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Report on Wheathampstead Neighbourhood Plan 2020 - 2035

An Examination undertaken for St Albans City and District Council with the support of Wheathampstead Parish Council on the April 2021 submission version of the Plan.

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Main Findings - Executive Summary

From my examination of the Wheathampstead Neighbourhood Plan (the Plan) and its supporting documentation, including the representations made, I have concluded that subject to the policy modifications set out in this report, the Plan meets the Basic Conditions.

I have also concluded that:

- the Plan has been prepared and submitted for examination by a qualifying body – Wheathampstead Parish Council;
- the Plan has been prepared for an area properly designated – the Wheathampstead Neighbourhood Plan Area – Figure 1.1 on Page 4 of the Plan;
- the Plan specifies the period to which it is to take effect – 2020 to 2035; and
- the policies relate to the development and use of land for a designated neighbourhood area.

I recommend that the Plan, once modified, proceeds to referendum on the basis that it has met all the relevant legal requirements.

I have considered whether the referendum area should extend beyond the designated area to which the Plan relates and have concluded that it should not.

1. Introduction and Background

Wheathampstead Neighbourhood Plan 2020-2035

- 1.1 Wheathampstead is a village and civil parish in Hertfordshire about 7 km to the north-northeast of St Albans. Included within the parish is the small hamlet of Amwell. The town of Harpenden lies beyond the parish boundary to the west. Further to the west is the M1 motorway whilst the A1(M) runs to the east of the parish.
- 1.2 The parish was designated as a neighbourhood area by St Albans City and District Council in July 2015. Since then, plan preparation has proceeded in a number of phases. The resultant neighbourhood plan has a comprehensive vision, nine objectives and 25 policies together with a Policies Map and Inset.

The Independent Examiner

- 1.3 As the Plan has now reached the examination stage, I have been appointed as the examiner of the Wheathampstead Neighbourhood Plan by St Albans City and District Council with the agreement of Wheathampstead Parish Council.

- 1.4 I am a chartered town planner and former government Planning Inspector with over forty years' experience. I have worked in both the public and the private sectors. I am an independent examiner and do not have an interest in any of the land that may be affected by the draft Plan.

The Scope of the Examination

- 1.5 As the independent examiner I am required to produce this report and recommend either:
- (a) that the neighbourhood plan is submitted to a referendum without changes; or
 - (b) that modifications are made and that the modified neighbourhood plan is submitted to a referendum; or
 - (c) that the neighbourhood plan does not proceed to a referendum on the basis that it does not meet the necessary legal requirements.
- 1.6 The scope of the examination is set out in Paragraph 8(1) of Schedule 4B to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) ("the 1990 Act"). The examiner must consider:
- Whether the Plan meets the Basic Conditions;
 - Whether the Plan complies with provisions under Section 38A and Section 38B of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended) ("the 2004 Act"). These are:
 - it has been prepared and submitted for examination by a qualifying body, for an area that has been properly designated by the local planning authority;
 - it sets out policies in relation to the development and use of land;
 - it specifies the period during which it has effect;
 - it does not include provisions and policies for 'excluded development'; and
 - it is the only neighbourhood plan for the area and does not relate to land outside the designated neighbourhood area.
 - Whether the referendum boundary should be extended beyond the designated area, should the plan proceed to referendum.
 - Such matters as prescribed in the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended) ("the 2012 Regulations").
- 1.7 I have considered only matters that fall within Paragraph 8(1) of Schedule 4B to the 1990 Act, with one exception. That is the requirement that the Plan is compatible with the Human Rights Convention.

The Basic Conditions

- 1.8 The “Basic Conditions” are set out in Paragraph 8(2) of Schedule 4B to the 1990 Act. In order to meet the Basic Conditions, the neighbourhood plan must:
- have regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State;
 - contribute to the achievement of sustainable development;
 - be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the development plan for the area;
 - be compatible with and not breach European Union (EU) obligations (under retained EU law);¹ and
 - meet prescribed conditions and comply with prescribed matters.
- 1.9 Regulation 32 of the 2012 Regulations prescribes a further Basic Condition for a neighbourhood plan. This requires that the making of the neighbourhood development plan does not breach the requirements of Chapter 8 of Part 6 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017.²

2. Approach to the Examination

Planning Policy Context

- 2.1 The Development Plan for this part of St Albans City and District Council, not including documents relating to excluded minerals and waste development, includes the saved policies from the St Albans District Local Plan Review 1994. There is an emerging Local Plan in the form of the Local Plan 2020–2038 but this is at a relatively early stage of preparation.
- 2.2 Planning policy for England is set out principally in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). The Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) offers guidance on how this policy should be implemented. A revised NPPF was published in July 2021 and all references in this report are to that latest version and its accompanying PPG.

