

Watford Authorities Monitoring Report: 2021-2022

March 2023

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Executive Summary

Monitoring Indicator	Relevant Watford Local Plan policy	Policy target	Previous Monitoring Year (MY)	Current MY	Target met in current Monitoring Year? Yes or NO	Current trend- Red Amber Green
Residential completions	Policy H03.1	784 dwellings per annum (dpa) completed, 13,328 over the plan period, maintain a 5 year supply	395 dwellings (dws)	754 (Net) dws	N	
Residential delivery within the Core Development Area	CDA2.1; CDA 2.2 and CDA 2.3	No specific target set	-	368 dws (49%)	-	-
Residential delivery within the Watford Gateway Strategic Development Area	CDA 2.1	No specific target set	-	171 dws (23%)	-	-
Residential delivery within the Town Centre Strategic Development Area	CDA 2.2	No specific target set	-	104 dws (14%)	-	-
Residential delivery within the Colne Valley Strategic Development Area	CDA 2.3	No specific target set	-	93 dws (12%)	-	-
Residential delivery on PDL	Policy SS1.1	80% of all residential development	63%	95%	Y	
Number of dwellings granted permission	Policy H03.1	784 dpa completed, 13,328 over the plan period, maintain a 5 year supply	-	991 dws	Y	
Lapse Rate	Policy H03.1	Keep lapse rate as low as possible	-	6%	Y	
Density of new residential development within the Core Development Area (dph)	Policy H03.2	Minimum target of 95 dwellings per hectare (dph) within the CDA	-	177dph	Y	
Density of new residential development outside the Core Development Area (dph)	Policy H03.2	Minimum target of 45 dwellings per hectare outside the CDA.	-	95dph	Y	
Size of dwellings completed	Policy H03.2	20% of all completions to be family sized	-	10%	N	
Affordable housing delivery	Policy H03.3	35% of all habitable rooms on sites of 10 or more	75 dws	251 dws	Y	

	Policy H03.4	dwellings to be affordable.				
Number of applications for residential conversions permitted?	Policy H03.9	No specific target set	-	14 dws	-	-
Number of specialist and care bed spaces completed	Policy H03.5	102 bed spaces over the plan period (6 bed spaces per year).	-	0	N	
Number of student bed spaces	Policy H03.6	No specific target set.	-	0	-	-
Number of Gypsy and Traveller pitches granted planning permission.	Policy H03.8	Meet the identified need for two pitches over the plan period.	0	0	N	
Number of self build or custom build plots provided and completed.	Policy H03.7	Proposals for 20 houses or more to provide plots to contribute towards meeting the needs of people on the self build and customhouse building list	-	0	-	
Building standards for new homes	Policy H03.10	All new homes to comply with M4(2) accessibility standard.		<i>No data available</i>	<i>n/a</i>	
		6% of all new dwellings to meet M4(3) accessibility standard.		<i>No data available</i>	<i>n/a</i>	
		2% all dwellings on developments of 50 or more dwellings to be dementia friendly.		<i>No data available</i>	<i>n/a</i>	
Net Industrial floorspace	Policy SS1.1 Policy EM4.2	No net loss of industrial floorspace	-	-5,143sqm	N	
Net Office floorspace	Policy EM4.3	No net loss of E(g)(i) class office floorspace	-	15,507sqm	Y	
Net delivery of employment floorspace within the designated industrial areas	Policy EM4.2	No net loss of industrial floorspace within the designated industrial areas	-	-4,863qm	N	
Net delivery of E(g)(i) office floorspace within the Primary	Policy EM4.2	No net loss of office floorspace within the Primary	-	15,235sqm	Y	

Office Location and the Town Centre		Office Location or the Town Centre				
Delivery of employment floorspace outside designated employment locations	Policy EM4.4	No net loss of floorspace	-	242sqm	Y	
Employment land available on extant permissions	Policy EM4.1	No specific target set	-	43,514sqm	-	-
Net delivery of retail E(a) floorspace over the monitoring year	Policy VT5.1	No specific target set	-	Town Centre: 711sqm	-	-
				District Centre: 0 sqm		
				Local Centres: -163sqm		
Net delivery of main town centre uses over the monitoring year	Policy VT5.1	No specific target set	-	Town Centre: -3748sqm	-	-
				District Centre: 0sqm		
				Local Centres: -163sqm		
Percentage of designated centres which are in main town centre uses	Policy VT5.1	No specific target set		<i>No data available</i>	<i>n/a</i>	
Vacancy rate in the designated centres	Policy VT5.1	No specific target set		<i>No data available</i>	<i>n/a</i>	
Number of planning applications where Policies QD6.2; or QD6.4 is listed as a reason for refusal	Policy QD6.2 QD6.4	No specific target set		<i>No data available</i>	<i>n/a</i>	
Number of planning applications where Policies QD6.3 is listed as a reason for refusal	Policy QD6.3	No specific target set		<i>No data available</i>	<i>n/a</i>	
Number of applications completed over the MY that exceed the base building heights	Policy QD6.5	No specific target set	-	3	-	-
Number of extant permissions that will exceed the base building heights	Policy QD6.5	No specific target set	-	11	-	-
Number of developments granted planning permission	Policy QD6.5	No specific target set	-	2	-	-

over the monitoring year that exceeded the base building heights						
Number of applications refused over the monitoring year where Policy QD6.5 (Building Height) is listed as a reason for refusal	Policy QD6.5	No specific target set		<i>No data available</i>	<i>n/a</i>	
Number of assets on the heritage at risk register	Policy HE7.2	Reduce the number of buildings on the heritage at risk register.	-	6 (2 assets removed from register over the monitoring year)	Y	
Number of applications granted contrary to advice from Historic England	Policy HE7.2	No specific target set		<i>No data available</i>	<i>n/a</i>	
Percentage of carbon reduction since 2018	Policy CC8.1	Reduction in carbon emissions over the plan period	-	11.7%	Y	
Percentage of non-residential developments which meet BREEAM standards	Policy CC8.2	100% of developments meeting either excellent or very good		<i>No data available</i>	<i>n/a</i>	
Number of new residential permissions that meet carbon emission standards	Policy CC8.1	19% energy efficiency above Part L of the Building Regulations.		<i>No data available</i>	<i>n/a</i>	
Number of new homes achieving 110 litres/person/day	Policy CC8.3	100% of new homes		<i>No data available</i>	<i>n/a</i>	
Number of Air Quality Management Areas	Policy CC8.4	Reduce the number of Air Quality Management Areas	2	2	-	
Number of planning applications refused on pollution grounds	Policy CC8.5	Zero refusals		<i>No data available</i>	<i>n/a</i>	
Number of Environment Agency objections to planning applications.	Policy NE9.3 Policy NE9.4 Policy NE9.5	No planning permissions granted contrary to the advice of the Environment Agency on flooding and water quality grounds.	0	0	Y	

Net gain/loss of designated open space	Policy NE9.6 Policy NE9.7	No net loss of designated open space	614 hectares	0 losses	Y	
Net gain in Biodiversity	Policy NE9.8	10% net gain		<i>No data available</i>	<i>n/a</i>	
Delivery of Infrastructure	Policy IN10.1 Policy IN10.2	Deliver the infrastructure set out in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan	-	IDP reference 7.4 (Colne Valley Linear Park) and 7.1 (Transforming travel in Watford)	Y	
Developer contributions paid	Policy IN10.3	No specific target set	£3,029,271	£1,203,484 (CIL) £154,541.98 (s106)	-	-
% of new housing within 400m of a bus stop/railway station	Policy ST11.1	No specific target set	-	Bus stop- 100% Railway station- 29%	-	-
% of developments granted with policy compliant cycle parking provision	Policy ST11.4	100%		<i>No data available</i>	<i>n/a</i>	
% of people walking and cycling for their main mode of transport	Policy ST11.4	Improvement on baseline levels	-	32% walking	-	
				3.7 % cycling		
% of electric vehicles within the boroughs total car ownership	Policy ST11.5	Improvement on baseline levels	1,289 additional electric vehicle registrations	2,125 additional electric vehicle registrations	Y	
Number of electric vehicle spaces delivered	Policy ST11.5	No specific target set	-	129 spaces provided	-	-
Level of car ownership in the borough	Policy ST11.5	Improvement on baseline levels	-	68% (2011 census)	-	
% of new developments which have an active travel plan	Policy ST11.6	Improvement on baseline levels		<i>No data available</i>	<i>n/a</i>	
Number of qualifying schemes with a Health Impact Assessment completed	Policy HC12.2	All schemes over 100 dwellings		<i>No data available</i>	<i>n/a</i>	
Number of new community facilities approved/completed	Policy HC12.3	No specific target set	-	None	-	-

Number of community facilities lost over the monitoring year	Policy HC12.3	No net loss	-	0 losses	Y	
Number of housing allocations permitted, started or completed over the monitoring year	Policy SA13.1	8,604 dwellings over the plan period	-	2 permitted 2 under construction	-	
Number of mixed use allocations permitted, started or completed over the monitoring year	Policy SA13.1	8,604 dwellings over the plan period	-	2 permitted 2 under construction	-	
Number of employment allocations permitted, started or completed over the monitoring year	Policy SA13.1	12,799sqm of industrial floorspace over the plan period 19,428sqm of office floorspace over the plan period	-	2 permitted 1 under construction	-	
Number of education site allocations permitted, started or completed over the monitoring year	Policy SA13.1	No specific target	-	0 permitted	-	-

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1. Introduction

Section 113 of the Localism Act (2011) requires every Local Planning Authority (LPA) to publish monitoring information at least annually¹. In the past Watford has complied with this requirement by producing an Authority Monitoring Report (AMR).

The structure and content of an AMR is not fully prescribed in legislation and it is largely up to each LPA to decide what is included.

The report must however be consistent with regulation 34 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2012. These regulations set out the following minimum requirements for what monitoring information must be published:

- A Local Development Scheme;
- The boroughs performance against the housing delivery targets in the development plan;
- Any Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) payments the authority has received;
- Details of any Duty to Co-operate issues and meetings that have arisen or been undertaken.

Watford's AMR previously monitored progress against policies in the Core Strategy 2006 – 2031, adopted in 2013, and the remaining saved policies of the Watford District Plan, adopted in 2000. These documents are now redundant having been superseded by the Watford Local Plan 2021 – 2038, which was adopted in October 2022. As such, this AMR is monitoring performance against the policies in the new Watford Local Plan 2021 – 2038 even though the Plan was formally adopted after the 2021-2022 monitoring year had ended. This is to ensure that the monitoring of the Plan reflects the start of the plan period being 2021.

Following adoption of the Watford Local Plan, the borough's development plan now consists of:

- Watford Local Plan 2021-2038
- The Waste Core Strategy and Development Management policies 2011-2026 within the Minerals and Waste Local Plan, prepared by Hertfordshire County Council.

It is these documents which are used, alongside any relevant supplementary documents, and any other material considerations, to determine planning applications.

The new Local Plan incorporates the following key objectives for future growth in the borough within its overarching vision:

- Watford will be an exemplar town that embraces sustainability and the challenges of climate change.
- Achieve a high quality of design on new developments and ensure that they are accessible and inclusive.
- Conserve and enhance green and blue infrastructure, maximising biodiversity.
- The town centre will retain its role as a retail destination in the sub-region.
- Watford will have a comprehensive network of cycling and walking routes, plus public transport will be enhanced to encourage a move away from car usage.
- Protect and enhance Watford's social, cultural, built environment and heritage.

¹ [Plan-making - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/plan-making)- para 073

- Support the local economy through creating business opportunities and providing a mix of employment spaces to support growth.
- Support growth with high quality infrastructure.

The above vision has been reflected in the Plan's policies. Monitoring these policies will help the Council to reflect on the extent to which this vision is being realised and whether further interventions such as revised or new policies are needed in the future.

As was the case in previous AMRs, this document goes significantly beyond the minimum requirements of regulation 34 and monitors a wide variety of indicators that cross economic, social and environmental topics.

The Local Plan includes a monitoring framework (Appendix A) which sets out what indicators will be monitored, how it will be monitored and what targets the Council is seeking to achieve over the Plan period. Some of these targets are more prescriptive than others, and some indicators do not have a specific target where applying one would not be appropriate. This AMR aligns closely with this monitoring framework and reports on the majority of policies in the Plan.

This report covers the period **1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022**.

This is the first year of using this new format of AMR and of monitoring policies from the new Local Plan. Whilst the Council has made every effort to collect as much data as possible, there are some gaps where data has not available in this first monitoring year. It is the intention that future AMRs will develop so that they can monitor every indicator effectively, and the policy team have already put in place procedures that will enable the team to collect additional data in future years.

An important part of ensuring that the AMR is useful in considering the impacts of the Local Plan policies is using it to monitor trends by comparing the monitoring year results with previous years. Whilst this has been possible for some indicators, there are lots of topics which the borough has not collected data on before and so comparisons are not possible in this first year. Where this is the case, this year's data will be used as a baseline against which future years will be compared.

It should also be noted that all of the applications referenced in this report and contributing to the data that has been recorded, were approved prior to the adoption of the new Watford Local Plan and the policies within it being given full weight in decision making.

The Council welcomes views on the new Authority Monitoring Report's format and content so improvements to future reports can be made. If there are any comments then please send these to strategy@watford.gov.uk.

Please note that every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of the data provided. However, in the event of any honest errors noticed please also send these to strategy@watford.gov.uk.

Why do we have an AMR?

Councils have a duty to monitor the effectiveness of their planning policies. The AMR is not intended as a state of the Council report and should not be read as such, it is instead an important evidence base that will help to inform Council and planning decisions across the Plan period, and will inform any future review of the Local Plan. It is likely that actual progress and trends on some of the new policy requirements may take some years to emerge fully which will be important to recognise when considering the effectiveness of policies in the Plan.

The AMR allows the Council to;

- Establish what new development and change has occurred in the borough and monitor trends.
- Consider the extent to which Local Plan policies are effective and successful (or where there may be problems).
- Decide whether changes to policies or targets are necessary and whether these are significant enough to prompt a full or partial review to the Local Plan.

How to use this document

The AMR is structured roughly in plan order and divided into chapters using sub-headings that reflect sections in the new Local Plan. The majority of indicators correspond directly to a row in the Watford Local Plan monitoring framework.

An executive summary is provided at the start of the document setting out the annual results and giving a basic indication of whether targets are being met, and whether the trend is up, down or unchanged from the previous year.

As this is the first year of the new plan period, much of this year's data is being presented as a baseline against which future years will be measured. It is likely that the next two or three AMRs will also be fairly transitional as applications approved against superseded policies get delivered and replaced by applications approved against the new Local Plan policies.

The majority of indicators are reported in tables that will provide data from 2021/2022 to 2025/2026. This will enable comparisons to be clearly shown and enable more streamlined updating of the indicators in future years. After 2025/2026, a column titled 'Pre-2026' will be added to include the cumulative total of completions prior to this date. This will keep the table legible and compact.

For each indicator three analysis boxes are provided, one describing what has happened over the monitoring year, one to analyse comparisons and trends with previous years and finally a section which will explain the impacts of the years data on the Local Plan and the effectiveness of the Plan's policies.

The following sub sections summarise the different sections of this AMR and the key indicators that are to be monitored.

A Spatial Strategy for Watford

This section of the Plan sets out the overall strategy for growth in the borough including the number of residential dwellings, and level of employment floorspace that is required to meet local needs and broadly where this growth will be located within the borough.

This AMR reports the number of residential completions over the monitoring year, and the net gain/loss of employment floorspace and will offer comparisons with identified needs in the borough.

The Core Development Area

The vast majority of development in the borough is to be directed towards three Strategic Development Areas as the most sustainable locations for growth.

- The Watford Gateway Strategic Development Area;
- The Town Centre Strategic Development Area; and
- The Colne Valley Strategic Development Area.

This area is known collectively as the Core Development Area (CDA). 80% of all residential and mixed use allocations in the Plan are situated within the CDA.

This AMR will report the number of residential completions taking place within and outside the Core Development Area and within each of the three Strategic Development Areas individually. This will help to show where new development in the borough is being concentrated.

Homes for a Growing Community

The Local Plan aims to provide the housing that the community needs and ensure that these homes are well designed, high quality and that they meet building standards.

This AMR will report on the delivery of market housing, specialist housing, including affordable housing, and the quality of new residential development relative to required access and space standards.

A Strong Economy

The Local Plan aims to support the delivery of new, and the protection of existing, office and industrial employment floorspace. Clarendon Road, along with the town centre, will be the focus for new E(g)(i) office uses; whilst there are several designated industrial areas that will be the focus for the majority of industrial E(g)(iii)/B2/B8 floorspace.

This AMR will report on the delivery of both industrial and office uses, both within designated employment areas and outside.

A Vibrant Town

The policies in the Plan seek to support the Town Centre, District Centre and Local Centres in challenging economic times following the Covid-19 pandemic by protecting their long term vitality and viability. Policies provide flexibility to encourage a mix of uses within the town centre whilst ensuring that it remains a focus for main town centre uses as defined in the NPPF.

This AMR will report on the net delivery of retail and main town centre uses floorspace over the monitoring year and will report the results of a town centre survey conducted by Hertfordshire County Council to determine the proportion of the centres that are in an active town centre uses and the proportion of units that are currently vacant.

These indicators will allow assessment of the health of the Centres, and changing demands as peoples shopping habits change.

An Attractive Town

Achieving a high quality of design is a key objective for the borough and the policies in the Plan require applicants to demonstrate how they have designed schemes in a way that reflects the character of the area, the National Planning Policy Framework, the National Design Guide and any Supplementary Planning Documents.

The Plan also includes a policy on building heights which is a locally important issue, setting base building heights for each part of the borough as well as a detailed set of criteria that a proposal must adhere to in order for it to be acceptable.

The new AMR is the first time that design is being specifically monitored in Watford. The document will report; the number of planning applications where poor design has been listed as a reason for refusal, and the number of applications approved that exceed the base building heights, and conversely the number of applications where the building heights policy, Policy QD6.5 has been listed as a reason for refusal.

The Historic Environment

Policies in the Plan seek to preserve and enhance both nationally and locally designated heritage assets and conservation areas, ensuring that new development compliments the boroughs historic environment.

This AMR will report on the number of buildings in Watford that are considered to be 'at risk' both on the Historic England 'heritage at risk' register which is released annually, and the Council's own list. The report will also monitor the number of applications which were granted contrary to advice from Historic England, and any works or changes to listed buildings that have taken place over the monitoring year.

A Climate Emergency

Policies in the Plan aim to move the borough towards a more carbon neutral future and ensure that the borough adapts to and mitigates the effects of climate change, reflecting the Council's declaration of a Climate Emergency in 2019. Policies also seek to ensure that development does not have an unacceptable impact on a variety of pollution related issues such as noise, odour, air quality or light pollution

This AMR will monitor progress in reducing carbon emissions, pollution, and improving air quality across the borough. It will also monitor the proportion of new developments that meet sustainability standards regarding BREEAM, water and energy efficiency.

Conserving and Enhancing the Environment

The Local Plan seeks to protect, enhance and increase biodiversity, and access to open space and green and blue infrastructure. The Plan recognises the importance of these spaces to the local community and their role in helping to mitigate the impacts of climate change.

This section of the AMR will report on the number of applications that have been approved contrary to advice from the Environment Agency, the net gain/loss of open space and green infrastructure and the proportion of approved planning applications that have resulted in a net gain in biodiversity.

Infrastructure

The full infrastructure requirements for the Plan are set out in an Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) which was submitted as part of the Local Plan evidence base and remains a live document that will be updated over the plan period. Much of the funding for this infrastructure will be sought from developer contributions as part of new development.

This AMR will therefore report on progress with the delivery of infrastructure in the IDP, and on the receipt and spending of developer contributions in the borough.

A Sustainable Travel Town

The Local Plan seeks to achieve a modal shift over the plan period, away from private cars towards more active travel and better, more convenient and accessible, public transport.

There are a variety of indicators relating to this objective within this AMR, including the proportion of new developments that are located within 400m of a bus stop and railway station, and the proportion of new developments that include policy compliant car and cycle parking provision.

There is also an indicator relating to the provision of electric vehicle charging points and the level of electronic vehicle ownership compared to diesel or petrol vehicles.

