



ESSENTIAL REFERENCE PAPER 'B'

# District Plan

Infrastructure Topic Paper

January 2014

[www.eastherts.gov.uk/infrastructure](http://www.eastherts.gov.uk/infrastructure)

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**Appendix A: National Planning Practice Guidance (extract)**

# 1. Introduction

- 1.1 This Infrastructure Topic Paper has been prepared to support the draft District Plan at Preferred Options stage. It summarises infrastructure planning work to date, sets out East Herts Council's approach, and explains the work to be undertaken during 2014 prior to submission of the District Plan to the Planning Inspectorate for examination in public.

### **Why Plan?**

- 1.2 One of the reasons for preparing a District Plan to is help to maximise the potential for development to be accompanied by the full range of necessary supporting infrastructure. Given the imperative to deliver housing in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), without a District Plan in place there is a high risk that development will take place without the infrastructure that local communities, existing and future, rightly expect.
- 1.3 A particular role of the plan in this respect will be in relation to the potential cumulative impact of large and small development sites, within and outside East Herts. Planning applications in isolation are limited in their ability to consider the cumulative impacts of development on infrastructure. By providing a framework for development in multiple locations, the District Plan can help to manage the cumulative impact and to give advance notice to infrastructure providers to programme infrastructure delivery into their own plans.

### **District Plan Approach**

- 1.4 The draft District Plan development strategy is underpinned by an infrastructure policy as set out in the box below:

#### **DPS5 Infrastructure Requirements**

I. East Herts Council will prepare an Infrastructure Delivery Plan to address the co-ordinated phasing of infrastructure and development of items of strategic and local infrastructure.

II. Infrastructure needed to support development must be phased appropriately with the delivery of residential and other development to ensure that capacity is provided and impacts are satisfactorily mitigated in a timely manner.

III. The following strategic infrastructure will be required to support the development identified within the District Plan:

- (a) upgrades to Rye Meads Sewage Treatment Works;
- (b) improvements to the A414 through Hertford;
- (c) new schools;
- (d) healthcare facilities;
- (e) improvements to the road network around Junction 8 of the M11 at Bishop's Stortford;

- (f) the Little Hadham Bypass;
- (g) A602 improvements;
- (h) broadband telecoms.

IV. The Council will use planning obligations with landowners and developers to secure direct provision or financial contributions towards infrastructure necessary to support the District Plan, including both on-site and off-site provision to satisfactorily address the cumulative impacts of development on strategic infrastructure.

- 1.5 Strategic infrastructure is defined as infrastructure which meets more than site-specific needs and supports the overall level and pattern of growth outlined in the Development Strategy. Site specific infrastructure serves just the needs of the occupiers and visitors to the site that it is located in. The site-specific policies in the settlement sections within the draft District Plan contain both strategic and site-specific infrastructure.
- 1.6 Each of the settlement chapters in the Plan is accompanied by a high-level strategy statement which sets out the development strategy in relation to key elements of infrastructure, including education, transport, and other infrastructure. The site-specific policies also set out requirements for specific items of infrastructure on and off-site.
- 1.7 The draft District Plan policies list many types of infrastructure which are essential to sustainable place-making. Lack of infrastructure hampers the ability of places to form communities, since local services and facilities are the location of activity. Infrastructure is also essential to quality of life, the maintenance of which is an important aim of the District Plan. Green infrastructure and local community facilities are good examples of this.

