

4 Alternatives

4.1 Introduction

- 4.1.1 In accordance with the EIA Regulations, this chapter describes the reasonable alternatives to the Development considered by the Applicants, prior to the selection of the final design and provides a description of the main reasons for the choice made, including a comparison of the environmental effects if available. A summary of consultation, how the EIA process informed the Development and the key stages of the design evolution process is also provided.
- 4.1.2 Brief consideration is given of the ‘No Development’ alternative. The other alternatives that are considered in this chapter include:
- Alternative site extents; and
 - Alternative designs (e.g. layout, access).
- 4.1.3 No alternative sites were considered by the Applicant as the proposals respond to the Site’s allocation for development in the Draft SADC Local Plan.
- 4.1.4 The Development has been designed to seek to adhere to emerging Policy H1 for the North Hemel Broad Location in the Draft SADC Local Plan and as such no alternative land uses were considered.

4.2 Development Objectives

- 4.2.1 The Site is a proposed allocation in the St Albans City & District Council (‘SACDC’) Draft Local Plan¹ under Policy H1 – North Hemel Hempstead, AL3 7AU, for 1,500 dwellings (indicative) and a range of other uses, including a mixed-use local centre, a 3FE primary school including early years provision, care facilities, flexible non-residential uses, areas of play, sport and leisure, allotments and areas of open space including a new Significant Publicly Accessible Green Area (‘SANG’). Draft Site Allocation H1 measures 154.06ha. The Site, and Draft Site Allocation H1, also forms part of the emerging Hemel Garden Communities (‘HGC’).
- 4.2.2 The proposals align to SADC’s aspirations for the Site Allocation as set out the Draft Local Plan and the pillars/principles of the HGC Spatial Vision² to deliver the following:
- Up 1,500 new dwellings (including residential accommodation and specialist accommodation for older people);
 - A new primary school (including early years provision) and a local centre that offers amenity to new residents and helps foster a sense of place and community;
 - Strategic and local public open space, including sports facilities, managed woodland and ecological network links that links to adjacent site allocations and developments;

- A high-quality transport network including the Sustainable Transport Corridor (STC), active and sustainable routes and wider routes which connect to adjacent site allocations and developments, including the HGC Green Loop;
- An extensive area of substantial new Significant Publicly Accessible Green Area providing facilities for new and existing communities and a permanent green buffer to Redbourn which also acts as a SANG; and
- Strategic and local public open space, including sports facilities, managed woodland and ecological network links, that preserve and enhance links to adjacent site allocations and developments.

4.3 Consultation and Engagement

4.3.1 The Development is the culmination of extensive technical work and has evolved following community consultation, working closely with SADC Officers, key stakeholders and statutory consultees. This has included:

- 10 pre-application meetings with SADC and HCC in 2025, including a joint pre-application meeting with The Crown Estate; and
- Two Design South East Design Review Panels (May and September 2025);
- A series of public consultation events that were held in the lead-up to this submission. The first round of consultation was held both online and in-person between 14 July and 1 August. The second round of consultation consisted of an online consultation hosted on the project website between 1 and 19 October 2025.
- The first round of public consultation included two in-person public exhibitions that took place on 14 July 2025 at the Aubrey Park Hotel and on 16 July at Brockwood Primary School. The Applicant also hosted a consultation website where feedback could be provided by members of the public (<https://northhemel.co.uk/home/>). The second round of public consultation took place online in September and October 2025.
- Meetings and consultation with various stakeholders including:
 - Affinity Water
 - British Pipeline Agency
 - DBC
 - Environment Agency
 - HCC (Highways, Lead Local Flood Authority, Ecology, Heritage, Education and Public Rights of Way)
 - HGC
 - Historic England
 - Natural England
 - NHS Hertfordshire and West Essex Integrated Care Partnership (ICB)
 - Redbourn Parish Council
 - St Albans Civic Society

- SADC
- Thames Water
- Engagement with The Crown Estate, developers of the adjacent East Hemel Hempstead development.

4.3.2 The feedback from the public consultation received shows that the local community values the importance of public open space (amenity space, community park and play provision) and significant financial contributions for local infrastructure (such as highways, education and health facilities). It also reflected recognition of the need for affordable housing, accommodation for older people, and the provision of a new primary school.

4.3.3 Some local residents raised concerns regarding the need for new homes, the potential impact on the local highways network and healthcare provision, which the applicant sought to respond to.

