



# Ware Neighbourhood Plan 2021-2033



**Referendum Version Plan**

**July 2023**

## Foreword

Ware is a thriving market town where people value the rural feel, the wealth of amenities and being part of a community that is inclusive and diverse. The Neighbourhood Plan is an opportunity for local people to have control over the future of the town, by actively planning for new sympathetic development and protecting those parts of the town that are important to its character and function.

The Neighbourhood Plan represents the vision and aspirations of the community. It has been produced by the Ware Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group, supported by Ware Town Council, using the views and ideas of those living and working in the town and other stakeholders with an interest in the community.

The Steering Group carried out extensive and inclusive community engagement to listen and consult on a wide range of issues in order to achieve a plan that details how we see our community developing. Every effort has been made to ensure that the views contained in this document reflect those of the majority of Ware.

Ware presents a unique set of planning challenges. It has taken time and careful consideration to craft a set of local planning policies that will safeguard everything we regard as special, whilst allowing the area to change and develop in response to the needs and demands of modern life.

The Neighbourhood Plan has taken many hours of hard work. I wish to pay tribute to the residents and councillors who have given their time freely. Our sincere thanks to Alison Eardley, who has provided invaluable advice, guidance and produced many drafts and to Terry Philpott, the Town Clerk, who has coordinated our meetings.

I hope the investment of time by the community in preparing this Plan will result in a flourishing and sustainable future for Ware.

Jan Stock

Chair of the Ware Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group

## Contents

<b>1</b>	<b>INTRODUCTION .....</b>	<b>4</b>
	The Planning Policy Context .....	6
	Community engagement .....	7
	Sustainability of the Neighbourhood Plan.....	8
<b>2</b>	<b>ABOUT WARE .....</b>	<b>9</b>
	Challenges facing Ware .....	11
<b>3</b>	<b>A VISION FOR WARE .....</b>	<b>13</b>
	Vision for the Neighbourhood Plan .....	13
	Neighbourhood Plan Objectives .....	13
<b>4</b>	<b>HOUSING.....</b>	<b>14</b>
	Policy W1: Meeting the housing needs of Ware’s population .....	14
<b>5</b>	<b>CHARACTER, HERITAGE AND DESIGN.....</b>	<b>17</b>
	Policy W2: Reflecting the character of Ware through high quality design .....	17
	Policy W3: Conserving heritage assets .....	27
	Policy W4: Design of shopfront signage .....	31
	Policy W5: Meeting the highest environmental standards .....	33
<b>6</b>	<b>ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND WARE TOWN CENTRE.....</b>	<b>36</b>
	Policy W6: Retaining and enhancing the vitality and viability of Ware town centre .....	36
	Policy W7: A safe, attractive, and welcoming public realm .....	39
	Policy W8: Small business and shared space support .....	43
	Policy W9: Supporting commercial premises and land .....	45
	Policy W10: Supporting SMEs, flexible start-ups, and homeworking .....	47
	Policy W11: Ware as a sustainable visitor destination.....	49
<b>7</b>	<b>ENVIRONMENT AND GREEN SPACE .....</b>	<b>52</b>
	Policy W12: Green and blue infrastructure and delivering biodiversity net gain .....	52
	Policy W13: Local Green Spaces .....	59
	Policy W14: Managing the environmental impact of development .....	62
<b>8</b>	<b>TRANSPORT AND MOVEMENT .....</b>	<b>65</b>

Policy W15: Improving walking and cycling.....	65
Policy W16: Mitigating vehicular impacts at junctions.....	74
Policy W17: Maximising the potential for children to walk safely to school .....	77
Policy W18: Electric vehicle charging .....	78
<b>9 COMMUNITY FACILITIES .....</b>	<b>79</b>
Policy W19: Improving provision of community facilities, including accessible toilet facilities, and promoting shared, flexible spaces.....	79
Policy W20: Allotments and community growing spaces.....	81
<b>10 IMPLEMENTATION AND PLAN REVIEW .....</b>	<b>83</b>
<b>11 INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS AND PROVISION .....</b>	<b>85</b>
<b>12 NON POLICY ACTIONS .....</b>	<b>88</b>
<b>13 POLICIES MAPS .....</b>	<b>91</b>
<b>14 GLOSSARY .....</b>	<b>97</b>
<b>15 LIST OF EVIDENCE DOCUMENTS .....</b>	<b>100</b>

Appendix A - Local Green Space details

Appendix B - Venues currently offering shared space in Ware

Appendix C - Definition of accessible toilets

## 1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This document is the Ware Neighbourhood Plan (WNP). It sets out planning and land-use policy for the neighbourhood area, over the period 2021 to 2033, sitting alongside and in compliance with the East Herts District Plan 2018. The Plan has been prepared in accordance with the Town & Country Planning Act 1990, the Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, the Localism Act 2011 and the Neighbourhood Development Planning Regulations 2012 (as amended).
- 1.2 East Hertfordshire District Council (EHDC), as the local planning authority, designated the neighbourhood area (Figure 1.1) on 11 September 2018. The neighbourhood area shares much of its boundary with that of the Town Council, excluding the North and East Ware Site Allocation, as this is the focus of a separate masterplan.
- 1.3 The document sets out planning policies only. Issues relating to highways fall beyond this scope, as they are dealt with by the Highways Authority (Hertfordshire County Council), although related projects are captured in Section 12 of this document (Non-Policy Actions). A Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group, comprising local councillors and volunteers from the community, was established by the Town Council to prepare the Plan. In consultation with the community and local businesses, it has established a vision and framework for the future of the designated area and sets out how that vision will be realised through planning land use and development change over the plan period 2021 to 2033.
- 1.4 The Plan provides guidance to any interested parties wishing to submit planning applications for development within the designated area. It also sets out how land should be considered, in planning terms, locally, and is a material planning consideration in the determination of applications.
- 1.5 The process of producing the plan has sought to involve the community as widely as possible and the different topic areas are reflective of matters that are of considerable importance in Ware. Within each section there is a summary of what each policy seeks to achieve and a justification, providing the necessary understanding of the policy and how it should be applied. The policies themselves are presented in the **blue** boxes and these will be used to assist in the determination of planning applications. It is advisable that, to understand the full context for any individual policy, it is read in conjunction with the supporting text and evidence documents. These can be found on the [Neighbourhood Plan website](#). Beneath each policy is a conformity reference, listing the policies in the EHDC District Plan and paragraphs of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) that the policy conforms to. The Plan identifies projects that are not met through the planning system, but which are important to the well-being of the community. It is proposed that these projects will be met through community action supported by a range of organisations. The Plan also sets out the Community Infrastructure Priorities and a framework for monitoring and implementation.

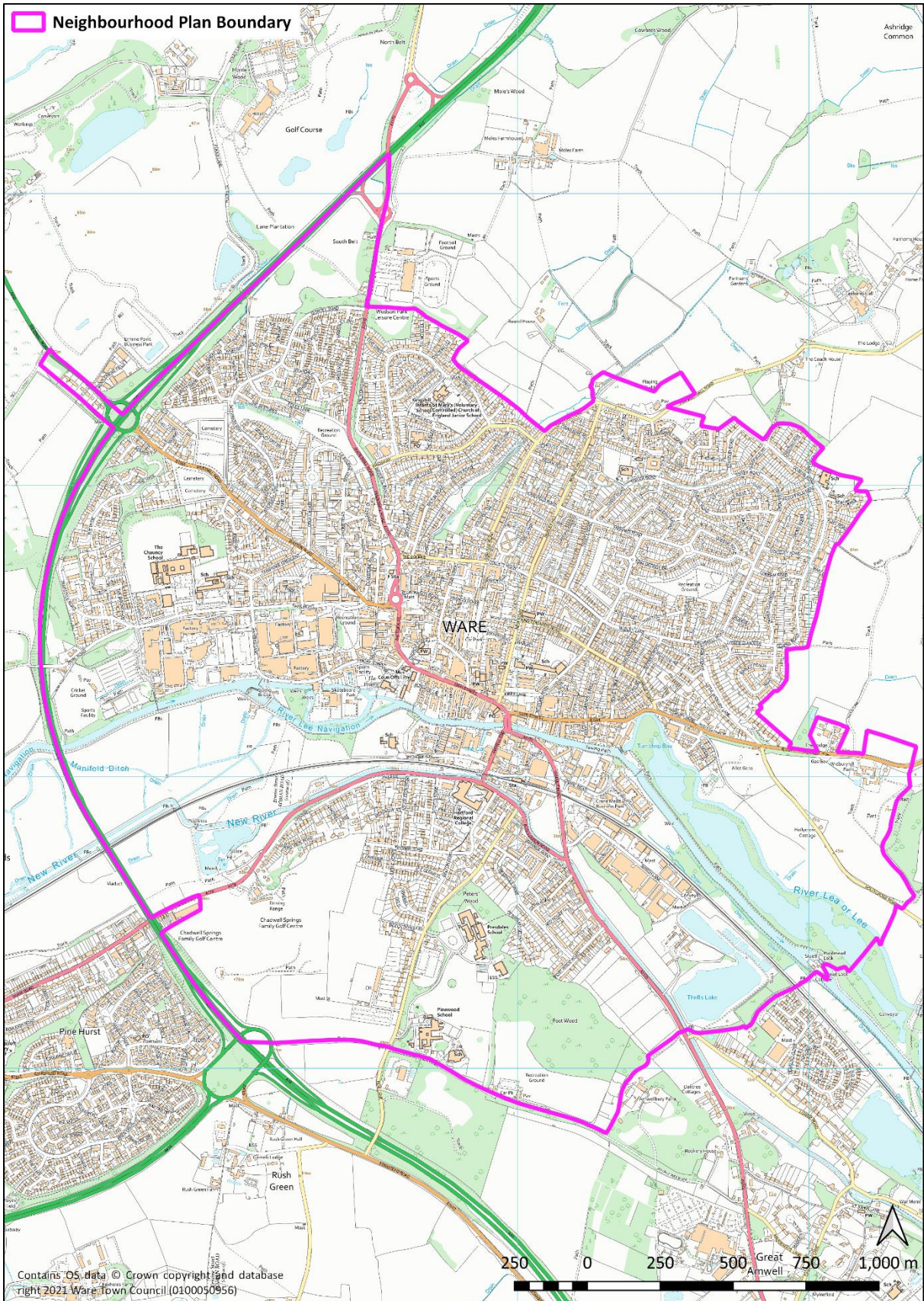


Figure 1.1: The Ware Neighbourhood Plan designated area

## The Planning Policy Context

### National Planning Policy

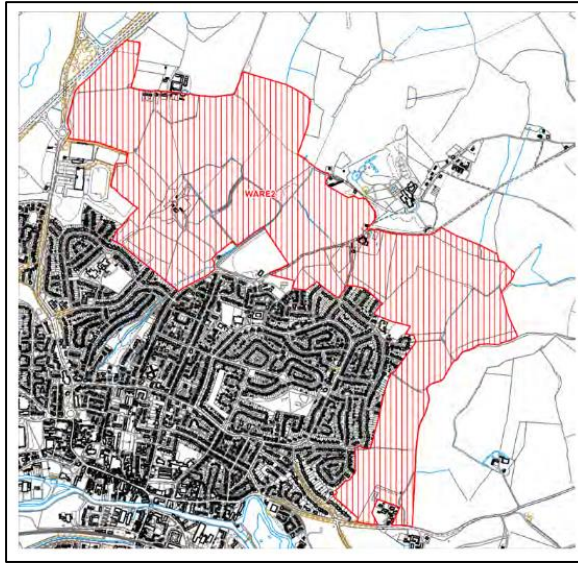
- 1.6 The WNP has been prepared in accordance with the revised NPPF published in July 2021, which states at paragraphs 29 and 30:

*‘Neighbourhood planning gives communities the power to develop a shared vision for their area. Neighbourhood plans can shape, direct and help to deliver sustainable development, by influencing local planning decisions as part of the statutory development plan. **Neighbourhood plans should not promote less development than set out in the strategic policies for the area, or undermine those strategic policies** (Neighbourhood plans must be in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in any development plan that covers their area).*

*Once a neighbourhood plan has been brought into force, **the policies it contains take precedence over existing non-strategic policies in a local plan covering the neighbourhood area, where they are in conflict; unless they are superseded by strategic or non-strategic policies that are adopted subsequently.***

### Local Planning Policy

- 1.7 The WNP policies are in general conformity with the strategic policies of the East Herts District Plan which, alongside the Minerals and Waste Local Plans for Hertfordshire, makes up the Local Development Plan.
- 1.8 The East Herts District Plan was adopted in 2018 and sets out the planning framework for the district covering the period from 2011 to 2033. It establishes a need for 18,458 new homes by 2033, which equates to 839 new homes per year, across the district. In addition, it supports the provision of 10,800 new jobs and provides for 19-20 hectares of new employment land: 3,000m<sup>2</sup> of Class E Commercial, Business and Service (formerly B1 employment floorspace) to be provided specifically at Mead Lane, Hertford; and an additional 7,100m<sup>2</sup> space relating to Convenience (food) retail; and a further 5,700m<sup>2</sup> of Comparison (non-food) retail.
- 1.9 The District Plan categorises Ware as a Minor Town centre and identifies it as the location for an urban extension to be developed to the north and east of the town. The strategy for Ware (both the existing town and taking into account the extension), will provide:
- 1,000 new homes, with a further 500 if adequate highways mitigation can be demonstrated;
  - a proportion of the overall residential windfall allowance for the District;
  - 600m<sup>2</sup> retail floorspace; and
  - 3ha commercial employment space



*Strategic site allocation north and east of Ware*

- 1.10 This strategic allocation will be subject to a masterplan encompassing Garden City principles and will deliver amongst others a range of new facilities including a new neighbourhood centre, primary and secondary school provision, indoor and outdoor sports facilities, a care home and a site for Travelling Showpeople.
- 1.11 The neighbourhood plan area does not encompass the strategic site, however, the development of that site has been carefully considered in terms of its potential impact on the existing settlement, the local community and facilities.

## **Community engagement**



*Images show examples of community engagement activities throughout the process*

- 1.12 Work on the WNP has been guided by the need to engage as widely as possible with the different communities served by Ware. Efforts have been made to reach those people who are often more difficult to involve in formal consultations. This has included a series of exhibitions, presentations, and surveys. These will be more fully set out in the Consultation Statement to be submitted alongside the Submission Version Plan at Regulation 16. A timeline of activity is summarised in Figure 1.2.



Date	Milestone	Key activities
2018	Ware Town Council decides to prepare a Neighbourhood Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Neighbourhood Area is designated</li> <li>• Steering Group established</li> </ul>
2019 2020	Evidence collation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Topic Groups set up</li> <li>• Dedicated website established</li> <li>• Attendance at Masterplan meetings (for the strategic site N&amp;E Ware)</li> <li>• Initial consultation days held</li> <li>• Community consultation to determine key issues facing Ware</li> </ul>
2021	Informal Plan developed  Regulation 14 Plan finalised	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consultation events on the informal draft Plan</li> <li>• Pre-Submission Version Plan finalised</li> <li>• SEA/ HRA Screening</li> </ul>
2022 to 2023	Plan finalised and made	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pre-Submission (Regulation 14) consultation</li> <li>• Plan amended appropriately into Submission Version and submitted, with supporting documents to EHDC</li> <li>• Regulation 16 consultation run by EHDC</li> <li>• Plan independently examined</li> <li>• Plan finalised for Referendum</li> <li>• Plan 'made' and forming part of the strategic development plan</li> </ul>

Figure 1.2: Engagement activity timeline

1.14 Discussions with EHDC have taken place on each of the topic areas covered by the Plan. In addition, communication with local groups and neighbouring parishes has taken place.

### Sustainability of the Neighbourhood Plan

1.15 The WNP has been screened to ascertain whether a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and/or Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA) is required. The screening document was subject to consultation with Historic England, Natural England and the Environment Agency. The screening Determination Statement has concluded that the WNP is *unlikely to result in significant environmental effects and therefore does not require an SEA or an HRA*.

1.16 A copy of the Screening Determination letter and statement is included within the evidence base, accompanying the WNP.

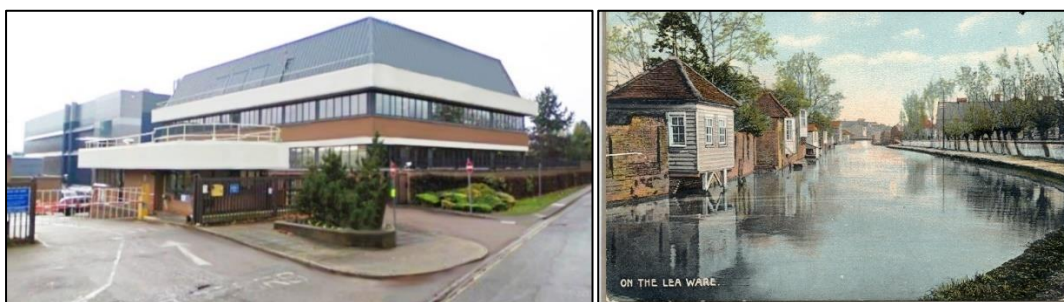
## 2 ABOUT WARE

- 2.1 Ware is an ancient historic Hertfordshire market town of circa 18,800 people (based on the census 2011. This will have increased due to additional housing being built since this time), located close to the county town of Hertford. The Prime Meridian passes to the east of Ware. The River Lea (known by the terms 'Lea' and 'Lee'; this document refers to it as the River Lea) runs through the centre of Ware, providing a 'green lung' for walkers and cyclists, and an inland navigational connection with neighbouring Hertford connecting the town with London and the national canal network and neighbouring Hertford. In the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, there were more than 70 public houses in the town, most of which have become private homes, leaving only approximately 19 to 20 operating currently.
- 2.2 Archaeology has shown that Ware has been occupied since at least the Mesolithic period (which ended about 4000 BC). Thus, it has been said that Ware is one of the oldest continuously occupied sites within Europe. During the pre-Roman Iron-Age, the River Lea was a convenient trade route from the Continent. With the river crossing allowing further access, the Iron-Age settlement became an important trading centre. Following the Roman invasion of AD 43, the area continued to develop, and a Roman town grew up either side of the road known as Ermine Street. The river crossing was the centre for the Saxon town. The Norman overlords developed Ware along the river, creating the High Street and the bridge, which superseded the Ermine Street and ford crossing. The Town's modern name probably dates from the 9th century, when weirs were built on the River Lea to prevent Danish Viking long ships escaping after a battle with Alfred the Great near Ware.
- 2.3 Ware has numerous locally and nationally listed assets, including four Grade I, fifteen Grade II\* and 181 Grade II. The Grade I assets comprise the remains of the 14th century Friary, one of the few friary buildings to have survived the dissolution of the monasteries under Henry VIII. It became known as The Priory and is currently used as the Town Council's offices. Place House Hall is a manor house dating to the 13th/ early 14th century and is one of the most important early medieval timber-framed structures in the county. Scott's Grotto, built in the 1760's by local poet John Scott, is Grade I listed complex of rooms and tunnels, clad in a variety of shells, fossils and other materials. The tunnels extend over 20 metres into the chalk hillside with the deepest chamber being some 10 metres below the hilltop. Finally, St. Mary's Church is regarded as a fine example of 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> century architecture and contains many items of historic interest, including its stained-glass windows and organ.
- 2.4 Ware was considered the 'premier malting town in England'; with more than 100 malthouses in the early 20th century, sending most of its production to the London breweries via the River Lea.



*Images show: Scott's Grotto; the River Lea; Ware Priory; and Place House*

- 2.5 Ware is probably best known for the 'Great Bed of Ware', which was mentioned by Shakespeare in Twelfth Night and is on display in London's Victoria and Albert Museum. Other literary references to the Bed include plays of Ben Johnson, Thomas Decker, John Webster, Richard Brone, John Wilson and George Farquhar in the 17<sup>th</sup> century. It also appears in a poem by Lord Byron in the 18<sup>th</sup> century and in one of Dickens Christmas stories in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.
- 2.6 The north bank of the river behind the High Street has several 'Gazebos', originally known as 'Dutch Houses', the oldest of which date to the reign of King William of Orange in the 1690s. They were a peaceful retreat for the owners of the High Street Inns and their guests and restored at the instigation of the Ware Society in the 1980's.



*Images show: GSK offices and gazebos on the River Lea*

- 2.7 Today, Ware's largest employer is GlaxoSmithKline (GSK). Their large pharmaceutical research and production sites are located adjacent to the River Lea, to the west of the Town centre.
- 2.8 Ware's current educational provision includes: several preschools and nurseries; seven primary schools; two secondary schools; two schools for students with special needs; and Ware Campus of the Hertford Regional College (HRC) - including the college's

‘Creative Art & Enterprise,’ ‘Hair and Beauty,’ ‘Business and Computing’ and ‘Inclusive Learning’ Departments.

2.9 Ware has good local road traffic links to the M25 / London and Cambridge via the adjacent A10. Easy access to the A1(M) is provided via local A10 junctions, i.e., with the A602 (via Stevenage), and the A414 (via Hertford and Hatfield). Easy access to the M11 and Stansted Airport is provided via the local A10 / A120 junction. The town has moderately reasonable local public transport provision:

- Ware Rail station is on the London Liverpool Street - Hertford East Branch Line operated by Abellio Greater Anglia, and offers a half hourly rail service to/from London and Hertford.
- Daytime bus services operate within the town and connect Ware to local villages and nearby towns including Stevenage, Harlow, Waltham Cross, Hertford and Hatfield.

### **Challenges facing Ware**

2.10 The WNP seeks to address, as far as is possible, the challenges that face the community. In summary these challenges are:

- Meeting the demands of an ageing population in terms of ensuring housing, services and facilities are accessible and suited to their needs.
- Ensuring that new homes are of the type and affordability to enable young people who grew up in and around Ware the chance to live locally rather than be forced to move away.
- Encouraging younger people and families to locate to the town.
- Managing the integration of the prospective strategic mixed-use development on land allocated immediately to the north and east of the town.
- Supporting the ongoing viability and vitality of the town centre and encouraging the continued presence of major employers in the town.
- Supporting employment that exists in the town, including opportunities for those wishing to work from home or more flexibly.
- Safeguarding the valued green spaces and wider natural setting, including the River Lea, of the town.
- Continuing to provide a range of community facilities that are accessible to everyone. This is particularly important given the number of historic buildings which are often restricted in terms of access.
- Conserving the town’s historic assets, and encouraging aesthetically pleasing design in new developments, that contributes to and enhances the existing identity and character of the town.

- Improving accessibility to services within and near the town - through the provision of a network of footpaths, cycle paths, and public transport - to support active travel and help to reduce over-reliance on car use.
- Building on the strong sense of community and active voluntary sector in the town.
- Encouraging high quality development that contributes to the mitigation of climate change.

### 3 A VISION FOR WARE

#### Vision for the Neighbourhood Plan

3.1. In consultation with the community, the vision for Ware to 2033 is:

**Ware should be kept as an identifiable attractive town community, which enjoys the peace associated with being part of the countryside, while still contributing to the wider geographical community.**

**The character of Ware must be maintained, in order that it remains an attractive and accessible place in which to live, work and visit.**

#### Neighbourhood Plan Objectives

3.2. The objectives of the Neighbourhood Plan are as follows:

**Objective 1:** a thriving modern market town, underpinned by its heritage and promoting beauty;

**Objective 2:** an attractive place to live, where the natural environment is valued and safeguarded;

**Objective 3:** a place where people can work in rewarding jobs supporting a vibrant economy;

**Objective 4:** a caring community, supporting residents of all ages and social groups through health, education, employment, and enjoyment of cultural and leisure facilities;

**Objective 5:** an attractive Town centre which retains its human scale, and where people want to access services, meet and shop; and

**Objective 6:** a place that fosters mobility and healthy living, with a sustainable transport network for walkers, cyclists and those who use public transport.

## 4 HOUSING

### Policy W1: Meeting the housing needs of Ware’s population

#### Purpose

- 4.1. This policy seeks to ensure that there is a range of general housing that is designed to be capable of meeting the needs of people in Ware, including as they age and their requirements change.
- 4.2. It is important to note that the WNP does not seek to allocate sites for housing development. The East Herts District Plan 2018 does not identify a housing figure to be delivered through the Ware Neighbourhood Plan, and it is considered that housing supply has been addressed adequately at the strategic level, including through the strategic allocation of land North and East of Ware. Any additional development would come forward within the settlement boundary and would be treated as windfall. Therefore the focus of the WNP is to ensure that the right sort of housing is developed to meet Ware’s needs.

#### Justification

- 4.3. Housing delivered in Ware should be capable of meeting the needs of local people. Policy HOU1 of the East Herts District Plan addresses this by requiring a mix of housing in terms of size, tenure and type, as evidenced in the latest West Essex and East Hertfordshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment. Policy W1 of this Neighbourhood Plan adds additional detail to this by recognising the significant proportion of Ware’s population that is of retirement age and ensuring that new housing is capable not only of meeting the needs of younger people, but also adaptable to suit needs as people progress through life. In 2018, over 18% of residents were aged 65+. This is similar to other Hertfordshire towns of an equivalent size and mirrors a wider national trend - see Figure 4.1.

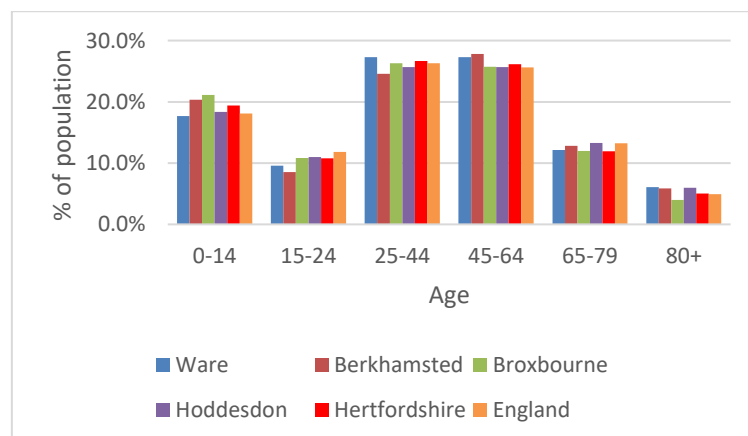


Figure 4.1: Age profile of population, 2018 (Source: Herts Insight, mid-year population estimates)

4.4. Over the period between 2011 and 2018 Ware has seen a significant increase in the proportion of its population aged between 45 and 64, i.e., those who will be at or approaching retirement over the plan period, and between 65 and 79 (see Figure 4.2).

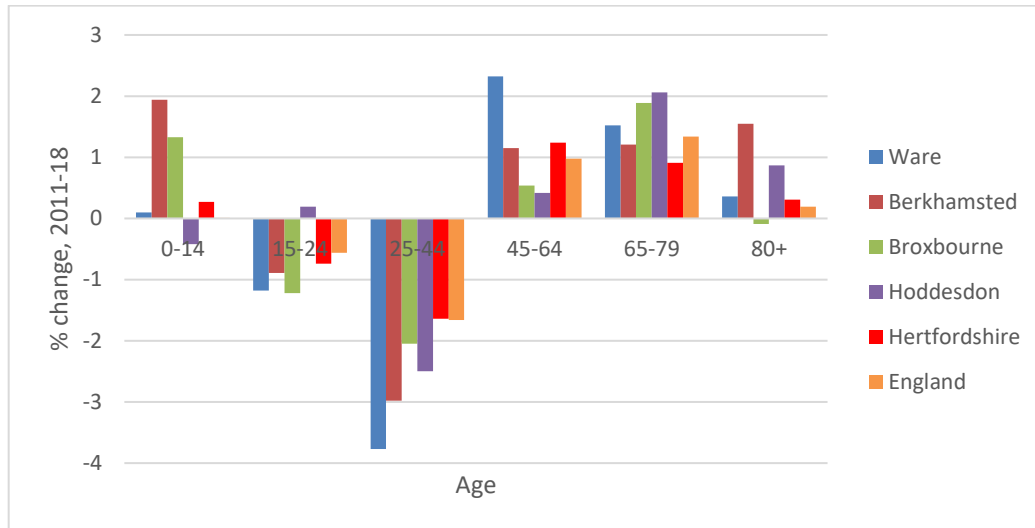


Figure 4.2: Population change, 2011-2018 (Source: Herts Insight, mid-year population estimates)

4.5. It is therefore important that a good proportion of the new housing stock in Ware can meet the needs of people as they age. Whilst bungalows are often considered popular among the older age group (Inside Housing - News - More than half of older people ‘would consider living in bungalows’), to provide flexibility in the housing stock, the issue should not be addressed solely by building bungalows. General housing is capable of being designed with the needs of people in mind as they age. The focus should be on smaller housing (suitable and more manageable for older ‘downsizers’) that is close to shops and services (principally in Ware town centre).

4.6. Policy HOU1 in the East Herts District Plan requires the provision of accessible and adaptable dwellings to meet the changing needs of occupants over their lifetime. Policy HOU7 requires sites of 11 or more dwellings to meet the higher Building Regulations requirements relating to wheelchair use. However, these policies do not say what types of features are important as part of such a development to make them attractive to older people.

4.7. The Housing our Ageing Population Panel for Innovation (HAPPI) (*HAPPI - Design - Topics - Resources - Housing LIN*) has, since 2009, promoted a series of principles for good design of housing. Many are recognisable from good design generally - good light, ventilation, room to move around and good storage - but they have particular relevance to the spectrum of older persons’ housing which needs to offer both an attractive alternative to the family home and be able to adapt over time to meet changing needs. Access to social space, for



instance, encourages social interaction and can help to reduce isolation. Of the ten key design criteria, the most relevant ones that reflect what the community of Ware has said is needed (e) are:

- Space and flexibility
- Balconies and outdoor space
- Adaptability and 'care ready' design
- Positive use of circulation space
- Shared facilities and 'hubs'
- Storage for belongings and bicycles

4.8. Good design to deliver these criteria is particularly important for smaller dwellings such as flats. Ware has a high proportion of flats (over 31% of all dwellings in the town - source: 2011 Census) and many of the development opportunities in the town in recent years have delivered apartment living. This must ensure that it is aimed at meeting the needs of older people as well as the younger working population.

#### **POLICY W1: HOUSING TO MEET THE NEEDS OF OLDER PEOPLE**

**Residential development that could reasonably be expected to meet the needs of older people (by virtue of its size and location) should demonstrate how it has reflected the Housing our Ageing Population Panel for Innovation (HAPPI) principles, particularly:**

- Space and flexibility;**
- Balconies and outdoor space;**
- Adaptability and 'care ready' design;**
- Positive use of circulation space;**
- Shared facilities and 'hubs'; and**
- Storage for belongings and bicycles.**

Conformity Reference: NP objective: 4; EHDP (2018): HOU1, HOU7; NPPF: 62

4.9. The WNP does recognise that there are other issues relating to housing in Ware, not least its affordability for younger people on average incomes. These are matters which in planning policy terms are addressed at the strategic level, i.e., through the East Herts District Plan. However, it is acknowledged that this has been a long-term problem of considerable significance that needs to be addressed, be it through district or national policy.

## 5 CHARACTER, HERITAGE AND DESIGN

### Policy W2: Reflecting the character of Ware through high quality design

#### Purpose

- 5.1. This policy seeks to ensure that new development is well-designed and contributes to, and where possible enhances, the distinctive market town character of Ware. The policy and its supporting text add greater detail to the strategic District Plan policies on this topic, by defining what is meant by 'local character' in the context of Ware. This will help to avoid building design that is inappropriate to the Plan area.



