

## St Albans Call for Sites 2021 - Site Identification Form

<b>Your Details</b>	
<b>Name</b> Suzi Green	
<b>Company/Organisation</b> Bidwells	
<b>Address</b> John Ormond House 899 Silbury Boulevard Central Milton Keynes	
<b>Postcode</b> MK9 3XJ	
<b>Telephone</b> [REDACTED]	
<b>Email</b> [REDACTED]	
<b>Your interest</b>	
Site Owner	
Planning Consultant	X
Registered Social Landlord	
Local Resident	
Developer	
Community	
Other	
<b>Site address/location (Please provide a map showing the site boundary)</b> Chelford House Coldharbour Lane Harpenden AL5 4UN	
<b>Site area (in hectares)</b> 0.35ha	

<b>Coordinates</b>
<b>Easting</b> 514268
<b>Northing</b> 215371

**Site Location Plan Attached**

Yes ✓

No

**GIS mapping shapefile attached (in .shp file format)**

Yes

No ✓

**Land ownership (please include contact details if known)**

Chelford Fabrics Ltd

**Current land use**

Class E and Sui Generis

**Suggested land use**

- Housing ✓
- Gypsies & Travellers
- Mixed Use (please specify)
- Employment
- Renewable and low carbon energy and heat
- Biodiversity Improvement / Offsetting
- Green Belt Compensatory Land
- Land for Tree Planting
- Other (please specify)

**Reasons for suggested development / land use**

The site is proposed for development as a residential care home (C2).

The site is located in a sustainable town centre location with access to nearby local services, such as shops and the local church as well as open space, Residents who are able to venture out of the proposed Care Home and visiting families and care home staff would be able to enjoy these amenities. Moreover, the setting provides a pleasant outlook onto the river and tree lined surroundings for residents. The site is also accessible by a walkable distance to the local train station.

Whilst located within an existing employment area the site is well related to the nearby existing residential area. A site with activity nearby is often a desirable location for a care home as it provides things of interest for residents and this site would not be promoted unless the care home operator involved in the proposed development to date considered it a viable/suitable location. The nearby residential area behind the site has properties within a similar distance to commercial uses.

There is a significant need for care home spaces in Hertfordshire and the development of the site will help the district to meet this need and will also contribute towards the district's land supply position.

The development of this site would also mean that this need will not have to be met through Green Belt release.

Most importantly a care home on this site would provide a multitude of jobs, with a likely higher degree of employment than other 'E Class' uses. These jobs would be created through a range of care, management, catering and maintenance staff.

The site is presently occupied by a retailer, who is party to this promotion and is looking for smaller and more suitable premises with more of a 'shop frontage'.

The plot has no restrictive covenants in place nor is restricted by the use of any planning conditions. Therefore, it is free to be used across a range of uses within the new 'E class' range, many of which do not comply with the historic restrictions of retaining the former 'b class' employment uses. Therefore, this provides an opportunity to reconsider 'employment policy' designations by virtue of the changes to the Use Class Order and seek appropriate uses, to meet local care needs.

**Likely timescale for delivery of suggested development / land use**

- 1-5 Years ✓
- 6-10 Years
- 11-15 Years
- 15+ Years

**Site Constraints**

**Contamination/pollution issues (previous hazardous land uses)**

Yes  
No ✓

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

Yes  
No ✓

**Flood Risk**

Yes  
No ✓

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

Yes  
No ✓

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

Yes ✓  
No

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

Yes  
No ✓

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

Yes ✓

No

**Other constraints affecting the site**

Yes - (If yes, please specify)

No ✓

**Planning Status**

- Planning Permission Granted
- Planning Permission Refused
- Pending Decision
- Application Withdrawn
- Planning Permission Lapsed
- Pre-Application Advice
- Planning Permission Not Sought
- Other ✓

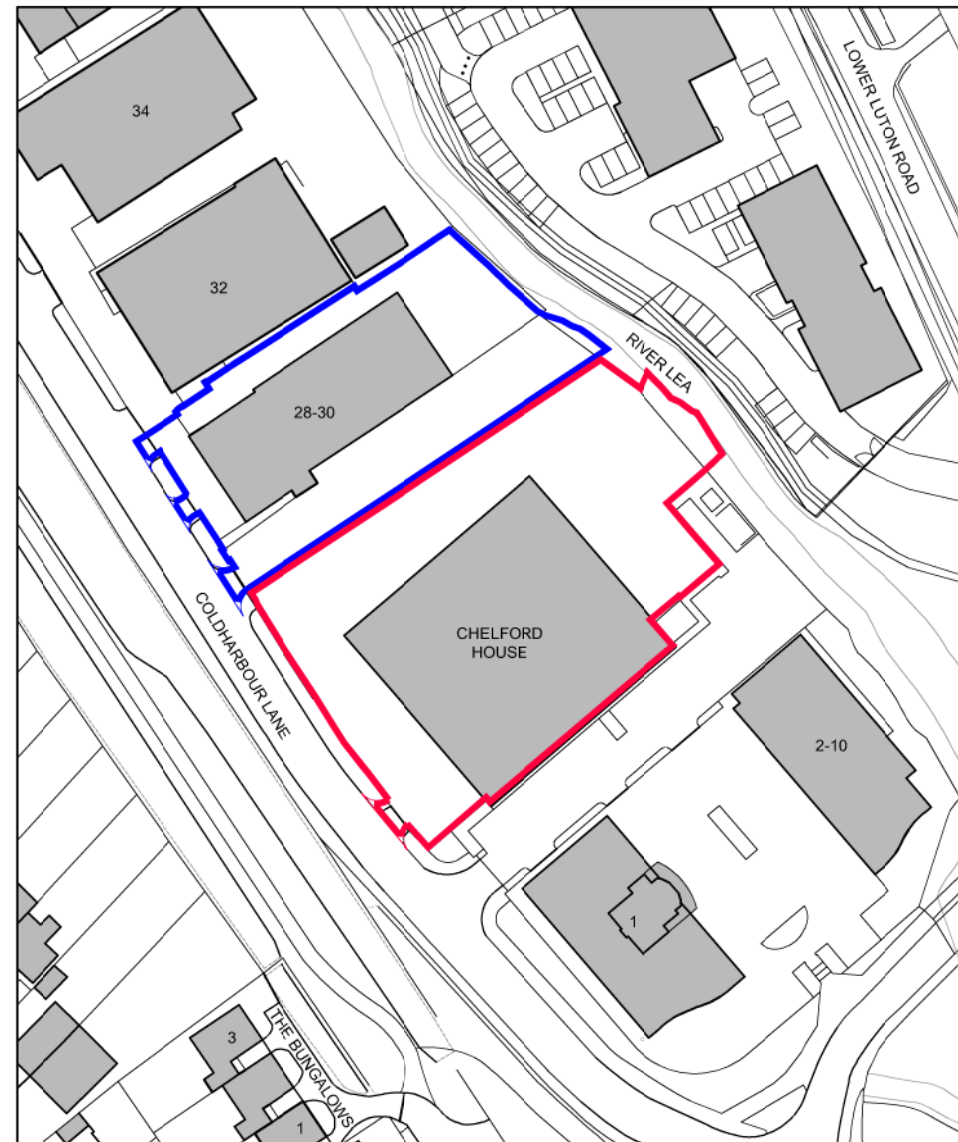
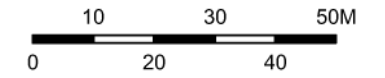
**Please include details of the above choice below (for example planning reference numbers and site history)**

