

M1I1Q1 – Appendix 1

Draft Local Plan 2041

Regulation 19 Publication with proposed main modifications

September 2025

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Chapter 1 - A Spatial Strategy for St Albans City and District

Introduction

- 1.1 Preparation of a Local Plan (LP) is a statutory requirement for the Council. The Local Plan sets out the planning policies and proposals for the future development of the City and District of St Albans. It establishes the Council's long term spatial planning strategy for delivering and managing development and infrastructure, and for environmental protection and enhancement, to 2041.
- 1.2 The LP is a statutory Development Plan Document (DPD). It must comply with legal requirements. The LP must have regard to the Government's national planning policy, principally in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). It also needs to be based on proportionate and justifiable evidence.
- 1.3 The NPPF sets out that achieving sustainable development means that the planning system has three overarching objectives, which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways (so that opportunities can be taken to secure net gain across each of the different objectives):
 - a) an economic objective – to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure;
 - b) a social objective – to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering well-designed, beautiful and safe places, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities' health, social and cultural well-being; and
 - c) an environmental objective – to protect and enhance our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, improving biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to Climate Change, including moving to a low carbon economy.
- 1.4 The NPPF requires that strategic policies should set out an overall strategy for the pattern, scale and design quality of places, and make sufficient provision for housing (including affordable housing), infrastructure, community facilities and conservation and enhancement of the natural, built and historic environment. Strategic policies should address each of the Council's priorities for the development and use of land in the District, along with policies to address non-strategic matters. The policies in this Local Plan meet with these requirements and are set out with a strategic policy for each main chapter.
- 1.5 This Plan contains all the planning policies and proposals for the future growth of the City and District of St Albans. It covers the period 1 ~~October~~April 2024 to 31 March

2041. The current Plan is the District Local Plan Review 1994 which will be superseded by the new Local Plan.

Table 1.1 – Overview of the Local Plan process

Stages in preparing a Local Plan
Collecting Evidence
Issues and Options
First Draft Local Plan – Consultation Regulation 18
Final Draft Local Plan – Publication Regulation 19
Submission of Final Draft to Government
Examination of Local Plan and Adoption

Regulation 19 Public Consultation

- 1.6 Public consultation will begin on 26 September 2024 and run until 8 November 2024.

Delivering the St Albans and District Council Plan

- 1.7 St Albans District Council Plan 2024-2029 sets out five key priorities:

- Combat the Climate Emergency
- Deliver more social housing
- Support our local economy
- Enhance the District's cultural offer
- Promote equality, inclusion and fairness.

- 1.8 The Local Plan has a vital role in helping to deliver these priorities through to 2029 and beyond.

Duty to Cooperate

- 1.9 St Albans Council has a statutory Duty to Cooperate (DtC) with other local planning authorities and the county council and with other prescribed bodies, on strategic planning matters that cross administrative boundaries.

Joint Planning – South West Hertfordshire Joint Strategic Plan and Hemel Garden Communities

- 1.10 St Albans Council is working with other Councils in South West Hertfordshire (Dacorum Borough Council, Hertsmeire Borough Council, Three Rivers District Council and Watford Borough Council) to deliver a Joint Strategic Plan (JSP) for South West Hertfordshire. The JSP will provide a long-term blueprint for the area to 2050. It will consider and address issues that cross council boundaries and set out a strategic vision for the area. It will also help guide future plans and strategies by

‘A thriving, inclusive and sustainable community which is a great place to live and work and has a vibrant economy.’

Local Plan Objectives

1.28 The Vision will be delivered through the Objectives, show below in Table 1.2. The Objectives have been used to form the structure for the Local Plan, and preface each chapter in the document.

Table 1.2 – Local Plan Objectives

Local Plan Objectives to 2041		
Climate Change and Spatial Strategy (low carbon)	Climate change	Promote adaptation to and mitigation of the Climate Emergency; seek to achieve net zero by 2030, including through the Council doing everything reasonably within its power; promote the use of renewable resources, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, protect natural resources and reduce waste.
	Sustainable use of land / Green Belt	Prioritise the effective use of land by locating new development on previously developed land first, where appropriate; and protecting and enhancing the Green Belt.
Housing	Housing	Provide a sufficient amount of good quality housing which meets the needs of all sections of society in sustainable locations.
Infrastructure	Community infrastructure	Make sufficient provision for and access to community infrastructure in sustainable locations.
	Transport	Prioritise and enable the safe and attractive use of active and sustainable means of transport and reduce the need for people to travel.
	Utilities infrastructure	Ensure that essential utilities infrastructure, including broadband, is delivered to support our existing residents and services as well as growth.
Economy and Employment	Economy and employment	Encourage strong and resilient economic growth, employment and skills opportunities; including supporting growth in green and creative sectors; and

Tier 4 Large Village	Smaller population size compared to Small Town Relatively self-contained settlements with provision of key services and employment sites Functional relationship with Harpenden for higher order services Availability of bus routes to provide public transport offer	Redbourn Wheathampstead
Tier 5 Medium Sized Village	Smaller population size compared to the Large Villages Provision of key services Functional relationship with St Albans and Watford for high order services Availability of bus routes and rail branch line to provide transport offer	Bricket Wood Chiswell Green How Wood Park Street
Tier 6 Green Belt Village	Washed over by the Green Belt Smaller population size compared to Medium Sized Villages Some or few key services Generally functional relationship to settlements in higher tiers within the hierarchy which provide key services and higher order services Generally some or limited availability of bus routes to provide public transport offer	Sandridge Colney Heath (three parts) Lea Valley Estate Radlett Road Smallford Napsbury Park Sleapshyde Gustard Wood
Tier 7 – Green Belt Hamlet	Washed over by the Green Belt Population less than 250 residents	Folly Fields Annables, Kinsbourne Green

Source: Settlement Hierarchy Report

- Renewable energy provision and generation. Broad Locations will have to provide a comprehensive approach to renewable energy such as wind and solar.