4.3.4 During the consultation process, the following key themes were also raised:

- **Scale, Capacity and Layout:** the masterplan should maximise the development capacity of the Site within the existing landscape and visual sensitivities and constraints, including visual topography, utility easements and surrounding sensitive receptors including residential properties, school and scheduled monument.
- **Connectivity:** the importance of embedded principles of active travel, especially regarding east-west connectivity and southwards towards the Nickey Line need to be explored and incorporated. A 'Green Loop' for pedestrian movement only needs to be fully defined.
- **STC and junction design:** Clarification that the final location of the B487 Redmore Road junction and STC route are fully considered with respect of the requirements of the Development, e.g. local centre, primary school, and wider connectivity, i.e. proposed East Hemel development to the south.
- **Landscape, Public Amenity and SANG design:** Landscape design was seen as an integral component of the Development. Efforts should be made to maximise the retention and enhancement of existing trees and hedges as far as possible. The design of the SANG needs to meet Natural England guidance³ and respond to the Chilterns Beechwoods SAC Mitigation Strategy for Ashridge Commons and Woods SSSI⁴ prepared jointly for SADC, DBC, Buckinghamshire Council and Central Bedfordshire Council to support their respective Local Plan Habitats Regulations Assessments.

4.3.5 A Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) accompanies the planning application which provides further information on consultation and the feedback received. Further information on consultation of relevance to the assessment of environmental effects is provided under 'Assessment Methodology' section of each technical chapter (Chapters 7 to 17).

4.4 EIA and Design Process

4.4.1 The Development has been informed by baseline environmental studies, iterative analysis and modelling as part of the EIA process. The EIA process commenced with a constraints and opportunities review informed by desk-based studies and surveys. Environmental

analysis and testing of early scheme designs were used in tandem to inform the design of the Development.

4.4.2 The following key studies have influenced the design of the Development:

- **Landscape and Visual:** Iterative landscape and visual appraisal which included initial Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) analysis. Initial ZTV analysis was based on existing ground levels and a maximum height of 12m (c. 3 storey buildings) across the site. Heights across the Site have been guided by a landscape-led approach reflecting the changing Site topography and responding to sensitivities including the Chilterns National Landscape, countryside edges, residential properties and heritage assets. This process also identified opportunities for enhancement through a green infrastructure network which connects to the wider area and other future developments;
- **Transport and Access:** Iterative transport assessment modelling and appraisal work informed the access and movement strategy. This work was designed to inform improvements to bus infrastructure, cycle and walking connections to enhance connectivity to the town centre and between nearby sites, and encourage modes of transport other than the private car. HCC, as the highway authority and the public transport team, were closely involved on the emerging proposals and interventions informed by iterative traffic modelling. The Applicants have also been working in partnership with The Crown Estate to design the proposed B487 Western Junction that will be used as an access into both the North Hemel and East Hemel developments. This shared junction will form a critical element of the proposed STC, a movement corridor that will run through the HGC and will feature a high-quality segregated pedestrian and cycle route along its entirety.;
- **Ecology and Arboriculture:** Comprehensive ecological baseline studies to identify priority habitats, protected species, 'important' hedgerows and trees informed the development layout and green infrastructure strategy. The SANG proposals and farmland bird mitigation strategies were developed during the EIA process, informed by ecological surveys, guidance as well as consultation with stakeholders; The Green Infrastructure Strategy was informed by early Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) analysis also which informed the green infrastructure and ecological mitigation strategy including approach to retaining vegetation.
- **Drainage and Levels:** Drainage and civil engineering studies including infiltration testing and hydraulic modelling, informed the drainage and cut and fill strategies to ensure that the Development is safe, avoids flood risk elsewhere and reduces flood risk where possible;
- **Utilities:** Desk-based assessments and consultation informed the design approach to existing utilities within the Site which includes overhead ultra-high voltage electricity pylon route crosses the centre of the Site on a north to south alignment, a pair of overhead HV services also cross the Site, skirting the existing residential development of Woodhall Farm and a high-pressure British Pipeline Agency (BPA) oil fuel pipeline crosses the Site diagonally from north-west to south-east with associated easements. Appropriate easements to this infrastructure were agreed with the relevant statutory undertaker which informed the Parameter Plans.

- **Heritage:** Desk-based assessment and an on-site meeting with Historic England and the SADC (Place Services) informed the design response to heritage assets close to the Site including The Aubreys Camp Scheduled Monument south east of the Site.

4.4.3 Chapter 2: Site and Setting provides a summary of the main environmental sensitivities and constraints at the Site, and this is therefore not repeated here.