5/1986/0246	Cherry Electrical Products Limited	Division of existing factory into two	Approved 12th May 1986
5/1986/1214	Automagic Ltd	Change of use from light industrial/offices to warehouse with ancillary offices	Approved 3rd November  1986
5/1989/1942	Automagic Ltd	Five single storey light industrial units	Refused 24th  November  1989
5/1989/0700	Automagic Ltd	Five single storey light industrial units	Approved 6th  June 1989
5/1990/0007	Automagic Limited	Five single storey units for B1 use.	Approved 13th  March 1990
5/1996/0798	Smiths Coffee Company	Certificate of Lawfulness (Proposed) – Use for coffee processing	Approved 12th July 1996

5/2009/0531	FM Car Valeting Services Ltd	Change of use of part of existing car park (sui generis) to car wash and valeting service (sui generis), erection of canopy and installation of portable cabin (retrospective)	Approved 20th May 2009
5/2011/0523	Chelford Estates Ltd	Certificate of Lawfulness (existing) - Use of premises Class A1 (retail) with ancillary storage	Refused 29th July 2011
5/2011/1762	FM Car Valeting Services Ltd	Change of use of part of existing car park (sui generis) to car wash and valeting service (sui generis), erection of canopy and installation of portable cabin (resubmission following approval of temporary permission application 5/2009/0531)	Approved 14th  September  2011
5/2011/2986	FM Car Valeting Services Ltd	Variation of operating hours pursuant to 5/2011/1762	Approved 3rd  July 2012
<p>A planning application (ref: 5/19/1642) for the 'demolition of Chelford House and construction of a three storey care home (Class C2) and associated alterations to access, parking and landscaping' was submitted 25<sup>th</sup> July 2019. This application was refused by St Albans City and District Council on 10<sup>th</sup> March 2020. A planning appeal (ref: APP/B1930/W/20/3259161) challenging this decision is pending.</p>			
<p><b>Other comments</b></p> <p>Please see submitted covering letter.</p>			

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KEY:	
<span style="color: red;">—</span>	SITE BOUNDARY CARE HOME SITE AREA = 0.86 ACRES / 0.35 HECTARES
<span style="color: blue;">—</span>	SITE BOUNDARY COMMERCIAL SITE AREA = 0.52 ACRES / 0.21 HECTARES

PL1	PLANNING ISSUE	GH	16.05.19
REV	DESCRIPTION	BY	DATE

PROJECT WORK STAGE  
**PLANNING**

CLIENT  
JARVIS COMMERCIAL LTD.  
PORTHAVEN NO. 3 LTD.

PROJECT  
CHELFORD HOUSE,  
COLDHARBOUR LANE  
HARPENDEN, AL5 4UN

DRWG TITLE  
SITE LOCATION PLAN

PROJECT	ORIGINATOR	ZONE	LEVEL	TYPE	DIS	NUMBER
1154PL	RDT	ZZ	XX	DR	A	0001

STATUS SUITABILITY DESCRIPTION  
-

DRAWN BY	DATE	SCALE	CHECKED BY
GH	NOV 18	1:1250	CC

RDT PROJECT REF.	PAPER SIZE	REVISION
1154	A3	PL1

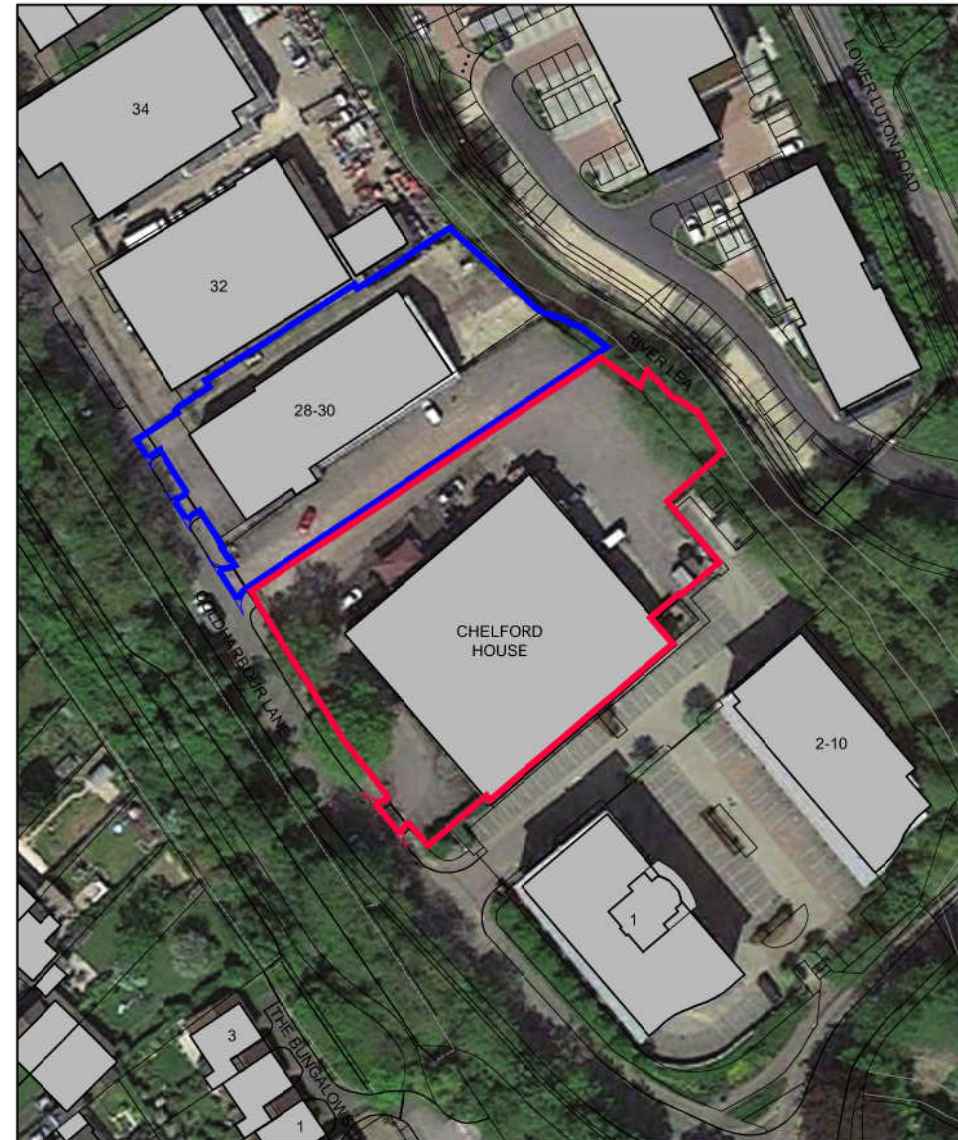
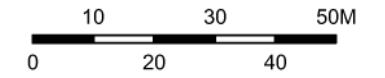


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SITE LOCATION PLAN

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PROJECT WORK STAGE

**PLANNING**

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PORTHAVEN NO. 3 LTD.

