

HALLAM LAND MANAGEMENT LIMITED
ST ALBANS SCHOOL
ST ALBANS SCHOOL WOOLLAM TRUST

Woollam Park

Development Specification
and Scheme Parameters

February 2025



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1 Introduction

- 1.1 This document sets out the Development Specification and Parameters for a residential led mixed use development on land at North St Albans (the 'application site'). It has been prepared to inform a 'hybrid' planning application to be submitted on behalf of Hallam Land Management Limited, St Albans School, and St Albans School Woollam Trust.
- 1.2 Planning permission is sought for the following development:
 - (1) *Relocation and replacement of existing playing fields and erection of pavilion annex; and*
 - (2) *Construction of up to 1000 new homes (Use Class C3) to include a mix of market housing, affordable housing, age restricted specialist accommodation for the elderly, adult disability service units; a care home (Use Class C2); a local centre (Use Classes E and F); a primary school (Use Class F); the laying out of green infrastructure including habitat creation; drainage infrastructure; earthworks; pedestrian and cycle routes; new means of access and alterations to existing accesses.*
- 1.3 The application site, shown at *Appendix 1*, is described in detail in Section 3 of this Report.
- 1.4 The purpose of this document, together with the parameter plans, is to define and describe the proposed development

Format of the development specification and parameters

- 1.5 The application is submitted as a "hybrid" application. Part (1) is submitted as a full application. Part (2) is submitted as an outline application with approval of means of access sought at the present time, and all other reserved matters to be approved at a later date.
- 1.6 The proposed development is Environmental Impact Assessment ("EIA") development as defined by the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017. The planning application will therefore be accompanied by an Environmental Statement ("ES"). Certain parameters will be fixed to set the framework for that assessment and subsequent future reserved matters as part of the multistage consent process. Without these, the EIA has no context from which to assess the likely environmental effects of the development. Adopting a 'parameters approach' allows for a degree of flexibility with regard to, for example, the detailed design of the development, whilst ensuring that the EIA is appropriate and legally robust.
- 1.7 Therefore, this report should be read alongside the parameter plans contained in *Appendix 2*, which will be submitted for approval as part of the planning permission.
- 1.8 In terms of format, this document is structured as follows:

Section 2 sets out the procedural and policy requirements relevant to the submission of an outline planning application;

Section 3 sets out a description of the application site; and

Section 4 sets out the form of the proposed development and planning application.

2 Procedural matters

- 2.1 This section sets out the procedural and policy requirements relevant to the submission of an outline planning application.

Town and Country Planning Act 1990

- 2.2 An application for outline planning permission allows for a decision on the general principles of how a site can be developed. Pursuant to Section 90 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, outline planning permission is granted subject to conditions requiring the subsequent approval of one or more 'reserved matters'.

Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (Order) 2015

- 2.3 The following explains an outline planning permission and the associated reserved matters.

Part 1: Interpretation – Article 2

“outline planning permission” means a planning permission for the erection of a building, which is granted subject to a condition requiring the subsequent approval of the local planning authority with respect to one or more reserved matters;

“reserved matters” in relation to an outline planning permission, or an application for such permission, means any of the following matters in respect of which details have not been given in the application—

(i) *access*; in relation to reserved matters, means the accessibility to and within the site, for vehicles, cycles and pedestrians in terms of the positioning and treatment of access and circulation routes and how these fit into the surrounding access network;

(ii) *appearance*; means the aspects of a building or place within the development which determines the visual impression the building or place makes, including the external built form of the development, its architecture, materials, decoration, lighting, colour and texture

(iii) *landscaping*; in relation to a site or any part of a site for which outline planning permission has been granted or, as the case may be, in respect of which an application for such permission has been made, means the treatment of land (other than buildings) for the purpose of enhancing or protecting the amenities of the site and the area in which it is situated and includes—

screening by fences, walls or other means;

the planting of trees, hedges, shrubs or grass;

the formation of banks, terraces or other earthworks;

the laying out or provision of gardens, courts, squares, water features, sculpture or public art; and

the provision of other amenity features.

