










A Sustainable Town

Final Draft Watford Local Plan
2018-2036



WATFORD
BOROUGH
COUNCIL

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Foreword

The Local Plan is a framework for how we grow our town so that it continues to be a great place to live, work and visit. With many challenges facing the community – including climate change, the shortage of homes, revitalising the town centre, delivery of new infrastructure, providing more jobs and protecting the environment and heritage of the town – we must be bold and ambitious. A new Local Plan is our opportunity to be exactly that, facing these issues head on to ensure Watford continues to flourish and grow in the best possible way.

Watford remains a popular town, and rightfully so, with beautiful award winning parks, excellent transport connections, a host of quality shops and restaurants, good schools and great leisure and cultural facilities. Plus, we are home to a thriving business community, ranging from TK Maxx European HQ to a cluster of pharmaceutical companies and a host of creative SMEs. These are all the reasons why we are proud to call Watford home.

It also means that our young people want to remain in Watford and others want to join our community. So we need to make sure we have the right homes in the right places and the much needed infrastructure to go with them.

The Local Plan sets out the best places to build homes and it protects and promotes the things that are important to people – like parks and green spaces, sustainable transport and community facilities.

Having a well thought through Local Plan in place means that we have our say on where development should be located. Otherwise, change will happen to our town in an unplanned way, with speculative development and little benefit to local community. A good Local Plan makes sure that decisions about the future of Watford are made here in the town and not by others.

Peter Taylor
Elected Mayor of Watford



How to use this document

The Local Plan covers a wide range of complex and interrelated issues that need to be considered when new development is proposed to ensure change can be managed to deliver benefits for the community. The Plan sets out planning policies to guide planning decisions, identifies strategic areas for growth. Strategic policies are indicated in the policy titles, any policies that are not specified as strategic are local policies.

The Local Plan and the Spatial Strategy

Introduces the Local Plan and sets out the objectives to be achieved when development comes forward.



Chapter 1:
**A Spatial Strategy for
Watford**

Introduces the Local Plan and provides an overview of key planning themes through the document. Sets out the approach to growth and the principles behind the Core Development Area. Proposals for new development are to accord with the respective strategic development area policy and with the strategic and Local Planning Policies elsewhere in the Local Plan.



Chapter 2:
Core Development Area

Sets out the principles for development in the Core Development Area and locally specific opportunities and constraints in the Strategic Development Areas.

Planning policies to guide development

Proposals for new development are to accord with strategic and Local Planning Policies across different chapters in the Local Plan.

	Chapter 3: Homes for a Growing Community	Introduces the Local Plan and provides an overview of key planning themes through the document. Sets out the approach to growth and the principles behind the Core Development Area. Proposals for new development are to accord with the respective strategic development area policy and with the strategic and Local Planning Policies elsewhere in the Local Plan.
	Chapter 4: A Strong Economy	Provides a structure to support economic growth and enable an economy that can adapt to changing economic conditions.
	Chapter 5: A Vibrant Town	A framework to retain Watford town centre as the focus for retail, leisure, entertainment and cultural activities with flexibility to adapt to changing economic conditions. This will be supported by a network of sustainable local centres.
	Chapter 6: An Attractive Town	This section sets out the design standards new development will be expected to achieve in order gain planning permission.
	Chapter 7: The Historic Environment	This section sets out the design standards new development will be expected to achieve in order gain planning permission.
	Chapter 8: A Climate Emergency	Sets out requirements that new buildings need to achieve to reduce carbon emissions and contribute towards the borough becoming carbon neutral, while mitigating impacts associated with climate change, such as living environments, building quality and flood risk.
	Chapter 9: Conserving and Enhancing the Environment	Policies to manage and improve the outdoor environment for people and wildlife, enhance biodiversity and manage impacts on the environment when new development comes forward.
	Chapter 10: Infrastructure	Provides the framework for delivery of the infrastructure needed to support new development.
	Chapter 11: A Sustainable Travel Town	Sets out an approach to enable better mobility and access to services and facilities, a more balanced reliance on different modes of transport and to encourage a shift towards greater use of public transport, walking and cycling.
	Chapter 12: A Healthy Community	The role of promoting good health in the built environment is increasingly recognised and this chapter discusses the key threads that run through the Plan.

Sites for development

Proposals for new development are to accord with strategic and Local Planning Policies across different chapters in the Local Plan.



Chapter 13: Site Allocations and New Development

Identifies land suitable for new development and the types of land uses that would be acceptable, along with site-specific issues that should be considered by applicants.

The information used to support the policies and site allocations is set out in the Council's evidence base which includes a diverse range of topic areas exploring local and strategic issues.



Chapter 1

A Spatial Strategy for Watford

What is the Local Plan and what does it do?

1.1 The Local Plan lies within the national town and country planning system. It sets out the policy framework for how land is used and guides development so that it comes forward in a way that is co-ordinated and planned for.

Table 1.1: Planning structure around the Watford Local Plan

National Planning Policy Framework	Sets out the national guidance to which Local Plans must conform.
South West Herts Joint Strategic Plan	Provides a framework to deliver strategic needs across five local authority areas.
Watford Local Plan	Sets out the growth strategy for the borough and policies to guide planning decisions and protect environmental and heritage assets.
Hertfordshire Minerals and Waste Local Plans	Sets out policies on minerals and waste for new development to comply with (forms part of the Watford Local Plan).
Neighbourhood Plans	Prepared by the members of the community to address locally specific planning issues (must be in conformity with Watford Local Plan).
Local Development Documents	These include documents which form part of the Development Plan such as Supplementary Planning Documents that support the Local Plan.
Background Studies	Provides a robust evidence base to inform the Local Plan and planning decisions.

1.2 The Local Plan is a ‘statutory’ or legally required document that forms part of the Council’s strategy to deliver sustainable development, tackle climate change and to deliver new homes, jobs and infrastructure for current and future generations. It covers the period from 2018 to 2036 and will guide new development so that it goes ahead in a co-ordinated manner, making the best and most appropriate use of land to meet the needs of the community.

1.3 The Watford Local Plan sits within a wider structure of planning documents. This includes national guidance set out by the government, strategic plans, neighbourhood plans, supporting strategies and background studies. The hierarchical relationship between these policy documents is set out in Table 1.1.

1.4 Planning policies can be supported by additional guidance to explain how a policy is to be implemented in greater detail, these are referred to as Supplementary Planning Documents. Where required, the Council will prepare and update Supplementary Planning Documents to support the Local Plan.

South West Hertfordshire Joint Strategic Plan

1.5 Watford is one of five authorities in South West Hertfordshire that share administrative boundaries and issues across the wider area, such as housing, employment and infrastructure. To plan strategically for growth in the area, Watford Borough Council, in conjunction with Dacorum Borough Council, Hertsmere Borough Council, Three Rivers District Council and St. Albans City & District Council, is preparing the South West Hertfordshire Joint Strategic Plan.

1.6 The Plan will influence the end phase of the current Local Plans and the direction of travel for the next generation of Local Plans that will follow. It is not a statutory document, however, local authorities that share cross-boundary issues are encouraged by the government to prepare strategic plans as a way of maximising opportunities for growth and create greater benefits for communities.

Preparation of the Local Plan and stakeholder engagement

1.7 When the Local Plan is being prepared, it goes through several stages from its inception, pulling together evidence to support decision making, through to the adoption of the Local Plan, at which point the policies can be applied to manage change in the town effectively (Table 1.2). The consultation has involved members of the public, the development industry, infrastructure organisations and other stakeholders that have an interest in the area.

Table 1.2: Stages in the preparation of a Local Plan



Issues and options 2018

1.8 In September - October 2018 the Council consulted on what the community thought were the key planning issues and options affecting the borough and if they should be addressed as part of the new Local Plan. Key issues that were raised were:

- The impact of growth (including future infrastructure provision and parking);
- Climate change and pollution;
- Affordable housing;
- Taller buildings and achieving good design; and
- Improvements to sustainable travel options.

First Draft Local Plan 2019

1.9 In October - November 2019 the Council consulted on the first draft Watford Local Plan. Key issues that were raised were:

- The impact of growth (including future infrastructure provision and parking);
- The potential impacts of proposed development sites;
- Taller buildings and high-density development; and
- Affordable housing.

Final Draft Local Plan 2021

1.10 The final draft Local Plan is the version of the Plan the Council intends to submit to the Planning Inspectorate for examination by an independent Inspector to ensure the Plan is consistent with national guidance for it to be adopted by the local authority. Any proposed changes to the final draft Local Plan are submitted alongside the Plan for the Planning Inspector to decide which are appropriate.

Stakeholder engagement

- 1.11 During the preparation of the Local Plan, stakeholders were involved in different aspects of the work. Early consultations seeking potential sites for development included members of the public, landowners and the development industry to identify those suitable for development. Public consultations provided further avenues to engage with stakeholders and comment on the different elements of the Plan they were interested in. This included online engagement, public events, working with elected members and local organisations to raise the profile of the Local Plan and the importance of having 'your say' to help shape future growth in Watford.
- 1.12 At each stage of the process a Sustainability Appraisal was carried out, to assess the social, environmental and economic effects of any plans, from the outset. In doing so it helped ensure that decisions were made which contribute to achieving sustainable development in Watford.
- 1.13 Background studies have been undertaken to create a robust evidence base. A number of these studies have been commissioned jointly with other South West Hertfordshire authorities in recognition of the cross-boundary issues shared across the area. These have involved engagement and the sharing of information with stakeholders who have a direct interest in the Local Plan such as organisations that provide or manage

infrastructure, and also engagement with people and organisations involved with the social and business community.

- 1.14 Working with the neighbouring authorities in South West Hertfordshire has been ongoing from early in the Plan preparation process, through the duty to cooperate. It has also been reflected in the undertaking of the Joint Strategic Plan. There has also been continued engagement with Hertfordshire County Council, the local Highways and Education Authorities, as well as a strategic approach with other organisations, such as the Hertfordshire Growth Board and the Local Enterprise Partnership.

A brief portrait of Watford

- 1.15 In the middle of the nineteenth century Watford was a small market town in Hertfordshire with a population of around three thousand people. It saw growth from 1860 due to the introduction of the railways (various routes were developed in the years 1837 - 1925) and there was a rapid rise in the population from 1890 onwards. It was known for traditional industries including printing and brewing.
- 1.16 Today there are around 96,700 people (Office for National Statistics (ONS), 2019) living in approximately eight square miles. It is one of the smallest districts in England and the town has a high population density, averaging 45 people per hectare, compared to a 7 people

per hectare average in Hertfordshire (ONS, Census 2011). There are approximately 39,900 homes in the borough with an average household size of 2.4 persons per dwelling.

- 1.17 The town has a relatively young population and a high proportion of family-sized households compared to other areas in South West Hertfordshire (ONS, Census 2011). The town is ethnically diverse, with 62% of the existing population being White British, while 38% of people come from Black and Minority Ethnic backgrounds.
- 1.18 Watford is adjacent to north London and, as such, is facing similar growth pressures and related issues. Historical development has resulted in the built-up area extending up to its boundaries and consequently much of the development taking place in the borough is located on previously developed land. Approximately 19% of the land in Watford's administrative area is designated as Green Belt. Most of this performs a community function, being designated as public open space with other areas important for wildlife habitats and biodiversity.
- 1.19 There are four railway stations in the borough serving the mainline, London Overground and London Underground, connecting Watford to London, while the Abbey Line with two railway stations (in Watford) connects the town with St. Albans. The M25 is located just north of the town. Watford has long been a commuter town, yet one that maintains its independence and distinctive character.

Sustainable development in England: The economic, environmental and social objectives

1.20 The National Planning Policy Framework states there are three overarching objectives to achieving sustainable development; these are economic, environmental and social. They are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways:



An economic objective: 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.



A social objective: 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 wellbeing.



An environmental objective: 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.

The key challenges and sustainable objectives for Watford: economy, society and environment

1.21 Watford will see a lot of change in the 18 years covered by the plan period, as it grows and makes a transition towards being a more sustainable town, actively tackling climate change, with the aim of becoming carbon neutral.

1.22 This will be achieved by promoting the three overarching objectives of the National Planning Policy Framework at a local level, thereby creating a different and better place in 2036. The Council will work with organisations including Hertfordshire County Council to help implement the objectives set out in local and strategic strategies including the Local Transport Plan, Watford Corporate Plan and the Sustainability Strategy.

1.23 The following highlights the key Economic, Social and Environmental characteristics of Watford now, and where the Council wants it to be in 2036.



Watford's economy and the key challenges

- New employment floorspace is important to support economic growth, and based on past trends, the East of England Forecast Model indicates that the number of jobs in Watford will increase by 11.4%.
- There is limited land available in the borough to allocate new sites for industrial, storage and distribution uses with low plot ratios.
- 136,000sqm of office and industrial floorspace is needed in Watford. A variety of sites and floorspace of different quality is needed to support different sectors and employment skills.
- Business start-up rates are well above the national and regional average, indicating there is a demand for flexible and affordable workspace to foster new businesses.
- The town centre contains a mix of chain and independent retailers, creating a varied mix of retail, restaurant and leisure provision that make the area a retail and leisure hub for South West Hertfordshire.
- The town supports a variety of different sectors, 20% of jobs are in professional services and other large employers are in the retail and health care industries. Equally, there are also a number of people employed in industrial sectors, such as manufacturing, construction and wholesale.

- In Watford and across South West Hertfordshire, there is a shortfall of land available for employment. Since 2015, changes to permitted development right changes have coincided with a loss of employment floorspace.
- The resident workforce in Watford is generally highly skilled overall (Nomis, 2019), however, this is not met with the same level of growth in high-skilled jobs in the borough.
- Watford developed as part of the London commuting belt in the 1850s and has retained that role, with 47% of outward commuters travelling into the London area.
- Watford has good access to strategic transport rail routes and roads with the A41, M1 and M25 while Luton and Heathrow airports are within 20 miles.



Watford's economy in 2036 - the sustainable objectives

- The Plan will have helped attract business investment to support jobs growth, strengthening its key role in the sub regional economy.
- The employment opportunities in the town will have increased with a highly skilled labour force and the provision of quality education facilities.
- Employment areas will have been intensified, making more effective use of land and higher employment densities, with appropriate areas supporting a mix of complementary uses.
- Watford town centre will have been enhanced as a place to socialise, as well as to shop, providing an enjoyable experience for people of all ages.
- The town and wider area will have an attractive range of activities available, reinforcing Watford's appeal as a destination for leisure and recreation.
- Redevelopment and delivery of high quality office floorspace in Clarendon Road will have brought in new investment, facilitating growth.



Watford's society and the key challenges

- Watford is one of the most densely populated non-metropolitan districts in England.
- The town experiences some of the highest levels of in-migration in Hertfordshire, reflecting its attractiveness as a place to live.
- Watford has the lowest level of car ownership in Hertfordshire; a lot of its congestion is caused by through traffic.
- Rising house prices mean many people cannot afford a home of their own (the affordability ratio is 12.1 times the median average income (2019)).
- Life expectancy is marginally below the national average with males expected to live 79 years and women 83 years (NHS Health Profile), and is lower in more deprived areas.
- Overall, Watford is ranked the 194th least deprived of 391 local authority areas in England, with no areas identified as being in the 10% most deprived parts of the country.
- Despite areas of high prosperity, poverty is an issue with Tudor Ward being the fifth highest level of deprivation in Hertfordshire (ONS, Census 2011).
- There has been an increasing proportion of smaller one- and two-bed homes built in recent years compared to family-sized housing.
- There is limited space available for new social infrastructure such as new schools and healthcare facilities and to improve transport systems to encourage less car reliant travel.



Watford's society in 2036 - the sustainable objectives

- New development will have met the needs of a population projected to increase to 97,080 people in 2036 (ONS, 2011 Census and 2018 based population projections).
- The town will be characterised by mixed and balanced communities and new development that will have made a positive contribution towards this.
- It will be a socially inclusive place for everyone, with a mix of homes for single occupancy, couples, families and older people including people with special needs.
- There will be a high quality, safe, clean and attractive public realm that encourages people to be more active through walking and cycling, encouraging social interaction and better health.
- Traffic congestion will be reduced and air quality improved, with priority given to public transport, shared car use, walking and cycling.

Watford's environment and the key challenges

- The River Colne and River Gade, along with the Grand Union Canal, provide structure to much of the green infrastructure network in the borough, but in places it is poor in quality.
- Historical patterns of development have created constraints within the built-up area that limit the potential to deliver new open space of any significant size.
- Watford has the highest number of open spaces with Green Flag status in Hertfordshire, but some areas of the town have limited access to quality open space.
- The number of heritage assets protected in the town as nationally and locally listed buildings make an important contribution towards the character of the town.
- The built-up area is traversed by a number of strategic road corridors that results in a vehicle dominated environment with air, noise and light pollution.
- Traffic modelling shows that congestion and associated impacts on the environment will worsen without a modal shift in the town and also in the surrounding areas.



Watford's environment in 2036 - the sustainable objectives

- The town will have a more sustainable pattern of urban development and transport, minimising the impact on the environment and reducing pollution.
- New development will be high quality, designed to minimise impact on the environment through greater energy and resource efficiency and adapted to climate change. These adaptations and renewable energy opportunities will have been incorporated into new and existing developments.
- The network of open spaces, parks and waterways, and the connections between them, will have been improved to support increased recreational activities.
- Important biodiversity and wildlife habitats will have been protected and connections within the green and blue infrastructure networks improved, increasing their value for wildlife.
- New development will also have made improvements to biodiversity and strengthened Watford's ecosystems, reversing the national trend of biodiversity decline.
- Important heritage assets, such as locally and nationally listed buildings, historic green spaces and conservation areas will have been protected and the historic environment enhanced.

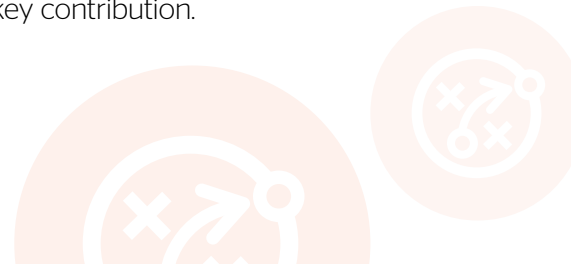


Helping to make Watford a better place for everyone

1.24 The housing targets set by the government have placed considerable development pressure to deliver new homes in the town, increasing targets threefold since 2013. In conjunction with this growth, the Local Plan needs to support economic development and make provision for infrastructure and community facilities to come forward alongside these developments. This change will need to be managed, which is one of the key roles of the Local Plan.

1.25 New development provides opportunities to not only meet future need, but to also deliver facilities and improvements to support the existing community. To maximise these opportunities, it is important for the Local Plan to set out the key sustainability objectives that will contribute towards achieving the vision for Watford, which will be delivered through a mix of corporate strategies and other approaches, with the Local Plan making the key contribution.

1.26 The Local Plan is a roadmap of where we want to be, and when looking ahead to 2036, whilst it is difficult to predict the future, the Plan is aspirational and it seeks to lay the building blocks for a vision that is both deliverable and achievable. It will help strengthen the town's pre-eminent role in the South West Hertfordshire sub-region, in terms of being a desirable place to live, a desirable place to invest and a desirable place to visit. The overall growth strategy and sustainability objectives will help Watford with taking steps forward to deliver growth and embrace change in a positive and sustainable way.



Helping to create a better Watford in 2036: our Vision

At the edge of London, and also a part of the County of Hertfordshire, Watford will embrace its role as a major urban centre that acts as a focus for employment, homes, leisure, caring for its town centre and green spaces and making the most of its excellent connections to the capital and surrounding areas.

Watford will be an exemplar town in how it embraces the challenge of sustainability and climate change, with environmentally friendly construction and design, working towards being carbon neutral.

High quality design will be showcased as part of new development, with accessible and inclusive high-density, mixed-use development and enhanced open spaces.

Green and blue infrastructure will be conserved and enhanced, maximising their value for biodiversity and other important ecosystem services.

The Town Centre will retain its key role as a retail destination in the sub-region, home to a mix of uses including residential, commercial, cultural and leisure, creating a vibrant place for people to socialise, live and work.

The town will have a comprehensive network

of cycle and walking routes, encouraging a more active population. Public transport will also be enhanced, encouraging a move from car based travel for shorter journeys, reducing congestion and air pollution.

Watford's social, cultural, built environment and heritage assets will be protected, and where possible their settings enhanced.

Local economies will be supported by creating opportunities for local businesses to access new markets and providing a mix of employment spaces to support business growth.

The population will be healthier, with more opportunities to get active, through walking and cycling and access to high quality open spaces.

Growth will be supported by a range of high quality infrastructure delivered in a comprehensive, timely and co-ordinated manner, making the most efficient use of land.

In 2036, Watford will continue to be a welcoming and vibrant place and home to a wide range of communities, where people enjoy a high quality of life.



Planning for growth

- 1.27 Many of the growth issues facing Watford are also being considered by other local authorities in South West Hertfordshire. All five authorities face different constraints making the delivery of development required over the respective plan periods challenging. In Watford, this challenge is primarily related to a shortfall of land available for development.
- 1.28 Watford has achieved 94% of its housing growth on brownfield land in the last ten years, reflecting the scarcity of greenfield land. Early in the stages of the Local Plan it was recognised that this trend of brownfield development would continue given the constrained nature of the borough.
- 1.29 The borough was assessed against a number of criteria including access to public transport, employment areas, schools and local shopping centres. This led to the identification of three sustainability zones across the borough with the centre of Watford being significantly more sustainable than the rest of the town (Figure 1.1). These areas formed the basis for calculating housing capacity of the borough as part of the Watford Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (2020).
- 1.30 As demonstrated by the Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment, the majority of the land available for development is located in the area of highest sustainability. It is also the part of the borough that will see significant investment in the future and that will help facilitate infrastructure improvements integral to supporting the objectives of the Plan. Given its proximity to the town centre, business district and strategic transport hubs located at Watford Junction and Bushey this part of the borough has the greatest capacity to absorb new development in a way that will contribute towards achieving sustainable development.
- 1.31 The concentration of sites in the high sustainability zone led to the designation of three areas identified as being strategically important in the Local Plan; Watford Gateway, the Town Centre and the Colne Valley Strategic Development Areas. These are recognised as growth areas likely to experience transformative change. This area of growth encapsulating these designations is referred to as the Core Development Area, shown on the key diagram (Figure 1.2). In locations outside of these areas, while still likely to support development as areas of renewal, change will be more limited in scale and not transformative.

Figure 1.1: Sustainability zones in Watford

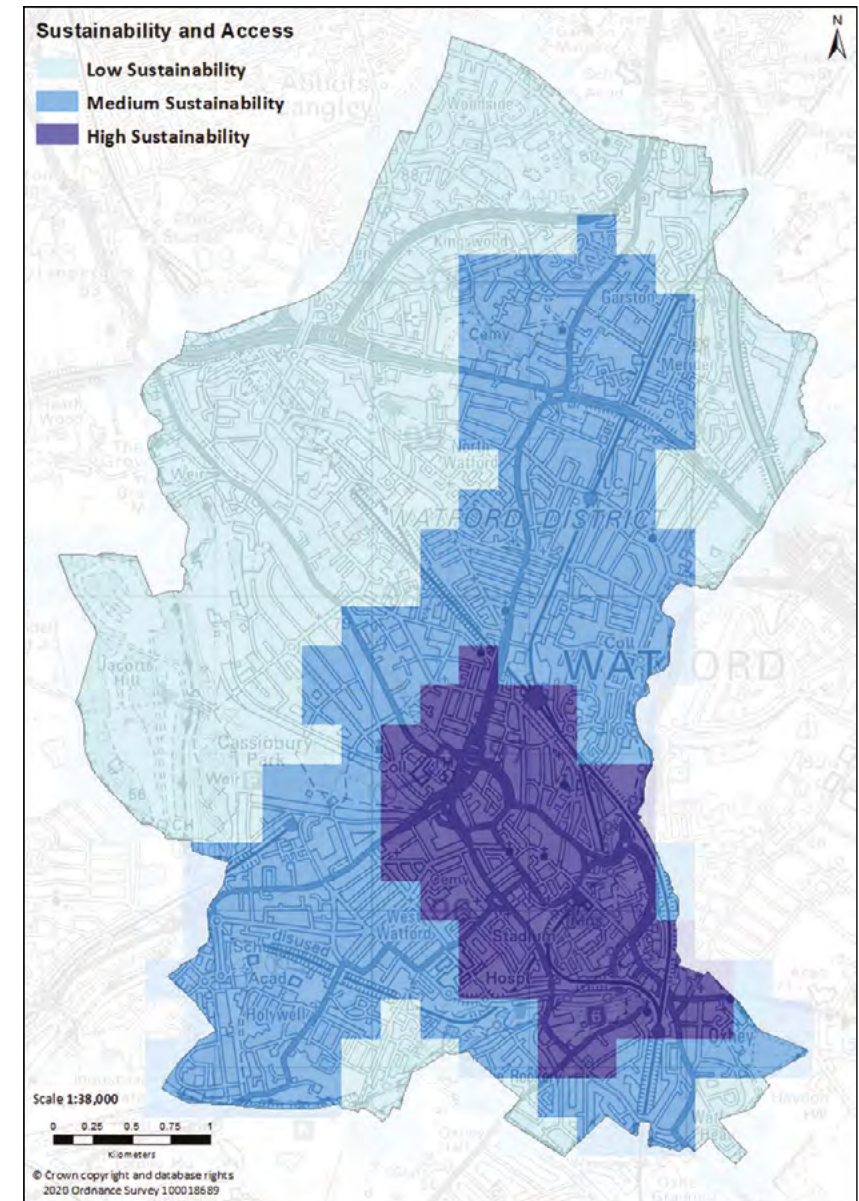
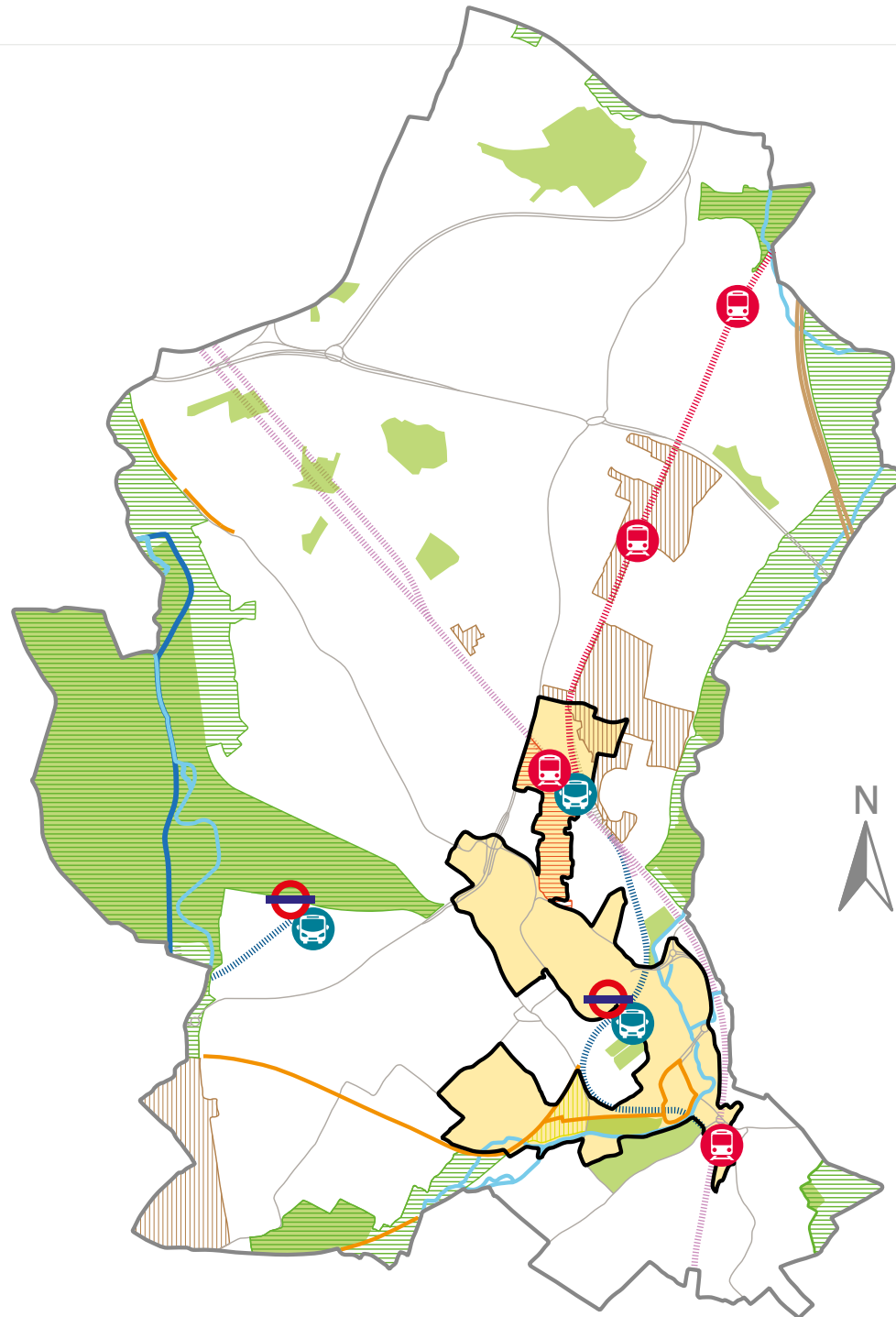
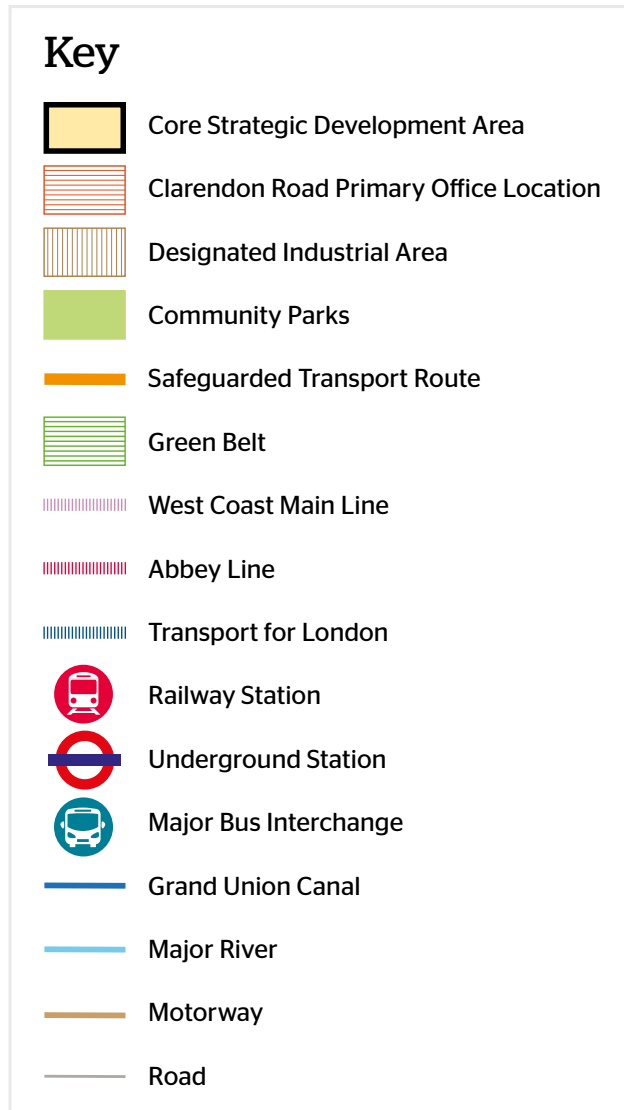


Figure 1.2: Key Diagram



A sustainable development strategy for Watford

- 1.32 Sustainable development is integral to creating good places. To achieve it, proposals should seek to find a balance of economic, environmental and social considerations in order to ensure the town's success without compromising the potential growth and use of resources in the future. For a development to be successful, these fundamental elements need to work together to benefit the scheme and the community.
- 1.33 The Spatial Strategy sets out the approach for development to contribute towards the Council Plan and long-term vision for Watford as an inclusive place for everyone and the aim to be a town that has embraced sustainability. As a largely urban borough, and given the findings of the Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment and the trend for developing brownfield land in the last ten years this will continue. There will be a general presumption against inappropriate development in the Green Belt, so the extent of the Green Belt will be largely maintained. Other policies in the Plan support delivery of this strategy and will collectively ensure development takes place in the most appropriate way.

- 1.34 To successfully achieve sustainable development, a wide variety of factors need to be balanced and delivered. One of the key aspects is climate change. This responds to the Climate Change Act (2008, as amended) when the government legislated that the United Kingdom will reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 100% by 2050. The Local Plan makes an important contribution towards achieving this target by guiding planning decisions to ensure they embrace and prioritise these principles.
- 1.35 In July 2019, Watford Borough Council declared a Climate Change Emergency. Key elements of the declaration included integrating climate change into planning policy and the Local Plan having a focus on greener homes and buildings, taking into account climate impacts within Council decision making processes with the overall objective to be carbon neutral by 2030.
- 1.36 Addressing climate change is intrinsically linked to public health and wellbeing. Public health, physical and mental, is an important part of achieving sustainable development. Closely linked to this is the quality of homes people live in and how people feel included as part of their community. The design of buildings and the spaces around them is integral to encouraging people to be more active, have a greater sense of belonging in their community through more social interaction, and increasing the perception of a place and in turn health and wellbeing.

- 1.37 The approach is to meet a significant proportion of Watford's future development needs in the Core Development Area. The residential character of the rest of the borough will largely see development that is more modest in scale.
- 1.38 This approach increases the number of people living in locations where there is good access to services and facilities, reducing the need to travel by car and making investment in public transport, walking and cycling infrastructure more viable and attractive by responding to demand. In turn, less reliance on private vehicles will help reduce traffic congestion, to benefit the economy and reduce air and noise pollution. This will create space to support walking, cycling and public transport and encourage people to be more active and have healthier lifestyles, while improving the quality of the built environment.



1.39 Creating sustainable neighbourhoods in this way has multiple benefits. New development can attract investment to the area as businesses cluster, creating local jobs and providing opportunities for new skills and training through apprenticeships. Employment opportunities bring workers into Watford, which, in turn, increases demand for ancillary goods and services supporting local businesses, particularly in the town centre. Delivering a mix of new homes to meet the needs of local people and those wanting to move here supports a more inclusive, equitable and balanced community. The inclusion of measures, such as improvements to the green infrastructure network, benefits people and biodiversity, while making better use of resources and helps to create high quality places and habitats.

Collaborative working

1.40 Collaborative working is an integral part of preparing development schemes that will contribute towards delivering growth to help achieve sustainable development. Early engagement with the Local Planning Authority to discuss planning proposals is encouraged to ensure that schemes will comply with strategic and Local Planning Policies that seek to achieve economic, environmental and social objectives. Engagement is also encouraged to help ensure that development comes forward efficiently from the time of its design to when it is completed, whilst minimising the risk of unforeseen delays and costs that could adversely impact upon a proposed scheme.



Monitoring the Local Plan

- 1.41 Monitoring of the Local Plan is important to determine the effectiveness of planning policies. It identifies if policies are impacting on Development Management decisions and whether they are contributing towards achieving the Council's objectives and targets. Policies in the Local Plan will be monitored to ensure they are being successfully implemented and the overall strategy is being achieved. These indicators are set out in Appendix A along with the source data to be collected to monitor the Plan. This findings will be presented in the Council's Authority Monitoring Reports.
- 1.42 Watford forms part of the South West Hertfordshire Housing Market Area and Economic Market Area. The Council will have an active role promoting and supporting high quality development that will benefit the community, support the economy, enhance the environment and are consistent with policies in the Local Plan. Development facilitated through the Local Plan will also contribute towards achieving strategic objectives set out in the future South West Hertfordshire Joint Strategic Plan.
- 1.43 Where monitoring, particularly the updated housing trajectory that will be published in the Authority Monitoring Reports, demonstrates that there will not be sufficient progress towards meeting housing need, the Council will consider the reasons for this and whether the extent of under-performance is sufficient to trigger a partial or full review of the Local Plan.





Strategic Policy SS1.1: Spatial Strategy



The Local Plan makes provision for 14,988 additional homes and 11,500 additional jobs between 2018 and 2036, along with other supporting infrastructure. Proposals for new development will be supported, where they demonstrate that they will contribute towards the Local Plan's economic, social and environmental objectives, cumulatively achieving sustainable development.

Growth will be focused in the Core Development Area, which has excellent access to public transport and facilities, and where development can be accommodated sustainably, creating a high quality place to live, work and visit by 2036. Heritage assets and areas of greenspace will continue to be protected.

Development will make an effective and efficient use of land. This will need to support a mix of uses compatible with each other, with high quality design, and innovative technology to address climate change and reduce carbon emissions.

Proposals will contribute towards a modal shift, greener travel patterns and minimising the impact on the environment. Pedestrian and cycle travel will be prioritised.

These high standards and a positive and integrated approach to development will be expected across the whole of the borough.

This will contribute towards creating attractive and inclusive neighbourhoods, supporting people to be more active, healthy and encourage greater social inclusion as part of a balanced community.

Across the borough, new infrastructure and improvements to existing infrastructure will be delivered to support development. Infrastructure proposals will be progressed collaboratively with relevant stakeholders and providers to maximise the benefits and success of any scheme.

All development will take place on brownfield, or previously developed land and only in exceptional circumstances will development on greenfield land be supported. Development in the Metropolitan Green Belt will not be supported unless it can be demonstrated that exceptional circumstances apply.

The Core Development Area

The Core Development Area is expected to support 80% of allocated development in the borough and provides opportunities for further redevelopment. Proposals in this area will be supported where they optimise the use of land in this location through mixed-use high-density development, with excellent access to services, facilities and public transport. Development should deliver positive social and environmental gains, incorporating high quality design

and innovation to ensure high environmental standards are achieved.

The scale of change will be transformational in places. Collaboration between development partners and stakeholders on larger sites will be the key to unlocking the potential of the area. Ongoing and effective community engagement will also be required. Proposals should demonstrate a holistic approach to development, optimise opportunities for higher-density development, create linkages to adjacent areas and ensure proper infrastructure provision.

Areas outside the Core Development Area

Outside the Core Development Area, proposals will be supported where they optimise densities to make efficient use of land and manage change with greater regard to the existing context and local character. Development should make the most of its location, such as access to public transport, cycling and walking and seek to provide off-site infrastructure to enhance them, and facilitate access to services and facilities.

High quality connections between people and destinations within the Core Development Area, wider town and locations outside of the borough will be sought.

WATFORD
RIVERWELL



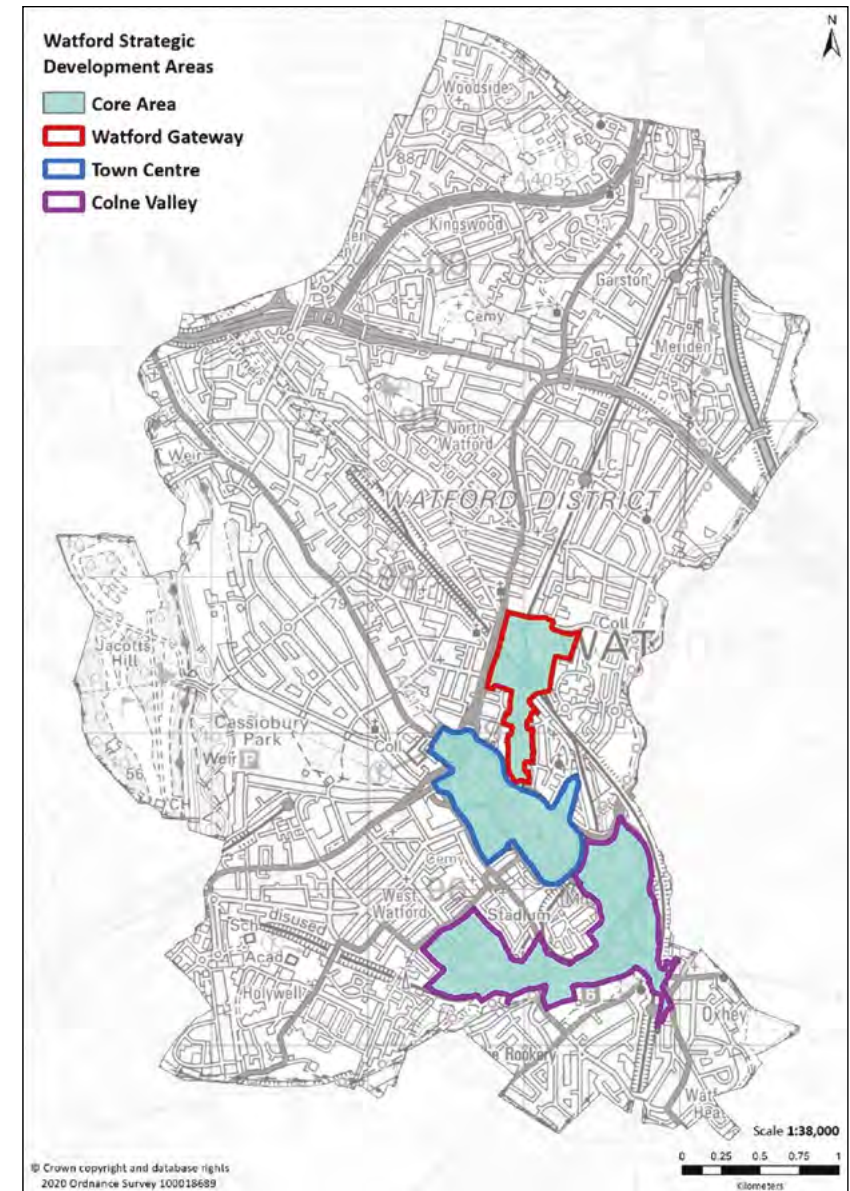
Chapter 2

Core Development Area

Core Development Area

- 2.1 The Core Development Area constitutes 8% of the built area of Watford (2,150 hectares), and is an area where significant revitalisation and transformative change are expected to bring new investment in the town (Figure 2.1).
- 2.2 The Core Development Area comprises three distinct locations, based on their character and the opportunities that each presents to contribute towards making Watford a place that people want to be and where businesses want to invest.
- 2.3 These areas are:
 - **Watford Gateway**, which is focused on the transport hub of Watford Junction and business district of Clarendon Road;
 - **The Town Centre**, where the majority of the retail and leisure offer of the borough is located; and
 - **The Colne Valley**, which encompasses the out-of-town retail area, hospital and stadium and adjoins the River Colne flowing through the area.
- 2.4 The scale of development envisaged in the Core Development Area during the plan period provides opportunities to deliver new homes and provide more employment space for businesses, infrastructure to support new development and community facilities to make the area a focal point for the borough. To help achieve the vision and deliver the objectives of the Local Plan, the policies and site allocations have been informed by the Watford Sustainability Strategy (2019). Applicants will need to embed sustainability principles, such as; appropriate land uses, active travel, energy and water efficiency, and good design resulting in high quality buildings and public realm into their proposals.
- 2.5 The requirements set out in the policy for each Strategic Development Area are to be considered alongside other planning policies in the Local Plan and applied collectively. Further information about site-specific allocation considerations and requirements are set out in Chapter 13 'Site Allocations and New Development'.

Figure 2.1: Core Development Area and the Strategic Development Areas



Watford Gateway Strategic Development Area

Context

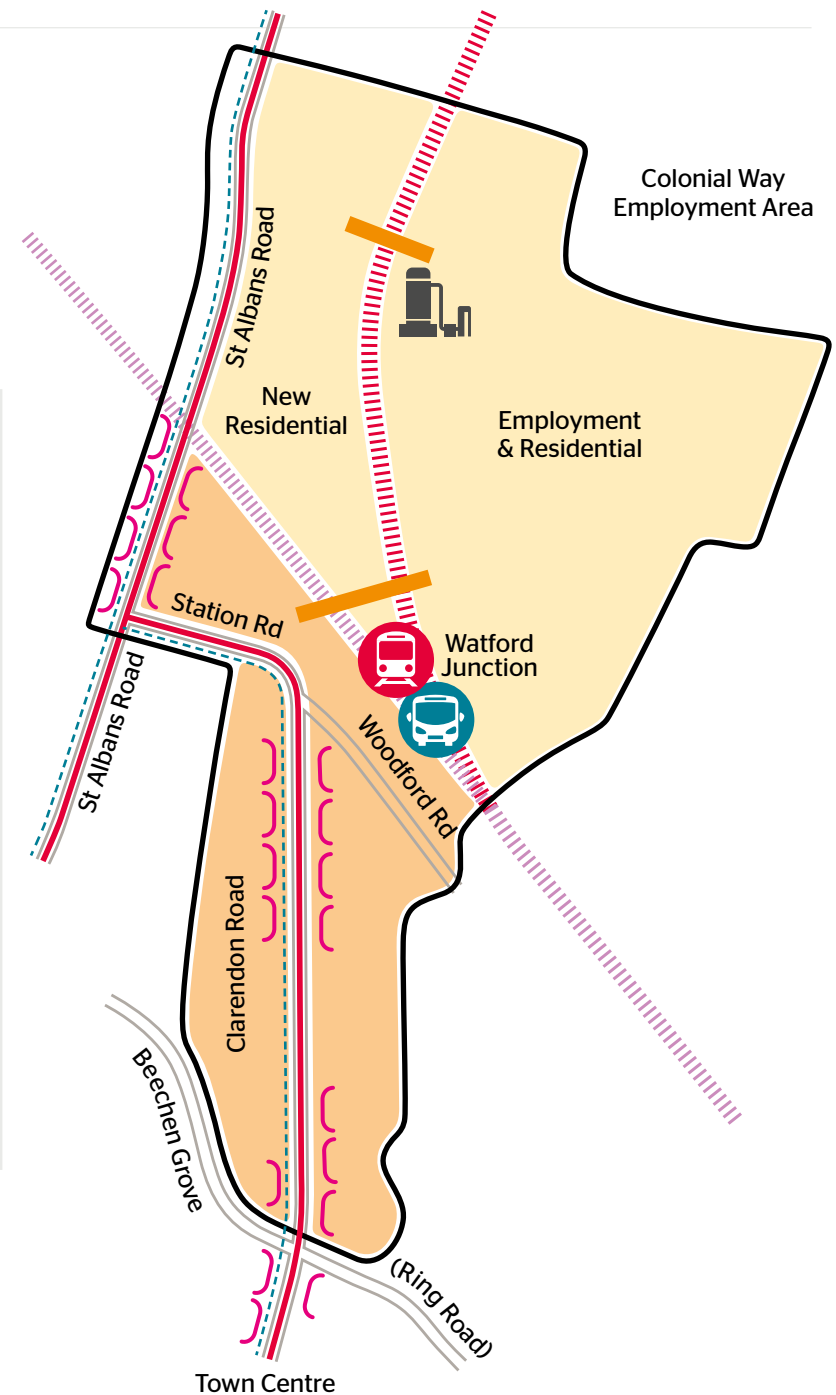
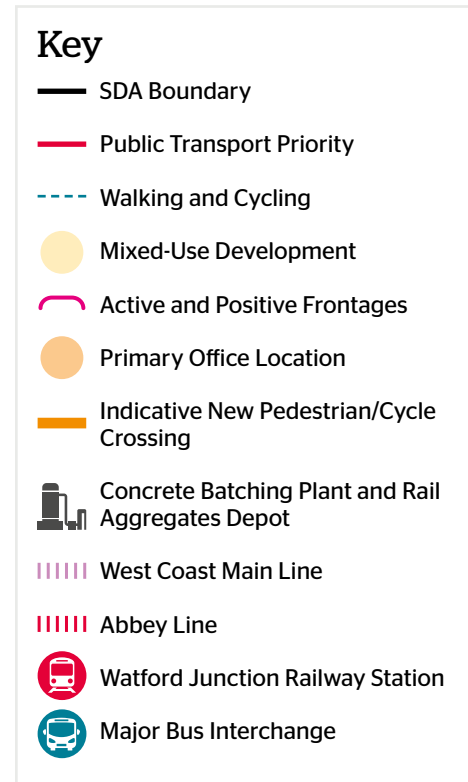
2.6 The Watford Gateway Strategic Development Area encompasses 31 hectares of land north of the town centre and comprises two key locations in the town; the Watford Junction railway and bus station, surrounding retail and employment land and Clarendon Road, which is the primary business district in the area (Figure 2.2).

2.7 Nearly all of this Strategic Development Area sits within the High Sustainability Area (Figure 1.1). This area is recognised by the Hertfordshire Growth Board as one of the key locations for redevelopment in the county.

Watford Junction Station Area

2.8 The railway and bus station provide the main transport interchange for the town, in conjunction with five other railway stations in Watford. These provide excellent connections to London, Milton Keynes and further north to Birmingham and destinations beyond. With good access to local services, facilities, employment and leisure activities the Watford Gateway area provides a focal point for sustainable development.

Figure 2.2: Watford Gateway Strategic Development Area



- 2.9 The station, including the associated public realm, is to be improved, to increase capacity and make for better access to services and facilities to help people intuitively find where they are going using rail, bus, cycle, pedestrian and taxi facilities, as part of a modern transport hub.
- 2.10 The area north of the station along Station Road and Bridle Path is characterised as an area with inconsistent urban grain. New schemes should make use of design opportunities to reinstate a network of streets that improve the layout of the area. Schemes should be designed to improve connections with the residential area north of St Albans Road, including the pedestrian link from the station along the railway line to St Albans Road.

Clarendon Road

- 2.11 Clarendon Road acts as a sub-regional business centre that provides offices to businesses that require good access to London, but which do not necessarily need to be located in the city. The objective of the area during the plan period is for Clarendon Road to continue to be a focal point for high value office uses and the primary link between Watford Junction station and the town centre.
- 2.12 Proposals should reflect the potential of Clarendon Road as an area of high-density development, while having regard to its underlying character. Where buildings of greater height than adjacent areas are proposed close to low lying residential areas, they will need designed so that they minimise their impact on the amenity of residents and demonstrate how they have embraced a

transition from higher-density development to areas of a different residential character. Where possible, taller parts of a building should be designed to have a frontage on the main road while the lower areas of a scheme should be located closer to areas characterised by lower building height.

- 2.13 To improve the quality of the environment along Clarendon Road, proposals should be designed to ensure there is a good relationship between new buildings, their frontages and street users. They should also create a positive route for people walking and cycling between the station and the town centre. Frontages along the side streets should also focus on making a positive contribution to the street scene.

Land east of the railway line

- 2.14 Land east of Watford Junction Station and the railway lines consists primarily of industrial, storage and distribution uses including a concrete batching plant and rail aggregates depot. These premises generally support businesses that have low jobs per square metre. They make a contribution towards sustainable development by providing local jobs for industries where future land allocations is extremely limited in the borough. Consistent with Policy EM4.1 'Providing New Employment', appropriate intensification to make more effective use of the land will be supported in this part of the Strategic Development Area. However, the compatibility of new uses will need to be carefully considered, particularly where residential uses are proposed.

- 2.15 The concrete batching plant and rail aggregates depot is safeguarded by the Hertfordshire Minerals Local Plan. Its relocation will only be supported where a suitable alternative location has been identified that meets the operational requirements and environmental criteria.
- 2.16 Reprovision of car parking, including access, will need to be considered at a strategic level across the area to avoid fragmentation and inefficient use of land. Large areas of scattered car parking throughout the Strategic Development Area should be avoided. Proposals for car parking that come forward independently of a car parking strategy for the area, or a future masterplan, will not be supported where they could compromise the road network or infrastructure for alternative forms of active travel, such as cycling and walking.
- 2.17 The area is presently severed by the railway lines and improved access is needed to mitigate the impact of this. The delivery of a new pedestrian and cycle bridge will connect Watford Junction station to the land east of the Abbey Line. This bridge will need to be accessible for commuters and local people to ensure that development is integrated into the existing built-up area. The location of the bridge landing points will be identified as part of discussions with landowners. The legal agreement for this will need to be in place before redevelopment can progress. A route for a second bridge that connects Penn Road with Watford Junction is to be protected so that new development does not compromise potential access to the area in the future.

Community infrastructure

- 2.18 New development in the Watford Junction area is anticipated to include at least 2,718 new homes and some additional windfall development. This will generate additional need for school places and increase demands placed on existing health facilities.
- 2.19 A primary school has been identified as part of the scheme located in the north of the Strategic Development Area. Additional education facilities east of Watford Junction Station will be required. However, much of that area is sub-optimal given the constraints of the site including proximity to railway lines and the concrete batching plant and rail aggregates depot. A second primary school will be required east of the station and applicants are encouraged to work collaboratively to identify where it can be provided that provides good amenity for young children. If an alternative location for a new primary school is identified outside of the Strategic Development Area and will meet the needs of new residents this will be supported.
- 2.20 The Herts Valleys Clinical Commissioning Group has indicated that a new health facility, with a floorspace area of approximately 1,300sqm, is required in the Watford Gateway Strategic Development Area. Applicants should work collaboratively with other landowners and the Clinical Commissioning Group to identify how this facility can be delivered. Where provision is made on site, this will be considered in the context of other developer contributions. As part of the redevelopment of the area, a childcare facility should be reprovided within the Strategic Development Area. The location of this facility, and how it will be delivered, will need to be agreed with the Local Planning Authority prior to redevelopment of the existing premises.

Building height

- 2.21 The Taller Buildings Study (2021) suggested that a suitable prevailing base building height in the Watford Junction and Clarendon Road area would be eight to ten storeys tall. Development will be required to comply with Policy QD6.5 'Building Height' where proposals are above this base height on a street frontage, or more than ten storeys to the rear. Other Local Plan policies and the relationship with existing low lying areas will also be considered in determining acceptable building heights.
- 2.22 Located adjacent to the east and west of the Strategic Development Area are the Estcourt and Nascot Conservation Areas. Developments will need to be considered with regard to how they may impact on these designations and their sensitivities, particularly where proposals are designed to exceed the base building height.





Strategic Policy CDA2.1: Watford Gateway Strategic Development Area



The Strategic Development Area will see co-ordinated change around Watford Junction railway station / bus station and the Clarendon Road area, creating a mixed-use urban quarter of high quality design and place making, with excellent connectivity to support a mix of housing, employment and other subsidiary land uses and community orientated facilities. To achieve this, applicants will be required to demonstrate how proposals will make provision for and contribute towards the following criteria:

- a) The regeneration of land north of Watford Junction railway station and how they will help transform the area into new, high-density development providing homes, jobs and other uses;
- b) In locations where new development is of a scale and is notably different in character to adjacent existing residential uses, proposals will need to be designed so that they demonstrate a transition of taller urban form to lower lying character and mitigate any significant impact on neighbouring residential or community amenity;
- c) A new primary school site to meet the demands generated by the development;
- d) Provision of a circa 1,300sqm of healthcare floorspace;
- e) A high quality transport interchange hub located at Watford Junction connecting rail, bus, taxi, cycle and pedestrian facilities;
- f) New walking, cycling and public transport infrastructure will be required to contribute towards the Local Transport Plan and supporting strategies;
- g) On land east of the railway line, a pedestrian and cycle bridge for commuters and residents across the Abbey Line must be agreed before planning permission is granted;
- h) A route for a pedestrian and cycle bridge aligned with Penn Road to Watford Junction must be safeguarded;
- i) The land east of the West Coast Mainline will support a mix of uses including replacement car parking, new homes and employment uses;
- j) Existing employment floorspace will be protected, proposals for redevelopment of employment premises will be supported where there is no net loss of employment floorspace and the proposed use will not undermine existing uses through the Agent of Change Principle. As part of the commercial floorspace a replacement childcare facility should be provided;
- k) Car parking at Watford Junction should be part of a strategic approach, including provision of a multi-storey car park east of the Abbey Line. Applicants will be required to demonstrate this has been achieved as part of any proposal;
- l) New development will not compromise vehicle access from Colonial Way and Clive Way into the site and access to the station;
- m) The concrete batching plant and rail aggregates depot will be safeguarded as significant mineral infrastructure.

Town Centre Strategic Development Area

Context

2.23 The Town Centre Strategic Development Area encompasses 52 hectares of land at the heart of Watford (Figure 2.3). The area is a sub-regional destination for town centre uses including retail and leisure, and supports a significant number of jobs. Its historical importance is reflected in the high number of heritage assets present. This area of high sustainability is home to a growing residential community.

2.24 The Strategic Development Area extends from Watford High Street overground station in the south to West Herts College in the north. It has good access to rail and bus links and strong connections to the other Strategic Development Areas. The town centre does however suffer from an 'island effect' created by the severance caused by the surrounding ring road.

