

Spatial Strategy Workshop - 12 July 2010 – Schools

Urban Consolidation

- Public transport needs to be high quality and reliable
- Concern about loss of green space
- Employment in Harpenden is mainly young people as part-time jobs.
- Employment areas such as Southdown Industrial area – is it worth using such spaces for employment or housing?
- Flag up potential for accommodation for students, particularly for the potential site at EMP 13 off Hatfield Road

Pros

- All facilities/services are already there and are local
- Type of housing (flats) and location (urban) attracts younger people with professional skills (would need good shopping, nightlife etc for them- could drive up prices and separate community by age)
- Improves investment/economic activity in centres
- Saves greenbelt
- Value proximity to shops and facilities in the centre.
- Will not need to rely on public transport or parent's car as much.
- Positive, but could only ever form a small part of the answer

Cons

- Peoples housing needs change, i.e. garden for children, being close to schools, getting old etc, urban consolidation may not fully meet these needs.
- Apartments/flats not suitable housing for growing family
- Parking will be an issue in urban areas
- More housing in urban areas will require more space for other social activities which may not always be available
- No department store, so couple may still travel out of the centre for shopping needs
- Only suits certain type of people, may not cater for elderly.
- Would use up open space in city
- Do not want green space lost, which adds to the charm.
- Harpenden has a suburban town feel and increased densities may damage the character.
- Don't build too high – would ruin the atmosphere.
- Not much potential for urban consolidation in Harpenden.
- Removing employment area will just result in increased out-commuting.
- Only suitable for childless couples (no gardens).
- Crowding already overcrowded areas which will lead to further crowding and the increased demand for services and improved infrastructure.
- Concern over short term gains at the price of loss of open space for the long term

Growth of Smaller Settlements

- Certain services and facilities should be a requirement for going forward with this option, such as healthcare, small shop to cater for daily goods, healthcare bus for existing elderly to get them to main hospitals, community nurses, public transport improvements (links to St Albans and wider District).
- Playing fields would be a good use in green belt land
- How long will growth continue? If you keep coming back to build on the green belt where will it end?
- Affordable housing is important
- Additional station at Napsbury would be good to improve London Colney public transport. But additional stops on the busy railway line is difficult to justify and very expensive.
- Would be most beneficial if selected sites can be tied in to specific contributions to civic amenities in the smaller settlements, such as funding for new/improved community halls

Pros

- Is positive if it delivers facilities to smaller settlements, e.g. doctors
- Builds community spirit
- Can help create more diverse community
- Can deliver mixture of housing types for different types of people (more land available than scenario 1)
- May provide local employment opportunities for younger people in those settlements
- Could help reduce congestion in city centre
- Agree some limited development in the Green Belt – more acceptable if of benefit to schools.
- Growth could lead to more primary schools and facilities
- Overall a good idea, but only if transport to larger settlements is improved – both for leisure users to the cinema etc at weekends and in the evening and also for daytime visits to hospitals and other community facilities

Cons

- Transport issues – relatively poor bus services in the villages and expensive. Better bus routes to the station are needed, but probably not enough new people to make viable improvements.
- Some facilities could be stretched by extra people
- City centre and Harpenden may lose out; people/investment will be drawn away to smaller settlements
- Could result in more congestion from people travelling to main towns/settlement for services that are not available in smaller settlements
- Could fracture existing community
- Involves building on green belt
- Public transport connections are poor, will need improving
- Not appealing for teenagers/ young adults (they want city buzz) especially in terms of activities, transport and connections to London
- Transport links in smaller settlements are poor – extra costs to improve.
- Not sustainable.
- Schools already under pressure.

