.1 Introduction

New development, at any scale, should not be viewed in isolation, but considerations of design and layout must be informed by the wider context and respond to he qualities of each character area.

The general design principles address the structure of the place, including the pattern of streets and spaces, building traditions, materials and the natural environment, which should all respond to the character and identity of each character area. It should also be recognised that new technologies are capable of delivering built development in a more efficient and sustainable form and this needs to be factored into considerations of character and context.

It is important that the new design embodies the 'sense of place' and also meets the aspirations of people already living in that area, maintaining a harmony between new development and that which already exists.

The set of design principles shown below are specific to Abbots Langley Parish and are based on the analysis of the character areas and discussions with members of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group.

1 SL. Settlement layout

2 SM. Safe movement

3 BU. Buildings

4 RK. Regeneration of key centres

5 LC. Respecting the local character

6 SU. Sustainability

How do the design principles relate to each character area?

This table links the design principles to the different character areas in the Parish, which are introduced in the next section. The aim of the design codes is to specify the design actions that explain how to achieve the design principles.

Key:

\+ This design principle does relate to this character area

\- This design principle does not relate to this character area

Applicable design principles		Character area				
SL	**Settlement layout**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
SL01	Pattern of developments	+	+	+	+	+
SL 02	Layout and grain	+	+	+	+	+
SM	**Safe movement**					
SM 01	Interconnected street network	+	+	+	+	-
SM 02	Pedestrian and cycle paths connectivity	+	+	+	+	+
SM 03	Parking typologies	-	+	+	+	-
SM 04	Cycle parking	+	+	+	-	-
SM 05	Legibility and signage	+	+	+	-	-
BU	**Buildings**					
Bu 01	Houses for a lifetime	+	+	+	-	+
Bu 02	Scale form and massing	+	+	+	+	+
Bu 03	Building proportion	+	+	+	+	-
Bu 04	Aspect and orientation	+	+	+	-	+
Bu 05	Enclosure	+	+	+	+	-
Bu 06	Boundary treatment	-	-	+	+	-
Bu 07	Building line and setback	+	+	+	+	-
Bu 08	Roofline	+	+	+	+	+
Bu 09	Corner buildings	+	+	+	+	-
Bu 10	Active frontage	+	-	-	+	+
Bu 11	Well defined public and private space	+	+	+	+	-
Bu 12	Extension and alteration	-	+	+	+	-

Applicable design principles		Character area				
RK	**Regeneration of key centres**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
RK 01	Mix of use	-	-	+	-	+
RK 02	Public realm	-	-	+	+	-
RK 03	Shop fronts	-	-	+	-	-
RK 04	Infill	+	+	+	+	-
RK 05	Signage and wayfinding	-	-	+	+	-
LC	**Respecting the local character**					
LC 01	Landscape and green space	+	+	+	+	+
LC 02	Landmarks and views	+	-	+	-	-
LC 03	Architectural details	+	-	+	-	+
LC 04	Materials and colour palette	+	+	+	+	+
LC 05	Street lighting/ dark skies	+	+	+	+	+
SU	**Sustainability**					
SU 01	Energy efficient housing and production	+	+	+	+	+
SU 02	Biodiversity	+	+	+	+	+
SU 03	Sustainable drainage	+	+	+	-	-
SU 04	Permeable pavements	+	+	+	+	+
SU 05	Storage and slow release	-	+	+	+	+
SU 06	Bioretention systems	-	-	+	+	+

Character areas

1. Pimlico and Bedmond
2. Gade Valley
3. Abbots Langley Village
4. Leavesden
5. Langlebury and Hunton Bridge

1 SL. Settlement layout

4.2 Settlement layout (SL)

Future developments should be sympathetic to the local character and history and establish or maintain a strong sense of place.

The relationship between different components of the settlement should be carefully considered. With respect to the most important components of a settlement, the pattern of development and layout and grain are key to the creation of 'sense of place'. These matters are considered in more detail on the following pages.

SL 01. Pattern of developments

SL 02. Layout and grain

F.88

F.89

F.90

Figure 88:
The pattern of development along High Street in Abbots Langley Village Character Area

Figure 89:
The pattern of development along Aerodrome Way in Leavesden Character Area

Figure 90:
The pattern of development along Bridge Road in Hunton Bridge Character Area

SL 01. Pattern of development

There are various development patterns within the parish. Some of them are linear (arranged along either side of a road, usually, only one plot deep) such as the development along Bedmond Road and Toms Lane. However, Abbots Langley Village and Leavesden Character areas have a more nucleated form (i.e., where developed has occurred around a central point, such as a road intersection, or an important building such as a church). By contrast, in other parts of the parish, such as Pimlico, Langleybury and Hunton Bridge Character Areas, developed is more dispersed, with small clusters of development spread across a wider area.

The following principles should be taken into account in any future developments:

- Any future developments should reflect the local context ensuring that it makes a positive contribution to the existing built form;
- To ensure a good fit between new and old it is important that any new development seeks to conserve and enhance the character of the existing settlement in terms of urban form as well as character; and
- Developments affecting the transitional edges between a settlement and countryside should be softened by landscaping to complement the character of the adjacent or surrounding countryside.

SL. Settlement layout

SL 02. Layout[1] & grain[2]

Understanding and appreciating the local historic environment and the different character areas can help to ensure that potential new development is properly integrated with the existing settlement and does not result in the loss of local distinctiveness.

- Development should respect the historic, locally distinctive grain and mix of form, layout and size;
- Siting and layout of new developments must be sympathetic to the specific character areas and must respect the historic heritage of the surrounding area; and
- Developments which do not reflect the existing grain of a character area should be avoided unless on a site where a different design approach is deemed appropriate. Importantly, proposals need to consider existing density and the relationship between buildings and plot sizes.

Figure 91:
Fine grain in Abbots Langley Village Character Area

Figure 92:
Medium grain on Toms Lane in Gade Valley Character Area

Figure 93:
Coarse grain in Leavesden Character Area

1. Layout refers to the pattern of the physical arrangement of all resources. These resources could be roads, parcel size and orientation, buildings or green spaces etc.

2. Grain is essentially a description of the pattern of individual development plots in an urban or village block. When this pattern is dominated by small plots it is described as fine grain, when the plots are larger, it can be described as having an open or coarse grain.

2 SM. Safe movement

4.3 Safe movement (SM)

Safe movement focuses on the creation of safe, attractive and convenient connections around Abbots Langley Parish, within and between settlements, and to the wider area via sustainable modes of transport, wherever possible.

Walking and cycling should be encouraged to support growth, limit the negative impacts of traffic congestion on the roads and create direct and memorable routes. In particular, the safety of active transport should be improved around Chequers Lane between the three main settlements in Parish.

In addition, public transport should be used to support active travel[1] and provide improved links between places. There is an opportunity to use Leavesden Country Park as an active transport hub between Abbots Langley Village and Leavesden, providing safe and efficient access to both villages.

SM 01. Interconnected street network

SM 02. Pedestrian and cycle paths connectivity

SM 03. Parking typologies

SM 04. Cycle parking

SM 05. Legibility and signage

1. Active travel refers to all modes of transport that are dependant on physical activity such as walking or cycling.

SM 01. Interconnected Streets

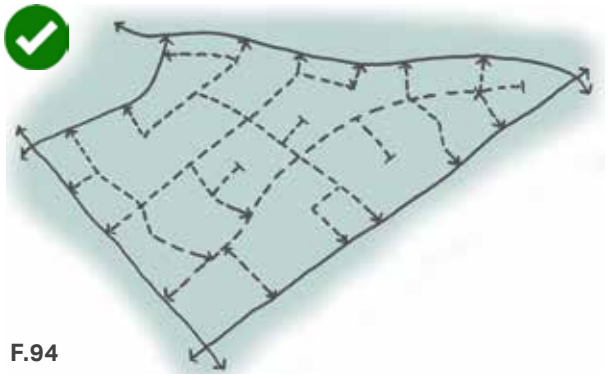
Streets should be connected with each other and different travel options and routes should be considered. Good practice favours a well connected street layout that makes it easier to travel by foot, cycle, and public transport. A more connected pattern creates a 'walkable neighbourhood', a place where routes link meaningful places together.

The street network in Abbots Langley Village is reflective of its historic development, with the High Street as the principal route which connects Abbots Langley Village to the surrounding settlements. Branching out from the High Street, routes are mostly residential roads with culs-de-sac in some residential neighbourhoods. The culs-de-sac are mostly found in Pimlico and Bedmond, Gade Valley, Hunton Bridge and the southern part of Abbots Langley Village Character Areas.

The street network contributes to the villages informal character and must be preserved in the design of future roads and retrofit of existing ones.

The following principles must, therefore, be taken into account:

- New roads, if required, must meet the technical highways requirements as well as be considered a 'space' to be used by all, not just motor vehicles. It is essential for new developments to have roads designed for the needs of pedestrians and cyclists. Existing roads must be retrofitted for the same purpose and to discourage speeding;
- Routes should be laid out in a permeable pattern, allowing for multiple connections and choice of routes, particularly on foot. Any cul-de-sac should be relatively short and provide onward pedestrian links;



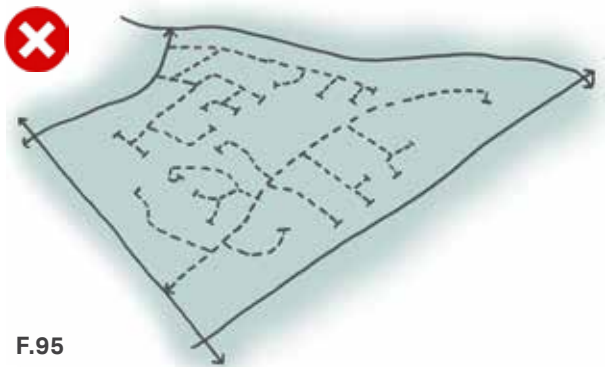


Figure 94:
A connected layout, with some culs-de-sac, balances sustainability and security aims in a walkable neighbourhood.

Figure 95:
A layout dominated by culs-de-sac encourages reliance on the car for even local journeys.

SM. Safe movement

- Proposals should take into account existing relationship between buildings and the street or other surrounding open spaces and how the siting and position of any new buildings can fit around and enhance what is already there;
- There should be a clear hierarchy of streets to facilitate different levels of activity. Streets should incorporate opportunities for landscaping, green infrastructure and sustainable drainage; and
- The design of the street network should respond to the topography and natural desire lines[1].

Junctions and pedestrian crossings

- Crossing points that are safe, convenient and accessible for pedestrians of all abilities must be placed at frequent intervals on pedestrian desire lines and at key nodes;
- Junctions must enable good visibility between vehicles and pedestrians. For this purpose, street furniture, planting and parked cars must be kept away from visibility splays to avoid obstructing sight lines;

F.96

F.97

F.98

Figure 96:
High Street as the main road in Abbots Langley Village

Figure 97:
Toms Lane is meandering providing evolving views in Gade Valley Character Area

Figure 98:
Hill Lane as a rural road in Bedmond

1. Desire lines are routes that are developed over time by the choices people make in respect of how they move between places.

- Traffic calming measures should be introduced at crossing points to increase safety and discourage speeding. Along major streets, for example, kerb build outs can be used to reduce pedestrian crossing distances. At junctions with minor roads, the carriageway surface can be raised across a pedestrian crossing to prioritise pedestrian movements;
- Traffic signals, where they are introduced, must be timed to enable the elderly, children and disabled to cross safely; and
- Along low-traffic lanes and residential streets, crossing points can be more informal. For example, pedestrians may cross at any section of a street whose surface is shared between different users.

F.99

F.100

Figure 99:
Example of a raised crossing across a main road in Cambridge, with contrasting paving materials and space for low-level planting and street furniture.

Figure 100:
Example of a raised mid-block pedestrian crossing on a 20 mph street on Goldsmith Street, Norwich (note: many councils require blister tactile pavers at crossings to guide visually disabled pedestrians).

SM 02. Pedestrian and cycle paths connectivity

Public footpaths offer access to the wider landscape from the settlements and the wide variety of lanes play a crucial role in connecting the character areas within the parish. They also provide opportunities for people to enjoy nature, benefiting both their physical and mental health. The following are the principles for interconnected streets, pedestrian/ cycle paths:

- New streets should be considered a space to be used by all, not only vehicles. Therefore, it is essential that street design prioritises the needs of pedestrians, cyclists and public transport users. Pedestrian and cycle routes need to be continuous and well connected, and can be from point to point or circular depending of the nature of the site and the relationship with the surrounding network;
- Propose short and walkable distances which are usually defined to be within a 10 minute walk or a 5 mile trip by bike. This information can be shown on signage at key points within the Parish. If the design proposal calls for a new street or cycle/pedestrian link, it must connect destinations and origins providing multiple access points where possible; and
- Create improvements to existing green networks to promote active travel opportunities, while also enhancing habitat and biodiversity.

Figure 101:
The footpath and cycle way next to Manor House Grounds

Figure 102:
Presence of cyclists on Bedmond High Street

Figure 103:
A footpath surrounded by mature trees and shrubs on Sergehill Lane in Bedmond

SM 03. Parking typologies

Parking areas are a necessity of modern development. However, they do not need to be unsightly or dominate views towards the house. Parking provision should be undertaken as an exercise of placemaking.

- When placing parking at the front of a property, the area should be designed to minimise visual impact and to blend with the existing streetscape and materials. The aim is to keep a sense of enclosure and to break the potential of a continuous area of car parking in front of the dwellings. This can be achieved by means of walls, hedging, planting, and the use of quality paving materials;
- When needed, residential car parking can be translated into a mix of on-plot side, front, garage, and courtyard parking, and complemented by on-street parking;
- For family homes, cars should be placed at the side (preferably) or front of the property. For small pockets of housing, a rear court is acceptable;
- The provision of tandem parking encourages on-street parking. Where on-plot parking space is limited, tandem parking is acceptable, but should be avoided in areas which offer general access, e.g. parking courts;
- Car parking design should be combined with landscaping to minimise the presence of vehicles; and
- Parking areas and driveways should be designed to improve impervious surfaces, for example, through the use of permeable paving[1].

Figure 104:
On- plot parking with garage

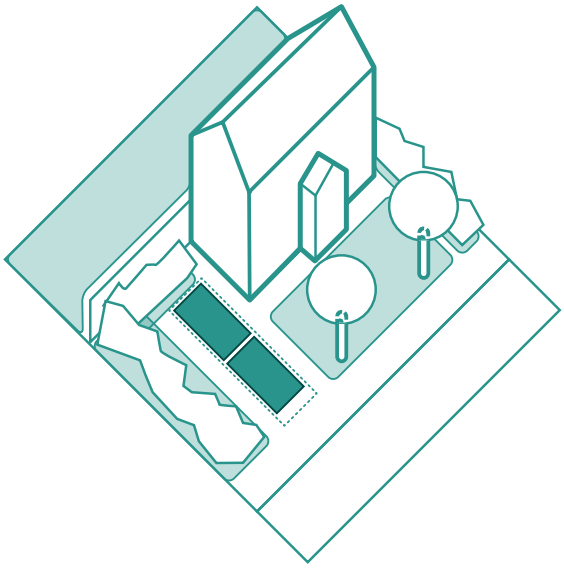
Figure 105:
On- street angle parking on High Street in Abbots Langley Village

1. Permeable pavement is a type of pavement that allows rainfall to percolate to an underlying reservoir base where rainfall is either infiltrated to underlying soils or removed by a subsurface drain.

SM. Safe movement

On-plot parking

- On-plot parking can be less visually intrusive when it is combined with high quality and well designed soft landscaping;
- Boundary treatment is the key element to help avoid a car-dominated character. This can be achieved by using elements such as hedges, trees, flower beds, low walls, and high quality paving materials between the private and public space; and
- Hard standing and driveways must be constructed from porous materials to minimise surface water run-off and help manage flood risk.



F.106

F.107

Figure 106:
The diagram showing on- plot parking

Figure 107:
On- plot parking on Bell Lane in Bedmond

On-plot parking with garages

- Where provided, garages must be designed either as free standing structures or as additive form to the main building. In both situations, it must complement and harmonise with the architectural style of the main building rather than forming a mismatched unit;
- Often, garages can be used as a design element to create a link between buildings and ensuring continuity of the building façade. However, it should be understood that garages are not prominent elements and they must be designed accordingly;
- Garages should be designed with sufficient space to accommodate a modern car (See page 64);
- It should be noted that many garages are not used for storing vehicles, and so may not be the best use of space on a plot; and
- Considerations must be given to the integration of bicycle parking and/or waste storage into garages.

F.108

F.109

Figure 108:
Diagram showing on-plot parking with garage

Figure 109:
On- plot parking with garages on Little Orchard Close off Gallows Hill Lane

SM. Safe movement

Rear parking courtyard

- Rear parking courtyards must be overlooked by neighbouring properties;
- Access to the parking courtyards should be through archways where possible to ensure the continuity of the street frontage;
- Parking bays must be arranged into clusters with groups of 4 spaces as a maximum. Parking clusters should be interspersed with trees and soft landscaping to provide shade, visual interest and to reduce both heat island effects; and
- Public and private spaces should be very clearly defined to avoid confusion and necessary design mitigations should be applied for maximum safety such as gates or barriers.

F.110

F.111

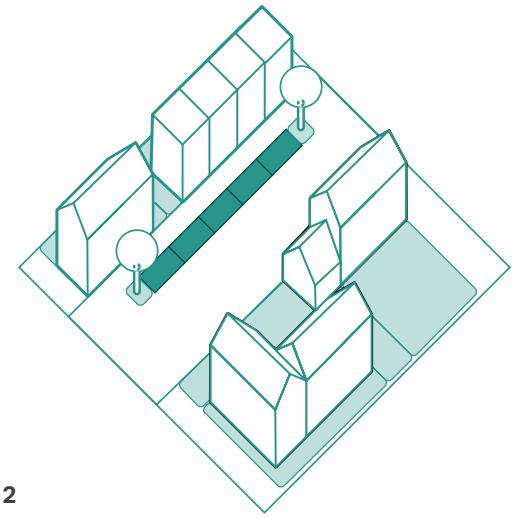
Figure 110:
An overlooked rear parking courtyard

Figure 111:
Rear parking courtyard on Wharf Way in Langleybury and Kings Bridge Character Area

SM. Safe movement

On-street parking

- On-street parking must be designed to avoid impeding the flow of pedestrians, cyclists, and other vehicles, and can serve a useful informal traffic calming function;
- On low-traffic residential streets or lanes that are shared between vehicles and pedestrians, parking bays can be clearly marked using changes in paving materials instead of road markings; and
- Opportunities must be created for new public car parking spaces to include electric vehicle charging points. Given the move towards electric vehicles, every opportunity must be taken to integrate charging technologies and infrastructure into the fabric of road and street furniture in the public and private realm.



F.112

F.113

F.114

Figure 112:
Diagram showing the on-street parking

Figure 113:
Inset on-street parking with electric vehicle charging points

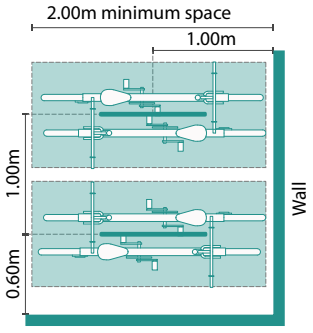
Figure 114:
On- street parking on High Street in Abbots Langley Village

SM 04. Cycle parking

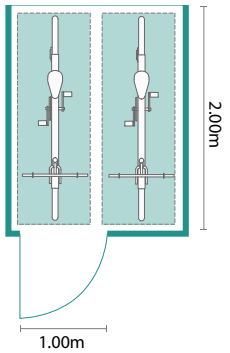
A straightforward way to encourage cycling is to provide secured covered cycle parking within all new residential developments and publicly available cycle parking in the public realm.

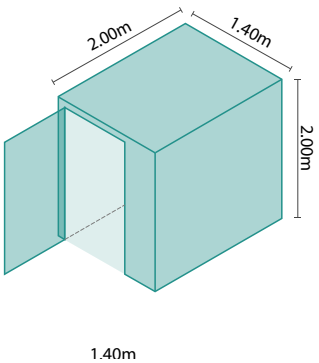
Houses without garages

- For residential units, where there is no on-plot garage, covered and secured cycle parking should be provided within the domestic curtilage;
- Cycle storage should be provided at a convenient location with an easy access;
- When provided within the footprint of the dwelling or as free standing shed, cycle parking should be accessed by means of a door at least 1300mm and the structure should be at least 2m deep;
- Parking should be secure, covered and well integrated into the streetscape if it is allocated at the front of the house; and
- The use of planting and smaller trees alongside cycle parking can be used to mitigate any visual impact on adjacent spaces or buildings.



F.115





F.116

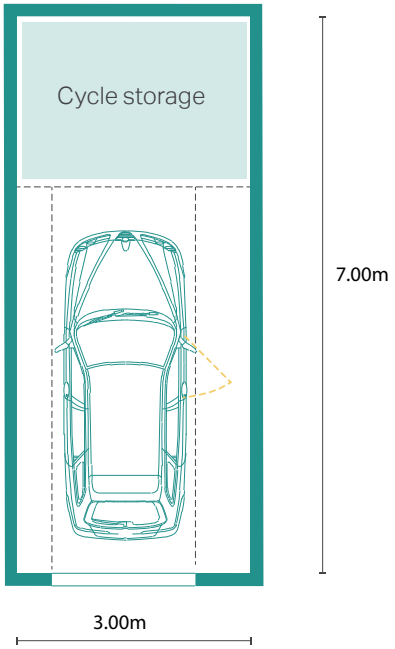
Figure 115:
Sheffield cycle stands for visitors and cycle parking illustration.

Figure 116:
Secure covered cycle store for two cycle storage illustration

SM. Safe movement

Houses with garages

- The minimum garage size should be 7m x 3m to allow space for cycle storage;
- Where possible cycle parking should be accessed from the front of the building either in a specially constructed enclosure or easily accessible garage;
- The design of any enclosure should integrate well with the surroundings;
- The bike should be removed easily without having to move the vehicle. New developments should promote cycling by providing more cycle routes and monitor the condition of the existing ones; and
- In the cases of apartments, cycle parking should be allocated at the basement or ground floor.



F.117

Figure 117:
Indicative layout of a garage with a cycle storage area

SM 05. Legibility[1] and signage

A legible and well signposted place is easier for the public to understand as people can orient themselves with visual landmarks and direct routes. Being able to navigate around a place makes people feel safer as well as offering a more pleasant living environment that functions well. Signage is an important element to Abbots Langley Village local character.

- Abbots Langley Parish should use a variety of easily identifiable landmarks, gateways and focal points such as listed buildings located on the High Street and the significant green space like Leavesden Country Park to create visual links and establish a clear hierarchy between different places;

1. Legibility means the way a place is laid out so that it is accessible and easily understood by those using it. Legibility can be improved by arranging the focal points, landmarks or high-quality trees within the settlement in a way that people can navigate the area, easily.

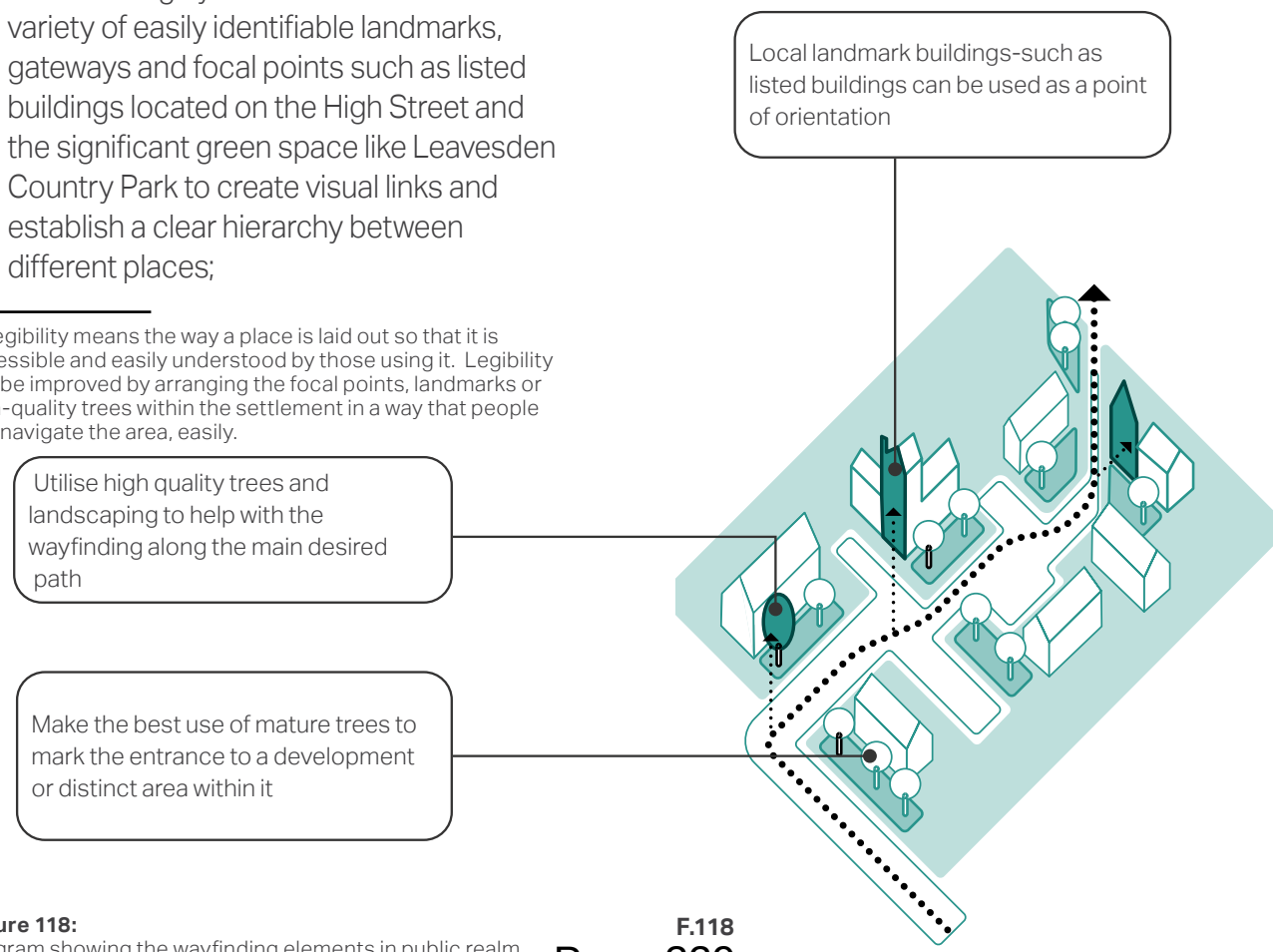


Figure 118:
Diagram showing the wayfinding elements in public realm

F.118

- The existing landmarks within the Parish such as Church of the Ascension in Bedmond, St Lawrence Church in Abbots Langley Village, etc., should be respected as key character assets that enhance the legibility of the area.
- Existing landmarks and wayfinding should be complemented by new development providing distinctive architectural elements around gateways, junctions and points of interest or orientation;
- New developments should be designed around a series of nodal points focusing on the relationship with the existing character areas as well as the surrounding landscape;
- Wayfinding must be clearly established throughout the village, particularly along pedestrian and cycle routes and should be designed to complement and not clutter the public realm; and
- New signage design must be easy to read. Elements likes languages, fonts, text sizes, colours and symbols should be clear and concise, and avoid confusion; and
- Box signs[2] should generally be avoided and signwritten fascias preferred.

F.119

F.120

F.121

Figure 119:
Abbots Langley Village Centre signage

Figure 120:
Church of St Paul a Grade II* listed building in Langleybury and Hunton Bridge Character Area

Figure 121:
The Church of the Ascension

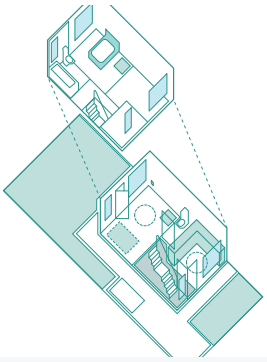
2. A sign with a solid frame to which plastic, metal or simple sign panels are attached on top of shop fronts.

3 BU. Buildings

4.4 Buildings (BU)

New developments should encourage different housing types to reflect different size, type and tenure of housing needs for a range of people including but not limited to families with children, older people, people with disabilities, travellers, people who rent their home and people wishing to commission or build their own home.

Development must seek to provide housing with standard design principles, innovative housing solutions and appropriate levels of space within the dwellings. Modern houses need to provide adequate storage spaces, as well as some consideration of how people might choose to work in the future.



BU 01. Lifetime homes

BU 02. Scale form and massing

BU 03. Building proportion

BU 04. Aspect & orientation

BU 05. Enclosure

BU 06. Boundary treatment

BU. Buildings

BU 07. Building line & setback

BU 08. Roofline

BU 09. Corner buildings

BU 10. Active frontage

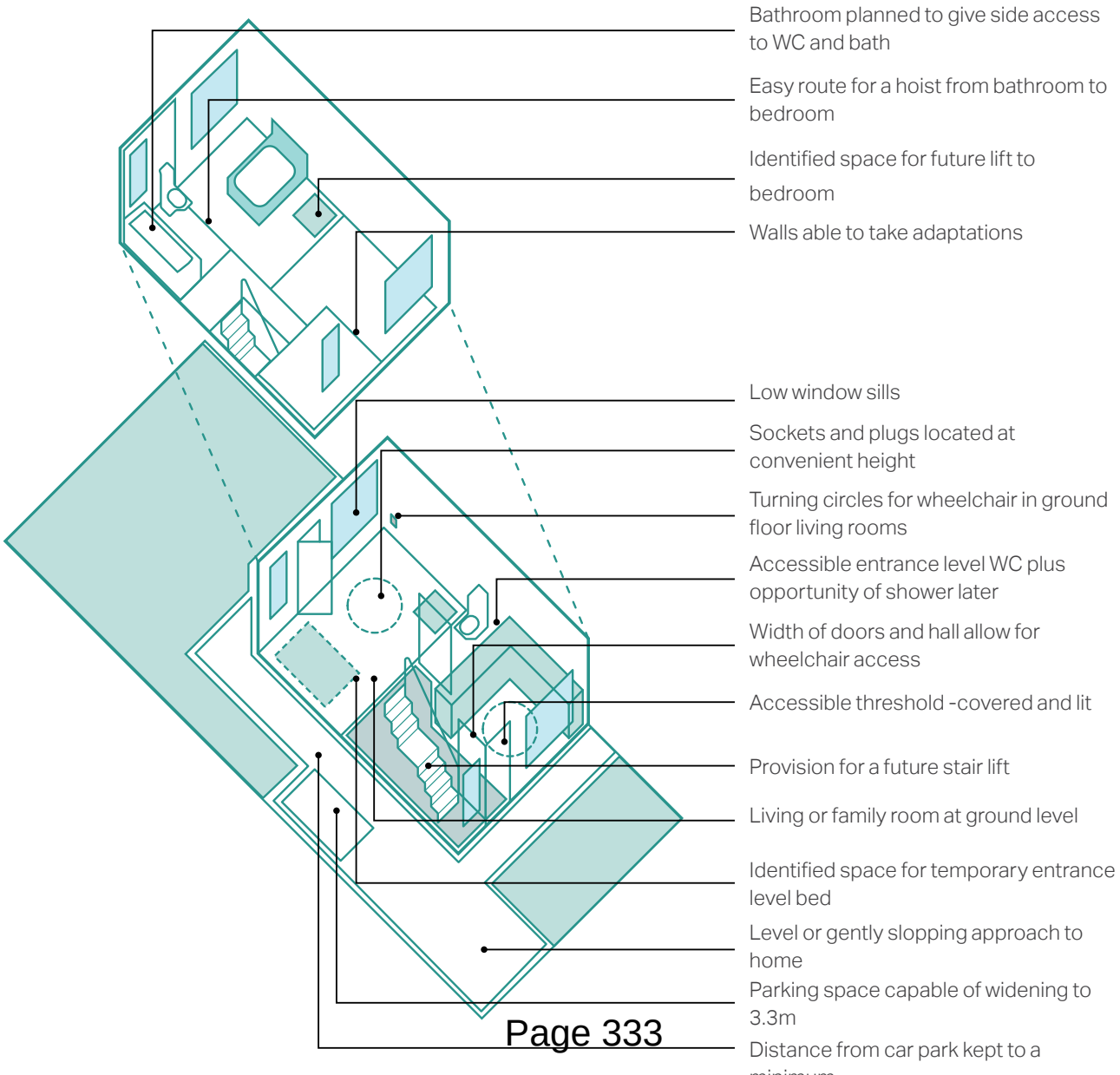
BU 11. Well defined public & private space

BU 12. Extension & alteration

BU 01. Lifetime homes

Houses should be designed to meet the differing and changing needs of households and people's physical abilities over their entire lifetime. One way to achieve this is to incorporate Lifetime Homes Standards design criteria in the design of new homes and to assess whether they can be retrofitted in existing properties.

The diagram on this page illustrates the main principles of inclusivity, accessibility, adaptability and sustainability.



BU 02. Scale, form and massing

The scale, form and massing of buildings are important to the character of a place; therefore, the existing context needs to be considered and new development needs to react sensitively to preserve and enhance the best characteristics of a place ensuring a harmonious relationship with neighbouring buildings, spaces and streets.

Building heights within Abbots Langley are very consistent, with the majority of the buildings being two-storey.

- The scale and massing of new buildings should be consistent with the form and massing of neighbouring properties;
- New developments should seek to respond to the surrounding context by using similar configurations with a modern interpretation, if appropriate. Buildings and developments should provide high-quality, attractive, modern homes using modern materials that are still in keeping with the local character;
- The height of new buildings should respond to the surrounding context and should not be over-bearing or dominant in the existing street scene; and
- Development within Abbots Langley should be of a scale and design to reinforce the locally distinctive character of each character area.

Figure 122:
Compact terraced houses along High Street in Abbots Langley Village

Figure 123:
Semi- detached properties built with mix of pebbledash and red brick in Leavesden Character Area

Figure 124:
A bungalow with hipped roof on Toms Lane

BU 03. Building proportion

The relationships between the building and its elements can provide visual interest and enhance the local character.

- The proportions of a building's elements should be related to each other as well as the scale and proportion of the building;
- The proportions should be dictated by and respond to the type of activity proposed as well as the composition of the existing streetscape;
- The front elevation of the buildings must be arranged in an orderly way to avoid creating cluttered façades; and
- Features such as windows, doors and solid walls should create vertical and horizontal rhythms along the façade providing variety.

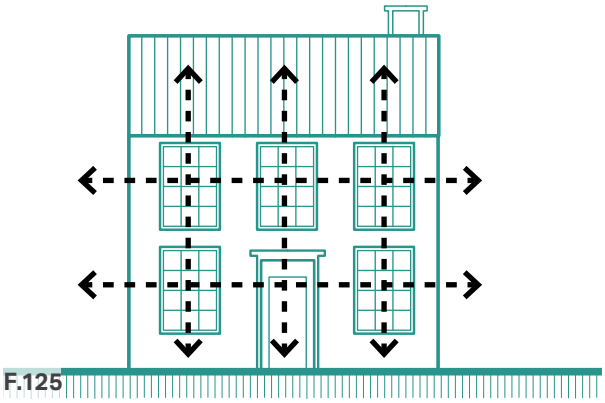


Figure 125:
Elevation showing typical building proportion in a detached house.

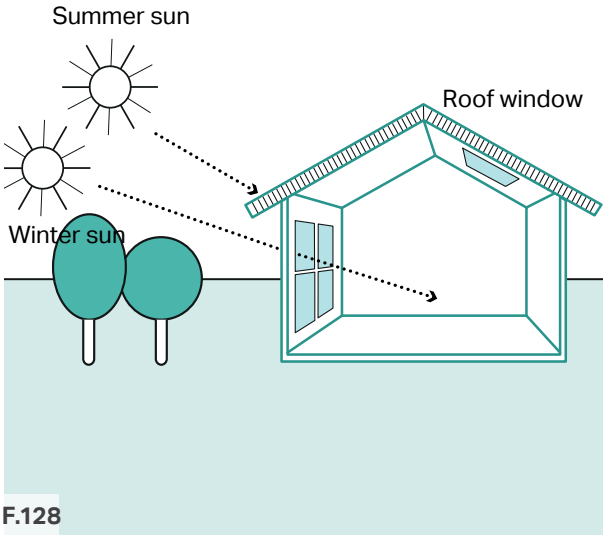
Figure 126:
The building proportion shown on Breakspear Place

Figure 127:
The building proportion in Leavesden.

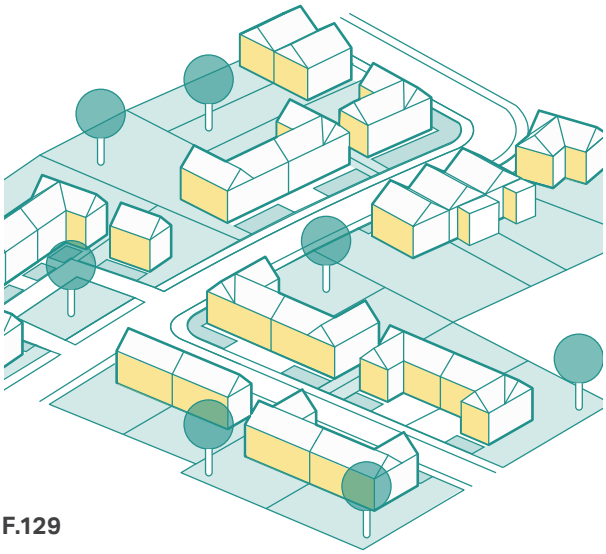
BU 04. Aspect and orientation

Buildings should be designed to maximise solar gain, daylight and sun penetration, while avoiding overheating. Subject to topography and the clustering of existing buildings, they should be orientated to incorporate passive solar design principles. These principles include:

- One of the main glazed elevations should be within 30° due south to benefit from solar heat gain. Any north-facing façades might have a similar proportion of window to wall area to minimise heat loss on this cooler side (see Figure 128);
- If houses are not aligned east-west, rear wings could be included so that some of the property benefits from solar passive gain (see Figure 129);
- Homes should be designed to avoid overheating through optimisation of glazed areas, natural ventilation strategies via passive/ non mechanical design measures. The natural ventilation strategies include high- and low- level openings, longer roof overhangs deep window reveals and external louvers/shutters to provide shading in hotter summer months (see Figure 128);
- All new residential units should be dual aspect, unless provision of dual aspect



F.128



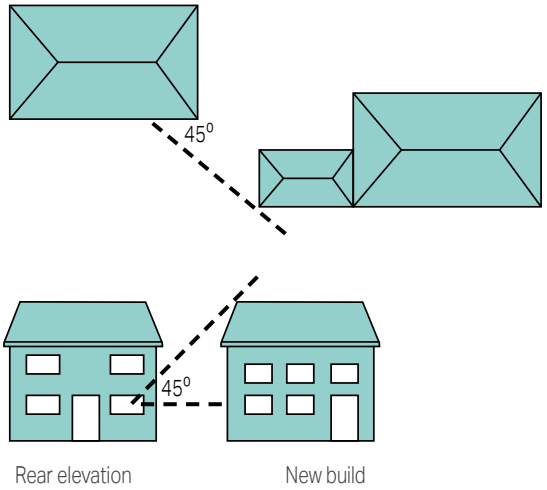
F.129

Figure 128:
The use of roof window, pitch roof, location and size of windows in favour of maximising solar gain

Figure 129:
Elevations that would benefit from passive solar gain

is demonstrated to be impossible or unfavourable[1]. North facing single aspect units should be avoided or mitigated with the use of reflective light or roof windows;

- Providing solar panel on roof of south facing buildings recommended to enhance energy efficiency and sustainability (see Section 6);
- Minimise the degree to which the development aspect faces onto main roads or other significant source of air pollution and/or noise and vibration, which would preclude opening windows; and
- Two storey detached and semi-detached dwellings should not intrude into a 45 degree splay line drawn from the corner of an adjacent residential property. This principle is dependent on the spacing and relative positions of the dwellings and consideration will also be given to the juxtaposition of properties, land levels and the position of windows and extensions on neighbouring properties.



F.130

Figure 130:
The 45% rule ensures that adequate levels of daylight can be maintained.

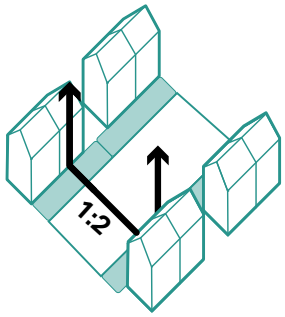
1. Part 1: Preferred Policy Options, Three Rivers Local Plan

BU 05. Enclosure

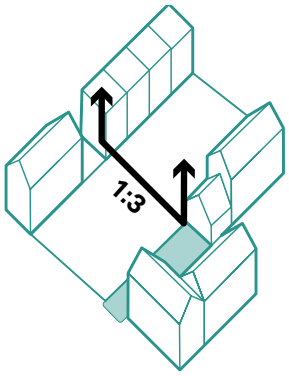
Enclosure is the relationship between public spaces and the buildings or other features that surround them. A more cohesive and attractive urban form is achieved where this relationship is in proportion.

The enclosure ratio varies considerably across the parish, depending on the age of the development and the role and function of the space around which the buildings are clustered. The following principles serve as general guidelines that should be considered to achieve a satisfactory sense of enclosure:

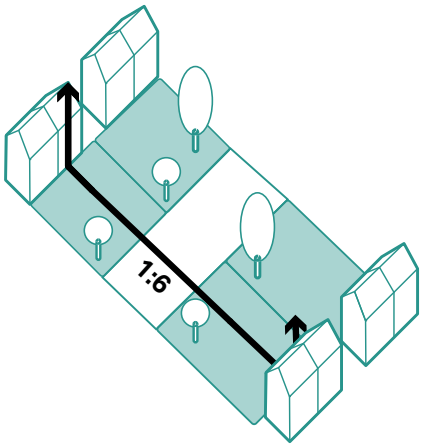
- Façades should have an appropriate ratio between the width of the street and the building height;
- Corner buildings[1] are placed in important locations and at the intersection of two streets;
- Excessively narrow gaps between buildings should be avoided. Buildings should be either detached/ semi-detached (with adequate side access to rear gardens) or properly linked (in the form of terraced housings, which may also have alley ways or covered walkways built into the structure of the buildings);



F.131



F.132



F.133

Figure 131:
Enclosure ratio on Bridge Road in Langleybury and Hunton Bridge Character Area is about 1:2

Figure 132:
Enclosure on High Street in Abbots Langley Village Character Area. The enclosure ratio is typically 1:3

Figure 133:
Enclosure ratio on Toms Lane in Gade Valley Character Area is more than 1:6

1. Corner buildings have two main facades facing the street.

BU. Buildings

- Building lines should run parallel to the back of the pavement;
- In places with lower density, the sense of enclosure is provided from the use of natural elements such as trees and hedges; and
- In the case of terraced buildings, it is recommended that a variety of plot widths, and façade alignments should be considered during the design process to create an attractive villagescape.

Figure 134:
Enclosure ratio on Bridge Road in Langleybury and Hunton Bridge Character Area is about 1:2

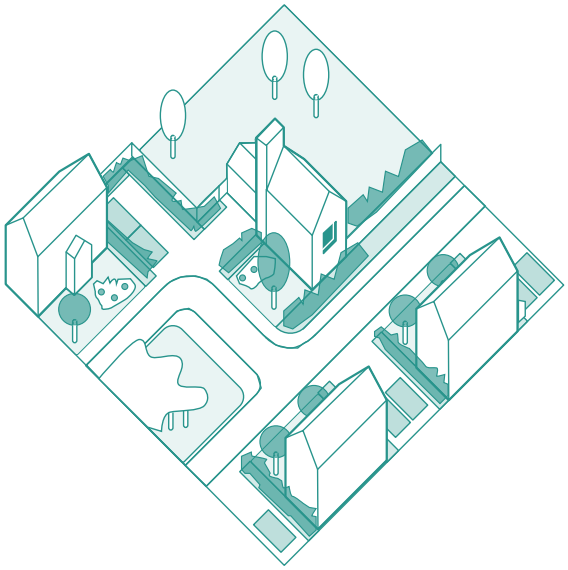
Figure 135:
Enclosure on High Street in Abbots Langley Village Character Area. The enclosure ratio is typically 1:3

Figure 136:
Enclosure ratio on Tanners Hill in the Leavesden Character Area is more than 1:6

BU 06. Boundary treatment

Boundary treatments, such as hedges, low walls and fences should be included in design proposals to clearly distinguish public and private spaces.

- High walls and fences or railings on the front elevations should be avoided, especially in the conservation areas;
- Boundary treatments should reflect locally distinctive forms and materials, consisting mainly of red brick low walls and wooden fences, but also the occasional use of hedgerows and trees;
- Development shall identify existing boundary treatments in the context of the site and consider appropriate boundaries for new development to ensure integration with the existing context; and
- Existing boundary trees and hedgerow should be retained and should be reinforced with native species.



F.137

F.138

Figure 137:
Diagram showing the boundary treatment such as low wall and hedges in front of houses

Figure 138:
The mix of red- brick low wall, flowers and hedges on Toms Lane

BU. Buildings

F.139

F.140

F.141

F.142

Figure 139:
The use of trees, flowers and hedges on High Street in Bedmond

Figure 140:
The mix of hedges and low wall built with stone on Gallows Hill Lane

Figure 141:
Wooden fence and hedges defined the boundary of the flats on Shirley Road in Leavesden Character Area

Figure 142:
Railing as boundary treatment in Bedmond

BU 07. Building line and setback

The use of continuous and/or consistent building lines and setback distances contribute to the overall character of the area and the sense of enclosure of the streets and public spaces. Continuous building lines with a minimum gap create a strong distinction between public and private spaces, and provide definition to the public realm. Where buildings are more generously set back from the carriageway, the threshold spaces should be well landscaped.

- To ensure sufficient street enclosure private front threshold should have a modest depth and accommodate a small garden or area for plantation;
- With modern requirements for waste separation and recycling, the number of household bins has increased. It is important that these bins are accommodated in ways that allow convenient access, but without creating clutter in the street or private space in front of building. Where possible, recycling and refuse bins should be accommodated out of public view;
- Low to medium densities in residential areas can vary setbacks in order to respond to the landscape context and the more open character of the area; and
- Front gardens can be much deeper in response to topography or to respond to the existing character area. This treatment can also helps to create a softer transition between countryside, green spaces and built environment.

Figure 143:
Buildings with no setback on High Street in Abbots Langley Village

Figure 144:
A bungalow well set back on Toms Lane providing sufficient front garden and good visual impacts on Toms Lane

BU 08. Roofline

Traditional buildings within the village are unified by their simplicity of form, with gables and pitched roofs which, combined with variations in the height of eaves and ridge levels and the number of storeys, make an important contribution to defining the character of the area.

- Varied rooflines can help to create a more visually appealing and distinctive villagescape;
- The scale of the roof should be in proportion with the dimensions of the building with subtle changes in the roofline to avoid monotonous elevations; and
- Rooflines should respect the view corridors and not obstruct them. Also be mindful of the topography and existing landmarks when designing the new development.

Figure 145:
Subtle changes in roofline in Leavesden Character Area

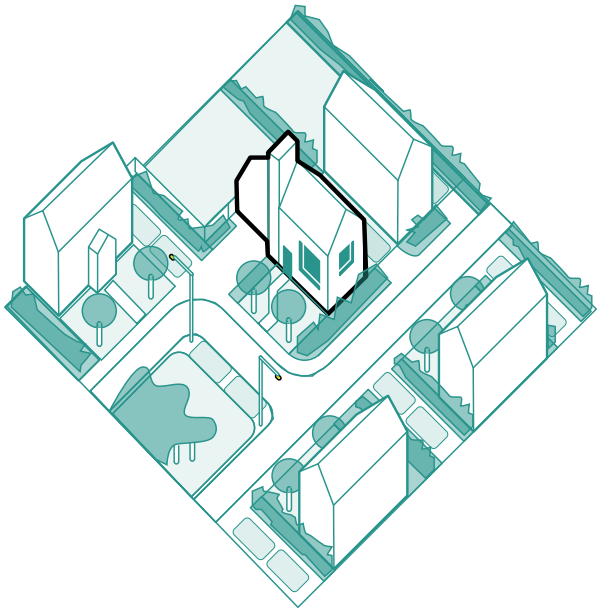
Figure 146:
Various roofscape on Toms Lane in Gade Valley Character Area

Figure 147:
The roofscape rhythm in Abbots Langley Village

BU 09. Corner buildings

An important villagescape principle is for buildings to properly address corners of development parcels. Where corner sites are visually prominent, buildings should define the corner architecturally.

- Buildings should have active frontages (see BU.10, below) on both aspects of a corner plot, with prominent entrances and windows on each elevation, wherever possible;
- On corners which are less visually prominent, such as within the lower density residential areas, continuous built frontage should address the corner by using a series of linked dwellings where possible; and
- When a terraced, detached or semi-detached house faces out onto the corner, the buildings should have the main entrance and habitable room windows facing both sides to create activity, and should overlook the street. This building can also be taller or have a distinctive architectural element to ensure a greater presence.



F.148

F.149

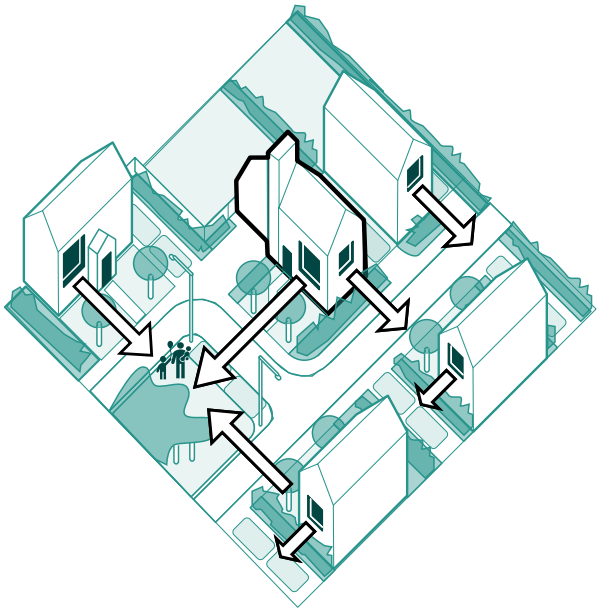
Figure 148:
The diagram showing the corner building with two active frontages

Figure 149:
The corner building at the junction of Popes Road and Breakspeare Road

BU 10. Active frontage

Active frontages[1] bring life and vitality to streets and public spaces.

- Introducing regular doors, windows, front gardens and front parking, providing it does not dominate, can stimulate activity and social interactions;
- Narrow frontages with a vertical rhythm can create a more attractive and interesting streetscape, while articulation on façades and use of bays and porches can create a welcoming feeling; and
- Exposed blank façades facing the public realm must be avoided. They should normally be fully fenestrated.



F.150

F.151

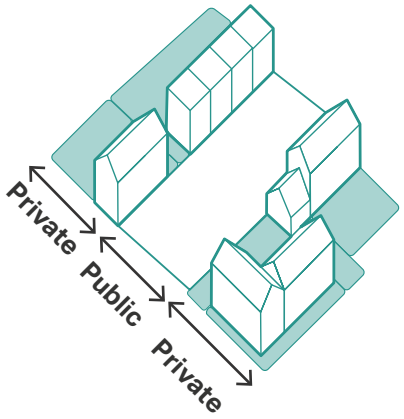
Figure 150:
The active frontages with a well-supervised public realm.

Figure 151:
The bay windows on a row of locally listed buildings provide an attractive streetscape

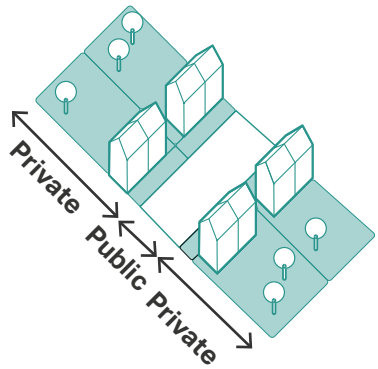
1. Active frontage refers to street frontages where there is an active visual engagement between those in the street and those on the ground of a building. Introducing windows and entrances can enhance the vitality of public spaces.

BU 11. Well defined public and private space

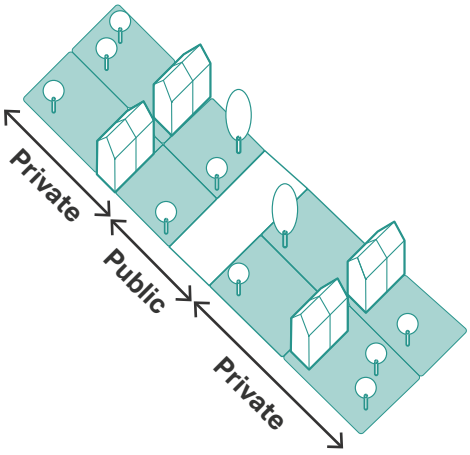
- Setbacks from the street and front garden landscaping, together with more detailed architectural design should seek to balance privacy for front living rooms with natural surveillance of the streets, and the need for street enclosure. The front garden depth should normally be a minimum of 3m from the front elevation of the dwelling and be permanently screened by a wall, fence or hedging, except where the historic form dictates that buildings should be aligned immediately to the rear of the footway;
- The privacy distance between the backs of the properties should be a minimum of 22m[1]. This should be achieved between the faces of single or two storey buildings backing each other. Distances should be greater between buildings in excess of two storeys (especially dwellings/ flats) When this is not possible, the layout should be a back to-side arrangement, or use single-aspect buildings (north facing single aspect units should be avoided) to avoid creating overlooking issues;
- Appropriate boundary treatments including low walls, hedges and fencing/ railings must be incorporated into design proposals to clearly distinguish public and private space. Reliance should not be placed on high screening fences or wall (2m and above) where these would form a dominant feature;



F.152



F.153



F.154

Figure 152:
Public and private spaces on High Street in Abbots Langley Village Character Area

Figure 153:
Public and private spaces on High Street in Pimlico, Bedmond and Leavesden Character Areas

Figure 154:
Public and private spaces on Toms Lane in Gade valley Character Area

1. Part 1: Preferred Policy Options, Three Rivers Local Plan

- Private open amenity space is important to wellbeing and is, in the form of back gardens, also part of the character of Abbots Langley Parish. All new houses will be expected to have usable outside amenity space, with the exception of the High Street in Abbots Langley Character Area where more compact building typologies, may be appropriate; and
- New residential development should provide private amenity space within the curtilage of the development in accordance with the following indicative minimum level[2];

Housing typologies	Amenity space area
Houses	
2 bed house	45sqm
3 bed house	60sqm
4 bed house	75sqm
Additional bedrooms	15sqm each
Flats	
1 bed flat	15sqm
2 or more bed flat	25sqm
Specialists and supported housing for older people	
15sqm per bedspace to be provided communally	

- The standards provide guidance for all new residential development. However, in some situations, such as where existing buildings in village centres are converted to residential use, there might be challenges in meeting these standards. Some flexibility might be applied by proposing additional living space or the provision of winter gardens.

F.155

F.156

F.157

Figure 155:
The two- storey properties without front gardens along High Street in Abbots Langley Village Character Area

Figure 156:
Well- kept front garden with more than 3m width. Public and private spaces on Gallows Hill Lane

Figure 157:
Public and private spaces on Toms Lane in Gade Valley Character Area

2. Part 1 preferred policy options - Three Rivers District Council

BU 12. Extension and alteration

There are multiple ways to create extra space within a building using different types of extensions. Extensions must be designed to an appropriate scale and be secondary to the original building. The pitch and form of a building's roof forms part of its character; therefore, extensions should respond by enhancing the existing character. Extensions should consider the materials, architectural features and proportions of the original building and designed to complement these existing elements.

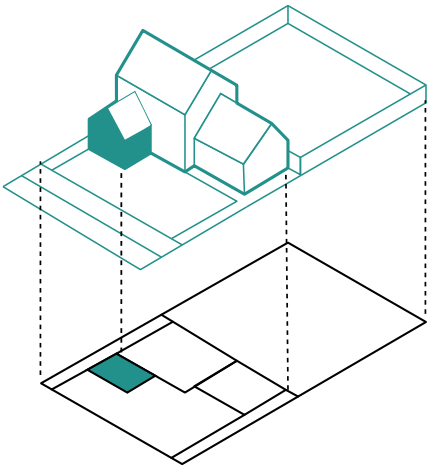
Many household extensions are covered by permitted development rights, meaning that they do not need planning permission. There are exceptions, though, that will be relevant in Abbots Langley Parish, such as conservation areas. Check the latest guidance here: https://www.planningportal.co.uk/info/200130/common_projects/17/extensions.

- The character of the existing building, along with its scale, form, materials and details should be taken into consideration when preparing proposals for alterations and/or extensions;
- External extensions should respect or enhance the visual appearance of the original buildings and the character of the wider street scene;
- Extensions should be subordinate in term of scale and form and shall not be visually dominant or taller than the existing building;
- Extensions should be recessed or in line with the existing building façade and shall use lower ridge and eaves levels to ensure that the length and width of the extension are less than the dimensions of the original building;
- Extensions should be designed using materials and details to match the existing building or alternately, use contrasting materials and details with a contemporary design approach. However, in either case extensions should create a harmonious composition overall and a strong degree of unity with the original building;
- Extensions should safeguard the privacy and daylight amenity of neighbouring properties;
- Extensions should retain on-site parking capacity and a viable garden area to meet the needs of future occupiers; and
- Extensions of existing buildings should help to reduce carbon emissions by complying with high energy efficiency standards and using low energy design.

Front extensions

These extensions are generally not acceptable. If proposed, in all cases front extensions should take the form of the existing building, mirroring the roof pitch, replicate or have lower cornice height and their ridge should be below the existing ridge height.

The extension can project maximum 2 metres beyond the front façade and will not cover more than 50% of the front elevation.

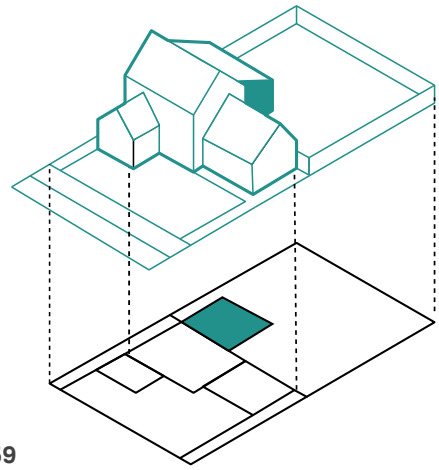


F.158

Rear extensions

Single storey rear extensions are generally the easiest way to extend a house and provide extra living space. Generally, the maximum depth should be 3.6m, or 4m in the case of a detached dwelling[1]. The extension should be set below any first-floor windows and designed to minimise any effects of neighbouring properties, such as blocking day light. A flat roof is generally acceptable for a single storey rear extension.

Double storey rear extensions are not common as they usually affect neighbours' access to light and privacy, however, sometimes the size and style of the property allows for a two-storey extension. In these cases, the roof form and pitch should reflect the original building and sit slightly lower than the main ridge of the building.



F.159

Figure 158:
An example diagram of a front extension

Figure 159:
An example diagram of a rear extension

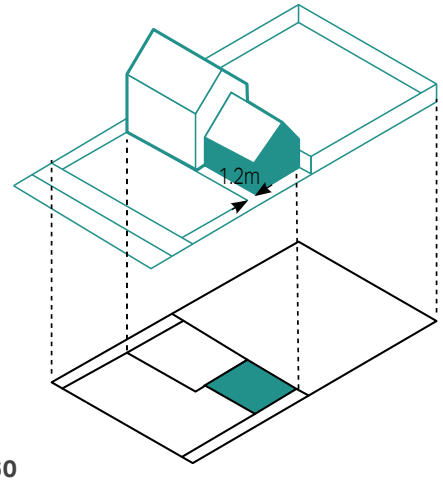
1. Part 1: Preferred Policy Options, Three Rivers Local Plan

Side extensions

Side extensions are a popular way to extend a building to create extra living space. However, if poorly designed they can negatively affect the appearance of the street scene, disrupting the rhythm of spaces between buildings. Single storey and double storey side extensions should be set back from the main building and complement the materials and detailing of those on the original building, particularly along the street elevation. The roof of the extension should harmonise with that of the original building; flat roofs should be avoided. Side windows should also be avoided unless it can be demonstrated that they would not result in overlooking of neighbouring properties. Proximity to the flank boundary in single storey extensions will be individually assessed.

In order to prevent a terracing effect and maintain an appropriate spacing between properties in keeping with the local character, where appropriate, the following should be taken into consideration when proposing two storey side extensions:

- First floor extensions (i.e. over a garage or previous ground floor extension) shall be a minimum of 1.2m from the flank boundary.
- Two storey extensions maybe positioned on the flank boundary provided that the first floor element is set in by a minimum of 1.2m[1].



F.160

Figure 160:
An example diagram of a side extension

1. Part 1: Preferred Policy Options, Three Rivers Local Plan

4 RH. Regeneration of key centres

4.5 Regeneration of key centres (RK)

In order to enhance the character of Abbots Langley Village High Street and other key centres, different interventions need to be considered to enhance the place quality and functional role of these locations. The guidance and codes in this regard are a mix of use, public realm, streets and movement, shop front, infill, signage and wayfinding.

The following pages elaborate the guidance and codes in respect of the village and local centres, the aim being to bring benefit to both residents and businesses in the heart of the community.

RK 01. Mix of use

RK 02. Public realm

RK 03. Streets and movement

RK 04. Shop fronts

RK 05. Infill

RK 06. Signage and wayfinding

04

RK 01. Mix of use

Abbots Langley Parish has a number of social and community facilities that contribute to the character of the village such as Manor House, Henderson Hall, Council chambers, Tanners Wood Hall. In addition, various sports facilities are found around the Parish such as a Multi use Games Area (MuGA) located adjacent to Manor House, Evergreen Football Club on South Way, Bedmond Football Club, Langleybury Cricket Club in Hunton Bridge etc. These facilities offer a high level of engagement for local people.

- Any proposed social and community infrastructure shall respond to the main place making principles identified in each character area as well as being sympathetic with the existing architectural style;
- Public houses represent a social focal point for communities and community activities and form part of the character and charm of the village. Where they exist, they should be protected and their setting and architectural quality retained and enhanced. New public houses should be designed to fit into the existing context and harmonise with the wider qualities of the proposed development;
- Similarly, places of worship such as chapels, vestries and mission halls shall be carefully designed as part of the specific character area where they are located;

F.161

F.162

F.163

Figure 161:
Abbots Langley Cricket Club on Manor House Grounds

Figure 162:
Henderson Memorial Hall on High Street in Abbots Langley

Figure 163:
The Hertfordshire County Council Library on High Street, a well- designed modern building sit at the heart of the Conservation Area

RK. Regeneration of key centres

- Changing the function of retail and other commercial space to residential use, within village and local centres, should be avoided, wherever possible;
- In terms of parking provision, it shall be provided in such a way that it does not create additional congestion nor create a sense of parking dominating the public realm. The prospect of sharing parking areas with existing facilities in the village centre should be considered (see Appendix, page 133, Policy DM13 Parking); and
- Signage and wayfinding must be used to highlight options for sustainable transport modes, promoting walking and cycling. This would potentially increase movement and activity in the streets, enhancing natural surveillance and therefore, reducing the potential for antisocial behaviour.

F.164

F.165

F.166

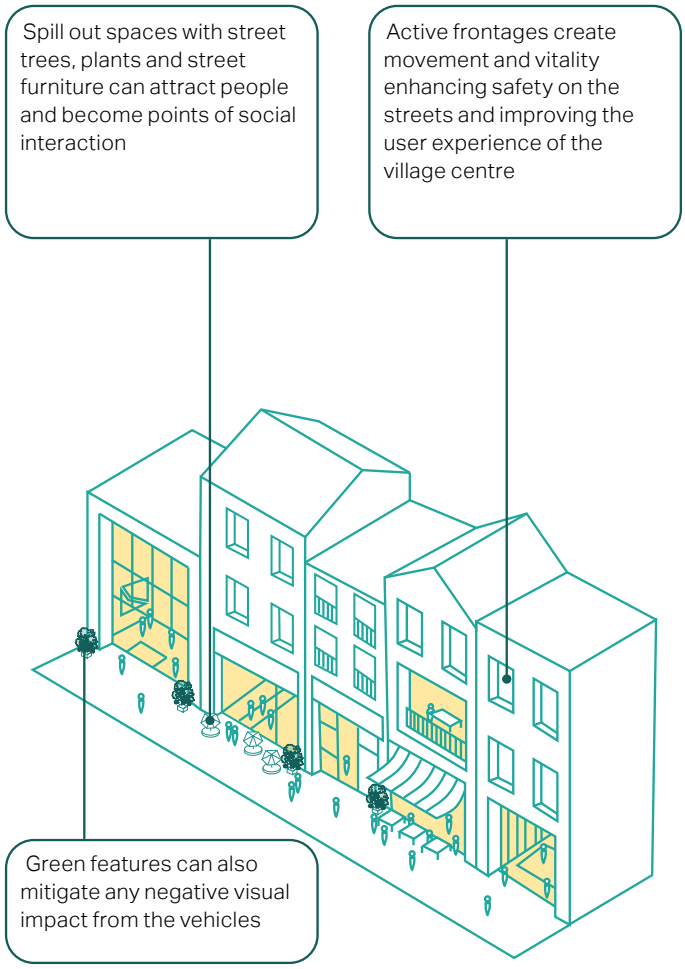
Figure 164:
The Bell on Bedmond High Street

Figure 165:
St Saviours Catholic Church

Figure 166:
Woodlands cafe in Leavesden Character Area

RK 02. Public realm

- The public realm is physically, visually and culturally accessible to the public and is vital to the quality and identity of Abbots Langley Parish;
- Well-connected, high-quality public spaces are essential to the long-term success of the village and local centres in Abbots Langley Parish, because they are the place where social and commercial exchange happens and are the forum in which the community expresses itself;
- The public realm within the village centres should be co-ordinated to strengthen local distinctiveness, enhance accessibility and aid wayfinding;
- Active frontage adds to the vitality and vibrancy of the streets and public realm and enhances the user experience of the village centre. The design guidelines seek to create an active commercial centre by promoting a vibrant street scene; and
- High levels of natural surveillance should be provided to create vibrancy and vitality within village and local centres, particularly at ground level. Use of larger well-proportioned windows or floor to ceiling windows on the ground floors help achieve adequate overlooking. The fenestration on floors above should be well proportioned and aligned with the ground floor.



F.167

Figure 167:
Diagram to illustrate some of the design guidance related to the village centre development

RK. Regeneration of key centres

- Pavement width in the village and local centres should be of a comfortable width for pedestrians, especially for those with disabilities, as well as wide enough to create active frontages with spaces for spill out seating and display areas for shops, cafes and restaurants. Pavements widths should be at least 2m at key points, such as along the High Street in Abbots Langley Village;
- Street furniture should be co-ordinated and well organised to avoid clutter and create a more attractive and coherent public realm; and
- Pedestrian flow and access within the village and local centres should be maximised to create the feeling of a shared space where pedestrians are the primary user. Well-designed traffic calming measures should be used to manage traffic speed and enhance pedestrian safety.

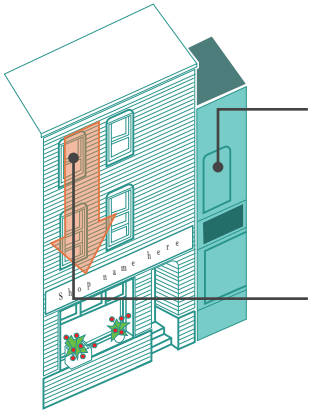
Figure 168:
The public realm adjacent to Abbots Langley Methodist Church

Figure 169:
The flower box and benches on the green verge along High Street creates a welcoming public realm

Figure 170:
The play area in Leavesden Country Park next to Woodlands Cafe provides a vibrant public realm

RK 03. Shop fronts

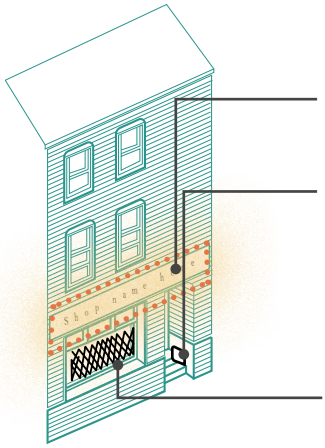
- The fascia is the most important area of a shopfront for advertising the business. Maintain the signage within the established proportions and confines of the fascia board. Large box signs or additional flat boards should be avoided as they create disproportionate depth and height;
- Box signs should generally be avoided and signwritten fascias preferred;
- The most appropriate signage at fascia level is individual letters applied or painted directly onto the fascia board;
- Hanging signs should be appropriately sized in relation to the building and street. They should not dominate the pavement space. They should use an appropriate material, shape, and form avoiding large box signs;
- Hanging signs should be held by slender, well-designed brackets using a high quality material;
- In the case of corporate brands, those should be sensitive to the existing context, size, scale, use materials and textures from the local vernacular of the area;
- Avoid using visually distinct sources of illumination that result in disproportionate signage, such as internally-illuminated box signs; and



Character & Design

Integrate the shop front with the surrounding streetscape. Consider adjacent buildings and typical details in the area

Incorporate the overall proportion, form, and scale of the building's upper floors into the design of the shop front

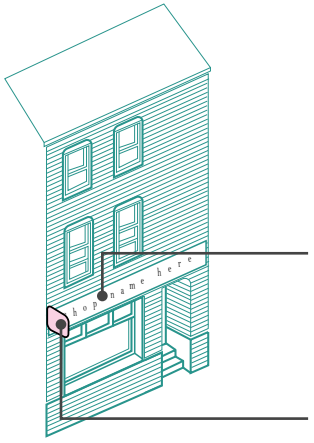


Lighting & Safety

Avoid using internally-illuminated box signs

Conceal alarms from the shop front façade and integrate them in the design

Avoid using external roller shutters and grilles. Favour the use of internal open grilles which cover only the glazed part of the shop front



Signage

Avoid unnecessary visual clutter

Signage should not be placed on upper floors

Use the fascia as the predominant position for signage

Hanging signs should be in proportion to the building and street and should not dominate pavements

- Avoid using external roller shutters and grilles. Favour the use of internal open grilles which cover only the glazed part of the shop front.

Good examples of shop front design

Stall riser

- A stall riser should be incorporated into the design for the full width of the shopfront, except for the door opening. The height of the stall riser should be between 0.3m and 1m.

Materials

- Window frames, doors, pilasters and fascias should be of timber construction with a painted finish and not a stained finish.

Panelling

- Any timber panelling used in doors, stall risers, pilasters or other elements of the shop front should comprise a constructional timber panel and should not comprise the application of timber beading to a flat timber surface.

Fascia

- The shop front design should include a full-width projecting fascia. The fascia should consist of a surrounding frame, creating an area for a shop-sign. Fascia with lettering of between 250mm and 300mm will read well from street level and from across the road; the size of the fascia is defined by the building typology or detailing, the font size should be proportionate to the fascia.

Lighting

- If lighting is incorporated into the design of the shop front, then it should comprise projecting light to create external illumination of the shop sign area.

Shutters

- If shutters and shutter boxes are incorporated into the design, then they should be placed internally, behind the shop front. When in an open position, shutters should not block the shop window opening.

Fascia should be projected with full width with shop sign lettering

F.171

Window frames, doors, pilasters and fascia should be of timber construction with paint finish and not stain finish instead of other inappropriate materials

Timber framing should be used as panelling for doors, windows, stall risers and other elements of shop front instead of metal material. Use of plastic or constructional timber should be avoided

F.172

Fascia should be projected full width with shop sign lettering between 250-300mm to read well. An hierarchy of lettering enhances the readability and effectiveness of the signage

Display should be organised to promote visual connection to the interior of the shop

Stall risers must be designed to full width of shop front and the height must be between 0.3-1.0m. Stall risers must be of timber or metal

Timber framing should be used as panelling for doors, windows, stall risers and other elements of shop front. Use of plastic or constructional timber should be avoided

Window frames, doors, pilasters and fascia should be of timber construction with paint finish and not stain finish

Figure 171:
An existing shop front in Abbots Langley Village

Figure 172:
A good example of shop front design

RK 04. Infill

Infill sites will vary in scale, context and location within a settlement. Any new infill can have significant impact on the character and appearance of the built environment. The following principles should be applied in any future infill site:

- Infill development should complement the street scene into which it is inserted. It does not need to mimic the existing styles, but its scale, massing and layout need to be in general conformity with the existing (this is particularly true for ridge/eave heights, especially for terraced or dense groupings of buildings);
- The building line of new development should be in conformity with the existing. Very often, with terraced or dense groupings, the building line will be exactly the same, but in other cases it might be acceptable that it closely aligns with the existing arrangement of buildings where there is an irregular, meandering building line; and
- The density of any new infill development should reflect its context and its location in the village (centre or edge), or in a smaller settlement nestled in a wider landscape. The optimum density will respond to surrounding densities whilst making efficient use of land.

