



HEGNPG

Supporting our Community

# Basic Conditions Statement

Gilston Area Neighbourhood Plan  
2020-2033

(June 2020)

HUNSDON EASTWICK AND GILSTON  
NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN GROUP



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Document prepared by the Hunsdon Eastwick and Gilston Neighbourhood Plan Group with the technical support of URBAN Silence (Martina Juvara; Joanna Chambers)

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# A. Introduction to the Basic Conditions Statement

## Background to the Neighbourhood Plan

1. The Gilston Area Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared by the Hunsdon Eastwick and Gilston Neighbourhood Plan Group (HEGNPG) which represents the Parish Councils of Hunsdon and Eastwick and Gilston and is made up of people living within the Parishes<sup>1</sup>. The application for designation of the Neighbourhood Area was approved by East Hertfordshire Council on 28 November 2017<sup>2</sup>.
2. The Neighbourhood Plan covers the entirety of Gilston Parish, Eastwick Parish and that part of Hunsdon Parish which lies within the proposed Gilston Area (Policy GA1) in the East Hertfordshire District Plan (adopted October 2018) and constitutes the rural portion of the Parish of Hunsdon east of Hunsdon village, from the outer boundaries of Hunsdon House (excluded) and the land to the south of it to the A414 (see Fig. 1).
3. The Gilston Area is allocated for 10,000 homes, jobs and services under Policy GA1 and forms a part of the wider Harlow and Gilston Garden Town government initiative. People living in the area are concerned about the impacts of development of this scale on their communities and are determined to influence the character and quality of the new development to ensure that it respects the nature and integrity of the local area, takes place in a way that minimises impacts on landscape, local heritage and existing communities and upholds the essential quality of life of the area. The community wants to ensure that the release of land from the Green Belt genuinely leads to a development of 'exceptional quality' and creates distinctive villages each with their own individual identity set within an attractive rural landscape, whilst at the same time protecting and enhancing existing settlements and delivering benefits for existing and new communities.
4. The Submission Draft Neighbourhood Plan sets out in policy terms what matters to the community and reflects the essential aspects of what has been agreed with the Council and developers since September 2017. In developing a Neighbourhood Plan based on the extensive discussions and consultations which have taken place over this period, the HEGNPG and local communities aim to give the strongest possible weight to their views and priorities whilst respecting the Policy GA1 allocation and other District Plan policies and the aspirations of the Council and developers.
5. The Neighbourhood Plan covers the period 2020-2033 and will be subject to review to ensure that it responds to changes over time and if necessary, policies and development guidelines will be revised for future phases of development.
6. Preparation of the Draft Neighbourhood Plan has drawn on the extensive evidence base that supports the East Hertfordshire District Plan, the Gilston Area Concept Framework

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<sup>1</sup> The Hunsdon Eastwick and Gilston Neighbourhood Group was established in 2016 and has been working hard in trying to influence the future of the area. It meets regularly and is open to all local residents wishing to join and take an active role - [www.hegnp.org.uk](http://www.hegnp.org.uk)

<sup>2</sup> The Gilston Area Neighbourhood Plan refers to the Eastwick, Gilston and part of Hunsdon Neighbourhood Plan designated area – See Fig. 1 - Neighbourhood Plan Area Boundary

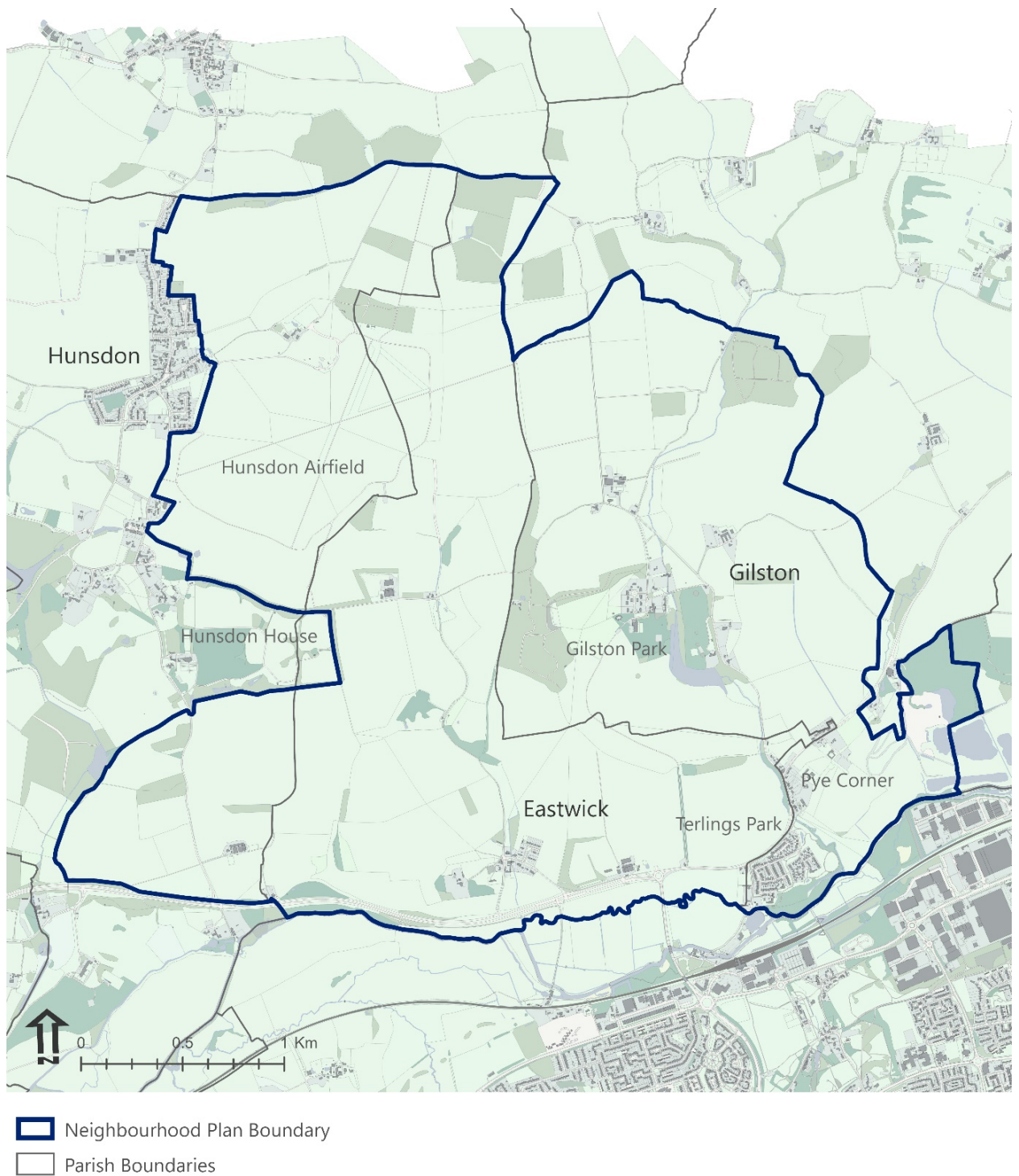
and the Harlow and Gilston Garden Town documents. This includes landscape assessment, environmental assessment and housing need studies. The evidence base which has been drawn in respect of each Policy is referred to in the supporting text. This has been supplemented by direct inputs from the community, either in the form of comments or through their knowledge of local history, character, landscape and environmental sensitivities.

7. The Gilston Area Neighbourhood Plan is supported by a Consultation Statement and this Basic Conditions Statement.

## What are the Basic Conditions?

8. The Neighbourhood Plan can only be put to a referendum and be adopted if it meets each of a set of basic conditions. The basic conditions are set out in paragraph 8(2) of Schedule 4B to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as applied to neighbourhood plans by section 38A of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. The basic conditions are:
  - having regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State it is appropriate to make a neighbourhood plan.
  - the making of the neighbourhood plan contributes to the achievement of sustainable development.
  - the making of the neighbourhood plan is in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in the development plan for the area of the authority (or any part of that area).
  - the making of the neighbourhood plan does not breach, and is otherwise compatible with, EU obligations.
9. Throughout the process of developing the Gilston Area Neighbourhood Plan, the qualifying body has given consideration to how it will meet the basic conditions that must be met if the plan is to be successful at independent examination. This Basic Conditions Statement has been prepared to demonstrate to the independent examiner that the draft Gilston Area Neighbourhood Plan meets the basic conditions.
10. In accordance with the published Neighbourhood Planning Guidance, the Neighbourhood Plan Group has discussed the basic conditions with the local planning authority.

*Fig. 1 - Neighbourhood Plan Area Boundary*



## What are the Legal Requirements?

11. There are five prescribed legal requirements for a neighbourhood plan:
  - The plan is being submitted by a qualifying body. In a neighbourhood area that covers the whole or any part of the area of a parish / town council only a parish / town council can submit the neighbourhood plan. If the plan is for an area that includes the whole or part of the area of another parish or town council (a multi-parish plan), consent must be obtained from all of the parish / town councils whose area is included. This could take the form of a written consent form. Elsewhere the plan must be submitted by a designated neighbourhood forum.
  - The draft neighbourhood plan sets out policies in relation to the development and use of land in the whole or any part of a neighbourhood area. A neighbourhood plan must include land use planning policies that can be used in the determination of planning applications. It must also relate to a designated neighbourhood area. The statement needs to confirm these two matters, clearly stating which designated neighbourhood area the draft plan relates to.
  - The proposed neighbourhood plan states the period in which it is to have effect. This should be clearly shown on the front of the plan and confirmation of the period should also be included within the basic conditions statement.
  - The policies do not relate to excluded development. For example, county matters (mineral extraction and waste development) and Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects.
  - The proposed neighbourhood plan does not relate to more than one neighbourhood area. You cannot submit a neighbourhood plan that relates to more than one neighbourhood area and there can only be one neighbourhood plan in force for each neighbourhood area.
12. The Draft Gilston Area Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared and submitted by a qualifying body- the Hunsdon Eastwick and Gilston Neighbourhood Plan Group (HEGNPG) which represents the Parish Councils of Hunsdon and Eastwick and Gilston. It expresses policies that relate to the development and use of land only within the designated neighbourhood area. No provision for excluded development such as national infrastructure is contained within the Neighbourhood Plan. The Neighbourhood Plan does not relate to more than one neighbourhood area and relates solely to the Gilston Area as designated by East Herts Council on 27th November 2017. There are no other Neighbourhood Development Plans in place for the neighbourhood area.

## Structure of the Basic Conditions Statement

13. This document explains how the Gilston Area Neighbourhood Plan taken as a whole and the policies set out in it meet the requirements of each of the basic conditions and other legal tests. It is structured as follows:
- Section 2: sets out how the Neighbourhood Plan has had regard to national planning policies and advice.
  - Section 3: explains how the ‘making’ of the neighbourhood plan contributes to the achievement of sustainable development.
  - Section 4: explains how the ‘making’ of the Neighbourhood Plan is in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in the development plan for the area of the authority.
  - Section 5: explains how the ‘making’ of the Neighbourhood Plan does not breach, and is otherwise compatible with, EU obligations.
  - Section 6: confirms how the prescribed conditions are met in relation to the Neighbourhood Plan and prescribed matters have been complied with in connection with the proposal for the Neighbourhood Plan



## B. Basic Condition 1: Conformity with National Policy and Guidance

### Introduction

14. To meet this condition, the Neighbourhood Plan must be shown to have regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issues by the Secretary of State.
15. There is an obligation for any Neighbourhood Plan to have regard to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). The NPPF is the key document setting out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. Introduced in 2012, it sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. Critically, it established a 'presumption in favour of sustainable development' unless there are policies which provide a specific reason for refusing development relating to areas or assets of particular importance. It provides a framework within which local people and their accountable local authorities can produce their own distinctive local and neighbourhood plans which reflect the needs and priorities of the community. The NPPF also stipulates that, where appropriate, the plans must reflect and promote relevant EU obligations and statutory requirements. Principally, the NPPF stipulates that any planned development is sustainable and achieves improvements in the environment, economy and wellbeing of people. *However*, the NPPF also makes it clear that in guiding development to sustainable solutions, the planning system must take into account local circumstances to reflect the character, needs and opportunities of each area.
16. This retains the presumption in favour of sustainable development but there is a stronger focus on improving the supply of new homes. Paragraph 18 sets out that policies to address non-strategic matters should be included in local plans that contain both strategic and non-strategic policies, and/or in local or Neighbourhood Plans that contain just non-strategic policies. The Gilston Area Neighbourhood Plan contains non-strategic planning policies and proposals that add local detail and value to strategic policies in the East Herts District Plan.

### Compliance with Principles of the NPPF

17. The NPPF states that the planning system should be genuinely plan-led with succinct and up-to-date plans providing a positive vision for the future of each area; a framework for addressing housing needs and other economic, social and environmental priorities; and a platform for local people to shape their surroundings.
18. The NPPF sets out a number of underlying principles for plan-making. Table 1 provides a summary of how the Gilston Area Neighbourhood Plan conform to these principles.
19. The NPPF also provides further details on the role of communities and the status of Neighbourhood Plans. Paragraph 29 advises that Neighbourhood Planning gives communities the power to develop a shared vision for their area. Neighbourhood Plans can shape, direct and help to deliver sustainable development, by influencing local

planning decisions as part of the statutory development plan. Neighbourhood Plans should not promote less development than set out in the strategic policies for the area or undermine those strategic policies. The Gilston Area Neighbourhood Plan supports the strategic policies and does not undermine them and does not propose less development than set out in Policy GA1 of the East Herts District Plan. Paragraph 30 goes on to say that once a Neighbourhood Plan has been brought into force, the policies it contains take precedence over existing non-strategic policies in a local plan covering the neighbourhood area, where they are in conflict; unless they are superseded by strategic or non-strategic policies that are adopted subsequently.

*Table 1 - Conformity of the Gilston Area Neighbourhood Plan with overarching principles of NPPF*

<b>NPPF Overarching Principles</b>	<b>Gilston Area Neighbourhood Plan</b>
a) Plans should be prepared with the objective of contributing to the achievement of sustainable development	The Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared to contribute to sustainable development (see Section C). The Plan's objectives, policies and proposals address economic, social and environmental objectives. Policy AG1 sets out an overarching policy for delivering sustainable development.
b) Plans should be prepared positively, in a way that is aspirational but deliverable;	The Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared positively. It builds on the consultation undertaken in relation to the Gilston Area Concept Framework and has included a formal Regulation 14 public consultation and further consultation with East Herts Council and principal landowners/developers on emerging policies and proposals. The Neighbourhood Plan Group (HEGNPG), has worked hard to ensure policies are positively worded to "support" the delivery of 10,000 homes and associated infrastructure in the Gilston subject to locally relevant criteria. The policies in the Neighbourhood Plan sets out robust criteria which reflect local concerns about the need to respond to the character of the Gilston Area in terms of existing settlements, landscape, topography and heritage assets and to be of a high quality in design terms. The Neighbourhood Plan includes land use planning policies and actions which are in conformity with national, strategic and local planning policies and provides a clear and practical framework within which decisions on planning applications can be made. The Neighbourhood Plan Group has worked closely with the local planning authority at each stage of preparation of the plan.

NPPF Overarching Principles	Gilston Area Neighbourhood Plan
c) Plans should be shaped by early, proportionate and effective engagement between plan-makers and communities, local organisations, businesses, infrastructure providers and operators and statutory consultees;	The accompanying Consultation Statement sets out the details of the consultation which have been undertaken since September 2017. The Gilston Area Neighbourhood Plan is founded on the extensive public consultation which took place with the local community during development of the Concept Framework between September 2017 and January 2018, and subsequent meetings and discussions within local communities and with the Neighbourhood Plan Group and Parish Councils. It has been prepared in close collaboration with East Herts Council, the Harlow and Gilston Garden Town and the landowners. Regulation 14 Consultation was undertaken for a 6-week period between September and October 2019. Responses received from the local community, statutory consultees and other stakeholders have been fully reviewed and changes have been made to the Draft Neighbourhood Plan where considered appropriate to address these. The community has confirmed through this consultation that there is general support for the vision and objectives set out in the Plan and the scope and purpose of the policies for development in the Gilston Area.
d) Plans should contain policies that are clearly written and unambiguous, so it is evident how a decision maker should react to development proposals;	The Neighbourhood Plan policies and proposals have been prepared by the Neighbourhood Plan Group comprising local residents, with support from planning consultants and planning officers at East Herts Council. Amendments have been made at key stages to improve the clarity and reduce ambiguity and in response to comments and representations made.
e) Plans should be accessible through the use of digital tools to assist public involvement and policy presentation; and	Updates and documents have been provided on the Neighbourhood Plan websites at all stages of plan preparation.
f) Plans should serve a clear purpose, avoiding unnecessary duplication of policies that apply to a particular area (including policies in this Framework, where relevant).	The objectives of the Neighbourhood Plan are clearly set out and the Plan has been amended and updated to reduce duplication of policies in the East Herts District Plan.