There is also a broader indicator relating to the percentage of residents that walk or cycle as their main method of transport.

A Healthy Community

The Plan has a chapter on health, reflecting the importance of getting people to be more active by walking and cycling more through the improved provision of cycle ways and greenspaces, healthy eating, tackling noise and air pollution and providing for a healthy older population and protecting and supporting community facilities.

This AMR will report on the number of approved planning applications that include a Health Impact Assessment (HIA), and the net delivery of new community facilities.

Site Allocations and new development

There are four types of site allocation in the Plan, thirty three are purely residential (28 of them are under 1 ha in size), alongside twenty three mixed use allocations which together provide for 8,604 residential units alongside a variety of other uses including employment, education or retail.

There are employment allocations providing for office and industrial floorspace.

There is one Gypsy and Traveller allocation for two pitches.

There are two sites allocated for education facility development over the plan period.

All allocated sites have development considerations which are used to highlight the specific requirements of development proposals and any potential issues or special considerations that need to be taken into account in delivering them.

The AMR will report generally on housing and employment delivery across the borough but it will also specifically report updates on allocated sites.

Duty to Co-operate

The Duty to Co-operate is a statutory duty that all LPAs must adhere to, requiring co-operation (though not necessarily agreement), on cross boundary issues that arise between neighbouring plan making authorities, and other statutory bodies, when developing strategic policies.

During the preparation of their respective Local Plans, Dacorum Borough Council, Hertsmere Borough Council, St Albans City and District Council, Three Rivers District Council, Hertfordshire County Council and Watford Borough Council have been working collaboratively to identify and consider how to appropriately address cross boundary issues where they exist.

These six Councils have also been working together on the South West Herts Joint Strategic Plan, which was subject to an initial vision consultation soon after the end of the 2021/2022 monitoring year.

Before submission of the Local Plan in 2021, Watford Borough Council signed Statements of Common Ground with all of these Councils. Following the adoption of Watford's Local Plan, further cross boundary work and discussions will be ongoing as these Council's progress their own Local Plans, and with the County Council on the production of the Local Transport Plan.

At the Hertfordshire County wide level, Watford has played an active role in the Hertfordshire Infrastructure and Planning Partnership, the Hertfordshire Planning Group and the Hertfordshire Development Plans Group. The work of these groups is helping to progress a number of joined up strategies on infrastructure needs, development viability and agreeing future joint working arrangements.

There were no Duty to Co-operate issues raised by the Planning Inspector or any other stakeholder during the examination of the Local Plan, nor during the subsequent consultation on main modifications, adoption or legal challenge period. This reflects and endorses the collaborative approach taken to cross boundary issues in Watford, and the positive engagement that was undertaken at all stages of the Local Plan process.

Over the monitoring year, a variety of Duty to Co-operate meetings were attended by officers in the Planning Policy team. These included meetings with neighbouring Councils in South West Hertfordshire in relation to Local Plan progress and minerals and waste issues led by Hertfordshire County Council.

This section of the AMR will record any key Duty to Co-operate issues that have arisen over each monitoring year.

Local Development Scheme

The timetable setting out the programme for production of Local Plan Documents is known as the Local Development Scheme (LDS). AMRs are required to set out the latest progress with preparing local plan documents during the monitoring year to meet targets set in the LDS, and whether changes to the LDS are required.

Following the recent adoption of the Local Plan there is currently no new LDS or any timetable in place to undertake a review. Once a decision is formally made to review the Local Plan a new LDS will be published in this section of future AMRs.

Watford Local Plan 2021-2038

The Watford Local Plan 2021-2038 was adopted at the Full Council meeting on 17th October 2022. Paragraph 33 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) requires that local plans are reviewed every five years (from the date of local plan adoption) to consider whether they need updating. Any review will take into account changing circumstances affecting the area and any changes in national policy guidance.

Supplementary Planning Guidance

Following the adoption of the Local Plan, the Council is intending to prepare a series of Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs).

Over the plan period this section will provide written updates on progress with SPDs and any other supplementary planning guidance that is being produced.

Table 1: Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) being prepared by the Council

Name of document	Progress over the monitoring year
Affordable Housing SPD	Preliminary scoping and internal discussions have been undertaken and further progress will be made over the next monitoring year
Colne Valley Strategic Development Area SPD	The Council committed to doing an SPD during the Local Plan hearing sessions. Initial internal discussions are taking place.
Biodiversity SPD	Currently awaiting a template that has been developed by Hertfordshire County Council and the Hertfordshire and Middlesex Wildlife Team.
Design SPD	Broad scoping has begun and a project team has been assembled to take this forward

Neighbourhood Plans and Neighbourhood/Local Development Orders

The borough currently has no Neighbourhood Plans in place, or in production. There are no Neighbourhood Plan groups currently active. This section will record any changes to this situation over the plan period.

2. Housing

Plan Period and Housing Targets

The Watford Local Plan sets a minimum target of 13,328 homes to be delivered over the plan period between 2021 and 2038, an average delivery rate of 784 dwellings per annum. This target reflects the Government’s standard methodology figure for calculating local authority housing needs in Watford.

The Plan makes provision for this scale of growth through a combination of residential and mixed use site allocations, windfall completions and the implementation of current extant commitments.

Figure 3.1 of the Local Plan (replicated below in Figure 1) shows the breakdown of how the housing target will be met in the borough over the Plan period.

Figure 1- Housing supply identified in the Watford Local Plan- 2021-2038

Housing Trajectory

The housing trajectory assesses actual net annual completions in the past and projected numbers of completions in the future compared to the Plan’s target for new housing growth.

The main purpose of the trajectory is to support forward planning by monitoring housing performance and supply to determine if any action is necessary or any amendments to planning policy are required to meet targets.

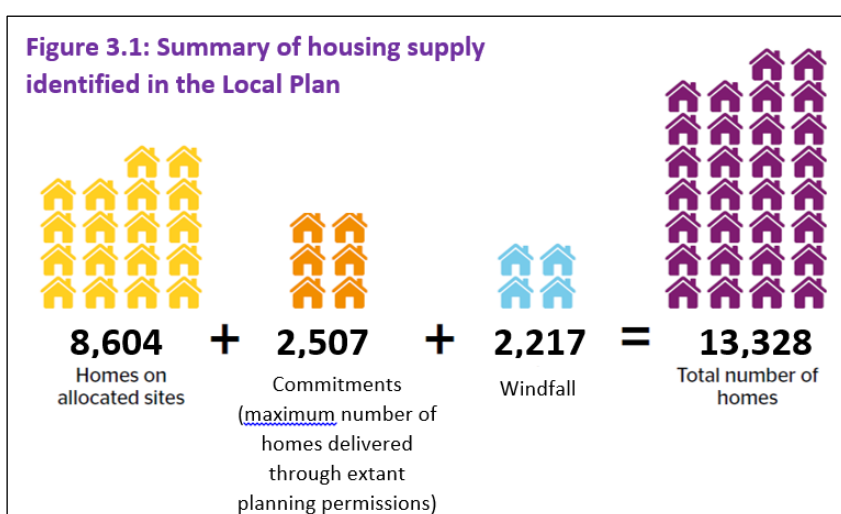
As this is a new Plan period with new housing targets, this year’s data will act as the baseline against which future years housing delivery will be assessed.

For some additional context however, since 2015/2016 there has been an average of 312 residential completions per annum with a maximum annual delivery of 416 dwellings in 2020/2021. This provides a useful historic context when looking at the following tables. More detail on past housing completions can be found in previously published AMRs.

Table 2 sets out the gross and net residential completions over the monitoring year.

Table 2: Residential completions over the monitoring year (MY) (dwellings)

	2021/2022	2022/2023	2023/2024	2024/2025	2025/2026	Total
Gross residential completions MY	812					
Net residential completions MY	754					



What Happened?:

In total there were 754 net residential completions over the monitoring year April 1st 2021 to March 31st 2022. This represents a slight shortfall on the Local Plan annual housing target of 784 dwellings of 30 dwellings.

The bulk of housing delivery was on the following large sites although there was substantial delivery on smaller sites as well:

Land to the East of Ascot Road (18/00703)- 171 completions

149 St Albans Road (18/00542)- 106 completions

Former Gas Holder (18/01560)- 92 completions

16-18 St Albans Road (19/00999)- 90 completions

Comparisons:

Whilst the annual housing target was narrowly missed, the figure of 754 represents the largest single year of completions in the borough since the previous AMR was first published in 2006/2007. The previous highest number of completions in a single year was 633 in 2010/2011. 754 is significantly higher than the average since 2015/16 which has been 312 completions per annum.

It will be interesting to see how housing delivery fluctuates going forward over the plan period, and this indicator will compare delivery year on year as well as looking at trends over a longer period of time.

Implications of the Local Plan:

The delivery of 754 net additional dwellings represents a substantial increase in the delivery of new dwellings relative to historic trends of just over 312 dwellings per annum.

This year, residential dwellings have mainly been delivered on large capacity flatted sites of over 100 dwellings which tend to contribute towards a peak and trough style of housing delivery due to them delivering large numbers of dwellings in one year and low numbers in other years. It would be expected that delivery will peak and trough over the next 2-3 years before becoming more consistent once the mainly small to medium sized site allocations start to come forward.

[Housing Delivery Test](#)

The Housing Delivery Test was introduced by the Government in 2018 to monitor how effectively new homes are being delivered within local authorities over a three year period. The test is based on comparing the standard methodology produced by Government against the actual number of homes delivered over a rolling three year period.

The following table shows the latest Housing Delivery Test result in Watford for the period up to 2021. A revised Housing Delivery Test is expected from the Government up to 2022, but this has not been published at the time of publication. The results of this update will be reported by the Council once known, and will be reported subsequently in next year's AMR for reference.

Table 3: Housing Delivery Test results (dwellings)

Number of homes required			Total number of homes required	Number of homes delivered			Total number of homes delivered	Housing Delivery Test: 2021 measurement	Housing Delivery Test: 2021 consequence
2018-19	2019-20	2020-21		2018-19	2019-20	2020-21			
798	726	524	2,048	298	266	416	980	48%	Presumption

What Happened?:

The Council has failed to meet the Housing Delivery Test requirements due to under delivering relative to needs.

As a result of this the council is subject to all of the following:

- Less than 95%- An action plan must be produced within six months.
- Less than 85%- A 20% buffer must be added to the five year housing land supply
- Less than 75%- The 'presumption in favour of sustainable development' applies. This introduces a test, which has become known in legal cases as the 'tilted balance' in favour of granting permission for housing development. This means that local development plan policies carry less weight and increased emphasis should be placed on the NPPF in decision making.

As a result of this, a 20% buffer has been added to the borough's five year housing supply and the Council has produced an Action Plan which can be viewed on the Council's website.

Comparisons:

There has been no change to the overall Housing Delivery Test results since the previous 2020 results were published. Given this years significantly increased housing delivery, it will be interesting to see how this translates into the 2022 Housing Delivery Test results expected in the new year. These results will be published by the Council once available.

Implications for the Local Plan:

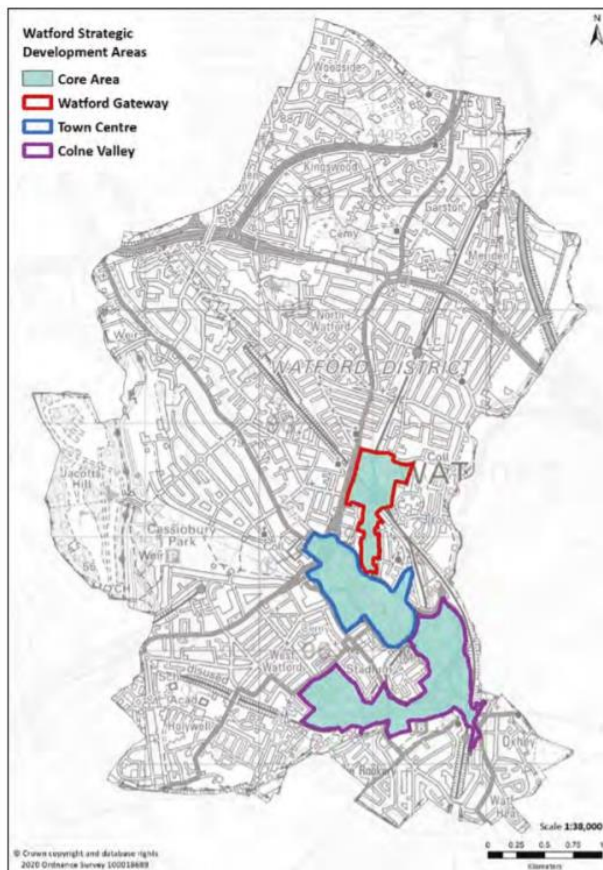
It is likely, despite the increased delivery of housing this year, that the Council will remain in the 'less than 75%' category of the Housing Delivery Test, and as a result still be in the 'Presumption in favour of sustainable development' when the new 2022 results are published.

The allocation of housing and mixed use development sites in the Local Plan should help the Council to improve its position relative to the Housing Delivery Test and ensure the Council maintains a Five Year Housing supply position.

Five Year Housing Supply

The Five Year Housing Supply Statement is published separately from this report.

2021-2022 Housing Completions



This section breaks down the current monitoring years residential completions by location and type.

The Core Development Area (CDA) includes the area covered by the three Strategic Development Areas (SDAs); Town Centre SDA, Colne Valley SDA and Watford Gateway SDA. Figure 2 shows the geographic extent of the CDA and each of the SDAs. 80% of dwellings proposed on site allocations are located within the CDA and it is expected that a similarly high percentage of all completions over the plan period will be located within this area.

Figure 2- Core Development Area and Strategic Development Areas

Tables 4 and 5 below, break down annual residential completions into those within the CDA as a whole and then into each of the three SDAs.

Table 4: Net residential completions within the Core Development Area (dwellings)

		2021/2022	2022/2023	2023/2024	2024/2025	2025/2026	Total
Net residential completions within CDA	No.	368					
	%	49%					
Net residential completions outside CDA	No.	386					
	%	51%					

Table 5: Residential completions by Strategic Development Area (dwellings)

		2021/2022	2022/2023	2023/2024	2024/2025	2025/2026	Total
Net residential completions within Watford Gateway SDA	No.	171					
	% of total HC's	23%					
Net residential completions within the Town Centre SDA	No.	104					
	% of total HC's	14%					
Net residential completions within the Colne Valley SDA	No.	93					
	% of total HC's	12%					

What Happened?:

Over the current monitoring year there were 368 net residential completions within the CDA out of a total of 754 completions. This equates to 49% of all completions.

The Watford Gateway SDA saw the highest number of residential completions over the monitoring year (171 dwellings- 23% of all completions). These were all on a single development site on Land to the East of Ascot Road (18/00703).

104 completions (14% of total completions) were within the Town Centre SDA however in contrast with the Watford Gateway SDA this was spread across 13 small development sites, only two of which were major developments of more than 10 dwellings.

93 completions (12% of total completions) were within the Colne Valley SDA across two development sites at Lower High Street and Riverwell.

Comparisons:

As this is the first year of the new monitoring framework, and of the new Watford Local Plan, it is impossible to make comparisons for this indicator. This year will be used as a benchmark against which future AMRs will be compared.

Implications for the Local Plan:

The Plan directs the majority of growth to the Core Development Area reflecting its sustainability in terms of access to services and facilities and public transport and therefore its suitability for development. 80% of all residential and mixed use site allocations are within the CDA and so it is likely that delivery in this area will increase, and that the proportion of delivery relative to outside the CDA will also increase as these site allocations come forward.

This is the first year that the CDA designation has been in place and so it hard to make any long term conclusions on its effectiveness as a designation at this stage.

Residential Completions on Previously Developed Land (PDL)

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the Local Plan seek to make effective use of land by optimising densities and prioritising the re-use of brownfield sites (Previously Developed Land). There is a target in the monitoring framework for 80% of all residential development to be on Previously Developed Land (PDL).

The proportion of completions on PDL has historically been high in Watford, 84% on average over the five years prior to the start of the plan period (2015-2020) and it is expected that this trend will continue given the geography of the borough and the focus in the Local Plan on delivering growth on brownfield sites.

Table 6: Residential completions on Previously Developed Land (Gross) (dwellings)

		2021/2022	2022/2023	2023/2024	2024/2025	2025/2026	Total
Residential completions on PDL (gross)	No.	767					
	%	95%					

What Happened?:

In 2021/2022 there were 767 gross completions on PDL compared to total of 812 gross completions.

This equates to 95% of all gross completions being on PDL meaning that the borough has exceeded the 80% target in the Local Plan.

Comparisons:

Historically Watford has seen a very high proportion of development on PDL and this trend has continued this year although 95% remains particularly high relative to trends in the previous iteration of the AMR.

Implications for the Local Plan:

The Local Plan, and the NPPF, supports a 'brownfield first' approach to the delivery of housing, with only one site allocation being on a 'greenfield site'. As such it is expected that the majority of development will continue to take place on Previously Developed Land.

This year's figure of 95% meets the Local Plan target of 80% which is positive.

Extant Permissions

Table 7 records the number of dwellings that have been granted planning permission over the monitoring year and the number of total extant permissions in the borough at the end of the monitoring year.

The number of dwellings being granted permission will have a direct impact on the level of housing development coming forward in future years and so it is a useful indicator to monitor.

Together with the lapse rate table in the next section (Table 8) this data will be used in the calculating of the boroughs five year housing land supply.

Table 7: Number of dwellings granted permission over the monitoring year (MY) (dwellings)

	2021/2022	2022/2023	2023/2024	2024/2025	2025/2026	Total
Number of dwellings granted planning permission over the MY	991					
Number of dwellings on extant permissions at the end of the MY	4,202					

What Happened?:

Over the monitoring year 991 dwellings were granted planning permission. As of 31st March 2022 there were 4,202 dwellings with extant planning permission. This should provide a considerable supply of new homes over the coming years, even taking into account the fact that a proportion of these extant permissions will inevitably lapse without being implemented.

Comparisons:

As this is the first year of the new monitoring framework, and of the new Watford Local Plan, it is impossible to make comparisons for this indicator. This year will be used as a benchmark against which future AMRs will be compared.

Implications for the Local Plan:

There are a considerable number of extant housing permissions in the borough. It is likely that these permissions will provide the bulk of housing delivery in the short term and will contribute towards meeting the annual housing requirement of 784 dwellings set out in the Local Plan.

Lapse Rate

It is a reasonable assumption that not all planning applications granted permission will end up being implemented. To ensure that the published housing supply in the borough is considered robust, an allowance should be made for the non-implementation of some permissions. This allowance is known as a lapse rate. The lapse rate is calculated by determining the percentage of all dwellings on extant permissions which have lapsed over a given period.

It was determined during the Local Plan examination that a 15% lapse rate is appropriate and reflective of past trends in the borough.

Table 8 below reports the number of lapsed permissions over the monitoring year and will compare this against this 15% figure over the plan period.

Table 8: Lapse rate in the monitoring year and plan period (dwellings)

	2021/2022	2022/2023	2023/2024	2024/2025	2025/2026	Total
Number of dwellings granted permission	991					
Number of dwellings lapsed	62					
Lapse rate	6%					

Table 9 below further breaks down this lapse rate data into major developments (10 or more dwellings) and minor developments (under 10 dwellings). Over the course of the plan period this will highlight whether non implemented permissions are evenly distributed between major and minor applications or whether they are mostly on larger or smaller developments. This will provide additional and useful data when it comes to reviewing the local plan policies and the five year supply assumptions in the borough.

Table 9: Lapse rates on major and minor developments (dwellings)

	2021/2022	2022/2023	2023/2024	2024/2025	2025/2026	Total
Number of dwellings granted permission on sites of 10 or more dwellings	863					
Number of dwellings lapsed on sites of 10 or more dwellings	39					
Lapse rate on sites of 10 or more dwellings	5%					
Number of dwellings granted permission on sites of less than 10 dwellings	128					
Number of dwellings lapsed on sites of less than 10 dwellings	23					
Lapse rate on sites of less than 10 dwellings	18%					

What Happened?:

Over the monitoring year 62 dwellings previously granted planning permission were on applications that lapsed between March and April 2021-2022. This is a lapse rate over the monitoring year of 6%.

