

# NORTH WEALD BASSETT MASTERPLANNING STUDY

**Allies and Morrison**  
September 2014







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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### Introduction

Allies and Morrison Urban Practitioners were commissioned by Epping Forest District Council to undertake a masterplanning study for North Weald Bassett, to identify a vision for the settlement and to provide a clear framework for future development and investment. The study covers transport and movement considerations, provision of new homes, economic opportunities, shops and community services for the settlement, and the role of open space. This report sets out a vision and objectives for North Weald Bassett, masterplan options and involved stakeholder and community engagement. The study feeds into the Local Plan process for Epping Forest District Council.

### Baseline analysis and community engagement

A review of statutory and supplementary policy context has been undertaken along with a review of the socio-economic considerations and priorities specific to North Weald Bassett. These inform an understanding of the growth expected for the local area and how this sets the conditions for the masterplanning study.

The urban design and heritage analysis identifies key features of North Weald Bassett's character and identity to be retained and complemented in the future, while a review of transport and utilities identifies infrastructure capacity and future requirements. A review of the local property market provides an economic context highlighting trends in housing and employment for the area and establishes key assumptions against which masterplanning options can be assessed. Epping Forest District





Council's Call for Sites highlights the enthusiasm of landowners for development in the area, and that objective consideration of these sites is necessary in order to ensure future development will be delivered in a fair, appropriate and sustainable way. Local residents were given the opportunity to feed their knowledge and thoughts about North Weald Bassett into the study at a workshop early in the process. The general attitude towards development was found to be positive so long as this brings improvements to social and physical infrastructure.

### **Vision**

The analysis and consultation undertaken during the study indicated that the settlement has potential for some growth that can help to more effectively support the local community in the future, but that this growth must be minded to preserve the existing assets of the settlement and bring about additional benefits for the community. The assets include, but are not limited to, the settlement's relationship with the surrounding green open space, stand-out historic buildings, a range of housing types which can support a mixed community and the heritage and current economic role of the North Weald Airfield. The vision is to protect these assets, attract investment to strengthen the existing commercial centre and establish North Weald Bassett as a sustainable place in its own right with an active community life.

### **Spatial Framework**

A general framework has been identified which could help to augment and consolidate the structure of the settlement and provide for various growth scenarios. Areas suitable for residential, commercial,

employment, leisure and community uses have all been identified. North Weald Bassett has a relatively coherent pattern of settlement based on incremental development to either side of the High Road. The linear shape of the settlement set within Metropolitan Green Belt ensures that all residents live within a few minutes' walk to open countryside. New development should respect, protect and augment the inherent character of the North Weald Bassett to preserve and enhance the benefits it brings to its residents.

The masterplan study articulates a set of development principles, agreed by community stakeholders, which aim to:

- Preserve the discrete 'village-like' character of North Weald Bassett
- Preserve and enhance settlement's relationship to the Greenbelt/countryside
- Consolidate the structure of the settlement to make it more 'walkable' and accessible
- Increase the range and quantity of local shops, leisure and community facilities, both in an augmented centre, and in other convenient locations elsewhere
- Increase the range of types and quality of employment space within the settlement
- Enhance the context of North Weald Airfield to help stimulate additional uses and activities which benefit residents
- Improve the quality of local public transport links and mitigate present highways issues

### **Masterplan options**

A number of masterplan options have been developed. Option 1 envisages up to 500 new dwellings being built in North Weald Bassett over

the coming 20 years. Option 2 envisages between approximately 1,000 and 1,200 new dwellings and option 3 envisages between 1,500 and 1,600 new dwellings over the next 20 years. Broad spatial scenarios for new development exist, regardless of the level of growth. These consider whether new dwellings should be introduced to the south east of the existing settlement, covering land towards the Ongar Redoubt and including part of the existing golf course (Scenario A); or whether it is preferable for residential development to extend closer to the North Weald Airfield, up to Merlin Way (Scenario B). In addition to this, consideration is given to focusing new development on strengthening the existing commercial centre towards the southern end of the High Road, and the extent to which a secondary commercial centre at Tyler's Green is intensified.

The Masterplanning Study identifies suitable locations for commercial development, such as retail and leisure uses to support residential growth and other locations for employment generating uses, including those relating to airfield activity. The demand arising from a larger population at North Weald Bassett will help ensure the viability of these facilities and services. The Council's emerging Economic Development Strategy and studies relating to the future of the airfield will map and in greater detail the delivery of viable employment generating uses.

Residents were given further opportunity to comment on these options at an exhibition on the 28 June 2014. A summary of their feedback has been included in the report.

### **Viability and infrastructure considerations**

The physical and community infrastructure requirements for new development at North Weald Bassett are identified and described in broad terms, related to the different spatial options.

A high level viability analysis has been undertaken to inform the masterplanning process and the assessment has indicated a viable development scenario. The results of the viability testing give an indication of the funding levels which might be available to invest in new social infrastructure in the settlement, including a new GP surgery premises, a new primary school and landscape open spaces and play spaces.

Delivery is envisaged over a long period of time and a number of phasing principles have been set out to ensure development integrates with existing development, and avoids disconnected and isolated pockets of residential development, and to ensure adequate services, facilities and infrastructure to support the new levels of housing proposed at each phase.







# 1 INTRODUCTION

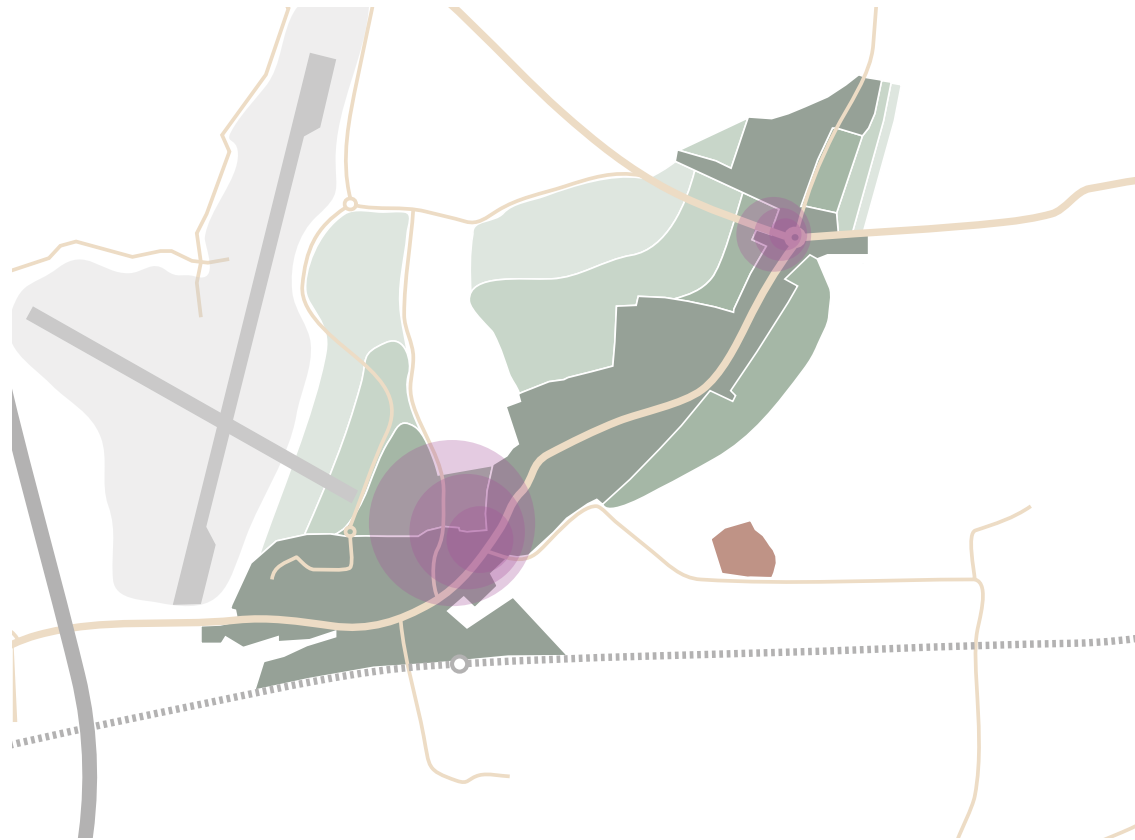
Allies and Morrison Urban Practitioners has been commissioned by Epping Forest District Council to undertake a masterplanning study for North Weald Bassett, to identify a vision for the settlement and to provide a clear framework for future development and investment. The project team for the masterplan study includes Alan Baxter and Associates transport consultants and infrastructure engineers, and GL Hearn property consultants.

The masterplan covers transport and movement considerations, provision of new homes, economic opportunities, including the role of North Weald Airfield, shops and community services for the settlement, and the role of open space, with the identification of a long term defensible green belt boundary. The study feeds into the Local Plan process for Epping Forest District Council and will inform future planning decisions taken by the district council.

This report sets out a vision and a set of objectives for any new development at North Weald Bassett; baseline analysis and stakeholder and community engagement undertaken to inform the study; a set of potential high level masterplan options; and the viability, infrastructure requirements and implementation considerations for these options.







Spatial masterplanning framework

## 2.1 VISION

North Weald Bassett has a number of great assets including, but not limited to, the settlement's relationship with the surrounding green open space, stand-out historic buildings, a range of housing types which can support a mixed community and the heritage and current economic role of the North Weald Airfield. However, the settlement could also benefit from investment to strengthen the existing commercial centre and establish North Weald Bassett as a sustainable place in its own right with an active community life.

The analysis and consultation undertaken during the North Weald Bassett masterplanning study indicated that the settlement has potential for some growth that can help to more effectively support the local community in the future, but that this growth must be minded to preserve the existing assets of the settlement including its landscape and heritage and bring about additional benefits for the community.

Aims and objectives for North Weald Bassett, to help secure the settlement's long term, sustainable future, are set out on the following pages.

## 2.2 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES



High Road

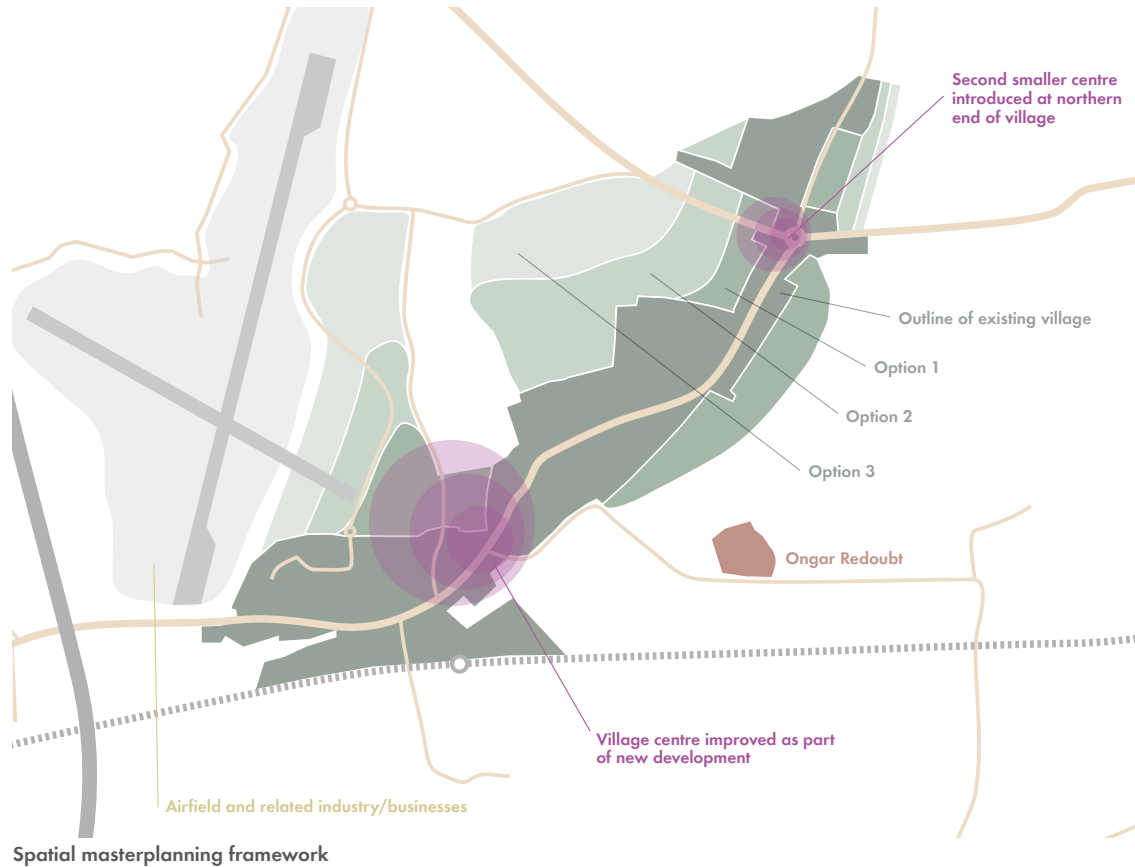
### Aims

1. The creation of a sustainable commercial centre for North Weald Bassett that can serve the community's immediate needs without people needing to get in a car
2. Maintenance of the existing character of the settlement, in which the form and scale of any future development can complement and benefit the existing fabric
3. Retention of North Weald Bassett's identity as a settlement within the green belt, with easy access to open green space for all residents
4. A strengthened set of commercial and aviation activities at the airfield, to enhance North Weald Bassett's economic profile and to provide local employment opportunities
5. A rationalisation of North Weald Bassett's streets and routes, to avoid conflicts between activity and access to the airfield, the commercial centre and residential areas
6. Improved access to Epping and, in particular, the Central Line connection to central London
7. Investment in social infrastructure within the settlement to ensure a healthy, active and educated community

These aims can be supported by a number of measurable objectives for future initiatives and/or development in North Weald Bassett.

### Objectives

1. Maintain residents' connection with and proximity to green belt open space, so that no home is beyond a 5 minute walk from green belt land
2. Ensure that all homes are within 10 minute walk to local shops and services
3. Reflect existing typical density levels for any new homes and ensure that these appropriately reflect a central or edge of settlement location
4. Ensure that the number of new homes for the settlement is appropriate and proportional to the existing settlement size
5. Ensure that commercial traffic entering the airfield does not access the site via residential routes
6. Explore alternative modes of transport connecting Epping and North Weald Bassett including a Park and Ride scheme and potential for a car pooling scheme
7. Ensure that investment in new primary school places, GP and dental provision and sports and activity provision meets and exceeds, where possible, acceptable levels and is in place for any new homes.



## 2.3 SPATIAL FRAMEWORK

Following local consultation and analysis of the physical opportunities and constraints in and around North Weald Bassett, a general framework has been identified which could help to augment and consolidate the structure of the settlement and provide for various growth scenarios.

The framework diagram to the left is not a design proposal, but represents an overall approach to the potential spatial relationships at a conceptual level.

It indicates a broad approach to three potential growth scenarios in relation to the existing settlement:

- low growth option 1;
- medium growth option 2; and
- high growth option 3.

The three scenarios develop out of each other and are based on the same analysis of North Weald Bassett's current structure and the opportunities new development could bring to the settlement in future.

The diagram also indicates in general terms where new settlement services, facilities and infrastructure might be located as a result of each growth scenario. These elements are illustrated over the following pages.



Diagram indicating study area, existing village and airfield

### The study area

Areas suitable for residential, commercial, employment, leisure and community uses have all been identified as part of the masterplanning study. The focus for each of these areas is designed to integrate with the existing settlement and to serve both existing and new residents.

The study area is outlined on the plan opposite. The area to the east of the settlement is considered to be sensitive in landscape and topography terms and in terms of proximity to the Ongar Redoubt. The area to the north of North Weald Airfield is considered to be sensitive in terms of its proximity to Harlow and the future risk of coalescence with the town.

For further information on more detailed constraints regarding sites, please refer to the opportunities and constraints plans in the development principles section. It is important to note that the opportunities and constraints identified in this report are to inform the high level approach taken in this study to test the scale of development which might be appropriate in North Weald Bassett and should not prejudice consideration of specific proposals as and when they arise.



Control Tower

Green Belt

Methodist Church

Co-op

Village Hall

Shops

Kings Head

North Weald Airfield Museum

Hall

Library

Heritage Railway

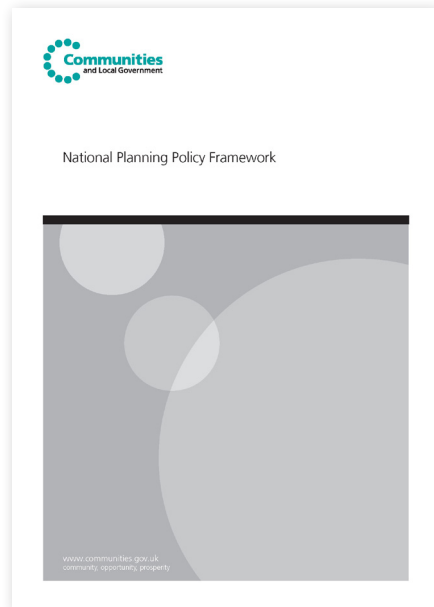


### 3 BASELINE ANALYSIS AND REVIEW

This chapter sets out the key messages from the baseline analysis undertaken for the North Weald Bassett masterplanning study. This includes:

- A review of the statutory and supplementary policy context in order to ensure that the masterplan aligns with the Epping Forest District Council Local Plan process
- A socio-economic analysis of the North Weald Bassett ward in order to identify key considerations and priorities in ensuring a sustainable settlement in the future
- Urban design and heritage analysis to ensure that North Weald Bassett's character and identity is retained and complemented in the future
- A transport and utilities review, to identify existing and future utilities capacity and key road, rail, cycling, pedestrian and parking infrastructure and priorities
- A review of the local property market in terms of housing and employment and the establishment of key assumptions against which masterplan options can be assessed
- A review of the sites identified during Epping Forest District Council's Call for Sites in the local area





**National Planning Policy Framework**

### 3.1 POLICY CONTEXT REVIEW

The policy context for the North Weald Bassett masterplanning study is shaped primarily by documents at national and local levels. Some county-level documents that relate to Essex as a whole are also important.

#### **National policy**

At a national level the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) set out high-level principles for sustainable development. The central principle in the NPPF is a presumption in favour of sustainable development throughout the planning process, which requires that local planning authorities seek positive opportunities to meet the development needs of their area. Other more detailed policies should guide plan preparation, as well as development management decisions.

#### **Local policy**

The Council's Development Plan currently consists of the saved policies within the Local Plan (1998) and Local Plan Alterations (2006). Although the adopted documents are fairly dated, it remains extant and the NPPF requires that due weight should be given to existing plans according to their degree of consistency with its policies.

There is an emerging new Local Plan, which will eventually replace the extant Local Plan and alterations. However this is at a relatively early stage of preparation and the most recent consultation document (July 2012) contains issues and options rather than policies and proposals. The masterplanning study is intended to help shape policies and proposals for North Weald Bassett and

North Weald Airfield, following consultation on options, it is expected that the final Local Plan will be adopted in 2016.

There are few local supplementary guidance documents, however the leaflet on designing out crime would be relevant in relation to development layout and detailed design.

#### **Local Plan (1998) and Local Plan Alterations (2006)**

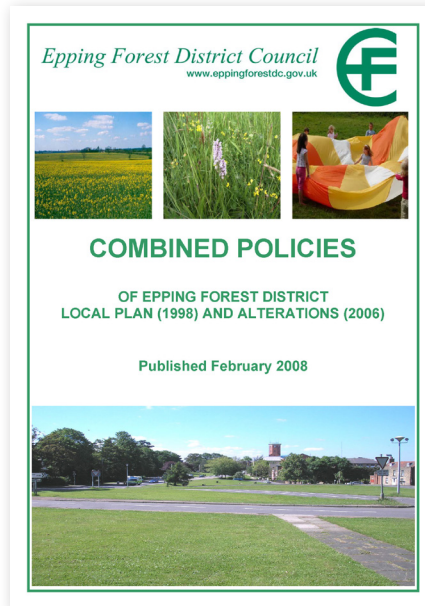
The Local Plan has some strategic and area specific policies that are relevant to the masterplanning study; notwithstanding this, many of the strategic policies that would have previously been relevant were not saved beyond July 2009. The extant policies include:

##### **GB1 - Green Belt boundary**

On the whole, outside of the existing built up areas of the settlement, the area surrounding North Weald Bassett, including most of North Weald Airfield, is included within the Green Belt. Policy GB2A sets out the types of development that would be permitted within the Green Belt and a series of other policies provide more detail in relation to specific development scenarios.

##### **TC1 - town centre hierarchy**

This policy allocates High Road as a local centre within the town centre hierarchy. This policy and Policies TC2 and TC6 seek to protect the retail function of High Road in accordance with its position as a local centre at the foot of the hierarchy.



Local Plan (1998) and Local Plan Alterations (2006)

### U2A - development in flood risk areas

This policy seeks to ensure a sequential approach to development, which prioritises the development of areas with little or no risk of flooding and sets out criteria that must be satisfied if development is to be permitted in areas of flood risk. Most of the southerly parts of settlement and airfield are within the area broadly defined as at risk from flooding on the proposals map, and Policy U2B requires that a site specific Flood Risk Assessment is required for development proposals in this area.

### Housing

There are also policies that control affordable housing provision and financial contributions, which are discussed in more detail in relation to the local property market. Policies H6A and H7A require 40% affordable housing for developments of 15 or more homes or on sites of 0.5 hectares or above in settlements with a population of 3,000 or greater.

### Detailed design

There are a range of policies relating to more detailed design issues, which would impact layout and financial viability. These would, for example, influence the density of new development (Policy H3A), the mix of dwelling sizes (Policy H4A) and the number of car parking spaces that should be provided (Policy ST6).