- Bus services would need to be improved.
- With increased distance from the station, housing will probably be less popular.
- Danger of turning small settlements into towns and losing their village feel
- Commuters to London would add traffic to the busy roads and not sustainable
- No jobs in villages result in commuting. Working from home could mean less commuting

Eco Village

- All plans should be 'eco'
- It would be better to build this next to London Colney, build a secondary school, appropriate infrastructure and improve London Colney and the surrounding area.
- Support for existing employment at the hospital is important
- A primary school and a community hall of some kind would be necessary to make a real community

Pro

- Support for eco idea
- Generally supportive of principles if made accessible and not car-dependent.
- Opportunity for more education on the environment (learning how to be sustainable)

Con

- Limited public transport / far from St Albans/rest of district – expensive to travel across district on public transport
- Congestion issues
- Not big enough to build secondary school so would have to travel elsewhere
- Uses Green Belt
- No point in building that many houses with no facilities (i.e. still having to rely on going to city for some facilities)
- If it were closer to St Albans then it would be better in terms of transport (M25 barrier)
- Eco-village concept should be accessible, and concerned that it won't be.
- Shouldn't be called 'Eco-village'
- Separated from the rest of the district by the M25 which is a major barrier.
- Noise and environmental pollution problems from the M25.
- Open space will not be good quality due to proximity to M25
- No transport links
- Not attractive
- Expensive housing due to level 6 sustainability standards
- Not many jobs so will result in commuting and traffic issues
- Better public transport needed
- Loss of green belt land
- Limited appeal to those in affordable housing due to limited public transport
- Too far away from facilities
- No secondary school

- Commuting and building will create more pollution and is contradictory
- Harperbury site is too small to create a proper community with facilities.
- This is not a place that young people would want to live due to lack of facilities and poor transport.

Urban small extensions

- Most positive of all Scenarios
- Have to increase facilities if increasing amount of housing to attract a wide range of people to district – young, families and elderly.
- Ensuring gaps between settlements is important
- Make sure there are enough playing fields and green spaces
- Concern where development will stop. Do not want too much development and settlements merging together.
- Loss of green belt should not be a big issue.

Pros

- Spreads development around instead of concentrating in certain areas
- Fits into existing areas, not too much of an impact
- Already have transport and other facilities in area
- More of a community – strengthens existing community
- Caters for more people – families/ young/old
- Will help improve St Albans
- In the town but has countryside on the doorstep.
- Will provide affordable housing and facilities which likely to need in the future.
- More potential for expansion on the outskirts of town rather than the centre.
- Makes good use of existing facilities and they could be improved.
- Edge of town locations need good transport links to centre. Extra people can increase demand and make better bus services.
- Ability to assist in potential provision of educational facilities a significant positive
- The potential provision of a shop south of Napsbury, improved bus routes for London Colney and Napsbury residents and the integration of Napsbury more closely with the wider LC community are potentially very significant advantages
- The USE at Harpenden would provide a more equitable distribution of growth throughout the District

Cons

- Increases traffic going into and out of the city
- Not all people want to live on the outskirts (need a combination of scenario 1 and 4)
- The Green Belt is a key factor which makes Harpenden an appealing place to live – having rural countryside on your doorstep.
- Concern about loss of Green Spaces which are valued by existing residents close by

Post 2021

- Favoured combination of 1 and 4
- Scenario 1 caters for young and commuters, 4 caters for existing and supports facilities and services already there
- 3 is impractical, need a lot more homes to deliver all facilities, school and transport improvements. Would result in a segregated village
- Eco village is good idea but too far out
- Scenario 2 perhaps targets one type of persons
- Redbourn expansion – would it deliver a new school? Potential for more services.
- The approach taken should put emphasis on meeting schooling needs - “Can go to London for work, but not all that way for school”.
- East of Hemel seen as a sensible option, in conjunction with Maylands expansion and should not necessarily have to wait until post 2021
- Further growth at Napsbury seen as further support to local facilities and bus provision
- The former Radlett Aerodrome should be proactively planned for in some way
- The provision of affordable housing is key
- Make a Broad Location into an Eco Village – it doesn’t have to be at Harperbury