

Townscape and Visual Impact Appraisal (TVIA)

Maple House, Nos.8-16 (even) & 30-32 High Street and Nos.1-7 Princes Parade, Potters Bar

July 2026

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Client
Chase New Homes

Our Reference
Project: 04397

July 2026

1. Introduction

1.1 This Townscape and Visual Impact Appraisal (TVIA) has been prepared by Turley on behalf of Chase New Homes (our ‘Client’ and the ‘Applicant’) to accompany an application for full Planning Permission for the redevelopment of Maple House, Nos.8-16 (even) & 30-32 High Street and Nos.1-7 Princes Parade, Potters Bar (the ‘Site’ – Figure 1.1). This TVIA assesses the effects of the Proposed Development on the townscape and visual receptors of the Site and its surrounding context.

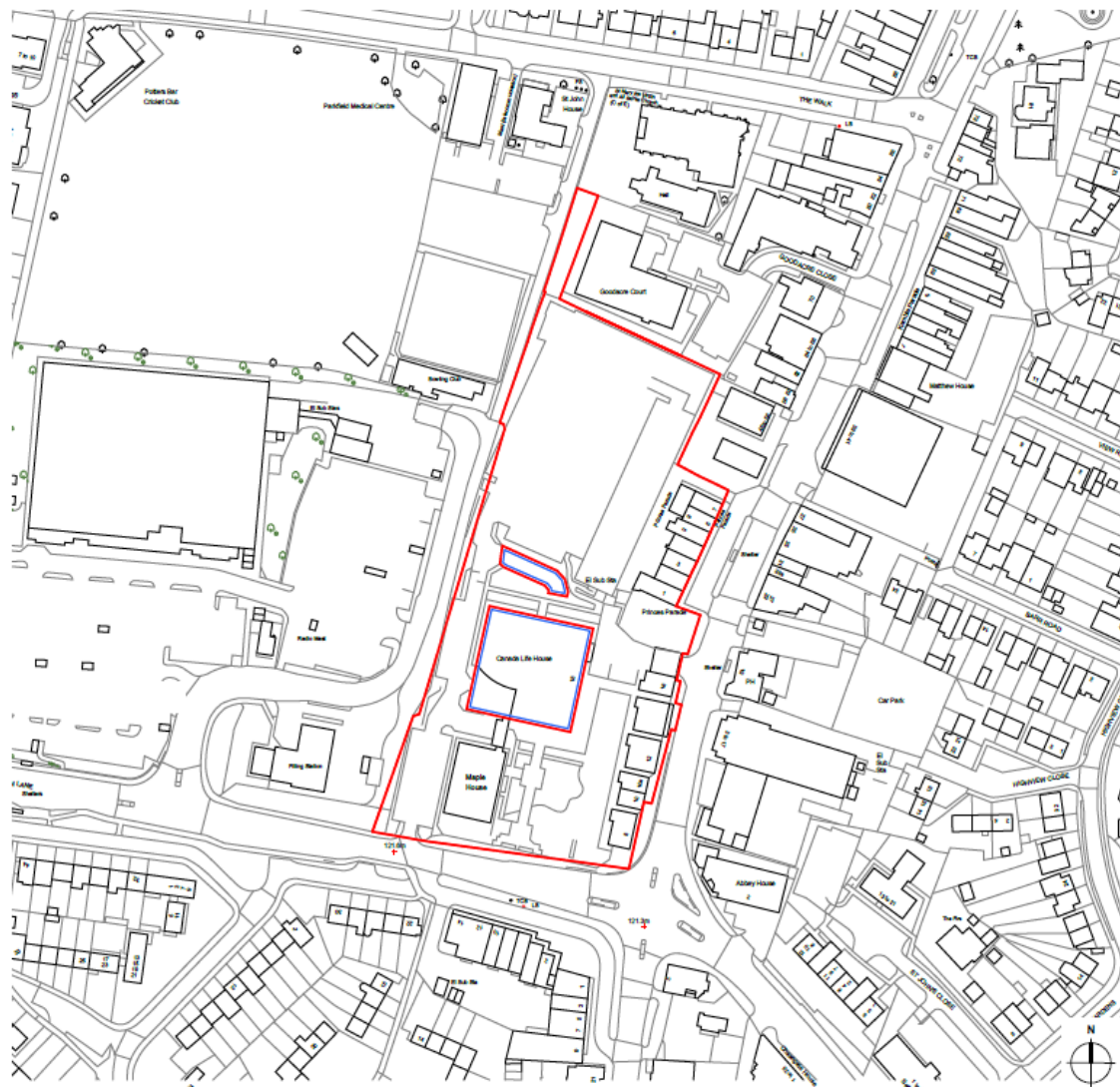


Figure 1.1: Site Location Plan (AFK Studios)

1.2 The proposed scheme (the ‘Proposed Development’) are described for planning purposes as:

“Partial demolition of existing buildings (with retention of existing two-storey car park and substation) and redevelopment of the site to provide a mixed-use development comprising residential apartments

(Class C3) and flexible commercial floorspace (Class E) across 4 Blocks and associated internal roads, parking, drainage, landscaping, amenity space and associated works.”

- 1.3 In summary, proposed new built form for the Site comprises the creation of four residential blocks (A, B, D & E) located around central courtyards and ranging between 4–15 storeys in height. This will provide a total of 293 residential units in a mix of types, alongside 1,742 sqm of flexible commercial floorspace at street level. These proposals will include an area of Public Open Space between Blocks B & D, fronting the High Street, the creation of two communal residential courtyards incorporating Local Area for Plays for young children, with further opportunities for intergenerational play incorporated across the scheme. Existing trees within the TPO to be protected as part of the wider development and integrated into the design. Car and cycle parking is also provided on Site for the scheme. The site will be serviced from the internal access road and existing servicing area on the High Street.
- 1.4 As further background, within the Applicant’s wider ownership, but outside the planning application boundary (i.e. the Site) is the Canada Life Building, which is an existing 6 storey purpose-built office block with prior approval for use as residential¹. A full planning application for external alterations to the Canada Life building, including new windows and replacement cladding, has been submitted and is pending consideration currently.
- 1.5 This TVIA should be read in conjunction with the other key application documents of the Planning Statement and Heritage Statement (prepared by others) and the Design and Access Statement (DAS) and full architectural and landscape drawing pack that supports this application as prepared by AFK Studios architects, with MRG Studio landscape architects.
- 1.6 In addition, a select number of Verified Visualisations (either as photomontage or photowire), also known as Accurate Visual Representations (AVRs) for these purposes, have been prepared by Ocean AVR in order to model the scheme proposals on the Site, and further inform our townscape and visual assessment of these changes in context. This application material is set out at full size in **Appendix 4** of this report accordingly. The technical methodology used in producing these images by specialist visualisation consultant is also provided at **Appendix 5** for completeness.
- 1.7 Legislation and also both national and local planning policy provides guidance with regard to the requirement for assessment of both townscape and visual impacts in relation to new development and its design in response to context. This underpins the purpose and structure of this report and is also set out for ease of reference at **Appendix 1**.

Structure of this Report

- 1.8 This TVIA report is set out in five sections with five supporting appendices. This introductory **Section 1** provides a summary of our approach and methodology for the assessment of townscape and visual impacts for the redevelopment of the Site as proposed for application. This is followed by **Sections 2 and 3**, which assess the baseline situation of the Site and surrounding context; providing a proportionate baseline assessment of the established local townscape character, visual amenity and key views, including the value of those relevant local Townscape Character Areas (TCAs) receptors, and the identification of

¹ An application for Prior Approval for the change of use of the Canada Life building to 74no Class C3 residential dwellings under Class MA of the GDPO received deemed consent which expires on 9 February 2029 (ref 25/1764/PD56M)

key visual receptors and associated representative views, likely to be affected by the Proposed Development on Site.

1.9 **Section 4** then provides an assessment of the effects of the Proposed Development on Site the previously identified baseline situation, in terms of townscape character and visual amenity, and as is also supported by those representative viewpoints and verified visualisations of the views relevant to each receptor. A summary of the findings of the overall TVIA is set out at the end of this report at **Section 5**.

1.10 The TVIA is supported by a series of **Figures**, photographs and other illustrations, and our technical exercise of an indicative Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) of the scheme proposed for the Site prior to final design freeze (Figure 3.6), which can all be found at **Appendix 3**. These key Figures comprise:

- **Figure 3.1: Local Policy Designations Plan (the Site)**
- **Figure 3.2: Local Policy Designation Plan (wider context)**
- **Figure 3.3: Townscape/Landscape Character Area (TCA) Plan**
- **Figure 3.4: Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) for the Proposed Development**
- **Figure 3.5: Representative Viewpoint Plan**
- **Figure 3.6: Representative Viewpoint Plan with ZTV overlay**

1.11 The locations of twelve representative viewpoints have agreed in consultation with officers at Hertsmere Borough Council (HBC) ² during pre-application engagement, and have been used to inform the assessment of the likely townscape and visual effects of the scheme design as it has emerged. For each of these representative views, Type 4 Visualisations (photomontage / photowire - survey verifiable, and also known as AVRs) have been prepared by others. Again, these visualisations and associated baseline photography are set out at full size in **Appendix 4** (recommended to be printed and viewed at A3). The methodology used in producing these images by the specialist visualisation consultant is also included at **Appendix 5**.

Site Location and Description

1.12 The Site comprises approximately 1.63ha and occupies a corner plot located to the west of the junction at Mutton Lane, Southgate Road which travel west to east and Barnet Road and the High Street which travel south to north, within Potters Bar. To the south the Site is bounded by Mutton Lane which is the primary road connecting Potters Bar High Street with Potters Bar Station to the west, to the east is the 2-3 storey retail frontage which defines the southern extent of the High Street, to the west is the perimeter planting which defines Tesco Superstore and its associated petrol garage and large area of surface carparking and to the north is Goodacre Court which provides residential accommodation and other building which have supporting residential functions such as the Parkfield Medical Centre, St Mary the Virgin and All Saints Church and to the north west is the Potters Bar Cricket Club Ground.

1.13 The Site is located within the Town and District Centre for Potters Bar and is surrounded by a mix of uses, which reflect this designation, though the wider townscape is predominantly occupied by residential uses.

The existing Site is occupied by established office uses within the southernmost buildings on Site (occupied by Bishopsgate Law, although Canada Life UK occupies Canada Life Building adjacent but outside the area of the Site itself) and the northern extent of the Site is largely characterised by a hard landscaped area which provides car parking for the offices and Maple House High Street office building which is 1 storey, long and rectangular in form occupied by Easy Build Construction Software Ltd. A mix of retail, leisure, office and residential uses surround the Site to the north, east and south and west.

1.14 The site benefits from a pedestrian route to the north connecting it to The Walk, facilitating onwards travel to Potters Bar Railway Station to the west. The site is surrounded by a mix of residential and town centre uses, including a large Tesco Superstore to the immediate west. The site is well connected to the strategic road network, with M25 J24 to the south-east.

Study Area

1.15 A 1.5km radius of search has been established initially for the townscape study area for the purposes of our TVIA. This was considered appropriate from our professional assessment and analysis of the likely effects of new development of this type and scale on the wider urban area given the history, settlement pattern, form and character of the surrounding townscape. The baseline townscape character assessment considers the Site at a local level through the determination of local Townscape Character Areas (TCAs) (or Landscape Character Areas (LCA) where relevant) within a 1.5km radius from the Site accordingly, and also the identification of key townscape features within this area.

1.16 The baseline visual assessment considers the existing and potential views within a wider 2km study area with occasional further long-distance views being considered where identified, and relevant. This has been informed by the early stage production of a computer generated ZTV which identifies indicatively where in the surrounding townscape and or landscape area that the Proposed Development is likely to be visible. It is acknowledged that the Proposed Development on Site would be visible from points beyond this area (as demonstrated by the indicative ZTV) but the effects of this would be so minor that detailed assessment is not warranted. This approach is supported by GLVIA3 which states that the scale of assessment should be appropriate and proportional to the nature of the development scheme proposed.

1.17 Again, the Site boundary and study areas are identified within each of the key **Figures at Appendix 3**, including the ZTV at Figure 3.6.

Surveys

1.18 A preliminary desk-based study was undertaken to establish the physical components of the Site and its surrounding townscape / landscape area. Potential visual receptors to the Site from the surrounding area were identified, along with a number of supporting representative views from a selection of these key visual receptors that could be tested to better appreciate the likely visual effects of the Proposed Development within its local townscape context. Both historic and modern Ordnance Survey (OS) maps were utilised to identify these features, supplemented by study of aerial photography. The desk study included a review of any relevant characterisation and or townscape / visual studies or documents published by the local planning authority or authorities.

² Email correspondence with HBC officers at pre-application engagement stage dated 27th March 2026

- 1.19 A series of field studies for the Site and wider area were undertaken by a Turley townscape and visual specialists; starting with a first site visit on 22 December 2025, during which the visibility was reported as good. This initial site survey was undertaken under Winter conditions; as relates to maximum visibility of the existing Site (its buildings and spaces) within the study area with regard to mature vegetation within the settlement and its wider landscape setting. The key features of the Site and surrounding townscape were verified with any recent changes identified, and our initial representative viewpoints were explored and confirmed as appropriate. This was accompanied by the identification of local TCAs (or LCAs where relevant) within the study area to help describe the wider surroundings of the Site and understand how the development may affect the wider townscape and or landscape characteristics. Our field study also involved travelling throughout the study area and producing a working photographic record.

Methodology

- 1.20 The TVIA is based on the assessment methodology for both townscape and visual matters set out in the following national guidance:
- Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, 3rd edition, 2013 (Landscape Institute and Institute for Environmental Management and Assessment) (GLVIA3);
 - Townscape Character Assessment, 2017 (Landscape Institute Technical Information Note 05/2017); and,
 - Visual Representation of Development Proposals 2019 (Landscape Institute Technical Information Note 06/2019).
- 1.21 Our TVIA assessment methodology is set out in further detail at **Appendix 2** to this report. In summary, the baseline conditions of the existing townscape character, visual receptors and representative views of the Site and the surrounding area were established. The Proposed Development was then considered, and from this the potential degree of effect on the first day of operation was predicated and assessed.
- 1.22 Again, the relevant legislation and also both national and local planning policy that provides guidance with regard to the requirement for assessment of both townscape and visual effects has been considered through the process. Which is also set out for ease of reference at **Appendix 1**.

Consultation

- 1.23 The location of the twelve representative viewpoints and also relevant verified visualisation types to support the assessment of visual impacts of the Proposed Development on Site was shared and subsequently agreed with officers at HBC prior to the production of this application stage TVIA³.
- 1.24 The design of the new scheme for the Site (the Proposed Development) has evolved through a positive process of pre-application engagement with officers at HBC. The TVIA process has informed this scheme evolution through early stage views testing and feedback to the design team from our consultants.

³ Email correspondence with HBC officers at pre-application engagement stage dated 27th March 2026

2. Townscape Baseline

- 2.1 A baseline assessment of the local townscape for the Site and its surrounding area was undertaken to understand and appreciate the townscape character context of the Site and identify the key features and characteristics which contribute to this. This includes consideration of associated elements, features and aesthetic and perceptual factors which contribute to townscape character. Once these factors are established the local Townscape Character Areas (TCAs), which are the townscape receptors for the purposes of our TVIA, and their associated key characteristics can be identified.

Townscape Planning Policy Context

- 2.2 A full summary of the adopted and also emerging national and local planning policy context, relating to townscape and visual matters, is provided at **Appendix 1**. This should be read in conjunction with the Planning Statement by consultants Barker Parry, which sets out the wider planning policy context for the future use and development of the Site within Potters Bar town centre area.
- 2.3 The Site is located within the local development plan area for Hertsmere (2012-2027) comprises the following planning policy documents:
- Core Strategy (2013)
 - Site Allocations and Development Management (SADM) Policies Plan (2016)
- 2.4 Key Supplementary Planning Guidance / Documents also include:
- Planning and Design Guide SPD, Parts A-F (2006)
 - Streetscape Manual (2012)
- 2.5 Supporting evidence base documents include:
- Settlement Hierarchy and Accessibility Mapping Analysis (2018)
 - Landscape and Visual Sensitivity Assessment (2020)
 - Outline Landscape Appraisals (OLA) Report (2020)
 - Conservation Area Appraisals (various dates)
- 2.6 Within the adopted Local Plan the Site falls within Designated Town and District Centre, defined under Policy SADM42: Potters Bar High Street District Town Centre in the Hertsmere Site Allocations and Development Management Policies Plan 2016. This policy stipulates that new development must also accord with Policy CS27 and CS28 in the Core Strategy Document (2013), which requires the identification of primary and secondary retail frontages to support the vitality of centres. The Site is located to the west (rear of the designated primary retail frontage). The retention of active ground floor uses along the

primary frontage is a necessitated by policy and key to ensuring that the Proposed Development continues to contribute positively to the character of the High Street.

- 2.7 As relevant to the Site and its future development, the spatial vision and development strategy outlined within the adopted Local Plan Core Strategy sets out the following intentions for Potters Bar town centre area:
- *Address the poor environment in and around the bus garage;*
 - *Address the decline of the High Street;*
 - *Address localised anti-social behaviour problems;*
 - *Provide more play areas and facilities for young people;*
 - *Reduce congestion including that caused by traffic by the diversion of vehicles from the M25;*
 - *Develop the range of evening activities in the town centre for younger people;*
 - *Roll out town centre environmental improvements beyond Darkes Lane; and*
 - *Protect employment and industry in the town.*
- 2.8 Furthermore, relevant local planning Policies⁴ include:
- CS22 – Securing a High-Quality and Accessible Environment;
 - CS27 – Town Centre Strategy;
 - CS28 – Strengthening Town Centres;
 - SADM30 – Design Principles;
 - SADM29 – Heritage Assets;
 - SADM11 – Landscape Character; and
 - SADM42 – Town and District Centres.
- 2.9 The Regulation 18 Consultation Document of the HBC Local Plan was consulted on between April and May 2026. This includes a number of local planning policies relevant to the Proposed Development and the Site in relation to townscape character and visual amenity / views matters accordingly. These include:
- Policy HQD1 Delivering High Quality Design in Hertsmere
 - Policy HQD3 Public Realm and Connecting Places
 - Policy HQD4 Building Heights

⁴ From the adopted HBC Core Strategy (2013) and Site Allocations and Development Management (SADM) Policies Plan (2016)

- Policy HE1 Hertsmere’s Historic Environment
- Policy HPBA1 Potters Bar Town Centres – supported by the Draft “Potters Bar - Key Themes & Priorities Report” March 2026, which envisions new development for the two centres that will optimise the use of suitable land within this existing urban area, including opportunities for regeneration, infill and intensification, while ensuring that development respects the character of the town and its surrounding landscape.

2.10 Subsequently, the emerging Draft Local Plan will replace the Core Strategy once adopted. Whilst the emerging Local Plan establishes the key visions and ambitions for the Hertsmere Council, at this stage of the plan process these emerging documents carry more limited weight in the planning balance.

2.11 Supplementary planning guidance also includes Part D: Guidelines for High-Quality Sustainable Development (Draft 2016), which outlines design considerations and sustainability objectives for development within the borough.

Planning Designations

2.12 The Site itself does not contain any designated or otherwise identified non-designated heritage assets, nor does it fall within a conservation area. However, the surrounding High Street and town centre include historic buildings such as Salisbury House (18th century), St Mary the Virgin and All Saints Church (1914), the War Memorial (C.F.A Voysey, 1920), and Darkes Lane timber-framed houses, reflecting Potters Bar’s layered architectural history. The town expanded rapidly in the latter half of the 19th century and again in the inter-war period in the 20th century following the arrival of the Great Northern Railway in 1850.

2.13 There are two conservation areas within Potters Bar; Potters Bar Darkes Lane (West) located approximately 1km to the northwest of the Site and Potters Bar, and The Royds Conservation Area located approximately 750m to the southwest of the Site.

2.14 There are also a number of statutory listed buildings within the local area of Potters Bar High Street and the surrounding townscape of the Site; including The Lion Public House, Barnet Road (Grade II), The White Horse Public House, High Street (Grade II), both to the east of the Site, Ladbroke School and Forecourt Wall, High Street (Grade II) to the north east of the Site, and Salisbury House, High Street (Grade II) again to the north east.

2.15 Detailed information on the historical development of the local area of the Site and also the significance and setting of any of those relevant heritage assets (and also the potential impacts on this heritage significance through changes to their setting due to the introduction of the Proposed Development) is provided in the Heritage Statement produced by SOCOTEC, and not repeated here. Both reports should be read in conjunction therefore at application.

2.16 Potters Bar is identified as a key settlement within Hertsmere’s settlement hierarchy, and one of the largest centres for employment within the borough where a significant proportion of homes, jobs and services are located. The town is arranged around two distinct shopping areas which emerged with the original High Street, on the historic Great North Road and a retail centre on Darkes Lane to the west which emerged following the arrival of the railway. Both the High Street and Darkes Lanes comprise a section of retail and commercial frontages and some larger format buildings which provide employment uses.

2.17 Beyond the retail frontages on both the High Street and Darkes Lane is residential development which

largely comprises detached or semi detached suburban development between 2 and 5 storeys in height and services and public amenity spaces which supports the residential function of the local area, including churches, schools and nurseries, leisure centre, allotments and recreational open space such as the tennis courts, cricket club, playing fields and Oakmere Park which are located either side of the High Street to the north of the Site.

2.18 Potters Bar is situated between a number of designated Landscape Character Areas (LCAs), which are described in detail within the OLA Report (2020), and also shown at Figure 2.1 (and Appendix 3) in this report. They include:

- LCA24 Arkley Plain and LCA26 Hornbeam Hills (Enfield Chase) to the south;
- LCA53a Northaw Common Parkland and LCA54 Potters Bar Parklands to the north;
- LCA29 Mimms Hall Valley to the west.

2.19 These surrounding LCAs are predominantly rural or semi-rural in character, with varying degrees of openness, vegetation, and agricultural use. The urban fringe of Potters Bar forms a transitional zone characterised by gently undulating topography, mature boundary vegetation, hedgerows, footpaths.

2.20 The Potters Bar Fringe (LCA24c) reflects the town’s historic development as a commuter town with fast rail connections to London. Key historic milestones include:

- Intersection of two roads along the former Enfield Chase boundary;
- Turnpike road construction (1828); railway line and station (1850);
- 1920s–1930s ‘garden village’ style housing with large plots and amenities;
- Post-WWII expansion with large council estates, office blocks, and suburban housing.

2.21 The town’s edges are characterised by varied residential typologies, industrial estates, leisure facilities, and pockets of open space. The southern edge adjoining LCA24 Arkley Plain is largely residential, including part of the Royds Conservation Area, and is generally screened from rural views by mature vegetation. The north-western edge adjoining LCA29 Mimms Hall Valley includes residential, industrial, and leisure uses, with woodland.

2.22 Transport infrastructure has a definitive influence on the arrangement of the town centre, particularly proximity to the M25 which extends east to west at the southern extent of Potters Bar and junction 24 located circa 750m to the southeast of the Site. To the north is the A1000 or Great North Road which adjoins the High Street and provides connection to High Barnet to the south and Hatfield to the north, in addition to the East Coast Mainline rail track which intersects the town centre diagonally from the northwest to the southeast.

2.23 The key planning designations located within the Site’s local townscape area are illustrated at **Figure 2.1**. This figure is included full size at **Appendix 3** to this report, and also at a larger scale in relation to the urban area of Potters Bar. These are: Figure 3.1: Local Policy Designations Plan (the Site) and Figure 3.2: Local Policy Designation Plan (wider context).

