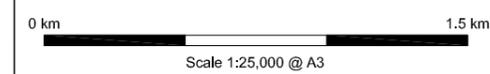




**Key**

<b>General</b>	
	Boundary of Consideration
	Watercourse
<b>Services</b>	
	Surface Water
	Foul Water
	Potable Water
	Gas Pipeline (Low Pressure) - 21 mBar to 75 mBar
	Gas Pipeline (Medium Pressure) - 270 mBar to 2 Bar
	Gas Pipeline (Intermediate Pressure) - 2 Bar to 7 Bar
	Electricity Cables (33kV)
	Electricity Cables (400kV)
	Oil Pipeline
	BT
	Gas Governor Station
	Major Substation
	Major Pumping Station
	Water Tower

- NOTES:**
1. Site boundary shown is the boundary identified as Crown Estate Land Ownership.
  2. The purpose of the drawing is to provide a high level overview of a wide range variety of services within the site boundary. As a result there are a number of above ground and below ground services that are not shown and have been omitted from the drawing for clarity.
  3. In order to clarify the location of all services in a particular area reference should be made to the Statutory Undertaker's records.
  4. Details shown on this drawing have been provided in good faith by each Statutory Undertaker. No liability of any kind is accepted by the operator, its agents or servants for any error or omission. The information is given without obligation, or warranty and as a result the accuracy of the information shown cannot be guaranteed.
  5. The location of all proposed services shown need to be confirmed with the relevant statutory undertaker prior to any works commencing on site.

