

**AITCHISON  
RAFFETY**



# **PART 1 BACKGROUND PAPER**

PROPERTY CONSULTANTS

**FOR SALE**

**ON BEHALF OF THE JOINT OWNERS**

**2.1 HECTARE (5.19 ACRE) PRIME HOUSING SITE**

**LAND AT HITCHIN ROAD, WESTON, HERTFORDSHIRE, SG4 7AY**



**ALLOCATED GREENFIELD HOUSING SITE, WITHIN THE NORTH HERTS COUNCIL  
ADOPTED LOCAL PLAN**

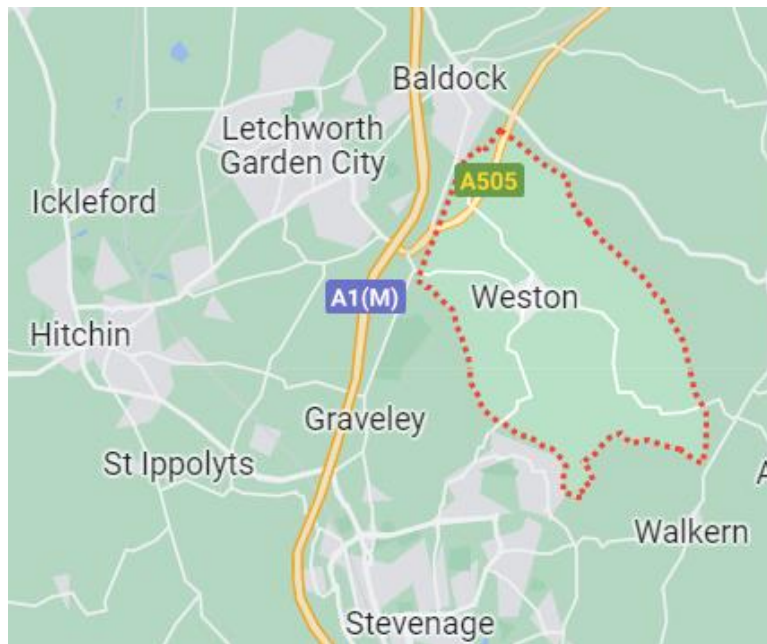
**OFFERS INVITED ON AN UNCONDITIONAL OR SUBJECT TO PLANNING BASIS**

**INFORMAL TENDER, OFFERS BY 12 NOON, 12 SEPTEMBER 2023**

# LAND AT HITCHIN ROAD, WESTON, HERTFORDSHIRE, SG4 7AY

## LOCATION & DESCRIPTION

Weston is an attractive and highly sought after village approximately 2.5 miles south of Baldock and Letchworth and c4 miles north of Stevenage and east of Hitchin. The village is highly accessible with the A1M to the west and the Baldock bypass to the north. Weston has a nursery/primary school, shop, church, village hall, public houses and sports clubs.



The land comprises two distinct parcels. The larger eastern section is owned by North Herts Council (NHC) and is overgrown grassland with hedged boundaries. The western parcel is privately owned and is in use as grazing land. There is a mature hedge belt between the parcels.

The site has extensive frontage to Hitchin Road with a wide verge. There is a pumping station beyond the northwest corner of this frontage.

To the south of the site are houses in The Snipe and a mature public play area.



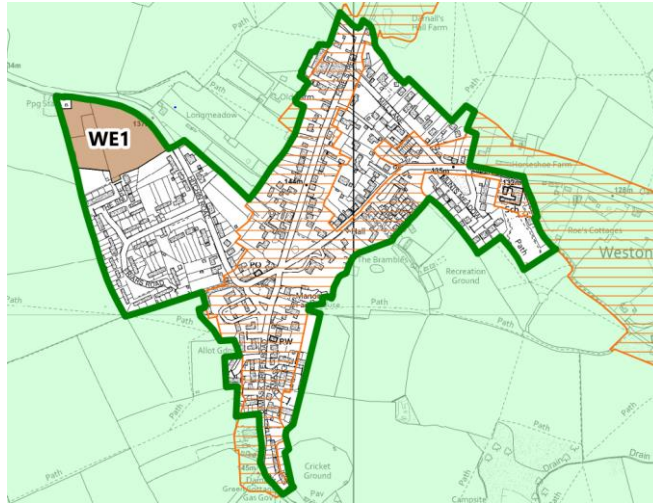
These particulars have been prepared in good faith to give a fair overall view of the property, do not form any part of an offer of contract and must not be relied on as statements or representations of fact. Any areas, measurements or distances referred to are given as a guide and are not precise. No assumption should be made that contents shown in photographs are included in the sale.

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## TOWN PLANNING

The land is within the town planning jurisdiction of North Herts Council.

Within the recently adopted North Herts Local Plan 2011-2031 the site is allocated as the only housing site in Weston, site WE1 as per the plan below.



