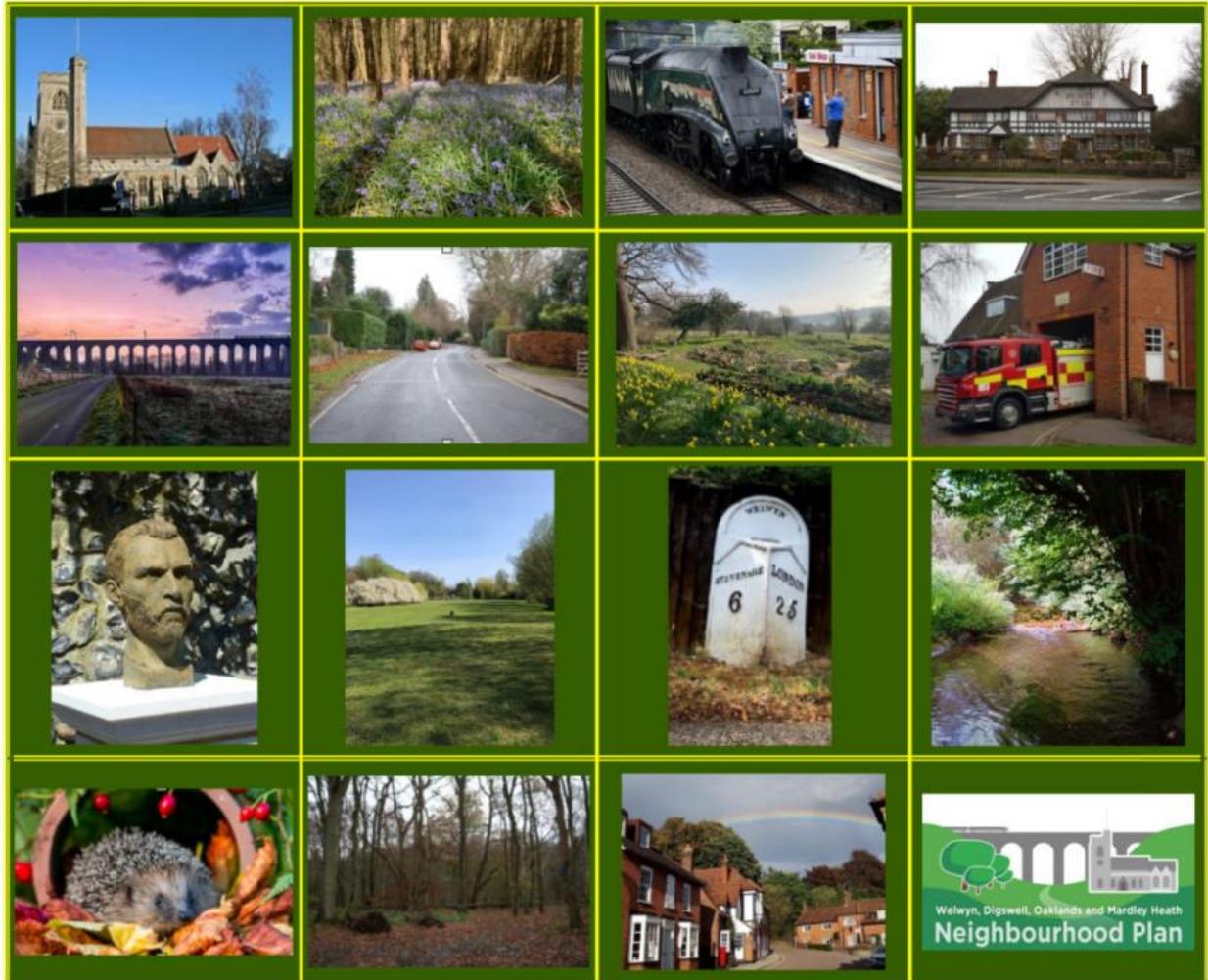

Welwyn Parish Neighbourhood Development Plan 2025-2036



for
Welwyn, Digswell, Oaklands and Mardley Heath



Welwyn Parish Council



Front Cover:

Photographic collage (left-to-right, top-to-bottom):

1. St Mary's Church, *Welwyn*
2. Harmer Green Woods in Spring, *Oaklands*
3. A4 Pacific locomotive "Union of South Africa" at *Welwyn North Station, Digswell*
4. The North Star pub restaurant, Great North Road (B197), *Oaklands*
5. Digswell Viaduct early morning, *Digswell*
6. New Road, *Digswell*
7. Danesbury Park Fernery, view showing grotto, bridge and planting by volunteers, *Welwyn*
8. Welwyn Fire Station, Hertford Road, *Welwyn*
9. Vincent van Gogh bust by Anthony Padgett, alongside Bridge Cottage Surgery, *Welwyn*
10. Singlers Marsh *Welwyn*
11. Milestone on Church Street, *Welwyn*
12. River Mimram, at Fulling Mill Lane, *Welwyn (with acknowledgement to Flickr)*
13. A local resident *at home*
14. Mardley Heath
15. Church Street, towards Wendover Lodge, from Mill Lane, *Welwyn,*
16. The Welwyn Parish Neighbourhood Plan logo (*designed by Councillor Mark Castle, WPC*)

With thanks to all the talented local photographers who have contributed their works on various occasions including to Welwyn Village News and Welwyn and Oaklands Chat Facebook pages

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Foreword

This Plan sets out a vision for the area that reflects the thoughts, feelings and aspirations of local people and states objectives, policies and projects on key themes: planning, development and housing; travel and transport; environment; heritage; and living and working in the Parish, through to 2036.

We all believe our Parish, with its distinct settlements of Welwyn, Digswell, Oaklands and Mardley Heath, is a wonderful area. Each settlement and its community is different, with varied countryside: farmland, woodland, heathland and parkland. Welwyn and Digswell in particular have a long and unique heritage stretching back to Domesday Book and earlier.

The Parish Council has partnered with local organisations and volunteers to create this Plan. By working together to implement and maintain it as a live document, we will make our Parish an even better place to live, work, relax, enjoy and bring up families.

Welwyn Parish Council

1. INTRODUCTION & BACKGROUND

1.1 Neighbourhood Development Plans

The Government gave communities via the Localism Act 2011, the right to shape development in their areas by producing a Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP, also known as a Neighbourhood Plan or NP). The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)¹ 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.”*

NPs describe how those who live and work in an area believe that area should be developed in the future; with a “made”² Plan, a parish or town council can articulate formally and publish those ideas and preferences. The aim of this NP is to: -

- Set out a shared vision for Welwyn Parish over the Plan period (to 2036).
- Encourage sustainable development in accordance with the varying character of the Parish across its main settlements, which accords with the needs and wishes of the local community and which is compliant with the NPPF and in general conformity with the strategic policies of Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council (WHBC)³.
- Influence where new homes, shops, offices and other developments should be built in the Parish and what those new buildings should look like.
- Provide a legally binding *“.... practical framework within which decisions on planning applications can be made with a high degree of predictability and efficiency”* in accordance with the NPPF Core Principles.
- Influence the infrastructure, facilities and amenities that support the area.
- Identify and protect important local open (green) spaces, the general environment and other local amenities.

This Plan has been prepared under the authority of and published by Welwyn Parish Council (WPC) and is compliant with provisions in the Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council Local Plan (WHBC or WH LP). It will help to ensure development is aligned with the wishes of local residents and is sympathetic to local needs. It declares our preferences, including styles of building and will enable our area to be shaped in the manner that those who live here would prefer.

1.2 Plan Period & Coverage

This NP covers the period from 2025 to 2036. The Inspector for the WHLP determined that the Local Plan must be revised within 3 years from the date of its adoption, in order to include an additional 1800 dwellings to meet the Fully Objectively Assessed Housing Need (FOAHN) of 15,200 dwellings⁴ in the 20-year period from 2016 up to 2036. Therefore this NP may require modification to align and be compliant with any Local Plan revision⁵ that impacts upon our Parish. In October 2020, WPC was confirmed as a “relevant body”⁶ and the Welwyn

¹ December 2024 version.

² “made” in this context means agreed by an independent Examiner, voted for by a simple majority of residents at a referendum and then formally adopted by the Local Planning Authority (in this case, WHBC).

³ As determined in the LP, approved by WHBC on 10 October 2023

⁴ The FOAHN for Welwyn Hatfield was the subject of considerable debate over the compilation/examination period of the LP; following the 2024 General Election, the number may be further revised.

⁵ WHBC has decided to produce a new Local Plan rather than revise the original; WPC will consider if changes are required to this NDP as a result, once the Local Plan has been published for consultation.

⁶ By the WHBC Head of Planning, as authorised by Schedule 9 Part 1 Paragraph 61G (2) (a) of the Localism Act 2011

Parish area was designated as a neighbourhood area⁷. The boundary of the area covered by this Plan is the area of Welwyn Civil Parish, as shown at Map 1 in Appendix 1.

1.3 “Fit” with the Planning System

Basic conditions for a NP, specified by law, are that it must be:

- appropriate, having regard to national policy (such as the NPPF);
 - contribute to the achievement of sustainable development (defined in the NPPF);
 - in general conformity with the strategic policies in the development plan for the local area (i.e. in the WHBC Local Plan);
 - compatible with human rights requirements and any remaining EU obligations post-Brexit.
- An assessment of how this NP meets these conditions may be found in the *Basic Conditions Statement*, one of the Evidence Base documents.

The NP must not contradict the WHBC LP but it can consider wider matters than housing development and indicate more general wishes. It cannot unilaterally decide on aspects such as roads and footpaths but it can endeavour to influence details within these areas and in the over-arching plans such as Hertfordshire County Council’s (HCC) Local Transport Plan (LTP) and the Growth & Transport Plans (GTPs).

1.4 Plan Structure

The Plan is divided into various sections:

- An Introduction; a description of the processes for its creation, control and management; and a brief description of our Parish⁸;
- An explanation of the Vision for the future of our Parish; the Principles underpinning that Vision; and the Plan’s Core Objectives in delivery of that Vision;
- Individual areas containing Policy and Project detail, together with justification evidence and an outline Implementation Plan for those policies and projects;
- Appendices containing additional detail on certain areas;
- A Bibliography containing a summary of the supporting data and other reference material; a Glossary of abbreviations and terms used in the Plan; and Acknowledgements to the information providers and supporters.

1.5 Strategic Context For The Plan

The Welwyn Hatfield Borough Local Plan (2016–2036), adopted in October 2023, identifies that the Borough’s full objectively assessed housing need cannot be met within the adopted plan period and commits the Council to an early review of the Local Plan.

That review is currently underway and is expected to consider how and where additional sustainable development should be accommodated across the Borough in order to meet identified housing needs.

Welwyn Parish is recognised within the settlement hierarchy of the adopted Local Plan as capable of accommodating sustainable growth. It is therefore acknowledged that, beyond existing site allocations and what may reasonably be expected from windfall development and conversions, further development within the Parish may be required through the Local Plan review process.

⁷ As allowed by Part 2 Paragraph 5 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012.

⁸ More detail about the Parish can be found in the Evidence Base document *Parish Portrait*.

Meeting future development needs may have implications for existing Green Belt boundaries, which can only be considered and determined through the preparation and examination of the Borough Local Plan.

This Neighbourhood Plan does not allocate additional development sites beyond those identified in the adopted Local Plan. However, its policies are intended to provide a positive and flexible framework to guide the form, quality and sustainability of development that may come forward in the future, ensuring that any growth within the Parish is planned in a coordinated, locally informed and sustainable manner.

1.6 Sustainability Appraisal

Managed by the policies in the WHBC LP and this NP, growth at allocated sites is considered sustainable given population size and infrastructure needs. The NPPF recognises three dimensions constituting sustainable development⁹ in planning terms:

- Economic: contributing to building a strong, responsive and competitive economy;
- Social: supporting a strong, vibrant and healthy community;
- Environmental: contributing to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment and heritage.

To achieve sustainable development, a thoughtful and sensitive approach that meets the Parish's housing need and contributes proportionately to the overall WH need is required, but in so-doing does not needlessly damage the environment or undermine the social fabric or the rural nature of the Parish. Residents understand and accept that some new housing is needed, especially affordable housing: to maintain a strong, vibrant, healthy community and enable young people and young families to live here. But they also feel strongly that the very qualities which make the Parish such a lovely place to live must be protected. Therefore, this Plan seeks to encourage sustainable development that supports these aims while reflecting community-wide aspirations, observations and concerns¹⁰.

The NPPF states at paragraph 7: "*the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development*" and summarises the objective of sustainable development as "*meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs*". We agree with the Sustainability Assessment (SA) for the sites¹¹ in our Parish allocated for development in the Local Plan: two in Oaklands, three in Welwyn and none in Digswell. This NP does not promote any further sites for development and does not advance any commercial development; it seeks to preserve the areas currently designated as Urban Open Land, Local Nature Reserves and Local Wildlife Sites, and seeks to define and have recognised additional areas as Local Green Spaces. Therefore this NP does not require a separate SA¹².

For new developments, developers will be required to prepare plans which seek to change travel habits, support local ecology and encourage sustainable living, including:

- support initiatives to encourage the use of local shops;
- facilitate and support recycling, including commercial waste;
- encourage and facilitate walking, cycling, horse-riding and public transport use;

⁹ Sustainable development is about positive growth, making progress for this and future generations,

¹⁰ 76% of all respondents aged 16+ in our NP survey believed a NP which planned for growth, was important.

¹¹ In the approved version of the WHBC LP, two sites in Oaklands were combined to be treated as one development, due to site access restrictions; this meant a total of 5 sites across the Parish.

¹² See also *Welwyn Neighbourhood Plan Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) & Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) Screening Opinion Report July 2024*, by WHBC

- encourage reduction in energy and water use and promote alternative energy sources;
- allocate areas in a development site to promote wildlife, wild flowers and where appropriate, be supportive of “Green Corridors”;
- support the Parish’s green (and blue) infrastructure.

WPC has followed a similar direction to many other parish councils, in declaring a Climate Emergency. It is currently pursuing various local projects and initiatives within the Council and supporting and actively pursuing measures in collaboration with others, to alleviate the impact of Climate Change.

2. PROCESS SUMMARY

2.1 Developing the Plan

WPC established a Working Group of Parish Councillors whose initial activity was to determine if a NP would be supported. Residents were asked, via a simple questionnaire and briefing in *Welwyn News*¹³ if they would support the creation of a Parish NP, or not and if they would be prepared to help produce it. 243 positive replies were received of 245 and over 70 people sought involvement in the work.

Once the decision to go ahead had been taken, the Working Group was expanded¹⁴ and retitled a Steering Group, reporting back to the Full Parish Council. The Steering Group co-ordinated individual Task Teams (which were formed to research and draft the details for each aspect) and critically examined the full draft plan and supporting documents before passing to the Full Council for agreement to wider scrutiny. An editorial sub-committee examined the consolidated text for clarity, overlap and relevance.

2.2 Community Engagement & Consultation

A key initial task was to devise and undertake a major survey¹⁵ of residents. Over 4000 paper forms were delivered to households and businesses and the survey was also accessible online via *Google Forms*; 1132 responses were received and that 28% response rate gave a confidence level of 95% ± 2.4%. The survey results shaped the detail of the NP. Various articles in *Welwyn News*, the WPC Chair's letter in the *Welwyn Magazine*¹⁶ and updates at the Annual Parish Meeting, monthly WPC Full Council¹⁷ meetings and other gatherings, kept residents informed as to progress.

Informal consultation included Open Evenings (including one specifically for local businesses) and daytime "drop-in" sessions, all advertised on local social media sites, the Parish Council web site and noticeboards and items in various newsletters. The consolidated draft was subject to informal discussion with statutory bodies and other identified stakeholders. After their comments had been incorporated, the revised draft was offered for formal consultation under Regulation 14 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012.¹⁸

¹³ *Welwyn News*: a newsletter published by WPC and delivered free to all households in the Parish, with 4 editions per year.

¹⁴ This group comprised Parish Councillors, other residents and members of both WPAG (Welwyn Planning and Amenity Group) and WPPG (Welwyn Parish Plan Group).

¹⁵ Full details of the survey and its results are given in the Evidence Base document *Survey Report*.

¹⁶ *Welwyn Magazine*: a subscription magazine produced under the aegis of St Mary's Church, with 10 editions per year and also available for purchase at certain shops in the area.

¹⁷ Open to the public; dates are published in advance for the whole year; agendas and minutes are available via the WPC website.

¹⁸ Full details of the consultations are given in the Evidence Base document *Consultation Statement*.

3. THE PARISH

3.1 Brief Description

The civil Parish of Welwyn was designated in 1894. Its main settlements are: the villages of Welwyn and Digswell¹⁹ (both mentioned in Domesday Book), the mainly 20thC settlement of Oaklands and the largely “returned to nature”²⁰ area of Mardley Heath; for more detail see *Parish Portrait*. These settlements are separated and surrounded by the fields, open spaces and woodlands of the green belt (see Map 2 at Appendix 1) and from:

- Welwyn Garden City, by the River Mimram, the old Lockleys estate and Sherrardspark Wood;
- Woolmer Green (which pre-2000 was part of Welwyn Parish), by the GNR²¹ line and Mardley Heath;
- Codicote; by the River Mimram;
- Ayot St Peter; by minor roads, fields and woodland.

Residents value the close connection to the surrounding countryside, the historic built environment and the overall landscape. This connection and the overall visual amenity are furthered by reasonable pedestrian and cycle access and interesting local views of the area.

3.2 Some Parish Statistics²²

The total number of households is 3741 (including those outside the main settlement boundaries) and within the main settlements, Welwyn village: 1801; Digswell: 633 and Oaklands & Mardley Heath: 1213.

- 29% of households have dependent children living in them; 11% have non-dependent children;
- 24% are people living alone; 17% are couples without children (no children or grown up and moved away).; 30% of households have at least one adult aged over 65.
- 59% of adults over 16 (excluding full-time students) are “economically active”; 12% are self-employed; 28% are retired; fewer than 2% are unemployed. Of working adults, 51% work mainly from home.

The 2021 Census showed that 10% of the adult residents were aged 16-25; 20% aged 26-45; 30% aged 46-65; and 24% 65 and over with 7% aged 80 and over. The 2021 Survey results showed the equivalent numbers were: 10% aged 16-25; 12% aged 25-44; 31% aged 45-64; 35% aged over 65, with 8% over 80. This is broadly in line with the census data, although in the survey, those over 65 may be over-represented and those under 25 may be under-represented. The percentage change in major age groups from the 2011 to the 2021 Census was: ≤ 15 years: +5%; 16 to 64 years: +8% and ≥ 65 years: + 20%.

The number of bedrooms in houses was reported as: 5%: 1 bedroom; 18%: 2 bedrooms; 30%: 3 bedrooms; 47%: 4 or more bedrooms

¹⁹ The original mediaeval Digswell village is now part of WGC (the Digswell Park area); the current (“new”) Digswell is the mid-19thC - mid-20thC development primarily around Welwyn North station (the area was originally called “High Welwyn”). The much older hamlet of Digswell Water is mediaeval in origin but contiguous with the “new” Digswell.

²⁰ Following the cessation of gravel extraction in the mid-20thC

²¹ Great Northern Railway, now the East Coast Main Line

²² 2021 Census data. These numbers were compiled by the Planning and Data Analysis officer of the WHBC Planning Department to whom the Steering Group express their thanks.

