

05 March 2021
Delivered by email

Mrs Tracey Harvey
Head of Planning and Building Control
St Albans City and District Council
Civic Centre
St Peters Street
St Albans
AL1 3JE

Ref: TARC3000

Dear Mrs Harvey

**ST ALBAN'S DRAFT LOCAL PLAN 2020-2038: CALL FOR POTENTIAL DEVELOPMENT SITES 2021
SITE SUBMISSIONS ON BEHALF OF TARMAC.**

We are instructed by our clients: Tarmac, to submit various site submissions in connection with the above consultation, in respect of the following four promoted development sites in St Albans District, all of which, are within the freehold ownership of Tarmac.

The four promoted sites contained within these call for sites submissions are:

- **Land South of London Colney**
- **Land at Colney Heath**
- **Land at Moor Mill North**
- **Land at Tyttenhanger**

Tarmac is an established land promotion and development company with a significant portfolio of freehold and other commercial land interests in St Albans District. Tarmac is also a major national employer with nationwide experience of bringing forward strategic development sites of all scales for new residential, mixed-use and commercial and industrial development.

Tarmac is promoting four of its numerous freehold sites in the south of the St Albans District in the A414 and M25 corridors for potential residential, employment and other related development, including new transport infrastructure and contributions to the public realm. Turley has been instructed to prepare four separate site submissions in relation to each of these promoted site locations which are attached to this correspondence. The main attributes of the four promoted Tarmac sites are set out in the following overarching summary:

Our complete submissions comprise this overarching summary and four individual written site evaluations. Each site evaluation also has three related drawing Appendices (a red line plan, a constraints plan and a Framework Masterplan). Our overall site submissions on behalf of Tarmac comprises 17 items in total.

8 Quay Court
Colliers Lane
Stow-cum-Quay
Cambridge
CB25 9AU

T 01223 810990 turley.co.uk

Land South of London Colney

This promoted site, comprises 32.75 hectares of previously used land located to the south of London Colney immediately to the north of the M25 and south of the River Colne, as shown on the red line plan at **Appendix 1** of the attached South London Colney site evaluation.

The Framework Masterplan proposals set out at **Appendix 3** of the South London Colney site evaluation illustrate a viable scheme for circa 750 new market and affordable homes, set over 18.79 hectares, a new two-form entry Primary School, located on a 2.25 hectare site and a new Local Centre occupying 0.30 hectares. The broad concept of the proposal is to provide a new Garden Suburb to South London Colney in the area between the existing Colney Fields Retail Park and Shenley Lane, with the area to the south bounded by the M25. A further 11.41 hectares (35%) of the site will comprise formal public open space, children's play provision, semi-natural green spaces, incidental open green areas and structural landscaping. Vehicular access to the site will be via Shenley Lane to the west (B5378) with further pedestrian and cycle connections to London Colney High Street.

The development proposed on this site is in a highly sustainable, well connected and self-contained, location. The promoted site lies adjacent to major existing retail facilities and close to the historic village core. The Site also lies within a strategic Sub-Area previously identified in the 2014 St Albans Green Belt Review as one of the Sub-Areas contributing least to the purposes of the Green Belt. Therefore this site serves little or no existing Green Belt function and can make a strong sustainable contribution to future housing land supply in St Albans District. As such, the site is highly suitable for detailed consideration for sustainable new development.

The South London Colney site has been previously worked for minerals and landfilled and so consequently has little in the way of existing landscape character. In addition, two of its boundaries are set in an urban context as the site is located directly adjacent to existing major retail facilities and close to national transport infrastructure. South London Colney can therefore be brought forward in the new Local Plan as a residential site to create a cohesively located, sustainable new Garden Suburb, to which it is well suited. The development of the South London Colney site for mixed-use purposes would also be a more efficient and sustainable use of land in this urban fringe location. This development of this previously used site could also help to reduce development pressures on other, more functional and visually sensitive areas, of the Green Belt, within St Albans District.

A comprehensive Vision Document is currently in preparation for this site, in lieu of the consultation stages of the emerging Draft Local Plan, which will provide additional technical details.

Land at Colney Heath

The promoted site at Colney Heath comprises 43.58 hectares of open grassland, local woodland and a lake adjacent to the southwest boundary, located to the south east of the A414, between the villages of Colney Heath and Sleafshyde, as shown on the red line plan at **Appendix 1** of the Colney Heath site evaluation.

The hybrid development proposals at Colney Heath, are primarily intended to serve as a new Country Park, which would occupy circa 89% of the total site area. The residual 11% of the Colney Heath site is proposed to accommodate employment and a small scale residential use together with new public transport infrastructure provided in the form of an MRT interchange, to deliver sustainable growth within the A414 corridor on the most unconstrained areas of the site.

8 Quay Court
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Stow-cum-Quy
Cambridge
CB25 9AU

T 01223 810990 turley.co.uk

The Framework Masterplan proposals set out at **Appendix 3** of the Colney Heath site evaluation illustrate a viable scheme for an employment-led, hybrid development, comprising 3.70 hectares of employment land, approximately 30 new homes adjoining the existing village envelope on a small, one hectare, site and a transport interchange connected to the A414 and a new 33 ha Country Park. The Framework Masterplan also proposes a further 5.66 hectares of formal and informal public open space associated with the new built development.

The Tarmac proposals at Colney Heath meet the core objectives of the NPPF in that there is an opportunity to establish a diverse, high quality, County Park for the long term benefit of all residents of St Albans District, facilitating the release of a further area of Tarmac land for employment, residential and transport infrastructure purposes, in accordance with a sustainable pattern of development. The scale of the residential component is also in accordance with the 10% target set by Paragraph 68(a) of the NPPF.

Land at Moor Mill North

The promoted site at Moor Mill North comprises 12.26 hectares of open grassland with local woodland located in the western area of the site, adjacent to the River Ver, which forms the western boundary. The site is located on the western edge of Frogmore Village and adjoins the extensive rear gardens of the residential properties which front Radlett Road, as shown on the red line plan at **Appendix 1** of the Moor Mill North site evaluation.

The Framework Masterplan proposals set out at **Appendix 3** of the site evaluation illustrate a viable scheme for a landscape-led, residential development of approximately 5.88 hectares, comprising up to 180 new market and affordable homes. The Framework Masterplan proposes a further 6.38 hectares of natural greenspace in the form of a new Community Woodland and public open space associated with the new residential development.

One of the main considerations in the Framework Masterplan is to provide an integrated and sympathetic extension to the existing village envelope, which will provide new homes and assist with community cohesion. As such, the site is promoted as a small garden village suburb of Frogmore, with a strong semi-rural character. This is reflected in the proposed low ratio of built form to useable natural greenspace.

This promoted site forms part of a much larger Tarmac land holding at Moor Mill. The wider Tarmac owned land parcel in question at Moor Mill North is roughly triangular in form and is enclosed by the settlement boundary of Frogmore to the east, the How Wood Railway Line to the west and the M25 corridor to the south. The overall scale of the Tarmac land holding in this area is circa 90+ hectares. In this regard, the built form of the proposed development at Frogmore equates to no more than 5.88 hectares. This therefore represents less than 7% of the overall site area within Tarmac's total land ownership at Moor Mill North.