*Archaeological excavation at Ware Priory*

#### Justification

- 5.2. Past generations of people and development have created the features that give Ware its identity today. This process has been gradual, taking place over many centuries, and the streetscapes that exist today have a distinctiveness that derives from variety. They contain heritage assets of all kinds, including characterful buildings, historic landmarks and archaeological features, both exposed and still beneath the ground. Much of Ware is recorded as an Area of Archaeological Significance and there are over 200 individual and clusters of nationally listed buildings across the town. The town is also home to two Scheduled Monuments: Ware Priory (the Scheduled Monument is officially recorded as 'Ware Friary', however locally it is referred to as Ware Priory) and a Section of Ermine Street, north of the Hertford Branch Railway.
- 5.3. This built heritage is important because it helps to create a sense of place and belonging for those living in Ware. It is also attractive to visitors to the town and therefore has an economic value in supporting regeneration and the visitor economy. The historic assets that contribute to Ware's character are an irreplaceable resource and should be conserved for future generations to enjoy.
- 5.4. Much of the centre of Ware is designated as a Conservation Area, for which an [Appraisal and Management Plan](#) was adopted by EHDC in 2016. It defines the essential qualities

that comprise this historic core, provides guidance for development proposals, measures for enhancing the area, and policies for its preservation. The Conservation Area is subdivided into four Identity Areas, although these are not mapped in the Area. Work on the WNP has enabled fuller descriptions, which can assist in guiding any future development proposals. The areas are mapped in Figure 5.1.

- 5.5. **Identity Area 1: the central historic core, essentially consisting of the High Street south to the River Lea, Church Street, part Baldock Street, south part of Crib Street, West Street, East Street and Kibes Lane.**
- 5.6. This area has a particularly large concentration of listed buildings, over 60% of which date from the 16th and 17th centuries and earlier. This is considerably higher than the national figure of buildings of this age, which Historic England advises is 34%. This core of the town, which forms the focus of the original settlement, is recognisable for its narrow streets, burgage plots and yards, many of which would have supported the malting heritage of the town. Original cobbled road surfacing still exists in parts.
- 5.7. The river is significant, having been the focal point of the original settlement. It follows therefore that there is a close relationship between the historic buildings, the River Lea and New River, where waterside structures - including the Gazebos - contribute greatly to the character of the area.
- 5.8. There are examples of more modern designs that complement the existing streetscape, for instance Christopher Court and Swan Mews.



*Images show: 17<sup>th</sup> century nurses' cottages for Bluecoat School and Christopher Court picks up on built elements (materials, colours, architecture) from the surrounding context*

- 5.9. Future development considerations are as follows:
- Reinforce the relationship between the historic core and the rivers.
  - Development proposals to pick up on elements from surrounding historic buildings - materials, colours, architectural features, layouts.
  - Support/ encourage features along the riverside.

- Retaining remaining features of the malting industry
- Retention of original paving or, where necessary, mirroring this using traditional materials (stone) and patterning.
- Retaining prominent historic architectural features in redevelopments or retrofitting of buildings.
- Restoration of features to original form.
- Encouraging more sympathetic fascias and shop front design, coordinated to complement historic buildings.
- Work with partners (EHDC, Historic England) to identify proposals to restore heritage assets considered to be at risk.
- Retain trees and hedgerows (notably along the riverside and in St Mary's Churchyard) and seek opportunities for additional planting.
- Reducing or repurposing unnecessary street clutter.

**5.10. Identity Area 2: principally being south of the River Lea consisting of Amwell End, Broadmeads, Station Road and London Road/Hertford Road, including New River and bounded in the east by Viaduct Road.**

5.11. Much of this area is designated as being of archaeological significance. There are numerous listed buildings here, many originally commercial in nature given the proximity of both the railway line, which crosses east-west, as well as the river.

5.12. Viaduct Road was constructed in 1843 for the Turnpike Company by the Eastern Railway as a condition of the latter's Parliamentary Bill because the level crossing in Amwell End would intermittently obstruct the Turnpike Road. The former Goods Shed has been attractively redeveloped as apartments adjacent to the station. This along with the Railway Station buildings and the former Station Hotel opposite are all Grade II listed. In Amwell End, twelve of the properties on the east side are Grade II listed, notably the Neelakash Restaurant at No. 3 (former shop frontage elements conserved), the Drill Hall with its partially tiled frontage, and the Spread Eagle public house.



*The former Goods Shed has been redeveloped*

5.13. Along London Road / Hertford Road, The Royal Oak public house and the railings of the New River are listed Grade II and Amwell House (recently restored and redeveloped as apartments) is Grade II\*. The riverside gazebos are visible from the towpath along the northern edge of the area. There is an extensive car parking area at Broadmeads and a large open unkempt low-lying field, known as Gilpins Field, at the junction of London Road and Viaduct Road. The latter is considered an important gateway to the Conservation Area and perhaps more generally to the town; as such its openness should be protected. The field is owned by Thames Water and discussions are in place to explore options for creating a nature reserve here. Further detail on this is provided in Policy W12 (Green and blue infrastructure and delivering biodiversity net gain) of this Neighbourhood Plan.



*Images show: Important open spaces along the River Lea; London Road / Viaduct Road junction: an important gateway to Ware*

5.14. This Identity Area is possibly the weakest one from an aesthetics perspective, having seen significant redevelopment. There is a need to ensure that any further development is beautiful, characterful and of a locally sympathetic design, rather than bland generic architecture that might be found anywhere. There are many features which contribute to the quality of the Conservation Area and many opportunities to initiate further improvements.

5.15. Future development considerations:

- Shop fronts and fascias should complement the historic environment.
- Cast-iron railings contribute to the local character, but some are in a state of disrepair.
- Repair or reinstating of buildings in poor repair and other features, for instance traditional paving materials and designs.
- Mirroring features, materials and colours from historic buildings.
- Improving the 'gateways' to the town and Conservation Area, including the safeguarding of the openness of Gilpins Field.
- Maintain and improve open spaces along the river.
- Retain trees and hedgerows (notably Conifer) and seek opportunities for additional planting.
- Removal of unnecessary street clutter.
- Improving interpretation boards and signage.

**5.16. Identity Area 3 principally being Collett Road, Musley Hill, High Oak Road, part of Baldock Street, northern part of Crib Street and New Road.**

5.17. There is only a scattering of listed buildings within this northern part of the Conservation Area, the most notable of which is the former Ware Union Workhouse off Collett Road.

5.18. A large central part of Identity Area 3 comprises neutral 20th century buildings of limited architectural or historic interest; these would previously have been the sites of 19th century Maltings, now lost. Elsewhere, however, there are concentrations of later non-listed buildings of considerable architectural and historic interest dating from the late 19<sup>th</sup> / early 20<sup>th</sup> century. Such concentrations are located along New Road, the south part of Milton Road and Coronation Road areas.



*Former maltings converted to housing*

**5.19. Future development considerations:**

- Repair or reinstating of buildings in poor repair and other features, including original boundary walls and road surfacing.
- Protecting late 19<sup>th</sup> / early 20<sup>th</sup> century buildings, some of which may not be listed, from demolition.
- Retaining original features of developments and reflected these in new proposals.
- Recognising the role that chimney pots play in contributing to local character.
- Retaining and improving open spaces, verges and communal seating areas and seeking opportunities to plant additional native street trees.
- Improving the gateways to the town: the roundabout at Watton Road / Baldock Street is a key entrance point to the historic town.
- Reducing on-street clutter, such as redundant utility cabinets.
- Large area of neutral development around Crib Street in the north of the Conservation Area where opportunities to create an improved environment should be explored.

5.20. **Identity Area 4 principally being centred on Priory Street and Buryfield Recreation Ground, parts of Watton Road and Gladstone Road and bounded by the River Lea in the south and including the western edge of Baldock Street.**

5.21. Most of this area is designated as an Area of Archaeological Significance. There is a concentration of nationally listed properties along Baldock Street which principally date from the 16 / 17th centuries; also former Maltings to the east of Buryfield Recreation Ground and a scattering along Priory Street including the grade I Priory.



*Images show: Trees add character to the riverside; an example of an early street sign*

5.22. There are numerous non-listed properties, most of which are worthy of retention, dating from the 19th and early 20th centuries. In respect of the latter, the converted Mill buildings along Priory Street are particularly fine. The southern part of Area 4 is dominated by the River Lea and the open area (Lock keepers Island) enclosed by its arms. Open space and gardens around The Priory and Buryfield Recreation Ground play important visual, communal and land use roles.

5.23. Future development considerations:

- Retaining remaining features of the malting industry.
- Retaining and restoring historic street signs.
- Repairing historic railings, for instance alongside the River Lea.
- Improving public seating areas.
- Safeguarding trees and hedgerows.
- Rationalisation of street furniture on small sitting area on Watton Road to west of Gladstone Road.

5.24. **The River Lea Navigation Character Corridor**

5.25. In addition to the four Identity Areas, the River Lea Navigation itself should be recognised as a continuous entity extending beyond the Conservation Area. Much of the significant historic townscape can be publicly appreciated from both the water and the towing path. The waterway corridor acts as a receptor, in terms of townscape and amenity and natural and historic environment. The gazebos, with their statutory listing, visual prominence,

distinctive vernacular and recognition within local conservation discourse / agendas, are an important feature of the River Lea's character in Ware. Equally the non-designated weir-keeper's cottage at Tumbling Bay, just 200m downstream of the conservation area, makes a positive contribution to the historic setting of the River Lee Navigation, and is recognised in Policy W3 (Conserving Heritage Assets) as a non-designated heritage asset to support the long-term protection of this vulnerable heritage asset.

5.26. The Canal and Rivers Trust recommend a number of guiding principles for waterside developments and individual waterways and water spaces need to be viewed as an integral part of a wider network, and not in isolation.

5.27. Future development considerations:

- Water should not be treated as just a setting or backdrop for development but as a space and leisure and commercial resource in its own right. Waterways themselves should be the starting point for consideration of any development and use of the water and waterside land - look from the water outwards, as well as from the land to the water. The Trust would also require any development at the river frontage to not adversely affect the integrity of the waterway structure.
- A waterway's towing path and its environs should form an integral part of the public realm in terms of both design and management. It is important that the siting, configuration and orientation of buildings optimise views of the water, generate natural surveillance of water space, and encourage and improve access to, along and from the water. It should be recognised that appropriate boundary treatment and access issues are often different for the towing path side and the offside.
- Future proposals must aim to avoid creating direct views of the developments 'back of house' from the waterway's outward perspective which heavily degrades the rivers credentials as a green corridor, tranquil retreat and its use as a treasured public amenity. Back of house elements might include car parks, service areas, bin stores, delivery areas, sub stations etc.
- Any development with a river frontage is also likely to include visually exposed parking arrangements in areas due to the intrinsic nature of a river fronting layout. It must however be recognised that vehicles can be visually buffered from the river's outward views through clever design and use of landscaping. This might include well placed linear hedgerows to visually buffer parked vehicles from the river's outward views, parking bays set between plots or within buildings, again to hide from view. Staggered bays with surrounding planting can also work to soften visual impacts.

Potential developers are encouraged to undertake pre-application discussions with the Canal and Rivers Trust.



5.28. The town has continued to develop by way of numerous individual estates from the early 1900s onwards, as shown in Figure 5.2. Whilst not within the Conservation Area, it is considered that in the future, these areas will have become sufficiently embedded to contribute demonstrably the story of Ware and its character. Planning in these areas is less controlled but those submitting proposals for development are strongly encouraged to consider how the proposal will contribute positively to the wider context, bearing in mind layout, height, massing and features typical of the surrounding area. Equally, opportunities to safeguard and add to natural features are encouraged - including trees, wide verges and communal green spaces and seating areas. Improvements and enhancements include, where appropriate, additional native tree planting, the enhancement of roadside green space, the reduction / consolidation of road signs, the retention of historic features including walks and railings, and wider green infrastructure improvements that are identified as being necessary. Contributions from appropriate major development in the neighbourhood area will be used to enable this, collected through Section 106 Agreements or the Community Infrastructure Levy mechanism, if and when adopted.

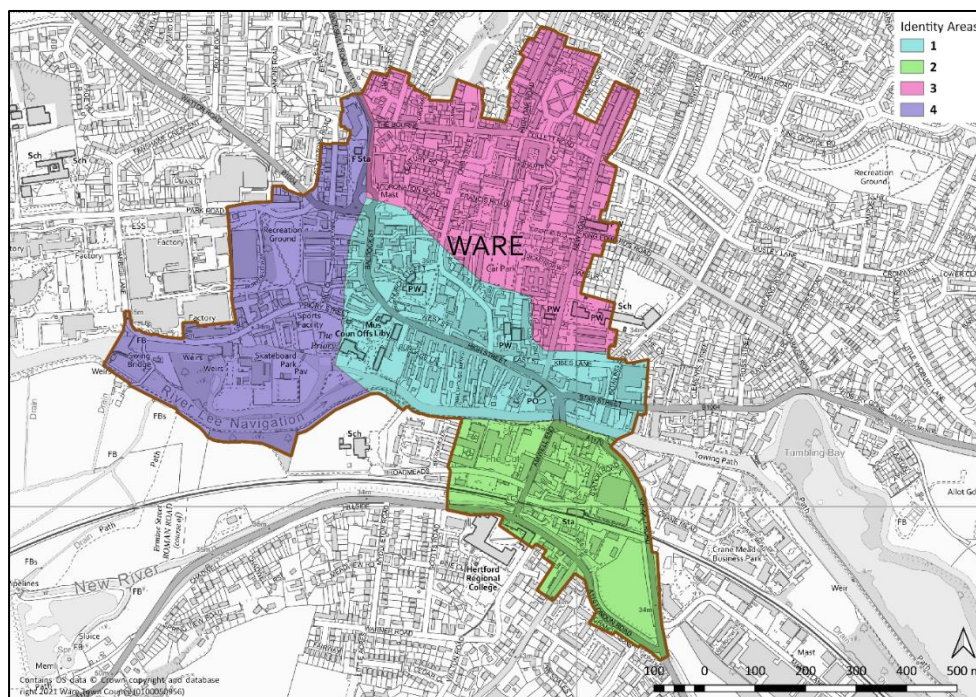


Figure 5.1: Ware Conservation Identity Areas

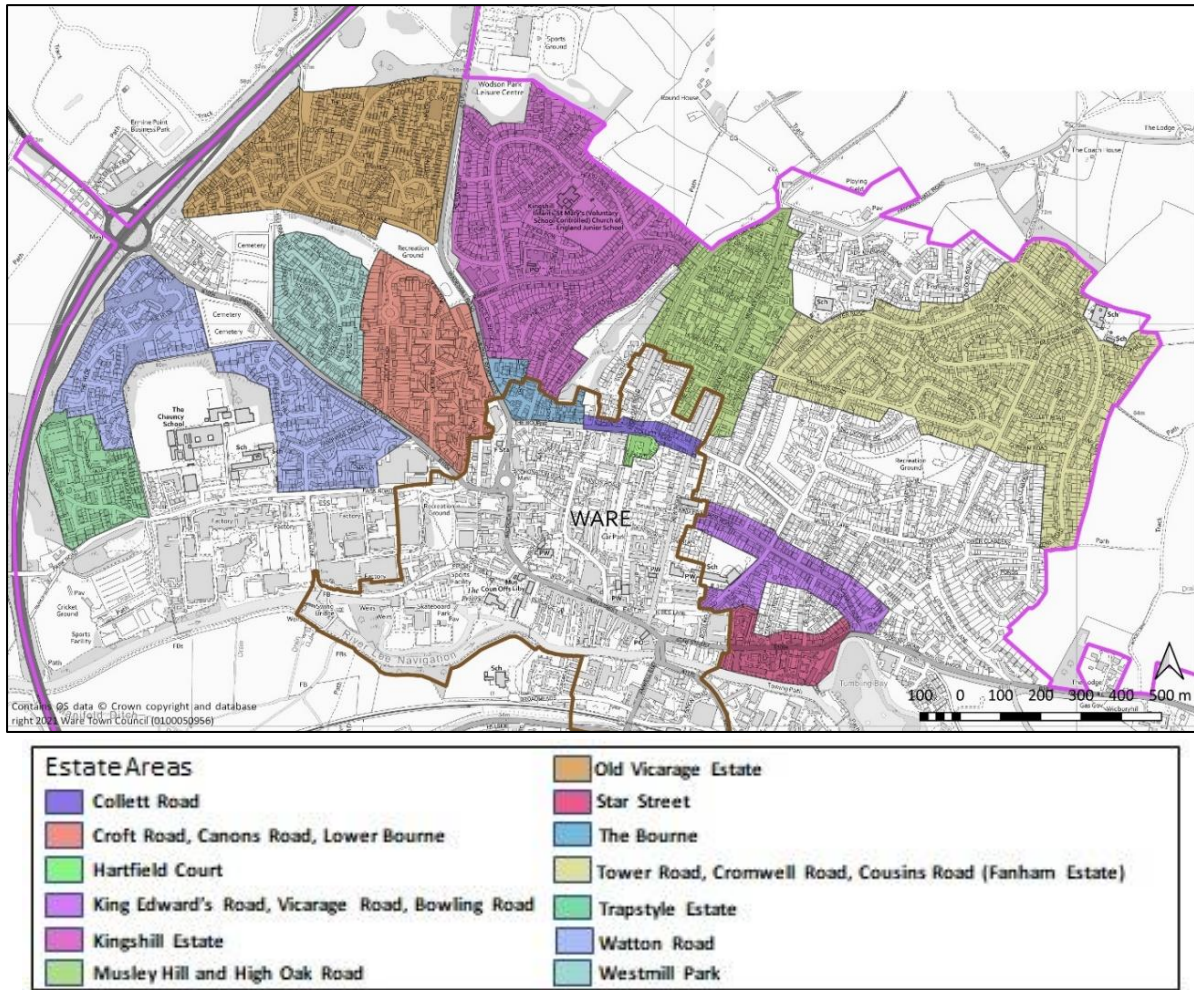


Figure 5.2: Newer estates developed since the 1900s

**POLICY W2: REFLECTING THE CHARACTER OF WARE THROUGH HIGH QUALITY DESIGN**

- A. Development should, where practical, enhance the local character and vernacular of the town. Proposals should draw on architectural variety found locally, including materials, layouts and colours, with a focus on delivering beautiful design that enhances the quality of the built form.**
- B. As appropriate to their scale, nature and location, development proposals should demonstrate how they have addressed the following:**
- i. the guidance contained within the [Ware Conservation Area Appraisal](#), conserving those features identified as contributing to the particular Identity Areas and the River Lea Character Navigation character corridor;**
  - ii. ensuring that the development contributes to the relationship between the built townscape and the River Lea and New River, for instance retaining and enhancing green space along the river;**
  - iii. retain and, where possible, restore built historical features including: original malting industry features and cowlings, street signs, iron railings, boundary walls and other features, such as windows and chimneys;**
  - iv. retain existing trees and hedgerows and plant new ones to enhance the street scene, in accordance with Policy W12;**
  - v. reduce or repurpose unnecessary street clutter, such as unused phone boxes, utility cabinets;**
  - vi. ensure that shops fronts and fascias contribute positively to the historic street scene, in accordance with Policy W3;**
  - vii. maintain, improve, and create open spaces, green verges and communal seating areas; and**
  - viii. make a positive contribution to the visual impact of the main highway and river approaches into the town, which are:**
    - a. Gilpins Field, as an open space, at the junction of London Road and Viaduct Road;**
    - b. boundary wall and trees at junction of London Road and Grange Gardens;**
    - c. roundabout at Watton Road / Baldock Street;**
    - d. New Road and Musley Hill;**
    - e. Ware Railway Station; and**
    - f. Common Wharf.**

Conformity Reference: NP objective: 1, 2, 5; EHDP (2018): DES2, DES3, DES6, HA1, HA2, HA4, HA5, HA6, HA9; NPPF: 20, 126 to 131

## Policy W3: Conserving heritage assets

### Purpose

5.29. This policy recognises the important contribution that heritage assets - designated and non-designated - make to the local character and distinctiveness of Ware, both individually and collectively. Where possible, they should be conserved, well-maintained, enhanced and celebrated.

### Justification

5.30. The first signs of settlement in Ware can be dated back to 4000BC; consequently, the area is rich in archaeology, and this is recognised by the broad Area of Archaeological Importance that stretches across much of the town. There are two Scheduled Monuments: Ware Priory and a Section of Ermine Street, north of the Hertford Branch Railway. The town has over 200 individual and clusters of nationally listed buildings and structures, including the Grade I listed Church of St. Mary, Place House, The Priory, and Scott's Grotto. Many of these are concentrated in the historic core of the Conservation Area, with its layout established in the 12<sup>th</sup> century, the buildings dating from the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> century onwards, and often reminiscent of the commercial activities of the town's history.

5.31. There are many heritage assets, however, that whilst contributing to the historic local context, are not nationally important enough to be included on the statutory List of Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest compiled by the Government. These have been identified within the Ware Conservation Appraisal as '*unlisted buildings to be protected from demolition*' and are shown in Figure 5.3. Further descriptions of them, including why they are important, are contained in the Ware Conservation Area Appraisal. There is also a range of published literature relating to Ware's heritage and references are included in Section 15 of this document.

5.32. Development proposals affecting heritage assets - including non-designated heritage assets - either directly or indirectly, should enhance the significance and setting of the asset. This includes as yet undiscovered or poorly understood heritage assets. Enhancements could include, where appropriate, the delivery of development that will make a positive contribution to, or better reveal the significance of, the heritage asset, or reflect and enhance local character and distinctiveness with particular regard given to the prevailing styles of design and use of materials in a local area. Proposals are expected to be accompanied by a Heritage Statement.

5.33. Development proposals should demonstrate that they have considered the potential impact on above and below ground archaeological deposits to ensure that evidence which could contribute to the understanding of human activity and past environments is not

lost. Where a scheme has a potential impact on archaeological remains (below or above ground) a Heritage Statement should be prepared in support of planning applications.

- 5.34. A proactive stance will be taken to any heritage assets that may be at risk. This will include working with property owners to find a use that will enable them to be put back into optimum viable use. Particular care should be taken in the Conservation Area to ensure that alterations and new buildings contribute to the enhancement of the historic environment, in accordance with the guidance set out in the Ware Conservation Area Appraisal.
- 5.35. Policy W3 identifies these buildings and structures as non-designated heritage assets, recognising their value to the local character and history of the town.
- 5.36. In parallel with this policy, it is proposed that these assets are considered by EHDC for inclusion on any Local List for the district. However, the inclusion of any building or structure on such a register is not necessary for the application of this policy.



*Images show: Place House (inside); The Church of St. Mary*

#### **Local Heritage at Risk**

- 5.37. Historic England produces an annual Register of Heritage at Risk. Outside of London it does not include Grade II listings, apart from churches. EHDC produces a Register to cover those Grade II assets, most recently updated in 2021. The Register will be updated periodically by EHDC and can be found here: <https://www.eastherts.gov.uk/planning-and-building/heritage-risk>.
- 5.38. Opportunities should be taken to restore these assets where possible.

**POLICY W3: CONSERVING HERITAGE ASSETS**

**A. The following are identified as non-designated heritage assets for the purpose of implementing Policy HA2 of the East Herts District Plan:**

- i. **buildings and structures (not already listed) within Ware contained in the [Historic Environment Record](#); and**
- ii. **unlisted buildings to be protected from demolition, as identified in the [Ware Conservation Area Appraisal](#); and**
- iii. **the weir-keeper's cottage at Tumbling Bay.**

**The effect of a development proposal on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining planning applications. In weighing applications that directly or indirectly affect the non-designated heritage assets identified in this policy, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.**

Conformity Reference: NP objective: 1; EHDP (2018): HA2, HA3, HA4; NPPF: 189, 190, 203

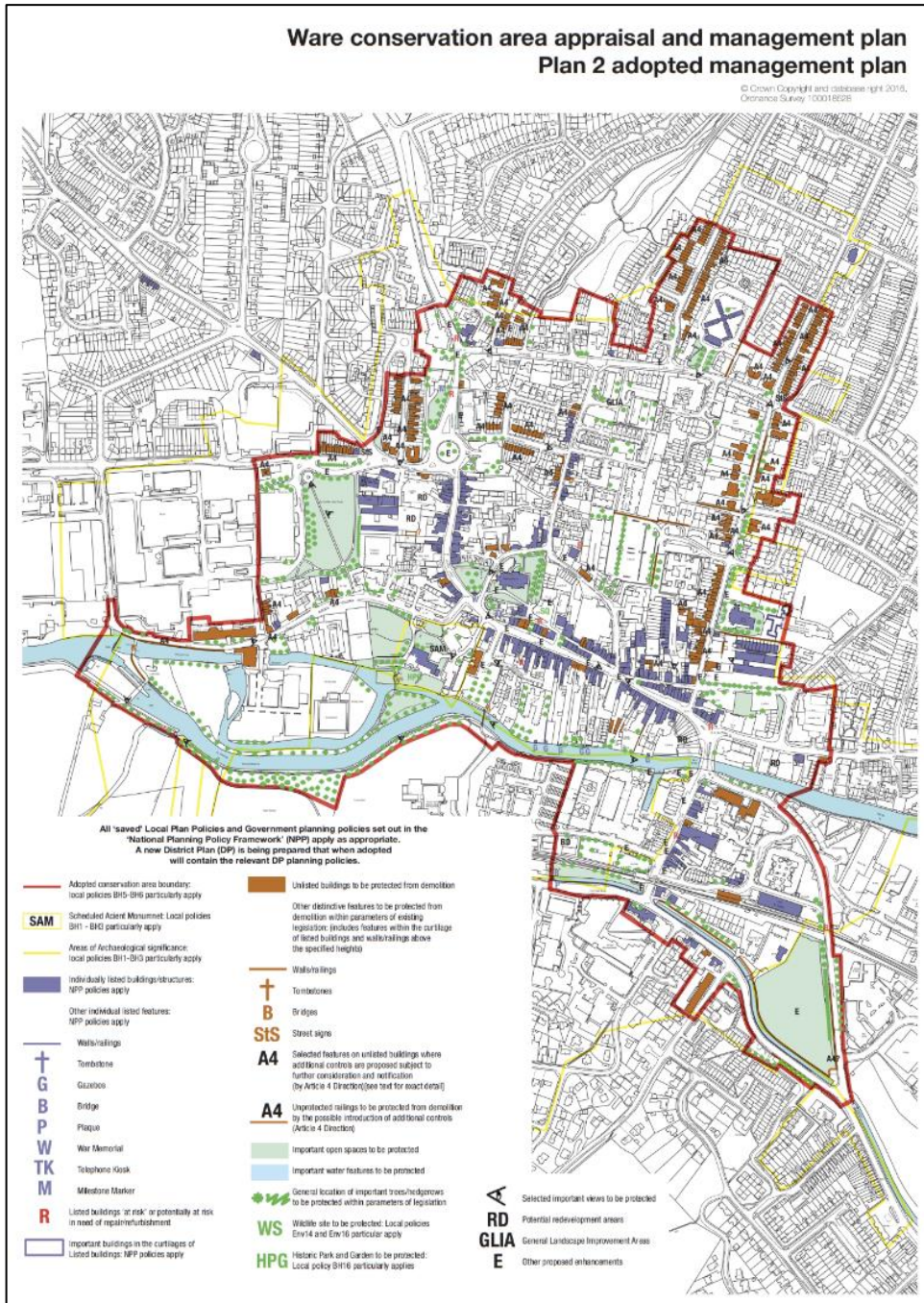


Figure 5.3: Map showing 'unlisted buildings to be protected from demolition' (source: Ware Conservation Area Appraisal)

## Policy W4: Design of shopfront signage

### Purpose

5.39. This policy seeks to ensure that shop fronts and signage are in keeping with and contribute positively to the character of Ware. This is important given that the main retail and commercial areas of Ware are located within the Conservation Area and individual properties are often listed buildings.

### Justification

5.40. In addition to the guidance contained in the Ware Conservation Area Appraisal, the [East Herts Retail Frontages: Design & Signage SPD](#), published in 2019, contains comprehensive information about the types of commercial signage that are considered appropriate within the historic towns across the district.

5.41. There are also particular nuances in design that are considered to contribute positively to the overall character and individual identity of Ware specifically. The Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group, in partnership with the Ware Society, undertook an audit of the key features of commercial signage in Ware (contained in the Evidence Base supporting the WNP) that are considered to illustrate both good, well-integrated design, in the Ware context, as well as that which should be avoided.



*Example of sympathetic shop front and sign writing*

5.42. If the historic nature and character of the town is to be preserved, the following guidelines should be followed:

- Signage must consider how it complements, and where possible, enhances the character of the building and surrounding area, and any historic features of the building;
- Sign writing on older buildings is considered to contribute positively to the historic look and feel of the town, where it is of a proportionate size and colour;



- The use of applied lettering, including plastic lettering, should only be employed in exceptional circumstances; where used, the colours should be muted and appropriate materials used to harmonise with surrounding buildings;
- Where corporate image is important to the retailer then the form of signage should be agreed, and the use of company standard formats must be avoided where these are unsuitable;
- Blocked signs and electronic signs applied internally to windows must be discouraged because of the overbearing effect on the townscape.
- External decoration, particularly colour choice, should be carefully considered in the context of the surrounding environment.
- The use of internally illuminated signage and box signage must be avoided.

5.43. An associated action, detailed in Section 12 of this Plan, will be to work in partnership with EHDC to ensure that signage guidance is adequately enforced.

#### **POLICY W4: DESIGN OF SHOPFRONT SIGNAGE**

**A. Proposals for new or replacement shop fronts in Ware should be designed in accordance with Policy DES6 of the East Herts District Plan, and the guidance contained in both the East Herts Retail Frontages: Design & Signage SPD and the Ware Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan.**

**B. Development proposals should respond positively to the following design features:**

- i. the protection of original architectural detail and, where appropriate, its restoration;**
- ii. the use of high quality signage from sustainable materials, such as timber, with the use of plastic or aluminium signage being strongly resisted;**
- iii. the use of sign writing on older buildings;**
- iv. applied lettering should utilise muted colours and be of appropriate high quality materials to harmonise with surrounding buildings;**
- v. the incorporation of any corporate image in a way which will contribute to local character;**
- vi. the avoidance of illuminated / neon-type displays which fill the shops window and which have an overbearing effect on the townscape; and**
- vii. choice of colour that blends well with the surroundings.**

Conformity Reference: NP objective: 1, 2, 5; EHDP (2018): HA5, HA6, DES6; NPPF: 128, 129, 130

## Policy W5: Meeting the highest environmental standards

### Purpose

5.44. This policy seeks to ensure that development meets the highest environmental standards in terms of its construction, materials and energy use. This will help to mitigate against climate change.

### Justification

5.45. On 12 June 2019 the Government voted to amend the Climate Change Act 2008 by introducing a new target for at least a 100% reduction of greenhouse gas emissions (compared to 1990 levels) in the UK by 2050. This is otherwise known as a net zero target. This is a demanding target, which will require everyone to be engaged, from households and communities to businesses and local and national government. As part of this, the government has set an interim target to cut the country's greenhouse gas emissions 78% by 2035 compared to 1990 levels.