### Transport and movement

There are a number of policies that relate to transport and movement. The following policies are of particular relevance:

- Policy ST1 – Location of Development
- Policy ST2 – Accessibility of Development
- Policy ST4 – Road Safety
- Policy ST7 – New roads and extensions or improvements to existing roads
- Policy ST8 – Epping to Ongar Line
- Policy ST9 – Stansted Aerodrome Safeguarding

In terms of accessibility and location of development, proposals should be located in areas that maximise sustainable transport modes such as walking, cycling and public transport. This would mean, if necessary, the provision of additional infrastructure, locations with regular access to public transport and/or links with public rights of way and cycle networks.

The council states that permission will be granted for new developments if they do not cause excessive traffic congestion, become detrimental to highway safety and cause adverse effects on the environment. The council will expect satisfactory mitigation measures to offset any potential road safety implications.

The protection of the Epping to Ongar Line and the Stansted safeguarding zone is of high importance to the council and will likely refuse applications that will compromise the integrity of their operation.



Issues & Options for the Local Plan:  
Consultation Document (July 2012)

### Issues & Options for the Local Plan: Consultation Document (July 2012)

The Consultation Document sets out options for the Council's policy position in relation to core issues, including Green Belt, natural and built heritage, housing, economic development, transport, infrastructure and climate change. There are also more detailed options for North Weald Bassett and North Weald Airfield, with potential areas for growth, opportunity areas, and development sites identified.

Whilst the preparation of the new Local Plan is at a relatively early stage and does not yet contain preferred options, the contents of the Consultation Document and consultation responses have helped to inform the masterplanning study.

### Local evidence base documents

There are a number of relevant documents which will inform the emerging Local Plan. These include the existing and emerging updated Strategic Land Availability Assessment (SLAA), the Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA 2012), demographic forecasts from consultants Edge Analytics, a Level 2 (site-specific) Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, traffic modelling and impact assessments and landscape characteristics. A list of background documents is available on the Council's website.

### Housing Need

The most relevant published document which considers the potential housing need of Epping Forest District is the 2013 demographic projections report by Edge Analytics (accepted into the Local Plan evidence base in December 2013).

The Edge Analytics forecasting report offers a range of population forecasts for the district between 2011 and 2033, dependent upon the assumptions made regarding economic, demographic and national/local policy changes. The results of these forecasts vary widely. The highest population growth forecasts predict an annual dwelling requirement of between 698 and 741 dwellings per year. The lowest forecasts, which explore the hypothetical absence of migration, predict an annual dwelling requirement of between 240 and 273 dwellings per year. For more information on the detail of the 2013 Edge Analytics population forecasting study, please see section 3.2 in this document. Edge Analytics released an updated version of the population projections in autumn 2014. The masterplanning study should be read in conjunction with this updated analysis.

There is also the Strategic Housing Market Assessment produced in 2013 (which was noted by Councillors but not formally accepted into the evidence base). The SHMA provides a picture of the local housing market, which is intended to help inform the production of planning policies, such as those relating to targets for new homes; it provides an overview of the existing housing stock, existing prices and affordability, and future requirements, including property size requirements. It includes overall trend-based projections for Epping Forest District, based on the mostly recent published Office of National Statistics projections for the district. However, it was published before the Edge Analytics December 2013 study had been prepared, and so does not incorporate this more up to date information.

In terms of the overall housing requirement between 2011 and 2033, the SHMA estimates that a total of 16,700 new homes would be required – 5,900 of these would be market homes, 6,700 intermediate affordable and 4,100 social rented. It also provides a breakdown of the overall requirement by unit size and shows that the greatest need is for three bedroom homes, closely followed by homes with two bedrooms and then one bedroom; there is very little need for homes with five or more bedrooms and only limited need for homes with four bedrooms.

Neither of these documents forecast future growth for North Weald Bassett in isolation, they forecast only for the entire district.

It is important to note that new demographic information is published at regular intervals by the Office of National Statistics and the department of Communities and Local Government, so the Council will need to update their evidence when necessary.

### **North Weald Airfield Study (2013)**

Deloitte's "North Weald Airfield Review (5 July 2013)" report assessed three development options for North Weald Airfield (NWA) and identified issues regarding infrastructure capacity and potential infrastructure upgrades required to serve the proposed developments. Of the three options assessed by Deloitte, the preference identified by the Council was for the Scenario 3, a combined development option which looks at retaining current aviation activity and providing additional mixed-use development, including 1,670 new homes. The three development options were:

- Option 1: Assessment of solely aviation based options
- Option 2: Assessment of solely non-aviation options
- Option 3: Assessment of mixed use options

The report concluded that there were significant concerns in respect of the sustainability of Options 1 and 2 and that Option 3 (a mixed aviation, employment and residential option) offered the best opportunity to meet the overall objectives for NWA. Option 3 comprised:

- The retention of existing aviation functions on the western side of the airfield with the remaining areas considered for residential, employment and leisure uses with a phased development of the eastern and southern sides of the site.
- The increase in population as a result of these plots being developed would trigger an urban threshold requirement such that facilities would be required to serve a community at a 'local urban community' capacity.
- A single plot (plot 6) was designated for employment use. This area was envisaged to support either further development of hangars or, as we have assumed for this option, the development of additional business premises to complement the commercial activities currently being undertaken by AMG, Kings Transport Services and Lightwood.
- The western side of the airfield is focused on the retention of the existing leisure and industrial aviation uses.

Use	Land	Units	Floorspace (sq m)
Residential	31.6	1,107	
Employment	8.2		31,160
Open Space	11		

A viability analysis was conducted on a Net Present Value basis (applying a discount value of 20%) and concluded that the development as envisaged resulted in a surplus land value of £4m. In the context of the scale of development envisaged this would be considered marginal and only a small negative change to sales values, build costs or timescale would render the project unviable on this basis.

As part of the study, Peter Brett Associates undertook a transport assessment for the local area and the likely impact of the three options on transport and movement in the local area. The key findings from this are set out in the transport section of this report.





Essex Road Passenger Transport Strategy

### County-level policy

Essex County Council (ECC) is the Minerals and Waste Planning Authority for North Weald Bassett and has adopted Local Plans for both Minerals and Waste - the Essex Minerals Local Plan (July 2014) and Essex and Southend Waste Local Plan (2001). Work on a new Waste Local Plan is at a very early stage.

ECC has also prepared a number of other policy documents that are relevant to North Weald Bassett, such as those that relate to its role as Local Highway Authority. These include documents relating to design, parking standards, strategies for walking, cycling, rail, road passenger transport and powered two wheelers, and detailed development management policies for new roads.

### Essex Transport Strategy (2011)

The Essex Transport Strategy (ETS) sets out the high level objectives and priorities for managing and improving transport within Essex and details policies on how to achieve them. Transport priorities for the West of Essex are specifically identified, including:

- Improving access to and from the M11 corridor;
- Providing the transport improvements needed to support housing and employment growth;
- Working with Transport for London to improve the journey experience of Essex residents using the Central Line underground services; and
- Improving access to Stansted Airport by low carbon forms of transport.

The ETS is to be supported by a Transport Implementation Plan, which will detail how the strategies and objectives of the ETS will be met through improvements. The Transport Implementation Plan is yet to be published.



**Replacement Minerals Local Plan: Pre-Submission Draft (January 2013)**

### **Replacement Minerals Local Plan: Pre-Submission Draft (January 2013)**

An area of land towards the eastern edge of the study area is safeguarded for sand and gravel extraction. As such, Policy S8 is relevant and would require that most types of development inside or within 250 metres of the allocated site would not be able to take place prior to consultation with ECC, with the aim of preventing the sterilisation of the site as a valuable economic resource.

### **Essex and Southend Waste Local Plan (2001)**

Policy WM4 identifies part of the North Weald Airfield, at its south-east corner, as a preferred location for waste management facilities. This means that the site is considered, in principle, suitable for waste management, subject to a series of detailed criteria. However, paragraph 8.36 makes clear that the site cannot be safeguarded for waste management facilities only, as it is part of a site previously allocated for employment uses in Epping Forest District Council's Local Plan (1998) that is also suitable for other uses.



### 3.2 SOCIO ECONOMIC ANALYSIS



House types in North Weald Bassett

This section sets out the socio-economic context for North Weald Bassett and assesses the existing social infrastructure within the settlement. A review has been undertaken of the Edge Analytics 2013 report looking at population forecasts for the district as a whole, and analysis has been undertaken using Office for National Statistics (ONS) data from the 2011 Census and from the 2010 Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD).

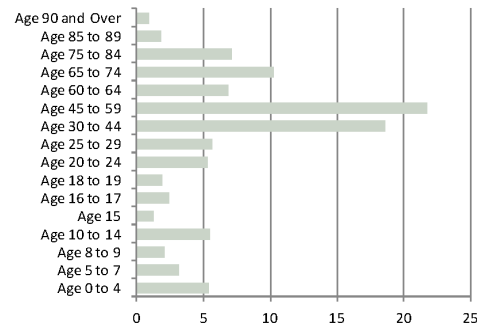
#### Edge Analytics report (2013)

Between 2001 and 2011 the population of Epping Forest District increased by 3,763 people or 3.1%. Over the same time period there has been roughly a 5% increase in dwellings.

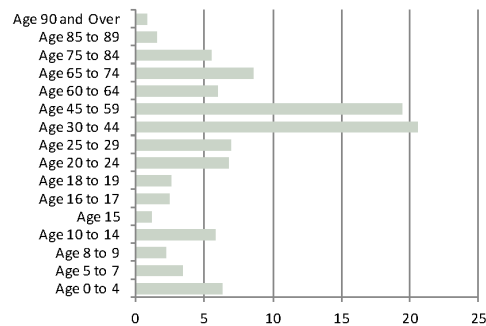
The Edge Analytics report offers a range of population forecasts for the district between 2011 and 2033 dependent upon the assumptions made regarding economic, demographic and national/local policy changes. The results of these forecasts vary widely. The highest population growth forecasts predict a population increase of 23.2% with an annual dwelling requirement of between 698 and 741 dwellings per year. The lowest forecasts explore the hypothetical absence of migration, putting the population growth at 3.8%, with an annual dwelling requirement of between 240 and 273 units per year. The reason for the range in numbers (240 and 273, or between 698 and 741), is because the report actually gives two sets of forecasts, based on whether household projections from 2011 or 2008 are used. The 2011 data (set A) is gathered from a period during the recession when the

formation of households was lower, as the housing market was weaker. The 2008 data (set B) is gathered from a period of higher rates of household formation, as it was during a period just before the recession when the housing market was relatively strong, and it predicts slightly higher percentage growth in the number of households.

For each of the sets there are ten further forecast scenarios which vary the assumptions made with regards to the predicted number of dwellings to be completed, the predicted growth in employment and the rate of migration (both internal and international). The results for these forecasts fall between the two examples discussed above. The report suggests that it is difficult to decide which of these forecasts is the most appropriate. It also suggests that when considering each pair of forecasts (each has an 'A' version using 2011 household formation rates, and a 'B' version using 2008 household formation) it is sensible to consider an average between 'A' and 'B'. This places the forecast for the number of homes between 257 and 719 dwellings per year from 2011 to 2033. Edge Analytics released an updated version of the population projections in autumn 2014. The masterplanning study should be read in conjunction with this updated analysis.



North Weald Bassett's age structure



England's age structure

As before, it must be remembered that new demographic information is published at regular intervals by the Office of National Statistics and the department of Communities and Local Government, so the Council will need to update its requirements as necessary.

### Demographics

At the time of the 2011 Census, North Weald Bassett Ward had a population of 4,477 people, which increased from 4,461 in the 2001 Census.

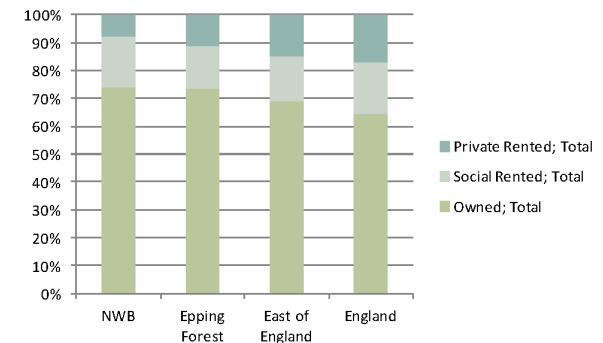
The age structure for the settlement indicates an above average number of people in the age brackets 45-59 (21.7% against a national 19.4%) and also in the age brackets 60-64, 65-74 and 75-84. There is a lower than average number of young children in the 0-4 age bracket and in the young adult categories of 18-19 and 20-24, perhaps due to there being no higher education establishments close by. This data is reflected in a higher than average median age of 44, compared to 39 at a national level.

### Housing

Census data from 2011 indicates that there are 2,037 dwellings in North Weald Bassett and 1,867 regularly inhabited homes in the settlement.

### Household tenure

Of the regularly inhabited homes in North Weald Bassett, over 73.3% were owned, either outright or with a mortgage, which is above the national average of 63.3%; 18.2% were socially rented, slightly above the national average of 17.7%; and 7.4% were privately rented, significantly below the national average of 16.8%. This information is illustrated in the chart below.



Household tenure

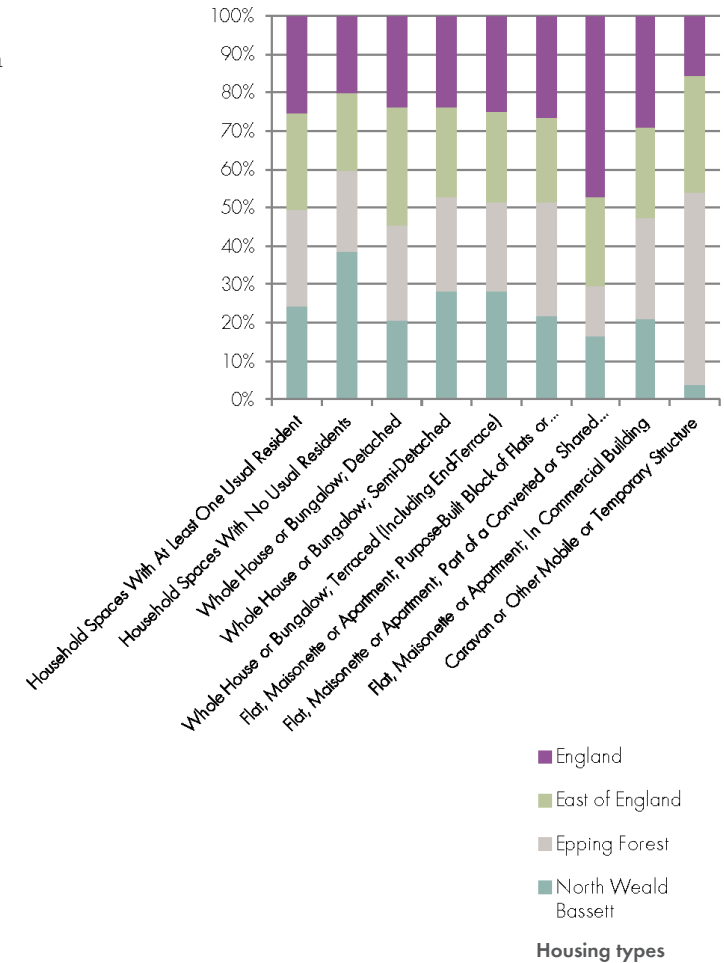




House types in North Weald Bassett

### House types

North Weald Bassett has a slightly greater proportion of semi-detached and terraced whole houses and a slightly smaller proportion of detached houses and flats or maisonettes in purpose built or converted residences than the national average. North Weald Bassett does have a significantly lower proportion of caravans and mobile homes and a significantly higher proportion of household spaces with no usual residents, at 8.3% of all household spaces in the settlement (169 dwellings). This indicates that, in exploring means of providing new homes for the settlement, it would be useful to review whether any unused dwellings could be brought back into use or these brownfield sites redeveloped with new homes. This should be investigated in reference to the Local Plan and the Empty Homes Strategy which the Council is currently preparing,

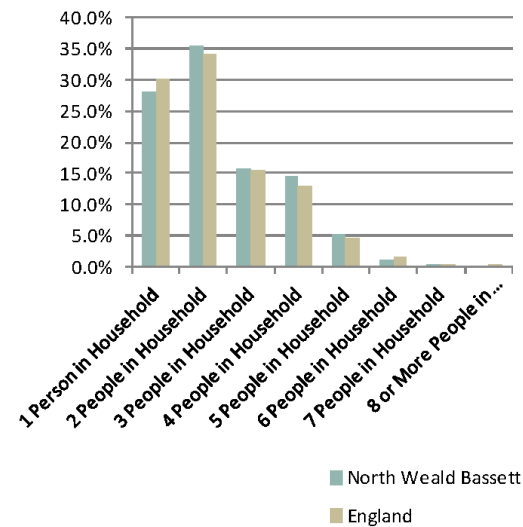




Houses on High Road

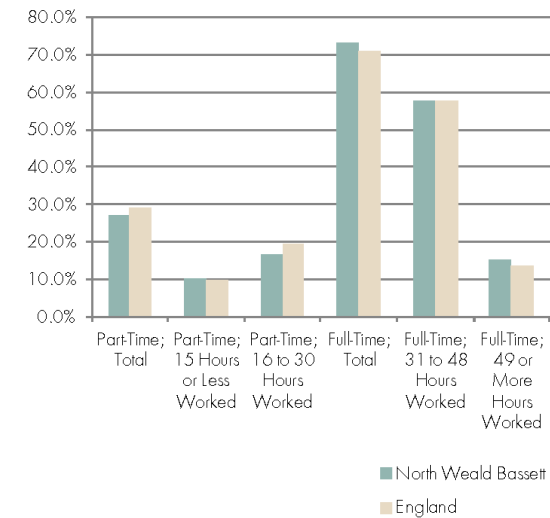
### Household size

North Weald Bassett had a higher than average proportion of 2-person households and 4-person households than at the national level and a lower than average proportion of 1-person households. In general, household size at the time of the 2011 Census was in line with national patterns.



### Employment patterns

North Weald Bassett has above average levels of employment at 69% of all residents (including non-working age residents) in comparison to a national average of 65%. North Weald Bassett has 2,239 residents aged 16-74 in employment. Of these, a slightly greater proportion of people work full-time (73.2% compared to a national average of 71%). The settlement also has a greater proportion of residents who work 49 or more hours a week (15.4% compared to a national 13.1%).



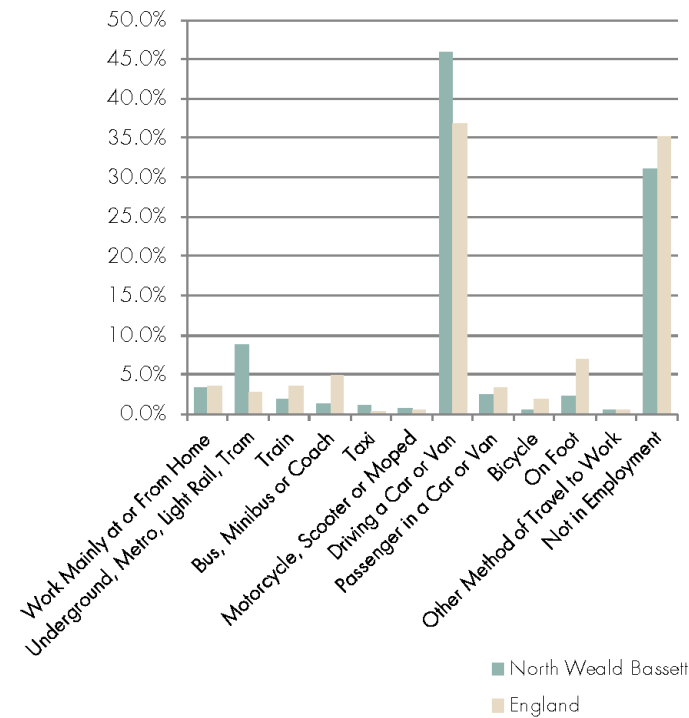




Large proportion of car use in settlement

### Method of travel to work

A significantly higher proportion of residents travel to work by driving a car or van than on a national level (46% compared to 37%) and there is also a greater proportion of people who take the underground (8.9% compared to 2.6%). This reflects the number of people who are travelling into central London on the Central Line from Epping.



### EXISTING SOCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE

#### Schools

North Weald Bassett has one primary school, St Andrew's Church of England, at the northern end of the settlement off School Green Lane, with playing fields immediately to the west. The school currently has 200 pupils in attendance, but has capacity for 297 pupils, meaning that the school could absorb growth in the settlement of up to 97 new primary school aged children.

Secondary schools are provided at Epping and Harlow. The distance to these schools is sufficient enough to require students to take public transport, but not far enough for students to qualify for free bus passes, which is considered an issue locally.

Standard primary school provision is for one school for 1,000 dwellings, or one new form entry of 21 places per 100 dwellings. This means that, given the existing extra capacity at the primary school, North Weald Bassett can accommodate children from up to 500 new homes without requirement for new form entries.



North Weald Golf Club

St Andrews Church

Scribbles Nursery

Bantham and Ongar Bowls Club

Weald Hall Residential Home

St Andrews  
C of E School

Playing Fields  
Playground

Hall

Wheeler's Farm Gardens  
Sheltered Housing GP

Library

Blakes Golf Club

Methodist  
Church

Village Hall

Playground

North Weald Wireless  
Station Bowls Club

North Weald Par 3 Golf Course

Norway House  
Homeless Persons Hostel

Abeyfield Care Home

Leonard Davis House  
Assisted Living

Social infrastructure

N



North Weald Bassett Library



North Weald Chemist

## Health

The Limes Medical Centre is located centrally to the settlement on the High Road. The centre is open on Monday, Wednesday and Thursday mornings, and alternate Friday mornings. Anecdotal feedback suggests that the medical centre is at capacity and it is difficult to get an appointment here or at the alternative Limes Medical Centre in Epping. North Weald Bassett does not currently have a dental surgery.

The Practice reports that an increase in North Weald Bassett's population level could be accommodated through employing additional GPs. However, the existing facilities are not fit for purpose and a larger, modern facility is required for the existing patient base and would certainly be necessary should there be an increase in the local population.

