

**Examination of the North Hertfordshire Local Plan (2011-2031)**  
**Examination hearing sessions**  
**Statement of North Hertfordshire District Council**

**Matter 11 – The housing allocations and the settlement boundaries: The Category A Villages - Knebworth**

**Note:** *This Statement relates to sites KB1, KB2, KB3 and KB4*

**11.37 Are all of the proposed housing allocations deliverable? In particular, are they:**

***a) confirmed by all of the landowners involved as being available for the use proposed?***

1. The landowners of sites KB1, KB2 and KB4 confirmed that they support the allocation and its deliverability for housing in their representations to the Regulation 19 consultation on the plan (ED3, p.16).
2. Planning permission for 47 assisted living extra care (Class C2) apartments for the frail elderly along with three ground floor commercial units (Use A1 or A2) was granted planning permission on site KB3 on 8 December 2017.
3. This development will not contribute to the housing target identified in Policy SP8(a) of the plan but will make a market-led contribution to the requirement for 350 additional bedspaces identified in Policy SP8(g) (LP1, pp.47-48).
4. The consequential impacts of this will be reflected in a further update to document ED3 which will be produced following completion of the site-specific hearing sessions.

***b) supported by evidence to demonstrate that safe and appropriate access for vehicles and pedestrians can be provided?***

5. No site specific objections to the allocations have been received from the highway authority. All sites provide opportunities to connect into the existing highway and pedestrian footpath networks.
6. Site KB1 has a frontage along Park Lane which provides a direct footpath and highway connection to the station and the village centre.
7. Gipsy Lane passes through, and along the north-eastern frontage of, Site KB2 providing connections into the suburban village highway network.

8. Site KB3 has been granted planning permission following receipt of advice from the highway authority.
9. Site KB4 lies across or adjacent to three broadly east-west routes connecting to the village centre. The principal of these being Watton Road where the existing footpath extends to the site boundary.
10. The baseline transport modelling supporting the Local Plan (TI4) does not identify any specific measures as being required in Knebworth to support the proposed developments.
11. Notwithstanding this, both the plan (LP1, paragraphs 13.195 and 13.196, p.179) and Transport Strategy (ED14, paragraph 5.31, p.56) recognise that some localised congestion issues caused, in part, by existing parking arrangements in the village centre, may need to be addressed. Sites within Knebworth will need to give consideration to potential pedestrian and cycling enhancements within the village.

***c) deliverable, having regard to the provision of the necessary infrastructure and services, and any environmental or other constraints?***

12. Yes. All sites in Knebworth have been considered through the SHLAA and are considered suitable locations for development having regard to potential constraints (HOU9, site references 52, 355 [KB1], 53 [KB2], KB/m1 [KB3] and 55, 57, 58, 336 [KB4]. See Appendix 3, pp.25-26 and Appendix 4, pp.40-41). This is expanded upon in answer to Issue 11.38 below.
13. The sites have been subject to consultation with a range of statutory providers. The Infrastructure Delivery Plan (TI1), feedback from key infrastructure providers and the Local Plan Viability Assessment Update (TI2) show that these developments are deliverable in infrastructure planning terms and that the development would be profitable such as to support a package of infrastructure measures. The likely significant environmental affects of allocating the site have been considered through the Sustainability Appraisal (LP4, Appendix 6, pp.513-514 & 583-589).
14. No fundamental constraints to development have been identified. Site-specific infrastructure and / or mitigation measures for these sites are identified as policy measures in the plan (LP1, pp.177-179). This includes the provision of land for a new primary school on site KB2 and a potential secondary school on site KB4.
15. Hertfordshire County Council (HCC) as the education authority plans on the basis that 500 homes will generate demand for 1 form of entry (FE) of additional schools provision<sup>1</sup>. The reception year intake for Knebworth primary school is regularly filled by demand from pre-existing development in the local area. New development in

---

<sup>1</sup> 1FE of demand / provision is equivalent to 1 class of 30 pupils in each year group.

## Matter 11 (Knebworth), North Hertfordshire District Council

Knebworth will therefore generate a demand for additional provision. Equally it is important to ensure that any new development is of a critical mass such as to sustain that additional provision.