5.46. Being '2050 ready' means that new development will be required to have minimal energy use and net carbon emissions over the year. Unlike Local Plans, Neighbourhood Plans are more limited in what they can dictate in terms of environmental standards, as they must confirm to the minimum requirements as set out by national policy and building regulations. The WNP can however strongly encourage the design and layout of new development to maximise its potential to be as energy efficient as possible and to encourage the use of renewable energy.



*Examples of discreet solar panels (source: Historic England)*

5.47. The efficient use of water is also to be considered. In 2019, Affinity Water, which supplies the area, warned that within the next 25 years and beyond, there may not be enough water in this part of the country due to climate change, population growth and increases in demand. It suggests that local and neighbourhood plans in severely water stressed areas should include targets limiting domestic water consumption. For this reason, the WNP strongly supports Policy DES4 of the District Plan, for achieving total mains water consumption of no more than 110 litres per person per day. This target is equivalent to that proposed as an optional requirement of the Housing Standards Review which corresponds with Code Level 4 in relation to water efficiency.

- 5.48. The potential to use the River Lea Navigation for heating and cooling and the document could also contribute to low carbon technologies. The use of on-site Low and Zero Carbon (LZC) energy generation would encourage development to be as energy efficient as possible.
- 5.49. In summary, there are opportunities to improve and promote sustainability in the neighbourhood area which would help to deliver the government's climate change targets by: following basic passive environmental design including use of efficient and insulative materials; integrating renewable energy systems into new development, including existing and new public buildings; reducing water consumption including through grey water systems; and promoting sustainable forms of transport through priority systems for pedestrians and cyclists.

**POLICY W5: MEETING THE HIGHEST ENVIRONMENTAL STANDARDS**

- A. Development proposals which incorporate design and environmental performance measures and standards to reduce energy consumption and climate effects will be supported. Proposals which incorporate the following energy design principles as appropriate to their scale and nature will be particularly supported:**
- i. siting and orientation to optimise passive solar gain.**
  - ii. the use of high quality, thermally efficient building materials.**
  - iii. installation of energy efficiency measures e.g. loft and wall insulation and double glazing.**
  - iv. incorporating on-site energy generation from renewable sources such as solar panels, ground, water and air source heat pumps.**
  - v. reducing water consumption through the use of water re-use measures including rain water harvesting, surface water harvesting and / or grey water recycling systems.**
  - vi. providing low carbon sustainable design and avoid or mitigate all regulated emissions using a combination of on-site energy efficiency measures (such as insulation and low energy heating systems), on-site zero carbon technologies (such as solar panels) and, only where necessary, off-site measures to deal with any remaining emissions.**
  - vii. providing the infrastructure for adequate electric vehicle charging points for each development, where new parking provision is expected to be made, in accordance with [Hertfordshire County Council's Electric Charging Strategy](#).**
  - viii. alterations to existing buildings should be designed with energy reduction in mind and comply with current sustainable design and construction standards.**
- B. The retrofitting of historic buildings to reduce energy demand and to generate renewable energy where appropriate will be supported where such proposals provide appropriate preservation of the character and integrity of the building concerned.**
- C. Proposals for individual and community scale energy, for instance from hydro-electricity, solar photovoltaic panels, local biomass facilities, anaerobic digestions and wood fuel products will be supported subject to the following criteria:**
- i. the siting and scale of the proposed development is appropriate to its setting and position in the wider landscape; and**
  - ii. the proposed development does not create an unacceptable impact on the amenities of local residents; and**
  - iii. the proposed development does not have an unacceptable impact on a feature of natural or biodiversity importance.**

Conformity Reference: NP objective: 1, 6; EHDP (2018): DES4, CC2, CC3, WAT4; NPPF: 153, 154, 155

## 6 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND WARE TOWN CENTRE

### Policy W6: Retaining and enhancing the vitality and viability of Ware town centre

#### Purpose

- 6.1 This policy seeks to help position Ware as a thriving 21<sup>st</sup> century market town centre by supporting a sustainable mix of uses, which will encourage footfall throughout the day and into the evening. The Town Council is preparing a separate five year town centre strategy and the policies in this section will help to underpin the activities proposed.



*Ware Town centre*

#### Justification

- 6.2 Ware is an attractive and historic market town. As noted previously, the town centre falls fully within the Conservation Area and contains many fine buildings of historic importance, a good number linked to the town's malting heritage. Many of the buildings are nationally listed, with others identified in Policy W3 as non-designated heritage assets, reflecting their local importance. The waterside setting provides an attractive backdrop.
- 6.3 The East Herts District Plan 2018 categorises Ware as a Minor Town centre, catering for a mixture of shopping and other service needs, both for its own residents and those of surrounding settlements. The footprint is defined in Figure 6.1 and comprises predominantly high quality, smaller independent stores, as opposed to larger units and is also known for its higher-than-average food and drink offer. There is limited scope for expansion of the existing town centre, hence existing units - both retail and hospitality related - should, where possible, be retained. It is also anticipated that some retail will be provided as part of the urban extension to the north and east of the town. It is vital that such facilities should complement what exists already; it should be of a local nature with enough provision to ensure a sustainable community, without diverting trade from the town centre, where the retail offer will continue to be safeguarded, along with the other mix of uses.
- 6.4 Like many town centres, over the last few decades Ware has been impacted by a variety of issues including competition from neighbouring towns, out-of-town stores and online

shopping. This has been exacerbated by the recent Covid-19 pandemic. Despite this, however, the number of vacant units remains fairly low: [just 15 units were recorded as available in March 2021](#).

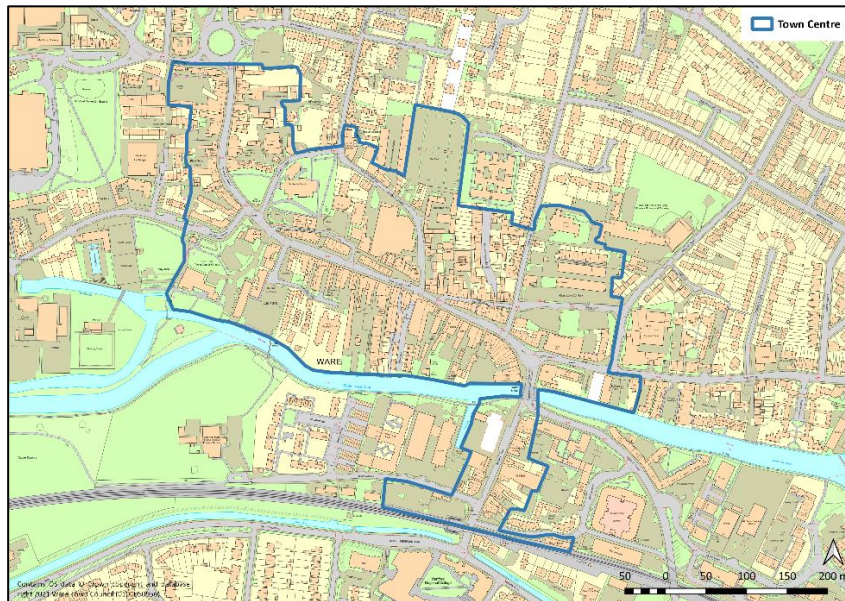


Figure 6.1: Ware town centre footprint

#### What are local agents telling us?

Local agents report that independent retail operators comprise approximately 86% of the retail market in Ware. Prior to the Covid-19 pandemic the fastest growing retail sectors were hair dressing salons / barbers, beauty salons, cafés and nail salons.

Retail types which are in decline include estate agents, bookmakers, pubs, domestic appliance shops, and travel agents. There has been a tendency for many retail leases to get shorter, and tenants are requesting more frequent break intervals within a lease. It is anticipated the recent changes to the Use Classes Order may encourage many businesses to explore their options, working with landlords to open restrictive user clauses, in existing leases. Many retail chains are on the verge of collapse, and therefore the opening of restrictions on the Use Classes Order will be good news for some.

- 6.5 Whilst the ongoing provision of retail is clearly important, the opportunity exists to host other services and facilities - beyond retail - to enhance the overall 'product' on offer. This could include identifying cultural and arts uses, providing shared spaces playing host to different activities depending on the time of day, and temporary 'pop'-up' uses, supported by promotional activities to encourage footfall, such as events and markets.
- 6.6 The conversion of units to residential - particularly those on the upper floors - could provide a useful source of footfall, while meeting housing needs. It should be noted that permitted development rights were extended in August 2021 to enable non-listed Class E

(commercial, business and service) premises of up to 1,500m<sup>2</sup> of floorspace and which have been vacant for at least three continuous months, to convert to residential without the need to apply for planning permission. This could have an impact the retail and commercial offering within Ware Town centre, as a consequence of reduced footfall. Whilst it will not apply to listed buildings, where it does apply, it will be important that proposals clearly demonstrate, prior to approval, that the impact of the loss of the ground floor Commercial Business and Service use is not detrimental to local character, as required within Conservation Areas.

**POLICY W6: RETAINING AND ENHANCING THE VITALITY AND VIABILITY OF WARE TOWN CENTRE**

**Mixed use development proposals for main town centre uses - including employment, office, retail, community, cultural, tourism and residential uses - will be supported, subject to other policies in this Neighbourhood Plan. Such proposals should demonstrate how they contribute to one or more of the following aspirations:**

- i. they help to maintain a strong and vibrant retail presence within the town centre area, enabling the continued presence of a varied range of small independent shops (where government's definition of small is <280 sq m), in accordance with Policy W8;**
- ii. they enhance the provision of leisure activities for both residents and tourists. This could include cultural, arts and community venues, additional overnight accommodation and food or drink establishments;**
- iii. they provide safe, easy, and inclusive access for all people regardless of disability, age or gender. This should include access to, into and within the building and its facilities, as well as appropriate car parking and access to public transport provision.**
- iv. they encourage footfall into the evening, where this does not compromise local amenity;**
- v. they provide opportunities for office-based and shared-space employment, which complement and support the town centre's vitality and viability;**
- vi. they offer opportunities for housing on otherwise underused upper floors, in particular, and both where separate access can be achieved and where these are shown to be no longer suitable for commercial use; and**

**The temporary change of use of vacant premises to enable pop-up shops, community advertising displays and activities will be supported, where they contribute positively to the area.**

Conformity Reference: NP objective: 1, 3, 5; EHDP (2018): WARE1, RTC1-3, CLFR7, HA5, HA6; NPPF: 86

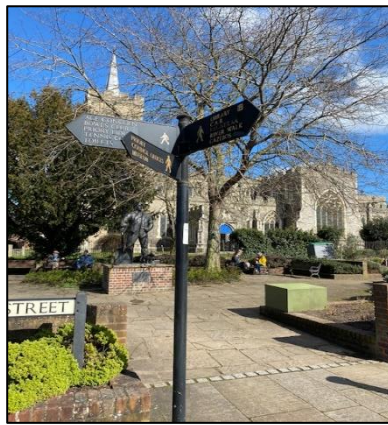
## Policy W7: A safe, attractive, and welcoming public realm

### Purpose

- 6.7 This policy seeks to ensure that development contributes to a safe, accessible and attractive public realm within the town centre.

### Justification

- 6.8 Maintaining and, where possible, improving the public realm environment will help to sustain Ware's local character and distinctiveness, which in turn will help to maintain its appeal as a destination for residents, businesses and visitors alike. Engagement undertaken for the WNP revealed numerous areas where the public realm could be improved:



*Example of attractive way-signage*

- 6.9 Improved linkages between the town centre and residential areas: including to connect to the new urban extension and neighbouring settlements. This would enable greater choice of movement, particularly by foot and cycle, which will help to mitigate against pollution, promote healthier lifestyles and reduce the amount of traffic making and associated congestion. This should be supported by improved wayfinding and signage.
- 6.10 Enhancing the entry points into to the town centre: to enable more attractive entryways for visitors, as set out in Policy W2.
- 6.11 Providing attractive, safe spaces that are accessible to all: There are several small pockets of existing green space, often with seating areas, that should be maintained and, where possible, enhanced. For instance, the Malt Makers Garden and the sitting area in Watton Road. The use of native planting, such as street trees and wildflowers (the town has an active Ware in Bloom group), would provide shade, an attractive setting and help to screen against noise and pollution.
- 6.12 One notable public space is Tudor Square, centrally located off West Street. It was upgraded in 2018 / 2019 to provide a welcoming space, incorporating circular paved areas with trees, plants and benches. There is an aspiration to further enhance the space as a focal point for the town and encourage its use by visitors, businesses, and the community.



This could include, for instance, a performance area with staggered steps and extra seating, which would open the area up for family-friendly events and entertainment as well as being of use as a place to stop and sit in the middle of town.



*Tudor Square as a focal point for community events and activities*

6.13 Encouraging events and activities that celebrate local heritage and bring footfall to the area: The use of events to increase footfall has been considered as an ongoing solution to town centres generally.

6.14 Proposals that enable and enhance Ware's existing calendar of events should be supported. For instance, the use of temporary lighting or gazebo-type structures at locations including the Priory and in Tudor Square would enable attractive and vibrant environments for public activities. The installation of locally relevant art can also assist in celebrating local history.



*Images show: Ware Festival and Rock in the Park at The Priory*

6.15 Tackling unsightly waste bins: the historic and narrow nature of Ware's streets, combined with the size of the bins, leads to cluttered, blocked pavements and unpleasant street scenes, regardless of whether it is bin collection day. Often bins are left open. This has several negative consequences on the area:

- Pedestrian mobility is affected as this reduces space for movement. The problem is more acute in Identity Area 1 of the Conservation Area, where roads and pavements

are very narrow. Pedestrians with buggies, seniors and those with mobility impairments are potentially the most impacted by the situation. Furthermore, pedestrians have to zigzag between bins because they are not grouped properly and some are left in the middle of the pavement.

- The quality of the public realm is reduced, as bins give a dirty and messy impression. This may have a negative impact on the town centre's commercial footfall. Many studies draw a link between quality of the environment and a town centre's economic vitality.



*Examples of large bins located to the back of properties, but facing the front of others*

- 6.16 Potential solutions, aside from greater enforcement, include requesting businesses with high waste (for instance food businesses) to prepare a waste management plan alongside any planning applications and screening bins, by building more attractive structures around them, in keeping with the local environment. Daily night-time collections may also provide a solution, although outside the planning system.



*Example of practical and more attractive bin storage*

- 6.17 *Reducing street clutter*: unnecessary street furniture, advertising board and other items should be reduced where possible to enable active travel. Further guidance is available at: <https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/highways-roads-and-pavements/business-and-developer-information/business-licences/a-boards.aspx>.

**POLICY W7: A SAFE, ATTRACTIVE AND WELCOMING PUBLIC REALM**

- A. As appropriate to their scale, nature and location development proposals should incorporate public realm improvements where it is practicable to do so. In particular, development proposals should look to incorporate opportunities to:**
- i. reinforce the distinctive character of the area, as set out in Policy W2 (Character of Development) including through the use of planting, seating, and installation of public art, celebrating the heritage and history of the area.**
  - ii. provide for pedestrian and cycle movement as a priority, including making provision for those with mobility requirements, making appropriate connections to existing footpaths, cycle paths and rights of way, in accordance with the movement routes identified in Policy W15 (Encouraging Sustainable Movement) to improve connectivity and movement within the town.**
  - iii. improve and provide new safe, open (In terms of availability of space) public spaces that are accessible, including to those with physical or mental disabilities, and which are suitable for a range of civic, cultural, recreational and leisure activities, including open air markets.**
  - iv. provide adequate off-street car parking, in accordance with the [Vehicle Parking Standards Supplementary Planning Document](#) (2008, or as amended), where required for workers, residents and visitors, which responds appropriately to the local context.**
  - v. contribute to improved wayfinding and signage for the town centre, provided that they can be satisfactorily integrated within their surroundings.**
  - vi. Integrate waste facilities into the design of buildings and allow for the separate storage and collection of recyclable materials, including compostable material are encouraged. In order to protect visual amenity, such facilities should be suitably screened and in keeping with the local environment. Odour should also be mitigated.**

Conformity Reference: NP objective: 2, 5; EHDP (2018): DES4, DES5; NPPF: 92, 93, 126

## Policy W8: Small business and shared space support

### Purpose

- 6.18 This policy encourages the provision of smaller units (where government's definition of small (<280 sq m) to attract independent retailers and other uses. It also supports the idea of shared uses for properties, where this can enable both the ongoing viability of the unit, while providing a range of facilities in line with Policy W6, which supports mixed uses in the town centre.

### Justification

- 6.19 There are approximately 200 units within Ware town centre (Essex + Herts Digital Innovation Zone data, March 2021), the majority of which are smaller, locally owned, independent businesses. This is perhaps unsurprising given the historic nature of the town. Indeed, The [Retail and Town centres Study Update](#), 2013, identified limited opportunities for expansion and little need for larger stores, a situation which has not changed in the interim years.
- 6.20 Despite facing a series of challenges, many of these businesses have continued to flourish and contribute greatly to the character and vitality of the town.



*The historic nature of the town lends itself to smaller units*

- 6.21 Policy W8 seeks to support the ongoing provision of such units.
- 6.22 In addition, a concern that has emerged over recent years is the closure of key facilities, where some providers nationally are scaling back on physical operations. A particular example of this in Ware is the banking sector; all six of Ware's high street banks (HSBC, NatWest, Lloyds, Santander, Barclays and TSB) have now ceased trading, two as a result of the lockdown during 2020. The [Rural Services Network reported](#) that since 1988, more than 14,000 bank branches have closed in the UK, and by 2021, there would be just 5,772 left. This has obvious repercussions, particularly for older people, who are more likely to have greater mobility issues and extra needs; they are disadvantaged by not being able to perform their banking needs face to face. Equally those on low / lower incomes or without

access to private transport are also impacted negatively. The main alternative to physical branches is online / smartphone apps, however the technology cannot provide all the required services, in particular access to money. Whilst money is available from the post office or via cash back (in supermarkets for instance) these only meet some of the demand, and ATMs in particular are being phased out in areas.

- 6.23 Solutions sought by other towns across the country affected by this issue include the introduction of shared banking hubs. Such schemes could also address shortages of other important facilities - for instance postal services - bringing together hubs of like-minded services or shared complementary uses which could, for instance, change depending on the time of day.



*Example of a shared banking hub*

- 6.24 The policy therefore also supports the reuse of vacant, including historic, buildings to provide spaces that could offer shared community services and facilities.

#### **POLICY W8: SMALL BUSINESS SUPPORT**

- A. Development proposals that foster small, local business activity in the town centre will be supported. Proposals for the significant enlargement of units or the merging of multiple units will not be supported within the secondary shop frontage areas of Ware Town centre.**
- B. The reuse of buildings, including historic buildings, within Ware Town centre for activities that will enhance the vitality and viability of the town will be particularly supported. This could include community uses, retail or business. Any associated physical alterations should be sympathetic to the historic and architectural significance and character of the building concerned.**

Conformity Reference: NP objective: 3, 5; EHDP (2018): ED4; NPPF: 86, 92, 93

## Policy W9: Supporting commercial premises and land

### Purpose

- 6.25 This policy supports commercial employment opportunities by safeguarding existing designated employment sites and, importantly, identifying additional areas that are considered important commercial and industrial employment sites within Ware. Additional opportunities for employment sites are supported.



*GlaxoSmithKline plc*

### Justification

- 6.26 Ware benefits from a diverse mix of employment land and buildings. Over the years, however, the town has lost much of its employment space - notably some of the former working maltings - to permitted residential development and this has affected the dynamics of the town. The protection of local employment opportunities will not only provide greater prospects for local people to access jobs but will ensure that these are sustainable in terms of the patterns of commuting that they generate.
- 6.27 Discussions with local commercial agents reveal that there is a shortage in the availability of good quality small unit warehousing, especially units with parking / loading facilities. Initiatives such as subdividing industrial buildings to provide smaller 'easy in, easy out' units offered on flexible terms are very popular. These allow occupiers to expand or retract as necessary. There is also a need to protect existing employment sites from being lost to other uses.
- 6.28 The East Herts District Plan already designates several sites within Ware as Employment Areas. In addition, the WNP engagement process has identified some additional Important Employment Areas and Out of Town centre retail, that are considered to contribute significantly to the commercial offering of the town. These are shown in Figure 6.2.

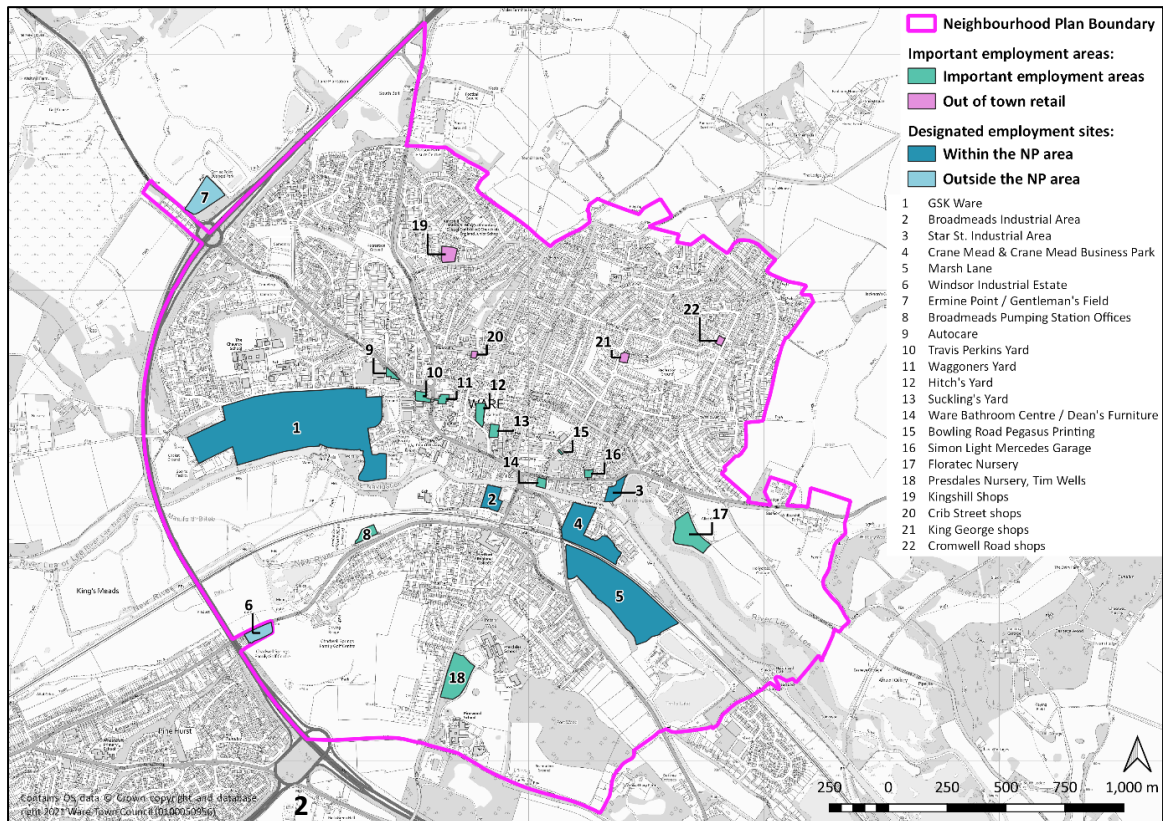


Figure 6.2: Designated Employment Areas and Important Employment Areas in Ware

6.29 Policy W9 seeks to protect existing employment land while also encouraging new businesses.

**POLICY W9: SUPPORTING EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES**

**A. The Important Employment Areas, as shown on Figure 6.2, are considered to be important employment sites, in addition to those designated in the East Herts District Plan. Applications for B2, B8 and E(g) uses will be supported in these areas subject to the following criteria:**

- i. the proposal, including any associated premises, would not have unacceptable impacts on the local environment;
- ii. the proposal would not have unacceptable impacts on the amenity of neighbouring uses, particularly residential through excessive noise and pollution; and
- iii. the proposal would not have unacceptable impacts upon the local road network.

**B. Retail uses in these areas will be supported if they have trade links with employment uses, such as tyre and exhaust centres, car showrooms and trade counters. Other uses which do not provide direct, on-going local employment opportunities (for instance Use Class C) will not be supported at these sites.**

Conformity Reference: NP objective: 4; EHDP (2018): WARE3, ED1; NPPF: 81

## **Policy W10: Supporting SMEs, flexible start-ups, and homeworking**

### **Purpose**

- 6.30 This policy recognises the growing contribution of home-based and small-to-medium sized businesses to Ware and seeks to encourage opportunities for them, including by supporting the provision of start-up and move-on business units. This would provide a greater incentive and opportunity for local people to work locally. Homeworking too has become necessary for many in the context of the Covid-19 pandemic.

### **Justification**

- 6.31 A balanced work economy requires a sufficiently large base to ensure the retention of core business support activities, as well as the provision of local amenity and good communications. In this respect Ware, as a traditional market town, has a key role in supporting the rural hinterland. It also has an opportunity to redevelop as a modern market town by providing more space for early-stage businesses and start-ups. This could include incubator space and enhancing the market offer, by an indoor market for example.
- 6.32 Evidence prepared for the neighbourhood plan (Ware Town centre – A Network of Business and Remote Working Hubs: <https://www.wareneighbourhoodplan.com/>) explored the potential for new ways of working in Ware. A top objective of the Neighbourhood Plan is to re-inject activity into the Town centre and increase footfall for the benefit of businesses, both new and old. The changing pattern of retail creates a real and present challenge for all town and city centres, large and small. One way of increasing activity in the town is to create more opportunities for people to work remotely in broadband community hubs. The Launchpad (co-working space) at Ware Priory is an example of such a hub.
- 6.33 Homeworking too provides an opportunity: the population of Ware is 18,800 - the ONS records that 48% of the UK population are in employment, which equates to 9,024 of the population of Ware in employment. Of those, 15% are self-employed, leaving 7,670 working for an employer. A survey of employers by the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development shows that 22% are expected to work from home all the time, with another 15% expected to work from home some of the time. These figures are about double the experience pre-Covid and seem to be in line with the KPMG study (The Future of Towns and Cities post Covid-19, January 2021).
- 6.34 For Ware that translates to 1,687 people expected to work from home all the time, and a further 1,150 expected to work from home some of the time. There is therefore a very substantial potential demand for remote working to be anticipated in Ware. The existing remote working facilities in the business centre hubs identified probably amount to only 150 places available in Ware for remote workers, so there is plenty of opportunity for expansion.



**What are local agents saying?**

Many tenants are looking to downsize their office spaces and achieve cost savings. At least half of the companies expect a 30% decline in office attendance, whether a result of working from home or redundancies. As a result of this a scenario is anticipated where there is a 20% - 30% fall in rents for offices. Larger companies are looking to move to their own self-contained space, where they can control their own environment. Flexible leases are therefore high on the agenda, and there is a move away from co-working and serviced offices.

- 6.35 To provide flexible start-up space, it is necessary to encourage appropriate buildings that can be rented out at sufficiently low rents to attract their use by business start-ups and existing home workers. A potential source of such space is vacant units in the commercial areas or within the Town centre, which could either be converted on a permanent basis if they are no longer viable for retail use or on a temporary basis.

**POLICY W10: SUPPORTING SMES, FLEXIBLE START-UPS AND HOMEWORKING**

**A. Proposals to provide workspaces that encourage homeworking and creative small industries, for instance through incubator / start-up business space on flexible terms, will be supported through:**

- i. the provision of new buildings or conversion of existing buildings, including historic buildings within Ware town centre;**
- ii. enabling extensions and appropriately-sized garden offices to facilitate homeworking;**
- iii. enabling microbusinesses (10 or fewer employees); and**
- iv. the provision of start-up businesses by enabling low-cost facilities in cooperative clusters.**

**B. As appropriate to their scale, nature and location, proposals for new workspaces should demonstrate the way in which they can be incorporated within their immediate locality without generating any unacceptable impact on the amenity of residential properties and on the capacity and safety of the local highways network.**

Conformity Reference: NP objective: 3; EHDP (2018): ED4; NPPF: 81, 83

## Policy W11: Ware as a sustainable visitor destination

### Purpose

6.36 This policy recognises the important contribution that tourism makes to Ware. It supports the provision of facilities and associated infrastructure that will enable and support a sustainable visitor economy.

### Justification

6.37 By 2025, [VisitBritain estimates](#) that the UK will have a tourism industry worth over £257 billion - just under 10% of UK GDP and supporting almost 3.8 million jobs, which is around 11% of the total UK number.

6.38 The tourism industry plays a vital role in the East Herts economy, creating jobs and contributing to the maintenance of facilities. Tourism in East Herts benefits from the high-quality environment of its countryside and historic market towns, along with its road and rail links and proximity to Stansted Airport.

6.39 Ware itself, with its rich history and varied heritage, has a lot to offer visitors:

- The River Lea and the New River provide walking and cycling opportunities, as do the Rivers Ash and Rib. The towpath of the River Lea gives access to nature reserves on both sides of the town - the Meads between Ware and Hertford and the Amwell Nature Reserve which attracts birdwatchers nationwide. The gazebos too form an important part of the heritage landscape.
- The town is steeped in industrial heritage, notably the malting industry, having been the largest malting town in England. Unusual historical assets including Scott's Grotto, commissioned by John Scott, the 18th century poet.
- Leisure facilities include the lido, which is a very popular local attraction dating to the 1930s. Ware sits at the northern end of the Lee Valley Regional Park, which also offers a range of activities, both on water and land. Wodson Park Sports and Leisure Centre, whilst just beyond the neighbourhood area boundary, is a community-based charity offering a range of recreational opportunities and is very popular with local residents.
- A range of festivals and events, including the Rock in the Priory, the Ware Festival, the Dickensian evening and Heritage Open Days.

6.40 The town is very accessible, less than an hour's drive from London and Cambridge and 30 minutes from Stanstead Airport. It is also accessible in more sustainable ways: the railway station, with a direct train service to London, is located at the entrance to the town centre, and at the start of the heritage trail. There are regular bus services to nearby towns including Hertford and Harlow. Furthermore, the river itself provides a point of entry to Ware, with a regular waterbus between Ware and Hertford and moorings available to those arriving by canal boat.



*Images show: The towpath is used extensively for walking and cycling; Narrow boats on the River Lea*

- 6.41 There have been few studies into the value of tourism to Ware. The East of England Tourist Board, in 2004, produced the most comprehensive report on tourism in Ware, attributing a value of £24,313k to the visitor economy locally (report available at <https://www.wareneighbourhoodplan.com/> ). To put this in context, based on the latest ONS statistics for the UK's GDP, which is £28k / head of population, and a 'notional GDP' for Ware of £526k, tourism in Ware is 4.5% of economic activity based on the 2004 total (the current UK wide figure is 9%).
- 6.42 Given the historic attractiveness of Ware - the museum records between 7,000 to 8,000 visitors per year - and with its central and accessible location, it is considered that tourism could provide a growth opportunity, in particular attracting the 'visiting friends and relatives' (VFR) market, day trippers and those basing themselves for at least one night in Ware to visit the town and surrounding areas. Making this happen will require local partners to work together to create a Ware brand that can be marketed effectively to the types of audiences that are likely to be attracted to the area. It will also be important that the provision of facilities which cater for the needs of visitors do not detract or harm the very environment that attracts them.
- 6.43 To support this, the following issues and opportunities have been identified, some of which are being pursued through the Ware Town centre Strategy, a project funded by Ware Town Council to provide a strategy for improving the town centre:
- Supporting proposals for additional visitor accommodation - the town has only a limited number of B&Bs in addition to the Premier Inn. If the short-stay market is to be attracted, which offers greater returns for the economy, this would need to be addressed.
  - Providing coach parking bays - coach tourism is a lucrative market, [contributing over £7bn a year to the UK economy](#). Ware could capitalise on this, particularly given its proximity to tourism centres such as Cambridge. There are currently no parking spaces for coaches. This could be addressed, for instance, through dedicated provision or as part of a redevelopment.
  - Enabling an evening economy - Over the last few years, there has been a considerable amount of development in the town, which has facilitated additional

entertainment options. Fletchers Lea and the Southern Maltings now offer a wide range of events, including live theatre, music and film options. The Drill Hall provides a venue for live music. New bars, such as The Mixer, offers a 'club' type environment with a DJ and a late licence. While pubs like The Punch House and The Bull offer live music at weekends.

