

**KEY OBJECTIVES FOR THE CHURCHGATE DEVELOPMENT PROJECT**

***To deliver a high quality retail-led mixed use scheme that is of high quality in overall design and contributes to the historic character of the life of Hitchin as a market town. This should:***

- contribute to the promotion of the town as a place to invest and live and attract a broad mix of visitors and residents;
- include as a minimum areas 1 to 3 of Churchgate Development and Enhancement Area and provide the rationale for any need to include areas 4 & 5 as part of the overall site area;
- make provision for additional comparison retail units of variable size, including in excess of 200 sqm to enable the town to maintain its current market share and provide suitable units to encourage both multiples and local independent retailers to move into or relocate within the town centre;
- include a mix of high quality private and affordable housing that has regard to the Council's Strategic Housing Market Assessment, whilst recognising the need for flexibility on the amount of affordable housing when considering viability;
- allow for the re-provision of the market to improve the operational efficiency and quality of the market's environment and contribution to the diversity of the town centre retail offering;
- include the provision of an integrated car parking solution that not only enhances accessibility but also maintains, as a minimum, the current number of parking spaces;
- make provision for a high quality public realm that will provide a seamless connection of active streets, spaces and paths where compatible with the historic character of the town including a strengthened pedestrian link between the Market Place, River Hiz and St. Mary's Square. The scheme should also deliver a sustainable transport solution for the highways in the town centre to ensure easy access to and from the centre for public and private transport;
- allow for the re-provision of public conveniences that should be conveniently located, freely accessible to the public and maintained at no expense to the Council.

***To deliver a solution that is commercially viable, sustainable, satisfies best value considerations, provides a financial return to North Hertfordshire District Council and establishes a long term management and maintenance structure at minimal cost and risk to the public sector.***

***To deliver a scheme in accordance with the Development Agreement and to ensure the efficient assembly of land necessary for the timely execution of the development; whilst ensuring that provision is made for the continuity of service for the market during the development and a continuous provision of an appropriate level of car parking is made available during the development.***