16. HCC has also identified a requirement for the plan to identify an additional 8 forms of entry (FE) of secondary school capacity in the Stevenage School Place Planning Area (SPPA) to ensure the potential needs arising from new development can be met. Knebworth lies within this SPPA.
17. There is currently no secondary education provision in Knebworth and children from the village travel out to schools in the surrounding area, principally within Stevenage and Hitchin.
18. As per the evidence heard at the Matter 6 hearings, the precise timing of any new secondary schools in the Stevenage SPPA remains uncertain pending the commencement of the new development anticipated by this plan and the plans of Stevenage and East Hertfordshire Councils. However, the published projections submitted to the examination (TI13, p.29) suggest that any new schools would not be required until the late 2020s at the earliest once the 8FE of existing capacity identified at existing premises in Stevenage was taken into account.
19. It is therefore likely that the need for any new schools provision will not arise until after a future review of this plan, and possibly even beyond the end of the current plan period. However, it is accepted that it is prudent and appropriate for this plan to identify land or sites now that could accommodate the future demands generated by the housing development currently being planned.
20. The Plan identifies two sites – one at Great Ashby and one in Knebworth – which, together, could meet the requirement identified by HCC.
21. The Council's evidence suggests that land within the proposed allocation at KB4 would be capable of supporting a small secondary school in a variety of formats if required in the future (ED17, pp.18-19). Representations submitted by the site promoter in response to the Regulation 19 consultation (Respondent ID: 14280) include an indicative layout accommodating a school. It is proposed to amend the site specific criteria to make clear that all of the land north of Watton Road be reserved for this purpose.
22. These measures will be supplemented by the generic development management policy requirements that apply to all sites in relation to issues including (but not limited to) affordable housing, housing mix, transport, design and heritage.
23. Modifications to the site-specific criteria and supporting text for Knebworth (LP1, pp.177-179) are proposed to more effectively address infrastructure provision, particularly in relation to education and sustainable transport provision. These are attached as Appendix A to this statement.

**Question 11.38 Are all of the proposed housing allocations justified and appropriate in terms of the likely impacts of the development?**

24. Yes. All of the housing allocations in Knebworth are justified and appropriate. The appropriateness of the individual allocations is discussed below.

25. In broad terms, each allocation in the plan is justified by (see the Council's Statements on Matters 5, 7 and 9):

- The need to seek to meet the Objectively Assessed Needs (OAN) for housing as far as is consistent with the policies set out in the NPPF in a district that is currently highly constrained by Green Belt and other considerations;
- The 'presumption in favour of sustainable development' and plan-making requirements set out in Paragraph 14 of the NPPF. Potential adverse impacts and specific policies in the Framework which indicate development should be restricted have been properly considered. Mitigation measures have been identified to address key issues. A balanced planning judgement has been made on the benefits and impacts of each individual site.
- The significant majority of the deliverable and developable sites identified in the SHLAA (HOU9) being required for allocation if the District is to be able to meet the OAN;
- No preferable, deliverable alternative sites existing which would allow OAN to be met over the plan period in a substantively different way;
- There being no reasonable prospect of other authorities in shared housing market areas being in a position to assist under the Duty to Co-operate should North Hertfordshire have resolved not to meet its OAN in full.

26. Knebworth is the largest village in the District. It is included within Policy SP2 (as proposed to be amended) as one of five villages identified for growth over the plan period.

27. All of the sites around Knebworth lie within the Datchworth Settled Slopes landscape character area as identified in the Council's evidence base (CG16, pp.24-28c). This is a large parcel that surrounds the whole of Knebworth and continues into neighbouring Welwyn Hatfield district. It is considered to be of low to moderate sensitivity and low landscape value.

Site KB1

28. Site KB1 lies to the north-west of Knebworth in an area currently designated as Green Belt. The site provides an opportunity to make a moderate to significant contribution to

the District's future housing needs and helps to provide the 'critical mass' required to support the provision of new infrastructure in the village.

29. The justification and impacts in relation to Green Belt are discussed under Issue 11.40 below.
30. The site is bounded to the south by Park Lane and an existing residential property and to the east by the rear of existing properties on Deards End Lane.
31. The southern areas of the site are on a shallow slope that faces back towards Park Lane and the existing village. The northern end of the site begins to slope down facing out towards Stevenage. Detailed site design will need to ensure visual and landscape impacts here are minimised. A modification is proposed for effectiveness in Appendix A. This will be achieved in association with the creation of a new defensible boundary (see Issue 11.40(g)). The dwelling estimate in the plan is reduced from the initial yield identified in the SHLAA to take these issues into account.
32. Potential constraints identified by the SHLAA include the adjoining Deards End Lane Conservation Area, which includes a number of listed buildings. The site also adjoins an area of priority habitat in the form of deciduous woodland.
33. The site lies close to the A1(M) motorway. Thames Water has identified a requirement to ensure the provision of appropriate water infrastructure. The ecological sensitivity of this site is generally low though with some potential for the presence of protected species.
34. These constraints are addressed through site-specific criteria which provide an appropriate tool for mitigation in concert with the detailed design and development management policies of the plan.
35. Since completion of the SHLAA, Natural England has revised the boundaries of their planning impact zones around Knebworth Woods SSSI and it is proposed to remove this element of the site-specific criteria through a modification.
36. The Housing and Green Belt Background Paper summarises the reasons for the selection of site KB1 (HOU1, Appendix 2, p.61). The allocation of site KB1 provides the opportunity to make a contribution to the overall housing requirements identified. The proposed dwelling estimate allows for appropriate mitigation of potential impacts and addresses a number of issues raised through the consultation. On balance, the positive opportunities afforded by this site are considered to outweigh harms.