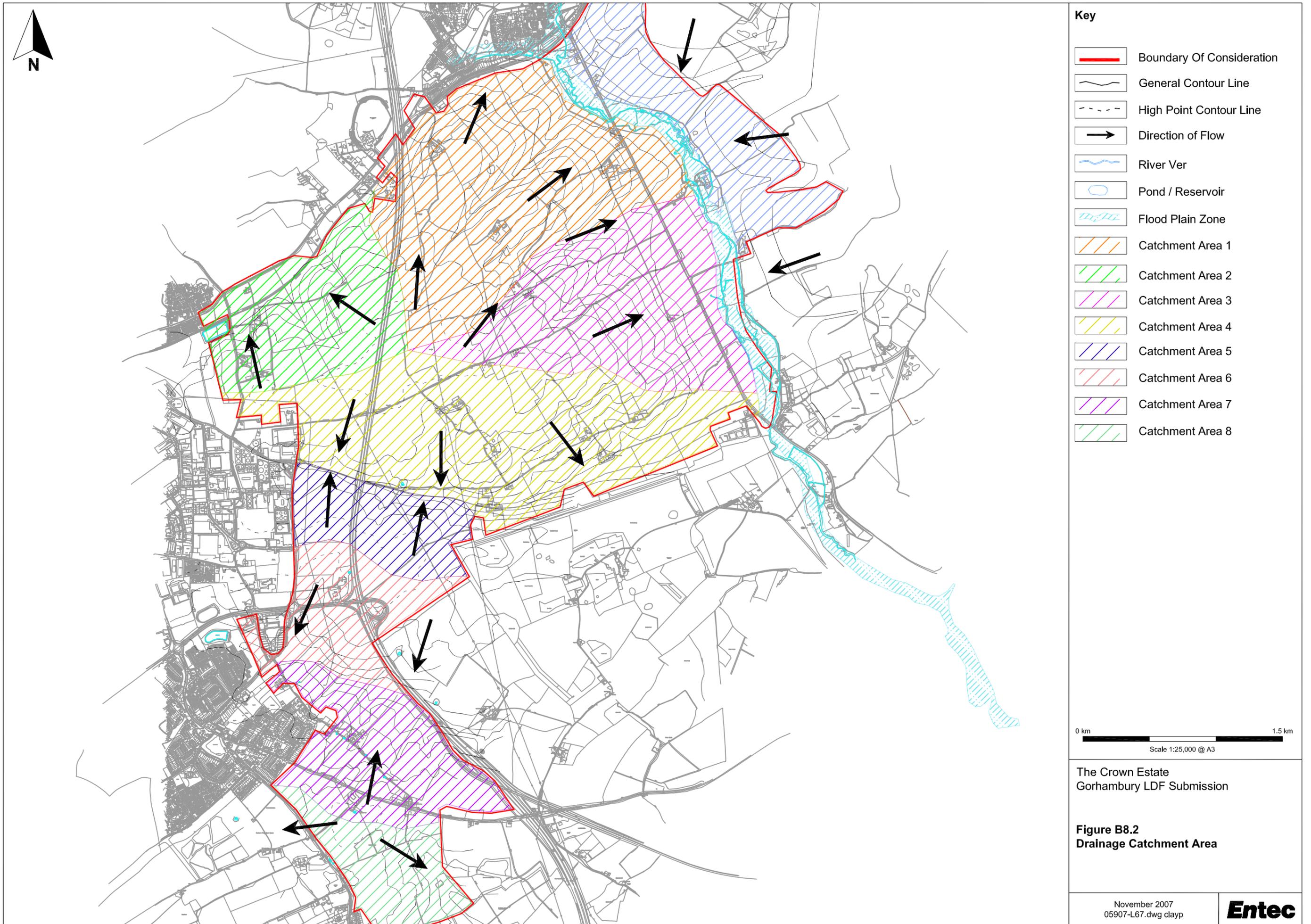


The Crown Estate  
Gorhambury LDF Submission

**Figure B8.1**  
**Service Location Plan**



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- Key**
- Boundary Of Consideration
  - General Contour Line
  - High Point Contour Line
  - Direction of Flow
  - River Ver
  - Pond / Reservoir
  - Flood Plain Zone
  - Catchment Area 1
  - Catchment Area 2
  - Catchment Area 3
  - Catchment Area 4
  - Catchment Area 5
  - Catchment Area 6
  - Catchment Area 7
  - Catchment Area 8

0 km 1.5 km  
 Scale 1:25,000 @ A3

The Crown Estate  
 Gorhambury LDF Submission

**Figure B8.2**  
**Drainage Catchment Area**

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## 9. Informal Recreation and Public Access

### 9.1 Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to develop an initial indication of opportunities to improve and extend informal recreation and public access provision within the context of the Gorhambury development. The proposed Gorhambury development is likely to consist of around 6,000 new dwellings and a mix of other uses, equating to an approximate population of 15,000.

### 9.2 Context

The ability to meet the informal recreation and public access needs of both future residents and the existing population in the adjacent environs is the key focus for this work. In identifying potential opportunities, consideration will be given to recreation/access planning policies, existing recreational needs and existing provision within the Gorhambury area. Opportunities will focus on informal recreation use (e.g. walking, dog-walking, jogging cycling and horse-riding) rather than formal recreational uses such as organised sport activities (e.g. rugby and football).

It is intended that this chapter will form the first stage in the development of detailed informal recreation and public access proposals and as such will be undertaken at a strategic, rather than detailed level. The remainder of this chapter sets out:

- the planning context for informal recreation and public access provision;
- an indication of local recreation needs;
- existing informal recreation and public access provision (in map format); and
- potential informal recreation and public access opportunities and constraints (again in map format).

#### 9.2.1 National Context

The Government's Game Plan has a long term vision to 'to increase significantly levels of sport and physical activity' with an associated aim to achieve a target of '70% (currently ~30%) of the population to be reasonably active (for example 30 minutes of moderate exercise five times a week) by 2020.'

The Framework for Sport in England provides 'the strategic direction and policy priorities that unite sport in its commitment to make England the most active and successful sporting nation in the world by 2020'. Within the framework there are priorities for access to the countryside (with reference to the urban fringe) as well as parks and open spaces (recognising that such areas play an important part in helping people become more active). The



Framework recognises the wider benefits of increased physical activity including ‘improved health and well being’ and ‘stronger and safer communities’.

## 9.2.2 National Planning Context

Planning Policy Guidance 17 (PPG17) recognises the important role open space, sport and recreation play in underpinning people's quality of life. PPG17 states:

*“Well designed and implemented planning policies for open space, sport and recreation are therefore fundamental to delivering broader Government objectives. These include: supporting an urban renaissance; supporting a rural renewal; promotion of social inclusion and community cohesion; health and well being; promoting more sustainable development.”*

Fundamental to the effective planning of open space, sport and recreation is the determination of local needs. Local authorities are encouraged within PPG17 to undertake assessments to determine existing and future needs for open space, sport and recreational facilities. Local authorities are also encouraged to undertake audits of existing facilities as well as identifying opportunities for new open spaces and facilities. Such studies will help local authorities to set open space standards that best reflect the local situation. Needs and opportunities identified at the local level are explored under section 3.2.

