

Sustainable future of former Potters Bar Golf Course (PBGC)



PBGC has been in family ownership for almost 100 years. For most of that time, it was operated as a Golf Course run by its members. Unfortunately, the Club went into liquidation and the site has, and continues to, decline in the absence of the expensive ongoing grounds maintenance which was previously paid for by the golfing fees.

The family wants to work with the local Council and community to deliver a sustainable solution. Alongside much-needed homes for local people, the site can provide a country park, as well as either a reserve primary school site or land for residential, a nursery or community facility, depending on what is most required.

As new homes are needed and there are not enough brownfield sites that can be developed to meet this need, the development of some greenfield sites is inevitable. We believe this former golf course is the most sustainable site for housing owing to its location close to Potters Bar railway and bus stations and local facilities, as well as the defensible boundary we will create to the north of the site. The family has therefore appointed CEG to bring forward a sustainable development for future generations.



CEG

CEG is committed to delivering vibrant developments. We create distinctive new communities around the UK, making space for lives to flourish and neighbourhoods to evolve.

Our approach is collaborative and we have secured a huge number of awards for our engagement and placemaking, as well as the design and environmental credentials of our developments. We would work closely with the Council and the local community to ensure that we create a legacy of which residents of Potters Bar can be proud.

As we start to prepare a planning application for the site we welcome your thoughts on the evolving masterplan. Please review and liaise with the team. Questionnaires are available so you can also give your views. You can complete this via your smart phone by using the link on our website:

www.pottersbarfuture.co.uk

Local Housing Need and Sustainable Development



Since the 2024 draft Local Plan consultation, new national planning policy has been adopted in the form of the 2024 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). Amongst many other changes, it sets a new local housing need figure for Hertsmere of 1,034 dwellings per annum and now requires councils which are Green Belt constrained to review Green Belt boundaries in exceptional circumstances which include instances where an authority cannot meet its identified need for homes, commercial or other development through other means. As part of this process, the NPPF is clear that when drawing up or reviewing Green Belt boundaries, the need to promote sustainable patterns of development is key.

The Hertsmere Core Strategy was adopted in January 2013, setting the housing requirement for the plan period up to 2027 to provide at least 3,990 homes, or 266 dwellings per annum.

The Core Strategy is now substantially out of date and Hertsmere Borough Council (HBC) is working on producing a new Local Plan.

The latest consultation for the draft Local Plan in April to May 2024 set out the Borough's plan for green, sustainable growth. It provided details as to how and where new homes, jobs and essential investment can be delivered, along with schools, health facilities and green sustainable transport measures. The draft Local Plan set out the following aims for Potters Bar and the former golf course site:

- Increasing the supply of new homes within Potters Bar (which has historic under-delivery of new housing), so that younger people aren't priced out of the area.
- Focusing new development in the most sustainable locations, including the former Potters Bar golf course, with strong links to the town centre and railway station to the south.



To deliver a vibrant new community set in publicly accessible and extensive green spaces and provide new community facilities that complement, rather than compete with, local services.

Homes, facilities and a country park in a sustainable location

- Help young people access the housing ladder, so they can stay and re-invest in Potters Bar providing a boost to the high street.
- Deliver a full mix of high quality house types and sizes for all - from affordable, family, specialist to elderly accommodation, providing a balanced community.
- Ensure a varied, attractive and characterful mix of housing, set within strong landscaping.
- Close to the train station and multiple bus services - with further investment into walking and cycling routes along Darkes Lane and improvements to bus infrastructure.
- Within easy walk of shops and facilities, new residents would help support local businesses and boost the local economy.
- Open up approximately 65-acres of green spaces which are not currently accessible to the public. This could include a country park, playing fields, play areas or other recreational activities.
- Include community facilities such as a reserve school site or alternatively land for residential, children's nursery or community uses - we welcome your ideas.



Water management and masterplanning

We are preparing an outline application which will be supported by technical and environmental assessments and identify appropriate mitigation measures to demonstrate that the proposed development would not cause unacceptable harm.

This documentation will include an Environmental Impact Assessment and a Design and Access Statement setting out a series of design principles which will be incorporated into the illustrative masterplan and Parameter Plans.

These plans identify matters such as land use, movement and building heights which will establish the principles of the proposed development going forward.

If planning permission is granted, then the details of the scheme will be the subject of Reserved Matters applications which will determine the detailed design of buildings and the green spaces. At this stage, there would be further opportunities to comment on these details.