Table 9 analyses whether this lapse rate has been consistent across all types of application or whether it is more prevalent in major or minor applications. Over this monitoring year, there was a lapse rate of 5% on major applications over 10 dwellings, compared to a lapse rate of 18% on minor applications of less than 10 dwellings. It will be interesting to monitor this over the plan period to determine if this is a trend.

Comparisons:

There was an assumed lapse rate of 15% provided at the examination of the Watford Local Plan based on historic trends. The overall lapse rate this year was considerably less than this figure, although the lapse rate on minor applications was just above this 15% baseline.

Implications for the Local Plan:

It is positive to see a lower than average lapse rate over the monitoring year demonstrating the strong market conditions that exist in the borough which allow the vast majority of permissions to be implemented.

It is noted that the lapse rate on minor applications is considerably higher than major applications. This is the first year in which the Council has made this distinction in monitoring lapse rates and it will be interesting to continue to assess this going forward.

Density of Residential Completions

The new Watford Local Plan sets minimum targets with regard to the density of new residential development within and outside the Core Development Area (CDA):

- Within the CDA new residential developments should be a minimum of 95 dwellings per hectare (dph).
- Outside the CDA new residential developments should be a minimum of 45 dwellings per hectare.

It is expected that within the CDA, higher density development will continue to be delivered in the most sustainable locations.

This indicator will highlight how the density of new development is changing across the area, as a reflection of the increased demand for new homes, and the effectiveness of the policy to distinguish between within the CDA and outside the CDA.

Table 10: Average density of residential development (dwellings per hectare)

	2021/2022	2022/2023	2023/2024	2024/2025	2025/2026	Total
Average density of residential completions within CDA	177dph					
Average density of residential completions outside CDA	95dph					
Overall average density of residential completions	116dph					

What Happened?:

Over the monitoring year the average density of new residential development completed within the CDA was 177dph compared to outside the CDA where the density was an average of 95dph.

Across the whole borough the average density was 116dph.

In this first year of the plan period it is clear that the minimum density standards above have been exceeded both within the CDA and outside, and that the density of new development is considerably higher within the CDA than outside it.

Comparisons:

The density of new development in the previous AMR was 106dph, and prior to that, densities had been averaging around 60-65dph. It is clear that the density of new development in the borough is increasing and the new density minimum figures in the Local Plan reflect a desire to optimise densities and make more efficient use of available land.

Previously density figures were not split between CDA and outside the CDA and so comparisons between these are not possible in the first year of this new AMR.

Implications for the Local Plan:

The Local Plan seeks to optimise densities and make more efficient use of land by setting minimum density standards for within the CDA and outside the CDA. It is clear that over the first year of the plan period these densities have been exceeded. It will be important to monitor this indicator to get an idea of the density of new development being approved in the borough relative to these minimum densities and historic density rates in the borough.

Delivery of Site Allocations

Chapter 13 of the Local Plan allocates several sites for housing and other mixed-uses. Details of any progress that has taken place on these allocations over the monitoring year can be found in section 12 of this AMR.

Type of Dwellings

Previous AMRs have reported that the vast majority of new residential dwellings in Watford are 1 or two bedroom flats. The most recent previously published AMR indicated that the number of dwellings that were 3+ bedrooms was just 10%, a further reduction to the five year trend which showed 12.6% of dwellings being 3+ bedrooms.

The Local Plan evidence base (South West Local Housing Needs Assessment, 2020), indicated however, that there is a need in Watford for:

- 68% of market homes to be 3+ bedrooms
- 38% of affordable homes to be 3+ bedrooms.

It was clear however that were the Local Plan to require this mix it would not be able to meet its quantitative housing needs relative to Government targets.

The Local Plan has therefore sought to balance the delivery of local housing needs in quantitative terms, with the qualitative need to deliver larger family sized housing. Policy H03.2 requires new residential development to provide at least 20% family sized dwellings (3+ bed properties). Tables 11 and 12 will show the breakdown of type and size of dwelling in the borough over the monitoring year and the percentage of all completions in terms of dwelling size and type.

Table 11: Type of dwellings being completed over the monitoring year (gross) (dwellings)

		2021/2022	2022/2023	2023/2024	2024/2025	2025/2026	Total
Flats, Apartment or Maisonette	No.	728					
	%	90%					
Bungalow	No.	10					
	%	1%					
House	No.	40					
	%	5%					
Studio	No.	28					
	%	3%					
Other	No.	6					
	%	<1%					

Table 12: Size of dwelling units completed over the monitoring year (gross)

		2021/2022	2022/2023	2023/2024	2024/2025	2025/2026	Total
1 bed	No.	311					
	%	38%					
2 bed	No.	422					
	%	52%					
3 bed	No.	64					
	%	8%					
4+ bed	No.	15					
	%	2%					

What Happened?:

Over the monitoring year 90% of all residential completions were flats or apartments. Houses and Bungalows made up just 6% of all dwellings delivered over the year.

Just 10% of all dwellings delivered over the monitoring year were 3+ bedrooms and so counting as family sized. The Local Plan target for 20% of all dwellings to be family sized dwellings of 3+ bedrooms was not met over the monitoring year.

Over 50% of all dwellings completed were 2 bed units, with 38% being 1 bed.

Comparisons:

The prevalence of flatted development compared to traditional housing types is a trend that has been seen in the borough over the past years. It is expected that this trend will likely continue, although it will be important to monitor the proportion of dwellings that are family sized in comparison to the target in Policy HO3.2.

The proportion of 3+ bedroom units over this monitoring year is equal to last year with 10% of all residential units and broadly reflective of historic trends.

Implications for the Local Plan:

The Local plan targets for family sized dwellings have been missed in this monitoring year with just 10% delivered compared to the 20% target.

The provision of family sized units is a key element of meeting the housing needs of the borough, and so it will be important to monitor this going forward to determine how effective the requirements in Policy HO3.2 have been in securing family sized homes.

[Affordable Housing](#)

The Watford Local Plan (Policy H03.3) sets a target of 35% of habitable rooms on residential developments of over 10 units to be affordable. Previously affordable housing was based on the number of units, but in the new Local Plan, the number of habitable rooms is used instead, as a way of trying to facilitate delivery of larger family sized affordable units rather than only delivering 1 or 2 bed units.

Whilst the policy is not specific on tenure mix across all the affordable housing typologies that are included within the NPPF definition, 60% of affordable dwellings should be social rent tenure.

Table 13 and 14 set out both the overall number and proportion of affordable housing delivered over the monitoring year as a percentage of total completions as well as breaking down this delivery into tenures, allowing comparison against the above local plan targets.

Note that the figures in the below tables are by number of units. The policy team will work on also reporting the number of affordable units by habitable room in future years as this will give a better indication on the effectiveness of Policy HO3.3.

Table 13- Number of Affordable houses (Net) (dwellings)

	2021/2022	2022/2023	2023/2024	2024/2025	2025/2026	Total
Number of net affordable dwellings completed	251					
% of all net completions	33%					

Table 14: Type of affordable dwellings completed over the monitoring year (gross) (dwellings)

		2021/2022	2022/2023	2023/2024	2024/2025	2025/2026	Total
Social rented	No.	30					
	%	10%					
Affordable rented	No.	229					
	%	75%					
Intermediate and Shared Ownership	No.	44					
	%	15%					
Build to rent	No.	0					
	%	0%					
Discounted Market	No.	0					
	%	0%					

What Happened?:

Over the monitoring year 251 affordable dwellings were completed in the borough, equal to 33% of all completions. This is slightly below the 35% target in Policy HO3.3 of the Local Plan by number of units. In future years the number of affordable units by habitable room will also be reported to accurately reflect the Local Plan policy and target.

Of these affordable completions, 10% were social rent compared to the local requirement of 60%, whilst 75% of all affordable units delivered were affordable rented; and 15% were shared ownership or intermediate tenure.

Comparisons:

251 net completions represents the largest number of affordable dwellings built in a single year in Watford since records in the AMR began in 2014 by a considerable margin. In comparison, the average annual affordable completions between 2014/15 and 2020/21 were 74 affordable dwellings per year.

Implications for the Local Plan:

It is considered particularly positive to see the volume of affordable housing coming forward over this monitoring year. A volume that falls just short of the 35% Local Plan target by number of units.

Only 10% of this provision was social rent tenure however, which is the tenure that is most in demand, reflected in the target in Policy HO3.3 for 60% of affordable housing provision to be social rent.

It will be important to evaluate the effectiveness of this policy requirement for social rent units and whether it leads to more social rent units in the short, medium and long term.

Residential Conversions

Table 15 below sets out the number of residential conversions that have been permitted over the monitoring year.

Conversions and Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) make an important contribution to an area's housing stock and as such are supported in the Local Plan where they are well located with regard to public transport and access to services and facilities, and where they would not result in unacceptable amenity impacts.

The delivery of this type of housing will need to be carefully managed and this indicator will allow the location of new HMOs to be evaluated with regard to avoiding over-concentrations of such units and their potential amenity impacts.

Table 15: Number of Residential conversions approved (applications)

	2021/2022	2022/2023	2023/2024	2024/2025	2025/2026	Total
Number of conversions from a single dwelling house into multiple smaller houses permitted	14					
Number of conversions of residential units into a large House in Multiple Occupation (HMO) of over 6 occupants	<i>No data available this year. Data will be reported in subsequent AMRs</i>					

The table above highlights two distinct types of conversion; the sub-division of an existing residential dwelling into a larger number of smaller dwellings and secondly the number of residential dwellings that have been converted into HMOs. Note that the above indicator only includes larger HMOs of 6 occupants or more; HMOs of less than 6 occupants can be created under Permitted Development and so it is not possible to monitor these effectively.

What Happened?:

Over the monitoring year, 14 applications were for the conversion of residential dwellings resulting in a net gain of residential C3 dwellings. This has resulted in a net increase of 19 dwellings (19 dwellings converted into 38 dwellings).

Comparisons:

As this is the first year of the new monitoring framework, and of the new Watford Local Plan, it is impossible to make comparisons for this indicator. This year will be used as a benchmark against which future AMRs will be compared.

Implications for the Local Plan:

It will be important to assess the number and location of units being delivered through conversions and HMOs to ensure that they are well located and that they do not contribute to or exacerbate amenity issues.

Specialist Housing and Care Homes

Policy H03.5 of the Local Plan supports the provision of specialist housing to meet the needs of vulnerable people. This type of development will become increasingly important given the ageing population and the increasing number of residents with disabilities living in the borough. This indicator will therefore monitor the delivery of this type of development across the plan period.

Table 16: Number of specialist and care home beds completed and the number lost over the monitoring year

	2021/2022	2022/2023	2023/2024	2024/2025	2025/2026	Total
Number of specialist and care home beds completed	0					
Number of specialist and care home beds lost	0					

Table 17 will add further detail to the above table, reporting the number of specialist housing units completed and approved over the monitoring year, plus the location and type of these developments.

It is important given the wide variety of different specialist housing typologies to suit different levels of care and need that the type of specialist housing being delivered is monitored alongside the monitoring of overall housing.

Table 17: Location and type of specialist and care bed spaces completed and approved

Location/App number	Type of specialist housing (extra care/supported living)	Number of dwellings
N/A	N/A	N/A
Total		

What Happened?:

Over the monitoring year there were no gains or losses of specialist care or extra care development.

Comparisons:

As this is the first year of the new monitoring framework, and of the new Watford Local Plan, it is impossible to make comparisons for this indicator. This year will be used as a benchmark against which future AMRs will be compared.

Implications for the Local Plan:

Over the course of the plan period it will be crucial that the needs for specialist care homes are met, especially when considering the ageing population within the borough. This indicator will continue to report any delivery of this type, and assess whether more direct interventions are necessary as part of a future plan review.

Student Accommodation

There are a variety of education institutions within and adjacent to Watford that could create a need for student accommodation in the borough. These include West Herts College, the Harrow branch of the University of Westminster and Middlesex University in Hendon.

Whilst the borough has no such facilities currently and at the start of the plan period there are no current permissions to deliver any student specific accommodation, this indicator will monitor any permissions or completions of this type that come forward over the plan period.

Table 18: Number of applications for student accommodation completed or approved

	2021/2022	2022/2023	2023/2024	2024/2025	2025/2026	Total
Number of student bed spaces completed	0					
Number of student bed spaces approved	0					

What Happened?:

Over the monitoring year there were no gains or losses of student bed spaces.

Comparisons:

As this is the first year of the new monitoring framework, and of the new Watford Local Plan, it is impossible to make comparisons for this indicator. This year will be used as a benchmark against which future AMRs will be compared.

Implications for the Local Plan:

The Local Plan provides a positive base on which proposals for student housing can be assessed. There is no identified demand currently for this type of unit and so there is no target to assess any provision against.

If the demand for this type of accommodation is shown to have increased in the borough then this will be considered in a future iteration of the Local Plan.

Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation

Watford Borough Council currently accommodates a single 10-pitch gypsy and traveller site (which can accommodate up to 20 caravans) at Tolpits Lane in the south of the borough. This site is managed by Hertfordshire County Council. There are currently no transit sites in Watford.

The Local Plan allocates a site adjacent to the existing site at Tolpits Lane for the provision of two additional pitches. This meets in full the current identified need in the borough as set out in the Gypsy and Traveller assessment undertaken as part of the Local Plan evidence base.

Policy H03.8 sets out the basis by which proposals for Gypsy and Traveller accommodation will be assessed.

Table 19: Number of Gypsy and Traveller pitches completed or approved over the monitoring year

	2021/2022	2022/2023	2023/2024	2024/2025	2025/2026	Total
Number of Gypsy and Traveller pitches completed	0					
Number of Gypsy and Traveller pitches approved	0					

What Happened?:

Over the monitoring year there were no gains or losses of Gypsy and Traveller pitches.

Comparisons:

As this is the first year of the new monitoring framework, and of the new Watford Local Plan, it is impossible to make comparisons for this indicator. This year will be used as a benchmark against which future AMRs will be compared.

Implications for the Local Plan:

The target for and allocation of 2 Gypsy and Traveller pitches reflects the assessed need in the latest Gypsy and Traveller Needs Assessment.

Any future Local Plan review would need to take account of an up to date Gypsy and Traveller Assessment. There is no indication of any demand for additional pitches in the borough at present.

Self-Build and Custom Build Housing

Section 1 of the Self Build and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015, requires local authorities to keep a register of any person seeking to acquire serviced plots in the area for self-build and custom housebuilding. Under Section 2 of the Act they are also required to have regard to this register in developing strategies that will provide enough suitable permissions to meet this identified demand. These can be delivered as either market or affordable homes.

Table 20: Number of people seeking to acquire plots that are registered on the authorities' self-build register

Number on the register as of 31/3/2022	Number added over the monitoring year
62	9

There are currently 62 people that have requested to be listed on the council's self-build register. This is the number as of the end of the monitoring year. People can request to be added at any time of the year and so this figure may have changed at the time of reading. This will likely be only an indication of demand. In reality, there may be others who have not registered that would have the means and interest in self or custom build development if opportunities were to arise. There may also be those that are on the register who desire a self-build plot but in reality would not have the means to acquire or deliver a self-build development.

Table 21: Delivery of Self and Custom Build Units

	2021/2022	2022/2023	2023/2024	2024/2025	2025/2026	Total
Number of Self and Custom Build plots approved	0					
Number of Self and Custom Build units completed	0					
Number of CIL exemptions for self-build offered	2					

What Happened?:

Over the monitoring year 9 people requested to be included on the Self and Custom Build Register.

Table 21 shows that over the monitoring year there were no self and custom build plots approved and there were no plots completed.

There were however two CIL exemptions offered for self-build over the monitoring year.

Comparisons:

As this is the first year of the new monitoring framework, and of the new Watford Local Plan, it is impossible to make comparisons for this indicator. This year will be used as a benchmark against which future AMRs will be compared.

Implications for the Local Plan:

Given the current and expected dominance of flatted developments in the borough, particularly within the CDA the opportunities for delivering self and custom build units may be limited. It is therefore important that any opportunities that do arise are taken advantage of to ensure that the demand for self-build is met.

The number of additional people being entered onto the self-build register is reported to assess growing demand that the council will have an obligation to try and meet.

Building Standards

Policy H03.10 sets out four requirements relating to the quality of new residential units:

- Firstly, that all new homes will meet the nationally described space standards;
- Secondly, that all new housing will be designed to comply with M4(2) of the building regulations unless they are meeting M4(3) of the building regulations;
- Thirdly, on developments over 10 homes at least 4% of the dwellings should be wheelchair adaptable and built to M4(3) standard.
- Finally, on developments of 50 or more dwellings 2% are to be designed to support living someone living with dementia.

Meeting these standards is an important requirement for delivering high quality homes in the borough that provide a high quality of life for residents.

Table 22- Percentage of new development meeting building standards in H03.10

		2021/2022	2022/2023	2023/2024	2024/2025	2025/2026	Total
Number and percentage of completions meeting national space standards	No.	<i>No data available this year. Data will be reported in subsequent AMRs</i>					
	%						
Number and percentage of completions complying with	No.	<i>No data available this year. Data will</i>					

M4(2) accessibility standard		<i>be reported in subsequent AMRs</i>					
	%						
Number and percentage of completions on developments of over 10 dwellings meeting M4(3) accessibility standard	No.	<i>No data available this year. Data will be reported in subsequent AMRs</i>					
	%						
Number and percentage of dementia friendly homes delivered on sites of 50 or more dwellings	No.	<i>No data available this year. Data will be reported in subsequent AMRs</i>					
	%						

What Happened?:

No data available this year. Data will be reported in subsequent AMRs

Comparisons:

No data available this year. Data will be reported in subsequent AMRs

Implications for the Local Plan:

No data available this year. Data will be reported in subsequent AMRs

3. Employment and the Economy

The following indicators present a variety of data on the provision of new employment floorspace in the borough, and the gains and losses resulting from changes of use to and from employment.

In 2020, the Use Class Order was revised nationally, collating together a large number of uses including offices, and light industrial into a new single commercial use class (E).

The following indicators will therefore take into account the following Use Classes as defined in the Use Class Order (2020):

B Class:

- B2 (General Industrial)- Use for industrial processes other than uses falling within Class E(g)(iii) (*previously Class B1c*).
- B8 (Storage and Distribution).

E Class:

- E(g)- Previously B1 Use Class- uses which can be carried out in a residential area without detriment to its amenity:
 - E(g)(i)- Offices to carry out any operational or administrative function
 - E(g)(ii)- Research and Development of products or processes
 - E(g)(iii)- Industrial processes

Note that some of the applications reported in this section were approved prior to 2020 so were approved against the previous Use Class Order. For the purposes of the indicators in this section, the provision of both B1a, B1c and E Class Uses have been taken into account.

If demolition and rebuild applications are involved, these can often take place in one year and the replacement provision will not be completed until the following year (or years in the case of larger sites). This can sometimes be the cause of apparent net losses in employment floorspace. It is important therefore to assess trends in this section over a period of time rather than make overall conclusions based on a single monitoring year. Where it is clear that the losses are likely to be balanced by subsequent re-provision, this has been indicated in the analysis.

Permitted Development and Article 4 Directions

Some changes of use involving commercial floorspace can take place through Permitted Development (PD) under the regulations of the General Permitted Development Order (GDPO, 2021) and not require planning permission. As these changes take place outside the planning system they cannot be monitored and as such will not be included within the following figures.

The Council has previously had Article 4 Directions in place to try and protect designated employment areas from changes of use through Permitted Development, reflecting the importance of these areas to local employment and the lack of alternative sites available for these uses, as well as concerns over the quality of development delivered through PD.

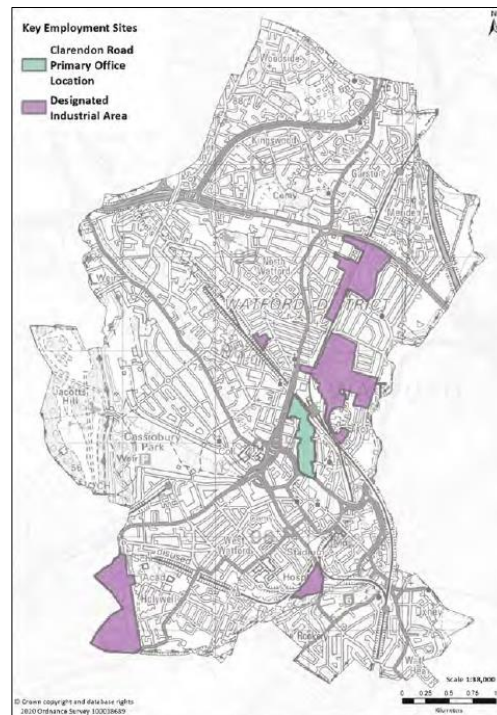
Given the changes to the Use Class Order and the Permitted Development Order (GDPO), these Article 4 Directions are currently being reconsidered as to whether they need to be re-issued or whether in light of these changes are no longer necessary. It is expected that progress will be made on this over the coming monitoring year to ensure that the correct protections are put in place where they are necessary.

