



BIRCHALL GARDEN SUBURB

*CREATING A THRIVING, SUSTAINABLE
EXTENSION TO WELWYN GARDEN CITY*

BIRCHALL GARDEN SUBURB (BGS)

BGS is a sustainable extension to the south-east of Welwyn Garden City. The proposal will draw upon the best of town and country living to create a thriving new place and community, supported by extensive new infrastructure.



THE BGS VISION

The BGS vision is to create an integrated neighbourhood, whose residents – and those already living in the area – can access a range of essential amenities on their doorstep.

In design terms BGS will reflect Garden City design principles, which will be captured within a site-wide design code guiding all future detailed planning applications.

BGS will provide 2,650 new homes, two new neighbourhood centres with local shops, space for healthcare and services, three schools – two primary and one secondary, children's play areas, two community centres, and extensive amounts of new Open Space – all within a short 15-minute walk or a cycle journey.

BGS MASTERPLAN

The masterplan respects the principles established in both Local Plans, which are to create a sustainable new community that is not only carefully designed, but which also responds to local requirements and preferences – now and in the future – recognising that BGS will be delivered over a number of years.



BGS: A NET POSITIVE DEVELOPMENT

BGS as a strategically planned site has been created holistically over the past 12 years within a comprehensive masterplan, and shaped in close consultation with the local community and a range of stakeholders. BGS is a net positive development and in addition to providing 2650 new homes will deliver:

- A net positive contribution to Open Space with a vast new central public parkland – Birchall Common - making up around half of the site, along with new sports pitches, children's play and allotments
- A net positive contribution to education, providing 3 new schools which will provide school spaces for BGS and the wider area
- A net gain to Biodiversity; with provision for wildlife corridors including connections from Commonswood to Birchall Common, and beyond to Panshanger Park
- A net gain in connectivity; providing 5 miles of new Public Rights of Way, including a new strategic cycle link between Cole Green Way and the southern part of Welwyn Garden City.





THE NEED FOR HOMES

BGS will make a net positive contribution to housing across Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council and East Hertfordshire District Council and presents a real solution to the local housing crisis, with over 5000 families currently on housing waiting lists.

BGS will deliver a diverse mix of housing types and tenures – including rental, shared ownership and custom build options - to meet local housing needs. BGS can positively deliver a blend of family properties (3 to 4-bedroom homes with gardens), alongside smaller properties, suitable for first-time buyers and accessible accommodation for older people. The new homes will be constructed to the latest building regulations with superfast broadband and electric car charging.



Over the past 12 years, we have carried out extensive public consultation with the local community, as well as technical and political stakeholders, on the plans for Birchall Garden Suburb, which has shaped and evolved the development.

2012



Hands-on community planning weekend and public exhibition.

Community survey via telephone poll.

Welwyn Hatfield identifies BGS as an option for allocation in its local plan.

Initial discussions about potential inclusion of Birchall Garden Suburb in the South East plan. East Herts and Welwyn Hatfield both involved.

East Herts identifies BGS as an option for allocation in its local plan.

East Herts proposes BGS as a broad location in its preferred options for its local plan.

2006

2009

2010

2014

2015



2008

Ongoing discussions with Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council / East Herts District Council.

Ongoing engagement with Hertfordshire County Council, including infrastructure, minerals, highways, archaeology, and schools.



2016



2022

- Community group meetings.
- Feedback and update public consultation and second exhibition.
- East Herts and Welwyn Hatfield both propose BGS as an allocation in the pre-submission versions of their local plans.

- Meetings with Hertfordshire & Middlesex Wildlife Trust.
- Discussions with Sport England.
- Discussions with Historic England.
- East Herts local plan and Welwyn Hatfield draft local plans submitted for examination to the Planning Inspectorate, including allocation for BGS.
- Feedback and update public consultation and third exhibition.

- East Herts district plan adopted, including 1,350 homes at BGS.
- BGS masterplanning workshop and presentation to Welwyn Hatfield and East Herts councillors.
- Community group meetings.

- Welwyn Hatfield Forum event.

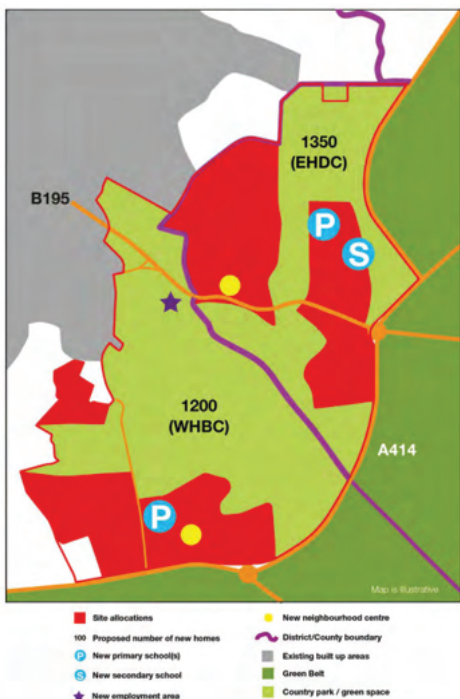
2016

2017

2018

2019

Figure 13.1: Key Diagram for East of Welwyn Garden City



- Ongoing meetings with Welwyn Hatfield and East Herts technical officers.

2022

In 2018, the BGS site was allocated for development within the East Hertfordshire District Plan (2011-2033), and was also included in the submitted Welwyn Hatfield Local Plan.* This process, in effect, removed the land from the green belt.

*The examination of the Welwyn Hatfield Local Plan continues.

2022

222
hectares
(549 acres)

transformed
into new garden
suburb

80 
hectares of land

Over 200 acres with
2,650 new homes

113 
hectares of new
open spaces

including 76 hectares
(188 acres)
of new parkland



Diverse range of homes
for first time buyers,
families & older people



3 new schools



Affordable housing,
offering rental and shared
ownership options



Space for retail
and healthcare



New sports pitches and
children's play areas



5 miles of
pedestrian walkways
and cycle routes



Superfast broadband
connection to each
front door



2 new neighbourhood
centres, with shops,
services & 2 community
centres



Wildlife corridors
and new habitats



Allotments



A network of
electric vehicle
charging points



Public transport
connections, including a
potential Hertfordshire
Essex Rapid Transit hub



Website: bgs.tarmac.com

Email: bgsengagement@cratus.co.uk

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