Standard assumptions are for 1 GP per 1,800 population and one dental practitioner per 2,000 population. (NHS standard)

## Sports and activities

North Weald Bassett has a cricket club, which play on the Memorial Playing Fields, two bowls clubs and two football teams. The North Weald Airfield additionally provides sport and leisure activities including car test drives, a shooting range, archery, model air plane flying and cycling races. North Weald Bassett does not currently have sports hall courts. While facilities are provided at the primary school, these are not open to the general public.

The nearest public swimming pools are located at Harlow Leisurezone, 6.5 miles northwest, and Chelmsford Nuffield Centre, 15.5 miles to the east.

Standard assumptions are for one sports court per 3,130 population. (Sport England)

## Community spaces

North Weald Bassett has a Village Library, located centrally on the High Road and community space which can be hired at North Weald Bassett Village Hall and at St Andrew's Primary School. The level of community space for the size of the settlement is relatively generous, though it would be important to maintain and enhance this space, should new homes be developed in the settlement.

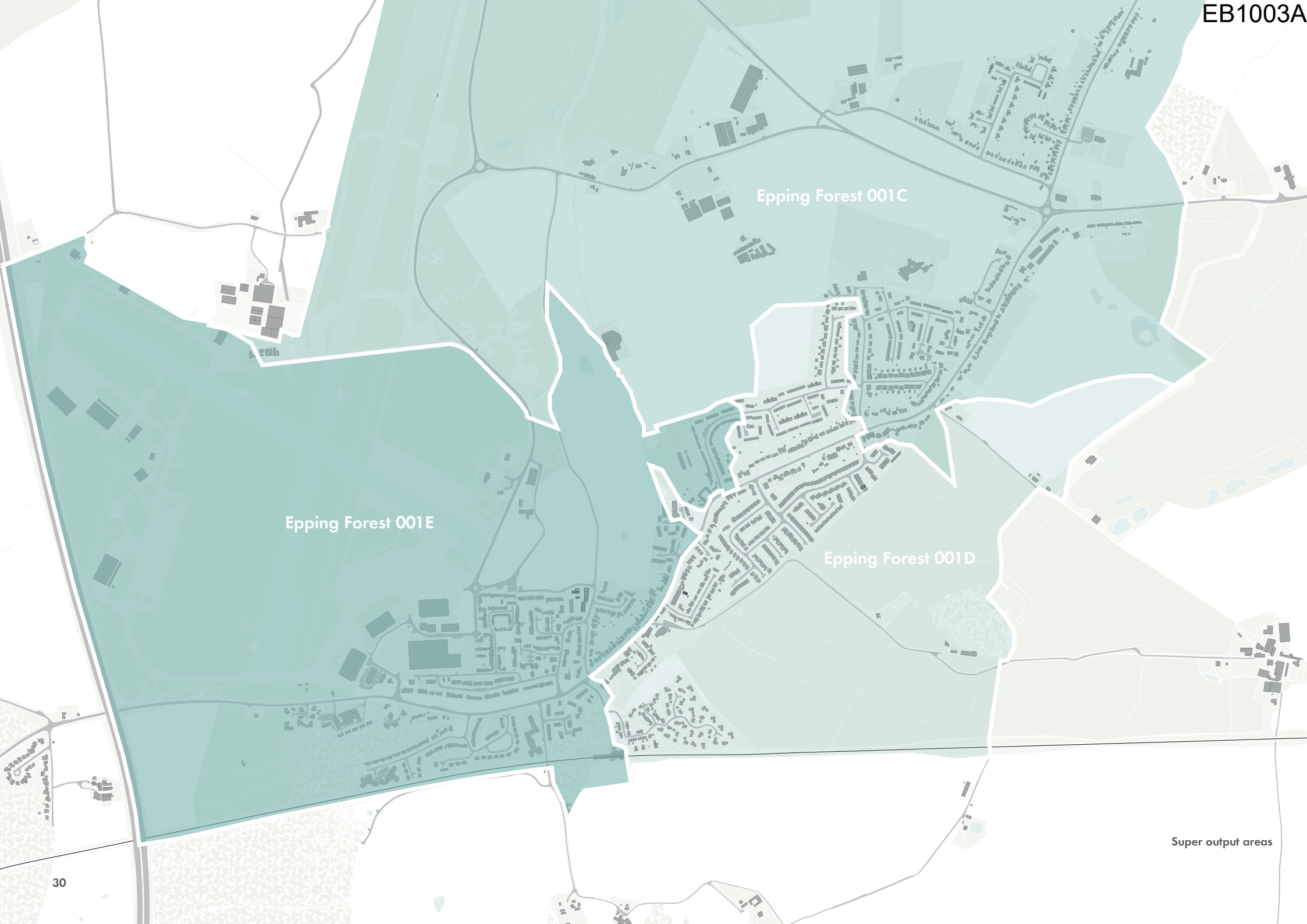
Standard assumptions are for 250 sqm of multi-purpose community space per 1,000 population (Colchester Borough Council SPD) and 26.5sqm of library space per 1,000 population (DCMS) although both of these would be dependent on existing local provision.

## Shops and services

North Weald Bassett settlement commercial centre is relatively small, located towards the southern end of the settlement on the High Road. The shops include a Co-operative food store, a post office, a greengrocers/ florist, a hairdressers, a chemist, take-aways, a tea room, two pubs and a gift shop.

The commercial centre currently has limited parking levels (approximately 14 unmarked spaces) in front of the parade of shops and proposals to strengthen the commercial centre must include consideration of parking provision for the centre.





Super output areas

### Indices of Multiple Deprivation

The Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) have been measured for lower level Super Output Areas of a few hundred homes in 2004, 2007 and 2010. There are 32,482 SOAs in the country and the IMD measures levels of deprivation overall and for the following domains:

- Income
- Employment
- Health deprivation and disability
- Education, skills and training
- Barriers to housing and services
- Crime
- Living environment

The IMD data for the three lower level super output areas in North Weald Bassett (Epping Forest 001C, 001D and 001E) indicates that overall, levels of deprivation are relatively low in the settlement, with 001D being in the least deprived 50% of SOAs in the country for all domains.

Indices of Deprivation 2010 for SOAs	001C		001D		001E	
	Rank	%	Rank	%	Rank	%
Rank of Index of Multiple Deprivation Score	21930	66.7%	28114	85.5%	13988	42.6%
Rank of Income Score	27005	82.1%	25586	77.8%	12840	39.1%
Rank of Employment Score	23639	71.9%	27130	82.5%	17144	52.2%
Rank of Health Deprivation and Disability Score	24176	73.5%	25410	77.3%	12223	<b>37.2%</b>
Rank of Education Skills and Training Score	11478	<b>34.9%</b>	17120	52.1%	13441	40.9%
Rank of Barriers to Housing and Services Score	6212	<b>18.9%</b>	19097	58.1%	11442	<b>34.8%</b>
Rank of Crime Score	19584	59.6%	24934	75.8%	9232	<b>28.1%</b>
Rank of Living Environment Score	24978	76.0%	28845	87.7%	15080	45.9%

001C is within the 20% most deprived SOAs in the country in terms of barriers to housing and services and 001E is within the 30% most deprived SOAs in the country in terms of crime.

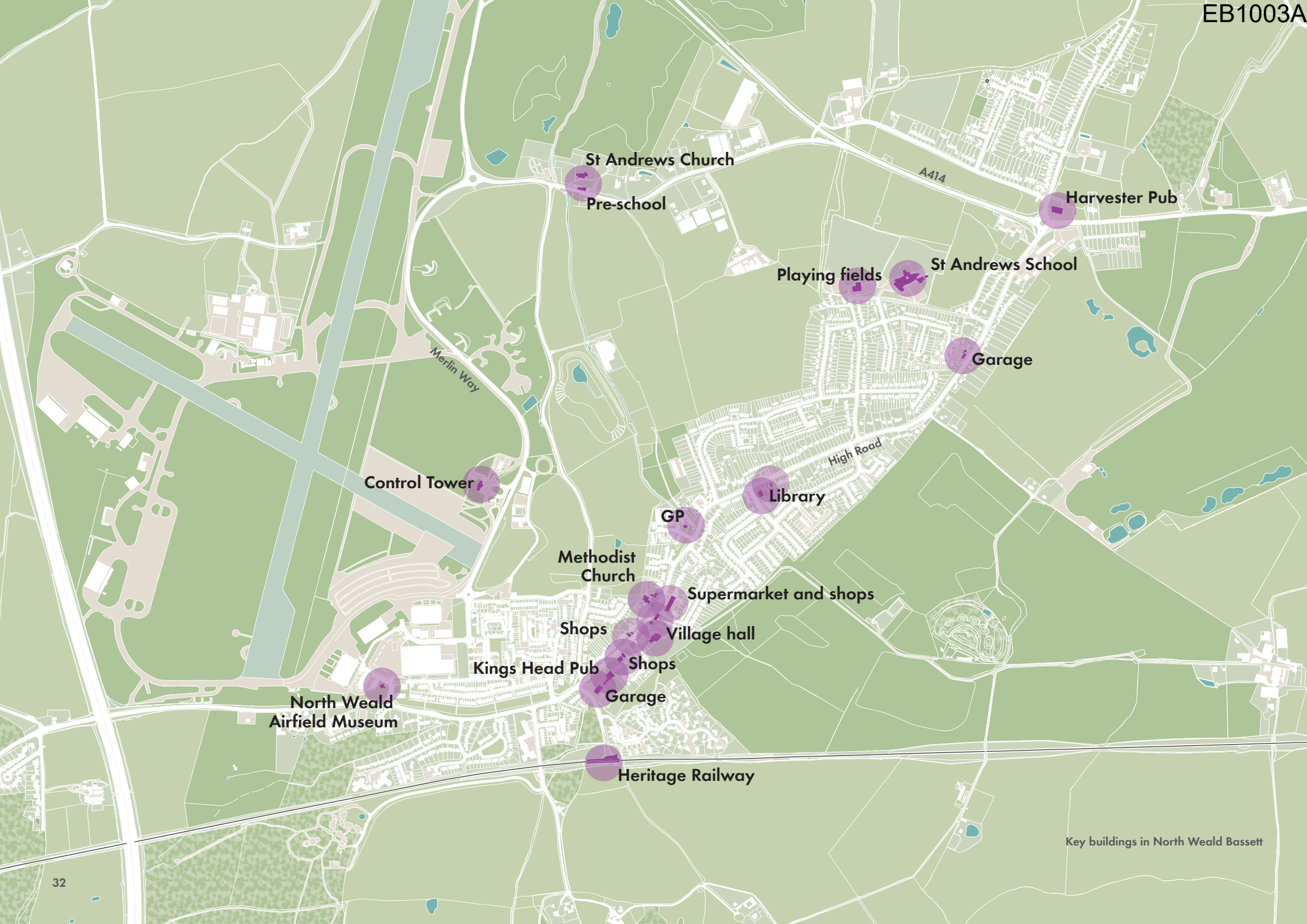
The housing and services domain measures the physical and financial accessibility of housing and key local services. The indicators fall into two sub-domains: 'geographical barriers', which relate to the physical proximity of local services, and 'wider barriers' which includes issues relating to access to housing such as affordability. 'Barriers to housing and services' is included as one of the seven domains because accessibility of suitable housing and local amenities are significant determinants of quality of life. People who cannot afford to enter owner occupation, live in overcrowded homes or are classed as homeless are deprived of the safety and stability of a home that is appropriate to their household's needs. Individuals who have to travel long distances to key local services are also disadvantaged.

#### *Wider Barriers*

- Household overcrowding: The proportion of all households judged to have insufficient space
- Homelessness: The rate of acceptances for housing assistance
- Housing affordability: The difficulty of access to owner-occupation

#### *Geographical Barriers*

- Road distance to a GP surgery
- Road distance to a food shop
- Road distance to a primary school
- Road distance to a Post Office



St Andrews Church

Pre-school

A414

Harvester Pub

Playing fields

St Andrews School

Garage

Merlin Way

Control Tower

High Road

Library

GP

Methodist Church

Supermarket and shops

Shops

Village hall

Kings Head Pub

Shops

Garage

North Weald Airfield Museum

Heritage Railway

Key buildings in North Weald Bassett





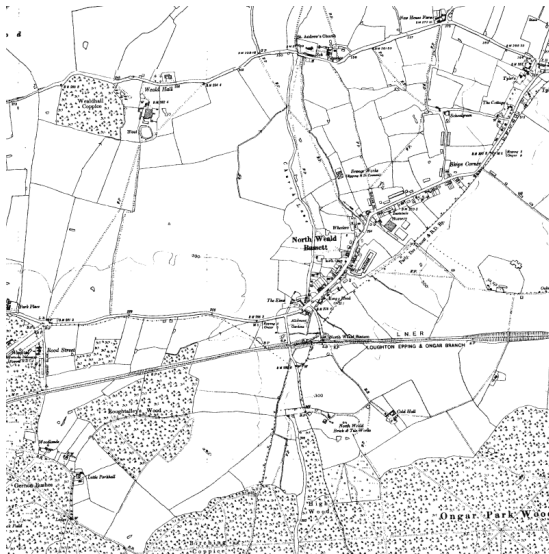
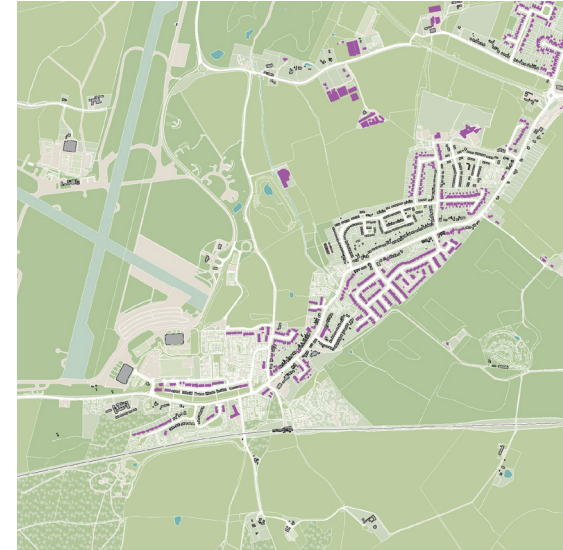
High Road



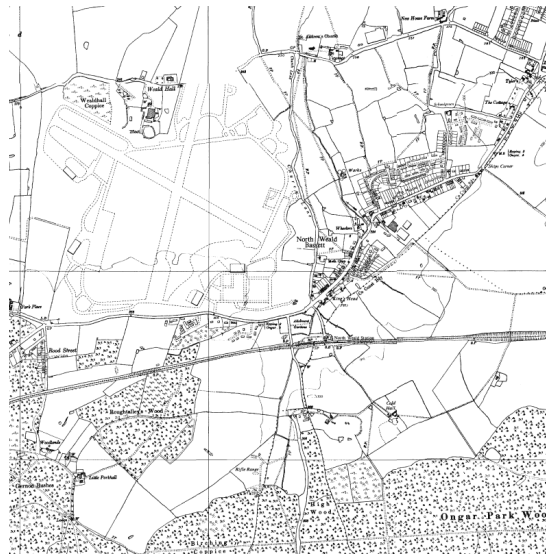
Kings Head Pub

### 3.3 LANDSCAPE, CHARACTER AND HERITAGE

This section sets out the analysis of the key urban design characteristics and the heritage and identity of North Weald Bassett. This has been undertaken to ensure a thorough understanding of what makes the settlement special and how this should be taken into account when establishing a framework for future investment and development.



1938

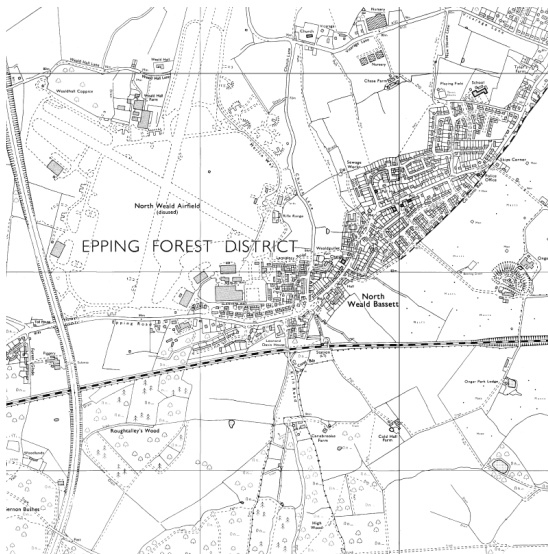


1960



1974





1984



2014

### Development over time

Review of historic maps of North Weald Bassett highlight the fact that the settlement has developed incrementally over time in a reasonably consistent manner. There has been no one period during which the character and form of the settlement has been static, or during which a considerable amount of development has changed the form of the settlement dramatically.

In 1938, residential and commercial buildings were scattered along the High Road and one or two side residential areas were established, with new homes beginning to fill these. The airfield was in place following the first world war.

By 1960, additional commercial buildings relating to the airfield had been developed and a network of residential streets introduced to the north of the High Road, around Queen's Road. A row of homes were established by this point on Vicarage Lane East by Tyler's Green.

By 1974, the Queen's Road residential area had been supplemented and a network of residential streets added to the south of the High Road at Thornhill. Commercial units were developed alongside Chase Farm and the residential area at Tyler's Green extended to the north.

By 1984, the settlement had added infill residential areas and a new neighbourhood close to the airfield, leading from Church Lane.

Today, the Tempest Mead and Blenheim Square developments have further 'fattened' the settlement at the southern end, each bound by the rail line or airfield.



### Historic Development

North Weald Bassett is a low density ribbon development of mostly 20th century housing. The church (listed) is not on High Road, which suggests a split historic centre (if there was one). The settlement is not in a conservation area. The wider area is characterised as type F5, Ridges and Valleys, in the Epping Forest Landscape Characterisation Study.

The M11 to the west was built in the late 1970s, but only fully operational in 1980.

To the south is the Former Central Line. The central section of the Central Line was constructed in the 1890s, but it was only extended from Stratford to Epping and Ongar (over the London and North Eastern Railway) in the 1940s. The section between Epping and Ongar was closed in 1994. There have been various train enthusiasts running trains on the tracks since, but it is not a commuter service.

The key historic features are as follows:

#### Roman Road

The course of a Roman Road runs across the east side of the site, although it is unclear how visible this is on the ground. There could be archaeology present, which could be used as a design constraint.

#### Estate Lands

The site of two ancient estates, to the west and east of the settlement. Both have listed houses on them: (1) Weald Hall Farm House and Little Weald Hall, to the north and west of the airfield – it is unclear whether

there are any landscape features remaining; (2) Ongar Park Hall and Lodge – outside the site, but also unclear as to remains of landscape features.

### North Weald Redoubt

This fort is one of 15 London mobilisation centres constructed during the 1890s to protect London against possible invasion. It is a scheduled ancient monument. It is on higher ground, and its setting will have to be considered. There is no direct connection with the airfield, but it was used in WWI and WWII.

### North Weald Airfield

The airfield opened in 1916 and saw active service in WWI and WWII. The control tower, which was built in 1952, is listed at grade II and the officers mess (Norway House) was built in 1923 and is listed at grade II. The site remained in RAF usage until the 1980s. It is now used for events, shows etc. The airfield is the biggest local feature in the area, there is an active pressure group to keep it open. Much of the development of the settlement is related to the airfield.

### Listed Buildings

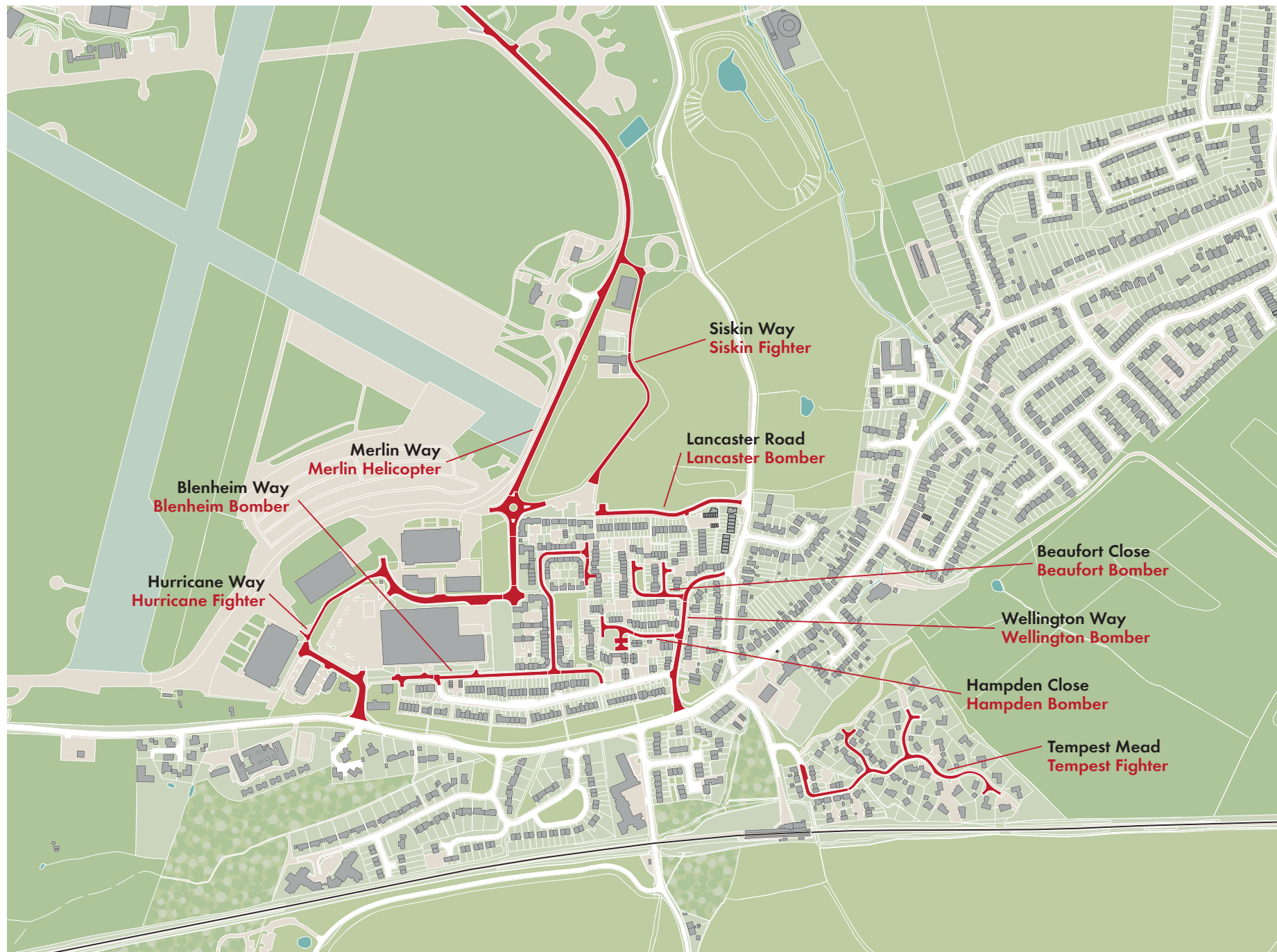
There are several listed buildings within the settlement, but, depending on masterplan, of which the most significant are the Ongar Redoubt, the Control Tower, the Officers Mess, Weald Hall and Ongar Park.