PPG17 seeks to protect existing open space, sport and recreational land unless it is proven to be surplus to requirements. When planning for new open space, sports and recreational facilities the following general principles have been set out in PPG17:

- ‘promote accessibility by walking, cycling and public transport and ensure that facilities are accessible for people with disabilities;
- locate more intensive recreational uses activities in sites where they can contribute to town centre vitality and viability;
- avoid any significant loss of amenity to residents, neighbouring uses or biodiversity;
- improve the quality of the public realm through good design;
- provide area of open space within commercial and industrial areas;
- add to and enhance range of existing facilities;
- carefully consider security and public safety;
- meet the regeneration need of areas, use brownfield in preference to greenfield;
- consider the scope for using any surplus for open space and sports and recreational use;



- assess impact of new facilities on social inclusion; and
- consider recreational needs of visitors.’

The guidance clearly indicates that open space standards should be decided locally so as to reflect local characteristics in supply and demand for example in response to local demographics and existing provision. PPG17 goes on to consider the urban-rural fringe and encourages the:

*“creation of sports and recreational facilities in such areas and development of areas of managed countryside such as country parks, community forest and agricultural showground’s ... facilities should be accessible by walking, cycling and public transport...”*

It also considers recreational rights of way as follows:

*“Rights of Way are an important recreational facility, which local authorities should protect and enhance. Local authorities should seek opportunities to provide better facilities for walkers, cyclists and horse-riders, for example by adding links to existing rights of way networks.”*

The long term outcomes of PPG17 (as defined in Assessing needs and opportunities PPG17 Companion Guide) are to deliver:

- ‘networks of accessible, high quality open spaces and sport and recreation facilities, in both urban and rural areas, which meet the needs of residents and visitors, are fit for purpose and economically and environmentally sustainable;
- an appropriate balance between new provision and the enhancement of existing provision; and
- clarity and reasonable certainty for developers and land owners in relation to the requirements and expectations of local planning authorities in respect of open space and sport and recreation provision’.

### 9.2.3 Regional Planning Context

The East of England Plan for Sport prepared by Sport England seeks to encourage informal recreation and recognizes the recreational opportunities of the natural environment by promoting ‘making the most of these assets and linking to the urban-fringe of the larger towns’.

The East of England Plan recognizes the recreational value of the urban fringe and seeks to ensure new development in such areas will enhance this value. It also supports the provision of green space and networks that link the urban and rural environment. Policy SS8 sets out the policy for informal recreation and public access within urban fringe areas as follows:



*“Local authorities should work with developers and other agencies to secure the enhancement, effective management, and appropriate use of land in the urban fringe through formulating and implementing strategies for urban fringe areas, working across administrative boundaries where appropriate.”*

Local development documents should:

- ‘ensure that new development in or near the urban fringe contributes to enhancing its character and appearance and its recreational and/or biodiversity value;
- seek to provide networks of accessible green space linking urban areas with the countryside; and
- set targets for the provision of green space for planned urban extensions.’

The plan goes on to highlight the need for effective management of the urban fringe to meet the recreational needs of residents whilst also being compatible with existing land uses. The policy for the London Arc area, in which Hemel Hempstead falls, specifically states development growth will be managed to secure more sustainable forms of development to deliver ‘positive management of land between settlements to ensure a good quality environment and its enhancement for the purposes of countryside access, outdoor sport and recreation, landscape amenity, improvement of damaged land, nature conservation, agriculture and forestry.’

Within the plan there is also a policy for pedestrian and cycle provision improvements at the local level specifying the need to create links to the National Cycle network. Accessibility is also promoted within policy on Environmental Infrastructure in particular the need for Local Development Documents to ‘provide connected and substantial networks of accessible multi-functional green space, in urban, urban fringe and adjacent countryside areas to service the new communities’ as well as ‘set targets for the provision for natural green space within development areas’ (the latter reflecting PPG17). Policies relating to recreation also encourage local authorities to improve informal recreational opportunities for both residents and visitors, aspects specified include access to sites/facilities and maximising the development of regional recreational assets.

### 9.2.4 County Planning Context

The Hertfordshire Structure Plan has set out a series of policies of relevance to informal recreation and public access. The aim of the policies is to ensure links between the open countryside and the town are maintained and, where appropriate, improved. The plan also recognizes the role urban fringe areas can play in providing ‘countryside recreation facilities’ that are close to large populations. A further policy looks at the provision of open spaces within urban areas. These reflect the policies set out in The East of England Plan 6.