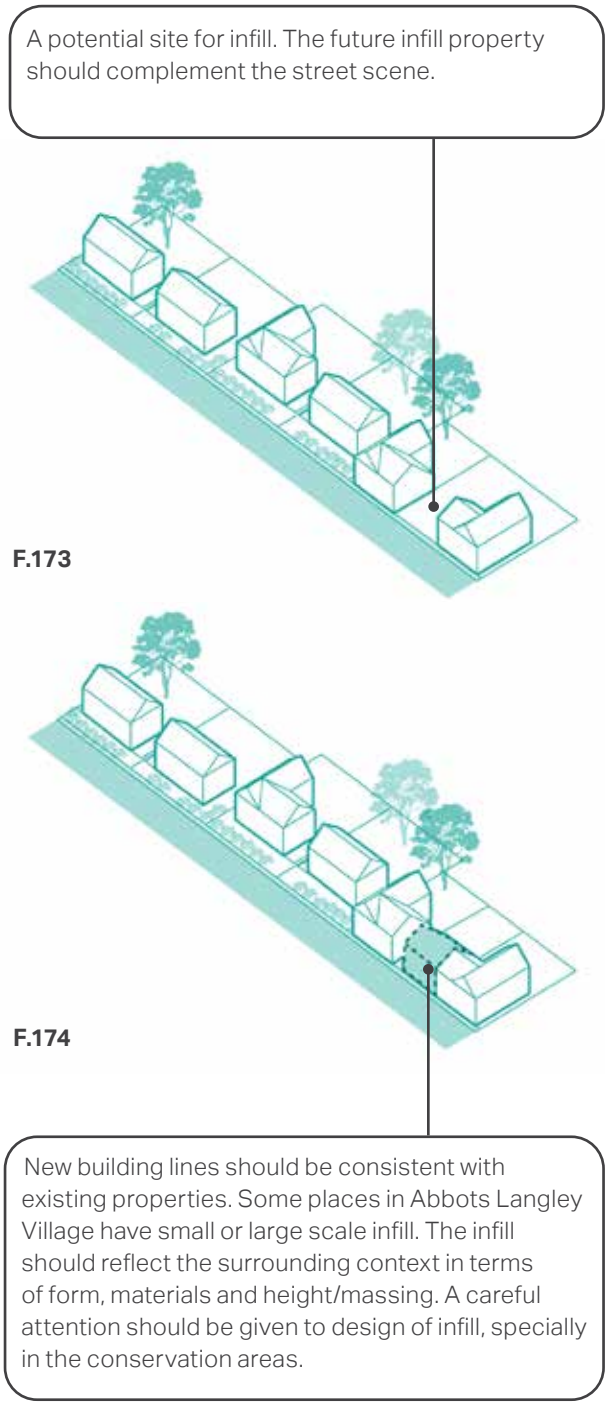


Figure 173:
An indicative diagram highlighting a site before infill

Figure 174:
An indicative diagram highlighting a site after infill

RK 05. Signage and wayfinding

When places are well signposted, they are easier for the public to understand and navigate. People feel safer when they can easily memorise places and navigate around them. It is easier for people to orientate themselves when the routes are direct, particularly for people with dementia and related cognitive and sensory challenges.

- A familiar and recognisable environment makes it easier for people to find their way around. For example, landmark buildings, trees, or signage totems are obvious and unambiguous features that could be added in new development;
- Buildings which are located at corners, crossroads or along a main road should play a significant role in navigation.
- At a local level, landmark elements could be a distinctive building, public art or even a significant tree;
- Providing signage around the Parish showing travel times for walking and cycling, will be beneficial for both visitors and residents.
- New signage design must be easy to read. Elements likes languages, fonts, text sizes, colours and symbols should be clear and concise, and avoid confusion;
- Signage should also help highlight existing and newly proposed footpaths and cycle lanes encouraging people to use them more; and
- Signage elements and techniques must be appropriate to the character of the area and be a nice fit to the existing architectural style and details.

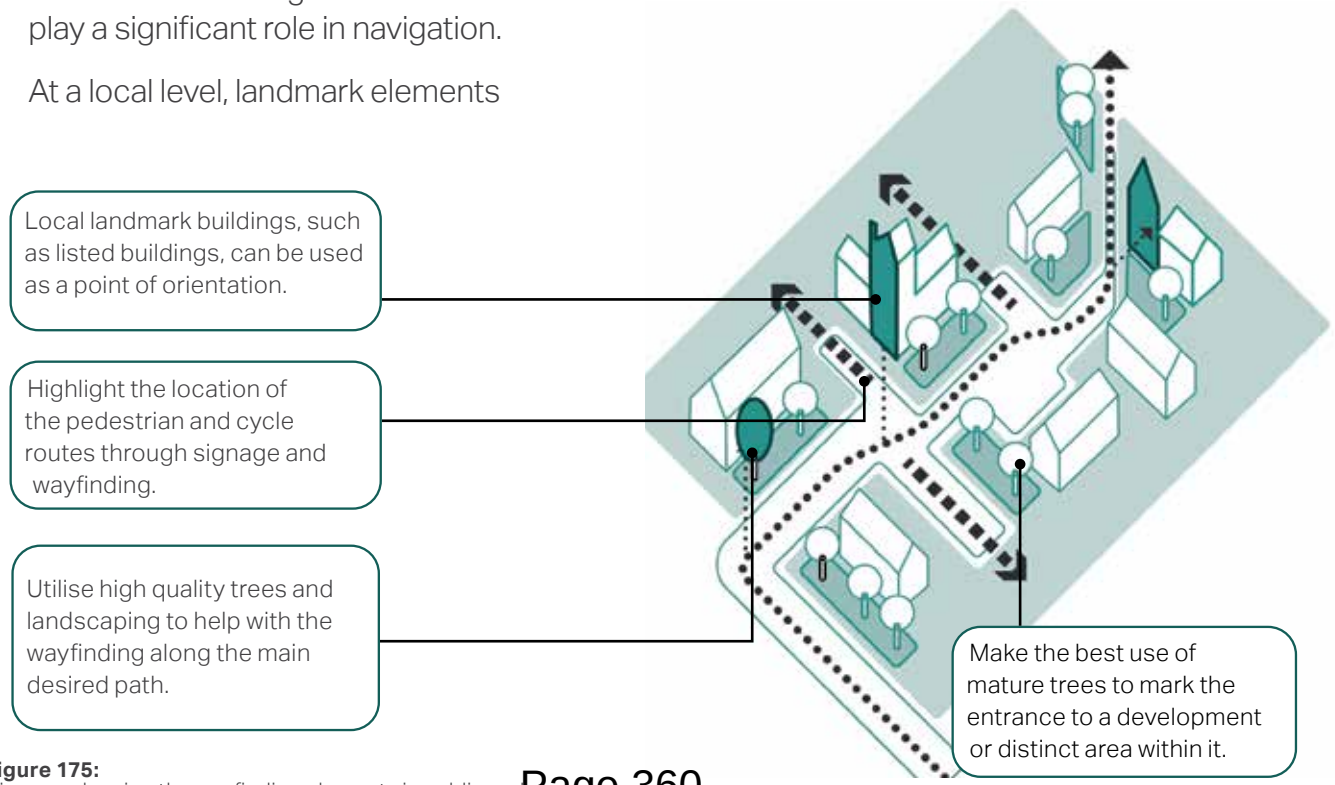


Figure 175:
Diagram showing the wayfinding elements in public realm

5 LC. Respecting the local character

4.6 Respecting the local character (LC)

A place's character can be made up of many different elements which come together to create a unique sense of place. Any proposal will need to respect the existing context as well as create attractive and resilient places that contribute positively to the village-scape, views and landscape setting of Abbots Langley Parish.

These design principles describe the elements that contribute to Abbots Langley Parish's character and new development should pay particular attention to the layout, form, scale, materials and detailing.

LC 01. Landscape & green spaces

LC 02. Views

LC 03. Architectural details

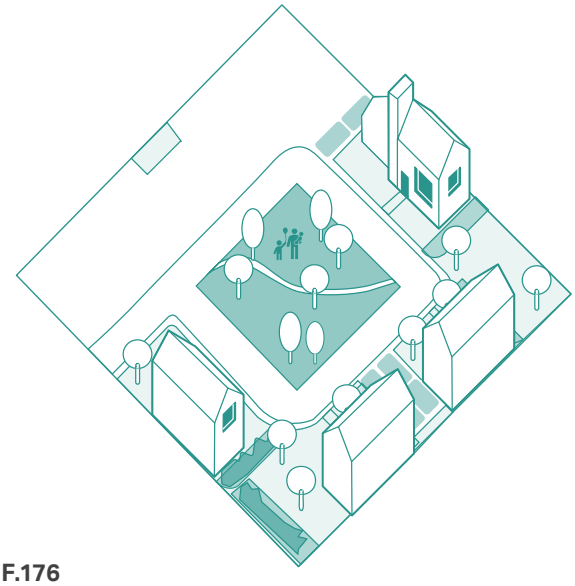
LC 04. Materials and colour palette

LC 05. Street lighting / dark skies

LC 01. Landscape and green spaces

Abbots Langley Parish has a good network of footpaths and wide range of green spaces. Future open spaces should be planned considering the following principles:

- Design new open space to incorporate existing landscape features with opportunities for habitat, natural play and recreation;
- Planting should be used to soften the mass of new built form. For example, a 'semi-natural' strip of planting of around 50 metres would be adequate for 2 rows of trees with a woodland footpath between;
- Green buffers can be a satisfactory transition between old and new neighbourhoods. This could take the form of a 'semi-natural' woodland strip, as above, or more formal open space like playing fields including those belonging to schools;
- All existing good quality woodland, hedgerows, trees and shrubs to be retained within the layout of the parks and enhanced with improved management;
- New trees, grassland and shrubs to be planted to supplement existing vegetation;
- Active frontages to face onto green spaces;
- Provide allotments or other community garden facilities where appropriate; and
- Allow for flexible use of the space allowing temporary uses to fluctuate with a changing programme of events and use.



F.176

Figure 176:
Green space at the heart of a development

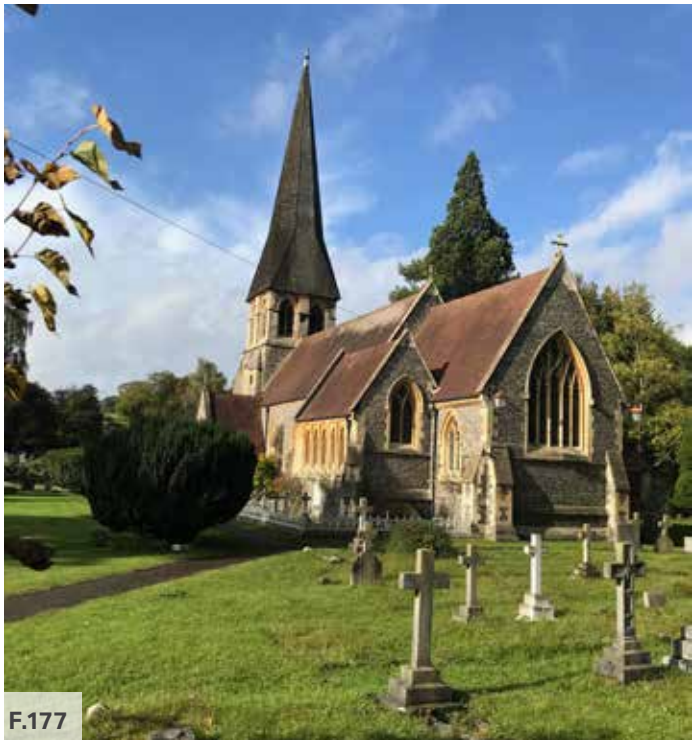
Figure 177:
The landscape in front of St Paul's Church in Langleybury (Photo by Abbots Langley Parish Council)

Figure 178:
Existing well- kept vegetation in Bedmond

Figure 179:
View to Grand Union Canal (Photo by Abbots Langley Parish Council)

Figure 180:
Horses Field near South Way and Langley Lane Play Area (Photo by Abbots Langley Parish Council)

Figure 181:
View to Leavesden Country Park (Photo by Abbots Langley Parish Council)


F.177

F.179

F.180

F.178

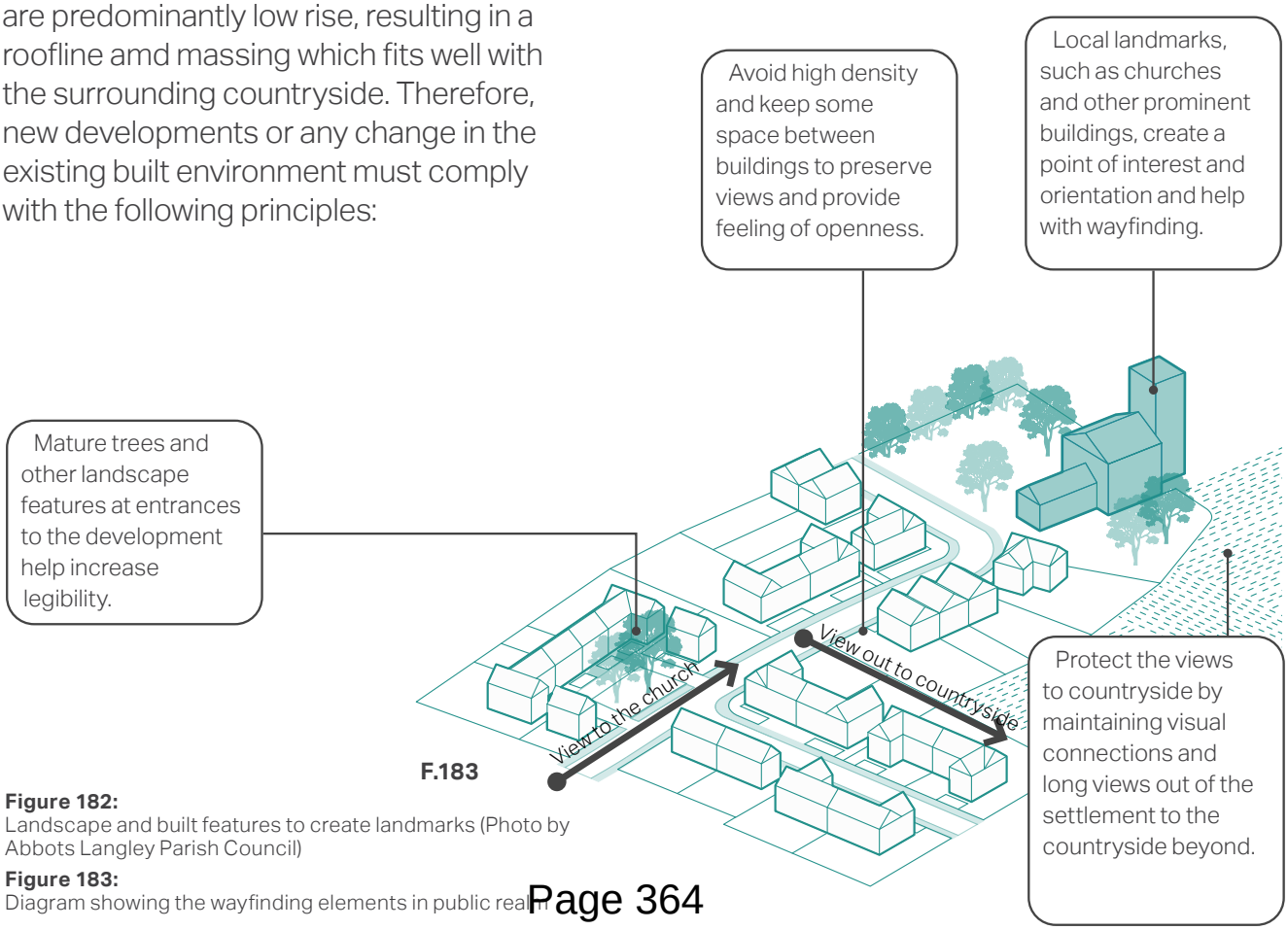
F.181

LC02.Views

One of the most important characteristics of Abbots Langley Parish is the significant number of listed buildings, many of which serve as landmarks within the villagescape and wider landscape. The natural landscape that surrounds the settlements also provides views of local significance, such as views to the Grand Union Canal or long- distance views to the countryside.

These landmarks and views need to be preserved in order to protect the identity and sense of place. Buildings in the parish are predominantly low rise, resulting in a roofline amd massing which fits well with the surrounding countryside. Therefore, new developments or any change in the existing built environment must comply with the following principles:

F.182



F.183

Figure 182:
Landscape and built features to create landmarks (Photo by Abbots Langley Parish Council)

Figure 183:
Diagram showing the wayfinding elements in public realm

- Any new developments should respect the existing landmarks. New developments should include some landmark buildings to improve legibility and provide varying features to create articulation which allows visual interest;
- New buildings should be designed with a number of different features that can create a landmark, such as, projecting bays, large window openings, expressive roof forms and taller elements;
- To provide articulation and a welcoming feeling, building façades should have occasional projections such as bays and porches;
- Creating short-distance views broken by buildings, trees or landmarks to create memorable routes and places, and easily intelligible links between places. New developments should be oriented to maximise the opportunities for memorable views and visual connectivity;

Figure 184:
Allow for spaces between buildings to preserve views of countryside beyond (Photo by Abbots Langley Parish Council)

Figure 185:
Abbotswood Estate. Soft nature edges and preserving view to Horses Field (Photo by Abbots Langley Parish Council)

- New development proposals should not be visually intrusive. This should be achieved through appropriate scaling and design, including landscape screening, where appropriate;
- As noted above, existing views and vistas should be actively considered when preparing new development proposals. Where possible, new developments should seek to retain existing and frame new views and vistas towards the wider countryside;
- Where appropriate, future development proposals should incorporate landscape and built features to create landmarks, helping with legibility;
- New development proposals should maintain visual connections to the surrounding landscape and long views out of the settlement. Development density should allow for spaces between buildings to preserve views of countryside beyond and maintain the perceived openness of the settlement;
- Respect any designations and constraints related to the surrounding countryside and aim to preserve long distance views;
- Include 'soft' edges to shield buildings and ease the transition between the countryside and the urban area;
- Preserve uninterrupted views and vistas looking into and out of the village in all directions; and
- Protect views and vistas along Grand Union Canal.

Figure 186:
Significant view to Grand Union Canal in Gade Valley Character Area

LC 03. Architectural details

New developments or any change to the existing built environment must be able to demonstrate a sympathetic response to the existing character and architectural details found in the village.

This section showcases some local building details which should be considered as positive examples to inform design proposals.

There are a number of features in the Neighbourhood Plan area, encompassing Georgian, Victorian, Edwardian and more modern architectural styles, each of which plays a crucial role in characterising the parish. Examples include the Church of St Lawrence, in Abbots Langley Village, with its surrounding mid-16th century timber framed houses and 18th century cottages. Other examples of note include larger 18th century houses such as the Vicarage and Breakspear Place. There are architectural elements in these keynote buildings and, indeed, across the wider built environment, that provide visual clues as to how new development proposals might be framed.

New development in Abbots Langley Parish must seek to preserve the existing character not only within the conservation areas, but also across the wider settlements. There are many elements that contribute to the local character of the village and these should be respected when new development is proposed.

Figure 187:
St Lawrence Church, built with knapped flint, tilehanging and rendering

Figure 188:
Breakspear Place, formerly listed as Langley House, built in Georgian Architecture Style

Figure 189:
18th Century house built with whitewashed brick and tiled gabled roof

LC. Respecting the local character

F.191

F.190

F.192

F.193

F.194

F.195

Figure 190:
A bungalow in front of Breakspear College built with yellow render, sash windows and shed dormers

Figure 191:
Two storey property built with painted brisk, bargeboard and lintel above windows

Figure 192:
Pound Cottage built with leaded casement windows and hipped roof

Figure 193:
Chapel Studios on Bridge Road

Figure 194:
Georgian Architecture Style with red brick and sash windows in Bedmond

Figure 195:
A large bungalow with bow, casement windows and slate on roofscape

LC 04. Materials and colour palette

A wide variety of materials have been used within the Parish such as flint, brick, timber and clunch (a stone detail used on older buildings). The colour pallet varies as shown below.

Wall

Warm red brick

Dark brown weatherboard

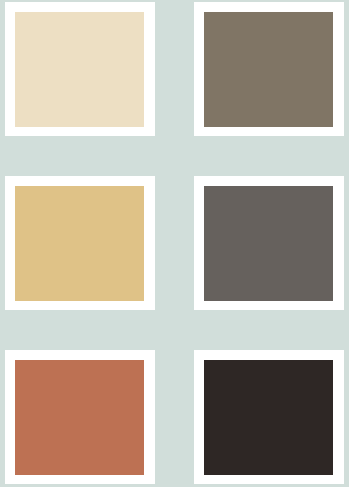
Gaunt or gault brick

Pebble dash

Knapped flint

Mix of timber and render

Colour palette



LC. Respecting the local character

Roof

Gabled roof with glazed pantile

Gabled roof with chimney

Shed dormer

Gabled dormer

Hipped roof

Slate

Details

Brick details around window

Porch

Details of interest

LC 05. Street lighting / dark skies

The 'dark skies' character of the countryside should be protected. Dark skies benefit both people and wildlife.

Any new development should minimise impact on the existing 'dark skies' within the settlements and reduce light pollution that disrupts the natural habitat and human health.

The following guidelines aim to ensure there is enough consideration given at the design stage:

- The provision of street lighting within certain areas, such as public open space, sites of nature conservation and habitat or other sensitive areas should be the subject of careful consideration, with public safety an important factor;
- Ensure that lighting schemes will not cause unacceptable levels of light pollution, particularly in intrinsically dark areas. These can be areas very close to the countryside or where dark skies are enjoyed;
- Consider lighting schemes that could be turned off when not needed ('part-night lighting') to reduce any potential adverse effects; i.e. when a business is closed or, in outdoor areas, switching off at quiet times between midnight and 5am or 6am. Planning conditions could potentially be used to enforce this;
- Impact on sensitive wildlife receptors throughout the year, or at particular times (e.g. on migration routes), may be mitigated by the design of the lighting or by turning it off or down at sensitive times;

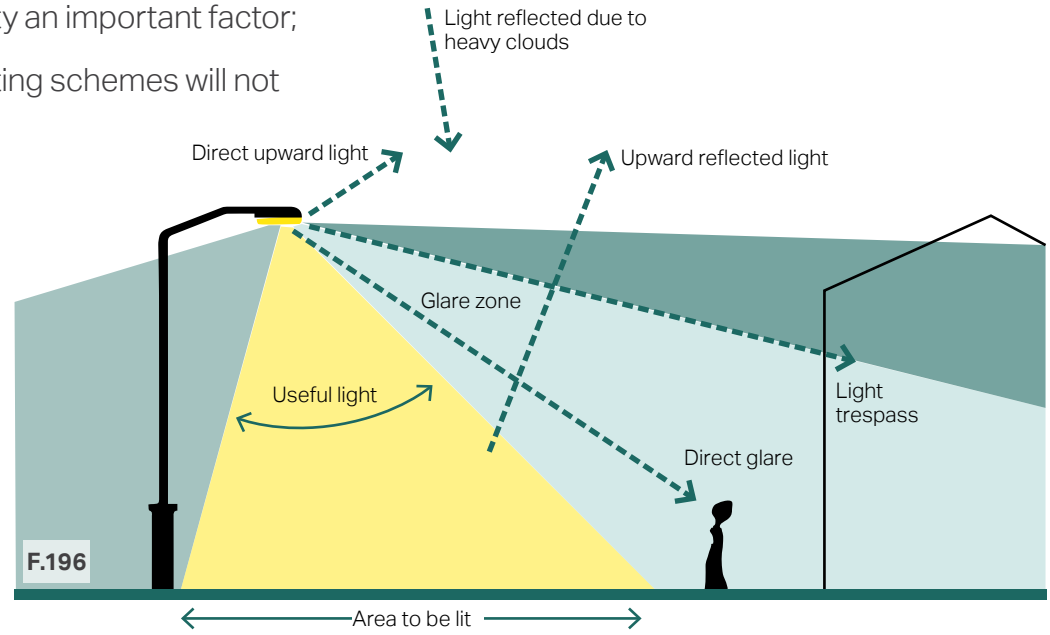


Figure 196:
Diagram to illustrate the different components of light pollution and what 'good' lighting means

- Glare should be avoided, particularly for safety reasons. This is the uncomfortable brightness of a light source due to the excessive contrast between bright and dark areas in the field of view. Consequently, the perceived glare depends on the brightness of the background against which it is viewed. It is affected by the quantity and directional attributes of the source. Where appropriate, lighting schemes could include 'dimming' to lower the level of lighting (e.g. during periods of reduced use of an area, when higher lighting levels are not needed);
- The needs of particular individuals or groups should be considered, where appropriate (e.g. the safety of pedestrians and cyclists);
- Foot/cycle path light should be introduced sensitively and in harmony with surrounding rural landscape. Light fittings such as solar cat's-eye lighting, reflective paint and ground-based lighting could be introduced. Full-height lighting should be avoided; and
- Any new developments and house extensions designs should encourage to use natural light sources.

6 SU. Sustainability

4.7 Sustainability (SU)

New development should incorporate and support innovative and proactive approaches to design and opportunities to deliver decentralised energy systems powered by a renewable or low carbon source and associated infrastructure, including community-led initiatives.

New developments must strive for good quality design that meets low or zero-carbon targets for CO2 emissions that can be constructed sustainability, maximising opportunities for recycling.

This section introduces energy efficient technologies and strategies that could be incorporated in individual buildings, landscapes and wider neighbourhoods.

SU 01. Energy efficient housing & production

SU 02. Biodiversity

SU 03. Sustainable drainage

SU 04. Permeable pavements

SU 05. Storage and slow release

SU 06. Bioretention systems

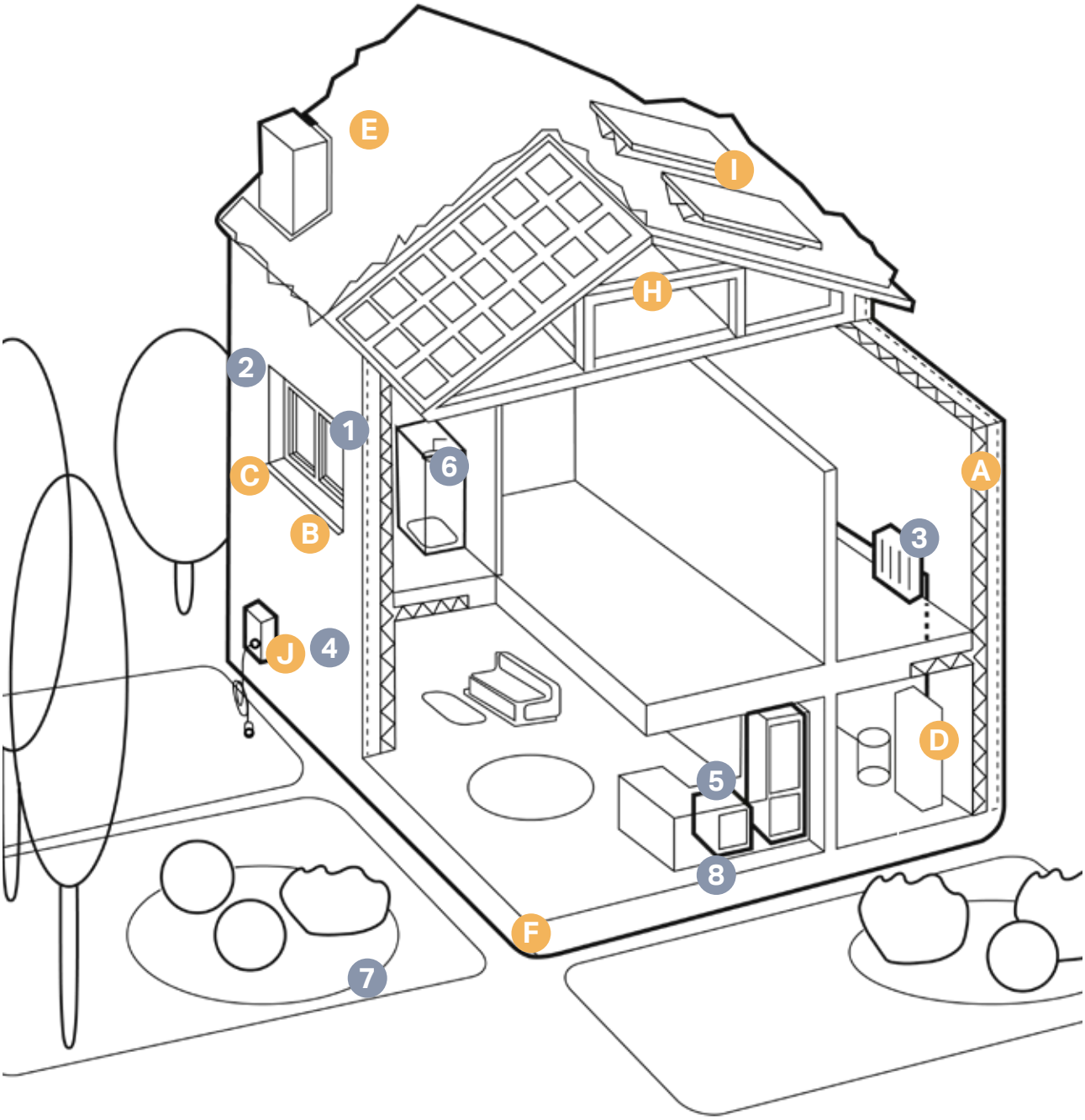
SU 01. Energy efficient housing and energy production

Energy efficient homes combine energy efficient construction, appliances and lighting with commercially available renewable energy systems, such as solar water heating and solar electricity, and ground/air-source heat pumps.

The aim of these interventions is to reduce overall energy use in the home, as cost effectively as possible.

It should be noted that sustainable design principles do not prescribe a particular architectural style and can be adapted to fit a wide variety of built character. A wide range of solutions is also available to retrofit existing buildings, including listed properties, to improve their energy efficiency[1].

1. Historic England. https://historicengland.org.uk/advice/technical-advice/energy-efficiency-and-historic-buildings



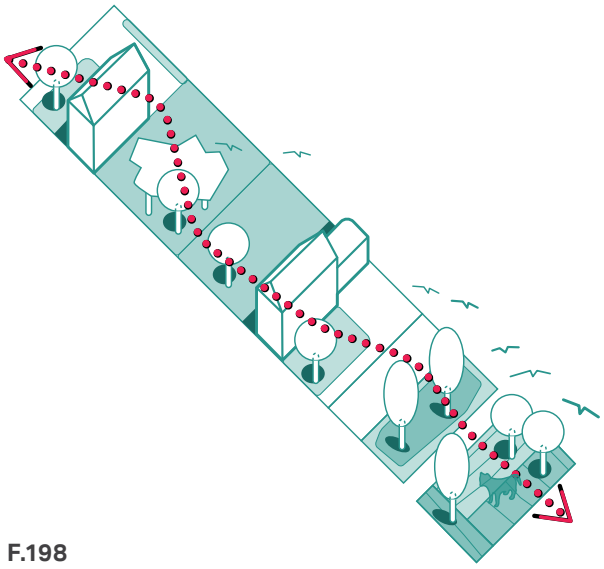
F.197

Figure 197:
Diagram showing low-carbon homes in both existing and new build conditions.

SU 02. Biodiversity

Abbots Langley Parish has a rich and varied landscape character. There are many natural features and assets, such as trees, woodlands, hedgerows, verges, front and back gardens. They all contribute to provide habitats for biodiversity to flourish. Therefore, any new development or any change to the built environment should:

- Protect and enhance designated habitats to the west of the Neighbourhood Plan area around the Grand Union Canal. Ensure habitats are buffered. Widths of buffer zones should be appropriately sized and based on specific ecological function;
- Protect woodlands, hedges and other trees and road verges, where possible. Natural tree buffers should also be protected when planning for new developments;
- Avoid abrupt edges to development with little vegetation or landscape on the edge of the settlement and, instead, aim for a comprehensive landscape setting;
- Include the creation of new habitats and wildlife corridors in development proposals. This could be done by aligning back and front gardens or installing bird boxes or bricks in walls; and
- Create wildlife corridors in the surrounding countryside by proposing new green links and improving existing ones. This will enable wildlife to travel between foraging and dwelling areas.



F.198

F.199

Figure 198:
Diagram to highlight the importance of creating wildlife corridors

Figure 199:
Examples of a bughouse decorating rear gardens or public green spaces

SU 03. Sustainable drainage (SuDS)

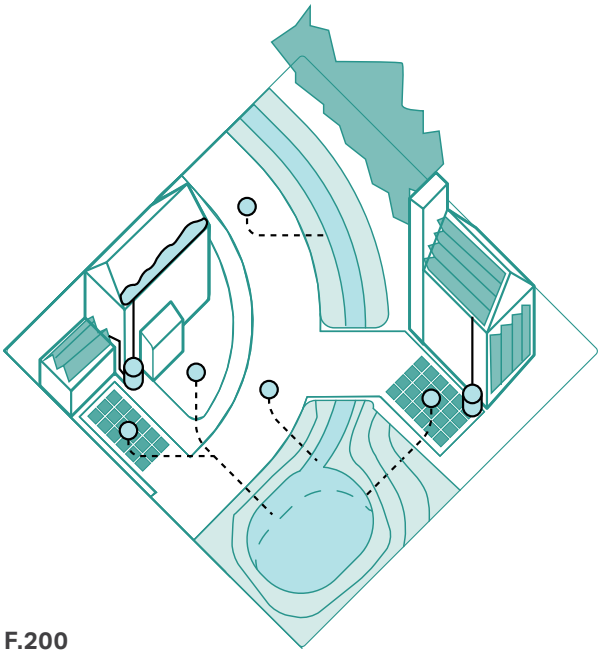
As mentioned earlier (see 3.1.7 Flood risk), there are areas of flood risk to the west of the Parish around Water Lane where mitigation will be required. One way of managing the surface water is using SuDS.

The term SuDS stands for Sustainable Drainage Systems, and covers a range of approaches to managing surface water in a more sustainable way to reduce flood risk and improve water quality whilst also providing amenity benefits.

SuDS work by reducing the amount and rate at which surface water reaches a waterway or combined sewer system. Usually, the most sustainable option is collecting this water for reuse, for example in a water butt or rainwater harvesting system, as this has the added benefit of reducing pressure on important water sources.

Where reuse is not possible there are two alternative approaches using SuDS:

- Infiltration, which allows water to percolate into the ground and eventually restore groundwater;
- Attenuation and controlled release, which holds back the water and slowly releases it into the sewer network. Although the overall volume entering the sewer system is the same, the peak flow is reduced. This reduces the risk of sewers overflowing. Attenuation and controlled release options are suitable when either infiltration is not possible (for example, where the water table is high or soils are clay) or where infiltration could be polluting (such as on contaminated sites).



F.200

F.201

Figure 200:
Diagram showing the best use of harvesting water systems rain garden, swales, permeable paving, green roofs

Figure 201:
Examples of SuDS designed as a public amenity and fully integrated into the design of the public realm, Sweden

When designing SuDS, one must consider site-specific conditions such as underlying ground conditions, infiltration rate, slope or presence of ground contamination. A number of overarching principles can, however, be applied:

- Reduce runoff rates by facilitating infiltration into the ground or by providing attenuation that stores water to help slow its flow down so that it does not overwhelm water courses or the sewer network;
- Integrate into development and improve amenity through early consideration in the development process and good design practices;
- SuDS are often as important in areas that are not directly in an area of flood risk themselves, as they can help reduce downstream flood risk by storing water upstream;
- Some of the most effective SuDS are vegetated, using natural processes to slow and clean the water whilst increasing the biodiversity value of the area;
- Best practice SuDS schemes link the water cycle to make the most efficient use of water resources by reusing surface water; and
- SuDS must be designed sensitively to augment the landscape and provide biodiversity and amenity benefits.

SU 04. Permeable pavements

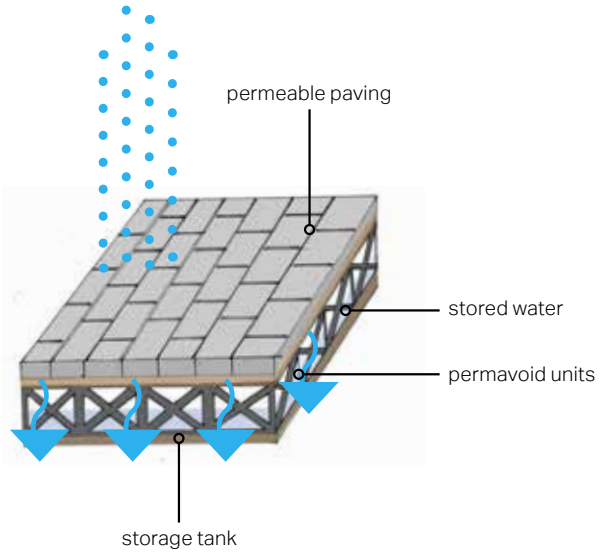
Most built-up areas have hard surfaced roads, footpaths and driveways which are impervious surfaces and reduce the capacity of the ground to absorb runoff water. This, in turn, increases the risks of surface water flooding. Permeable pavements offer a solution to maintain soil permeability while performing the function of conventional paving. The choice of paving in public areas should also have reference to public safety, so some materials may not be appropriate and, therefore, permeable paving might be more difficult to install. In domestic properties, there may be greater scope for the use of permeable surfaces on driveways and footpaths. The choice of permeable paving units should be made with reference to the local context; in Abbots Langley Parish, therefore, the units may take the form of unbound gravel, grass drives with inset permeable concrete, clay pavers, or stone setts.

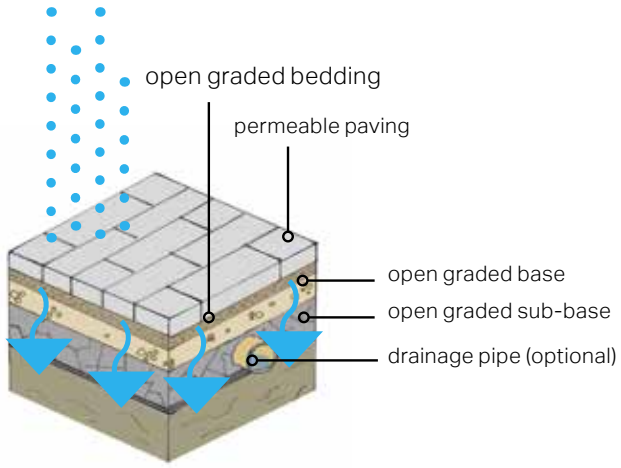
Permeable paving can be used where appropriate on footpaths, public squares, private access roads, driveways, and private areas within the individual development boundaries. In addition, permeable pavements must also comply with:

- Flood and Water Management Act 2010, Schedule 3;[1]
- The Building Regulations Part H;

1 Great Britain (2010). Flood and Water Management Act, Schedule 3. Available at: http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/29/schedule/3

- Drainage and Waste Disposal;[1]
- Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015;[2]
- Regulations, standards, and guidelines relevant to permeable paving and sustainable drainage are listed below:
- Sustainable Drainage Systems - non-statutory technical standards for sustainable drainage systems;[3]
- The SuDS Manual (C753);[4]
- BS 8582:2013 Code of practice for surface water management for development sites;[5]
- BS 7533-13:2009 Pavements constructed with clay, natural stone or concrete pavers;[6] and
- Guidance on the Permeable Surfacing of Front Gardens.[7]





F.202

Figure 202:
Diagrams illustrating the functioning of a soak away

1 Great Britain (2010). The Building Regulations Part H – Drainage and Waste Disposal. Available at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/442889/BR_PDF_AD_H_2015.pdf

2 Great Britain (2015). Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015. Available at: http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2015/596/pdfs/uksi_20150596_en.pdf

3 Great Britain. Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (2015). Sustainable drainage systems – non-statutory technical standards for sustainable drainage systems. Available at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/415773/sustainable-drainage-technical-standards.pdf

4 CIRIA (2015). The SuDS Manual (C753).

5 British Standards Institution (2013). BS 8582:2013 Code of practice for surface water management for development sites. Available at: https://shop.bsigroup.com/ProductDetail/?pid=000000000030253266

6 British Standards Institution (2009). BS 7533-13:2009 Pavements constructed with clay, natural stone or concrete pavers. Available at: https://shop.bsigroup.com/ProductDetail/?pid=000000000030159352

7 Great Britain. Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government (2008). Guidance on the Permeable Surfacing of Front Gardens. Available at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/7728/pavingfrontgardens.pdf

SU 05. Storage and slow release

Rainwater harvesting refers to systems for the capture and storage of rainwater as well as those enabling the reuse on-site of grey water (lightly contaminated water)

Simple storage solutions, such as water butts, can help provide significant attenuation. To be able to continue to provide benefits, there has to be some headroom within the storage solution. If water is not reused, a slow release valve allows water from the storage to trickle out, recreating capacity for future rainfall events.

New digital technologies that predict rainfall events can enable stored water to be released when the sewer has greatest capacity to accept it.

These systems involve pipes and storage devices that could be unsightly if added without an integral vision for design.

Therefore, some design recommendations would be to:

- Conceal tanks by cladding them in complementary materials;
- Use attractive materials or finishing for pipes;
- Combine landscape/planters with water capture systems;
- Underground tanks; and
- Utilise water bodies for storage.

Figure 203:
Examples of water butts used for rainwater harvesting in Reach, Cambridgeshire

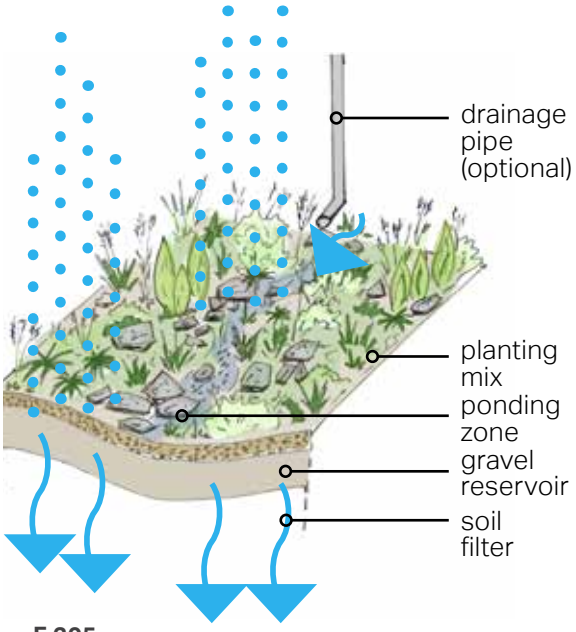
Figure 204:
Examples of water butts used for rainwater harvesting in Reach, Cambridgeshire

SU 06. Bioretention systems

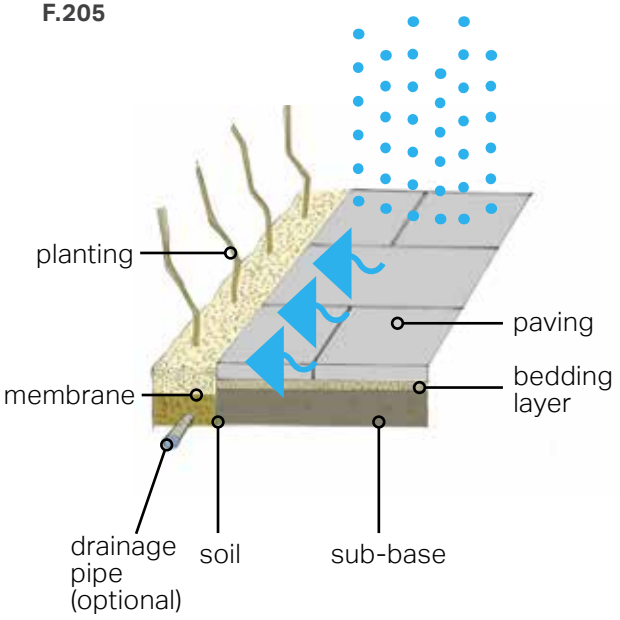
Bioretention systems, including soak-aways and rain gardens, can be used within each development, along verges, and in semi-natural green spaces.

- They must be designed to sit cohesively with the surrounding landscape, reflecting the natural character of the Parish. Vegetation must reflect that of the surrounding environment; and
- They can be used at varying scales, from small-scale rain gardens serving individual properties, to long green-blue corridors incorporating bio-retention swales, tree pits and mini-wetlands, serving roads or extensive built-up areas.

These planted spaces are designed to enable water to infiltrate into the ground. Cutting of downpipes and enabling roof water to flow into rain gardens can significantly reduce the runoff into the sewer system. The UK Rain Garden Design Guidelines provides more detailed guidance on their feasibility and suggests planting to help improve water quality as well as attract biodiversity.[1]



F.205



F.206

Figure 205:
Diagram illustrating the functioning of a rain garden

Figure 206:
Diagram illustrating the functioning of a soak away garden

1 UK Rain Gardens Guide. Available at: https://raingardens.info/wp-content/uploads/2012/07/UKRainGarden-Guide.pdf

05 General questions

5. General questions

Because the design guidelines and codes in this document cannot cover all design eventualities, this section provides a number of questions based on established good practice against which the design proposal should be evaluated.

5.1 General questions to ask and issues to consider when presented with a development proposal

The aim is to assess all proposals by objectively answering the questions below. Not all the questions will apply to every development. The relevant ones, however, should provide an assessment as to whether the design proposal has considered the local context and provided an appropriate design solution.

As a first step, there are a number of ideas or principles that should be present in all proposals. These are listed under "General design guidelines for new development." Following these ideas and principles, a number of questions are listed for more specific topics on the following pages.

1

General design guidelines for new development:

- Does the development integrate with existing paths, streets, circulation networks and patterns of activity?
- Does it reinforce or enhance the established settlement character of streets, greens, and other spaces?
- Does it harmonise and enhance existing settlement in terms of physical form, architecture and land use?
- Will it relate well to local topography and landscape features, including prominent ridge lines and long-distance views?
- Does it reflect, respect, and reinforce local architecture and historic distinctiveness?
- Does it retain and incorporate important existing features into the development?
- Will it respect surrounding buildings in terms of scale, height, form and massing?
- Does it adopt contextually appropriate materials and details?
- Cam it provide adequate open space for the development in terms of both quantity and quality?
- Does it incorporate necessary services and drainage infrastructure without causing unacceptable harm to retained features?
- Will it ensure all components, e.g., buildings, landscapes, access routes, parking and open space are well related to each other?
- Does it make sufficient provision for sustainable waste management (including facilities for kerbside collection, waste separation, and minimisation where appropriate) without adverse impact on the street scene, the local landscape or the amenities of neighbours?
- Will it positively integrate energy efficient technologies?
- Will it ensure that places are designed with management, maintenance and the upkeep of utilities in mind?
- Does it seek to implement passive environmental design principles by, firstly, considering how the site layout can optimise beneficial solar gain and reduce energy demands (e.g., insulation), before specification of energy efficient building services and finally incorporate renewable energy sources?

2

Street grid and layout:

- Does it favour accessibility and connectivity? If not, why?
- Do the new points of access and street layout have regard for all users of the development; in particular pedestrians, cyclists and those with disabilities?
- What are the essential characteristics of the existing street pattern; are these reflected in the proposal?
- How will the new design or extension integrate with the existing street arrangement?
- Are the new points of access appropriate in terms of patterns of movement?
- Do the points of access conform to the statutory technical requirements?

3

Local green spaces, views and character:

- What are the particular characteristics of this area which have been taken into account in the design; i.e. what are the landscape qualities of the area?
- Does the proposal maintain or enhance any identified views or views in general?

Local green spaces, views and character:

- How does the proposal affect the trees on or adjacent to the site?
- Can trees be used to provide natural shading from unwanted solar gain? i.e. deciduous trees can limit solar gains in summer, while maximising them in winter.
- Has the proposal been considered within its wider physical context?
- Has the impact on the landscape quality of the area been taken into account?
- In rural locations, has the impact of the development on the tranquillity of the area been fully considered?
- How does the proposal impact on existing views which are important to the area and how are these views incorporated in the design?
- How does the proposal impact on existing views which are important to the area and how are these views incorporated in the design?
- Can any new views be created?
- Is there adequate amenity space for the development?
- Does the new development respect and enhance existing amenity space?
- Have opportunities for enhancing existing amenity spaces been explored?

3

Local green spaces, views and character:

- Will any communal amenity space be created? If so, how this will be used by the new owners and how will
it be managed?
- Is there opportunity to increase the local area biodiversity?
- Can green space be used for natural flood prevention e.g. permeable landscaping, swales etc.?
- Can water bodies be used to provide evaporative cooling?
- Is there space to consider a ground source heat pump array, either horizontal ground loop or borehole (if excavation is required)?

4

Gateway and access features:

- What is the arrival point, how is it designed?
- Does the proposal maintain or enhance the existing gaps between settlements?
- Does the proposal affect or change the setting of a listed building or listed landscape?
- Is the landscaping to be hard or soft?

5

Buildings layout and grouping:

- What are the typical groupings of buildings?
- How have the existing groupings been reflected in the proposal?
- Are proposed groups of buildings offering variety and texture to the townscape?
- What effect would the proposal have on the streetscape?
- Does the proposal maintain the character of dwelling clusters stemming from the main road?
- Does the proposal overlook any adjacent properties or gardens? How is this mitigated?
- Subject to topography and the clustering of existing buildings, are new buildings oriented to incorporate passive solar design principles, with, for example, one of the main glazed elevations within 30° due south, whilst also minimising overheating risk?
- Can buildings with complementary energy profiles be clustered together such that a communal low carbon energy source could be used to supply multiple buildings that might require energy at different times of day or night? This is to reduce peak loads. And/or can waste heat from one building be extracted to provide cooling to that building as well as heat to another building?

6

Building line and boundary treatment:

- What are the characteristics of the building line?
- How has the building line been respected in the proposals?
- Has the appropriateness of the boundary treatments been considered in the context of the site?

7

Building heights and roofline:

- What are the characteristics of the roofline?
- Have the proposals paid careful attention to height, form, massing and scale?
- If a higher than average building(s) is proposed, what would be the reason for making the development higher?
- Will the roof structure be capable of supporting a photovoltaic or solar thermal array either now, or in the future?
- Will the inclusion of roof mounted renewable technologies be an issue from a visual or planning perspective? If so, can they be screened from view, being careful not to cause over shading?

8

Household extensions:

- Does the proposed design respect the character of the area and the immediate neighbourhood, and does it have an adverse impact on neighbouring properties in relation to privacy, overbearing or overshadowing impact?
- Is the roof form of the extension appropriate to the original dwelling (considering angle of pitch)?
- Do the proposed materials match those of the existing dwelling?
- In case of side extensions, does it retain important gaps within the street scene and avoid a 'terracing effect'?
- Are there any proposed dormer roof extensions set within the roof slope?
- Does the proposed extension respond to the existing pattern of window and door openings?
- Is the side extension set back from the front of the house?
- Does the extension offer the opportunity to retrofit energy efficiency measures to the existing building?
- Can any materials be re-used in situ to reduce waste and embodied carbon?

9

Building materials and surface treatment:

- What is the distinctive material in the area?
- Does the proposed material harmonise with the local materials?
- Does the proposal use high-quality materials?
- Have the details of the windows, doors, eaves and roof details been addressed in the context of the overall design?
- Does the new proposed materials respect or enhance the existing area or adversely change its character?
- Are recycled materials, or those with high recycled content proposed?
- Has the embodied carbon of the materials been considered and are there options which can reduce the embodied carbon of the design? For example, wood structures and concrete alternatives.
- Can the proposed materials be locally and/or responsibly sourced? E.g. FSC timber, or certified under BES 6001, ISO 14001 Environmental Management Systems?

10

Car parking:

- What parking solutions have been considered?
- Are the car spaces located and arranged in a way that is not dominant or detrimental to the sense of place?
- Has planting been considered to soften the presence of cars?
- Does the proposed car parking compromise the amenity of adjoining properties?
- Have the needs of wheelchair users been considered?
- Can electric vehicle charging points be provided?
- Can secure cycle storage be provided at an individual building level or through a central/ communal facility where appropriate?
- If covered car ports or cycle storage is included, can it incorporate roof mounted photovoltaic panels or a biodiverse roof in its design?

11

Architectural details and design:

- If the proposal is within a conservation area, how are the characteristics reflected in the design?
- Does the proposal harmonise with the adjacent properties? This means that it follows the height massing and general proportions of adjacent buildings and how it takes cues from materials and other physical characteristics.
- Does the proposal maintain or enhance the existing landscape features?
- Has the local architectural character and precedent been demonstrated in the proposals?
- If the proposal is a contemporary design, are the details and materials of a sufficiently high enough quality and does it relate specifically to the architectural characteristics and scale of the site?
- Is it possible to incorporate passive environmental design features such as larger roof overhangs, deeper window reveals and/or external louvres/shutters to provide shading in hotter months?
- Can the building designs utilise thermal mass to minimise heat transfer and provide free cooling?
- Can any external structures such as balconies be fixed to the outside of the building, as opposed to cantilevering through the building fabric to reduce thermal bridge?

06 Delivery

6. Delivery

The Design Guidelines will be a valuable tool in securing context-driven, high quality development within Abbots Langley Parish. They will be used in different ways by different actors in the planning and development process, as summarised in the table, opposite.

Actors	How They Will Use the Design Guidelines
Applicants, developers, & landowners	As a guide to community and Local Planning Authority expectations on design, allowing a degree of certainty – they will be expected to follow the Guidelines as planning consent is sought.
Local Planning Authority	As a reference point, embedded in policy, against which to assess planning applications. The Design Guidelines should be discussed with applicants during any pre-application discussions.
Parish Council	As a guide when commenting on planning applications, ensuring that the Design Guidelines are complied with.
Community organisations	As a tool to promote community-backed development and to inform comments on planning applications.
Statutory consultees	As a reference point when commenting on planning applications.

Appendix. Policy review

Appendix. Policy review

This section highlights the key adopted and emerging planning policies relevant to the design codes included in this document. It should be read in conjunction with the Chapter 2 Policy Review of this Report.

Three Rivers Core Strategy 2011-2026 (Adopted October 2011)

The adopted Three Rivers Core Strategy set out the District-wide spatial vision and overarching strategies up to 2026. The key policies relevant to the design codes included in this document are:

Policy PSP2 Development in the Key Centres (South Oxhey, Croxley Green, Abbots Langley, Chorleywood, Leavesden and Garston and Mill End) sets out the place-shaping strategy for key centres identified in the settlement hierarchy, including Abbots Langley. In Key Centres, future development sites are expected to be predominantly in the urban area and on previously developed land. Developments should also conserve and enhance the local distinctiveness of Key Centres, particularly the historic core of Abbots Langley. They should also improve provision of, and access to, services and facilities.

Policy CP1 Overarching Policy on Sustainable Development requires all development in Three Rivers to contribute to the sustainability of the District, including by taking into account the need to tackle climate change.

Policy CP3 Housing Mix and Density promotes high quality residential development that respects the character

of the District and caters for a range of housing needs. In particular, new development should provide a range of house types and sizes to reflect the existing and future needs of the Three Rivers population and the characteristics of housing in the area. In relation to density, development should respect density levels within existing residential areas, particularly within areas of special landscape and/or historic value in the district. In locations that are highly accessible to public transport, services and facilities, higher densities will be promoted. (Note: While the policy text refers to the production of an overall Design Code Supplementary Planning Document at the time of adoption, the relevant SPD does not form part of the current Development Framework for Three Rivers. The most up-to-date Local Development Framework as of May 2021 also did not indicate progress of the production of a District-wide Design Code).

Policy CP4 Affordable Housing seeks to secure an overall provision of around 45% of all new housing as affordable housing.

Policy CP9 Green Infrastructure seeks a net gain in the quality and quantity of Green Infrastructure through protection, enhancement and provision.

Policy CP10 Transport and Travel requires all development to be designed and located to minimise the impact of travel by motor vehicle on the District.

Policy CP12 Design of Development states a list of high quality design criteria which all development proposals will be expected to achieve. All development proposals are expected to:

- Have regard to the local context and conserve or enhance the character, amenities and quality of an area;
- Conserve and enhance natural and heritage assets;
- Protect residential amenities by taking into account the need for adequate levels and disposition of privacy, prospect, amenity and garden space;
- Make efficient use of land whilst respecting the distinctiveness of the surrounding area in terms of density, character, layout and spacing, amenity, scale, height, massing and use of materials;
- Build resilience into a site's design taking into account climate change (for example flood resistant design);
- Use innovative design to reduce energy and waste and optimise the potential of the site;
- Ensure buildings and spaces are, wherever possible, orientated to gain benefit from sunlight and passive solar energy;
- Design out opportunities for crime and anti-social behaviour through the incorporation of appropriate measures to minimise the risk of crime and create safe and attractive places;

- Incorporate visually attractive frontages to adjoining streets and public spaces;
- Ensure all appropriate frontages contain windows and doors that assist informal surveillance of the public realm;
- Use high standards of building materials, finishes and landscaping; also provide/contribute towards street furniture and public art where appropriate;
- Ensure the development is adequately landscaped and is designed to retain, enhance or improve important existing natural features; landscaping should reflect the surrounding landscape of the area and where appropriate integrate with adjoining networks of green open spaces;
- Make a clear distinction between public and private spaces and enhance the public realm;
- Ensure that places, spaces and buildings are accessible to all potential users, including those with mobility difficulties;
- Provide convenient, safe and visually attractive areas for the parking of vehicles and cycles without dominating the development or its surroundings; and
- Be durable and, where practical, buildings should be capable of adapting to other uses and functions in order to ensure their long-life.

Three Rivers Development Management Policies (Adopted July 2013)

Adopted in July 2013, the Development Management Policies for Three Rivers set out the detailed criteria which planning applications within the District will be considered against, alongside other policies within the Development Framework. The key policies of relevance include:

Policy DM1 Residential Design and Layout requires all residential development to satisfy the design criteria set out in Appendix 2 of the document, in order to ensure that development does not lead to a gradual deterioration in the quality of the built environment, and that landscaping, the need for privacy and amenity space and the creation of identity in housing layouts are taken into account.

Appendix 2 Design Criteria sets out qualitative and quantitative guidelines in relation to privacy, prospect, amenity space, property extensions, dormers, roofs and the layout, as well as boundaries, for new development.

Policy DM3 The Historic Built Environment sets out a presumption in favour of the retention and enhancement of heritage assets.

Policy DM6 Biodiversity, Trees, Woodlands, Watercourses and Landscaping requires development to result in no net loss of biodiversity value across the District as a whole. In particular, development proposals are required to seek to retain existing trees, hedgerows and other important landscape and nature conservation features as many as possible, particularly, those of local amenity, nature conservation value and biodiversity value. New developments are also required to include new trees and other planting to enhance the landscape of the site and its surroundings as appropriate.

Policy DM7 Landscape Character requires proposals to make a positive contribution to the surrounding landscape.

Policy DM11 Open Space, Sport and Recreation Facilities and Children's Play Space states that proposals for new and existing open space should be designed to a high standard and should not consist of large areas of open grass. In particular, it should have regard to its surroundings, its likely use, the need for a variety of different forms of open space, the need to enhance existing nature conservation interests and the benefits of creating new habitats.

Policy DM13 Parking requires development to make provision for parking in accordance with the zone-based standards set out in Appendix 5 of the document. It also refers to Hertfordshire County Council's Roads in Hertfordshire: A Design Guide, which sets out the street design guidelines and parking standards (including vehicles, motorcycle and cycle) in Hertfordshire, particularly in relation to dimensions and design principles.

Emerging Three Rivers Local Plan

Three Rivers District Council is currently preparing a new Local Plan which will set out the vision and policy framework for growth within the District until 2038. The Additional Regulation 18 Preferred Policy Options and Sites for Potential Allocation documents are published for consultation from June 2021 to August 2021. Part 1 of the documents set out the preferred strategic vision and policies while Part 2 of the documents identifies potential sites for allocation (including housing, gypsies and travellers & traveling showpeople sites, employment, town centres & retail, open space, education, green belt and other infrastructure).

The key preferred policies in Part 1 relevant to the design codes included in this document are:

Preferred Policy Option 1 Strategic Policy: Overarching Policy on Sustainable Development states that the Council will take a positive approach to the consideration of development proposals that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained in the National Planning Policy Framework. In particular, all development proposals are required to take into account the

sustainable need to:

- Tackle climate change by reducing carbon emissions, increasing energy and water efficiency of buildings, promoting the use of renewable energy systems, and using other natural resources wisely, including through the use of sustainable building materials;
- Manage water and flood risk through the use of Sustainable Drainage Systems;
- Optimise the use of land including through an uplift in the density of development where appropriate;
- Reduce waste going into landfill by reducing materials used, reusing and recycling building materials, and providing opportunities for recycling wherever possible;
- Protect and enhance our natural, built and historic environments from inappropriate development and improve the diversity of wildlife and habitats;
- Build mixed and sustainable housing by providing a range of tenures and types, including affordable housing and specialist and supported accommodation to meet needs;
- Maintain high levels of employment by attracting jobs and training opportunities for local people and supporting businesses;
- Improve access to jobs, skills, services and facilities particularly within areas of deprivation in the District;
- Sustain the viability and vitality of the key town and district centres and villages identified in the settlement hierarchy (Abbots Langley is identified as a key District Centre);
- Protect and enhance existing social and community facilities, and provide new facilities;
- Promote a range of sustainable travel modes with priority given to cycling and walking;
- Providing necessary infrastructure to enable and/or support development, including transport, education, health, Green Infrastructure, utilities, waste facilities, waste water, leisure, cultural and community facilities;
- Promote buildings and public spaces of a high enduring design quality that respect local distinctiveness, are accessible to all and reduce opportunities for crime and anti-social behaviour; and
- Manage and reduce risk of and from pollution in relation to quality of land, air and water and dealing with land contamination.

Preferred Policy Option 2 Housing Mix and Type requires all new homes to contribute to the creation of balanced and sustainable communities by meeting identified local and District housing needs in terms of mix, size, tenure and type to cater for the full range of different households.

Preferred Policy Option 3 Housing Density seeks to promote high quality residential development that respects the character of the District and caters for a range of housing needs. New housing should be provided at a target density responding to the site, its context and the housing need with densities generally of at least 50 dwellings per hectare. In areas served by public transport, services and facilities higher densities will be expected.

Preferred Policy Option 4 Affordable Housing requires all new development resulting in a net gain of one or more dwellings to provide at least 40% of the total number of dwellings as affordable housing for rent and an additional 10% of total number of dwellings as dwellings available for affordable home ownership on developments delivering 10 or more dwellings. 10% of the affordable housing should meets the Building Regulation M4(3) standard.

Preferred Policy Option 6 Residential Design and Layout and Accessible and Adaptable Buildings requires all new housing development to be designed and built to high quality for duration of its lifetime and meets the preferred Design Criteria as set out in the consultation document Appendix 1 to ensure that development does not lead to a gradual deterioration in the quality of the built environment, and that landscaping, the need for privacy and amenity space and the creation of identity in housing layouts are taken into account. In addition, the preferred policy supports housing designed and built to encourage sustainable and flexible living and those that are built to be accessible and adaptable to meet changing occupier circumstances over the lifetime of the development. On developments of 50 or more dwellings, 10% of new homes are required to meet the Building Regulations M4(2) standard and 10% of the affordable housing are required to meet the Building Regulations M4(3) standard.

Preferred Policy Option 10 Social and Community Facilities supports proposals for new or improved social or community facilities that are accessible by a range of sustainable modes of transport; provide spaces and buildings which are inclusive, accessible, flexible and sustainable and which meet the needs of the intended users; and are designed and sited to maximise shared use of the facility.

Preferred Policy Option 11 Health and Wellbeing requires all development to be designed to maximise opportunities to promote healthy communities and reduce health inequalities, particularly in regard to the provision of accessible open space, vegetation and landscaping, sport and recreation facilities, cultural facilities and safe, well promoted, walking and cycling routes.

Preferred Policy Option 13 Adapting to Climate Change and Sustainable Construction supports new development that builds in greater resilience to climate change and extreme weather events through the design of sites and buildings,

including where appropriate:

- Managing flood risk and promoting sustainable drainage systems;
- Promoting and enhancing the Green Infrastructure network across the District and integrating this as part of the design process;
- Protecting the natural environment, and conserving and enhancing biodiversity; and
- Considering the layout of new development, building orientation, shading, construction materials and ventilation systems to address sunlight and daylight, passive solar gain and reduce risks of overheating and reliance on air conditioning systems.

In relation to sustainable design and construction, the preferred policy also requires new development to be designed and constructed to:

- Make efficient use of mineral resources and incorporate a proportion of recycled materials and/or secondary aggregates;
- Minimise waste and reuse materials resulting from excavation and demolition activity;
- Conserve water and reduce flood risk;
- Be flexible and adaptable to the needs of future occupiers; and
- Incorporate measures to enhance biodiversity value.

Preferred Policy Option 15 Flood Risk and Water Resources requires major development and supports minor development to incorporate Sustainable Drainage Systems into their designs. Developments are required to maintain a minimum distance of 8m from a main river and a minimum distance of 5m from any ordinary watercourse.

Preferred Policy Option 18 Waste Management and Recycling requires development proposals to provide waste and recycling facilities in accordance with the Council's Solid Waste Storage and Collection Guidance.

Preferred Policy Option 19 Green and Blue Infrastructure requires new development to contribute to the delivery of new safe and accessible Green and Blue Infrastructure and to the management of a linked network of new and enhanced open spaces and corridors. It also seeks to protect and enhance public rights of way and other sustainable transport links between spaces in the Green Infrastructure network by requiring development masterplans to incorporate buffers of at least 20m around Rights of Way (where appropriate).

Preferred Policy Option 20 Landscape Character seeks to conserve and enhance the quality, character and features of the Chilterns AONB and other landscape regions.

Preferred Policy Option 21 Biodiversity, Trees, Woodlands and Landscaping seeks to ensure a net gain in biodiversity value in developments and protect

designated sites. In particular, development proposals are expected to retain as many trees and hedgerows as possible and should be designed to allow trees and hedgerows to grow to maturity without causing undue problems of visibility, shading or damage.

Preferred Policy Option 22 Open Space, Play Space, Sport and Recreation requires proposals for new or existing open space to be designed to a high standard and should not consist of large areas of open grass. It should have regard to the relationship between the open space and its surroundings, the level and kind of use likely given the nature of nearby uses and occupants, the need to maintain a variety and balance of different forms of open space and the need to maintain and enhance existing nature conservation interests and the benefits of creating new habitats.

Preferred Policy Option 23 Local Distinctiveness and Place Shaping requires all new development to achieve high quality design that responds to the distinctive local character (including landscape character of the area) of the area and contributes to a strong sense of place. It also defines that essential elements of place-making include creating economically and socially successfully new places with a clear identity that promote wellbeing.

In addition to the Design Criteria set out in Appendix 1, the preferred policy also sets out the following criteria in relation to design:

Distinct Local Character

- All new development should be designed to respond to locally distinct patterns of development and character, including landscape setting. Proposals will need to take account of local design guidance including that contained within Conservation Area Appraisals, Neighbourhood Plans and Supplementary Planning Documents to conserve or enhance the character, amenities and quality of an area;
- Development should make efficient use of land whilst respecting the distinctiveness of the surrounding area in terms of density, character, layout and spacing, the pattern of street blocks and plots, building forms, amenity, scale, height, massing, style, landscaping and the use of materials;
- The layout of proposals must be easy to navigate, with buildings designed and positioned to define and enhance a hierarchy of streets and spaces and create a density appropriate to the site, taking account of factors such as the relationship between building height and street width, and the relationship between the height, width and depth of buildings;
- Materials used should be sustainable, practical, durable and attractive with regard to aspects including their colour, texture, grain and reflectivity; and

- The size, function or density of some of the allocations for development within the Local Plan are such that it may not be appropriate for these sites to always reflect locally distinct patterns of development. In such cases, sites should take opportunities to create their own identity while ensuring cohesive and vibrant neighbourhoods.

Connections

- The layout of development should be designed to ensure it connects appropriately to existing street patterns and built form, and creates safe and accessible spaces; and
- Buildings and open spaces should be designed to create a high quality public realm, promote positive social interaction and create attractive environments that maximise opportunities and encourage people to move around by cycling and walking.

Safeguarding Amenity

- Development should protect residential amenities and the attractiveness of non-residential buildings and spaces which contribute to the economic success of the District for both existing and proposed occupiers by taking into account the need for adequate levels and disposition of privacy, prospect, amenity and garden space, and suitable access.

Landscaping and Public Realm

- Development should incorporate visually attractive frontages to adjoining streets and public spaces and should provide for high standards of building materials, finishes and landscaping;
- Landscaping must be considered as an integral element of the layout and design of development, including integration with adjoining networks of green open spaces where appropriate and retaining, enhancing or improving important existing natural features such as trees, hedgerows and walls as far as possible. Proposals for landscaping should show how the design, planting species and materials have been selected with regard to factors including the character of the area, conservation and enhancement of biodiversity and the natural environment, and ongoing management and maintenance;
- Development should provide for a clear distinction between public and private space and should provide boundary treatments which enhance the appearance, character and amenity of the site and area; and
- Development should enhance the public realm to promote social interaction, including making provision for adequate lighting and for street furniture and public art where appropriate and ensuring that all appropriate frontages contain windows and doors that assist informal surveillance.

Safeguarding Assets and the Environment

- All development should conserve and enhance natural, built, cultural and heritage assets, including public open space; and
- Proposals must take opportunities to make sustainable design integral to the development and build resilience into a site's design taking into account climate change including through flood resistant design, Green Infrastructure, sustainable drainage, minimising the use of natural resources, reducing waste and ensuring that buildings and spaces are durable capable of adaptation to other uses and functions where practical in order to ensure their long-life.

Safety and Security

- Development must design out opportunities for crime and anti-social behaviour through the incorporation of appropriate measures to minimise the risk of crime and create safe and attractive places taking into account the Police 'Secured by Design' standards and where appropriate guidance on terrorism in the Government's Planning Practice Guidance; and
- Development should provide natural security through layout and design with attractive, well enclosed, and overlooked streets, roads and spaces with clear consideration for the interrelationship of land use with external spaces and landscaping.

Access and Inclusion

- Places, spaces and buildings must be accessible to all potential users, including those with mobility difficulties taking into account the setting of buildings in the wider environment, the location of buildings within plots, gradient, transport infrastructure and public realm; and
- Development must provide appropriate levels of parking for cycles to support sustainable travel choices and appropriate levels of parking for vehicles to avoid additional on-street parking where this would cause congestion or harm to amenity or highway safety. Parking and cycle storage areas should be convenient, safe and visually attractive areas that do not dominate the development or its surroundings or impact on driver, cyclist or pedestrian sight lines.

Ancillary Facilities

- Development must provide appropriate facilities for individual and communal use including cycle storage, amenity areas and facilities for the storage and collection of refuse and recycling materials which are designed and sited in accordance with current Council standards, avoiding adverse impacts on safety or security, the street scene, or the amenities of the proposed and existing properties.

A

Preferred Policy Option 25 Heritage and Historic Environment seeks to conserve and enhance the historic environment. It supports development of the highest design quality that will sustain and where appropriate enhance the special interest, character and significance of the District's heritage assets and their setting, as well as those that will make a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness. Within conservation areas, development will only be permitted if the proposal:

- Is of a design and scale that preserves or enhances the character or appearance of the area;
- Uses building materials, finishes, including those for features such as walls, railings, gates and hard surfacing, that are appropriate to the local context;
- Retains historically significant boundaries, important open spaces and other elements of the area's established pattern of development, character and historic value, including gardens, roadside banks and verges;
- Retains and restores, where relevant, traditional features such as shop fronts, walls, railings, paved surfaces and street furniture, and improves the condition of structures worthy of retention;
- Does not harm important views into, out of or within the conservation area; and
- Protects trees, hedgerows and other significant landscape features and incorporates landscaping appropriate to the character and appearance of the conservation area.

Preferred Policy Option 26 Sustainable Transport and Travel requires new development to contribute to the delivery of an integrated, accessible and safe transport system that maximises the use of sustainable transport modes of walking, cycling and the use of public transport.

Preferred Policy Option 27 Parking requires development to make provision for parking in accordance with the parking standards set out in Appendix 3. In particular, 20% of car parking spaces for major developments should be allocated and off-street vehicle parking for new developments should be provided. Areas providing parking should preserve a building's setting and the character of the surrounding area, and should provide adequate soft landscaping and surface material to avoid adverse visual impacts and to manage surface water runoff.

Preferred Policy Option 28 Deliveries, Servicing and Construction requires development proposals to demonstrate that adequate provision of deliveries and servicing arrangements can be made for future occupiers. These should be accommodated off-street where possible. The use of delivery and servicing bays should be strictly controlled.

Preferred Policy Option 29 Waterways seeks to protect and enhance waterway infrastructure.

Preferred Policy Option 30 Broadband and Electronic Communications requires all residential, employment and commercial developments to be served by or be capable of being served by superfast broadband. Proposals for the installation of electronic communications equipment should have no significant adverse effect on the external appearance of the building on which, or space in which, they are to be located and should be appropriate designed, coloured and landscaped to take account of their setting. The possibility sharing facilities, erecting antennae on existing structures and miniaturising or camouflaging apparatus should be explored.

©2021 AECOM. All Rights Reserved.

This page is intentionally left blank

APPENDIX H: ABBOTS LANGLEY VILLAGE CENTRE MASTERPLAN

Abbots Langley

Village Centre Masterplan

FINAL REPORT | OCTOBER 2022

Delivering a better world

Quality information

Prepared by	Check by	Approved by
Hoorieh Morshedi	Niamh McDevitt	Mark Huges
Urban Designer	**Graduate Town Planner**	**Director**

Revision History

Issue no.	Issue date	Details	Issued by	Position
3	14.10.2022	Review	Mark Hughes	Director
	14.10.2022	Address comments	Hoorieh Morshedi	Urban Designer
2	26.09.2022	Review	Peter Warman	Chairman of Abbots Langley Neigbourhood Plan
	06.09.2022	Address comments	Hoorieh Morshedi	Urban Designer
1	01.09.2022	Review	Peter Warman	Chairman of Abbots Langley Neigbourhood Plan
	19.08.2022	Review	Jimmy Lu	Senior Urban Designer
	19.08.2022	Research, site visit, drawings	Hoorieh Morshedi	Urban Designer

This document has been prepared by AECOM Limited ("AECOM") in accordance with its contract with Locality (the "Client") and in accordance with generally accepted consultancy principles, the budget for fees and the terms of reference agreed between AECOM and the Client. Any information provided by third parties and referred to herein has not been checked or verified by AECOM, unless otherwise expressly stated in the document. AECOM shall have no liability to any third party that makes use of or relies upon this document.

Contents

01 **1. Introduction** 5
1.1 About this report 5
1.2 Aims and objectives 6
1.3 Process 9
1.4 Document structure 10
1.5 Area of study 11

02 **2. Policy and evidence-based review** 16
1.1 National and local policy and guidance 16

03 **3. Masterplan area study analysis** 21
3.1 Issues and constraints 22
3.2 Opportunities 34

04 **4. Public engagement** 54
4.1 Public engagement 54
4.2 The village centre masterplan objectives 58

05 **5. Village centre masterplan** 61
5.1 Concept masterplan 61

06 **6. Delivery** 85
6.1 Delivery 85

A **Appendix** 88

Introduction

01

01

1. Introduction

Through the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC)'s Neighbourhood Planning Programme led by Locality, AECOM has been commissioned to provide design support to Abbots Langley Parish Council. This document is a concept masterplan for the central area of Abbots Langley Village including four detailed framework -proposals. This supports Neighbourhood Plan policies that guide the assessment of future development proposals, encouraging high quality design that is sympathetic to the local character of Abbots Langley.

1.1 About this report

The design studies are high level and illustrative, prepared to demonstrate how the design principles that the Parish Council wishes to promote could be applied on the sites. We have not undertaken technical studies on topics such as ground conditions, traffic and drainage (although AECOM specialists have inputted into design development). It is expected that full co-design exercises are undertaken by applicants on the sites. This report is just a step in that direction, enabling stakeholders to progress from an informed position.