Land at Tyttenhanger

The promoted site at Tyttenhanger comprises two separate land parcels, which are bisected by a shared private access road. The north eastern land parcel is 18.07 ha in area and this comprises an active Tarmac operational unit (Tyttenhanger) with associated buildings. The land parcel to the south west is 13.07 ha in area and is broadly triangular in shape. This adjacent site has also been previously used for mineral extraction and has been restored to open pasture fronting the A414, which forms the northern boundary. The latter site is immediately available as a development opportunity now, save for an initial period for site preparation, given its historic use.

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CB25 9AU

T 01223 810990 turley.co.uk

The remaining two boundaries comprise the access road to the north east and a wooded tree belt to the south, which separates this parcel from a nature reserve further south (Willows Lakes). The northern apex of the lower site adjoins a petrol filling station which fronts the A414 and which has a local waste management operator located behind the petrol station premises within the same general curtilage. The overall combined site is circa 31.14 ha in area and is promoted for a broad range of uses, comprising employment, commercial, leisure and residential. However given the current operational activity on the upper site, the timing of when each parcel can come forward will be at different points in the plan period.

As such, the upper site is not being promoted at this time for general residential use, although Tarmac reserve judgement on this position in the medium term, given that a large new settlement is also being promoted in close proximity to Tarmac's promoted site on other neighbouring land in Tyttenhanger, in Hertsmere District. This authority is currently in the process of finalising their Draft Local Plan for examination.

The Framework Masterplan proposals set out at **Appendix 3** of the site evaluation illustrate a viable scheme for an employment-led, hybrid development, comprising 4.66 ha of employment land in the upper site parcel and 7.33 ha of developable land, for a broader range of uses, in the lower site parcel. The lower site parcel is also suitable for potential residential use, as a large new settlement is being actively promoted in Hertsmere District, on an adjacent site in Tyttenhanger, which presents key opportunities under the Duty to Cooperate.

Given its A414 frontage location, the Tarmac site at Tyttenhanger has the potential to host an MRT stopping point and a new transport interchange, which could be of mutual benefit to the Tarmac site proposal and the adjoining potential new settlement. The remaining undeveloped 60% of the Tarmac site at Tyttenhanger would also help to offset the built form of the development by improving the environmental quality, accessibility and biodiversity of the site. The proposals are therefore in accordance with the aims and objectives of the NPPF.

In conclusion, the attached four site submissions and their appendices identify four sustainable Tarmac owned sites for development and set out a summary case for their future allocation for the range of uses described. With regard to the largest of these proposals, at South London Colney, these submissions are made in lieu of additional forthcoming technical submissions, which will be set out in a Vision Document in production.

Further technical details of the other promoted Tarmac sites will also follow these site submissions in lieu of future Local Plan consultations. However in the interim, should St Albans Council require any additional information on any specific site, Tarmac and its consultant team will be able to address any technical queries on request and welcome the opportunity to further engage with the Council.

Yours sincerely



Steven Kosky
Director

On behalf of Tarmac



Enc.

8 Quay Court
Colliers Lane
Stow-cum-Quy
Cambridge
CB25 9AU

T 01223 810990 turley.co.uk

Land at Tyttenhanger

Submissions on behalf of Tarmac

St Albans City and District

Local Plan 2020 - 2038

Call for Sites Consultation

January 2021

Turley

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Steven Kosky BA (Hons) DipTP MRTPI
steven.kosky@turley.co.uk

Client

Tarmac

Our reference

TARC 3000

05 March 2021

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 These site submissions have been prepared by Turley, on behalf of Tarmac, pursuant to the St Albans City and District Local Plan 2020-2038, call for potential development sites consultation, January 2021. Tarmac is an established land promotion and development company with a significant portfolio of freehold and other commercial land interests in St Albans District. Tarmac is also a major national employer with nationwide experience of bringing forward strategic development sites of all scales for new residential, mixed-use and commercial and industrial development.
- 1.2 Tarmac is promoting four of its freehold sites in the south of the St Albans District in the A414 and M25 corridors for potential residential, employment and other development. Turley has been instructed to prepare separate site submissions in relation to each of these promoted site locations and the inter-relationships and connectivity between these four Tarmac sites is set out in our overarching correspondence. The following site-specific submissions relate to Tarmac's **Land at Tyttenhanger**, which is located to the south east of the A414, approximately 1.1km north east of the intersection with Highfield Lane and White Horse Lane, as shown on the attached red line plan at **Appendix 1**.
- 1.3 The promoted site at Tyttenhanger comprises two separate land parcels, both owned by Tarmac. These comprise; a northern parcel, associated with operational mineral workings and an adjacent land parcel to the south west, which has been previously used for mineral extraction. This adjacent parcel largely comprises open pasture fronting the A414 which forms the principal boundary. The northern apex of this site adjoins a petrol filling station which fronts the A414 on a third party site, alongside a waste management operator.
- 1.4 The combined site is 31.14 ha and is promoted for a range of uses, including employment, commercial, leisure and residential use. However, given the operational activity on the upper site, the delivery timing for each parcel will be different. Viable scenarios for the overall site include a phased employment scheme on both parcels, or a residential scheme in combination with a later, phased, employment scheme on the operational parcel.
- 1.5 In this regard all potential development scenarios have excellent access to the A414 and so we also propose that the development is linked to the future Mass Rapid Transport (MRT) initiative, planned along the route of the A414 corridor by Hertfordshire County Council. Accordingly, a transport interchange is proposed on the site and an illustrative Framework Masterplan is attached at **Appendix 3** for reference.
- 1.6 An additional consideration in regard to these two Tyttenhanger parcels is their close proximity and inter-relationship with emerging nearby strategic development in the form of an adjacent proposed new settlement. The new settlement is proposed immediately adjacent to the southern boundary of the Tyttenhanger landholding, but across an administrative boundary that is otherwise invisible on the ground. This therefore presents a good opportunity for cross border co-operation, under the Duty to Co-operate, should the anticipated strategic new settlement come forward as envisaged.

- 1.7 The following site evaluation describes the rationale behind the Framework Masterplan and assesses the proposals against the evaluation criteria used by St Albans during the last call for sites exercise, held in 2018.
- 1.8 The evaluation sets out the availability, suitability and deliverability of the proposals and their compatibility with this local methodology, the 2019 NPPF and the Draft Local Plan Inspector's Report 2020.
- 1.9 This evaluation concludes with a summary case as to why exceptional circumstances exist to justify the release of **Land at Tyttenhanger** by St Albans City and District Council for a range of potential uses including employment, commercial, leisure and residential use.

2.0 SITE EVALUATION: LAND AT TYTTENHANGER

Location and Site Characteristics

- 2.1 The promoted site at Tyttenhanger comprises two separate land parcels, bisected by a private access road. The north eastern land parcel (the 'upper site') is 18.07 ha in area and this land comprises an active Tarmac operational unit (Tyttenhanger) with associated buildings.
- 2.2 The land parcel to the south west (the 'lower site') is 13.07 ha in area and is broadly triangular in shape. This site has also been previously used for mineral extraction and has been restored to open pasture fronting the A414, which forms the northern boundary. The latter site is available as an immediate opportunity now, save for an initial period for site preparation given its historic use
- 2.3 The remaining two boundaries comprise the access road to the north east and a wooded tree belt to the south, which separates this parcel from a nature reserve further south (Willows Lakes). The northern apex of the lower site adjoins a petrol filling station which fronts the A414 and which has a local waste management operator located behind the petrol station premises within the same general curtilage.
- 2.4 The overall combined site is 31.14 ha in area and is promoted for a broad range of uses, comprising employment, commercial, leisure and residential. However given the current operational activity on the upper site, the timing of when each parcel can come forward will be at different points in the plan period.
- 2.5 As such, the upper site is not being promoted at this time for general residential use, although Tarmac reserve judgement on this position in the medium term, given that a large new settlement is being promoted in close proximity to Tarmac's promoted site on other neighbouring land in Tyttenhanger, within Hertsmere District. This authority is also currently in the process of finalising their Draft Local Plan for examination.
- 2.6 In this regard, Tarmac are currently undertaking the majority of their current minerals extraction activities in the Tyttenhanger area at the prospective new settlement site location in Hertsmere. With regard to the lower site, this parcel is less constrained as there are no operational activities on site, however this site has also been landfilled.
- 2.7 The lower parcel therefore requires some initial remediation prior to the commencement of development but is judged to be suitable for a range of potential after uses, including residential, all of which can either come forward in the first half of the new Local Plan period or be safeguarded for use later in the period.
- 2.8 The potential areas which are most suitable for development across the overall site area are as shown on the illustrative Framework Masterplan at **Appendix 3**. The proposed land use budget for the combined site area is provided in the table below.