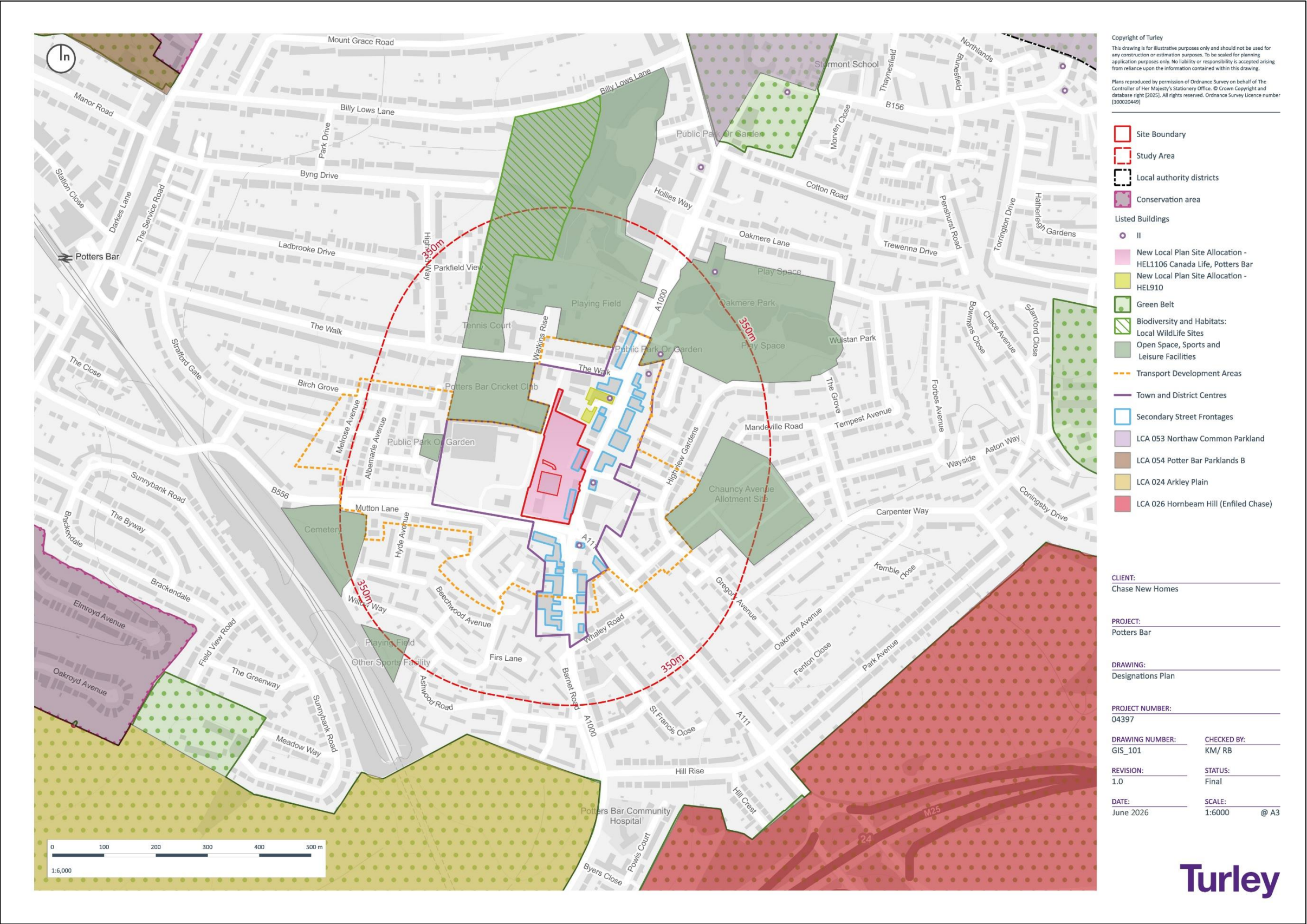


Figure 2.1: Local Policy Designations Plan (the Site and local area)

Townscape/Landscape Character Areas (T/LCAs)

- 2.24 In order to define townscape character receptors at a scale appropriate to the Site and Study Area, local townscape character areas (TCAs) have been identified. In this process, local level changes in characteristics that relate to physical elements or features and historic development, alongside how a place is experienced, have been considered. Note that where these defined areas comprise predominantly open green landscape rather than built townscape they are referred to as Landscape Character Areas (LCA).
- 2.25 The TCAs have broadly been informed by the Study Areas identified in the Hertsmere Local Plan and Hertfordshire Landscape Character Assessment and supplemented with additional and more recent information obtained from the desktop study and exploration of the current baseline position during the site visit. The TCAs are largely characterised by the mix of land uses, urban grain, movement corridors and scale and form of built development and open spaces.
- 2.26 The process has resulted in the identification of three TCAs within the Study Area which each share common features and characteristics, as listed below and illustrated at **Figure 2.2** and at full size in **Appendix 3**. TCA1 and TCA2 are separated into sub-areas in accordance with their geographic locations which presents some nuanced differences associated with their context.
- TCA1 Commercial and Retail Frontage (red)
 - Sub-Area A: High Street
 - Sub Area B Darkes Lane
 - TCA2: Suburban Residential (yellow)
 - Sub-Area A: to the east of the Site
 - Sub-Area B: to the west and north of the site
 - Sub-Area C: to the south and west of the site
 - LCA3: Rural and Open Parkland (green)
- 2.27 The Site is located within TCA1: Commercial/ Retail frontage (High Street) and the effect on this character area will be considered in detail in **Section 4** as the Proposed Development will directly affect its character. TCA2 and TCA3 which comprises the adjacent areas of townscape will also be considered in detail, albeit in relation the indirect effects and intervisibility, and then with TCA2B, TCA2C and LCA3 considered in less detail due to the distance of these from the Site and the low likelihood of the development resulting in notable changes to the character of these other townscape areas.
- TCA1: Commercial / Retail Frontage**
- 2.28 TCA1 comprises the principal commercial and retail frontages within Potters Bar, which is focused in two centres, extending along the High Street and Darkes Lane. The area forms the functional commercial core of the town, characterised by linear development patterns which have evolved over time aligning with key transport routes, including the historic Great North Road and the railway station at Potters Bar.

Sub Area A: High Street

- 2.29 Historically, Potters Bar followed a largely linear pattern along the main thoroughfare, with open countryside on either side. This pattern continued until the 20th century, when new building gradually encroached into the surrounding rural landscape. Over that century, the High Street and its context fundamentally changed from a rural settlement into a fully urbanised area.
- 2.30 The key characteristics are:
- Corridor of land between the A1 and M25 which comprises a mix of uses, primarily retail and commercial with active frontages at ground floor and office or residential uses above forming part of a secondary frontage within the District Centre as identified within the development plan.
 - Planning aspirations set out with the Local Development Plan seek to focus development in the most sustainable locations with strong links to the town centre and railway station to the south. This includes the Site as draft Site Allocation HEL1106- Canada Life, Potters Bar.
 - Strong building line at both the east and western sides of the High Street provide a clearly defined structure which reinforces the linearity of the High-Street, creating long north-south views along its length. This also enhances the legibility of the secondary retail frontage and its townscape designation.
 - Low density pattern of built development, with buildings fronting the high street typically ranging between 2 and 5 storeys in height. The Site comprises a prominent element in the local townscape, at 12-storeys in height and visible from most locations within the TCA (**See Figures 2.3-2.10**)
 - Southgate Road is a key approach route from the south which connects to the M25. The orientation of the road aligns with the southern extent of the High Street. Occasional street trees and some small areas of landscaped public realm such as that surrounding the existing Canada Life building (outside the Site), although this is set back from the High Street frontage. Otherwise a harsh urban environment, dominated by road infrastructure, service access points and parking (**Figure 2.5**).
 - Limited permeability and access on approach to the Site from the High Street, narrow passageways in between frontage buildings create a defensive character (**See Figure 2.8**).
 - Built form is varied in age, style, materiality and typology, though the majority date from the late 19th century and 20th centuries following the arrival of the railway and the towns' expansion and population growth. Scattered building from different ages which reflect the areas historic development, past uses and provide visual interest including the following (north to south fronting the High Street)
- 2.31 Also refer to the Heritage Statement submitted as part of the full planning application prepared by H+R as part of SOCOTEC in relation to the historical development of the Site and local area, and also significance and setting of heritage assets, as further context to the townscape baseline.



Figure 2.3: Middle of the High Street looking south



Figure 2.5: View from the junction between Barnet Road and the High Street



Figure 2.4: Northern extent of the High Street looking south



Figure 2.6: View of the landscaped area of public realm to the front of the existing Site from the High Street



Figure 2.7: View into the Site from the High Street



Figure 2.8: Grade II listed *Oakmere House* (Listing Reference: 1103568⁵)



Figure 2.9: View from Southgate Road

Sub-Area B: Darkes Lane

2.32 Darkes Lane developed in the late 19th and early 20th centuries following the opening of Potters Bar Station. It became the principal retail frontage by the early 20th century and is characterised by small parades, daily shopping facilities, banks, cafés, and services.

- Linear structure of built development along both sides of Darkes Lane, with consistent building line along the length of the street which encourages movement north to south towards Potters Bar Station.
- Potters Bar Station is set back from Darkes Lane and fronted by an area of hard landscaped public realm and is marked by comparatively taller buildings at Albany Gate (No. 1 Darkes Lane) and Metropolitan House (No. 9 Darkes Lane) and the railway bridge which crosses the Darkes Lane at its southern extent.
- Buildings range in height from two to eight storeys, with some later infill providing taller elements such as Metropolitan House.
- Mixed historic and post-war character, reflecting incremental growth over the past century. Grade II listed Tiverton, is an attractive 20th century red brick house with stone dressings located at the northern extent of Darkes Lane, contributing visual interest along the frontage.
- Pedestrian movement is prioritised with wide pavements. Occasional street trees and some low-level planters on the eastern side of the road soften the overall urban environment.



Figure 2.10: View south towards Potters Bar Station, Darkes Lane

Summary for TCA1

2.33 The historic core of Potters Bar, located within TCA1A, contains several designated heritage assets, however incremental and modern infill have resulted in variable building condition which lacks a sense of

cohesion in terms of architectural style, appearance and character. Darkes Lane (TCA1B) has a legible and coherent commercial function characterised although by retail and commercial uses at ground floor which activate the streetscape. As described for TCA1A, buildings range in architectural style and some modern development disrupts the historic pattern.

2.34 Townscape Value: Low, albeit with some locally higher value elements including designated and non-designated heritage at Oakmere House and historic frontage buildings though these are variable across the sub-areas and fragmented.

TCA 2: Suburban Residential

2.35 The Suburban Residential Townscape Character Area comprises the established residential neighbourhoods surrounding the Site, forming a transition between Potters Bar town centre and the rural fringe. The area reflects successive phases of suburban expansion from the late 19th century through to the post-war period, resulting in variations in layout, density and built form. Despite these differences, the TCA is unified by its predominantly residential use, suburban scale, and the presence of open spaces and community infrastructure that contribute to local amenity.



Figure 2.11: View from Carpenter Way at the junction with Park Avenue

- Predominantly residential character, comprising a mix of private and council housing developed during the inter-war and post-war periods.
- Suburban scale and massing, generally defined by two-storey housing with consistent building heights and domestic architectural forms.
- Street layouts vary across the TCA, including regular post-war layouts, curvilinear streets following historic lanes, and more informal ribbon development in peripheral areas.

- Housing typologies include semi-detached and detached dwellings, with private gardens and set-backs contributing to a spacious suburban townscape.
- Integrated community infrastructure, including schools, neighbourhood centres, sports facilities and open spaces, supporting day-to-day residential use.
- Presence of significant areas of open space, such as Oakmere Park, Parkfield Open Space and sports grounds, providing visual relief, recreation and separation between built-up areas.
- Mature trees, grass verges and landscaped areas contribute to a leafy suburban character and soften the built environment.
- Visual connections to Potters Bar High Street and surrounding residential areas reinforce the TCA's relationship with the town centre.
- Development along the edges of the TCA signals proximity to the town centre while maintaining a predominantly residential character.

For assessment purposes, the TCA is subdivided into three sub-areas reflecting differences in historic development patterns, townscape character and landscape context.

Sub-Area A: To the east and south

- 2.36 The eastern and south-eastern suburbs of Potters Bar were developed in two phases. Initial inter-war housing was limited, concentrated near Oakmere Park. The major expansion occurred post-war during the 1950s–60s, driven by housing shortages, council house building, and new planning powers post-1947.
- 2.37 The TCA contains a mix of council and private housing, organised in regular street layouts with integrated schools, open spaces, and neighbourhood centres. Later infrastructure, including the M25, reinforced the area's role as a southern access corridor. Oakmere Park and surrounding allotments provide recreational amenity and visual relief, forming a buffer between suburban development and the outer Green Belt.
- 2.38 This TCA comprises open spaces supporting local residents and community uses, including Oakmere Park, Parkfield Open Space, and sports facilities such as Potters Bar Town Football Club and the Cricket Ground. The TCA provides amenity, visual relief, and recreation within a predominantly residential context. Built development around the edges informs users of the proximity to High Street and suburban housing.



Figure 2.12: View from the Walk looking south towards the entrance of Potters Bar Cricket Club



Figure 2.13: View from the Oakmere Park

Sub-Area B: To the west and north

- 2.39 This area emerged throughout the 1920s–30s as an inter-war suburb, with infill continuing into the early post-war years. The TCA is characterised by semi-detached housing with private gardens and curvilinear street layouts that follow the alignment of pre-existing lanes, such as Quakers Lane. Residential plots are medium-sized, with design focused on middle-income families seeking commuter access to London via the Great North Road.
- 2.40 The townscape reflects early planned suburban expansion, spreading northwards from the historic High Street. Trees, street furniture, and grass verges contribute to a leafy suburban character. The area is visually contained, with intermittent long-range views to the High Street and Darkes Lane, particularly along Hawkshead Road.



Figure 2.14: View from Church Road at junction with Sandringham Road

Sub-Area C: To the west and south

- 2.41 Development in this area was limited and fragmented between the 1890s and 1930s, with some later infill. The TCA includes late 19th- and early 20th-century villas, semi-detached housing, and low-density residential plots, maintaining a semi-rural character. The Royds Conservation Area reflects a high-status suburban character, with large plots, detached houses, and leafy streets.
- 2.42 Baker Lane and Mutton Lane retain a rural lane character with ribbon development, connecting Potters Bar to surrounding farmland and historic estates. Open views and mature vegetation contribute to the perception of low-density, semi-rural settlement.

Summary for TCA2

- 2.43 The residential areas which surround the historic core of Potters Bar, located within TCA2, reflect cohesive suburban planning, with regular built form, community infrastructure, and accessible open space.
- 2.44 Townscape Value for TCA2: **Low to Medium**, reflecting predominantly suburban residential character with areas of open space and local landscape amenity which support community and residential uses in

addition to two visually contained conservation areas. Although these features elevate local value, the predominance of common suburban form and widespread replicability of the townscape limits overall value to Low–Medium.



Figure 2.15: View from Ashwood Road looking east towards the Site

LCA3: Rural and Open Parkland

- 2.45 The rural fringe of Potters Bar comprises agricultural land, estate grounds, and protected open spaces. Key examples include Jubilee Woods, Potters Bar Brook, RVC Bolton Park Farm, Morven Park (National Trust), and Wrotham Park estate. These areas are predominantly open with a rural or agricultural character. Built development is visible in parts but does not dominate the landscape. Historic estate grounds, particularly Wrotham Park, have limited suburban expansion and preserved openness over centuries.
- 2.46 Key characteristics include:
- Gently undulating plain;
 - Slopes rise up to the south and east at Arkley, High Barnet and Potters Bar;
 - Small to medium fields with hedge enclosure and field trees to the south-west of Dyrham Park;
 - Extensive areas of equestrian activity and grazing;
 - Dyrham parkland;
 - Modern visually intrusive golf courses on former agricultural land;
 - Medium arable fields to the north with hedges and field trees in a declining condition;
 - Major motorway, trunk road and associated infrastructure

2.47 The gently sloping landform, varying field sizes and visual prominence, presence of footpaths and sense of rural character which provides a rural setting to Potter's Bar and the presence of some priority habitats and Local Wildlife Sites increase sensitivity to built development, however the areas proximity to the A1(M) and the edge of Potters Bar, particularly the industrial estate and Furzefield Leisure Centre, and the existing Canada Life tall building which is visible from distant views to the north (Figure 2.16) and south (Figure 2.17) create an awareness of suburban and urban development nearby.



Figure 2.16: View from the LCA29 Mimmshall Valley, PROW which adjoins Hawkshead Road



Figure 2.17: View from the LCA24 Arkley Plain, PROW which adjoins Baker Street looking north of The Royds Conservation Area

Summary for LCA3

2.48 These areas contribute to the wider rural context which surrounds Potters Bar, provide visual containment for suburban areas and support the historic integrity of estate and parkland landscapes several of the identified LCAs, which are described in detail within the OLA Report (2020) and the Hertfordshire Landscape Character Assessments (2000-2005). Whilst the condition and strength of each character areas varies the characteristics afforded by the open space have a notable scenic quality and/or recreational value. The Landscape Value for LCA3: **Medium**, by our assessment.

Table 2.1: Summary of Townscape / Landscape Value

Townscape Character Area	Value
TCA1 Commercial Retail Frontage (inclusive of Sub-Areas A and B)	Low
TCA2 Suburban Residential (inclusive of Sub-Areas A, B and C)	Low to Medum
LCA3 Rural and Open Parkland	Medium

3. Visual Baseline

- 3.1 An assessment of the local visual context and visual amenity was first undertaken on site in December 2025 to understand the existing extent of visibility of the Site and key views and visual receptors likely to be affected by the Proposed Development. In this context, the term 'Site' is used to refer to the full extent of the Site and the existing features within it. The visibility of the Site was established through desktop analysis of the surrounding area and then by confirming on site the localised screening effect of existing topography, street patterns, built form and any vegetation.
- 3.2 As part of this baseline appraisal, a computer-generated Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) has been produced. ZTV mapping is a tool that can be used to help identify the likely visibility of the height and or massing of a proposed development scheme from specific locations in the wider environment. The site visit and ZTV established the area in which the Site, and the Proposed Development, may be visible; the different groups of people who may experience views of the development (defined as visual receptors); the areas where views can or are likely to be possible; and, the nature of these views. These factors interrelate, but for the purpose of the assessment will be dealt with in that order.
- 3.3 **Figure 3.1** (also included full size at **Appendix 3**) illustrate the locations of the Representative Viewpoints, which form a part of this assessment within the TVIA. The supporting baseline photography and verified visualisations of the Proposed Development for each of the selected representative views has been prepared by the appointed visualisation consultant Ocean AVR. High resolution A3 versions of these visualisations are provided at **Appendix 4**, and the technical methodology for preparing these images also provided at **Appendix 5**.
- 3.4 The key Representative Views (**Figure 3.1**) were identified which reflect the character and quality of typical views from the key receptors and to form the baseline against which the visual effect of the Proposed Development could be assessed. The selection of representative views included within the TVIA was presented to officers at HBC during the pre-application process (meeting dated 26th February 2026 and latterly agreed via email correspondence dated 27th March 2026 following the addition of RV12 from local PRoW 058 on the footbridge over the M25 as requested by officers).

Extent of Visibility

- 3.5 As demonstrated by the ZTV (**Figure 3.2** and also at **Appendix 3**) and as confirmed during the subsequent site visit, the Proposed Development would be highly visible from the surrounding local area of the town centre and suburban fringe of Potters Bar. This is due to the nature scale and height of the replacement taller building at Maple House on Site in comparison to the existing generally low to mid rise urban and suburban built development which defines the majority of the settlement area of Potters Bar. This is reflected by the selection of representative viewpoints which cover a relatively large geographic area from all compass directions, and also including a number of viewpoints located within the wider open / rural landscape setting of this settlement and looking in towards the centre of the town. Views from the north are more limited, save for where the orientation of the streets and roads channels views towards the Site, namely along the High Street, which the Site fronts at its southern extent. As a result, the Site is visible along the entire length of the street where it forms part of the kinetic experience.
- 3.6 The ZTV mapping utilises LiDAR data with 1m grid resolution, incorporating available information on existing topography, built form and mature vegetation. The ridge heights of the Proposed Development were provided by AFK Architects during the first stage of the design development for the redevelopment of the taller building at Maple House and utilised in the production of the ZTV. The blue to white colour range indicates where in the surrounding townscape the Proposed Development would potentially be visible from, with dark blue areas indicating the highest predicted extent of visibility. The grey areas demonstrate parts of the townscape where the scheme is likely to be obscured. The ZTV process does not provide an accurate detailed picture of where the proposed development scheme will be visible, due to not all vegetation or recent development being included in the available LiDAR data 3D model at the time of this exercise. As a result, the process gives a larger extent of visibility of the proposals than would happen in reality. However, it is a useful starting point to help identify the key views likely to be affected.
- 3.7 The ZTV was produced for an area within a 2km radius of the Site. The larger areas of predicted visibility are typically within 1km of the Site. There are some more distant viewpoints beyond this from which the development would be visible, but it would appear as a very small feature in the background of the view and visual impacts from this distance would not be significant by our assessment.

