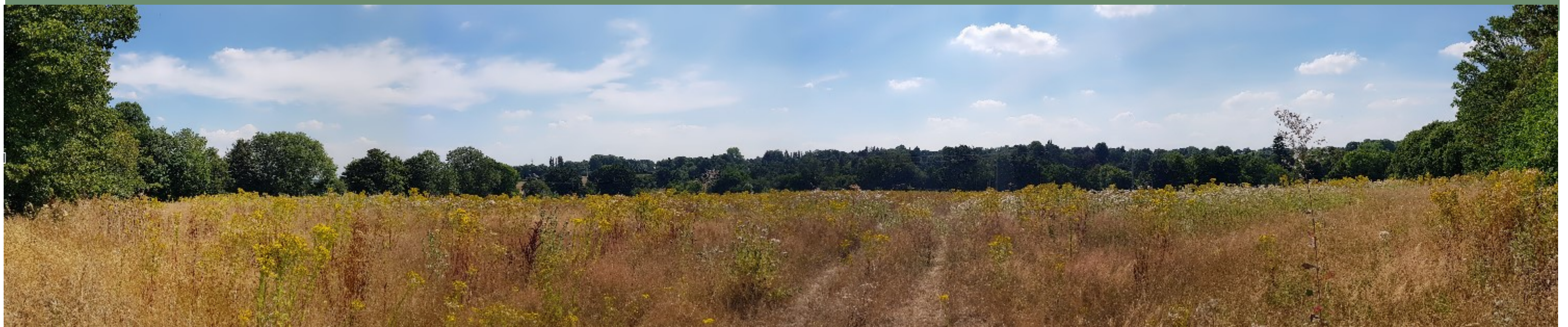


**Land at Theobald Street, Radlett**

**Concept Proposals for a Housing Scheme**

**August 2018**





This document has been compiled on behalf of Richborough Estates Limited utilising the services of its consultant team including:





# Introduction

This Promotional Document provides information concerning the potential for residential development of land at Theobald Street, Radlett.

Richborough Estate’s interest extends in about 3.16 hectares (some 7.82 acres) of land which is well contained by Theobald Street, the London to Bedford railway line and a well established tree belt adjacent to which is a public right of way (No. 54).



A Illustrative Concept Plan is provided in this document to enable an understanding of how the opportunities and constraints have been taken into account to devise a residential scheme which could be accommodated within the site in a manner that recognises the interface with existing residential development, the railway line and countryside.

The Illustrative Concept Plan is based upon technical and environmental assessments which have so far been undertaken for the site. The concept plan indicates that around 60 dwellings could be accommodated on the site, including 40% of the homes being affordable.

The emerging Hertsmere Local Plan recognises that some development to meet the housing needs of the Borough will have to be accommodated on land that is currently within the Green Belt. This site can be developed for housing at a sustainable location in the manner proposed without prejudic-

ing the purposes of the Green Belt.

Accompanying this brochure are the following technical documents which provide additional information:

- ◆ Access Appraisal
- ◆ Flooding and Surface Water Drainage
- ◆ Landscape & Visual Technical Note

The land at Theobald Street is a single field physically and visually related to the settlement of Radlett. The site has the capacity to accommodate housing development without detriment to character or appearance of the wider landscape. There is ample scope to augment existing well established belts of trees within the site to create an effective transition between the countryside and the settlement of Radlett.

Unlike other potential locations for growth at Radlett, the single field at Theobald Street is physically contained by existing well defined boundaries. Any housing development would not encroach into the wider and more open undulating verdant countryside which is exhibited, in particular, to the east and west of Radlett. Further, the site is not affected by the Minerals Consultation Area which impacts upon the availability of other land around Radlett.

The site is well located relative to the facilities and services within Radlett.

Future residents would be able to safely walk and cycle to the existing facilities and services within Radlett, including a wide range of shops, services, community facilities, schools and the railway station with its connections to London, Luton and St Albans. Bus services operate along Theobald Street providing access by public transport to St Albans, Borehamwood, Watford and the Hatfield Business Park.