(iv) *layout*; means the way in which buildings, routes and open spaces within the development are provided, situated and orientated in relation to each other and to buildings and spaces outside the development; and

(v) *scale*; except in the term ‘identified scale’, means the height, width and length of each building proposed within the development in relation to its surroundings.

Part 3: Applications for outline planning permission – Article 5

(1) Where an application is made to the local planning authority for outline planning permission, the authority may grant permission subject to a condition specifying reserved matters for the authority’s subsequent approval.

(5) Where access is a reserved matter, the application for outline planning permission shall state the area or areas where access points to the development proposed will be situated.

Part 3: Applications for approval of reserved matters – Article 6

An application for approval of reserved matters—

(a) must be made in writing to the local planning authority and give sufficient information to enable the authority to identify the outline planning permission in respect of which it is made;

(b) must include such particulars, and be accompanied by such plans and drawings, as are necessary to deal with the matters reserved in the outline planning permission.

Planning Practice Guidance

- 2.4 Planning Practice Guidance (“PPG”) published in March 2014 provides guidance in respect of the requirements for outline planning applications. The PPG notes that *“information about the proposed use or uses, and the amount of development proposed for each use is necessary to allow consideration of an application for outline planning permission”* (Paragraph: 034 Reference ID: 14-034-20140306).
- 2.5 PPG notes that the applicant can choose to submit details of any of the reserved matters as part of an outline application (Paragraph: 035 Reference ID: 14-035-20140306).
- 2.6 For Part 2 of the application, Table 1 below catalogues the extent to which (1) approval of some of reserved matters sought at the present time and (2) those which are reserved for subsequent approval.

Table 1: Extent of planning permission sought; matters not reserved and matters reserved

	THE RESIDENTIAL-LED MIXED USE SCHEME
Access	Yes – formation of new junction on Harpenden Road, pedestrian and cycle routes and connections to existing routes at Harpenden Road, Sandridgebury Lane and Valley Road, and alterations to Valley Road and Sandridgebury Lane. (Details of the shared footway/cycleway from Sandridgebury Lane to Bridleway Sandridge 009 (the Hertfordshire Way) shown on the Access and Movement Parameter Plan is reserved for subsequent approval.)
Appearance	No – reserved for later approval pursuant to Section 92(1) of the Town and Country Planning Act
Landscaping	No – reserved for later approval pursuant to Section 92(1) of the Town and Country Planning Act
Layout	No - reserved for later approval pursuant to Section 92(1) of the Town and Country Planning Act
Scale	No - reserved for later approval pursuant to Section 92(1) of the Town and Country Planning Act

3 The application site

3.1 This section provides a description of the application site.

Location

3.2 The site, shown at *Appendix 1*, is located immediately north of the urban area of St Albans and lies within the administrative area of St Albans City and District Council.

The site

3.3 The majority of the site is arable land in agricultural use and measures approximately 50.30 hectares in size. In the north west of the site are three playing fields, which are associated with Woollam Playing Fields.

3.4 The site is bounded to the south by the existing settlement of St Albans, St Albans Girls' School and the Valley Road Industrial Estate. The southern boundary is formed by Longspring Wood which is an ancient woodland and Local Wildlife Site. To the north and east there is countryside. To the north west are the Woollam Playing Fields and to the west are residential dwellings fronting Harpenden Road. A residential premise known as Cheapside Farm is situated to the east of the northernmost field and is accessed from a lane extending north from Sandridgebury Lane.

3.5 The site is contained by the A1081 to the west and the railway line to the east. Sandridgebury Lane runs southwest to northeast through the site. Valley Road extends south of Sandridgebury Lane.

3.6 The site is sub divided into five fields of varying size and shape. These fields are typically defined by hedgerows containing some trees.

3.7 There is one Public Right of Way ("PRoW") along the eastern and southeastern boundary of the site, referenced St Albans City 096.

