


# Planning, Design and Access Statement

Salisbury Square, Old Hatfield

09.11

Prepared by

 planning associates

On behalf of

**Gascoyne Cecil Estates**






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# 1

## Introduction

**1.1** This Planning, Design and Access Statement has been prepared to accompany a planning application by Gascoyne Cecil Estates for the redevelopment of Salisbury Square in Old Hatfield. The application proposals comprise the following elements:

- 4 no. 1 bedroom flats and 15 no. 2 bedroom flats
- 5 no. 3 bedroom houses
- Retail development totalling 1,235 m<sup>2</sup>, divided into 4 separate units including basements
- Increased car parking provision, from the current 109 spaces, up to a total of 141 spaces in the form of a new two deck car park.
- The reintroduction of a vehicular highway through Salisbury Square

**1.2** Salisbury Square is currently an unsuccessful public space, partly due to a lack of activity, and partly due to the poor design of its public areas and the buildings which surround them. The application proposals have been formulated through an extensive public consultation exercise, known as the 'Old Hatfield Charrette' which took place in October 2008 and which sought the views of local residents and stakeholders, identified the problems facing Old Hatfield, and developed a number of urban design solutions.

**1.3** The application proposals have been designed to revitalise Salisbury Square, which lies at the heart of Old Hatfield, reversing many of the unsuccessful interventions of the 1960s and 70s, and creating a greater level of activity and range of uses. The proposed redevelopment will also significantly improve the appearance and functionality of the Square and the buildings which surround it, and the character and vitality of Old Hatfield as a whole.

**1.4** This Statement outlines the planning context for the proposed development, in relation to current local and national planning policy. It also describes the evolution of the proposed design, and the way in which it will improve the character and appearance of Old Hatfield, as well as its vitality and commercial success.

Salisbury Square, shortly after its completion in the early 1970s



The entrance to the Square today



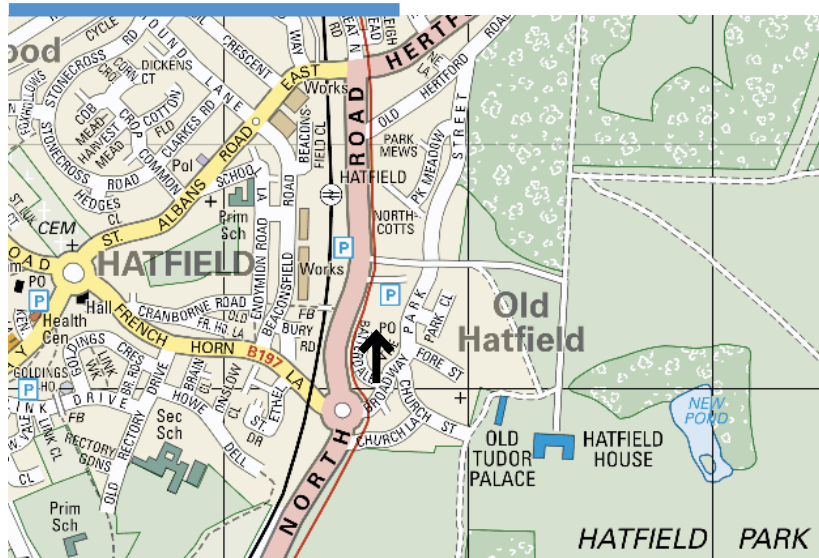
# 2 Application Context

**2.1** The application site covers Salisbury Square, and the route of the new road which is proposed to run through its centre, from close to the Great North Road in the north-west, to Park Street in the south-east. This area is in need of regeneration, as it has a poor appearance, characterised by a number of vacant shops and a poor quality open space. The application site relates directly to an area which was redeveloped in the early 1970s, and the character and quality of the built environment in this area contrasts markedly with the more historic areas of Old Hatfield which have remained unaltered for many years.

**2.2** In order to understand the application proposals, it is also important to understand the way the site and surrounding area have changed over time. This application is the result of studying this historical context, and a desire on the part of Gascoyne Cecil Estates and other key stakeholders to revitalise Salisbury Square. The proposed development will return activity to the Square, and will also significantly enhance the quality of its built environment.

**2.3** A street map and an Ordnance Survey map of the surrounding area, identifying the application site, is included below to aid orientation, and provide references for the streets mentioned in this application.

Street map of the local area (below left)  
OS site location plan (below right)

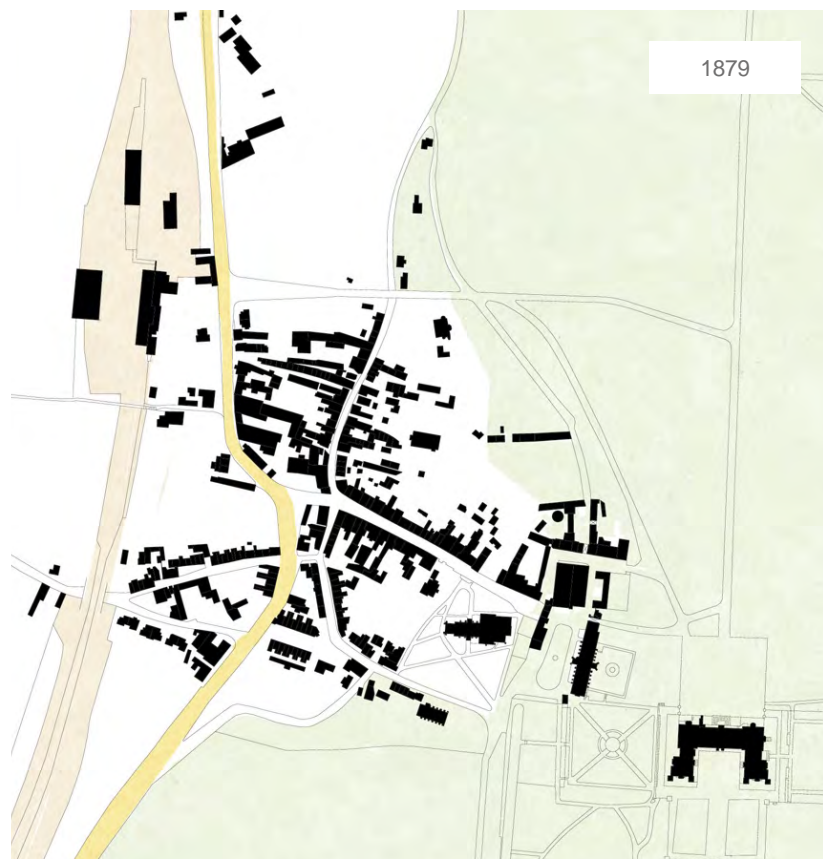


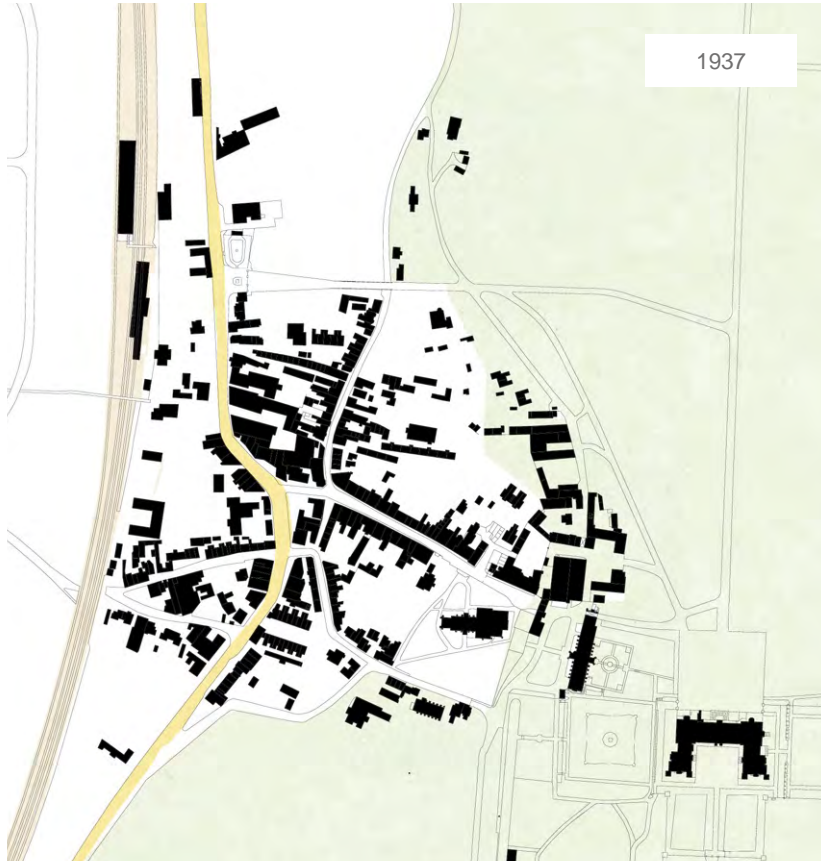
## Historical Context and the Great North Road

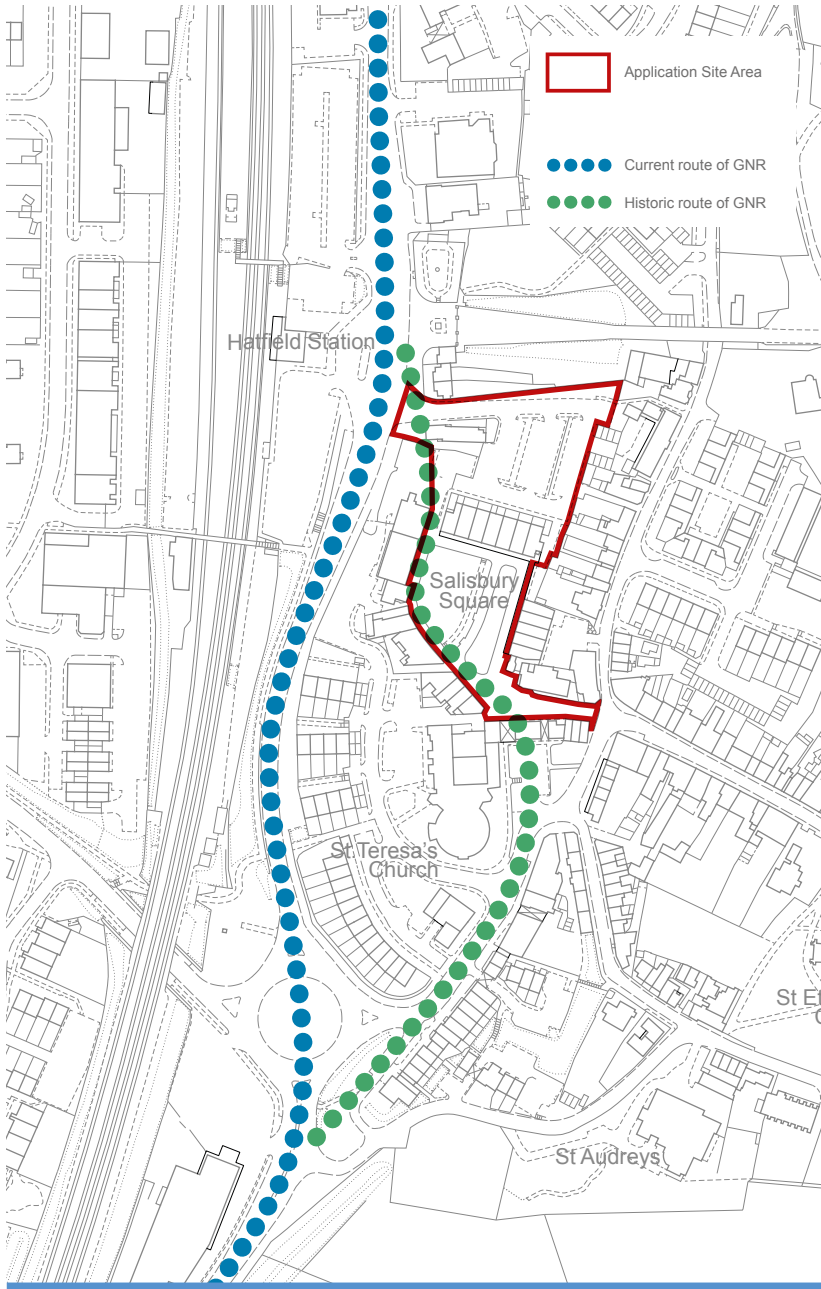
**2.4** Salisbury Square is located on the route of the old Great North Road, and was once a thoroughfare for all traffic coming from the north towards Hatfield House. A large part of the historic pattern of development which characterised Old Hatfield was lost in the early 1970s, when much of the area was comprehensively redeveloped. Salisbury Square and its immediate surroundings are largely the result of this redevelopment, while the older elements of the town, such as Fore Street and the areas closest to Hatfield House remained unaltered.