The County have also undertaken a Rights of Way Improvement Plan (ROWIP) which forms part of the Local Transport Plan. Within this plan they have identified the following vision:



*“To create, by 2026, an accessible and integrated off-road network for non-motorised users based on rights of way and other routes, that meets the current and perceived future needs and demands of Hertfordshire’s residents and visitors”*

A set of core actions have been prepared to improve rights of way as follows:

- ‘develop routes that cater for the needs of people with limited mobility;
- develop the network from significant public transport connections;
- reduce the number of unnecessary physical barriers on the network;
- promote Hertfordshire's countryside to residents and visitors;
- develop appropriate, well maintained links into the countryside;
- create and develop off road routes linking communities with places of work, schools and other local facilities;
- extend the network currently available to cyclists and horse-riders;
- help people wishing to improve or maintain their health by developing a range of circular off road routes;
- ensure that opportunities to protect, extend and enhance the off road network are included in proposals for new developments;
- where the off road network is affected by busy transport routes work to ensure that appropriate measures are taken to improve the safety and attractiveness of the routes for users;
- address problems of fly-tipping, litter and dog-fouling in partnership with appropriate local and regional agencies; and
- identify and address potential demand for access to the countryside amongst those who currently do not use the network.’

## 9.2.5 District Planning Context

Relevant planning policies are set out in the Dacorum and St. Albans local plans. Both seek to protect and enhance Public Rights of Ways (PRoW). Specific mention is given to the development of circular routes and links to existing PRoW. The provision of open/leisure space in new residential development is also addressed in both local plans (each plan has a policy relating to the subject). These policies reflect the policies set out in the Hertfordshire Structure Plan 7 and in turn The East of England Plan 6.



## 9.2.6 The Town Context

Hemel Hempstead was designed as a New Town over 50 years ago. Understanding the development of Hemel Hempstead provides a clear indication of the importance of open space which is fundamental to design of this New Town by the landscape designer Geoffrey Jellicoe. The existing network of open spaces, with key routes following valley floors, creates many opportunities for informal recreation and public access (this is recognized in Hemel 2020 and beyond). Hemel 2020 and beyond goes on to encourage the enhancement of high quality environments and recognise the contribution open space make ‘to the quality of life for residents and enjoyment of visitors’. The vision specifically mentions the need to ‘achieve quality improved networks of open spaces with linking green corridors of footpaths and cycleways’.

## 9.3 Existing Needs

The existing needs of the local population surrounding Gorhambury and its immediate environs have been identified through:

- Hertfordshire’s Rights of Way Improvement Plan (RoWIP); and
- relevant open space studies.

### 9.3.1 Rights of Way Improvement Plan

The need and demand for Public Rights of Way in Hertfordshire was determined through a variety of focus groups and surveys. The key issues identified are as follows:

- difficulties in getting to the countryside without the use of a car;
- insufficient off road routes linking communities and services;
- people have to use or cross-busy roads to link up sections of network;
- the network does not adequately provide for cycling and horse riding;
- uncontrolled dogs and fouling are a deterrent to users;
- insufficient circular routes starting from settlements or other suitable locations;
- information provided about the off road network is neither adequate nor well enough co-ordinated or targeted;
- there are too many barriers and structures;
- the off road network does not meet the needs of many potential users; and



- seasonal obstructions created by ploughing, cropping etc. need to be addressed.

A breakdown of needs and demands by users group is provided in Table B9.1.

