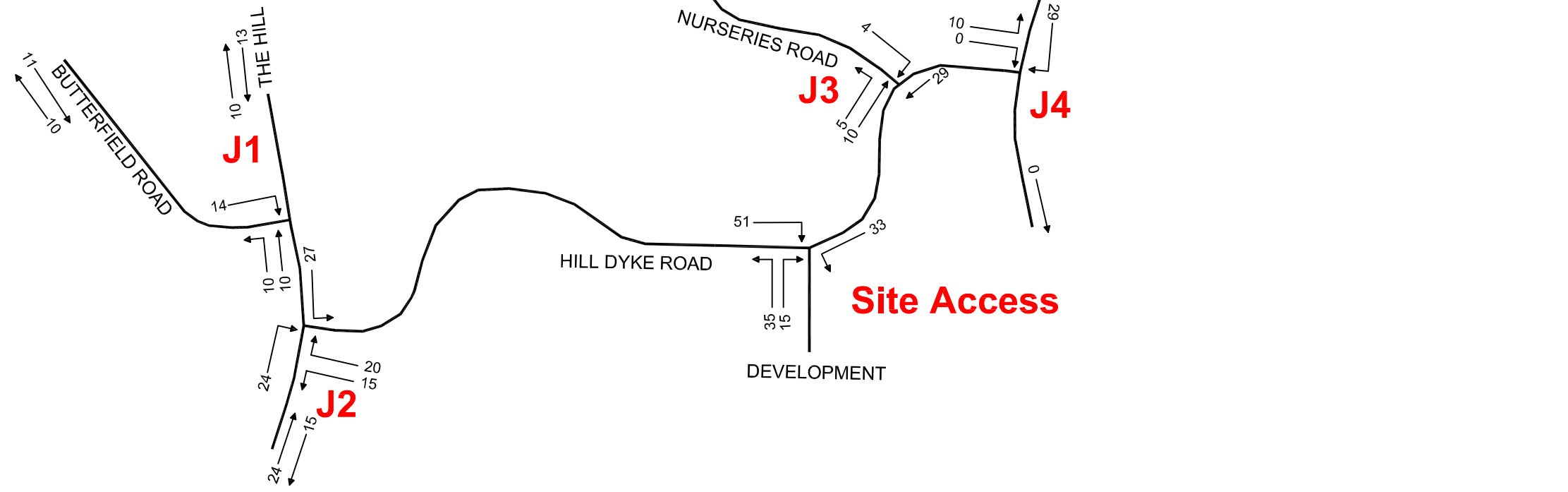


**FLOWS**  
5.00-6.00PM

KEY	
	Direction of Traffic Flow
123	Number of Vehicles (inc. Heavy Vehicles)
(123)	Number of Heavy Vehicles



Rev	Description	Date	Drawn By	Checked By

**PRELIMINARY**

Written dimensions to be taken Do Not Scale off the drawing  
 Any discrepancies, written or scaled, should be brought to the attention of the engineer immediately  
 This drawing is to be read in conjunction with the relevant Bills of Materials and the Local Authority Specification.  
 All relevant information identifying the unavoidable risks has been passed to the planning supervisor for inclusion in the Health and Safety plan  
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**Wormald Burrows Partnership Limited**  
 Civil Engineering Consultants  
 12a - 18a Hitchin Street, Biggleswade, SG18 8AX  
 Tel: (01767) 317244 Fax: (01767) 315434  
 Web: www.wormburp.com  
 Email: engineer@wormburp.com