**2.5** The historical maps shown demonstrate the way in which Old Hatfield developed along the route of the Great North Road. This road once ran very close to Hatfield House, and along Fore Street, but was diverted to run closer to the railway line as the influence of Hatfield Railway Station (built in 1850) grew. These maps also show the dramatic change to the form of the centre of Old Hatfield which occurred in the early 1970s, when a large part of the town was demolished, and the route of the Great North Road was significantly altered as it moved to the west. At the same time, the frontage-led linear street form of Old Hatfield was replaced by a more dispersed and precinct form of development.

**2.6** Salisbury Square was created as part of this new development. The buildings which now form the western side of Salisbury Square follow the line of the original Great North Road, while the line of the buildings which once faced them has been lost to the square's open centre.







The current and historic routes of the Great North Road through Old Hatfield, and the application site

2.7 Today, the Great North Road bypasses Old Hatfield, having been designed to allow traffic to pass through the area with as little interruption as possible. Where once the road wound through tight pedestrian-dominated streets, it is now wide, and physically separated from pedestrians. However, while this may allow traffic to move freely, it also removes activity from the centre of Old Hatfield.

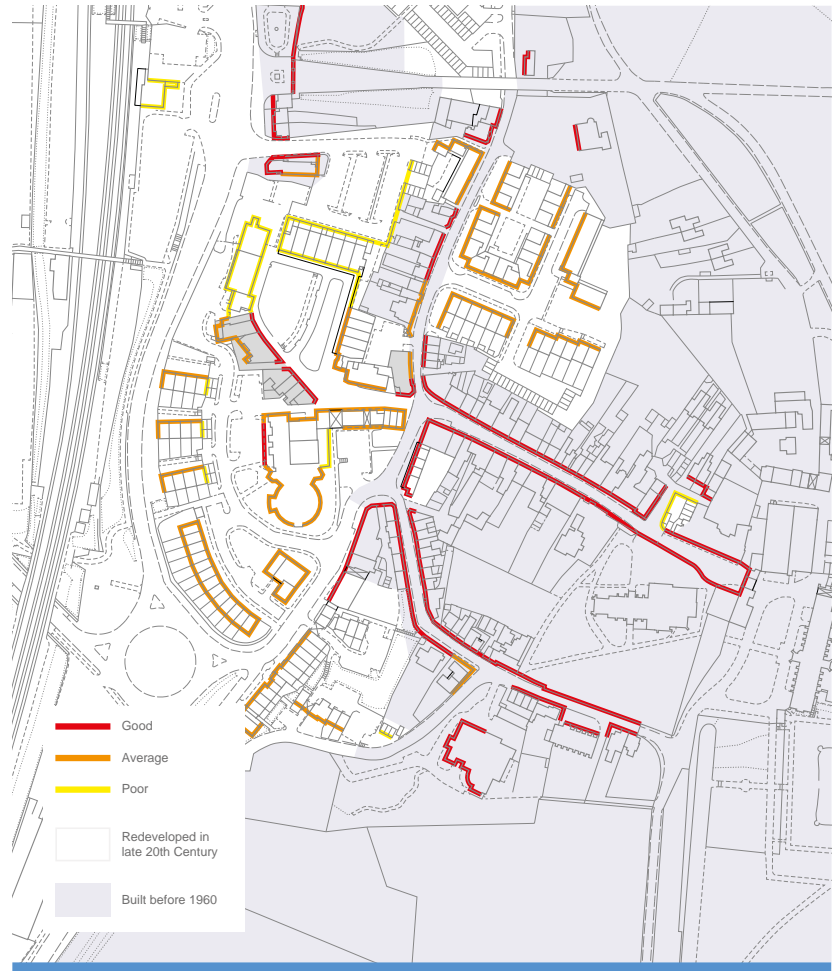


The A1000, passing Old Hatfield (top)  
No footpath for pedestrians (bottom)

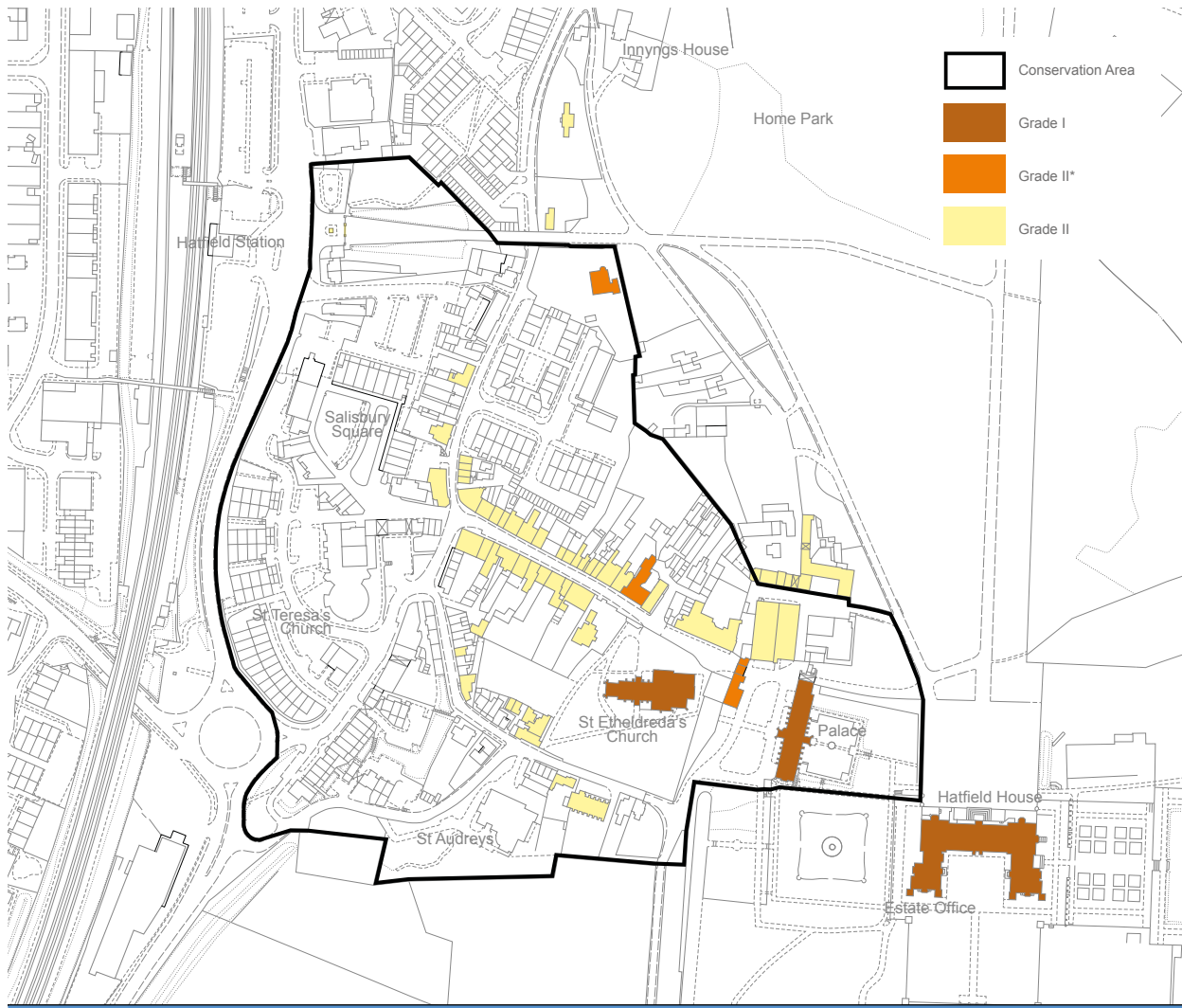
### The Application Site and Surrounding Area Today

2.8 The application site lies entirely within the Old Hatfield Conservation Area. It appears to have been included within this area more because of its historic function as part of Old Hatfield, rather than as a reflection of the quality of its built environment. Most of the buildings and public spaces within and around the site today date from the comprehensive redevelopment of the area in the early 1970s, and they are generally of a poor quality. This application has been designed with the intention of dramatically improving the appearance and functionality of the built environment within the site, thereby enhancing the character of the Conservation Area.

2.9 A character appraisal of the area immediately surrounding Salisbury Square shows that the buildings with the highest quality public frontages, which contribute most to the quality of the public realm, tend to be the older buildings. The diagram below demonstrates that the highest quality frontages are located in the parts of Old Hatfield which remained largely unaltered by the 20th Century. Similarly, listed buildings are generally clustered in the older areas, along Park Street, Fore Street, and close to Hatfield House.



Building Frontage Study, demonstrating that the highest quality frontages tend to be those of the older buildings.



Listed buildings and the Old Hatfield Conservation Area.

**2.10** The plan above shows that many of the buildings which contribute to this high quality frontage are also Listed Buildings of architectural and historic interest. The Conservation Area boundary has been drawn to incorporate this area, and all of Old Hatfield, stretching to the Great North Road. This provides a clear link between the high quality historic form of Old Hatfield and the application site. The need to improve the built form of the application site, and bring it closer to the standard of the rest of Old Hatfield, is one of the major aims behind the application proposals.

