

Knebworth

Introduction

13.183 Knebworth parish lies on the southern edge of District between Stevenage and Welwyn. The village of Knebworth has a good range of facilities including a railway station, school, doctors and dentists, library, a range of shops, village hall and churches. The railway and A1(M) both cross the parish. East of the A1(M) is Knebworth village, which grew up around Knebworth Station. West of the A1(M) is Old Knebworth, adjoining the Knebworth House estate. Apart from the two villages the parish also includes the Knebworth House parkland and surrounding countryside.

13.184 At the 2011 census the population of the parish of Knebworth was 4,496 and there were 2,002 dwellings in the parish.

Role in settlement hierarchy

13.185 Knebworth is identified as a Category A village. It is excluded from the Green Belt with a settlement boundary shown on the ~~Proposals~~ **Policies** Map. General development will be permitted in this area. The rest of the parish is designated Green Belt. Old Knebworth is identified as a Category B village within the Green Belt where limited infilling will be allowed.

Heritage

13.186 Knebworth village has moved twice. The original village was in what is now Knebworth Park, clustered around the parish church of St Mary and St Thomas. The church, which is a Grade I listed building, now stands alone in the park, after one of the owners of Knebworth House moved the village to enlarge the park. The village's new location was what is now called Old Knebworth. The settlement now called Knebworth grew up around the railway station a little way to the east of Old Knebworth.

13.187 Knebworth has three conservation areas. The Old Knebworth conservation area covers that village, whilst the Deards End Lane and Stockens Green conservation areas cover suburban parts of the main village with particular distinctive characteristics. Knebworth Park is designated as a historic park and garden. The smaller Homewood estate, built as the dower house to Knebworth House, is also a designated historic park and garden.

Housing

13.188 This Plan identifies four local housing allocations within Knebworth for an estimated 598 new homes. A further ~~65~~ **138** homes have already been built or granted planning permission **within the parish**.

Ref	Local Housing Allocations and site specific <u>policy</u> criteria	Dwelling estimate
<p>Policy KB1</p>	<p>Land at Deards End</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transport Assessment to consider the cumulative impacts of sites KB1, KB2 and KB4 upon key junctions and rail crossing points for all users, including walkers and cyclists, and secure necessary mitigation or improvement measures; • Sensitive design and / or lower density housing at east of site to respect setting of Deards End Lane Conservation Area and listed buildings; • Creation of appropriate, defensible Green Belt boundary along north-western perimeter of site; • Detailed scheme layout to be informed by site-specific visual impact assessment to mitigate Green Belt impacts to the fullest reasonable extent; • Transport assessment (or equivalent) to demonstrate highway impacts, including construction traffic, will not significantly affect Deards End Lane railway bridge (Scheduled Ancient Monument); • Preliminary Risk Assessment to identify any contamination associated with previous uses including mitigation; • Appropriate noise mitigation measures, to potentially include insulation and appropriate orientation of living spaces; • Consider and mitigate against potential adverse impacts upon Knebworth Woods SSSI and priority habitat (deciduous woodland) adjoining site; and • Detailed drainage strategy identifying water infrastructure required and mechanism(s) for delivery. 	<p>200 homes</p>
<p>Policy KB2</p>	<p>Land off Gypsy Lane</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transport Assessment to consider the cumulative impacts of sites KB1, KB2 and KB4 upon key junctions and rail crossing points for all users, including walkers and cyclists, and secure necessary mitigation or improvement measures; • Sensitive design and / or lower density housing where site affects setting of Stockens Green Conservation Area; • Creation of appropriate, defensible Green Belt boundary along southern perimeter of site; • Approximately two hectares of land to the south of Gypsy Lane and adjoining the existing settlement reserved as an appropriate site for provision of 1FE Primary School • Preliminary Risk Assessment to identify any contamination associated with previous uses including mitigation; • Address existing surface water flood risk issues, including any run-off from A1(M), through SUDs or other appropriate solution; • Transport assessment (or equivalent) to demonstrate highway 	<p>184 homes</p>

	<p>impacts, including construction traffic, will not significantly affect Deards End Lane railway bridge (Scheduled Ancient Monument);</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appropriate noise mitigation measures, to potentially include buffer strip, insulation and appropriate orientation of living spaces; and • Detailed drainage strategy identifying water infrastructure required and mechanism(s) for delivery. 	
Policy KB3	Chas Lowe site, London Road	14 homes
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Address existing surface water flood risk issues through removal of hardstanding, SUDs or other appropriate solution. • Parking provision to ensure no detrimental impact upon the operation of the High Street 	
Policy KB4	Land east of Knebworth	200 homes
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transport Assessment to consider the cumulative impacts of sites KB1, KB2 and KB4 upon key junctions and rail crossing points for all users, including walkers and cyclists, and secure necessary mitigation or improvement measures; • Structural landscaping and planting to provide and / or reinforce Green Belt boundary to east; • Up to 4ha of Land north of Watton Road reserved for long-term secondary education purposes subject to up-to-date assessments of needs; • Integrate Bridleway Knebworth 001 as part of green infrastructure strategy; • Address existing surface water flood risk issues through SUDs or other appropriate solution; • Preserve longer views from Knebworth to wider countryside along dry valley to south of Watton Road; and • Detailed drainage strategy identifying water infrastructure required and mechanism(s) for delivery. 	
Total allocated sites		598 homes
Completions and permissions		65 138 homes
Total allocated, completed and permitted		663 736 homes