PROJECT

CHELFORD HOUSE,  
COLDHARBOUR LANE  
HARPENDEN, AL5 4UN

DRWG TITLE

SITE LOCATION PLAN  
AERIAL PHOTO

PROJECT	ORIGINATOR	ZONE	LEVEL	TYPE	DIS	NUMBER
1154PL	RDT	ZZ	XX	DR	A	0005

STATUS SUITABILITY DESCRIPTION

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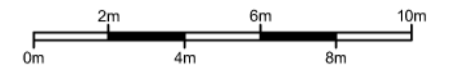


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SITE LOCATION PLAN - AERIAL PHOTO

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**KEY:**

- SITE BOUNDARY
- CARE HOME SITE AREA = 0.86 ACRES / 0.35 HECTARES
- EXISTING BUILDINGS
- PROPOSED LEVELS
- EXISTING LEVELS
- EXISTING TREES
- PROPOSED TREES
- ▲ ENTRANCE POINTS
- FENCE
- BANK
- RECTANGULAR PAVING  
PRIVATE GARDEN TERRACES
- BLOCK PAVING  
PARKING AREA
- BLOCK PAVING  
PUBLIC AREA FOOTPATH
- BLOCK PAVING  
PRIVATE AREA FOOTPATH
- SOFT LANDSCAPING  
PLANTING
- SOFT LANDSCAPING  
GRASSED LAWN
- HEDGE
- RIVER BANK
- CONCRETE PAVING  
PLANT REFUGE AREA
- PROPOSED GAS METER

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REV	DESCRIPTION	BY	DATE

PROJECT WORK STAGE

**PLANNING**

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 PORTHAVEN NO. 3 LTD.

PROJECT  
 CHELFORD HOUSE,  
 COLDHARBOUR LANE,  
 HARPENDEN, AL5 4UN

DRWG TITLE  
**PROPOSED  
 SITE PLAN  
 COLOURED**

PROJECT	ORIGINATOR	ZONE	LEVEL	TYPE	DIS	NUMBER
1154PL	RDT	ZZ	XX	DR	A	0101

STATUS | SUITABILITY DESCRIPTION

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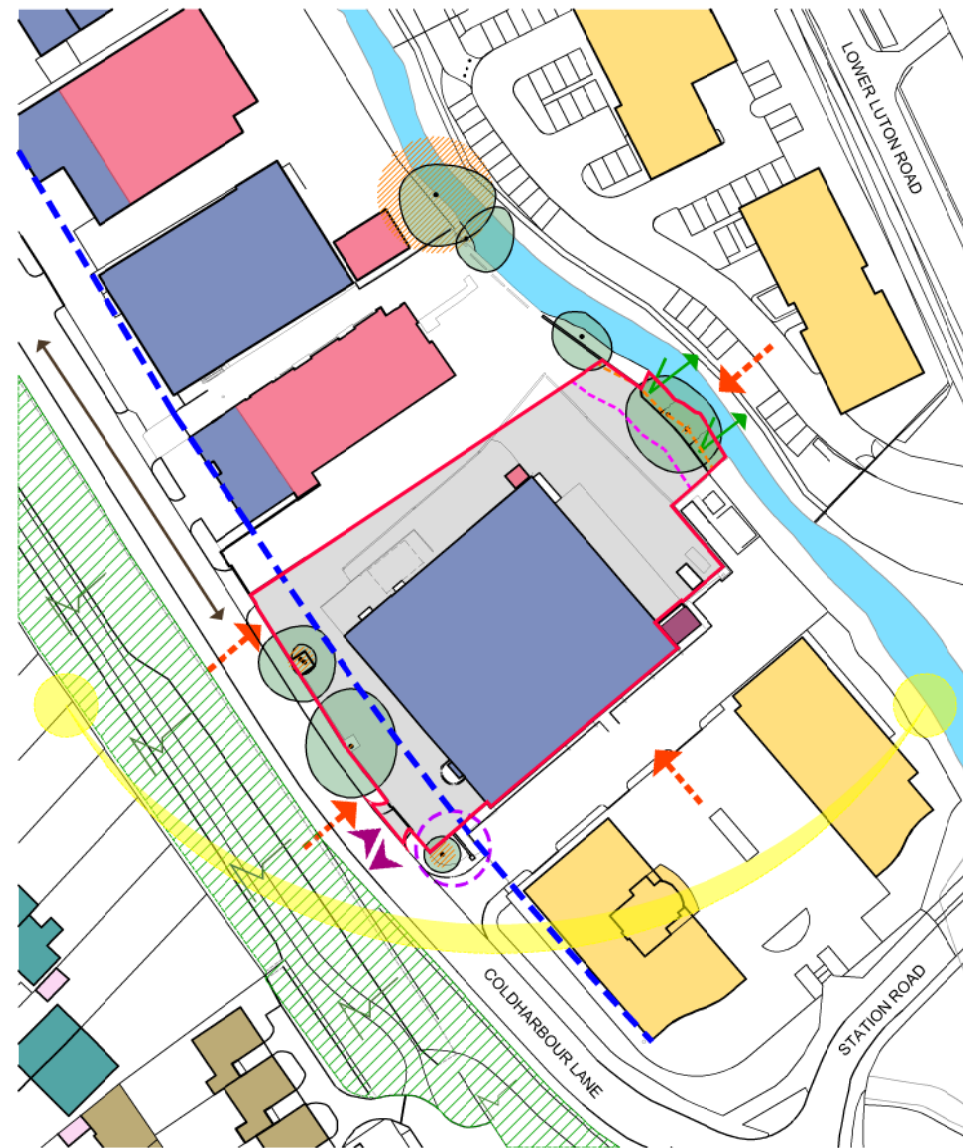
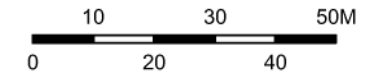
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**PROPOSED SITE PLAN - COLOURED**



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KEY

- |                             |                                        |                        |                                       |
|-----------------------------|----------------------------------------|------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| SITE BOUNDARY               | EXISTING SINGLE STOREY COMMERCIAL UNIT | EXISTING TREES         | 3m ENVIRONMENTAL AGENCY EASEMENT ZONE |
| EXISTING GARAGE             | EXISTING 2 STOREY COMMERCIAL UNIT      | BUILDING FRONTAGE LINE | 8m ENVIRONMENT EASEMENT ZONE          |
| EXISTING BUNGALOW           | SUN PATH                               | KEY VIEWS ONTO SITE    | BANK                                  |
| EXISTING 2 STOREY BUILDINGS | PROTECTED SITE SCREENING               | DENSE PLANTING         | ROAD DIRECTION                        |
| EXISTING SUBSTATION         | NODAL CORNER                           | ACCESS ONTO SITE       |                                       |
| EXISTING 3 STOREY OFFICE    | RIVER LEA                              | HARDSTANDING           |                                       |

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HARPENDEN, AL5 4UN

DRWG TITLE  
SITE CONSTRAINTS &  
OPPORTUNITIES PLAN

PROJECT	ORIGINATOR	ZONE	LEVEL	TYPE	DIS	NUMBER
1154PL	RDT	00	ZZ	DR	A	0015

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SITE CONSTRAINTS & OPPORTUNITIES PLAN



St Albans City and District Council  
Planning Policy  
Civic Centre  
St Peters Street  
St Albans  
AL1 3JE

Sent via Email Only:  
[planning.policy@stalbans.gov.uk](mailto:planning.policy@stalbans.gov.uk)

Dear Sir/Madam,

**LAND AT CHELFORD HOUSE, HARPENDEN  
CALL FOR SITES  
SUBMISSION ON BEHALF OF JARVIS HOMES LTD**

On behalf of my client, Jarvis Homes Ltd, I am delighted to submit this site for the St Albans City and District (SADC) Call for Sites.

