

Supplementary Planning Document

Parking (DRAFT) September 2024

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Local Plan Policy Policy SP6: Sustainable transport
 Policy IT5: Parking and access
 Policy IT8: Public parking provision

How the guidance will be applied This guidance provides standards that will be applied to new development within Stevenage Borough and will form a material consideration in planning decisions. They relate to all forms of development that are likely to generate demand for parking.

The standards should be read alongside local plan policies, other Stevenage Borough Council supplementary planning documents, and any other material considerations.

The standards aim to ensure that developments promote sustainable transport and have an acceptable impact on highway safety.

Who is this guidance for? This guidance is aimed at developers and their design teams seeking planning permission, as well as the council's development management officers. The guidance is largely divided into parts according to the various types of parking.

1 About this document

Introduction

- 1.1 This document replaces the Parking Provision and Sustainable Transport SPD 2020 and provides guidance on the policies in the adopted local plan. It is a supplementary planning document (SPD) and is therefore a material consideration in planning decisions.
- 1.2 This document was adopted as an SPD on [DATE], following a meeting of the Executive Committee of Stevenage Borough Council on [DATE].
- 1.3 A draft version of this document was subject to two public consultations between [DATE] and [DATE] and a second from [DATE] to [DATE]. The consultations were carried out in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004, as well as the council's Statement of Community Involvement. A summary of the representations received and the council's response to these is set out in the statement of consultation which accompanies this document.

How to use the guidance

- 1.4 Although this SPD is a material consideration in planning decisions, it does not form part of the development plan and consequently does not introduce new policies. Instead, it builds upon already existing policies and provides advice on how they might be complied with. As such, the application of the guidance in this SPD should be seen as the starting point for the assessment of planning applications, rather than a set of inflexible rules.

Policy context

- 1.5 National planning policy is set out in the National Planning Policy Framework, the most recent version of which was published in December 2023. It does not form part of the development plan but is nonetheless a material consideration, both in the preparation of this SPD and in the assessment of planning applications.
- 1.6 Paragraph 111 of the NPPF requires the following to be taken into account when setting local parking standards:
- a) the accessibility of the development;
 - b) the type, mix and use of development;
 - c) the availability of and opportunities for public transport;
 - d) local car ownership levels; and
 - e) the need to ensure an adequate provision of spaces for charging plug-in and other ultra-low emission vehicles.
- 1.7 Paragraph 112 goes on to say that maximum parking standards should only be set where there is clear and compelling justification that they are necessary for managing the local road network or for optimising the density of development. In town centres, the quality of parking should be improved so that it is convenient and safe, alongside measures to promote accessibility for pedestrians and cyclists.

- 1.8 Paragraphs 114 to 116 require development proposals to promote sustainable transport, giving priority first to pedestrians and cyclists and second – so far as possible – to facilitating access to high quality public transport. Proposals should also address the needs of people with disabilities and reduced mobility, minimise the potential for conflict between different road users, avoid unnecessary street clutter, and enable electric vehicle charging. Development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe.
- 1.9 The development plan for Stevenage is comprised of the following documents:
- The Stevenage Borough Local Plan 2011-2031
 - The Hertfordshire Waste Core Strategy & Development Management Policies Development Plan Document 2011-2026
 - The Hertfordshire Waste Site Allocations Development Plan Document 2011-2026
 - The Hertfordshire Minerals Local Plan Review 2002-2016
- 1.10 Of these documents, the Stevenage Borough Local Plan 2011-2031 (the local plan), which was adopted in 2019, is the only one relevant to parking. At the time of writing, the local plan is under review but the policies relevant to parking are not expected to be materially altered.
- 1.11 Policy SP6 of the local plan sets out the strategic transport objectives for the borough, insofar as they relate to development. The overriding objective is to promote means of travel other than private cars in the interests of both driving down the greenhouse gas emissions associated with transport and improving the health and wellbeing of the borough's residents. However, the policy also recognises the important role played by private cars in modern life and that certain parts of the town suffer because of a lack of sufficient car parking spaces. It therefore seeks to strike a balanced approach to parking, which is not too restrictive or unrealistic.
- 1.12 Policy IT5 sets out specific requirements for development proposals with this strategic objective in mind. First and foremost, it states that planning permission will be granted where new parking is provided in accordance with the standards in this SPD. It also requires the protection of existing private off-street parking spaces and formally defined on-street spaces where they are needed.
- 1.13 Policy IT8 sets out additional requirements for proposals involving public off-street parking spaces, such as surface and multi-storey car parks. As with Policy IT5, the general principle is that new parking provision will be supported and existing spaces will be protected where there is a demonstrable need for them.
- 1.14 This SPD also takes into account various other national and regional guidance documents. A list of these documents is provided at appendix 4.

Evidence base

- 1.15 Transport planning for the local plan began in 2014 with modelling of the potential transport impacts arising from the housing and employment growth proposed in what was then the preferred option local plan. This identified issues across the local highway network should the plan be delivered without mitigation.

- 1.16 It is widely accepted that merely building additional capacity into the road network is not a suitable approach to mitigate future transport issues. Accordingly, the Stevenage Mobility Strategy 2016 set out the council's intention to improve transport choices, with a high priority placed on active travel. The strategy includes significant enhancements to pedestrian and cycle infrastructure, improved accessibility to public transport, and controls on car parking to discourage car use.
- 1.17 Future Town, Future Transport 2019 – the council's transport strategy – duly committed the council to updating the Parking Standards SPD by 2020. This culminated in the publication of the Parking Provision and Sustainable Transport SPD in October of that year, which is now replaced by this SPD.

The Stevenage approach

- 1.18 The overall approach to parking standards remains unchanged from the previous version of this document. Maximum parking standards are set for both residential and non-residential development, according to the type, mix, and use of development, with regard to Census 2011 data on local car ownership levels. Allowances are then made for reductions in parking provision in areas that are well served by public transport and highly accessible for pedestrians and cyclists.
- 1.19 Standards are also set for disabled persons' parking and powered two-wheeler parking. Standards for electric vehicle charging points are not set, as these are now set by the Building Regulations.
- 1.20 Parking on residential streets in Stevenage is of considerable local concern, with some roads not designed to accommodate on-street parking on both sides of the road. In some places, this has a significant impact on the function and feel of local areas. This SPD only controls parking provision within new development and by setting maximum parking standards, seeks to reduce the overall number of private cars in Stevenage rather than displace parking onto surrounding roads. The standards are set with this in mind.
- 1.21 This SPD also sets standards for cycle parking. Stevenage has one of the UK's best cycle networks and is therefore well placed to facilitate an increase in cycling. Providing secure and convenient cycle parking, together with other supporting facilities (e.g. lockers and changing facilities) will be key to achieving this.

2 The standards

Residential parking standards

2.1 The parking standards for residential¹ development are shown in Table 1 below. These apply to all residential development, including householder development.

Development	Parking Standard
C3 Dwellings	
1 Bedroom house	1 space per house
2 Bedroom house	1.5 spaces per house
3 Bedroom house	2 spaces per house
4 Bedroom house and larger	2.5 spaces per house
1 Bedroom flat	1 space per flat
2 Bedroom flat	1.5 spaces per flat
3 Bedroom flat	1.5 spaces per flat
4 Bedroom flat and larger	2 spaces per flat
Sheltered and supported housing	1 space per unit
C4 Houses in multiple occupation	
Up to and including six residents	0.5 spaces per tenancy unit
Sui generis houses in multiple occupation	
More than six residents	0.5 spaces per tenancy unit

Table 1 – Residential car parking standards

Residential visitor parking

2.2 For residential development where the majority of car parking is allocated, additional car parking for visitors should be provided at a rate of 0.25 spaces per unit. Where the majority of parking is unallocated, additional visitor car parking spaces should not normally be provided. This standard does not apply to householder development.

Residential accessibility zones

2.3 Car ownership levels tend to reduce in areas where residents are less reliant on them i.e. in areas where there is good access to public transport, shops, jobs and other services. On this basis, there are areas of the borough where reduced levels of parking provision will generally be appropriate, which the council has designated as “residential accessibility zones”. Please see appendix 1 for detailed maps of these areas.

¹ For the purposes of the parking standards, hotels, residential institutions and hostels are treated as non-residential because they are predominantly trip destinations rather than trip origins

2.4 The applicable reductions in car parking are shown in Table 2 below.

Accessibility Zone	Adjusted Parking Provision
TC	0% to 25%
1	25% to 50%
2	50% to 75%
3	75% to 100%
All other areas	No reduction

Table 2 – Residential accessibility reductions

Non-residential car parking standards

2.5 The parking standards for non-residential development are shown in Table 3 below. These apply to all non-residential development.

Development	Parking Standard
B2 General industry	
General industry	1 space per 50m ²
B8 Storage and distribution	
Wholesale distribution, builders' merchants, storage	1 space per 75m ²
Business Parks	
Mixed B2 and B8 plus appropriate class E uses ²	1 space per 40m ²
C1 Hotels	
Hotels	1 space per guest bedroom; 1 space per staff member; 1 space per 5m ² dining area; 1 space per 3m ² bar area; 1 space per 5m ² conference area; and 1 space per 6m ² exhibition area.
C2 Residential institutions	
Residential institutions with care staff on premises at all times (excluding nursing homes,	1 space per 5 resident bed spaces

² Where individual land use components are unknown and/or use is flexible

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hospitals, and residential schools, colleges and training centres)	Parking for staff will be considered on a case-by-case basis
Nursing homes	1 space per 4 resident bed spaces Parking for staff will be considered on a case-by-case basis
Local general hospitals	2 spaces per patient bed
Other hospitals ³	To be considered on a case-by-case basis
Halls of residence	1 space per staff member; and 1 space per 6 students.
E(a) Retail	
Food retail up to 500m ²	1 space per 30m ²
Food retail between 500m ² and 1,000m ²	1 space per 18m ²
Food retail exceeding 1,000m ²	1 space per 14m ²
Non-food retail warehouses up to 1,000m ²	1 space per 25m ²
Non-food retail warehouses exceeding 1,000m ²	1 space per 20m ²
Garden centres up to 4,000m ²	1 space per 20m ²
Garden centres exceeding 4,000m ²	To be considered on a case-by-case basis
Retail parks	To be considered on a case-by-case basis
E(b) Sale of food and drink	
Restaurants and cafes	3 spaces per 4 employees; and 1 space per 5m ² dining area.
Roadside restaurants	3 spaces per 4 employees; and 1 space per 4m ² dining area.
Transport cafes	3 spaces per 4 employees
E(c) Services	
Financial, professional and other services	1 space per 35m ²
E(d) Indoor sport, recreation and fitness	
Badminton and squash courts	3 spaces per court
Fitness centres and sports clubs	1 space per 15m ²

³ Private, mental health, community hospitals, etc.

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Ten pin bowling	4 spaces per lane
Indoor bowls	4 spaces per rink
Leisure parks	To be considered on a case-by-case basis
E(e) Medical and health services	
Surgeries or clinics	1 space per employee ⁴ ; and 3 spaces per consulting room.
E(f) Day nurseries and day centres	
Day nurseries and playgroups	1 space per 4 pupils
Day centres	1 space per 2 staff members; and 1 space per 3 persons attending.
E(g) Business	
Offices	1 space per 30m ²
Research and development	1 space per 35m ²
Light industry	1 space per 35m ²
F.1 Learning and non-residential institutions	
Schools	1 space per staff member; 1 space per 100 students; 1 space per 8 pupils aged 17 or over; and 1 space per 20 pupils aged 17 or under.
Further education	1 space per staff member; and 1 space per 5 students.
Libraries	To be considered on a case-by-case basis
Places of worship	1 space per 10m ²
Other cultural buildings	2 spaces; and 1 space per 30m ² .
F.2 Local community	
Football pitches	20 spaces per pitch
Tennis courts	4 spaces per court

⁴ Excluding consulting practitioners

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18-hole golf courses	100 spaces
9-hole golf courses	60 spaces
Driving ranges	1.5 spaces per tee
Golf courses larger than 18 holes and/or for more than local use	To be considered on a case-by-case basis
Other outdoor sports grounds	50 spaces per hectare
Swimming pools	1 space per 15m ²
Ice rinks	1 space per 12m ² rink area
Sui generis (motor trade)	
Car showrooms	3 spaces per 4 employees; and 1 space per 10 cars displayed.
Vehicle storage	3 spaces per 4 employees
Car hire	3 spaces per 4 employees; and 1 space per 2 hire cars at the site.
MOT and service centres	3 spaces per 4 employees; and 3 spaces per repair bay.
Tyre and exhaust	3 spaces per 4 employees; and 2 spaces per repair bay.
Sale of parts	3 spaces per 4 employees; and 3 spaces for customers.
Car wash	3 spaces per 4 employees; and 3 spaces per bay or run-in to row of bays.
Petrol filling station ⁵	3 spaces per 4 employees; and 3 spaces per bay or run-in to row of bays.
Sui generis (public transport)	
Rail stations	To be considered on a case-by-case basis
Bus stations	To be considered on a case-by-case basis
Sui generis (other)	
Adult-only hostels	3 spaces per 4 units

⁵ Any retail space at petrol filling stations will be assessed against the relevant retail standard

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Family hostels	1 space per unit
Drinking establishments	3 spaces per 4 employees; and 1 space per 3m ² bar area.
Hot food takeaways	3 spaces per 4 employees; and 1 space per 3m ² publicly-accessible area.
Drive-thru restaurants	1 space per 8m ²
Cinemas	1 space per 5 seats

Table 3 – Non-residential car parking standards

Non-residential accessibility zones

- 2.6 Car usage declines according to the accessibility of sustainable modes of transport, especially public transport. For this reason, non-residential parking provision may be reduced across the borough but especially in those areas with very good public transport links, which the council has designated as “non-residential accessibility zones”. Please see appendix 2 for detailed maps of these areas.
- 2.7 The applicable reductions in car parking are shown in Table 4 below.