4.5 Design Evolution and Reasonable Alternatives

4.5.1 This section provides a summary of the main design stages of the project, illustrating the evolution of the proposals. Design alternatives are discussed in Section 4.8. The main stages were:

- Stage 1: Initial Illustrative Framework Plan (2019)
- Stage 2: Vision and Delivery Statement (2023)
- Stage 3: Outline Planning Application Design Development (Winter 2024 – Spring 2025)
- Stage 4: Refinement through Engagement (Summer–Autumn 2025)

Stage 1: Initial Illustrative Framework Plan (2019)

4.5.2 An illustrative framework plan was prepared to test the deliverability of the site in 2019. This framework plan was included in Pigeon's North Hemel Vision and Delivery Statement (December 2019)⁵ which was prepared to support draft Policy S6 iv of the St Albans Local Plan 2020- 2036 (now withdrawn) for the allocation of a minimum of 1,500 homes on the land at North Hemel Hempstead. At the time, the site comprised 87.9 hectares.

4.5.3 The framework masterplan (shown on Figure 4.1) responded to baseline site analysis and technical assessments and sought to demonstrate the site's suitability for development as part of the emerging wider HGC proposals. Key components included:

- An indicative amount of 1,500 new homes, with at least 40% affordable housing and opportunities for self-build.
- Community facilities: Provision for a new 3FE primary school with early years, at least one care home, and a local centre with employment, community, leisure, and health uses.
- Green infrastructure: A substantial new Country Park forming a permanent buffer to Redbourn, alongside strategic planting, landscape corridors, allotments, and play areas for all ages.
- Access and movement: Primary access from Redbourn Road, a potential secondary access, and an integrated SuDS network following the natural fall of the land. The framework also safeguarded routes for a future multimodal link road and provided pedestrian and cycle connections into the town and wider countryside.
- Utilities and infrastructure: Consideration of pylons, oil pipelines, and PRoWs, with opportunities to mitigate and integrate these within a landscape-led layout.

Figure 4.1: Initial Illustrative Framework Plan (Vision and Delivery Statement, December 2019)