- Optimising the tourism value of the River Lea and New River - the river provides an attractive backdrop to the town. There is scope, however, for additional river access points, for instance at The Priory, where this can be achieved sensitively.
- Enhancing and adding to the town heritage trail - to celebrate the history and heritage of the town - this is explored further in the movement section of the Neighbourhood Plan.
- Encouraging nature tourism - alongside its attractive river setting, Ware is surrounded by attractive countryside, including some important nature reserves. There is scope to enhance these natural spaces for biodiversity, something explored more fully in section 7 of this Plan, including public access, where this can be achieved sustainably.

#### **POLICY W11: WARE AS A SUSTAINABLE VISITOR DESTINATION**

**The development and expansion of tourism facilities accommodation, entertainment, visitor attractions and activities connected with day-trippers and staying visitors, and extending the night-time economy, will be supported where the following criteria can be met:**

- there are demonstrable economic and social benefits of the proposals; and**
- the proposal provides links to sustainable forms of transport and is accessible by foot, bicycle and mobility transport; and**
- there is no unacceptable detrimental impact (e.g. noise, traffic) on the existing community; and**
- dedicated parking provision should be consistent with the adopted [Vehicle Parking Standards](#); and**
- the siting, scale and design has strong regard to the local character, historic and natural assets of the surrounding area and the design and materials are in keeping with the local style and reinforce local distinctiveness and provide a strong sense of place.**

Conformity Reference: NP objective: 3,4; EHDP (2018): ED5; NPPF: 81, 84, 93

## 7 ENVIRONMENT AND GREEN SPACE

### Policy W12: Green and blue infrastructure and delivering biodiversity net gain

#### Purpose

- 7.1 This policy seeks to ensure that the multiple benefits of Ware's green and blue spaces - including their importance in combating pressure on wildlife, habitats, biodiversity and geodiversity and in off-setting the effects of air pollution - are recognised and enhanced. This applies particularly where individual spaces have a greater collective value as part of wider chains of green infrastructure. This will serve to support the requirement to conserve and, where possible, provide a net gain in biodiversity through planning policy whilst accommodating sustainable development.

#### Justification

- 7.2 The NPPF states that plans should seek to protect and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity including by identifying and mapping habitats and networks. The [Environment Act 2021](#) includes a provision for a mandatory requirement for new major developments to provide a minimum 10% biodiversity net gain (further information on smaller-scale developments is anticipated to be published by government). Figure 7.1 maps the green stepping-stones and, importantly, the unbroken green corridors within the area, as well as the water corridors. These are important spaces for the local community for recreational purposes and for visitors to the area, threading through the town itself. They also provide critical spaces as wildlife refuges and routes, such as for bats, to prevent species becoming isolated.

The [Defra biodiversity metric](#) has been designed to determine and quantify existing biodiversity value, in terms of habitats, and the consequent measures required to ensure measurable net gain. Net gain involves a post development increase in biodiversity units of at least 10%. Natural England considers this to be the most appropriate mechanism for determining current ecological value and delivering biodiversity net gain. Ecological assessment by suitably qualified people must utilise this metric on all habitats to determine net gain. Ecological reports must be consistent with BS 42020 Biodiversity - code of practise for planning and development.

- 7.3 They should be maximised and made properly accessible, where feasible - this would help to address the poor provision of accessible natural greenspace that has been identified in the [East Herts Green Infrastructure Plan](#) (p.10). Development proposals are encouraged to facilitate improved connectivity between wildlife areas and green spaces that are used by the community.
- 7.4 If significant harm resulting from a development cannot be avoided (for instance by locating to an alternative site with less harmful impacts), adequately mitigated, or, as a last resort, compensated for, then planning permission should be refused. As established in Policy NE3 of the District Plan, planning permission should also be refused for any development resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats such as

veteran trees and trees of a high conservation value, unless the need for and benefits of the development in that location clearly outweigh the loss. In this instance, substantial compensation as quantified by the Defra biodiversity metric will be considered. This is addressed in Policy W12 (Part A).

- 7.5 Net gain involves a post development increase in biodiversity units of 10% in line with requirements set out in national legislation and guidance. The appraisal should demonstrate that where significant harm cannot be avoided, proposed development and other changes should adequately mitigate or, as a last resort, compensate for the harm. The appraisal must demonstrate a measurable biodiversity net gain of 10% by utilising the Defra biodiversity metric (or as amended). Where this is not demonstrated, permission for planning or for change should be refused.
- 7.6 Measures to achieve biodiversity net gain, mitigation or compensation involving the creation of habitat and / or relocation of species, must be agreed by the Local Planning Authority and include sufficient funding to support at least 30 years of post-development habitat management or land use change.

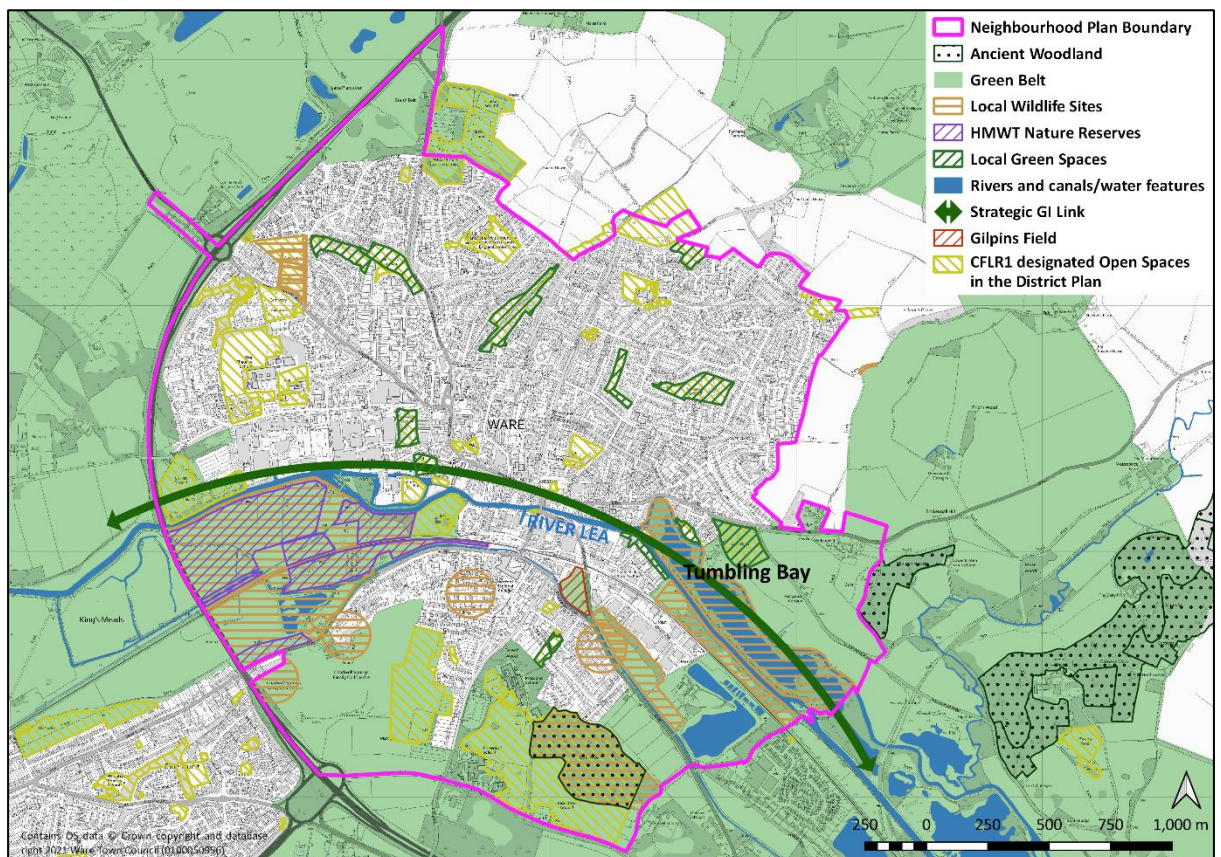


Figure 7.1: The Green and Blue infrastructure within Ware (including CFLR1 designated open spaces in the District Plan)

### The River Lea Corridor

- 7.7 The corridor along the River Lea and Lee Navigation provides a strategic east-west route through and beyond Ware. It is an attractive and important backdrop to the historic core of Ware, the town having developed originally around the river's crossing point. The River Lea and Lee Navigation has, since medieval times, enabled boats to access the river between Hertford, Bishops Stortford and London. As such, it is popular and well-travelled.



*River Lea boat moorings near to The Priory*

- 7.8 From an environmental perspective, the [East Herts Green Infrastructure Plan](#) identifies the river corridor as a priority for wetland enhancements, including increased greening, to create enhanced 'space for water' and improving biodiversity in the area.
- 7.9 Equally, feedback from the Plan process, supported by the District Plan, recognises the value of the river corridor for recreation, including walking and cycling. Further information about this aspect is set out in Policy W15 (Improving Walking and Cycling).
- 7.10 There has also been a call for new and / or enhanced access points for boats wishing to stop off at Ware, such as at The Priory.
- 7.11 The WNP supports such initiatives, where it can be achieved sympathetically - from a natural and historic landscape perspective - and where it maintains the highest water efficiency standard, does not contribute to net loss of water from the waterway and is conducive to the maintenance of the river. Recreational uses should be considered in conjunction with the Canal & Rivers Trust as Navigation Authority, which owns and manages the navigation, as well as Defra, where appropriate. This will ensure there is no detrimental impact on other recreational users of the waterway or towpath.

### **Gilpins Field**



7.12 Gilpins Field, shown on Figure 7.1 is a triangle of Green Belt situated at the southern end of the town, just south of the railway line. Owned and managed by Thames Water, the space comprises an unkempt wilderness, providing a habitat to a series of species. It has been identified within the Ware Conservation Area Appraisal as an important natural and green open gateway to the historic area and wider town.

7.13 Discussions are in place between the Town Council, Thames Water and the Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust to explore opportunities to enhance biodiversity on-site by creating a nature reserve to incorporate features, for instance: a pondscape, wet woodland, a community orchard and a tiny forest. This is in line with the District Plan (Paragraph 20.3.10), which supports the creation of orchards, wildflower grasslands and nature reserves, to support biodiversity, and as such, the site is considered to be a biodiversity opportunity area.

### **Tumbling Bay**

7.14 The Tumbling Bay local wildlife site on the north side of the Lee Navigation at the east side of Ware, is an attractive green space. It is designated as Green Belt land apart from one small corner by the Tumbling Bay weir-keeper's cottage. The centre is largely taken up by a lake, which was once gravel workings, although these are no longer visible. It is a peaceful and attractive spot, regularly accessed by many townspeople, although public access is on a completely unofficial basis.



*One of the bridges leading to Tumbling Bay*



- 7.15 There are three footbridges connecting to the 'island' - Tumbling Bay weir, Crane Mead, and Plaxton Way - of which the first is in poor repair but the second has recently been refurbished. All are joined by paths of varying widths, and which are quite muddy in winter. The footpath via Tumbling Way weir bridge is the shortest route to Ware town centre, but this bridge is narrow and the path runs through the Dockyard (Widbury Hill) trading estate. Where bridges are in the ownership of the Canal and Rivers Trust, proposals for these crossings must be discussed with the Trust, to discuss and agree details on design, layout, future ownership, maintenance and technical approval.
- 7.16 The lake and surrounding land provide important habitats for flora and fauna; the Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust (HMWT) has identified a population of smew duck, for instance, which are fairly uncommon as they are shy and easily disturbed. The existing Green Belt space here, comprising the lake and surrounding strip of land, should be preserved for its important biodiversity value. As with Gilpins Field, there may be potential for biodiversity enhancement, which could attract funding from development sites in the district that cannot demonstrate biodiversity gain on site.
- 7.17 In addition, there is a local aspiration to enable greater public access to the site, where this can be done sustainably. This would help to tackle the shortfall of such access to natural green space in Ware and could include:
- Regularising public access to the green space so that people can continue to enjoy it permanently. Either permissive or public footpaths are highly desirable, at least to connect the three footbridges and these paths should be improved to give all-weather surfaces to make them accessible;
  - Introducing a cycleway from the Crane Mead bridge to the Plaxton Way bridge, with a full-width all-weather surface. Access to the Crane Mead bridge could be improved by providing ramps at either end in addition to the current steps. The Plaxton Way bridge is already suitable for cycles, although conditions of access through the estate road beyond are not fully clear;
  - Providing a direct cycleway leading into Star Street but bypassing the Dockyard trading estate, as the route via Tumbling Way weir bridge and the Dockyard trading estate is clearly unsuitable as a cycleway. This could be achieved either via a new bridge at the north end of the island or by widening the Tumbling Bay weir bridge and building a new cycle path behind the trading estate by the River Lea (backwater). This would give a much more direct and useful cycling route than currently available.
- 7.18 Proposals for new or amended bridge crossings should be required to make an assessment of the visual impacts, taking into consideration any existing features / crossings. Any works, including ramps etc, will also need to ensure that there are no adverse impacts to the safe navigation of the waterway, stability of the waterway or existing infrastructure such as culverts or access along the towpath, including horse drawn boats or operational

activities such as dredging. Works will likely require separate consent from Defra and proposals should also be clearly set out how any improvements would be funded / maintained.

**POLICY W12: GREEN AND BLUE INFRASTRUCTURE AND DELIVERING BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN**

- A. Development proposals should be designed to create, conserve, enhance and manage green spaces and connect chains of green and blue infrastructure, as identified on the Policies Maps, with the aim of delivering a measurable net environmental benefit<sup>1</sup> for local people and wildlife. Subject to their scale, nature and location, proposals for development should be supported by a biodiversity appraisal, which should demonstrate how negative impacts would be minimised and biodiversity net gain achieved.**
- B. Proposals which would improve the connectivity between wildlife areas and green spaces will be supported where they would enhance the green infrastructure of the Neighbourhood area. Development proposals which would unacceptably detract from connectivity with wildlife areas and green spaces will not be supported.**
- C. Insofar as planning permission is required, proposals for the planting of additional native species trees and/or continuous hedgerows to provide wildlife corridors and as a habitat for wildlife will be supported, especially where they would be alongside the public right of way network. Wherever practicable indigenous or native species should be used for such proposals.**

**The River Lea Corridor**

- D. Proposals for short-term visitors' moorings and opportunities for non-motorised (licenced) pleasure craft and kayaks to enter and egress the water will be supported where they:
  - i. incorporate design and landscaping which protects the setting of the watercourses, conserving their heritage value and reflecting the character of the surrounding context. This should be demonstrated through an environmental impact statement, taking into account, for example, geological, ecological, landscape, species, habitats and sustainability criteria and in consultation with the Canal & River Trust, as the Navigation Authority; and**
  - ii. avoid views onto 'back of development', such as car parks, service areas, bin stores, delivery areas, sub stations and associated car parking, using natural buffering where possible; and**
  - iii. conserve and where practicable enhance the biodiversity, landscape and recreational value of the River, its tributaries and its corridor through the area; and****

---

<sup>1</sup> Net gain involves a post development increase in biodiversity units of 10% in line with requirements set out in national legislation and guidance.

**iv. include a long-term landscape and ecological management plan for the greening of the river and enhancement / expansion of the wetland environment, in consultation with the Environment Agency; and**

**v. enable the retrofitting of SuDS where possible and ensure permeable paving is used.**

**E. Other types of development that either adjoin or are within the river corridor of the River Lea or its tributaries, as shown on the Policies Map, will only be supported in exceptional circumstances.**

**Gilpins Field**

**F. Development proposals should protect the open aspect and biodiversity of Gilpins Field. Development proposals which would increase the biodiversity of the Field will be strongly supported.**

**Tumbling Bay**

**G. Development proposals that enhance the site as a wildlife habitat will be supported.**

**H. Proposals that enable sustainable community access and use of the site for recreational and educational purposes will be supported, where they would not have unacceptable impacts on the amenities of surrounding residents, the local environment or the River Lea Corridor.**

Conformity Reference: NP objective: 2; EHDP (2018): NE1, NE2, NE3, NE4; NPPF: 174, 175, 179, 180

## Policy W13: Local Green Spaces

### Purpose

7.19 The policy designates Local Green Spaces within Ware, that are demonstrably special to the local community.

### Justification

7.20 Under the NPPF, neighbourhood plans can designate Local Green Spaces which are of particular importance to them. This will afford protection from development other than in very special circumstances. Paragraph 102 of the NPPF says that the Local Green Space designation should only be used where the green space is:

- in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves;
- demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance, for example because of its beauty, historic significance, recreational value (including as a playing field), tranquillity or richness of its wildlife; and
- local in character and is not an extensive tract of land.

7.21 A survey of green spaces in Ware was undertaken. The Steering Group reviewed the green spaces to ascertain whether they might be suitable for designation as a Local Green Space. Many are already adequately protected, for instance where they are already located within the Green Belt or have an existing protective designation attributed to them. The following areas are considered to fulfil the criteria of the NPPF:

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1. Lady Margaret Gardens<br>(playground area and open space) | 8. Buryfields   |
| 2. The Bourne  | 9. Widbury Hill Allotments                                  |
| 3. King George Fields  | 10. Plaxton Way   |
| 4. Lower Bourne Gardens                                      | 11. King George Road Allotments                             |
| 5. The Pastures  | 12. Land between Crane Mead houses and River Lee Navigation |
| 6. Priory Playgrounds  |   |
| 7. Presdales Drive Playground<br>(and Land)                  |   |

7.22 Figure 7.2 shows the location of each of the Local Green Spaces. Detailed maps and descriptions of the spaces, including how they meet the NPPF criteria, are included in Appendix A.

**POLICY W13: LOCAL GREEN SPACES**

**The 12 green spaces listed below and shown in Figure 7.2 and on the Policies Map, are designated as Local Green Spaces:**

- 1. Lady Margaret Gardens (playground area and open space)**
- 2. The Bourne**
- 3. King George Fields**
- 4. Lower Bourne Gardens**
- 5. The Pastures**
- 6. Priory Playgrounds**
- 7. Presdales Drive Playground (and Land)**
- 8. Buryfields**
- 9. Widbury Hill Allotments**
- 10. Plaxton Way**
- 11. King George Road Allotments**
- 12. Land between Crane Mead houses and River Lee Navigation**

**Development proposals within the designated local green space will be consistent with national policy for Green Belts.**

Conformity Reference: NP objective: 2; EHDP (2018): CFLR2; NPPF: 101, 102, 103, 137, 147 to 151

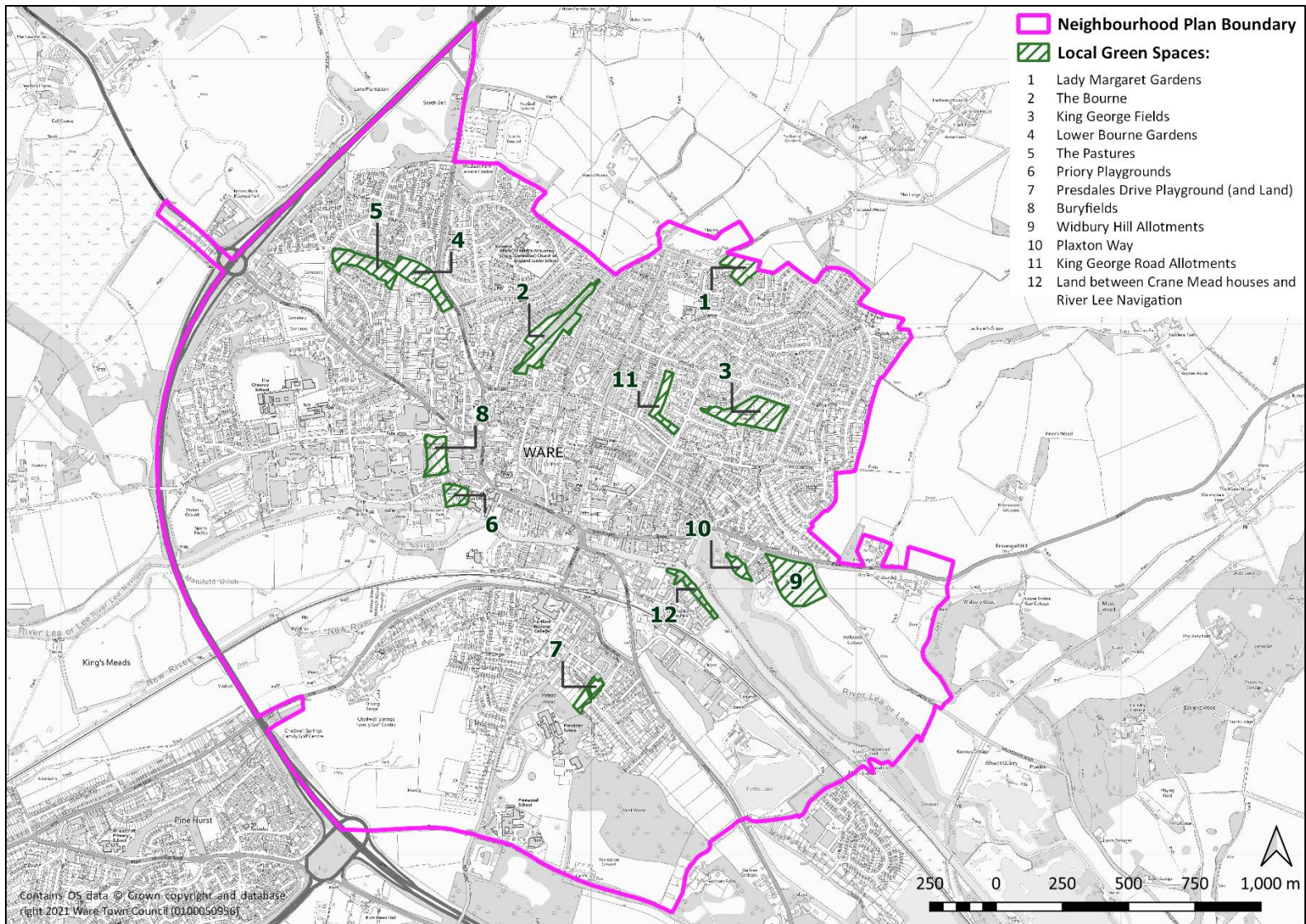


Figure 7.2: Map showing the Local Green Space designations

# Policy W14: Managing the environmental impact of development

## Purpose

7.23 This policy seeks to ensure that development proposals have considered how they can enhance the natural environment - both flora and fauna - including the features of it that are particularly distinctive to Ware. It also seeks to ensure that development proposals contribute to the provision of adequate open space.

## Justification

7.24 The NPPF stresses that planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural environment including requiring net gain in biodiversity. Protected natural assets in the neighbourhood area, shown in Figure 7.3, include:

- the Green Belt, surrounding and, in parts, extending into the town; and
- Ancient woodland at Post Wood - an oak-hornbeam Ancient Semi-Natural Woodland which supports a variety of wildlife
- 11 Local Wildlife Sites
- Part of the Lee Valley Park
- Historic Parks and Gardens

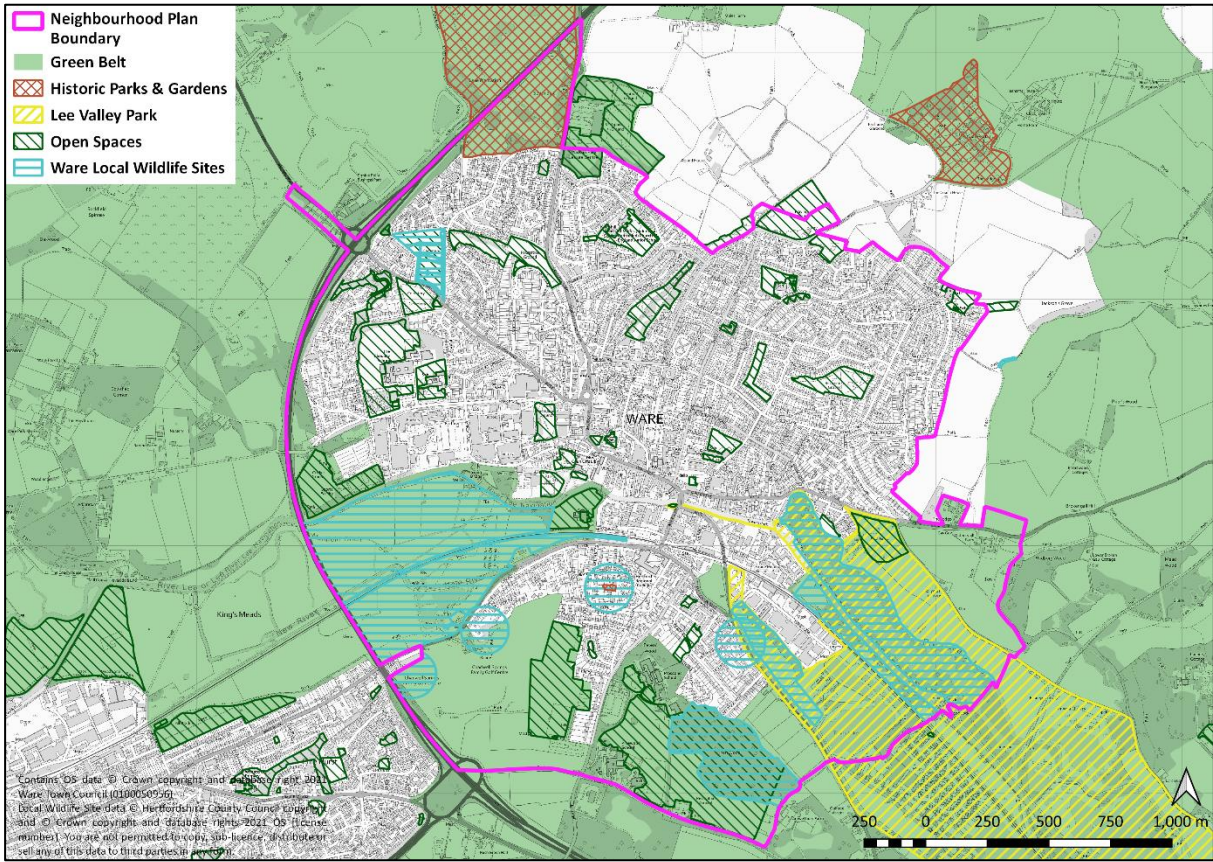


Figure 7.3: Habitats and natural sites in the neighbourhood area

7.25 Other distinctive features particular to Ware that are not protected, yet provide vital habitats for flora and fauna, include veteran and mature trees and established woodland, mature planted gardens, the wide green verges alongside roads and the banks of the rivers. Such features form vital corridors for many animals and birds, especially those migrating, to safely navigate around their domains.



Street trees are an important feature in Ware (Kibes Lane pictured)

7.26 Development proposals are expected to retain, protect, and enhance these habitats where possible and, where appropriate, include a landscape and ecological management plan, with a list of trees and shrubs to be planted to optimise the greenness of the town. New trees should be native to the UK and selected based on the [Woodland Trust Urban Air Quality Report](#) (2012), which provides guidance for street trees based on Urban Tree Air Quality Score (UTAQS) to ensure the best effect is achieved for air quality, to optimise their cooling effect and to protect from disease (see Figure 7.4). Colour of foliage will also be considered as this can enhance the overall appearance of the town throughout the year. Resistance to drought, in light of climate change, will also be an important factor to consider.

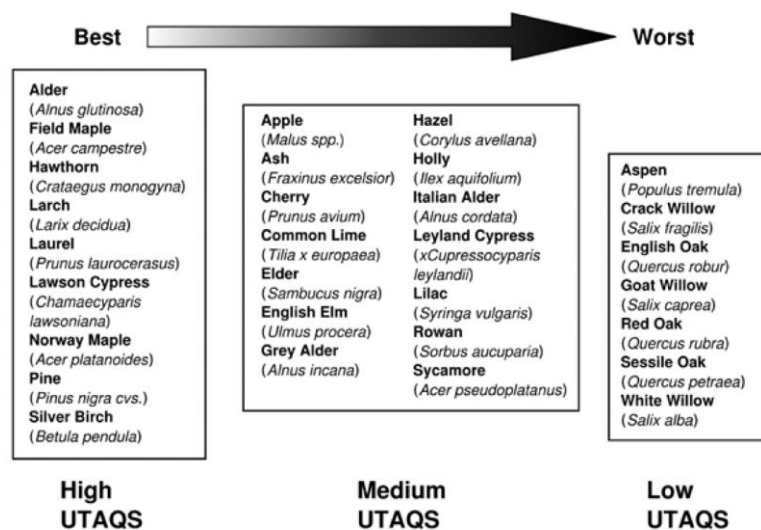


Figure 7.4: Classification of 30 of the most common UK urban tree species using UTAQS



#### **POLICY W14: MANAGING THE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT OF DEVELOPMENT**

Development proposals should maintain and, where practicable, enhance the natural environment, landscape features and the rural character and setting of the neighbourhood area.

As appropriate to their scale, nature and location, development proposals should demonstrate that they have addressed the following matters:

##### **Trees and woodlands:**

- i. there is no unacceptable loss of, or damage to, existing trees, woodlands during, or as a result of, development. If veteran or notable trees (As defined by [The Woodland Trust](#)) must be removed, they should be replaced with trees of a similar potential size and native species elsewhere on the site, unless this is clearly not possible.
- ii. new tree planting will be encouraged. Where new trees are planted or existing trees replaced, indigenous or native species should be favoured, as well as locally appropriate varieties attractive to insects, birds and other wildlife. The Urban Tree Air Quality Score and colour of foliage should be taken into account.
- iii. all priority habitats and mature trees must have a minimum buffer of complimentary habitat of 10m, and more if required (for instance ancient woodland or veteran trees require a minimum buffer of 15m).

##### **Fauna:**

- iv. the provision of hedgehog holes in new residential fencing will be supported.
- v. development proposals which provide wildlife-friendly features, such as bird and bat nesting boxes, swift bricks and bee bricks, will be supported.
- vi. the provision of wildlife friendly communal 'green spaces' within new major developments will be supported.

##### **Incorporate open space that is:**

- vii. in usable parcels of land and not fragmented.
- viii. safe, easily accessible and not severed by any physical barrier.
- ix. is accessible to the general public.
- x. creates a safe environment considering lighting and layout.
- xi. complemented by high quality landscaping schemes.