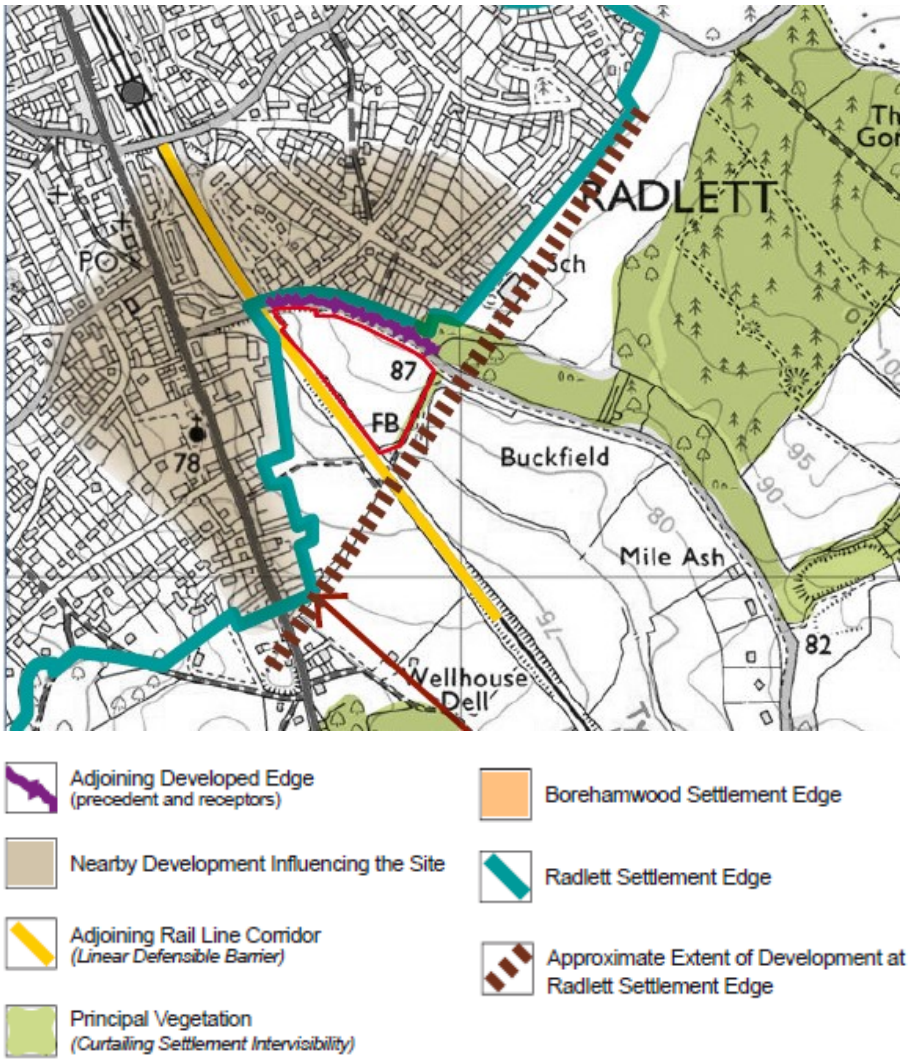
Other than being within the Green Belt, and as informed by initial assessments, there are no insurmountable physical or environmental constraints which would preclude the residential development of around 60 homes of varying types, sizes and tenures on the site as demonstrated by the Illustrative Concept Plan. The housing mix would include affordable homes.

Scope exists to improve biodiversity and create a high quality development which would respect this approach to Radlett.

Richborough Estates is continuing to commission surveys and other work to refine the proposals contained in this document. As part of this process engagement will be sought with all stakeholders to discuss the emerging proposals and what benefits could accrue to the community of Radlett.

Once Richborough Estates has all the necessary information then they intend to engage with the local community to seek its views on the proposals.

In the event that the site is removed from the Green Belt and planning permission granted, this is a site which can speedily deliver the circa 60 dwellings envisaged. It would take about 2-years from the grant of outline planning permission to the completion of the new homes. These homes would make a positive contribution to the supply of housing, especially where it can take 2 to 3 years for larger urban extensions to start delivering houses from outline consent. The land at Theobald Street Radlett would be an important and positive contribution toward including balanced portfolio of greenfield sites within the emerging Local Plan to meet the District’s housing need.





# Emerging Proposals



Richborough Estates has carefully considered the outcome of the initial surveys and assessment to devise an Illustrative Concept Plan for further discussion with stakeholders. This is just an indication of how the site could be developed and is the subject of further assessment.



# Purpose and Context

## Purpose of this Document

Richborough Estates is a responsible and specialist strategic land promotion business founded with the aim of working in partnership with land-owners. The projects are located throughout the country ranging from large urban extensions to residential schemes of around 50 dwellings, including sites in the Green Belt.

Richborough Estates oversee entire planning processes from start to finish and seek to work very closely with local communities, Planning Officers and Councils to create the most mutually beneficial schemes. Richborough Estates is seeking to apply this approach to the scheme at Radlett.

This Promotional Document provides information concerning the potential for residential development of land at Theobald Street, Radlett. The content of this document is based upon initial technical and environmental assessments which have been undertaken.



Richborough Estate's interest extends in about 3.16 hectares (some 7.82 acres) of land which is well contained by Theobald Street, the London to Bedford railway line and a well established tree belt adjacent to which are a public right of way (No. 54)

The land is currently fallow but has been farmed and grazed. There are well established belts of trees along the boundaries with Theobald Street and the public right of way. The combination of the belt of trees, public right of way, access road and flood attenuation dam isolate the site from the wider countryside of the land between Radlett and Borehamwood.

## Site Location and Context

The site is located to the immediate south of Radlett and is enclosed. Topographically, the site falls from Theobald Street towards the railway. The lowest point is in the south west and north west corners. In the south west corner the site borders Radlett Brook.

The site is broadly triangular in shape and is bounded by Theobald Street, the London to Bedford Railway line and the public right of way. There is an existing gated field access from Theobald Street. The northern and eastern boundaries are well defined by belts of trees. The western boundary is created by the interface with the railway which is defined by palisade fencing.

