



**Redbourn Parish Council**

# **Redbourn Neighbourhood Plan 2020-38**

**Referendum Version**

January 2023

Made 12/07/2023



# **Redbourn Neighbourhood Plan**

2020 – 2038

Referendum Version

January 2023

Redbourn Parish Council  
Redbourn Parish Centre  
The Park  
Redbourn  
St Albans  
Herts, AL3 7LR

<https://www.redbourn-pc.gov.uk/>

01582 794832

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## FOREWORD

### *Dear Residents*

The Redbourn Neighbourhood Plan has been developed to establish a vision for the village and to help deliver the local community's aspirations and needs for the plan period 2020 – 2038.

The Plan has been produced by the Parish Council with the support of local residents. The Working Party has consulted and listened to the community and local organisations on a wide range of issues that will influence the well-being, sustainability and long-term preservation of our rural community. Every effort has been made to ensure that the views and policies contained in this document reflect those of the majority of Redbourn residents.

A Neighbourhood Plan has many benefits. The Redbourn Neighbourhood Plan has been developed by volunteers from the village to:

- ensure any future developments is well designed and sympathetic to local character;
- promote high quality, sustainable eco-friendly design, that respects the environment qualities and landscape setting of the village;
- conserve and enhance the natural environment;
- improve Redbourn's community facilities, services, and local environment and to address issues beyond the scope of the Neighbourhood Plan;
- protect the important local green spaces;
- conserve and enhance the local heritage assets;
- improve conditions and promote cycling and walking and better public transport facilities; and
- retain and strengthen the High Street.

The Parish Council would like to thank the members of the Working Party and pay tribute to their work since designation in November 2013. The Parish Council is also grateful for the help and the engagement of many others in the village without which it would not have been possible to produce this Neighbourhood Plan.

Cllr David Mitchell

Cllr Teresa Finnigan

Chair Parish Council

Chair Neighbourhood Plan Working Party

# 1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This document represents the Neighbourhood Plan for Redbourn Parish (hereafter known as 'Redbourn'). It represents one part of the development plan for the parish over the period 2020 to 2038<sup>1</sup>, the other parts being the 1994 St Albans City and District Local Plan, the Hertfordshire Minerals Local Plan 2002, the Hertfordshire Waste Core Strategy & Development Management Policies Development Plan Document 2012 and the Hertfordshire Waste Site Allocations Development Plan Document 2014. For clarity, the development plan consists of any planning policies currently adopted by the local planning authority, St Albans City and District Council, Hertfordshire County Council and this Neighbourhood Plan.
- 1.2 St Albans City and District Council (SADC), as the local planning authority, designated a Neighbourhood Area for the whole of the Redbourn parish area in November 2013 to enable Redbourn Parish Council to prepare the Neighbourhood Plan. The Plan has been prepared by the community through the Redbourn Neighbourhood Plan Group (RNPG).
- 1.3 The Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared in accordance with the Town & Country Planning Act 1990, the Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, the Localism Act 2011 and the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations 2015 (as amended). The RNPG has prepared the Plan to establish a vision for the future of the parish and to set out how that vision will be realised through planning and controlling land use and development change over the plan period 2020 to 2038.
- 1.4 The map in Figure 1 shows the boundary of the Plan area, which is the same as the administrative boundary of Redbourn Parish.
- 1.5 The purpose of the Neighbourhood Plan is to guide development within the parish and provide guidance to any interested parties wishing to submit planning applications for development within the designated Neighbourhood Area. The process of producing a plan has sought to involve the community as widely as possible and the different topic areas are reflective of matters that are of considerable importance to Redbourn, its residents, businesses and community groups. It has therefore given the community the opportunity to guide development within their neighbourhood.
- 1.6 The Neighbourhood Plan has been subject to a period of formal consultation and independent examination. The Examiner recommended that, subject to the making of modifications, the Plan proceed to referendum. At the Neighbourhood Plan referendum, all residents living in the Plan area are invited to vote on whether the Plan should be 'made' or not. If more than 50% of those who turnout to vote are in favour of 'making' the Plan then it can begin to be used to inform planning applications and decisions.
- 1.7 Alongside the Neighbourhood Plan a document entitled 'Redbourn Design Guidance and Codes' has been prepared and which establishes design principles that new development should respond to. This should be read alongside the Neighbourhood Plan and used by applicants and decision makers to shape and respond to planning applications.

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<sup>1</sup> Please note that the Neighbourhood Plan period aligns with the Local Plan that is currently being prepared by St Albans City and District Council



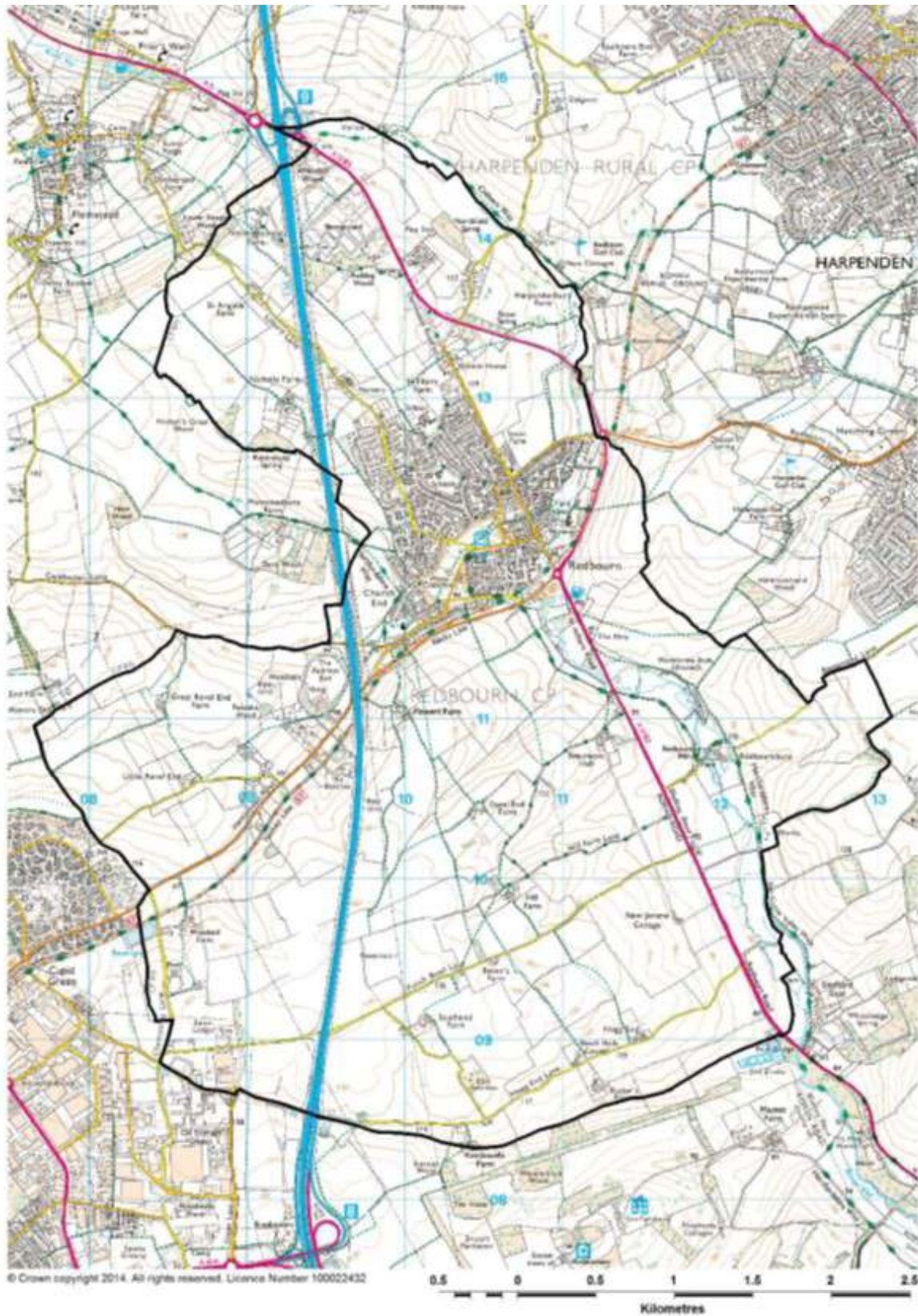


Figure 1: Redbourn Neighbourhood Plan area

## National and Local Policy

- 1.8 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2021<sup>2</sup>) states:

*"Neighbourhood planning gives communities the power to develop a shared vision for their area. Neighbourhood Plans can shape, direct and help to deliver sustainable development, by influencing local planning decisions as part of the statutory development plan. Neighbourhood plans should not promote less development than set out in the strategic policies for the area, or undermine those strategic policies (para.29). Neighbourhood Plans must be in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in any development plan that covers their area.*

*Neighbourhood plans should support the delivery of strategic policies contained in local policies or spatial development strategies; and should shape and direct development that is outside of these strategic policies (para. 13).*

*Once a neighbourhood plan has been brought into force, the policies it contains take precedence over existing non-strategic policies in a local plan covering the neighbourhood area, where they are in conflict; unless they are superseded by strategic or non-strategic policies that are adopted subsequently (para.30).*

- 1.9 The relevant SADC Local Plan was adopted in 1994 and was subject to a review in 2007, where policies either expired or were 'saved'. Based on NPPF guidance, both the 1994 Adopted Local Plan and subsequent 'saved' policies are now effectively out of date. St Albans City and District Council had prepared a Draft Local Plan (2020-2036) but this was formally withdrawn from examination in November 2020 on the grounds that it had failed the duty to cooperate. St Albans City and District Council are now preparing a new Local Plan which will cover the period 2020-2038<sup>3</sup>. The Local Development Scheme prepared in January 2021 by St Albans City & District Council indicates adoption of the new Local Plan by the end of 2023, with the first round of consultation on the new Local Plan taking place in January / February 2022. At the time of writing this consultation had yet to take place, suggesting that adoption of the new Local Plan will slip to 2024.
- 1.10 In the absence of an up-to-date and adopted Local Plan, the Neighbourhood Plan fills the policy vacuum and presents locally specific planning policies for Redbourn.

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<sup>2</sup> [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/1005759/NPPF\\_July\\_2021.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1005759/NPPF_July_2021.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.stalbans.gov.uk/new-local-plan>

## Climate change emergency

1.11 In addition to the policy framework this Neighbourhood Plan is also set in the context of the 'Climate Emergency' declared by St Albans City and District Council in July 2019. The response to this has been embedded in the Council's Corporate Plan for 2019-2025<sup>4</sup>, forming one of four key areas for the Council to address, alongside social housing, community facilities and being 'business friendly'. Priority climate projects and initiatives identified by the Council include:

- Developing plans to reduce congestion and encourage walking and cycling.
- Working with the County Council to better manage grass verges and trees along highways, as well as increasing tree cover across the District and rewilding Council owned land to increase biodiversity
- Introduce anti-idling zones, particularly around schools, and develop plans for an increase in charging points for electric vehicles.
- Increase the use of solar panels and develop other renewable energy sources.
- Promote energy efficiency measures in buildings, including improved home insulation.
- Develop public realm schemes, including the planting of flowers and sustainable shrubs.

1.12 In addition, Hertfordshire County Council also declared a 'Climate Emergency' in July 2019 and has published a 'Sustainable Hertfordshire Strategy'<sup>5</sup> which is based around two main ambitions which are:

*'A leader in our own operations'*

- Carbon neutral for our own operations by 2030
- All operations and services ready for future climates
- Improve biodiversity on our land by 20% by 2030
- Reduce what we throw away, sending nothing to landfill by 2030.

*'Enabling and inspiring a sustainable county'*

- Net zero greenhouse gas county by 2050
- Our communities are ready for future climates
- Improve wildlife in our land and water by 20% by 2050
- Clean air for all by 2030
- Increase resource efficiency threefold in the County by 2050.

1.13 This Neighbourhood Plan seeks to promote high quality, eco-friendly design, that respects the environmental qualities and landscape setting of Redbourn. It promotes walking, cycling and better public transport facilities. It seeks to protect and enhance green infrastructure and river valleys, and seeks to protect and support the full range of facilities that make Redbourn a vibrant and attractive place, reducing the need to travel, promoting social cohesion, health and wellbeing. As the District Council reviews and updates policies in response to the Climate Emergency, so this Neighbourhood Plan will be reviewed.

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<sup>4</sup> <https://www.stalbans.gov.uk/sites/default/files/attachments/SADC%20Corporate%20Plan%202020%20web.pdf>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/Media-library/Documents/About-the-council/data-and-information/Sustainable-Hertfordshire-Strategy-2020.pdf>



## Covid-19

- 1.14 Any Plan for the future must also consider the implications of the Covid pandemic and what this might mean in terms of changing lifestyles, ways of working, shopping and travelling.
- 1.15 With social isolation and homeworking measures put in place during the pandemic the need to travel quite so extensively on a daily basis for many people reduced. This resulted in improvements to air quality as well as quieter and safer streets for walking and cycling. At the same time, it increased awareness of the importance of local shops and essential services, and the ability of people to be able to access those, with matters such as resilience in regard to food supplies, for example, recognised. The measures also highlighted the importance of good quality broadband provision, the need for parks and spaces for people to exercise in, and the importance of well-designed homes and living spaces. Moreover, the importance of good social networks and community cohesion was highlighted, providing support to neighbours and those in need.
- 1.16 As a response to Covid-19 the Government has published a series of policy and guidance notes, including, for example, an update to the Traffic Management Act 2004<sup>6</sup>. This specifically requires local authorities to make significant changes to road layouts to give more space to pedestrians and cyclists. This has been developed further in the Cycling and Walking Plan for England ('Gear Change')<sup>7</sup> which sets out a vision for a travel revolution in the country's streets, towns and communities. The aim is to support behavioural change, facilitate active travel and realise the benefits this brings in terms of health and wellbeing, air quality and congestion.
- 1.17 Furthermore, the Government's High Streets Task Force<sup>8</sup> announced a series of initiatives to help support the recovery of high streets, including how communities might reimagine and revitalise their high streets.
- 1.18 As part of this Neighbourhood Plan we have sought to future proof growth and development, with the suite of policies and projects set out in the Plan responding to these challenges, including improved conditions for walking and cycling, retention of important local green spaces, community facilities and strengthening of the high street.

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<sup>6</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/reallocating-road-space-in-response-to-covid-19-statutory-guidance-for-local-authorities/traffic-management-act-2004-network-management-in-response-to-covid-19>, accessed May 2020

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/cycling-and-walking-plan-for-england>

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.highstreetstaskforce.org.uk/about/>

## Reviewing the Plan

- 1.19 Notwithstanding the defined period of the Neighbourhood Plan to 2038 it is recognised that, with further changes to planning policy, including the Local Plan and updates to the National Planning Policy Framework, as well as further actions emerging from the Climate Emergency and lessons from the Covid Pandemic, the Neighbourhood Plan will need to be reviewed periodically. This will enable the Neighbourhood Plan to remain 'current' and in conformity with the Local Plan and National Planning Policy Framework. Reviews are anticipated as taking place on a five-yearly basis.

### **How to read this document**

Each section of the Plan covers a different topic. Under each heading there is the justification for the policies presented which provides the necessary understanding of the policy and what it is seeking to achieve. There is also a summary of how each policy contributes towards the objectives of the plan. It is important to note that planning applications will be assessed against these policies.

The plan also includes a number of projects within Redbourn. Although not strictly policies, these projects are aspirational and are reflective of the community's manifesto for the area.

The policies and projects are presented in coloured boxes. It is advisable that, in order to understand the full context for any individual policy or projects, each is read in conjunction with the supporting text.

Furthermore, the policies in the document should be read as a whole and in line with those at the national and local levels, which together comprise the 'development plan' for Redbourn and will be used to inform and determine planning applications.

### **Redbourn Design Guidance and Codes**

Alongside this Neighbourhood Plan a set of Design Guidance and Codes have been prepared. This covers the entire Plan area and includes guidance and codes that should be used to inform new development as well as wider initiatives, such as improvements to the quality of the public realm and open spaces. It is referred to throughout the Plan, in policies and support text. It is presented as a free-standing Appendix to the Plan for use by applicants and decision-makers.

## 2 GLOSSARY OF PLANNING TERMS

2.1 This Neighbourhood Plan uses a number of planning terms. For ease of reference the most common terms are listed and defined below:

TERM	DEFINITION
Affordable Housing for Rent	Housing which meets all of the following conditions: (a) the rent is set in accordance with the Government's rent policy for Social Rent or Affordable Rent, or is at least 20% below local market rents (including service charges where applicable); (b) the landlord is a registered provider, except where it is included as part of a Build to Rent scheme (in which case the landlord need not be a registered provider); and (c) it includes provisions to remain at an affordable price for future eligible households, or for the subsidy to be recycled for alternative affordable housing provision. A full definition is available in the NPPF (2021).
Allocation site	A piece of land that has had a particular use earmarked to it via the Neighbourhood Plan or Local Plan. This might be for housing employment or another purpose such as amenity use.
Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)	A formal designation of an area where planning control is based on the protection and enhancement of the natural beauty of the area.
Basic conditions	Criteria that a Neighbourhood Plan must meet before it can come into force. These are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• They must be appropriate having regard to national policy,</li> <li>• They must contribute to the achievement of sustainable development,</li> <li>• They must be in general conformity with the strategic policies in the development plan for the local area,</li> <li>• They must be compatible with human rights requirements,</li> <li>• They must be compatible with EU obligations.</li> </ul>
Brownfield site	Land that has been previously developed on (excluding agricultural or forestry buildings and residential gardens).
Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)	Allows local authorities to raise funds from developers undertaking new building projects in their areas. Money can be used to fund a wide range of infrastructure such as transport schemes, schools and leisure centres.
Conservation Area	An area designated under Section 69 of the Town and Country Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as being of 'special architectural or historical interest' the character and appearance of which it is desirable to preserve and enhance
Consultation Statement	A document which needs to be submitted to St Albans District Council detailing the people and organisations consulted with about a proposed Neighbourhood Plan and how this was undertaken. It also includes a summary of the main issues and concerns raised throughout the consultation process and how these were considered and addressed in the proposed Neighbourhood Plan.
Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC)	The Government Department with responsibility for planning, housing, urban regeneration and local government. Previously known as the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) and, prior to that, the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG).
Designated Neighbourhood (Plan) Area	This is the area that the Plan will focus on. For town or parish councils, the designated area is usually the boundary. However, a smaller, more focused area could be chosen, such as a local centre. Also, adjacent parish councils may agree to work in partnership.