Accessibility Zone	Adjusted Parking Provision
TC	Case-by-case assessment
1	0% to 25%
2	25% to 50%
3	50% to 75%
All other areas	75% to 100%

Table 4 – Non-residential accessibility reductions

Powered two-wheeler parking

- 2.8 Five percent of the total number of parking spaces should be set aside for the parking of powered two-wheelers (PTWs). This standard applies to all development with the exception of householder development.

Lorry parking

- 2.9 The need for lorry parking spaces for non-residential development will be assessed on a case-by-case basis. However, for B2 general industry and B8 storage and distribution uses, lorry parking should usually be provided at a rate of between 1 space per 200m² and 1 space per 1,000m².

Disabled persons' parking

2.10 The standards for disabled persons' parking are shown in Table 5 below. These apply to all development except for householder development.

Development	Parking Standard	
	Disabled Persons' Spaces	Enlarged Standard Spaces
Residences ⁶	5%	None
Workplaces	1 space; and 5%.	5%
Retail, recreation and leisure	1 space; and 6%.	4%
Education	1 space; and 5%.	5%
Rail stations	1 space; and 5%.	5%
Places of worship, cemeteries and crematoriums	2 spaces or 6% (whichever is greater)	4%
Hotels	1 space per accessible bedroom	
Sports facilities	To be assessed on a case-by-case basis	

Table 5 – Disabled persons' parking standard

Cycle parking

2.11 The standards for cycle parking are shown in Table 6 below. These apply to all development except for householder development.

Development	Parking Standard	
	Long-term cycle spaces	Short-term cycle spaces
B2 General industry		
General industry	1 space per 500m ²	1 space per 1,000m ²
B8 Storage and distribution		
Storage and distribution	1 space per 500m ²	1 space per 1,000m ²

⁶ C3 dwellings (including sheltered and supported housing), C4 HMOs and sui generis HMOs

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C1 Hotels		
Hotels	1 space per 20 bedrooms	1 space per 50 bedrooms
C2 Residential institutions		
Hospitals	1 space per 5 staff	1 space per 30 staff
Care homes	1 space per 5 staff	1 space per 20 bedrooms
Student accommodation	1 space per 2 bedrooms	1 space per 40 bedrooms
C2A Secure residential institutions		
Secure residential institutions	1 space per 5 staff	1 space per 20 bedrooms
C3 Dwellings		
Dwellings ⁷ (without garage)	1 space per bedroom ⁸	1 space per 40 units
C4 Houses in multiple occupation		
Houses in multiple occupation (without garage)	1 space per tenancy unit	None
E(a) Retail		
Food retail exceeding 100m ²	1 space per 175m ²	1 space per 150m ²
Non-food retail between 100m ² and 1,000m ²	1 space per 250m ²	1 space per 350m ²
Non-food retail exceeding 1,000m ²	4 spaces; and 1 space per 1,000m ² .	1 space per 350m ²
E(b) Sale of food and drink		
Restaurants and cafes exceeding 100m ²	1 space per 175m ²	1 space per 100m ²
E(c) Services		
Financial, professional and other services exceeding 100m ²	1 space per 175m ²	1 space per 100m ²
E(d) Indoor sport, recreation and fitness		
Sports clubs, gyms and indoor racquet sports	1 space per 8 staff	1 space per 100m ²

⁷ Including sheltered and supported housing

⁸ Up to a maximum of 3 spaces per unit

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Ten pin bowling and indoor bowls	1 space per 10 staff	1 space per 3 lanes; and 1 space per 25 spectator seats.
E(e) Medical and health services		
Surgeries or clinics	1 space per 5 staff	1 space per 3 staff
E(f) Day nurseries		
Day nurseries	1 space per 8 staff; and 1 space per 8 students	1 space per 100 students
E(g) Business		
Offices, research and development, and light industry	1 space per 500m ²	1 space per 1000m ²
F.1 Learning and non-residential institutions		
Schools	1 space per 8 staff; and 1 space per 8 students.	1 space per 100 students
Further education	1 space per 4 staff; and 1 space per 20 students.	1 space per 7 students
Libraries	1 space per 8 staff	1 space per 100m ²
Places of worship	1 space per 8 staff	1 space per 100m ²
Other cultural buildings	1 space per 8 staff	1 space per 100m ²
F.2 Local community		
Halls and meeting places	1 space per 8 staff	1 space per 100m ²
Golf courses	5 spaces per 9 holes	None
Other outdoor sports grounds	None	1 space per 10 players at busiest period
Swimming pools	1 space per 8 staff	1 space per 100m ²
Ice rinks	1 space per 8 staff	1 space per 100m ²
Sui generis		
Houses in multiple occupation (without garage)	1 space per tenancy unit	None

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Hostels	1 space per unit	None
Drinking establishments exceeding 100m ²	1 space per 175m ²	1 space per 100m ²
Hot food takeaways exceeding 100m ²	1 space per 175m ²	1 space per 100m ²
Cinemas	1 space per 8 staff	1 space per 30 seats

Table 6 – Cycle parking standards

3 Applying the standards

Step 1 – Baseline maximum parking

- 3.1 The starting point for any proposal is to calculate the baseline maximum level of parking by applying the standards in Table 1 (for residential development) and Table 3 (for non-residential development), as appropriate.
- 3.2 Where a proposed use is not listed in the standards, whether that use is sui generis or falls within a defined use class, the appropriate maximum level of parking will be assessed on a case-by-case basis. Initially, a “best-fit” approach should be used i.e. the proposal should be assessed against the standard for the most similar use which is listed. However, the resultant level of parking may not always be appropriate. Therefore, in all cases where a use is not listed in the standards, the proposed maximum level of parking provision should be justified with reference to some form of transport assessment or technical note.
- 3.3 Unless stated otherwise, where the standards refer to areas (e.g. 100m²), they refer to gross internal area (GIA). The definition of GIA for the purposes of this SPD is given in appendix 3.
- 3.4 Where the standards refer to numbers of staff, employees, pupils or students, this refers to the full-time equivalent (FTE) number. What constitutes full-time hours will vary between sectors and 1 FTE should not necessarily be taken to mean 40 hours per week of work or study.
- 3.5 Sometimes more than one standard may be applicable to a proposal. In these circumstances, each of the proposed uses should be assessed against the relevant standards separately (having regard to the GIA, staffing levels, etc. in each use), before being added together⁹. Where individual land use components are unknown or the proposal is for flexible uses, the maximum level of parking provision will be considered on a case-by-case basis, in the manner described in paragraph 3.2 above.
- 3.6 For proposals which involve additions or alterations to existing developments, maximum parking should be assessed for the site as a whole rather than just for those elements which are new or altered. Applicants should ensure that sufficient information is included within applications to facilitate this process (e.g. the GIA of existing buildings, overall site staffing levels, etc.).
- 3.7 For residential developments involving houses or flats, including householder developments, maximum parking is calculated on the basis of the number of bedrooms. For the purposes of this calculation, a room should be counted as a bedroom if:
- a) it is not a kitchen, dining room, living room, utility room, or bathroom; and
 - b) it has a floor area of 7.5m² or more.

⁹ With the exception of proposals for a mix of residential and non-residential uses, where parking for the residential and non-residential elements should continue to be treated separately until the accessibility reductions have been applied in step 2.

- 3.8 This means that home offices will normally be counted as bedrooms where they are of a sufficient size (owing to the fact that they can be readily converted to bedrooms).
- 3.9 For residential developments, except for householder developments, parking for visitors should also be considered. Where appropriate, the number of visitor parking spaces should be added to the number of resident parking spaces calculated through the application of the standards in Table 1. In these circumstances, applicants should also include details of how resident parking will be allocated as part of the application.

Step 2 – Accessibility reductions

- 3.10 Having determined the maximum level of parking, accessibility reductions should then be applied according to Table 2 (for residential development) and Table 4 (for non-residential development), as appropriate. These adjustments are expressed as proportions of the baseline maximum figure.
- 3.11 For residential development, large parts of the borough fall outside of any accessibility zone, such that no reduction will be applicable. In these cases, parking should normally be provided precisely at the baseline maximum level.
- 3.12 For non-residential development, the entirety of the borough is subject to some form of accessibility reduction.
- 3.13 The application of accessibility reductions will result in a range of figures for parking provision. The higher figure represents the adjusted maximum number of parking spaces that should be provided, whereas the lower figure represents the minimum.
- 3.14 The level of proposed parking should normally fall somewhere between the minimum and the adjusted maximum figures. Where this is not the case, the level of proposed parking should be justified with reference to a transport assessment or technical note.
- 3.15 Proposals for higher or lower provision should, first and foremost, be based on site context (particularly the accessibility of sustainable modes of transport) and the specific characteristics of the proposed development. The fact that a site lies close to the boundary of an accessibility zone (or an accessibility zone of a different level) will not, in itself, be accepted as justification for deviation from the range of acceptable provision.
- 3.16 Exceptionally, a site may straddle the boundary of one or more accessibility zones. In these circumstances, an attempt should be made to strike a balance between the requirements of each area the site falls within, having regard to the proportion of the site that falls within each area.

Step 3 – PTW parking

- 3.17 The parking standard for PTWs is expressed as a proportion of the overall number of parking spaces. This means that the combined total of car and PTW spaces provided should fall between the minimum and adjusted maximum¹⁰ parking figures calculated in the previous step.

¹⁰ Where no reduction is applicable, the baseline maximum figure should be used.

3.18 For residential development, PTW spaces do not need to be provided where the majority of parking is allocated. This includes development where parking is provided on private driveways or in garages.

3.19 For non-residential development, it is assumed that the vast majority of parking will be unallocated. Therefore, PTW spaces should always be provided.

Step 4 – Lorry parking

3.20 Few developments will require any lorry parking and where it is required, it will be assessed on a case-by-case basis, having regard to the specific nature or the proposed use or uses. Therefore, the standards presented should be seen only as a general recommendation and the proposed level of lorry parking should always be justified with reference to a transport assessment or technical note.

Step 5 – Disabled persons' parking

3.21 Disabled persons' parking should be provided in accordance with the standards set out in Table 5. These standards apply to both residential and non-residential development.

3.22 Parking for disabled persons is not subject to any accessibility reductions. This means that where the standards are expressed as a percentage, they refer to a percentage of the baseline maximum rather than adjusted maximum parking figure.

3.23 It also means that disabled persons' parking should be provided in addition to any parking provided as a result of previous steps.

3.24 Paragraphs 3.2 and 3.5 above also apply to disabled persons' parking.

3.25 For residential development, disabled persons' parking need only be provided where parking is unallocated. Where a residential proposal includes a mix of allocated and unallocated parking, the number of disabled persons' parking spaces may be reduced accordingly.

3.26 In all other cases, including all non-residential development, reduced levels of provision will only be acceptable where it is demonstrated that a development is adequately served by existing disabled persons' spaces. This may include developments which are adjacent to a sufficient number of on-street spaces.

Step 6 – Cycle parking

3.27 Cycle parking should be provided in accordance with the standards set out in Table 6. These standards apply to both residential and non-residential development.

3.28 The cycle parking standards are minimum rather than maximum standards. Provision of spaces above the standard is strongly encouraged.