¹ The existing body of environmental regulation is retained in UK law.

² This revised Basic Condition came into force on 28 December 2018 through the Conservation of Habitats and Species and Planning (Various Amendments) (England and Wales) Regulations 2018.

Submitted Documents

- 2.3 I have considered all policy, guidance and other reference documents I consider relevant to the examination, including those submitted³ which comprise:
- the draft Wheathampstead Neighbourhood Plan 2020-2035, April 2021 (including separate Appendices A to G);
 - a map which identifies the area to which the proposed Neighbourhood Development Plan relates;
 - the Consultation Statement, January 2021;
 - the Basic Conditions Statement, June 2021;
 - the List of Evidence Base Documents;
 - all the representations that have been made in accordance with the Regulation 16 consultation;
 - the Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening Determination Statement (including the Habitats Regulations Assessment screening), August 2019;
 - the request for additional clarification sought in my letter dated 31 May 2022, and the responses from St Albans City and District Council and Wheathampstead Parish Council dated 22 June 2022 and 27 June 2022 respectively; and
 - the follow-up question raised in my letter of 5 July 2022 and the Parish Council's response of the same date.⁴

Site Visit

- 2.4 I made an unaccompanied site visit to the Neighbourhood Plan Area on 22 June 2022 to familiarise myself with it and visit relevant sites and areas referenced in the Plan and evidential documents.

Written Representations with or without Public Hearing

- 2.5 This examination has been dealt with by written representations. I considered hearing sessions to be unnecessary as the consultation responses clearly articulated the objections to the Plan and presented arguments for and against the Plan's suitability to proceed to a referendum.

Modifications

- 2.6 Where necessary, I have recommended modifications to the Plan (**PMs**) in this report in order that it meets the Basic Conditions and other legal requirements. For ease of reference, I have listed these modifications separately in the Appendix.

³ View at: <https://stalbans-consult.objective.co.uk/kse/event/36454>

⁴ View Examiner correspondence at: <https://www.stalbans.gov.uk/neighbourhood-planning>

3. Procedural Compliance and Human Rights

Qualifying Body and Neighbourhood Plan Area

- 3.1 The Wheathampstead Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared and submitted for examination by Wheathampstead Parish Council, which is a qualifying body for an area that was designated by St Albans City and District Council on 21 July 2015.
- 3.2 It is the only neighbourhood plan for Wheathampstead Parish and does not relate to land outside the designated Neighbourhood Plan Area.

Plan Period

- 3.3 The Plan specifies clearly the period to which it is to take effect, which is from 2020 to 2035.

Neighbourhood Plan Preparation and Consultation

- 3.4 Plan preparation and consultation were carried out in a number of distinct phases. Details are set out in the Parish Council's Consultation Statement, dated January 2021.
- 3.5 The decision to prepare a neighbourhood plan was made in 2015 when key actions included the Plan area designation (21 July 2015), the formation of a Steering Group and the establishment of various working groups. Community engagement and evidence gathering continued through 2016 and 2017 with an on-going programme of community involvement, face-to-face meetings, a local business survey, a local housing needs survey and a call-for-sites exercise. Plan development and the testing of options followed through 2018 and 2019.
- 3.6 Formal consultation under Regulation 14 was carried out for 8 weeks, between 24 February 2020 and 6 April 2020. A summary of the main issues and concerns raised by consultees is set out in Paragraphs 2.29 to 2.43 of the Consultation Statement. Detailed comments and agreed responses of the Parish Council are set out in Appendix C of the Statement.
- 3.7 At the Regulation 16 stage (6 January 2022 to 18 February 2022), representations were made by some 17 different parties. They included statutory consultees, wildlife bodies and private individuals.
- 3.8 I am satisfied that, at both the Regulation 14 and the Regulation 16 stages, the consultation process met the legal requirements and there has been procedural compliance. Regard has been paid to the advice on plan preparation and engagement in the PPG.