9% of households had no car or van; 91% had at least 1; 40% had 2; 19% had 3 or more. The Survey results showed that: 2.7% had no car or van, 47% had 2; 18% had more than 2

4. PRINCIPLES & VISION

The responses to our extensive survey led to the establishment of a set of Principles which helped determine our Vision. Residents recognised and wanted their Parish to remain essentially village-residential, with small-medium sized settlements, interspersed with areas of woodland and open space²³ and with industry located outside. The Principles devised²⁴ were:

- **Continue the individual distinctive characters of each of the settlements, and their separation**
- **Preserve the rural and green environment**
- **Sustain the main settlements, each with a compact “village feel”**
- **Sustain the close relationship between countryside and settlements**
- **Sustain and enhance transport and other local facilities**

These principles are to be supported by an approach that:

- **Plans for the future:** addresses short term issues while maintaining a long term view
- **Builds on our community spirit:** maximises engagement, minimises estrangement and fosters a friendly approach
- **Showcases the Parish:** develops a place which residents are passionate about, where they want to live and want to showcase to visitors
- **Leaves a legacy:** enables planning for future generations

So our **Vision for Welwyn Parish to 2036** (and potentially beyond) became:

A visually, culturally, and socially attractive Parish, with excellent services, facilities and amenities, offering a high quality of life in locations where families can live and prosper in a sustainable environment.

Implications from that Vision are:

- People will continue to want to live in, and move into, the Parish;
- Developments will be sympathetic to the locale;
- The identity of the Parish as a whole, and of individual settlements, will be strengthened.
- There will be varied Community activities and a range of local service-related and small business work available within, for those not wishing to commute out;
- Those who have grown up in the Parish will be able to afford to stay as young adults and families. There will also be opportunities for older members of the community to remain in the area that they consider as home, by downsizing into quality local accommodation.
- A range of excellent public services across education, healthcare, play and general leisure will be available for all residents.
- The ecologically-rich rural setting, heritage assets and attractive features that have helped to shape and support our community to-date, will be safeguarded for future generations.
- Sustainable transport modes will be emphasised with a focus on pedestrians and cyclists;
- Traffic flow will be managed to minimise impact on the communities and conducted away from settlement centres wherever possible; enhanced road safety and a high degree of isolation from noise and other pollutants and will be afforded.

²³ This could be heathland, parkland or farmland; what was vital to residents was that it was accessible and not built upon.

²⁴ The detail behind the Principles is given in the Evidence Base document *Supplementary Information*.

5. OBJECTIVES & POLICIES

5.1 Objectives

The following Objectives are defined, which state broadly **what** will be done to achieve that vision:

Objective 1: Enable the building in the Parish, of well-designed and sympathetic housing developments

Objective 2: Promote the environment; support actions to combat the climate emergency.

Objective 3: Highlight concerns and champion solutions, for local travel and transport.

Objective 4: Promote and enable the well-being of residents, including better co-ordinated and wider coverage of health support, particularly for older residents

More detail behind each objective may be found in *Supplementary Information*.

5.2 Policies & Projects

These Objectives led to establishing:

For proposals requiring planning consent, Policies for land use and development management on **how** to deliver our vision, each policy advancing one or more Objectives:²⁵

Policies are depicted in **blue shaded** boxes

Projects represent features the community wants, but are wider aspects than traditional planning policy can affect or implement or are aspirational. They relate to the Objectives, forming an important part of the Plan and are codified as Projects; where appropriate, some are included in the appendices and others within the main body of the report.

Projects are depicted in **orange shaded** boxes

A Design Principle and Guidance document has been prepared and is an appendix to this Neighbourhood Plan, the documents supports the implementation of the Welwyn Neighbourhood Plan.

Design Principles and Guidance are depicted in **purple shaded** boxes

Each Policy and Project is accompanied by justification²⁶ and structured under the major themes identified by the community in the survey; each lists the Objective(s) supported:

- Planning, Development & Housing.
- Transport & Travel.
- Environment; Climate Emergency; Energy.
- Heritage.

²⁵ In general conformity with WHBC Strategic Policies.

²⁶ Much of the detailed data justifying the need can be found in the Evidence Base documents (see *Bibliography*).

The following aspects do not involve planning-related policies²⁷, they are detailed in Appendices:

- Living in the Parish: Health & Well-Being; Culture; Crime & Security; Shopping.
- Infrastructure: Education; Utilities; Council Services.

5.3 Use of Policies & Design Principles

The Planning Policies and Design Principles are intended as tools to secure context-driven, high-quality development in the Parish. It is envisaged that the information will be used in different ways by the different participants in the planning and development process, as summarised below.

Participants	How they will use the Information
Applicants, Developers and landowners	As a guide to Community expectations on design, allowing a degree of certainty: they will be expected to follow the guidance as planning consent is sought.
Local Planning Authority	As a reference point, embedded in policy, against which to assess planning applications: the guidance should be discussed with applicants during any pre-application discussions.
Parish Council	As a guide when commenting on planning applications, ensuring compliance with the Policies and Design Principles.
Community organisations	As a tool to promote community-backed development and to inform comments on planning applications.
Statutory consultees	As a reference point when commenting on individual planning applications.

An important use is as part of a process of involvement that takes account of local preferences and expectations of design quality. In this way the policies can help to facilitate discussions on the various topics that should aid understanding and balancing of key issues.

²⁷ They represent non-planning policy for WPC or are aspirational, and thus are locally-arranged or co-ordinated projects.

6. PLANNING – GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

6.1 Objectives Supported

O1: Promote the environment and support activities to combat the climate emergency, by:

- 1) Retaining the existing character and feel of the Parish, safeguarding existing parkland and green spaces valued by the community and adding to these in quantity, enhanced facilities and increased access to the countryside.
- 2) Promoting and safeguarding green infrastructure, an important aspect of the character and amenity of Welwyn Parish, including Urban Open Land, Local Green Spaces (both of which are highly valued by the community) and trees (both those with and those without TPOs).
- 3) Meeting the NPPF aspiration of sustainable development (comprising the economic, social and environmental aspects) by identifying proportionate development that meets the needs of the Parish and the wider Welwyn Hatfield community.

The aim of these policies is to ensure due regard for the built environment and the countryside with which it interfaces and to some extent replaces, including any land removed from the Green Belt for the purposes of development.

6.2 Open Spaces & General Landscape

Policy No. 1: Preservation, Protection and Enhancement of Open Spaces & Landscape

Development proposals for sites of ≥ 10 dwellings will be supported provided they:

- respect and maintain the rural character of the local area through appropriate screening, to maintain a sense of openness wherever possible; and
- minimise intrusion to visually prominent land, limiting the visual impact of the development; and
- retain the well-established hedgerow and woodland network; and
- demonstrate how they will sustain the wildlife therein.

Justification

The current landscape contains valued features: rural lanes, woodland and openness and that landscape should be preserved. WHLP Policy SP11 specifies advocates “*The protection, enhancement and management of the environmental, ecological and historic assets within the borough ...*” and is supportive of “*Development that would secure positive improvements to and ensure the long-term conservation of ecological and heritage assets ...*” Our aim is to ensure sites, including important archaeological sites (with particular emphasis on those as yet unexcavated), designated LNRs and LWSs and the wider area, remain protected, unspoilt, undeveloped and remain accessible for leisure purposes.

The survey illustrated the importance and value that residents place on green infrastructure for its amenity value, role in sustainability and as a wildlife habitat, that they enjoy the natural environment and are extremely protective of it. The need to protect green areas within the Parish was supported by more than 80% of survey respondents, whilst almost 80% stated the loss of countryside was their greatest worry. WPC will work with partners to support actively the creation and enhancement of strategic green infrastructure.



P1: River Mimram
(from Fulling Mill Lane Bridge)



P2: Danesbury Park
(Local Nature Reserve)

Project No. 1: Protection of our Sensitive Areas

WPC will monitor and support the general maintenance and well-being of these areas, in accordance with their respective Management Plans²⁸, in particular:

1. River Mimram: work with partners and local groups to ensure the continued well-being, protection and improvement of this valued asset, including its aquatic life.
2. Singlers Marsh: encourage and support measures to conserve this valued local amenity (managed by WHBC, with support from a local volunteer group) with its mixture of woodland and heath as well as being a flood plain for the Mimram, including achieving village green status.
3. Danesbury Park: oppose any further unapproved and unlicensed tree felling in the general area. Seek review of the age, condition and merit of each specimen of the remaining trees and approach the WHBC tree officer to consider appropriate assessment of such for TPO provision.
4. Danesbury Fernery: encourage and support further restoration, protection and publicity of the facility (managed by WHBC, with major work by a local volunteer group).
5. Mardley Heath: encourage and support all measures to conserve this valued local amenity with its mixture of woodland, heath, footpaths and bridleways (managed by WHBC, with support from a local volunteer group).
6. Wildflower Meadows & Community Orchards: encourage and support the continuance of good agricultural and horticultural practice to promote further recovery of these assets.

Justification

The Mimram flows through Welwyn and Digswell villages and increases landscape sensitivity due to its significance as one of the 260 known chalk streams in the world²⁹ ³⁰ and whose innate features afford a habitat of great importance for wildlife, biodiversity, recreation, natural beauty and amenity value.

Danesbury Park is an area of parkland and wildflower meadow³¹; both park and environs have a wide variety of flowering plants which support insects and birds. The large mature trees continue in importance even after they have died, fallen and begun to decay, affording great value to

²⁸ Notably: *Singlers Marsh 10 Year Landscape Management Plan 2023 – 2033* available at: <https://www.welhat.gov.uk/directory-record/20271/singlers-marsh>; and *Danesbury Local Nature Reserve 10 Year Landscape Management Plan 2023 – 2033* available at: <https://www.welhat.gov.uk/directory-record/20275/danesbury>; both prepared by Maydencroft and published by WHBC.

²⁹ Of this 260, 224 can be found in Southern England; Hertfordshire has some 10% of the global number.

³⁰ See *Chalk Stream Restoration Strategy* and *Chalk Stream Restoration Strategy Implementation Plan*, both devised and published by The Catchment Based Approach (CaBA) and available for download at: <https://catchmentbasedapproach.org/learn/chalk-stream-strategy-3/> See also *Chalk Streams in Hertfordshire and North London*. Environment Agency Briefing Note July 2019.

³¹ Changes in farming practice and losses arising from development and management neglect have elsewhere resulted in the destruction nationally of these once botanically-rich and diverse habitats

wildlife, especially bats, owls, fungi and insects. The area is very popular for walking and children playing.

Hertfordshire Gardens Trust has identified the parks and gardens at Tewin Water (also in Tewin Parish Council area) and Danesbury as significant ecological assets.

6.3 Local Green Spaces

Local Green Space (LGS) designation provides special protection against development for green areas in the community.

Policy No. 2: Local Green Spaces

1. WPC proposes the sites in Table 1 be designated as LGS.
2. Sites designated as LGS shall be afforded protection against development consistent with that for the Green Belt: proposals for any development will only be supported in very special circumstances; for example, if it is essential to meet specific necessary utility infrastructure needs and no alternative feasible site is available.
3. Development should not compromise the open character and community value of such spaces.

Ref	Site Name	Beauty/ Tranquillity	Recreation	Wildlife/ Flora
LGS1	Digswell Playing Fields and Nature Reserve	✓	✓	✓
LGS2	Forge Lane Close Orchard, Digswell	-	✓	✓
LGS3	Whitehill Wildflower Meadow, Welwyn village	✓	✓	✓
LGS4	Harmer Green, Digswell	✓	✓	✓
LGS5	Cemetery, Welwyn village	✓	-	-
LGS6	St Mary's Churchyard, Welwyn village	✓	-	-
LGS7	Hawbush Close allotments, Welwyn village	-	✓	✓

Table 1: Locations proposed as Local Green Spaces³²

Justification

The sites proposed and their key features are summarised in Table 1. The reference numbers have been compiled by WPC. Full details, with photographs, maps and rationales are given in the Evidence Base document: *Local Green Spaces*.

NPPF (at paragraph 106) allows communities to nominate green areas of particular local importance, to be designated as "Local Green Spaces" and afforded protection as public open spaces and paragraph 107 stipulates that such spaces must be:

- a. In reasonable proximity to the community served; and
- b. Demonstrably special to a local community and holding a particular local significance³³; and
- c. Local in character and not an extensive tract of land.

All the proposed sites meet these NPPF criteria (see *Local Green Spaces*).

³² For full details, with photographs, maps and justifications, see the Evidence Base document *Local Green Spaces*.

³³ E.g. because of its beauty, historical significance, recreational value, tranquillity, or richness of its wildlife.

A NP offers opportunity to amend or propose additional LGS. The Survey identified the pleasure many derive from simply being with nature; WHBC LP Policy SP12 emphasises the significance of Green Infrastructure; Policy SADM17 emphasises the importance of Urban Open Land (UOL)³⁴; the Landscape Sensitivity Assessment³⁵ restricts development in areas subject to ‘absolute constraints’, e.g. the Historic Parks, Gardens, Ancient Woodland, LNRs and LWSs. Some of the land proposed as LGS is managed but much is “left to nature”.³⁶

6.4 Mimram Valley Blue³⁷-Green Corridor

Project No. 2: Local Landscape Designation – Mimram Valley

WPC will seek to extend the Tewin initiative and achieve Local Landscape Designation for the Mimram valley overall, enabling greater protection for the precious chalk stream environment of our local river by exploring the potential to extend the current scope and partner with adjacent parishes, H&MWT (as Catchment Management Hosts for the Rivers Lea & Mimram) and WHBC.

Justification

This project seeks to continue the direction initiated by Tewin Parish Council³⁸ and extend a “blue-green corridor” for the Mimram Valley, to the north of Welwyn Garden City. WHLP Policy SP12 refers to the Green Corridor proposed to extend around the south of Welwyn Garden City, noting its location, aims and objectives. WPC’s objective is (as far as is possible) to link up the green spaces and footpaths bordering the River, from Digswell, along the A1000, through Lockleys Farm and Sherrardswood School grounds, Welwyn village and Singlers Marsh and hopefully beyond, to the river’s source near Whitwell. The Welwyn Parish section is illustrated in Map 3 at Appendix 1. The River Mimram and its associated valley are rarely in full view for their whole length and are highly vulnerable from the continued threat of urban expansion, local pollution and lack of care for the landscape.

Survey responses showed all aspects of the environment were very important to residents, with particular focus on the Mimram. To be able to preserve and present this beautiful landscape for the enjoyment of all and to protect it for future generations would be a major contribution. Land/riverside ownership is vested with numerous individuals/organisations: liaison, co-ordination and establishing the co-operation of landowners is a major project currently under way, to turn this concept into reality.

6.5 Wildlife Corridors

Policy No. 3: Wildlife Corridors

1. The network of Wildlife Corridors in the Parish (see Appendix 1, Map 4), must be protected from the impact of harmful development, managed and where possible enhanced:
 - River Mimram between Welwyn Parish’s boundaries with Tewin and Codicote Parishes; and
 - Singlers Marsh to Danesbury Park; and
 - Between the two sections of Danesbury Park; and

³⁴ Details of current UOL sites within the Parish are given in the Evidence Base document *Open Spaces*.

³⁵ *Welwyn Hatfield Landscape Sensitivity Assessment*. LUC. July 2019 (EX156).

³⁶ Most of the area are “open” in the accessible sense but some have restricted access (e.g. members only).

³⁷ “Blue Infrastructure” refers to the watercourses and open water areas and their features, in a similar way to Green Infrastructure refers to the wider green areas.

³⁸ See *Mimram Valley at Tewin: The case for a Local Landscape Designation*. The River Mimram rises in St Paul’s Walden Parish and progressively flows through Codicote, Welwyn and Tewin Parishes towards its confluence with the River Lea at Hertford (which may also involve further parishes en route). At March 2025, this project had started; Tewin PC have indicated they will work collaboratively and proposals are now being actively discussed with Codicote PC and Affinity Water, the latter offering some funding.

- Rabley Heath (Codicote Parish) to Mardley Heath; and
 - Harmergreen Wood to Lockley Farm; and
 - Harmergreen Wood to land around Harmer Green and Burnham Green; and
 - Sherrardspark Wood (WGC) to Whitehill area (part-Ayot St Peter Parish); and
 - Land around Ayot Green (Ayot St Peter Parish) to woods around Wilshere Park.
2. Proposals for development on or adjacent to these corridors must maintain and if possible enhance their ecological function. Encroachment into either open countryside or woodland that would result in isolation of an area from a wildlife perspective will not be supported.

Justification

The corridors for wildlife routes were identified by Herts & Middlesex Wildlife Trust as the most important areas between which to ensure connectivity and provide wildlife migration routes. National Policy³⁹ and LP Policy SP12 promote the creation and enhancement of strategic green infrastructure,

6.7 Landscaping And Screening

Policy No. 5: Landscaping and Screening

1. Developments \geq 10 dwellings must be accompanied by:
 - Landscaping and tree planting for screening, where this is deemed appropriate to protect the green belt boundary and where land ownership permits. Such landscaping shall be sympathetic to any green belt area abutted and fulfil a screening function from the start of development; and
 - Responsible planting of additional trees in line with UK government policy to reduce or absorb air pollution from traffic; and
 - Plans to replant and rebuild any hedges that have been “lost”; and
 - A tree survey and tree management plan compliant with BS 5837 recommendations, prepared by the Developer and approved by the Local Planning Authority (i.e. WHBC) prior to the commencement of any work on site.
2. Proposals for all developments must:
 - Retain ancient, veteran and mature trees (particularly in ancient woodland) or trees or hedgerows of ecological, arboricultural or amenity value and be accompanied by a survey that establishes the health and longevity of any affected tree. Existing trees should be retained and proposals include any appropriate protection by barriers and root protection zones as recommended in BS 5837 (2012); and
 - Involve no net reduction of trees. Trees whose removal is permitted within development sites, must be replaced with like-for-like trees in the categories defined in BS 5837 section 4 and use preferred native species that will encourage wildlife. If replacement is not practical within a specific site, then the shortfall shall be made up by new tree planting at the developer’s cost in areas specified elsewhere in the Parish; and
 - Incorporate tree, shrub and hedge planting as part of the design and relate to a vision of that landscape at the end of the Plan period, using locally-suitable species; monoculture must be avoided.

Justification

The settlements of Welwyn, Digswell, Oaklands and Mardley Heath are excluded from the Green Belt (see Appendix 1, Map 2) and are defined by tightly-drawn boundaries that clearly separate them from each other and from Welwyn Garden City and Woolmer Green (i.e. thus promoting “gaps”). Any change in those boundaries runs the risk of degrading the visual and physical quality of the green belt, so mitigation is critical to minimise this and the use of sympathetic and effective

³⁹ NPPF paragraphs 187 to 201.

landscaping and tree planting is essential. Visual screening was identified as important by 95% of survey respondents. Carbon footprints must be minimised, carbon capture maximised and habitat loss prevented. Even man-made additions such as walls and fences are popular if they are of traditional/sympathetic design and materials or have a heritage value.

External private spaces, proportionate to dwelling size and household make-up, together with public open space associated with developments, are important in creating home environments that meet people's desires. Policies SP11 and SP12 in the WHBC Local Plan address environmental assets and the 'Tree and Woodland Strategy' prepared and adopted by WHBC for the period 2018 to 2023 emphasises the importance of green infrastructure.

6.8 Ecology & Wildlife⁴⁰

Policy No. 6: Wildlife Habitats

Where feasible, and appropriate to its nature and scale, new development should incorporate the following:

- 'in the ground' soft landscaping, planted boundary treatments and wildlife friendly planting, and where possible, inclusion of grass verges as a feature; and
- biodiversity net gains in excess of the 10% legal minimum, with 20% the preferred objective, given the rural nature of the Parish; and
- details of how they will sustain wildlife habitats in compliance with WHBC LP Policies SP11 and SADM16; and
- provisions to afford support for species of local (and national) importance, some of which are endangered, such as (but not limited to): hedgehogs, frogs/toads, badgers, bats and birds. E.g. by including integrated Swift and bat bricks on all suitable buildings; designing developments to accommodate wildlife migration routes (e.g. badger gates); providing access through hard boundary treatments into gardens for hedgehogs.