## Compliance with Objectives of the NPPF

20. The NPPF has 13 key objectives which are:
  - Delivering a sufficient supply of homes
  - Building a strong, competitive economy
  - Ensuring the vitality of town centres
  - Promoting healthy and safe communities
  - Promoting sustainable transport
  - Supporting high quality communications
  - Making effective use of land
  - Achieving well designed places
  - Protecting Green Belt Land
  - Meeting the challenges of climate change and flooding
  - Conserving and enhancing the natural environment
  - Conserving and enhancing the historic environment
  - Facilitating the sustainable use of minerals
21. The Gilston Area Neighbourhood Plan contributes to meeting these objectives and promotes sustainable development together with improvements to the environment, economy and wellbeing of people (existing and new communities) in the Neighbourhood Area. It has been prepared having full regard to national policies and advice.
22. A detailed assessment has been undertaken of the neighbourhood area which is set out in the evidence base documents. Building on the work undertaken in preparation of the Gilston Area Concept Framework, the issues identified from our assessment of existing conditions and consultation with the local community, have provided the basis for the development of planning policies. The Neighbourhood Plan seeks to ensure that development is of a high quality which respects the character of the neighbourhood area and that the provision of necessary infrastructure is secured to meet the needs of new and existing communities. A key objective of the Neighbourhood Plan is to promote sustainable development and create a healthy living environment. This is reflected in policies to promote sustainable transport (walking, cycling and use of public transport, the creation of an integrated Green Infrastructure Network, sustainable design with a high level of resource efficiency and resilience to climate change, and the protection of the natural environment and heritage assets.
23. Of particular relevance to the Neighbourhood Plan is the emphasis placed in the NPPF on good design and the protection of the natural and historic environment. The NPPF makes it clear that design quality must be considered throughout the evolution and assessment of individual proposals and that early discussion between applicants, the local planning authority and local community about the design and style of emerging schemes is important for clarifying expectations and reconciling local and commercial interests. Early, proactive and effective engagement with the community is expected.

24. Development will be required to provide a measure of biodiversity and an overall 'net gain' in biodiversity for the site and to make provision for new tree planting and landscaping and protect existing woodlands and areas of wildlife importance that contribute to the character of the area.
25. The Neighbourhood Plan identifies 13 objectives which provide the basis for the policies in the Plan. These comprise the following:
- Objective 1: Creating distinctive and balanced communities
  - Objective 2: Maintaining the distinctiveness and managing the impacts of Development on Existing Villages
  - Objective 3: Delivering a wide choice of quality homes
  - Objective 4: well connected to but distinctive from Harlow
  - Objective 5: Promoting healthy communities
  - Objective 6: Promoting sustainable travel
  - Objective 7: Creating walkable neighbourhoods
  - Objective 8: Promoting high quality design
  - Objective 9: A protected and enhanced landscape and network of Green Spaces
  - Objective 10: protecting and enhancing natural assets
  - Objective 12: Engaging local communities
  - Objective 13: Ensuring the phased delivery of necessary infrastructure
26. The Neighbourhood Plan contains 21 policies. These are arranged under the following key headings:

### *1. Accommodating Growth*

These policies address the theme of comprehensive development as a single strategic allocation, relationship with wider landscape and built context, and essential infrastructure.

Policy AG1 Promoting Sustainable Development in the Gilston Area

Policy AG2 Creating a Connected Green Infrastructure Network

Policy AG3 Protecting and Enhancing the Countryside Setting of New and Existing Villages

Policy AG4 Maintaining the Individuality and Separation of All Villages

Policy AG5 Protecting Areas of Local Significance

Policy AG6 Creating New Villages with a Distinct and Locally Inspired Character

Policy AG7 Creating New Countryside Parks at Hunsdon Airfield and Eastwick Woodlands

Policy AG8 Minimising the Impact of Traffic and New Transport Infrastructure

Policy AG9 Phasing of Infrastructure Delivery

### *2. Delivering Quality Places*

These policies address and aim to inform the shape of future development and provide appropriate design for landscape and built-up areas, heritage, community assets and mobility.

Policy LA1 Landscape within the New Villages

Policy BU1 Housing and Residential Neighbourhoods  
Policy BU2 Village Cores/Centres  
Policy BU3 Employment Areas  
Policy BU4 Village Streets and Lanes  
Policy H1 Celebrating Existing Heritage Assets  
Policy C1 Community Facility Provision  
Policy EX1 Improving Existing Settlements  
Policy TRA1 Sustainable Mobility  
Policy TRA2 Access to the Countryside

### *3. Implementation and Delivery*

These policies set out the role and responsibilities of the community during implementation and delivery.

Policy D1 Community Partnership

Policy D2 Community Ownership and Stewardship

27. An assessment of the objectives and policies of the Gilston Area Neighbourhood Plan against the objectives and guidance set out in the NPPF is provided in Table 2.



*Table 2 - Conformity of the Neighbourhood Plan with NPPF Objectives*

NPPF Objective	Gilston Area Neighbourhood Plan Objective	Gilston Area Neighbourhood Plan Policy	Conformity of Neighbourhood Plan with NPPF
Delivering a sufficient supply of homes	Objective 1: Creating distinctive and balanced communities  Objective 3: Delivering a wide choice of quality homes	Policy AG1 Promoting sustainable development in the Gilston Area  Policy AG6 Creating New Villages with a Distinct and Locally Inspired Character  Policy AG9 Phasing of Infrastructure Provision  Policy BU1 Housing and Residential Areas	The Neighbourhood Plan makes provision for the development of 10,000 homes in seven new villages in accordance with Policy GA1. A wide range of different housing typologies and tenures (including market and affordable housing) will be provided in each village to create mixed and balanced communities and meet the housing needs of East Hertfordshire. New homes will be designed and constructed to a high-quality standard. They will be flexible and adaptable to different and changing lifestyles, providing for a variety of needs. A range of specialist housing will be provided including assisted living for older residents, and opportunities will be created for self-build and custom building. New homes will be located within short walking distance of open space, community facilities, shops, and schools to promote a healthy and active community. This will help to create vibrant, inclusive and healthy communities with a distinctive sense of place.
Building a strong, competitive economy	Objective 1: Creating distinctive and balanced communities  Objective 13: Ensuring the phased delivery of necessary infrastructure	Policy AG9 Phasing of Infrastructure Provision  Policy BU2 Village Cores/Centres  Policy BU3 Employment Areas	The Neighbourhood Plan provides for the development of seven villages, each informed by Garden City principles, with a wide range of homes, employment, local retail, education and community facilities well connected by pedestrian, cycle and public transport routes. Policies provide for employment development in village centres and other accessible locations which will

NPPF Objective	Gilston Area Neighbourhood Plan Objective	Gilston Area Neighbourhood Plan Policy	Conformity of Neighbourhood Plan with NPPF
			complement employment development elsewhere in the Garden Town including the Harlow Enterprise Zones.
Ensuring the vitality of town centres	Objective 1: Creating distinctive and balanced communities  Objective 13: Ensuring the phased delivery of necessary infrastructure	Policy BU2 Village Cores/Centres	A key objective of the Neighbourhood Plan is the creation of mixed-use village centres with a range of employment, services and community facilities which will form a vibrant heart to the new villages and reduce the need to travel. Village centres will be the preferred location for employment uses.
Promoting healthy and safe communities	Objective 1: Creating distinctive and balanced communities  Objective 2: Maintaining the distinctiveness and managing the impacts of Development on Existing Villages  Objective 5: Promoting healthy communities  Objective 7: Creating walkable neighbourhoods	Policy AG1 Promoting sustainable development in the Gilston Area  Policy AG5 Protecting Areas of Local Significance  Policy AG6 Creating new villages with a distinct and locally inspired character  Policy C1 Community facility provision	The Neighbourhood Plan promotes social interaction; makes provision for social, recreational and cultural facilities and supports healthy lifestyles through the provision of safe and accessible green space and access to the countryside. Each new village will be supported by an appropriate range of social infrastructure, reflecting the scale of each village, including education, health, faith, open space, leisure, retail and community facilities alongside excellent links to the undeveloped open countryside especially that in community ownership and management Each village will provide community facilities (such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, cultural buildings, public houses and places of

NPPF Objective	Gilston Area Neighbourhood Plan Objective	Gilston Area Neighbourhood Plan Policy	Conformity of Neighbourhood Plan with NPPF
	<p>Objective 12: Engaging local communities</p> <p>Objective 13: Ensuring the phased delivery of necessary infrastructure</p>	<p>Policy EX1 Improving existing settlements</p> <p>Policy TR2 Access to the Countryside</p> <p>Policy D1 Community partnership</p> <p>Policy D2 community ownership and stewardship</p>	<p>worship) and other local services as relevant to the scale and size of that village. The design of new development will create safe and accessible living environments with clear and legible pedestrian and cycle routes and high-quality public spaces. The development will encourage active lifestyles and social integration through everyday use of public areas</p>
Promoting sustainable transport	<p>Objective 4: well connected to but distinctive from Harlow</p> <p>Objective 6: Promoting sustainable travel</p> <p>Objective 7: Creating walkable neighbourhoods</p> <p>Objective 13: Ensuring the phased delivery of necessary infrastructure</p>	<p>Policy AG8 Minimising the impact of traffic and new transport infrastructure</p> <p>Policy TR1 Sustainable Mobility</p> <p>Policy TR2 Access to the Countryside</p>	<p>The Neighbourhood Plan promotes sustainable transport choices, anticipates foreseeable changes in transport technology and mitigates the traffic impact of the development on existing communities and the wider transport network across the locality. New development will be designed on active design principles. New homes will be located within short walking distance of open space, community facilities, shops, and schools to promote a healthy and active community. This will help to create vibrant, inclusive and healthy communities with a distinctive sense of place. Within neighbourhoods walking and cycling will be prioritised. A balance of land uses will be provided in each village (relative to the scale, size and role of the village) to encourage people to minimise journeys for shopping, leisure, education and other activities. Key facilities such as primary schools and local shops will be located within walking distance of most properties.</p>



NPPF Objective	Gilston Area Neighbourhood Plan Objective	Gilston Area Neighbourhood Plan Policy	Conformity of Neighbourhood Plan with NPPF
Supporting high quality communications	Objective 13: Ensuring the phased delivery of necessary infrastructure	Policy AG9 Phasing of Infrastructure Policy EX1 Improving existing communities	The Neighbourhood Plan promotes the provision of new infrastructure will be designed to meet the comprehensive needs of the Gilston Area and will be phased to minimise and manage the impacts of the development on the local area. The provision of necessary infrastructure will be phased in relation to development to ensure there is adequate capacity to meet the cumulative needs of new and existing communities.
Making effective use of land	Objective 2: Maintaining distinctiveness and managing the impacts of development on existing settlements Objective 7: Creating walkable neighbourhoods Objective 8: Promoting high quality design Objective 13: Ensuring the phased delivery of necessary infrastructure to meet the needs arising from the development	Policy AG1 Promoting sustainable development in the Gilston Area Policy AG9 Phasing of Infrastructure Provision Policy AG6 Creating new villages with a distinct and locally inspired character Policy Bu1 Housing and residential neighbourhoods	The Neighbourhood Plan seeks to make the most effective use of land taking into account local characteristics and context and strategic policy objectives. However, the Neighbourhood Plan also seeks to avoid coalescence between settlements and to ensure the boundaries and character of each new village are designed to emphasise the individuality and separation of each settlement, including the existing ones. A key objective is to contain development within defined settlement boundaries in order to protect the landscape setting of new and existing villages. Policies seek to achieve the best possible balance between landscape, village separation, mass, density and the overall delivery of the aims of Policy GA1 of the District Plan. New homes will be located within short walking distance of open space, community facilities, shops, and schools. Policy AG61(iv) states that Village Masterplans should provide a range of densities and building heights which

NPPF Objective	Gilston Area Neighbourhood Plan Objective	Gilston Area Neighbourhood Plan Policy	Conformity of Neighbourhood Plan with NPPF
			are appropriately scaled in relation to location, heritage assets, landscape features and topography.
Achieving well designed places	<p>Objective 4: well connected to but distinctive from Harlow</p> <p>Objective 7: Creating walkable neighbourhoods</p> <p>Objective 8: Promoting high quality design</p> <p>Objective 12: Engaging local communities</p>	<p>Policy AG1 Promoting sustainable development in the Gilston Area</p> <p>Policy AG2 Creating a Connected Green Infrastructure Network</p> <p>Policy Ag3 Protecting and enhancing the Countryside setting of new and existing villages</p> <p>Policy AG6 Creating new villages with a distinct and locally inspired character</p> <p>Policy LA1 Landscape within the New Villages</p> <p>Policy BU1 Housing and Residential Neighbourhoods</p> <p>Policy BU2 Village Cores/Centres</p> <p>Policy BU3 Employment Areas</p>	<p>The Neighbourhood Plan places great importance on promoting high quality design. The principle of accommodating development in the Gilston Area in seven distinct villages of individual character was established in Policy GA1. Whilst it is recognised that the new villages will be required to accommodate the strategic priorities established in the District Plan and to meet current design and sustainability standards, the new villages should each have a distinct character. Development should create a strong sense of place and local character, appropriate to the local area, drawing inspiration from the morphology and character of existing settlements. Policy AG6 states that the Village Masterplan should demonstrate the extent to which it has been informed by its relationship with the landscape and heritage assets and has drawn inspiration from the character and morphology of existing villages in the Gilston Area and elsewhere in Hertfordshire to create a distinct and individual village character. Durable and high-quality buildings and public spaces will positively respond to local landscape character and history and reflect the identity of the local area. Clear and detailed design guidance will be developed for each village. Appendix 4 provides details of the key characteristics of the local area that may be used as possible design cues in</p>

NPPF Objective	Gilston Area Neighbourhood Plan Objective	Gilston Area Neighbourhood Plan Policy	Conformity of Neighbourhood Plan with NPPF
		<p>Policy BU4 Village Streets and Lanes</p> <p>Policy H1 Celebrating Existing Heritage Assets</p> <p>Policy C1 Community Facility Provision</p> <p>Policy EX1 Improving Existing Settlements</p>	the preparation of Village Masterplans and Design Codes. Policies BU1-BU3 provide more detailed policy guidance on the design of new development. Policy D1 seeks to ensure that local communities are proactively engaged in the Strategic Landscape and Village Masterplanning processes to ensure they reflect local aspirations and an understanding of the area's defining characteristics.
Protecting Green Belt Land	<p>Objective 9: A protected and enhanced landscape and network of Green Spaces</p> <p>Objective 10: protecting and enhancing natural assets</p>	<p>Policy AG2 Creating a connected Green Infrastructure Network</p> <p>Policy AG3 Protecting and enhancing the countryside setting of new and existing villages</p> <p>Policy AG5 Protecting Areas of Local Significance</p>	The Green Belt around Gilston and Eastwick was released when the East Hertfordshire District Plan was adopted October 2018 in order to accommodate development in the Gilston Area. Whilst the Gilston Area has been allocated for major development, the Neighbourhood Plan seeks to mitigate the impacts of development and to define and protect the countryside setting of villages (existing and new) in order to retain the character of the area and reinforce its distinctiveness from Harlow. A key objective of the Neighbourhood Plan is to protect and enhance the landscape and create a network of green spaces including protection of the revised Green Belt and opportunities to improve access to the countryside. The landscape setting of new and existing villages / communities will be protected and enhanced through the creation of an extended network of accessible green spaces, with the retention of existing trees, hedgerows and landscape features and



NPPF Objective	Gilston Area Neighbourhood Plan Objective	Gilston Area Neighbourhood Plan Policy	Conformity of Neighbourhood Plan with NPPF
			enhancement of the water environment where possible. The network of green spaces will be linked by a series of environmentally viable green corridors between new and existing villages and the River Stort and its towpath which will provide walking routes and promote rich biodiversity appropriate to the area.
Meeting the challenges of climate change and flooding	Objective 8: Promoting high quality design Objective 10: Protecting and enhancing natural assets	Policy AG1 Promoting sustainable development in the Gilston Area Policy AG2 Creating a Connected Green Infrastructure Network Policy AG3 Protecting and enhancing the Countryside setting of new and existing villages Policy AG6 Creating new villages with a distinct and locally inspired character Policy LA1 Landscape within the New Villages Policy BU1 Housing and Residential Neighbourhoods Policy BU2 Village Cores/Centres	Neighbourhood Plan policies support appropriate measures to ensure the future resilience of communities and infrastructure to climate change impacts. Policy AG1 states that new development should incorporate measures to conserve water resources and protect existing and new communities from the impacts of flood risk and climate change. Policy AG2 seeks to protect areas of ecological, wildlife and landscape value and create an integrated green infrastructure network to support biodiversity. Policy AG9 seeks to ensure that the necessary physical infrastructure is in place at each stage of the development to support the comprehensive needs of the area without placing additional pressures on existing infrastructure and services. The topography of the site and existing landscape features will inform the configuration of the village layouts and assist in the sustainable management of surface water drainage. Policy AG5 provides for the integration of flood water retention in the landscape to remedy, if necessary, surface water flood risk within Hunsdon village.