The report provides an evidence base and concept masterplan. This should be read in conjunction with the Abbots Langley Design Guidance and Code completed by AECOM in June 2021.

F.1

Figure 01: Existing shops and local facilities on the High Street

F.2

Figure 02: Manor House Grounds, an important leisure space in the village

1.2 Aims and objectives

The Three Rivers Local District Council is expected to produce a new Local Plan that would plan for at least 10,000 new houses to be built over the next 15 years.

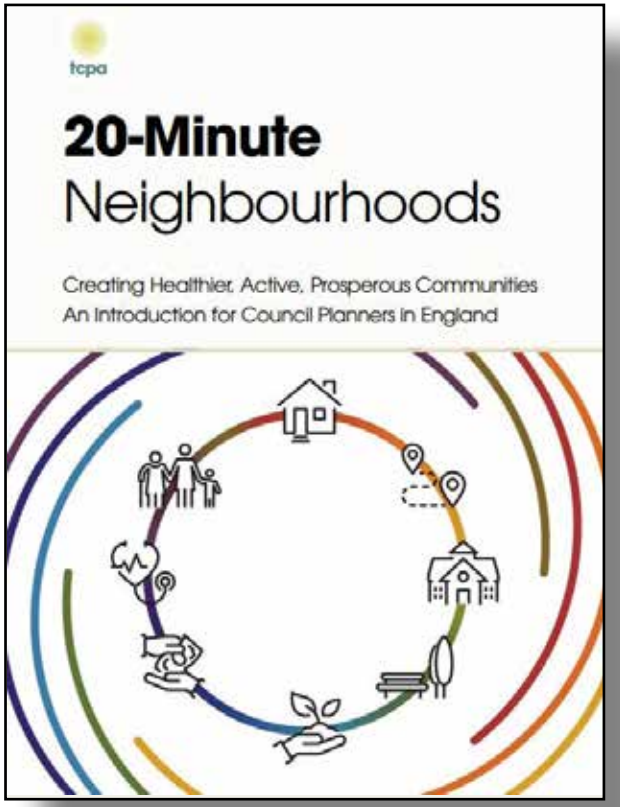
It seems, with this push for new housing, less attention is paid to the comprehensive planning of the use of land, adequate infrastructure including schools, primary care health services and the design of public realm along the High Street. There are also concerns about the loss of green belt land for housing development.

The objective of this Village Centre Masterplan is to provide a high-level concept masterplan based on the 20-Minute Neighbourhood principles for the central area of the village, showing how the central area can evolve as future developments come forward. This concept masterplan will align with the Neighbourhood Plan and inform the emerging Three Rivers District Council Local Plan.

The concept masterplan shows the opportunities that exist in the central area of the village to support existing facilities and businesses and improve the public realm along the High Street.

The key components of the scheme are as follows:

- To promote a highly distinctive local character that reflects the heritage of the village centre;
- To retain and create easily accessible green spaces;
- To connect the existing community facilities and businesses in order to increase patronage:
- Upgrade connections to the village centre for all residents.



F.3

Figure 03: TCPA 20-Minute Neighbourhoods

This report also sets out further details of the central area of the village including four detailed framework proposals for different parts of the central area. These sites are as follows:

- Area in front of the library and St Saviours;
- Area next to St Lawrence Church;
- Area in front of the shopping parade:
- The Breakspeare Special School Site.

This report encourages the village to be more self-sufficient by following principles set out in the 20-Minute Neighbourhood[1].

20-Minute Neighbourhood

Wellbeing relates to our physical and mental state. There are a number of factors that can influence our wellbeing. A holistic approach to this is the 20-Minute Neighbourhood concept, which is defined by the Town and Country Planning Association (TCPA) in its recent guide "Creating Healthier, Active, Prosperous Communities" as a place in which most of people's daily needs can be met within a short walk or cycle. The guide defines 20 minutes as the maximum time that people are willing to walk to meet their daily needs and that the 20-minute journey represents an 800m walk from home to a destination and back again (10 minutes each way).

Covid has made the 20-Minute Neighbourhood even more pertinent, with access to local facilities, including high-quality green infrastructure, more important than ever for our wellbeing.

The additional benefits of the 20- Minute Neighbourhood include:

- People choose to stay in the neighbourhood for longer as the neighbourhoods are diverse and cater for a wide range of needs/lifestyles;
- People become more active which improves mental and physical health;
- Traffic is reduced and air quality is improved;
- Local shops benefit from increased patronage;
- People connect with nature;
- People see more of their neighbours, strengthening community bonds;
- Neighbourhoods become generally safer for all, but particularly children and elderly, due to the points above.

1. https://tcpa.org.uk/resources/the-20-minute-neighbourhood/

The village of Abbots Langley meets almost all of the 20-Minute Neighbourhood principles, but there is a need to protect and improve some of the elements. In addition, the village is well set up for the 20-Minute Neighbourhood, given its compact size and good provision of walking routes.

The characteristics of the 20-Minute Neighbourhood are shown in Figure 4 opposite, including:

- Diverse and affordable homes;
- Well-connected paths, streets and spaces;
- Schools at the heart of communities;
- Good green spaces in the right places;
- Local food production/ community gardens;
- Keeping jobs and money local;
- Community health and wellbeing facilities:
- A place for all ages.

F.4

Figure 04: TCPA 20-Minute Neighbourhoods characteristics

1.3 Process

Following an inception meeting, AECOM and the members of the Abbots Langley Parish Council carried out a high-level assessment of the village. The following steps were agreed with the group to produce this report:

F.5

Figure 05: Key steps involved in the development of the Abbots Langley Village Centre masterplan

1.4 Document structure

01 INTRODUCTION - Outlining the background, objectives, process, Village Centre masterplan document structure and area of study.

02 POLICY AND EVIDENCE-BASED REVIEW - Reviewing the planning policy context.

03 MASTERPLAN AREA STUDY ANALYSIS - Providing village centre constraints and opportunities.

04 PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT - Providing an appreciation of public engagement and the development objectives.

05 VILLAGE CENTRE MASTERPLAN - Proposing a high-level concept masterplan and detailed masterplan proposals for four sites along the High Street.

05 DELIVERY - Explaining how this document can be used and elaborating next steps.

F.6

Figure 06: View towards a part of Abbots Langley Village centre in front of the Abbots Langley Post Office

1.5 Area of study

Abbots Langley is a large parish located to the north west of London and 4km north of Watford. The parish has a population of approximately 23,000 people.

The name of the village of Abbots Langley dates from 1045. It is recorded that a Saxon, Ethelwine the Black and his wife Wynfleda, gave 'Langelei' (denoting a long meadow or long lea) to the Abbot and the monks of the monastery of St Albans, who for several hundred years played an important part in the affairs of Abbots Langley.

The neighbourhood area is cut in two by the M25. While this creates a hard boundary between different parts of the area, the road is valuable in terms of connectivity. Travelling east on the M25 provides access to the M1 and the A1 towards the north. To the west, the M25 links Abbots Langley to Heathrow Airport.

The Parish is also served by Kings Langley Rail Station, providing access to Central London, which is well used by commuters.

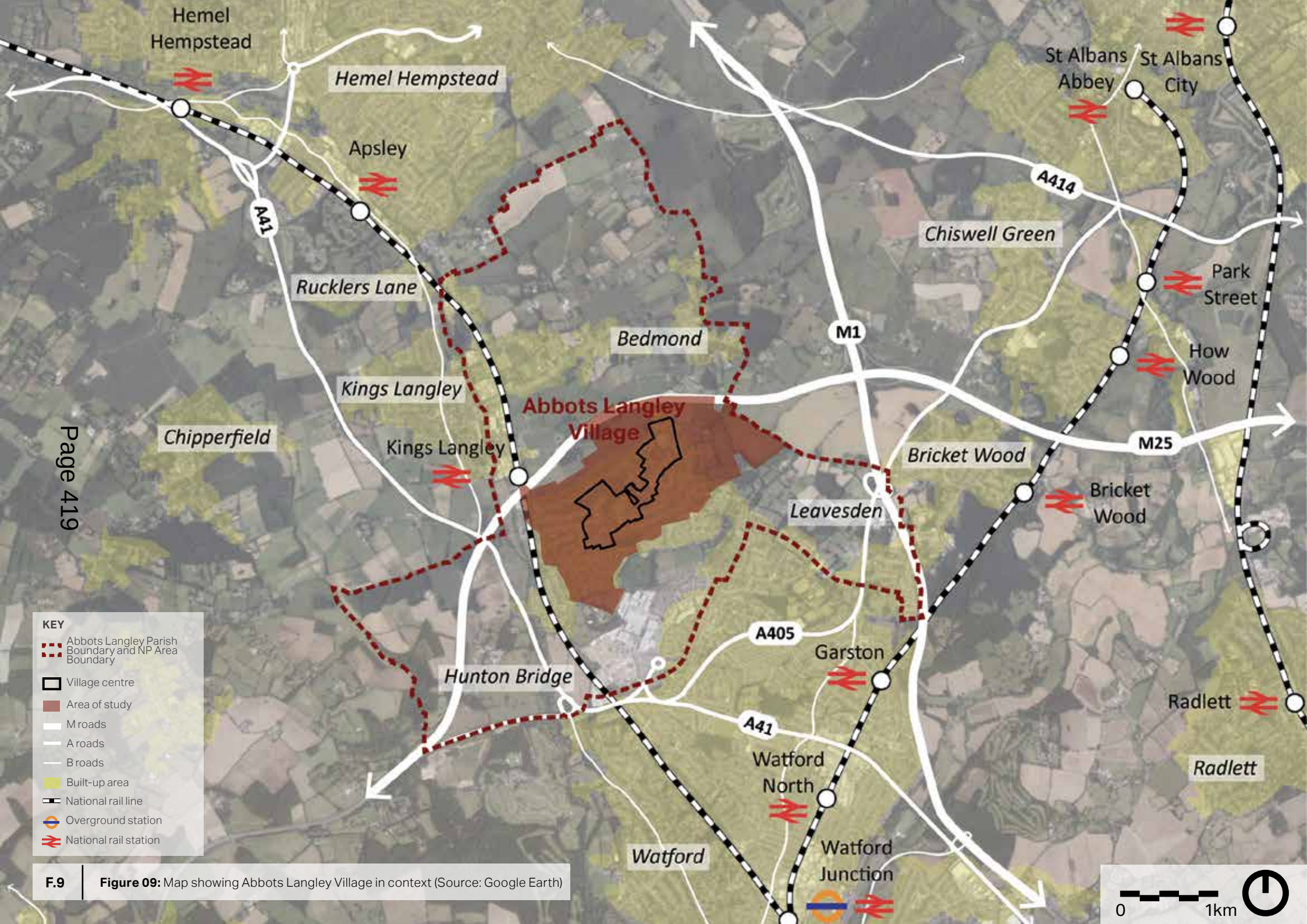
A popular attraction in the neighbourhood area is the Warner Bros Studio Tour London where visitors can learn about the making of the Harry Potter films.

F.7

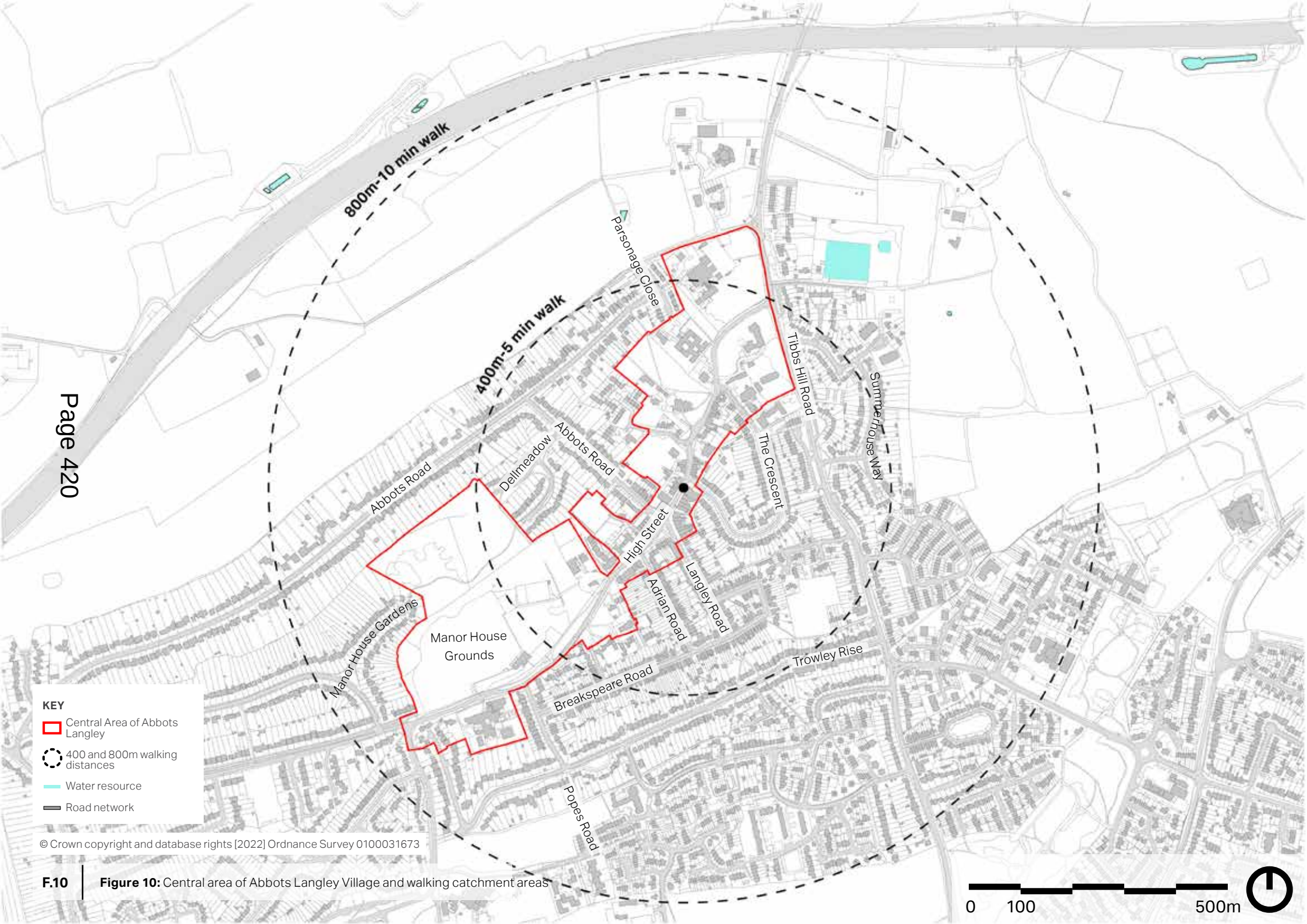
Figure 07: Church of St Lawrence, a Grade I listed building

F.8

Figure 08: Shopfronts illustrating the vibrant retail scene along the High Street in Abbots Langley Village



F.9 | **Figure 09:** Map showing Abbots Langley Village in context (Source: Google Earth)



© Crown copyright and database rights [2022] Ordnance Survey 0100031673

F.10 | **Figure 10:** Central area of Abbots Langley Village and walking catchment areas

F.11

F.12

Figure 11: Current businesses and community facilities along the High Street in the central area of the village

Figure 12: Green space and public realm along the High Street. The wide verges containing street furniture provide an attractive area

Figure 13: Area in front of library and surrounding landscape

Figure 14: Parking area in front of the shopping parade of Garston TV, Abbots Langley Pharmacy, Full Moon, Opticians and Simmons

Figure 15: Breakspeare Special School on Gallows Hill Lane, provided for students with severe or profound learning difficulties

F.13

F.14

F.15

Policy and evidence-based review

02

2. Policy and evidence-based review

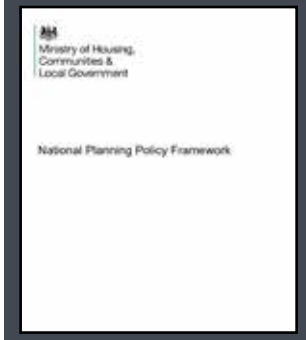
This section summarises the relevant design policy, guidance and evidence base produced at national, county and district levels.

1.1 National and local policy and guidance

The following national and local policy documents and best practice guidance have informed this report. Any new development application should be familiar with these documents.

National Design Guidance

2021



National Planning Policy Framework - Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities

Relevant national planning policy is contained within the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, July 2021). The NPPF was updated in July 2021 to include reference to the National Design Guide and National Model Design Code and the use of area, neighbourhood and site-specific design guides. Paragraph 126 states that: "the creation of high quality buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve and outlines that good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities."

2019

National Design Guide - Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities

The National Design Guide sets out the government's ten priorities for well designed places and illustrates how well-designed places can be achieved in practice. The ten characteristics identified are: context, identity, built form, movement, nature, public spaces, uses, homes and buildings, resources and lifespan. The Guide also reinforces the National Planning Policy Framework's objective of creating high quality buildings and places. The document forms part of the government planning practice guidance.

2021

National Model Design Code - Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities

The National Model Design Code provides guidance on the production of design codes, guides and policies to promote well-designed places. It sets out the key design parameters that need to be considered when producing design guides and recommends methodology for capturing and reflecting views of the local community.

2020

Building for a Healthy Life - Homes England

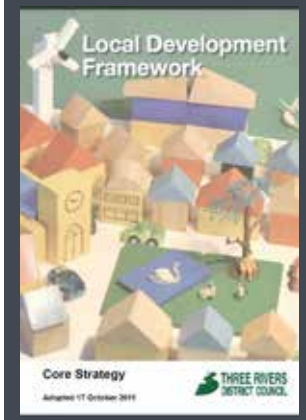
Building for a Healthy Life updates Homes England's key measure of design quality as the national housing accelerating body. The document sets out 12 considerations for creating integrated neighbourhoods distinctive places and streets for all. While it is not part of the national policy, it is recognised as best practice guidance and design tool in assessing the design quality of developments.

2007

Manual for Streets - Department for Transport

Development is expected to respond positively to the Manual for Streets, the Government's guidance on how to design, construct, adopt and maintain new and existing residential streets. It promotes streets and wider development that avoid car dominated layouts but that do place the needs of pedestrians and cyclists first.

Various



Adopted and Emerging Local Plan for Three Rivers - Three Rivers District Council

The adopted Development Plan for Three Rivers comprises the Three Rivers Core Strategy 2011-2026 (adopted October 2011), Site Allocations Local Development Document (adopted November 2014), Development Management Policies (adopted July 2013), various supplementary planning documents and adopted neighbourhood plans. Hertfordshire County Council's mineral and waste planning policies also forms part of its Development Plan.

Three Rivers District Council is currently preparing a New Local Plan which will guide future sustainable growth in the District up to 2038. The Regulation 18 Preferred Policy Options and Sites for Potential Allocation documents were published for consultation from June 2021 to August 2021. In particular, Appendix 1 of the Preferred Policy Options sets out a range of design criteria for new developments in relation to privacy, prospect, daylight, sunlight and outlook, aspect, flatted developments, residential amenity space, built form, as well as servicing and ancillary facilities. The Council is aiming to consult on the Regulation 19 Draft Local Plan in November and December 2022. An updated Local Development Scheme has not been published as of March 2022.

In addition, Three Rivers District Council is also working on a Joint Strategic Plan (JSP) for South West Hertfordshire along with neighbouring authorities (Dacorum, Hertsmere, St Albans and Watford), which will guide longer term growth in the wider sub-region up to 2050.

The Appendix provides a review of key adopted and emerging policies relevant to this Masterplanning Guidance.

2018

Hertfordshire's Local Transport plan - Hertfordshire County Council

This plan sets out how transport can help deliver a positive future vision of Hertfordshire. As well as providing for safe and efficient travel, transport has a major input into wider policies such as economic growth, meeting housing needs, improving public health and reducing environmental damage.

2005

Hertfordshire Landscape Character Area Statements St Albans District (Hertfordshire Landscape Character Assessment)

The assessment evaluates and classifies landscape character areas in Hertfordshire based on work undertaken between 2000 and 2005. Area 9 of the assessment covers area to the north east of Abbots Langley and identifies key distinctive landscape features, their visual and sensory perceptions and visual impacts. It seeks to preserve, enhance and identifies features of special architectural or historic interest by Character Areas.

2005

Abbots Langley Draft Conservation Area Appraisal - Three Rivers District Council

Designated in October 1969, Abbots Langley contains a 13-ha Conservation Area at its medieval core, focusing on the Grade I Listed Church of St Lawrence. The Abbots Langley Draft Conservation Area Appraisal describes the special character and appearance of the Conservation Area that seeks to preserve and enhance and identifies features of special architectural or historic interest by Character Areas. It also set out considerations for development. The document also highlights key views into and out of the Conservation Area. However, overall it is found that these views are limited by the curve of the High Street, brick walls and extensive planting around the main entrances into the Conservation Area in the north and south.

Masterplan area study analysis

03

3. Masterplan area study analysis

This chapter has analysed the existing condition of Abbots Langley Village Centre. AECOM identified four objectives which were agreed with Abbots Langley Neighbourhood Plan Group. The objectives are: historic assets, public spaces, land use and sustainable travel. These have been introduced in the next chapter and further refined after the public engagement took place. A set of issues and constraints have been identified based on the objectives. Ultimately, following the baseline analysis a set of opportunities have also been proposed.

F.16

Figure 16: A view towards the High Street

3.1 Issues and constraints

Abbots Langley High Street is the historic focal point of the village centre. Various historic buildings along the High Street with distinctive materials add interest to the public realm.

A reasonable range of shops are located in the village centre, although businesses are concerned with the recent drop in foot fall. This is attributed to the closure of two local banks (Lloyds and Barclays) within the last two years and the impact of Covid 19. In addition, the shops remain vulnerable to high rents, business council taxes and Internet shopping trends (increased nationally from 9% in 2012 to 26% in 2022).

The overall sense is not of a failed or failing High Street, rather it is of a place which has been slowly drawing back into itself with an air of tiredness and lack of focus, despite some very obvious strengths and opportunities. To address this, it is suggested that a variety of businesses are provided along the High Street to establish a good balance between the type of businesses located in the area.

The historic assets and green infrastructure in the village could be enhanced to address the issues. These assets include the three churches and listed buildings, along with the Manor House Grounds, Millennium Gardens, Kitters Green and trees along the High Street.

Similarly, the streetscape in the High Street is not in bad condition, per se, but the general arrangement, including vehicle access and parking, is not conductive to it being pedestrian friendly and a people focused space. The surface material used on pavements adds to the relatively poor general arrangement of street furniture, making the High Street feel excessively open and lacking interest.

Lack of detail and inappropriate use of materials, colour and signage tends to reduce the overall quality of the village centre, undermining the sense of place and quality provided by some of the attractive historic assets.

There is a general lack of greening within the High Street, which tends to amplify the impact of the large areas of hard surfacing and creates a slightly austere atmosphere.

There is little in the way of public art or wayfinding, which means that those unfamiliar with Abbots Langley would not necessarily find it easy to locate or move between different points within the village centre.

Based on the key components of the scheme (described in Section 1.2), a list of objectives have been proposed. For each of these objectives, the main constraints and opportunities have been investigated.

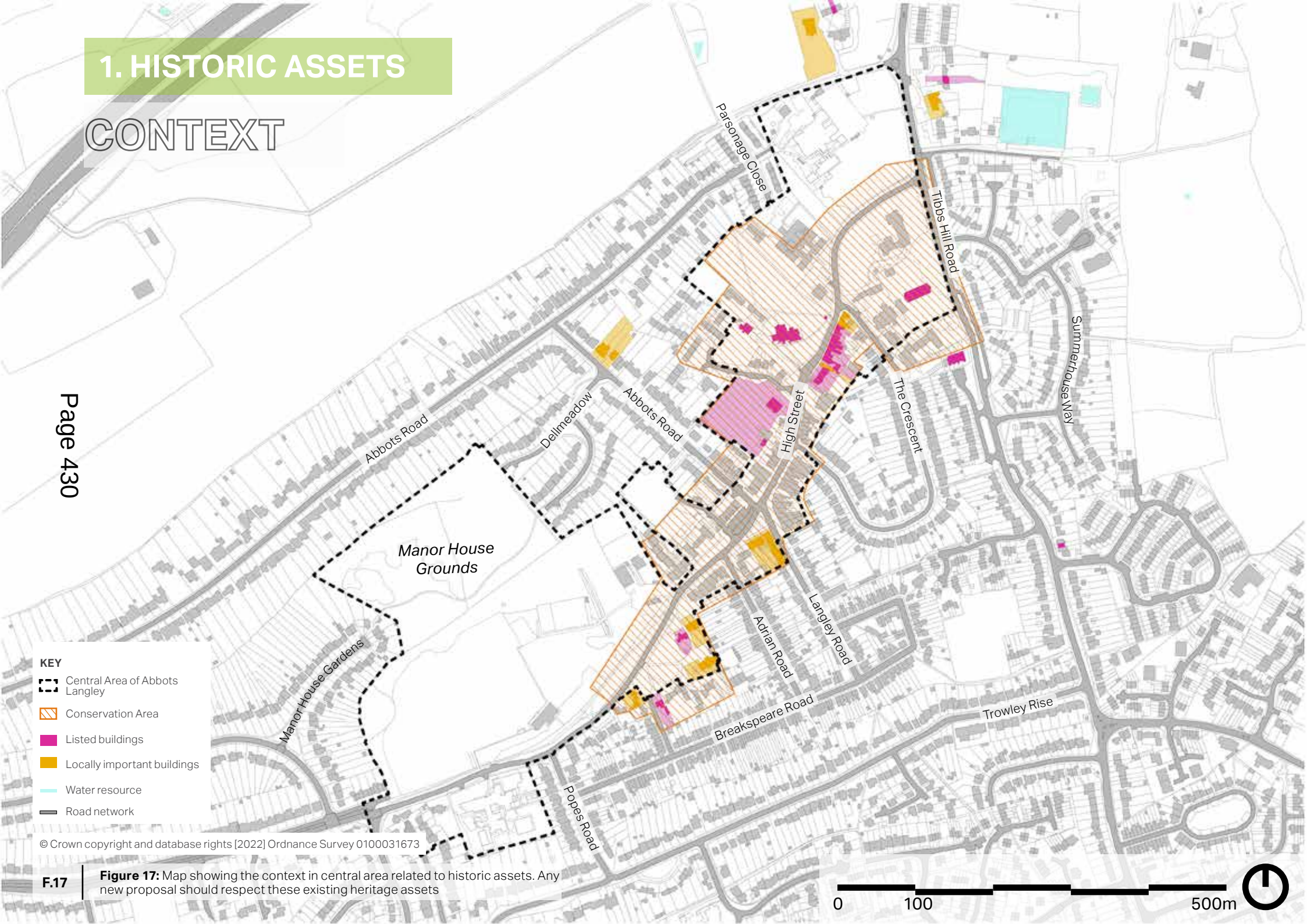
The following pages illustrate the existing context and the main constraints of Abbots Langley's central area, while the objectives have been presented in Section 4.2. These are as follows:

1. Historic assets;
2. Land uses;
3. Public spaces;
4. Sustainable travel.

The analysis related to historic assets is shown in Figure 17.

1. HISTORIC ASSETS

CONTEXT



© Crown copyright and database rights [2022] Ordnance Survey 0100031673

F.17 **Figure 17:** Map showing the context in central area related to historic assets. Any new proposal should respect these existing heritage assets

1. HISTORIC ASSETS

CONSTRAINTS

- If green space in front of heritage assets is not well-maintained, this can undermine their presence and value;
- A need to appreciate more of the listed buildings such as churches and other historic assets;
- Lack of high-quality architecture adjacent to some of the existing listed buildings.

Figure 18: Church of St Lawrence, a Grade I listed building

Figure 20: Row of adjoining listed buildings along the High Street

Figure 19: Pound Cottage in Kitters Green built in the late 17th century with distinctive materials

Figure 21: War Memorial on churchyard as a focal point approaching to the High Street

2. LAND USE

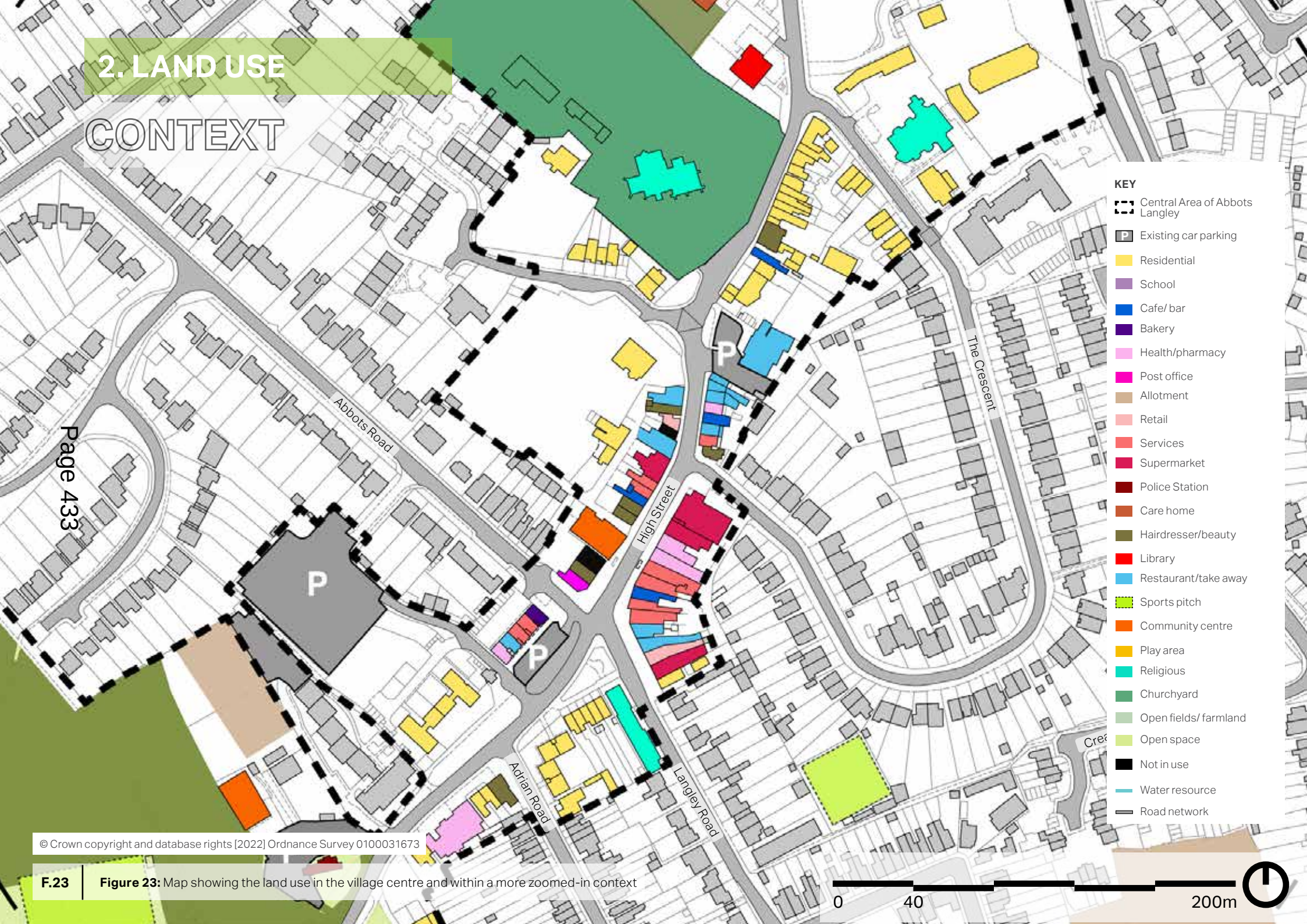
CONTEXT

© Crown copyright and database rights [2022] Ordnance Survey 0100031673

Figure 22: Map showing the land use in the village centre

2. LAND USE

CONTEXT



© Crown copyright and database rights [2022] Ordnance Survey 0100031673

F.23 **Figure 23:** Map showing the land use in the village centre and within a more zoomed-in context

2. LAND USE

CONSTRAINTS

- Empty premises on the High Street creates inactive frontages and can lead to issues associated with vandalism and declining image;
- Lack of linkage between community facilities such as the Henderson Hub, the library, the community centre, the Manor House, three active churches, pubs and clubs;
- A good range of shops although businesses are concerned with drop in foot fall (after two bank closures) and remain vulnerable to high rents, business council taxes and online shopping.

Figure 24: Henderson Memorial Hall on the High Street as community facility at the heart of the village

Figure 25: The Library on the High Street as community facility

Figure 26: Empty premises on the High Street need to be revitalised

Figure 27: The shopping parade along the High Street

3. PUBLIC SPACES

CONTEXT

© Crown copyright and database rights [2022] Ordnance Survey 0100031673

F.28 | **Figure 28:** Map showing the context in central area related to public space

3. PUBLIC SPACES

CONTEXT

© Crown copyright and database rights [2022] Ordnance Survey 0100031673

F.29 | **Figure 29:** Map showing the issues and constraints in central area related to public space in a more zoomed-in context

3. PUBLIC SPACES

CONSTRAINTS

- Poor outdoor conditions around some of the local facilities such as the library and the central area where the High Street meets Abbots Road;
- Lack of green features in the form of planters, street trees and green walls along High Street;
- Lack of outdoor places for informal socialising and gatherings in the shopping area;
- Limited street furniture and green elements create a less vivid scene;
- Lack of wayfinding signs to important destinations, activity nodes, landmark buildings, and open spaces;
- Lack of consistent use of local materials in some of the retail units. For more details please see Section LC04 in Abbots Langley Design Guidance and Codes[1];
- Inconsistent use of materials in the public realm creates a fragmented scene for pedestrians. Need for easier access for wheelchairs and mobility scooters.

1. https://www.abbotslangley-pc.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/sites/4/2022/06/Design-Guide-and-Code-Final-Report-November-2021.pdf

Figure 30: Manor House Grounds in the village centre

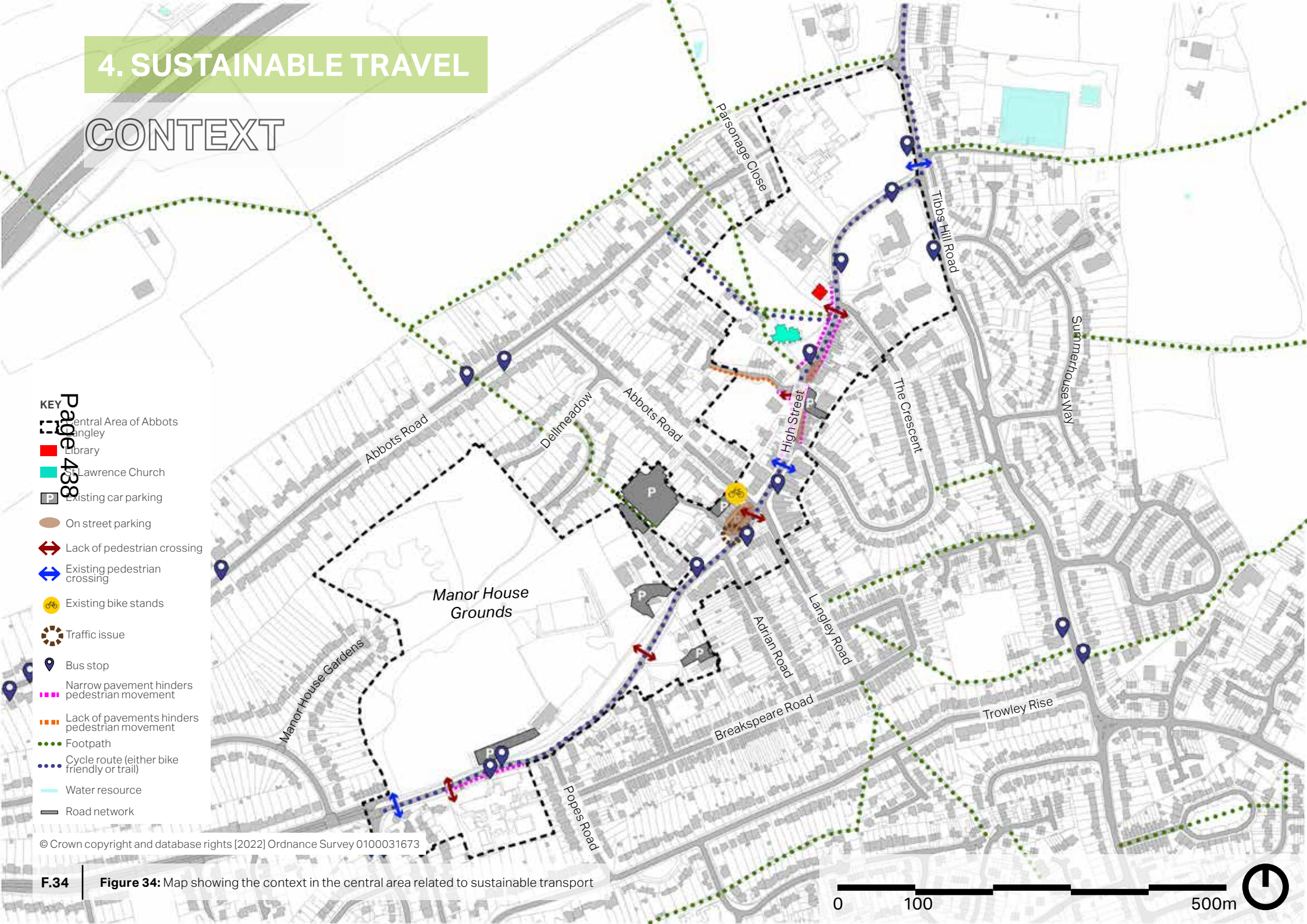
Figure 31: Green infrastructure and footpath along the High Street

Figure 32: Existing public realm with street furniture in front of the Methodist Church

Figure 33: Poorly maintained paving materials in front of the shops create a fragmented streetscape

4. SUSTAINABLE TRAVEL

CONTEXT



© Crown copyright and database rights [2022] Ordnance Survey 0100031673

F.34 | **Figure 34:** Map showing the context in the central area related to sustainable transport

4. SUSTAINABLE TRAVEL

CONSTRAINTS

- Traffic congestion along the High Street;
- Issue with the junctions where the High Street meets roads branching off;
- Lack of pedestrian crossings along the High Street and Gallows Hill Lane;
- Lack of pavement or inadequate pavement width hinders pedestrian movement;
- Lack of pelican crossing along the cross roads;
- Safety concerns about the pedestrian crossing in the High Street. Although there is a 20-mph speed limit, some safety issues remain;
- Existing car parking facilities fall under capacity. It is important to meet the rising parking needs of the local residents and visitors;
- Unattractive car parking due to lack of landscape features which creates less pleasant public spaces;
- Car-dominated public realm due to presence of car parking along the High Street;
- Lack of cycle route and footpaths to connect the village centre to other parks and countryside:
- Lack of bike stands discourages the use of bicycles in the village centre.

F.35

Figure 35: Car parking along the High Street creates a car-dominated spaces

F.36

Figure 36: Pedestrian route along the High Street

4. SUSTAINABLE TRAVEL

CONSTRAINTS

- Narrow pavements along some stretches of the High Street hinder pedestrian flow;
- Poor condition of pavements affects mobility especially those with mobility difficulties:
- Lack of signage showing important landmarks and showing footpaths and cycle routes could confuse residents and visitors.

F.37

Figure 37: Pedestrian crossing and pavement near the Henderson Hub

F.38

Figure 38: Existing signage and wayfinding

3.2 Opportunities

This section fulfils the criteria of the 20-Minute Neighbourhood by proposing suggestions and opportunities against each of the objectives.

These proposals are based on the outcome of the workshops and 20-Minute Neighbourhood principles (See Chapters 1 and 4).

Figure 39: A view away from the High Street to the west

1. HISTORIC ASSETS

OPPORTUNITIES

- An opportunity to look after the heritage buildings, showing the character and history of the village;
- Create points of interest to appreciate the local history in front of the listed buildings;
- Restore Pound and Kitters Green;
- Display more information about the local history with improved wayfinding in the village;
- Incorporate locally distinctive design features and public art;
- Respect the historic assets along the High Street and beyond by directing the views and improving the design of outdoor spaces:
- Preserve and enhance Abbots Langley's historic values by maximising green infrastructure and planting opportunities along key routes such as the High Street.

Figure 40: Incorporate locally distinctive design features

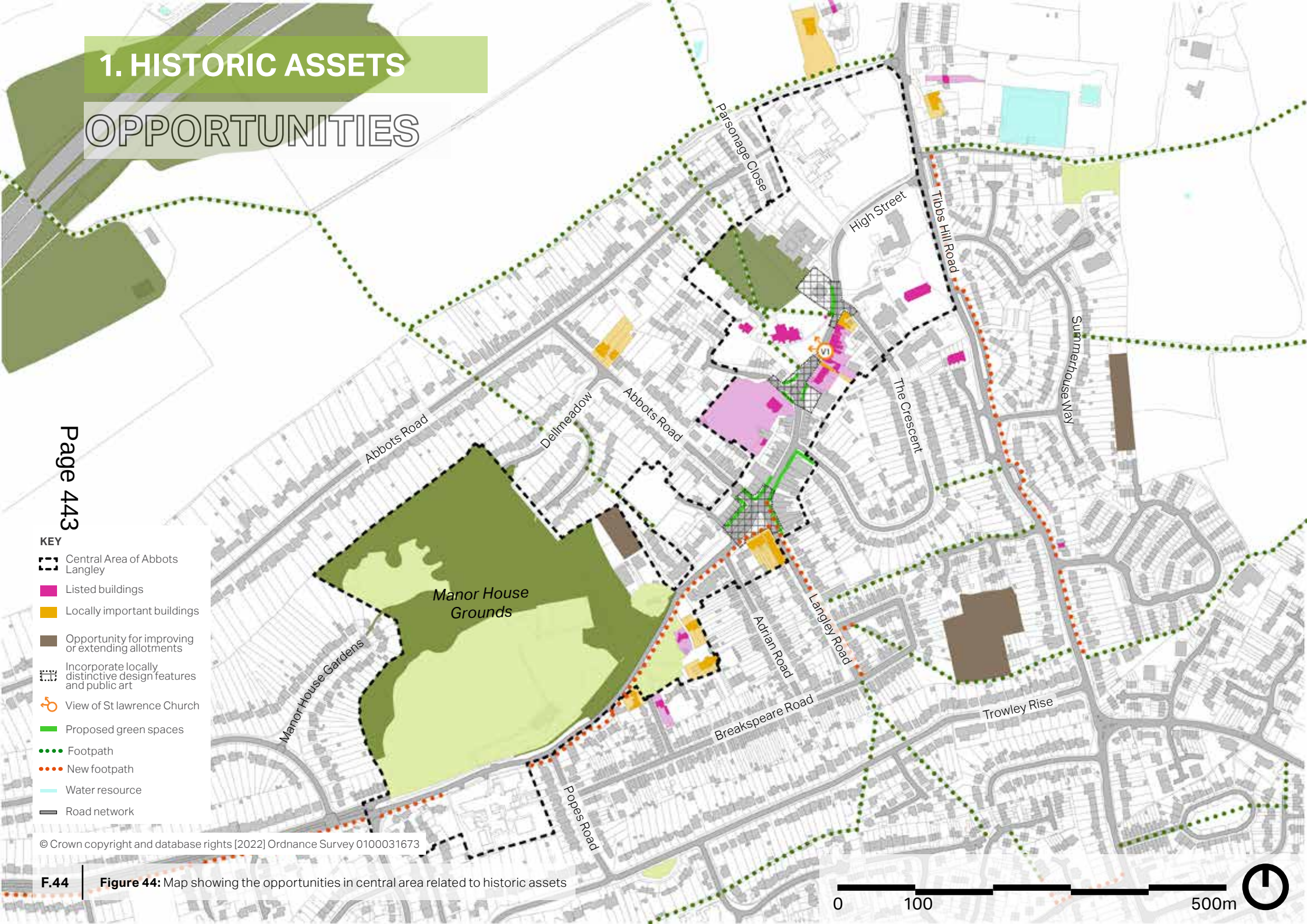
Figure 41: Display information about the local history (Source: https://www.bing.com/images)

Figure 42: An example of Nelson's statue used in Burnham Market representing the history of the place

Figure 43: Respect the historic value of existing listed buildings by maximising green infrastructure and avoid blocking the views towards them and around

1. HISTORIC ASSETS

OPPORTUNITIES



© Crown copyright and database rights [2022] Ordnance Survey 0100031673

Figure 44: Map showing the opportunities in central area related to historic assets

2. LAND USE

OPPORTUNITIES

- Provide well-connected roads and promote active travel modes around community facilities and businesses;
- Increase dwell-time and opportunities for community to form with 'sticky' uses such as regular farmer, community and artisan markets in front of businesses and community facilities. These should be interconnected via dedicated green routes;
- Improve existing facilities, recreation and leisure opportunities (e.g. toilets, to serve tourism):
- Improve the local food environment by encouraging local food production in allotments or community food enterprises in order to produce healthy, locally sourced, fresh food.

F.45

Figure 45: People walking on Guildford High Street (Source: https://www.getsurrey.co.uk/news/surrey-news/surrey-hampshire-towns-villages-named-17968049)

F.46

Figure 46: Farmers Market in Tring (Source: https://www.livingmags.info/tring-farmers-market-attendance-rises/)

2. LAND USE

OPPORTUNITIES

- Opportunity to transform empty high-street premises into community-led enterprise centres as familiar places with good public transport links;
- Provision of on-site office hub for hired use by office workers;
- Parks should include different types of spaces; some for sports and energetic activity; some more tranquil spaces should be provided for nurseries, more toddler-friendly play equipment in the Manor House Grounds, day centre, clubs and social activity for all ages;
- Provision of more storage facilities for the various sport equipment used by the local youth football teams and the cricket teams, currently in the cricket score building. This should be located across the playing fields:
- Improve changing facilities for home and away teams along with umpires. Also, maintain and improve the club house.

Figure 47: Performance events could take place in the flexible use space attracting a good number of people from all ages and offer entertainment. (Source: https://www.connswatergreenway.co.uk/news/2016-09-05/love-victoria-park-a-great-day-out-for-all-the-family)

Figure 48: Provision of high-quality materials on shop fronts in Burnham Market

Figure 49: An example of a community hub with a mix of complementary uses to maximise uses and activities. A library and gym in South Woodford. The income from the gym subsidies the library running costs (Source: https://www.bing.com/images)

2. LAND USE

OPPORTUNITIES

- Provision of multi-functional uses in any given premises can benefit the community by providing multiple services in the same location such as cafes, libraries, meeting rooms, performing arts venues, employment services etc. This creates a strong social offer to attract activity/community uses. The Henderson Hub is a good example of this. Its charitable status means it must fulfil a dual role as a village hall and a performing arts venue;
- Improve the shop frontage along the High Street;
- Encourage diverse businesses in order to improve the vitality of the High Street;
- Activate the vacant shops to boost the local economy;
- Improve the appearance of shop fronts along the High Street;
- Propose solar panels on public buildings to encourage the use of sustainable energy.

Figure 50: Drawing classes could be organised by the library or the community in general to attract people from all ages and help them express themselves while being close to nature. (Source: https://texashillcountry.com/texas-hill-country-extra-curricular-activities/)

Figure 51: Book reading events could be organised by the library or the schools over the weekends attracting families and promoting community engagement. (Source: https://www.pinterest.co.uk/pin/556124253957054796/)

2. LAND USE

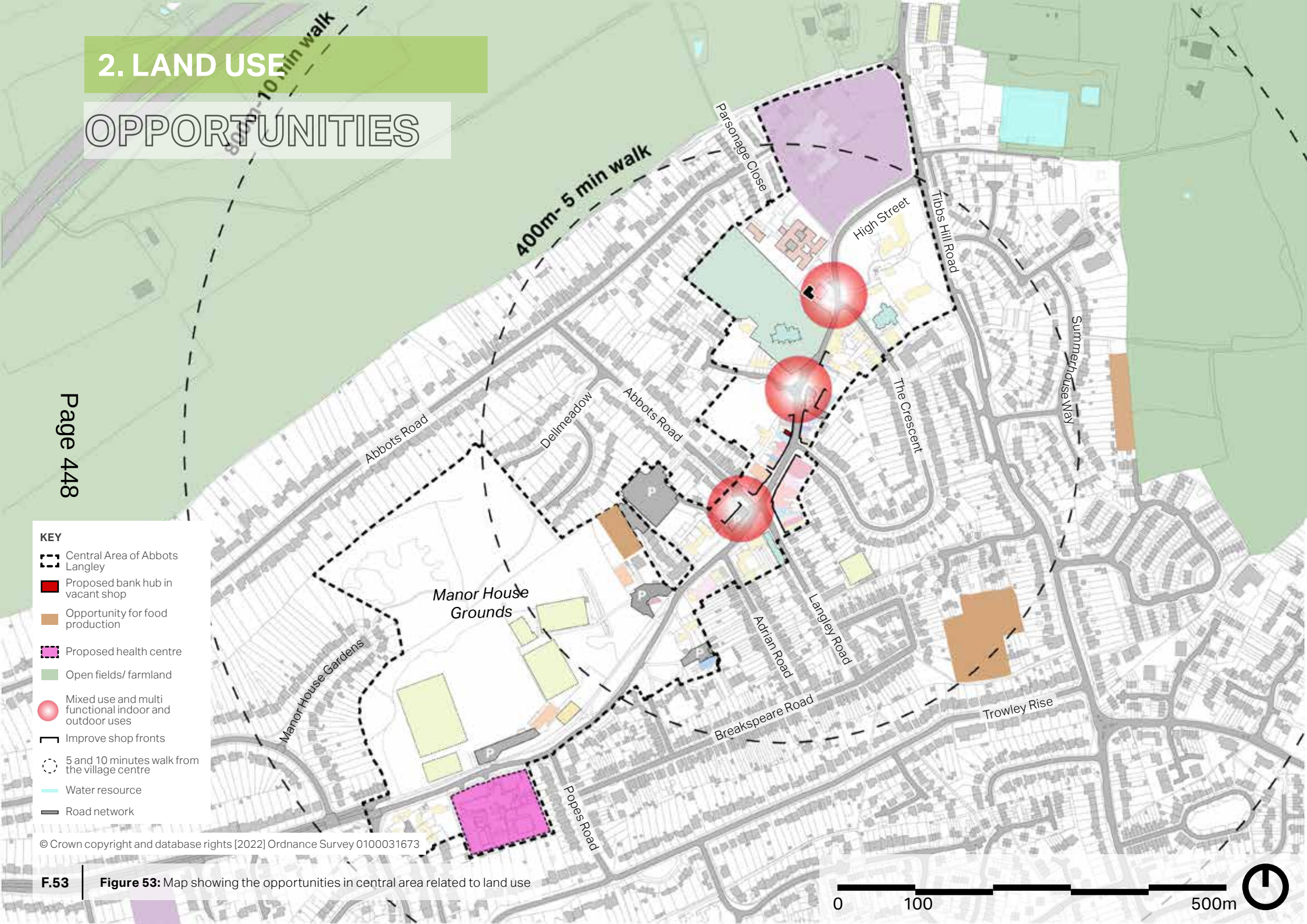
OPPORTUNITIES

- Support small independent businesses and retailers that are community led-ventures. The idea of community wealth-building aligns with the principles of the 20-Minute Neighbourhood, with a focus on locally productive forms of business and employment, ensuring that a strong neighbourhood centre exists to support everyday needs;
- Provision of a banking hub on the High Street to increase footfall in the village centre;
- An opportunity for Margaret House Site to be an alternative health centre, affordable houses for the elderly or facilities for the care of the elderly:
- Move Vine House Health Centre (whose current facilities are under capacity for the current patient list) to Breakspeare School Site after 2024 and provide a new health centre with a potential capacity of up to 20,000 patients.

Figure 52: Redeveloping Breakspeare Special School Site for a new larger NHS health centre to replace the Vine House Health Centre (Source of the aerial view: Google Earth)

2. LAND USE

OPPORTUNITIES



© Crown copyright and database rights [2022] Ordnance Survey 0100031673

F.53 **Figure 53:** Map showing the opportunities in central area related to land use

3. PUBLIC SPACES

OPPORTUNITIES

- Provision of an attractive environment at a human scale by better connecting places such as churches and community centres to nature;
- Design pocket parks in between the outdoor spaces;
- A green and comfortable High Street and the paths branching off will enhance lives. This can be achieved by high quality planters, trees, green walls, allotments and other green spaces;
- Promote a healthier lifestyle by providing places to rest, with shade, shelter and street furniture. Allow some spill out spaces in front of cafes and restaurants;
- Create a temporary play street to create a safer space in which children can play. This can be achieved by short- term road closures:
- Create more attractive public spaces to accommodate events such as markets.

Figure 54: Allotment on the High Street in Elmbridge Village, Surrey. An affordable, healthy way of food production (Source: https://www.bing.com/images/)

Figure 55: Any element along the High Street like lighting columns, plants, signage, can be a form of public art to improve the quality of the environment. (Source: Westfield Stratford City: https://www.iotagarden.com/projects/westfield-shopping-centre-london-e20-faux-corten-planters/)

Figure 56: Open space for people in all ages to encourage gathering and help legibility, Poundbury

Figure 57: High-quality boundary treatments, Pedestrian/cycling footpaths, Screening built environment by different type of greeneries, Cambridge

3. PUBLIC SPACES

OPPORTUNITIES

- Use the same materials for all pavements, whether owned by the Highway Authority or the shops;
- Provide places suitable for everyone including the elderly, children and disabled people. This can be achieved by prioritising walking and cycling, so that children are safe to travel independently;
- Provide street furniture on the High Street and other public places:
- Improvements in the outdoor space in front of the library, church and the junction where the High Street meets Abbots Road and Langley Road.
- Provision of a public drinking fountain in Millennium Gardens;
- Creation of green corridors for wildlife.

Figure 58: Raised planter with seating improves the quality of public realm (Source: https://www.externalworksindex.co.uk/entry/151830/Streetlife/Mobile-Green-Isles-Oval/)

Figure 59: High-quality of street furniture can improve the environment of the High Street and offer opportunities for resting and socialising. (Source: Wokingham town market: https://news.wokingham.gov.uk/news/overview-and-scrutiny-call-for-questions/)

Figure 60: Example of high quality paving materials that give the impression of a shared space where vehicles, pedestrians and cyclists co-exist. (Source: Preston: https://www.blogpreston.co.uk/2020/07/safety-action-plan-aims-to-bring-people-back-to-preston-city-centre/)

Figure 61: Public drinking fountain

3. PUBLIC SPACES

OPPORTUNITIES

- Design the outdoor space in a way to emphasise key views and key focal point;
- Incorporate practical and mood lighting for evening usage.

F.62

Figure 62: Night time use- cafe (Source: https://globerove.com/france/night-time-outdoor-cafe-paris/)

F.63

Figure 63: Allocating space within the street for market stalls (permanent or temporary). These can be used for farmer, community or other type of markets

F.64

Figure 64: Well integrated greenery in public realm

3. PUBLIC SPACES

OPPORTUNITIES

© Crown copyright and database rights [2022] Ordnance Survey 0100031673

F.65 | **Figure 65:** Map showing the opportunities in central area related to public space

4. SUSTAINABLE TRAVEL

OPPORTUNITIES

- Improve materials for the carriageway to flag the approaching traffic calming measures and create a sense of shared environment rather than a strictly vehicular street;
- Replace the existing zebra crossing with a pelican pedestrian crossing on the High Street to improve pedestrian flow and increase safety;
- Discourage motor vehicle traffic and open the streets for walking and cycling e.g. using measures such as medians in the middle of street, traffic calming, and 20-mph limits or zones;
- Junction improvements (public realm/ shared surface junction with signals) to reduce speeds and congestion:
- Temporary road closure for special events in the parking area in front of the parade of shops (Simmons, Garston TV.etc.) to form a pedestrian square.

Figure 66: Distinctive materials for junction, footpath, use of shared surface for all users to reduce traffic speed in Poynton (Source: https://www.cnu.org/publicsquare/2019/04/26/poynton-video-tribute-hamilton-baillie)

Figure 68: The use of safety camera plus applying the 20 mph limits

Figure 67: Stamford New Road after reconstruction in Altrincham. The new design re-organised traffic flows by introducing a central median, installing new trees and planters, adding crossings, using high-quality paving materials, and rationalising car parking (Source: https://www.bing.com/images)

4. SUSTAINABLE TRAVEL OPPORTUNITIES

Figure 69: Planted kerb build-outs and raised junction table to reduce vehicle speed

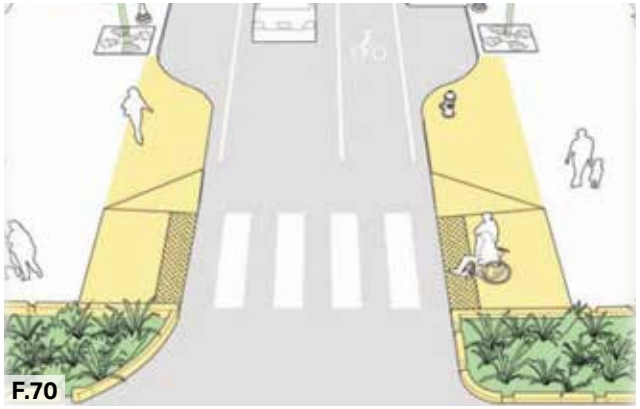


Figure 70: Shorter pedestrian crossings to encourage car to reduce speed (Source: https://nacto.org/publication/urban-street-design-guide/street-design-elements/curb-extensions/gateway/)

Figure 71: High- quality paving

Figure 72: Example of raised pedestrian crossing on a main road, with contrast paving materials and space for low- level planting and with contrasting paving materials

Figure 73: Road closure using a gate in Rickmansworth

4. SUSTAINABLE TRAVEL

OPPORTUNITIES

- Provide a well-connected road network and avoid cul-de-sac developments;
- Enable everyone to access the local facilities;
- Create an attractive street network at a human scale, with reduced risk of air and noise pollution and opportunities to connect with nature;
- Enhance public transport by extending the Arriva Click scheme from Watford;
- Introduce the Beryl Bike Hire Scheme and a more extensive cycle network;
- Improve signage to the High Street and improve walking and cycling routes:
- Improve signage to highlight the 20-mph speed limit on the High Street and raise awareness for drivers. This should also be accompanied by average speed camera control;
- Re-balance the ratio of existing parking in public spaces.

Figure 74: DIY urban design solutions to transform car-oriented public realm into more pedestrian-friendly spaces.

Figure 77: ArrivaClick, a smarter way to travel (Source: https://www.arrivabus.co.uk/arrivaclick)

Figure 75: A signage totem that offers information about different destinations in St Albans

Figure 76: An example of signage in St. Albans showing the destination and the time

Figure 78: Beryl Bike Hire Scheme, a sustainable way to ride on the High Street (Source: https://beryl.cc/scheme/watford)

4. SUSTAINABLE TRAVEL

OPPORTUNITIES

- Encourage car parking to the rear of Causeway parking area;
- Soften the parking area with hedges and flower beds to minimise the impact of parked cars;
- Relocate some of the car parking on the High Street to allow for more pedestrian footfall;
- Provide more disabled parking along or adjacent to the High Street:
- Progressively provide electric charging points in car parking spaces.
- Provision for cycle stands along the High Street to be more visible;
- Create more distinctive routes with focal points and access to the High Street and key facilities;
- Improve evening/feature lighting and in turn, safety for pedestrians.

Figure 79: Integrating cycle parking into streetscape, soften by vegetation

Figure 81: The cycle stands along the open space should be well-integrated into the environment (Source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bicycle_parking_rack)

Figure 80: Good example of high-quality walking route with visible cycle stand and greenery to soften the landscape on St Peter's Street in St Albans

4. SUSTAINABLE TRAVEL

OPPORTUNITIES

- Cycling routes to connect the High Street with surrounding open spaces and areas;
- Provide local facilities such as health centres, primary schools and local shops within 800 metres of main housing developments;
- Provide affordable public transport which is reliable, convenient, clean and accessible to promote active travel modes;
- Ensure that footways are wide enough to accommodate everyone i.e. users of buggies, mobility scooters, wheelchairs, etc. The Department for Transport's Manual for Streets (2007)1 states there is no maximum width for footway, it suggests that in lightly used streets, the minimum unobstructed width for pedestrians should generally be 2m;
- Improve the paving materials to create consistency and a more welcoming environment, facilitating pedestrian movement;
- Make the footpaths and cycle routes green by adding features such as planters and flower boxes;
- Temporary/ regular 'play street' can create a safe space for children to play and be active outside;
- Opportunity for spill-outs, where possible, to encourage social gathering;
- Opportunity for upgrading street furniture and proposals for additional street furniture where possible.

1. Manual for Streets (2007). Available at: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/manual-for-streets

Figure 82: Car-dominated public realm before intervention, Altrincham

Figure 83: The public realm after the intervention. Pedestrianisation of the street, spill out cafes, welcoming paving materials with green elements encourage people to walk in the public realm, Altrincham

4. SUSTAINABLE TRAVEL

OPPORTUNITIES

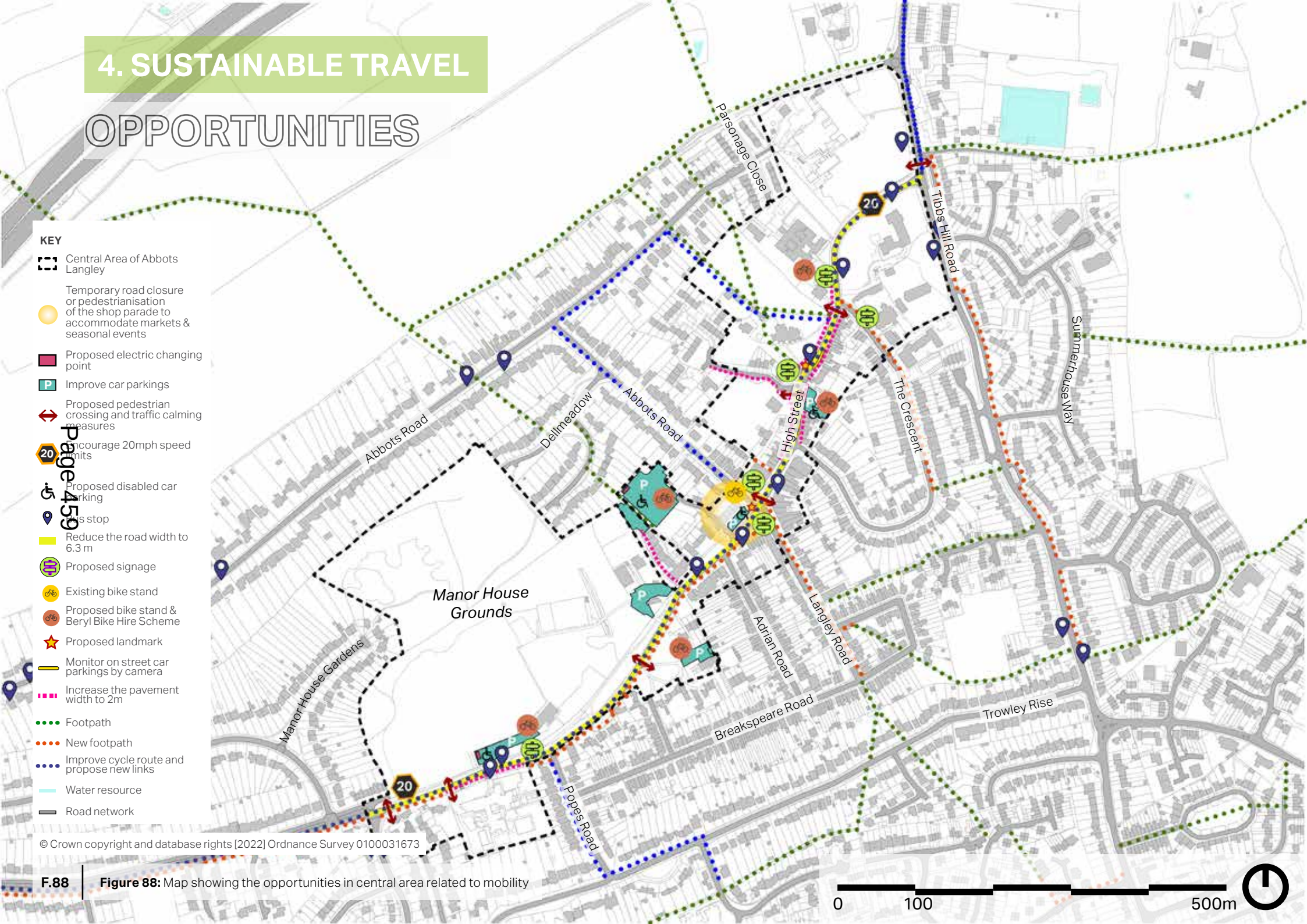
Figure 84: Provision of electric charging points on car parking spaces

Figure 85: Rationalise the existing car parking and soften the public realm with appropriate trees and planters

Figure 86: Making the footpath green by providing planter and flower box along the High Street in Rickmansworth

Figure 87: Well-used public realm in St. Albans

OPPORTUNITIES



© Crown copyright and database rights [2022] Ordnance Survey 0100031673

F.88 | **Figure 88:** Map showing the opportunities in central area related to mobility

Public engagement

04

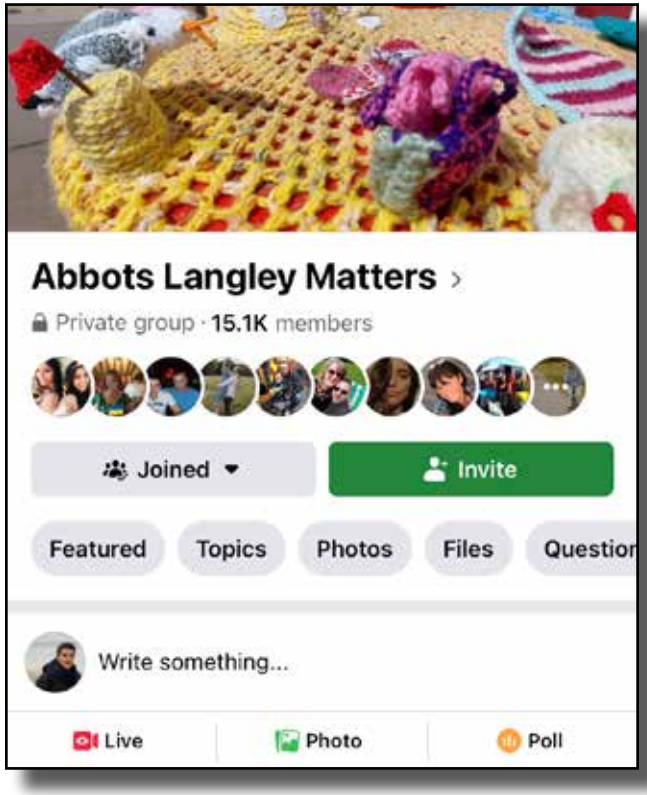
4. Public engagement

The consultant team proposed three interactive workshops to gave the residents and key stakeholders the opportunity to contribute to the development of potential solutions for the village centre. The purpose of the workshops was to generate a set of potential public realm improvements for Abbots Langley Village Centre.

4.1 Public engagement

After some baseline analysis and preparing the issues, constraints and opportunities, information was presented to attendees in a series of workshops. More than 100 participants attended the workshops including Abbots Langley residents and shopkeepers.

Public engagement took place across three workshops as well as comments via Abbots Langley Matters Facebook Page.



F.89

Figure 89: "Abbots Langley Matters" Page on Facebook

AECOM

Abbots Langley Village Centre Project

Online Workshop Thursday 19th May at 19.30- 21.30

Purpose of the virtual workshop

To agree the required list of improvements for Abbots Langley Village Centre.

These will be based on a shared understanding of the **issues** and **opportunities** affecting the upgrade of the village centre.

The aim is to agree a vision that can meet most local people's daily basic needs within a short walk or cycle from their home.

(This is described as a 20-minute neighbourhood, promoted by the Town and Country Planning Association). See https://tcpa.org.uk/collection/the-20-minute-neighbourhood/) where the quality placemaking is the key. This will include the design of a new, larger GP Surgery/ Health Hub in the centre of the village.

There are **four objectives** identified in the project brief, agreed with our professional planning consultants (AECOM) and developed from their recent visit to the village. These objectives are:

1. **Sustainable Travel:** Upgrade connections to the village centre for all residents in the Parish via safe and convenient routes with good public transport, free off-street parking, walking and cycling links. Integrating nature into the public realm and street networks to improve the quality of the environment and the well-being of residents.
2. **Public Spaces;** Green public spaces will be accessible to all residents. A village centre focused on a green infrastructure network that contains a range of green spaces, which are accessible and meet the needs of residents. Public spaces should be well connected by active travel modes (walking and cycling).
3. **Land Use:** Existing community facilities and business will be better connected within the village centre and accessible to the village and Parish beyond. There will be an emphasis on flexible spaces which support local people as they seek to develop new commercial activities, while retaining existing businesses in the village centre.
4. **Historic assets**: Promoting a highly distinctive local character that reflects the heritage of the village centre, applying placemaking principles that seek to deliver an attractive, safe and popular place at the heart of the village.

Questions

- **Question 1- What statements of intent might be included under each of the objectives above**?
- **Question 2- What are the issues you think need addressing in the village centre?**
- **Question 3- What are the opportunities for improving the village centre?** We are going to present some successful interventions that have been done in other places, to stimulate discussion during the workshop.
- **Question 4- What is your view of an overall vision for the village centre?**
- **Question 5- Are there new facilities required to improve the village centre and where should these be located?** e.g. a larger GP Surgery with a wider scope of NHS services, etc.

Peter Warman, Chair, Abbots Langley Neighbourhood Plan, Peter@warmanconsult.co.uk, Mobile: 07973 308013

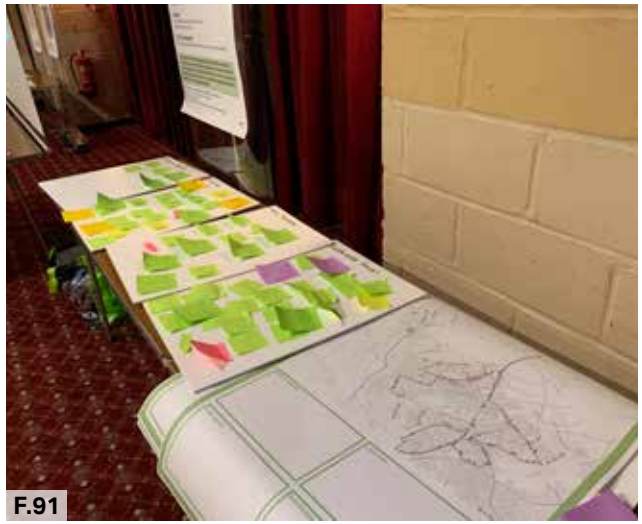
F.90

Figure 90: The leaflet hand out prior the workshops

Workshops

Three workshops took place, including one online (10 people on 19th May) and two face-to-face workshops (42 people on 20th June, 50 people on 22nd June 2022), to engage with local residents and shopkeepers. These were based on a shared understanding of the issues and constraints affecting the upgrade of the village centre.

In addition, a leaflet was handed out to participants to explain Abbots Langley Village Centre Masterplan, the objectives and frequently asked questions. The key question was "What are the issues and improvements that you require to be addressed in the Village Centre Masterplan?"



F.91

Figure 91: A series of pictures from the workshop held on 20 June 2022

The workshops were structured as follows:

- Introduction;
- 20-Minute Neighbourhood principles;
- The development objectives;
- Issues and constraints;
- Opportunities for improvement:
- Conclusions and next steps.

Abbots Langley Matters - Facebook Page

In addition to the public comments from the workshops, a further opportunity was given to local residents via the Abbots Langley Facebook pages ('Abbots Langley Matters' Group with 15,000 members). The dialogue on the Facebook page included about 140 comments.

The comments were gathered after the workshops and AECOM refined the issues, constraints and opportunities based on the feedbacks which has informed the final concept masterplan.

The outcome of the public engagement is shown on the next page. Residents' and stakeholders' views are referred to in Section 3.1 and Section 3.2.

Public engagement outcome

During discussions with the attendees in the different workshops and from the comments gathered from Abbots Langley Matters Facebook Page, the ideas which were repeated are categorised under each of objectives (See Section 4.2).

These are based on the things that participants valued and considered to be most important to the long-term vitality and wellbeing of the High Street and village centre.

The most important things that the attendees valued are illustrated on the following page.

Improve the relationship of Manor House and new health centre

Highlight the historic buildings

Improve pavements material

Link historic assets

Space to grow and sell food locally

Bank hub

Points to stop and look around

Make better use of pavements

Display historic assets information

Need for another health centre

Maintain a balance in terms of shops

Storage facilities in Manor House Grounds

Increase footfall

Flexible location for regular outdoor activities/events

Shops look tired

Rearrange the car parking spaces

20mph speed limit plus speed camera control

More disabled parking

Multi-use facilities

Improve wayfinding

Traffic calming measures

Continuous walking and cycling links

Provide cycle stands

wheelchair access to the shops

Beryl Bike Hire Scheme

Use of electric vehicle charging facilities

Arriva Click Demand Responsive Bus Service

4.2 The village centre masterplan objectives

The four objectives, listed opposite, have been identified in collaboration with the Abbots Langley Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group.

They are proposed to respond to, aid and advance the lives of residents and the attractiveness of the place for visitors.

These are long-term, sustainable recommendations that will support and uphold local values and preserve resources for future generations.

The following page shows the main interventions discussed during the public engagement which have informed the concept masterplan.

HISTORIC ASSETS

Promoting a highly distinctive local character that reflects the heritage of the village centre, applying 20-Minute Neighbourhood principles that seek to deliver an attractive, safe and popular place at the heart of the village.

LAND USE

Existing community facilities and businesses will be better connected within the village centre and accessible to the village and parish beyond. There will be an emphasis on flexible spaces which support local people as they seek to develop new commercial activities, while retaining existing businesses in the village centre.

PUBLIC SPACES

Green public spaces will be accessible to all residents. A village centre focused on a green infrastructure network that contains a range of interconnected green spaces, which are accessible and meet the needs of residents. Public spaces should be well connected by active travel modes (walking and cycling).