As required, a call for sites form has been prepared detailing the basic information requested by the Council to enable consideration of the site. This letter sets out in a little more detail why the site is suitable for development and should form part of the development strategy within the new Local Plan.

The site is suitable for and should be allocated as a care home site (C2). The site is located within the existing urban area of Harpenden making it a sustainable site and easily accessible by staff and the family of residents. There are no significant constraints to development of the site; whilst Chelford House is located within an existing employment area, it is in close proximity to existing residential development and the compatibility of a care home with the existing employment uses. Residential use in this location would help the authority to meet the significant shortfall in both existing and future local housing need and care bed spaces in Hertfordshire.

**Site Description**

The site is located within the centre of Harpenden, St Albans. A Site Location Plan is enclosed.

The site is approximately 0.35ha in size. Chelford House is occupied by Chelford Fabrics, who are a soft furnishing and fabric retailer. The building is predominately in A1 use with retail showroom space, along with ancillary offices and storage. Following the changes to the Use Class Order in Sept 2020, the use of the premises can lawfully change to any other appropriate use within the new 'E Class' uses, as the building is free from any restrictive covenants or planning conditions.

The Site fronts onto Coldharbour Lane, beyond which lies a band of mature trees (former railway corridor) that provide screening to the rear gardens of residential properties on Wroxham Way. To the south-east of the Site, lies the 'Waterside' office development (B1 Use Class) comprising two three-storey purpose-built modern office buildings and associated parking. To the north-east lies the River Lea, with new purpose-built office and residential accommodation beyond. To the north-west of the Site lies

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no. 28-30 which comprises a part 2-storey building with single storey rear warehouse, along with associated car parking. The building is in a mixture of offices, showroom (kitchen specialist and architect) and light industrial (temporary food bank).

The site has few environmental constraints. There are limited ecological or landscape features within the Site, with trees located along the peripheries. There are no Scheduled Monuments or Listed Buildings within or in proximity to the Site. The Site does not lie within or in proximity to Harpenden's Conservation Area. As part of a recent planning application, the Environment Agency agreed that the Site is almost entirely Flood Zone 1 classification.

### **Access to Services and Facilities**

Development of the site would support the sustainability of existing services in Harpenden, including: a Tesco Express, a Co-op, places of worship and pubs/restaurants.

There are bus stops within walking distance of the site (c.3 minutes). The Malta PH bus stops are served by routes 45, 357, 366 and 610 Dragonfly; these provide connections to Luton, Harpenden, Potters Bar, Borehamwood, Welwyn Garden City and Hatfield. This location is therefore well served by buses and sustainable transport options are a viable option for residents and their families and care home staff.

The site is located in close proximity to train services. Harpenden station is the nearest station and is a short distance away by bus (c.8 minutes), cycling (c.6 minutes), on foot (c. 19 minutes) or car (c.4 minutes). The station has links to the wider train network.

### **Planning Policy Considerations**

The new emerging Local Plan was recently withdrawn following it being found unsound due to the failure over the duty to cooperate. The Development Plan therefore comprises of the saved policies of the 1994 St Albans District Local Plan.

The Authority is currently facing a significant lack of supply of housing with the last published statement claiming a 1.9 years supply. As such, the Council cannot demonstrate a robust five-year housing land supply. It is therefore vital that smaller, more deliverable sites are identified to deliver much needed homes in the short-term.

Additional supplementary planning guidance of relevance comprise the following:

- Revised Parking Policies and Standards (2002)
- Roads in Hertfordshire Design Guide 3rd Edition
- Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Guidance (2004)
- Design Advice Leaflet No. 1 'Design and Layout of New Housing'

In the 1994 Local Plan Review, Policy 20 'Development in Employment Areas' identifies the Site within a designated Employment Area, known as EMP.1 Coldharbour Lane in which the 'normally acceptable use' is B1 (see CD2.01).

The Site is also protected with an Article 4 Direction which removes permitted development rights (under the General Permitted Development Order 2015 (as amended)) for changes of Use from Office / Light Industrial / Storage and Distribution to C3 Residential. This does not apply to C2 uses.

Firstly, it should be noted that Policy 20 should be considered out of date and should therefore carry limited weight. Through the introduction of Class E as part of the amended use class order in September 2020, the outcome that policy 20 seeks to prevent, namely the loss of B class uses, is something which can happen lawfully in any event.

My client also considers that there is no conflict of a care home use with the underlying objectives of Policy 20. The proposed development would provide a significantly diversify and higher number jobs to the local economy than the alternative Class E 'Commercial, Business and Service' uses.

The compatibility of a care home with the existing employment uses in terms of neighbouring amenity and future residential amenity. A site with activity nearby is often a desirable location for a care home as it provides things of interest for residents and this site would not be promoted unless the care home operator involved in the proposed development to date considered it a viable/suitable location. Whilst located within an existing employment area the site is well related to the nearby existing residential area. A site with activity nearby is often a desirable location for a care home as it provides things of interest for residents and this site would not be promoted unless the care home operator involved in the proposed development to date considered it a viable/suitable location. The nearby residential area behind the site has properties within a similar distance to commercial uses.

There is a significant need for care home spaces in Hertfordshire and development of the site will help the district to meet this need and will also contribute towards the district's land supply position shortfall.

In view of the above, a care home allocation on the site should be made.

### **Neighbourhood Plan**

Harpenden Neighbourhood Plan was made 20<sup>th</sup> February 2019.

The site is designated as a protected employment area (ref: DEL3: Coldharbour Lane) in the Neighbourhood Plan, in which a change of use to a non-B Class use would not be supported unless it could be demonstrated that the premises are no longer suitable for business use or there is clear evidence of no new commercial operator being found.

However, amendments were made to the use class order in September 2020 and this resulted in the creation of a Class E (combining classes B1, A1, A2, D1, etc.). The restriction of the site to purely B class use is therefore no longer compatible with national legislation and this policy should be considered out of date. It is also noted that Harpenden Town Council supported a recent planning application (reference: 5/2019/1642 - appeal pending) for a care home on this site despite the conflict with the Neighbourhood Plan due to the significant public benefit that the proposal offered.

### **Conclusion**

My client's site should be allocated for care home development, which can be delivered quickly free of other impediments (such as being part of larger mixed-use sites). This would not result in the loss of an existing 'B class' employment use, as the existing building is in retail use.

Whilst Chelford House is located upon the edge of an existing employment area, the site is suitable for a care home development. The proposed development is compatible with the existing employment uses and the site is located in a sustainable town centre with access to local services and is located close to area of open space. This is ideal for those few residents who are able to venture out of the proposed

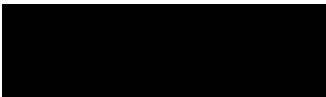
Care Home and for families and care home staff who are able to access the site through sustainable modes of transport.

Residential use in this location would help the authority to meet the significant shortfall in both existing and future local housing need and care bed spaces in Hertfordshire.

The site is capable of meeting the required policy standards and can be developed in a way which will not result in any harm by way of ecology, neighbour amenity, impact on services and facilities, landscaping, etc.