NPPF Objective	Gilston Area Neighbourhood Plan Objective	Gilston Area Neighbourhood Plan Policy	Conformity of Neighbourhood Plan with NPPF
		Policy BU3 Employment Areas	
Conserving and enhancing the natural environment	Objective 9: A protected and enhanced landscape and network of Green Spaces  Objective 10: Protecting and enhancing natural assets	Policy AG1 Promoting sustainable development in the Gilston Area  Policy AG2 Creating a Connected Green Infrastructure Network  Policy AG3 Protecting and enhancing the Countryside setting of new and existing villages  Policy AG4 Maintaining the individuality and separation of all villages  Policy AG5 Protecting Areas of Local Significance  Policy AG6 Creating new villages with a distinct and locally inspired character  Policy AG7 Creating new countryside parks at Hunsdon Airfield and Eastwick Woodlands	A key objective of the Neighbourhood Plan is to protect and enhance natural assets and a number of policies seek to achieve this. Existing natural assets, especially woodlands and the water environment, will be retained and enhanced and incorporated as part of the integrated network of green and blue spaces. Key habitat features will be preserved and enhanced as a priority and new habitats created to improve biodiversity. The topography of the site and existing landscape features will inform the configuration of the village layouts and assist in the sustainable management of surface water drainage. The new villages will be designed to maximise access to open spaces and the wider countryside with a network of green spaces and walking and cycling routes. The existing network of parks, views and paths will be integrated with new connections to form a rich and permeable network. Each village will have a range of multi-functional open spaces, local play areas, landscaping and SUDS carefully designed to be safe and pleasant, forming an essential part of the experience of living in the Gilston Area. Development will be designed to minimise impacts on areas of ecological importance through the creation of adequate separation distances and buffer zones. This should contribute to restoring the health of local rivers and their associated habitats. Early restoration and management of woodlands will be

NPPF Objective	Gilston Area Neighbourhood Plan Objective	Gilston Area Neighbourhood Plan Policy	Conformity of Neighbourhood Plan with NPPF
		<p>AG9 Phasing of Infrastructure Provision</p> <p>Policy LA1 Landscape within the new villages</p> <p>Policy Ex1 Improving existing settlements</p> <p>Policy D2 Community Ownership and Stewardship</p>	<p>required. Existing woodlands will be enhanced and management plans developed at an early stage of the development process. A number of locally significant sites are designated as Local Green Space in accordance with the NPPF (Policy AG5). Policy AG7 relates to the design and management of new countryside parks at Hunsdon Airfield and Eastwick Woodlands. A key objective is to establish early on the framework for governance arrangements for the long-term stewardship of the Gilston Area that will bring together the new and existing communities whilst ensuring the long-term protection of the green spaces and their high quality management by the community. Policy D1 addresses arrangement for future management and stewardship of open land.</p>
Conserving and enhancing the historic environment	Objective 11: Protecting and enhancing heritage assets	<p>Policy AG1 Promoting sustainable development in the Gilston Area</p> <p>Policy AG2 Creating a Connected Green Infrastructure Network</p> <p>Policy AG3 Protecting and enhancing the Countryside setting of new and existing villages</p>	<p>A key objective of the Neighbourhood Plan is to protect and enhance heritage assets. Policies require that development in the Gilston Area will respect and have a positive relationship with its heritage assets. Historic boundaries, such as the former deer park pale and ditch will be respected, preserved and enhanced. The layout and design of new development will respond sensitively to the form, proportion, scale and character of heritage assets. Open spaces will be strategically positioned to preserve the setting of heritage assets. Development will be positioned and landscape designed to respect, protect, and in some instances, enhance, the setting and views to/ from heritage assets. Long term conservation</p>

NPPF Objective	Gilston Area Neighbourhood Plan Objective	Gilston Area Neighbourhood Plan Policy	Conformity of Neighbourhood Plan with NPPF
		<p>Policy AG4 Maintaining the individuality and separation of all villages</p> <p>Policy AG5 Protecting Areas of Local Significance</p> <p>Policy AG6 Creating new villages with a distinct and locally inspired character</p> <p>Policy AG7 Creating new countryside parks at Hunsdon Airfield and Eastwick Woodlands</p> <p>Policy H1 Celebrating existing heritage assets</p>	<p>and management plans will be developed for all heritage assets, in consultation with the local community as part of the planning process. Opportunities will be promoted to increase public appreciation and understanding of heritage through village design and the incorporation of appropriate references.</p>
Facilitating the sustainable use of minerals	Not applicable to Gilston Area Neighbourhood Plan- no proposals for extraction of mineral resources within Neighbourhood Plan area.	N/A	N/A

## C. Basic Condition 2: Contribution to Sustainable Development

### Introduction

28. National, strategic and local planning policies set a clear context for the Neighbourhood Plan and the overriding importance on the promotion of sustainable development. Contributing to the achievement of sustainable development is the core principle underpinning this Neighbourhood Plan. Delivering sustainable development involves seeking positive improvements in the quality of the built, natural and historic environment, as well as in people's quality of life including (but not limited to):
- widening the choice of high quality homes
  - improving the conditions in which people live, work, travel and take leisure
  - making it easier for jobs to be created in villages
  - protecting the natural environment and achieving net gains in biodiversity
  - promoting good design
29. There are three dimensions to sustainable development: economic, social and environmental. These dimensions give rise to the need for the planning system to perform a number of roles:
- **an economic role** – to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure;
  - **a social role** – to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering a well-designed and safe built environment, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities' health, social and cultural well-being; and;
  - **an environmental role** – to contribute to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, helping to improve biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.
30. The NPPF (para 9) makes clear that these objectives should be delivered through the preparation and implementation of plans and the application of the policies in the NPPF; they are not criteria against which every decision can or should be judged. Planning policies and decisions should play an active role in guiding development towards sustainable solutions, but in doing so should take local circumstances into account, to reflect the character, needs and opportunities of each area.
31. At the heart of the NPPF is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. Para 13 states that neighbourhood plans should support the delivery of strategic policies



contained in local plans or spatial development strategies; and should shape and direct development that is outside of these strategic policies.

## Delivering Sustainable Development

32. The promotion of sustainable development sits at the heart of the Neighbourhood Plan. Policy AG1 is a general policy which supplements existing guidance and Policy GA1 to ensure that local character and distinctiveness are informed by the understanding of the local community and will be taken into account in the determination of planning applications. It also sets out the main principles of sustainable development and the measures needed to respond to a changing climate.
33. Local circumstances have been taken into account and preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan has responded to the different opportunities for achieving sustainable development. Table 3 summarises how the objectives and policies in the Plan contribute towards sustainable development as defined in the NPPF. Many of the objectives overlap the three strands of sustainability

*Table 3 - Assessment of The Neighbourhood Plan Objectives and Policies against Sustainable Development Objectives*

Deliver Economic Sustainability	
NPPF Definition- Delivering a sufficient supply of new homes, building a strong, competitive economy and ensuring the viability of town centres	
Neighbourhood Plan Objectives	<p>Objective 1: Creating distinctive and balanced communities</p> <p>Objective 3: Delivering a wide choice of quality homes</p> <p>Objective 13: Ensuring the phased delivery of necessary infrastructure</p>
Neighbourhood Plan Policies	<p>Policy AG1: Promoting Sustainable Development in the Gilston Area</p> <p>Policy AG9: Phasing of Infrastructure Delivery</p> <p>Policy BU1: Housing and Residential Neighbourhoods</p> <p>Policy BU2: Village Cores/Centres</p> <p>Policy BU3: Employment Areas</p> <p>Policy TR1: Promoting Sustainable Travel</p>
<p><b>Commentary</b></p> <p>The Neighbourhood Plan responds to the major allocation in the East Herts District Plan for 10,000 new homes and around 5ha employment land in the Gilston Area (Policy GA1) and the objectives of the Harlow and Gilston Garden Town to deliver sustainable growth</p>	

and infrastructure of considerable scale and significance, which will meet housing and employment needs, deliver regeneration objectives and create a high-quality environment. It provides for the development of seven villages as part of the wider Harlow and Gilston Garden Town, each informed by Garden City principles, with a wide range of homes, employment, local retail, education and community facilities well connected by pedestrian, cycle and public transport routes. Policies provide for employment development in village centres and other accessible locations which will complement employment development elsewhere in the Garden Town including the Harlow Enterprise Zones. A key objective of the Neighbourhood Plan is the creation of mixed-use village centres with a range of employment, services and community facilities which will form a vibrant heart to the new villages and reduce the need to travel. This is addressed in Policy BU3.

Village centres will be the preferred location for employment uses. A sensitive and innovative approach to integrating employment within the villages is proposed, supported by a step change in travel modes as part of the transport approach to the Garden Town and models of employment development designed to accord with other policies in the Neighbourhood Plan. This is addressed in Policy BU2.

The District Plan recognises that residents will also be able to access more substantial employment opportunities within Harlow, including the Enterprise Zone. In addition, the proximity of the site to Harlow Town station will enable sustainable access to employment opportunities further afield, including Stansted Airport, Cambridge, Bishop's Stortford and London. This is addressed in Policy TRA1.

The provision of necessary infrastructure is critical to the delivery of growth in the Gilston Area. The Neighbourhood Plan seeks to ensure that infrastructure provision is phased to ensure that there is adequate capacity to meet the needs of new and existing communities. New infrastructure will be designed to meet the comprehensive needs of the Gilston Area and will be phased to minimise and manage the impacts of the development on the local area. The provision of necessary infrastructure will be phased in relation to development to ensure there is adequate capacity to meet the cumulative needs of new and existing communities. Infrastructure requirements need to be considered in the light of the Garden Town Infrastructure Delivery Plan and trigger points directly related to actual arising needs, rather than standard requirements, which are not appropriate to a development of this scale and impact. Phasing will need to ensure its timely delivery through appropriate clauses within the legal agreements associated with planning permissions to ensure there is sufficient capacity (taking into account existing demand) to accommodate the needs of new development. The identification of Heads of Terms and triggers associated with the delivery of infrastructure all need to be carefully considered as part of engagement with key infrastructure providers and the community as the planning and design process progresses. This is addressed in Policy AG9.

## Deliver Social Sustainability

### NPPF Definition- Promoting healthy and safe communities

Neighbourhood Plan Objectives	<p>Objective 1: Creating distinctive and balanced communities</p> <p>Objective 2: Managing distinctiveness and the impacts of development on existing villages</p> <p>Objective 3: Delivering a wide choice of quality homes</p> <p>Objective 4 Well connected to but distinctive from Harlow</p> <p>Objective 5: Promoting healthy communities</p> <p>Objective 12: Engaging local communities</p> <p>Objective 13: Ensuring the phased delivery of necessary infrastructure</p>
Neighbourhood Plan Policies	<p>Policy AG1: Promoting Sustainable Development in the Gilston Area</p> <p>Policy AG4: Maintaining the Individuality and Separation of All Villages</p> <p>Policy AG5: Protecting Areas of Local Significance</p> <p>Policy AG6: Creating New Villages with a Distinct and Locally Inspired Character</p> <p>Policy AG9: Phasing of Infrastructure Delivery</p> <p>Policy C1: Community Facility Provision</p> <p>Policy EX1: Improving Existing Settlements</p> <p>Policy D1: Community Partnership</p> <p>Policy D2: Community Ownership and Stewardship</p>

### Commentary

The principle of accommodating development in the Gilston Area in seven distinct villages of individual character was established in Policy GA1 and has been further amplified in the Gilston Area Concept Framework and the Harlow and Gilston Garden Town Vision and Design Guide. Whilst it is recognised that the new villages will be required to accommodate the strategic priorities established in the District Plan and to meet current design and sustainability standards, the new villages should each have a distinct character. This is addressed in Policy AG6.

The Neighbourhood Plan promotes social interaction; makes provision for social, recreational and cultural facilities and supports healthy lifestyles through the provision of safe and accessible green space and access to the countryside. Each new village will be supported by an appropriate range of social infrastructure, reflecting the scale of each

village, including education, health, faith, open space, leisure, retail and community facilities alongside excellent links to the undeveloped open countryside especially that in community ownership and management.

The design of new development will create safe and accessible living environments with clear and legible pedestrian and cycle routes and high-quality public spaces. The development will encourage active lifestyles and social integration through everyday use of public areas. Each village will provide community facilities (such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship) and other local services as relevant to the scale and size of that village. This is addressed in Policies Bui-4 and C1.

Access will be provided for all residents to high quality open spaces and the wider countryside. Opportunities for sport and recreation will be available for all age groups. Sport pitches will be provided in a variety of accessible locations, but should be designed to reflect the setting of their location, e.g. floodlighting and large car parks will not be permitted in historic settings or locations with long distance views. Accessible homes and neighbourhoods, and housing with care and support, will be integrated into the villages to enable people to live independently within their community.

Local communities (existing and new) will be fully, meaningfully and collaboratively engaged with each stage of the development process. The undeveloped land to the northwest of the Gilston Area will be transferred at an early stage into community ownership via a community land trust or similar governance mechanism, supported by a comprehensive long-term management strategy. Through the Governance Strategy, measures will be put in place to ensure that the community will have the necessary means to secure the long-term operation and maintenance of community assets. This is addressed by Policies D1 and D2

## Deliver Environmental Sustainability

**NPPF Definition- Promoting sustainable transport, achieving well designed places, meeting the challenge of climate change and flooding and conserving and enhancing the natural and historic environment**

Neighbourhood Plan Objectives	<p>Objective 6: Promoting sustainable travel</p> <p>Objective 7: Creating walkable neighbourhoods</p> <p>Objective 8: Promoting high quality design</p> <p>Objective 9: A protected and enhanced landscape and network of green spaces</p> <p>Objective 10: Protecting and enhancing natural assets</p> <p>Objective 11: Protecting and enhancing heritage assets</p> <p>Objective 13: Ensuring the phased delivery of necessary infrastructure</p>
Neighbourhood Plan Policies	<p>Policy AG1: Promoting Sustainable Development in the Gilston Area</p> <p>Policy AG2: Creating a Connected Green Infrastructure Network</p> <p>Policy AG3: Protecting and Enhancing the Countryside Setting of New and Existing Villages</p> <p>Policy AG4: Maintaining the Individuality and Separation of All Villages</p> <p>Policy AG5: Protecting Areas of Local Significance</p> <p>Policy AG6: Creating New Villages with a Distinct and Locally Inspired Character</p> <p>Policy AG7: Creating New Countryside Parks at Hunsdon Airfield and Eastwick Woodlands</p> <p>Policy AG8: Minimising the Impact of Traffic and New Transport Infrastructure</p> <p>Policy AG9: Phasing of Infrastructure Delivery</p> <p>Policy LA1: Landscape within New Villages</p> <p>Policy BU4: Village Streets and Lanes</p> <p>Policy EX1: Improving Existing Settlements</p> <p>Policy TRA1: Sustainable Mobility</p> <p>Policy TRA2: Access to the Countryside</p> <p>Policy D2: Community Ownership and Stewardship</p>



## Commentary

Whilst the Gilston Area has been allocated for major development, the Neighbourhood Plan seeks to mitigate the impacts of development and to define and protect the countryside setting of villages (existing and new) in order to retain the character of the area and reinforce its distinctiveness from Harlow. A key objective of the Neighbourhood Plan is to protect and enhance the landscape and create a network of green spaces including protection of the revised Green Belt and opportunities to improve access to the countryside. The landscape setting of new and existing villages / communities will be protected and enhanced through the creation of an extended network of accessible green spaces, with the retention of existing trees, hedgerows and landscape features and enhancement of the water environment where possible. The network of green spaces will be linked by a series of environmentally viable green corridors between new and existing villages and the River Stort and its towpath which will provide walking routes and promote rich biodiversity appropriate to the area.