Conformity Reference: NP objective: 2; EHDP (2018): DES2, DES3, NE3; NPPF: 92, 131, 174, 179, 180

## 8 TRANSPORT AND MOVEMENT

### Policy W15: Improving walking and cycling

#### Purpose

8.1 Many people rely on their car for a variety of reasons - they may have limited mobility, they may be transporting young children, carrying larger loads, or simply be short of time to reach their destination. Noting those concerns, this policy seeks to promote walking and cycling along the routes which are most likely to enable a shift away from the private car for short journeys in and around Ware. This will assist in reducing congestion and air pollution, whilst freeing the roads for those who are less able to give up their cars for the reasons stated.

#### Justification

- 8.2 Ware is a local centre for surrounding villages as well as those living in the town itself. As a result, there is substantial car traffic to and from the town centre and also the Tesco car park in Dickenson Way, accessed via New Road which is thus an important two-way route. People frequently combine supermarket shopping with visiting other town centre shops, helping to keep the High Street vibrant. The Asda store in Watton Road also receives significant traffic.
- 8.3 The High Street is currently the main route for east-west traffic across the town and into the central area. However, there is no viable alternative route. This was illustrated during the pandemic when one-way systems in the High Street diverted traffic on to narrow residential roads and seriously inhibited sustainable transport modes such as buses and cycles, although one-way westbound was less disruptive than one-way eastbound. However, the 20-mph speed limit has been beneficial. Other measures such as an HGV ban, loading / unloading restrictions at peak work / school travel hours and a 'shared space' approach as used in some Continental cities should be beneficial. Many of these highways issues fall outside the remit of the neighbourhood plan, but nevertheless have been captured in Section 12 of this document, as Non policy actions.

#### Supporting sustainable modes of transport

8.4 Whilst the Neighbourhood Plan cannot prevent people from using their cars, encouraging walking and cycling, particularly for shorter journeys within the town and to nearby settlements - including the urban extension - will be important. Promoting active travel is beneficial in many ways: to promote healthy lifestyles, to encourage social interaction, to reduce traffic congestion, and to help to alleviate air pollution. This latter point is particularly relevant in Ware: Whilst no part of the town has significant enough air pollution for an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) classification to be declared, parts of the town are facing increasing air pollution (Figure 8.1) and this is an issue that should be explored further with the relevant monitoring authorities.

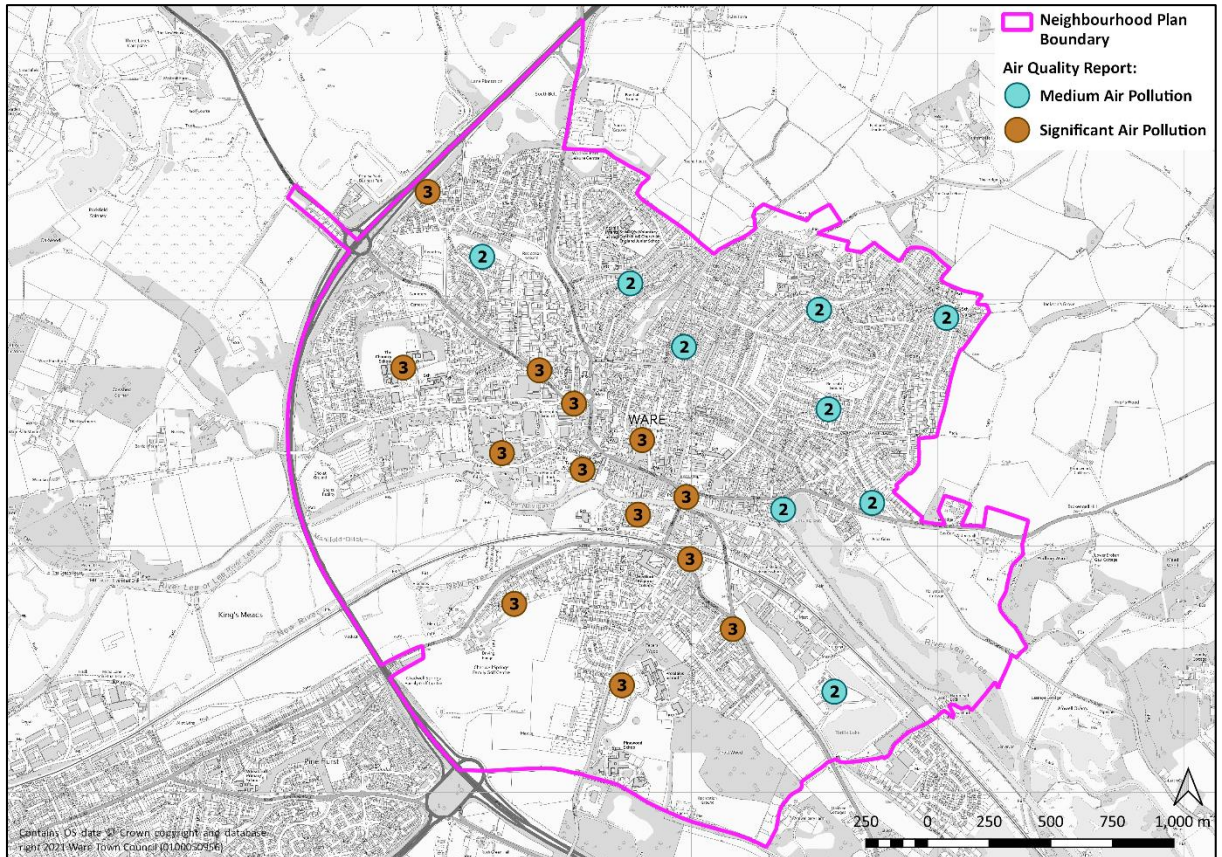


Figure 8.1: Air pollution in Ware (based on the Central Office of Public Interest Air Quality data available at [addresspollution.org](https://addresspollution.org) in partnership with Imperial College London)

8.5 Enabling active travel in Ware should be possible as Ware is a highly walkable and cyclable town. The whole of the town is accessible within 15 minutes by bicycle and Figure 8.2 shows that a significant proportion of the community is within a 15-minute walk of the railway station close to the centre of the town.

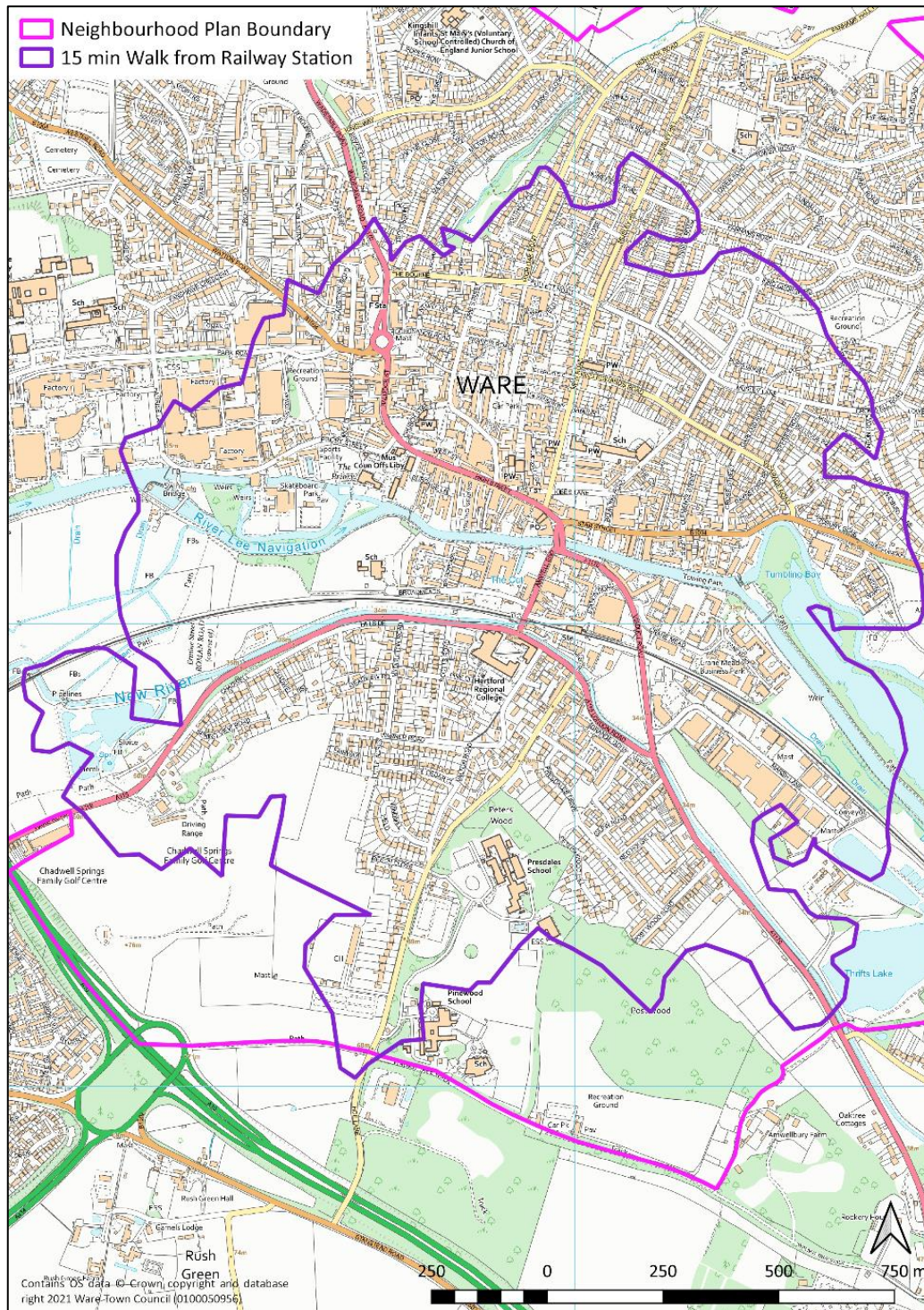
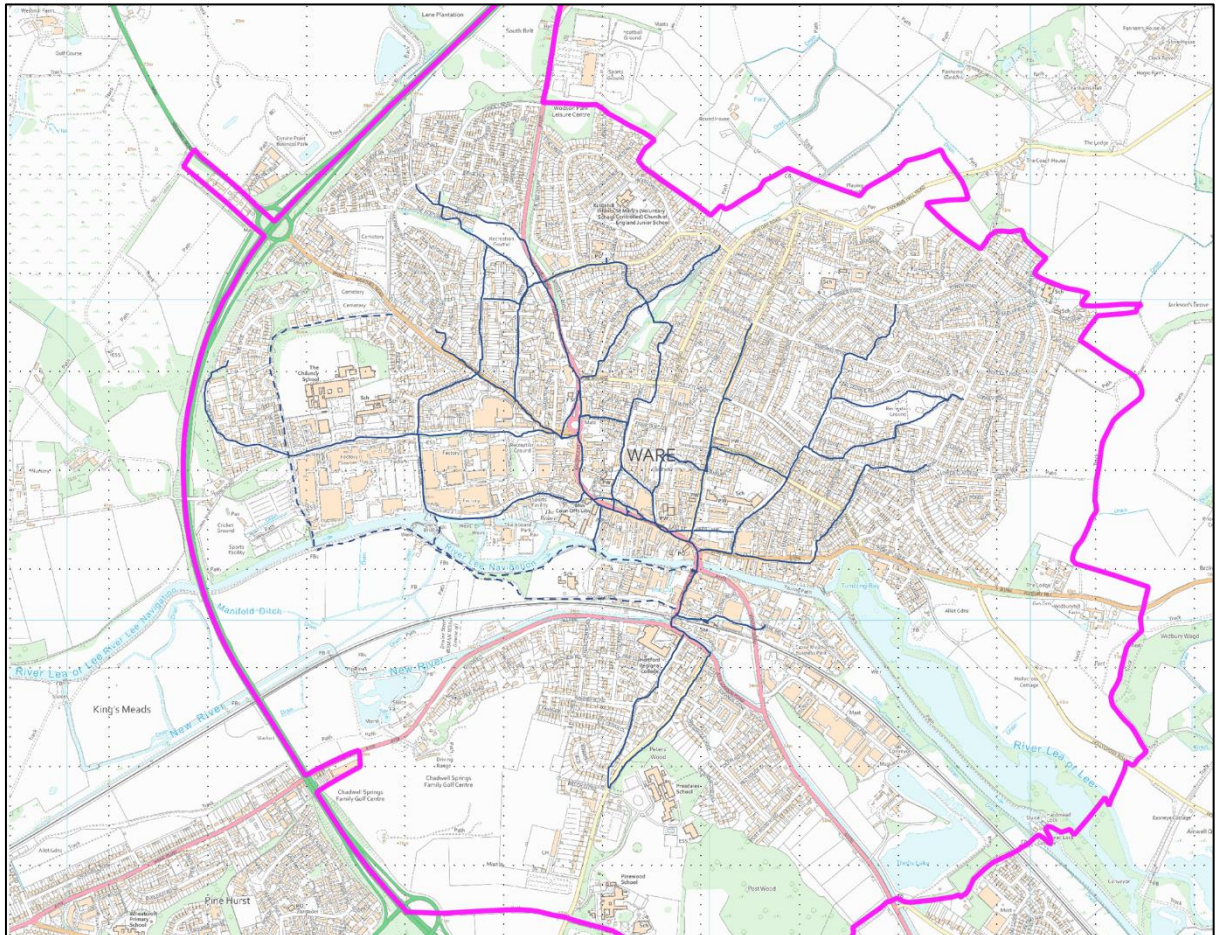


Figure 8.2: 15-minute walk time from Ware railway station

8.6 There are numerous destinations that Ware residents - including those who will be living in the strategic allocation at north-east Ware - will commonly look to access. These include the town centre, the schools, the main employment areas and the railway station. Improving walking and cycling routes so that they are safe and attractive to users will create the best opportunity to get more people to walk and cycle for their short journeys 'within town'. This will help to reduce congestion on secondary routes.

### Walking in and around Ware

- 8.7 The most direct routes to reach the key facilities on foot from residential areas tend to coincide with the main road network. These have pavements and are, on the whole, well-lit and accessible, as shown in Figure 8.3.



*Figure 8.3: Map showing the most frequently used pedestrian routes in Ware (dotted lines tend to be summer-only use)*

- 8.8 To support Policy W11 (Ware as a sustainable visitor destination), the WNP supports the recreational heritage trail (prepared by The Ware Society), showcasing the town's heritage, that should be well-maintained for the use of those visiting the town. Shown in Figure 8.4, proposals that enable this route to be well-signposted and fully accessible to users will be supported. The provision of information boards at key destinations along the route will contribute to the celebration and enhancement of Ware's distinctive heritage. Such boards are already provided by the Ware Society at the railway station, the lido, outside the Museum by Kibes Lane car park, and by the river concerning the gazebos.

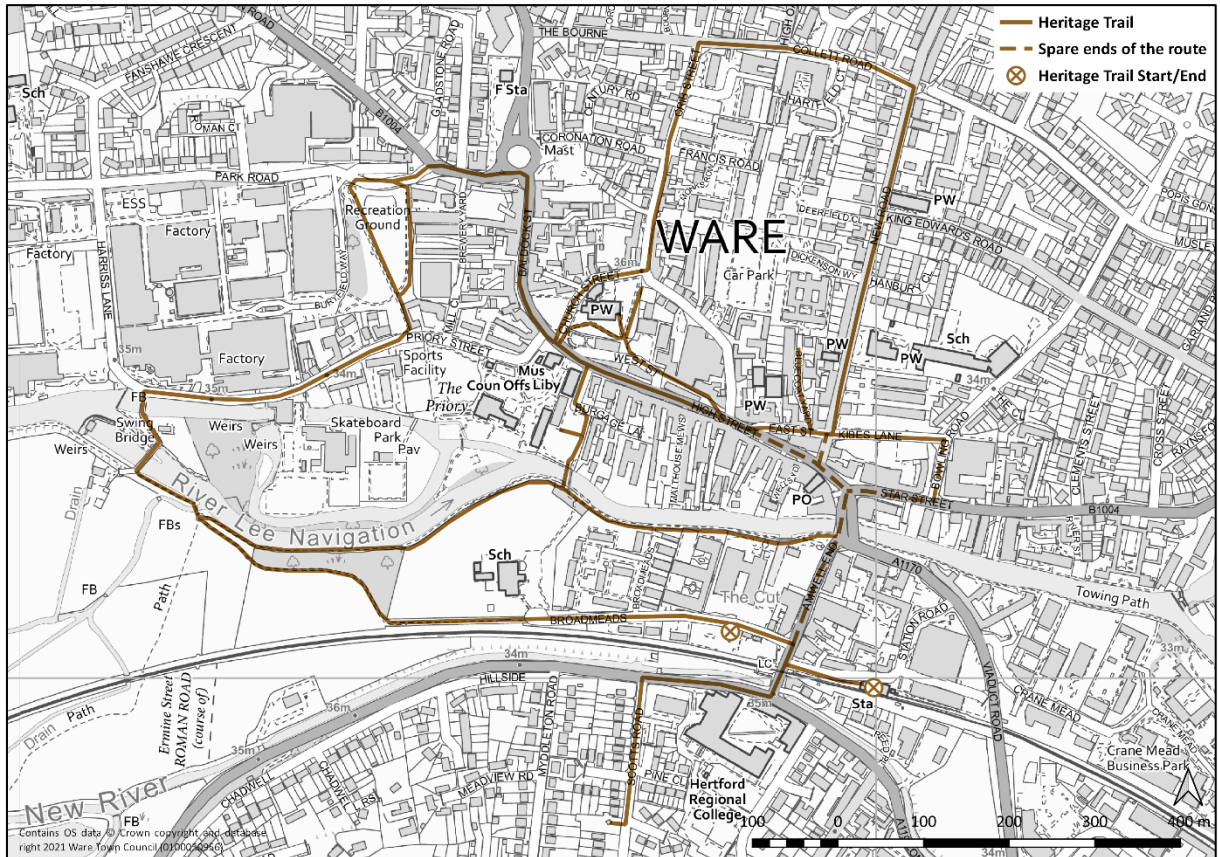


Figure 8.4: Recreational Heritage Trail

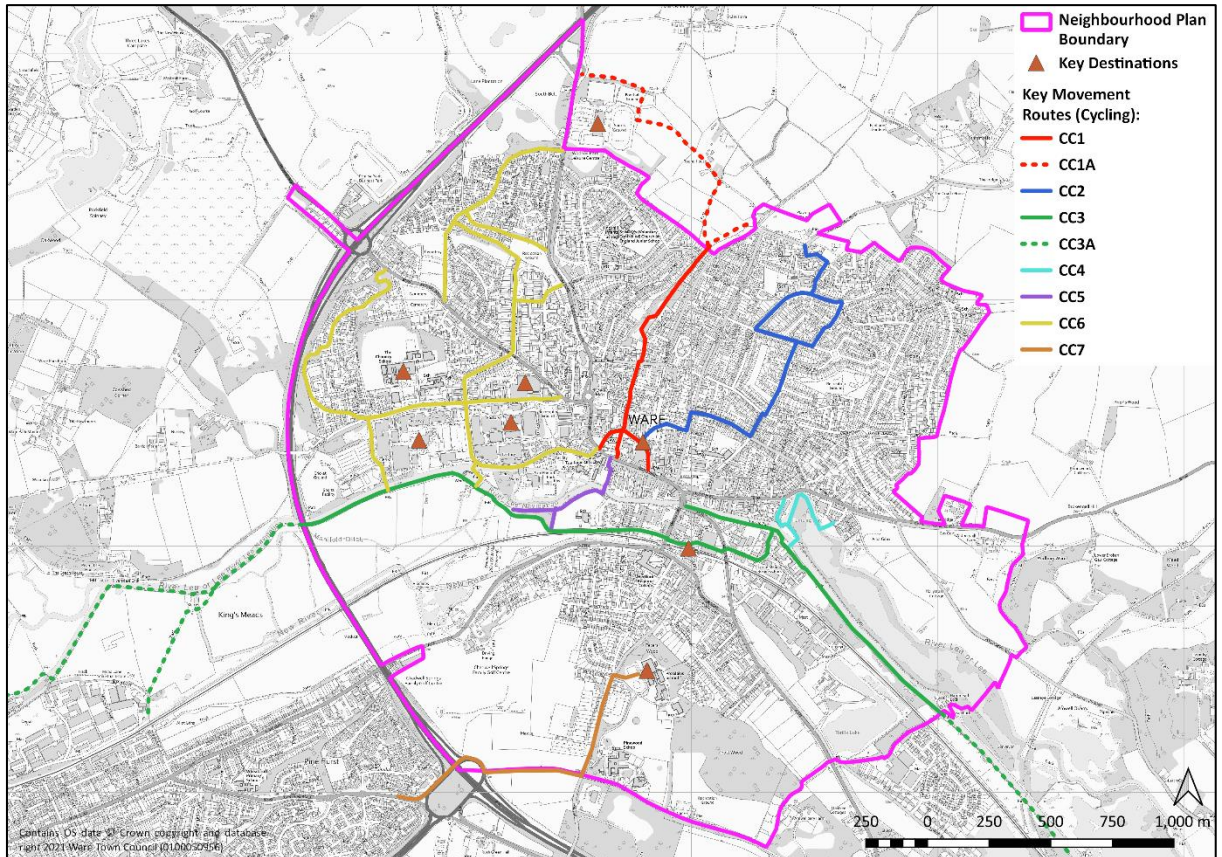
Cycling routes in and around Ware

8.9 Seven important cycling corridors through Ware have been identified and are shown as CC1-CC7 in Figure 8.5. They are described in more detail in the supporting document ‘Cycling routes in Ware’, available from the [Neighbourhood Plan website](#).

8.10 Routes CC3 and CC5 along the River Lea are described in Paragraph 8.11 and Route CC4 across Tumbling Bay is covered in Paragraph 7.15.

8.11 Routes CC1 and CC1A are essential to achieve the aim of the North and East Ware development to provide safe cycle routes into town and require construction of a short section of new cycleway for which three feasible alternative routes have been identified (it should be noted that because Route CC1A is outside the Neighbourhood Area, the requirements of Policy W15 do not apply. Routes CC1 and CC2 also reach areas of North Ware outside the 15-minute walking range.

8.12 Likewise, Route CC6 gives routes into West Ware beyond the 15-minute walking range; the key item is upgrading of Poles Lane. Route CC7 is a shorter and safer route from Presdales School to South Hertford (Kingsmead), with the section outside the Neighbourhood Area in Kingsmead parish appearing in the Kingsmead Neighbourhood Plan - its plan policies relevant to that section of the route will therefore apply.



*Figure 8.5: Important cycling corridors through Ware (noting that where routes extend outside the NP area these are not directly controlled by Policy W15 and are purely indicative)*

The River Lea corridor for walking and cycling

- 8.13 There is a continuous towpath running along the entire length of the south side of the river, from Hertford through Ware to Stanstead Abbots and down the Lee Valley. There are no actual blockages on this path, but some key improvements are desirable. The north bank of the river is broken up into separate roads and footpaths. Some specific improvements can be made and more circular routes would be possible.
- 8.14 There are bridges across the river at Park Road / Wengeo Lane / GSK, Ware Lock, Burgage Lane, Town Bridge and Tumbling Bay / Crane Mead. All are public rights of way except the last, but only the Town Bridge carries motorised vehicular traffic.
- 8.15 Potential improvements could include:
- **Improved surfacing of the towpath:** The existing surface of the south side towpath is often poor, and several sections are too narrow for cyclists and pedestrians to pass safely. Drainage is also poor and there is often standing water and mud, even after a light shower. The central section through Ware is tarmacked but narrow and has been distorted by tree roots. The sections outside Ware are stone-based surfaces and cyclists have complained that these are too rough, particularly between Ware Lock and the entrance to the New River west of the town. Sustrans cycle route 61 runs along the

towpath for a considerable distance and potentially provides a good Hertford-Ware-Stanstead Abbots route.

Where cyclists and pedestrians share the towpath, there should be segregation between them wherever possible, and a smooth all-weather surface. Much of the towpath outside central Ware is wide enough to allow separate cycle and foot sections, or could be widened.

- Better mode segregation in the central Ware section:** The towpath between the Town Bridge and Burgage Lane is too narrow for cyclists and pedestrians to share comfortably, but it is the most heavily used section by pedestrians both as a key route (between the town centre and the west of Ware and the railway station) and as a leisure and tourist route (to view the riverside gazebos which are Ware’s most unique and distinctive feature). The section east of Town Bridge is also narrow. The Sustrans cycle route 61 avoids these sections, going via Broadmeads and Ware Station, and by means of an underpass also avoids a level crossing of the busy A1170. Therefore, the Burgage Lane - Town Bridge section of the towpath should be made pedestrian only, with cyclists allowed only if dismounted and giving way to pedestrians.
- New cycle route from Burgage Lane bridge to Broadmeads:** If the towpath section above is banned to cyclists, a convenient alternative cycling route is needed from the town centre to Ware station. To achieve this, a link is needed around the west side of Sacred Heart school by upgrading and surfacing a current unofficial footpath (marked in purple on Figure 8.6). The route would be permissive (like Sustrans 61 in this location) and the landowner’s permission would need to be sought. Surfacing improvements may be required, alongside the formalisation of the access via the unofficial footpath. The route and associated works should be developed in collaboration with the Canal and Rivers Trust.

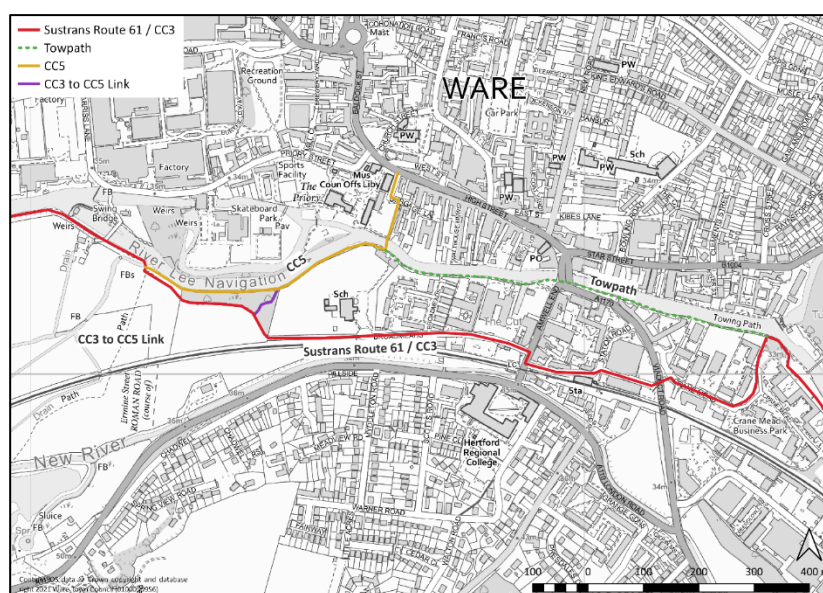


Figure 8.6: Potential new connection between CC3 and CC5



- **Better signposting:** Both the pedestrian and cycle routes are inadequately signposted at present. Where Sustrans 61 leaves the river, this is not clearly indicated and many cyclists unwittingly carry on along the narrow towpath. The very useful underpass crossing the A1170 is not signposted, so clear signage is needed at the Station Road / Stewards Way junction and in Crane Mead.
- **Lighting:** The towpath is currently unlit. Discreet ground-level lighting, subject to Policy EQ3 (Light Pollution) of the District Plan, could encourage its safe use by cyclists and pedestrians. The section from Town Bridge to Burgage Lane, and possibly on to Ware Lock with the associated cycleway, are priorities.

It should be noted, however, that the Canal and Rivers Trust advise that waterside lighting affects how the waterway corridor is perceived, particularly when viewed from the water, the towpath and neighbouring land, for example waterside lighting can lead to unnecessary glare and light pollution if it is not carefully designed. Lighting can also adversely impact on bats and other nocturnal species who utilise our waterways as dark corridors for foraging and migration. Notwithstanding the ecological concerns, the Trust is not usually able to provide lighting on towpaths, as there is no power supply, and it is unable to take on extensive maintenance liability.

Therefore any proposals for lighting schemes, if provided by a lighting authority, would need to avoid impact on biodiversity and on the amenity of boaters. Personal safety is not automatically conferred by lighting; however, reflectors or very low-level lighting could reduce the risk of riding off the path into water. The Trust should be consulted on all proposals.

### Public transport

8.16 Ware's public transport links are largely concentrated at the south end of the town, with the railway station and east-west services along the A119 London Road. These are a significant walking distance from the majority of residential areas. There are direct bus links to Hertford from the town centre at a reasonable frequency. For the rest of the town and for inter-urban journeys, services are infrequent, slow and often unreliable. For example, the route to Stevenage runs every two hours, takes over an hour and travels via all the intervening villages, whereas the direct road route along the A602 is 10 miles and takes 20 minutes by car, also giving door-to-door transport. Hence the vast majority of travel to and from Ware is by car except along the Hertford-Ware-Broxbourne-London corridor. Section 12 (Non Policy Actions) includes recommendations to enhance local bus services.

**POLICY W15: KEY WALKING AND CYCLING ROUTES**

- A. Development which provides new transport infrastructure or improves existing transport infrastructure should be designed to maximise use by pedestrians, those with mobility impairments and cyclists.**
- B. Specific proposals to improve pedestrian and cycle access will be supported. In particular, such proposals should focus on improving access between residential areas of Ware, including new development at North and East Ware, and important local facilities, including schools, the railway station and public transport nodes, community facilities, important employment areas and the town centre.**
- C. Improvements to the walking and cycling opportunities along the River Lea corridor - surfacing, shared paths, route extension, signposting and lighting - as described in Paragraph 8.15, will be supported where this can be achieved without unacceptable impact to biodiversity and water quality, in accordance with Policy W12 (Green and blue infrastructure and delivering biodiversity net gain).**
- D. As appropriate to their scale, nature and location, new developments should seek to ensure safe access to link up with existing footways and cycle routes, wherever practicable.**
- E. Proposals to enhance the cycle routes identified on Figure 8.5 and the Policies Map will be supported. Development that is immediately adjacent to these cycle routes should:
  - i. ensure the retention and where possible the enhancement of the cycle route; and**
  - ii. be designed so it does not have a detrimental impact on the cycle route and ensure the safety and flow of pedestrians and cyclists.****
- F. The provision of dedicated bicycle parking facilities, preferably covered and secure, will be supported.**
- G. The Recreational Heritage Trail route (Figure 8.4) should be protected from development that would impede access to pedestrians.**

Conformity Reference: NP objective: 5, 6; EHDP (2018): WARE2, TRA1; NPPF: 100, 104, 105, 106

## Policy W16: Mitigating vehicular impacts at junctions

### Purpose

8.17 This policy seeks to ensure that development proposals fully assess both their potential impact and their cumulative impact on the key junctions in Ware that already experience congestion problems and actively seek ways to mitigate this.

### Justification

8.18 The strategic allocation north and east of Ware is required to deliver a link road connecting the site with the A10 junction with the A1170 under Policy WARE2 of the District Plan. This requirement forms part of the submitted planning application. In addition, the East Herts Infrastructure Delivery Plan identifies the need for contributions towards improvements at the Rush Green roundabout, specifically, an additional lane on the northern slip road approaching the roundabout. The final scope of these improvements will be determined by the Highways Authority and, where justified to mitigate the impact of identified development in the District, proportionate contributions may be sought from such developments by the Highways Authority.