Development and Use of Land

3.9 The Plan sets out policies in relation to the development and use of land in accordance with Section 38A of the 2004 Act.

Excluded Development

3.10 The Plan does not include provisions and policies for “excluded development”.

Human Rights

3.11 Wheathampstead Parish Council is satisfied that the Plan does not breach Human Rights (within the meaning of the Human Rights Act 1998). From my independent assessment, I see no reason to disagree.

4. Compliance with the Basic Conditions

EU Obligations

4.1 The Neighbourhood Plan was screened for Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) by consultants acting for Wheathampstead Parish Council, which found that it was unnecessary to undertake SEA. Having read the Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening Determination Statement, I support this conclusion.

4.2 The Wheathampstead Neighbourhood Plan was further screened for Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA), which also was not triggered. The site is not in close proximity to a European designated nature site. Natural England agreed with this conclusion in an email dated 26 April 2019 (Appendix C of the Screening Determination Statement). From my independent assessment of this matter, I have no reason to disagree.

Main Issues

4.3 Having regard for the Wheathampstead Neighbourhood Plan, the consultation responses and other evidence, and the site visit, I consider that there are seven main issues relating to the Basic Conditions for this examination. These concern:

- Spatial Strategy and Housing;
- Natural Environment;
- Character and Conservation;
- Transport and Movement;
- Community Facilities;
- Local Economy; and
- Policies Map.

- 4.4 Before I deal with the main issues, I have a few observations to make with regard to the representations. Firstly, the Wheathampstead Neighbourhood Plan should be seen in the context of the wider planning system. This includes the saved policies from the St Albans District Local Plan Review as well as the NPPF and PPG. It is not necessary, and it would be inappropriate, to repeat in the Neighbourhood Plan matters that are quite adequately dealt with elsewhere (see NPPF, Paragraph 16 f).
- 4.5 Secondly, the Neighbourhood Plan does not have to deal with each and every topic raised through the consultation. In this regard, the content of the Neighbourhood Plan and the scope of the policies is largely at the discretion of the qualifying body, albeit informed by the consultation process and the requirements set by the Basic Conditions.
- 4.6 Thirdly, my central task is to judge whether the Neighbourhood Plan satisfies the Basic Conditions. Many of the representations do not demonstrate or indicate a failure to meet those conditions or other legal requirements. Similarly, many of the suggested additions and improvements are not necessary when judged against the Basic Conditions.
- 4.7 The following section of my report sets out modifications that are necessary in order to meet the Basic Conditions. Some of the proposed modifications are factual corrections (modifications for the purpose of correcting errors is provided for in Paragraph 10(3)(e) of Schedule 4B to the 1990 Act). Others are necessary in order to have closer regard to national policies and advice. In particular, plans should contain policies that are clearly written and unambiguous (NPPF, Paragraphs 15 and 16). In addition, the policies should be supported by appropriate evidence (PPG Reference ID: 41-041-20140306).

Issue 1: Spatial Strategy and Housing

- 4.8 Policy W1 of the draft Neighbourhood Plan concerns the location of development. However, there are a number of matters that require amendment.
- 4.9 First, the policy states that development will be focused within the settlement boundary as defined on the Policies Map. In error, this boundary has not been shown the Policies Map. It needs to be added.
- 4.10 Secondly, Policy W1 includes criteria that relate to “appropriate uses in the countryside”. The Parish Council’s answers to my questions indicate that the whole of the area in question is Green Belt. As such, there should be reference to the limitations of national and local Green Belt policy.
- 4.11 Thirdly, the policy includes a number of criteria to be satisfied if development outside the settlement boundaries is to be supported. In this regard, it is not clear whether selected criteria are to apply or all the criteria.