The Neighbourhood Plan places great importance on promoting high quality design. The principle of accommodating development in the Gilston Area in seven distinct villages of individual character was established in Policy GA1. Whilst it is recognised that the new villages will be required to accommodate the strategic priorities established in the District Plan and to meet current design and sustainability standards, the new villages should each have a distinct character. Development should create a strong sense of place and local character, appropriate to the local area, drawing inspiration from the morphology and character of existing settlements. Policy AG6 states that the Village Masterplan should demonstrate the extent to which it has been informed by its relationship with the landscape and heritage assets and has drawn inspiration from the character and morphology of existing villages in the Gilston Area and elsewhere in Hertfordshire to create a distinct and individual village character. Durable and high-quality buildings and public spaces will positively respond to local landscape character and history and reflect the identity of the local area. Clear and detailed design guidance will be developed for each village. Appendix 4 provides details of the key characteristics of the local area that may be used as possible design cues in the preparation of Village Masterplans and Design Codes. Policies BU1-BU3 provide more detailed policy guidance on the design of new development. Policy D1 seeks to ensure that local communities are proactively engaged in the Strategic Landscape and Village Masterplanning processes to ensure they reflect local aspirations and an understanding of the area's defining characteristics.

Neighbourhood Plan policies support appropriate measures to ensure the future resilience of communities and infrastructure to climate change impacts. Policy AG1 states that new development should incorporate measures to conserve water resources and protect existing and new communities from the impacts of flood risk and climate change. Policy AG2 seeks to protect areas of ecological, wildlife and landscape value and create an integrated green infrastructure network to support biodiversity. Policy AG9 seeks to ensure that the necessary physical infrastructure is in place at each stage of the development to support the comprehensive needs of the area without placing additional pressures on existing infrastructure and services. The topography of the site and existing landscape features will inform the configuration of the village layouts and assist in the

sustainable management of surface water drainage. Policy AG5 provides for the integration of flood water retention in the landscape to remedy, if necessary, surface water flood risk within Hunsdon village.

A key objective of the Neighbourhood Plan is to protect and enhance natural assets and a number of policies seek to achieve this. Existing natural assets, especially woodlands and the water environment, will be retained and enhanced and incorporated as part of the integrated network of green and blue spaces. Key habitat features will be preserved and enhanced as a priority and new habitats created to improve biodiversity. The topography of the site and existing landscape features will inform the configuration of the village layouts and assist in the sustainable management of surface water drainage. The new villages will be designed to maximise access to open spaces and the wider countryside with a network of green spaces and walking and cycling routes. The existing network of parks, views and paths will be integrated with new connections to form a rich and permeable network. Each village will have a range of multi-functional open spaces, local play areas, landscaping and SUDS carefully designed to be safe and pleasant, forming an essential part of the experience of living in the Gilston Area. Development will be designed to minimise impacts on areas of ecological importance through the creation of adequate separation distances and buffer zones. This should contribute to restoring the health of local rivers and their associated habitats. Early restoration and management of woodlands will be required. Existing woodlands will be enhanced and management plans developed at an early stage of the development process. A number of locally significant sites are designated as Local Green Space in accordance with the NPPF (Policy AG5). Policy AG7 relates to the design and management of new countryside parks at Hunsdon Airfield and Eastwick Woodlands. A key objective is to establish early on the framework for governance arrangements for the long-term stewardship of the Gilston Area that will bring together the new and existing communities whilst ensuring the long-term protection of the green spaces and their high quality management by the community. Policy D1 addresses arrangement for future management and stewardship of open land.

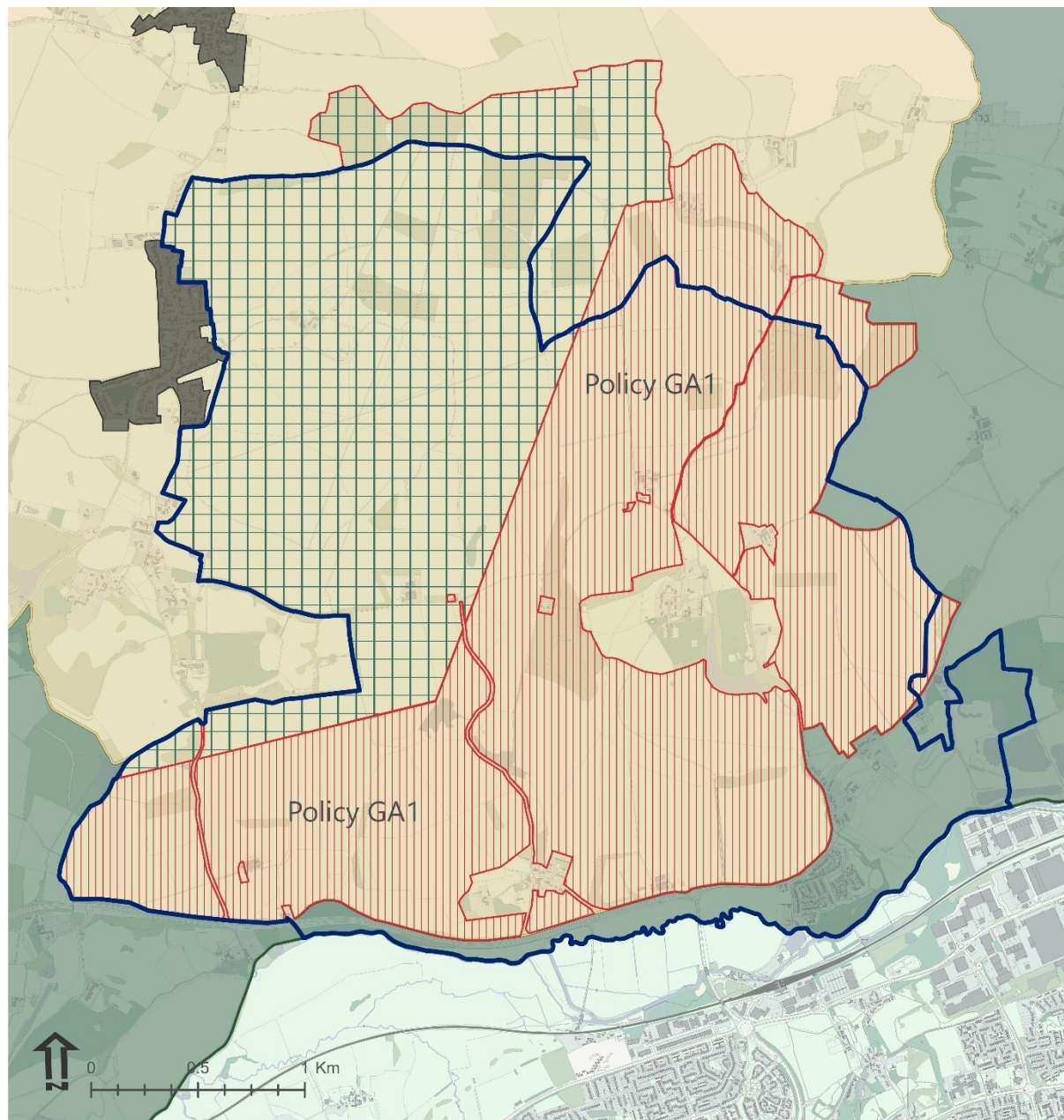
The Neighbourhood Plan seeks to protect and enhance heritage assets. Policies require that development in the Gilston Area will respect and have a positive relationship with its heritage assets. Historic boundaries, such as the former deer park pale and ditch will be respected, preserved and enhanced. The layout and design of new development will respond sensitively to the form, proportion, scale and character of heritage assets. Open spaces will be strategically positioned to preserve the setting of heritage assets. Development will be positioned and landscape designed to respect, protect, and in some instances, enhance, the setting and views to/ from heritage assets. Long term conservation and management plans will be developed for all heritage assets, in consultation with the local community as part of the planning process. Opportunities will be promoted to increase public appreciation and understanding of heritage through village design and the incorporation of appropriate references.

## D. Basic Condition 3: General Conformity with the Strategic Policies of the Development Plan

### Introduction

34. The Development Plan currently consists of the East Hertfordshire District Plan which was adopted in October 2018. The Gilston Area Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared in accordance with the policies in the District Plan and is founded on extensive consultation with East Herts Council at each stage of the plan preparation process.
35. The key strategic policies which the Neighbourhood Plan must comply with are the policies relating to the development at Gilston (Policy GA1 and GA2). The policy designations are shown in relation to the Neighbourhood Plan area in Figure 2. The District Plan allocates the Gilston Area to accommodate 10,000 new homes in distinct villages with at least 3,000 homes to be delivered by 2033 along with significant supporting infrastructure including roads and sustainable transport provision, schools, health centres and public open space. The plan also requires the equivalent of 5ha of employment land, either as a business park or planned within its village centres. This would account for a large proportion of the District's housing and employment needs and in addition, is intended to support the regeneration of Harlow.
36. The Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared fully in accordance with the strategic policy context provided by Policy GA1 and other policies in the District Plan. It provides further detailed policy guidance in relation to Policies GA1 and GA2 and other strategic policies taking into account local characteristics to reflect the character, needs and opportunities in the area in accordance with the guidance set out in the NPPF.
37. The Neighbourhood Plan is also founded on the Gilston Area Concept Framework which was endorsed by East Herts Council in July 2018 as a material consideration for Development Management. It also complies with the Gilston Area Charter SPD which provides further detail on the masterplanning process and community engagement and was approved by the Council in June 2020.
38. An assessment of the Neighbourhood Plan policies against the relevant strategic policies is set out in Table 4.

*Fig. 2 - District Plan Policy GA1 and the Neighbourhood Plan Area*



- Neighbourhood Plan Boundary
- Site Allocation (Policy GA1)
- Community Trust Open Space Land (Policy GA1)
- Green Belt (East Herts only)
- Rural Area Beyond the Green Belt
- Village Development Boundary (Group 1)

*Table 4 - Compliance of the Gilston Area Neighbourhood Plan with Strategic Policies in the East Herts District Plan*

District Plan Policy Ref	Policy Requirements	Compliance of Neighbourhood Plan with Strategic Policies
<b>GA1 The Gilston Area</b>		
GA1 I	In accordance with Policy DPS3 (Housing Supply 2011-2033), land at the Gilston Area is allocated for development to accommodate 10,000 homes, to be delivered within this Plan period and beyond. It is anticipated that at least 3,000 homes will be delivered by 2033	The Neighbourhood Plan makes provision for the development of 10,000 homes to be delivered in the plan period and beyond and sets out policies to accommodate growth; deliver quality places and ensure the community are engaged at each stage of the planning process and in the implementation and delivery of development and necessary infrastructure in the Gilston Area.
GA1 II	A Concept Framework is being jointly prepared by the landowners, the Council and the local community. The Concept Framework identifies design principles, potential land uses, infrastructure requirements and phasing, and will be used as a benchmark in reviewing proposals for development. Prior to the submission of any planning application(s) further design work through the pre-application engagement process will be required in order to agree, among other things, the quantum and distribution of land uses, access and layout principles.	The Neighbourhood Plan is founded on the Concept Framework which has been jointly prepared by the landowners, East Herts Council and the local community. It represents an agreed approach which has been developed through collaboration between all main parties. It identifies high quality design and placemaking principles, potential land uses, landscaping and public realm, transport and infrastructure requirements and phasing. The framework identifies design principles, land uses, infrastructure requirements and phasing and used surveys, assessments, conceptual Masterplans and consultation input from key stakeholders and the community to support and demonstrate the deliverability of Policy GA1 as seven distinct villages separated by meaningful landscape with shared infrastructure and a clear collective identity. It also established key principles to underpin and shape the content of any future masterplanning work, including 'strong vision, leadership and community engagement in accordance with Garden City



		<p>principles’ and informed by the landscape, topographical and built features of the area. The Neighbourhood Plan adopts the shared vision set out in the Concept Framework<sup>3</sup>, which had been developed through extensive public consultation at the time and then again through consultation on the Draft Neighbourhood Plan. Some minor changes have been made to strengthen references to an enhanced countryside landscape, to enrich habitats, biodiversity and the natural environment, increase resilience to climate change and promote sustainable mobility in response to comments received from the Environment Agency and the Harlow and Gilston Garden Town following consultation on the Draft Neighbourhood Plan.</p>
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<sup>3</sup> Gilston Area Concept Framework (July 2018), Gilston Area Vision (p.10)

GA1 The Gilston Area		
District Plan Policy Ref	Policy Requirements	Compliance of Neighbourhood Plan with Strategic Policies
	I.	
GA1 III	II. The Gilston Area will provide for 10,000 homes across distinct villages, each based on Garden City principles respecting the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• strong vision, leadership and community engagement;</li> <li>• land value capture to deliver the social and physical infrastructure for the benefit of the community;</li> <li>• long-term community ownership of land and stewardship of assets mixed-tenure homes and housing types including those that are genuinely affordable;</li> <li>• a wide range of local jobs within easy commuting distance of homes;</li> <li>• beautifully and imaginatively designed homes with access to open space, combining the best of town and country to create healthy communities, and including opportunities to grow food;</li> <li>• development that enhances the natural environment, providing a comprehensive green infrastructure network and net biodiversity gains, and that uses energy-positive technology to ensure climate resilience;</li> </ul>	<p>In accordance with the District Plan, the Neighbourhood Plan seeks to ensure that development in the Gilston Area is brought forward in accordance with Garden City principles. Policy D1 sets out how the community should be fully engaged at each stage of the planning process. Policy D2 addresses issues relating to governance, stewardship and community ownership of land in accordance with Garden City principles.</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• strong cultural, recreational and shopping facilities in walkable, vibrant, sociable communities; and</li> </ul> <p>integrated and accessible sustainable transport systems, with walking, cycling and public transport designed to be the most attractive forms of local transport for new residents to travel within the Gilston Area and to key local destinations</p>	
GA1 IV	A community engagement strategy will be prepared, working with the two local parishes, which will include consideration of managing the effects on local residents, and opportunities for them to participate in the emerging new community. Engagement with the local communities and other relevant stakeholders shall take place through the planning application process and through the development of village Masterplans	The Neighbourhood Plan reinforces the requirement for community engagement at each stage of the planning process and in the development of the Strategic Landscape and Village Masterplans and Design Codes.
GA1 VII	<p>The development is expected to address the following provisions and issues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) a range of dwelling type and mix, in accordance with the provisions of Policy HOU<sub>1</sub> (Type and Mix of Housing);</li> <li>(b) Affordable Housing in accordance with Policy HOU<sub>3</sub> (Affordable Housing);</li> <li>(c) a care home/ flexi-care or sheltered properties in accordance with the provisions of Policy</li> </ul>	<p>Where appropriate, the Neighbourhood Plan adds detail to Policy GA1 in respect of the issues identified in the District Plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) The issue of residential development is addressed in Policy BU<sub>1</sub></li> <li>(b) The issue of affordable housing and delivery of a range of tenures is addressed in Policies AG<sub>1</sub> and BU<sub>1</sub></li> <li>(c) The issue of special needs housing is addressed in Policy GA1 VII</li> <li>(d) The issue of self-build and custom build housing is addressed in Policy GA1 VII</li> </ul>