Settlement Atlas 1805

The 1805 map shows that the historic urban structure is triangular – North Weald (location of the church), Tyler's Green and Weald Gullet (at base of Church Road) – with Weald Hall to the west and Ongar Park Hall to the east.

From this brief desktop review, it would seem that there are likely to be no major heritage constraints to development (other than military history), but that there are several surviving features that could be used to inform the design. The key consideration will be how the airfield is treated, and how a unified settlement is created.



Airfield heritage





Airfield control tower



The Norwegian Wing Clubhouse

### Airfield heritage

North Weald Bassett's aviation heritage is evident throughout the settlement in the form of street and development names. Many of these reflect the names of fighter planes including Hurricane, Blenheim, Tempest, Beaufort and Lancaster. The street names which draw on the aviation heritage of the settlement are highlighted in the plan to the left.



Merlin Way

A414

High Road

Walking routes



Walking south of the settlement



Looking back towards the settlement from Ongar Redoubt

- ■ ■ ■ ■ Bridle way
- ■ ■ ■ ■ Footpath
- ● ● ● ● Unregistered footpath

### Landscape Character

In 2009 Epping Forest District Council (EFDC) commissioned two landscape studies of the district to enable a better understanding of its landscapes and provide an evidence base for informing policies within the Local Development Framework. These two studies comprise:

- A district-wide Landscape Character Assessment; and
- A settlement-edge Landscape Sensitivity Assessment.

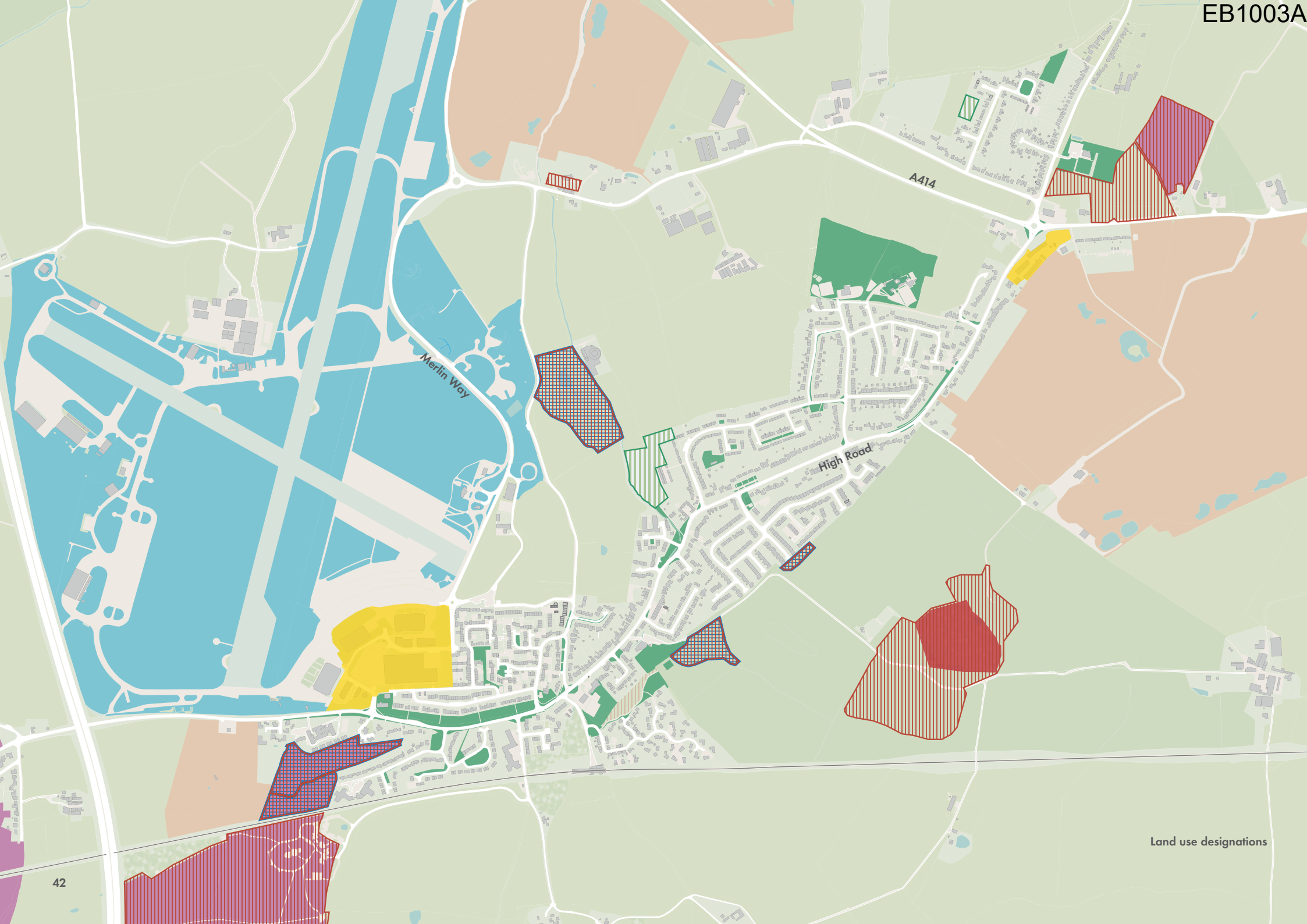
The landscape designations and allocation of different levels of sensitivity in these reports suggests the landscape to the south east of the village is the most sensitive to future development.

The studies have informed the Greenbelt Review currently being undertaken by EFDC. It is worth noting that the reports make high level characterisations of the landscape. Further assessment of landscape requirements for individual sites would be required at a detailed design stage.

### Walking routes

The greenbelt land surrounding North Weald Bassett is traversed by a network of bridleways and public rights of way which are used regularly by walkers and dog walkers. Additional informal routes also exist, which are visible as pedestrian 'desire lines' on satellite views of the settlement. The masterplan will take account of these routes and their amenity value to local residents.





Land use designations



North Weald Par 3 Golf Course



Garage on High Road



Local Nature Reserves



Local Wildlife Sites



Scheduled Ancient Monument



Ancient woodland



Settlement green and open spaces



Industrial areas



Airfield



Golf courses



Allotments

### Land use designations

North Weald Bassett is covered by a number of land use designations that should inform any future development and investment in the settlement.

Ancient woodland exists to the south of the rail line and to the north of the High Road, close to Tyler's Green.

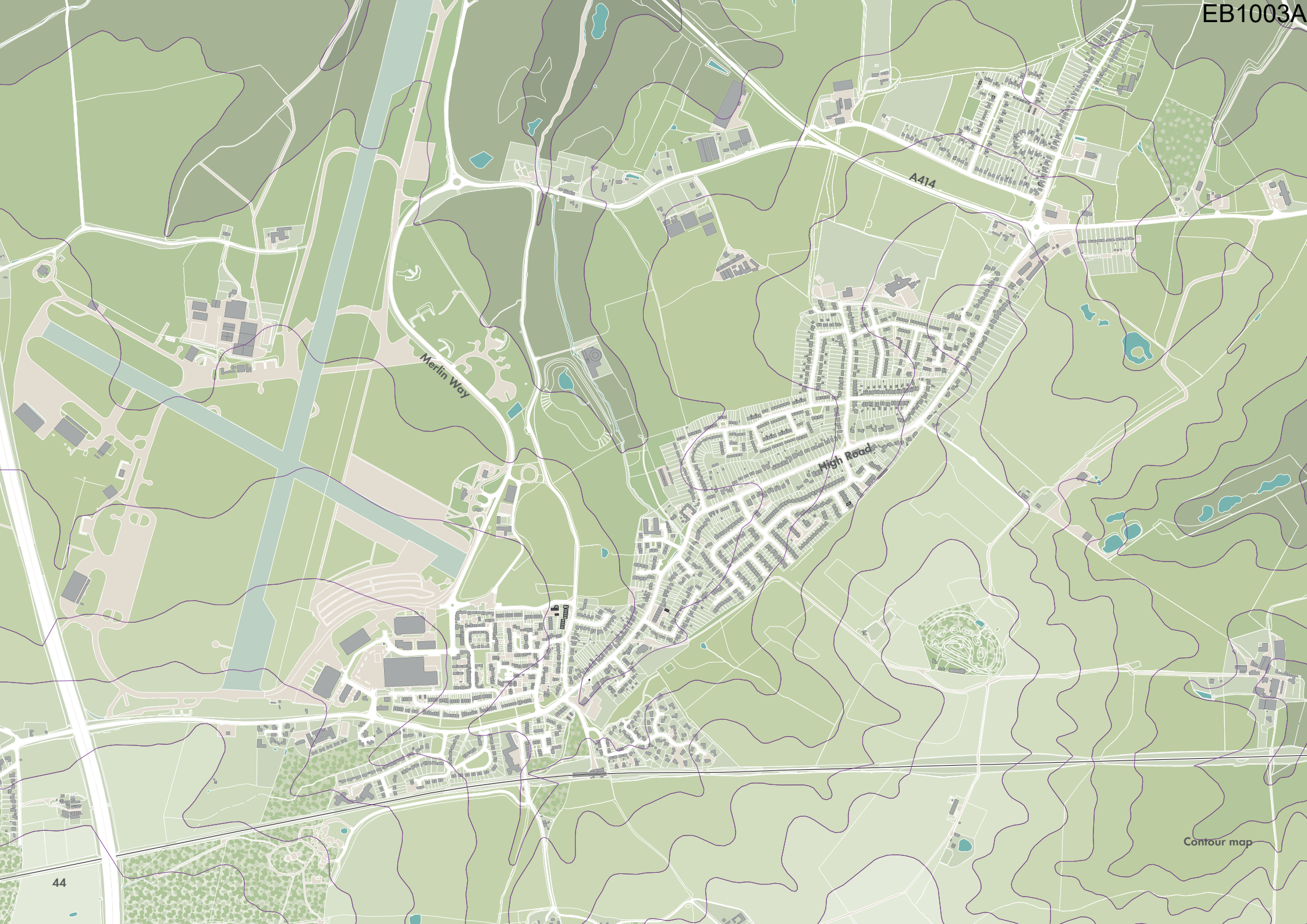
The Ongar Redoubt, to the east of the settlement on raised land is identified as a Scheduled Monument by English Heritage and included on their Heritage at Risk register.

Local Wildlife Sites exist in close proximity to the edges of the settlement. These cannot be built upon and would require a suitable buffer zone. Where they fall within a broader development area these would need to be included as part of a larger open space.

Green amenity space is scattered throughout the settlement, including particular areas close to the commercial centre, by the school and close to the flood risk area to the west of the settlement. Golf courses are located to the east of the High Road, at the northern end of the settlement, and between the High Road and the rail line at the south western end of the settlement.

Employment space is broadly located close to the airfield and within the airfield site itself, at Chase Farm and at the northern end of the High Road, by Tyler's Green.





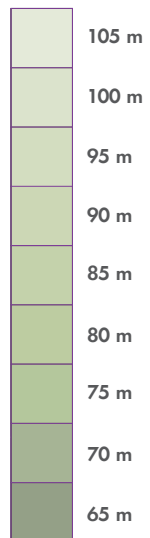
Merlin Way

A414

High Road

Contour map



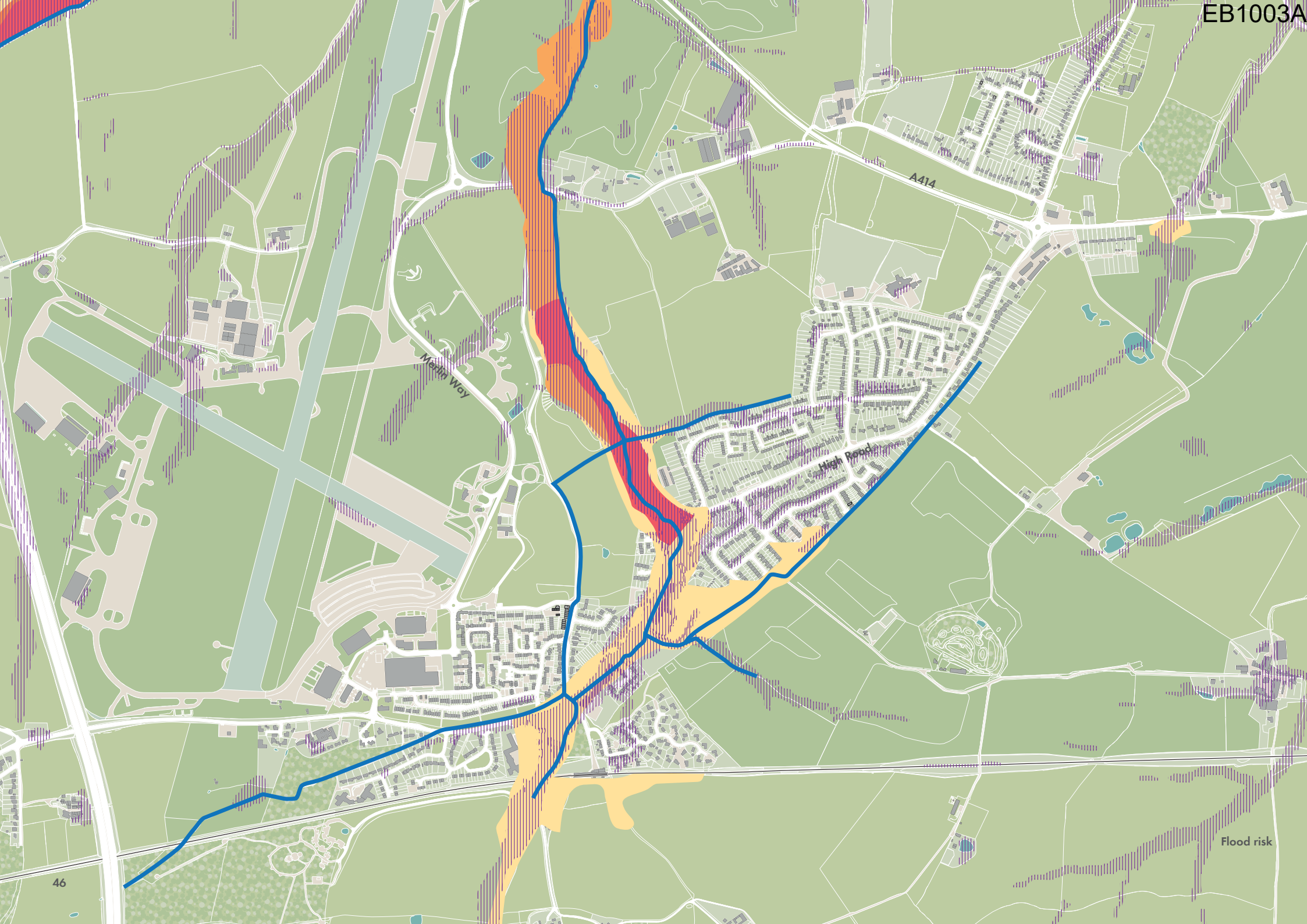


### Topography

North Weald Bassett is set in a natural dip in land levels, with land rising to the east, with the historic Ongar Redoubt being placed on a significant vantage point with extended views over the surrounding countryside to the south and east. The settlement itself from this point is almost invisible, with chimney stacks peeping above the horizon line but no substantial built fabric visible.

### TPOs

There are a number of Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) in place protecting trees and groups of trees which have significant amenity value. Notably there are a number of protected trees in the vicinity of the relatively recent developments at Tempest Mead and Blenheim Square. These protected trees would have to be considered when planning development. However the general disposition and location of protected trees does not present a significant constraint on growth in North Weald Bassett.



Medlin Way

A414

High Road



Culvert running past the Village Hall

### Flood risk

The plan to the left illustrates the risk from river and surface water flooding which is likely to happen once in a thousand years. This identifies a significant proportion of the central settlement area along the High Road as being within the flood risk area.

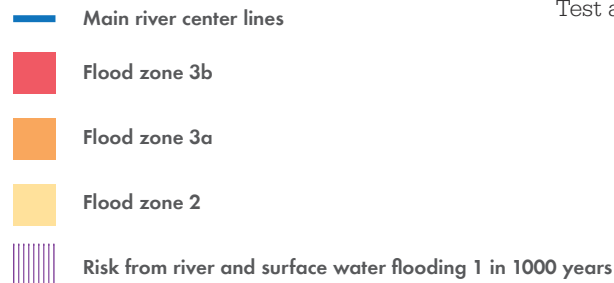
The area of risk on undeveloped land close to the settlement runs to the east of Church Lane, through the water treatment works. This includes some areas at the highest risk of flooding, within flood zones 3A and 3B of the Environment Agency's flood map. An area of flood risk also exists to the west of the main runway within the North Weald Airfield.

The NPPF at paragraphs 100 and 101 states that inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding should be avoided by directing development away from areas at highest risk. Local Plans should be supported by Strategic Flood Risk Assessment and develop policies to manage flood risk from all sources, taking account of advice from the Environment Agency and others. Local Plans should apply a sequential, risk-based approach to the location of development to avoid where possible flood risk to people and property and manage any residual risk, taking account of the impacts of climate change, by applying the Sequential Test and if necessary, applying the Exception Test.

The aim of the Sequential Test is to steer new development to areas with the lowest probability of flooding. Development should not be allocated or permitted if there are reasonably available sites appropriate for the proposed development in areas with a lower probability of flooding. If, following application of the Sequential Test, it is not possible, consistent with wider sustainability objectives, for the development to be located in zones with a lower probability of flooding, the Exception Test can be applied if appropriate. For the Exception Test to be passed:

- It must be demonstrated that the development provides wider sustainability benefits to the community that outweigh flood risk, informed by a Strategic Flood Risk Assessment where one has been prepared; and
- A site-specific flood risk assessment must demonstrate that the development will be safe for its lifetime taking account of the vulnerability of its users, without increasing flood risk elsewhere, and, where possible, will reduce flood risk overall. Both elements of the test will have to be passed for development to be allocated or permitted.

Existing waterways running through the village are culverted at various points and opportunities exist to de-culvert and improve the quality of these waterways.







1



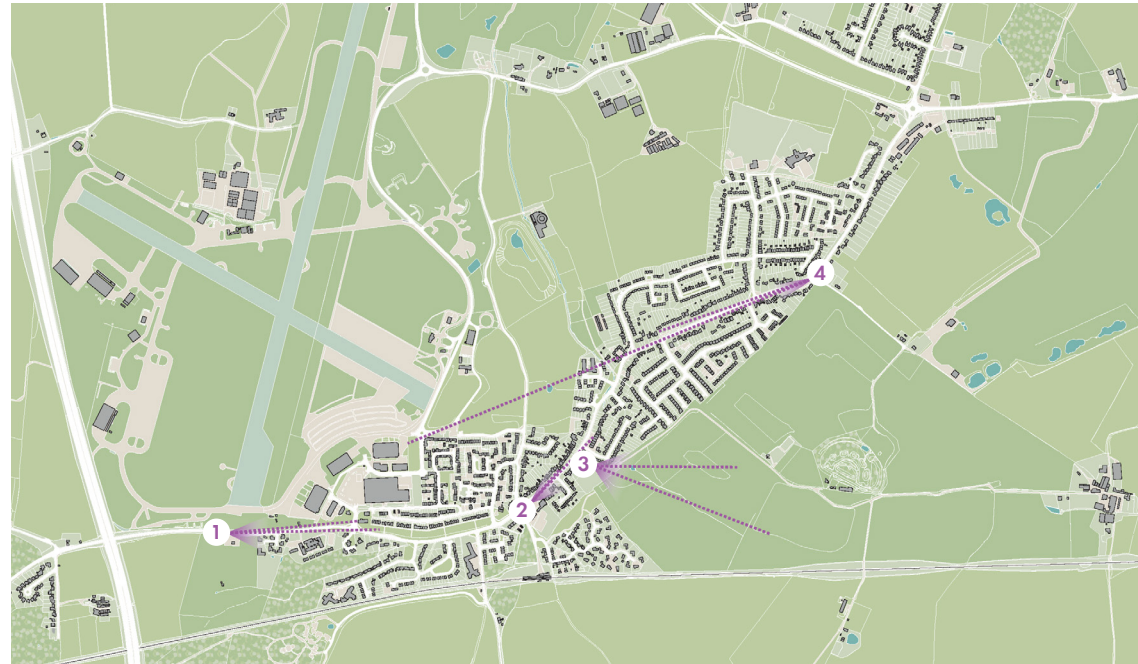
2



3



4



Location and extent of views 1, 2, 3 and 4



5

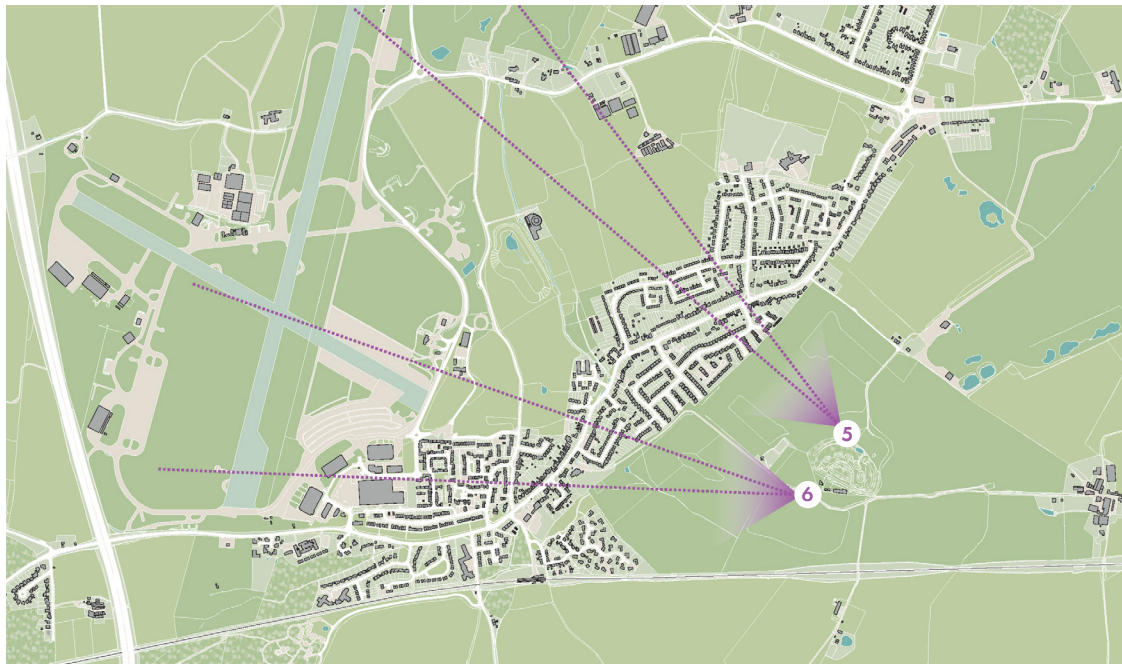


6

### Key views

A number of key views have been identified as being particularly important, either on the approach to the settlement, in the commercial centre or looking across the settlement out to the surrounding fields.