Project No. 3: Wildlife Habitat Support

WPC will:

1. Encourage the creation, restoration and preservation of wildflower meadows⁴¹, woodland and wildlife-friendly gardens.
2. Where formal legal protection is considered to be inadequate, consulted with wildlife groups operating locally (including the Herts & Middlesex Wildlife Trust and the Herts & Middlesex Badger Group), support their work and partner with them.
3. Encourage and support surveys by local wildlife groups (e.g. of wildflowers, birds, bats, insects) on sites, as that data will guide future WPC policy and work.

Justification

Ecology explores the connections between plants, animals and the world around. Other policies address landscape and general environment and wildlife, which must also be considered.

From 12 February 2024, legislation requires that development proposals must achieve Biodiversity Net Gain targets of at least 10% and information on Biodiversity Net Gain is to be submitted as part of planning applications.

⁴⁰ Advice and guidance may be obtained from: Herts & Middlesex Wildlife Trust, Herts & Middlesex Badger Group, North East Herts Swift Group and Herts Ecology. WPC are grateful to the assistance given by these organisations in preparing this part of the NP.

⁴¹ The WPC-owned meadow at Whitehill (Welwyn village) and the WHBC-owned Forge Close orchard (Digswell) are typical local examples. The management plan for the Whitehill meadow (available at <https://welwyn-pc.gov.uk/whitehill-wildflower-meadow/>) gives details of the species of flora and fauna that are being encouraged.

Swift bricks conforming to BS42021:2022, are simple, inexpensive, last the lifetime of the building and require no maintenance. They provide nest cavities for a range of birds of conservation concern including: Swift, House Martin, House Sparrow and Starling and bats, all of which nest/roost in the area; such creatures are vulnerable when roof repairs or building upgrades, such as energy efficiency measures, are carried out and remove possible nest sites.

Over 2000 years of agriculture, the Parish area has never seen a monoculture or major use of pesticides; the landscape is varied and abundant and varied wildlife is supported at all levels in the hierarchy or food chain. However, maps, photographs and films in local collections⁴² show that in the past 150 years (and especially since the 1960s) housing developments brought major change which threatens both land and wildlife.

⁴² Notably Welwyn Photographic Society and Welwyn Film Record Society.

7. PLANNING - HOUSING

7.1 Objectives Supported

O1: Enable the building of new, well-designed and sympathetic housing developments within the Parish, by seeking provision of a mix of suitable homes for the current and future local demographic of the Parish:

- To create sustainable, inclusive, mixed communities in the Parish.
- To provide a range of housing options (price, tenure, type and size) to meet the needs of different households, e.g. families, couples, single person households and older people.
- To achieve these objectives in a way that is consistent with and respects the characteristics of the individual settlements, in terms of housing design and appearance, scale, plot layout, open space, screening and treatment of boundaries.

7.2 Policies & Projects

Policy No. 7: Development of Larger Sites (≥10 new dwellings or ≥0.5ha)

This policy applies to development proposals for larger sites (10 or more dwellings).

In accordance with Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council Local Plan Policy SP7 and the Welwyn Parish Council Local Housing Needs Assessment, proposals for more than 10 dwellings shall demonstrate how the need for adaptable dwellings will be met. This may include an appropriate mix of sheltered housing, both market and affordable smaller housing (i.e. dwellings for single-person or couples' households) and single-storey dwellings for less mobile older people.

Policy No. 8: Development of Smaller Sites (<10 new dwellings or <0.5ha)

1. Developments that provide small-scale schemes for affordable housing, and smaller houses suitable for older people, will be encouraged on both allocated and windfall sites.
2. Where detached homes form the dominant current house type (e.g. the Danesbury area of Welwyn village, large parts of Digswell and Oaklands and the limited development in Mardley Heath) small-scale developments of detached larger homes will be supported, where they complement the character of the local area.
3. Self and Custom Build units will be supported provided their design, construction and materials are appropriate to the character of the area.

Justification

The survey results highlighted the difficulty that younger people (often first-time buyers) have in being able to afford a place to live in the Parish and emphasised the importance of ensuring that a high proportion of new housing development should be affordable. Residents expressed a clear preference for small-scale developments or no development at all.

Table 2 shows the response to the question “**What sort of housing (if any) do you want to see built within the Parish?**” A requirement was identified for smaller houses (either starter homes, or for smaller families, or retired couples). Some residents also wanted to see further development of larger executive homes, whilst very few wanted to see apartments built. In answer to the question “What size of housing developments do you think would be most appropriate in the Parish?” 98% of respondents wanted developments limited to 30 houses.⁴³

⁴³ See *Housing Needs Assessment*

Family Houses, 2-4 Bedrooms	15%	For Rent/Shared Ownership	5%
Starter Houses, 1-2 Bedrooms	13%	Small Terraced Houses	4%
None	13%	Social Housing	4%
Small Retirement Houses	9%	Single Storey Houses	3%
Sheltered Housing for the elderly	8%	Flats/Apartments	3%
Small Semi-Detached Houses	7%	Residential Care Homes	3%
Small Detached Houses	6%	Other sheltered housing	2%
Large Executive Houses	5%		

Table 2: Survey Response on type of housing

Policy No. 9: General Housing Mix and Location Context

Housing styles shall be considered to be well-designed when they satisfy the Design Principles set out in this Plan. The following types of development will be encouraged and supported:

1. Housing for older people and young families on sites where amenities and infrastructure such as shops, medical centres and schools are within walking distance.
2. Specialist and accessible/adaptable housing, whilst seeking to deliver a wider choice of homes and encouraging mixed communities.
3. Traditional housing styles and conversion of existing buildings, given the semi-rural village character of the Parish and the style variations exhibited in the various settlements.
4. Well-designed, small-scale apartment buildings on appropriate sites close to amenities and settlement centres.
5. In addition to that allowed under permitted development, houses in multiple occupation that demonstrably contribute to inclusive and mixed communities through offering cheaper accommodation and do not lead to a concentration of such housing in any part of the Parish.

Justification

Survey responses suggested that the following aspects of housing were significant and important:

- a. Those who have grown up in the Parish should be able to afford to stay as young adults and families; and
- b. Older members of the community want to remain in the area that they think of as home and downsize into quality local accommodation; and
- c. General opposition to the conversion of single occupancy houses to multiple occupancy housing or apartments; and
- d. A preference for new developments to be of traditional housing styles.

The Evidence Base document "*Local Housing Needs Assessment*" gives more background to the policy statements and preferences expressed above.

8. PLANNING - GENERIC POLICIES FOR HOUSING DEVELOPMENT

10.1 Objectives Supported

O1: Enable the building of new, well-designed and sympathetic housing developments within the Parish by:

1. Using the direct power given to communities and derived from the NPPF, to develop a shared vision for their neighbourhood and deliver the sustainable development they need and meet the NPPF aspiration of sustainable development (comprising the economic, social and environmental aspects) by identifying proportionate development that meets the needs of the Parish and the wider Welwyn Hatfield community.
2. Supporting development proposals whose scale, density, massing, height, landscape design, layout and materials (including alterations to existing buildings) reflect and enhance the architectural and historic character and scale of the buildings and landscape of the Parish.
3. Taking a positive approach to development, seeking to engage with developers and other stakeholders to encourage the formulation of proposals that can be approved as in accordance with this Plan

8.2 Generic Policies

Policy No. 10: Generic Policy for Welwyn Village

1. Proposals for development or alterations in village conservation area will be carefully scrutinised for compliance with the CAAMP⁴⁴ and the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and to prevent:
 - The potential for piecemeal reduction and the absence of a defined and realisable conservation area boundary; and
 - restriction of ground level views of the historic core; in particular, the design or construction of buildings adjacent to but outside the conservation area, detracting from the historic core in any way; and
 - compromise of longer-distance views of the historic core; in particular the design or construction of buildings outside the conservation area must not in any way obstruct, obscure or detract from the view over the conservation area.
2. Outside the conservation area, developments should (unless detailed otherwise elsewhere in this Plan) be well-proportioned with regard to dwelling size and plot size, and positioning (gross external area) thereon; have amenity space with associated garden(s); be in keeping with their environs (particularly with regard to the plot ratio and appearance of properties adjoining and in the vicinity); exhibit facilities such as off-road parking and features such as use of materials, as stated under Design Principles.
3. Development proposals which restrict ground-level views or compromise longer-distance views of heritage structures⁴⁵ will not be supported.
4. Be compliant with the Planning Objectives for Welwyn village in the WHBC LP (s18.3).

Justification

The Welwyn Village CAAMP was initiated with the aim of reviewing the conservation area, reinforcing the important aspects within the area and removing from the area specific, more

⁴⁴ Welwyn Village Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Plan; WHBC 2023. See also Map 8 at Appendix 1.

⁴⁵ For details of heritage structures, please see *Parish Portrait* and Historic Environment & Heritage later in this Plan.

modern buildings and estates at the periphery, that did not contribute to the heritage of the village or offer historically important architecture. The revised CAAMP was agreed by WHBC in March 2024. The WPC stance is that the revised Conservation Area boundary must be carefully safeguarded, now and in the future when developments outside the area but adjacent to it, are re-developed. These might otherwise mar the visual or historic amenity value of the Conservation Area and/or cause it to be overlooked or overshadowed.

Policy No. 11: Generic Policy for Digswell

1. Development proposals must comply with the Planning Objectives for Digswell, as expressed in the WHBC LP (s19.2) and recommendations in the Digswell Character Appraisal will be given continued weight in determining development applications.
2. To the west of the railway, the character of the predominantly smaller houses and bungalows should be maintained, but opportunity exists for good modern design and use of eco-friendly materials.
3. Proposals that seek to over-develop a site with multiple houses or apartments, will not be supported unless they recognise the narrow roads are through-traffic routes⁴⁶ with restricted on-road parking. Adequate off-road parking must be provided for residents and visitors, with safe ingress and egress to and from the site.
4. Proposals must also:
 - involve effective screening from both road and adjacent plots; and
 - conserve mature trees throughout the area; and
 - avoid and/or mitigate potential harm to wildlife, particularly nesting birds and badgers.

Project No. 4: Potential for Conservation Area status for Digswell Water

WPC will investigate the potential for the heritage-rich area of Digswell Water to become a Conservation Area.

Justification

Some things have changed since the Digswell Character Appraisal of 2003 (published by WHBC and adopted as a Supplementary Planning Guide) but many aspects are the same. The fine large houses, still a major feature of that location, are now under threat from developments that many residents regard as unsympathetic to the area.

Policy No. 12: Generic Policy for Oaklands and Mardley Heath

1. Development proposals within Oaklands and Mardley Heath wards must comply with the Planning Objectives for Oaklands and Mardley Heath, as expressed in the WHBC LP (s17.2).
2. Proposals which follow existing styles of house and low-rise apartment blocks, which do not dominate any given road, will be supported.
3. Utmost care must be taken to protect trees (especially oaks) and any development proposal involving their removal, will not be supported unless justified and replacement specimens planted.
4. Proposals (especially relating to Robbery Bottom Lane and its feeder roads: including Oaklands Rise, Copse Hill and Broom Hill), must ensure that surface water drainage from rainfall run-off, is in accordance with Design Principle No 3.

Justification

⁴⁶ In particular to and from south Stevenage, Knebworth, Datchworth, and Woolmer Green, especially when the A1(M) and B197 are frequently congested.

Oaklands and Mardley Heath have a mix of housing types with a mostly informal layout providing variety and interest from small bungalows and inter-war homes (some built on larger plots) to five bedroom executive-style properties. Although significant areas are protected by TPOs, a large number of the oak trees that gave the Oaklands area its name have been felled; the character of the area has been altered and that process should be resisted. Surface water drainage in much of the area is inadequate⁴⁷.

⁴⁷ Run-off from the fields at the top of the valley and the addition of multiple driveways has removed much soakaway potential. Local flooding has on occasions closed Robbery Bottom Lane and even the B197 for a day and more.

9. PLANNING - SITES IN THE LOCAL PLAN

This section gives details for sites in the Parish allocated in the WHLP for housing development, together with the policies that WPC wishes to apply to them, individually and collectively. See also Map 7 at Appendix 1.

9.1 Objectives Supported

O1: Enable the building of new, well-designed and sympathetic housing developments within the Parish by:

1. Meeting the NPPF aspiration of sustainable development⁴⁸ by identifying proportionate development that meets the needs of the Parish and the wider community.
2. Supporting development proposals, providing their scale, density, massing, height, landscape design, layout and materials (including alterations to existing buildings) reflect and enhance existing architectural and historic character and scale of buildings and landscape.
3. Taking a positive approach to development and seeking to engage with developers and other stakeholders to encourage proposals that can be approved as in accordance with this Plan

Policy No. 13: Generic Policy for Sites Allocated in the Local Plan

1. In addition to the Policies and Design Principles proposals for sites allocated in the WHLP shall comply with the site-specific requirements stated in the policies below.
2. Should additional sites within the Parish be allocated as part of any update or revision of the WHLP, WPC will propose specific requirements for those sites, to be included in a revise of this NP.

⁴⁸ Comprising the economic, social and environmental aspects.

9.2 Sites Allocated In The Local Plan: Oaklands

9.2.1 HS32 Four Oaks, Great North Road



Site Plan



P5: HS32 Site Entrance from B197

Current Status

The Local Plan has allocated 6 additional pitches to the original 5 approved (i.e. 12 extra caravans) making a total of 11 pitches on the site.

Site Specific Considerations Identified in Local Plan

Mitigate air and noise pollution from A1(M) and B197.

Project No. 5: Additional Response for HS32

This site currently hosts in total, more pitches than approved in the WHBC LP; WPC will request WHBC to investigate and resolve, with respect to the provisions for this site in the LP.

9.2.2 HS16 2 Great North Road



Site Plan



P6: HS16 Site Entrance from B197

Site History

Originally two sites (HS16 & 17), access restrictions made it practical to combine the two sites into one; now designated HS16.

Current Status

The Local Plan has allocated for development of up to 25 residential dwellings. Policies SP2, SP3 and SADM 28 allocate sites for development in Oaklands to allow for a limited amount of development compatible with the growth and settlement strategy of the Local Plan.

Policy No. 14: Additional Response for HS16

Residential development proposals for this site will be supported in principle, in accordance with the following requirements:

1. This site is considered suitable for various housing types, although in accordance with the Local Housing Needs Assessment, one and two bedroom dwellings are preferred. Apartment buildings are not considered appropriate on this site.
2. Building designs can be flexible subject to the use of predominantly traditional materials for elevations and pitched roofs, must reflect the area's informal character and not be overbearing or adversely affect the amenity of neighbouring properties.
3. Development should accommodate the site topography, sloping downwards to the B197.
4. Woodland on the northern part of the site must be retained, protected and preserved as a buffer to the motorway; a wildlife habitat survey will be required. There must be no net reduction in the total number of trees across the site, with compensatory planting if any are removed from outside the protected woodland area.
5. A communal Open Space and a Children's Play Space shall be incorporated where suitable (in accordance with the WHBC Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document (2012)), or contributions made to the upgrading of off-site provision within the local vicinity.
6. Parking, drainage and utility service provision must accord with the appropriate Policies and Design Principles.
7. Adequate visibility splays will be required for direct ingress/egress to/from the Great North Road (B197) with adequate room allocated to permit safe vehicle manoeuvring.

9.3 Sites Allocated in the Local Plan: Welwyn VILLAGE

9.3.1 HS18 The Vineyards



Site Plan



P7: Site Entrance from B656

Current Status

Site allocated for development of 30 residential dwellings in Local Plan. Policies SP2 & SP3 and SADM 29 allocate sites for development in Welwyn to allow for a limited amount of development compatible with the growth and settlement strategy.

Policy No. 15: Additional Response for HS18

Residential proposals for this site will be supported in principle, in accordance with the following requirements:

1. The exact levels of the dwellings, parking and access road must consider the nature of terrain and the fall across the site from north east to south west.
2. Access arrangements from the B656 Codicote Road, shall incorporate calming measures for traffic in both directions along the B656, include provision for non-vehicular users⁴⁹ to access and egress the site safely and for safe pedestrian access to the existing footway on the west side.
3. A purpose-built footway and cycleway link shall be provided to connect the development site to the turning head of the Carleton Rise cul-de-sac.
4. Development of the land at the north east end of the site should be in keeping with the architectural appearance of the existing nearby residential properties, with smaller dwellings, including low-rise apartments on the remainder of the site, as evidenced by the Local Housing Needs Assessment.
5. Appropriate ecological and wildlife surveys shall be conducted and any mitigation measures incorporated, such as a buffer zone for the adjacent LNR. There must be no reduction in the total number of trees across the site; existing trees should be retained or new specimens planted, with additional planting to ensure a positive transition to the surrounding land.
6. All provisions for hard landscaping should incorporate SuDS and other sustainable drainage measures in accordance with previously-stated Policies and Design Guides.

⁴⁹ E.g. pedestrians, cyclists, equestrians and wheelchair users, In accordance with Travel & Transport Policy No. 22.

7. A communal Open Space and a Children's Play Space shall be incorporated where suitable (in accordance with the WHBC Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document (2012)), or contributions made to the upgrading of off-site provision within the local vicinity.
8. A full acoustic survey of noise from the B656 must be undertaken, with any noise mitigation measures required incorporated into the design.

9.3.3 HS20 School Lane

Current Status

Site has been granted full planning permission by WHBC for a development of 9 dwellings.



Site Plan



P11: HS20 Site Entrance from School Lane



P12: Site Interior

Policy No. 17: Additional Response for HS20

Residential proposals for this site will be supported in principle, in accordance with the following requirements:

1. In accordance with the Local Housing Needs Assessment, a mixture of detached, semi-detached, or possibly terraced dwellings is possible.
2. Dwellings should complement the general appearance of the current pumping station.
3. The capacity of the existing infrastructure for services other than water supply must accord with policies in this NP.
4. The UKPN Substation adjacent to the site must be evaluated for noise mitigation measures.

5. The site contains pockets of mature and semi-mature trees and there must be no reduction in the total number of trees across the site, either retaining the existing stock or removal and replanting of new specimens. Additional planting is required to ensure a positive transition to the surrounding green belt land in accordance with policies on Landscaping and Screening. The existing trees may provide habitats for birds and a Phase 1 habitats survey is required. All provisions for hard landscaping should incorporate SuDS and other sustainable drainage mitigation measures in accordance with earlier Policies and Design Guides.
6. Archaeological field evaluation may be required with consideration of findings prior to works.
7. Existing site entrance to be modified to ensure adequate visibility is achieved in both directions along School Lane and possibly incorporated with the adjacent entrance to Queen Victoria Memorial Hospital. Provision should be made for non-vehicular users to negotiate the modified entrance safely.

9.4 Sites Not Allocated In The Local Plan

Sites in the Parish that were proposed but ultimately not allocated in the adopted WHBC LP are detailed in *Supplementary Information*. WPC support the rationale and WHBC's decision not to allocate those sites.

10. PLANNING - NON-RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

10.1 Core Objectives Supported

O4: Promote and enable well-being, by:

1. Supporting and encouraging new businesses within the Parish;
2. Ensuring all children in the Parish can access high - quality state primary education locally;
3. Encouraging improvement and expansion of:
 - Community facilities: shops, public houses, restaurants, public buildings, playing fields, play areas, nature reserves and churches for the use and enjoyment of future generations.
 - The rural economy: by supporting agriculture and farming, equestrians and their horses and supporting infrastructure⁵⁰, encouraging home working, and supporting alternative business use for redundant buildings, thus creating employment opportunities within the Parish.