Updates to these, and any other Article 4 Directions will be reported here each year.

Watford Local Plan

The plan designates five separate industrial areas within which the loss of employment land will be resisted and designates a Primary Office Location along Clarendon Road which, along with the town centre, will be the focus for office development in the borough and for the protection of existing provision.

Figure 3: Locations of designated industrial and office areas in the Watford Local Plan



The plan includes provision for 85,488sqm of office floor space and 25,206sqm of industrial floor space. This represents, relative to identified needs across South West Hertfordshire, an over provision of office floor space and an under provision of industrial floor space.

The over provision of office floor space will help neighbouring authorities to meet their needs and reflects Watford’s role as the sub-regional hub of office based employment. The under provision of industrial floor space is reflective of the dense, residential, urban character of Watford and the lack of suitable sites available for these uses.

The following tables highlight this provision relative to the identified needs in Watford and South West Hertfordshire.

Table 23: Industrial floorspace supply and targets

Summary of industrial floorspace provision 2021-2038	Floorspace provision (sqm)
South West Hertfordshire requirement	481,500
Watford requirement	98,400
Provision through site allocations	12,799
Provision on sites with planning permission	12,407
Total industrial floorspace provision in the Local Plan	25,206

Table 24: Office floorspace supply and targets

Summary of office floorspace provision 2021-2038	Floorspace provision (sqm)
South West Hertfordshire requirement	188,000
Watford requirement	37,600
Provision through site allocations	19,428
Provision on sites with planning permission	66,060
Total office floorspace provision in the Local Plan	85,488

Policies EM4.1-EM4.6 set out the Plan's approach to the economy and employment. The indicators in this section will monitor progress on the implementation of this strategy across the plan period.

COVID-19

The COVID-19 pandemic had a particularly significant impact on the economy, and in particular, changing the way people work away from traditional working patterns. The Plan was adopted following the pandemic and many facets of life are normalised again.

The full impacts of the pandemic are still relatively unknown in relation to the economy but it is likely that levels of home working will increase in the long term and that more flexible types of working may become more common at the expense of traditional 9-5 patterns of office work.

It is vital therefore that this AMR monitors the economic sector closely during this recovery stage from the pandemic to identify longer term patterns and trends that could help the council deliver on the changing needs and demands of businesses and employees, going forward.

Employment Floorspace Delivery

This indicator will record the net gains and losses of employment floor space in the borough over the plan period. It will do this collectively, and by Use Class, to allow analysis of the overall economic performance of the borough and the relative performance of individual employment sectors.

This indicator will take account of the changes to the Use Class Order in 2021 which removed B1a, b and c as Use Classes, replacing them with Class E(g)(i), E(g)(ii) and E(g)(iii). For the purposes of office, research and development and light industrial uses, these have been combined into a single figure for each in the new E Class.

Table 25: Net employment floorspace delivered over the monitoring year (sqm)

Use class	2021/2022	2022/2023	2023/2024	2024/2025	2025/2026	Total
B2 (General Industrial)	-1,214					
B8 (Storage and Distribution)	-2,121					
E(g)(I) (Offices)	15,507					
E(g)(ii) (Research and Development)	0					
E(g)(iii) (Industrial Processes)	-1,744					
Mixed E Class	-64					
Total	10,364					

What Happened?:

There was an overall net gain of 10,364sqm of employment floorspace over the monitoring year. This was entirely due to net growth of office floorspace; other employment Use Classes experienced net losses.

This included a net loss of -1,214sqm in B2 floorspace; a net loss in B8 floorspace of -2,121sqm, and a loss of -1,744sqm of E(g)(iii) light industrial floorspace.

This loss of B8 floorspace was due to the loss of -1,400sqm of floorspace at Faraday Close (20/01188) and -721sqm of floorspace at Blackmoor Lane (19/00378/FUL).

This same Faraday Close development also contributed a net loss of -1400sqm to this year's net delivery of B2 and E(g)(iii) floorspace.

Although this is reported as a loss this year, the application is for the demolition and replacement of the current employment site with a larger development that includes a mix of commercial buildings replacing it. Once complete, this will result in an overall net growth in B2, B8 and E(g)(iii) floorspace. This is important to consider when putting this years reported loss of employment floorspace in context.

There was contrastingly a significant net growth of 15,507sqm of E(g)(i) office floorspace, largely due to a single large development on Clendon Road, which delivered 24,451sqm on a single site (17/00558) over the monitoring year.

Comparisons:

Historically there has been concern over a loss of employment floorspace in the borough which resulted in Article 4 Directions being put in place in 2013 on Clendon Road and in 2019 on industrial areas.

Whilst there has been an overall net gain in employment floorspace, this has been due to the significant net gain in office floorspace, and it appears that there has continued to be a loss of floorspace this year for other industrial employment Use Classes.

It is important to recognise however that the site at Faraday Close contributed a net loss of -3600sqm to this year's employment floorspace figures but once the development is completed it will, in the long term, provide a net increase in floorspace of 2,574sqm.

It is particularly positive to see the growth in office development particularly in the Primary Office Location at Clarendon Road.

Implications for the Local Plan:

It is apparent that this year has seen a continuation of a trend in losing employment floorspace in non-office uses although the above explanation would maybe suggest that this is a slightly simplistic observation and that the actual picture is more nuanced with regard to the delay between demolition and reprovision of floorspace on Faraday Close.

The adoption of the Local Plan should allow the Council to exercise greater control over managing losses where appropriate and in resisting inappropriate proposals that result in a loss of employment floorspace.

It is positive to see the net growth in office floorspace, particularly as this growth was concentrated within the Primary Office Location on Clarendon Road.

It will be crucial to monitor this indicator over subsequent years to see if additional protections are necessary or whether the Local Plan policies and the market starts to contribute to improvements in the provision of employment floorspace.

Designated Industrial Areas

The plan designates five parts of the borough as industrial areas. Policy EM4.2 states that within these areas proposals will only be supported where they result in no net loss of industrial floorspace other than in specific circumstances set out in the policy. The monitoring framework sets a target for there to be no net loss of industrial uses over the plan period within these locations.

Table 26 below highlights net gains and losses in B2, B8 , E(g)(iii) employment floor space within the five industrial areas over the monitoring year.

Over the plan period this indicator will be used to assess the health of the borough's key industrial areas and the extent to which they remain viable and growing.

Table 26: Net delivery of employment floor space within designated industrial areas over the monitoring year (sqm)

Use class	2021/2022	2022/2023	2023/2024	2024/2025	2025/2026	Total
B2 (General Industrial)	-1,400					
B8 (Storage and Distribution)	-2,121					
E(g)(ii) (Research and Development)	0					
E(g)(iii) (Industrial Processes)	-1,342					
Total	-4,863					

What Happened?:

Over the monitoring year there was a loss of -4,863sqm of B2, B8 and E(g)(iii) class floor space within the designated industrial areas.

This loss was fairly consistently spread across the different Use Classes, with the exception of Use Class E(g)(ii) research and development where there was no net gain or loss.

Losses were experienced on just one of the designated industrial areas; -3600 at Faraday Close within the Watford Business Park estate, and -721 at Blackmore Lane on the same estate. The only other loss/gain of employment floorspace within designated estates was a net gain of 58sqm on Caxton Way which is also within the Watford Business Park estate.

As mentioned above, the development at Faraday Close contributed -1400sqm to this year's net loss of B2, B8 and E(g)(iii) floorspace. Although this is reported as a loss this year, the proposal is to demolish and replace the current employment site with a larger development including a mix of commercial buildings. This will result in an overall net growth in B2, B8 and E(g)(iii) floorspace when the replacement buildings come forward. This is important to consider when analysing the figures in this section.

Comparisons:

Historically there has been concern over a loss of employment floorspace in the borough which resulted in Article 4 Directions being put in place.

Whilst it appears that there has continued to be a loss of floorspace this year it is important to recognise that the site at Faraday Close contributed -3600sqm to this years employment floorspace within designated industrial estates but once the development is completed it will, in the long term, provide a net increase in floorspace of 2,574sqm.

Implications for the Local Plan:

The industrial areas were designated specifically to try and protect employment floorspace within the borough. It will need to be assessed through this indicator whether this designation is providing suitable protection or whether additional protection or guidance is needed.

The Council is currently considering whether to re-issue Article 4 Directions to cover the Industrial areas to ensure that proposals for changes of use in these areas are subject to consideration against Local Plan policies.

Office Development

Policy EM4.3 states that applications within the Clarendon Road Primary Office Location or the town centre that would result in any net loss of office floor space will be resisted other than in certain circumstances set out in the policy. Policy EM4.3 also states that any office development proposed outside either the Primary Office Location or the Town centre will be subject to assessment against an office development hierarchy (Figure 4.3 of the Local Plan) to try and ensure that these areas remain the focus for office employment in the borough.

The monitoring framework sets a target for there to be no net loss of E(g)(i) Class office floor space within the Primary Office Location or the Town Centre. Table 27 highlights net gains or losses of office floor space within the Clarendon Road Primary Office Location and the Town Centre.

Over the plan period this indicator will provide key data on the health of Watford as a regional office hub.

Table 27: Net delivery of E(g)(i) office floorspace within the Primary Office Locations (sqm)

	2021/2022	2022/2023	2023/2024	2024/2025	2025/2026	Total
Net E(g)(i) class office floor space delivered within the Clarendon Rd Primary Office Location	20,470					
Net E(g)(i) class office floor space delivered within the Town Centre	-5,235					

What Happened?:

Over the monitoring year there was a net gain of 20,470sqm of office floor space on Clarendon Road but a net loss of -5,235sqm in the Town Centre.

This growth on Clarendon Road is largely down to the delivery of 24,451sqm of office floorspace at 64 and 73/77 Clarendon Road.

A large proportion of this loss (-4,459sqm) reported in the Town Centre was down to a single application converting an E Class Use into an F1 Use County Courthouse (21/00785/FUL). Whilst this use would be considered appropriate within a town centre, it does not fall within the definition of Main Town Centre Uses in the NPPF Glossary and so is shown as a loss in this indicator.

Comparisons:

As this is the first year of the new monitoring framework, and of the new Watford Local Plan, it is impossible to make comparisons for this indicator. This year will be used as a benchmark against which future AMRs will be compared.

Implications for the Local Plan:

The Local Plan is clear on the importance of the Clarendon Road Primary Office Location and the Town Centre to the local and regional economy and therefore seeks to resist the loss of floorspace whilst encouraging new floorspace to be delivered.

This indicator will be useful in highlighting the health of the office locations and provide evidence on the current state of the local and regional economic market.

[Employment Floorspace outside designated employment locations](#)

Although employment in the borough is concentrated within the designated industrial and office areas there are other employment sites outside of these which continue to be an important part of the local economy. The Watford Employment Land Review (2017) shows that the risk of losing employment floor space in the borough is higher on sites outside these designated areas.

As such policy EM4.4 seeks to also prevent the loss of employment space outside designated locations other than in specific circumstances as set out in the policy and sets a target of no net loss of employment floor space over the plan period.

Table 28: Net delivery of office floorspace outside of designated employment locations (sqm)

	2021/2022	2022/2023	2023/2024	2024/2025	2025/2026	Total
Net E(g)(i) class floor space delivered outside the Clarendon Rd Primary Office Location or the Town Centre	458					

Table 29: Net delivery of B2, B8, E(g)(ii) and E(g)(iii) floorspace outside of the designated industrial areas (sqm)

Use class	2021/2022	2022/2023	2023/2024	2024/2025	2025/2026	Total
B2 (General Industrial)	186					
B8 (Storage and Distribution)	0					
E(g)(ii) (Research and Development)	0					
E(g)(iii) (Industrial Processes)	-402					
Total	-216					

What Happened?:

Over the monitoring there was a net gain of 458sqm of office floorspace delivered outside of the Primary Office Location and the Town Centre.

Contrastingly, there was a net loss of industrial (B2/B8/E(g)(ii) and E(g)(iii)) floor space of -216sqm outside the designated industrial areas.

The majority of this loss was in E(g)(iii) (Light Industrial) Use Class resulting from the loss of 330sqm of floorspace on Nascot Street (19/00244).

The growth in office floorspace is mainly as a result of two developments, one on Tolpits Lane (20/00372/CM) delivering 319sqm of new office floorspace and a development on Blackmoor Lane (19/00378/FUL) delivering 938sqm of office floorspace.

Comparisons:

As this is the first year of the new monitoring framework, and of the new Watford Local Plan, it is impossible to make comparisons for this indicator. This year will be used as a benchmark against which future AMRs will be compared.

Implications for the Local Plan:

The Primary Office Location and employment area designations are intended to be the main focus for employment floorspace in the borough but the Local Plan is clear that employment floorspace outside these areas should also be subject to protection.

Whilst it is positive to see an increase in office floorspace outside the designated areas, it is concerning to see the loss of industrial floorspace that has been reported. It will be important to monitor this indicator over the coming years to see whether this trend continues and whether additional interventions might be required in the future.

Employment Land Available

This indicator will highlight the current level of employment land permitted on applications which have not yet been implemented. This again takes into account permissions relating to the old Use Classes Order as well as the new Use Classes Order.

Table 30: Employment floor space available in Watford (with planning permission, not yet implemented/completed) (sqm)

Use class	2021/2022	2022/2023	2023/2024	2024/2025	2025/2026	Total
B2 (General Industrial)	4,469					
B8 (Storage and Distribution)	3,220					
E(g)(I) (Offices)	25,416					
E(g)(ii) (Research and Development)	250					
E(g)(iii) (Industrial Processes)	3,170					
Mixed E Class	6,989					
Total	43,514					

What Happened?:

Currently, across the borough, there is a total of 43,514sqm of employment floorspace available taking into account all planning permissions that have not yet been implemented. This is a significant amount of committed employment floor space that should provide a substantial supply of floorspace going forward.

By far the largest amount of floorspace available is in E(g)(i) Class office uses which accounts for over 50% of all floorspace available.

Comparisons:

As this is the first year of the new monitoring framework, and of the new Watford Local Plan, it is impossible to make comparisons for this indicator. This year will be used as a benchmark against which future AMRs will be compared.

Implications for the Local Plan:

There is substantial employment floorspace permitted in the borough, particularly for E(g)(i) office uses. It is reasonable to think that the majority of this floorspace will come forward in the short-medium term, contributing to meeting the targets in the Local Plan.

This AMR will compare the delivery of employment floorspace against the targets in Table 4.1 and 4.2 of the Local Plan going forward.

Delivery of Site Allocations

Chapter 13 of the Local Plan allocates several sites for employment uses. Details of any progress that has taken place on these allocations over the monitoring year can be found in chapter 12 of this AMR.

Training and Skills

Policy EM4.6 of the Local Plan seeks to ensure that major development could provide employment and training initiatives for local people. This indicator will seek to capture any training programmes and apprenticeships that have arisen as a result of new development during the monitoring year.

Table 31: Training schemes and apprenticeships delivered as a result of development being permitted

Applications with training schemes or apprenticeship programmes for local people	
Application Reference	Details of scheme (description, type of scheme, number of people involved, length of time)
21/00934/VARM- 37-39 Clarendon Road	The developer of this site has implemented their own apprenticeship scheme for ex-servicemen on the site which is currently under construction for a mixed use development of office floorspace, 154 residential units and a café/restaurant use.

What Happened?:

Over the monitoring there was one training schemes implemented as a result of new development, providing apprenticeships for ex-servicemen. This was not secured by the Council through s106 but through the developers own internal scheme.

Comparisons:

As this is the first year of the new monitoring framework, and of the new Watford Local Plan, it is impossible to make comparisons for this indicator. This year will be used as a benchmark against which future AMRs will be compared.

Implications for the Local Plan:

It is positive to see an apprenticeship scheme currently being implemented in the borough. The new Local Plan policy should provide a methodology by which more training schemes and apprenticeships can be secured through s106 agreements driven by the Council. As this is the first year of the Local Plan it is too early to make conclusions on the effectiveness of the Policy as a whole.

4.A Vibrant Town: Town Centre and Retail

Watford has a strongly performing Town Centre, a supporting District Centre on St Albans Road incorporating a wide range of services and facilities, and a series of Local Centres that meet the day to day needs of communities across the borough.

Figure 4: The location of the Town Centre, District Centre and Local Centres

Watford functions as a sub-regional Town Centre that serves residents of the town and beyond, drawing people from across South West Hertfordshire. The wide availability of facilities and shops within the Town Centre helps to attract people into the town, sustaining the dynamism and vibrancy of the Centre as well as supporting a large number of local jobs and businesses.

The continued success of the Town and other centres can also reduce the need to travel by car, encourage combined trips and promote sustainable transport methods such as walking and cycling.

Incorporating flexibility within the retail policies of the Plan was important in allowing the centres to evolve in response to the changing nature of the retail market, that national and local economy and to keep them vibrant and successful.

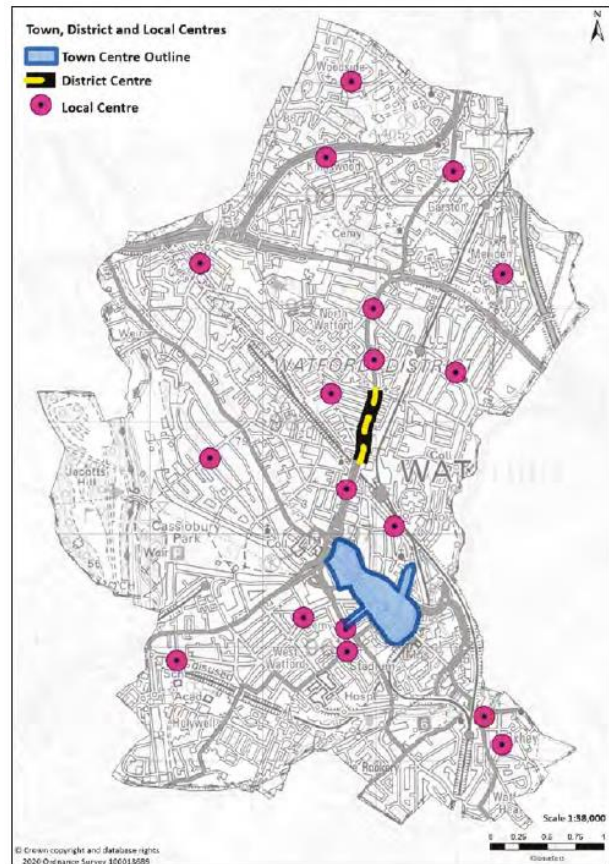
It is vital that trends on Town Centre, District Centre and Local Centres performance over the plan period is monitored. The indicators in this section will report on the provision and loss of traditional retail uses, and of all other uses that fall within the definition of 'main town centre uses' in the NPPF. It will also assess current vacancy rates within the centres as a key indicator of centre health.

Watford Local Plan

Policies VT5.1, VT5.2 and VT5.3 set out the Plan's approach to development in the Town Centre, District Centre and Local Centres.

These policies are reflective of national policy; applying a sequential, 'town centre first' approach to the delivery of retail, and other main town centre uses. This supports the provision of main town centre uses in the town centre first of all, then edge of centre locations, then local centres and only supporting limited convenience floorspace outside these centres where they support the day to day needs of residents at new strategic sites.

There are several mixed use residential allocations in the plan that are located within the Town Centre boundary and it is likely that the population living within the Town Centre will increase over



the plan period. The provision of additional residential uses within the Town Centre can encourage increased footfall and promote the use of shops, services and businesses. It can also reduce the need for car parking due to the increased availability and viability of walking, cycling and public transport options for short journeys.