	<p>HOU6 (Homes for Older and Vulnerable People);</p> <p>(d) Self-Build and Custom Build Housing in accordance with Policy HOU8 (Self-Build and Custom Build Housing);</p> <p>(e) the provision of a serviced site for Gypsy and Travellers, in accordance with Policy HOU9 (Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople) which should deliver 15 pitches for longer term needs beyond the Plan period;</p> <p>(f) the provision of a serviced site for Travelling Showpeople in accordance with Policy HOU9 (Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople) which should deliver 8 plots for longer term needs beyond the Plan period; (each of sufficient size to allow for the provision of accommodation and equipment plus storage/maintenance);</p> <p>(g) quality local green infrastructure throughout the site including opportunities for preserving and enhancing on-site assets, maximising opportunities to link into existing assets and enhancing biodiversity. This will include the protection of Local Wildlife Sites and other assets of environmental value;</p> <p>(h) the provision of significant managed open space and parklands, and a limited number of buildings associated with that use, on the northern section of the site as identified in</p>	<p>(e) It is not considered necessary to duplicate Policy GA1(e) in respect of the provision of a serviced site for Gypsy and Travellers. This will be addressed at the masterplanning stage in relation to the criteria established in the District Plan.</p> <p>(f) As (e) above</p> <p>(g) Policy AG2 provides further detail relating to the establishment of an integrated Green Infrastructure Network, the protection of existing natural assets and sites of nature conservation importance and securing net- biodiversity gain</p> <p>(h) Policies AG2, AG3 and AG4 address issues relating to green space and the landscape setting of new and existing villages. Areas of local significance are designated as Local Green Space in Policy AG5 and Policy AG7 addresses the establishment of countryside parks and the long-term stewardship and community ownership of the community trust open land on the northern section of the site. Policy AG1 3(xi) states that the framework for governance arrangements should be established early on for the long-term stewardship of the Gilston Area that will bring together new and existing communities whilst ensuring the long-term protection and management of the green spaces and community open land in accordance with Garden City principles and Policy GA1 (V(h)).</p> <p>(i) Policies AG2 deal with green spaces outside the village boundaries. Policy LA1 addresses the network of open spaces and play areas within village boundaries.</p> <p>(j) Policies AG8 deals with the provision of new transport infrastructure and mitigation of impacts on the wider highway network including the second Stort Crossing.</p>
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	<p>Figure 11.2, the ownership of which will be transferred to a community trust or other mechanism that ensures long term stewardship and governance for the benefit of the community;</p> <p>(i) a variety of public green spaces across the site, including the provision of play areas and opportunities for outdoor health and fitness activities, as well as space for wildlife;</p> <p>(j) access arrangements and local highways measures and commensurate financial contributions to addressing impacts on the wider strategic highways network, including the provision of additional crossings to the River Stort;</p> <p>(k) land for twenty forms of entry for both primary and secondary education, including Early Years facilities, subject to more detailed modelling. All schools should provide for the dual use of facilities for community purposes;</p> <p>(l) sustainable transport measures which encourage walking, cycling and the use of public transport including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the provision of cycleways and footways that provide links throughout the site and into Harlow;</li> <li>• enhancement of existing bridleways and footpaths;</li> <li>• enhanced passenger transport services including the creation of a sustainable</li> </ul>	<p>(k) Policies BU2 encourages the location of primary schools within village centres to create vibrant hearts to new communities. Issues relating to the siting of secondary school and associated playing field provision is addressed in Policies AG3 and C1.</p> <p>(l) Policy AG1 establishes the requirement for provision for provision to be made for the phased delivery of necessary infrastructure to meet the comprehensive infrastructure needs of the area in line with Garden City principles and, where possible, promote advanced infrastructure provision to ensure that adequate capacity is available. Policy TRA1 provides further details of how development should promote sustainable travel and achieve sustainable transport targets. Policy TRA2 promotes improved access to the countryside by sustainable travel modes.</p> <p>(m) It is not considered necessary to duplicate Policy GA1(m) in respect of the of the potential of the site to facilitate the delivery of a re-located Princess Alexandra Hospital. Any proposals would need to be considered in the context of District Plan and Neighbourhood Plan policies.</p> <p>(n) The protection and enhancement of the countryside setting of new and existing villages is addressed in Policy AG3. Policy AG4 seeks to maintain the individuality and separation of all villages. The policy states that a landscape-led approach should be adopted to define the extent of meaningful separation and green corridors between villages and to establish a boundary to the built-up area of each village and that this should be defined in a Strategic Landscape Masterplan (Policy AG1). Policy AG4 also states that the green corridors separating villages should form part of the Green Infrastructure Network and should be retained in perpetuity and be subject</p>
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	<p>transport route through the site which will link into a sustainable transport corridor which links the Gilston Area to the urban area of Harlow; and</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the setting of objectives and targets for the use of sustainable transport modes.</li> </ul> <p>(m) consideration of the potential of the site to facilitate the delivery of a re-located Princess Alexandra Hospital;</p> <p>(n) the use of appropriate landscape buffers in order to protect the individual character and integrity of Eastwick and Gilston villages within the context of the development;</p> <p>(o) the protection and enhancement of heritage assets and their settings, both on-site and in the wider area through appropriate mitigation measures, having regard to the Heritage Impact Assessment. Gilston Church and the Johnston Monument (both grade I listed), the moated site Scheduled Monuments at Eastwick, the Mount Scheduled Monument, and Gilston Park house (grade II*) are of particular significance and sensitivity and any planning application should seek to ensure that these assets and their settings are conserved and, where appropriate, enhanced, through careful design; landscaping; open space; buffer zones; protection of key views; and, better management and interpretation of assets, where appropriate;</p>	<p>to management and maintenance plans. The policy also requires measures to protect the setting and distinctiveness of Eastwick, Gilston and Hunsdon and other clusters of existing buildings, including the establishment of landscape buffers and the retention of sensitive views and existing landscape features.</p> <p>(o) The protection and enhancement of heritage assets is a theme that runs throughout the Neighbourhood Plan. Policy AG6 states that the Village Masterplan should demonstrate the extent to which it has been informed by its relationship with the landscape and heritage assets and has drawn inspiration from the character and morphology of existing villages in the Gilston Area and elsewhere in Hertfordshire to create a distinct and individual village character. Policy AG7 relates to the community trust open space land on the northern part of the site and states that the design of the new countryside parks should include the restoration of existing heritage buildings on the former Hunsdon Airfield to provide a visitor centre with interpretation facilities relating to the history and natural environment of the Airfield and small-scale ancillary uses such as a café. Policy H1 sets out a range of measures for the protection and enhancement of heritage assets and requires the layout and design of the development respond sensitively to the form, proportion, scale and character of heritage assets, including, where appropriate, set back distances and buffers to preserve and enhance their rural countryside setting. It also states that proposals should include measures to celebrate heritage assets by promoting opportunities to increase public appreciation and preserve key views and features in the design of new development.</p>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(p) neighbourhood centres in accessible locations, providing local retail and community uses, including healthcare facilities to meet the day-to-day retail and health needs of new residents;</li> <li>(q) employment area/s (of around 5ha), within visible and accessible location/s, which provides appropriate opportunities to promote self-containment and sustainability;</li> <li>(r) consideration of opportunities for local supply chains as well as opportunities for local employment and training including apprenticeships and improving skills base for local people;</li> <li>(s) indoor and outdoor sports facilities (which may be shared use) taking into account the Council's evidence on sports and open space needs;</li> <li>(t) consideration of need for cemetery provision;</li> <li>(u) landscaping and planting, both within the site and peripheral, which responds to the existing landscape and complements development, as appropriate, and a defined recognisable boundary to the Green Belt;</li> <li>(v) assisting the delivery of all other necessary on-site and appropriate off-site infrastructure;</li> <li>(w) necessary new utilities, including integrated communications infrastructure to facilitate home working;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(p) The Neighbourhood Plan promotes the creation of vibrant mixed-use village centres in locations well served by public transport and accessible to residents by walking and cycling (Policy BU2).</li> <li>(q) The Neighbourhood Plan makes provision for employment. The preferred location for employment uses will be in village centres but other locations may be suitable subject to compliance with the criteria in Policy BU3 including accessibility by sustainable transport modes.</li> <li>(r) Opportunities for local supply chains as well as opportunities for local employment and training including apprenticeships and improving skills base for local people are adequately addressed by strategic policies in the District Plan and there is no requirement for a separate policy in the neighbourhood Plan.</li> <li>(s) The location of indoor and outdoor sports facilities within and outside village boundaries is addressed in Policies AG3, LA1 and C1.</li> <li>(t) The provision of cemetery space is a matter that would be addressed at the masterplanning stage. The Neighbourhood Plan does not include proposals for a cemetery and any proposals would be subject to policies in the District Plan and Neighbourhood Plan.</li> <li>(u) The Neighbourhood Plan places significant importance on the protection and enhancement of the landscape and promotes landscaping which responds to existing landscape character of the area. Policy AG3 sets out a range of measures to protect and enhance the countryside setting of new and</li> </ul>
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	<p>(x) satisfactory water supply, including acceptable water pressure for occupants;</p> <p>(y) sustainable drainage and provision for flood mitigation;</p> <p>(z) other policy provisions of the District Plan and relevant matters, as appropriate.</p>	<p>existing villages and to contain the visual impact of development on the open character of the landscape.</p> <p>(v) Policy AG9 sets out a number of criteria relating to the phasing of infrastructure delivery to ensure that social and physical infrastructure is provided at the time of need for the benefit of the entire community and to ensure there is adequate capacity to meet the cumulative needs of new and existing communities</p> <p>(w) The Neighbourhood Plan seeks to secure the necessary infrastructure to meet housing and employment needs in accordance with sustainable development objectives.</p> <p>(x) Policy AG9 highlights the opportunity to explore with the Environment Agency and Water Companies how the current network can be improved in association with new development.</p> <p>(y) The Neighbourhood Plan promotes measures to mitigate impacts of climate change and provision for sustainable drainage and flood mitigation (see Policies AG1, AG2, AG7 and LA1).</p>
GA1 VI	Any application for development will include an indicative phasing plan for the delivery of infrastructure and utilities across the villages	Policy AG9 provides further detail of the phasing of necessary infrastructure and the requirement for an Infrastructure Delivery Strategy.
GA VIII	Proposals for the Gilston Area should complement, and have regard to, ongoing work in relation to the Harlow and Gilston Garden Town	The Neighbourhood Plan has had full regard to the on-going work in relation to the Harlow and Gilston Garden Town which forms part of the evidence base and is referenced throughout the document and in the policy rationale.

GA2 Stort Crossings		
District Plan Policy Ref	Policy Requirements	Compliance of Neighbourhood Plan with Strategic Policies
GA2 I	<p>The Council will work with key stakeholders including Hertfordshire County Council, Essex County Council, Harlow Council, Hertfordshire LEP, and others as appropriate, to facilitate the delivery of the following transport improvements to crossings of the River Stort:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A widening of the existing A414 crossing to enable a dualling of the northbound and southbound carriageways and provision of a new footway/cycleway, which will form part of a north-south sustainable transport corridor through Harlow; and</li> <li>• A new vehicular, cycle and pedestrian crossing either to the east of the existing crossing (connecting the A414 to the River Way), or to the west of the existing crossing (connecting the A414 to Elizabeth Way).</li> </ul>	<p>The Neighbourhood Plan provides further detail on the criteria to be applied in the design of new transport infrastructure and measures to minimise impacts on existing communities, residential amenity and landscape character. Policy AG9 seeks to minimise the impact of traffic and new infrastructure on the Gilston Area.</p>
GA2 II	<p>Development proposals for both Stort Crossings should protect and, where appropriate, enhance heritage assets and their settings through appropriate mitigation measures, having regard to the Heritage Impact Assessment</p>	<p>Policy AG9 1 (iv) requires measures to protect the environment of the Stort Valley and to mitigate visual and noise impacts on landscape character and the setting of local heritage assets.</p>

Other Policies		
District Plan Policy Ref	Policy Requirements	Compliance of Neighbourhood Plan with Strategic Policies
ED1 Employment	<p>I. Within designated Employment Areas (as defined on the Policies Map), land is allocated for industry, comprising Use Classes B1 (Business), B2 (General Industrial) and where well related to the primary road network, B8 (Storage and Distribution). II. The provision of new employment uses will be supported in principle, where they are in a suitable location where access can be achieved by a choice of sustainable transport and do not conflict with other policies within this Plan. New employment floorspace should be of a flexible design, able to respond to the changing needs of small and growing enterprises, be energy efficient in construction and operation (in accordance with the Council's Design and Landscape, and Climate Change policies in Chapters 17 and 22) and have fully integrated communications technology, in line with Policy ED3 Communications Infrastructure.</p>	<p>The Neighbourhood Plan makes provision for employment development in accordance with Policy ED1. Policy BU3 sets a number of criteria for the location of employment development.</p>
DPS4 Infrastructure Requirements	<p>I. Infrastructure needed to support development must be phased appropriately with the delivery of residential and other development to ensure that capacity is provided and impacts are satisfactorily mitigated in a timely manner.</p> <p>II. During the Plan-period the following strategic infrastructure will be required to support the development identified in East Herts and the wider</p>	<p>The provision of necessary infrastructure is critical to the delivery of growth in the Gilston Area and is an underlying objective of the Neighbourhood Plan. This is further addressed in Policy AG9 which sets criteria for phased infrastructure delivery to ensure that social and physical infrastructure is provided at the time of need for the benefit of the entire community according to Garden City Principles and ensure there is adequate capacity to meet the cumulative needs of new and existing</p>

	<p>housing market area: (a) a new Junction 7a on the M11; (b) upgrades to Junction 7 and 8 of the M11; (c) widening of the existing River Stort crossing, and provision of a second crossing; (d) provision of a Hertford bypass to address identified constraints on the A414 in combination with Sustainable Travel Town initiatives; (e) the Little Hadham bypass; (f) upgrades to the A602; (g) upgrades to the rail network; (h) measures to facilitate sustainable transport; (i) new schools and the expansion of existing schools; (j) healthcare facilities; (k) broadband telecoms; and (l) upgrades to waste water and water supply networks.</p> <p>III. The Council will use planning obligations with landowners and developers to secure direct provision or financial contributions towards infrastructure necessary to support the District Plan, including both on-site and off-site provision to address the cumulative impacts of development on strategic infrastructure.</p>	<p>communities. The policy states that Infrastructure requirements and the timescale for provision will be subject to public consultation through the planning application process and determined as part of the approval of future planning applications</p>
DES1 Masterplanning	<p>I. All 'significant' development proposals will be required to prepare a Masterplan setting out the quantum and distribution of land uses; access; sustainable high quality design and layout principles; necessary infrastructure; the relationship between the site and other adjacent and nearby land uses; landscape and heritage assets; and other relevant matters. II. The Masterplan will be collaboratively prepared, involving site promoters, land owners, East Herts Council, town and parish councils and other</p>	<p>The Neighbourhood Plan highlights the importance of a landscape-led approach to development in the Gilston Area and the importance attached to the preparation of a Strategic Landscape Masterplan to provide the framework for individual Village Masterplans. Policies AG2, AG6, AG7 and D1 highlight the requirement for engagement with the community in the preparation of Masterplans and Design Codes.</p>

	relevant key stakeholders. The Masterplan will be further informed by public participation. III. In order to ensure that sites are planned and delivered comprehensively, any application for development on part of the site will be assessed against its contribution to the Masterplan as a whole.	
NE4 Green Infrastructure	I. A diverse network of accessible, multi-functional green infrastructure across the district will be protected and enhanced for its biodiversity, recreational, accessibility, health and landscape value and for the contribution it makes towards combating climate change. II. Development proposals should: (a) Avoid the loss, fragmentation or functionality of the green infrastructure network, including within the built environment, such as access to urban waterways; (b) Maximise opportunities for improvement to the green infrastructure network in accordance with the Council's Green Infrastructure Plan, its Parks and Open Spaces Strategy, the Hertfordshire Biodiversity Action Plan, Living Landscape Schemes, locally identified Nature Improvement Areas and any future relevant plans and programmes as appropriate; (c) Maximise opportunities for urban greening such as through appropriate landscaping schemes and the planting of street trees; (d) Consider the integration of green infrastructure into proposals as an alternative or to complement 'grey' infrastructure. (e) Demonstrate how lighting will not adversely impact on green infrastructure that functions as nocturnal wildlife	A key objective of the Neighbourhood Plan relates to a protected and enhanced landscape and network of green spaces for its landscape, biodiversity, recreational and health benefits. The landscape is integral to the character of the Gilston Area and the creation of distinct villages with an individual character. Further detail is provided in Policies AG2, AG3, AG4, AG5, AG6, AG7 and LA1. Areas of local significance are designated as Local Green Space in Policy AG5 and AG7 addresses the design and delivery of the community trust open land on the northern part of the site.