There are no flooding or surface water drainage issues which would preclude the site being developed for housing purposes due to the following:

- All built development will be located within the areas at lowest risk of flooding (flood zone 1).
- Flood free access can be provided via Darkes Lane.
- Surface water runoff from roads, drives, roofs and other hardstanding areas will be carefully managed, restricting runoff to existing greenfield rates and incorporating Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) to attenuate runoff and provide new habitats.
- The proposals would not have an adverse impact on flood risk elsewhere (i.e. off-site) and would reduce the flood risk in the wider area.
- The design protects Potters Bar Brook channel and will ensure built forms are resilient to the potential impacts of climate change.
- Through pre-application consultation, the Environment Agency and Hertfordshire County Council (as the Lead Local Flood Authority) have confirmed that they are satisfied with the proposed strategy for managing flood risk and surface water drainage at the site.
- In terms of foul water, the performance of, capacity and any future investment is the responsibility of the local water authority, in this case Thames Water. As part of the planning application process, the team is engaging with Thames Water to agree any required upgrades. While the new development would not connect into the tank on site, the redevelopment of the site offers an opportunity for Thames Water to look to address any known issues within the system.



The Planning Application



Noise and air quality

- A Noise Impact Assessment will confirm any mitigation measures on site, including consideration of the noise and vibration impacts of the adjacent rail line, as well as any arising from the commercial units on the Cranborne estate.
- An Air Quality Assessment will accompany the planning application and will assess the effects of the proposal if any arise. It will provide details of any solutions which are required to mitigate air quality impacts.

Utilities

- A Utility Assessment will detail the anticipated utility requirements for the proposed development and evidence that the required infrastructure is deliverable without adversely impacting the local utility networks. This will include provision for electricity, potable water, high speed broadband, telephone and foul water connections for example.

Heritage and Archaeology

- The Proposed Development retains and enhances the Grade II listed 19th century Coal Duty Marker and the two World War type 24 pillboxes and secures their long-term management within a potential country park or other green space.
- The development is designed to respond to the neighbouring Potters Bar Darkes Lane (west) Conservation Area through the introduction of low density, low height development to the north of it and careful consideration of the treatment of the northern Conservation Area edge.



Environment, Green Spaces and Biodiversity



A Green Infrastructure Plan and Strategy will form part of the planning application. A suite of ecological surveys has been undertaken to identify areas of interest.

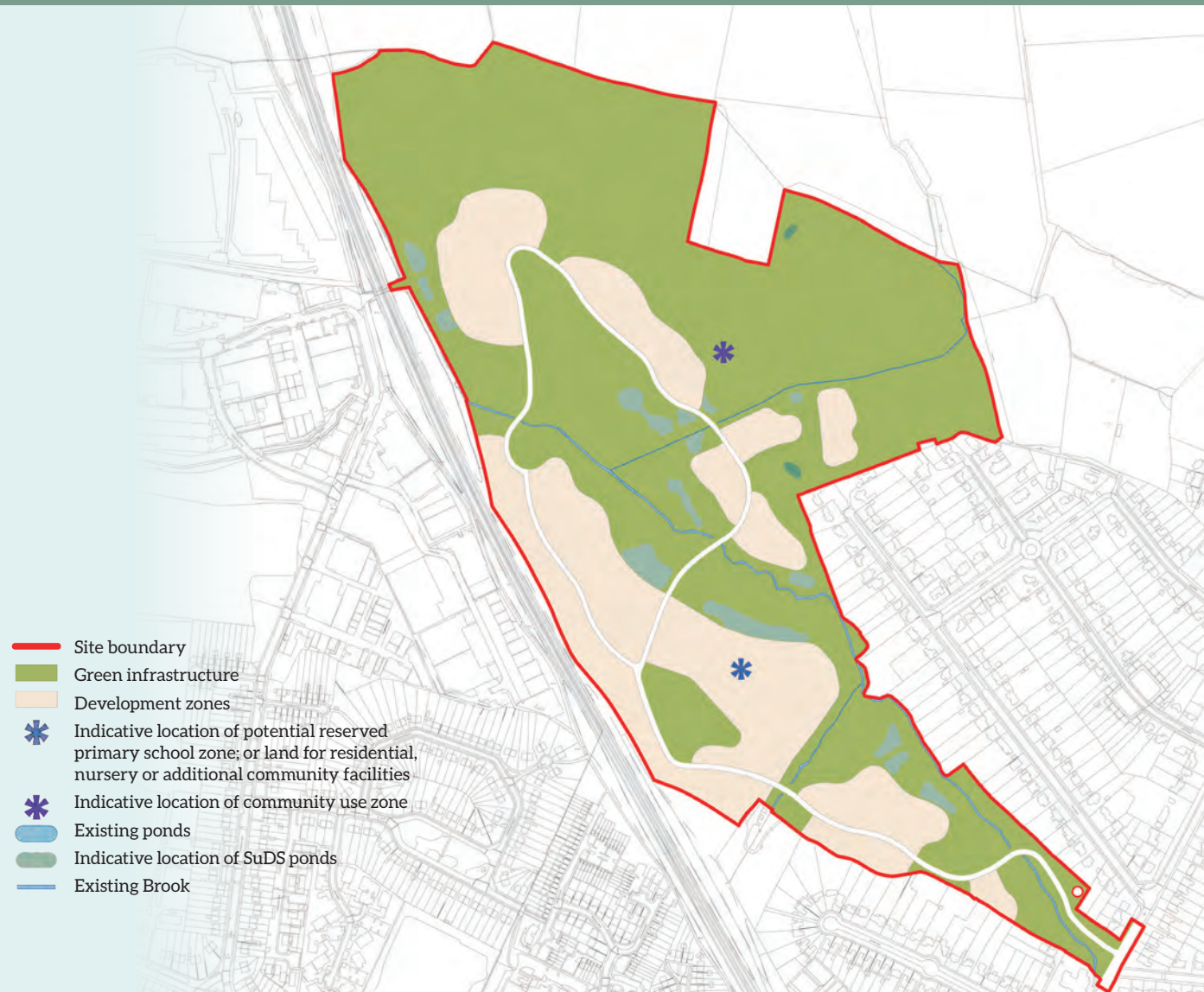
Mitigation measures will provide suitable post-development habitat foraging. There would be around 65 acres of green spaces, which could include a country park, playing fields, play areas, as well as new nature areas to enhance opportunities for biodiversity.