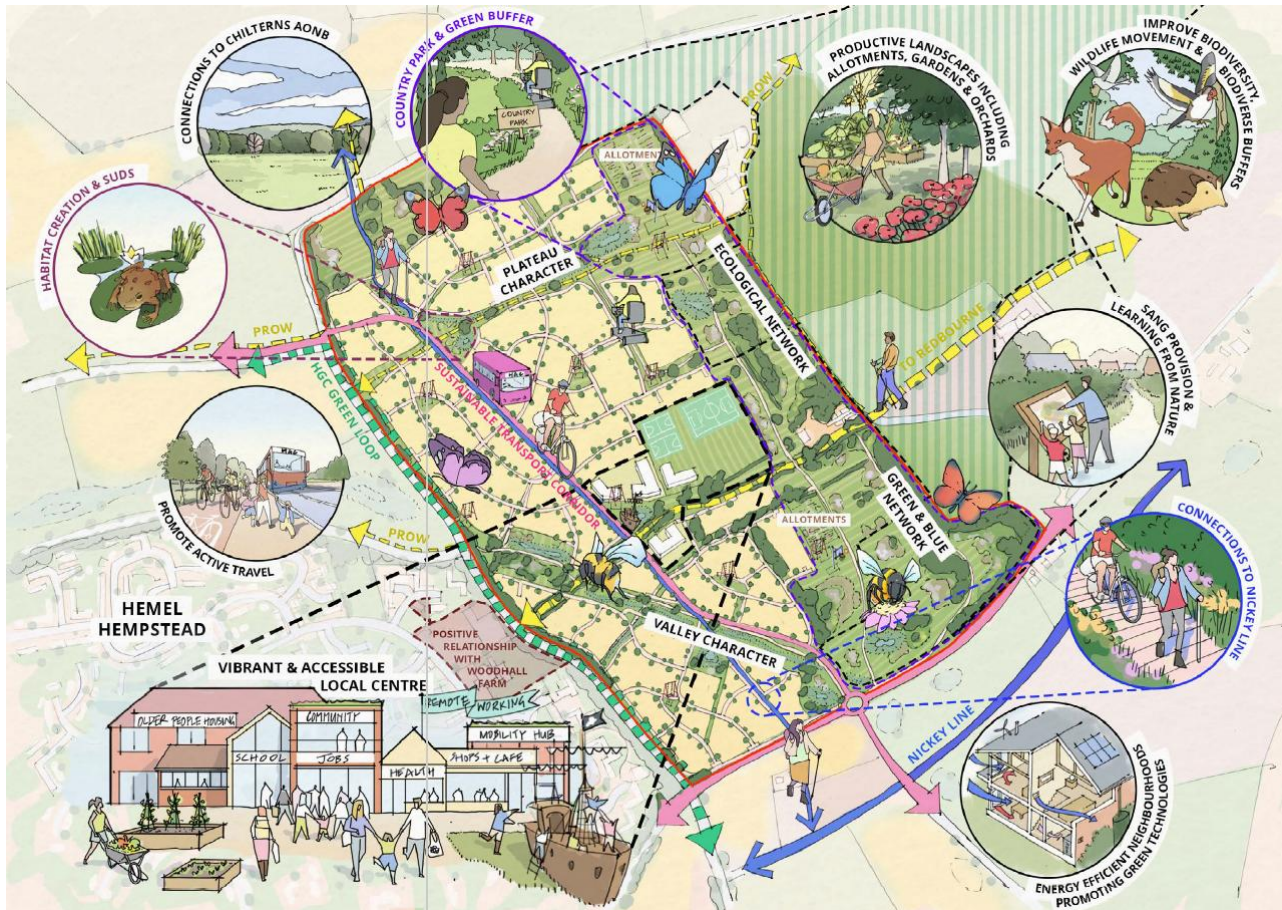


Stage 2: Vision and Delivery Statement (September 2023)

- 4.5.4 The framework masterplan proposals were refined in 2023 at the Regulation 18 stage of the Draft SADC Local Plan process as shown on Figure 4.2. An updated Vision and Delivery Statement was prepared jointly by Pigeon and Bloor Homes to support the allocation of North Hemel Hempstead (Policy H1) and the HGC Spatial Vision. The Vision and Delivery Statement demonstrated that North Hemel Hempstead is deliverable, technically unconstrained, and a sustainable location for new development.
- 4.5.5 The Vision and Delivery Statement framework masterplan was informed by further detailed technical work and engagement with stakeholders, producing a more comprehensive and landscape-led masterplan. Key components and refinements from Stage 1 included:
- Housing: 1,500 homes, with a site-wide minimum density of 40 density per hectare, including specialist housing for older people;
 - Community facilities: A new local centre at the heart of the neighbourhood, providing shops, café, community space, health services, remote working hub, and a parcel collection point. A 3FE primary school with early years provision and extra care housing were integrated within the community core;
 - Green infrastructure: Delivery of a substantial new Country Park providing SANG. The green network was strengthened with allotments, orchards, community food growing, play areas for all age groups, and improved PRow connections;

- Sustainability and mobility: A mobility hub, bus services, and active travel corridors formed the backbone of movement, connecting to Woodhall Farm, the Nickey Line, and the wider HGC Green Loop; and
- Landscape and setting: Development was concentrated on higher ground, while valley floors and lower-lying areas were retained as accessible landscape corridors and SuDS features, enhancing biodiversity and creating a strong transition to open countryside.

Figure 4.2: Vision and Delivery Statement (September 2023)



Stage 3: Outline Planning Application Design Development (Winter 2024 – Spring 2025)

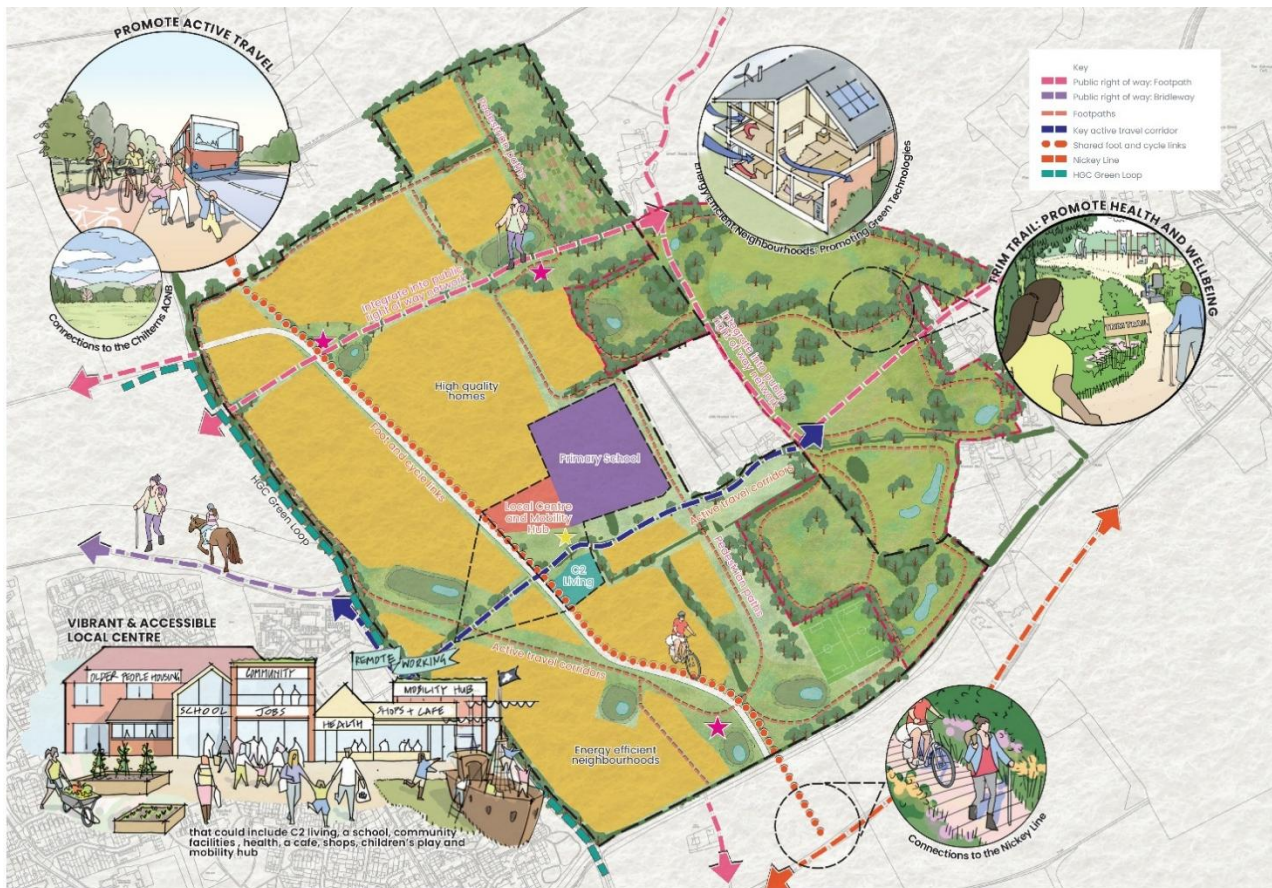
- 4.5.6 This stage marked the beginning of design development in preparation for the outline planning application. During this phase, design work was coordinated through a structured series of pre-application meetings with SADC, HCC, HGC, and other key stakeholders. Further baseline studies and iterative testing was also undertaken as part of the EIA process.
- 4.5.7 The masterplan at this time was similar that shown in Figure 4.3 below which was subject to public consultation in July 2025. It defined the principles of the primary road layout, arrangement of development zones, locations of public open space, the primary school and local centre / mobility hub.