Chapter 2 of this AMR provides data on the delivery of residential dwellings in the Town Centre SDA (Table 5) and chapter 13 provides details and updates on the delivery of all allocated sites within the Town Centre. Although residential uses are supported in the Town Centre, the plan emphasises the importance of retaining active frontages on ground floors even if residential uses are being provided above, and that residential development should be designed sensitively with regard to heritage assets and conservation areas.

COVID-19

As the country emerges from the pandemic, it will be important to monitor the performance of the centres and whether the pre-pandemic footfall levels resume in the short, medium and long term. This chapter monitors vacancy rates in all of the designated centres as a key indicator of their current health and viability.

Town Centre Strategic Framework

Over the monitoring year progress has been made on producing a town centre framework document which sets out a vision and a series of recommendations relating to the future development and enhancement of the Town Centre. This document will be used as a planning framework to inform development in the Town Centre particularly focusing on issues of connectivity, heritage, public realm and sustainable transport. Updates on this project will be provided annually in this AMR.

Town Centre Design SPD

To build on the principles in the Town Centre Framework the Council’s policy team is producing design guidance in the form of an SPD for the Town Centre. This is a reaction to the significant amount of development likely to come forward in this area and the unique design and policy considerations and challenges within this area. Updates on this project will be provided annually in this AMR.

Maintaining ground floor units, within a defined Town District or Local Centre: Delivery of Retail uses over the Monitoring Year

The plan supports the provision of retail uses within the centres as defined in Figure 4. Table 32 records the net growth in retail uses over the monitoring year within the Town centre, District Centre and Local Centres.

Table 32: Net delivery of retail E(a) floor space (sqm) over the monitoring year

Location	2021/2022	2022/2023	2023/2024	2024/2025	2025/2026	Total
Town Centre	711					
District Centre	0					
Local Centres	-163					
Outside Centres	126					
Total	674					

What Happened?:

Over the monitoring year there was an overall net growth of 674sqm in Class E(a) retail floorspace across the borough.

A net gain of 711sqm of retail floorspace was delivered within the designated Town Centre, virtue of two applications on The Parade, both were the conversion of Sui Generis units to retail use.

There was however a loss in retail floor space of -163sqm within the Local Centres. This loss resulted from two applications converting retail units into a Sui Generis Use and so they remain as active commercial units. One of these was in Goodwood Parade on Courtlands Drive and the other on Langley Road.

There was no net gain or loss in E(a) Class Uses in the District Centre.

Outside of any designated centre there was a net increase of 126sqm resulting from the extension of the kiosk at Sheepcot service station on the North Orbital Road.

Comparisons:

This is the first year of the new monitoring framework, and of the new Watford Local Plan, it is impossible to make comparisons for this indicator. This year will be used as a benchmark against which future AMRs will be compared.

It will be important to monitor the growth and loss of retail floorspace to assess trends regarding the health and viability of the designated centres.

Implications for the Local Plan:

The growth of retail floorspace in the Town Centre over the monitoring year highlights the positive performance of the Centre as the focus for retail uses.

Whilst there has been a small loss of retail floorspace in the Local Centres, the losses have been from a retail use to a Sui Generis use, and so they are retained as active commercial units, maintaining the vitality and vibrancy of the area.

The Local Plan highlights the importance of these centres to the economic performance of the borough, and monitoring the gains and losses in retail floorspace will provide a measure by which the Council can determine the success of the Local Plan's retail policies in protecting centres as the primary locations for retail uses.

Main Town Centre Uses in the Town Centre, District Centre and Local Centres

This indicator assesses the delivery and provision of all ‘main town centre uses’ in the different centres, broadening the previous indicator which focused only on class E(a) retail uses. This indicator will report on the provision of all the following uses. These are all defined as main town centre uses in the NPPF glossary definition.

- Retail units
- Leisure uses
- Cinemas
- Restaurants
- Drive through restaurants
- Bars and Pubs
- Nightclubs
- Casinos
- Health and Fitness centres
- Indoor bowling
- Bingo halls
- Offices
- Theatres
- Museums
- Galleries
- Concert halls
- Hotels
- Conference facilities

Table 33 below sets out the net delivery of any ‘main town centre uses’ within the Town Centre, District Centre and Local Centres. Note that the figures in this table also include the retail provision that was assessed in isolation in Table 32 above. Also note that these figures **do not** include Class E(a) Office floorspace which, although counting as Main Town Centre Uses, were assessed in the previous chapter on employment.

Table 33: Net delivery of main town centre uses over the monitoring year (sqm)

Location	2021/2022	2022/2023	2023/2024	2024/2025	2025/2026	Total
Town Centre	-3,748					
District Centre	0					
Local Centres	-163					
Total	-3,911					

What Happened?:

Over the monitoring year there was a net loss of -3,911sqm of floorspace in main town centre uses within designated centres. This included -3,748sqm of floorspace within the Town Centre, accompanied by a loss of 163sqm within the Local Centres.

This loss reported in the Town Centre was exclusively down to a single application converting an E Class Use into an F1 Use county courthouse (21/00785/FUL). Whilst this use would be considered

appropriate within a Town Centre, it does not fall within the definition of main town centre uses in the NPPF Glossary. This has resulted in this indicator reporting a substantial loss.

Removing this application from the above table would leave a net growth of 711sqm within the Town Centre and 548sqm across all designated centres.

Comparisons:

As this is the first year of the new monitoring framework, and of the new Watford Local Plan, it is impossible to make comparisons for this indicator. This year will be used as a benchmark against which future AMRs will be compared.

Implications for the Local Plan:

There has been a considerable overall loss of main town centre uses within the Town Centre, and a smaller loss in the Local Centres. This is contrary to the objectives in the Local Plan to maintain the role of the centres as the primary locations for town centre uses.

However, in analysing this loss in more detail, the reported loss is down to a single change of use from an office use to a law courts. Whilst law courts would not technically fall within the definition of main town centre uses as defined in the NPPF they are a suitable use within the Town Centre and so this year's loss is not considered to be overly significant with regard to a loss of town centre uses.

Additionally, the loss in the Local Centres was to a Sui Generis use that will retain the active frontages, vibrancy and vitality of the centres.

Table 34 sets out the current proportion of centres that are in a main town centre uses as defined in the NPPF. This is assessed in terms of number of units.

This indicator will be useful to monitor over the plan period as it will provide an indication of the health of the centres and the extent to which they remain viable locations, not just for retail but for services and facilities, leisure, arts and culture.

This data is collected through the undertaking of a retail survey by Hertfordshire County Council. This year, the survey is to be undertaken in early 2023 and so will likely be too late to report on in this year's AMR. The Council will consider whether to publish this information separately over the next monitoring year or whether to report the results in the next AMR.

Table 34: % of each centre that are in active town centre uses

Location	2021/2022	2022/2023	2023/2024	2024/2025	2025/2026	Total
Town Centre	<i>No data available this year. Data will be reported in subsequent AMRs</i>					
District Centre	<i>No data available this year. Data will be reported in subsequent AMRs</i>					
Local Centres	<i>No data available this year. Data will be reported in subsequent AMRs</i>					

What Happened?:

No data available this year. Data will be reported in subsequent AMRs

Comparisons:

No data available this year. Data will be reported in subsequent AMRs

Implications for the Local Plan:

No data available this year. Data will be reported in subsequent AMRs

Vacancy Rates in Town, Local and District Centres

This indicator will monitor the number, location and proportion of vacant ground floor units within the Town Centre, District Centre and Local Centres.

Having a large number of vacant units within a centre can have impacts on the centre’s perceived and actual vitality and viability, affecting the surrounding public realm, people’s perceptions of a place and the local economy.

Table 35 assesses the number and percentage of units in each of the centres that are vacant as of the end of each monitoring year.

These figures only include ground floor units as these have a greater impact on the vitality of a centre and ensures that the data is not distorted by a large number of upper floor residential units, which are less likely to be vacant, being included.

It is recognised that there may be some units that become vacant and active again within the same monitoring year which will not be recorded in these figures but as there would be no net difference over the monitoring year, this is not considered to be a limitation in the accuracy of the data.

This data is collected through the undertaking of a retail survey by Hertfordshire County Council. This year, the survey is to be undertaken in January 2023 and so will be too late to report on in this year’s AMR. The Council will consider whether to publish this information separately over the next monitoring year or whether to just report the results in the next AMR.

The Atria Centre, which is the main indoor shopping centre situated within the Town Centre has been included as a separate category in the above table. This is due to the way the data will be recorded in the shop front survey, from which these vacancy figures are taken, where the Atria Centre is assessed separately from the rest of the Town Centre.

Table 35: Vacancy rates in the Town Centre, District Centre and Local Centres

Location		2021/2022	2022/2023	2023/2024	2024/2025	2025/2026	Total
Town centre	No.	<i>No data available this year. Data will be reported in subsequent AMRs</i>					
	%						
Atria shopping Centre	No.	<i>No data available this year. Data will be reported in subsequent AMRs</i>					
	%						
District centre	No.	<i>No data available this year. Data will be</i>					

		<i>reported in subsequent AMRs</i>					
	%						
Local centres	No.	<i>No data available this year. Data will be reported in subsequent AMRs</i>					
	%						
Total	No.						
	%						

What Happened?:

No data available this year. Data will be reported in subsequent AMRs

Comparisons:

No data available this year. Data will be reported in subsequent AMRs

Implications for the Local Plan:

No data available this year. Data will be reported in subsequent AMRs

5. An Attractive Town: Design and Building Height

New development provides an opportunity to make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of an area, however poorly designed developments can lead to negative impacts on both the character and environment of a place as well as having negative impacts on residents' health and quality of life.

Ensuring that Local Plan policies contribute to achieving a high quality of design is therefore crucial in creating successful places both in terms of the internal and external environment where people live. Both can help to create a safe, attractive and sustainable borough that improves the health and wellbeing of residents.

The policies in the Local Plan do not, therefore, only focus on a developments external appearance but also its sustainability, its compliance with internal standards, and its impacts on the surrounding area. The policies provide both general design principles and specific design requirements.

Watford has recently experienced a significant increase in the number of applications for taller buildings, particularly in the Core Development Area. A key issue in the preparation of the new Local Plan has therefore been how high density development can be incorporated into the borough without having unacceptable impacts on the character of the area or on important heritage assets.

The Local Plan sets out specific requirements for buildings that exceed set base building heights. These base building heights vary depending on location as shown in Figure 5. Buildings exceeding base building heights should be of outstanding design, and provide substantial public and sustainability benefits.

This section of the AMR will report on the extent to which the standards for design set out in the Local Plan are being met and report on how the policies are being applied in practice. It will record specifically the number of applications where design is a listed reason for refusal and on both refusals and approvals of development proposing to exceed the base building heights.

This section should be read in conjunction with Table 22 of the housing chapter which outlined the extent to which internal space and accessibility standards were being met, and Table 10 of the housing chapter which sets out the average density of new residential development in the borough.

In this first monitoring year for the new Local Plan, it has proved difficult to source reliable data for some indicators in this section in particular. Processes have been put in place that should enable more comprehensive coverage in the next AMR.

Watford Local Plan

Policies QD6.1 to QD6.4 set out broad and detailed design principles that will direct the delivery of high quality development in the borough.

These principles include the following topics:

- **Character and Identity-** Making sure new buildings and streets are attractive and distinctive including consideration of how the area looks, feels and functions. They should make a positive contribution to the character of the area so that it is identifiable and relatable to residents.
- **Built Form-** Ensure that the scale and massing of proposed buildings relate to their local context.
- **Active Frontages-**New buildings should include an active frontage to ensure there is a visual and physical relationship between the street and the building.
- **Movement and Connectivity-** Streets should be efficient, convenient, legible and permeable to prioritise non-vehicle travel.
- **Views-** New development should contribute positively towards important views in the borough.
- **Sustainability-** Development should be designed to minimise negative impacts on the environment and embrace sustainability principles. This should include measures to reduce the use of resources.

Policy QD6.5 sets out the criteria that a proposal needs to meet for it to be acceptable as a ‘taller building’ in the borough. This has become a significant issue for Watford and as such this policy, and the monitoring of it, is a vital one for the future growth of the borough over the plan period.

The plan sets four different base building heights; within each of the three Strategic Development Areas (SDAs) and then a single base height for any proposals that are located outside the Core Development Area (CDA). These base building heights can be seen in Figure 5 below. Development proposed over and above these base building heights will be considered a taller building and subject to the requirements of Policy QD6.5.

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.

Figure 5: Base Building Heights

This AMR will record the number of tall buildings (over the base building heights) that have been approved over the monitoring year and the number of applications where Policy QD6.5 is listed as a reason for refusal.

High Quality Design

This indicator will provide details of how many applications where Policy QD6.2 or Policy QD6.4 are listed as reasons for refusal.

Table 36 includes new build development, both residential and non-residential, but it excludes any extensions or other householder applications where the above policies have been referenced.

Table 36: Number of applications where Policy QD6.2 (Design Principles) or QD6.4 (Building Design) are listed as a reason for refusal.

Location	2021/2022	2022/2023	2023/2024	2024/2025	2025/2026	Total
Residential	<i>No data available this year. Data will be reported in subsequent AMRs</i>					
Non-residential B use	<i>No data available this year. Data will be reported in subsequent AMRs</i>					
Non-residential E use	<i>No data available this year. Data will be reported in subsequent AMRs</i>					
Other uses	<i>No data available this year. Data will be reported in subsequent AMRs</i>					
Total						

What Happened?:

No data available this year. Data will be reported in subsequent AMRs

Comparisons:

No data available this year. Data will be reported in subsequent AMRs

Implications for the Local Plan:

No data available this year. Data will be reported in subsequent AMRs

Public Realm

Providing a high quality and functional public realm is crucial to creating places and environments in which communities and businesses can thrive. Policy QD6.3 requires new development to be designed in a way that makes places safe, accessible, inclusive and attractive. Criteria a-f of this policy will ensure that new development has a positive impact on the surrounding public realm.

Table 37 below reports the number of new build applications where Policy QD6.3 is listed as a reason for refusal.

Table 37: Number of applications where Policy QD6.3 (Public Realm) is listed as a reason for refusal

Location	2021/2022	2022/2023	2023/2024	2024/2025	2025/2026	Total
Residential	<i>No data available this year. Data will be reported in subsequent AMRs</i>					
Non-residential B use	<i>No data available this year. Data will be reported in subsequent AMRs</i>					
Non-residential E use	<i>No data available this year. Data will be reported in subsequent AMRs</i>					
Other uses	<i>No data available this year. Data will be reported in subsequent AMRs</i>					
Total						

What Happened?:

No data available this year. Data will be reported in subsequent AMRs

Comparisons:

No data available this year. Data will be reported in subsequent AMRs

Implications for the Local Plan:

No data available this year. Data will be reported in subsequent AMRs

Public realm improvements and projects can be undertaken without links to a planning application or a new development. Over the plan period the AMR will also provide a written commentary on any major public realm enhancements undertaken in the borough over the monitoring year. This will likely not be an exhaustive list and is provided for information only.

During the 2021 to 2022 monitoring year, the following public realm projects were started or completed:

- Clarendon Road (phase 2) between St Johns Road and Station Road. The footpaths on either side of the road were upgraded using granite paving. In addition a new surface water drainage system was installed connecting to the Thames Water main. The carriageway has been narrowed to help enforce the 20mph speed limit and was resurfaced. New pedestrian facilities have been introduced at road junctions with new upgraded signal controlled crossings. New seats, street trees and planting have been supported by uplighters to enhance the street scene and the street lighting has been upgraded to support festive lighting and vertical banners
- Queens Road project- This project is ongoing and is being progressed
- Market Street project- This project is ongoing and is being progressed
- The Town Centre Strategic Framework includes various suggestions for public realm enhancements within the Town Centre and has been progressed over the monitoring year.

Building Height

Building height is an important issue for the borough, both for local residents and for the Council. There has been a growing prevalence in applications for taller buildings in the borough. Policy QD6.5 sets out the criteria that a proposal over the base building heights must meet for it to be acceptable.

The following tables report a variety of indicators relating to building height. The first indicator shows the number of applications/dwellings that have been completed over the monitoring year that were delivered over the base building heights set out in the Local Plan and replicated in Figure 5 above.

These applications were all approved prior to the base building heights being formally adopted in the Local Plan. It is however useful to assess the current situation with regard to building height, to provide a baseline against which to assess monitoring the effectiveness of the base building heights being in place and Policy QD6.5 in the Local Plan.

Table 38: Applications completed over the monitoring year that are in excess of the base building heights

Core Development Area (CDA)/Not Core Development Area	2021/2022	2022/2023	2023/2024	2024/2025	2025/2026
Not CDA	90 comps				
	10 storeys				
Not CDA	23 comps				
	5 storeys				
Town Centre Strategic Development Area (SDA)	56 comps				
	7 storeys				

Table 39: Extant permissions that are over the base building heights

Core Development Area (CDA)/Not Core Development Area	2021/2022	2022/2023	2023/2024	2024/2025	2025/2026
Not CDA	315 dws				
	25 storeys				
Not CDA	248 dws				
	13 storeys				
Not CDA	16 dws				
	7 storeys				
Not CDA	86 dws				
	6 storeys				
Not CDA	279 dws				
	11 storeys				
Not CDA	126 dws				
	5 storeys				
Not CDA	72 dws				
	5 storeys				
	407 dws				

Colne Valley SDA	11 storeys				
Colne Valley SDA	192 dws				
	8 storeys				
Watford Gateway SDA	964 dws				
	28 storeys				
Watford Gateway SDA	41 dws				
	14 storeys				

What Happened?:

Table 38 shows that there were 3 permissions completed over the monitoring year that were above the base building heights. Two of these were outside the CDA and one was in the Town Centre SDA. These delivered a total of 169 dwellings and were 10, 7 and 5 storeys.

Table 39 shows that there are currently 11 extant permissions that are above base building heights. The majority of these are currently under construction and may be partially completed at the end of the monitoring year.

These 11 applications will deliver 2,746 dwellings. They are in a mix of locations inside and outside the CDA and vary in height from 5 storeys to 28 storeys.

Comparisons:

As this is the first year of the new monitoring framework, and of the new Watford Local Plan, it is impossible to make comparisons for this indicator. This year will be used as a benchmark against which future AMRs will be compared

Implications for the Local Plan:

The above permissions were all approved prior to the adoption of the new Local Plan and the introduction of base building heights. It is expected that the policies in the new Local Plan will give the Council greater ability to resist inappropriately tall development and will ensure that any proposals above the base building heights are of outstanding quality and that they provide substantial public benefits.

It will be interesting to keep these tables updated over the plan period to consider whether the number of buildings above the base building heights decreases or whether the borough is still subject to development in excess of these.

Table 40 below records the number of applications and the number of dwellings that have been approved within this monitoring year and are proposing to exceed the base building heights. This is divided into the three Strategic Development Areas (SDAs) and areas outside the Core Development Area (CDA).

Both numbers of applications and numbers of dwellings are reported to try and assess the effectiveness of the policy, as well as the impact that approvals exceeding building heights are having on housing supply and delivery.

Table 40: Applications approved over the monitoring year that are in excess of the base building heights

		2021/2022	2022/2023	2023/2024	2024/2025	2025/2026	Total
Watford Gateway SDA	No. Apps	0					
	No. of Dws	0					
Town Centre SDA	No. Apps	0					
	No. of Dws	0					
Colne Valley SDA	No. Apps	0					
	No. of Dws	0					
Outside the CDA	No. of Apps	2					
	No. of Dws	171					
Total	No. of Apps	2					
	No. of Dws	171					

What Happened?:

Over the year, two applications were approved despite being completely, or partially, in excess of the base building heights set out in Policy QD6.5.

Both applications were outside the CDA. One of which on St Albans Road (21/00698/FULM) was only partially in excess of the base building height, with two blocks being 5 storeys.

The other application, on Cherry Tree Road (21/00455/AAPA) was also 5 storeys, in excess of the base building height of up to 4 storeys.

These two applications will provide a total of 171 dwellings, 127 on one site and 44 on the other.

Comparisons:

As this is the first year of the new monitoring framework, and of the new Watford Local Plan, it is impossible to make comparisons for this indicator. This year will be used as a benchmark against which future AMRs will be compared.

This indicator will be monitored going forward to indicate how much of the boroughs possible future growth is to come forward on tall buildings, and where these applications are being concentrated.