<b>TERM</b>	<b>DEFINITION</b>
Examination	Independent Examination of a Neighbourhood Plan to check whether the proposed Plan meets the Basic conditions and other requirements set out by law.
Floodplain	A floodplain is the area that would naturally be affected by flooding if a river rises above its bank, or high tides and stormy seas cause flooding in coastal areas
Flood Zone	An area identified by the Environment Agency as being at risk of flooding. The Flood Zone refers to the probability of river and sea flooding, ignoring the presence of defences.
Green Belt	A designated band of land around urban areas, designed to contain urban sprawl.
Greenfield Site	Land where there has been no previous development.
Lifetime Homes	Ordinary homes carefully designed to incorporate 16 Design Criteria that can be universally applied to new homes at minimal cost. Each criterion adds to the comfort and convenience Lifetime Homes of the home and supports changing needs of individuals and families at different stages of life, from raising children through to coping with reduced mobility or illness in later life.
Local Green Space Designation	As per National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) <sup>9</sup> , a Local Green Space designation is a way to provide special protection against development for green areas of particular importance to local communities.
Local Green Ventures	Local Green Ventures are local businesses that do not make any negative impacts on the environment, economy or community. They use environmentally sustainable resources and uphold socially responsible policies. They include those companies involved in the circular economy.
Local Plan	The name for a document (or collection of documents) prepared by the local planning authority for the use and development of land and for changes to the transport system. The adopted Local Plan forms part of the Statutory Development Plans for the area.
National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)	Sets out national planning policy and how these are expected to be applied. Provides a planning policy National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) framework for Local Plans and Neighbourhood Development Plans.
Neighbourhood (Development) Plan	A planning document created by a parish or town council or a neighbourhood forum, which sets out a vision for the neighbourhood area, and contains policies for the development and use of land in the area. Neighbourhood plans must be subjected to an independent examination to confirm that they meet legal requirements, and then to a local referendum. If approved by a majority vote of the local community, the neighbourhood plan will then form part of the statutory development plan
Policy	A concise statement of the principles that a particular kind of development proposal should satisfy in order to obtain planning permission.
Pop-up Shops	Pop-up shops are temporary retail stores that are open for a short period of time in order to take advantage of a passing fad, seasonal demand or economic opportunity. They include holiday markets, Halloween and firework stores, certain niche retailers and limited engagement experimental retailers.

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/open-space-sports-and-recreation-facilities-public-rights-of-way-and-local-green-space#Local-Green-Space-designation> (Para.: 005, Reference ID: 37-005-20140306, Revision Date: 06 March 2014)



<b>TERM</b>	<b>DEFINITION</b>
Public Realm	Those parts of a village, town or city (whether publicly or privately owned) available, for everyone to use. This includes streets, squares and parks.
Referendum	A vote in which the people in a country or an area are asked to give their opinion about or decide an important political or social question. Neighbourhood Plans and Neighbourhood Development Orders are made by a referendum of the eligible voters within a neighbourhood area.
Section 106	Planning obligation under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, secured by a local planning authority through negotiations with a developer to offset the public cost of permitting a development proposal. Sometimes developers can self-impose obligations to pre-empt objections to planning permission being granted. They cover things like highway improvements or open space provision.
Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)	A way of ensuring the environmental implications of decisions are taken into account before the decisions are made. The need for environmental assessment of plans and programmes is set out in the EU Directive 2001/42/EC – known as the SEA Directive.
Town and Country Planning Act 1990	Currently the main planning legislation for England and Wales is consolidated in the Town and Country Planning Act 1990: this is regarded as the 'principal act.'
Use Classes	<p>The Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) (Amendment) (England) regulations 2020 puts uses of land and buildings into various categories known as 'Use Classes'. These regulations came into force on 1<sup>st</sup> September 2020 and effectively nullify the former use class definitions used within the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987.</p> <p>It is generally the case that you will need planning permission to change from one use class to another, although there are exceptions where the legislation does allow some changes between uses. It should be noted that the recent regulation changes led to former Use Class A (shops, financial and professional services and food and drink establishments) becoming part of the new Use Class E.</p> <p>B2 Use Classes Refers to general industry</p> <p>B8 Use Classes Refers to storage and distribution</p> <p>C1,2,2A,3,4 Use Classes Refers to hotels and residential institutions, secure residential institutions, dwellings and House in Multiple Occupations (HMOs)</p> <p>E Use Classes Refers to shops, restaurants, financial and professional services, indoor sport, recreation or fitness (not involving motorised vehicles or firearms, health or medical services, creche, nursery or day centre principally to visiting members of the public, an office, research and development, or any industrial process that can be carried out in any residential area without detriment to amenity.</p> <p>E.(a) Display or retail sale of goods, other than hot food</p> <p>E.(b) Sale of food and drink for consumption (mostly) on the premises</p> <p>E.(c) Provision of (i) Financial services, (ii) Professional services (other than health or medical services), or (iii) other appropriate services in a commercial, business or service locality</p>

TERM	DEFINITION
E.(e)	Provision of medical or health services (except the use of premises attached to the residence of the consultant or practitioner)
E.(f)	Creche, day nursery or day centre (not including a residential use)
F Use Classes	Class F covers uses previously defined in the revoked classes D1, 'outdoor sport', 'swimming pools' and 'skating rinks' from D2(e), as well as newly defined local community uses.
F.1	Learning and non-residential institutions, including (a) provision of education, (b) Display of works of art (otherwise than for sale or hire), (c) Museums, (d) Public libraries or public reading rooms, (e) Public halls or exhibition halls, (f) Public worship or religious instruction (or in connection with such use), or (g) Law courts
F.2	Local community uses, including (a) Shops (mostly) selling essential goods, including food, where the shop's premises do not exceed 280 square metres and there is no other such facility within 1000 metres, (b) Halls or meeting places for the principal use of the local community, (c) Areas or places for outdoor sport or recreation (not involving motorised vehicles or firearms), or (d) Indoor or outdoor swimming pools or skating rinks
Sui Generis	'Sui generis' is a Latin term that, in this context, means 'in a class of its own'. Certain uses are specifically defined and excluded from classification by legislation, and therefore become 'sui generis'. Public houses, wine bars, or drinking establishments (previously Use Class A4) are classified as Sui Generis.

### 3 A PICTURE OF REDBOURN

#### History of Redbourn

- 3.1 Redbourn is a large village north-west of St Albans. The name is derived from 'reedy stream', and the reeds which used to grow on the banks of the River Ver, and also the smaller River Red.
- 3.2 Redbourn Common is at the heart of the village. It is over half a mile long and was presented to the Redbourn Parish Council in 1948 by the Earl of Verulam for the benefit of Redbourn residents. The Common is the home of the oldest known cricket club in the country, dating from 1666. Fetes, firework displays and fairs take place on the Common regularly.



*Figure 2: Redbourn Common*

- 3.3 The oldest part of Redbourn is defined by the conservation area, in the High Street, around the Common and in the Church End area. Despite the presence of the Green belt, there have been several new developments, along with some infill development. Some of the roads in the village are called 'Meadow', e.g. Coopers Meadow, Bettespole Meadow and Holts Meadow, an indication of former meadows in and surrounding the village which have been developed.
- 3.4 In the 1960s Monks Close was built behind the High Street just outside the conservation area, followed by family houses being built in various locations around the village in the 1970s and 80s. In the 1990s the Brooke Bond tea factory site was redeveloped as the Brooke End/Silk Mill housing estate with large family homes. The old house which was part of the Silk Mill could not be developed, and was given to Redbourn Parish Council to be used as a Museum, run by a Trust and staffed by volunteers.



*Figure 3: Redbourn Village Museum*

- 3.5 One housing development which respondents to the Neighbourhood Plan consultation have been very positive about is The Park estate built in the 1960s. Residents have commented that they like the way the houses have been set out with large communal areas of grass around them in a very open development. This promotes a sense of community within the estate with children regularly playing out and residents getting together for BBQs and social events.
- 3.6 There are maisonettes and low level blocks of flats, formerly Council-owned but now in private ownership, in Downedge and Stephens Way, stretching from Lybury Lane to Flamsteadbury Lane with other former council houses in various streets in Redbourn. Later, in the 1980s, Hilltop was extended and offers homes for rent by a housing association, although it is mostly shared ownership. There is also housing specifically for older people in different locations throughout the village, although the housing at the top end of Lybury Lane and in Nicholls Close means that older people are reliant on bus services which are poor in this area.
- 3.7 Also in the 1990s, Cumberland House, the former hunting lodge of the Duke of Cumberland, which had been occupied by the National Grid, was sold to developers. The land and buildings around were developed as Miller Close. As part of this development, the delivery of the new Health Centre was secured on the site. The walled garden, which could not be developed, was given to the Redbourn Parish Council as Cumberland Garden, currently used as a walk through to the Health Centre and the High Street as well as a location for part of Redbourn Christmas Market, in addition to exercise classes, theatre productions and other events throughout the year.





*Figure 4: Cumberland House*

- 3.8 A site occupied by Universal Salvage on Dunstable Road, just outside the main settlement, was a brownfield site which was developed despite being in the Green Belt. This became known as 'Meadow View' and as well as large family houses some affordable and shared ownership homes were built as part of this development.
- 3.9 On entering the village, a number of farms are visible. Industry is mainly located in the industrial estate, which is the site of the former Jam Factory.

## **Population and Housing**

- 3.10 ONS mid-year population estimates<sup>10</sup> reveal that the population of Redbourn has steadily increased from 5,028 to 5,548 persons from 2001 to 2014. Since then, the population has stabilised and is approximately 5,550. Data on the age of people living within Redbourn reveals that between 2008-2018 the proportion of those aged 65+ grew by 2.3% from 14.7% to 17.0% of the whole population. The proportion of younger people grew by 1.1% between 2008-2018, from 21.3% to 22.4% respectively. The age structure and number of homes in Redbourn means that the housing stock is under-occupied, with nearly half of all dwellings having at least two spare bedrooms. This is reflected in the housing stock, of which there are a high proportion of larger detached houses.

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<sup>10</sup>

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/populationestimates/adhocs/12324parishpopulationestimatesformid2001tomid2019basedonbestfittingofoutputareastoparishes>

- 3.11 Yet the picture of Redbourn as a very high value area dominated by market housing does not entirely hold. It has a high proportion of social rented properties and low proportions of higher Council Tax band properties. Equally, the older population that predominates in Redbourn has a lower proportion of owner occupiers and a higher proportion living in properties rented from the local authority. Whilst Redbourn is an affluent area, it has a significant proportion of its population with specific housing needs.

## **Working**

- 3.12 A low proportion of the Redbourn population are economically active, reflecting the high proportion of retirees. However, the proportion of those in work that are self-employed is strong.
- 3.12 Qualification levels are slightly below the district average, with Redbourn having a higher proportion of low skilled workers and a lower proportion of the most skilled workers. Reflective of this, the sectors that workers from Redbourn are well represented in are lower value, e.g. retail, manufacturing and construction.
- 3.13 There are relatively high levels of car ownership in Redbourn (in comparison to St Albans as a whole), and use of the car forms the primary mode of travel for work purposes.

## **Environment and Community**

- 3.21 Redbourn Common is the main green space serving the community. The local play space at the Common is well used.
- 3.22 The Parish Centre is the main community facility serving Redbourn and surrounding areas. It houses Council Chambers, Council Offices and the local Police Office. There is also a large main hall and smaller conference room available for private hire used for fitness classes, children's parties, photography, District and County Council meetings and elections and training for local businesses.
- 3.23 There is also a Village Hall on the High Street which is currently hired by over 35 different individual users either on a weekly, monthly or occasional basis. Notable events include monthly village markets, dance groups, carpet bowls and blood donation sessions. It is also regularly hired out for children's parties.
- 3.24 In a 2001 survey under the 'Vital Villages' initiative, young people told the Parish Council that they needed a skateboard park, and this was the only project voted for by the public which it was not possible to deliver.
- 3.25 In 2012/2013 a new Parish Survey was carried out, to create an up-to-date parish plan, and to give an overview on planning in advance of starting the Neighbourhood Plan process. Members of the working party went out and spoke to stakeholders and organisations in the village. What came from meetings with the Youth Council and the Youth Club was that a skateboard park was still needed.
- 3.26 Other challenges identified were in respect of parking along the High Street and how this might be better managed in the future.





Figure 5: Redbourn Common



Figure 6: Redbourn Common Play Area



Figure 7: Redbourn Parish Centre



Figure 8: Co-op, in the former Bull Inn



Figure 9: Nisa Local, Redbourn High Street



Figure 10: The George Pub, Redbourn High Street

- 3.27 In August 2017, planning permission was approved for the relocation of the Co-op store to the site of the former Bull public house, which closed some time ago. The final refurbishment is currently underway, with a target opening date of December 2021. This will make a larger store, and from having no car parking spaces for shoppers, the proposal is for six parking spaces with two of those spaces reserved for disabled drivers. This relocation is therefore likely to relieve some of the burden on the High Street. However, the store will need to create and enforce time limits on the spaces to prevent office workers in the High Street from taking up the spaces all day, forcing shoppers' cars into the spaces on the road.



- 3.28 Despite the conversion of the offices at The Priory into residential use and the closure of the Bull, it is considered that there is an adequate variety of meeting rooms and conference venues within Redbourn. Meetings with the Redbourn Business Community show that there are a number of small businesses who use these meeting rooms, and there is a demand for function rooms for parties. There is currently available meeting room space at the Village Hall, the Parish Centre, the church halls, Redbourn Leisure Centre, St Luke's School hall, the Hollybush pub and the Cricketers pub, however conference facilities are also available at the Aubrey Park Hotel and other venues. Small businesses at the moment are predominantly sole traders, mostly working from home. As these expand, they are likely to need office space, at least for part of the time.
- 3.29 More cycle paths, as reported in the transport section, are needed. The Bike Loft and the Hub café (specialising in catering for cyclists) are expanding, and many cyclists are now visiting the village every day of the week.
- 3.30 A range of leisure activities are provided for at the Redbourn Leisure Centre, including bowls, football, cricket, dance, gymnastics, netball and fitness.
- 3.31 Outside the settlement of Redbourn there is the opportunity to access the countryside. The River Ver is maintained and protected by the Ver Valley Society in partnership with the Countryside Management Service, Hertfordshire County Council, St Albans District Council, Local Groups and the Chilterns Chalk Streams Projects. The Nickey Line is also managed by CMS with help from Friends of the Nickey Line and uses a former railway line to link Harpenden and Hemel Hempstead, via Redbourn. It is well used by cyclists and pedestrians, providing off-road access to the major settlements serving Redbourn.



*Figure 11: The Nickey Line*



- 3.32 Youth activities are provided at both the Redbourn Parish Centre and Redbourn Leisure Centre, and there are plans to re-establish the Redbourn Youth Parish Council. However, as reported earlier with the need for a skate park, young people have said that Redbourn is lacking space to just hang out. This could also be a youth shelter or similar provision.
- 3.33 Redbourn has many activities for children and pre-teens, from youth organisations like Scouts and Guides to sports clubs like cricket, tennis, football and martial arts. The Redbourn Leisure Centre also offers a range of other activities such as roller discos, trampolining and gymnastics. Much younger children have parent and toddler groups, musical and baby gym activities at various locations across the village from the Village Hall, to the local churches and the Leisure Centre.



*Figure 12: Cricket on The Common*

## 4 VISION AND OBJECTIVES

### Challenges for Redbourn

4.1 The Neighbourhood Plan seeks to address, as far as is possible, the challenges that face the community of Redbourn. These have been identified through consultation event with the community and, in summary, are:

- **Housing** – providing a wider range of housing, particularly smaller units as well as affordable and social rent, to address the needs of first-time buyers and older downsizers.
- **Environment** - protecting the historic and natural environment of Redbourn, in particular Redbourn Common.
- **Giving people the choice of travelling by means other than the car** - in particular, improving movement for pedestrians, cyclists and public transport users.
- **Vitality of Redbourn village** - seeking to retain and improve the vitality of the village, particularly in terms of its shops and services.
- **Community activities** - the need to provide for more community activities that will encourage particularly young people and families to stay in Redbourn.
- **Commercial activity** - recognising the potential to grow small-scale businesses through the provision of business space and support.



*Figure 13: Consultation on the Neighbourhood Plan, based around a Lego event supported by 'Awesome Engineers', capturing the ideas of children, parents and carers which have informed the Plan*

## Vision Statement

4.2 The vision for Redbourn parish is as follows:

*'In 2038, Redbourn is still a pleasant village to live in. It has **retained its village feel** along with its particular individual characteristics, including its **high quality built heritage, high street** and **its green and spacious setting**.*

*Where development has taken place, this has been focused on **providing for Redbourn's changing needs**. The barrier created by not having enough of the type of properties that people want has been broken down. **Additional affordable housing (for rent) and smaller dwellings have been built**, enabling both young first-time buyers and older 'downsizers' to remain in the village (with all new dwellings built to Lifetime Homes standards so that they are capable of adaptation as people's needs change through their lives). This has been achieved with **development that is in keeping with the character of Redbourn**, in particular ensuring that historic and listed buildings remain protected.*

*Redbourn has become a **thriving hub for small, start-up businesses**. More residents now work locally.*

*The **High Street is thriving in both daytime and evening** and the appearance of the High Street reflects that. This has been anchored by the re-location of the Co-op to provide greater retail floorspace and parking provision at the former Bull Inn; and the re-location of the Redbourn Library to co-locate with the Fire Station at the northern end of the High Street, providing additional car parking for easy access to both the Library and High Street shops. The Redbourn Community Group's bus garage has been retained as part of the redevelopment, enabling the Group to help the less able members of the community. A pedestrian crossing has ensured easy access to the site.*

*Redbourn remains a village with a **distinct identity sitting in a rural setting**. Development has served to **improve access to the countryside** surrounding Redbourn, which itself is protected from inappropriate development. This means that more Redbourn **residents are able to enjoy the countryside** including the Ver Valley's Nature Reserve which is run by a local community group of volunteers.*

*The Climate Emergency has been adequately addressed through the provision of **high-quality eco-designs** and **sensitively designed public transport and pedestrian and cycling routes**. Redbourn's **natural environment has been protected and enhanced**, and the village has a strong **offering of community facilities** that are accessible to all.*

***Redbourn Common is well loved and continues to provide a physical heart to the community**, enjoyed for leisure activities by all. More formal leisure activities have been improved through the **enhancement of the Redbourn Leisure Centre**.*

*The proportion of journeys made by non-car modes has increased. This is not only due to the improved shopping on the High Street and number of local jobs, but also through **improved cycle links, bus services and footpaths to nearby towns**. This has been delivered through contributions from development and pride of place has been taken by **improvements to access along the Nickey Line**.'*

## Objectives

- 4.3 The objectives of the Neighbourhood Plan as identified through engagement with the community are as follows:
- **Objective 1:** Retain Redbourn's role as a village with a strong heritage located in a high quality and accessible countryside setting.
  - **Objective 2:** To provide for the changing housing needs of the community, particularly the growing need for affordable houses for rent and smaller properties by first-time buyers and older 'downsizers'.
  - **Objective 3:** Make Redbourn a hub for start-up business and commercial enterprise.
  - **Objective 4:** Provide new community facilities and recreation space to address the needs of the growing population.
  - **Objective 5:** Increase walking and cycling movements through improved footpath and cycle path provision.
- 4.4 The policies, and projects, that follow in subsequent sections of the Neighbourhood Plan seek to respond to these objectives. For the avoidance of doubt these are presented in coloured boxes like the ones below:

### **POLICY BOX**

The Neighbourhood Plan establishes land use and development management policies for Redbourn. These are contained in shaded boxes, like this one. They are used for proposals that require planning permission.