SUSTAINABLE TRAVEL

Upgrade connections to the village centre for all residents in the parish via safe and convenient routes with good public transport, free off-street parking, walking and cycling links. Introduce new services like ‘on-demand’ Arriva Click and Beryl Bikes for hire as in Watford. Integrating nature into the public realm and street networks to improve the quality of the environment and the wellbeing of residents.

HISTORIC ASSETS

1. Highlight the historic buildings
2. Link historic assets
3. Points to stop and look around
4. Display historic assets information
5. Abbots House

LAND USE

6. Maintain a balance in terms of shops
7. Shops look tired
8. Bank hub
9. Need for another health centre
10. Multi-use facilities
11. Wheelchair access to the shops

PUBLIC SPACES

12. Improve the relationship of the Manor House and new health centre
13. Flexible location for regular outdoor activities/events
14. Improve pavements material
15. Space to grow and sell food locally
16. Make better use of pavements
17. Additional sports storage facilities in Manor House Grounds

SUSTAINABLE TRAVEL

18. Increased footfall
19. Rearrange the car parking spaces
20. More disabled parking
21. 20mph speed limit plus speed camera control
22. Improve wayfinding
23. Traffic calming measures
24. Provide electric vehicle charging facilities
25. Implement Beryl Bike Hire Scheme
26. Introduce the Arriva Click Demand Responsive Bus Service
27. Continuous walking and cycling links
28. Provide more cycle stands

Village centre masterplan

05

5. Village centre masterplan

This chapter has proposed a series of design concepts for the High Street as well as some aspirations for other key areas in the village centre aiming to improve the existing situation.

5.1 Concept masterplan

This section presents the concepts for the masterplan for the High Street and the key areas identified in the village centre. A series of detailed designs have been proposed for the following key areas:

1. Area in front of the library and St Saviours Church;
2. Area next to St Lawrence Church;
3. Area in front of the shopping parade:
4. The Breakspeare Special School Site.

These proposals have been developed and based on the analysis of the constraints and opportunities for the High Street, a series of site visits, the feedback given from the multiple workshops and discussions with the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group.

A variety of graphic materials have been used to illustrate these proposals ranging from maps, as well as hand-drawn sketches.

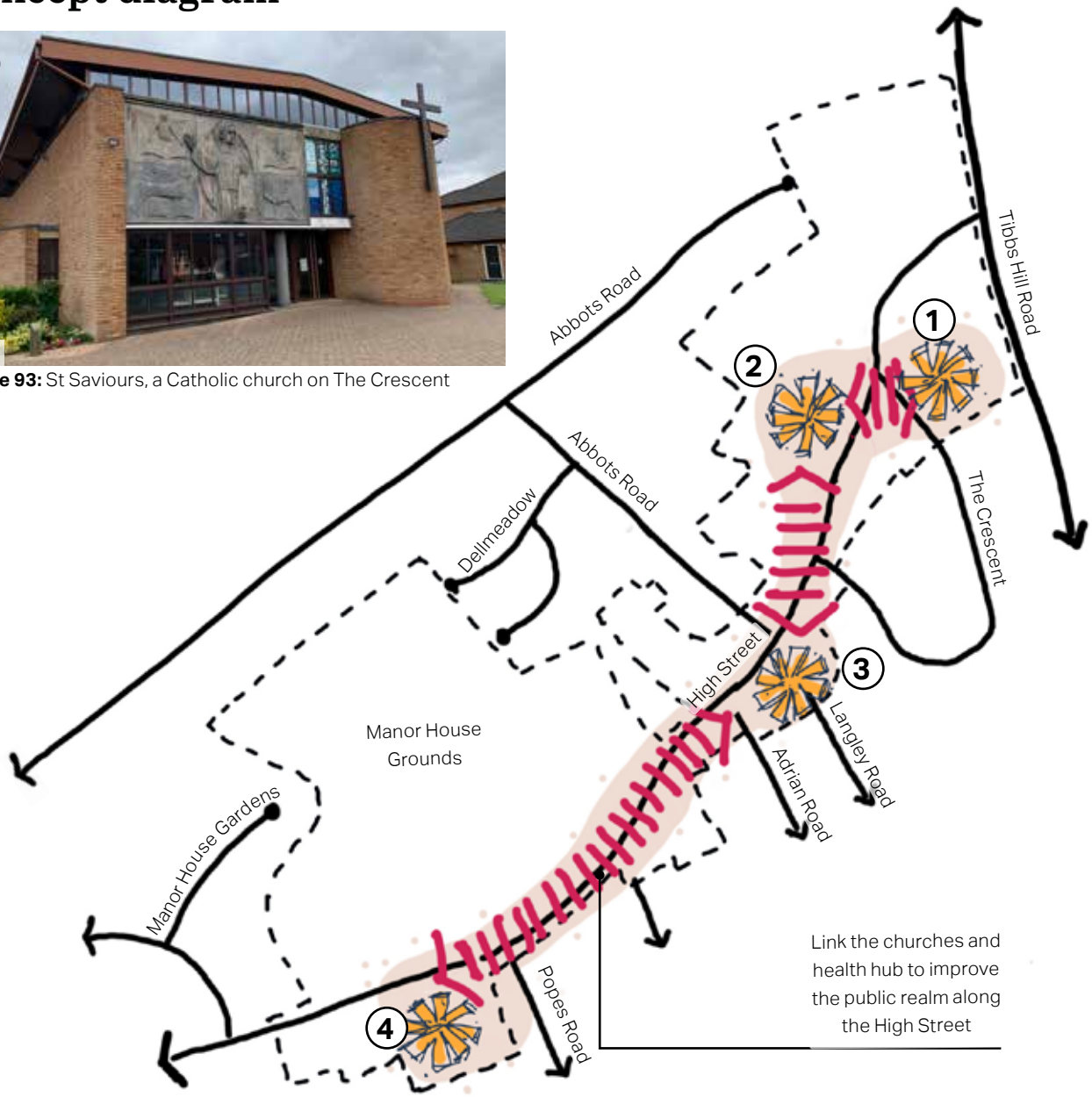
The concept diagram (See Figure 92) links the spaces in front of three different churches (St. Lawrence, St Saviours and Abbots Langley Methodist Church) and the Breakspeare Special School Site, which has been highlighted as an opportunity to be an enlarged health centre replacing the Vine House Health Centre with a capacity of 20,000 patients in the village centre.

Any improvements on the High Street aim to reduce non- essential use of the High Street by motor vehicles and prioritise pedestrian movement and safety. The proposed interventions suggested for each of above areas are explained on the following pages in more detail.

Concept diagram

F.93

Figure 93: St Saviours, a Catholic church on The Crescent



F.92

Figure 92: The overall concept diagram. Linking three churches and the aspirational site - Breakspeare Special School Site- aiming to improve the public realm quality

F.94

Figure 94: St Lawrence Church, an Anglican church on the High Street

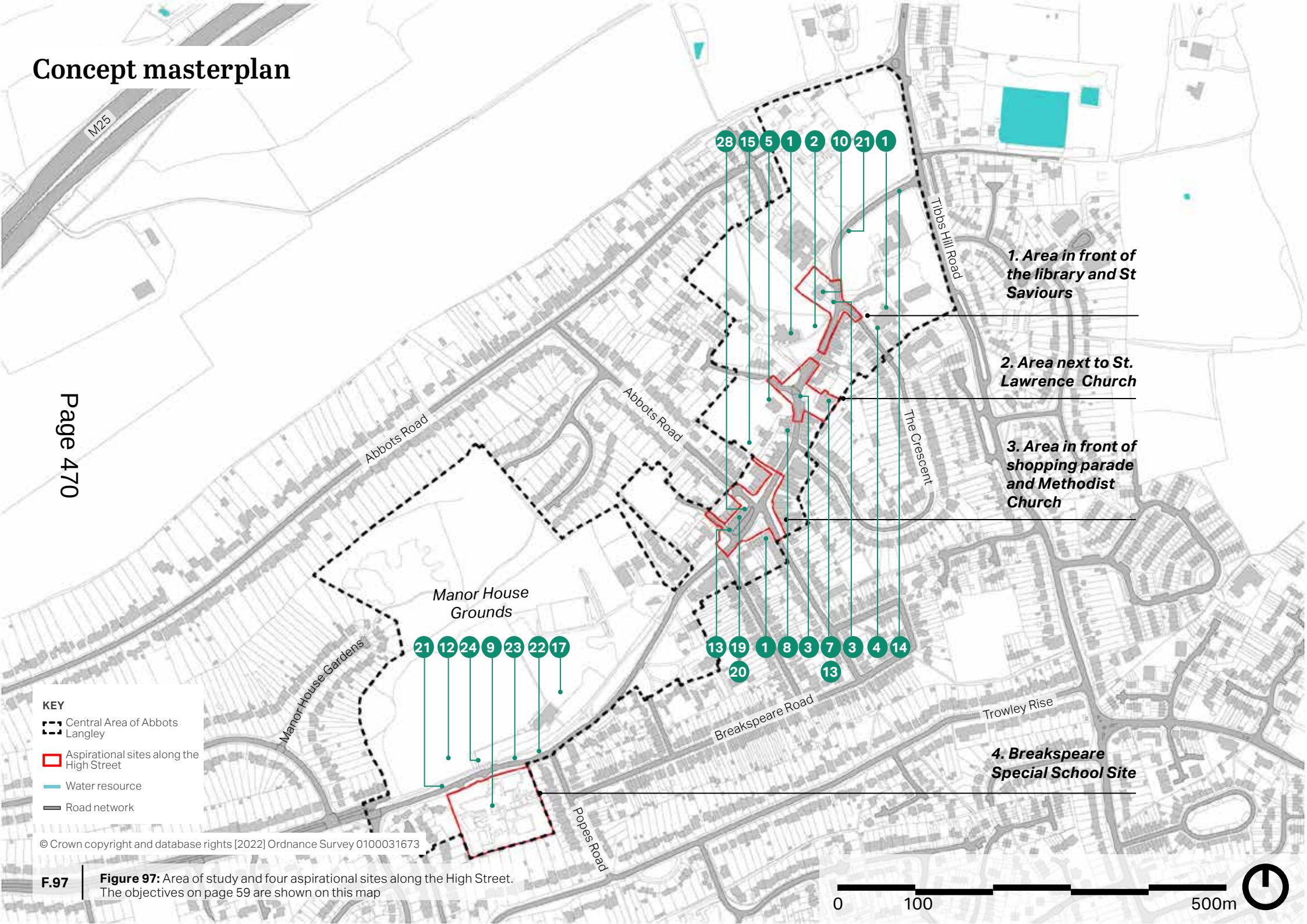
F.95

Figure 95: Abbots Langley Methodist Church on the High Street

F.96

Figure 96: Breakspeare Special School Site, an opportunity to be a health hub with capacity for 20,000 patients

Concept masterplan



© Crown copyright and database rights [2022] Ordnance Survey 0100031673

F.97

Figure 97: Area of study and four aspirational sites along the High Street. The objectives on page 59 are shown on this map

1. AREA IN FRONT OF THE LIBRARY AND ST SAVIOURS CHURCH

This area is a gateway to the High Street and therefore its character should be welcoming. It is important to discourage speeding along the High Street and propose dwelling points within the public realm.

Historic assets

- Provide information boards in front of historic assets such as churches and the war memorial to illustrate their history.

Public spaces

- Provide signage on the area near the library to indicate the gateway to the village centre, showing the speed limit, other important destinations and landmarks, plus the walking distance to each of the destinations;
- Provide public art (e.g. sculptures) in front of the library with adequate street furniture and landscaping to create a well-designed public realm:
- Opportunity for a public space opposite the library with seating areas and flexible use (e.g. Activity for kids) space to accommodate events. Indicative examples of those events are shown on Figure 50.

Land use

- Provision of an office hub behind Abbots Langley Library to provide hot desks for hire with high performance internet services.

Sustainable travel

- Reduce the width of the High Street to 6.3m for two-way operation with adequate space for buses to come through, subject to further investigation and transport evaluation;
- Re-design the High Street into a shared surface scheme. Junction improvements such as reducing the radius of The Crescent where it meets the High Street;
- Provision of pedestrian crossing with lights along junction and raised tables to reduce car speed;
- Provision of median in centre of the High Street to help vehicular flow (See Figure 67);
- Provide an average speed camera control where the 20mph sign is located to discourage cars from speeding;
- Use different materials at the road junction in favour of increasing the safety;
- Wider footway along the High Street to improve pedestrian flow and improved paving materials. An indicative example is shown on page 43;
- Improve the cycle and pedestrian links along the High Street and surrounding area:
- Visible cycle stands will be added along the footpaths to encourage walking and cycling. Design should be well integrated with the natural environment. An indicative example is shown on page 49.

© Crown copyright and database rights [2022] Ordnance Survey 0100031673

F.98 | **Figure 98:** Map showing the design proposals for the Area in front of the library and St Saviours

Figure 99: Example of cycle stands

Figure 100: Use high-quality bins and other street furniture along the High Street

Figure 101: Use of high-quality materials on the raised tables

Figure 102: Shared surface with carriage and pavement on the same level. The shared surface can be used by all public realm users such as vehicle, pedestrian and cyclists. Trees can soften the area and improve the biodiversity, Walthamstow Village

Figure 103: Example of signage

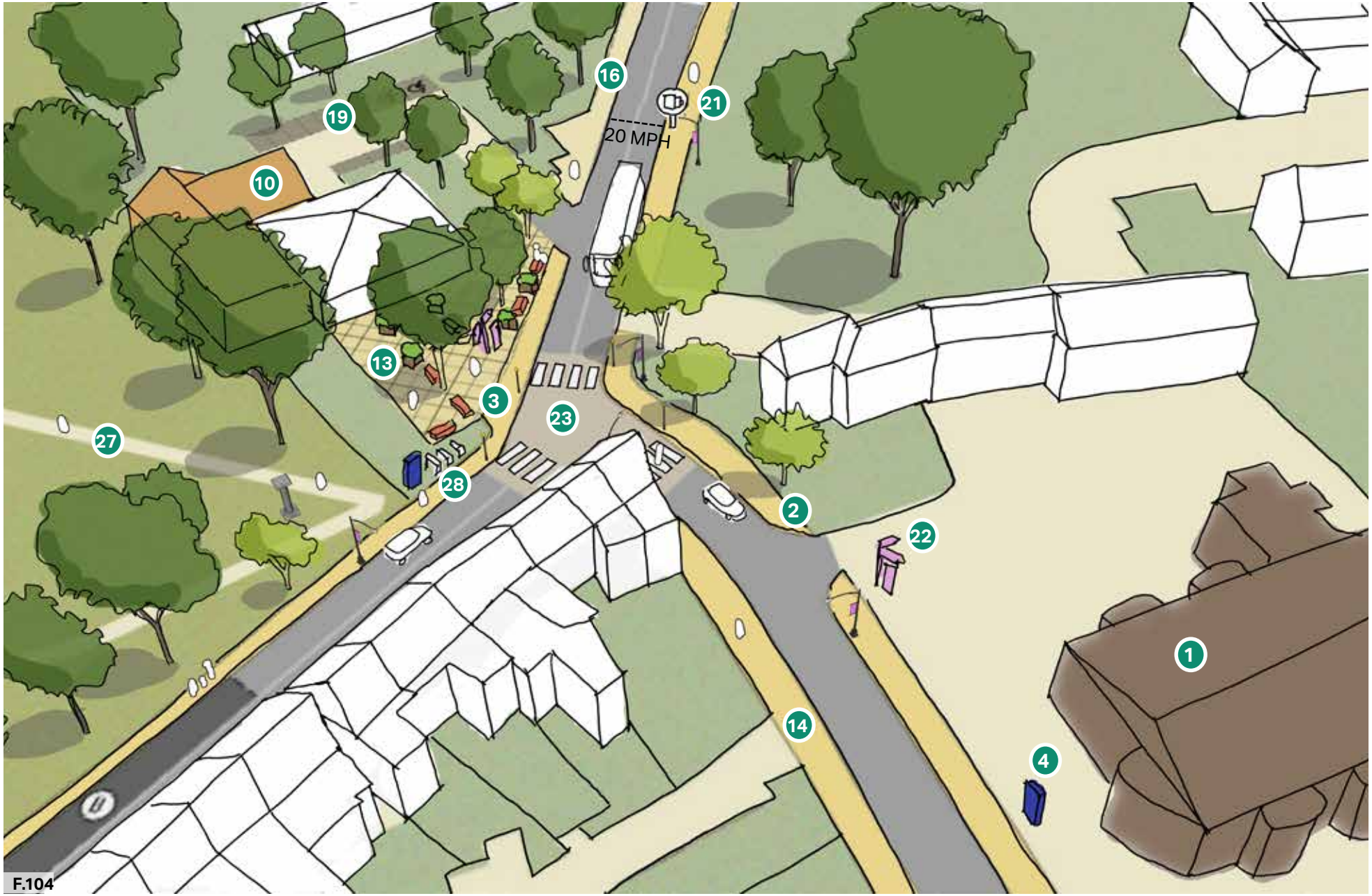


Figure 104: Indicative sketch showing the site within its context

2. AREA NEXT TO ST LAWRENCE CHURCH

The public realm in front of St Lawrence Church can be used as another point of interest by local residents to appreciate the historic assets such as the church and Abbots House. There is also an opportunity to improve the area in front of Pin Wei Restaurant.

Historic assets

- Provide information boards in front of historic assets such as churches and war memorial to illustrate their history and the distinctive local character.

Public spaces

- Design green space by proposing flower boxes and trees in front of the Pin Wei Restaurant which offer shading and also enclose the junction. Parklets and rain gardens can be used along the High Street;
- The public realm in front of St Lawrence Church can be used as a stopping point, providing a seating area and flower boxes to encourage socialising;
- Provide signage in front of the church, showing the important destinations and landmarks plus the walking distance to each of the destinations;
- Improve the public realm in front of the church by proposing public art features, new benches to encourage socialising and places for the elderly to sit and relax:
- Encourage pedestrian flow by improving the paving material quality around the restaurant and proposing high-quality green space.

Land use

- Provide a flexible space in front of Pin Wei Restaurant for various events or regular monthly farmer's market (Note: The existing business lease is due to finish at the end of 2022. See page 90 Site H3- site could be redeveloped for housing).

Sustainable travel

- Change the configuration of carriageway and junction near St Lawrence Church to reduce the width of the High Street to 6.3m for two-way operation with adequate space for buses to come through, subject to further investigation and transport evaluation;
- Re-design High Street to create a shared surface scheme;
- Provision of pedestrian crossing at the junction, plus raised tables to discourage speeding;
- Visible cycle stands proposed in front of improved public realm in front of the church to encourage walking and cycling;
- Parking spaces in front of the Pin Wei Restaurant are for restaurant users only and camera controlled:

© Crown copyright and database rights [2022] Ordnance Survey 0100031673

F.105 | **Figure 105:** Map showing the design proposals for the Area next to St Lawrence Church

Figure 106: Rain gardens with outlet kerbs in stone

Figure 108: Example of street furniture

Figure 111: Raised planters with integrated seating

Figure 107: Tree grill

Figure 109: Use of trees along the High Street

Figure 110: Example of a parklet in Hammersmith & Fulham

Figure 112: Indicative sketch showing the site within its context

3. AREA IN FRONT OF SHOPPING PARADE

The next set of proposals refers to the centre of the High Street. The High Street welcomes local residents and visitors, offering areas for resting, gathering, socialising and events. More informal green spaces will be created.

Historic assets

- Provide information boards in front of historic assets such as Henderson Hub and Methodist Church to illustrate their history.

Public spaces

- Propose a public drinking fountain in Millennium Gardens;
- Improve the public realm to orient people to use the green space for community uses (e.g. community allotments);
- Improve wheelchair access to the shops:
- A landmark can be used on the area in front of shopping parade (e.g. Harry Potter sculpture which could be provided by Warner brothers Studio).

Land use

- The area in front of shopping parade can be closed temporarily with a gate (See Figure 73) for farmer or community markets, cafe culture or art performances on a regular basis (e.g. monthly).

Sustainable travel

- Junction improvements such as reducing the radius at Abbots Road, Langley Road where they meet the High Street;
- Provision of pedestrian crossing at the junction plus raised carriageways to discourage cars from speeding;
- Provision of median in the centre of the High Street to help two- way vehicular flow;
- Reduce the number of parking spaces and allow spill out cafe near Simmons;
- Use of contrasting materials at the junction to heighten drivers' awareness of pedestrian safety;
- Provide signage in front of post office and the area in front of Methodist Church indicating speed limit and other important destinations and landmarks plus the walking distance to each of the destinations;
- Wider footway along the High Street to improve pedestrian flow and improved paving materials.
- Provide studs to differentiate the dual ownership of pavements along the High Street rather than a different surface material;
- Cycle stands will be added along shopping parade. They should be located in areas with good natural surveillance;
- Provide a bank hub in one of the empty premises along the High Street to increase footfall:
- Encourage drivers to park in the Causeway rear parking area. Improve the landscape and add electric charging points in the parking area:
- Provide echelon car parking with two disabled parking bays and seven other parking bays in front of shopping parade but moved away from shop fronts. Apply one hour limit restriction.

© Crown copyright and database rights [2022] Ordnance Survey 0100031673

F.113 **Figure 113:** Map showing the design proposals for the Area in front of shopping parade

F.114

Figure 114: Clear wayfinding

F.115

Figure 115: Shared surface carriageway

F.116

Figure 116: Upgraded surfacing-Station Road, Ashington

F.117

Figure 117: Examples of studs which can demarcate public pavements from the private areas in front of the shops

Figure 118: Indicative sketch showing the site within its context

4. BREAKSPEARE SPECIAL SCHOOL SITE

Any improvements on the High Street aim to reduce non- essential use of the High Street by motor vehicles and prioritise pedestrian movement and safety. The following interventions are suggested for this area:

Historic assets

- Incorporate locally distinctive design features in the design of the new health centre to respect the historic local character.

Public spaces

- Provide flower boxes and trees along the carriageway to soften the area;
- Provide 'a seating area/flexible space' in Manor House Grounds to be used by residents, visitors and workers in the new health centre for different times of the day:
- Provide signage in this area near the Manor House Grounds parking area showing the low speed limit and other important destinations and landmarks plus the walking distance to each of the destinations.

Land use

- Relocate Breakspeare School and develop a new expanded health centre with a potential capacity for 20,000 patients to replace the Vine House Health Centre.

Sustainable travel

- Reduce the width of the High Street to 6.3m for two-way operation with adequate space for buses to come through, subject to further investigation and transport evaluation;
- Junction improvements such as reducing the radius of Popes Road where it meets Gallows Hill Lane;
- Provision of a pedestrian crossing near the junction plus raised tables to discourage car speed;
- Provision of median in centre of the High Street to help vehicular flow;
- Provide speed camera control near the health centre;
- Use different materials at the junction in favour of increasing the road safety;
- Wider footway along the High Street to improve pedestrian flow and improved paving materials. An indicative example is shown on page 43;
- Improve the wheelchair access to the Manor House Grounds:
- Cycle stands will be added along the footpaths to encourage walking and cycling besides and within the Manor House Grounds. Design should be well integrated with the natural environment. Indicative example is shown on page 49.

© Crown copyright and database rights [2022] Ordnance Survey 0100031673

F.119 | **Figure 119:** Map showing the design proposals for Breakspeare Special School Site

Figure 120: Electric vehicle charging points

Figure 122: An example showing a mix of trees and green verges along the High Street could be designed for the approach to the new health centre

Figure 121: Disabled parking

Figure 123: Gossoms End Surgery in Berkhamsted, an example with adequate services which could be provided in the proposed new health centre

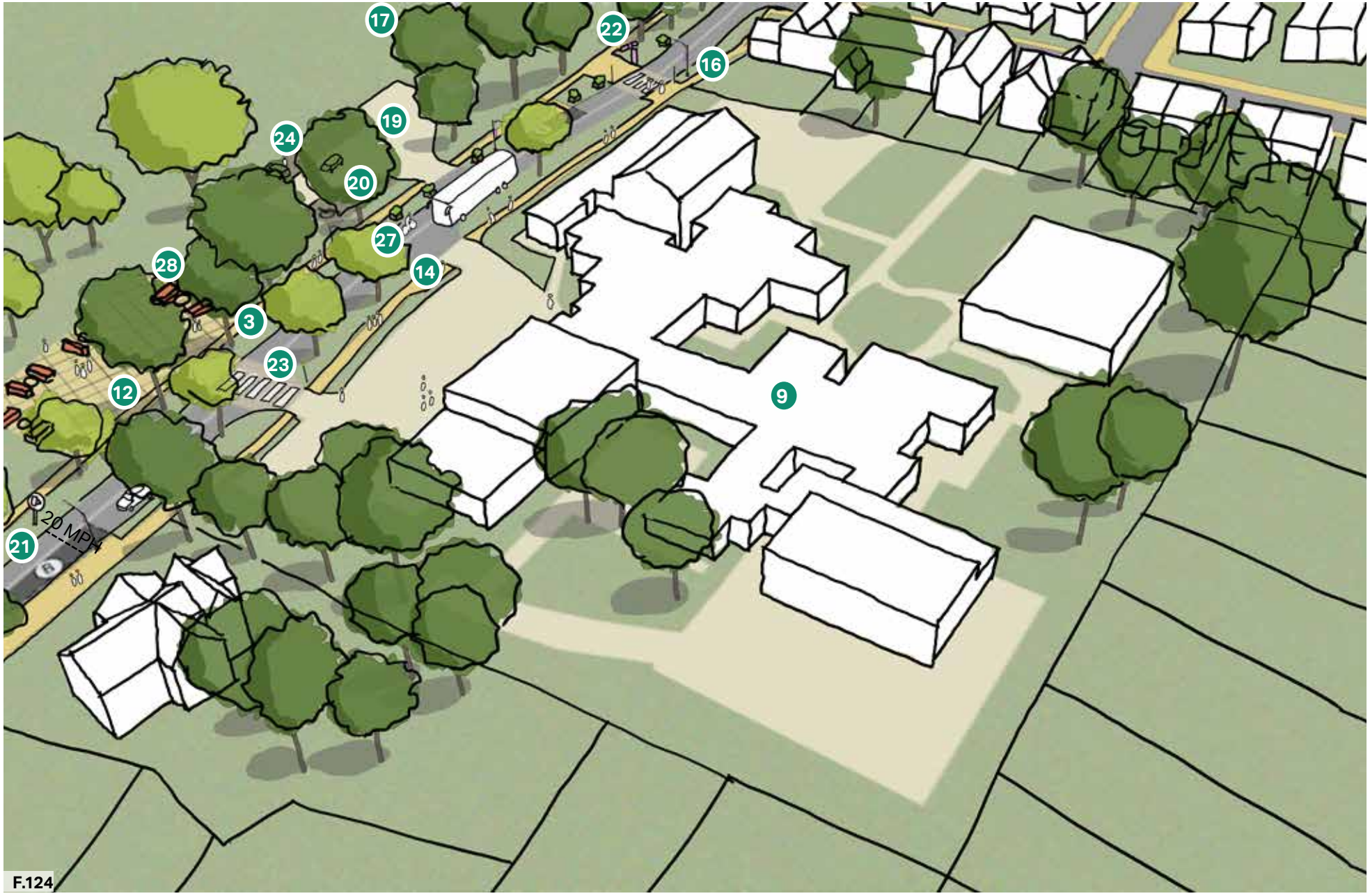


Figure 124: Indicative sketch showing the site within its context

Breakspeare School Site Feasibility Study

Abbots Langley Parish Council commissioned a feasibility study to examine if the Breakspeare School Site would be a suitable location for an expanded new Health Centre. The summary of this feasibility study is provided below.

Need for an Enlarged Health Centre in Abbots Langley Village

It has always been part of the Abbots Langley Neighbourhood Plans (ANLP) objectives to encourage the expansion of the primary health care facilities in the parish. A recent dialogue with the doctors at the Vine House Health Centre confirmed that all three GP surgeries in the parish have oversubscribed patients' lists. At present the Vine House Health Centre has 12,000 registered patients, 2,000 more than its planned capacity at its current site. There is no possibility of expanding the floorspace. Neither of the other two local surgeries have expansion options.

The local NHS authorities recognise that primary care facilities in the Abbots Langley Parish are inadequate. They agree that a new local surgery/health centre is required. Changes in the scope and range of primary care along with the advance of technology mean there is a requirement for primary care facilities to offer some of the interventions that currently take place in a hospital (secondary care) environment. The shift of emphasis toward wellness and away from 'illnesses' has an impact upon the type of service on offer and benefit the system by reducing the demand upon secondary care. Ongoing Government pressure to increase the population of Abbots Langley over the next ten years also places increasing pressure on health services. Any new facility here should be capable of accommodating up to 20,000 registered patients, **if a suitable site can be found.**

Breakspeare School Site becoming available in 2024

The ALNP Working Group understand that Hertfordshire County Council Cabinet decided on 23rd May 2022 to relocate the Breakspeare School to a new site in Croxley Green, to provide the school with a new purpose-built facility able to accommodate more than twice the number of pupils (210) with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND). Outline planning permission for this new school has been approved.

From discussions with the Vine House Health Centre, it is agreed that the Breakspeare School would be the right location, if the County Council would allow it, for a new primary care health centre after the school relocates in 2024. Importantly, it is thought to be sufficiently close to the Abbots Langley High Street to be accessible to both patients and immediate supporting services in the community that it is serving.

Commissioning an architect-led Feasibility Study

Given this opportunity, the Abbots Langley Parish Council commissioned a feasibility study, led by an architect, to examine in more detail the suitability and scope of using the Breakspeare School Site as the location for an expanded health centre to replace the Vine House facilities. This was completed as a separate part of the Abbots Langley Village Centre Masterplan. On 10th June 2022, the Abbots Langley Parish Council wrote to the Chief Executive of Hertfordshire County Council, the owner of the Breakspeare School site, expressing the community's interest in this site for community uses, including a new health centre.

The fifth objective of the ALNP includes proposing expanded primary health care facilities and is captured in Policy AL18 of the plan as follows:

AL18 MAINTAINING EXISTING HEALTH SERVICES —

Expanding and enhancing the health care facilities at key sites within the village of Abbots Langley and surrounding settlements will be supported.

There is a legal process for registering a property as an asset of Community Value as described under Part 5 Chapter 3 of the Localism Act 2011. At its July 2022 meeting, the Parish Council voted unanimously that the Chief Officer & Clerk should submit an 'Assets of Community Value Nomination Form' to Three Rivers District Council for Breakspeare School. If accepted, this would formerly register the community's interest in the Breakspeare School Site.

Figure 125: Aerial view of the Breakspeare School, Abbots Langley (Source: Google Earth)

In cooperation with the doctors at the Vine House Health Centre, the feasibility study was completed during July 2022. The ALNP's only role in matters relating to health facilities is to identify a potential site for the expanded Vine House Health Centre. Beyond this, it is the responsibility of the GP practice and NHS to progress discussions. The feasibility study allows the GP practice to take discussions further with the owners of the Breakspeare School site, Hertfordshire CC, and determine if the site could be acquired for this purpose. If successful, the NHS can also be approached to help fund the ongoing design of the new facilities following NHS established procedures.

Topics covered in the Feasibility Study

The technical report provides a site appraisal, including aspects such as geography, topography, geology, flood risk, 'sun study', site constraints and possible planning risks. Relevant background material is provided on the village of Abbots Langley including population size and characteristics, economic activity, local property values, housing types and tenure, local amenities, transport provision and access to a range of other nearby health facilities and services.

The report reviews the condition of the existing school buildings, with site photos, and observations on the nature and quality of construction given the different stages of its development, dating back to the late 1940's.

The report summaries the project brief to examine the scope for a new health centre for this site. The report lists the advantages and disadvantages of the site for the new health centre. It then illustrates a conceptual design for the health centre and compares the footprint of this design with the existing school buildings. The report provides a concept design with a schedule and analysis tabulating the accommodation that could be provided in this modular building with a parking layout for 62 vehicles and 32 bicycles. Other conceptual drawings are shown to illustrate the site landscaping, amenities, site and building access points, general points about the design of the building, including renewable energy, refuse strategy, heating, ventilation and drainage.

There are tables showing the rooms on each floor with their floor areas and potential functions. A detailed analysis is provided of the accommodation with some illustrative 3D visuals of the design concept. Based on this material an initial budget has been prepared for the project, including the costs of site clearance, construction, external costs, other contracting costs and a contingency provision.

Main Conclusions of the Feasibility Study

The project is not fully exhaustive and further investigations on the area, the site and the existing building (including soil, contamination, biodiversity, main services, structural report, transport impact, daylight-sunlight, SuDS, noise, detail costing based on an architectural detail design proposal), will have to be carried out in the next phase.

However, based on the size of the site, its geometry, topography, orientation and location, potential area of catchment, public transport and infrastructure, surrounding properties, nearby park and roads, physical constraints, initial costs and potentials for future expansion of a modular building, this site appears ideal for this type of development, subject to a coherent detail design proposal.

Therefore, having considered all of the points discussed in the Feasibility Study, and based on the above-mentioned points, **the study concluded that the Breakspeare School Site not only appears suitable and compatible with the proposed type of development and proposed functions associated with a multi-disciplinary health centre, it is actually ideal for it.** It will be difficult, even after sequential testing, to identify a more suitable site with so much potential for future expansions.

This site on Gallows Hill Lane is capable of accommodating a building or cluster of buildings of sufficient floor area for all the required health centre functions and associated infrastructure, including parking.

The Project identified many points in support of a health centre redevelopment in this location, and only a limited number of general aspects against - mainly relating to costs that require furthur evaluation.

Delivery

06

6. Delivery

6.1 Delivery

Abbots Langley Village Centre Masterplan will be a valuable tool in securing context driven, high quality development in the Parish of Abbots Langley. The table, opposite, identifies those groups who might use the concept masterplan and how they would use it.

The National Planning Policy Framework (paragraph 35) emphasises that a proportionate evidence base should inform plans. Based on a 'positive vision for the future of each area; a framework for addressing housing needs and other economic, social and environmental priorities; and a platform for local people to shape their surroundings' (see paragraph 15).

Policies should be 'underpinned by relevant and up-to-date evidence. This should be adequate and proportionate, focused tightly on supporting and justifying the policies concerned, and take into account relevant market signals' (paragraph 31).

Actors	How they will use the design guidelines
Applicants, developers, and landowners	As a guide to community and Local Planning Authority expectations on design, allowing a degree of certainty – they will be expected to follow the Guidelines as planning consent is sought.
Local Planning Authority	As a reference point, embedded in policy, against which to assess planning applications. The concept masterplan should be discussed with applicants during any pre-application discussions.
Parish Council	As a guide when commenting on planning applications, ensuring that the objectives set out in the Masterplan Framework are complied with.
Community organisations	As a tool to promote community-backed development and to inform comments on planning applications.
Statutory consultees	As a reference point when commenting on planning applications.

Crucially planning policies 'should not undermine the deliverability of the plan' (paragraph 34). Neighbourhood Plans need to be in general conformity with the strategic policies in the corresponding Local Plan. Where new policy requirements are introduced (that carry costs to development) over and above the Local Plan and national standards it is necessary to assess whether development will remain deliverable.

The objectives herein constitute place making principles and guidance to help interpret and apply the statutory policies within the Neighbourhood Plan. Good design is not an additional cost to development and good placemaking can result in uplifts in value.

As a consequence, it is a key document, to which developers, in particular, must have reference. They will be expected to demonstrate how they have responded to the provisions of the concept masterplan and, in those instances where they deviate from the concept masterplan, they will be required to demonstrate why the proposed changes represent an improved outcome in terms of the delivery of Abbots Langley Village Centre objectives.

Appendix

A

Key policy and guidance

This section highlights the key adopted and emerging planning policies relevant to the masterplan included in this document. It should be read in conjunction with the Chapter 2 Policy Review of this Report.

Three Rivers Core Strategy 2011-2026 (Adopted October 2011)

The adopted Three Rivers Core Strategy set out the district-wide spatial vision and overarching strategies up to 2026. The key relevant policies relevant included in this document are:

Policy PSP2 Development in the Key Centres (South Oxhey, Croxley Green, Abbots Langley, Chorleywood, Leavesden and Garston and Mill End) sets out the place-shaping strategy for key centres identified in the settlement hierarchy, including Abbots Langley. In key centres, future aspirational development site are expected to be predominantly in the urban area and on previously developed land. Developments should also conserve and enhance the local distinctiveness of key centres, particularly the historic core of Abbots Langley. They should also improve provision of, and access to, services and facilities.

Policy CP1 Overarching Policy on Sustainable Development requires all development in Three Rivers to contribute to the sustainability of the district, including by taking into account the need to tackle climate change.

Policy CP3 Housing Mix and Density promotes high quality residential development that respects the character of the district and caters for a range of housing needs. In particular, new development should provide a range of house types and sizes to reflect the existing and future needs of the Three Rivers population and the characteristics of housing in the area. In relation to density, development should respect density levels within existing residential areas, particularly within areas of special landscape and/or historic value in the district. In locations that are highly accessible to public transport, services and facilities, higher densities will be promoted. (Note: While the policy text refers to the production of an overall Design Code Supplementary Planning Document at the time of adoption, the relevant SPD does not form part of the current Development Framework for Three Rivers. The most up-to-date Local Development Framework as of May 2021 also did not indicate progress of the production of a District-wide Design Code).

Policy CP4 Affordable Housing seeks to secure an overall provision of around 45% of all new housing as affordable housing.

Policy CP9 Green Infrastructure seeks a net gain in the quality and quantity of Green Infrastructure through protection, enhancement and provision.

Policy CP10 Transport and Travel requires all development to be designed and located to minimise the impact of travel by motor vehicle on the District.

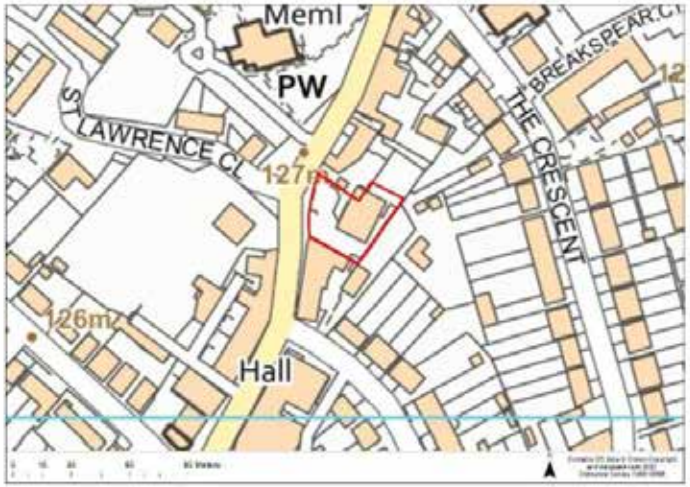
Policy CP12 Design of Development states a list of high-quality design criteria which all development proposals will be expected to achieve. All development proposals are expected to:

- Have regard to the local context and conserve or enhance the character, amenities and quality of an area;
- Conserve and enhance natural and heritage assets;
- Protect residential amenities by taking into account the need for adequate levels and disposition of privacy, prospect, amenity and garden space;
- Make efficient use of land whilst respecting the distinctiveness of the surrounding area in terms of density, character, layout and spacing, amenity, scale, height, massing and use of materials;
- Build resilience into a site's design taking into account climate change (for example flood resistant design);
- Use innovative design to reduce energy and waste and optimise the potential of the site;
- Ensure buildings and spaces are, wherever possible, orientated to gain benefit from sunlight and passive solar energy;
- Design out opportunities for crime and anti-social behaviour through the incorporation of appropriate measures to minimise the risk of crime and create safe and attractive places;
- Incorporate visually attractive frontages to adjoining streets and public spaces;
- Ensure all appropriate frontages contain windows and doors that assist informal surveillance of the public realm;
- Use high standards of building materials, finishes and landscaping; also provide/ contribute towards street furniture and public art where appropriate;
- Ensure the development is adequately landscaped and is designed to retain, enhance or improve important existing natural features; landscaping should reflect the surrounding landscape of the area and where appropriate integrate with adjoining networks of green open spaces;
- Make a clear distinction between public and private spaces and enhance the public realm;
- Ensure that places, spaces and buildings are accessible to all potential users, including those with mobility difficulties;
- Provide convenient, safe and visually attractive areas for the parking of vehicles and cycles without dominating the development or its surroundings:
- Be durable and, where practical, buildings should be capable of adapting to other uses and functions in order to ensure their long-life.

Three Rivers Site Allocations Local Development Document (Adopted November 2014)

The Three Rivers Site Allocations Local Development Document (LDD) provides the principle of suitable development on a selected number of sites. Within the Abbots Langley Central Area, one site has not yet been built out and will be carried forward into the new Local Plan:

H3:

Site Ref.	H3	Site	Pin Wei, 35 High Street	Size (ha):	0.13
					
				Current Use	Restaurant
				Dwelling Capacity	11
				Green Belt	No
				Phasing	6-10 years
				Comments The site is an existing housing allocation in the Site Allocations LDD (adopted 2014).	

Three Rivers Development Management Policies (Adopted July 2013)

Adopted in July 2013, the Development Management Policies for Three Rivers set out the detailed criteria which planning applications within the district will be considered against, alongside other policies within the Development Framework. The key policies of relevance include:

Policy DM1 Residential Design and Layout requires all residential development to satisfy the design criteria set out in Appendix 2 of the document, in order to ensure that development does not lead to a gradual deterioration in the quality of the built environment, and that landscaping, the need for privacy and amenity space and the creation of identity in housing layouts are taken into account.

Appendix 2 Design Criteria sets out qualitative and quantitative guidelines in relation to privacy, prospect, amenity space, property extensions, dormers, roofs and the layout, as well as boundaries, for new development.

Policy DM3 The Historic Built Environment sets out a presumption in favour of the retention and enhancement of heritage assets.

Policy DM6 Biodiversity, Trees, Woodlands, Watercourses and Landscaping requires development to result in no net loss of biodiversity value across the District as a whole. In particular,

development proposals are required to seek to retain existing trees, hedgerows and other important landscape and nature conservation features as many as possible, particularly, those of local amenity, nature conservation value and biodiversity value. New developments are also required to include new trees and other planting to enhance the landscape of the site and its surroundings as appropriate.

Policy DM7 Landscape Character requires proposals to make a positive contribution to the surrounding landscape.

Policy DM11 Open Space, Sport and Recreation Facilities and Children's Play Space states that proposals for new and existing open space should be designed to a high standard and should not consist of large areas of open grass. In particular, it should have regard to its surroundings, its likely use, the need for a variety of different forms of open space, the need to enhance existing nature conservation interests and the benefits of creating new habitats.

Policy DM13 Parking requires development to make provision for parking in accordance with the zone-based standards set out in Appendix 5 of the document. It also refers to Hertfordshire County Council's Roads in Hertfordshire: A Design Guide, which sets out the street design guidelines and parking standards (including vehicles, motorcycle and cycle) in Hertfordshire, particularly in relation to dimensions and design principles.

Emerging Three Rivers Local Plan

Three Rivers District Council is currently preparing a new Local Plan which will set out the vision and policy framework for growth within the District until 2038. The Regulation 18 Preferred Policy Options and Sites for Potential Allocation documents are published for consultation from June 2021 to August 2021. Part 1 of the documents set out the preferred strategic vision and policies while Part 2 of the documents identifies potential sites for allocation (including housing, gypsies and travellers & traveling show people sites, employment, town centres & retail, open space, education, green belt and other infrastructure).

The document identifies Abbots Langley as one of main settlements in the District experiencing gradual growth. Abbots Langley is identified as a District Centre in the preferred options, where main town centre uses will be directed to, in order to support local businesses and reduce the need for local communities to travel. It is also highlighted that a key transport constraint experienced in Abbots Langley is its limited services to Watford General Hospital.

The key preferred policies in Part 1 relevant to the Masterplanning guidelines are:

Preferred Policy Option 1 Strategic Policy: Overarching Policy on Sustainable Development states that the Council will take a positive approach to the consideration of development proposals that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained in the National Planning Policy Framework.

In particular, all development proposals are required to take into account the sustainable need to:

- Tackle climate change by reducing carbon emissions, increasing energy and water efficiency of buildings, promoting the use of renewable energy systems, and using other natural resources wisely, including through the use of sustainable building materials;
- Manage water and flood risk through the use of Sustainable Drainage Systems;
- Optimise the use of land including through an uplift in the density of development where appropriate;
- Reduce waste going into landfill by reducing materials used, reusing and recycling building materials, and providing opportunities for recycling wherever possible;
- Protect and enhance our natural, built and historic environments from inappropriate development and improve the diversity of wildlife and habitats;
- Build mixed and sustainable housing by providing a range of tenures and types, including affordable housing and specialist and supported accommodation to meet needs;
- Maintain high levels of employment by attracting jobs and training opportunities for local people and supporting businesses;
- Improve access to jobs, skills, services and facilities particularly within areas of deprivation in the district;
- Sustain the viability and vitality of the key town and district centres and villages identified in the settlement hierarchy (Abbots Langley is identified as a key District Centre);
- Protect and enhance existing social and community facilities, and provide new facilities;
- Promote a range of sustainable travel modes with priority given to cycling and walking;
- Providing necessary infrastructure to enable and/or support development, including transport, education, health, Green Infrastructure, utilities, waste facilities, waste water, leisure, cultural and community facilities;
- Promote buildings and public spaces of a high enduring design quality that respect local distinctiveness, are accessible to all and reduce opportunities for crime and anti-social behaviour:
- Manage and reduce risk of and from pollution in relation to quality of land, air and water and dealing with land contamination.

Preferred Policy Option 2 Housing Mix and Type requires all new homes to contribute to the creation of balanced and sustainable communities by meeting identified local and district housing needs in terms of mix, size, tenure and type to cater for the full range of different households. The strategic mix of housing provision summarized below should form the basis for development proposals across the district:

	1-bedroom	2-bedroom	3-bedroom	4+-bedroom
Market Housing	5%	23%	43%	30%
Affordable Home Ownership	21%	41%	28%	9%
Social/ Affordable Rented Housing	40%	27%	31%	2%

Preferred Policy Option 3 Housing Density seeks to promote high-quality residential development that respects the character of the district and caters for a range of housing needs. New housing should be provided at a target density responding to the site, its context and the housing need with densities generally of at least 50 dwellings per hectare. In areas served by public transport, services and facilities higher densities will be expected.

Preferred Policy Option 4 Affordable Housing requires all new development resulting in a net gain of one or more dwellings to provide at least 40% of the total number of dwellings as affordable housing for rent and an additional 10% of total number of dwellings as dwellings available for affordable home ownership on developments delivering 10 or more dwellings. 10% of the affordable housing should meets the Building Regulation M4(3) standard.

Preferred Policy Option 6 Residential Design and Layout and Accessible and Adaptable Buildings requires all new housing development to be designed and built to high quality for duration of its lifetime and meets the preferred Design Criteria as set out in the consultation document Appendix 1 to ensure that development does not lead to a gradual deterioration in the quality of the built environment, and that landscaping, the need for privacy and amenity space and the creation of identity in housing layouts are taken into account. In addition, the preferred policy supports housing designed and built to encourage sustainable and flexible living and those that are built to be accessible and adaptable to meet changing occupier circumstances over the lifetime of the development. On developments of 50 or more dwellings, 10% of new homes are required to meet the Building Regulations M4(2) standard and 10% of the affordable housing are required to meet the Building Regulations M4(3) standard.

Preferred Policy Option 7 Employment and Economic Development supports the employment proposals in allocated employment sites and those within the most sustainable locations including town centres and areas served by sustainable transport. Proposals providing a range of small, medium and large business premises will be supported, although new employment provision will be focused towards existing allocated employment sites through intensification and expansion where appropriate.

Preferred Policy Option 9 Retail and Leisure identifies Abbots Langley as a district centre where main town centre uses will be directed to. School Mead

and Katherine Place in Abbots Langley are also identified as key neighbourhood centres. Shop fronts and displays should be appropriate to the character and function of the area.

Preferred Policy Option 10 Social and Community Facilities supports proposals for new or improved social or community facilities that are accessible by a range of sustainable modes of transport; provide spaces and buildings which are inclusive, accessible, flexible and sustainable and which meet the needs of the intended users; and are designed and sited to maximise shared use of the facility.

Preferred Policy Option 11 Health and Wellbeing requires all development to be designed to maximise opportunities to promote healthy communities and reduce health inequalities, particularly in regard to the provision of accessible open space, vegetation and landscaping, sport and recreation facilities, cultural facilities and safe, well promoted, walking and cycling routes. Proposals for residential development of 100 or more dwellings and non-residential development of 1000 sm or more will be required to submit a Health Impact Assessment.

Preferred Policy Option 12 Carbon Dioxide Emissions and On-site Renewable Energy requires applications for all residential development of one unit and above and for all new commercial development will be required to submit an Energy Statement to demonstrate that the development proposals will produce 20% less carbon dioxide emissions than Building Regulations Part L requirements (2013) having regard to feasibility and viability.

Preferred Policy Option 13 Adapting to Climate Change and Sustainable Construction supports new development that builds in greater resilience to climate change and extreme weather events through the design of sites and buildings, including where appropriate:

- Managing flood risk and promoting sustainable drainage systems;
- Promoting and enhancing the Green Infrastructure network across the district and integrating this as part of the design process;
- Protecting the natural environment, and conserving and enhancing biodiversity:
- Considering the layout of new development, building orientation, shading, construction materials and ventilation systems to address sunlight and daylight, passive solar gain and reduce risks of overheating and reliance on air conditioning systems.

In relation to sustainable design and construction, the preferred policy also requires new development to be designed and constructed to:

- Make efficient use of mineral resources and incorporate a proportion of recycled materials and/or secondary aggregates;
- Minimise waste and reuse materials resulting from excavation and demolition activity;

- Conserve water and reduce flood risk;
- Be flexible and adaptable to the needs of future occupiers:
- Incorporate measures to enhance biodiversity value.

Major non- residential development are required to achieve BREEAM 'Excellent' Standard unless demonstrated unviable

Preferred Policy Option 15 Flood Risk and Water Resources requires major development and supports minor development to incorporate Sustainable Drainage Systems into their designs. Developments are required to maintain a minimum distance of 8m from a main river and a minimum distance of 5m from any ordinary watercourse.

Preferred Policy Option 17 Ground Conditions, Contamination and Pollution resists development that contribute to, put an unacceptable risk from or be adversely affected by unacceptable levels of soil, air, water light or noise pollution, odour, vibration, disturbance or land instability.

Preferred Policy Option 18 Waste Management and Recycling requires development proposals to provide waste and recycling facilities in accordance with the Council's Solid Waste Storage and Collection Guidance.

Preferred Policy Option 19 Green and Blue Infrastructure requires new development to contribute to the delivery of new safe and accessible Green and Blue Infrastructure and to the management of a linked network of new and enhanced open spaces and corridors. It also seeks to protect and enhance public rights of way and other sustainable transport links between spaces in the Green Infrastructure network by requiring development masterplans to incorporate buffers of at least 20m around Rights of Way (where appropriate).

Preferred Policy Option 20 Landscape Character seeks to conserve and enhance the quality, character and features of the Chilterns AONB and other landscape regions.

Preferred Policy Option 21 Biodiversity, Trees, Woodlands and Landscaping seeks to ensure a net gain in biodiversity value in developments and protect designated sites. In particular, development proposals are expected to retain as many trees and hedgerows as possible and should be designed to allow trees and hedgerows to grow to maturity without causing undue problems of visibility, shading or damage.

Preferred Policy Option 22 Open Space, Play Space, Sport and Recreation requires proposals for new or existing open space to be designed to a high standard and should not consist of large areas of open grass. It should have regard to the relationship between the open space and its surroundings, the level and kind of use likely given the nature of nearby uses and occupants, the need to maintain a variety and balance of different forms of open space and the need to maintain and enhance existing nature conservation interests and the benefits of creating new habitats.

New residential developments are expected to provide for amenity and children's play space. Developments of 25 or more dwellings or 0.6ha (whichever is greater) should make provision on site for open space and play space. 10% of the site area should be set aside as open space, and where the development is likely to be occupied by families with children 2% of the open space area should provide formal equipped play facilities. Guidance on the provision of open space and children's play space will set out in the forthcoming Open Space, Sport and Recreation SPD.

Preferred Policy Option 23 Local Distinctiveness and Place Shaping requires all new development to achieve high quality design that responds to the distinctive local character (including landscape character of the area) of the area and contributes to a strong sense of place. It also defines that essential elements of place-making include creating economically and socially successfully new places with a clear identity that promote wellbeing.

In addition to the Design Criteria set out in Appendix 1, the preferred policy also sets out the following criteria in relation to design:

Distinct Local Character

- All new development should be designed to respond to locally distinct patterns of development and character, including landscape setting. Proposals will need to take account of local design guidance including that contained within Conservation Area Appraisals, Neighbourhood Plans and Supplementary Planning Documents to conserve or enhance the character, amenities and quality of an area;
- Development should make efficient use of land whilst respecting the distinctiveness of the surrounding area in terms of density, character, layout and spacing, the pattern of street blocks and plots, building forms, amenity, scale, height, massing, style, landscaping and the use of materials;
- The layout of proposals must be easy to navigate, with buildings designed and positioned to define and enhance a hierarchy of streets and spaces and create a density appropriate to the site, taking account of factors such as the relationship between building height and street width, and the relationship between the height, width and depth of buildings;
- Materials used should be sustainable, practical, durable and attractive with regard to aspects including their colour, texture, grain and reflectivity:
- The size, function or density of some of the allocations for development within the Local Plan are such that it may not be appropriate for these sites to always reflect locally distinct patterns of development. In such cases, sites should take opportunities to create their own identity while ensuring cohesive and vibrant neighbourhoods.

Connections

- The layout of development should be designed to ensure it connects appropriately to existing street patterns and built form, and creates safe and accessible spaces:
- Buildings and open spaces should be designed to create a high-quality public realm, promote positive social interaction and create attractive environments that maximise opportunities and encourage people to move around by cycling and walking.

Safeguarding Amenity

- Development should protect residential amenities and the attractiveness of non-residential buildings and spaces which contribute to the economic success of the district for both existing and proposed occupiers by taking into account the need for adequate levels and disposition of privacy, prospect, amenity and garden space, and suitable access.

Landscaping and Public Realm

- Development should incorporate visually attractive frontages to adjoining streets and public spaces and should provide for high standards of building materials, finishes and landscaping;
- Landscaping must be considered as an integral element of the layout and design of development, including integration with adjoining networks of green open spaces where appropriate and retaining, enhancing or improving important existing natural features such as trees, hedgerows and walls as far as possible. Proposals for landscaping should show how the design, planting species and materials have been selected with regard to factors including the character of the area, conservation and enhancement of biodiversity and the natural environment, and ongoing management and maintenance;
- Development should provide for a clear distinction between public and private space and should provide boundary treatments which enhance the appearance, character and amenity of the site and area:
- Development should enhance the public realm to promote social interaction, including making provision for adequate lighting and for street furniture and public art where appropriate and ensuring that all appropriate frontages contain windows and doors that assist informal surveillance.

Safeguarding Assets and the Environment

- All development should conserve and enhance natural, built, cultural and heritage assets, including public open space:
- Proposals must take opportunities to make sustainable design integral to the development and build resilience into a site's design taking into account climate change including through flood resistant design, Green Infrastructure, sustainable drainage, minimising the use of natural

resources, reducing waste and ensuring that buildings and spaces are durable capable of adaptation to other uses and functions where practical in order to ensure their long-life.

Safety and Security

- Development must design out opportunities for crime and anti-social behaviour through the incorporation of appropriate measures to minimise the risk of crime and create safe and attractive places taking into account the Police 'Secured by Design' standards and where appropriate guidance on terrorism in the Government's Planning Practice Guidance:
- Development should provide natural security through layout and design with attractive, well enclosed, and overlooked streets, roads and spaces with clear consideration for the interrelationship of land use with external spaces and landscaping.

Access and Inclusion

- Places, spaces and buildings must be accessible to all potential users, including those with mobility difficulties taking into account the setting of buildings in the wider environment, the location of buildings within plots, gradient, transport infrastructure and public realm:
- Development must provide appropriate levels of parking for cycles to support sustainable travel choices and appropriate levels of parking for vehicles to avoid additional on-street parking where this would cause congestion or harm to amenity or highway safety. Parking and cycle storage areas should be convenient, safe and visually attractive areas that do not dominate the development or its surroundings or impact on driver, cyclist or pedestrian sight lines.

Ancillary Facilities

- Development must provide appropriate facilities for individual and communal use including cycle storage, amenity areas and facilities for the storage and collection of refuse and recycling materials which are designed and sited in accordance with current Council standards, avoiding adverse impacts on safety or security, the street scene, or the amenities of the proposed and existing properties.

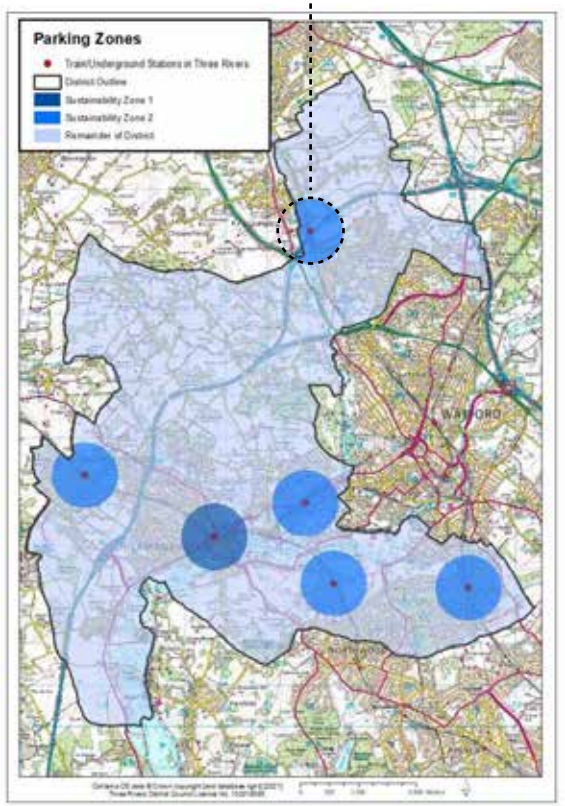
Preferred Policy Option 25 Heritage and Historic Environment seeks to conserve and enhance the historic environment. It supports development of the highest design quality that will sustain and where appropriate enhance the special interest, character and significance of the district's heritage assets and their setting, as well as those that will make a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness. Within conservation areas, development will only be permitted if the proposal:

- Is of a design and scale that preserves or enhances the character or appearance of the area;
- Uses building materials, finishes, including those for features such as walls, railings, gates and hard surfacing, that are appropriate to the local context;
- Retains historically significant boundaries, important open spaces and other elements of the area's established pattern of development, character and historic value, including gardens, roadside banks and verges;
- Retains and restores, where relevant, traditional features such as shop fronts, walls, railings, paved surfaces and street furniture, and improves the condition of structures worthy of retention;
- Does not harm important views into, out of or within the conservation area:
- Protects trees, hedgerows and other significant landscape features and incorporates landscaping appropriate to the character and appearance of the conservation area.

Preferred Policy Option 26 Sustainable Transport and Travel requires new development to contribute to the delivery of an integrated, accessible and safe transport system that maximises the use of sustainable transport modes of walking, cycling and the use of public transport.

Preferred Policy Option 27 Parking requires development to make provision for parking in accordance with the parking standards set out in Appendix 3. The standards for car parking may be adjusted according to which sustainability zone the proposed development is located in:

Sustainability Zone 2



Zone Type	Car parking provision
Sustainability Zone 1	80% of indicative demand-based parking standard
Sustainability Zone 2	90% of indicative demand-based parking standard
Rest of District	Apply full indicative demand-based standard

Car parking standards

Use Class	Description	Car parking standards
E(a) Retail and Foodstores F2(a) Shops selling essential goods which do not exceed 280sqm and there is no other facility within 1,000 metres	Retail and Small food shops up to 500sqm gross floor area	1 space per 30sqm gross floor area
	Food superstores/hypermarkets up to 2,500sqm retail floor area	1 space per 18sqm gross floor area
E(a) Retail Foodstores	Food superstores/hypermarkets exceeding 2,500sqm retail floor area.	1 space per 15sqm gross floor area
	Food retail parks.	1 space per 14sqm (threshold 1000spm) below this figure to
E(a) Non-food retail	Non-food retail warehouses with garden centres.	1 space per 25sqm gross floor area
	Non-food retail warehouses without garden centres.	1 space per 35sqm gross floor area
E(a)Non-food retail (cont)	Garden centres up to 4,000sqm gross floor area.	1 space per 25sqm gross floor area
	Garden centres exceeding 4,000sqm gross floor area.	Decided in each case on individual merits.
	Non-food retail parks where individual land use components are known.	Decided in each case on individual merits (shared parking and an overall reduction in provision, taking into account linked to trips on site).
	Non-food retail parks where individual land use components are not known.	1 space per 40sqm gross floor space (shared parking).
E(c) Financial and professional services	Banks, building societies, estate agencies	1 space per 30sqm gross floor area.
Sui generis (betting shops)	Betting shops.	
E(b) Restaurants and Cafés	Restaurant/ cafés	1 space per 5sqm of floorspace of dining area plus 3 spaces per 4 employees.
Sui generis (Drinking Establishments)	Public houses/bars	1 space per 3sqm of floorspace of bar area plus 3 spaces per 4 employees.

Car parking standards

Use Class	Description	Car parking standards
Sui generis (Hot Food Takeaways)	Roadside restaurants	1 space per 5sqm of floorspace of dining area plus 3 squares per 4 employees.
	Transport café	1 lorry space per 3.5sqm gross floor area plus 3 spaces per 4 employees.
	Hot food takeaway shops (excluding fast food drive thru restaurants)	1 space per 3sqm of floorspace of public area plus 3 spaces per 4 employees.
	Fast food drive thru restaurants	1 space per 8sqm gross floor area.
E(g)Business	E(g)(i) offices	1 space per 30sqm gross floor area
	E(g)(ii) research and development, high-tech/ E(g)(iii) light industry.	1 space per 35sqm gross floor area
B2 General Industry	General industry	1 space per 50sqm gross floor space (1 lorry space per 200sqm)
B8 Storage and distribution	Wholesale distribution, builders merchants, storage	1 space per 75sqm gross floor area (1 lorry space per 200sqm)
Business Parks	Mixed E(g)/B2/B8 (unless heavily oriented to B8) for use where individual land use components are not known.	1 space per 40sqm gross floor area (1 lorry space per 200sqm)
C1 Hotels and Hostels	Hotels	1 space per bedroom (including staff accommodation) plus 1 space per manager plus
		2 spaces per 3 staff minus spaces related to staff bedrooms plus 1 space per 5sqm dining area plus 1 space per 3sqm bar area plus 1 space per 5sqm public area in conference facility plus 1 space per 6sqm of public area in exhibition hall plus a minimum of 1 coach parking space per 100 bedrooms.

Car parking standards

Use Class	Description	Car parking standards
		3 spaces per 4 units.
	Hostels	
	Small (single parent or couple with no children)	1 space per units.
	Family (2 adults and 2 children)	
		1 space per 2 staff non-resident (parking for resident staff to be based on general needs standard).
	Hospitals	1 space per 0.5 beds or to be decided on individual merits (including a full transport assessment and proposals in a green transport plan); special hospitals must be considered individually.

Use Class	Description	Car parking standards
C2 Residential institutions (cont)	Education – halls of residence.	1 space per 2 full-time staff plus 1 space per 6 students (but with linkage to student transport plans where appropriate).
C3 Residential	General needs	
	1 bedroom dwellings	0.9 spaces per dwelling
	2 bedroom dwellings	1.4 spaces per dwelling
	3 bedroom dwellings	1.9 spaces per dwelling
	4 or more bedroom dwellings	2.5 spaces per dwelling
C3 Residential	Elderly person's accommodation.	
	Retirement dwellings – no warden control, 1 or 2 bedroom (Category 1).	1.5 spaces per unit including 0.25 visitor space.
	Sheltered dwellings – warden control (Category 2)	0.75 spaces per unit including 0.25 visitor space.
C4 Residential	Houses in multiple occupation (i.e. separate households sharing facilities)	0.5 spaces per tenancy

Car parking standards

Use Class	Description	Car parking standards
F1 Learning and non-residential Institutions	F1(e) Public halls/places of assembly (excluding D2) F1(f) Places of worship	1 space per 9sqmgross floor area or 1 space per 3 fixed seats plus 3 spaces per 4 staff members 1 space per 10sqm gross floor area
F2(b) Halls or meeting places for the local community	F2(b) Community/family centres	1 space per 9sqm gross floor area plus 1 space per full time staff member or equivalent
E(f) Day centres	E(f) Day centres	1 space per 2 staff members plus 1 space per 3 persons attending or 1 space per 9sqm gross floor area
E(e) Provision of medical or health services Non-residential Institutions	E(e) Surgeries and clinics	3 space per consulting room plus 1 space per employee other than consulting doctors/dentists/vets.

Use Class	Description	Car parking standards
F1 Learning and non-residential Institutions (Cont)	F1(d) Libraries and miscellaneous cultural buildings (including F1(b) buildings for display of works of art, F1(c) museums and F1(g) law courts)Miscellaneous cultural buildings.	1 space per 30sqm gross floor area of freestanding development (otherwise assessed on merits). 2 spaces plus 1 space per 30sqm of public floorspace.
F1 Learning and non-residential Institutions	F1(a) Educational establishments (including residential).	1 space per full-time member of staff plus 1 space per 8 pupils over 17 years old plus
	F1(a) Schools	1 space per 20 pupils under 17 years old.
F1 Learning and non-residential Institutions	F1(a) Further education	1 space per 2 staff plus 1 space per full-time 15 students (2500sqm threshold). The standard for students attending an educational establishment, rather than full-time equivalent.
E(f) Crèche, day nursery	E(f) Nursery schools/Playgroups	1 space per 4 pupils.
E(d) Indoor sport, recreation or fitness F2(c) Outdoor sport and recreation F2(d) Indoor or outdoor swimming pools or ice skating rinks Sui generis (cinemas, concert halls, bingo halls, dance halls)	Places of entertainment/leisure parks for use when individual land use components are known.	1 space per 22sqm (threshold 1000sqm) below threshold to be decided in each case on individual merits: parking for individual land use components should be based on the standards set out in this appendix, but with an overall reduction in provision to reflect linked trips on site (all parking should be shared and an overall reduction of 25% should form the starting point for discussion).

Car parking standards

Use Class	Description	Car parking standards
	Places of entertainment/leisure parks for use when individual land use components are not known.	1 space per 22sqm (1000sqm threshold)
Sui generis (cinemas)	Cinemas (including multiplexes)	1 space per 5 seats (1000sqm threshold)
Use Class	**Description**	**Car parking standards**
E(d) Indoor sport, recreation or fitness F2(c) Outdoor sport and recreation F2(d) Indoor or outdoor swimming	F2(d) Swimming pools.	1 sp per 22 sq m (1000 sq m threshold)
	F2(c) / E(d) Tennis/badminton	4 spaces per court not to exceed 1 space per 22sqm (1000sqm threshold)
pools or ice skating rinks	E(d) Squash courts	3 spaces per court not to exceed 1 space per 22sqm (1000sqm threshold)
	F2(d) Ice rinks	1 space per 12sqm gross floor area of rink not to exceed 1 space per 22sqm (1000sqm threshold)
	E(d) Fitness centres/sports clubs	1 space per 22sqm (1000sqm threshold)

Use Class	Description	Car parking standards
E(d) Indoor sport, recreation or fitness	Ten pin bowling	4 space per lane not to exceed 1 space per 22sqm (1000sqm threshold)
	Indoor bowls	4 space per rink not to exceed 1 space per 22sqm (1000sqm threshold)
F2(c) Outdoor sport and recreation	Outdoor Sports Grounds	
	with football pitches	20 spaces per pitch
	without football pitches	50 spaces per hectare
F2(c) Outdoor sport or recreation	Golf	
	18 hole golf course	100 spaces
	9 hole golf course	60 spaces
	golf driving range	1.5 spaces per tee
	golf course larger than 18 holes and/or for more than local use	To be decided in each case on individual merits
Sui generis (Motor Trade Related)	Showroom car sales	3 spaces per 4 employees plus 1 space per 10 cars displayed.

Car parking standards

Use Class	Description	Car parking standards
	Vehicle storage	3 spaces per 4 employees plus 2 spaces per showroom space or provision at rate of 10% annual turnover.
	Hire cars	3 spaces per 4 employees plus 1 space per 2 hire cars based at site.
	Ancillary vehicle storage	3 spaces or 75% of total if more than 3 vehicles.
	Workshops	3 spaces per 4 employees plus 3 spaces per bay (for waiting and finished vehicles) in addition to repair bays.
	Tyre and Exhaust	3 spaces per 4 employee plus 3 spaces for customers.
	Part stores/sales	3 spaces per 4 employees plus 3 spaces for customers.
	Car wash/petrol filling station	3 spaces per 4 employees plus 3 waiting spaces per bay or run in to row of bays (additional parking is required where a shop is provided).
Passenger transport facilities	Rail Stations/bus Stations	To be decided in each case on individual merits.
Sui generis (where specific use is not included as a description elsewhere in this appendix)		To be decided in each case on individual merits

Parking for Disabled Motorists

The parking needs of disabled motorists shall be met in full irrespective of location i.e. where the zonal procedure results in on-site parking restraint, there shall be no corresponding reduction in disabled spaces. The minimum measurements of a disabled space provided off the highway should be 3.2m in width and 4.8m in length. Disabled spaces provided on the highway must comply with the requirements of Hertfordshire Highways Authority.

Employment generating development	
(1) Up to 200 space car park (demand-based as calculated from above standards).	Individual spaces for each disabled employee plus 2 spaces or 5% of total capacity, whichever is greater.
(2) More than 200 space car park (demand-based as calculated from above standards).	6 spaces plus 2% of total capacity.
Shops/premises to which the public have access/recreation.	
(1) Up to 200 space car park (demand-based as calculated from above standards).	3 spaces or 6% of total capacity whichever is greater.
(2) More than 200 space car park (demand-based as calculated from above standards)	4 spaces plus 4% of total capacity.
Residential	
General	1 space for every dwelling built to mobility standards (such as Lifetime Homes).
Elderly persons dwellings up to 10 spaces (demand-based as calculated from above standards)	3 spaces
More than 10 spaces (demand-based as calculated from above standards).	1 space per 4 spaces

Cycle parking standards

Use Class	Description	Cycle parking standards
E(a) Retail Foodstores F2(a) Shops selling essential goods which do not exceed 280sqm and there is no other facility within 1,000 metres	Small food shops up to 500sqm gross floor area Food superstores/hypermarkets up to 2,500sqm retail floor area	1 short-term space per 150sqm gross floor area plus 1 long-term space per 10 maximum staff on site at any one time.
E(a) Retail Foodstores	Food superstores/hypermarkets exceeding 2,500sqm retail floor area. Food retail parks	1 short-term space per 250sqm gross floor area plus 1 long-term space per 10 maximum staff on site at any one time.
E(a) Non-food retail	Non-food retail warehouses with garden centres. Non-food retail warehouses without garden centres. Garden centres up to 4,000sqm gross floor area Garden centres exceeding 4,000sqm gross floor area. Non-food retail parks where individual land use components are known. Non-food retail parks where individual land use components are not known.	1 short-term space per 350sqm gross floor area plus 1 long-term space per 10 maximum staff on site at any one time.

Use Class	Description	Cycle parking standards
E(c) Financial and professional services	Banks, building societies, estate agencies	1 short-term space per 200sqm gross floor area plus 1 long-term space per 10 full time staff.
Sui generis (betting shops)	Betting shops.	

Use Class	Description	Cycle parking standards
E(b) Food and drink Sui generis (Drinking Establishments)	Restaurant/cafes Public houses/bars	1 short-term space per 100sqm gross floor area plus 1 long-term space per 10 maximum staff on site at any one time. 1 short-term space per 100sqm gross floor area plus 1 long-term space per 10 maximum staff on site at any one time
Sui generis (Hot Food Takeaways)	Hot food takeaway shops (excluding fast food drive thru restaurants) Fast food drive thru restaurants	1 short-term space per 100sqm gross floor area plus 1 long-term space per 10 maximum staff on site at any one time
Sui generis (Hot Food Takeaways)	Roadside restaurants Transport café	1 long-term space per 10 maximum staff on site at any one time.
E(g) Business	E(g)(i) offices E(g)(ii) research and development, high-tech/ E(g)(iii) Light industry.	1 short-term space per 500sqm gross floor area plus 1 long-term space per 10 full time staff

Cycle parking standards

Use Class	Description	Cycle parking standards
B2 General Industry	General industry	1 short-term space per 500sqm gross floor area plus 1 long-term space per 10 full time staff
B8 Storage and Distribution	Wholesale distribution, builders merchants, storage	1 long-term space per 10 full time staff
Business Parks	Mixed E(g)/B2/B8 (unless heavily oriented to B8) for use where individual land use components are not known.	1 short-term space per 500sqm gross floor area plus 1 long-term space per 10 full time staff
C1 Hotels and Hostels	Hotels	1 long-term space per 10 beds plus 1 long-term space per 10 maximum staff on site at any one time
C1 Hotels and hostels	Hostels Small (single parent or couple with no children) Family (2 adults and 2 children)	1 long-term space per 3 units
C2 Residential institutions	Institutions/homes with care staff on premises at all times (excluding nursing homes, hospitals, residential schools, colleges or training centres). Elderly persons residential and nursing homes. Hospitals	1 short-term space per 20 beds plus 1 long-term space per 10 staff on duty at any one time.