Implications for the Local Plan:

The building height policy does not prevent buildings over the base building heights being delivered, rather it requires developments that exceed them to be of outstanding design, significant public benefits and substantial sustainability benefits in order for them to be permitted.

The two applications this year that exceed the base building height were both marginally over by one storey. These applications were determined prior to the adoption of the new Local Plan, so Policy QD6.5 did not have full weight.

This indicator will help to consider how successful the policy has been in preventing inappropriate taller development, or whether additional policy guidance is required in the future.

Table 41 below sets out the number of applications that were refused on the basis of their height. This, along with the above indicator on approvals, will help to make an assessment on the effectiveness of this policy.

Table 41: Applications refused over the monitoring in which Policy QD6.5 (Building Height) was listed as a reason for refusal

Location	2021/2022	2022/2023	2023/2024	2024/2025	2025/2026	Total
Watford Gateway SDA	<i>No data available this year. Data will be reported in subsequent AMRs</i>					
Town Centre SDA	<i>No data available this year. Data will be reported in subsequent AMRs</i>					

Colne Valley SDA	<i>No data available this year. Data will be reported in subsequent AMRs</i>					
Outside the CDA	<i>No data available this year. Data will be reported in subsequent AMRs</i>					
Total						

What Happened?:

No data available this year. Data will be reported in subsequent AMRs

Comparisons:

No data available this year. Data will be reported in subsequent AMRs

Implications for the Local Plan:

No data available this year. Data will be reported in subsequent AMRs

6. The Historic Environment

Both national and local policy attach great importance to the preservation of the historic environment. The NPPF recognises heritage assets as an irreplaceable resource that should be given great weight in decision making, whilst the Local Plan reiterates the need to conserve, and where possible enhance, the significance of assets.

Watford has a wide range of heritage assets, including locally and nationally listed buildings, conservation areas, and historic parks and gardens. These assets have considerable value to local people and add significantly to the character of the town.

The following list replicated from paragraph 7.2 of the Local Plan sets out some of the key features of the town's heritage:

- 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.

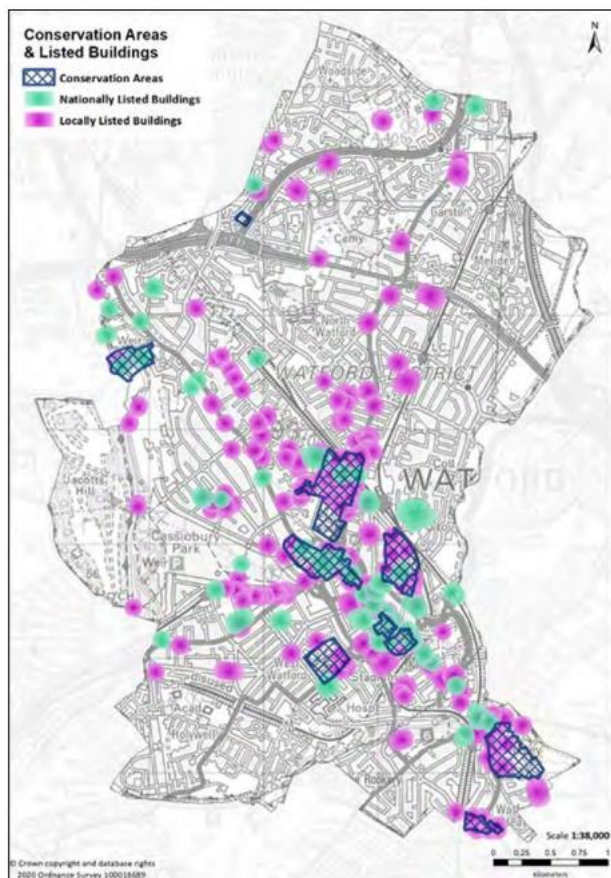


Figure 6: Heritage assets in Watford

Watford Local Plan

Policies HE7.1-HE7.4 set out the Council's approach to the historic environment. This AMR will monitor the impacts of new development on the historic environment, as well as reporting on any major heritage projects or issues that have arisen over the monitoring year.

Overall the policies in the Plan seek to give great weight to the conservation of important historic assets and avoid and mitigate any possible harm or loss to this significance.

Conservation Areas

The town's historic environment is protected by the designation of several conservation areas. These will be reviewed as part of an ongoing project to update the Watford

Conservation Areas Management Plan. The existing conservation areas can be seen in Figure 6.

Conservation areas exist to manage and protect the special architectural and historic interest of a place. Applications submitted within them are subject to additional planning controls and considerations in order to protect the unique character of the area.

This AMR will report any progress on the Conservation Areas Management Plan review and any changes to the conservation areas over the monitoring year in the below boxes.

What Happened?:

Work has progressed over the monitoring year, on a review of the Watford Conservation Areas Management Plan to ensure that it reflects the latest policy and guidance. An informal, early-stage consultation took place in August and September 2022 just after the end of the 2021/2022 monitoring year. Work is currently progressing on the updated document, with a consultation on the proposed actions due to take place in 2023.

If adopted, the updated document will set out actions that the Council will take to ensure that special architectural or historic interest is protected for future generations.

Implications for the Local Plan:

The review of the Conservation Areas Management Plan will allow the Council to better assess proposals that sit within, or adjoining, conservation areas and ensure that they respond to the unique character of the area in accordance with Policy HE7.2 of the Local Plan.

Heritage at Risk

Every year Historic England publishes a Heritage at Risk report that identifies those sites most at risk of being lost as a result of neglect, decay or inappropriate development. The Historic England report only includes buildings of Grade I or Grade II* status, with the exception of places of worship, which can be included even at Grade II. The Council produces a local Buildings at Risk (BAR) register, which includes other types of Grade II properties. The list was last updated in 2017, but any additional buildings at risk that have come to light in the intervening years have been included below.

This indicator will report any individual assets or conservation areas in Watford that are considered at risk and any changes from the previous year. The objective over the plan period is to reduce the number of assets at risk and to prevent any additional assets from becoming at risk.

Table 42: Heritage Assets at risk in Watford

Asset Name/Conservation Area	Condition and Description
Little Cassiobury and former stable block, Hempstead Rd (Grade II*)	Condition poor – Late C17 house built as dower house to Cassiobury. Last occupied as offices, the building has been empty for many years. Raised to Priority A by Historic England following site visits in September 2022.
Gateway and attached walls of approx. 30m northwest of 42, The Gardens (Grade II)	Condition poor/fair – Mid to late C16 walls and gateway, altered c.1830, formed part of the gardens of Cassiobury. Visible cracks and movement in brickwork (loose and missing bricks), missing pointing, and vegetation growing on and around structure noted when assessed in 2017.
Administration Block at Watford General Hospital, Vicarage Road (Grade II)	Poor – Former Watford Union Workhouse of 1838 with later alterations. Currently disused and in need of extensive renovation work. Recently damaged by car impact, although that is currently being repaired.
97 High Street (Grade II)	Poor - Townhouse of c.1740 with notable surviving interior. The building is a state of considerable disrepair, although some works have taken place since 2020 to limit further water ingress.
Watford Place, 27 King Street (Grade II)	Poor/Fair – Georgian mansion of c1797, altered c.1822. One wing severely damaged by fire in 2015.
The Old Station House, 147 St Albans Road (Grade II)	Poor/Fair – The former ticket office of Watford's original station, built in 1837. Currently unoccupied and has been subject to some vandalism. Permission has been granted for re-use of the building as part of redevelopment of the surrounding land but renovation work on the building has yet to start.

What Happened?:

There are currently 6 designated heritage assets considered to be at risk in Watford.

The following heritage assets are no longer considered to be at risk, and have been removed from the register over the monitoring year:

- Frogmore House, High Street (Grade II*) – Restored as part of the redevelopment of the former gas works site, the building was Highly Commended at the 2022 Civic Trust Awards, AABC Conservation Awards & Selwyn Goldsmith Awards for Universal Design. The building has been returned to use as an office.
- 63 and 65 High Street (Grade II) – The façade of the former Bucks and Oxon Bank, built in 1899, was restored as part of the Charter Place redevelopment (now Atria). The building is now occupied by Côte Brasserie.

Applications Impacting Historic Assets

The recording of an asset as a nationally or locally listed building does not prevent applications for it being submitted. Listed buildings do, however, have significant additional protection when applications are received by the Council.

Policy HE7.1, HE7.2 and HE7.3 of the Local Plan seek to ensure that development impacting a heritage asset does not diminish its significance, and where possible it should enhance it. All applications will be determined in accordance with an asset's significance and heritage value.

Historic England are consulted on all developments that could have an impact on designated heritage assets and provide comments based on their expert opinions. This indicator records any applications that have been granted permission by the Council over the monitoring year contrary to advice received from Historic England. The objective is for there to be no applications granted contrary to Historic England advice.

Table 43: Number of applications granted contrary to Historic England advice

2021/2022	2022/2023	2023/2024	2024/2025	2025/2026	Total
<i>No data available this year. Data will be reported in subsequent AMRs</i>					
Total					

What Happened?:

No data available this year. Data will be reported in subsequent AMRs

Comparisons:

No data available this year. Data will be reported in subsequent AMRs

Implications for the Local Plan:

No data available this year. Data will be reported in subsequent AMRs

Changes impacting on Historic Assets

The following table will report any nationally or locally listed assets which have been subject to works, loss, damage, redevelopment, extension or change of use over the monitoring year.

Table 44: Changes and alterations to heritage assets over the monitoring year

Name of Asset	Description of change	Reasons for change
Former Workhouse building - Administration Block at Watford General Hospital, Vicarage Road	Damage to building	Damaged by a car colliding with the building. The repair is currently being dealt with.
Watford Place, 27 King Street	Destruction of a ceiling	Destroyed during renovation work, following a fire in 2015. Subject to an ongoing enforcement case.
Little Cassiobury and former stable block, Hempstead Rd	Historic England have raised the risk category of Little Cassiobury to Priority A, their highest priority level.	Historic England assessment of the condition of the building.

The above cases highlight the importance and vulnerability of Watford's historic assets. It is crucial that over the plan period damage to, and the loss of, assets is minimised to avoid degradation of the area's historic environment. It is hoped that it will be possible to improve the condition of all three of the above cases so that they are not lost, or damaged beyond repair.

7.A Climate Emergency

Local Plan policies have an important role in ensuring that developments become more sustainable, environmentally friendly and consider aspects of climate change early in the application process. This section of the AMR includes indicators relating to the targets that need to be met following the Council's declaration of a Climate Emergency in 2019, as well as reporting on how new developments are transforming Watford into becoming carbon neutral.

Watford Local Plan

The Watford Local Plan is an important tool for implementing change and improving the borough through new development and transformational change. All developments in the borough should be considering both the adaptation and mitigation aspects of climate change.

The efficient management of resources is important and policies in the Local Plan seek to improve this through a variety of requirements including energy and water efficiency, carbon reduction and offsetting, overheating, use of materials and waste management.

Air quality has historically been worsening nationally due to increased emissions largely from the use of private vehicles. Watford has two Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs) currently in place which need to be monitored.

The Plan discusses sustainable measures and climate change in multiple sections but has one dedicated chapter 'Chapter 7: A Climate Emergency'. This chapter focuses on how to achieve a carbon neutral Watford, ensure sustainable construction, produce efficient new buildings that develop in a cumulative way and how to make use of opportunities for low carbon.

Reducing Carbon Emissions

The Climate Change Act 2008 includes a national duty to ensure that carbon emissions in the UK in 2050 are at least 100% lower than the 1990 baseline. This covers the net amount of carbon dioxide emissions for that year and net UK emissions for each of the other targeted greenhouse gases for the year. Watford Borough Council declared a Climate Emergency in 2019 and has since prioritised the reduction of carbon among other climate and ecological improvements.

The reduction in carbon emissions is important to monitor as a way of assessing progress towards the carbon neutral target put in place by the Council as part of its declaration of a climate emergency. This information is taken from UK local authority and regional carbon dioxide emissions national statistics which publish new results every year in June. The data is however produced approximately two years after the data is collected so the most recent data available at this time is referring to data collected in 2020. The data includes exclusively carbon dioxide emissions and is measured in kilotonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent (kt CO₂e).

The 2019 baseline is 333 kt CO₂e. This is the figure against which future years data in Table 45 will be measured. The 2019 baseline reflects the year which the Council declared a Climate Emergency and committed to taking more action to reduce carbon emissions in the borough.

Table 45: The level of carbon reduction since 2019

	2021/2022	2022/2023	2023/2024	2024/2025	2025/2026	Total
Percentage of carbon reduction since 2019 (kt CO ₂ e)	11.7%					

What Happened?:

Over the monitoring year there was a net decrease in carbon dioxide emissions of 11.7% when compared to the 2019 baseline. This resulted in a reduction of 39 kilotonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent from 333kt CO₂e to 294 kt CO₂e.

Comparisons:

There has been a reduction in carbon emissions since the 2019 baseline of 11.7%. This indicator will continue to monitor carbon emissions over the plan period to assess whether this is a long term trend.

As mentioned above, the way the data is published means that this indicator will always have a lag, and that data presented will always apply to a time period that is two years out of date.

Implications for the Local Plan:

The reduction in carbon emissions is in line with Policy CC8.1 and it is positive to see a reduction on the 2019 baseline figures. However, if this current level of decrease was maintained over the plan period it would be insufficient to achieve the Council’s target to be carbon neutral by 2030.

BREEAM Standards

An important method of assessing the sustainability of non-residential dwellings has been created by the British Research Establishment and is called the Environmental Assessment Method (BREEAM). This helps to ensure that non-residential developments are more energy efficient and sustainable.

BREEAM is a standardised tool used to assess sustainability measures and inform stakeholders in planning developments. There are multiple levels of BREEAM that can be achieved based on established rating systems. The Local Plan requires major non-residential developments to meet BREEAM Excellent/Very good standard and the following indicator will report the number of non-residential developments which are meeting this target.

Table 46: The number of major non-residential applications approved which are meeting BREEAM excellent or very good standard

	2021/2022	2022/2023	2023/2024	2024/2025	2025/2026	Total
Major non-residential developments which meet BREEAM excellent/very good	<i>No data available this year. Data will be reported in subsequent AMRs</i>					

What Happened?:

No data available this year. Data will be reported in subsequent AMRs

Comparisons:

No data available this year. Data will be reported in subsequent AMRs

Implications for the Local Plan:

No data available this year. Data will be reported in subsequent AMRs

Carbon Emission Reduction Standards

Developments are required to individually meet carbon emission reduction standards above those specified in Part L of Building Regulations in 2013. The Local Plan requires a 19% increase above Part L regulations but this has since been superseded with national building regulations to require 31% above Part L 2013 standards for dwellings and 27% above for other buildings which is what will be monitored.

Table 47: Number of new residential permissions that meet carbon emission reduction standards

	2021/2022	2022/2023	2023/2024	2024/2025	2025/2026	Total
Number of new residential developments which meet carbon emission reduction standards	<i>No data available this year. Data will be reported in subsequent AMRs</i>					

What Happened?:

No data available this year. Data will be reported in subsequent AMRs

Comparisons:

No data available this year. Data will be reported in subsequent AMRs

Implications for the Local Plan:

During this monitoring year the national building regulations were modified to require 31% above Part L 2013 standards for dwellings and 27% for other buildings which now renders the 19% increase included in this Local Plan to be obsolete. Therefore, the information included in this area of monitoring in future years will be consistent with the higher standard set out in the building regulations rather than the Local Plan.

Water Efficiency

All residential developments should be meeting a technical standard of 110 litres per person, per day. This is particularly important in Watford as it is located within an area of high water stress.

This is a new standard with this Local Plan and will be monitored going forward to determine the level of compliance with this target.

Table 48: The number of new homes achieving water use standards

	2021/2022	2022/2023	2023/2024	2024/2025	2025/2026	Total
Number of homes achieving that water use standard of 110 litres per person per day	<i>No data available this year. Data will be reported in subsequent AMRs</i>					

What Happened?:

No data available this year. Data will be reported in subsequent AMRs

Comparisons:

Affinity Water are the main provider of water in Watford and their customers on average use 150 litres per person per day (Affinity Water) compared with the national average of 140 litres per person per day (Waterwise). This is the baseline against which this indicator will be considered.

Implications for the Local Plan:

No data available this year. Data will be reported in subsequent AMRs

Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs)

Every local authority in the UK has been assessing air quality since 1997 and locations where national objectives are not achieved become AQMAs. Currently, Watford has two AQMAs:

- Watford AQMA 2: Vicarage Road
- Watford AQMA 3A: Aldenham Road/Chalk Hill

The Council recognises the concerns around poor air quality and has reduced the number of AQMAs from 19 in 2018. The main pollutants of interest in the borough are nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) and particulate matter, smaller than 10mm in size (PM₁₀) which are both associated with road traffic. Decreases and improvements to air quality in these areas will occur through a shift to green transport options and increased mitigation measures. Improving air quality will mean less AQMAs will be needed in Watford.

Table 49: The number of AQMAs in place within Watford Borough

	2021/2022	2022/2023	2023/2024	2024/2025	2025/2026	Total
AQMAs in Watford	2					

What Happened?:

Watford currently has 2 AQMAs which are being monitored, Vicarage Road and Aldenham Road/Chalk Hill. This is consistent with the information reported in the last AMR from 2019.

Comparisons:

There has been no change in the amount of AQMAs in Watford over the monitoring year.

Implications for the Local Plan:

Policy CC8.4 strives to minimise the worsening effects of poor air quality and increase air quality overall. This will reduce the need for the 2 remaining AQMAs. Whilst there have been no reduction in the number of AQMAs during the monitoring year there has been no increase.

Improvements to air quality will likely be recorded over the medium to longer term and so the implications for a future Local Plan review should not be considered based on a single monitoring year.

Pollution and Disturbance

Development can negatively impact adjacent land uses and future occupants if not carefully managed. New developments need to assess their impacts on neighbouring land while taking into account its use and the possible cumulative effects in accordance with the Agent of Change principle. Management of these potential effects must be dealt with early in the planning process otherwise permissions may be refused.

Table 50: Number of applications refused on the basis of pollution or disturbance

	2021/2022	2022/2023	2023/2024	2024/2025	2025/2026	Total
Number planning permissions refused on pollution or disturbance grounds	<i>No data available this year. Data will be reported in subsequent AMRs</i>					

What Happened?:

No data available this year. Data will be reported in subsequent AMRs

Comparisons:

No data available this year. Data will be reported in subsequent AMRs

Implications for the Local Plan:

No data available this year. Data will be reported in subsequent AMRs

8. Natural Environment

Aspects of the natural environment such as biodiversity, flood risk and protected green spaces have been gaining attention and increasing in importance as ways to improve the natural environment in the UK. Watford recognises this and declared an ecological and climate emergency which highlight the importance of the natural environment to the borough.

Through the monitoring of any improvements to green and blue infrastructure, and requiring a net gain in biodiversity from new development, Watford hopes to strengthen and enhance its natural environment.

Watford Local Plan

Watford is blessed by many natural environment features that are important to the residents and wildlife of the borough. The Plan seeks to improve biodiversity and protect existing open spaces and green infrastructure to ensure that the natural environment is preserved.

This section of the AMR will report any gains and losses in green infrastructure and open space within the borough, and the number of applications that include a sufficient net gain in biodiversity.

Consistency with Environment Agency Advice

The Environment Agency (EA) have policies and advice covering a variety of topics around water quality, flooding, climate change and waste. The EA is consulted on all major development proposals and any applications on sites that have specific environmental risks. They also have authority over all major rivers in the UK, which includes the River Colne.

In Watford, the EA is largely consulted on issues of flood risk. Table 51 highlights levels of compliancy with EA advice as per the Natural Environment Policies in the Local Plan.

There is a target for there to be no applications approved contrary to EA advice on flooding or water quality grounds.

Table 51: The number of applications approved over the monitoring year that was contrary to advice from the Environment Agency

	2021/2022	2022/2023	2023/2024	2024/2025	2025/2026	Total
Number of applications granted planning permission contrary to Environment Agency advice	0					

[Environment Agency objections to planning applications based on flood risk and water quality - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/90422/Environment_Agency_objections_to_planning_applications_based_on_flood_risk_and_water_quality_-_GOV.UK.pdf)

What Happened?:

The EA did not object to any developments in the borough over the monitoring year and as such no development was granted contrary to EA advice.