Important views also exist from the raised land close to the Ongar Redoubt, looking west across the settlement. This highlights the minimal visual impact of the settlement on the landscape from this point.



Location and extent of views 5 and 6



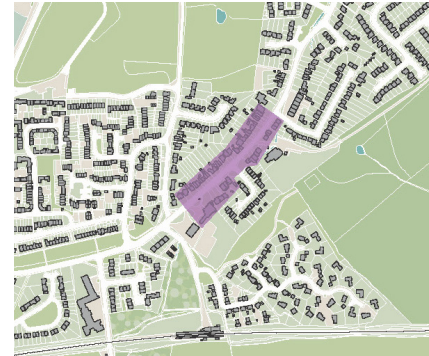
### Density levels

Density levels within North Weald Bassett have generally been at a consistent level throughout the settlement's evolution with the commercial centre being approximately 29 units per hectare, Thornhill being 27 units per hectare and the Queen's Road area being 26 units per hectare.

More recent residential development varies from these density levels in both directions. Tempest Mead is a relatively low density, with approximately 17 units per hectare. Lysander Court and Blenheim Square, however, each have higher levels of density at 44 units per hectare and 58 units per hectare, respectively.

Review of these developments and feedback during the stage one consultation suggest that it would be most appropriate to reflect historic density levels in North Weald Bassett in new development. A density level of between 30 units and 45 units per hectare appears to be broadly appropriate as a general principle.

Socio-economic analysis of the area has identified a disproportionately high number of household spaces which do not have regular residents. This characteristic is worth considering in future to provide homes on existing sites and reduce pressure on density levels for new development.

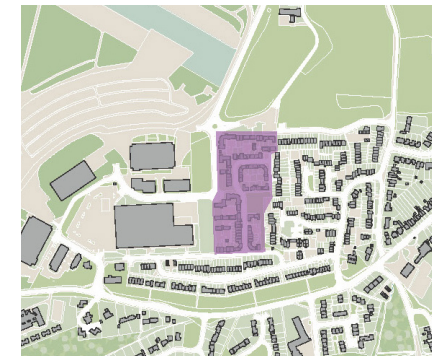
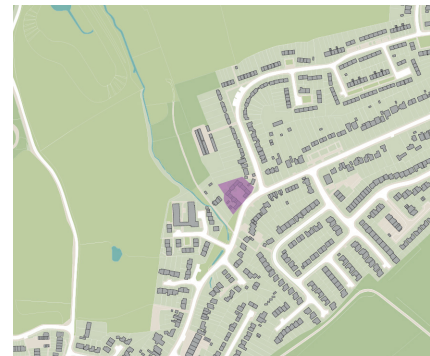


Village centre 29 u/ha



Thornhill 27 u/ha





Queens Road 26 u/ha



Tempest Mead 17 u/ha



Lysander Court 44 u/ha



Blenheim Square 59 u/ha



**Settlement character**

There are a number of features that provide character for the settlement. These include St Andrew's Church (1330) to the north of the settlement, and the Kings Head pub (first built 15th century). North Weald Airfield displays a number of planes preserved from the second world war, with the war memorial and debt of honour memorial on the main road as you enter the settlement.

There are a number of 19th century houses on High Road, with a few older buildings scattered through the settlement. The majority of the housing to the north were constructed from the 1950s onwards.







### 3.4 TRANSPORT

#### Walking & Cycling

The airfield, M11 and railway line form significant barriers to movement on foot and by bicycle around North Weald Bassett, with the quality of existing facilities being fairly poor.

Existing pedestrian facilities within the airfield itself are fairly limited, with no direct connections to North Weald Bassett other than unofficial routes through the existing industrial estate. A number of walking routes, bridleways and other rights of way connect to the north, east and south of the settlement across the countryside. Strategic connections include the Stort Valley Way connecting to Harlow, north of the settlement, and the Essex Way, connecting Ongar to Epping, south of the settlement.

There are few, if any, cycling facilities in the area. While distances to key destinations such as Epping and Harlow are not excessive, the environment for cycling is generally not attractive. Connections to Epping are along the B181, which is relatively narrow and busy with traffic. Cycling to Harlow, one would have to negotiate the A141 to the north or the B1393 via Thornwood (also narrow and congested), and then the M11 Junction 7. The local environment is therefore not particularly attractive for cycling, and much could be done to improve this situation by detailed masterplan proposals if land comes forward.



High Road at northern end of the settlement

#### Bus Services

There are a number of local bus services, running principally along the High Road through North Weald Bassett. These are listed in the table below. However frequency of these services is extremely limited and they therefore do not offer a compelling alternative to travel by car.

Bus Number	Bus Operator	Frequency	Destinations
7	Regal Busways	Mon-Fri: 2 buses in both directions per day	Chelmsford, Writtle, Ongar, North Weald, Coopersale, Epping
380	Regal Busways	Mon-Fri: 1 bus (inbound only) per day	Ongar, Bobbingworth, Epping, Tylers Cross, Harlow
381/382	Regal Busways	Mon-Sat: 3 buses in both directions per day	Harlow, Tylers Cross, Epping, North Weald, Toot Hill
383	Regal Busways	Mon-Fri: 1 bus (inbound only) per day	Broadley Common, Summers Farm, Epping
19	Townlink Buses	Mon-Fri: 2 bus (inbound only) per day	Epping, Thornwood, Brays Grove, Harlow
20	Townlink Buses	Mon-Fri: 1 bus every hour, 2 bus every hour for peak periods Sat: 1 bus every hour	Harlow, Epping, North Weald, Epping
21	Townlink Buses	Mon-Fri: 1 bus every hour Sat: 1 bus every hour	Harlow, Epping, North Weald, Epping, Brentwood
339	The London Bus Company	Sat-Sun: 7 buses per day	Ongar, Bobbingworth, North Weald, Epping
501	Network Harlow	Sun only: 6 buses per day	Ongar, Bobbingworth, North Weald, Epping, Harlow
SB05	Epping Forest Community Transport	Mon only: 1 bus per day	Epping, North Weald, Moreton, Abbess Roding, Birds Green, Ongar
SB06	Epping Forest Community Transport	Mon only: 1 bus per day	Matching Green, Matching Tye, North Weald, Epping

Bus services (reference Traveline website)



Kings Head bus stop

### Underground & National Rail

Historically, the London Underground Central Line connected Epping to North Weald, Blake Hall and Ongar. However this section of the Central Line was closed in 1994. Between 2004 and 2007 the line reopened as a preserved railway. This was followed by a change in ownership in 2007 resulting in the line being restored as a heritage steam railway which reopened in 2012. According to Transport for London, the Central Line is currently over capacity, with the likelihood of reopening the line to North Weald fairly remote. Although Epping Forest District Council has an adopted policy to safeguard reinstatement and future operation of this branch line.

The closest Underground station, Epping, can be accessed via bus which would take around 20 minutes or by car in 10 minutes. There are frequent rail services to Stratford and to Central London

The closest national rail stations are Harlow Town and Harlow Mill, located approximately 17 minutes' drive from North Weald Bassett. Both stations are operated by Greater Anglia. There are three main services:

- Stratford to Bishops Stortford – 2 trains per hour
- London Liverpool Street to Kings Lynn – Peak hour services
- London Liverpool Street to Stansted Airport and Cambridge – approximately every 4-9 minutes on Weekdays and 4-6 services during weekends

### North Weald Airfield Study

A Transport Assessment of the North Weald Bassett area to support potential development of North Weald Airfield was carried out by Peter Brett Associates in 2013. This information has been reviewed and taken on board rather than repeated. Key findings were as follows:

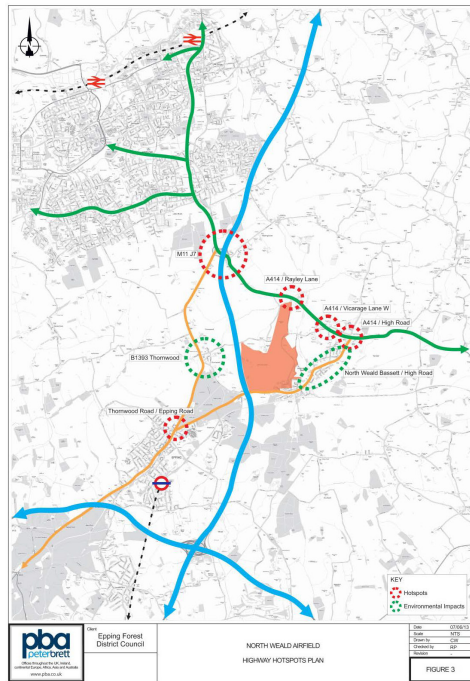
Existing Travel Patterns:

- Reliance on the car is high, underground journeys from Epping and Train journeys from Harlow will involve an initial journey by car to the station.
- Based on the 2001 Census, 44% of residents of North Weald Bassett work within Epping Forest District, of which 21% work within North Weald Bassett.
- This is followed by Harlow (9%), Waltham Forest (5%) and Westminster (4%). Approximately 35% of North Weald Bassett residents commuted to London for work.

Highway Hotspots:

PBA in discussion with Essex County Council and the Highways Agency identified the following highway congestion hotspots within and around North Weald Bassett:

- M11 Junction 7
- A414 / Rayley Lane
- A414 / Vicarage Lane W
- A414 / High Road
- Thornwood Road / Epping Road
- B1393 / Thornwood Road



Highway hotspots

#### Future Infrastructure Enhancements Crossrail:

The new Crossrail service will provide access from Essex to Central London and is anticipated to be completed in 2018. The closest stations to North Weald Bassett are Harold Wood and Brentwood. Although these stations are relatively far from North Weald Bassett it is likely to free up some capacity on the Central Line from Epping.

#### New M11 Junction 7a:

The new junction 7a, north of North Weald Bassett, is identified as the County's top strategic highway priority which would serve developments in Harlow and would relieve stress on the currently at capacity junction 7.

Essex County Council is currently undertaking an assessment of the improvements required at junction 7 and the time frame and funding sources will be better understood following this study.

#### Access strategies:

PBA identified four strategies to complement development within North Weald Airfield.

Improving highway links between the site and Junction 7 on the M11:

- This will involve upgrades to Merlin Way, Rayley Lane and Talbot Roundabout.
- There is a further potential to upgrade the A414 to a dual carriageway between Rayley Lane and Junction 7.
- Alternatively a new link from the site to A414 can be constructed.

Improvements to the A414 to the east:

- An upgrade to the A414/Vicarage Lane junction which will relieve future stress on the A414/Rayley Lane

junction and provide better access from the east.

#### Improving bus services:

- Provide better frequency of commuter services to Epping as well as direct and faster services to Harlow.
- Ensure bus services provide good penetration to the Airfield.

#### Cycle:

- Improve local links between the site, the Airfield and Epping, possible option to upgrade footways to provide off-track cycle lanes and improve cycle parking at Epping Station.

#### Assumptions on preferred development scenario:

PBA produced a spreadsheet model which assesses the likely impacts of different development scenarios based on how many trips are generated and how they are distributed on the road network. The modelling assumptions are as follows:

- Development quantum of 1,670 new homes
- Commuting and business trip distribution based on 2001 Census
- For education trips it is assumed that 50% relate to primary school and 50% to secondary school (in Epping)
- For all other trips, it is assumed that during the AM peak, 70% of trips are local, reducing to 50% in the PM peak. Non-local trips have been assumed to be evenly distributed between Epping Harlow and Ongar.
- All scenarios have been tested with and without the new Junction 7a. It is assumed that the impacts of junction 7a reduce existing flows between the A414 and the M11 by 30%.
- Background traffic growth is based on Temprow growth factors to 2027.





**B181 towards Epping**

#### Findings

- Approximately 880 vehicular trips generated during both AM and PM peak hours
- Development would impact the A414 between Rayley Lane and the M11. Suggested upgrade of the A414 / Rayley Lane junction with a cost in the order of £200,000 triggered by 1,200 homes
- Improvements to M11 Junction 7
- 500 homes – flare on N. bound exit slip, £150,000
- 1000 homes – free flow connection between A414 and south bound on slip road, £500,000
- Widening of northern bridge and associated circulatory carriageway estimated at £3.0m triggered by 1,000 homes
- A414 / Vicarage Lane junction improvement estimated at £300,000 triggered by 500 homes
- Replacing A414 / High Street roundabout with signalised cross roads, estimated at £100,000 at 1,000 homes
- £500,000 allowance made for modest highway capacity improvements at B181 / B1393 junction
- Investment in public transport and walking/cycle networks, allowance between £7m - £10m for infrastructure enhancement.

#### Engagement with transport providers

Alan Baxter Associates (ABA) liaised with Essex County Council, the local highway authority. Two principle pieces of strategic transport modelling work were underway. These are:

- Epping Forest District-wide Transport Model
- Harlow Stansted Gateway Transport Model

District-wide highways impact assessment:

This spreadsheet-based model assesses the impacts of all potential developments within the district on Epping's highway network and will be used to support Epping Forest District Council's emerging Local Plan.

Essex County Council provided recent (2013) traffic survey data used for this model and includes traffic count and vehicle speed survey data in the following locations:

- A414 Canes Lane
- B1393 London Road
- B181 Epping Road
- B1393 High Road
- Talbot Roundabout (junction between A414 High Road and B181 High Road)
- Palmers Hill
- Woodside

Historic link traffic flow counts (2010) on three locations along B181 High Road near Dukes Close, Harrison Drive and the A414 Roundabout have also been supplied along with historic Automatic Number Plate Recognition (2008) data at junction 7 of the M11. The ANPR data broadly shows the distribution of traffic at this junction.

Harlow Stansted Gateway Transport Model (HSGTM)

This strategic transport model is being used to assess the impact of significant growth planned in and around Harlow over the next 15 years and to model in detail the proposals for a new Junction 7a on the M11. Key points to note are as follows:

- Spurs for potential employment sites have been removed as HA objected
- Gilden Way flows are very high under the 'do something' scenario
- Junction capacity is key consideration
- Increased congestion at Southern Way
- Model largely based on Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) for the East of England Growth (16,000 dwellings)
- No increase in through traffic in Harlow
- Reduction in traffic through Sheering
- No significant 'rat running' in Harlow as result of Junction 7a
- Flow maintained on A414
- Less stress on Junction 7
- Improvements to Harlow are needed first before introducing Junction 7a

ECC has consulted on three potential solutions for a new M11 Junction 7a and is now developing designs for the preferred option for consultation in late 2014, ahead of submitting a formal planning application supported by more comprehensive modelling work. It is anticipated that construction would be completed by 2020/21 at a cost of around £47m.

### 3.5 UTILITIES

#### North Weald Airfield Study

Deloitte's "North Weald Airfield Review (5 July 2013)" report assessed three development options for North Weald Airfield (NWA) and identified issues regarding infrastructure capacity and potential infrastructure upgrades required to serve the proposed developments. Of the three options assessed by Deloitte, the preference identified by the Council was for the Scenario 3, a combined development option which looks at retaining current aviation activity and providing additional mixed-use development.

A high level utility review was carried out by PBA as part of this study, which sets out the existing utility infrastructure and potential constraints within and adjacent to the airfield. Key findings were as follows.

#### Electricity

- The Distribution Network Operator for the area is UK Power Network (UKPN).
- Information on electricity cabling has been derived from UKPN's asset record information and a marked up copy of the NWA Facilities Management High Voltage Distribution Plan.
- There are 5 substations identified on-site and 2 substations identified off-site, all of which are fed from a private high voltage ring main. An additional 2 substations located on Lancaster Road and Hampden Close are fed from 11kV cables which serve local residences through the low voltage network.
- Majority of electrical infrastructure within the site appears to be privately owned and operated.
- A conservative estimate of the capacity of an individual substation would be 315kVA, this would provide a total capacity of 2.2MVA for the entire site.

- Options 1 and 3 would require an additional 3-3.5MVA of demand above the existing usage. A new 11kV feed from the nearest Primary Substation would be recommended to provide additional capacity.
- Option 2 has been estimated to have a peak demand of 11.5MVA. To cater for this, an alternative point of connection would be required, based on the UKPN Long Term Development Statement 2012, the Epping Grid Supply Point would have sufficient capacity. Alternatively a new Primary Substation on-site will be sufficient in meeting the demands.

#### Gas

- The gas provider for this area is National Grid Gas.
- There is a single 125mm diameter Low Pressure (LP) gas main into the warehouse in the south eastern corner of the proposed development. This is the only gas main identified on National Grid Gas records.
- There is an off-site 150mm diameter LP main which follows Epping Road into North Weald.
- There is an 8" Intermediate Pressure (IP) gas main running north to south along Church Lane adjacent to the eastern boundary of the development. This is a strategic main that supplies North Weald and other settlements to the north and south.
- The new development could be served by the existing 8" diameter IP gas main with an installation of a pressure reducing station to allow distribution of gas at low pressure.

#### Potable Water

- The provider is Affinity Water Limited.
- On-site: 6" water main along the western side of the site, 4" water main along the eastern side of the development on Merlin Way, a 5" water main from the

Weald Hall Lane to the west of the development across the main runway to supply properties along Vicarage Lane.

- Highly likely the 6" Affinity Water main feeds a local supply network within the site, which is operated by the North Weald Airfield.
- Off site: 8" and 6" water main running along Epping Road on the northern and southern verges respectively. These mains run along Epping Road for the full extent of the southern boundary and into North Weald.
- Option 1 and 3 can be served by the 8" and 6" water mains along Epping Road
- Option 2 will require a new connection to the nearest water main with capacity which is likely to be in the vicinity of Harlow.

#### Public Surface and Foul Water Sewers

- The sewerage undertaker for this area is Thames Water Limited.
- North Weald and Thornwood WwTW are in the vicinity of the site.
- Connection to the North Weald WwTW is likely to be most economical solution subject to existing capacity.
- However there are no foul sewers adjacent to the site that is likely to have sufficient capacity to drain any future development as laid out in the 3 options. There is also the issue of providing an onsite WwTW as there are no water courses in the vicinity to accommodate discharge.
- Thames Water is currently investing upgrades to the Epping WwTW to meet anticipated growth in the Epping area up to 2021. Whether upgrades will accommodate development will have to be discussed with Thames Water.
- Alternatively, discharge to Rye Meads WwTW may be



possible. Rye Mead Water Cycle Study 2009 references planned upgrades to this WwTW and the strategic sewer network to the south west of Harlow.

- All proposals would have to be discussed with Thames Water upon the application for a pre-development enquiry.

### **Engagement with utilities providers**

Following on from PBA's initial review of utility infrastructure, ABA has approached various statutory providers directly for an initial view on the likely impact of development in and around North Weald Bassett. An initial development quantum of 1,500 homes was suggested.

#### **Gas Supply**

A capacity enquiry was made to National Grid Gas to find out about potential upgrades to their network with respect to a development quantum of 1,500 homes. National Grid Gas undertook a capacity assessment using a loading of 14,928KwH (typical standard for 1,500 homes according to National Grid) for the Intermediate Pressure (IP) main connection point located east of the Airfield. The outcome of the assessment suggested that there is existing capacity to accommodate the new development without further need for infrastructure upgrades.

#### **Electricity**

An enquiry was made to UK Power Networks regarding existing network capacity. A preliminary budget estimate of £2 million has been provided with respect to a development quantum of 1,500 homes. The estimate suggests that the most appropriate Point of Connection for the potentially new development (of

up to 1500 homes) at the primary substation located on Lindsey Street, Epping. This is based on the total load for the site being up to a maximum of 3.0MVA.