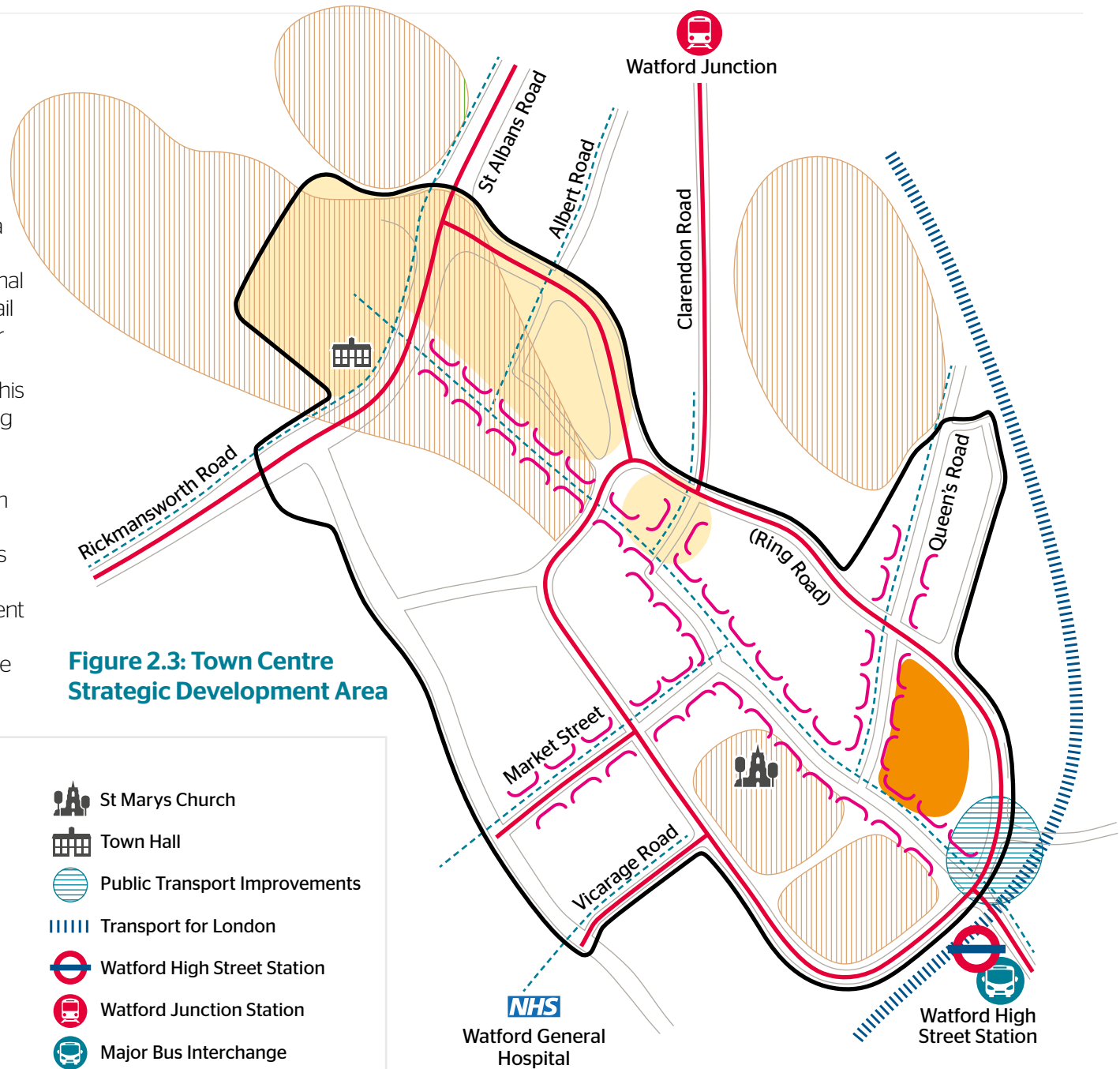
















Figure 2.3: Town Centre Strategic Development Area

Key			
	SDA Boundary		St Marys Church
	Public Transport Priority		Town Hall
	Walking and Cycling		Public Transport Improvements
	Conservation Areas		Transport for London
	Mixed-Use Development		Watford High Street Station
	Active Frontages		Watford Junction Station
	Indoor Shopping Centre		Major Bus Interchange

A thriving Town Centre

- 2.25 The Town Centre has existing residential areas alongside a wide range of facilities with large amounts of comparison retail alongside a variety of leisure, cultural and entertainment facilities. The evening economy is strong and draws visitors from a wide area to the restaurants, bars and in particular the Watford Colosseum and Watford Palace Theatre.
- 2.26 To continue to thrive, Watford Town Centre will need to evolve and diversify in response to current and future retail and social trends, be adaptable to changes in technology, consumer behaviours and the shift from 9am-5pm towards longer, flexible, active hours. This need for adaptation and diversification, together with access to good public transport, makes the Town Centre also appropriate for residential-led or mixed-use high density development.
- 2.27 The Strategic Development Area contains three distinct character areas: the North High Street from the Exchange Road flyover north to Rickmansworth Road; the central part of the High Street from the flyover, south to King Street; and the south part of the High Street, which extends south of King Street to the Colne Valley Strategic Development Area.

Development in the Town Centre

- 2.28 The Town Centre provides opportunities for residential development as part of a wider mix of uses. This additional footfall will contribute towards the vitality in the Town Centre through the day and into the evening, particularly to support convenience and retail leisure uses. More people living in the area also encourages a sense of ownership.
- 2.29 Achieving an appropriate mix of residential types, sizes and tenures, including family-sized units, across the area, will be of great importance to meet Watford's housing need, as will providing essential services to ensure the area is an attractive place to live. The growth in the number of people living in the area will mean a need for additional community facilities to support the new residents of the town as well as providing community uses for the whole borough.
- 2.30 The importance of the retail offer in the Town Centre is reflected in the South West Hertfordshire Retail and Leisure Study (2018). Retaining active and positive ground floor shop frontages will be the key to maintaining this position. Further discussion is provided in Chapter 5 'A Vibrant Town' and Chapter 6 'An Attractive Town'.

- 2.31 New development, particularly new homes, will need to be sensitive to potential environmental issues, noise and light pollution that occur with some town centre uses. Applicants will need to design building servicing and waste management facilities into schemes to avoid adverse impacts on amenity and the public realm.
- 2.32 It is important that development proposals consider how they are integrated with other projects in the Town Centre and nearby. In this context, proposals will be expected to contribute towards the vision for Watford to 2036, which has been informed by Watford's Cultural Strategy and reinforces the importance of the town centre as a destination with an improved visitor experience.



North High Street area

- 2.33 This area from the Exchange Road flyover to Rickmansworth Road is currently the focal point for the evening economy in Watford. The north part of the High Street itself is a wide boulevard with listed buildings at the north end but much of the area's character has been compromised by low quality development and public realm. The area lies outside of the Core Shopping Area, and a mix of uses that provides positive and active frontages, quality public realm and contributes towards the vibrancy of the town centre will be supported. Proposals to make better use of the public space along the High Street in the area north of Albert Road South will be supported, where they meet the requirements of licensing and do not create conflict with other uses in the vicinity.
- 2.34 At the north end of the High Street is the area known as The Parade, where several listed buildings are located. Proposals will need to be designed to minimise impact on the listed buildings and use heights that are sympathetic to the surrounding character.
- 2.35 The Civic Core Conservation Area encompasses several listed buildings, including the Town Hall and Watford library. A number of cultural facilities are also nearby including the Colosseum, leisure centre and West Herts College. Development in this area will be guided by the North Hub Masterplan, which seeks to deliver a variety of facilities reflecting the cultural and heritage value

of the area. Proposals will need to consider heritage-related Supplementary Planning Documents. They must also improve the function and setting of the buildings, reduce the dominance of the road system around the Avenue Car Park, and make more efficient use of land. A short distance to the west is Cassiobury Park, the largest park in the borough. Proposals for the wider area should seek to improve connectivity to this area given the limited recreation space available in the Town Centre.

- 2.36 East and west of the north part of the High Street are areas that have a low quality urban grain that does not relate well to the main retail area. Proposals in these areas should consider the potential for high-density development that will reinstate a street pattern that improves connectivity through a high quality public realm, and uses building design to create a balanced approach to openness, enclosure and natural surveillance.
- 2.37 Allocations around Albert Road South provide an opportunity for comprehensive redevelopment of this area to create a distinct identity with improved public realm. Proposals in this area will be supported to provide pedestrian and cycle connections across Beechen Grove.

Central High Street area

- 2.38 The central High Street area lies within the core shopping area and is a focus for retail and leisure uses, to encourage a variety of

activities for all ages and a positive visitor experience. Development proposals should reinforce these uses and make a positive contribution towards the town centre as a destination.

- 2.39 The east side of the High Street is dominated by the indoor shopping centre, formerly intuWatford, where the extension into Charter Place, which opened in 2018, has also created a significant leisure draw. Flexibility for retail and leisure uses will be required to help ensure that the complex continues to make a positive contribution towards the town centre, while complementing the more traditional High Street retail offer.
- 2.40 Towards the south end of the area is the St Mary's Conservation Area, which includes St Mary's Church, the oldest building in Watford, and several other listed buildings. Proposals in this area will need to be designed to reflect the sensitivity of the historic environment and the setting of the listed buildings.
- 2.41 Located at the north end of this area is Watford Market. The market has two elements, with a covered 'box park' facility of retail and eateries and outdoor stalls on the open High Street. There are aspirations to improve the market and make it a more attractive destination for local people. Proposals to relocate the market will be supported where they align with the ambition to improve the quality of the town centre as a vibrant retail destination and visitor experience.



2.42 Adjacent to the High Street are the distinctive street areas of Market Street (to the west) and Queens Road (to the east). These are local retail areas that complement the High Street offer and have pedestrian and cycle links to other parts of Watford. Both reflect the residential character around them, being characterised by low-level built form and shops operated as private enterprises, rather than national operators. Development in these areas should enhance the retail offer and community orientated facilities. Projects that will improve the public realm and the pedestrian experience through urban greening and street works will be supported. The Council encourages engagement with local stakeholders in a co-ordinated approach to enhancing Market Street and Queens Road.

2.43 The Local Plan encourages increasing accessibility for people using public transport, walking and cycling, however, private vehicles will still be the choice for some. Should the redevelopment of large-scale parking facilities be considered in the future, proposals must be supported with evidence setting out the potential impacts and benefits for the town centre as a thriving retail destination and a place people want to visit. This will need to consider good access to retail, recreational and leisure facilities and the relationship to other strategies associated with walking, cycling, taxis and public transport.

South High Street area

2.44 The south High Street area is more reflective of a traditional High Street, characterised by smaller independent units and specialised retail that create a continuous active frontage. The existing built form consists of buildings with a small footprint and is generally two storeys in height.

2.45 Much of the south part of the High Street lies within the High Street / King Street Conservation Area and includes several listed buildings. Proposals will need to consider their potential impact on these heritage assets, and be designed using high quality and innovative approaches to improve the built environment and contribute towards the distinctiveness of Watford.

2.46 At the base of the south High Street area is the junction with Beechen Grove and Exchange Road, creating severance between the Town Centre and Lower High Street and is a poor quality and vehicle dominated environment. Highways improvements to the junction will be supported, particularly where they prioritise walking and cycling. This area acts as a gateway to the Town Centre from the Watford High Street Overground Station and opportunities to improve local transport with connections to a future Mass Rapid Transport System will be supported. Where necessary the Council may use land assembly powers to secure proposals that are of high quality.

Improving connectivity

2.47 The Local Plan reflects objectives set out in the Local Transport Plan and will be further informed by the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan and Sustainable Transport Strategy. One of the overarching objectives of the Local Plan is to improve the environment for people to move through and make it an attractive place to live, work and visit.

2.48 The Town Centre is bound by the ring road, creating significant severance for people not using private vehicles to get around. Of particular importance are improvements to key junctions that should prioritise non-vehicle users, including the junctions at the High Street / Rickmansworth Road, Albert Road South / Beechen Grove, Clarendon Road / Beechen Grove, south part of the High Street / Beechen Grove and Market Street / Exchange Road.

Community infrastructure

2.49 New development in the Town Centre Strategic Development Area is anticipated to include at least 546 new homes. This will generate additional need for school places and increase demands placed on existing health facilities.

2.50 Applicants are encouraged to work collaboratively to identify where a new primary school can be provided that provides good amenity for young children. If an alternative location for a new primary school is identified outside of the Strategic

Development Area and will meet the needs of new residents this will be supported.

2.51 Applicants will need to demonstrate collaborative working with other landowners and the Clinical Commissioning Group to identify how additional health facilities can be delivered. Where provision is made on site, this will be considered in the context of other developer contributions.

Building heights

2.52 Developments within the Town Centre will need to consider how they relate to their surroundings, including heritage assets, and the impact they may have on the character and function of the area. Schemes will need to comply with policies set out in Chapter 6 'An Attractive Town' and consider how they relate to the existing built form. Informed by the Building Heights Study the future base height in the Town Centre is considered to be five storeys. Proposed buildings taller than this will need to satisfy the requirements set out in Policy QD6.5 'Building Height'.





Strategic Policy CDA2.2: Town Centre Strategic Development Area

Proposals in the Town Centre Strategic Development Area will be supported where good design contributes positively towards creating a vibrant town centre, focused on people, healthy lifestyles and quality of life. To achieve this, applicants will be required to demonstrate how proposals will make provision for, and contribute positively towards, the following criteria:

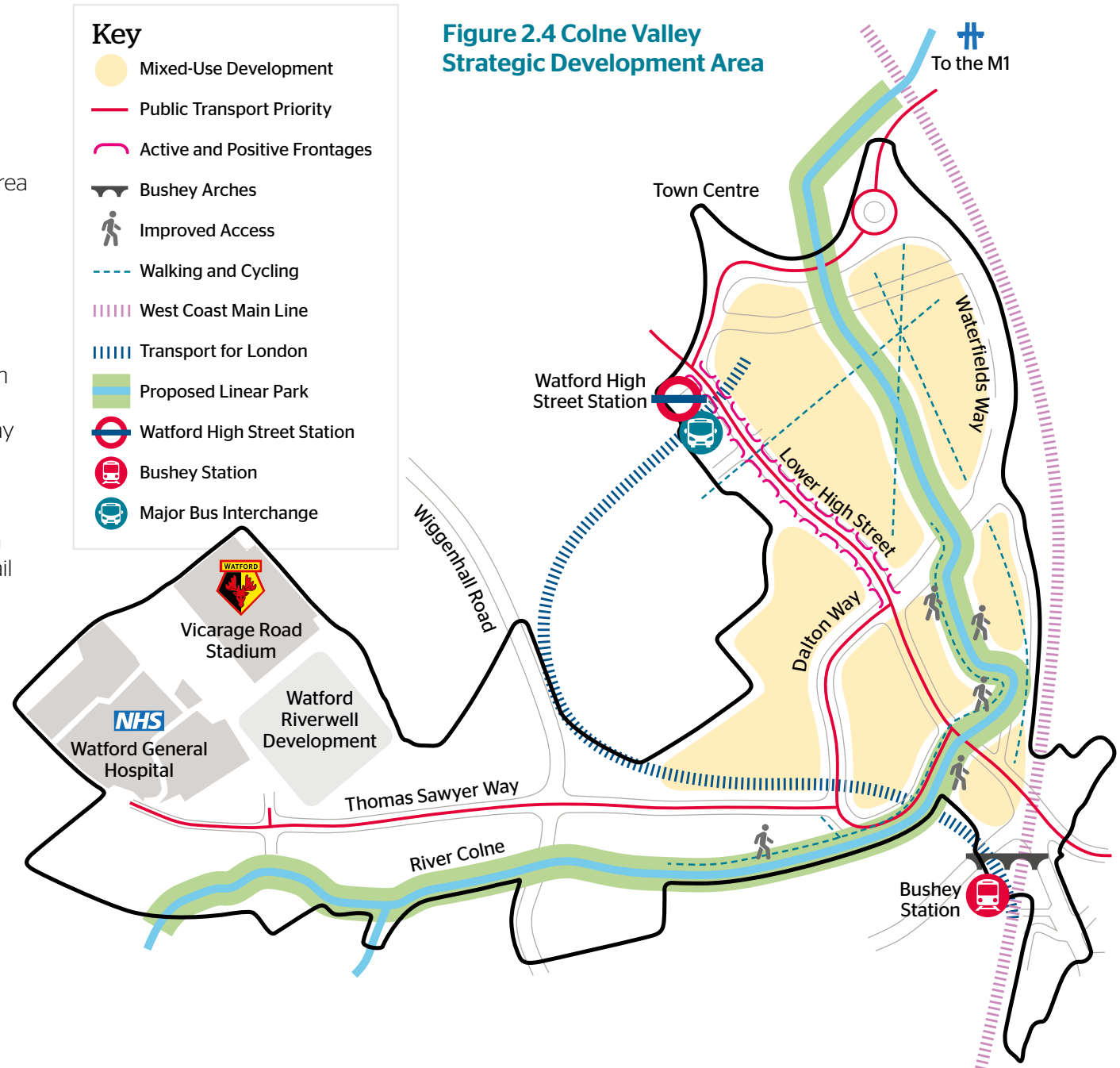
- a) New development will make effective use of land to intensify town centre uses and increase the amount of people living in the Town Centre, intensifying footfall and adding vitality to the town throughout the day and evening;
- b) New uses should make a positive addition to the vitality and functionality of the Town Centre. Residential uses should be sensitively designed and located to avoid negatively impacting on existing town centre uses. Leisure uses that contribute towards the vibrancy and functionality of the Town Centre will be supported;
- c) Development along the High Street, Market Street and the north part of the High Street should retain and enhance active frontages on the ground floor. Uses, such as flexible workspace, where activity occurs throughout the day, will be supported in these areas;
- d) Public realm should be improved to create distinct places throughout the Town Centre to increase dwell time. Proposals should support the delivery of green infrastructure, and in particular, tree planting, to enhance the visitor experience;
- e) Proposals should contribute to clear and co-ordinated wayfinding across the Town Centre and permeability into surrounding areas, including the rail and bus stations, Clarendon Road office hub, the football stadium and hospital. Priority will be for pedestrians and cyclists;
- f) Opportunities should be taken to reduce the vehicle dominance of the ring road, proposals that provide active frontages to the ring road will be supported, transforming the environment into a street that is a positive experience to use for pedestrians and cyclists, as well as vehicle users, will be a priority;
- g) Linkages to open spaces, particularly Cassiobury Park and the proposed Colne Valley Linear Park, should be improved, contributing to the creation of a well connected, accessible and integrated network of open spaces;
- h) Heritage assets, in particular St Mary's Church and the surrounding conservation areas, are key to the character of the Strategic Development Area and proposals should be sensitive to these heritage assets, enhancing their character and setting;
- i) Proposals should demonstrate the provision of innovative waste management and recycling storage and collection systems, to reduce the need for service vehicles along the High Street.

Colne Valley Strategic Development Area

Context

2.53 The Colne Valley Strategic Development Area encompasses 83 hectares in the southern part of the Core Development Area with the defining feature being the River Colne. It includes destinations such as Vicarage Road Football Stadium; Watford General Hospital; Trade City employment area and a distribution of retail parks that perform an out-of-town shopping role in the borough and Bushey and Watford High Street railway stations (Figure 2.4).

2.54 The overarching vision for the Strategic Development Area is to transform it from a car-dominated environment with large retail and commercial sheds, into a new mixed use urban quarter with a quality public realm and an enhanced and accessible river environment for all to enjoy. The Strategic Development Area comprises three areas of different character and objectives; Lower High Street, River Colne and Watford Riverwell.



2.55 Located in an area of high sustainability, new development provides opportunities for people to have excellent access to public transport, services and facilities including the town centre. New development is envisaged to transform this part of the town and create a built and natural environment that is increasingly focussed on people and high quality place making. New development should be designed to reinstate an urban grain that creates a legible network of streets and public spaces and a quality public realm. This should improve connectivity for all users and more widely makes a contribution towards creating a high quality neighbourhood where people want to live.

2.56 Proposals should maximise the opportunities and be designed to make effective use of land. They should ensure design measures are implemented to mitigate any adverse impact of the scheme on existing residential areas. Within the Strategic Development Area, proposals should not increase the amount of retail floorspace on site unless small-scale provision is needed to support the local community. Existing retail floorspace can be reprovided, where appropriate, however a reduction of retail provision will be supported to contribute towards the objective of transforming this area into a residential and mixed-use quarter.

2.57 Watford Museum (Grade II listed building), the Pump House Theatre and Frogmore

House are important heritage assets located along the Lower High Street. Where there is a potential adverse impact on a heritage asset a Heritage Impact Assessment may be required. Design measures to minimise impacts on these assets should be set out as part of any proposals.

2.58 The area is dominated by a network of busy roads that include the Lower High Street, Dalton Way and Waterfields Way (which links to the M1). The high volumes of traffic have resulted in the designation of an Air Quality Management Area Bushey Arches and another at Pinner Road just outside the Strategic Development Area boundary. The road network has also resulted in fragmented pedestrian and cycle provision and significant severance between people and local destinations. Informed by the Local Transport Plan and the forthcoming Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan, proposals will contribute towards reducing the influence of the motorised vehicle in this area and prioritising active travel and public transport. Projects such as junction improvements and giving priority to non-private-vehicular traffic along the Lower High Street will be supported.

2.59 Major development proposals should use a masterplan led approach that demonstrates how they have maximised local opportunities for development of appropriate densities, to improve the public realm and increase access to services and facilities.

River Colne area

2.60 Development in this area will primarily be residential. Located at the lowest point of the valley between the town centre and Bushey Arches, proposals will need to be designed to reflect their location near the River Colne while intensifying existing land uses given the close proximity to Bushey Station.

2.61 New development fronting the river should be designed to minimise disturbance to semi-natural areas. Proposals should do this by including measures that will enhance the setting of the river, the avian, riparian and aquatic habitats it supports and improve pedestrian and cycle routes. To do this, proposals should by consider the location of other green spaces and community facilities in the wider area that the community will use.

2.62 The area has been subject to a Strategic Flood Risk Assessment and this should be used to inform how proposals are designed in order to mitigate flood risk. Sites affected may require a site-specific flood risk assessment and this should consider other flood risk mitigation measures that may be forthcoming in the Core Development Area. Applicants are encouraged to engage with the Environment Agency as an early part of scheme preparation. Further discussion is set out in the 'Flood risk and ground water management' section of Chapter 9 'Natural Environment'. On sites where the River Colne has been culverted, measures need to be taken to re-naturalise the waterway.

2.63 The impacts of new development will need to be managed given the sensitivities of the environment, particularly those located in Flood Zones 2 and 3 or with potential to affect biodiversity. Building design measures that reduce noise and light spill should be integrated into all development proposals. Building heights in this area will need to be appropriate and reflect the context and constraints of this part of the Strategic Development Area.

2.64 The River Colne is an important asset in the area as part of the network of green and blue infrastructure, and a connection from the Ebury Way and Oxhey Park to Waterfields Recreation Ground and further north along the valley. The area lies to the north of the Colne River Regional Park and shares many of the same characteristics as part of the green and blue infrastructure network. The Colne Valley provides an opportunity to improve the natural environment and increase the recreational value for local people.

2.65 A key objective of the Strategic Development Area, informed by the Watford Green Infrastructure Strategy (2011), is to create a linear park along the river basin. Proposals along the River Colne should be designed to help create this park and make provision for a publically accessible shared use path along the site. This will contribute towards open space requirements set out in Policy NE9.7 'Providing New Open Space'. As part of the linear park, proposals should be designed to facilitate continuous access to adjacent

greenspaces, play areas, allotments and playing fields, this may require measures to address road crossings in the vicinity.

Watford Riverwell, Vicarage Road Football Stadium and Watford General Hospital area

2.66 The western part of the Strategic Development Area incorporates Watford Riverwell, an area of residential development and supporting community facilities; the Vicarage Road Football Stadium and Watford General Hospital, an important sub-regional health facility. The area has an overarching residential character and development schemes will need to be designed to reflect and integrate with this character.

2.67 The stadium and hospital are next to each other and important local landmarks in the Vicarage area. Improvements to the hospital will be supported, and planning consent has been granted for a new multi-level car park. Any future development proposals in this area should positively contribute towards the existing residential character and enhance community facilities.

2.68 Part of the site includes the former Metropolitan Line Extension, a route safeguarded by Policy ST11.2 'Protecting and Enhancing Future Public Transport routes and Watford Junction Station Area as a Transport Hub'. This route will form part of a Mass Rapid Transport system linking Watford High Street and Ascot Road to the west (on the boundary with Three Rivers District). Development

proposals adjacent to the safeguarded route should be designed to enable pedestrian and cycle connections into the route and to any future infrastructure. More generally, proposals are expected to enhance the local walking and cycle network and enable good access to public transport along Vicarage Road and Thomas Sawyer Way.

Community infrastructure

2.69 New development in the Colne Valley Strategic Development Area, is anticipated to include 4,361 new homes. Of these, 1,383 form part of the Watford Riverwell scheme which already has planning permission. These will generate additional need for school places and increase demands placed on existing health facilities.



2.70 The Watford Riverwell scheme will provide one new primary school with one other provided within the Colne Valley SDA and there is some projected capacity at existing schools in the wider area. Proposals will be required to make provision for primary school facilities. For sites larger than 1,000 dwellings, this will be required on site. For sites that are located in close proximity to each other and will have a cumulative impact that will generate demand for a new school, applicants are encouraged to work collaboratively with other landowners and the education authority to best meet this need. There is a need to identify where a new primary school can be provided that provides good amenity for young children. If an alternative location for a new primary school is identified outside of the Strategic Development Area and will meet the needs of new residents this will be supported.

2.71 Applicants should work collaboratively with other landowners and the Clinical Commissioning Group to identify how additional health facilities can be delivered. Where provision is made on site, this will be considered in the context of other developer contributions.

Building height

2.72 Informed by the Taller Buildings Study', the base future building height in the area is five storeys. New development should be designed to reflect this character and where proposals exceed this height, they will need to comply with the requirements set out in Policy QD6.5 'Building height'. To make a positive contribution to the Watford Skyline, proposals should use appropriate densities, site layouts, building heights and reflect the topography which is lowest around the River Colne and highest near the town centre. Important views across the borough, such as from the rail viaduct and Oxhey Park, should not be compromised.





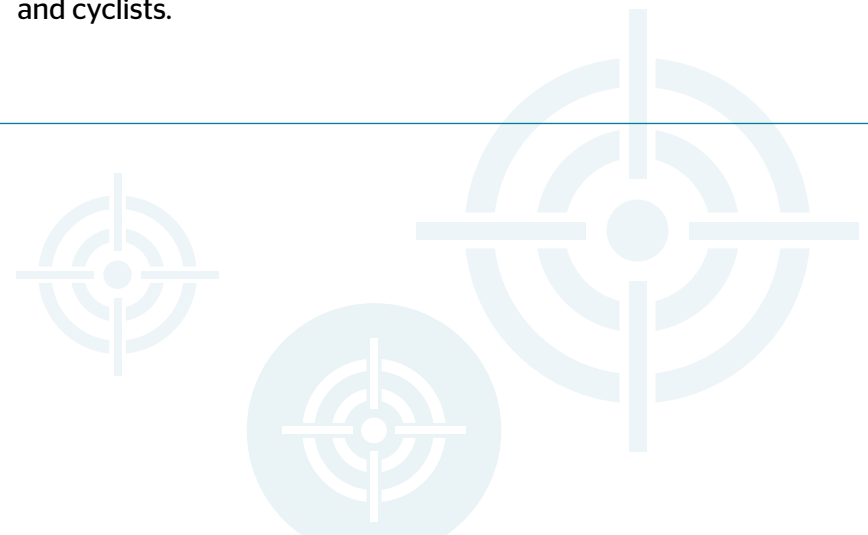
Strategic Policy CDA2.3: Colne Valley Strategic Development Area



The Colne Valley Strategic Development Area is designated to facilitate transformative and co-ordinated change around the River Colne and Lower High Street area, producing a sustainable and mixed-use urban quarter of high quality design and place making, excellent connectivity and a diverse range of uses.

Development will be supported where it contributes towards the objectives for the area and is consistent with other policies in the Local Plan. Applicants will be required to set out how their proposals contribute positively towards the following:

- a) The redevelopment of retail and commercial land will be intensified with mixed-used development. Where retail use is reprovided, this should not exceed the existing net retail floorspace on site;
- b) In locations adjacent to existing residential areas, new development should be designed to minimise the potential impact on these areas by providing a transition in built form between existing homes and higher-density development;
- c) Proposals located in areas of flood risk will need to consider the cumulative impact of development and ensure that mitigation measures do not conflict with other measures that may have been agreed on other sites in the Core Development Area;
- d) New development will contribute towards the creation of, and connections to a linear park along the River Colne, from Water Lane to Oxhey Park, enabling public access for pedestrians and cyclists and the enhancement of wildlife habitats;
- e) Proposals adjacent to the River Colne are to be designed to enhance its setting, facilitate public access, and to include measures to minimise the impact of development on the river-based habitats including the re-naturalisation of the River Colne between Water Lane and Waterfields Way;
- f) New primary school sites to meet the demands generated by the development;
- g) A new pedestrian and cycle crossing or underpass at Waterfields Way should be provided as part of the linear park along the River Colne;
- h) The Lower High Street should be prioritised for improved public transport and the creation of a shared surface route;
- i) Priority systems at junctions and crossings to improve access and permeability in the wider area for public transport, pedestrians and cyclists.





Chapter 3

Homes for a Growing Community



Homes for a Growing Community

- 3.1 The Spatial Strategy to 2036 seeks to deliver at least 14,988 new homes. This figure includes the amount of housing required to meet local need as determined using the government’s standard method (14,274 homes) and an additional 5% allowance (714 homes) to reduce the risk of sites identified in the plan not coming forward as anticipated. The figures that make up this housing target are set out in Figure 3.1.
- 3.2 The Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (2020) identified 56 sites suitable for residential and mixed-use development that includes new homes. The location of these sites are shown in Figure 3.2. This assessment sets out the number of homes that will come forward. This includes identified sites and also how many homes will come forward on sites that are either: not identified as a site allocation, or come forward with a housing density that is different from the indicative capacities calculated in the Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment.

Figure 3.1 Housing figures in the Local Plan

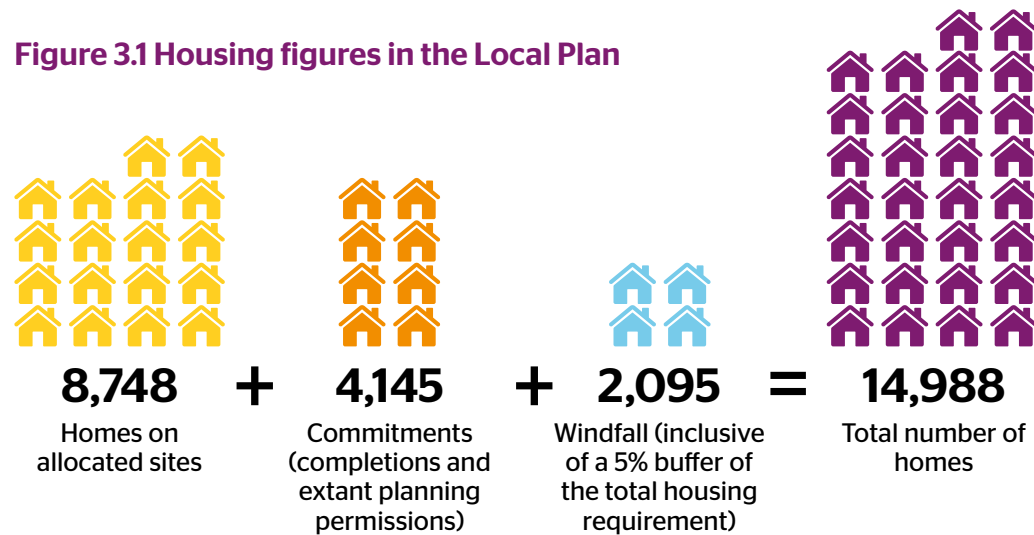
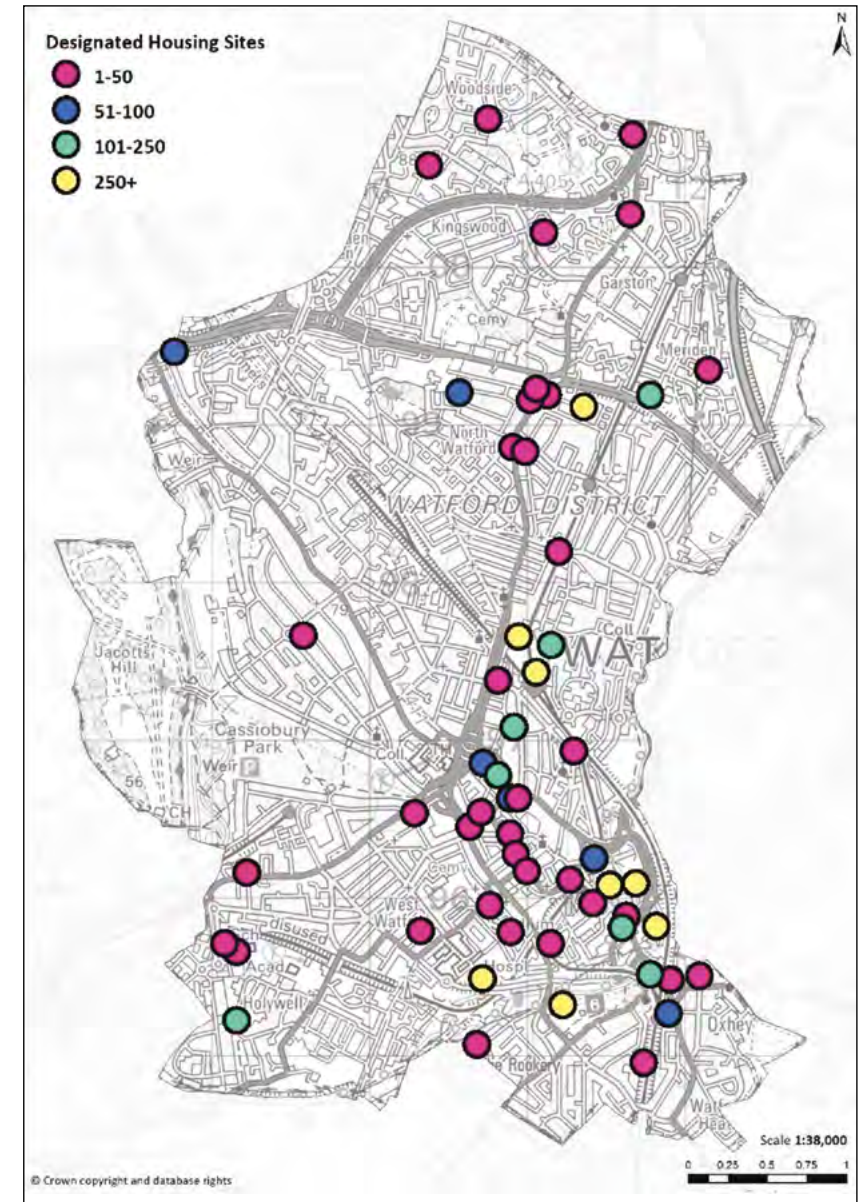


Figure 3.2: Housing sites in the Local Plan



- 3.3 As part of the housing to be provided to 2036, a windfall allowance of 2,132 units is included. This is based on a combination of three factors including the historical annual average of 70 dwellings per year completed on sites of less than five units; development sites coming forward within the density range identified in the Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment, but higher than projected; and unidentified sites larger than five dwellings gaining planning permission. Combined, it is expected that windfall development will contribute, on average, 116 new homes per year.
- 3.4 The South West Hertfordshire Local Housing Needs Assessment (2020) identified the local authorities of Dacorum Borough Council, Hertsmere Borough Council, St Albans City and District Council, Three Rivers District Council and Watford Borough Council as forming the South West Hertfordshire Housing Market Area. It demonstrates a relationship between housing need and movement between the five authority areas. The Council's all face challenges to meet their housing need, however they have agreed to continue to work together to deliver the housing required across the wider area.

- 3.5 The delivery of new homes over the plan period is set out in the housing trajectory (Appendix B). This forecasts the anticipated delivery of new homes each year to 2036 and provides a mechanism to evaluate the performance of the Plan. It also highlights when the provision of supporting facilities and infrastructure are required. The housing trajectory will be kept up-to-date and monitored as part of the Council's Authority Monitoring Report.
- 3.6 To provide more certainty about when schemes will be coming forward and assist with projecting when other types of supporting development may be required, such as infrastructure, as part of their proposals, applicants are expected to provide a year by year housing trajectory setting out when new homes will be completed.



Strategic Policy HO3.1: Housing Provision



Provision will be made for 14,988 new homes, inclusive of a 5% buffer of 714 homes, in Watford Borough for the period 2018 to 2036. Proposals for residential development will be supported where they contribute positively towards meeting local housing needs and achieving sustainable development.

Residential developments should demonstrate how they will make an optimal use of land and provide a mix of homes including size, tenure and specialist adaptations to support people with different needs to ensure good quality homes are provided for all, both now and in the future.



Housing mix, density and optimising use of land

Design-led schemes and housing density

- 3.7 The Spatial Strategy sets out an approach to maximise the land available for redevelopment, reduce its impact on the environment through carbon reductions and deliver sustainable development. Housing density provides an indication of how effectively a site is used and its contribution towards meeting housing need. However, it does not provide wider context about efficient use of land, which is more closely related to site-specific opportunities, constraints and sensitivities. Design-led schemes should make efficient and effective use of land by responding to character, existing or intended as appropriate, the opportunities, constraints and sustainability of a particular site and its surroundings.
- 3.8 Within the Core Development Area higher-density development of at least 95 dwellings per hectare is expected. Higher-density development will be particularly supported in areas where there is good access to Mass Rapid Transport, such as at Watford Junction. Outside of the Core Development Area, proposals should start with a minimum of 45 dwellings per hectare and be revised up or down, based on the character and attributes of the area. This lower figure reflects the lower sustainability of these areas which have fewer services and facilities compared to the Core Development Area.

Housing mix

- 3.9 The variety of housing types enable people to live and move within the town at different times in their lives as their needs change. The types of new homes coming forward during the plan period should reflect the needs of local people, present and future, and account for market trends.
- 3.10 A balance between housing demand and housing need should relate to what is deliverable. This can vary on a site-by-site basis. During the plan period Watford is likely to provide a higher proportion of smaller one-and two-bed properties than other local authorities in the South West Hertfordshire housing market area. This is reflective of Watford's character, which is more intensively built-up, has a higher population density and better access to public transport, which makes it a more sustainable location compared to its neighbours. Over the plan period the mix of housing types may need to be rebalanced across the housing market area to ensure an appropriate amount of family housing is provided.

- 3.11 The Local Housing Needs Assessment suggests that a high proportion of demand for new homes will be generated by households with one and two dependent children. Providing a mix of homes of different sizes is therefore important to support a balanced community and ensure that housing demand and housing need are both met through new development. Therefore, proposals for residential development will be expected to provide a housing mix that includes a proportion of family-sized homes with three or more bedrooms.
- 3.12 Proposals with a residential element are to provide a Housing Schedule. This should set out the total number of units; type and tenure of units; the number of habitable rooms and floorspace for the different elements of the market; and affordable and specialist housing, provided as appropriate. In conjunction with this, a housing trajectory setting out the anticipated annual completions should be provided as part of a planning application.





Policy HO3.2: Housing Mix, Density and Optimising Use of Land



Housing mix

Proposals for new residential development will be supported where they make provision for at least 20% of the total number of residential units to be family-sized (at least three+ bedrooms).



Housing density and optimising land

Residential developments should seek to optimise the density of sites through a design-led approach, taking account of the context and sustainability of a site, focusing higher-density development within the Core Development Area. Within it, new residential developments should seek to deliver a minimum density of at least 95 dwellings per hectare. Outside of the Core Development Area, new residential developments are expected to achieve at least 45 dwellings per hectare, but the optimal density for individual sites should be established through careful consideration of local character, context and access to amenities and public transport.



Protecting existing housing stock

If a net loss of residential accommodation is proposed, applicants will be required to demonstrate how the benefit of the scheme outweighs this loss.

Affordable housing

The need for affordable housing

3.13 Affordable housing can refer to rented or sales properties and is defined by the National Planning Framework. Definitions of affordable housing are set out in Annex 2 of the National Planning Policy Framework. To best reflect affordable housing as a proportion of the total number of homes completed on a site, the requirement will be based on habitable rooms, with supporting information to be provided by an applicant including the number of units, floorspace and bed spaces as part of the housing schedule. Applicants are encouraged to partake in pre-application discussions to determine the affordable housing mix early in the planning process.

Type and size of affordable housing

3.14 The National Planning Policy Framework requires new development to provide different types of affordable housing, including shared-ownership products on qualifying sites in conjunction with other affordable housing products, such as social and affordable rent. The level of provision required has been determined through a viability assessment of the Local Plan to ensure sites are deliverable.

3.15 Social rented housing provides homes for those who need it most and cannot access the property market. To prioritise this need, at least 60% of affordable housing provided on qualifying needs should be social rent,

with the remaining made up of other tenures, such as affordable rent and discounted home ownership products. Social rented units are in greatest demand, but are the costliest to deliver. In some circumstances it may be preferable for a proposal to include a greater number of social rented properties, which would reduce the total number of affordable units. Where this is agreed with the Local Planning Authority, the applicant will be required to demonstrate how the provision is of equivalent value to meeting the affordable housing requirements set out in Policy HO3.3 'Affordable Housing'.

3.16 The type and quality of an affordable home to meet the needs of local people is often reflected in the size of the units provided. New homes can have bedrooms designed for one-bed space (single bed) or two-bed spaces (double bed or twin beds). Unit sizes are commonly expressed in terms of the number of beds and persons. The Council's preference generally being for larger bedrooms which are more reflective of local need. The types of units in terms of bedroom and bed spaces should reflect the needs set out in the Council's Housing Strategy.

Deliverability

3.17 Where delivery of 35% affordable housing on site is not possible and a reduced requirement is agreed with the Local Planning Authority at the time of planning consent, permissions will be subject to a late-stage review to determine if the scheme could deliver affordable housing more akin to the full policy requirement of 35%.



Policy HO3.3: Affordable Housing



Residential developments, including residential institutions of ten homes or more will be supported where they provide at least 35% affordable housing (by habitable room).

Proposals will be required to provide a mix of affordable housing tenures, including a minimum of 60% of new affordable homes as homes for social rent. The homes for social rent should seek to prioritise family-sized (three+ bedrooms) accommodation and reflect the most up-to-date housing strategy.

Affordable housing should be provided on site. The Council will not support provision in lieu through commuted sums, other than in exceptional circumstances where it can be clearly demonstrated that it is not feasible to provide affordable housing on site.

Affordable housing is to be fully integrated in the development and to be designed and built to the same standard as market housing.

In exceptional circumstances, where it is demonstrated that it would not be viable to meet the affordable housing requirements set out in this policy, a late-stage review mechanism, which is triggered when 75% of the units in a scheme are sold or let (or a period agreed by the Local Planning Authority) will be required. Where it is demonstrated the number of affordable units achievable on site is higher than agreed, up to 35%, the applicant will be required to provide the additional units to the Local Authority or Registered Housing Provider upon completion of the development.

Build to Rent

Build to Rent proposals

3.18 The National Planning Policy Framework defines Build to Rent as 'purpose-built housing that is typically 100% rented out.' Additionally, the South West Hertfordshire Local Housing Needs Assessment states that 'it can form part of a wider multi-tenure development comprising either flats or houses, but should be on the same site and / or contiguous with the main development. Schemes are usually of a large-scale in terms of the number of residential units and offer longer tenancy agreements of three years or more, and will typically be professionally managed stock in single ownership and management control'.

Discounted market rent and affordable housing

3.19 Build to Rent schemes will be required to provide affordable housing based on the criteria set out in Policy HO3.3 'Affordable Housing'. Where a developer is proposing a Build to Rent scheme that requires affordable housing to be provided, the affordable housing offer may be entirely Discounted Market Rent, if agreed with the Local Planning Authority. Discounted Market Rent units should be fully integrated into the development, with no differences between these units and the market units, tenure blind.

3.20 The discount on the market rent should be provided in line with the findings of the Local Housing Needs Assessment. It identified that for a person or family to afford a home in Watford, a discount of between 26-34% would need to be applied to market rents, with the variation reflecting different sizes of homes. This level of discount reflects a local approach to meeting the needs of local residents who cannot afford market rents.



3.21 As part of a planning application, applicants should provide the following information to demonstrate how the scheme will be operated and provide well managed, high quality rented homes:

- a) There is unified ownership and unified management of the development;
- b) Longer tenancies (three years or more) are available to all tenants. These should have break clauses for renters, which allow the tenant to end the tenancy with a month's notice any time after the first six months;
- c) The scheme offers rent certainty for the period of tenancy, the basis of which should be made clear to the tenant before a tenancy agreement is signed, including any annual increases, which should always be formula linked;
- d) There is on-site management, this does not necessarily mean full-time, dedicated staff, however, all schemes need to have systems for prompt resolution of issues and some daily on-site presence;
- e) Providers have a complaints procedure in place and are a member of a recognised ombudsman scheme;
- f) Providers do not charge up-front fees of any kind to tenants or prospective tenants, other than deposits in advance.

3.22 Discounted Market Rent units that are provided as affordable housing will be allocated to eligible households on Watford

Borough Council housing register. The allocation of the Discounted Market Rent properties that are not offered as affordable housing should be allocated to people in a manner agreed with the Local Authority.

Clawback agreements

3.23 Private affordable rented properties will be subject to a 15-year covenant or a clawback agreement, agreed through planning conditions. For units provided as affordable housing, these will be provided in perpetuity.

3.24 Affordable housing, whether it be publicly or privately operated, provides a long-term community benefit. This benefit is likely to increase over the plan period if past trends continue, with property values increasing significantly faster than household incomes. Therefore it would be reasonable to expect an operator who wishes to sell any discounted market rent properties to:

- Clearly set out how the property(s) will be reprovided, by identifying a specific development to provide certainty to the local authority that there will be no net loss of affordable housing provision and the community will not be adversely affected;
- Reprovide with a unit(s) of the same size as the unit(s) being withdrawn for sale;
- Locate the replacement units where they will meet the needs of people on the discounted market rent housing register.

3.25 This requirement should be set out through the use of planning conditions.





Policy HO3.4: Build to Rent



Proposals for Build to Rent homes will be supported in locations appropriate for residential development. Affordable housing should be provided in accordance with Policy HO3.3 'Affordable Housing', although Discounted Market Rent, at a genuinely affordable rent, will be accepted in place of other affordable housing tenures. Genuinely affordable rents should be established against the most up-to-date Local Housing Market Needs Assessment and should be capped at a level equivalent to the Local Housing Allowance.

To qualify as a Build to Rent scheme, proposals should meet the following criteria:

- a) The development, block or phase within the development has at least 50 units;
- b) The homes are retained as Build to Rent under a covenant for at least 15 years;
- c) A clawback mechanism is in place to recoup additional affordable housing contributions in the event of the covenant being broken;
- d) All the units are self-contained and let separately.

On schemes that propose a proportion of homes as Build to Rent and a proportion for sale to the market, this policy will only be applicable to the Build to Rent component. The scheme should be assessed as a whole, with affordable housing calculated as a proportion of the total habitable rooms across the scheme.

Accommodation for vulnerable people

3.26 With an ageing population comes changing housing needs. These include differing design principles and the types of support required to enable people to live independently for longer, with care services and facilities available. Specialist housing for elderly people can include:

- Age-restricted general market housing;
- Retirement living or sheltered housing;
- Extra care housing or housing with care;
- Residential care homes and nursing homes.

3.27 People may have disabilities such as ambulatory difficulties, blindness, learning difficulties, autism and mental health needs, which may generate a range of housing requirements that change over time. These should be considered when new homes are built and if any special requirements should be incorporated into the design of a new building.





Policy HO3.5: Specialist Housing and Care Homes



Existing specialist and supported housing will be protected where it is up to the standards set out in Hertfordshire County Council guidance.

The redevelopment of any site that includes housing for vulnerable people will only be acceptable where it meets the standards set out in Hertfordshire County Council guidance and when it meets the following criteria:

- a) There is no longer an identified need for the existing facility;
- b) The needs will be met elsewhere in the Borough, preferably close to the existing building or in a preferential location for specialist housing;
- c) Reprovision would result in improved quality of specialist housing.

Proposals for new specialist housing should be located within 400m of a district or local centre and public transport, be designed to include pick-up and drop-off facilities close to the principle entrance that are able to accommodate specialist transport vehicles. To aid mobility, development should provide space for the storage of mobility scooters.

New specialist housing and care homes that are provided at market value will be required to comply with the affordable housing requirements set out in Policy HO3.3 'Affordable Housing'.

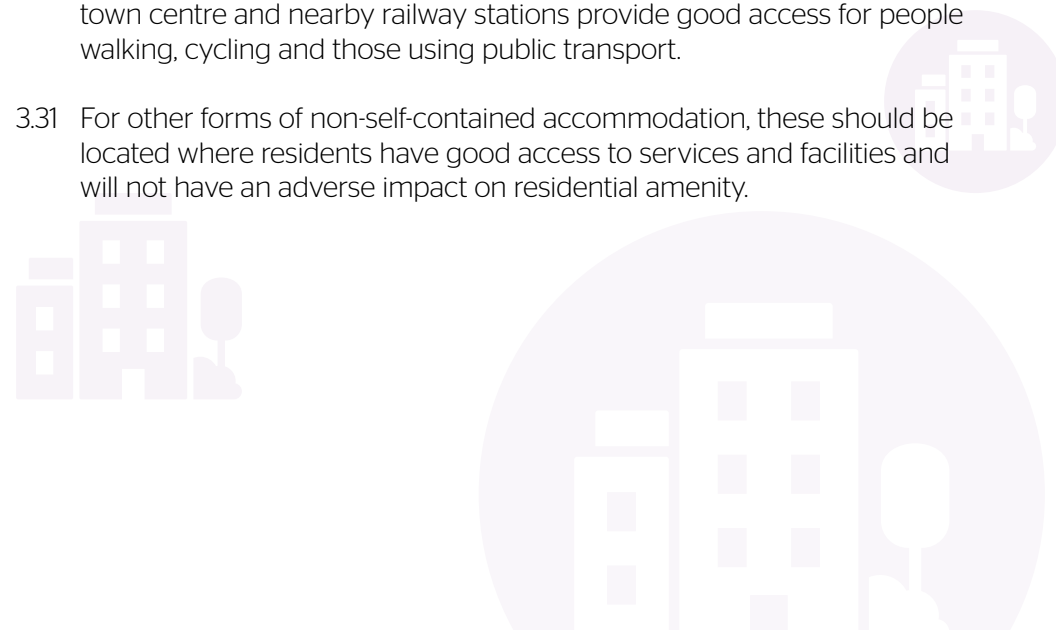
Student, co-living and non-self-contained accommodation

3.28 Watford has a thriving town centre with a diverse range of services and facilities in the borough. The population is relatively young compared to neighbouring districts, with population projections indicating this demographic will continue.

3.29 West Herts College is the largest education institution providing tertiary education opportunities up to diploma and apprenticeship levels. The University of Westminster branch in Harrow, Middlesex University in Hendon, as well as a number of technical colleges in the area, offer wider education opportunities, attracting people from other areas or abroad who will seek accommodation. Increasingly Watford is seen as a possible location for a more affordable lifestyle.

3.30 Student and co-living accommodation is a type of housing primarily focused on younger people, where they can share communal facilities while having their own accommodation. These types of developments have a high ratio of people per square metre and are best suited to areas where there is good access to services and facilities. In Watford, the town centre and nearby railway stations provide good access for people walking, cycling and those using public transport.

3.31 For other forms of non-self-contained accommodation, these should be located where residents have good access to services and facilities and will not have an adverse impact on residential amenity.





Policy HO3.6: Student, Co-living and Non-Self-Contained Accommodation



New student and co-living and non-self-contained accommodation will be supported where it is located within the Core Development Area, or within 800 metres of a railway station located in the Core Development Area.

Proposals for student accommodation will be supported where they provide evidence of support and need from an educational institution or a registered provider of student accommodation.

A covenant protecting the premises for student use only will be secured through planning conditions.

Co-living and non-self-contained accommodation will be supported where it incorporates a high quality of design and generous communal shared space and amenities for all occupants.

To differentiate co-living and non-self-contained accommodation from other types of residential accommodation, proposals will be required to have a minimum provision of 50 units. Proposals will need to be supported with a management plan submitted as part of a planning application.

Proposals will be required to make a financial contribution to comply with affordable housing requirements set out in Policy HO3.3 'Affordable Housing'.



Self-build and custom housebuilding

- 3.32 Self-build and custom housebuilding is an approach to delivering new homes that are designed and built by people to meet their needs and aspirations. The limited amount of land available for new development, as identified by the Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment, makes it inappropriate to allocate land specifically for self-build homes and custom homebuilding. However, self-build and custom housebuilding will be supported on windfall sites where proposals are for 50 new houses or more.
- 3.33 If the scale of development is large enough to support one or more self-build plots, applicants are encouraged to consider how these self-build plots can be integrated into the overall scheme. Marketing of the site should be demonstrated to have been undertaken proactively to gauge potential interest in a self-build plot by those registered on the Council's Self-build Register.



Policy HO3.7: Self-build and Custom Housebuilding



Residential proposals for 50 houses or more (excluding houses to be provided as affordable homes) will be supported where they provide one self-build plot for every ten houses, in agreement with the Local Planning Authority. This will be secured through legal agreement.

The average size of a self-build plot should be comparable to the average size of the market sized plots provided on site.

If the plot has been offered to people registered on the Council's Self-build Register and has not been sold within 12 months of completion of the overall scheme, the property will return to the developer to be built out.



Gypsies and Travellers

3.34 Gypsies and Travellers are part of our community and have housing needs that are to be addressed as part of the Local Plan. Presently, there is one permanent Gypsy and Traveller site in Watford at Tolpits Lane, with ten authorised pitches. There are no private long-term sites or sites for temporary stays in the borough.

3.35 The Watford Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (2018) was undertaken to identify the local needs of Gypsies and Travellers up to 2036. The study identified a need for two additional pitches for Gypsy and Traveller households.

3.36 The assessment found there is a need for seven additional pitches for households that do not meet the planning definition of Gypsies or Travellers. This need will be addressed as part of the general housing need.

3.37 One site with two pitches located adjacent to the existing site at Tolpits Lane is allocated for Gypsies and Travellers to meet projected need during the plan period. There is no further requirement to allocate land to meet future need. However, should that change in the future, proposals for new Gypsy and Traveller accommodation will be assessed using Development Management policies.



Policy HO3.8: Gypsies and Travellers



Existing designated sites used by Gypsies and Travellers will be protected, unless it is demonstrated they are no longer required.

Proposals for new sites will be supported when there is no further capacity at existing or allocated sites for Gypsies and Travellers and the Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment is considered out of date.

Proposals for new sites for Gypsies and Travellers should:

- a) Have good access to the highway network;
- b) Have good access to health and education facilities by walking and cycling;
- c) Not have a significant adverse impact on the physical or visual character of the area;
- d) Contribute towards biodiversity net gain and not adversely impact upon habitats or trees;
- e) Not be located in an area of significant flood risk; and
- f) Not have an adverse impact on the amenity of existing or future residents.

Residential conversions

Residential conversions

3.38 Properties converted into smaller units contribute towards new homes required in an area through the sub-dividing of existing properties. This can make effective use of existing dwellings, particularly where there is high-density housing in an area of high sustainability. However, they can reduce the number of family-sized homes available in the area and impact upon local amenity if not properly managed. A mix of dwelling sizes (number of bedrooms) is important to maintain balanced communities and enable people to move and live in areas where they share social connections and are affordable.

Houses in Multiple Occupation

3.39 Houses in Multiple Occupation perform an important role in the availability of housing, particularly for people only able to afford lower rents, and are supported in the borough. However, Houses in Multiple Occupation, in conjunction with other residential conversions, can create issues where there is a high concentration in a particular area. This can be visible through inappropriate numbers of parked vehicles and declining maintenance, affecting the property and amenity in the immediate area.

3.40 Proposals for changes of use to a House in Multiple Occupation will only be acceptable where residential amenity is not significantly affected, family housing is reprovided and the dwelling has good access to services and facilities (Figure 11). To enable good management and support, and ensure that they are available in the right locations without having an adverse impact on the surrounding area, only ten percent of the total number of dwellings along a residential frontage (or for a long street, defined as a residential frontage between two main roads or junctions) will be permitted.



Policy HO3.9: Residential Conversions



Proposals to sub-divide existing residential accommodation in to self-contained flats or large-scale Houses in Multiple Occupation will be supported where:

- a) In the case of conversion to self-contained flats, proposals resulting in the loss of purpose-built, family-sized accommodation with three or more bedrooms include a family-sized unit (three+ bedrooms) with direct access to garden space at ground floor on site as part of the development;
- b) In the case of conversion to self-contained flats, all residential units on site meet the nationally described space standard;
- c) In the case of conversion to a House in Multiple Occupation, the property has an original, unextended, floor area of at least 150sqm and is located in an area with good access to public transport and other amenities;
- d) Appropriate amenity space and facilities for refuse and recycling storage are provided; and
- e) The proposal is car-free or parking provision is provided on site, or in nearby off-street parking facilities.



Building standards for healthy, accessible and adaptable Homes

3.41 To achieve sustainable development and improve health and wellbeing, new homes need to be of a quality to enable people to live comfortably in circumstances that meet their needs. This applies to all members of our community who may be at different stages of their lives and have different family circumstances. Physical and mental health are often affected by household circumstances such as cramped accommodation and poor soundproofing and in part, can be related to the quality of how a home has been built.

Internal space standards

3.42 New housing is an opportunity to improve new housing for local people. This is particularly pertinent with an increasing number of homes being delivered through permitted development rights, where Internal Space Standards are not regulated, and an increasing awareness of the importance of healthy homes to support physical, mental health and wellbeing. To ensure the delivery of high quality housing, proposals will be required to meet the Internal Space Standards set out in the national Building Regulations.

Adaptability and accessibility

3.43 People should have the opportunity to stay in their own homes as they grow older; enjoy a good quality of life, and continue to live in the community where they have lived their lives; feel more connected to their communities; and help reduce costs to the social care and health systems. To do this, homes need to be adaptable. Most existing homes have not been designed in this way and are increasingly unlikely to meet the needs of a changing demographic. Alterations useful to support people as they get older, or those with disabilities, include wider doors and ramps for wheelchair access, and walls fitted with grab rails. More generally, it is important that the internal layout of a home is designed to enable it to support people with mobility issues and disabilities.

3.44 The demographic in Watford is one of an ageing population, with the number of elderly people expected to increase (ONS, 2011 Census). The Local Housing Needs Assessment highlights the projected increase in the number of people with a range of disabilities from existing levels, including those with mobility issues, autistic spectrum disorders, learning disabilities and challenging behaviour.

3.45 The Local Housing Needs Assessment states there is an existing shortfall of adaptable homes in the borough. It suggests there is a significant need for new housing that is designed to address the needs of the changing demographic. More specifically, the study suggests that a higher proportion of people using wheelchairs are likely to be living in social housing.