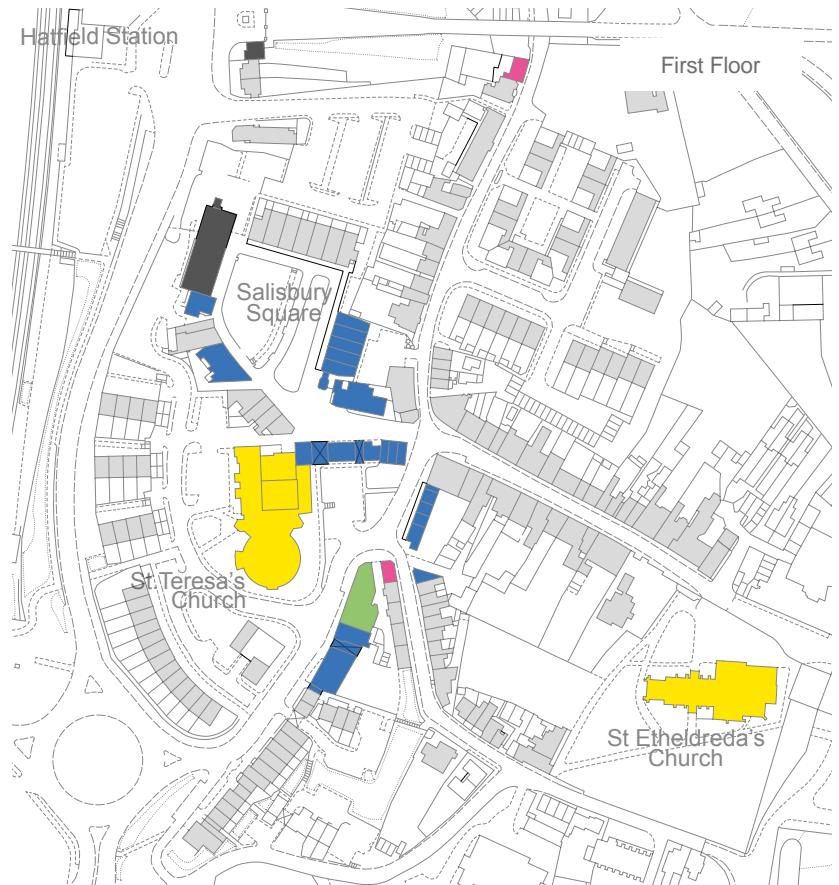
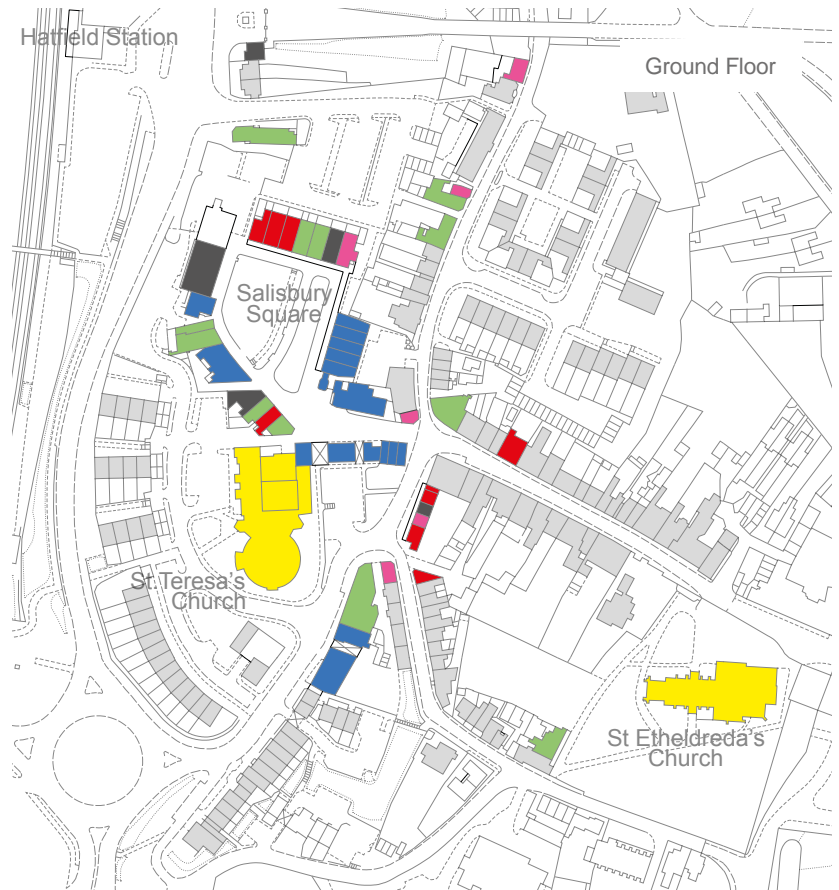
#### Land Uses

**2.11** Old Hatfield once contained many shops, particularly along Fore Street and Park Street. While some of these shops still exist on Park Street, Fore Street is now almost entirely residential in use, although the form of the buildings still recalls their former use as a shopping parade. For further assessment of the historic context, please see the submitted Heritage Statement.

**2.12** The plans opposite give an overview of the land uses within Old Hatfield today, at ground and first floor levels. While much of Old Hatfield is now in residential use, Salisbury Square stands out as an exception, with none of the buildings which surround it in residential use at ground floor level, and only around half of them in residential use on their upper floors, in the form of flats above shops.

**2.13** However, the plans also show that many of the shop units which surround Salisbury Square are now in A3, A4 or A5 use, such as restaurants or hot-food take-aways. There are very few shop units remaining in A1 retail use, and these consist of a newsagent, a launderette and a small supermarket, catering for the small amount of local and passing trade in the area. This is a stark contrast with Old Hatfield's historic form, and marks its decline as a local shopping centre. The application proposals have been designed with a view to improving the vitality and viability of this local shopping area.

**2.14** Old Hatfield also contains a number of offices, both surrounding Salisbury Square and along the southern end of Park Street. These are a valuable source of local employment, and also help to bring some trade into the area for the local shops which remain. The offices which surround Salisbury Square, as part of a mixed use environment with its residential elements, ensure there is activity throughout the day. This is a positive aspect of Salisbury Square which the application proposals have been designed to build on.



- A1 Retail
- A2 Financial & Professional Service
- A3 Restaurants/Cafes  
A4 Pub  
A5 Take Away
- B1 Office
- C3 Residential
- D1 Non-Residential Institution
- SUI Generis



Salisbury Square is currently characterised by poor quality open spaces and surrounded by buildings of no architectural merit.

### Salisbury Square

**2.15** Salisbury Square itself is not currently a successful place. It was designed to offer a green and open space at the heart of Old Hatfield. However, it suffers from a lack of activity, surrounded as it is by low-key shops and take-aways, and with relatively little pedestrian traffic through the Square. It fails to make the most of its location, with much of the activity of Old Hatfield happening on the streets outside its boundaries, which are vehicular routes.

**2.16** The open space at the Square's centre is unwelcoming and inflexible, as it is surrounded by a brick wall and which appears poorly maintained. The buildings which surround the Square are also of a poor appearance and no great architectural style, and do little to enhance its character. For example, the shopfronts are set back behind colonnades and are not very visible to pedestrians. However, the Square's location and basic form offer significant potential, and the application proposals will create an enhanced public space, of superior character and appearance.



**2.17** The public car park to the north of Salisbury Square is a very poor space. It is not overlooked by any development, but is faced by the backs of the shops and maisonettes on Salisbury Square, and the shops and pubs of Park Street. It is also poorly lit, and considered to be an uninviting place at night.

### The Local Perspective

**2.18** This application is the result of proposals drawn up during a major public consultation and design exercise carried out by Gascoyne Cecil Estates in 2008, known as the Old Hatfield Charrette. The Charrette drew heavily on the opinions and experiences of local residents, people living and working in Old Hatfield and other key stakeholders. Further details are set out in Appendix 1. The subjects of particular concern are outlined below.

#### Lack of attractive shopping

**2.19** Residents considered the number and quality of shops in Old Hatfield to be disappointing, and a need was highlighted for more convenience shops, restaurants and a tea shop. The layout of Salisbury Square was criticised, and traders felt that opening up a vehicular route through the Square, and improving car parking, would help to improve their businesses.





**Unattractive and Inflexible Public Spaces**

Poor quality entrance to Salisbury Square.

2.20 Public spaces within Old Hatfield, such as Salisbury Square, are considered ill-managed, unfriendly and underused. Residents expressed a strong desire for a safe, welcoming environment, and more flexible and useable public spaces.

**Failure to exploit the opportunities for tourism**

2.21 Hatfield House currently attracts some 100,000 visitors a year, but residents felt that there is currently little incentive for tourists to visit the Old Town. An increased range of shops and facilities in the Old Town, and a better link with Hatfield House, were believed to be necessary if this important economic opportunity were not to continue to be missed. An objective is to encourage tourist visitors to Hatfield House down in to the Old Town. Potential routes are shown on the Charrette plan opposite.



Arrows denote the possible walking route from St Audrey's Coach Park to Hatfield House, with an additional link to the railway station.

**Frustrations of the unsatisfactory parking arrangements**

2.22 The current parking arrangements were one of the major issues which concerned residents. Commuters to the nearby station currently park in the free car park and on the streets of Old Hatfield, rather than paying to park in the station car park. A new, comprehensive car parking plan, restricting commuter parking within the Old Town and improving the layout and efficiency of the Station car park were considered necessary.



**The chaos resulting from the inadequate access to the railway station**

2.23 While the presence of the railway station is considered a great benefit for Old Hatfield, the station building is seen as being of poor quality, with few amenities. The station entrance is also seen as being chaotic, with a single access for pedestrians, cars, buses, taxis and cycles. The connections between the station and the Old Town are also seen as a problem, with the A1000 forming a significant barrier to pedestrian traffic, while the underpasses are seen as unpleasant, narrow and unsafe.

2.24 A further stakeholder consultation took place in March 2011 and the results of that consultation have been summarised in the Statement of Community Involvement, shown in Appendix 2.



Some of the Old Hatfield Charrette public consultation events, at which the design options were developed.

# 3

## Design

### Development Proposals and Rationale

**3.1** The proposed redevelopment is intended to bring activity back to Salisbury Square. It is also intended to enhance its character and appearance, and that of the Old Hatfield Conservation Area as a whole. Policy D4 of the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan relates to the Quality of the Public Realm, and states that 'The Council will expect new development where appropriate to either create or enhance public areas and the public realm.' The application proposals have been designed with particular regard for this policy.