Site Constraints

- 2.9 Pursuant to these site submissions, Tarmac commissioned Turley to identify the relevant constraints to residential and other proposed development on the Site to inform the illustrative Framework Plan (see the constraints plan at **Appendix 2**). The site has some identified constraints and we summarise these below and how the Concept Framework has responded in terms of presenting an achievable and deliverable illustrative scheme.
- 2.10 The primary constraint on the upper site is the current operational activity, which would need to cease before the site becomes available for development. Thereafter a potential after-use for the type of non-residential development specified is likely to be deliverable within circa four years from acquiring all necessary permissions. Other constraints on the upper site include existing water bodies, as shown on the constraints plan, together with a section of the site within Flood Zone 2 at the southern end. These constraints have however been fully taken into account in the Framework Masterplan.
- 2.11 In contrast, the lower site is available now, subject to the need for initial remediation, as this site has been previously landfilled. We envisage that a circa 2 year lead in period would be required on the lower site before development could practically commence. Thereafter we would anticipate that all the specified suitable categories of development, could be completed within a further 2 years from acquiring all relevant permissions.
- 2.12 The premise of the proposals on the lower site is that landfill has a commercial value and so can be economically recovered and moved further up the waste hierarchy. This will facilitate a sustainable development to be brought forward on previously used land in a suitable transport corridor location, linked by new infrastructure and adjacent to the site of a proposed new settlement in a neighbouring authority area.
- 2.13 The principle of landfill extraction to facilitate new development in sustainable locations is also supported by emerging Waste Plan Policy (Hertfordshire Waste Local Plan Consultation Draft January 2021). Paragraph 23.3 of the Consultation Draft states that; *'landfill excavation can restore a site to a quality sufficient to develop upon and can provide valuable spaces for development in line with District or Borough Local Plans'*. Emerging Waste Policy 17: Landfill Excavation; states that waste development proposals for the excavation and re-restoration of historic landfill sites will be permitted where it can be clearly demonstrated, inter alia, that excavation is required to enable a beneficial after-use (including built development) to take place on the site and that excavated waste will be moved up the hierarchy.
- 2.14 Accordingly, the fact that the lower site has been historically landfilled is not an overriding constraint to development in terms of its achievability and deliverability. Whilst there is a short term abnormal cost associated with the prior remediation necessary to facilitate residential development, Tarmac is the sole freeholder and has evaluated the cost and logistics of the proposed extraction and found the proposals set out in these submissions to be viable, which underpins the rationale of Tarmac in making these submissions.

Accessibility

- 2.15 Hertfordshire County Council (HCC) adopted their strategy in 2019 to upgrade the A414, into a principal multi-modal movement corridor linking the main urban centres within the County, to support growth within the County in an efficient and sustainable manner.
- 2.16 These improvements include the development of Mass Rapid Transport (MRT) cycleways and other targeted capacity and safety improvements. Transit Oriented Development (TOD), whereby development is located at key nodes (communities) within the corridor with high quality interchange opportunities, will additionally complement this aligning of planned land use with the transport strategy. Accordingly the scheme also proposes a direct connection to and transport interchange with the A414 corridor including the Mass Rapid Transport (MRT).

The Illustrative Framework Masterplan

- 2.17 The Framework Masterplan proposals set out at **Appendix 3** illustrate a viable scheme for an employment-led, hybrid development, comprising 4.66 ha of employment land in the upper site parcel and 7.33 ha of developable land, for a broader range of uses, in the lower site parcel. The lower site parcel is also suitable for potential residential use, as a large new settlement is being actively promoted in Hertsmere District, on an adjacent site in Tyttenhanger, which presents opportunities under the Duty to Cooperate.
- 2.18 The identified constraints on the northern site have been used constructively as part of the proposed overall scheme to create a stimulating and diverse working and living environment with a strong focus on new open space provision and increased biodiversity. The Framework Masterplan therefore proposes three separate developable areas for a range of employment, commercial and residential uses, together with formal open space and new opportunities for organised sport on the lower site parcel.
- 2.19 The existing water bodies and woodland in the north of the site will be maintained and enhanced to ensure suitable separation from Colney Heath and the avoidance of any coalescence. The identified Flood Zone area in the southern section of the upper site is proposed as a semi-natural wetland park, which will significantly increase the overall net biodiversity of the promoted site. The proposed overall land budget for the illustrative scheme at **Appendix 3** is therefore as follows:

Tyttenhanger: Land Budget	
Red Line Site Area	31.14 ha
New Employment Land (Upper Site)	4.66 ha
New Residential / Employment Area (Lower Site)	7.33 ha
Open Space associated with New Development	4.78 ha
Wetland Park	3.34 ha
Sport and Play Area	0.85 ha
All Woodland Areas	8.24 ha
All Ponds	1.94 ha

Green Belt Function in this Site Location

- 2.20 The **Green Belt Review Purposes Assessment: November 2013** (Green Belt Study) is the extant Green Belt evidence base currently available to the Council, relative to this site. In this regard, the site at Tyttenhanger lies within the assessed Green Belt Parcel **GB34**.
- 2.21 The assessed Green Belt Parcel is some 419 ha in total area, therefore the site promoted by Tarmac for the mixed use development proposed (31.14 ha) equates to 7.5% of the overall parcel, assessed by the Green Belt Study in 2013. However, given that the built form proposed on the Tarmac site at Tyttenhanger is less than 40% of the promoted site area (11.99 ha) and that over 60% of the site (19.15 ha) is being promoted for public open space, semi-natural wetlands and other natural green space, the context is that the total built form proposed by Tarmac equates to less than **3%** of Green Belt Parcel **GB34**.
- 2.22 The principal function of Parcel GB34 was assessed as making a significant contribution towards safeguarding the countryside and maintaining the existing settlement pattern, by providing a gap between Hatfield and London Colney. The Parcel was also assessed as making a partial contribution towards preventing the merging of St Albans and Hatfield and preserving the setting of London Colney, Sleafshyde and Tyttenhanger. Parcel GB34 was considered to contribute significantly towards 2 of the 5 Green Belt purposes.
- 2.23 The assessment noted that in combination, Parcel GB34 contributed towards maintaining the strategic gap between St Albans and Hatfield. The assessment noted that as a whole, that the gap contains some built development associated with 3rd tier settlements in the Green Belt. However, any minor reduction in the gap would be unlikely to compromise the separation of 1st tier settlements in physical terms, or overall visual openness.
- 2.24 The gap south to Colney Heath was noted as relatively free of development, however the gap to the north is more built up and narrower. Therefore any reduction in the gap to the north was judged to compromise the separation of settlements in physical and visual terms and local levels of visual openness. In contrast, any minor reduction to the south was judged to be a less significant assessed impact. Parcel GB34 also adjoins the London Colney and Sleafshyde Conservation Areas, however the assessment noted that visual connection or views to these areas are limited by local routes and wooded areas.
- 2.25 Accordingly in terms of assessing the five purposes of Green Belt, as set out in Paragraph 134 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) the evaluation of the promoted Tarmac site at Tyttenhanger can be broadly summarised as follows:
- a) To check unrestricted sprawl of large built up areas**
- 2.26 The Tarmac proposal is for a landscape-led, mixed-use development with high standards of design and landscaping including the provision of a transport interchange. The nearest settlements are Colney Heath and Sleafshyde, which are compact in scale and as such do not represent a large built up area. They are also separated from the promoted site by mature woodland and permanently separated from each other by the A414 corridor.