### **County-wide approaches**

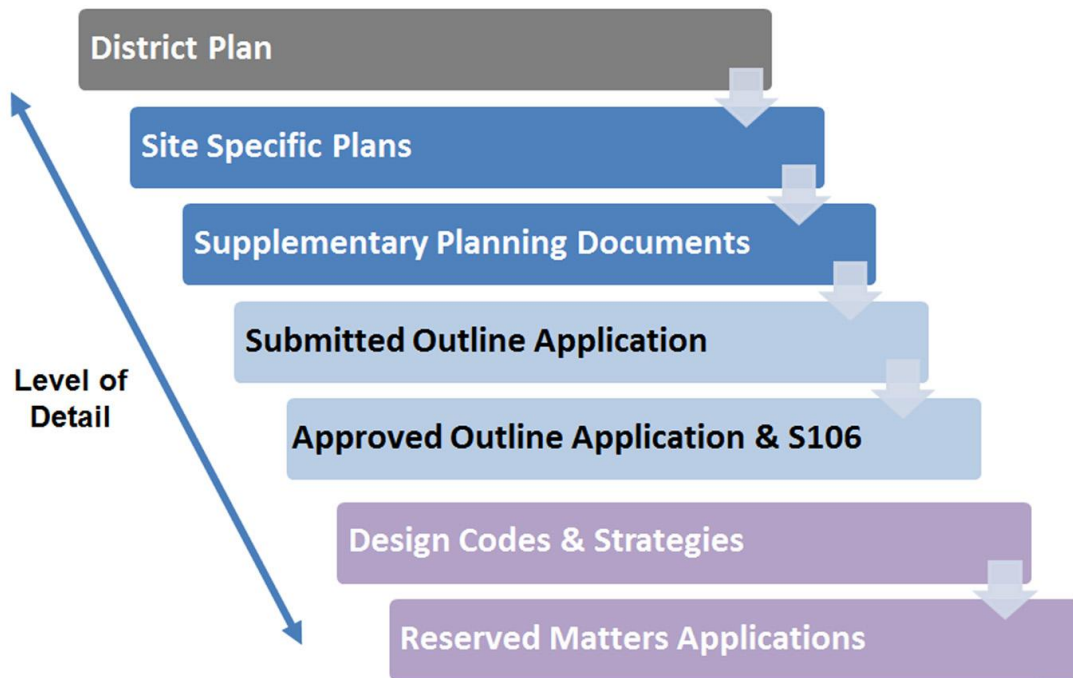
- 1.8 In 2009 a major study, known as the Hertfordshire Infrastructure and Investment Strategy (HIIS), was published. The study was commissioned by Hertfordshire County Council and all the District and Borough Councils in Hertfordshire. The study contains some costing details and suggested approaches which will be helpful going forward.
- 1.9 There have been a number of other County-wide studies, including the Hertfordshire Green Infrastructure Plan (2012), the Rye Meads Water Cycle Strategy (2009), CIL Viability Study (2012) and the Inter-Urban Route Strategy (2013) which address particular infrastructure issues. These studies are not addressed directly in the Infrastructure Topic Paper but have informed the policies within the draft District Plan. Going further, these studies and any successors are anticipated to play a major role in the shape and content of the Infrastructure Delivery Plan, as explained in Chapter 6 below.

- 1.10 A 'refresh' of HIIIS was prepared by Hertfordshire County Council in January 2013. The main focus of the refresh was to establish the processes and procedures necessary to implement effective infrastructure planning, including matters which are cross-boundary in nature.
- 1.11 East Herts Council also participates in a number of other county-wide initiatives as follows:
- Hertfordshire Infrastructure and Planning Partnership (HIPP), through which many of the ideas in the refresh are being taken forward;
  - officer-level Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Reference Group, which investigates issues relating to financial viability and developer contributions;
  - Hertfordshire Memorandum of Understanding and Local Strategic Statement to enhance cross-boundary co-ordination.

### **Scope of the Infrastructure Topic Paper**

- 1.12 The Infrastructure Topic Paper does not attempt to review all types of infrastructure, because this would require a level of detail which is not yet necessary. The Topic Paper is proportionate to NPPF requirements at draft Plan stage.
- 1.13 Although further information will be accumulated as work on the District Plan progresses, the District Plan will not in itself resolve all outstanding infrastructure matters. In many cases this is only possible at site-specific stage, and taking account of masterplanning. The District Plan itself should be understood as the first part in an end-to-end planning process, as shown in Figure 1.1.

**Figure 1.1: The end-to-end planning process**



- 1.14 The Council's development management service where appropriate consults the NHS and other important bodies such as the police in relation to facilities provision.
- 1.15 National regulations do not permit local planning authorities to make up any historic shortfall in infrastructure provision through developer contributions. However, East Herts Council can use the District Plan to support the channelling of future public funding and other private sector investment into the District.
- 1.16 In scoping the mainstream and other funding sources available, the Infrastructure Topic Paper addresses the prospects for the provision of the main items of capital expenditure going forward.
- 1.17 More detail will be accumulated as the Topic Paper gradually evolves and expands into a Delivery Plan. This will include a wider range of infrastructure types, and also include further information on funding and costings, particularly in the first five years of the plan (i.e. 2016-2021). The Delivery Plan will be accompanied by an infrastructure schedule for ongoing monitoring and updating throughout the lifetime of the plan. This is explained further in Chapter 6.

## **2. Approach**



## **The Stepped Approach**

- 2.1 Infrastructure planning is sometimes described as a ‘chicken and egg’ conundrum: plan-makers want to know what infrastructure is needed to support development options, but infrastructure providers want to know where and what development is planned before they commit resources to providing advice. This is understandable, because infrastructure planning can be very resource intensive in terms of time and money.
- 2.2 East Herts Council has adopted a stepped approach to gradual accumulation of information from infrastructure providers, recognising that it is not practical for providers to undertake exhaustive studies when there remain a large number of development options still under consideration.
- 2.3 This approach is set out in the Supporting Document to the District Plan, available at [www.eastherts.gov.uk/supportingdocument](http://www.eastherts.gov.uk/supportingdocument). High-level infrastructure information has helped to shape the selection of options, and to identify key infrastructure issues for inclusion in the draft policies at various levels, from site-specific infrastructure requirements to strategic infrastructure supporting a wider catchment of users.