The specific allocation policy is shown below:

Ref	Local Housing Allocations and site specific policy criteria	Dwelling estimate
Policy WE1	<p>Land off Hitchin Road</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Site layout to take account of existing wastewater infrastructure;</li> <li>• Address existing surface water flood risk issues, including any run-off through SUDs or other appropriate solution;</li> <li>• Western hedgerow to maintained and strengthened to form a robust boundary; and</li> <li>• Archaeological survey to be completed prior to development.</li> </ul>	40 homes

Whilst a dwelling estimate of 40 dwellings is stated above, we consider that subject to other technical and town planning issues the site could potentially accommodate a higher number of dwellings should prospective purchasers consider that to be favourable.

The adopted policy for affordable housing provision in NHC on sites over 25 dwellings is 40%.

CIL is not in place in NHC, and a Section 106 agreement will be required. Attention is drawn to the NHC SPD, "Developer Contributions", dated January 2023 which together with the policies in the adopted local plan provide prospective purchasers with general planning information required. Any further planning enquiries should be to the selling agent and **NOT** directed to NHC planning officers.

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## TECHNICAL INFORMATION

A detailed information pack is available upon request and includes a Topographical Survey; an Archaeological Desk-based Heritage Assessment and a Phase 1 Desk Study and Walkover Survey.

A Proposed Highways Access Strategy Report was produced by clients' highway consultants and was submitted to HCC for a pre-application response. Our clients' highways report supports the technical suitability of up to 70 dwellings with a simple junction access from Hitchin Road. The HCC pre-application response accepts the junction location and design but proposes a capacity of up to 40 dwellings due to their opinion as to location sustainability. HCC also suggest some limited pedestrian and vehicle local enhancement and they seek a financial contribution towards sustainable transport. In our consultant expert's opinion some of the HCC comments/requests are capable of challenge and interested parties should take their own expert consultant advice.

Our clients have also commissioned a Flood Risk and Drainage Review Report. The site is within flood zone 1 so a low-risk location. There is a foul water sewer crossing the site close to the intersecting hedgerow and also around the site edges to the pumping station. There is a private surface water land drain on a small corner of the site close to The Snipe that serves some existing adjoining homes. This is in the process of being repaired/replaced. Usual lift and shift provisions will apply. Surface water drainage for the new homes on site will be via infiltration and an appropriate SUDS strategy will be required.

## VIEWING OF THE SITE

External viewing of the site may be undertaken from the road frontages of Hitchin Road and The Snipe. Internal viewing of the larger eastern parcel only is permitted at any time at your own risk. There is a gate from The Snipe into this parcel and from this section you can also obtain views into the western paddock. There is also a track by the Hitchin Road pumping station which offers another view into the smaller western paddock. Internal entry onto the western paddock without an appointment is not permitted due to the horses. **If internal viewing of this section is required then it is strictly upon request.**

## METHOD OF SALE

Offers are invited on either an unconditional basis (subject to contract only) or on a subject to planning basis.

To accompany ALL offers, it is essential that detailed supporting information is also included.

This must include a preliminary site layout and the offer must set out the density of development upon which it is based, in terms of GIA for both the private and affordable homes split.

For conditional offers, the offer must also include the key terms for any conditional contract, such as contract duration and long stop date; an achievable target layout density and land value/ft<sup>2</sup> for both the private sale and affordable homes and a contractual minimum density. Conditional offers should be made gross of any s106 costs at this stage.

The selected buyer should be prepared to provide "a legal undertaking to the vendors reasonable legal costs" (abortive or otherwise) and if the prospective buyer does not conclude the purchase then the vendor will require assignment/ability to use all plans and rely on all reports. The property is marketed for sale by informal tender, with best offers to be submitted by 12 noon on Tuesday 12 September 2023. VAT will **not** be charged on the land sale.

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We anticipate a prompt interview process for any shortlist, post bid date.

Interested parties are encouraged to obtain as high a level of internal approval as possible to support their offer and should clearly state the level of internal approval obtained and what future approval process would occur if successful. Any specific conditions and the need for any pre-contract surveys must be made clear as well as funding arrangements and key financial assumptions.

### **LEGAL ASPECTS**

The freehold title to the property is held in two titles with HD498242 owned by NHC and HD208783 privately owned. The parties have entered into an agreement in order to facilitate the joint sale. The grazing land is subject to a tenancy, but vacant possession can be provided at one months notice.

Following submission of any conditional offers, assuming any such parties are shortlisted then they will be provided with a draft conditional contract to confirm general acceptance to the key terms.

### **FURTHER INFORMATION**

Green field housing sites are in short supply, and this is the only housing allocation within this highly sought after village. All enquiries & offers for this property should be directed to sole agents, Aitchison Raffety, for the attention of Kevin Rolfe MRICS, [kevin.rolfe@argroup.co.uk](mailto:kevin.rolfe@argroup.co.uk)



Eastern Parcel



Western Parcel

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