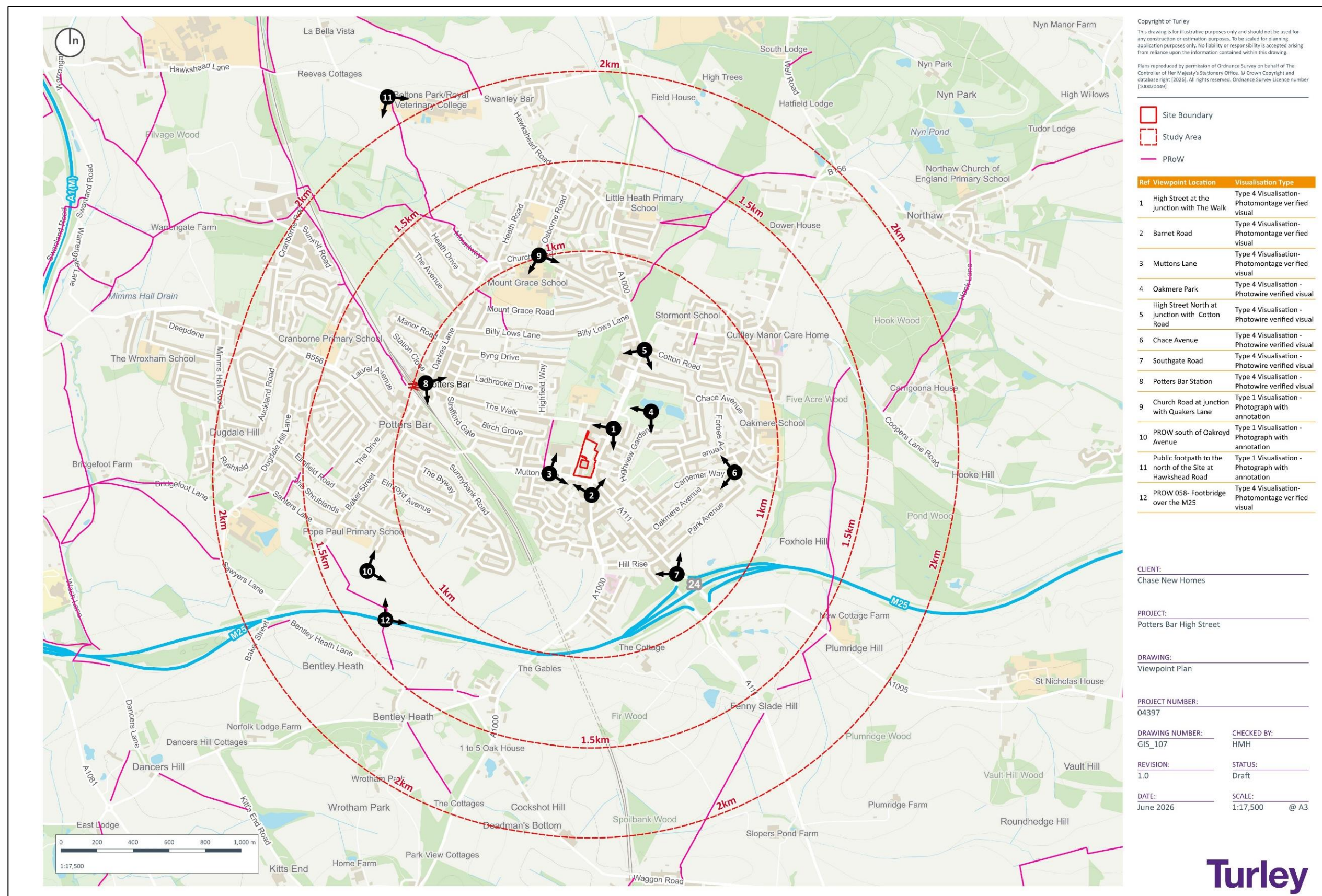


Figure 3.1: Representative Viewpoint Plan (with local PRow network shown in pink)

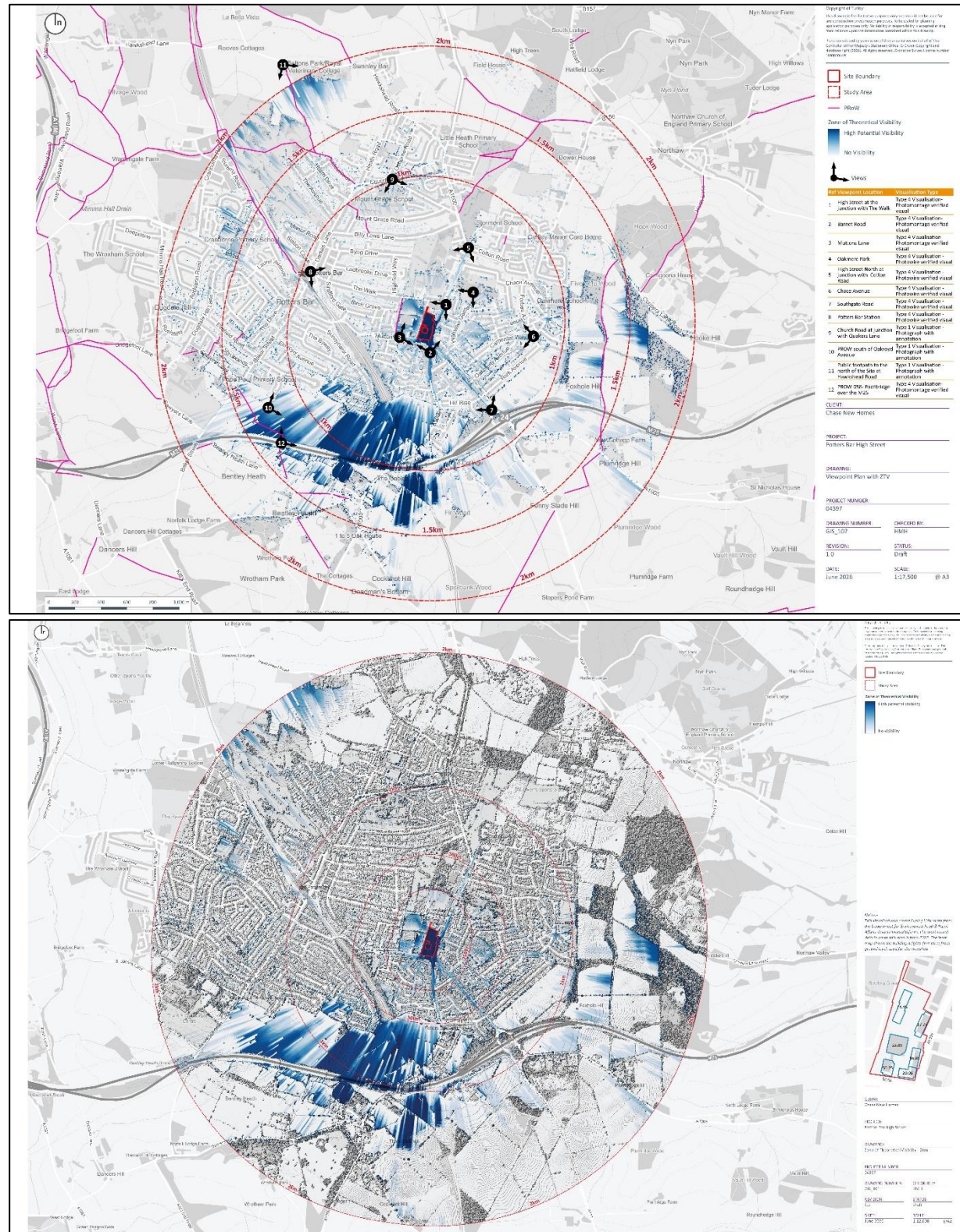


Figure 3.2: (Top) ZTV for the Proposed Development (Bottom) ZTV with Representative Viewpoints overlaid and local PRoW network shown in pink

Local Visual Amenity

- 3.8 The existing built features of the Site do not typically make a positive contribution to local visual amenity due to the generic commercial architectural form and appearance of the existing buildings, notably Maple House. The later 20th century built form and also larger scale does however, read as distinct group of buildings set back from the principal shopping frontage along the High Street (alongside Canada Life Building which is outside the application Site itself). These modern urban elements have a different use character and scale when compared with frontage elements which relate more closely to the scale of the rest of the High Street to the north; with typically low rise 2-3 storeys in height with retail and commercial shop frontages at ground floor level. However, the section of the Site which fronts the High Street as existing, at its southern extent provide little activation and small passageways create a defensive appearance as described with the description of the townscape baseline conditions for TCA 1A (**Figure 2.7**).
- 3.9 Areas of soft landscaping integrated as part of the modern development within the centre of the Site generally make a moderate contribution to local visual amenity; however this is limited to a small area at the southern extent of the Site and located behind the frontage buildings to the High Street and partially screened by the boundary wall to the south of the site on Mutton Lane. As a result, the positive contribution made by these green element is relatively limited.
- 3.10 Key contributors to the visual amenity of the local area surrounding the Site include:
- Heritage assets:** There are several buildings in the local area that also provide visual interest and create focal points in views, namely the designated heritage assets fronting the High Street including Oakmere House, the War Memorial, St John's Churchyard, Salisbury House, Ladbroke School and Forecourt Wall, The White Horse Public House and the former Lion Public House (all Grade II listed).
 - Residential streets:** the verdant nature of the streets (which is characteristic of the residential areas surrounding Potters Bar) notably to the east and north of the Site: Highview Gardens road including the entrance to Oakmere Park and along The Walk and Parkfield Open Space. Overall, the suburban residential areas feature a housing stock of semi-detached and detached dwellings with predominantly good quality architecture, planted front gardens and a variety of mature tree species within the property ownership and the street scene.
 - Road network:** The roads surrounding the Site have a distinct impact on the quality of the visual amenity. Generally, the M25, B556 and Great North Road (which becomes Hatfield Road and the High Street at its southern extent) contribute negatively. The roads are wide and vehicle dominated, thus restricting pedestrian movement between the retail core and suburban areas to the south and west. Despite the scale of the road infrastructure, the northern approach route via Hatfield Road and the connecting roads of Church Road and Quakers Lane and The Causeway are verdant and in places relatively picturesque, given the context of a town centre area, particularly when near to Movern Park at the northern end of the High Street with substantial planting and amenity grass areas forming a visually strong, green framework. Barnet Road, Mutton Lane and Southgate Road however, to the south of the Site, are more sparsely planted.
 - Frontages and service areas:** Amongst the primary routes there is a network of service access roads and entrances to car parks which are visually of low quality: bare and lacking in townscape features.

This is of particular relevance to the Site along the northern edge, which comprises built form in dense, block masses with brick and concrete materials which provide no activation at street level. The petrol station, multi-storey car parking and vehicle entrances visually detract and give the perception of this area as ‘back of house’. Likewise, the Tesco Superstore located to the west of the Site is also served by a large surface carpark which similarly offers little by way of visual amenity, though due its location to the west of the High Street it doesn’t engage directly with the street scene.

- **Wayfinding:** The existing tall building on Site, Maple House, remains a constant in views across the town centre and surrounding open landscape. The area has relatively strong north-south connectivity via the High Street, and east-west permeability along The Walk which links to Darkes Lane and Potters Bar Station to the west. Similarly, Metropolitan House (No. 9 Darkes Lanes) is 8 storeys in height and notably taller than the surrounding townscape fronting Darkes Lane and provide a visual marker indicating the location of Potters Bar Station.
- **Local open space:** Parkfield Open Space is an important local open space situated to the north of the Site, also linked to Potters Bar Football Club and Cricket Club Ground, on the western side of the High Street. Oakmere Park is located on the eastern side of the High Street and offers are more landscaped area of open space with a pond and play area connecting with the suburban residential area to the east of the Site. More open and natural landscape areas inform the wider context of Potters Bar town centre including Morven Park to the north, Fir and Pond Woods, the Jubilee Woods and former Potters Bar Golf Course to the north of the Site.

Key Views

- 3.11 The Site is not located within any key views or vistas as identified within the adopted Local Plan or emerging New Local Plan to date. However, it was acknowledged as part of the scoping exercise that views from within Wrotham Park to the south of the Site were particularly sensitive to change, given its’ status as a designated heritage asset and registered park and garden of historic interest at Grade II⁶. Key views set out within the Landscape Sensitivity Report (2020)⁷ and associated Outline Landscape Appraisals Report (2020)⁸ were also considered. Where oriented towards the Site these views have been included on the Designation Plan included at **Figure 2.1**. A ‘Notable View’ was identified at the northern extent the Landscape Character Area 025 Wrotham Park and Bentley Heath (LCA025)⁹ looking towards the Site from within Wrotham Park, circa 1.5km to the southwest of the Site. The Sensitivity Evaluation drafted with respect to LCA025, states the following with respect to ‘Visual prominence’ for the Wrotham Park and Bentley Heath LCA:

“The presence of woodland provides a sense of enclosure, although the ridge location and open fields provide some visible areas. Moderate sensitivity”

- 3.12 The inclusion of this view was discussed with officers at the pre-application meeting held on the 26th February 2026. The ZTV included at **Figure 3.2** identifies that there would be intervisibility with the Proposed Development from the surrounding fields to the south of Potters Bar and to the north of the M25. However, within Wrotham Park itself and beyond the 1.5km study radius and south of the M25 intervisibility is significantly reduced due to dense vegetation and woodland which lines both sides of

Dancers Hill Road and Barnet Road and dispersed rural settlements such as Ganwick Corner that provide further screening. It was agreed that given that intervisibility with the Site would be unlikely. As such, this view was scoped out of further assessment.



Figure 3.3: (Top) Extract from ZTV indicating intervisibility to the south of the M25 (Bottom) Google Maps extract demonstrating landscape characteristics in relation to ZTV.

6 Wrotham Park, Non Civil Parish - 1000254 | Historic England
7 Hertsmere Borough Council Landscape Sensitivity to Residential and Employment Development in Hertsmere Final report Prepared by LUC September 2020 (10862-Hertsmere-LSA-Final-Report-LR.pdf)

8 Hertsmere Borough Council Outline Landscape Appraisals for potential development sites in Hertsmere Final report Prepared by LUC October 2020 (Outline Landscape Appraisals Report Oct 2020)

9 Ibid.,Figure 25.2 page 100

- 3.13 Where there is a flare of dark blue on the ZTV beyond 1km such as from The Gables and Three Oak Hill as shown in the zoomed in extract from the ZTV at **Figure 3.4 (top)** below. The landscape has an agricultural character and appearance, located near R&C Haulage & Tippers and Waste Water Solutions at Chase Farm, Potters Bar which have an industrial character and are not considered sensitive to visual changes in the wider landscape (**Figure 3.4 (bottom)**).
- 3.14 Darkes Lane Conservation Area Report (2011¹⁰) was also reviewed with respect to identifying key views and vistas in proximity to the Site. This Conservation Area Report identifies several views, including views of Darkes Lane along its length in both directions and also views west along The Avenue, Heath Drive and Mountway. The Site is visible intermittently within the background of views along Darkes Lane where adjoining roads eastwards align with the direction of the Site. RV8 from Potters Bar Station has been included to represent the visual amenity from this location.
- 3.15 As above, the Royds Conservation Appraisal (2014)¹¹ was also reviewed with regard to focal points, key views and vistas. These are as follows:
- *From Baker Street, looking into both Avenues;*
 - *From the bottom of both Elmroyd and Oakroyd Avenues, looking towards Baker Street;*
 - *From the junction of Oakroyd and Elmroyd Avenues and their respective Close's, looking in either direction; and*
 - *Along Baker Street through the Area*
- 3.16 Due to the enclosed and inward nature of the Royds Conservation Area defined by the planned layout of the Estate the Site would not be readily visible from key views along Oakroyd and Elmroyd Avenue within or in views from Baker Street into the Conservation Area from which the spatial organisation of the built form and character and appearance can be best appreciated as demonstrated by the ZTV included at **Figure 3.2** and **3.3**.

Visual Receptors

- 3.17 Visual receptors are the people who may be affected by changes in views and visual amenity. They include people passing through an area (e.g. by foot, car, bicycle or public transport), people working in an area and people visiting or engaged in recreational activities. The key visual receptors which have been identified within the study area with potential to be affected by the Proposed Development are set out in **Table 3.1** below.
- 3.18 Although surrounding residential properties form a further receptor group, these will generally not be considered in detail within the TVIA as views from private properties are not a material planning consideration¹² unless the impact of the proposals is likely to be so great that it would harm the residential visual amenity of the property. This is not considered likely to be the case for any of the surrounding residential properties due to the urban context of the Site, the proposed built form reflecting the existing

building line or the separation distances between residential properties reflecting existing breaks within the city centre between residential properties.

Table 3.1: Key Visual Receptors

Visual Receptor	Commentary
Local Residents to the north of the Site (Representative Views: RV 5,9; RV11)	Residential streets to the north of the Site, including Little Heath and Church Road, are characterised by mid- to late-19th century and early-20th century detached suburban housing set within generous plots with off-street parking and rear gardens. Mount Grace School and surrounding open spaces afford long-range views southwards, where Maple House is visible as the only tall building on the skyline. The leafy character of streets and abundant trees partially screen views, particularly in summer when foliage is in leaf. Views are generally framed by a consistent suburban grain, punctuated by occasional historic features.
Local Residents to the east of the Site (Representative Views: RV4; RV6)	Residential areas along Chace Avenue and surrounding streets to the east are predominantly suburban in character, with two- and three-storey detached and semi-detached housing. Maple House is intermittently visible through gaps in the built form and changes in topography, rising above lower scale housing. In views looking eastwards from the site, the townscape transitions to a more open, semi-rural character, revealing rolling fields, woodland, and allotments. Views are often glimpsed and framed by garden boundaries and street trees, softening the visual impact of taller buildings.
Local Residents to the south of the Site (Representative Views: RV2; RV7)	Streets including Ashwood Road, Barnet Road, and Southgate Road provide residents with views of Maple House (alongside Canada Life Building outside the Site itself) rising above surrounding two- and three-storey housing. The southern approach along Southgate Road functions as a primary route from the M25, with views of the tall building helping to orientate users. Open corners along Barnet Road and hard landscaping around Maple House reduce legibility at street level. Views of the tall building are partially screened by intervening housing, and the setback from the High Street frontage reinforces its background role within the wider townscape.
Pedestrians and, users of Potters Bar High Street (Representative Views: RV1; RV2; RV5)	The High Street provides a key north-south route and focal point for pedestrians accessing shops, cafés, and local services. Frontage buildings along the High Street form a relatively consistent street line, while gaps and narrow alleys allow intermittent glimpses of Maple House behind the frontage. As pedestrians move south along the High Street and The Walk, views of the tall building become increasingly apparent, rising above the lower scale retail and residential buildings. Poorly defined frontages, such as the bus depot and petrol station, interrupt the townscape, while the introduction of open spaces and improved permeability would enhance the visual experience. The Walk and central High Street allow pedestrians to experience intermittent glimpses of Maple House behind street frontage buildings, with views becoming more prominent moving south along The Walk. Views are framed by commercial buildings, churches, and open spaces such as Potters Bar Cricket Club. Seasonal vegetation provides partial screening in summer, while winter views reveal the tall building rising above the

¹⁰ Microsoft Word - DarkesLane_west_CA REPORT TO EXEC 28.07.10.doc

¹¹ The Royds PB Conservation Area Appraisal 2014

¹² ‘Aldred’s Case’ in 1610 established that there is no legal right to a view for private dwellings.

Visual Receptor	Commentary
	surrounding townscape. Improved pedestrian permeability could enhance views and connectivity across the High Street.
Pedestrians and, users of Darkes Lane primary retail frontage (Representative Views: RV8)	Darkes Lane is a pedestrian-prioritised route linking Potters Bar Station to the town centre, featuring 2–8 storey buildings with commercial uses at ground floor. Street trees, pavements, and some listed buildings, such as Tiverton (Grade II), provide character and interest along the street. Views of Maple House are visible through breaks in the built form along The Walk, creating a visual link to the town’s taller buildings from this busy pedestrian corridor.
Key road corridor users (Representative Views: RV2; RV3; RV5; RV7)	Key road corridors, including Southgate Road, Barnet Road, Muttons Lane, and the B56, provide glimpsed views of Maple House (and adjoining Canada Life Building outside the Site) rising above the surrounding suburban development. The tall building acts as a visual landmark along primary access routes from the M25 and local roads. Road alignment, vegetation, and building setbacks mean visibility is often partial, with Maple House frequently appearing as a background element framed by lower suburban housing. Open corners along Barnet Road and the setback of Maple House contribute to its background character.
Users of recreational public open space (Representative Views: RV4)	Oakmere Park and other open spaces to the north of the High Street provide residents and visitors with views across the park towards Maple House, particularly in winter when trees are bare. Long-range views from PROWs through the Royds Conservation Area and Hawkshead Road allow users to see Maple House rising above the low-density suburban housing, connecting the townscape with semi-rural surroundings. These routes also act as natural wayfinding corridors linking the town centre to surrounding open spaces.
Users of rural landscape and open parkland (Representative Views: RV10; RV11, RV12)	PROWs and open agricultural or estate land to the northwest and southwest, including areas around Royal Veterinary College/Bolton Park Farm and Wrotham Park (Grade II Registered Park and Garden), provide long-range views of Maple House above suburban development. The tall building is visible as a focal point within open, semi-rural landscapes, reinforcing wayfinding and the visual relationship between the town and its rural hinterland.

Representative Views

- 3.19

In order to recognise and assess the likely effects of the Proposed Development on the identified visual receptors, a number of Representative Views from these visual receptors have been identified. The locations of the viewpoints are set out in **Figures 3.1** and **3.2**. The Representative Views are listed in **Table 3.2** with brief commentary on why they have been selected and the visual receptors they represent. The selection of these views has also been informed by further consideration of the townscape character areas and also where relevant the surrounding heritage assets that help to define the nature and value of the surrounding area.
- 3.20

In order to recognise and assess the likely effects of proposed development on the identified visual receptors, visualisations have been prepared using different visualisation types. The type of visual representation has been guided by the Landscape Institute’s Technical Information *Note 06/19: Visual Representation of Development Proposals* and *GLVIA3* which recommends a proportionate approach to

assessment in relation to the scale of development proposed and the sensitivity of the visual receptors. Due to the scale of development and sensitivity of the Site, it was agreed with officers at HBC that a combination of verified Rendered/Photomontage and Photowire Type 4 visualisations would be produced to accompany the application submission.

- 3.21

The rendered (or photomontage) views demonstrate the materiality of proposed development and its relationship with the existing street scene and neighbouring buildings, and so are most helpful for closer distance views. The photowire views illustrate the massing of the proposed development and demonstrate how it sits in the wider townscape and in relation to other built form, and so are most helpful for longer distance views. The type of visualisation prepared for each key view is also identified in **Table 3.2** below. The selection of visualisation types was again confirmed with officers at HBC as part of pre-application engagement.
- 3.22

The verified visualisations and baseline photography have been produced in accordance with the Landscape Institute Technical Information Note 06/19. For local townscape views a 35 or 24mm lens was used in order to capture the surrounding context. If it was not possible to capture the full site and proposed development within the view, only where necessary, a wider lens and tilt shift has been applied. This process is described in the technical methodology provided by appointed visualisation consultants Ocean AVR at **Appendix 5**. In views from the wider area a 50mm lens has been utilised in accordance with the standard for landscape photography.

Table 3.2: Representative Viewpoint Locations

Representative Viewpoint Location	Visualisation Type	Commentary
RV1 High Street at the junction with The Walk	Type 4-Photomontage verified visual	To demonstrate views of the Site experienced by pedestrians walking south along the High Street. The Walk serves as the main connecting route to Darkes Lane primary retail frontage to the west of the Site and is where Potters Bar Station is situated. This view also illustrates the visual relationship between the Proposed Development and the listed building in the middle ground of the view at No. 86 High Street.
RV2 Barnet Road	Type 4-Photomontage verified visual	To demonstrate views of the Site experienced by pedestrians walking north towards the High Street, one of the main retail frontages within the local area, from Barnet Road to the south.
RV3 Muttons Lane	Type 4-Photomontage verified visual	To demonstrate views of the Site experienced by pedestrians and road on the western approach to the Site: including users of the large shopping centre which is located adjacent to the west of the Site. Muttons Lane is a key approach route connecting Potters Bar Station and Darkes Lane in the west and the M25 in the east.
RV4 Oakmere Park	Type 4-Photowire verified visual	To demonstrate views of the Site seen experienced by pedestrians, and users of the Oakmere Park open space. Oakmere Park forms the setting of the Grade II listed Oakmere House. The Park also provides a key pedestrian route connecting the suburban residential areas to the east with the High Street.

Representative Viewpoint Location	Visualisation Type	Commentary
RV5 High Street North at the junction with Cotton Road	Type 4-Photowire verified visual	To demonstrate views of the High Street in the northern approach road, Great North Road Site experienced by pedestrians walking north towards the High Street, and road users. of the main retail frontages within the local area, from Barnet Road to the south.
RV6 Chace Avenue	Type 4-Photowire verified visual	To demonstrate views of the Site experienced by residents to the east. Pedestrians and vehicle users on their way to their homes, local amenities or services or travelling towards the High Street.
RV7 Southgate Road	Type 4-Photowire verified visual	To demonstrate views towards the Site experienced by road users and pedestrians travelling along the A111which serves as the primary approach road to the Potters Bar High Street to the southeast which connects to the M25.
RV8 Potters Bar Station	Type 4-Photowire verified visual	To demonstrate views towards the Site from Potters Bar Station entrance, experienced by pedestrians travelling to and from Potters Bar Station.
RV9 Church Road at junction with Quakers Lane	Type 1-Photograph with annotation	To demonstrate views of the Site experienced by residents to the northwest. Pedestrians and vehicle users on their way to their homes, local amenities and services such as schools or travelling towards the High Street.
RV10 PROW south of Oakroyd Avenue	Type 1-Photograph with annotation	To demonstrate views of the Site to the south experienced by pedestrians and users of open amenity space, engaging in recreational activity such as dog walking.
RV11 PROW to the north of the Site at Hawkhead Road	Type 1-Photograph with annotation	To demonstrate views of the Site to the north experienced by pedestrians and users of open amenity space, engaging in recreational activity such as dog walking and also visitors to and from the local veterinary centre.
RV12 PRoW to the south of the Site on footbridge over the M25	Type 4-Photomontage verified visual	To demonstrate views of the Site to the south experienced by pedestrians and users of open amenity space, engaging in recreational activity such as dog walking and also visitors to Wrotham Park and Bentley Heath to the south of the M25.