- 4.12 In its response to my questions, the Parish Council has stated that development should be required to meet only at least one of the criteria. However, it appears to me that all developments should meet both criterion i. (accordance with the Local Plan Review) and criterion ii. (preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the area). The other two criteria (bringing historic buildings back into beneficial use/relationship with utilities infrastructure) are appropriate options. The policy should be modified accordingly.
- 4.13 To ensure clarity and regard to national policy, Policy W1 should be amended as in proposed modification **PM1**. The matter of amendments to the Policies Map is dealt with under Issue 7.
- 4.14 A second policy under the spatial strategy and housing heading is Policy W2: Dwelling mix. Developments of 10 dwellings or more should seek to provide a mix of dwelling sizes as stated in the policy. An exception would be if there were evidence from "the Strategic Market Housing Assessment". This is a reference to the Strategic Market Housing Assessment 2016 (see the Parish Council's response to my request for additional clarification) to which the successor document is the South West Hertfordshire Local Housing Needs Assessment, September 2020. For clarity, there should be reference to this specific document.
- 4.15 The policy continues by saying that, for affordable housing, priority must be given to allocation to those with a local connection. To my mind, the allocation of affordable housing is not a planning matter. This would be the responsibility of the Local Housing Authority or affordable housing provider. However, in line with the Parish Council's intention (see response to my request for additional clarification), it would be appropriate to require occupation by a household with a local connection.
- 4.16 The definition of "local connection" within the policy is somewhat loosely worded. I take the connection to be with the Parish of Wheathampstead but this is not stated. A more comprehensive definition based on the City and District Council's February 2021 Housing Allocations Policy would be appropriate. To avoid complicating the policy, this should be set out in the Glossary to the Neighbourhood Plan. The definition should also refer to residence at the time of occupation (not at the time of sale).
- 4.17 A further matter to be addressed in the housing mix policy is First Homes. Guidance in the PPG (Reference ID: 70-018-20210524) calls for new development plans, from 28 June 2021, to take account of the new First Homes requirements. The Parish Council is keen to include a clause on this type of affordable housing (see response to my request for additional clarification). Suitable amendments have been included in the proposed modification to the policy.
- 4.18 Proposed modifications to Policy W2: Housing Mix are set out in **PM2**. With these modifications in place, there would be appropriate clarity and regard for national policy and guidance.

Issue 2: Natural Environment

- 4.19 Policy W3 (Minimising the Environmental Impact of Development) requires, amongst other things, all new trees and hedgerows to be native species and disease resistant. Whilst this requirement is highly desirable, there is no evidence to show that this is necessary in all development. Regard should be paid to the circumstances of the case. A more nuanced approach is reflected in proposed modification **PM3**.
- 4.20 Along with other matters, Policy W4 (Conservation and Enhancement of Natural Habitats and Delivering Biodiversity Net Gain) addresses biodiversity appraisal. Under Part D of the policy, the appraisal must demonstrate a measurable biodiversity net gain utilising the Defra biodiversity metric. Where there is no such demonstration, planning permission should be refused. For clarity, a link to Defra's biodiversity metric should be provided. In addition, and to allow for legitimate exceptions, the words "where appropriate" should be added.
- 4.21 "Where appropriate" should also be added in Part E of the policy to qualify the requirement for biodiversity impact to be determined using the Defra metric. Proposed modification **PM4** refers to these changes.
- 4.22 The next policy, Policy W5, deals with the River Lea Corridor and its environment. However, this is not defined in the draft Neighbourhood Plan. For clarity, a link should be provided to the definition in the South Hertfordshire Landscape Character Assessment. Proposed modification **PM5** refers.
- 4.23 Policy W6 concerns the designation of 12 Local Green Spaces. Three of these (LGS 6: Marford Playing Fields, LGS 10: The Meads and LGS 12: Glebe and Hitchens Allotments) are within the Green Belt. In this regard, national guidance (PPG Reference ID: 37-010-20140306) advises that consideration should be given to whether any additional local benefit would be gained by designation as Local Green Space.
- 4.24 In its response to my follow-up question, the Parish Council has emphasised the particular importance to the community of these spaces. Each is seen as playing a significant role in the community. For my part, I appreciate that this is the case. However, I would expect the spaces to have on-going protection through the application of Green Belt policy. Having viewed the spaces and considered the evidence, I cannot see that any additional local benefit would be gained through Local Green Space designation. A further problem relates to LGS 4: Diamond Jubilee Garden, and LGS 7: Rectory Meadow and Copse. Although these are either under licence or leased to the Parish Council, they are not in its ownership and the owners have not been consulted explicitly as part of the consultation. The PPG (Ref ID: 37-019-20140306) advises that owners should be consulted at an early stage and that they would have the opportunity to make representations. As it is, I have no evidence as to the owners' intentions or that the designation would be capable of

enduring beyond the Plan period (NPPF, Paragraph 101). Otherwise, I am satisfied that, apart from LGS 4, 6, 7, 10 and 12, the remaining sites meet the requirements for designation as set out in NPPF paragraph 102 and are, in my view, capable of enduring beyond the end period of the Plan. LGS 4, 6, 7, 10 and 12 should be deleted as in proposed modification **PM6**.