#### Site KB2

37. Site KB2 lies to the west and south-west of Knebworth in an area currently designated as Green Belt. The site provides an opportunity to make a moderate to significant

contribution to the District's future housing needs. It reserves land for the provision of a new primary school to serve the new allocations and existing development on this side of the village.

38. It is bounded to the east and north by the existing village and to the west by a tree belt to the A1(M) which provides screening from wider views from the west.
39. The land to the north of Gipsy Lane generally faces in towards the existing village. The land to the south of Gipsy Lane is gently undulating and development will generally be contained within a shallow ridgeline that will be reinforced by a new boundary broadly aligned with the rear of existing residential properties on Woodstock (see issue 11.40(g)). These existing built limits of Knebworth are visible in views from the south.
40. The justification and impacts in relation to Green Belt are discussed under Issue 11.40 below.
41. The SHLAA identifies a number of potential constraints, including surface water flood risk and potential contamination on a small part of the site from a previous use.
42. No fundamental ecological constraint has been identified.
43. The eastern point of the site adjoins the Stockens Green Conservation Area. This is designated in large part as an example of early 20<sup>th</sup> Century garden suburb co-operative development. This was the first part of a broader plan for the development of 'Knebworth Garden Village' which included the land now identified as site KB2. This plan was never implemented in full.
44. The western boundary of the site adjoins the tree planting along the edge of the A1(M) motorway. Thames Water has identified a requirement to ensure the provision of appropriate water infrastructure.
45. The constraints are addressed through site-specific criteria which provide an appropriate tool for mitigation in concert with the detailed design and development management policies of the plan.
46. The Housing and Green Belt Background Paper summarises the reasons for the selection of site KB2 (HOU1, Appendix 2, p.62). The allocation of site KB2 provides the opportunity to make a contribution to the overall housing requirements identified and provide land for infrastructure with wider community benefits. The site-specific criteria and proposed dwelling estimate allow for appropriate mitigation of potential impacts and address a number of issues raised through the consultation. On balance, the positive opportunities afforded by this site are considered to outweigh harms.

### Site KB3

47. Site KB3 is a previously developed site in the centre of Knebworth. The site has been granted planning permission for 47 assisted living extra care (Class C2) apartments for the frail elderly along with three ground floor commercial units (Use A1 or A2).

#### Site KB4

48. Site KB4 lies to the east of Knebworth in an area currently designated as Green Belt. The site provides an opportunity to make a moderate to significant contribution to the District's future housing needs. It reserves land for the potential long-term provision of a small secondary school to serve needs arising from the village and the Stevenage School Place Planning Area.

49. The site is located at the east of Knebworth. The western boundaries of the proposed allocation are defined by existing development and features within the village, including the recreation ground. The contours of the site mean that the site generally faces in towards Knebworth. Boundary features will be created and / or reinforced to limit wider impacts (see issue 11.40(g)).

50. The justification and impacts in relation to Green Belt are discussed under Issue 11.40 below.

51. Potential constraints include areas of surface water flood risk, a water source protection zone and a bridleway across the northern site boundary. Thames Water has identified a requirement to ensure the provision of appropriate water infrastructure. No fundamental ecological constraint has been identified.

52. These issues are addressed through site-specific criteria which provide an appropriate tool for mitigation in concert with the detailed design and development management policies of the plan.

53. The Housing and Green Belt Background Paper summarises the reasons for the selection of site KB4 (HOU1, Appendix 2, p.62). The allocation of site KB4 provides the opportunity to make a contribution to the overall housing requirements identified and provide land for infrastructure with wider community benefits. The site-specific criteria and proposed dwelling estimate allow for appropriate mitigation of potential impacts and address a number of issues raised through the consultation. On balance, the positive opportunities afforded by this site are considered to outweigh harms.

54. The above findings, derived from the Council's own evidence base, have been supplemented by additional work conducted by the site owner to support the allocation. This includes additional studies submitted at Regulation 19 stage [representor reference 14280] and provides further reassurance that key issues are being actively addressed.