#### **Potable Water**

An enquiry was made to Affinity Water regarding the existing network capacity to accommodate 1,500 new homes in North Weald Bassett. According to Affinity Water there would likely be reinforcements to the network at the following locations: (A) upsize and provision of new main along Woodside, (B) upsize main to 250mm on Hurricane Way and (C) upsize of main to 180mm on High Road near new connection. A preliminary budget estimate for off-site works and on-site connections are £435,000 and £600,000 respectively.

#### **Public Surface and Foul Water Sewers**

An enquiry was made to Thames Water regarding the ability of the existing network to accommodate 1,500 new homes in North Weald Bassett. According to Thames Water, North Weald Sewage Treatment Works (STW), immediately north of the existing settlement, is currently at, or very close to, its operational capacity. Any significant growth in the area is likely to require an upgrade to the STW. It is understood that land is available at the STW to accommodate such an upgrade, which would take 3-5 years to plan and deliver. Due to proximity, it is likely that new connections would be established directly to the STW, rather than upgrading the existing sewer network.

### 3.6 PROPERTY MARKET



Semi-detached housing on High Road

The following section summarises the pertinent background documentation, sets out the property market context, the viability approach as well as the development assumptions.

It is important to acknowledge that a considerable amount of work has already been undertaken and this is particularly the case in relation to the North Weald Airfield (NWA), which represents the main development opportunity in North Weald as well as one of the more sustainable locations for development in the District. In this respect the following section seeks to build on this work rather than ‘reinvent the wheel’.

However, it is also important to highlight that NWA is not the only development opportunity in North Weald Bassett, the purpose of the masterplan is to consider all opportunities with a view to arriving at the optimum growth scenario, which is economically sustainable and helps to address the needs of the settlement, as well as housing and employment pressures in the District.

#### North Weald Bassett context

North Weald Bassett is located in the District of Epping Forest in the county of Essex. The settlement is 3 miles from Epping and 3.2 miles south of Harlow. Stansted Airport and Chelmsford are both circa 15.8 miles away. The North Weald Airfield is located approximately 1 mile from Junction 7 on the M11 offering excellent access to the M25. By rail the site is closely located to Epping which offers fast access into London via the Central Line. The population of the settlement is approximately 6,000 people. The dwellings are arranged in a linear form with a small commercial centre.

#### Residential and employment growth pressure

As with most Councils in the South East of England Epping Forest District Council is under pressure to deliver residential and employment growth. The District is extremely well connected given its proximity to the M11. However, much of the District falls within the Green Belt, which represents a significant barrier to meeting growth targets.

#### Housing need and development considerations

- The Essex and Southend on Sea Structure Plan contained a housing target of 2,400 net additional dwellings over the period 1996 to 2011.
- The RSS established housing targets for the EFDC authority area of 3,500 net additional dwellings over the plan period of 2001 to 2021, equating to an annual target of 175 net additional dwellings (although the RSS has now been abolished).
- EFDC are awaiting latest population projections to identify and consult on objectively assessed housing

need for the district to 2033.

- NWA was specifically assessed by the SLAA and a potential housing yield of 735 units was identified.
- Housing policies within the Combined Policies Local Plan identify that 70% of all new housing should be on previously developed land.
- Affordable housing is sought from developments of 15 or more units and at a level of 40% provision.

### **Employment need**

- The most current Employment Land Review (ELR) for EFDC (2010) identifies a future requirement for approximately 66,000 sq m net additional employment floorspace in the District in the period up to 2031.
- Two sites at NWA are specifically identified for potential intensification, extension or redevelopment, totalling 13,139 sq m of B1 to B8 floorspace.
- The assessment of NWA within the SLAA identifies a potential yield of 42,000 sq m of commercial floorspace.
- An Economic Development and Employment Strategy has been commissioned and will report later in 2014.

### **North Weald Airfield**

North Weald Airfield is located a short distance west of the commercial centre and was purchased in 1980 by the Council from the MOD, for the purpose of leisure and general aviation use.

Current aviation activity at the airfield comprises a mixture of historic and general aviation operations, ranging from air ambulance operations, private and group flying and microlight training. Historic and light aircraft maintenance and repair, aircraft handling and refuelling services are provided by two companies based on the airfield namely North Weald Flying Services and Weald Aviation.

In 2012, the airfield recorded just fewer than 20,000 movements and the analysis indicates that 60% - 70% of existing traffic occurs at the weekend, with relatively infrequent movements during the week.

In addition to the general and leisure aviation uses described above, North Weald Airfield also accommodates a number of commercial and leisure functions. These additional uses have generally developed on an ad-hoc basis, reflecting approaches made to the Council rather than an overarching strategic plan for the airfield.

The table opposite provides details of the commercial and leisure enterprises operating from the Airfield:



Use	Brief Description
AMG North Weald Limited	Haulage and freight company based in Hangar 1 which provides express courier services, freight forwarding, road freight and warehousing & distribution.
ATC Driver Training	Operate from unit 4 within Hangar 1 at the southern end of the airfield and offer advanced fleet driver training on the airfield in addition to other specialist courses, designed to improve the safety of individuals on the road.
Car Limits	Driver experience and training company, operating from the airfield for the past 15 years.
Kings Transport Services	Haulage/logistics company based in Hangar 5 on the airfield.
Lightwood Logistics	Haulage/logistics company based in Hangar 2 on the airfield.
North Weald Market	Reputedly England's largest regular Saturday and Bank Holiday Market. The market operates from the apron located in the south east corner of the airfield and typically attracts over 30,000 visitors per year.
Source to Trade	Distributor of aviation related products.

#### Commercial users

Use	Brief Description
Epping Forest Pistol Club	Amateur sports shooting club, formed in the early 1970s and currently operating for the rifle range on the eastern side of the airfield.
Epping & North Weald Modelers Club	Amateur model aircraft club, formed in the early 1980s and operating from the south western side of the airfield.
Epping Forest Gym Trust Ltd	Gymnastics club operating from the gymnasium on the eastern side of Merlin Way, within Council owned land.
Epping Forest Archers	Archery club established in 1973, which currently operates from a shooting range in front of the control tower.

#### Leisure users

In addition to the above, North Weald Airfield is also home to the biggest open air market in the country although we understand that traders and visitor numbers have started to reduce in recent years. The Deloitte's Report indicates that the 2013/14 budget figures for the airfield, which were provided by the Council, amount to circa £1m as indicated in the table below:

Element	Amount
Property Rents	£335,660
Saturday market	£637,170
Events	£57,000
Other	£65,000
Total (from EFDC 2013/14 revenue forecast)	£1,094,830

#### Budget figures for North Weald Airfield

### Property market context

The following section has been undertaken to inform the preparation of the new Local Plan looking specifically at North Weald Bassett settlement. Given the scale of change under consideration for North Weald Bassett there is the potential to include a diverse range of uses to reinforce the commercial centre and bring forward development on the Airfield and other strategic sites in a viable and sustainable manner. The points below summarise the key messages regarding residential, employment and community uses.

- Residential: There is clear development potential for the airfield subject to various infrastructure requirements
- Offices: Market demand is currently limited as Harlow is the established office hub however the location would complement an office park and there is a lack of grade A space
- Industrial: Given the size and close proximity to the M11 and M25, the airfield would be well suited to a distribution and logistics warehousing space. There is a shortage of high quality space and research suggests this would be attractive
- Supermarket: the scale of the proposed growth would likely be able to support a supermarket in its own right. There are no major food stores in North Weald Bassett
- Education (primary and secondary): The existing primary school St. Andrew's has enough capacity to accommodate 200 homes in the catchment. There is scope to expand the school to go up to 500 homes. Anything larger would require new schools. At secondary level there is currently no need for a new school. We understand the requirement for a new four form school would be triggered by a development of 3,000 new homes
- Glasshouses: Although the site would lend itself well to large scale horticultural development the land values achieved would be significantly lower than alternative developments such as distribution and residential. With a development of this kind there would be a requirement for other ancillary services such as car parking, reservoirs, staff facilities and anaerobic digestion plant
- Leisure centre: The sports centre at Epping is in need of upgrading and a replacement facility at North Weald Airfield is a possibility. A new facility on the airfield would also serve the rural north of the district. The new facility has been estimated by the council to run without additional needs to provide revenue given the current levels of subsidy at Epping and Ongar sports centres and the potential capital receipts realisable from the sales of the Epping and Ongar sites
- Museum: It is unlikely that a museum would be financially viable in isolation. Although the presence of a museum may complement a wider scheme. There has been interest in running a transport museum at the airfield by Epping and Ongar Heritage Railway
- Community Uses: A large residential community will require and support various local services such as a GP surgery, hairdressers, pub and other local retail facilities
- Research and development: The market for speculative research and development is currently limited and would also be in competition with the Enterprise Zone based over two sites in Harlow

### Residential market context

It is clear from our market research that residential is likely to be the predominant use and certainly the main value driver at North Weald Bassett.

Much has been written about the recession and the state of the UK economy in recent times.

Growth in house prices has been supported by an improvement in the availability and a reduction in the cost of credit, partly as a result of the Government's 'Funding for Lending' and 'Help to Buy' schemes. Consumer confidence has increased significantly in recent months with signs that the UK economy is gathering momentum following consecutive quarters of GDP growth (Q1 2014: 0.8%, Q2 2014: 0.8%) and the Monetary Policy Committee's (MPC) statement that it intends to keep interest rates on hold at least until the unemployment rate reaches 7%.

The number of transactions in the UK has increased to over 62,000 per month, an annual increase of 19% reinforcing the view that this is as a result of growth across the sector as opposed to a sharp rise in the number of higher value transactions skewing the market. The recent strong increases in sales values have seen notes of caution from commentators that the UK is entering into another house price 'bubble' and that house price rises need to be kept in check. Both the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and to a lesser extent, the Governor of the Bank of England, have played down these fears but the Bank of England Financial Policy Committee has stated that it is closely monitoring developments in the housing market and bank's underwriting standards, that it would be

vigilant to potential emerging vulnerabilities and that it could cool the housing market through the use of its powers, such as forcing the banks to hold more capital.

According to the Nationwide House Price Index, average house prices in the UK rose by 0.6% in November 2013 and were 6.5% higher than in November 2012. House prices are now around 6% below the peak experienced in 2007. The early half of 2014 has seen significant house price growth in London, although the market has cooled from mid year.

### Local residential market context

There are then a number of factors which play out at a more local level within a functional housing market influencing demand. These include quality of place, school performance and the accessibility of areas including the proximity to employment centres (with transport links being an important component of this), and the existing housing market and local market conditions. These factors influence the demand profile and pricing, against a context in which households compete within the market for housing.

There has been a great deal of development within the wider Essex area which has been received with strong demand and take-up. Residential land is highly sought after by both house builders and developers mainly due to its proximity to London and the major road network. The few strategic land holdings that have come to the market recently have seen significant competition from the national house builders, who are generally looking to rebuild their balance sheets after a



period of relative in activity from 2007 – 2010.

There are several developments underway as well as recently completed schemes within the vicinity of North Weald which provide an indication of the area for residential development. It is clear that future residential development in the area would be welcomed by developers and occupiers alike.

Set out below are some of the recent developments in the locality:

#### **Blenheim Square, North Weald**

The closest recent development is the 4.96 acre Blenheim Square which is adjacent to the south east boundary of the airfield. The site was purchased in 2008 by Crest Nicholson for £8.77m, reflecting £1.77m per acre. The scheme comprises 119 houses and flats. The scheme was extremely popular and sold out by September 2012. Sale prices of 2 bed flats are around £185,000 and 3 bed houses are circa £265,000.

#### **Kings Wood Park, Epping**

Kings Wood Park is a large Bellway development offering 132 two, three, four and five bedroom homes, and is located in Epping. Due to high demand, only the five bedroom properties are now available.

#### **Newhall, Harlow**

Phase 1 of this scheme recently completed which saw the construction of 500 units. Phase 2 of the scheme will involve a further delivery of around 2,500 units including various community facilities. This construction will be competing for interest with any other scheme coming forward in the next few years.

#### **Brent House Farm, North Weald**

This site is currently being marketed for £2 million after obtaining planning permission for 10 x 4 and 5 bedroom houses. The site is 3.3 acres in size and currently occupied by a 4 bedroom house needing refurbishment. There is no affordable requirement on this site. This is another example of further land becoming available and although not a vast scheme in scale it is a good sign of confidence in the local area.

#### **Industrial and office market context**

With the general state of the economy there has been little speculative development which has led to a decline in available prime industrial space which has had a negative impact on tenants and generally led to rents increasing due to the lack of supply.

Harlow is the dominant industrial market in the locality and currently maintains a number of successful industrial estates including the Harlow Mill Business Centre and Mead Park. The area lends itself to light industrial space given the proximity to London and excellent transport links with the M11 and M25 close by and the level of amenities on offer to occupiers. There has been a steady level of demand for prime space and there also seems to be an increased level of investment in the area specifically the Spire Green Centre, Pinnacles West and Mead Park Industrial Estate.

The shortage of grade A space combined with the consistent levels of demand will bring further confidence to investors in the short to medium term.

It is our opinion that NWA would lend itself well to some light industrial uses given its proximity to Harlow and good transport links. That said its compatibility with residential or continuing aviation use will require further consideration.

Rental values in Harlow have been mainly focused on space under 10,000 sq ft and have been ranging from £6 - £8 per sq ft. It is our opinion that this too would be an appropriate rental value for new stock in North Weald Bassett Office Market Context.

The office market in the larger centres of Harlow and Epping remain fairly weak with a lack of occupier demand, significant void periods and falling headline rents. 2012 take-up was nearly 20% lower than in 2011 and vacancy rates in Essex all increased with the exception of Chelmsford. In Harlow and Epping, rents are currently ranging from £13.00 - £14.75 per sq ft. Secondary stock has reduced further to below £10.00 per sq ft and this is expected to reduce further.

With the current levels of available space an office development would be extremely speculative, however the provision of which would provide an affordable space for prospective tenants given the rental levels in the area in comparison to London. Looking at the nearby markets in Harlow and Epping respectively, demand has been low and the preference for occupiers is to head to Brentwood or Chelmsford.

### Viability approach

In order to inform the evolution of the development scenarios for North Weald Bassett, GL Hearn has undertaken a high level viability analysis of key development sites / opportunities.

The viability analysis has been informed by a range of primary and secondary sources including a review of relevant studies, existing and evolving planning policy, an urban design audit, a property market review (including initial consultation with existing landowners / their agents) and discussions with Council officers.

Initial density scenarios / layouts were produced by Allies and Morrison Urban Practitioners (AMUP) in consultation with the rest of the consultant team to inform the basis of the viability testing.

The viability analysis includes an assessment of the likely gross development value relevant development / infrastructure costs and the resultant residual land value of projects and ultimately assist to inform the most appropriate phasing and delivery strategy.

The viability assessment does not constitute formal valuations under the provisions of the RICS Valuation Standards ('Red Book'). It is a market accepted approach to providing landowners, developers and investors with an early indication of viability.

Individual development appraisals will be undertaken using the Argus Developer software package, which is a leading development appraisal package used by developers and consultants alike.

It is important to highlight from the outset that the team does not include specialised cost advisors and therefore all base costs will be based on standard building indices as well as the team's knowledge of comparable schemes.

In respect of infrastructure costs, high level costs have been provided by Alan Baxters. For NWA Deloitte's report (May 2013) incorporates a considerable amount of information.

Given that the viability analysis has been undertaken well in advance of commencement of the development, the inputs adopted can only be recognised as a projection. That said every care has been taken to adopt realistic and robust assumptions at this stage but we would highlight that relatively small changes in inputs, time scales or implementation approach can all have a magnified effect on the residual value / land receipt.

The following sections detail the assumptions we have adopted.

### **Development assumptions**

The following sections detail sets out our development assumptions for North Weald Bassett. It is important to highlight that the below is currently focused on NWA as the main development opportunity but as other sites are identified the assumptions outlined below will be adjusted accordingly to reflect the specific opportunity.

### **Residential density and mix assumptions**

Housing policies indicate that new residential developments should be at a density of between 30 and 50 dwellings per hectare, subject to other considerations such as surrounding character and environmental features.

The Council's SHMA was completed in 2012, jointly with other nearby Councils in Essex and Hertfordshire. Epping Forest District's housing mix requirements across all tenures to 2026 were estimated as:

- 1 bedroom - 17.7%
- 2 bedrooms - 32.3%
- 3 bedrooms - 38.4%
- 4 bedrooms - 9.8%
- 5+ bedrooms - 1.9%

The viability analysis broadly on this basis although more weighted towards housing typologies as there remains nervousness from developers in respect of apartment development and the impact on viability due to heightened build and finance costs. We consider this approach more accurately reflects the market realities of the sites.



### Residential values

Based on our market assessment of comparable schemes and discussions with local agents, we would propose to adopt an average private residential sales value of £260 per sq ft. This is at the midpoint of sales values currently being achieved in the area. We would envisage undertaking sensitivity analysis around an increase in residential value in line with current sentiment.

The values of the affordable housing (level of revenue received for it by the developer) is variable by its very nature. Given the number of scenarios to be tested we have based our revenue assumptions on the average percentage of market (sales) value ('MV') generated for the affordable.

However it is important to highlight that Registered Providers (RP) may have access to other sources of funding related to their own business plan such as cross-subsidy from sales/other tenure forms, recycled capital grant from stair-casing receipts, but such additional funding cannot be regarded as the norm.

Policies H6A and H7A in the Local Plan are saved policies and potentially NPPF compliant subject to being justified by the evidence base. These address affordable housing whereby provision is sought from developments of 15 or more units and at a level of 40% provision. (The 2011/12 Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) identifies that of the 320 gross residential completions in 2011/12, only 33 were affordable housing, representing approximately 10% position).

A base case viability assessment will ensure a policy compliant affordable housing position with sensitivity analysis on the assumption of a reduced requirement to illustrate the impact on land value.

### Lifetime Homes

Policy H9A – states that on developments of 10 or more homes at least 10% should meet the JRF lifetime homes standards. This would provide the starting point but sensitivity analysis to illustrate the impact of varying the assumption where appropriate is included.

### Employment uses

We would envisage incorporating a range of employment uses from light industrial to the provision of a new local centre including a new food store.

### Base build costs

We would propose to adopt a base build cost assumed for the housing of £90 per sq ft and apartments of £110 per sq ft. This is based on standard building indices (BCIS), adjusted for North Weald. We have made no specific cost adjustment for sustainability measures, although the base build cost assumed is within the upper quartile of the BCIS figures. We therefore consider that the base build costs assumed would be sufficient to achieve at least Code for Sustainable Homes - Level 4 and new building regulation requirements.

### S106 contributions / CIL Approach

The council is currently undertaking a CIL viability study and the results for this will be completed in the near future.

In the absence of a S106 SPG with clearly defines contributions we have reviewed Deloitte's report, which itemises some infrastructure items and thresholds though it is not clear how specific these are to the airfield. For example the report suggests that only 50 homes would trigger need for expansions to St Andrew's 2 Form entry. This amounts to £1.3m spread over 50 homes i.e. £26 k per unit. The public leisure centre triggered by 100 homes costs £7.5m. That suggests if only 100 homes are built, the infrastructure burden for these two items alone would equate to circa £75k per unit.

There are two approaches we could adopt in respect of assessing infrastructure costs. The first is to agree a tariff system for the main infrastructure items i.e. education, leisure and transport infrastructure i.e. build on the work undertaken by Deloitte to arrive at a total infrastructure cost for the area. This total cost would then be divided by the proposed number of units across the Masterplan area, which would allow us to include an infrastructure cost per residential unit within the appraisals.

The alternative to the above is the 'CIL route' i.e. adopt say £2k per unit as a residual S106 cost and then assess the infrastructure contribution the growth scenario proposal will bear. This alternative approach will be the more straight forward and one we would recommend as it will only require a single set of calculations and will not require the allocation of infrastructure items to specific schemes.

Essentially this approach assumes the required infrastructure will be funded through s106 or CIL if in place at the time. Rather than including these costs within the appraisals these would omitted to calculate a 'surplus per unit' which will provided an indication as to what the sites might be able to contribute towards infrastructure.

### Infrastructure costs as detailed in option 3 for Deloitte's NWA report

Option 3 of Deloitte's NWA Report identifies a number of development assumptions which would be required for the principle of mixed use development of the scale envisaged to come forward. The infrastructure requirements range from Airfield works to support the continuation of a scaled down operation to transport, utilities, community and social infrastructure. The tables below provide an indication of items required and cost.

#### Airfield Works

Item	Justification	Source	Cost (£)
Runway works	Repair in accordance with existing lease/licence obligations. The exact costs of these works are unknown but the Council is currently subject to pressure from the beneficiaries on the runway licence to repair the runway	EFDC	1,000,000
Taxiway works	Included above		0
Security fencing	To separate the airfield from the redeveloped eastern side of the site	Halcrow (2011)	170,000
New control tower	Replacement for existing control tower, to maintain clear site lines of the airfield	Deloitte research	750,000
<b>Total (excluding fees, contingency and prelims)</b>			<b>1,920,000</b>

#### Education and Leisure Facilities

Item	Cost (£)	Trigger (Homes)
Expand St Andrew's Primary School to 2 Form Entry (FE)	1,300,000	50
Early Years and SEN Contribution at St Andrew's Primary School	650,000	50
New 1FE Primary School on NWA	5,600,000	500
New 2FE Primary School on NWA	0	1,400
Public Leisure Centre, with wet and dry facilities	7,500,000	100



#### Transport Costs

The PBA Transport Assessment and Strategy Paper detailed a number of likely transport infrastructure works required, which equated to an estimated cost of £7m.

#### Site Utilities

The PBA Utilities and Drainage Assessment indicated that there are likely to be significant utility costs associated within promoting a major development of the airfield, even in a mixed use scenario.

Element	Option 3
Water/Sewerage	£4.1 million
Gas	£0.2 million
Electricity	£0.75 million
Total	£5 million

The report highlighted that there is a particular risk associated with sewerage.