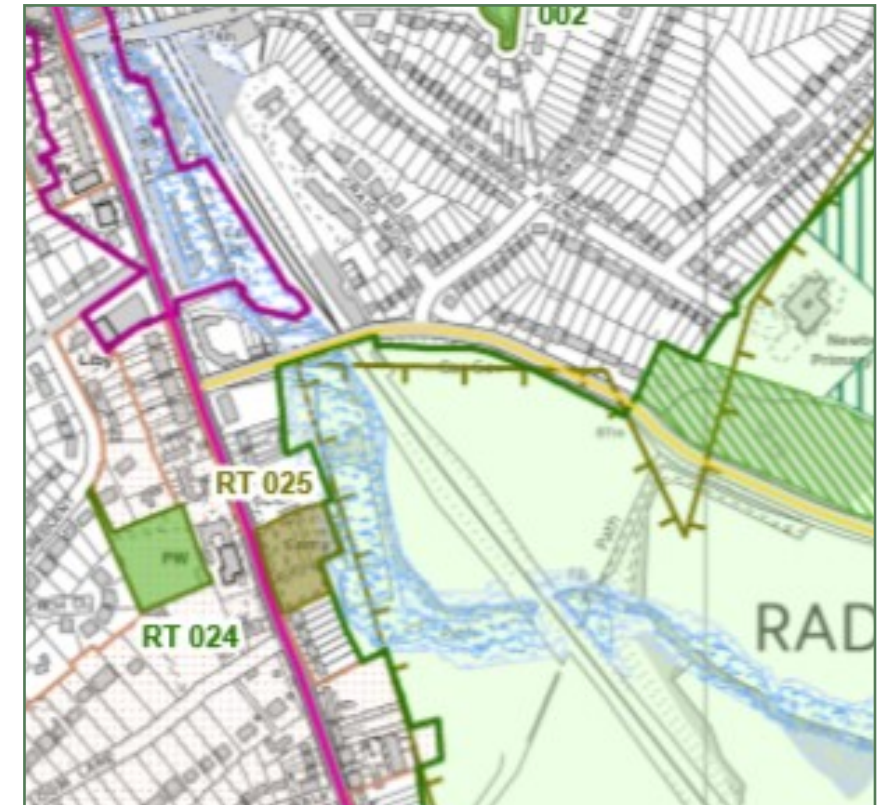
The built development to the north of the site comprises single storey and 2 storey dwellings. Beyond the railway to the west is Radlett Lawn Tennis and Squash Club. Along Watling Street there are designated heritage assets, including Christ Church and the South Radlett Conservation Area.

Some 400 metres to the north of the site is Radlett local centre which possesses a wide range of retail outlets, including shops such as Tesco and Budgens, banks, cafés, public houses, places of worship and restaurants. Included within the local centre is Radlett railway station which is about 600 metres from the site.

There are bus stops adjacent to the site along Theobald Road which provide access the higher order facilities within St Albans and Borehamwood and Welwyn Garden City.

## Planning Context

The site is currently included within the Green Belt as defined in the Hertsmere Local Plan 2012-2017. The site is also within an area identified as barren for sand and gravel.



Hertsmere Borough Council has commenced a review of the Local Plan. An issues and Options document was published in September 2017 and included the recognition that to meet the growth needs of the Borough some land would need to be released from the Green Belt for development purposes. The exceptional circumstances to release land from the Green Belt have been established and the issue is how this can best be achieved.

Richborough Estates is of the opinion that a balanced portfolio of housing sites, including smaller and larger greenfield sites, is required at sustainable locations which must include sites on the periphery of existing settlements such as Borehamwood and Radlett. These settlements possess a range of facilities necessary to support the needs of future occupiers of new homes. This spatial distribution of growth provides the greatest prospect of delivering the much needed homes in the Borough

The site at Theobald Street, Radlett meets the requirements as a sustainably located site which should be released from the Green Belt. in a manner which accords with the principles of sustainable development. The approach and release of this site from the Green Belt reflects national planning policy as contained in the National Planning Policy Framework.



# Photographs



Panorama of the Site from by the Access Gate—centre looking towards Christ Church



Site’s Northern Boundary Along Theobald Street



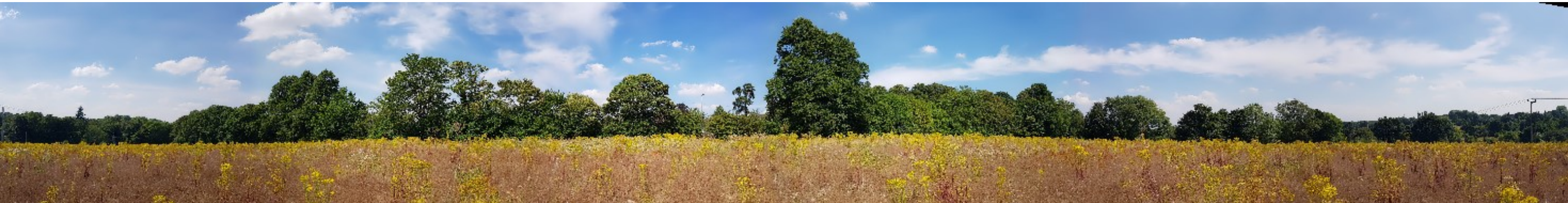
Site’s Western Boundary with the Railway



Public Right of Way No. 54/Site’s Southern Boundary



Access Gate from Theobald Street



Panorama of the Site from by the railway— centre looking towards the access



# Green Belt and Landscape Assessment

## Green Belt

The National Planning Policy Framework identifies the purposes of the Green Belt and the approach which should be adopted towards any amendments to the boundary where expectational circumstances have demonstrated such a need exists.

In reviewing Green Belt boundaries account should be taken of the need to promote sustainable patterns of development. There can be little dispute that Radlett is a sustainable location for growth to occur. Further, the site, with its ease of access to the local facilities and public transport connections is itself in a sustainable location.

To clearly define Green Belt boundaries physical features that are readily recognisable and likely to be permanent should be used. Theobald Street is already a Green Belt boundary and the railway undoubtedly meets the Framework's criteria. The eastern boundary would be created the a well established public right of way (No. 54) which is supplemented by an extensive belt of trees. These are clear physical features.

The eastern boundary is likely to remain permanent. The reason for this is that there is a flood alleviation scheme to the east of the site and it is unlikely that this land will ever be developed given its function as a flood-plain.



The site can be released from the Green Belt without prejudicing its five purposes.

Radlett is not a historic town where its setting and special character need to be preserved. There are heritage assets to the west of the site along Walting Street but their settings can be respected.

The Council has already made an assessment that the available urban sites which can be redeveloped for housing residential use are insufficient to meet the housing needs of the Borough and, accordingly, the release of Green Belt land is required.