The future planning application will incorporate an Environmental Impact Assessment, which will, amongst other things, set out in detail how biodiversity will be protected, preserved and enhanced not just during construction, but also long after development is complete.

Habitat assessments, protection and mitigation measures form a key part of the proposals, as well as details as to how 10% Biodiversity Net Gain can be achieved. Investment into sustainable drainage features would incorporate attenuation basins which provide fantastic and attractive habitat opportunities.

The scheme is landscape led, retaining the most important trees and with substantial new planting to enhance the existing belts of trees and individual mature species through the site.

Multifunctional greenspace will permeate through the site incorporating the existing Potters Bar Brook and Hertfordshire Way Public Right of Way footpath. The new landscape planting will also provide buffers to the more sensitive areas around the site, allowing wildlife to thrive and enhancing biodiversity.



Masterplanning

- The site's natural assets (topography, woodlands, veteran and mature trees and heritage assets) have guided the masterplan.
- The development has been designed to ensure it is visually well-contained within existing woodland belts and planting.
- The masterplan seeks to protect and enhance green space and habitat opportunities, alongside the delivery of new homes. It provides a mix of green spaces for landscaping, environmental features, biodiversity, water and drainage, well-connected walking and cycling routes, recreation and play to enhance the health and wellbeing of residents.

Biodiversity

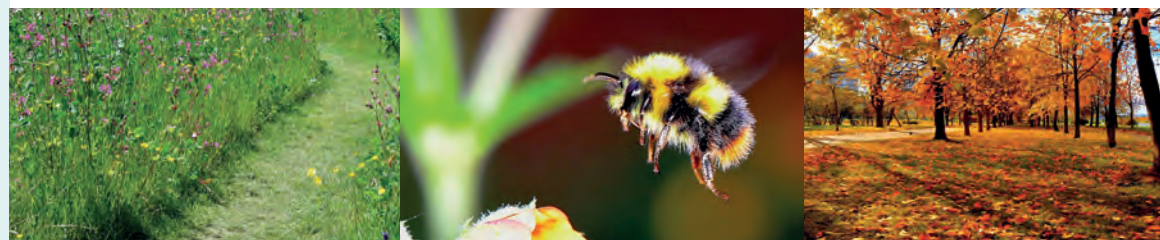
- 10% Biodiversity Net Gain will be achieved through the retention and enhancement of key habitats, including Potters Bar Brook, on-site ponds, mature woodland blocks, and veteran trees.
- New species-rich grasslands and glades will be created to support pollinators and other wildlife.
- The scheme will provide habitat connectivity with surrounding landscapes and wildlife corridors.
- A range of bird and bat boxes and other ecological enhancements will be installed across the site.
- Ecological Management Plans and Public Right of Way Strategy to be provided.



