

# LANDSCAPE DESIGN STATEMENT



**Former Shredded Wheat Factory - North Side**

**Wheat Quarter**

**Bridge Road / Broadwater Road, Welwyn Garden City**

BRADLEY MURPHY DESIGN LTD  
6 The Courtyard, Hatton Technology Park, Dark Lane, Hatton, Warwickshire, CV35 8XB  
Company No: 7788475

This report is the property of Bradley Murphy Design Ltd and is issued on the condition it is not reproduced, retained or disclosed to any unauthorised person, either wholly or in part without the written consent of Bradley Murphy Design Ltd.

Project Number: BMD.20.019		Document Reference: BMD.20.019.RP.LDS.P001			
Revision	Purpose of Issue	Originated	Reviewed	Approved	Date
-	Planning	MP	RW	LB	Oct 20
A	Planning	MP	RW	LB	Nov 20
B	Planning	MP	RW	RW	Jan 21
C	Planning	MP	RW	RW	Jan 21

# CONTENTS

## Landscape Design Statement

-  01. Introduction & Background
  - 1.1 Purpose of the Document
  - 1.2 Design team
  - 1.3 Project overview
  - 1.4 Design objectives
-  02. Assessment of the Site Context
  - 2.1 Historical context
  - 2.2 Policy context
  - 2.3 Land use
  - 2.4 Open space context
  - 2.5 Townscape character
-  03. Analysis & Evaluation
  - 3.1 Site analysis
  - 3.2 Constraints and Opportunities
-  04. Design Ambition
  - 4.1 Design principles
-  05. Landscape Proposals
  - 5.1 Concept
  - 5.2 Design evolution
  - 5.3 Landscape Masterplan
-  06. Landscape Components
  - 6.1 Open space hierarchy
  - 6.2 Public realm
  - 6.3 Green space
  - 6.4 Streetscapes
  - 6.5 Play
-  07. Planting Strategy
-  08. Public Art Strategy
-  09. Material Palette
  - 9.1 Soft Landscape
  - 9.2 Hard Landscape
  - 9.3 Street Furniture
-  10. Sustainability & Climate Change
-  11. Maintenance and Management
-  12. Conclusion & Summary

# 01 INTRODUCTION & BACKGROUND

“... by so laying out a Garden City that, as it grows, the free gifts of nature, fresh air, sunlight, breathing room and playing room- shall be still retained in all needed abundance”

Garden Cities of To-morrow, Ebenezer Howard, 1902 edition.

This document has been prepared to support the hybrid planning application being submitted by Wheat Quarter Limited for the North Side of the development on the former Shredded Wheat Factory site in Welwyn Garden City, Hertfordshire. The landscape design statement sets out the rationale, design principles, concept and landscape proposals for the public realm, open space, private and semi private amenity spaces for the proposed masterplan.

The landscape design has been influenced by the Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) for the site, produced by Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council and the extant consent for the site, which was granted in February 2019. A landscape design statement, produced by BMD to accompany the previous application, established a series of overarching landscape design objectives, which have evolved to reinforce the industrial heritage and guide the landscape and public realm design for the consented proposals. These design objectives, and the principles underpinning the consented scheme, have informed the evolution of the landscape proposals for this application.

This landscape design statement seeks to capture the holistic design process to present a coherent and detailed set of proposals for the open space and public realm, determining the use, function, form and character of the key landscape components and identifying the proposed palette of hard and soft landscape materials within the public realm.



## AERIAL PHOTOGRAPH

The former Shredded Wheat Factory site before recent demolition works under the extant consent, showing the relationship to the town centre in the west and Peartree in the east, the extent of existing landscaping and site infrastructure

- 
- The aerial photograph shows an industrial site with various buildings and parking areas. A red line outlines the 'Site Boundary', which is an irregular shape covering the central and eastern parts of the site. A blue line outlines the 'Extant Consent Boundary', which is a more rectangular shape covering the western and central parts of the site. The site is surrounded by residential areas, roads, and railway tracks.
- Site Boundary
  - Extant Consent Boundary



## 1.1 Purpose of the Document

This document has been prepared by Bradley Murphy Design (BMD) on behalf of Wheat Quarter Limited. BMD was appointed to develop the design of the landscape and public realm for the North Side (Wheat Quarter) of the development as part of an iterative process, alongside Collado Collins Architects. This document has been prepared to explain the principles behind the Landscape Masterplan and how the landscape design has evolved from the extant consented scheme.

This report should be read in conjunction with the Design and Access Statement prepared by Collado Collins Architects and all reports and drawings submitted as part of the planning application.

## 1.2 Design Team

Wheat Quarter Limited are proposing development on the North Side of the former Shredded Wheat Factory Site in Welwyn Garden City.

To ensure delivery of a creative, vibrant community and to deliver the aims and objectives of the scheme, a strong design team is critical. The following consultants have contributed to the preparation of the planning application:

Wheat Quarter Limited

Architect - Collado Collins Architects

Landscape Architect, Ecology, TVIA - Bradley Murphy Design

Town Planning - Icen Projects

Transport - Entran

Decontamination - EAME - Earth And Marine Environmental Consultants

Louis de Soissons Building Architect - Louis de Soissons Ltd

Art Centre Architect – Jamie Fobert Architects

Energy and Sustainability - Sol Environmental

MEP Consultants – John Slater Howard

Structural Engineering- WSP

Fire Engineering - WSP

Environmental Impact Assessment - Entran

Health and Safety - Entran

Heritage Advisor - KM Heritage

Public Relations - Marengo Communications

Railway Experts – Masons

QS – Cast Consultancy

## 1.3 Project Overview

### WELWYN GARDEN CITY

The site is located within Welwyn Garden City, a town within the Borough of Welwyn and Hatfield in Hertfordshire. Welwyn Garden City was founded by Sir Ebenezer Howard in the 1920's and is unique in being both a garden city and a new town. It exemplifies the physical, social and cultural planning ideals of the periods in which it was built.

The former Shredded Wheat Factory was designed by Louis de Soissons; this building was ground breaking and represented the best of early 20th century modern architecture.

The starting point for the landscape design of the extant consent was to understand how the principles underpinning the garden city movement could be applied here as an integral part of the masterplan concept as well as responding to the historic context of the site and listed built form still occupying the site.

Analysis of the concepts, models and garden city principles have been key in influencing the design approach for a new 21st Century interpretation of a garden city.

### GARDEN CITY MOVEMENT

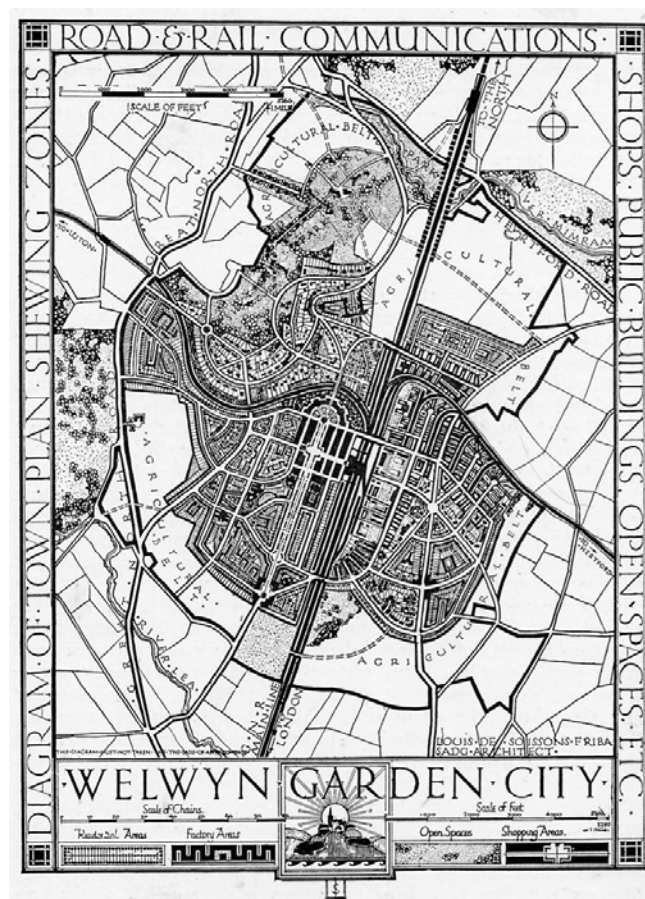
Sir Ebenezer Howard was a founder of the garden city movement, known for his publication *Garden Cities of Tomorrow* (1898), the description of a utopian city in which people live harmoniously together with nature. The publication resulted in the realisation of several Garden Cities in Great Britain at the beginning of the 20th century.