**3.2** Salisbury Square is located at the centre of Old Hatfield, and was presumably created to be a thriving local centre, where people could live, work and shop, and benefit from public open space. Unfortunately, the shops have been only a limited success, and there is little retail development surrounding the Square, other than a small local supermarket. Other shop units on Salisbury Square are now either A2 use (insurance broker), Sui Generis uses (beauty salon, launderette), or A3 restaurants and A5 hot-food take-aways. Meanwhile, nearby Fore Street, which was once characterised by small shops at ground floor level, is now almost entirely residential in use.

**3.3** By reintroducing a vehicular route through the square, running along the line of the old Great North Road, the proposed redevelopment is intended to bring all types of movement to the square, creating activity and vitality by bringing a greater number of people into contact with the Square. This in turn is intended to stimulate the shops which surround the square. While some of these shops will be demolished, they will be replaced by new shop units in a new building which will enclose the square.

**3.4** The new building which will face the square has been designed to reflect the traditional character of Old Hatfield, rather than the newer style developments of the 1970s. As such, this building will enhance the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

**3.5** In addition, the car park to the north of Salisbury Square will be expanded so that it will both meet the need for parking generated by the new development, and will provide additional car parking for Old Hatfield residents. This will help to ease the current under-provision and pressure from commuter parking. This element of the proposals is explained in further detail in Section 6 of this Statement.

**3.6** The car park will also be surrounded by new development, with the new mixed use commercial and residential buildings at Salisbury Square to the south and west, and new houses to the north. This will help to make it a safer place, with a greater level of activity surrounding it and a greater number of habitable rooms overlooking it. The new car park will also be well lit, and designed with public safety considerations in mind.

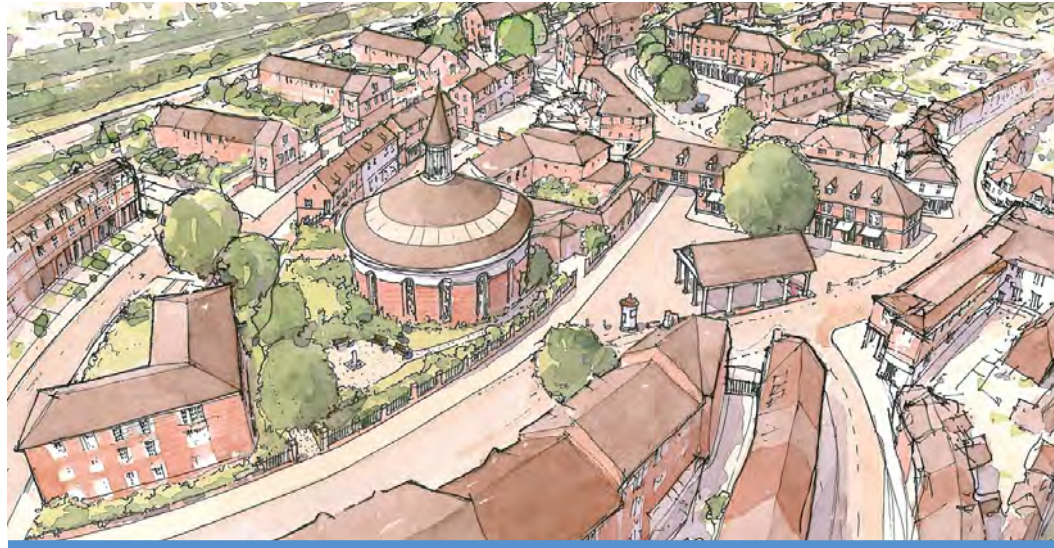
**3.7** The houses which will face the northern edge of the site have already gained planning permission as part of an earlier application (S6/2005/0432/FP) involving the redevelopment of Dunhams Yard. This project is presently being implemented by the Gascoyne Cecil Estate. The Salisbury Square planning application proposes a further terrace of five new houses, which will form a new street, leading through to Park Street (but including a bollard to prevent direct vehicular access other than for fire appliance vehicles).

**3.8** These proposals have evolved through a detailed, iterative design process, including public consultation with key stakeholders, as described in Section 2. A summary of the evolution of these proposals, incorporating illustrations of the evolving designs, is included in Appendix 3 and details of the Broadway Market and Salisbury Square (Charrette Proposal 2) are enclosed as Appendix 4.

## Use

### Residential

**3.9** The proposed development will replace 7 maisonettes with 19 flats, and will also involve the construction of an additional 5 houses. A residential use is already established on the site, as noted in Section 5 below, and the proposed development will result in an increase in the number of dwellings. There is a pressing need for additional new housing within Welwyn Hatfield Borough, and the proposed development will help to meet some of the local need.



### Retail

Design evolution.

**3.10** The proposed development would increase the amount of retail floor space within Salisbury Square. Policy TCR24 of the District Plan, outlined in Section 5 below, notes that the Council will encourage A1 retail uses within Old Hatfield, and will resist any change of use which would result in the loss of this use. The principle of the acceptability of retail use within the new building is therefore established.

**3.11** The building which is to be demolished contains an A1 retail use in 3 of its 7 ground floor units. The proposed new buildings will incorporate more retail floor space, as well as the possibility of a café or restaurant.

**3.12** Moreover, the proposed development offers the potential to increase the amount of retail development in other commercial premises within Salisbury Square. There are already a number of buildings facing the Square which contain commercial activities other than retail, but which have shop frontages on the ground floor level and therefore suitable for retail use. The increase in activity through the Square, should contribute to increasing the potential for new retail units within the Square, within existing buildings and help to regenerate the Old Town.



The proposed development would extend the retail frontage through Salisbury Square, along the new road.

- Existing or potential retail frontage
- Office buildings, brick frontage

**3.13** The proposed development will also extend retail frontage along the proposed new road, and will increase the total retail provision within Old Hatfield. The location of these retail units will also help to encourage the flow of pedestrians along the new road. The new car parking spaces on the road, within the Square, are also intended to encourage passing trade, and were one of the measures local shopkeepers suggested during the Old Hatfield Charrette.

**Café**

**3.14** Public consultation during the Old Hatfield Charrette revealed a desire for a café or tea shop within Old Hatfield. A suitable premises has been designed for the ground floor of one of the proposed buildings, with an associated outdoor seating area. This is to be located in one of the most visible locations within the Square, where it can positively influence the character of the Square. A café would also create a new facility for local residents and workers, and could help to attract some of the 100,000 tourists who visit Hatfield House each year into Old Hatfield.

**Amount**

**3.15** The application proposals include the demolition of the building which currently marks the north side of Salisbury Square, which contains retail units on the ground floor and maisonettes above. The new building will also incorporate retail floorspace with residential development above. It will result in a net increase of 17 dwellings, by replacing 7 maisonettes with 19 new flats and 5 terraced houses. The retail element of the building would result in a net increase of 605 m<sup>2</sup> retail floorspace, up to a total of 1,235 m<sup>2</sup>; this will be split into 4 separate self-contained shop units, to replace the 7 smaller shop units which the existing building accommodates.

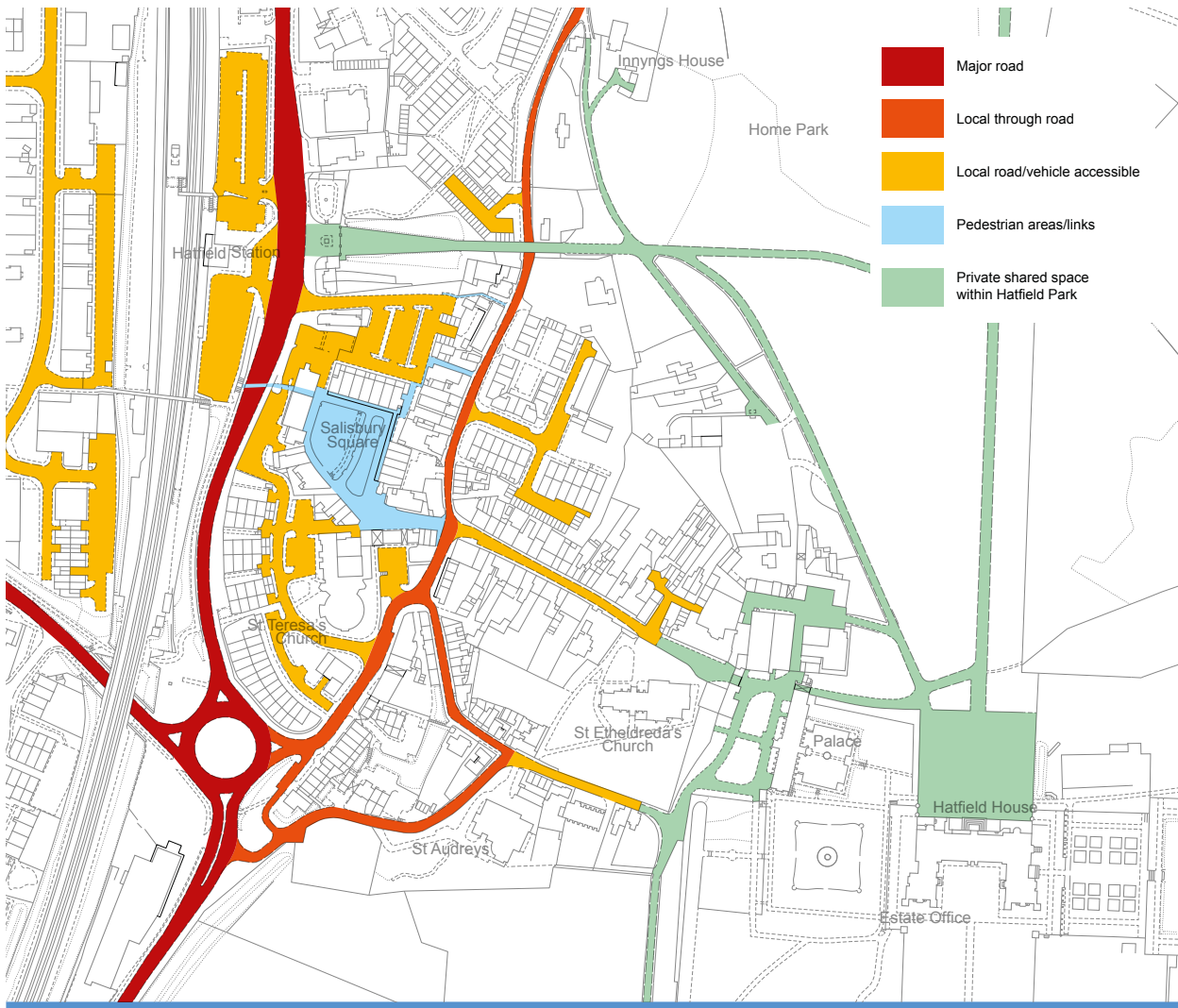
**3.16** The net increase in dwellings will bring greater activity to Salisbury Square, particularly outside the working week, when the offices located on and close to the Square may be empty. The increase in activity should help to improve the vitality of local shopping facilities by creating a greater local demand. This should also make the Square safer, with a greater degree of natural surveillance of public spaces and the car parking areas.

