

HEARING STATEMENT

St Albans City and District Local Plan

Stage 2 Matter 2 – Housing Growth and Spatial Strategy

On behalf of Taylor Wimpey Strategic Land
(Land at Pipers Lane, Harpenden)
(Respondent no.317)

September 2025

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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This Hearing Statement has been prepared on behalf Taylor Wimpey Strategic Land (TWSL) in response to questions set out in Matter 2 – Housing Growth and the Spatial Strategy of the Matters, Issues and Questions published in respect of Stage 2 of the examination of the St Albans City and District Local Plan ('the Draft Local Plan' or 'DLP').
- 1.2 This Hearing Statement includes a brief response to Question 1 of Issue 1: in short we consider it will be necessary to have sight of a revised trajectory, and opportunity for participants to comment on this as part of the Examination.
- 1.3 This TWSL is promoting the residential development of Land at Pipers Lane, Harpenden ('the Site') through the plan-making process.
- 1.4 The Site forms most of the land referenced WH12 in the Council's Call for Sites; and WH-04-21 in the Council's Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (HELAA) (2021/22).
- 1.5 The Site is not proposed to be allocated in the DLP.
- 1.6 Representations ('the Regulation 19 representations') were made on the Regulation 19 Publication Draft Local Plan by TWSL and in respect of the Site (respondent no.317), through which changes to the plan were sought.
- 1.7 Matters raised within this Hearing Statement seek to avoid repeating points already made in the representations on the Regulation 19 iteration of the DLP, unless they expressly relate to the Matters, Issues and Questions published.
- 1.8 Our position is that the DLP is capable of being made sound, but that modifications are required to ensure this is the case.
- 1.9 Under the 2024 NPPF transitional arrangement, it is recognised that the DLP will be examined in relation to national policies contained in the December 2023 NPPF. Consequently, unless expressly stated otherwise, references to the NPPF in this Hearing Statement refer to the December 2023 NPPF.

2. ISSUE 1 – HOUSING REQUIREMENT

Q1 How should the minimum housing requirement be reflected in the Plan to address these soundness matters? Is there a need for the housing requirement to feature in Policies SP1 and SP3?

To assist with the examination hearing sessions, it would be useful for the Council to produce a new housing requirement figure and trajectory to replace Table 3.2.

- 2.1 We welcome the Inspectors' suggestion that the Council produce a new housing requirement figure and trajectory as part of the Examination process.
- 2.2 The establishment of a housing requirement, and the effectiveness of the DLP to meet this, are key considerations in relation to the soundness of the DLP.
- 2.3 We suggest that it will be important for a revised trajectory to be published and participants to have opportunity to comment on this through the Examination, particularly as the evidence the Council has produced in recent months (e.g. the Flood Risk Addendum) suggests fewer dwellings will be delivered through the DLP than the submitted version originally envisaged.
- 2.4 This issue would be of great importance in the examination of any Local Plan, but we consider it is of particular importance in this case, given the severity of the District's housing needs and the inability of the current Local Plan to address these.