Comparisons:

Over the 2020/2021 monitoring year the EA objected to one application in the borough, a residential development for 1 dwelling. In this case the advice from the EA was followed.

Implications for the Local Plan:

There were no applications granted contrary to the advice of the EA. This indicator will report these figures each year to determine whether the Local Plan policies relating to the natural environment are preventing development seen as unacceptable by the EA.

Open Space/Green Infrastructure

Having green spaces such as parks, public gardens, play spaces, allotments and sports facilities is highly beneficial to the health and wellbeing of a community as well as having environmental benefits. Watford has a good amount of greenspace and a considerable number of high quality open spaces, but needs a more robust Green Infrastructure Network. There are a large number of areas designated in the Local Plan which protects green infrastructure and open space from development. All of the different green space typologies have been defined in the Green Spaces Strategy.

Within the newly adopted Local Plan there are 614Ha of land designated as green infrastructure or open space, ranging from large areas of regional significance like Cassiobury Park to small amenity spaces of local importance.

New developments can establish new areas of open space onsite or make off-site contributions. They can also help to enhance and improve connectivity between green spaces by creating linkages between sites. The target is to ensure that there is no net loss in open space or green infrastructure, but seeing a gain would be preferable particularly to ensure adequate provision to support new development being delivered in the borough.

Whilst future years will seek to record more of an exact net gain/loss in open space and green infrastructure, this has not been possible over this first monitoring year. This year will instead provide a summary of provision of open space and green infrastructure resulting from new development.

Table 53: Gains and losses in designated open space and green infrastructure (sqm)

	2021/2022	2022/2023	2023/2024	2024/2025	2025/2026	Total
Developments with gains to Open/Amenity space and Green Space	<i>See summary in the box below</i>					

What Happened?:

The data for this year is incomplete and a more comprehensive update will be provided in the next AMR. The baseline figure for this indicator is 614 hectares which is the current amount of designated open space and green infrastructure in the Local Plan. The sites making up this existing provision is shown on the policies map.

Over the monitoring year there have been multiple park improvement projects that seek to enhance the quality of open spaces in Watford.

There were nine major developments completed over the monitoring year, all of which included some form of amenity space or green infrastructure on-site.

3 of the major developments included soft landscaping across the development such as tree planting and green verges.

4 of the major developments included amenity space as part of the development.

The remaining two included amenity space/green infrastructure on the roofscape as part of a higher density development.

The Council has not recorded any loss of designated open space or green infrastructure over the monitoring year, and given the above it is reasonable to assume there has been a small net increase in green infrastructure over the monitoring year.

Comparisons:

As this is the first year of the new monitoring framework, and of the new Watford Local Plan, it is impossible to make comparisons for this indicator. This year will be used as a benchmark against which future AMRs will be compared

Implications for the Local Plan:

It is positive to see amenity space and green infrastructure being delivered as part of new development, as supported by Policy NE9.7. Access to sufficient open space is a key part of achieving sustainable development and in improving the physical and mental health and wellbeing of the residents and so it is important to monitor this indicator to ensure sufficient provision is being made.

The new Local Plan policies should strengthen the ability of the council to require sufficient amounts of open space as part of developments.

Net gain in Biodiversity

Watford Borough Council declared an Ecological Emergency in early 2021 and has committed to increasing existing, and providing creative new, areas of biodiversity in the borough. Any sustained loss of green infrastructure and the fracturing of its networks can have a damaging effect on habitats. The new Environment Act (2021) includes means to strengthen biodiversity and is mandating a net gain which will gradually come into effect over the coming years. Updates to this will be reported in subsequent AMRs if relevant.

Table 54: Number of applications which have delivered a net gain in Biodiversity as per the DEFRA metric

	2021/2022	2022/2023	2023/2024	2024/2025	2025/2026	Total
Biodiversity net gain as per DEFRA biodiversity metric	<i>No data available this year. Data will be reported in subsequent AMRs</i>					

What Happened?:

No data available this year. Data will be reported in subsequent AMRs

Comparisons:

No data available this year. Data will be reported in subsequent AMRs

Implications for the Local Plan:

No data available this year. Data will be reported in subsequent AMRs

9. Infrastructure

New development must be supported by sufficient and appropriate infrastructure. This infrastructure falls into three categories:

- 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.

Figure 7 below replicates Figure 10.1 of the Local Plan setting out all the different types of infrastructure that will be subject to assessment in this section of the AMR.

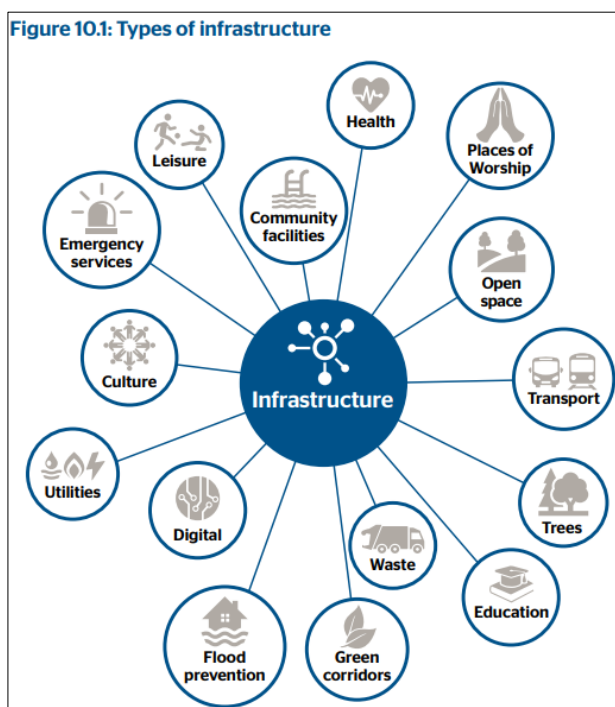


Figure 7: Types of Infrastructure

Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP)

Details of the infrastructure requirements in the Local Plan to support the planned increase in new homes, businesses and other facilities are found in the IDP. The IDP identifies essential infrastructure projects and prioritises them according to their importance, as well as providing indicative costs and timescales.

The IDP includes strategic level infrastructure such as health facilities, education facilities, sustainable transport projects and communication infrastructure as well as more locally specific infrastructure projects.

Table 55 reports on the delivery of projects referenced in the IDP over the monitoring year.

Table 55: Progress on infrastructure projects over the monitoring year

IDP reference	Name of project	Progress 2021/22
7.4	Colne Valley Linear Park	Ongoing programme of improvements.
7.1	Transforming Travel in Watford projects	Project scoping and detailed costing.

What Happened?:

The Colne Valley Linear Park project is progressing. Transport projects from the Transforming Travel in Watford programme are at detailed scoping stage.

Comparisons:

As this is the first year of the new monitoring framework, and of the new Watford Local Plan, it is impossible to make comparisons for this indicator. This year will be used as a benchmark against which future AMRs will be compared.

Implications for the Local Plan:

Infrastructure provision is essential to support development. Due to the nature of scoping, costing and delivery, projects are phased over a period of several years.

It will be important to monitor the timely delivery of infrastructure projects over the plan period to ensure that new development is supported by the timely and sufficient delivery of infrastructure.

Developer Contributions

There are various methods the Council can use to fund infrastructure projects, many of which involve securing funding through developer contributions as a way of mitigating the impacts of new development.

Developer contributions can take various forms:

- Securing appropriate on-site enabling and development works.
- Charging the Community Infrastructure Levy on developments as required by any charging schedules in operation for the area within which the development is located;
- Securing Section 106 Agreements to provide affordable housing and make provisions to mitigate the impacts of the development where necessary, or appropriate, having regard to any relevant supplementary planning documents or guidance;
- Securing off-site highway works where necessary;

The Council will primarily use Section 106 Agreements and Community Infrastructure Levy payments to secure appropriate contributions from developments for affordable housing and pieces of infrastructure, such as new schools and transport network improvements

The following indicator will report the amount of contributions secured through s106 or CIL payments over the monitoring year.

Table 56: Amount of developer contribution secured through s106 and CIL over the monitoring year (£)

Type of contribution	2021/2022 (£)	2022/2023 (£)	2023/2024 (£)	2024/2025 (£)	2025/2026 (£)	Total (£)
CIL	£1,203,484					
S106	£154,541.98					
Total (£)	£1,358,026					

What Happened?:

Over the monitoring year £1,203,484 was secured through CIL payments towards infrastructure projects.

Watford currently has the following CIL funds available:

- Total Strategic CIL: £7,002,404
- Total Neighbourhood CIL: £1,721,590

In addition to the above CIL receipts, the Council received £154,541.98 in s106 contributions over the monitoring year. The Council spent £10,600.80 of these s106 contributions over the monitoring year.

Further detail on CIL and S106 collection and spend is reported in the council's Infrastructure Funding Statement.

Comparisons:

The following table provides a comparison between the CIL contributions received this year compared to previous years. There has been a general upward trend in the amount of CIL contribution received since 2018 but this year has seen a reduction relative to the previous years despite the overall rate of delivery increasing.

Year	Amount collected
2015/16	£160,275
2016/17	£421,060
2017/18	£762,986
2018/19	£1,442,328
2019/20	£3,270,390
2020/21	£3,029,271
2021/22	£1,203,484

The annual delivery of CIL contributions will vary based upon the sites that are developed, existing floorspace, and affordable housing contributions. Areas around Riverwell and the Hospital, Watford Junction and Ascot Road are £0 rated and so any development in these areas will not receive any CIL contributions.

The annual delivery of CIL and any other relevant developer contributions will be reported in the Council's Infrastructure Funding Statement and summarised here over the plan period.

Implications for the Local Plan:

The collection and use of developer contributions through CIL and s106 can ensure that appropriate infrastructure comes forward to support the scale of development anticipated in the Local Plan. The delivery of infrastructure helps to ensure the delivery of sustainable development.

This indicator will highlight the availability of funds to deliver infrastructure and whether development is contributing sufficiently to the infrastructure needs of the borough.

10. A Sustainable Travel Town

The Council are aiming to make Watford a Sustainable Travel Town by incorporating the features in Figure 8 below, which is replicated from Figure 11.2 of the Local Plan.

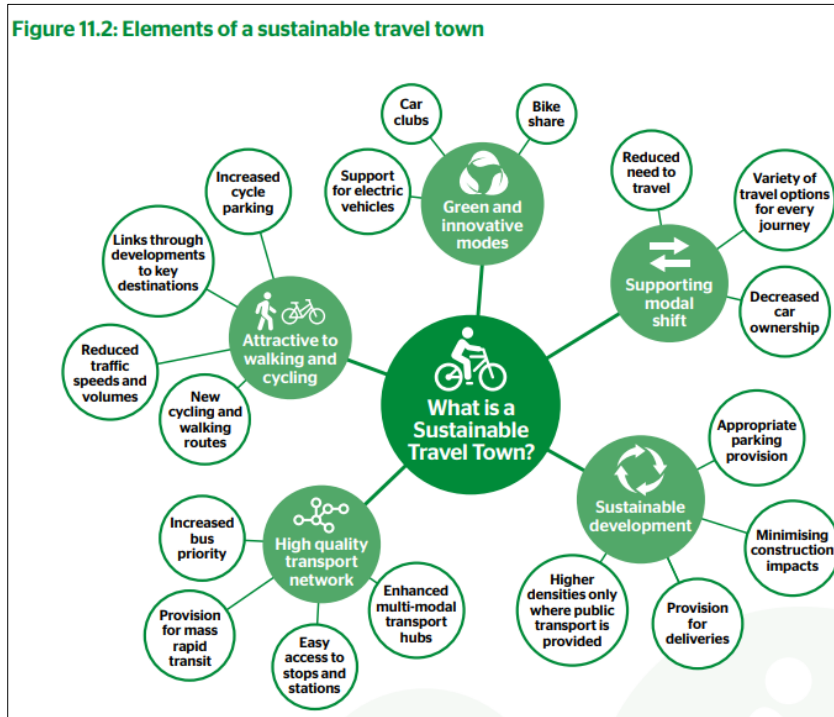


Figure 8: Elements of a Sustainable Travel Town

Watford's compact urban form gives it significant potential to achieve these sustainable travel measures especially through encouraging and prioritising walking, cycling and public transport use rather than cars.

The conversion into a Sustainable Travel Town will involve changing the perceptions and priorities of all highway users so that cyclists and pedestrians have priority.

The majority of new development will take place within the Core Development Area, close to where there is high levels of public transport availability or there is potential to achieve this and where key services and facilities will be accessible by walking and cycling.

Sustainable Travel Town

Policy ST11.1 sets out the criteria and principles that development should meet when contributing towards promoting sustainable and active travel behaviour. Proximity to sustainable transport options is a key part of creating a Sustainable Travel Town.

As such this indicator assesses the amount of new residential development that is located within walking distance (400m) of an active bus stop or train station and therefore provides easy and convenient access to sustainable transport options.

Note that this is worked out using a 400m buffer zone around each site. It does not take into account any physical or environmental barriers that may impact on the distance or journey time in reality.

Table 57: % of new residential development that is located within 400m of a bus stop or railway station

	2021/2022	2022/2023	2023/2024	2024/2025	2025/2026	Total
% of new development within 400m of a bus stop	100%					
% of new development within 400m of a railway station	29%					

What Happened?:

All of the 754 net residential units completed over the monitoring year were within 400m of a bus stop.

29% of net residential completions were within 400m of one of the six railway stations located within Watford Borough².

This data considers the distance from these sustainable transport options ‘as the crow flies’. It takes no account of any physical or environmental barriers affecting the walking or cycling route to them in reality.

Comparisons:

As this is the first year of the new monitoring framework, and of the new Watford Local Plan, it is impossible to make comparisons for this indicator. This year will be used as a benchmark against which future AMRs will be compared.

Implications for the Local Plan:

It is positive to see that all new residential development delivered in the borough provides opportunities for public transport use through having walkable access to a bus stop. This should help new development contribute effectively towards modal shift and encourage more sustainable transport usage across the borough.

It is likely that the allocating of sites within the Core Development Area will increase the proportion of new development located within 400m of a railway station over the plan period.

² Note that this includes Watford Underground station on the Metropolitan Line.

Safeguarded Transport Routes

Policy ST11.2 of the Local Plan safeguards several transport routes (listed in Table 58) for incorporation into future mass transit, bus prioritisation or walking and cycling routes.

These are safeguarded to ensure that designs do not compromise the prioritisation of public transport or active travel now or in the future.

The Policy also safeguards the role of Watford Junction as a multi modal hub, preventing development that would hinder the provision of key infrastructure that would support this.

This indicator will report any changes or updates in relation to these safeguarded routes that have taken place over the monitoring year.

Table 58: Annual updates on safeguarded transport routes

Safeguarded routes	2021/2022- Any updates
Disused Croxley Rail Line	None
Ebury Way cycle path	None
Abbey Line	None
Existing and Planned cycle routes in the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan	None
Any future planned mass rapid transport routes identified by the county council	None
Watford Junction	None

What Happened?:

There were no updates to any of the safeguarded transport routes over the monitoring year.

Implications for the Local Plan:

There were no updates during this monitoring year and so there are no immediate implications for the Local Plan.

Walking and Cycling Infrastructure

Policy ST11.4 states that developments need to demonstrate that they have sought to prioritise walking and cycling through the delivery of on-site infrastructure, wayfinding measures and a safe and secure design. The overall objective of the Plan is to reduce car use by increasing the convenience and attractiveness of walking and cycling.

Appendix D of the Local Plan sets out the standards for on-site cycle parking that all new development will be expected to meet.

Table 59 will report the number of applications that have been approved with levels of cycling parking provision in accordance with Appendix D of the Local Plan.

Table 59: Number of applications with policy compliant cycle parking provisions

	2021/2022	2022/2023	2023/2024	2024/2025	2025/2026	Total
Number of applications with policy compliant cycle parking	<i>No data available this year. Data will be reported in subsequent AMRs</i>					
% of all new development with policy compliant cycle parking	<i>No data available this year. Data will be reported in subsequent AMRs</i>					

What Happened?:

No data available this year. Data will be reported in subsequent AMRs

Comparisons:

No data available this year. Data will be reported in subsequent AMRs

Implications for the Local Plan:

No data available this year. Data will be reported in subsequent AMRs

Sustainable Transport Usage in Watford

Hertfordshire County Council produce a travel survey every 3 years, which provides data on how many people are walking and cycling for their main mode of transport, compared to car use. Table 60 records the latest results of this survey. The objective is to increase the percentage of people mainly using cycling or walking over the plan period. The data in this year’s AMR comes from the Hertfordshire County Council (HCC) Travel Survey published in December 2022.

Table 60: The % of people walking or cycling for their main mode of transport

	2021/2022	2022/2023	2023/2024	2024/2025	2025/2026	Total
% of people walking for main transport	32%					
% of people cycling for transport	3.7%					

What Happened?:

32% of people use walking as their main method of transport in Watford, and 3.7% of people use cycling as their main method of transport. This data is taken from the 2022 HCC travel survey published in December 2022.

Comparisons:

There was no comparable data in the previously published 2020 HCC travel survey and so it is not possible to make comparisons between this year and last for this indicator.

In comparison with other districts in Hertfordshire this year however, Watford has the highest levels of walking and cycling recorded as being the main method of transport.

In comparison to car use, the use of cars is still marginally higher than walking in Watford with 35.5% of people using cars as their main method of transport compared to 32% walking.

Implications for the Local Plan:

Achieving significant modal shifts in transport will likely take time to occur across the plan period, but it is encouraging to see Watford’s position relative to the rest of Hertfordshire regarding the use of walking and cycling as the main form of transport.

The locating of 80% of new residential and mixed use allocations within the Core Development Area should increase the attractiveness and viability of walking and cycling as a main transport option. In trying to increase walking and cycling, it will also be important to provide safe and accessible routes to and from key locations, and good quality infrastructure such as cycle parking opportunities, particularly in the town centre and at major transport hubs.

Electric Vehicle Ownership and Infrastructure

Policy ST11.5 supports the increased provision of electric vehicle charging infrastructure. 20% of all new parking spaces should have active charging infrastructure and all spaces should have passive provision. The provision of electric charging infrastructure should make electric vehicles a more viable option for a wider range of people and should drive up levels of ownership in the borough.

Standard car parking should be provided in accordance with Appendix E of the Local Plan with all development in the Core Development Area being car-lite.

The following indicators seek to track the level of electric vehicle ownership in the borough as a percentage of total car ownership, the number of new electric charging infrastructure being delivered and lastly the level of car ownership generally across the borough.

Table 61: Ownership of electric vehicles as a % of total car ownership

	2021/2022	2022/2023	2023/2024	2024/2025	2025/2026	Total
Number of electric vehicles registered in Watford 2021/22	2,125					
% of all car registrations in the borough that are electric.	4%					

[Vehicle licensing statistics data tables - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/vehicle-licensing-statistics-data-tables)

What Happened?:

There were 2,125 electric or ultra-low emission vehicles registered over the monitoring year and there have been 5,935 private electric vehicle registrations since 2013. This past year appears to represent a significant uplift in ownership of ultra-low emission vehicles.

It will be interesting to continually assess this to see if this is a trend that continues.

In total there were 50,200 vehicles registered in Watford at the end of the 2021/2022 monitoring year, the addition of 2,125 electric vehicle registrations equates to 4% of all registrations.

Comparisons:

Over the 2020/2021 monitoring year, there were 1,289 electric or ultra-low emission vehicle registrations in the borough and so there has been a significant increase relative to this in the current monitoring year.

In terms of comparing the ownership of electric vehicles against the total number of registered vehicles in the borough, the overall number of registrations at the end of the 2021/2022 monitoring year was 50,200.

The above table shows that the electric vehicle registrations for this monitoring year (2,125) would represent 4% of the total vehicle registration figure. Taking into account the registration of electric vehicles back to 2013 of 5,935 this would equate to nearly 12% of all registrations. It is noted however that these figures do not include de-registrations and so the actual figures are likely to be lower in reality.

Implications for the Local Plan:

This indicator will seek to assess the demand for electric vehicles in Watford and in turn provide evidence as to whether there is more demand for electric vehicle infrastructure in the borough that could be given further encouragement in Local Plan policy.