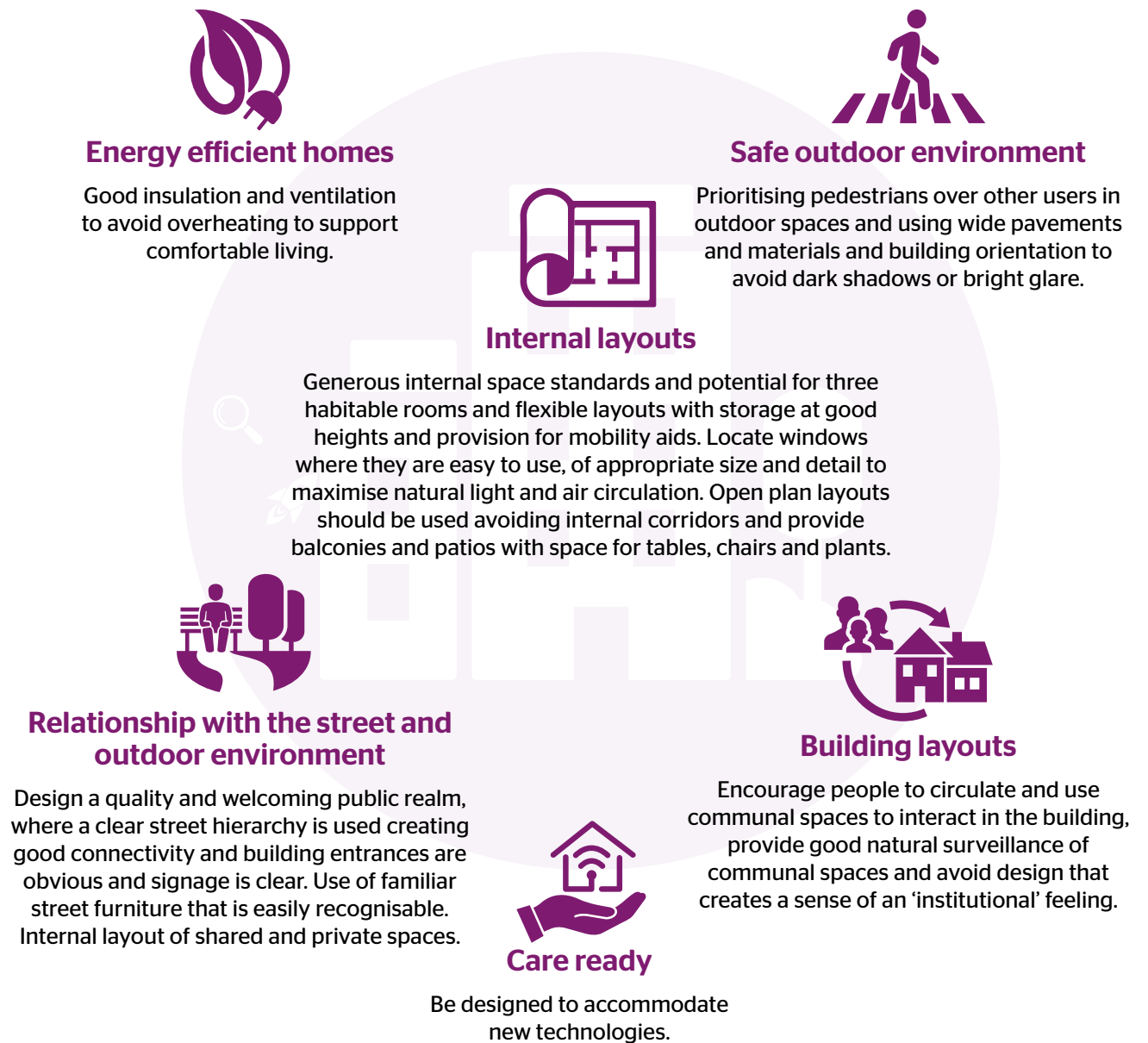
Dementia Friendly homes

3.46 It is estimated that nationally the number of people living with Alzheimer’s will more than double by 2040 and directly affect one in three people aged over 65 (Alzheimer’s Society). In Watford this translates to about 2% of people who could be living with Alzheimer’s by 2036. This is recognised locally by Watford Borough Council, having declared their intention to be a ‘Dementia Friendly Town’ in 2019.

3.47 Good quality housing and sensitively planned environments, whether a family home, extra-care housing, residential care or nursing care, can have a substantial impact on the quality of life of someone living with dementia. Small changes can often be enough to help someone living with dementia to be more independent, by providing an environment that is clearly defined, easy to navigate, and feels safe. Design considerations to support people with dementia are set out in Figure 3.3.



Figure 3.3: Dementia Friendly design principles





Policy HO3.10: Building Standards for New Homes



All new homes will meet or exceed the nationally described internal space standard.

All new housing will be designed and built to comply with M4(2) of the Building Regulations unless they are built to comply with M4(3) of the Building Regulations.

For developments of 10 or more homes, at least 10% of the dwellings will be built to be wheelchair adaptable and comply with M4(3) of the Building Regulations.

For developments of 50 homes or more, 2% of dwellings should be designed to support someone living with dementia.



Private and communal open space

Private open space

3.48 In addition to internal space standards that contribute towards quality homes, access to private outdoor space is just as important for health and wellbeing. Most of the residential development to come forward in Watford during the plan period will be apartments. To provide healthy home environments, access to private outdoor space is essential.

3.49 Proposals should consider how private outdoor space can add quality to a scheme and how it will improve the relationship between the building and its surroundings. This includes the provision of a high quality built environment, and should increase natural surveillance early in the design process. All dwellings should have level access to one or more of the following forms of private open space: garden, terrace, roof garden, courtyard garden or balcony.

3.50 Private open space should be practical in terms of its shape and utility, offering good amenity so it can comfortably accommodate a table and at least four chairs. The space should also be suitably screened, to protect the area from high noise levels and provide privacy.

Communal amenity space

3.51 Where communal amenity space is provided this should be of a minimum size of 50sqm for two units, plus 15sqm per additional two units. The use of roof areas, including podiums and courtyards for additional private or shared amenity or garden space is encouraged. While the standard is set out, this will need to be considered in the wider context of the scheme, in terms of the opportunities and constraints of a site.

3.52 Family housing on upper floors should have access to shared amenity space, informal play space and equipped play space (if no facilities are located nearby) and / or a balcony or terrace, subject to acceptable amenity and design considerations. This should be considered in conjunction with Policy NE9.7 'Providing New Open Space'. Where communal amenity space is provided, it should be designed to provide places to sit, play and the exercise. It should be adaptable to accommodate the changing needs of residents and be easy to maintain, whilst not compromising its contribution towards creating a quality public realm. Importantly, communal open space should be designed into the scheme so as not to be overshadowed or suffer low levels of daylight.





Policy HO3.11: Private and Communal Outdoor Amenity Space



A minimum of 5sqm of private outdoor space should be provided for 1-2 person dwellings and at least one additional square metre should be provided for each additional occupant. The minimum depth and width for all balconies and other private external spaces should be 1.5m. This does not contribute towards the minimum internal space standards.

Provision of private amenity space is to meet the following standards:

Size of dwelling	Apartment*	House/Duplex/Maisonette
1-bed	5sqm	12sqm
2-bed	7sqm	24sqm
3-bed	8sqm	25-40sqm
4+bed	9sqm	25-40sqm

The provision of communal outdoor amenity space, including roof and terrace space, will be supported. Communal outdoor amenity space will need to be designed to be usable by all residents.





Chapter 4

A Strong Economy

A Strong Economy

- 4.1 Watford is a sub-regional economic centre, home to the UK headquarters of some well-known companies as well as many smaller local businesses. A short commute to central London means that Watford is strategically placed for business, although it remains a distinct and competitive economic centre in its own right.
- 4.2 Watford has a diverse economy, with a mix of office and Industrial-led employment that reflects the multi-skilled community living in the borough. Information and communications technology based industries (ICT) are key employers in Watford, with professional services and knowledge based industries being its largest sector. Equally there is a strong industrial base in the borough, with five distinct industrial areas operating across a variety of different industries (Figure 4.1). This includes businesses related to storage, distribution and manufacturing.
- 4.3 Watford is also part of the South West Hertfordshire Functional Economic Market Area (FEMA) along with Dacorum, Hertsmere, St Albans and Three Rivers. Watford shares a strong relationship with its neighbouring areas, as demonstrated by the interlinked commuting flows.
- 4.4 The planning system can help to support the growth of Watford's economy by ensuring that the right type of land is available in the right places. The South West Herts Economic Study Update (2019) has identified a need across the sub-region for 188,000sqm of additional office floorspace and 481,500sqm of additional industrial floorspace. To contribute towards this requirement, Watford has planned for 111,175sqm of office floorspace and 40,759sqm of industrial floorspace. This means that there is an underprovision of industrial floorspace due to land availability, which is compensated for through an overprovision of office floorspace.
- 4.5 Providing more office floorspace than required for Watford can support our neighbouring authorities in meeting their need, provide high quality office floorspace to replace aging stock and reinforce Watford's role across the sub-region as an office hub. It also allows for new offices to be provided at the most sustainable locations, as Clarendon Road allows for the benefits of its proximity to Watford Junction to be maximised.

Figure 4.1: Areas designated for office and industrial uses

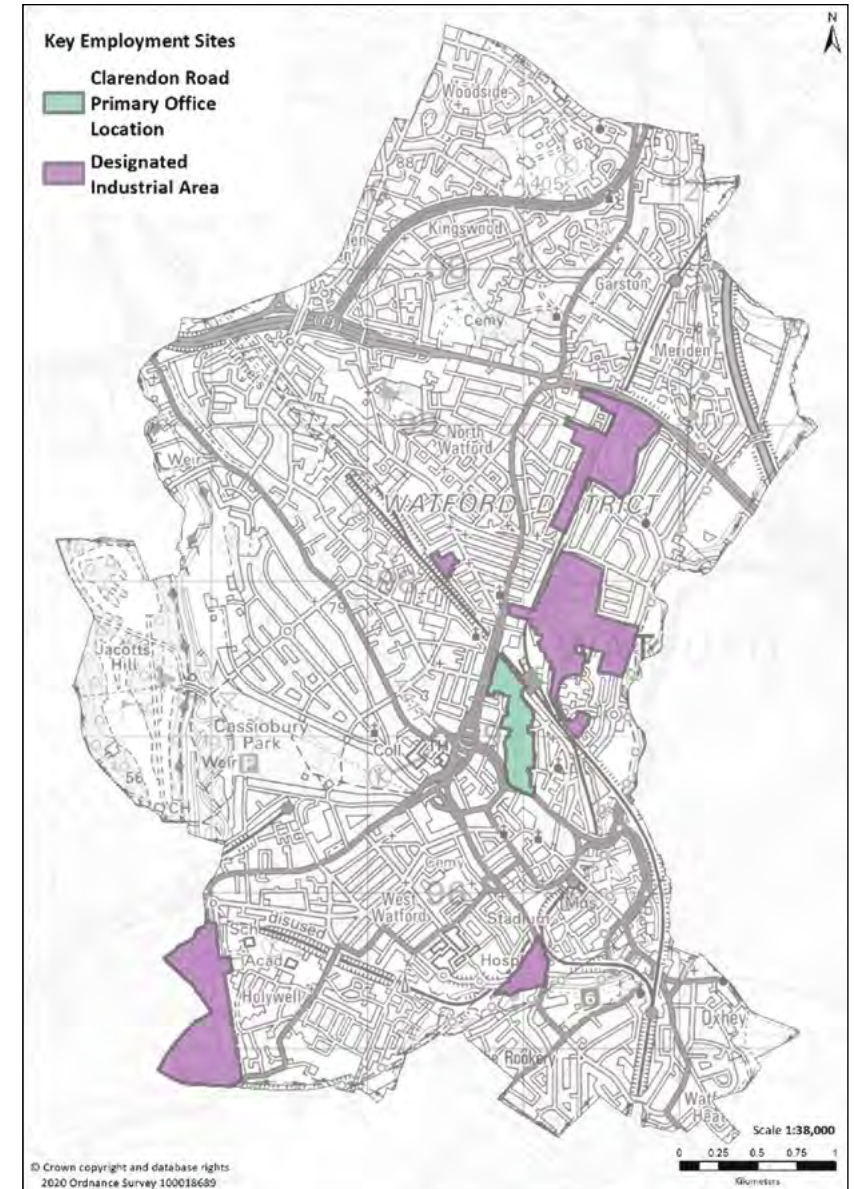
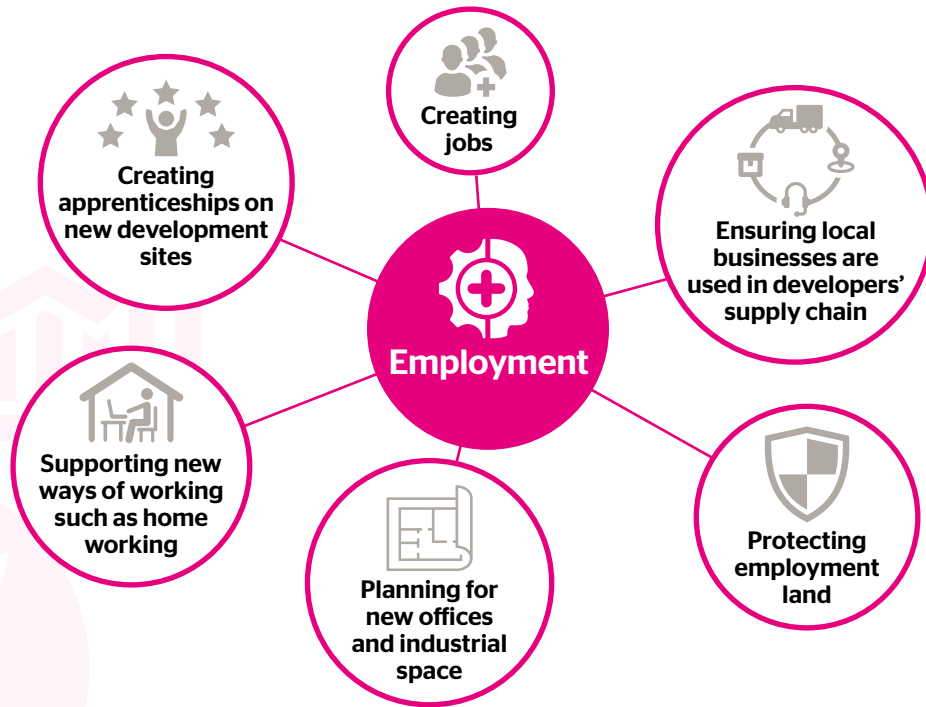


Figure 4.2: Role of employment policies



4.6 The policies in this chapter seek to encourage further economic growth by supporting increased provision and intensification of employment floorspace, including industrial.

4.7 COVID-19 has greatly impacted the economy to date, with the full, long-term effects upon employment remaining relatively unknown. The policies have been designed to continue to support business investment and development in Watford, whilst also being sufficiently flexible to allow for any potential transformative impacts. This may include increased flexible and home working. There is also the potential for an economic recession which could lead to a period of high unemployment and vacancy before any long-term recovery.



Strategic Policy EM4.1: Providing New Employment



Proposals for new employment floorspace will be supported where they contribute towards meeting the identified employment need in the borough and Functional Economic Market Area.

To meet these challenging targets, the Local Plan will seek to prevent the net loss of both office and industrial floorspace across the Borough. New office growth will be prioritised at the Clarendon Road Primary Office Location, while new industrial growth will be prioritised in the five Designated Industrial Areas. Over the plan period, the Council will seek to plan for the creation of 11,500 new jobs.

The Council will continue to work with neighbouring authorities in the South West Hertfordshire Functional Economic Market Area to deliver the shortfall of industrial floorspace that cannot be provided in Watford over the plan period.

The Council will seek to support sustainable economic growth in the borough and the wider Functional Economic Market Area where possible by:

- a) Protecting existing employment land from inappropriate development;
- b) Encouraging the growth of new businesses and industries;
- c) Supporting new models and ways of working, including more flexible working practices;
- d) Ensuring employment land is intensified to make the most effective use of land; and
- e) Attracting new inward investment.

Designated industrial areas

4.8 Watford contains five industrial areas, which host a wide variety of businesses, from large warehouses for storage and distribution, to smaller workshops. These industrial areas are vibrant during the day time and vacancy rates are low. Yet as the demand for housing grows, so too will the number of jobs required in Watford. A key issue facing the borough is that the identified need for new industrial land is met with a limit in land supply. The South West Herts Economic Study Update has shown there to be a large demand for industrial floorspace within the plan period, although the borough's Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (HELAA) (2021) has identified a shortfall of land for industrial uses up to 2036.

4.9 This shortage has been exacerbated by large-scale losses of floorspace over recent years. In Watford, industrial floorspace has seen a net loss of 24,657sqm between 2007 and 2018. Evidence shows that these losses have often been to residential uses, which enjoy higher land values and have been subject to conversions through Permitted Development Rights. There have also been losses to other non-employment uses that generate few jobs, such as bulky retail units and community spaces that are better suited to other locations. These losses, combined with high future demand for industrial land, mean that protecting and intensifying designated

industrial areas will play an important role in meeting future industrial growth requirements. Sites within designated industrial areas that have scope to be intensified have been identified as part of the Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment.

4.10 While any new industrial floorspace could be dispersed across the borough, the colocation of industrial uses in a designated area can have benefits. Although evidence shows productivity is higher when industry is clustered, there are some more practical advantages of consolidating designated industrial areas. The noise, vibration and odour often caused by industrial processes can make it more sensible to locate these industrial uses together, as opposed to dispersing them directly amongst residential and office uses.

4.11 Uses that would be considered inappropriate in designated industrial areas are destination uses that do not complement the existing industrial uses in the area. These destination uses generate specific trips to the industrial areas that are not related to the employment offer on site. For example, some retail uses such as showrooms may attract customers to the industrial area, but cannot be used by the employees on site on a daily basis. These types of uses can undermine the effectiveness and value of the employment area to Watford's economy and are better suited to other locations.

4.12 Some non-industrial uses can support the function of the designated sites, making a valuable contribution to the area. These uses can be referred to as supporting uses, or 'walk to' uses, reflecting their strong relationship with neighbouring businesses. Providing small facilities under 100sqm in size such as fitness gyms, nurseries, some retail units and cafés can complement existing uses by providing facilities that can frequently be used by staff working in the employment areas while also creating jobs. Offices may also support the industrial function of some businesses in the site, although larger premises will be subject to Policy EM4.3 'Office Development'. Existing office in the Designated Industrial Areas can retain the same use, but will be encouraged to intensify where possible.

4.13 Development should also have regard to the Waste Local Plan and the identified Employment Land Areas of Search (ELAS) which overlaps with some of the sites in the Local Plan.

Table 4.1: Future industrial supply

Industrial potential supply 2018-2036	Floorspace (sqm)
Site allocations	17,035
Sites with planning permission	23,724
Total	40,759



Policy EM4.2: Designated Industrial Areas



Designated industrial areas are identified on the Policies Map.

Proposals for new industrial employment uses will be supported where they contribute to the identified need for industrial land set out in the South West Herts Economic Study Update. To achieve this, proposals will be supported that incur no net loss of industrial floorspace unless:

- a) An up-to-date evidence base demonstrates that the site is no longer required for industrial use; or
- b) The property has been vacant for at least 12 months and there is clear marketing evidence to show it cannot be reused or redeveloped for industrial use in the medium term.

Proposals for supporting uses under 100sqm will be supported where their job generating potential can clearly be demonstrated. This should be assessed on a case by case basis. Proposals for supporting uses must show that the development proposed would not compromise any industrial or other employment activities in the designated site in terms of their continued efficient function, access, service arrangements and operating times.

Office development

- 4.14 The professional service industry is the largest sector of employment in Watford and accounts for 14% of employment, with these types of businesses often being office based.
- 4.15 The majority of Watford's offices are clustered around Clarendon Road, which functions as Watford's central office district. The draw that Clarendon Road has across the sub-region is reflected in the South West Herts Economic Study Update, which emphasises the strategic role that the area plays in the Functional Economic Market Area. The provision of office floorspace in the Local Plan is set out in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2: Future office floorspace supply

Office potential supply 2018-2036	Floorspace (sqm)
Site allocations	38,672
Sites with planning permission	72,503
Total	111,175

- 4.16 The Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment has shown that the vast majority of new office growth in the plan period can be met at Clarendon Road. There are many economic and environmental benefits of concentrating Watford's office growth at this established office location. Developing an intensified office cluster will help sustain Clarendon Road as an eminent and distinctive office location, with an increased focus on sustainability and high quality design. Ensuring that Watford's offices are grouped at Clarendon Road would also help retain its vibrancy, whilst enjoying the benefits of agglomeration.
- 4.17 The area sits within the Watford Gateway section of the Core Development Area, which is set to be an area that will experience some transformative change during the plan period. Potential exists to redevelop sites within the Clarendon Road office area and intensify land use to ensure that office growth requirements are met. This includes high-density development and taller buildings.
- 4.18 Similar to designated industrial areas, some smaller, supporting or walk-to uses of under 100sqm may also be considered appropriate, where they support the office function of the area. This may include cafés or convenience stores for employees to purchase lunch, hot drinks or other everyday items. Residential uses will also be supported in the area, to create a vibrant, mixed-use quarter. However, any mixed-use development should be office led to ensure that the quarter retains its key office function.



4.19 To preserve the strong sub-regional role that Clarendon Road plays in supporting growth in the office sector, the area will be the preferred location for future office growth. It is important to protect existing office use at this location, in line with the findings of the South West Herts Economic Study Update. For proposals for new office floorspace, the office development hierarchy should be followed (Figure 4.3). The approach aims to direct new office development to the Clarendon Road Primary Office Location. If it is not possible for the new office to be located within the Clarendon Road Primary Office Location, the sequential test should be used to direct the office use to the wider Core Development Area, in line with the office hierarchy. This ensures that new office use outside of Clarendon Road contributes to small clusters first, to minimise any potential negative impacts on residential or industrial areas elsewhere.

Figure 4.3: Office development hierarchy



Policy EM4.3: Office Development



The Clarendon Road Primary Office Location is located on the Policies Map.

Proposals for new office development that result in no net loss of office floorspace in the Clarendon Road Primary Office Location will be supported. Proposals that would incur a net loss of office floorspace will be resisted unless:

- a) An up-to-date evidence base demonstrates that the site is no longer required for office use; or
- b) The property has been vacant for at least 12 months and there is clear marketing evidence to show it cannot be reused or redeveloped for office use in the medium term.

Mixed-use development, including residential, will be supported where there is no net loss of office floorspace and a predominantly commercial frontage is maintained on to Clarendon Road.

Proposals for development of new office uses outside the Clarendon Road Primary Office Location must support the Office Development Hierarchy. Where these are 250sqm (gross) or more, they must also be accompanied by an Impact Assessment. Assessments will need to demonstrate there will be no significant adverse impact on the office function of Clarendon Road, and that good accessibility by walking, cycling and public transport is provided or available.

Proposals for supporting uses under 100sqm will be supported where their job-generating potential can clearly be demonstrated. This should be assessed on a case-by-case basis.

Economic development outside of designated employment areas

4.20 The Watford Employment Land Review (2019) has shown that losses of B (employment) class floorspace have been most prevalent in non-designated employment locations. This has largely been through changes to residential uses through permitted development and other means. These losses remain in conflict with the need to increase floorspace to support Watford's economic growth to meet the identified need set out in the South West Herts Economic Study Update. Whilst the majority of employment growth is expected to come through the redevelopment and intensification of designated sites, the designated industrial areas and the Clarendon Road Primary Office Location, smaller non-designated sites also have the potential to assist in supporting Watford's economy.

4.21 In the first instance, new offices should be directed to the Clarendon Road Primary Office Location and industrial uses to the Designated Industrial Locations. However, the loss of existing offices and industrial sites should be avoided to ensure that viable employment sites are not lost to other uses. The policy seeks to protect the employment offer outside of designated employment areas to address recent losses of B (employment) class floorspace.

4.22 Changes in the market may mean that some sites are no longer viable for employment use and either lie vacant, or are better suited for another use. In these circumstances, changes of use should be enabled to ensure that the most effective use of land is being pursued.



Policy EM4.4: Economic Development Outside Designated Employment Locations



The net loss of existing employment floorspace outside designated industrial areas or the Clarendon Road Primary Office Location will only be permitted where:

- a) **An up-to-date evidence base demonstrates that the site is no longer required for employment use; or**
- b) **The property has been vacant for at least 12 months and there is clear marketing evidence to show it cannot be reused or redeveloped for employment use in the medium term; or**
- c) **The job generating potential of the alternative proposed use can clearly be demonstrated; or**
- d) **The proposal achieves clear sustainability objectives, such as the provision of residential development in close proximity to key public transport nodes.**

Different ways of working

4.23 One of the impacts of COVID-19 to date has been the move towards more flexible working practices. This includes a rise in home working for those who are able to do so. This change in working culture may spell an increase in demand for different types of premises.

4.24 Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) dominate the working base in South West Hertfordshire and account for 99.6% of all businesses and 50% of employment. This means that there may be a greater demand in Watford for smaller, non-traditional workspaces. This issue was also raised during the preparation of the Local Plan, where public consultation identified the need for the provision of more flexible workspace, as well as more start-up and incubator units for small businesses. The demand for more communal office facilities to be provided as part of new development was also highlighted as part of the public consultation.

4.25 Creative industries are a fast-growing sector in South West Hertfordshire and providing the right types of spaces could support their growth. The Cultural Strategy (2019) highlights the need to improve the range of facilities for creative industries, which could strengthen Watford's cultural offer. This could include the provision of exhibition or studio space on the ground floor of new developments or in stand-alone spaces.



Policy EM4.5: Different Ways of Working



Development proposals for new forms of workspace including flexible workspace, start-ups, micro businesses and space for social and cultural enterprises will be supported across the borough where there is demonstrated to be no significant harm to the amenity of neighbouring land uses.

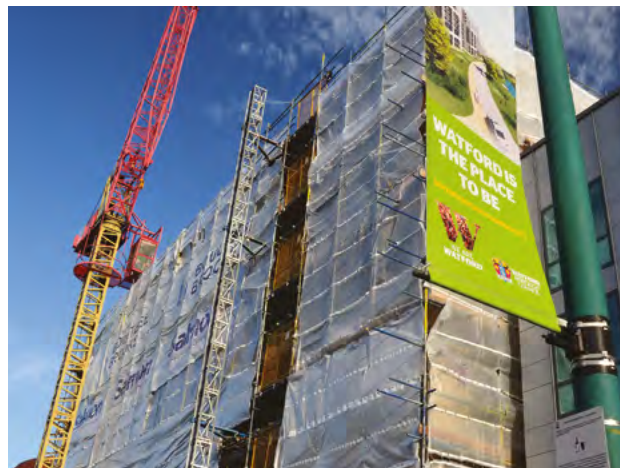
Training, skills and professional development

4.26 It is important that when new development comes forward, this benefits local people. Development contributions are sought to ensure that new development provides the required infrastructure to support the current and future needs of the community. These contributions, such as Section 106 contributions, can be used to fund social infrastructure, such as opportunities for training and professional development. Although the labour force in Watford is considered to be highly skilled, there exist opportunities to help address social inequalities by offering opportunities to those seeking apprenticeships or further training. This could be during the construction phase of new development or in the completed development itself.

4.27 There are high levels of deprivation in parts of the borough, including the fifth most deprived area (LSOA) in Hertfordshire. This is often linked to income deprivation, which can be exacerbated by unemployment and lower levels of education. Supporting apprenticeships or training schemes would seek to capture the social value of new development.

4.28 New development can also support local businesses in Watford by ensuring that fair tender opportunities are given to local small and medium-sized enterprises and social enterprises, and that local businesses are used in the developer's supply chain.

4.29 The process for providing these employment and training initiatives will be set out in a Supplementary Planning Document. Applicants will be required to provide a training, skills and employment strategy to demonstrate their contribution.



Policy EM4.6: Training, Skills and Professional Development



The Council will work with its partners and use development obligations to require major developments to provide appropriate employment and training initiatives for local people.

To achieve this, major development proposals will be required to submit a training, skills and employment strategy, in agreement with the Council, which demonstrates:

- a) Training programmes and apprenticeships provided on new development sites and / or as part of new development;
- b) Fair tender opportunities offered to local small and medium-sized enterprises and social enterprises; and
- c) Opportunities offered to local businesses in their supply chains. (Figure 4.2)





Chapter 5

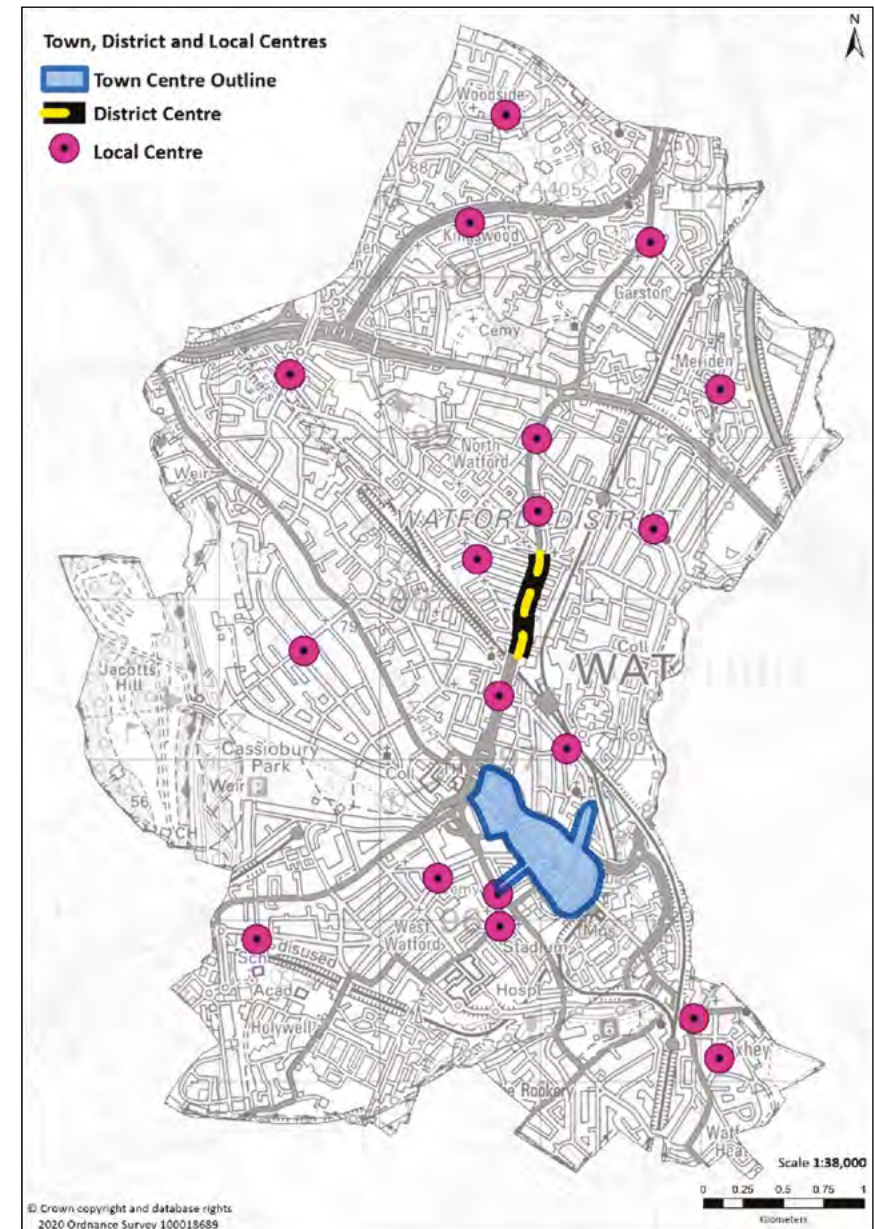
A Vibrant Town



A Vibrant Town

- 5.1 Watford has a strongly performing Town Centre, with St Albans Road District Centre supporting by also offering a wide range of services and facilities. In addition, there is a network of Local Centres that provide for much of their communities' day-to-day needs. The approach for the Plan is to build on these strengths and focus growth in these centres, providing retail, leisure and entertainment for all ages and groups of people. Protecting smaller centres will help ensure built-up areas in the borough have good access to services and facilities and contribute towards achieving sustainable development.
- 5.2 The opportunity to participate in activities, whether for recreation, community events or learning, is important for people living in and visiting Watford. The availability of a variety of facilities and shops attracts people to the Town and Local Centres (Figure 5.1) and helps them remain dynamic and vibrant.
- 5.3 Watford, as a sub-regional centre, serves residents of the town and beyond, drawing people from throughout South West Hertfordshire. The vibrancy and vitality of the Town Centre will be maintained and enhanced through the plan period, providing the opportunity to access a wide range of 'town centre uses' (as identified in the National Planning Policy Framework) including retail, leisure, entertainment, office, arts and culture. These functions are vital to long-term sustainability and underpinning Watford as an attractive place to live, work and invest.
- 5.4 Continued vitality in these areas can reduce the need to travel, by providing goods and services in easily accessible locations and allowing combined trips. This encourages sustainability and creates opportunities for focal points within residential areas, particularly those with the potential to support higher housing densities.

Figure 5.1: Watford Town, District and Local Centres



The changing nature of retail in Watford

- 5.5 Watford has a successful town centre but the Local Plan also recognises that the retail environment is changing with traditional retail declining and service sectors, such as food and drink, health and fitness, and hotels increasing. This highlights the importance of retaining flexibility in retail policy to encourage footfall with popular uses, such as leisure and food and drink.
- 5.6 The nature of our Town Centre and, to a lesser extent, Local Centres is continuing to evolve. Increasingly they are becoming hubs for leisure, social and community activities, not just for shopping. Retaining flexibility in retail policy to encourages footfall, ensuring centres remain vibrant while continuing to meet the needs of people that use them. The Council is seeking to enhance the offer for families in the town and create a balanced centre that meets the needs of all residents and users at different times of the day and night. New proposals for cultural and social uses will be encouraged as appropriate town centre uses that can add vibrancy and activity. It is anticipated that a building may be in a number of different uses concurrently or at different times of the day.

- 5.7 The Town, District and Local Centres play a critical role in place making. To support this, developers will be expected to maximise the proportion of ground floors in town centre uses, fronting on to streets or public spaces that are active, by taking steps to reduce the amount of blank frontage and space given over to building servicing and management, such as bin stores and plant. Proposals must ensure that units are accessible and designed to the highest quality, considering how proportions, materials and detailing relate to, and complement, their surroundings.
- 5.8 Where opportunities arise to develop new centres or to enhance existing local shops to perform as Local Centres, some limited additional retail development may be acceptable, subject to the Sequential and Impact Tests.



Sequential Test

National policy sets out a 'town centre first' approach through the Sequential Test adopted for the delivery of new retail and other town centre uses. This means that such uses should be located in central locations first to ensure the continued vitality and viability of those town centre locations. Town centre uses should be delivered in the following order of preference:

- a) Locations within the Town Centre;
- b) Edge of centre locations, with preference given to those sites which are or will be well connected to the town centre;
- c) Local Centres.

Where appropriate the Local Planning Authority will support applicants in undertaking a proportionate and appropriate Sequential Test. This should consider whether there is scope for flexibility in the format and /or scale of the proposal and assess the contribution more central sites are able to make individually to accommodate the proposal.



5.9 There are a number of out-of-centre retail parks in Watford. These generally provide for shops selling large value items, less suitable for Town Centre locations. They are generators of car travel and are poorly integrated into their surroundings. Redevelopment of these sites, such as Waterfields and Lower High Street, should make a better use of land by providing new residential development alongside appropriate retail that is easily accessible and well integrated with the surrounding area. Redevelopment of these sites could also provide an opportunity to reassess the transport network in the vicinity, securing improvements to public transport, cycling and walking. Consolidation of retail floor space in such locations may be appropriate to support additional economic spend or investment in the Town Centre, Watford's primary retail destination.

5.10 This chapter should be read in conjunction with the Town Centre Strategic Development Policy CDA2.2 'Town Centre Strategic Development Area'.



Strategic Policy VT5.1: Supporting Vibrant Retail Centres



Planning permission will be granted for the development of town centre uses (retail, leisure, entertainment, office, arts and culture) within the defined Town, District and Local Centre boundaries, providing the use is appropriate for the scale and function of each centre. Development within these boundaries should contribute towards the enhancement of the public realm.



Town Centre

Alongside new homes, Watford Town Centre will remain the focus for; comparison shopping, leisure, entertainment, civic and cultural activities. Development proposals within the Town Centre that are 'family friendly' will be encouraged.

To ensure the long-term vitality and viability of the Town Centre, the Council will apply a 'Town Centre first' approach to proposals for retail, leisure, cultural facilities and other town centre uses.

Proposals that optimise the use of land and floorspace within the Town Centre, through mixed-use development, including new or re-used space above shops and commercial premises, will be supported, providing they have regard to the role and function of the centre, impact on vitality and viability and the compatibility of proposed and existing surrounding uses.



Outside the Town Centre

Where appropriate, a limited amount of retail development will be supported on strategic sites to provide for the new community, subject to: compliance with the Sequential Test; proposals being of an appropriate scale; provision of good accessibility by walking, cycling or public transport; and there being no significant adverse impact on the vitality and viability of the Town Centre or Local Centres in the vicinity.

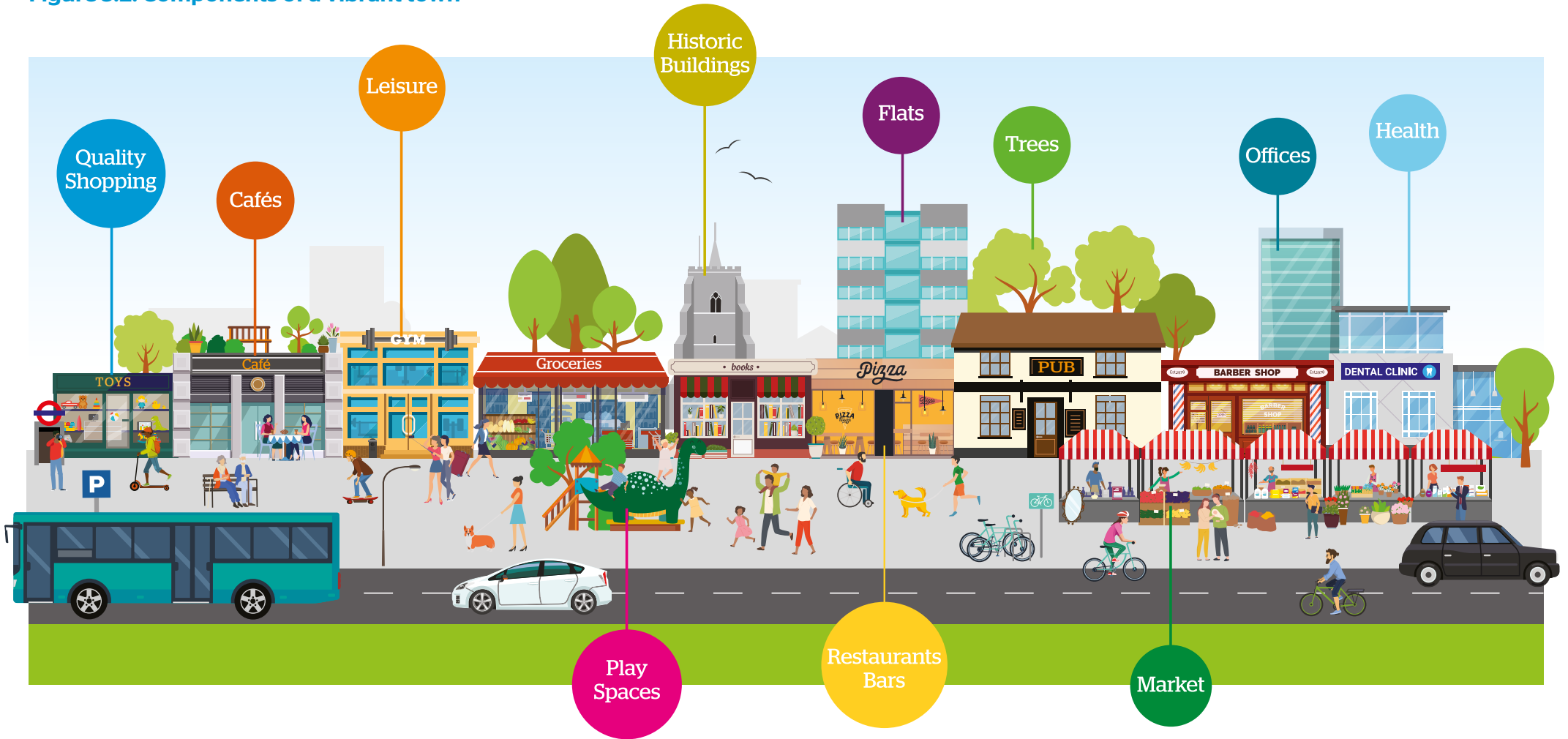


District and Local Centres

The vitality and viability of the District and Local Centres will be enhanced to provide local goods and services for local communities. Proposals that optimise the use of land and floorspace within the District and Local Centres, through mixed-use development, including new or re-used space above shops and commercial premises, will be supported, providing they have regard to the role and function of the centre, impact on vitality and viability, including that of existing business, and the compatibility of proposed and existing surrounding uses.



Figure 5.2: Components of a vibrant town



Retail hierarchy

5.11 The retail hierarchy focuses town centre uses that, generate high footfall in accessible locations for those working, living and visiting Watford (Table 5.1). It is important that new retail development takes place in the right locations and at an appropriate scale. Watford’s retail hierarchy will be used to direct town centre uses to the most appropriate location, with regard to their scale, function and character. The Town Centre will be the preferred location for these uses.

5.12 It is acknowledged that ‘walk-to’ Local Centres can help provide premises for small-scale manufacturing or shared working premises, where businesses may wish to sell their produce. These uses can help to serve the needs of the local community and improve the function by increasing footfall in the area. Proposals for these uses will be supported, but will be considered against the policy criteria.

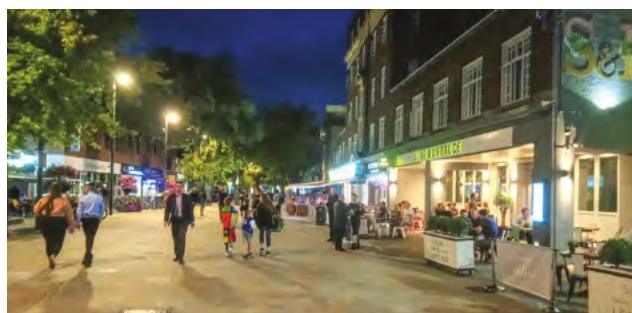


Table 5.1: Watford Retail Hierarchy

Retail hierarchy		Description
Town Centre	Watford Town Centre	Watford Town Centre performs a role as a regional centre, with its catchment extending beyond the borough boundary. The centre offers a full range of town centre uses, including: retail, leisure, business, community and cultural facilities.
District Centre	St Albans Road	St Albans Road District Centre contains a good range of town centre uses, including a large public library. The District Centre has a smaller catchment than the Town Centre, but a wider draw and a larger number and range of units than the Local Centres.
Local Centres	Buckingham Road Bushey Arches Garston Park Parade Goodwood Parade Langley Road Langley Way Leavesden Road Longspring Merton Road North Approach St Johns Road The Brow The Gossamers Tudor Avenue Vicarage Road Villiers Road Whippendell Road East Whippendell Road / Ascot Road	Local Centres include a range of small shops, meeting the day-to-day needs of a small catchment area. It is expected that Local Centres will also contain facilities, such as GPs, dentists, dry cleaners and community facilities, to support the retail offer. Typically, Local Centres are categorised as being over seven units, with a range of at least three different uses.



Watford Town Centre

5.13 Given the scale of development envisaged within Watford over the plan period, the rapidly changing economic market and the way people are increasingly using town centres to socialise, it will be important for proposals to be designed to be sufficiently flexible to allow for changing conditions and needs. Proposals that allow for varying size requirements, for example, by providing for expansion through the future creation of mezzanines, or the subdivision / amalgamation of units, will be supported. Consideration should also be given to future-proofed design that allows for units to readily change uses. This flexibility should be demonstrated as part of a planning application submission.

5.14 It is acknowledged that there may be instances where some loss of floorspace contributes towards achieving wider objectives, such as the redevelopment of the site, or improving access to upper levels. In such cases, ground floor units should remain of a size and scale that is viable to current or future occupants and the access to upper levels be designed so as not to undermine the activity and function of the frontage.



5.15 The South West Herts Retail and Leisure Study (2018) recognises the prominent position of Watford Town Centre, whilst also acknowledging the need to broaden the offer to include a wider range of leisure and cultural activities. No specific allocations are required to meet any leisure capacity identified within Watford, however, such facilities should be promoted, providing that such uses would not adversely impact the operation or function of existing retail provision and the vitality and viability of the town centre.

5.16 Other uses, such as employment and residential, would be appropriate on upper floors, however, access must be designed to promote street level activity and not undermine the viability of ground floor units or interrupt the active frontages.

Learning and non-residential institutions

5.17 These uses (class F1) are acceptable in the Town Centre, however, it is important that they do not negatively impact on the function. It is acknowledged that large numbers of people travel to large-scale attractor uses at a specific time; applications will need to demonstrate that such uses would have no negative impact on the transport network. In addition, uses that remain closed for large portions of the day or week are not appropriate. Windows and doors should face on to the street, creating interest and activity for significant portions of the day, with lively internal uses visible from the outside, or spilling on to the street in appropriate locations.

Outdoor uses

5.18 Uses that help to keep the public realm active will play an important role in placemaking and are, in principle, encouraged. However, the impacts on the amenity of residents and workers would need to be carefully considered. Any proposals for street markets would need to be accompanied by a management plan that identifies its hours of operation and storage arrangements when not in use, types of traders, advertising, servicing and pedestrian and transport impacts. Event spaces will also require a management plan regarding types of events, frequency of use, noise levels, advertising, servicing and pedestrian and transport impacts.

Convenience food takeaways

5.19 There has been a growing concern in recent years about the proliferation and over-concentration of hot food takeaways and their impact on health, in particular, regarding the proximity of takeaways to schools and the impact that this has on childhood obesity. In 2020 government reclassified hot food takeaways into a separate use class. The type of food on sale nearest to schools can influence the diet of schoolchildren and the availability of 'unhealthy' foodstuffs can make healthier choices less likely. While it is acknowledged that takeaway uses can be beneficial to the function of the Town Centre and reduce vacancies, an over-concentration of these uses would be detrimental to the character and function, or vitality and viability, of the Town Centre, and, as such, proposals that would result in potential clustering will be resisted.



Policy VT5.2: Watford Town Centre



Within Watford Town Centre, as shown on the Policies Map, applications for town centre uses will be supported where they:

- a) **Maximise the proportion of the ground floor fronting a street as a positive and / or active frontage; and**
- b) **Support flexibility and adaptability to future-proof for changing uses (subject to appropriate permissions).**

Applications for learning and non-residential institutions will be supported where they:

- c) **Retain active frontages throughout the day;**
- d) **Demonstrate no negative impact on the road network;**
- e) **Serve the local community.**

Applications providing outdoor uses, such as eating and drinking uses with outdoor seating, event space or street markets are encouraged and will be supported where they:

- f) **Do not detract from residential amenity;**
- g) **Demonstrate no negative impact on connectivity and the ease of getting around for pedestrians and cyclists.**

Applications for new hot food takeaway will be supported where they:

- h) **Retain a separation of at least four units between each hot food takeaway unit;**
- i) **Protect the amenity of surrounding properties.**

Local Centres

- 5.20 Retail and service provision outside the Town Centre is an important element towards achieving sustainable development and healthy communities. The network of Local Centres across the borough allows easy access to multiple services and contributes positively towards the identity of neighbourhoods. Local shops, alongside other services, are a key component of Local Centres and their protection will help shape how services are provided in the future.
- 5.21 Proposals will need to provide flexibility for Local Centres to address the challenges of new forms of retailing, while realising their potential for higher-density, mixed-use residential developments and environmental improvements. Redevelopment will be supported where it can make centres more viable and functional, but existing floorspace will be protected, to provide more facilities and amenities in local communities and reduce the need for travel. Proposals should demonstrate that the continued operation of existing facilities is not compromised by redevelopment.
- 5.22 The focus is on the consolidation of a viable range of functions and uses that make Local Centres a recognisable destination in the local area, particularly convenience retailing, leisure, local employment and workspaces. The design, accessibility and layout of Local Centres will have an important impact upon their success, and, in turn, the health and wellbeing of local people. Proposals should promote a range of unit sizes and retain a variety of uses, to meet the needs of the local community.
- 5.23 Smaller Neighbourhood Centres should focus on a limited but variety of uses and provide convenient and attractive access by walking and cycling to local goods and services needed on a day-to-day basis.



Policy VT5.3: District and Local Centres



New development must contribute positively to the function, vitality and viability of the District and Local Centres. This will include sufficient provision of local shops and services to meet the day-to-day needs of local communities.

Proposals for commercial, business and service uses, or appropriate community uses, will be supported. Development proposals should:

- a) Maximise the proportion of the ground floor fronting a street as a positive and / or active frontage;
- b) Demonstrably relate to the character, scale and role of the existing centre;
- c) Ensure centres are accessible, active, attractive and safe during the day and night;
- d) Provide convenient and attractive access by walking and cycling; and
- e) Support temporary and community uses where they help to activate and revitalise units.

Applications for new hot food takeaway will be supported where they:

- f) Are located more than 400m walking distance from the entrance of an existing or permitted primary school;
- g) Retain a separation of at least four units between each hot food takeaway unit; and
- h) Protect the amenity of surrounding properties.





Chapter 6

An Attractive Town

An Attractive Town

- 6.1 The Spatial Strategy identifies areas of the town where transformational change is appropriate, areas where the scale of change is lower and some areas where very little change is expected. Within Watford's urban fabric there are existing areas of distinctive and high quality character, which should be retained and reinforced, and other areas where the character has been eroded through past developments that present opportunities for creating new, distinctive, high quality places.
- 6.2 New development provides an opportunity to make a positive contribution through high quality design. To help deliver the objectives of the Local Plan, applicants will need to demonstrate how they have integrated high quality design in a fashion that reflects the character of the area. The National Planning Policy Framework requires new development to take opportunities to improve the character and quality of an area and the way it functions. The National Design Guide sets out detailed practice guidance which new development should follow. Development proposals should take account of guidance provided in the Council's supporting planning documents and guidance.



Figure 6.1: Principles of good design

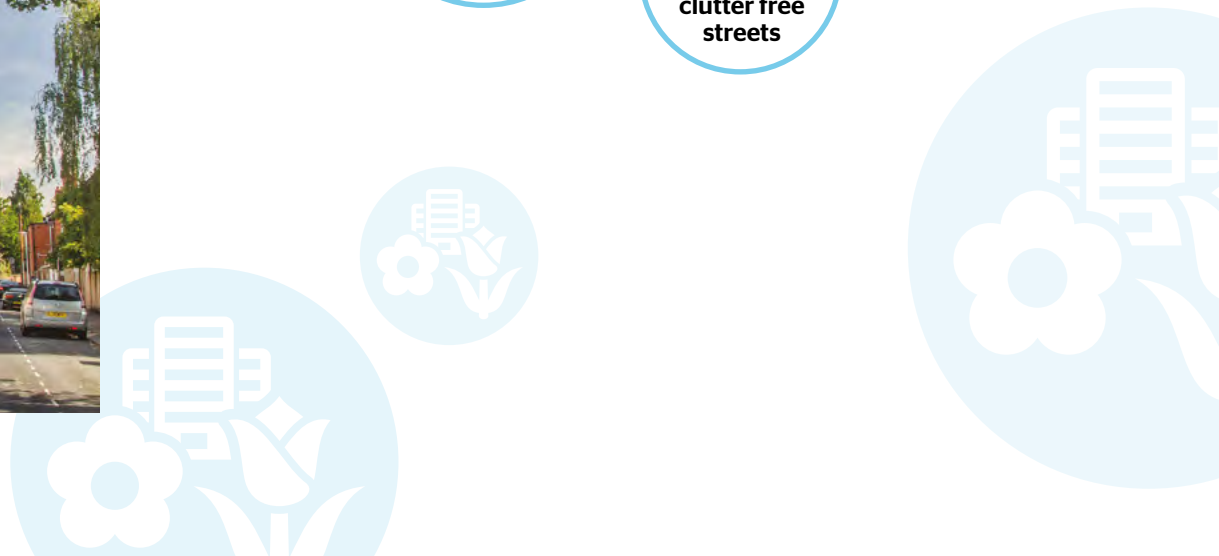
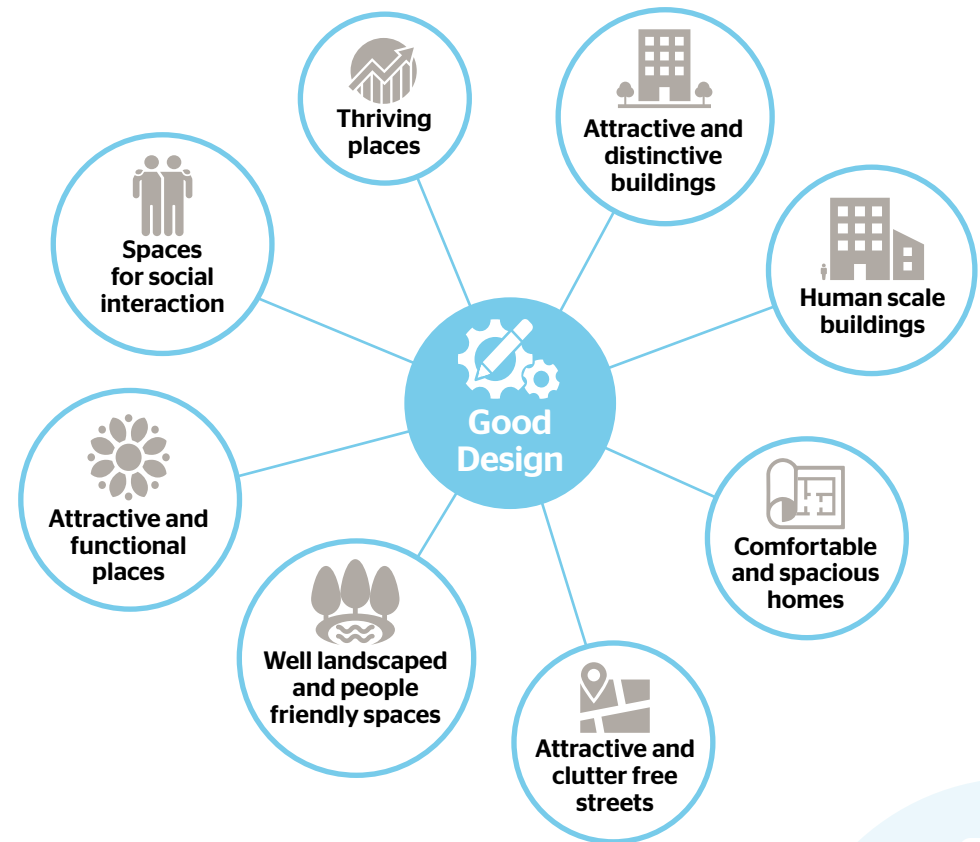
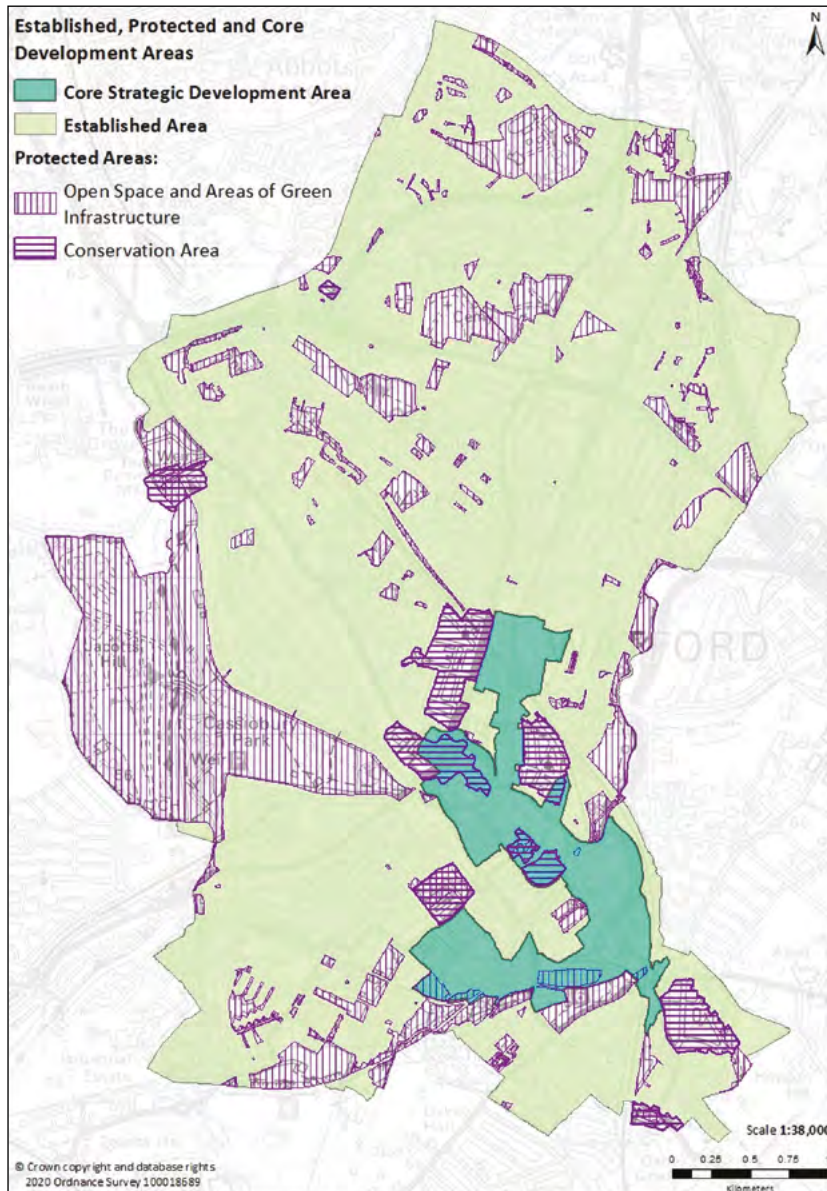


Figure 6.2: Established, Protected and Core Development Areas



6.3 To ensure that the growth proposed can be delivered in a way which will retain and reinforce the character and identity of Watford three types of area within the town have been identified.

- a) The core development area, where most of the growth for the town will take place and the scale of change is expected to be transformational;
- b) protected areas where the scale of growth will be very limited and very respectful of the local context; and
- c) established areas (parts of the town not in the Core Development Area or Protected Areas) where the scale of change is more limited than the Core Development Area but where some intensification is expected.

6.4 Protected areas include all parks and open spaces (detailed map at Figure 9.1) and all conservation areas (detailed map at Figure 7.2).





Strategic Policy QD6.1: Design for an Attractive Town

New Development in Watford is required to deliver high quality design. Buildings will be designed to minimise environmental impact including mitigating climate change impacts, deliver attractive and functional spaces and reinforce and develop a distinctive local character with durable, lasting materials. Proposals will be required to demonstrate that they have responded positively to sensitive areas. New public realm will be attractive, accessible and reflective of the needs of the community.

There are three areas in Watford, each of which requires a separate approach when considering the design of new development.

Core Development Area

The approach to design will encourage a new positive character, enhance areas of poor quality and build on existing aspects of positive design. High-density development will be supported, with the highest densities to be located in the most sustainable locations. Proposals for taller buildings will be of an appropriate height that reflects its location, role in the built-up area, contributes to wayfinding as a key marker in the townscape and which makes a positive contribution towards an attractive skyline.

Proposals for major developments will be required to achieve high quality design, with taller buildings required to demonstrate exceptional design and innovation that are well connected through a quality public realm that is interesting and people can easily interpret and use. Together, these will contribute towards achieving a compact and walkable town.

Proposals will demonstrate how they maximise the relationship between new buildings, environmental features and people, maximise site-specific opportunities and contribute towards their integration with the surrounding area.

In locations where the Core Development Area is adjacent to existing areas of established residential character, proposals will need to be designed to reflect this sensitivity and demonstrate how they enable an appropriate transition between these areas.