55. A Statement of Common Ground with the owner of this site is being prepared and, subject to its agreement, will be made available to the examination in advance of the hearing sessions.

**11.39 Are all of the proposed allocations the most appropriate option given the reasonable alternatives?**

56. The proposed allocation of site KB1, KB2 and KB4 represent the only reasonable alternatives for the expansion of Knebworth beyond its existing limits. HOU1 (Appendix 2, pp.61-62) shows that all potential sites in and around Knebworth are being carried forward for proposed allocation and no reasonable alternate sites have been discarded.
57. The Council's Matter 5 statement demonstrates there is a lack of reasonable alternatives for an alternate distribution of development between the District's main settlements if the proposed housing requirement is to be met.
58. A review of the sites not proposed for allocation through the plan (HOU1, Appendix 2) shows that these are generally:
- In or adjoining less sustainable village locations; and / or
  - Also within the Green Belt; and / or
  - Subject to flood risk constraints which make them sequentially less preferable for allocation than these sites

**11.40 Sites KB1, KB2 and KB4 comprise land in the Green Belt.**

**a) Do exceptional circumstances exist to warrant the allocation of the sites for new housing in the Green Belt? If so, what are they?**

59. Yes. Exceptional circumstances exist to warrant the allocation of land for housing and supporting education infrastructure in the Green Belt at KB1, KB2 and KB4. The sites provide the only reasonable alternatives for the expansion of Knebworth beyond its current built limits (see *also* Paragraph 56).
60. Under the saved policies of the current District Plan, the settlement limits of Knebworth are tightly defined with all surrounding land designated as Green Belt. The Council's general case for the existence of exceptional circumstances is set out in its response to Matter 7. The objectively assessed need for housing significantly exceeds the level of development which can be met on development opportunities on brownfield land or contained within existing urban areas or in rural areas beyond the Green Belt.
61. The District is highly constrained by Green Belt and many of the most sustainable locations for new development are within or adjacent to existing higher order settlements as set out in Policy SP2.
62. Knebworth is the largest village in the District and the only village containing a station.
63. The harms to the Green Belt of the potential allocations have been assessed and weighed against the benefits of development in these locations. Measures to



ameliorate or reduce the consequent impacts to the lowest reasonably practicable extent have been identified.

#### Site KB1

64. Site KB1 provides the opportunity to make a moderate to significant contribution to the District's future housing needs and helps to provide the 'critical mass' required to support the provision of new infrastructure in the largest village in the District. There are not considered to be any insurmountable non-Green Belt constraints to development of the site which cannot be addressed through the policy requirements of the plan.

#### Site KB2

65. Site KB2 provides the opportunity to make a moderate to significant contribution to the District's future housing needs. It reserves land for the provision of a new primary school to serve the new allocations and existing development on the west side of the Knebworth. There are not considered to be any insurmountable non-Green Belt constraints to development of the site which cannot be addressed through the policy requirements of the plan.

#### Site KB4

66. Site KB4 provides the opportunity to make a moderate to significant contribution to the District's future housing needs. It reserves land for the potential long-term provision of a small secondary school to serve needs arising from the village and the Stevenage School Place Planning Area. There are not considered to be any insurmountable non-Green Belt constraints to development of the site which cannot be addressed through the policy requirements of the plan.

#### ***b) What is the nature and extent of the harm to the Green Belt of removing the site from it?***

67. The strategic land parcel surrounding Knebworth was assessed as making a significant contribution to the purposes of the Green Belt by the 2016 Green Belt Review (CG1, Figure 2.8, p.31). However the Green Belt Review also took a fine grained approach to the assessment, further dividing the parcels into sub-parcels and also assessing individual sites.

68. The assessment found that the contribution of site KB1 was significant for two of the four purposes of Green Belt assessed with an overall moderate contribution (CG1, p.118 assessed as site reference NL).
69. The assessment found that the contribution of site KB2 was significant for two of the four purposes of Green Belt assessed with an overall moderate contribution (CG1, p.117, assessed as site reference L/r13).
70. The assessment of KB4 was split across four land parcels (CG1, pp.115-116, assessed as site references 55, 57, 58 and 336). The assessment found that the contribution of the two parcels lying to the north of Old Lane was significant for three of the four purposes of Green Belt with an overall significant contribution. The assessment found that the contribution of the two parcels lying to the south of Old Lane was significant for two of the four purposes of Green Belt with an overall moderate contribution.
71. These results are summarised in Table A below.