- 4.25 The next policy, Policy W7, deals with locally significant views. Safeguards apply in regard to developments within the shaded arc of various views *as shown in Appendix C and on the Policies Map*. In error, the relevant arcs are not shown on the Policies Map. Bearing in mind the details shown on the plans in Appendix C, it would not be appropriate to show the arcs of view on the Policies Map. Reference to the Policies Map should be deleted as in proposed modification **PM7**.

Issue 3: Character and Conservation

- 4.26 The opening sentence of Part A of Policy W8: Character of Development indicates that development should preserve *and* enhance the Conservation or Local Character Area in which it is located. However, there is no evidence to suggest that, to meet the objectives of the policy, both conservation and enhancement are necessary. Proposals that preserve the special characteristics of the areas would also be acceptable if enhancement were not possible. Part B ii. of the policy should also refer to preserve *or* enhance.
- 4.27 Part B iii. of the policy refers to the Hertfordshire Heritage Environment Register. However, the correct reference is to Hertfordshire County Council's Historic Environment Record (HER). The text should be corrected and a link provided.
- 4.28 To accord with the evidence and to ensure clarity and accuracy, the policy should be amended as in proposed modification **PM8**.
- 4.29 Policy W9: High Quality Design of Development makes reference to the document "Building for a Healthy Life". For clarity and for the assistance of applicants, an appropriate link should be provided (proposed modification **PM9**).
- 4.30 Part A ii. of Policy W10 (Incorporating Sustainable Design Features) refers to energy from recoverable resources. However, as confirmed in the Parish Council's response to my request for additional clarification, this is an error. The reference should be to renewable resources.
- 4.31 In Part B, the policy continues by referring to current sustainable design and constructions standards. The Parish Council's response (as above) sets out what are these standards. For the benefit of applicants and decision takers, this information should be set out in a footnote to the policy.

- 4.32 Finally, in regard to building works, Part E of the policy refers to adherence to the Government's National Planning Policy for Waste. In response to my questions, the Parish Council has indicated that it is minded to remove this requirement, which should be dealt with at the more strategic level. The reference should therefore be deleted.
- 4.33 In terms of accuracy, clarity and evidence, Policy W10 should be amended as in proposed modification **PM10**.

[Issue 4: Transport and Movement](#)

- 4.34 Amongst other things, Policy W12 (Primary Local Access Routes) is concerned with the provision of safe pedestrian and cycle access. The policy states that "All new routes are to be dedicated as public rights of way". Whilst this is a laudable objective, developers cannot be required to dedicate or offer for dedication such routes as public rights of way. Encouragement of dedication would be a more appropriate way forward (proposed modification **PM11**).
- 4.35 Policy W14: Off-Street Car Parking in Wheathampstead resists the unacceptable loss of publicly available off-street car parking spaces and encourages new provision. This approach could be seen as contrary to the Government's policy of promoting sustainable travel (NPPF, Section 9). Nevertheless, as recognised in the NPPF (Paragraph 105), opportunities to maximise sustainable transport solutions will vary between urban and rural areas. In the circumstances, there should be recognition in the policy of sustainable transport solutions and adherence to the City and District Council's car parking standards (not any amount of parking). Proposed modification **PM12** refers.

[Issue 5: Community Facilities](#)

- 4.36 Policy W17: Education Provision makes reference to state education land including associated playing fields *as defined on the Policies Map*. However, in error, such land has not been shown on the Policies Map. This error needs to be corrected (see Issue 7 below).
- 4.37 Policy W20 on sports and recreational facilities makes reference to Sport England's Playing Fields Policy and Guidance including the Five Exceptions. For clarity, a link to this document should be provided as in proposed modification **PM13**.