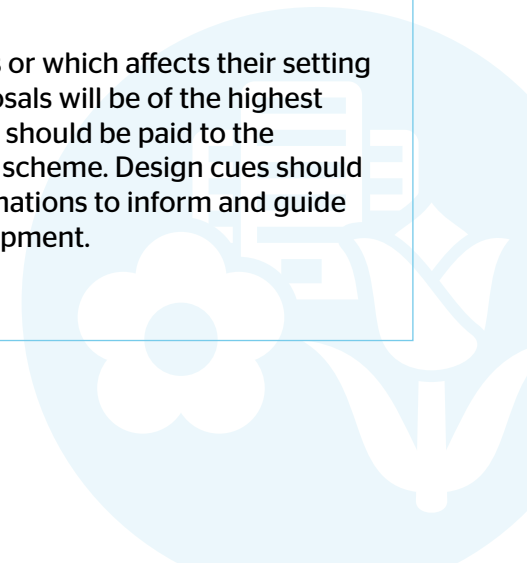
Established Areas

This includes all areas that lie outside the Core Development Area and the Protected Areas. The degree of change will be more limited than in the Core Development Area but is expected to result in a gentle uplift in the density of the area. Development proposals in these areas should be led by the existing characteristics of the local area and will reinforce and where appropriate enhance the character of the local area.



Protected Areas

The degree of change within these areas or which affects their setting will be more limited. Development proposals will be of the highest design standard and particular attention should be paid to the detailing and materials proposed for the scheme. Design cues should be taken from heritage assets and designations to inform and guide the character and identity of new development.



Design principles

- 6.5 The quality and distinctiveness of a place is the result of decisions made about how the buildings relate to one another and to the spaces between them. This affects the way the place looks, feels and is used. It is important that new developments in the town make a positive contribution to the identity and character of the local area and support and enhance the local movement network whilst providing opportunities for businesses to thrive, spaces for people to enjoy and leisure activities.
- 6.6 The ground floor of new buildings should provide animated and active frontages. This can be achieved through the provision of direct access to ground floor uses and the positioning of ground floor uses so that the active uses animate the adjoining public space. This will help streets and spaces to be lively areas and contribute to social wellbeing and strong communities.
- 6.7 New development inclusive of individual buildings and the public spaces between them should be designed for all users, link well into the existing network and provide safe and attractive areas for cyclists and pedestrians. Street layouts should follow a logical structure and hierarchy to aid navigation including: incorporating local landmarks; other distinctive features that help wayfinding and be designed to provide a logical sequence of key points.
- 6.8 Local and town wide views are important to residents and those arriving in the town, and are an important aid to finding key locations. Key views are identified in supporting planning documents.





Policy QD6.2: Design Principles

Proposals for new development will be required to show how they will make a positive contribution to high quality design and place making. To achieve this, proposals for new development will need to show how they have responded to the following design principles.



Character and identity

New buildings and streets are to be attractive and distinctive. This includes consideration to the way an area looks, feels, sounds, smells and how it functions, both presently and in the future. Street scenes are to be of high quality, welcoming and take design cues from existing buildings, where they make a positive contribution to the character of the area ensuring it is identifiable and relatable to residents.



Built form

The scale and massing of proposed buildings will need to relate to the local context and the role of the area. Building footprints are to be of an appropriate scale, enhance the relationship between buildings individually, collectively and the spaces between them to create environments that are relatable to people, easy to understand, have good light, minimise wind effects and improve connections with the surrounding area. New buildings should make use of local topography, to reinforce Watford's distinctiveness.



Active and positive frontages

On main streets and in public spaces, new buildings should include active frontages and / or positive frontages and ensure an active visual and physical relationship between the street, or space, and the building. Uses on the ground floor should incorporate active uses to animate the interface between buildings and the public realm.



Movement and connectivity

Streets are to be designed so they are efficient, convenient, legible and permeable, to support all users and prioritise non-vehicular travel. Routes need to be designed for their anticipated level of use and be clearly defined, to make it easy for different users to interpret using appropriate wayfinding measures, including sightlines.



Views

New development will need to make a positive contribution towards important views in the borough. This includes views from high vantage points, ground level and long distance views. New development should enhance the setting of local landmarks where appropriate. New developments that have an impact on the local skyline will need to be designed to an exceptional standard that will improve the distinctiveness of Watford in a positive way.



Public realm

6.9 High quality and functional public realm is crucial to creating places in which communities and businesses can thrive. Streets and spaces should be designed to promote social interaction and inclusion, where people of all ages and abilities can mix, feel safe and be comfortable. In areas of higher-density development, it is crucial that the streets and spaces accommodate a wide range of uses to meet the needs of the communities around them such as areas for play, fitness, quiet spaces and more generally to contribute towards improving health and wellbeing.

6.10 The spaces created between buildings should be convenient for a wide range of users, adaptable and flexible so they can accommodate the changing needs and lifestyles of users and changing uses over time. Building lines and active frontages should be used to define the public realm and building height used to create a sense of enclosure that results in a comfortable and usable space or street.

6.11 Complementary elements, such as materials, finishes, furniture, planting, signage, lighting and public art should be used to ensure that the spaces and streets created in new developments are at a human scale. Design details should consider the health and wellbeing of the people using them, for example, the provision of shade and shelter, places to rest as well spaces for more active uses. The creation of 'gated communities' which do not contribute to well connected, accessible and a permeable public realm should be avoided.

6.12 The delivery of high quality public realm within new schemes and within the Strategic Development Areas will be secured through the use of conditions or S106 Agreements.

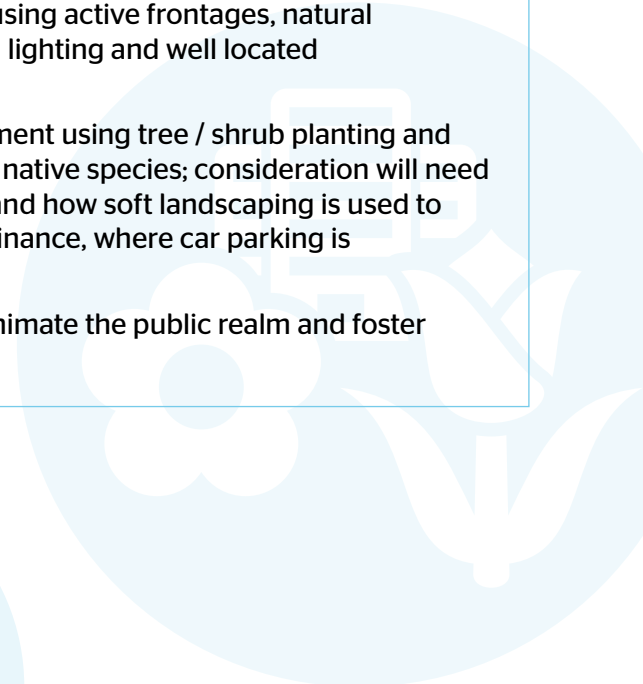


Policy QD6.3: Public Realm



All areas of public realm need to be designed so they are safe, accessible, inclusive and attractive. Public spaces in new development will be supported where it is demonstrated they meet the following criteria:

- a) Create spaces that positively reinforce local identity;
- b) Routes and spaces are designed to accommodate social interaction, activity and green infrastructure for everyone to use;
- c) Use appropriate street furniture to enable informal play, areas for rest, encourage social interaction, wayfinding measures and linkages between local destinations taking care to avoid unnecessary street clutter, and consider how spaces will be used during the day, evening and night;
- d) Provide safe environments, using active frontages, natural surveillance, sightlines, good lighting and well located building entrances;
- e) Create an attractive environment using tree / shrub planting and soft landscaping, prioritising native species; consideration will need to be given to maintenance and how soft landscaping is used to reduce the sense of car dominance, where car parking is provided; and
- f) Use public art where it will animate the public realm and foster a sense of identity.



Building design

6.13 High quality building design is important to creating successful places, in terms of the impact that the external appearance has on the spaces and streets around it and the internal living environment which occupiers experience. Good building design will contribute to high quality living environments and will have a beneficial impact on the health and wellbeing of users and occupiers.

Relationship between buildings and streets

6.14 New buildings should be designed so that the external appearance enhances the positive aspects and features of existing local character and identity. There are some parts of the urban area where the positive character has been eroded through inappropriate past development and proposals to redevelop in such locations should take the opportunity to enhance and upgrade the character and identity of the area, drawing on the positive aspects of the wider area.

6.15 The detailed design of the building facades should have a positive relationship with the street and, in particular, should be at a scale that people walking in the street can relate to and feel comfortable with. Façades facing the street and other public spaces should have entrances and windows at regular intervals allowing access to the building and the sense that the space is overlooked from the surrounding buildings. The details and materials should reflect those found in the

local area but may be interpreted in a more contemporary and innovative way. Materials should be of high quality and designed to age well, retaining their quality and finish; care should be taken when introducing new materials alongside traditional ones, so that they work well together and also reinforce local character, whilst creating a distinctive new identity.

Flexibility in design

6.16 The design of new buildings should consider how the building and the spaces in the area will be used now and in the future, and ensure that they can be adapted to accommodate the needs of future users. In particular, consideration should be given to how new residential buildings can facilitate changing working patterns, where more people may be working at home more of the time. This may be achieved by providing additional space within residential units or in appropriate locations, providing a shared workspace on the ground floor of a new building. Applications for residential development should demonstrate how this has been considered.

Designing for comfortable environments

6.17 The effects of climate change mean that buildings should be adequately heated and cooled to deal with more extreme hot and cold spells. Where possible, new residential units should be able to be cooled using natural cross ventilation, which will result in a more energy efficient building. This can be achieved using dual aspect units in residential schemes which

will also improve the daylight levels. Internal design measures, such as higher ceilings, can be used to aid cooling and ventilation.

6.18 Proposals for new buildings should consider this at an early stage of the design process and use building layouts that maximise the number of dual aspect units delivered. The size of glazed areas should be adjusted to avoid overheating, particularly on south and west-facing elevations, which receive more sunlight during the hottest part of the day. Other measures to shield the impacts of afternoon sun should be an integral part of the building design.



Safe and attractive environments

6.19 To assist with delivering active frontages and improving social interaction within larger residential developments, buildings should be designed to have multiple cores that access directly onto the street at the front of the building. Reducing the number of units served by a core area will provide better opportunities for residents to meet and get to know their neighbours and to develop stronger local communities. Shared internal areas should be light and airy and provide sufficient circulation space for residents to pass each other easily and for informal social interaction.

6.20 It is important that residents have somewhere safe and convenient for package and parcel delivery. Where possible, this should be located within the buildings on the ground floor of each core. Other large item and cycle storage should be conveniently located, easily accessible and safe, so that residents feel comfortable using it. The best location is within the building and on the ground floor of the core area. If this cannot be achieved, then storage should be located close to the buildings, visible from the buildings and secure. External refuse and recycling and cycle storage should be located to minimise visual and physical obstruction, whilst being easily accessible for residents and operatives.

6.21 To provide attractive environments and buildings it is important to consider the location of services, utilities, down pipes and gutters carefully and early in the design process so that they are an integral part of the design. Where possible, service and utility boxes and pipes should be located inside buildings with access to boxes from communal areas on the ground floor. On taller buildings the removal of excess rainwater from the roof of buildings to the drainage network should be integrated into the building and external gutters and downpipes avoided. On a more domestic scale, buildings external downpipes and gutters should be carefully positioned to avoid a cluttered appearance.

6.22 Internal space standards and amenity space standards are set out in Policy HO3.10 Building Standards for New Homes and Policy HO3.11 Private and Communal Outdoor Amenity Space. Policies relating to sustainable construction are located in Chapter 8 'A Climate Emergency'.





Policy QD6.4: Building Design

Well designed buildings that are visually attractive, functional, accessible, sustainable, mitigate climate change, and which reflect the character and wider objectives for the area will be supported.



Enhancing character and identity

New buildings are to positively contribute towards the local area using the following design principles:

- a) In areas where the local character and identity has been eroded, the design of new buildings should enhance the positive and improve the negative qualities of the area;
- b) The proportions of new buildings need to be appropriate to the existing or emerging character of the area;
- c) Façades and their detailing are to have a positive relationship with the street, be of a human scale, reflect its role and function and enhance the character of the area;
- d) Materials should be of high quality, robust, durable, age well, reflect their function and sit comfortably with buildings in the area, adding to local distinctiveness.



Safe, healthy and attractive internal and external environments

New residential buildings should be designed to provide internal and external spaces that support the health and wellbeing of all those who use and experience them. New building design should adhere to the following:

- e) All ground floor units to be designed so that the primary access for each individual unit is directly on to the street;

- f) Include a high proportion of dual aspect units to create quality internal spaces, able to receive good light and air ventilation and, where possible, avoid using a single aspect form;
- g) Internal layouts should provide for working at home, implementing the technical internal space standards; this could be the inclusion of space within individual dwellings for a home office, or a shared workspace within the building;
- h) Internal cores are to serve no more than eight units.



Getting the details right: storage, waste, servicing and utilities

All new developments will be designed so they are effective and attractive by meeting the following criteria:

- i) Access to service and utility boxes should be inside the building and avoid unnecessary clutter; where this is not possible they should be an integral part of the design;
- j) Refuse and recycling should be located within the building envelope; where this cannot be achieved, bin stores which are carefully positioned, easy to use and attractive should be provided;
- k) Secure provision for parcel receipt and storage should be provided on site;
- l) The location of drainpipes and gutters and pipes for services and utilities should be integrated into the wider design, to avoid a cluttered appearance.

Building height and taller development

- 6.23 To meet the borough's need for new homes and jobs the Local Plan anticipates development coming forward at higher densities than currently exist across the borough. This means Watford is more likely to see new buildings that are taller than the existing prevailing height within an area.
- 6.24 The Taller Buildings Study (2021) examines the prevailing height of existing buildings across a series of defined character areas and the likely base building heights that will need to be achieved in order to meet the need for homes and jobs across the borough. The findings have been drawn from an assessment of relevant factors, including: an area's sensitivity to taller buildings and suitability for them; consideration of strategic growth designations; and potential visual impacts of tall buildings when seen within the townscape including important views). The report provides an evidence-driven approach, which establishes appropriate thresholds for base building heights in each character area for future development.
- 6.25 Base building heights are not intended to act as an absolute 'cap' on the height of new buildings but instead set a presumption in favour of developments where the predominant height falls within the threshold set for that character area. Four distinctive character areas have been identified including:

- **Watford Gateway:** Potential development sites within Watford Gateway are generally less constrained by their urban context, particularly in the area around Watford Junction Station. They are well connected to the local and strategic transport network, and higher-density and mixed-use development is generally appropriate here. The Watford Junction area is relatively low lying, while Clarendon Road is characterised by buildings taller than the surrounding area. The station area is a key node with limited sensitivity and excellent access to public transport; strengthening the role of Clarendon Road as a gateway into the town centre through good design and use of buildings with added height can make a contribution towards this. Sites in this area will be expected to make a significant contribution to streetscape and connectivity improvements, particularly the transformation of the ring road. Proposals that adjoin existing residential areas will need to demonstrate a transition between the two areas.
- **Town Centre:** The Town Centre contains a diverse range of uses, buildings and public spaces. The area is suitable for higher-density development in the right locations, however, this needs to be appropriate to the site and its surroundings and to clearly justify why a site is suitable for a taller building. Proposals will need to be explicit as to why a taller building is appropriate for the location. This includes demonstrating which landmark, node or location the building is marking;

how it relates to and enhances the existing built form, including scale and massing; how the frontage will positively contribute towards the public realm and placemaking; in locations near the High Street, how it relates to the shopping area and provides a quality living environment; and how the proposal has responded to heritage assets that may be affected by the proposal.

- **Colne Valley:** The Colne Valley area has a greater sensitivity to building height and proposals will need to consider the local topography and views across the area. Proposals should embed placemaking aspirations to open up the river, protect and enhance existing or future views and mitigate sensitivities associated with biodiversity. On larger sites, through a masterplan approach, well designed schemes may identify opportunities that maximise changes in topography to achieve additional height.



- **Areas outside the Core Development Area:**

These areas have an established character and the prevailing height is lower. Proposals will need to clearly demonstrate how they relate to the existing character and make a positive contribution towards the area. In very limited cases, specific locations might be suitable for taller elements above the proposed base building heights. However, in the absence of significant improvements to public transport accessibility, building heights and density are likely to be more modest. Locations outside the Core Development Area where taller elements may be appropriate include:

- Ascot Road, where a character for taller buildings has been established; and
- On large sites close to the Dome Roundabout, which is a key entry point to the town.

6.26 Where a proposed building would exceed the base building height for the area, this will need to be clearly justified and will be subject to detailed consideration under the criteria set out within the Building Height Policy. To demonstrate why a proposal for a taller building should be supported the starting point should be to demonstrate that the location is appropriate, based on an evaluation and assessment of suitability and sensitivity, as set out in the Taller Buildings Study:

- **Suitability:** Proposals should demonstrate the suitability of the proposals in relation to excellent public transport and cycling accessibility, proximity to town centres or local facilities, access to green spaces and designations for strategic development.

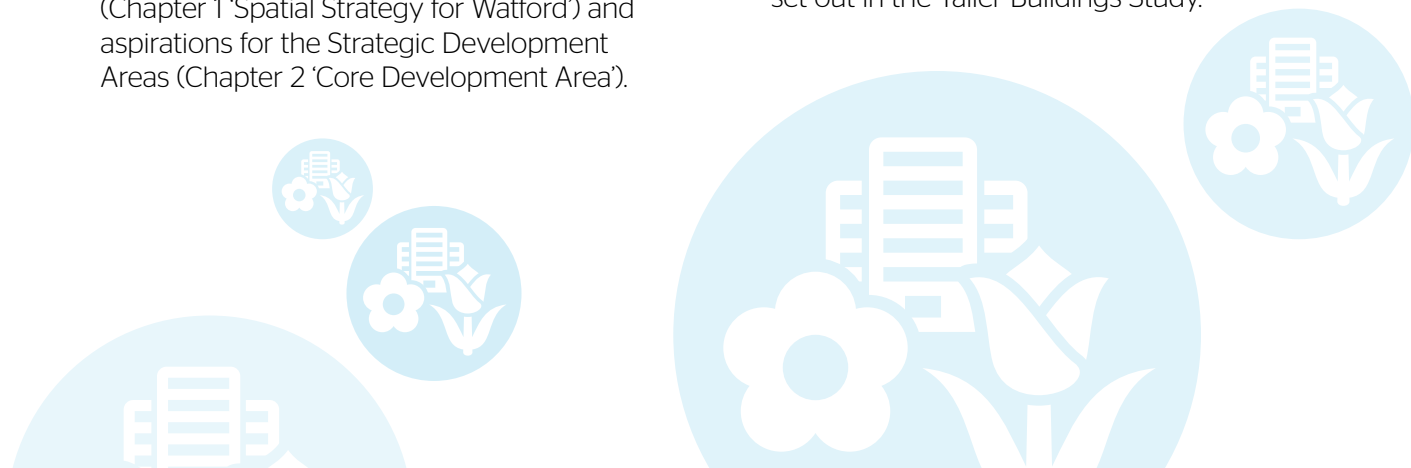
- **Sensitivity:** Proposals must consider potential impact on designated and undesignated heritage assets, views, ecological assets and greenspaces.

6.27 Proposals that involve higher densities should be based on careful consideration of local character, context and access to amenities and public transport. Relevant plan policies include: housing and amenity space (Chapter 3 'Homes for a Growing Community'); design (Chapter 6 'An Attractive Town'); and heritage (Chapter 7 'The Historic Environment'); sustainability and climate change (Chapter 8 'A Climate Emergency'); open space (Chapter 9 'The Environment') and sustainable transport (Chapter 11 'Sustainable Transport Town'). The approach to building heights should also be considered alongside the Spatial Strategy and Local Plan objectives (Chapter 1 'Spatial Strategy for Watford') and aspirations for the Strategic Development Areas (Chapter 2 'Core Development Area').

Exceptional design, high quality living environments and community benefits

6.28 Where consideration of the suitability and sensitivity of a site suggests that a taller building, or built element, may be justified proposals will need to demonstrate how they will deliver exceptional design quality, high quality living environments and public benefits for the town and community.

6.29 Taller buildings can have a significant impact on townscapes and views and therefore, in relation to their prominence, it is important that taller buildings are of the highest design quality. To ensure taller buildings are of exceptional design, applicants should make appropriate use of tools and processes for assessing and improving the design of their proposals, including making use of design review. More specifically, when taller buildings are designed, they should demonstrate that consideration has been given to the three main elements: base, mansard and pop-up. Guidance should refer to the specific massing rules that apply to each of these elements, as set out in the Taller Buildings Study.



6.30 Buildings that would be taller than the base building height for their area will also be required to demonstrate their positive contribution in terms of public benefits to the town and the community. These benefits should clearly exceed the benefits that could be achieved for a building that would be lower than the base height for the appropriate area. These benefits should include, but may not be limited to:

- a) Provision of affordable housing and a good mix of dwelling sizes;
- b) Provision of infrastructure, including public transport, cycling and walking infrastructure and social infrastructure to support communities' health and wellbeing, including public open space and access to services and facilities;
- c) Building to high environmental standards, with comfortable internal living environments that provide good air ventilation, daylight and minimise overheating;
- d) Maximising opportunities to generate energy, using low carbon and renewable sources and taking advantage of the scale of development;
- e) Make a positive contribution towards placemaking, including measures to reflect local character and signify a recognisable landmark; and

- f) How the building will contribute towards Watford as a place, in terms of distinctiveness, design quality and how this relates to the urban form.

Definition of prevailing building height and taller building thresholds

6.31 The Taller Buildings Study' has identified future prevailing building heights in all parts of the borough. This has been used to inform an approach where higher-density development up to a certain height will not be defined as a taller building. This is referred to as the 'base building height' and is set out as the number of storeys. This base building height for each respective area reflects the balance between existing character, constraints and opportunities (Fig 6.2). Buildings at this height or lower will not be assessed against Policy QD6.5 'Building Height', but will need to comply with other policies in the Local Plan. Where a building is proposed that exceeds the appropriate base building height, it will be defined as a 'taller building' and will trigger the implementation of Policy QD6.5 'Building Height' alongside other Local Plan policies.

Figure 6.3: Base building heights

Area of the borough	Base building height
Watford Gateway	Up to 8 storeys on a street frontage, stepping up to 10 storeys to the rear.
Town Centre Strategic Development Area	Up to 5 storeys on the High Street, stepping up to 8 storeys to the rear.
Colne Valley Strategic Development Area	Up to 6 storeys.
Outside of the Core Development Area	Up to 4 storeys.





Policy QD6.5: Building Height

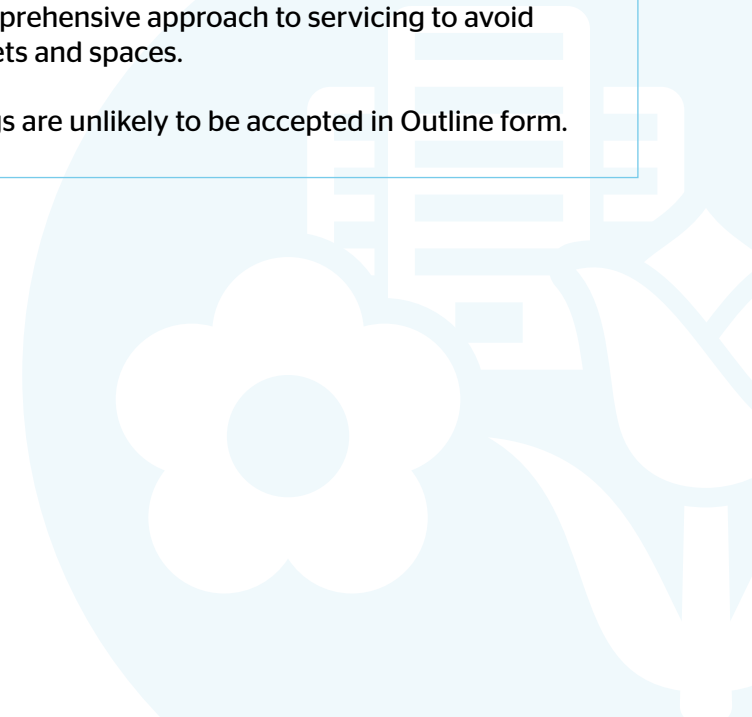


Proposals for buildings that exceed the base building height set out in Table 6.1 will be classified as a taller building.

Proposals for taller buildings should clearly demonstrate:

- a) Exceptional design quality, including height, massing, proportion, materials, detailing, site layout and its relationship with the surrounding area, which set it apart in terms of quality and distinctiveness, and which positively contribute towards the context and character of the area;
- b) Significant public benefits that the development will provide, clearly setting out why these would not be achievable as part of a development restricted to the base building height;
- c) Significant sustainability benefits including the building design, construction, operation and connections to the surrounding area;
- d) A clear townscape rationale for the specific siting of taller buildings, marking key locations or nodes, and responding to public transport accessibility and activity;
- e) A positive relationship with relevant heritage assets and their setting and the historic character that contributes to the town's distinctiveness;
- f) A desire to achieve a specific skyline shape or cluster;
- g) That proposals have been designed to avoid harmful impacts on daylight, sunlight, wind conditions, overheating and microclimate, including the provision of appropriate mitigation where required;
- h) That appropriate amenity and play spaces are incorporated to a high standard for all residents;
- i) That the setting of the development will not be dominated by car parking as a result of the higher-density. In this context, a car-lite approach should be taken where this would be an appropriate response to higher local public transport accessibility;
- j) A balanced and comprehensive approach to servicing to avoid impact on local streets and spaces.

Proposals for tall buildings are unlikely to be accepted in Outline form.





Chapter 7

The Historic Environment



The Historic Environment

7.1 The Council places great importance on preserving the historic environment. Under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act the Council has a responsibility to have special regard to preserving listed buildings and must pay special attention to preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of conservation areas. The National Planning Policy Framework states that in decision making local authorities should give great weight to conservation of designated heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance. The Council expects that development not only conserves, but also takes opportunities to enhance, or better reveal the significance of heritage assets and their setting.

7.2 Watford has a diverse and rich range of heritage assets including listed buildings, historic parks and gardens, conservation areas and assets of archaeological significance which make an important contribution towards the character and distinctiveness of the town (Figure 7.2). Some key elements of the town's heritage include:

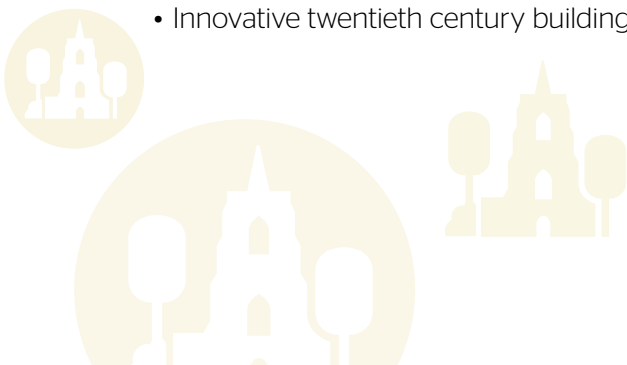
- Surviving buildings from the medieval core of the town (St Mary's Church, Almshouses, Fuller Free School);
- 18th Century town houses (Frogmore House , 97 High Street, Little Cassiobury and Watford Museum);
- Industrial heritage;
- Parks, gardens and cemeteries;
- Residential streets and buildings of the Victorian period; and
- Innovative twentieth century buildings and housing developments.

Figure 7.1: Heritage benefits



7.3 All heritage assets (designated and undesignated) will be appropriately protected reflecting the importance of the designation and where appropriate enhanced.

7.4 New development can make a positive contribution to, or better reveal the significance of heritage assets and the Council will encourage this where appropriate. Well designed proposals which protect and enhance the significance, character and setting of heritage assets which may be affected by the development will be supported.



7.5 The Council has a proactive approach to managing heritage assets and in addition to the Local Plan Policies the Council protects the historic environment through the following guidance which should be considered as part of planning proposals where they apply:

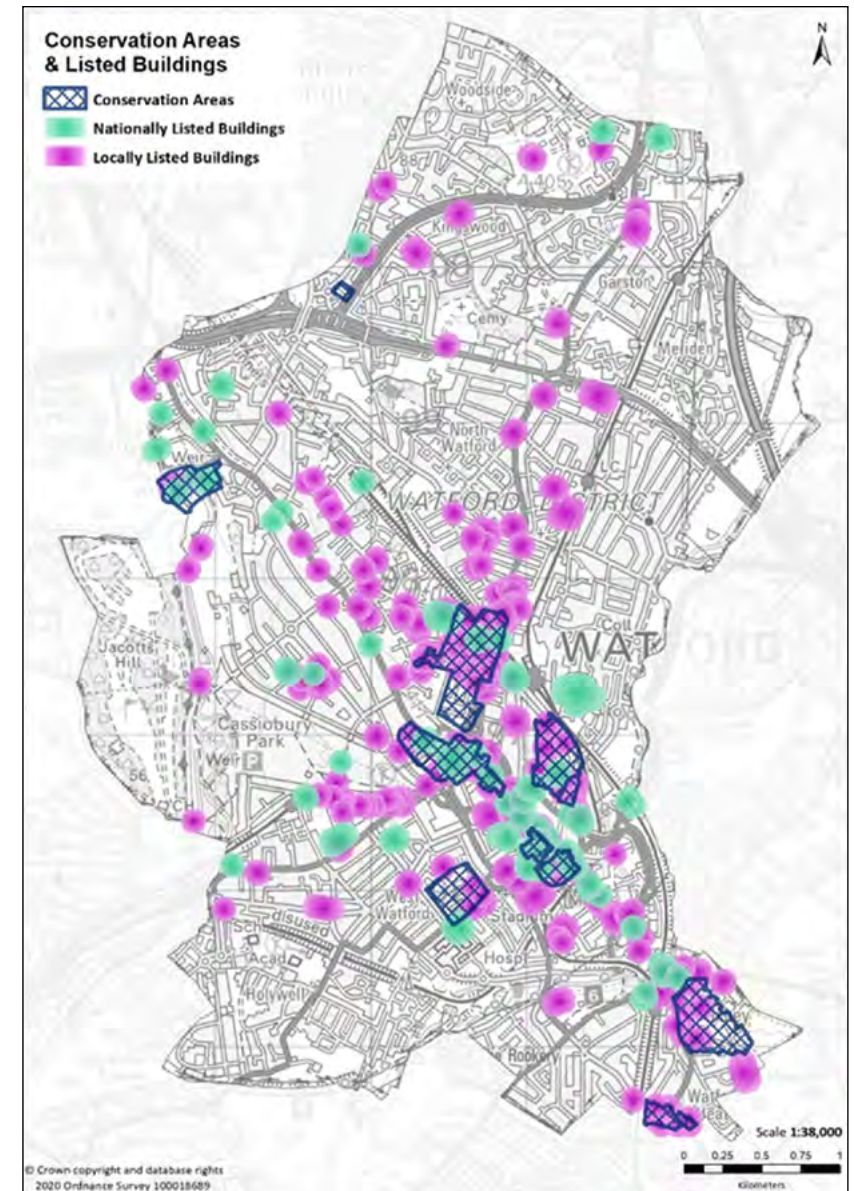
- Conservation Areas Management Plan;
- Conservation Area Appraisal documents;
- Local list of undesignated assets of local interest;
- Register of buildings and structures at risk;
- Supplementary planning documents to provide more detailed guidance on specific issues;
- Article 4 Directions to protect designated and undesignated assets from small-scale changes which are allowed under permitted development rights and which would erode the significance of those assets.

7.6 Proposals for new development which involve heritage assets or their setting should be accompanied by supporting material which shows that the development has understood the significance of the asset. This should be a combination of desktop and on-site investigation making use of the Historic Environment Records (HERs) database and relevant supplementary planning documents.

7.7 Detailed plans to an appropriate level will need to be submitted with applications, alongside design and access or heritage statements, to demonstrate how the heritage asset and its setting will be affected and to ensure that its significance is protected or enhanced.

7.8 Where a new heritage asset is revealed during the early phases of new development, the developer will be expected to work with the Council to seek a solution, as far as is practicable, which protects the significance of the new asset. Depending on the importance of the revealed assets proportionate changes to the scheme being proposed may be necessary.

Figure 7.2: Conservation areas, listed buildings and locally listed buildings in Watford





Strategic Policy HE7.1: Enhancement and Protection of the Historic Environment



Development proposals should embrace opportunities to use the historic environment to support good design and enhance the setting and understanding of the historic environment and improve Watford's historic character.

All development proposals involving heritage assets (designated and undesignated) should avoid causing harm to the significance of those assets, including their setting. Where this cannot be avoided measures to minimise or mitigate the harm caused will be considered and balanced against the heritage and public benefits arising from the development according to the importance of the asset and the extent of the impact to its significance.

Where loss, wholly or partly, is unavoidable developers are required to record and enhance the understanding of the significance of any heritage asset and to make this record publicly available.

Proposals will need to consider the potential adverse impacts on a heritage asset or its setting associated with cumulative development. Where there are potential cumulative effects, applicants should include design measures to mitigate this impact.

All development proposals involving heritage assets (designated and undesignated) or affecting the setting of assets should be supported by a Heritage Impact Assessment, proportional to the scheme proposed and significance of the heritage asset, prepared by a suitable qualified person.





Designated heritage assets

- 7.9 Designated assets within the borough include statutorily listed buildings, registered parks and gardens and conservation areas. It is important to ensure the significance of these assets is protected and where possible, better understood through any changes which have to be made to the assets. Proposals involving listed buildings and registered parks will need to clearly justify the positive contribution it will make and show that the proposal has been designed to avoid, and where possible, minimise the impact on the significance of the asset through appropriate enhancement and conservation measures.
- 7.10 Designated assets and in particular listed buildings and structures make an important and valued contribution to the distinctive character and appearance of the town and provide attractions for people visiting the town and cherished local landmarks.

Listed buildings

- 7.11 New development proposals involving listed buildings should avoid total or substantial demolition including those which propose the rebuilding behind the façade. Proposals should avoid causing harm to the setting of listed buildings and structures and where appropriate should seek to enhance and better reveal the significance of that setting.
- 7.12 Many minor alterations and some repairs to listed buildings, including those to the interior, which may affect the special interest of the building will require listed building consent. Proposals for changes to listed buildings may present opportunities to improve disabled access to those buildings. Solutions to improved accessibility will require a balancing of the need for access with the conservation and preservation of the asset. Design approaches for this should be supported by an audit of conservation constraints and access needs and should have considered all available options.



7.13 Proposals which seek to reduce energy consumption in listed buildings will be welcomed provided they do not cause harm to the significance of the building. Energy use can be reduced without harming the fabric or appearance of the building such as roof insulation, draught proofing, secondary glazing, more energy efficient boilers, heating and lighting and the use of green energy sources.

Conservation areas

7.14 Changes within conservation areas will be managed in a way which retains the distinctive character and appearance of that area and new development should make a positive contribution to this. Design and access statements or heritage statements should include an assessment of the character and context and show how the development proposed has been informed by this and how it contributes positively to it.

7.15 When considering applications for demolition in conservation areas account will be taken of group value, context and setting of buildings as well as their quality as individual structure and any contribution made to the setting of listed buildings. Applications for total / substantial demolition will be expected to:

- a) Demonstrate to the Council's satisfaction that effective measures will be taken during demolition and building works to ensure structural stability of retained parts and adjoining structures;
- b) Be justified in terms of the optimisation of resources and energy use in comparison with the existing building;
- c) Include plans which clearly show which parts of buildings are to be demolished;
- d) Provide detailed plans for redevelopment which are to be approved prior to permission for demolition being granted.



Policy HE7.2: Designated Heritage Assets



Proposals will be supported where they will not result in the loss of, or substantial harm to an asset unless this will provide substantial public benefits that outweigh the harm or loss caused; where any harm caused to the significance of an asset is deemed to be less than substantial the public benefits from the scheme should convincingly outweigh the harm caused.



Designated buildings, structures and parks

Development involving a statutory listed building, scheduled ancient monument, its setting or a registered park or garden will be determined in accordance with their significance and value. To ensure the conservation of the listed buildings in Watford proposals should:

- a) Avoid total or substantial demolition of a listed building;
- b) Avoid changes of use, alterations, and extensions that would cause harm to special architectural and historic interest of the building; and
- c) Not cause harm to the significance of the listed building or its setting.



Conservation areas

Development in conservation areas will be supported where they preserve and, where possible, enhance the character, appearance and significance of the designation and clearly demonstrate they:

- d) Use building design that is of an appropriate scale and materiality;
- e) Enhance existing features and structures which contribute to the significance of the Conservation Area;
- f) Do not significantly harm important views into, out of, or within the conservation area; and
- g) Preserve trees and other significant built and landscape features which contribute to the character and appearance of a conservation area or which provides a setting for local architectural heritage.



Non-designated heritage assets

716 Watford has many attractive and locally significant buildings and features which contribute to the distinctiveness of the town but which are not formally designated as heritage assets. The NPPF identifies these as non-designated assets. These can either be identified as part of the planning process or be on Watford's Local List. Watford's local list identifies historic buildings and features which are valued by the local community. When planning permission is required for any proposal which directly or indirectly affects the significance of a non-designated asset then the Council will treat the significance of that asset as a material consideration when determining the application. Proposals for development must have regard to Watford's Local List of Buildings of Historic or Architectural Importance Supplementary Planning Document or equivalent.

717 Proposals should be of a design and scale which preserves or enhances the features which contribute to its significance and should use building materials, features and finishes for features such as gates, walls, railings and hard surfacing which are appropriate to the setting of the asset and the local context. Where possible proposals should take the opportunity to remove unsympathetic alterations and restore or reinstate missing features.



Policy HE7.3: Non-designated heritage assets



To preserve and enhance the character, appearance and setting of Locally Listed Buildings all planning applications that affect Locally Listed Buildings will be determined in accordance with the following:

- a) **Where demolition is proposed, it should be demonstrated that all reasonable attempts have been made to retain all or part of the building; and**
- b) **All alterations and extensions should enhance the building's character, setting and features and must not adversely affect the significance of the building.**

Archaeology

718 Archaeological remains can provide great insight into the social and economic lives of people living many years ago and it is important to ensure that such remains, whether known or unknown are protected.

719 Where an application site includes, is considered to, or is found to have the potential to include, heritage assets with archaeological interest, it must be accompanied by an appropriate desk-based assessment and, where desk-based research is insufficient to properly assess the interest, a field evaluation.

720 Where the loss of the whole, or a material part of, the significance of a heritage asset of archaeological interest is justified, planning conditions will be included in any permission to ensure that an adequate record is made of the significance of the heritage asset before it is lost. This will be secured through an archaeological Written Scheme of Investigation which must include provision for appropriate publication of the evidence. The potential for local public engagement and dissemination should also be considered and included in the Written Scheme of Investigation where this is deemed to be appropriate.



Policy HE7.4: Archaeology



New developments should protect remains of archaeological importance. Where a development may affect archaeological remains applicants will be required to submit an archaeological assessment as part of a planning application.

To protect the significance of archaeological assets, measures will need to be taken that are proportional to their importance to ensure the physical preservation of the assets and their setting. These measures should be prepared in collaboration with the county archaeologist and secured through planning conditions.



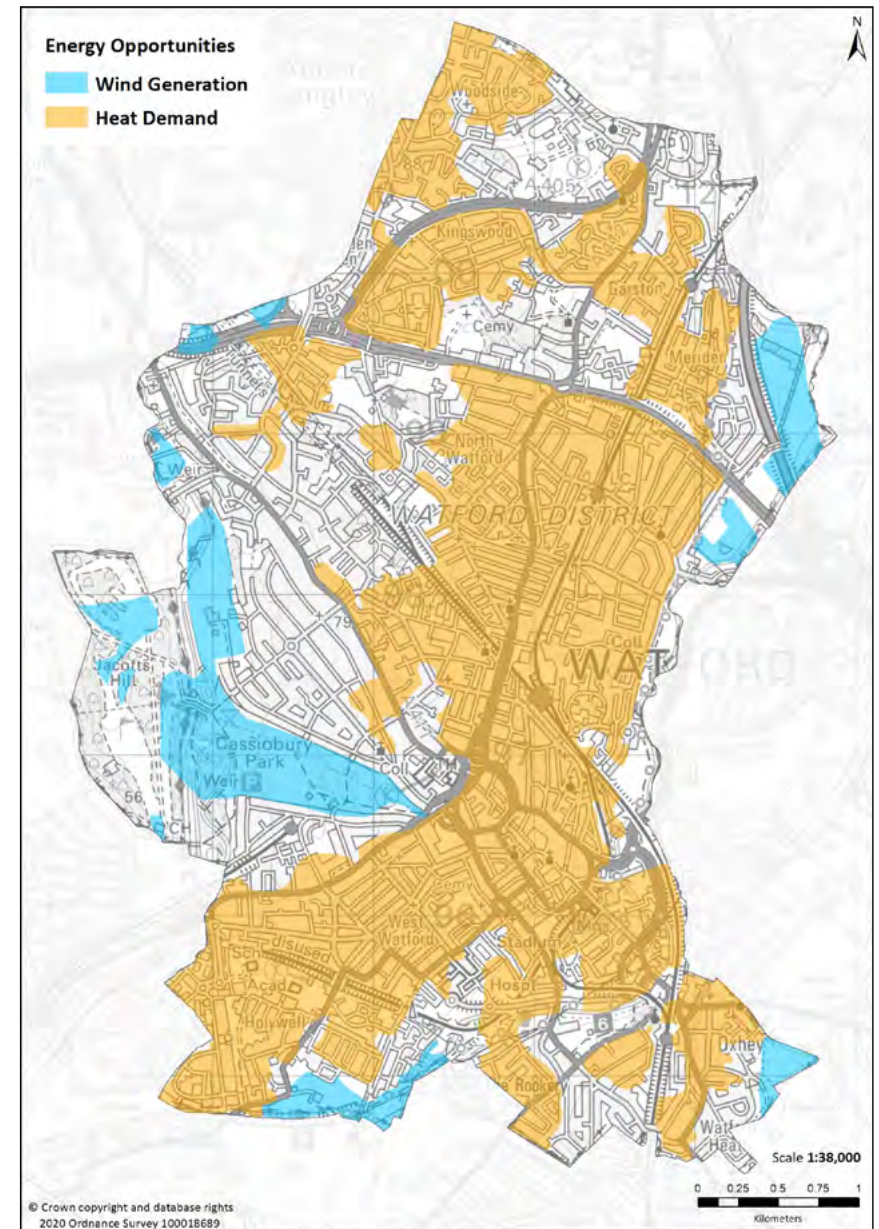
Chapter 8

A Climate Emergency

Sustainable construction and resource management

- 8.1 The Climate Emergency Declaration by the Council in July 2019 led to the ambitious objective of becoming carbon neutral by 2030. Planning has an important role to play in creating carbon neutral developments to meet this objective and work in conjunction with the wider Council initiatives to combat climate change as set out in the Watford Sustainability Strategy (2020)¹.
- 8.2 New development will be expected to use design and a mix of passive and active low carbon and renewable energy technologies to reduce emissions and support greener industries. Sustainable building construction and operations will be encouraged.
- 8.3 Major developments in the Core Development Area should consider how they can reduce carbon emissions through the use of large-scale renewable energy schemes, such as community energy networks. Areas with potential for community energy schemes are identified on the Watford Energy opportunities map (Figure 8.1).
- 8.4 To be most effective, minimise costs and avoid time delays, applicants should consider sustainable principles from the start of the design process. A Sustainability Statement should be used to set out how proposals will mitigate the impact of climate change and contribute towards sustainable development.

Figure 8.1: Energy opportunities map



¹ https://www.watford.gov.uk/downloads/file/3229/sustainability_strategy_part_1_-_2020_to_2023



Strategic Policy CC8.1: Mitigating Climate Change and Reducing Carbon Emissions

The Council will support proposals that help combat climate change and ensure the borough becomes more resilient, sustainable and adaptable to climate change. Developments should provide a sustainability statement with their application. New development will need to demonstrate how it is contributing positively towards:



A Carbon Neutral Watford

Developments are expected to contribute towards the borough becoming carbon neutral and reducing the overall environmental impact.



Sustainable construction

Proposals need to consider how they will affect the environment from start to finish including the construction process and how occupants will use the building and surrounding area.



New buildings

New buildings will need to be high quality, use resources efficiently, reduce pollution, be safe to live in and encourage healthy lifestyles.



Cumulative development

New development should consider opportunities associated with cumulative development. This includes materials used in construction, the layout of the scheme and measures that will create a comfortable microclimate such as light, shading and landscaping.



Low carbon and renewable energy

On-site low carbon and renewable energy technologies will be encouraged, particularly where the scale of growth can support community energy networks.

8.6 As indicated in Chapter 4: 'A Strong Economy', Watford will see significant employment and other non-residential development coming forward. This provides an opportunity to reduce their impact on the environment through the use of high quality construction methods. The Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method (BREEAM) is intended improve the design quality of new non-residential schemes. Therefore, major non-residential developments are to meet the BREEAM 'excellent' standard, or equivalent. While more limited in scope, smaller schemes also have opportunities to reduce their environmental impact, Minor non-residential proposals are encouraged to achieve BREEAM 'very good' standard or individual requirements that form part of the overall assessment to improve their environmental quality.

8.7 To be effective and reduce costs of retrofitting buildings, applicants are to provide a pre-assessment certificate to the Local Planning Authority which will set out how sustainability measures can be achieved as part of the development early in the process. Submission of a certificate by an accredited assessor will be required upon completion.

Sustainable construction standards

8.5 The scale of development in Watford presents significant opportunities to improve the quality and sustainability of new residential and non-residential buildings and how they

can contribute towards a wider goal of achieving sustainable development. All new development should strive for sustainable consumption of resources, including energy, water and materials, with the latter reflecting guidance set out in the Hertfordshire Waste Local Plan².

² <https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/recycling-waste-and-environment/planning-in-hertfordshire/minerals-and-waste-planning/waste-planning/waste-planning.aspx>



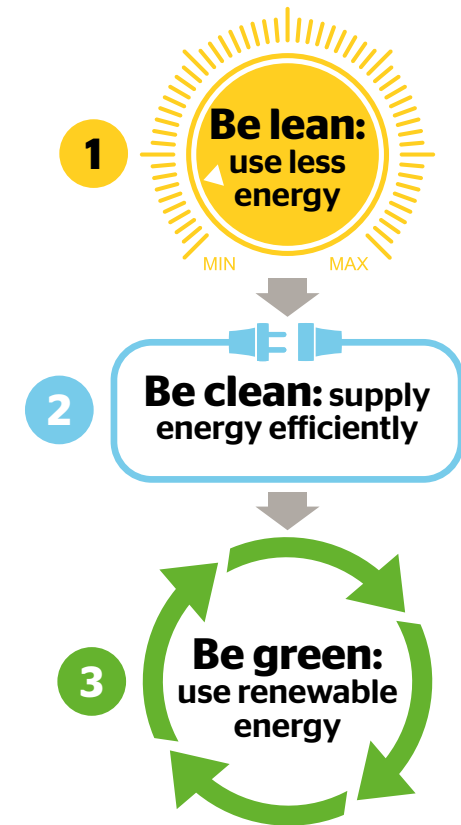


Policy CC8.2: Sustainable Construction Standards for Non-residential Development

Proposals should be designed to reduce their impact on the environment and create high quality internal and external space for people to use. Proposals will be supported where it is demonstrated that resources will be used efficiently as part of the construction and operation of a building. This includes appropriate use of technologies, building design and layout, while taking into consideration the effects of climate change. To achieve this, non-residential major developments should achieve BREEAM excellent standard.

Applicants should provide a BREEAM pre-assessment completed by a suitably qualified assessor as part of an application. The submission of a Compliance Certificate to the Local Planning Authority upon completion will be secured through planning conditions.

Figure 8.2: Energy hierarchy



8.12 The Council will be more ambitious with energy performance standards as technologies improve, become more accessible and cheaper, and therefore the impact on development viability is reduced. Developments are to either achieve the applicable percentage of improvement required over the Target Emission Rate (TER) set out in Building Regulations or updated government standards that exceed this requirement, whichever is greater.

Resource management

Energy efficiency

8.8 Energy use should be prioritised in line with the energy hierarchy (Figure 8.2). The first priority is to be lean. This is to ensure less overall energy use with good building design and high energy efficiency using passive design measures, such as building orientation, internal and external building layout, tree planting (prioritising endemic and deciduous species) and the size and location of windows.

8.9 The second priority is to be clean; to use energy that is supplied efficiently. Developments should consider connecting to decentralised energy networks (energy generated off the energy grid). This can include technologies such as solar energy and water, heat pumps, biomass-fuelled energy

generation and larger-scale schemes, such as Combined Heat and Power (CHP) systems.

8.10 The final priority is to be green and use renewable low or zero carbon energy sources. To reduce the impact on the environment and contribute towards the borough becoming carbon neutral, energy generation using sustainable sources is strongly encouraged.

8.11 In June 2019, parliament passed legislation to legally bind the UK government to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 100% from 1990 levels, by 2050. The design of new buildings will make an important contribution towards this goal. To plan, design and save unnecessary retrofitting of buildings, new homes should be designed to be adaptable to zero carbon in the future.

Carbon off-setting

8.13 If developments demonstrate exceptional circumstances, resulting in an inability to meet the required standard of efficiency, they are to contribute to Watford’s Carbon Offset Fund. Contributions will be used within Watford for carbon reduction projects, such as retrofitting. The amount to be paid will be agreed in advance using the equation: $Cost = (T - O) * X * Y$. Where T = Total carbon emissions; O = Amount already offset on site; X = Cost per tonne of carbon emitted and Y = Number of years found applicable.

Overheating

8.14 Building energy efficient homes is important to reduce carbon emissions, however, it is also important to build new homes that are healthy to live in and support a person’s wellbeing. Overheating can be uncomfortable and dangerous, making it an important health issue. Smart design, such as dual aspect windows, passive ventilation and the incorporation of cooling measures like trees and shrubs, to increase light or provide shading, reflecting the seasons, are important to prevent overheating and avoid health risks. Further detail is set out in Chapter 6 ‘An Attractive Town’. Developers will be expected to integrate good design to support health and wellbeing and reduce overheating as part of their schemes. Use of traditional, energy dependent, cooling systems is not appropriate.

8.15 Where apartments are single aspect, which reduces airflow, and need to be supported by mechanical ventilation in addition to passive cooling measures developers should demonstrate how this is addressed using low carbon technologies.

Water efficiency

8.16 The borough is within an area classified as under serious water stress by the Environment Agency. Water security can be put at risk, especially during droughts and with an increasing population, if not carefully managed.

8.17 To secure a sustainable water supply, new standards and technologies should be incorporated as part of new development schemes to reduce water use. Residential developments are to meet the technical standard for water efficiency set at a maximum consumption level of 110 litres per person per day. All developments should utilise opportunities to install internal water efficient fixings and incorporate rainwater use and harvest greywater where possible.

Materials and waste management

8.18 Generating large amounts of waste can be detrimental to the health of the public, the environment and wildlife. To be more resource efficient, new developments should actively plan to reduce waste by minimising residual waste and by using recycled and recyclable materials as much as possible.

8.19 Proposals are to be in accordance with the Hertfordshire Waste Local Plan, including aligning construction practices and building operations with the Hertfordshire Waste Hierarchy (Figure 8.3). Practices to manage materials and waste through mechanisms such as Site Waste Management Plans and circular economy statements, as appropriate, are supported:

8.20 Site waste management plans outline the types and amounts of waste expected from a construction site, including how each will be reused, recycled or disposed of.

8.21 Circular economy statements consider how materials are used and keep their main use for as long as possible, before planning on reusing or recycling the material.

Figure 8.3: Hertfordshire Waste Hierarchy





Policy CC8.3: Sustainable Construction and Resource Management

Energy efficiency

To minimise the impact of new homes on the environment and achieve Net Zero Carbon, a phased approach to improve the energy efficiency of new homes is set out. To achieve this residential developments should:

- a) Be designed so they can be adapted to be Net Zero Carbon;
- b) Avoid overheating and use passive ventilation when possible;
- c) Achieve the minimum applicable percentage, as set out below, of improvement for carbon emissions over the target emission rate (TER) as outlined in National Building Regulations Part L (2013)³, or any updated government standards, whichever results in a higher target.

2018 - 2025	19%
2025 - onwards	35%

Proposals that do not meet these energy efficiency targets will only be supported if it is unfeasible due to exceptional circumstances and a financial contribution is made towards the Carbon Offset Fund to provide equivalent carbon savings off site.

Water efficiency

All residential developments should meet the technical standard for water efficiency of 110 litres per person, per day.

In new, non-residential developments, water conservation measures should be incorporated to reduce water consumption to a standard equivalent to BREEAM 'very good' for the appropriate building typology.

Materials and waste management

Development proposals should reduce construction waste through the re-use and recycling of materials. Practices undertaken should reflect the Hertfordshire Waste Hierarchy. As part of an application, applicants should set out how waste management of the site is in accordance with the Hertfordshire Waste Local Plan.

Sustainability Statements

A Sustainability Statement will be submitted to the Local Planning Authority to demonstrate compliance with this policy for new-build residential developments (other than householder applications). The Sustainability Statement will include details as to how energy, water and waste requirements will be complied with and monitored.



³ https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/226965/Part_L_2013_IA.pdf

Managing air quality

8.22 A polluted environment can result in a severe cost to public health, the natural environment and the economy. The links between poor air quality, human health, and the environment are well documented and is classed by Public Health England as a major public health risk. Mitigating the impact of development on air quality and minimising exposure to poor air quality across Watford is important. This can help to safeguard residents from the impacts of a polluted environment.

8.23 There are currently two Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs) in Watford, where national objectives for ambient air quality have been exceeded. The predominant pollutants in Watford are those commonly associated with road traffic.

8.24 The exposure of vulnerable residents, such as children, the elderly, and those with respiratory issues to poor air quality, is a particular concern. Air pollution can affect anyone's health; nevertheless, some individuals can be more susceptible than others. These include:

- children;
- the elderly;
- individuals with existing cardiovascular or respiratory diseases;
- pregnant women;
- communities in areas of higher pollution, such as close to busy roads; and
- low income communities.

8.25 Sensitive development may include, but is not limited to, schools, residential care homes and health facilities. Air pollution also has potential to have increased impacts on the wider global environment and society with a changing climate.

8.26 Air quality is often managed through soft measures, such as active modes of travel, urban greening and the use of sustainable construction methods. The ways new developments are designed can also assist in mitigating against the negative impacts of poor air quality. For instance, strategically planting trees and hedges between major roads and residential development can create a barrier to shield residents from poor air quality caused by traffic. Measures such as these will be supported as part of the Plan. However, to ensure that national and international objectives for ambient air quality are met, additional steps must be taken to guide new development.

8.27 Development should seek to achieve overall improvements to air quality and minimise the potential adverse impacts. The policy intends to ensure that the potential impacts of new development upon air quality is an issue considered early in the design process and when planning applications are determined. Regard should be given to the location of development where users may be more sensitive to poor air quality.

8.28 Development will be expected to support the aspirations of the Air Quality Action Plan, as well as Public Health England's 2019 'net health gain' principles and the Public Health Outcomes Framework. Regard should also be given to the Ambient Air Quality Directive (2008) and the European Union Limit Values to determine compliance with national and international air quality standards.





Policy CC8.4: Managing Air Quality



Development will be supported where it does not contribute towards a worsening of existing air quality and, where possible, seeks to improve existing air quality. Appropriate mitigation measures will be required to address any potential impact on air quality.

An Air Quality Assessment will be required for all major developments and other forms of development that are considered to be at risk of impacts from significant emissions or pollutants. This includes, but is not limited to, development where the occupiers/ users may be sensitive to poor air quality and development in close proximity to an Air Quality Management Area. Assessments will be required to consider the cumulative impacts in conjunction with other developments in the vicinity and include mitigation measures where necessary.

Where the Air Quality Assessment indicates that a development would cause harm to air quality, planning permission will not be granted unless appropriate mitigation measures are proposed, which demonstrate that:

Public exposure to the pollution source has been minimised;

- a) Sensitive development has been located an appropriate distance away from the source of exposure; and
- b) The development would not lead to the creation of a new street canyon or a building configuration that inhibits effective pollution dispersion.

Managing the environmental impacts of development

- 8.29 There are other types of pollution in addition to air quality that can have a negative impact on the environment and residential amenity, including light, noise, contamination, odour and vibration. Pollution can be brought about by new development and can have a severe impact on the amenity and function of existing properties and businesses, and the quality of life in an area.
- 8.30 The Council places responsibility on the applicant, or the party responsible for the development, to provide mitigation for any significant adverse impacts that may be generated by the proposed development. This is set out in national policy as the 'Agent of Change Principle' and ensures that new development does not cause existing uses in the vicinity to curtail their activities. Applicants will need to demonstrate how mitigation has been provided for any potential issues related to noise and light pollution, odour, contamination and other negative impacts. The Council will seek to ensure that quality of life, health, wellbeing and the environment are not adversely affected by harmful pollutants and other negative impacts that could be associated with new development.
- 8.31 The relevant national policy and guidance, including Building Regulations, should be referred to for information regarding ambient levels for each individual pollutant. There are also various key stakeholders who are able to give advice on minimising the risk of pollution and effective mitigation. These bodies should be engaged early in the process for good practice. For instance, where overhead powerlines traverse the site, early engagement with the operator should be undertaken and where development may have an impact on groundwater, the Environment Agency should be consulted.



Policy CC8.5: Managing the Impacts of Development



Development should be designed to protect the amenity of adjacent land uses and their occupants and local amenity, and to enhance the public realm. In accordance with the 'Agent of Change Principle', new development will be required to assess its potential impacts on neighbouring land uses, including the cumulative effects, and set out mitigation measures where appropriate. To achieve this, development must have regard to the risk related to:



Light pollution

Developments must be designed to minimise any significant detrimental impact of external lighting on local amenity and safety, biodiversity, heritage assets, roads and watercourses.



Noise pollution and vibration

Where development is noise-generating, or the surrounding area is sensitive to noise and vibration, applicants must undertake a

noise assessment to identify potential issues and the required attenuation measures to achieve acceptable noise levels, as defined in national guidance. Noise assessments should also consider the risk of noise reflection, particularly on new developments near to railway lines and major roads.



Contamination, including contamination of groundwater

Applicants are required to carry out a comprehensive ground investigation report and take appropriate remediation measures for development on or near a site that is potentially contaminated.

Development that could adversely affect the groundwater quality, flow or volume will not be granted permission.



Odour

Development must address the adverse impact of odour through the incorporation

of appropriate mitigation measures where the development is considered to generate or development is sensitive to odours.



Unstable land

Applicants will be required to remediate unstable land and further issues related to subsidence, before development can commence. Appropriate measures must ensure that the proposed development will not lead to land instability during works or following completion. A Land Stability Risk Assessment report may be required in line with national guidance if unstable land is considered to be a potential risk.



Power lines

The statutory safety clearances between overhead lines, the ground, and built structures must not be infringed.