## **Cumulative Impacts**

- 2.4 Large and small development sites can collectively create strains on infrastructure which may not be adequately addressed by planning applications relating to a single site in isolation. As explained in the introduction above, the District Plan can address this by providing advance notice to infrastructure providers to start to include specific items of infrastructure in their own plans.
- 2.5 Significant efforts have already been made to address the issue of cumulative impacts. For example, transport modelling has been undertaken which includes test assumptions about growth locations within and outside the district. Consideration has also been given to the cross-boundary movement of school pupils, since the good schools in the district attract pupils from surrounding areas. Demand generated by the existing population is also assessed alongside additional demand from new population.
- 2.6 Further work on the cumulative impacts will be undertaken over the coming year in relation to a range of infrastructure types. At the same time it is important to understand that whilst a certain amount of evidence can be obtained by working with providers, there will inevitably be some gaps in the available information. For this reason an important part of plan-making is dealing with uncertainty.

## Dealing with Uncertainty

- 2.7 Many infrastructure and service providers have comparatively short-term planning horizons, in many cases of less than 5 years<sup>1</sup>. It is also clear from the responses received from the Council's request for information that infrastructure providers are limited in the amount of detail they can provide at this stage.
- 2.8 The National Planning Policy Framework draws a distinction in terms of housing provision between the 5-year plan and the long-term plan. Whereas the 5-year plan should be 'deliverable', the long-term plan should be 'developable'<sup>2</sup>. At the same time, the NPPF also requires that a plan should be 'effective' throughout its period as well as taking a positive approach and meeting objectively assessed housing needs (Paragraphs 47 and 182).
- 2.9 East Herts Council has sought advice from the planning specialists at the Advisory Team for Large Applications in relation to strategic scale development options. ATLAS has advised that dealing with uncertainty is an important part of plan-making, and that flexibility and contingency planning are essential for a successful plan<sup>3</sup>. The ATLAS advice also reflects the draft National Planning Practice Guidance contained in Appendix A. This flexibility is embedded in the development strategy and policies of the plan.
- 2.10 The District Plan deals with this in a number of ways.
- 2.11 Firstly, a long-term component is an essential part of the plan because strategic scale development can take many years for the infrastructure to be planned and built. However, the District Plan is reviewed on average every few years, and is subject to annual monitoring. Monitoring of emerging infrastructure provision means that whilst acknowledging the overall direction of travel, the plan can be amended if circumstances change.

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<sup>1</sup> This issue was raised in the Hertfordshire Infrastructure and Investment Strategy, 2010. See [www.eastherts.gov.uk/hiiis](http://www.eastherts.gov.uk/hiiis)

<sup>2</sup> NPPF Paragraph 47, **footnote 11**: To be considered deliverable, sites should be available now, offer a suitable location for development now, and be achievable with a realistic prospect that housing will be delivered on the site within five years and in particular that development of the site is viable. Sites with planning permission should be considered deliverable until permission expires, unless there is clear evidence that schemes will not be implemented within five years, for example they will not be viable, there is no longer a demand for the type of units or sites have long term phasing plans. **Footnote 12**: To be considered developable, sites should be in a suitable location for housing development and there should be a reasonable prospect that the site is available and could be viably developed at the point envisaged.

<sup>3</sup> ATLAS Strategic Sites Deliverability Advice Note, September 2013. Presented to the District Planning Executive Panel, 3 October 2013, and available at [www.eastherts.gov.uk/infrastructure](http://www.eastherts.gov.uk/infrastructure)

- 2.12 Secondly, in the short term, the plan provides a small amount of contingency in provision of sites, which can assist in the event of unanticipated challenges arise in the phasing of particular sites.
- 2.13 Thirdly, the draft District Plan policies set out the goals as to the type of development the District Council wishes to see, but avoids an overly prescriptive approach to the means of achieving it. For example, a new healthcare facility may be needed, but the NHS may wish to have some flexibility as to where it is provided over what form it might take. There may be opportunities for co-location of different services which are not apparent at the plan-making stage but which become available through the planning process, and this could make local facilities financially viable whereas they may not otherwise be.
- 2.14 Another major policy approach on 'Broad Locations' has been developed which entails further testing and assessment as explained below.