3.29 The cycle parking standards differentiate between short-term spaces, which are principally for visitors, and long-term spaces, which are principally for residents and employees. Applications should make clear which spaces are for short-term use and which are for long-term use.

3.30 As with disabled persons' parking, cycle parking is not subject to any accessibility reductions. Again, this means that they must be provided in addition to any parking provided as a result of previous steps.

- 3.31 Paragraphs 3.2 to 3.5 above also apply to cycle parking.
- 3.32 For residential development, units which have access to a private garage do not need to have any separate cycle parking. Where a proposal includes a mix of units which have garages and units which do not, the number of cycle parking spaces may be reduced accordingly.

Further considerations

Rounding

- 3.33 The application of the standards in this SPD will often result in figures which are not whole numbers. Where this is the case, the figures should be rounded up to the nearest whole number. The only exception is where a figure is equal to less than 0.5, in which case it may be rounded down to zero.
- 3.34 In all cases, rounding should only be done after any relevant accessibility reductions have been applied.

Parking design

- 3.35 Parking spaces (including garages) will only be counted as such where they comply with the most up-to-date standards of design¹¹, which at the time of writing, are found in Hertfordshire County Council's *Place & Movement Planning and Design Guidance for Hertfordshire* (2024), Part 4, Chapter 6. Further guidance can also be found in the council's Design Guide SPD.
- 3.36 This applies to both new and existing spaces. It is recognised that there are many parking spaces which do not meet the standards but are nonetheless frequently used without issue. However, the average size of vehicle has steadily grown over time and the council has no control over which vehicles people own. The council must therefore ensure that parking spaces are fit for a range of vehicle sizes today and in the future.
- 3.37 Where visitor, PTW, disabled persons', and cycle parking is provided, it should be reasonably spread out such that it benefits the entire site. For example, on very large sites, it will not normally be appropriate for all such parking to be provided in one location, even if the overall number of spaces provided is sufficient.
- 3.38 Any spaces which are not for PTWs, disabled persons, lorries or cycles should meet the design criteria for standard car parking spaces.
- 3.39 Where garages are provided, they should be laid out individually¹² and in close proximity to the unit they serve. Garage blocks will rarely be considered acceptable.
- 3.40 Where cycle parking is provided, it should be secure and sheltered, with convenient access to the street. For non-residential development, consideration should be given to providing supplementary facilities such as changing rooms, showers and lockers to improve the attractiveness of cycling as a mode of transport.

¹¹ Garages which are of a substandard size will not be treated as car parking spaces but may still be treated as satisfying the need for cycle parking.

¹² For semi-detached properties, pairs of garages may also be appropriate.

Existing conditions

- 3.41 When assessing proposals for additions or alterations to existing sites, the council will take levels of existing parking provision into account. This means that in cases where existing parking provision does not comply with the standards, proposals for new development which is non-compliant may be acceptable, provided that the degree of non-compliance would remain the same before and after the development is implemented. However, proposals for entirely new development or comprehensive redevelopment will generally be expected to comply with the standards regardless of existing levels of provision.
- 3.42 The council will also take existing conditions on surrounding roads into account. Where parking on surrounding roads is oversubscribed and especially where there is evidence of inconsiderate parking, it will be expected that proposed parking provision will be at or close to the maximum level allowed by the standards. In exceptional cases where these issues are deemed to be severe, provision above the standards may be considered necessary.

Mixed-use development

- 3.43 On mixed-use sites, there may be opportunities for parking to be shared between different land uses, either because trips are linked or because the uses have differing time profiles for parking demand. In these cases, applications should be supported by an assessment of the potential for shared parking. Subject to this assessment, it may be possible to reduce parking provision below the accumulated requirements for each individual land use.
- 3.44 The above applies especially to retail and leisure parks, which are known to attract a significant number of linked trips. For this reason, parking provision for all proposals for retail and leisure parks will be assessed on a case-by-case basis.
- 3.45 Single-use sites which serve multiple functions can also give rise to similar considerations. Schools, for example, may be used as community sports facilities outside of teaching hours. In these instances, consideration should be given to the use of dual-purpose surfaces (e.g. school playing areas doubling as car parks) if occasional overspill parking is envisaged.
- 3.46 In all cases where parking is to be shared, it should be predominantly unallocated to facilitate sharing.

Phased restraint and strategic sites

- 3.47 It is recognised that development, especially large-scale development, can result in sites having better access to local services and public transport than they did prior to the development being carried out. In these circumstances, it may be appropriate to reduce parking provision for later stages of a development as accessibility improves. In determining whether this is the case, regard should be had to the accessibility zone designation criteria set out in appendices 1 and 2.
- 3.48 However, it must also be recognised that travel patterns tend to become established at the point of occupation of a property or the start of a new job and dependence on private vehicles can be hard to break once established. Therefore, a balanced judgement will be required such that any reductions in parking provision are not excessive.

- 3.49 The above is particularly relevant to the three strategic housing sites allocated in the local plan. These sites are designated for large-scale development comprising a mix of homes, schools, shops and other local facilities. Once developed (or following a particular phase of development), they may meet the designation criteria for one or more accessibility zones, such that reduced levels of parking would be appropriate. Any full or reserved matters applications for these sites should therefore include sufficient information to enable the council to determine whether this is the case.
- 3.50 Neighbouring authorities have also planned for development on the borough boundary, adjacent to the council's own strategic sites. Parking provision at these developments should be consistent with that of development within the boundary, having regard to the availability of local services and public transport within the cross-boundary area as a whole.

Loss of existing spaces

- 3.51 Proposals involving the loss of existing parking spaces will be assessed against the standards in the usual way, with any losses taken into account.
- 3.52 Unmarked on-street parking spaces will not be protected unless there is evidence that their loss would cause or exacerbate issues of inconsiderate parking, to the detriment of highway safety. Marked on-street spaces will be protected and should be replaced as close as possible to their existing location unless there is evidence that they are not required. In any cases where development would result in the loss of on-street spaces, whether marked or unmarked, a parking survey should normally be carried out to determine the extent of any impact.
- 3.53 Public car parks and cycle parking facilities will also be protected. Where they are lost, equivalent replacements should be provided within reasonable proximity¹³ to the destinations they serve unless it can be demonstrated that the parking is no longer required.

Changes of use

- 3.54 Parking requirements can vary considerably between uses, even when they fall within the same use class. Changing use within the same class does not normally require planning permission and changing from one use class to another can sometimes constitute permitted development.
- 3.55 When assessing applications, the council will be mindful of the possibility for such changes of use to occur. When granting permission for a development where parking is adequate for the proposed use but would be inadequate for another use within the same class or another use which could be implemented through permitted development rights, the council may impose conditions to restrict a change of use from taking place.

The town centre

- 3.56 The town centre is a unique location within the borough because of its excellent public transport links and wide array of shops and services. It is also set to undergo a comprehensive programme of regeneration, on which work has already begun.

¹³ 200m for car parking and 80m for cycle parking.

This will no doubt be supplemented by residential, non-residential and mixed-use development on unallocated sites.

- 3.57** The council will place the town centre at the forefront of its efforts to transition to sustainable modes of transport. This will not only involve limiting new car parking but also providing new sustainable travel facilities and measures to ensure that car parking is not simply displaced to surrounding areas.
- 3.58** Residential development in the town centre should provide parking spaces at no more than 25% of the baseline maximum level. Ideally, it should not provide any parking apart from disabled persons' parking, cycle parking and dedicated bays for car sharing schemes. Applications for residential development in the town centre should always be supported by a transport assessment or technical note to justify the proposed level of parking.
- 3.59** Non-residential development in the town centre will be assessed on a case-by-case basis. Any parking that is provided should be unallocated and publicly available, such that it can be shared by the staff and customers of other nearby businesses. Only in exceptional circumstances will private or allocated parking be considered acceptable. Applications for non-residential development in the town centre should always be supported by a transport assessment which provides justification for the proposed level of parking with reference to existing, planned and committed parking provision across the town centre as a whole.
- 3.60** The need for car parking in the town centre may decline over time. With this in mind, any new car parking in the town centre should be designed so that it can be readily converted to other uses in the future, with due consideration given to floor-to-ceiling heights, outlook, pedestrian access, and materials.
- 3.61** Where car-free development is proposed in the town centre, it may be challenging to find sufficient on-street space to provide new disabled persons' parking. In these circumstances, reduced or zero provision may be acceptable provided that it can be demonstrate that the development will be adequately served by existing spaces.
- 3.62** Developers should also note that much of the town centre is pedestrianised and the council want to avoid encouraging cycling in the areas where it is prohibited. Therefore, where there is no suitable cycle access to a site, it may be considered appropriate to develop off-site facilities¹⁴ or contribute to the council's cycle hire scheme in lieu of on-site cycle parking provision.
- 3.63** In many cases, town centre development will necessitate planning obligations secured by a section 106 agreement. For further details, please refer to the Developer Contributions SPD.

¹⁴ Outside of the prohibited zone.

Appendix 1 | Residential Accessibility Zones

The zoning process

The zoning process used in this SPD is broadly based on the methodology used within the HCC Best Practice Guide on Parking Provision at New Development (2003). It involves assessing different areas within Stevenage according to how closely they meet accessibility criteria.

Residential accessibility is affected by the provisions of passenger transport but levels of car ownership may not necessarily be lower just because there is good passenger transport. Residential car ownership is predominantly dependent on access to primary schools, access to shops and access to other services/facilities commonly found without neighbourhood centres.

Criteria for designation

The residential accessibility zones were designated on the basis of the following criteria as a starting point:

- Town Centre Zone: The Town Centre, as defined in the local plan
- Zone 1: The remainder of the primary retail/leisure core.
- Zone 2: Within 1200m of the train and bus stations.
- Zone 3: Within 400m of a primary school and a district, local or neighbourhood centre, as defined on the Policies Map of the adopted Stevenage Local Plan.

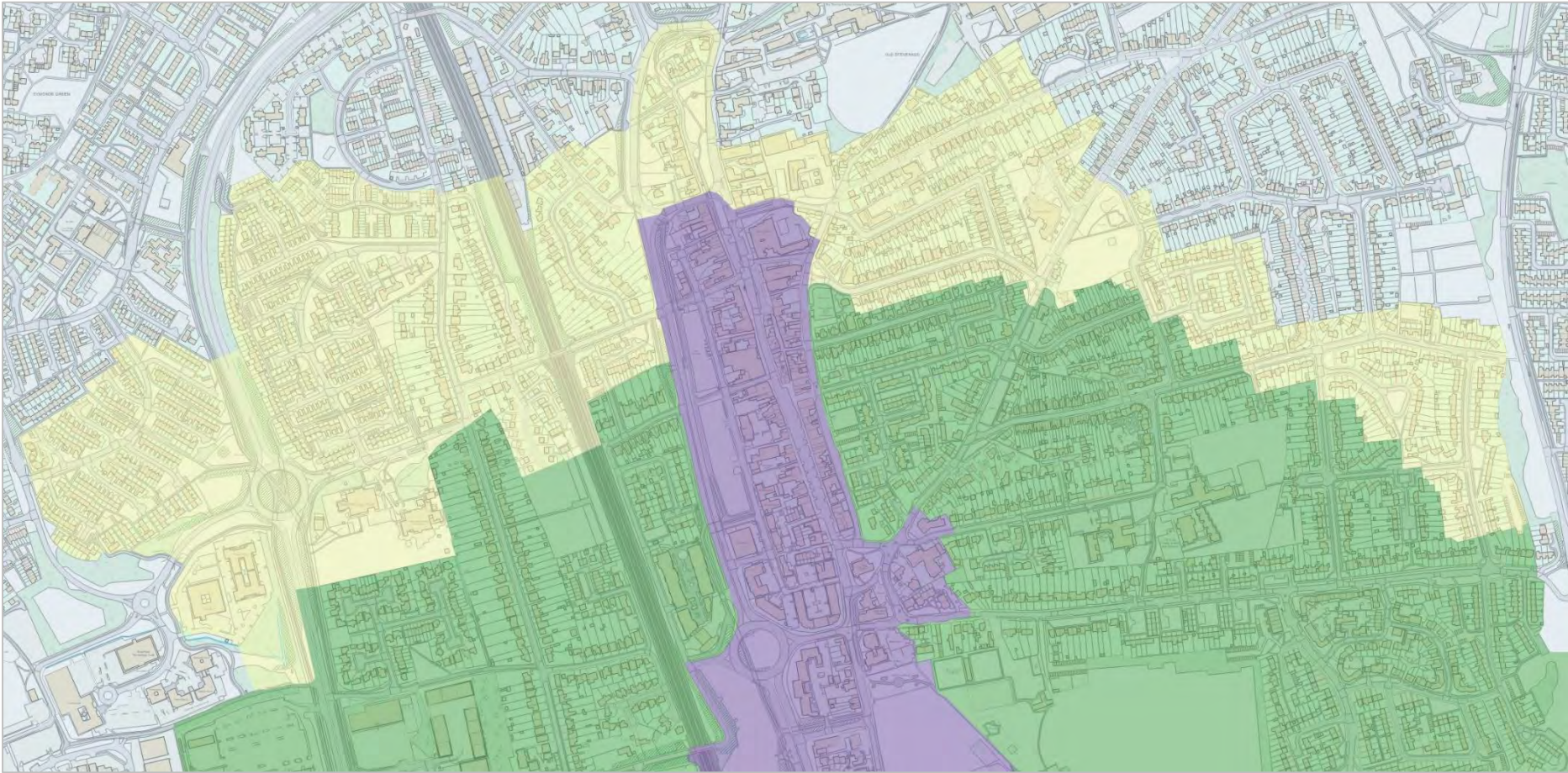
Once these areas were determined, they were increased/decreased taking account of road layout, non-vehicular connections, and/or obstructions to sustainable forms of transport. In many cases, the accessibility zones were extended or reduced so that either a carriageway or garden curtilage marked the edge of the zone.