#### Professional, Marketing and Legal Fees

Usual professional fees for a development of this nature, equating to 10% of development costs, along with market standard agents' and legal fees will be included.

#### Inflation

All values and costs will be assumed at day one i.e. no allowance for inflation will be made.

#### Interest

Development finance costs will be assumed at a rate of 7.00% to reflect the risk margin involved and reflecting the likely short to medium term continued lending constraints.

#### Project Contingency

A contingency figure of 5% will be applied to the base total construction costs.

#### Sales Rate

We would propose to model an average residential sales rate of 6 units per month applying to the private units with the affordable accommodation assumed to be sold on completion. In respect of the commercial accommodation we would propose that the investment is sold on completion.

#### Developers Profit

For the purposes of modelling we propose to assume a blended profit margin of 17.5% on revenue to reflect the mix of private accommodation and affordable housing envisaged. For the commercial accommodation we would propose to adopt a developer's profit of 15% on revenue.

### 3.7 SITES

As part of its Local Plan process, Epping Forest District Council issued a 'call for sites' in the local area. The plan to the left highlights the sites which were put forward by local landowners as having potential, in their opinion, for development. The number of sites put forward following the call was greater than anticipated and the masterplanning study is being prepared in order to give objective consideration to these sites and ensure that any future development is delivered in a fair, appropriate and sustainable way.



Sites identified by Epping Forest District Council





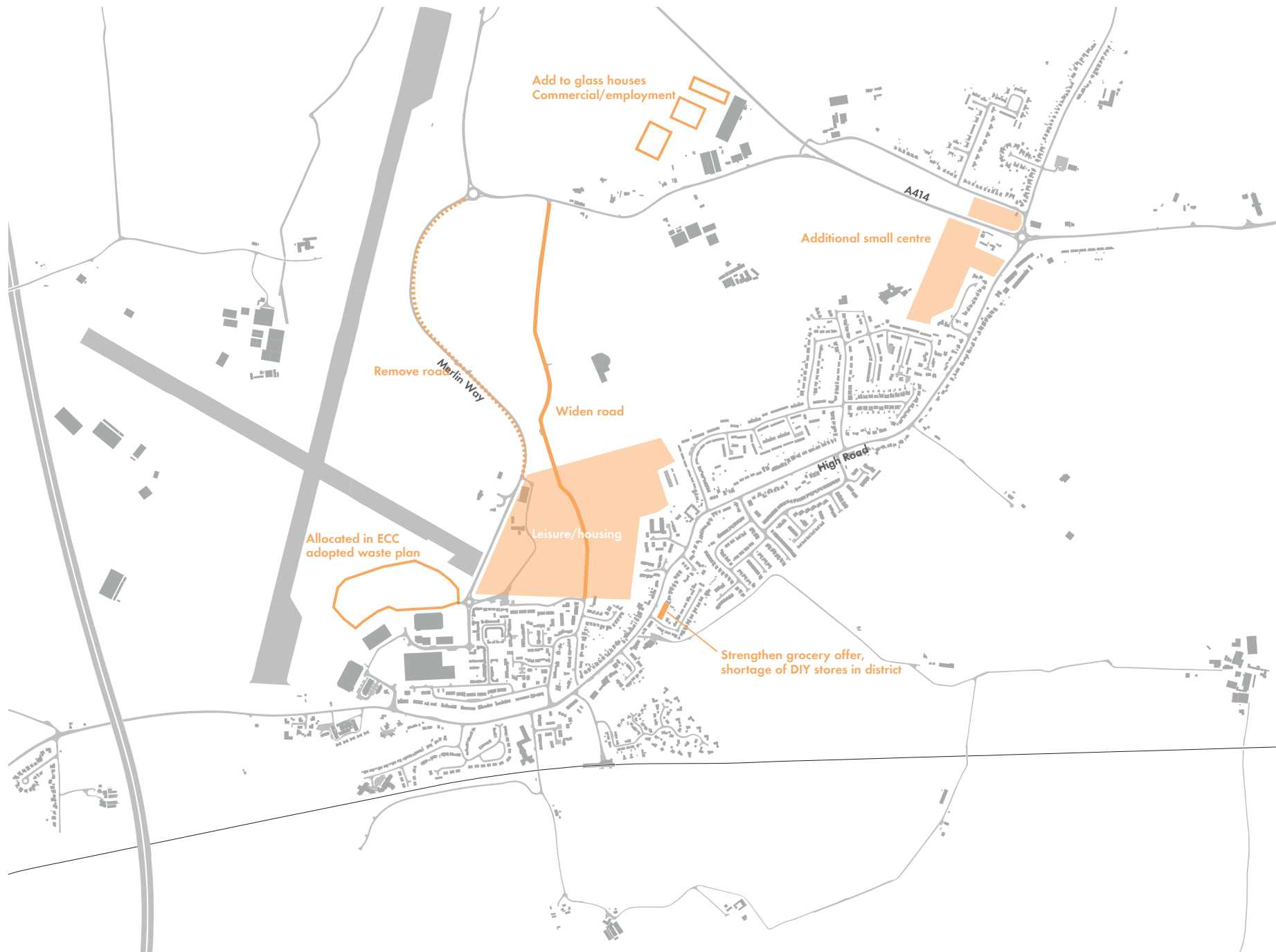


## 4 ENGAGEMENT

This chapter sets out the key feedback messages from the consultation and engagement undertaken during stage one of the project. This includes:

- The results from an Officer Working Group workshop which included representatives from relevant departments within Epping Forest District Council (EFDC) and from neighbouring councils and Essex County Council;
- Ideas and suggestions from the community workshop attended by local residents and stakeholders;
- Key issues raised at a discussion session with landowners and their representatives;
- The messages arising from more detailed interviews and discussions held with key stakeholders including EFDC officers, services providers, interest group representatives and landowners; and
- Results from comments emailed to the dedicated project email address, provided so that people who were unable to attend the community workshop could contribute their views.





Officer workshop feedback

#### 4.1 OFFICER WORKSHOP



Officer workshop

An Officer Working Group workshop session was held at Epping Forest District Council offices on 21 January 2014 from 2.00pm to 4.00pm. Attendees represented EFDC departments, neighbouring local authorities and Essex County Council. The workshop was attended by approximately 20 officers.

A presentation was given on the context and initial analysis undertaken for the study and this was followed by a workshop session during which officers were invited to identify priorities and discuss issues relating to a number of themes, including:

- Shops and services;
- Employment opportunities;
- Community services and open space;
- Transport and movement;
- The role of the airfield;
- Possible benefits of new homes; and
- Key issues involved in provision of new homes.

Two groups discussed these topics, with A1 sheets provided so that feedback could be noted. A1 plans of North Weald Bassett were also provided, so that participants could draw proposals or highlight areas of particular interest or concern.

The key feedback is summarised here:

##### **Shops and services**

The linear nature of the settlement was highlighted as an issue and the smaller local centre at Tyler's Green was referenced as a potential natural consequence of this, given that walking distances to the small commercial centre are quite long for people living in the northern end of the settlement. It was felt that any new development should strengthen the existing centre rather than being dispersed.

##### **Employment opportunities**

Participants considered it important for North Weald Bassett to make greater use of its strategic position next to the M11. Reference was made to the diversification of activities from local farmers, including the establishment of Ashlyn's farm shop. There has also been a minor trend in farm buildings being converted into office space.

Offices and industrial uses were considered to be unviable, but distribution and logistics might be suitable uses, due to the location. Distribution activities will have a disproportionate visual impact for the number of jobs they may create.





North Weald Bassett Village Hall



North Weald Bassett Library

### Transport and movement

References were made to the fact that new development should have provision for car parking as the settlement is not well connected enough for residents not to rely on private cars.

The bus service is considered adequate for the size of the settlement though comments were made regarding the frequency and affordability of services.

The greatest pressure locally relates to access to the Central Line station at Epping. There has apparently been a 100% increase in use levels in the last 12 years. Congestion accessing the station, a lack of parking and general capacity pressure on the line were all mentioned.

Traffic levels are high on London Road between Epping and Harlow due to the construction trade.

### Community provision

There is concern about healthcare provision in the settlement, as the Limes medical centre is currently at capacity and the phasing of new development would need to take account of this.

Flood mitigation initiatives have created open space which is now appreciated by the community. Groups also use open space at the airfield.

The settlement has a homeless hostel and this should be retained or reprovided elsewhere locally.

Wider expansion at Harlow was identified as a key consideration in terms of placing North Weald Bassett and its future growth in context.

### Role of the airfield

The use of the airfield by local groups was identified for potential intensification though concerns were expressed regarding potential conflict between different uses.

The current uncertainty regarding the future of the airfield has meant that proposed uses and requests for space have been declined. The current activity levels do not, therefore, reflect the full demand for uses at the site.

The continued viability of the Saturday market was questioned.

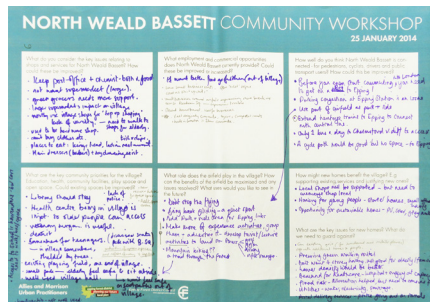
### Impact of new homes

A challenge was identified between new homes and the point at which these will trigger investment in new community facilities. It might be difficult for the community to accept the number of homes required to deliver new facilities, but a small number of new homes would simply place greater pressure on existing services.

Affordable homes were identified as a potential positive impact of new development.

There was a general feeling that many residents have moved to North Weald Bassett because it is a rural location, and would like it to remain that way.

North Weald Bassett has very limited employment opportunities within the settlement – principally at the airfield or local shops – and most people travel to other locations, such as Epping, Harlow or London. This leads to a large number of people having to commute and puts stress on local roads and public transport. Many considered that intensification of business uses at the airfield, and its development as a commercial centre, presents the best opportunity for providing more employment opportunities within the settlement.



### Example of topic based discussion sheet



### Example of spatial planning sheet

- A community workshop session was held at North Weald Village Hall on Saturday 25 January 2014, from 10.15am until 1.00pm. The event was well attended by around 85 people. It was advertised via the following methods:
- Invites were sent to all homes in the settlement
  - Posters were put up at visible locations in the settlement
  - Adverts were placed in local papers; and
  - A notice was put on the Epping Forest District Council's website
- A presentation was given on the context and initial analysis undertaken for the study – similar to that given to the officer working group – and this was followed by a workshop session during which members of the community were invited to identify priorities and discuss issues relating to a number of themes, including:
- Shops and services;
  - Employment opportunities;
  - Community services and open space;
  - Transport and movement;
  - The role of the airfield;
  - Possible benefits of new homes; and
  - Key issues involved in provision of new homes.

Eight groups discussed these topics, with A1 sheets provided so that feedback could be noted. A1 plans of North Weald Bassett were also provided, so that participants could draw proposals or highlight areas of particular interest or concern.





Initial presentation



Group discussions

### Community services and open space

One clear message related to medical care, as the Limes Medical Centre is the only existing resource and most felt that better provision was required. There is also pressure on the existing Primary School (St. Andrew's) and children have to travel to other areas to attend secondary school. There were suggestions that a new primary school would be needed to accommodate growth and that the existing Secondary School in Epping (St. John's) would need to be expanded.

In terms of leisure facilities, it is considered that there are too few activities for young people and that a result of this is anti-social behaviour. More sports facilities, as well as play areas and better access to green space would help in this respect.

### Transport and movement

There are concerns in relation to suitability of existing connections to Epping, Harlow and Chelmsford. The majority use private cars as their main form of transport. However, most people would like to see the Ongar to Epping line reopened as a commuter line and reconnected with the Central Line, as this could have a major positive impact on local roads and traffic congestion. Most people currently drive to Epping and park near to the station, as local bus services are not very reliable.

In terms of walking and cycling, people are put off using roads that are perceived as being dangerous and a lack of street lighting.

### The role of the airfield

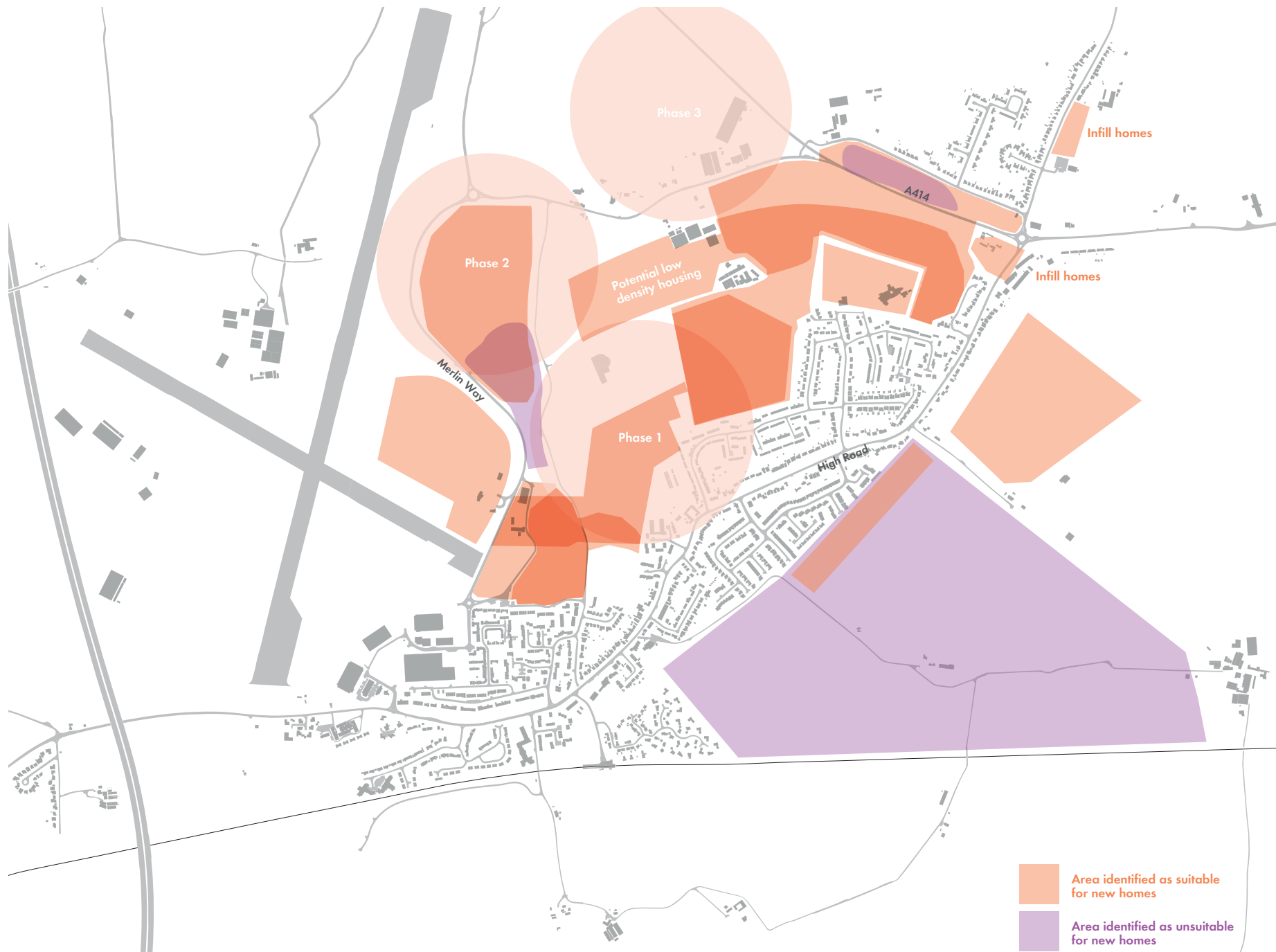
The airfield is central to the identity of North Weald Bassett and many wanted to encourage the continuation, and perhaps intensification, of aviation-related activities. It was felt that it should be promoted more as a tourist attraction. There was also strong support for commercial sports facilities, such as golf or mountain biking, at the airfield.

### Possible benefits of new homes

The new infrastructure that would come with homes would be welcomed, as would any new jobs. It was also considered important for some new homes to be affordable, as this would help young people in the settlement; though there would be a need to ensure that there is a mix and that a balanced community is created.

### Key issues involved in provision of new homes

People were fearful that too much or the wrong type of new development would cause the settlement to lose its character and village-feel, so any new development would have to be of an appropriate scale and density to reflect North Weald Bassett's existing characteristics.



### Housing community workshop feedback

Composite of the feedback from all eight groups illustrating some conflicting views



Annotating plans



Group discussions

### Spatial planning session

For the second group session at the community workshop, participants were provided with A1 plans to annotate with their ideas and suggestions for future development and investment in North Weald Bassett. The plans have been amalgamated and grouped according to particular themes, which cover:

- Housing;
- Social infrastructure;
- Green and open space; and
- Transport and movement.

The accompanying plans illustrate the key points made during the working session, which are also summarised below.

### Housing

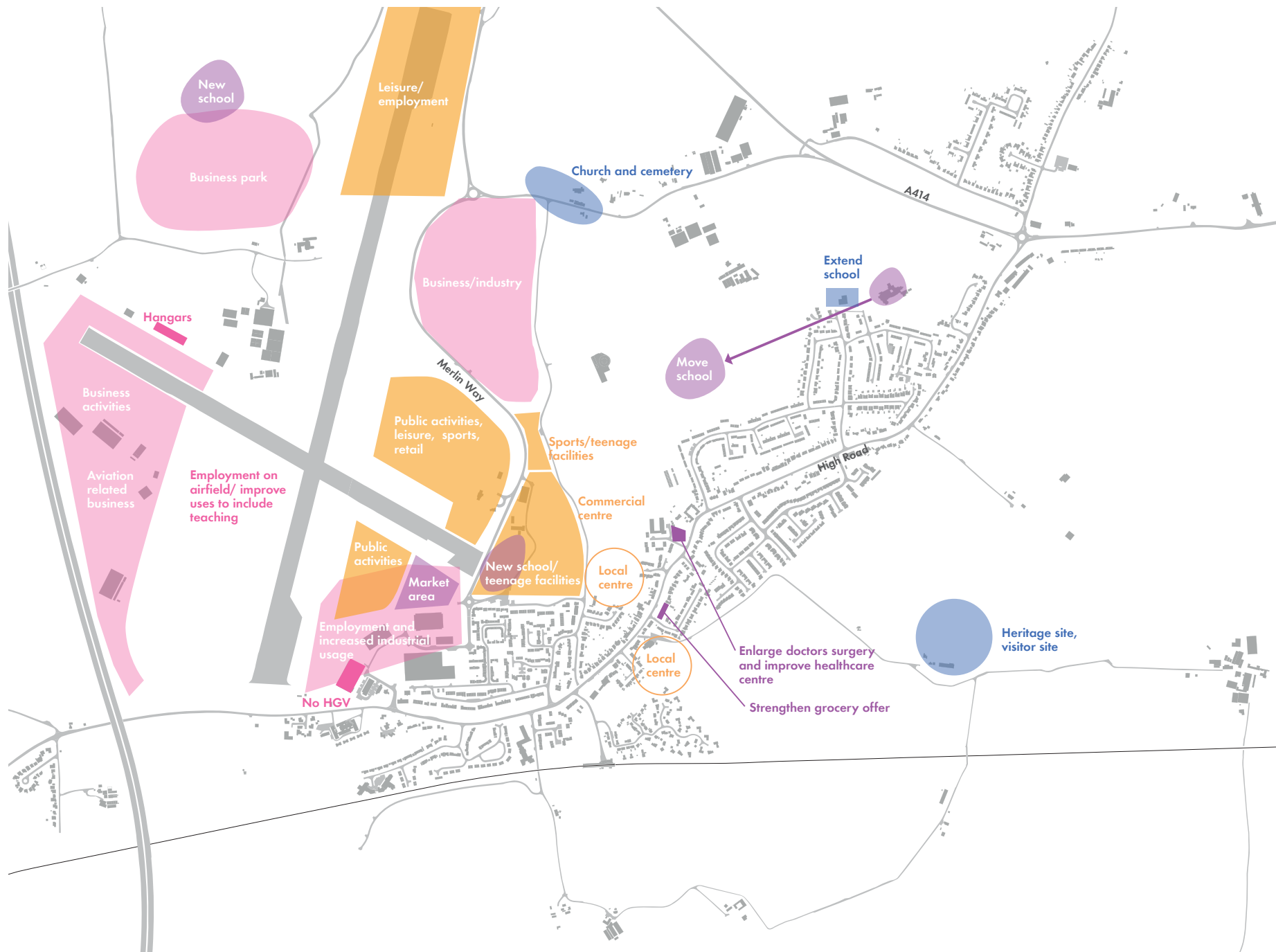
Suggestions for sites considered suitable for new homes in North Weald Bassett both overlapped and conflicted between groups, reflecting a range of opinion on the subject.

The sites considered most appropriate included the area between the commercial centre and the airfield, to the north of Lancaster Road; the area to the west of Oak Piece and the area to the north of the primary school.

Infill homes were suggested as being suitable by Tyler's Green and homes were also considered to be appropriate by some groups to the east of the settlement, on a strip of land to the east of Thornhill and on part of the site of Blakes's Golf Course.

Areas considered inappropriate for development included the flood risk and sewage works area to the west of the settlement, the strip of land to the north of the A414 (though some groups suggested this site was suitable for homes), and the area surrounding the Ongar Redoubt, to the east of the settlement.