8.19 It is considered that while these mitigation measures may help to accommodate the proposed growth, they will have limited impact on existing problems associated with congestion in Ware. The town has several road junctions and routes that experience regular congestion, particularly at peak periods. This not only delays journeys but increases emissions and associated air pollution. A particular issue is the large volumes of traffic, including heavy goods vehicles, that travel through the town centre. The following areas were identified through the neighbourhood plan process as being problematic and are shown in Figure 8.7:

### 8.20 Junctions:

- Star Street roundabout and High Street / New Road junctions - these are located very close to each other and handle much of the traffic coming into the town from the south and east;
- Baldock Street roundabout - this is heavily used, and congestion can be daunting for cyclists, some of whom have requested a marked cycle lane;
- A10 / A1170 Ware North junction - the slip roads are too short, causing concern to users. It is considered that the junction needs improvement given that it will be the junction for the spine road for the N&E Ware development with the associated construction traffic and large vehicles for Travelling Showpeople; and
- Widbury Hill / Hollycross Road - the entry point from the south and east of the town.

### 8.21 Secondary school pickup areas:

- Chauncy School, Park Road; and
- Presdales School, Hoe Lane.

8.22 Congested roads (the identification of congested roads has been collated by the Steering Group based on visual evidence, local knowledge and feedback from the community events):

- Ware High Street;
- Star Street;
- New Road and southern part of Musley Hill;
- Park Road and Fanshawe Crescent at school opening / closing times;
- Hoe Lane at school opening / closing times;
- High Oak Road;
- Homefield Road;
- Bowling Road;
- King Edward Road;
- Vicarage Road; and
- Collett Road.

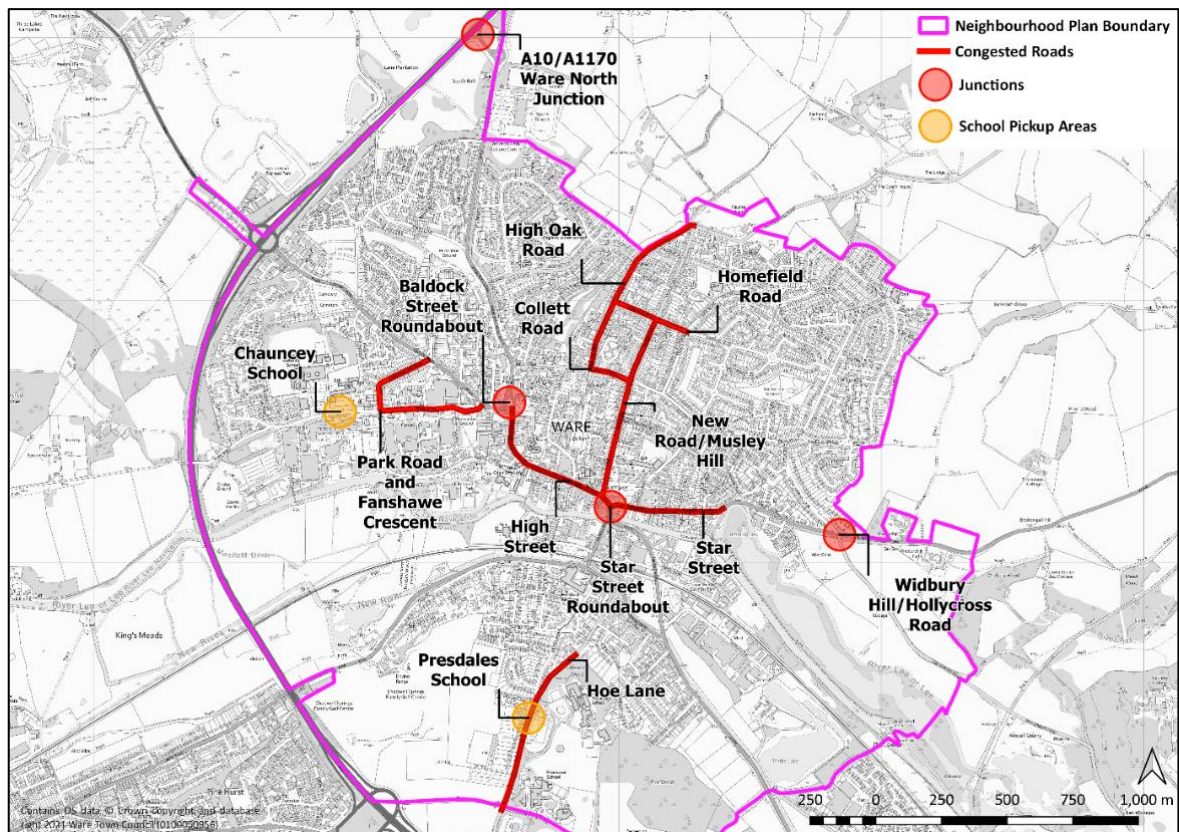


Figure 8.7: Areas of the road network which are considered to be under stress

8.23 Where necessary development proposals should be accompanied by Transport Assessments (for larger sites) or Transport Statements (for smaller sites) ('larger' and smaller' site size defined in the NPPF) and address to the satisfaction of the highway authority the direct and cumulative transport impact on road junctions. The policy adds local detail to Policy TRA2 (Safe and Suitable Highway Access Arrangements and Mitigation) of the East Herts District Plan.

**POLICY W16: MITIGATING VEHICULAR IMPACTS AT JUNCTIONS AND PINCHPOINTS**

**A. Development proposals should ensure that they have no unacceptable direct or cumulative impact on the following junctions:**

- i. Star Street roundabout and High Street / New Road junctions**
- ii. Baldock Street roundabout**
- iii. A10 / A1170 Ware North junction**
- iv. Widbury Hill / Hollycross Road**

**B. Proposals to enhance the identified Key Movement Routes, as shown on Figures 8.3 and 8.5, will be supported. Major development proposals should not have an unacceptable impact on the safety and accessibility of Key Movement Routes. As appropriate to their scale, nature and location, development proposals should provide a strategy to mitigate the impact of additional traffic movements on the pinch points as shown on Figure 8.7, and on the safety and flow of pedestrian and cycle access on the identified Key Movement Routes.**

Conformity Reference: NP objective: 6; EHDP (2018): TRA1, TRA2; NPPF: 104, 110, 111, 113

## **Policy W17: Maximising the potential for children to walk safely to school**

### **Purpose**

- 8.24 This policy seeks to ensure that new development in the immediate vicinity of a school protects and, where possible, enhances the safety of pedestrians.

### **Justification**

- 8.25 One of the key groups whose mobility is commonly compromised by road safety is children. The most well-used routes that approach the schools in Ware area heavily trafficked. If more children are to walk or cycle to school then improvements need to be made, starting with areas closest to the schools. Figure 8.6 shows the areas that have been identified as problematic, notably around Chauncy School (Park Road and Fanshawe Crescent) and Presdales (Hoe Lane, which is extremely narrow).

### **POLICY W17: MAXIMISING SAFETY OF ROUTES TO SCHOOL**

**Proposals for major development on the 'school pick-up/drop-off streets' identified on Figure 8.7 and the Policies Map should demonstrate how pedestrian safety will be maximised and the impacts of queuing cars minimised.**

Conformity Reference: NP objective: 6; EHDP (2018): TRA2; NPPF: 104, 110, 111

## Policy W18: Electric vehicle charging

### Purpose

- 8.26 This policy seeks to ensure that adequate provision is made for electric vehicle charging, which will assist in effecting a shift toward less polluting vehicles.

### Justification

- 8.27 East Herts District Plan Policy TRA3 (Vehicle Parking Provision) requires residential development to make provision for charging points for low and zero carbon vehicles. However, it is important that this is supplemented by charging points at suitable publicly accessible locations around Ware. This will benefit not only residents but also those visiting the town for leisure and work.
- 8.28 Currently there is only one location in Ware (Asda) that offers publicly accessible charging points (<https://www.zap-map.com/live/>).
- 8.29 Locations within the town centre, at the car parks, key visitor attractions and community facilities are considered good locations for charging points as people can charge their vehicles whilst they are in town. In particular Baldock Street, The Priory grounds, Library Car Park and Tesco Car Park were mentioned as part of the engagement. Provision should be consistent with HCC's emerging Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure Strategy.

### **POLICY W18: PUBLICLY AVAILABLE ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGING**

**Proposals to provide publicly available vehicle charging points in Ware will be strongly supported.**

**Such charging facilities should provide parking spaces with future-proofed four hour or faster electric vehicle charging points (or wireless charging facilities) that are reliable and provide open access.**

Conformity Reference: NP objective: 6; EHDP (2018): TRA3; NPPF: 112

- 8.30 The WNP does not address matters such as parking because these are already addressed by the East Herts District Plan. In particular this requires new development to provide certain levels of off-street car-parking. It is particularly important, if Ware's streets are to be safe for pedestrians and cyclists, that these parking standards are adhered to by new development.

## 9 COMMUNITY FACILITIES

### **Policy W19: Improving provision of community facilities, including accessible toilet facilities, and promoting shared, flexible spaces**

#### **Purpose**

- 9.1 This policy supports the upgrading and expansion of community facilities, in particular where this enables the provision of flexible, shared community spaces. It sets out three criteria with which any such proposals should comply. Furthermore, the policy supports the provision of accessible toilet facilities, which are currently unavailable in central Ware.

#### **Justification**

- 9.2 The town is fairly well served for community, recreational and sporting facilities. It is also fortunate in having over 150 local groups and societies offering a range of activities and facilities to residents of all ages and varied interests. Whilst some of these have dedicated venues, many rely on identifying spaces that are shared with others. The shared use of spaces can be helpful in that it enables different user groups to access facilities at different times of the day, depending on the demands of the groups hiring. This optimises the use of space. Appendix B contains details of the venues currently available across the town; whilst there are many, there are groups still seeking suitable space, for instance the Guides and the boxing club. The latter is currently renting the hall at Leaside but like all clubs / organisations renting they must put all the equipment away and reassemble it. There is a need for more facilities where equipment can be left out and therefore used more often.
- 9.3 The Priory Play Area, situated in seven-acre grounds within Ware Town centre, provides play equipment for children and an opportunity for relaxation and leisure as part of the visitor experience. It has recently updated with the support of community group fundraising. Equally, there are examples of other existing facilities that need upgrading.



*Priory Play Area*

- 9.4 Wodson Park is a marvellous sports and community facility and the Southern Malting redevelopment is looking to provide an equivalent venue for the arts. Policy W19 would be supportive of proposals to enable this. Other projects will be able to add to the community facilities in the town. The new library has already secured planning



permission. This includes the provision of accessible toilets, which are unavailable in central Ware. The new library will also be capable of delivering a wider range of community events, activities, and performance spaces as well as traditional library services. In addition, the provision of an arts venue as part of the Southern Maltings redevelopment are potential projects.

- 9.5 Finally, a recurrent problem in the town centre is the lack of available and hospitable toilets for all visitors, with a particular need identified amongst elderly people, disabled people, carers and parents with children. Currently several businesses are signed up to the Community Toilet Scheme, whereby facilities are available for use for free. This includes Tesco, Café Frappe and toilets at The Priory, however the remainder are within public houses, which some users may find less inviting than facilities in public areas. The scheme is also being phased out. Therefore, the provision public toilet facilities, preferably to include a Changing Places (see Appendix C for definition) facility, could address this.

**POLICY W19: IMPROVING PROVISION OF COMMUNITY FACILITIES, INCLUDING ACCESSIBLE TOILET FACILITIES, AND PROMOTING SHARED, FLEXIBLE SPACES**

- A. Proposals that enable the upgrade, diversification, shared and flexible use of community facilities through extension and upgrading of such buildings and sites will be supported subject to the following criteria:**
- i. the proposal must provide safe, easy, and inclusive access for all people regardless of disability, age or gender. This should include access to, into and within the building and its facilities, as well as appropriate car parking and access to public transport provision.**
  - ii. the proposal would not have unacceptable harmful impacts on the amenities of surrounding residents and the local environment; and**
  - iii. the proposal would not have unacceptable impacts upon the local road network; and**
  - iv. the proposal would respect the historic importance and integrity of the building as appropriate.**
- B. Proposals which deliver publicly accessible toilet facilities within the town centre, where possible including a Changing Places facility, as appropriate to their scale, nature and location, will be strongly supported.**

Conformity Reference: NP objective: 4; EHDP (2018): CFLR1, CFLR7; NPPF: 92, 93

## Policy W20: Allotments and community growing spaces

### Purpose

- 9.6 This policy seeks to safeguard existing allotment space and, where possible, encourage new space to be provided.

### Justification

- 9.7 Many people wish to grow their own food, which has many benefits, including providing exercise, social contact, reducing food miles and helping to mitigate climate change.
- 9.8 Within the last 20 years the allotment area between Trinity Road, Musley Lane, Musley Hill and Fanhams Road was lost when the Sandeman Gardens development was created. A bit further back, what is now Popis Gardens was also an allotment area. A repeat of this style of development will not be supported.



*King George Road allotments (also known as Crosspath Field)*

- 9.9 The two remaining allotments in Ware are managed by Ware Town Council. They have been in their current position for many decades and consequently, the soils are rich in minerals and generations of local people have bonded socially. Their loss would be felt and therefore they should be safeguarded against loss to alternative uses. Equally, proposals to move them elsewhere would also not be supported, recognising the long-term soil improvement that would be needed to match the current investment in the existing environment. As such, both allotments are designated as Local Green Spaces, in the context of their social and wildlife value.
- 9.10 The Cowfields / Fireworks Field allotment site is an important local resource but lies outside the Ware town boundary and therefore just outside the official area of the Neighbourhood Plan. It has, however, been stated in the [Approved Masterplanning Framework for the North and East Ware development](#) that it should be retained as green space.
- 9.11 The five-year waiting list (currently closed due to high demand, at July 2021) for an allotment site demonstrates the demand for additional plots. In a densely developed area such as Ware, however, identifying land for new traditional allotments can be difficult.
- 9.12 An alternative solution is community growing spaces which can be designed into new developments, meaning they are close to residents' homes and involve collective growing

by residents that helps to ensure that what is grown is of the right quantity for those residents. They can also help to provide screening from noise and fumes in built up areas, as well as contributing to the street scene.



*Examples of community growing spaces*

**POLICY W20: ALLOTMENTS AND COMMUNITY GROWING SPACES**

- A. Proposals that would result in the loss of all or part of the following existing allotment spaces will not be supported:**
- i. Widbury Hill allotments (also known as Warehouse Field)**
  - ii. King George Road allotments (also known as Crosspath Field)**
- B. The provision of new community growing spaces of a size appropriate to residential developments and which would have an attractive screening function will be supported where appropriate service access is provided.**

Conformity Reference: NP objective: 2, 4; EHDP (2018): CLFR1, CC1; NPPF: 92, 93

## 10 IMPLEMENTATION AND PLAN REVIEW

10.1. Ware Town Council is the official qualifying body responsible for the Neighbourhood Plan.

10.2. Once the Plan has been 'made', there will be a series of actions that need to be undertaken to ensure that the policies within the WNP are being interpreted and used in the way intended. It will also be necessary to maintain a watching brief on changes to the planning policy landscape, both at the national and local planning authority levels, which may have an impact on the Plan's policies. Finally, any non-planning-related projects and activities that were identified will need to be prioritised for delivery, in partnership with other organisations.

10.3. Specific actions to be undertaken are as follows:

- Pursuing the projects and activities that are not policy-based, but nevertheless contribute to the delivery of the Plan - these are set out in Section 12, divided into priorities towards which developer contributions may be directed and broader, community projects, which have been collated throughout the process, but which sit beyond planning policy. A range of organisations may be involved in delivering these projects and there will be a need for a coordinated approach. Many will require funding and therefore it would be helpful to consult with the community to understand the potential costs and achievability of each. Funding may be sourced from developer contributions or tailored funds, such as the Big Lottery Fund.
- Commenting on planning applications or consultations relating to the neighbourhood plan area - the Town Council has a role in ensuring that the WNP policies are being adequately considered, where relevant, in decisions to determine the outcome of planning applications in the neighbourhood area. A meeting between local councillors, planning committee members and the supporting planning officers at EHDC would be a useful step in ensuring that the purpose and application of the policies is fully understood by all parties. This will assist in ensuring that policies are interpreted and applied in the way intended.
- Monitoring the application of the Neighbourhood Plan policies to ensure they have been applied consistently and interpreted correctly in response to planning applications - there is scope to identify indicators to measure the effect that each policy is having and the extent to which this is delivering against the associated objective. As a minimum, the Town Council would wish to maintain a log of planning applications relating to the neighbourhood area, detailing which Neighbourhood Plan policies have informed the Town Council response and the outcome of the decision. This will assist in understanding whether the policies have been used in the manner intended or whether changes may be required, for instance in any future review of the Neighbourhood Plan.
- Maintaining a dialogue with East Herts District Council regarding the timing and content of any future District Plan - it will be important to consider the policies in any

emerging document and how these may impact the WNP policies. The adoption of a new District Plan may trigger a light-touch review of the WNP.

- Maintaining a dialogue with East Herts District Council and the promoter / developers of the North and East Ware development.
- Maintaining a watching brief on the national policy landscape - changes at the national level may impact on the policies contained in the Local Plan and also the Neighbourhood Plan. It is therefore important to keep abreast of this, as this could also provide a trigger to undertake a light-touch review of the Neighbourhood Plan.
- Maintaining a dialogue with neighbouring authorities on cross-boundary projects.
- Maintaining a dialogue with the local community on the plan implementation - ensuring that all records of how the plan has been used should be made public. It is also recommended that a regular update - for instance at the Annual Town Meeting - is provided, to feed back to the community on progress about both the effectiveness of the policies and the pursuing of the projects.
- Considering gaps in the Neighbourhood Plan - local issues, concerns or opportunities may arise during the lifespan of the Plan that trigger the need for the inclusion of a new policy. Such issues can be most effectively understood by maintaining open dialogue with the community and other partners.

10.4. Whilst it is not a legislative requirement to review a Neighbourhood Plan, it is good practice to do so periodically. This may be because of any of the points noted above. A light-touch review will enable the Town Council to keep the Neighbourhood Plan up to date in general terms, and to ensure that it remains in general conformity with the wider development plan. In this context, it could consider a review of the neighbourhood plan within six months of the adoption of the new Local Plan. Any review should be undertaken in partnership with and ensuring the engagement of the wider community.

10.5. The Town Council will consider how best to progress these actions.

## 11 INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS AND PROVISION

11.1 The Town Council is keen to influence the way in which developer contributions are spent in the neighbourhood area to the full extent of their powers under national legislation and planning guidance.

11.2 There are different types of contributions arising from section 106 agreements, section 278 agreements and the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL):

- A section 106 agreement is a mechanism under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 whereby contributions can be sought from developers towards the costs of providing community and social infrastructure, the need for which has arisen as a result of new development taking place.
- A section 278 agreement refers to a section of the Highways Act 1980 that allows developers to enter into a legal agreement with the local authority to make alterations or improvements to a public highway as part of a planning application.
- The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), if adopted by EHDC, would be a non-negotiable charge on development based on a fixed rate per square metre of net additional development on a site, and levied by the District Council. Different charge rates would apply for different types of uses and in different areas. The levy is intended to fund the provision, improvement, replacement or maintenance of infrastructure required to support development in an area as set out in its local plan. With a 'made' (adopted) Neighbourhood Plan, the local community would benefit from an uplift in the level of CIL received, from 15% (capped at £100 per existing property) to an uncapped 25% of CIL receipts from the neighbourhood area.

11.3 Table 11.1 provides details of the projects identified during the WNP process, which are supported by the Town Council alongside its wider programme of activities and towards which any developer contributions should be made. The Town Council intends to regularly review its spending priorities. Any proposed changes to spending principles or priorities will be published for comment by the community and other interested parties. Once finalised, any updated list will be published on the Town Council website and in relevant literature.

## 11.4

Table 11.1: Projects identified during the WNP process

Project ID	NP Chapter	Topic Area	Scale	Project
1.1	Character, Heritage and Design	Interpretation boards	Medium	Improved signage, including places of interest
1.2	Character, Heritage and Design	Street furniture	Medium	Reducing street clutter
1.3	Character, Heritage and Design	'Gateways' into the town	Medium	Enhance the visual impact of entry points into the town and conservation area
2.1	Economic development and Town centre	Unightly waste bins	Medium	Provision of bin storage
2.2	Economic development and Town centre	Access to banking facilities	High	Shared space community hub to house vital community services such as community banking facilities, CAB, Food Bank etc.
3.1	Transport and Movement	Improved access	High	Resurfacing of the towpath
3.2	Transport and Movement	Improved access	High	Repairs to the footbridge at Tumbling Bay
3.3	Transport and Movement	Improved access	High	Improvements to existing cycleways
3.4	Transport and Movement	Improved access	High	Development of through cycle route from North Ware to town centre (CC1), including off-road section along Upper Bourne and construction of new link path through to The Bourne / Collett Road
3.5	Transport and Movement	Improved access	High	Improvement to Poles Lane (CC6) to create marked cycle and pedestrian paths
3.6	Transport and Movement	Improved access	High	New cycle route (CC5) from Burgage Lane bridge along upgraded towpath and new path to join CC3 west of Broadmeads
3.7	Transport and Movement	Improved access	High	New cycle route across Tumbling Bay (CC4) with improved path and bridging facilities at north-western end (Tumbling Bay Weir to Star Street) and ramps on Crane Mead bridge
3.8	Transport and Movement	Improved access	High	New cycle path (CC7) from Presdales School to Rush Green roundabout and safer crossing points at the roundabout

Project ID	NP Chapter	Topic Area	Scale	Project
3.9	Transport and Movement	Improved access	High	Improved signposting on cycle routes throughout Ware, including on-road cycle routes such as CC2.
3.10	Transport and Movement	Improved access	High	Electric car charging points in the town centre car parks
3.11	Transport and Movement	Improved access	High	Electric vehicle charging points for flats and shared car parks
3.12	Transport and Movement	Improved access	High	Improved lighting
4.1	Community Facilities	Improved provision	High	Portacabin with electricity and water facilities in King George playing field
4.2	Community Facilities	Improved provision	High	Repairs to the roof at Wodson Park
4.3	Community Facilities	Improved provision	High	Workshop type facility for 'Men in Sheds' project
4.4	Community Facilities	Improved provision	High	Provision of an arts venue as part of the Southern Malting redevelopment
5.1	Green Infrastructure	Enhancement	Medium	Plant a community orchard
5.2	Green Infrastructure	Enhancement	High	Improvements to Gilpins Field



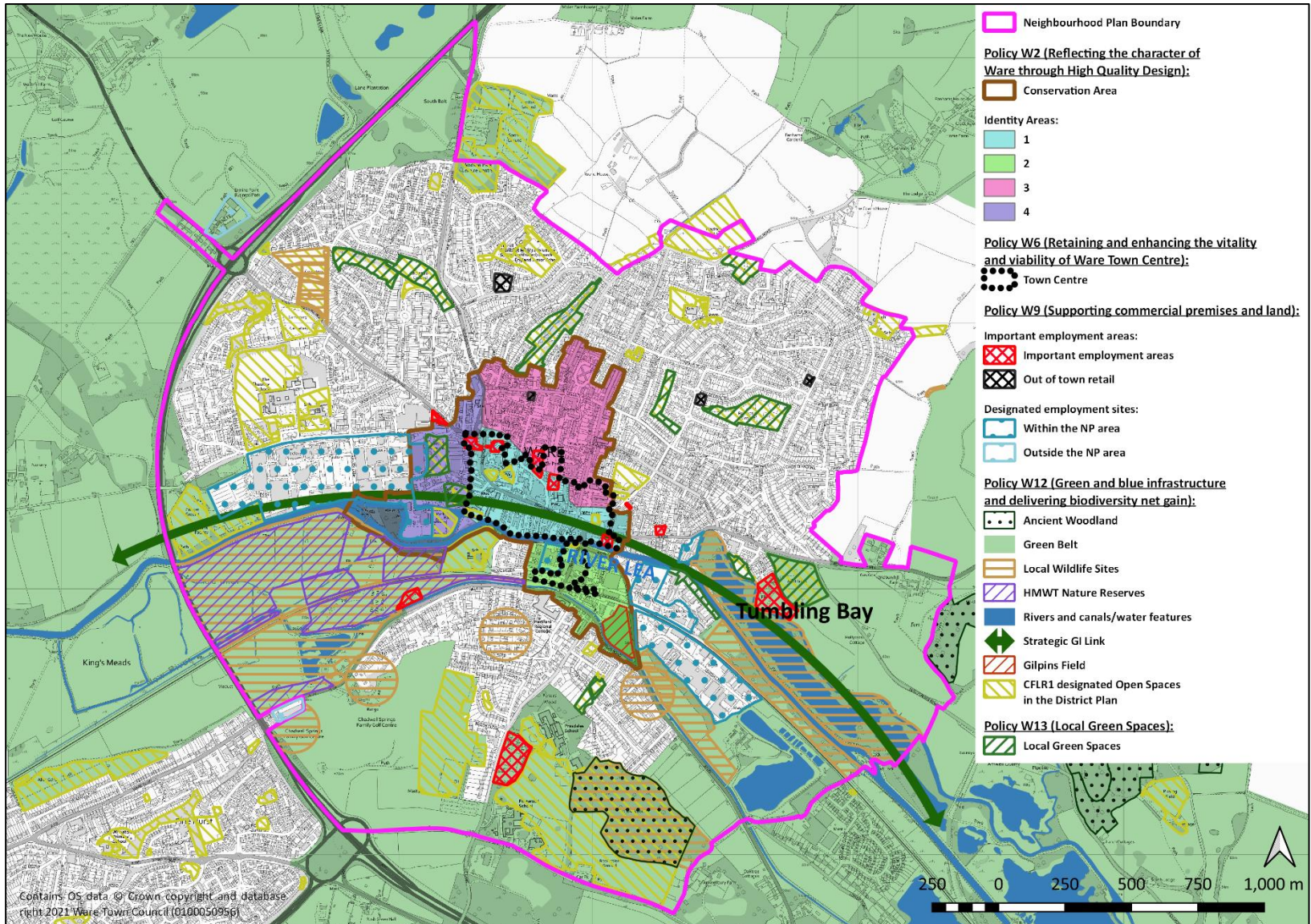
## 12 NON POLICY ACTIONS

Ref.	Issue	Possible Actions	Key partners involved
1.	Understanding Ware's local housing needs	Consider undertaking semi-regular assessment of local housing needs to inform future housing policy.	WTC, EHDC
2.	Shopfront signage should adhere to guidelines	Monitor the use of signage to identify where guidelines are not being followed and to follow this up with EHDC and the owners	WTC, EHDC, The Ware Society, private owners
3.	Celebrating local history and heritage	Install additional interpretation boards at locations in the town, including: along the High Street's north pavement, near to the surviving maltings, and by the Baldock roundabout (concerning the removal of Ware Hall House to Wells-next-the-Sea)	WTC, The Ware Society
4.	Supporting a 21 <sup>st</sup> century town centre	Prepare a town centre strategy to set out projects that will improve the vitality and viability of the centre. As part of this, provide a baseline of performance data against which the relative success of projects can be measured.	WTC, local businesses
5.	Supporting the local economy	Undertake a regular review of the town centre economic performance, for instance through a Town centre health check	WTC, local businesses
6.	Seek solutions to unsightly bins in public areas	Explore daily night-time collections to reduce amount of litter. Consider introducing waste containers that blend into the surroundings.	WTC, HCC, businesses
7.	Understanding the visitor economy	Review the contribution of tourism to the local economy.	WTC, Visit Herts, local businesses
8.	Biodiversity enhancements	Consider locations and projects for improvements, including tree planting, encouraging greater access (where this can be achieved sustainably).	Wildlife Trust, landowners
9.	Improve the A10 / A1170 Ware North junction	Lengthening the current short slip roads; the need is further increased by the construction and residential traffic for the Ware North and East development.	HCC, National Highways, EHDC, North and East Ware developers/promoters
10.	Speeding traffic	Confirm the current 20mph speed limit along the High Street and extend it to selected other roads in the town, particularly main walking / cycling routes.	WTC, EHDC, HCC

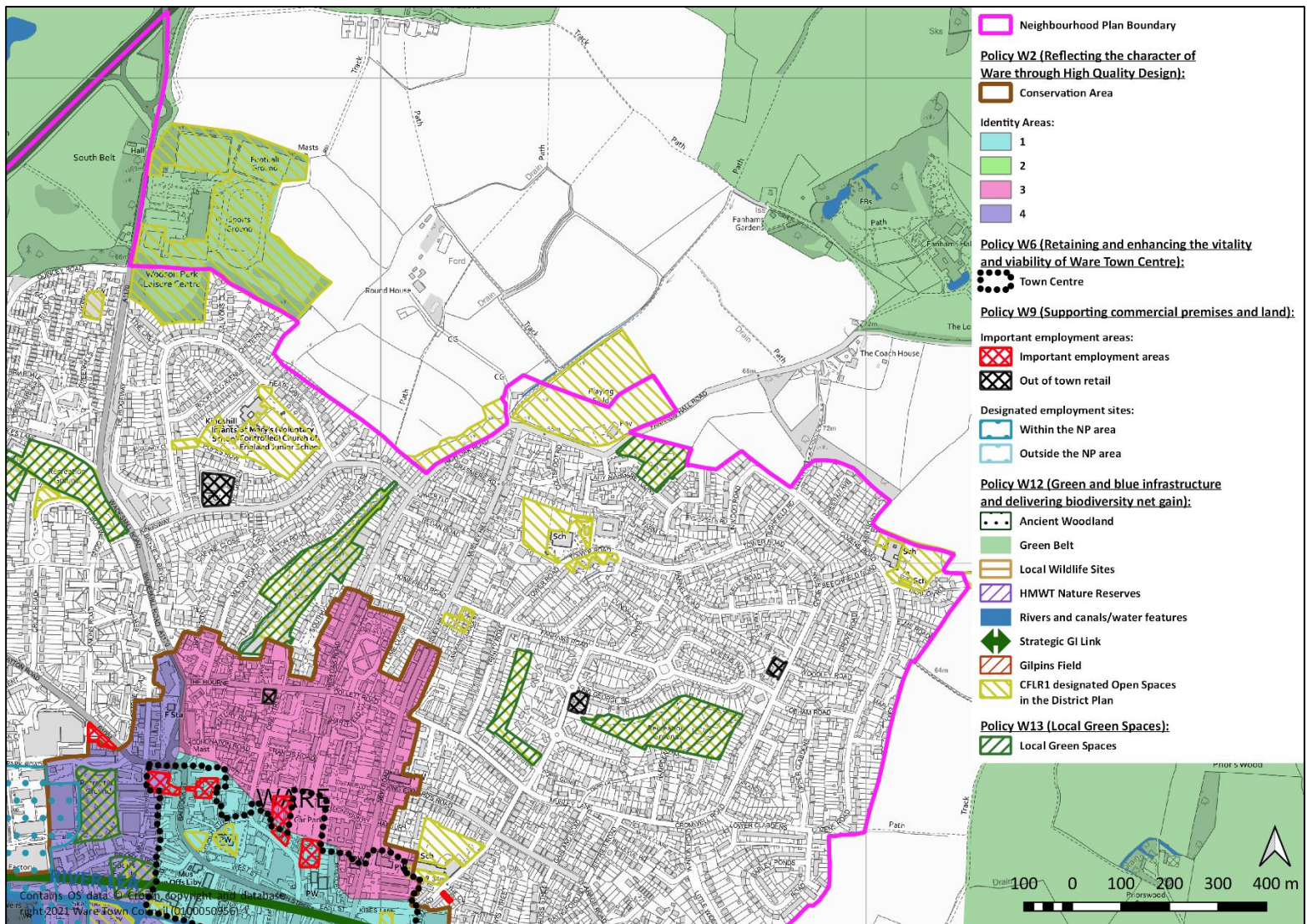
11.	Improving the High Street for all users	Investigate ways to make the High Street a 'shared space' and more pedestrian-friendly (noting however that the one-way systems introduced during the pandemic were disruptive and diverted traffic on to residential roads).	WTC, HCC, EHDC, local businesses
12.	Improvements to the towpath	Consider surfacing improvements and bank reinforcement.	WTC, CRT
13.	HGVs along the High Street and other residential areas of the town	Ban HGVs from the High Street between the Baldock Street roundabout and the Star Street roundabout, except for access.  Ban lorries from loading and unloading in the High Street during peak work and school travel hours.  Downgrade the A1170 through Ware to a 'B' road to discourage drivers and satnavs from using it as a through route, particularly for HGVs.	HCC
14.	Easing traffic flow	Consider whether improvements are needed to the A414 / A1170 / B1502 roundabout south of Ware (e.g. traffic lights) to cover current and future traffic flows.	HCC
15.	Community Rail	Support and encourage the Community Rail Partnership initiative for the New River Line (Broxbourne-Rye House, St Margarets, Ware-Hertford East)	WTC, Rail companies, HCC
16.	Roll out of the Hertfordshire and Essex Rapid Transit	Engage with the long-term plans for a HERT (Hertfordshire and Essex Rapid Transit) mass transit system, ensuring that this includes routes that serve the whole of the town, rather than simply running along the A119 at the southern boundary as with most present bus services.	WTC, HCC
17.	Improvements to bus services	Improve the speed, frequency and reliability of bus services particularly on inter-urban routes such as to Stevenage and	HCC, private operators, LYNX trial operators