2.27 The release of the promoted site for use for a landscape led, mixed use scheme, as set out in these submissions, would therefore maintain the existing settlement identity of both locations. The submitted proposals would also be subject to public consultation and full examination and brought forward via the Plan-led system and so would not represent any unrestricted sprawl in this area.

b) To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another

2.28 The nearest affected settlements are Colney Heath and Sleapshyde which could not be physically coalesced by the partial development of the promoted site, by reason of the permanent severance caused by the A414 and the intervening ponds and woodland to the north of the upper site. The ratio of built form to open space is less than 40% and the dominant proposed use of the Tarmac site is therefore a wetland park, woodland and existing watercourses, with the primary built form comprising a new employment and residential area, aligned alongside the A414.

2.29 The location within the site for the development parcels is particularly well contained by the A414 to the northwest and by a dense woodland to the northeast of the upper site. As such, the built element of the proposed land use would be visually very well contained within the boundaries shown on the Framework Masterplan and would not be prejudicial to this particular Green Belt purpose.

c) To safeguard the countryside from encroachment

2.30 The Tarmac site is partly open in character, interspersed with pockets of woodland and lakes, which will be largely maintained and enhanced as 60% of the site will be retained as formal, semi-natural and natural public green space to enhance the developable areas. The areas proposed for built development on the site are visually self-contained and are adjacent to established and defensible boundaries. Therefore the partial development of the identified sections of this site would not represent any visual encroachment into the open countryside in this particular location.

d) To preserve the setting and character of historic towns

2.31 The promoted site at Tyttenhanger is not proximate to any historic towns, as it is located some distance away from the nearest historic town at St Albans. The nearest settlements to the site are Sleapshyde and Colney Heath, which are located approximately 1km to the north east of the site along the A414.

2.32 Although Sleapshyde has a Conservation Area to the north of the A414, any potential impacts arising from the site will be primarily mitigated by the physical separation of the intervening A414 corridor. Similarly in the case of Colney Heath, there is an intervening strong woodland to the northeast of the site, which will preserve the existing character of Colney Heath in that location. Accordingly any residual impacts on either settlement can be appropriately managed through the detailed design process, as illustrated by the Framework Masterplan.

e) To assist in urban regeneration

- 2.33 The planned release of this site for sustainable development would not be prejudicial to the delivery of urban regeneration elsewhere in the District. The combination of the scale of the housing and employment requirement, the limited urban capacity for brownfield redevelopment and the predominance of Green Belt throughout the District, means that exceptional circumstances exist and the planned release of Green Belt will be a necessary key element of the spatial strategy of the new Local Plan.

Availability, Suitability and Deliverability

- 2.34 The promoted site comprises 31.14 ha across two distinct land parcels, both of which, are within the sole freehold ownership of Tarmac. The lower site is less constrained and so is available immediately for the range of uses outlined above, as illustrated in the Framework Masterplan, subject to initial landfill remediation. The upper site can also be brought forward within a reasonable timeframe, post adoption, or can be safeguarded for future development and brought forward later in the new plan period.
- 2.35 The overall site is suitable for the range of uses proposed as it lies within a strategic transport corridor which is already well served by public transport. This is likely to be enhanced in the future with the implementation of the proposed MRT system and the proposals are designed to accommodate an MRT interchange on site for this purpose.
- 2.36 There are no known overriding constraints to the development of this site for the mix of land uses proposed as shown. Where constraints exist, such as the identified floodplain areas, these are compatible with the open recreational uses proposed in those locations. Whilst the lower site has been landfilled, Tarmac are the freehold owners of the site and have tested the timing and viability of landfill extraction to facilitate development on this land parcel in accordance with emerging Hertfordshire Waste Plan policy.

Consistency with National Policy

- 2.37 The NPPF states at Paragraph 67 that that planning policies should identify a sufficient supply and mix of sites, taking into account availability, suitability and likely economic viability. Planning policies should identify a supply of:
- a) specific, deliverable sites for years one to five of the plan period; and*
 - b) specific, developable sites or broad locations for growth, for years 6-10 and, where possible, for years 11-15 of the plan.*
- 2.38 In this regard, the promoted site at Tyttenhanger is available in the near and medium term and is suitable for the mixed-use development proposed without the need for any additional infrastructure. The lower site is therefore suitable for housing or employment delivery during years **1-5** of the new Local Plan period and the upper site is suitable for employment and commercial land use delivery during years **6-10** of the Local Plan period.

- 2.39 Paragraph 68 of the NPPF identifies that Small and medium sized sites can make an important contribution to meeting the housing requirement of an area, and are often built-out relatively quickly. Therefore local planning authorities are encouraged to promote a good mix of housing sites, of all scales. In this regard the lower site could approximately 70 new market and affordable homes in conjunction with the adjacent new employment development proposed on the upper site.

Consistency with the Local Plan Examination Inspector’s Recommendations

- 2.40 On 14th April 2020 the Inspectors appointed to examine the former Draft Local Plan wrote to St Albans Council to clarify a number of issues. Amongst some of the suggestions made by the Inspectors in their letter was that a range of smaller sites should be considered as part of the spatial strategy going forward. In this regard the Inspectors stated, *inter alia*, at Paragraph 43 of their letter:

‘We see no reason why the identification of some smaller sites would unacceptably spread the adverse impacts of development on Green Belt purposes. Whilst this would extend the impact of development over a wider geographic area, the extent of the resultant impacts would be likely to be smaller given the more limited scale of the sites...’

- 2.41 These recommendations are consistent with Paragraph 68 of the NPPF and were agreed in principle by St Albans Council in following correspondence. Accordingly the residential component of the promoted site at Tyttenhanger additionally fits this small site criteria.