Howard thought people should live in places that combine the best aspects of both town and country. Howard believed that such Garden Cities were the perfect blend of city and nature and that a new civilisation could be found by marrying the town and the country.

The garden city model would make efficient use of land but would also be of a scale whereby all land uses would be within walking distances, thus delivering the 'sustainable' development that we are still seeking to deliver in the 21st century.

#### GENERAL TOWN PLAN OF WELWYN GARDEN CITY

Louis de Soissons' 1921 plan of Welwyn Garden City. The The former Shredded Wheat Factory site was located in a zone allocated for industry to the south east of the railway station and town centre.





## GARDEN CITY PRINCIPLES

At the heart of the Garden City ideal is the development of holistically planned new settlements which enhance the natural environment and provide high-quality affordable housing and locally accessible jobs in beautiful, healthy and sociable communities. Garden cities were founded on a series of principles developed by Ebenezer Howard which remain relevant today. These Garden City Principles are designed as an indivisible and interlocking framework for the delivery of high quality places.

### **Land value capture for the benefit of the community**

A fair distribution to the community of the profits that result from new development, founded on land value capture and the control of core utilities.

### **Strong vision, leadership and community engagement**

If Garden Cities are to be successful, they need strong political support and leadership, with a clear vision and firm commitment.

### **The long-term stewardship of assets**

A suitable body will need to be established to manage the assets of the Garden City in the long term. This management body can take a variety of forms, and the most suitable approach should emerge through the design and delivery process.

### **Mixed-tenure homes and housing types that are genuinely affordable for everyone**

The majority of homes in a new Garden City must be 'affordable' for ordinary people.

### **A strategic approach**

Ebenezer Howard saw the development of Garden Cities as part of a wider strategic approach to meeting the nation's housing needs. This was based on networks of new settlements well connected by public transport.

### **A robust range of employment opportunities, with a variety of jobs within easy commuting distance of homes**

Provide a full range of employment opportunities, with the aim of no less than one job per new household. While the changing nature of work means that the achievement of perfect employment self-sufficiency is impossible, the aim should be to reduce the need to travel to work.

### **Development which enhances the natural environment**

This net gain to biodiversity is secured through master plans which link generous private and community gardens with wider public green and blue space and ultimately with strategic networks of green infrastructure and habitat creation.

### **Strong local cultural, recreational and shopping facilities in walkable neighbourhoods**

This means, for example, shaping design with the needs of children's play, teenage interests and the aspirations of elderly in mind. Creating shared spaces for social interaction and space for both formal and informal artistic activities, as well as sport and leisure activities.

### **Integrated and accessible transport systems**

Walking, cycling and public transport should be the most attractive and prioritised forms of transport in the garden city. This means ensuring a comprehensive and safe network of footpaths and cycleways throughout the development, and public transport nodes within a short walking distance of all homes.

### **Beautifully and imaginatively designed homes with gardens, combining the very best of town and country living to create healthy homes in vibrant communities**

Aspiring to the very best domestic and commercial architecture with sensitivity to local vernacular design and materials. A strong emphasis should be placed on homes with gardens and space for both allotments, community gardens and orchards to provide for healthy local food.

Source: Town and Country Planning Association

## 1.4 Design Objectives

The design objectives for the landscape strategy of the consented development were informed both by the Garden City Principles and the Local Authority's vision for the Broadwater Road site. These design objectives have underpinned the further design development, masterplanning and landscape design of the revised proposals for Wheat Quarter.

The brief for the public realm and landscape strategy has evolved as part of the masterplanning process and centres around a modern interpretation of the Garden City Principles. Specific objectives for the design of the public realm include the aspiration:

1

### **...To establish a strong sense of place**



Responding to the industrial heritage context and setting of the listed built form to capture creatively and culturally the unique history and heritage of Welwyn Garden City that make the place special and unique.

2

### **...To create beautiful and imaginative landscape spaces**



The public realm and landscape must be user friendly, beautiful, elegant and have a timeless quality that promotes a true sense of place.

3

### **...To increase biodiversity and sustainability**



The landscape design proposals should provide new strategic networks of green infrastructure and habitat creation which results in a net gain to biodiversity and a landscape sustained through the subtle integration of sustainable urban drainage systems, energy conservation and microclimate enhancement.

4

### **...To establish a series of connected and integrated routes**



A safe and accessible development, containing clear and legible pedestrian and cycle routes which establishes wider connections between Peartree ward in the east and Welwyn Garden City town centre in the west.

5

### **...To create a multifunctional environment and high-quality landscape setting**



Inclusive flexible spaces with an appropriate mix of uses and activities from day to night.

6

### **...To deliver the social, recreational and cultural facilities and services the community needs**



Access to open spaces and opportunities for play and recreation can make an important contribution to the health and well-being of communities, therefore the landscape proposals should provide open space for both children's play and older youth groups.



# 02 ASSESSMENT OF THE SITE CONTEXT

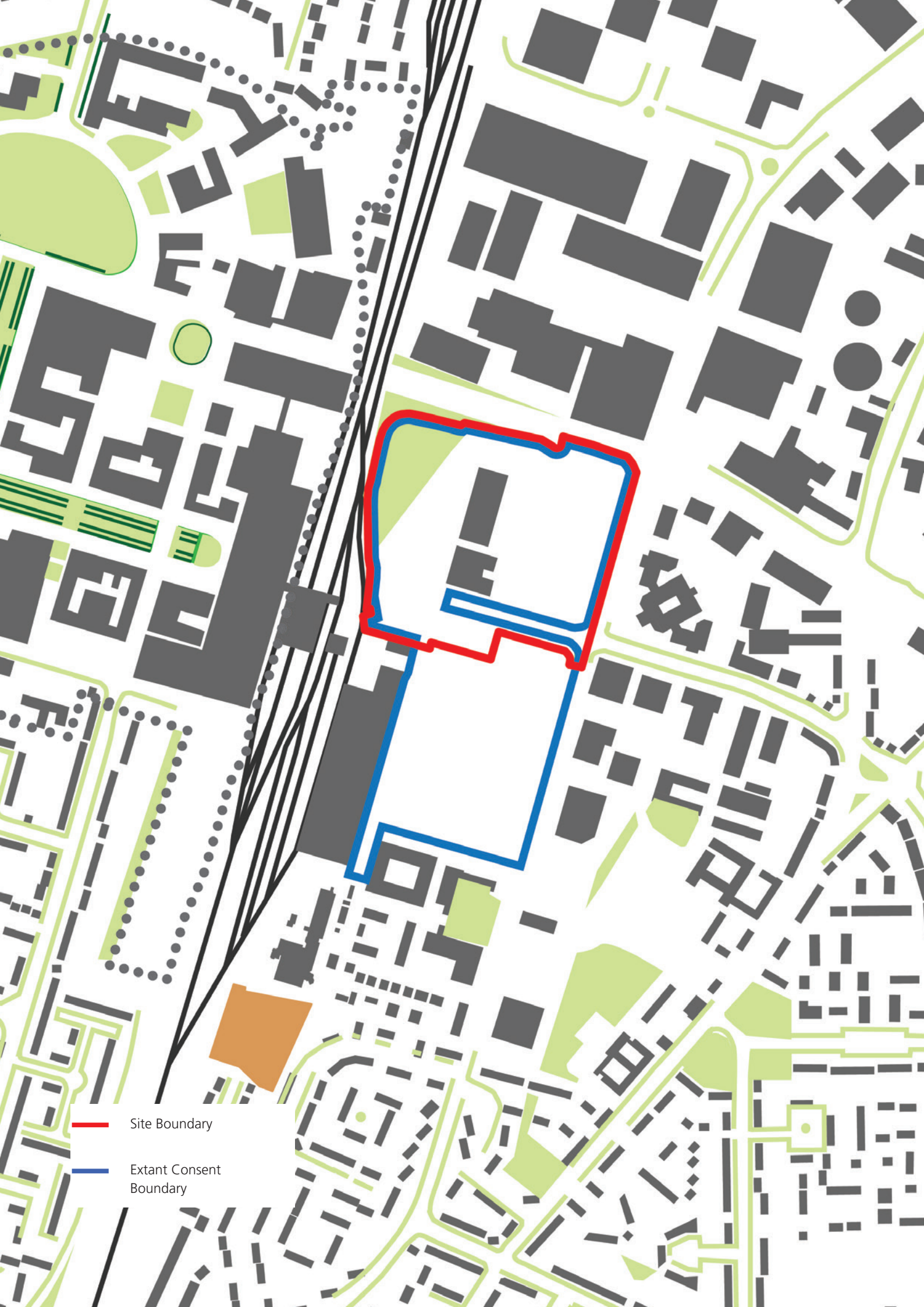
Identifying the site's unique historical, geographical, cultural and social context provides an understanding as to what gives the place an identity. Emphasising these elements with integrity and honesty is what fosters a 'sense of place'.