Project:  
 Land to South of Hill Dyke Road, Wheathampstead

Drawing Description:  
 Development PM Flows

Drawing Number:  
**E3090/15**

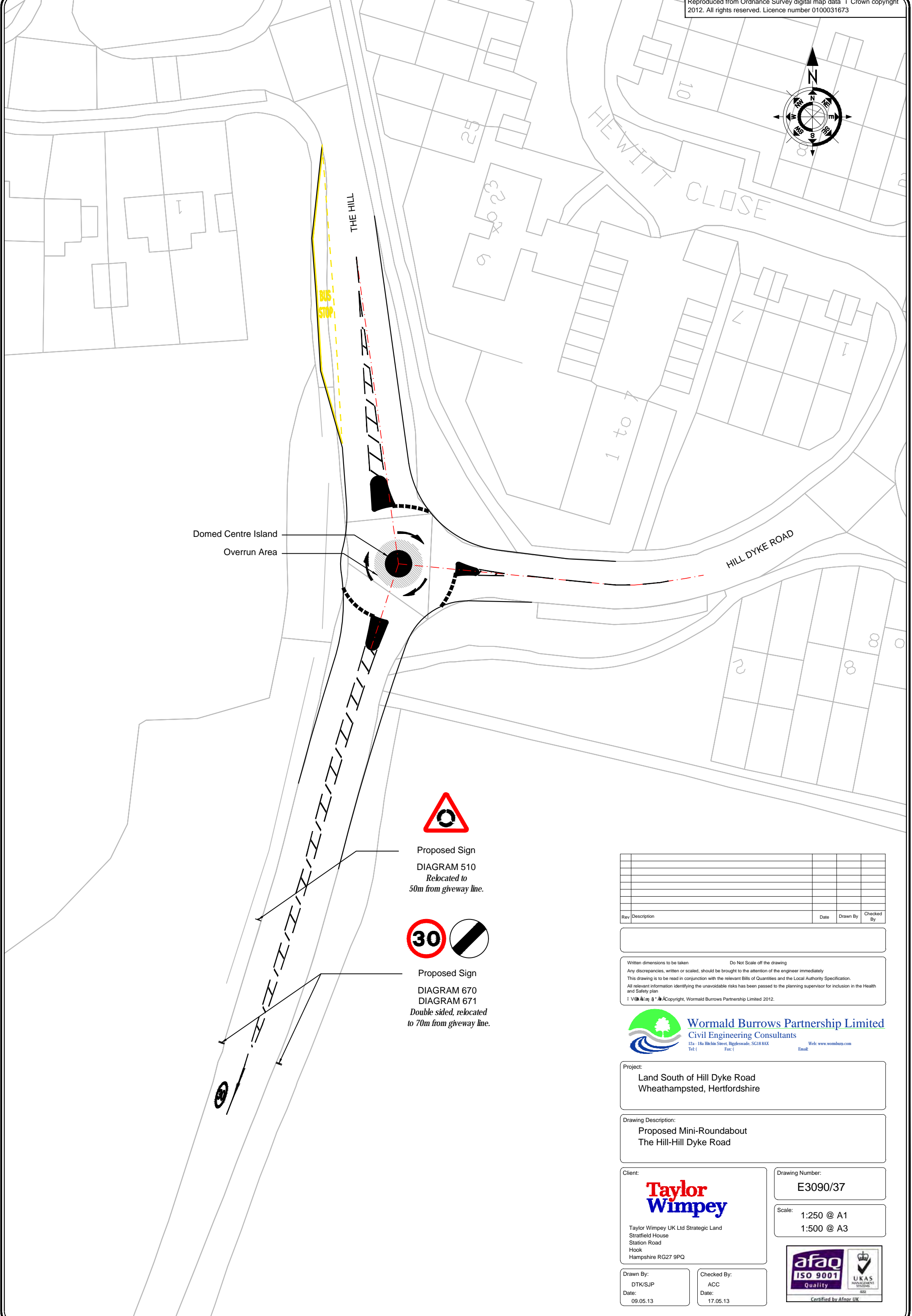
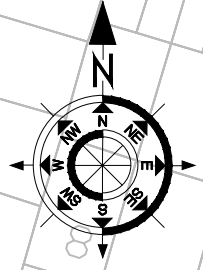
Scale:  
 NTS

Client:

Taylor Wimpey UK Ltd Strategic Land  
 Stratfield House  
 Station Road  
 Hook  
 Hampshire RG27 9PQ

Drawn By: AMZ	Checked By: ACC
Date: 04.02.13	Date: 28.05.13

## APPENDIX G



Domed Centre Island  
Overrun Area

THE HILL

HEWITT CLOSE

HILL DYKE ROAD



Proposed Sign  
DIAGRAM 510  
Relocated to  
50m from giveaway line.



Proposed Sign  
DIAGRAM 670  
DIAGRAM 671  
Double sided, relocated  
to 70m from giveaway line.