**Table B9.1 Needs and Demands by Users Group**

User Group	Needs and demands
<b>General issues for all:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Minimum number of obstructions</li> <li>ii. Circular routes</li> <li>iii. Better information both about the network and how to access it</li> </ul>
<b>Walkers want:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Network free from obstruction</li> <li>ii. Short circular routes starting and finishing at key nodes</li> <li>iii. Long routes, not necessarily circular, in more remote interesting places</li> <li>iv. Structures kept to a minimum</li> </ul>
<b>Parents with children want:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Better information about where to go and how to get there</li> <li>ii. Dog mess, litter and vandalism to be addressed as a key priority</li> <li>iii. To be able to access the countryside with a pushchair</li> </ul>
<b>People with limited mobility (and their carers) want:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Acknowledgement that their needs are variable and depend on an individual's physical limitation</li> <li>ii. Paths with shallow gradients</li> <li>iii. Information about where to go and what to expect on arrival</li> </ul>
<b>Dog walkers want:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Walks up to an hour</li> <li>ii. Sites or Rights of Way accessible from home/kennels</li> <li>iii. Natural surfaces</li> <li>iv. Better information</li> </ul>
<b>Runners want:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Runs up to 2 hours</li> <li>ii. Routes that have a suitable natural surface</li> <li>iii. Routes that can take groups</li> <li>iv. Better information about available routes</li> </ul>
<b>Cyclists want:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Access to a greater proportion of the network to enjoy circular routes</li> <li>ii. Surfacing enabling all weather access, not necessarily tarmac</li> <li>iii. Routes free from furniture i.e. barriers not seats</li> </ul>
<b>Horse riders want:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Long circular routes, accessible from stables, avoiding roads</li> <li>ii. Routes for galloping, with a natural surface separate from improved path surfaces (especially in winter when damage is more likely)</li> <li>iii. Structures kept to minimum - must be manageable from horseback</li> </ul>
<b>Carriage drivers want:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. More off road routes linked to byways and quiet lanes</li> <li>ii. Structures kept to a minimum, recognizing the need for restrictions of motorized vehicles</li> <li>iii. Long circular routes, typically 10 to 15 miles, accessible from stable yards and hard standing for horse boxes</li> </ul>



iv. Conversion of RUPPs to Restricted Byways (RBs) once legislation is complete.

Motorised users want:

- i. Routes with some physical challenge - gradients, water features etc
- ii. Clarity as to where they can or cannot go – unambiguous status
- iii. More off-road provision

Within the RoWIP Hertfordshire County Council recognises that improvements need to be considered alongside the needs of landowners and managers, who are themselves, users of the network. The RoWIP pays particular attention to improvements which will meet a variety of needs for example walkers, those of dog walkers, joggers and cyclists.

Although the RoWIP provides the county context, the preparation of local area implementation plans are intended. The locally based implementation plans will set out a detailed programme of work and associated costing. The area to the east of Hemel Hempstead is planned, subject to funding, to be considered during 2007/8.

### 9.3.2 Open Space Studies

PPG17 encourages local authorities to undertake local assessments for needs and audits of open space, sport and recreational provision. Dacorum Borough has very recently published its Open Space Study. St. Albans does not appear to have any open space study at present. In terms of Local Management Plans, the Nicky Line Management Plan for the relevant part of the Nicky Line is due to be finalised in 2008.

### 9.4 Existing Provision

Initial informal recreation and public access provision was identified via a desk study. Table B9.2 sets out the types of informal recreation and public access provision considered and the source used to determine its extent in relation to Gorhambury and its surrounding environs.

**Table B9.2 Sources of Information to Identify Existing Informal Recreational and Public Access Provision**

Type of informal recreational and public access resource	Source of information
National Parks/AONBs/Heritage coasts	<a href="http://www.magic.gov.uk">www.magic.gov.uk</a>
Community Forest	<a href="http://www.magic.gov.uk">www.magic.gov.uk</a>
Open Access Land	<a href="http://www.countrysideaccess.gov.uk">www.countrysideaccess.gov.uk</a>
National and local nature reserves	<a href="http://www.magic.gov.uk">www.magic.gov.uk</a>
Long distance and promoted walks	OS mapping and <a href="http://www.magic.gov.uk">www.magic.gov.uk</a>



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**Other significant recreational resources**

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**OS mapping (Tourist and leisure information)**

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**Public and permissive rights of way**

---

**OS mapping**

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At a strategic level, Gorhambury lies between the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty in the west and north-west and Watling Chase Community Forest in the south east. There are three Local Nature Reserves: Howe Grove Wood, Shrub Hill Common and Nash Mills located to the north, west and south of Hemel Hempstead respectively. In terms of recreational routes the Nicky Line is the closest route to Gorhambury (this is also identified as a cycle route). Lying to the north of Gorhambury the route runs from Hemel Hempstead to Harpenden. Also near to Gorhambury are the Grand Union Canal Walk to the south west and the Ver-Colne Valley Way to the east. Lying a little further from Gorhambury is the Hertfordshire Way and Chiltern Way to the south and west of Hemel Hempstead respectively. There are no notable open access areas (other than those associated with roads) in close proximity to the study area, however in the wider area open access land is associated with small pockets of commons, heaths and woodlands. The existing informal recreational and public access provision at the strategic scale is shown diagrammatically in Figure B9.1.