#### **Broad Locations Development Plan Document (DPD)**

- 2.15 A site allocation is appropriate where there are clear boundaries to a proposed development site and there is a realistic prospect of delivery. These are shown in red on the District Plan Key Diagram.
- 2.16 In cases where strategic development is proposed but further work is needed to establish boundaries, develop infrastructure requirements and/or work with neighbouring planning authorities and there is not the necessity to bring forward development within the first five years of the plan, Broad Locations for Development have been identified. Paragraphs 6.11 to 6.13 of the Interim Development Strategy Report explain how these criteria have been used to identify Broad Locations in the Gilston Area (north of Harlow), north and east of Ware and east of Welwyn Garden City.
- 2.17 However, from discussions with the transport authorities in particular, it is clear that for three of the long-term development options there remains a substantial amount of work to test a range of mitigation measures. East Herts Council notes the need for a positive approach in the NPPF but agrees with the need for caution as expressed by the transport authorities.
- 2.18 Acknowledging the uncertainty, a further Development Plan Document (DPD), similar in nature to the District Plan but more detailed in its focus on area-specific issues, will be prepared. The DPD will be subject to full consultation and examination by a planning inspector before it will be adopted by East Herts Council as policy.
- 2.19 For further detail refer to Chapter 6 of the Strategy Report and Chapter 3 of the draft District Plan.

## The Infrastructure Topic Paper

- 2.20 The remainder of the Infrastructure Topic paper sets out the key messages for schools, transport, health, water, and other utilities. The aim of these sections is not to resolve all the outstanding infrastructure issues, but to illustrate the nature of the issues involved and the different ways in which these will be taken forward.
- 2.21 There are a number of other areas of infrastructure provision which will require further consideration as the Infrastructure Delivery Plan is prepared during 2014. Passenger transport and emergency services are briefly addressed below. At this stage in the plan-making process consideration of these areas is not necessary. The Council is not aware of any cases where the Planning Inspectorate has taken lack of rail or bus capacity as a reason to reject options or lower the level of development put forward as part of Local Plans.
- 2.22 Emergency services were addressed in Chapter 2 of the Supporting Document<sup>4</sup>. Police, ambulance and fire services are all in the process of rationalising their estate portfolios. Fire and ambulance services are unlikely to take on new estate, although development of 10,000 dwellings in the Gilston Area (north of Harlow) might require the provision of a part-time fire station. The police service indicated that larger developments may require the provision of additional custody facilities. This will need further consideration as part of the Broad Locations DPD and is not addressed further as part of this Topic Paper.
- 2.23 The Council continues to work with Network Rail and the Train and Bus Operating Companies in terms of provision of improved services. Further information on these will be considered as the Infrastructure Delivery Plan takes shape during 2014.

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<sup>4</sup> Supporting Document Section 2.10: Community and Leisure. See [www.eastherts.gov.uk/supportingdocument](http://www.eastherts.gov.uk/supportingdocument)

## **3. Transport**

- 3.1 This section focuses on highways issues. The Council continues to work with Network Rail and passenger transport providers to understand the implications for the development strategy. This section will therefore evolve through the preparation of the Infrastructure Delivery Plan.
- 3.2 Paragraph 32 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states that “development should only be prevented or refused on transport grounds where the residual cumulative impacts of development are severe.” There is no accepted definition of ‘severe’ transport impacts at present. A definition may emerge over time through practice, interpretation and decisions by the Planning Inspectorate, through the appeals system or in the courts. Paragraph 32, whilst significant in terms of planning applications and Transport Assessments, has not as yet been a significant feature of Local Plan Examinations.
- 3.3 East Herts Council has sought independent advice and clarification of the approach to this from the Advisory Team for Large Applications (ATLAS). ATLAS has advised that it may not be possible to determine conclusively what constitutes a ‘severe impact’ as part of the plan-making process, as further planning stages would refine and provide greater detail of the specific range of necessary transport mitigation measures.
- 3.4 East Herts Council has worked closely with Hertfordshire County Council and Essex County Council during the process of plan formulation to understand the potential transport impacts of development. The Transport Update draws on transport modelling and development management advice. Based on this work, Hertfordshire County Council submitted a Transport Update<sup>5</sup> (November 2013) to East Herts Council, based on the shortlisted areas of search (summer 2012). Paragraph 1.3 of the Transport update explains that:
- The advice provided in the report and undertaken by East Herts Council to date is proportionate to the preferred options stage of plan making, as set out in HCC’s ‘Protocol for Working with District and Boroughs during the Local Plan Process 2013’. It aims to set an agenda for issues that need to be addressed, and, if possible, resolved during the continued development of the plan.*
- 3.5 The key messages from the Transport Update have been taken into account where appropriate in Chapter 6 of the Supporting Document.
- 3.6 At this stage the Infrastructure Topic Paper is not able to add further to the information contained within the Transport Update. However, the District Council will work to address the identified evidence gaps set out in the Transport Update, to produce an Infrastructure Delivery Plan