Chapter 9

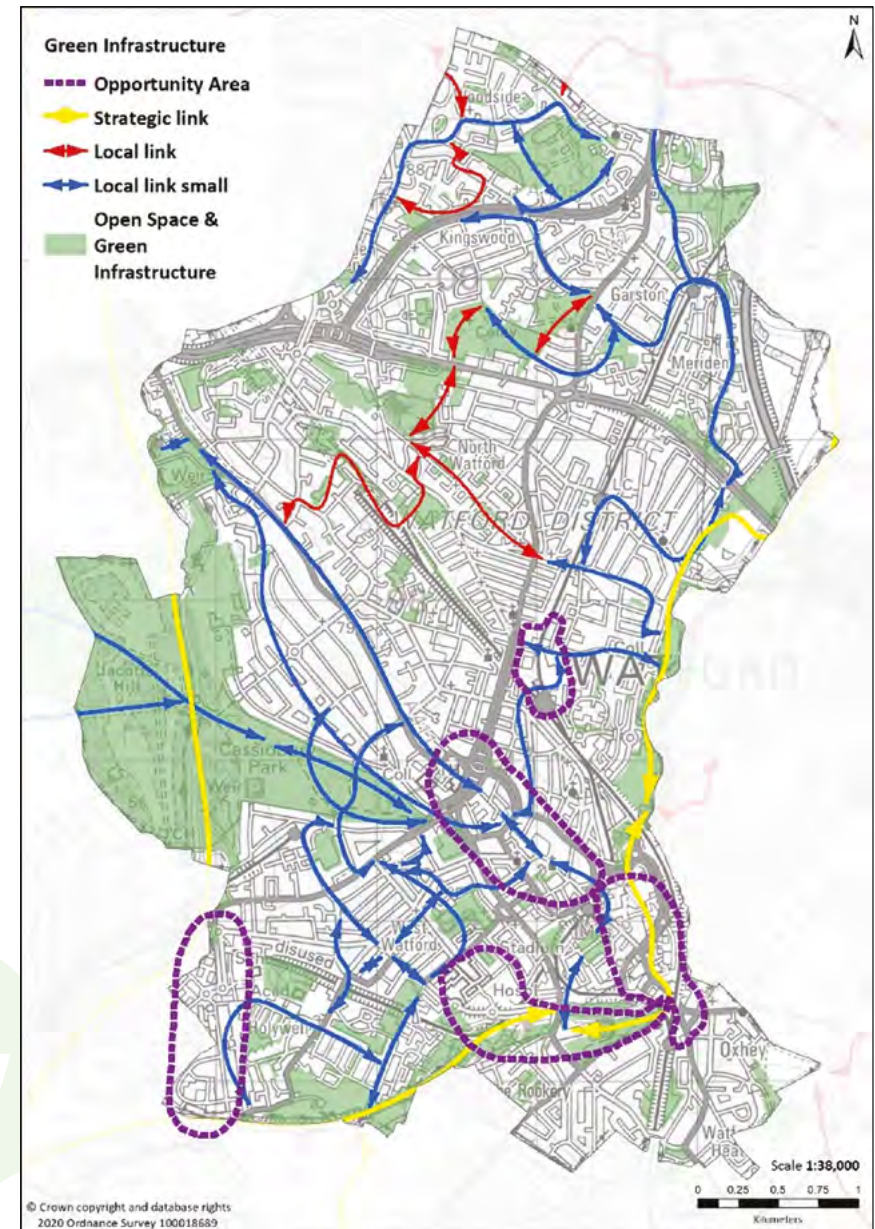
Conserving and Enhancing the Environment

Conserving and Enhancing the Environment

9.1 Although Watford is a densely populated urban borough, the natural environment is relatively rich. There are many high quality and high value open spaces, including 12 Green Flag parks, ancient woodland and sites of national and regional significance. Two rivers run through the borough, as well as the Grand Union Canal, which stretches from London to Birmingham. Watford supports wider green and blue links to other natural areas of significance in the region, including Colne Valley Regional Park and the Chilterns Area of Natural Beauty. Urban planning can be an important instrument for the natural environment, for it seeks to balance the need for new development while also striving to conserve and enhance the natural environment.

9.2 Designated green infrastructure and open spaces in Watford are shown on Figure 9.1. Ecological resources and opportunities have been identified and mapped as part of data held by the Hertfordshire Ecological Records Centre. This data includes species and site records and maps, as well as the Local Nature Partnership's Network Mapping.

Figure 9.1: Green infrastructure in Watford



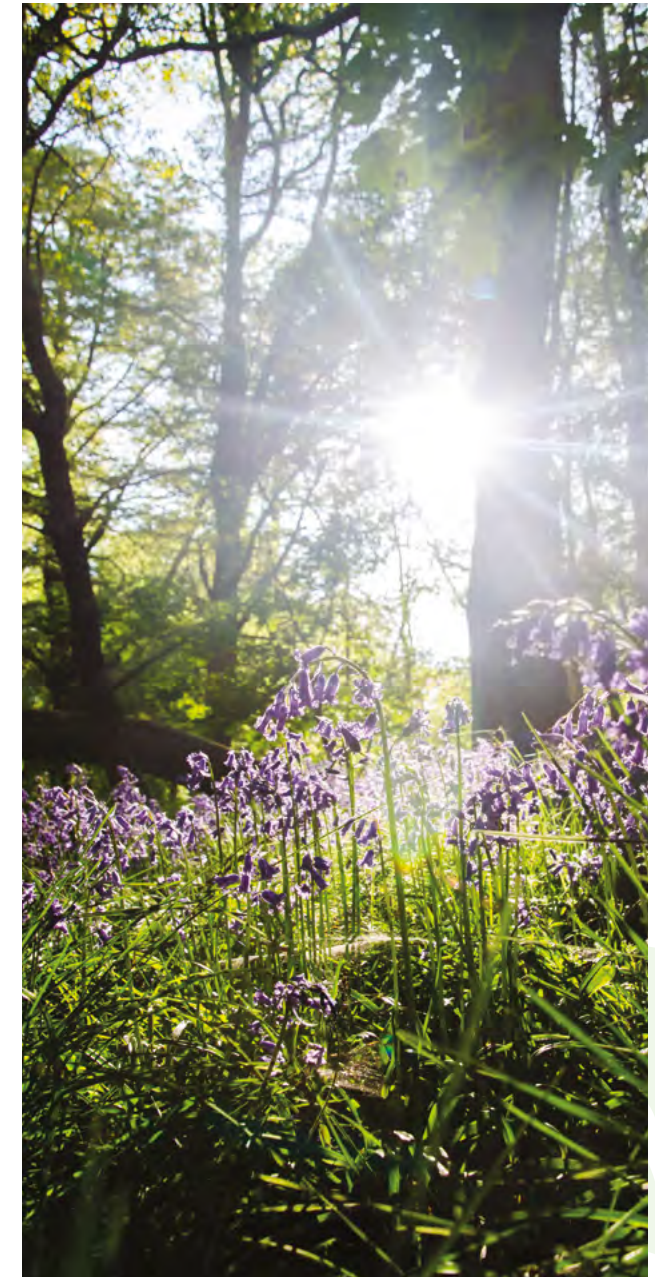


Strategic Policy NE9.1: The Natural Environment



The Local Plan will support the conservation and enhancement of the natural and local environment. Development proposals will be required to demonstrate a positive impact on Watford's natural environment by:

- a) Protecting and enhancing Watford's natural and environmental assets and seeking to create new environmental features where possible;
- b) Conserving and enhancing the extent and quality of green infrastructure and ecological networks by seeking to create, expand and restore links within the network, and support the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services at a landscape scale where appropriate;
- c) Ensuring all new development minimises impacts on biodiversity and achieves a measurable biodiversity net gain, locally, where possible;
- d) Following the 'mitigation hierarchy' of avoidance, mitigation or compensation as appropriate;
- e) Maximising the role of watercourses for leisure, recreation and active travel purposes, as well as seeking to enhance their water quality and biodiversity value;
- f) Minimising the risk of flooding, including surface water flood risk;
- g) Bettering access to open space across the borough where there is an identified need and delivering new green spaces as part of new development;
- h) Delivering non-traditional forms of urban greening as part of high-density development, as well as traditional open space, including green roofs and walls;
- i) Improving the quality of Watford's existing open spaces through development contributions;
- j) Where necessary, ensuring that protected species and their habitats are a material consideration when determining planning applications;
- k) Protecting trees and encouraging native planting on new development; and
- l) Considering the cumulative impacts of development on green and blue infrastructure.

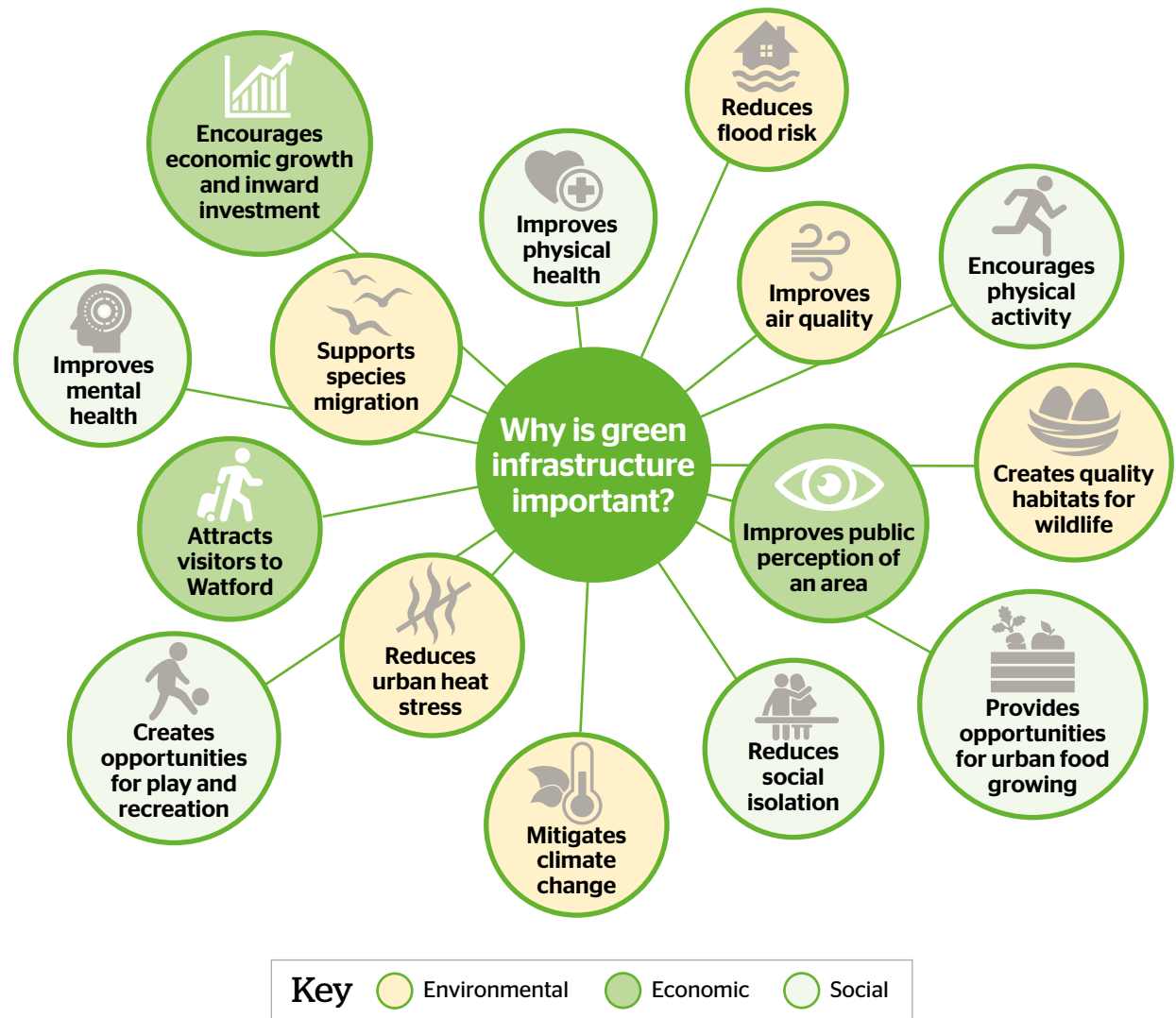


The green infrastructure network

9.3 Green infrastructure is defined as multi-functional networks of open spaces, green corridors and natural green space. Together, these networks perform a variety of functions for the environment and the people who live here. The importance of green infrastructure is highlighted in Figure 9.2. Watford's green infrastructure network contains critical links across the borough, but also across wider Hertfordshire and beyond.

9.4 To conserve and enhance the green infrastructure network, new proposals adjacent or in close proximity to open space and green corridors should consider the impact of development on existing networks and prevent fragmentation. New development can help deliver enhancements to the green infrastructure network and improve connectivity between green spaces if opportunities are proactively identified in the early stages, as proposals are being drafted. The potential impact of landscaping, access, excessive lighting, overshadowing and noise should also be considered and appropriate mitigation provided to protect the intrinsic quality of the network.

Figure 9.2: Benefits of green infrastructure



9.5 Opportunities to improve the green infrastructure network have been set out in the Green Infrastructure Plan and have been illustrated on Figure 9.1. The projects identified are:

- Cassiobury Park enhancement;
- Whippendell Woods enhancement;
- Grand Union Canal enhancement;
- Colne Valley Wetland enhancement;
- Urban greening and legibility for Watford.

9.6 Trees also make an important contribution to biodiversity and should be protected where possible to support the government's England Tree Strategy (2020)⁴. Opportunities should also be taken to increase native planting to support biosecurity.



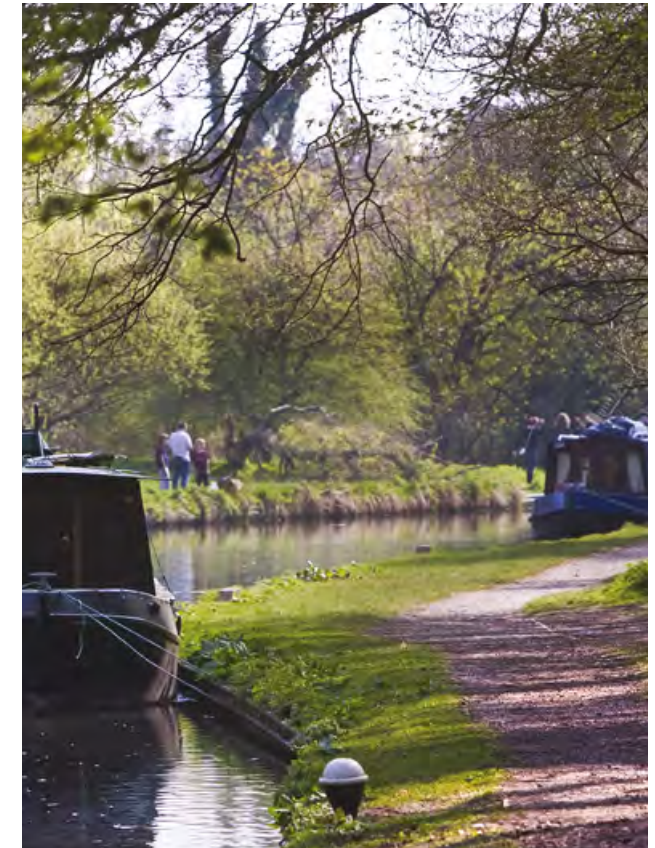
Policy NE9.2: Green Infrastructure Network



Proposals must demonstrate how they will appropriately conserve, restore, expand or enhance the green infrastructure network, including how the site connects with the wider network. Development should protect the function and amenity of green routes, including public rights of way.

A proposed loss or damage of non-protected trees, woodland or hedgerows should be avoided, and if demonstrated as being unavoidable, appropriate replacement or compensation will be required. Native planting should be prioritised.

Priorities for green infrastructure focus on the projects identified in the Green Infrastructure Plan.



⁴ https://consult.defra.gov.uk/forestry/england-tree-strategy/supporting_documents/englandtreestrategyconsultationdocument%20%20correctedv1.pdf

The blue infrastructure network

- 9.7 The Grand Union Canal, River Gade and the River Colne all flow through Watford and form the borough's blue infrastructure network. Rivers Colne and Gade are designated as main watercourses by the Environment Agency, whereas the Grand Union Canal is designated as an ordinary watercourse for the length it runs through Watford. Protecting and enhancing these watercourses is important for many reasons, such as to effectively manage flood risk, to conserve and enhance river habitats and to maximise opportunities for active travel and leisure. The Water Framework Directive (WFD)⁵ also sets an objective to improve these watercourses to 'good' status by 2027.
- 9.8 During the plan period, there is expected to be new development occurring near to Watford's watercourses and their corridors. High quality development presents an opportunity to enhance the role of watercourses and make them a central feature of new development. This would maximise the contribution that blue infrastructure can make to creating successful places.

- 9.9 New development also presents an opportunity to enhance the quality of watercourses, to support them achieving Water Framework Directive 'good' status within the established timeframe. The potential impact of landscaping, access, lighting, overshadowing and noise should be considered and appropriate mitigation provided to protect the intrinsic quality of the water environment. This is particularly pertinent for taller buildings, which can overshadow rivers and result in the loss of habitats.
- 9.10 Development that occurs too close to the banks of watercourses can increase the risk of pollution and limit capacity to manage run off. The South West Hertfordshire Strategic Flood Risk Assessment Stage 1 (2018) identifies the need for 8m undeveloped buffer zones between the top of the bank of any main watercourse and the built environment (including formal landscaping, sport fields, footpaths, lighting and fencing). The buffer zone must be free of hard standing, paths or lighting and must not be used for storage of materials. Planning conditions will require the developer to provide details of an appropriate management scheme to ensure that the buffer is well maintained.

- 9.11 Many of Watford's watercourses have been culverted, to support historic development and infrastructure projects. However, the culverting of watercourses can be harmful for the ecology, as it creates barriers to the movement of fish and causes the loss of bankside habitats.⁶ Culverts also contribute to an increased risk of blockage, which in turn, increases flood risk. As new development comes forward, it is important that deculverting and the re-naturalisation of the watercourse occurs as much as possible to improve the water environment. Culverting, among other issues, has meant that routes for cyclists and pedestrians along canals are also relatively fragmented. New development can help deliver enhancements to watercourses and their corridors by providing new connections and routes for active travel and leisure uses and by enhancing interconnectivity with the green infrastructure network.
- 9.12 This policy should be read in conjunction with Policy NE9.4 'Flood Risk and Mitigation', which provides more detailed guidance on mitigating flood risk.



⁵ https://ec.europa.eu/environment/water/water-framework/info/intro_en.htm

⁶ Environment Agency, Fluvial Design guide: <http://evidence.environment-agency.gov.uk/FCERM/en/FluvialDesignGuide/Chapter8.aspx?pagenum=6>



Policy NE9.3: Blue Infrastructure Network



Development proposals in close proximity to watercourses must support the strategic importance of Watford's blue infrastructure network and seek to maximise its multifunctional environmental, social and economic benefits. Development proposals in close proximity to, or that include a watercourse must:

- a) Maintain an undeveloped and unobstructed buffer strip of eight metres from the top of the bank of all watercourses. Where this enables public access, proposals should be accompanied by a management plan;
- b) Conserve and enhance the biodiversity value of the watercourse and its corridor through the inclusion of in-channel enhancements, the creation of priority wetland habitats, prioritising native planting schemes and by addressing misconnections;
- c) Enhance the role of the watercourse as an accessible active travel and leisure route for pedestrians, cyclists and boaters, and increase connectivity along the length of the watercourse. This includes connectivity and access, where appropriate, to the green infrastructure network;
- d) Integrate the watercourse into the scheme as a vital part of the public realm; and
- e) Open and re-naturalise modified watercourses, including culverted and piped waterways.

The provision of crossings and bridges will be supported where they improve connectivity for pedestrians and cyclists, are in keeping with the setting of the area, and are designed to avoid obstructing flood flows.

Flood risk and groundwater management

9.13 The National Planning Policy Framework supports a risk-based, sequential approach to manage flood risk and ensure development is located in areas of lowest risk. Along with the Flood and Water Management Act (2010), there is a requirement for new development to minimise vulnerability and improve resilience to the impacts of climate change including flooding.

Flood risk

9.14 Flood zone classifications reflect the local risk to people and property and indicate types of development that may be suitable in that zone due to risk level. In Watford, zones of fluvial and surface water flood risk and groundwater protection are identified in the Level 1 (2018) and Level 2 (2020) Strategic Flood Risk Assessments. These areas are largely, but not exclusively, associated to the water basins of the Rivers Colne and Gade.

- Sites located within Flood Zone 1 are subject to lower levels of flood risk, however, they may still require a Flood Risk Assessment where new development could affect the floodplain and increase risk on site or on other sites nearby. A sequential test may be required for development where there is a previously identified flood risk issue.
- Development located in Flood Zones 2 and 3 is at high risk of flooding. Site-specific Flood Risk Assessments are required for all developments within these zones. Development should be prioritised outside of these areas, however, where this is not possible, sites will need to comply with Sequential and Exception Test requirements, as appropriate, before planning permission can be granted.



9.15 Flood risk should be discussed when development proposals are prepared. Applicants are expected to consider how their proposals affect, or could potentially impact other sites in the vicinity and the cumulative impact on flood risk. In some circumstances this may require further modelling to determine the overall impact and potential mitigation measures that may be needed. Developments should seek betterment of existing flood risks, both within the site and in the surrounding area. External organisations such as the Environment Agency and the Lead Local Flood Risk Authority (Hertfordshire County Council) should be consulted to provide guidance when required.

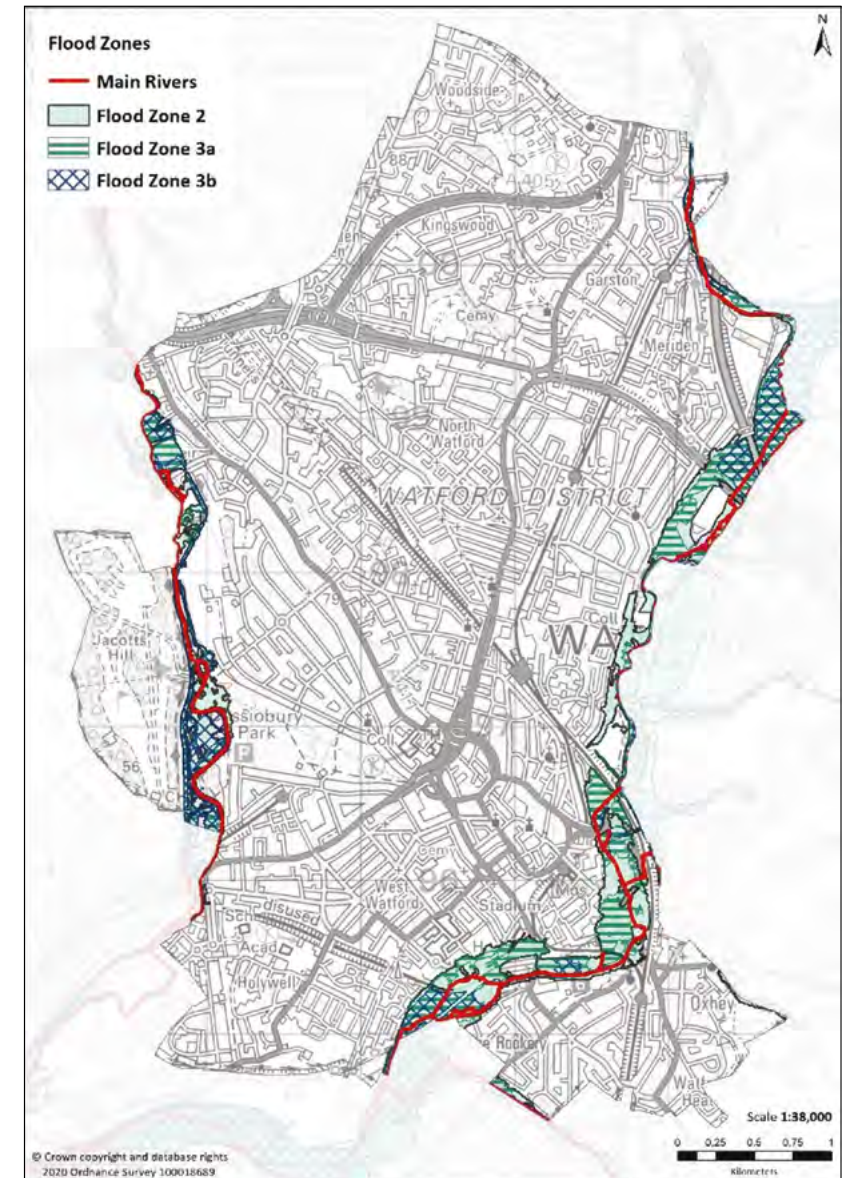
Groundwater protection

9.16 The River Colne basin is designated as Groundwater Source Protection Zone 1, most sensitive with an area buffering the waterway covering much of east Watford identified as Groundwater Source Protection Zone 2 and sensitive to contamination. This means several land uses including industrial, petrol stations and waste management may not be suitable in certain areas of Watford due to the high risk of contamination to the aquifer and drinking water. Developers are expected to implement measures to minimise these potential negative impacts on the ground source. Where these are required these should be prepared in collaboration with the Environment Agency and the Lead Local Flood Authority.

Flood risk mitigation

9.17 There are different causes that can trigger fluvial, surface and ground source flooding, and appropriate mitigation measures are required to reflect this. Proposals located in different parts of the borough that are subject to any type of flood risk will need to consider suitable measures to minimise the potential impacts. This should include measures to address safe access and egress, particularly for changes of use to a 'more vulnerable' classification (e.g. commercial to residential). These should satisfy the requirements set out in the Hertfordshire Local Flood Risk Management Strategy (2019) and should be prepared in collaboration with the Environment Agency.

Figure 9.3: Flood Zones with climate change allowances in Watford



9.18 Developments located in Flood Zones 2 or 3 are encouraged to have early and ongoing discussions with the Environment Agency (EA) and Lead Local Flood Authority to ensure proposals comply with their requirements. New residential developments should be designed to withstand a 1-in-100 year flood, plus a 35% climate change allowance while considering the impacts of plus 70% climate change during the process, to ensure longevity and safety of the development over time.

Sequential and Exception Tests

9.19 Sites designated for development in this Plan have already been put through the Sequential and Exception Tests. However, the Exception Test may need to be reapplied if relevant aspects of a proposal were not considered initially. Windfall sites located within Flood Zones 2 or 3, or sites within Flood Zone 1 where there is an identified flood risk, which have not been subjected to Sequential and Exception Tests, will be required to do so.

9.20 In some instances, following the application of the Sequential Test, it may be necessary for a developer to make a contribution to the improvement of flood management provision that would benefit the proposed new development and the existing community. Where a proposed development is deemed to have a harmful impact on flood risk, a contribution towards flood mitigation may be required through planning conditions.



Policy NE9.4: Flood Risk and Mitigation

Fluvial flooding



When located within areas identified as being at risk of flooding, applicants are required to demonstrate how appropriate and effective mitigation measures have been integrated into the scheme, including management of residual flood risk.

Proposals located within flood zones, need to meet the requirements of the Sequential and Exception Tests. To demonstrate compliance with the Exception Test, a flood resilient design and emergency planning considerations will need to be accounted for, over the lifetime of the development including:

- a) The development to remain safe and operational under flood events;
- b) Safe evacuation and/or safely remaining in the building under flood conditions;
- c) Key services must continue to be provided under flood conditions; and
- d) Buildings are to be designed for quick recovery following a flood.

Any development within Flood Zones 2 and 3, and those over one hectare in Flood Zone 1, should use a Flood Risk Assessment to show how they have considered flood risk beyond the site boundaries, including cumulative impacts arising from other developments. Proposals should demonstrate that suitable flood compensation storage is available to avoid any net loss in floodplain.

Proposals located in areas where waterways have been culverted or altered should seek to re-naturalise the river and surroundings, improve water storage and enhance riparian habitats, in line with requirements to meet Water Framework Directive objectives and the Thames River Basin Management Plan. Flood defences within the site boundary must be maintained, repaired or replaced by the developer for the lifetime of the development.

Groundwater protection

Where a proposal is located within a Groundwater Source Protection Zone, applicants will be required to demonstrate there will be no significant impacts. If a potential impact is identified, appropriate mitigation measures need to be incorporated as part of the scheme. Within Source Protection Zone 1 (SPZ1), deep infiltration soakaways should be the last resort. Certain discharges into the ground may require an Environmental Permit.

Surface Water Management

9.21 A well-considered drainage strategy plays a vital role in the management of surface water flood risk. Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) are water management measures that use natural methods designed to manage surface water as close to the source as possible. To be effective, a Sustainable Drainage System can be designed to use a combination of approaches including rainwater collection, grey water recycling, infiltration, soakaways, bio-swales and discharge to a watercourse as appropriate. Design requirements for effective drainage systems can be found in the CIRIA (Construction Industry Research and Information Association) Sustainable Drainage Systems Manual (2015) and Hertfordshire Local Flood Risk Management Strategy (2019).

9.22 Sustainable Drainage Systems should be multifunctional in their approach and be designed to maximise their benefits in other areas such as biodiversity and useable space for periods when they are not actively managing water for flood risk. Sustainable Drainage Systems can also aid in pollution mitigation when implemented correctly, but it is important that they are designed carefully to avoid contamination. For example, soakaways should not be implemented on contaminated land and infiltration should only be incorporated when using uncontaminated

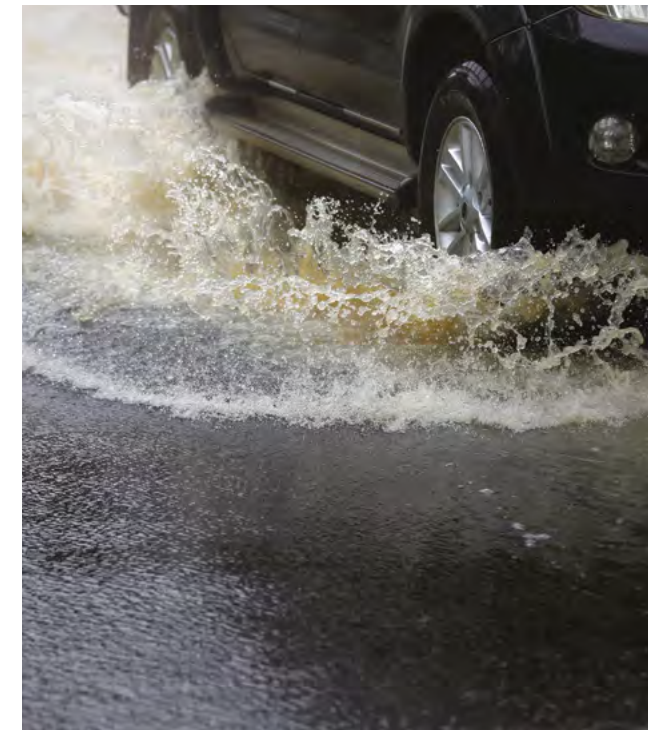
water. A surface water management plan is necessary to ensure Sustainable Drainage Systems are effectively designed, maintained and monitored.

9.23 The quality and effectiveness Sustainable Drainage Systems can vary. The hierarchy below sets out an approach that should be considered where a scheme could use single or multiple measures. From preferable, to least preferable:

- a) storage rainwater for later use;
- b) use of infiltration measures, such as porous surfaces in non-clay areas;
- c) attenuate rainwater in ponds or open water features for gradual release;
- d) attenuate rainwater by storing in tanks or sealed water features for gradual release;
- e) discharge rainwater direct to a watercourse;
- f) discharge rainwater to a surface water sewer/drain; and
- g) discharge rainwater to a combined sewer.⁷

9.24 Where management and maintenance of Sustainable Drainage Systems are required, the applicant should set out how this will be approached. This will need to be discussed with the appropriate stakeholders and required through the use of planning conditions.

9.25 Site-specific and Strategic Flood Risk Assessments for surface water management should consider both central and upper-end climate change allowances as stated in the National Planning Policy Framework. Details on the locations and necessary allowances are provided in the most recent Strategic Flood Risk Assessment. Predicted climate change allowances are increasing with time, and developments must consider this increase based on the expected duration of the structure.



⁷ <https://www.london.gov.uk/what-we-do/planning/london-plan/current-london-plan/london-plan-chapter-five-londons-response/pol12>



Policy NE9.5: Surface Water Management



Proposals that incorporate well designed Sustainable Drainage Systems that are appropriately integrated into the scheme, aim to achieve greenfield run-off rates manage surface water and improve resilience will be supported.

Sustainable Drainage Systems should make effective use of land by being multifunctional, to maximise ecological benefits such as biodiversity, provide open space or incorporate tree planting and landscaping. Developments will need to ensure the implementation of Sustainable Drainage Systems does not worsen contamination effects, and soakaways should not be located within land affected by land contamination. Details of the Sustainable Drainage System should be submitted to the Council as part of the Sustainability Statement.

Developments should seek betterment of existing surface water flood risk, both within the site and surrounding area, as an opportunity to have a positive impact on cumulative risk, using appropriate drainage measures. Allowances for changes and increases in flood risk due to climate change need to be considered. Sustainable Drainage Systems must be designed to respond to risk for the lifetime of a development, including the appropriate climate change impacts.

Sustainable Drainage Systems should be designed and integrated into the proposal to effectively manage the existing surface water flow paths on the site and help to mitigate other flood risks. Measures should be agreed with the lead flood risk authority and be consistent with the Hertfordshire Local Flood Risk Management Strategy. As part of an application, an applicant should provide a management plan that clarifies how any measures will be managed and maintained and agreed with the lead Local Flood Risk Authority.

Protecting open space

9.26 Watford's open spaces are a great source of pride for our communities. Our award winning parks are not the only types of green spaces that Watford's residents can enjoy, as the borough contains a wide variety of types of open space. From allotments to playing pitches, these different open spaces can provide for a variety of different uses, functions and activities. Open space can make an important contribution to the green infrastructure network and offer valuable space for recreational and amenity use. Open spaces can also contribute towards flood risk management schemes and sustainable drainage systems.

9.27 Everyone living, working in and visiting Watford should have access to high quality open space and sports and recreation facilities. The types of open spaces provided and protected through new development should reflect a locally identified need. This can help to avoid deficiencies in different types of open space, and to ensure that open spaces are being effectively used. Watford's open spaces are not evenly distributed across the borough. Some communities are deficient in open space and require improved access to these recreational areas, whereas in some neighbourhoods there may be opportunities where alternative open space and ancillary uses could be considered if there is a demonstrated need.





Policy NE9.6: Protecting Open Space



Open space and ancillary facilities used for leisure and recreation will be protected, unless an up-to-date assessment demonstrates the space is surplus to need. For an open space or an ancillary facility to be considered surplus to requirements, the following must be demonstrated:

- a) An assessment has been undertaken that has clearly shown the open space, buildings or land to be surplus to requirements, having regard to the Council's most recent evidence base; and
- b) The open space is not needed for alternative open space uses; or
- c) An equivalent or better facility in terms of quality and quantity is to be provided in a more suitable location that meets the needs of the local community.

Development proposals for alternative open space uses will be supported where an up-to-date assessment clearly shows the benefits outweigh the loss.

The absence of identification of an open space on the Policies Map does not imply that development is appropriate.

Providing new open space

9.28 As new development comes forward, there will be opportunities to create new communal open space on site. While some level of private amenity space will be expected (Policy HO3.11 Private and Communal Outdoor Amenity Space), larger developments can also help to provide communal sports and recreational facilities, such as:

- Parks, public gardens and recreational grounds;
- Amenity green spaces;
- Equipped play space;
- Natural and semi-natural green spaces;
- Outdoor sports facilities;
- Churchyards and cemeteries; and
- Allotments.

9.29 The different types of open space have been defined in the Green Spaces Strategy. The strategy sets out where these different facilities are located in the borough and appropriate catchment distances for each type of open space. Where a development does not lie within the catchment distance of a type of open space, it will be imperative that this is provided on site to reverse the deficiency.

9.30 In circumstances where on site open space provision is not practical, feasible or would not benefit the scheme, a financial contribution may be acceptable with the agreement of the Local Planning Authority. This contribution will be secured through planning conditions. In these cases, some level of communal open space and landscaping should be provided on site.

9.31 For outdoor sports facilities, it is not expected that provision will generally be possible on site. For areas deficient in outdoor sports facilities, contributions will be sought through the Playing Pitch Calculator, in line with the Playing Pitch Strategy (2020). Therefore, new residential developments will be required to provide open space, such as amenity and equipped play space on site, or where practical, other forms of open space such as allotments or semi-natural areas, where opportunities exist to enhance the green infrastructure network and support local residents.

9.32 The design of new play areas and other formal open spaces should take account of good practice provided in Sport England's 'Active Design' guidance and any subsequent replacements.





Policy NE9.7: Providing New Open Space

New developments proposals will be supported where they contribute to the provision, enhancement and maintenance of open space, either by means of on-site provision or through developer contributions.

Where there is an identified deficiency, as set out in an up-to-date open space needs assessment, development proposals of ten dwellings or more will be required to provide publicly accessible open space on site. Provision should reflect the type of open space required in the area through accessibility, quality and value.

Proposals that include new open space should be accompanied by a site management plan, in agreement with the Council, which sets out a proactive approach to the long-term maintenance of the site.

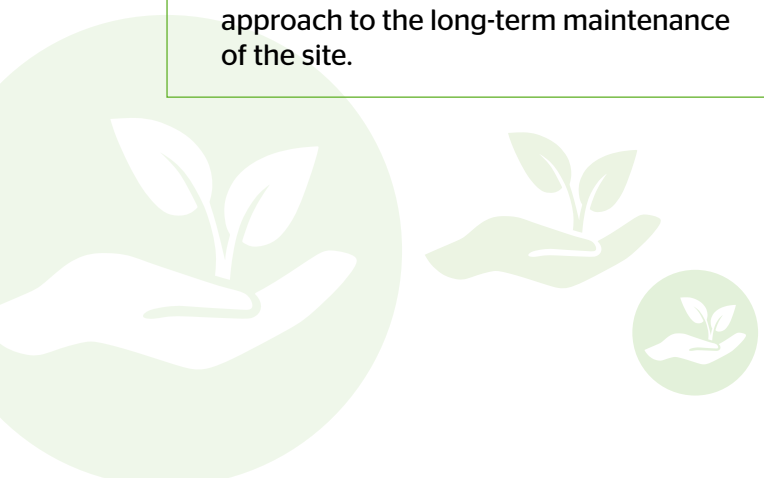
Biodiversity

- 9.33 Despite being a largely urban borough, Watford is rich in biodiversity. Watford contains a number of Local Nature Reserves and Local Wildlife Sites and is home to European Protected Species such as great crested newts and pipistrelle bats. Other locally important but non-designated wildlife sites also make a significant contribution towards biodiversity in the area.
- 9.34 The sustained loss of green infrastructure and the breaking up of its networks can have a damaging effect on ecosystems in Watford. Inappropriate development could threaten the future of different species through habitat fragmentation and the loss of habitats. Given development pressures, it will important to ensure that Watford's biodiversity is protected and enhanced. Development proposals should contribute positively to ecosystems in Watford through the delivery of net gains in biodiversity.
- 9.35 New development should support the creation of new wildlife habitats, which can be integrated into the layout and design of sites, as well as offsite where this cannot otherwise be achieved. Traditionally, this would include habitats incorporated as part of open space, such as water courses, vegetation and

planting. However, some contemporary schemes have evolved to include green/brown roofs, living walls and roof and rain gardens, which support biodiversity, amongst other benefits. Where appropriate, smaller alterations can include providing integrated bat or bird boxes within the fabric of new buildings, or hedgehog highways to make gardens more permeable.

- 9.36 The Council will take a hierarchical approach to assessing proposals, as set out in national guidance. Compensatory measures will only be considered when no other measures are demonstrated to be feasible as set out in the mitigation hierarchy (Figure 9.4). In such an instance, Biodiversity Offset Agreements must be secured through Section 106 Agreements. The process for this will be set out in a Supplementary Planning Document.

Figure 9.4: Biodiversity mitigation hierarchy





Policy NE9.8: Biodiversity

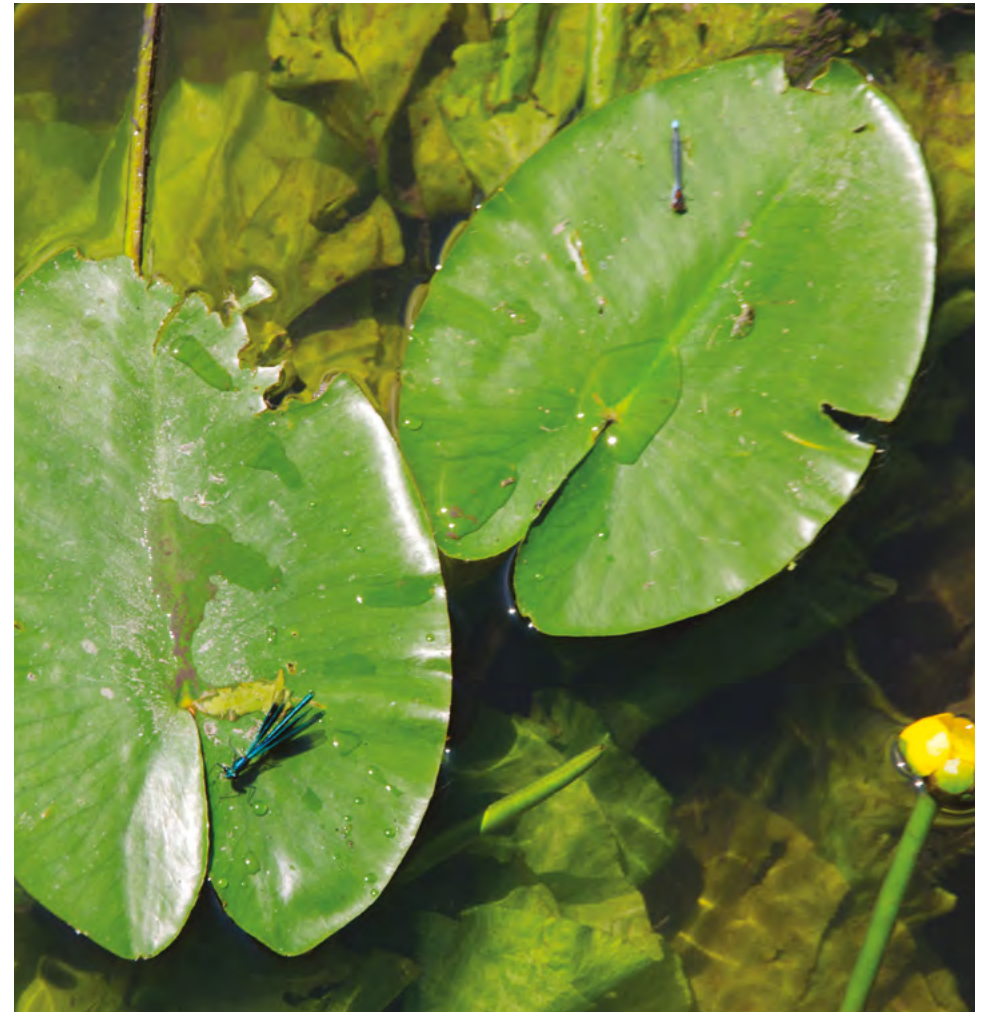


Development proposals should apply the mitigation hierarchy to avoid or mitigate harmful effects on biodiversity. Protected sites of international, national and local importance will be protected from inappropriate development based on the importance of the designation.

New development should seek to achieve an overall net gain in biodiversity. This must be measured through the use of the latest Natural England biodiversity metric. The biodiversity metric should demonstrate an improvement in biodiversity units of 10% or more from the existing baseline value of the site.

Development should apply the mitigation hierarchy to avoid or mitigate harmful effects on biodiversity. Mitigation and compensation measures must offset any losses to achieve a measurable net gain for biodiversity. Where it is not possible to avoid or mitigate all impacts on site, an offsite Biodiversity Offset Agreement should be submitted.

Where there is a reasonable likelihood of the presence of a protected species or its habitat, applications must be supported by an ecological survey. If present, the proposal must mitigate or compensate appropriately in accordance with the legislation that protects them.





Chapter 10

Infrastructure



Infrastructure

10.1 The provision of sufficient and appropriate infrastructure is required to support the growth and change set out in the Local Plan, in line with the sustainable development objectives in the National Planning Policy Framework.

10.2 Infrastructure is provided by public and private bodies and includes:

- Social infrastructure: schools, healthcare, community facilities, leisure and cultural centres, places of worship and emergency services.
- Physical infrastructure: roads, footpaths, cycleways, water provision and treatment, sewerage, flood prevention and drainage, waste disposal, electricity, gas and electronic communications networks.
- Green Infrastructure: open spaces, recreation facilities, trees, green corridors, wildlife corridors and landscape features.

10.3 Details of these requirements are set out in Watford's Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP). The Infrastructure Delivery Plan considers the infrastructure improvements that are needed to support the planned increase in new homes, businesses and other facilities arising from the population and job growth in the borough. It identifies essential infrastructure and prioritises projects according to their importance in delivering the growth strategy.

10.4 The Watford Infrastructure Delivery Plan considers the infrastructure improvements that are needed to support the planned increase in new homes, businesses and other facilities arising from the population and job growth in the borough. The Council will seek to protect existing community facilities in line with Policy HC12.3 'Built and Community Facilities'.

10.5 Developers will be expected to engage early with the Council and appropriate infrastructure service providers to discuss relevant requirements. Some will be specific to a particular site, whilst some will relate to the wider area. It is important that each development provides a fair contribution towards both site-specific and area-wide infrastructure. Alongside this, the cumulative impacts arising from the development across the area will need to be co-ordinated and adequately mitigated. Where necessary, the use of compulsory purchase powers to assist in the timely delivery of infrastructure will be considered.

10.6 Significant infrastructure items such as, but not limited to, schools, community centres, public realm, or, public transport provision, and will often require different landowners or stakeholders to work together to secure timely and efficient delivery. Infrastructure should be delivered in a way and at a time that does not compromise development coming forward on connected sites.





Strategic Policy IN10.1: Integrated Infrastructure Delivery



Proposals should demonstrate a comprehensive integrated and future-proofed approach to the delivery of development and infrastructure that mitigates the cumulative impact of development, and:

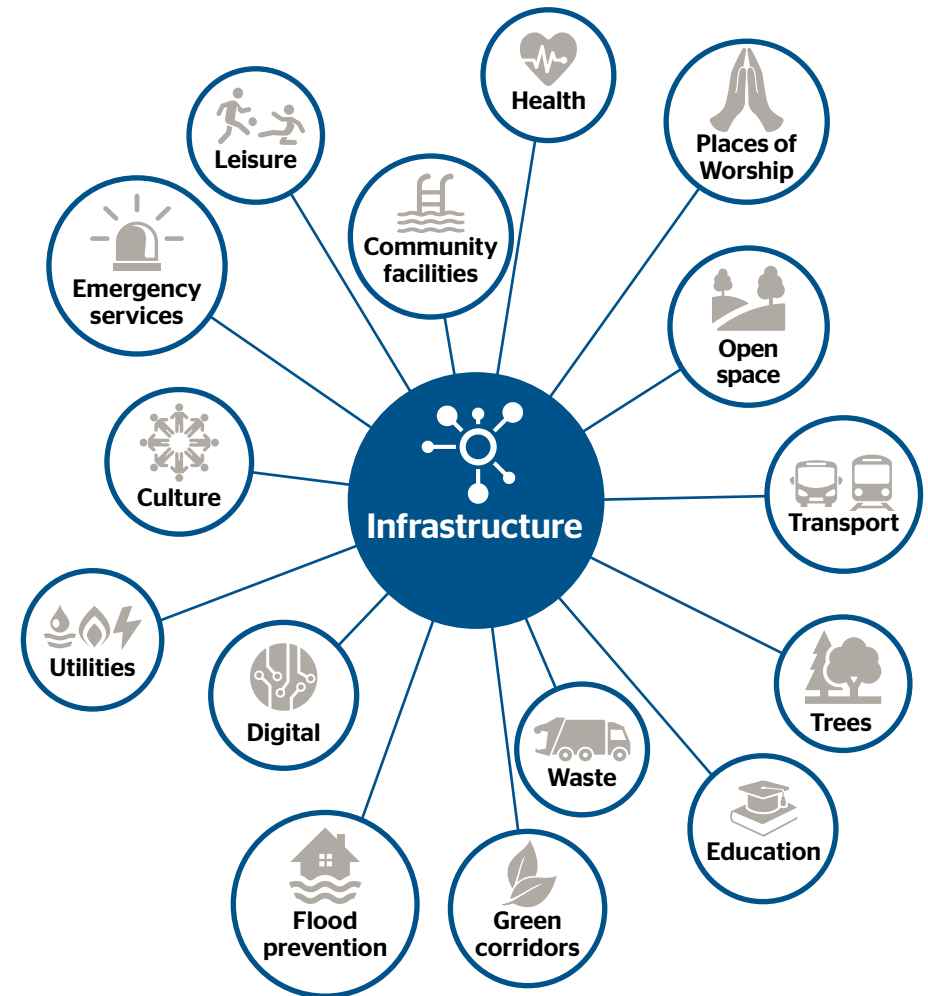
- a) Contributes appropriately and proportionately towards required infrastructure identified in Watford's Infrastructure Delivery Plan, at a rate and scale sufficient to support the growth identified in this Local Plan;
- b) Where applicable, connects to area-wide infrastructure and enables future connections;
- c) Safeguards land to deliver area-wide or site-specific infrastructure, as identified in the Watford's Infrastructure Delivery Plan, Site Allocations and / or other policies in the Local Plan;
- d) Where development is dependent upon, or creates a specific need for, new or improved infrastructure; this will be delivered on site;
- e) Is appropriately designed so that it complements and does not unduly restrict development on adjacent or connected sites.

Developers will be expected to engage early with the Council and infrastructure service providers to discuss their requirements.

Developer contributions will be sought where needs arise, in line with the policy requirements of this plan; where provision is made on site, this will be considered in the context of other developer contributions.

Providing infrastructure to support new development

Figure 10.1: Types of infrastructure



10.7 Infrastructure should be well integrated alongside new development with the phasing agreed, alongside providers, as part of a planning application. Wherever possible, especially on larger developments, infrastructure should be provided on-site creating sustainable neighbourhoods.

10.8 The Infrastructure Delivery Plan highlights the need for new schools, healthcare and sustainable transport to support Watford's population growth over the plan period. As infrastructure is provided by various agencies, the onus is on developers to ensure there is capacity to meet requirements arising from a proposed development.

Health facilities

10.9 Applicants will need to demonstrate collaborative working with other landowners and the Clinical Commissioning Group to identify how additional health facilities can be delivered. The scale and range of service provision will need to be appropriate to the level of demand generated by developments. Contributions towards new or enhanced healthcare facilities will be sought to ensure the health care requirements arising from new development are met.

Education

10.10 As the Borough's population grows, demand for school places will continue to increase, placing pressure on existing facilities. It is

therefore vital that where housing growth results in increased demand, investment is made across each education tier, as necessary, to ensure there are enough places to serve the Borough's pupils within their community.

10.11 For sites larger than 1,000 dwellings, education provision will be required on site. For sites that are located in close proximity to each other and will have a cumulative impact that will generate demand for a new school, applicants are encouraged to work collaboratively with other landowners and Hertfordshire County Council to best meet this need, identifying where a new primary school can be provided that provides good amenity for young children. Education opportunities should be maximised on any site given the high demand and limited suitable sites for school provision.

Sustainable Transport

10.12 Applicants will need to demonstrate collaborative working with other landowners, Watford Borough Council and Hertfordshire County Council, as well as other providers to deliver transport infrastructure improvements to support development, in line with Chapter 11 'A Sustainable Transport Town'. This will include delivery of onsite infrastructure as well as contributing towards projects identified in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan, Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan and Watford's Sustainable Transport Strategy.

Metropolitan Line Extension

10.13 The Metropolitan Line Extension, commonly known as MLX, was a proposal to extend the existing line to Watford Junction, creating two new stations including one in Vicarage Road. It was a project costing more than £300 million, with funding secured from the government, Hertfordshire County Council, Watford Borough Council, and Transport for London (TfL). However, the financial contributions from Transport for London were withdrawn in 2018.

10.14 Watford Borough Council continues to support the Metropolitan Line Extension, or a comparable alternative, and considers that the route along the disused former Croxley Rail Line provides a potential future route for Mass Rapid Transit, as well as an opportunity for a walking and cycling link. As such, the route and access to it should be safeguarded to maintain the possibility of its use by these modes; details of the land to be preserved are set out within the Watford Mass Rapid Transport Safeguarding Technical Report and reflected on the Policies Map.





Quality communications

- 10.15 Communication technology is an integral part of modern society. It is important to work with developers and providers to ensure that schemes are well designed and have sufficient capacity to meet the anticipated demand and embrace technological change to continue to be socially connected and economically competitive.
- 10.16 For a scheme to be successful and be able to adapt to future technological changes, developers are expected to engage with utility providers early in design process. This enables all stakeholders to understand as early as possible if, and where, there may be a need for additional capacity in the network. It provides opportunities for development to be designed in such a way as to support the provision of utilities.
- 10.17 Future-proofed, high quality digital infrastructure is considered vital to support well-functioning employment areas. The National Planning Policy Framework requires planning policies to set out how high quality digital infrastructure is expected to be delivered.



Policy IN10.2: Providing Infrastructure to Support New Development



Planning permission, except for householders, will be granted where it is demonstrated that there is, or will be, sufficient infrastructure capacity to support and meet all the requirements arising from proposed development. Infrastructure provision will reflect the Infrastructure Delivery Plan and its successor documents to; meet the needs arising from development, and mitigate adverse social, economic or environmental impacts arising from development.

Developers must demonstrate they have explored existing infrastructure capacity, and how this could be future-proofed, with appropriate providers and demonstrate that they have made sufficient provision. Where appropriate, and where there is an identified shortfall across the borough, opportunities should be taken to maximise infrastructure provision on suitable sites.

Proposals for employment uses should demonstrate that provision is made for high quality digital facilities as part of the application.

Development contributions

10.18 The Local Plan will deliver new homes and jobs to meet Watford's identified need. To support this, significant supporting infrastructure will be required to be delivered at the right time to meet the Council's aspirations for sustainability, affordable housing delivery, health and wellbeing and placemaking. To ensure that the burden of providing the additional infrastructure needed does not fall on existing communities, planning authorities are able to seek appropriate funding for this infrastructure from developers.

10.19 Housing and employment density, site constraints, affordable housing, ambitious sustainability standards, infrastructure delivery and other planning obligations all have associated costs. There will be a need to consider the ability of each site to contribute its fair share towards infrastructure, affordable housing and sustainability standards, whilst ensuring new development is viable and that the market is appropriately incentivised to deliver. Site constraints may include exceptional or abnormal costs relating to contamination or poor ground conditions for example. The presence of such issues will be expected to impact on land values, rather than through a reduction in planning obligations or sustainability standards. In taking a balanced approach, development will need to deliver on the principles of sustainable development

as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework.

10.20 Watford's Infrastructure Delivery Plan identifies and prioritises the key infrastructure required to support the growth outlined in this plan. It is an important supporting document that is regularly updated to react to the infrastructure delivery requirements and challenges associated with delivering the Local Plan.

10.21 A substantial amount of the infrastructure required to deliver sustainable development, including (but not limited to) enabling works, public realm and open space improvements, and street greening, will be sought on site and it is expected that developers will directly fund these.

10.22 The Council will primarily use Section 106 Agreements and Community Infrastructure Levy payments to secure appropriate contributions from developments for affordable housing and items of infrastructure, or financial contributions towards their delivery, such as new schools and transport network improvements. Non-financial contributions may include employment and training opportunities.

10.23 The Council's Infrastructure Funding Statement provides a summary of all financial and non-financial Section 106 and Community Infrastructure Levy planning obligation receipts and projects.





Policy IN10.3: Development Contributions



There will be a need to balance the priorities for infrastructure delivery with those for affordable housing, other non-infrastructure related planning obligations and sustainability standards.

The Council will secure the infrastructure necessary to support the growth outlined in this plan, ensure sustainable development, meet the needs of development and, where necessary, mitigate the impacts of development by:

- a) Securing appropriate on-site enabling and development works;
- b) Charging the Community Infrastructure Levy on developments as required by any charging schedules in operation for the area within which the development is located;
- c) Securing Section 106 Agreements to provide affordable housing and make provision to mitigate the impacts of the development where necessary, or appropriate, having regard to any relevant supplementary planning documents or guidance;
- d) Securing off-site highway works where necessary;
- e) Working with relevant service providers to identify and secure infrastructure funding or financing mechanisms.





Chapter 11

A Sustainable Travel Town



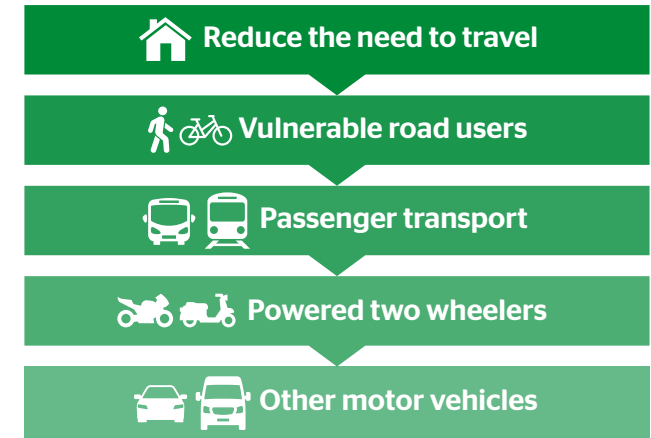
A Sustainable Transport Town

- 11.1 The approach to managing transport in Watford is a key challenge, given its significant impact on major factors, such as economic productivity, air quality, public health and carbon emissions. With respect to the Climate Emergency, transport remains the largest emitting sector of greenhouse gases in the UK⁸, whilst the town also has the highest levels of deaths attributed to air pollution in Hertfordshire. Working collaboratively with transport providers including Hertfordshire County Council as the Local Highway Authority, Highways England, and both bus and rail operators, the importance of a strategic direction to the development of transport options for Watford is reflected in the development of a Sustainable Transport Strategy, which should be considered alongside the Local Plan. Without significant change, the transport network will increasingly be a limiting factor on the borough's aspirations for economic productivity, environmental sustainability, community vitality and public health, amongst others.
- 11.2 Watford's compact urban form has significant potential to encourage people to walk and cycle more to local destinations, services and facilities, reflected by the fact that of trips made by Watford residents, 19% are less than one mile, with a further 36% being between one and three miles. This highlights the

opportunity for more active travel if people have access to routes that get them to where they want to be in a way that is safe, efficient and enjoyable.

- 11.3 The combination of the Climate Emergency, the dominance of the car in the current modal share, and the potential for active travel based upon the volume of short-distance trips, means that new developments will need to be designed to encourage a modal shift in the town that reduces local people's dependency on cars in favour of increased walking, cycling and public transport use. This will contribute towards reducing congestion, addressing climate change and air quality issues, as well as bringing health and economic benefits.
- 11.4 Hertfordshire County Council has adopted the Hertfordshire Local Transport Plan (2018). The South West Herts Growth and Transport Plan (2019) is the key supporting document to the Local Transport Plan, with an emphasis on improving health and generating modal shift away from car use. The Local Plan supports the Local Transport Plan and will facilitate delivery where possible. Additional county-wide transport strategies, to which development should align, include the Intalink Bus Strategy (2019), draft Rail Strategy (2020), and forthcoming Highways Network Management Strategy. To encourage more sustainable forms of travel, applicants should design schemes to reflect the Transport User Hierarchy priorities in the sequential order shown in Figure 11.1.