Trees and hedgerows



- High to moderate quality and value trees have been prioritised for retention, helping to maintain the established character of the area and preserve features that matter to the local community. Existing hedgerows and tree groups with ecological or landscape value have also been retained wherever possible and will be enhanced through sensitive management.
- In addition to this, a significant new planting scheme is proposed. That will support local wildlife, enhance biodiversity, and create attractive green spaces for people to enjoy.
- This is a landscape-led approach that not only respects what's already here, but builds on it, delivering long-term environmental benefits and helping to shape a development where people and nature can thrive together.



Health, Wellbeing and Sustainability



Health and wellbeing

- Outdoor space, including the potential new country park will promote community interaction, fitness and health, with play space, a trim trail and places to socialise.
- This walkable community will encourage active travel.
- Provide access to nature – other than the Public Right of Way there is no legal access to the site. This development will open up access to extensive new green spaces, walking routes and nature areas.
- High quality and energy efficient housing for all – whatever your age and lifestyle.
- Set within a network of waterscapes and green corridors that encourage walking, cycling, ecology and biodiversity.

Climate Protection

- A Sustainability and Energy Strategy will accompany the planning application.
- Well-insulated, energy efficient and healthy modern homes.
- All electric – no fossil fuel use on site.
- Fabric first approach to reduce the need to heat and cool homes.
- On site renewable energy provision could include air source heat pumps, mechanical ventilation and /or solar PV.
- Built in line with Future Homes Standard as a minimum.
- Water efficiency measures built-in.
- Buildings that respond to the environment and are adaptable to future technologies.
- A healthy, accessible community with fantastic sustainable travel opportunities – from rail and bus, to foot and cycle.



Indicative Masterplan

A draft masterplan is shared today for up to 550 homes, extensive green infrastructure including a country park and a reserve school site which, if not required, could be used for residential, a children's nursery or community uses.

- Site boundary
- Residential development zone
- Primary route
- Active travel route for pedestrians/cycles
- Other footways and shared surface routes
- Public Right of Way 005 (Hertfordshire Way)
- Informal footways
- Green infrastructure including country park
- Existing brook
- Existing ponds
- Indicative location of SuDS ponds
- Existing and proposed trees
- Indicative location of potential reserved primary school zone; or land for residential, nursery or additional community facilities
- Indicative location of community facilities
- Locally listed anti-tank defenses and pillboxes
- Obelisk



Sustainable Transport

A Transport Assessment and Sustainable Travel Plan will form part of the planning application.

- These reports will highlight how the central location of the site and proximity to the bus and rail station will encourage new residents to walk, cycle and use public transport for many of their trips.
- The masterplan will be designed so that walking and cycling routes are attractive, convenient and feel like the natural choice for making shorter distance journeys to school, the shops and local facilities. We are working with the local highway authority to maximise infrastructure to support these journeys.
- Our work will also include assessing the impact on local roads and junctions and where any significant impacts are identified, mitigation measures will be investigated.
- The main vehicular access would be via Darkes Lane. There would also be a dedicated access for active travel, which would also serve as an emergency vehicular access.

- Protect and enhance Public Right of Way and provide new foot/cycle routes and linkages.
- Cycle storage for every home.
- EV charging points for each house.
- Within walking distance of train station and bus services.
- Improve walking and cycling access to the high street, bus stops and railway station.
- Deliver new amenities such as a community facility and land for a school.
- Opportunity to provide green travel initiatives – from bus and train travel vouchers to e-bike access so residents don't need to own a car.



Delivering Benefits



- A significant proportion of the site will become publicly accessible open space for the first time, including a potential country park. This may include areas of parkland, destination viewpoints and gathering places incorporating nature ponds, woodland activities and spaces for recreation, amenity and community events. A country park could also incorporate a variety of habitats and areas managed for wildlife which will offer opportunities for education and community stewardship and conservation.
- A variety of new homes would be delivered including much-needed affordable housing, homes for growing families, those downsizing and those suitable for the elderly. It will enable young people to stay in Potters Bar. New residents will also help to boost the local economy and the shops and services on the high street.
- There would also be investment into flood mitigation on Darkes Lane, reducing the current flood risk.



Your ideas

- Alongside much-needed new homes, community facilities will be provided. Our early ideas include a reserve site for a school and a community facility as part of the country park. If you have any ideas regarding the types of community facilities you would like us to consider please let us know.
- Community involvement of this space will be important to create a sense of pride and effective management.

As we are preparing a planning application, we would welcome your feedback on the proposals.

If you have any queries, please chat to the team and complete a comment form at today's event.

You can also comment by:

Email: pottersbar@ceg.co.uk

website: www.pottersbarfuture.co.uk