Use Class	Description	Cycle parking standards
C2 Residential institutions	Education – halls of residence.	1 long-term space per 10 full time staff plus 1 long-term space per 3 students.
C3 Residential	General needs 1 bedroom dwellings 2 bedroom dwellings 3 bedroom dwellings 4 or more bedroom dwellings	1 long-term space per unit if no garage or shed provided.
	Houses in multiple occupation (i.e. separate households sharing facilities)	
C3 Residential	Flats	1 space per 2 units
C3 Residential	Elderly person's accommodation. Retirement dwellings – no warden control, 1 or 2 bedroom (Category 1). Sheltered dwellings – warden control (Category 2)	1 short-term space per 3 units plus 1 long-term space per 5 units

Cycle parking standards

Use Class	Description	Cycle parking standards
F1 Non-residential Institutions	F1(e) Public halls/places of assembly (excluding D2) F1(f) Places of worship	1 short-term space per 200sqm gross floor area plus 1 long-term space per 10 staff on duty
F2(b) Halls or meeting places for the local community	F2(b) Community/family centres	1 short-term space per 200sqm gross floor area plus 1 long-term space per 10 staff on duty
E(f) Day centres	E(f) Day centres	1 short-term space per 200sqm gross floor area plus 1 long-term space per 10 staff on duty
E(e) Provision of medical or health services	E(e) Surgeries and clinics	1 short-term space per consulting room plus 1 long-term space per 10 staff on duty at any one time.
F1 Learning and non-residential Institutions	F1(d) Libraries and miscellaneous cultural buildings (including F1(b) buildings for display of works of art, F1(c) museums and F1(g) law courts)	1 short-term space per 100sqm gross floor area plus 1 long-term space per 10 full time staff
F1 Learning and non-residential Institutions	F1(a) Educational establishments (including residential).	1 long-term space per 10 full time staff plus:
	F1(a) Schools	a) Primary School: 1 long-term space per 15 students. b) Secondary School: 1 long-term space per 5 students.
Use Class	**Description**	**Cycle parking standards**
F1 Learning and non-residential Institutions	F1(a) Further education	1 long-term space per 10 full time staff plus 1 long-term space per 5 students
E(f) Crèche, day nursery	E(f) Nursery schools/playgroups	1 long-term space per 10 full time staff.
E(d) Indoor sport, recreation or fitness F2(c) Outdoor sport and recreation F2(d) Indoor or outdoor swimming pools or ice skating rinks Sui generis (cinemas, concert halls, bingo halls, dance halls)	Places of entertainment/leisure parks for use when individual land use components are known. Places of entertainment/leisure parks for use when individual land use components are not known.	On merit, depending upon mix of uses.

Cycle parking standards

Use Class	Description	Cycle parking standards
F2(c) Outdoor sport and recreation F2(d) Indoor or outdoor swimming pools or ice skating rinks	F2(c) / E(d) Tennis/badminton E(d) Squash courts F2(d) Ice rinks E(d) Fitness centres/sports clubs	
E(d) Indoor sport, recreation or fitness	Ten pin bowling Indoor bowls	1 short-term space per 3 lanes or rink plus 1 short-term space per 25 spectator seats plus 1 long-term space per 10 full time staff.
F2(c) Outdoor sport and recreation	Outdoor sports grounds with football pitches without football pitches	1 short-term space per 10 players/participants at busiest period
F2(c) Outdoor sport or recreation	Golf 18 hole golf course 9 hole golf course golf driving range golf course larger than 18 holes and/or for more than local use	 10 long-term spaces 5 long-term spaces 5 short-term spaces per 20/30 tee driving range Pro rata to the above

Use Class	Description	Cycle parking standards
Sui generis (Motor trade related)	Showroom car sales Vehicle storage Hire cars Ancillary vehicle storage Workshops Tyre and Exhaust Part stores/sales	1 long-term space per 10 full time staff.
	Car wash/petrol filling station	1 long-term space per 10 full time staff plus 5 short-term spaces if shop included
Passenger transport facilities	Rail Stations Bus Stations	5 long-term spaces per peak period train 2 l/t spaces per 100 peak period passengers

Electric vehicle parking standards

Use Class	Description	Electric vehicle parking standards
E(a) Retail Foodstores F2(a) Shops selling essential goods which do not exceed 280sqm and there is no other facility within 1,000 metres	Small food shops up to 500sqm gross floor area	20% of all spaces to be active provision, a further 20% of spaces to be passive provision.
	Food superstores/hypermarkets up to 2,500sqm retail floor area	
E(a) Retail Foodstores	Food superstores/hypermarkets exceeding 2,500sqm retail floor area. Food retail parks	20% of all spaces to be active provision, a further 20% of spaces to be passive provision.
E(a) Non-food retail	Non-food retail warehouses with garden centres. Non-food retail warehouses without garden centres. Garden centres up to 4,000sqm gross floor area Garden centres exceeding 4,000sqm gross floor area. Non-food retail parks where individual land use components are known. Non-food retail parks where individual land use components are not known.	20% of all spaces to be active provision, a further 20% of spaces to be passive provision.

Use Class	Description	Electric vehicle parking standards
E(b) Food and drink	Restaurant/cafes	20% of all spaces to be active provision, a further 20% of spaces to be passive provision.
Sui generis (Drinking Establishments)	Public houses/bars	20% of all spaces to be active provision, a further 20% of spaces to be passive provision.
Sui generis (Hot Food Takeaways)	Hot food takeaway shops (excluding fast food drive thru restaurants) Fast food drive thru restaurants	20% of all spaces to be active provision, a further 20% of spaces to be passive provision.
Sui generis (Hot Food Takeaways)	Roadside restaurants Transport café	20% of all spaces to be active provision, a further 20% of spaces to be passive provision.
E(g) Business	E(g)(i) offices E(g)(ii) research and development, high-tech/E(g)(iii) light industry.	20% of all spaces to be active provision, a further 30% of spaces to be passive provision.
B2 General Industry	General industry	20% of all spaces to be active provision, a further 30% of spaces to be passive provision.
B8 Storage and Distribution	Wholesale distribution, builders merchants, storage	20% of all spaces to be active provision, a further 30% of spaces to be passive provision.

Electric vehicle parking standards

Use Class	Description	Electric vehicle parking standards
	Elderly persons residential and nursing homes. Hospitals	
C2 Residential institutions	Education – halls of residence.	20% of all spaces to be active provision, a further 20% of spaces to be passive provision.
C3 Residential	1 bedroom dwellings 2 bedroom dwellings 3 bedroom dwellings 4 or more bedroom dwellings Houses in multiple occupation (i.e. separate households sharing facilities)	20% of all spaces to be active provision, the remaining 80% to be passive provision; Houses to have 1 charging point per house.
C3 Residential	Elderly person's accommodation. Retirement dwellings – no warden control, 1 or 2 bedroom (Category 1). Sheltered dwellings – warden control (Category 2)	20% of all spaces to be active provision, the remaining 80% to be passive provision.

Use Class	Description	Electric vehicle parking standards
F1 Learning and non-residential Institutions	F1(e) Public halls/places of assembly (excluding D2) F1(f) Places of worship	20% of all spaces to be active provision, a further 20% of spaces to be passive provision.
F2(b) Halls or meeting places for the local community	F2(b) Community/family centres	20% of all spaces to be active provision, a further 20% of spaces to be passive provision.
E(f) Day centres	E(f) Day centres	20% of all spaces to be active provision, a further 20% of spaces to be passive provision.
E(e) Provision of medical or health services	E(e) Surgeries and clinics	20% of all spaces to be active provision, a further 20% of spaces to be passive provision.
F1 Learning and non-residential Institutions	F1(d) Libraries and miscellaneous cultural buildings (including F1(b) buildings for display of works of art, F1(c) museums and F1(g) law courts)	20% of all spaces to be active provision, a further 20% of spaces to be passive provision.
F1 Learning and n-on-residential Institutions	F1(a) Educational establishments (including residential). F1(a) Schools	20% of all spaces to be active provision, a further 20% of spaces to be passive provision.

Electric vehicle parking standards

Use Class	Description	Electric vehicle parking standards
F1 Learning and non-residential Institutions	F1(a) Further education	20% of all spaces to be active provision, a further 20% of spaces to be passive provision.
E(f) Crèche, day nursery	E(f) Nursery schools/playgroups	20% of all spaces to be active provision, a further 20% of spaces to be passive provision.
E(d) Indoor sport, recreation or fitness F2(c) Outdoor sport and recreation F2(d) Indoor or outdoor swimming pools or ice skating rinks Sui generis (cinemas, concert halls, bingo halls, dance halls	Places of entertainment/leisure parks for use when individual land use components are known. Places of entertainment/leisure parks for use when individual land use components are not known.	20% of all spaces to be active provision, a further 20% of spaces to be passive provision.
Sui generis (cinemas)	Cinemas (including multiplexes)	20% of all spaces to be active provision, a further 20% of spaces to be passive provision.
E(d) Indoor sport, recreation or fitness F2(c) Outdoor sport and recreation F2(d) Indoor or outdoor swimming pools or ice skating rinks	F2(d) Swimming pools. F2(c) / E(d) Tennis/badminton E(d) Squash courts F2(d) Ice rinks E(d) Fitness centres/sports clubs	20% of all spaces to be active provision, a further 20% of spaces to be passive provision.

Use Class	Description	Electric vehicle parking standards
E(d) Indoor sport, recreation or fitness	Ten pin bowling Indoor bowls	20% of all spaces to be active provision, a further 20% of spaces to be passive provision.
F2(c) Outdoor sport and recreation	Outdoor sports grounds with football pitches without football pitches	20% of all spaces to be active provision, a further 20% of spaces to be passive provision.
F2(c) Outdoor sport or recreation	Golf	20% of all spaces to be active provision, a further 20% of spaces to be passive provision.
Sui generis (Motor trade related)	Showroom car sales Vehicle storage Hire cars Ancillary vehicle storage Workshops Tyre and Exhaust Part stores/sales Car wash/petrol filling station	20% of all spaces to be active provision, a further 20% of spaces to be passive provision.
Passenger transport facilities	Rail Stations	20% of all spaces to be active provision, a further 20% of spaces to be passive provision.

20% of car parking spaces for major developments should be allocated and off-street vehicle parking for new developments should be provided. Areas providing parking should preserve a building's setting and the character of the surrounding area, and should provide adequate soft landscaping and surface material to avoid adverse visual impacts and to manage surface water runoff.

Preferred Policy Option 28 Deliveries, Servicing and Construction requires development proposals to demonstrate that adequate provision of deliveries and servicing arrangements can be made for future occupiers. These should be accommodated off-street where possible. The use of delivery and servicing bays should be strictly controlled.

Preferred Policy Option 29 Waterways seeks to protect and enhance waterway infrastructure.

Preferred Policy Option 30 Broadband and Electronic Communications requires all residential, employment and commercial developments to be served by or be capable of being served by superfast broadband. Proposals for the installation of electronic communications equipment should have no significant adverse effect on the external appearance of the building on which, or space in which, they are to be located and should be appropriate designed, coloured and landscaped to take account of their setting. The possibility sharing facilities, erecting antennae on existing structures and miniaturizing or camouflaging apparatus should be explored.

Planning History Review – for internal use:

No relevant planning history to highlight but recent planning applications include (note that the Parish Council is likely to have a more detailed list – this just highlights recent ones on bigger sites). These are shown on the next page.

Application Ref	Address	Proposal	Decision
18/0178/FUL	Manor House Ground Sport Complex, Gallows Hill Lane, Abbots Langley, Hertfordshire	The refurbishment of existing tennis courts and multi-use games area (MUGA) including the removal of adjacent skateboard park, resurfacing of tennis courts, new enclosure, construction of a single storey timber hut, provision of ramps to the gates and provision of outdoor table tennis tables	Approved
18/1996/FUL	Play Area, Manor House Recreation Ground, Gallows Hill Lane, Abbots Langley, Hertfordshire	Construction of a new skate park	Approved
20/0830/HCR3	Breakspeare School, Gallows Hill Lane, Abbots Langley, Hertfordshire, WD5 0BU	Herts County Regulation 3 Application: Removal of existing Portakabin classroom building and construction of new classroom building	No objection
17/1065/HCR3	Breakspeare School, Gallows Hill Lane, Abbots Langley, Hertfordshire, WD5 0BU	Herts County Regulation 3 Application: Replacement mobile classroom with permanent single storey building	No objection

About AECOM

AECOM is the world's trusted infrastructure consulting firm, delivering professional services throughout the project lifecycle — from planning, design and engineering to program and construction management. On projects spanning transportation, buildings, water, new energy and the environment, our public- and private-sector clients trust us to solve their most complex challenges. Our teams are driven by a common purpose to deliver a better world through our unrivaled technical expertise and innovation, a culture of equity, diversity and inclusion, and a commitment to environmental, social and governance priorities. AECOM is a *Fortune 500* firm and its Professional Services business had revenue of $13.2 billion in fiscal year 2020. See how we are delivering sustainable legacies for generations to come at aecom.com and @AECOM.

aecom.com

©2021 AECOM. All Rights Reserved.

Appendix I - Aspirations for Bedmond

Contents

1. Introduction 2
2. Bedmond 3
3. Spatial Strategy: Spatial Strategy and Housing 5
4. Local Character, Heritage, and Design 6
5. Local Economy 9
6. Natural Environment 10
7. Leisure and Community 17
8. Transport and Movement 19

1. Introduction

1.1. Bedmond is a small village located around one mile (1.6 km) north of Abbots Langley village. It forms one of the 14 distinct settlements within the parish. The village and surrounds have historically been a rural farming area, which formed part of an Estate for many centuries until 1919, when the Estate was sold. A legacy of historical farms, farmland, woods and meadows remains.

1.2. The village has an active Residents' Association, who take a keen interest in considering the role and future of the settlement, within the wider parish and district.

1.3. This document forms part of the evidence base for the Abbots Langley Neighbourhood Plan (ALNP). It sets out the community aspirations for Bedmond, so that these can be integrated into the ALNP and reflected in planning policy and associated actions.

1.4. The document has been informed by the following:

- Feedback from the Neighbourhood Plan surveys to date, including the CommonPlace online consultation, ongoing
- The Bedmond Residents Association's response to the Three Rivers District Council Draft Local Plan Regulation 18 consultation
- Aspirations document developed by Jan Smith and Wendy Ball, who are Bedmond residents, 11 December 2021, August 2021
- Vision and Aspirations Workshop held with Bedmond residents, 3 February 2022
- Additional comments received April 2022

1.5. The report is structured around the themes of the ALNP, to aid read across to the policies and associated actions.

2. Bedmond

2.1. The ancient and historical Village of Bedmond is reputed to be the birthplace of the only English Pope, Nicholas Breakspear, Pope Adrian IV. It has a history stretching back to Palaeolithic times. Its identity is deeply rooted in its rural and farming history more recently as part of the Serge Hill Estate.

2.2. Bedmond has sufficient facilities for its size and continues to serve its local residents well. It has a wide variety of well established and new organisations and groups which run activities and events to engage the community. The Church of the Ascension, Bedmond Village Hall, Bedmond Academy, the Bell Pub, Bedmond Stores, the Sports and Social Club/Playing Fields and local businesses all support the needs of the community and beyond.

Images show: Bedmond Village Hall, Bedmond local shops and the stained glass window in the Church of the Ascension

2.3. From a landscape perspective, Bedmond is in the Bedmond Plateau and Chilterns Landscape Area. This is characterised by a gently undulating landscape of small to medium-sized arable and pasture creating a coherent and settled appearance defined by its long history of traditional farms. These are punctuated by ancient lanes and woodlands. Twentieth century development is mainly residential ribbon development with long gardens and wide verges. Bedmond has a strong rural character and farming continues to be a major feature of the village's identity.

2.4. Bedmond is washed over with Green Belt which provides a landscape in which residents enjoy a wealth of outdoor activities. All of these factors contribute to a strong sense of community. Residents place a high value on their Green Belt and would like it protected from development and for future generations. The overall aspiration is to make the history, heritage, and green openness of Bedmond more accessible to residents and visitors.

3. Spatial Strategy: Spatial Strategy and Housing

3.1. Bedmond village is located to the north of the centre of the parish, just north of the M25, which runs east-west through the parish. The core of the village is concentrated in the east of the parish, which is where the main facilities such as the Post Office, the village stores, the school, the church and the recreation ground can be found. There are also parts of the village to the very east that fall within the neighbouring City and District of St Albans. To the west, residential development extends along Toms Lane, before reaching the railway line.

3.2. Currently, the village is washed over by Green Belt. This is highly valued by the local community, who consider that the village, when considered in its entirety and bearing in mind its open spaces, contribute significantly to the open character of the surrounding landscape, with permeability into it.

3.3. The emerging Local Plan for Three Rivers District requires a significant uplift in housing numbers to be delivered to 2038. The district is heavily constrained, with 76% of area of the district located in Green Belt land. Consequently, TRDC commissioned a Green Belt Review to understand whether parcels of Green Belt might be released to enable development. This has explored options to amend Green Belt boundaries, in addition to amending the existing settlement boundaries.

3.4. The residents of Bedmond strongly support retaining the washing-over of Green Belt for Bedmond village. As the emerging Local Plan has not yet been adopted, and in fact has yet to reach an advanced stage, the ALNP supports this approach in Policy AL1 (Location and Scale of Development).

3.5. Other comments received relating to housing:

Issue raised	How to address
Ensuring that housing meets the needs of a range of users.	This can be considered in the Housing Mix policy and within Design.

4. Local Character, Heritage, and Design

4.1. The following issues and comments have been received through the various consultation methods.

Issue raised	How to address
Ensuring that any new development is in-keeping with local character.	The ALNP provides an opportunity to define what is meant by 'local character' at a neighbourhood level. Pimlico and Bedmond have been identified collectively as a Character Area. See the Abbots Langley Design Guidance and Codes for further information: The associated Policy requires development proposals to use the advice contained in the guide when considering issues such as materials, colour, layout, height, density etc. This will ensure that they are in-keeping with local character, although will not prevent innovative design, for instance where this is delivered to a high quality and promotes sustainable design.
Bedmond has a rich history and a large archive of photos which are often displayed at Local events. The site of Breakspear Farm, Holy Well and surrounding Nature Reserve are historically important to Bedmond and its residents. The aspiration is to promote awareness of Bedmond's history by the creation of history boards and a statue/memorial to Nicholas Breakspear/Pope Adrian IV to be placed in a central location accessible to residents and visitors.	Displays of photos and other information related to the history of the village can be included as a non-policy action. Policy AL8 (Village centres) will also touch on public realm improvements and the public art/statue can be supported here, as well as the use of display boards and materials to enable the celebration of local heritage.
Mapping the Archaeology of our Parish. Bedmond has a history stretching back to the Palaeolithic times evidenced by local finds and remains of roman roads. With its close proximity to the major Iron Age/Celtic and Roman settlements at St Albans, the archaeology of the Village needs to be systematically explored, documented and researched.	Policy AL7 (Conserving buildings and structures important to local character) includes clauses on the conservation and preservation of local heritage assets (including below ground deposits). It is supported by a map which identifies known assets, including archaeological areas. If further mapping needs to be undertaken, this can be included as a non-policy action.
Protection of sites. Mapping sites of importance to ensure that all local historically important sites and buildings are listed and protected.	Policy AL7 (Conserving buildings and structures important to local character) provides information about how both designated (i.e. listed) and non-designated heritage assets should be considered within planning proposals. It is supported by a map.

Bedmond High St has listed cottages and buildings such as the old White Hart Public House, the Bell Pub and the unique Church of the Ascension. Explore with residents the possibility and the implications of Bedmond High St becoming a Conservation Area.	Currently, it references the Historic Environment Record with regards non-listed assets that should be considered as non-designated heritage assets for the purpose of applying the policy. If there are unlisted assets (buildings/ structures) in Bedmond that you want to explicitly name as a non-designated heritage asset in the ALNP, this can be achieved, if we can demonstrate that it is of local historical importance. At the moment, none have been identified across the Parish, so it's included as an associated action (see note further down). This falls outside the scope of the ALNP, but can be included as a non-policy action.
Provide new local history walks and promote existing ones, in partnership with the Abbots Langley Local History Society. Suggestion of a Pope Adrian IV trail, which in turn might attract more visitors to Bedmond.	This could be included as a non-policy action.
A number of residents support the idea for a permanent memorial, Pope Adrian IV – as the only English Pope, who was born in Bedmond.	As noted above, this can be included in the villages policy.
The character of Bedmond village could be protected through the identification of a conservation area and by setting out other development management policies.	A conservation area cannot be designated through the ALNP, so this would need to be identified as a 'non-policy action' and pursued separately. Further information about how to do this can be found on the Historic England website.
Can design include: - Hedgehog friendly fencing - Bird and bat boxes - Swift boxes - Protecting any water features on site Houses with roofs and gables should have boxes for birds e.g. sparrows and swallows	Yes, this can be included in policy.

Buildings and Structures identified that could be nominated as non-designated heritage assets:

- Holy Well – an important historical asset. Site of Breakspear Farm, Holy Well and surrounding Nature Reserve
- Site of Bedmond House/Twychells Farm – listed as a monument with Hertfordshire HER & St Albans UAD
- Long Wood/ the Kings Langley Estate north of the M25 - interest in terms of flint tools and other archaeological finds is designated as archaeological site and Local Wildlife Site.
- The Bell Pub (already listed)
- The Church of the Ascension (already listed)

Of the list above, the ALNP includes the Holy Well as a non-designated heritage asset.

Local Economy

5.1. The following issues and comments have been received through the various consultation methods.

Issue raised	How to address
The Bell Public House is the last remaining pub in Bedmond. It is the oldest public house in the Parish being built in 1618. It is an important historical feature of the Village as a listed building. It is part of the view of the Old High Street, integrated with the listed cottages on the east side, which is the oldest remaining section of the High St and provides a coherent view of Old Bedmond. It is also popular with residents and must be retained as a public house.	Policy AL17 seeks to protect the loss of public houses and The Bell is explicitly mentioned in the supporting text.
Try to enhance the village centre as a local hub for the community – shop, pub, church, café, village hall etc. A location for a range of shops, café, community space etc. to complement the existing ones, whilst providing another location for a modern new premises, would be supported.	Policy AL8 includes a clause on Bedmond seeking to support its role in delivering a range of roles and functions.
Is there support for a public house/ community meeting space in Pimlico?	Can be supported through Policy AL17, although will require someone to propose it as a business.

5. Natural Environment

5.1. The following issues and comments have been received through the various consultation methods.

Issue raised	How to address
Mapping the existing biodiversity of Bedmond and creating a strategy to enhance this. Rewilding appropriate areas if necessary. Mapping of habitats and wildlife corridors including hedgerows for all wildlife and protect these habitats so that wildlife are able to move freely and prevent fragmentation of habitats. Protection of Hedgerows. The restoration of hedgerows for wildlife and also for natural flood control. Mapping and protecting increasingly rare meadow habitats. Mapping the Geology of Bedmond. Mapping, monitoring and protecting the springs, ponds, seasonal bournes and the aquifer. Monitoring the water table to ensure that any problems are dealt with.	Policy AL12 (Green and blue infrastructure) maps out various aspects of the natural environment of the parish. If there are particular areas where biodiversity could be improved (Biodiversity Opportunity Areas), these can be explicitly named in the policy. Included in AL11.
Important natural features that are characteristic in Bedmond: - Water sources such as Ponds, Springs and Seasonal bournes - Aquifer - Trees – including mature trees dating back to at least 1880 - Hedgerows – East Lane, Millhouse Lane, Serge Hill Lane, Farmland behind Church Hill	Can be expressly noted in the policy as important features that are not already afforded a level of protection.
Exploring opportunities for growing shared food supplies.	This would be included as a non-policy action.
Mapping the veteran Trees listed on the Ordnance Survey Map c1880. Ensuring that all veteran and significant trees in Bedmond are mapped and protected.	There is a section dedicated to trees and woodland (including ancient woodland) in Policy AL12.

	Mapping may need to be undertaken as a separate community project.
Bedmond is part of Natural England's Chiltern Landscape Area 110 and the Bedmond Plateau. The Chiltern Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) boundaries are currently under review. Explore opportunities for Bedmond to be included in the Chilterns AONB as it shares similar characteristics and the current Chiltern AONB boundary is not far.	This would be a separate piece of work requiring discussion with the AONB.
Countryside Code. Raising awareness of the Countryside Code with a multi agency approach including education and possible signage and nature interpretation boards in key locations. Educating those accessing the Rights of Way network about nature, wildlife and livestock.	Non-policy action.
Three Rivers District Council's Local Plan proposed Site CFS56. This site is an historical meadow habitat with indicator species which would designate it as a wildflower meadow. Meadow habitats are increasingly rare and this site needs protecting for its biodiversity and value to the community.	
Flower and tree planting. Replacement trees. Planters with appropriate planting under the Breakspear signs in Bedmond would provide a pleasant and welcoming experience for residents and those travelling through the Village.	
Community land. A village green or area for residents to enjoy for recreation would be good. Should a central space become available on Bedmond High Street or close to the Village centre, create a village green, square or outdoor general meeting space.	
Farming/land use. Bedmond has a large amount of arable land which has been farmed for centuries. Work with local farmers/landowners to explore joint working on local food production, enhancing and increasing biodiversity and natural flood control.	
Using phrases such as 'A breath of fresh air' and "A space to breathe' within the Plan (noted in relation to Horsefield and Ovaltine Farm land, but relevant to the wider area).	These can be woven in, particularly when describing the Local Green Spaces and green/blue infrastructure network.
Community planting / guerrilla gardening.	Can be supported.

Concern about the degradation of farming fields. What might be done to improve them? In particular the Wellcome Trust land is mentioned. Can it be improved for wildlife?	This could be identified as a Biodiversity Opportunity Area.
Flooding has been raised by a number of residents. Both in the fields, which are in flood plain, impacts on footpaths and some roads, including Water Lane. Also along the River Gade, the canal side can leak and gets blocked and backed up.	Potential to include a flood policy, which would seek to ensure that the smaller streams and watercourses (which often fall below the radar of environment agency mapping) are taken into consideration by development proposals.
Important wildlife in the parish: - wide range of birds in the parish – need to protect these. Including birds of prey – supported by the field pattern. - Foxes - Badgers - Deer, muntjacs - Dormice, fieldmice, shrews - Butterflies, moths, bees pollinators - Invertebrates - Insects Bedmond has a long established skylark breeding area in the fields on the Welcome Trust Land adjacent to Moor Wood. Skylarks and farming exist side by side.	These can support the biodiversity policy.

Potential spaces to be safeguarded from inappropriate development:

Local Space	Comment
Horsefield – CFS56 • A wild' area • Open space reminiscent of the past • Retain as space for people to visit • Breath of fresh air This site is an historical meadow habitat with indicator species which would designate it as a wildflower meadow. Meadow habitats are increasingly rare and this site needs protecting for its biodiversity and value to the community.	The site is an historical meadow and could be considered for designation as a Local Green Space in terms of character and also biodiversity. Whilst the site is not publicly accessible, it does have public footpaths running along two sides and the Bedmond Road pavement on one side. The views onto the site are greatly valued by the community. This is one of the sites identified in the Local Plan for potential allocation. The mechanism for challenging the site is the Local Plan process. It is highly unlikely that an Examiner would wish to pre-empt the Local Plan process by designating the space as a Local Green Space.

Area of the Ovaltine Farm between Toms Lane and Abbots Langley • A 'wild' area • Open space reminiscent of the past • Retain as space for people to visit • Breath of fresh air	This is too large a space to designate as a Local Green Space. As above.
Primrose Hill Playing Fields	This would appear to be a good candidate for a Local Green Space designation. Description on the PC website: Primrose Hill has a play area and fields available for walkers only. No football is permitted on these playing fields as the ground is too uneven due to an infestation of moles. It has been included in the Submission Version Neighbourhood Plan as a Local Green Space.
Bedmond Playing Fields, Toms Lane	This has been included in the Submission Version Neighbourhood Plan as a Local Green Space.
The site of Breakspear Farm, Holy Well and nature reserve	Holy Well has been identified as a non-designated heritage asset in the Submission Version ALNP.
Longspring Wood	This has been included in the Submission Version Neighbourhood Plan as a Local Green Space.
The Spinneys close to Rights of Way 17 and 18, Bedmond	This has not been included as a Local Green Space.
Moor Wood, Bedmond	This has not been included as a Local Green Space. It is ancient woodland and a Local Wildlife Site. The whole site is covered by TPOs.
Local Wildlife Site, Toms Lane, Bedmond	This was a former gravel pit (and possibly contaminated land) owned by TRDC and designated as a Local Wildlife Site.
The Kings Langley Estate north of M25 including Long Wood	Owned by the Wellcome Trust and farmed. This is too large to be a Local Green Space. Long Wood is a Local Wildlife Site.
Land adjacent to No.40 Church Hill	This is TRDC land, which has a proposal for a wildlife site but is not yet designated.
Land behind High Street Cottages, Bedmond	A former residential garden with TPOs. Private, fenced land. This has not been included as a Local Green Space.
Corner of Bell Lane	This has been included as a Local Green Space.

Locally significant views are described in Appendix G of the Neighbourhood Plan. The following buildings and lanes have been identified as contributing to the character of the local area:

Area: Pimlico

Buildings

The Swan Pub and Cottages
Bourzuei (Formerly Roseacre)
Pimlico House, Harthall Lane

Area: Bedmond

Buildings

Church of the Ascension
The former White Hart Pub
Serge Hill Estate buildings
High Street Cottages
The Bell Pub
The former Green Man Pub
East Lane corner – cottages
Old houses, Bedmond Road
Site of Breakspear Farm, Holy Well and surrounding Nature Reserve

Lanes

Hyde Lane
Harthall Lane
Sergehill Lane
Millhouse Lane
Toms Lane
East Lane
Bell Lane

Views

Footpath 18 - View of the Horsefield from Footpath 18 and the Bedmond Road
View of fields across to Harthall Lane from Footpaths 18, 17, 14 and 16
Farmland and Spinneys from Footpaths 18, 17, 14 and 16
Footpath 18 to Bluebell Drive (CFS75)
Church of the Ascension and former White Hart Pub
Bedmond Playing Fields, Toms Lane
View from the Bedmond Playing fields towards Abbots Langley from Footpath 22
Footpath 22
Toms Lane, View across fields to Harthall Lane
Corner of Bell Lane and Bell Lane
Bell Lane
Footpath 55 and 56, Twychells Farm leading to Poppy Fields

Area: Gade Valley

Buildings

Primrose Hill Cottages, Bell Pub and Old Chapel

Railway Terrace Cottages
Numbers Farm
Old Ovaltine Factory
Railway Bridges
Kings Langley Station

Wildlife Sites:

Moor Wood, Toms Lane, Bedmond

Local Wildlife Site, Toms Lane, Bedmond

The Land adjacent to No 40 Church Hill has also been proposed as a Local Wildlife Site by Three Rivers District Council.

Locally significant views - Bedmond

The ancient and historical Village of Bedmond lies in the Bedmond Plateau and Chiltern Landscape Area which is characterised by a gently undulating landscape of small to medium-sized arable fields and meadows which gives a coherent and settled appearance defined by its long history of a number of traditional farms. The iconic “Tin Church” (Church of the Ascension), traditional Public House and the charming old High Street cottages at the core of the Village are nestled within this Green Belt landscape of fields, ancient lanes and woodlands which gives easy access to the many footpaths which afford the expansive views in all directions.

The village is surrounded by a wealth of panoramas. The following views are considered to hold particular local importance, being much loved by residents and visitors alike. Many of these views also contribute to the wider heritage and natural environment, representing diverse wildlife habitats and are therefore worthy of protection.

The locally significant views are:

Ref	Name of view and description and photo
1	View of the Poppy Field and Potters Crouch Plantations from Footpath 55 This view has multiple attractive angles. The view from Footpath 55 encompasses the farmland north to Pimlico with the Potters Crouch plantations on the right. The arable field which is also visible from the Bedmond Road occasionally has spectacular seasonal displays of field poppies drawing locals and visitors alike. The elevated view from this area of the Bedmond Road just south of Pimlico gives a stunning view back across this vale of fields towards woodland which stretches from the Bedmond Road to the Potters Crouch plantation enclosing the village of Bedmond. The hamlet of Potters Crouch beyond is a conservation area: CONSERVATION AREA CHARACTER STATEMENT POTTERS CROUCH (stalbans.gov.uk)
2	View from Footpath 55, Twychells Farm A wild area which was historically Twychells Farm and the site of Bedmond House but now a valuable open stretch of land of trees and meadow where wild life and vegetation can develop naturally and provide a refuge for wildlife. The view is from Footpath 55 which is a delightful path which follows on from Footpath 56 with its entrance on St Albans Lane leading to the Poppy Field (view no 1). Footpath 55 and 56 are very attractive paths shaded by mature mixed hedgerows and bordered by woodland, paddocks and the meadow lands of Twychells Farm.

3	<u>View from Footpath 9 to Nash Mills and Highwoodhall Lane, north Pimlico.</u> Footpath 9 is a pretty winding footpath lined with woods, fields and farmland leading to the panoramic views across open farmland and woodland towards Highwoodhall Lane in the north of Pimlico and sloping gently downhill west towards the valley of the Gade River and settlement of Nash Mills. Several listed buildings surround this site and the wooded area to the right is the local wildlife site of New Plantation.
4	<u>View of the Horsefield, Church Hill from Footpath 18</u> The field which borders the Bedmond Road and Footpath 18 known locally and affectionately as the Horsefield, is a very attractive undulating historical meadow full of wildflowers, wildlife and majestic Oaks, the very epitome of a pastoral landscape important both for wildlife and the community. It is a fine example of lowland meadow habitat with indicator species, also containing a pond which is evident on old maps and seasonal bournes which form an important wetland resource for wildlife. Footpath 18 which lines the southern

	border of the meadow is a shady tree lined and very popular path which affords panoramic and ever-changing views of the Horsefield and gives interest through the seasons.

5	<u>View from Footpath 14 of Farmland and Spinneys</u> Footpath 18 which borders the Horsefield continues onwards to cross open farmland to join Footpath 14 which together give extensive views across the fields north to Harthall Lane and west to Kings Langley. Bedmond was historically a farming community and the Village continues to be surrounded by many of the traditional farms and farmland today. The fields north west of Bedmond which slope down towards the Gade Valley historically follow the pattern of the strip field system. The view from Footpath 14 towards the two Spinneys, one of hornbeam which has beautiful mature trees and provides a peaceful place off the beaten track accessible to the walking public. The farmland is lined with mature hedgerows and many mature trees including veteran oak trees. The Spinneys and Hedgerows provide important wildlife habitats and corridors especially as this field borders a Local Wildlife site.

6	<u>View from Footpath 18 towards Bedmond</u> The view from Footpath 18 across arable land towards the settlement of Bedmond is beautifully encompassed by mature trees and hedgerows serving as a wind and visual break. These also provide important wildlife corridors across the expanse of open land particularly as the adjacent field is a Local Wildlife Site. Footpath 18 and its connecting path, 14 are very popular with walkers.
7	<u>View of the Church of the Ascension and the former White Hart Public House from the High Street/Church Hill</u> The Church of the Ascension, affectionately known locally as the 'Tin Church' is a much loved historically important and unique Grade II listed building and one of the finest surviving examples still in use. It has a prominent position on the corner of Church Hill and Sergehill Lane in a beautiful green setting which comprises mature Yew, Oaks and mixed trees, The 'Tin Church' is a significant and very well known feature of the Village. The Churchyard is managed in accordance with the Living Churchyard Scheme providing a diverse habitat to benefit wildlife and an important wildlife corridor. About The Church Of The Ascension | St Lawrence and Church Of The Ascension Bed (abbotslangley.org.uk) The former White Hart Public House is situated adjacent to the 'Tin Church' and may have been an ale house from 1733 until relatively recently is a distinctive and important local historical building.

8	<u>View from Footpath 22 towards Leavesden</u> The land stretches out from the Bedmond playing fields along the tree and hedge lined Footpath 22 to meet Footpath 19, the Sheppeys Lane footpath and onto the extensive panoramic farmland of the former Ovaltine Farm, now the Kings Langley Estate.

9	<u>View from Footpath 22 towards Kings Langley</u> A break in the hedgerow bordering Footpath 22 affords a view of the rolling landscape of the historical farmland of the 'Ovaltine Valley' now the Kings Langley Estate as it unfolds towards Kings Langley in the west.
10	<u>View from Footpath 19 (Sheppeys Lane Footpath) north to Bedmond.</u> Footpath 19 which is known as Sheppeys Lane footpath includes a section of the Hertfordshire Way. It affords panoramic views of undulating arable fields punctuated with woodland and hedgerows all along the path from the Bedmond Road downhill to the Gade River Valley towards Kings Langley. It is crossed by Footpaths 21 which provides a very pleasant route across the arable fields from Bedmond to Abbots Langley, also providing panoramic views of the same undulating landscape. The multiple footpaths in all directions are very popular with walkers throughout the year and were particularly vital during the COVID-19 Pandemic. The Kings Langley Estate is of historical interest as the former home of the Ovaltine Farm established in 1930. For its history see Kings Langley History Society. <u>Sheppeys Lane Footpath: view north across fields to Bedmond High Street</u> Sheppeys Lane footpath runs across the expanse of the Kings Langley estate to the south of Bedmond. An attractive view from the start of the footpath near the Bedmond Road looking north affords a view of farmland, meadow and the modern houses at the beginning of Bedmond High Street which lie on the site of the historically important, Breakspear Farm, the birthplace of Nicholas Breakspear, Pope Adrian IV. http://www.allhs.org.uk/

	The view includes the woodland on the site of Breakspear Farm which contains a pond and springs including the historically important Holy Well which attracted pilgrimages until the 1950s and the verdant tree and hedgerow lined entrance to Bedmond from the south and a locally important building is in the vicinity.
11	<u>View near the top of Footpath 19 looking west to Kings Langley including Long Wood.</u> This view across the Kings Langley estate near the top of Footpath 19 (Sheppeys Lane Footpath) looks west to Kings Langley offers extensive panoramic views of farmland punctuated by woodland including the ancient woodland and Local Wildlife Site of Long Wood. The site also contains a site of archaeological interest and there have been ancient finds across this landscape. Footpath 19 is also the Hertfordshire Way which is part of a network of footpaths that serve walkers access across open land with extensive views of wooded areas and farmland made interesting by the changing variety of crops bordered by wildflowers and veteran oak trees and a resident population of skylarks.
12	<u>View near the bottom of Footpath 19 looking towards Toms Lane, Bedmond and Kings Langley.</u> The views across open undulating farmland to the settlement of Toms Lane, Bedmond, to the right and Kings Langley to the left which are very popular with walkers and joggers.

13	<u>View from the permissive path to Numbers Farm and Toms Lane.</u> An impressive view of the very attractive collection of listed buildings of Numbers Farm which sits on an elevated site overlooking the Gade Valley from the permissive path which runs along the bottom of the hill and all surrounded by the farmland of the former Ovaltine Dairy Farm now the Kings Langley Estate.
14	<u>View from the High Street of the corner of Bell Lane and Bell Lane</u> A delightful little area of grass and mature trees is situated on the corner of an unmade road, Bell Lane with places to sit giving a feel of a small village green right adjacent to the old Bell Public House.

15	<u>View of Strawberry Field, Bell Lane</u> A lovely open meadow with some trees adjoining a woodland footpath which links Bell Lane to Millhouse Lane. It is situated adjacent to the ancient woodland of Piecorner Wood and the wooded area behind the listed old houses of the High Street.
16	<u>View from Long Spring Wood to Abbots Langley</u> Long Spring Wood is a small pretty woodland owned as a Local Wildlife Site by the Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust which lies on the edge of the Kings Langley Estate Longspring Wood | Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust (hertswildlifetrust.org.uk). The back of the wood gives wide and open views across the land to Abbots Langley.

17	View of Bedmond Road looking north towards Pimlico. A road with views all along its length of open fields on both sides which change colour with the seasons, some stretching to the horizon with scattered dwellings with mature gardens. The hedgerow and tree lined entrance to Bedmond gives a rural character and pleasant experience on entering the Village.
18	View of Bedmond Road looking north towards Bedmond

	This view includes the attractive wooded, tree and established hedgerow lined entrance to Bedmond with glimpse of fields on either side, which provide a rural feel on entering the Village along the Bedmond Road from Abbots Langley.
19	<u>View of Millhouse Lane.</u> An attractive Lane with characterful trees bordered by several woods and the ancient woodland and Local Wildlife site of Piecorner Wood. The winding lane continues on to farmland and provides access to multiple footpaths through varied landscapes much enjoyed by walkers passing some of the historical Estate farms.

20	<u>View of Sergehill Lane/St Albans Lane.</u> A very attractive mixed deciduous hedge and tree lined lane which gives interest throughout the seasons and historically linked the village of Bedmond with the Serge Hill Estate which owned the Village from approx. 1700s to 1919.

21	<u>View of Cottages and the Bell Public House, Bedmond High Street.</u> This view consists of the old High Street including the Bell Public House which is the oldest Public House in the Parish dating from 1618 and a mixture of houses in various styles which have developed over many years. The terrace of cottages on the east side of the High Street (no's 22 – 52) are probably some of the oldest houses in the village and are good examples of well preserved vernacular cottages which are listed and locally important buildings. Many were part of the workers cottages attached to the nearby Serge Hill Estate which owned the Village and some of the surrounding traditional farms until 1919. Number 25 is a good example of a regency cottage and originally had a handsome garden laid out with specimen trees and plants. Photos credit: C Gardner
22.	<u>View from Footpath 34 (St Stephens Bridleway O4) towards East Lane and Leavesden Country Park.</u> A very attractive ancient Lane with restricted traffic access and very popular with walkers throughout the seasons, which connects with the history and leisure facilities of Leavesden Country Park and other footpaths through farmland. The Lane is bordered by old and interesting trees, mixed hedgerows, farmland, meadows and the Local Wildlife Site of Great Notley. A variety of attractive old cottages and a former Public House, The Green Man are situated at and near the entrance to the Lane.

23. View of Longspring Wood, Toms Lane.

The site is located behind houses in Toms Lane and borders gardens to the East and West and the Kings Langley Estate to the south. It is a peaceful location in which to enjoy the circular path around the woods and affords extensive views across the Green Belt land of the Kings Langley Estate looking south towards Abbots Langley.

The site is important for wildlife and designated as a Local Wildlife Site managed by the Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust. Information from their website: Longspring Wood | Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust (hertswildlifetrust.org.uk)

6. Leisure and Community

7.1. The following issues and comments have been received through the various consultation methods.

Issue raised by a member of the community	How to address
Desire for a café to be provided in Bedmond. Need to explore options to have a cafe in Bedmond such as using existing venues to provide a Cafe facility/meeting place during the day. Internet Cafe and quiet place for people working from home to work with others.	Policy AL15 sets out support for new, expanded, and/or shared community facilities. The policy is most helpful where it is specific. We can mention specific projects in the policy, which would then be supported (subject to other policies) should they come forward in proposals. An associated action would be to explore with current venue providers scope to deliver this.
More public seating in key locations in Bedmond. Seats/benches could be located by the Bus Stops to provide more comfortable seating waiting for the Bus, and in key locations around the Village to provide rest for walkers. The Bus Stop at Church Hill going North has no seating or a shelter despite being opposite Newlands Mobile Home site which has approx. 70 residences.	This can be explicitly mentioned in Policy AL22 in respect of bus stops. It could also be identified, more generally, in the section setting out priorities for infrastructure investment.
The COVID Pandemic has made the necessity for outdoor meeting spaces essential. Find ways to increase the versatility of outdoor spaces and add necessary utilities and facilities for potential use as performance areas, outdoor cinema, group meeting places etc.	This can be explicitly mentioned in Policy AL15 and AL8 (village centres)
Extending the village hall to provide additional facilities including shared office hub and homeworking centre. This could use the space currently available at the end of the car park. Potential to consider the French Mediatec System as an example of good practice: shared space with library facility, staffed by small team who rotate round sites in other small villages. Space is equipped with 2/4 computers and one linked printer. Staff assist drop-in visitors (no charge no appointment) who don't have computers etc or who need to produce docs	This is helpful to detail to include in a policy but would need to be discussed with the village hall committee.

professionally. Reading space provided - current newspapers provided.	
Find a suitable space for a communal garden for growing vegetables etc. Space for allotments and community growing areas.	Including detail in the allotments policy.
More community gatherings – bridge, craft sessions, speakers, social events – make better use of the Church and Village Hall.	This could provide useful supporting text in relation to expanding the village hall and providing additional shared community spaces (including outdoor ones). Also suited to a non-policy action.
Need to encourage greater civic pride – e.g. less littering. Better road cleaning.	Non-policy action also partially falls to the local authority and highways authority.
Primrose Hill Playing Field Project	Can be included in the Plan.
Events making use of the playing fields.	This can be supported.
Making optimum use of what already exists for community benefit – e.g. the sports and social club needs to be more integrated into the community. Potential for a café during the day with outdoor seating.	Noted. This can be mentioned within Policy AL15.
Place seating in strategic locations around the village, including one or two on the little green next to The Bell.	Noted as an action.
Explore the possibility of outdoor gym equipment on the Playing Fields.	Noted as an action.

.

7. Transport and Movement

8.1. The following issues and comments have been received through the various consultation methods.

Issue raised	How to address
Accommodating electric charging points for dwellings without drives or hard standing areas: - Space around the back of bluebell drive - Car sales - Newlands mobile home site - The Bell - Sports and Social Club - Bedmond Stores - Layby near to the Breaskpear plaque along Toms Lane	This is included in Policy AL5 (Design of Development), which requires development proposals to incorporate electric vehicle charging points (both cars and bikes). Policy AL22 includes a requirement for public parking to provide charging points. Particular locations in the parish can be identified. We also promote the installation of such facilities, where this can be accessed by the local community.
The Rights of Way network in Bedmond is very extensive with many walks in all directions and on the Kings Langley Estate including the Hertfordshire Way. Most residents live next to or very near a footpath. Monitoring and managing the Rights of Way to ensure they are kept open and well managed. Working with the Local Authorities, landowners, Rights of Way volunteers, Footpath Wardens, residents and walkers to prevent and manage problems such as fly tipping, littering, overgrown vegetation, dog fouling, dogs causing problems with livestock and ensuring wildlife and livestock are protected. Ensure paths are well signed.	These are mapped to support an active travel strategy. New development must connect to an existing pavement or right of way. This is a non-policy community action. As above. Included in the active travel policy and as an associated action.
The ever-increasing volume, speed and noise of traffic through Bedmond is a problem which blights the Village. Crossing the Bedmond Road at points along the High St and Church Hill down to the Newlands Mobile Home Park is becoming increasingly difficult and unpleasant experience. To improve the health, wellbeing and quality of life for residents in reducing noise and air	Much of this sits outside the scope of the ALNP, however, the Active Travel policy will help to ensure that shorter journeys can be undertaken by means other than by car. Traffic calming can be investigated as a non-policy action.

pollution and making the roads safer to cross to access the Village facilities, it is necessary to explore a range of traffic calming measures including 20mph through Bedmond, possibly Quiet Lanes (which balance the needs of cars with pedestrians, cyclists and horseriders) for Serge Hill Lane and Millhouse Lane especially as these lanes are used by residents, popular with walkers and have no pavements, options for Toms Lane and more pedestrian crossings and refuges (traffic islands). This needs to be coordinated and integrated so as not to cause problems on surrounding roads and areas.	
Bedmond is generally well served by one North - South bus connection with stops along the Bedmond Road to provide access to Watford and Hemel Hempstead. This bus is hourly after around 7pm which makes evening travel more restrictive. Toms Lane has a very limited bus service with one bus a day. Provision of East – West bus connections would be beneficial to provide improved connectivity between Bedmond, Abbots Langley and Kings Langley and also to St Albans. Improved access to Abbots Langley Village and Kings Langley centres including Kings Langley Station would be beneficial generally for better access to the GP Surgery and other services especially for those with mobility issues, disabilities and those reliant on public transport as the bus stop is situated some distance from the centre of Abbots Langley on the Bedmond Road. Improvements to public transport: - Better east-west connections to access St Albans and Kings Langley - Regular circular bus routes - Better connection to Abbots Langley Village centre to access healthcare and other facilities - Regular bus along Toms Lane needed - Bus access to Kings Langley Railway Station	Public transport again falls outside the remit of the ALNP, however Policy AL22 seeks to address some of this through developer contributions and the Bedmond situation has been added to the supporting text.

- Better evening service – the Bedmond bus is hourly from 7pm	
To maintain and promote East Lane as a route for pedestrians, cyclists and horse riders. Also Bedmond Lane, Serge Hill, Hyde Lane and Harthall Lane.	Policy AL21 of the ALNP seeks to promote active travel in the parish. It is supported by a map that will set out the public rights of way and key movement routes. It will also show where specific improvements can be made. It could lead to a separate but associated project for the parish to produce a local cycling and walking infrastructure plan (LCWIP).
We need to improve the cycle network.	It would be helpful to understand what the issues are and where improvements can be made. At the very least the ALNP can support this and an associated action could be the CWIP as noted above.
Speeding traffic is a problem, in particular along Toms Lane.	We cannot address speeding through planning policy, however we are seeking to reduce car usage locally by promoting active travel for shorter journeys. Traffic controls and enforcement would need to be considered as part of the non-policy actions.
Safeguarding ancient lanes: - East Lane, Bedmond - Bell Lane (unmade road, bridlepath) - Milhouse Lane - Serge Hill Lane	For discussion with the Highways Authority.

Appendix A:

Three Rivers District Council
Draft Local Plan 2021

Regulation 18 Consultation

Statement by Jed Griffiths MA DipTP FRTPI

On Behalf of Bedmond Residents' Association

August 2021

Introduction

1. This statement has been prepared by Jed Griffiths MA DipTP FRTPI on behalf of the Bedmond Residents' Association. It has been compiled in response to a consultation by Three Rivers District Council on a draft Local Plan under Regulation 18 of the Town and Country Planning Regulations 2012.

2. The Association notes that the consultation document is arranged in two parts. Comments on Part 1 Preferred Policy Options have been prepared separately by the Three Rivers Joint Residents' Association, of which Bedmond Residents' Association is a member. This statement focuses on Part 2 Sites for Potential Allocation, and the specific proposals for the village of Bedmond and the surrounding area. The first section is concerned with the proposal to remove the village from the Green Belt. The second responds to the proposed allocation of three sites for housing on the edge of the existing settlement. Specific questions in the consultation document are listed, where appropriate, under each sub-heading.

Green Belt

Question 77: Do you agree with the revised Green Belt boundary to inset Bedmond and the reasons why? If not, please explain why.

3. Chapter 9 of the Part 2 consultation document sets out a proposal to revise Green Belt boundaries and to "inset" the village of Bedmond within the Green Belt. Reference is made to paragraph 140 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2019 (NPPF) and Stages 1 and 2 of the Three Rivers Green Belt Review. As stated in paragraphs 9.5 and 9.6 of the consultation document, the 2019 NPPF, now superseded by the 2021 version, required an analysis of settlements within the Green Belt to determine whether they should remain "washed over" by the Green Belt, in terms of helping to maintain its openness. If it is necessary to restrict development in a village primarily because of its contribution to the openness of the Green Belt, then it should remain in the Green Belt. If the character of the village needs to be protected for other reasons, then there are other means which can be used, and the village should be excluded from the Green Belt. For the reasons set out in this statement, the Association firmly believes that the "washed over" status of Bedmond should not be changed, as it does make a significant contribution to the openness of the Green Belt.

4. The consultation document refers to the 2017 Stage 1 Green Belt Review for Three Rivers District and Watford Borough, which considered that the village of Bedmond "could be inset from the Green Belt by virtue of its size and density." The Stage 2 Green Belt Assessment 2019 contained a more detailed analysis of the "washed

over" settlement which examined the extent to which the release of different parcels of land would reduce the contribution to Green Belt purposes. As a result, the Part 2 consultation document now proposes that Bedmond should be inset from the Green Belt, as shown on the map on page 92.

5. Details of the results for Bedmond are shown on pages 119 – 139 of the Stage 2 Green Belt Assessment. Nine areas (BM1 – BM9/AL10) are assessed against the harm which development would cause to the stated purposes of the Green Belt. The results are summarised in map form on page 119 of the Assessment. Not surprisingly, the two areas shown as "low" are Parcels BM1 and BM4, which are already developed. At the centre of the village, Parcel BM1 forms the bulk of the area which is proposed to be inset from the Green Belt.

6. In the Association's view, the area of Parcel BM1 is too small to justify the proposal to inset Bedmond from the Green Belt. With the exception of Parcel BM4, it is acknowledged that the other seven parcels in and around the village do make a contribution to the openness of the Green Belt and the three purposes listed in the study. In adopting the "fine-grained" approach to the analysis, the Stage 2 Green Belt Assessment fails to acknowledge the bigger picture and the strategic contribution that Bedmond and the surrounding area makes to the protection of the Green Belt between Abbots Langley and Hemel Hempstead. In this respect, it is clearly contradictory to the strategic analysis of the Green Belt, as set out in the 2017 Green Belt Review.

7. The significant contribution which Bedmond and the surrounding area makes to Green Belt purposes is clearly depicted on Figure 2 of the Stage 1 Review, and elaborated in the more detailed analysis in Appendix B4. Assessment of Parcels N7 – N11 concludes that these parcels all make a significant contribution to the purposes of the Green Belt. It should be noted that the village of Bedmond is included in this analysis, being split between Parcels N7 and N11 along the Bedmond Road.

8. In Chapter 4 and Appendix C of the Stage 1 Review, there is a consideration of the Green Belt status of three villages within the Green Belt – Heronsgate, Sarratt, and Bedmond. In the settlement analysis, summarised in Table 4.1 of the report, only Bedmond is recommended to be inset from the Green Belt. In the detailed assessment in Appendix C, it is concluded by the consultants that the definition of a village envelope "could help to better define the role and longer term character of the village."

9. It is also argued in Appendix C that Bedmond has a weak connection with its Green Belt. The Association cannot understand this conclusion. The core of the village has a mixture of wide green verges, large front gardens, a green open space, many trees, green lanes and is surrounded by open spaces and fields which contribute to a sense of openness and show the strong connection of the settlement to the Green Belt. Bedmond is a hilltop village – its residents and visitors generally enjoy extensive vistas of the surrounding Green Belt. Residents generally live close to an extensive network of footpaths, ancient lanes, and bridleways which facilitate access to the countryside. The Rights of Way network provides many benefits to the health and well-being of residents, and has seen increased usage during the Covid pandemic.

10. The map of Bedmond in Appendix C is incomplete as it does not include the eastern part of the village which lies within the City & District of St. Albans. It also excludes part of Toms Lane to the west. Compared to Sarratt and Heronsgate, which are depicted as entire settlements, the map does not give an accurate representation of Bedmond. By contrast, the strong relationship with the Green Belt can be seen from the appropriate Google Earth map. Apart from the large Green at Sarratt, there is very little difference between the two villages. In the section of the assessment of Bedmond entitled Presence of Open Space, it is wrongly stated there is "no formal open space". In fact, the map does show the Bedmond Playing Fields, which are designated open space.

11. There are a number of other open areas which are important, including the open fields behind Bluebell Drive and those leading off from multiple footpaths around the core of the Village including those accessing the Kings Langley estate. Bedmond Road North and South have fields on both sides. From Serge Hill Lane, Millhouse Lane and East Lane, all ancient lanes with hedgerows, woodland and open fields are directly accessible from the High St.

12. The Association strongly disputes the assessment in Appendix C and the recommendations which have been carried through to the Stage 2 Green Belt Review and the Part 2 Site Allocations document. Although the centre of the village is of "relatively high density", it is a small settlement – the 2011 Census recorded a population of 930 persons, compared to the population of Sarratt of 918 persons.

13. The NPPF 2021, at paragraph 142, states as follows:

"When drawing up or reviewing Green Belt boundaries, the need to promote sustainable patterns of development should be taken into account. Strategic policy-

making authorities should consider the consequences for sustainable development of channelling development towards urban areas inside the Green Belt boundary, towards towns and villages inset within the Green Belt…"

14. In the Association's view, it is clear from the Part 2 Site Allocations document that the addition of the three proposed housing sites would lead to an expansion of the settlement boundary which is shown on Page 92. From the NPPF, it is also beyond doubt that the policy status of Bedmond would be changed radically from a "washed over" settlement, where "limited infilling" may be permitted, to an inset village, within which there would be a presumption in favour of sustainable development. In future reviews of the development plan, the village would be a focus for housing development, rather than an integral part of the Green Belt gap between Abbots Langley and Hemel Hempstead.

15. The area around Bedmond has been recognised for its high landscape quality. In Natural England's National Character report it is located within the Chilterns Character Area 110, as it displays similar landscape features to the Chilterns. In the existing Three Rivers Local Plan, relevant policies are found in Policy DM7.

16. In the more detailed Hertfordshire Landscape Assessment, Bedmond is within Area 009 the Bedmond Plateau, which is described as "a gently undulating plateau area of small to medium-sized fields." In terms of its visual and sensory perception, with the exception of the M25 - the area is generally well-concealed due to the elevated landform. It has a "coherent and unified character" as described in the Character Assessment.

17. In terms of its geography, Bedmond is on the edge of Three Rivers District – the administrative boundary with the City and District of St. Albans abuts the eastern side of the village. Historically, Bedmond has very strong connections with St. Albans. In the existing Local Plan for St. Albans, adopted in 1994, the rural area to the east of the village is also within the Green Belt. There have been several unsuccessful attempts to replace the Local Plan – the most recent review of 2018 was withdrawn after it failed to satisfy the Inspectors at the early stages of its examination. The City & District Council have now embarked on the preparation of a new Local Plan, which will have regard to the emerging South West Hertfordshire Joint Strategic Plan.

18. Part of the evidence base supporting the 2018 submission included a Green Belt Review for St. Albans, Welwyn Hatfield, and Dacorum, prepared by the consultants SKM Enviros in 2013. In the review, the consultants divided the study area into

Green Belt parcels, which were analysed against the purposes of the Green Belt. It was concluded that the area to the east of Bedmond (parcel 15) made a strong contribution to the purposes of the Green Belt. Consequently, it was not proposed for development in the 2018 submission Local Plan. It is recognised for its strong rural character, centred on the hamlet of Potters Crouch, and is part of an important tract of countryside to the west of St. Albans.

19. Historically, Bedmond has very strong connections with St. Albans. The village including surrounding farms were part of the Serge Hill estate. Due to the proximity of the boundary with St Albans District Council, the Association feels that insetting reinforces the division caused by the existing boundary between the authorities and would be divisive to the community.

20. Should the village become a focus for development, the Association is concerned that there would be an unacceptable strain on the road network, local services and facilities. Drainage and sewage systems are currently at capacity. Electricity pylons form part of an ageing network, which is in need of renewal. Bedmond is not well-served by public transport.

21. The argument for keeping Bedmond within the Green Belt is closely related to the characteristics of the three sites proposed for allocation. As described in the next section, each site possesses biodiversity, historical, and landscape values which should not be lost when less sensitive sites can be found elsewhere in the District. All three sites are on previously undeveloped land. They are composed of meadow and pastures, which contain critical habitats for flora and fauna and are an important part of the history of the village as a rural and farming community.

22. Bedmond is one of the communities covered by the emerging Abbots Langley Parish Neighbourhood Plan, the draft of which is, at the time of writing, out for public consultation. An objective of the Neighbourhood Plan Vision is "Protecting both the historical and environmental assets of the Parish, particularly its biodiversity, open spaces, and Metropolitan Green Belt." In terms of the planning policy context for Bedmond, the plan states as follows:

> *"Local residents believe that no major future new housing should be planned in the Parish until the capacity of its local public services associated with education, local health/social services and local transport networks are increased to meet adequately the current and any planned future demand. The local community place a high value on the area's designated open spaces and Metropolitan*

Green Belt land within the Parish. They do not want this land to be lost to development. However, there are undeveloped sites under consideration by the District Council for new housing in Abbots Langley that are located within designated Metropolitan Green belt land. Also, development in the Parish must take into account the impact of Climate Change, Brexit, and Covid-19 and make investment for the required adjustment in lifestyles and enhancing biodiversity."

Housing Sites

Site CFS10: Land between Millhouse Lane and Bell Lane

Question 13: Do you agree that Site CFS10 is an appropriate development site? If not, please outline your reasons.

23. The Association notes that this 1.2 hectare site is proposed for the development of specialised housing for the elderly, with a dwelling capacity estimated at 34 units. Located in the Green Belt on the eastern edge of the village, the site is currently open mown grassland in the ownership of the site promoter. Historical maps of Bedmond show the land as an open paddock, which in the past it has been used for the grazing of animals. Although there is housing adjoining the south western boundary of the site, and on the south side of Bell Lane, the land is surrounded predominantly by trees and woodland. To the north, Millhouse Lane defines the administrative boundary between the Districts of Three Rivers and St. Albans.

24. In the Stage 1 Green Belt Review (Appendix B4), the site was included in assessment parcel N11, which stated that *"Strategically, the land is part of the open countryside between Kings Langley/Watford and Hemel Hempstead."* In the detailed analysis, the area was described as making a "significant contribution" to the Green Belt purpose of preventing neighbouring towns from merging into one another. In terms of protecting the countryside from encroachment, however, the contribution was ranked lower. Nevertheless, the overall assessment of the parcel to Green Belt purposes was a "significant contribution."

25. By contrast, the Stage 2 Green Belt Assessment (Appendix 1) assessed the harm to the Green Belt of releasing the wider parcel BM3, in which the site is located, as "moderate". Although the impact on Purpose 3 (Assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment) was rated as "Moderate-Relatively significant", there was a "Limited-No contribution" to Purpose 2 (Merging of towns). The latter view was in direct contradiction to the assessment result in Stage 1. The Association

rejects the Stage 2 rating of “moderate” for parcel BM3, which should be higher. It follows that the proposed allocation of site CFS10 would clearly be contrary to the purposes of the Green Belt, in that it would encroach on the area of attractive wooded countryside to the east of the village. As acknowledged in the assessment of parcel BM3, its boundaries “to the east and north are all relatively well-defined by protected ancient woodland or other tree cover.” Despite the residential development to the south, the site is integral to the rural character of the area to the east of the village core.

26. Development of the site would be contrary to the aims of the NPPF 2021 which seeks to conserve and enhance the natural environment. In the view of the Association, the proposed development would lead to a severe deterioration of the protected trees and woodlands in the vicinity of the site, particularly Piecorner Wood, which is an Ancient Woodland and a Local Wildlife Site. The benefits of the development would not outweigh the damage to woodland habitats and the range of protected species of flora and fauna. To the north of the site, Millhouse Lane is bounded by ancient hedgerows which are also of conservation value. To the west, in close proximity to the site, there are the listed houses and locally-important buildings on the old part of the High Street. Adjacent land on the western border also contains protected trees.

27. Access to the site is proposed from Bell Lane, which is an unadopted and unmade road in very poor condition. Over the past twenty years, there has been an increase in business activity at the east end of the lane. This has led to a substantial amount of commercial traffic, which has caused considerable damage to the carriageway.

28. Historical maps of the area show that Bell Lane originated as a track leading to Ninnings Farm. In the current Hertfordshire Definitive Map of Footpaths, it is classified as a Statutory Bridleway, the status of which is protected in law. The proposed development would almost double the number of dwellings with access to Bell Lane. The consequent increase in traffic, compounded with the volume of visitors and service movements, would be well in excess of the capacity of Bell Lane.

29. In the site assessment, the Council acknowledge that Bell Lane should be upgraded, but the consequences of removing its legal status as a Bridle Way are very substantial. There are very significant queries too about connecting Rights of Way and the ownership of the lane which falls into two parts –the old Ninnings Drive at the east end, and Bell Lane at the west, connecting to the High Street. The legal and

technical difficulties of upgrading the lane would have a considerable harmful effect on local residents, who would still need to maintain it in the future.

30. The development would also affect users of a public footpath on the northern edge of the site, connected to Millhouse Lane, which leads to Millhouse Farm. At the extreme north-west corner of the site there is a gateway which has been unused for many years. Its suitability as an access point is questionable, however, as it is adjacent to a sharp bend in Millhouse Lane.

Site CFS56: Church Hill

Question 14: Do you agree that Site CFS56 is an appropriate site for development? If not, please outline your reasons.

31. This large 2.9 hectare site is located in the Green Belt beyond the north western edge of the village, to the west of Church Hill. It is in close proximity to listed buildings. Visually, it is a very open and undulating area, which slopes away from the edge of the village to the north. Historical records show that it was formerly part of the Serge Hill Estate, which owned most of Bedmond and the surrounding area until it was sold in 1919. Known locally as "the Horse Field", it has been used for at least 50 years until the present day for the grazing of animals.

32. In the Stage 1 Green Belt Review (Appendix B4), the site was included in a large assessment parcel (N8), running from the Bedmond Road westwards to the Gade Valley. Although the parcel was stated generally to have an urban fringe character, it was considered overall to make a "significant" contribution to Green Belt purposes.

33. In 2019, the Stage 2 Green Belt Assessment considered the site as a separate parcel (BM6). Although its contribution to safeguarding the countryside from encroachment was "relatively significant", there was "limited-no contribution" to preventing neighbouring towns from merging into one another. The overall harm to the Green Belt of releasing the land was stated as "moderate". The Association fundamentally disagrees with this conclusion and believes that the site should be rated as "high".

34. Development of this very prominent site would clearly be contrary to the overall aim of the Green Belt, which is to maintain its openness. It would also be harmful in terms of two key purposes of the Green Belt. First, it would severely encroach onto the open countryside beyond the village to the north. Second, housing expansion in this location would be detrimental to the purpose of protecting the Green Belt gap

between Abbots Langley and Hemel Hempstead. Contrary to the Stage 2 Review, development would have a significant impact on the adjacent Green Belt.

35. The Association believes that development of the site would have a severe effect on the quality of the landscape. In the Hertfordshire Landscape Character Assessment, the land is within Area 009 the Bedmond Plateau. It is described as “a gently undulating plateau area of small to medium-sized fields.” In terms of its visual and sensory perception, with the exception of the M25, the area is generally well-concealed due to the elevated landform. It has a “coherent and unified character” as described in the Character Assessment.

36. The Landscape Sensitivity Assessment 2019 describes the site as undulating grassland, with established vegetation on all boundaries. It reports that the area would be indicated as “higher sensitivity” but for some built development in adjacent areas. Nevertheless, the Association notes the references to the extensive public views into the site, which confirm its significance in landscape terms.

37. There are a number of protected trees in and around the site which contribute considerably to its rural character (Three Rivers Tree Protection Order 901). Development of the site would result in the removal of a number of these trees which form an attractive part of the village setting. A public right of way (Footpath 18), which runs along the southern boundary of the site, would also be affected. The mature veteran trees appear to be the last remaining trees depicted on a Victorian Ordnance Survey Map c1880 and as such need to be protected. The mature trees and other groups are part of a panorama of a pastoral landscape, with a constant unchanging view over time. The Association firmly believes that this continuity is much valued by the local community and needs to be protected for future generations.

38. The Abbots Langley Parish Tithe Map c1839 of Bedmond indicates that the site was an historical meadow. Within living memory, it has only ever been used for grazing and not cultivated. The evidence is also shown by the indicator species found there. In terms of its current biodiversity, a recent study by the Herts Environmental Records Centre (HERC) has confirmed that the presence on the site of eleven grassland indicator species could be indicative of lowland meadow, a priority habitat listed in Section 41 of the NERC Act 2006. It would therefore be considered of principal importance for biodiversity. As the UK has lost 97% of its herb-rich meadows since the 1930s, the site should continue to be protected for its biodiversity. In the view of the Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust, this site should be

treated as a Local Wildlife Site as the impacts would be significant in terms of the NPPF and Local Plan policies. In terms of Section 14 of the NERC Act 2006, there is an obligation to avoid development of the site. If that is not possible, then there should be compensation by the development of other sites as similar habitats.

39. Victorian Ordnance Survey maps show that on the south east corner of the site stood dwellings dating back to the sixteenth century which were replaced by modern housing in the 1970s. On the southern edge of the area, bordering Footpath 18, there are a number of mounds and undulations in the ground which could be of archaeological interest. Historical records, including the papers relating to the sale of the Serge Hill Estate in 1919, clearly show that this site was once part of the village.

40. There is no private access road to the site. It is assumed that access to the site would be directly from Church Hill, which is a busy C-class road linking Hemel Hempstead with Abbots Langley and the Watford area. Northbound traffic descends a steep hill from the centre of the village on a blind bend where there are issues of speeding beyond the 30 mph limit, as vehicles accelerate on leaving the village. There is a boundary gate on the western side of Church Hill, but it would be difficult, if not impossible, to establish the necessary 70 metre visibility splays at that location or at any point along the site boundary. Traffic between Hemel Hempstead and the Watford area along the Bedmond Road has increased considerably in recent years. Additional vehicular movements associated with over 70 dwellings would cause considerable conflicts on Church Hill, where local residents have been campaigning against speeding traffic for over 15 years. These problems are exacerbated by drivers using the village roads as a “rat run” to avoid congestion on the M1 or M25.

41. Problems of surface water flooding on the site have been acknowledged by the Council. Within the site there is a spring which is part of the springline or series of such springs which effectively circle the centre of the village. There are potentially three springs in the field. One flows down from the western edge to create and maintain the flow of water to a pond. The pond is recorded on historical maps and sometimes overflows to form a second pond. At times of heavy rainfall, water flows though the centre to collect as a pool in the north-east corner of the site to join another potential spring. On occasions this has also contributed to the flooding of the road at the bottom of Church Hill. The middle part of the field is always boggy over a large area. The slope of the land often accumulates surface water run-off from surrounding fields; there is also a watercourse in the field which could be classified as a seasonal bourne. These complex issues would need to be taken into consideration in any development proposal. Foundations to houses could impede the normal groundwater flows and cause localised flooding and excessive damp

within properties. There may also be impact on ground instability. Given the effects of climate change and the prospect of more extreme weather conditions, it is difficult to envisage how these problems could be overcome.

42. In the context of this site and others in Bedmond, there is a wider issue concerning water resources and water quality, which have not been considered fully by the Council and its consultants. There is a perched aquifer beneath the village. An original well, which would have served the houses on the southern edge of the site, still exists in one of the Church Hill gardens and takes water from the aquifer. Protecting the aquifer is of critical importance – if the impermeable layer were to be damaged during construction, it could result in subsidence problems for local properties. Damage to the aquifer could also have unforeseen consequences for the natural environment. The aquifer is a valuable water resource and should not be disturbed or damaged by development. According to the Environment Agency document Approach to Groundwater Protection (February 2018), Policy N8 states that "The Environment Agency will normally object in principle to any planning application for any development that may physically disturb an aquifer."
43. Site CFS56 has a diverse habitat which also includes the wetland area – it supports a wide range of flora and fauna, including protected species. It supports many resident and visiting birds. It is in close proximity to a Local Wildlife Site and to Piecorner Wood which is an ancient woodland and a Local Wildlife Site. Together these areas form part of an important wildlife corridor which extends from the St. Albans Verulam Estate to Kings Langley and beyond, which should be conserved and protected.

Site ACFS9e: Land West of Bedmond Road

Question15: Do you agree that Site ACFS9e is an appropriate development site? If not, please explain your reasons.

44. This prominent one hectare site is located in the Green Belt beyond the southern edge of the village, on the west side of Bedmond Road. It is an open and sloping area, which until recently has been used for the grazing of a horse. In the summer of 2021, it was unused and covered with long grass.

45. In the Stage 1 Green Belt Assessment, the site was included as part of the much larger assessment parcel N7, extending westwards from Bedmond Road to the edge of Kings Langley. Notwithstanding some urban development, it was described as retaining characteristics of open countryside. Its overall contribution to Green Belt purposes was assessed as "significant."

46. The Stage 2 Green Belt Review included the site in a smaller parcel (BM7) and assessed the overall harm to the Green Belt as “moderate-high”. Although its contribution to safeguarding the countryside from encroachment was “relatively significant”, it had a “limited-no contribution” to preventing neighbouring towns from merging into one another. This conclusion is contrary to the assessments of other parcels, both in the Stage 1 and 2 Reviews, which refer to the importance of the gap between Hemel Hempstead and Abbots Langley/Watford.

47. Accordingly, the Association considers that the site should have a “high” rating, as its development for housing would clearly be contrary to the overall aim of the NPPF 2021 which seeks to protect the openness of the Green Belt. In addition, the development would also contravene two key purposes of the Green Belt. First, it would encroach on an area of open countryside to the south and west of the village. Second, as an extension to the existing village envelope, it would compromise the Green Belt gap between Hemel Hempstead and Abbots Langley.

48. There are a number of protected trees in and around the site, especially on its western edges. Removal of trees on the site would be detrimental to its rural character. Woodland areas to the west and north-west are important wildlife habitats.

49. Beyond the north western edge of the site is the Holy Well, which was in the grounds of the former Breakspeare Farm, now within the boundary of the Bedmond Academy. Breakspeare Farm was significant as the birthplace of Nicholas Breakspeare, the only English Pope Adrian IV (1100-1154). The waters were thought to have healing properties for eye diseases and the Holy Well was a place of pilgrimage from the mediaeval period until the 1950s. The area contains a range of wetland and woodland species which need protection. The site is also in close proximity to locally important buildings. Development of the site would be harmful to the biodiversity and the historical setting of the area as a whole.

50. As with site CFS56, the site is affected by a spring which is part of a springline or series of such springs which effectively circle the centre of the village - similar issues could also apply. There is often surface water flooding on the proposed development site, which is associated with the spring at the Holy Well. The spring runs all year round and primarily feeds a pond beyond the northwest corner of the field, but also flows naturally downhill to form a stream on the southern boundary of the site. There is considerable below ground water in addition to surface water on the site,

arising from the spring, which can be seen on Land Registry title documents, which means that the land is virtually marsh land for most of the year.

51. As with the other proposed allocations at Bedmond, this site is located in Landscape Character Area 009 the Bedmond Plateau (see paragraph 15 above). Housing development would seriously affect its "coherent and unified character."

52. Access to the site would be from Bedmond Road, which is the main route between Hemel Hempstead and Abbots Langley. From the south, the road ascends steeply on a sharp bend towards the village. At this location, where the speed limit changes from 40 mph along the Bedmond Road to 30mph on entering the village, speeding is a problem. It is considered that the additional traffic movements associated with 48 dwellings would cause considerable conflict and road safety problems, especially at peak hours.

Summary

53. This statement contains the response of the Bedmond Residents' Association in respect of the Three Rivers New Local Plan consultation Part 2: Sites for Potential Allocation. The first part of the statement, headed Green Belt (paragraphs 3-22), addresses Question 77 of the consultation document "Do you agree with the revised Green Belt boundary to inset Bedmond and the reason why?" In common with CPRE Hertfordshire and other representors, the Association fundamentally objects to the proposed change for the reasons set out above.

54. The second part (paragraphs 23-52) is concerned with the three sites proposed for housing allocations in the consultation document – sites CFS10, CFS56, and ACFS9e. For the reasons expressed under each site heading, the Association strongly believes that none of them are appropriate for development. If any of the sites were to be included in the Submission Local Plan, the Association would register its objections.

55. In the view of the Association, the way forward for Bedmond should continue to be as a "washed over" settlement within the Green Belt. Future development should be assessed against its local housing needs, which should be determined in the context of the Abbots Langley Neighbourhood Plan.