Figure 11.1: Transport User Hierarchy



- 11.5 Measures that encourage the uptake of sustainable modes, including new, high quality cycle networks, walking infrastructure and bus prioritisation will be supported. In addition, measures that reduce through traffic flows and speeds, including low traffic neighbourhoods and 20mph speed limits, will be encouraged. The enhancement of public transport provision will be prioritised through the safeguarding of land required for major interventions, such as new interchange spaces, mass rapid transit and upgrades to existing hubs, as well as supporting the County Council in delivering the public transport actions set out in its transport strategies.



⁸ 2018 UK Greenhouse Gas Emissions, Final Figures, ONS, https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/862887/2018_Final_greenhouse_gas_emissions_statistical_release.pdf

11.6 Watford Borough Council aims for Watford to become a Sustainable Travel Town (Figure 11.2), as advocated by the Local Transport Plan, where the perception to all highway users is that pedestrians, cyclists and public transport users will have a greater priority than they do at present. It will be expected that major new development will be located in areas of high sustainability where there is existing, or the potential for, high public transport accessibility, and that key services will be accessible by walking or cycling, with developments contributing to significant improvements to sustainable transport routes. Where this is the case it is expected that the provision of car parking will be highly limited, effectively removing in-built car dependence.

11.7 Land use decisions made through the Local Plan development process can shape and facilitate change in transport provision and travel choices. However, to successfully achieve a meaningful and sustained shift in travel behaviour, attractive alternatives to the private car are required. This is the start of a long-term process of change that will continue beyond the Local Plan end date of 2036, and will work within the framework of the South West Herts Joint Strategic Plan and the multi-modal study that goes up to 2050.

Figure 11.2: Elements of a sustainable travel town





Strategic Policy ST11.1: Sustainable Travel Town



New development will be supported in principle where it contributes towards sustainable and active travel behaviour, respecting the Transport User Hierarchy (Figure 11.1) set out in the County Council's Local Transport Plan and Watford's ambition to be a sustainable travel town. It should create an urban environment where people choose to walk and cycle, whilst reducing the impact of cars on the transport network, and promoting the use of public transport. Proposals will need to demonstrate how they contribute positively towards the Council's Climate Emergency declaration and are expected to bring public health, air quality and economic productivity benefits.

Development proposals should align with the principles set out below that aim to achieve better integration of land use planning and transport planning and develop a Sustainable Travel Town with a more active population. They should support the objectives of Hertfordshire County Council's Local Transport Plan, and supporting strategies, plus contribute to the Growth and Transport Plan packages in the Local Transport Plan and subsequent updates, as well as aligning with Watford's forthcoming Sustainable Transport Strategy and Local Cycling and Walking Implementation Plan.

To promote active travel the following initiatives should be embedded in development plans:

- a) Developing Watford as a Walking and Cycle Infrastructure Improvement Town, supporting the growth of shared mobility offerings that include bike share schemes;
- b) Creating neighbourhoods that encourage people to walk or cycle, through the provision or contribution to high quality walking and cycle routes that enhance connectivity and reduce severance; and

c) Measures that reduce traffic speed and flow.

Developments will be supported where they improve public transport connectivity through:

- d) Contributing to the development of comprehensive priority measures for buses with supporting high quality, accessible bus stops and service improvements where required, to enhance existing services and demand responsive transport throughout the town;
- e) Supporting the development of mass rapid transit in Watford;
- f) Preserving and improving Watford Junction as a strategic transport hub for both rail and bus users, with excellent access routes, interchanges and other facilities enabling sustainable 'first and last mile' travel; and
- g) Supporting a Sustainable Transport Hub within the town centre that serves as a focal point for multiple modes.

To reduce car dependency and the impact of private motor vehicles developments should:

- h) Contribute to traffic-demand management measures introduced that promote mode shift away from private cars;
- i) Provide provision for car clubs and electric vehicles, as set out in Policy ST11.5 'Car Parking, Car Clubs and Electric Vehicles'; and
- j) Produce Travel Assessments and Travel Plans where required by, and in line with, Hertfordshire County Council's relevant guidance.

Protecting and enhancing future public transport routes and Watford Junction station area as a transport hub

- 11.8 Watford benefits from being home to a number of key transport interchanges and routes, and is an established transport hub for the South West Hertfordshire area. This transport infrastructure should be retained and enhanced where necessary to meet the needs of those who live, work and visit. There is an expectation that an uplift in densities will also aid the provision and maintenance of public transport on a borough-wide basis.
- 11.9 A variety of measures will need to be pursued and supported, including those identified in the South West Herts Growth and Transport Plan. The Council will support all of these where it can, including safeguarding routes for future active or public transport provision. The disused former Croxley Rail Line provides a potential future route for mass rapid transit, as well as an opportunity for a walking and cycling link. As such, the route and access to it should be safeguarded to maintain the possibility of its use by these modes; details of the land to be preserved are set out within the Watford Mass Rapid Transit Safeguarding Technical Report.
- 11.10 The Ebury Way cycle path provides a direct, traffic-free cycle and walking route between Watford and Rickmansworth, providing a valuable commuting and leisure route. It should therefore be preserved, including access to it, with opportunities sought to enhance its quality, particularly in making it an all-weather route.
- 11.11 The Abbey Line is an important public transport link between Watford and St Albans, enhancing regional connectivity. The status of this route, as being used for public transport, should be safeguarded.
- 11.12 Plans for an enhanced walking and cycling network are set out within the Local Cycle and Walking Infrastructure Plan. This network will be critical to Watford being a town where active travel is the natural first choice for short journeys. Thus, development should not prevent the ability of these networks to be delivered.
- 11.13 Hertfordshire County Council is developing plans for a new, mass rapid transit system to significantly increase connectivity across the county. This will bring significant benefits to Watford, and it is expected therefore that proposed routes for this system will not be prevented by new development.
- 11.14 Watford Junction is the busiest railway station in Hertfordshire. The adjacent bus station, along with taxi rank provision, cycle and walking links and car parking mean that it serves as a multi-modal transport hub for both the town and the wider region. Growth around the station is unlikely to be possible without alterations to the built environment to unlock sites and improve accessibility to sustainable travel. The ability to deliver key transport infrastructure must therefore be preserved. This should include the provision of two new pedestrian / cycle bridges to overcome severance caused by the rail lines. One of which should cross both the West Coast Main Line and Abbey Line, preferably as part of, or within the vicinity of, Watford Junction Station, and the second being between Penn Road and Colonial Way. Links to these should accommodate both pedestrians and cyclists, and be accessible to non-station users 24 hours a day, to maximise the permeability of the area.
- 11.15 A key requirement in developing Watford Junction as a transport hub is ensuring the existing bus station is well integrated with Watford Junction Station, as well as making travelling by bus as attractive as possible. Opportunities for improved infrastructure and facilities for passengers and bus operator staff should be preserved, and the bus and rail station should not be separated. A further element to the re-development of the area is a new multi-mobility hub, containing a multi-storey car park as well as facilities for a range of other modes, to be located immediately east of the station, space for which should be preserved. Improvements to the road network through an extension of Imperial Way, to provide a connection with the new proposed mobility hub and the rerouting of vehicle access to the concrete batching plant via Imperial Way, should also be facilitated.



Policy ST11.2: Protecting and Enhancing Future Public Transport Routes and Watford Junction Station Area as a Transport Hub



To prevent development that would compromise future mass transit, bus prioritisation, walking, and cycling infrastructure, set out in either the South West Hertfordshire Growth and Transport Plan, the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan or Watford's Sustainable Transport Strategy, the following routes will be protected from development whose designs would compromise their ability to prioritise public transport and active travel routes:

- a) The disused, former Croxley Rail Line, including access points, as set out in the Watford MRT Safeguarding Technical Report;
- b) The current Ebury Way cycle path and access to it;
- c) The Abbey Line;
- d) Current and planned cycle routes identified in the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan;
- e) Planned mass rapid transit routes identified by Hertfordshire County Council.

All routes are represented in Figure 11.3.

The role of Watford Junction as a multi-modal hub should be preserved, meaning that development must not hinder the provision of the following on-site and cross-boundary infrastructure;

- f) New pedestrian / cycle bridges over the West Coast Main Line and Abbey Line and connecting Penn Road with Colonial Way, plus access to these;
- g) Bus and rail access that also provides for cycles, electric vehicles, drop-off movements, taxis, coaches and future mass rapid transit access;
- h) Extension of Imperial Way to provide a connection to the station and the rerouting of vehicle access to the concrete batching plant via Imperial Way;
- i) Upgrading of the bus station and bus priority improvements to roads in the vicinity of the station.



Providing sustainable transport infrastructure for major development

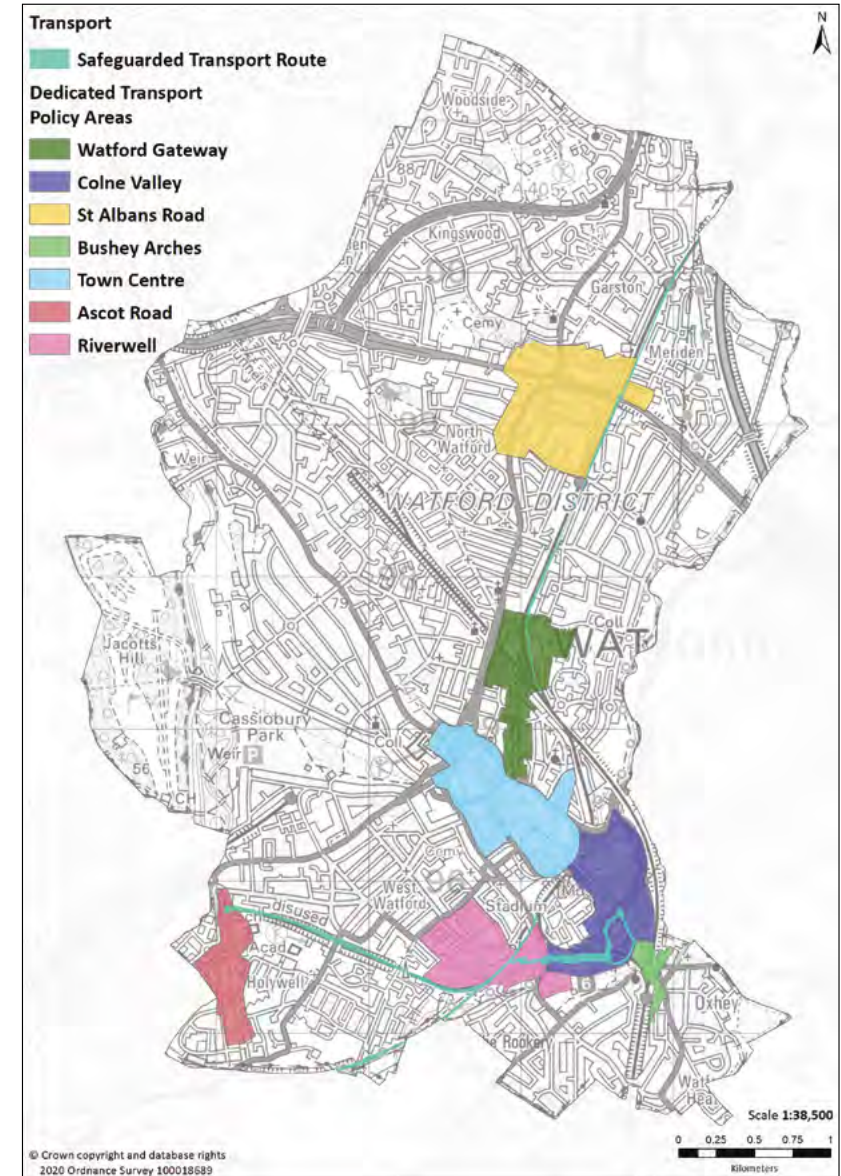
11.16 A number of areas within the town are anticipated to experience significant levels of development within the Local Plan timescales or are located around major transport infrastructure. These areas are shown in Figure 11.3. Without appropriate mitigations, new development will likely affect the functioning of the local transport network. A key mitigation will be the reduced provision of car parking (Policy ST11.5, 'Car Parking, Car Clubs and Electric Vehicles') that, in turn, will require the provision of alternative transport options. The sustainable transport requirements for these areas are set out within this policy. In particular, attention should be paid to providing internal permeability to walking and cycling, as well as complete, high quality routes to key destinations, overcoming severance where encountered.

Colne Valley

11.17 Modelling forecasts that, without mitigation, potential development will have an impact on all major links into Watford, with particularly high impacts on Lower High Street, Beechen Grove Gyratory, and Waterfields Way. Therefore, where development sits within the Core Development Area it is expected that sites will be car-lite, with car-free being encouraged for those in closest proximity to Watford High Street Station.

11.18 Given its central location, and proximity to existing public transport networks, there is significant potential for the area to be supported by sustainable transport. Development should support the creation of a sustainable, multi-modal transport hub at the High Street / Water Lane junction. The location of the site between the town centre, Bushey Arches, Watford General Hospital, and Watford Riverwell means that development will be supported where permeability for people walking and cycling is enhanced from current levels through the provision of direct, high quality routes and an internal road network that ensures traffic volumes and speeds are low. Provision should also be made for active travel links to the termination of the former Croxley Green Line on Wiggshall Road.

Figure 11.3: Areas for transport improvements in Watford, and routes to be safeguarded



11.19 Lower High Street should be seen as a corridor primarily for sustainable transport, preserving the current high frequency bus service, as well as accommodating mass rapid transit, plus being a key walking and cycling route for the site. To enhance bus services, introducing bus priority measures on the ring road should also be supported. Ensuring access to the site for people walking and cycling should also be considered as part of development in the area, including upgrading the public realm and reducing severance at the Lower High Street / Exchange Road junction, plus providing high quality cycle routes on Lower High Street and Wiggshall Road. As a noted accident hotspot, contribution should also be made to a revised junction layout at the intersection of Waterfields Way and Lower High Street.

Bushey Arches

11.20 Whilst the scale of expected development is relatively limited, Bushey Arches is a known congestion hotspot, and an Air Quality Management Area has previously been declared for Pinner Road and Chalk Hill, so the traffic impacts of any development will need to be carefully considered. Without additional intervention, modelling suggests increasing stress on Lower High Street, south of Waterfields Way, and the Buses Arches Gyratory, as well as a number of further links, including Pinner Road being over capacity. It is therefore expected that development around Bushey Arches will support a package of sustainable transport interventions that

is coherent with those to the north, around Lower High Street. Developments should make sure that best use is made of existing public transport in the area, in particular by contributing to high quality walking and cycling links to Bushey Station and upgrading those around the Bushey Arches Gyratory. Bus priority measures around the gyratory and connecting to a Lower High Street sustainable transport corridor should also be supported.

Watford Riverwell

11.21 Development beyond that already granted permission is not anticipated to be significant. However, new trips from development in the Riverwell area are likely to increase congestion and delays on the town centre road network and links such as the A4178, Vicarage Road and Harwood Road in the immediate vicinity. It is therefore expected that new development must contribute to sustainable transport infrastructure that makes the most of the area being within walking distance of the town centre and local transport hubs. Contributions could be expected to bus prioritisation measures on Vicarage Road, whilst permeability for cycling and walking should be substantially improved. In particular, active travel routes should link Watford General Hospital, Stripling Way, Thomas Sawyer Way and Ebury Way through the area, and additional infrastructure should be provided on routes around the site, such as Vicarage Road and Wiggshall Road.

Ascot Road

11.22 Whilst the highway network of the Ascot Road Area currently operates without congestion at most times, several locations are expected to see large increases in traffic levels during the Local Plan period, particularly around the Ascot Road / Hatters Lane / Blackmoor Lane / Greenhill Crescent Roundabout.





11.23 To ensure bus services become a primary travel option for residents and employees in this area, development should support Ascot Road becoming a sustainable transport corridor, with significantly improved cycle infrastructure and bus priority measures. Existing pedestrian and cycle links between Croxley View and Greenhill Crescent improve local connectivity, and the Council will support new development that ensures this access is protected and enhanced, to maximise the permeability of the area. The road network within the area features few high quality cycle lanes. New developments will therefore be required to provide significantly upgraded cycle lanes on key routes to sites, and site layouts should integrate connections to these routes where possible, to deliver a cohesive cycling environment. The Council will support proposals to improve cycle links in the Holywell area including resurfacing the Ebury Way (and new connections to it) to maximise use, alongside enhanced east-west cycle facilities along Harwoods Road / Chester Road / Queens Avenue to Whippendale Road and along Vicarage Road. New development in the Ascot Road Area should preserve the opportunity for providing mass rapid transit and walking and cycling on the disused Croxley Railway line, including safeguarding land for a potential terminus.

St Albans Road

11.24 Several congestion hotspots exist within this area, with St Albans Road, the A41 and the Dome Roundabout particularly under stress. It should also be noted that an Air Quality Management Area was required on St Albans

Road (revoked in 2019) and journey times for bus travel are long. These issues will be exacerbated if new development does not support sustainable transport.

11.25 St Albans Road is a key strategic route serving the Dome Roundabout area for both car and public transport users, due to its connections with the town centre to the south and strategic roads to the M1. A shift to non-car-based modes of travel should be targeted for this corridor via improved highway infrastructure for bus priority. The corridor also has the potential to become a key cycle route, providing direct links to destinations and transport interchanges. Developments will therefore be supported that contribute to significantly enhanced, continuous walking and cycling infrastructure along the corridor, including overcoming severance and bus journey time delays caused by the Dome Roundabout.

Town Centre

11.26 Development sites within Watford Town Centre have high accessibility to public transport options, as well as services, amenities and employment opportunities within convenient walking and cycling distances. Many of the arterial roads leading towards the town centre are congested at peak times currently, and high traffic levels on the central ring road affect bus journey times and reliability as well as it causing significant severance. It will therefore be expected that parking provision will be minimised at all new developments with car-free development encouraged, and contribution made to the development of enhanced public transport and active travel infrastructure in the town centre.

11.27 This would include bus priority interventions along and in the vicinity of the ring road, as well as preserving its ability to become part of a mass rapid transit route. The potential to develop a sustainable transport hub and interchange point at the High Street / Water Lane junction should also be supported. High quality and convenient cycle routes, especially those that facilitate north-south and east-west movement are required to encourage people to choose cycling as a primary mode of travel for short-to-medium-distance trips, notably along Hempstead Road, Rickmansworth Road and St Albans Road. All developments should support significantly enhanced cycle and walking infrastructure provision, through being highly permeable and contributing to complete routes that overcome the severance of the ring road, particularly at the Derby Road, Water Lane, Lower High Street, Vicarage Rd and Market Street junctions.

Watford Gateway

11.28 Being focused on a strategic, multi-modal transport hub, public transport accessibility in Watford Gateway is high and thus it is expected that developments will be car-lite, with car free encouraged. In addition to the internal requirements set out in Policy ST11.2, 'Protecting and Enhancing Future Public Transport Routes and Watford Junction Station Area as a Transport Hub', contribution should be made to high quality cycle and walking infrastructure to access the area from all directions. This should include a link north via Bradshaw Road to Balmoral Road as well as infrastructure along, and to cross, St Albans Road.



Policy ST11.3: Providing Sustainable Transport Infrastructure for Major Development



Major developments should maximise opportunities for sustainable transport, protecting and supporting current and future active and public transport routes.

Cycling and walking infrastructure should be high quality and provide complete routes to key destinations, such as the town centre, transport hubs, employment centres, educational or community facilities. In addition, for each of the following areas, as indicated in Figure 11.3, the principles set out below should be observed and the infrastructure requirements set out in Appendix C be positively supported by major developments, in addition to the safeguarding requirements set out in Policy ST11.2 'Protecting and Enhancing Future Public Transport Routes and Watford Junction Station Area as a Transport Hub'.

Colne Valley Strategic Development Area

Developments should expect that their transport needs here are met primarily by sustainable transport objectives, and as such should be car-lite. Lower High Street should serve primarily as a sustainable travel corridor, with high quality direct pedestrian access from sites. The provision of an internal travel network that is highly permeable to those who wish to walk or cycle, with direct, high quality links and low-traffic streets between the town centre, Oxhey, Vicarage

Road, Watford General Hospital and Riverwell should be ensured. Bus prioritisation measures should be provided on key access links.

Bushey Arches

Developments should support the ambitions for sustainable transport options around Lower High Street, and also make best use of existing public transport infrastructure, by supporting the delivery of new and significantly improved high quality walking and cycle links to Bushey Station and Arches; overcoming the severance caused by the current highway layout.

St Albans Road

Developments will be expected to support significant improvements to walking and cycling infrastructure along St Albans Road and at the Dome Roundabout, alongside implementation of bus priority measures, mitigating potential junction delays for buses on main thoroughfares and junctions.

Watford Riverwell

Permeability for active travel should be substantially improved, linking to bus stops, Watford General Hospital, Vicarage Road, Stripling Way, Thomas Sawyer Way and Ebury Way. Developments should contribute to bus priority or cycle infrastructure on Vicarage Road and Wiggenhall Road.

Ascot Road

Development should contribute positively towards Ascot Road becoming a sustainable transport corridor through new and significantly enhanced bus priority measures and pedestrian / cycle infrastructure. Improvement to active travel permeability and routes should include significant enhancement to links between Croxley View and Greenhill Crescent, to Tolpits Lane, to the Ebury Way and further east-west routes to the town centre.

Town Centre Strategic Development Area

Development should at a minimum be car-lite, and car-free should also be considered. Bus priority interventions along, and in the vicinity of, the ring road should be supported. Development should support the delivery of high quality cycle and walking routes across and to the Town Centre, linking to key destinations. Development should contribute to reducing the severance caused by the ring road.

Watford Gateway Strategic Development Area

All major developments will be expected to significantly enhance pedestrian and cycle routes through the Watford Gateway area by providing high quality internal infrastructure and links to the Town Centre, North Watford and towards Bushey. The development of the station as a multi-modal hub should also be supported, including the access requirements for this across all modes.

A walking and cycling infrastructure improvement town

11.29 Consideration of how best to facilitate walking and cycling trips must be integral to all design. A key principle of the Local Transport Plan is 'modal shift and encouraging active travel', noting that 'the potential public health benefits of increased levels of active travel indicate this should be a high priority, and a key feature of the future transport system we are planning for'. This contributes towards the wider objective within the Local Transport Plan promoting Watford as a Walking and Cycling Infrastructure Improvement Town.

Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Implementation Plan

11.30 The forthcoming Watford and Three Rivers Local Cycling and Walking Implementation Plan will identify routes and improvements that comprise, but are not limited to, the provision of pedestrian crossings, segregated cycle routes, and enhanced junctions, to facilitate a more comprehensive and safe cycling and walking network that connects to local destinations and encourages less reliance on private vehicle travel.

11.31 Developments should ensure that their design encourages walking and cycling and respects the Local Transport Plan Transport

User Hierarchy that prioritises active travel, through being permeable to people both walking and cycling, with high quality footpaths, and design that reduces vehicle dominance and encourages cycling by all. This should be supported by signage that aligns with Watford's existing wayfinding approach.

Cycle parking

11.32 Consideration of the needs for cycling parking play a key part in ensuring that design encourages cycling. The absence of high quality cycle parking, with its resulting inconvenience and fear of theft, is a key barrier to people choosing to cycle. Without an easily accessible and secure place for people to store their cycle, both at home and at their destination, they are unlikely to choose to cycle their journey.

11.33 In designing cycling parking, attention should be paid to the difference in requirements for long-stay parking, required where people will leave their cycle for an extended period, for example, at home, work, place of education or a station, and thus place a premium on security, compared to short-stay parking, for example, outside a retail location, where convenience is the key factor. Cycle parking standards are set out in Appendix D and parking should be laid out in accordance to the Watford Cycle Parking Supplementary Planning Document.

Cycle parking in residential developments

11.34 The manner in which residential cycle parking is provided will depend on characteristics of the development:

- a) In large apartment complexes, single, large, communal storage does not provide sufficient security. Multiple cycle storage areas or individual storage compartments located outside the apartment, within the blueprint of the building, that are capable of taking cycles, prams and other large items, should be provided;
- b) For smaller developments or converted buildings, a secure, accessible communal area should be provided that includes space for non-standard cycles, such as cargo bikes, adapted cycles or tandems;
- c) For houses, cycle storage should be at the rear, the side or within the building, as storage at the front can be unsightly, and tends to advertise to thieves that cycles are there. Where adequate cycle parking cannot be provided within residential developments, alternative cycle parking arrangements for residents should be provided, such as the provision of a provision of a cycle hangar on the highway in a location agreed with the Council.





Cycle parking in non-residential developments

- 11.35 Secure cycle storage for staff and visitors should be provided as part of new non-residential developments. These should be part of a wider approach to encourage cycling that includes the provision of changing facilities and showers, encouraging a long-term modal shift away from single-occupancy vehicle use.
- 11.36 To support commuting to employment and education destinations, security is particularly important. Provision for employees or students should have employee only access storage areas that are covered and include space for non-standard cycles, along with showering and changing facilities within the building. At primary and nursery schools, an appropriate proportion of long-stay cycle parking for students may be met through scooter parking.

Location of cycle parking

- 11.37 All major non-residential developments and residential developments should provide short-stay cycle parking for visitors who will not be able to access parking provided for employees or residents. This should be convenient and readily accessible, preferably in the form of Sheffield Stands within 15m of the main entrance where possible, so that the ease of cycling is not undermined by a lengthy search for suitable parking.

For primary schools and nurseries, short-stay cycle parking should be located and designed to accommodate at least two parental cargo bikes or cycles with trailers.

Bicycle hire and share schemes

- 11.38 Not all residents or visitors to Watford will own or have access to a cycle within the town. The town's bike-share scheme provides access to bikes for those without access to a personal cycle. These bikes are stored at bays across the town and can easily be hired for use via a mobile phone app. Users collect and deposit the bikes at a bay at the start and completion of their trip, thus it is important that sufficient bays are available near to all potential destinations to support the scheme. The provision of bike share bays where it would support the wider bike share network, in agreement with the Local Authority, will be encouraged and could replace some on-site visitor parking provision.
- 11.39 In the largest of developments it is encouraged that this is in the form of a bike share parklet that combines standard cycle parking with bike share bays. The requirements for bike share bays is specified in the cycle parking standards in Appendix D. To preserve the ability to enhance the bike share infrastructure, any land set aside to support the installation of a bike share bay will be safeguarded should installation not take place immediately.



Policy ST11.4: A Walking and Cycling Infrastructure Improvement Town



New development will be supported where it will contribute towards achieving a modal shift and make walking and cycling a convenient and efficient way to access local destinations. To be integrated into the adjacent and strategic walking and cycling network, proposals should demonstrate how they have prioritised walking and cycling through the provision of on-site infrastructure including cycle parking facilities, wayfinding measures and good design for safety and security. Major developments should contribute towards the delivery of significantly improved walking and cycling routes to key destinations, prior to first occupancy, where viable.



Walking

Developments should be permeable and safe to walk through, including high quality footways and pedestrian crossings, adequate lighting and signposting. They should facilitate or deliver the links required to connect to existing and proposed walking routes as well as local amenities and public transport. Developments adjacent to the borough's walking routes, as identified in the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan, will be expected to accommodate them through allocating space and supporting off-site contributions.



Cycling

Developments will encourage people to cycle by providing an urban environment that is accessible and safe for all cycle trips. This requires high quality cycle routes that are segregated, unless both traffic flows and speeds are low. These routes should connect to local amenities, transport interchanges and the existing and proposed cycle network, as set out in the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan. Developments adjacent to existing and new cycle routes will be expected to facilitate and deliver these links through allocating space and contributing to infrastructure improvements.



Cycle parking

All development proposals will be required to provide on-site cycle parking facilities in line with the cycle parking standards detailed in Appendix D. Secure cycle parking facilities should be designed at the outset of the scheme. Should the standards for visitor cycle parking mean a requirement in excess of ten spaces, part of this provision can be replaced with a contribution to publicly accessible bike share bays in a suitable location nearby, further detail on this is provided in Appendix D.



Car parking, car clubs and electric vehicles

- 11.40 Controlling car parking and providing alternatives to personal vehicle ownership have been found to be some of the most effective methods for managing demand and thus addressing issues such as the perception of a car-dominated environment, congestion, unreliable journey times, diminished air quality and higher carbon emissions amongst others. Advancing transport technology has the potential to drastically change how travel is managed and undertaken and opportunities are to be taken through new development to help future-proof the borough to support electric vehicle charging and shared mobility solutions, such as car clubs.
- 11.41 There is limited space available to support new development, and new schemes will be expected to make the most efficient use of the land available for redevelopment. Continuing to provide excessive car-related infrastructure, particularly overgenerous parking, will exacerbate existing issues associated with the transport network and the environment. These requirements will also support Watford becoming a Sustainable Travel Town (Policy ST11.1 'Sustainable Travel Town') by encouraging mode shift away from private car trips and thus reducing the impact of transport on the environment.

Car parking standards

- 11.42 New development in all areas of the borough is to provide car parking that is reflective of the needs of its location and encourages greater proportions of people to use alternative transport modes to the private vehicle in the long-term.
- 11.43 Car parking standards (Appendix E) have been set in consideration to the Core Strategic Development Area, the availability of public transport modes and the type of development, in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework. The car parking standards provided are maximums, to support Local Plan objectives by helping reduce overall car use and pressure on highway networks and infrastructure. Provision should take into consideration alternative forms of mobility, such as car club vehicles and seek to minimise the risk of off-site parking impacts.
- 11.44 Developments that are likely to result in material impacts to highway safety as a result of insufficient parking will be refused. Development in the Core Development Area will be severely restricted (i.e. 'car-lite'), and this will be enforced via Section 106 agreements. This is to minimise congestion in this area by discouraging vehicles where there are excellent public transport options available.

Allocated and unallocated parking spaces

- 11.45 For all new residential developments, the standards set out a requirement for a proportion of parking spaces to be unallocated to any particular user. This is intended to accommodate vehicles that visit the site irregularly (such as visitors) who may otherwise struggle to find a parking space on site, and car club vehicles. Where parking spaces are allocated, they should be leased rather than sold. This will ensure that parking areas are used efficiently and reduces the risk of spaces being left vacant for any period of time. This policy requirement also supports development land being adaptable for the needs of subsequent users.



Car parking and controlled parking zones

11.46 There is a recognition that for low levels of on-site car parking to work most effectively, it needs to be combined with on-street parking restrictions, one of the most effective modes of traffic demand management. This is particularly important for the areas located in the Core Development Area. Controlled Parking Zones are well established in the borough and will be kept under review as part of the Council's approach to traffic management. New development should not increase parking demand in Controlled Parking Zones and users will therefore be exempt, or subject to restriction, from obtaining permits to existing Controlled Parking Zones.

Parking for disabled persons

11.47 Though parking may be restricted across the borough, the need to provide parking for people with reduced mobility remains an important requirement as part of Watford's ambitions to become a more accessible, inclusive borough. Disabled persons' parking should form a proportion of the overall parking provision, rather than being treated as additional. Demand for accessible parking spaces may change over time, and so developers are required to future-proof residential car parks by identifying additional parking spaces that could be converted to disabled persons' parking spaces if needed.

11.48 Disabled persons' parking spaces should not be allocated to specific dwellings, unless they are provided within the curtilage of the dwelling, and all disabled persons' parking spaces should follow relevant design guidance. Recommended parking provisions for non-residential land uses are also provided. Where it is not possible to provide disabled persons' parking at developments due to site constraints or highway safety concerns, the applicant will be required to demonstrate where a disabled person can park to access the development conveniently.

Parking for powered two wheel vehicles

11.49 Powered two wheeled vehicles, such as motorcycles, scooters and mopeds, contribute to reducing congestion and emissions and also provide more efficient use of space than car parking. Providing space to park powered two wheeled vehicles will increase the attractiveness of powered two wheeled vehicles as an alternative to car ownership, and reduce instances of illegal parking which often obstructs footways. Guidance on designing for powered two wheeled vehicles is available from the Institute of Highway Engineers and motorcycle industry groups.

Electric vehicles

11.50 Electric vehicles, that is any road vehicle with a battery that is intended to be charged from mains supply, will be encouraged for use where people are unable to use public transport, walk, or cycle to destinations. Whilst not reducing congestion, a move towards electric vehicles will reduce air pollution in the borough and contribute to local and national carbon reduction targets.

11.51 The number of electric vehicles is expected to increase further with the ban on the sale of petrol and diesel vehicles from 2030, and as electric vehicle technology becomes cheaper. It is therefore necessary to ensure that new developments are future-proofed to facilitate this progression. Sufficient electrical capacity in new developments for current and future demand for charging points will therefore be required.



11.52 The parking standards require consideration for the provision for electric vehicles, including one of two types of charging infrastructure:

- a) 'Active provision' requires fully wired and connected charging points at parking spaces;
- b) 'Passive provision' requires the necessary underlying infrastructure (e.g. capacity in the connection to the local electricity distribution network and electricity distribution board, and cabling to parking spaces) to enable simple installation and activation of a charge point at a future date.

11.53 As electric vehicles become more commonplace around Watford, locations for new electric vehicle charging infrastructure will naturally be focused on trip origins and destinations, where longer charges can take place (such as homes and workplaces). Where charging points are provided at commercial developments, the infrastructure must be able to support a rapid charging service (i.e. a 43kW connection, taking less than one hour for a full charge).

Car clubs

11.54 Car clubs are a form of shared mobility that allows individuals and businesses to have access to a locally parked vehicle for a short-term rental period. Various models are possible including 'back-to-base' and more flexible one-way trip options, and dedicated parking bays are sometimes provided. Coinciding with changing population demographics, there is a recognition that the desire to own a car is reducing, and access to a vehicle for occasional use is becoming increasingly favourable. To support this change, people need to have a choice of easy and convenient transport options on a daily basis to best meet their circumstances. Having car club vehicles located at key journey origins and destinations will mean people can rely on this method of travel being possible when needed, and new developments must therefore support the growth of car clubs in the borough.

11.55 For residential schemes above ten units, developers are required to identify, and

safeguard, one unallocated parking space for every 50 units which would become a car club space if needed. Car-free residential developments will be expected to provide such spaces alongside disabled spaces, or contribute to the equivalent volume of on-street car club spaces within short walking distance, if required by the Council. This will help to facilitate and support effective travel planning measures being taken throughout the lifespan of the development.

11.56 Car club spaces should be situated where they are easily accessed and are visible to occupiers of the development and the surrounding neighbourhood. Where parking is inaccessible to the public, the Council may secure contributions to fund on-street car club spaces in the local area or require alterations to parking layouts to allow for accessible parking. Should a car club network become active in the borough, the Council will expect contributions to secure car clubs at new developments and incentivise membership as deemed necessary.





Policy ST11.5: Electric Vehicles, Car Parking and Car Clubs



Electric vehicle charging

For all schemes, 20% of parking spaces should have active charging infrastructure for electric vehicles provided, all other spaces should have passive provision. Proposals to increase the availability of publicly accessible electric vehicle charging infrastructure within the borough will also be supported and encouraged.



Car parking

Development proposals should only provide car parking where it complies with the car parking standards set out in Appendix E. All new development proposals within the Core Development Area should be car-lite. Where these standards and requirements are met, the parking element of the proposal will be supported.

For residential schemes of ten units or more, 20% of all parking spaces should be unallocated.



Disabled parking

For residential schemes of ten units or more, disabled persons parking should be provided for at least 5% of units, with a minimum of one space; potential disabled persons' parking spaces for a further 5% of units should be identified on a plan to facilitate conversion as required; wheelchair accessible or adaptable accommodation should provide one unallocated disabled persons' parking space per unit.

For non-residential schemes, provision for disabled persons' parking

will be determined on a case-by-case basis through pre-application discussions and an accurate estimate of potential demand provided in the Transport Statement/Assessment.

All disabled parking spaces should be located within 50m of the entrance to the building that it serves, via level access.



Car club parking

The Council will support the development of car club networks within the borough, particularly those using low-emission vehicles.

For residential schemes of ten units or more, developers should identify one parking space per 50 units that would be designated for car club use only, if supported by a car-club operator (minimum of one space). Where parking is inaccessible to the public, the Council may secure contributions to fund on-street car club spaces. If no car-club spaces are proposed, this should be supported by evidence that there is a no demand from car-club operators for a space within the development. Developers may also be required to provide a financial contribution towards car club memberships for new residents.



Powered two wheeler parking

For all schemes where parking is provided, one powered two wheeler parking space should be provided per 30 car parking spaces (minimum of two per site). All other schemes should provide sufficient powered two wheeler parking for the potential demand for their sites, as assessed in the Transport Statement / Assessment.



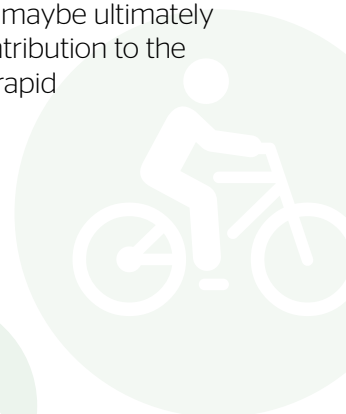
Managing the transport impacts of development

Transport Statements and Transport Assessments

- 11.57 Transport Statements and Transport Assessments seek to assess and reduce the transport impact of a development, and allow the Council to evaluate the scheme's compliance with relevant policies and objectives. They identify the need for mitigation and describe interventions to reduce traffic generation, highway safety risk and environmental impacts, and maximise accessibility.
- 11.58 A Travel Plan is a long-term management strategy for the site that seeks to deliver sustainable transport objectives. This is regularly reviewed and monitored. It should identify a package of measures for the development to improve accessibility and encourage the use of sustainable modes of travel.
- 11.59 All Transport Assessments, Statements and Travel Plans should follow the Transport User Hierarchy, as outlined in the Hertfordshire Local Transport Plan.
- 11.60 Planning applications for developments that will generate significant impact on

the transport network must be supported by a Transport Assessment. A Transport Statement may be sufficient instead of a full Transport Assessment, where the development will have relatively low transport implications. Applicants should determine whether a Transport Assessment or Transport Statement is required, based on the thresholds provided in Roads In Hertfordshire: A Design Guide⁹.

- 11.61 Where negative impacts are identified within the Transport Assessment or Statement on the safety or operation of the transport network, mitigation measures should be developed to eliminate or significantly reduce these. Appropriate levels of financial contribution for mitigation measures will be sought from developers towards any interventions required to offset transport impacts via Section 106 planning obligations or planning conditions. Should Hertfordshire County Council's plans for a mass rapid transit system progress, it could be expected that the total value of contributions is agreed via the Transport Assessment process based upon interventions directly related to the site, but that some or all of this maybe ultimately delivered as a financial contribution to the development of the mass rapid transit system.



⁹ <https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/highways-roads-and-pavements/business-and-developer-information/development-management/highways-development-management.aspx>

Travel Plans

11.62 A Travel Plan is required in all cases where a Transport Assessment is needed, as well as other circumstances where local factors make one necessary as determined by the Council. For smaller developments, a Travel Plan Statement, with a reduced quantity of detail, may be sufficient to accompany the planning application. Travel Plans should be produced with regard to Hertfordshire County Council's Travel Plan guidance¹⁰. Where the travel behaviour of the end user is unknown at the time of the planning application submission, applications will be expected to prepare draft Travel Plans with indicative modal shift targets for the planning application, before agreeing to update the Travel Plan with site-specific data upon occupation.

11.63 The Travel Plan should demonstrate how site users are being encouraged to travel in a sustainable manner, with a package of measures to support this. They should set targets or objectives, with accompanying monitoring, management and enforcement approaches. Monitoring of the Travel Plan's progress should take place on an annual basis for a minimum of five years following full occupation for residential developments,

or first occupation for workplace or commercial developments. Travel Plans for educational establishments should be monitored for a minimum of seven years following first occupation. A Travel Plan Review document, covering results, implementation updates and recommended revisions, should be shared with HCC within 30 days of data collection, and this will be assessed and recorded in Hertfordshire's Travel Plan monitoring system. The Council will secure a fee as part of the financial obligations of the planning permission to cover Travel Plan monitoring. Potential Travel Plan measures and objectives are provided within Hertfordshire County Council's guidance, measures that would support take up of the Council's sustainable transport schemes – bike share and on demand bus service – will be encouraged.

11.64 Alongside discussions with Watford Borough Council, applicants are encouraged to engage with the Highway Authority (Hertfordshire County Council) via the transport pre-application advice service to discuss and agree the appropriate level of assessment and the need for other supporting documents to be provided, such as Construction Management Plans and Delivery and Servicing Plans.



¹⁰ <https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/highways-roads-and-pavements/business-and-developer-information/development-management/highways-development-management.aspx>



Policy ST11.6: Managing the Transport Impacts of Development

A Transport Statement or Transport Assessment is required to support planning applications for all developments that will impact upon the transport network, in accordance with Hertfordshire County Council thresholds. They should set out:

- a) How the development has been designed in line with the Transport User Hierarchy;
- b) How the development will facilitate greater use of sustainable modes of transport;
- c) The impact of all development users on the transport network during and after construction; and
- d) Proposed mitigations for any adverse impacts identified.

A Travel Plan that encourages sustainable travel behaviour should be developed for all developments, meeting the requirements set out by Hertfordshire County Council and should be structured according to their guidance. This should have a clear set of objectives, measures to achieve these and an approach to monitoring and enforcement. Where required, a Construction Management Plan and / or a Delivery and Servicing Plan must also be provided.

Significant negative impacts on the transport network as a result of new development must be satisfactorily mitigated. Developers will be required to contribute to and deliver appropriate transport infrastructure or other mitigation measures, with financial contributions required through planning conditions. This could include an agreement with the Council during the planning process instead for a financial contribution to the proposed mass rapid transit system equivalent to part of all of that required for local mitigations.



Chapter 12

A Healthy Community

A Healthy Community

12.1 Good masterplanning and the high quality design of buildings, outdoor spaces and the relationship between them make an important contribution towards health and wellbeing. It can lift the spirits or have a negative impact on people. Internal living spaces, personal and shared, and access to open space are known to help people relax and counter the stress of modern urban life.

12.2 Considering health and wellbeing as an opportunity can help to improve the quality of a scheme for both its marketability for people occupying a building. Figure 12.1 shows factors that contribute towards health and wellbeing while the Health and Wellbeing Planning Guidance (Hertfordshire County Council, 2017) sets out seven themes that should be considered and incorporated into the planning of new developments to ensure they are promoting health and sustainability. These include; air quality, movement and access, open spaces, design, employment and education, and healthy food choices. The Coronavirus pandemic has further highlighted how important both public open space and quality internal living spaces within a home are to people.

Figure 12.1: Factors contributing towards health and wellbeing





12.3 The health of an individual and the wider community is often dependent of a variety of issues, and the way people go about their everyday living. While not limited to the following, the Local Plan can help to positively influence the following contributors to health and wellbeing in Watford:

- **An active population:** taking steps to manage increasing child obesity and the location of unhealthy food outlets and providing better access to open spaces and community facilities.
- **Community severance:** physical and mental barriers such as busy roads affect the perception of safety, and restrict individuals' mobility and social interaction. This can be improved through a more community orientated public realm that prioritises people and provides better access to services and facilities through improved infrastructure and public transport.
- **Poverty and deprivation:** historical economic, environmental and social patterns affect the quality of living but can be improved through better access to education, quality jobs, improving support for people with disabilities and providing high quality places to live.
- **Environmental quality:** poor air quality and other disturbances such as noise, light, odour and vibration are commonly associated with vehicle traffic and industrial emissions. These can be improved through higher better use of technology, prioritising non-vehicular travel such as walking and cycling and also locating new development where people will not be adversely affected by pollution. Ensuring that uses are located where they are compatible will benefit physical and mental health and reduce conflict.
- **Mental health:** high population densities have higher rates of mental health issues compared to rural areas, including almost 40% higher risk of depression (RTPI Planning for 'wellbeings' 2020). Well designed internal and external spaces within new buildings and outdoor public spaces provide an opportunity to create healthy places to live and improve the neighbourhood.
- **An ageing population:** the changing age demographic will place increasing demand for new homes and facilities. Providing adaptable and specialist homes, improving access to community facilities and providing well designed spaces that enable people to interact and continue to feel part of their community are integral to sustainable development.





Strategic Policy HC12.1: Healthy Communities



Creating a high quality environment encourages physical activity through easier movement for pedestrians and cyclists, and helps improve people’s mental health by creating spaces (urban and green) that are welcoming, pleasant and encourage activity and social interaction between people of all ages.

New development will be supported where it will contribute towards an inclusive and healthier community through delivering these objectives:

An active population

Tackling obesity in children by creating opportunities for active play in new development. Encouraging adults to become more active with a more pedestrian and cycle-friendly urban environment that is focused on quality safe spaces for people, not dominated by the car or suffering from community severance. Major developments should support the provision of accessible open space that offers appropriate opportunities for outdoor physical activity to meet local needs. This should be supplemented by new and enhanced greenspaces to support health and wellbeing. Major developments are expected to promote active design by adhering to the 10 Principles of Active Design set out by Sport England.

Healthy eating

Supporting healthy eating through the protection of community assets, such as allotments, community orchards and planting of fruit trees on open spaces. Opportunities for food growing should be maximised within new developments.

Pollution

Improving air quality, noise and light pollution by locating compatible uses in the vicinity of each other, reducing the impact of vehicles through a modal shift and slowing average vehicle speeds.

Poverty

Supporting initiatives to tackle poverty, such as back-to-work schemes, training and education and access to jobs using good public transport.

A healthy older population

Providing homes and facilities to meet the needs of an ageing population such as adaptable and specialist homes and access to health facilities.

Community facilities

It is important to ensure community facilities are of good quality and are located where they can be accessed by walking, cycling and public transport. Consideration should also be given to sensory gardens to provide a diversity of colour, patterns, smell, touch, taste and sounds to benefit physical and mental relaxation or in particular to benefit disabled members of the community.



Health Impact Assessments

12.4 A Health Impact Assessment seeks to inform and influence decision-making, ensuring that health impacts, and the distribution of those impacts, are considered as part of the planning policy process. They provide a mechanism to understand more broadly how a wider range of economic, environmental and social factors can combine to affect a development.

12.5 The Position Statement: Health Impact Assessments (Hertfordshire County Council, 2019) sets out guidance for how a Health Impact Assessment should be undertaken. It seeks to facilitate higher quality development of schemes of 100 or more residential units. This can be applied flexibly depending on the nature of a development proposal. Following a staged methodology from when a scheme is designed, through to construction and occupation, a clear brief is produced from the screening and scoping stages to determine the type of Health Impact Assessment that may be required. The two types of Health Impact Assessment are:

- Rapid Assessment for simpler proposals;
- In-depth Health Impact Assessment for more complicated or larger proposals.

12.6 Large development proposals can benefit from undertaking an objective Health Impact Assessment, which is used to inform the design of a scheme to improve its design and increase the likelihood of gaining planning approval, as they summarise many of the issues set out in policies in the Local Plan. In-depth Health Impact Assessments will be supported on large-scale development proposals, however, all major proposals are encouraged to consider undertaking a Rapid Health Impact Assessment, as a minimum, to support their planning application.



Policy HC12.2: Health Impact Assessments



Health Impacts Assessments are required for proposals that may have an adverse impact on the immediate area and affect people living in the development and close by. More specifically, Health Impacts Assessments should be provided as part of a planning application submitted for the following types of applications:

- Major residential proposals of 100 units or more;
- Major transport infrastructure improvements, including major new roads or major new junctions, existing rail networks, rail stations and transport interchange areas and the proposed Mass Transit System along the former Croxley Rail link; and
- Any other locally or nationally significant infrastructure project.

Where a Health Impact Assessment has identified an issue that may have a significant adverse impact, the applicant should set out how this has been addressed and mitigated as part of the proposal.



Cultural and community facilities

- 12.7 Facilities that provide opportunities for leisure, recreation, sport and tourism are vital to our physical and mental health, and can be a key element of the overall quality of life. Such facilities need to be close to where people live to reduce the need to travel, and be in the heart of the community, a social role often filled by uses such as public houses.
- 12.8 Built cultural or community facilities can include education and health facilities, public houses, local places of worship, community centres, public halls, leisure and sports centres, or arts buildings. Other types of buildings might also function as community facilities where they meet the social, leisure, cultural and religious needs of Watford's diverse communities. Such facilities can be listed as 'assets of community value' where they are of particular significance to the local community and this will form a key consideration in determining an application.
- 12.9 This policy provides protection for existing community facilities that play an important role in delivering a place where people want to live. Where major new development is proposed, or where facilities are lost as part of redevelopment proposals, the Council will seek the provision of new or replacement facilities where there is an identified demand. New community uses will generally be supported where the use has a clear benefit to the local community. Where possible, these are encouraged, in or near to, Local Centres, in order to reduce trips.
- 12.10 Proposals that result in the loss of a community facility must demonstrate that the facility is no longer needed and that no other community uses could make use of the site or facility. This should include evidence of consultation with the local community and community infrastructure providers, marketing and an analysis of local provision.



Policy HC12.3: Built Cultural and Community Facilities



Proposals for new, extended or improved cultural and community uses that address a demonstrated demand from the local community will be supported. Such uses should be located within sustainable, accessible locations close to the identified need and as a complementary use within, or close to, an identified Local Centre. Facilities that are proposed in isolated locations or that conflict with existing uses nearby will not be permitted.

The loss of existing community and cultural venues will only be permitted where it can be demonstrated that:

- a) The facility is no longer needed and there is no need for an alternative community or cultural use on that site; or**
- b) The community or cultural uses can be reprovided of a higher quality in an alternative location or manner that is equally accessible to the community.**

Development within the curtilage of existing community facilities should demonstrate that the continued operation of these facilities is not compromised.





Chapter 13

Site Allocations and New Development



Site allocations and new development

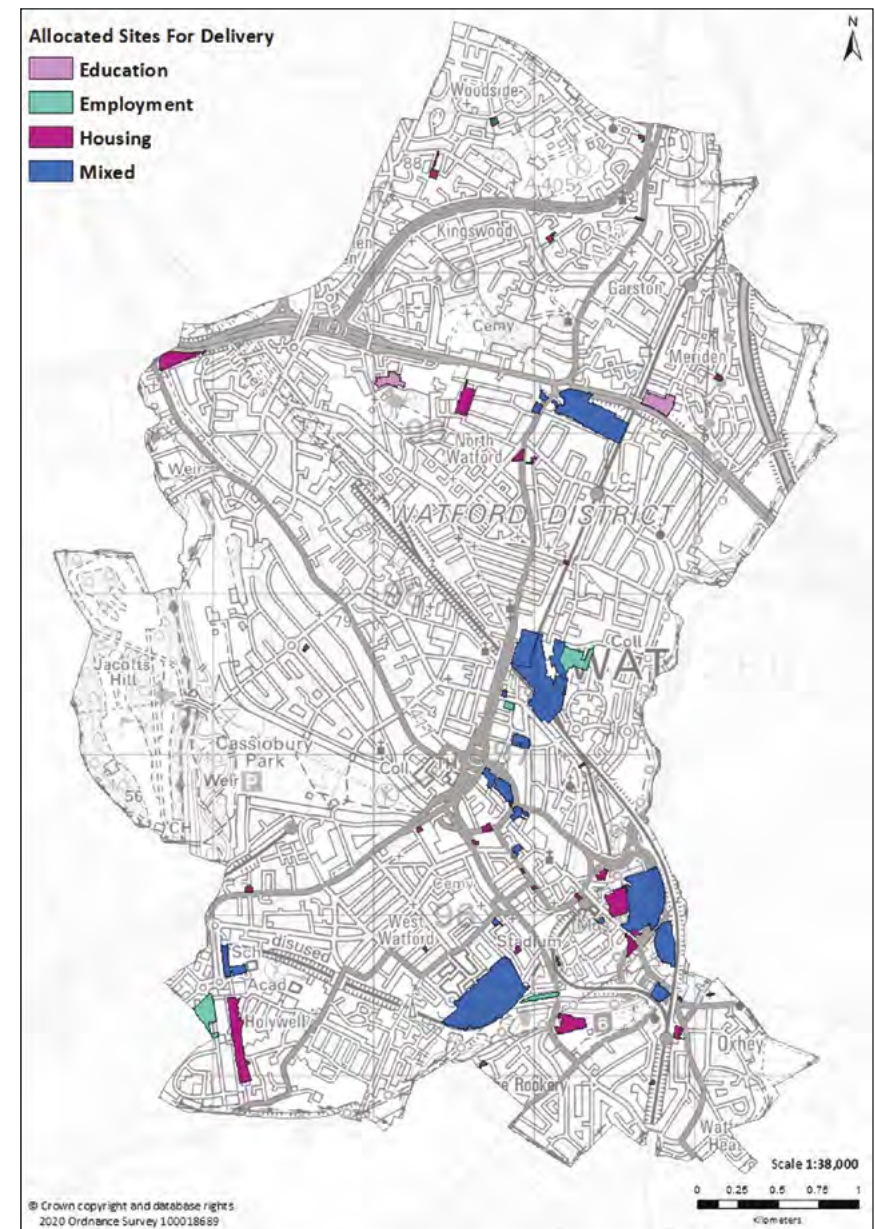
13.1 Demographic pressures, a national housing shortage and unbalanced regional development on a national level creates significant demand for housing in Watford and the South East more generally. The borough's proximity to London (with high housing costs in the city pushing people out into the surrounding areas) has resulted in challenging housing targets over the plan period.

13.2 There is need to plan for these homes. The Watford Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (HELAA) (2021) involved an exhaustive search of the borough for land available for development and sought to assess the capacity of the urban area. The administrative area of Watford has a capacity for providing 14,988 units over the plan period, with current estimates indicating a 793 units per annum requirement.

13.3 These sites are identified on the Policies Map. The policy is applicable to those sites identified in Tables 13.1, 13.2, 13.3 and 13.4 which include the following information:

- Site Name and Map
- The land use allocated for
- Site Size
- Whether the site is part of the Core Development Area
- Timescales
- Key development requirements and considerations
- Indicative yield (including net additional employment floorspace)

Figure 13.1: Allocated sites for delivery



13.4 The process for calculating the indicative yields of the site has been set out in the HELAA, as has the wider process for site selection.

13.5 The development requirements and considerations detailed in Tables 13.1, 13.2, 13.3 and 13.4 are not exhaustive. They consist of a mix of requirements for on-site provision and considerations to aid scheme design by identifying key constraints and bespoke to specific sites. All allocated sites have a presumption in favour of development in principle. However, all proposals need to comply with the full suite of policies in the Local Plan. Absence of reference to a study or mitigation measure does not mean that it would not be required if a planning application was submitted.



Strategic Policy SA13.1: Allocated sites for delivery

The sites listed in Tables 13.1, 13.2, 13.3 and 13.4 as shown on the Policies Map, are allocated for residential (Use Class C3), mixed-use development (Sui Generis), employment uses (Use Classes B and E), education use (Use Class F1(a)) and any other uses specified. Planning permission will be granted for proposals that:

- a) Accord with the policies in the Local Plan;
- b) Accord with any Supplementary Planning Document, master plan or development brief that affects the site;
- c) Address the key development considerations for each site; and
- d) Provide appropriate mitigation measures for issues identified where the development considerations set out the need for an assessment.

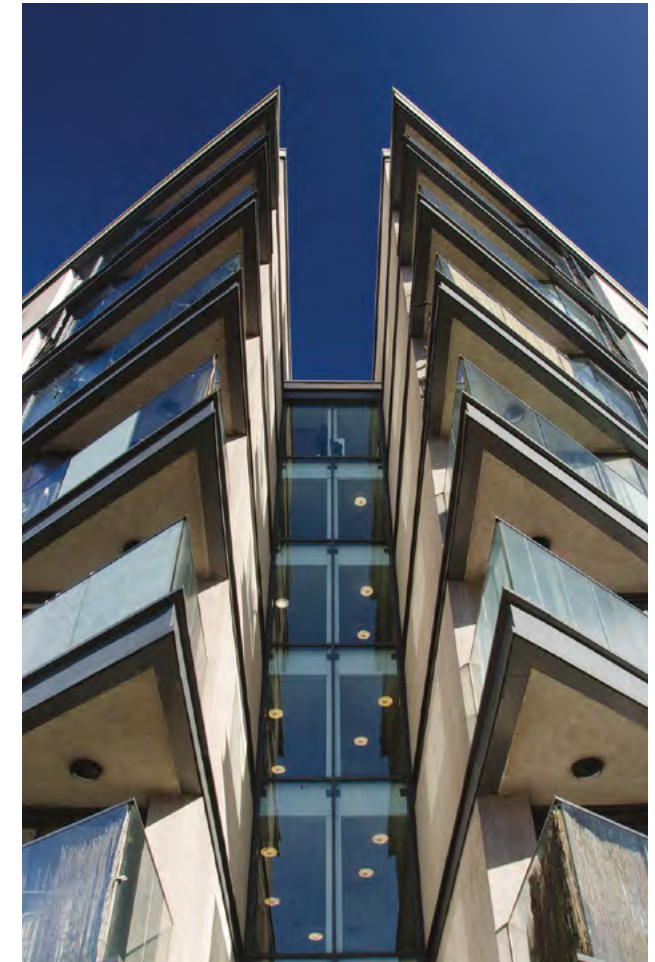
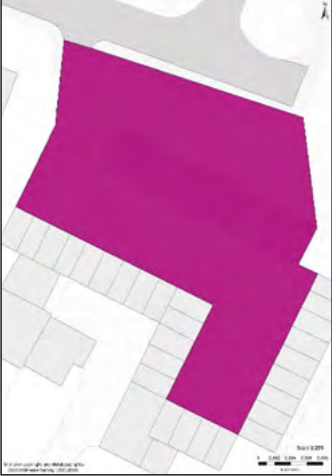

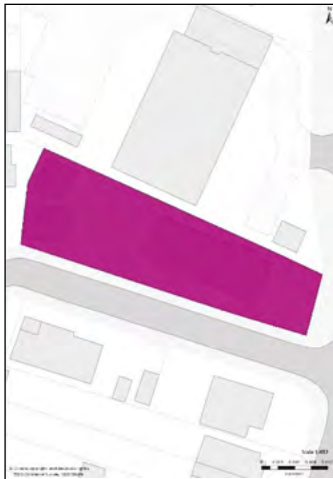


Table 13.1: Allocated sites for delivery

Site: HS01 Land and garages at Lych Gate			
Size (ha): 0.1	Location: Outside of CDA	Timescale: 1-5 years	Indicative yield = 5 units
	<p>Development requirements and considerations</p> <p>The site is allocated for residential development.</p> <p>Development proposals should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Retain access to the garages not allocated in the Plan; • Take account of the potential risk of contamination on site; and • Be accompanied by a parking survey to avoid any adverse impacts on parking in the area. 		
Site: HS02 Land and buildings at 275 Sheepcot Lane			
Size (ha): 0.35	Location: Outside of CDA	Timescale: 6-15 years	Indicative yield = 21 units
	<p>Development requirements and considerations</p> <p>The site is considered suitable for residential development.</p> <p>Development proposals should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have regard to the waste management facility currently included in the allocation. The County Council, as the Waste Planning Authority, should be consulted on any applications which come forward on this site and the adopted Waste Local Plan Safeguarding Policy must be taken into account in the consideration of any applications; • Demonstrate that safe access has been provided to the site; • Ensure that the scheme is designed to minimise impacts on the low-level residential dwellings adjacent to the site; • Take account of the potential risk of contamination on site; and • Be accompanied by a Preliminary Roost Assessment. 		