Conclusions and the Exceptional Circumstances Case

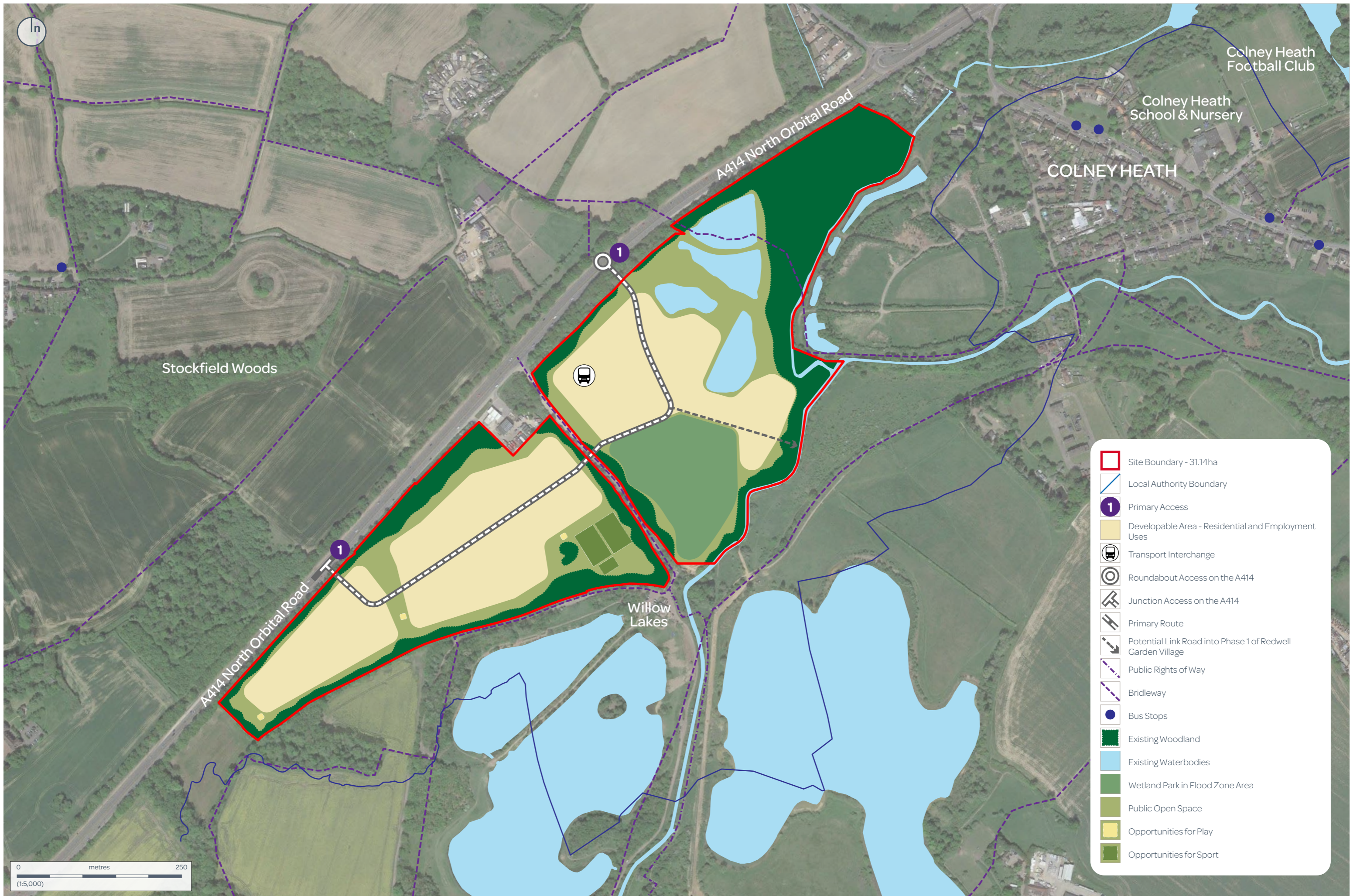
- 2.42 The NPPF does not provide decision makers with a strict definition with regards to what constitutes ‘exceptional circumstances’. However Paragraph 137 of the NPPF sets out a number of matters that should be identified and dealt with in order to ascertain whether ‘exceptional circumstances’ exist to justify releasing land from the Green Belt.
- 2.43 The approach taken in the ‘Calverton’ judgement (*Calverton Parish Council v Greater Nottingham Councils - 2015*) also provides useful guidance when considering whether exceptional circumstances exist. These include; the intensity of the assessed need, inherent constraints on the supply of land suitable for sustainable development and difficulties in achieving sustainable development without impinging on the Green Belt.
- 2.44 The mixed-use development proposals at Tyttenhanger, set out in these site submissions, are primarily landscape led, with over 60% of the site used for open space, recreation and semi-natural green space. The residual area of the site is proposed for a combination of employment, commercial and residential land uses, together with a new transport interchange, to deliver sustainable development in the A414 corridor. The opportunity to create an MRT stopping point on the A414 at this location could also be of benefit to the adjacent large new settlement proposed in Hertsmere, under the Duty to Co-operate, if this strategic proposal comes forward in the impending Hertsmere Draft Local Plan.

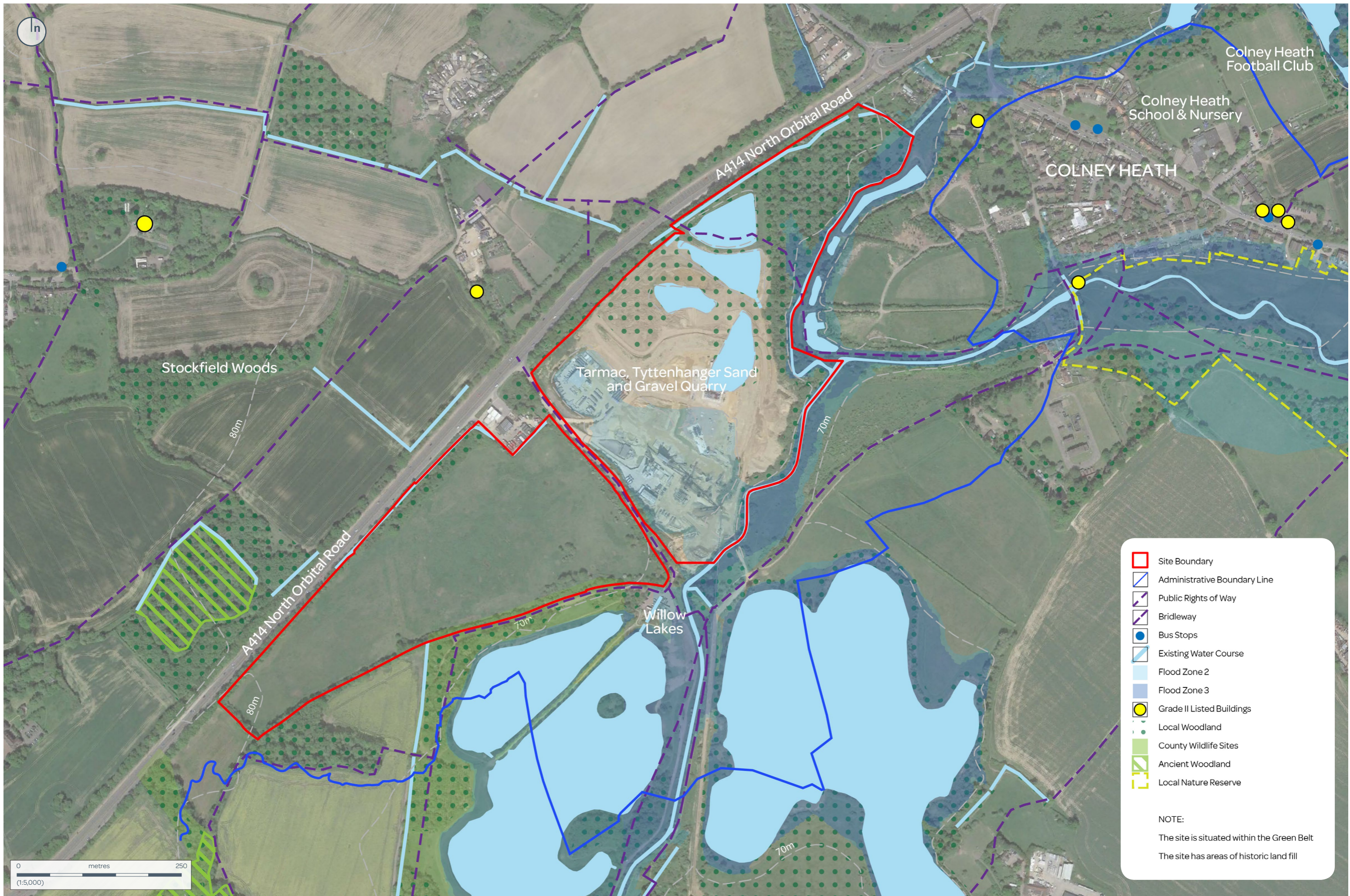
- 2.45 Paragraph 138 of the NPPF states that where it has been concluded that it is necessary to release Green Belt for development, plans should give first consideration to land which has been previously-developed and/or is well-served by public transport. They should also set out ways in which the impact of removing land from the Green Belt can be offset through compensatory improvements to the environmental quality and accessibility of remaining Green Belt land.
- 2.46 The proposals for the Tarmac site at Tyttenhanger are on land which has been previously used, or is in current operational use and nearing practical completion. The site is also close to where other large scale strategic residential development is being contemplated at Tyttenhanger by an adjoining planning authority. The details of this proposed new settlement are known to St Albans, whom have been actively consulted on the strategic proposal by Hertsmere under the Duty to Cooperate.
- 2.47 Given its A414 frontage location, the Tarmac site at Tyttenhanger has the potential to host an MRT stopping point and a transport interchange, which could be of mutual benefit to the Tarmac site proposal and the adjoining potential new settlement.
- 2.48 The remaining undeveloped 60% portion of the Tarmac site would help to offset the built form of the development by improving the environmental quality, accessibility and biodiversity of the remaining land. The proposals are therefore in accordance with the broad aims and objectives of Paragraph 138 of the NPPF.
- 2.49 In conclusion, the proceeding site submissions identify a sustainable site for mixed-use development at Tyttenhanger and set out a summary case for the future allocation of this site area. However should St Albans Council require any additional information, Tarmac and its consultant advisors can address any further technical queries on request and we welcome the opportunity to engage further with the Council.