10.2 Policies & Projects

Policy No. 18: Change of Use for Premises

1. Creation of new shops will be encouraged and supported.
2. Where planning permission is required for a change of use of existing retail or commercial premises to other uses, this will only be supported where it can be demonstrated that no viable retail or commercial use has been found possible.

Justification

No survey questions were directly aimed at shopping but more general questions elicited valuable detail about the concern of residents over shops and shopping. Many wanted a traditional greengrocer, butcher, fishmonger and a delicatessen. However in the recent past, attempts to re-introduce a butcher, deli and greengrocer ended due to lack of support as many people use the large supermarkets in the nearby towns or have home deliveries on a regular basis.

There was a positive approach from survey respondents to re-use of farm buildings.

Policy No. 19 Developments for New Businesses

Proposals for developments that enhance existing or create new businesses and provide opportunities for local employment, will be supported, provided that they:

- Complement the local character and rural surroundings; and
- Do not have an undue adverse impact on the amenity of the Parish.

Justification

Hertfordshire has long been an area of high employment, which today ranges from agricultural and retail to professional and hi-tech. The 2021 Census data shows 2% of Hertfordshire's population "economically active and unemployed" (the corresponding number for our Parish is also 2%). Following the relocation of several large companies from Welwyn in the 1970s and 1980s, it is unlikely that the Parish will ever see large businesses again due to land availability.

⁵⁰ DEFRA statistics show around 750 horse passports are recorded within Welwyn Parish. The accepted cost of keeping a horse is £5,000pa which equates to a £3,375,000 contribution to the local economy. Horses kept in adjacent parishes will also contribute to the Welwyn economy. Rural businesses supported by equestrians include: saddlers and harness makers, pet shops, farriers, vets, feed merchants, agricultural equipment suppliers, etc.

In Welwyn, Digswell and Oaklands, retail outlets provide employment for local people. Opportunities are also presented for small business premises e.g. above shops on, or just off, Welwyn High St., for services such as editorial, accountancy, insurance, investment and similar. Survey responses rejected any heavy industry in the area.

Policy No. 20: Expansion of Educational Facilities

Should demand for primary or nursery school places in the Parish be such that expansion of an existing primary or nursery school or a new school be required, this will be supported, provided that it can be demonstrated that it would not:

- exacerbate existing access-related or traffic circulation problems, without suitable mitigation measures brought forward as part of the proposal, and
- result in a significant loss of amenity to residents or other adjacent users; and
- make safe vehicular ingress and egress and safe access by pedestrians and cyclists problematic; and
- be away from bus routes and without adequate provision for waiting school buses; and
- conflict with other policies or proposals in this NP.

Justification

Our primary schools have good reputations and attract families from WGC: Welwyn St Mary's; St John's Digswell, and Oaklands Primary. Welwyn St Mary's is full-two form entry, the others are limited to single form entry due to land area and buildings. All these schools are currently at or near capacity with the present population. Any future large-scale developments would necessitate expansion.

Policy No. 21: Agricultural Land

Where planning permission is required, development on agricultural land which facilitates rural economic growth and the diversification of agricultural units will be supported.

Justification

Farming and agriculture locally no longer employ a significant number of people. However, despite settlement expansion, a short walk shows agriculture thriving⁵¹. Survey respondents often replied "don't mind" to development on agricultural land.

Project No. 6: Supporting Agriculture

WPC will seek to improve its understanding of the issues confronting local farming and agriculture and publicise helpful details, including:

- The significance of the role of agriculture both nationally and locally.
- The importance of sourcing produce locally where possible
- The need for visitors to farmland to follow good practice in the Country Code.

Justification

Responsible public enjoyment of the countryside is important and supported by farmers and landowners. The Countryside Code safeguards land, crops, livestock, pathways, environment and farm livelihoods. Control of a dog or a child, closing gates and reporting damage is of major benefit.

⁵¹ E.g. at Whitehill, Linces and Lockley farms, the latter including a recent vineyard initiative



P13: View across to Linces Farm, Welwyn



P14: Harvest underway, near Oaklands

11. TRANSPORT & TRAVEL

11.1 Objectives Supported

O2: Highlight local concerns regarding travel and transport and champion practical solutions

O3: Promote the environment and support activities to combat the climate emergency.

O4: Promote and enable well-being, by:

1. Maintaining a safe environment for pedestrians, cyclists, equestrians, children, the elderly, and those with disabilities.
2. Reducing the impact of commuter traffic, particularly at peak hours.
3. Encouraging walking and cycling to support the Government's decarbonisation agenda. Enhancing residential amenity and supporting local businesses through effective parking management.

11.2 Policies & Projects

Policy No. 22: Maintain and Enhance a Safe and Healthy Travel Environment

Where required by the local planning authority, and having regard to the nature and scale of development, a transport assessment or transport statement may be sought in accordance with national and local policy.

Where such assessment is required, mitigation should, where practicable, include measures to:

- Provide or enhance green walking routes, with clear links to the Parish's wider green infrastructure network;
- Improve walking routes in the vicinity of the River Mimram, integrating with the Parish's blue infrastructure network; and
- Ensure safe, inclusive and convenient access to retail, public transport, local amenities and community facilities for all users, including pedestrians, cyclists, equestrians and people using mobility aids.

Project No. 7: Through-Traffic Road Safety Improvements

WPC will work with the highways authority to:

- Develop a plan to manage increased through-traffic from neighbouring developments.
- Address cumulative traffic impacts from Codicote, Knebworth, Stevenage, and other settlements.
- Support enforceable 20mph zones ("20s Plenty") to reduce speed and discourage rat-running.
- Implement safety measures on the B197 through Oaklands and at key junctions (e.g. Clock Roundabout).
- Lobby for re-alignment of the Waterside/B1000 junction to divert HGVs away from Hertford Road.
- Identify and resolve local traffic "hot spots" (see Map 5, Appendix 1).

Justification

Neighbouring growth will add significant traffic to already congested routes. A holistic approach is needed to reduce volumes, improve flow, and ensure safety. WHLP Policy SP4 and HCC's LTP4 support these aims, but current plans do not adequately address peak-time commuter traffic. Residents consistently rank traffic volumes and speeds among their top concerns.

Project No. 8: Improvements for Non-Motorists

Work with the Highway Authority to:

- Deliver dedicated cycle routes and improved pedestrian provision along the B656, B197, and A1000.
- Manage parking near schools to improve safety.
- Provide secure cycle racks at Welwyn North station.
- Improve road safety for equestrians through signage, speed restrictions, and safer crossings (see Map 6, Appendix 1).
- Implement traffic calming to reduce speed and congestion, prioritising pedestrian and equestrian safety.

Justification

Safe alternatives are essential to shift travel from cars to sustainable modes. Residents support improved cycle paths, pavements, and equestrian safety measures.

Project No. 9: Rights of Way Enhancement & Enforcement

Support upgrading key footpaths to bridleways for equestrian access (see Map 6, Appendix). Advocate enforcement against illegal scrambler motorbike use on bridleways.

Justification

Rights of Way improvements should be pursued in HCC's upcoming review. Cross-boundary coordination is essential for continuous equestrian routes.

Policy No. 23 Public Electric Vehicle Charging Points (EVCPs)

1. WPC will encourage and support provision of public EVCPs in private or public car parks (in particular at Welwyn North station car park).
2. WPC will also support EVCP provision on streets with designated parking bays, provided that they do not restrict use of bays by non-EV users, due to the high demand for on-street parking in parts of Welwyn, Digswell and Oaklands.

Justification

WPC installed a dual public charge point in Welwyn village at the Civic Centre car park, which is well-frequented and further deployments will be actively considered and supported.

Project No. 10: Enable and Encourage De-Carbonisation of Transport

- Support cycle and pedestrian routes along the B656, B197, and A1000, including access to Welwyn North station.
- Provide secure cycle racks at Welwyn North station.

Justification

Reducing car use and supporting active travel is vital to meet decarbonisation goals.

Project No. 11: Public Parking Provision

- Maintain free access to public car parks and on-street parking.
- Introduce time restrictions to ensure turnover for local businesses.
- Deter all-day commuter parking in settlement centres.
- Provide signage and enforcement to improve safety and traffic flow.
- Involve residents in reviewing parking restrictions.

Justification

Residents strongly support free public parking with sensible restrictions to protect local business viability and pedestrian safety.

Project No. 12: Provision of Public Surface Transport

- Improve and integrate bus and rail services.
- Provide affordable, reliable links to shopping centres.
- Establish peak-time direct bus services to Welwyn North station.
- Restore rail services to pre-pandemic levels and explore demand for late-night services.

Justification

Effective public transport is essential to reduce car dependency, support local businesses, and sustain High Street vitality.

Project No. 13: Road, Cycleway and Footway Maintenance

Encourage HCC to:

- Inspect and maintain gullies, cycleways, and footways regularly.
- Use fault-reporting tools for both highways and cycle networks.
- Plan roadworks holistically to avoid adverse impacts on local settlements.

Justification

Proactive maintenance is needed to prevent hazards and ensure safe use of cycleways and footways. Holistic planning avoids shifting traffic problems elsewhere.

12. ENVIRONMENT

12.1 Objectives Supported

O1: To enable the building of new, well-designed and sympathetic housing developments within the Parish;

O3: To promote the environment and support the climate emergency; and

O4: Promote and enable general well-being.



P15: Civic Centre recycling area



P16: Public dual EVCP at Welwyn Civic Centre

Project No. 14: Climate Change Actions

1. WPC will raise awareness and support the community in taking appropriate action by:
 - pledging to make the WPC carbon-neutral by 2030, considering both production and consumption emissions and calling on partners and central government to provide the powers and resources to make this target possible.
 - working in partnership with local groups, organisations, schools and residents, create an action plan that includes carbon and energy audits of all council facilities, demonstrating leadership through practical actions that save energy;
 - supporting residents to channel funds from all levels of Government to enable them to implement action for sustainable energy alternatives/improved insulation/energy reduction action.
2. This NP will be made fit for purpose in relation to climate change by:
 - Supporting the establishing of specific wildflower and wildlife areas, grassland, agricultural pastures, gardens and green spaces, in particular the Whitehill Wildflower Meadow, Forge Close Orchard and Soper Wildlife Sanctuary.
 - Promoting sustainable biodiversity and carbon retention by:
 - increasing tree cover across Parish Council-owned land, and
 - encouraging the leaving of wider margins around the edge of fields to encourage wildflowers review grass cutting contracts to promote flora and fauna and protecting pollination, and
 - sustaining the natural environment (e.g. with wildflowers seeded on road verges), but ensuring cutting near road junctions and roundabouts, to ensure safe views for drivers.
 - Actively considering further ideas including:
 - Production of a guide to give ideas on how to make a start on reducing adverse environmental impact, including one specifically for schools in the Parish.

- Drawing attention to water saving ideas i.e. water butts and water saving devices in houses.
- Creating Community Hub facilities in an existing location, where people can shop, gain advice and share or hire equipment or get it repaired, e.g. endeavour to ensure the Old Coal Yard Site adjacent to Welwyn North station could be allocated for this purpose. This would promote community involvement and support/advise/assist individual residents, particularly the non-IT literate and the elderly.
- Investigating the practicalities of implementing solar photovoltaic panels on WPC-owned buildings.
- Minimising waste going to landfill or incineration
- Use of electric and alternative fuel vehicles for Council work.

Justification

WPC made its Climate and Environment Crisis Declaration in 2020 and the Climate Emergency Action Group's plan is steadily being addressed. *Locality* and the Centre for Sustainable Energy encourage NPs to encompass Climate Emergency to explain the progress made to-date and the way forward for this vital area. WPC's Climate Emergency Action Group and Community Engagement Committee generate ideas and identify opportunities, which must be embedded in mainstream activity, with a priority in Planning & Development, to ensure longer term benefits.

Policy No. 25: Alternative Energy Sources

Proposals for individual and community scale energy from alternative/renewable sources⁵² will be supported, provided that:

- The siting and scale of the proposal is appropriate to its setting and position in the wider landscape and does not create any adverse visual or audio impact; and
- The proposal does not create an unacceptable impact on the amenities of local residents; and
- There is no unacceptable impact on a feature of natural or biodiversity importance or that presents a flying hazard to birds and bats; and
- The impact of added road traffic to construct, service or operate them is considered carefully and any necessary provisions for mitigation included; and
- They incorporate where appropriate, features such as wildflower meadows, on the land they utilise and take account of any wildlife corridors.

Justification

The survey responses showed overwhelming support for alternative energy sources. Provision of such is part of the national decarbonising agenda.

Project No. 15: Use of Lighting

WPC will urge business and shops to turn-off lights at night, or operate at a reduced level, unless required for safety or security, to reduce both energy use and light pollution.

Justification

Minimising energy use and initiating alternative sources of energy are primary means of reducing our carbon footprint.

⁵² For example (but not confined to): solar photovoltaic panels, local biomass facilities, anaerobic digestions and biomass systems

13. HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT & HERITAGE

13.1 Objectives Supported

O4: Promote and enable well-being, by: Promoting the area as an oasis for relaxation, leisure and enjoyment that emphasises the wealth of history and leisure opportunities, together with the choice of pubs and restaurants, with a balance between enhancing economic activity and retaining the special character of the Parish.

13.2 Policies & Projects

Our Parish does not have a pleasure beach or a world-renowned museum or art gallery, but it does have fine countryside for walking and quality pubs and restaurants. It also has a wealth of interesting locations: the old mill races at Welwyn village and Digswell Water; ecologically-prized nature reserves and wildlife sites at the edge of settlements; significant archaeological sites; a Roman road running through Welwyn village and Oaklands; fine country houses at Danesbury, Lockleys and The Frythe; Tudor, Jacobean and Georgian town houses in Welwyn village; spacious late 19th/early 20th C houses in Digswell; cottages in the Welwyn conservation area; the Italianate Welwyn North Station and the superb viaduct; the Roman Baths; long-established places of worship. All are in a good state of repair or conservation.

Policy No. 26: Designated and Non-Designated Heritage Assets

1. WPC will encourage and support the provisions in WHBC LP policy SADM15 and NPPF (paragraphs 202-221), by:
 - Seeking mitigation of the impact of any development on the overall historic environment including designated and non-designated assets; and
 - Conserving the character and appearance of the Welwyn village Conservation Area⁵³ and the hamlet of Digswell Water, with their heritage buildings and settings; and
 - Scrutinising development proposals for any impact on a heritage asset, or are within its setting, to ensure they take account of the historic fabric, its significance, the contribution of its setting to that significance and conserve or enhance the asset or its setting.
2. WPC is proposing the structures listed at Table 3, which have local (mainly historical) interest or significance, as Non-Designated Heritage Assets.
3. Development proposals relating to a non-designated heritage asset must include a proportionate description of the significance and impact of the proposal, to enable a balanced judgement to be made, having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the asset.
4. The sensitive retrofitting of energy efficiency measures and the appropriate use of micro-renewables in heritage buildings will be supported, provided that the special characteristics of any heritage assets involved are safeguarded.

Justification

The large number of designated⁵⁴ heritage assets in the Parish include 3 Grade II* listed structures and 80-plus Grade II-listed above-ground structures of which 52 are within the Welwyn Conservation Area and 15 in or near Digswell. Part of the 18thC Tewin Water Park and Garden lies within the Parish and there are two scheduled monuments: Lockleys and Dicket Mead Roman Villa complexes, the latter including the Roman Baths. There are numerous other

⁵³ In accordance with WHBC LP and the guidance in the *Welwyn CAAMP*.

⁵⁴ See Glossary for definition. *Parish Portrait* summarise these features. The villa complexes are on private land (Lockleys Farm and Sherrardswood School) but the bath complex is part of the Welwyn Hatfield Museum Service and open for visitors.

above-ground locations that may not merit formal scheduling but are of local interest and significance. Table 3 includes lists the locations and a summary of the basis for their inclusion; more detail is given in *Non-Designated Heritage Assets*.⁵⁵

Ref	Feature	Architectural Interest	Archaeological or Historical Interest	Artistic Interest
NHDA1	The Frythe	✓	✓	-
NHDA2	The Frythe Farm Buildings	-	✓	-
NHDA3	Becket Hall, London Road	-	✓	✓
NHDA4	St Mary's Court, London Road	✓	✓	-
NHDA5	The Old Workhouse, London Road	✓	✓	-
NHDA6	The Steamer PH, London Road	-	✓	-
NHDA7	The Old Rectory, Hobbs Hill	✓	✓	-
NHDA8	Bethel Chapel, Hobbs Hill	✓	✓	-
NHDA9	High Street Road Bridge & Ford	✓	✓	-
NHDA10	Orchard Road Sewage Works Pump House	✓	✓	-
NHDA11	Ice House, Danesbury Park	✓	✓	-
NHDA12	Ghyll Hill	✓	✓	-
NHDA13	Danesbury Fernery	✓	✓	✓
NHDA14	Bypass Road	-	✓	-
NHDA15	Robbery Bottom Lane Viaduct	✓	✓	-
NHDA16	Pest House, Ninnings Lane	✓	✓	-
NHDA17	Heath Road Road Bridge	✓	✓	-
NHDA18	Great North Road Road Bridge	✓	✓	-
NHDA19	Station Road Rail Bridge	✓	✓	-
NHDA20	Fishponds & Earthworks, Digswell Park	-	✓	-
NHDA21	St John's School, Digswell	✓	✓	-
NHDA22	Conical anti-tank obstacles, Digswell Pk Rd	-	✓	-
NHDA23	Conical anti-tank obstacles, Hertford Rd	-	✓	-
NHDA24	Conical anti-tank obstacles, Harmer Gn Lane	-	✓	-
NHDA25	Spigot Mortar Emplacement, Fulling Mill Lane	-	✓	-
NDHA26	The Vine, Church Street	-	✓	-

Table 3: Proposed Non-Designated Heritage Assets⁵⁶

The Welwyn Conservation Area covers the historic centre of the village, extending northwards up the High Street from the junction with Prospect Place and along Codicote Road to the Link Road roundabout and southwards to include some parts of School Lane, Hobbs Hill and London Road (see Appendix 1, Map 8). The CAAMP identifies three non-designated heritage assets in the Conservation Area but WHLP Policy SADM 15 does not at this time consider beyond the Conservation Area. The HHER also records further above-ground structures that are not listed. This NP is therefore an important opportunity for our community to develop a positive strategy

⁵⁵ One of the NP's Evidence Base documents.

⁵⁶ For full details, with photographs, maps and justifications, see the Evidence Base document *Non-Designated Heritage Assets*.

and identify the area's locally important heritage assets that are not currently recognised at a national level through formal listing or scheduling, or documented the CAAMP. Many, but not all, are mentioned in the HHER.

Policy No. 27: Archaeological Remains

Development proposals in the Parish must consider the potential for (as yet) unrecorded remains as well as any recorded remains, in view of the known number of rich archaeological sites. Proposals affecting a site with potential archaeological interest⁵⁷ shall be accompanied by a desk-based archaeological assessment by a suitably qualified person, informed by an analysis of the HHER and, where necessary, a detailed field evaluation.

Project No. 16: Archaeological Remains

WPC will work with partners including the Welwyn Archaeological Society:

1. To identify potential locations of below-ground archaeological significance.
2. To support activity to determine their sensitivity, significance and documentation.
3. To arrange for suitable protection of any assets found or proven to be there, including future identification as Non-Designated Historical Assets in any revision to this NP or other appropriate method.
4. To include (if appropriate) within the Welwyn Heritage Trail or otherwise to publicise for the benefit of the Parish community, visitors and wider audiences.