This section of the report explores the local context of the former Shredded Wheat Factory site as well as an overview of its history, physical characteristics, urban grain, townscape character and planning policy context. To ensure the physical, social and economic integration of the development proposal, the areas immediately adjacent to the site, together with the wider surroundings, have been the subject of our assessment.

The site is approximately 4.7ha in size and is located adjacent to Broadwater Road in the industrial zone of Welwyn Garden City. The former factory site is bound on all four sides: Bridge Road East B195 lies to the north, Broadwater Road A1000 to the east, Otto Road to the south and the East Coast Mainline railway to the west. It is strategically located centrally within Welwyn Garden City, on key transport routes and within walking distance of the town centre and railway station.

## GROUND FIGURE MODEL

The plan opposite illustrates the urban grain and public open space within and surrounding the site in the present day



Site Boundary



Extant Consent  
Boundary

## 2.1 Historical Context

Welwyn Garden City was Ebenezer Howard's second Garden City after Letchworth, where he appointed the architect Louis de Soissons to interpret the garden city concept into a masterplan for the town. One of the elements (zones) of the garden city was a factory belt to attract non polluting industries where the quality of the conditions for the workforce would be a key consideration. After 10 years of existence Welwyn had a population of 10,000, with well-established residential, industrial and commercial zones.

The area to the east of the railway line was recognised as the best site for industry, due to its level nature.

One of the first manufacturing industries to locate to the town was Shredded Wheat which opened in May 1924 on the Broadwater Road site. The American company considered the garden city image would be ideal for the production of their 'health' food and the new modern factory provided excellent amenities and working conditions, including a recreation ground.

The Shredded Wheat Factory finally ceased production in January 2008, after 73 years in Welwyn Garden City. It brought to an end one of the most closely identified aspects of the Garden City.



"There are two men in my life,  
To one I am a mother,  
To the other I'm a wife,  
And I give them both the best  
With natural Shredded Wheat"

The popular lyrics from the 1970' Shredded Wheat television advertising campaign



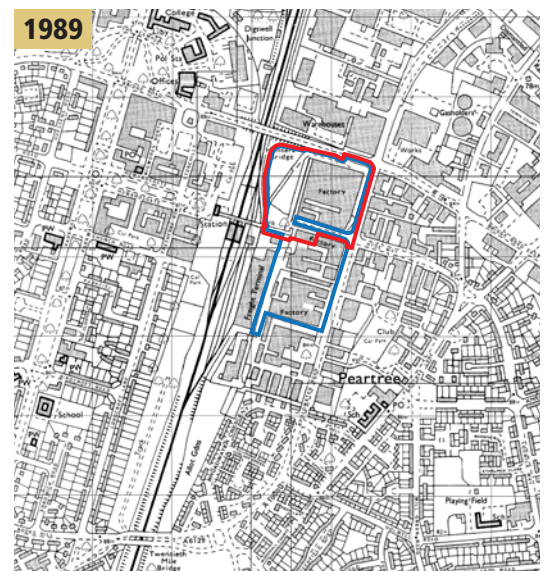
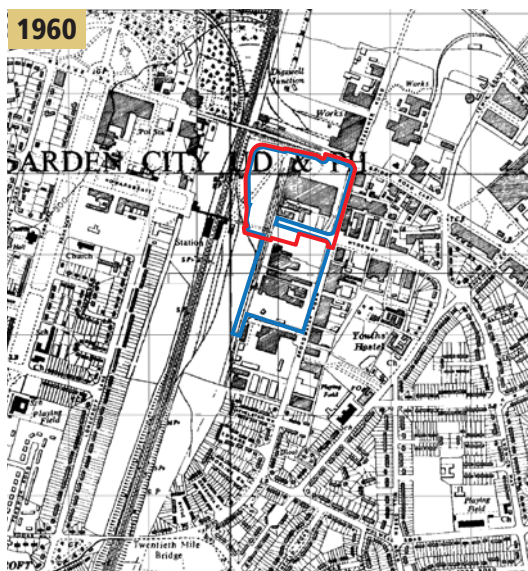
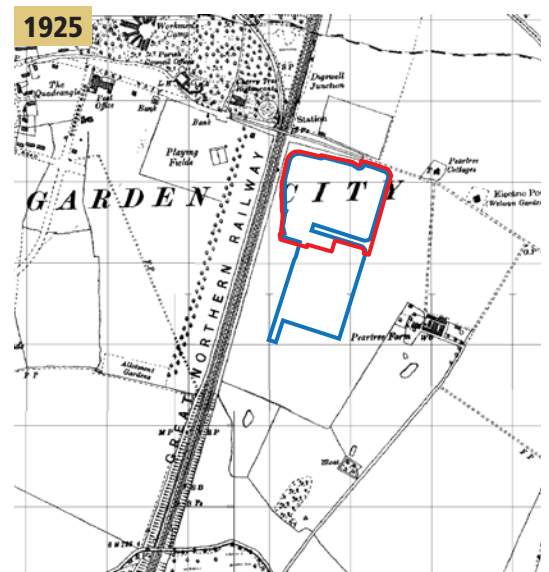
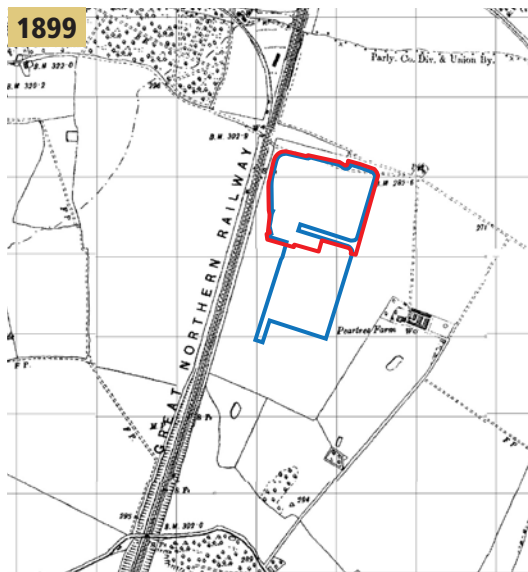
## HISTORIC GROWTH

A map regression dating back to 1899 shows that prior to the development of Welwyn Garden City, the site and surrounding land in and around Welwyn Garden City was open farmland (1899). The Former Shredded Wheat Factory site was situated to the east of the Great North Railway line and to the west of Pear Tree Farm.

By 1925 the map shows the early development of Welwyn Garden City primarily focused in the centre of town (Bridge Road and the Parkway).

The 1960's Welwyn Garden City was fully established featuring a town centre, residential areas and industry. The Shredded Wheat Factory site formed part of the industrial zone between the railway and Peartree ward.

The 1989 map illustrates further built form and a reduction in the balance of open space in Welwyn.



### MAP REGRESSION

Through historic mapping it is possible to build an understanding of the growth of Welwyn Garden City and the relationship between built form and public open space.