My client welcomes the opportunity to promote this site through the Call for Sites. Should you have any questions or comments, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Kind regards



**Suzi Green, MRTPI**  
Senior Planner

- Enclosures**
- Site Location Plan x2
  - Site Constraints and Opportunities Plan
  - Proposed Site Plan
  - Call for Sites Form

# **COOTERS END HOUSE**

**COOTERS END LANE, HARPENDEN, AL5 3NP**

**ST ALBANS DISTRICT COUNCIL CALL FOR SITES**

**RESPONSE FEBRUARY 2021**

**BY**

**DR ANDEW PEARCE & GORDON PEARCE**

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## 1.0

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 This report, produced on behalf of the landowner, promotes land at Cooters End Farm, for residential purposes through the emerging Local Plan process.

1.2 The Council acknowledges that the scale of housing need is higher than has previously been planned for and is higher than can be accommodated within the built-up area. 8 Broad Locations have been identified by the Council's Green Belt consultants as capable of being released without harming Green Belt purposes. The Cooters End Farm site falls within the north-west Harpenden Broad Location and as such is sequentially preferable to other potential development sites not within an identified Broad Location.

1.3 The site lies adjacent to a larger area of land, also identified by the Council's Green Belt consultants, and now being promoted by L&G and CEG as an urban extension to Harpenden. The Cooters End Farm site could either be developed as part of the wider site or by a separate housebuilder but consistent with the surrounding development.

## 1.4

Highways technical work demonstrates that the access arrangements are suitable for the report site, notwithstanding any proposals for development on surrounding land.

## 1.5

The site is unconstrained (apart from the Green Belt) and could be delivered quickly to meet identified housing need. The fact that it is in separate ownership from the wider site means it could be delivered more quickly and start to meet the urgent housing need in the local area.

## 1.6

The Cooters End Farm site is consistent with the Council's emerging strategy, which focuses initially on the 8 Broad Locations identified in the Green Belt Review. On this basis, the site should be included in the next iteration of the Local Plan when it is published for consultation.



## 2.0 INTRODUCTION

2.1 This report has been produced by [redacted] the owners of Cooters End Farm. It is submitted in response to the "Call for sites" undertaken by St Albans City and District Council in January ~~2018~~ <sup>2021</sup>, alongside a Local Plan options consultation.

2.2 This report has been produced to aid consideration of the site through the SHLAA and Local Plan process. This report provides additional information to complement the Council's proforma submitted with the report.

2.3 The Council is starting work on a new Local Plan and in planning for an increased level of housing has put forward a number of Broad Locations where development has been judged to have least impact on the Green Belt purposes. One of these Broad Locations is land to the north-west of Harpenden and includes the Cooters End Farm site.

2.4 This report sets out why the Cooters End Farm site is suitable for development for housing as part of the wider north-west Harpenden Broad Location. An indicative layout has been produced that reflect the Council's expectation that sites will be delivered at around 40 dwellings per hectare.

2.5 The level of detail given is sufficient for the consideration of the site through the SHLAA and the Local Plan process. However, this report does not provide a planning application level of detail and further work will be required prior to any planning application being made.

### 3.0 STRATEGIC CONTEXT

3.1 The current adopted Local Plan for the St Albans area dates from 1994. A number of attempts have been made to update the 1994 Local Plan, the most recent of which was the Strategic Local Plan which was submitted for Examination in August 2016 but was found by an Inspector to have been flawed in respect of the Duty to Cooperate with adjoining local authorities. The Council is now starting initial work on a new Local Plan and, as a first step, consulted on an "issues and options" document in January and February 2018.

#### Housing need

3.2 The new Local Plan will be produced in the context of the Government's new standardised methodology for assessing housing need. This new methodology has been published in draft form and is due to be implemented in summer 2018, alongside a new National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

3.3 For St Albans district, the annual housing need figure identified in the new methodology is 913 dwellings per year. This compares to 436 dwellings per year proposed under the withdrawn Strategic Local Plan and an average of 437 dwellings per year completed over the past 10 years.

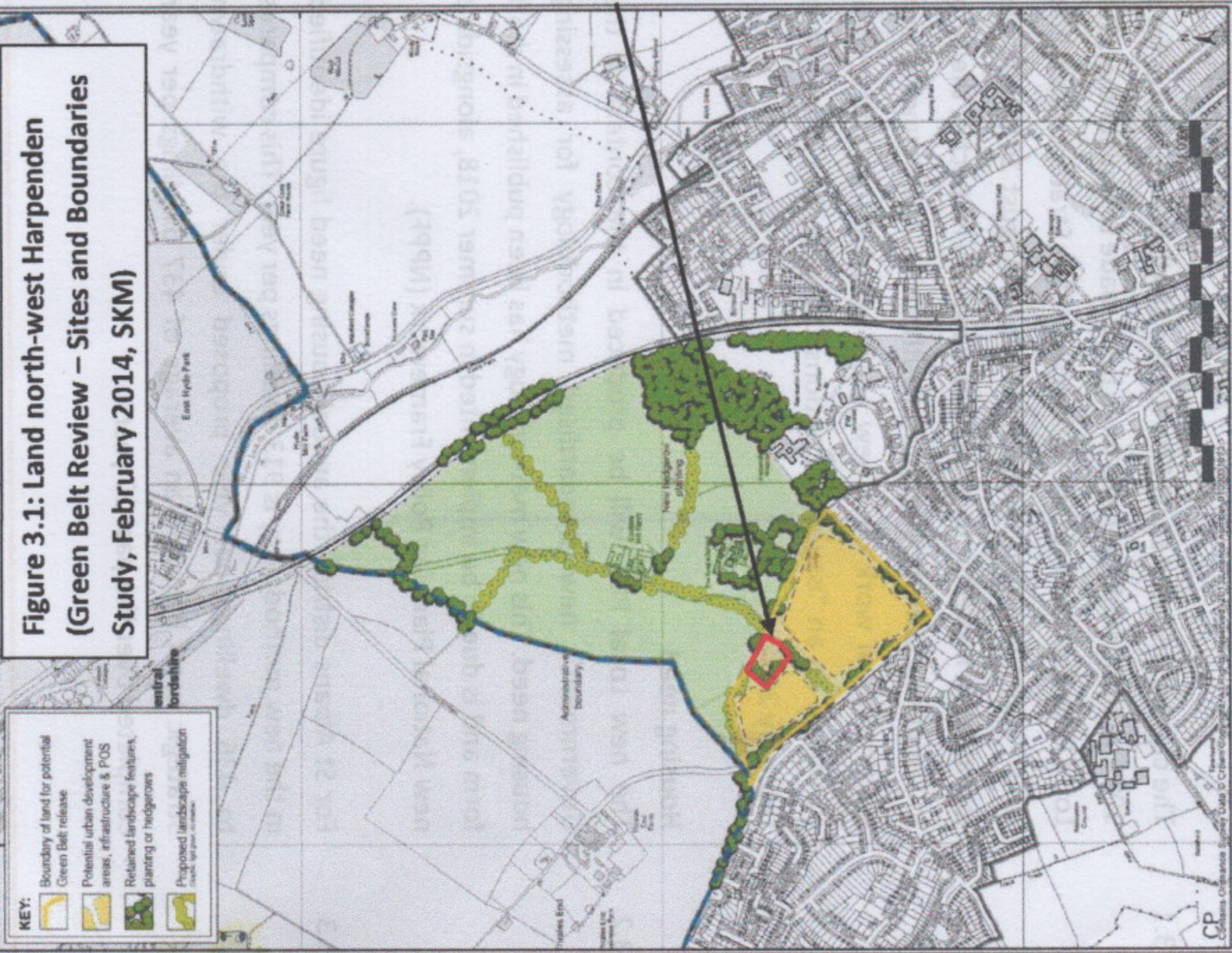
3.4 It is clear that a substantial increase in housing provision is needed to meet identified need. It is also clear from the Council's evidence base that insufficient land is available within the built-up area to meet housing need and that Green Belt land will be needed for housing purposes.