Appendix 1
Land at Tyttenhanger
Site Location / Ownership Plan

Appendix 2
Land at Tyttenhanger
Site Constraints Plan

Appendix 3
Land at Tyttenhanger
Illustrative Framework Masterplan





	Site Boundary
	Administrative Boundary Line
	Public Rights of Way
	Bridleway
	Bus Stops
	Existing Water Course
	Flood Zone 2
	Flood Zone 3
	Grade II Listed Buildings
	Local Woodland
	County Wildlife Sites
	Ancient Woodland
	Local Nature Reserve

NOTE:
 The site is situated within the Green Belt
 The site has areas of historic land fill

Comment

Agent	Mr Talys Nikan (1265531)
Email Address	[REDACTED]
Company / Organisation	Woods Hardwick Planning
Address	Woods Hardwick Planning 15-17 Goldington Road Bedford MK40 3NH
Consultee	Mr Sean Coleman (1265532)
Email Address	[REDACTED]
Company / Organisation	Canton Ltd
Address	Canton Ltd Level 6 Douglas IM1 1EJ
Event Name	Call for Sites 2021
Comment by	Canton Ltd (Mr Sean Coleman - 1265532)
Comment ID	CFS19
Response Date	08/03/21 16:15
Status	Submitted
Submission Type	Web
Version	0.1
Files	Site Location Plan - Land Off Of Bullens Green Lan, Colney Heath

Name

Talys Nikan

Company/Organisation

Woods Hardwick Planning

Address

Woods Hardwick Planning
15-17 Goldington Road

Bedford
MK40 3NH

Postcode

MK40 3NH

Telephone

[REDACTED]

Email

[REDACTED]

Your interest

. Planning Consultant

Site address/location (Please provide a map showing the site boundary)

Land Off Of Bullens Green Lane (Roundhouse Farm), Colney Heath

Site area (in hectares)

5.12 (2.48 of which is within St. Alban's District and 2.77 of which is within Welwyn Hatfield District)

Easting

521208

Northing

205906

Site Location Plan Attached

Yes

Upload Site Location

Site Location Plan - Land Off Of Bullens Green Lan,
Colney Heath
Site Location Plan - Land Off Of Bullens Green Lan,
Colney Heath

GIS mapping shapefile attached (in .shp file format) No

Land ownership (please include contact details if known)

[REDACTED]



Current land use

Agricultural

Condition of current use (e.g. vacant, derelict)

Agricultural

Suggested land use

Housing

Site proposed for residential development of approximately 100 units, to include policy compliant mix of affordable and self-build units.

Reasons for suggested development / land use

To contribute toward meeting the local housing need and affordable housing needs of the District in a sustainable location.

Likely timescale for delivery of suggested development / land use

1-5 Years

Contamination/pollution issues (previous hazardous land uses)

No

Environmental issues (e.g. Tree Presentation Orders; SSSIs)

No

Flood Risk

No

Topography affecting site (land levels, slopes, ground conditions)

No

Utility Services (access to mains electricity, gas, water, drainage ect.)

No

Legal issues (For example, restrictive covenants or ownership titles affecting the site)

No

Access. Is the site accessible from a public highway without the need to cross land in a different ownership to the site?

Yes

Other constraints affecting the site

Yes - (If yes, please specify)

The site is situated within the Metropolitan Green Belt. However, it makes very limited to no contribution the application site makes toward the purposes of including land within the Green Belt, together with

the localized impacts on openness of the Green Belt as demonstrated by supporting evidence for an application submitted for this site (now due to be heard at an Inquiry, please see below). This includes the Landscape and Visual Statement and Planning Statement which affirm that this site makes no contribution at all to the purposes identified under paragraph 134 (a), (b) and (d), and only makes a limited contribution to the purposes identified under 134(c) due to the self-contained nature of this site and its immediate context, and under 134(e) due to the very clear lack of previously developed land and brownfield sites available for (re)development and exceptional circumstances identified by the Council to met its very considerable need for housing under the previous emerging Plan wherein 524ha of Green Belt was proposed to be released - all of which was greenfield land.

Nonetheless, one of the significant failings of that now withdrawn plan was the assessment of Green Belt parcels and their contribution to the Green Belt as set out in ED40 by the examining Inspectors. Please see relevant extracts of ED40 below:

* Para. 40: "In light of the large number of homes that would need to be accommodated, the Council decided that only strategic scale Green Belt sites would be taken forward in the Plan. The advantages of strategic scale sites over smaller ones was an explicit evaluative choice made by the Council."

* Para. 41: "In looking at Green Belt releases we have concerns about the narrow focus that has been placed on only strategic sites. This has ruled out a number of sites that have already been found to impact least on the purposes of the Green Belt. It may well also have ruled out other nonstrategic sites with limited significant impacts on the Green Belt which may have arisen from a finer grained Green Belt Review."

* Para. 44: "We accept that large scale urban extensions would provide significant amounts of new infrastructure which both the new and already established communities would benefit from. On the other hand, a range of sites including smaller sites could also provide benefits. For example, they could be delivered more quickly without requiring additional infrastructure, provide choice and flexibility in the housing market and secure affordable housing more immediately."