## 2.2 Policy Context

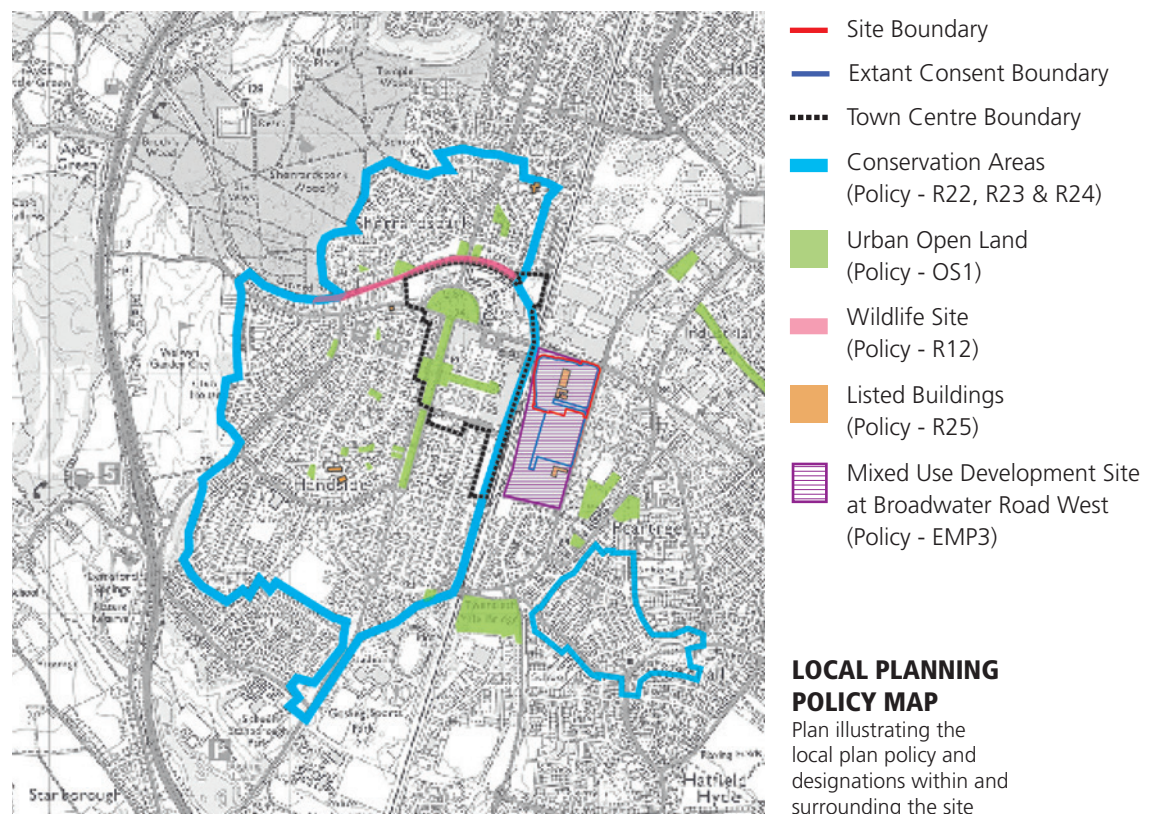
This landscape design statement is specifically focused on the public realm, open space and private amenity space within the proposed mixed use masterplan for land off Broadwater Road, Welwyn Garden City. This section of the document outlines planning policy and guidance relevant to the site and relating to landscape, play and public open space. For a comprehensive review of the planning policy context please refer to the Planning Report, produced by Iceni which supports the planning application. For landscape and townscape planning policy please refer to Appendix 10.2 - Planning Policy supporting Chapter 10 - Townscape and Visual Amenity of the Environmental Statement

Hybrid planning application comprising: Detailed Planning Application for circa 399 Class C3 Private Rented Sector (PRS) dwellings, circa 250 unit Class C2 residential care community, circa 153 Class C3 dwellings, a community and commercial hub comprising Use Classes E and F1 floorspace and a Cycling Hub with associated car parking, access, landscaping, public art and other supporting infrastructure; Outline Planning Application for circa 418 Class C3 dwellings.

For breakdown of site boundaries refer to Collado Colins (Architects) drawing P0(N)-111 - Outline and Detail Boundary.

The development of the landscape masterplan has been guided by the following planning policy and guidance documents:-

- Local Plan Saved Policies of the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan adopted 2005
- Broadwater Road West, Supplementary Planning Document, Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council, 2008
- Welwyn and Hatfield Borough Council, Draft Local Plan Proposed Submission, August 2016
- Welwyn Hatfield Borough Green Infrastructure Plan, March 2011
- Welwyn Hatfield Borough Assessment of Open Spaces, June 2009







## 2.3 Land Use

The Application Site is brownfield land, featuring the original 1920s parts of the Shredded Wheat factory complex designed by Louis de Soissons, including the production hall, boiler house, grain house and first 18 wheat elevators (silos). These former Shredded Wheat Factory buildings remain largely derelict and disconnected from the surrounding townscape, due to the removal of former disused factory buildings.

The land use pattern for Welwyn Garden City still reflects Louis de Soissons' original 1921 masterplan; a town defined clearly by land use zones set nearly a Century ago. The town's shopping core remains in the same location, albeit much larger in size with many additions, not least the Howard Centre built in the 1990s. The industrial work zone remains in its original location although this has expanded considerably in size and is now more reliant on the road infrastructure than the railway. The Shire Park Business Area to the North East of the town has introduced office and business land use due to the decline in industrial activities. The Times Square development off Bessemer Road (Chase New Homes) has been built on the former Xerox complex and comprises a 541 unit residential development scheme with the first phase complete. As a result of the industrial, commercial and office uses surrounding Broadwater Road and Bridge Road, Peartree residential area has become increasingly distanced, both physically and psychologically from the town's core, located on the opposite side of the railway lines. Due to the decline in industry in this part of Welwyn Garden City and the increase in demand for housing, the Application Site and the former Shredded Wheat Factory site has been identified as an area suitable for mixed use development, by the Broadwater Road Supplementary Planning Document (2008), to assist in bridging the east and west sides of the town.

The land use within and immediately surrounding the Application Site is currently in a state of change, with full planning permission being granted in February 2019 to redevelop the former Shredded Wheat Factory site to accommodate up to 1,340 homes (ref:6/2018/0171/MAJ).



### DEFINED LAND USES

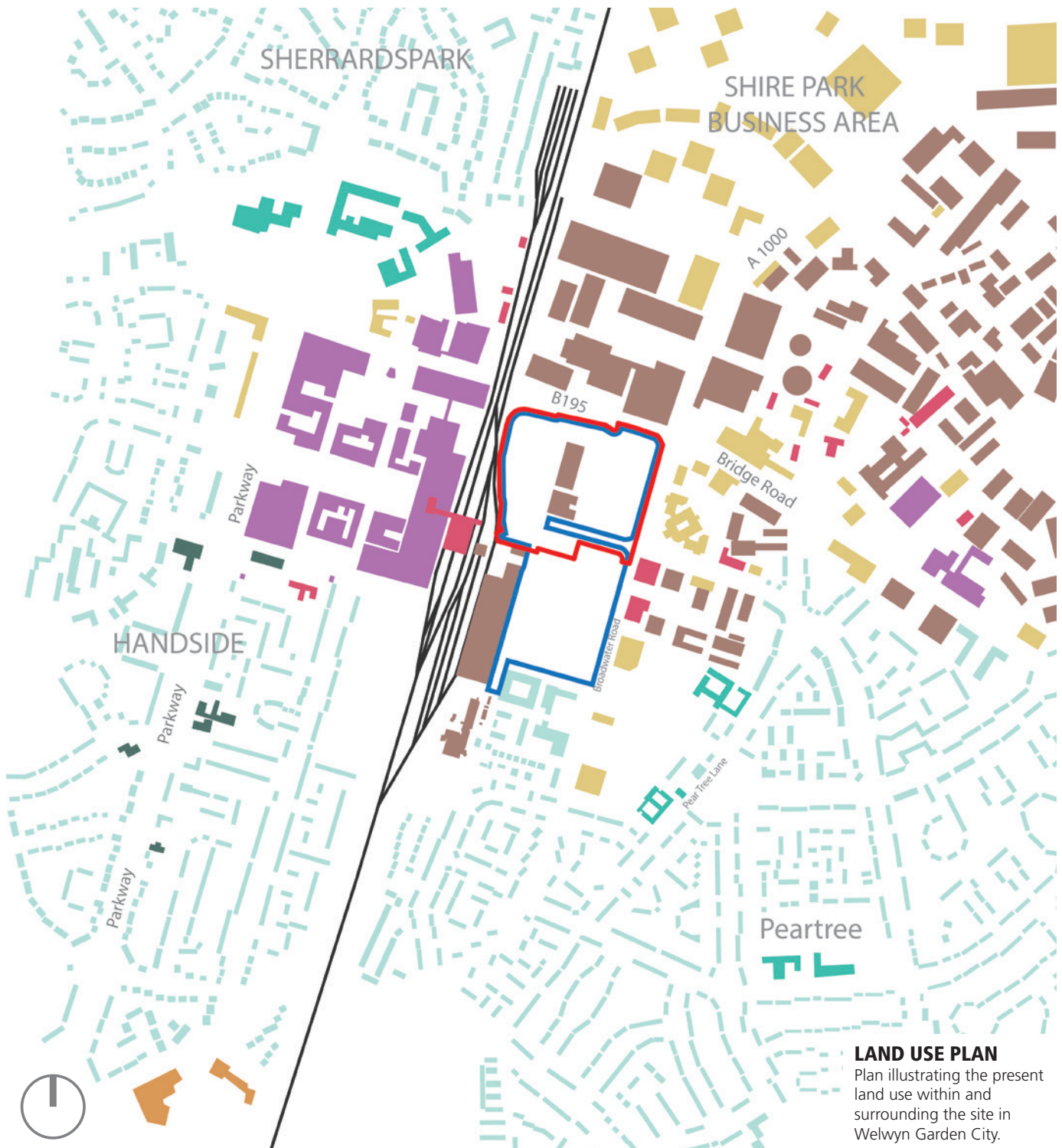
The residential areas around the Town Centre date back to the original Welwyn Garden City masterplan



### DERELICT INDUSTRY

The industrial use around Broadwater Road is in decline and buildings although prominent have become derelict over the last decade





<span style="color: red;">—</span> Site Boundary	<span style="color: black;">—</span> Railway Line	<span style="color: yellow;">■</span> Offices	<span style="color: darkgreen;">■</span> Religion
<span style="color: blue;">—</span> Extant Consent Boundary	<span style="color: lightblue;">■</span> Residential	<span style="color: purple;">■</span> Retail	<span style="color: orange;">■</span> Leisure
<span style="color: black;">.....</span> Town Centre Boundary	<span style="color: brown;">■</span> Industrial	<span style="color: pink;">■</span> Commercial	<span style="color: teal;">■</span> Education

## 2.4 Open Space Context

A spatial analysis of the public open space and green space provision within Welwyn Garden City has identified a concentration of public open space located within the town centre along Howardsgate, and Parkway; areas of formal lawns, seating, boulevards of trees and framed views are key features of these spaces alongside the more informal open space at the Campus. Within the industrial and business park areas to the east of the town the amount of public open space is restricted to landscaped verges and some street tree planting. Within Peartree and Handside wards, residential development is centred around small pockets of public open space and wide tree lined verges.