This is not a case where there would be the unrestricted sprawl of a large built-up area. Radlett is not a large built-up area. Even if this matter was assessed as just the sprawl of a built-up area then consideration would need to be given to the containment of the site by strong physical features (i.e. the existing development which is to the north, railway to the west and belt of trees/public right of way to the east). In effect, any housing development would round-off the existing pattern of settlement.

For the same reasons of containment and relationship to the pattern of settlement, the release of this site would not cause Radlett and Borehamwood to coalesce. There would remain a substantial gap between these settlements of some 1,600 metres. The existing gap at its closest is circa 1,700 metres. The closest distance between the built-up areas of the settlements is 1,300 metres

Finally, although there would be the loss of a field to development, the wider and open countryside elsewhere around Radlett would not be encroached upon. Again issues of containment, the well defined eastern boundary and the flood alleviation scheme would prevent further development occurring.

## Landscape

The site is not located within any national or local designation which would preclude site being developed for landscape reasons.

The site lies within the Wooded Hills and Ridges Landscape Character Type (LCT) as identified in the East of England Landscape Assessment. This LCT is described as a varied and textured landscape characterised by undulating hills and steep ridges, which are cloaked in woodland, with clearings of arable farmland and pasture. It is evident from the LCT's characteristics that the site does contain features representative of the Wooded Hills and Ridges LCT. However, the site does not contain any notably rare or unique features.

At County level, the Hertfordshire Landscape Character Assessment locates the site within the Aldenham Plateau Landscape Character Area.

The wider landscape to the south and east is included within the High Canons Valleys and Ridges Landscape Character Areas. The adjoining urban influence of the Radlett settlement fringe immediately to the north and west of the site is not directly referenced as a feature of the published Assessments yet this is apparent in the immediate vicinity of the site. Elements of the Aldenham Plateau/High Canons Valleys and Ridges Landscape Character Areas (LCAs) are present on site and within the immediate context, including the current arable land use, delineated by hedgerow trees and sloping landform. The published assessments do not consider the nature of the site specific issues and context. The existing arrangement of on-site Green Infrastructure, namely the field boundary enclosures of naturalised hedgerow trees are a characteristic feature of the locality, as identified LCAs. Such features can be maintained, strengthened and enhanced as part of any proposals for the development of the site, including sensitive boundary treatments.

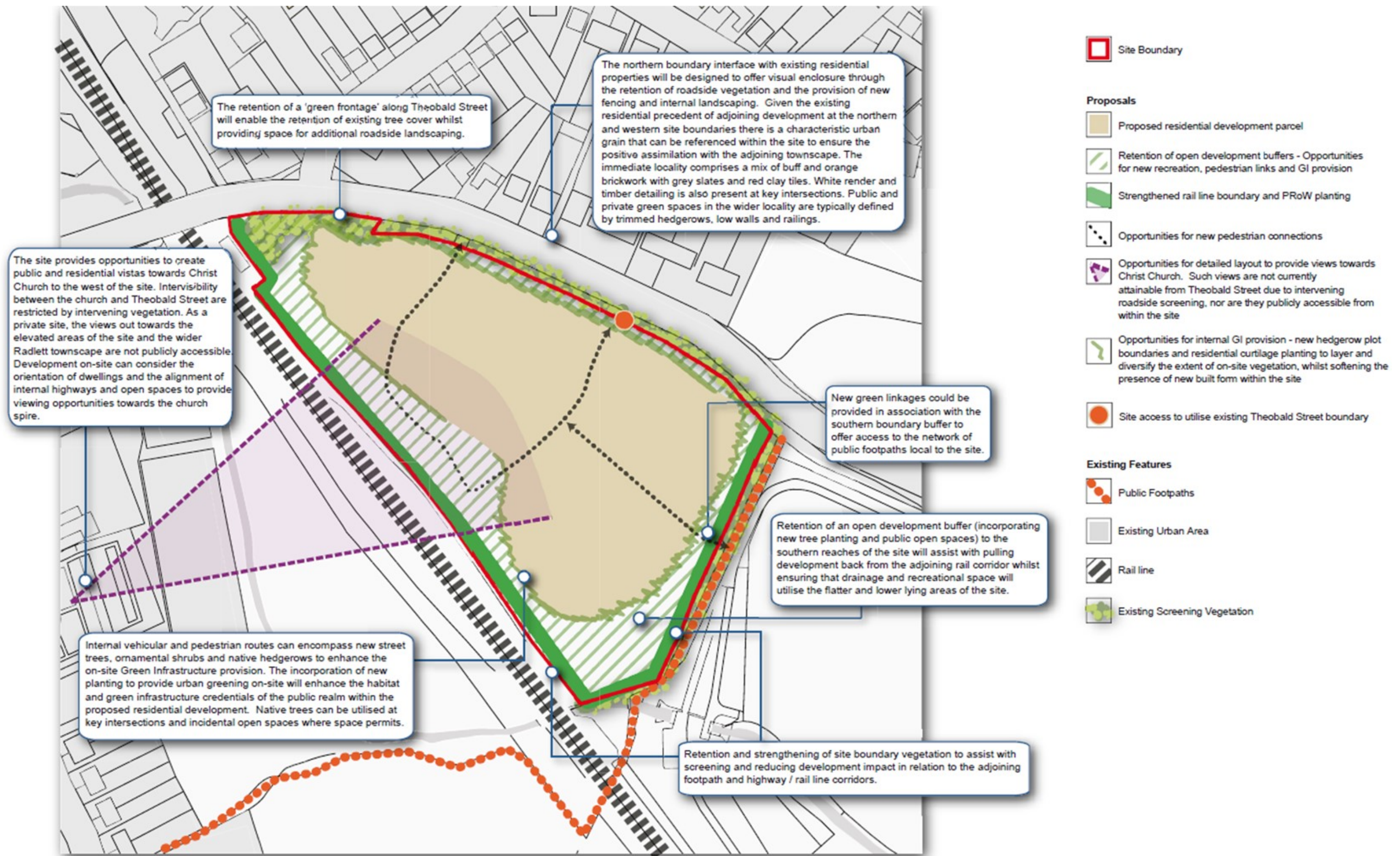
Based upon a visit to the site and the wider area, it is evident that the visibility of the site is localised and substantially limited by the surrounding built form of Radlett, the presence of intervening field boundary hedgerows and hedgerow trees, and the vegetation/undulating topography associated with the surrounding landscape. The visual receptors affected by the prospective development of the site would be limited and localised.