Economy

13.189 The facilities of Knebworth are designated as a village centre in our retail hierarchy under policy SP4. Applications in this area, outside of the allocated housing site, will be assessed using our detailed development management policies. The village centre is shown on the ~~Proposals~~ **Policies** Map and the detailed in Appendix 4 ~~3~~.

Infrastructure and mitigation

13.190 The new homes in Knebworth will require additional school places. There is currently one primary school in Knebworth to the east of the High Street. This takes 60 Reception aged pupils each year. In recent years, school places have been filled by local children and the catchment is relatively tightly drawn.

13.191 Land will be reserved within Site KB2 will to provide an additional primary school that will meet the needs arising from new development at the west of Knebworth and provide capacity to serve some existing residential areas. Land at the south-east of the KB2 allocation is most suited for this provision which should additionally seek to maximise the distance of the school from the A1(M).

13.192 There is currently no secondary education provision in Knebworth. Pupils travel to a variety of schools in Hitchin, Stevenage and Welwyn Garden City. ~~Although some of these journeys can, and are, made by public transport, many are also made by car. This contributes to some of the known traffic issues in the town and across the wider road network~~

13.193 ~~New development, particularly on site KB4 to the east of Knebworth, provides the opportunity to look at alternate approaches. Making smaller-scale secondary provision, possibly as an 'all-through school'¹⁴⁴ may be an appropriate solution which meets future needs, benefits existing residents and provides a more sustainable approach.~~

13.194 It is currently anticipated that any secondary school provision in Knebworth will not be required until the late 2020s at the very earliest. To ensure an appropriately sized site can be made available, land to the north of Watton Lane at the east of the village is reserved for this purpose. We will continue to work with Hertfordshire County Council, the Parish Council, the landowner and Knebworth Primary School to monitor long-term education needs across the Stevenage School Place Planning Area and explore the most appropriate education solution for this site.

13.195 Our transport modelling does not identify any specific mitigation scheme requirements for Knebworth. However, the high street, **including the junction of Stevenage Road/London Road/Watton Road and Station Road**, is a known pinch point, particularly when delays or incidents on the A1(M) result in the B197 being used as an alternate route between Welwyn Garden City and Stevenage. **There are also issues of poor pedestrian/cycle access along Station Road under the railway line, and similar issues at Gun Lane and new development will be expected to identify any necessary improvements to walking/cycling conditions in these locations and make reasonable contributions to secure their delivery.**

13.196 Some of the capacity issues here arise from the way in which the local highway is managed and in particular, the provision of short-stay on-street parking adjacent to the shops¹⁴⁵.

13.197 Highway management measures, such as the use of Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs), lie outside the direct control of the planning system and it is therefore not for this Local Plan to dictate the most appropriate solution(s).

¹⁴⁴ All-through schools make provision for all children from age 4 to 18. See Policy SP10.

¹⁴⁵ This also explains why high-level traffic modelling, which will not contain this level of intelligence, considers there to be sufficient capacity.

- 13.198 It is recognised that a careful balance needs to be struck between ensuring the continued vitality of the local centre, providing access to local facilities and supporting the new development planned for Knebworth. We will continue to work outside of the local plan process to identify and implement the most appropriate future strategy.
- 13.199 Sites in Knebworth will need to ensure that any transport assessments appropriately take these issues into account and contribute reasonably to any necessary mitigation measures, or wider strategies which may seek to address these issues.
- 13.200 ~~A planning application~~ **Planning permission** has recently been submitted **granted** for a new library, doctors' surgery and pharmacy on the site of the current library within the identified village centre.
- 13.201 Knebworth lies within the Thames Water area with wastewater draining to their facility at Rye Meads near Hoddesdon. Previous work identifies that this treatment works should have sufficient capacity to handle all planned development within its catchment until at least 2026 with a reasonable prospect of being able to accommodate development to 2031.
- 13.202 However, it is also recognised that there are constraints in the infrastructure connecting to Rye Meads and capacity from Knebworth is an issue that has been identified. Scheme promoters should work with Thames Water, and together, to identify the likely nature of infrastructure required to ensure this can be programmed appropriately.