### **PROJECT / ASPIRATION BOX**

The Neighbourhood Plan covers more than just traditional planning matters as it presents the community's vision for the area. Items that the community are seeking, but that cannot be delivered through planning policy, are identified and contained in shaded project boxes, like this one. These are included within the body of the report, rather than being presented in a separate chapter or appendix, because they relate to the objectives and form a clear and important part of the story.



## 5 SENSE OF PLACE

### Policy Objectives

- 5.1 The policies and projects in this section of the Neighbourhood Plan respond to the following objectives:
- **Objective 1:** Retain Redbourn's role as a village with a strong heritage located in a high quality and accessible countryside setting.
  - **Objective 3:** Make Redbourn a hub for start-up business and commercial enterprise.

### Introduction

- 5.2 Redbourn has a small economic base, which partly reflects the fact that it has some large economic centres nearby, including St Albans, Hemel Hempstead and, to a lesser extent, Harpenden. The proximity of both Harpenden and St Albans Stations, and the Thameslink link into St Pancras International also means that it is an attractive location for commuting to Central London.
- 5.3 In fact, and before the period of 'lockdown' during the Covid pandemic, every morning over 60% of those in employment in Redbourn left to work elsewhere.
- 5.4 It is important that opportunities to work locally are taken, even if only relatively small scale.
- 5.5 Equally, Redbourn village's High Street is a precious resource. With the ever-changing nature of shopping, the traditional model of 'the High Street shop' is increasingly fragile. What is important is that the village centre continues to be a place where people come to in large numbers for whatever reason. It is this high 'footfall' that will ultimately give Redbourn's shops the greatest opportunity to not only survive, but thrive. However, this requires a more flexible approach to the way we think about the High Street.

## Redbourn High Street

- 5.9 The retail provision along Redbourn High Street provides an important resource to the community of Redbourn. The range of shops addresses both day-to-day ('convenience') and wider ('comparison') shopping needs. This is complemented by the cafes and restaurants that bring people to the High Street throughout the day. The High Street also accommodates a regular village market and youth market which provide opportunities for start-ups and local entrepreneurs. These markets also help to create a strong sense of community amongst local residents.



Figure 14: The Hub, Redbourn High Street

- 5.10 However, the High Street is still exposed to competition from the changing nature of retail and the way people shop. The growth of out-of-town retailing and the internet has left high streets such as Redbourn's struggling to compete. In addition, the change in national planning practice to permit the change of use of shops to residential has increased the threat to Redbourn's shops. Some retailers have reported that due to the rental levels that can be achieved, many landlords would prefer to leave an empty shop vacant and then sell it for redevelopment.
- 5.11 A recent workshop by the Friends of the High Street, a local community group set up to improve Redbourn's High Street; found that key priorities for the High Street include improvements to the appearance and functioning of vacant retail units, the provision of a new community hub and the strengthening of the evening economy in Redbourn. The Friends of the High Street has prepared an Action Plan which sets out the short-term and medium-term aims and projects for Redbourn's High Street. Where appropriate, these aims and projects have been included within this Neighbourhood Plan.



*Figure 15: The Enchanted Tea Rooms, Redbourn High Street*

- 5.12 It is important the High Street continues to attract people from both the village itself and surrounding areas to spend money and contribute towards its long term commercial health. But it is important that a balance is achieved between retail, residential and other commercial uses. The change to residential use is national policy so cannot be prevented. However, there are other actions that can help to maintain vitality.
- 5.13 Certainly in recent years given the economic slowdown, the risk of starting new commercial ventures has increased, as has the difficulty given the need for finance. One of the highest costs is premises and often there is a desire to take space on a flexible short-term lease in order to see if there is potential in the business. This in itself provides more opportunity to focus investment in the business itself.
- 5.14 The High Street has vacant units that could be taken by commercial ventures on short term, flexible leases to see if the business has potential. Often these businesses are not those that are permitted on the High Street without the need for planning permission – a further and potentially quite significant cost for a new business. Yet it is not to say that these non-retail businesses would not thrive and fit in well on the High Street. There are examples elsewhere of businesses as diverse as ceramics manufacturers, artists and web designers not only taking space and thriving in a High Street location, but providing life and diversity to the offer and bringing new people in that wouldn't have otherwise visited.
- 5.15 More flexibility is therefore required in the types of commercial uses that are permitted on the High Street. The business community of Redbourn, recognising the impact of the loss of commercial premises on other uses such as Prosperity House, are keen for a more flexible approach in order to help new (and existing) businesses grow and thrive. This in turn then has benefits as they grow, with many identifying the opportunities this creates for young people through apprenticeships and graduate training. As part of their Action Plan, the Friends of the High Street group will also seek to support local shops and businesses through their continued campaign work.

### **POLICY RED 1: REDBOURN HIGH STREET**

1. In the Primary Shopping frontage<sup>11</sup> and Class E shop frontage<sup>12</sup> of Redbourn High Street shown on Figure 16, uses within Classes E.(a)-(c), (e), (f), F.1 and F.2 together with drinking establishments (see Glossary) will be strongly supported.
2. The loss of drinking establishments from the combined Primary Retail Frontage and the Class E frontage will be resisted.
3. Changes from Class E.(a) retail will only be supported if it can be demonstrated that:
  - a) The Class E.(a) retail and drinking establishments premises in question have not been in active use for at least 12 months; and
  - b) The Class E.(a) retail and drinking establishments premises have no potential for either reoccupation or redevelopment for employment generating uses, as demonstrated through the results both of a full viability report and a marketing campaign lasting for a continuous period of at least 12 months.
4. The use of vacant premises for temporary uses that fall within Classes E.(a)-(c), (e), (f), F.1 and F.2 together with drinking establishments will be supported along the Primary Shopping Frontage and the Class E frontage. Such uses include 'pop up' shops (see Glossary) and cultural, creative and leisure uses introduced on a temporary basis or for specific events. Such uses
  - a) must demonstrate that they will not have a detrimental impact on the amenity of neighbouring uses, particularly residential through excessive noise and pollution.
  - b) will generally not be considered appropriate if the operation of the business requires large amounts of parking in order to function. Wherever possible, proposals for development should help contribute to wider public realm improvement and other initiatives as set out in 'Project Red A'.
5. Proposals for development along the High Street, including any changes to shop fronts, are expected to reflect principles established in the Redbourn Design Guidance and Codes.

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<sup>11</sup> The Primary Shopping Frontage is 68-80 High Street

<sup>12</sup> The Class E frontage is 17-19, 51-83, 22-30, 48-66 and 82-86 High Street



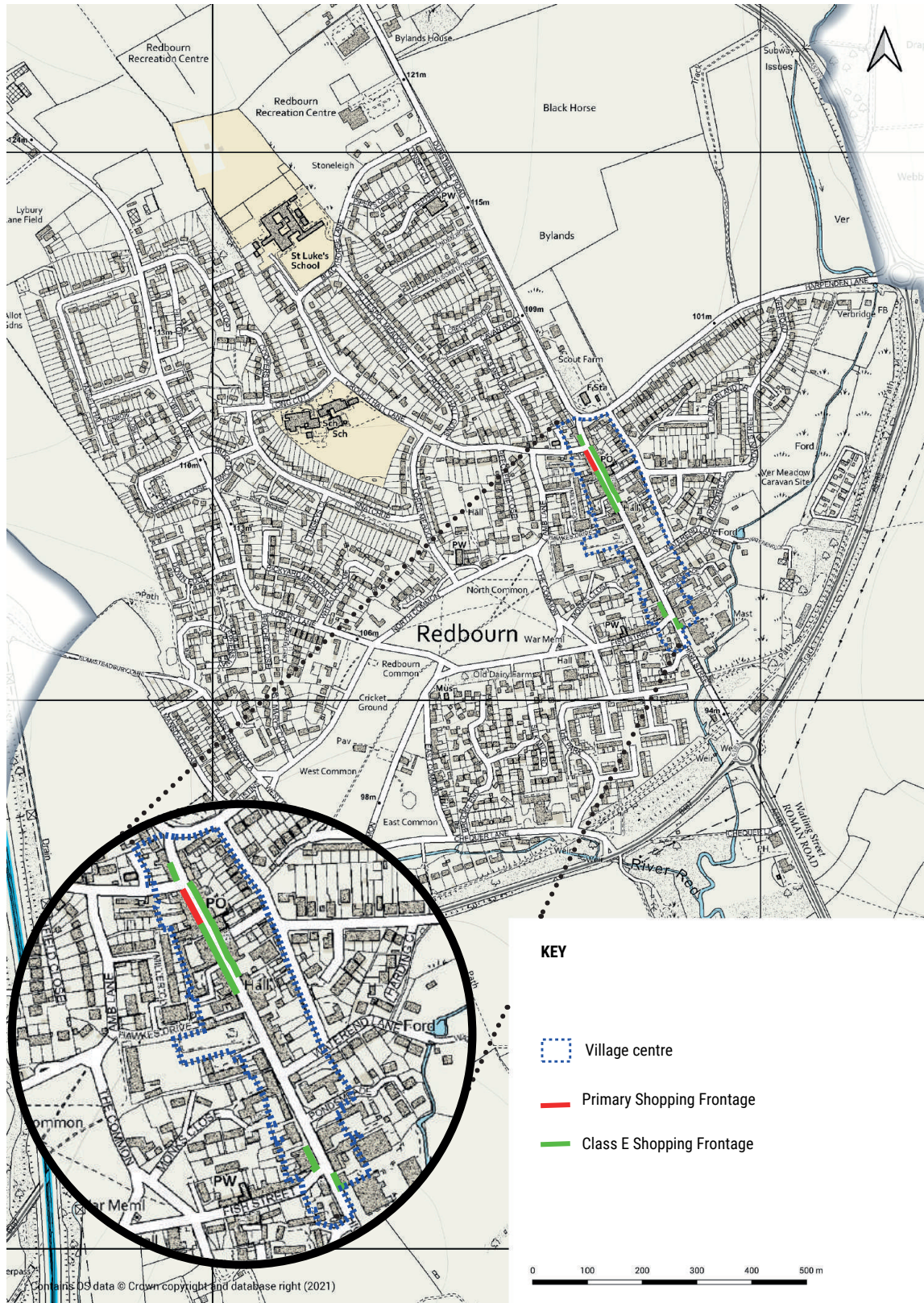


Figure 16: Redbourn High Street retail frontage



## Village centre initiatives

- 5.15 Alongside land-use policies for the High Street as outlined above a wider range of projects and initiatives have been identified through work on the Neighbourhood Plan which the Parish Council would like to explore further with partners to help deliver improvements that enhance the quality of the pedestrian environment, strengthen relationship between the High Street and wider village, and capture the spending power of visitors to Redbourn. Key opportunities that have been identified are summarised below. They build on actions previously identified by the Friends of the High Street and revisited during a High Street Workshop held as part of work on the Neighbourhood Plan to explore how the High Street might respond to changing circumstances, such as the impact of Covid and land use changes introduced by the Government.

### *Public realm improvements*

- 5.16 While functional, the existing High Street offers ample opportunity for improvement. The existing streetscape benefits from Redbourn's historic charm, however, as highlighted in Figure 17, elements of the High Street are outdated and are in need of investment, both at 'gateway' locations which help define the central area, but also along the High Street, improving the quality of the pedestrian environment and thus the 'retail experience'. Such improvements can help respond to the need for additional space highlighted through the Covid pandemic, but also providing an attractive environment within which people want to spend time, being places for outdoor activities and for socialising, but also bringing economic benefits to businesses through increased visits and longer dwell times.



*Figure 17: Existing public realm gateway treatment at junction of Redbourn High Street and Fish Street*

- 5.17 Improvements to Redbourn High Street over the Plan period will help to ensure that pedestrians are prioritised. These measures will be designed to satisfy the needs of all users and will enhance Redbourn High Street's character and attractiveness.

- 5.18 Paragraph 104 of the NPPF states that “*opportunities to promote walking, cycling and public transport use*” should be pursued in the plan—making process and which can help to “*reduce congestion and emissions and improve air quality and public health*”. In particular, improvements to the quality of the public realm and the pedestrian environment can improve public safety and provide much needed space for local communities to interact. A recent study<sup>13</sup> highlights that better street walkability has a positive impact on local economic performance, as improved feelings of safety and more enjoyable visits leads to a higher propensity to spend.
- 5.19 In Redbourn, opportunities should be taken to explore and deliver improvements to the quality of the public realm. Paving should be rejuvenated and redesigned, making use of a simple palette of high quality materials that help define pedestrian areas and incorporate areas of parking and servicing inset from the carriageway, but which are subtly designed so that they can be used for a variety of means (including, for example, outdoor market stalls or temporary areas for tables and chairs) and where the visual impact of the car is minimised. Through any redesign, paving materials should extend across the carriageway at key crossing points and at gateway junctions, helping to define these areas as places of pedestrian priority and where driver behaviour should change.

#### **Case Study: Old Hemel Hempstead High Street**

Public realm improvements make use of textured subdued stone to demarcate pedestrian crossings. These improvements were part of a wider town centre regeneration project. The newly installed crossings are effective and consistent, providing pedestrian priority at key areas along the High Street.



Figure 18: Public realm treatment, Old Hemel Hempstead High Street (image source: Google Streetview)

<sup>13</sup> <https://www.livingstreets.org.uk/media/3890/pedestrian-pound-2018.pdf>

- 5.20 Wider opportunities to reconfigure and rationalise parking on or in close proximity to the High Street will be investigated, accommodating visitors and employees, but in such a way that this is designed so as not to hinder pedestrian movement nor create visual intrusion. Through the 'Sustainable Travel Towns Programme' Hertfordshire County Council, has explored ways in which parking spaces might be rationalised and infrastructure supporting movement by foot and by bike introduced. Similar ideas could be explored in Redbourn and might extend to promotion of a car sharing scheme as a means of minimising traffic and parking on the High Street. Schemes involving parking should comply with Hertfordshire County Council's Local Transport Plan (LTP4).
- 5.21 Linked to strategies that support walking and cycling, and increased dwell time in the centre, opportunities that incorporate sensitively designed cycle parking, public benches and other street furniture, such as bins, will be explored and implementation supported. These should complement the historic setting of the centre, making use of materials that combine with paving to create a cohesive and legible environment and which are designed to reduce the impact of visual clutter on the High Street. This could involve combining different elements and pieces of street furniture. Innovative approaches to street furniture will be supported, including the use of temporary interventions, such as 'parklets' that test appropriate places for intervention.

#### **Case Study: Cyclehoop 'Parklet', Hammersmith and Fulham**

This parklet was designed with the local community at heart, providing cycle parking spaces, seating and greenery. Built from natural materials, the 'Parklet' can be designed in multiple configurations and can help to transform spaces that are typically car-dominated.



*Figure 19: Cyclehoop 'Parklet', Hammersmith and Fulham (image source: Cyclehoop)*



### ***Connecting with green assets***

- 5.22 Redbourn's existing green spaces – including The Common – help to define Redbourn's rural character and identity, and have a significant biodiversity value, particularly in terms of wildlife corridors, pollinators and species diversity. To accentuate Redbourn's ties with its green spaces, opportunities to implement soft landscaping, planters, bedding and greenery along the High Street will be sought. New green infrastructure will be orientated to provide stronger connections between the High Street, The Common, The Nickey Line and other green spaces.
- 5.23 In tandem with this, pedestrian and cycle links, and wayfinding strategies, should be redefined and introduced to create more legible green routes within the village centre and between surrounding assets. This could help draw in visitors to The Common and those walking or cycling along the Nickey Line, capturing the economic benefits of the spending power for activities and businesses on the High Street.

#### **Case Study: Eastcote Town Centre Rain Gardens, Hillingdon**

This project included the development of new rain gardens to capture stormwater, thus helping to manage the risk of flooding from surface water runoff but also introducing greenery into the environment, with the vegetation planted also bringing biodiversity benefits. This multi-functional scheme also sought to revitalise neglected public spaces whilst creating new legible pathways.



*Figure 20: Eastcote Town Centre Rain Gardens (image source: Landscape Institute)*



### ***Reimagined space***

5.24 The village hall car park on the High Street (Figure 21 and Figure 22) is an under-utilised area where potential exists to re-model the space as a multi-functional area, improving the quality of the space but also the use of it. Although it plays host to an occasional market, it could be used to better effect. In response to behavioural changes associated with the Covid pandemic it is envisaged that this space could become a focus of activity, hosting regular community events whilst also be redesigned as an attractive space to spend time in at the heart of the High Street. Potential opportunities for this space include:

- Introduction of soft landscaping, planters and greenery.
- Introduction of flexible street furniture.
- Provision of motion-sensitive street lighting and string lighting.
- Use of the space for occasional outdoor events.
- Introduction of wall murals as appropriate to enliven the space. Ideas for the mural could potentially be developed through a locally-run design competition.

5.25 Any significant re-configuration works would need to sensitively consider impacts on traffic and movement along the High Street.