	<p>movement and foraging corridors, in line with Policy EQ3 Light Pollution. III. Contributions towards local green infrastructure projects will be sought where appropriate. If providing green infrastructure as part of a development, applicants should detail how it will be maintained in the long term. IV. Proposals which affect the district's river environments, including built development and recreation and leisure proposals, should take into account and contribute towards achieving, the aims of any statutory or non-statutory plans, such as the Lee Valley Regional Park Authority Park Development Framework, relevant River Catchment Management Plans and the Water Framework Directive, and any future relevant plans and programmes</p>	
HA1 Designated Heritage Assets	<p>I. Development proposals should preserve and where appropriate enhance the historic environment of East Herts. II. Development proposals that would lead to substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset will not be permitted unless it can be demonstrated that the harm or loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss. Less than substantial harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal. III. Where there is evidence of neglect of, or damage to, a heritage asset, the deteriorated state of the heritage asset will not be taken into account in any decision. IV. The Council will, as part of a positive strategy, pursue opportunities for the</p>	<p>A key objective of the Neighbourhood Plan is to ensure heritage assets are protected and where possible enhanced and provides further criteria to assess new development proposals in Policy H1. The layout and design of the development will be required to respond sensitively to the form, proportion, scale and character of heritage assets, including, where appropriate, set back distances and buffers to preserve and enhance their rural countryside setting. The Plan also provides guidance on how new development can celebrate and give prominence to heritage assets and the requirement for long-term heritage conservation and where appropriate, management plans.</p>



	conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment recognising its role and contribution in achieving sustainable development	
TRA1 Sustainable Transport	<p>I. To achieve accessibility improvements and promotion of sustainable transport in the district, development proposals should: (a) Primarily be located in places which enable sustainable journeys to be made to key services and facilities to help aid carbon emission reduction; (b) Where relevant, take account of the provisions of the Local Transport Plan; 18 . Transport 244East Herts Council   East Herts District Plan 2018 (c) Ensure that a range of sustainable transport options are available to occupants or users, which may involve the improvement of pedestrian links, cycle paths, passenger transport network (including bus and/or rail facilities) and community transport initiatives. These improvements could include the creation of new routes, services and facilities or extensions to existing infrastructure and which may incorporate off-site mitigation, as appropriate. In suitable cases the provision of footways and cycle paths alongside navigable waterways may be sought, along with new moorings, where appropriate. The implementation of car sharing schemes should also be considered; (d) Ensure that site layouts prioritise the provision of modes of transport other than the car (particularly walking, cycling and, where appropriate, passenger transport) which, where feasible, should provide easy and direct access to key services and facilities; (e) In the</p>	<p>The promotion of sustainable travel and achievement of the targets for the use of sustainable transport modes is a key objective of the Neighbourhood Plan. This is further amplified in Policies AG2, AG8, TRA1 and TRA2.</p>

	<p>construction of major schemes, allow for the early implementation of sustainable travel infrastructure or initiatives that influence behaviour to enable green travel patterns to become established from the outset of occupation; (f) Protect existing rights of way, cycling and equestrian routes (including both designated and non-designated routes and, where there is evidence of regular public usage, informal provision) and, should diversion prove unavoidable, provide suitable, appealing replacement routes to equal or enhanced standards; and (g) Ensure that provision for the long-term maintenance of any of the above measures (c) (d) and (f) that are implemented is assured.</p> <p>II. Where appropriate, contributions may be required towards the facilitation of strategic transportation schemes identified in the Local Transport Plan and other related strategies. III. In order to minimise the impact of travel on local air quality in accordance with Policy EQ4 (Air Quality), where major developments involve the introduction of new bus routes or significant changes to existing routes, service providers should work with Hertfordshire County Council's Transport, Access and Safety Unit to secure optimal solutions.</p>	
WAT1 Flood Risk Management	<p>I. The functional floodplain will be protected from inappropriate development and where possible developed flood plain should be returned to Greenfield status with an enhanced level of</p>	<p>The Neighbourhood Plan promotes sustainable development and the incorporation of measures to conserve water resources and protect existing and new communities from the impacts of flood risk and climate change (See Policies AG1, AG2 and AG7)</p>

	<p>biodiversity. II. Development proposals should neither increase the likelihood or intensity of any form of flooding, nor increase the risk to people, property, crops or livestock from such events, both on site and to neighbouring land or further downstream. III. Development should take into account the impacts of climate change and should build in long term resilience against increased water levels. Therefore, appropriate distances and buffers between water courses and built development should be maintained in accordance with Environment Agency guidelines. IV. In order to steer new development to areas with the lowest probability of flooding, the Sequential Test will be used. In exceptional circumstances, if developments are proposed which are required to pass the NPPF Exceptions Test, they will need to address flood resilient design and emergency planning by demonstrating that: (a) The development will remain safe and operational under flood conditions; (b) A strategy of either safe evacuation and/or safely remaining in the building is followed under flood conditions; (c) Key services will continue to be provided under flood conditions; and (d) Buildings are designed for quick recovery following a flood</p>	
WAT3 Water Quality and the Water Environment	<p>I. Development proposals will be required to preserve or enhance the water environment, ensuring improvements in surface water quality and the ecological value of watercourses and their margins and the protection of groundwater. II.</p>	<p>The Neighbourhood Plan promotes sustainable development and the incorporation of measures to conserve water resources and protect existing and new communities from the impacts of flood risk and climate change (See Policies AG1, AG2 and AG7). Policy AG8 1 (iv) states that there will be a requirement for measures to be put in</p>

	<p>Unless there is clear justification for not doing so, an undeveloped buffer strip at least 8 metres wide should be maintained alongside all main rivers, and an appropriate buffer strip should be maintained at ordinary watercourses. Any development proposals should include an appropriate management scheme for buffer strips. III. Opportunities for removal of culverts, river restoration and naturalisation should be considered as part of any development adjacent to a watercourse. Additional culverting and development of river corridors will be resisted</p>	<p>place to minimise the risk of potential pollutants entering the River Stort or any of the other watercourses (main river or ordinary) as a result of surface water run-off from new transport infrastructure or increase in traffic volumes resulting from the development.</p>
EQ2 Noise Pollution	<p>I. Development should be designed and operated in a way that minimises the direct and cumulative impact of noise on the surrounding environment. Particular consideration should be given to the proximity of noise sensitive uses, and in particular, the potential impact of development on human health. II. Applications should be supported by a Noise Assessment in line with the Council's Noise Assessment Planning Guidance Document. III. Noise sensitive development should be located away from existing noise generating sources or programmed developments where possible to prevent prejudicing the continued existing operations. The use of design, layout, landscaping tools and construction methods should be employed to reduce the impact of surrounding noise sources.</p>	<p>A key objective of the Neighbourhood Plan is to minimise and mitigate the impacts of new development on existing residents and the environment (See Policy AG8, EX1).</p>

CFLR2 Local Green Space	Development will be permitted only if it is consistent with the function, character and use of the Local Green Space to which it relates.	The Neighbourhood Plan seeks to protect and enhance green space and makes provision for an integrated Green Infrastructure. A number of sites of local significance are designated as Local Green Space under Policy AG5.
DEL1 Infrastructure and Service Delivery	<p>I. The District Council will work in partnership with providers of infrastructure and services to facilitate the timely provision of infrastructure necessary to support sustainable development. In support of this work the Council will: (a) Maintain an up-to date Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) to identify the timing, type and number of infrastructure projects required to support the objectives and policies of the strategy as well as the main funding mechanisms and lead agencies responsible for their delivery; (b) Use the District Plan and IDP to bid for funding necessary to support development, working in partnership with the Local Economic Partnership (LEP), Hertfordshire Infrastructure Planning Partnership (HIPP), the Local Transport Body (LTB), the Local Nature Partnership (LNP), and other bodies as appropriate; (c) Monitor capacity in infrastructure and services through annual updates of the IDP and future infrastructure needs assessments; (d) Consider alternative infrastructure provision, or a review or partial review of the District Plan if evidence in the IDP indicates a changed outlook for the realistic prospects for delivery of infrastructure to support development. II. For individual development proposals, developers will be required to: (a) Demonstrate, at the planning application</p>	The provision of necessary infrastructure is critical to the delivery of growth in the Gilston Area and is an underlying objective of the Neighbourhood Plan. This is further addressed in Policy AG9 which sets criteria for phased infrastructure delivery to ensure that social and physical infrastructure is provided at the time of need for the benefit of the entire community according to Garden City Principles and ensure there is adequate capacity to meet the cumulative needs of new and existing communities. The policy states that Infrastructure requirements and the timescale for provision will be subject to public consultation through the planning application process and determined as part of the approval of future planning applications.

	<p>stage, that adequate infrastructure capacity can be provided both on and off site to enable the delivery of sustainable development within the site, the locality and the wider area, as appropriate. Where proposals cannot demonstrate the deliverability of supporting infrastructure, they will be refused; (b) Ensure that development is phased to coincide with the delivery of additional infrastructure or service capacity as set out in the IDP; (c) Ensure that infrastructure assets and services are delivered to adoptable standards. Suitable long-term management arrangements must be put in place with a view to secure adoption by the appropriate authority in the longer term</p>	
DEL3 Planning Obligations	<p>I. The Council will seek a range of planning obligations. Planning obligations will only be sought where they are necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms, directly related to the development, and fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development. II. The provision of infrastructure referred to in I. above, includes, but is not limited to: affordable housing, open space and recreation facilities, community, education and health facilities, sustainable transport modes, highway improvements, nature conservation, landscape and landscaping improvements, low carbon and decentralised energy, flood mitigation and sustainable construction</p>	<p>Planning obligations will be a critical part of the planning process in securing the phased provision of necessary infrastructure and putting in place measures for the long-term governance, stewardship and investment in the area. This will include provision for management, funding for long-term maintenance, capture of uplift in land values and residents' decision-making and the transfer of the community trust open land on the northern section of the site into community ownership. The Neighbourhood Plan acknowledges that in accordance with Garden City principles, there is a need to provide the necessary infrastructure to ensure the sustainability and long-term stewardship of the Garden Town <i>as a whole</i>- not just an individual development. Policy AG9 therefore requires development proposals to demonstrate how the delivery of infrastructure will be phased to ensure that social and physical infrastructure is provided at the time of need for the benefit of the <i>entire community</i> according to Garden City Principles and</p>

		ensure there is adequate capacity to meet the cumulative needs of new and existing communities. The use of planning obligations in the context of the Gilston Area is further addressed in Policies AG1, AG7, EX1, D1 and D2.
DEL4 Monitoring of the Gilston Area	I. In order to ensure timely delivery of the Gilston Area, the Council will draw up an action plan setting out key milestones for the delivery of the site, including masterplanning, phasing of infrastructure and submission of planning applications, and monitor its progress on an annual basis. II. The annual rate of housing completions at the Gilston Area will be considered as part of District wide monitoring, in accordance with the provisions of Policy DEL3 (Monitoring Framework).	The Neighbourhood Plan will be subject to monitoring in collaboration with East Herts Council who will be responsible for the overall monitoring of delivery and post-construction development in the Gilston Area. This is addressed in Section 4.

## E. Basic Condition 4: Compliance with EU Obligations

### Introduction

41. In order for a neighbourhood plan to meet the Basic Conditions to proceed to Referendum, the Local Planning Authority must determine whether a neighbourhood plan requires a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA), and/or a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA).
42. This requires the Plan to be assessed against the criteria set out in Schedule 1 to the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 and the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 which transposed EC Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC into UK law.
43. The Hunsdon Eastwick and Gilston Neighbourhood Plan Group as the qualifying body produced a screening report in March 2020 and requested East Herts Council for a screening opinion on whether the proposed GANP will require and SEA or an HRA.

### Background

44. The Neighbourhood Plan does not seek to modify the proposals in the District Plan or the quantity of development to be accommodated in the area but rather seeks to clarify the qualitative requirements of development taking into account local context in terms of, for example, the green infrastructure network, countryside setting, visual separation between the villages and location appropriate design. As such, the GANP provides further amplification of Policy GA1 to assist developers and decision makers in bringing forward development proposals for the Gilston Area. The aim is to ensure the scope and content of the proposals are consistent to the vision agreed in the District Plan (and subsequently within the Gilston Area Concept Framework which was endorsed by the Council as a material consideration for development in July 2018) and that a comprehensive approach to development is taken which respects the character and qualities of the Gilston area.
45. Compared to Policy GA1 of the District Plan (2018) the GANP does not include:
  - New and additional site allocations for development
  - Modification of the development quantities or breakdown of development types (such as housing typologies, employment space, etc)
  - Any changes to development boundaries
46. The Designated Boundary of the Neighbourhood Plan area does not include any European designated sites, such as Special Areas of Conservation (SAC), Special Protection Areas (SPA) and Ramsar sites (Appendix 2). Pressure on these sites (increased use, changed water discharge patterns, impact on wildlife) has been already considered at a strategic level with the allocation of the Gilston Area as part of the



District Plan, and the GANP makes no material changes which would have any likely significant impacts on these designated areas.

## Strategic Environmental Assessment

47. The European Directive 2001/42/EC requires a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA Directive) to be carried out for certain plans and programmes to assess their effects on the environment. This Directive was transposed in law by the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004. The purpose of a SEA is to provide a high level of protection for the environment and to integrate considerations of the environment into the preparation and adoption of plans with a view to promoting sustainable development. Under Article 3(2) of the SEA Directive and Regulation 5 (6) of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004, Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) is only required for documents that determine land that are a minor modification of a plan that has already been subject to an SEA where it is considered that they are likely to have 'significant environmental effects'.
48. The role of a screening exercise is to determine whether the effect of the implementation of the proposed Neighbourhood Plan is likely to have a significant effect on the environment over and above what was already proposed and assessed as part of Policy GA1 of the District Plan. The Screening Assessment is attached as Appendix 1.
49. The screening report prepared by the Neighbourhood Plan Group and submitted to the East Herts Council concluded that having regard to the criteria in Schedule 1 to the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 and the guidance set out in the National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG), the Neighbourhood Plan does not require a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) to be undertaken. The Neighbourhood Plan does not make any significant changes to the land allocation and the development proposed by approved East Hertfordshire District Plan and therefore it is not likely to have any additional significant environmental effects that have not already been assessed in the SEA undertaken in connection with the District Plan.
50. Taking into account the advice in the NPPG, this concludes that, having regard to the criteria in Schedule 1 to the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004, a Strategic Environmental Assessment is not required, as the Neighbourhood Plan only makes minor modifications to a Plan already subject to SEA and is unlikely to have significant environmental effects. The Neighbourhood Plan does allocate any sites for development additional to the District Plan and does not change development parameters (quantity, location, etc). The Neighbourhood Plan seeks to guide the quality and contextualisation of the development, and does not alter the scale or type of the overall strategy for growth set out by the District Plan. It identifies a series of criteria-based policies against which development proposals should be assessed. These criteria are designed to ensure the delivery of sustainable development to meet the objectives of the District Plan and the GANP. The Neighbourhood Plan designation of several Local Green Spaces recognises green areas that are locally valued, and which are already designated as wildlife sites or ancient woodland or Scheduled Ancient Monuments. The aim of the GANP is to ensure that these locations become part of

meaningful green infrastructure. This objective was already stated in the SEA Scoping Report to the District Plan (March 2010) Section 8.6.

51. The Environment Agency, Natural England and Historic England have all been consulted on the draft Neighbourhood Plan and have confirmed that a SEA is not required for the Neighbourhood Plan. Copies of the responses to consultation are attached in Appendix 2.
52. Having regard to Schedule 1 of the Regulations and following consultation with the consultation bodies East Herts Council determined on 10th June 2020 that an environmental assessment of the emerging Neighbourhood Plan is not required as it is unlikely to have significant environmental effects<sup>4</sup>.

## Habitats Regulation Assessment

53. The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (as amended in 2012) transpose the requirements of the European Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC into UK law. The Habitats Directive and Regulations afford protection to plants, animals and habitats that are rare and vulnerable in a European context.
54. Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) is a systematic process through which the performance of a plan or project can be assessed for its likely impact on the integrity of a European Site. European Sites, also referred to as Natura 2000 sites, consist of Special Protection Areas (SPA), Special Areas of Conservation (SAC); Potential Special Protection Areas and candidate Special Areas of Conservation (pSPA and cSAC); and listed or proposed Ramsar sites.
55. Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive states: 'Any plan or project not directly connected with or necessary to the management of the site but likely to have a significant effect thereon, either individually or in combination with other plans and projects, shall be subject to appropriate assessment of its implications for the site in view of the site's conservation objectives'. This will indicate whether a full Appropriate Assessment is required.
56. There are three key Natura 2000 sites that lie partly within East Hertfordshire – Lee Valley SPA; Lee Valley Ramsar site; and Wormley-Hoddesdonpark Woods SAC (although there are also sites in neighbouring authorities, namely Epping Forest SAC). Because Neighbourhood Plans must conform with the development plan for the area (in this case, the East Herts District Plan), which has been subject to an HRA, the key issue will be whether the Neighbourhood Plan will potentially result in an impact not previously considered.