CE2 - Renewable and Low Carbon Energy

The Council seeks to increase the use of renewable and low carbon energy in the District.

- a) Developments proposals must demonstrate, where appropriate, that the use of renewable or low carbon energy has been maximised.
- b) Major development proposals must set out at the planning application stage how they will make use of renewable or low carbon energy within the site through submitting and agreeing an Energy Statement with the Council. Agreed measure will be secured through conditions;
- c) The Council will support a range of low carbon and renewable energy solutions including, but not limited to, the following:
 - i. Solar power, including photovoltaic panels, solar thermal-heaters, and maximising passive solar heating through south facing designs;
 - ii. Wind turbines at different scales;
 - iii. Decentralised District Heating and Energy Networks; and
 - iv. Heat Pumps.
- d) To maintain the public benefits of renewable power, proposals which overshadow existing solar panels should be avoided and / or mitigated.

3.22 Large, Medium or Small sites are defined as follows:

- Large Sites 100 - 249 homes
- Medium and Small Sites 5 - 99 homes

3.23 These sites have the potential to be quicker to assemble and built out than the Broad Locations.

3.24 Where the Plan refers to 'major' development, this includes developments of 10 homes or more, development creating floorspace of 1,000 sqm or more, and developments on sites of at least 1 hectare or more in area.⁵

Housing Trajectory

3.25 The NPPF requires that the Local Plan includes a trajectory illustrating the expected rate of housing delivery over the Plan period. This is set out for St Albans District in Table 3.2 below.

3.26 As effectively required by the NPPF and Inspectors (and is best practice), a buffer is added to provide headroom and ensure a sufficient supply in the event of some sites not coming forward as expected.

3.27 The housing trajectory has been stepped in order to allow sufficient time for the significant uplift in housing delivery to be realistically delivered.

⁵ The full definition is in The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 (or subsequent amendments)

economy and pioneering green technology driven by Hertfordshire Innovation Quarter (Herts IQ).”

- 3.40 The Spatial Vision focuses on the creation of a greener, more connected town which builds on its existing strengths, and the heritage and culture of Hemel Hempstead and its New Town legacy.
- 3.41 The Spatial Vision will be delivered through creating a more innovative and dynamic destination and ~~encouraging~~ encourage investment in business and jobs, alongside new homes. Creating integrated and balanced communities will be key, with improved local centres, and leisure and green spaces, which connect established areas with the new growth.
- 3.42 There are four key pillars within the Vision: a green network; integrated neighbourhoods; a self- sustaining economy, and engaged communities. The four pillars have guided detailed studies and strategies for the programme and their outputs.
- 3.43 The main outputs provide a requirement for a range of infrastructure, projects and initiatives across Hemel Hempstead and wider routes. There are also clear crosscutting transformative themes helping to steer growth, infrastructure regeneration and investment. The Transformative themes are Climate Resilience; Healthy Lifestyles; One Place; and Balanced Communities.
- 3.44 Since receiving Garden Town status, the partners (St Albans City and District Council, Dacorum Borough Council, Hertfordshire County Council, Hertfordshire Economic Board ‘Hertfordshire Futures’ and Hertfordshire Innovation Quarter) have been working collaboratively on strategic issues relating to the delivery of Hemel Garden Communities. The joint working approach is set out in a Memorandum of Understanding.

removal of the existing building will be secured through a S106 agreement; and

- ii. Whether the new building would be similar in character and size to the existing building, taking into account extensions that could have been permitted under this policy.
- f) The replacement of a temporary dwelling, or short-life dwelling, with a permanent dwelling will be refused.
- g) Permitted development rights¹³ may be removed by condition from replacement buildings which are larger than the existing building where this is necessary to prevent further harm to the openness of the Green Belt.

¹³ Set out in the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 as amended.

- i. New sites as part of Broad Locations for development that should accommodate a maximum of 20 pitches (each pitch being designed to accommodate 1 family / household);
 - ii. Reconfiguring or extending existing sites; and
 - iii. Sites with temporary permissions.
- b) Ensure that proposals make efficient use of land. Pitch sizes should not exceed 500m² and can be considerably less. Site design should be assessed in relation to the specific circumstances of the site and in particular whether there is a need for integrated general amenity and landscaping space;
- c) Take account of any additional criteria contained in Government guidance; and
- d) Based on a variety of factors including proximity to the road network most used by Gypsies and Travellers, development site scale, area topography and landscaping opportunities, and the wide range of uses to be provided in the Broad Locations for development; require provision of the following new sites:
 - i. East Hemel Hempstead (South) Broad Location - one up to 15-20 pitch site
 - ii. East Hemel Hempstead (Central) Broad Location - one up to 15-20 pitch site