4. Townscape and Visual Assessment of Impacts

Approach to Assessment

- 4.1 The assessment of the potential impacts of the Proposed Development on townscape and visual receptors was undertaken following scheme fix in June 2026. The assessment is based on the scheme as set out in the Design and Access Statement (DAS) and the detailed plans, sections and elevations or other illustrative material produced by AFK architects, MRG Studio landscape architects and Preconstruct, together with the verified visualisations (or AVRs) produced for the scheme by appointed visualisation consultant Ocean AVR (included at full size and high resolution in **Appendix 4** and with technical methodology for their preparation set out at **Appendix 5** for completeness).
- 4.2 As previously outlined in this report, the methodology and approach in undertaking this impact assessment is summarised in **Appendix 2** and is based upon informed and reasoned professional judgement, taking into account a combination of quantitative and qualitative factors.
- 4.3 The relevant legislation and also both national and local planning policy and guidance in relation to the assessment of both townscape and visual impacts in relation to new development and its design in response to context has been considered from the start as part of the TVIA process for this scheme. This wider planning context is again set out in full and for ease of reference at **Appendix 1**.

Overview of Proposed Development and Design Response

Construction Effects

- 4.4 The key aspects of the construction phase which have potential to affect the townscape and visual receptors have been identified as: demolition works associated with removal of existing buildings on Site; construction machinery (including tower cranes); material stock piles; scaffolding; vehicle movements; contractor site offices and compounds; and the incremental appearance of the new or altered buildings during the construction process.
- 4.5 Any effects arising during the construction phase are regarded as short term or temporary effects and have therefore not been separately described. However, in general terms, the construction effects of the Proposed Development would be no greater in magnitude than those described below for the completed development but would generally be considered to be either Neutral or Adverse effects. The exception to this is effects associated with the tower cranes associated with the development. These would be visible from a wider area than the completed building itself and would form a noticeable skyline feature in views from the surrounding area, albeit relatively commonplace in the urban context.

Operational Effects

- 4.6 The supporting DAS prepared by AFK Studios architects provides a comprehensive description of the scheme design and its approach. This design information is integrated with and also supported by the Landscape Strategy Report prepared by MRG Studio as part of the full application submission. This reporting includes a review of how the proposals have responded to the particular constraints and opportunities of the Site, in particular the relationship to the character of the adjoining streetscape, wider townscape context and visual amenity, and key approach routes to Potters Bar High Street where the proposals are particularly visible. The DAS also underlines the significance of the opportunity to redevelop this key town centre site as part of the wider regeneration planned and envisioned for Potters Bar. The

Proposed Development will deliver much-needed new homes on a well-connected brownfield site, alongside new public realm, landscaped spaces, and pedestrian routes for both residents and the wider community. Intending to enhance the quality and vitality of the High Street, introducing new commercial and community uses to support the area's growth.

- 4.7 The DAS sets out in summary the Vision and Brief for the redevelopment of this site; under the following key headings or themes:
- *Landmark Response to a Key Site*
 - *Delivering High Quality Homes*
 - *Walkable and Well-Connected*
 - *Reinvigorate the High Street*
 - *Landscape*
 - *Long-Term Sustainability*
- 4.8 The Proposed Development on Site for the application submission is described for the purposes of full planning permission as:
- “Partial demolition of existing buildings (with retention of existing two-storey car park and substation) and redevelopment of the site to provide a mixed-use development comprising residential apartments (Class C3) and flexible commercial floorspace (Class E) across 4 Blocks and associated internal roads, parking, drainage, landscaping, amenity space and associated works.”*
- 4.9 In summary, proposed new built form for the Site comprises the creation of four residential blocks (A, B, D & E) located around central courtyards and ranging between 4 – 15 storeys in height. This will provide a total of 293 residential units in a mix of types, alongside 1,742 sqm of flexible commercial floorspace at street level. These proposals will include an area of Public Open Space between Blocks B & D, fronting the High Street, the creation of two communal residential courtyards incorporating Local Area for Plays for young children, with further opportunities for intergenerational play incorporated across the scheme. Existing trees within the TPO are to be protected as part of the wider development and integrated into the design. Car and cycle parking is also provided on Site for the scheme. The site will be serviced from the internal access road and existing servicing area on the High Street.
- 4.10 A number of architectural computer generated images (CGIs) have been prepared for the Proposed Development by Preconstruct in conjunction with the appointed architects (which are included in the DAS) to demonstrate the likely appearance of the scheme within its immediate townscape context. Extracts of these images are also included in this section of the TVIA report for illustrative purposes and as figures for ease of reference. Again, the further set of AVRs for each of the agreed representative views for TVIA purposes are appended in full at Appendix 4 for completeness.



Figure 4.1: CGI of Proposed Development on Site as viewed from Southgate Road and across the key junction with High Street and Barnet Road looking north west. This is one of the main approaches to the Site, which will present a bold active frontage to this prominent corner, with the greater height of the replacement to Maple House clearly marking the town centre (Preconstruct & AFK Studios)



Figure 4.3: CGI of Proposed Development as viewed from the south across Mutton Lane. New and more positive building line and urban enclosure to this key route, with taller local landmark Block A alongside lower perimeter Block B to High Street corner, framing access points, and with complementary architectural treatment



Figure 4.2: CGI of Proposed Development as viewed from across Potters Bar High Street from the listed building Cask and Stillage PH looking west. This break in the stronger and more animated built frontage signals and frames the connection route through to the Neighbourhood Square within the depth of the Site (alongside the existing retained / revitalised Canada Life Building outside that site)



Figure 4.4: CGI of Proposed Development as viewed along Potters Bar High Street from the south. Creating a stronger, albeit well-articulated and more animated built frontage for the Site and this key route through the town centre

4.11 Both the full application submission material, and also as supported by this TVIA, describe that the heart of these development proposals is the desire to provide a balanced mix of residential and commercial spaces through high quality architecture and landscape proposals. The scheme seeks to enliven the High Street, through the demolition of the existing buildings on Site which make little contribution to the character and appearance of the town centre currently, and their replacement with a series of new buildings which have been sensitively designed to respond to the surrounding context in terms of their height, materials, detailed design and land-use character. The proposals also include the creation of a new pedestrian north-south walkway at the western edge of the Site connecting Mutton Lane with The Walk to the north and an additional west-east link to the High Street. The public realm within the Site will be revitalised with new hard and soft landscape proposals which allow for a variety of flexible social uses and events in addition to enhance the overall appearance of the Site and also providing valuable outdoor amenity space for new residents.

Land Use

- The proposed land use for the Site comprises the introduction of new homes into the town centre with up to 293 additional residential dwellings, alongside complimentary retail and commercial space, high quality community uses and open space, which will all contribute to an active and vibrant urban neighbourhood and High Street. This will be achieved through the phased demolition and reconstruction of the existing buildings on site.
- The introduction of a residential led mixed-use development and new public realm will largely replace a collection of 20th century buildings and hard landscaped area used for car parking. This will mark a change in the intensity of use within the Site, with a resultant increase in vibrancy and activity levels in and around the new buildings and the adjoining streets.
- The introduction of residential apartments above commercial units at ground floor on the southern frontage to the High Street is considered appropriate to the local context with similar (albeit more modest) uses present in the surrounding townscape. They would result in a substantial increase in the residential population and activity levels which would bring about positive changes to the vitality and vibrancy of the local area. The proposals make effective use of balconies and space at upper and roof levels with podium gardens providing private and communal space for residents within the Site itself.
- The proposals will introduce a new north south link from Muttons Lane to The Walk which will enhance pedestrian connectivity. Likewise, the proposed central area of landscaped public realm connects to a pedestrian walkway which provides access to the High Street to the east. Overall, improving permeability across the Site and encouraging movements towards the High Street.
- The residential buildings have been designed in a courtyard arrangement which overlook amenity space for residents, resulting in a positive level of passive surveillance. Some of the spaces fronted by residential units would also be accessible to the public, offering access for all and open to the public. The existing landscaped area at the southern extent of the Site will be replaced and enhanced, retaining and reimagined the green character at the heart of the masterplan with a further piece of public realm connected through a permeable north-south link at the western edge perimeter of the Site and at the entrance to the High Street at the east. Ground floor spill out space across the Site is a key feature which will enhance the vibrancy of the neighbourhood at all times of the day, evenings and throughout the seasons. Car parking, required servicing and other vehicular routes are rationalised and visually contained through architectural and landscape design.

- As also relevant to the proposed development on Site, the adjoining Canada Life Building and original offices just outside that boundary, but as part of the immediate townscape context, has extent prior approval for use as residential. This further establishes the greater mix and intensity of uses within this part of the town centre. Similarly, the existing taller building within the Site itself also enjoys deemed consent for conversion from offices to residential use at the current time.



Figure 4.5: Extract of proposed Ground Floor Arrangement and Distribution of Uses for Proposed Development on Site (AFK Studios)

Urban Structure and Built Form

- As set out within the accompanying DAS and detailed drawings at application, the proposals comprises 4 principal blocks of new or replacement built form. The maximum height of the Proposed Development will be Ground + 14 storeys (Block A), with lower perimeter blocks to the Site and main street frontages ranging between Ground + 4 and Ground + 4 storeys (Blocks B and D), and Block E within the north western part of the Site within the depth of the urban block as a lower Ground + 3 storeys. The taller element of the Proposed Development will be located to the south west part of Site (and towards Mutton Lane), deliberately positioned away from High Street to the east and the listed buildings in that area, and as would also replace the existing established urban marker of the tall building Maple House in this location. This approach responds to the existing prevailing hierarchy and character of built form, retains and reinforces the existing contribution of Maple House as a local landmark to the town centre in terms of wayfinding and townscape legibility, and also looks to respect the most sensitive areas to change within that wider townscape.

- As part of the design process, the wider team have undertaken detailed research into the local and historic architecture within the town. This is demonstrated within the DAS in the sections covering historical development and local townscape / contextual characteristics, and also the supporting Heritage Statement prepared by SOCOTEC.
- The uses at ground floor across the site area provides flexibility of uses including active frontages along the High Street which could offer a mix of uses with residential use at upper levels.
- The DAS establishes a high-quality material palette that would respond to the local built context of Potters Bar. This will also ensure that a degree of variety is achieved across the scheme which will contribute to the design quality and visual interest of the scheme as a whole. In response to the prevailing and wider urban architectural character of the town centre brick has been chosen as the principal facing material, albeit with a mix of brighter red and softer buff tones between the different taller and lower perimeter blocks proposed to support that visual hierarchy and variety. The use of brick detailing, incidental use of glazed bricks, coloured metal panels and balcony / balustrades adds further richness and diversity to the architecture.
- The Proposed Development would include built form that maintains a comparable maximum height to that existing on Site; principally in replacing the tallest urban element of Maple House at 12 commercial storeys (equivalent to 13 residential storeys) with a new tall building and maintained local landmark role. As a result, the proposals would not introduce notable changes to the townscape of the Site in terms of the maximum height, overall scale and massing in relation to the surrounding wider townscape context. As further described in the DAS, the use of chamfering to corners (i.e. a faceted plan form) for the taller building on Site helps with orientation within the local townscape in marking arrival points for the tower and also edges to the central courtyard space, as well as a giving a more slender vertical profile reducing the width of this element in longer distance views / on the skyline. The proposed architecture and materiality is employed positively to establish a base for this taller building and visual grounding, a well-proportioned vertical grid to the upper storeys with further relief provided by fenestration and balconies, and crowning detail to the top parapet line to add distinctiveness in skyline views.
- It is acknowledged that there would be an increase in building heights for the perimeter blocks to the High Street and part of the Mutton Lane frontages, this is intended to reintroduce a more positive and stronger building line and urban enclosure to the Site and these key routes. This is also in accordance with planning aspirations for the redevelopment of the town centre area as part of the Hertsmere New Local Plan review (2024); to contribute positively to the activity and attractiveness of frontages and overall vibrancy of Potters Bar High Street. The proposed architecture and variation in materiality and detailing reinforces a regular vertical rhythm to the street elevations for the perimeter blocks, albeit tempered with a horizontal layering (or banding) across these frontage, overall breaking down the scale and massing visually, as well as adding interest. Balcony setbacks are also used as a device along these longer fronted and lower blocks to provided further articulation and again to break down that impression of scale and mass to the street views.
- The Proposed Development also includes the reuse and upgrading of the existing car park structure within the northern area and depth of the Site (screened away from the High Street) to provide residents only car parking. Painting of the existing brickwork facing is proposed, and a series of new pergola structures to the upper most level that will allow attractive planting to drape down

elevations to the courtyard garden below.

- The existing Canada Life Building which is surrounded by this Site is intended to be retained and revitalised in new residential use and with external material improvements (albeit now outside the application Site and scheme itself). The overall layout and heights and massing of the Proposed Development (new 4 surrounding blocks and shared open space between) has been designed to integrate with and also responsive to that retained existing building and its use as part of a more comprehensive approach to the future of this larger urban block to the west side of the High Street.

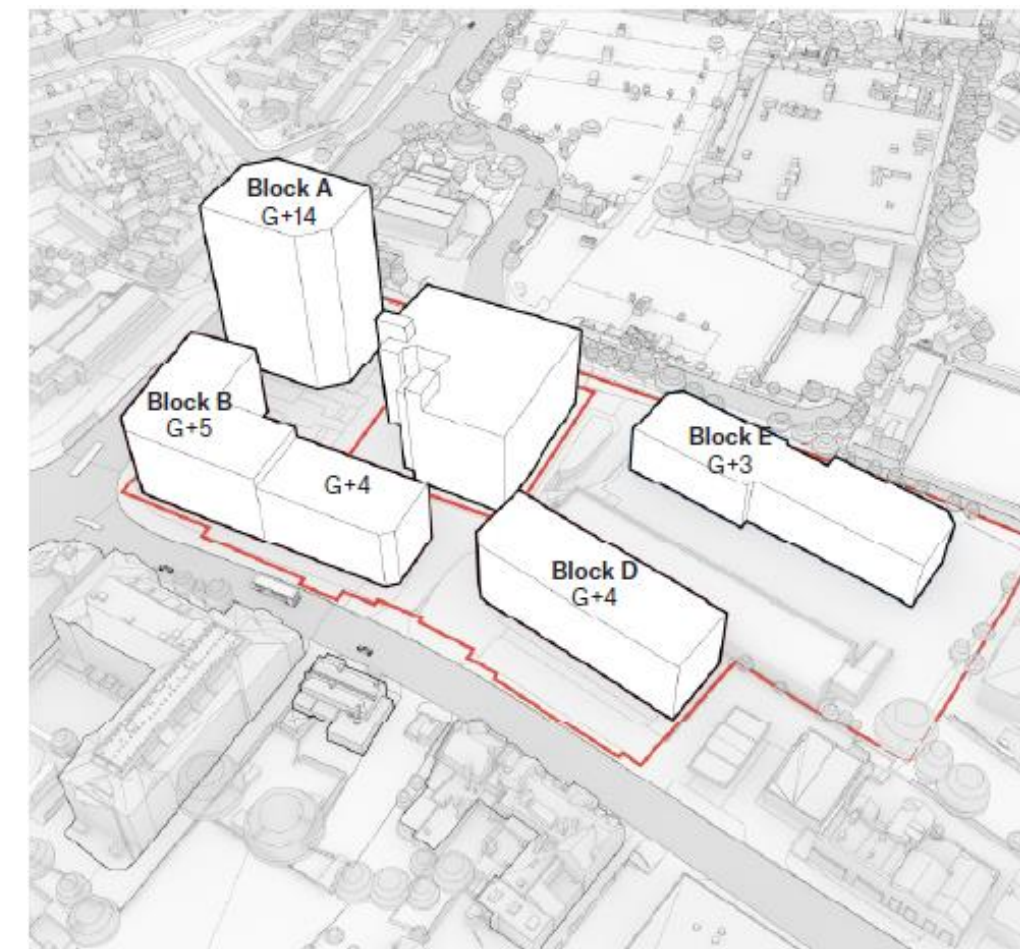


Figure 4.6: Extract of proposed Site Layout and Block Heights / Massing Principles of Proposed Development (AFK Studios)

Topography

- The Proposed Development would largely retain the existing levels at all edges of the development, limiting any direct effects on topography to within the Site itself. The streets and public access landscape areas will remain accessible.

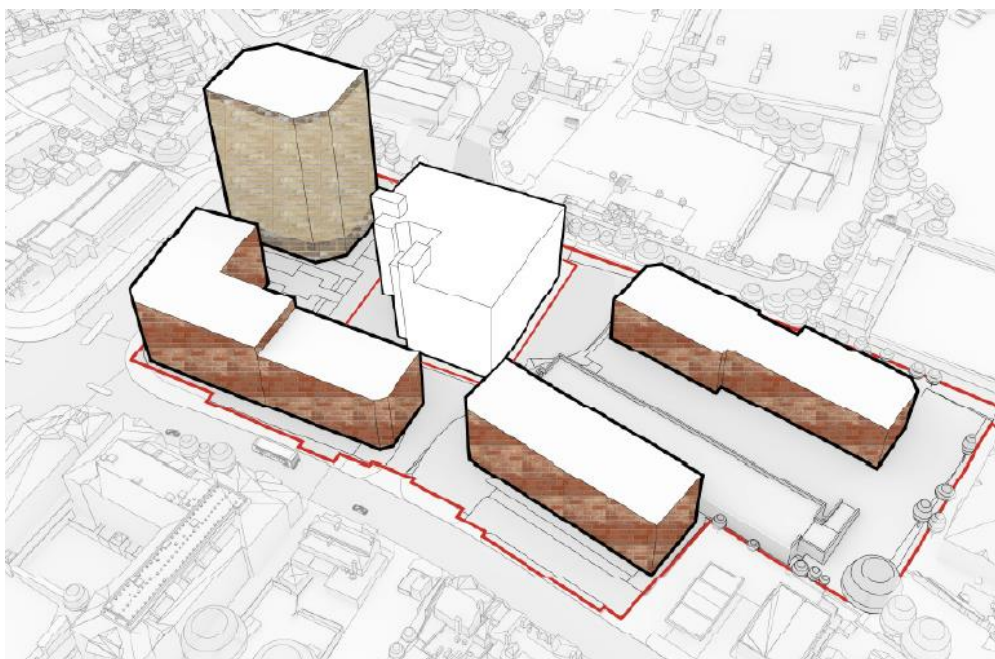


Figure 4.7: Extract of proposed Material Palette of Proposed Development, in response to the prevailing and wider urban architectural character of Potter Bar town centre (AFK Studios). The perimeter blocks are predominantly expressed in red brick, and taller Building A adopts a lighter buff brick

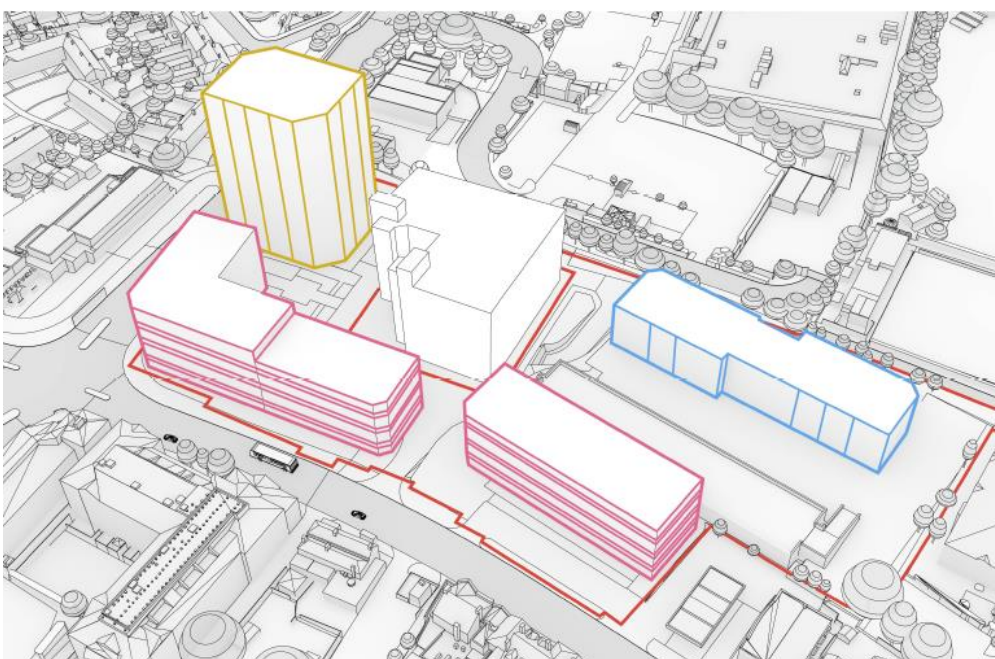


Figure 4.8: Extract of proposed architectural design Vertical and Horizontal Expression of Proposed Development (AFK Studios). The principal façade expression is designed to reinforce the three distinct block typologies, employing vertical, horizontal, and segmented architectural languages respectively

Vegetation, Public Realm and Open Space

- The new public realm is focussed on creating and enhancement to the High Street access. This will be achieved through legible spacing between the buildings, changing in paving surfaces, varied and attractive planters and soft landscaping scheme.
- The two central courtyard area within the depth of the Site will provide pockets of green space for residents who occupy the Proposed Development. These two new sites provide node points as part of the onward connectivity north and east out to the edge of the Site. Though additional planting and new green space as proposed this will have an overall positive effect on visual amenity from areas of publicly accessible space.
- The north south link at the western perimeter of the Site will be publicly accessible and lined by planting creating a landscaped avenue connecting to The Walk at the north.



Figure 4.9: Extract of proposed General Landscape Arrangement of Proposed Development on Site and within local context of town centre (MRG Studio)

- With further reference to the Landscape Strategy Report and associated design information prepared by MRG Studio, these proposals will result in an immediate, softening visual effect from completion of the landscape works and new or replacement planting. It is acknowledged that the development scheme will require the removal of an area of existing greenery towards the uncharacteristically open or broken urban edge to Mutton Lane (south), albeit this allows for the introduction of a more appropriate perimeter layout of new blocks and outward facing active frontages to the street sheltering two new and improved courtyard garden areas within the depth of the Site. Otherwise existing trees within the TPO (along the north and west edges of the Site) are to be protected as part of the wider development and integrated into the overall landscape design.

Accessibility and Movement

- The Proposed Development will introduce a new north south link through the Site as well as retain and enhance the existing east west links through the Site providing direct access to and from the High Street. The Proposed Development would connect with the existing network of streets and pedestrian routes within the town and would improve the experience of the local streetscape. The permeability across the Site would improve and the experience of using these routes would also improve. This is due to the increased natural surveillance and the creation of active frontages.