Justification

The HHER lists multiple sites for Welwyn, Digswell, Oaklands and Mardley Heath that have yielded archaeological finds from Palaeolithic, through Roman, Saxon and Mediaeval, through to 19thC. Many important “finds” (particularly late Iron Age and Romano-British) have been made in the immediate area of Welwyn village and were assessed as being of national significance and importance and as a consequence, are in the British Museum. There are also sites of recorded⁵⁸ below-ground remains as yet unexcavated, and evidence suggesting currently unrecorded remains⁵⁹ e.g. the strongly-suspected location of the original Roman village and ford for the prehistoric trackway and Roman road towards Colchester and the east, crossing the river. However, the known occupation of the Parish area from the Mesolithic era and possibly earlier, suggests that archaeology of national importance⁶⁰ could occur almost anywhere. It is vital that any indication of such should be properly investigated and recorded; hence the need for any development activity to be carefully planned, with proper regard to preserving and protecting assets.

Policy No. 28: Key Views around the Parish

1. The value of the significant views of the built and rural environments of the Parish detailed in Table 4 must be protected. Any development proposals which are judged to have a harmful impact on their public appreciation will not normally be supported.
2. Proposals will be supported where measures proposed to contain and mitigate the visual impact of development on the open landscape character and setting of settlements can be demonstrated.

⁵⁷ The CAAMP notes: “Welwyn retains the appearance of a ‘historic’ village. In addition, the potential for significant archaeological deposits to be present contributes to the special interest of the area, and may reveal further information about the origins and development of the settlement in the future”. This potential also applies to places outside the Conservation Area.

⁵⁸ Most notably in the area of Sherrardswood School grounds and Lockleys Farm (excavated recorded).

⁵⁹ Most notably in the field adjacent to the Evangelical Church in Fulling Mill Lane.

⁶⁰ E.g. the late Iron Age “Chieftain Burials” and the Roman Baths, although there are many more examples.

Justification

The Parish has many fine views of both the built and rural environments.

Ref	Vantage Point	View
V1	High Street bridge, Welwyn	N up the High Street.
V2	Junction High Street and Church Street, Welwyn	E along Church Street.
V3	Junction High Street and Church Street, Welwyn	N along Codicote Road.
V4	Mill Lane, Welwyn	N towards Church Street.
V5	Singlers Bridge, Welwyn	NW across Singlers Marsh.
V6	Welwyn Playing Fields	N & W, from the highest point
V7	Top of Hawbush Rise, Welwyn	Across the Mimram valley and fields.
V8	Danesbury Park near Fernery	NE towards Oaklands.
V9	St Mary's Church tower, Welwyn	SE across the Conservation Area
V10	Welwyn North Station footbridge	Station and view N of tunnel entrance
V11	Adele Avenue, Digswell	W towards Welwyn North Station.
V12	Junction Hertford Road & Station Road, Digswell	S across Digswell Lake to WGC.
V13	Digswell Park Road	West face of the viaduct.
V14	Land behind New Road, Digswell	SW across the Mimram valley .
V15	Inside Tewin Water Park	Tewin Water House, grounds & park.
V16	Hertford Road near St John's School, Digswell	W along Digswell Water.
V17	Heath Road, Mardley Heath	W along Heath Road.
V18	Heath Road car park, Mardley Heath	N towards across The Heath.
V19	Top of Welwyn (S) railway tunnel ⁶¹	W & SW across Lockley's Farm.
V20	Top of Welwyn (N) railway tunnel	E & SE to Harmer Green & Digswell.
V21	NW corner Lockleys Wood	W to Sherrardswood School & Welwyn village
V22	NW corner Lockleys Wood	NW to Foxley Grove & Lockley Farm

Table 4: Key Views around the Parish⁶²

Table 4 provides a summary of the characteristics of each view that justify its protection. More detail, including photographs and maps is given in *Key Views*.

Project No. 17: Heritage Promotion

WPC will:

1. Publish a heritage statement to outline the overall significance of buildings, conservation area, heritage assets (both designated and non-designated) and settings.
2. Ensure that all WPC policies consider their impact upon Heritage and Culture prior to adoption.

⁶¹ There are two tunnels – Welwyn South (under Lockley's Wood) and Welwyn North (under Harmergreen Wood). Various fine views across much of the area can be obtained from above both locations, with a small change in vantage point; V19 & V20 are typical.

⁶² For full details, with photographs, maps and justifications, see the Evidence Base document *Key Views*.

3. Take ownership of the hosting of the Welwyn Heritage Trail website and encourage and support work by (in particular) WPAG and DRA to enhance the Trail progressively to include more locations in Welwyn village, Digswell and the wider Parish.
4. Actively publicise, promote and encourage further public engagement in the historic environment: archaeological remains, historical attractions, leisure opportunities, places of entertainment and hospitality, and the potential for Heritage (Healthy) walks around Welwyn and Digswell (including, where possible, the viewing of archived records).
5. Promote the historic environment in discussions on development in the Parish and seek its appropriate inclusion in any Master planning of development.
6. Consider the potential for nominating certain features as Assets of Community Value.

Justification

The Parish area has major historical value and residents are concerned about its continuation as well as the continued “greenness” and rural “feel” of the area. This will add to the understanding of the structures, their settings and how that has changed over time and thus provide for a better-informed experience. A positive strategy has been adopted:

- for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment;
- to sustain and enhance where possible the significance of all types of heritage asset;
- to emphasise the need for new developments to make a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness;
- to ensure that new developments consider opportunities to use the existing historic environment to help reinforce character of a place.

Within the Parish there are a number of assets (in some cases relatively modern) that are much-used and greatly valued by the communities, but not necessarily appropriate for recognition as either Designated or Non-Designated Heritage Assets; these can be considered in the future for nomination as Assets of Community Value.

14. LIVING IN THE PARISH HEALTH & WELL-BEING

14.1 Objectives Supported

O4: Promote and enable well-being, by:

- 1) Championing the need for a good standard of primary (GP) and secondary (hospital) healthcare provided under the NHS or privately to residents of all ages from the Parish and beyond.
- 2) Supporting a variety of private medical facilities and services being provided privately (or which may be NHS-funded) to residents of all ages from the Parish and beyond.
- 3) Providing whatever support is possible for the overall well-being of residents and their families, including those who are elderly or disabled and becoming a dementia-friendly parish.

14.2 Policies & Projects

Policy No 29: Healthcare Provision

WPC will encourage and support:

- Proposals for expansion, including relocation locally, of these services, subject to the following criteria:
 - No significant negative impact on the amenities of surrounding residents and the local environment; and
 - No unacceptable impact on the local road network or public parking; and
 - Any new/additional location must be accessible by foot, cycle and public transport
- Mainstream and alternative healthcare practitioners who seek to operate from premises in the Parish.

Project No. 18: Healthcare System

1. WPC will work positively:
 - With the Integrated Care Partnership of Hertfordshire and West Essex and with partners, to champion the needs of patients in regard to gaining GP appointments within a reasonable time at Bridge Cottage Surgery
 - To appoint a Health & Well-Being lead with a general watching brief, to find ways of contributing to the process for the benefit of Parish residents.
 - To hold Councils and Developers to account to ensure that adequate primary care and support facilities, identified by the community (including GP surgery and NHS Dental Care capacity), are provided to support housing growth in the Parish, in preparation for that growth being delivered.
2. WPC will encourage and support:
 - Proposals which promote, enhance and facilitate the continued delivery of health facilities, in particular at Bridge Cottage Surgery.
 - Active distribution of information via the Patient Participation Group and more presentations for “being well in Welwyn” i.e. Coping with Dementia, Helping Carers, keeping residents supported in their own homes.
 - Services provided by the QE2 Urgent Care Centre and strongly oppose any reduction in those services.

Justification

There is a limit to what a parish council can itself deliver in terms of healthcare, however, following the survey and frequent comments on local social media, WPC has a legitimate role in representing residents' views.

Welwyn village hosts a variety of other healthcare practitioners: Osteopath, Chiropractor, Physiotherapists, Chiropodist & Podiatrist, 2 Dental surgeries, Hearing Clinic and a Pharmacy. Counselling is available via the Surgery and elsewhere. The QE2 Urgent Care Centre services include phlebotomy, radiography, out-patient clinics and treatment for a wide range of conditions that obviates a longer-distance visit to the A&E Department at Lister Hospital, Stevenage.

Project No. 19: Automatic External Defibrillators (AEDs)

Initiatives to establish AEDs, with registration of their locations on the national database, will be encouraged and supported. WPC will take over the funding and any co-ordination required to maintain them when current management arrangements end, including facilitating local training in their use.

Justification and Evidence

The Parish benefits from a number of publicly-accessible Automatic External Defibrillators (AEDs) funded by grants and local contributions and available 24x7. Some are owned and maintained by a charity to which an annual management fee is paid.



P17: Bridge Cottage Surgery, Welwyn High St



P18: AED outside the Parish Council Offices

Project No. 20: Facilities and Provision for the Elderly or the Disabled

WPC will:

- Respect the needs of the elderly or disabled in regard to gaining access to its venues; and
- Champion the provision of support aid for the visually and audibly impaired; and
- Set an example with its indoor venues and outdoor spaces: to make them wheelchair accessible; provided with disabled-access toilet facilities; stairs and steps provided with hi-visibility nosings and handrails; indoor venues provided with large print signage and hearing loops.

Justification

The survey showed that some elderly and disabled people would like to visit locations such as our open/green spaces, for leisure and pleasure but are deterred because there is no ready wheelchair access. To afford inclusivity, in our public buildings and spaces, we must go that extra mile beyond what the law may regard as “reasonable” to accommodate those who have impairments such that they may participate fully in Parish life.

Physical and mental health are closely connected, maintaining the former has positive effects on the latter and to some extent *vice versa*. Exercise and “getting-about”, together with associated social interaction are important, from early childhood into old age, and are important factors in maintaining mental health and in child development. Also see below regarding Dementia.

Project No. 21: Provision of Information

WPC will:

- Commit to keeping the current Directory of Resources⁶³ updated and available both online and in hard copy form to address the challenge of making information available.
- Sponsor sessions to help residents (especially the elderly) who lack knowledge or are apprehensive about using digital media or experience technical issues, as this is a vital method of communication and information dissemination.

Justification

The use of resources, both within the Parish and in the wider Borough and County, that support health and well-being and therefore their effectiveness, is maximised by making information on them readily available, preferably in one place.

Experience in Datchworth Parish has shown that residents want to use IT but lack knowledge and confidence. They require impartial advice and guidance, help in configuring or getting equipment such as PCs, tablets, smart phones to work correctly, confidence in dealing with the various security challenges and support for shopping and banking effectively online.

Project No. 22: Developing a Dementia-Friendly Parish

The Parish Council intends to become dementia-friendly and will:

- Appoint a lead within the council to ensure people with dementia are represented.
- Ensure that people with dementia are considered in all things.
- Determine what is necessary to create Welwyn as a Dementia-friendly Parish.
- Lead the work around Dementia Friendly Communities and have Dementia Friendly Communities as a periodic agenda item to monitor progress and initiate actions.
- Commit to making council buildings dementia-friendly and support local initiatives to improve matters for those suffering with dementia.
- Champion greater help and support for the carers of persons with this and other debilitating health problems.

Justification

The 2021 Census shows the age profile of our Parish is significantly skewed with 24% over 65 and 7% over 80; the over-65s have increased by 20% since the 2011 Census. Thus the number of residents with dementia onset is expected to increase. In a Dementia-Friendly Parish, people with dementia are understood, respected, supported and can continue to live in the way they want. People affected by dementia are at the heart of every dementia-friendly community.



⁶³ Everything within Welwyn; this Directory covers more than Health & Well-Being.

15. IMPLEMENTATION & DELIVERY

This section sets out how WPC will ensure the Vision, Objectives and Policies are delivered once the Plan is adopted.

15.1 Use of the Plan

Flexibility will be needed as new challenges and opportunities arise over the plan period and any revision to the Local Plan will contribute considerable changes. WPC is committed to ensuring locally-informed input on planning decisions and the Plan will be used to:

- brief potential developers of Parish policies and requirements;
- guide WPC comments on planning applications;
- negotiate with stakeholders to achieve the best possible outcomes from new developments;
- direct financial resources (including CIL monies) in a structured way, including for Community Projects, following local consultation;
- bring together groups or working parties to improve the local environment;
- liaise with local authorities to support residents' wishes and aspirations.

We recognise that partnership and joint working with HCC, WHBC, adjacent parish councils, developers and landowners will be essential to successful implementation, over a long period with many aspects not under the unique or direct control of WPC.

15.2 Delivery Statement

Once adopted, this Plan will become a Development Plan Document, used by WHBC when determining planning applications within its boundaries, in order to ensure that any such determination has full regard to the policies of the Plan. Following approval WPC will:

- pursue key projects that support the delivery of the Plan, utilising developer contributions where possible. These projects and the Plan will be used to determine policy on how to spend CIL money afforded to the Parish.
- Seek to meet with applicants of planning applications for major developments to discuss local infrastructure needs and the features of the development prior to the preparation of a planning application;
- Monitor all planning applications to review conformity to Neighbourhood Plan policies, providing representations to WHBC as required;

As far as possible, WPC will seek to deliver the Plan via its existing operational Committees (see Section 18.4). However, if necessary, new Committees or Working Parties will be introduced to engage with residents and other organisations to deliver and monitor progress.

15.3 Community Infrastructure Levy Contributions

WHBC currently uses s106 and s278 Agreements to secure improvements and collect contributions but will adopt the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) in October 2025. WPC strategy will be to use financial contributions through s106/278 agreements or CIL to support the timely delivery of infrastructure, services and facilities necessary, to provide a balanced, self-sufficient community. See appendix X

15.4 Plan Monitoring

The Plan will be monitored and its effectiveness and relevance to national and local policies reviewed. The following WPC Committees will discharge this responsibility:

Full Council: Following adoption, WPC will update its Action Plan to prioritise projects and monitor progress under standard procedures, reporting on compliance at the Annual Parish Assembly. WPC will also use information such as: policies used and those not used and how any appeal has interpreted and used the relevant Policy(ies).

Planning & Licensing Committee: Housing Growth, Local Infrastructure, Transport, Travel, Road Safety, Communications, Local Character, Sustainable Development and Design Quality. The P&L Committee will continue to review planning applications and now include the extent to which applicants apply NP Policies. The Committee will provide comment as necessary on the conformity of applications with the Plan and highlight appropriate obligations. Granting of planning consent will be reviewed for adherence to the NP, CAAMP and Character Appraisals.

Leisure & Open Spaces Committee: Landscape, Environment, Leisure, Sustainability.

Community Engagement Committee: Health & Well-Being; Local Communications; Energy; Council Facilities; Education; Utilities; Living and Working in the Parish; Heritage and Culture; Sports; sporting and other civic organisations⁶⁴; Crime & Security.

Finance Committee: stewardship of CIL monies; prioritisation for spend.

15.5 Plan Review

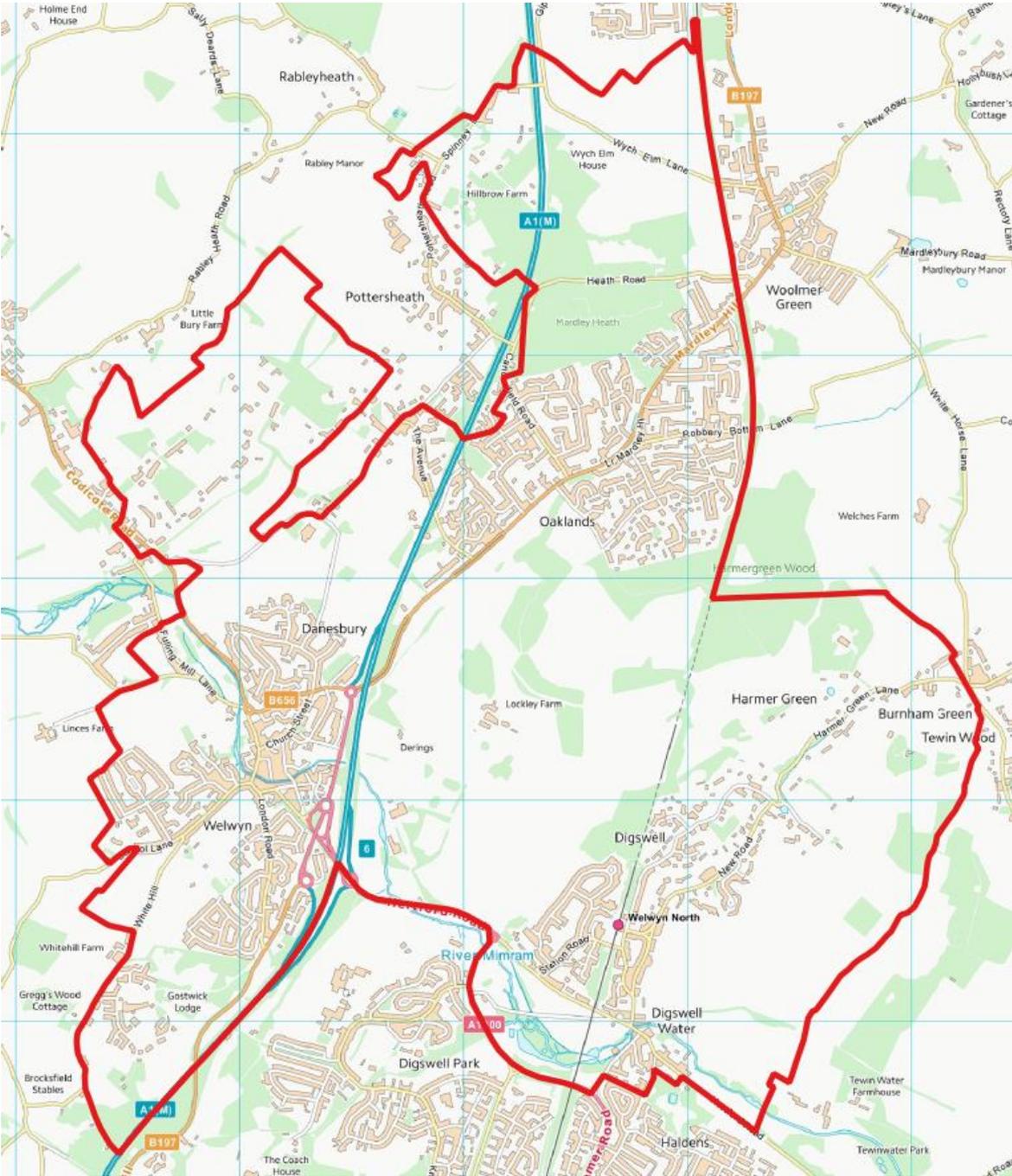
WHBC were required to review their Local Plan within one year of adoption and have a revised plan within a further 2 years. WHBC have decided to produce a new Local Plan, which may in turn require WPC to revise this NP in order to be compliant with any revision to the Local Plan that affects the Parish. See Section 1.2.

⁶⁴ E.g. The Natural History Society; The Archaeological Society, etc.