The proposed design recommendations provided on the next page demonstrate a strategy to retain and manage landscape features whilst improving the condition and connectivity of boundary trees and hedgerows as part of a site-wide planting and urban greening strategy. A successful design would deliver a soft edge with new green spaces throughout and surrounding the site to facilitate the retention of existing vegetation and the incorporation of new trees to assist with assimilation and containment. Opportunities also exist to maintain and improve public access to the site and to provide views back from within the development towards the Christ Church spire at the heart of the Radlett settlement.

In summary, the proposed development area is discreet and well related to the existing settlement. Development in this location would not constitute an extension of the settlement edge beyond Radlett's current south eastern extremities. It has been demonstrated that the site would facilitate a logical revision to the Green Belt without resulting in encroachment into the wider countryside or unrestricted sprawl.



# Landscape Considerations

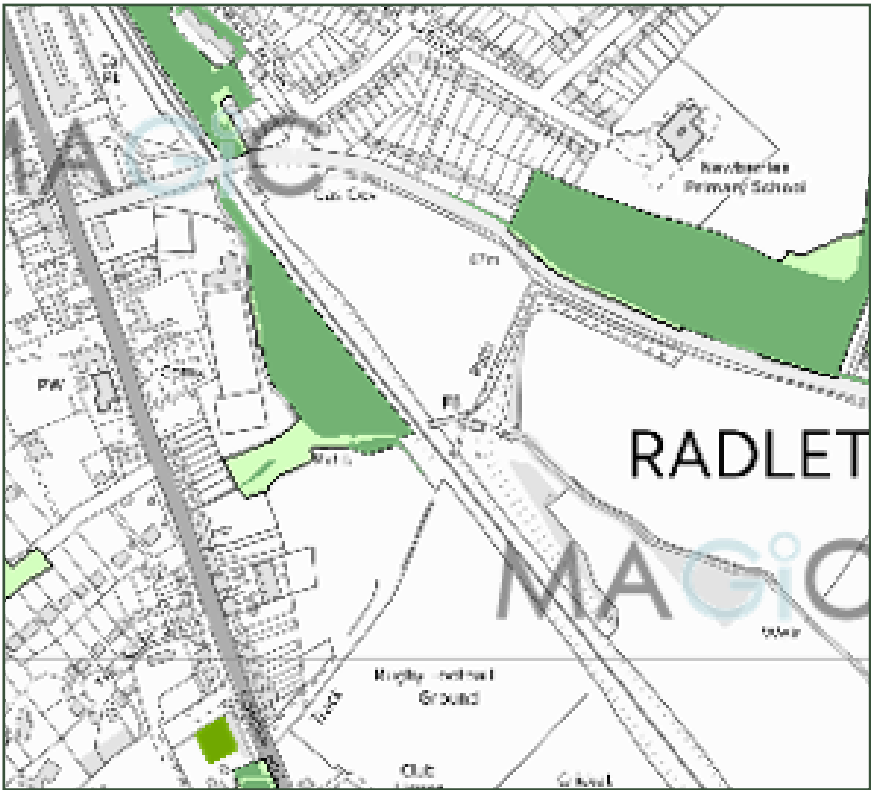




# Biodiversity and Heritage

## Biodiversity

The Magic web resource identifies that the site is not located within, or adjacent to, any nationally designated ecological interests. There are 3 woodlands (north of Theobald Street and west of the railway) which are identified as being of local interest but these are separated from the site by physical features and do not onto the site.