Figure 4.10: CGI of Proposed Development as viewed from within the Site and new southern courtyard garden / public realm looking south towards the taller building element (Preconstruct & AFK Studios)



Figure 4.11: CGI of Proposed Development as viewed from the north and new approach from The Walk looking south through the Site. Here a new string pedestrian link will be created with the enhancement of the hard and soft landscape, and the entrance to the Site is also framed by the retained existing mature trees (Preconstruct & AFK Studios)

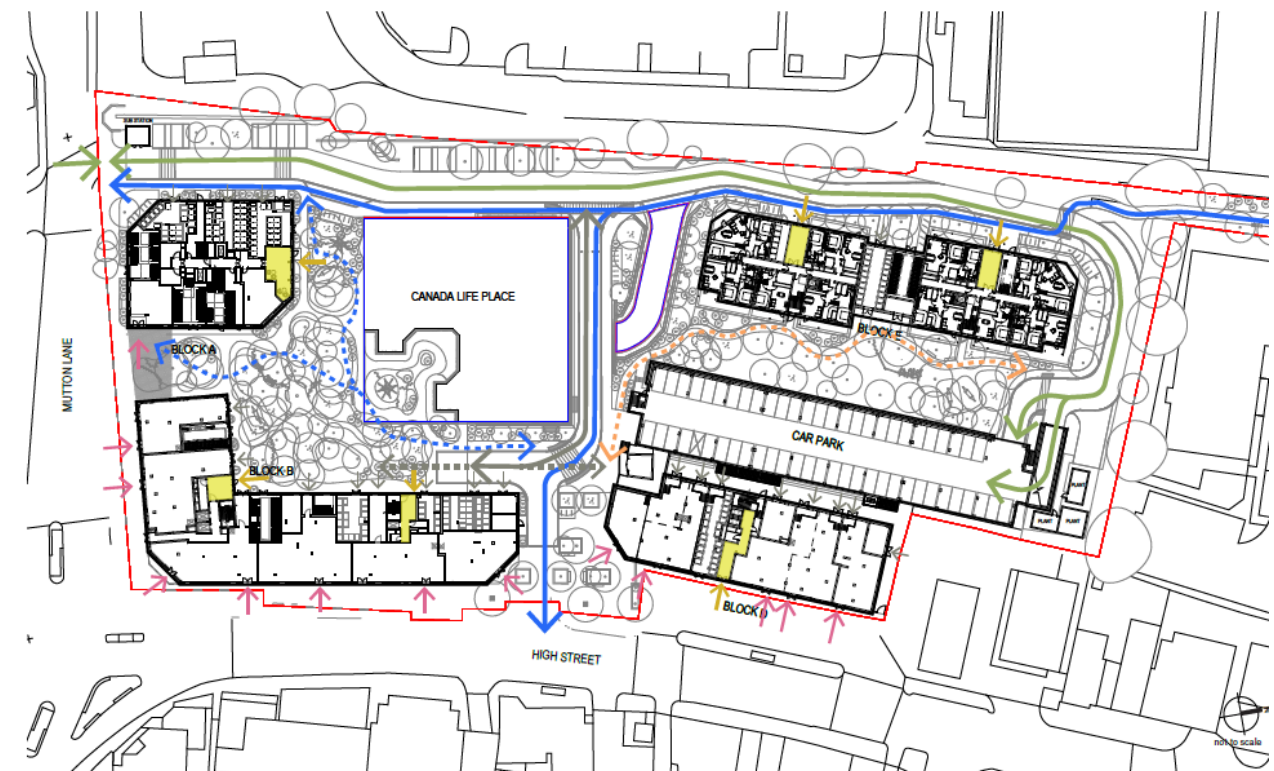


Figure 4.12: Extract of proposed Movement and Access Layout for Proposed Development on Site (AFK Studios)

- The Proposed Development would be highly accessible via public transport, walking distance from Potters Bar Station located on Darkes Lane to the west of the Site in addition to connections to the wider pedestrian network through the town centre and other local PRow routes.
- The M25 (London Orbital Motorway), Great North Road and Barnet Road are served by multiple bus and coach routes and also provide vehicular connection to London and the surrounding urban fringe settlements such as Barnet, Enfield, Finchley and Edmonton. The Proposed Development would benefit from this connection and retain the existing road network.
- Pedestrian experience and visual amenity would be improved through the proposed landscape design. This includes the enhancement of the Site itself through the regeneration of the public realm and the introduction of two central courtyard spaces. New hard and soft landscape design features would be implemented throughout the Site, including planting along the pedestrian walkways. Permeability would also be enhanced with direct connections made from the High Street to the east, with the western part of the Site which borders the Tesco Car Park, thus facilitating greater connectivity to both the immediate and wider townscape.

Design Evolution and Consultation

- 4.12 The Proposed Development has evolved through an iterative design process informed by engagement with Hertsmere Borough Council, including a number of pre-application meetings and also review by the Design Review Panel (DRP). The scheme presented to the DRP on 6 November 2025 comprised 364 residential units, 127 car parking spaces (including 113 within the retained multi-storey car park), approximately 1,900 sqm of commercial floorspace, and a series of communal and public open spaces.
- 4.13 The DRP report (shared with the team on 20 November 2025) identified a number of matters relevant to townscape and visual considerations. In particular, the panel recommended further review of the site layout and distribution of building heights to ensure that the proposed built form responded appropriately to the surrounding urban context and that public spaces were not adversely affected by overshadowing or inactive frontages. The panel also advised that the relationship between the development and the High Street should be strengthened to ensure the proposals respond positively to the established urban grain and the setting of nearby heritage assets, including the Grade II listed Cask and Stillage public house.
- 4.14 Following the DRP review, the scheme was revised and further discussed with the Council at a pre-application meeting on 23 February 2026, with written feedback issued on 12 March 2026. Officers confirmed that the Site forms part of a draft allocation within the emerging Local Plan and is considered a key opportunity site within the aspirational vision for Potters Bar. As such, the development has the potential to deliver a prominent town centre scheme which may act as a landmark within the wider townscape, enhancing the character, appearance and function of the High Street.
- 4.15 Pre-application discussions focused on the distribution of height, scale and massing across the Site. Officers acknowledged that the existing office buildings on the site already form relatively tall elements within the local townscape and are visible in longer-range views across Potters Bar. On this basis, the principle of taller buildings within the redevelopment was accepted, subject to the scheme demonstrating a high-quality design and a positive contribution to the townscape.

- 4.16 Officers considered the February 2026 pre-application scheme to be an improvement on earlier iterations of the design proposals; however, it was suggested that the transitions between building heights could be improved upon- managing the change in scale more effectively.
- 4.17 The latest proposals have responded to this feedback directly with buildings fronting the High Street proposed to be lower in height and the taller elements (Block A and C) set back from the street frontage and the height of Block B increasing towards the junction of High Street and Mutton Lane at the southern extent of the Site to provide a distinct corner appearance which would improve views towards the Site on key approach roads from the south such as Barnet Road and Southgate Road where the Site can be seen to terminate these views marking the start if the Principal shopping frontage at the High Street.
- 4.18 These frontage buildings have a horizontal reading, reinforced by striped brickwork and contrasting balconies. Proportions of the 'bay' elements appear to pick up on those of the parade of 1930's shops that would be demolished under this application. Officers noted that 'This reference back is welcome, but further studies of the important 1930's buildings should be conducted. This might include acknowledgement of the historic shop fronts (before more recent changes) and adopting the sloped parapet details to give more interest to the roof line, as suggested by the heritage advisor.' The design team responded directly to this feedback (insert page ref within the DAS which contains historic reference photographs), undertaking further historical studies of the High Street Elevations. Block D has been redesigned in the submitted proposals to have recessed bays which reflect the regular rhythm as existed previously and taller elements of the roof parapet have been set back away from the street frontage to respond to the listed building element opposite and reduce the overall expression of height, bulk and mass. Further high-quality detailed design measures such as the introduction of brick course details soldering around doors and entrances with differentiation between commercial and residential doors, in addition to the redesigned parapet which reflects the 1930s shop front.
- 4.19 Officers considered the taller buildings (i.e. Blocks A and C) to have a vertical appearance created by the façade articulation, using windows with green metal spandrel panels, which helps to promote a double-storey reading of these elements and accentuate the verticality of the brick elements. The suggestion of the use of a complementary, but different, brick tone to these two buildings was considered and applied, helping them to read as distinct parts of the same family of buildings with similar brick detailing through bonds helping to introduce depth and interest to the richness to the facades. Further refinement to the tops of the building Blocks A and C which softening at the corners and introducing a defined building crown which reduced their prominence on the skyline through the use of brick detailing and or attention to parapet design may help.
- 4.20 Due to the scale of development proposed, officers noted that the taller buildings have the potential to be visible in longer-range views within Potters Bar and its surrounding landscape. A preliminary Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) and viewpoint plan were therefore submitted for review as part of the pre-application process by Turley. Following consultation with landscape officers, it was agreed that an additional viewpoint from Public Right of Way 058 at the footbridge over the M25 (to the south of the site) would be included to assess views of the Proposed Development from the surrounding landscape around the urban settlement of Potters Bar. In response to this feedback, an additional viewpoint (RV12) from PRow 058 has been included within the visual assessment prepared by Ocean AVR and presented as a Type 4 photomontage. The ZTV plan has also been updated to include the Public Rights of Way network to clearly illustrate the relationship between potential visibility and publicly accessible viewpoints.

- 4.21 Following a further review of the scheme and its deliverability by the Applicant in April / May 2026 the red line boundary of the Site was changed and the area of the Proposed Development reduced accordingly. Although still within the Applicant’s ownership, the existing purpose-built modern offices Canada Life Building within the southern part of the Site have since been excluded from that Site for the purposes of this application for planning permission. As noted previously, prior approval has already been consented for the change of use of this building to residential. More recently a full planning application for external alterations to a retained and no longer demolished Canada Life Building has been submitted to the Council and is now pending consideration. These changes include new windows and replacement cladding as associated with that new use and also the wider aspirations and in conjunction with the design approach for the Proposed Development itself (and immediately surrounding Site).
- 4.22 As also described in the DAS and other submitted application material, this scheme for the Site has also been informed by public consultation and engagement in 2025 and 2026.

Sensitivity of Townscape / Landscape Receptors

- 4.23 The sensitivity of the townscape or landscape receptors relates to the value attached to that receptor (which was established as part of the baseline assessment) and the susceptibility of the receptor to the type of change or development proposed. Effects on townscape and or landscape character are both direct i.e. on the TCA that the Site is located within, and indirect i.e. changes to characteristics that occur beyond the boundary of the TCA and within other TCAs or the one LCA. An assessment of the sensitivity of each of the townscape / landscape receptors is provided in **Table 4.1**.

Table 4.1: Sensitivity of Townscape / Landscape Receptors

Townscape / Landscape Character Area	Value	Susceptibility to Change	Sensitivity
TCA 1- Commercial and Retail Frontage	Low	Low The townscape receptor is considered to have low susceptibility to change of the type proposed. The area is a defined town centre environment characterised by a strong commercial function and a clear capacity for higher-density mixed-use redevelopment. The Site as existing, contains a tall building which establishes a precedent for vertical scale and contemporary architectural style within the High Street context. As a result, the receptor has a strong ability to accommodate change of this nature without undermining the underlying structure and function of the townscape. The proposed mixture of uses would promote the commercial and civic uses of the High Street and Darkes Lane in accordance with the Site Allocation set out within the Local Plan Policy SADM42 (2016).	Low
TCA 2 Suburban Residential	Medium to Low Varying quality and value,	Low The townscape receptor is considered to have low susceptibility to change arising from the Proposed	Low

Townscape / Landscape Character Area	Value	Susceptibility to Change	Sensitivity
	small areas located within the designated Conservation Area boundaries (The Royds Conservation Area and Darkes Lane are medium value.	Development. Although the surrounding context is predominantly suburban in character and generally lower in scale, prominent taller elements are present within and adjacent to the town centre (including the existing Maple House tall building on Site) which establish a precedent for variation in height and built form. The receptor has some functional relationship with the type of development proposed on account of its shared use function which would provide a residential led mixed use scheme which would positively contribute towards the policy aspirations of the area (Site Allocation SADM42, Local Plan 2016). The overall suburban structure is therefore capable of accommodating limited visual and functional change without fundamental alteration to its character.	
LCA 3 Rural and Open Parkland	Medium	Low The landscape receptor is considered to have low susceptibility to the change proposed, primarily due to the distance from the Site and the presence of intervening urban development located within TCA1 and TCA2, and the partial visual containment provided areas of dense and mature vegetation. Although the area is characterised by openness and rural qualities, the influence of nearby infrastructure, including major transport corridors and the edge of the built-up area, reduces sensitivity to distant built form. The Proposed Development would be perceived in the context of the wider settlement pattern (including some taller building elements with a wider visual influence) rather than as a defining element of the rural landscape.	Low

Sensitivity of Visual Receptors

- 4.24 **Table 4.2** establishes the sensitivity of the previously identified visual receptors. This is based on the identification of the value of the visual receptor’s view and the susceptibility of change of the visual receptor to the Proposed Development on Site. The latter is established by considering the occupation or activity of people; and extent of attention or interest that may therefore be focused on the views and visual amenity.
- 4.25 National guidance in GLVIA3 notes that the visual receptors most susceptible to change are likely to include: people who are engaged in outdoor recreation whose attention is likely to be focused on the landscape (or townscape as defined as a category of landscape) and on particular views; visitors to heritage assets; and communities where views contribute to the landscape setting enjoyed by residents in the area. Visual receptors with moderate susceptibility to change include travellers on road, rail or other transport routes and visual receptors likely to be less sensitive to change include: people engaged

in outdoor sport or formal recreation; and, people at their place of work whose attention may be focused on their work or activity.

Table 4.2: Sensitivity of Visual Receptors

Visual Receptor	Value	Susceptibility to change	Sensitivity
Residents to the north of the Site (Representative Views: RV11)	Low The views experienced by visual receptors to the north of the Site do not comprise any designated, or non-designated, heritage assets, or a planning designation; and/or mentioned in guidebooks or on tourist maps; and/or referenced in art and literature. Suburban residential dwellings front alongside the roads and provide a cohesive appearance softened by landscaping associated with each dwelling and street trees provide an attractive feature which soften the suburban character where roads and parked cars are a frequent feature. As receptors move further north, away from the centre of Potters Bar, longer range views towards the surrounding open landscape can be seen (LCA 054 Potter Bar Parklands B as pictured on the designation plan included at Appendix 3.1) which contribute positively to the visual amenity. Overall, the views experienced by local residents to the north are unremarkable and typical.	Medium Views and visual amenity likely to be of moderate importance to pedestrians and road users moving between the residential townscape areas towards the town centre.	Low/Medium
Residents to the east of the Site (Representative Views: RV4; RV11)	Low The views experienced by visual receptors to the east of the Site. There are some designated heritage assets located at the western extent of the suburban area towards the High Street and the historic core, however for the most part built form comprises consistent suburban residential development in terms of scale, layout and appearance. As	Medium Views and visual amenity likely to be of moderate importance to pedestrians and road users moving between the residential townscape areas towards the town centre.	Low/Medium

Visual Receptor	Value	Susceptibility to change	Sensitivity
	found in the suburban area located to the north of the Site the residential dwellings are softened by landscaping associated with each dwelling and street trees provide an attractive feature. As receptors move further east, away from the centre of Potters Bar, longer range views towards the surrounding open landscape can be seen (LCA 024 Arkley Plain and LCA026 Hornbeam Hill (Enfield Chase) as pictured on the designation plan included at Appendix 3.1) which contribute positively to the visual amenity. Overall, the views experienced by local residents to the north are unremarkable and typical.		
Residents to the south of the Site (Representative Views: RV2, RV7)	Low The views experienced by visual receptors to the south of the Site. There are some designated heritage assets located beyond the 500m study radius including the Royds Conservation Area which is designated for its distinctive character created by the relationship between the estates spatial qualities and associated landscaping which creates an coherent inter-war style housing development when compared with the surrounding suburban detached and semi-detached dwellings which are typical of the area seen both of the north and east of the Site (as described above). As receptors move further south, away from the centre of Potters Bar, longer range views towards the surrounding open landscape can be seen (LCA 024 Arkley Plain and LCA026 Hornbeam Hill (Enfield Chase) as pictured on the designation plan included at	Medium Views and visual amenity likely to be of moderate importance to pedestrians and road users moving between the residential townscape areas towards the town centre.	Low/Medium

Visual Receptor	Value	Susceptibility to change	Sensitivity
	Appendix 3.1) which contribute positively to the visual amenity. Overall, the views experienced by local residents to the north are unremarkable and typical.		
Pedestrians and, users of Potters Bar High Street (Representative Views: RV1; RV2; RV5)	Low View or views experienced by the receptor along Potters Bar are of Low value, whilst there are some listed buildings along the High Street frontage which contribute some visual interest, for the most part buildings are unremarkable and typical of 19 th -to-20 th century commuter town development. The linear nature of the High Street (A1000) provides views along its length. There is a noticeable transition between the more suburban character at the northern end of the High Street where Morven Park, a National Trust parkland creates a more open character and slightly further to the south Oakmere Park to the east of the High Street which contribute positively to the overall aesthetic quality, although the busy road network of the A1000 which connects to the A1 provides noise and distraction.	Medium Views and visual amenity likely to be of moderate importance to pedestrians and road users moving between the residential townscape and the town centre.	Low/Medium
Pedestrians and, users of Darkes Lane primary retail frontage (Representative Views: RV8)	Low/Medium View or views experienced by the receptor along Darkes Lane are of low value. As described in the description for Potters Bar High Street, for the most part buildings fronting Darkes Lane itself are unremarkable and typical of 19 th -to-20 th century commuter town development. As found on the High Street there is a noticeable transition between the more suburban character at the northern end of the	Medium Views and visual amenity likely to be of moderate importance to pedestrians and road users moving between the residential townscape and the town centre.	Low/Medium

Visual Receptor	Value	Susceptibility to change	Sensitivity
	Darkes Lane where it adjoins Church Road. Potters Bar Station forms a focal point at the centre of the Darkes Lane as a major public transport node contributing to a lively and active streetscape. Darkes Lane Conservation Area which includes the Avenue, Heath Drive, Manor Way and Mountway Areas which adjoins Darkes Lane at its northern extent is of medium value. The Conservation Area Appraisal for Darkes Lane West (2010) states that “the views or vistas of Darkes Lane along its length are good from both directions and it also provides good views west along The Avenue, Heath Drive and Mountway”. This Conservation Area is visually contained and orientated along residential streets. Visibility from Darkes Lane itself is limited.		
Key road and corridor users (Representative Views: RV1; RV2; RV3; RV5; RV7)	Low The view or views experienced by the receptors approaching and leaving Potters Bar on the key routes located within the study area such as Southgate Road to the southeast which connects to the M25, along Potters Bar High Street which provides further connection to the A1 in the north and Muttons Lane to the southwest. Road users on these routes will be primarily focussed on vehicular movement, commuting and their destination. Whilst receptors within this group would be likely to be aware of the diverse and varied architectural character lining both sides of the streets which includes late 19 th century town expansion and suburban growth outward from the town centre. Some listed buildings would be experienced fleetingly, particularly	Low Views and visual amenity likely to be of minor importance to pedestrians and road users moving between the residential townscape and the retail core and using the surrounding road network.	Low

Visual Receptor	Value	Susceptibility to change	Sensitivity
	when travelling along the High Street though this would not be the focus of the receptor's attention. Overall, views experienced as part of the road users receptor group are considered typical or unremarkable.		
Users of recreational open space (Representative Views: RV4)	Medium The view or views experienced by the receptor group from within recreational amenity space are of medium value. Oakmere Park is a particularly well maintained and landscaped area of public open space with an attractive pond/ water feature and several walking routes through as well as play space for young children. Due to proximity to the High Street and surrounding suburban residential development located to the north, east and south the park has an enclosed character, and visual receptors will be aware of the town centre context located in proximity. Oakmere House (Grade II) in particular is an attractive designated heritage asset which informs the immediate setting of Oakmere Park which provides a contrast to the finer grain-built form which extend along the length of the High Street frontage.	High Views and visual amenity likely to be of high importance to pedestrians visiting the park.	Medium/High
Users of rural landscape and open parkland (Representative Views: RV10, RV11, RV12)	Medium Despite the large scale of the roads which surround Potters Bar at all sides which includes the M24, the A1 and smaller connecting roads in between, the wider context beyond these roads is characterised by high quality, verdant and in many places relatively picturesque landscape which has a natural character in contrast with character of Potters Bar Town Centre. As identified on the Designation Plan included at Appendix 3.1. Hertsmere identify	High Views and visual amenity likely to be of high importance to local residents visitors and users of rural open landscape and parkland surrounding Potters Bar.	Medium/High

Visual Receptor	Value	Susceptibility to change	Sensitivity
	severally views from within and out towards the surrounding Landscape Character Areas which are locally protected views experienced by the receptor which contribute positively to the visual amenity and aesthetic quality of the area.		

Townscape Impacts

- 4.26 The assessment of townscape impacts likely to arise from the Proposed Development comprised initially, an assessment of the likely changes to the key townscape elements within the Site as previously described in this section, and then an assessment of the impact of these changes on townscape character as established in our previous section describing the baseline conditions. The assessment has again been informed by review of the proposed scheme as set out in the DAS and the detailed plans, sections and elevations or other illustrative material produced by AFK architects, MRG Studio landscape architects and Preconstruct, and also the AVRs prepared for each of the representative views by Ocean AVR for townscape purposes.

Effects on Townscape / Landscape Receptors¹³

TCA1: Commercial and Retail Frontage (both Sub-Areas A and B)

- 4.27 The Site is located within this TCA and in particular Sub-Area A, Potters Bar High Street. As a result, there would be a direct and noticeable change to the character and appearance across the Site with the introduction of a new mix of uses and built development. The delivery of high density residential-led mixed use apartment blocks would not appear out of context given the existing baseline condition of the Site which comprises two high-density commercial developments across the Site which are of a comparable height and massing to that which is proposed as part of this application submission. This is also in accordance with planning aspirations / objectives for the regeneration and redevelopment of the town centre area as part of the emerging Hertsmere New Local Plan review (2024), and other existing policy and guidance for this local area.
- 4.28 The Proposed Development would increase permeability across this part of TCA1 (Sub-Area A) through the introduction of an open north south link across the Site adjoining with The Walk to the north and an east-west link through the Site which provides direct access to and from the High Street. The primary vehicular entry and service routes along the boundaries have been rationalised with a hierarchy favouring pedestrian activity implemented. Car parking would be incorporated within the built form; reusing and also upgrading and existing structure within the depth of the Site. The existing pedestrian access off High Street would remain and be legible throughout the scheme's development with the key buildings along the southern extent of the High Street frontage adjoining Mutton Lane redeveloped to provide greater activation and sense of enclosure as appropriate to the urban character and role of this main route. The southern access is the primary pedestrian route. The access points which currently lack legibility and visual interest: off Mutton Lane (to the south) will all be enhanced through landscape design and an effective new movement strategy for the Site. Overall the public realm within the Site will be revitalised with new hard and soft landscape proposals which allow for a variety of flexible social uses and events in addition to enhance the overall appearance of the Site and also providing valuable outdoor amenity space for new residents.
- 4.29 The proposed height, massing, architectural design and quality materiality / detailing of the proposals within the Site is considered to respect its urban context and town centre location; re-providing a key visual marker visible within the local wider townscape that indicates its location through the replacement of existing modern Maple House with a comparable taller built element to the south west of the Site. The new built form would continue to deliver this strong wayfinding function, provide visual interest, a

contextual response to the setting of the Site, active frontages and an improved relationship between the built form and public realm. These are considered to result in beneficial changes to local townscape character. The introduction of a new residential community would generate more activity and footfall within Potters Bar and support the function and prosperity of the High Street. The proposed mix of uses at ground and first floor would also generate greater activity and vibrancy in the local townscape. There would be some loss of existing open space and greenery to the south of the Site area fronting Mutton Lane, however the proposed development would instead provide a clearly defined building edge and active frontages more characteristic of the urban character of this town centre area and also the importance of that vehicular route, where the perimeter block model would help to strengthen the hierarchy of the High Street and introduce two principal new areas of public open space contained within the development area which would be visible / legible to access from the High Street itself where pedestrian footfall is greater. The proposals would overall include the increase of tree canopy cover and also provision for biodiversity and wildlife, alongside the retention and integration of existing TPOs as part of a wider landscape strategy.