Whilst there is a high proportion of public open green space within Welwyn Garden City, desk top analysis and study visits have indicated a lack of play provision for young children across the town and an underuse of areas such as Parkway by the public, who seem to prefer the more intimate and towncentric Howardsgate or the more flexible open space of Campus.

The focus of existing public open space around the town centre adjacent to the site provides the opportunity to link the east and west of Welwyn Garden City through the use of quality green spaces. As stated in the SPD “the provision of well landscaped open space and planting is intrinsic to the character of Welwyn Garden City and should be a key feature of this development”.

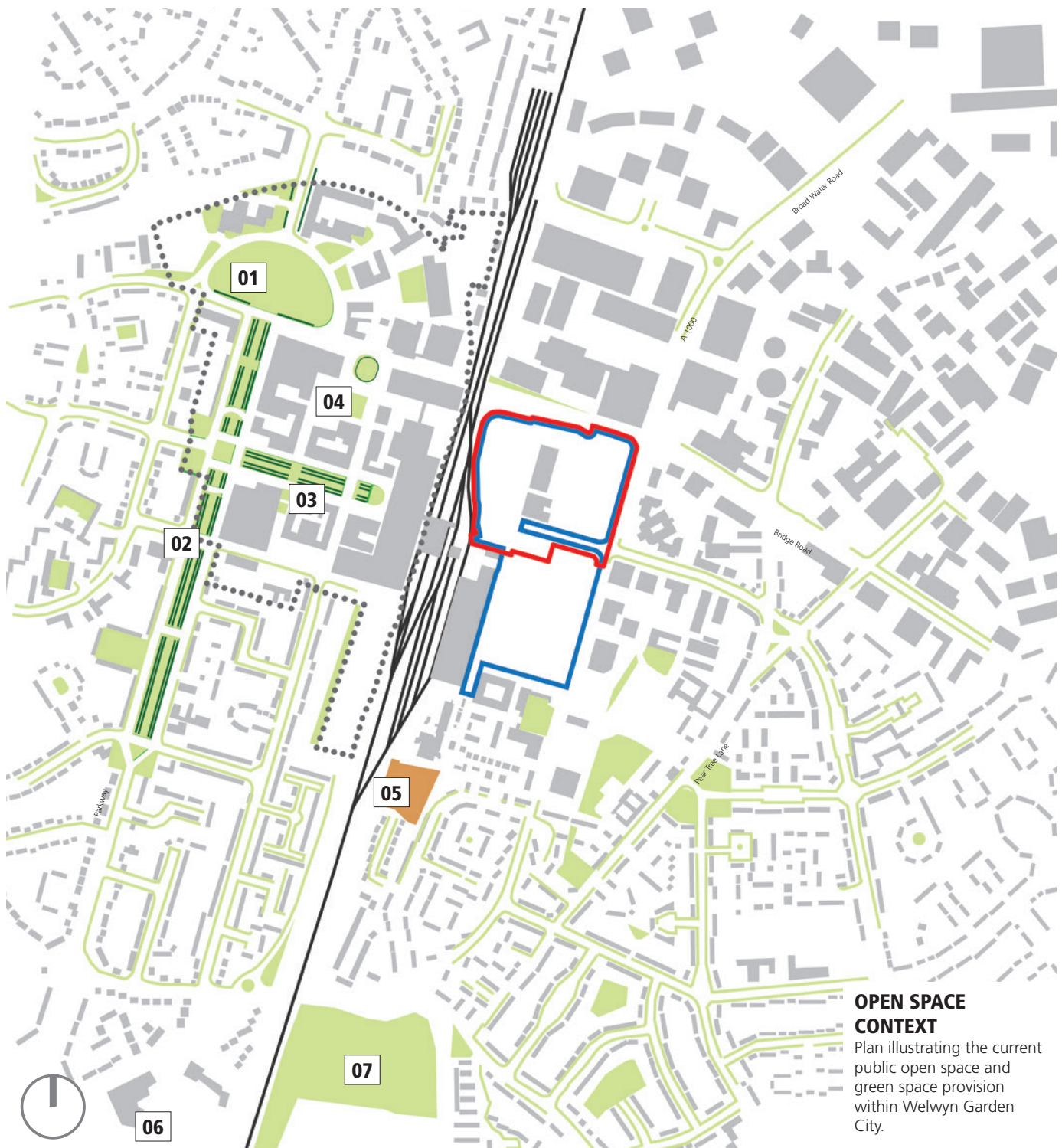


### EXISTING PUBLIC OPEN SPACE IN WELWYN

The central area of Welwyn Garden City is defined by large tracts of formal lawns, boulevards of trees, water features and ornamental planting along Parkway, Howardsgate and the Campus







### OPEN SPACE CONTEXT

Plan illustrating the current public open space and green space provision within Welwyn Garden City.

- |   |   |                         |
|---|---|-------------------------|
| <span style="color: red;">—</span> Site Boundary            | <span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: grey; border: 1px solid black;"></span> Built form                               | 01. The Campus          |
| <span style="color: blue;">—</span> Extant Consent Boundary | <span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: #90EE90; border: 1px solid black;"></span> Public open space                     | 02. Parkway             |
| ..... Town Centre Boundary                                  | <span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: #FF8C00; border: 1px solid black;"></span> Allotments                            | 03. Howardsgate         |
| <span style="color: black;">—</span> Railway Line           | <span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: #90EE90; border: 1px solid black; border-style: dashed;"></span> Tree boulevards | 04. Wigsmores North     |
|   |   | 05. Allotments          |
|   |   | 06. Gosling Sports Park |
|   |   | 07. Chequers Parkland   |



## 2.5 Townscape Character

The Townscape and Visual Impact Assessment (TVIA), which accompanies the planning application, divides the townscape surrounding the site into fourteen different character areas which display subtly different characteristics - influenced by historical development, predominant land uses and architectural character. The site falls within an area defined as 'Broadwater Road industrial area', which is characterised as an industrial zone, around Broadwater Road and Bridge Road, which once formed part of the original masterplan for Welwyn Garden City. The area features some of the oldest industrial development within Welwyn Garden City, most notably the former Shredded Wheat Factory (Grade II listed). Below is a brief summary of the townscape character area of the site and key areas in the immediate vicinity.



### Broadwater Road Industrial Area (Includes The Site) (03)

- heritage industrial buildings, some of which listed, with small pockets of office and commercial use along Broadwater Road, whereas north of Bridge Road features a large proportion of more recent commercial, storage and distribution warehouses;
- a large proportion of brownfield land and derelict industrial buildings in state of change, as a result of the decline in industrial activities over the last century, which is evident on the Application Site and the wider former Shredded Wheat Factory site;
- large scale industrial activity, notably the modern BioPark facility immediately to the south of the Application Site, off Broadwater Road;
- main arterial roads Broadwater Road and Bridge Road bisect the area and create a visual, physical and noise detractor and large expanses of hardstanding associated with car parking and storage for commercial units off Bessemer Road; and
- whilst new businesses, commercial and office developments are present amongst the industrial uses, the large vacant plots and derelict industrial buildings retain the strongest influence as a post-industrial townscape.



### Peartree Modern Business & Industrial Park (04)

- piecemeal development varying in use and scale, giving a fragmented, discordant character;
- large expanses of hardstanding associated with car parking for the office blocks;
- a notable building within this area is no. 29 Broadwater Road, which comprises a five storey angular modern office block; and
- main arterial roads (Broadwater Road and Bridge Road) lie on the LTCA boundary and create a visual / physical barrier and noise detractor.