Rev	Description	Date	Drawn By	Checked By

Written dimensions to be taken Do Not Scale off the drawing  
Any discrepancies, written or scaled, should be brought to the attention of the engineer immediately  
This drawing is to be read in conjunction with the relevant Bills of Materials and the Local Authority Specification.  
All relevant information identifying the unavoidable risks has been passed to the planning supervisor for inclusion in the Health and Safety plan  
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Tel: ( ) Fax: ( ) Email: [www.womburp.com](http://www.womburp.com)

Project:  
Land South of Hill Dyke Road  
Wheathampsted, Hertfordshire

Drawing Description:  
Proposed Mini-Roundabout  
The Hill-Hill Dyke Road

Client:  
**Taylor Wimpey**  
Taylor Wimpey UK Ltd Strategic Land  
Stratfield House  
Station Road  
Hook  
Hampshire RG27 9PQ

Drawing Number:  
E3090/37

Scale:  
1:250 @ A1  
1:500 @ A3

Drawn By:  
DTK/SJP  
Date:  
09.05.13

Checked By:  
ACC  
Date:  
17.05.13







## **St Albans Local Plan – Call for Sites**

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**Land at Hill Dyke Road, Wheathampstead**

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**Taylor Wimpey Strategic Land**

March 2021

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## **1. Introduction and Overview**

- 1.1 This supporting statement accompanies the submission of Land at Hill Dyke Road, Wheathampstead ('the Site') to St Albans and City District Council's (SACDC) Call for Sites 2021. The Site and this statement is submitted on behalf of Taylor Wimpey Strategic Land.
- 1.2 Taylor Wimpey Strategic Land is actively promoting the development of the Site to provide approximately 100 homes, including affordable homes, and public open space.
- 1.3 The Site was identified as SHLAA-GB-W-3 in the Council's previous Local Plan-making process.
- 1.4 Evidence collated by both ourselves and the Council in relation to the previous plan-making exercise demonstrates the Site to be sustainable and deliverable for residential development to help meet the District's acute housing need.
- 1.5 In particular, it should be recognised that the Council's evidence base confirms that the Site lies within a parcel of land that makes limited or no contribution to the purposes of the Green Belt.
- 1.6 The development of the Site would represent a proportionate extension to Wheathampstead, providing homes to support the vitality of the community as well as to assist in meeting the District's overall need. Development of the Site also has the potential to contribute to other sustainability objectives, as described in this statement.
- 1.7 We would welcome further discussions with the Council and other key stakeholders as to how development of this Site could deliver much needed homes and meet other emerging Local Plan objectives.



## **2. Wheathampstead**

- 2.1 Wheathampstead is an established community with a population of 6,410 (Census, 2011), and demonstrates a range of facilities and services to meet people's daily needs.
- 2.2 The settlement benefits from an established High Street which runs centrally through the village on a north-south axis. The High Street provides a variety of services, shops and businesses, including a post office, pharmacy, local supermarkets and takeaways/restaurants.
- 2.3 In addition to an active service centre, Wheathampstead has two primary schools and nursery provision which perform an important function for the existing community. Other notable community facilities include allotments, sports clubs (including playing pitches), community halls, a surgery, a library and churches.
- 2.4 The characteristics of Wheathampstead are such that it would clearly be appropriate to direct some of the District's housing growth to this sustainable settlement. Indeed, it is essential for the vitality of the community that the planning system supports growth of Wheathampstead – failure to do so would have negative social and economic impact implications for the settlement.
- 2.5 It is notable that the existing Green Belt boundary is drawn tightly around Wheathampstead which serves to restrict growth on the edge of the settlement. To ensure sustainable growth of the settlement, it will be necessary to make alterations to the Green Belt boundary through the preparation of a new Local Plan.