Site: HS03 Land and garages adjacent to 1 Lavinia Avenue

Size (ha): 0.08	Location: Outside of CDA	Timescale: 6-15 years	Indicative yield = 5 units
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Development requirements and considerations

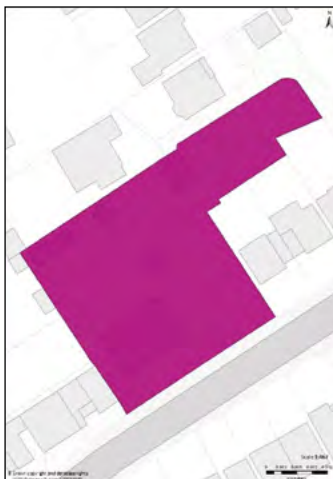
The site is considered suitable for residential development.

Development proposals should:

- Take account of the potential risk of contamination on site;
- Avoid any significant adverse impacts on the locally listed building, Garston Bus Garage, located directly opposite the site; and
- Be accompanied by a Preliminary Roost Assessment.

Site: HS04 Land and buildings at 5 Sheepcot Drive

Size (ha): 0.17	Location: Outside of CDA	Timescale: 6-15 years	Indicative yield = 9 units
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Development requirements and considerations

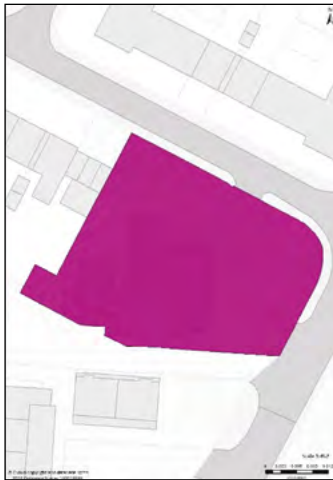
The site is considered suitable for residential development.

Development proposals should:

- Be accompanied by a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal;
- Ensure that the scheme is designed to minimise impacts on the low-level residential dwellings adjacent to the site.

Site: HS05 Land at the Badger Public House

Size (ha): 0.15	Location: Outside of CDA	Timescale: 1-5 years	Indicative yield = 9 units
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Development requirements and considerations

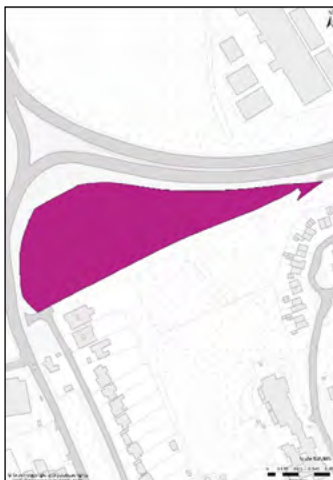
The site is considered suitable for residential development. Redevelopment of the site should be in line with Policy HC12.3 'Built Cultural and Community Facilities'.

Development proposals should:

- Be accompanied by a Preliminary Roost Assessment; and
- Ensure that the scheme is designed to minimise impacts on the low-level residential dwellings adjacent to the west of the site.

Site: HS06 Land at Russell Lane

Size (ha): 1.61	Location: Outside of CDA	Timescale: 1-5 years	Indicative yield = 93 units
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Development requirements and considerations

The site is considered suitable for residential development.

Development proposals should:

- Demonstrate that safe access has been provided to the site;
- Ensure that the scheme is designed to minimise impacts on the low-level residential dwellings and open space adjacent to the south of the site;
- Incorporate compensatory measures for the loss of Green Belt into the scheme, in line with national policy; and
- Be accompanied by a Noise Assessment and provide the appropriate mitigation for noise associated with the road network.

Site: HS07 Land at former Mothercare site

Size (ha): 1.3	Location: Outside of CDA	Timescale: 1-5 years	Indicative yield = 98 units
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Development requirements and considerations

The site is considered suitable for residential development.

Development proposals should:

- Be accompanied by a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal;
- Ensure that the scheme is designed to minimise impacts on the low-level residential dwellings adjacent to the site; and
- Be informed by a Surface Water Drainage Strategy as the site is subject to surface water flood risk.

Site: HS08 Land at the Longspring car park

Size (ha): 0.27	Location: Outside of CDA	Timescale: 6-15 years	Indicative yield = 17 units
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Development requirements and considerations

The site is considered suitable for residential development.

Development proposals should:

- Be accompanied by a parking survey to ensure that an appropriate level of car parking for the local shopping parade is retained;
- Avoid any significant adverse impacts on the locally listed buildings, 91-111 Longspring, located directly opposite the site;
- Be accompanied by a Noise Assessment and provide the appropriate mitigation for noise associated with the road network; and
- Take account of the potential risk of contamination on site.

Site: HS09 Land and buildings at 420-420a St Albans Road

Size (ha): 0.12	Location: Outside of CDA	Timescale: 6-15 years	Indicative yield = 9 units
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Development requirements and considerations

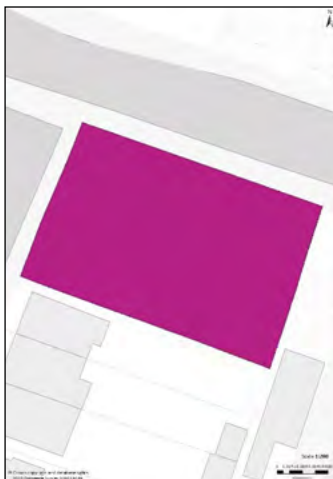
The site is considered suitable for residential development.

Development proposals should:

- Demonstrate that safe access has been provided to the site;
- Ensure that the scheme is designed to minimise impacts on the low-level residential dwellings adjacent to the site;
- Be informed by a site-specific Flood Risk Assessment and Surface Water Drainage Strategy as the site is subject to groundwater and surface water flood risk;
- Take account of the potential risk of contamination on site; and
- Be accompanied by a Preliminary Roost Assessment.

Site: HS10 Land at Balmoral Road

Size (ha): 0.06	Location: Outside of CDA	Timescale: 1-5 years	Indicative yield = 5 units
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Development requirements and considerations

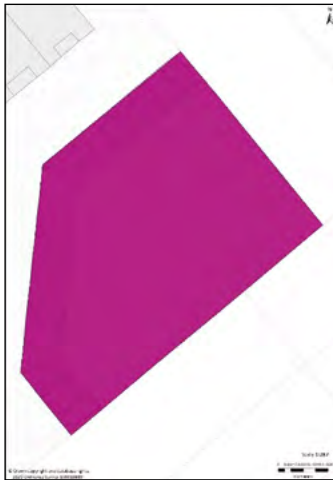
The site is considered suitable for residential development.

Development proposals should:

- Be accompanied by a Preliminary Roost Assessment;
- Be informed by a Surface Water Drainage Strategy as the site is subject to surface water flood risk;
- Be informed by a site-specific Flood Risk Assessment and Surface Water Drainage Strategy as the site is subject to groundwater and surface water flood risk; and
- Take account of the potential risk of contamination on site.

Site: HS11 Land to the rear of 53 Langley Way

Size (ha): 0.09	Location: Outside of CDA	Timescale: 6-15 years	Indicative yield = 7 units
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Development requirements and considerations

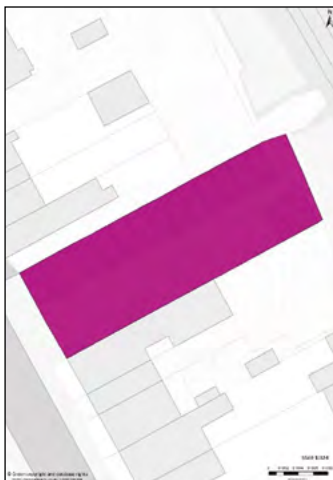
The site is considered suitable for residential development.

Development proposals should:

- Demonstrate that safe access has been provided to the site;
- Ensure that the scheme is designed to minimise impacts on the low-level residential dwellings and shopping parade adjacent to the site; and
- Take account of the potential risk of contamination on site.

Site: HS12 Land and garages between 139 and 149 Queens Road

Size (ha): 0.05	Location: Outside of CDA	Timescale: 1-5 years	Indicative yield = 5 units
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Development requirements and considerations

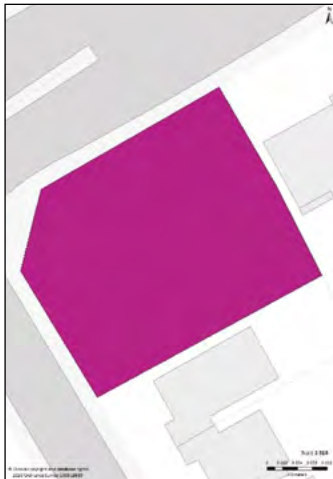
The site is considered suitable for residential development.

Development proposals should:

- Avoid significant harm to the setting of the Estcourt Conservation Area;
- Seek to enhance the setting and safety of the public footpath to the north west of the site;
- Take account of the potential risk of contamination on site;
- Be accompanied by a Noise Assessment and provide appropriate mitigation for noise associated with the railway line directly adjacent to the site;
- Be accompanied by a parking survey to avoid any adverse impacts on parking in the area; and
- Be accompanied by a Preliminary Roost Assessment.

Site: HS13 Corner of Park Avenue and Rickmansworth Road

Size (ha): 0.1	Location: Outside of CDA	Timescale: 1-5 years	Indicative yield = 9 units
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Development requirements and considerations

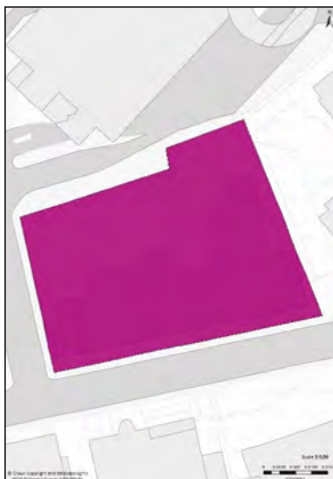
The site is considered suitable for residential development.

Development proposals should:

- Avoid significant harm to the setting of Cassiobury Registered Park, located north of the site; and
- Avoid any significant adverse impacts on the locally listed buildings located in the vicinity of the site.

Site: HS14 Land at 14-20 Upton Road

Size (ha): 0.22	Location: CDA	Timescale: 6-15 years	Indicative yield = 48 units
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Development requirements and considerations

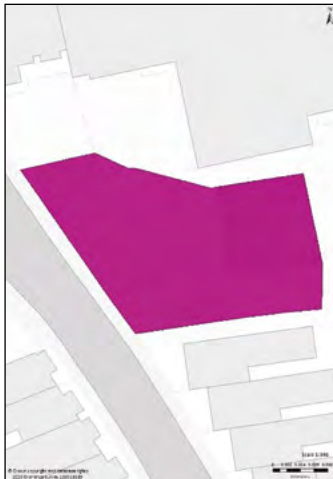
The site is considered suitable for residential development.

Development proposals should:

- Avoid any significant adverse impacts on the locally listed building, Exchange House, located opposite the site;
- Be accompanied by a Noise Assessment and provide appropriate mitigation for noise associated with the road network adjacent to the site; and
- Take account of the potential risk of contamination on site.

Site: HS15 Land at 80 Cassio Road

Size (ha): 0.08	Location: CDA	Timescale: 6-15 years	Indicative yield = 17 units
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Development requirements and considerations

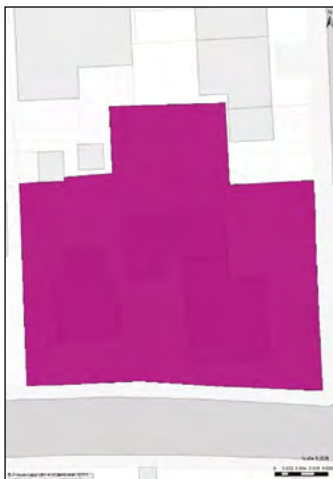
The site is considered suitable for residential development.

Development proposals should:

- Support the wider objectives of the Town Centre Strategic Development Area;
- Demonstrate that safe access has been provided to the site;
- Ensure that the scheme is designed to minimise impacts on the low-level residential dwellings located to the south of the site; and
- Take account of the potential risk of contamination on site.

Site: HS16 Land and buildings at 176-186 Rickmansworth Road

Size (ha): 0.16	Location: Outside of CDA	Timescale: 1-5 years	Indicative yield = 12 units
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Development requirements and considerations

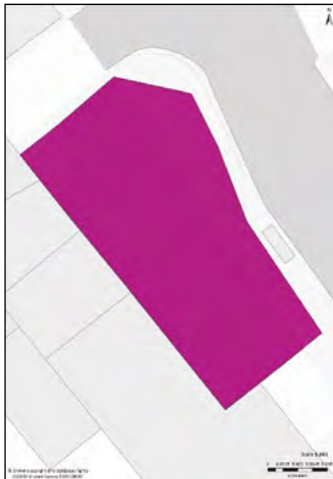
The site is considered suitable for residential development.

Development proposals should:

- Avoid any significant adverse impacts on the locally listed buildings, 195-199 Rickmansworth Road located directly opposite the site;
- Demonstrate that safe access has been provided to the site via Queen Mary's Avenue;
- Ensure that the scheme is designed to minimise impacts on the low-level residential dwellings located to the north and east of the site; and
- Take account of the potential risk of contamination on site.

Site: HS17 120-122 Exchange Road

Size (ha): 0.05	Location: Outside of CDA	Timescale: 1-5 years	Indicative yield = 5 units
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Development requirements and considerations

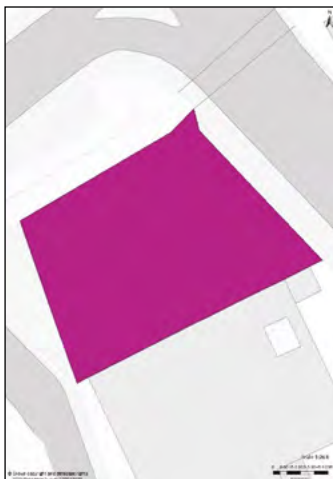
The site is considered suitable for residential development.

Development proposals should:

- Avoid any significant adverse impacts on the locally and nationally listed buildings located in the vicinity of the site. A Heritage Impact Assessment may be required;
- Be accompanied by a Noise Assessment and provide appropriate mitigation for noise associated with the road network adjacent to the site; and
- Be accompanied by a Preliminary Roost Assessment.

Site: HS18 Car park at Vicarage Road / Exchange Road

Size (ha): 0.05	Location: Outside of CDA	Timescale: 1-5 years	Indicative yield = 5 units
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Development requirements and considerations

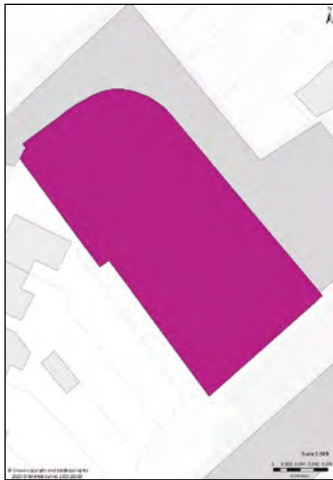
The site is considered suitable for residential development.

Development proposals should:

- Be designed to ensure safe pedestrian and cyclist access to and from the site;
- Avoid any adverse impacts on the locally and nationally listed buildings located in the vicinity of the site, including the Grade II listed Former Watford County Court House adjacent to the site. A Heritage Impact Assessment may be required;
- Be accompanied by a Noise Assessment and provide appropriate mitigation for noise associated with the road network adjacent to the site;
- Take account of the potential risk of contamination on site; and
- Be accompanied by a parking survey to avoid any significant adverse impacts on parking in the area.

Site: HS19 Crown Passage car park

Size (ha): 0.1	Location: CDA	Timescale: 1-5 years	Indicative yield = 18 units
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Development requirements and considerations

The site is considered suitable for residential development. Development proposals should:

- Support the wider objectives of the Town Centre Strategic Development Area;
- Avoid significant harm to the High Street and Kings Street conservation area;
- Ensure that the scheme is designed to minimise impacts on the low-level residential dwellings located to the west of the site;
- Be accompanied by a Noise Assessment and provide appropriate mitigation for noise associated with the road network adjacent to the site;
- Incorporate the trees to the south of the site into the design of the scheme to provide a buffer to the adjacent road network;
- Avoid any significant adverse impacts on the locally and nationally listed buildings located in the immediate vicinity of the site. A Heritage Impact Assessment may be required; and
- Be accompanied by a parking survey to avoid any significant adverse impacts on parking in the area.

Site: HS20 Land at Lower Derby Road

Size (ha): 0.27	Location: CDA	Timescale: 1-5 years	Indicative yield = 59 units
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Development requirements and considerations

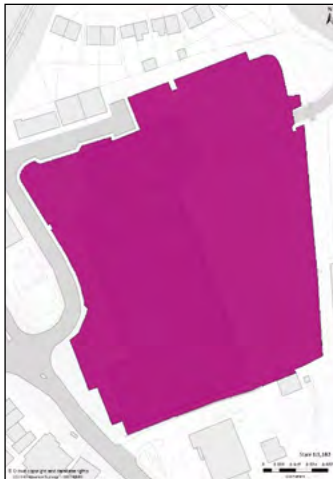
The site is considered suitable for residential development. An improved replacement skate park has been completed at Oxhey Park North.

Development proposals should:

- Support the wider objectives of the Colne Valley Strategic Development Area;
- Retain the current access to the site from Lower Derby Road; and
- Be accompanied by a Noise Assessment and provide appropriate mitigation for noise associated with the road network and railway line adjacent to the site.

Site: HS21 Land at Waterfields Retail Park

Size (ha): 1.89	Location: CDA	Timescale: 6-15 years	Indicative yield = 414 units
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Development requirements and considerations

The site is considered suitable for residential development.

Development proposals should:

- Support the wider objectives of the Colne Valley Strategic Development Area;
- Seek to engage with the landowners of sites MU16, located adjacent to the site, to maximise the benefits of development;
- Ensure that the scheme is designed to minimise impacts on the low-level residential dwellings located to the north of the site;
- Retain significant trees on site wherever possible, including those with a Tree Protection Order; and
- Avoid any significant adverse impacts on the locally and nationally listed buildings located in the immediate vicinity of the site. A Heritage Impact Assessment may be required.

Site: HS22 Land and buildings at 252-272 Lower High Street

Size (ha): 0.5	Location: CDA	Timescale: 1-5 years	Indicative yield = 110 units
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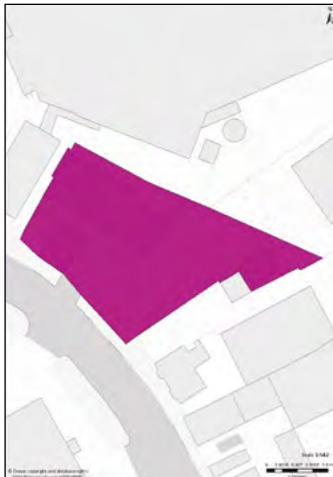
Development requirements and considerations

The site is considered suitable for residential development. Development proposals should:

- Support the wider objectives of the Colne Valley Strategic Development Area;
- Avoid any significant adverse impacts on the locally and nationally listed buildings located in the vicinity of the site. A Heritage Impact Assessment may be required;
- Ensure that the scheme is designed to minimise impacts on the low-level residential dwellings located to the west of the site;
- Demonstrate that safe access has been provided to the site;
- Consider how the scheme contributes to the pedestrian and cyclist experience in the area and retain the footpaths adjacent;
- Be informed by a site-specific Flood Risk Assessment and Surface Water Drainage Strategy as the site is in Flood Zone 2 and 3a, and is also subject to groundwater and surface water flood risk;
- Take account of the potential impact on water and wastewater infrastructure in conjunction with Thames Water and make provision for upgrades where required due to the scale of the new dwellings to be provided; and
- Take account of the potential risk of contamination on site.

Site: HS23 Land and buildings at 247 Lower High Street

Size (ha): 0.14	Location: CDA	Timescale: 6-15 years	Indicative yield = 31 units
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Development requirements and considerations

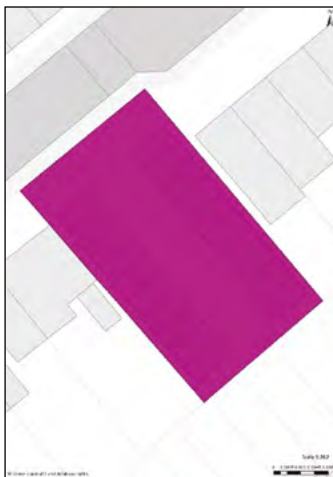
The site is considered suitable for residential development.

Development proposals should:

- Support the wider objectives of the Colne Valley Strategic Development Area;
- Seek to engage with landowners of sites MU16, located adjacent to the site, to maximise the benefits of development;
- Avoid any significant adverse impacts on the locally and nationally listed buildings located in the vicinity of the site. A Heritage Impact Assessment may be required;
- Be informed by a site-specific Flood Risk Assessment and Surface Water Drainage Strategy as the site is in Flood Zone 2 and 3a, and is also subject to groundwater and surface water flood risk;
- Take account of the potential risk of contamination on site; and
- Be accompanied by a Preliminary Roost Assessment.

Site: HS24 Land and garages between 41 and 61 Brightwell Road

Size (ha): 0.05	Location: Outside of CDA	Timescale: 1-5 years	Indicative yield = 4 units
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Development requirements and considerations

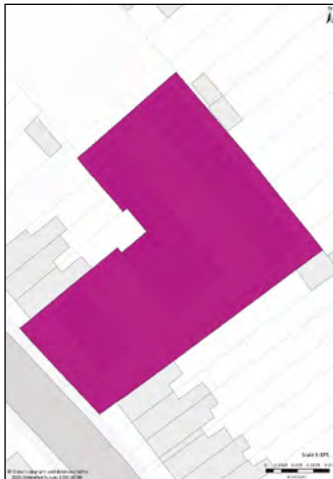
The site is considered suitable for residential development.

Development proposals should:

- Take account of the potential risk of contamination on site;
- Ensure that the scheme is designed to minimise impacts on the low-level residential dwellings adjacent to the site; and
- Be accompanied by a parking survey to avoid any adverse impacts on parking in the area.

Site: HS25 Land and garages to the rear of 15-17 Liverpool Road

Size (ha): 0.12	Location: Outside of CDA	Timescale: 6-15 years	Indicative yield = 11 units
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Development requirements and considerations

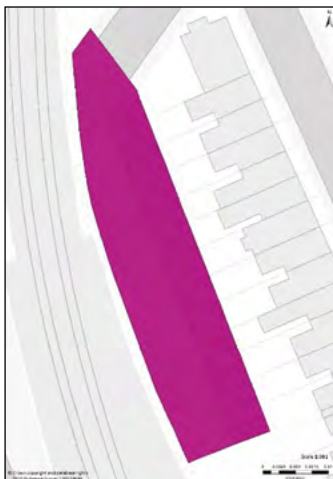
The site is considered suitable for residential development.

Development proposals should:

- Take account of the potential risk of contamination on site;
- Ensure that the scheme is designed to minimise impacts on the low-level residential dwellings adjacent to the site;
- Be accompanied by a parking survey to avoid any significant adverse impacts on parking in the area; and
- Be accompanied by a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal.

Site: HS26 Land and garages to the rear of 2-24 Elfrida Road

Size (ha): 0.08	Location: Outside of CDA	Timescale: 1-5 years	Indicative yield = 8 units
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Development requirements and considerations

The site is considered suitable for residential development.

Development proposals should:

- Ensure that the scheme is designed to minimise impacts on the low-level residential dwellings located to the east of the site;
- Demonstrate that safe access has been provided to the site;
- Be informed by a site-specific Flood Risk Assessment and Surface Water Drainage Strategy as the site is subject to groundwater and surface water flood risk;
- Take account of the potential risk of contamination on site;
- Be accompanied by a Noise Assessment and provide appropriate mitigation for noise associated with the railway line directly adjacent to the site; and
- Be accompanied by a parking survey to avoid any significant adverse impacts on parking in the area.

Site: HS27 Land at Croxley View

Size (ha): 3.2	Location: Outside of CDA	Timescale: 1-5 years	Indicative yield = 240 units
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Development requirements and considerations

The site is considered suitable for residential development.

Development proposals should:

- Enhance the green corridor and high quality cycle and walking route, which provides a key link between the Ebury Way and Cassiobury Park;
- Ensure that the scheme is designed to minimise impacts on the low-level residential dwellings located to the east of the site; and
- Be accompanied by a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal.

Site: HS28 Wiggenhall Depot

Size (ha): 1.5	Location: CDA	Timescale: 6-15 years	Indicative yield = 330 units
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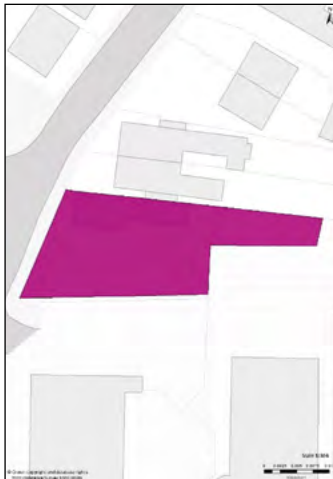
Development requirements and considerations

The site is considered suitable for residential development. Reprovision of the depot and waste transfer station is required. Development proposals should:

- Enhance the setting of the River Colne and be designed to minimise impact on wildlife habitats;
- Ensure that the scheme is designed to minimise impacts on the low-level residential dwellings located to the west of the site;
- Retain the significant locally listed buildings on site where possible. If it is demonstrated to be unfeasible to retain the listed building on site, the design of the replacement scheme should be of an extremely high quality to justify the loss of the building;
- Be informed by a site-specific Flood Risk Assessment and Surface Water Drainage Strategy as the site is in Flood Zones 2 and 3, and is also subject to groundwater and surface water flood risk;
- Take account of the potential risk of contamination on site; and
- Be accompanied by a Preliminary Roost Assessment.

Site: HS29 41 Aldenham Road

Size (ha): 0.05	Location: Outside of CDA	Timescale: 1-5 years	Indicative yield = 5 units
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Development requirements and considerations

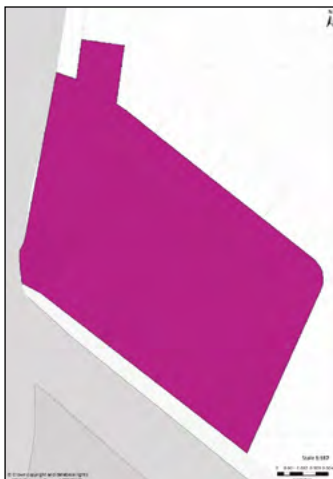
The site is considered suitable for residential development.

Development proposals should:

- Avoid any significant adverse impacts on the locally listed building, Bushey Baptist Church, adjacent to the site;
- Ensure that the scheme is designed to minimise impacts on the low-level residential dwellings located to the north of the site; and
- Take account of the Pinner Road Air Quality Management Area, located to the south of the site.

Site: HS30 Chalk Hill car park

Size (ha): 0.04	Location: CDA	Timescale: 6-15 years	Indicative yield = 9 units
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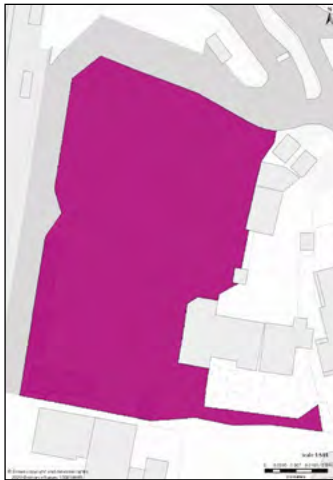
Development requirements and considerations

The site is considered suitable for residential development. Development proposals should:

- Support the wider objectives of the Colne Valley Strategic Development Area;
- Demonstrate that safe access has been provided to the site;
- Avoid any significant adverse impacts on the locally and nationally listed buildings located in the vicinity of the site;
- Be informed by a site-specific Flood Risk Assessment and Surface Water Drainage Strategy as the site is subject to groundwater and surface water flood risk;
- Take account of the Pinner Road Air Quality Management Area, located to the east of the site;
- Take account of the potential risk of contamination on site;
- Be accompanied by a Noise Assessment and provide appropriate mitigation for noise associated with the railway line adjacent to the site; and
- Be accompanied by a parking survey to ensure that an appropriate level of car parking for Bushey station is retained.

Site: HS31 Land at Bushey Station

Size (ha): 0.31	Location: CDA	Timescale: 1-5 years	Indicative yield = 68 units
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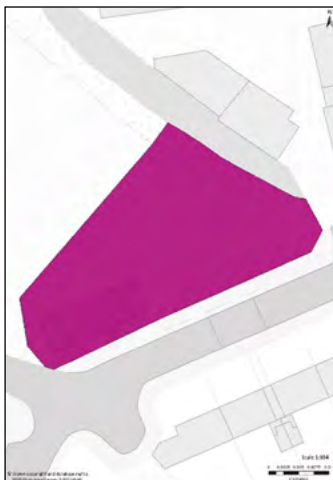
Development requirements and considerations

The site is considered suitable for residential development. Development proposals should:

- Support the wider objectives of the Colne Valley Strategic Development Area;
- Ensure the scheme is designed to provide high quality connections to Bushey Station for pedestrians and cyclists;
- Take account of the Pinner Road Air Quality Management Area, located to the north east of the site;
- Avoid any adverse impacts on the locally and nationally listed buildings located in the vicinity of the site. A Heritage Impact Assessment may be required;
- Be accompanied by a Noise Assessment and provide appropriate mitigation for noise associated with the railway line adjacent to the site; and
- Be accompanied by a parking survey to ensure that an appropriate level of car parking for Bushey station is retained.

Site: HS32 Riverside Road and garages

Size (ha): 0.1	Location: Outside of CDA	Timescale: 1-5 years	Indicative yield = 5 units
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Development requirements and considerations

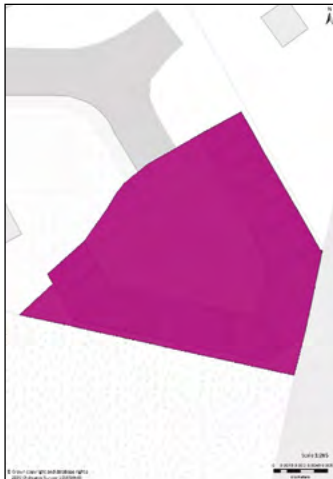
The site is considered suitable for residential development.

Development proposals should:

- Take account of the potential risk of contamination on site;
- Be informed by a site-specific Flood Risk Assessment and Surface Water Drainage Strategy as the site is in Flood Zones 2 and 3, and is also subject to groundwater and surface water flood risk;
- Be accompanied by a Preliminary Roost Assessment; and
- Be accompanied by a parking survey to avoid any significant adverse impacts on parking in the area.

Site: HS33 Land and garages at Kingsfield Court

Size (ha): 0.06	Location: Outside of CDA	Timescale: 6-15 years	Indicative yield = 4 units
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Development requirements and considerations

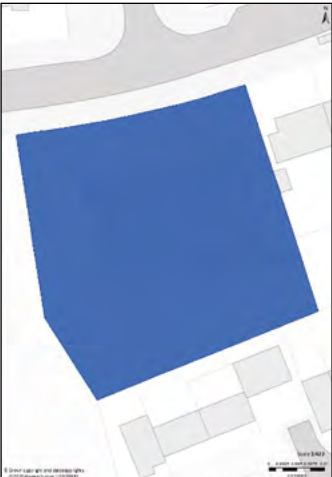
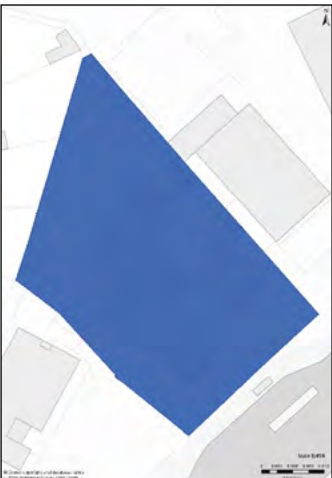
The site is considered suitable for residential development.

Development proposals should:

- Take account of the potential risk of contamination on site;
- Demonstrate that safe access has been provided to the site;
- Incorporate the trees to the south of the site into the design of the scheme. A Tree Survey may be required;
- Be accompanied by a Noise Assessment and provide appropriate mitigation for noise associated with the railway line adjacent to the site;
- Be accompanied by a Preliminary Roost Assessment; and
- Be accompanied by a parking survey.

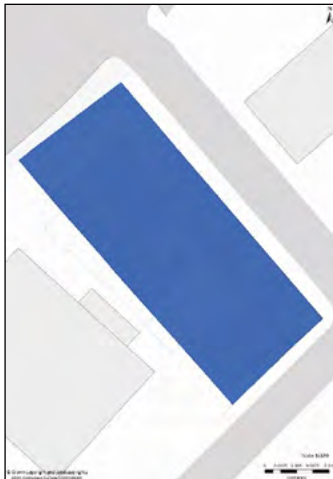


Table 13.2: Mixed-use sites

Site: MU01 Land at Woodside Community Centre			
Size (ha): 0.2	Location: Outside of CDA	Timescale: 6-15 years	Indicative yield = 12 units
	<p>Development requirements and considerations</p> <p>This site is considered suitable for mixed-use development, including residential and community uses. Redevelopment of the site should be in line with Policy HC12.3 ‘Built Cultural and Community Facilities’.</p> <p>Development proposals should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take account of the significant ground level change to the south of the site; and • Be accompanied by a Preliminary Roost Assessment. 		
Site: MU02 Land at 501 St Albans Road			
Size (ha): 0.21	Location: Outside of CDA	Timescale: 1-5 years	Indicative yield = 13 units
	<p>Development requirements and considerations</p> <p>This site is considered suitable for mixed-use development, including residential and community uses. Redevelopment of the site should be in line with Policy ‘HC12.3 Built Cultural and Community Facilities’.</p> <p>Development proposals should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoid significant adverse impacts on the locally listed building, North Watford Library, located opposite the site; • Ensure that the scheme is designed to minimise impacts on the low-level residential dwellings located to the north west of the site; • Demonstrate that safe access has been provided to the site; • Be accompanied by a Noise Assessment and provide appropriate mitigation for noise associated with the road network adjacent to the site; and • Be accompanied by a Preliminary Roost Assessment. 		

Site: MU03 Land at the Lemarie Centre

Size (ha): 0.1	Location: Outside of CDA	Timescale: 1-5 years	Indicative yield = 7 units
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Development requirements and considerations

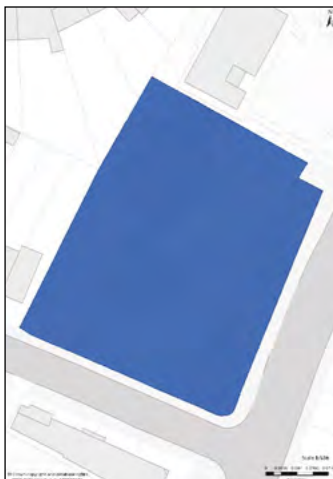
This site is considered suitable for mixed-use development, including residential and community uses. Redevelopment of the site should be in line with Policy 'HC12.3 Built Cultural and Community Facilities'.

Development proposals should:

- Seek to work collaboratively with the landowner of site MU23, which is located adjacent to the east, to maximise the benefits of development;
- Be accompanied by a Noise Assessment and provide appropriate mitigation for noise associated with the road network adjacent to the site; and
- Avoid significant adverse impacts on the locally listed building, North Watford Library, located adjacent to the site.

Site: MU04 453 St Albans Road

Size (ha): 0.3	Location: Outside of CDA	Timescale: 1-5 years	Indicative yield = 18 units
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Development requirements and considerations

This site is considered suitable for mixed-use development, including residential uses. Redevelopment of the site should be in line with Policy HC12.3 'Built Cultural and Community Facilities'.

Development proposals should:

- Avoid significant adverse impacts on the locally listed building, North Watford Library, located opposite the site;
- Be accompanied by a Noise Assessment and provide appropriate mitigation for noise associated with the road network adjacent to the site.

Site: MU05 Land and buildings at 94-98 St Albans Road

Size (ha): 2.47	Location: CDA	Timescale: 1-5 years	Indicative yield = 1,214 units 295sqm of office floorspace 4,960sqm of commercial and educational floorspace
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Development requirements and considerations

This site is considered suitable for mixed-use development, including residential uses. A primary school is also required on site.

Development proposals should:

- Support the wider objectives of the Watford Gateway Strategic Development Area;
- Ensure that retail reprovision on site will not exceed the existing retail floorspace;
- Seek to work collaboratively with the landowner of site MU06, which is located adjacent to the east of the site, to maximise the benefits of development;
- Avoid significant harm to the Nascot Conservation Area, located directly to the west of the site;
- Avoid significant adverse impacts on the locally and nationally listed buildings located in the vicinity of the site. A Heritage Impact Assessment may be required;
- Take account of the potential impact on water and wastewater infrastructure in conjunction with Thames Water and make provision for upgrades where required due to the scale of the new dwellings to be provided;
- Facilitate appropriately and proportionately towards the timely provision of required infrastructure identified in Watford's Infrastructure Delivery Plan, including measures to improve access to the station for cyclist, pedestrians and vulnerable users; and
- Be accompanied by a Noise Assessment and provide appropriate mitigation for noise associated with the railway line adjacent to the site.

Site: MU06 Land at Watford Junction

Size (ha): **7.46'**

Location: **CDA**

Timescale: **1-15 years**

**Indicative yield = 1,232 units
20,998sqm of office floorspace**



Development requirements and considerations

This site is considered suitable for mixed-use development, including residential, employment and commercial uses. A replacement childcare facility and a new primary school is required on site.

Development proposals should:

- Support the wider objectives of the Watford Gateway Strategic Development Area, including the necessary improvements to the station and it's functionality;
- Facilitate the timely delivery of required infrastructure as identified in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan, including measures to improve bus priority around the station;
- Support the delivery of a new pedestrian and cycle bridge and the protection of a second crossing route from Penn Road across the railway line;
- Demonstrate that safe access has been provided to the site;
- Ensure the layout of the scheme has been designed to minimise any potential adverse impacts associated with the railway lines and the concrete batching plant and rail aggregates depot. This may include locating non-residential floorspace in the lower storeys;
- Seek to work collaboratively with the landowners of sites MU05 and MU07, which are located adjacent to the site, to maximise the benefits of development;
- Avoid significant harm to the setting of the Nascot Conservation Area, located directly west of the site;
- Avoid significant adverse impacts on the locally and nationally listed buildings located in the vicinity of the site. A Heritage Impact Assessment may be required;
- Take account of the potential impact on water and wastewater infrastructure in conjunction with Thames Water and make provision for upgrades where required due to the scale of the new dwellings to be provided;
- Take account of the potential risk of contamination on site;
- Be informed by a site-specific Flood Risk Assessment and Surface Water Drainage Strategy as the site is subject to groundwater and surface water flood risk; and
- Be accompanied by a Noise Assessment and provide appropriate mitigation for noise associated with the railway line, rail aggregates depot and associated concrete batching plant located in and adjacent to the site. Early engagement with the site operator will be required to ensure that to ensure that development does not prejudice the existing or future use of the safeguarded site and associated operations.

Site: MU07 Land and buildings at Astral House

Size (ha): 1.32	Location: CDA	Timescale: 1-5 years	Indicative yield = 131 units
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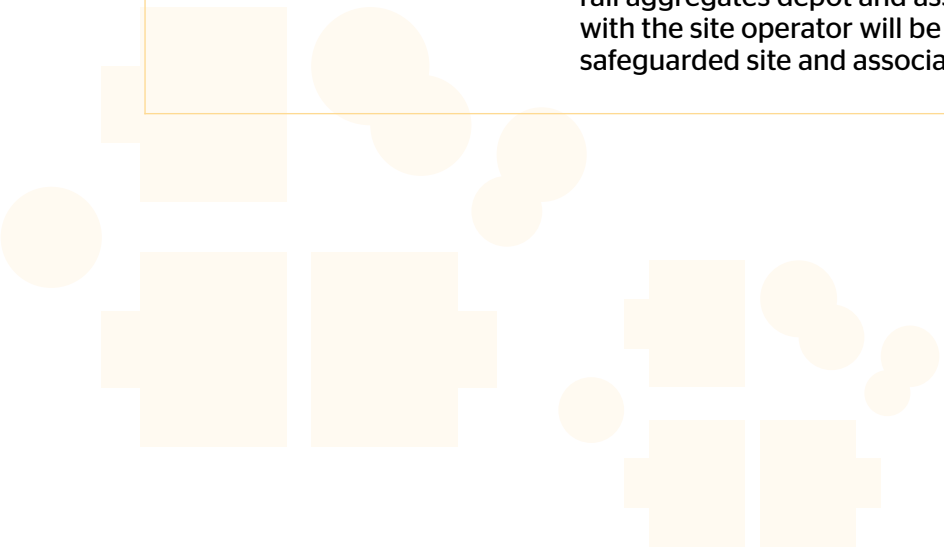


Development requirements and considerations

This site is considered suitable for mixed-use development, including residential and employment uses.

Development proposals should:

- Support the wider objectives of the Watford Gateway Strategic Development Area;
- Result in no net loss of employment floorspace on site;
- Seek to work collaboratively with the landowners of sites MU06 and EMO5, which are located adjacent to the east of the site, to maximise the benefits of development;
- Demonstrate that safe pedestrian and cyclist access to the site has been provided;
- Facilitate the timely delivery of required infrastructure as identified in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan, including the safeguarding of land required for the bridge;
- Take account of the potential risk of contamination on site;
- Take account of the potential impact on water and wastewater infrastructure in conjunction with Thames Water and make provision for upgrades where required due to the scale of the new dwellings to be provided; and
- Be accompanied by a Noise Assessment and provide appropriate mitigation for noise associated with the railway line, rail aggregates depot and associated concrete batching plant located in and adjacent to the site. Early engagement with the site operator will be required to ensure that development does not prejudice the existing or future use of the safeguarded site and associated operations.



Site: MU08 22-28 Station Road

Size (ha): **0.12**

Location: **CDA**

Timescale: **1-5 years**

**Indicative yield = 21 units
480sqm of office floorspace**



Development requirements and considerations

This site is considered suitable for mixed-use development, including residential and office uses.

Development proposals should:

- Support the wider objectives of the Watford Gateway Strategic Development Area;
- Support the objectives of the Clarendon Road Primary Office Location;
- Facilitate improvements to cycle provision on St Albans Road, particularly the narrowing of the cycle lane approaching the junction from the west;
- Be accompanied by a Noise Assessment and provide appropriate mitigation for noise associated with the road network adjacent to the site; and
- Avoid significant harm to the setting of the Nascot Conservation Area, located directly west of the site.



Site: MU09 Land at Watford Police Station

Size (ha): **0.68**

Location: **CDA**

Timescale: **1-5 years**

**Indicative yield = 120 units
2,770sqm of office floorspace**



Development requirements and considerations

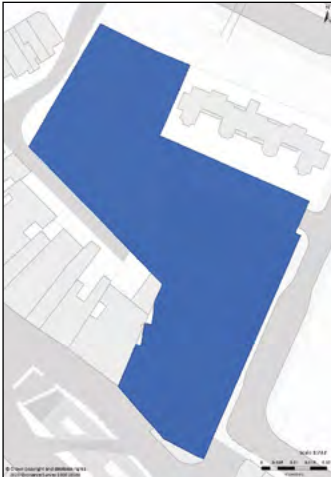
This site is considered suitable for mixed-use development, including residential and office uses.

Development proposals should:

- Support the wider objectives of the Watford Gateway Strategic Development Area and the Clarendon Road Primary Office Location;
- Position the tallest elements of the scheme along the Clarendon Road frontage;
- Ensure that the scheme is designed to minimise impacts on the low-level residential dwellings south and to the west of the site and to create a strong relationship with the street edge;
- Retain the trees on the Clarendon Road frontage;
- Avoid significant adverse impacts on the locally and nationally listed buildings located in the immediate vicinity of the site, including the locally listed building within the site boundary. If it is demonstrated to be unfeasible to retain the listed building on site, the design of the replacement scheme should be of an extremely high quality to justify the loss of the building;
- Be informed by a site-specific Flood Risk Assessment and Surface Water Drainage Strategy as the site is subject to groundwater and surface water flood risk; and
- Take account of the potential impact on water and wastewater infrastructure in conjunction with Thames Water and make provision for upgrades where required due to the scale of the new dwellings to be provided.

Site: MU10 Land to the rear of 125-127 The Parade

Size (ha): 0.51	Location: CDA	Timescale: 1-5 years	Indicative yield = 90 units
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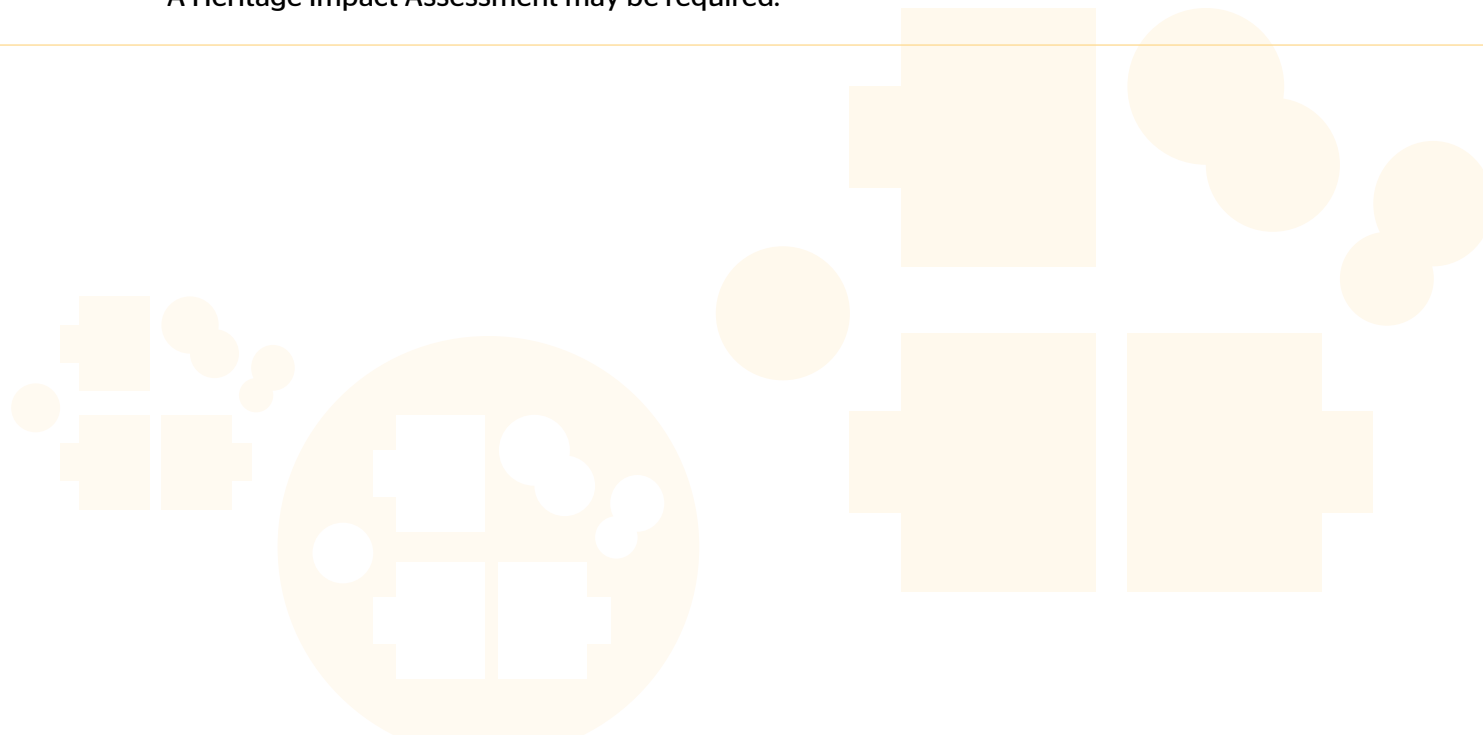


Development requirements and considerations

The site is considered suitable for mixed-use development, including residential and commercial uses.

Development proposals should:

- Support the wider objectives of the Town Centre Strategic Development Area;
- Ensure that the scheme is designed to minimise impacts on the low-level residential dwellings and shopping parade surrounding the site;
- Provide a quality frontage and landscaping along the Parade and Albert Street South;
- Seek to engage with the landowners of site MU13 located adjacent to the east to maximise the benefits of development;
- Avoid significant harm to the setting of the Civic Core Conservation Area;
- Avoid any significant adverse impacts on the locally and nationally listed buildings located in the vicinity of the site. A Heritage Impact Assessment may be required.



Site: MU11 23-37 The Parade

Size (ha): 0.41	Location: CDA	Timescale: 1-5 years	Indicative yield = 72 units
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Development requirements and considerations

The site is considered suitable for mixed-use development, including residential uses and active commercial uses on the ground floor.

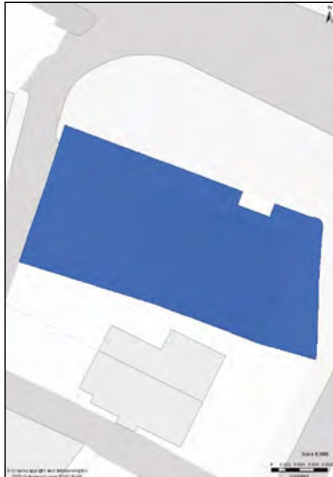
Development proposals should:

- Support the wider objectives of the Town Centre Strategic Development Area;
- Avoid significant adverse impacts on the locally and nationally listed buildings located in the immediate vicinity of the site, including the locally listed shopfront within the site boundary. If it is demonstrated to be unfeasible to retain the listed building on site, the design of the replacement scheme should be of an extremely high quality to justify the loss of the building. A Heritage Impact Assessment may be required;
- Seek to engage with landowners of site MU12 located adjacent to the west to maximise the benefits of development;
- Comprehensive redevelopment should explore options for the provision of a high quality market which will capitalise on the increased residential occupancy of the Town Centre and an improved inter-relationship with Clarendon Road;
- Provide high quality pedestrian connections between Beechen Grove and the Parade; and
- Enhance the public realm along Beechen Grove.



Site: MU12 19-21 Clarendon Road

Size (ha): 0.08	Location: CDA	Timescale: 1-5 years	Indicative yield = 14 units
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Development requirements and considerations

The site is suitable for mixed-use development, including residential and commercial uses.

Development proposals should:

- Support the wider objectives of the Town Centre Strategic Development Area;
- Seek to engage with landowners of site MU11 located adjacent to the west to maximise the benefits of development;
- Avoid significant adverse impacts on the locally and nationally listed buildings and monuments located in the vicinity of the site. A Heritage Impact Assessment may be required; and
- Be accompanied by a Noise Assessment and provide appropriate mitigation for noise associated with the railway line adjacent to the site.



Site: MU13 Land at Sainsbury's, Town Centre

Size (ha): 1.0	Location: CDA	Timescale: 6-15 years	Indicative yield = 220 units
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Development requirements and considerations

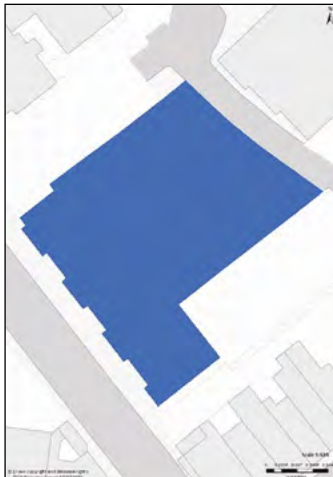
The site is suitable for mixed-use development, including residential and commercial uses.

Development proposals should:

- Support the wider objectives of the Town Centre Strategic Development Area;
- Improve the setting and public realm along Beechen Grove and Albert Street South, as well as Gaumont Approach;
- Seek to engage with landowners of site MU10 located adjacent to the west to maximise the benefits of development;
- Ensure that the scheme is designed to minimise impacts on the low-level residential dwellings to the north of the site;
- Avoid significant harm to the setting of the Civic Core Conservation Area which lies directly south of the site;
- Avoid any significant adverse impacts on the locally and nationally listed buildings and monuments located in the vicinity of the site. A Heritage Impact Assessment may be required;
- Provide no additional retail floorspace above the existing on site provision;
- Be accompanied by a Noise Assessment and provide appropriate mitigation for noise associated with the road network adjacent to the site;
- Take account of the potential risk of contamination on site; and
- Take account of the potential impact on water and wastewater infrastructure in conjunction with Thames Water and make provision for upgrades where required due to the scale of the new dwellings to be provided.

Site: MU14 Land at the car park, Wellstones

Size (ha): 0.23	Location: CDA	Timescale: 1-5 years	Indicative yield = 40 units
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Development requirements and considerations

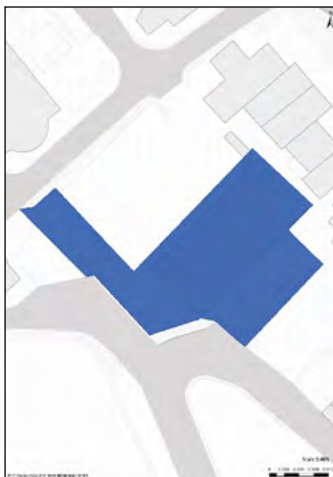
The site is suitable for residential-led, mixed-use development. E and F class uses are possible on the ground floor to maintain an active frontage.

Development proposals should:

- Support the wider objectives of the Town Centre Strategic Development Area;
- Avoid significant adverse impacts on the locally and nationally listed buildings in the vicinity of the site. A Heritage Impact Assessment may be required;
- Be accompanied by a Noise Assessment and provide appropriate mitigation for noise associated with the road network adjacent to the site;
- Take account of the potential risk of contamination on site; and
- Be accompanied by a parking survey to avoid any significant adverse impacts on parking in the area.

Site: MU15 18 Watford Field Road

Size (ha): 0.11	Location: CDA	Timescale: 1-5 years	Indicative yield = 19 units
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Development requirements and considerations

The site is suitable for mixed-use development, including residential and community uses.

Development proposals should:

- Support the wider objectives of the Colne Valley Strategic Development Area;
- Be designed to maximise the outlook across Watford Field Recreation Ground; and
- Avoid any significant adverse impacts on the locally and nationally listed buildings located in the vicinity of the site. A Heritage Impact Assessment may be required.

Site: MU16 Land at Tesco, Lower High Street

Size (ha): **7.6**

Location: **CDA**

Timescale: **6-15 years**

Indicative yield = **1,338 units**



Development requirements and considerations

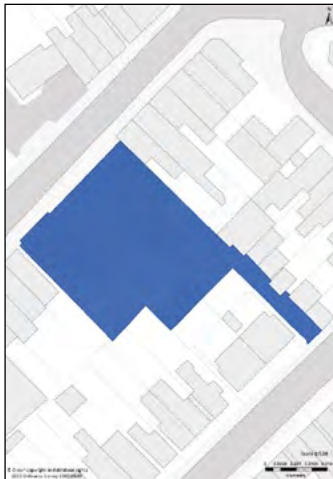
The site is considered suitable for mixed-use development, including residential, E and F class uses and a primary school.

Development proposals should:

- Support the wider objectives of the Colne Valley Strategic Development Area, including the linear park;
- Enhance connectivity to the River Colne. This includes providing open space and a green route along the river as part of the linear park proposal. Re-naturalisation of the culverted River Colne will also be supported;
- Seek to engage with landowners of site HS21, located adjacent to the west, and HS23, located adjacent to the south, to maximise the benefits of development;
- Provide no additional retail floorspace above the existing on site provision;
- Enhance the strategic view from the railway line to the town centre. Proposals should be supported with images that demonstrate how a proposal will contribute towards the Watford skyline;
- Have building heights along the River Colne that reflect the sensitivity of the location and minimise disturbance on the waterway;
- Avoid significant adverse impacts on the locally and nationally listed buildings located in the vicinity of the site, including the locally listed coal duty marker on site. If it is demonstrated to be unfeasible to retain the listed monument on site, the design of the replacement scheme should be of an extremely high quality to justify the loss of the monument. A Heritage Impact Assessment may be required;
- Adequately address the level changes on site;
- Have regard to the high pressure pipeline that traverses the site;
- Be informed by a site-specific Flood Risk Assessment and Surface Water Drainage Strategy as the site is in Flood Zones 2 and 3, and is also subject to groundwater and surface water flood risk;
- Be accompanied by a Noise Assessment and provide appropriate mitigation for noise associated with the road network and railway line adjacent to the site;
- Take account of the potential impact on water and wastewater infrastructure in conjunction with Thames Water and make provision for upgrades where required due to the scale of new dwellings to be provided;
- Take account of the potential risk of contamination on site;
- Facilitate the timely delivery of required infrastructure as identified in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan, including a revised junction layout, crossing improvements and provision of a cycle path along Lower High Street; and
- Retain significant trees on site wherever possible, including those with a Tree Protection Order.

Site: MU17 44-56 Vicarage Road

Size (ha): 0.13	Location: Outside of CDA	Timescale: 6-15 years	Indicative yield = 10 units
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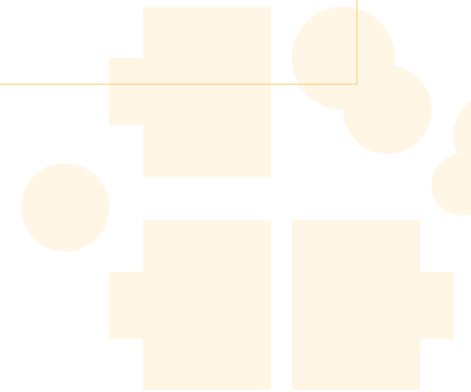


Development requirements and considerations

The site is considered suitable for mixed-use development, including residential. The retail uses on the ground floor should be reprovided to strengthen the offer of the designated local centre.