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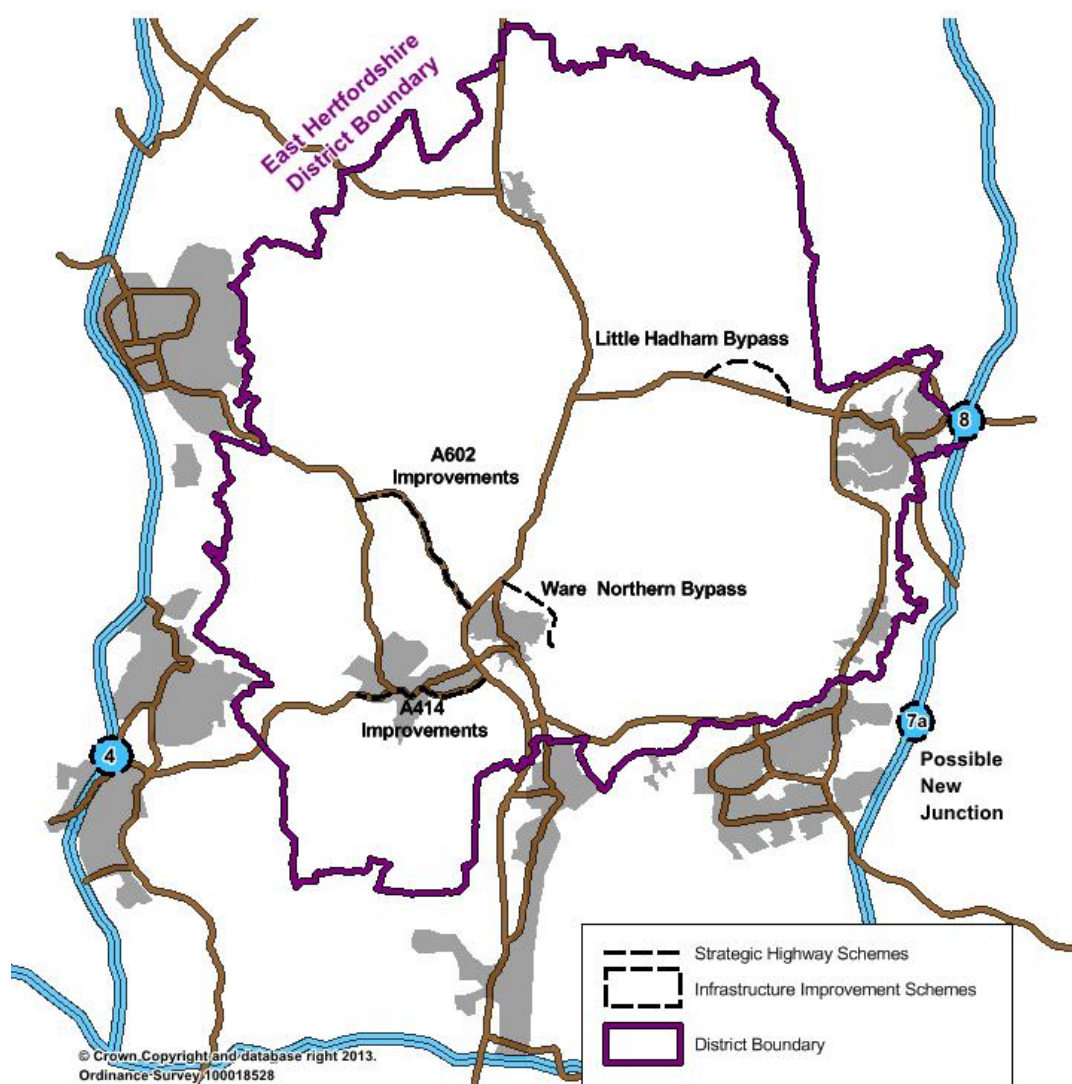
<sup>5</sup> District Planning Executive Panel, 3 December 2013

to support the District Plan at examination in public in late 2014/early 2015.