* Para. 45: "Overall, although previously recognised as a source of housing to be identified at some stage, smaller sites have been disregarded as part of the plan making process. It is our view that this approach has ruled out an important potential source of housing that may have been found to have a lesser impact on the purposes of the Green Belt than the sites selected without sufficient justification." This application site represents a suitably sized parcel of Green Belt land capable of delivering housing quickly (within 1-5 years) following the grant of planning permission which would make significant contribution to alleviating the housing need early on in the plan period and cannot be understated.

Planning Status

Other

Please include details of the above choice below (for example planning reference numbers and site history)

A cross-boundary planning application was submitted to St. Albans (5/2020/1992) and Welwyn Hatfield Councils (6/2020/2248/OUTLINE) in September 2020, with this being non-determined by St. Albans prior to the statutory deadline and refused by Welwyn Hatfield in December 2020. An appeal was lodged in the same month, and an Inquiry (APP/C1950/W/20/3265926) is scheduled to commence 27 April 2021.

Other comments

As set out above, the site is located within the MGB but makes little to no contribution to Green Belt purposes. Given the need to consider smaller to medium-sized sites to deliver housing within the District quickly, due consideration should be given to the application site which has no other identified constraints to development.

The site is supported by a number of technical documents which sets this out in clear detail on relevant matters such as landscape, ecology, arboriculture, archaeology, heritage, highways, flood risk, drainage. These documents can be found under the planning application submitted to the Council in September 2020, with further documents provided to support the site through the appeals process and include:

- Site Location Plan (Dwg. no. 17981 1002);
- Land use Parameters Plan (Dwg no. 17981 1004);
- Illustrative Site Layout Plan (Dwg. no. 17981 1005; Not for approval);

- Landscape Strategy Plan (Illustrative and not for approval)
- Access Plan (Dwg. no. 18770-FELL-5-500 A);
- Housing Land Supply Statement;
- Affordable Housing Statement;
- Preliminary Ecological Appraisal;
- Agricultural Land Classification Report;
- Archaeological Assessment & Heritage Statement;
- Design & Access Statement;
- Landscape & Visual Impact Assessment;
- Noise Assessment;
- Tree Survey & Arboricultural Impact Assessment;
- Transport Assessment and Travel Plan;
- Utilities & Foul Assessment;
- Flood Risk Assessment & Surface Water Drainage Strategy; and
- Site Investigation Report

Nonetheless, key technical matters are summarised below, and it should be noted the majority of these are of a technical nature with some having been resolved through the appeals process:

*Design: The design of the scheme has undergone an iterative process to arrive at a scale, form and density suitable for the proposed location and is in keeping with the context of the local character and appearance. Thus, accounting for the character of the settlement, together with the surrounding layout and pattern of development, the scheme has been designed to front onto the eastern and southern boundaries and the building line set back to create a green corridor. This green corridor has been introduced to accommodate a new footpath link between Bullens Green Lane and Fellowes Lane and also a landscape buffer to help create a soft edge to the development, marking the transition from settlement to countryside beyond.

A sizeable area of open space has been indicated in the northwest corner of the site to provide a significant separation between the new built form and the grade II listed, no. 68 Roestock Lane, in order to sensitively minimize any impact on its setting. Additionally, the illustrative layout demonstrates the plentiful amount of informal, open space onsite. The proposed site immediately adjoins Roestock Park Recreation Ground which itself also provides plentiful open space, together with playing space for which the applicant would make the full and necessary contribution to upgrade in line with the generated demand of this development. Thus, the illustrative site layout indicates how the proposed development will provide a high-quality residential environment with landscaping, good amenity space levels and sufficient resident and visitor parking.

*Highways: Vehicular access can be provided into the site to be taken from a newly proposed priority T-junction at Bullens Green Lane as per the proposed site access plan (ref: 18770-FELL-5-500). The existing hedge at the proposed junction location on-site is to be replaced with planting behind the junction visibility splays. This newly proposed access will see the incorporation of a new footway with street lighting at the junction connecting to the existing along Bullens Green Lane, which will continue onward to tie into the existing public rights of way network on-site that are to be retained and extended. A new "green" route is proposed to run from Bullens Green Lane at the north eastern corner of the site running adjacent to the existing and new boundary planting along the eastern and southern boundaries to the sites south western corner providing a pleasant walking route around the site's perimeter. The proposed level of housing would induce a level of trip generation not considered to be significantly adverse on the highway network.

*Highways (cont'd): A pedestrian access is proposed to be taken from Fellowes Lane which would provide a safe and direct link to methods of sustainable transport within and beyond Colney Heath. This will be facilitated by way of a crossing on Fellowes Lane and tactile paving. A Road Safety Audit has been produced to demonstrate the suitability of this pedestrian access and concludes there need not be any fundamental changes to the proposed access to make it suitable for its purpose. In terms of accessibility, the Transport Assessment and Green Travel Plan also set out details of the services and facilities that are conveniently and safely accessible by foot, bicycle or bus from the site and in doing so, demonstrating that this is a sustainable location for new housing. The nearest bus stop to the site is located approximately 400m from the site on Hall Gardens Road which equates to a short 5-minute walk and is therefore easily accessible for any future residents. The bus stop serves the Routes 200, 230, 305 and 312 which facilitate access to Essendon, Brookmans Park, London Colney, Welwyn Garden City, St. Albas, Potters Bar, Sandridge and Hatfield. The TA details a number of these destinations together with journey times and service frequency, All are noted to be no more than 30-minutes by bus, with services operating throughout the week for users

*Landscape: A Landscape and Visual Assessment (LVA) has been carried out by FPCR Environmental and Design Ltd to support the site. The LVA notes that the completed scheme is likely to result in a range of landscape effects at different scales. The nature of the immediate landscape, with a high degree of enclosure by existing built development and woodland, limits the effect on character and reduces the extent of change on the wider landscape character area. There would be overall a minor landscape effect in this context. The impact on the character of the immediately surrounding area would be limited as the existing settlement and tree lines contain the site to a high degree and minimise the effect on the wider area. The site and its immediate context has been assessed as having a medium sensitivity to change, and the scheme would result in a medium magnitude of landscape change on the area. Overall, this would lead to a Moderate landscape effect at the year of completion. Over time the green infrastructure would establish, including strengthening the tree belts along Bullens Green Lane and Fellowes Lane, and this would further reduce the landscape effects, leading to a Moderate/Minor landscape effect on the site and its immediate context.

*Ecology & Arboriculture: A Phase 1 Habitat Survey was undertaken by FPCR Environmental and Design Ltd to support this site, the results of which are produced in a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA). The application is also further supported by an Arboricultural Assessment (AA), also produced by FPCR. The established vegetation is noted as being restricted to general narrow margins of poor semi-improved grassland associated with the boundary features. A total of seven hedgerows are identified within the site and from sections of the northern, eastern and southern boundaries. All of the hedgerows bar on are native species dominated and are unmanaged in nature exhibiting tall outgrown structures. With regards to wildlife, there was no evidence of badgers on site or nearby; is of an unsuitable habitat to host common reptile species; is of little interest to invertebrates due to its use as farmed land.