Areas within Zone 1 are most likely to have lower levels of car ownership, as they have access to local facilities as well as the ability to easily travel outside of the borough by passenger transport, to access facilities and jobs in other towns.

Detailed maps

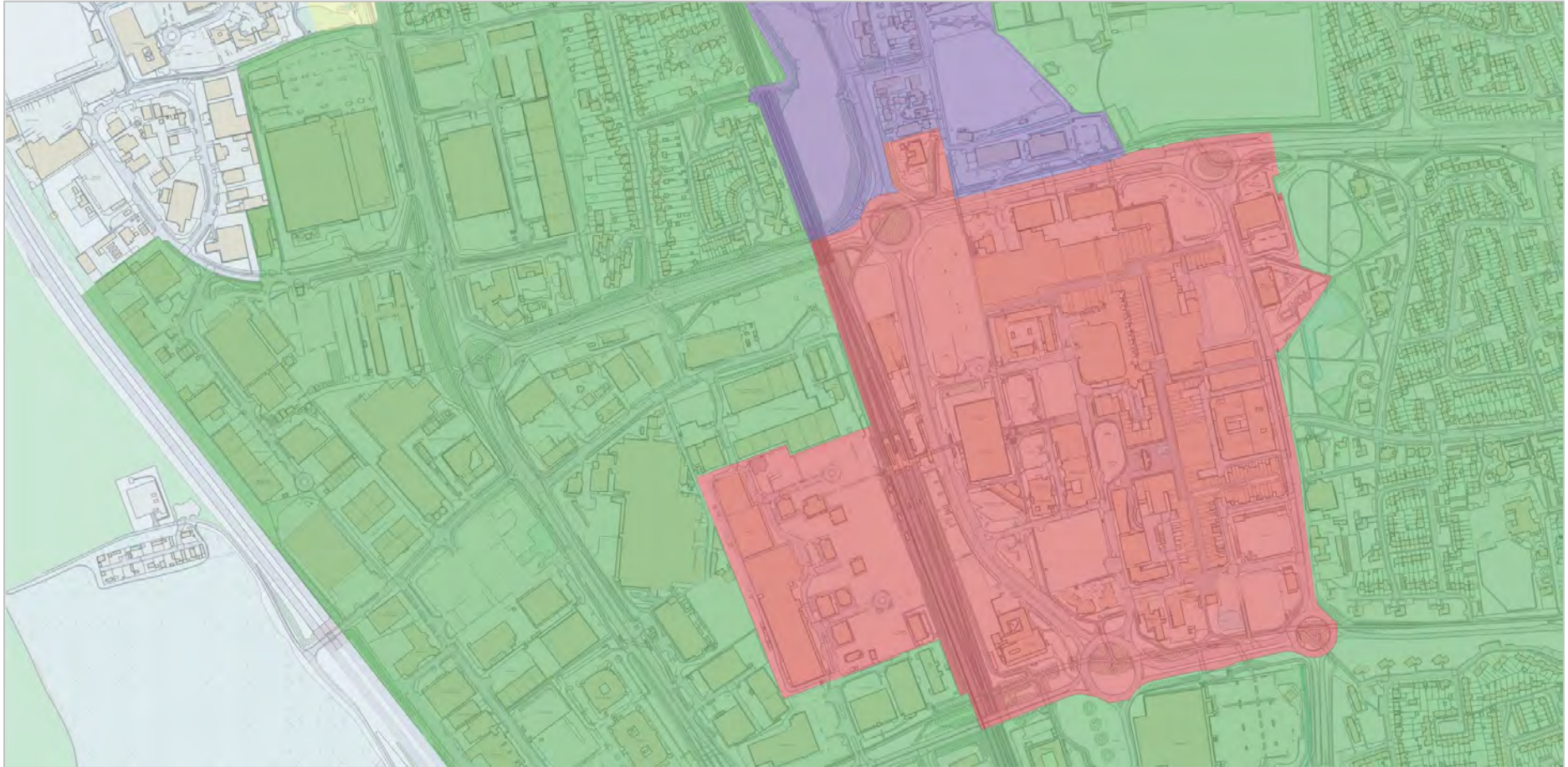
Detailed maps of the residential accessibility zones are shown below.

Residential Map 1 | Old Town / Symonds Green / Almond Hill

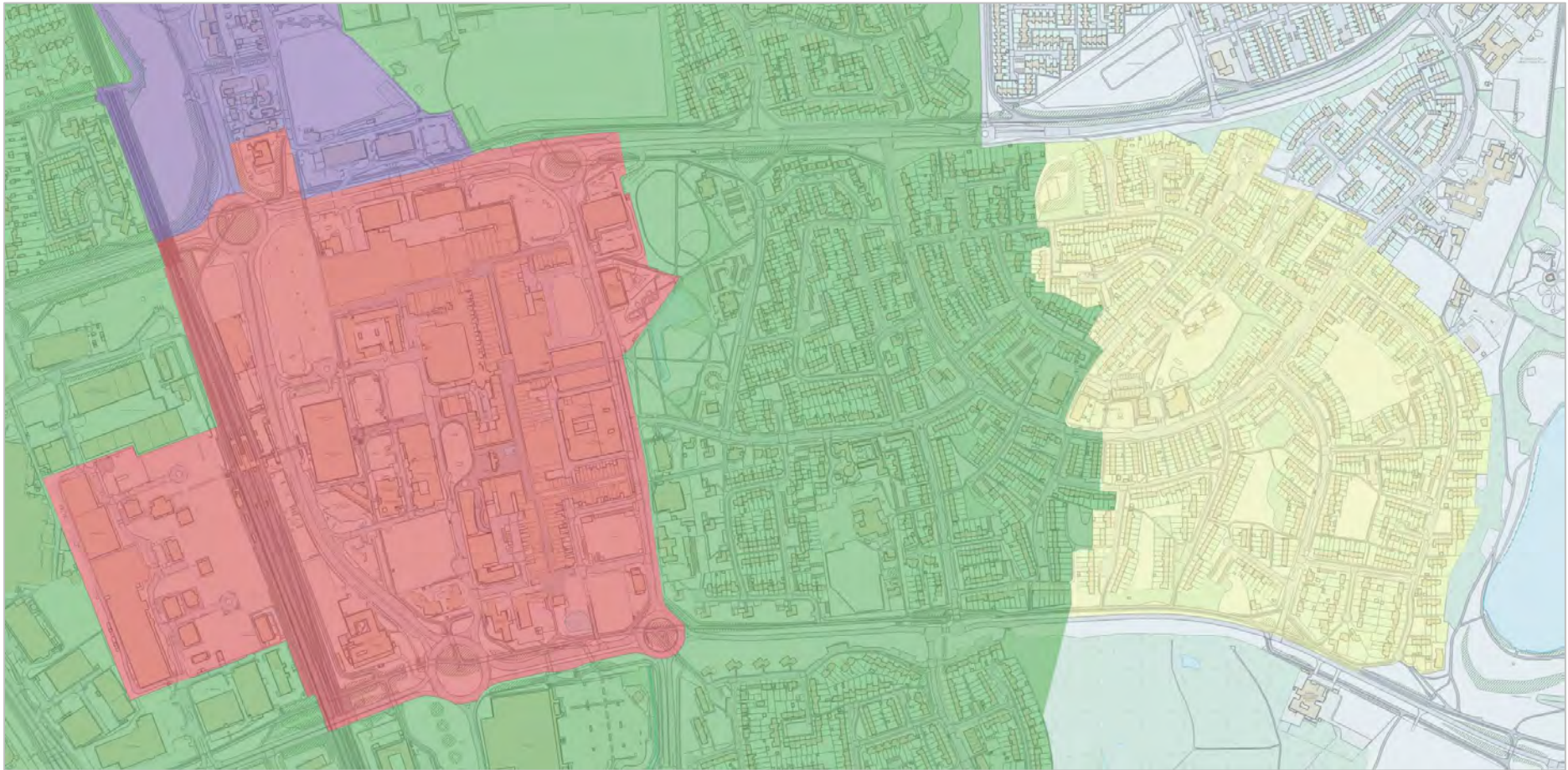


 Town Centre  Zone 1  Zone 2  Zone 3

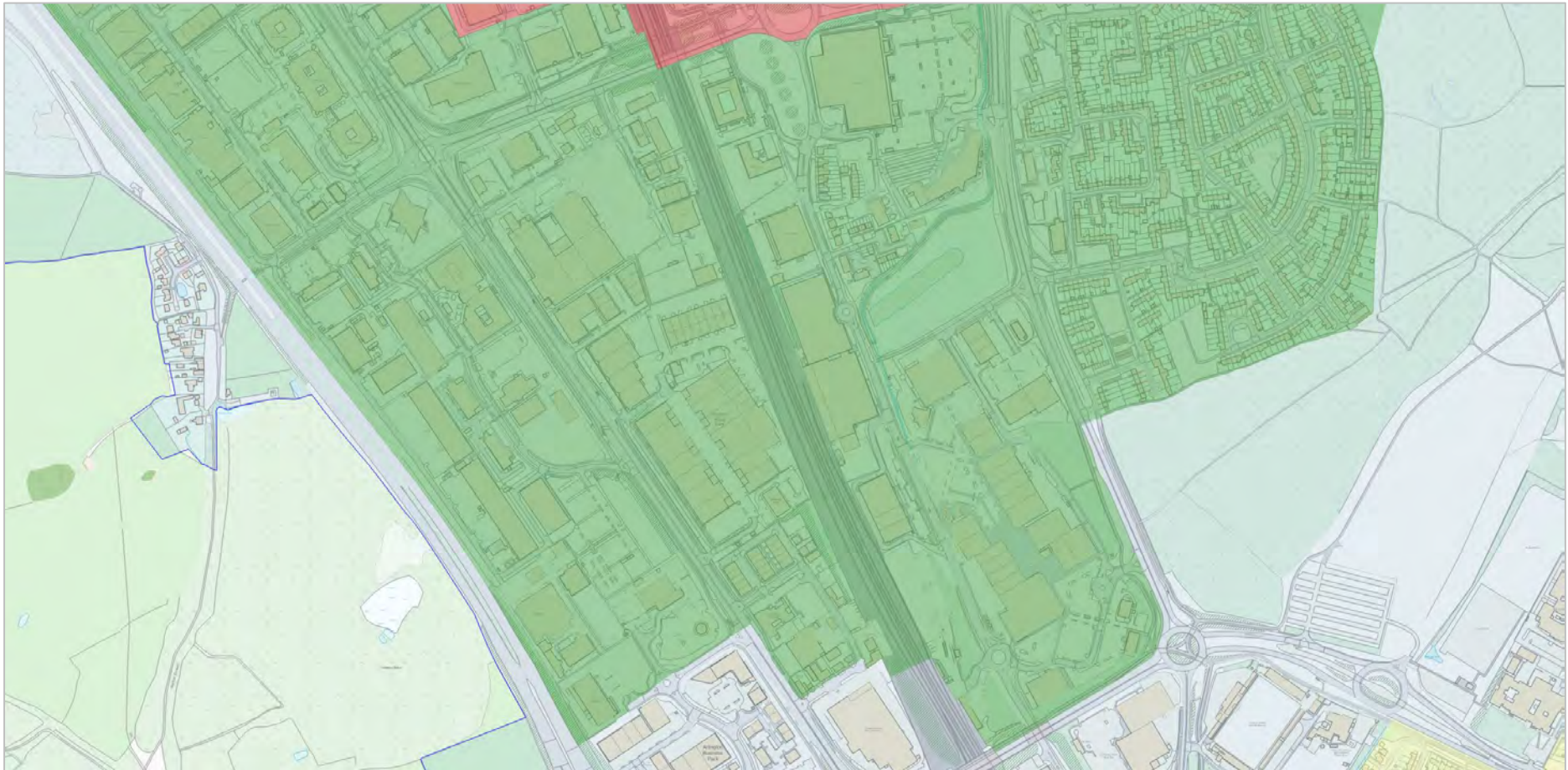
Residential Map 2 | Town Centre (W)