### 3. The Site

#### Site Description and Proposed Development

- 3.1 The Site measures approximately 3.5 ha, is rectangular in shape, and lies on the south-eastern edge of Wheathampstead, south of Hill Dyke Road. The Site comprises an enclosed arable field and, other than the tree-lined hedgerows along the boundaries, the Site is relatively featureless.
- 3.2 A Site Location Plan accompanies this representation as **Appendix A**.
- 3.3 The Site is bounded to the north by Hill Dyke Road; to the south by a belt of mature trees; to the east by an established tree and shrub line adjacent to Dyke Lane; and, to the west by the rear gardens of properties on Vale Court and Beech Crescent, the boundaries of which are marked by timber fences and well-established tree and shrub planting.
- 3.4 The Site adjoins the existing settlement boundary, and is adjacent to existing housing to the north and west.
- 3.5 The proposed development of the Site comprises c.100 dwellings, including affordable housing, alongside the provision of public open space.
- 3.6 An illustrative masterplan is provided as **Appendix B**. This is indicative, and we would welcome further discussions with the Council and other stakeholders in respect of the proposals, including in relation to the public space and what form this could take to best serve new and existing residents.
- 3.7 Development of the Site would also be accompanied by the necessary highway improvements.

## **Sustainability and Deliverability for Housing**

- 3.8 The Site has been subject to substantial technical work in support of its proposed residential allocation and development. This has included the following, which have confirmed the sustainability and deliverability of the Site for housing:
- Site Landscape & Green Belt Boundary Assessment prepared by CSa Environmental Planning (provided as **Appendix C**)
  - Archaeological Assessment prepared by Archaeological Solutions Ltd (**Appendix D**)
  - Phase 1 Habitat Survey prepared by James Blake Associates (**Appendix E**)
  - Flood Risk Assessment prepared by Wormald Burrows Partnership Ltd. (**Appendix F**)
  - Utilities Assessment prepared by Wormald Burrows Partnership Ltd (**Appendix G**)
  - Transport Assessment by Wormald Burrows Partnership Ltd (**Appendix H**)
- 3.9 The above were also provided to the Council for consideration in the preparation of the previous plan-making exercise, but are provided here again for completeness.
- 3.10 The Site is not subject to any heritage or environmental designations that suggest its development for housing would be inappropriate, and assessment work has confirmed the Site can be developed without undue harm to the environment.
- 3.11 The entire Site is located within Flood Zone 1 – land assessed as being of lowest risk of flooding from tidal and fluvial sources.
- 3.12 The Site is well-related to the local infrastructure network with good access to sustainable modes of transport. Walking, cycling and public transport routes are all located in close proximity to the Site, with all parts of the site located within 400m of a bus stop. These bus stops provide regular access to both Harpenden and Borehamwood.
- 3.13 The Transport Assessment undertaken in respect of the Site confirms appropriate vehicular access to the Site for in the region of 100 dwellings is deliverable and that highway impact mitigation can also be delivered where necessary.

- 3.14 The St Albans Greenspace Strategy (2011) identified a shortage of certain typologies of public open space, including amenity green space (informal recreation spaces, greenspaces in and around housing, village greens etc.). The illustrative layout provided shows how public open space could be provided as part of the development.
- 3.15 The creation of such public space on land over which there is currently no public access represents a further benefit to the community of the development, one that is particularly pertinent given the identified shortage of public open space in Wheathampstead.
- 3.16 Development of the Site has the potential to connect to the Public Right of Way to the south, which in turn connects to a wider network of footpaths in the area.
- 3.17 Land at Hill Dyke Road represents a logical extension to the existing settlement. Located immediately adjacent to existing residential areas, its development for housing would reflect the prevailing character with minimal landscape impact.
- 3.18 The proposed development would extend no further south or east than the existing established residential area adjacent to the site at Beech Crescent. The CSa Landscape Visual Assessment and Green Belt Boundary Review concluded that Land at Hill Dyke Road represents a small, enclosed portion of the Green Belt, with established planting to visually and physically shield the Site. The assessment concluded that its removal from the Green Belt would not, therefore, cause harm to the integrity of the surrounding Green Belt. It is recognised that Green Belt is an important consideration in the preparation of the new Local Plan, and the issue vis-à-vis the Site and impact on Green Belt is discussed in further detail under separate heading below.
- 3.19 In summary, there are no physical, environmental or ecological factors which prohibit the Site from being developed or indicate its development should be restricted. The only constraint to the Site's development is its current allocation as Green Belt – a policy constraint, as opposed to a physical constraint.
- 3.20 The Site represents a sustainable and deliverable site to provide homes to meet local needs through a proportionate and logical extension to the village envelope. Furthermore, its development would result in additional benefits in respect of highway improvements and provision of public open space.