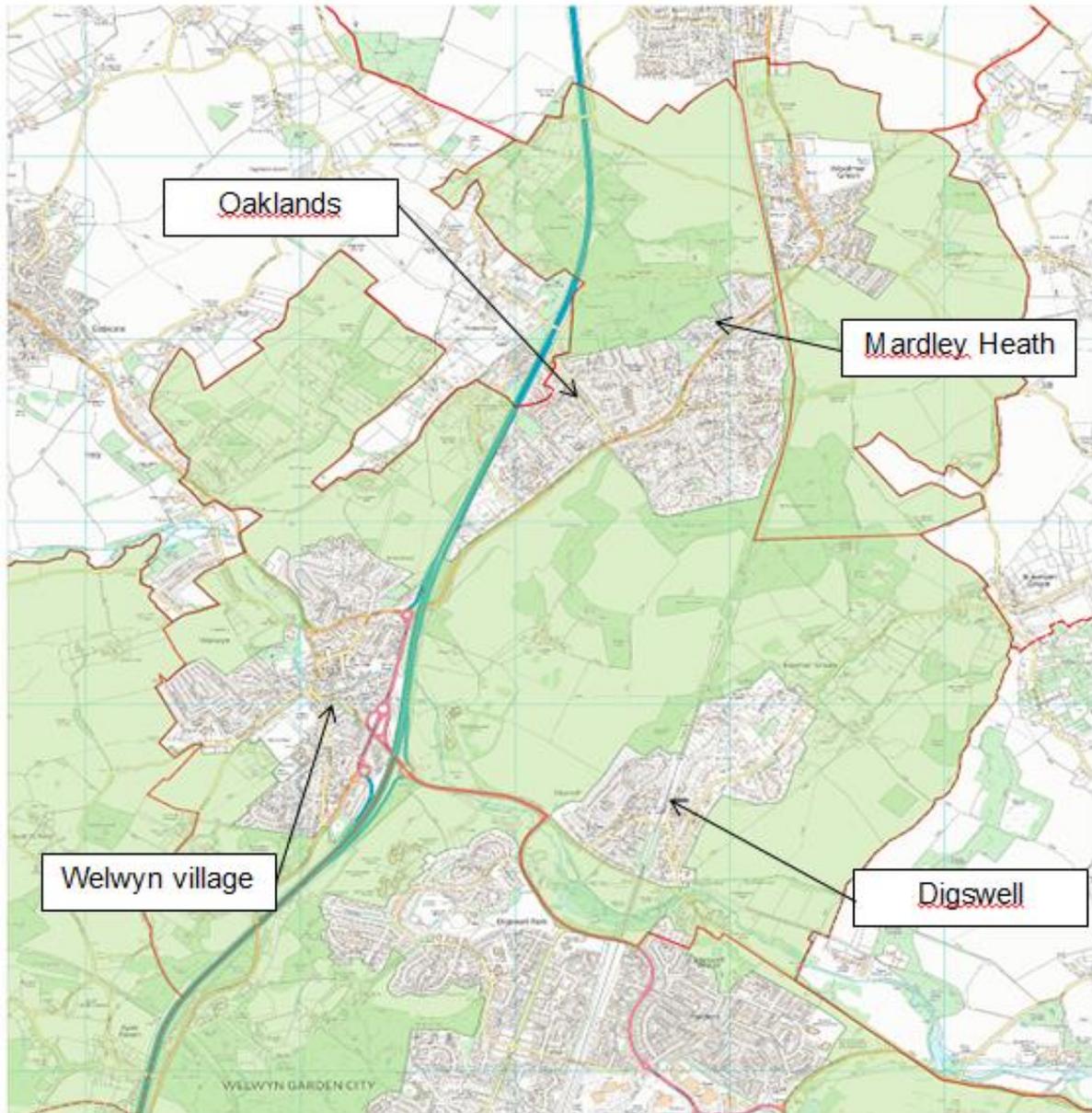
Appendices

Appendix 1: Maps

Map 1: Welwyn Parish Neighbourhood Plan Area

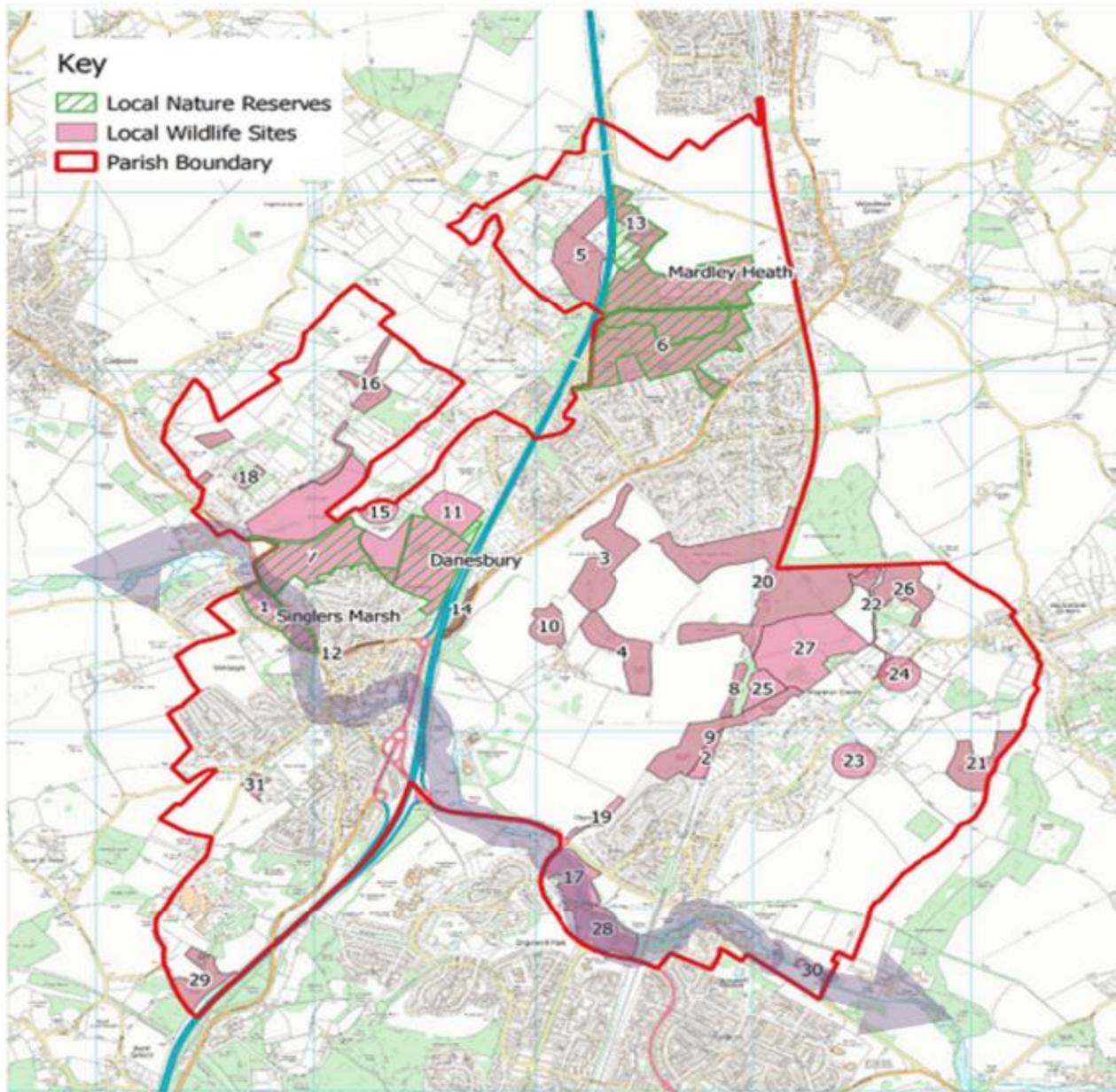


Map 2: Green Belt Areas within the Parish Boundary (2024)



Note: The Parish/Neighbourhood Plan boundary is shown in RED

Map 4: Local Nature Reserves, Local Wildlife Sites And Major Wildlife Corridors



Notes:

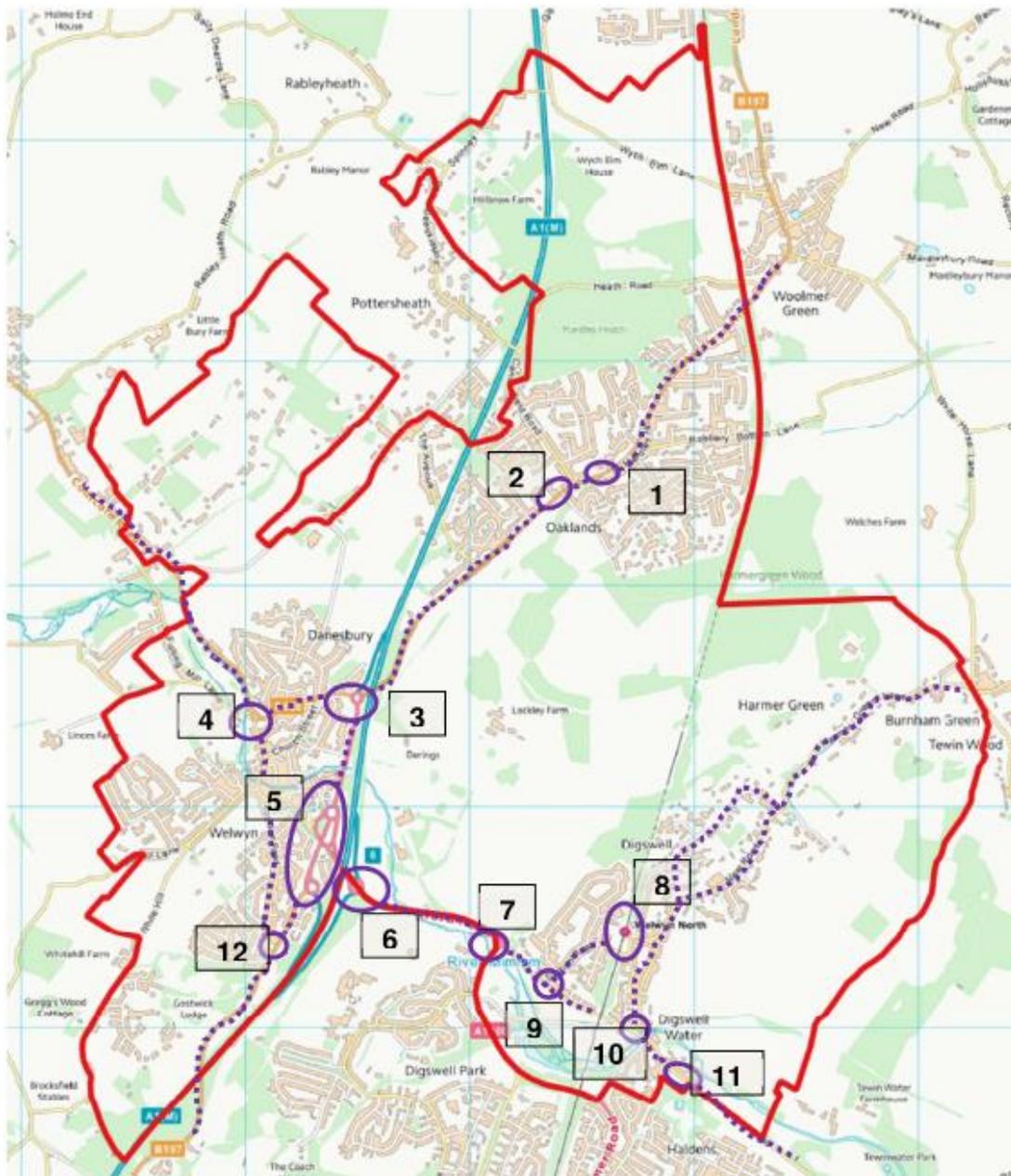
1. LWSs are numbered (key below); LNRs are named on the map.
2. The RSPB-owned private Nature Reserve "*Wildings*" (Soper Wildlife Sanctuary) to the rear of No. 58 Harmer Green Lane, Digswell is not shown on the map.
3. With acknowledgement to WHBC for the LNR & LWS mapping and to Herts & Middx Wildlife Trust for defining the wildlife corridors.

↔ Major wildlife (green) corridors

↔ Proposed route of Mimram Corridor ("blue"), also a major wildlife corridor

Site No	Site Name	Site No	Site Name
1	Singlers Marsh / Fulling Mill Meadow	17	Digswell Meadows South
2	Lockleys Wood Meadow	18	Rolls Wood (Codicote)
3	Puttockhill Wood	19	Scrub Slope E. of Digswell
4	Foxley Grove and Hazel Grove	20	Harmergreen Woods
5	Ninning's Wood	21	Cooks Wood
6	Mardley Heath	22	Barnes Green
7	Danesbury Park	23	Harmer Green Area
8	Lockleys Chalk Bank, Harmer Green	24	Harmer Green Lane
9	Lockleys Wood	25	Pasture N. of Lockleys Wood
10	Lockleys Farm Woodland	26	Barnes Wood
11	Grassland E. of Danesbury Hospital	27	Pastures S. of Harmergreen Wood
12	Link Road, Grange Hill Road Banks	28	Digswell Lake
13	Legs and Stockings Wood	29	Homer's Wood
14	Old North Rd & Central Reservation	30	Tewin Water Mimram Valley
15	Danesbury Icehouse	31	Whitehill Wildflower Meadow
16	Reynard Spring & Arnold's Spring		

Map 5: Road Traffic Hotspots/Danger Areas

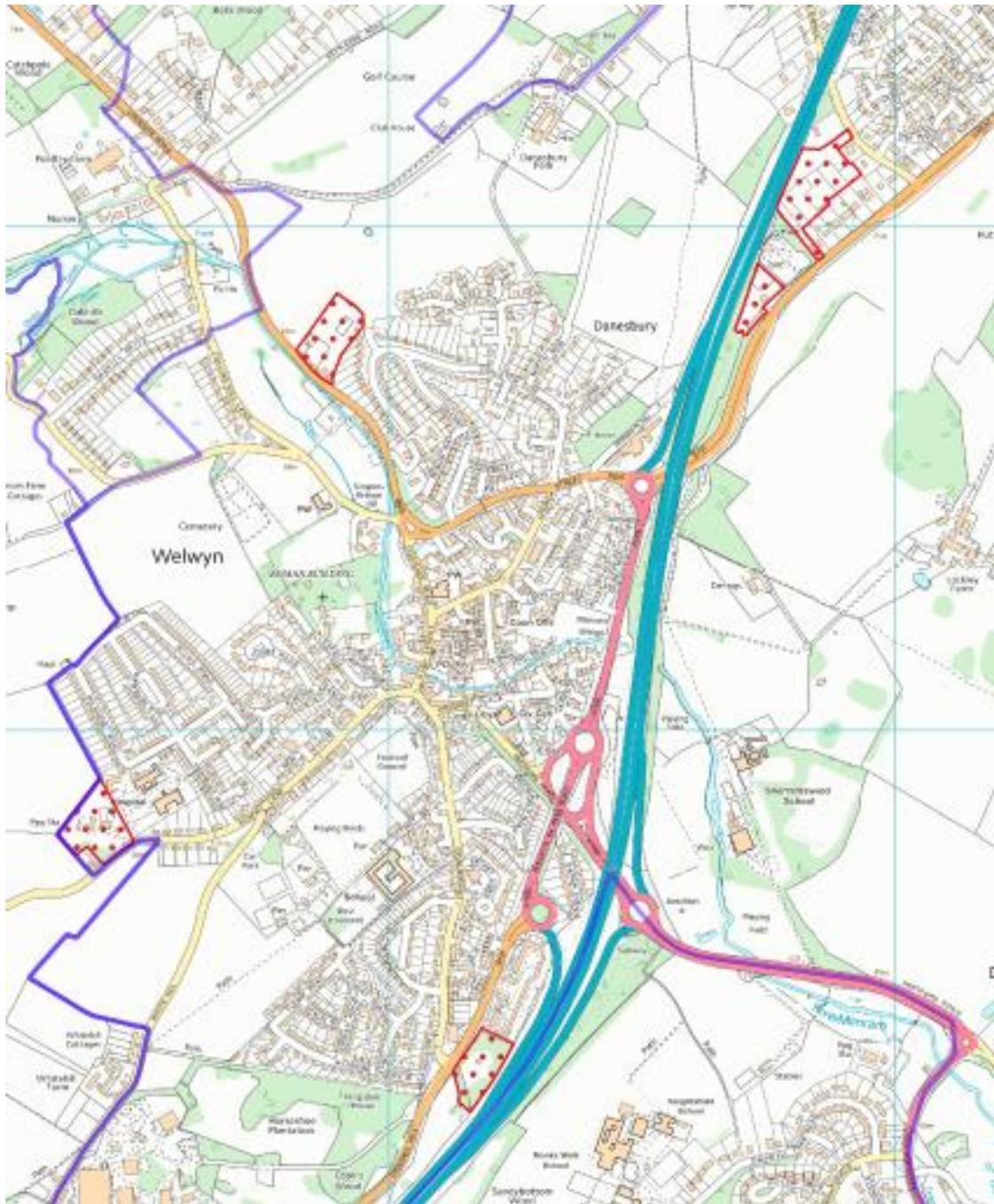


1	B197 area of Oaklands parade of shops
2	B197 area of Oaklands Primary School
3	B197/By-Pass/Link Road/A1(M) Junction 5 (N) – “Clock” Roundabout
4	B656 Codicote Road/Link Road roundabout
5	B197 Parkside and adjacent roundabouts
6 & 7	A1000 roundabout at A1(M) Junction 5 (S), A1000 Bessemer Road/B1000 roundabout and dual carriageway between.
8	Harmer Green Lane in area of Welwyn North Station
9	Mini rbt Station Rd/B1000
10	B1000 Roundabout New Road/Hertford Road/Digsweil Park Road
11	B1000 area of St John’s Primary School
12	B197 By Pass Road/London Road junction by BP Garage
	“Hotspot” - road traffic flow confluence creates a point of excessive volume and/or queuing
	“Danger Area” - road traffic level and/or speed is excessive and there is no separate footway or cycle path (or inadequate ones) which deters cyclists and pedestrians

Map 6: Locations for warnings of Equestrians / Enhancements to Rights of Way are required

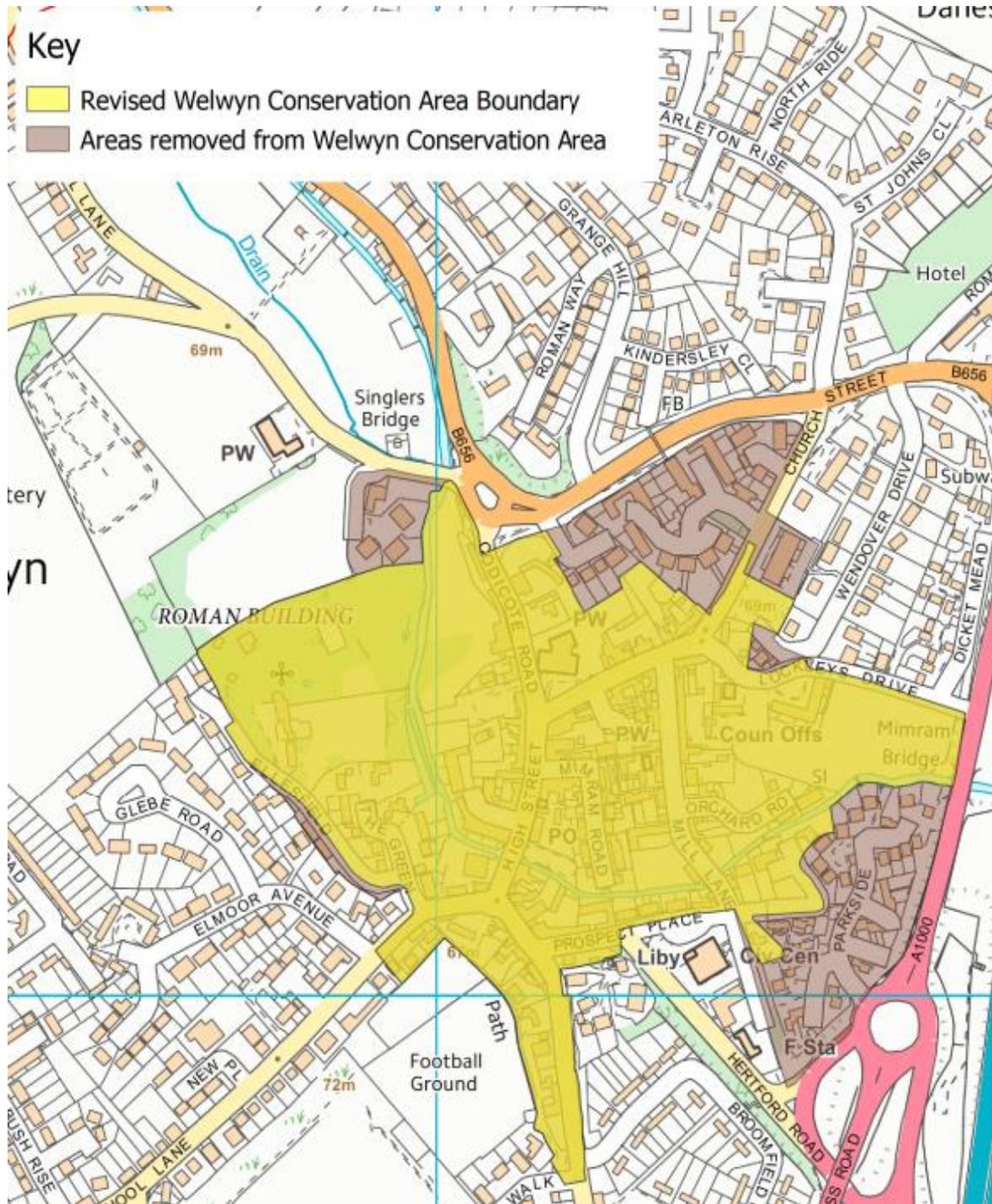


Map 7: Sites Allocated In the WHBC Local Plan



Note: No sites for Digswell were allocated in the Local Plan

Map 8: Welwyn Village Conservation Area (following the 2023 revision)



Appendix 2: Living in the Parish – Security & Crime

A2.1 Objectives Supported:

O2: Highlight the concerns locally regarding travel and transport and to campaign and champion solutions required; and

O4: Promote and enable well-being.