- 4.5.8 During this period, feedback from SADC and HCC reinforced the need for a coherent Green Belt boundary, robust Green Infrastructure Framework, and connectivity to East Hemel and the Nickey Line. The design team also further developed the Community Park concept and refined SuDS and attenuation features to balance ecology, landscape character, and recreation.
- 4.5.9 Discussions with SADC, HCC and HGC confirmed the STC as the main north–south movement spine, to be designed as a multimodal route prioritising active and sustainable travel. Connections to Woodhall Farm and the Hemel Green Loop were explored, alongside options for a temporary bus loop and future extension of bus Route 46 into the site.
- 4.5.10 Feedback from a SADC Design Review Panel was addressed including providing a clearer hierarchy of access, enhanced east–west integration, and stronger pedestrian/cycle prioritisation within the STC design. The team also further design principles and character areas (Local Centre/School, Neighbourhood Streets, Town Edge, and Countryside Edge) using the valley form and plateaus as the main structuring device.

Stage 4: Refinement through Engagement (Summer–Autumn 2025)

- 4.5.11 This stage focused on refining the masterplan through continued engagement with SADC, DBC, HGC, HCC and The Crown Estate. Parameter Plans, which now form the basis of the Application, were developed in consultation with SADC together with detailed designs for the B487 junctions.
- 4.5.12 The drainage and SuDS strategy were advanced in this stage to demonstrate site-wide flood resilience, including an integrated landscape and attenuation design that followed the natural valley topography. Stepped building forms and terraced gardens were developed to manage level changes. The SANG and Community Park concept was expanded to include multi-functional spaces balancing recreation, habitat creation, and water management and was amended to respond to comments from Natural England.
- 4.5.13 This stage included public consultation on the masterplan shown in Figure 4.3 together with a further Design Review Panel in September 2025. Parameter Plans were also further refined to coordinate with the emerging East Hemel proposals and incorporate detailed B487 junction designs.
- 4.5.14 A full description of the Development is provided in Chapter 5: Description of the Development.

Figure 4.3: July 2025 Consultation Scheme



4.6 'No Development' Alternative

- 4.6.1 Should no development take place, the Site it would remain in its current state as described under the Baseline Conditions section of Chapters 7 to 17 of the ES. However, the 'No Development' alternative is not considered to be a reasonable scenario by the Applicant in view of their emerging proposals which are consistent with the Draft site allocation 'H1 Broad Location' described above.