At the more local level there appears to be a good network of public and permissive rights of way in all areas surrounding Gorhambury, except around the remains of Gorhambury and the Gorhambury development site itself - both areas are almost devoid of access. The proposed development area is crossed by three footpaths. The route of these footpaths is as follows:

- from the cemetery to Breakspear to the M1 (near the motorway junction);
- from Westwick Row to the M1 (near the motorway junction); and
- from Cherry Tree lane, past Woodend Farm over the Nicky Line to the Hempstead Road.

The key features of interest close to the study area are the numerous historic features that lie in the area between Hemel Hempstead and St. Albans. The existing informal recreational and public access provision at the local scale is shown diagrammatically in Figure B9.2.

## 9.4.1 Future Needs

The demands on the existing informal recreational and public access provision are likely to increase as phases of the development come forward and as the additional population increases up to 15,000. As a consequence:

- where relevant, existing provision should be enhanced/improved; and
- where appropriate, opportunities for new informal recreational and public access provision should be sought (especially where it meets any existing shortfalls).



Considering the profile of the new population it is likely that the Gorhambury development will contain a large proportion of affordable housing. Occupants of affordable housing may be more likely to include non-car owners hence access to the countryside on foot will be an important element to consider in identifying opportunities for informal recreation and public access.

## 9.5 Opportunities and Constraints

### 9.5.1 Opportunities

Opportunities are outlined under the headings of public access and informal recreation. Although footpaths, bridleways and cycleways satisfy walkers, horse riders, cyclists etc. and are a recreational asset in their own right, it is recognised that key foci/attractions will provide additional recreational benefits to a wider range of users.

A key principle of the opportunities identified is to utilise what already exists, as such existing informal recreation and public access provision will be safeguarded wherever possible, especially where it forms part of a wider network or is highly valued/good quality. Initial opportunities to enhance existing provision that have been identified to date are shown in Figure B9.3.

### Public Access

#### Footpaths

Opportunities relating to footpaths include consideration of:

1. circular routes of different lengths (short, medium and long distance);
2. accessible routes e.g. routes which are accessible for wheel chair users, provide links to public transport routes and are perceived as being safe;
3. routes that link settlements notably Hemel Hempstead with Redbourn, St. Albans, Kings Langley, Bedmond and Chiswell Green;
4. routes which link up to the existing network; and
5. routes which provide access to key attractions/facilities such as Gorhambury remains and other historic features and local nature reserves.

#### Bridleways and Cycle Ways

Opportunities for bridleways and cycle ways are similar to footpaths; however, there is also a specific opportunity for bridleways to provide access/links to existing horse riding facilities and for cycle ways to utilise minor roads.



## Informal Recreation

There are possible opportunities to improve access to the Gorhambury remains (opening times are at present slightly limited) and this, together with the creation of public access routes to the site, could result in the Gorhambury remains and the associated historic environs becoming a key focus for informal recreational users.

Considering the provision of new informal recreational attractions we have focussed on opportunities to gain access to woodland/s, whether this is existing or new woodlands within the vicinity of the proposed development. Such attractions are characteristic of the area and are a popular destination for people participating in informal recreation. It should also be noted that Prae Wood contains earthworks of historical note and access to such remains, albeit managed, would be beneficial.

Although there are no large natural water bodies/courses in the immediate vicinity of Gorhambury there are a couple of small ponds to the east of the motorway. Dependent on water storage needs, there may also be an opportunity to develop recreational activities around a water body/group of small water bodies for example circular walks that focus on the water body/ies and/or recreational angling.

## Taking the Opportunities Forward

In taking forwarding these opportunities there is need to consider:

- links to public transport/cycle-ways - specifically what new transport provision will be provided as part of the proposals;
- access for all - identification of specific routes for wheel chair users and those routes which should be lit;
- multifunctional - i.e. public access and informal recreation resources that can provide additional social/economic and environmental benefits (e.g. strategic function, urban quality, promoting health and well being, havens and habitats for flora and fauna, community resource, a visual amenity);
- what can realistically be delivered through the Gorhambury development - in particular consideration of land ownership constraints, existing/future land uses and environmental considerations (especially historic environment when considering access around Gorhambury); and
- how such opportunities may be implemented, managed and financed.