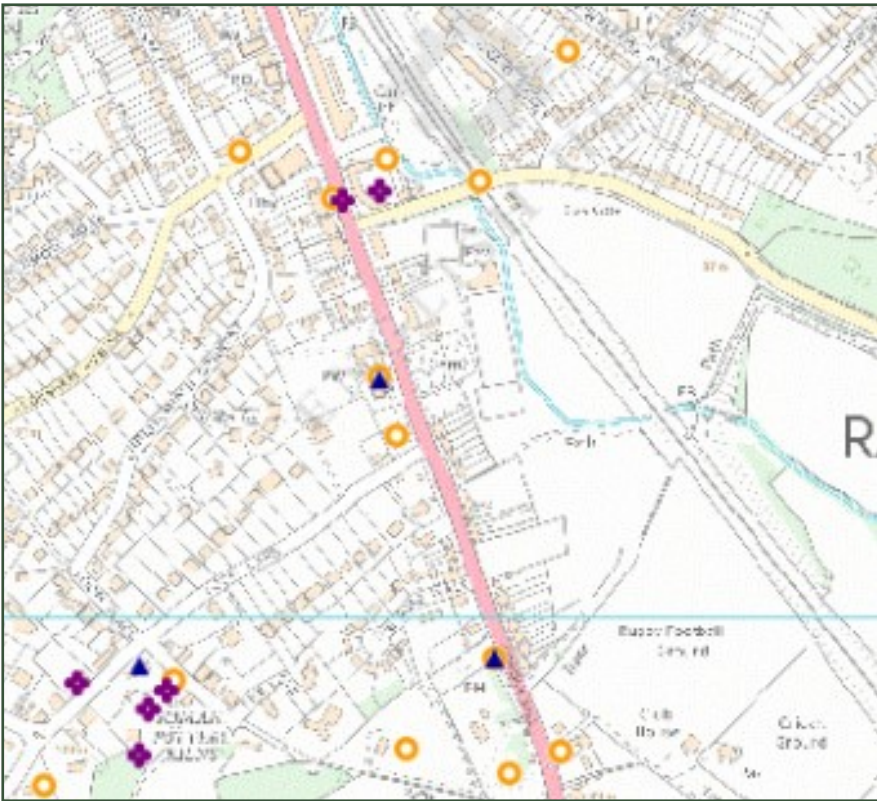
The agricultural use of the site limits its biodiversity value principally to the mature trees which form the site's northern and eastern boundaries. Detailed species surveys of these trees have yet to be undertaken but there might be the potential for bat roosting. Accordingly, although not the subject of any Tree Preservation Order, the master planning of the site should seek to retain these trees for their potential biodiversity interest. Appropriate buffers between the trees and any built development should be provided based upon the root protection areas.

Radlett Brook has some ecological potential. However, adjacent to the site, the engineered nature of the flood alleviation works and the railway bridge across the watercourse will impact on this potential. Built development should be set back from the brook to ensure a wildlife zone is provided.

As part of the proposals considerations biodiversity improvements through native planting, positive use of Green Infrastructure, good arboricultural practice for the management of the trees, habitat creation and the erection of bird and bat boxes.

## Heritage

A review of historical mapping identifies that the site has remained in agricultural use since the construction of the railway.



The Heritage Gateway web resource does not identify that there are national or local records associated with the site itself.

However, there designated heritage assets to the west of the site comprising:

- ◆ South Radlett Conservation Area
- ◆ Christ Church which is a Grade II Listed Building
- ◆ The Cat and Fiddle Public House a Grade II listed Building

Regard has to be had to the setting of these designated heritage assets. Any functional element of the setting is limited by both the separation distance and the railway. Views from the Conservation Area and Listed

Buildings towards the site are limited from the grounds of the Church.



The spire of the Church is visible from the site. However, less than substantial harm would be caused to the setting of these designated heritage assets. Indeed, any harm would be at the bottom end of substantial if such harm exists.

To the north west of the site is the bridge where Theobald Street crosses the railway. This has been identified as a non-designated heritage asset. However, between the bridge and the site is a signal control building associated with the railway which provide the immediate setting for this non-designated heritage asset.

Other non-designated heritage assets within the local area are sufficiently distant from the site not to influence their setting, including the Village School, the Ice House and Newberries Bridge.

Below ground there have been excavations at 411 Watling Street but the outcome of the works did not indicate anything of particular archaeological significance.



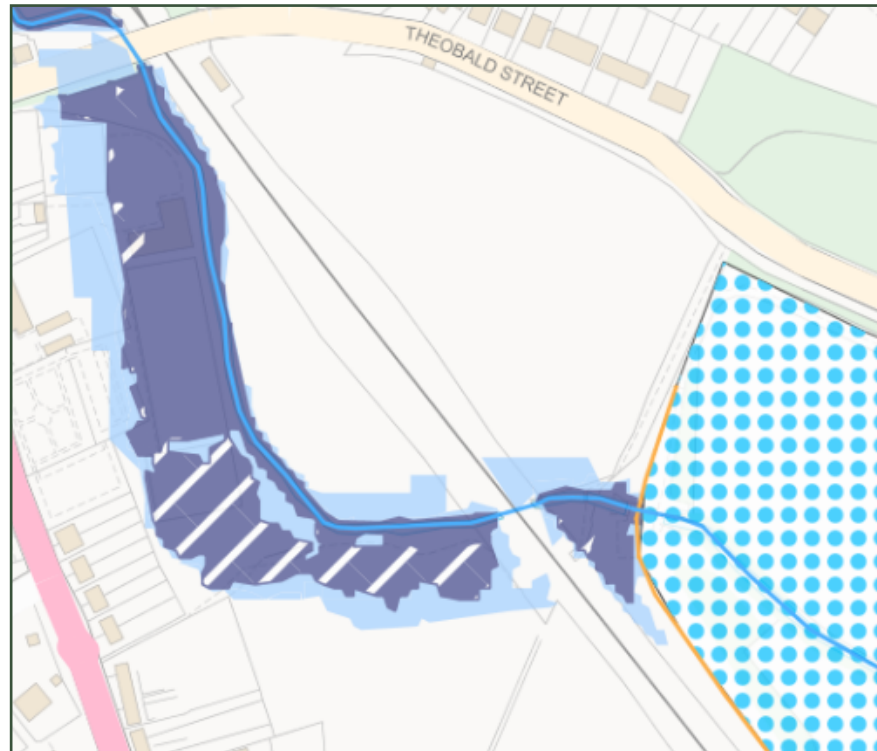




# Flood Risk and Drainage, Noise and Air Quality

## Flood Risk and Drainage

A technical note prepared by BWB accompanies this brochure which contains further details about the flooding assessment work which has been undertaken to date.