*Figure 21: The Village Hall car park and blank end wall of buildings, which could be enlivened*



*Figure 22: The Village Hall car park as viewed from the High Street*



*Figure 23: Whitfield Gardens, Tottenham Court Road, is an example of a revitalised outdoor space enlivened with an imaginative mural designed in association with the community and depicting local community life*

### ***Place branding***

- 5.26 Place branding is an effective means to market the offer of a particular place, attracting and supporting businesses and visitors, building upon local identity, sense of place and the special qualities that define the place. In Redbourn, special qualities might relate to the presence of The Common and Nickey Line, as well as its historic fabric. The creation of a place branding strategy for Redbourn has previously been discussed by the 'Friends of the High Street' and is an area that the Council would be interested in developing further with the community.

#### **PROJECT RED A: VILLAGE CENTRE INITIATIVES**

1. The Parish Council will continue to work with partner organisations, including the Friends of the High Street, District and County Council, to explore and develop ideas that strengthen the role and function of the Village Centre, and which might include:
  - a) A public realm scheme along the High Street.
  - b) Introduction of greenery and landscaping into the High Street.
  - c) Increased opportunities for biodiversity.
  - d) A wayfinding scheme that helps connect the High Street with The Common and the Nickey Line.
  - e) Revitalisation of the car park outside the Village Hall, as a multi-functional event and social space.
  - f) The running of a competition to design a Redbourn specific mural or imagery to enliven blank walls framing the Village Hall car park.
  - g) A place branding strategy that helps draw in the economic spending power of visitors to Redbourn.
  - h) Support for a car-sharing scheme, with any spaces provided such that any harmful impacts on pedestrian circulation are minimised.
  - i) Opportunities for pedestrianising the High Street on a temporary basis for occasional events, subject to wider impacts associated with traffic diversion.
2. All initiatives should help to maintain the character and appearance of the Conservation Area, carefully consider the mobility needs of all and the economic impacts of changes to parking provision.



## New employment opportunities

- 5.27 Whilst Redbourn is not a major employment centre, there are approximately 250 businesses (including self-employed and sole traders) located in and around the village. This suggests a network of small businesses operating locally, a fact reinforced by the high levels of self-employment of Redbourn residents.



Figure 24: Redbourn Industrial Estate

- 5.28 The South West Herts Economic Study Update (2019)<sup>14</sup> found that economic productivity in South West Herts has now fallen below the UK average (average Gross Value Added [GVA] per job has fallen £1,000 and is now 2% lower than the national average). Despite this, the Study states that *"South West Herts has a highly entrepreneurial population with business start-up rates well above the national and regional average (particularly in ICT and professional services)"*. The Study adds that *"this suggests a need for flexible and affordable workspace to support the growth of these businesses"*. Strong support will therefore be given to the provision of small-scale businesses premises, ideally on flexible rental arrangements.
- 5.29 Recent UK-wide research<sup>15</sup> found that the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic (and its associated uncertainties) has put the strong flexible leasing market growth temporarily on hold. However, the research states that this demand will return and will evolve into *"a spectrum of options that provide various levels of real estate flexibility, experience and choice for tenants and landlords alike"*. In the medium to long-term, this analysis predicts that over 30% of all office space will be consumed flexibly by 2030. For Redbourn, retention and development of a diverse range of flexible workspaces and leasing arrangements should be supported, catering for a variety of businesses.

<sup>14</sup> [https://www.stalbans.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/publications/planning-building-control/planning-policy/examination-library/South%20West%20Herts%20Economic%20Study%20Emerging%20Draft\\_tcm15-66985.pdf](https://www.stalbans.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/publications/planning-building-control/planning-policy/examination-library/South%20West%20Herts%20Economic%20Study%20Emerging%20Draft_tcm15-66985.pdf)

<sup>15</sup> <https://www.jll.de/content/dam/jll-com/documents/pdf/articles/covid-19-and-flexible-space-report.pdf>



## **POLICY RED 2: SMALL-SCALE COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT**

1. Development proposals to provide small-scale (up to 500 sq m of employment floorspace) Class E retail, office and research and development employment opportunities, particularly on flexible terms to support small businesses, will be supported. This could either be through the following:
  - a) conversion of existing buildings across the Neighbourhood Plan area but outside the settlement boundary, subject to the impact of provision on the highway network and parking and consideration of the operating requirements for new businesses including delivery traffic (if applicable) and traffic routing in the parish area; or
  - b) provision of new buildings or conversion of existing buildings within the settlement boundary of Redbourn village.
2. Development proposals for flexible workspaces that are designed to accommodate local green ventures (see Glossary) will also generally be supported.
3. The design of any new development will need to respond positively to the defining characteristics of the area within which it is located and reflect the associated principles set out in the Redbourn Design Guidance and Codes that are applicable to that area.
4. Consideration will need to be given to ensure that this policy supports flexible working patterns resulting from the Covid pandemic

## Local Green Space Designations

- 5.30 Through consultation events on the Neighbourhood Plan the importance of local green spaces were identified, both in terms of providing opportunities for leisure and recreation (the importance of which was further emphasised during the Covid pandemic), but also in terms of the setting of Redbourn and their importance in retaining the sense of identity of the village.
- 5.31 Under the NPPF Neighbourhood Plans can designate Local Green Spaces which are of importance and value to the local community. The NPPF states<sup>16</sup> that Local Green Spaces should only be designated where the green space is:
- a) in reasonably close proximity to the community it services;
  - b) demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance, for example because of its beauty, historic significance, recreational value (including as a playing field), tranquillity or richness of its wildlife; and
  - c) local in character and is not an extensive tract of land.
- 5.32 The Local Green Spaces listed below and mapped in Figure 25 are all considered to meet the criteria for designated outlined in the NPPF. More information, including mapping of each designation, is presented in Appendix 1. Designation as a Local Green Space does not infer any maintenance regimes or burdens over and above those already in place.
1. **Redbourn Common:** Redbourn Common is a key focal point of Redbourn Village. Contained on all sides by development, the Common serves as a key recreational area, hosting Redbourn Cricket Club, the Redbourn Mile for Walkers and numerous community events such as the Fete du Velo, Classics on the Common and Folk on the Common. Redbourn Common is also historically significant, as this site was gifted to the Parish by the Earl of Verulam. Despite its size (half a mile end to end), the Common is its own entity and is not considered an extensive tract of land.
  2. **Long Cutt / Hill Top Play Area:** Long Cutt Play Area offers nearby residents a children's play area and green space. The site was purposely designed to cater to children's recreational needs. Centrally located, the site is contained on all sides by the rear gardens of properties and a dense wooded area.
  3. **Holts Meadow:** Holts Meadow offers a tranquil scenic break from the surrounding residential properties. It also has a clear recreation purpose, serving as a children's play space and area for dog walkers. Centrally located, Holts Meadow is contained on all sides by development and is accessible via Holts Meadow (road) and a pathway leading to Dunstable Road.
  4. **Greyhound Meadow:** Greyhound Meadow is located within the centre of Redbourn and features tennis courts, allotments and open space associated with the Scout Hut. The site is owned by Redbourn Parish Council. The site is well-used and has a clear purpose to provide recreational space for local residents. The allotments also serve as a wildlife habitat. The site is not deemed an extensive tract of land as it is contained on all sides by the rear gardens of properties.

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<sup>16</sup> Paragraph 102, MHCLG, July 2021, National Planning Policy Framework

5. **Lamb Lane:** This site is deemed significant to the local community as it offers a natural open break from the surrounding properties. In the summer months, flowers bloom, attracting butterflies and other wildlife to the site. There is also a proposal to convert the site into a 'Community Garden' for local residents. With the above in mind, it is considered that the site fulfils the 'beauty' and 'recreation' criteria for local green space designation. The site is centrally located and is easily accessible via Lamb Lane.
6. **Nicholls Close and Ridgedown:** The site comprises a tree-lined grassy open space. It serves as a recreation space for dog walkers and elderly residents who walk within the space. It is a well-loved and well-used space due to its beauty and openness. The site is contained on all sides by housing and is accessible via Nicholls Close. The site is located a short walking distance away (~300m) from the centre of Redbourn.
7. **Cumberland Gardens:** Cumberland Gardens is historically significant as it was formally part of Cumberland House, a Georgian building situated on the east side of the Common which was developed as a hunting lodge by the Due of Cumberland in the 1700s. In 1890 Mr. R Cecil bought the property and installed a generator, making it the first property in the village to have electric lighting. The site also has recreational value, as it is a well-used community space that is used for plays, exercise classes, markets and accessing the High Street on foot. The site lies within the heart of the village and is not considered an extensive tract of land.

5.33 Opportunities for the sites to be designated as Town or Village Greens will be explored through the next review and update of the Neighbourhood Plan.

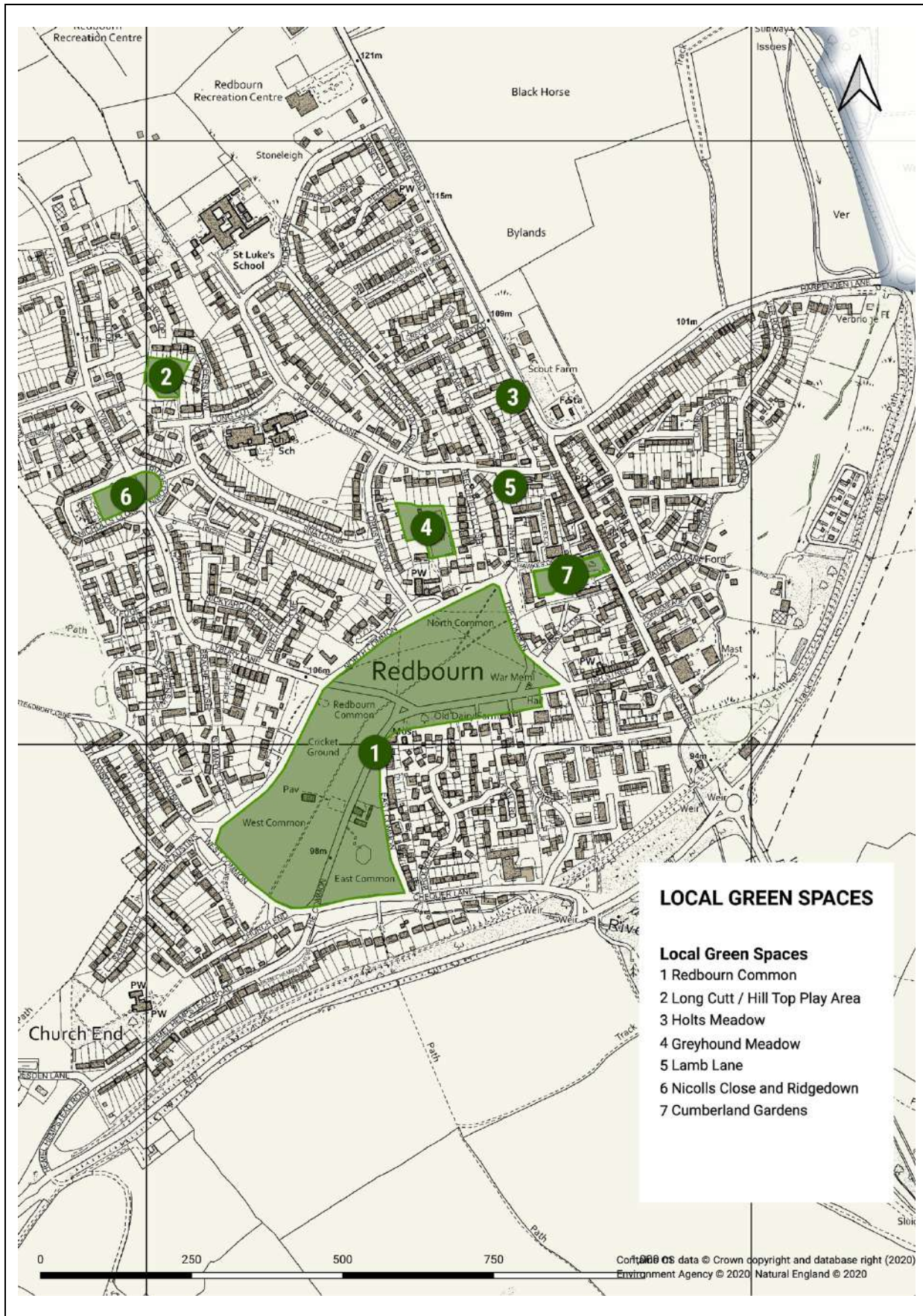


Figure 25: Local Green Space Designations in Redbourn



### **POLICY RED 3: LOCAL GREEN SPACE DESIGNATIONS**

1. The following are designated as Local Green Spaces, as identified on Figure 25 and in more detail on the maps in Appendix 1:
  - 1) Redbourn Common
  - 2) Long Cutt / Hill Top Play Area
  - 3) Holts Meadow
  - 4) Greyhound Meadow
  - 5) Lamb Lane
  - 6) Nicholls Close and Ridgedown
  - 7) Cumberland Gardens
2. Planning applications for development on the Locally Designated Green Spaces will not be supported unless they perform a supplementary and supporting function to the green space and the use of that space, and comply with the wider policies set out in the Development Plan and in the National Planning Policy Framework. Initiatives which seek to increase biodiversity on the above Local Green Spaces will be supported.



*Figure 26: The Avenue of Trees, Redbourn Common*

## Biodiversity and Re-Wilding

- 5.34 The Environment Act (November 2021) and declaration of a Climate Emergency have raised the importance of biodiversity and natural habitats. The Government envisages creation of a Nature Recovery Network<sup>17</sup>, with greenery integrated into all development and resulting in a net gain for wildlife. It is proposed that nature is brought back into the places where people live their lives, also having a positive impact on health and wellbeing.
- 5.35 Hertfordshire's Landscape Character Area Assessment<sup>18</sup> classifies the area to the north east of Redbourn as the Upper Ver Valley. This area is defined as a broad, open river valley with gentle slopes and extensive views. In the lower stretch between Redbourn and St Albans, the landscape is dominated by small fields of wetland pasture. The area to the north of Redbourn consists of a dry valley up to Hemel Hempstead. The River Ver is a chalk stream which supports a number of discrete woodlands on the valley slopes (typically comprising oak/beech/ash/hazel and cherry species).
- 5.36 The River Red serves as a main groundwater drainage route for a large area west of Redbourn and is a main tributary of the River Ver<sup>19</sup>. Despite its important role, the River Red is largely hidden from view as it is culverted and is only visible where it emerges on Redbourn Common and where seasonal springs occur. The River Red supports a wide variety of faunal and floral species and is renowned for its rich marginal vegetation such as reeds and bulrushes. Hertfordshire's Landscape Character Area Assessment recommends that the Upper Ver Valley is conserved and strengthened through "*the reversal of habitat fragmentation and the creation of and improvement of habitat links to create eco-corridors*".
- 5.37 More recently, St Albans City and District Council formally declared a Climate Emergency on 10th July 2019. The St Albans City and District Council's Sustainability and Climate Crisis Strategy<sup>20</sup> recognises the importance of water and climate change adaptation through Theme 6 of their Action Plan. Specifically, the Strategy states that "*chalk streams such as the River Ver are at risk from over abstraction, pollution and climate change*", adding that "*they [chalk streams] depend upon a healthy flow of water and a variety of natural habitats to thrive*".

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<sup>17</sup> The Wildlife Trusts, 2018, Towards a Wilder Britain: Creating a Nature Recovery Network to bring back wildlife to every neighbourhood, A report for the Westminster Government

<sup>18</sup> [https://www.stalbans.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/publications/planning-building-control/planning-policy/examination-library/SP\\_SLP\\_ENV005HertfordshireLandscapeCharacterAreaStatementsStAlbansDistrict\\_tcm15-54905.pdf](https://www.stalbans.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/publications/planning-building-control/planning-policy/examination-library/SP_SLP_ENV005HertfordshireLandscapeCharacterAreaStatementsStAlbansDistrict_tcm15-54905.pdf)

<sup>19</sup> <http://www.riverver.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/the-redbournbury-walk.pdf>

<sup>20</sup>

<https://www.stalbans.gov.uk/sites/default/files/attachments/FINAL%20SADC%20Sustainability%20and%20Climate%20Crisis%20Strategy.pdf>





*Figure 27: River Red*

- 5.38 In recognition of the Climate Emergency and introduction of the Environment Act, applicants are strongly encouraged to submit a biodiversity net gain plan as part of development proposals, where appropriate. Net gain should ideally be achieved through on-site measures and be demonstrated through use of the Natural England / Defra Biodiversity Metric<sup>21</sup> (current version 3.0 or any updates to this published at the time an application is made). The greening of development sites can take a variety of forms and include the use of landscaping, green roofs and walls and sustainable urban drainage systems. Design guidance prepared by the London Wildlife Trust<sup>22</sup> includes a range of design solutions that can be utilised increase biodiversity value and augment existing habitats. Applicants are encouraged to refer to this guidance. Further information is presented in the Redbourn Design Guidance and Codes to which applicants should refer.

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<sup>21</sup> <http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/6049804846366720>

<sup>22</sup> London Wildlife Trust for the Mayor of London, March 2021, Urban Greening for Biodiversity Net Gain: A Design Guide.



#### **POLICY RED 4: BIODIVERSITY**

1. Development proposals should manage impacts on biodiversity and secure a net biodiversity gain of at least 10%, ideally on-site if possible. This should be informed by current site conditions and with any proposed habitat creation being appropriate to local context. Where measures are proposed off-site these should be located as close as possible to the development site.
2. A biodiversity net gain plan shall be submitted as part of planning application material where appropriate. This should be prepared in accordance with Natural England's Biodiversity Metric 3.1 (or subsequent version) and reflect principles contained in the Redbourn Design Guidance and Codes.
3. If sites with semi-natural habitats are proposed for development, ecological surveys may be required or need updating. Some previously developed sites may need specific protected species surveys (e.g.: bat surveys).

#### **PROJECT RED B: RESTORATION AND CONSERVATION OF THE RIVER RED**

1. The Parish Council is keen to improve the biodiversity value of the River Red and will explore opportunities to work with partner organisations to:
  - a) Restore and conserve ecological networks within the River Red.
  - b) Create valuable habitats for wildlife.
  - c) Improve and manage water flow.
  - d) Improve public access to the River Red.

#### **PROJECT RED C: TREE PLANTING AND RE-WILDING INITIATIVES**

1. The Parish Council is keen to promote the delivery of greener streets, verges and open spaces throughout Redbourn.
2. The Parish Council is keen to work with partners, including St Albans City and District Council and Hertfordshire County Council, to explore how underused areas of public realm and roadside verges might be better used to increase biodiversity value, provide new wildlife habitats and create vibrant green spaces. Reuse of such areas for tree planting and re-wilding initiatives is encouraged. These may act as secondary ecological networks for nesting birds and insect pollinators.
3. The associated management and maintenance regimes of existing and new wildlife resources would be agreed with the relevant authorities and stakeholders.