Jed Griffiths MA DipTP FRTPI

Hertford

August 2021

Appendix

Paragraph 9: Bedmond Green Belt

View from entrance to Footpath 18 looking at Church Hill, Serge Hill Lane, Chapel Way and Bedmond High Street

High Street and Church Hill looking north

Fields behind Bluebell Drive

View from Footpath 18 looking towards Church Hill

Toms Lane looking north with Bedmond Playing fields – open space

View from Sheppeys Lane Footpath looking north towards Bedmond

Serge Hill Lane **Bedmond Road north looking south**

Site CFS10

Paragraph 26: Proximity to Piecorner Wood, Ancient Woodland

Paragraph 27: Access

Site CFS56

Paragraphs 38: Meadow Habitat

Paragraph 40: Access

Paragraph 41: Surface Water Flooding

Site ACFS9e

Paragraph 44 (The green field is ACFS9e)

Paragraph 52: Access

(Bedmond Road looking south with Site ACFS9e on the right)

This page is intentionally left blank

Abbots Langley Neighbourhood Plan

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) & Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) Screening Report

February 2023

Essex County Council

© Place Services 2023

About us

Place Services is a leading public sector provider of integrated environmental assessment, planning, design and management services. Our combination of specialist skills and experience means that we are uniquely qualified to help public organisations meet the requirements of the planning process, create practical design solutions and deliver environmental stewardship.

Place Services has a proven track record of delivering sustainable, creative and effective solutions for the built environment. Our in-house expertise comprises a multidisciplinary team which includes planners, urban designers, landscape architects, flood specialists and public art consultants. Our approach is client led; we work alongside our clients to deliver services, projects and planning objectives in a collaborative and cost effective way.

Copyright

This report may contain material that is non-Place Services copyright (e.g. Ordnance Survey, British Geological Survey, Historic England), or the intellectual property of third parties, which Place Services is able to provide for limited reproduction under the terms of our own copyright licences or permissions, but for which copyright itself is not transferable by Place Services. Users of this report remain bound by the conditions of the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988 with regard to multiple copying and electronic dissemination of the report.

Disclaimer

The material contained in this report was designed as an integral part of a report to an individual client and was prepared solely for the benefit of that client. The material contained in this report does not necessarily stand on its own and is not intended to nor should it be relied upon by a third party. To the fullest extent permitted by law Place Services will not be liable by reason of breach of contract, negligence, or otherwise for any loss or damage (whether direct, indirect or consequential) occasioned to any person acting or omitting to act or refraining from acting in reliance upon the material contained in the report. Loss or damage as referred to above shall be deemed to include, but is not limited to, any loss of profits or anticipated loss of profits damage to reputation or goodwill, loss of business, or anticipated loss of business, damages, costs, expense incurred or payable to any third party (in all cases whether direct, indirect or consequential) or any other direct, indirect or consequential loss or damage.

Contents

1.	**Introduction**	6
2.	**Legislative Background**	12
3.	**SEA Screening**	15
4.	**HRA Screening**	30
5.	**Conclusions**	70
6.	**References**	71
Appendix 1		72
Appendix 2		73

© Place Services 2023

List of Tables

Table 1: Exploring whether the Principle of the Plan would warrant SEA.....16
Table 2: Assessment of Likely Significant Effects on the Environment.....19
Table 3: Habitats Sites within 20km to be considered in this assessment 32
Table 4: Screening categorisation 35
Table 5: Assessment of potential impacts on Habitats Sites.....36
Table 6: Assessment of potential impacts from the Plan policies.....38

© Place Services 2023

1. Introduction

1.1 The Purpose of this Report

This screening report is an assessment of whether or not the contents of the Abbots Langley Neighbourhood Plan requires a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) in accordance with the European Directive 2001/42/ EC and associated Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations. A SEA is required if the Neighbourhood Plan is deemed to have a likely significant effect on the environment.

This report will also screen to determine whether the Neighbourhood Plan requires a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) in accordance with Regulation 61 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended). An HRA screening report is required when it is deemed that likely adverse significant effects may occur on protected Habitats (European) Sites as a result of the implementation of a plan or project.

1.2 The Abbots Langley Neighbourhood Plan

The Neighbourhood Plan will set out planning policies for the Abbots Langley Neighbourhood Plan area. Once formally adopted, a Neighbourhood Plan carries the same legal weight as Local Development Plans adopted by the Local Planning Authority (LPA), in this case Three Rivers District Council.

The Neighbourhood Plan includes a Vision, which expresses the community's aspirations for the plan area. This Vision is included within the Plan as follows:

> 'In 2038, Abbots Langley is a predominantly semi-rural parish, its main settlements surrounded by Green Belt. Abbots Langley Village itself is a thriving destination, capitalising on increasing numbers of visitors to the parish and providing a range of shopping and eating opportunities as well as leisure activities. The historic core remains, and new developments reflect the local character of the area to maintain the village feel with sufficient local facilities to meet the primary retail, healthcare, child education and leisure/sport activities for local residents. The Abbots Langley Village Centre has been improved following the proposals of the Masterplan for this area.
>
> Visitors are attracted by the continued presence of the Warner Bros. Studios, which has been expanded to provide additional facilities and opportunities for local employment. Additionally, the regeneration along the Grand Union Canal has encourage more canal traffic, and increased footfall in the village centre.
>
> The development of smaller and more affordable properties, in-keeping with the local area, has enabled first time buyers and new families to move into the area, bringing renewed energy to the area and a perpetuation of local events and activities. Older people in the area have the opportunity to downsize to more manageable properties, freeing up homes for growing families. These families are

© Place Services 2023

attracted to the area because of the excellent schools, which have expanded to meet the local need and are more accessible with improved links east-west through the parish.

New homes have been designed sustainably to reduce their impact on the environment. Opportunities to enable people to work from home, should they wish, combined with the retention of a series of global businesses, has meant that fewer people are commuting out as jobs and training are available locally. Those that are commuting find it easier to get to Kings Langley station as the public transport, pedestrian and cycle access have been improved. Public transport services should be well maintained particularly local train services at Kings Langley Station.

The growing community's needs are well-met with an expanded medical centre as a District Health Hub, new playgrounds and leisure facilities and the ongoing resource offered by the Henderson Hub. The green spaces across the parish, well-linked by footpaths and cycle-paths, enable locals to enjoy the countryside on their doorstep. Equally these areas provide a haven for wildlife and native plants, increasing local biodiversity.

The parish has been able to install additional electric vehicle charging points at key locations and at new developments. A local car sharing scheme/ on-demand public transport /shared taxis services have reduced the need for multiple car-owning households and on-street residential parking pressures. This, in combination with the planting of trees and vegetation along the main routes, has helped to reduce the air and noise pollution. Houses have been well insulated and implemented alternative heating systems with less dependence on fossil fuels.

The community is more balanced in the age groups living here.'

A number of economic, social and environmental objectives have been devised for the Neighbourhood Plan. These are:

- Objective 1: Ensure that new developments are sustainably sited and contribute to both the local housing needs of the parish while helping to deliver the district-wide housing requirement, including more affordable housing (of all types) as well as housing that addresses the needs of residents of all ages.
- Objective 2: Ensure new development reflects the high-quality local context in terms of building style and materials and is sensitively designed to be attractive, to minimise flood risk, mitigate climate change, promote biodiversity and reduce our carbon footprint.
- Objective 3: Strengthen, support and promote local economic activity in all retail, industrial, commercial and professional activities and maximise opportunities for tourism including the regeneration of the Grand Union Canal.
- Objective 4: Protect both historic and the environmental assets of the parish, preserving the green setting of the settlements and the individual green spaces within them, ensuring that they are linked to create wildlife corridors. Maintain as much as possible, the five distinctive statutory purposes of Green Belt

© Place Services 2023

policies in the Parish.

- Objective 5: Ensure that the provision of local infrastructure and facilities including expanded primary health care facilities and sufficient school places to address the needs of existing and future residents.
- Objective 6: Improve sustainable transport and movement across the parish, in particular through electric vehicle modes, on-demand services and public transport, specifically ensuring there is a safe environment for pedestrians and cyclists as well as motorists.
- Objective 7: Explore the potential for viable renewable energy projects locally, serving and ideally owned by the local community.
- Objective 8: Encourage the production of local food including local farms, horticulture, community projects and private gardens/allotments.

1.3 The Three Rivers District Council Local Plan

The adopted Local Plan consists of three main documents: a Core Strategy Development Plan Document Development Plan Document (DPD), a Development Management Policies DPD and a Site Allocations Local Development Document (LDD). The content of these relevant to Abbots Langley is outlined in the corresponding sub-sections.

1.3.1 The Core Strategy DPD (2011)

The adopted Three Rivers Core Strategy contains the current strategic planning policy for the District and thus the Abbots Langley Neighbourhood Plan area. The Core Strategy 2011 includes a number of policies related to a strategy for growth in the District, the delivery of growth and the provision of infrastructure. A Sustainability Appraisal was carried out for the Core Strategy.

The Core Strategy categorises the various settlements within the Neighbourhood Plan area as follows:

- Abbots Langley – Key Centre
- Leavesden (the western / north-western part of the settlement is within the Neighbourhood Plan area) – Key Centre
- Kings Langley (the eastern part of the settlement to the east of the river is within the Neighbourhood Plan area) – Secondary Centre
- Bedmond - Village

The Core Strategy's Spatial Strategy identifies that new development will be directed towards previously developed land (including surplus employment land) and appropriate infilling opportunities within the urban areas of the Principal Town (Rickmansworth) and Key Centres, as the most sustainable locations in the District. More limited new development will take place on previously developed land (including surplus employment land) and appropriate infilling opportunities within the Secondary Centres, recognising that such settlements are not generally as sustainable as the Principal Town and 'Key Centres'

© Place Services 2023

however do provide some access to services and facilities and are generally close to larger settlements. Some growth will help to sustain the vitality and viability of these settlements. Limited development to meet local needs will take place in the villages of Bedmond and Sarratt, recognising the need to sustain these more rural areas.

Policy PSP2 – Development in the Key Centres (South Oxhey, Croxley Green, Abbots Langley, Chorleywood, Leavesden and Garston and Mill End) sets out that such settlements will provide approximately 60% of the District's housing requirements over the Plan period on sites predominantly within the urban area, on previously developed land. Improvements specific to Abbots Langley and Leavesden (those parts within the Neighbourhood Plan area) include:

- Recognise that the former Leavesden Aerodrome site which includes the nationally important film studios is anticipated to be significant in meeting needs for housing and employment through mixed use redevelopment. Specific proposals for the site will be included in the Site Allocations Development Plan Document.
- Maintain and enhance primary and secondary shopping frontages within Abbots Langley, Chorleywood and South Oxhey District Shopping Centres and the Local Shopping Centre at Croxley Green to meet needs from existing and new housing development and to enable Key Centres to be sufficient in meeting local daily needs.
- Provide for a modest extension of retail floorspace within the Key Centres where opportunities arise in accordance with the Retail Capacity Study.
- Conserve and enhance the local distinctiveness of the Key Centres, particularly the historic cores of Abbots Langley, Croxley Green and Chorleywood.
- Improve provision of, and access to, services and facilities, to meet future demands, specifically through:
    - Highway improvements to A41 and surroundings in relation to Leavesden Aerodrome.
    - Improvements to bus services to and from Leavesden area including to the shuttle service from Leavesden Aerodrome to Watford Junction Station.
    - Improve the range of youth facilities in all Key Centres.
    - Improve facilities and accessibility at Leavesden Country Park.
    - Improve outdoor leisure facilities for residents of Abbots Langley.
    - Provide additional neighbourhood policing and facilities in the Abbots Langley area.
    - Expansion of existing schools and/or provision of new schools meet identified needs in the Key Centres.

Policy PSP3 - Development in Secondary Centres (Kings Langley, Carpenders Park, Eastbury, Maple Cross, Moor Park, Oxhey Hall) sets out that such settlements shall provide approximately 24% of the District's residential growth needs whilst also maintaining and enhancing employment opportunities. Improvements specific to the part of Kings Langley

© Place Services 2023

that is located within the Neighbourhood Plan area include:

- Recognise Kings Langley as a cross boundary village shared with Dacorum Borough Council which therefore requires a co-ordinated approach between the two authorities in planning for the future of the village.
- Improve provision of access to services and facilities, to meet future demands, specifically through:
    - Traffic management improvements to the C76 between Kings Langley Station and Barnacres Lane (in Dacorum Borough) and to the A412 (Denham Way) in Maple Cross
    - Improvement of bus services from Kings Langley Employment Area to Key Centres in District
    - Improvement of parking and cycling facilities at Kings Langley, Moor Park and Carpenders Park stations
    - Expansion of existing schools and/or provision of new schools meet identified needs in the Secondary Centres.

Policy PSP4 – Development in Villages (Bedmond, Sarratt) sets out that development in Villages will be strictly controlled in order to protect the character, landscape, heritage and wildlife of the wider countryside, and the openness of the Green Belt. Some limited small-scale development in or on the edge of the villages in order to meet local community and business needs is considered appropriate. Regarding housing, this would amount to approximately 1% of the District's housing requirements over the Local Plan period. Improvements specific to Bedmond include:

- Traffic management improvements to the C77 (Bedmond Road).
- Extending provision at Bedmond Sports and Social Club site, Toms Lane, to
- include facilities for young people.

1.3.2 The Development Management Policies DPD (2013)

The Development Management Policies Local Development Document (LDD) sets out the criteria against which all planning applications in the District will be considered, including those settlements and the countryside areas of the Abbots Langley Neighbourhood Plan area. The Council considers these policies will enable the long term vision for Three Rivers set out in the Core Strategy.

1.3.3 The Site Allocations LDD (2014)

The Site Allocations LDD supports the delivery of the Core Strategy. It allocates specific sites to meet needs for housing, employment, education, shopping and open spaces in Three Rivers. The LDD allocates land for development purposes within the Abbots Langley Neighbourhood Plan area across five sites at a combined quantum of approximately 565 dwellings. The LDD also allocates one site in Leavesden for 30 dwellings, and one site in Kings Langley for 100 dwellings. No potential residential allocations are included within

© Place Services 2023

Bedmond.

1.4 The Emerging Three Rivers Local Plan

Three Rivers District Council is preparing a new Local Plan that will set out a vision and policy framework for the future levels of growth within the District up until 2038.

At the time of writing, the Local Plan is at the 'Regulation 18 Preferred Policy Options' stage, which includes sites for potential allocation. A consultation on the 'Local Plan Regulation 18 Preferred Policy Options and Sites for Potential Allocation' documents ran from June 2021 to August 2021.

The emerging Local Plan seeks a continuation of the Settlement Hierarchy as adopted, and the broad spatial / distribution strategy of growth as the adopted Core Strategy. The emerging Local Plan proposes potential development allocations, expressed as options within Abbots Langley, Leavesden, Kings Langley and Bedmond. In Abbots Langley 13-14 sites have been proposed, with a further 2-3 identified within Kings Langley, and an additional 3 in Bedmond.

© Place Services 2023

2. Legislative Background

2.1 Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)

Directive 2001/42/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 June 2001 on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment states that,

> 'Environmental assessment is an important tool for integrating environmental considerations into the preparation and adoption of certain plans and programmes which are likely to have significant effects on the environment.
>
> (10) All plans and programmes which are prepared for a number of sectors and which set a framework for future development consent of projects listed in Annexes I and II to Council Directive 85/337/EEC of 27 June 1985 on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment(7), and all plans and programmes which have been determined to require assessment pursuant to Council Directive 92/43/EEC of 21 May 1992 on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild flora and fauna(8), are likely to have significant effects on the environment, and should as a rule be made subject to systematic environmental assessment. When they determine the use of small areas at local level or are minor modifications to the above plans or programmes, they should be assessed only where Member States determine that they are likely to have significant effects on the environment.
>
> (11) Other plans and programmes which set the framework for future development consent of projects may not have significant effects on the environment in all cases and should be assessed only where Member States determine that they are likely to have such effects.'

The Abbots Langley Neighbourhood Plan may influence frameworks for future development or become used ancillary to those plans and programmes that do set such a framework, and as such it has been determined that the principle of the Neighbourhood Plan should be screened for the necessary application of the SEA Directive.

The Report from the Commission to The Council, The European Parliament, The European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions states, on the application and effectiveness of the Directive on Strategic Environmental Assessment (Directive 2001/42/EC), that 'the following Plan & Programme (P&P), and modifications to them, are covered when prepared and/or adopted by an authority and required pursuant to legislative, regulatory or administrative provisions:

- P&P prepared for certain sectors and which set the framework for future development consent in respect of projects under the Environmental Impact Assessment-EIA-Directive.
- P&P requiring an assessment under the Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC).
- P&P setting the framework for development consent in respect of projects (not

© Place Services 2023

limited to those listed in the EIA Directive; see above) and determined by "screening" as being likely to have significant environmental effects.'

This report represents this screening process in regard to the content and influence of the Abbots Langley Neighbourhood Plan.

2.2 Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA)

Under the provisions of the Habitats Regulations (The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017, as amended), a competent authority must carry out an assessment of whether a plan or project will significantly affect the integrity of any European Site (also referred to as Habitats sites in the National Planning Policy Framework), in terms of impacting the site's conservation objectives.

The first stage of HRA is the screening assessment of the impacts of a land use proposal against the conservation objectives of Habitats sites. Specifically, it is to ascertain whether or not a proposal (either alone or in combination with other proposals) would potentially damage the internationally designated features of that site. European sites are also known as Natura 2000 sites.

This HRA Screening Report has been undertaken in order to accompany the Abbots Langley Neighbourhood Plan in accordance with the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012.

The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012, state that submitted Plans need to be accompanied by a statement explaining how the proposed Plan meets the 'basic conditions' set out in Schedule 4B of the 1990 Town and Country Planning Act. These basic conditions include a requirement to demonstrate how the Plan is compatible with certain obligations, which includes the need to undertake an HRA.

In line with the Court judgement (CJEU People Over Wind v Coillte Teoranta C-323/17), mitigation measures cannot be taken into account when carrying out a screening assessment to decide whether a plan or project is likely to result in significant effects on a Habitats site.

On 26 June 2018. The European Union (Withdrawal) Act 2018 received Royal Assent and the UK left the EU. The European Union (Withdrawal) Act 2018 made sure that UK laws continue to operate following the UK's exit. Relevant EU Directives have been transposed into UK law and those are unchanged until amended by Parliament. The requirements for HRA under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) remain in place with minor changes being affected by the Conservation of Habitats and Species Amendment (EU Exit) Regulations 2019. Parliament is however at liberty to introduce future changes to the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) since, after 31 December 2020, the UK is no longer bound by the EU Habitats or Wild Birds Directives.

© Place Services 2023

At the present time the position, under section 6(3) EU (Withdrawal) Act 2018 (as amended), is that the courts in the UK, with the sole exception of the Supreme Court, will continue to be bound by HRA judgements handed down by the CJEU and by domestic courts prior to 31 December 2020 when interpreting the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended). This is the case as long as the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) remain unmodified by Parliament.

There is currently a legal requirement for HRA screening of Plans prior to being adopted so any additional plans or projects which might reasonably interact with the Abbots Langley Neighbourhood Plan will be considered before post consultation.

© Place Services 2023

3. SEA Screening

3.1 When is SEA Required?

Planning Practice Guidance – Strategic environmental assessment requirements for neighbourhood plans (Paragraph: 026 Reference ID: 11-026-20140306) states that,

> 'In some limited circumstances, where a neighbourhood plan is likely to have significant environmental effects, it may require a strategic environmental assessment. Draft neighbourhood plan proposals should be assessed to determine whether the plan is likely to have significant environmental effects. This process is commonly referred to as a "screening" assessment and the requirements are set out in regulation 9 of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004.
>
> If likely significant environmental effects are identified, an environmental report must be prepared in accordance with paragraphs (2) and (3) of regulation 12 of those Regulations.
>
> One of the basic conditions that will be tested by the independent examiner is whether the making of the neighbourhood plan is compatible with European Union obligations (including under the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive).
>
> To decide whether a draft neighbourhood plan might have significant environmental effects, it must be assessed (screened) at an early stage of the plan's preparation according to the requirements set out in regulation 9 of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004. These include a requirement to consult the environmental assessment consultation bodies.
>
> Each consultation body will be able to advise on particular topics relevant to its specific area of expertise and responsibility, and the specific information that it holds.
>
> Where it is determined that the plan is unlikely to have significant environmental effects (and, accordingly, does not require an environmental assessment), a statement of reasons for the determination should be prepared. A copy of the statement must be submitted with the neighbourhood plan proposal and made available to the independent examiner.'

Articles 2 and 3 of the SEA Directive set out the circumstances in which a SEA is required. Table 1 sets out the assessment of whether the principle of the Abbots Langley Neighbourhood Plan will require a full SEA.

© Place Services 2023

Table 1: Exploring whether the Principle of the Plan would warrant SEA

Question 1: Is the Plan subject to preparation and/or adoption by a national, regional or local authority OR prepared by an authority for adoption through legislative procedure by Parliament or Government?
Yes - The Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared for adoption through legislative procedure.
Question 2: Is the Plan required by legislative, regulatory or administrative provision? (Typical characteristics of "administrative provisions" are that they are publicly available, prepared in a formal way, probably involving consultation with interested parties. The administrative provision must have sufficient formality such that it counts as a "provision" and it must also use language that plainly requires rather than just encourages a Plan to be prepared.)
Yes - The Neighbourhood Plan would be considered as falling within the category of an 'administrative provision'.
Question 3: Is the Plan prepared for agriculture, forestry, fisheries, energy, industry, transport, waste management, water management, telecommunications, tourism, town and country planning or land use AND does it set a framework for future development consent of projects in Annexes I and II to the EIA Directive?
Yes to both criteria - The Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared for town and country planning and sets a framework for future development consent.
Question 4: Will the Plan, in view of its likely effect on sites, require an assessment under Article 6 or 7 of the Habitats Directive?
The Neighbourhood Plan's likely effect on sites and requirement for an assessment under Article 6 or 7 of the Habitats Directive is explored in Section 4 of this Report.
Question 5: Does the Plan determine the use of small areas at local level, OR is it a minor modification of a Plan likely to require assessment under the Habitats Directive?
Yes to one of the criteria - the policies of the Neighbourhood Plan can be considered to determine the use of small areas at local level commensurate with their status in determining local planning applications.
Question 6: Does the Plan set the framework for future development consent of projects (not just projects in the Annexes of the EIA Directive)?

© Place Services 2023

Yes - the Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared for town and country planning and sets a framework for future development consent.

Question 7: Is the Plans sole purpose to serve national defence or civil emergency, or is it a financial or budget Plan, or is it co -financed by structural funds or European Agricultural Guidance and Guarantee Fund (EAGGF) programmes 2000 to 2006/7?

The Neighbourhood Plan does not serve a purpose related to national defence or civil emergency, a financial or budget Plan. The Neighbourhood Plan is not co-financed by structural funds or EAGGF programmes 2000 to 2006/7.

Question 8: Is it likely to have a significant effect on the environment?

Likely significant effects are explored in more detail in Section 3.3 of this Screening Report. The 'conclusions' section of the Report outlines whether the Neighbourhood Plan requires SEA or not due in regard to its effects on the environment.

The following section looks at the criteria for assessing the effects of the Neighbourhood Plan and the identified effects of the Neighbourhood Plan in line with the criteria. Crucially, it will determine whether there are any likely significant effects on the environment.

3.2 Criteria for Assessing the Effects of the Neighbourhood Plan

Criteria for determining the likely significant effects on the environment, referred to in Article 3(5) of Directive 2001/42/EC are set out below.

Annex II of SEA Directive 2001/42/EC – Significant Effects

1. The characteristics of plans and programmes, having regard, in particular, to

- the degree to which the plan or programme sets a framework for projects and other activities, either with regard to the location, nature, size and operating conditions or by allocating resources,
- the degree to which the plan or programme influences other plans and programmes including those in a hierarchy,
- the relevance of the plan or programme for the integration of environmental considerations in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development,

© Place Services 2023

Annex II of SEA Directive 2001/42/EC – Significant Effects

- environmental problems relevant to the plan or programme,
- the relevance of the plan or programme for the implementation of Community legislation on the environment (e.g. plans and programmes linked to waste-management or water protection).

2. Characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected, having regard, in particular, to

- the probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects,
- the cumulative nature of the effects,
- the transboundary nature of the effects,
- the risks to human health or the environment (e.g. due to accidents),
- the magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected),
- the value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to:
  * special natural characteristics or cultural heritage,
  * exceeded environmental quality standards or limit values,
  * intensive land-use,
  * the effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, Community or international protection status.

3.3 Likely Significant Effects resulting from the Neighbourhood Plan

The following assessment will consider the likelihood of the Abbots Langley Neighbourhood Plan (at the time of writing) to have significant effects on the environment. The table below will explore the likelihood of effects on the following required themes, as included within Annex I of the SEA Directive (2001/42/EC):

© Place Services 2023

- Biodiversity;
- Population;
- Human health;
- Fauna;
- Flora;
- Soil;
- Water;
- Air;
- Climatic factors;
- Material assets;
- Cultural heritage including architectural and archaeological heritage;
- Landscape; and
- The interrelationship between the above factors.

Table 2: Assessment of Likely Significant Effects on the Environment

Criteria for determining the likely significance of effects (Annex II SEA Directive)	Likelihood and summary of significant effects
The degree to which the plan or programme sets a framework for projects and other activities, either with regard to the location, nature, size and operating conditions or by allocating resources.	The Plan sets out relevant policies which will be used to determine proposals for development within the Neighbourhood Plan area once adopted. A Neighbourhood Plan must demonstrate conformity with the strategic policies of the Local Plan and once brought into force, the policies it contains take precedence over existing non-strategic policies only in the Local Plan for that Neighbourhood Plan area. The principle of development is established for both Abbots Langley as a 'Key Centre' in the District, Leavesden and Kings Langley, both 'Secondary Centres' and also the 'Village' of Bedmond within the adopted Three Rivers Local Plan's settlement hierarchy. The emerging Three Rivers Local Plan similarly allows for development to come forward in the Key Centres, Secondary Centres, and villages however does not identify a dwelling threshold applicable for the Neighbourhood Plan area. The Neighbourhood Plan does not allocate any land

© Place Services 2023

Criteria for determining the likely significance of effects (Annex II SEA Directive)	Likelihood and summary of significant effects
	for development purposes. Irrespective of the Neighbourhood Plan policies' compliance with those of the Local Plan, which will be considered between the Parish Council and the Local Planning Authority in finalising the Neighbourhood Plan and through the independent examination of the Neighbourhood Plan, it is considered that the degree to which the Neighbourhood Plan sets a framework for development is low. This is primarily due to the Neighbourhood Plan not allocating land for development.
The degree to which the plan or programme influences other plans or programmes including those in a hierarchy.	The Neighbourhood Plan, when/if 'made', will have weight in all planning decisions within the plan area. The Neighbourhood Plan provides policies for the Plan area, relevant to a local level only. The Neighbourhood Plan does not allocate land for development purposes. It is assumed that allocations within the Neighbourhood Plan area will be included within the emerging Three Rivers Local Plan. These allocations would be required, if 'made' in advance of the adoption of the Local Plan, to accord with the policy requirements of the Neighbourhood Plan. In consideration of the above, the degree to which the Neighbourhood Plan influences other plans or programmes is considered relatively low in the context of the Neighbourhood Plan area. This is primarily related to the Plan's position of not allocating land for development purposes.
The relevance of the plan or programme for the integration of environmental considerations in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development.	Neighbourhood Plans are required to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. The Neighbourhood Plan policies seek to ensure environmental considerations are taken into account. The Neighbourhood Plan includes policies related (directly / indirectly) to ensuring environmental considerations will be integrated into any forthcoming development within the Plan area. These are:

© Place Services 2023

Criteria for determining the likely significance of effects (Annex II SEA Directive)	Likelihood and summary of significant effects
	• Policy AL11: Natural Landscape and Rural Character • Policy AL12: Green Infrastructure and Development Irrespective of the adequacy of the above policies, adopted Local Plan policies apply within the Neighbourhood Plan area, which have been subject to thorough assessment within the Local Plan Sustainability Appraisal and Habitats Regulations Assessment. This ensures that environmental considerations, in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development, will be considered for all development proposals within the Neighbourhood Plan area.
Environmental problems relevant to the plan area	The Neighbourhood Plan reflects a small area and the Plan's policy content seeks to address environmental issues. The policy content of the adopted Local Plan will additionally apply to any proposals within the Neighbourhood Plan area. Local Plan policies have been subject to Sustainability Appraisal (SA) within the context of the Local Plan. The Neighbourhood Plan and this Screening Report identify the following potential (direct / indirect) environmental problems or sources of potential problems relevant to the Neighbourhood Plan area: • The Plan area is within the Impact Risk Zone (IRZs) of several SSSIs that are outside the Plan area. Development proposals within IRZs are required to be consulted on with Natural England, should they be of a type or size that could warrant negative effects on the relevant SSSI. • As a result of this, in many areas of the Plan area any residential developments with a total net gain in residential units would require consultation with Natural England at the planning application stage. • A number of Priority habitats (from the Priority

© Place Services 2023

Criteria for determining the likely significance of effects (Annex II SEA Directive)	Likelihood and summary of significant effects
	Habitat Inventory[1]) are scattered throughout the Plan area. These include Traditional Orchard, Open Mosaic Habitat, Ancient and Semi-Natural Woodland, Ancient Replanted Woodland, Deciduous Woodland, Broadleaved Woodland, Coastal and Floodplain Grazing Marsh, Good quality semi-improved grassland. • There are approximately 73 listed buildings within the Plan area, most of which are Grade II. • Of these listed buildings, there exists the Grade I listed Church of St Lawrence the Martyr in Abbots Langley. • Also with the Plan area are approximately five Grade II* listed buildings. • There are two Conservation Areas within the Plan area; Abbots Langley, and Hunton Bridge. • The entirety of the plan area is within various Source Protection Zones (SPZs). SPZs are defined around large and public potable groundwater abstraction sites. The purpose of SPZs is to provide additional protection to safeguard drinking water quality through constraining the proximity of an activity that may impact upon a drinking water abstraction. Within the Neighbourhood Plan area, there lie areas of Zone I (Inner Protection Zone), Zone II (Outer Protection Zone) and Zone III (Total Catchment). • Land within Flood Risk Zones 3 and 2 exists within the Neighbourhood Plan area at its western boundary. This is associated with the River Gage. • The non-developed areas of the Plan area, and those also not in non-agricultural use, are

[1] a spatial dataset that describes the geographic extent and location of Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (2006) Section 41 habitats of principal importance.

© Place Services 2023

Criteria for determining the likely significance of effects (Annex II SEA Directive)	Likelihood and summary of significant effects
	Grade 3 ('good to moderate') soils. Grade 2 soil represents the best and most versatile soil within the wider District context. • The entirety of the non-developed parts of the Plan area are designated as within the Metropolitan Green Belt (MGB). • The Plan area is located within both the Northern Thames Basin, and Chilterns National Character Areas (NCAs). • The Northern Thames Basin NCA is characterised as having a diverse range of semi-natural habitats include ancient woodland, lowland heath and floodplain grazing marsh and provide important habitats for a wide range of species including great crested newt, water vole, dormouse and otter. • The Chilterns NCA is characterised as having enclosed views within branching valleys, sunken routeways and extensive woodland and hedgerow-enclosed fields. Ancient woodland has remained on extensive clay-with-flint deposits. There are not inconsiderable areas of Grade 1 and 2 land that are associated with lower-lying areas and river valleys.
The relevance of the plan or programme for the implementation of Community legislation on the environment (e.g. plans and programmes linked to waste management or water protection).	The content of the Neighbourhood Plan is not in conflict with those relevant planning documents within the wider district and county area related to waste management or water protection.
The probability, duration, frequency and	The following impacts have been identified within this

© Place Services 2023

Criteria for determining the likely significance of effects (Annex II SEA Directive)	Likelihood and summary of significant effects
reversibility of the effects on the following factors:	Screening Assessment:
• Biodiversity	The Plan includes Policy AL11: Natural Landscape and Rural Character and Policy AL12: Green Infrastructure and Development which set out protection objectives and priorities for biodiversity improvements in the Plan area and the impact of development proposals on the local environment, such as securing biodiversity net gain. The Plan area is within the IRZs of several SSSIs not within the Plan area. Any planning applications coming forward within the plan area may require consultation with Natural England should they be of a size or type that meets specific conditions. Nevertheless, the Plan does not allocate any land for development purposes that could potentially conflict with any such requirements. The HRA element of this Screening Report, due to the content of the Plan, there will be no likely significant effects on the designated features of Habitats sites either alone or in-combination with other plans and projects. In consideration of all of the above effects on biodiversity that would require the full application of the SEA Directive (a SEA Environmental Report) can be screened out.
• Population	It is considered that there would be no significant effects on population resulting from the Neighbourhood Plan. This is due to the small scale of the plan area.
• Health	The Neighbourhood Plan includes Policy AL14: Protection and Maintenance of Local Green Spaces which designates existing green spaces and seeks their protection. This can be seen to support the principles of improving health and wellbeing in the plan area. There are therefore no significant effects resulting from the Neighbourhood Plan regarding human health that would

© Place Services 2023

Criteria for determining the likely significance of effects (Annex II SEA Directive)	Likelihood and summary of significant effects
	warrant a strategic assessment through SEA.
• Fauna	There are no direct impacts resulting from the Neighbourhood Plan on fauna that are considered significant at the Plan level. The Plan seeks the protection and enhancement of biodiversity at key sites and does not propose any development that could lead to the direct deterioration of habitats. Possible effects on fauna (outside those associated with Habitats Sites) cannot be considered strategically significant to the extent that Strategic Environmental Assessment would be warranted. Such issues are more appropriate to be considered on a case-by-case 'project level' basis at the development management stage and in accordance with relevant development management policies contained within the LPA's adopted Local Plan. Effects on fauna from the content of the Neighbourhood Plan can therefore be screened out.
• Flora	Numerous and various areas of Priority Habitat exist within the plan area. The Plan seeks to protect and enhance existing biodiversity assets in the Neighbourhood Plan area. In addition to the Plan's policies that seek the protection and enhancement of flora, the Three Rivers Local Plan policies apply relevant to such matters and the minimisation of effects. As a result, no effects are expected to result from the Neighbourhood Plan regarding flora.
• Soil	The non-developed areas of the Neighbourhood Plan area consist of predominantly Grade 3 ('good to moderate') soils. The Neighbourhood Plan does not allocate land for development purposes, and encourages the use of previously developed land in the first instance. There are no identified negative implications surrounding soil quality as a result of the Neighbourhood Plan.

© Place Services 2023

Criteria for determining the likely significance of effects (Annex II SEA Directive)	Likelihood and summary of significant effects
• Water	Land within Source Protection Zones I, II and III makes up the entirety of the Plan area. Source Protection Zones (SPZs) respond to sources such as wells, boreholes and springs used for public drinking water supply. These zones show the risk of contamination from any activities that might cause pollution in the area. The Neighbourhood Plan does not allocate any land for development purposes and as such no uses are considered to give rise to ground water pollutants (e.g. give rise to hazardous substances such as pesticides, oils, petrol and diesel, solvents, arsenic, mercury or chromium VI; or non-hazardous substances such as ammonia or nitrates). The HRA element of this Screening Report identifies that the Plan area lies outside the IRZ for water sensitive Habitat sites within the scope of this assessment and that no likely significant effects are expected of the Plan either alone or in combination with other plans and projects.
• Air	Although consultation with Natural England is required for any development that could cause air pollution (regarding industrial/agricultural development) in association with the IRZs of SSSIs in parts of the Plan area, no allocations are included within the Plan. If speculative development does come forward within the Plan period, consultation would be required at the planning application stage and is not considered a matter would warrant SEA, as a strategic process, to be undertaken.
• Climatic factors	The Plan includes Policy AL5: Design of Development, which seeks sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) to be incorporated into developments proposals, where applicable. The Neighbourhood Plan area contains an area of Flood Risk Zone 3 associated with the Rivers Gage, which is in close proximity to the eastern edge of the built up area of Kings Langley. No development allocations are proposed within the Plan and it is considered that Policy AL5 is

© Place Services 2023

Criteria for determining the likely significance of effects (Annex II SEA Directive)	Likelihood and summary of significant effects
	sufficient in conjunction with adopted Local Plan policies to ensure that any effects are avoided in the first instance and mitigated where that is not possible. It is therefore considered that SEA would not be required regarding matters of flood risk and any speculative development coming forward within the Neighbourhood Plan area in the Plan period can be considered at the planning application stage.
• Material assets	The Plan area does not contain land within a Minerals Consultation Area (MCA) within the County Council's adopted Minerals Local Plan. The Plan area similarly does not contain any existing or allocated sites for waste management facilities within the County Council's adopted Waste Local Plan. Regarding other material assets, the content of the Neighbourhood Plan is not considered to have any significant effects due to the extent / size of the Plan area. Such issues are more appropriate to be considered on a case-by-case basis at the development management stage and in accordance with relevant development management policies contained within the LPA's adopted Local Plan.
• Cultural heritage	The Plan area contains numerous Listed Buildings, as well two Conservation Areas. The Plan does not allocate land for development purposes that could have any effects on these listings or their settings. The Plan includes the specific thematic Policy AL7: Listed Buildings and Structures of Character, and the historic environment is a recurrent theme throughout the Plan's various other policies. Irrespective of the adequacy of the Plan's policy in the conservation and enhancement of the Plan area's heritage assets and their settings, policy regarding the protection and enhancement of the Historic Environment also exists at the LPA level which additionally applies in the Plan area. The effects on heritage are, as a result, considered a development management issue in the context of the Plan

© Place Services 2023

Criteria for determining the likely significance of effects (Annex II SEA Directive)	Likelihood and summary of significant effects
	and its content. There are not considered to be any elements of the Plan that would give rise to significant effects on the historic environment at the strategic level that would require the full application of the SEA Directive.
• Landscape	The parish is within a sensitive landscape, in regard to the protection objectives of the Northern Thames Basin Valley National Character Area (NCA) and the Chilterns NCA. The Plan area contains some features synonymous with these NCAs and furthermore undeveloped areas within the Plan area are entirely within the Metropolitan Green Belt. The Plan does not allocate any land for development purposes and includes Policy AL11: Natural Landscape and Rural Character, which seeks the maintenance and enhancement of landscape features within development proposals. In light of the Plan not allocating land for development purposes and in consideration also of the requirements of development proposals in accordance with the Three Rivers Local Plan, there are no significant strategic landscape effects identified within this Report that would warrant the requirement for the application of the SEA Directive and the formulation of a SEA Environmental Report.
The cumulative nature of the effects.	The Plan does not allocate any land for development purposes and therefore any negative cumulative effects can be ruled out.
The trans boundary nature of the effects.	The adopted Three Rivers Local Plan can be seen to support the protection and improvement of conditions relevant to those sustainability factors listed within the SEA Directive. The Neighbourhood Plan is broadly aligned with the principles of those wider thematic environmental policies. The HRA Screening element of this Report, which explores in-combination effects with other relevant plans and projects, also identifies no in-combination effects regarding Habitats (European) Sites.

© Place Services 2023

Criteria for determining the likely significance of effects (Annex II SEA Directive)	Likelihood and summary of significant effects
The risks to human health or the environment (e.g. due to accidents).	It is considered that there is no risk to human health or the environment as a result of the Neighbourhood Plan. This is in consideration of the above screening requirements related to sustainability themes. The Neighbourhood Plan is unlikely to give rise to any accidents that can be considered to have a significant risk to human health or the environment.
The magnitude spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected).	The Neighbourhood Plan relates to the local level only. The magnitude and spatial extent of the Plan's content is therefore not considered significant in a wider District context. No effects are highlighted within this SEA screening at either the local or wider geographic area.
The value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to: • special natural characteristics or cultural heritage • exceeded environmental quality standards • intensive land use	As highlighted above in the screening of the Neighbourhood Plan per sustainability theme, the Neighbourhood Plan has not been assessed as having negative effects associated with environmental themes.
The effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, community or international protection status.	As highlighted above in the screening of the Plan per sustainability theme, the Neighbourhood Plan has not been assessed as having any significant effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, community or international protection status.

© Place Services 2023

4. HRA Screening

4.1 Habitat Regulations Assessment of Development Plans

This section forms a plan level Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) as required by Regulation 63 of The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended).

This section of this Report aims to:

- Identify the Habitats sites within 20km of Abbots Langley Neighbourhood Plan area.
- Summarise the reasons for designation and Conservation Objectives for each site to be considered in this assessment.
- Screen the Abbots Langley Neighbourhood Plan for its potential to impact upon a Habitats site.
- Assess the potential for in combination effects from other projects and plans in the area.
- Identify if there are any outstanding issues that need further investigation.

4.2 Court Judgements and their consideration in this Report

4.2.1 CJEU People Over Wind v Coillte Teoranta C-323/17

As previously mentioned, in line with the Court judgement (CJEU People Over Wind v Coillte Teoranta C-323/17), mitigation measures cannot be taken into account when carrying out a screening assessment to decide whether a plan or project is likely to result in significant effects on a Habitats site.

This HRA Screening Report does not therefore consider mitigation measures within the assessment of Likely Significant Effects resulting from the Abbots Langley Neighbourhood Plan.

4.2.2 CJEU Holohan C- 461/17

This Court judgement now imposes more detailed requirements on the competent authority at Appropriate Assessment stage:

> 1. […] an 'Appropriate Assessment' must, on the one hand, catalogue the entirety of habitat types and species for which a site is protected, and, on the other, identify and examine both the implications of the proposed project for the species present on that site, and for which that site has not been listed, and the implications for habitat types and species to be found outside the boundaries of that site, provided that those implications are liable to affect the conservation objectives of the site.

© Place Services 2023

2. […] the competent authority is permitted to grant to a plan or project consent which leaves the developer free to determine subsequently certain parameters relating to the construction phase, such as the location of the construction compound and haul routes, only if that authority is certain that the development consent granted establishes conditions that are strict enough to guarantee that those parameters will not adversely affect the integrity of the site.

3. […] where the competent authority rejects the findings in a scientific expert opinion recommending that additional information be obtained, the 'Appropriate Assessment' must include an explicit and detailed statement of reasons capable of dispelling all reasonable scientific doubt concerning the effects of the work envisaged on the site concerned.

Within this Stage 1 HRA Screening report, the assessment determines the requirement whether or not a Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment is needed for the Abbots Langley Neighbourhood Plan.

4.3 Habitats (European) Sites

Habitats sites is the term used in the (revised) NPPF (2021) to describe any site which would be included within the definition at Regulation 8 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) for the purpose of those regulations. These now form part of the UK national network of sites for nature protection. The aim of the network is to assure the long-term survival of UK's most valuable and threatened species and habitats.

All Special Protection Areas (SPAs) are designated for birds and Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) are designated for other species, and for Habitats. Wetlands of International Importance (Ramsar sites) are also part of the National Network of sites. This is because all SPAs and SACs are comprised of Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) and all Ramsar sites in England are SSSIs. Together, SPAs, SACs and Ramsar Sites make up the Habitats sites in England. The following offers a description and explanation of SPAs, SACs and Ramsar Sites.

4.3.1 Explanation of SPAs, SACs and Ramsar Sites

Special Protection Areas (SPAs)

SPAs are areas which have been identified as being of international importance for the breeding, feeding, wintering or the migration of rare and vulnerable species of birds. Example: South West London Waterbodies is internationally important for wintering waterfowl. Legislation: Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended).

Special Areas of Conservation (SACs)

SACs are areas designated to protect habitat types that are in danger of disappearance, have a small natural range, or are highly characteristic of the region; and to protect species

© Place Services 2023

that are endangered, vulnerable, rare, or endemic. Example: Chiltern Beechwoods is designated for its habitats which qualify under Annex I of the European Habitats Directive2: H9130 Asperulo-Fagetum beech forests; Beech forests on neutral to rich soils and H6210 Semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies: on calcareous substrates (Festuco-Brometalia); Dry grasslands and scrublands on chalk or lime..Legislation: Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended).

Wetlands of International Importance (Ramsar Sites)

Ramsar Sites are designated to protect the biological and physical features of wetlands, especially for waterfowl habitats. For example, South West London Waterbodies which comprises a number of reservoirs and former gravel pits in the Thames Valley and support internationally important numbers of Gadwall and Shoveler Ramsar sites often overlap with SACs and SPAs and UK planning policy determines that they should be accorded the same importance when developments are proposed. Legislation: Ramsar Convention (1971) – Wetlands of International Importance and Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended).

4.3.2 Habitats Sites to be considered

There are three Habitats sites which lie within 20 km of the Abbots Langley Neighbourhood Plan area. This is shown in Table 3 and in Appendix 2.

Table 3: Habitats Sites within 20km to be considered in this assessment

SPA
N/A
SAC
Burnham Beeches Chilterns Beechwoods Wormley Hoddesdonpark Woods
Ramsar
N/A

Consideration was given to potential impact pathways, Impact Risk Zones (IRZ) for the

© Place Services 2023

underpinning SSSIs for the Habitats sites listed in Table 3 and Zones of Influence (ZOI) as confirmed on MAGIC website www.magic.gov.uk and Abbots Langley parish lies outside the 5.6 km ZOI for Burnham Beeches SSSI (19.1km) and that for Wormley Hoddesdonpark Woods (19.6 km).

The Abbots Langley NP area lies within the 12.6km ZOI for Chilterns Beechwoods SAC (9km) for predicted recreational impacts. However, the greatest pressure, noted in the report to Dacorum BC (Footprint Ecology,2022) and experienced on the Chilterns Beechwoods SAC, is in Ashridge Commons and Woods SSSI and Tring Woodlands SSSI. Natural England has provided advice relating to the need for a Strategic Access Management and Monitoring (SAMM) for the Ashridge Estate. Based on the evidence, Natural England believes the following LPAs and other bodies should be involved in the development of this strategic solution:

- Buckinghamshire Council (Aylesbury Vale and Chilterns Districts);
- Central Bedfordshire Council;
- Dacorum Borough Council;
- St Albans City and District Council;
- Hertfordshire County Council (as Ecological advisors to Dacorum Borough Council and St Albans City and District Council); and
- National Trust as land owner and delivery body for Ashridge Estate.

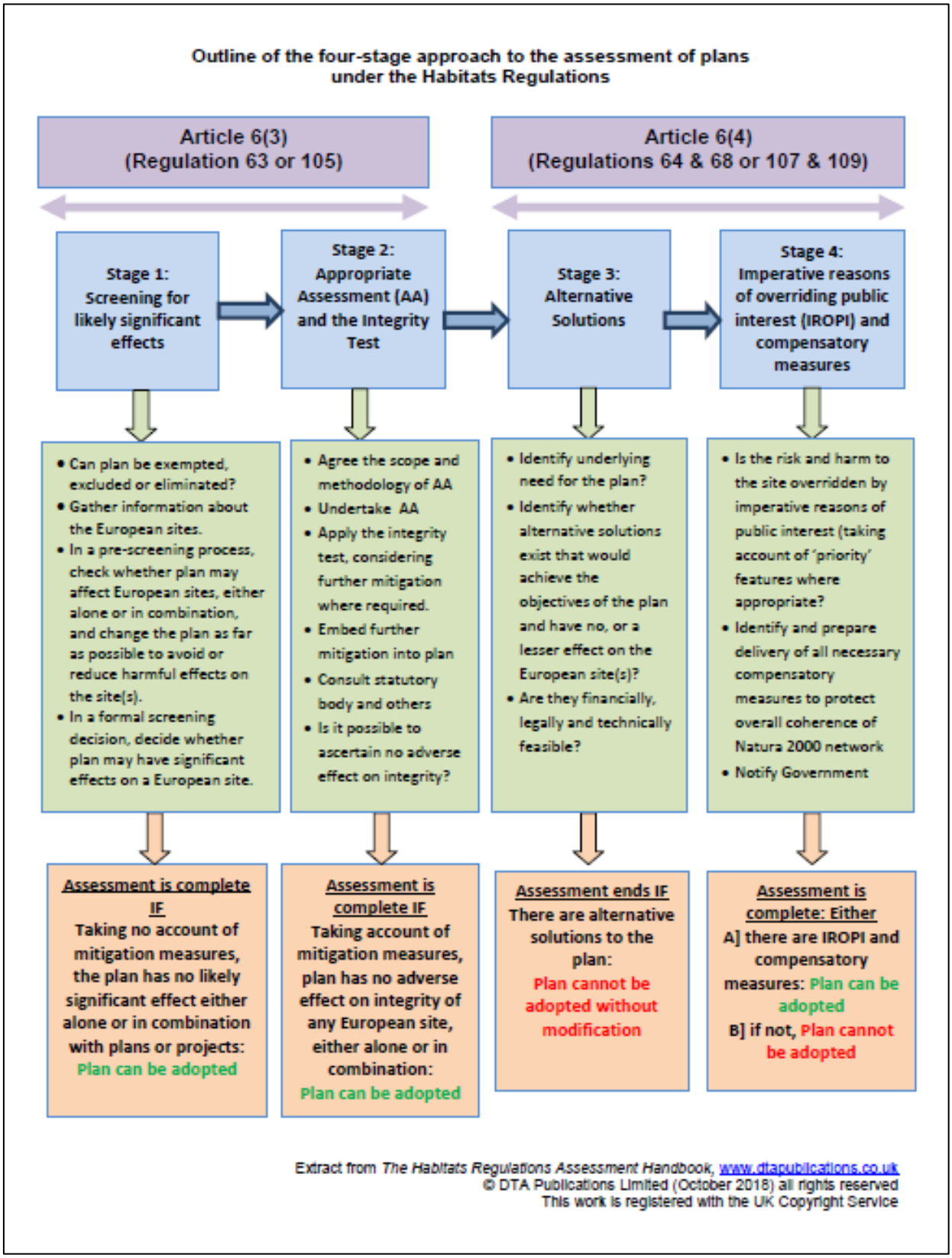
The above are the districts/unitary authorities providing the majority of the visits, and impact to this component part of the Chilterns Beechwoods SAC and the list does not include Three Rivers DC. As the Abbots Langley NP does not allocate any land for development, there is no predicted impacts nor would support for residential development being considered as significant. It is therefore concluded that there is no likely significant effect on any of the Habitats sites within scope resulting from the Abbots Langley Neighbourhood Plan.

4.4 Method and Approach

The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 state that submitted Plans need to be accompanied by a statement explaining how the proposed Plan meets the ‘basic conditions’ set out in Schedule 4B of the 1990 Town and Country Planning Act. These basic conditions include a requirement to demonstrate how the Plan is compatible with EU obligations, which includes the need to undertake a HRA screening report; this is necessary to ensure the making of the neighbourhood plan is not likely to have a significant effect on a Habitats (European) site or a Habitats (European) offshore marine site, either alone or in combination with other plans or projects. This document relates only to Stage 1 of the HRA process as set out in Figure 1 below.

© Place Services 2023

Figure 1: Outline of the Four Stage Approach to the Assessment of Plans under the Habitats Regulations (taken from the DTA handbook).



4.4.1 Stage 1: HRA Screening

The screening stage identifies if any significant effects are likely because any policies or projects will have an impact on a Habitats site. Table 4 identifies the different categories assigned to each policy in the plan: Category A identifies those policies or projects that are considered to have No Negative Effect. Category B identifies those policies or projects that will have No Likely Significant Effect. Category C identifies those policies or projects that might have Likely Significant Effect upon a Habitats site either alone or in combination with other plans or projects. Section 4.5 considers each policy or projects and the results of the screening exercise recorded.

Each of the policies in the Abbots Langley Neighbourhood Plan has been screened to identify whether they would have any effect on a Habitats site and allocated to a category as shown in Table 4.

Table 4: Screening categorisation

Category A: No negative effect
Policies or projects that will not be likely to have any negative effect on a Habitats site.
Category B: No Likely Significant Effect
Policies or projects that could have an effect but would not be likely to have a *significant* negative effect on a Habitats site alone or in combination. This conclusion could only be reached if the effects, even in combination and taking the precautionary principle into account, are considered trivial.
Category C: Likely Significant Effect
Policies or projects which are predicted to have a likely significant effect on a Habitats site either alone or in combination with other plans and projects and require revision or further assessment (Appropriate Assessment).

4.4.2 Potential impacts of Abbots Langley Neighbourhood Plan on Habitats Sites

There are a wide range of potential impacts on Habitats Sites that could arise from development plans. These can be summarised as:

- Land take by development;
- Impact on protected species found within but which travel outside the protected sites may be relevant where development could result in effects on qualifying interest species within the Habitats site, for example through the loss of feeding

© Place Services 2023

grounds for an identified species.

- Increased disturbance, for example from recreational use resulting from new housing development and / or improved access due to transport infrastructure projects;
- Changes in water availability, or water quality as a result of development and increased demands for waste water treatment, and changes in groundwater regimes due to increased impermeable areas;
- Changes in atmospheric pollution levels due to increased traffic, waste management facilities etc. Pollution discharges from developments such as industrial developments, quarries and waste management facilities.

Each policy will be assessed against the criteria in the table below.

Table 5: Assessment of potential impacts on Habitats Sites

Nature of potential impact	How the Abbots Langley Neighbourhood Plan (alone or in combination with other plans and projects) could affect a Habitats site	Why these effects are not considered significant
Land take by development	The Abbots Langley Neighbourhood Plan area is outside the boundaries of the Habitats sites within scope of this HRA screening.	No likely significant effects are expected, as no development will be allocated on designated land. It is therefore, considered that impacts from land take by development can be screened out when considered from the Plan either alone or in combination with other plans and projects.
Impact on protected species outside the protected sites	The Abbots Langley Neighbourhood Plan area lies within the 12.6 km IRZ for Chilterns Beechwoods SSSI which underpins the SAC designation.	There is no risk of impacts on protected species outside of the protected sites. It is therefore considered that this impact pathway will not result in likely significant effects upon Habitats sites from the Neighbourhood Plan. Therefore, impacts on protected species outside the protected sites from the Neighbourhood Plan (either alone or in combination with

© Place Services 2023

Nature of potential impact	How the Abbots Langley Neighbourhood Plan (alone or in combination with other plans and projects) could affect a Habitats site	Why these effects are not considered significant
		other plans and projects) on the Habitats sites can be screened out from further assessment.
Recreational pressure and disturbance	The Abbots Langley Neighbourhood Plan area lies outside the 5.6km Zone of Influence (ZOI) for Burnham Beeches SAC but within the 12.6km ZOI for Chilterns Beechwoods for predicted recreational impacts.	The Abbots Langley Neighbourhood Plan does not allocate land for development, so impacts from recreation arising from the NP are screened out when considered from the Plan either alone or in combination with other plans and projects.
Water quantity and quality	The Abbots Langley Neighbourhood Plan area lies outside the IRZ for water sensitive Habitat sites within the scope of this assessment.	No likely significant effects are expected so changes in water quantity and quality have been screened out when considered from the Plan either alone or in combination with other plans and projects.
Changes in pollution levels	The Abbots Langley Neighbourhood Plan area lies outside the IRZ for pollution levels for sensitive Habitat sites and there are none within the scope of this assessment.	No likely significant effects are expected, so changes in air pollution have been screened out when considered from the Plan either alone or in combination with other plans.

4.5 Results from HRA Screening of Neighbourhood Plan Policies

Each of the policies in the Abbots Langley Neighbourhood Plan was screened in turn to identify whether they would have any impact on a Habitats site and the result of this exercise is recorded in Table 5.

© Place Services 2023

Table 6: Assessment of potential impacts from the Plan policies

Policy Number	Policy Wording	Will Policy have Likely Significant Effects on the Habitats Sites?	Recommendations
Policy AL1: Location and Scale of Development	A. Development in the Parish will be focused within the settlement boundaries as defined on Figure 5.1 and the Policies Maps. B. The Neighbourhood Plan supports the continued washing over of Bedmond village by the Green Belt, as shown on the Figure 7 and the Policies Maps. C. Development proposals outside the settlement boundaries will not be supported unless: i. it is in accordance with Three Rivers District Council Core Strategy policies in respect of appropriate uses in the countryside; and ii. the development preserves or enhances the character or appearance of the area; or iii. where relevant, the development brings redundant or vacant historic buildings back into optimal beneficial re-use; or iv. it relates to necessary utilities infrastructure and where no reasonable alternative location is	No, Category A	No specific recommendations

© Place Services 2023

Policy Number	Policy Wording	Will Policy have Likely Significant Effects on the Habitats Sites?	Recommendations
	available; or v. it is on sites allocated for those uses in the Three Rivers Core Strategy or its successor. D. Development which meets either the exceptions to inappropriate development in the Green Belt set out in paragraph 149 of the National Planning Policy Framework, or demonstrates very special circumstances, as set out in paragraph 147 of the National Planning Policy Framework, will be supported. E. Proposals should make the best use of all suitable brownfield land, where available, before greenfield land is released.		
Policy AL2: Housing Mix	A. Proposals that will deliver a high proportion of smaller (1-3 habitable rooms) dwellings at lower to median local cost; and medium (5 habitable rooms) dwellings will be supported within the Parish, and in accordance with Policy AL5 (Design of Development) of this Neighbourhood Plan. B. Housing development must contribute to meeting the existing and future housing needs of the Parish.	No, Category A	No specific recommendations

© Place Services 2023

Policy Number	Policy Wording	Will Policy have Likely Significant Effects on the Habitats Sites?	Recommendations
	Developers are required to submit a Parish-specific Affordable Housing and Dwellings Mix Strategy with any planning application. The Strategy must clearly set out identified housing needs within the Parish and demonstrate how the proposed development addresses those needs. C. Subject to the other policies of this plan, proposals for self- and custom build housing will be supported.		
Policy AL3: Affordable Homes	All residential development proposals in the Neighbourhood Plan area shall provide affordable housing as required by Policy CP4 of the Three Rivers Core Strategy or its successor. Affordable homes should be well integrated with market housing. The type and size of affordable homes should meet the specific needs identified for the Parish, as set out in the Abbots Langley Local Housing Needs Assessment, with a minimum of 25% of the provision comprising First Homes. Development proposals that enable an uplift to the discounts provided on the First Homes element of the	No, Category A	No specific recommendations

© Place Services 2023

Policy Number	Policy Wording	Will Policy have Likely Significant Effects on the Habitats Sites?	Recommendations
	development - up to 50% - to assist single occupants on median and lower quartile incomes, will be supported. Such proposals should seek to prioritise those with local connections to the Parish and key workers.		
Policy AL4: Character of Development	A. Development proposals should conserve and, where practicable, enhance the character of the Conservation Area and/or Character Area in which it is located (as shown on Figure 11, the Policies Map and as described in the Abbots Langley Design Guidance and Code, Appendix E.) Developments should reflect the architectural variety found locally and use materials that are in keeping with those found in existing buildings in the immediate locality. This will help to avoid building design that is inappropriate to the Plan area. Innovation in design will be supported, where this demonstrably enhances the quality of the built form. B. As appropriate to their scale, nature, and location development proposals should: a. make a positive contribution to the visual impact of the	No, Category A	No specific recommendations

© Place Services 2023

Policy Number	Policy Wording	Will Policy have Likely Significant Effects on the Habitats Sites?	Recommendations
	main highway approaches into the settlements, as shown on Figure 10; b. incorporate the principles included in the Conservation Area guidance where applicable, and the Abbots Langley Design Guidance and Code, Appendix E; and c. protect views and vistas along the Grand Union Canal and River Gade; and d. not have a significantly detrimental impact on the local views as set out in Policy AL13.		
Policy AL5: Design of Development	Development proposals should demonstrate a high quality of design, which responds and integrates well with its surroundings, meets the changing needs of the population of the neighbourhood area. In addition they should minimises their impacts on the natural and historic environment. Development proposals will be expected to demonstrate how they have sought to address the following matters: a. Being guided by the principles of 'Building for a Healthy Life' unless alternative principles would otherwise	No, Category A	No specific recommendations

© Place Services 2023

Policy Number	Policy Wording	Will Policy have Likely Significant Effects on the Habitats Sites?	Recommendations
	result in a higher quality of design. Development proposals are encouraged to achieve the commendation. b. The guidance contained within the Abbots Langley Neighbourhood Plan Design Guidance and Code (see Appendix E). c. Avoiding development over two storeys unless it can be demonstrated that it will not have a detrimental impact on views, streetscape or character of an area. Development of three-storeys and above on or close to the boundary of sites adjacent to the settlement boundary abutting open countryside will not be supported. d. The creation of variety through the use of a range of housing designs, provided that the predominant type of design reflects the character of the area. e. Dwellings designed to be suitable for older residents (aged 60 and over) are encouraged to reflect the Housing our Ageing Population Panel for Innovation (HAPPI) principles; f. Such dwellings may also be suitable for younger residents		

© Place Services 2023

Policy Number	Policy Wording	Will Policy have Likely Significant Effects on the Habitats Sites?	Recommendations
	and are not intended to be restricted in use. g. To design layouts of safe and secure dwellings that meet the requirements of 'Secure by Design' and minimise the likelihood and fear of crime. h. Provide adequate cycle storage and off-road parking for residents, visitors and service vehicles – including electric vehicle charging points – in accordance with the Three Rivers District Council Parking Standards. i. Traffic generation and on-street parking does not adversely affect vehicular and pedestrian safety. j. Development that is required to provide Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) is expected to be accommodated on site. Such development is encouraged to demonstrate the use of a wide range of creative SuDS solutions, for example through the provision of SuDS as part of green spaces, green roofs, permeable surfaces and rain gardens. SuDS provision must demonstrate how its design will enhance wildlife and biodiversity, as well as		

© Place Services 2023

Policy Number	Policy Wording	Will Policy have Likely Significant Effects on the Habitats Sites?	Recommendations
	minimise the impacts of flooding. k. To ensure that areas requiring service and maintenance including watercourses are accessible at all times.		
Policy AL6: Environmentally Sustainable Design	A. Development proposals which incorporate design and environmental performance measures and standards to reduce energy consumption and climate effects will be supported. As appropriate to their scale, nature and location, proposals should demonstrate how they have responded positively to the following matters: a. non-residential developments should aim to meet the Buildings Research Establishments BREEAM building standard 'excellent', and residential dwellings should aim for an EPC rating of B or above; and b. Siting and orientation of buildings to optimise passive solar gain. c. The use of high quality, thermally efficient building materials. d. Installation of energy	No, Category A	No specific recommendations

© Place Services 2023

Policy Number	Policy Wording	Will Policy have Likely Significant Effects on the Habitats Sites?	Recommendations
	efficiency measures such as loft insulation and double glazing. e. Reducing water consumption through the use of grey water systems. f. Providing low carbon sustainable design and avoid or mitigate all regulated emissions using a combination of on-site energy efficiency measures (such as insulation and low energy heating systems), on-site zero carbon technologies (such as solar panels) and only where necessary off-site measures to deal with any remaining emissions. g. Reducing fuel poverty levels, such as replacement of lighting by lower wattage light sources. h. Providing the infrastructure for adequate electric vehicle charging points for each dwelling, where new parking provision is expected to be made, in accordance with Three Rivers District Council Parking Standards. Where a development cannot achieve one or more of the criteria (for instance for practical reasons), then this would not render the scheme		

© Place Services 2023

Policy Number	Policy Wording	Will Policy have Likely Significant Effects on the Habitats Sites?	Recommendations
	unacceptable, providing a robust demonstration can be provided by the developer. B. Alterations to existing buildings, including the sensitive retrofitting of historic buildings, should be designed with energy reduction in mind and comply with current sustainable design and construction standards. C. Proposals for individual and community scale energy, for instance from hydro-electricity, solar photovoltaic panels, local biomass facilities, anaerobic digestions and wood fuel products will be supported subject to the following criteria: a. the siting and scale of the proposed development is appropriate to its setting and position in the wider landscape; and b. the proposed development does not create an unacceptable impact on the amenities of local residents; and c. the proposed development does not have an unacceptable impact on a feature of natural or biodiversity importance.		

© Place Services 2023

Policy Number	Policy Wording	Will Policy have Likely Significant Effects on the Habitats Sites?	Recommendations
Policy AL7: Listed Buildings and Structures of Character	A. The Neighbourhood Plan identifies the Holy Well in Bedmond (as detailed in Appendix F) and those assets within the parish contained in the Heritage Environment Record and which are not already nationally listed are identified as non-designated heritage assets. B. Development proposals affecting heritage assets - including non-designated heritage assets - either directly or indirectly, should conserve and enhance the significance and those elements of the setting that contribute to the significance. This could include, where appropriate, the delivery of development that will make a positive contribution to, or better reveal the significance of, the heritage asset, or reflect and enhance local character and distinctiveness with particular regard given to the prevailing styles of design and use of materials in a local area. Proposals are expected to be accompanied by a Heritage Statement. C. Development proposals should demonstrate that they have taken into account the potential impact on above and below ground archaeological	No, Category A	No specific recommendations

© Place Services 2023

Policy Number	Policy Wording	Will Policy have Likely Significant Effects on the Habitats Sites?	Recommendations
	deposits to ensure that evidence which could contribute to the understanding of human activity and past environments is not lost. Where a scheme has a potential impact on archaeological remains (below or above ground) a Heritage Statement or similar should be prepared in support of planning applications. D. A proactive stance will be taken to any heritage assets that may be at risk. This will include working with property owners to find a use that will enable them to be put back into optimum viable use. E. Particular care should be taken in the Conservation Area to ensure that alterations and new buildings contribute to the enhancement of the historic environment, in accordance with the guidance set out in the Abbots Langley Village and Hunston Bridge Conservation Area Appraisals.		
Policy AL8: Retaining and Enhancing the Vitality and Viability of	ABBOTS LANGLEY VILLAGE CENTRE A. There is a need to maintain the economic health, vitality and viability of the Village	No, Category A	No specific recommendations

© Place Services 2023

Policy Number	Policy Wording	Will Policy have Likely Significant Effects on the Habitats Sites?	Recommendations
Local Centres	Centre, as defined on the Policies Maps, in balance with residential development and infrastructure. Therefore, development proposals that provide a balance of uses – retail, leisure and community, commercial and residential - will be supported subject to compliance with all relevant development plan policies. Proposals that add to or sustain the distribution of local neighbourhood convenience shops in particular, where they are designed to be accessible on foot or by bicycle, will be supported. B. Development proposals to enhance Abbots Langley Village Centre, as set out in the Village Centre Masterplan, will be supported, where this will not result in the significant detrimental impact to local heritage assets. In Chapter 5 of the Abbots Langley Village Centre Masterplan, design proposals are given for four distinct areas in the village centre which are: a. Around the Library and St Saviour's Church. b. In front of St Lawrence Church c. Main Shopping Parade		

© Place Services 2023

Policy Number	Policy Wording	Will Policy have Likely Significant Effects on the Habitats Sites?	Recommendations
	d. Breakspeare Special School site after 2024 Maps and illustrations are provided to show the proposals for each of the four areas. For the Breakspeare School site, a separate Feasibility Study was conducted to determine the site's suitability for a new enlarged Health Centre to replace the Vine House Health Centre after 2024 after the school is relocated to Croxley Green in 2024. C. Positive consideration will be given to applications that will improve the quality of shop fronts and signage in these areas. TEMPORARY USES D. The use of E, F1 and F2 premises for temporary uses will be supported. Such uses include 'pop up' shops and cultural, creative and leisure uses introduced on a temporary basis or for specific events. Proposals must demonstrate that they will not have a detrimental impact on the amenity of neighbouring uses, particularly residential, through excessive noise and pollution. Such uses will generally not be considered		

© Place Services 2023

Policy Number	Policy Wording	Will Policy have Likely Significant Effects on the Habitats Sites?	Recommendations
	appropriate if the operation of the business requires a large number of vehicle parking spaces in order to function. RE-USE OF HISTORIC BUILDINGS E. The reuse of historic buildings within Abbots Langley Village Centre for activities that will enhance the vitality and viability of the Village Centre are strongly encouraged. Any alterations to historic buildings will need to be sympathetic to the historic and architectural significance and character of the building EATING AND DRINKING ESTABLISHMENTS F. Proposals for eating and drinking establishments (Classes E, F1 and F2, including where consumption of food and drink is an ancillary activity) to site tables and chairs outside their premises are supported, provided they do not impede pedestrian movement. LOCAL AND NEIGHBOURHOOD CENTRES G. Proposals which result in the loss of existing local neighbourhood convenience		

© Place Services 2023

Policy Number	Policy Wording	Will Policy have Likely Significant Effects on the Habitats Sites?	Recommendations
	shops will be resisted. H. To secure the ongoing vitality of Bedmond village centre, proposals which protect, enhance and promote a diverse range of village centre uses – including retail, leisure, cultural and community - will be supported, subject to the other policies in this Neighbourhood Plan.		
Policy AL9: Supporting Recreation and Sustainable Tourism	A. Development proposals for recreational and tourism activities, including additional visitor accommodation and a Visitor Centre, will be supported where the following criteria can be met: a. There are demonstrable economic and social benefits of the proposals; and b. There is no significant detrimental impact on the existing community; and c. Adequate provision for parking is included, particularly for proposals within or adjacent to the local centres; and d. the siting, scale and design has strong regard to the local character, historic and natural assets of the surrounding area and the design and materials	No, Category B	No Likely Significant Effect Recommendation to add to the policy text clause d. to refer to Chilterns Beechwoods SAC to avoid recreational pressure (see suggested text underlined below). d. the siting, scale and design has strong regard to the local character, historic and natural assets of the surrounding area and the design and materials are in keeping with the local style and reinforce local distinctiveness and provide a strong sense of place. Sufficient greenspace should be provided

© Place Services 2023

Policy Number	Policy Wording	Will Policy have Likely Significant Effects on the Habitats Sites?	Recommendations
	are in keeping with the local style and reinforce local distinctiveness and provide a strong sense of place. B. Proposals for the improvement of signage for local facilities will be supported, provided that they can be satisfactorily integrated within their surroundings.		within walking distance of residential developments to avoid recreational impacts on Chilterns Beechwoods SAC .
Policy AL10: A Safe, Attractive and Welcoming Village Centre	Development proposals to enhance the public realm in Abbots Langley Village Centre will be encouraged, particularly where they enhance movement by pedestrians. In particular: a. the widening of pavements b. the inclusion of cycling facilities c. provision of electric charging points d. information totem points providing guidance and information for visitors and residents.	No, Category A	No specific recommendations
Policy A11: Natural Landscape and Rural Character	A. Development proposals should maintain and where practicable enhance the natural environment, landscape features, the rural character and setting of the Parish. Development	No, Category A	No specific recommendations

© Place Services 2023

Policy Number	Policy Wording	Will Policy have Likely Significant Effects on the Habitats Sites?	Recommendations
	proposals that would achieve a net gain in biodiversity will be particularly supported. B. Where reasonable and necessary, development proposals are expected to demonstrate that they have addressed the following matters: TREES AND WOODLAND a. There is no unacceptable loss of, or damage to, existing trees or woodlands during or as a result of development. If veteran or notable trees must be removed, they should be replaced with trees of a similar potential size and native species elsewhere on the site, unless this is clearly not possible. In fact our landscape has to increase the number of native trees. b. Where trees and/or shrubs are replaced with new plantings, native or locally appropriate varieties attractive to insects, birds and other wildlife must be used. HEDGEROWS: c. Development that would result in the loss of, or the deterioration in the quality of, hedgerows will not be supported with the exception		

© Place Services 2023

Policy Number	Policy Wording	Will Policy have Likely Significant Effects on the Habitats Sites?	Recommendations
	of removal for vehicular access. In this case, the access should include trees at either end of the retained hedgerow to aid wildlife to cross overhead from crown to crown. FAUNA: d. The provision of hedgehog holes in new residential fencing will be supported. e. Development proposals which provide bird and bat nesting boxes will be supported. f. The provision of a communal pond and wildlife friendly communal 'green spaces,' within new major developments, will be supported.		
Policy AL12: Green Infrastructure and Development	A. Proposals should be designed to create, conserve, enhance and manage green spaces and connect chains of green infrastructure, as identified on Figure 13, with the aim of delivering a measurable net environmental benefit for local people and wildlife. Proposals for development must be supported by a biodiversity appraisal, which must demonstrate how negative	No, Category A	No specific recommendations

© Place Services 2023

Policy Number	Policy Wording	Will Policy have Likely Significant Effects on the Habitats Sites?	Recommendations
	impacts would be minimised and biodiversity net gain achieved. B. The appraisal should demonstrate that where significant harm cannot be avoided, proposed development and other changes should adequately mitigate or, as a last resort, compensate for the harm. The appraisal must demonstrate a measurable biodiversity net gain of 10% by utilising the Defra biodiversity metric (or as amended). Where this is not demonstrated, permission for planning or for change should be refused. C. Measures to achieve biodiversity net gain, mitigation or compensation involving the creation of habitat and/or relocation of species, must be agreed by the Local Planning Authority and include sufficient funding to support at least 30 years of post-development habitat management or land use change. D. Proposals that seek to improve the connectivity between wildlife areas and green spaces will be encouraged in order to enhance the green		

© Place Services 2023

Policy Number	Policy Wording	Will Policy have Likely Significant Effects on the Habitats Sites?	Recommendations
	infrastructure of the Parish. Conversely, proposals which threaten to damage such connectivity will be strongly resisted. E. The planting of additional native species trees and/ or continuous hedgerows to provide wildlife corridors and to offset the effects of air pollution and to provide cooling and shelter for people as well as a habitat for wildlife will be supported.		
Policy AL13: Protection of Locally Significant Views	The Plan identifies the following locally significant views (mapped in Figure 14): • View 1: View to the north from Hyde Farm. • View 2: View to Potters Crouch Hamlet. • View 3: View to the Church of the Ascension and White Hart. • View 4: View from Longspring Wood to Local Wildlife Site and the Green Belt. • View 5: View of the Grand Union Canal. • View 6: View of St Lawrence Church.	No, Category A	No specific recommendations

© Place Services 2023

Policy Number	Policy Wording	Will Policy have Likely Significant Effects on the Habitats Sites?	Recommendations
	• View 7: View in Leavesden Country Park. • View 8: View to Cheques Lane. • View 9: View to Langley Lane Play Area and farmlands. • View 10: View from Langleybury Lane to the Open Field. • View 11: View from Gypsy Lane Railway Bridge across open fields. • View 12: View of the Horsefield Meadow (Site CFS56), Bedmond. As appropriate to their scale and nature, development proposals within the shaded arcs of the various views as shown on Figure 14 should be designed in a way that safeguards the locally significant view or views concerned.		
Policy AL14: Protection and Maintenance of Local Green Spaces	The following 13 spaces, as shown on the Policies Map are designated as a local green spaces: 1. Jubilee Gardens 2. Tanners Wood	No, Category A	No specific recommendations

© Place Services 2023

Policy Number	Policy Wording	Will Policy have Likely Significant Effects on the Habitats Sites?	Recommendations
	3. Abbots Village Park and Woodlands at the Manor House Grounds 4. Primrose Hill playing fields 5. Langleybury cricket ground 6. Abbots Langley Horses Field 7. Bedmond Green, Toms Lane, Bedmond 8. The Breakspear Farm, Holy Well and surrounding nature reserve (inc. Moor Wood) 9. Longspring Wood 10.Bedmond playing fields 11.Bedmond Meadow 12.The Spinneys in Bedmond Local policy for managing development on a Local Green Space should be consistent with national policy for Green Belts; proposals for development on Local Green Spaces will not be supported unless they conform to with national policy guidelines.		
Policy AL15: Continue to Provide, Maintain and Improve Public	A. Proposals for new/expanded facilities should meet identified needs for leisure and social needs in the community that are not	No, Category A	No specific recommendations

© Place Services 2023

Policy Number	Policy Wording	Will Policy have Likely Significant Effects on the Habitats Sites?	Recommendations
Facilities for the Community	adequately provided for at present, where: a. Proposals are consistent with Green Belt policies. b. Proposals would not have significant harmful effects on the amenities of surrounding residents and the environment or heritage in the local area. B. Proposals that would result in the loss of community and leisure facilities will only be supported if alternative and equivalent facilities are provided of at least the same standard and which are equally accessible to the local community.		
Policy AL16: Allotments and Community Growing Spaces	A. Proposals that would result in the loss of all or part of existing allotment spaces will not be supported unless alternative and equivalent allotment space is provided. Alternative allotment provision proposed as part of such proposals will be required to meet the following criteria: a. the scale of the alternative site must be of at least an equivalent scale to the existing allotment provision; and b. the quality of the alternative site must be of at least an	No, Category A	No specific recommendations

© Place Services 2023

Policy Number	Policy Wording	Will Policy have Likely Significant Effects on the Habitats Sites?	Recommendations
	equivalent standard in terms of layout and soil character to the existing allotment provision; and c. the location of the alternative provision must be generally accessible by pedestrians and cyclists and within or adjacent to the defined settlement areas, as shown on the Policies Map in Chapter 15. B. The provision of allotment facilities and/or community growing spaces of a size appropriate to developments, particularly where these can be used to create attractive screening will be encouraged for places such as car parking areas.		
Policy AL17: Protection of Public Houses	A. Development proposals to change the use of public houses (Class sui generis) will only be supported if such a use is demonstrably unviable. In order to demonstrate this, evidence will be required to show that the existing public house has been actively marketed for a period of not less than 12 months at a reasonable market value for drinking establishment floorspace, that are comparable to the market values for drinking	No, Category A	No specific recommendations

© Place Services 2023

Policy Number	Policy Wording	Will Policy have Likely Significant Effects on the Habitats Sites?	Recommendations
	establishment floorspace in that general locality. B. Proposals for the expansion of existing public houses (Class sui generis) in the Parish to develop appropriate community-based activities, such as a restaurant will be supported, subject to complying with other policies within the plan and provided the scale, design and materials are in keeping with the local character and reinforce the local distinctiveness of the surroundings.		
Policy AL18: Maintaining Existing Sports and Recreation Facilities	A. In order to provide for the increased need for leisure provision to support the growing population of the Parish, development proposals that deliver the following shall be strongly supported: a. Provision of purpose-designed storage units to house sports equipment near to the pitches and facilities used by the various sports and leisure groups. b. Equipment that help the Parish Staff maintain the sports facilities to ensure the pitches and courts are kept in good condition throughout the	No, Category A	No specific recommendations

© Place Services 2023

Policy Number	Policy Wording	Will Policy have Likely Significant Effects on the Habitats Sites?	Recommendations
	year. c. Ensure that team changing rooms are provided and well-maintained, where required. d. Ensure appropriate seating is provided for spectators wishing to watch local team games.		
Policy AL19: Maintaining Existing Health Services	A. Proposals to enhance and facilitate the continued delivery of health facilities at key sites within the village of Abbots Langley and surrounding settlements, as shown on the Policies Map, will be supported. B. Proposals for the expansion, including relocation locally if required, of these services will be supported subject to the following criteria: a. the proposal would not have significant harmful impacts on the amenities of surrounding residents and the local environment. b. the proposal would not have unacceptable impacts on the local road network. c. the proposal is located within or immediately adjacent to the settlement boundary as	No, Category A	No specific recommendations

© Place Services 2023

Policy Number	Policy Wording	Will Policy have Likely Significant Effects on the Habitats Sites?	Recommendations
	defined in Policy AL1.		
Policy AL20: Education Provision	A. Proposals which provide, enhance and facilitate the continued delivery of educational provision on existing state education land, including associated playing fields, as defined on the Policies Map in Chapter 15, will be supported. B. Proposals for the expansion of existing schools in the Plan area will be supported where it can be demonstrated that: a. Expansion would not exacerbate existing access related or traffic circulation problems, or that suitable mitigation measures are being brought forward as part of the proposal. b. The development would not result in a significant loss of amenity to local residents or other adjacent users; and c. The development does not conflict with other Plan policies or proposals. C. Where expansion of an existing school is not possible, and/or a proposal for a new school is brought forward, the proposal will be supported where it can be demonstrated	No, Category A	No specific recommendations

© Place Services 2023

Policy Number	Policy Wording	Will Policy have Likely Significant Effects on the Habitats Sites?	Recommendations
	that: a. The development would be safely accessible by pedestrians and cyclists and is well related to bus routes and/or there is adequate provision for waiting school buses to park. b. The development has appropriate vehicular access and does not adversely impact upon traffic circulation. c. The development would not result in a significant loss of amenity to local residents or other adjacent uses. d. The development does not conflict with other Plan policies or proposals.		
Policy AL21: Footpaths, Cycle Paths and Bridleways	A. To ensure that residents can access social, community, public transport, schools, retail and other important facilities both within Abbots Langley and in neighbouring settlements, new developments should ensure safe pedestrian, and where feasible cycle, access to link up with the existing footpath and cycleway network, as defined in Figure 20 and Figure 21. B. Development proposals to	No, Category A	No specific recommendations

© Place Services 2023

Policy Number	Policy Wording	Will Policy have Likely Significant Effects on the Habitats Sites?	Recommendations
	improve cycling and walking will be supported, including new linkages as shown in Figure 19. In particular, provision of cycle and pedestrian routes that are physically separated from vehicular traffic and from one another will be strongly supported. Such routes should also incorporate access by disabled users and users of mobility scooters. C. The network of ancient lanes across the Abbots Langley as shown in Figure 18 will be protected and enhanced. Development proposals that would have an unacceptable detrimental impact on the existing historic network will not be supported. D. Proposals to maintain and improve access by walking and cycling throughout the Parish, particularly in the parks and open countryside, should be encouraged to support safe, healthy exercise for all ages.		
Policy AL22: Bus Services and Community Transport	Contributions from new major development in the Parish will be used to provide additional community bus services or, where appropriate, improvements to the public bus service by way of	No, Category A	No specific recommendations

© Place Services 2023

Policy Number	Policy Wording	Will Policy have Likely Significant Effects on the Habitats Sites?	Recommendations
	increased services and improvements to public transport infrastructure. These contributions will be collected through Section 106 Agreements or the Community Infrastructure Levy.		
Policy AL23: Public Car Parking	A. Development proposals that would result in an unacceptable loss of existing publicly available off-street car parking spaces will not be supported. B. Proposals that enable the provision of additional, publicly accessible off-road car parking spaces, to alleviate parking congestion near to businesses, schools and at transport hubs, will be supported. C. Alongside any new public car parking provision, the following facilities will be strongly supported as part of that provision: a. dedicated bicycle parking facilities, preferably with e-bike charging points, covered and secure; and b. future-proofed electric vehicle charging points.	No, Category A	No specific recommendations

© Place Services 2023

4.5.1 Recommendations

There is only a single recommendation for the policies in this Neighbourhood Plan as they have all been assigned to Category A except Policy AL9: Supporting Recreation and Sustainable Tourism. There will therefore be no need for any residential development subsequently coming forward under this Plan to be subject to a project level HRA. As such there is no requirement for this Plan to progress to Appropriate Assessment.