A2.2 Statistics

Improved presentation of crime statistics, in terms of granularity of location and type of incident, is required at or near parish level. This will go a long way to reassure residents that this is a safe place to live, work and bring up families. Although the crime statistics suggest this, when incidents do occur they raise concerns locally that are possibly disproportionate but nevertheless genuinely felt, especially with the elderly. The statistics can be confusing and unhelpful.

A parallel issue is completeness: cyber or other “scams” are not included in these figures. Although the objectives of Action Fraud (the national entity that deals with scams) state that information about these is sent back to local forces, it is uncertain if they find their way into the crime figures. Scam reporting in particular, due to its wide nature and poor recognition by many, is at an early stage. This lack of granularity does not facilitate comparisons or provide a rigorous basis to dispel the fear of crime.

A2.3 Publicity & Awareness

Participation in a community messaging system such as the police system “Neighbourhood Alert” (branded as “Herts Connected”) helps prevent crime in a neighbourhood; increased system penetration increases awareness of crime and enables residents to contribute individually and collectively to crime reporting and prevention. The facilities and support from the *Beacon*⁶⁵ initiatives will be of great help to residents.

Residents will be encouraged to:

- adopt good neighbourly behaviour by “keeping an eye on other residents and their homes” (e.g. via a *Neighbourhood Watch* scheme);
- to seek professional crime prevention advice and deter break-ins by investing in effective intruder alarms, security lighting, quality locks and CCTV;
- exercise sensible precautions with property kept outside of their house: cars (parked on the road, on driveways or in unsecured garages), motor bikes and scooters, pedal cycles, motorised wheelchairs, garden machinery and tools (in sheds or outbuildings).

Project No. 23: Security & Crime Prevention Advice

WPC will:

1. Draw attention to publicity and provide easy-to-follow guidance (particularly for elderly persons) to defend against phone and internet-related scams and ensure residents have a point of contact for help and advice.
2. Signpost residents via website links, to quality advice and encourage and facilitate them to take advantage of Herts Connected, *Neighbourhood Watch* and *Beacon Assist* for crime reporting and prevention information, and to consider and review their domestic property protection. Telephone contact numbers will also be readily available for those who are without Internet access.

⁶⁵ Herts Beacon Assist is a recent (2022) first step to giving victims of crime a one-stop portal for all issues associated with their case and a unique access point to the Beacon Victim Care team. <https://hertfordshirebeacon.org/>

Justification

The UK Crime and Safety statistics⁶⁶ for Welwyn village⁶⁷ state: “The overall crime rate in Welwyn in 2023 was 55 crimes per 1,000 people. This compares favourably to Hertfordshire's overall crime rate, coming in 13% lower than the Hertfordshire rate of 64 per 1,000 daytime population”. Detection, delay and identification of perpetrators are most important and valuable to the police who can and do respond promptly to emergency calls of crimes in progress. Crime deterrence can and should be bolstered by householders.

A2.4 Current Threats

The Parish is a low crime area, with little street or violent crime, although there are some isolated incidents of domestic issues, anti-social behaviour and criminal damage, which the police usually respond to promptly. Most of our pubs are also restaurants, so we have a low incidence of anti-social behaviour following (excessive) drinking. Anti-social behaviour is not a huge issue but gives rise to local disquiet. Fly-tipping is a rural scourge at certain locations: occasional, but very annoying, with both financial and environmental cost. The Pandemic lockdown saw increased use of internet, telephone shopping and banking, and witnessed an upsurge in scam e-mails and telephone calls which disturbed elderly persons.

The periodic appearance of “Nottingham Knockers”⁶⁸ is a concern to elderly people, especially those living alone. The age profile of the Parish is heavily weighted towards post-retirement age and concern over a threat of violence is understandable. The rural area and its larger houses (more likely to contain valuable items indoors and in outbuildings) present an attractive target for burglary, but the numbers of incidents of such incidents are low. Drug crime is “undercover” and hard to quantify, although servicing a drug habit may account for much acquisitive crime. Detection, delay and identification of perpetrators are most important and valuable to the police who can and do respond promptly to emergency calls of crimes in progress and deterrence should be bolstered by the householder.

Most felt safe in the Parish but there is certainly a desire to see police vehicles frequently in the area on routine patrol. Parking Enforcement is not a general issue but anti-social parking and parking on double yellow lines or the zig-zags by a pedestrian crossing (especially by Tesco in Welwyn village) causes concern. Parking enforcement on- and off-road (including double yellow line enforcement) is not generally the task of the police but of specialist wardens during the working day.

Project No. 24: Policing

WPC will represent the concerns of residents to the police and hold them and the PCC to account for:

- their response to the volume of crime and in particular those involving violence, anti-social behaviour, burglary, drug dealing and fly-tipping; and
- enforcement of road policing including speeding, the use by HGVs of inappropriate country and village roads, the use of Hertford Rd for through-transport despite its narrow width and use by pedestrians for school, and anti-social or illegal parking, especially outside schools, near Welwyn North station and in Welwyn High St.

Justification

⁶⁶ Abstracted from: <https://crimerate.co.uk/hertfordshire/welwyn>. Also available from: <https://www.police.uk/your-area/hertfordshire-constabulary/welwyn-hatfield-north/?tab=CrimeMap>. The inter-active mapping is most useful.

⁶⁷ Includes Digswell, Oaklands & Mardley Heath, but Welwyn Hatfield North also includes a large sector of WGC; by use of the inter-active map, the non-relevant reports can be filtered out and monthly crime numbers and detail examined to individual street level.

⁶⁸ Usually younger persons “cold-calling” and selling shoddy merchandise at inflated prices, often with the ulterior motive of checking if the premises are worth an attempt to break in. They can be abusive if refused.

Many concerns were expressed in the Survey Results by local residents and there are frequent postings in local social media.

Appendix 3: Living in the Parish – Retail Shopping

Welwyn Village has a modest High Street with a range of good quality shops including Tesco Extra. **Oaklands** has a small parade of shops including a large convenience store, a butcher, and a newsagent/post office. **Digswell** has a convenience store/newsagent opposite Welwyn North Station, plus a small parade of shops: salons, dog groomer and flooring specialist in Woodside Road. Understandably limited ranges mean major shopping, e.g.: for clothes, household goods, and less-common food items etc. are only available in the towns. The survey elicited valuable detail from residents: many wanted traditional greengrocer, butcher, fishmonger and delicatessen, however in the recent past, attempts to re-introduce these into the village ended due to lack of support. The shops are convenient and very useful but they cannot support larger developments for other than modest requirements. Car travel to a supermarket in and around WGC and Stevenage for family shopping, or internet order/home delivery by van, are the favoured solutions for many, on a regular basis.

The only Post Office in the Parish is at Oaklands⁶⁹ and there are no bank branches the Parish⁷⁰. Welwyn village centre is a popular shopping and entertainment location with on- and off-street parking free at the point of use⁷¹. As a result shops, pubs and restaurants are well-patronised, popular and viable and the village centre is essentially vibrant and populated at all normal hours. The same is also true at Oaklands and to a lesser extent, at Digswell. Locations outside our Parish with parking issues or restrictions have few shops and customers simply go elsewhere.



P19: Welwyn Village - High Street



P20: Digswell - Woodside Road Shops



P21: Oaklands Shops



P22: Welwyn North Stores

⁶⁹ Alternative sub-post offices are at Knebworth or Codicote, both outside Welwyn Parish; the nearest main Post Office is in Stevenage.

⁷⁰ The nearest branches are in WGC, many operating with reduced opening hours. Branch closure has caused and continues to cause, major inconvenience to residents and businesses.

⁷¹ A 90-minute parking time restriction applies on High St/Church St/Codicote Rd and in the High St Car Park, during the daytime.

Appendix 4: Community Infrastructure - Education

A4.1 Objectives Supported

O4: Promote and enable well-being, by ensuring all children in the Parish can access high - quality local state pre-school facilities.

A4.2 Provision of Facilities

Project No. 25: Provision of Mother & Toddler and pre-School Facilities

1. Provision of Mother and Toddler Group services will be encouraged by discounted hire of the Civic Centre to local not-for-profit organisations.
2. Provision of Nursery and Pre-School facilities, especially by Acorn, will be supported by continuing to rent land and use of the car park where it is located.

Justification

A well-supported Mother and Toddler Group meets weekly in Welwyn Civic Centre, but the level of demand is such that further capacity is required; the limitation is leaders and staff, not primarily accommodation. The Parish has excellent Nursery & Pre-School facilities (notably: Acorn at Whitehill and Tenterfield at London Road, in Welwyn village; and Busy Bees at Mardley Hill).

Appendix 5: Community Infrastructure - Utilities

A5.1 Core Objectives Supported

O3: Promote the environment and support activities to combat climate emergency; and

O4: Promote and enable well-being.

A5.2 Drainage

Project No. 26: Drainage Facilities & Pollution Reduction

WPC:

1. Welcomes the opportunity to continue engagement with HCC in relation to the issue of surface water discharge and its concomitant vehicle-derived and other pollutants, from Codicote Road directly into the River Mimram by Singlers Marsh.
2. Will work in partnership with the Catchment Based Approach, Environment Agency, Affinity Water, Thames Water, HCC Highways and other interested parties to develop strategies to:
 - Ensure effective drainage and reduce pollutant impact.
 - Include regular inspection and deal promptly, regularly and pro-actively with blocked roadside gullies and linear drainage facilities; and
 - Install SuDS technology where necessary to deal with locations at risk from frequent flooding due to surface water run-off.
 - deal promptly and properly with long-term solutions to sewage overflows.

Justification and Evidence

There are major concerns over the management of waste water. Surface water run-off from higher-level agricultural land (especially in the areas of Harmer Green Woods, and upper School Lane/Whitehill) exposes inadequate infrastructure. Under heavy rainfall conditions this leads to:

- Localised (but nevertheless deep) flooding at or near Robbery Bottom Lane, Oaklands and on the B197 between Oaklands School and the parade of shops
- Water cascading down the steep hill of Hawbush Rise, Welwyn, which overshoots blocked en-route roadside gullies and on encountering the grass bank at the “T” junction with School Lane, scours away earth and stones leaving them strewn along the length of School Lane to the Mimram ford, by the High St bridge.
- Flooding and sewerage outflow into houses by the roundabout at the junction of Harmer Green lane and Hertford Road.

A5.3 Provision of Utility Services

Project No. 27: Utility Service Provision

1. A dialogue will be opened and maintained with Cadent (Gas), UK Power Networks (Electricity) and Affinity Water to deal promptly with effective long-term solutions to:
 - Supply disruption; and
 - Renewal of existing supply infrastructure, to minimise disruption; and
 - Plan ahead for supply provision to new developments in such a way as to minimise disruption to residents/existing customers.
2. Urge Affinity Water to continue work to minimise abstraction from the River Mimram and thus support its wildlife.
3. Fixed and Mobile broadband service providers and their infrastructure providers will be expected to make high quality superfast Broadband via optical fibre delivery to the home and 5G mobile, available to both residents and businesses throughout the Parish.
4. Service providers will be expected and urged to adopt sensible planning practice to infrastructure provision in advance of development completions, capacity replacement and enhancement and maintenance and to co-ordinate their roadworks and related activities to minimise impact and duration of inconvenience to residents.

Justification

There was major concern in the survey over largely-unannounced electricity power cuts. New housing places an increased demand on ageing network infrastructure, and there is widespread concern if current network capacity and distribution infrastructure are adequate for the job. Contingency plans for outages should be adequate, prepared and exercised.

Quality broadband provision is essential for home-working, establishing a business, or enjoying high-tech leisure pursuits. Increased availability to all addresses, of fibre to the kerb and full fibre to the home, together with adequate backhaul capacity from the exchange and rigorous 5G mobile services are essential and urgently needed.

The frequency of disruption and major traffic diversions has significant impact at locations such as: London Road/High St and School Lane (Welwyn); Great North Road (Oaklands); and Hertford Road (Digswell). All are major transport routes for getting to work, shopping and daily living. Roadworks must be better-co-ordinated, including minimisation of traffic volume whilst road capacity is reduced and length of detours.

Appendix 6: Community Infrastructure – Council Facilities

A6.1 Core Objectives Supported

O3: Promote environment and support activities to combat the climate emergency; and
O4: Promote and enable well-being.

A6.2 Policies & Projects

Project No. 28: Publicity and Awareness of Services

WPC will continue to:

1. Publicise via various channels, e.g. *Welwyn News*, *The Welwyn Magazine*, *Digswell Church News*, noticeboards and any future Community Hub database, to inform residents which council provides which service, to avoid the confusion many have, and where to report a fault or make a complaint.
2. Use its best endeavours to respond via the telephone, e-mail or face-to-face queries and provide links from its website, with guidance to enable residents to find out about services such as hedge, tree and verge cutting, street sweeping and leaf clearance and reporting if work has not have been done in a timely way, or not at all, or if there is an urgent requirement.

Justification

Local social media shows that local residents are confused about which Council is responsible for what function. WPC receive frequent calls on this matter and to report poor or no response.

Project No. 29: Local Recycling

WPC will:

- Encourage residents to use the doorstep recycling facilities provided by WHBC and household recycling centres provided by HCC, to the maximum - putting as much as possible into recycling, commensurate with local regulations.
- Support local recycling provision from car parks at the Civic Centre in Welwyn and Digswell Playing Fields and hold WHBC to account for ensuring their timely and regular emptying and maintaining them in a tidy manner.
- Partner with organisations such as Terracycle, to provide opportunities to recycle “hard-to-recycle” items and publicise these opportunities to residents.
- Support and encourage the institution of a facility with the twin objectives of improving recycling/up-cycling and providing well-being opportunities.

Justification

Initial work with Terracycle on crisp packets, rubber gloves and tablet “blister” packs proved very popular and successful with collection points at the Civic Centre and Parish Offices as pilot ventures before “mainstream” recycling capabilities could handle these items.

The exact format, location, content and insurance of any up-cycling/well-being feature is yet to be worked through, but could align with HCC’s *Repair Café* initiative⁷². The popularity of “*The Repair Shop*” and “*Money from Nothing*” TV programmes have struck a chord with people concerned about waste, inability to repair things and premature obsolescence. Activities could include

⁷² https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/recycling-waste-and-environment/recycling-and-waste/wasteaware-campaigns/repair-cafes.aspx?dm_i=5ESZ,TZKZ,3DEMUU,3J7PF,1

recycling, up-cycling, repairs, simple manufacturing and planting, possibly operated on a not-for-profit basis with any charges covering costs and raw materials⁷³. Currently a small-scale scheme operated commercially by an individual, provides a small electrical equipment repair facility with an initial quotation and collection and return to the Parish Office. There is a steady flow of work suggesting people will pay for cost-effective repairs rather than buy new items.

Project No. 30: Operation of Parish Facilities

WPC will continue:

1. To invest in its buildings, replacing where needed, to ensure they remain high quality and attractive venues for hires.
2. Its policy of providing lower rates (discounted up to 100%) to local organisations and charities for functions via its Gift Aid scheme.
3. Support the Playing Fields and Play Areas at Ottway Walk in Welwyn and take every opportunity, subject to funding, to enhance and improve the playing surfaces, including drainage. Efforts will continue to determine a location to create such a facility in Oaklands.
4. To provide allotments at Lockleys Drive under current arrangements and in co-operation with the Welwyn Allotments Association, as a legal obligation for the Council.
5. The policy that protection and enhancement of certain local facilities can best be achieved by (given appropriate conditions) taking them under Parish Council ownership or management control where possible, so local interest, local resident-funded investment, grants and fund raising can be marshalled and channelled to achieve this, in respect of: Digswell Playing Fields and associated Play Area; Singlers Marsh; Danesbury Park; Mardley Heath; Hawbush Close allotments.

Justification

Pro-active work is essential with Civic Centre and Whitehill Centre and the Parish Office building is approaching end-of-life as well as having a leaking roof and being very poorly-insulated.

There is a significant demand for high-quality playing surfaces, including pavilion facilities and for formal and informal leisure activities for adults and children of ages. The two much-used play areas at Ottway Walk Playing Fields are regularly checked and subject to annual inspection by RoSPA⁷⁴. It is regrettable that efforts have failed to identify a suitable location in Oaklands to provide a play area with equipment for small children. However, given the obligations on developers to make such provision on developments above 0.4 hectares in area, WPC stands ready to assume management control and maintain such and, by negotiation, to expand any provision at the early planning stage. Grants and work organised by local volunteers have improved the state of Digswell Playing Fields occasioned by previous neglect and lack of investment, especially with new apparatus for the play area for small children and the riverside walk. Regrettably WPC has not been permitted to fund play equipment there via s106 funding, as it does not own the area, but the introduction of CIL should change that position.

Residents are concerned for added protection for Singlers Marsh. The Danesbury Park Fernery has been restored by local volunteer effort with financial support and expertise from WHBC, but there is inadequate monitoring of the area and a large number of trees felled by an adjacent landowner have caused a major change to the visual landscape. WHBC allotment plots are charged to plot hirers at a higher rent than WPC levy for our own allotments. Parish residents are charged via Special Expenses for Danesbury Park and Singlers Marsh, but despite this funding, there are aspects needing repair or investment. By taking control of these facilities, we believe we can better operate these for the benefit of the community and at a lower overall cost.

⁷³ The original Australian concept of a "Men's Shed" to improve mental well-being among those (men) suffering from mental health issues has now expanded to other countries and widened both its gender appeal and scope (beyond its original armed service personnel audience). The burgeoning need for remedial activity to help support, heal or improve capability for any and all to face the world is now more widely understood and encouraged.

⁷⁴ The Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents.

Appendix 7: Summary List of Policies & Projects

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Appendix 8: Use of Neighbourhood CIL and Other Funding Sources

Purpose of this Appendix

This appendix sets out the Parish Council's priorities and aspirations for the use of Neighbourhood Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) receipts and other funding sources that may become available during the Plan period.

It is not a land-use planning policy and does not form part of the statutory development management framework. It is provided to support implementation and delivery of the Neighbourhood Plan.