**Table A: Contribution of allocations at Knebworth to the purposes of Green Belt**

Site	Green Belt purpose				Overall contribution
	Sprawl	Merge	Countryside	Historic	
Site KB1	Significant	Moderate	Significant	Limited	Moderate
Site KB2	Significant	Moderate	Significant	Limited	Moderate
Site KB4(N)	Significant	Significant	Significant	Limited	Significant
Site KB4(S)	Significant	Moderate	Significant	Limited	Moderate

***c) To what extent would the consequent impacts on the purposes of the Green Belt be ameliorated or reduced to the lowest reasonably practicable extent?***

72. Actions have been specified as conditions which must be satisfied before the grant of planning permission on the allocated sites.

**Site KB1**

73. The site allocation boundary is drawn to ensure the built extent of Knebworth will not extend any further north towards Stevenage than is already the case. The physical gap between the two settlements will not be reduced.
74. The creation of a new boundary around the north-western perimeter (see Issue xx) will aid with the containment of development. A new site specific-criterion is proposed to mitigate the potential visual encroachment of Knebworth, and impacts on openness, from views of this site from the north.
75. This is in line with advice in the Council's landscape evidence (CG16, p.28c) which suggests the use of planting to provide screening and to avoid the coalescence of Stevenage and Knebworth.

Site KB2

76. The site is generally well contained by the topography and the A1(M) and much of the site has a visual relationship with the existing settlement. Site-specific criteria require the creation of an appropriate, defensible Green Belt boundary along the southern perimeter of the site to prevent encroachment into the wider countryside.
77. The allocation boundary is drawn so as to ensure the built extent of Knebworth will not extend any further south than is presently the case.
78. This is in line with advice in the Council's landscape evidence (CG16, p.28c) which suggests the use of planting to provide screening.

Site KB4

79. Site-specific criteria require structural landscaping and planting to provide and / or reinforce the new Green Belt boundary along the eastern edge of the proposed allocation.
80. This is in line with advice in the Council's landscape evidence (CG16, p.28c) which suggests the use of planting to provide screening.
81. The landform in this area means that much of the site faces inwards towards the existing village. Reserving the land to the north of Watton Lane for future education use ensures lower intensity development in this more sensitive area of the site.

***d) If this site were to be developed as proposed, would the adjacent Green Belt continue to serve at least one of the five purposes of Green Belts, or would the Green Belt function be undermined by the site's allocation?***

82. Through the actions specified in the allocation criteria as set out above, the Green Belt adjacent to sites KB1, KB2 and KB4 will continue to contribute to the purposes of Green Belt.
83. The assessment of the strategic land parcels and sub-parcels in the Green Belt Review shows that land beyond the proposed allocation boundaries already serve Green Belt purposes (CG1, Figure 2.8, p.31 and Figure 3.6, p.66).
84. The adjacent Green Belt land would continue to play an important role in, in particular, maintaining the gap from Stevenage. The land beyond Site KB2 to the south would additionally play an important role in maintaining the gap from Knebworth to Welwyn Garden City as well from Stevenage to Welwyn.

**e) Will the Green Belt boundary proposed need to be altered at the end of the plan period, or is it capable of enduring beyond then?**

85. The extent to which existing settlements might be further expanded in order to meet future need is finite particularly given the dense settlement pattern in existence at the more sustainable locations in the west and central areas of the District.
86. The review and release of land undertaken as part of this plan would extend Knebworth in its current form to its logical maximum extent in all directions.
87. To the north, any further development would substantively breach the ridgeline and give rise to a physical and visual narrowing of the gap between Knebworth and Stevenage. To the east, development would similarly encroach into an important gap between the two settlements. To the south-east the land is contained by the topography. To the south there is only a narrow gap to Woolmer Green while to the west the revised settlement boundary will be bound by the A1(M)..
88. Notwithstanding this point, each settlement within and adjoining the District will need to be properly assessed for further expansion capacity to inform any future local plan review process.
89. However, it is the intention of the plan that the amended Green Belt boundaries will endure beyond the plan period in order to continue to ensure the Green Belt continues to perform its key strategic functions.

**f) Are the proposed Green Belt boundaries consistent with the Plan's strategy for meeting identified requirements for sustainable development?**

90. Green Belt boundaries have been determined with a view to achieving the most sustainable pattern of development. The new Green Belt boundaries have been established in order to accommodate the reasonable maximum of development that can be accommodated within the District at the present time in accordance with the settlement hierarchy.
91. This seeks to allocate development to higher order settlements in the first instance in accordance with Policy SP2 (as amended) and supported by the Sustainability Appraisal in (LP4, Section 4). This approach to the distribution of development and the establishment of enduring Green Belt boundaries is supported as the most sustainable approach to achieving the development needs over the plan period.