- 3.7 Additional evidence will be drawn from the Urban Transport Plan for Bishop's Stortford and Sawbridgeworth (forthcoming), the Urban Transport Plan for Hertford and Ware, the A414 Study, the Inter-Urban Route Strategy and any other technical work. This work will need to be pursued through joint working between East Herts Council, the transport and highways authorities and the landowner/developers to test development scenarios and mitigation measures.
- 3.8 The results of this work will inform the Delivery Study (see Chapter 2 above) which should provide further information in respect of likely viability taking account of other infrastructure and planning costs.
- 3.9 Following these additional studies the Council will need to secure further advice from Hertfordshire County Council as the Highway Authority, as to whether or not development is acceptable.
- 3.10 Finally, it should also be noted that some of the testing work will go beyond the scope of the plan-making process and will rest on scrutiny of the Transport Assessments accompanying planning applications at future development sites.
- 3.11 The Highways Agency has indicated the need for further investigation into measures to address the capacity of junction 4 of the A1(M) and junction 8 of the M11. Essex County Council is promoting a new junction 7a on the M11, which could also serve new development in and around Harlow.
- 3.12 The Broad Location to the north and east of Ware is likely to require a northern bypass between Widbury Hill and the A10 in order to avoid the congested High Street. The Little Hadham Bypass and improvements to the A414 and A602 are being promoted by Hertfordshire County Council as part of the primary route network.
- 3.13 Transport modelling has shown that an A414-M11 bypass (i.e. a link between the Eastwick junction and a proposed new junction 7a) is unlikely to fully mitigate transport impacts of large-scale development in the Gilston Area (north of Harlow) and therefore further testing will need to focus on a range of smaller viable measures.
- 3.14 Further consideration will need to be given to the cross-boundary implications of traffic growth. Outside East Herts there are considerable growth pressures, particularly in the A1(M) and M11 corridors, as well as the A414 and A120. Some of these issues are apparent, for example in Essex County Council's response to Uttlesford District Council's draft Local Plan. These areas will need to be assessed further with Hertfordshire and Essex County Councils and the Highways Agency.

3.14 Figure 3.1 illustrates the most expensive and significant schemes which will require further investigation as part of the plan-making process. There are many other smaller schemes not shown on the diagram which will need to be investigated further prior to submission of the District Plan to examination.

**Figure 3.1: Major highways options for further investigation**





## **4. Schools**

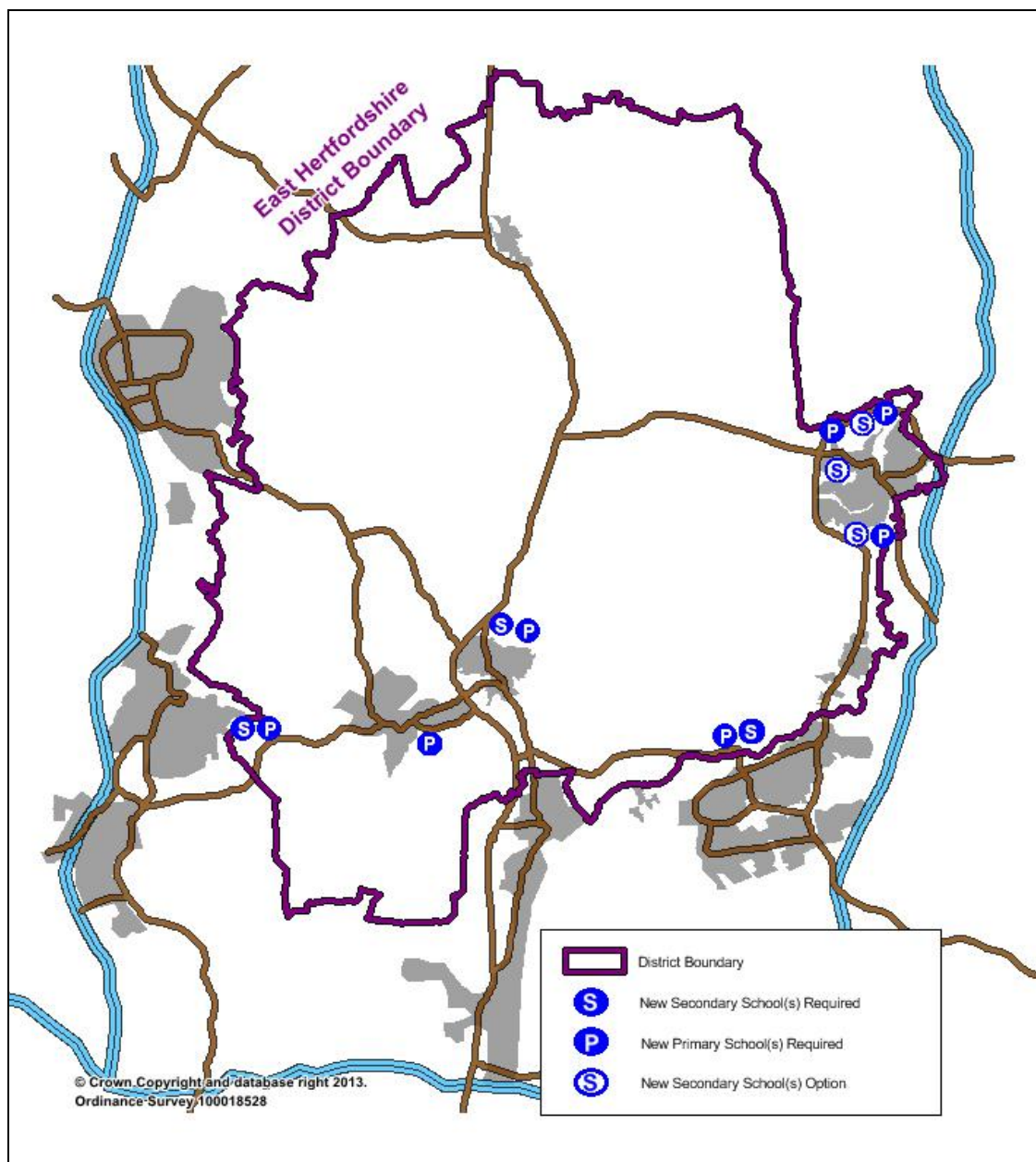
- 4.1 Current Government policy is to promote Free Schools and Academies. A number of secondary schools have opted out of local authority control to become Academies. Given these changes in national policy, Hertfordshire County Council's role is a commissioning one: it cannot direct admissions.
- 4.2 Additional school capacity needs to be delivered within the relevant school planning areas. At secondary level, the school catchments are as follows:
- Bishop's Stortford (including Sawbridgeworth)
  - Hertford and Ware
  - Buntingford
  - Welwyn Garden City
  - Stevenage
- The villages tend to fall within one of the catchments.
- 4.3 Within this context, in September 2013<sup>6</sup> Hertfordshire County Council provided a response in relation to the shortlisted areas of search agreed for further testing in summer 2012. The response has been taken into account in formulating Chapter 6 of the Supporting Document and also in the policies in Part 1 of the Draft District Plan.
- 4.4 Based on the County Council's response, the District Plan identifies locations for potential new schools, as shown in Figure 4.1.
- 4.5 New secondary schools will be required to the north of Ware, in the Gilston Area (north of Harlow) and to the east of Welwyn Garden City. In Bishop's Stortford there is uncertainty around the location of additional secondary capacity. In order to resolve this, the District Plan identifies three options for new secondary school sites. The remainder of the additional capacity requirements will be delivered through expansion of existing secondary schools within each catchment.
- 4.6 A number of new primary school sites have been identified. The remainder of the additional primary school capacity will be provided through the expansion of existing schools.
- 4.7 The District Plan facilitates school expansion through the 'Major Developed Sites' designation (Policy GBR3) which allows schools to expand even where they are located within the Green Belt.