#### Green Belt considerations

3.5 The Council commissioned consultants, SKM, to undertake a strategic review of the Green Belt and examine areas that contribute least towards Green Belt purposes. The report site is included within Site 5, known as north-west Harpenden, shown in figure 3.1.

3.6 Site 5 was a strategic site that was found to contribute least to the Green Belt purposes and it was concluded that at the strategic level, a reduction in the size of the parcel would not significantly compromise the overall role of the Green Belt or compromise the separation of settlements. Also, when assessed in isolation the sub-area makes a limited or no contribution towards checking sprawl, preventing merging, preserving setting and maintaining local gaps.

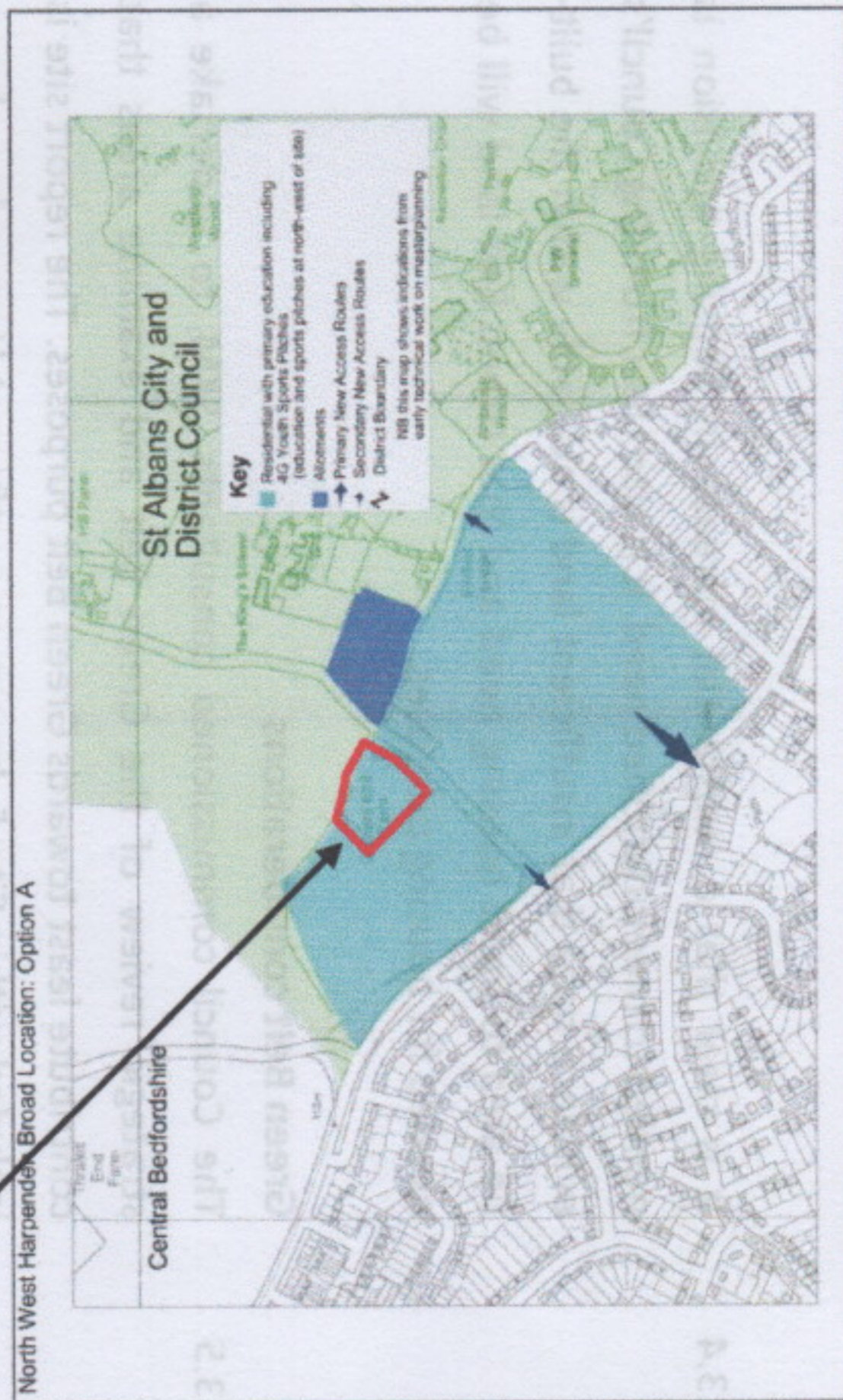
3.7



Based on the findings of the SKM Green Belt Review, the proposed Broad Location north west of Harpenden was proposed within the draft Strategic Local Plan, albeit that Plan was based on a much-reduced housing target and has now been withdrawn. This proposal was also followed through to the site-specific level in the draft Detailed Local Plan published for consultation in April 2016. The specific allocation included the Cooters End Farm site (see Figure 3.2 below).

**Figure 3.2: Proposed north-west Harpenden allocation (Draft Detailed Local Plan, April 2016, SADC)**

Cooters End Farm site



## 4.0 OUTLINE OF SITE

### Location

4.1 The Cooters End Farm site is located to the north west of Central Harpenden. The site, as shown in Figure 4.1 below, is broadly rectangular in shape and is approximately 0.95ha. It is currently in residential use, with a single dwelling and a barn at the entrance of the site, with green space covering the remainder. All four boundaries of the site have hedgerows around the outside. There is existing vehicular access to the site from Cooters End Lane.



Figure 4.1: Site boundary

### Context

4.2 To the north and west of the site is open countryside, with The King's School to the east. To south of the site is Cooters End Lane, with another field beyond it. Cooters End Lane links Harpenden to the hamlet of East Hyde.

### Listed Building

4.3 The dwelling on the site is a grade II Listed Building. The northern section of the building dates from the 17<sup>th</sup> century, while the western end is a two-storey 18<sup>th</sup> century addition. A Design and Access Statement produced in 2014 by ADP states:

*"The property became derelict during the 1960s and was substantially rebuilt and renovated in 1969/70. Unfortunately, this appears to have involved some loss of original historic fabric. Notwithstanding this, a substantial proportion of the timber framing to the 17<sup>th</sup> century section of the building remains, together with some internal fireplaces."*