***g) Has the Green Belt boundary around the site been defined clearly, using physical features that are readily recognisable and likely to be permanent? Does it avoid including land which it is unnecessary to keep permanently open?***

92. Every effort has been made to clearly define the Green Belt boundaries around allocated sites using physical features such as roads and watercourses that are readily recognisable and likely to be permanent.
93. Where no such permanent features exist, or where use of such features would necessitate release of substantial additional land beyond the proposed allocation boundary from the Green Belt, it has been necessary to use semi-permanent existing features such as field boundaries, hedgerows, public rights of way and / or tree belts.
94. Where no features exist the allocation criteria specify that the allocation should seek to establish a landscape feature that will sufficiently contain the site and be identifiable as the Green Belt boundary such as through the establishment of hedgerows or tree belts.

Site KB1

95. The north-eastern site boundary consists of existing established planting. The north-western perimeter will require the establishment of a new defensible boundary set back from the A1(M) to align with existing features. This is specified in the site criteria (LP1, p.177).

Site KB2

96. The western site boundary consists of existing established planting running south from Park Lane along the edge of the A1(M) and continuing to the south of Gypsy Lane. The southern perimeter will require the establishment of a new defensible boundary from the current tree belt running east to align with the existing Green Belt boundary along the rear of the properties on Woodstock.

Site KB4

97. The southern site boundary consists of a generally well established hedgerow running from the rear of Haygarth to Swangley's Lane. New planting will be required to create an eastern boundary from Swangley's Lane to Old Lane broadly following the contours of the hill before connecting to the existing planting around the curtilage of Longdene. The revised boundary will then follow Old Lane northwards for a short distance.
98. To the north of Watton Lane, the proposed alignment of the new Green Belt boundary is presently marked by the existing telegraph poles and lines that run in a broadly north-westerly direction. A new boundary will be required here, though the timing of this may be linked to the provision of any new school.

**Question 11.41** *Is the proposed settlement boundary:*

**a) consistent with the methodology for identifying the settlement boundaries?**

**b) Appropriate and justified?**

99. The approach to establishing Green Belt boundaries and therefore the settlement boundary is discussed in the Council's answer to question 11.40(g) above. Beyond the proposed site allocations, no further alterations are proposed to the Green Belt boundary in this area. A map showing the existing and proposed extent of the settlement at Knebworth is attached to this Statement as Appendix B to aid interpretation.

## Appendix A: Proposed modifications to Chapter 13 (Knebworth)

Ref	Local Housing Allocations and site specific criteria	Dwelling estimate
KB1	<p><b>Land at Deards End</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sensitive design and / or lower density housing at east of site to respect setting of Deards End Lane Conservation Area and listed buildings;</li> <li>• Creation of appropriate, defensible Green Belt boundary along north-western perimeter of site;</li> <li>• <b>Detailed scheme layout to be informed by site-specific visual impact assessment to mitigate Green Belt impacts to the fullest reasonable extent;</b></li> <li>• Transport assessment (or equivalent) to demonstrate highway impacts, including construction traffic, will not significantly affect Deards End Lane railway bridge (Scheduled Ancient Monument);</li> <li>• Preliminary Risk Assessment to identify any contamination associated with previous uses including mitigation;</li> <li>• Appropriate noise mitigation measures, to potentially include insulation and appropriate orientation of living spaces;</li> <li>• Consider and mitigate against potential adverse impacts upon Knebworth Woods SSSI and priority habitat (deciduous woodland) adjoining site; and</li> <li>• Detailed drainage strategy identifying water infrastructure required and mechanism(s) for delivery.</li> </ul>	200 homes
KB2	<p><b>Land off Gypsy Lane</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sensitive design and / or lower density housing where site affects setting of Stockens Green Conservation Area;</li> <li>• Creation of appropriate, defensible Green Belt boundary along southern perimeter of site;</li> <li>• <b>Approximately two hectares of land reserved as an appropriate site for provision of 1FE Primary School</b></li> <li>• Preliminary Risk Assessment to identify any contamination associated with previous uses including mitigation;</li> <li>• Address existing surface water flood risk issues, including any run-off from A1(M), through SUDs or other appropriate solution;</li> <li>• Transport assessment (or equivalent) to demonstrate highway impacts, including construction traffic, will not significantly affect Deards End Lane railway bridge (Scheduled Ancient Monument);</li> </ul>	184 homes