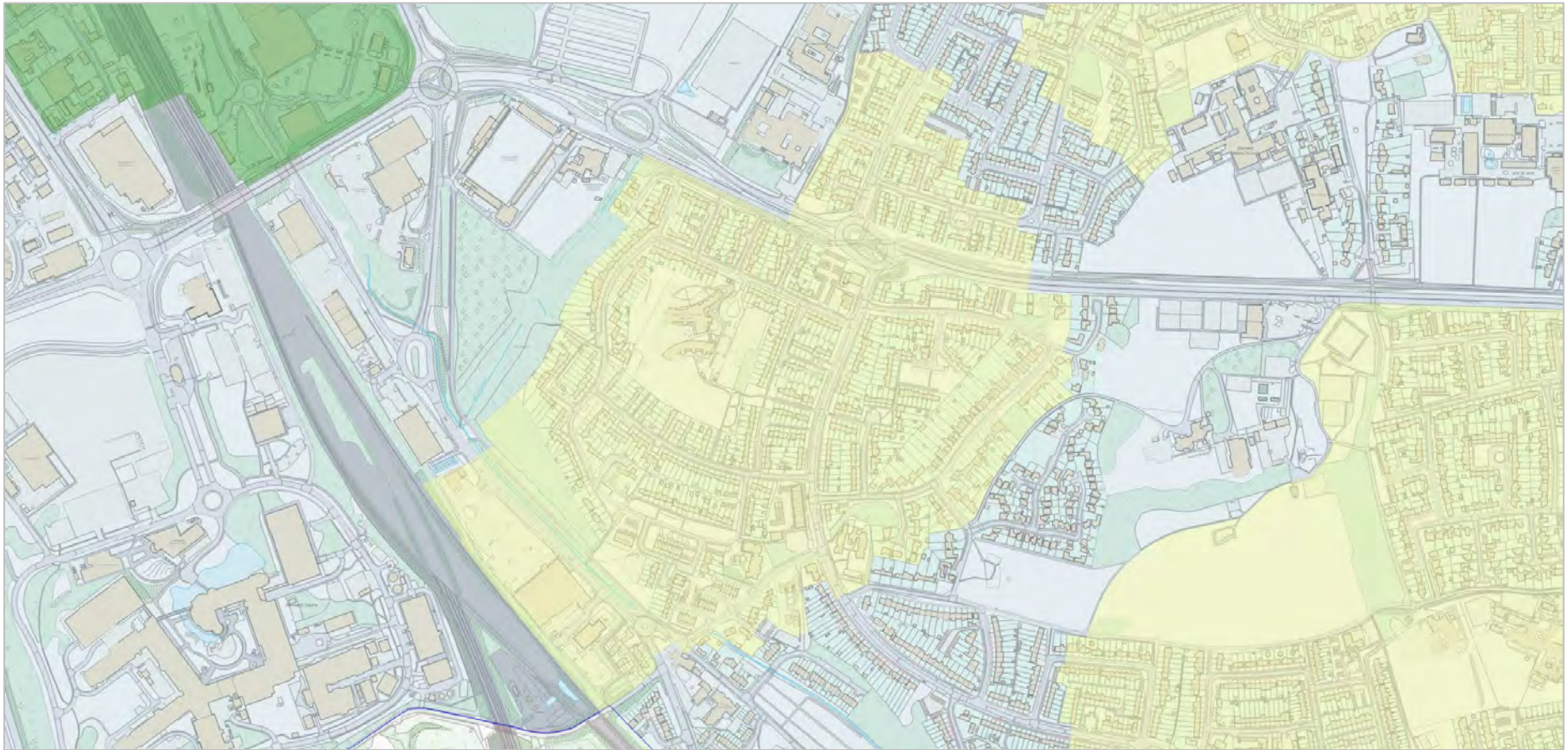
Residential Map 3 | Town Centre (E) / Bedwell



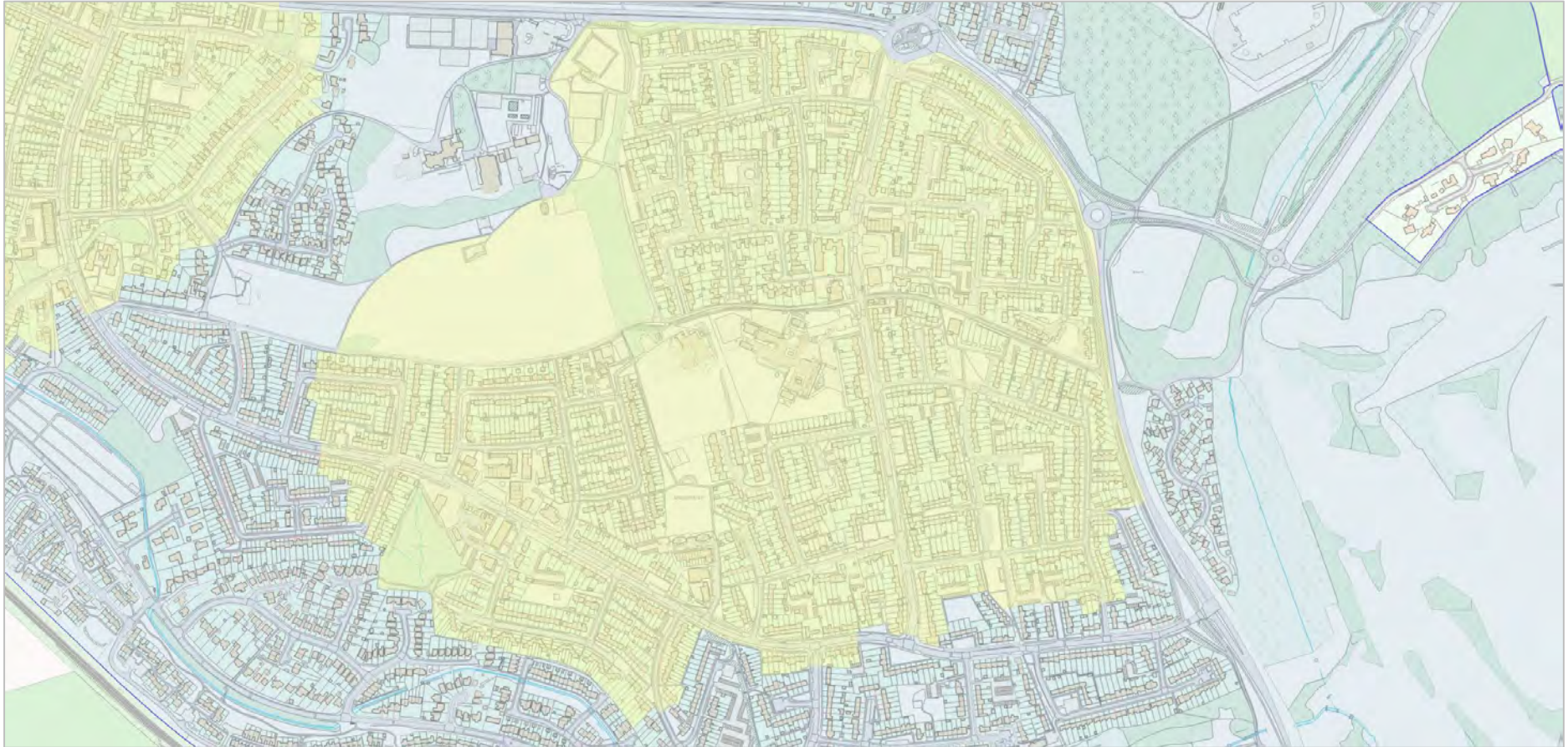
Residential Map 4 | Roebuck (N) / Bedwell (S)



Residential Map 5 | Roebuck



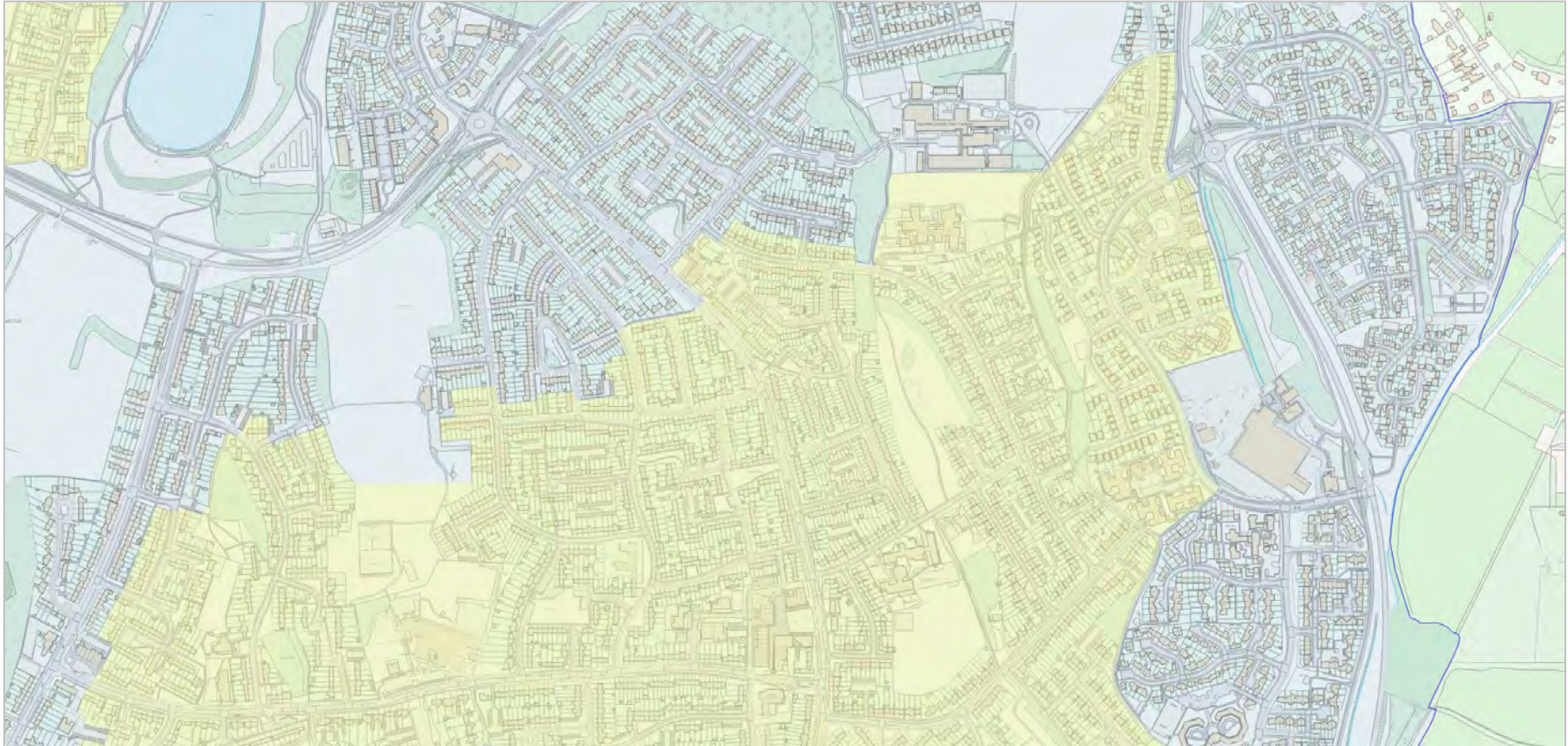
Residential Map 6 | Roebuck (S) / Longmeadow



Residential Map 7 | Shephall / Bandley Hill & Poplars (S)