## 6 HOUSING

### Policy Objectives

- 6.1 The policies and projects in this section of the Neighbourhood Plan respond to the following objectives:
- **Objective 2:** To provide for the changing housing needs of the community, particularly the growing need for smaller properties by first-time buyers and older 'downsizers'.

### Housing type and mix

- 6.2 The NPPF states that "*strategic policy-making authorities should establish a housing requirement figure for their whole area, which shows the extent to which their identified housing need (and any needs that cannot be met within neighbouring areas) can be met over the plan period. Within this overall requirement, strategic policies should also set out a housing requirement for designated neighbourhood areas which reflects the overall strategy for the pattern and scale of development and any relevant allocations.*" (para. 66).
- 6.3 At District level, the assessment that establishes housing needs is the South West Hertfordshire Local Housing Needs Assessment (2020), which covers the South West Hertfordshire housing market area and constituent authorities (St Albans City and District Council, Dacorum Borough Council, Hertsmere Borough Council, Three Rivers District Council and Watford Borough Council). The South West Hertfordshire Local Housing Needs Assessment (2020) states that the local housing need for St Albans District is 893 dwellings per annum over the 2020-2036 period<sup>23</sup>. However, given the status of the Local Plan, and thus the need to revisit this study, and because it covers a larger geography that does not address requirements at the granular level, Redbourn Parish Council commissioned a local Housing Needs Assessment (HNA) for Redbourn Parish. This covers the period 2021-2036.
- 6.4 Engagement with the community on housing matters showed that there are considered to be two predominant requirements – firstly, housing for young people and secondly, housing for older downsizers. This is further evidenced in a Demos survey (2013), which found that 76% of older households occupying three or more bedroom might consider downsizing. Equally however, housing to meet the needs of younger people is important to avoid Redbourn becoming a 'retirement village'.

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<sup>23</sup> <https://www.stalbans.gov.uk/sites/default/files/attachments/HOU%20September%202020%20-%20South%20West%20Hertfordshire%20Local%20Housing%20Need%20Assessment.pdf>

### ***Size and affordability***

- 6.5 The HNA states that need is predominantly focused on smaller to medium-sized homes, with 44% of the need being for 3-bed homes, 24% for 2-bed homes, 16% for one-bed homes, 16% for 4+bed homes.
- 6.6 The HNA demonstrates that there is currently a backlog of need for affordable housing of approximately 30 homes (comprising 16 affordable rented homes and 14 homes of affordable housing ownership) in Redbourn. Some of this need will be offset over the Plan period by the turnover of existing stock. However, there will remain a need and, over the Plan period, the HNA estimates a need for 450 affordable homes in Redbourn, comprising 240 affordable rented homes and 210 homes in affordable housing ownership). The HNA recommends that any future affordable housing development is front-loaded towards the start of the Plan period to ensure needs are met as soon as possible.
- 6.7 With regard to housing market demand, the HNA notes that the average price of a flat costs just under £275,000. The HNA suggests that whilst the purchasing of a flat within Redbourn may be achievable for younger buyers, terraced housing suitable for younger families is less affordable, as it yields an average value of £440,000. Generally speaking, semi-detached and detached properties within Redbourn remain within reach of only the wealthiest households. More recent information on paid price data released by HM Land Registry shows that, at the time of writing, house prices in Redbourn are 7% up on the previous year and 8% up on the 2017 peak. The average price paid over the most recent year is just over £560,00, with the average price of a terraced property having increased to £460,000. This upwards trend exacerbates affordability issues.
- 6.8 The affordability issues highlighted above are further evidenced by income threshold assessment data, which found that the income required to buy an average market home for sale is more than double what would be available to those on average household incomes.
- 6.9 To address affordable housing needs, the St Albans City and District Council's Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)<sup>24</sup> states that *"the Council will seek, by negotiation, a target level of 35% affordable units on suitable sites above the site size thresholds."* However, the viability study undertaken in support of the now withdrawn Local Plan indicated that a requirement for 40% of all new homes to be affordable is reasonable<sup>25</sup>. At the same time, the study recognised that viability will be more challenging on some sites than others, because of land values, remediation and development form for example, and that in such instances a flexible approach which allows a reduced provision of affordable housing would be acceptable. In such circumstances, viability testing would need to be clearly demonstrated by the applicants. This Neighbourhood Plan adopts this approach.

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<sup>24</sup> <https://www.stalbans.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/publications/planning-building-control/planning-policy/Affordable%20housing%20-%20supplementary%20planning%20guidance.pdf>

<sup>25</sup> BNP Paribas, for St Albans and City District Council, November 2017, St Albans Community Infrastructure Levy and Emerging Local Plan Viability Study.



### ***Housing for older people***

- 6.10 The HNA identifies that there will be a need for between 75-98 specialist accommodation units over the Plan period to meet the needs of Redbourn's ageing population. The overall level of need will heavily depend upon the amount of accessible/adapted mainstream housing currently in Redbourn. Hertfordshire County Council has also recently implemented the 'Adult Disability Service Accommodation Strategy'<sup>26</sup>, which outlines the county council's ambitions to offer high quality and accessible homes for all in the community. This identifies a need for specialist accommodation for adults with learning and or physical disabilities who currently reside in the District and who are waiting for specialist accommodation. Any new specialist accommodation within Redbourn must be in accessible, sustainable locations to ensure that residents are able to access local services and facilities on foot and to ensure that the specialist accommodation is accessible by more sustainable transport modes for those visiting or for staff working there. This will help support and promote social cohesion and proximity to families and friends.
- 6.11 Planning Practice Guidance<sup>27</sup> notes that there are a variety of specialist housing types that can meet the needs of older people. This includes, but is not limited to, (1) age-restricted general market housing, (2) retirement living or sheltered housing, (3) extra care housing or housing-with care, and (4) residential care homes and nursing homes.
- 6.12 Where housing for the elderly is to be provided it must meet the principles of inclusive design outlined in Planning Practice Guidance<sup>28</sup>, as well as those principles set out in the HAPPI (Housing our Ageing Population Panel for Innovation) report<sup>29</sup> which are applicable to housing for elderly people and age-friendly places.
- 6.13 Planning Practice Guidance notes that:
- 'accessible and adaptable housing enables people to live more independently, while also saving on health and social costs in the future. It is better to build accessible housing from the outset rather than have to make adaptations at a later stage – both in terms of cost and with regard to people being able to remain safe and independent in their homes.'*
- 6.14 In line with this, opportunities to provide flexible housing types that can be adapted over time in response to changing lifestyles will be supported.

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<sup>26</sup> HCC and Herts Care Partners, 2017-2027, Ten year supported accommodation strategy

<sup>27</sup> MHCLG, June 2019, PPG: Housing for older and disabled people <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/housing-for-older-and-disabled-people> accessed December 2019

<sup>28</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/housing-for-older-and-disabled-people> accessed December 2019

<sup>29</sup> <https://www.housinglin.org.uk/Topics/browse/Design-building/HAPPI/> accessed December 2019

### ***First Homes***

- 6.15 The Government has recently introduced a new First Homes Policy. The purpose of this scheme is to allow first-time buyers to purchase their first homes within their local community. Where new builds are proposed within the Parish, a discount of 30% on the market price will apply to a proportion of new homes. Guidance allows for this discount to be increased where there is evidence of an affordability gap. The HNA indicates this is the case in Redbourn, noting that 'the discount on the average market sale price required to enable households on average incomes to afford to buy is 57%. For a dual lower quartile earning household, a discount of 73% would be required'. The Government guidance allows the discount of First Homes to be increased to 50%. This should apply in Redbourn.

### ***Self and custom build homes***

- 6.16 To support diversification of the housing offer and the ability of people to access a home, the Parish Council supports opportunities for self-build and custom housebuilding in Redbourn. The Self-build and Custom Housebuilding Act came into effect in 2015 and places a duty on certain public authorities, in this case St Albans City and District Council, to keep a register of individuals and associations of individuals who wish to acquire serviced plots of land to bring forward self-build and custom housebuilding projects. The Act places a duty on those public authorities to have regard to those registers in carrying out planning and other functions. The most recently available information indicates that there are 515 registrations on the Self-build register (covering the period from 1st April 2016 to the 30th October 2020)<sup>30</sup>.
- 6.17 Where self or custom build plots are to be made available a set of plot passports should be produced. These will provide a summary of the design parameters for any given plot and help private housebuilders understand what they are allowed to build on the plot. They capture key information from the planning permission or the site, design constraints and procedural requirements. The passports clearly show permissible building lines within which the new dwelling can be built as well as height restrictions and other details such as parking requirements. Aspects such as materials, roof styles and fenestration are usually left for the plot owner to decide.
- 6.18 A range of housing and delivery models might come forward on the self and custom build plots, including shared delivery through collaboration. To allow for this, any area of self and custom build should be no smaller than ten plots in size. All plots should also be connected to the utilities network to enable private housebuilders to plug directly into these.

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<sup>30</sup> <https://www.stalbans.gov.uk/sites/default/files/attachments/AMR%20Authority%27s%20Monitoring%20Report%202020.pdf>

## **POLICY RED 5: HOUSING MIX**

### ***Housing Mix***

1. In order to address the need for small to medium-sized dwellings in Redbourn, major development sites (those of ten or more homes) must provide a mix of dwelling sizes (market and affordable) that are tenure-blind and fall within the following ranges:

1-bed dwellings	11-21% of all dwellings
2-bed dwellings	19-29% of all dwellings
3-bed dwellings	39-49% of all dwellings
4-bed+ dwellings	16-26% of all dwellings

2. An alternative mix of housing will only be supported where there is valid market data to support this.

### ***Housing Tenure***

3. On all major development proposals (those of ten or more new homes), and subject to viability, 40% of all homes provided should comprise affordable housing.
4. Affordable housing for rent products will be encouraged on these sites. Occupation of affordable housing to those with a local connection will be supported. Local connection to Redbourn is defined as:
  - a) People who have chosen to live in Redbourn and have done so for three of the last five years, or
  - b) People who have immediate family (parents, children or siblings) who live in Redbourn and have done so for at least five years, or
  - c) People who have regular employment in Redbourn.
5. All affordable housing must be designed such that it is tenure-blind i.e.: of an equal quality in terms of its design and use of materials compared to the market element and it should be integrated into the overall proposal.
6. Where specialist housing for the elderly is proposed, including Extra Case housing schemes, housing designs should be inclusive and should incorporate the ten key design principles developed by the Housing our Ageing Population Panel for Innovation (HAPPI) group<sup>31</sup>. Specialist housing should ideally be located in close proximity to and in easy access of services and facilities.

### ***First Homes***

7. All qualifying developments in Redbourn are required to provide First Homes at a discount of 50%.

### ***Self and Custom Build Housing***

8. Provision of plots for self and custom build homes will be supported. Areas proposed for self and custom build should be no smaller than ten plots in size, allowing opportunities for co-housing and other collaborative delivery models to come forward. Where self or custom build housing is proposed plot passports shall be prepared for approval by the Local Planning Authority at outline planning application stage. These will establish the form of development and building parameters for each plot, including building heights, footprint, frontages, density and parking requirements. All plots for self and custom build housing shall be provided with connections to utilities and communication infrastructure.

<sup>31</sup> <https://www.housinglin.org.uk/Topics/browse/Design-building/HAPPI/>



## New Housing Sites

- 6.19 The character of Redbourn derives from its scale and relationship with surrounding Green Belt, which comprises countryside, green and open spaces. The Neighbourhood Plan Area (Figure 1) is relatively small and is occupied by the existing built-up area, as well as open spaces including Redbourn Common, Long Cutt Park, Hill Top Park, Flamsteadbury Park and Holts Meadow.
- 6.20 Paragraph 119 of the NPPF states that planning policies should "*promote an effective use of land in meeting the need for homes and other uses, while safeguarding and improving the environment and ensuring healthy and living conditions*". Given that the built extent of Redbourn is constrained by Green Belt, new development should, in the first instance, take the form of infill or redevelopment within the built-up area. Any proposals for development within the Green Belt would be subject to national policies and need to fully justify the benefits of any proposed development against the tests of the Green Belt.
- 6.21 To the north and west of Redbourn (the built-up area), the Hertfordshire Landscape Character study<sup>32</sup> notes that the area is one of gently undulating upland with discrete woodland blocks, but with the M1 corridor interrupting the unity of the character area and the recreation ground and school playing fields on the northern edges of Redbourn influencing the character of the landscape adjacent to the settlement boundary. The study recommends that the landscape character area be improved and conserved.
- 6.22 To the south and east of the built-up area of Redbourn the study notes that the landscape comprises a broad, open river valley with gentle slopes and extensive views. Large arable fields on the gentle slopes contrast with smaller fields of wetland pasture along the river banks between Redbourn and St Albans, with a continuous strip of pasture tracking the base of a dry valley between Redbourn and Hemel Hempstead. The study notes that it is unusual to find a river valley that is so broad and open, and that the water meadows south of Redbourn are the most distinctive feature. The study recommends that the landscape character area be conserved and strengthened.
- 6.23 As per 120 of the NPPF, planning policies should "*encourage multiple benefits from both urban and rural land*". Paragraph 130 of the NPPF adds that "*policies should ensure that developments will function well and add to the overall quality of the area [...] are sympathetic to local character and history [...] and create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and wellbeing, with a high-quality standard of amenity for existing and future users*". It is therefore considered that the quality of development and the proximity of schemes to local services and facilities (that is, they are in comfortable walking distance of such facilities) is critical in achieving sustainable and accessible development which meets the needs of the local community.
- 6.24 Although there are no Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) or Special Protection Areas (SPAs) within the Neighbourhood Plan area the majority of the parish falls within the Zone of Influence of the Chiltern Beechwoods SAC in Dacorum Borough and where mitigations for new residential development will be required to ensure the integrity of the SAC is not adversely affected by new planning proposals. Development that results in a net gain of new homes within the Zone of Influence may need a Habitats Regulation Assessment to be approved by Natural England.

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<sup>32</sup> St Albans City and District Council, Landscape Character Area Statements, extracted from Hertfordshire Landscape Character Assessment, 2005.

## **POLICY RED 6: NEW HOUSING SITES**

1. Proposals for major development<sup>33</sup> will need to satisfy policies in the NPPF for development in the Green Belt and rural areas as appropriate. As a minimum, all major development proposals should:
  - a) maximise opportunities to build on brownfield and under-utilised land within the settlement boundary<sup>34</sup>;
  - b) be located in accessible locations which are within an 800m walking distance (equating to a ten-minute walk of an actual walking distance [and not as the crow flies]) of nearby services and facilities;
  - c) be sited and designed so as to avoid exposure by residents, after any mitigation, to significant levels of traffic noise;
  - d) not have a detrimental impact on heritage assets (including nearby locally listed buildings, listed buildings, Conservation Areas and Ancient Monuments);
  - e) be of a scale, mass and form that is consistent with the existing built form or landscape character (as defined in the Redbourn Design Guidance and Codes) and rural uses; and
  - f) not have a detrimental impact on wildlife and provide biodiversity net gain of at least 10% where appropriate.
2. Proposals for development in the Green Belt will be subject to national policy.
3. Development that results in a net gain of new homes and which is located within the zone of influence around the Chiltern Beechwoods SAC<sup>35</sup> may need a HRA to be approved by Natural England.

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<sup>33</sup> See NPPF Glossary

<sup>34</sup> See Local Plan Policies Map

<sup>35</sup> <https://www.stalbans.gov.uk/chilterns-beechwoods-sac>

## 7 SERVICES AND FACILITIES

### Policy Objectives

- 7.1 The policies and projects in this section of the Neighbourhood Plan respond to the following objectives:
- **Objective 4:** Provide new community facilities and recreation space to address the needs of the growing population.
- 7.2 There will be growth in the population over the Plan period as a result of demographic change and new development, which will place additional demand on for leisure activities and wider community facilities in Redbourn. This has been identified by the community during consultation events.

### Leisure centre

- 7.3 The Redbourn Leisure Centre is a key asset serving the population of Redbourn. It supports a number of activities and sports clubs including football, bowls, cricket, dance, gymnastics, netball and fitness. To support a sustainable community and easy accessibility to facilities, it is considered essential to ensure that these existing facilities are retained for sporting and recreational use.



Figure 28: Redbourn Leisure Centre



- 7.4 The St Albans City and District Corporate Plan (2018-2023) states that the Council is committed to *'working with local groups to improve recreation, sport and social opportunities for young people, including those with special needs and promote sporting activities across the District'*. It also commits to developed cultural, sport, leisure and heritage facilities.
- 7.5 The St Albans Playing Pitch Strategy<sup>36</sup> notes that, across the District as a whole, there is currently no spare capacity for community use on any of the artificial pitches (that is, they are all being fully used during the peak period). Indeed, with expected growth across the District and the resulting pressure on sports provision, there is considered to be a requirement for new artificial pitches across the District. Indeed, and in respect of playing pitches, the study notes that in the greatest need is in the 'rest of the district' (i.e.: outside of the larger towns), and that it is possible that new pitches could be accommodated as an expansion of existing facilities.
- 7.6 It should be noted that the Redbourn Leisure Centre is currently consulting on extensive new plans for a variety of sporting facilities, including outdoor leisure facilities such as an all-weather pitch and tennis courts. Any future improvements will need to take have due regard for the Leisure Centre's location within the Green Belt and will need to meet the needs of existing users and residents. Additional parking provision will need to accommodate any future growth and should be sized appropriately.
- 7.7 This could potentially be accommodated on land adjacent to the existing Leisure Centre. If this additional leisure provision replaces existing facilities then it is particularly important that it is suitable for meeting the needs of those existing users that are affected. Relevant considerations will include design, cost and access.

#### **POLICY RED 7: REDBOURN LEISURE CENTRE**

1. Proposals for development that strengthen the role and function of the Redbourn Leisure Centre will be supported. This includes provision of new leisure facilities to support the needs of the community, including, where feasible, new astro-pitches, a skate park and swimming pool.
2. Proposals that would result in the loss of leisure facilities at the Redbourn Leisure Centre will only be supported if alternative and equivalent leisure facilities are provided elsewhere with the Parish.
3. Alternative leisure provision will be required to meet the following criteria:
  - a) The scale of the alternative provision must be at least of an equivalent scale to the existing provision; and
  - b) The alternative site must be at least of equivalent standard in terms of layout to the existing provision; and
  - c) The location of the alternative provision must be generally accessible by foot and within or adjacent to the settlement boundary<sup>37</sup> of Redbourn village.
4. Proposals for alternative provision will be subject to consultation with Sport England.