		<p>Harlow, as current service levels from the majority of the town do not present a practicable alternative to the private car.</p> <p>Evaluate whether the HertsLynx journey-on-demand system currently under trial in North Hertfordshire could provide a convenient and cost-effective public transport alternative, within Ware as well as outlying villages.</p> <p>Consider whether rapid commuter buses from Buntingford, Puckeridge / Standon and North Ware to Broxbourne railway station would provide an attractive alternative that discourages people from parking in Ware residential streets and travelling from Ware.</p>	
18.	Walking and cycling infrastructure plan	Explore, with partners, the potential to develop a Local Walking and Cycling Infrastructure Plan for the town.	WTC, EHDC, HCC, Sustrans

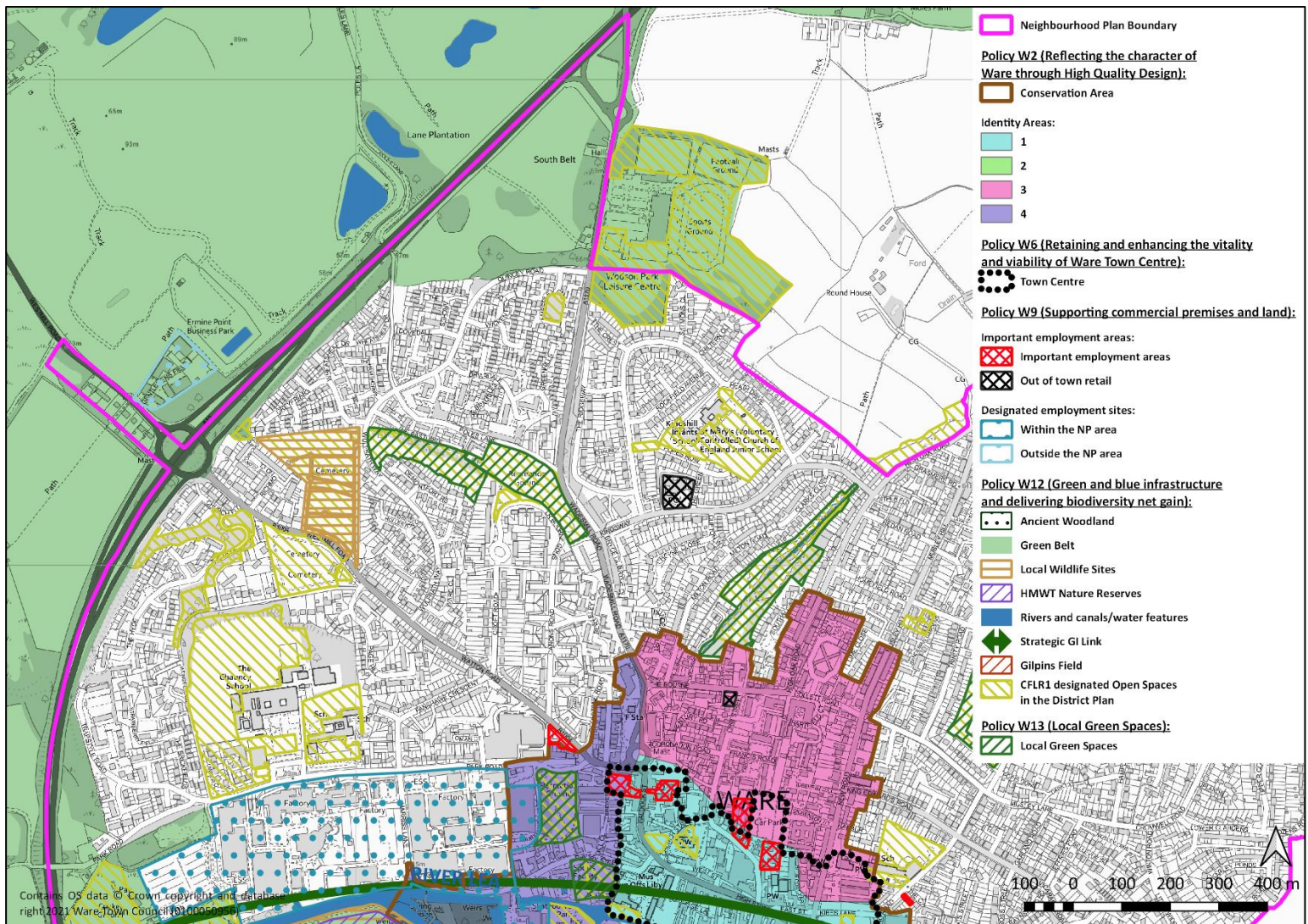
**13 POLICIES MAPS**



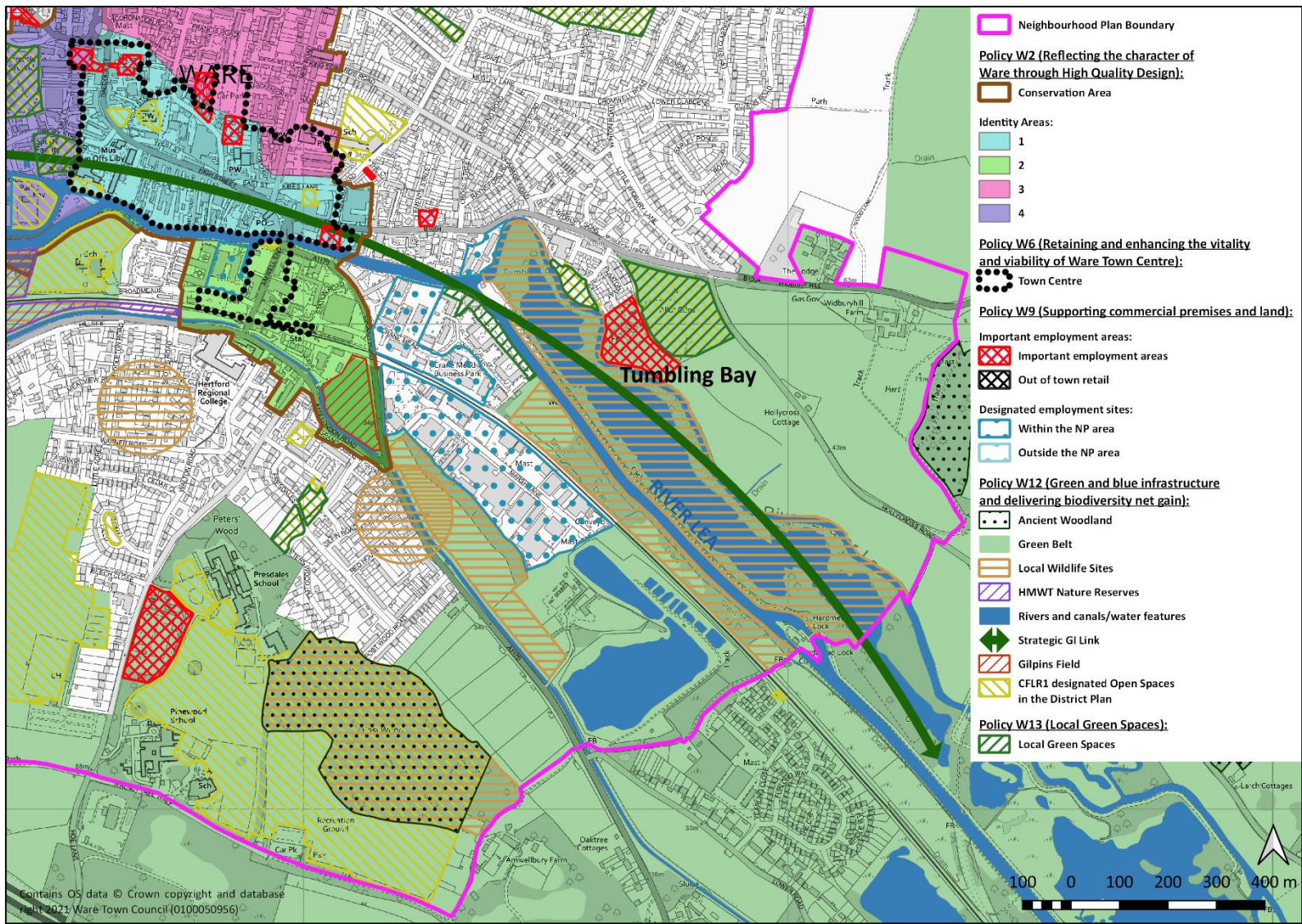
- Neighbourhood Plan Boundary
- Policy W2 (Reflecting the character of Ware through High Quality Design):**
- Conservation Area
- Identity Areas:**
- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- Policy W6 (Retaining and enhancing the vitality and viability of Ware Town Centre):**
- Town Centre
- Policy W9 (Supporting commercial premises and land):**
- Important employment areas:**
- Important employment areas
- Out of town retail
- Designated employment sites:**
- Within the NP area
- Outside the NP area
- Policy W12 (Green and blue infrastructure and delivering biodiversity net gain):**
- Ancient Woodland
- Green Belt
- Local Wildlife Sites
- HMWT Nature Reserves
- Rivers and canals/water features
- Strategic GI Link
- Gilpins Field
- CFLR1 designated Open Spaces in the District Plan
- Policy W13 (Local Green Spaces):**
- Local Green Spaces



Policies Map (North-East part of the neighbourhood area)

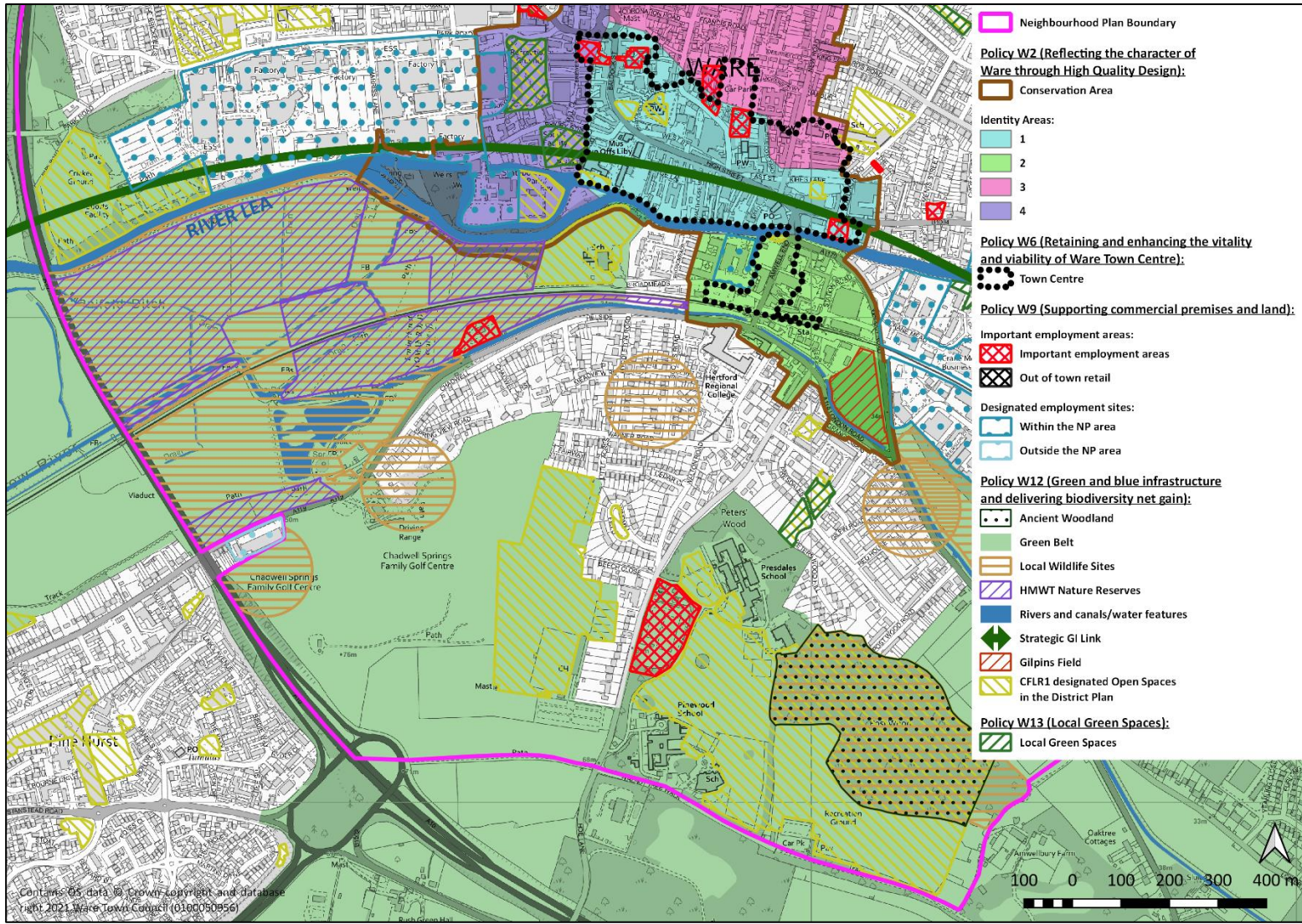


Policies Map (North-West part of the neighbourhood area)



Policies Map (South-East part of the neighbourhood area)





Policies Map (South-West part of the neighbourhood area)

## 14 GLOSSARY

- **Affordable housing:** Social rented, affordable rented and intermediate housing, provided to eligible households whose needs are not met by the market
- **Ancient or veteran tree / tree of arboricultural value:** A tree which, because of its age, size and condition, is of exceptional biodiversity, cultural or heritage value. All ancient trees are veteran trees. Not all veteran trees are old enough to be ancient but are old relative to other trees of the same species. Very few trees of any species reach the ancient life-stage.
- **Archaeological interest:** There will be archaeological interest in a heritage asset if it holds, or potentially holds, evidence of past human activity worthy of expert investigation at some point.
- **Change of Use:** A change in the way that land or buildings are used (see Use Classes Order). Planning permission is usually necessary to change a 'use class'.
- **Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL):** a fixed, non-negotiable contribution that must be made by new development. It is chargeable on each net additional square metre of development built and would be set, once adopted, by EHDC.
- **Conservation area:** an area of notable environmental or historical interest or importance which is protected by law against undesirable changes.
- **Designated heritage asset:** A World Heritage Site, Scheduled Monument, Listed Building, Protected Wreck Site, Registered Park and Garden, Registered Battlefield or Conservation Area designated under the relevant legislation
- **Disability:** There is no single definition for 'disability'. Under the Equality Act 2010, a person is defined as disabled if they have a physical or mental impairment that has a 'substantial' and 'long-term' negative effect on their ability to do normal daily activities.
- **District Plan:** The adopted District Plan 20182 sets out the planning framework for the District for the period of 2011-2033 and will deliver sustainable development. The plan will aim to provide new homes, new jobs, new facilities and infrastructure across the District. It also contains Development Management policies that will be used to determine planning applications.
- **Green infrastructure:** A network of multi-functional green space, urban and rural, which is capable of delivering a wide range of environmental and quality of life benefits for local communities.
- **Heritage asset:** A building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest. It includes designated heritage assets and assets identified by the local planning authority (including local listing).
- **Hertfordshire County Council:** The county-wide authority has responsibility for strategic matters including waste and minerals planning, public rights of way / roads, education, and libraries.
- **Local housing need:** The number of homes identified as being needed through the application of the standard method set out in national planning guidance.
- **Local Plan:** Local Plans set out a vision and a framework for the future development of the area, addressing needs and opportunities in relation to housing, the economy, community facilities and infrastructure - as well as a basis for safeguarding the environment, adapting to climate change and securing good design for the area they cover. They are a critical tool in guiding

---

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.eastherts.gov.uk/planning-building/planning-policy/east-herts-district-plan-2018>

decisions about individual development proposals, as Local Plans (together with any Neighbourhood Development Plans that have been made) are the starting-point for considering whether applications can be approved. It is important for all areas to put an up to date Local Plan in place to positively guide development decisions.

- **Major Development:** For housing, development where 10 or more homes will be provided, or the site has an area of 0.5 hectares or more. For non-residential development it means additional floorspace of 1,000m<sup>2</sup> or more, or a site of 1 hectare or more, or as otherwise provided in the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015.
- **National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF):** the national planning policy document which sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied.
- **Nature Recovery Network:** An expanding, increasingly connected, network of wildlife-rich habitats supporting species recovery, alongside wider benefits such as carbon capture, water quality improvements, natural flood risk management and recreation. It includes the existing network of protected sites and other wildlife rich habitats as well as and landscape or catchment scale recovery areas where there is coordinated action for species and habitats.
- **Non-strategic policies:** Policies contained in a neighbourhood plan, or those policies in a local plan that are not strategic policies.
- **Older people:** People over or approaching retirement age, including the active, newly-retired through to the very frail elderly; and whose housing needs can encompass accessible, adaptable general needs housing through to the full range of retirement and specialised housing for those with support or care needs.
- **Permitted development:** Permitted development rights are an automatic grant of planning permission which allow certain building works and changes of use to be carried out without having to make a planning application. Most houses have permitted development rights, but flats and maisonettes do not, so planning permission is required. A further example is the conversion of many offices, for instance to flats, without the need for planning permission.
- **Pop-up shop:** A pop-up shop is a short-term, temporary retail space where brands—usually ones without a physical presence—can interact in person with current customers and communicate their message to potential new ones. It can also accommodate seasonal businesses.
- **Previously developed land / brownfield land:** Land which is or was occupied by a permanent structure, including the curtilage of the developed land (although it should not be assumed that the whole of the curtilage should be developed) and any associated fixed surface infrastructure.
- **Retail Frontage:** A street frontage containing retail shops and services. Primary Retail Frontage is found in the town / village centre and includes a high proportion of retail uses. Secondary Retail Frontage contains a greater diversity of uses and may also be found outside of the town centre.
- **Section 106 agreement:** A mechanism under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 whereby contributions can be sought from developers towards the costs of providing community and social infrastructure, the need for which has arisen as a result of new development taking place.
- **Settlement Boundaries:** These identify the areas of primarily built form, rather than countryside.
- **Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD):** Supplementary Planning Documents may cover a range of issues, both topic and site specific, which may expand policy or provide further detail to

policies contained in a Development Plan Document, where they can help applicants make successful applications or aid infrastructure delivery.

- **Use Classes Order:** The Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (As amended in 1995, 2005, 2013 and 2020) puts uses of land and buildings into various categories. Planning permission is not needed for changes of use within the same use class.

## 15 LIST OF EVIDENCE DOCUMENTS

All links are correct at 10 January 2022. Evidence documents are also available on the Ware Neighbourhood Plan website: <https://www.wareneighbourhoodplan.com/>

Document/ Evidence	Author	Year
<a href="#">AddressPollution.org</a>	Imperial College London	2021
A History of Place House Ware	Hertfordshire Building Preservation Trust	2008
A New History of Ware its people and its buildings	David Perman	2010
A Walk Through Ware	The Ware Society	2008
<a href="#">Affinity Water warns of water shortages unless government acts now</a>	Affinity Water	2019
<a href="#">Ancient tree guide 4: What are ancient, veteran and other trees of special interest?</a>	Woodland Trust	2008
At the Sign of the Plough	Geoffrey Tweedale	1990
Audit of Ware Signage	Ware Society	2021
<a href="#">Available commercial properties in Ware</a>	Ware Town Council	2021
<a href="#">Biodiversity metric</a>	Defra	2021
<a href="#">Britain's Visitor Economy stats</a>	VisitBritain	2013
<a href="#">Census</a>	Office for National Statistics	2011
<a href="#">Climate Change Act 2008</a>	HM Government	2008
<a href="#">Cycling Routes in Ware</a>	WNP Steering Group	2021
<a href="#">East Herts District Plan 2018</a>	EHDC	2018
<a href="#">East Herts Green Infrastructure Plan - Final Report</a>	Land Use Consultants	2011
<a href="#">East Herts Retail and Town centres Study Update</a>	Nathaniel Lichfield & Partners Ltd	2013
<a href="#">East Herts Retail Frontages: Design &amp; Signage SPD</a>	EHDC	2019
Economic Impact of Tourism - Ware 2004	East of England Tourist Board	2004
<a href="#">Environment Act 2021</a>	HM Government	2021
Franciscan Architecture in England. (pp. 137-142)	A.R. Martin	1937
<a href="#">The Future of Town and Cities post Covid-19</a>	KPMG	2021
<a href="#">Heritage at Risk Register</a>	Historic England	ongoing
<a href="#">Hertfordshire County Council's Electric Charging Strategy</a>	HCC	2022
<a href="#">Herts Insight</a>	HCC	ongoing
<a href="#">Historic Environment Record</a>	Historic England in partnership with <a href="#">ALGAO</a> and <a href="#">IHBC</a>	ongoing
<a href="#">Housing our Ageing Population Panel for Innovation (HAPPI)</a>	Housing LIN	2012
<a href="#">Housing Standards Review</a>	HM Government	2012 (and amended)
<a href="#">How covid-19 'killed' the high street bank</a>	Rural Services Network	2021

<b>Document/ Evidence</b>	<b>Author</b>	<b>Year</b>
<a href="#">Land North and East of Ware. A sustainable urban extension. Masterplanning Framework Document</a>	EHDC	2019
<a href="#">Localism Act 2011</a>	HM Government	2011
The Malshouses of Ware	David Perman	2017
<a href="#">Minerals Local Plan</a>	HCC	2007
<a href="#">More than half of older people 'would consider living in bungalows', Inside Housing</a>	Gavriel Hollander	2018
<a href="#">National Heritage List for England (NHLE)</a>	Historic England	ongoing
<a href="#">National Planning Policy Framework (amended July 2021)</a>	HM Government	Amended 2021
<a href="#">Neighbourhood Development Planning Regulations 2012 (as amended)</a>	HM Government	2012
<a href="#">Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004</a>	HM Government	2004
<a href="#">Tourist businesses worth billions may close because they are excluded from tourism and leisure rate relief scheme</a>	Coach Tourism Association	2020
<a href="#">Town and Country Planning Act 1990</a>	HM Government	1990
<a href="#">Urban Air Quality</a>	Woodland Trust	2012
<a href="#">Use Classes</a>	Planning Portal	2021
<a href="#">Vehicle Parking Provision at New Development</a>	EHDC	2008
Ware and Hertford. The Story of Two Towns From Birth to Middle Age	Robert Kiln, & Clive Partridge	1995
<a href="#">Ware Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan</a>	EHDC	2016
<a href="#">Waste Local Plan</a>	Hertfordshire County Council	adopted November 2012/ July 2014
<a href="#">Zap Map</a> , showing publicly available electric vehicle charging points	Zap-Map	2022

## APPENDIX A LOCAL GREEN SPACES

Details of how the 11 spaces designated as Local Green Space meet the criteria is provided below.

### 1. Lady Margaret Gardens (playground area and open space)

This green space is located to the north-east of Ware, bounded by Fanhams Hall Road, Lady Margaret Gardens, Brocket Meadows and the hedgerows on to open fields that may become part of Ware N&E development. It contains a small coppice, open grass, newly planted trees and junior & senior playgrounds.

LGS1 - Lady Margaret Gardens



The space is owned and managed by Hertfordshire County Council. Management-wise, some of the area is badly drained. The north-west exit needs a short stretch of pavement by the Fanhams Hall Road.

There are no site allocations or planning permissions pending on the site.

#### National Planning Policy Framework: Local Green Space criteria

##### Close to the community

The space is located adjacent to housing and will also be located near to the Ware N&E development, providing a green space for those future residents.

##### Demonstrably special to the local community

**Recreation:** This area provides an informal recreational space for dog-walkers, children, and young people. It houses a children's playground as well as playing field space.

**Wildlife:** It also represents a green buffer / wildlife corridor between the existing housing development and future Ware N&E development.

##### Local in Character / not extensive tract of land

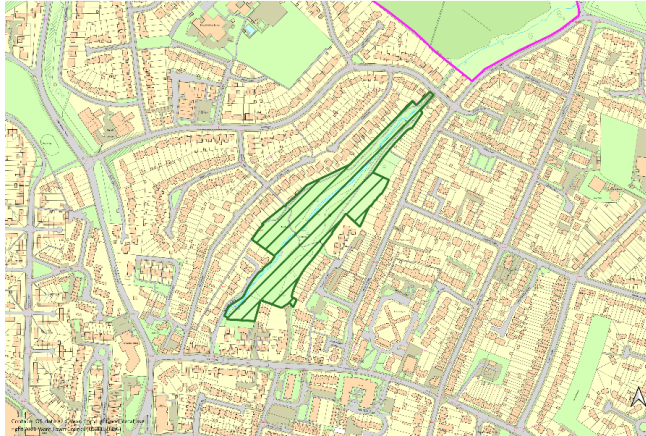
The space is not considered to be an extensive tract of land.

---

## 2. The Bourne

The Bourne is a linear park following the path of the Bourne (stream) from Kingsway to Orchard Close. The boundary is Kingsway, High Oak Road, Southall Close, Bourne Close, Orchard Close, Milton Road, Clarks Close.

LGS2 - The Bourne



It is owned and managed by East Herts District Council.

The Bourne could provide a good off-road route for cyclists, however, none of the entrances are good for cycles or very accessible. Several possible routes to enhance this would run through private grounds or private roads. The paths have been enhanced recently but can still be muddy in winter.

There are no site allocations or planning permissions pending on the site.

### National Planning Policy Framework: Local Green Space criteria

#### Close to the community

The space is surrounded by housing and as such is very accessible and well-used. There are entrances at Kingsway, steps at Southall Close, Clifton Way and a narrow footpath off Milton Road.



**Demonstrably special to the local community**

**Recreation:** There is a children’s playground, a jungle gym, and an informal football pitch - popular with children and teenagers. The park is used extensively for walking (including dog-walking), and other informal recreation.

**Wildlife:** The whole area is an important wildlife sanctuary in the middle of town, which is otherwise urban in nature. There are numerous mature trees on site.

**Local in Character / not extensive tract of land**

The space is not considered to be an extensive tract of land.

---

**3. King George V Playing Fields (King George Fields)**

This is a recreation ground located in the heart of Ware. It is one of the largest public open green spaces within the Town and lies between King George Road, Queens Road, Cromwell Road and Hampden Hill. There is a large field for informal recreation as well as playgrounds and equipment including swings, a balance beam, trampoline and stepping boulders.

The field is listed as a Field in Trust, for its historic significance as a ‘King George Field’, a public open space dedicated to the memory of King George V.

LG53 - King George Fields



The site is owned and managed by East Hert District Council. Management-wise, the N, W and S entrances have large kissing gates which are not ideal for cyclists or accessibility. The NE entrance is unpaved, narrow and can be muddy.

There are no site allocations or planning permissions pending on the site.

**National Planning Policy Framework: Local Green Space criteria**

**Close to the community**

It sits very close to the King George housing estate, surrounded by housing and as such is very accessible and well-used. There are four entrances: N, NE, S and W.

**Demonstrably special to the local community**

**Recreation:** As well as the wide-open recreational space, the site contains two playgrounds and exercise equipment.

**Historic:** This is a King George V field.

**Local in Character / not extensive tract of land**

The space (2.27 ha) is not considered to be an extensive tract of land.

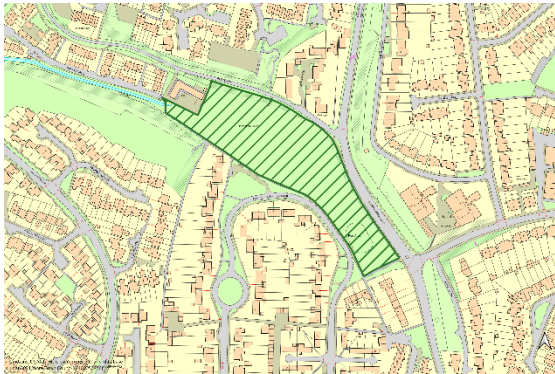
---

#### 4. Lower Bourne Gardens

Lower Bourne Gardens park sits between the A1170, Lower Bourne Gardens, Poles Lane and the end of The Pastures. The Pastures park (designated as LGS5) is connected from the Lower Bourne Gardens via a stairway and runs through to Wulfrath Way. The northern edge is also bounded by The Pastures and a footpath and the Bourne.

Lower Bourne Gardens park has a children's playground, cycle path from Kingsway, informal football field and scout huts. The hedge at the northern edge is an important nature highway along Poles Lane. It sits close to the Bourne Gardens and Ridgeway Estates.

LGS4 - Lower Bourne Gardens



The site is owned and managed by East Hert District Council.

There are no site allocations or planning permissions pending on the site.

#### National Planning Policy Framework: Local Green Space criteria

##### Close to the community

The space is surrounded by housing and as such is very accessible and well-used.

##### Demonstrably special to the local community

**Recreation:** The park is used extensively for dog-walking, recreation including outdoor gyms and fitness and the children's playground. It is used by organised groups, for instance the scouts, for recreational activities.

**Wildlife:** The hedge at the northern edge is an important nature highway along Poles Lane. It sits close to the Bourne Gardens and Ridgeway Estates.

##### Local in Character / not extensive tract of land

The space is not considered to be an extensive tract of land.