- 4.30 Again, the existing Canada Life Building which is surrounded by this Site is intended to be retained and revitalised in new residential use and with external material improvements (albeit now outside the application Site and scheme itself). The overall layout and heights and massing of the Proposed Development (new 4 surrounding blocks and shared open space between) has been designed to integrate with that retained existing building as part of this larger urban block to the west of the High Street.
- 4.31 The key positive changes to townscape character as a result of the Proposed Development would include:
- Improvement in the condition of built form and public realm within the Site following redevelopment in accordance with the aspirations of the Site Allocation, contributing positively to the regeneration and overall vibrancy of the High Street;
 - Introduction of built form, public realm and public open space of high-quality design and construction that responds in scale, materiality and land use to the existing character of the townscape and aspirations for development in the local area. Including retaining the local landmark role and legibility of a taller building within the south part of the Site (albeit away from the more historic High Street edge) and reinforcement / reintroduction of lower perimeter blocks to better define, enclose and active surrounding streets in an appropriately urban manner;
 - Landscape improvements through planting, new spill out spaces and stopping points, improved connections and permeability with wider parts of the town centre and the introduction of extensive areas of public open space for the local community; and,
 - Creation of a new mixed-use community with associated activity, social interactions and open space which would create a more vibrant area and better integration across the town centre.
- 4.32 In overall terms, the type of effect of the Proposed Development on the character of TCA1 (including the Site itself) would be beneficial. The Proposed Development would include an appropriate mix of land uses which would integrate with and strengthen the character of this TCA which needs to evolve from its late 20th century conception and regenerate an area which would benefit from a comprehensive refurbishment. Whilst larger scale changes would be noticeable within the immediate area of the Site and

¹³ Note: Some views from within the character areas would experience a higher magnitude of change and these are considered separately as part of the visual impact assessment.

- surrounding TCA in terms of new and replacement built for at scale and contemporary architectural response, they would be consistent with the established townscape character of this urban area or otherwise reinforce and improve key town centre characteristics in terms of use and or built form and frontages. These changes would not result in the loss of any key townscape features of local significance.
- 4.33 The influence of the Proposed Development on the townscape of Sub-Area A within TCA1 (Potters Bar High Street) is demonstrated by the AVRs prepared for Representative Views 1, 2 and 5 and by the architectural CGIs and other illustrative design material included in the DAS. Whilst the magnitude of change is considered to be **Medium**, the Low sensitivity of the receptor results in an overall **Minor** level of effect, which would be **Beneficial** in townscape terms.
- 4.34 For the separate Sub-Area B (Darkes Lane) within this TCA that is focussed around the railway station c.1km to the west of the Site the influence of the Proposed Development on its townscape character is demonstrated by the AVR prepared for Representative View 8 and also as supported by the DAS. Visibility of change as a result of the proposed development on Site outside this other sub-area would be very limited, as would other experiential effects. The magnitude of change is considered to be **Very Small**, the Low sensitivity of the receptor results in a **Negligible to Minor** level of effect, which would overall be **Neutral**.
- TCA2: Suburban Residential (inclusive of Sub-Areas A, B and C)**
- 4.35 The Proposed Development would not directly affect the characteristics of TCA2. The key characteristics of this suburban area relating to the residential use, the historic built form and land use, and cohesive urban grain and prevailing scale would be maintained.
- 4.36 Indirect changes to character would result from the introduction of development within an adjacent character area. This would include the additional movement and activity generated by the Proposed Development and also improved connections to this area of townscape. Key vehicular routes would be unaffected. New pedestrian routes through the Proposed Development would enhance permeability. This has the potential to lead to positive impacts on character through greater footfall and vibrancy around the town centre. The Proposed Development, whilst not wholly characteristic but consistent with the established presence of taller built form would consolidate the residential character within TCA2 and active uses at ground floor would support the residential and community function of the surrounding area.
- 4.37 Due to the scale of the Proposed Development, which is notably taller than the suburban development located within TCA2, this scheme would form a noticeable element in the background of some views. However, as described in the baseline description for TCA2 at Section 2 the existing taller building (Maple House) located on Site is of comparable height, scale, form and massing to that which is proposed to replace it, also notable in existing views from the surrounding area within TCA2. The Proposed Development would sustain this established relationship, and also through higher quality architectural design and landscaping, will maintain the positive wayfinding role of the existing tall building, indicating the location of the High Street and the commercial and retail frontage within Potters Bar.
- 4.38 The influence of the Proposed Development on the townscape of TCA2 is demonstrated by Representative Views 3, 4, 6, 7 and 9 and by the architectural CGIs and other illustrative design material included in the DAS. The indirect change to the townscape character arising from the Proposed Development would overall be a **Neutral** type of effect, and also of **Small** magnitude. The overall level of effect would be **Minor to Negligible**.

- LCA3: Rural and Open Parkland**
- 4.39 The Proposed Development would not directly affect the characteristics of LCA3. The key characteristics of the area relating to the open and natural or rural landscape outside the boundary of the settlement of Potters Bar would be maintained.
- 4.40 Indirect changes to landscape character would result from the introduction of new or replacement built development within a TCA1 and one of the two town centre areas of Potters Bar that may be appreciable in longer distance views from the north or south from beyond that urban area. The Site separated from that wider open / green landscape setting by interposing built development contained within both TCA1 and TCA2 (Suburban Residential). At this distance it is unlikely that the additional movement and activity generated by the Proposed Development would effect key vehicular routes extending out into the surrounding countryside. The Proposed Development is compatible with the baseline characteristics of the LCA, and the proposed urban form and commercial / residential uses of TCA1 And TCA2 within Potters Bar that are clearly differentiated from this LCA.
- 4.41 The taller building element within the Site and Proposed Development would be seen in the background of some views from LCA3 looking towards the centre of Potters Bar, albeit only at a considerable distance and also from confined areas within that open space where topography and or intervening built or green features allow. Again, the existing taller building (Maple House) located on Site is of comparable height, scale, form and massing to that which is proposed to replace it. Therefore the Proposed Development would sustain this established relationship and the noticeable landmark role of the existing tall building signalling the location of Potters Bar High Street.
- 4.42 Overall, the Proposed Development would be perceived to some degree in the context of the wider urban settlement and its landscape setting, but would not materially influence the open rural or parkland character of LCA3 due to distance, topography and intervening development and established vegetation. The influence of the Proposed Development on the landscape of LCA3 is demonstrated by Representative Views 10, 11 and 12. The indirect change to the landscape character arising from the Proposed Development would overall be a **Neutral** type of effect, and also of **Very Small** magnitude. The overall level effect would be **Minor to Negligible**.

Table 4.3: Assessment of Effects on Townscape / Landscape Receptors

Townscape / Landscape Character Areas	Sensitivity	Magnitude of Change	Type of Effect	Overall Level of Effect
TCA1A - Commercial and Retail Frontage (High Street)	Low	Medium	Beneficial	Minor
TCA1B - Commercial and Retail Frontage (Darke Lane)	Low	Very Small	Neutral	Minor to Negligible
TCA2A-C - Suburban Residential	Low	Small	Neutral	Minor to Negligible
LCA3 - Rural and Open Parkland	Low	Very Small	Neutral	Minor to Negligible

Visual Impacts

4.43 The assessment of visual impacts likely to arise from the Proposed Development comprised initially, an assessment of the likely extent of visibility of the Proposed Development and the receptors likely to be affected, and as informed by each of the representative views as relate to each of those visual receptors. This assessment should be read in conjunction with the Accurate Visual Representations of the Proposed Development prepared by Ocean AVR for each of the agreed representative views across the local and wider townscape and landscape area around the Site, as included in full and at high resolution within **Appendix 4**, and also the DAS and the detailed plans, sections and elevations or other illustrative material produced by AFK architects, MRG Studio landscape architects and Preconstruct for completeness.

Extent of Visibility of the Proposed Development

4.44 The visibility of the Site would increase with the implementation of the Proposed Development. This is due to the presence of new taller built form within Block B and D fronting the High Street and the corner to Mutton Lane locally, although the replacement taller built element at the south west corner of the Site (former Maple House) would be of a comparable height and overall scale and massing to that existing; as would be seen in some longer distance views from within and outside the urban area of Potters Bar. The potential extent of visibility is demonstrated by the indicative computer generated ZTV run during the design development / pre-application stage, and provided in **Appendix 3**. The ZTV was produced using height information for the proposed buildings at that time provided by AFK architects. It should be noted that this visibility is based on available lidar data and does not take account of seasonal changes in leaf cover or some more recent development. The assessment of visibility has therefore been refined through the field study and the analysis of the AVRs subsequently prepared by the visualisation consultants.

4.45 The ZTV identifies visibility in immediate roads such as the High Street and roads which adjoin it, and medium to longer distance views from residential areas to the north, south, east and west as well as on key approach roads such as Southgate Road and Muttons Lane, Potters Bar Station to the west and areas located within the open landscape character surrounding Potters Bar. Due to the low-medium scale of existing built form surrounding the Site, the Proposed development is likely to be experienced from most areas due to the lack of containment and open character of the junction between the High Street / Muttons Lane / Southgate Road and Barnet Road in addition to the topography of the townscape. The ZTV also demonstrates how views of the Proposed Development would become possible from localised parts of public open spaces including Oakmere Park at the northern end of the High Street which is used for recreational and amenity purposes and open to the public. Glimpses of the taller building element as existing and also as would be replaced by new in a similar location and to a comparable height could be gained from certain areas of the wider landscape setting of the urban settlement of Potters Bar.

Assessment of Effects on Visual Receptors (including Representative Views)

4.46 **Table 4.4** below provides a summary assessment of the likely key effects of the Proposed Development on each of the visual receptors identified during the baseline appraisal.

4.47 Each of the visual receptors (as described in **Table 4.4**) would experience varying views of the Proposed Development as they travel along the indicated routes or within these areas (such as open spaces). The visual receptors would also experience a range of effects to visual amenity as a result of the Proposed Development. This range of effects is described in its entirety for the visual receptors. The representative views themselves (which are included in support and in full at **Appendix 4**) demonstrate a snapshot of this experience and have been used to inform the overall assessment accordingly.

4.48 Whether the type of effects have been identified as beneficial, neutral or adverse is based on a professional judgement made by the assessor. The proposed changes to views as a result of the new built form is likely to have both beneficial and adverse impacts and will be perceived differently by different individuals. Overall, it is considered that the new or replacement building designs are of high quality in architectural terms and materiality / detailing; alongside new public realm improvements and planting on Site, and that the height, scale and form of these buildings will be commensurate with its local townscape context (as experienced in views). However, it should also be noted that judgements on the appearance of the building will depend on the personal preferences of the individual. For some, the modern qualities of the proposed buildings would be seen as positive additions to the townscape and for others would be seen as a more negative addition.

Table 4.4: Assessment of Effects on Visual Receptors

Visual Receptor	Sensitivity	Commentary
Residents to the north of the Site (Representative Views: RV9, RV11)	Low/Medium	Residential receptors to the north would experience mid- to longer-range views of the Proposed Development, often filtered or partially screened by intervening suburban built form and vegetation, such as Mount Grace School which can be seen in the foreground of RV9 fronting Church Road. From this distance (circa 1km) only the upper levels of Block A and C would be visible above the existing roof and treeline. Due to the residential character of the roads, which curve and veer off to form cul-de sacs and closes such as Westwood Close, Heath Close and Kerdistone Close, the intervisibility with the Proposed Development would change as receptors move around the area. As a result, the Proposed Development would come into and out of view frequently, perceived within the context of an existing urban edge and the existing relationship between the tall building and lower scaled suburban development would be sustained. The replacement buildings, whilst contemporary in appearance, would maintain a comparable scale and massing overall. Where seen, the upper storeys of the proposed replacement Block A would introduce a modest change to the skyline through the high architectural quality of the design which has a distinct crowning detail, and softening at the edges to refine its profile in longer views. The regular fenestration details and vertical emphases through the main column introduces a slightly increased sense of vertical emphasis, articulation that helps to break up the overall massing, and also a more attractive architectural form and use of materials. The development would reinforce the legibility of the town centre location; with that re-provided taller urban element acting as a wayfinding element in marking the location of the High Street in middle and longer distance views within Potters Bar settlement area. Magnitude of Change: Small Type of Effect: Neutral overall Overall Level of Effect: Minor to Negligible
Residents to the east of the Site	Low/Medium	Views from the east are characterised by suburban residential streets with intermittent longer-distance views toward the town centre. As described for

Visual Receptor	Sensitivity	Commentary
(Representative Views: RV4; RV6)		the residential receptors to the north of the Site, the Proposed Development would be visible in the background of some views. RV6 is representative of this visual change, where the taller element of the Proposed Development (Block A) can be seen in the background of the view rising above the roofline of the existing suburban development fronting Carpenter Way. While the greater scale of development would remain noticeable relative to the surrounding lower-rise housing, this relationship is already established in the baseline condition. The proposals would introduce a more cohesive and higher-quality architectural expression, improving skyline composition and architecture for the taller Block A replacing Maple House; also sharing a distinct architectural identity through the consistent material palette, façade detailing and rhythm of fenestration and openings with lower perimeter blocks on Site. In some instances, receptors may perceive increased built density; however, this would be balanced by enhanced design quality which introduces depth to the façade adding visual interest and effectively reducing the overall impression of bulk and mass. Magnitude of Change: Small Type of Effect: Neutral overall Overall Level of Effect: Minor to Negligible
Residents to the south of the Site	Low/Medium	Visual receptors in residential areas to the south of the Site would experience varied impacts with respect to the visual changes introduced by the Proposed Development, depending on their proximity to the Site. RV2 taken from Barnet Road looking north towards the Site, would introduce a notable change oriented directly towards the southern end of the High Street, one of the few views where the lower elements of the scheme Block B and Block D would be seen and their relationship the High Street - continuing the retail frontage along Barnet Road - transition in scale and active frontages. The corner treatment and southern extent of Block B forming an L-shape creates greater definition to the street and appropriate urban enclosure. Enhanced public realm and new pedestrian links would be visible indicating permeability and encouraging movement through the Site itself. Visual interest and high quality architecture and use of materials / detailing would be an enhancement upon the existing building and red brick would provide a positive response to the existing context fronting the High Street such as the building located on the opposite side of the road at No.3 High Street. Varied parapet height and the articulation of balcony setbacks add visual interest, and the taller elements of the scheme are set back away from the historic High Street frontage. Overall the existing relationship between the tall building elements located on Site and the lower scale retail frontage to the High Street are retained RV3 taken from Mutton Lane is representative of the western approach to the site from the south, the existing vegetation which defines the boundary to the Tesco superstore car park is situated in front of the existing buildings and provide some partial screening. Visual distraction from the road limits the visual amenity in these views. The western elevation of the upper levels to the taller

Visual Receptor	Sensitivity	Commentary
		element at Block A would be visible. The high quality architecture and cohesive materials and detailed design would enhance the appearance of the view. Furthermore, the new pedestrian north south link along the western perimeter of the Site boundary would be visible in this view which is treated with a high quality public realm / landscaping scheme and access and movement strategy. Other comparable views toward the Site from further south within this suburban area, these are typically longer range and influenced more by intervening built form and vegetation. The Proposed Development would appear as a background feature within the wider townscape, with limited change to the composition of nearer field elements. The Proposed Development would be read in the context of the existing urban form and would not materially alter key characteristics of these views. In some cases, upper elements may modestly increase visibility on the skyline, however the replacement of existing buildings with a coordinated, high-quality scheme would represent a visual improvement overall. Proposed Block A would effectively replace the existing Maple House on Site at a comparable scale and massing overall, and in so maintain and reinforce the legibility of the town centre location with a taller urban element acting as a wayfinding element marking the location of the High Street. On approach into the town centre from the south the higher architectural quality of the taller building and use of materials / details would also be perceptible (alongside the lower but complementary perimeter block defining and activating the street edges). It is in RV7 looking directly north west along Southgate Road into the town from the M25 that the improved skyline appearance and reinforced local landmark role of the taller element can be appreciated visually. Magnitude of Change: Small/Medium Type of Effect: Beneficial Overall Level of Effect: Minor
Pedestrians and, users of Potters Bar High Street	Low/Medium	Receptors along the High Street would experience close-range and dynamic views of the Proposed Development. The scheme would introduce a notable change through redevelopment of the Site frontage, increasing enclosure and redefining the High Street, as demonstrated by RV1 at the junction with The Walk. The locally listed buildings Nos. 75, 77 & 79; 80, 82- 84; 86 and 88-110 High Street located within the fore and middle ground of the views would remain prominent and distinctive in their characteristics in relation to the Proposed Development. The location of the taller Block A has been strategically positioned at the south western edge of the Site, away from the more historic High Street frontage. This maintains the existing relationship between the existing taller building Maple House and the adjoining Canada Life Building (outside the Site) and also the lower perimeter buildings with retail frontages, and ensures that the proposed building read as background elements within views south along the High Street. Furthermore, the use of red brick with varying shades and articulated detailing through recesses and deep reveals will provide a complementary material palette and design response to the existing

Visual Receptor	Sensitivity	Commentary
		historic context and represents a sensitive response to the of the High Street improving upon the relatively blank and ordinary appearance of the existing commercial character of the grouping of the Canada Life and Maple House buildings (Blocks B and D). Activation of the ground floor frontage within proposed perimeter Blocks B and D at the eastern edge of the Site would result in an enhancement to the street scene, contributing positively to a sense of vibrancy at the southern extent of the High Street. Similarly, the proposed landscaping and public realm improvements will create a stronger sense of place and arrival within the town centre. RV5 is representative of the visual experience further north along the High Street, looking south. At this distance, the lower levels of the Proposed Development including ground floor activation and public realm enhancements are less noticeable, and visibility is limited to the upper levels of taller Block A alongside the existing modern block of Canada Life Building. Again, proposed Block A would effectively replace the existing Maple House on Site at a comparable scale and massing overall, and in so maintain and reinforce the legibility of the town centre location in townscape and visual terms. Within the local High Street area the higher architectural quality of this taller building and its use of materials / details would also be appreciable as a benefit. Whilst some receptors may perceive increased scale as more urban in character, this aligns with town centre aspirations and would be largely viewed as a positive enhancement to visual amenity. Magnitude of Change: Small/Medium Type of Effect: Beneficial Overall Level of Effect: Minor
Pedestrians and, users of Darkes Lane primary retail frontage	Low/Medium	Views along Darkes Lane are linear and framed by built form, with the entrance to Potters Bar Station acting as a focal point along the street. The Proposed Development would be visible in mid-range views, contributing to the town centre skyline. The development will reintroduce a taller building element through the replacement of Maple House, sustaining the visual relationship with the generally lower scaled urban development which surrounds. However, the high quality architecture and materials will deliver buildings which are recognisable residential in character. The detailed design will introduce taller elements which will have a stronger presence on the skyline. The contemporary architectural form, which may contrast with surrounding historic elements in places. However, the scheme would sustain and reinforce the role of the town centre as a key node and provide a visual marker within the urban structure identifying the location of the High Street. The overall effect would include enhanced legibility and vitality, although some localised perceptions of change in character may occur.

Visual Receptor	Sensitivity	Commentary
		Magnitude of Change: Very Small Type of Effect: Neutral overall Overall Level of Effect: Minor to Negligible
Key road corridor users	Low	Road users on key routes would experience transient, kinetic views of the Proposed Development. Their primary focus would be on movement and navigation, limiting sensitivity to visual change. The development would be noticeable in certain approach views, particularly where the Site is visible along key routes, and may act as a wayfinding feature indicating the town centre. However, the duration of views would be brief and the change would not substantially alter the overall visual experience of journeys through the area. Magnitude of Change: Small Type of Effect: Neutral overall Overall Level of Effect: Minor to Negligible
Users of recreational open space	Medium/High	Users of nearby open spaces (such as Oakmere Park to the north east of the Site and edge of the town centre) would experience partial or filtered views of the Proposed Development, often framed by vegetation and existing built form intervening. The development may be visible above the tree line or through gaps, introducing a more defined urban edge to the wider setting (albeit as may be effected in terms of visibility by season changes to leaf cover). Whilst this represents a perceptible change, the enclosed nature of many of these green spaces and their existing relationship with surrounding urban development means that the overall character would remain intact. Enhanced design quality of the buildings may contribute positively to the backdrop of these views. Magnitude of Change: Very Small Type of Effect: Neutral overall Overall Level of Effect: Minor
Users of rural landscape and open parkland	Medium/High	From the wider rural / parkland landscape surrounding the urban settlement of Potters Bar the Proposed Development would be visible as a distant element within that townscape area. The scale of the development may result in slightly increased prominence on the skyline; however it would be read in the context of the existing established settlement and infrastructure. The taller building element proposed within the Site would be seen in the background or on the skyline of some views back from the wider countryside setting, albeit only at a considerable distance and also from confined areas within that open space where topography and or intervening built or green features allow (albeit as may be effected in terms of visibility by season changes to leaf cover). The existing taller building (Maple House) located on Site is of comparable height, scale, form and massing to that which is proposed to replace it, therefore the Proposed Development would sustain this established visual relationship and its local landmarking role for the High Street. These changes would be limited and

Visual Receptor	Sensitivity	Commentary
		would not materially affect the rural open and green character or key visual attributes of these views. Magnitude of Change: Very Small Type of Effect: Neutral overall Overall Level of Effect: Minor

5. Summary

- 5.1 This TVIA report has been founded on a thorough study of the Site at Maple House, Nos.8-16 (even) & 30-32 High Street and Nos.1-7 Princes Parade, Potters Bar, and its local and wider townscape and visual context. Through understanding and appreciating these features and resources, a robust impact appraisal of the Proposed Development has been undertaken. The assessment has included:
 - A review of relevant legislation, planning policy and guidance;
 - Identification of the baseline quality and characteristics of the local townscape character, visibility, visual amenity and key views, and the identification of relevant townscape and visual receptors and associated representative viewpoints; and
 - Assessment of the likely impacts of the Proposed Development on Site on townscape character, visual amenity and key views (i.e. townscape and visual receptors).
- 5.2 This report and its process has been informed by review of the DAS prepared by AFK Studios architects, which provides a comprehensive description of the scheme design and its approach. This design information is integrated with and also supported by the Landscape Strategy Report prepared by MRG Studio as part of the full application submission. Our assessment has been further informed by review of the detailed plans, sections and elevations and other illustrative material produced by the appointed architects and Preconstruct, and also the AVRs prepared for each of the agreed representative views by Ocean AVR for TVIA purposes.
- 5.3 For ease of reference the Proposed Development on Site for the purposes of an application for full planning permission is described as:

“Partial demolition of existing buildings (with retention of existing two-storey car park and substation) and redevelopment of the site to provide a mixed-use development comprising residential apartments (Class C3) and flexible commercial floorspace (Class E) across 4 Blocks and associated internal roads, parking, drainage, landscaping, amenity space and associated works.”
- 5.4 This scheme looks to provide a balanced mix of residential and commercial spaces through high quality architecture and landscape proposals. The scheme seeks to enliven the High Street, through the demolition of the existing buildings on Site which make little contribution to the character and appearance of the town centre currently, and their replacement with a series of new buildings which have been sensitively designed to respond to the surrounding context in terms of their height, materials, detailed design and land-use character. The proposals also include the creation of a new pedestrian north-south walkway at the western edge of the Site connecting Mutton Lane with The Walk to the north and an additional west-east link to the High Street. The public realm within the Site will be revitalised with new hard and soft landscape proposals which allow for a variety of flexible social uses and events in addition to enhance the overall appearance of the Site and also providing valuable outdoor amenity space for new residents.