<sup>36</sup> St Albans City and District Council, January 2019, Local Plan Technical Report: Playing Pitch Strategy Update

<sup>37</sup> See Local Plan Policies Map

## Community facilities and events

- 7.8 The presence and provision of social and community infrastructure is critical to sustaining and meeting the day-to-day needs of local residents, providing access to essential services and facilities, and helping to maintain a high quality of life. Such facilities, which include schools, healthcare, churches, sports and community centres, also have an important role to play in strengthening social networks, sense of community and identity.
- 7.9 Redbourn currently benefits from a range of community services and facilities, which are important to retain. The importance of such facilities has been heightened during the Covid pandemic, providing locally available support functions to the community. All such facilities should be protected from loss. They include:
- Redbourn Village Hall
  - Redbourn Community Library
  - Redbourn Village Museum
  - Redbourn Recreation Centre
- 7.10 Support will be given to proposals that seek to improve existing facilities, or provide new facilities. In all cases the facilities should be accessible to all, with an emphasis placed on good walking and cycling links to these, as well as provision of secure, and dry, cycle parking provision. All facilities should be designed to reflect the character and qualities of the site and local setting, as set out in the Redbourn Design Guidance and Codes.
- 7.11 The Village Hall is located along the High Street but set back from the main building line, with the frontage comprising an area of off-street car parking. This is occasionally used for outdoor events and activities, including markets. As explored in the town centre section of this Neighbourhood Plan (Section 5), support will be given to proposals and projects that make greater use of this space for events and activities as a location at the heart of the High Street, and which might extend to public realm initiatives and greening programmes that help make this an attractive multi-functional space.



Figure 29: Market stalls in the car park outside at Redbourn Village Hall

### **POLICY RED 8: COMMUNITY FACILITIES**

1. Proposals that involve the loss of any space used for community purposes will only be supported where an equivalent replacement for alternative provision is made for that use, and or where the application is supported by material which demonstrates the benefits to the community which outweigh the harm created by loss of that facility.
2. Proposals for new youth facilities will be welcome within the Parish, including such provision at St. Luke's SEN School, subject to those facilities being physically accessible to the community and, where practical, open to the public.
3. Proposals for new or improved community facilities will be supported and should:
  - a) include provision of flexible space that can be used for a variety of community uses;
  - b) be provided in locations that capitalise on opportunities to promote walking, cycling and use of public transport;
  - c) be easily physically accessible to all; and
  - d) respond to local character, design policies and guidance set out in the Neighbourhood Plan and those contained in the Redbourn Design Guidance and Codes.

### **PROJECT RED D: COMMUNITY EVENTS**

1. The Parish Council is keen to explore opportunities for additional community events to be held in Redbourn all year round.
2. In particular, the Parish Council, in collaboration with the Friends of the High Street group, will seek to either develop or support various community groups to provide a diverse programme of community events which will include, but is not limited to, village markets, craft fairs and volunteer-led initiatives. Events aimed for younger people will be especially encouraged. The Parish Council will work closely with local groups and stakeholders to ensure that adequate spaces are available to accommodate these events. Cumberland Gardens is noted as a suitable location for such events.
3. Where it is expected that a large number of users or visitors might attend an event, the Parish Council will seek to engage with the Network Management Team at HCC.

## 8 GETTING AROUND

### Policy Objectives

- 8.1 The policies and projects in this section of the Neighbourhood Plan respond to the following objectives:
- **Objective 5:** Increase walking and cycling movements through improved footpath and cycle path provision.

### Supporting 'active travel'

- 8.2 Redbourn village's rural nature, coupled with the poor public transport links, means that car usage is high. However, engagement with the community has shown that residents would be happy to use alternative means of getting around, be it on foot, by bicycle or by bus, if the necessary infrastructure is in place. Horse riding is also still active within the parish.
- 8.3 The Nickey Line has opened up the potential to cycle to Harpenden and Hemel Hempstead. This, coupled with the presence of The Hub and Bike Loft in Redbourn, has resulted in increased interest in cycling. The community would also like improved cycle linkages with St Albans, the main centre serving Redbourn. In order to create a noticeable shift towards cycling, this should ideally provide cycle paths that are clearly separated from vehicular traffic.



Figure 30: The Bike Loft, Redbourn High Street



Figure 31: Fete du Velo cycling event, Redbourn Common

- 8.4 In 2015, SADC consulted on proposals for a Green Ring, linking existing cycle paths including the Alban Way, to create a ring of cycle routes around the city. Improved links from Redbourn towards St Albans, within the neighbourhood plan area, could meet up with the Green Ring, creating a more comprehensive network of cycle routes. Where possible, these cycle routes should have a dedicated cycle path which is separate from the road network and footpaths, as per national design standards.



- 8.5 In addition, the Nickey Line serves as an important route for children to cycle and walk to Roundwood Park Secondary School in Harpenden, the main secondary school serving Redbourn children. However, in order to access the school it is necessary for users of the Nickey Line to cross both the A5183 Redbourn bypass and the B487 Redbourn Road. Both these crossing points are close to the junctions and are considered by users to be unsafe. A detailed highways assessment needs to be undertaken to establish the safest location and type of crossing point. Such provision could be funded through S106 agreements.



*Figure 32: Existing crossing points on the Nickey Line to be improved – A5183 (top) and B487 (bottom)*

- 8.6 Redbourn is a relatively compact place but, beyond the Nickey Line, existing infrastructure provision is not supportive of travel by foot or by bike. Alongside town-wide interventions and projects intended to support active travel (See 'Project Red E'), proposals for new development should help facilitate walking and cycling, making these more attractive propositions, particularly for short, every day journeys, which include those to the Common and local play parks, the High Street, schools, leisure centre and other community facilities. Where possible, new development should integrate new walking and cycle routes, and link these into existing movement networks. Hertfordshire County Council has, through its Rights of Way Improvement Plan, set out a number of proposed improvements to the walking and cycling (and bridleway) network. Furthermore, The County Council, with St. Albans City & District Council, is in the process of preparing a Local Walking and Cycling Infrastructure Plan. Proposals for development should, as far as possible and where appropriate to the development site, help implement proposals contained within these documents.

#### **PROJECT RED E: WALKING AND CYCLING ROUTES**

1. The Parish has identified the following locations for new and or improved walking and cycling routes, which it is keen to explore further in partnership with relevant delivery organisations including the District and County Council:
  - a) A dedicated walking and cycling route to St Albans, linking up with the Green Ring.
  - b) A dedicated walking and cycling route to Harpenden.
  - c) A dedicated walking and cycling route to Hemel Hempstead.
  - d) Improvements to the crossings of the A5183 and B487 to provide safer access to the Nickey Line. Such improvements should include new pedestrian access points.
  - e) Improvements to walking and cycling routes which provide linkages between Redbourn's residential areas and the High Street, and between the Nickey Line and the High Street.
  - f) General public realm improvements along the High Street that make enhance the quality of the pedestrian environment and which incorporates wayfinding or other features, potentially through public realm works, that strengthen the connectivity and relationship with the Common and Nickey Line.
2. The above are illustrated on Figure 33.
3. Further information on project ideas 5 and 6 listed above are included in Section 5 of the Neighbourhood Plan.
4. Proposals which seek to improve the usage of the Nickey Line for pedestrians and cyclists will generally be supported. Equestrian use of the Nickey Line should be maintained, with off road rights of way facilities and contributions to these for horse-riding sought where appropriate.



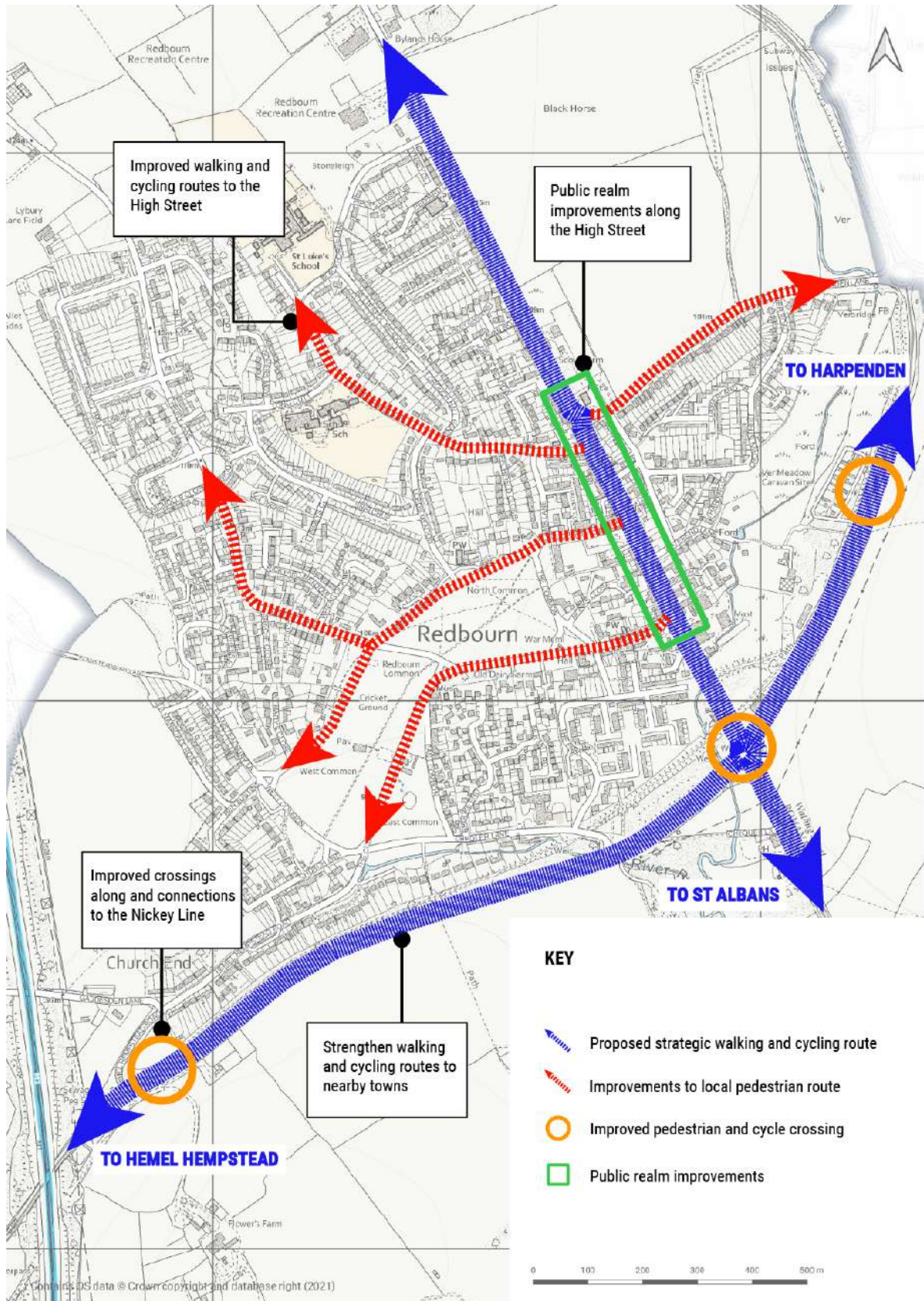


Figure 33: Potential walking and cycling improvements in Redbourn

## **POLICY RED 9: ACTIVE TRAVEL**

1. All applications for major residential and commercial development should demonstrate how they support active travel through delivery of new walking and cycle routes, and or improvements to existing routes, reducing reliance on vehicular movement. New major development will be required to submit Transport Plans in accordance with St Albans City and District Council's Validations Majors Checklist<sup>38</sup>.
2. Where new walking and cycling routes are provided, they must be direct, safe and convenient to use. In particular, the provision of cycle routes which are separated from vehicular traffic will be welcomed. They should be designed for use by all people, of all ages and abilities, including those with baby-buggies, using frames or wheelchairs. Wherever possible, new routes should be dedicated as public rights of way.
3. The layout of proposed development should allow for the natural surveillance of routes through overlooking with active development frontages.
4. Where there are existing walking and cycling routes within or adjacent to a development site, proposals for development are required to show how they link into these networks. Proposals should not result in the loss of existing walking or cycling routes, nor reduce the capacity or safety of that infrastructure. Where possible, development proposals should enhance the safety of existing pedestrian and cycle routes.
5. Where appropriate, proposals for development should implement, as far as practicable, measures within Local Walking and Cycling Infrastructure Plans<sup>39</sup> and most recent edition of the HCC Rights of Way Improvement Plan<sup>40</sup>.
6. Where new cycle routes are provided, they should reflect best practice principles and should be designed such that they can be used in all weather conditions. The design of new routes shall follow guidance set out in DfT Cycle Infrastructure Design LTN 1/20<sup>41</sup>.
7. Proposals for new homes shall provide secure cycle storage assigned to the dwelling. This should be located within or immediately adjacent to the property, fully-enclosed and at ground-level.
8. Proposals for commercial, leisure and community uses should support and enable active travel through inclusion of safe, secure and convenient cycle parking and changing facilities where appropriate. This should include provision of dry and secure cycle parking.
9. The Redbourn Design Guidance and Codes include principles in respect of street design, cycle and parking provision which should be referred to by applicants.

<sup>38</sup> <https://www.stalbans.gov.uk/application-forms-and-validation-checklists>

<sup>39</sup> <https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/about-the-council/consultations/transport-and-highways/lcwips-2022/lcwips-2022.aspx>

<sup>40</sup> <https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/media-library/documents/environment-and-planning/countryside-access-and-management/rights-of-way/improvement-plans/rights-of-way-improvement-plan-201718-202728.pdf>

<sup>41</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/cycle-infrastructure-design-ltn-120>



## Wider transport projects and initiatives

- 8.7 Paragraph 104 of the NPPF recognises that *"transport issues should be considered from the earliest stages of plan-making and development proposals so that [...] opportunities from existing or proposed transport infrastructure and changing transport technology and usage are realised"*. In recognition of this, it is important that residents are given a wide range of sustainable transport choices. A recent Report<sup>42</sup> shows that car sharing has consistently seen double digit growth over the last few years across Europe. Whilst London remains the centre for car sharing in the UK, the focus has started to shift to other regions. As such, it is evident that car sharing schemes are capable of setting the course for a new era of future mobility, and, therefore, acceptance and implementation of such schemes would be beneficial to Redbourn over the Plan period.
- 8.8 The Government is committed, through the 'Road to Zero' Strategy<sup>43</sup>, to half of all new car sales being ultra-low emission vehicles by 2030 (with the sale of all petrol and diesel vehicles phased out by 2040), whilst also rolling-out the necessary infrastructure to support provision of electric vehicles. The National Infrastructure Audit<sup>44</sup> goes further than this and includes recommendations that are based on preparing for the sale of all new cars by 2030 to be electric. More recently, the Government has launched a consultation<sup>45</sup> on proposals to make it mandatory for all new homes to be fitted with an electric car charging point. Support will be given to proposals that include electric vehicular charging points, including those appropriate in public locations and where they are designed to minimise obstruction and visual intrusion. Appropriate locations shall be identified with partners and be taken forward in parallel to public realm improvements along the High Street.

### PROJECT RED F: CAR SHARING

1. The Parish Council welcomes proposals for a community car-sharing scheme in Redbourn. Where proposed, consideration should be given to the location of any car sharing parking spaces such that impacts on pedestrian movement and existing parking provision are minimised. A feasibility study should be undertaken to assess the viability of such a scheme in Redbourn.

### PROJECT RED G: ELECTRIC VEHICLES

1. The Parish Council will seek to identify appropriate locations for communal e-vehicle charging points within the public realm for shared, personal and micro-mobility solutions. These could form part of public realm improvement schemes for the High Street.
2. The charging points should be designed to minimise impacts upon pedestrian circulation and the appearance of the street scene, minimising visual clutter and impacts on any heritage assets, including the character and appearance of conservation areas.

<sup>42</sup> <https://www2.deloitte.com/content/dam/Deloitte/uk/Documents/manufacturing/deloitte-uk-automotive-car-sharing-in-europe.pdf>

<sup>43</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/government-launches-road-to-zero-strategy-to-lead-the-world-in-zero-emission-vehicle-technology>

<sup>44</sup> <https://www.nic.org.uk/our-work/national-infrastructure-assessment/>

<sup>45</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/electric-car-chargepoints-to-be-installed-in-all-future-homes-in-world-first>

## 9 DESIGN

### Policy Objectives

- 9.1 The policies and projects in this section of the Neighbourhood Plan respond to the following objectives:
- **Objective 1:** Retain Redbourn's role as a village with a strong heritage located in a high quality and accessible countryside setting.

### High quality design

- 9.2 Good design has a major role in contributing to quality of life and creating attractive, liveable places. This goes beyond the look of buildings and considers: the mix of uses and activities that help create lively and interesting places; the local character and distinctiveness of a place, reflected through its landscape and building materials for example, contributing to healthy lifestyles by making it easy for people to move on foot and by bike; fostering a sense of community through well designed, functional and attractive public spaces; and enhancing the quality of environment.
- 9.3 The achievement of high quality design is a core principle of the NPPF. It states, at paragraph 126, that *'good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps makes development acceptable to communities'*. The importance of the design of the built environment and its contribution to making better places for people is emphasised. It goes on to note that *'Neighbourhood Plans can play an important role in identifying the special qualities of each area and explaining how this should be reflected in development'* (paragraph 127).
- 9.4 In short, good design will help create high quality, safe and successful places where people enjoy living, working and visiting. This is emphasised in the National Design Guide, which should be referred to by all involved in the planning system when shaping, responding to and considering applications for planning permission. This recognises the importance of local character and the role of the community in the design process. It states that:
- 'Local communities can play a vital role in achieving well-designed places and buildings and making sure there is a relationship between the built environment and quality of life'* (paragraph 17).
- 9.5 For the purpose of this Neighbourhood Plan Design Guidance and Codes have been prepared<sup>46</sup>. This is reflective of the NPPF which encourages the use of codes and guidelines to help deliver quality outcomes for new development. Production of the Design Guide also responds to the new National Model Design Code (January 2021) and the clear expectation from central Government that *'codes and guides are used to inform development proposals to provide maximum clarity about design expectations at an early stage and reflect local character and preferences'*.