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<sup>4</sup> East Herts Council Non-Key Decision Report by Executive Member for Planning and Growth (28 May 2020)  
<https://democracy.eastherts.gov.uk/mgIssueHistoryHome.aspx?IIId=27116&Opt=o&J=3<https://eu-ro2.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fdemocracy.eastherts.gov.uk%2FmgIssueHistoryHome.aspx%3FIIId%3D27116%26Opt%3Do%26J%3D3&data=02%7Co1%7C%7C5c1fcdbfbbce4134f86co8d807b59aef%7C84df9e7fe9f640afb435aaaaaaaaaaaa%7C1%7Co%7C637267824460304028&sdata=jpB8VJFGM3fv1OB7VyolO6newxn%2BHeWwIwKL568Vskc%3D&reserved=0>

57. The screening report prepared by the Neighbourhood Plan Group and submitted to the East Herts Council concluded that the Neighbourhood Plan does not require a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) to be undertaken. The District Plan HRA screened out the housing policies at an early stage, concluding that they were unlikely to have a significant effect, either alone or in combination, on the integrity of European Sites. As the purpose of the Neighbourhood Plan is to add further guidance to, but not materially change, these policies, the screening report concluded that an HRA should not be required.
58. The HRA on the District Plan concludes that the District Plan will not result in a likely significant effect, either alone or in combination, upon any European sites. In particular Policy NE1 of the District Plan provides for the protection of internationally designated sites. 3.12 The Neighbourhood Plan does not allocate any additional sites or growth not accounted for in the District Plan. Therefore, the Neighbourhood Plan is not thought to generate any additional impact not previously considered.
59. The Local Authority is the 'competent authority' under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010, and needs to ensure that Neighbourhood Plans have been assessed through the Habitat Regulations process. This looks at the potential for significant impacts on nature conservation sites that are of European importance, also referred to as Natura 2000.
60. Given the conclusions of the HRA on the District Plan and the fact that the Neighbourhood Plan does not allocate any further development sites and is generally in accordance with the policy approach set out in the District Plan (which has been subject to HRA), East Herts Council determined on 10<sup>th</sup> June 2020 that an HRA on the Neighbourhood Plan is not required<sup>5</sup>.

## Conclusions

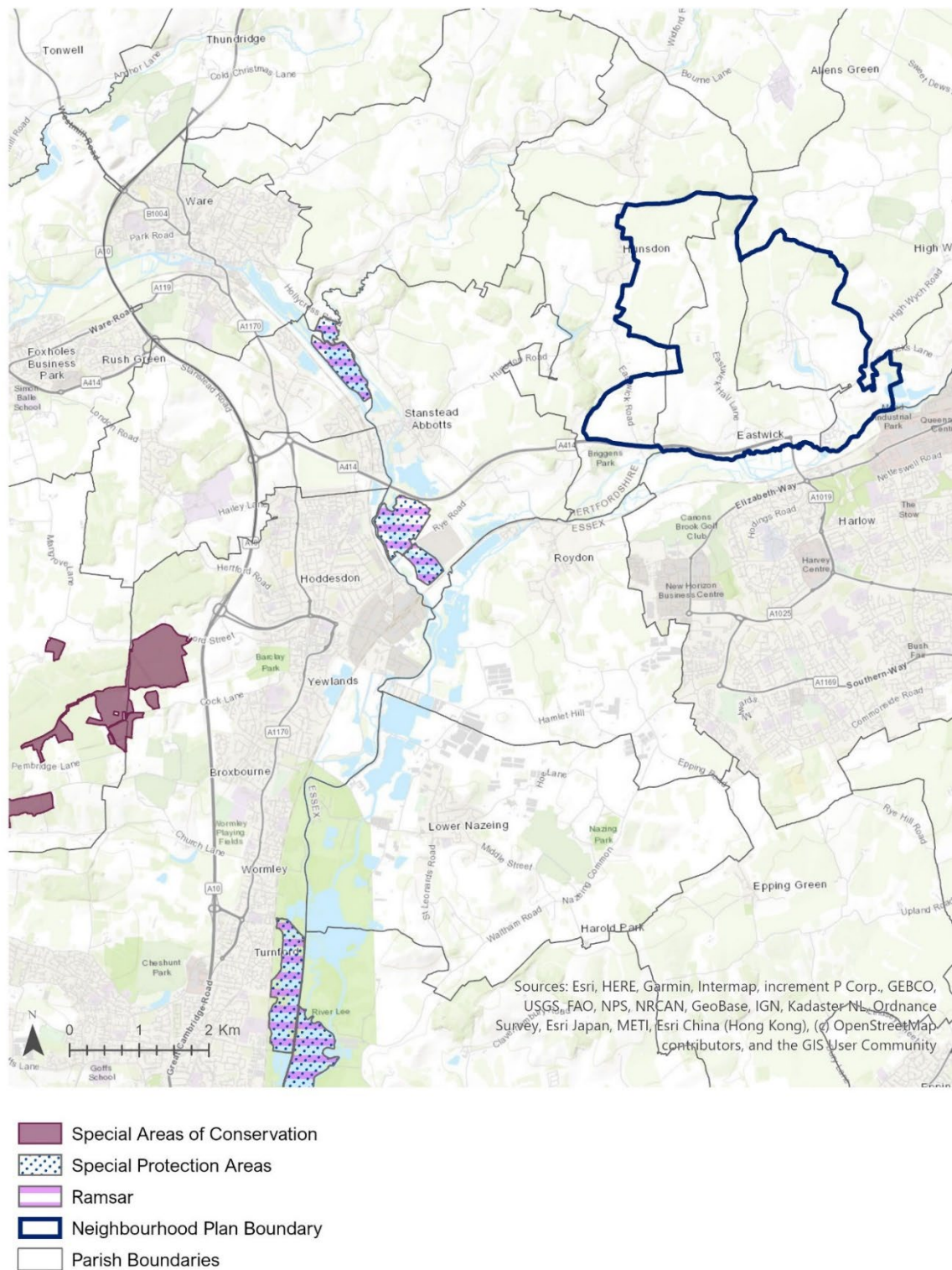
61. Following consultation with the Environment Agency, Natural England and Historic England, East Herts Council has confirmed that the Neighbourhood Plan does not require a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)/ Sustainability Appraisal (SA) or Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA). This is because there will be no significant environmental, social or economic effects arising from its implementation that have not already been fully assessed in the SEA/ SA / HRA of the District Plan (including Policy GA1).
62. The Gilston Area Neighbourhood Plan is therefore compliant with EU Regulations.

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<sup>5</sup> East Herts Council Non-Key Decision Report by Executive Member for Planning and Growth (28 May 2020)

<https://democracy.eastherts.gov.uk/mgIssueHistoryHome.aspx?IId=27116&Opt=o&J=3<https://eu-ro2.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fdemocracy.eastherts.gov.uk%2FmgIssueHistoryHome.aspx%3FIId%3D27116%26Opt%3D0%26J%3D3&data=02%7C01%7C%7C5c1fcdbfbbce4134f86c08d807b59aef%7C84df9e7fe9f640afb435aaaaaaaaaaaa%7C1%7C0%7C637267824460304028&sdata=jpB8VJFGM3fviOB7VyolO6newxn%2BHeWwIwKL568Vskc%3D&reserved=0>

Figure 3 European Designated Sites near the Gilston Area



**Note:** There are no environmental European sites within the Neighbourhood Plan Area. Nearby sites have been all considered as part of the HRA of the District Plan



## F. Meeting the Prescribed Conditions and Legal Requirements

### Prescribed Conditions

63. This statement has demonstrated that the draft Gilston Area Neighbourhood Plan satisfies the basic conditions that are relevant to a neighbourhood plan. These are:
- having regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State it is appropriate to make the neighbourhood plan
  - the ‘making’ of the neighbourhood plan contributes to the achievement of sustainable development
  - the ‘making’ of the neighbourhood plan is in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in the development plan for the area of the authority (or any part of that area)
  - the ‘making’ of the neighbourhood plan does not breach, and is otherwise compatible with EU obligations
64. The prescribed conditions have therefore been satisfied and the prescribed matters have been complied with in connection with the proposal for the neighbourhood plan.

### Legal Requirements

65. The Gilston Area Neighbourhood Plan satisfies each of the prescribed legal requirements as follows:
- *The plan is being submitted by a qualifying body.* The Gilston Area Neighbourhood Plan is being submitted by the Hunsdon Eastwick and Gilston Neighbourhood Plan Group which represents the Parish Councils of Hunsdon and Eastwick and Gilston and is made up of people living within the Parishes.
  - *The draft neighbourhood plan sets out policies in relation to the development and use of land in the whole or any part of a neighbourhood area.* The Neighbourhood Plan relates to the designated Gilston neighbourhood area and includes land use planning policies that can be used in the determination of planning applications.
  - *The proposed neighbourhood plan states the period in which it is to have effect.* The Gilston Area Neighbourhood Plan covers the period 2020-2033 and this is stated in the Neighbourhood Plan.
  - *The policies do not relate to excluded development.* The Gilston Area Neighbourhood Plan does not relate to excluded development
  - *The proposed neighbourhood plan does not relate to more than one neighbourhood area.* The Gilston Area Neighbourhood Plan does not relate to more than one neighbourhood area and there is no other neighbourhood plan in force for the Gilston neighbourhood area.

## Conclusions

66. This Neighbourhood Plan has been produced by the Hunsdon Eastwick and Gilston Neighbourhood Plan Group based on consultation over a period of nearly three years with the local community, the Council, landowners/developers, statutory bodies and other stakeholders. The policies and actions set out in the plan aim to address the key themes and priorities identified by the community and to contribute to the delivery of sustainable development in the neighbourhood area in accordance with strategic policies.
67. The Policies have been drafted taking into account national and local planning policies and are considered to be in conformity with these policies and EU obligations in respect to environmental effects.
68. Taking all these together, we consider that the Plan is in conformity with the relevant regulations and prescribed conditions and can be approved accordingly.

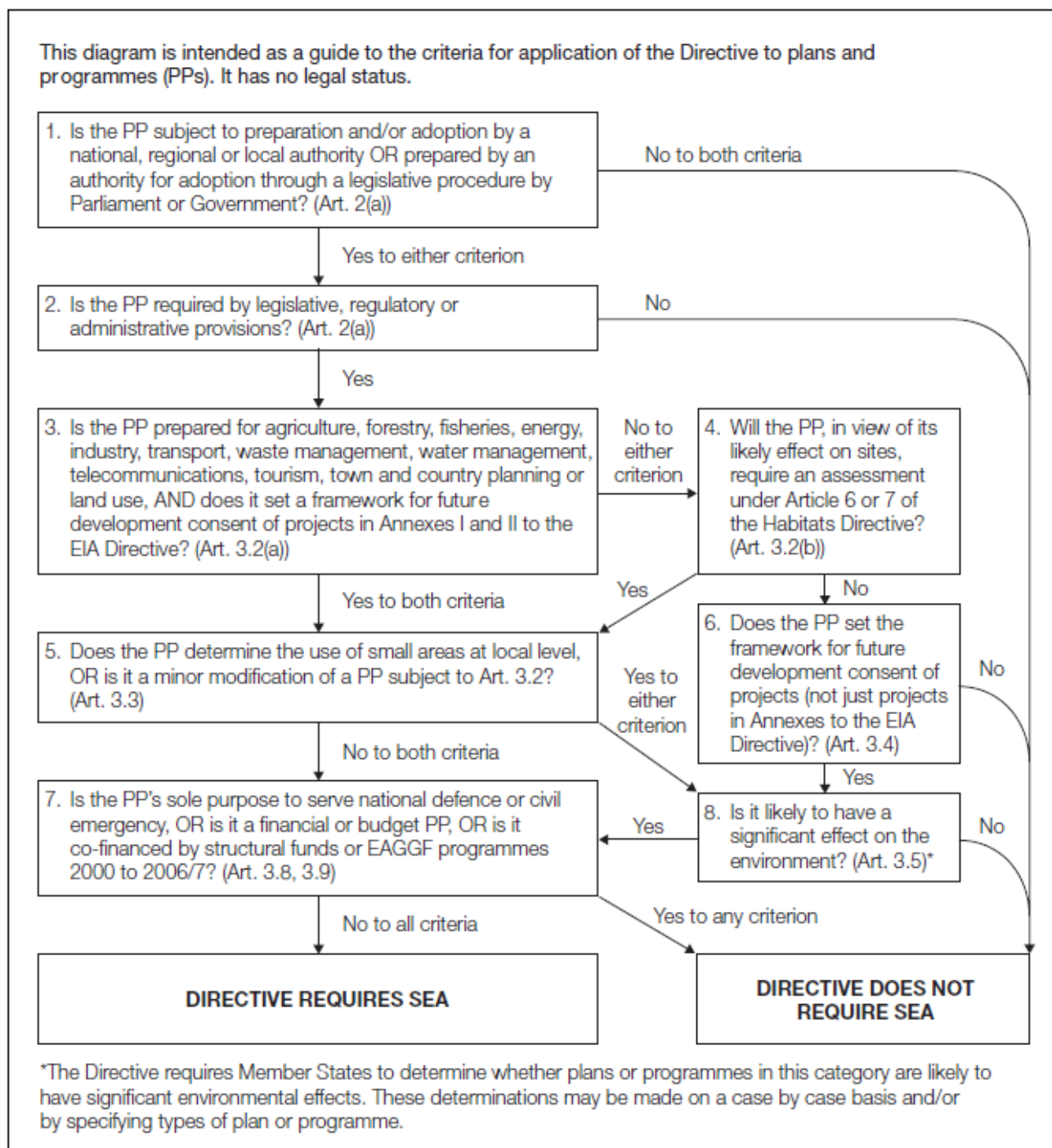
## Appendix 1

### Gilston Area Neighbourhood Plan – SEA Screening Assessment

Extract from Strategic Environmental Assessment and  
Appropriate Assessment Screening Report (Hunsdon Eastwick  
and Gilston Neighbourhood Plan Group, March 2020)



Figure A1: Application of the SEA Directive to plans and programmes guide



Source: A Practical Guide to the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive, ODPM 2005

*Table A1: Establishing whether there is a need for SEA*

Stage	Yes/No	Assessment
1. Is the PP (plan or programme) subject to preparation and/or adoption by a national, regional or local authority OR prepared by an authority for adoption through a legislative procedure by Parliament or Government? (Art. 2(a))	Yes:  proceed to question 2	The preparation and adoption of the GANP is allowed under the Town and Country Planning Act as amended by the Localism Act 2011. It has been prepared by the HEGNPG on behalf of the Parish Councils of Hunsdon, Eastwick and Gilston (the relevant body) and the community to guide development in the Gilston Area. The GANP will become a part of the Development Plan alongside the District Plan and support the implementation of District Plan Policy GA1.
2. Is the PP required by legislative, regulatory or administrative provisions? (Art. 2(a))	Yes:  proceed to question 3	It is not a requirement but is being prepared under the Town and Country Planning Act as amended by the Localism Act 2011. Once the GANP is made it will form part of the Statutory Development Plan alongside the District Plan.
3. Is the PP prepared for agriculture, forestry, fisheries, energy, industry, transport, waste management, water management, telecommunications, tourism, town and country planning or land use, AND does it set a framework for future development consent of projects in Annexes I and II to the EIA Directive? (Art 3.2(a))	Yes:  proceed to question 5	The GANP is prepared for the purpose of town and country planning. It guides new development in the Gilston Area through policies guiding landscape, development character, built form, delivery of infrastructure, community collaboration. The GANP therefore sets a framework for development in the Gilston Area which is in accordance with Policy GA1 of the District Plan.
5. Does the PP determine the use of small areas at local level, OR is it a minor modification of a PP subject to Art. 3.2? (Art. 3.3)	Yes (second criterion):  proceed to question 8	The GANP includes policies intended to influence the quality of the landscape, the setting of the development and its character. It provides qualitative clarification of the policies of the District Plan. It does not, however, allocate sites for development or determine the size, type and location of development or provide other than minor modification of the development and principles established by the District Plan.