[Issue 6: Local Economy](#)

- 4.38 Policy W22 (Protection of Existing Employment Premises or Land) uses the phrase "Notwithstanding permitted development rights". As confirmed in the Parish Council's response to my questions, this is an error. The text should read "Subject to permitted development rights". See proposed modification **PM14**. A similar correction needs to be made in Policy W24: Supporting a Vibrant High Street, as in proposed modification **PM15**.

4.39 Policy W25 deals with temporary shops, referred to in the policy as “pop-up” shops. However, there is no definition of a pop-up shop. For clarity, a definition should be provided in the Glossary. The definition that I am suggesting in proposed modification **PM16** is different from that put forward by the Parish Council in its answers to my questions but, in my view, is a more appropriate description of this trend.

Issue 7: Policies Map

4.40 The Policies Map and Inset are included in Section 13 of the draft Neighbourhood Plan. As noted above, various notations are missing from the map. These are the settlement boundary and state education land including associated playing fields. The inclusion of local significant views would add confusing detail and are best depicted in Appendix C.

4.41 A serious problem is that the Policies Map and Inset are at too small a scale to be able to distinguish accurately the boundaries of designations and the like. Contrary to national guidance (PPG Reference ID: 41-041-20140306), a decision maker would not be able to apply the Plan policies consistently and with confidence when determining planning applications. For applicants too, the geographical extent of the policies would not be clear.

4.42 For clarity, the Policies Map and Inset should be amended as in proposed modification **PM17**.

Other Matters

4.43 There remain a number of policies that have not been the subject of commentary in the above report. These are Policy W11 (Attractive village street scene), W13 (improving cycle connections beyond the parish), W15 (Public transport), W16 (Creating a village hub), W18 (Health and well being), W19 (Community growing spaces), W21 (Celebrating Wheathampstead’s heritage), W23 (Encouraging businesses to come to Wheathampstead) and W24 (Supporting a vibrant High Street).

4.44 To a greater or lesser extent, these topics are covered in NPPF Sections 6 (Building a strong, competitive economy), 8 (Promoting healthy communities), 9 (Promoting sustainable transport) and 12 (Achieving well-designed places). I find that there has been regard for national policy and that the Basic Conditions have been met.

4.45 All policy areas have been considered in the foregoing discussion. With the modifications that I have recommended, the Plan would meet the Basic Conditions. Other minor changes (that do not affect the Basic Conditions), including those suggested by the City and District Council and the County Council as well as consequential amendments, corrections and up-dates, could be made prior to the referendum at the discretion of the City and District Council and the Parish Council.

5. Conclusions

Summary

- 5.1 The Wheathampstead Neighbourhood Plan has been duly prepared in compliance with the procedural requirements. My examination has investigated whether the Plan meets the Basic Conditions and other legal requirements for neighbourhood plans. I have had regard for all the responses made following consultation on the Neighbourhood Plan and the evidence documents submitted with it.
- 5.2 I have made recommendations to modify a number of policies and text to ensure the Plan meets the Basic Conditions and other legal requirements. I recommend that the Plan, once modified, proceeds to referendum.

The Referendum and its Area

- 5.3 I have considered whether or not the referendum area should be extended beyond the designated area to which the Plan relates. The Wheathampstead Neighbourhood Plan as modified has no policy or proposals which I consider significant enough to have an impact beyond the designated Neighbourhood Plan boundary, requiring the referendum to extend to areas beyond the Plan boundary. I recommend that the boundary for the purposes of any future referendum on the Plan should be the boundary of the designated Neighbourhood Plan Area.

Overview

- 5.4 It is evident that a considerable amount of time and effort has been devoted to the development and production of this Plan and I congratulate those who have been involved. The Plan should prove to be a useful tool for future planning and change in Wheathampstead Parish over the coming years.

Andrew S Freeman

Examiner

Appendix: Modifications

Proposed modification number (PM)	Page no./ other reference	Modification
PM1	Page 21	<p>Replace the first two criteria under part B of Policy W1 with the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> “i. the development preserves or enhances the character or appearance of the area; and ii. it is in accordance with the St Albans District Local Plan Review and National Planning Policy Framework in respect of appropriate uses in the Green Belt; or”. <p>At the end of criterion iii, replace “and” with “or”.</p>
PM2	Page 24	<p>At the end of Policy W2 Part C, replace “Strategic Housing Market Assessment” with “South West Hertfordshire Local Housing Needs Assessment, September 2020”.</p> <p>Replace Part D with the following: “All affordable housing shall be first occupied by households with a local connection (see Glossary). In the event that there are no applicants satisfying this requirement, the housing shall be occupied in accordance with the City and District Council’s standard allocation procedures. At least 25% of the affordable housing units must be delivered as First Homes (see Glossary definition of Affordable Housing).</p> <p>In the supporting text (at the end of Paragraph 4.18), add the following: “All new residential development should provide a quantity of affordable housing in line with the requirements contained within the St Albans District Local Plan Review or its successor. Affordable homes should be well integrated with market housing. The provision and mix of affordable units for new development must comply with the National Planning</p>

