

Strategic Local Plan 2011-2031

Publication Draft

2016



St Albans City

- 4.10 The historic City of St Albans functions very well in general as a major town. However, whilst the City centre is healthy and vibrant it does not cater for everyone's full shopping needs. Its general retail offer has become more limited and retail market share in the County has been declining over recent years. Often residents commute out of the District for their shopping needs, particularly for bulky goods. The St Albans urban area has the District's widest range of services, facilities and employment opportunities available, with a good range of transport options to access them, making it the most sustainable location for development.
- 4.11 The surrounding Green Belt maintains the separation of St Albans from nearby settlements, including Chiswell Green, How Wood and Park Street & Frogmore, retaining the separate identity of individual communities.

Harpenden

- 4.12 Harpenden functions very well as a small town and has a thriving vibrant high street for a town of its size. However there is need for some small-scale housing, employment, cultural, retail related development and redevelopment and improvements to the railway station to ensure that the settlement continues to prosper. It has a good range of services, facilities and employment opportunities available, with a good range of transport options to access them, making it the second most sustainable location for development.

London Colney

- 4.13 London Colney is the third largest settlement in the District and has grown substantially in recent years. The former hospital site at Napsbury has been redeveloped into a substantial new residential community, although there is a poor interface between this development and the rest of London Colney. There has been redevelopment of several employment sites for housing and the London Colney Retail Park (Colney Fields) has grown significantly. Parts of London Colney suffer from relatively high levels of deprivation and some areas of poor environment. It does not have as wide a range of services, facilities, employment opportunities or as good a range of transport options as Harpenden or St Albans. It is the third most sustainable location for development and in order to provide the best opportunity to generate the new services and opportunities that the settlement needs, London Colney is re-classified as a town.

Other settlements excluded from the Green Belt - Bricket Wood, Chiswell Green, How Wood, Park Street and Frogmore, Redbourn, Wheathampstead

- 4.14 The District contains a diverse range of villages and settlements excluded from the Green Belt that have a more limited range of services than the towns, but still offer a range of facilities to meet the day-to-day needs of their communities. The overall amount of development that will be acceptable in these settlements will generally be less than in the towns, due to their more limited range of services and reduced

accessibility, which renders them less sustainable locations for meeting the development needs of the District as a whole. In addition, the smaller size of the settlements means that the physical scope for larger scale development consistent with maintaining their character and identity is less.

- 4.15 The continued sustainability of these settlements as places to live and work is dependent on the retention and expansion of local services that meet community needs, coupled with improved transport services enabling access to larger centres for those services that are not available locally. The Council will work with service providers to support the retention and where possible improvement of transport services that provide an essential link between smaller settlements and the towns, both in the District and in adjoining districts.

Green Belt Settlements – Annables and Kinsbourne Green, Colney Heath (three parts), Folly Fields, Gustard Wood, Lea Valley Estate, Radlett Road (Frogmore), Sandridge, Sleafshyde, Smallford

- 4.16 There are a range of smaller settlements in the District that have a more limited range of services than the villages excluded from the Green Belt. The overall amount of development that will be acceptable in these settlements will generally be less than in the villages excluded from the Green Belt, due to their more limited range of services and reduced accessibility, which renders them less sustainable locations for meeting the development needs of the District as a whole. The small size of the settlements means that the physical scope for larger scale development consistent with maintaining their character and identity is very limited.
- 4.17 In a similar way to the settlements excluded from the Green Belt, the continued sustainability of these places to live and work is dependent on the retention and expansion of local services that meet community needs, coupled with adequate transport services enabling access to larger centres, which will be supported by the Council.

Wider Spatial Planning and Duty to Co-operate

- 4.18 The Council continues to fully engage and co-operate with all adjoining and nearby Local Authorities under the Localism Act 2011; particularly Dacorum, Welwyn and Hatfield, Luton, Central Bedfordshire, Watford, Hertsmere, Three Rivers and Hertfordshire County Council, in order to appropriately address sub-regional and regional strategic spatial planning issues. The Council is also very aware of the strategic importance of its Green Belt to the wider economic, social and environmental sustainability of London. It is because of the good transport connections between the District and London that many of the District's residents commute to London for employment. This is particularly true for higher paid jobs.
- 4.19 The SLP Development Strategy includes providing for the District's future development needs partly through a major eastern expansion of Hemel Hempstead (Broad Locations – Mixed Use (East Hemel Hempstead North and South). This is an appropriate strategy because Hemel Hempstead has Town status and is recognised as a potential growth and regeneration location in the M1 corridor in the Local Enterprise Partnership's (LEP) Strategic Economic Plan (SEP) and the Dacorum