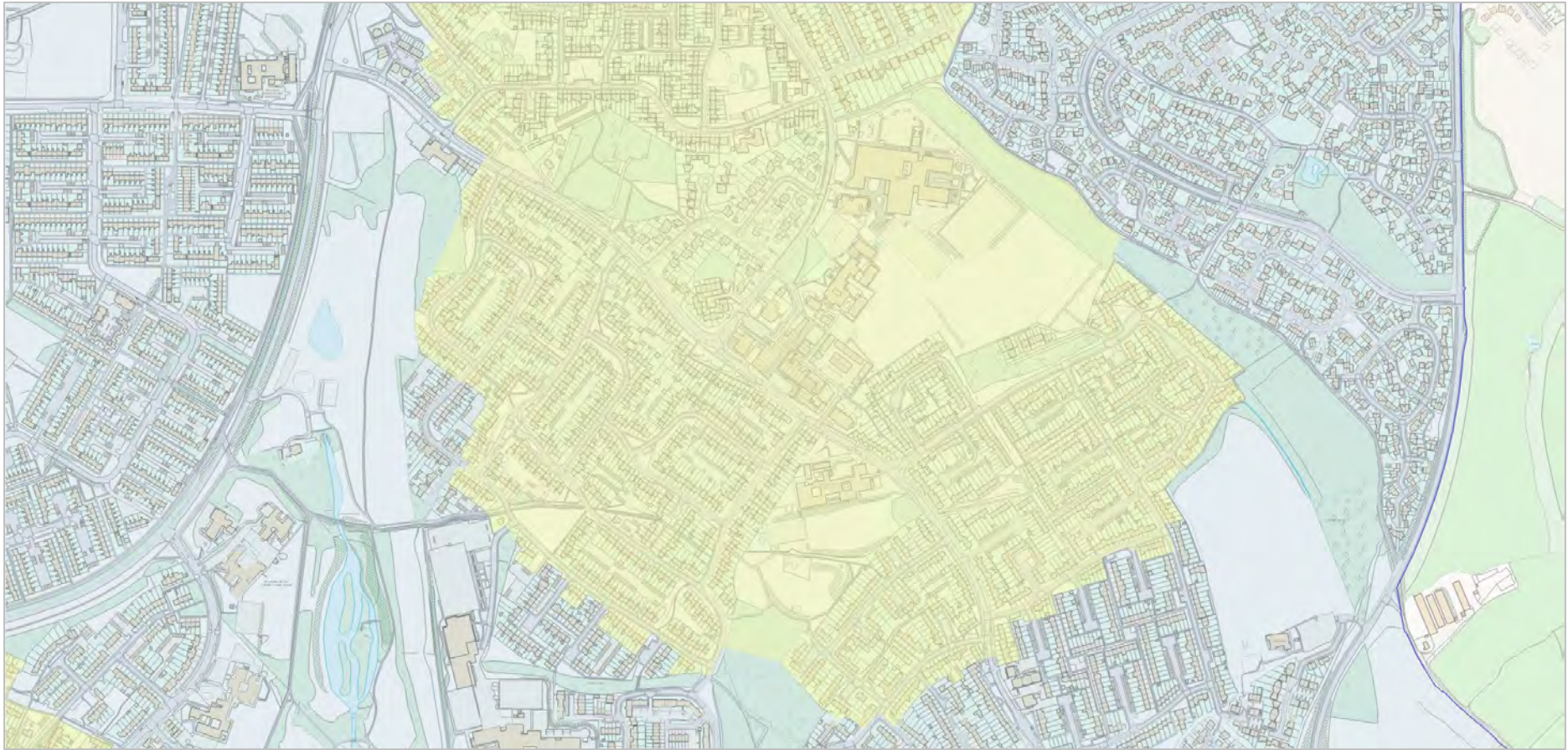


Residential Map 8 | Shephall / Bandley Hill & Poplars (N)

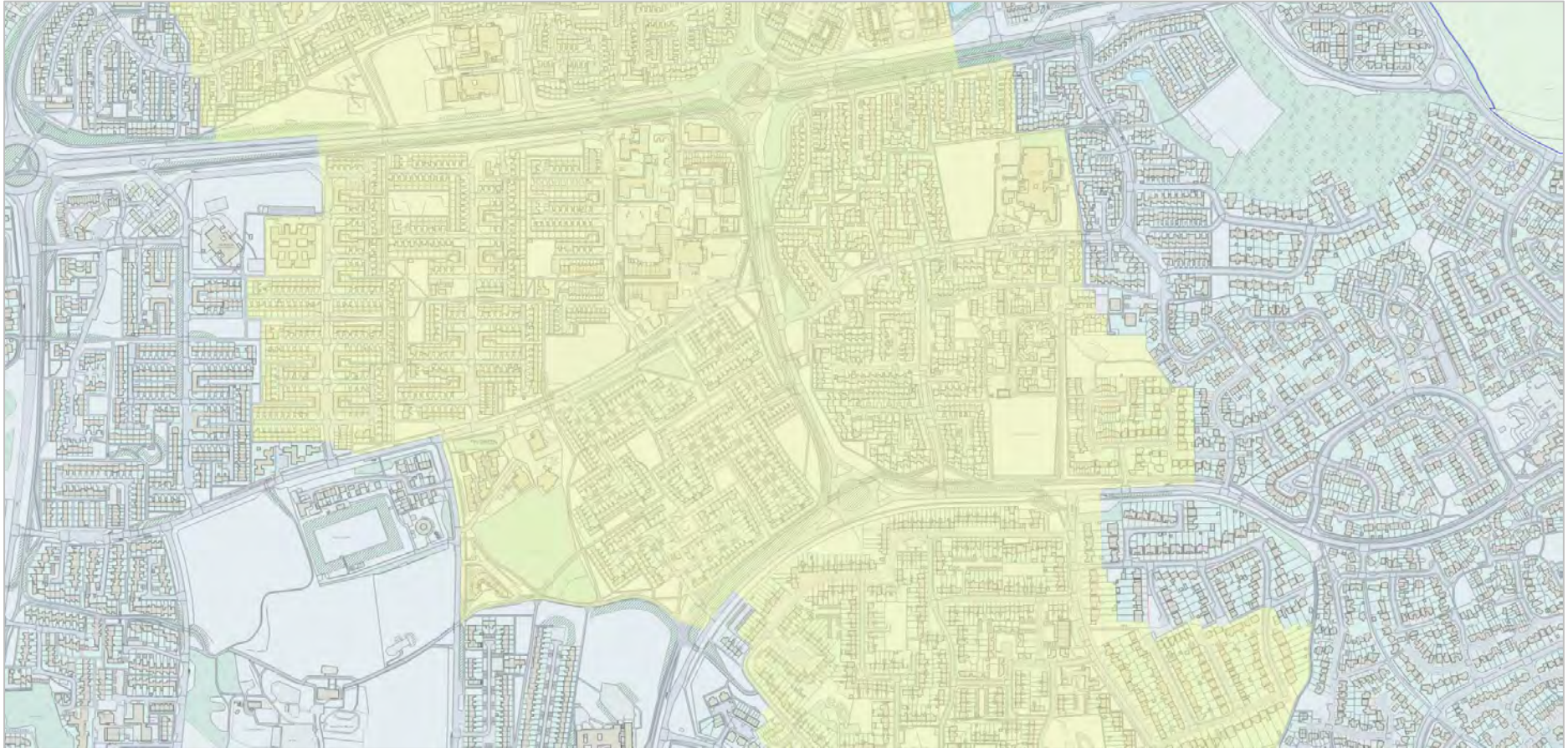


Residential Map 9 | Chells

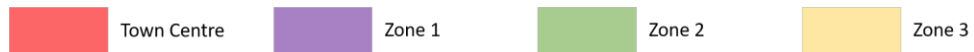
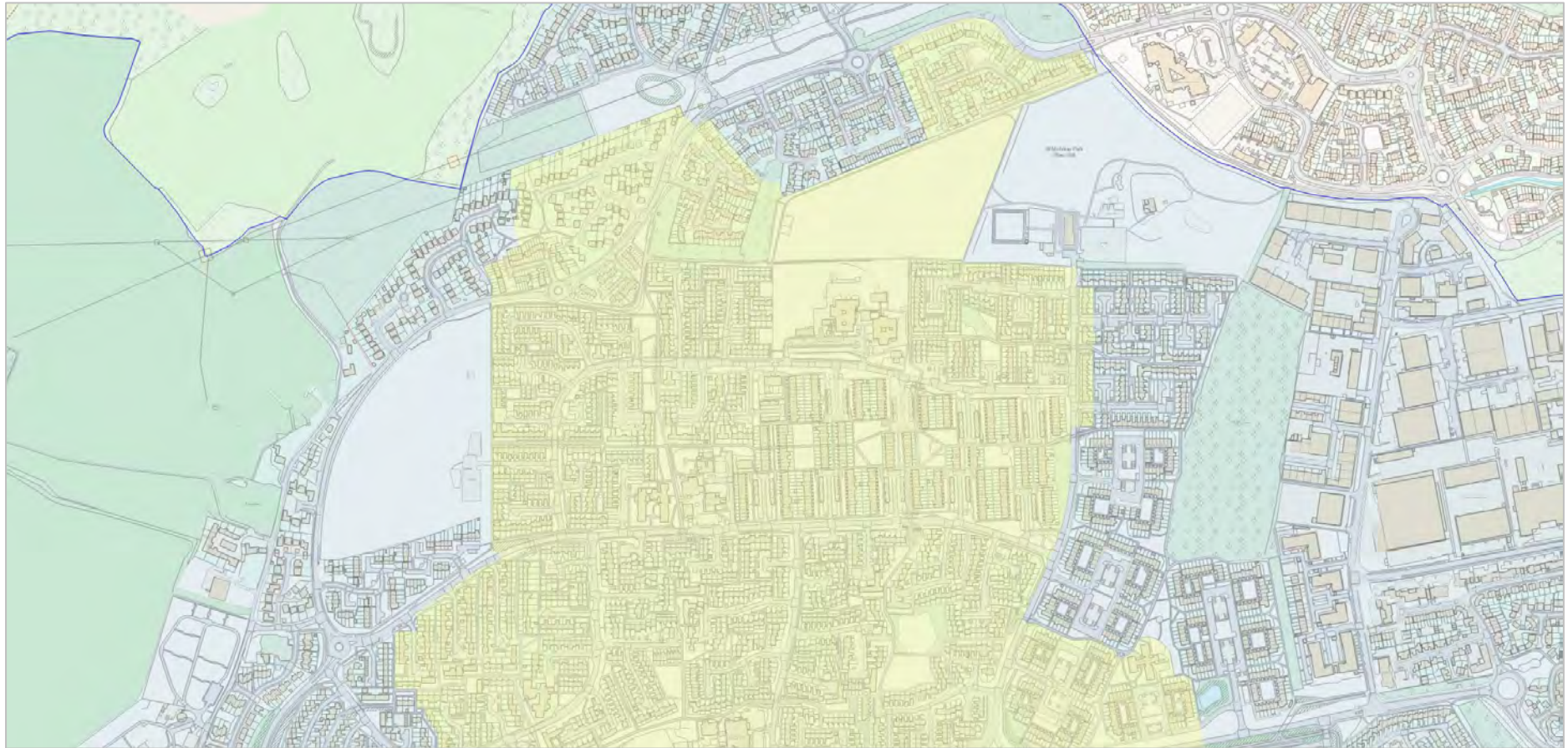
Parking SPD 2024



Residential Map 10 | Martins Wood



Residential Map 11 | St Nicholas / Woodfield



Appendix 2 | Non-residential accessibility zones

The zoning process

The zoning process used for non-residential development is also broadly based on the methodology used within the HCC Best Practice Guide on Parking Provision at New Development (2003). It involves assessing different areas within Stevenage according to how closely they meet accessibility criteria.

For non-residential development, the proximity to passenger transport is the main determinant of whether or not people can use non-vehicle modes of transport and whether parking levels can be reduced.

Criteria for designation

The non-residential accessibility zones were designated according to the following criteria as a starting point:

- Town Centre Zone: The Town Centre, as defined in the local plan
- Zone 1: Within 800m of the bus and train stations
- Zone 2: Within 1200m of bus and train stations
- Zone 3: At least one bus every 5 minutes and at least 6 routes available

As with the residential accessibility zones, the exact boundaries were amended taking into account roads, development layout, links and obstructions. Again, efforts were made to ensure that a carriageway or curtilage marked the edge of the zone.

Good access by passenger transport means that employees can travel more easily, and are therefore more likely to travel, by passenger transport rather than in a private car. In these locations, developers can encourage lower levels of car use effectively through minimising car parking provision.