### Peartree Residential Area (05)

- one and a half to two storey, red brick residential housing with a diverse mix of ages, styles and types;
- a significant number of more modern 1980s properties present on Peartree Lane, whilst in other areas infill has occurred, replacing the original 1920s residential built form;
- residential built form is arranged as short terraces aligned with the roads with the occasional detached dwelling; and
- compared to the western residential areas within Welwyn Garden City the housing within Peartree is of a much higher density with less open space and street planting.



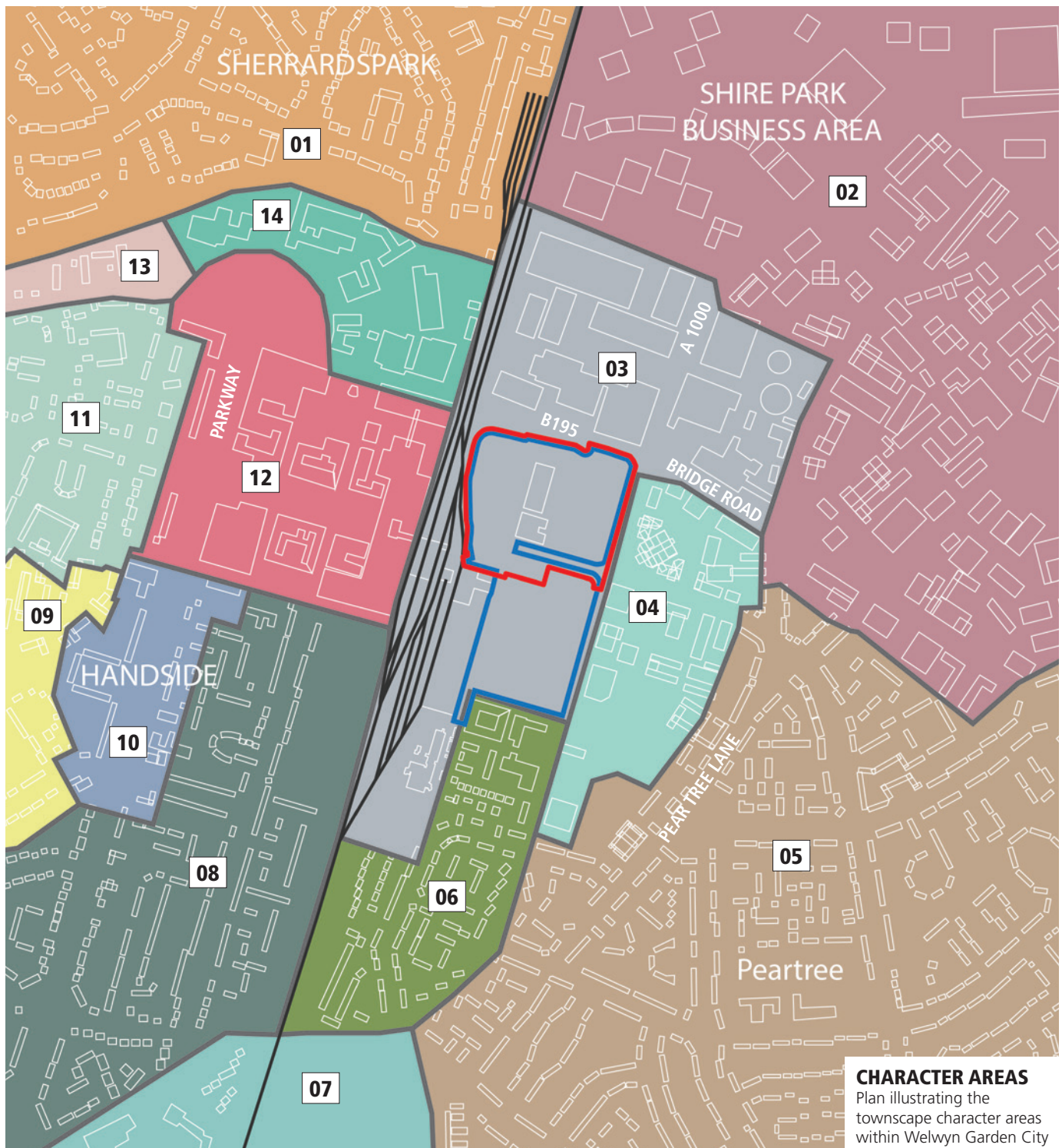
### Broadwater Crescent Residential Area (06)

- predominantly two storey, red brick, semi-detached and terraced houses;
- the former Roche Products Factory site, now a 21st Century residential development (The Mirage) featuring four storey apartments and three storey terraces;
- the offices of the Roche Products Factory (Grade II listed), designed by Otto R. Salvisberg in the 1940s, retained as part of the Mirage development;
- Broadwater Crescent is lined with street trees which, combined with the built form within the LTCA, provide a sense of enclosure to the area; and
- due to the close proximity of neighbouring industrial buildings, such as the BioPark building, there is a visual industrial presence on the skyline.



### Parkway Retail Area (12)

- the main commercial centre of Welwyn Garden City and the Northern extent of Parkway;
- defined by the large open green spaces, long vistas and a neo-Georgian department store building;
- an Eastern arm of Parkway branches off to form Howardsgate, a central open space framed by tall Poplars at the end of which is the modern Howard Centre;
- the Howard Centre (a shopping centre developed in the 1990s) and car park forms a prominent visual mass on the LTCA's eastern boundary; and
- many of the original houses within the character area have been converted to either offices or surgeries.



- Site Boundary
- Extant Consent Boundary
- Character Areas
- Railway Line

- 01. Sherrards Park
- 02. Shire Park Business Area
- 03. Broadwater Road Industrial Area
- 04. Peartree Modern Business & Industrial Park
- 05. Peartree Residential Area
- 06. Broadwater Crescent Residential Area
- 07. Chequers Parkland

- 08. Longcroft Lane Area
- 09. Barleycroft Road
- 10. Parkway Residential Area
- 11. Handside Lane Area
- 12. Parkway Retail Area
- 13. Brockwood Lane Area
- 14. The Campus

# 03 ANALYSIS & EVALUATION

“The key to the problem how to restore the people to the land — that beautiful land of ours, with its canopy of sky, the air that blows upon it, the sun that warms it, the rain and dew that moisten it — the very embodiment of Divine love for man — is indeed a Master-Key.”

The Garden City Concept by Ebenezer Howard

Analysis of the site and context was undertaken to inform the wider extant consented scheme, which allowed an understanding of its characteristics and assets. This analysis has been revisited to further consider these aspects in the context of the revised proposals for the Wheat Quarter. The site analysis findings can be interpreted as either constraints or opportunities and have helped shape the overall masterplanning process, ensuring that the layout is derived from the site and that any design solutions maximise the site's potential.

The site is located to the east of Welwyn Garden City town centre on land previously used for Industrial activities. It occupies a central position, to the east of the A1(M) motorway and main railway line bound by Broadwater Road, Bridge Road and Hyde Way. The site is rectangular in plan and the topography is mainly flat. The site comprises former industrial buildings, the remaining 1920s listed parts of the Shredded Wheat Factory and silos. The former factory and silos are designated as grade II listed buildings.