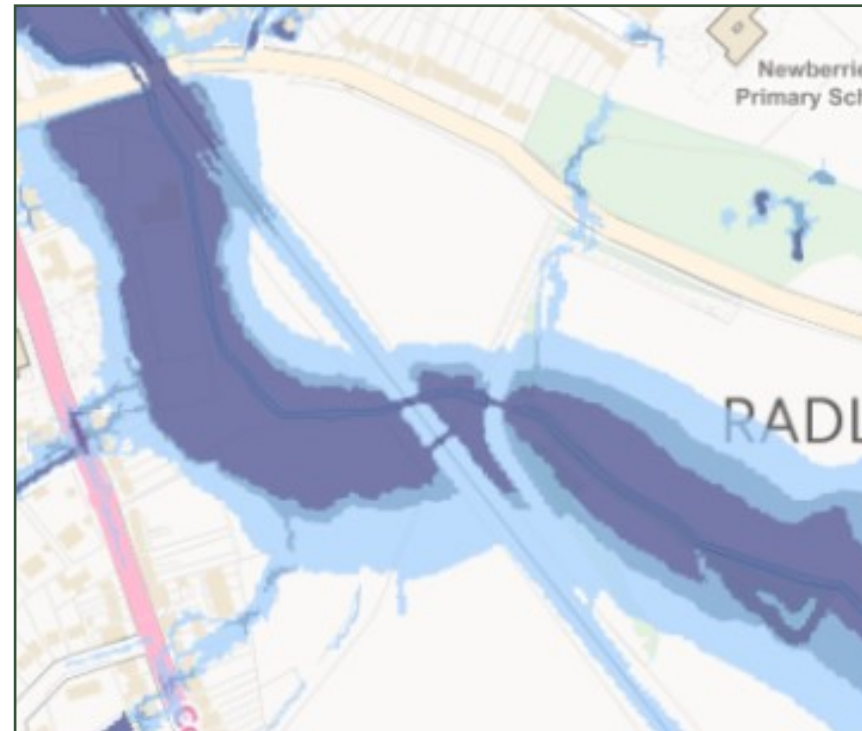


**Fluvial Flooding**

The vast majority of the site is outside the floodplain associated with Radlett Brook.

The fluvial floodplain (Zone 2) only affects the lower land adjacent to the brook in the south west corner of the site (light blue area). As can be seen from the extract from the Environment Agency's website, the dam (orange line) and flood alleviation area (blue dots) are located to the east to the site.

In addition to fluvial flooding, consideration has been given to surface water flooding and the potential for flooding if, for whatever reason, the dam fails causing an inundation event. The extent of this type of flooding is similar for both sources as can be seen from the extract from the Environment Agency's website for surface water flooding. Flooding would again affect the south west corner adjacent to the brook and also the lower lying land in the north west corner close to the railway bridge.



**Surface Water Flooding**



Any housing development should avoid the areas which are susceptible to flooding.

## Drainage

A review of the underlying geology and nearby British Geological Survey borehole logs identifies that the site is situated atop Lambeth sandy clay superficial deposits overlying Seaford Chalk. In view of the potentially favourable underlying ground conditions, (subject to the height of the water table) infiltration testing should be conducted to confirm the viability of drainage via soakaways.

If infiltration were to prove unviable, a connection to the Radlett Brook would be achievable on the site's south western boundary, subject to discussion with the Environment Agency and Network Rail in view of the proximity to the Radlett Flood Storage Area and the railway line. A further attenuation feature might be required in the north west corner with a discharge westwards to Radlett Brook. Further survey work would be there is an existing surface water sewer within the vicinity. The rate of discharge from any attenuation into the receiving network would be limited to the existing greenfield runoff rate so as not to increase flood risk to the wider catchment.

Based upon the Illustrative Concept Plan, an approximate storage estimate (using an assumed 65% impermeable area and an approximate annual average greenfield runoff rate of 5l/s) indicates that a storage volume of approximately 1900m<sup>3</sup> would be required to accommodate runoff up to the 1 in 100-year plus 40% climate change flow scenario. This provides a conservative estimation of storage requirements.

Enquires are being made of Thames Water concerning foul water capacity. There is already a sewer which crosses the site and could be used for disposal of foul water.



# Other Matters

## Air Quality

There is an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA No. 7) along Watling Street within the local centre and located about 550 metres from the site. This area encompasses residential properties along both sides of Watling Street between the junctions with Park Road and Aldenham Road. The air quality concern is associated with Nitrogen Dioxide. No Air Quality Action Plan has been produced. There would potentially be some additional vehicle trips through the AQMA arising from the proposed development and further consideration of any impact is ongoing.



## Noise

Residential development of the site would not generate any excessive noise or cause disturbance to the occupiers of neighbouring properties, including by reason of vehicle noise. However, the site is located adjacent to the London to Bedford railway line which is busy during the day-time and operates overnight.

Along the majority of the western site boundary, the railway is in a cutting which provides some attenuation of rail noise. At In the south west and north west corners the railway formation and site are at similar levels. To address potential noise concerns, residential development should be set back from the western boundary with dwelling orientated with the front elevations facing the railway. The opportunity also exists to erect a noise barrier, whether a landscaped earth bund or fence or combination or both, to provide attenuation, especially where the site and railway formation are at grade.

## Ground Conditions

A review of historical mapping identifies that the site has remained in agricultural use since the construction of the railway. It is not expected that there will be any contamination which would preclude the development of the site for residential purposes.

## Minerals

The adopted Hertsmere Local Plan confirms that the site is within an area identified as barren for sand and gravel. The emerging Minerals Local Plan is not proposing to alter this status. However, the emerging Local Plan confirms that the Minerals Consultation Area continues apply to the land north, east and west of Radlett because of the potential resource which exists. This existence of such resource impacts upon the availability of this land for built development unless or until the mineral potential has been properly assessed and, if viable, exploited.