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<sup>46</sup> Aecom for Redbourn Parish Council, August 2021, Redbourn Design Guidance and Codes (See Appendix)

- 9.6 The Redbourn Design Guidance and Codes presents a set of principles and codes, advocating a character-led approach to the design of new development which responds to and enhances the existing townscape. Reference to context does not intend to promote the copying of or use of pastiche solutions. It means responding to what is around as inspiration and influence and it could be that a contemporary solution is equally in harmony with the surroundings.
- 9.7 The Redbourn Design Guidance and Codes present a series of character areas (Figure 34) across Redbourn and summarises key features of each in terms of land use, pattern of development, building lines and plot arrangements, boundary treatments, heights and roofline.

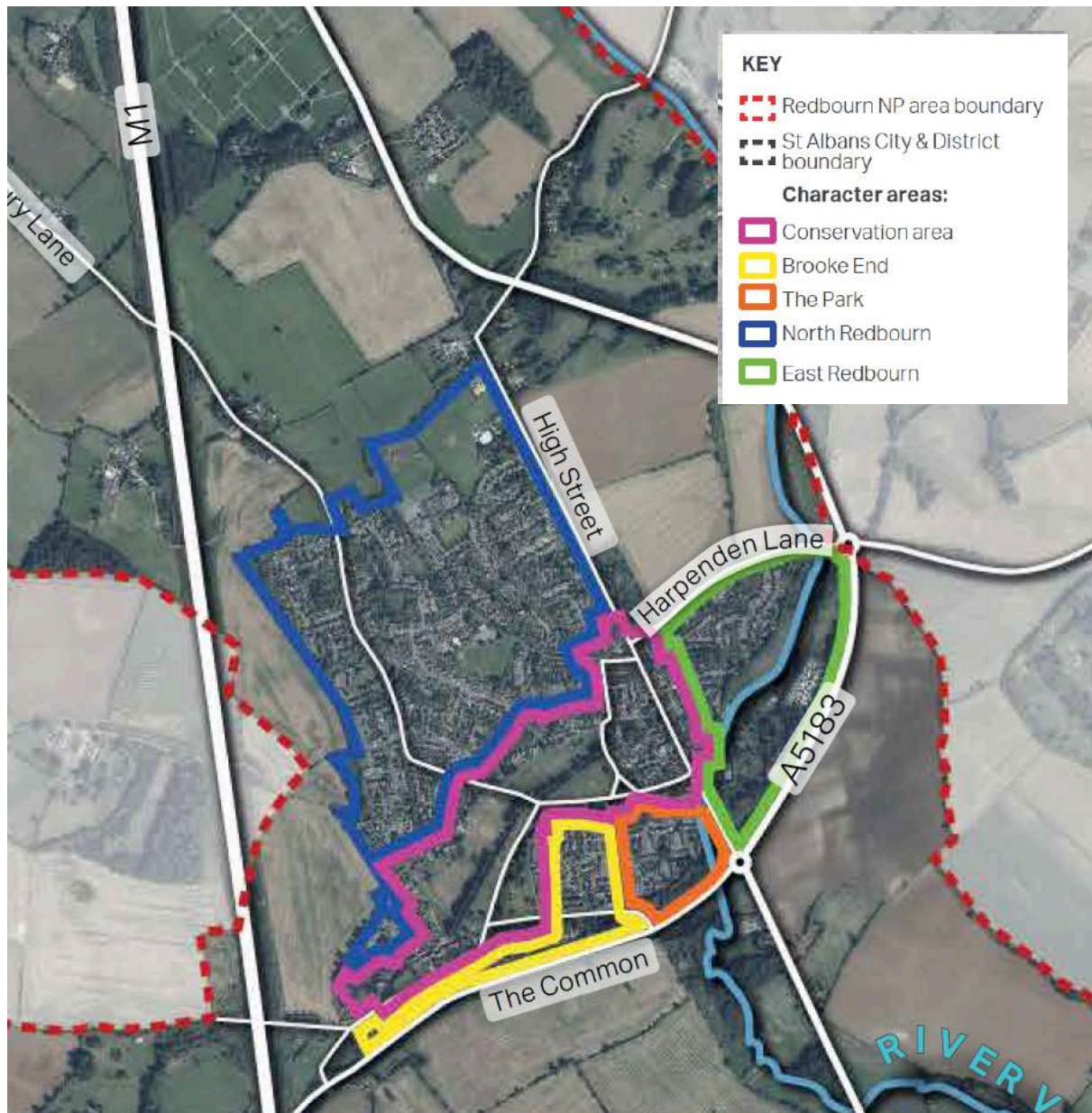


Figure 34: Defined character areas in Redbourn (source: Redbourn Design Guidance and Codes, August 2021)

### **POLICY RED 10: HIGH QUALITY DESIGN**

1. New development in the parish of Redbourn shall contribute to the creation of high quality places through a design-led approach to development underpinned by good practice principles and reflecting a thorough site appraisal. Development proposals shall respond positively to guidance and best practice principles established in the Redbourn Design Guidance and Codes.
2. New developments should be well-integrated and sympathetic to local character. Innovative schemes that respond to and reinterpret local design cues, and which demonstrate an imaginative sense of place whilst respecting surrounding context, are welcome. Applicants for development will be expected to demonstrate how their designs have responded to local character, reflecting the character areas and defining features of each identified in the Redbourn Design Guidelines and Codes.
3. Development in Redbourn shall, where appropriate:
  - a) Reflect the scale and grain of the settlement pattern in the character area it is found in or adjacent to, reflected in development plot size, building heights and materials, rooflines, street enclosure, boundary treatments and building alignments.
  - b) Facilitate walking and cycling through creation of a connected network of streets, connecting where possible with existing routes and desire lines. This includes orientating buildings, features and spaces that support legibility and wayfinding.
  - c) Create active frontages to the street, avoiding blank gable ends, particularly on corner plots. The alignment of buildings should help define the public and private realm, distinguishing back gardens from the street.
  - d) Accommodate car parking in such a way that minimises the visual impact of such provision, maintaining established building lines and being combined with soft landscape measures that reduce the impact of hard standing on the environment and run-off associated with surface water flooding.
  - e) Reflect prevailing building heights across Redbourn (which are generally two-storeys) and be designed such that design features, windows and doors are in proportion with the scale and rhythm of other buildings within that character area.
  - f) Be orientated to maximise solar gain, avoiding provision of single-aspect north facing buildings whilst avoiding overheating.
  - g) Incorporate new open space and landscaping, which should be well integrated with the development and overlooked by active development frontages.



## Sustainable Design

- 9.8 Most carbon dioxide emissions come from heating, cooling and powering buildings. Reducing carbon dioxide emissions and other air pollutants will contribute to efforts aimed at tackling the effects of man-made climate change. This is recognised by the declaration of the Climate Emergency by St Albans City and District Council. At the same time, the Government is planning to introduce a 'Future Homes Standard', requiring new build homes to be future-proofed with low carbon heating and energy efficiencies. It is anticipated that the Future Homes Standards will be implemented by 2025.
- 9.9 Future growth and development in Redbourn represents an opportunity to secure reduced emissions, potentially through the construction of highly energy efficient homes, the provision of decentralised energy networks and the retrofitting of existing homes to reduce their energy use and fuel bills. Buildings should be designed to maximise solar gain and incorporate technologies that maximise the use of energy from renewable sources.
- 9.10 All development in Redbourn will be expected to make use of the best available sustainable design and technology. Proposals for development are expected to minimise the use of resources, mitigate against and be resilient to the impact of climate change. Current sustainability standards for new construction will be used for assessing the sustainability of new, non-residential buildings. This includes those established by BREEAM<sup>47</sup>. For new homes, the Home Quality Mark<sup>48</sup> developed by BREEAM is intended to provide an indication of the quality and environmental performance of those homes. Housebuilders are encouraged to use this assessment method.
- 9.11 The Parish Council is particularly supportive of proposals for new buildings that achieve zero or near zero net energy consumption in line with the Passivhaus Standard<sup>49</sup>. This also aligns with St Albans City and District Sustainability and Climate Crisis Strategy<sup>50</sup>, which seeks to reduce energy consumption from buildings and generate clean energy by "developing a Council-wide construction standard for Council new-builds and refurbishments to ensure that high standards of energy efficiency and sustainability are incorporated into building design and construction".
- 9.12 The Redbourn Design Guidelines and Codes introduces a range of technologies and strategies that could be incorporated to help deliver energy efficiencies and notes that these can be adapted to fit a wide variety of built characters. It is expected that applicants for new development will refer to the Guidelines and Codes. Equally, the guidance is also applicable to those looking to improve the energy efficiency of existing buildings.

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<sup>47</sup> BREEAM UK, 2014, Non-domestic Buildings (United Kingdom), Technical Manual SD5076 4.1

<sup>48</sup> See: <http://www.homequalitymark.com>

<sup>49</sup> Passivhaus is the world's leading fabric first approach to low energy buildings. The core focus of the Passivhaus standard is to dramatically reduce the requirements for space heating and cooling, whilst also creating excellent indoor air quality and comfort levels. See: <http://www.passivhaus.org.uk>

<sup>50</sup>

<https://www.stalbans.gov.uk/sites/default/files/attachments/FINAL%20SADC%20Sustainability%20and%20Climate%20Crisis%20Strategy.pdf>

### **POLICY RED 11: SUSTAINABLE DESIGN**

1. The design and standard of any new development should aim to meet a high level of sustainable design and construction and be optimised for energy efficiency, targeting zero carbon emissions. Encouragement is given to development that accords with Hertfordshire Building Future's Sustainable Design Toolkit<sup>51</sup>.
2. Applicants should refer to the Redbourn Design Guidelines and Code to help inform a design-led approach to energy efficiency that responds positively to the character of the area and environment within which the development or building is located.
3. Innovative approaches to the construction of low carbon homes, including construction to Passivhaus standards, is strongly encouraged where development also complies with other policies of the Development Plan.
4. New developments which incorporate renewable energy sources and EV-charging points are also strongly encouraged. Wherever EV charging points are provided these should be designed to minimise visual clutter, hindrance and hazard to pedestrians and other street users.
5. Where appropriate, proposals for refurbishments and or the retrofitting of existing buildings are encouraged to optimise the energy efficiency of the building, reduce heat loss and install energy saving measures and renewable energy sources. Any alteration to an existing building must be carefully considered to ensure that potential adverse impacts are adequately mitigated.

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<sup>51</sup> <https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/microsites/building-futures/a-sustainable-design-toolkit/sustainable-design-toolkit.aspx>

## Heritage Assets

- 9.13 The NPPF stipulates that the historic environment should be conserved and enjoyed. In accordance with paragraph 200 of the NPPF, “*any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting), should require clear and convincing justification [...] and substantial harm to or loss of grade II listed buildings should be exceptional*”.
- 9.14 Despite being located on a major road (now bypassed), Redbourn has managed to avoid substantial rebuilding within its historic areas and has retained a village character which centres around the extensive Redbourn Common. This rural character is also in part enhanced by the village’s proximity to open farmland. Redbourn includes one Conservation Area which comprises Redbourn Common and the High Street. Within the Conservation Area are concentrations of Grade II listed properties and locally listed buildings. These include St Mary’s Church (Grade I listed), Cumberland House and The Priory (both Grade II\* listed). In addition, The Aubreys Camp is an Iron Age Monument. As noted above, these designated heritage assets benefit from NPPF protection. However, it is important to note that weight should also be applied to non-statutory heritage assets which are equally important to the character and identity of Redbourn, and of which there are many examples in Redbourn. Locally listed buildings are set out in Table 1 below. This will be reviewed and updated over time as appropriate.



Figure 35: The Cricketer’s Pub, Redbourn – a Locally Listed Building

Table 1: Locally Listed Buildings in Redbourn (based on the January 2020 local list)

Church End	3, 8, 14, 18, 20, 45
	Church Hall
Crouch Hall Lane	2-8 (evens)
Crown Street	1, 3, 6, 8, 9, 11, 17-23 (odds), 27-33 (odds)
East Common	7-10, 13-21, 23-28, 30, 35, 37, 43, 44, 46, 47, 51, 53, 56, 57
	Cricketer's Public House
Fish Street	28, 32, 35
Harpenden Lane	2-10 (evens)
Hemel Hempstead Road	Schoolhouse
High Street	2-10 (evens), 17, 19, 30a (Lavender Cottage), 44, 46, 63 (Village Hall), 65, 67, 69, 91-99 (odds), 100-124 (evens)
Lamb Lane	39-42 (consecutive)
Lybury Lane	2, 4 (Heath Lodge)
North Common	1-4, 6-13, 22-25, 28-31, 35, 36
	Greenleas
	Meadow Cottage
	Methodist Chapel
	Old Pastures
	Woollams
Shepherd's Row	1-11 (consecutive)
Waterend Lane	Wall to former Redbourn House
West Common	21, 25, 28



### **POLICY RED 12: NON-DESIGNATED HERITAGE ASSETS**

1. Development proposals shall protect or enhance non-designated heritage assets which contribute to the heritage significance of Redbourn. Non-designated heritage assets include those on the Local List published by St Albans City and District Council and listed in Table 1. The retention and protection of these non-statutory heritage assets must be appropriately secured:
  - a) All new development shall conserve or enhance any affected non-designated heritage assets taking into consideration its significance and in line with the provisions of the NPPF.
  - b) Any development proposals that would affect any of the non-statutory heritage assets, including development within their setting, should be supported by an appropriate heritage statement to enable a balanced judgement regarding the scale of any harm to the significance of the heritage asset.

9.15 The presence of historic buildings and assets in Redbourn, listed or not, contribute enormously to the identity and character of the village and its evolution over time. Local pride in the history of Redbourn should be celebrated, raising local awareness but also forming part of wider strategies to position the town centre and opportunities to capture the economic spending power of visitors to the area (as discussed further in Section 5 of the Neighbourhood Plan). The introduction of plaques, notices and information boards around the village that tell the story of Redbourn and its local history, and which might form part of a wider 'heritage trail', would be supported. Although some such information boards do exist (next to the Village Hall car park for example), they would benefit from being updated and supported by a wider network of material, including scope for interactive elements that allow people to learn more. The Wheathampstead Heritage Trail<sup>52</sup> is a good example of what might be achieved.

### **PROJECT RED H: PROMOTION OF LOCAL HISTORY**

1. The Parish Council will investigate the potential for introducing heritage plaques, information boards and posters around Redbourn, which would include information on the history of local buildings, sites, monuments and past events, drawing upon the County Council's Historic Environment Record and other sources of information.
2. The Parish Council will work with partners, including the Friends of the High Street, Redbourn Village Museum and St Albans and Hertfordshire Architectural and Archaeological Society, to develop ideas for the project, which might extend to a heritage trail around Redbourn.

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<sup>52</sup> See: <http://www.wheathampsteadheritage.org.uk/>

## 10. NEXT STEPS

- 10.1 This is the submission version Neighbourhood Plan for Redbourn. It has been subject to a period of formal consultation (known as 'Regulation 14' consultation) and, following appropriate amendments reflective of comments received, has been submitted to St Albans City and District Council who will start the 'examination process'.
- 10.2 St Albans will formally consult on the submission version of the Neighbourhood Plan and appoint an independent examiner to review the Plan and any comments made in response to it. Following this the Examiner will issue a report to St Albans advising whether:
- The Plan should proceed to referendum.
  - The Plan should proceed to referendum subject to modification.
  - The Plan should not proceed to referendum.
- 10.3 For the Examiner to advise that the Plan proceed to referendum it will need to be demonstrated that the Plan meets what are called the 'Basic Conditions'. These include showing that the Plan is in general conformity with higher order policies and helps achieve the aims of sustainable development.
- 10.4 St Albans will organise the referendum. All people of voting age in the Parish are eligible to vote on whether the Plan should be brought into force ('made') or not. If more than 50% of all people who turnout vote in favour of making the Plan, then it will become part of the suite of planning policies used by St Albans City and District Council to help shape and determine planning applications in the Parish.

## 11 NON-POLICY ACTIONS

- 11.1 St Albans City and District Council is not currently a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) charging authority. Until such time as CIL is adopted the Council will continue to negotiate Section 106 agreements with applicants that provides funds or works to make development more acceptable in planning terms. The 'Planning Obligations Toolkit for Hertfordshire' provides guidance provides information on the approach to planning obligations at the County level.
- 11.2 Through production of the Neighbourhood Plan and in consultation with the community a list of non-policy projects has been identified. These are:
- Restoration and Conservation of River Red
  - Tree Planting and Re-Wilding Initiatives
  - Community Events
  - Walking and Cycling Routes (further detail also provided below)
  - Car Sharing Scheme
  - Pedestrianising the High Street during Large Community Events
  - Promotion of Local History
- 11.3 In addition, a range of wider initiatives have been identified and are set out in the table below. These are projects towards which funding, either by way of a Section 106 agreement or through other arrangements, including funding streams available through partner organisations, might be directed.