Work with other specialists including master planners, landscape architects, transport planners and cultural heritage specialists will be imperative to the development of these opportunities.

As previously mentioned, this report forms the first stage in the development of detailed informal recreation and public access proposals. In developing the detailed design proposals the following elements will be considered (please note this is not an exhaustive list but indicative of elements to be considered):



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o **Seating**

---

o **Signage and maps**

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o **Dog and litter bins**

---

o **Parking provision**

---

o **Paved/unpaved routes**

---

o **Picnic sites**

---

o **Lighting**

---

o **Large open spaces for informal games**

---

o **BBQ provision**

---

o **Dog free areas**

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o **Toilets**

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## Summary

It is not anticipated that the development will notably degrade the existing access/informal recreational provision of the proposed development area or its surrounding environs.

The proposed development and adjacent land to the east of the M1 provide many opportunities for the creation of new informal recreational resources and the improvement of access into the wider countryside. Indeed the opportunities identified reflect national, regional and local policy relating to informal recreation/access and reflect local characteristics and needs. Furthermore many of the informal recreational and public access opportunities identified will help improve and enhance the green infrastructure of the locality.

Potential 'knock on' effects of the proposed opportunities include social benefits such as a greater quality of life/health benefits for future residents and economic benefits, for example by creating a more desirable environment more businesses may be attracted to the area.

## Exploring Potential Regional Recreational Opportunities

The opportunities identified above have focussed on the characteristics of the local area and seek to address the likely needs of the local community. However, there may be opportunity for Gorhambury and the surrounding environs to deliver a recreational resource that can serve the wider region. The potential evolution of Gorhambury and its surrounding environ as a regional recreational hub is supported by its location close to the M1 junction, making it a readily accessible location for the regional community.

In considering the potential for a regional recreation provision within the rural/urban fringe area associated with Gorhambury three key themes emerged:

- woodland based recreational provision - the creation of woodland reflects the character of the area;
- water based recreational provision - there may be potential to flood one/more of the valleys present; and
- other rural based activities/sports - linking to East of England Plan Policy C2: Provision and location of strategic leisure, sport, recreation, arts or tourism facilities which states 'a rural site may make it uniquely appropriate for a regionally strategic cultural development proposal' (see appendix A).



The initial identification of a regional recreational resource, as set out in Table B9.2, has considered both formal and informal recreational activities (even though this paper has focused on informal recreation).

**Table B9.2 Potential Regional Recreation Resources**

Woodland activities	Water sports	Other activities	
Nature trail	Fishing	Bikes/vehicles	Wind dependent
Heritage trail	Outdoor swimming	Quad biking	Kiting
Fit trail	Cruises	BMX track	Kite boarding
Orienteering	Sailing dinghies	Motor cross	Other activities
Obstacle course	Motor boats	Mountain Biking	Clay pigeon shooting
Horse riding/pony trekking	Wind surfing	4x4 off roading	Archery
Canopy walks	Wake boarding	Rallying course	Paint balling
Rope bridges/Zip slides/Tarzan swings	Water skiing	Air sports	Golf
Paint balling	Canoeing/Kayaking	Balloonng	Obstacle course (death slides)
	Rowing	Parachuting	Nature trail
	Rafting	Gliding	Heritage trail
		Flying	Fit trail
		Hand gliding	Orienteering
		Topography dependent	Horse riding/pony trekking
		Climbing	Zorbing
		Abseiling	Skate board facilities
		Caving	
		Pot holing	
		Gorge scrambling	
		Mountain boarding	

**Websites that provide an example of the recreational provision identified:**

<a href="http://www.kielder.org/">http://www.kielder.org/</a>	<a href="http://www.kielder.org/">http://www.kielder.org/</a>	<a href="http://www.outdooradventureactivities.com/multiadventure.html">http://www.outdooradventureactivities.com/multiadventure.html</a>
<a href="http://www.goape.co.uk/ContentArticle.aspx?id=119">http://www.goape.co.uk/ContentArticle.aspx?id=119</a>	<a href="http://www.vyrnwy.co.uk/">http://www.vyrnwy.co.uk/</a>	<a href="http://www.calshot.com/">http://www.calshot.com/</a>
<a href="http://www.nationalforest.org/visit/summary.html">http://www.nationalforest.org/visit/summary.html</a>	<a href="http://www.grafham-water-centre.co.uk/home.asp">http://www.grafham-water-centre.co.uk/home.asp</a>	<a href="http://www.arthoq.co.uk/joomla/index.php">http://www.arthoq.co.uk/joomla/index.php</a>

Although a number of these regional opportunities may not be realistic or appropriate for Gorhambury or its surrounding environs it is important at this early stage to consider all possibilities. More work would be required to determine the viability of these options.