**3.17** The net increase in retail floorspace is accompanied by a reduction in the number of retail units from 7 to 4. This is intended to create larger and more flexible spaces, which are more suited to modern retailing. The existing retail units are small, and are only suited to minor A1 retail, A2 financial and professional services, or A5 take-aways. The new retail units will be suited to a wider range of retail uses, including the possibility of an expanded local supermarket to replace the existing Costcutter.

**3.18** With regard to car parking, the application will result in an increase from the existing provision of 109 spaces, up to a new total of 141 spaces. This is further discussed in the Access Section below.



Brewery Hill looking north 1961.



Existing vehicular route structure in Old Hatfield. Salisbury Square is a pedestrian island between vehicular routes

**Layout**

**3.19** The contextual and historical analysis above has outlined that the existing layout of Salisbury Square was formed partly by the previous route of the Great North Road, and partly by a comprehensive redevelopment of the area in the early 1970s. The rationale behind the application proposals is to take elements from the area's past and present in order to create a superior public realm. A new road will be reinstated along the Square's southern and western sides, on the old route of the Great North Road, while the appearance of Salisbury Square itself will be enhanced.

**New Road**

**3.20** Since the creation of Salisbury Square, Old Hatfield has been cut off from the passing activity of the Great North Road. In one way this is a benefit, as the volume of traffic on the modern road is something to which the streets of Old Hatfield are poorly suited. However, one apparently unintended consequence of the revised street pattern has been to reduce the level of activity passing through the area to the extent that it has led to a serious decline in the vitality of Old Hatfield by reducing the visibility and accessibility of local shops, and removing much of the passing trade.



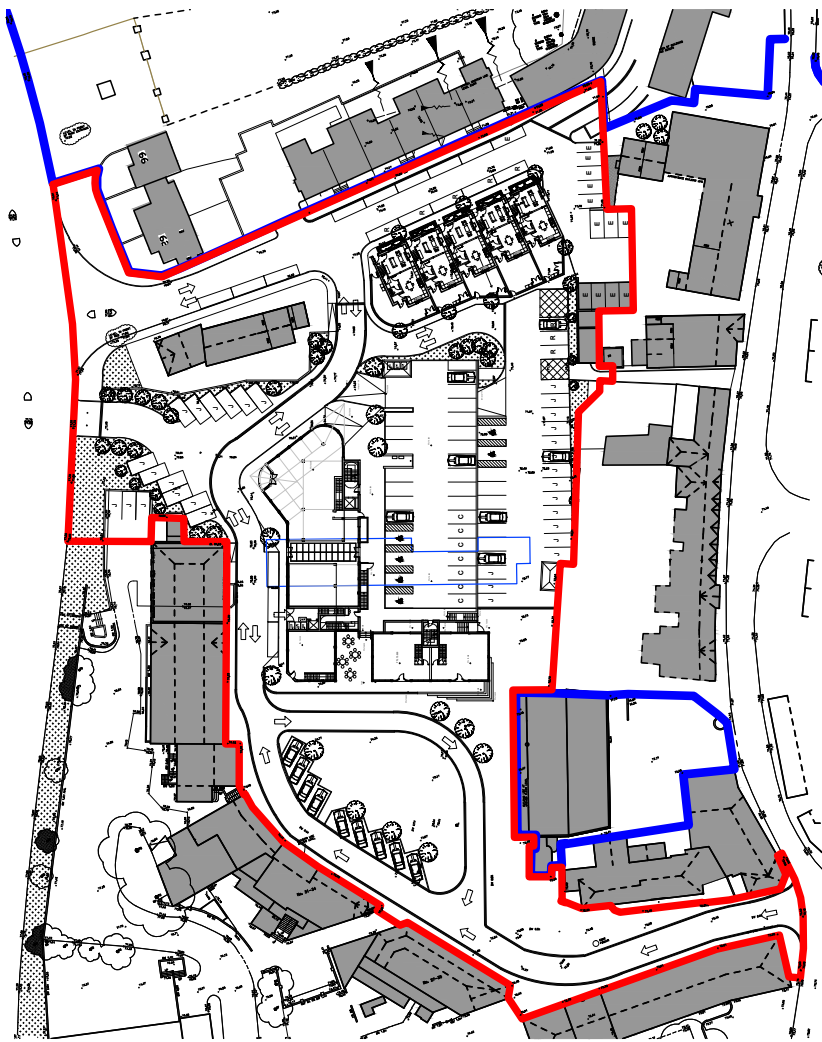
Emerging layout proposals for Salisbury Square

**3.21** This application proposes to return a road to Salisbury Square, which will bring traffic from Park Street through to the Great North Road. It will also cater for traffic coming from the Great North Road and visiting Salisbury Square, but will not provide a through route in this direction.

**3.22** An analysis of the existing road network in and around Old Hatfield shows that Park Street is now essentially the only through road, with all other roads leading out from it, and forming cul-de-sacs and dead ends. Since its redevelopment in the 1970s, Old Hatfield has turned its back on the Great North Road, and the only vehicular connections are those to Park Street, Church Street and the car park to the north of Salisbury Square.

**3.23** As there is no vehicular link between Salisbury Square and the car park to the north or Park Street, a large part of Old Hatfield, including Salisbury Square, is essentially pedestrianised. The only passing trade for Salisbury Square is from pedestrians, who will inevitably either be on a local journey through Old Hatfield, or will have come specifically to visit the Square. One of the conclusions of the Old Hatfield Charrette process was that local traders felt vehicular access to the Square, and short-stay parking spaces, would help improve demand for their businesses from passing trade.

**3.24** The proposed redevelopment would make better use of the existing vehicular access to the car park, and this access would not only serve the new car park, but also access to the new residential and retail development. However, the new road would not offer access from the Great North Road to Park Street, and traffic wishing to access Park Street and the rest of Old Hatfield would still use the existing access from the A1000 roundabout and via The Broadway. The new road will therefore not be a through road, but will be limited to local traffic, such as that visiting the new shops and residences on Salisbury Square. A detailed description and explanation of the highway proposals is included in the Transport Statement prepared by WSP UK Ltd which accompanies this application.



Application site plan including the proposed new circulation routes within and through Salisbury Square.

### Salisbury Square

**3.25** Salisbury Square has the potential to be a vibrant centre for Old Hatfield. One of the conclusions of the Old Hatfield Charrette was that it would be important to improve the quality of the open space at its heart, as this makes a substantial contribution to the character of the Square as a whole. Salisbury Square currently accommodates quite a large space at its centre, but the design of this space is poor, and is considered poorly maintained and underused. The application proposes to reduce the size of the open space, but also to make the new space far more user-friendly and attractive.

**3.26** The edges of Salisbury Square will be pedestrianised, with the current pathway on its western side retained, and a wider pathway incorporated on the eastern side. The new road would run along the southern and western sides of the Square, while a turning loop would run around the opposite side. A public open space would be located within the loop formed by the new road.

**3.27** The new buildings will make Salisbury Square a smaller and more intimate public space. The plan above demonstrates the relative location of the existing and proposed buildings which will enclose the new space. The corner of the westernmost new buildings will be level with the centre of the existing Job Centre.

**3.28** When viewed from the south, the frontage of the Job Centre will perform the dual function of enclosing the new Square, and leading the eye along the new road. The curve of the buildings on the western side of the Square follows the route of the old Great North Road. For this reason, the route of the proposed new road, leading to further development beyond Salisbury Square, will be well defined. This will help to encourage pedestrian trade to venture beyond the immediately visible bounds of the Square towards the proposed shops beyond.





**Car Park**

**3.29** The car park to the north of Salisbury Square will cover approximately the same amount of the site as the existing car park. However, its capacity will be increased from 109 to 141 spaces, as the replacement car park will have two storeys. At the ground floor level, the car park will be accessed from the west, while a separate access is to be located at the basement level immediately to the east.

**3.30** The new car park will be enclosed by development, with new buildings of four storeys (plus basement) immediately to the south and west. Four storeys will be visible from the upper deck of the car park, the top three of which will be residential. 15 of the 19 flats will overlook this space, as will the rear of the new terrace of 5 houses. The design therefore engenders a high degree of natural surveillance.

**Housing**

**3.31** The proposed terrace of houses to the north of the new car park will face a similar terrace being part of the Dunhams Yard redevelopment. The two terraces will create a new residential street, and will bring activity to what is currently a “neglected corner” of Old Hatfield, dominated by back yards and surface car parking. There was formerly a row of houses broadly in this location called (Viaduct Villas) and also an old street in this location called Arm and Sword Yard. Please see the submitted Heritage Statement.



**Scale**

**Salisbury Square**

**3.32** The new buildings will be of a similar height to the existing buildings on Salisbury Square, as demonstrated by the illustrations. Their ridge height will in fact be slightly lower than that of the Job Centre building, reflecting the change in levels across the Square.

**3.33** As Salisbury Square will now be a smaller public space, the buildings will remain of a similar height to existing, thereby creating a stronger sense of enclosure. This will accord with District Plan Policy D3, Continuity and Enclosure.

**Housing**

**3.34** The new terrace of housing that will be created to the north of the car park will be three storeys in height. These houses are set on lower ground to the new buildings in Salisbury Square. They will be stepped up the hill towards the Great North Road, but on a slightly higher level than the existing buildings on Park Street. However, they will not be particularly visible from Park Street, due to the tight-knit fabric of the intervening adjacent buildings.

Proposed new buildings and two storey car park (top).

Proposed new buildings on the northern side of Salisbury Square (bottom).

**3.35** The new terrace of houses will form a strong sense of enclosure and recreate a former street at this location. The scale of the new street is similar to that of many of the older streets in the nearby area, such as Fore Street and Park Street.

**3.36** As the buildings play an important role in defining the physical extent of the street, it is important that their character is strong and of a high quality, and the proposed houses meet this requirement. They have been designed in a traditional style, reminiscent of many of the older buildings in Old Hatfield in terms of their door and window types and sizes, building height, roof pitch and materials. The new car park has been designed with brick arches reminiscent of the listed brick viaduct over Park Street.

## **Landscaping**

**3.37** The existing landscaping within Salisbury Square is minimal and hostile. Most of the square is covered with grassed raised planters making the area dysfunctional and as a result unused. The proposal for Salisbury Square aims to fulfil its wasted potential. The landscaping scheme proposes to abandon the planters and create a multi functional, accessible space for the whole community to use. The square will be predominantly a shared surface, made up of a mixture of conservation granite paving and resin bonded gravel, where required Montague bollards will be used to control the traffic. The Square will be defined by the planting of young trees around the edges.

**3.38** The regeneration of the square will create a pleasant and accessible space, allowing community events such as Farmers markets and Christmas Fairs to be held, bringing locals and visitors to the area.

## Appearance

**3.39** The new buildings on the northern side of Salisbury Square will be designed to accord with the traditional character of Old Hatfield, rather than the Square's current utilitarian character. The buildings which currently surround the Square were built in the early 1970s, and are purely functional in appearance, generally lacking the architectural detail which characterises many of the older buildings in the area. The highest quality frontages tend to be the older ones, and the elevations of the new buildings have been designed to follow some of the key principles of these older frontages.