As the parish of Abbots Langley does not allocate any land, there are no predicted effects from the Plan alone and no residual effects to consider in combination with other plans and projects.

There is therefore no need to identify any relevant plans or projects likely to result in a significant effect on Habitats sites.

In the context of this HRA, there are no relevant plans or projects to be considered in combination with Abbots Langley Neighbourhood Plan.

© Place Services 2023

5. Conclusions

5.1 Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)

The Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared for town and country planning purposes and sets a framework for future development consent. The policies of the Neighbourhood Plan can be considered to determine the use of small areas at local level commensurate with their status in determining local planning applications.

Planning Practice Guidance on SEA of Neighbourhood Plans indicates that a strategic environmental assessment may be required, for example, where a neighbourhood plan allocates sites for development; the neighbourhood area contains sensitive natural or heritage assets that may be affected by the proposals in the plan; or the neighbourhood plan is likely to have significant environmental effects that have not already been considered and dealt with through a sustainability appraisal of the Local Plan.

The Plan does not allocate any land for development purposes and seeks to strengthen the protection and enhancement of assets at the local level and in a local context.

In consideration of the findings of this Screening Report, the Abbots Langley Neighbourhood Plan can be **screened out** for its requirement of Strategic Environmental Assessment in line with the requirements of Directive 2001/42/EC.

5.2 Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA)

Subject to Natural England's review, this HRA Screening Report indicates that without mitigation embedded, the Abbots Langley Neighbourhood Plan is not predicted to have Likely Significant Effect on the designated features of a Habitats site, either alone or in combination with other plans and projects. The requirement for the Plan to undertake further assessment under the Conservation of Habitats and Regulations 2017 (as amended) is therefore **screened out**.

© Place Services 2023

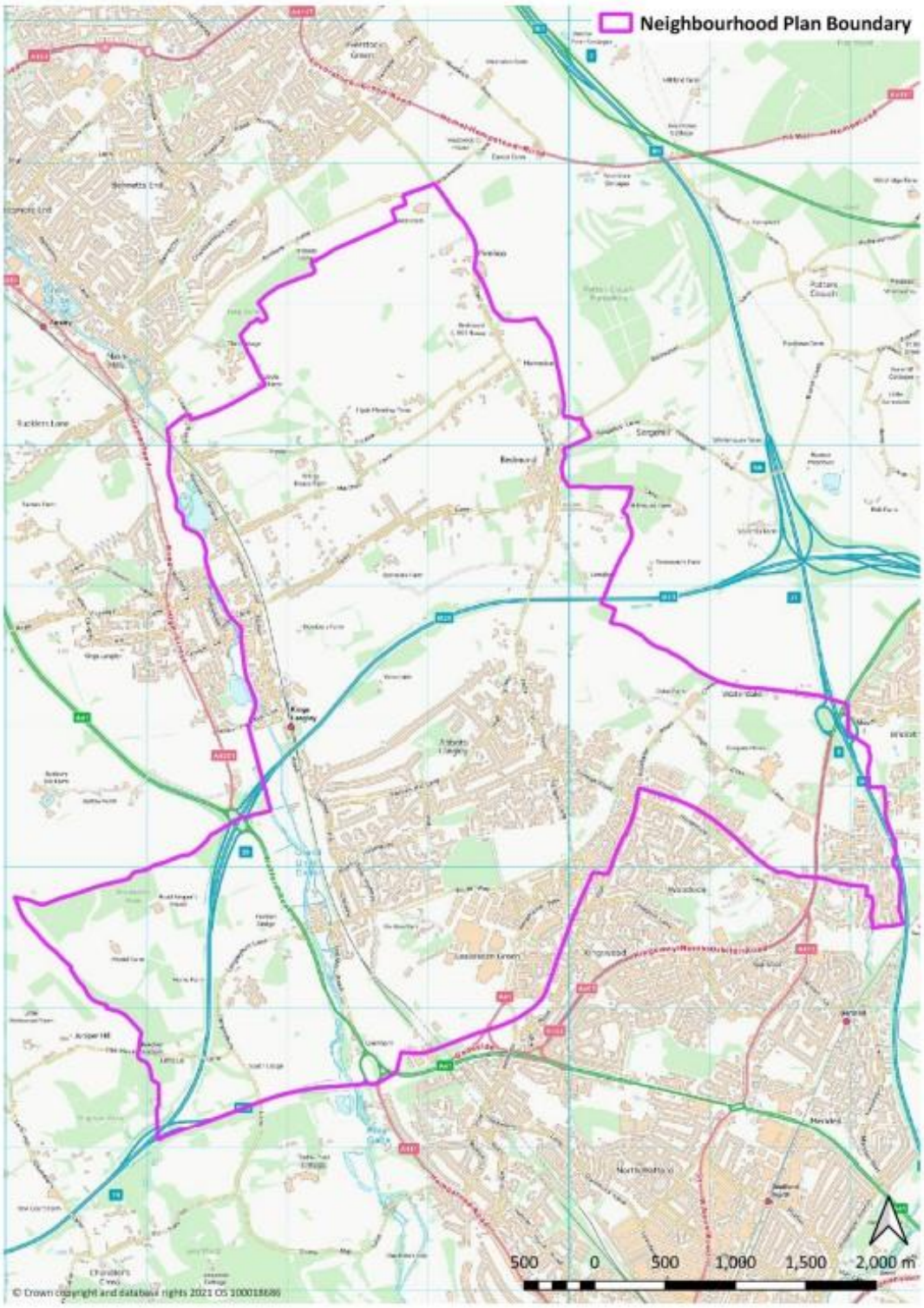
6. References

- Abbots Langley Neighbourhood Plan (December 2022)
- Burnham Beeches Special Area of Conservation Strategic Access Management and Monitoring Strategy SPD (Buckinghamshire Council, November 2020)
- Footprint Ecology (Visitor survey, recreation impact assessment and mitigation requirements for the Chilterns Beechwoods SAC and the Dacorum Local Plan. by Footprint Ecology for Dacorum Borough Council.
- Panter, C., Liley, D., Lake, S., Saunders, P., & Caals, Z. (2022). Visitor survey, recreation impact assessment and mitigation requirements for the Chilterns Beechwoods SAC and the Dacorum Local Plan. Report by Footprint Ecology for Dacorum Borough Council
- Three Rivers District Council DPD (adopted 2011)
- Tydlesley, D., and Chapman, C., (2013) The Habitats Regulations Assessment Handbook, (April 2022) edition UK: DTA Publications Limited

© Place Services 2023

Appendix 1

The Abbots Langley Neighbourhood Plan area

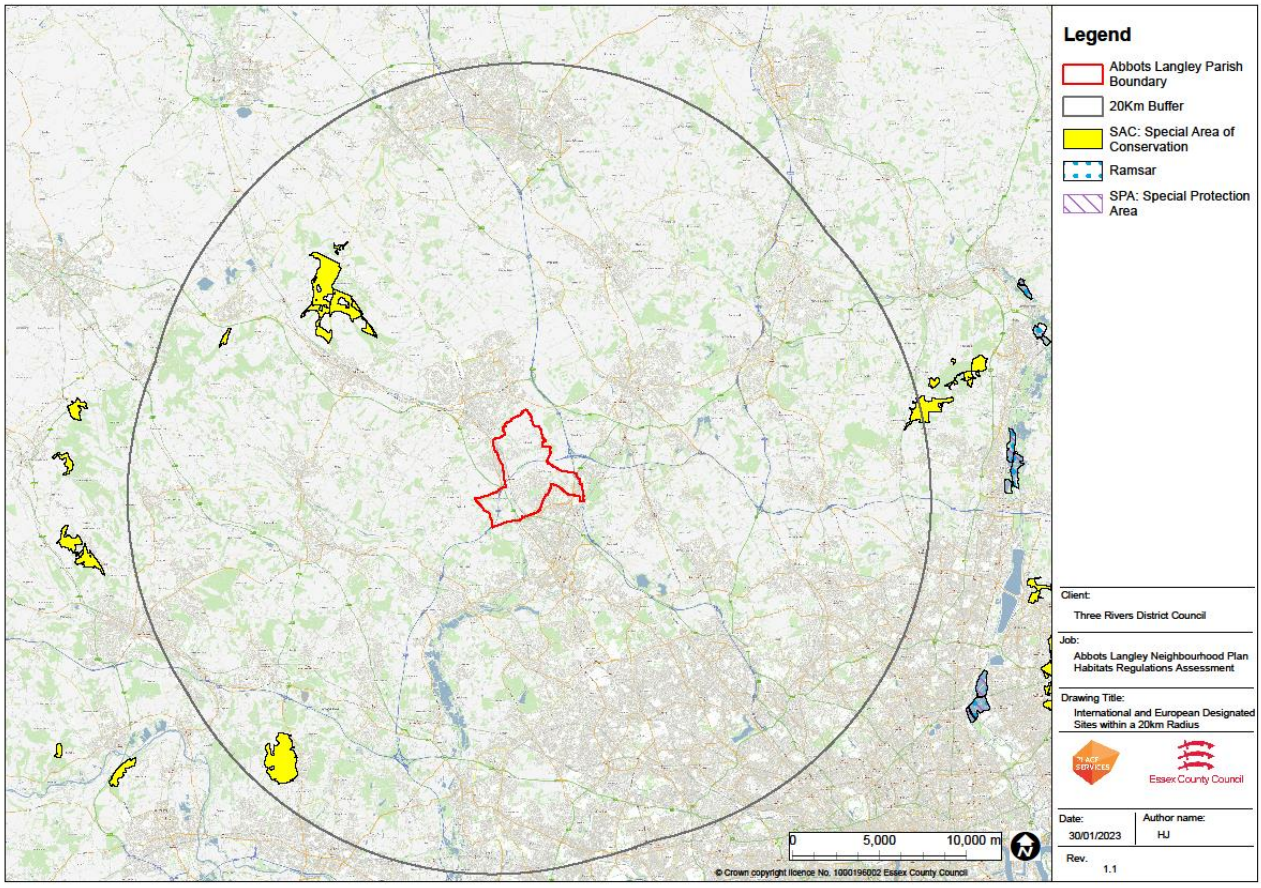


Source: Abbots Langley Neighbourhood Plan

© Place Services 2023

Appendix 2

Abbots Langley Neighbourhood Plan area & Locations of Habitats Sites within 20 km



Source: Place Services, 2023

Place Services

County Hall, Essex CM1 1QH

T: +44 (0)3330 136 844

E: enquiries@placeservices.co.uk

www.placeservices.co.uk

@PlaceServices

Essex County Council

ABBOTS LANGLEY PARISH COUNCIL

ABBOTS LANGLEY NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN 2025 TO 2041

Consultation Statement to accompany the Submission Version Abbots Langley Parish Neighbourhood Plan

May 2025

Contents

1 Introduction 3
2 Summary of engagement and consultation activities, issues and outcomes 4
Stage I: Engaging on the key issues and opportunities for Abbots Langley 5
Stage II: Preparing the Pre-Submission Version Neighbourhood Plan 8
Stage III: Consulting on the Pre-Submission Version Neighbourhood Plan 13
Stage IV: Finalising the Submission Neighbourhood Plan 16
3 Conclusion 17
Appendix A: List of those consulted at Regulation 14 (Pre-Submission stage) 18
Appendix B: Summary of comments received at Pre-Submission Regulation 14 consultation and response from the Steering 21

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1. The policies contained in the Abbots Langley Neighbourhood Plan (ALNP) have been developed following extensive interaction and consultation with the local community.

1.2. This Consultation Statement sets out how the ALNP has been developed and contains, in accordance with Regulation 14 of Neighbourhood Development Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended):

- details of the persons and bodies who were consulted about the proposed neighbourhood development plan;
- details as to how they were consulted;
- a summary of the main issues and concerns raised by the persons consulted; and
- how these issues and concerns have been considered and, where relevant, addressed in the proposed Neighbourhood Plan.

The Abbots Langley Parish Neighbourhood Plan Steering Committee

1.3. Abbots Langley Parish Council is the qualifying body officially responsible for preparing the Neighbourhood Plan. A Steering Committee, comprising local councillors and volunteers from the community, was set up to lead on the development of the ALNP with each member take the lead on a particular topic. Additional support was provided by other members of the community during the course of the Plan.

Information about the Neighbourhood Plan process

1.4. An area of the Abbots Langley Parish Council website is dedicated to the Abbots Langley Neighbourhood Plan. All the relevant Submission Version documents can be found here.

1.5. There are also the following:

- Copy of Terms of Reference for the Steering Group
- Archive of meeting notes (scroll to the bottom)
- Neighbourhood Plan Bi-Monthly Progress Reports

1.6. The 53 Bi-monthly Progress Reports for the ALNP Steering Group were published on the Abbots Langley website throughout the work programme (2016 to 2025). They include information about all the consultations that took place throughout the work programme. The Reports were on the agenda of the Bi-monthly Parish Council meetings for discussion, and these meetings were open for the public to attend.

2 SUMMARY OF ENGAGEMENT AND CONSULTATION ACTIVITIES, ISSUES AND OUTCOMES

2.1. A high-level summary of the steps involved in development the ALNP is shown in *Table 1*:

Table 1: High level summary of the key milestones

Date	Milestone	Key activity
2014	Parish Council decides to prepare a Neighbourhood Plan	• Terms of Reference prepared • Parish designated
2015	Hiatus in activity	
2016 to 2017	Initial community engagement to gather evidence on each topic Evidence base constructed Continued engagement and evidence collation	• Steering Group established • Contact made with TRDC for guidance and information • NDP publicly launched • Initial engagement including website, public exhibitions and presentations • Database of business and community group created • Database of public buildings compiled • Parish Profile assembled • Leaflet to all households • Information included in the My Abbots newsletter • Public exhibitions • Stakeholder meetings • Surveys • Aerial photos
2018	Key themes, vision and objectives identified	• Commonplace feedback analysed to inform vision and objectives and topic areas • AECOM commissioned to undertake Local Housing Needs Assessment
2019 to 2020	Informal draft Plan written	• Informal engagement
2021	Public Consultation on the informal Draft Plan	• AECOM commissioned to provide Building Design Guidelines and evaluation of valued features of each settlement in the parish. • Focus Groups and exhibitions • SEA and HRA Screening prepared
2022	Village Centre Masterplan finalised	• Village Centre masterplan prepared in consultation with the community
2023 to 2025/26	Regulation 14 Consultation Regulation 16 consultation Examination Referendum	• Regulation 14 Plan • Plan finalised and submitted to TRDC • Plan 'made'

2.2. The sections below describe, in fuller detail, the engagement and consultation process which took place during the Plan preparation. This is divided into three stages:

Stage I: Engaging on the key issues and opportunities for Abbots Langley

Stage II: Preparing the Pre-Submission Version Neighbourhood Plan

Stage III: Consulting on the Pre-Submission Version Neighbourhood Plan

Stage IV: Finalising the Submission Neighbourhood Plan

Stage I: Engaging on the key issues and opportunities for Abbots Langley

2.3. In May 2014 Abbots Langley Parish Council (ALPC) decided to embark on the process to develop a Neighbourhood Plan, under Part 2 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012. The Parish Council decided the designated area for the plan should coincide with the whole of the civil parish of Abbots Langley. Following public consultation in 2014, Three Rivers District Council (TRDC), as the local Planning Authority, approved this choice of area.

2.4. It was not until early 2016 that the a Steering Group was established, a twelve-person team comprising local residents and Parish Councillors to coordinate the work programme, with a Terms of Reference developed. The ALPC set up an area dedicated to the Neighbourhood Plan on the Parish Council website and this would ultimately be used to contain links to all archive documents, minutes, updates and other useful reports. Early contact was also made with TRDC to talk through the neighbourhood plan process.

2.5. The Steering Group put together plans for engaging the local community, bearing in mind that the Abbots Langley Parish consists of at least 15 distinct communities, not all of which orientate towards the village of Abbots Langley. It would be important to ensure that all communities were able to input. A full detail of the work undertaken is provided in the Neighbourhood Plan Progress Reports. This is summarised below:

2016 Work:

- **Neighbourhood Plan website**: A dedicated area of the ALPC website was established.
- **Social media**: A Facebook page for the ALNP was set up.
- **Interactive website:** May 2016, a 'Commonplace' web site was set up, allowing residents, local businesses and local organisations to provide their views about the parish, including key issues, on an interactive mapping web site, which the 'Commonplace' organisation helped to manage and analyse.
- **Information leaflet:** A leaflet was designed with 12,000 copies printed and distributed across the Parish over the next few months the next four months, i.e. 8,500 households, 500 businesses and possibly 100 organisations. The leaflet explained the ALNP process and how residents, organisations and businesses in the Parish could participate, including via the interactive website and social media, via post and at local events and meetings.

Two sides of the A5 four-page printed leaflet distributed to all households in the Parish, May 2016

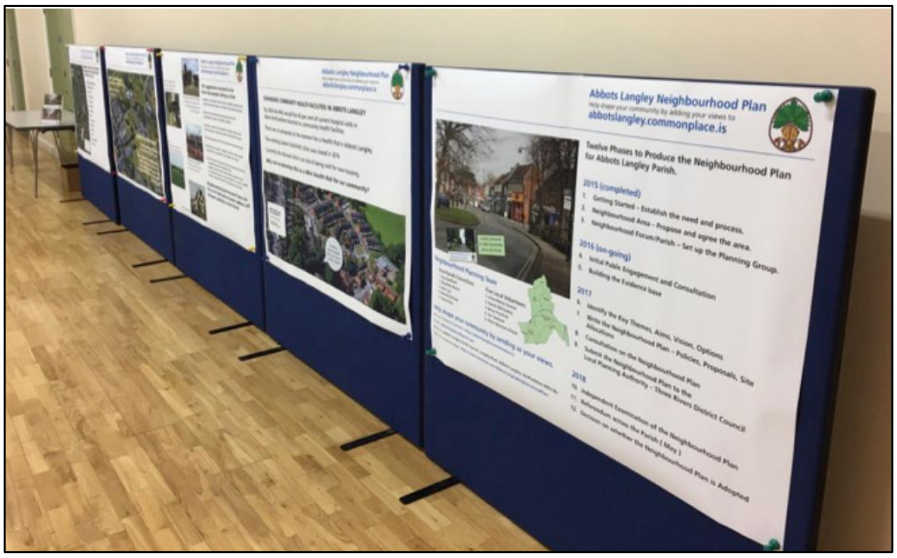
- **Aerial photography**: This was undertaken for the whole Parish for use in the public engagement and the ALNP itself.
- **Local events**: The Steering Group had a presence (e.g. stall) at local events including the Abbots Langley Carnival (June 2016), the Bedmond Village Summer Fair (July 2016).
- **Area meetings**: A presentation was given to the Three Rivers Abbots Langley Forum in Bedmond (July 2026). The Steering Group also met with Parish Councillors to educate them about the project and encourage them to speak about it when meeting local residents.
- **Local Businesses:** A database of local businesses (approx. 400) was established to gather information from the business community. Dialogue with the Economic and Sustainable Development team at TRDC was helpful in starting to build an evidence base for this topic area.
- **Parish Profile:** A parish profile was developed using Census data (updated following the 2021 census) to get an understanding of local demographics.
- **Magazine articles:** Regular articles were published in My Abbots, a magazine distributed to about 75% of households in the Parish. Inserts were enclosed at strategic times, for instance to promote the interactive website.

2017 work:

- **Identifying plots of land (and ownership/ key uses) across the Parish**: All the key plots of land were identified across the Parish using the 'Land Insight' software (https://land.tech/products/landinsight) This gave access to maps showing land ownership details of each plot and the plot's history of planning applications.

- This was undertaken in early 2017, to provide information to feed into the responses to the emerging Local Plan and also to consider potential future sites, including aspirational sites, within the ALNP.
- **Healthcheck of the findings to date**: A review of the feedback to date was undertaken by an external planning consultant in order to identify the main themes emerging, potential policy options to address these, and the sort of evidence that would be required to underpin them.
- **Annual Parish Meeting 2017:** A Public Exhibition of the Main Themes of the Neighbourhood Plan was prepared for the Annual Parish meeting on 1st March 2017. A formal 'Question and Answer' session was provided during the Parish Council AGM as well as informal talks with members of the public before and after the meeting.

Public Exhibition of the Main Themes of the Neighbourhood Plan



- **NHS Consultation Meetings**: The Steering Group attended three meetings to discuss emerging plans for local health and how this might synchronise with the emerging ALNP.
- **Local History Society and Garden Society**: Members were invited to hear about progress to date, share their views on Parish priorities and discuss how the ALNP process might support these.
- **Residents Groups**: Groups were invited to meet with the Steering Group to discuss issues facing them and receive information about the emerging ALNP.
- **Housing Needs Assessment for Abbots Langley**: The group commissioned the preparation of this report, to be funded using the Locality Technical Support programme. There was little appetite from the community to allocate sites for homes, largely as this was being pursued via the emerging Local Plan Review process. In addition, many potential sites that might come forward for consideration were in Green Belt locations, and the adopted Local Plan does not provide the strategic policy to enable the ALNP to remove sites and allocate them. The HNA was one way to understand the sorts of homes (size, mix, affordability) that may be required locally over the Plan period, so that the ALNP could underpin this in a policy. The final report was published in December 2017. An update has not been undertaken to date, but this is included in

the Submission Version ALNP as an action for the Parish Council. In the meant time, the findings largely chime with those at the more strategic level.

- **Meetings with TRDC**: to discuss the emerging Local Plan Review and also aspirations for sites in the neighbourhood area.
- **Website improvements:** These were undertaken to ensure that all material relating to the plan was stored and recorded appropriately.

Stage II: Preparing the Pre-Submission Version Neighbourhood Plan

2018 to 2019 work:

- **Local Plan Input and Aspirational Sites:** Much effort was put into exploring how land submitted to the Local Plan Review might most usefully be developed locally. This slowed the work on the ALNP down somewhat, however was important due to the need to input into the strategic document. Whilst this was happening, the Steering Group was actively developing policy options, taking on board feedback gained from the community engagement to date.

  As sites were not being allocated in the ALNP, such sites would be included as Aspirational Sites. Work would be reflected in the ALNP and also directed to TRDC to influence their Local Plan work.

- **Bedmond Aspirations:** Residents in Bedmond had taken a particular interest in the ALNP project and designed a survey to go to their residents. This built on the overall findings to date and asked specific questions about issues in Bedmond, such as potential local green spaces, viewpoints, community facilities etc. It was considered that if successful, and if there was appetite from other areas, this could be rolled out further. Their work is recorded in Appendix H of the ALNP.
- **Meeting with Herts Growth at Hertfordshire CC**: This was to discuss their strategic work and consider how this might be reflected / influenced in the ALNP, for instance in relation to education, transport and land use. It was understood that some of these issues fell outside the scope of the ALNP, but nevertheless were important to discuss. They might also help to inform ALPC's response to TRDC consultations on the Local Plan Review.

2020 to 2021 work:

2.6. Face-to-face engagement on the project slowed down at this point, largely due to the impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic. Nevertheless, the feedback gathered to date enabled work to continue remotely.

- **Informal Draft Plan prepared:** Based on the feedback to date, and while engagement was less feasible, the Steering Group developed a draft vision and objectives for the ALNP alongside policies to deliver this. This feedback included the analysis of the 300+ comments received from the ALNP Commonplace site. See: This first informal draft of the ALNP was shared with local councillors and others for comment. The vision and objectives are shown below.

Draft Vision, 2021

In 2036, Abbots Langley is a predominantly semi-rural parish, its main settlements surrounded by Green Belt. Abbots Langley Village itself is a thriving destination, capitalising on increasing numbers of visitors to the parish and providing a range of shopping and eating opportunities as well as leisure activities. The historic core remains, and new developments reflect the local character of the area to maintain the village feel with sufficient local facilities to meet the primary retail, healthcare, child education and leisure/sport activities for local residents.

Visitors are attracted by the continued presence of the Warner Bros. Studios, which has been expanded to provide additional facilities and opportunities for local employment. Additionally, the regeneration along the Grand Union Canal has encourage more canal traffic, and increased footfall in the village centre.

The development of smaller and more affordable properties, in-keeping with the local area, has enabled first time buyers and new families to move into the area, bringing renewed energy to the area and a perpetuation of local events and activities. Older people in the area have the opportunity to downsize to more manageable properties, freeing up homes for growing families. These families are attracted to the area because of the excellent schools, which have expanded to meet the local need and are more accessible with improved links east-west through the parish.

New homes have been designed sustainably to reduce their impact on the environment. Opportunities to enable people to work from home, should they wish, combined with the retention of a series of global businesses, has meant that fewer people are commuting out as jobs and training are available locally. Those that are commuting find it easier to get to Kings Langley station as the pedestrian and cycle access has been improved. Public transport services should be well maintained particularly local train services at Kings Langley Station.

The growing community's needs are well-met with an expanded medical centre as a District Health Hub, new playgrounds and leisure facilities and the ongoing resource offered by the Henderson Hub. The green spaces across the parish, well-linked by footpaths and cyclepaths, enable locals to enjoy the countryside on their doorstep. Equally these areas provide a haven for wildlife and native plants, increasing local biodiversity.

The parish has been able to install additional electric vehicle charging points at key locations and at new developments. A local car sharing scheme/ on-demand public transport /shared taxis services have reduced the need for multiple car-owning households and on-street residential parking pressures. This, in combination with the planting of trees and vegetation along the main routes, has helped to reduce the air and noise pollution. Houses have been well insulated and implemented alternative heating systems with less dependence on fossil fuels.

The community is more balanced in the age groups living here.

Draft Objectives, 2021

- **OBJECTIVE 1:** Contribute to both the local housing needs of the parish while helping to deliver the district-wide housing requirement, including more affordable housing (of all types) as well as housing that addresses the needs of residents of all ages.
- **OBJECTIVE 2**: Ensure new development reflects the high quality local context in terms of building style and materials and is sensitively designed to be attractive, to minimise flood risk, mitigate climate change, promote biodiversity and reduce our carbon footprint.
- **OBJECTIVE 3:** Strengthen, support and promote local economic activity in all retail, industrial, commercial and professional activities and maximise opportunities for tourism including the regeneration of the Grand Union Canal.
- **OBJECTIVE 4:** Protect both historic and the environmental assets of the parish, preserving the green setting of the settlements and the individual green spaces within them, ensuring that they are linked to create wildlife corridors. Maintain as much as possible, the five distinctive statutory purposes of Green Belt policies in the Parish.
- **OBJECTIVE 5**: Ensure that the provision of local infrastructure and facilities including expanded primary health care facilities and sufficient school places to address the needs of existing and future residents.
- **OBJECTIVE 6**: Improve sustainable transport and movement across the parish, in particular through electric vehicle modes, on-demand services and public transport, specifically ensuring there is a safe environment for pedestrians and cyclists as well as motorists.
- **OBJECTIVE 7:** Explore the potential for viable renewable energy projects locally, serving and ideally owned by the local community.
- **OBJECTIVE 8**: Encourage the production of local food including local farms, horticulture, community projects and private gardens/allotments.

- **Design Guidance and Codes**: One of the emerging policy areas related to design of development. Using the Locality Technical Support programme, consultants, AECOM, were engaged to prepare Design Guidance, which would underpin a number of policies in the plan. Three virtual tours of the parish were conducted, using GoogleEarth. Councillors were tasked to try and recruit interested residents from each of the individual communities to feed into the process.
- **Informal plan engagement:** In July 2021, an eight-page Summary Leaflet was published to introduce the proposed policies of the Informal Draft Plan for residents and businesses and to invite comments. It was uploaded to the website and delivered to all households.
- **Virtual Focus Groups**: These were set up with those expressing an interest, to discuss the policy areas proposed and to gather specific feedback to underpin emerging policies. This included, for instance exploring how walking and cycling (to enable walkable neighbourhoods) could be promoted. It proved difficult to recruit resident input from all areas, despite various publicity drives, including leaflets to households and social media.

- **Public exhibitions:** During the summer of 2021, two Public Exhibitions of the Neighbourhood Plan took place. These were promoted in an article written for the July edition of Abbots News and on local Facebook sites including Abbots Matters. The first exhibition was held at the Henderson Hub from 12 July to 13 August. The second exhibition was held at the Village Hall in Bedmond on selected days in the month of August. A 'Neighbourhood Plan' stand was arranged for the Autumn Fest event in School Mead on Saturday 18 September. Copies of the ten exhibits used at the exhibitions were published on the Parish website.

2022 to 2023 Work:

- **Village Centre Masterplan**: In line with one of the Aspirational Projects identified in the emerging ALNP, funding was secured from Locality to enable a Village Centre Masterplan to be prepared for Abbots Langley. The consultants conducted to site visits, held Discussion Groups with residents and also engaged with shopkeepers in the village centre.
- **Public Workshops**: Two Public Workshops were held at the Manor House in May and June 2022 focusing on aspirations for the Village Centre. These were well attended with forty-two people attending on the Monday evening and about 50 people on the Wednesday evening. Further dialogue took place on the Abbots Matters Facebook Group. Comments from the Workshop were recorded, published online and share with the Masterplanners.

Image from the Public Workshops

- **Public Exhibition**: An exhibition of the work on the Abbots Langley Neighbourhood Plan was on show at the Autumn Fest in September 2022, with opportunities to review the emerging Village Centre Masterplan. The exhibition material included a large-scale aerial photo of the Abbots Langley Parish to assist residents identify and discuss places in the parish with the neighbourhood planning team members.
- **Neighbourhood Plan updated**: The informal draft document was further updated in late 2022 and issued to both the Parish Councillors for comment and also to TRDC, who provided informal feedback. This version of the document was used by TRDC to determine the need for a Strategic Environmental Assessment/ Habitats Regulations Assessment. The Screening Report, published in February 2023, confirmed that neither would be required.
- **Council elections**: Local council elections delayed work on the ALNP, with councillors engaged for comments on the latest informal draft version.

Large-scale map aerial photo used at the public exhibition

2024 work:

- **Updates to the informal ALNP:** A meeting of Parish Councillors in January 2024 identified a series of areas to be updated in the informal draft, including where additional evidence would be needed. A process of how to gather such information was agreed and the following months were spent gathering this.

Key tasks to complete the informal draft ALNP

A Briefing Note was prepared listing the sections to be reviewed. The main points for updating were listed as follows:

- Update the ALNP with 2021 local census data throughout the report.
- Update the property prices/ rental information
- Focus any development on brownfield areas first and then the 'low to moderate harm' greenbelt areas
- Update to reflect TRDC housing needs assessment (if Abbots Langley Parish data can be abstracted from the District estimates.)
- Ensure, in the Design Guide, that new houses are orientated to face the road.
- Garages should not be included as part of the parking allocation for new build properties.
- Update the proposals for the redevelopment of Breakspeare School site.
- Update the list on Locally Significant Views, Local Green Spaces and protecting a 'green ring around the Parish.'
- Consider possible locations for a new local primary school and local secondary school.

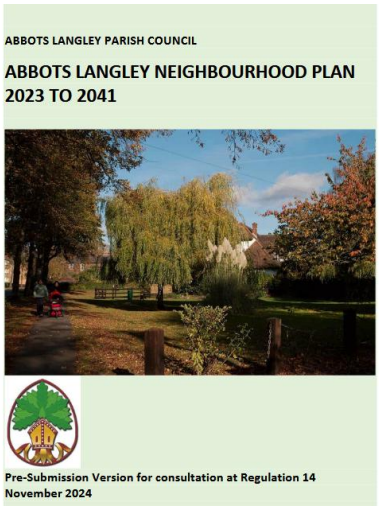
2.7. The Pre-Submission Draft Plan was finalised during Autumn 2024. The documents were approved at the Parish Council meeting on 20 November 2024.

Stage III: Consulting on the Pre-Submission Version Neighbourhood Plan

2.8. The Pre-Submission (Regulation 14) consultation took place between Monday 9 December 2024 and end January 2025. It was publicised in the following ways:

- The Parish Council website was updated showing the Plan itself, the Housing Needs Assessment, the Design Guidance, the SEA/HRA Screening Determination Statements and links to other supporting evidence.
- Hard copies of plan were made available to be viewed by individuals wishing to read a hard copy.

The Pre-Submission Neighbourhood Plan



- A Feedback Survey was provided, both online and paper copy, allowing residents to provide feedback on the individual policies, the design guidance and any other aspects they wished to comment. Paper copies could be returned to various locations around the Parish.
- The Chair of the ALNP Steering Group gave a short presentation at the TRDC Local Forum in Abbots Langley on 3 December 2024 (just prior to the official consultation launch) and answered questions. The talk was reported on Abbots Matter social media to encourage public participation in the consultation process.
- An updated four-page summary of the ALNP was prepared.
- An article on the ALNP was published in three magazines produced by My Local News, namely, 'My Abbots', 'My Kings' and 'My Garston.' The magazines collectively are sent to all households in the parish. Example 1 - My Local News; Example 2 – My Local News.
- Regular social media updates were posted on local Facebook pages
- An email (and later reminder emails) was sent to the ALNP residents mailing list, the local business mailing list and other interested parties.
- Statutory consultees were written to directly, informed by a list of contacts provided by TRDC.
- The owners of the proposed Local Green Spaces were written to.

2.9. A list of the consultees contacted is contained in Appendix A and responses were received from the following:

- Three Rivers District Council
- Hertfordshire County Council (HCC)
- Hertfordshire County Council Property Planning
- Pegasus Group on behalf of Greystoke Land Ltd.
- Historic England
- Pegasus Group for Taylor Wimpey Land at Woodside Road
- National Grid
- Cllr Sara Bedford
- National Highways
- Sport England
- Abbots Youth Football Club
- Nash Mills Parish Council
- Environment Agency

2.10. Only one direct response was recorded from the public survey. It was considered that there had been so much engagement during the development of the Plan, that residents lacked motivation to respond at this stage.

2.11. Representations received at the Pre-Submission Consultation were recorded by topic/policy and carefully considered by Steering Committee members. A summary of the comments and responses from the Steering Group, are set out in Appendix B. Full copies of the responses are available on the neighbourhood plan website. The following paragraphs provide a summary, by topic area, of the comments received during this process and how these were integrated into the Submission Version ALNP.

2.12. **General comments**: Overall, the comments were very supportive of the Plan and its scope. A number of factual corrections were submitted by some consultees, which have been addressed. Conformity references have been updated to align to the National Planning Policy Framework updated in December 2024. The Appendices have been slightly reorganised to make them easier to read.

2.13. Some respondents suggested that work be paused until the adoption of the Emerging Local Plan, however it was considered that there was no firm timeline for this and that the ALNP should continue. Legislation allows for a neighbourhood plan to be made in advance of a new local plan, and the ALNP was considered the emerging local plan accordingly.

2.14. The vision and objectives, which had slightly evolved since the informal draft, were supported.

2.15. The ALNP has been reviewed to ensure that it meets accessibility requirements.

2.16. **Spatial Strategy and housing**: Policy AL1 was amended to reflect comments from TRDC, mainly relating to terminology. HCC recommended including a clause about avoiding flood risk but it was felt that this is already adequately covered in strategic policy. Reference to the national changes to Green Belt policy have been included, as well as reference to Grey Belt. Policy AL2 continues to reference First Homes but has been amended to reflect the fact that 25% of affordable homes are no longer required to be delivered as such. Reference to the Abbots Langley HNA have been retained, but given that it now dates to 2017, reference is also made to the TRDC housing needs documents, including the update to their own HNA. It is considered that the two largely align.

2.17. **Character, heritage and design**: Historic England welcomed the inclusion throughout the plan of the important historic environment of Abbots Langley. Policies AL3 and AL4 have been amended slightly to correct references to strategic documents (e.g. the TRDC parking policy). These policies, and Policy AL5, were very much supported, with some minor drafting amendments, largely on the advice of TRDC to align with their emerging Local Plan and to reference Historic England guidance in relation to low carbon adaptations.

2.18. Policy AL6 has been amended slightly for clarity purposes. Reference to the Local List held by TRDC is made.

2.19. **Local Economy:** The policies in this section were largely supported with some drafting amendments made for clarity purposes.

2.20. **Environment and Green Space:** Policy AL10 was largely supported. Policy AL11 has been amended to remove duplication with strategic policy, including national policy relating to biodiversity net gain. The supporting text has been amended to include reference to potential habitat bank areas locally. Policy AL12 identifies locally important views in the parish. Further text has been added to the Appendix to explain how they were identified. In terms of Local Green Space (Policy AL13), TRDC commented on specific spaces and the supporting evidence for these have been amended as necessary. All Local Green Space owners were written to and no specific comments, beyond those received by TRDC were submitted.

2.21. **Locally community:** Abbots Youth commented on their desire to see additional sports facilities locally, including football. A non-policy action has been added for the PC to liaise with local sports organisations and TRDC in relation to the emerging Local Plan and potential site allocations, which could deliver this sort of facility / use of developer contributions. AL15 (Allotments and Community Growing Spaces) has been further justified with inclusion of current demand figures in the supporting text. On Policy AL18, the supporting text has been amended to reflect the current educational position on the advice of HCC.

2.22. **Transport and Movement**: The two policies in this section were supported. Additional detail has been added in relation to the definition of ‘ancient lanes’ in association with Policy AL19. In addition, Clause E of that policy has been amended to reflect advice from TRDC in relation to developer contributions. HCC suggested a number of amendments to add strength to the policy, and these have been incorporated.

2.23. The policy in this section was supported with few direct comments.

Stage IV: Finalising the Submission Neighbourhood Plan

2.24. Following the changes made to the ALNP as a result of the Regulation 14 consultation, the Submission Version was formally submitted to TRDC who, once satisfied that the correct set of documents have been received, will undertake the Regulation 16 consultation. The document will then proceed to Examination and, assuming a favourable outcome, to referendum.

3 CONCLUSION

3.1. The Steering Committee has undertaken a very thorough engagement programme in order to develop the Abbots Langley Neighbourhood Plan. It has set out a comprehensive vision and objectives and guiding principles. In developing the policies to achieve the vision and objectives, the Committee has actively engaged with a wide range of stakeholders and the Plan has evolved accordingly.

3.2. Feedback from the Regulation 14 consultation has enabled the Plan to be shaped into its final version, to submit to TRDC

3.3. This report fulfils the requirements for the Consultation Statement, set out in Regulation 15(2) of the Neighbourhood Development Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended).

3.4. Gratitude is extended to everybody who has contributed to the Plan's development, either as a valued member of the Steering Committee or as someone who has taken the time to contribute their views and opinions. This has been invaluable in helping to shape the scope and content of the Abbots Langley Neighbourhood Plan.

APPENDIX A: LIST OF THOSE CONSULTED AT REGULATION 14 (PRE-SUBMISSION STAGE)

In addition to residents, the following organisations were contacted by the Parish Council:

Three Rivers District Council
Herts Ecology
HCC Growth and Infrastructure Unit
Hertfordshire Highways
Buckinghamshire Council
Dacorum Borough Council
Watford Borough Council
Nash Mills PC
St Michael PC
St Stephen PC
Hertsmere Meriden CP
Sarratt PC
Abbots Langley Parish Council
Batchworth Community Council
Bovingdon Parish Council
Chenies Parish Council
Chipperfield Parish Council
Chorleywood Parish Council
Croxley Green Parish Council
Flaunden Parish Council
Kings Langley Parish Council
Watford Rural Parish Council
Hertfordshire Association of Town and Parish Councils
Hertfordshire Fire and Rescue
Marine Management Organisation
Natural England
The Office of Rail and Road
Historic England
Transport for London
Herts Valley Clinical Commissioning Group
Regulator of Social Housing
Thrive Homes
The Environment Agency
Highways England
Mobile UK
National Grid
Community Development Action Hertfordshire
The Open Spaces Society

Sport England
Affinity Water
Hertfordshire Constabulary
Cadent Gas
Thames Water
Network Rail
West Herts Hospital NHS Trust
British Telecom
British Gas
EDF Energy
Arqiva
Hutchinson 3G UK Ltd
O2 (UK) Ltd
EE
Homes England
Mind Hertfordshire Network
Three Rivers Chamber of Trade & Commerce
Hertfordshire Fire and Rescue
Watford and Three Rivers Trust
Age UK Hertfordshire
Watford and West Herts Chamber of Commerce
Campaign to Protect Rural England
Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust
Watford & District Synagogue
Watford Velmurugan Temple

Local Green Spaces:

Ref	Space	Owner
1	Primrose Hill playing fields	ALPC
2	Longspring Wood Grounds	Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust
3	Bedmond playing fields	ALPC
4	Bell Lane	TRDC
5	Manor House Grounds	ALPC
6	Millennium Gardens	ALPC
7	Kitters Green	ALPC
8	Tanners Wood	TRDC
9	Hazelwood Lane/ Upper Highway (cluster of 7 spaces)	TRDC
10	Tanners Hill Green	TRDC
11	School Mead Green	TRDC
12	Abbots Langley Horses' Field	TRDC
13	Leavesden Country Park	TRDC

14	Leavesden High Road / Aerodrome Way/ Halifax Close/ Westfield Close cluster	
15	South Way Playing Fields	TRDC
16	Langleybury cricket ground	Private - contact the cricket club
17	Lower Field Warner Brothers	Warner Bros

APPENDIX B: SUMMARY OF COMMENTS RECEIVED AT PRE-SUBMISSION REGULATION 14 CONSULTATION AND RESPONSE FROM THE STEERING

Responses were received from:

1. Three Rivers District Council
2. Herts CC, Property Planning Manager (responded via Surveymonkey)
3. Bedmond comments
4. Pegasus Group on behalf of Greystoke Land Ltd.
5. Historic England
6. Pegasus Group (in the context of Taylor Wimpey's land interests at Land at Woodside Road, Abbots Langley)
7. National Grid
8. Cllr Sara Bedford
9. National Highways
10. Sport England
11. Abbots Youth Football club
12. Nash Mills Council
13. Herts County Council Full
14. Environment Agency (Advice note)
15. SurveyMonkey – 2 responses (1 from a resident and one from Herts CC Property Planning (separated as Ref 2 here)

The table overleaf provides a summary of the comments received, where the Ref. column aligns with the numbering of respondents as shown above.

Spelling errors in actual responses have not been corrected.

Full copies of the responses are available on the Neighbourhood Plan website and have been sent to TRDC directly.

Ref	Who ?	Page/para/ policy	Comments/ Proposed change	SG response (to be agreed by the SG)
1.	1	General	i. Not all of the policy names in the policy "box" and above the box match, i.e policies AL19 and AL20 ii. References to NPPF must be updated to relate to 2024 version of the NPPF iii. Any references to TRDC emerging Local Plan must be updated (TRDC are willing to assist with any queries etc) iv. The conformity references underneath the policies don't seem to reference the Development Management Policies Local Development Document (2013). This document is a key document when assessing planning applications, so should be referenced within the NP. v. In the word document "APPENDICES A, B, C and F", the section on non-designated heritage assets and Local Green Spaces are included twice in the document. Additionally, whilst it makes sense to have Local Green Spaces and Locally significant view sections together in the same Appendix (F), it is advised that the non-designated heritage section has its own appendix.	i. Check as part of proofreading. ii. Amend throughout. iii. Noted and amend. iv. Add in these references. v. Separate appendices.
2.	4	General	Work should be paused until adoption of the Local Plan.	
3.	5	General	We welcome the production of this neighbourhood plan and are pleased to see that the historic environment of Abbots Langley features throughout the draft. We are pleased to note that the conservation of historic environment, as well as the development that is of high quality, contextual design, are two of the principal objectives as set out on Page 19. We also welcome Section 7: Local Character, Heritage and Design, which contains detailed and robust policies.	

Ref	Who ?	Page/para/ policy	Comments/ Proposed change	SG response (to be agreed by the SG)
			At this point we don't consider there is a need for Historic England to be involved in the detailed development of the strategy for your area.	
4.	6	General	The national policy section of the emerging Neighbourhood Plan should be updated accordingly. Taylor Wimpey remains keen to continue engaging in collaborative consultation with the Parish Council and local residents during preparation of the planning application, and post-submission. Land at Woodside Road is a deliverable and high-quality scheme which would contribute significantly towards the District's housing needs, in a manner that is aligned with the emerging Neighbourhood Plan. Taylor Wimpey will continue to engage positively in further consultation with the Steering Group as preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan progresses.	Amend to conform to Dec 2024 NPPF. Noted – action for PC.
5.	7	General	No comment.	Noted.
6.	9	General	We noted that the Plan is prepared in line with national guidance and legislation including the Localism Act (2011), the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations (2012) (updated in 2015 and 2016), the Neighbourhood Planning Act, the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2021) and National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG). Whilst a revision to the NPPF and other national planning policy was published in Autumn 2024 which increased the housing target for the district, this does not impact the neighbourhood plan since all site allocations are included in the Local Plan process. The Plan is prepared in general conformity with the strategic objectives of the Local Development Plan (i.e. the Three Rivers Core Strategy / Local Plan) and the County Council's Local Transport Plan (LTP4). The Three Rivers Local Plan acknowledges that within the district there is a high dependency on the car and actively seeks to change this, with the Local	Noted.

Ref	Who ?	Page/para/ policy	Comments/ Proposed change	SG response (to be agreed by the SG)
			Transport Plan intending to encourage a switch from the private car to sustainable transport (i.e. walking, cycling and passenger transport) wherever possible. We note that the Plan does not include any schemes related to the SRN, despite the SRN passing through the Plan area. We acknowledge however that the Three Rivers Local Plan does not include any site allocations in the Abbots Langley neighbourhood area which are adjacent to the SRN, and that the built-up area of Abbots Langley does not directly border the SRN. Upon review, we do not identify any policies or sites that would directly impact our network. We are supportive of the general design policies and principles set out within the Plan, which will assist in reducing the number of vehicle movements in the Plan area.	
7.	10	General	General advice provided. No specific comments.	Noted.
8.	12	General	NMPC considered your local plan document last night. Whilst they have decided not to comment formally in detail they did ask me to send across an email. NMPC wishes to commend you on the standard of the documentation and your robust evidence of how strongly ALPC wishes to support the local Green belt. NMPC were very supportive of this, particularly as we share boundaries.	Noted, with thanks.
9.	SM	General	This document provides feedback on Bedmond and to a lesser degree on Abbots Langley.	
10.	6	Vision and Objectives	The vision for the emerging Neighbourhood Plan is supported in principle; its aims to ensure new development respects the character of Abbots Langley and delivers tangible economic, social and environmental benefits are commendable.	Noted.

Ref	Who ?	Page/para/ policy	Comments/ Proposed change	SG response (to be agreed by the SG)
			The emerging Neighbourhood Plan objectives are similarly supported in principle, and align well with Taylor Wimpey's own aspirations to deliver high-quality, sustainably designed and located homes that can provide a range of private market and affordable accommodation types and tenures in response to identified local housing needs. The new homes will contribute towards both the local housing need and the district-wide housing requirement, in line with objective 1.	
11.	11	Chapter 3	However, the ALNP does not discuss how sports and leisure facilities should expand in future years to reflect the population growth and the population age profile. We understand that there is currently no statutory requirement for local authorities to provide sports facilities, however local authorities do have a duty to promote healthy lifestyles. Research shows that exercise is one of the key determinants of health along with the strength of personal social networks – recent research suggests that it is more important to health outcomes than levels of smoking or obesity. Community sport contributes to both. **** Abbots Youth suggests that the ALNP should include the provision of sports/leisure facilities to be a stated ambition in Chapter Three in the same way that school places, primary care facilities and mental healthcare services are mentioned.**	Include in the text.
12.	2	3.3	Add: In addition any new neighbourhoods will need to have measures incorporated to ensure their longevity, such as stewardship arrangements.	Added to the relevant bullet.

Ref	Who ?	Page/para/ policy	Comments/ Proposed change	SG response (to be agreed by the SG)
13.	2	Vision	Stewardship. It is suggested that there may be scope, within the vision, to link stewardship with the community's need. Stewardship applies to all aspects of a development, not solely to one objective of the Neighbourhood Plan.	The Vision has been agreed with the community and has been retained as presented in the Pre-Submission Version. It is considered that stewardship is intrinsic to development.
14.	2	Objectives	Public Health. is pleased to see the inclusion of **Objective 1** which seeks to deliver housing in sustainable locations, provide affordable housing and adaptable housing to meet the needs of residents of all ages. It is recommended to introduce a healthy homes policy which sets out housing standards to ensure high quality, sustainable housing that enables people to engage in healthy behaviours such as cooking meals, exercising and social interaction. An example of principles for healthy holes can be found in the Town and Country Planning Association's Healthy Homes Principles. Public Health is pleased to see the inclusion of **Objective 2** which seeks to deliver high quality developments that minimise flood risk, mitigate climate change, promote biodiversity, and reduce carbon footprint. Public Health is pleased to see the inclusion of **Objective 4** which seeks to protect and enhance green infrastructure within the designated neighbourhood plan area, specifically in relation to the inclusion of wildlife corridors within this policy objective. Public Health supports policies which enhance active travel such as walking and cycling. It is noted that safety for active travel has been considered, in numerous of ways, in the pre-submission Neighbourhood Plan, including in the wording for **Objective 6**.	The policies collectively seek to ensure that homes are of a high quality, sustainable and well-designed. In addition, that adequate access to green space and leisure and recreational facilities is provided. The reference to the TCPA Healthy homes principles has been added to the supporting text of the Design Policy. Noted. Noted. Noted.

Ref	Who ?	Page/para/ policy	Comments/ Proposed change	SG response (to be agreed by the SG)
			Public Health is pleased to see the inclusion of **Objective 7** which seeks to explore viable renewable energy projects locally. Public Health is pleased to see the inclusion of **Objective 8** which seeks to encourage the production of local food growing including local farms, horticulture, community projects and private gardens/allotments, this complies with paragraph 96(c) of the NPPF.	Noted. Noted.
15.	2	5.8	Stewardship. There appears to be scope for the concept of stewardship as a new parameter within the paragraph. Any new developments will be functioning as they were designed, for many years to come, to be able to benefit both the new and existing communities within the District.	Added.
16.	2	5.10	Waste Management. It is recommended that the following text be removed. There is no scientific proof that rubbish recycling depots (i.e. transfer stations) pollute the environment and affect the health of the population "or rubbish recycling depots"	Text has been removed.
17.	1	AL1	Criterion B (i) makes specific reference to the Core Strategy, however, that is only one of the several documents which forms part of the wider TRDC Local Plan. "Local Plan" should replace core strategy. Criterion B (v) – The ending of this sentence is "…that does not cause harm in terms of additional traffic". Causing additional traffic is not a reason to refuse a planning application. Instead, the ending of this policy should be re-worded to emphasise reducing car movements/enhancing sustainable modes of transport.	Amend. Amend. Noted however this is an important point that has been raised by the community. Already,

Ref	Who ?	Page/para/ policy	Comments/ Proposed change	SG response (to be agreed by the SG)
			Criterion B (ii) should be amended to only encourage development to preserve or enhance the separate identities of individual communities within the parish.	southern parts of the parish have effectively coalesced with Watford. This should be avoided between Abbots Langley village and Bedmond.
18.	2	AL1	Local Lead Flooding Authority. It is recommended that the Neighbourhood Plan refers to sequential testing and ensuring that development does not occur in areas at flood risk, unless there are no feasible alternative sites. Areas at risk from surface water flow paths should not be developed unless there are no alternatives and mitigation measures can resolve the flooding issue.	This is already established in national policy and therefore not considered to be required to be repeated in AL1.
19.	4	AL1	Object: Policy AL1 will become part of the adopted Development Plan once the ALNP is 'made', therefore it needs to be sufficiently forward thinking to help achieve the housing, commercial, logistical and modern economy needs of both the Neighbourhood Plan area and Three Rivers District Council across the ALNP period Therefore, the ALNP should provide criteria based policies which support the development of suitable sites in the Green Belt to meet an evidenced need in the area (such as Data Centres). Furthermore, it is clear that this Policy has been drafted with reference to the previous National Planning Policy Framework (September 2023) and should be updated to align with the updated plan making policies outlined in Paragraph 86 and 148 (Grey Belt) of the December 2024 National Planning Policy Framework to ensure that the Neighbourhood Plan does not act as a blocker to much needed development. Our client therefore suggests that Part B (i) of Policy AL1 is reworded to state 'it is in accordance with the provisions of the latest version of the NPPF in relation to development within the Green Belt'.	Amend policy to make reference to Green Belt/ Grey Belt to align with updated NPPF.

Ref	Who ?	Page/para/ policy	Comments/ Proposed change	SG response (to be agreed by the SG)
20.	1	AL2	Criterion A (c) refers specifically to first homes. However, social rent can also prioritise local people. Given that the NPPF no longer includes prescriptive requirements for First Homes, and that rented affordable housing products can also prioritise local people, specific reference to first homes should be removed. Criterion B should be amended to refer to housing which **IS** being built for the purposes of older people (i.e specialist housing). The phrase "residential development that could reasonably be expected to meet the needs of older people" is subjective and would be difficult for Development Management Officers to interpret. Criterion C needs rewording. An example could be: Development proposals for self and custom build housing will be supported where they otherwise comply with development plan policies. ~~and~~ Medium (5 habitable rooms) dwellings will be particularly supported.	Amend the way we ref First Homes. Amend to IS. Noted - amend
21.	2	AL2	Public Health. is pleased to see the inclusion of Policy AL2 which seeks to provide a range of housing types, tenures, and sizes to meet the identified housing need. It is important that new developments consider the changing lifestyles of residents and their mobility; the Neighbourhood Plan includes a policy which seeks to provide adaptable housing, in particular the inclusion of HAPPI design principles for older people housing. It is recommended that new housing for older people should investigate options such as Passivhaus and other eco-build designs for specialist older persons housing, to reduce thermal variances and the associated costs, and assist in preventing poor health outcomes in older people.	Noted. Noted – this is covered in other policies.

Ref	Who ?	Page/para/ policy	Comments/ Proposed change	SG response (to be agreed by the SG)
22.	6	AL2	It is noted that the evidence base for the emerging Neighbourhood Plan includes an Abbots Langley Housing Needs Assessment undertaken in December 2017. This has not been updated since and so is now out of date. It is therefore right that Policy AL2 requires reference to the most recent of the Local Housing Needs Assessment or Strategic Housing Needs Assessment. Taylor Wimpey have had regard to the most recent South West Herts Local Housing Needs Assessment (March 2024) when formulating the housing mix, with an element of flexibility to take into account reasonable site specific matters and constraints (as recognised in AL2). Paragraph 6.9 requires an update to the Abbots Langley Local Housing Needs Assessment 'ideally every five years'. This has not happened yet. Taylor Wimpey would welcome clarification on whether an update to the Abbots Langley Local Housing Needs Assessment is anticipated to happen; if that is not the case, then this reference should be removed from AL2.	Noted – we will align to the TRDC HNA but retain reference to the AL HNA as most recent – action will be to update this periodically. SW Housing Study. Make note that the HNA is dated, but the situation is considered not to have changed. Government funded and unlikely to be updated by govt funding.
23.	8	AL2	Three Rivers have just released a updated Local Housing Needs Assessment https://moderngov.threerivers.gov.uk/documents/s11760/Appendix%203%20-%20SW%20Herts%20Local%20Housing%20Needs%20Assessment%20Update.pdf . I would like to see the ALPC NP incorporate this.	Noted and update to reference this. See above.
24.	1	AL3	Not sure if Criterions B(f) and (g) are relevant to this policy? Consider removing these as they are covered elsewhere in the NP and also the TRDC Local Plan	F is retained by updated to refer to TRDC parking standards. G is particularly in relation to design so has been retained.

Ref	Who ?	Page/para/ policy	Comments/ Proposed change	SG response (to be agreed by the SG)
25.	2	AL3	Three Rivers District Council (TRDC), as the planning authority for the district, would ultimately need to be satisfied with the overall proposed parking levels on site considering its parking standards, use class, accessibility zone and the local area. Therefore it is recommended that the Policy should include some minor amendment as follows: B. As appropriate to their scale, nature, and location development proposals should strive to: f. be in accordance with Three Rivers District Council parking policy ~~the adopted Hertfordshire Vehicle Parking Standards;~~ Local Lead Flooding Authority. It is noted that well-designed Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) can serve to achieve Policy AL3 regarding tree planting and roadside green spaces, etc. Public Health is pleased to see the requirement to provide active frontages in Policy AL3, to provide natural surveillance. It is also noted that Policy AL3 adopts the Healthy Streets approach. This will improve the social, economic, and environmental sustainability through how streets are designed and managed. Healthy Streets | Making streets healthy places for everyone	Amended Noted. Noted. Noted.
26.	6	AL3 and AL4	The principles of Policy AL3 and AL4 is welcomed, insofar as the policies encourage high quality design which respects the local character. This is in line with the NPPF (2024) and the importance given in this national policy document to good design as a key aspect of delivering sustainable development, and creating better places to live and work.	Noted.

Ref	Who ?	Page/para/ policy	Comments/ Proposed change	SG response (to be agreed by the SG)
			Taylor Wimpey is taking a robust approach in formulating the layout and design of the proposed housing development. It has therefore comprehensively assessed the constraints and opportunities of the site and undertaken detailed contextual analysis of the wider area to inform the proposal for Land at Woodside Road. This detailed exercise and assessment of the local character has ensured new homes are designed which respond positively to the architectural styles, design and materials of the local area. Extensive technical assessment work has been undertaken which demonstrates that there are no constraints that cannot be overcome or appropriately mitigated. It should be clarified why AL3 refers to the Hertfordshire Vehicle Parking Standards rather than the parking standards contained within Appendix 5 of the adopted Development Management Policies Local Development Document (July 2013). The statement in AL4 that garages cannot be counted as an allocated parking space is disagreed with. This conflicts with the Abbots Langley Design Guidance (SM 03) which recognises garages as a parking typology. AL4 should be amended to recognise that an appropriately sized garage which can accommodate a modern car could be counted as an allocated parking space.	Noted. Amended See comment on this in response to TRDC.
27.	1	AL4	Criteria c – Delete or re-word “avoiding development over 2.5 storeys unless it can be demonstrated that it will not have a detrimental impact on views, streetscape or character of an area”. The emerging Local Plan will have a tall buildings policy (which considers a tall building as being 4 storeys, with tall buildings having to meet a list of criteria). Also, the assessment of “views, streetscape or character of an area”, are already covered by other Local Plan policies. This policy may be impacted by future local plan decisions on density etc, particularly as Abbots Langley is	This has been amended,

Ref	Who ?	Page/para/ policy	Comments/ Proposed change	SG response (to be agreed by the SG)
			identified as a Key Centre. Furthermore, the potential affects of reducing densities need to be considered including potentially having to release more Green Belt to meet housing need. It is considered that 2.5 storeys is too low of a threshold, so you should look at amending the threshold to 4 storeys (to be in line with emerging Local Plan policy), or deleting the sentence. Additionally change "close to the boundary" with "adjoining the boundary". The word close is potentially too subjective. Criterion e – In criterion E remove "*Such dwellings may also be suitable for younger residents and are not intended to be restricted in use*"- This should be moved to the explanatory section underneath the policy instead. Criterion I – It is worth considering the potential impacts of this policy wording. In order for development schemes to meet parking standards, there will need to be more external parking spaces (i.e larger front drives), which will reduce the amount of developable land within the site. This will either result in higher densities or mean that to meet housing need, more sites will be required (likely to be within the Green Belt). Rather than stipulate garages shouldn't be counted as a parking space, the policy could encourage larger garage sizes to ensure that they provide ample room for parking. In any event the current wording of the policy should be amended, and not refer to the garage as a room (as this is not necessary). Additionally, it is considered that this policy should only apply to new development rather than be used for example when assessing extensions to houses. The policy could say something along the lines of **"When assessing new residential development against Local Plan parking standards, garages should not be considered as a parking space".**	Amended Moved to justification. Amended to text in bold and apply to new build only.

Ref	Who ?	Page/para/ policy	Comments/ Proposed change	SG response (to be agreed by the SG)
28.	2	AL4	Local Lead Flooding Authority. is pleased to see the inclusion of SuDS in development, and the references to flood risk mitigation and providing biodiversity benefits. It is recommended that Policy AL4 also refers to the other two “four pillars” of SuDS – surface water quality and amenity. It is recommended that SuDS are provided on all developments. We would also recommend the Neighbourhood Plan could stipulate that developments on brownfield sites must restrict their runoff to greenfield rates, and reference SuDS features such as SuDS planters. It is recommended that Policy AL4 may also benefit from requiring developments to prepare Flood Risk Assessments. Public Health recommends a ‘designing out crime’ approach which removes the opportunity for crime to take place through the built environment. The following should be considered for new developments to build out crime: • Provide spaces that connect with residents, which promote a sense of ownership; • Places are maintained to a high quality, multifunctional to attract multiple users and feel welcoming. Public Health supports the enhancement of community safety through the inclusion of ‘Secured by Design’ principles in Policy AL4, includes the Building for a Healthy Life principles. It also supports seeking to provide adequate cycle storage in new developments to encourage residents to cycle.	This aspect has been slightly amended, although much of this is covered in strategic policy. This is adequately covered in strategic policy. This is covered in the policy. The recommended text has been added to the supporting justification. Noted.

Ref	Who ?	Page/para/ policy	Comments/ Proposed change	SG response (to be agreed by the SG)
29.	1	AL5	In criterion B, does the policy mean both historic buildings and heritage assets? Because a building can be "historic" but not a heritage asset. This may need considering. Overall, the policy takes a positive approach to reflecting the support given in the NPPF and Core Strategy for a low carbon future and renewable and low carbon energy and provides some helpful suggestions/guidance (rather than requirements). Consider deleting Criterion C as duplicates existing policy DM5 in the DMPD.	Add in 'heritage assets' Noted. This has been retained, largely due to the fact the DMPD dates to 2013 and potentially carries less weight in decision-making. It is unclear what the new Local Plan will say on this matter.
30.	2	AL5	Local Lead Flooding Authority. Is pleased to see the inclusion of reference to water efficiency measures, grey water and over-heating. SuDS can work to achieve Policy AL5 such as SuDS planters, which can function like rainwater butts at the end of downpipes to provide water supply resilience. Blue-green SuDS, such as enhanced tree pits, can also provide shade and help to relieve the urban heat island effect. Public Health. It is noted that Policy AL5 requires new developments to incorporate design and environmental performance measures, standards to reduce energy consumption and mitigate climate change, and prevent overheating. Public Health is pleased by the inclusion in the Neighbourhood Plan of low carbon sustainable design principles to reduce emissions and BREEAM building standards to achieve sustainable housing. Public Health is pleased to see the inclusion of low carbon sustainable design principles such as 'Fabric First' and consideration to building orientations, insulation, and double glazing to reduce emissions within	Noted. Noted. This is a helpful suggestion and has been added into the policy.

Ref	Who ?	Page/para/ policy	Comments/ Proposed change	SG response (to be agreed by the SG)
			Policy AL5. Public Health recommends that developments should have regard to climate change mitigation at all stages of the construction process. It is recommended that the Parish Council considers including this as a policy in their Neighbourhood Plan to ensure that the lifespan of the development has a low carbon footprint Wood fuel products and biomass both have potential to emit significant amounts of pollution. It is recommended that Policy AL5 (C) is modified, as follows, to remove reference to biomass and wood fuel energy products as these are increasingly being considered in data sets as an unsustainable alternative given the time it takes to recapture the carbon: C. Proposals for individual and community scale energy, for instance from hydroelectricity, solar photovoltaic panels, ~~and local biomass facilities,~~ anaerobic digestions ~~and wood fuel products~~ will be supported subject to the following criteria: a. the siting and scale of the proposed development is appropriate to its setting and position in the wider landscape; and b. the proposed development does not create an unacceptable impact on the amenities of local residents; and c. the proposed development does not have an unacceptable impact on a feature of natural or biodiversity importance. It is noted that wind generated energy is absent from Policy AL5. It would be helpful to understand if this is intentional or if this has been missed off the list.	The policy has been amended as suggested. This has been added.

Ref	Who ?	Page/para/ policy	Comments/ Proposed change	SG response (to be agreed by the SG)
31.	5	AL5	Policy AL5, B - we recommend making reference to Historic England's Advice Note 18: Adapting Historic Buildings for Energy and Carbon Efficiency, which can be found here: <https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/adapting-historic-buildings-energy-carbon-efficiency-advice-note-18//>. This provides up to date information and advice about how modifications to improve both factors on listed and unlisted traditional buildings can be achieved whilst minimising the effect on their special interest. The plan could also include consideration of any locally-designated heritage assets which are at risk or in poor condition, and which could then be the focus of specific policies aimed at facilitating their enhancement. We would refer you to our guidance on writing effective neighbourhood plan policies, which can be found here: <https://historicengland.org.uk/advice/planning/plan-making/improve-your-neighbourhood/policy-writing/>	Include reference to this in the policy. Para 7.34 (Reg 14 version) does include information about heritage at risk but no specific assets audited – would need to be included as a supporting action.
32.	1	AL6	In criterion D the word "conservation" in the main paragraph sentence "new developments contribute to the conservation or enhancement of the historic environment" could be changed to "preservation" or similar, due to "conservation" area being directly above it. It is advised to change criterion D (b)" to be designed to a high quality and preserve **or** enhance the character of the Conservation Areas and their settings", in line with the wider policy and TRDC policy.	Amend. Amend.

Ref	Who ?	Page/para/ policy	Comments/ Proposed change	SG response (to be agreed by the SG)
33.	5	AL6	Whilst we welcome AL3, E's stance on taking a proactive approach to heritage at risk, we consider this could be strengthened by the identification of existing heritage at risk, including non-designated heritage or parts of the conservation areas that may be in need of enhance. These - as we suggest below - could be the subject of specific enhancement proposals or policies to secure their adaptation and reuse. This would reflect a proactive approach. We welcome the production of the detail masterplan to support this neighbourhood plan and consider that, broadly, it contains proposals that will lead to the enhancement of the conservation area and the setting of listed buildings, should they come forward. We note, however, that policy AL3, B, a. aims to reduce street clutter. This is a positive move and is supported by Historic England's advice in Streets for All: Works to Highways and the Public Realm in Historic Areas. Given that policy aim, however, we suggest that the supporting masterplan review its design approach to signalised pedestrian crossings at the junction by the church, and consider whether these should be zebra crossings instead, which are less visually intrusive. We also note that the carriageway width is proposed to be reduced to 6.3m. This is still considerably wider than the 5.5metre recommended width for streets with regular buses and HGV movements set out in the government's guidance Manual for Streets 2. Reducing it to 5.5m would enable much more generous and safe pedestrian spaces, as well as the potential for more effective green infrastructure and planting.	I don't think we have a specific list of such assets at this stage so would need to be included as an action at this point. Masterplan is a 'direction of travel' as opposed to an absolute and would need to be reviewed as projects come forward. Masterplan was developed to reflect resident and trader views
34.	5	AL6	Policy AL6: suggest rewording clause C to the following: "The Holy Well in Bedmond is ***identified*** as a non-designated heritage asset. Proposals affecting the non-designated heritage assets will be determined based on national planning policy." This is to avoid confusion regarding terminology	Reword as noted.