Relationship with the Planning System

The collection and expenditure of CIL is governed by:

- the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations, and
- Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council's CIL Charging Schedule and governance arrangements.

The final allocation and use of Neighbourhood CIL receipts remains subject to:

- statutory requirements, and
- decisions of the relevant local authority bodies.
- Parish Council Priorities

Where Neighbourhood CIL or other locally controlled funding is available, Welwyn Parish Council may seek to prioritise investment in projects that support the objectives of this Neighbourhood Plan, including (but not limited to):

- improvements to community infrastructure and facilities;
- enhancements to walking, cycling and accessibility, including safer routes;
- environmental and green infrastructure improvements;
- measures that support health, wellbeing and community resilience;
- projects that help address the impacts of new development within the Parish.

Delivery and Review

The Parish Council will:

- review funding priorities periodically to reflect changing local needs;
- work with Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council and other partners where appropriate;
- seek to align funding decisions with other strategies, evidence and investment programmes.

This appendix may be updated from time to time without triggering a formal review of the Neighbourhood Plan.

Appendix 10: Glossary

A8.1 Abbreviations:

AA	Archaeological Area
AAS	Area of Architectural Significance
CAAMP	Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan
CaBA	Catchment Based Approach
CIL	Community Infrastructure Levy (largely replaces s106 funding)
DpH	Dwellings per Hectare
DRA	Digswell Residents Association
EHDC	East Herts District Council
FOAHN	Full Objectively Assessed Housing Need
GTP	Growth & Transport Plan (<i>produced by HCC</i>)
HELAA	Housing & Economic Land Availability Assessment (<i>produced by WHBC</i>)
HCC	Hertfordshire County Council
(H)HER	(Hertfordshire) Historic Environmental Record
HMG	His Majesty's Government
LGS	Local Green Space
LNR	Local Nature Reserve
LPA	Local Planning Authority (<i>in our case WHBC</i>)
LTP	Local Transport Plan (<i>produced by HCC</i>)
LWS	Local Wildlife Site
NHDC	North Herts District Council
N(D)P	See WN(D)P
NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework (<i>produced by Central Government</i>)
NPPG	National Planning Policy Guidance (<i>produced by Central Government</i>)
PCC	Police and Crime Commissioner
SHLAA	Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (<i>produced by WHBC</i>)
SuDS	Sustainable Drainage Systems
WH	Welwyn Hatfield (Borough)
WHBC	Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council
(W)N(D)P	(Welwyn) Neighbourhood (Development) Plan
(W)N(D)PSG	(Welwyn) Neighbourhood (Development) Plan Steering Group
WPAG	Welwyn Planning & Amenity Group
WPC	Welwyn Parish Council
WPPG	Welwyn Parish Plan Group

A8.2 Terms:

Ancient woodland	An area that has been wooded continuously since at least 1600 AD.
Archaeological interest	Interest in a heritage asset that holds, or potentially holds, evidence of past human activity worthy of expert investigation at some point.
Architectural interest	Interest in the art or science of the design, construction, craftsmanship and decoration of buildings and structures of all types.
Article 4 Direction	A statement made under the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 by the LPA. The direction removes all or some of the permitted development rights on a site.
Artistic interest	Interest in other human creative skill, like sculpture.
Borough Council	See Local Authority (Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council - WHBC)
Catchment Based Approach (CaBA)	An inclusive, civil society-led initiative that works in partnership with Government, Local Authorities, Water Companies, businesses and more, to maximise the natural value of our environment.
Census	The results of the national statistical survey carried out by The Office for National Statistics every 10 years (e.g. in 2011 & 2021). The first reports from

	the 2021 version were published in June 2022 with further reports planned in subsequent years.
Community Infrastructure Levy - CIL	Introduced in the Planning Act 2008 and coming into force with the Community Infrastructure Regulations 2010, CIL is a “flat rate” contribution towards infrastructure levied by local authorities on new development in their area. It is an important tool for local authorities to use to help deliver infrastructure in their area. The CIL rate may vary by type of development (such as residential, retail or community use) and may be lower in certain areas to stimulate growth (such as regeneration areas). WHBC aims to introduce CIL by the end of 2024.
Conservation (for heritage policy):	The process of maintaining and managing change to a heritage asset in a way that sustains and, where appropriate, enhances its significance.
Core Objectives	The principal objectives for our NP to satisfy, covering a wide range of aspects, each addressed by one or more Policy sections. They directly relate to what it means to live in the Parish and the aspirations of residents, which emerged following the Survey and consultation sessions.
Character Assessment	An analysis of the factors that give an area its unique character. Two such assessments have been made for the Parish: Digswell (adopted in 2004) and Welwyn village Conservation Area (Reviewed November 2023)
Conservation Area	Method to manage and protect the special architectural and historic interest of a place - the features that make it unique. Designation is by the local planning authority (WHBC). The central (oldest) part of Welwyn village is so-designated.
Designated heritage asset	Scheduled Monument, Listed Building, Registered Park and Garden or Conservation Area designated under the relevant legislation.
Evidence Base	Information, comment and needs discovered by the SG following consultations with the community, interested parties and stakeholders, and a determination of those issues and impacts which have a bearing and consequence on the Parish, and community life now and in the next 15 to 20 years.
Examiner (Inspector)	An independent expert, appointed by WHBC to examine the Plan submitted by WPC to ensure that it meets the “Basic Conditions” set by law for a NP. If it does they will recommend to WHBC that it proceeds to a referendum for adoption.
Flood plain	An area of flat land adjacent to a river, stretching from the banks of a river channel to the base of the enclosing valley; they experience flooding during periods of high discharge. In the case of Singlers Marsh, the periodic flooding is due to rising groundwater, not the river per se.
Green (and Blue) infrastructure	A network of multi-functional green (and blue - water) spaces and other natural features, urban and rural, which is capable of delivering a wide range of environmental, economic, health and wellbeing benefits for nature, climate, local and wider communities and prosperity.
Green Space	Area of grass, trees or other vegetation set apart for recreational or aesthetic purposes, in an otherwise urban environment. See also: UOL, LGS, LNR & LWS.
Health (see also Well-Being)	Those facilities and activities designed to return people to a normal physical and mental state.
Heritage asset	A building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest. It includes designated heritage assets and assets identified by the local planning authority (including local listing).
Historic environment	All aspects of the environment resulting from the interaction between people and places through time, including all surviving physical remains of past human activity, whether visible, buried or submerged, and landscaped and planted or managed flora.
Historic environment record	Information services that seek to provide access to comprehensive and dynamic resources relating to the historic environment of a defined geographic area for public benefit and use.
Historic interest	Heritage assets can illustrate or be associated with an interest in past lives and events (including pre-historic). Such assets provide a material record of our nation’s history and meaning for communities derived from collective

	experience of a place and can symbolise wider values such as faith and cultural identity.
National and locally designated sites of importance for biodiversity	All national sites (Sites of Special Scientific Interest) and locally designated sites including Local Wildlife Sites.
Local (Planning) Authority	Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council (WHBC)
Local Green Space (LGS)	<p>A method of identifying and protecting (subject to the same development restrictions as Green Belt) areas of value to communities. The land must be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reasonably close to the community it serves. • Demonstrably special to a local community and fulfil one of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Beauty – visual attractiveness, contribution to landscape; ○ Historic significance ○ Recreational value ○ Tranquillity ○ Richness of wildlife • Local in character, not an extensive tract <p>A NP offers a Parish Council, the chance to amend or add to the spaces currently so-designated.</p>
Local Nature Reserve (LNR)	Statutory designation made under Section 21 of the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949 by principal local authorities. LNRs are for people and wildlife and are places with wildlife or geological features of special interest locally. They offer people opportunities to study or learn about nature or simply to enjoy it. They include ancient woodlands, flower-rich meadows, abandoned railways, landfill sites and industrial areas re-colonised by wildlife. They make an important contribution to biodiversity. A LNR site must be of importance for wildlife, geology, education or public enjoyment and must be controlled by the local authority through ownership, lease or agreement with the owner.
Local Plan (LP)	The WHBC Local Plan covering amongst other issues, development proposals and infrastructure in WH
Local Wildlife Site (LWS)	Non-statutory designation of sites with 'substantive nature conservation value'. They are defined areas, identified and selected for their nature conservation value, based on important, distinctive and threatened habitats and species. They are usually selected by the relevant Wildlife Trust, along with representatives of the local authority and other local wildlife conservation groups.
<i>Locality</i>	The body established by the Government, which in addition to other duties, monitors and provides advice and support/funding to enable the creation of NPs for local communities in England & Wales
"Made"	The term used to signify that a NP, having been approved by a simple majority at referendum, has been adopted by the Local Authority, and has become an integral and legally-binding part of the Local Plan
National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)	Planning policy issued by Government and updated periodically (latest version December 2024). Neighbourhood Plans must conform to policies in the NPPF.
National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG)	Planning policy guidance supporting the policies in NPPF. The guidance is detailed and lengthy and divided into sections covering each individual aspect.
Neighbourhood Development Plan	Also known as a Neighbourhood Plan (NP). This essential element within the Localism Act 2011 is the mechanism by which local communities can influence and sometimes control development and growth in their Designated Area
Neighbourhood Plan Designated Area	The recognition and formal delineation of the area, within which the effect of a Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) is deemed to be in operation.
NP Survey Report and Analysis 2021	Published by WPC in April 2021 from the analysis of the returned completed Questionnaires (paper and online) circulated to each household in in the Parish during November & December 2020.
Open Space	Land that is not intensively developed for residential, commercial, industrial or institutional use. It serves many purposes, whether it is publicly or privately

	owned. An area of protected or conserved land without human-built structures, on which development is indefinitely set aside.
Plan	See Neighbourhood (Development) Plan
Pre-submission	See Regulation 14 Consultation.
Qualifying Body	A Parish or Town Council which is responsible for producing a Neighbourhood Plan in its parish or town.
Questionnaire (aka the Survey)	Consultation document delivered to every household in the Parish – approximately 28% of Questionnaires were completed and returned either on paper or online. See also NP Survey Report and Analysis 2021.
Regulation 14 Consultation	Of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012. Statutory consultation conducted by the Qualifying Body with the Parish community, prior to the NP being submitted for examination to the LPA.
Regulation 15	Of the same regulations. Statutory process and requirements for a qualifying authority (i.e. WPC) formally submitting a plan proposal to the local planning authority (i.e. WHBC).
Regulation 16 Consultation	Of the same regulations. Statutory consultation conducted by the local planning authority and scrutinised by the Examiner prior to the decision to move a NP to a referendum, or not.
Section 106 & Section 278	Planning obligations under S106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) are a legal agreement between an applicant and a local planning authority (i.e. WHBC) used to fund new infrastructure, which will make the development acceptable in planning terms. Established prior to the adoption of the CIL, S106 agreements are currently the sole means of securing contributions in WH. Highways works may be secured through S278 agreements, broadly similar to S106 agreements, but only relating to highways.
Setting of a heritage asset	The surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral.
Significance (for heritage policy)	The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. The interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting.
Strategic Housing Land Allocation Assessment	Assessment carried out by WHBC of accessible land within Welwyn Hatfield which is available for development, to enable WHBC to meet its required housing numbers as part of the government's national housing needs policy.
Steering Group (NPSG or SG)	Originally an informal Working Group created in 2019 to determine the need for a NP; formalised and expanded into a SG with added (non-Councillor) members, following a positive result to the household questionnaire. The SG's main role was to compile the Welwyn Parish NP.
Strategic Policies	The policies in the extant Local Plan which cover such matters as housing, employment, retail, leisure, commercial development, infrastructure, health, community and cultural facilities, climate change, natural and historic environments and other strategic policy issues, with which the NP must conform.
Urban Open Land	An area of open land in an urban area (i.e. near-surrounded by housing or other buildings) considered to be of such significance that it must not be developed other than for minor ancillary facilities, that has been defined in the (Borough) Council's Open Space Survey and to be protected from development. These areas have been identified as performing a key built environment function, in addition to any recreational, ecological, landscape or other amenity they provide. They are also an intrinsic part of the Borough's green infrastructure.
Village	A clustered human settlement, larger than a hamlet but smaller than a town, located in rural areas with fixed dwellings close to one another, not a dispersed settlement. In the UK, the main historical distinction between a hamlet and a village was that the latter had a church, and was the centre of worship of an ecclesiastical parish. However, some modern civil parishes

	(including Welwyn) contain more than one village. The traditional village also had a pub or inn, shops, and a blacksmith. (from <i>Wikipedia</i>)
Well-Being (see also Health)	Those facilities and activities that can maintain people in a healthy physical and mental state and help in recuperation after illness
Welwyn Parish Plan	Completed in 2008 by the Welwyn Parish Plan Group on behalf of WPC, following consultation with the Parish community and providing guidance to WHBC, WPC and others, on matters relating to and affecting the Parish.
Wildlife corridor	Areas of habitat connecting wildlife populations.
Windfall Development	Normally small development sites not specifically identified for development within the NP or the Local Plan and which emerge on an ad hoc basis.

Appendix 11: Bibliography

A11.1 Evidence Base

The Evidence Base is information assembled or created by the Steering Group and Task Groups following various consultations with the Parish community, enquiries made of interested parties and stakeholders, local research, and a determination of those issues and impacts which will have bearing and consequence on the Parish and the life of the community, now and in the next 15 to 20 years. All these documents are published by WPC and available from the WPC website.

Parish Portrait (2022, updated 2025). A detailed description of the area: its geography, history, heritage, facilities and demography, which supports the Plan.

Survey Report (2021, updated 2024). The results and analysis of the Parish-wide survey to elicit the views and opinions of residents regarding their issues and aspirations, which formed the foundation of much of the Plan content.

Local Green Spaces (2025). A compilation, description and justification for locations to be accorded the status of Local Green Spaces.

Key Views (2025). A compilation, description and justification for local views and vistas of significance, to be accorded the status of Key Views.

Non-Designated Heritage Assets (2025). A compilation, description and justification for above-ground structures of historical, cultural, archaeological or artistic interest and significance locally, to be accorded Non-Designated Heritage Asset status.

Local Housing Needs Assessment (2025). Based upon information in the Survey report and open sources, this signals and justifies the features of housing development, dwelling size and type stated in this Plan.

Basic Conditions Statement (2024, updated 2025). Sets out how our NP meets the requirements of each basic condition and other legal tests.

Consultation Statement (2024, updated 2025). Describes the consultation process for the Plan and the feedback obtained.

Supplementary Information for the Neighbourhood Plan (2025). Added information, explanation and justification of certain areas, that was originally included in the "Regulation 14" version. For brevity this has not been included in the main body of the Plan but is provided as a separate document.

Open Spaces (2024, updated 2025). A compilation of the open (green) spaces of heathland, parkland, woodland and grassland in the Parish that are there and in the main, can be seen, visited and enjoyed. Includes: Urban Open Land, LNR, and LWS. More detail on the sites proposed as LGS may be found in *Local Green Spaces*, (see above).

A11.2 Supporting Information

Supporting Information is data published independently from, but has a close bearing on, the NP and has provided helpful reference material.

Digswell Character Appraisal (2003) published by WHBC and adopted as supplementary planning guidance in 2004; a consultancy report on the Digswell area exploring it in fine detail.

Welwyn – A Village Appraisal (1978) compiled and published by the WPAG; one of its aims was to contribute to the version of the District Plan⁷⁵ then being prepared.

⁷⁵ For Welwyn Hatfield District before the change to Welwyn Hatfield Borough.

Welwyn Parish Plan (2008) compiled by the WPPG and published by WPC. This valuable document can be viewed as a precursor to this Neighbourhood Plan.

The Case for a Local Landscape Designation (2022) written by David Rixson and published by Tewin Parish Council; a compilation of evidence to support a local landscape designation of the area of the Mimram valley lying within Tewin Parish.

Welwyn Neighbourhood Plan Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) & Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) Screening Opinion Report (July 2024) determined and published by WHBC

Welwyn Village Conservation Area Assessment, Appraisal & Management Plan (2023) published by WHBC following their 2022/23 Review (the conservation area was originally adopted in 1968); other than minor changes it continues to include the core centre of the village and the variety of buildings, spaces and streetscapes that make it unique.

Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council Local Plan (2016) approved and published in its final form in October 2023. This final version includes all the changes to comply with the Inspector's direction to achieve "sustainable" status. The many supporting reports (in the EX Papers Series) are available from the WHBC website.

2011 & 2021 Census results published by The Office for National Statistics; website details below.

Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council Sustainability Adoption Statement

Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council Trees and Woodland Strategy

Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council: Development of Evidence for Welwyn Hatfield Local Plan: Green Gap Assessment (LUC; August 2019) available from the WPC NP website under Additional Information.

Hertfordshire County Council Green Infrastructure Strategy

All of the documents may be downloaded from the WPC website:

<https://welwyn-pc.gov.uk/neighbourhood-plan-site/> with the exception of:

Welwyn Neighbourhood Plan Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) & Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) Screening Opinion Report, together with the Determination and the Statement of Reasons, available from: <https://www.welhat.gov.uk/planning-policy/designated-neighbourhood-plan-areas/2>

Welwyn Village CAAMP, available from: <https://www.welhat.gov.uk/planning-building/welwyn-village-planning-consultation>

WHBC Local Plan, available from: <https://www.welhat.gov.uk/local-plan>

2011 and 2021 census data available from: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/census/2011census> and <https://www.ons.gov.uk/census>

Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council Sustainability Adoption Statement, available from: <https://www.welhat.gov.uk/downloads/download/351/welwyn-hatfield-local-plan-sustainability-appraisal-adoption-statement>

Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council Trees and Woodland Strategy, available from: <https://www.welhat.gov.uk/plans-strategies/tree-woodland-strategy/1>

Hertfordshire County Council Green Infrastructure Strategy, available from: [hertfordshire-gi-strategy-part-1-setting-the-scene-a-strategic-review-of-gi-in-hertfordshire.pdf](https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/media/1000000/2022-07-27-14-30-36-hertfordshire-gi-strategy-part-1-setting-the-scene-a-strategic-review-of-gi-in-hertfordshire.pdf)

Appendix 12: Acknowledgements

Many Parish residents worked together to produce this Plan. The research, drafting, editing, photography, image production and document design, of both the Neighbourhood Plan and all the supporting documentation, was done by local people, who freely volunteered their effort. They made enormous contributions to deliver it and the end result is therefore truly a neighbourhood plan in all respects.

The **Steering Group** comprised:

Parish Councillors: Magdalene Benson
Mark Castle
Colin Hukin
Bill Morris
Marj Otty

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Russell Haggar (Resident & WPAG Chairman)
Andy Palmer (Resident)
Sandra Saunders (Resident; WPAG Member; former Borough Councillor)
Ian Skidmore (Resident; WPPG; former Parish Councillor)
Andy Trotter (Resident; Group Scout Leader 1st Welwyn Scout Group)

The **Task Groups** who researched and drafted the various sections of the Plan were formed from the following Parish residents:

Planning, Development & Housing:	Colin Hukin, Peter Best, Heath Cooper, Alison Firth, Tony Hendley, Liz Johnson, Andy Palmer, Ian Skidmore, Geoffrey Yates.
Transport & Travel:	Andy Trotter, Bob Griffiths, Declan Keene, Andy Palmer
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Community Infrastructure:	Bill Morris
Verification and proof-reading:	Peter Best, Sarah Butcher, Paul Jiggins, Andy Palmer, John Roper, Ian Skidmore, Mike Smith
Compilation & overall editing:	Bill Morris

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⁷⁶ The colour photographs used in all of the documentation primarily came from our superbly-talented local photographers. Most of the (older) black and white photographs were supplied by Paul Jiggins, either from the extensive collection of the Welwyn Photographic Society or his own private collection.

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