**3.40** One clear difference between the existing and proposed buildings is their relationship to Salisbury Square at ground level. The current building is fronted by an open walkway, which casts a shadow over the shop fronts, and makes them difficult to see from a distance. This makes the shops less able to make clear and distinctive displays, thus undermining their potential success as retail outlets. It also gives the building an unappealing and unsafe appearance, as it is largely concealed at ground level to pedestrians.

**3.41** The ground floor of the proposed buildings will be characterised by shop fronts which form the edges of Salisbury Square, and are located immediately adjacent to pavements and the flow of pedestrians. This style of shop front is similar to those found on Park Street, or the many former shops on Fore Street, and allows a greater degree of interaction with passing trade. The shop fronts will also be overhung with awnings, which will provide a similar protection from the rain to the existing walkway, but without creating the same heavy shadows.



**3.42** The two new buildings will be positioned in line with each other, but will also be separated by a gap which will allow pedestrian access to the car park to the north, as well as space for outdoor seating for a café. This gap will also allow views between the buildings, giving a sense of space and light to balance the sense of enclosure which the buildings will create. The two buildings will be stepped, reflecting the change in levels across the site.

**3.43** A proposed palette of construction materials for hard surfaces and suggested street furniture is enclosed as Appendix 5.

Shop fronts are currently hidden in shadow and set back from Salisbury Square (top).

The proposed frontage to Salisbury Square (bottom).



View from Great North Road;  
proposed enhanced route through  
to right of the Hatfield Arms PH.



Glimpsed view from Park  
Street between buildings.

### Views from Outside the Site

**3.44** There are only limited views of the new buildings from outside the Square and the adjacent car park. They can be glimpsed intermittently between the buildings on Park Street to the east, while the rear of the new buildings on the Square, and an oblique view of the terrace of houses, can be seen more clearly from the station to the west. There will be improved visibility from the Great North Road into the development between the Hatfield Arms PH and Blackhorse House and which is important to the success of the scheme. The new buildings on Salisbury Square will be a significant improvement on the appearance of the existing buildings.

### Safety by Design

**3.45** These proposals have been designed in accordance with District Plan Policy D7, Safety by Design. The additional activity which the proposals will generate in and around Salisbury Square should significantly improve the pedestrian safety of the site and the surrounding area. As noted above, the increase in residential development will also result in improved natural surveillance of the public spaces.

**3.46** The only area not visible from the new residential development, or other public areas, will be the basement of the new car park. This floor will be reserved for the new residential development, and it will be gated, with access controlled by residents.

# 4

## Planning Policy Context

4.1 The application site lies within the Old Hatfield Conservation Area, and partly within an Area of Archaeological Significance, both of which are defined on the Welwyn Hatfield Borough Plan Proposals Map.

### Planning Policy Statement 3, Housing (June 2010, as amended)

4.4 With regard to the location of new residential development, paragraph 10 of PPS3 requires the planning system to deliver:

'Housing developments in suitable locations, which offer a good range of community facilities and with good access to jobs, key services and infrastructure.'

4.5 Paragraph 36 also notes that 'The priority for development should be previously developed land, in particular vacant and derelict sites and buildings.'

4.6 Paragraph 45 notes that 'Using land efficiently is a key consideration in planning for housing.' In the context of development which results in an intensification of the existing urban fabric, paragraph 49 notes that 'in Conservation Areas and other local areas of special character where, if proper attention is paid to achieving good design, new development opportunities can be taken without adverse impacts on their character and appearance.'

### Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

4.2 Section 66 of the Act concerns development which affects a listed building, or its setting. It requires the local planning authority to 'have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.'

4.3 Section 72 of the Act concerns Conservation Areas, and requires the local planning authority to pay 'special attention... to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area.'





Extract from Welwyn Hatfield District Plan Proposals Map.

-  Conservation Area
-  Area of Archaeological Significance
-  Historic Park & Garden
-  Wildlife Site
-  Green Belt

4.7 Paragraph 14 sets out an aim for new housing development to:

- Create places, streets and spaces which meet the needs of people, are visually attractive, safe, accessible, functional, inclusive, have their own distinctive identity and maintain and improve local character.
- Promote designs and layouts which make efficient and effective use of land, including encouraging innovative approaches to help deliver high quality outcomes.

4.8 Paragraph 16 sets out considerations for assessing the quality of residential design, and the extent to which the proposed development:

- Is easily accessible and well-connected to public transport and community facilities and services, and is well laid out so that all the space is used efficiently, is safe, accessible and user-friendly.
- Provides, or enables good access to, community and green and open amenity and recreational space (including play space) as well as private outdoor space such as residential gardens, patios and balconies.
- Is well integrated with, and complements, the neighbouring buildings and the local area more generally in terms of scale, density, layout and access.
- Facilitates the efficient use of resources, during construction and in use, and seeks to adapt to and reduce the impact of, and on, climate change.
- Takes a design-led approach to the provision of car-parking space, that is well integrated with a high quality public realm and streets that are pedestrian, cycle and vehicle friendly.



- Creates, or enhances, a distinctive character that relates well to the surroundings and supports a sense of local pride and civic identity
- Provides for the retention or re-establishment of the biodiversity within residential environments.

**4.9** Paragraph 69 sets the following criteria for determining planning applications for residential development, requiring local planning authorities to have regard to:

- Achieving high quality housing.
- Ensuring developments achieve a good mix of housing reflecting the accommodation requirements of specific groups, in particular, families and older people.
- The suitability of a site for housing, including its environmental sustainability.
- Using land effectively and efficiently.
- Ensuring the proposed development is in line with planning for housing objectives, reflecting the need and demand for housing in, and the spatial vision for, the area and does not undermine wider policy objectives e.g. addressing housing market renewal issues.

## Planning Policy Statement 4, Planning for Sustainable Economic Growth (December 2009)

**4.10** Paragraph 4 of PPS4 defines economic development as that within the B use classes, public and community uses and the main town centre uses. It also notes that uses which provide employment opportunities, generate wealth or produce or generate an economic output or product should be considered economic development. By this definition, retail uses are economic development.

**4.11** Paragraph 10 requires economic development to be focussed primarily in existing centres, with the aim of offering a wide range of services to communities, and remedying deficiencies in local provision. Economic development should also increase competition, and enhance consumer choice, to meet the needs of the entire community.

**4.12** Policy EC4.1 requires local planning authorities to pro-actively plan to promote competitive town centre environments, and promote consumer choice, by:

- (b) 'Planning for a strong retail mix so that the range and quality of the comparison and convenience retail offer meets the requirements of the local catchment area, recognising that smaller shops can significantly enhance the character and vibrancy of a centre.'
- (e) 'Retaining and enhancing existing markets and, where appropriate, re-introducing or creating new ones, ensuring that markets remain attractive and competitive by investing in their improvement.'

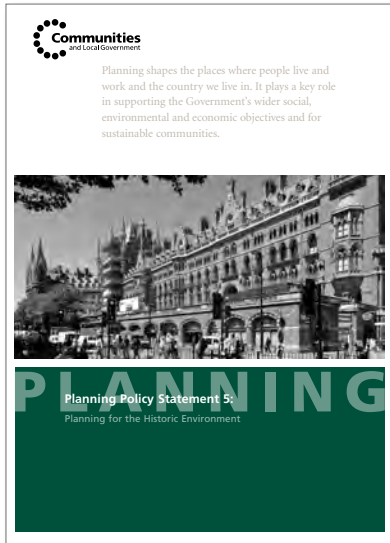
**4.13** Policy EC10.1 notes that:

- 'Local planning authorities should adopt a positive and constructive approach towards planning applications for economic development. Planning applications that secure sustainable economic growth should be treated favourably.'

**4.14** EC10.2 also contains a number of criteria for considering planning applications for economic development, and these are considered in Section 5 below.

**4.15** Policy EC13 sets criteria for local planning authorities, when determining applications affecting shops and services in local centres. It notes that they should take the following criteria into account:

- (a) take into account the importance of the shop, leisure facility or service to the local community or the economic base of the area if the proposal would result in its loss or change of use
- (b) refuse planning applications which fail to protect existing facilities which provide for people's day-to-day needs
- (c) respond positively to planning applications for the conversion or extension of shops which are designed to improve their viability

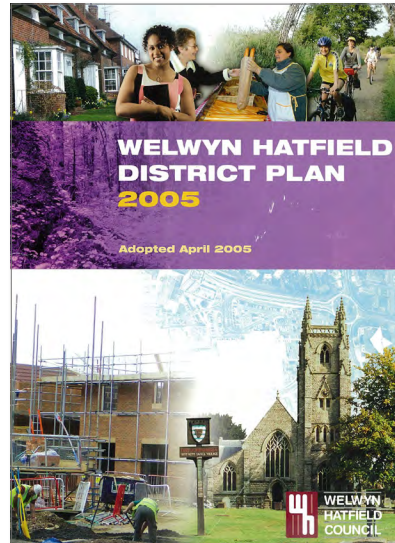


### Planning Policy Statement 5, Planning for the Historic Environment (March 2010)

4.16 PPS5 seeks to protect statutory designated heritage assets, such as Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas. Policy HE9 states that there is a presumption in favour of designated heritage assets, and it seeks to prevent the loss of or damage to a heritage asset. Policy HE9.1 implies that the protection accorded to a heritage asset should be proportional to its importance. However, Policy HE9.5 notes that not all elements of a Conservation Area will contribute to its significance, noting that:

*'When considering proposals, local planning authorities should take into account the relative significance of the element affected and its contribution to the significance of the World Heritage Site or Conservation Area as a whole. Where an element does not positively contribute to its significance, local planning authorities should take into account the desirability of enhancing or better revealing the significance of the World Heritage Site or Conservation Area, including, where appropriate, through development of that element. This should be seen as part of the process of place-shaping.'*

4.17 The significance of the historic environment has been fully considered in the submitted Heritage Statement.



### Welwyn Hatfield Borough Plan (April 2005)

#### Policy SD1, Sustainable Development

4.18 Policy SD1 requires all planning applications to be accompanied by details of the way in which the application addresses the sustainability criteria in the Council's Sustainability Checklist. A detailed response to the Sustainability Checklist is included below at Appendix 6 and which includes a completed Biodiversity Checklist.

#### Policy R1, Maximising the Use of Previously Developed Land

4.19 This policy expresses a preference for new development to take place on previously developed land (pdl). Almost all of the application site constitutes pdl, as defined in Annex B of PPS3, with the sole exception of the green space at the centre of Salisbury Square. This area was pdl up until the redevelopment of the area in the early 1970s. The proposed development would retain some of this area in its current function as a public open space.