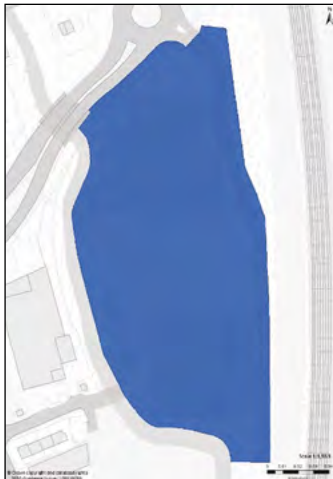
Development proposals should:

- Ensure that the scheme is designed to minimise impacts on the low-level residential dwellings adjacent to the site;
- Maintain the active retail frontage to Vicarage Road;
- Avoid significant harm to the setting of the Square Conservation Area which lies opposite the site; and
- Take account of the Hornets / Vicarage Road Air Quality Management Area, which the site is located within.



Site: MU18 Land at Colne Valley Retail Park

Size (ha): 2.65	Location: CDA	Timescale: 6-15 years	Indicative yield = 466 units
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Development requirements and considerations

The site is considered suitable for residential-led, mixed-use development. Reprovision of E class uses is possible on the ground floor.

Development proposals should:

- Support the wider objectives of the Colne Valley Strategic Development Area including the linear park;
- Enhance connectivity to the River Colne. This includes providing open space and a green route along the river as part of the linear park proposal;
- Have building heights along the River Colne that reflect the sensitivity of the location and minimise disturbance on the waterway;
- Provide no additional retail floorspace above the existing on site provision;
- Avoid any significant adverse impacts on the locally and nationally listed buildings located in the vicinity of the site. A Heritage Impact Assessment may be required;
- Take account of the potential impact on water and wastewater infrastructure in conjunction with Thames Water and make provision for upgrades where required due to the scale of the new dwellings to be provided;
- Be accompanied by a Noise Assessment and provide appropriate mitigation for noise associated with the road network and railway line adjacent to the site;
- Have regard to the high pressure pipeline that traverses the site;
- Be informed by a site-specific Flood Risk Assessment and Surface Water Drainage Strategy as the site is in Flood Zones 2 and 3, and is also subject to groundwater and surface water flood risk;
- Facilitate the timely delivery of required infrastructure as identified in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan, including a revised junction layout, crossing improvements and provision of a cycle path along Lower High Street; and
- Take account of the potential risk of contamination on site.

Site: MU19 Land to the west of and parallel to Ascot Road

Size (ha): 0.71	Location: Outside of CDA	Timescale: 1-5 years	Indicative yield = 43 units
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Development requirements and considerations

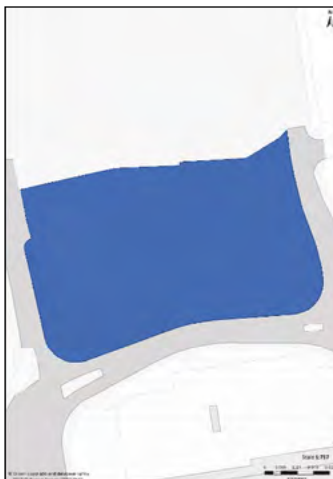
The site is considered suitable for residential-led, mixed-use development.

Development proposals should:

- Demonstrate that an appropriate amount of land has been safeguarded for the future provision of a mass transit route and station;
- Enable improvements to the contraflow cycle lane to provide a two way cycle lane;
- Enhance the green infrastructure network by enhancing the link between the Ebury Way and Cassiobury Park;
- Avoid any significant adverse impacts on the locally listed monument, the Former Sun Printer’s Clock Tower, located adjacent to the site; and
- Take account of the potential risk of contamination on site.

Site: MU20 Land east of Ascot Road

Size (ha): 0.45	Location: Outside of CDA	Timescale: 6-15 years	Indicative yield = 27 units
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Development requirements and considerations

The site is considered suitable for residential-led mixed-use development with E class uses suitable on the ground floor.

Development proposals should:

- Be informed by a site-specific Flood Risk Assessment and Surface Water Drainage Strategy as the site is subject to groundwater and surface water flood risk; and
- Take account of the potential risk of contamination on site.

Site: MU21 Land at Riverwell

Size (ha): **12.0**

Location: **CDA**

Timescale: **1-15 years**

Indicative yield = **1,383 units**



Development requirements and considerations

The site is considered suitable for mixed-use development, including residential, commercial uses and a primary school.

Development proposals should:

- Support the wider objectives of the Colne Valley Strategic Development Area;
- Be informed by a site-specific Flood Risk Assessment and Surface Water Drainage Strategy as the site is in Flood Zones 2 and 3, and is also subject to groundwater and surface water flood risk;
- Enhance the public realm through the provision of a new public square;
- Take account of the potential risk of contamination on site;
- Facilitate the timely delivery of required infrastructure as identified in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan; and
- Take account of the potential impact on water and wastewater infrastructure in conjunction with Thames Water and make provision for upgrades where required due to the scale of new dwellings to be provided.



Site: MU22 Land at Colne Bridge Retail Park

Size (ha): 0.8	Location: CDA	Timescale: 6-15 years	Indicative yield = 141 units
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Development requirements and considerations

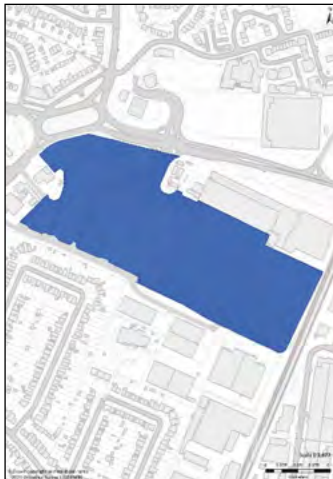
The site is considered suitable for residential-led, mixed-use development. Reprovision of the retail uses is possible on the ground floor.

Development proposals should:

- Support the wider objectives of the Colne Valley Strategic Development Area;
- Enhance connectivity to the River Colne;
- Have building heights along the River Colne that reflect the sensitivity of the location and minimise disturbance on the waterway;
- Be designed to help facilitate provision of a potential pedestrian / cycle crossing over the River Colne in the future, as set out in the South West Hertfordshire Transport and Infrastructure Plan;
- Avoid any significant adverse impacts on the locally and nationally listed buildings located in the vicinity of the site. A Heritage Impact Assessment may be required;
- Provide no additional retail floorspace above the existing on site provision;
- Be informed by a site-specific Flood Risk Assessment and Surface Water Drainage Strategy as the site is in Flood Zones 2 and 3, and is also subject to groundwater and surface water flood risk; and
- Take account of the potential impact on water and wastewater infrastructure in conjunction with Thames Water and make provision for upgrades where required due to the scale of the new dwellings to be provided;
- Be accompanied by a Noise Assessment and provide appropriate mitigation for noise associated with the road network and railway line adjacent to the site;
- Take account of the potential risk of contamination on site; and
- Take account of the Pinner Road Air Quality Management Area, located to the north west and south east of the site.

Site: MU23 Land at Asda, Dome Roundabout

Size (ha): 7.03	Location: Outside of CDA	Timescale: 6-15 years	Indicative yield = 422 units
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Development requirements and considerations

Development proposals should:

- Avoid significant adverse impacts on the locally listed buildings, the North Watford Library and Former Odhams Press Hall, located adjacent to the site;
- Provide no additional retail floorspace above the existing on site provision;
- Be informed by a Surface Water Drainage Strategy as the site is subject to surface water flood risk;
- Take account of the potential impact on water and wastewater infrastructure in conjunction with Thames Water and make provision for upgrades where required due to the scale of the new dwellings to be provided;
- Retain significant trees on site wherever possible, including those with a Tree Protection Order;
- Be accompanied by a Noise Assessment and provide appropriate mitigation for noise associated with the road and employment land adjacent to the site; and
- Take account of the potential risk of contamination on site.

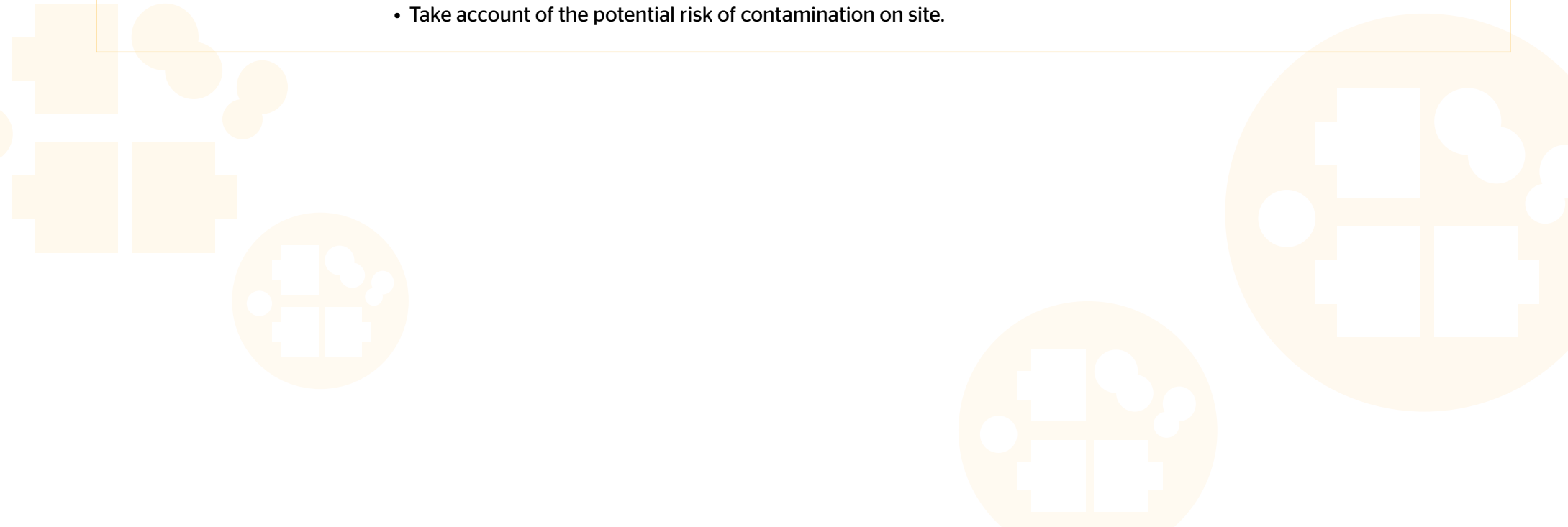
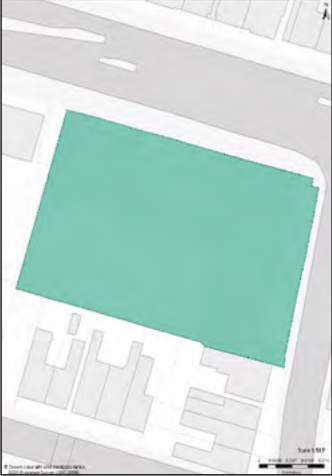



Table 13.3: Employment sites

Site: EM01 Cassiobury House, 11-19 Station Road			
Size (ha): 0.24	Location: CDA	Timescale: 1-5 years	Indicative yield = 2,530sqm of office floorspace
	<p>Development requirements and considerations</p> <p>This site is considered suitable for office development.</p> <p>Development proposals should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the wider objectives of the Watford Gateway Strategic Development Area and the Clarendon Road Primary Office Location; • Contribute towards the sustainability principles of the Plan while acknowledging that BREEAM ‘Excellent’ standards are not achievable; • Avoid significant adverse impacts on the locally and nationally listed buildings located in the vicinity of the site. A Heritage Impact Assessment may be required; and • Ensure that the scheme is designed to minimise impacts on the low-level residential dwellings adjacent to the south of the site. 		
Site: EM02 Land to the South of Wiggshall Industrial Estate			
Size (ha): 0.58	Location: Outside of CDA	Timescale: 6-15 years	Indicative yield = 11,600sqm of office floorspace
	<p>Development requirements and considerations</p> <p>This site is considered suitable for office development.</p> <p>Development proposals should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be informed by a site-specific Flood Risk Assessment and Surface Water Drainage Strategy as the site is in Flood Zones 2 and 3, and is also subject to groundwater and surface water flood risk; • Ensure that a safe access to the site has been provided; and • Take account of the potential risk of contamination on site. 		

Site: EM03 Gateway Zone

Size (ha): 1.7	Location: Outside of CDA	Timescale: 1-5 years	Indicative yield = 6,935sqm of industrial floorspace
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Development requirements and considerations

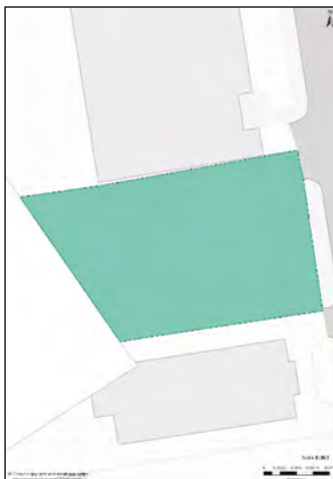
This site is considered suitable for industrial uses.

Development proposals should:

- Be informed by a site-specific Flood Risk Assessment and Surface Water Drainage Strategy as the site is subject to groundwater and surface water flood risk;
- Provide mitigation for any adverse impact resulting from the industrial uses on site in line with the ‘agent of change’ principle; and
- Take account of the potential risk of contamination on site.

Site: EM04 Land Between 14-18 Greenhill Crescent

Size (ha): 0.09	Location: Outside of CDA	Timescale: 1-5 years	Indicative yield = 900sqm of industrial floorspace
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Development requirements and considerations

This site is considered suitable for industrial uses.

Development proposals should:

- Provide mitigation for any adverse impact resulting from the industrial uses on site in line with the ‘agent of change’ principle; and
- Take account of the potential risk of contamination on site.

Site: EM05 Land at Colonial / Clive Way

Size (ha): **1.98**

Location: **CDA**

Timescale: **6-15 years**

Indicative yield = 9,200sqm of industrial floorspace



Development requirements and considerations

This site is considered suitable for industrial uses.

Development proposals should:

- Support the wider objectives of the Watford Gateway Strategic Development Area;
- Seek to work collaboratively with the landowner of site MU07, which is located adjacent to the west of the site, to maximise the benefits of development;
- Provide mitigation for any adverse impact resulting from the industrial uses on site in line with the ‘agent of change’ principle;
- Avoid any significant adverse impacts on the nationally listed buildings located within 300m of the site. A Heritage Impact Assessment may be required;
- Be accompanied by a Noise Assessment and provide appropriate mitigation for noise associated with the railway line, rail aggregates depot and associated concrete batching plant located in and adjacent to the site. Early engagement with the site operator will be required to ensure that to ensure that development does not prejudice the existing or future use of the safeguarded site and associated operations; and
- Take account of the potential risk of contamination on site.

Table 13.4: Education facilities¹¹

Site: ED01 Former Meriden School Site		
Size (ha): 1.74	Location: Outside of CDA	Timescale: 6-15 years
	<p>Development requirements and considerations</p> <p>The site is considered suitable for the development of an education facility.</p> <p>Development proposals should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide appropriate mitigation for the lapsed playing field in line with the Playing Pitch Strategy (2020); • Have regard to the Colne Way Waste Transfer Station, which is located directly west of the site. Mitigation for any negative impacts arising from the site's proximity to the waste site should be provided in line with the 'agent of change' principle; • Complete a review of transport impact and safety as part of a full Transport Assessment which will include mitigation for pupils crossing the A41. Pedestrian and cycle access should be taken from The Meadows to the north; • Explore the potential for a pedestrian and cycle link across Meriden Park between the site and Garsmouth Way; • Be accompanied by a Noise Assessment and provide appropriate mitigation for noise associated with the road network adjacent to the site; and • Be accompanied by a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal. 	

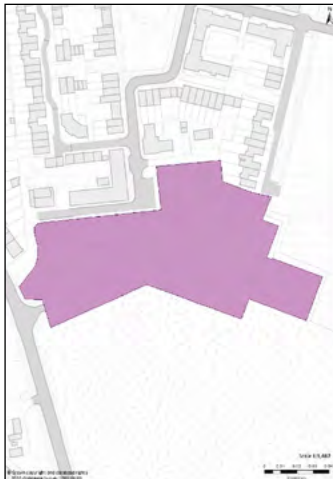
¹¹ Note that mixed use sites MU05, MU06, MU16 and MU21 are also required to provide a primary school on site as part of the wider scheme.

Site: ED02 Former Bill Everett Centre

Size (ha): **1.07**

Location: **Outside of CDA**

Timescale: **6-15 years**



Development requirements and considerations




The site is considered suitable for the development of an education facility.


Development proposals should:





- Establish clear connections and desire lines with the residential areas to the north;
- Complete a review of transport impact and safety as part of a full Transport Assessment. This will include consideration of the provision of a 'parent drop off' within the site to prevent parking and associated issues on the surrounding residential roads;
- Pedestrian and cycle access should be taken from Leggatts Way with potential for an additional access via Broad Road;
- Demonstrate suitable off-site playing field arrangements with consideration to safeguarding and land ownership and in consultation with Hertfordshire County Council;
- Ensure appropriate separation or buffers between development and the Harebreaks Wood Local Nature Reserve directly south of the site; and
- Be accompanied by a Preliminary Roost Assessment.








Appendix A: Draft Monitoring Framework

Chapter	Relevant Policies	Monitoring Indicator	Target	Source
 Chapter 1: A Spatial Strategy for Watford	Policy SS11: Spatial Strategy	Percent of floorspace on previously developed land	90% employment, 80% residential	Planning applications
		Number of jobs	13,000 jobs provided 2018-2036	Planning applications
		Completions data, for the Core Development Area Rest Of Town	N/A	Planning applications
 Chapter 2: Core Development Area	Policy CDA2.1: Watford Gateway Strategic Development Area; Policy CDA2.2: Town Centre Strategic Development Area; Policy CDA2.3: Colne Valley Strategic Development Area	Net additional home completions within each Strategic Development Area	Number of allocated homes	Planning applications
		Net office and industrial floor space within each Strategic Development Area	Amount of allocated office / industrial floor space	Planning applications
 Chapter 3: Homes for a Growing Community	Policy HO31: Housing Provision	Net completed dwellings and number of dwellings granted planning permission	14,274 dwellings 2018-2036 with 793 per year. Maintain 5 year housing supply	Planning applications and site visits
	Policy HO3.2: Housing Mix, Density and Optimising Use of Land	Density of residential developments (dph)	95+ dph within the Core Development Area and 45+ dph elsewhere in the town	Planning applications
		Percentage of family-sized units	20% of all new homes to be family-sized (three-bedrooms or more)	Planning applications
	Policy HO3.3: Affordable Housing	Percentage breakdown of affordable housing	35% of all residential units on sites of 10 or more dwellings to be affordable	Planning applications

Chapter	Relevant Policies	Monitoring Indicator	Target	Source
 Chapter 3: Homes for a Growing Community	Policy HO3.4: Build to Rent	Number of discounted market rent units	35% of all residential units (on sites of 10 or more dwellings) to be discounted market rent	Planning applications
	Policy HO3.9: Residential Conversions	Number of conversions refused planning permission based on exceeding 10% exceeding threshold	N/A	Planning applications
		Number of conversions permitted	N/A	Planning applications
	Policy HO3.5: Specialist Housing and Care Homes	Number of specialist and care bed spaces completed	102 bed spaces	Planning applications
	Policy HO3.6: Student and Co-Living Housing	Number of student bed spaces completed	N/A	Planning applications
	Policy HO3.8: Gypsies and Travellers	Number of pitches granted planning permission	Fulfil the identified need for 2 pitches if required	Planning applications
	Policy HO3.7: Self-Build and Custom Housebuilding	Number of self-build plots provided and completed	Proposals for 20 houses or more to provide a plot to contribute towards meeting the needs of people on the self-build and customhouse building list	Planning applications
	Policy HO3.10: Building Standards for New Homes	Delivery of accessible homes	All new homes to comply with M4(2) standard, 10% to comply with M4(3) standard and 2% of new homes on developments of 50 dwellings or more to be dementia friendly	Planning applications

Chapter	Relevant Policies	Monitoring Indicator	Target	Source
 Chapter 4: A Strong Economy	Policy EM4.2: Designated Industrial Areas	Loss of B class floorspace	No net loss	Planning applications
	Policy EM4.3: Office Development	E class office floorspace	No net loss	Planning applications
	Policy EM4.4: Economic Development Outside Designated Employment Locations	Loss of B class floorspace (outside designated areas)	No net loss	Planning applications
 Chapter 5: A Vibrant Town	Policy VT5.1: Supporting Vibrant Retail Centres	Percent of uses which are retail, office and leisure	N/A	Planning applications
		Maintain active ground floor uses	N/A	Annual shop survey
	Policy VT5.3: Local Centres	Maintain level of active ground floor uses	N/A	Annual shop survey
	Policy HC12.3: Built Cultural and Community Facilities	Number of community facilities	N/A	Annual shop survey
 Chapter 6: An Attractive Town	Policy QD6.2: Design Principles; Policy QD6.3: Public Realm; Policy QD6.4: Building Design	Number of planning applications refusals based on design grounds	N/A	Planning applications
	Policy QD6.5: Building Heights Policy	Number of buildings granted and refused planning permission that exceed the base building height	N/A	Planning applications
 Chapter 7: The Historic Environment	Policy HE7.2: Designated Heritage Assets; Heritage and The Historic Environment, Policy HE7.3: Non-Designated Heritage Assets; Policy HE7.4: Archaeology	Number of buildings on the at Risk Register	Reduce number on the risk register	Risk register
		Number of applications granted planning permission contrary to advice from Historic England	N/A	Planning applications

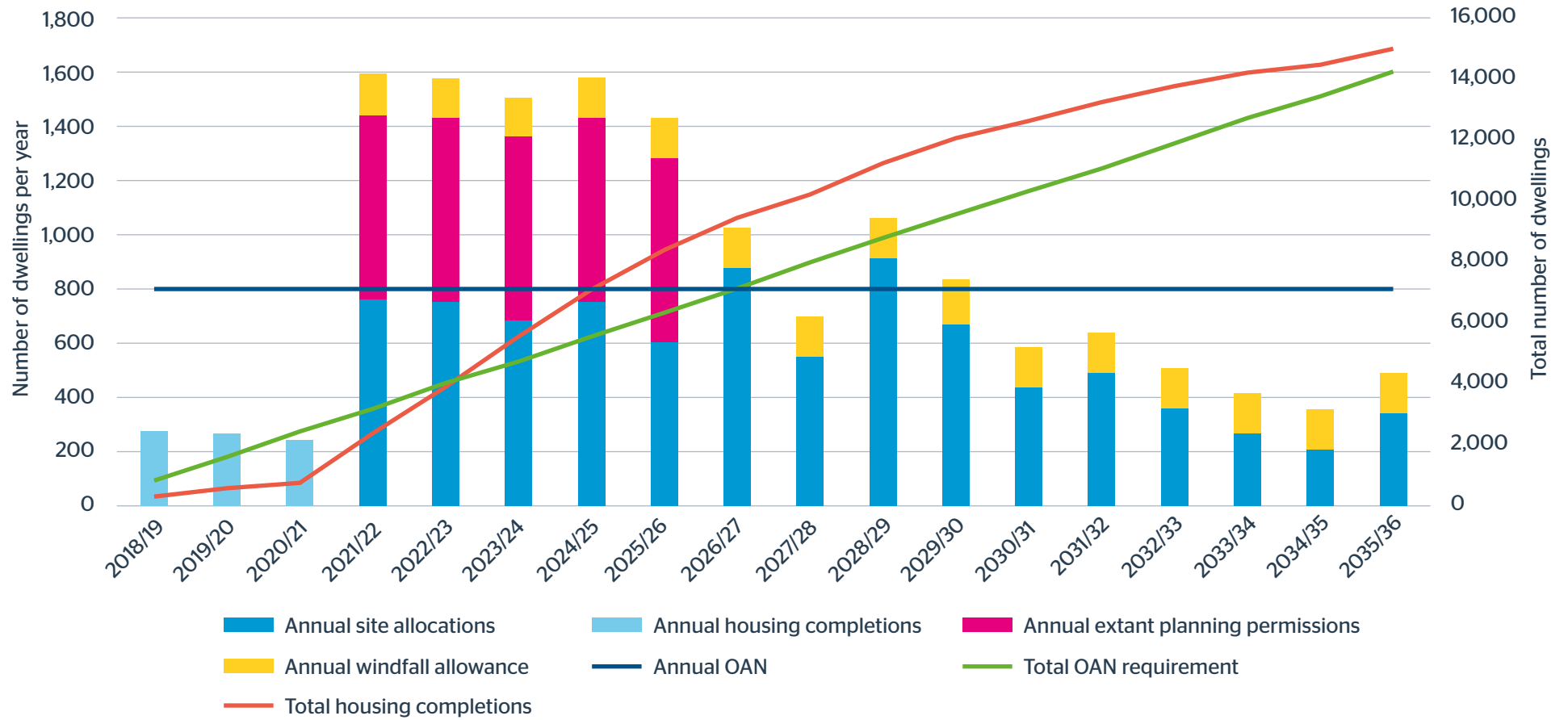
Chapter	Relevant Policies	Monitoring Indicator	Target	Source
 Chapter 8: A Climate Emergency	Policy CC8.1: Mitigating Climate Change and Reducing Carbon Emissions	Number of new residential developments which meet carbon emission reduction standards	19% energy efficiency above Part L of the Building Regulations (2013)	Planning applications and post completion certificates
		Percentage of carbon reduction since 2008	40% reduction by 2030	UK local authority and regional carbon dioxide emissions national statistics
	Policy CC8.2: Sustainable Construction Standards for Non-Residential Development	Percentage of non-residential developments which meet BREEAM standards	100% of developments meeting either excellent or very good	Planning applications
	Policy CC8.3: Sustainable Construction and Resource Management	New homes achieving 110 litres per person per day	100% of new homes	Planning applications
	Policy CC8.4: Managing Air Quality	Number of Air Quality Monitoring Areas	Reduction in number of Air Quality Management Areas	Planning applications
	Policy CC8.5: Managing the Impacts of Development	Number of planning permissions refused on pollution grounds	Zero refusals	Planning applications
 Chapter 9: Conserving and Enhancing the Environment	Policy NE9.3: Blue Infrastructure Network; Policy NE9.4: Flood Risk and Mitigation; Policy NE9.5: Surface Water Management	Number of Environment Agency objections to planning applications	No planning permissions granted contrary to the advice of the Environment Agency on flooding and water quality grounds	Planning applications
	Policy NE9.2: Green Infrastructure Network; Policy NE9.6: Protecting Open Space; Policy NE9.7: Providing New Open Space	Area of designated green infrastructure	No net loss of green infrastructure	Planning applications

Chapter	Relevant Policies	Monitoring Indicator	Target	Source
 Chapter 10: Infrastructure	Policy IN10.1: Integrated Infrastructure Delivery	Delivery of infrastructure set out in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan	N/A	Planning applications and infrastructure funding statements
	Policy IN10.2: Providing Infrastructure to Support New Development	Delivery of infrastructure set out in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan	N/A	Planning applications and infrastructure funding statements
	Policy IN10.3: Development Contributions	Contributions paid on new developments	N/A	Section 106 agreements, planning applications and infrastructure funding statements
 Chapter 11: A Sustainable Travel Town	Policy ST11.1: Sustainable Travel Town	Percentage of new housing within 400m of a bus stop or rail station	100%	Planning applications
	Policy ST11.2: Protecting and Enhancing Future Public Transport Routes and Watford Junction Station Area as a Transport Hub	Percentage of new developments granted planning permission with policy-compliant cycle parking provision	100%	Planning applications
	Policy ST11.4: A Walking and Cycling Infrastructure Improvement Town	Percentage of people walking and cycling for transport	Increase on baseline levels	HCC travel survey
	Policy ST11.5: Electric Vehicles, Car Parking and Car Clubs	Percentage of electric vehicles within the borough's total car ownership mix. Level of car ownership	Increase on baseline levels	Department for Transport
	Policy ST11.6: Managing the Transport Impacts of Development	Percentage of developments which have an active Travel Plan	Increase on baseline levels	Planning applications
 Chapter 12: A Healthy Community	Policy HC12.2: Health Impact Assessments	Number of Health Impact Assessments completed	All schemes over 100 dwellings	Planning applications

Appendix B: Housing Trajectory

Year	Commitments (completions and extant permissions)	Housing Completions from site allocations	Windfall allowance	Annual housing completions	Cumulative housing completions
2018/19	268	0	0	268	268
2019/20	262	0	0	262	530
2020/21	235	0	0	235	765
2021/22	676	771	139	1,586	2,351
2022/23	676	759	139	1,574	3,925
2023/24	676	684	139	1,499	5,424
2024/25	676	757	139	1,572	6,996
2025/26	676	611	139	1,426	8,422
2026/27	0	881	140	1,021	9,443
2027/28	0	553	140	693	10,136
2028/29	0	916	140	1,056	11,192
2029/30	0	687	140	827	12,019
2030/31	0	444	140	584	12,603
2031/32	0	493	140	633	13,236
2032/33	0	365	140	505	13,741
2033/34	0	275	140	415	14,156
2034/35	0	212	140	352	14,508
2035/36	0	340	140	480	14,988
Total	4,145	8,745	2,095	14,988	14,988

Housing Trajectory 2018-2036



Appendix C: Transport Infrastructure Requirements

Infrastructure	Description
Colne Valley Strategic Development Area	
20mph Speed Limit	On all internal roads, with design appropriate to low speeds.
Internal Walking and Cycling Links	Linking town centre, Bushey Arches, Oxhey, Vicarage Road, Watford General Hospital and Riverwell.
High Street Sustainable Transport Hub	At junction of High Street / Water Lane to provide interchange for multiple modes.
Junction Improvement	Revised layout of Waterfields Way / Lower High Street junction to improve visibility of signals and safety of all road users.
Mass Rapid Transit	To support route as developed by Hertfordshire County Council.
Bus Prioritisation	Bus priority along the length of Lower High Street, extending around Exchange Road / Beechen Grove Gyratory.
Cycle and Walking Access	Enhanced cycle infrastructure along length of Lower High Street.
Enhanced Public Realm	At Lower High Street / Exchange Road junction.
Bushey Arches	
Cycle and Walking Access	To Bushey Station through Oxhey Park and linking to enhanced provision on Lower High Street, reducing severance of Bushey Arches Gyratory.
Bus Prioritisation	Bus priority along the length of Lower High Street.
Mass Rapid Transit	To support route as developed by Hertfordshire County Council.
St Albans Road	
Cycle and Walking Access	Enhanced cycle infrastructure along St Albans Road. Crossing improvements for both walking and cycling at Langley Road / St Albans Road junction.
Bus Prioritisation	Along length of St Albans Road from, and including, Dome Roundabout to town centre.

Infrastructure	Description
Riverwell	
20mph Speed Limit	On all internal roads, with design appropriate to low speeds.
Internal Walking and Cycling Links	Linking Watford General Hospital, Stripling Way, Thomas Sawyer Way and Ebury Way.
Cycle and Walking Access	Cycling infrastructure improvements along Vicarage Road between Hagden Lane and Fearnley Street. Cycling infrastructure improvements along Harwoods Road, Chester Road, Queens Avenue and Whippendell Road linking Watford General Hospital and Ascot Road.
Bus Prioritisation	Along Vicarage Road between Hagden Lane and Fearnley Street.
Mass Rapid Transit	To support route as developed by Hertfordshire County Council.
Ascot Road	
Internal Walking and Cycling Links	Connecting Croxley View, Greenhill Crescent, Tolpits Lane, Watford Station, and all weather access to the Ebury Way from Tolpits Lane and King George V Playing Field.
Cycle and Walking Access	Resurfacing of the Ebury Way. Cycling infrastructure improvements along Vicarage Road between Hagden Lane and Fearnley Street. Cycling infrastructure improvements along Harwoods Road, Chester Road, Queens Avenue and Whippendell Road linking Watford General Hospital and Ascot Road.
Mass Rapid Transit	To support route as developed by Hertfordshire County Council.

Infrastructure	Description
Town Centre Strategic Development Area	
20mph Speed Limit	On all internal roads, with design appropriate to low speeds.
Internal Walking and Cycling Links	Across town centre both north / south and east / west.
Cycle and Walking Access	Overcome ring road severance via pedestrian and cycle crossing improvements at gateways to the town centre: Derby Road, Water Lane, Lower High Street, Vicarage Rd and Market Street. Enhanced cycle infrastructure along Hempstead Road. Enhanced cycle infrastructure along St Albans Road and Rickmansworth Road.
Junction Improvement	Full signalisation of Beechen Grove / Rickmansworth Rd roundabout and improved lane guidance and signage.
Bus Prioritisation	Bus prioritisation on the Exchange Road / Beechen Grove Gyratory.
Mass Rapid Transit	To support route as developed by Hertfordshire County Council.
Watford Gateway Strategic Development Area	
20mph Speed Limit	On all internal roads, with design appropriate to low speeds.
Eastern Mobility Hub and Station Bridge	Eastern mobility hub at Watford Junction station with a new multi-storey car park, a new station bridge connecting the two platforms and infrastructure provision for vulnerable road users. Improved access to the new hub along Imperial Way, Clive Way and Reeds Crescent/ Orphanage Road.
Western Station Access Priority Reallocation and bus station upgrade	Prioritise pedestrian, cycle and bus movements whilst limiting through traffic at the western station entrance. Improvements to bus priority around the bus station.
Penn Road Connectivity and Station Access Improvements	New pedestrian bridge and cycle bridge over the Abbey Line to connect Penn Road and Colonial Way, improvements to station access for vulnerable users, improvements to the station car park access.
Bradshaw Road Quietway	Link for vulnerable road users from Watford Junction Station through the new Station Quarter West development and Bradshaw Road to Balmoral Road.
Mass Rapid Transit	To support route as developed by Hertfordshire County Council.
Cycle and Walking Access	Crossing improvements at Langley Road / St Albans Road and Hempstead Road / Stratford Way junctions to improve connectivity for cyclists. Enhanced cycle infrastructure along St Albans Road.

Appendix D: Cycle Parking Standards

Use Class	High Sustainability Area		Other Areas	
	Minimums			
Residential	Long-Term (employee / resident)	Short-Term (visitor)	Long-Term (employee / resident)	Long-Term (employee / resident)
C2 Residential Institutions	1 space per 5 staff	1 space per 20 units	1 space per 8 staff	
C3 Dwelling House 1 Bed C3 Dwelling House 2 Bed C3 Dwelling House 3+ Bed	1.25 spaces per unit 2.00 spaces per unit 2.50 space per unit	1 space per 20 units	1.25 spaces per unit 1.75 spaces per unit 2.25 spaces per unit	1 space per 20 units
C4 Houses and Multiple Occupation	1 space per 2 bedrooms	1 space per 20 units	1 space per 2 bedrooms	1 space per 20 units
Non-Residential	Long-Term (employee)	Short-Term (student / visitor)	Long-Term (employee)	Short-Term (student / visitor)
B2 General Industrial	1 space per 150 sqm	1 space per 1,000 sqm	1 space per 250 sqm	1 space per 1,000 sqm
B8 Storage and Distribution	1 space per 250 sqm	1 space per 1,000 sqm	1 space per 500 sqm	1 space per 1,000 sqm
C1 Hotels	1 space per 20 bedrooms	1 space per 50 bedrooms	1 space per 20 bedrooms	1 space per 50 bedrooms
E Shops, Financial Professional Services, Restaurants and Cafes	1 space per 150 sqm	1 space per 20 sqm	1 space per 175 sqm	1 space per 40 sqm
E Office, R&D, Light Industry in Residential Area	1 space per 100 sqm	1 space per 500 sqm	1 space per 125 sqm	1 space per 500 sqm
E Clinic, Health Centre, Crèche, day nursery or centre	1 space per 5 staff	1 space per 3 staff	1 space per 8 staff	1 space per 5 staff
E Sports facilities, gymnasiums etc.	1 space per 5 staff	1 space per 100 sqm	1 space per 8 staff	1 space per 125 sqm
F Schools and Nurseries	1 space per 5 staff	1 space per 8 students	1 space per 8 staff	1 space per 10 students

Use Class	High Sustainability Area		Other Areas	
	Minimums			
Non-Residential	Long-Term (employee)	Short-Term (student / visitor)	Long-Term (employee)	Short-Term (student / visitor)
F Universities and Colleges	1 space per 5 staff	1 space per 8 students	1 space per 8 staff	1 space per 10 students
F1 Other uses (including non-residential education and training, libraries, museums, religious institutions etc.)	1 space per 5 staff	1 space per 100 sqm	1 space per 8 staff	1 space per 125 sqm
F2 Community Halls	1 space per 5 staff	1 space per 100 sqm	1 space per 8 staff	1 space per 125 sqm
F2 Swimming Baths, Ice Rinks, Outdoor Sport or Recreation	1 space per 5 staff	1 space per 100 sqm	1 space per 8 staff	1 space per 125 sqm
Drinking Establishments and Takeaways	1 space per 175 sqm	1 space per 20 sqm	1 space per 175 sqm	1 space per 40 sqm
Cinemas, concert halls etc	1 space per 5 staff	1 space per 100 sqm	1 space per 8 staff	1 space per 125 sqm
Sui generis	As per most relevant other standard			
Transport Hubs	To be considered on a case by case basis in discussion with the Council			
<p>Developments requiring ten or more visitor parking spaces may be required to include within this provision bike share bays, either on the site or at a suitable location within the vicinity that would serve the development if agreed with the Council and appropriate stakeholders. The volume of bays and positioning for these will be determined on a case by case basis, but no more than half of visitor parking provision should be formed of bike share bays as opposed to regular cycle parking.</p>				

Appendix E: Car Parking Standards

Use Class	Core Development Area	Other Areas
	Maximums	
Residential		
C2 Residential Institutions	n/a	n/a
C3 Dwelling House 1 Bed	0.3	1
C3 Dwelling House 2 Bed	0.3	
C3 Dwelling House 3+ Bed (spaces per unit)	0.3	
C4 Houses of Multiple Occupation (spaces per unit)	0.5	1
Non-Residential		
B2 General Industrial (spaces per 1,500sqm)	0.5	1
B8 Storage and Distribution (spaces per 1,500sqm)	0.5	1
C1 Hotels (spaces per bedroom)	0.5	1
E Shops (spaces per 100sqm)	Car free	1
E Financial / Professional Services (spaces per 100sqm)	Car free	0.5
E Restaurants and Cafes	Car free	n/a
E Office (spaces per 100 sqm)	0.5	1
E R&D, Light Industry in Residential Area (spaces per 150sqm)	0.5	1
E Clinic, Health Centre, Crèche, day nursery or centre	Car free	n/a
E Sports facilities, gymnasiums etc.	Car free	n/a
F.1 Schools and Nurseries	Car free	n/a

Use Class	Core Development Area	Other Areas
Maximums		
Non-Residential		
F.1 Universities and Colleges	Car free	n/a
F.1 Other uses (including non-residential education and training, libraries, museums, religious institutions etc.)	Car free	n/a
F.2 Community Halls	Car free	n/a
F.2 Swimming Baths, Ice Rinks, Outdoor Sport or Recreation	Car free	n/a
F.2 Shops smaller than 280 sqm mostly selling essential goods, at least 1km from another similar shop	Car free	n/a
Drinking Establishments and Takeaways	Car free	n/a
Cinemas, concert halls etc.	Car free	n/a
Sui generis	As per most relevant other standard	
Transport Hubs	To be considered on a case by case basis in discussion with the Council	
Where no standard is indicated car parking provision to be considered on a case by case basis in discussion with the Council, with car parking requirements to be evaluated within the Transport Assessment / Statement and will be expected to align with sustainable travel ambitions set out within the Local Plan Chapter 11 'A Sustainable Travel Town'.		

The extent of marketing initiatives will vary based on the type of premises being advertised. However, as a minimum the following initiatives should be employed for all premises:

- **Marketing Board** – this should be relative to the type and size of premises. A simple for sale board may be appropriate for small commercial premises and community facilities. For larger commercial units larger boards giving details of the property including the guide price should be employed. Boards should be clearly visible from main transport routes.
- **Marketing Particulars** – including the following:
 - Location
 - Internal and external photographs
 - Description of accommodation
 - Terms (leasehold, freehold, long lease etc.)
 - Guide Price/Rent
 - Current planning position
 - Services and Utilities
 - Energy Performance Certificate
 - Rateable value and business rates
 - VAT status
 - Legal and professional costs
 - Contact information for the agent

- For larger commercial units and tourist accommodation sites, which are more likely to have a regional or national audience, the particulars (including layouts and photos) should be set out in a bespoke brochure.
- **Press Advertisement** – for small commercial units and community facilities an advert should be placed and maintained in the local newspaper. For larger commercial units specialist publications should also be used. In addition, for large commercial units a press release should be given to local and regional press.
- **Online Advertisement** – the premises should be published on the agent's website as well as at least one national commercial property search engine. For very large or significant commercial units a bespoke website for the property could be created.
- **Targeted Advertisement** – where appropriate other providers should be informed directly that the premises is being marketed. This is likely to be particularly relevant for community facilities where there may be a requirement for alternative provision.

Marketing Report

If, following the 12 months of marketing, there has been no success in selling or letting a unit then a report detailing the marketing undertaken and demonstrating compliance with these requirements should be prepared and submitted alongside any

planning application for redevelopment or change of use. The marketing period must have ended no more than nine months before the date of submission of a planning application.

The Marketing Report must demonstrate:

- The original marketing strategy (in accordance with the above requirements).
- The duration and dates of the marketing campaign (minimum 12 months).
- Evidence that the marketing strategy was delivered – photos of marketing boards, copies of particulars, screenshots of online adverts, copies of press articles and adverts.
- A full log of relevant correspondence throughout the marketing campaign. This should include, where relevant, details of reasons why the prospective occupier(s) deemed the premises unsuitable. If any offers were rejected the grounds for rejection must be provided.
- If the record of enquiries indicated a lack of interest the report should demonstrate measures taken to alter the strategy to increase interest.

In summary, the marketing statement should include all details and evidence of the steps taken to market premises as detailed above. If the Authority is not satisfied that these requirements have been met then additional marketing may be required before the proposal can be considered acceptable.

Appendix G: Glossary

Active Travel

Non-motorised travel, such as walking and cycling.

Active Frontage

Ground floors where windows and doors face onto the street, avoiding blank walls and which enable people to see into and out of buildings.

Adaptation (Climate Change)

Modifications necessary to maintain life in response to climate change effects and expected negative impacts.

Adaptations (Housing)

Changes made to a home allowing safer, easier access.

Affordable Housing

Housing for sale or for rent for those whose needs are not being met by the market. This includes social rented housing, affordable rented housing and intermediate housing.

Air Quality Management Areas

Identified areas where air quality objectives are not being met.

Agent of Change Principle

The new use is responsible for mitigating any future impacts on existing surrounding uses. Seeks to prevent development creating a negative impact on the local area (for example noise pollution).

Authority Monitoring Report (AMR)

A report that summarises the performance of planning policies and is used to identify how effectively the Local Plan is implemented.

Base

The lower section of a taller building which is seen and experienced from street level.

Bike Share Scheme

A pool of bikes owned by a local authority or private company available for individual use on a short-term basis by members.

Biodiversity

The amount of variety in plants, animals and insects within a specific area. Higher amounts of biodiversity are important for sustaining ecosystems and habitats.

Bioswales

Channels which move and hold storm water and run off through vegetation and rock to remove debris and pollutants.

Blue Infrastructure

Networks of water including (but not limited to) rivers, ponds, lakes and canals.

BREEAM (Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method)

An assessment that measures the sustainability of a new building including issues related to energy, health and wellbeing, innovation, land use, materials, management, pollution, transport, waste and water.

Brownfield Land

Land that was previously developed with any type of fixed infrastructure.

Building Regulations

Government standards set for design and construction which apply to most new buildings and alterations to existing buildings in England and Wales.

Car Club

A pool of cars owned by a local authority or private company available for individual use on a short-term basis by members.

Carbon Neutral

A combination of reducing and offsetting emissions of the greenhouse gas carbon resulting in no net release.

Carbon Offset

A method to reduce emissions by compensating elsewhere. These offsets are measures in tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent.

Car-lite Development

Residential development with minimal or no car parking, where travel is mainly via walking, cycling and public transport.

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

A charge levied on new developments to support infrastructure delivery. Introduced by the Planning Act (2008).

Comparison Retail

Retail items not bought on a frequent basis, for example televisions and white goods (fridges, dishwashers etc).

Conservation Area

An area designated under the Planning Act 1990 (Listed Buildings and Conservation) as being of special historic or architectural interest the character of which should be preserved and enhanced.

Construction Management Plan

A plan to address procedures and methods of construction prior to commencement.

Controlled Parking Zones

An area where all on street parking is controlled and restricted by the local Council.

Culvert

An artificial, impermeable channel, tunnel or similar structure which enables water to flow under or through a built-up area.

Combined Heat and Power

A power system that generates both heat and electricity.

Curtilage

The boundary of a development site or property.

Delivery and Servicing Plan

A plan to manage logistics of how to provide services such as waste collection and freight delivery to a development.

Demand Responsive Transport (DRT)

Flexible form of bus services that vary routes and timetables according to demand, passengers' book spaces to join at an agreed time and place.

Design and Access Statement

A report statement submitted as part of a planning application which should explain how a proposed development is a suitable response to the site and its setting and how it will be accessed by future users.

Development Contributions

Contribution in the form of money, land or other means collected from developers to deliver infrastructure. This could be through the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) or a Section 106 Agreement as well as onsite contributions.

Endemic

Something that is native and regularly found in a certain area.

Exception Test (Flooding)

A test applied to sites with flood risk, when there are not enough suitable sites with lower or no risk of flooding available for use. The test is required to show that the sites with flood risk will be safe to develop and that any sustainability benefits of developing the site will outweigh the risk of flooding.

Evidence Base

Data collected by a local authority to support and justify policies.

Flexible Workspace

Shared working space in new developments, used by residents to work from home.

Flood Risk Assessment

A way to determine the likelihood of flooding in specific areas.

Flood Zones

Areas of land which are mapped by the Environment Agency into flood zones. Flood Zone 1 is least likely to experience a flooding event and Flood Zone 3 has the highest risk.

Green Infrastructure

Networks of green space which are multifunctional and offer environmental and social benefits for the surrounding area. This can include parks and gardens, green corridors, natural areas, amenity spaces and allotments.

Greenhouse Gases

Gases which occur naturally but due to human activity are intensifying climate change effects.

Health Impact Assessment

An assessment of how a proposal may potentially affect health and wellbeing of a population.

Habitable Rooms

Any room which is used (or intended to be used) for sleeping, cooking, eating or living. Rooms which are not included would be hallways, service rooms, laundry rooms and bathrooms.

Hardstanding

An area of hard surfacing which is often used for parking.

Hectare (ha)

A unit of measurement commonly used to measure land. 1 hectare = 10,000 square metres = 2.5 acres.

Housing Mix

The range of unit sizes (E.G. 1-bed, 2-bed, 3-bed units) and different types of homes (e.g. traditional houses, apartments).

Infill Development

When small areas of vacant land in urban areas are developed.

Intensification

Further development within the existing urban area.

Land Assembly Powers

An organisation that has legal powers to buy property at a fair price to combine land parcels from different ownerships.

Local Centres

An area including shops and facilities for local people.

Locally Listed Building

Buildings, structures or monuments of local interest that contribute to the heritage, identity and streetscape of Watford. Locally listed buildings do not merit statutory listing under the Planning Act (1990), but are considered to be of local architectural or historic value.

Major Development

In terms of residential development, greater than 10 dwellings or 0.5 hectares. In terms of other development, a floorspace increase of greater than 1000 square meters is considered to be major development.

Mansard

In relation to taller buildings this is the middle section of the buildings and is sometimes set in or narrower than the base section.

Mass Rapid Transit (MRT)

Urban transport system capable of carrying large numbers of passengers quickly. Encompasses transport modes that run on roads, rails or a combination of these.

The Metropolitan Green Belt

A statutory designation around London that exists to restrict urban sprawl, protect the countryside from encroachment, stop the merging of towns and encourage the recycling of brownfield land.

Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG)

The government department responsible for planning and local government.

Minor Development

In terms of residential development, less than 10 dwellings or 0.5 hectares. In terms of other development, a floorspace lower than 1,000 square meters would be considered to be minor development.

Mixed-use Development

A development that is comprised of different land uses, such as employment and residential uses.

Nationally Listed Building

A building or monument that is protected because of its national historical or architectural interest under the Planning Act (1990).

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

The national policy document which provides the framework to government policies to guide Local Planning Authorities, particularly when preparing a Local Plan.

Natural Surveillance

When building design encourages people to overlook a space with windows, balconies, front gardens or entrances.

Objectively Assessed Need (OAN)

Using a standardised methodology, the number of new homes required to meet the future needs of the population.

Overheating

Discomfort to occupants from high temperatures caused by highly insulated and airtight buildings with inadequate natural or mechanical ventilation systems.

Permeability

Is a measure of the number of alternative routes which are available for movement through an area; areas with a high number of choices are considered to have good permeability.

Place Making

The process of creating high quality accessible places that people want to live, work, play and learn in.

Planning Condition

These can be attached to a planning permission which require a developer to address specific issues.

Plot Ratio

The ratio of the floor area of a building to the land on which it sits. It is often used to measure how intensively land is being used.

Policies Map

Areas covered by Local Plan Policies and proposals identified on an Ordnance Survey Map.

Pop-up

This is the top section of the building and is the section which is most visible in the skyline and panoramic views across a place.

Positive frontage

An edge or side of a building or a boundary wall/fence with an interesting and well designed elevation or boundary treatment which provides an engaging and attractive edge to the public space.

Public Realm

Parts of the town that are available for everyone to use, including streets, public squares and open spaces.

Renewable Energy

Energy from renewable sources such as sunlight, wind, rain and geothermal heat. The use of these resources to create energy is sustainable for human consumption.

Retail Hierarchy

Classifies and ranks retail areas based upon the role, range of choice, distance people will travel and popularity from outside the town.

Retail impact assessment

An assessment undertaken for an application for retail use (normally on developments over 2,500 square metres gross floorspace, but they may occasionally be necessary for smaller developments, such as those likely to have a significant impact on smaller centres) on the impact of the proposal on the vitality and viability of existing centres within the catchment area of the proposed development. The assessment includes the likely cumulative effect of recent permissions, developments under construction and completed developments.

Riparian

Area adjacent to a river or similar body of water.

Section 106 Agreement

A reference to Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act (1990) allows a Local Planning Authority to enter a legally-binding agreement or planning obligation with a landowner in association with the granting of planning permission. These agreements are a way of delivering or addressing matters that are necessary to make a development acceptable in planning terms. They are used to support the provision of services and infrastructure.

Self-Build and Custom Build Housing

When an individual, or a group of individuals, organises the design and construction of their own home.

Severance Effect

The dividing effects of busy roads on the movement of people and communities.

Single and Dual Aspect

A single aspect dwelling only has windows and openings to the exterior on one side and a dual aspect dwelling has openings and windows to the exterior on at least two sides.

Sequential Test (Flooding)

A test that aims to steer new development to the areas with the lowest probability of flooding.

Sequential Test (Retail)

A test that aims to steer main town centre uses towards town centre locations first. If no town centre locations are available, the test steers the uses towards edge of centre locations next, then out of centre locations.

Street Canyon

A street which has tall buildings along both sides which results in the ground level experience being similar to a natural canyon.

Soakaways

A ditch or pit which is filled with loose rock or rubble used to manage water.

Statutory

Something that is required by law.

Sui Generis

A type of land use that is not defined by other land use classifications.

Supplementary Planning Document

A document which supports the Local Plan by providing more detail and guidance on a topic or an area. These are non-statutory documents.

Surface Water Flooding

Flooding caused by rainwater that cannot be absorbed into the ground or is caused by poor drainage systems.

Sustainable Development

Defined by the United Nations General Assembly as 'meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to

meet their own needs'. In terms of planning, the National Planning Policy Framework states that sustainable development should be viewed in a social, economic and environmental context.

Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS)

An approach to drainage which seeks to control the flow of water and reduce the risk of sewer discharge and/or flooding.

Target Emission Rate (TER)

A standard for energy efficiency of a building expressed as kilograms of CO₂ per square metre.

Tenure

The ownership or rental of a property.

Tenure Blind

Homes designed to make types of housing indistinguishable.

Topography

The shape and relief of the land resulting in a particular and distinctive landscape or town scape, often relating to height above sea level.

Town Centre Uses

Defined by the National Planning Policy Framework as retail development (including warehouse clubs and factory outlet centres); leisure, entertainment and more intensive sport and recreation uses (including cinemas, restaurants, drive-through restaurants, bars and pubs, nightclubs, casinos, health and fitness centres, indoor bowling centres and bingo halls); offices; and arts, culture and tourism development (including theatres, museums, galleries and concert halls, hotels and conference facilities).

Transport Assessment

A comprehensive review that sets out transport issues, and proposed mitigations for these, relating to a proposed development. The assessment also identifies measures to improve accessibility and safety for different travel modes, including walking and cycling.

Travel Plan

A long-term management strategy for a site that seeks to encourage sustainable travel.

Urban Grain

The size, shape and pattern of plots, buildings and streets in an area or neighbourhood that are a constituent part of the character of the places.

Use Classes

The Town and Country Planning Order (1987) places different land uses into categories. In practice, changes between use classes are likely to require planning permission. A list of the planning use classes can be found in Appendix B.

Viability

Ensuring that developer costs and policy obligations do not compromise the deliverability of a development.

Water Stress

When the amount of water being consumed exceeds the amount that is readily available for use it leads to water stress. Areas of water stress are determined by the Environment Agency.

Windfall Development

Development sites that are not specifically identified in the Local Plan.

Appendix H: Planning policies to be Superseded by the Watford Local Plan 2018-2036

Watford District Plan 2000 Policies Retained in the Core Strategy 2006-2031

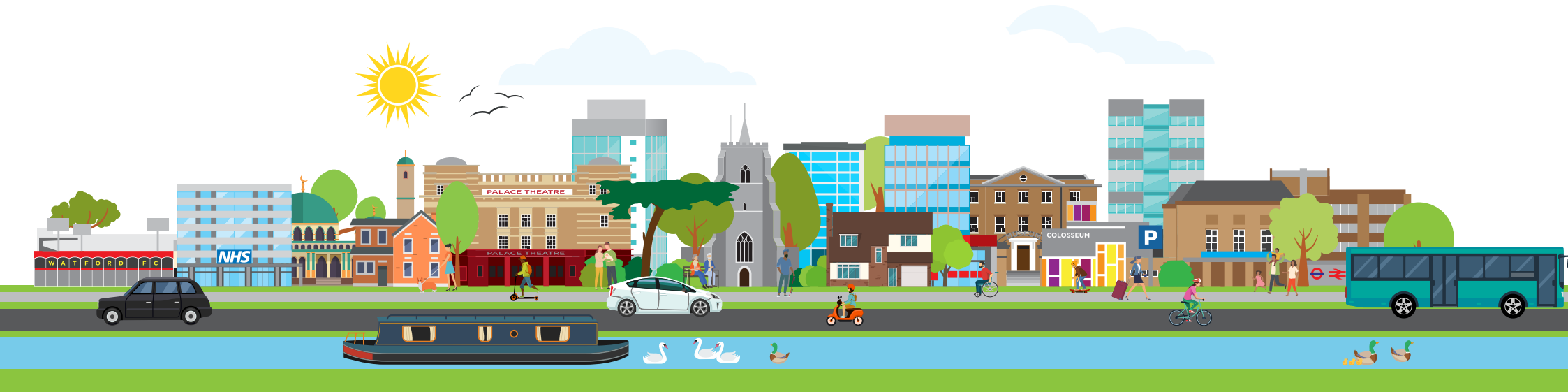
Policy No.	Title
SE7	Waste Storage, Recovery and Recycling in New Development
SE20	Air Quality
SE21	Air Quality Management Areas
SE22	Noise
SE23	Light Pollution
SE24	Unstable and Contaminated Land
SE25	Potentially Hazardous or Polluting Devt
SE26	Watercourses
SE27	Flood Prevention
SE28	Groundwater Quality
SE36	Replacement Trees and Hedgerows
SE37	Protection of Trees, Woodlands and Hedgerows
SE39	Tree and Hedgerow Protection in New Development
SE40	Landscape Character Assessment
T10	Cycle Parking Standards
T21	Access and Servicing
T22	Car Parking Standards
T24	Residential Development
T26	Car Free Residential Development
H9	Back Garden Development
H10	Planning Agreements for Educational and Community Facilities
H13	Conversions
H14	Conversions: Provision of Family-sized Units
H15	Non-Residential Proposals in Residential Areas
H16	Retention of Affordable Housing

Policy No.	Title
E1	Employment Areas
E2	Employment Use Outside Identified Employment Areas
E5	Environmental Considerations
S5	Non-Retail Uses in Prime Retail Frontage
S6	Non-Retail Uses within the Harlequin Shopping Centre
S7	Secondary Retail Frontage
S9	Non-Retail Uses in North Watford Shopping Centre/Local Shopping Frontages
S11	Use Class A3 Food and Drink
S12	Planning Conditions for Use Class A3 Food and Drink
E2	Employment Use Outside Identified Employment Areas
E5	Environmental Considerations
S5	Non-Retail Uses in Prime Retail Frontage
S6	Non-Retail Uses within the Harlequin Shopping Centre
S7	Secondary Retail Frontage
S9	Non-Retail Uses in North Watford Shopping Centre/Local Shopping Frontages
S11	Use Class A3 Food and Drink
S12	Planning Conditions for Use Class A3 Food and Drink
U15	Buildings of Local Interest
U17	Setting of Conservation Areas
U18	Design in Conservation Areas
U19	Small-scale Developments in Conservation Areas
U20	Demolition in Conservation Areas
U24	Shopfronts
U25	Advertisements and Signs

Core Strategy 2006-2031 Policies

Policy No.	Title
Vision	Vision of Watford in 2031
SO1	A Family Friendly Town Centre
SO2	Sustainable Neighbourhoods
SO3	Enhance Watford’s regional, economic and transportation role
SO4	Enhance Watford’s regional health, recreational, educational, cultural and social role.
SO5	Enhance Watford’s environment, green infrastructure and heritage assets.
SS1	Spatial Strategy
SPA1	Town Centre
SPA2	Watford Junction
SPA3	Health Campus
SPA4	Lower High Street
SPA5	Dome Roundabout
SPA6	Western Gateway
IP1	Croxley Rail Link
IP2	Abbey Flyer
IP3	Watford Junction Interchange
SD1	Water
SD2	Climate Change

Policy No.	Title
TLC1	Town Centre Development
TLC2	Neighbourhood Centres
HS1	Housing Supply and Site Selection
HS2	Housing Mix
HS3	Affordable Housing
HS4	Gypsies and Travellers
EMP1	Economic Development
EMP2	Employment Land
T1	Regional Transport Node
T2	Location of New Development
T3	Improving Accessibility
T4	Transport Assessments
T5	Providing New Infrastructure
INF1	Infrastructure Delivery and Planning Obligations
UD1	Delivering High Quality Design
UD2	Built Heritage Conservation
GI1	Green Infrastructure
GI2	Green Belt
GI3	Biodiversity
GI4	Sports and Recreation



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