### Planning History

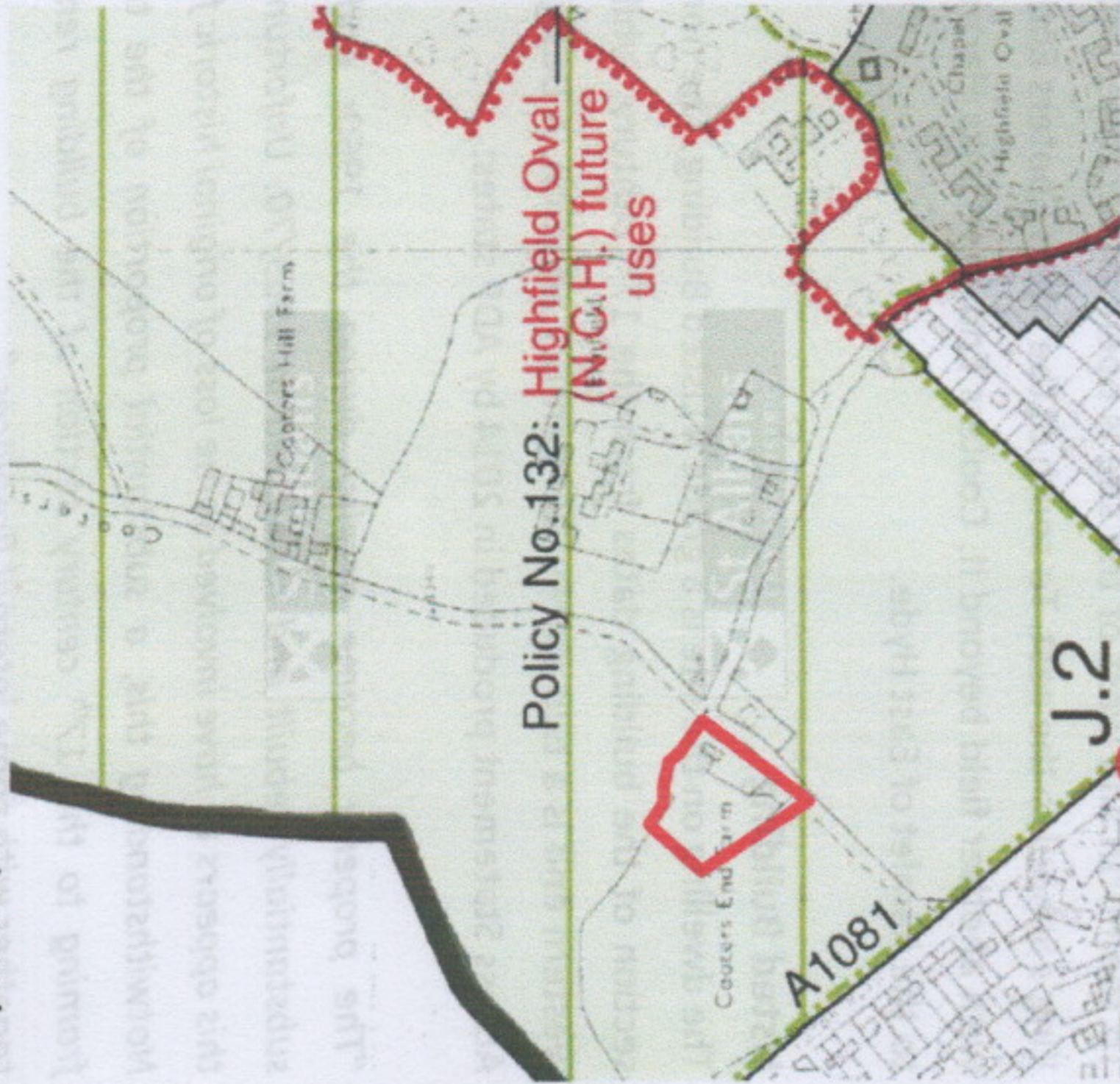
4.4 There is a series of Planning Applications for Cooters End Farm shown in the table below.

<u>Application Reference</u>	<u>Detail</u>	<u>Status</u>
5/1987/0976	Change of use of garage and store to bungalow.	Refused
5/1990/0019	Change of use of agricultural outbuilding to residential and erection of garage	Appeal Dismissed
5/1990/0020	Alterations of outbuilding to form dwelling and erection of garage	Approved
5/2013/2669	Two storey side and rear extension, new side window and rear patio	Withdrawn
5/2013/2753	Listed Building Consent - Two storey side and rear extension, new side window, rear patio and internal alterations	Withdrawn
5/2014/0432	Listed Building Consent - Two storey side and rear extension, rear patio and internal alterations	Approved
5/2014/0399	Two storey side and rear extension and rear patio	Approved

**Development Plan Notation**

4.5 The Proposals Map for St Albans district shows the site is in close proximity to settlement boundary, and is within the Green Belt. The site is shown within the proposals map in Figure 4.2 below.

4.6 The nearest settlements with settlement boundaries are Harpenden, a Tier 2 Town Settlement.



**Figure 4.2: Proposals Map extract**

### Local Services

4.7 The Site is located in close proximity to local facilities, as set out in the table below.

**Table 4.5.0: Summary of Local Services (approximate measurements)**

Facility	Local Provision	Proximity to site (km)
<b>Education</b>	Highfield Pre-School	0.95
	Roundwood Park Primary School	1.20
<b>Retail</b>	The Kings School	0.20
	Tesco Express	0.65
<b>Health</b>	Kinsbourne Post Office	1.20
	Harpenden High Street	1.50
	Harpenden Memorial Hospital	1.80
	Boots Pharmacy	1.90
<b>Leisure</b>	The Elms Medical Practice	2.00
	The Oval	0.70
	Marchon Athletic Harpenden Sports Centre	1.00 2.00

### Accessibility

4.8 The site is accessible by a variety of modes of transport other than the private motor car as set out below.

4.9 The Ridgewood Drive bus stop is located within 250m of the site. The 610, 321 and 846 busses provide travel from this bus stop to nearby towns and villages including Harpenden, Enfield, Hatfield, Luton, Brookmans Park, Welham Green, Wheathampstead and St Albans, Watford, and Markyate.

4.10 Harpenden Railway Station is located some 2.2km to the southeast of this site, providing frequent services to St Albans, St Pancras International, Gatwick Airport and Brighton to the south and Luton Airport, Luton and Bedford to the north.

## 5.0 OUTLINE OF PROPOSAL

5.1 An indicative layout has been produced and is shown at Figure 5.1 below. The indicative layout shows 31 dwellings in a mix of 3 and 4 bed houses and 2 bed flats. The height of the dwellings will be two or two-and-a-half storey, although potential exists to increase the height to three storeys in places, depending on the density of surrounding development. The density of development equates to 38.75 dwellings per hectare, which is a fraction below but broadly similar to the Council's preferred density of 40dph for the Broad Locations.

5.2 Affordable housing will be provided as part of the housing mix, at the Council's expected target of 40%. The size and tenure mix of this affordable housing will be subject to further discussions with the Council's housing officers.

5.3 The flats proposed could either be used as general accommodation or designed specifically for older people, depending on need and the details of surrounding development.

5.4 The layout retains Cooters End Farm, a Listed Building, with its own curtilage and outbuildings. The detailed design of the buildings can pick up visual elements from the Listed Building and ensure a high-quality development.

5.5 The layout shows how the site is deliverable as an independent housing development. However, in all likelihood, the site will be surrounded by the wider development known as north west Harpenden. Consideration has been given to how the site would relate to potential development surrounding it. The necessary consistency across site boundaries can be achieved through masterplanning and coordination of planning applications, with Section 106 agreements covering infrastructure provision.

Figure 5.1: Indicative development layout



Site Address: Cooters End Farm, Cooters End Lane, Harpenden, AL5 3NP  
DLA Ref: 2017/464  
February 2018





## Highways

5.6 Motion Transport Planning has been commissioned to assess the access options for the site. Motion conclude that the most appropriate location for the access from Cooters End Lane is at the northern end of the site, towards Ambrose Lane. A 5.5m access road with associated 2m footway is shown running through the site, as shown in Figure 5.2 below.