4.7 Alternative Site Extent

- 4.7.1 The extent of land being considered as part of the development has evolved over time since inception of the EIA process with the key differences shown in Figure 4.4 and summarised below.
- **Vision and Delivery Statement (2023)** – A Concept Scheme was developed to support Applicant's promotion of the site for development through the SADC Local Plan process. The site area at this time was 87.20 ha and included land to the north of the Application Site adjacent to Holtsmere End Lane and Holtsmere End Farm;
 - **Scoping (March 2025)** – At the scoping stage, the extent of the site was 152 ha and was aligned to the full extent of Draft Site Allocation H1 North Hemel Hempstead, including Great Revel End Farm and agricultural fields to the east of Great Revel End Farm. This land was included primarily because options for the provision of SANG land were being explored at that time. Land parcels in the north adjacent to Holtsmere

End Lane and Holtsmere End Farm were removed from the site extent as these are not proposed for development and would be retained as a green buffer; and

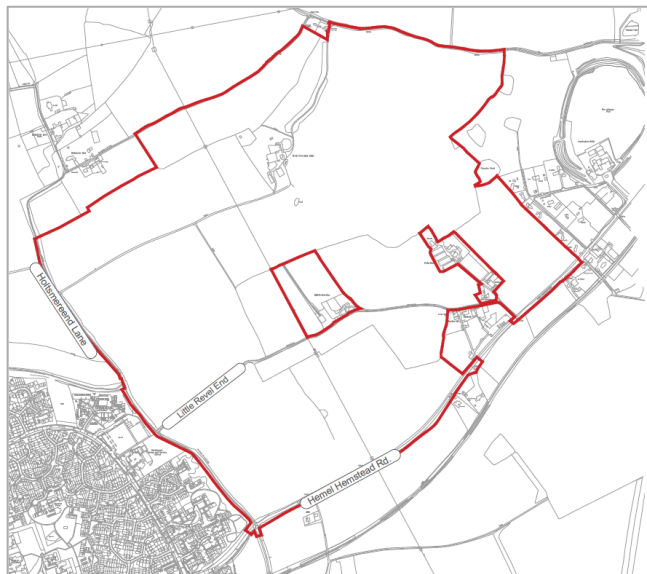
- **Development (December 2025)** – The planning application for the Development extends to approximately 105.60ha. Land to the east of the Site was removed from that shown in scoping as it was not required to deliver the SANG or other components of the development. Land along the B487 Hemel Hempstead Road was added in the south to facilitate the delivery of new junctions for access to the Development. The reduced site area from that presented at the scoping stage is not material to the scope of the topics covered in the EIA.

Figure 4.4: Site Extents

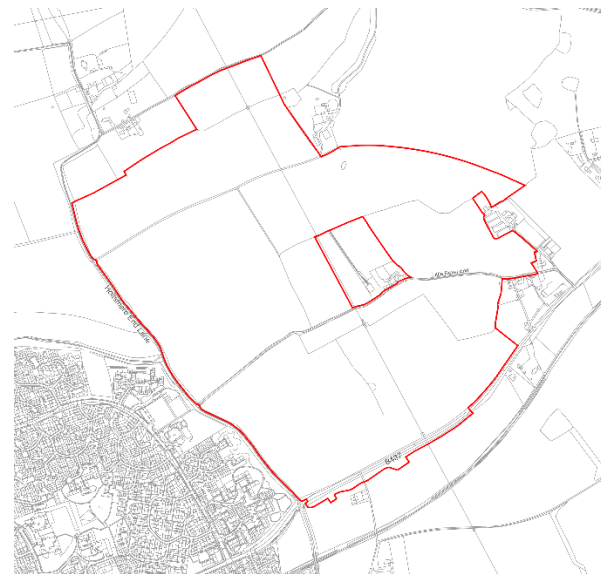
Concept Scheme (September 2023)



March 2025 (Scoping)



Development Site Boundary



4.8 Design Alternatives

- 4.8.1 Reasonable alternatives considered during the design stages discussed in Section 4.5 above are set out in Table 4.1, together with the main reasons for the choices made including a comparison of the environmental effects if available.

Table 4.1: Design Alternatives

Aspect	Alternatives & Reasons for choice made, including comparison of environmental effects
Building Layout	Built development zones are proposed in the western part of the Site, to the west of Little Revel End Farm and overhead powerlines. Siting built development in the western part of the Site allows the SANG to act as a permanent green buffer to Redbourn, the M1 motorway and Scheduled Monument. During Stage 1 deliverability testing, built development was considered on land immediately south of Holtsmere End Lane to the north west of the Site. However, this land is under a different landownership and therefore does not form part of the Application. Alternative layouts considered which introduced development into the valley in the south western part of the Site were rejected early on because they conflicted with both the HGC Spatial Vision and the requirement to maintain the 'City in a Park' character. New homes would also have been at risk of surface water flooding in this location. Reason for choosing final option: ▪ Protects the valley as one of the primary structuring elements. ▪ Maximises public access to green space. ▪ Provides clear east–west connectivity. ▪ Ensures built form sits on less visually sensitive land.
Building Heights	Building heights are shown on the Heights and Levels Strategy Plan and will be controlled through the Development Specification. The maximum proposed heights (up to 3 storeys) are located in the residential areas around the Sustainable Transport Corridor (STC) and local centre, and the western part of the Site, adjacent to Woodhall Farm. Areas of higher density are located around the STC and local centre to reduce the visibility and urbanising effect of new built form within the setting of Holtsmere Manor, Great Revel End Farm and minimise landscape and visual effects at the 'countryside edge'. Higher densities in these locations along the STC, close to the Local Centre and primary school also to support walkability and the use of public transport. Reason for choosing final option: ▪ Highest buildings placed where activity and services are located (STC / Local Centre).