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Appropriate noise mitigation measures, to potentially include buffer strip, insulation and appropriate orientation of living spaces; and</li> <li>• Detailed drainage strategy identifying water infrastructure required and mechanism(s) for delivery.</li> </ul>	
KB3	<b>Chas Lowe site, London Road</b>	14 homes
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Address existing surface water flood risk issues through removal of hardstanding, SUDs or other appropriate solution.</li> </ul>	
KB4	<b>Land east of Knebworth</b>	200 homes
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Structural landscaping and planting to provide and / or reinforce Green Belt boundary to east;</li> <li>• <del>Up to 4ha of</del> <b>Land north of Watton Road reserved for long-term secondary education purposes subject to up-to-date assessments of needs;</b></li> <li>• Integrate Bridleway Knebworth 001 as part of green infrastructure strategy;</li> <li>• Address existing surface water flood risk issues through SUDs or other appropriate solution;</li> <li>• Preserve longer views from Knebworth to wider countryside along dry valley to south of Watton Road; and</li> <li>• Detailed drainage strategy identifying water infrastructure required and mechanism(s) for delivery.</li> </ul>	
<b>Total allocated sites</b>		<b>598 homes</b>
<b>Completions and permissions</b>		<b>65 homes</b>
<b>Total allocated, completed and permitted</b>		<b>663 homes</b>

### *Economy*

13.90 The facilities of Knebworth are designated as a village centre in our retail hierarchy under policy SP4. Applications in this area, outside of the allocated housing site, will be assessed using our detailed development management policies. The village centre is shown on the Proposals Map and the detailed in Appendix 4.

### *Infrastructure and mitigation*

13.91 The new homes in Knebworth will require additional school places. There is currently one primary school in Knebworth to the east of the High Street. This takes 60 Reception aged pupils each year. In recent years, school places have been filled by local children and the catchment is relatively tightly drawn.

13.92 **Land will be reserved within Site KB2 will to provide an additional primary school that will meet the needs arising from new development at the west of Knebworth and provide capacity to serve some existing residential areas.**



- 13.93 There is currently no secondary education provision in Knebworth. Pupils travel to a variety of schools in Hitchin, Stevenage and Welwyn Garden City. ~~Although some of these journeys can, and are, made by public transport, many are also made by car. This contributes to some of the known traffic issues in the town and across the wider road network~~
- 13.94 ~~New development, particularly on site KB4 to the east of Knebworth, provides the opportunity to look at alternate approaches.~~ Making smaller-scale secondary provision, possibly as an 'all-through school'<sup>2</sup> may be an appropriate solution which meets future needs, benefits existing residents and provides a more sustainable approach.
- 13.95 **It is currently anticipated that any secondary school provision in Knebworth will not be required until the late 2020s at the very earliest. To ensure an appropriately sized site can be made available, land to the north of Watton Lane at the east of the village is reserved for this purpose.** We will continue to work with Hertfordshire County Council, the Parish Council, the landowner and Knebworth Primary School to **monitor long-term education needs across the Stevenage School Place Planning Area** and explore the most appropriate education solution for this site.
- 13.96 Our transport modelling does not identify any specific mitigation scheme requirements for Knebworth. However, the high street, **including the junction of Stevenage Road/London Road/Watton Road and Station Road**, is a known pinch point, particularly when delays or incidents on the A1(M) result in the B197 being used as an alternate route between Welwyn Garden City and Stevenage. **There are also issues of poor pedestrian/cycle access along Station Road under the railway line, and similar issues at Gun Lane and new development will be expected to consider improvements to walking/cycling conditions here and contributions towards this.**
- 13.97 Some of the capacity issues here arise from the way in which the local highway is managed and in particular, the provision of short-stay on-street parking adjacent to the shops<sup>3</sup>.
- 13.98 Highway management measures, such as the use of Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs), lie outside the direct control of the planning system and it is therefore not for this Local Plan to dictate the most appropriate solution(s).
- 13.99 It is recognised that a careful balance needs to be struck between ensuring the continued vitality of the local centre, providing access to local facilities and supporting the new development planned for Knebworth. We will continue to work outside of the local plan process to identify and implement the most appropriate future strategy.
- 13.100 Sites in Knebworth will need to ensure that any transport assessments appropriately take these issues into account and contribute reasonably to any necessary mitigation measures, or wider strategies which may seek to address these issues.

---

<sup>2</sup> All-through schools make provision for all children from age 4 to 18. See Policy SP10.

<sup>3</sup> This also explains why high-level traffic modelling, which will not contain this level of intelligence, considers there to be sufficient capacity.

