

REPRESENTATIONS OF HERTS & MIDDLESEX WILDLIFE TRUST

Please see the comments on this consultation from HMWT below. If you would like to discuss any of these please do not hesitate to get in touch.

- **Whether you agree with the council's stated objectives for this part of the Green Corridor and, if not, why not**

HMWT agree with the stated objectives for the green corridor but it should be understood that the effectiveness of a wildlife corridor will be impacted by the other services it is expected to provide. Consequently, if features such as cycle-paths and recreation are to be encouraged in the corridor (as proposed), then the corridor must be sufficient in width to adequately provide all these objectives without compromising its functionality for wildlife. HMWT was content with the width of the corridor indicated in the original local plan consultation i.e. 250m.

- **Whether you feel that there are other, sufficiently distinct, options that the examination should consider**

No

- **Which of the three options, if any, you prefer and the reasons why**

HMWT agree with the selection of option one as the preferred option. However, HMWT does not agree that the width of the green corridor should be limited to 100m when connecting sites of nature conservation interest (1..35). The value of a wildlife corridor increases with its width. The wider a wildlife corridor is, the more effective it will be. There are numerous scientific papers (available on request) that establish this relationship. If the wildlife corridor is also expected to contain cycle-paths and recreational facilities, it erodes the effectiveness of the corridor for wildlife due to the disturbance created by human activities.

The original consultation provided an indicative corridor width of approximately 250m in the vicinity of the Commons nature reserve (see below). HMWT considers this to be a viable corridor width to accommodate the predictable requirements of people and to provide habitats and dispersal opportunities for species of conservation concern known to be present in the area, e.g. barn owl and great crested newt. HMWT considers it to be inappropriate for the LPAs to give the impression of one corridor width in its original consultation, only to then reduce this by 3/5 in this document.

The former width of 250m should be reinstated to give a consistent undisturbed route for wildlife to and from the Commons nature reserve, to be fair to the original local plan consultation and provide an adequate corridor to accommodate the needs of people and the habitat and dispersal requirements of the species known to be present in the area.

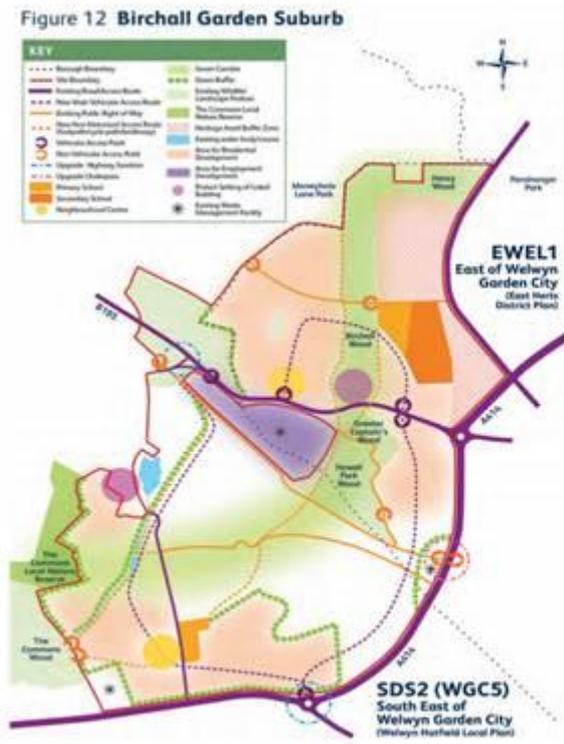


Figure 1.2 Strategy Diagram (Figure 1.2 within the emerging Welwyn Hatfield Local Plan), showing the proposed allocation site.

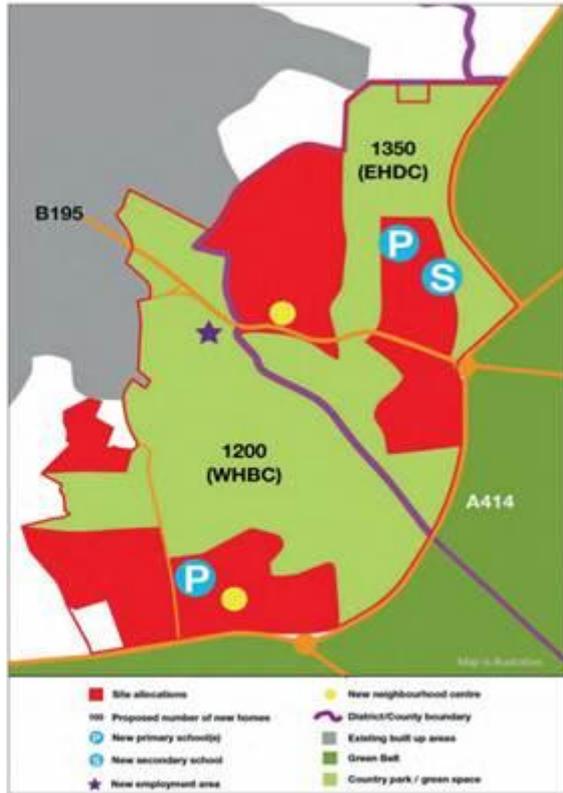


Figure 1.3 Key Diagram (Figure 1.3.1 within the emerging East Herts District Plan), showing the proposed allocation site.

- **Your concerns about the appropriateness of the other options**

Options 2 and 3 do not work from a wildlife perspective. They would see the creation of new habitat and dispersal routes from scratch which do not respect the existing habitats and the predictable current movement patterns of wildlife present in the area. The bulk of the beneficial habitat existing at present is connected most efficiently by option 1. Options 2 and 3 are longer, closer to the disturbance and dangers provided by the A414 and do not incorporate existing beneficial habitat to the same extent as option 1. Wildlife will favour utilising ecologically productive habitat for foraging and movement. It is logical and sensible to work with the existing resource rather than attempt to create a new one that will take many, many years to mature to a comparable value.

- **If you are promoting an alternate option, why you feel that your option is to be preferred when assessed against the stated objectives for the Green Corridor**

Best wishes

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