- 5.5 A Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) was produced at an earlier stage in the process to understand where in the surrounding townscape and or landscape the Proposed Development and Site was likely to be visible. This consideration of visibility was used to identify the visual receptors and key views with potential to be affected and so to inform the selection of representative views for verified visualisation and subsequent technical assessment. The location of the representative viewpoints and visualisation types to illustrate the scheme proposals were agreed in discussion with officers at HBC at pre-application stage in advance.
- 5.6 The TVIA identifies overall that the key positive changes to townscape character (and for the associated local visual receptors and views) as a result of the Proposed Development on Site would include as follows:
 - Improvement in the condition of built form and public realm within the Site following redevelopment in accordance with the aspirations of the Site Allocation, contributing positively to the regeneration and overall vibrancy of the High Street;
 - Introduction of built form, public realm and public open space of high-quality design and construction that responds in scale, materiality and land use to the existing character of the townscape and aspirations for development in the local area. Including retaining the local landmark role and legibility of a taller building within the south part of the Site (albeit away from the more historic High Street edge) and reinforcement / reintroduction of lower perimeter blocks to better define, enclose and active surrounding streets in an appropriately urban manner;
 - Landscape improvements through planting, new spill out spaces and stopping points, improved connections and permeability with wider parts of the town centre and the introduction of extensive areas of public open space for the local community; and,
 - Creation of a new mixed-use community with associated activity, social interactions and open space which would create a more vibrant area and better integration across the town centre.
- 5.7 In summary, the identified effects of the Proposed Development on Site on the key townscape receptors (i.e. townscape / landscape character areas) were as follows in **Table 5.1**.

Table 5.1: Summary Assessment of Effects on Townscape / Landscape Receptors

Townscape / Landscape Character Areas	Sensitivity	Magnitude of Change	Type of Effect	Overall Level of Effect
TCA1- Commercial and Retail Frontage	Low	Medium	Beneficial	Minor
TCA1B - Commercial and Retail Frontage (Darke Lane)	Low	Very Small	Neutral	Minor to Negligible
TCA2A-C - Suburban Residential	Low	Small	Neutral	Minor to Negligible
LCA3 - Rural and Open Parkland	Low	Very Small	Neutral	Minor to Negligible

5.8 The identified effects of the Proposed Development on Site on the key visual receptors (and as informed by review of the verified visualisations prepared for each of the agreed representative views) were as follows in **Table 5.2**.

Table 5.2: Summary Assessment of Effects on Visual Receptors

Visual Receptor	Sensitivity	Magnitude of Change	Type of Effect	Overall Level of Effect
Residents to the north of the Site	Low/Medium	Small	Neutral	Minor to Negligible
Representative Views: RV9, RV11				
Residents to the east of the Site	Low/Medium	Small	Neutral	Minor to Negligible
Representative Views: RV4; RV6				
Residents to the south of the Site	Low/Medium	Small/Medium	Beneficial	Minor
Representative Views: RV2; RV3; RV7				
Pedestrians and, users of Potters Bar High Street	Low/Medium	Small/Medium	Beneficial	Minor
Representative Views: RV1; RV2; RV5				
Pedestrians and, users of Darkes Lane primary retail frontage	Low/Medium	Very Small	Neutral	Minor to Negligible
Representative Views: RV8				
Key road and corridor users	Low	Small	Neutral	Minor to Negligible
Representative Views: RV1; RV2; RV3; RV5; RV7				
Users of recreational open space	Medium/High	Very Small	Neutral	Minor
Representative Views: RV4				
Users of rural landscape and open parkland	Medium/High	Very Small	Neutral	Minor
Representative Views: RV10, RV11, RV12				

5.9 Our review of policy and guidance documents of relevance to the Site and Proposed Development established the baseline aspirations for the local area (and site allocation) and key design principles and requirements for its regeneration and redevelopment. With regard to the Hertsmere Core Strategy (2015) Local Development Plan Document, and specifically *Policy CS20 Securing Mixed Use Developments* which promotes mixed used developments within Town Centre locations, including Potters Bar High Street and *Policy CS27: Town Centre Strategy* and *Policy CS28: Strengthening the Town Centre* sets out design criteria for new developments in order to make a positive contribution to public realm and sense of place, reinforcing characteristics that are valued locally. The policy sets out considerations for how development will be assessed including potential impacts on urban structure, permeability and legibility, density and mix, scale and massing, architectural detailing, impacts on nearby residents and occupiers, impacts on important views and vistas and the setting of heritage assets. Development will be expected to have regard to local context including valued landscape and townscape characteristics.

Appendix 1: Relevant Legislation, Planning Policy and Guidance

Legislation

European Landscape Convention

The European Landscape Convention (ELC) provides a basis for closer co-operation on landscape issues across Europe and was signed and ratified in the UK. This recognition to landscape matters raises the profile and the ELC has been set out to improve approaches to the planning, management and protection of landscapes throughout Europe. The ELC defines landscape as: “... an area, as perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors” and it includes ‘townscape’, as well as all forms of rural landscape.

Associated national guidance includes:

Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, 3rd edition, 2013 (Landscape Institute and Institute for Environmental Management and Assessment) (GLVIA3)

Townscape Character Assessment, 2017 (Landscape Institute Technical Information Note 05/2017)

Visual Representation of Development Proposals, 2019 (Landscape Institute Technical Information Note 06/19)

National Policy and Guidance

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2025

The Framework was first introduced in March 2012 as the full statement of Government planning policies covering all aspects of the planning process. It has subsequently been revised and republished, with the most recent version issued in December 2024 and then republished with correction in February 2025.

In December 2025, the Government published a draft NPPF for consultation. The timescales for adoption are yet to be confirmed, but it is likely the new NPPF will be in place during the determination of a forthcoming planning application. Therefore, whilst the draft policies are being consulted on and subject to change, consideration should be given to the proposed direction of travel with regards to a number of policy areas.

Chapter 12 of the Framework outlines the Government’s guidance regarding achieving well-designed and beautiful places.

Paragraph 131 establishes that for the Government the creation of high quality buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities. Being clear about design expectations, and how these will be tested, is essential for achieving this.

Paragraph 135 sets out that planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments:

“a) will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development;

b) are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping;

c) are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increased densities);

d) establish or maintain a strong sense of place, using the arrangement of streets, spaces, building types and materials to create attractive, welcoming and distinctive places to live, work and visit;

e) optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development (including green and other public space) and support local facilities and transport networks; and

f) create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users; and where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion and resilience.”

Paragraph 137 establishes that design quality should be considered throughout the evolution and assessment of individual proposals.

Paragraph 139 states that permission should be refused for development of poor design that fails to take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area and the way it functions, taking into account any local design standards or style guides in plans or supplementary planning documents. Conversely, where the design of a development accords with clear expectations in plan policies, design should not be used by the decision-maker as a valid reason to object to development. Local planning authorities should also seek to ensure that the quality of approved development is not materially diminished between permission and completion, because of changes being made to the permitted scheme.

Paragraph 139 also sets out that in determining applications, great weight should be given to outstanding or innovative designs which promote high levels of sustainability or help raise the standard of design more generally in an area, so long as they fit in with the overall form and layout of their surroundings.

Paragraph 187 of the NPPF goes on to say that the planning system should ‘*contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment*’ by a number of things including:

a) protecting and enhancing valued landscapes...(in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the development plan);

b) recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside ...

Paragraph 188 states that ‘*Plans should: distinguish between the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites; allocate land with the least environmental or amenity value, where consistent with other policies in this Framework; take a strategic approach to maintaining and enhancing networks of habitats and green infrastructure; and plan for the enhancement of natural capital at a catchment or landscape scale across local authority boundaries.*’

Chapter 16 Conserving and enhancing the historic environment, sets out the Government’s policies regarding planning and the historic environment. The glossary of the NPPF (Annex 2) defines conservation as the process

of maintaining and managing change to a heritage asset in a way that sustains and, where appropriate, enhances its significance.

MHCLG: National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG)

National Planning Practice Guidance was first issued in 2014 by the Government as a web resource, including a category on conserving and enhancing the historic environment. This is intended to provide more detailed guidance and information with regard to the implementation of national policy set out in the NPPF. It has been updated as a living document and web resource, most recently in 2025.

DLUHC & MHCLG: National Design Guide: Planning practice guidance for beautiful, enduring and successful places 2021

The government has published the National Design Guidance to underpin the NPPF design policies. The purpose of this document is to set out how well-designed places are recognised, and to assist policy makers, decision takers and applicants preparing applications.

The document outlines and illustrates the Government’s priorities for well-designed places in the form of ten characteristics which form an overarching framework.

“Well-designed places have individual characteristics which work together to create its physical Character. The ten characteristics help to nurture and sustain a sense of Community. They work to positively address environmental issues affecting Climate. They all contribute towards the cross-cutting themes for good design set out in the National Planning Policy Framework.”

The ten characteristics are summarised as follows:

- Context – enhances the surroundings.
- Identity – attractive and distinctive.
- Built form – a coherent pattern of development.
- Movement – accessible and easy to move around.
- Nature – enhanced and optimised.
- Public spaces – safe, social and inclusive.
- Uses – mixed and integrated.
- Homes and buildings – functional, healthy and sustainable.
- Resources – efficient and resilient.
- Lifespan – made to last.

¹⁴ <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/planning-practice-guidance>

The National Model Design Code (2021) expands on the ten characteristics of good design set out in the National Design Guide, which reflects the government’s priorities and provides a common overarching framework for design.

Note that - The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government keeps an updated collection of planning practice guidance to help support the public’s ongoing understanding and correct application of the National Planning Policy Framework. The guidance is kept on a wiki-style website and has pages on topics that range from Renewable and low carbon energy to First Homes.¹⁴

Local Policy and Guidance (the Development Plan)

The Development Plan relevant to Hertfordshire and the local planning authority area of Hertsmere within that larger designation comprises a combination of county-level and district-level planning documents. For development proposals within Hertsmere Borough Council, including Potters Bar High Street, the statutory Development Plan is made up of the following:

- **District and Borough Local Plans (including the Hertsmere Local Plan)**
- **Neighbourhood Plans (where adopted)**
- **Waste Core Strategy and Development Management Policies Development Plan Document (adopted November 2012)**
- **Waste Site Allocations Development Plan Document (adopted July 2014)**
- **Minerals Local Plan (adopted 2007)**

These documents collectively guide the scale, location and design of development, alongside material considerations including national planning policy and guidance.

The Development Plan for Hertsmere Borough Council comprises the following key planning policy documents:

- **Hertsmere Local Plan Core Strategy (2013) (“CS”)**
- **Hertsmere Site Allocations and Development Management Policies Plan (2016) (“SADMPP”)**

A summary of policies relevant to townscape, design and visual matters is provided below.

Policy CS14: Protection or Enhancement of Heritage Assets

Policy CS14 requires that all development proposals conserve or enhance the historic environment of the Borough. It states that:

Planning permission will be granted for proposals which:

- (a) preserve or enhance heritage assets and their settings, including Conservation Areas and Listed Buildings;

- (b) are sensitively designed to a high quality, reflecting local character and distinctiveness; and
- (c) avoid harm to designated and non-designated heritage assets, including archaeological remains.

The Council will take into account relevant evidence, including Conservation Area Appraisals and archaeological assessments, when determining applications.

In the context of Potters Bar High Street, development proposals must demonstrate an understanding of the local townscape and historic context, ensuring that new development integrates appropriately and enhances the character of the area.

Policy CS20: Securing Mixed Use Development

Policy CS20 promotes mixed-use development on suitable sites, particularly where it can enhance the functionality and vitality of centres such as Potters Bar.

The suitability of a site to accommodate mixed-use development will be assessed having regard to:

- (a) the need for additional services and facilities within the area;
- (b) opportunities to create linkages with surrounding land uses;
- (c) accessibility by public transport and the capacity of the local highway network; and
- (d) the ability to deliver a coherent and integrated form of development.

Within Potters Bar High Street, mixed-use development—such as commercial uses at ground floor with residential above—is supported where it contributes to activity, surveillance and vitality, whilst making efficient use of land.

Policy CS22: Securing a High Quality and Accessible Environment

Policy CS22 of the Core Strategy seeks to ensure that all development is of a high standard of design and contributes positively to the character and functionality of the Borough. It states that:

Planning permission will be granted for proposals which:

- (a) achieve a high quality of design, creating attractive, functional and usable places;
- (b) take opportunities to improve the character and environmental quality of the area, including along Potters Bar High Street;
- (c) conserve and, where appropriate, enhance the Borough’s historic environment;
- (d) respond to the cumulative impacts of development, including intensification and redevelopment within established urban areas;
- (e) incorporate principles of crime prevention and community safety through design; and
- (f) ensure inclusive access, with development designed to be fully accessible to all users, including those with mobility impairments.

The policy also promotes the delivery of accessible housing, including Lifetime Homes standards and, where appropriate, provision for wheelchair accessible dwellings on larger schemes.

In the context of Potters Bar High Street, this policy requires development to respond sensitively to the established townscape, enhance visual amenity, and contribute to a safe, inclusive and high quality public realm.

Policy CS27: Town Centre Strategy

Policy CS27 supports development within designated town centres, including Potters Bar, provided that proposals maintain and enhance their role as centres for retail, service, leisure and community uses.

Potters Bar is characterised by two distinct centres: Darkes Lane and the High Street. The policy identifies that:

- Darkes Lane functions as the primary retail focus;
- Potters Bar High Street performs a complementary role with a broader mix of uses.

The Council promotes:

- a primary frontage within Darkes Lane focused on retail uses; and
- a secondary frontage along the High Street, where a more diverse mix of uses is appropriate.

Within Potters Bar High Street, development proposals should therefore:

- (a) support a mix of uses including specialist retail, financial and professional services, leisure, healthcare and dining (Class A3);
- (b) maintain an appropriate balance of uses, with stricter control over A4 (pubs and bars) and A5 (takeaways); and
- (c) contribute positively to the environmental quality and vitality of the High Street.

This approach supports the evolution of the High Street as a mixed-use environment that complements, rather than competes with, the primary retail function of Darkes Lane.

Policy CS28: Strengthening Town Centres

Policy CS28 seeks to reinforce the vitality and viability of designated centres through the identification of primary and secondary frontages.

Within secondary frontages, such as Potters Bar High Street, the policy supports:

- (a) a mix of uses including retail (A1), financial and professional services (A2), and dining uses (A3);
- (b) an appropriate proportion of other town centre uses, including leisure and entertainment; and
- (c) opportunities for residential development, particularly where this would support the reuse of vacant or underutilised premises.

The policy also supports measures to address long-term vacancy and improve the overall condition and attractiveness of town centres.

For development on Potters Bar High Street, this policy encourages proposals that diversify the offer, support footfall, and enhance the overall vitality of the centre through an appropriate mix of uses.

Emerging New Local Plan

The emerging Local Plan for Hertsmere Borough Council is currently at preparation stage and is supported by a series of place-based Vision documents being prepared for the Borough's main settlements, including Potters Bar. These Vision documents, being developed in collaboration with urban design specialists AR Urbanism and Something Collective, are intended to provide clear, locally distinctive guidance on the future growth, regeneration and design of each settlement. They will establish overarching principles relating to development form, character, infrastructure, public realm and active travel, and are intended to inform and complement the emerging Local Plan evidence base.

The Regulation 18 Consultation Document of the HBC Local Plan was consulted on between April and May 2026. This includes a number of local planning policies relevant to the Proposed Development and the Site in relation to townscape character and visual amenity / views matters accordingly. These include:

- Policy HQD1 Delivering High Quality Design in Hertsmere
- Policy HQD3 Public Realm and Connecting Places
- Policy HQD4 Building Heights
- Policy HE1 Hertsmere's Historic Environment
- Policy HPBA1 Potters Bar Town Centres

The supporting Draft Potters Bar - Key Themes & Priorities Report was published in March 2026, which envisions new development for the two centres that will optimise the use of suitable land within this existing urban area, including opportunities for regeneration, infill and intensification, while ensuring that development respects the character of the town and its surrounding landscape.

Subsequently, the emerging Draft Local Plan will replace the Core Strategy once adopted. Whilst the emerging Local Plan establishes the key visions and ambitions for the Hertsmere Council, at this stage of the plan process these emerging documents carry more limited weight in the planning balance.

Supplementary Planning Documents and Guidance (SPD/SPG)

The ***Conservation Area Appraisals*** for The Royds Estate (October 2014) and Darkes Lane (West) (2011), Potters Bar, are published and adopted planning guidance documents prepared by Hertsmere Borough Council. The Royds Conservation Area, designated in 2000, covers properties in Oakroyd and Elmroyd Avenue and Close, along with Nos. 48–86 and 53–63 Baker Street. The Darkes Lane (West) Conservation Area includes the Avenue, Heath Drive, Manor Way, and Mountway areas. These appraisals provide a detailed assessment of the character, quality, and historic significance of the areas, identifying positive, neutral, and negative features and offering clear guidance for the management, enhancement, and control of development. As adopted guidance, they inform planning decisions within and adjacent to the conservation areas, including proposals affecting Potters Bar High Street, ensuring that development preserves or enhances the architectural and historic character of these areas.

The ***Landscape and Visual Sensitivity Assessment (2020)*** forms a key part of the evidence base supporting the emerging Hertsmere Local Plan. The study comprises two main elements: the Landscape Sensitivity Assessment (LSA) and the Outline Landscape Appraisals (OLA) Report. The LSA evaluates the sensitivity of different landscape

types and character areas to potential change, providing guidance on the capacity of the landscape to accommodate development. The OLA Report provides detailed appraisals of specific sites, assessing visual impact, landscape character, and potential mitigation measures. Collectively, these documents inform the Council's planning policies, ensuring that future development, including proposals in Potters Bar High Street, responds appropriately to the character, quality, and sensitivity of the local landscape and townscape.

The ***Settlement Hierarchy and Accessibility Mapping Analysis*** forms an integral part of the evidence base for the emerging Hertsmere Local Plan. This technical study assesses the size, function, and capacity of settlements across the Borough, including Potters Bar, and evaluates accessibility to services and public transport. The report is divided into two parts: Part I addresses the settlement hierarchy, while Part II focuses on accessibility mapping. The findings complement other key evidence, including the Green Belt review, Infrastructure Development Plan, Sustainability Appraisal, and Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (HELAA), providing a robust basis for identifying sustainable locations for future growth.

Appendix 2: Townscape and Visual Impact Appraisal Methodology

Assessment Methodology

Overview

The methodology for Townscape and Visual Impact Assessment (TVIA) is based on current best practice as set out in:

- Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, 3rd Edition (GLVIA 3) (Landscape Institute and Institute for Environmental Management and Assessment, 2013) and related documents
 - Landscape Character Assessment, 2016 (Landscape Institute: Technical Information Note 08/2015);
 - Townscape Character Assessment, 2017 (Revised April 2018) (Landscape Institute: Technical Information Note 05/2017); and
 - Visual Representation of Development Proposals, 2019 (Landscape Institute Technical Information Note 06/19).

GLVIA 3 states that this type of assessment provides a tool for identifying and assessing “*the effects of change resulting from development on both the landscape as an environmental resource in its own right and on people’s views and visual amenity*” (Para. 1.1). The guidance emphasises the importance of carrying two interlinked elements in assessments; landscape (or townscape) as a resource; and, visual amenity, including views. The effects of both must be addressed in the assessment.

GLVIA3 presents guidance for a landscape-based approach to townscape describing ‘townscape’ as the landscape within the built-up area, including the buildings and the relationships between them. It also advises that townscape assessments will likely require a good understanding of townscape, which may be from different disciplines stating that the nature of townscape requires a *particular understanding of a range of factors that together distinguish different parts of towns and cities*. The range of factors will vary depending on the nature of the place and urban environment to be assessed with some examples provided in the related Townscape Character Assessment guidance.

The definitions of the environmental effects to be considered in the TVIA is provided in GLVIA3 as below:

- **Townscape effects** relate to the predicted effects on the townscape as a resource. Townscape effects can be generated by a development’s effect upon the physical townscape, and its townscape character, fabric and quality. These include physical effects on townscape elements such as loss of trees or removal of structures. This also includes aesthetic, perceptual and experiential aspects of the urban environment, which may contribute to townscape character.
- **Visual effects** relate to the predicted change to the view and the related impacts on the visual amenity experienced by people – the visual receptors, (normally restricted to views from publicly accessible locations). A view is defined in GLVIA3 as a single sight or prospect that can be seen from a particular place or location. The visual amenity is defined as the overall pleasantness of what people can see in

their surroundings (GLVIA3 p158). Therefore, a view may have elements within it that change significantly, but the overall pleasantness could remain the same. Visual receptors typically include pedestrians, users of public rights of way/ recreational facilities and drivers and passengers of vehicles/ rail passengers.

Establishing the Baseline

Desk Based Studies

A preliminary desk study of Ordnance Survey (OS) maps, historic mapping sources and imagery, townscape characterisation studies, aerial photography, and online street views is undertaken to establish how an area has developed over time and the physical components of the Site and its surroundings (including land use, topography, built form, accessibility and vegetation). This understanding of place is used to identify potential townscape and visual receptors.

A review of the development context is also carried out to establish whether there are other developments of similar scale under construction that should be included in the baseline.

Study Area

The study area for the townscape and visual assessment comprises the area within which there is potential for the Proposed Development to result in significant townscape or visual effects. The extent of the study area is established as part of the baseline appraisal. It is likely that the Proposed Development would be visible from some points beyond the study area but the effects of this would be so minor that detailed assessment is not warranted. This approach is supported by GLVIA3, which states that the scale of assessment should be appropriate and proportional to the nature of the development proposed.

The study area for the assessment includes both the Site and the surrounding wider townscape context. The townscape character assessment considers the Site at a local level, through the determination of local townscape character areas within a defined study area, and the identification of townscape features. The visual assessment considers the existing and potential views experienced within this defined study area, but it may also include other identified views that may be from locations beyond the study area, such as from vantage points around the city or town.

Testing the Extent of Visibility

The extent of the study area is informed by identifying the potential extent of visibility of a Proposed Development in the surrounding townscape. A field study is undertaken by the professional team which considers the existing enclosure of the Site by surrounding development, topography and mature vegetation. A series of tools are also used to establish the potential visibility with development in place. This can include:

- Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) mapping assuming maximum building heights across the development area.
- Views testing undertaken in Vu.City software (or equivalent 3D city model)

Developments under construction will be identified and included in the baseline, and where possible in testing of the extent of visibility of the proposed scheme.

Surveys

An observational urban survey is undertaken by appropriately qualified and experienced professionals at Turley. The urban survey records the Site and surrounding context’s townscape features and confirms the visual receptors identified in the desk study. The urban survey involves travelling throughout the study area and producing a working photographic record of the area.

The urban survey establishes the key characteristics of the local context and townscape character, including the associated elements, features and aesthetic and perceptual factors,. The approximate visibility of the Site is established by the walkover survey, which considers the area within the study area from which the Site is currently visible and the key visual receptors within this area (i.e. groups of people within this area who experience (or may experience) views of the Proposed Development). A series of Representative Views experienced by these visual receptors is also identified.

Baseline Photography

Baseline photographic surveys are undertaken, by the professional team during the urban survey to record views from readily accessible public viewpoints and capture images that typify the local character or important townscape features. Photographs included in the baseline assessment are presented with the intention of aiding the understanding of the descriptive text and to illustrate context. Where accurate visualisation representations (AVR) have been prepared the baseline photography is in accordance with the Visual Representation of Development Proposals, Technical Guidance Note 06/19 to the visualisation type and level stated and a separate methodology for that photography is provided by the appointed visualisation consultant

Identifying Townscape Receptors and Sensitivity to Change

The sensitivity of townscape receptors relates to the value attached to that receptor and the susceptibility of the receptor to the type of change or development proposed.

The key townscape receptors (townscape character areas, townscape features or townscape characteristics) with potential to be affected by the Proposed Development are identified and a judgement is made on the value of each of these receptors. This judgement is made based on the approach set out in GLVIA3 and as described below.

Representative views are identified to reflect townscape character and to inform the townscape assessment.