Ref	Who ?	Page/para/ policy	Comments/ Proposed change	SG response (to be agreed by the SG)
			and indeed readability, as 'designated heritage asset' is a formal term as defined in the NPPF. This section should also make reference to the Abbotts Langley Local List: <https://www.threerivers.gov.uk/services/planning/heritage-urban-design>. With reference to Policy AL6, D, a., we note that it refers to relevant conservation area appraisals. Both appraisals for the relevant areas are now over 10 years old, with Hunton Bridge's dating from 2008. The 1990 Act requires local authorities to review their areas and publish proposals for their conservation and enhancement "from time to time". This is generally considered to be every 5 years, and we therefore suggest that these appraisals are updated, to ensure they provide a robust evidence base for the policies and proposals in this neighbourhood plan, as well as forthcoming local plan development.	Included Noted – and include as a specific Action. Add in the Design Guidance here in the policy which addresses these areas to an extent.
35.	1	AL7	Criterions C (a) and (b) may be too generic - What exactly constitutes the area "around" the library and St Saviours Church. This may be difficult for Development Management to judge. Criterion D – what areas is this policy criteria relating too? Character areas? – This should be set out more clearly. Also we are now past 2024, so should the Breakspeare Special School site have the 2024 caveat. This 2024 caveat should also be explained Is there a definition of "historic building" within the NP? There should be more focus on designated/non-designated heritage assets. At the moment the Criterion H states "Proposals which result in the loss of existing local neighbourhood convenience shops (Use Class F2)". Criterion	Reference to the Masterplan mapping provided. Amended Amend to 'heritage asset' (which incorporated designated and non) Removed this part of the clause.

Ref	Who ?	Page/para/ policy	Comments/ Proposed change	SG response (to be agreed by the SG)
			H needs to be clearer on whether it relates to a change of use to a non-commercial use such as residential, because H(b) sets out that consideration should been given to other alternative commercial uses, but the start of the criterion says specifically about loss of F2 (an alternative commercial use would also result in a loss of F2)	
36.	2	AL7	Public Health. is pleased to see the inclusion of Policy AL7 which seeks to retain and enhance the vitality and viability of local centres. Local Centres have a key role for the local community. In addition to this, Public Health is pleased to see the justification for Policy AL7 has considered markets, within the village centre, as a means to provide an opportunity for access to healthy food.	Noted.
37.	HCC property	AL7	Policy AL7 C (d) and text in Chapters 8, 10 and 12 referring to the current Breakspeare School Site. The County Council as landowner notes the Abbots Langley Neighbourhood Plan (ALNP) Pre-Submission (Regulation 14) Version suggests the site of the existing Breakspeare School could be used for a mixed development, including community facilities, once the school relocates to its new site in Croxley Green. However, to date the County Council has made no decisions regarding the future use of the site, nor has the site been declared surplus to their requirements. Once a confirmed date for the school relocation is known, consideration will be given to whether other County Council services have a requirement that the site could support. Only if there are no requirements will proposals for a sale to achieve best value be considered.	Noted.
38.	1	AL8	In criterion B (or successor document) should be added, in case the Hertfordshire County Council Highways Signage Guidance (2012) is superseded.	See Ref 39

Ref	Who ?	Page/para/ policy	Comments/ Proposed change	SG response (to be agreed by the SG)
39.	2	AL8	Transport. It is recommended that the Policy should include some minor amendment, as follows, as the guidance document referred to in the policy justification has been superseded: The signage for visitor attractions and facilities should be clear and further detail is provided in the Place & Movement Planning and Design Guidance for Hertfordshire Part 4 ~~Hertfordshire County Council Highways Signing Guidance, 2012~~, which includes the criteria for brown tourist signs.	
40.	1	AL9	It is considered that the policy complies with the Core Strategy, particularly policies CP7, CP10 and CP12.	Noted.
41.	2	8.22	Transport. It is recommended that the Policy justification should include some additional text, as follows: Sustainable modes of transport – providing infrastructure to encourage cycling, such as safe storage and access for electric vehicles, bus provision, timetable displays and information to assist visitors and residents.	Added in.
42.	1	AL10	Within the trees and woodlands section it says “no loss of, or damage to, existing trees or woodlands during or as a result of development”. This is not practicable, particularly as one can remove a non-protected tree at any time. This should be amended to be more similar to Policy DM6 of the DMPLDD, which states a preference for retention of as many trees as possible and that existing trees will be safeguarded.	The group consider that trees are a particularly important feature locally and therefore should be safeguarded. The importance of trees is noted in the NPPF. Clause B (ii) goes on to describe what can be done if there is loss is unavoidable and has been strengthened to seek additional trees. This will also contribute to biodiversity aims.
43.	2	AL10	Public Health is pleased to see the inclusion of the Plan’s landscape-led approach to retain and enhance existing green infrastructure in new developments in Policy AL10. It recommends that new open spaces should	Noted.

Ref	Who ?	Page/para/ policy	Comments/ Proposed change	SG response (to be agreed by the SG)
			be functional so that they can meet different community needs and attract wider users.	
44.	1	AL11	Amend Clause A to: of "Proposals would be particularly supported where biodiversity net gain units are delivered on-site. If not delivered on site, Biodiversity Net Gain requirements from development within the neighbourhood plan area, should where possible be delivered within the parish". Criterion B does not add anything new from national legislation, so should be deleted. BNG (and associated requirements etc) will be referred to in the emerging Local Plan. Biodiversity opportunity areas are mentioned in the policy a couple of times, but not explained or defined in the NP?- This needs addressing. There could be mention of the emerging LNRS, particularly that proposals incorporating strategies within the parish identified by the LNRS would be supported - https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/about-the-council/how-the-council-works/partnerships/herts-nature-recovery-partnership/hertfordshire-nature-recovery-partnership.aspx - this could replace the ill-defined "biodiversity opportunity areas". Nature 12 Standards is not defined or explained in any further detail. Further justification/explanation is needed. Maybe also add (and any successor document)	Amended Noted and removed. Include description in supporting text and point to Aspirational Project 5, which would identify such sites. PC action on this. Warner Bros work at Gyspy Lane as an example (It's a LGS, Horses Field too – wildflowers/cattle). Included in supporting text. Explained in supporting text.
45.	2	AL11	Local Lead Flooding Authority. would add that the provision of open, permanently wet SuDS features can provide habitat for various species. Most SuDS can be vegetated to provide habitat for a range of wildlife.	Noted – this is included in the Design policy.

Ref	Who ?	Page/para/ policy	Comments/ Proposed change	SG response (to be agreed by the SG)
			Public Health. is pleased to see that Policy AL11 requires soft landscaping to be included within new developments to reduce air pollution from vehicle emissions. Measures which reduce vehicle speed and volume of traffic to reduce emissions are also supported by Public Health.	
46.	6	AL11	In addition to well-designed homes, Taylor Wimpey are committed to the delivery of a minimum of 10% biodiversity net gain. The layout which has been designed for Land at Woodside Road respects existing green infrastructure. The objective of retaining and enhancing existing habitats where possible is already a key principle of the proposals in line with this emerging policy.	Noted.
47.	1	AL12	The views are shown on a map in Figure 15 of the NP, which is helpful. However, Appendix F Is not clear on how these views were selected and on what basis (i.e a detailed methodology). It is important that a detailed rationale for the views is included within the Appendix. Examples of this can be provided on request. Additionally, the description of some of the views could be expanded to emphasise the key attributes or features of the views and the potential impacts of losing the view.	The process has been described in the Appendix.
48.	1	AL13	Comments on specific Local Green Space designations provided.	Noted. Comments have been actioned.
49.	2	AL13	Public Health. supports Councils that seek to protect significant green spaces from development. It is pleased to see that Policy AL13 designates 17 sites at Local Green Spaces within the Neighbourhood Plan.	Noted.
50.	1	AL14	The wording/formatting of criterion A(c) needs reviewing. Perhaps it could remove “of the facility”.	Noted and amended Reinstated into the policy.

Ref	Who ?	Page/para/ policy	Comments/ Proposed change	SG response (to be agreed by the SG)
			Previous Criterion B has been removed. You should consider adding this criteria back in to the policy, as it provided an expansion on existing Local Plan policy DM12.	
51.	2	AL14	Public Health is pleased to see the inclusion within Policy AL14 of a requirement for new developments to meet the local need for sport, identified in the Three Rivers Sport and Recreational Facilities Assessment. It is positive to see that the Neighbourhood Plan refers to Sport England's design guidance for design.	Noted.
52.	11	AL14	Section 10.9 does state that "additional senior and mini football facilities" would be supported by the local community but gives no indication as to potential responses in terms of additional provision. Creating a full size 3G astroturf within Abbots Langley, or converting the lightly used courts at Manor House, would respond to the evident local need. **** Abbots Youth suggests that the ALNP should include a commitment to providing additional community facilities for sports including football and for ALPC to commit to actively support the growth of our local community football clubs. Specifically, we would like to see sport facilities being included in Chapter Twelve's 'Aspirational Projects' section.** Section 10.9 of the ALNP (and the Abbots Langley Village Centre Masterplan) outlines support for the provision of purpose-designed storage units for sports equipment near to existing pitches. We look forward to the detail and actions on this becoming evident – whenever we have enquired about dedicated storage facilities at Manor House, for example, we have met with hostility rather than support.	The value of 3G provision is understood, notably in the context of impact of climate change/ changing weather patterns on grass pitches. Plus the cost of maintaining grass pitches as a result of climate change. This could justify looking for an area to develop an astroturf pitch as an alternative. This has been noted in para 10.9 A non-policy action has been added for the PC to liaise with local sports organisations and TRDC in relation to the emerging Local Plan and potential site allocations, which could deliver this sort of facility / use of developer contributions.

Ref	Who ?	Page/para/ policy	Comments/ Proposed change	SG response (to be agreed by the SG)
			**** Abbots Youth suggests that more detail is provided in Section 10.9 including specific projects and timelines.**	
53.	1	AL15	Criterion B - It is advised that this paragraph is deleted. Given that TRDC is a CIL authority, S106 agreements are primarily reserved for purposes such as BNG and affordable housing provision. Applying for CIL funding is likely to be the best route for securing allotment space, and this is done outside of the planning process, and as such would not be listed within a neighbourhood plan policy. Having said this, there may be some scope for on-site provision of allotments within strategic sites (circa 500 dwellings), although it is worth considering that on-site provision of allotments may reduce other planning gains such as affordable home provision or other infrastructure being delivered (as a result of viability). The demand/need for allotments should be more robustly justified and evidenced within the justification section. It is also considered that the policy complies with the Core Strategy, particularly criterion k of Policy CP1 relating to protection and enhancement of existing community, leisure and cultural facilities and Strategic Objective 11 relating to healthy lifestyles.	The clause has been recast as a new Clause A. There is a demand – current waiting list: ranges from 36 people to 50 (equates to a roughly 2-3 year wait). 127 sites available. Also community garden is included as an Aspirational Project, which could be shared growing space. Add to conformity reference.
54.	2	AL15	Public Health. The Neighbourhood Plan identifies the importance of local food growing opportunities. Public Health is pleased to see the inclusion of	Noted.

Ref	Who ?	Page/para/ policy	Comments/ Proposed change	SG response (to be agreed by the SG)
			Policy AL15 which protects the loss of allotment spaces and the creation of allotments/community growing spaces in major developments.	
55.	1	AL16	Potential spelling mistakes “licenses premisses” in criterion A – Should it be licensed premises’?	Amended.
56.	1	AL17	It is considered that the policy complies with the Core Strategy, particularly criterion k of Policy CP1 relating to protection and enhancement of existing community, leisure and cultural facilities…	Noted.
57.	1	AL18	It is considered that the policy generally conforms with the Local Plan, particularly Policy PSP2 (m) which partly relates to the expansion of existing schools and/or provision of new schools meet identified needs in the Key Centres (such as Abbots Langley). However, there appears to be duplication of existing Local Plan policies (relating to highway safety, impact on amenity etc). It is recommended that the policy is amended to make it less generic and more nuanced to education-based development as advised by the independent review.	Noted. Amended slightly to be more locally focused. The review has not yet taken place.
58.	2	10.27	School Planning. The Neighbourhood Plan raises concern about meeting primary demand locally, but our records indicate that demand within the area has fallen in recent years. School Planning forecasts demand to continue to reduce in the interim. Whilst new housing could increase demand in the future, the Service has secured provision to ensure education demand can be met locally.	
59.	2	10.28	It is noted that reference to forecast figures, particularly from 2014/15, are now very dated and therefore could be misleading. Furthermore at present demand across the wider south-west of Hertfordshire is met within the existing schools, in the interim it will continue to be a close match between demand and places available but School Planning expects demand to fall at secondary before demand from new housing arises in the future. HCC, as Education Authority, has a statutory duty to secure sufficient school places	Text has been amended as suggested.

Ref	Who ?	Page/para/ policy	Comments/ Proposed change	SG response (to be agreed by the SG)
			for every child living in the county, and ensure sufficient sites are secured to meet long-term demand based on housing proposals in TRDC and neighbouring authorities. It is recommended that the text be amended. In respect of an additional secondary school, referred to at paragraph 10.28, School Planning has responded to the Regulation 18 consultation stage of TRDC's local plan, stating that a site should be included for secondary provision in the vicinity of Abbots Langley. The Service will review this position once the Regulation 19 consultation is published, to ensure sufficient sites are secured to meet long-term demand based on housing proposals in TRDC and neighbouring authorities.	
60.	1	AL19	Criterion C – Is there a definition or map of the "ancient lanes"? It may be difficult to distinguish what an ancient lane is, so this needs to be clarified. Also, what is meant by a "detrimental impact"? (highway safety concerns, impact on character etc?). It is advised to shorten this sentence to something similar to "*The network of ancient lanes across Abbots Langley shall be protected or enhanced where possible*". Criterion E – Whilst it is noted that the wording for Criterion E is based off the comments from the Independent Review, TRDC have some concerns. Firstly, it is considered that the threshold of 50 is very low (due to viability reasons). Secondly, TRDC is a CIL authority, which means that S106 contributions are mainly sought for affordable housing or for on-site infrastructure on strategic sites of over 500 dwellings, such as for a school or medical centre etc. CIL is a charge that all relevant development has to pay towards, and this money essentially goes into a "pot", which is bid on. It is up to bodies and infrastructure providers such as Herts County Council to apply for CIL funding to use for infrastructure projects etc. It is not	Additional detail added into the supporting text. Amended. Amended as per HCC comments – see Ref. 62

Ref	Who ?	Page/para/ policy	Comments/ Proposed change	SG response (to be agreed by the SG)
			considered appropriate for a Neighbourhood Plan to dictate to HCC what to spend CIL money on. As such, this Criterion needs amending to potentially something similar to " *In respect to strategic-scale developments, financial contributions via a S.106 agreement may be required to establish new or extended local bus routes that could sustainably connect the development with employment and shopping centres, education, recreation facilities and transport interchanges. To encourage the use of buses, contributions should include (as may be relevant), the provision of bus shelters with seating and 'countdown' bus information displays*"	
61.	2	AL19	Public Health - Welcomes Policy AL19 which seeks to create safe walking routes throughout the Parish by maintaining and improving access to encourage safe and healthy exercise, encourage designing in active travel and public transport in new developments, and will also improve local air quality. Public Health make the following recommendations regarding the policy: -walking routes should be well-lit, clear of obstacles and sign posted; -wide crossings are built on the same level which are well-lit and landscape to create safer crossings for residents; -policies should prioritise public transport in road layouts over cars to reduce travel times and make using public transport more appealing. -Landmark buildings also play an important role to help people navigatetheir journeys; -signs and seating on walking routes should be used to encourage more people to walk; -it is strongly recommended that that Sport England's Active Travel Guidance should be included in Policy AL19 as a requirement for all new	Noted. This has been incorporated into the policy.

Ref	Who ?	Page/para/ policy	Comments/ Proposed change	SG response (to be agreed by the SG)
			developments. We recommend the checklist in the Active Design guidance should be used for informing the design and consideration of the planning application e.g., as part of the Health Impact Assessment or Design and Access Statement. -Policy AL19(A) is recommended to include the following text to encourage people to walk and cycle to open spaces rather than travel by car, to reduce car emissions and increase physical activity: A. To encourage healthy lifestyles and ensure that residents have a choice of sustainable means of travel to access local destinations such as community buildings, employment, schools, shopping facilities, public transport interchanges, <u>open spaces</u> and other important facilities, development proposals should provide directly, or via financial planning obligations, safe pedestrian and cycle, both on- and off-site, to link up with the existing and proposed footpath and cycleway network defined on Figures 22 and 23.	
62.	2	AL19	E: In respect of developments or phases of development of 50 or more homes, ~~financial contributions via a S.106 agreement or the Community Infrastructure Levy should be sought by the County Council~~ HCC should consider seeking planning obligations towards the delivery of improvement works to bus stops under S278 (i.e. offsite highway works by the developer rather than a contribution) wherever possible. Such improvements should, where applicable, include raised kerbs (also known as Kassel kerbs), in addition to or as the sole measure, to ensure bus stops are accessible for all users. ~~to help establish~~ New or extended local bus routes ~~that could~~ should sustainably connect the development with	

Ref	Who ?	Page/para/ policy	Comments/ Proposed change	SG response (to be agreed by the SG)
			employment and shopping centres, education, recreation facilities, health care facilities and transport interchanges. To encourage the use of buses, contributions should include, as may be relevant, accessibility measures, the provision of bus shelters with seating and 'countdown' bus information displays.	
63.	2	11.12	Add to the end: TRDC LCWIP has been through public consultation in July 2023 and is in the process of being finalised for adoption later this year (2025). This has identified 5 priority routes across the district to develop and improve for the future. More information can be found at Three Rivers Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan | Hertfordshire County Council.	Added.
64.	4	AL19	Our client acknowledges the importance of the aim behind this policy (to ensure sustainable and healthy travel options). Policy does not go far enough in acknowledging the major benefit of locating employment facilities in close proximity to existing housing developments in Key Centres (as Abbots Langley is defined in the settlement hierarchy of the adopted Core Strategy) to help reduce out commuting, especially out commuting towards London given its close proximity. Propose reword to: ***"To encourage healthy lifestyles and ensure that residents have a choice of sustainable means of travel to access local destinations such as community buildings, employment, schools, shopping facilities, public transport interchanges, and other important facilities, development proposals should provide, either directly or via financial planning obligations, safe pedestrian and cycle routes, both on- and off-site, that link to the existing and proposed footpath and cycleway network. In***	Employment has to be compatible with other uses, such as residential. Suggest retain as is, as the proposed addition is outside the scope of what the policy is trying to achieve.

Ref	Who ?	Page/para/ policy	Comments/ Proposed change	SG response (to be agreed by the SG)
			addition, proposals that promote the integration of employment facilities within or near existing housing developments to reduce the need for out-commuting should be encouraged to support a more sustainable and connected community…"	
65.	5	AL19	If you are concerned about the impact of high levels of traffic through your area the "Traffic in Villages" toolkit developed by Hamilton-Baillie Associates in conjunction with Dorset AONB Partnership may be a useful resource to you.	Make reference to this in the document.
66.	2	AL19	Transport. It is recommended that this paragraph refers to encouraging more sustainable travel choices to railway stations and local amenities were possible, to reduce the need for additional car parking spaces.	Added.
67.	1	AL20	It is considered that the policy is in general conformity with the District's Local Plan documents.	Noted.
68.	1	Chapter 12 projects	A number of Projects have been included in the Plan. They are clearly distinguishable from the planning policies and accompanied by detailed explanations. ***Project 1: Sunnyside Community Food Production and Training Project*** There is currently no Local Plan policy for community food production. However, the project is supported in principle as training and employment opportunities (including those with disabilities) should be maintained and enhanced. ***Project 2: Using aerial photography to measure factors affecting climate change across the Parish*** Climate change will have significant impacts on the neighbourhood plan area, wider district and beyond, which will need to be responded to. It is	Noted.

Ref	Who ?	Page/para/ policy	Comments/ Proposed change	SG response (to be agreed by the SG)
			important to try and reduce and mitigate impacts of climate change as far as possible. Therefore this aspirational project is supported in principle. ***Project 3: A Master Plan for Abbots Langley Village Centre*** There is no relevant Local Plan policy regarding local masterplans, however, there project is supported in principle. ***Project 4: Community Affordable Housing Scheme,*** including community self-build, community custom-build and community land trusts Improving the supply and standard of affordable housing in neighbourhood plan area (and wider district) is supported in principle. ***Project 5: Measures to enhance biodiversity and wildlife corridors in the Parish*** Protecting of biodiversity and improvement of connectivity between key biodiversity and nature assets is supported in principle. ***Project 6: Planning the completion of the off-road cycle and footpath networks and other measures to assist with the decarbonisation of private transport*** Improved and integrated transport systems, including sustainable travel opportunities such as walking and cycling are supported in principle.	
69.	2	12.28	Early Years. welcome a dialogue on mixed development opportunities to explore how to utilise valuable facilities and services to better serve the local community.	Noted. The PC will pursue this.

Ref	Who ?	Page/para/ policy	Comments/ Proposed change	SG response (to be agreed by the SG)
70.	2	12.48	Transport. It is noted that HCC is working with TRDC, with their current EV rollout, to identify areas of need for on street EV charging points and to ensure they meet with HCC's siting criteria. Further information on the HCC EV Electric vehicle charging in Hertfordshire | Hertfordshire County Council.	Noted.
71.	6	Chapter 12 Projects	The 'Aspirational Projects' set out in Chapter 12 of the Neighbourhood Plan are noted. Taylor Wimpey is already considering the delivery of local infrastructure improvements such as a new or upgraded war memorial, connecting adjacent Woodside Road dwellings to the foul drainage network and improving High Elms pedestrian crossing. Nonetheless, Taylor Wimpey will continue to review the 'Aspirational Projects' and will keep under consideration if appropriate contributions can be made towards a project that is sufficiently related to the planning application.	Noted.
72.	SM	Chapter 12 Projects	The aspirational projects will move the indicative style into the next phase of the development of Bedmond and if treated sensitively will enhance the gentle and quiet aspects of the village which sits in its landscape unchanged yet quietly shifting forward to accommodate the next years of development. (i am of the strong opinion that the Data Centre planned for the site adjacent to the M25 in Bedmond is - long term - visually and physically destructive)	Noted.
73.	SM	Non Policy Actions	should be seen and recognised - protected and enhanced where possible. They could easily be over looked and this could be a mistake where they will cause radical change	
74.	HCC	Design Guidance	The Abbots Langley Design Guidance and Codes are well thought through and documented with sensitivity to an area which should be preserved for its historic references and unique setting. While the references are subtle they are important as they retain links with the relationship to the land and its natural materials and tonal qualities. The photographs serve to focus the colour palette and the vernacular styles indicative of the landscape	Noted.

Ref	Who ?	Page/para/ policy	Comments/ Proposed change	SG response (to be agreed by the SG)
75.	2	General	Public Health seeks to support the making of Neighbourhood Plans by providing consultation feedback to ensure that they comply with national and local policy and guidance, whilst also improving the health and wellbeing of Hertfordshire residents. Public Health recommends that a Health Impact Assessment (HIA) should be conducted during the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan to ensure that health and wellbeing are fully considered. This will ensure that the Neighbourhood Plan policies optimise health benefits. It also recommends the inclusion of a HIA policy in the Neighbourhood Plan to ensure that new developments are not creating any health inequalities through poor design. For more information on HIA please refer to our website: The role of Public Health in planning | Hertfordshire County Council. It is important that planning policies consider access to healthier food in planning application decisions. Having a healthy food environment is important for achieving healthy communities. Neighbourhood Plans provide an opportunity to create places that enable people to have a healthy weight by supporting healthy diets and healthy food provision. There are a range of policies that can help create healthy food environments such as: • Promoting local food growing opportunities • Hot food takeaway management zones • Hot food takeaway retail management policy • Restricting unhealthy food advertising Public Health is pleased to see a variety of health-related polices embedded in the draft Neighbourhood Plan. It is clear to see that the Parish Council have a good understanding of how the planning system can positively shape our environments to improve health inequalities through	Noted. The Design Guidance and Code embeds these principles. Noted.

Ref	Who ?	Page/para/ policy	Comments/ Proposed change	SG response (to be agreed by the SG)
			Neighbourhood Plans. It is hoped that the recommendations, provided above, will help strengthen the proposed policies to achieve healthy places for residents, which will prevent health inequalities and reduce pressure on health and social care services. HCC Public Health recommends that hot food takeaway premises should be located away from places that are regularly visited by younger people such as schools and consideration should be given to the proximity to other community uses where the residents can be vulnerable, for example refuges and temporary accommodation for the homeless. HCC Public Health support adopting a 400m hot food takeaway management zone around these areas (schools and community assets), whereby new proposals for hot food takeaways would be refused, to prevent any adverse harm and support healthier lifestyles. The inclusion of this policy would support paragraph 97 of the NPPF. Reference to: • ‘Hertfordshire Health and Wellbeing Planning Guidance’; • Public Health England’s ‘Spatial Planning for Health’ evidence resources • NHS England ‘Putting Health into Place, 10 Principles’ Guidance document 2019; and • TCPA’s ‘Planning for Healthy Places’ guidance document 2024. These documents set out our expectation in terms of the delivery of healthy development and communities and focusses on the principle of ‘designing in’ health and wellbeing as an essential part of the planning process. In doing so, this recognises the wider determinants of health as a diverse range of social, economic, and environmental factors which influence people’s mental and physical health.	This is now required at national policy level.

Ref	Who ?	Page/para/ policy	Comments/ Proposed change	SG response (to be agreed by the SG)
			Flooding: It is recommended that opportunities for SuDS retrofit are taken within the Neighbourhood Plan. Transport: The Highway Authority's primary interest in the Neighbourhood Plan is in relation to its approach to highway and transport matters. HCC aims to provide a safe, efficient and resilient transport system that serves the needs of businesses and residents across Hertfordshire and to minimise impact on the environment. Transport's comments, summarised above, reflect HCC's commitment to moving towards more sustainable modes of transport and movement as set out in the Hertfordshire LTP.	Noted.

TRDC Local Green Space comments:

Primrose Hill Playing fields

Is close to the community it serves, locally significant through its recreational value and is local in character and is not an extensive tract of land. It is therefore considered that this LGS allocation likely conforms with the NPPF. However, it must be noted, that the site is designated as "open space" as part of the current Three Rivers Local Plan, which is not signified in Appendix F.

SG Comment: This has been amended.

Longspring Wood Grounds

Is close to the community it serves, locally significant through its recreational, wildlife and tranquillity value, is local in character and is not an extensive tract of land. It is therefore considered that this LGS allocation conforms with the NPPF. The site is also within the Metropolitan Green Belt, which is not listed as a "designation".

SG comment: Amended.

Bedmond playing fields

Is close to the community it serves, locally significant through its recreational value, is local in character and is not an extensive tract of land. However, the LGS allocation should not include buildings or hardstanding within the wider site. It is then considered that it would conform with the NPPF. The site is also within the Metropolitan Green Belt and designated as “open space” as part of the current Three Rivers Local Plan, which is not listed as a “designation”.
SG comment: Amended.

Bell Lane (TRDC owned)

The reasoning for designation may need to be justified further due to the small size of this designation. There are concerns that this may not be a suitable LGS allocation given its size. Additionally, only part of the verged area appears to be mapped as a LGS, which may cause confusion as to how much of the verge is allocated as an LG S. The site is also within the Metropolitan Green Belt, which is not listed as a “designation”.
SG comment**:** Mapping has been amended**.** Whilst a small space, this is a much valued and well-cared for space in Bedmond and is considered to meet the criteria.

Manor House Grounds
Is close to the community it serves, locally significant through its recreational and historical value, is local in character and is not an extensive tract of land. However, the LGS allocation should not include buildings or hardstanding (including tennis courts) within the wider site. Following amendment to the mapping, it is then considered that it would likely conform with the NPPF. However, it must be noted, that the site is designated as “a site of archaeological interest” and “open space” as part of the current Three Rivers Local Plan, which is not signified in Appendix F.
SG comment: Amended. The map has been slightly revised to remove the buildings, however the tennis courts are intrinsic to the local green space and are retained.

Millennium Gardens
The reasoning for designation may need to be justified further. There are strong concerns that this may not be a suitable LGS allocation given its size and that a significant proportion of the allocation consists of hardstanding (in the form of paving).
SG comment: Whilst small, this is a much treasured space in the village. Additional historic information has been provided.

Kitters Green
Is close to the community it serves, locally significant through its recreational and historical value, is local in character and is not an extensive tract of land. However, the LGS allocation should not include hardstanding and further justification are required with regards to its beauty and wildlife value (or these removed). Amend map to remove the road Info board, historic sheep pen located here.
SG comment: The road and sheep pens for part of the space and are retained. National policy allows for works required to roads to be completed, even within a local green space. The sheep pen is one of the historic features of the site.

Tanners Wood (TRDC owned)
Is close to the community it serves, locally significant through its recreational and wildlife value, is local in character and is not an extensive tract of land. It is therefore considered that this LGS allocation likely conforms with the NPPF. However, the site is also a Local Wildlife Site, which is not listed as a “designation”.
SG comment: Amended.

Hazelwood Lane/Upper Highway (7 spaces) (TRDC owned)
Some of the smaller parcels of land need further individual explanation and justification as to why they are locally significant and used recreationally. There are concerns that not all of the parcels of land identified are appropriate. It may also be helpful to identify them as a, b, c etc so that they can be identified and justified individually. Additionally, the mapping of the LGS should not include any hardstanding (including parking areas) or buildings.
SG comment: the spaces identified form an intrinsic part of this housing estate and were part of the original design to give a sense of openness and provide communal spaces for the residents. The SG are minded to retain the space.
Tanners Hill Green (TRDC owned)
Is close to the community it serves, locally significant through its recreational value, is local in character and is not an extensive tract of land. It is therefore considered that this LGS allocation likely conforms with the NPPF.
SG comment: Noted.
School Mead Green
Is close to the community it serves, locally significant through its recreational value, is local in character and is not an extensive tract of land. It is therefore considered that this LGS allocation likely conforms with the NPPF. However, the mapping should not include parking areas. The site is also currently designated as an open space, not stated in Appendix F. Strip on edge needs to come off the map (school mead)
SG comment: The parkig strip has been removed from the map. Description amended.

Abbots Langley Horses' Field (TRDC owned)
Is close to the community it serves, locally significant through its recreational, wildlife (and maybe historic) value, is local in character and is not an extensive tract of land. It is therefore considered that this LGS allocation likely conforms with the NPPF. The site is also currently designated as an open space and is located within the Green Belt, which is not stated in Appendix F under designations.
SG comment: Amended.
Leavesden Country Park (TRDC owned)
Whilst the site is close to the community it serves and is locally significant, the allocation consists of an extensive tract of land and includes a variety of hardstanding (including roads) and buildings within the mapped area. Further consideration is required with regards to how to present this large LGS and given the existing designations, whether an LGS designation is even required.
SG comment: Following discussion, the SG are minded to retain this important space as a Local Green Space.
Leavesden High Road
Is close to the community it serves, locally significant through its recreational value, is local in character and is not an extensive tract of land. It is therefore considered that this LGS allocation likely conforms with the NPPF.
SG comment: Noted.
South Way Playing Fields (TRDC owned)
Is close to the community it serves, locally significant through its recreational value, is local in character and is not an extensive tract of land. However, the LGS allocation should not include buildings or hardstanding within the wider site. Following amendment to the mapping, it is then considered that it would likely conform with the NPPF. However, it must be noted, that the site is designated "open space" as part of the current Three Rivers Local Plan, and is in the Green Belt, which is not signified in Appendix F (designations).
SG comment: The buildings and hardstanding form an intrinsic part of the space in terms of being demonstrably special for recreation. The designation is not considered to hinder their use or future expansion for such uses. Designations amended.
Langleybury Cricket Ground

Is close to the community it serves, locally significant through its recreational value, is local in character and is not an extensive tract of land. However, the LGS allocation should not include buildings or hardstanding within the wider site. Following amendment to the mapping, it is then considered that it would likely conform with the NPPF. However, it must be noted, that the site is in the Green Belt, which is not signified in Appendix F (designations).
SG comment: The buildings and hardstanding form an intrinsic part of the space in terms of being demonstrably special for recreation. Designations amended.

Lower Field Warner Brothers

Is close to the community it serves, locally significant through its recreational and wildlife value, is local in character and is not an extensive tract of land. It is therefore considered that this LGS allocation likely conforms with the NPPF.
SG comment: Noted.

Jacketts Field Field Allotments (TRDC owned)

Is close to the community it serves, locally significant through its recreational value, is local in character and is not an extensive tract of land. It is therefore considered that this LGS allocation likely conforms with the NPPF.
SG comment: Noted.

ABBOTS LANGLEY PARISH COUNCIL

ABBOTS LANGLEY NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN 2025 TO 2041

Basic Conditions Statement

May 2025

Contents

1. Introduction 1

2. Basic condition (i) - conformity with national planning policy 4

3. Basic condition (iv) - contribution to sustainable development 15

4 Basic condition (v) - general conformity with the strategic policies of the development plan 18

5 Basic Condition (vi) - conformity with retained EU obligations 23

6 Basic condition (vii) - conformity with the prescribed conditions 23

7 Conclusion 24

1. Introduction

1.1. This Basic Conditions Statement has been produced to accompany the Abbots Langley Neighbourhood Plan (ALNP).

1.2. The relevant legal framework for the preparation and making of neighbourhood plans is supported by the Localism Act 2011 and the Neighbourhood Planning Act 2017 and found in the:

- Town and Country Planning Act 1990: ss. 61F, 61I, 61M-P and Schedule 4B
- Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004: ss 38A-C
- Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (2012 No.637) (as amended)

1.3. Paragraph 8(2) of Schedule 4B to the Town & Country Planning Act 1990 requires a neighbourhood plan to meet five basic conditions before it can proceed to a referendum. These are:

i. Having regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State it is appropriate to make the neighbourhood plan;
ii. The making of the neighbourhood development plan contributes to the achievement of sustainable development;
iii. The making of the neighbourhood development plan is in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in the development plan for the area of the authority (or any part of that area);
iv. The making of the neighbourhood development plan does not breach, and is otherwise compatible with, (retained) EU obligations; and
v. Prescribed conditions are met in relation to the neighbourhood plan and prescribed matters have been complied with in connection with the proposal for the neighbourhood plan. The prescribed condition is that the 'making' of the neighbourhood plan is not likely to have a significant effect on a European site (as defined in the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2012) or a European offshore marine site (as defined in the Offshore Marine Conservation (Natural Habitats etc.) Regulations 2007) (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects).

1.4. There are two further basic conditions which are relevant only to the making of a Neighbourhood Development Order and are therefore not considered in this document.

1.5. This document sets out how the ALNP meets the Basic Conditions.

Supporting documents and evidence

1.6. The Submission Version ALNP, with its policies, is supported by a Consultation Statement, this Basic Conditions Statement and an extensive evidence base. It has also been subject to a Screening, organised by Three Rivers District Council (TRDC), to ascertain whether it requires a Strategic Environmental Assessment and/or a Habitat Regulations Assessment, and the Determination Statement is included as part of the accompanying documentation. Neither are required.

1.7. Alongside the planning policies, the ALNP contains a series of Aspirational Projects and other actions which fall outside planning policy. These are intended to contribute towards the achievement of the Plan's vision and could form the basis of the principles for the use of any developer funding and other monies arising from other planning obligations. They complement the Neighbourhood Plan document but are not a formal part of the Development Plan.

Key statements

1.8. The Neighbourhood Area shares its boundary with that of the Abbots Langley Parish (*Figure 1*).

1.9. TRDC designated the Abbots Langley Neighbourhood Area on 18 November 2014.

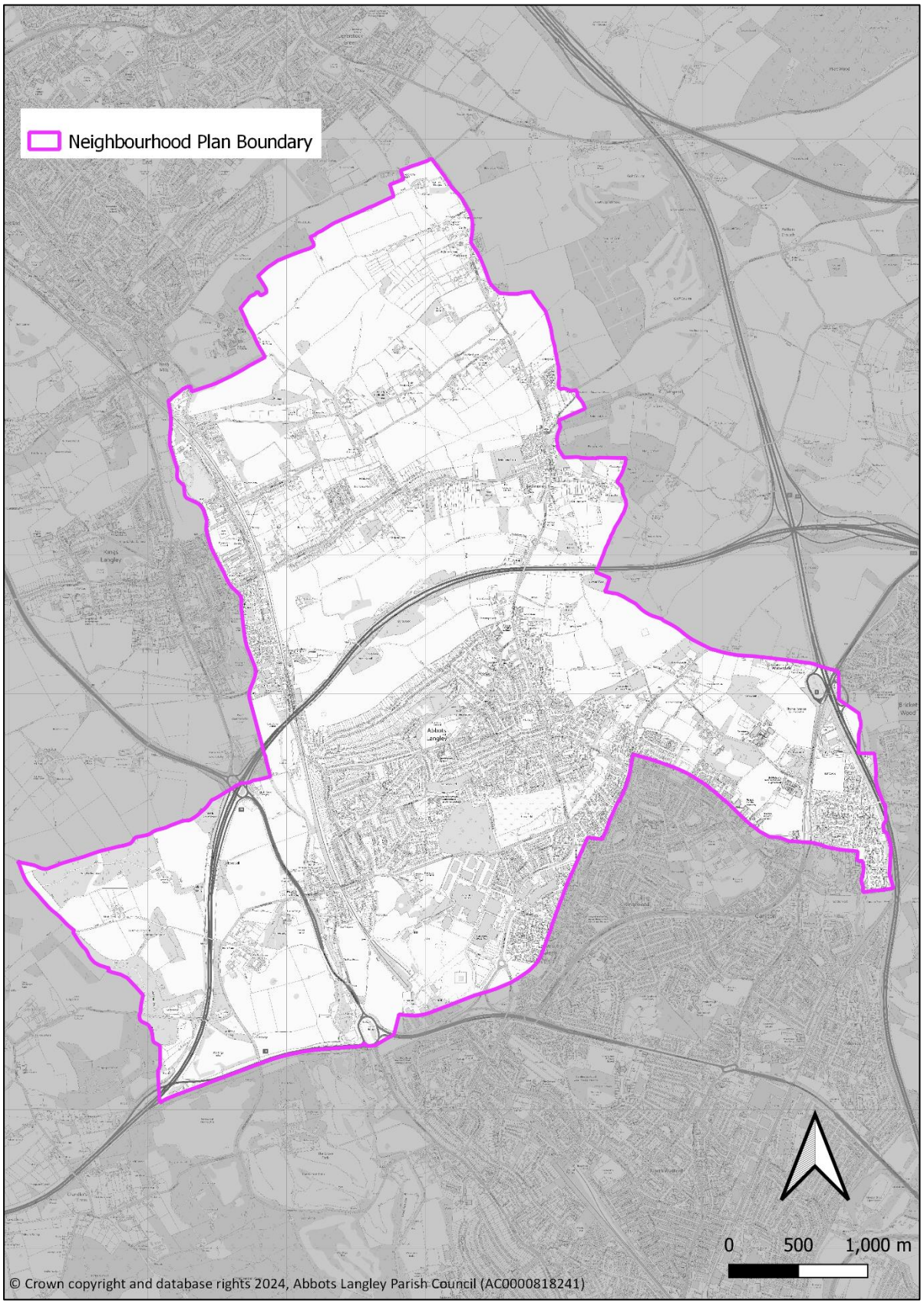
1.10. The ALNP sets out planning policies that relate to the development and use of land within the Abbots Langley Neighbourhood Area only.

1.11. The ALNP refers only to the administrative boundary of the parish. There are no other adopted Neighbourhood Plans that cover all or part of the Abbots Langley Neighbourhood Area.

1.12. The Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group has prepared the ALNP to establish a vision for the future of the parish. It has engaged with the community to set out how the vision will be realised through planning and controlling land use and development change over the plan period 2024 to 2038.

1.13. The Plan does not contain any policies which relate to excluded development as defined by section 61K of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

Figure 1: Abbots Langley Neighbourhood Development Plan designated area



2. Basic condition (i) - conformity with national planning policy

2.1. To meet this condition, it is necessary to demonstrate that the ALNP has regard to national planning policies and the advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State. National policy and guidance are contained within the National Planning Policy Framework ('NPPF') and the Planning Practice Guidance ('PPG').

2.2. It should be noted that the Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared in accordance with the NPPF, most recently revised in December 2024 (with additional minor revisions in February 2025).

National Planning Policy Framework

2.3. The NPPF has 13 key objectives which are:

- Delivering a sufficient supply of homes
- Building a strong, competitive economy
- Ensuring the vitality of town centres
- Promoting healthy and safe communities
- Promoting sustainable transport
- Supporting high quality communications
- Making effective use of land
- Achieving well-designed places
- Protecting Green Belt land
- Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change
- Conserving and enhancing the natural environment
- Conserving and enhancing the historic environment
- Facilitating the sustainable use of minerals

2.4. This Basic Conditions statement explains how the ALNP policies contribute to meeting these objectives, where relevant, and also notes the specific national policies that the Plan is intended to support and supplement.

2.5. The vision for the ALNP is shown in *Table 1*:

Table 1: Vision for the ALNP

In 2041, Abbots Langley is a predominantly semi-rural parish, its main settlements surrounded by Green Belt. Abbots Langley Village itself is a thriving destination, capitalising on increasing numbers of visitors to the parish and providing a range of shopping and eating opportunities as well as leisure activities. The historic core remains, and new developments reflect the local character of the area to maintain the village feel with sufficient local facilities to meet the primary retail, healthcare, child education and leisure/sport activities for local residents. The Abbots Langley Village Centre has been improved following proposals in the Masterplan. Visitors are attracted by the continued presence of the Warner Bros. Studios, which has been expanded to provide additional facilities and opportunities for local employment. Additionally, the regeneration along the Grand Union Canal has encourage more canal traffic, and increased footfall in the village centre. The development of smaller and more affordable properties, in-keeping with the local area, has enabled first time buyers and new families to move into the area, bringing renewed energy to the area and a perpetuation of local events and activities. Older people in the area have the opportunity to downsize to more manageable properties, freeing up homes for growing families. These families are attracted to the area because of the excellent schools, which have expanded to meet the local need and are more accessible with improved links east-west through the parish. New homes have been designed sustainably to reduce their impact on the environment. Opportunities to enable people to work from home, should they wish, combined with the retention of a series of global businesses, has meant that fewer people are commuting out as jobs and training are available locally. Those that are commuting find it easier to get to Kings Langley station as the public transport, pedestrian and cycle access have been improved. Public transport services should be well maintained particularly local train services at Kings Langley Station. The growing community's needs are well-met with an expanded medical centre as a District Health Hub, new playgrounds and leisure facilities and the ongoing resource offered by the Henderson Hub. The green spaces across the parish, well-linked by footpaths and cycle-paths, enable locals to enjoy the countryside on their doorstep. Equally these areas provide a haven for wildlife and native plants, increasing local biodiversity. The parish has been able to install additional electric vehicle charging points at key locations and at new developments. A local car sharing scheme/ on-demand public transport /shared taxis services have reduced the need for multiple car-owning households and on-street residential parking pressures. This, in combination with the planting of trees and vegetation along the main routes, has helped to reduce the air and noise pollution. Houses have been well insulated and implemented alternative heating systems with less dependence on fossil fuels. The community is more balanced in the age groups living here.

2.6. Eight objectives have been identified to support the vision and the planning policies are couched within these.

2.7. *Table 2* sets out each objective against the relevant NPPF goal.

2.8. *Table 3* provides further detail by setting out the policies of the ALNP and which specific paragraphs of the NPPF each has had regard to along with a commentary.

Table 2: Assessment of the ALNP objectives against NPPF (2024) goals

ALNP objective	Relevant NPPF goal
OBJECTIVE 1: Influencing new developments to be sustainably sited and to contribute to both the local housing needs of the parish while helping to deliver the district-wide housing requirement, including more affordable housing (of all types) as well as housing that addresses the needs of residents of all ages.	• Making effective use of land • Delivering a sufficient supply of homes • Conserving and enhancing the natural environment • Promoting healthy and safe communities
OBJECTIVE 2: Supporting new development that reflects the high-quality local context in terms of building style and materials and is sensitively designed to be attractive, to minimise flood risk, mitigate climate change, promote biodiversity and reduce our carbon footprint.	• Making effective use of land • Achieving well-designed places • Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change • Promoting healthy and safe communities
OBJECTIVE 3: Strengthening, supporting and promoting local economic activity in all retail, industrial, commercial and professional activities and maximise opportunities for tourism including the regeneration of the Grand Union Canal.	• Building a strong, competitive economy • Ensuring the vitality of town centres • Promoting healthy and safe communities
OBJECTIVE 4: Conserving both historic and the environmental assets of the parish, preserving the green setting of the settlements and the individual green spaces within them, ensuring that they are linked to create wildlife corridors. Maintaining as much as possible, the five distinctive statutory purposes of Green Belt policies in the Parish.	• Conserving and enhancing the natural environment • Conserving and enhancing the historic environment • Protecting Green Belt land
OBJECTIVE 5: Encouraging the provision of local infrastructure and facilities including expanded primary health care facilities and sufficient school places to address the needs of existing and future residents.	• Promoting healthy and safe communities
OBJECTIVE 6: Improving sustainable transport and movement across the parish, in particular through electric vehicle modes, on-demand services and public transport, specifically ensuring there is a safe	• Promoting sustainable transport • Promoting healthy and safe communities

environment for pedestrians and cyclists as well as motorists.	
OBJECTIVE 7: Exploring the potential for viable renewable energy projects locally, serving and ideally owned by the local community.	• Conserving and enhancing the natural environment • Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change
OBJECTIVE 8: Encouraging the production of local food including local farms, horticulture, community projects and private gardens/allotments	• Promoting healthy and safe communities

Table 3: Assessment of how each policy in the ALNP conforms to the NPPF

Policy Title and Reference	NPPF Ref.	Commentary
POLICY AL1: SPATIAL STRATEGY: LOCATION AND SCALE OF DEVELOPMENT	7, 8, 29, 61, 73, 77, 82-84, 96, 98, 111, 124-126, 129, 130, 135, 142-160, 187	A core principle of national policy is the need for the planning system to contribute to sustainable development. The NPPF states that plans should support strategic development needs as established in the adopted Local Plan and actively manage patterns of growth. Policy AL1 is an important policy in the context of the Neighbourhood Plan. It seeks to ensure that any development is directed to the most appropriate, sustainable locations, where there is easy access to the main village services and facilities. This will help to protect the wider landscape of the parish and safeguard against the coalescence of the individual settlements within the parish and also those nearby. It supports the development strategy set out in the adopted Local Plan and seeks to align with the new Local Plan. The policy supports the reuse of previously developed (brownfield land) where feasible and also bringing redundant / agricultural buildings back into use. The policy, attached great weight to the green belt, notwithstanding national changes to the way this – and grey belt land – is considered. This will contribute to sustainable development by ensuring that development takes place in the most appropriate places.
POLICY AL2: HOUSING MIX	61-68, 71, 82-84, 156, 157	National policy supports the delivery of homes that meet the needs of groups with specific housing requirements and the size, type and tenure of housing needed for different groups in the community should is assessed and reflected in planning policies. Policy AL2 sets this out for the neighbourhood area, evidenced by a Abbots Langley Housing Needs Assessment and drawing on the findings of the Strategic Local

		Housing Needs Assessment.
POLICY AL3: CHARACTER OF DEVELOPMENT	73, 77, 84, 96, 109, 129, 130, 131-140, 187,203	The NPPF states that neighbourhood planning groups can play an important role in identifying the special qualities of each area and explaining how this should be reflected in development. Policy AL3 is underpinned by the Abbots Langley Design Guidance and Code, which forms an integral part of the neighbourhood plan. It defines, at the local level, the character areas that make up the parish and how proposals should respond to the specific characteristics of each. An important aspect of this is ensuring that the rural edges of development are carefully considered, to ensure that planning applications contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment. Furthermore, that new development makes a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness in the context of the historic environment.
POLICY AL4: DESIGN OF DEVELOPMENT	73, 77, 84, 96, 109, 129, 130, 131-140, 182, 187,203	The policy has a close relationship with Policy AL3 and also AL5. It sets out broad parameters for the parish that will contribute to the delivery of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings.
POLICY AL5: ENVIRONMENTALLY SUSTAINABLE DESIGN	131-140, 161-167	National policy states that plans should take a proactive approach to mitigating and adapting to climate change. Notwithstanding the fact that many of these factors are dictated via building regulations, Policy AL5 takes a proactive approach to setting out the methods that applicants should seek to include within development proposals to support this national aim. The policy also sets out some general parameters for supporting community and renewable energy schemes, a renewed government priority.
POLICY AL6: HERITAGE ASSETS	135, 202, 203, 206, 207-217, 219	National policy states that plans should set out a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment. Policy AL6 sets out how this can be achieved in Abbots Langley parish. In particular, it identifies a non-designated heritage

		assets, additional to those already recorded on the Local List held by TRDC.
POLICY AL7: ABBOTS LANGLEY VILLAGE CENTRE AND OTHER LOCAL CENTRES	85, 88, 89, 90, 96, 98, 101, 111a, 125	The village centre and smaller, local centres, contribute both to the local economy and also the social aspects of the area. National policy recognises this and encourages planning policies to achieve healthy, inclusive and safe places which, for instance, plan positively for the provision and use of shared spaces, community facilities (such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, open space, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship) and other local services to enhance the sustainability of communities and residential environment. Policy AL6 complements this by setting out how the village and local centres can continue to be viable mixed-use spaces, enabling social interactions. It recognises the role that residential development can play in ensuring the vitality of village centres (notably on upper floors). It is supported by the Abbots Langley Village Centre Masterplan.
POLICY AL8: SUPPORTING RECREATION AND SUSTAINABLE TOURISM	85, 88, 89	The policy supports the national aims for enabling a strong economy, notably focussing on sustainable tourism and recreational opportunities. The parish is well-positioned near to a number of national tourism attractions to capitalise on the visitor economy, where this can be achieved sustainably.
POLICY AL9: A SAFE, ATTRACTIVE AND WELCOMING VILLAGE CENTRE	88, 90, 96, 98, 103, 105, 109, 131-141	Policy AL9 seeks to encourage improvements to the overall look and feel of Abbots Langley village centre, in line with the Village Centre masterplan. This will contribute to the national aim of achieving healthy, inclusive and safe places.
POLICY AL10: NATURAL LANDSCAPE AND	103, 136, 187, 188	This policy seeks to ensure that development proposals have carefully considered how they will mitigate their impacts on the natural environment and landscape and go further in contributing and enhancing it. It sets out the key features of the natural landscape that are particularly important and reflective of the area including trees and

ENVIRONMENT		hedgerows. It supports the use of wildlife-friendly features within developments.
POLICY AL11: GREEN AND BLUE INFRASTRUCTURE AND BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN	103, 136, 187, 188, 192, 193	Closely related to Policy AL10, this policy focusses on improving biodiversity locally, in line with national planning policy. In line with the Environment Act, the policy requires developments to deliver a biodiversity net gain of at least 10%, although at least 20% is encouraged in line with advice from the Wildlife Trusts. Where this cannot be achieved on-site, there is a desire for it to be delivered within the Parish in the first instance.
POLICY AL12: LOCALLY SIGNIFICANT VIEWS	131-135, 187	The policy identifies 15 views that have been identified as particularly important, for instance where they take in particularly valued landscapes and/heritage assets. This aligns with national policy, which supports neighbourhood planning groups in identifying the special qualities of each area and explaining how this should be reflected in development.
POLICY AL13: LOCAL GREEN SPACE	106-108, 153-160	The policy seeks to designate 17 local green spaces, which are demonstrably special to the local community, and which have been assessed against the national policy criteria.
POLICY AL14: PROVIDE, MAINTAIN AND IMPROVE PUBLIC FACILITIES FOR THE COMMUNITY	96, 98, 101, 103-105	National policy sets out that planning policies and decisions should aim to achieve healthy, inclusive and safe places and plan positively for the provision and use of shared spaces, community facilities (such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, open space, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship) and other local services to enhance the sustainability of communities and residential environment. Policy AL14 supports this by setting out the specific needs of the community, supported by the justification text, and guarding against loss of important facilities.
POLICY AL15:	96, 98, 103	National policy states that access to a network of high-quality open spaces and

ALLOTMENTS AND COMMUNITY GROWING SPACES		opportunities for sport and physical activity is important for the health and well-being of communities and can deliver wider benefits for nature and support efforts to address climate change. Allotments contribute to this and Policy AL15 seeks to safeguard those that exist, while supporting the provision of new such space, in line with the proven need locally.
POLICY AL16: PROTECTION OF PUBLIC HOUSES	96, 98	Public houses contribute significantly to local life, providing opportunities for meetings between people who might not otherwise come into contact with each other. Such venues are under threat nationally, and this is demonstrated in the local area. The policy seeks to safeguard against the loss of public houses, contributing to achieving healthy, inclusive and safe places.
POLICY AL17: SAFEGUARD AND EXPAND EXISTING HEALTH SERVICES	96, 98, 101	National policy places significant weight on the importance of new, expanded or upgraded public service infrastructure – including health - when considering proposals for development. Policy AL17 supports this, supporting the retention of existing facilities and the expansion / provision of new ones where required to support a growing population.
POLICY AL18: SAFEGUARD AND EXPAND EXISTING EDUCATION PROVISION	96, 98, 100, 101	National policy notes that it is important that a sufficient choice of early years, school and post-16 places are available to meet the needs of existing and new communities. There are numerous schools in the parish and Policy AL18 supports their ongoing provision and sets out parameters against which new sites could be brought forward. The policy has received positive support from the Education Authority (Herts CC).
POLICY AL19: SUSTAINABLE TRAVEL	96, 105, 109, 110, 111, 115-117, 135	National policy supports the need to identify and pursue opportunities to promote walking, cycling and public transport use. Policy AL19 conforms to this idea by encouraging strong connectivity between development and 'active travel' networks. It sets out how proposals can achieve this in the local area. The policy also recognises the role of Roman roads and rural lanes, which relates strongly to Policies AL3

		(Character of development) and AL6 (Heritage Assets).
POLICY AL20: PUBLIC PARKING	109, 113	National policy supports the need to improve the quality of parking so that it is convenient, safe and secure, alongside measures to promote accessibility for pedestrians and cyclists. Policy AL20 aligns with this approach, recognising that whilst a shift to more active modes of travel is optimum, some users will continue to be reliant on their private vehicle to access services and facilities. The policy supports the installation of EV charging points and cycle parking at these locations.

3. Basic condition (iv) - contribution to sustainable development

3.1. The NPPF states in paragraph 7 that '*the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development*.'

3.2. For the ALNP, sustainable development has provided the fundamental basis of each of its policies. The National Planning Practice Guidance advises that '*sufficient and proportionate evidence should be presented on how the draft neighbourhood plan … guides development to sustainable solutions' (*Planning Practice Guidance, Paragraph: 072 Reference ID: 41-072-20140306).

3.3. *Table 5* summarises how the overarching ambitions and policies in the ALNP contribute towards economic, social and environmentally sustainable development, as defined in the NPPF. Many of the ambitions of the ALNP overlap the three strands of sustainability, so for the purposes of this document, the most relevant strand has been taken to illustrate conformity.

Table 4: Assessment of the ALNP ambitions and policies against sustainable development

Deliver economic sustainability
NPPF definition – *'to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure.'*
ALNP Objective: 3
NP Policies: Policy AL7: Abbots Langley village centre and other local centres Policy AL8: Supporting recreation and sustainable tourism Policy AL9: A safe, attractive and welcoming village centre
Commentary: The Plan includes three policies aimed at encouraging a strong economy. These recognise the important role that the village centre and smaller centres have in supporting the economy and local community. The policies seek to retain their vitality and viability and encourage footfall through improvements to the public realm. A Village Centre masterplan has been prepared as guidance for Abbots Langley village. The parish already attracts significant visitor numbers and the plan includes a policy to optimise this sector, to encourage longer stays and associated economic input. In these ways, the Plan seeks to contribute to building a sustainable economy.

Deliver social sustainability
NPPF definition – *'to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering a well-designed and safe built environment, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities' health, social and cultural well-being.'*
ALNP Objectives: 1, 5, 6, 8
NP Policies: Policy AL1: Spatial Strategy: Location and scale of development Policy AL2: Housing mix Policy AL14: Provide, maintain and improve public facilities for the community Policy AL15: Allotments and community growing spaces Policy AL16: Protection of public houses Policy AL17: Safeguard and expand existing health services Policy AL18: Safeguard and expand existing education provision Policy AL19: Sustainable travel Policy AL20: Public parking
Commentary: The NPPF underlines the importance of supporting strong, vibrant, inclusive and healthy communities by providing the supply of housing required to meet the needs of present and future generations and by creating a high-quality built environment, with accessible local services that reflect the community's needs and support its health, social and cultural well-being. Policy AL1 sets overarching principles to ensure that development is directed to the most sustainable locations. The ALNP has been developed following significant community engagement over a prolonged period to understand local priorities to contribute to this national objective. Whilst the Plan does not seek to allocate homes at this time (as it had been considered and agreed with the local planning authorities that this would be adequately addressed through the emerging Local Plan process), it does focus on the type, mix, size, tenure and affordability of housing that should be supported in the parish, based on the findings of the local housing needs assessment, which offers a more nuanced picture compared to the wider strategic area. The Plan includes policies to provide the social, recreational and cultural facilities and services to address the community's needs. A key principle of the ALNP is to support the sustainable location of new development. It supports active travel principles, whereby residents and visitors should have the opportunity to walk, cycle and ride safely if they choose. This will support healthier lifestyles and could also help to reduce local traffic on the roads. In these ways, the Plan aims to support social sustainability.

Deliver environmental sustainability
NPPF definition – ***'to contribute to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, helping to improve biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy,'***
ALNP Objectives: 2, 4, 7
NP Policies: Policy AL3: Character of development Policy AL4: Design of development Policy AL5: Environmentally sustainable design Policy AL6: Heritage assets Policy AL10: Natural Landscape and environment Policy AL11: Green and blue infrastructure and biodiversity net gain Policy AL12: Locally significant views Policy AL13: Local Green Space
Commentary: Policies to celebrate, protect and enhance the natural, built and historic environment of the parish is an important element of the ALNP and conforms to the national aims set out in the NPPF. A locally distinctive Abbots Langley Neighbourhood Area Design Guidance and Codes has been developed and forms an integral part of the plan, underpinning many of the policies. It sets out expectations including in relation to local character, design, biodiversity and environmental considerations. In terms of local character, the plan seeks to consolidate all those elements that make the parish – and its individual communities distinctive. This includes the identification of an additional non-designated heritage asset and locally important views and viewpoints. The policies embed the need for high-quality, sustainable design that incorporate the principles to help mitigate climate change. The Plan maps out the green spaces and corridors locally that form a network of habitats, with a view to encouraging their protection, improvement and connection. Natural features distinctive to the parish are identified, to encourage their protection and for inclusion in the design of new development. In addition, a series of Local Green Spaces, considered to be demonstrably special to the community, are designated. The Plan emphasises the need to promote more sustainable modes of transport in order to reduce traffic congestion and carbon emissions, while supporting healthy lifestyles. In these ways, the Plan seeks to contribute to protecting and enhancing the natural, built and historic environment of the neighbourhood area.

3.4. As demonstrated in *Table 3*, the strategic objectives of the Plan are considered to comprise a balance of social, economic, and environmental goals. The policies in the Plan demonstrably contribute to sustainable development.

4 Basic condition (v) - general conformity with the strategic policies of the development plan

4.1. The policies of the ALNP must be in general conformity with the adopted strategic policies of the adopted Local Plan:

- Three Rivers District Core Strategy 2011-2026, (adopted October 2011) and sets out key planning policies for the district.
- Development Management Policies (adopted) 2013)
- Site Allocations Local Development Document (adopted 2014).

4.2. A new Local Plan to 2041 is being prepared. The Local Plan Regulation 18 consultation Part 4: Three Rivers' Preferred Local Plan Lower Housing Growth Option - Protecting More Green Belt Land ran from 27 October to 10 December 2023. The new Local Plan seeks to deliver 4,852 new homes over the period to 2041. However, this projected housing figure is being reviewed again in light of a potential new National Government housing target for the District of 13,300 houses.

4.3. The latest Local Development Scheme (December 2024), suggests that the new Local Plan will be published for consultation at Regulation 19 in February/March 2026 although following the Extraordinary Full Council Meeting on 7 January 2025, Members have agreed that officers should aim to publish the Regulation 19 draft plan by 7 November 2025. Examination is scheduled for summer 2026 and adoption anticipated at the end of2026. Work on the neighbourhood plan has been mindful of its emerging content.

4.4. It is confirmed that there are no policies in the strategic documents relating to minerals and waste that are of relevance to the ALNP.

4.5. *Table 5* sets out which adopted Development Plan policies each ALNP policy conforms to, where Place-Shaping policies are prefixed with PSP and Core Policies with CP (within the Core Strategy, 2011).

Table 5: Relevant strategic policies in the adopted local plan

Policy Title and Reference	Adopted Three Rivers Policy	Commentary
POLICY AL1: SPATIAL STRATEGY: LOCATION AND SCALE OF DEVELOPMENT	Core Strategy: PSP2, CP1, CP2, CP11; Development Management Policies: DM2 Site Allocations Local Development Document: SA1	The Core Strategy (2011) identifies Abbots Langley as a Key centre and seeks to focus development within the built up urban area and on previously developed land. Policy AL1 accords with this and expands on it by providing additional broad parameters in terms of location of development, to ensure that sustainable locations are prioritised. Strategic policy applies great importance to the Green Belt and this is supported in the ALNP, bearing in mind national policy changes relating this this matter.
POLICY AL2: HOUSING MIX	Core Strategy: CP1, CP3, CP4	TRDC require housing proposals to take into account the range of housing needs, in terms of size and type of dwellings as identified by the Strategic Housing Market Assessment and subsequent updates. Policy AL2 provides additional evidence by way of the Abbots Langley Housing Needs Assessment, to set out specific needs within the parish.
POLICY AL3: CHARACTER OF DEVELOPMENT	Core Strategy: PSP2, CP1, CP12;	Strategic policy seeks to ensure that development proposals have regard to the local context and conserve or enhance the character, amenities and quality of an area. Policy AL3 is underpinned by the Abbots Langley Design Guidance and Codes, which set out what this means in practice at the neighbourhood area level.
POLICY AL4: DESIGN OF DEVELOPMENT	Core Strategy: CP1, CL2, CP12; Development Management Policies: DM1, DM8, DM9, DM10, DM13	TRDC promote a high standard of design. Policy AL4 provides additional detail as to how this can be achieved in the parish, including the incorporation of sustainable drainage and mechanisms to enable homes to suit different ages and abilities. It is underpinned by the guidance contained in the Abbots Langley Design Guidance and Codes.

POLICY AL5: ENVIRONMENTALLY SUSTAINABLE DESIGN	Core Strategy: CP1, CP12; Development Management Policies: DM4, DM5	The Core Strategy (2011) includes broad clauses to tackle climate change. Policy AL5 expands on these with specific measures that should be considered within development proposals. It also provides some broad parameters against which community and renewable energy schemes should be considered.
POLICY AL6: HERITAGE ASSETS	Core Strategy: CP1, CP12; Development Management Policies: DM3	Strategic policy seeks to conserve and enhance natural and heritage assets. Policy AL6 provides additional detail on how this can be achieved locally, including the identification of a non-designated heritage asset.
POLICY AL7: ABBOTS LANGLEY VILLAGE CENTRE AND OTHER LOCAL CENTRES	Core Strategy: CP1, CP6, CP7	Abbots Langley is considered a District Centre in adopted policy, comprising a varied but more limited range of shops and services and serving a smaller catchment area. Policy AL7 updates strategic policy and provides a set of criteria more nuanced to the specific needs of the village centre, and also small local centres.
POLICY AL8: SUPPORTING RECREATION AND SUSTAINABLE TOURISM	Core Strategy: CP1, CP6	Policy CP6 sets out broad principles for supporting a prosperous local economy. Policy AL8 supports this, identifying the tourism sector as particularly important to optimise in Abbots Langley, bearing in mind its proximity to a number of national visitor attractions.
POLICY AL9: A SAFE, ATTRACTIVE AND WELCOMING VILLAGE CENTRE	Core Strategy: CP1, CP12	Strategic policy seeks to make a clear distinction between public and private spaces and enhance the public realm; and ensure that places, spaces and buildings are accessible to all potential users, including those with mobility difficulties. Policy AL9 adds to this in the context of Abbots Langley village centre and is informed by the Village Centre Masterplan, prepared alongside the neighbourhood plan.
POLICY AL10: NATURAL LANDSCAPE AND ENVIRONMENT	Core Strategy: CP1, CP9, CP12; Development Management Policies: DM6, DM7, DM11	Policy AL10 adds additional local detail to strategic policy by identifying specific features of the landscape that contribute significantly to local character and sets out how these should be considered and managed.

POLICY AL11: GREEN AND BLUE INFRASTRUCTURE AND BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN	Core Strategy: CP1, CP9; Development Management Policies: DM6, DM7	Strategic policy seeks to enhance green infrastructure assets in the district. Policy AL11 embellishes this against the backdrop of updated national policy in this area, notably around biodiversity net gain. It maps the network of spaces and corridors which can contribute to this.
POLICY AL12: LOCALLY SIGNIFICANT VIEWS	Core Strategy: CP1, CP12; Development Management Policies: DM7	Strategic policy seeks to ensure that development proposals have regard to the local context and conserve or enhance the character, amenities and quality of an area. Policy AL12 identifies views in the parish that contribute to landscape character.
POLICY AL13: LOCAL GREEN SPACE	Core Strategy: CP1, CP9; Development Management Policies: DM6, DM7, DM11	Strategic policy supports the protection and enhancement of assets and provision of new green spaces. Policy AL13 aligns with this, identifying local green spaces that are of particular importance to the local community.
POLICY AL14: PROVIDE, MAINTAIN AND IMPROVE PUBLIC FACILITIES FOR THE COMMUNITY	Core Strategy: PSP2, CP1, CP8; Development Management Policies: DM11, DM12	Strategic policy seeks to protect and improve local facilities, including outdoor leisure space and youth facilities. The ALNP has added additional detail to local needs as a result of the local engagement undertaken.
POLICY AL15: ALLOTMENTS AND COMMUNITY GROWING SPACES	Core Strategy: CP1, CP8, CP9; Development Management Policies: DM11, DM12	Strategic policy supports the protection and enhancement of assets and provision of new green spaces. In addition Policy CP1 seeks to protect and enhance existing community, leisure and cultural facilities and provide new facilities. Allotments were identified as important locally and Policy AL15 reflects this.
POLICY AL16: PROTECTION OF PUBLIC HOUSES	Core Strategy: CP1, CP8; Development Management Policies: DM12	Policy CP1 seeks to protect and enhance existing community, leisure and cultural facilities and provide new facilities. Public houses are under threat in the parish and Policy AL16 seeks to protect them against change of use.

POLICY AL17: SAFEGUARD AND EXPAND EXISTING HEALTH SERVICES	Core Strategy: CP1, CP8; Development Management Policies: DM12	Policy CP1 supports the provision of necessary infrastructure to enable and/ or support development, including (but not limited to) transport, education, health, green infrastructure, utilities, waste facilities, wastewater, leisure, cultural and community facilities. Policy AL17 provides local detail to add to this, which has been identified as an important priority locally.
POLICY AL18: SAFEGUARD AND EXPAND EXISTING EDUCATION PROVISION	Core Strategy: PSP2, CP1, CP8; Development Management Policies: DM12	The policy aligns with the strategic ambition to expand existing schools and/or provide new schools meet identified needs in the Key Centres.
POLICY AL19: SUSTAINABLE TRAVEL	Core Strategy: CP1, CP10	The policy conforms to strategic policy in terms of supporting improved access by public transport, walking and cycling.
POLICY AL20: PUBLIC PARKING	Core Strategy: CP1, CP10; Development Management Policies: DM13	Strategic policy supports the provision of infrastructure, such as secure cycle parking, that will encourage different modes of transport, integrated across the area. Policy AL20 supports this approach.

5 Basic Condition (vi) - conformity with retained EU obligations

5.1 The ALNP, and the process under which it was made, conforms to the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directive (EU 2001/42/EC) and the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (the Regulations).

5.2 In accordance with Regulation 9 of the SEA Regulations 2004, TRDC, as the responsible authority, determined in February 2023 that a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) is not required as the ALNP's policies – individually or collectively - are unlikely to have significant environmental effects.

5.3 The SEA Screening Statement is contained within the evidence base submitted alongside the Submission Version ALNP.

6 Basic condition (vii) - conformity with the prescribed conditions

6.1 Under Directive 92/43/EEC, also known as the Habitats Directive (Directive 92/43/EEC 'on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora'), it must be ascertained whether the ALNP is likely to breach the requirements of Chapter 8 of Part 6 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017. Assessments under the regulations are known as Habitats Regulations Assessments ("HRA"). An appropriate assessment ("AA") is required only if the Plan is likely to have significant effects on a European protected species or site. To ascertain whether it is necessary to undertake an assessment, a screening process is followed.

6.2 TRDC, as the responsible authority, determined in February 2023 that the ALNP is unlikely to have significant impact on European sites and therefore does not require a full HRA to be undertaken.

6.3 In addition to conforming to its EU obligations, the ALNP does not breach and is not otherwise incompatible with the European Convention on Human Rights.

6.4 The HRA Screening Statement is contained within the evidence base submitted alongside the Submission Version ALNP.

7 Conclusion

7.1. The relevant basic conditions as set out in Schedule 4B to the TCPA 1990 are considered to be met by the Abbots Langley Neighbourhood Plan and all the policies therein. It is therefore respectfully suggested to the Examiner that the ALNP complies with Paragraph 8(1) (a) of Schedule 4B of the Act.

Abbots Langley CP

ABBOTS LANGLEY PARISH COUNCIL

Neighbourhood Area Designation Application Map - Edged Red

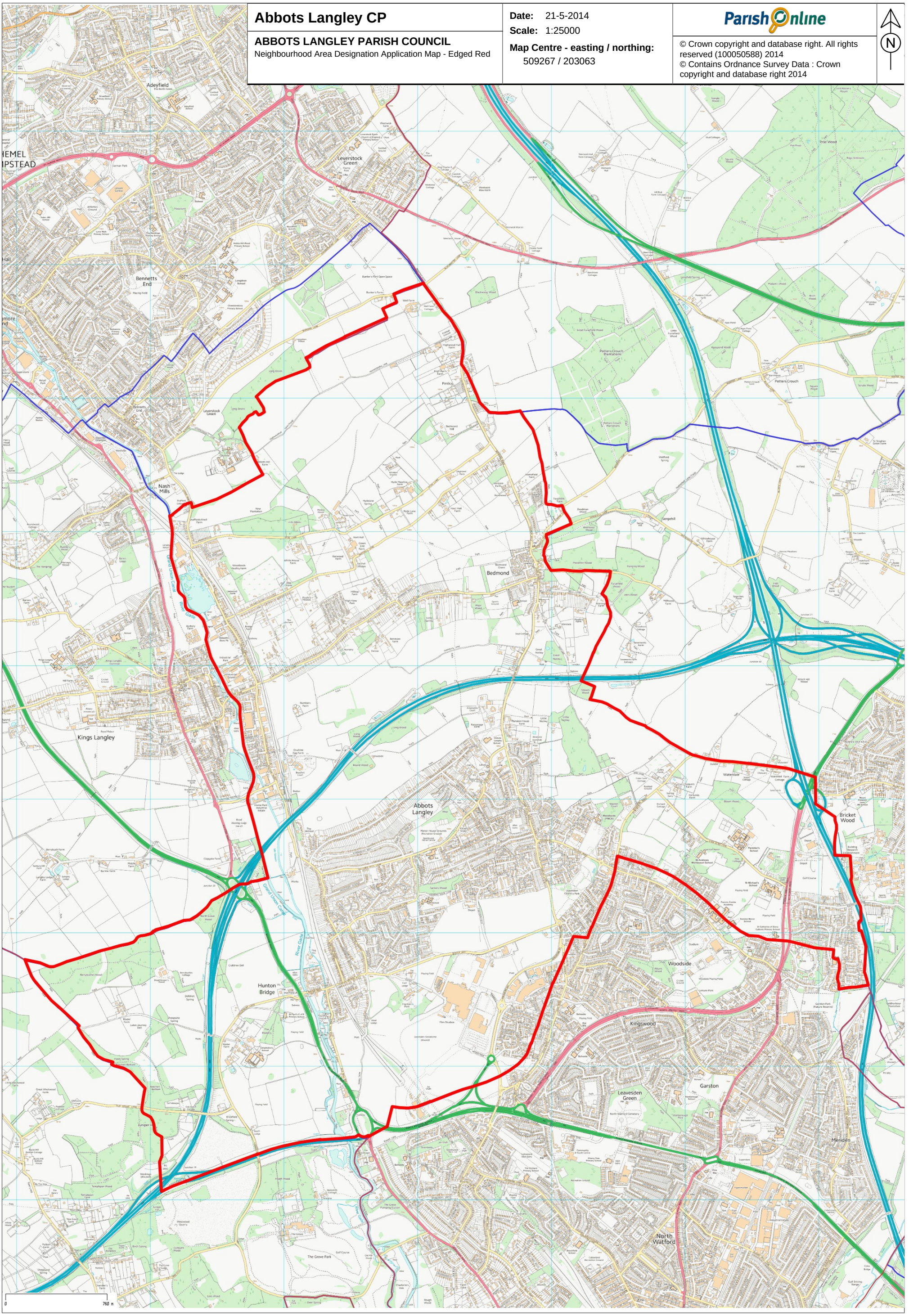
Date: 21-5-2014

Scale: 1:25000

Map Centre - easting / northing:
509267 / 203063

ParishOnline

© Crown copyright and database right. All rights reserved (100050588) 2014
© Contains Ordnance Survey Data : Crown copyright and database right 2014



This page is intentionally left blank