		<p>Practice Guidance on First Homes which requires 25% of all affordable housing units to comprise First Homes.”</p> <p>In the Glossary, for the definition of “affordable housing”, substitute the definition in the latest version of the NPPF (including reference to First Homes).</p> <p>In the Glossary, add a definition for “local connection” in Wheathampstead based on the City and District Council’s Housing Allocations Policy 2021. Include reference to a local connection at the time of occupation.</p>
PM3	Page 31	Substitute the following for Part B i. of Policy W3: “maintain hedgerows, trees and woodland and encourage the planting of new trees and hedgerows of native, disease resistant species”.
PM4	Page 36	<p>In Policy W4 D, add a link to the Defra biodiversity metric measure.</p> <p>At the end of Part D, add “where appropriate”.</p> <p>In Part E, add “where appropriate” at the beginning of the second sentence.</p>
PM5	Page 37	In Policy W5, add a link to the defined River Lee Corridor (South Hertfordshire Landscape Character Assessment).
PM6	Page 41	<p>In Policy W6, delete the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Diamond Jubilee Garden 6. Marford Playing Fields 7. Rectory Meadow and Copse 10. The Meads 12. Glebe and Hitchens Allotments <p>Carry out consequential amendments to the text and related plans.</p>
PM7	Page 43	In Policy W7, delete the words “and on the Policies Map”.
PM8	Page 51	Substitute the following for the first sentence of Policy W8 A: “Development should preserve or enhance the

		<p>Conservation Area or Character Area (as shown on the Policies Map) in which it is located.”</p> <p>In the final sentence of Part B ii. of the policy, substitute “preserve or enhance” for “preserve and enhance”.</p> <p>In Part B iii. of the policy, after “Appendix E”, substitute the following wording: “and/or Hertfordshire County Council’s Historic Environment Record (HER)”. Insert a link to the record.</p>
PM9	Page 55	In Policy W9, provide a link to the document Building for a Healthy Life (using the correct title in the policy text).
PM10	Page 57	<p>In Part A ii. of Policy W10, substitute “renewable” for “recoverable”.</p> <p>In Part B, provide a footnote confirming what are the current design and construction standards.</p> <p>Delete Part E of the policy (reference to National Planning Policy for Waste).</p>
PM11	Page 68	Substitute the following for the final sentence in Policy W12 Part A: “The dedication of new routes as public rights of way will be encouraged”.
PM12	Page 72	<p>At the beginning of Policy W14 A, insert “Subject to consideration of opportunities to maximise sustainable transport solutions,”.</p> <p>In the second sentence of Part A, substitute “should” for “must”.</p> <p>At the end of the first sentence of Part B, insert “in accordance with the City and District Council’s car parking standards”.</p>
PM13	Page 83	In Policy W20 B, provide a link to Sport England’s Playing Fields Policy and Guidance including the Five Exceptions (using the correct title in the policy text).

PM14	Page 86	In the opening of Policy W22, substitute "Subject to" for "Notwithstanding".
PM15	Page 88	In Policy W24 B, substitute "Subject to" for "Notwithstanding".
PM16	Page 88	In Policy W25, add "(see Glossary)" after "pop-up shops". In the Glossary, add the following definition: " Pop-up shops are temporary retail stores that are open for a short period of time in order to take advantage of a passing fad, seasonal demand or economic opportunity. They include holiday markets, Halloween and firework stores, certain niche retailers and limited engagement experimental retailers."
PM17	Page 98	Replace the Policies Map and Inset with versions drawn at a scale where the location and extent of the features shown in the key can be clearly discerned. Add to the Policies Map and Inset: the Settlement Boundary and state education land including associated playing fields.