The value of each of the identified townscape receptors is assessed with reference to the following criteria and the definitions of level of value set out in **Table 1:**

- Any designations or policies (both national and local), which may be present; and,
- The presence or absence of other attributes, which contribute to townscape value, such as condition, aesthetic quality, distinctive views, rarity, representativeness, urban morphology, conservation interests, recreation value, perceptual aspects or associations e.g. with writers, artists, notable architects or historic events.

Table 1: Value of Townscape Receptors

Value	Typical Level of Designation/ Rarity	Attributes
High	International, National, Regional	Townscape of notable character with unique or place-defining features and elements. Clearly coherent townscape character, with legible urban structure, a strong sense of architectural character and quality, and widespread use of high-quality materials. Minimal detracting elements and townscape features typically in good condition. High presence of good quality public realm or open space that contributes positively to the experience and usability of the townscape. No or limited potential for substitution.
Medium	Regional, Local	Townscape of some character, which is attractive, but with limited unique or place-defining features and elements. Recognisable urban structure with some variety in architectural quality and materials. Some detracting elements and variety in the condition of townscape features. Some presence of public realm or open space that makes a moderate contribution to the experience and usability of the townscape. Some potential for substitution.
Low	Local	Townscape of little scenic value or importance. Could include ordinary/commonplace or unremarkable areas of townscape. Disjointed urban structure and character or areas of coherent townscape that are commonplace and not locally distinctive. Presence of dominant detracting elements and townscape features in poor or declining condition. Areas that are vehicle focussed or dominated by industrial or commercial uses. Considerable potential for substitution.

A range in value may be given to a townscape receptor depending on the combination of attributes (present or absent), and/or the level of designations present. For example, if there are a number of highly significant listed buildings but in an area of mixed townscape quality and condition then the value may be given a high to medium value.

GLVIA3 defines susceptibility as “the ability of the landscape receptor (whether it be the overall character or quality/condition of a particular landscape type or area, or an individual element and/or feature, or a particular aesthetic and perceptual aspect) to accommodate the Proposed Development without undue consequences for the maintenance of the baseline situation and/or the achievement of landscape planning policies and strategies” (Ref: 7.9 Para. 5.40).

Judgements on the susceptibility to change of each of the identified townscape receptors are made based on the scale set out in **Table 2.**

Table 2: Susceptibility to Change of Townscape Receptors

Susceptibility to change	Description
High	Townscape receptor ¹⁵ would be unlikely to accommodate the type of development proposed without unacceptable negative consequences for the maintenance of the baseline townscape character and/or the achievement of townscape planning policies and strategies. Townscape receptor has little or no relationship to the type of development proposed and/or would be difficult to replace or substitute if lost e.g. veteran trees, historic or unique buildings and parkland. Characteristics of the townscape, which contribute to the townscape character are highly sensitive and would be fundamentally altered by the type of development proposed.
Medium	Townscape receptor would be compromised by the type of development proposed and/or the achievement of townscape planning policies and strategies would be compromised. Townscape receptor has some relationship to the type of development proposed and/or could be partially replaced or substituted if lost. Townscape receptor is moderately sensitive and characteristics of the receptor would be altered by the type of development proposed. The general townscape character would remain but would be weakened by the type of development proposed.
Low	Townscape receptor would be likely to accommodate the type of development proposed without unacceptable negative consequences for the maintenance of the baseline townscape character and/or the achievement of townscape planning policies and strategies. Townscape receptor has a close relationship to the type of development proposed and could be easily replaced or substituted if lost. Townscape receptor is of low sensitivity and characteristics of the townscape would not be significantly altered by the type of development proposed. The general townscape character is resilient to change.

A judgement on the overall sensitivity of each townscape receptor (ranging from High to Low) is made. This is based on the combined evaluation of susceptibility and value attached to the receptor, together with informed professional judgement and guidance provided in GLVIA3. For example, a townscape receptor that has a High Sensitivity is likely to have a High Value and a High Susceptibility to change, a townscape receptor that has a Low Sensitivity is likely to have a Low Value and a Low Susceptibility to change.

Identifying Visual Receptors and Sensitivity to Change

The sensitivity of the visual receptor comprises a judgement on the value attached to the views and an assessment of the susceptibility of each receptor to the type of change proposed.

The baseline visual appraisal establishes the area in which the Site, and Proposed Development, may be visible; the different groups of people who may experience the views of the development (defined as visual receptors); and the nature of these views. These factors interrelate, but for the purpose of the assessment are dealt with in that order.

In most visual assessments, unless specifically requested by the LPA, visual receptors are restricted to groups of people in publicly accessible places, and their experience of views/viewing experience.

Representative views are identified to reflect typical views experienced by the visual receptor in order to inform the visual assessment.

¹⁵ Includes townscape character areas, townscape elements features or components and particular aesthetic or perceptual aspects of the townscape.

A judgement on the value attached to the views is made with reference to the following criteria and the definitions of value set out in **Table 3**.

- Planning designations e.g. Designated Views or Protected Vistas identified in local or regional planning policy;
- Other designations relating to townscape features or heritage assets e.g. key views identified in conservation area appraisals or recorded in list entries for statutorily listed buildings or registered parks and gardens of special historic interest; and,
- Indicators of the value attached to views by visitors e.g. views identified in guidebooks or on tourist maps, official viewpoints (often with sign boards and interpretive material) or views referenced in literature or art.

Table 3: Value attached to views

Value	Typical level of designation / Rarity	Attributes
High	International, National, Regional,	View or views experienced by the receptor identified or protected at international, national or regional level recognised through designation or planning documents. View or views experienced by the receptors having a designed relationship with wider townscape features of high importance, and/or having a high aesthetic/scenic quality.
Medium	Regional, Local	View or views experienced by the receptor that are identified or protected at local level e.g. identified in local planning policy or guidance. May also include views experienced by the receptors which are undesignated, but value perhaps expressed through non-official publications or its contribution to enjoyment of the significance of a heritage asset or public open space, or have some aesthetic quality.
Low	Local	The view or views experienced by the receptors is/are not related to designated, or non-designated, heritage assets, or a planning designation; and/or mentioned in guidebooks or on tourist maps; and/or referenced in art and literature. Typical or unremarkable view or views of little visual amenity importance or views that do not contribute positively to the visual amenity experienced by the receptor.

A range in value may be given for the views depending on the combination of attributes (present or absent), and/or the level of designations present. For example, if identified views are experience in the context of a number of highly significant listed buildings but has a high presence of detracting elements then a high to medium value may be given.

The assessment of susceptibility of visual receptors is based on the approach set out in para 6.32 of GLVIA3,

which states:

‘the susceptibility of different visual receptors to changes in views and visual amenity is mainly a function of:

- The occupation or activity of people experiencing the view at particular locations: and,*
- The extent to which their attention or interest may therefore be focussed on the views and the visual amenity they experience at particular locations’.*

Judgements on the susceptibility of a visual receptor to change are broadly based on the descriptions of susceptibility set out in **Table 4**.

Table 4: Susceptibility to Change of Visual Receptors

Susceptibility	Description
High	Receptors for whom the view and visual amenity is of high importance to the experience or activity, including: people engaged in outdoor recreation whose attention or interest is likely to be focused on the townscape and on particular views e.g. waymarked walks through the townscape; and visitors to heritage assets or other attractions, where views of the surroundings are an important contributor to the experience.
Medium	Receptors for whom the view and visual amenity is of moderate importance to the experience or activity, including: travellers on most road or rail routes.
Low	Receptors for whom the view and visual amenity is of low importance to the experience or activity, including: people engaged in outdoor sport or recreation which does not involve or depend upon appreciation of views of the townscape; and, people at their place of work whose attention may be focussed on their work, not on their surroundings, and where the setting is not important to the quality of working life.

A judgement on the overall sensitivity of each visual receptor (ranging from High to Low) is made. This is based on the combined evaluation of susceptibility and value attached to the receptor, together with informed professional judgement and guidance provided in GLVIA3. For example, a visual receptor that has a High Sensitivity is likely to have a High Value and a High Susceptibility to change, a visual receptor that has a Low Sensitivity is likely to have a Low Value and a Low Susceptibility to change.

Assessing Significance of Effect

Assessment of Townscape Effects

The assessment of townscape effects considers the sensitivity of the townscape receptor and the magnitude of change. The level of effect is then concluded as major, moderate, minor or negligible, and professional judgement is used to determine whether the effect is Significant.

Magnitude of Change on Townscape Receptors

The magnitude of change considers the size or scale, the geographical extent and the duration and reversibility of the change. Judgements on the magnitude of townscape effect are broadly based on the descriptions of magnitude set out in **Table 5**.

Consideration is also given to the type of effect in terms of whether it is Adverse, Beneficial or Neutral. GLVIA3

states that an informed professional judgement should be made about whether the landscape/townscape effects should be categorised as positive or negative (or in some cases neutral), with the criteria used in reaching this judgement clearly stated. Therefore, a judgement is made on the nature of the overall effect which is based on the following terms:

- Adverse:** overall harm to townscape character/feature.
- Beneficial:** overall improvement to townscape character/feature.
- Neutral:** no overall harm or improvement to townscape character/feature (likely to be the result of a combination of both adverse and beneficial effects or very small changes).

Table 5: Defining Magnitude of Change – Townscape Receptors

Magnitude of Change	Definition
Large	Substantial change to all or most of the key characteristics of a townscape receptor and/or addition of major new elements and townscape features. Changes would substantially alter the character of a large area.
Medium	Partial change to some of the key characteristics of a townscape receptor and/or addition of new elements, which would be notable features. Changes would result in a large change to the character of a small area or a noticeable change to a larger area.
Small (or very small)	Limited (or very limited) or localised change to common characteristics of a townscape receptor and/or addition of new elements or features in keeping with the existing character. Changes would result in a small (or very small) change to the character of a large area or a noticeable change to a small area. Also includes temporary and/or reversible changes of larger scale or extent.
Negligible	No, or barely discernible, change to townscape receptor

Assessment of Visual Effects

The assessment of visual effects considers the sensitivity of the visual receptor and the magnitude of change. The level of effect is then concluded as major, moderate, minor or negligible and professional judgement is used to determine whether the effect is Significant.

Magnitude of Change on Visual Receptors

The magnitude of change considers the size or scale, the geographical extent and the duration and reversibility of the change. Judgements on the magnitude of visual effect are broadly based on the descriptions of magnitude set out in **Table 6**.

The assessment of the magnitude of change on visual receptors takes into account the following factors:

- type and relative numbers of people, and their occupation or activity.
- nature and characteristics of the location within the townscape and proximity to the Site.
- nature, composition and characteristics of the views (including directions).

- elements which may interrupt, filter or otherwise influence the views.
- seasonal changes in the view.

As per the townscape assessment, consideration is then given to the Type of Effect in terms of whether it is Adverse, Beneficial or Neutral as follows.

- Adverse:** overall harm to the character and appearance of the view, and the viewing experience.
- Beneficial:** overall improvement to the character and appearance of the view, and the viewing experience.
- Neutral:** no overall harm or improvement to the character and appearance of the view, and the viewing experience (likely to be the result of a combination of both adverse and beneficial effects or very small changes).

Table 6: Defining Magnitude of Change – Visual Receptors

Magnitude of Change	Definition
Large	Substantial change to the key characteristics of the views / visual experience and/or addition of major new elements, which would be prominent features. Changes would substantially alter the character and appearance of the views experienced by the receptor.
Medium	Partial change to some of the key characteristics of the the views / visual experience and/or addition of new elements, which would be notable features. Changes would result in a large change to the character and appearance of a small extent of views or a noticeable change to a larger extent of the views experienced by the receptor.
Small or Very Small	Limited (or very limited) and localised changes to the views / visual experience and/or addition of new elements, which would be noticeable features but largely in keeping with the existing character and appearance of views experienced by the visual receptor. Changes would result in a small (or very small) change to the character and appearance of a large extent of the views or a noticeable change to a small extent of the views. Also includes temporary and/or reversible changes of larger scale or extent within the views experienced by the receptor.
Negligible	No, or barely discernible, change to the views experienced by the receptor.

Determining the Level of Effect

The level of effect is determined by combining the magnitude of change due to the Proposed Development and the evaluation of the sensitivity of the affected receptor. The level of effect is determined using professional judgement and **Table 7** is used as a tool to assist with this process. For each effect, a judgement is made on whether the effect is ‘beneficial’ or ‘adverse’ or ‘neutral’.

Table 7: Matrix to Support Determining the Level of Effect

		Sensitivity			
		High	Medium	Low	Negligible
Magnitude of change	Large	Major	Moderate to Major	Minor to Moderate	Negligible
	Medium	Moderate to Major	Moderate	Minor	Negligible
	Small or Very Small	Minor to Moderate	Minor	Negligible to Minor	Negligible
	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible

The following terms have been used to define the level of the effects identified and these can be ‘beneficial’ or ‘adverse’ or ‘neutral’:

- Major effect:** where the Proposed Development is likely to cause a considerable change from the baseline conditions and the receptor has limited adaptability, tolerance or recoverability, or is of the highest sensitivity;
- Moderate effect:** where the Proposed Development is likely to cause either a considerable change from the baseline conditions at a receptor, which has a degree of adaptability, tolerance or recoverability, or a less than considerable change at a receptor that has limited adaptability, tolerance or recoverability;
- Minor effect:** where the Proposed Development is likely to cause a small, but noticeable change from the baseline conditions on a receptor, which has limited adaptability, tolerance or recoverability or is of the highest sensitivity; or where the Proposed Scheme is likely to cause a considerable change from the baseline conditions at a receptor, which can adapt, is tolerant of the change, or/and can recover from the change; and
- Negligible:** where the Proposed Development is unlikely to cause a noticeable change at a receptor, despite its level of sensitivity, or there is a considerable change at a receptor, which is not sensitive to a change.

The duration of the effect has been assessed as either ‘short-term’, ‘medium-term’ or ‘long-term’. Short-term is, up to 2 year, medium-term is, between 2 and 10 years and long-term is, greater than 10 years.

Appendix 3: Supporting Figures

Figure 3.1: Local Policy Designations Plan (the Site)

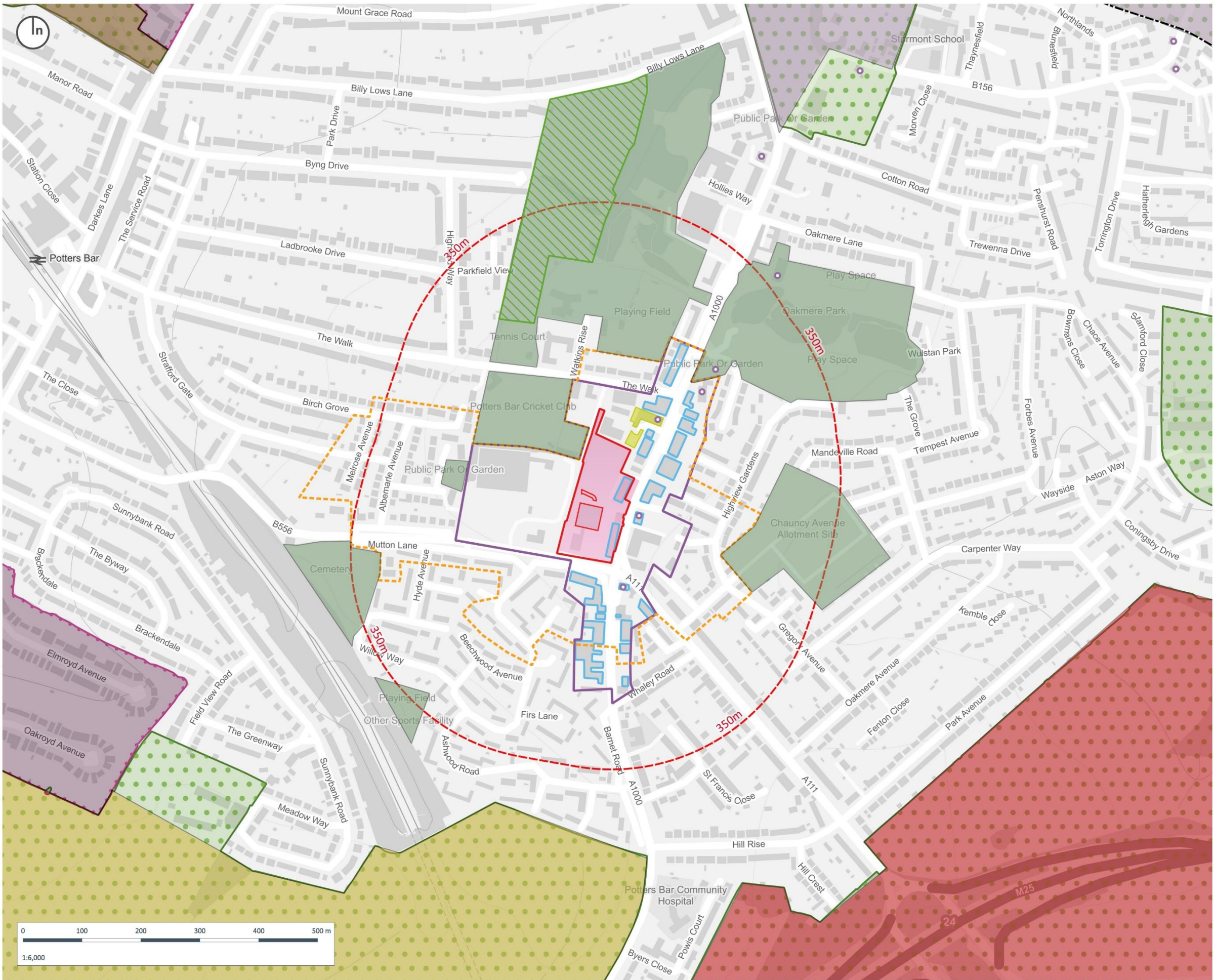
Figure 3.2: Local Policy Designation Plan (wider context)

Figure 3.3: Townscape Character Area (TCA) Plan

Figure 3.4: Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) for the Proposed Development

Figure 3.5: Representative Viewpoint Plan

Figure 3.6: Representative Viewpoint Plan with ZTV overlay



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- Site Boundary
- Study Area
- Local authority districts
- Conservation area
- Listed Buildings
 - II
- New Local Plan Site Allocation - HEL1106 Canada Life, Potters Bar
- New Local Plan Site Allocation - HEL910
- Green Belt
- Biodiversity and Habitats:
 - Local Wildlife Sites
 - Open Space, Sports and Leisure Facilities
- Transport Development Areas
- Town and District Centres
- Secondary Street Frontages
- LCA 053 Northaw Common Parkland
- LCA 054 Potter Bar Parklands B
- LCA 024 Arkley Plain
- LCA 026 Hornbeam Hill (Enfield Chase)

CLIENT:
Chase New Homes

PROJECT:
Potters Bar

DRAWING:
Designations Plan

PROJECT NUMBER:
04397

DRAWING NUMBER:
GIS_101

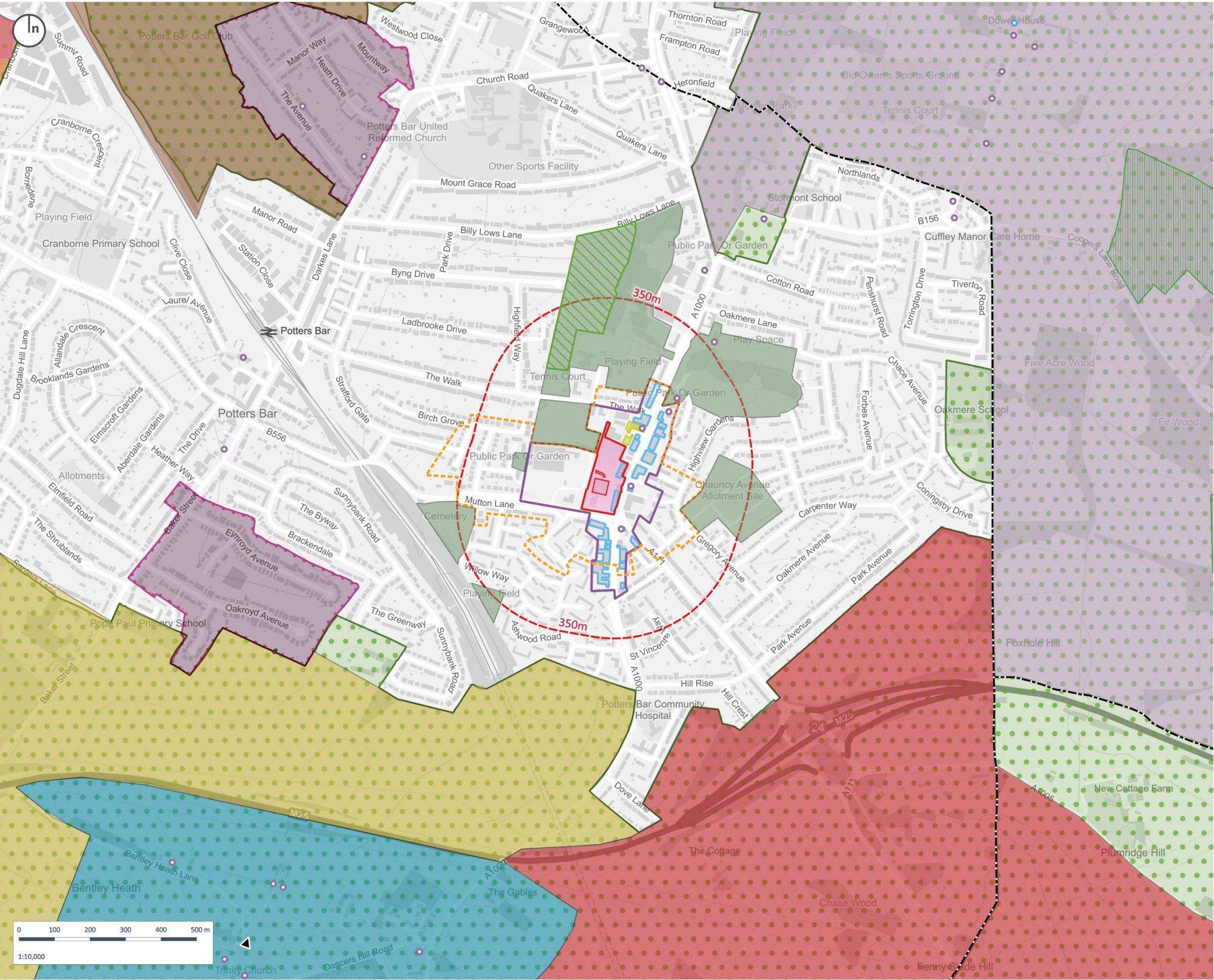
REVISION:
1.0

DATE:
June 2026

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KM/ RB

STATUS:
Final

SCALE:
1:6000 @ A3



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- Site Boundary
 - Study Area
 - Local authority districts
 - Conservation area
- Listed Buildings
- II*
 - II
 - Ancient woodland
 - New Local Plan Site Allocation - HEL1106 Canada Life, Potters Bar
 - New Local Plan Site Allocation - HEL910
 - Green Belt
 - Biodiversity and Habitats: Local Wildlife Sites
 - Local nature reserves
 - Open Space, Sports and Leisure Facilities
 - Transport Development Areas
 - Town and District Centres
 - Secondary Street Frontages
 - LCA 053 Northaw Common Parkland
 - LCA 029 Mimms Valley
 - LCA 054 Potter Bar Parklands B
 - LCA 024 Arkley Plain
 - LCA 025 Wrotham Park and Bentley Heath
 - LCA 026 Hornbeam Hill (Enfiled Chase)
 - Identified view within LCA 025 Wrotham Park and Bentley Heath
 - Local nature reserves

CLIENT:
Chase New Homes

PROJECT:
Potters Bar

DRAWING:
Designations Plan

PROJECT NUMBER:
04397

DRAWING NUMBER:
GIS_101

CHECKED BY:
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REVISION:
1.0

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SCALE:
1:10000 @ A3