## 9.5.2 Constraints

The key constraints influencing the viability of recreational and public access opportunities associated within the Gorhambury development are:

- land ownership;
- physical constraints; and
- environmental constraints.

The Crown Estate owns a substantial amount of land around the proposed development site which can provide a range of opportunities to develop recreational and public access provision to the east of Hemel Hempstead. However, for some opportunities considered within this report, joint working with the other land owners (including local authorities and English Heritage) will be required. As a consequence a number of the opportunities identified in this report will need further work before determining their viability.

The viability of recreational and public access opportunities may be influenced by environmental constraints such as the presence of nature conservation sites, protected species or scheduled monuments which recreational users may disturb/erode.

## 9.6 Public Open Space

Children’s play facilities are a key feature of open space provision and the proposed development will need to support play provision in accordance with the policies of the relevant planning authority (St. Albans District Council) and neighbouring planning authority (Dacorum Borough Council).

St. Albans Local Plan Policy Intention 22 Entertainment and Cultural Facilities states that:

*“playing facilities should be provided to meet with the National Playing Field Association (NPFA) target of 2.4 hectares per 1,000 persons distributed within an open space hierarchy to meet the needs of all age groups.”*

**Table B9.3 Recreational Open Space Hierarchy**

Type of Open Space	Size Range	Catchment (Maximum distance form homes)
District Park	> 20ha	3.2km
Local Park	2-20ha	1.2km
Small Local Park	0.8-2ha	0.4km



Type of Open Space	Size Range	Catchment (Maximum distance form homes)
Children's Play Area	0.4-0.8ha	0.4km
Toddlers Play Space	20-100m <sup>2</sup>	< 0.2km

**Note: A separate children's playground need not be provided where facilities exist in a park located within 400 metres of homes. Ideally, each home would be within the appropriate catchment area for each type of open space.**

St. Albans Local Plan Policy 70 Design and Layout of New Housing states that for new residential developments with more than 100 dwellings public open space should be provided on the basis of 1.2ha per 1,000 persons - comprising of 0.8ha children's play area and 0.4ha general amenity space. The proposed Gorhambury development will comprise of around 6,000 dwellings which equates to around 15,000 persons. To satisfy this planning policy the proposed new development will incorporate 18ha of open space comprising 12ha children's play area and 6ha of general amenity space.

There will be a clear hierarchy of open spaces within the proposed development, connected to the public realm through a network of corridors. Open spaces will provide for leisure and recreation, and nature conservation and will vary in their typology. The network will improve bio-diversity and provide for the safe movement of pedestrians and cyclists between new and existing open spaces, Hemel Hempstead, the Gorhambury Estate and the wider countryside. Together they will form a part of a green network of village greens and parks, formal play areas, linear parks, PRoW/cycle ways, road reserves, private gardens and structural landscaping. Key open spaces will include 'village' greens and civic spaces located within residential centres/mixed use areas. More informal open spaces are proposed within the valley systems associated with the Nicky Line and located to the east of Leverstock Green, along the western of the M1 motorway, and to the north of Blackwater Wood linking through to Bunkers Lane existing open space.

## 9.7 Conclusions

This chapter has considered the opportunities associated with the proposed development in terms of improving and extending informal recreation and public access provision within the Gorhambury area. This has considered the broad location and provision of existing recreation facilities and public rights of way in Hemel Hempstead. Key opportunities are identified, in particular opportunities associated with footpaths, including the creation of new footpaths, creating more accessible routes and routes that link settlements and extend existing footpaths. There are also opportunities associated with woodland based provision. There may be opportunities for joint working with other land owners including English Heritage in this area to ensure access to features of historical interest. In particular the land to the east of the M1 which is not proposed for development but is owned by The Crown Estate has potential for informal recreation/access, providing social benefits in terms of health benefits and a more attractive environment for both new residents and workers and existing residents.



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