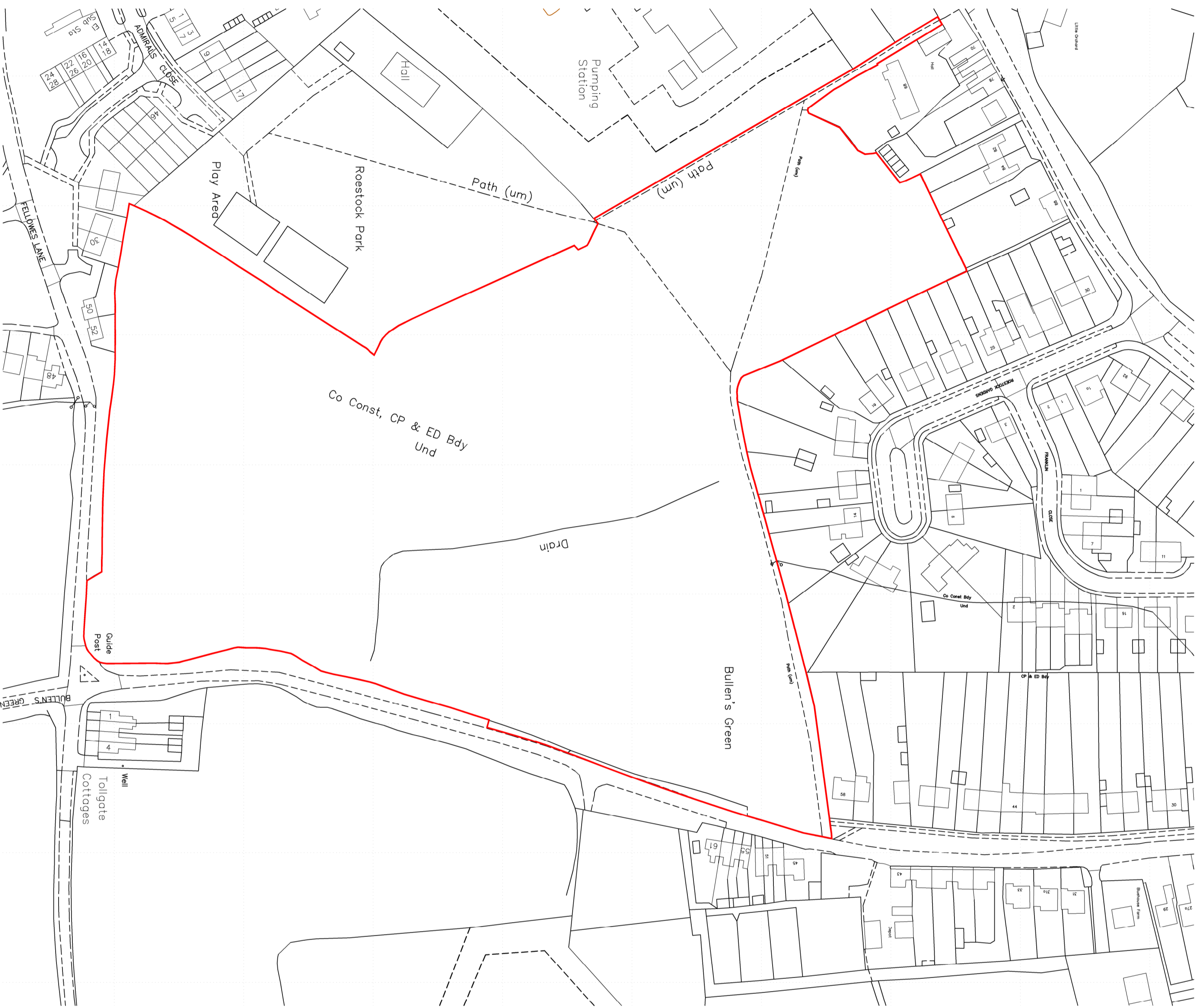
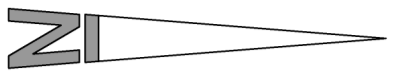
*Ecology & Arboriculture (cont'd): The PEA additionally makes a number of recommendations to maximise the biodiversity value of the site and contribute to measurable biodiversity gains. These include sowing the areas of informal green space with wildflower grassland mix appropriate to the local area; existing gaps in the boundary hedgerows to be replanted with native species, and attenuation ponds designed with consideration to their value to local wildlife. It has been agreed with the Council via the appeals process that net gains to biodiversity can be achieved by way of offsite contributions and is not a barrier to securing development at this site in ecological terms.

Archaeology & Heritage: An Archaeology and Heritage Assessment (AHA) has been produced by The Environmental Dimension Partnership (EDP) to support this site. The AHA noted that the site area does not contain any designated heritage assets, and that only one designated heritage asset within the site's wider surroundings would be affected through the change to its setting. That is the Grade II listed No. 68 Roestock Lane that adjoins the site's northwestern boundary and is orientated to east-west to face north away from the site. The Council has confirmed that the proposal of housing at this location would incur a less than substantial harm on the listed building as part of the application that was submitted. Trial trenching was undertaken on-site which has confirmed the site's archaeological potential to not be a constraint to development, also.

*Flood Risk & Drainage: This site lies within Flood Zone 1 on the Environment Agency's Indicative Flood Maps and therefore has an annual probability of flooding of less than 1 in 1,000. Notwithstanding this Woods Hardwick Infrastructure LLP have prepared a Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) on the basis that the site has an area greater than 1 ha. The FRA demonstrates that the site will not be at risk of flooding and the proposed development will not exacerbate the risk of flooding elsewhere within the vicinity of the site. The FRA also includes a Surface Water Drainage Strategy that identifies a suitable sustainable strategy for the disposal of surface water from the developed site. It is proposed to discharged surface water runoff from the site to the existing Thames Water public sewer located in Bullens Green lane. Thames Water have already confirmed acceptance of any such connection at a maximum rate of 9.3l/s. 6.77 In any event, the proposed surface water network is to be designed and tested to ensure flows generated from the site will not exceed a 1 in 100 year plus 40% climate change rainfall event. A suitable foul sewer network to discharge the residential development will be designed in accordance with Thames Water's adoptable standards, providing a direct point of connection between the site and the agreed Thames Water foul outfall.

*Summary: Evidently, the site has been assessed on a number of technical matters and deemed to be suitable to accommodate development in this specific location. Details of all the above can be provided upon requested, but has nonetheless already been submitted to the Council as part of the application and ongoing appeal at this site. It is understood the most significant constraint to development at this site, therefore, would be the inclusion of land within the MGB however a granular assessment of sites and their contribution to GB purposes undertaken by the Council will demonstrate

the site's suitability for release in this respect, also. Therefore, there is no reason why this site cannot or should not come forward as an allocation.



NOTES

- Contractors must check all dimensions on site. Only figured dimensions are to be worked from. Discrepancies must be reported to the Architect or Engineer before proceeding. © This drawing is copyright.
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<input type="checkbox"/> CONSTRUCTION	<input type="checkbox"/> AS BUILT		

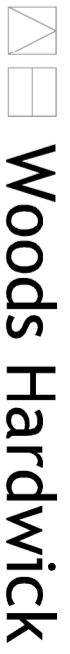
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DRAWN RR CHK TF

DRAWING NO. 17981-1002 REV -

TITLE Land West of Bullens Green Lane
Colney Heath

DETAILS Site Location Plan



Architecture | Engineering | Planning | Surveying

BEDFORD : HEAD OFFICE
15-17 Goldington Road
Bedford MK40 3NH
T: +44 (0) 1234 268862
ONLINE: mail@woodshardwick.com | woodshardwick.com

BIRMINGHAM
Fort Dunlop, Fort Parkway
Birmingham B24 9FE
T: +44 (0) 121 6297784

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