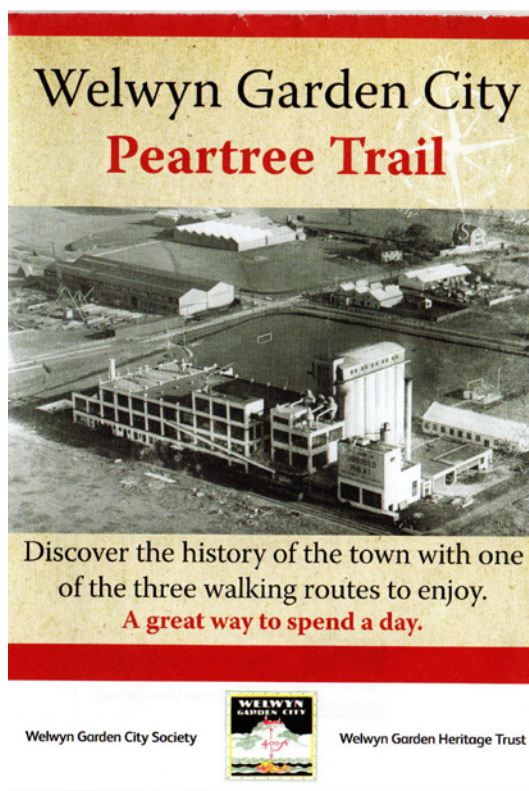
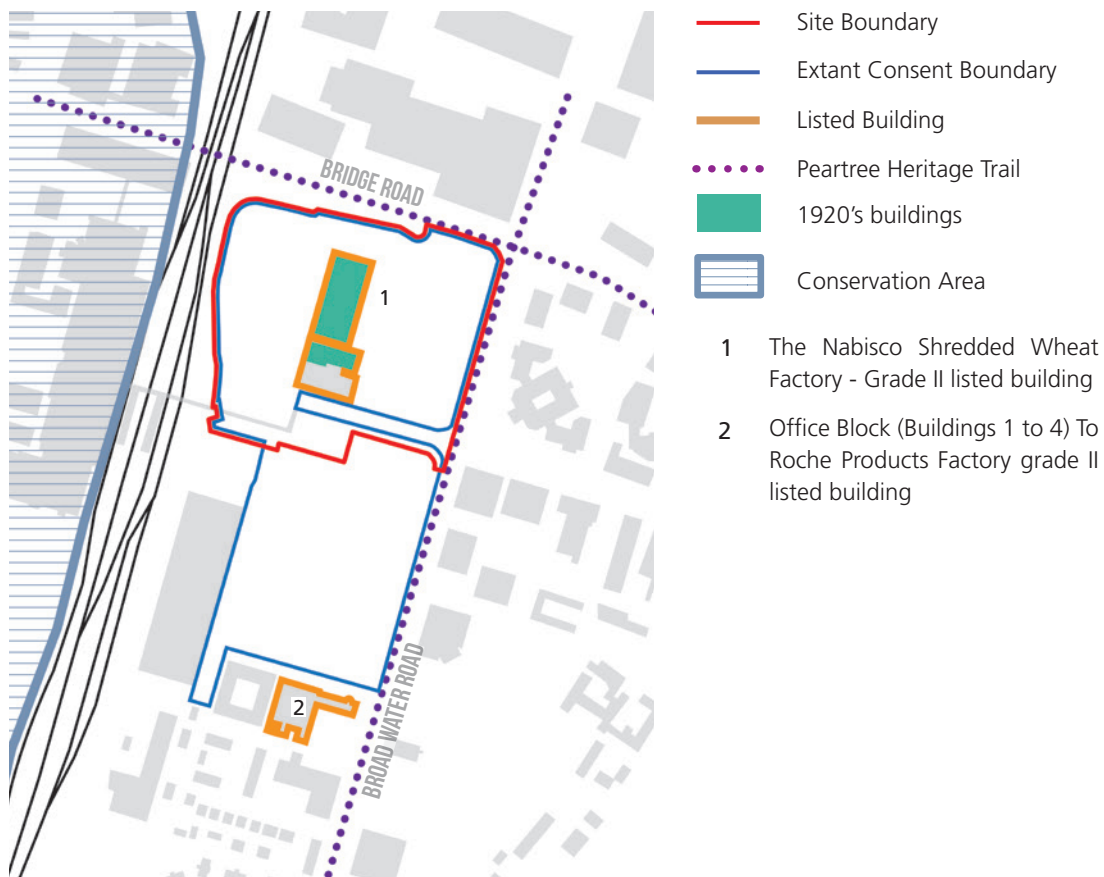
### **EXISTING SILOS**

The existing silos at the heart of the site are a valued historic asset with grade II listed building status, that form a prominent landmark within the landscape.



### 3.1 Site Analysis

#### HERITAGE



The site features the former Shredded Wheat Factory, grade II listed. The Heritage Statement which accompanies this planning application found the 1924 -1926 parts of the listed building to be of highest significance, architecturally, and historically. Much of the original 1920's production hall was hidden behind the later buildings, including the 1930's manufacturing hall and the 1950's administrative offices along Bridge Road. In support of the application for the extant consent, an opportunity was set out, to reveal the most significant elements of the listed building complex, by removing the lesser significant parts (now complete) and careful adaptation of the original factory buildings.

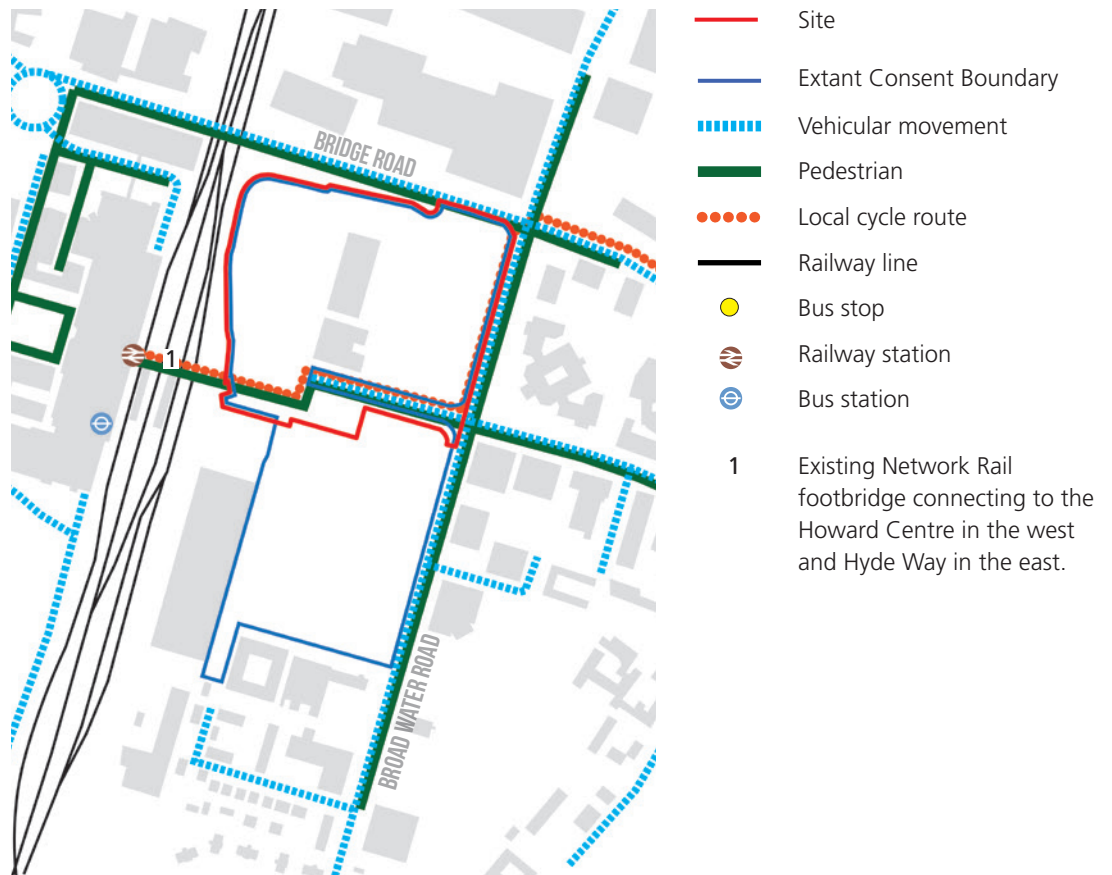
For further information on Heritage refer to the Heritage Report

#### HERITAGE ASSETS

The original part of the Factory complex, designed by Louis de Soissons and built between 1924-1926 remains largely as built – including the main factory, boilerhouse, and first 18 wheat elevators (silos). Architecturally this element of the complex is regarded as being of the highest significance.



## ACCESS & MOVEMENT



### CONNECTIONS

The East Coast Mainline railway forms a physical barrier between the east and west of Welwyn. A footbridge provides a connection, linking the town to the site through former industrial land. The development of the site provides the opportunity to improve this route.

The site is located in the Broadwater Road industrial area (TCA 03) on the eastern side of the railway lines. The site represents a gateway to the heart of Welwyn Garden City, particularly for those residents of Peartree ward who cross the existing 'Hyde Way' footbridge to access shops within the Howard Centre or the railway station.

There is a significant opportunity to improve pedestrian and cycle connections between the east and west of the town, providing established, safe, convenient attractive routes through the site.



## LANDSCAPE & OPEN SPACE



An Arboricultural Implications Assessment (AIA) which assesses the quality of the existing trees on site has been undertaken. The majority of the trees on the consented scheme are located on the western boundary south of the Wheat Quarter and are classified as grade B and C, defined as trees of moderate - low quality and value. There are a small number of grade A trees of high quality and value and these are located on Broadwater Road. Trees of high quality and value will be retained and incorporated as part of the development proposals wherever possible. For further information on the existing arboriculture refer to the Arboricultural Implications Assessment.