Table 62: Electric vehicle charging spaces delivered over the monitoring year

	2021/2022	2022/2023	2023/2024	2024/2025	2025/2026	Total
Number of electric vehicle charging spaces delivered on new developments in Watford	95					
Number of electric vehicle charging spaces provided by the Council	34					

What Happened?:

There were a total of 95 electric vehicle spaces delivered on new development sites over the monitoring year.

These were provided on the following applications:

Application Ref.	No.of spaces
21/00698/FULM	17
21/00971/FULM	6
21/00785/FUL	5
19/00778/FULM	16
20/01188/FULM	10
21/01605/VARM	17
21/01316/NONMAT	16
21/01721/FUL	8

In addition to spaces delivered as a result of new development there were 34 additional charging points delivered through the Councils Electric Vehicle charging scheme. These were made up of 18 new on street charging points and 16 conversions of existing charging points into trio charging points resulting in an additional third charging socket for residents to use.

It is positive to see electric vehicle spaces being delivered in the borough.

Comparisons:

As this is the first year of the new monitoring framework, and of the new Watford Local Plan, it is impossible to make comparisons for this indicator. This year will be used as a benchmark against which future AMRs will be compared.

Implications for the Local Plan:

It will be important that the Local Plan policies allow the demand for electric vehicle charging to be supported by sufficient charging infrastructure.

The above indicators relating to electric vehicle registrations will be used to give an indication of demand and this indicator should provide a useful measure of the extent to which this need is being met on new development sites and in the borough generally. The requirement in Building Regulations to provide active and passive electric charging infrastructure should increase the proportion of new development that includes electric vehicle spaces.

Car Ownership

The policies in the Plan seek to move people towards more active travel and away from using private cars. The locating of the majority of development within the Core Development Area should enable people to choose to live in Watford and not own a private vehicle because there will be ready access to services, facilities and public transport by walking and cycling.

This indicator will assess the level of car ownership in Watford, allowing the Council to assess whether there may be a reduction due to the policies in the Plan and the increased viability and attractiveness of active travel.

In the 2011 Census, there were 44,028 cars owned in Watford, meaning a ownership rate of 68% of all residents. It is expected that this data is to be updated over the next monitoring year as more data from the 2021 Census is released. Updates will be reported in the next AMR if available.

The 2022 Hertfordshire County Council travel survey reports that in Watford there are 1.18 cars per household, this is the lowest number in Hertfordshire reflecting Watford's location relative to good quality public transport options, and its provision of services and facilities accessible by walking or cycling. Watford also had the highest level of non-car ownership Hertfordshire with 18.9% of people not owning cars.

What Happened?:

There were 44,028 cars owned in Watford according to the 2011 Census. This represents a proportion of 68% of all residents in Watford. The 2021 Census data is being published in stages over the coming year so it is likely that updated data will be available next year.

The recently published HCC travel survey highlighted that there are 1.18 cars per household in Watford which is the lowest level in Hertfordshire and that Watford had the highest level of non-car ownership in Hertfordshire with 18.9% not owning a car.

Comparisons:

The data on total car ownership is from the 2011 Census and so there is no comparison to be made with previous years. When the new 2021 Census data is released this indicator will compare the difference between 2011 and 2021 with regard to car ownership.

As mentioned above, Watford has comparatively low car ownership compared to neighbouring districts in Hertfordshire.

Implications for the Local Plan:

The Local Plan seeks to make Watford a 'Sustainable Travel Town', directing the majority of growth towards the most sustainable locations close to services, facilities and public transport and prioritising the needs of active transport (pedestrians, cyclists and public transport) over cars.

The Plan supports development that is 'car-lite' or 'car-free' within the Core Development Area. It will be interesting to assess whether this has an impact on levels of car ownership over the plan period. It is anticipated that the need for cars as part of new development in the borough will reduce as new infrastructure initiatives to support active transport are delivered.

Reducing the level of reliance on private car ownership could provide opportunities for more pedestrianisation schemes and reducing road widths where appropriate could contribute towards making Watford more pedestrian friendly and reducing the perceived priority of cars in the town.

[Travel Plans](#)

Travel plans are required to support a planning application in all cases where a transport assessment would be required and where local circumstances set out in the Hertfordshire County Council Travel Plan Guidance document dictate that one is required. The Travel Plan should encourage sustainable travel behaviour and should include clear objectives and measures to achieve it.

The following indicator records the number and percentage of applications which include a travel plan that was submitted as a supporting document, either in a standalone format or within another, larger document such as the Design and Access Statement.

Table 63: % of applications that include a Travel Plan

	2021/2022	2022/2023	2023/2024	2024/2025	2025/2026	Total
Number of applications including a Travel Plan	<i>No data available this year. Data will be reported in subsequent AMRs</i>					
% of all applications that include a Travel Plan	<i>No data available this year. Data will be reported in subsequent AMRs</i>					

What Happened?:

No data available this year. Data will be reported in subsequent AMRs

Comparisons:

No data available this year. Data will be reported in subsequent AMRs

Implications for the Local Plan:

No data available this year. Data will be reported in subsequent AMRs

11. A Healthy Community

The design of new development and the provision of suitable outdoor spaces can have a significant effect on people's health and wellbeing. The Local Plan seeks to create a healthy, active population by ensuring access to open spaces, creating pedestrian and cycle friendly environments, limiting pollution, providing homes to meet the needs of specific sections of society such as older residents and supporting well located and good quality community facilities.

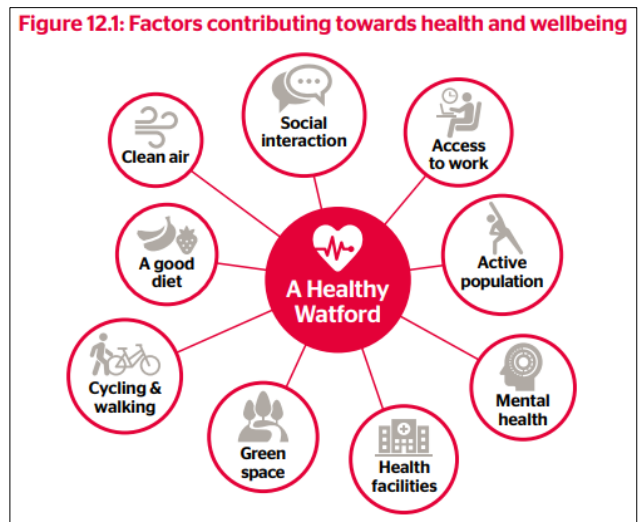
Figure 12.1 of the Local Plan is replicated below highlighting the factors that can contribute towards health and wellbeing. Many of these factors are reported on in other sections of this AMR.

Figure 9: Factors contributing towards health and wellbeing

Health Impact Assessments

The Local Plan seeks to ensure that development does not have a detrimental impact on the health of a population or health inequalities.

A Health Impact Assessment (HIA) is essential to demonstrate that a proposal would not have a negative impact on physical health or mental wellbeing.



Health Impact Assessments are a tool through which development can:

- Understand local community health needs and demonstrate how it can support these;
- Demonstrate how it has considered health inequalities;
- Meet the requirements of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Regulations for human health;
- Meets the policy requirements of the Watford Local Plan that major development proposals undertake a Health Impact Assessment;
- Demonstrate the opportunities of a proposal and how a development has been positively planned.

Policy HC12.2 sets out what type of applications require a HIA to be completed, these are;

- Major residential developments of 100 units or more
- Major transport infrastructure
- Any other locally or nationally significant infrastructure project

Table 64 records the number of HIAs completed on relevant schemes over the monitoring year.

Table 64: Number of HIAs completed for new applications over the monitoring year

Type of development	2021/2022	2022/2023	2023/2024	2024/2025	2025/2026	Total
Residential development over 100 dwellings	<i>No data available this year. Data will be reported in subsequent AMRs</i>					
Major transport infrastructure improvements	<i>No data available this year. Data will be reported in subsequent AMRs</i>					
Any other locally or nationally significant infrastructure	<i>No data available this year. Data will be reported in subsequent AMRs</i>					
Total						

What Happened?:

No data available this year. Data will be reported in subsequent AMRs

Comparisons:

No data available this year. Data will be reported in subsequent AMRs

Implications for the Local Plan:

No data available this year. Data will be reported in subsequent AMRs

New Community Facilities

Facilities providing opportunities for leisure, recreation, sport and tourism are vital for the health and wellbeing of a population. These facilities should be located close to where people live and in the heart of communities.

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.

Policy HC12.3 support the delivery of new, extended or improved cultural and community facilities, where they are located in sustainable and accessible locations and where they do not conflict with existing uses. The Policy resists the loss of existing facilities unless it is demonstrated that the facility is no longer needed; it is being provided to a higher quality; and that the facility has been vacant for 12 months with clear marketing evidence showing it could not have any community use.

Table 65 reports on the provision of new, and the loss of existing, community facilities. There is a target of no net loss of community facilities over the plan period.

Table 65: New community facilities delivered over the monitoring year

Type of Facility	Location/Name of facility
None	

What Happened?:

There were no new community facilities delivered over the monitoring year.

Comparisons:

As this is the first year of the new monitoring framework, and of the new Watford Local Plan, it is impossible to make comparisons for this indicator. This year will be used as a benchmark against which future AMRs will be compared.

Implications for the Local Plan:

There is no set target for the delivery of community facilities in the borough over the plan period, other than there being no net loss, but it is important that provision is supported when it comes forward. It is likely that most of the community facilities delivered over the plan period will be linked to new development.

Loss of Community Facilities

This indicator reports on any community facilities that have been lost over the monitoring year and gives a reason as to why the facility was lost with reference to the criteria in Policy HC12.3 (e.g. replacement facility being provided, vacant for over 12 months, not needed by the community).

Table 66: Number of community facilities lost over the monitoring year

Type of Facility	Location/Name of facility	Reasons for loss
None		

What Happened?:

There were no community facilities lost over the monitoring year.

Comparisons:

As this is the first year of the new monitoring framework, and of the new Watford Local Plan, it is impossible to make comparisons for this indicator. This year will be used as a benchmark against which future AMRs will be compared.

Implications for the Local Plan:

The protection of community facilities is supported by Policy HC12.3 and as such the recording of no net loss of community facilities over the monitoring year is positive.

This indicator will help to demonstrate whether the policy is effective in protecting community facilities.

12. Site Allocations

The Local Plan includes a variety of site allocations incorporating residential, mixed use, employment and education allocations. In total, these allocations are expected to deliver 8,604 homes over the plan period and so represent a critical element of meeting the target for 13,328 over the plan period and 784 dwellings per annum. This section of the AMR monitors progress on each of these allocated sites over the monitoring year.

Figure 13.1: Allocated sites for delivery

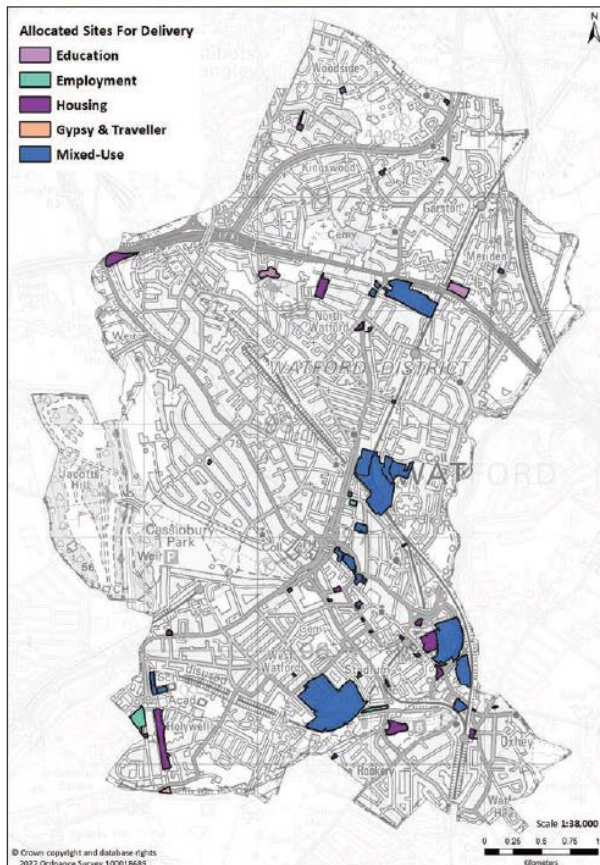


Figure 10: Allocated sites in the Local Plan

Figure 10 replicated from Figure 13.1 of the Local Plan provides a map of all allocated sites in the Local Plan.

Residential Site Allocations

There are a total of 32 purely residential site allocations in the Plan. Table 67 reports any planning or delivery updates that have been reported over the monitoring year.

Table 67: Progress on residential site allocations over the monitoring year (MY)

Reference/Name	Yield	Progress/Updates over MY
HS01- Lych Gate	5	Planning permission granted for this site (21/00304/FUL) over the monitoring year
HS02- 275 Sheepcot Lane	21	
HS03- 1 Lavinia Avenue	5	
HS04- 5 Sheepcot Drive	9	
HS05- Land at Badger PH	9	

HS06- Land at Russell Lane	93	
HS07- Former Mothercare site	98	Prior Approval granted (21/00455/AAPA) for 44 dwellings. Developers on-site.
HS08- Longspring Car Park	17	
HS09- Land and Buildings at 420-420a St Albans Road	9	
HS10- Land at Balmoral Road	5	
HS11- Land to the Rear of 53 Langley Way	7	
HS12- Land and Garages between 139-149 Queens Road	5	
HS13- Corner of Park Avenue and Rickmansworth Road	9	
HS14- Land at 14-20 Upton Road	48	
HS15- Land at 80 Cassio Road	17	
HS16- Land and Buildings at 176-186 Rickmansworth Road	12	
HS17- 120-122 Exchange Road	5	
HS18- Car Park at Vicarage Road/Exchange Road	5	
HS19- Crown Passage Car Park	18	
HS20- Land at Lower Derby Road	59	Feasibility study has been completed jointly between Watford Borough Council and Hertfordshire County Council
HS21- Land at Waterfields Retail Park	414	
HS22- Land and Buildings at 252-272 Lower High Street	110	
HS23- Land and Buildings at 247 Lower High Street	31	
HS24- Land and Garages between 41 and 61 Brightwell Road	4	
HS25- Land and Garages to the rear of 15-17 Liverpool Road	11	
HS26- Land and Garages to the rear of Elfrida Road	8	
HS27- Land at Croxley View	240	Development (19/00413/FULM) has commenced for the delivery of 86 units in initial phase.
HS28- Wiggshall Depot	330	
HS29- 41 Aldenham Road	5	
HS30- Chalk Hill Car Park	9	
HS31- Land at Bushey Station	68	
HS32- Riverside Road and Garages	5	Site completed over the monitoring year (20/00413/FUL for 5 residential units

What Happened?:

Delivery was reported on two allocated housing sites over the monitoring year, with a further site having developers on-site without reporting any completions over the monitoring year.

Several other updates are provided with regard to sites progressing through the planning system.

Comparisons:

As this is the first year of the plan period it would be unlikely to see a large number of site allocations already delivering.

It will be vital to assess how sites are progressing over the coming years to ensure that delivery remains aligned to the housing trajectory in Appendix B of the Local Plan.

Implications for the Local Plan:

The delivery of housing is crucial in maintaining a five year housing supply, and in passing the Housing Delivery Test, and therefore ensuring that the policies in the Plan remain up to date and be given full weight by Planning Inspectors at appeals.

The delivery of residential site allocations will be an important part of ensuring that housing needs are met.

Mixed-Use Housing Allocations

Alongside the above residential allocations there are a variety of mixed use allocations incorporating residential and employment or E class uses.

Table 68 provides any planning or delivery updates that have been reported over the monitoring year.

Table 68: Progress on mixed use site allocations over the monitoring year (MY)

Reference/Name	Yield	Progress/Updates over MY
MU01- Land at Woodside Community Centre	12	
MU02- Land at 501 St Albans Road	13	
MU03- Land at the Lemarie Centre	7	
MU04- 453 St Albans Road	18	
MU05- Land and Buildings at 94-98 St Albans Road	1214	Has an extant planning permission (19/00507/FULM) and development has commenced but completions have not yet been reported.

MU06- Land at Watford Junction	1232	
MU07- Land and Buildings at Astral House	131	
MU08- 22-28 Station Road	21	Half the site (26-28 Station Road) has permission for 9 dwellings.
MU09- Land at Watford Police Station	120	Consent granted for the Police to relocate to a new office.
MU10- Land at the Rear of 125-127 The Parade	90	
MU11- 23-37 The Parade	72	
MU12- 19-21 Clarendon Road	14	Live planning application (21/01811/FULM) for 65 units which is going to development committee in the summer.
MU13- Land at Sainsbury's Town Centre	220	
MU14- Land at the Car Park, Wellstones	40	
MU15- 18 Watford Field Road	19	
MU16- Land at Tesco, Lower High Street	1338	
MU17- Land at Colne Valley Retail Park	466	
MU18- Land to the West of and Parallel to Ascot Road	43	
MU19- Land East of Ascot Road	27	
MU20- Land at Riverwell	1383	Partially permissioned- 571 units on existing planning consents to be delivered before 2026 17/015111/FULM- 408 residential dwellings; 17/01543/FULM- 253 residential care home; 19/00778/FULM- 192 residential units; 18/01383/FULM- Car Park; 21/00765/OUTM- Hospital.
MU21- Land at Colne Bridge Retail Park	141	
MU22- Land at Asda, Dome Roundabout	422	
MU23- Land at Colonial Way/Clive Way	8,215sqm of industrial floorspace	Has planning consent but not started

What Happened?:

Several mixed use sites currently have applications granted permission, or are progressing towards getting an application submitted.

Comparisons:

As this is the first year of the plan period it would be unlikely to see a large number of site allocations already delivering. It will be vital to assess how sites are progressing over the coming years to ensure that delivery remains aligned with the housing trajectory in Appendix B of the Local Plan.

Implications for the Local Plan:

The delivery of housing is crucial in maintaining a five year housing supply, and in passing the Housing Delivery Test, and therefore ensuring that the policies in the Plan remain up to date and given full weight by Planning Inspectors at appeals.

The delivery of mixed use site allocations will be an important part of ensuring that housing needs are met.

Employment Site Allocations

Table 13.3 of the Local Plan allocates several sites for employment uses.

Delivery of these sites will be crucial to ensuring that the needs for both office and industrial floorspace will be met. The below table will report any updates over the monitoring year.

Table 69: Progress on employment allocations over the monitoring year (MY)

Reference/Name	Uses	Progress/Updates over MY
EM01- Cassiobury House, 11-19 Station Road	Office	Has planning consent but not started
EM02- South of Wiggshall Industrial Estate	Industrial	
EM03- Gateway Zone	Industrial	Has planning consent and the site has been cleared
EM04- Land between 14-18 Greenhill Crescent	Industrial	

What Happened?:

There was no delivery or permissions granted on employment allocations over the monitoring year although three out of the five allocated sites have extant permission.

Comparisons:

As this is the first year of the plan period it would be unlikely to see a large number of site allocations already delivering but it is notable to see a high proportion of sites with extant permission.

Implications for the Local Plan:

This indicator will assess the delivery of employment floorspace in the borough which will allow the Council to see how these key employment sites are coming forward and whether they are able to provide job opportunities for local people.

Education Site Allocations

The delivery of sufficient education facilities to support the level of new development expected in the area is crucial to achieving sustainable development and providing essential infrastructure to meet needs. Table 13.4 of the Local Plan, therefore, allocates two sites as being suitable for a new education facility.

Table 70 below will report any updates and progress on these two sites over the plan period.

Table 70: Progress on education allocations over the monitoring year (MY)

Reference/Name	Uses	Progress/Updates over MY
ED01- Former Meriden School Site	Education	
ED02- Former Bill Everett Centre	Education	

What Happened?:

There was no delivery or permissions granted on education allocations over the monitoring year.

Comparisons:

As this is the first year of the plan period it would be unlikely to see a large number of site allocations already delivering.

Implications for the Local Plan:

It is important that education facilities are delivered alongside housing growth in the borough to ensure that there are sufficient school places to cater for an increased population. The delivery of these two sites is therefore critical to achieving sustainable development over the plan period.