## Green Belt

- 3.21 As already noted, the Green Belt boundary is drawn tightly around the existing residential envelope of Wheathampstead (as it is around the District's other settlements), and realistically any housing growth will require alterations to the current Green Belt boundary.
- 3.22 However, it must also be recognised that not all land allocated as Green Belt is of equal importance or makes equal contribution to the purposes of the Green Belt.
- 3.23 The NPPF (paragraph 136) makes clear that the Local Plan is an appropriate vehicle through which to make modifications to the Green Belt boundary, and that 'exceptional circumstances' must be identified and evidenced in order to justify removal of land from the Green Belt.
- 3.24 Whilst 'exceptional circumstances' are not defined in national policy or guidance, there is case law which provides a framework for the consideration of the issue. In particular, the judgment in *Calverton Parish Council v Nottingham City Council & Ors* [2015] EWHC 1078 (Admin) suggests (paragraph 51) that the following matters are relevant in the consideration of whether exceptional circumstances exist:
1. The scale of the objectively assessed need;
  2. Constraints on supply/availability of land with the potential to accommodate sustainable development;
  3. Difficulties in achieving sustainable development without impinging on the Green Belt;
  4. The nature and extent of the harm to the Green Belt; and
  5. The extent to which impacts on the purposes of the Green Belt may be mitigated as far as practicable.
- 3.25 The first three points from the *Calverton* judgment relate to the District as a whole. Through the Council's previous plan-making process Local Plan process, it was evident that local development needs cannot be accommodated without alterations to the Green Belt. This position clearly has not changed. Furthermore, given that the Green Belt is

drawn tightly around Wheathampstead, it is equally clear that its own needs cannot be met without some alterations to the Green Belt boundary.

- 3.26 In respect of the third point from *Calverton* as set out above, it is pertinent to note that there is not simply a need to consider whether development can be achieved without impinging on the Green Belt, but specifically whether *sustainable* development can be achieved. In this regard, it is necessary to consider the need for some growth of Wheathampstead over the plan period in order to achieve sustainable development – failure to ensure this would be of social and economic harm to the village.
- 3.27 Turning to the fourth and fifth points raised in *Calverton*, these are dependent on the characteristics of specific sites (including its contribution to the strategic purposes of the Green Belt) and the nature of proposals.
- 3.28 In respect of these, and in relation to Wheathampstead and its growth, it should be recognised that the Council’s own evidence base has already confirmed that some Green Belt can be released around Wheathampstead without harm to the purposes of the Green Belt. The Green Belt Review Purposes Assessment (2013) (GBRPA 2013) identified two parcels of land (referenced SA-SS7 (GB43A) and SA-SS8 (GB41)) which make limited or no contribution towards checking sprawl, preventing merging, safeguarding the countryside, preserving setting or maintaining local gaps.
- 3.29 The Site promoted by Taylor Wimpey Strategic Land (reference SHLAA-GB-W-3) is within one of these parcels (SA-SS7 (GB43A)), development of which the GBPRA 2013 confirms would not undermine the purposes of the Green Belt.
- 3.30 Furthermore, the proposals for the development of the Site would see the creation of a new, robust, Green Belt boundary to the south which would have permanence in the long term as required by the NPPF at paragraph 136.
- 3.31 The Site represents an opportunity to provide homes and public open space through the expansion of Wheathampstead in a manner that will preserve the purposes of the Green Belt.
- 3.32 The Site would clearly meet the *Calverton* ‘tests’ for exceptional circumstances, but in any case, subsequent case law (*Compton PC, Ockham PC & Cranwell v Guildford BC, SSHCLG & Ors* [2019] EWHC 3242 (Admin) (*‘Compton’*)) has confirmed that it is

necessary for a decision-maker to use *Calverton* as a ‘checklist’ to determine if exceptional circumstances apply.