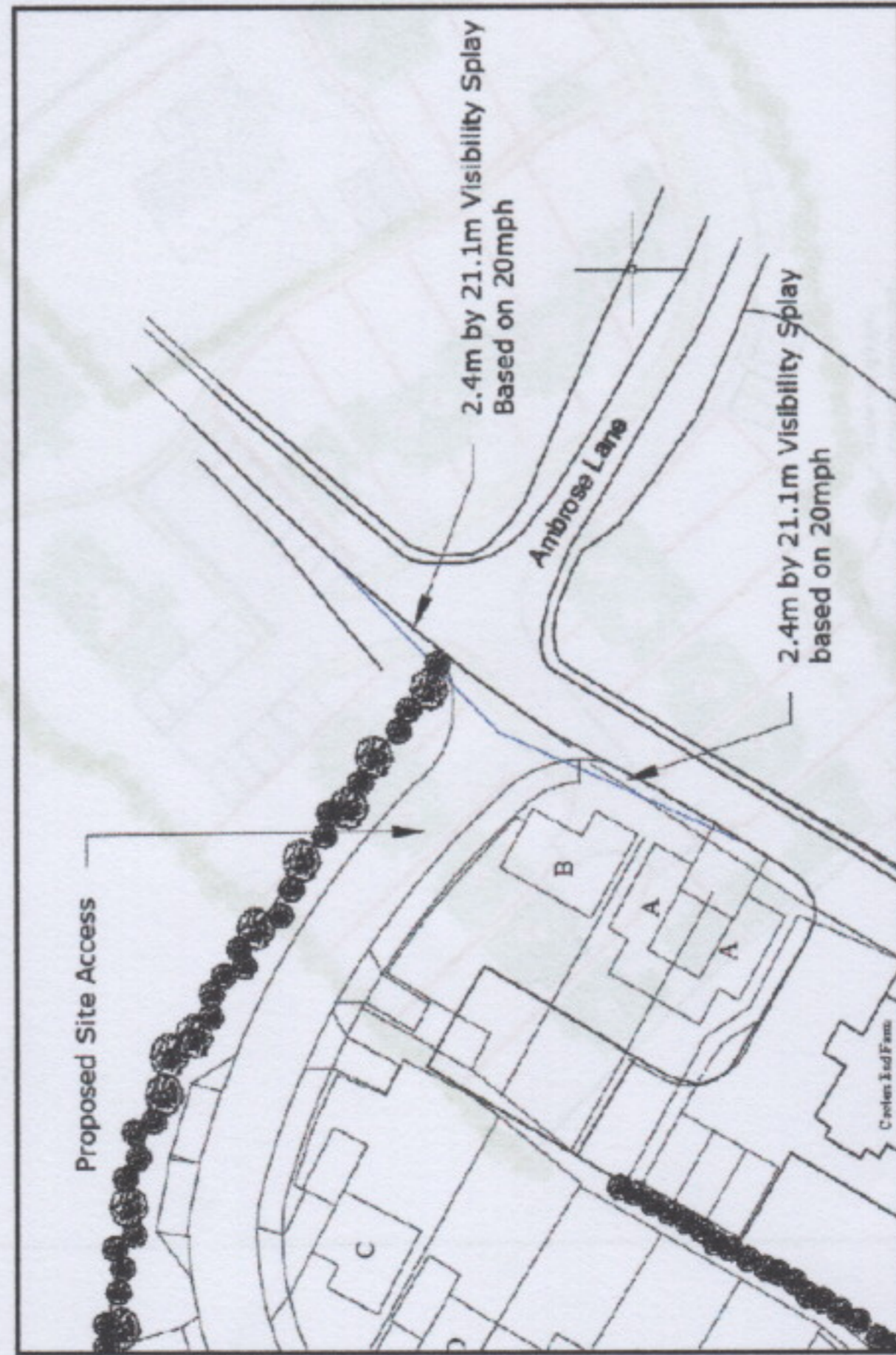


Figure 5.2: Indicative highways access

5.7 The level of traffic generation from the report site, at around 15 trips in the morning and evening peak hours, was not considered to have a severe impact on the surrounding road network.

5.8 Cooters End Lane is currently a rural lane with passing places. Motion consider that the existing carriageway could be widened, either where the current passing places are or in other locations. Sufficient highway land is available for such changes and this will provide formalised and much-improved places to pass, providing a significant benefit to all users of Cooters End Lane. Such upgrade works will need to consider how Cooters End Lane will continue to function when the wider development takes place.

5.9 In addition, Motion concluded that access to the wider public transport network could be improved by the creation of a new footway on the northern side of Luton Road, which would create much improved access to the existing bus stop. The Motion report is attached as appendix A to this report.

## Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA)

5.10 The report site has not previously been considered in isolation through previous SHLAA processes as the Council's position at that time was that individual parcels within larger sites did not need to be submitted separately.

5.11 The site was submitted to the Harpenden Neighbourhood Plan group in response to their call for sites in April 2017.

5.12 The Council's assessment of the northern part of the north west Harpenden Broad Location was consistent with the Council's Green Belt Review by SKM and concluded that this site should be considered further.

#### Listed Building impact

5.13 Cooters End Farm house is a Listed Building and this has been considered in producing the indicative layout above. However, the paddock area around the house relates more closely to the countryside to the north than it does to the Listed Building itself. In that respect, the curtilage of the Listed Building is confined to the area immediately around the house.

5.14 Historically there has been a range of outbuildings associated with the farm, some which still remain and others have been demolished. In particular, a large structure previously fronted Cooters End Lane. The relevance of this is that development around the Listed Building, both within the curtilage and beyond, reflects to some degree the historic use of the land and this can provide a context and design cues for detailed proposals.

#### Green Belt impact

5.15 As set out above, the Council's Green Belt Review found that the area north west of Harpenden could be removed from the Green Belt without harming the function of the remaining Green Belt.

5.16 It is essential that this site is removed from the Green Belt through the Local Plan. The previous Strategic Local Plan proposed this area as a Broad Location but left the detailed designation of the site and, critically, the removal of the site from the Green Belt to a later stage (the Detailed Local Plan). Given the urgency of the housing need it is paramount that sites be removed from the Green Belt now to aid delivery and remove uncertainty.

#### Exceptional circumstances

5.17 Exceptional circumstances are needed to justify removing a site from the Green Belt in a Local Plan. Unmet housing need can make up a very substantial part of the exceptional circumstances needed to release this site. While the Planning Practice Guidance sets out that unmet housing need on its own is unlikely to outweigh the harm to the Green Belt to constitute "very special circumstances" (Reference ID: 3-034-20141006), this isn't the case for exceptional circumstances. Across the country, local authorities are finding that Green Belt releases are an essential part of the strategy for meeting housing need in Local Plans.

5.18 Given the particular context of housing provision in St Albans – the historic undersupply of housing and the second oldest Local Plan in the country – unmet housing is clearly capable of

constituting exceptional circumstances on its own. The provision of around 31 homes on the report site and around 500 on the wider north west Harpenden site is a substantial benefit to the local area.

5.19 In addition, the provision of 12 affordable units is also a significant benefit that contributes towards the exceptional circumstances needed.

5.20 The delivery of the wider north west Harpenden site will also have other benefits such as the creation of new open space and a new primary school. The report site is part of this wider development and therefore benefits from these additional exceptional circumstances. The site should be removed from the Green Belt in the emerging Local Plan.