Sewell Park

3.8 Adjoining the application site to the west is the remaining parcel of land within the previous North St Albans Broad Location. The site measures approximately 3ha and is broadly rectangular in shape.

3.9 Outline planning permission was granted in January 2022 for residential development of up to 150 dwellings together with all associated works. (Application Reference 5/2021/0423). A reserved matters application was submitted in July 2024 and remains undetermined at the time of writing. The detailed proposals include 123 new dwellings, of which, 49 (40%) are to be affordable.

3.10 The location of pedestrian and cycle links between the application site and Sewell Park are shown on the parameter plans. The detailed design of these will need to be controlled by planning condition.

4 The form of the planning application

- 4.1 This section sets out the form of the planning application to be submitted.
- 4.2 The application is submitted as a “hybrid” application. Part (1) is submitted as a full application. Part (2) is submitted as an outline application with approval of means of access sought at the present time, and all other reserved matters to be approved at a later date.

The residential-led mixed use development

- 4.3 The main body of the application site is to be developed for new housing, a two-form entry primary school, a local centre including mobility hub, open space and drainage infrastructure. New landscape planting and habitat creation will be inherent within the developed areas.
- 4.4 For this part of the scheme, only access details are to be approved. The approval of other reserved matters (appearance, landscaping, layout and scale) would be conditioned.
- 4.5 The broad arrangement of land uses across this part of the application site is shown on the parameter plans listed in Table 2 and which are included at *Appendix 2*.

Table 2: Parameter plans

TITLE	DRAWING	INFORMATION PROVIDED
Land use parameter plan	DE_565_72 Rev D	The broad arrangement of land uses within the site
Access and movement plan	DE_565_73 Rev D	The internal access arrangements and points of connection to the site
Green and blue infrastructure parameter plan	DE_565_74 Rev D	The broad arrangement for blue and green infrastructure within the site
Building heights plan	DE_565_075 Rev D	The maximum height of buildings within development area

- 4.6 The components of this part of the development are shown in Table 3.

Table 3: Components of the proposed development

LAND USE	USE CLASS	QUANTUM
Housing including market, affordable, age restricted specialist accommodation for the elderly, and adult disability service units	C3	Up to 1000
A care home	C2	80-bed
Local centre	E and F	up to 2,230sqm
Primary school	F	Two-form entry (2 hectares of land)
Green infrastructure	-	-
Playing fields and sports pavilion annex	F	Three rugby pitches with a cricket pitch overlain, 285sqm (GEA) sports pavilion annex
Means of access and movement	-	Harpenden Road, Sandridgebury Lane Valley Road and pedestrian/cycle connection to Bridleway Sandridge 009

4.7 Building Heights are shown in Table 4.

Table 4: Proposed building heights

USE	STOREYS	HEIGHT (MAX TO RIDGE LINE)
Residential dwellings	Up to three storeys	Up to 12.8m in height
Apartments within local centre	Up to four storeys	Up to 16m in height
Buildings within the local centre	Up to four storeys	Up to 16m in height
Primary school	-	Up to 12m in height
80-bed care home	Up to three storeys	Up to 12.8m in height

Access

4.8 Access drawings for Harpenden Road, Sandridgebury Lane and Valley Road are included at *Appendix 3* and are listed in Table 5.

Table 5: Proposed Access Drawings

TITLE	DRAWING
Harpenden Road signalised site access	05920-CI-A-001 P04
Sandridgebury Lane arrangement	05920-SK-008 P1
Sandridgebury Lane turning loop	05920-SK-006 P2
Modal filter at Valley Road	05920-SK-010 P2

The replacement playing fields

4.9 The existing playing fields must be relocated and made ready for use prior to the commencement of residential development on the site.

4.10 As such, detailed approval is sought for the replacement playing fields scheme.

4.11 The scheme in overall is shown on drawing DE_565_81 Rev D which is included at *Appendix 4*. The area of land is sufficiently large for three rugby pitches to be laid out over which a cricket pitch will be laid. The provision of these playing fields facilitates a more efficient use of other playing pitch land within the existing Woollam Playing Field area.