#### Policy R2, Contaminated Land

4.20 The Council will encourage proposals for the development and reuse of land which is or may be contaminated. Please see the report submitted by RSK STATS which accompanies the application. Further details can be submitted pursuant to a planning condition.

#### Policy R3, Energy Efficiency

4.21 This policy requires new developments to maximise energy conservation through design and layout, and to incorporate the best environmental option for energy supply. This application is accompanied by an Energy Statement by ECSC, which sets out in detail the predicted energy performance of the proposed development.

#### Policy R5, Waste Management

4.22 The Council have indicated that they will require details of the proposed measures for dealing with waste generated during the demolition and construction process. A Waste Management Plan has been prepared and included in Appendix 7.

#### Policy R8, Floodplains and Flood Prevention

4.23 Policy R8 deals with floodplains and flood prevention and Policy R10 deals with water conservation measures. The applicant has consulted the Environment Agency at the pre-application stage. This aspect has been fully dealt with by WSP UK Ltd – please see the submitted Flood Risk Assessment and initial Foul and Surface water drainage proposals.



### **Policy R17, Trees, Woodland and Hedgerows**

**4.24** This Policy states that the Council will seek to protect and retain existing trees. New development will also be required to incorporate new planting of locally native species. The application site contains a number of trees, believed to have been planted at the time of the site's redevelopment in the early 1970s. This application proposes to remove most of the trees within Salisbury Square, and the car park to the north. These trees will be replaced with a number of new trees, which are to be carefully placed throughout the development.

### **Policy R20, Light Pollution**

**4.25** This Policy seeks to avoid light pollution from external lighting in new development. The proposed development would incorporate external lighting within the new car park, and within Salisbury Square. This lighting will be sensitively designed, so as to accord with the criteria of Policy R20 and also use lighting units which are of a traditional design, in keeping with the conservation area.

### **Policy R29, Archaeology**

**4.26** The application site is located within an Area of Archaeological Significance, as defined on the Proposals Map. Please see the submitted archaeology report within the Heritage Statement.

### **Policy M1, Integrating Transport and Land Use**

**4.27** This policy requires new developments to be located where sustainable modes of travel can be prioritised. The proposed development is in a highly sustainable location, within the urban area of Old Hatfield and less than 100m from Hatfield Railway Station and a number of bus stops. It is also less than 1km from Hatfield town centre. Further discussion can be found in the Access section of this report.

### **Policy M2, Transport Assessments**

**4.28** This application is accompanied by a Transport Statement by WSP UK Ltd, which has been produced following pre-application discussions with Hertfordshire County Council's Highways department. Relevant details are also given below in the Access section of this report.

### **Policy M5, Pedestrian Facilities**

**4.29** This policy requires improvements in facilities for the safe and convenient movement of pedestrians, and priority should be given to pedestrian access in proposed development layouts. The application proposals make careful provision for improved pedestrian facilities, and these are explored further in Section 6 below.

### **Policy M6, Cycle Route and Facilities**

**4.30** This policy requires the provision of safe cycle routes, cycle parking and where appropriate storage, showering and changing facilities. This is considered further in Section 6 below.

### **Policy M14, Parking Standards for New Development**

**4.31** This policy requires the car and cycle parking provision to be laid out in accordance with the Supplementary Planning Guidance on Parking Standards (January 2004). The standards, and the application proposals, are outlined below in the Access section 6 of this report.

### **Planning Obligation**

**4.32** Policy IM2 deals with planning obligations and seeks to require payments from development towards new social and community infrastructure directly relevant and necessary to the granting of planning permission. The applicants have fully assessed the financial viability of the scheme which at the date of the application generates a negative residual value. Please see the separate report submitted by Allen Dadswell – viability consultants.

### **Design Policies**

**4.33** The District Plan includes a number of policies relating to the quality of design, and various design principles, and these are expanded within the Council's Supplementary Design Guide. The application proposals have been formulated with the policies in mind, and they are referenced where appropriate in the Design section above.

### **Policy H2, Location of Windfall Development**

**4.34** The Welwyn Hatfield District Plan allows for part of the District's housing requirement to be met by windfall residential developments. Policy H2 notes that planning applications for windfall residential development will be considered against a number of criteria, and these are listed, along with the application's response, in Section 5 below.

### **Policy H6, Densities**

**4.35** This policy requires all new developments to be of between 30 and 50 dwellings per hectare (dph), provided the development is compatible with the character of the surrounding area, and the Plan's design policies. In central areas and areas with good access to public transport, development will be expected to be close to, or to exceed, 50dph, subject to the same caveats.

### Policy H7, Affordable Housing

**4.36** Policy H7, Affordable Housing requires the provision of affordable housing for sites over 1 hectare or schemes in excess of 25 dwellings. As the proposal is for 24 units and the site area is 0.93 ha, no affordable housing provision is required in this case.

### Policy H10, Accessible Housing

**4.37** This policy states that the Council will seek a proportion of all developments of 5 or more dwellings to be built to Lifetime Homes standard. Dwelling type, site location and topography will be factors in determining what the level of provision should be. The applicants will give consideration to this provision and note that the proposed flats will include lift access. The applicants will give consideration to this provision and note that the proposed flats will include lift access.

### Policy TCR24, Old Hatfield

**4.38** The District Plan contains policy guidance specifically related to retail provision within Old Hatfield. The supporting text at paragraph 13.75 reads as follows:

Old Hatfield has a unique retail function. Whilst retaining some of the characteristics of a Large Village Centre, it does not perform exactly the same functions because it serves the local business community, as well as local residents, and as such displays a mix of specialist and service uses. These uses are not located in one frontage, but are dispersed within the centre, being based both in and around Salisbury Square. The Council recognises that Old Hatfield has suffered from pressures for change of use from convenience retail uses to either specialist retailing uses, or non-retail uses, such as service and hot food outlets, and that this has eroded the provision of local, convenience shopping. It is therefore considered important to maintain and, if possible, improve the provision of convenience retail uses. Old Hatfield also acts as a local centre for office employment and therefore proposals for B1 office uses may be considered subject to the criteria in Policy TCR24.

**4.39** The supporting text at paragraph 13.75 reads as follows:

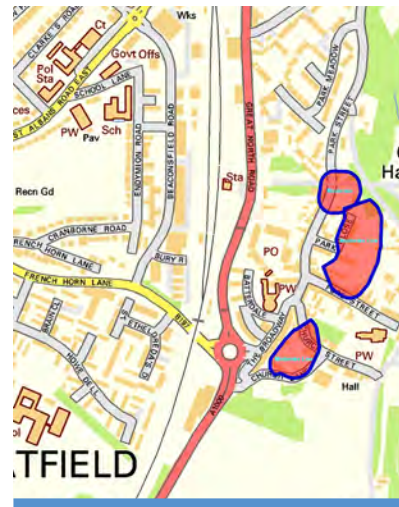
Within Old Hatfield the council will permit proposals for Class A1 uses, particularly for convenience goods shopping. Proposals for change of use to Class A2 (Financial and Professional Services) and Class A3 (Food and Drink) will only be permitted where this would not result in the loss of a Class A1 retail unit.

Proposals for change of use to Class B1 Business use will be permitted provided that:

- (i) The proposal would be at first floor level or higher; and
- (ii) It would not lead to the loss of a Class A1, A2 or A3 use; and
- (iii) It would not involve the loss of residential accommodation.

### Chalk Mines

**4.40** There are a number of former chalk mines within Hatfield, and the map below produced by the Council, shows those areas at potential risk from previous mining operations under Old Hatfield. The plan shows that none of the application site is affected by previous mine workings. The applicant is aware of the Council's advice to maintain a 'watching brief' on building works as they progress.



The location of former chalk mines in Old Hatfield

## 5

# Supporting Planning Considerations

## Conservation Area and Listed Buildings

**5.1** As described elsewhere in this statement, the proposed redevelopment will significantly enhance the character and appearance of the Old Hatfield Conservation Area. Similarly, the proposed redevelopment will have a positive effect on the setting of nearby listed buildings. It will therefore accord with the requirements of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

**5.2** PPS5 advises that where features within a Conservation Area do not positively contribute to its significance, it may be suitable to approve proposals to replace them with new forms of development which enhance or better reveal the significance of the Conservation Area. The application proposals relate to a part of the Old Hatfield Conservation Area which was comprehensively redeveloped in the early 1970s, and which is currently of a poor character and appearance. The proposed development would significantly enhance the character and appearance of the Old Hatfield Conservation Area by reinstatement of the old road and introduction of new buildings of traditional design more in-keeping.

## Residential Development

### Principle of Residential Development

**5.3** The application site is within the urban area of Old Hatfield, and already contains some residential development. It is not subject to any designations which would restrict further new residential development, and as such there is a presumption that the principle of additional residential use is acceptable.

**5.4** A recent Strategic Housing Market Assessment (2010), undertaken on behalf of the Council by Opinion Research Services (ORS), has noted that there is also an acknowledged need for new housing in Welwyn Hatfield Borough, as house prices continue to rise, and housing becomes less affordable for first-time buyers. There is therefore a pressing need for new housing in this area.



The eastern side of Salisbury Square. The space at the centre of the Square is unhelpfully separated from public areas by a wall and a change in levels.

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**5.5** As noted in Section 4 above, PPS3 requires new housing developments to be located where there is good access to 'a good range of community facilities and with good access to jobs, key services and infrastructure.' PPS3 also requires an application to have regard to 'the suitability of a site for housing, including its environmental sustainability.' The application site is in a sustainable location, close to Hatfield railway station, bus services and taxis. The site itself also already contains a limited number of local shops, the range of which will be improved by these application proposals. There are also a number of offices and other sources of employment in Old Hatfield. The application site is therefore a suitable location for residential development and this will help to regenerate the area.



There is a degree of natural surveillance from the upper floors of properties around Salisbury Square. This will be increased with the proposed additional residential development.

**Windfall Development**

5.6 Policy H2 of the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan allows for part of the Borough’s housing requirement to be met by windfall residential developments. The proposed redevelopment would count as windfall, and as such should be considered against the following criteria:

Policy H2 Criteria	Response
The availability of previously developed sites and/or buildings.	The application site constitutes previously developed land, in accordance with the definition in Annex B of PPS3.
The location and accessibility of a site to services and facilities by transport modes other than the car.	The site is in a sustainable location.
The capacity of existing and potential infrastructure to absorb further development.	The site is well served by local infrastructure, and is in one of the most suitable and sustainable locations for new development in the Borough. The proposed redevelopment will in fact enhance local infrastructure, providing a better range of shops and services, and improved pedestrian and vehicular linkages.
The ability to reinforce existing communities, including providing a demand for services and facilities.	The proposed redevelopment should provide an increased demand for local shops, which have declined in recent years. By generating increased activity, in terms of pedestrian and vehicular traffic through Salisbury Square, this application should improve the viability of its shops, and the attractiveness of the Square as a location for retail development to serve the local community. Through the introduction of additional housing, the application should also generate additional demand for local services and facilities.
The physical and environmental constraints on development of land.	There are no known physical constraints to the proposed development.