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<sup>6</sup> District Planning Executive Panel, 3 October 2013.

- 4.8 Going forward, there will need to be clarification of the extent of central government funding for new schools. The availability of central government funding will be the major impact on the financial viability of development, including contributions towards a wide range of infrastructure necessary to ensure sustainability development. Although landowners and developers are likely to be expected to contribute towards new schools, it is unlikely to be financially viable for this funding stream to support new schools on its own.
- 4.9 Another area for consideration will need to be in relation to demand for school places from areas outside the District.

**Figure 4.1: New school provision**



## **5. Health**

## 5.1 Introduction

5.1.1 The Infrastructure Topic Paper addresses facilities and services. Public health and planning for healthy societies through the promotion of physical activity is an important aspect of planning addressed through approaches to mixed-use communities and green infrastructure. This is addressed separately in the draft District Plan.

5.1.2 There are five main types of healthcare facility (excluding specialist and private hospitals and home care):

- **District General Hospitals** provide acute care services including accident and emergency and maternity functions. Although outside of the district, Lister Hospital in Stevenage and Princess Alexandra Hospital in Harlow serve East Herts;
- **Local General Hospitals** offer a wide range of primary care services that patients use most often including outpatient, therapies, diagnostics and urgent care. NHS Hertfordshire is proposing to redevelop the QEII Hospital site in Welwyn Garden City in 2014 as a Local General Hospital (with acute care services being transferred to Lister);
- **Urgent Care Centres** treat most injuries or illnesses that are urgent but not life threatening. For example sprains and strains, broken bones, minor burns and scalds, minor head and eye injuries, bites and stings. Hertford County Hospital is an Urgent Care Centre;
- **Community Hospitals** provide outpatient services, for example including a Minor Injuries Unit. There are community hospitals in Bishop's Stortford (the Herts and Essex Hospital) and Cheshunt;
- **GP surgeries** are located in the five towns in East Herts as well as the larger villages of Hertford Heath, Much Hadham, Puckeridge, Stanstead Abbots and Watton-at-Stone. There are a total of 70 practices in East Herts.