Matter 11 (Knebworth), North Hertfordshire District Council

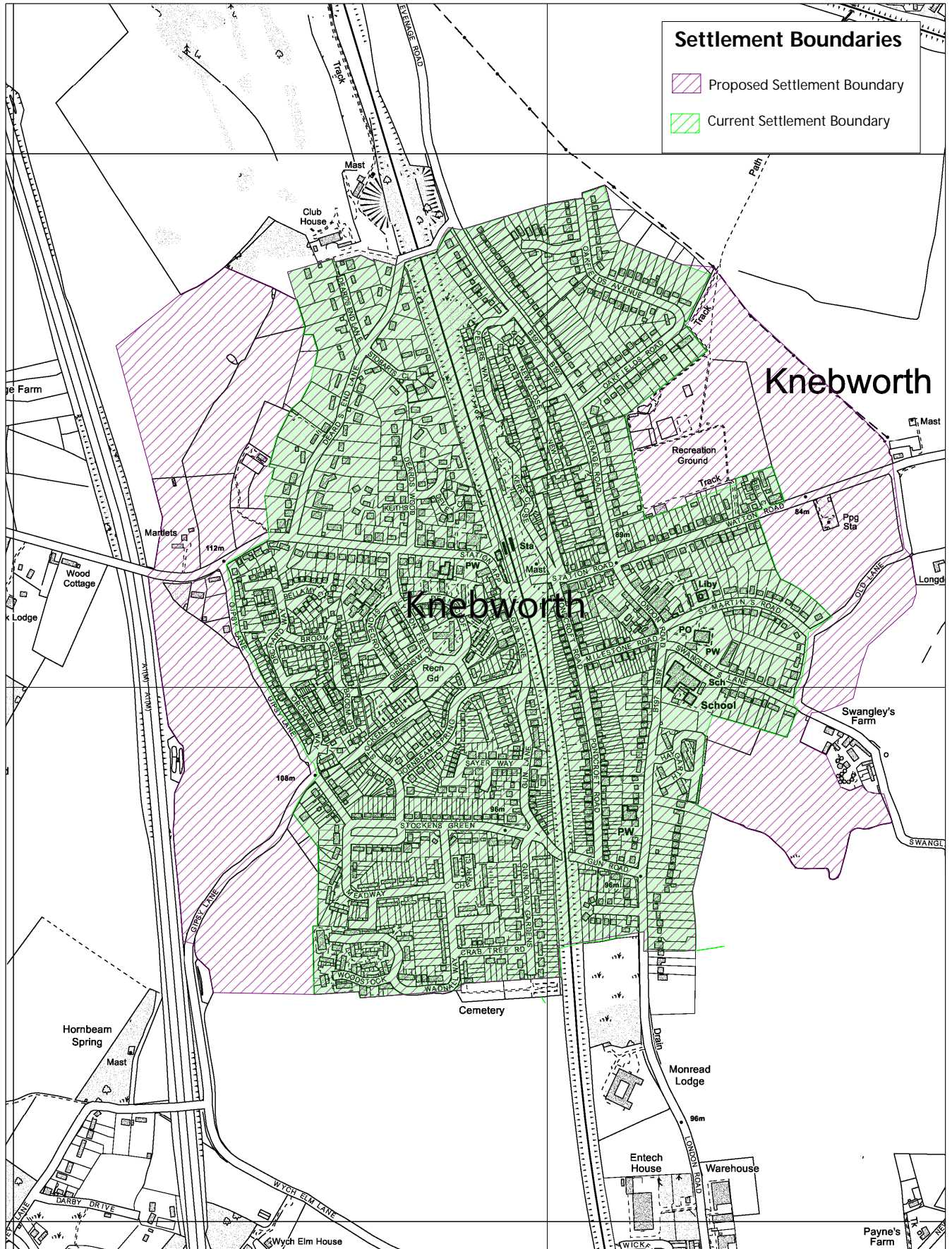
- 13.101 ~~A planning application~~ **Planning permission** has recently been submitted **granted** for a new library, doctors' surgery and pharmacy on the site of the current library within the identified village centre.
- 13.102 Knebworth lies within the Thames Water area with wastewater draining to their facility at Rye Meads near Hoddesdon. Previous work identifies that this treatment works should have sufficient capacity to handle all planned development within its catchment until at least 2026 with a reasonable prospect of being able to accommodate development to 2031.
- 13.103 However, it is also recognised that there are constraints in the infrastructure connecting to Rye Meads and capacity from Knebworth is an issue that has been identified. Scheme promoters should work with Thames Water, and together, to identify the likely nature of infrastructure required to ensure this can be programmed appropriately.

Matter 11 (Knebworth), North Hertfordshire District Council

**Appendix B: Current and proposed settlement extent of Knebworth**



Knebworth



Scale: 1:10000  
Date: 10:10:17