**Social and economic infrastructure community workshop feedback**  
 Composite of the feedback from all eight groups illustrating some conflicting views



Group discussions



Group discussions

### Social and economic infrastructure

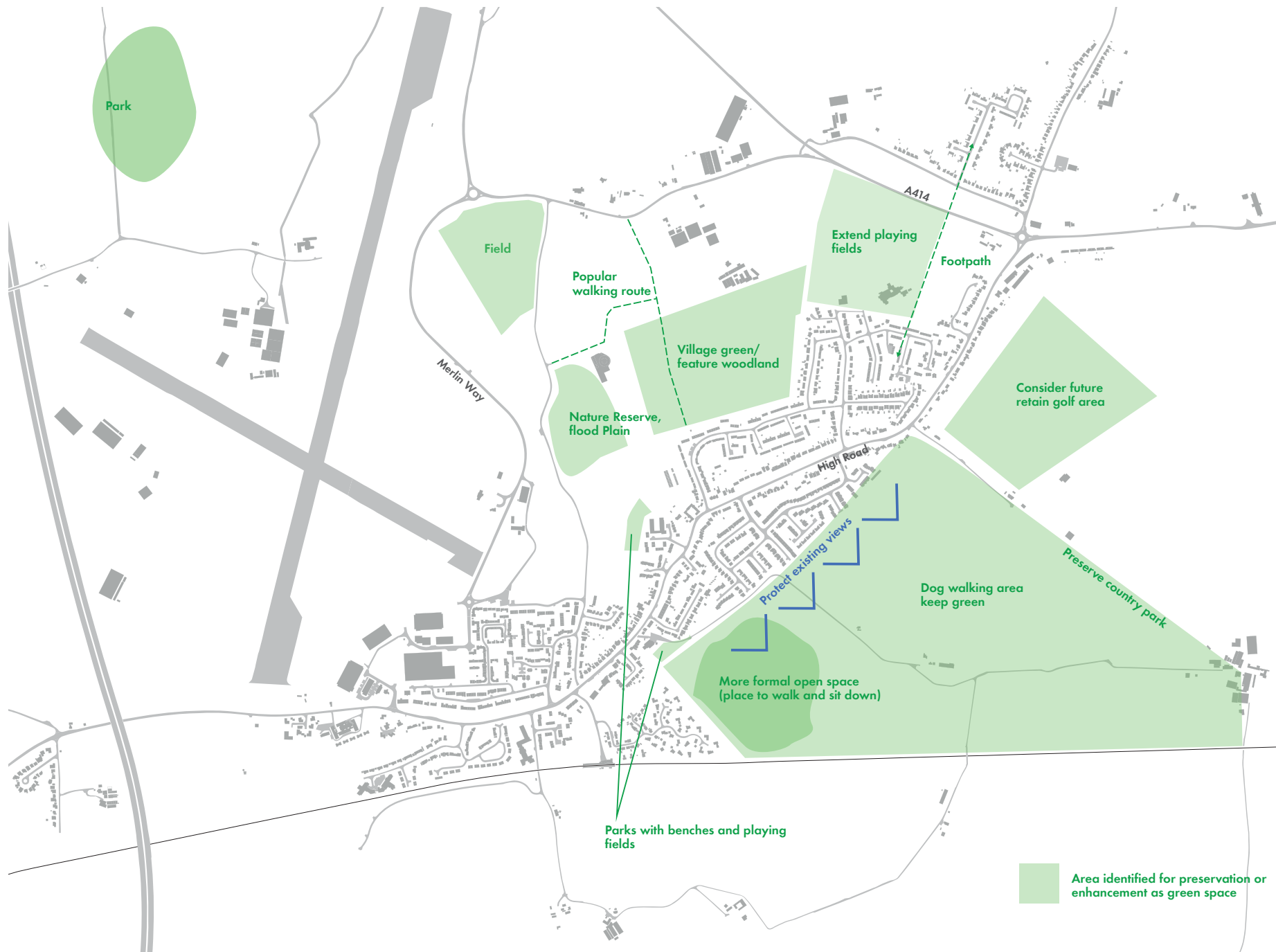
Suggestions were made to strengthen the local centre at its existing location and also to create a complementary centre between the existing shops and the airfield.

The area between the commercial centre and the airfield was identified as a suitable area for leisure uses in the settlement, including facilities for young people and sports provision.

Suggestions were made for the primary school to enlarge at its current location or move further west, to the area north of Queen's Road or to an area to the north-west of the airfield.

A heritage and visitor centre was suggested for the Ongar Redoubt area, set in a country park.

Employment uses were identified as being most suitably located either within the existing airfield, or immediately to the east of this.



### Green and open space community workshop feedback

Composite of the feedback from all eight groups illustrating some conflicting views





Feedback session

### Green and open space

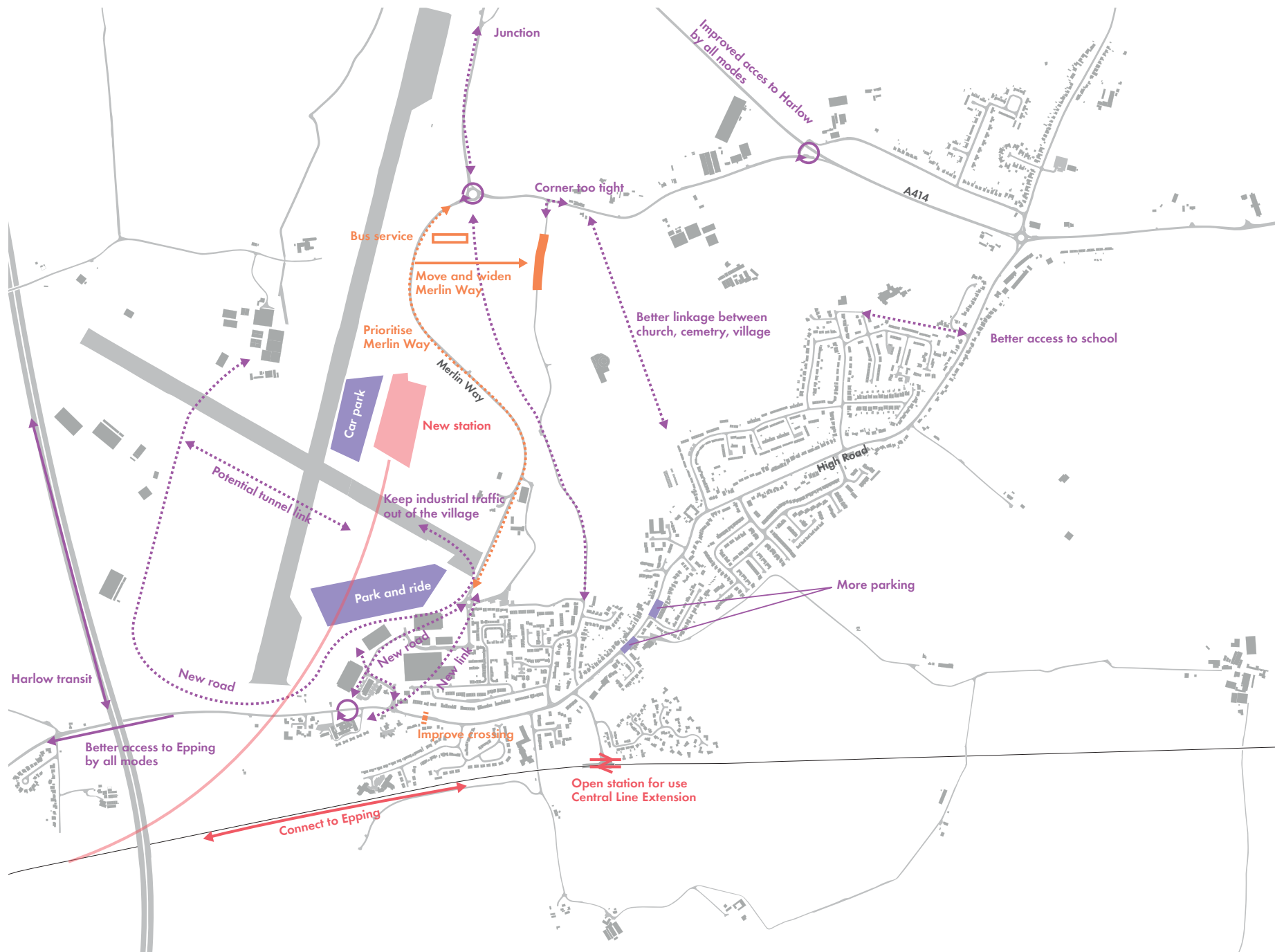
The areas most frequently identified as open space priorities were the area of rising land to the east of the settlement, close to the Ongar Redoubt, which was considered to have potential as a country park; and the flood plain area open space, which is considered to have merit as a nature reserve.

Other areas identified as being important included the walking routes to the east of the settlement and to the north of the settlement, linking to St Andrew's Church.

Suggestion was made for the establishment of a settlement green or feature woodland area for the settlement.



Feedback session



### Transport and movement workshop feedback

Composite of the feedback from all eight groups illustrating some conflicting views



Group discussions



Annotating plans



Annotating plans

### Transport and movement

A number of groups identified potential to provide a new entrance to the airfield from the south western point of the settlement that removes commercial traffic accessing the airfield from the residential streets around Wellington Road.

The area covering the airfield market was suggested as a suitable site for a park and ride scheme on weekdays, to make better use of this space and address accessibility issues to Epping.

Better connectivity to Epping was also suggested through the extension of the Epping-Ongar heritage rail line to connect to the Central Line.

A number of groups identified a duplicate role in Merlin Way and Church Lane and suggested that these could perhaps be consolidated as one route.

More parking was identified as a priority for the settlement, in order to more effectively support the existing commercial centre.

Access to the school was also raised as an issue, with a direct access from the High Road suggested by one group.



### 4.3 LANDOWNERS MEETING

A landowners' discussion session was held at Epping Forest District Council offices on 13 February 2014 from 1.30pm to 3.30pm. The event was hosted by EFDC's Director of Planning, John Preston, and invitations were sent to all landowners on the 'call for sites' list. 25 landowners registered for and attended the event.

The event was introduced by John Preston, who set out the Local Plan process context for the development of the North Weald Bassett Masterplanning Study. The project team then presented the context for the study and the key messages from the initial baseline analysis covering settlement character, urban form, physical and social infrastructure, transport and movement and the property context. The presentation also included initial feedback from the community workshop held on Saturday 25 January 2014.

Participants were then able to ask questions regarding the masterplan study, with key topics covered including:

- The role of the council as planning authority and land owner
- The timeframe for the masterplan study and the point at which sites will be identified
- The role of the green belt boundary review and ensuring this is defensible in the future
- The likely densities of any new development, with preference stated for densities which reflect the existing settlement character
- The role of the central line and the realistic chance of this being connected with the Ongar and Epping heritage line

- Whether sites could be identified during the masterplan study that are not within the call for sites boundaries, with agreement that this would not be impossible but would be unlikely
- The current and future capacity of the sewerage treatment works and the extent to which this is serving an area beyond North Weald Bassett
- The possibility of landowners being provided with a plan to sketch and submit their ideas for North Weald Bassett, as residents had done at the community workshop.

Following the event, a pdf of the North Weald Bassett base plan was forwarded to land owners who attended the event, so that they could submit their ideas for the future of the settlement.

Attendees were also asked to outline the particular sites which they represent. The results of this are set out in the plan opposite.



Land holdings of landowners that attended the landowners session

#### 4.4 STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

The project team has carried out interviews with key stakeholders, as identified by Epping Forest District Council. The key points made by the stakeholders are summarised below.

##### **Essex County Council – Spatial Planning**

The study should consider how new housing would access pre-school and primary and secondary school places. There is a primary school at Tyler's Green, but this may need to be expanded if a significant number of new houses are built. There are no secondary schools in North Weald Bassett.

##### **Essex County Council – Minerals and Waste Policy**

Land at the North Weald Airfield is identified in Policy WM4 of the extant Waste Local Plan and ECC's starting position would be to seek the protection of this site whilst it remains a site allocation. The emerging replacement Waste Local Plan is not at an advanced stage, but the land at North Weald Airfield is not currently included.

##### **Epping Forest District Council – Housing**

EFDC currently requires that 40% of new housing units are affordable and this has been achieved or exceeded on most sites recently. The general principle is that 40% of dwellings across a new development should be affordable. The housing strategy currently requires that no more than 30% of affordable housing should be shared ownership and no less than 70% should be affordable rented.

All affordable housing would be allocated to people of EFDC's waiting list, but it is not possible to reserve them for local people. Affordable housing should reflect the mix of units' sizes across a new development in terms of the ratio of flats to houses and the number of bedrooms. EFDC would want to agree the mix of flats to houses and the number of bedrooms on larger sites. Affordable homes should not be segregated, but could be clustered in groups in larger developments. The study should be clear in respect of the minimum proximity of new housing to the airfield.

##### **Epping Forest District Council – Neighbourhoods**

It is broadly recognised that North Weald Bassett should accommodate new homes in order to secure its future as a sustainable place, especially as the settlement needs investment to boost the economy

- However, the settlement is in a dilemma regarding the number of new homes it is prepared to accept and the ability of these to trigger investment in new physical and social infrastructure
- The heritage of the airfield is incredibly important to the settlement community and keeping aviation uses is important
- The Deloitte report suggests a combination of aviation activities and other uses but the potential for these to coexist and co-ordinate has still to be proven
- Housing immediately adjacent to the airfield may have issues in terms of value and appeal, but scope could exist for shortening the long runway and developing at the southern end of this.
- Access to the airfield is currently restricted and it would be better for traffic to access the airfield



without having to go through a residential area

- Land within the airfield boundary on the eastern side could be used for larger scale leisure uses that can act as a buffer for residential development
- A leisure study is currently being undertaken by EFDC and is due in the next 6 months

### **Epping Council - Landowner North Weald Airfield**

Savills are undertaking a study of the airfield. Their report considers the longer term sustainability of the airfield looking at growth sectors and possible marketing / management strategies.

- Savills indicated that it would cost in the region of £15m to bring the airfield up to business aviation standards
- A site to the east of the airfield had been identified for possible residential development, to help to raise the funds required
- An area to the north east of the airfield was identified as a possible location of B8 development albeit this was seen as a medium term opportunity (which would probably need further road infrastructure improvements)
- The area around the existing control tower was discussed as a potential location for a new local centre – which could help to act as a buffer between the continued aviation use and proposed area for residential intensification

### **English Heritage**

The Redoubt's key landscape setting is to the north and any development of this area could cause a negative impact. The ideal future use for the Redoubt would be one that protects, conserves and enhances the heritage asset, but which is also financially viable

### **Environment Agency**

There are a number of watercourses in the study area, including main rivers with associated flood zones. Development should be located away from flood zones, a minimum of eight metres from main rivers and 5 metres from ordinary watercourses, and any impact on flooding should be mitigated. Surface water drainage issues must be considered through the use of sustainable drainage systems to manage the run-off from any new development. Any new bridges would need to be clear span and there should be no culverting of watercourses. EFDC is the Lead Local Flood Authority and would deal with any issues related to ordinary watercourses. There is potential contamination at North Weald Airfield and an assessment would need to be carried out. New development should make use of water efficiency techniques, equivalent to code for sustainable homes level 3 / 4.

### **North Weald Bassett GP Surgery**

The GP practice is based in Epping (The Limes Medical Centre) and has had a branch centre in North Weald Bassett for the last 14 years. Capacity issues relate to the physical facilities rather than to the number of doctors and appointment availability, which is in line with GP surgeries across England.

The practice has attempted twice in the last 10 years to develop a new GP facility in North Weald Bassett. Firstly at the old printing press site, for which the land was secured, planning permission was secured but financing was not available from NHS England. Secondly at the Blenheim Court recent residential development the site was secured, planning permission secured and financing put in place but the developer then increased the price and NHS England was not willing to meet the gap.

The practice would like to expand, with appropriate facilities, to include training and other primary care services.

### **Epping Ongar Railway**

The railway ceased being operated as part of the London Underground Central Line in 1994, but has been restored using private funding and volunteer labour. Since 2012 passenger trains have been run on the track from Ongar to North Weald Bassett, which is owned and operated by the railway.

- The track does not join up with Epping Underground Station, but there are plans to build a platform to allow easy passenger interchange
- There is potential for a shuttle passenger train to run during morning and evening peak times on weekdays to act as a commuter service, with the railway acting as a tourist attraction at other times
- Financial contributions from developers could help to allow the railway to act as a public transport service
- The railway also runs bus services, competing with Essex County Council, and has run shuttle services to and from events at the North Weald Airfield in the past
- The railway would like to use hanger space at the

North Weald Airfield as a transport museum and restoration centre.

### **North Weald Airfield Museum**

The North Weald Airfield Museum looks at its history from 1915 to the 1960s.

- The museum has no direct access to the airfield and access is via the main gate
- The airfield is used extensively by a number of aviation and non-aviation uses
- The airfield is a heritage site and should be used for recreation
- If homes are built too close to the airfield there may be pressure for aviation activities to stop because of complaints about aircraft noise
- Infrastructure, including public transport, schools, medical services and utilities would need to be provided if new homes are built

### **North Weald Airfield Users Group**

The North Weald Airfield Users Group came into existence nine years ago, when the airfield was first under threat of closure.

- Weald Aviation and North Weald Flying Services are the main aviation users of the airfield
- The NWA Users Group has good communications with the local residents, some of whom are pilots and aviation enthusiasts
- There is a recognition that some changes to the way that the airfield is operated are needed, alongside investment, but it should be used for aviation and not developed for other uses
- There are some activities that can and do take place alongside aviation, such as sports and events, including motor sports, which bring in revenue but

also cause maintenance issues

- In terms of aviation uses, the airfield is currently used for private flying – sport, leisure and historic – but it would be ideal as a business airport
- A license and new infrastructure and facilities would be needed for the airfield to be used as a business airport
- There have been a number of reports that have looked at the airfield in recent years, and these explore the various options
- Residential development in close proximity to the airfield would not be ideal, even though aircraft that are landing make very little noise and taking off is only noisy for around 10 seconds, so commercial development would be preferred

#### **Natural England and Essex Wildlife Trust**

- There are some local wildlife sites within the study area
- Existing resources should be protected and new habitats and linking green corridors should be created
- New development should enhance ecology and biodiversity
- If new development would impact on ecology and biodiversity then mitigation would need to be put in place
- Epping Forest is near to the study area and designated as a Special Area of Conservation
- There is a Site of Special Scientific Interest near to the study area at Fiddlers Hamlet
- Three local nature reserves are in or within close proximity of the study area (Roughtalley's Wood, Weald Common Flood Meadow and Church Lane Flood Meadow)
- Development should not take place on class 1 or 2

agricultural land

- M11 Junction 7A improvements would allow more intensive use of North Weald Airfield but have a negative impact on air quality

#### **Harlow District Council – Forward Planning**

- The potential for North Weald Bassett's growth should not be taken out of context, and should be considered alongside growth across the wider sub-region
- The potential impact of any growth on the M11, including the new Junction 7A, should be carefully assessed.
- North Weald Airfield is important in terms of its historical associations and also provides opportunities for leisure just outside of London, which may be hard to provide at another location if it is redeveloped for other uses.
- New homes near to the airfield could result in pressure for aviation activities to cease or be limited.
- Harlow is a sub-regional centre and provides shopping, employment, a main line rail link, and education and health services to its wider catchment area.
- Harlow District Council believes that growth in the wider catchment area can help to support Harlow's role in the sub-region, but that there also needs to be new infrastructure to support this growth.



### **North Weald Golf Club**

Discussions / information provided was generally around the long term sustainability of the golf club. There is a view that the golf course was too remote from the likely growth area, which would be around the existing settlements / airfield. The emerging Strategy was to diversify the leisure uses and expand the golf course. The rationale outlined was a need to restructure the business to allow the club to grow beyond an 18 hole golf course (to include adventure golf and other facilities for families). A residential consent on an identified (2 to 5) acre plot would enable them to raise funds to restructure the golf business. The potential surplus land comprises 3 parcels, namely:

- Golf car park, plus two buildings – 140m x 65m, approx 2 acres
- Adjacent football site business – 100m x 60m, approx 1.5 acres
- Adjacent land connected to Little Weald Hall – approx 150m x 20m (average as it reduces in width), approx 1.25 acres.

### **Local councillors Epping Forest District Council County councillors Essex County Council**

Councillors gave comments on the following themes:

#### **The airfield and employment**

- The Enterprise Zone in Harlow means that businesses are attracted there ahead of North Weald Bassett
- North Weald Bassett's identity and the North Weald Airfield heritage are very important
- North Weald Airfield is not suitable as a business airport, but it is important in terms of its heritage value and the current business model could be improved

#### **Transport**

- Traffic and congestion is a big issue and development south of Harlow will put more pressure on M11 Junction 7
- North Weald Bassett is car dependent and many residents use Epping for shops and services and to commute into London, so more car parking would be needed as part of any new development and in Epping
- Better car parking is needed at Epping to meet the needs of North Weald Bassett residents
- Improved passenger transport is needed, especially at peak times, to decrease dependence on private cars
- The Epping Ongar Railway could reduce the pressure caused by development on the roads if commuter services are introduced

### **New housing**

- New homes in North Weald Bassett would be acceptable, but the impact on the Green Belt would have to be acceptable, with new defensible boundaries drawn, and new infrastructure would need to be provided
- Any new housing should be balanced in terms of mix and tenure to ensure a healthy community
- New development should protect the environment and the character of North Weald Bassett, and should not cause coalescence with other settlements
- New housing should not result in pressures that end aviation activities at North Weald Airfield
- Infill or brownfield development would be the most suitable type of development, which would mean that North Weald Bassett could be perhaps expanded to accommodate a significant population increase
- Building more homes would mean that improved infrastructure is required, especially shops, emergency services, health care and education

### **Social and community infrastructure**

- Most people use Harlow for major shopping trips, but local shopping trips are done in North Weald Bassett
- Secondary school age children currently have to travel out of the settlement for their education and there is a need for more nearby school places if more homes are built
- Land should be set aside for a secondary school in the study area even if one is not built
- Proposals to open the former comprehensive school in Ongar as a free school could benefit North Weald Bassett
- There is a need for the provision of better facilities for young people, such as a sports centre
- There are good shops and services in the settlement, but the introduction of competing businesses could have a negative impact and force these to lose custom
- Increased health care provision would be needed to accommodate housing growth