- 3.33 On the contrary, *Compton* confirms that all that is required is for the circumstances relied on, taken together, to be capable of being rationally considered to be exceptional circumstances that justify release of land from the Green Belt. Other matters can be relevant considerations. In *Compton*, for example, it was confirmed that provision of a higher level of housing above the objectively assessed need – and the resulting benefits, including in relation to affordability of housing – could be a contributor to exceptional circumstances
- 3.34 As such, whilst the Council may find *Calverton* useful in determining whether exceptional circumstances apply in the preparation of the Local Plan, it is not essential for it to take a ‘checklist’ approach in considering removal of land from the Green Belt. Nor is it essential for a proposed alteration to the Green Belt to have to ‘pass’ all of the *Calverton* ‘tests’. In short, even if the Council did not consider the Site to meet all of the *Calverton* tests, it could still be concluded that there were exceptional circumstances that justified its release from the Green Belt.
- 3.35 In terms of additional matters considered to be of relevance, the Site is being actively promoted by an established national house-builder with a proven track record of delivery. It is not subject to any legal or ownership constraints that would inhibit its development if it were to be allocated for development. As such, the Council can have confidence in the Site’s delivery in the event it were to be allocated, i.e. its removal from the Green Belt would be effective, and there would not be a need to release further Green Belt at a later date to account for any non-delivery. Separately, in addition to contributing towards meeting housing needs, the proposed development of the Site would also have the additional benefit of providing much-needed public open space.
- 3.36 In summary, it is evident that exceptional circumstances apply which justify release of some Green Belt land to meet local housing need in Wheathampstead and the wider District. Given the assessment of the Site in the Green Belt Review, its proportionate scale relative to the village, and its ability to contribute towards sustainable development, there are evidently exceptional circumstances which justify the Site’s release from the Green Belt and allocation for residential development through the Local Plan.

## **4 Conclusion**

- 4.1 In order to ensure the new SACDC Local Plan achieves sustainable development, it will be necessary to ensure that it facilitates the proportionate growth of villages such as Wheathampstead.
- 4.2 In order to ensure the sustainable growth of Wheathampstead, it will be necessary to make alterations to the Green Belt boundary around the settlement.
- 4.3 Development of the Site is supported by technical evidence which confirm it is suitable, achievable and available to deliver homes to meet local needs in a sustainable manner. In addition, the Site is one of only a small number across the whole District which the District Council's Green Belt assessment work has confirmed as making limited or no contribution to the purposes. It represents an opportunity to contribute towards development needs without harm to the purposes of the Green Belt.
- 4.4 Development of the Site would also have the additional benefits of providing public open space to address current local deficiencies.
- 4.5 We would very much welcome further discussions with the Council in respect of this Site, its potential development, and the potential to deliver benefits to the wider community.



**25 January to 5pm 8 March 2021**  
**'Call for Sites 2021' Site Identification Form**

St Albans City and District Council is in the process of preparing a new Local Plan 2020-2038. The 'Call for Sites' is an early opportunity for individuals, landowners and developers to suggest sites within the District for development over the next 15-20 years. The site suggestions received by us will be used to inform the preparation of the new Local Plan 2020-2038.

You are invited to put forward any new sites that you would like the Council to consider in its Housing Economic Land Availability Assessment (HELAA). These should be capable of delivering 5 or more dwellings, or economic development on sites of 0.25 hectares or more (or 500 square metres of floor space or more). The Council will take account of the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) submissions previously received since 2009 and therefore there is no need to resubmit these unless circumstances have changed. Sites from previous SHLAAs will form part of the Council's assessment. Proposed land uses can include:

- Housing
- Gypsy & Traveller Housing
- Mixed Use
- Employment
- Renewable and low carbon energy and heat
- Biodiversity Improvement / Offsetting
- Green Belt Compensatory Land
- Land for Tree Planting
- Other

To enable sites to be mapped digitally, please provide GIS shapefiles of your site, where possible.

The consultation period runs for six weeks between Monday 25 January to 5pm on Monday 8 March 2021.

Unfortunately, we cannot treat any of the information you provide as confidential.

**It is important to note that not all sites received through the 'Call for Sites' will be appropriate for consideration as part of the Housing Economic Land Availability Assessment (HELAA). As a general rule:**

**We encourage you to submit sites that are likely to become available for development or redevelopment between now and 2038.**

**Please do not submit sites that:**

- Are already included as a housing allocation in the St Albans District Local Plan Review (November 1994) – i.e. sites that are listed in 'saved' Policies 4 and 5.