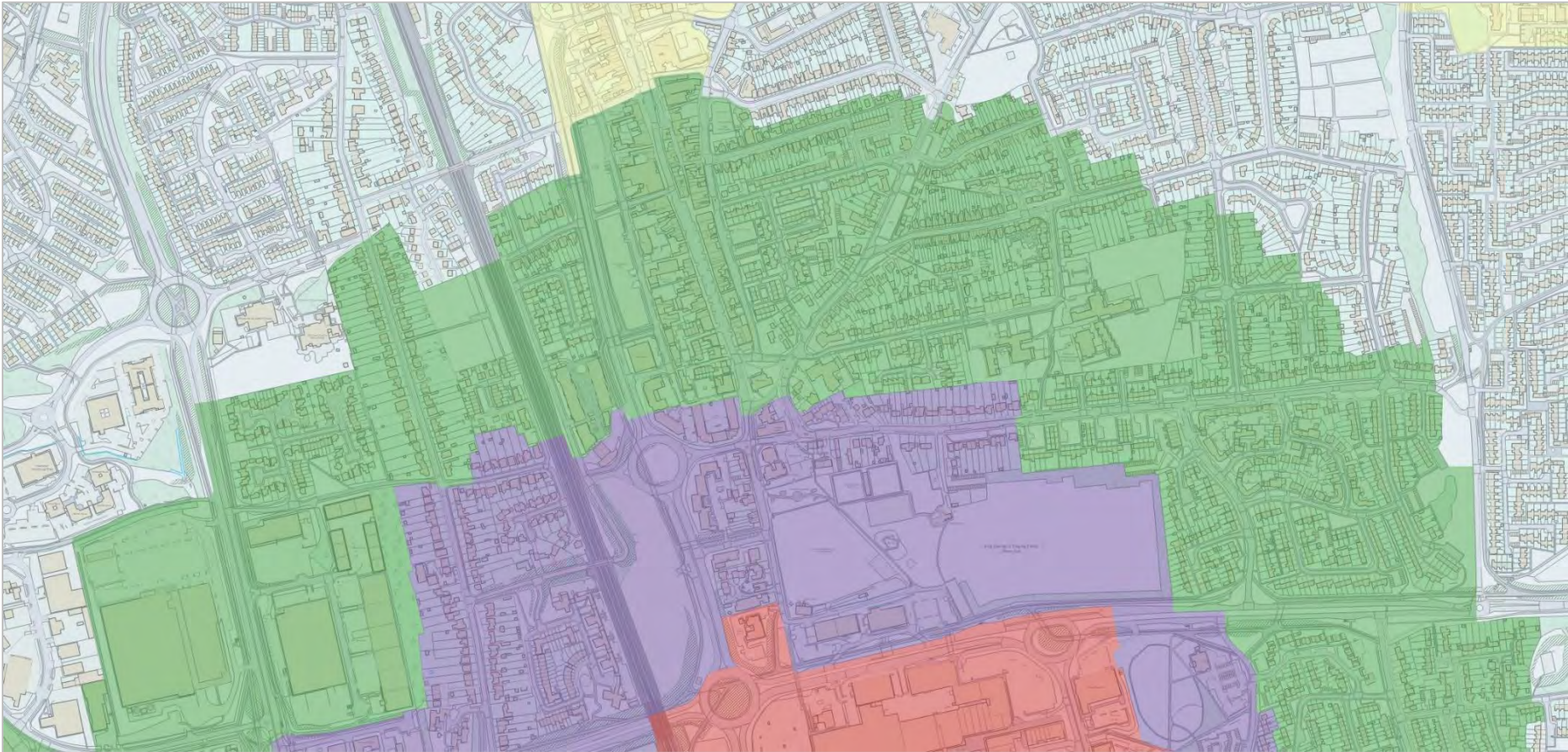
The criteria used to calculate the accessibility of an area (by non-car modes) have been chosen to reflect local characteristics, and to designate areas where lower levels of car use/ownership are/could be likely.

The criterion (within the best practice guide) on the attractiveness and availability of pedestrian and cycle routes, for example, has not been included, as cycle routes and pedestrian routes exist across the town and are very similar throughout.

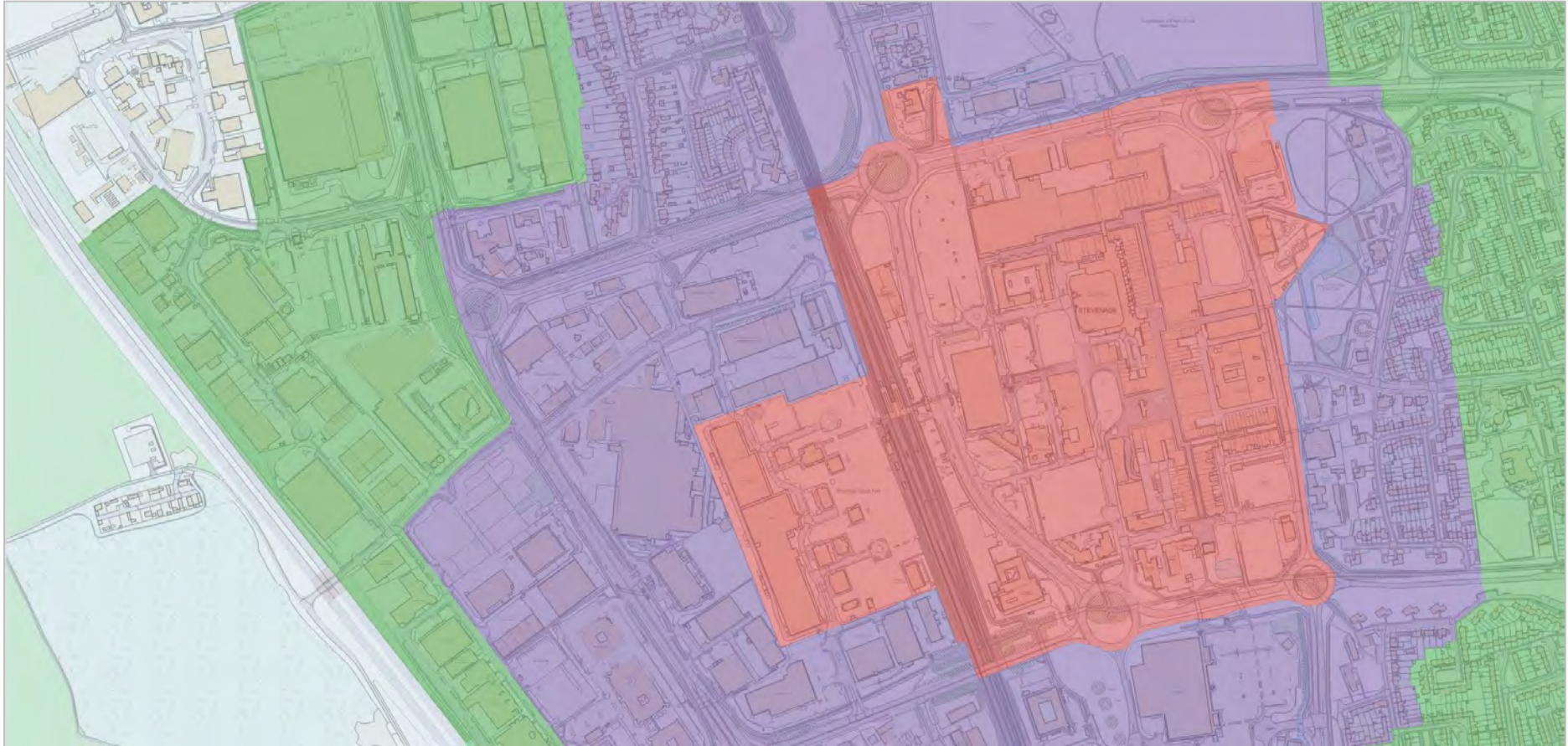
Detailed maps

Detailed maps of the non-residential accessibility zones are shown below.

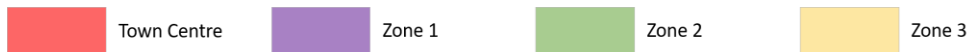
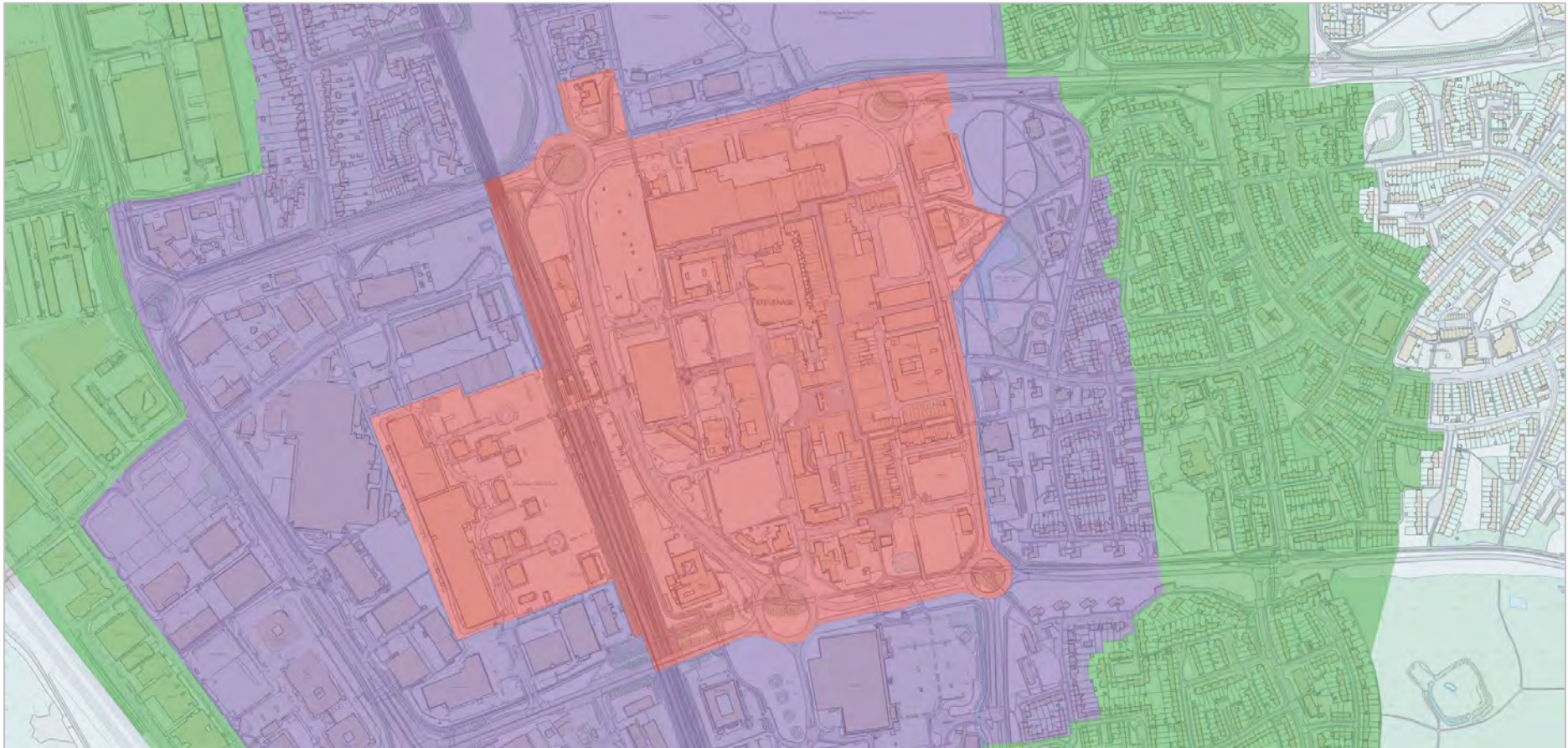
Non-Residential Map 1 | Old Town / Symonds Green / Almond Hill