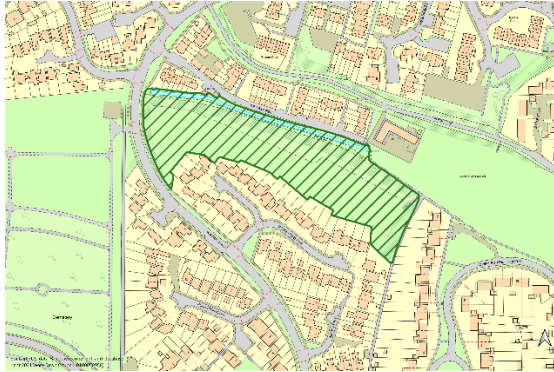
---

#### 5. The Pastures

The Pastures park is an open grassed area with an important nature highway along its northern edge. There are no specific 'built' facilities, but it is widely used for general informal recreation,

such as ball-games, walking and picnics.

LGSS - The Pastures



The site is owned and managed by East Hert District Council. The footpath along The Bourne can get overgrown and needs yearly maintenance. The surface is rough and muddy. The steep banked corner of the open space at Quincey Rd could be enhanced with some steps.

There are no site allocations or planning permissions pending on the site.

#### **National Planning Policy Framework: Local Green Space criteria**

##### **Close to the community**

The space is surrounded by housing and as such is very accessible and well-used.

##### **Demonstrably special to the local community**

**Recreation:** The space is well-used by the local community for a variety of informal recreation activities.

**Wildlife:** The Pastures park is an open grassed area with an important nature highway along its northern edge.

##### **Local in Character / not extensive tract of land**

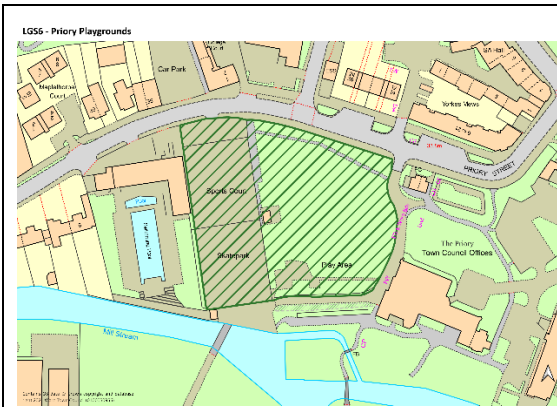
The space is not considered to be an extensive tract of land.

---

#### **6. Priory Playgrounds**

Priory Playground park is located centrally between The Priory and the Lido.

It houses a children's playground, a skateboard area, courts, and outdoor gym equipment. Being in the centre of town and close to Asda and a play-centre, they get extensive recreational use.



The site is owned and managed by Ware Town Council.

There are no site allocations or planning permissions pending on the site.

### National Planning Policy Framework: Local Green Space criteria

#### Close to the community

The space is located in the centre of Ware, close to housing and local facilities. As such it is very accessible and well-used.

#### Demonstrably special to the local community

**Recreation:** The entire site is very well-used by a range of age groups for both informal recreation and using the facilities on offer.

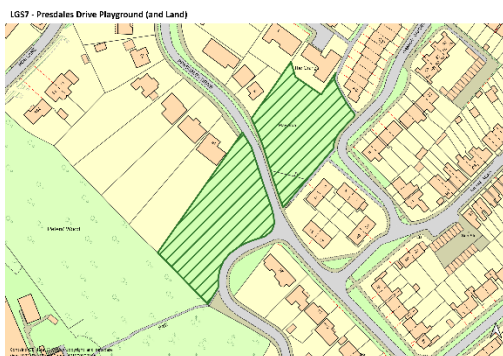
#### Local in Character / not extensive tract of land

The space is not considered to be an extensive tract of land.

---

## 7. Presdales Drive Playground (and Land)

This is the only children's playground in the southern part of Ware. It lies between Grange Gardens and Presdales Drive. It sits in the middle of the Gilpin Estate. The space consists of two parts: the first is 'Presdales Drive Playground', which is north of Presdales Drive and bounded by Grange Gardens, while the second part lies south of Presdales Drive, bounded by Peters Wood Hill.



The site is owned and managed by East Hertfordshire District Council.

There are no site allocations or planning permissions pending on the site.

**National Planning Policy Framework: Local Green Space criteria**

**Close to the community**

The space is located within the Gilpin Estate and is well-used by the community here.

**Demonstrably special to the local community**

**Recreation:** The playground is popular among local children.

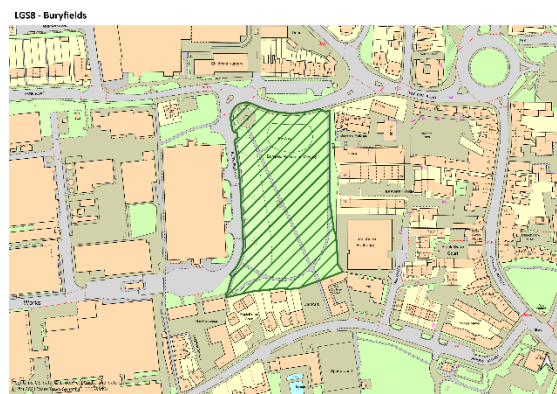
**Local in Character / not extensive tract of land**

The space is not considered to be an extensive tract of land.

---

**8. Buryfields**

Buryfields Green is located next to the Glaxo works and between Park Road and Priory Street. It is an area of open space laid to grass with trees and planting. There is an outdoor playground here for children.



The site is owned and managed by East Herts District Council.

There are no site allocations or planning permissions pending on the site.

**National Planning Policy Framework: Local Green Space criteria**

**Close to the community**

The space is located in the centre of town and well-used by a cross-section of the community.

**Demonstrably special to the local community**

**Recreation:** The playground is popular among local children. The open space surrounding it provides an important resource for a variety of informal recreational activity.

**Local in Character / not extensive tract of land**

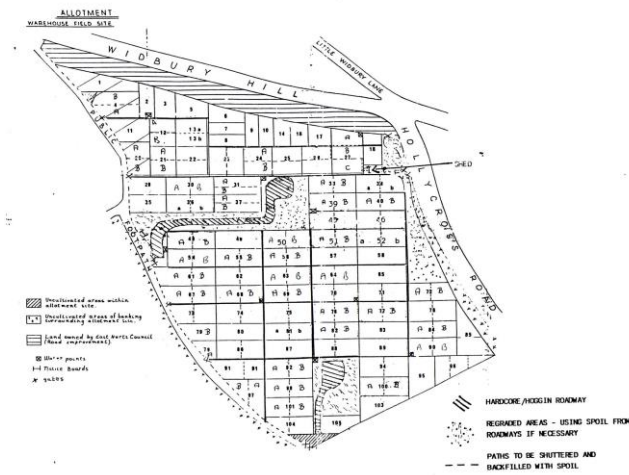
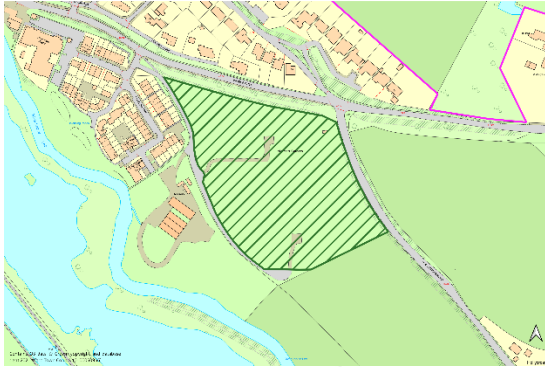
The space is not considered to be an extensive tract of land.

---

## 9. Widbury Hill Allotments (also known as Warehouse Field)

The allotments have been in this location for many decades and are extremely well-used, to the extent that there is a five year waiting list for sites.

LG59 - Widbury Hill Allotments



The site is owned and managed by Ware Town Council.

There are no site allocations or planning permissions pending on the site.

### National Planning Policy Framework: Local Green Space criteria

#### Close to the community

There are two main entry points to the allotments, which are located within an otherwise urban area. A car parking area is located to the north-east of the site, at the Widbury Hill / Hollycross Road junction. There is an unpaved lane to the south-west from Widbury Hill and Plaxton Way.

#### Demonstrably special to the local community

**Recreation:** The allotment has been in this location for many decades and is a well-used area for local people wishing to grow their own food. As such, it has social and health (including mental health) benefits.

**Wildlife:** Its rich soils have been developed over this time and the range of planting also attracts a variety of wildlife. This is considered important as an oasis within the built-up town.

#### Local in Character / not extensive tract of land

The space is not considered to be an extensive tract of land.

---

## 10. Plaxton Way

The area between Plaxton Way and the Old River Lea is a community space provided as part of the planning permission requirements for the Plaxton Way development. It includes a path to a new footbridge provided via Sec 106. The footbridge is an important link to the Tumbling Way nature area.

There are two Sustainable Urban Drainage areas with shallow depressions to provide some water management and flood relief.



The site is owned by Taylor Wimpey. The area could be enhanced with some park furniture. The path is accessible and wheelchair friendly on the lake side but the link to the road and pavements is a little awkward.

There are no site allocations or planning permissions pending on the site.

### National Planning Policy Framework: Local Green Space criteria

#### Close to the community

The space was provided when the neighbouring housing was built. As well as this housing estate, the space is also located next to the Riverside Place care home.

#### Demonstrably special to the local community

**Recreation:** The space is used for informal recreation by local residents. It was provided for this very purpose when the housing was built and therefore it is considered that it should remain an open space.

#### Local in Character / not extensive tract of land

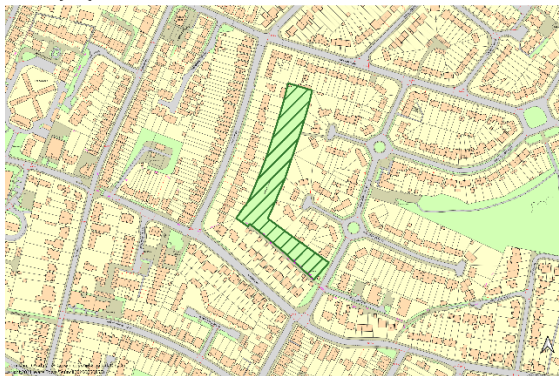
The space is not considered to be an extensive tract of land.

---

## 11. King George Road Allotments (also known as Crosspath Field)

The allotments have been in this location for many decades and are extremely well-used, to the extent that there is a five year waiting list for sites.

LGS11 - King George Road Allotments



The site is owned and managed by Ware Town Council.

There are no site allocations or planning permissions pending on the site.

### National Planning Policy Framework: Local Green Space criteria

#### Close to the community

The site is surrounded by housing in a built-up part of the town. This area has two points of access: a driveway off King George Road opposite Popis gardens; and a gate at the end of the north-west cul-de-sac off King George Road.

#### Demonstrably special to the local community

**Recreation:** The allotment has been in this location for many decades and is a well-used area for local people wishing to grow their own food. As such, it has social and health (including mental health) benefits.

**Wildlife:** Its rich soils have been developed over this time and the range of planting also attracts a variety of wildlife. This is considered important as an oasis within the built-up town.

#### Local in Character / not extensive tract of land

The space is not considered to be an extensive tract of land.

---

### 12. Land between Crane Mead houses and River Lee Navigation

This is an area of grassland, trees and gardens between the north-eastern frontages of housing in Crane Mead and the Lee Navigation, including the open green space between Loxley Court and the river. A footpath runs along the west side of the latter space. A further footpath runs between the towpath and the Crane Mead houses. The overall space is bounded on the north-eastern side by the river towpath and on the south-western side by the line of the frontages of the houses and flats. The west end is the boundary between Loxley Court car park and the Mill Studio Business Centre, and the east end is the boundary between Crane Mead and the riverside meadow to the south, the latter being designated green belt land.

Most of this area is privately owned and used by the inhabitants of the houses; however, it is not fenced and makes a vital contribution to the open vista along the Lea Valley between the Town



Bridge and Hardmead Lock. The housing in Crane Mead and Loxley Court has been carefully set back from the river in a continuous line to create and maintain this vista.

The green space also blends with the gardens of the housing in Crane Mead and the open area east of Loxley Court.



The site is in multiple ownership.

A planning application was submitted to East Herts District Council (3/22/0181/FUL) to build a three-storey block of flats on the land east of Loxley Court, which would impinge on this space, inhibit the views and break up the continuous line of the building frontages. The application was withdrawn in April 2022.

### National Planning Policy Framework: Local Green Space criteria

#### Close to the community

The space borders directly on housing to the south-west and the Lee Navigation towpath to the north-east, which is extensively used by pedestrians and also carries Sustrans Route 61. The footpath from Crane Mead / Loxley Court to the river also crosses it.

#### Demonstrably special to the local community

**Beauty:** The green space with grassland, low hedging and small trees and shrubs is essential to maintain the uninterrupted view along the Lea Valley and the character of the river corridor. Any development or building in this area would seriously damage these aspects, especially if it was of significant height.

**Recreation:** The gardens are used by residents of the houses and flats in Crane Mead and Loxley Court and the paths are also used by other residents of the town.

**Local in Character / not extensive tract of land**

The space is closely delineated, with a length of about 300 metres and a width varying from 10 to 30 metres.

**How the spaces were determined:**

In order to determine the spaces to designate as Local Green Space, an initial list of green spaces was taken from the EHDC District Plan Open Spaces (2018) policy map. There are approximately 50 of these open spaces within Ware.

The spaces were categorised into different types, in order to assess them further:

**Green Belt:** Green Belt defined in the 2018 District Plan is secure for the life of the plan. The following sites are within Green Belt:

1. Wodson Park complex (just beyond neighbourhood plan boundary)
2. Wood between A10, Greyfriars and Richmond Close
3. Glaxo Playing Fields
4. Sacred Heart Primary School spaces
5. Widbury Allotments
6. Football Field W of Beech Cl, SW of Little Acres, S of Fairway
7. Presdales School spaces
8. Post Wood
9. Post Wood playing fields
10. Gilpin Field, Viaduct Road Triangle
11. Post Wood Fields. Between Post Wood and A1170
12. New River Fields. Between A1170, New River and Marsh Lane.
13. Kings Meads East. Between Sacred Heart School, Ware Lock and railway footpath crossing
14. Kings Meads West. Between A10 Viaduct and railway footpath crossing.
15. Nun's Triangle, Old Hanbury Manor parkland opp Wodson.
16. Beyond Crane Mead between Lee Navigation and railway, opp Tumbling Bay
17. Tumbling Bay between Lee Navigation and Old River Lea
18. Fields between Old River Lea and Hollycross Rd, beyond allotments
19. Fields between Widbury Hill Farm and Hollycross Road
20. Trapstyle Woods, between Trapstyle Road and the A10

Whilst Widbury Allotments (5) are located within Green Belt, they are considered to be particularly valued for both their recreational and biodiversity value. Therefore, these have been designated as a local green space.

**Schools:** In the last 5 years, Chauncy has converted unused playing ground into a housing development. In the last 30 years, Trinity School was completely replaced with a care home and a housing development. It cannot therefore be assumed that school grounds are protected from

development or, if developed, that they would be retained as open space. That said, caution should also be taken when considering applying additional designations that could, for instance, restrict or hinder an extension or reconfiguration of the school.

Priors Wood school is scheduled for expansion as part of Ware N&E. New provision is to meet new planned development and not to absorb any of the existing schools.

1. St Marys Junior School
2. Priors Wood School. Due for expansion as part of Ware NE
3. Larkspur Primary Academy
4. Fives Court Nursery. The Sandeman development put this at risk. It survived and was refurbished, but if it doesn't look viable it could easily be lost again.
5. Chauncy School
6. St Catherine's School
7. Christ Church School

**Religious or Memorial:** These are not considered to require additional protection:

1. Ware Cemetery North
2. Ware Cemetery South
3. War Memorial Park
4. St Mary Churchyard
5. Quaker Graveyard (the burial ground), Kibes Lane
6. Christ Church Buildings

**Low Risk of Development:** These sites are mostly small patches of ground that are unsuitable for designation as Local Green Space. Some of them are already protected as they are part of Ware Town Council grounds:

1. Amberley Green, off Quincey Rd.
2. Area in front of the housing blocks Between 68 Tower Road and Tower Road
3. The Pastures fields (it is also covered by a CFLR1 designation in the District Plan and therefore has protection from inappropriate development)
4. Rough Ground below Church Field and The Hyde
5. Rough Ground between The Hyde and Wengeo lane
6. Priory Gardens
7. Priory Bowling green
8. Amwell End, River Lee corner
9. Windmill Field
10. Beacon Road Garden

**High Risk of Development:** These are considered to be at higher risk of loss as a result of development, due to recent development on very similar-sized areas. However they are unsuitable for LGS protection as they are not considered to meet the criteria for being demonstrably special:

1. Green Between Pope Row and Heath Drive
2. King George Rd Allotments (this space is covered by a CFLR1 designation in the District Plan and therefore has protection from inappropriate development)
3. Presdales Court Green

4. The two Greens by 3 Presdales Drive
5. Peters Wood Hill Green

**Unclassified:** The privately owned Ware Youth FC grounds is located partially in Ware Town and Wareside council areas. As such it is partially outside the Ware Neighbourhood Plan area and also the Ware N&E development area. Ware Youth grounds are owned by HCC (as previously detailed) and this land is also covered by a CFLR1 designation in the District Plan and therefore has protection from inappropriate development

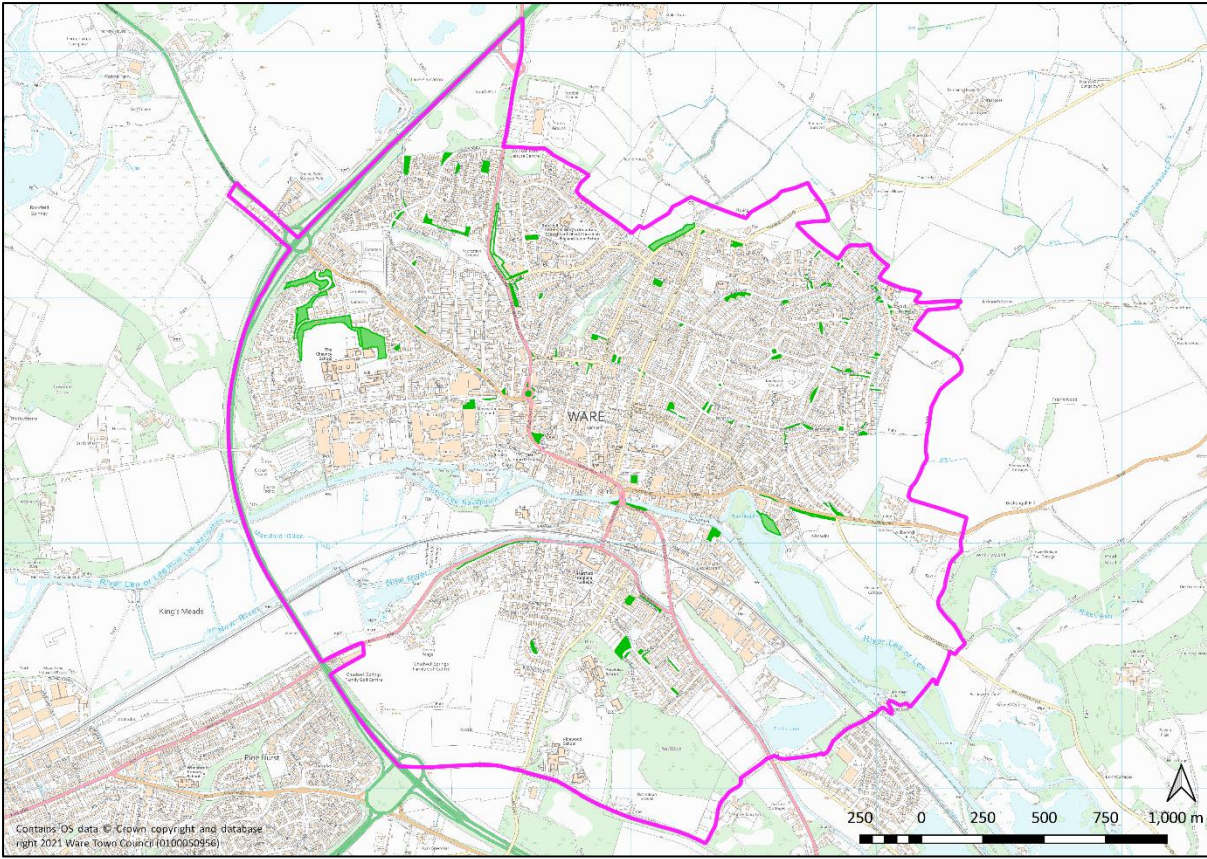
**Playgrounds & Community Spaces suitable for LGS:** The remaining areas are considered to be suitable for LGS protection as they meet the criteria as set out in the NPPF.

1. Lady Margaret Gardens (playground area and open space)
2. The Bourne
3. King George Fields
4. Lower Bourne Gardens
5. The Pastures
6. Priory Playgrounds
7. Presdales Drive Playground (and Land)
8. Buryfields
9. Widbury Hill Allotments
10. Plaxton Way
11. King George Road Allotments

#### Additional green space in the town

There are numerous small patches of green space around the town. An example is the corner of Upper and Lower Clabdens. These are too small for specific LGS protection. However any development or infill should be resisted. The local community should be encouraged to take responsibility for improving them, for instance as small gardens, wild flower meadow or community growing spaces.

The Baldock Street roundabout area is a fine example of this where the 'Ware In Bloom' group maintain garden displays in the middle of the roundabout and surroundings beds and verges.



## APPENDIX B VENUES OFFERING SHARED SPACE IN WARE

### Community Buildings

Many of the below are used on a regular basis by local Scout and Guiding groups and pre school organisations:

Venue	Type	Commentary
936 (Hertford and Ware) Air Training Corp Broadmeads	Uniformed organisation	
Riverside Hall Priory Street	Community Centre	Hall and rooms for hire.
Allenbury's Sports and Social Club Harris Lane	GSK Sports Centre	Halls and rooms for hire for various events.
Broadmeads Scout HQ 3 <sup>rd</sup> Ware	Uniformed Organisation	Used by Guiding as well. Hall may be hired for meetings / events / weddings etc.
Christ Church New Road	Community Centre	Church Hall may be hired for meetings /events
Church of the Sacred Heart of Jesus & St Joseph (RC) King Edward Road.	Community Centre	Church Hall may be hired for meetings /events
Great Amwell Scout HQ. London Road.	Uniformed Organisation	Used by Guiding as well. Hall may be hired for meetings / events / weddings etc.
Church of St Mary the Virgin Church Street	Community Centre	Church Hall may be hired for meetings / events.
Leaside Methodist & United Reformed Church & Community Centre East Street	Community Centre	Church Hall may be hired for meetings / events. Pre school uses premises.
Hale Rugby Club Hoe Lane	Community Centre	Rooms may be hired for meetings / events, weddings and sports such as squash
Place House East street	Community Centre	Rooms may be hired for meetings and events.
Poles Lane Scout HQ 2 <sup>nd</sup> Ware Scouts Poles Lane	Uniformed Organisation	Used by Guiding as well. Hall may be hired for meetings / events / weddings etc.
Royal British Legion	Community Centre	May be hired for meetings / events
Southern Maltings Community Centre Kibes Lane	Community Centre	Arts and crafts, Hire facilities for weddings and parties etc
Springs Christian Fellowship New Road	Community Centre	

The Priory	Town Council premises	Rooms may be hired for weddings / meetings / events
Ware Bowls Club	Community Centre	
Ware Christadelphians Church Street	Community Centre	
Ware Drill Hall Amwell End	Community Centre	Hire facilities for sport activities, dog training, weddings and parties
Ware Library	Community Centre	Small room for hire
Ware Museum High Street	Community Centre	Culture
Wodson Park Wadesmill Road	Sports Centre	Hire facilities for meetings, weddings and parties

### Public Houses

There are approximately 20 public Houses in Ware some of which rent out rooms for meetings or for bed and breakfast:

Jacoby's (Mexican) Tudor Sq	Upstairs room for meetings
The Angel Star Street	Room available for meetings / events
The Brewery Tap	Downstairs room for meetings
The Mixer Baldock Street	Upstairs rooms for meetings / events
The Old Bulls Head Baldock Street	Allows part of the ground floor to be used for meetings.
The Rifle Volunteer New Road	Bed and breakfast
The Saracen's Head Bridge Street	Basement room for meetings / events

### Schools

Chauncy School Park Road	Mixed Secondary School	Chauncy School is primarily an educational facility. It does, however, host many community uses outside of school hours.
Christ Church Primary School Bowling Road.	Primary School	Hall and rooms for hire.
Kings Hill Infant School Heath Drive	Infant School	
Larkspur Primary School Tower Road.	Primary School	Hall and rooms for hire.

Middleton School	Primary Special Needs School	
Monkey Puzzle Day Nursery Homefield Road	Pre school	
Pinewood School Hoe Lane	Special Needs School	
Presdales School	Secondary Girls School	Hall and rooms for hire.
Priors Wood School Cozens Road	Primary School	Hall and rooms for hire.
St Mary's C of E Primary School Heath Drive	Junior School	Hall and rooms for hire.
Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School Broadmeads	Primary School	Hall and rooms for hire.
St Catherine's, Park Road	Primary School	



## APPENDIX C            DEFINITIONS OF ACCESSIBLE TOILETS

Definitions taken from: <https://www.independentliving.co.uk>

Changing Places are designed so that they are completely accessible and provide sufficient space and equipment for people who are not able to use the toilet independently. They must be an extra facility, in addition to the accessible toilets for independent use.

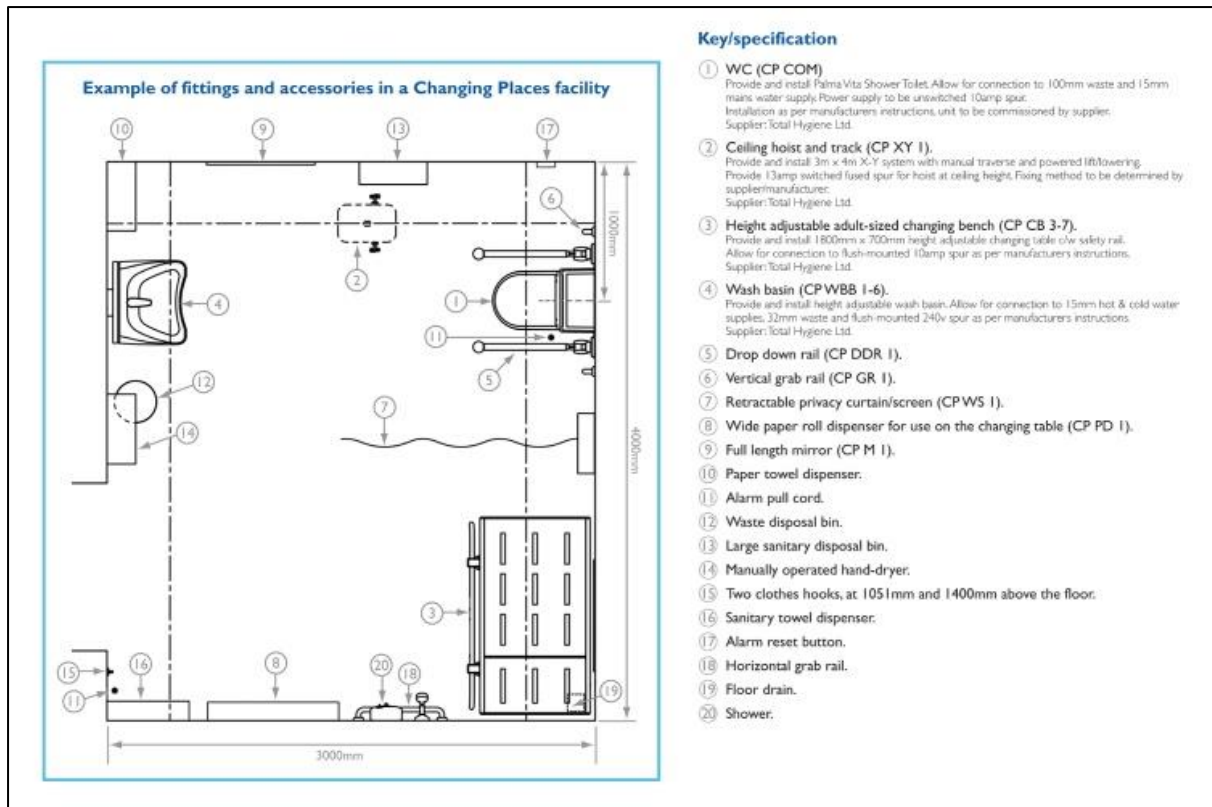
To start, there must be adequate space in a Changing Places: three metres by four metres is the recommended minimum, with a ceiling height of at least 2.4 metres.

### Equipment that should be included:

- **Changing bench**, adult sized (minimum 1800 mm long by 800 mm wide). This should be height adjustable, and can either be freestanding or wall-mounted.
- **Hoist** providing access between changing bench, basin and toilet. Ideally, ceiling or wall mounted, but a mobile hoist is acceptable if a track-mounted lifter is not possible. Hoist should comply with BS EN ISO 10535.
- **Toilet** must be a peninsular installation, with at least one metre of clear space on each side. It can be an automatic wash and dry toilet or a standard manual one, and in either case, the seat height should be 480 mm.
- **Washbasin**, which can be a standard model, or height adjustable. If it can't be adjusted in height, it should be fitted at between 720 and 740 mm from the floor.
- **Curtain or screen** to provide privacy for the user and carer(s)
- **Non-slip flooring**
- Wide tear-off **paper roll** in a dispenser close to the changing bench
- Large **waste bin** for disposing of pads, etc

These features are to be included with those of a standard accessible toilet:

- **Grab rails** where appropriate to provide necessary support
- **Emergency alarm** to summon help if necessary. Make sure that the red cord always hangs loose so that it can be used immediately.



## Relevant British Standard for Changing Places

Update July 2020: [Changing Places to be compulsory, rather than simply desirable](#)

### ***Building Regs and British standards updated at the beginning of 2018***

A Changing Places toilet is 'desirable' under Building Regulations Approved Document M and BS8300:2009 for all new build and refurbishment projects involving buildings to which numbers of the public have access.

A new clause has been added to the guidance, concerning the types of buildings that should include these facilities. This specifies visitor attractions, such as theme parks, monitored beaches and parks. Faith centres have been added, and the retail clause has been extended to include large commercial retail premises.

The standards say that 'Changing Places toilets should be provided in larger buildings and complexes, such as:

- a. major transport termini or interchanges, e.g. large railway stations and airports
- b. motorway services
- c. sport and leisure facilities, including large hotels
- d. cultural centres, such as museums, concert halls and art galleries and faith centres
- e. stadia and large auditoria
- f. large commercial retail premises and shopping centres
- g. key buildings within town centres, e.g. town halls, civic centres and main public libraries
- h. educational establishments

- i. health facilities, such as hospitals, health centres and community practices
- j. other visitor attractions, such as theme parks, monitored beaches and parks’.

The Changing Places Standard is based on the BS8300:2009. The requirements listed above should not be regarded as a substitute for the comprehensive information included in the British Standard.

Information on standard features needed in an accessible toilet is published in Approved Document M (England), Document T (Scotland), Document R (Northern Ireland) of the Building Regulations.