8. Is it likely to have a significant effect on the environment? (Art. 3.5) No

The principles of the masterplan approach and how development should come forward in the Gilston Area have both been established in the District Plan, which was subject to comprehensive SA incorporating SEA and HRA. The purpose of the GANP is to provide guidance on the quality and character of development in the Gilston Area. It does not allocate new sites for development or put forward development proposals which are not included in the District Plan.

Directive does not require SEA.

*Table A2: Assessment of Draft Neighbourhood Plan against Schedule 1 of the SEA Directive*

SEA Directive Criteria (Schedule 1 of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004)	Potential effects of the GANP
<b>1. Characteristic of the SPD having particular regard to:</b>	
(a) the degree to which the plan or programme sets a framework for projects and other activities, either with regard to the location, nature, size and operating conditions or by allocating resources;	The GANP has been prepared by the community to provide more detailed guidance on the policies and principles established in the East Herts District Plan 2018, which has been subject to comprehensive SA incorporating SEA. The purpose of the GANP is to ensure that development within the Gilston Area is in accordance with the principles set out in Policy GA1 (7 new villages set within the landscape) and by other non- statutory guidance issued by the Harlow and Gilston Garden Town.
(b) the degree to which the plan or programme influences other plans and programmes including those in a hierarchy;	The purpose of the GANP is to complement and provide further amplification of the District Plan policies. It sits alongside the District Plan in terms of the Development Plan hierarchy and will influence the qualitative aspects of masterplans and development proposals in the Gilston Area. It builds on the Gilston Area Concept Framework, a Guidance Document formally endorsed by the District Council as material consideration in the determination of planning applications.
(c) the relevance of the plan or programme for the integration of environmental considerations in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development;	<p>The GANP seeks to ensure the delivery of sustainable development and is in accordance with the sustainable development principles set out in the District Plan and Policy GA1. In particular, it provides further clarification on the requirements for an integrated Green Infrastructure Network, protection and enhancement of biodiversity and heritage assets, appropriate visual contextualisation, and sustainable mobility.</p> <p>It promotes sustainable development as an over-arching principle (within the umbrella framework of policies within the District Plan) and clarifies how this is to be translated into development proposals for the Gilston Area.</p>

## SEA Directive Criteria

### (Schedule 1 of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004)

### Potential effects of the GANP

(d) environmental problems relevant to the plan or programme; and

There are no environmental problems relevant to the GANP. Environmental issues have been fully assessed in the allocation of the Gilston Area for development in the District Plan. The SA of the East Herts District Plan identified a number of benefits arising from the relevant District Plan policies which the GANP expands on and clarifies.

(e) the relevance of the plan or programme for the implementation of Community legislation on the environment (for example, plans and programmes linked to waste management or water protection).

The purpose of the GANP is to provide guidance on appropriate development for the Gilston Area. The East Herts District Plan contains policies relating to these objectives and these will apply to development in the Gilston Area.

## 2. Characteristics of the effects and area likely to be affected having particular regard to:

(a) the probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects;

The GANP is not expected to give rise to any significant environmental effects that have not already been fully assessed in the District Plan SA/ SEA. The GANP does not change District Plan strategic allocation, quantity and type of development or allocate any new sites for development.

The GANP provides more detailed guidance on the implementation of District Policy GA1 in terms of the protection of environment, biodiversity, local character etc. It has received positive feedback from relevant statutory consultees as part of the Regulation 14 Consultation (see Appendix 3). GANP policies should have a positive effect and enhance the sustainability of the proposed development and ensure the community are fully engaged in the process.

<b>SEA Directive Criteria</b> <b>(Schedule 1 of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004)</b>	<b>Potential effects of the GANP</b>
(b) the cumulative nature of the effects;	By providing policies which seek to guide appropriate development across the Gilston Area, the GANP will have a positive cumulative effect in delivering high quality, sustainable design and development in the area, which better responds to community aspirations and to the local environmental context.
(c) the trans-boundary nature of the effects;	The trans-boundary nature of development coming forward in the Gilston Area has been considered throughout the development of the District Plan. The GANP is not expected to give rise to any significant transboundary environmental effects.
(d) the risks to human health or the environment (for example, due to accidents);	There are no anticipated additional risks placed by the GANP on human health. Policies are directed towards enhanced walking and cycling and access to the countryside are expected to have positive effect on health by creating the opportunity for healthy lifestyles and discouraging the use of the car.
(e) the magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected)	The role of the GANP in guiding appropriate development in the Gilston Area will have positive benefits for the local community, because of the better integration and contextualisation of development as a comprehensive group of villages, both new and existing. It will also create a positive model of development (villages in the landscape) for residents and visitors of East Herts and for Harlow. This is in accordance with the principles established in the District Plan.

<b>SEA Directive Criteria</b> <b>(Schedule 1 of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004)</b>	<b>Potential effects of the GANP</b>
<p>(f) the value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to—</p> <p>(i) special natural characteristics or cultural heritage;</p> <p>(ii) exceeded environmental quality standards or limit values; or</p> <p>(iii) intensive land-use;</p>	<p>The GANP is not anticipated to adversely affect any special natural characteristic or cultural heritage beyond what was already considered as part of the District Plan SA /SEA.</p> <p>GANP policies place great importance on ensuring the highest environmental quality is achieved in bringing forward development allocations in the District Plan. They will enhance how development comes forward in the Gilston Area, including the creation of a Green Infrastructure Network, the protection of the countryside setting, the enhancement of heritage assets and the appropriate reuse of the Hunsdon Airfield for the benefit of the local community. The policies have been developed in close collaboration with the District Council, the Harlow and Gilston Garden Town, landowners, developers and the wider community: this ensures that as wide a range of natural and cultural features of local significance have been taken into account.</p> <p>The GANP is not expected to lead to the exceedance of environmental limit values and does not promote intensive land use.</p>
<p>(g) the effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, community or international protection status.</p>	<p>The GANP is expected to have positive effects on the national environmental designations (Ancient Woodland) and heritage assets (Conservation Areas and Listed Buildings) in the Gilston Area through specific policies and through the designation of additional Local Green Spaces, where appropriate.</p>



## Appendix 2

### Responses from Environment Agency, Natural England and Historic England

in response to consultation on Environmental Screening Report

## George Pavey

---

**From:** HNL Sustainable Places <HNL.SustainablePlaces@environment-agency.gov.uk>  
**Sent:** 21 April 2020 13:39  
**To:** George Pavey  
**Subject:** [External] Hunsdon, Eastwick and Gilston Neighbourhood Plan - Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Screening Report - EA Response

Dear George,

Thank you for consulting us on the Strategic Environmental Assessment screening report for the Hunsdon, Eastwick and Gilston Neighbourhood Plan.

Based on a review of environmental constraints for which we are a statutory consultee, we find that there are watercourses, areas of fluvial flood risk (with the boundary extending into areas of Flood Zones 2 and 3) and protected sites within the neighbourhood plan area.

On the basis that the plan doesn't allocate any further development, and that future development is steered away from the sensitive aspects of the environment highlighted, we do not consider there to be potential significant environmental effects relating to these environmental constraints. Nevertheless we recommend the inclusion of relevant policies to cover the management of flood risk, and to give adequate protection to the watercourses and protected sites.

We encourage you to seek ways in which your neighbourhood plan can improve the local environment. For your information, together with Natural England, English Heritage and Forestry Commission we have published joint guidance on neighbourhood planning, which sets out sources of environmental information and ideas on incorporating the environment into plans. This is available at: <https://neighbourhoodplanning.org/toolkits-and-guidance/consider-environment-neighbourhood-plans/>.

Kind regards,

Becki

**Becki Ingram**

Sustainable Places Planning Advisor, Herts & North London.  
(Pronouns: she/her)

**Environment Agency** | Alchemy, Bessemer Road, Welwyn Garden City, Hertfordshire, AL7 1HE  
[HNL.SustainablePlaces@environment-agency.gov.uk](mailto:HNL.SustainablePlaces@environment-agency.gov.uk)  
Internal: 54985 | External: 0203 025 4985

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**From:** George Pavey [mailto:George.Pavey@eastherts.gov.uk]  
**Sent:** 16 April 2020 11:38  
**To:** HNL Sustainable Places <HNL.SustainablePlaces@environment-agency.gov.uk>  
**Subject:** Hunsdon, Eastwick and Gilston Neighbourhood Plan - Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Screening Report

Dear Becki,

I am writing to invite you to comment on the Hunsdon, Eastwick and Gilston Neighbourhood Plan. As you are aware, the Council is required to provide a screening opinion to the qualifying body on whether the proposed neighbourhood plan will require a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA). This is a requirement as set out in regulation 9 of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004.

I would therefore welcome your views on the Neighbourhood Plan in order to assist the Council to determine whether an SEA is necessary. The qualifying body has produced a Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening Report which includes an assessment of likelihood of significant effects on the environment. This has concluded that the Hundon, Eastwick and Gilston Neighbourhood Plan is not likely to have significant environmental effects and therefore an SEA is not required.

Please could you advise if the Hundon, Eastwick and Gilston Neighbourhood Area Plan is likely to have significant environmental effects and provide a response by **Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> May 2020**.

The Neighbourhood Plan does not allocate any sites for residential development, however the East Herts District Plan does allocate a strategic site (DP Policy GA1) for the development of 10,000 homes within the Neighbourhood Plan area.

If you have any queries or require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me. I look forward to hearing from you at your earliest convenience.

Kind regards,

**George Pavey**

Principal Planning Officer

Policy and Implementation, East Herts Council

01992 531623

[www.eastherts.gov.uk](http://www.eastherts.gov.uk)

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Date: 23 April 2020  
Our ref: 314586  
Your ref: Hunsdon, Eastwick and Gilston Neighbourhood Plan



George Pavey  
Principal Planning Officer  
Policy and Implementation  
East Herts Council  
[George.Pavey@eastherts.gov.uk](mailto:George.Pavey@eastherts.gov.uk)

Hornbeam House  
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**BY EMAIL ONLY**

T 0300 060 3900

Dear George Pavey,

### **Hunsdon, Eastwick and Gilston Neighbourhood Plan - SEA Screening Report**

Thank you for your consultation on the above dated 16 April 2020 which was received by Natural England on 16 April 2020

Natural England is a non-departmental public body. Our statutory purpose is to ensure that the natural environment is conserved, enhanced, and managed for the benefit of present and future generations, thereby contributing to sustainable development.

### **Screening Request: Strategic Environmental Assessment**

It is our advice, on the basis of the material supplied with the consultation, that, in so far as our strategic environmental interests (including but not limited to statutory designated sites, landscapes and protected species, geology and soils) are concerned, that there are unlikely to be significant environmental effects from the proposed plan.

### **Neighbourhood Plan**

Guidance on the assessment of Neighbourhood Plans, in light of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (as amended), is contained within the [National Planning Practice Guidance](#). The guidance highlights three triggers that may require the production of an SEA, for instance where:

- a neighbourhood plan allocates sites for development
- the neighbourhood area contains sensitive natural or heritage assets that may be affected by the proposals in the plan
- the neighbourhood plan may have significant environmental effects that have not already been considered and dealt with through a sustainability appraisal of the Local Plan.

We have checked our records and based on the information provided, we can confirm that in our view the proposals contained within the plan will not have significant effects on sensitive sites that Natural England has a statutory duty to protect.

We are not aware of significant populations of protected species which are likely to be affected by the policies / proposals within the plan. It remains the case, however, that the responsible authority should provide information supporting this screening decision, sufficient to assess whether protected species are likely to be affected.

Notwithstanding this advice, Natural England does not routinely maintain locally specific data on all potential environmental assets. As a result the responsible authority should raise environmental issues that we have not identified on local or national biodiversity action plan species and/or habitats, local wildlife sites or local landscape character, with its own ecological and/or landscape advisers, local record centre, recording society or wildlife body on the local landscape and biodiversity receptors that may be affected by this plan, before determining whether an SA/SEA is necessary.

Please note that Natural England reserves the right to provide further comments on the environmental assessment of the plan beyond this SEA/SA screening stage, should the responsible authority seek our views on the scoping or environmental report stages. This includes any third party appeal against any screening decision you may make.

For any new consultations, or to provide further information on this consultation please send your correspondences to [consultations@naturalengland.org.uk](mailto:consultations@naturalengland.org.uk).

Yours sincerely

Ben Jones  
Consultations Team

## George Pavey

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**From:** James, Edward <Edward.James@HistoricEngland.org.uk>  
**Sent:** 21 May 2020 12:03  
**To:** George Pavey  
**Cc:** Goodman, Thomas  
**Subject:** [External] RE: Hunsdon, Eastwick and Gilston Neighbourhood Plan - Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Screening Report

Dear Mr Pavey,

Thank you for inviting Historic England to comment on the this consultation. As the Government's adviser on the historic environment Historic England is keen to ensure that the protection of the historic environment is fully taken into account at all stages and levels of the local planning process. Therefore we welcome this opportunity to review the Screening Report for this plan. For the purposes of this consultation, Historic England will confine its advice to the question, "Is it (the Neighbourhood Plan) likely to have a significant effect on the historic environment?". Our comments are based on the information supplied with the Screening Opinion.

The Screening Report indicates that the Council considers that the plan will not have any significant effects on the historic environment. We note that, despite encompassing the area allocated for the 10,000 home 'Gilston Park' development, the neighbourhood plan does not itself propose to allocate sites for development.

On the basis of the information supplied, and in the context of the criteria set out in Schedule 1 of the Environmental Assessment Regulations [Annex II of 'SEA' Directive], Historic England concurs with the Council that the preparation of a Strategic Environmental Assessment is not required.

The views of the other two statutory consultation bodies should be taken into account before the overall decision on the need for an SEA is made.

I should be pleased if you can send a copy of the determination as required by REG 11 of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004.

We should like to stress that this opinion is based on the information provided by you with your correspondence. To avoid any doubt, this does not reflect our obligation to provide further advice on later stages of the SEA process and, potentially, object to specific proposals which may subsequently arise (either as a result of this consultation or in later versions of the plan) where we consider that, despite the SEA, these would have an adverse effect upon the environment.

Historic England strongly advises that the conservation and archaeological staff of the relevant local authorities are closely involved throughout the preparation of the plan and its assessment. They are best placed to advise on; local historic environment issues and priorities, including access to data held in the Historic Environment Record (HER), how the allocation, policy or proposal can be tailored to minimise potential adverse impacts on the historic environment; the nature and design of any required mitigation measures; and opportunities for securing wider benefits for the future conservation and management of heritage assets.

Please do contact me, either via email or the number below, if you have any queries.

Kind regards,

Edward

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Edward James MA BA ACIfA  
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Historic England

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**From:** George Pavey [mailto:George.Pavey@eastherts.gov.uk]

**Sent:** 16 April 2020 11:39

**To:** EastPlanningPolicy

**Subject:** Hunsdon, Eastwick and Gilston Neighbourhood Plan - Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Screening Report

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Dear Sir/Madam,

I am writing to invite you to comment on the Hunsdon, Eastwick and Gilston Neighbourhood Plan. As you are aware, the Council is required to provide a screening opinion to the qualifying body on whether the proposed neighbourhood plan will require a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA). This is a requirement as set out in regulation 9 of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004.



I would therefore welcome your views on the Neighbourhood Plan in order to assist the Council to determine whether an SEA is necessary. The qualifying body has produced a Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening Report which includes an assessment of likelihood of significant effects on the environment. This has concluded that the Hundon, Eastwick and Gilston Neighbourhood Plan is not likely to have significant environmental effects and therefore an SEA is not required.

Please could you advise if the Hundon, Eastwick and Gilston Neighbourhood Area Plan is likely to have significant environmental effects and provide a response by **Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> May 2020**.

The Neighbourhood Plan does not allocate any sites for residential development, however the East Herts District Plan does allocate a strategic site (DP Policy GA1) for the development of 10,000 homes within the Neighbourhood Plan area.

If you have any queries or require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me. I look forward to hearing from you at your earliest convenience.

Kind regards,

**George Pavey**

Principal Planning Officer

Policy and Implementation, East Herts Council

01992 531623

[www.eastherts.gov.uk](http://www.eastherts.gov.uk)

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