### Type of Accommodation Proposed

**5.7** One of the criteria set out by PPS3 for determining residential development proposals is 'Ensuring developments achieve a good mix of housing reflecting the accommodation requirements of specific groups, in particular, families and older people.' There are clear limitations on the amount and type of housing which can be delivered on the application site, particularly given another requirement of PPS3, for proposals to 'use land efficiently and effectively.' However, this application represents a good range of types of accommodation given these constraints, with 24 new dwellings, which are to comprise 19 flats and 5 houses. Of the flats, 4 will have one bedroom, and the other 15 will have two bedrooms. The five houses proposed by this application will comprise 5 three bedroom terraced houses.

**5.8** The 2004 Housing Needs Study (HNS) identified that flats made up only 17.6% of Welwyn Hatfield Borough's housing stock, and the 2010 Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) indicates that this proportion has now fallen to 17.2%<sup>1</sup>. However, the HNS identified that the need for flats amongst new households was as high as 60%. The SHMA does not have a comparative figure, but it does estimate that 50% future housing need in the area up to 2021 will be for 1 and 2 bedroom dwellings, and 38% of households will require 3 bedrooms.<sup>2</sup> The proposed development will make a valuable contribution towards meeting this long-term need.



### Retail Development

Some of the existing shops on Salisbury Square.

#### Planning Policy Statement 4

**5.9** Policy EC13(c) of PPS4 notes that local planning authorities should 'respond positively to planning applications for the conversion or extension of shops which are designed to improve their viability.' The proposed development is designed specifically to improve the viability of the shops around Salisbury Square, many of which are currently vacant. These proposals will result in larger and more flexible retail units, which are more suited to modern retail needs. They will also be more attractive, and better suited to retail use than the existing units. The reinstatement of the Old Great North Road through the scheme will also increase the flow of traffic past these shops, improving their potential for passing trade.

<sup>1</sup> Extrapolated from London Commuter Belt (West) Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2008 (Opinion Research Services, 2010), Figure 16(b)

<sup>2</sup> London Commuter Belt (West) Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2008 (ORS, 2010), Figure 144

**5.10** Policy EC10.2 of PPS4 contains the following criteria for determining planning applications for economic development:

<p>Whether the proposal has been planned over the lifetime of the development to limit carbon dioxide emissions, and minimise vulnerability and provide resilience to, climate change</p>	<p>This application is accompanied by an Energy Statement by the Environmental Centre for Sustainable Communities (ECSC), which sets out measures for potential use of renewable energy resources.</p>
<p>The accessibility of the proposal by a choice of means of transport including walking, cycling, public transport and the car, the effect on local traffic levels and congestion (especially to the trunk road network) after public transport and traffic management measures have been secured</p>	<p>The application site is in a highly sustainable location, with excellent access to local public transport facilities. It will also include enhanced facilities for cyclists, with the provision of new cycle parking stands, and improved accessibility through the site to Old Hatfield. Charging points for electric vehicles will also be installed.</p>
<p>Whether the proposal secures a high quality and inclusive design which takes the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of the area and the way it functions</p>	<p>The proposed redevelopment will be of a very high quality, and will significantly improve the character of the site, particularly the quality of the architecture and the public open spaces. The new road will increase activity through the site, and will improve the functionality of the new and existing retail units within the Square, as well as bringing additional trade in to Old Hatfield from users of the nearby train and bus parking areas.</p>
<p>The impact on economic and physical regeneration in the area including the impact on deprived areas and social inclusion objectives</p>	<p>The proposed development will help to regenerate Old Hatfield, bringing new employment and increasing commercial activity, to help reverse its long-term decline. The scheme represents a significant investment by the Applicant and their partners.</p>
<p>The impact on local employment</p>	<p>The proposed development will result in an increase in retail floor space, which should help employment levels within Old Hatfield.</p>



### Welwyn Hatfield District Plan

**5.11** Convenience shopping will be an important element of the new retail provision. It will be necessary to replace the existing small convenience store with a superior retail premises. This will more properly serve the local and working populations, and meet the requirements of Policy TCR24. The applicants will seek to secure an anchor tenant/retail user to promote the vibrancy and economic vitality of the development. Policy TCR24 also seeks to prevent the loss of residential development to other uses (offices are specified) within Old Hatfield, and the proposed development will comply with this policy.

### Design

**5.12** The Design policies within the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan have been carefully considered in the formulation of the application proposals. They are referenced where relevant in the Design Section of this Statement. Of particular note is Policy D4, which relates to the Quality of the Public Realm, and states that 'The Council will expect new development where appropriate to either create or enhance public areas and the public realm.' The application proposals relate to changes to the public realm in Salisbury Square. The proposed layout and design will enhance the character, appearance and vitality of the public realm.

**5.13** In design terms the project will use high quality building materials and finishes required for a conservation area location. The architectural design theme is for new buildings and spaces with a 'traditional' architectural design and layout.

### Financial Contributions

**5.14** A full financial appraisal has been prepared by Allen Dadswell of this regeneration proposal following analysis of development costs and potential income. The development appraisal will assist in discussions with the local planning authority relating to the provision of social and community infrastructure.

**5.15** The development appraisal shows a negative residual value due to the high construction costs in developing this brownfield site; the conservation area location and the long-term vision of the scheme in seeking to regenerate the area. As a consequence, the scheme will not be able to make financial contributions towards social and community infrastructure in accordance with Policy IM2.

**5.16** Central Government guidance in Circular 5/2005 Planning Obligations (paragraph B10) gives councils discretion in any request for contributions, having regard to the economic viability of a scheme. Any contributions must also be justified in terms of the statutory tests set out in Circular 5/2005 and the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Regulations relating to relevance; necessity and reasonableness.

**5.17** The applicants consider that the regeneration proposals for Salisbury Square will be a significant enhancement to the community of Old Hatfield and the conservation area. Given the economic viability of the scheme, the applicants request that the Council and other stakeholders investigate whether or not S106 and CI Levy funds raised from other developments in the borough are able to contribute to the project, in order to ensure that these important regeneration proposals for Old Hatfield come to fruition.



Pedestrian access under building and road underpass is not user friendly.

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# 6

## Access

### Sustainable Location

**6.1** Old Hatfield is in a highly accessible location, and the application site is only around 50m from Hatfield station at its closest point. Hatfield station offers a fast service to London, and connections to other major local towns and centres of employment, such as Stevenage. A train route map showing connections to Hatfield Station is enclosed as Appendix 8.

**6.2** There are also a number of bus stops located at the station, which offer a good range of services to local destinations such as Welwyn Garden City, Stevenage, Ware, Harlow, Potters Bar, Watford, Hemel Hempstead, Borehamwood and services into London. A list of local buses, and a map of local bus routes, is included below at Appendix 9.

**6.3** Old Hatfield has a number of local shops, including a local supermarket. This application proposes to increase the range of local shopping opportunities, by creating new and better shop units, and by increasing passing trade and thereby making retail units more viable in the future.

**6.4** The application site is also located within 1km of Hatfield town centre, which contains a wider range of convenience and comparison shops, and is within easy access by bus or cycle. Welwyn Garden City town centre is also only 4.5km away and is easily accessible by train or bus from Old Hatfield. A cycle route map is enclosed as Appendix 10. Further details can be found in the submitted Transport Statement prepared by WSP Ltd.

### Pedestrian Facilities

**6.5** Policy M5 of the District Plan requires improvements in facilities for the safe and convenient movement of pedestrians, and for priority to be given to pedestrian access in proposed development layouts. The application proposals include reinstatement of the route of the Old Great North Road through the site. This will not result in any degradation in safety for pedestrians, as the accompanying footpaths and public spaces have been designed to be fully accessible to pedestrians and also to link through to the rest of the Old Town. The objective is also to encourage tourist visitors to Hatfield House to also come down in to the town and visit local shops and facilities in the new square.

## Vehicle Parking

**6.6** Policy M14 of the District Plan requires new development to provide parking facilities in accordance with the Council’s Parking Standards SPG, which sets maximum car and cycle parking standards. This SPG classifies all of Old Hatfield, including the application site, as being within Zone 2, within which provision of between 25 – 50% of the maximum standards will be acceptable.

**6.7** The Council’s standards state that the following provision is required for the proposed development:

Use (Size)	Car Parking Requirement	Cycle Parking Requirement
Retail Unit B1	Food = 1 space per 30m <sup>2</sup>  No specific standard / requirement for small retail units	1 s/t space per 150m <sup>2</sup> gfa plus  1 l/t space per 10 maximum staff on site at any one time.
Retail Unit B2		
Retail Unit C	Café	
Retail Unit D		
1 Bedroom Dwellings	0.75 spaces per dwelling	1 long-term space per unit (if no garage / shed)
2 Bedroom Dwellings	1 space per dwelling	1 long-term space per unit (if no garage / shed)
3 Bedroom Dwellings	1.5 spaces per dwelling	1 long-term space per unit (if no garage / shed)

**6.8** The proposed development includes a total of 141 car parking spaces as a mixture of both private and public parking spaces.

parking provision and need in Old Hatfield. In particular, the survey found that there is considerable pressure from commuter parking in the Old Town.

**6.11** These issues are considered in further detail in the Transport Statement by WSP UK Ltd, which accompanies this application.

**6.9** The current under-provision in parking facilities within Old Hatfield was identified by the Hatfield Urban Transport Plan (2008), which noted that there was evidence that motorists using Hatfield Station were parking on the streets of Old Hatfield (para 6.4.5). This document also identified the need for a Controlled Parking Zone (CPZ) covering Old Hatfield, and additional car parking for the station. A further study, the Old Hatfield Parking Survey, was undertaken by Welwyn Hatfield Council in January 2010, concerning

**6.10** The parking for the proposed new dwellings will be accommodated on the lower floor of the new car park, while the upper level will be set aside to meet the needs of local residents and daytime visitors to the local shops. The car park will continue to be closed overnight and until 9am each morning, to deter its use by commuters travelling from Hatfield station.



**Cycle Routes**

**6.12** Policy M6 requires the provision of safe cycle routes, cycle parking and where appropriate storage, showering and changing facilities. The proposed development will create better accessibility for cyclists through the site, to and from Old Hatfield, due to the reinstatement of the Old Great North Road and improved facilities for parking of cycles within the square.

**Inclusive Access**

**6.13** Policy D9, Access and Design for People with Disabilities, requires all new development to be designed to allow access to those with impaired mobility. This development has been designed to be fully compliant with the latest building regulations, and also complies with this Policy.

The entrance to the existing car park from the Great North Road is flanked by high quality buildings (left).

Hatfield Station is very close to the application site (right).

**6.14** The commercial and residential buildings have been designed with regard to disabled access, meeting or exceeding Part M of building regulations, for instance through DDA compliant lifts. All public areas have also been designed with disabled access in mind.



The existing car park is currently a poor quality public space.