4.12 This works associated with the replacement playing field comprises:

- a) earthworks to create a plateau;
- b) the installation of surface water drainage;
- c) the surfacing of playing fields;
- d) the erection of new pavilion building;
- e) the erection of a means of enclosure to secure the site's boundary; and
- f) the laying out of an area of replacement car parking and extension of the existing internal highway.

4.13 Table 6 lists the drawings for the replacement playing fields and these are included at *Appendix 4*.

Table 6: Playing Field Drawings

TITLE	DRAWING	INFORMATION PROVIDED
Proposed pitch layout plan	DE_565_81 Rev D	The arrangement of playing pitches and ancillary uses

Pavilion annex elevations	DE_565_012 Rev C	The appearance of the proposed building
Pavillion annex proposed floor plan and roof plan	DE_565_013 Rev B	The internal arrangement of the building and its appearance in plan form
Proposed fencing and means of enclosure	DE_565_82 Rev C	Boundary treatments to enclose the playing fields land
Existing context plan	DE_565_78 Rev C	Existing OASA sports pitch and field arrangements
Proposed context plan	DE_565_79 Rev C	Proposed OASA sports pitch arrangements
Existing site plan	DE_565_80 Rev C	Existing site configuration
Advanced planting specification	DE_565_103 Rev A	Proposed landscaping and planting arrangements

Environmental Statement

4.14 Based on work undertaken to date and adopting the conclusion in the District Council's 2024 Scoping Opinion, the aspects of the environment likely to be significantly affected by the proposed development, both during construction and operation, are as listed below:

- a) Ecology and biodiversity
- b) Landscape and visual
- c) Agriculture and soil
- d) Heritage and archaeology
- e) Ground conditions
- f) Water resources
- g) Socio-economics
- h) Waste and material assets
- i) Climate change
- j) Traffic and movement;
- k) Noise and vibration; and
- l) Air quality.

4.15 The scope of the environmental topic assessments has been agreed with the District Council as part of the EIA Scoping Report.

5 Phasing and delivery

- 5.1 The proposals set out in the outline planning application are envisaged to be delivered over approximately a 10-year period with construction on replacement pitches commencing in 2026, construction commencing on residential development in 2027, first completions in 2028/29 and development completion estimated in around 2036.

Table 7: Delivery programme (indicative)

26-27	27-28	28-29	29-30	30-31	31-32	32-33	33-34	34-35	35-36	Plan Period
Pitches	Pitches / Site Preparation works	50	75	100	100	125	150	200	200	1,000

- 5.2 The EIA assumes that the construction of the proposed development will commence on site in 2026, with first completions likely 2028-29 and will assume delivery of the completed development (1,000 dwellings) by 2036.
- 5.3 This delivery timescale is considered broadly realistic and readily achievable in light of the build rates experienced on developments of comparable scale elsewhere. New residential dwellings will be delivered, and occupied, throughout this period. The construction and operational phases will run in parallel, from the date of the first completion/occupation to the date of the last completion/occupation.
- 5.4 The replacement playing pitches will be delivered and occupied prior to construction starting on the residential development. The Old Albanian Sports Association must be able to use the replacement playing pitches before the existing pitches can be removed and that land can be used to construct the new access road. The replacement pitches will require two full growing seasons, so assuming development can start in spring 2026, construction for the residential development could begin in autumn 2027.
- 5.5 The local centre will be delivered in the early stages of development where feasible and reasonable, with a view to establishing positive travel patterns and supporting the sustainable growth of the new community.
- 5.6 There is also the opportunity to provide temporary meanwhile uses in the local centre whilst the neighbourhood population increases prior to the construction of retail and community facilities.

Appendix 1. Site location plan

Appendix 2. Parameter plans

Appendix 3. Access drawings

Appendix 4. Playing field scheme

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