**Table 11.1: Non-land use issues to be addressed**

Issue	Possible actions	Lead agencies and partner
<b>Broadband</b>		
Ensure that all new developments have broadband connectivity	Engage with local service providers to ensure broadband infrastructure is provided in new builds	Internet providers / Herts CC
<b>Health</b>		
<p>The St Albans City and District Infrastructure Delivery Plan states that many GP practices are over capacity and cannot accommodate patient growth, thus resulting in a deficit in surgery space.</p> <p>Please note, this information will be kept under review and updated as part of the production of the new local plan.</p>	Keep a dialogue going with the Health Centre and work in partnership to look for potential opportunities to extend the Health Centre and increase the number of GPs. All existing healthcare facilities (doctors, dentists, pharmacists, opticians and physiotherapists) should be retained. Support existing outreach programme and volunteering in the village.	Redbourn Health Centre/ St Albans District Council/ Redbourn Parish Council

Issue	Possible actions	Lead agencies and partner
<b>Education</b>		
Pressure for school places as a result of the cumulative need arising from new development in urban areas.	As and when new development comes forward, the need for school places will be reviewed and any resulting requirement for new school space determined through discussion and agreement with Herts County Council as local education authority.	Herts County Council  Hertfordshire Education Authority  Department for Education
<b>Getting Around</b>		
Speeding in specific areas of Redbourn	Encourage volunteers from the village to work with the Police with equipment provided by Hertfordshire Constabulary to deter speeding motorists.  Implement a 20mph village-wide speed restriction, with appropriate speed reductions design features and interventions implemented.	Hertfordshire Constabulary, Redbourn Parish Council, Hertfordshire County Council
Management of car parking	Car parking in the village is an issue and identifying additional car parking is needed.  Undertake a feasibility study to establish whether a Park and Pay system could be introduced along Redbourn High Street (where only those not using any of the High Street premises are required to pay).	Redbourn Parish Council/SADC/Herts CC
Pedestrian/cycle safety	Improved access along Nickey Line from Redbourn to Harpenden, specifically at the junction of the A5183 but also across the B487	Redbourn Parish Council; Hertfordshire County Council
Dedicated cycle route to St Albans	Identify route options, start and finish points and type of provision	Redbourn Parish Council; Hertfordshire County Council
Rights of way	Where eligible, based on continued public use, to record the following routes as Public Rights of Way: ) The informal path between Tassell Hall and Redbourn, b) the route from the southern end of the adopted Bettespool Meadow via the unadopted Crouch Hall Gardens to Crouch Hall Lane, and c), the unadopted footpath and road Aysgarth Road	Redbourn Parish Council; Hertfordshire County Council



<b>Issue</b>	<b>Possible actions</b>	<b>Lead agencies and partner</b>
	between Bettespool Meadow and Dunstable Road	
Footpath access	Upgrading of existing permissive footpath from Blackhorse Lane to Redbourn Leisure Centre to a public right of way (PROW)	Redbourn Parish Council; Hertfordshire County Council
Footpath access	Extend proposed Blackhorse Lane-to-Redbourn Leisure Centre PROW northwards through the Leisure Centre grounds to join the existing PROW Redbourn FP16 which runs from Dunstable Road to FP3 along the rear of St Luke's School.	Redbourn Parish Council; Hertfordshire County Council
Improvements to existing road network	Working with developers, Hertfordshire County Council's highways team and Highways England, improvements to the existing road network will be sought, especially in areas which are likely to be subject to increased road usage as a result of new developments coming forward	Redbourn Parish Council; Hertfordshire County Council; Highways England
Public transport	Support increasing the frequency of existing services	Hertfordshire County Council and local bus operators
<b>Environment and Community</b>		
Provision for young people	The Parish Council will liaise with local youth groups to establish what the specific needs of younger generations are. This could include the provision of a skate park/off-road cycle track and or additional community events which cater to young people.	Redbourn Parish Council; Redbourn Leisure Centre; Playing Fields Trust.

## **APPENDIX 1: LOCAL GREEN SPACES**

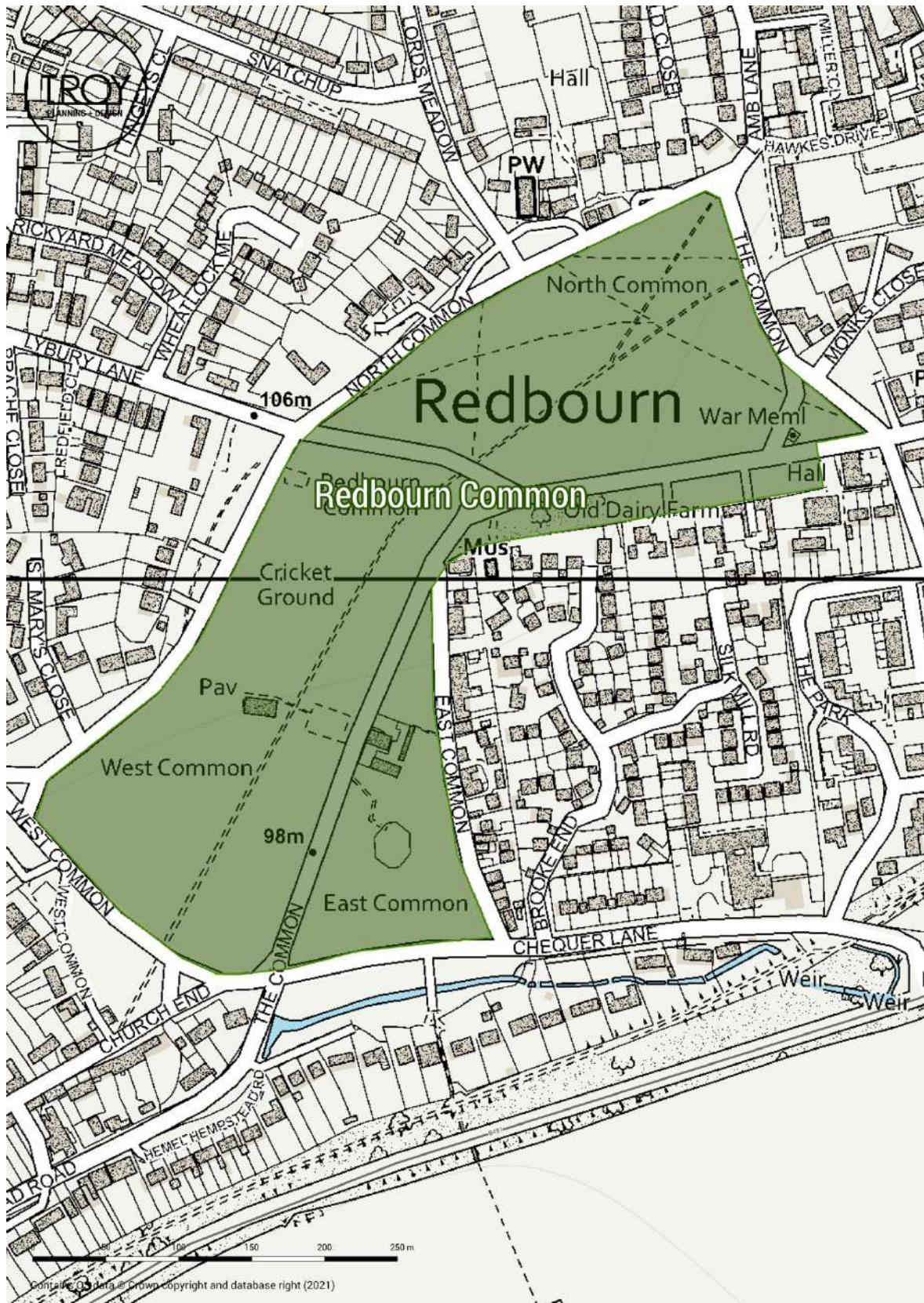


Figure 36: Redbourn Common



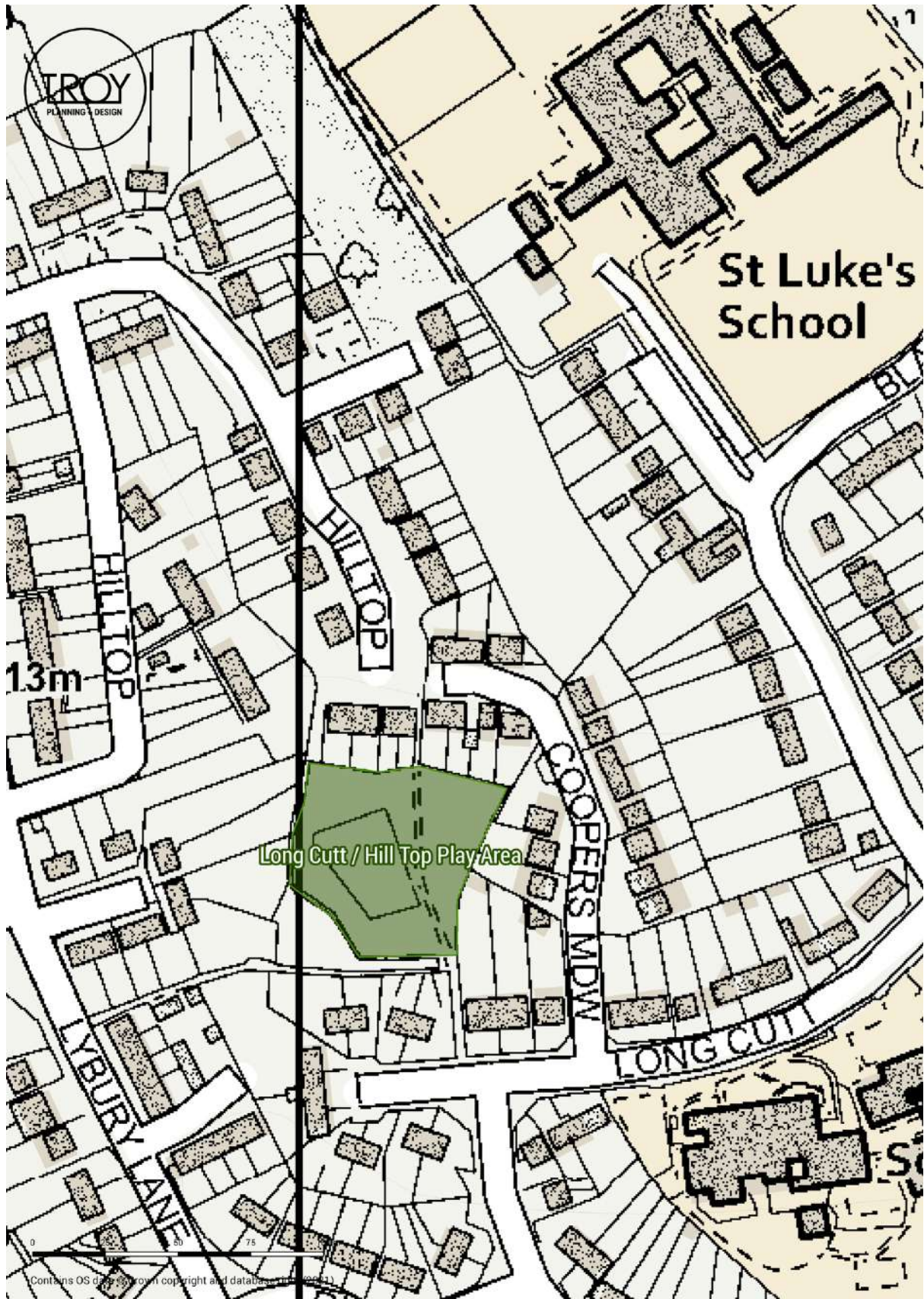


Figure 37: Long Cutt/Hill Top Playing Area





Figure 38: Holts Meadow



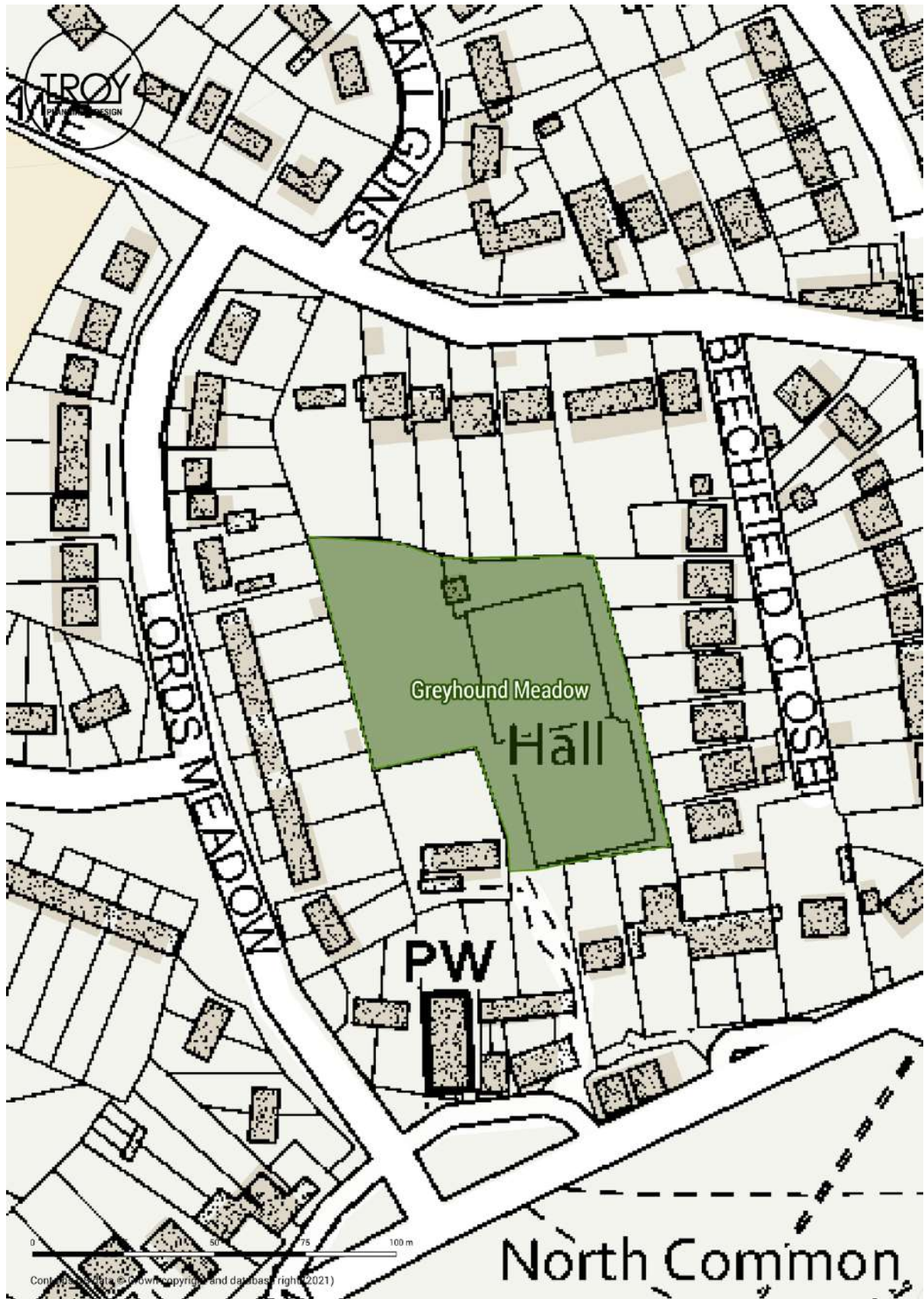


Figure 39: Greyhound Meadow

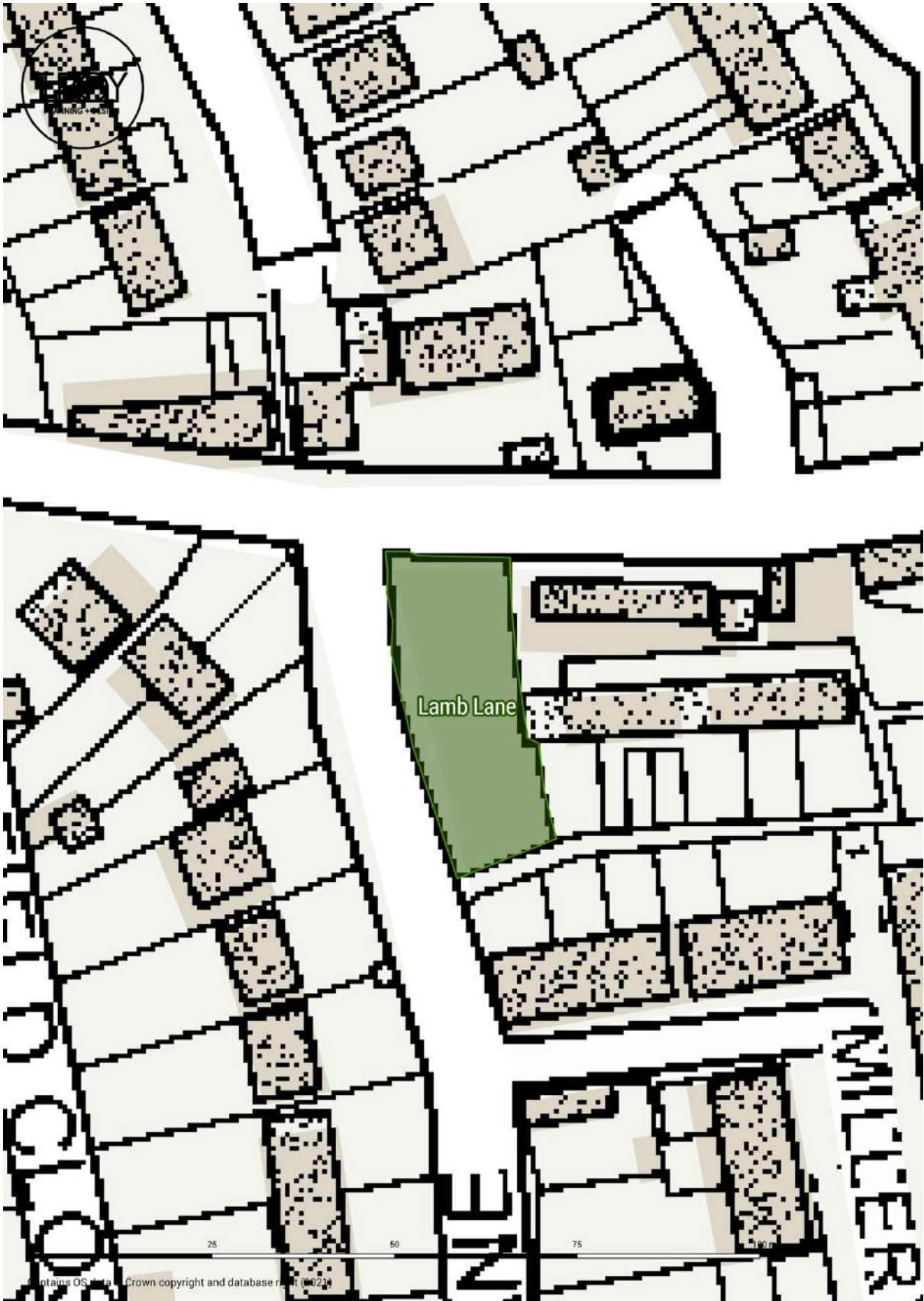


Figure 40: Lamb Lane





Figure 41: Nicholls Close and Ridgedown





Figure 42: Cumberland Gardens

## **APPENDIX 2: DESIGN GUIDANCE AND CODES**

See free-standing document, also available online via the Redbourn Parish Council website.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

Redbourn Parish Council would like to thank everyone who participated in consultation and engagement events to help shape and inform the Neighbourhood Plan.

We are also grateful to members of the Neighbourhood Planning Steering Group, who have committed their time, energy and passion to preparing the Neighbourhood Plan and helping to shape a better future for Redbourn.

We would also like to thank consultants Troy Planning + Design and Navigus Planning for their help in preparing the Neighbourhood Plan.

Redbourn Parish Council  
Neighbourhood Plan, 2020-2038  
Referendum Version, January 2023



Redbourn Parish Council  
Redbourn Parish Centre  
The Park  
Redbourn  
St Albans  
Herts, AL3 7LR

<https://www.redbourn-pc.gov.uk/>

01582 794832