Aspect	Alternatives & Reasons for choice made, including comparison of environmental effects
	▪ Lower heights on the edges ensure a soft transition to countryside and neighbouring settlements. ▪ Minimises visual impact when viewed from Redbourn Road and the open countryside.
Landform	The Site is undulating with falls generally from northwest to southeast and two shallow 'valley' features towards the south east corner of the Site. Retaining the existing levels is not considered to be a reasonable alternative due to the topography. Level changes across the built development areas will be necessary to create the building plateaus, accommodate sports pitches, sustainable drainage features, and a primary school site. The Applicant undertook hydraulic modelling and cut and fill analysis to design an optimised solution which used existing landform wherever possible, minimised the need for cut and fill and avoid large, engineered platforms in the landscape. Reason for choosing final option: ▪ Minimises engineered slopes in public areas. ▪ Locates the majority of retaining features within private plots. ▪ Responds to landscape and visual appraisal work demonstrating the importance of maintaining natural landform, especially in the valley.
Primary school and local centre	The local centre and primary school were always proposed to be located together in the centre of the Development, in accordance with the HGC Spatial Vision, to maximise their accessibility and create focal point and hub for the community. Their location was also selected to benefit from access to public transport by proximity to the STC and has been influenced by feedback received from SADC, HGC and HCC. The Local Centre (with Mobility Hub) was initially proposed south of the primary school and was moved further west so that it now fronts onto the STC to create activity along this route in response to engagement with the education authority and SADC. The primary school was located further west (and closer to Little Revel End Farm) that its proposed location, however, was moved further west to improve its accessibility from the STC and to provide a more residential context for the existing property at Little Revel End Farm. Reason for choosing final option: ▪ Delivers a highly accessible, walkable community hub. ▪ Ensures safe access away from the B487 road corridor. ▪ Supports sustainable transport by being directly on the STC. ▪ Creates the required three-form entry school space without excessive cut or impact on key views.

Aspect	Alternatives & Reasons for choice made, including comparison of environmental effects
Sports pitch provision	Figure 4.2 shows that in the Vision and Delivery Statement (2023), sports pitches were proposed in the centre of the Site associated with the local centre and primary school. The broad location of sports pitches was moved to the south eastern part of the Site adjacent to the B487 (as shown on Figure 4.2) and then further north, south of Little Revel End Farm (shown on Figure 4.3). This location was selected to reduce the amount of cut and fill required, maximise its accessibility for users, whilst minimises potential noise and visual effects of associated activities and potential lighting effects for existing and future residential receptors and road users of the B487. Initially, the sports provision within the Development comprised 2-3 formal sports pitches. The area for the sports facilities was increased to enable it to accommodate more pitches, thus providing more recreation facilities and potential benefits to the local community. The Development now includes approximately 3.86 ha of playing pitch provision, which can accommodate approximately c. 6 sports pitches. The indicative masterplan shows one adult football pitch, two youth football pitches and three mini soccer pitches which illustrates one way in which the sports provision could be delivered.
STC Routing	In line with discussions with SADC and HCC, and the Draft Local Plan, the STC within the Development forms the main north–south movement spine, to be designed as a multimodal route prioritising active and sustainable travel. The STC, is proposed to run through the west of the Site in a north-to-south direction and continue onto SADC Draft Site Allocation H2 (East Hemel) to the south. The STC will be available for use by all modes of transport and include segregated pedestrian and cycle routes alongside the carriageway. Initially, the Applicant considered an STC alignment further east within the Site than shown on the Parameter Plans. This was moved further west to avoid infrastructure constraints including the high-pressure pipeline and electricity pylons. Moving it further west also avoided potential for associated traffic and noise effects from the STC on the proposed SANG/community park area. Reason for choosing final option: ▪ Aligns with the HGC Orbital Route strategy. ▪ Reduces severance of green infrastructure, compared with the HGC Spatial Vision alignment. ▪ Follows natural contours, avoiding steep gradients. ▪ Places highest density homes and community uses along a sustainable corridor.
Access	B487 Eastern Access – The Development proposes a new signalised junction on the B487 Hemel Hempstead Road which will form part of the STC and will be used by all modes (Eastern Junction) including buses if needed. Initially, the Applicant considered a use of a large roundabout on the B487 (as shown on Figures 4.2 and 4.3) however, following initial modelling it was agreed with HCC