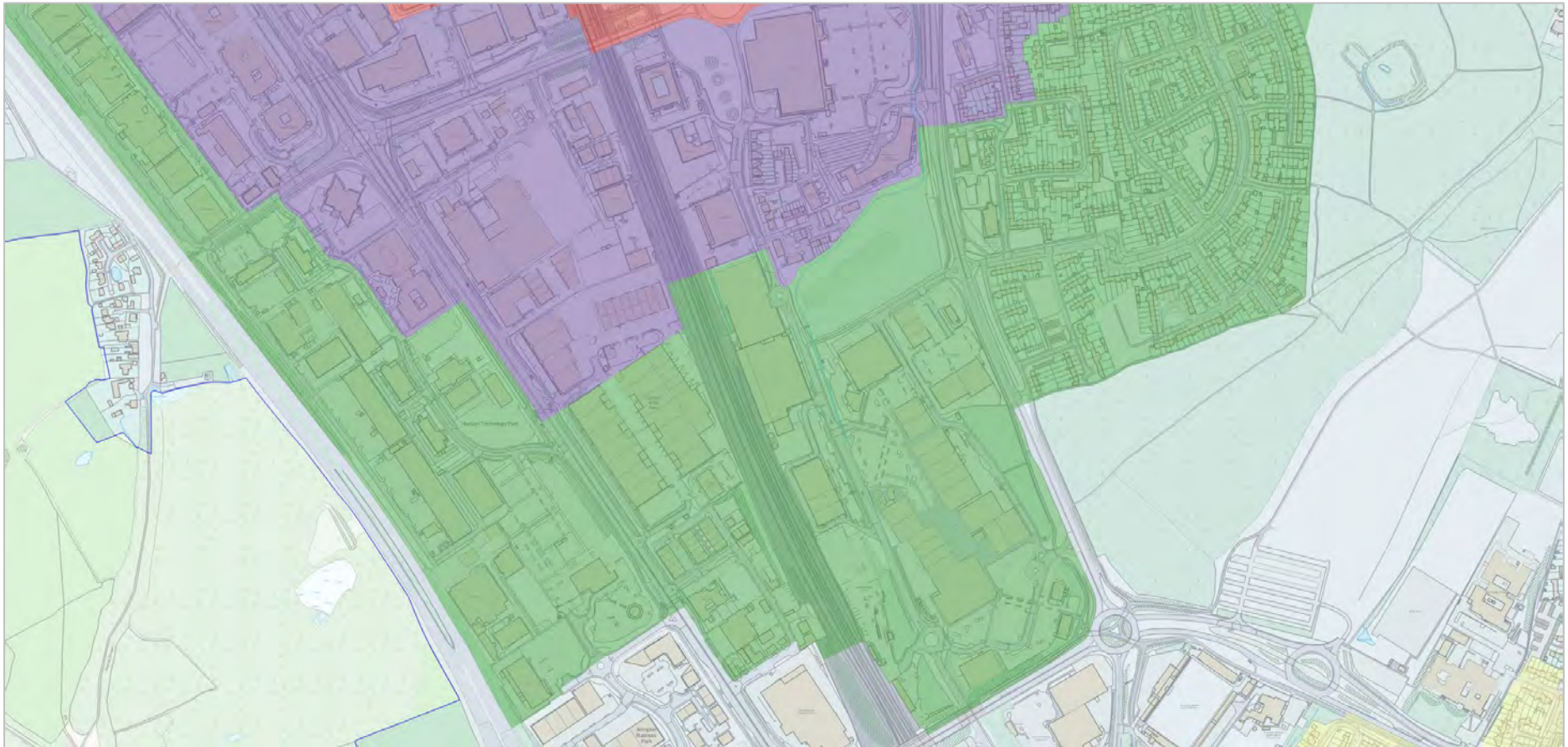
Non-Residential Map 2 | Town Centre (W)



Non-Residential Map 3 | Town Centre (E)



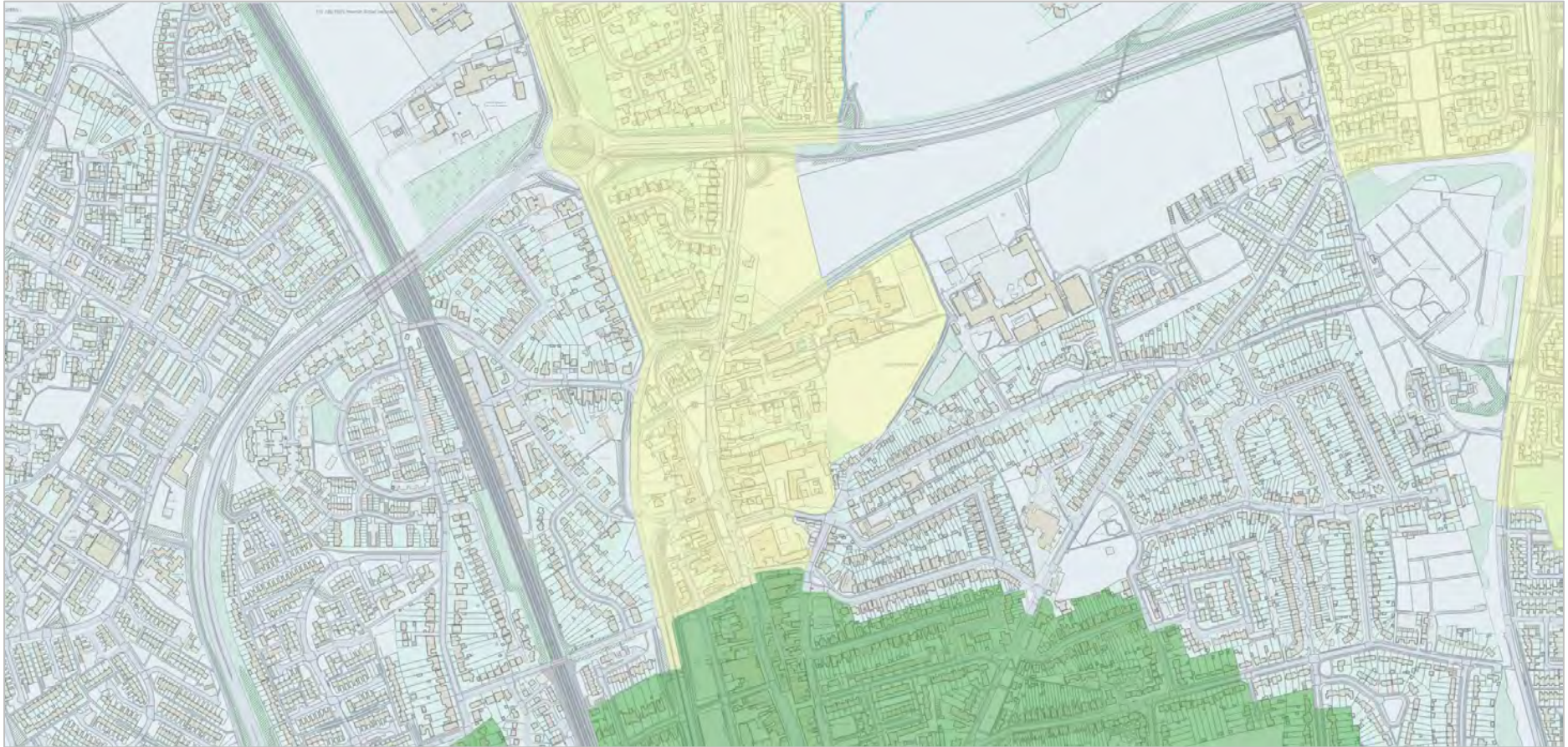
Non-Residential Map 4 | Roebuck (N) / Bedwell (S)



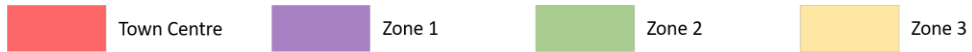
Non-Residential Map 5 | Woodfield



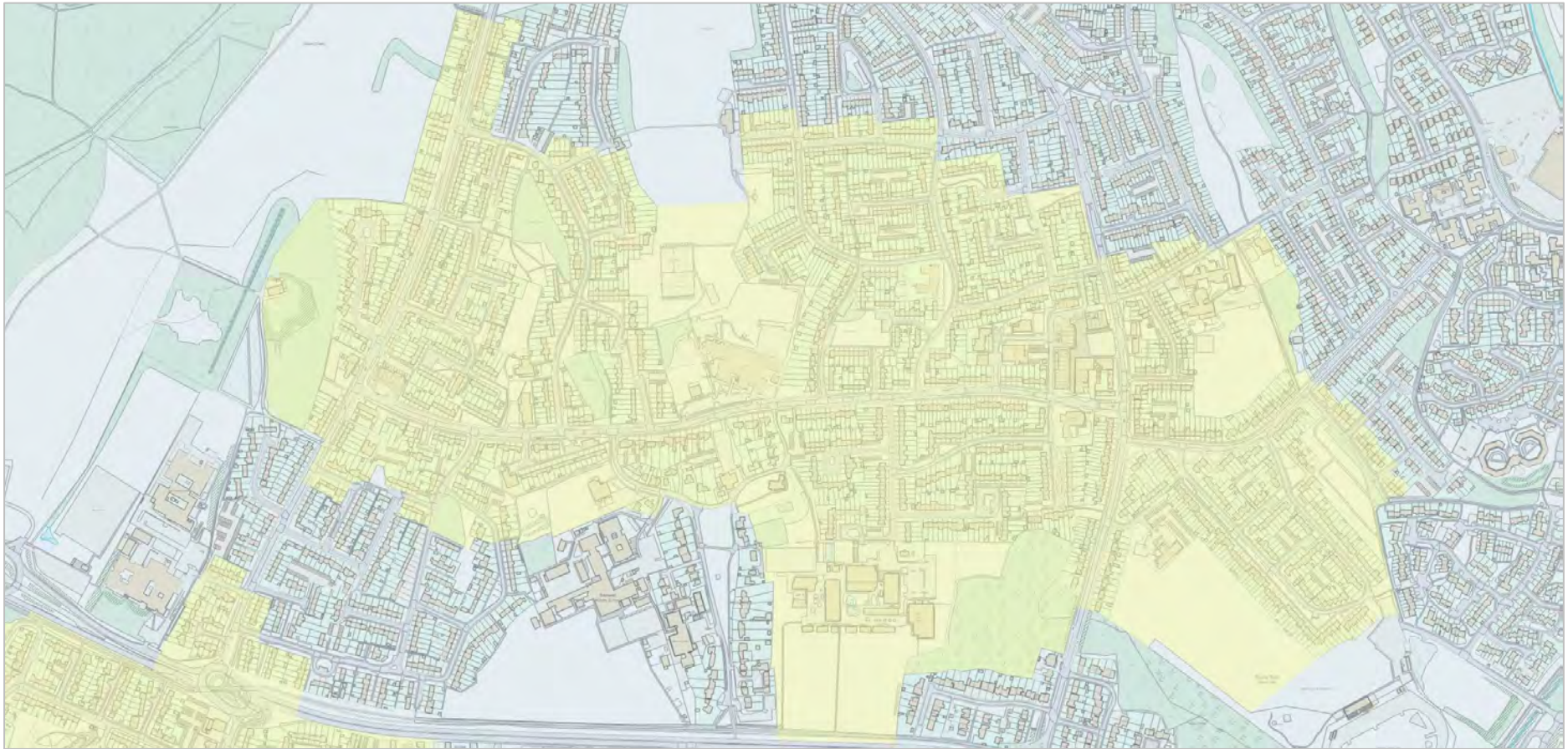
Non-Residential Map 6 | Old Town (N)



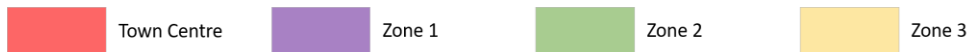
Non-Residential Map 7 | Roebuck



Non-Residential Map 8 | Shephall / Bandley Hill & Poplars



Non-Residential Map 9 | Martins Wood



Appendix 3 | GIA

For the purposes of this SPD, gross internal area (GIA) means the whole enclosed area of a building within the external walls, taking each floor into account and excluding the thickness of the external walls.

GIA includes:

- areas occupied by internal walls (whether structural or not) and partitions
- service accommodation such as WCs, showers, changing rooms and the like
- columns, piers, whether free standing or projecting inwards from an external wall, chimney breasts, lift wells, stairwells etc
- lift rooms, plant rooms, tank rooms, fuel stores, whether or not above roof level
- open-sided covered areas (should be stated separately)

GIA excludes:

- open balconies
- open fire escapes
- open-sided covered ways
- open vehicle parking areas, terraces and the like
- minor canopies
- any area with ceiling height of less than 1.5m (except under stairways)
- any area under the control of service or other external authorities

Any areas excluded from GIA should be calculated and shown separately.

Appendix 4 | Background documents

National

National Planning Policy Framework (2023)

Planning Practice Guidance (online)

Manual for Streets (2007)

Manual for Streets 2 (2010)

County

Hertfordshire Local Transport Plan 2018 – 2031 (2018)

Place & Movement Planning and Design Guidance (2024)

Local

Stevenage Borough Local Plan 2011 – 2031 (2019)

Future Town, Future Transport (2019)

Stevenage Cycle Strategy (2018)

Mobility Strategy (2016)