## Utilities and Services

Initial enquiries have not identified any insurmountable constraints to the provision of gas, water, electricity, foul water and telecommunications. Gas, water, electricity and telecommunication services are already within the highway along Theobald Street. There is a foul water sewer crossing the site to which a connection is intended.

Overhead electricity lines cross the site and they provide power to a sub station to the north of Theobald Street. These line would ebe placed underground in a similar manner to the what occurred when the flood alleviation scheme was implemented to the east of the site.

## Social Considerations

The scale of development, circa 60 dwellings, will to generate the need for social or community facilities to be provided on site. The exception would be safe play space for children being provided on-site.

Richborough Estates acknowledge that appropriate financial payments would be needed to be made to off-set the demands placed upon social and community facilities by future residents. Such payments would be made via the Community Infrastructure Levy which already operates within Hertsmere Borough or site specific Planning Obligations.

One of the site specific Planning Obligations will be securing the delivery of 40% of the housing being affordable homes. Radlett is one of the highest value areas in Hertsmere and hence the higher level of affordable housing. The mix and siting of the affordable homes would reflect re-

quirements of the Council's Supplementary Planning Document.

The market housing mix would predominantly composed of 2 to 5 bedroom dwellings with the emphasis on family homes.

## Neighbouring Occupiers

Unlike a high proportion of other potential residential schemes, housing development of the site would not cause adverse impact on the living conditions of the occupiers of neighbouring properties.



The properties on the north side of Theobald Street are set back from the road and there is then a wide verge and the substantial belt of trees along the site's boundary. Any new dwellings would be sited well away from these properties and there is no intention, other than for access or good arboricultural reasons, to remove any of the boundary vegetation. Residential properties fronting Watling Street are located well away from the site and there is woodland along Radlett Brook which screens views.



# Emerging Proposals



Richborough Estates has carefully considered the outcome of the initial surveys and assessment to devise an Illustrative Concept Plan for further discussion with stakeholders. This is just an indication of how the site could be developed and is the subject of further assessment.



# Conclusion

Through the preparation of this Promotional Brochure it is hoped that Hertsmere District Council will recognise the substantial planning merits and benefits of including Richborough Estate's land interest at Theobald Street as a housing allocation in the emerging Local Plan.

The emerging Local Plan recognises that some housing development will need to be accommodated on land which is currently within the Green Belt. By reason of its wide range of shops, services and facilities, together with its accessibility by both bus and rail, Radlett is recognised as a sustainable location for development. When considering amendments to the Green Belt boundary it is a clear requirement of the Framework that development should be directed towards sustainable locations such as Radlett.

The Illustrative Concept Plan commissioned by Richborough Estates is based upon technical and environmental assessments which have so far been undertaken for the site. The concept plan indicates that around 60 dwellings could be accommodated on the site, including 40% of the homes being affordable.

The scale of development would make a useful and positive contribution, as part of a balanced portfolio of different sized greenfield site, to meeting the housing needs of the District. Any housing development would be completed within around 2-years from the securing of outline planning permission.

The land at Theobald Street is a single field physically and visually related to the settlement of Radlett. As is evident by reference to aerial images, the Ordnance Survey maps and site visit, the site visually and physically contained by built forms of development to the north, east and west with a southern boundary which is well defined by a public right of way and a belt of established trees.

With the exception of being within the Green Belt, the site is not the subject of any national or local environmental designations. Part of the site is within an area susceptible to surface water flooding but built development would not occur in this locations. Built development would be on land within a Zone 1 floodplain.

The site is well related to the settlement pattern of Radlett and a housing development of circa 60 dwellings could occur without prejudicing the purposes of the Green Belt or encroach materially into the gap between Borehamwood and Radlett. There would not be urban sprawl into the wider open verdant countryside which characterises other land on the periphery of Radlett.

The site has the capacity to accommodate housing development without detriment to character or appearance of the wider landscape. There is ample scope to augment existing well established belts of trees within the site to create an effective transition between the countryside and the settlement of Radlett. Scope exists to improve biodiversity and create a high quality development which would respect this approach to Radlett. Development of the site for housing in the manner proposed would not cause less than substantial harm would be caused to the setting of designated heritage assets of Christ Church and the South Radlett Conservation Area.

This Illustrative Concept Plan has had regard to the topography of the site, matters associated with flooding and noise associated with the railway. The overhead lines can, as with what occurred to the south as part of the flood alleviation works, be placed underground. There are not biodiversity interests which would be prejudiced by the proposed housing development with the key ecological features associated with the boundary trees being retained,

The site is well located on foot to the wide range of local facilities and services within Radlett. The railway station is within walking distance and there are existing bus services operating along Theobald Road. The train and bus services enable access by public transport to higher order service and employment opportunities in London, Luton and St Albans. Vehicular access can be taken direct from Theobald Street adjacent to the existing field gate. There are opportunities to improve crossing facilities and provide a footway to improve access for local residents wishing to walk along the public right of way (No. 54) along the site's southern boundary

Overall, there are no insurmountable constraint to the accommodation of housing development on the site in the manner identified on the Illustrative Concept Plan. Unlike other land on the periphery of Radlett, the site has been identified in the current Local Plan as being barren of minerals and this is echoed in the emerging Minerals Local Plan.

The content of this Promotional Brochure sets out the current thoughts and ideas of Richborough Estates to foster engagement with the Council and other stakeholder. Richborough Estates is continuing to commission surveys and other work to refine the proposals contained in this document. As part of this process engagement will be sought with all stakeholders to discuss the emerging proposals and what benefits could accrue to the community of Radlett.

August 2018