Aspect	Alternatives & Reasons for choice made, including comparison of environmental effects
	that a signalised junction would be a more efficient design solution to a roundabout by minimising driver, pedestrian and cyclist delay effects compared to a roundabout. A roundabout would also require more land take which would have associated environmental effects associated with its construction. The Eastern Junction, which is the STC junction onto the B487, is proposed to be open to all modes. B487 Western Junction – The Development proposes a bus and pedestrian only Western Junction onto the B487. The Applicant initially considered the Western Junction being available for use by all modes of transport including private cars. However, following discussions with HCC, this was changed to bus and pedestrian only to ensure efficient public transport services which should encourage use by residents. Reason for choosing final option: ▪ Safest solution with predictable turning movements. ▪ The roundabout has the smallest land-take, least landscape impact, and vegetation removal. ▪ Prioritises bus movements
Public Rights of Way	The Applicant is not proposing diversions to the PRoW network although did consider alternative routing options for pedestrian and cycle connections. These were focused on maximising the connectivity of the Development to the existing PRoW network; facilitating east-west and north-south connections and connecting Holtsmere End Lane which will become part of the HGC Green Loop. The chosen strategy for pedestrian and cycle links was selected as it maximises accessibility and wider network connections which should encourage active travel. Reason for choosing final option: ▪ Strengthens east–west permeability. ▪ Integrates with Hemel Green Loop. ▪ Aligns with Building for a Healthy Life and Active Travel England principles.
SANG and Green Infrastructure Strategy	The project team selected the western part of the Site as the most suitable location for the SANG and community park at an early stage of the project for the reasons stated above. The Vision and Delivery Statement (2023) proposed a SANG of around 13.7 ha of SANG. This has been significantly increased in size to 28.8 ha in the Development following assessment of the predicted population and in line with Natural England SANG guidance. The Applicant consulted with SADC and Natural England on draft SANG proposals in March 2025. Natural England noted that the size and location of

Aspect	Alternatives & Reasons for choice made, including comparison of environmental effects
	the SANG was acceptable but noted that a circular walk needs to be provided and have a minimum length of 2.3km. The SANG design principles were subsequently updated to address other comments made by Natural England. Notably, a circular walk of 3.17 km is now provided, meeting the minimum requirement of 2.3-2.5km stated by Natural England. Reason for choosing final option: ▪ Delivers a comprehensive network of multifunctional green corridors and spaces ▪ Maintains a permanent green edge to Hemel Hempstead. ▪ Supports biodiversity enhancement and SuDS. ▪ Provides long-term recreational value and enhances setting of new homes.

References

¹ SADC, (2024). Draft Local Plan 2041. Regulation 19 Publication. September 2024

² HGC Spatial Vision. <https://www.hemelgardencommunities.co.uk/media/3hknvayj/hemel-garden-communities-spatial-vision.pdf>

³ Natural England. August 2021. Guidelines for Creation of Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG).

⁴ Chilterns Beechwoods Special Area of Conservation Mitigation Strategy for Ashridge Commons and Woods Site of Special Scientific Interest
[https://www.stalbans.gov.uk/sites/default/files/attachments/Planning%20Policy/Exa/Matter%201%20-%20%20Issue%207.2%20Appendix%201%20%20Chiltern%20Beechwoods%20Special%20Area%20of%20Conservation%20\(SAC\)%20Mitigation%20Strategy.pdf](https://www.stalbans.gov.uk/sites/default/files/attachments/Planning%20Policy/Exa/Matter%201%20-%20%20Issue%207.2%20Appendix%201%20%20Chiltern%20Beechwoods%20Special%20Area%20of%20Conservation%20(SAC)%20Mitigation%20Strategy.pdf)

⁵ North Hemel Vision and Delivery Statement (December 2019)
[https://www.stalbans.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/publications/planning-building-control/hearing-statements/matter7/1157883%20\(New%20Landowners%20Pigeon%20Land\)%20Matter%207\(iv\)%20Appendix%201%20-%20Vision%20and%20Delivery%20Statement%20tcm15-68610.pdf](https://www.stalbans.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/publications/planning-building-control/hearing-statements/matter7/1157883%20(New%20Landowners%20Pigeon%20Land)%20Matter%207(iv)%20Appendix%201%20-%20Vision%20and%20Delivery%20Statement%20tcm15-68610.pdf)