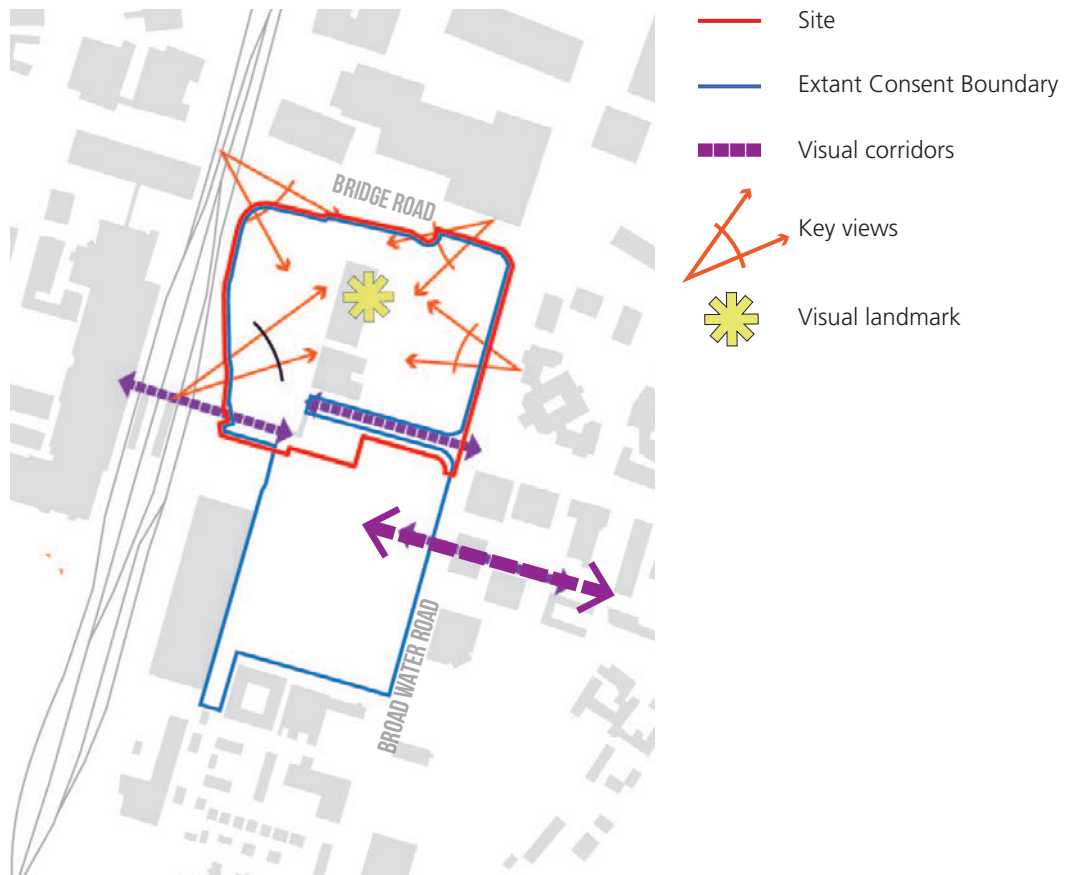
### LANDSCAPE ASSETS

The site features a small proportion of existing trees ranging in size, age and species. The trees provide an existing landscape structure along Broadwater Road (above) and along the site's western boundary which borders the railway line (opposite).





## VIEWS



### VISUAL LINKS

The East Coast Mainline railway forms a physical barrier between the east and west sides of Welwyn. An existing footbridge provides a connection linking these east and west sides of the town, running through the former industrial character of the site along Hyde Way. Development of the site provides an opportunity to significantly improve and enhance the setting of this route.



Visually the site is disconnected from the town centre by the Howard Shopping Centre, although current features on the site have a strong influence on the frontage of Broadwater Road. There are localised views through the site from the existing access route along Hyde Way that links Broadwater Road with the Howard Centre, including elevated views from the Network Rail bridge. The listed factory including the 1920's Silos and Production Hall provide a strong visual landmark in views from the north, south, east and west. In consultation with Historic England (formerly English Heritage) and Welwyn and Hatfield Borough Council, a number

of specific views have been reviewed as part of the design process to inform the height and massing of the built form. These include localised views from within the town centre, platforms of the railway station, along Broadwater Road and Bridge Road, as well as long distance views from Hatfield House. A detailed description of these views and the likely effects of development upon them is provided within the Townscape & Visual Amenity chapter of the Environmental Statement.



## 3.2 Constraints and Opportunities

Conceptual design is based on the coming together of needs; both human and site needs. Each offers unique design opportunities and constraints. Realising opportunities and resolving constraints is the beginning of conceptual design.

01. The site is strategically located between Welwyn Garden City town centre and Peartree ward. The redevelopment of the site provides the opportunity to regenerate former industrial land by providing an inclusive mixed use development.
02. The listed part of the 1920's (Louis de Soissons designed) Shredded Wheat Factory lies at the heart of the scheme and was, until recently, screened by lesser significant built form. The opportunity exists to reveal the hidden heritage assets (Production Hall and Silos) through the restoration and reuse of the building and by providing an appropriate public realm setting for a more public appreciation of their architectural quality.
03. The east coast mainline railway, located to the west of the site, currently forms a physical, visual and sound barrier.
04. Existing vegetation, featuring trees and shrub, currently borders the site's north west boundary. An opportunity exists to retain, enhance and strengthen the existing landscape resource to further alleviate the presence of the railway and create a strong green edge for the public and wildlife to enjoy.
05. The development of the site provides the opportunity to strengthen and enhance the existing east/ west pedestrian movement through the site from Welwyn Garden City to Peartree as part of the public realm strategy.
06. Currently pedestrian and cycle movement in and out of Welwyn is restricted to the vehicular dominated routes of Bridge Road and Broadwater Road. The development of the site provides the opportunity to create a north/ south footpath/ cycle link through the site and to improve permeability further through the creation of new east west links.
07. The existing and proposed connections through the site, identified in the analysis, converge at a central point at the end of Hyde Way. An opportunity presents itself to create a central public space at the heart of the development to form a main destination and focal point for user activities.
08. The lack of built form along the site's eastern boundary currently creates a weak, inactive urban edge. The development of the site provides the opportunity to introduce built form along Broadwater Road which will create an active, positive frontage with buildings orientated out onto the road.
09. The site also represents a gateway to the heart of Welwyn Garden City, particularly for those residents of Peartree ward who cross the existing footbridge to access the shops within the Howard Centre or the railway station. There is a significant opportunity to improve how this area integrates with the rest of the town.



# 04 DESIGN AMBITION

“The advantages of the most energetic and active town life, with all the beauty and delight of the country, may be secured in perfect combination...”

Ebenezer Howard

The Wheat Quarter site at Welwyn Garden City offers an opportunity to provide a high quality, mixed use scheme creating a vibrant new community at the heart of Welwyn Garden City, helping to redefine the former Shredded Wheat Factory site and provide much needed housing, community facilities and additional open space.

The landscape proposals continue to be underpinned by a coherent vision that draws upon the principles and qualities of the existing garden city and the Site's location, heritage, character and the wider setting of Welwyn Garden City. This vision formed the basis of the extant consent scheme and has been carried through to inform the current landscape masterplan.

The vision has four main strands:

## HERITAGE

- Retained 1920's listed buildings to provide a special heritage focus to the development

## BEAUTIFUL SPACES

- Landscape and open space integral to characterising the development
- Creation of public open spaces offering green routes in to the development
- An urban square at the heart of the development creating a new social focal point in the town

## SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES

- Fostering a sense of community to allow residents to integrate and support one another to create an inclusive mixed use community

## CONNECTIVITY

- Reinforcement of connectivity across the railway and in to the town
- Forging of new links to Peartree ward and the wider footpath network in the east





## 4.1 Design Principles

Wheat Quarter presents an opportunity to create new areas of high quality amenity space and public realm as an integral part of a mixed use development.

- Recognise and respond to the character and heritage of Welwyn Garden City, the Shredded Wheat Factory and listed buildings.
- Embrace and reinterpret Ebenezer Howard and Louis de Soissons' core Garden City principles established at Welwyn Garden City
- Balance the needs of private and public vehicles, cyclists and pedestrians.
- Improve the connectivity to both the east and west of Welwyn Garden City.
- Integrate site more effectively with the surrounding areas including Welwyn Garden City town centre and Peartree ward.
- Create activity, interest and multi-functional external spaces for a variety of age groups during both day and night.
- Balance the needs of different users ensuring a balance between public and private amenity space.
- Respond to the requirements of planning policy and supplementary guidance in terms of design quality, play provision, sustainability, climate change and green infrastructure.
- Provide high quality open space and landscape, reflecting the garden city principles and the interrelationship with the built form.
- Ensure buildings, public realm and private/ community amenity space are strategically located in the right place, responding to their wider surroundings, use and context.
- Ensure places and spaces are designed for all to use and promote community, inclusion and cohesion.
- Incorporate public art into key locations.

“High quality parks and public spaces are an essential feature of successful neighbourhoods where people want to live, work, play and invest. They are vital to people’s health and the local economy.”

Manifesto for Better Public Space, CABE Space, 2004