5.1.3 In order to provide a better and more efficient level of care, some health services are being decentralised closer to where people live, such as community hospitals, GP practices or in their own homes. Thus, in terms of plan-making, the focus for new health infrastructure will be on providing a limited number of small-scale local health facilities such as health centres for GP practices. It is not considered that specific allocations of new facilities will be made although any requirement for the provision of healthcare will be set out in the development strategy.

5.1.4 The Primary Care Trust (PCT) was abolished and East & North Herts Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) and NHS England are the main two statutory bodies that have replaced it.

5.1.5 The CCG is responsible for commissioning health care services for the residents in east and north Hertfordshire including hospital, ambulance,

mental health and community services. The CCG works closely with Herts County Council to jointly commission services. For East Herts the CCG commissions services from not only Hertfordshire providers such as Herts Partnership Trust, Hertfordshire Community Trust and East & North Herts Trust but also Princess Alexandra Hospital Harlow as the nearest acute hospital.

## **5.2 GP Practices**

5.2.1 NHS England through each of its 27 Area Teams (AT) is able to provide basic capacity information on GP Premises. The AT which covers East Herts is the Hertfordshire & South Midlands. NHS England commissions General Medical Services, Pharmacy, Optometry, Dentistry and some specialist services whilst Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) commission other health care such as A & E, outpatients and mental health. Currently, NHS England is working in conjunction with Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) to develop a longer term Primary and Community Care Strategy.

5.2.2 In Hertfordshire there are approximately 2,000-2,200 patients per GP. At 2.2 residents per dwelling, this equates to 900-1,000 dwellings per new GP. NHS England provides new GP surgeries facilities at a range of scales depending on local circumstances. Where an existing GP Practice relocates to a new surgery, for example at a large urban extension, then larger facilities may be provided to meet the proposed increased population. In some cases smaller facilities may be justified, depending on the local need. However, in most cases new GP surgeries will take patients from a fairly wide area.

5.2.3 Recognising the limited capacity of existing GP practices, East Herts Council has identified the need for additional healthcare services and facilities. It is anticipated that these would be located within the District centres in the large urban extensions proposed as part of the development strategy. Specific references to the need for new health services and facilities are provided within the policies as follows:

- DPS5: Infrastructure Requirements;
- BISH7: South of Bishop's Stortford;
- BISH8: North of Bishop's Stortford;
- WARE3: Land North and East of Ware;
- EWEL1: Land East of Welwyn Garden City;
- GA1: Land in the Gilston Area.

5.2.4 Although NHS England may obtain government grants for the capital costs of new health facilities, the biggest challenge for the local Area Teams lies in terms of the revenue costs for the first 3 years of a new facility, which have to be paid out of existing budgets. NHS England has therefore signalled its intention to look to local planning authorities to divert a proportion of developer contributions to healthcare provision.

5.2.5 East Herts Council will need to investigate NHS funding streams further, and to undertake financial viability assessment in order to ascertain what level of contributions it may be reasonable for developers to make.

**Table 5.1: NHS England comments on emerging plan housing numbers**

Location	NHS England Comment
Bishop's Stortford	The majority of existing practices in the area are constrained, although two do have capacity, however, both these surgery premises are not ideally suited for modern general medical services and this therefore, limits the practice's ability to accept new patients. It was the former PCT's intention that a proposed new surgery premises, to be located at Silver Leys, would be positioned, not only, to meet existing capacity issues within the Town centre, but would have been in a location to accept patients from the proposed new development north of the Town. However, because the Planning application for the new surgery premises (and subsequent appeal) was refused, and with a very large projected population across the proposed development locations, then additional GP Premises facilities may need to be considered on one of the development sites, rather than add pressure to the existing practices in the local area, which will be unable to accommodate the projected increase in population overall.
Buntingford	Currently, both practices within the town have capacity to accept new patients. The proposed development sites amounting to around 500 dwellings would potentially increase the population by circa 1,200 patients, which could be accommodated across both the existing town centre practices.
Hertford	The existing GP premises capacity within the town is already constrained, particularly in the case of two surgery premises. Therefore, any additional residential development in the area will only add pressure on existing facilities, which would not, as a result, be able to accommodate the projected increase in population without major investment in GP premises provision within the town.
Sawbridge-worth	The town is served by one practice only which is currently very constrained, therefore any additional development in the area will only add to the present situation. Although overall the development figures proposed on the out skirts of the Town are modest, the close proximity of the proposed development at Harlow North, could add additional pressure on the practice current capacity.
Ware	The existing GP premises capacity within the Town is already constrained, particularly with regard to one surgery premises. Although the proposed residential development in the area is moderate, it will only add pressure on the existing local

Location	NHS England Comment
	practices to accommodate the additional growth in population, which may, given the current capacity, have implications on the services provided locally.
Gilston Area (north of Harlow)	Currently, patients in this area are served by several practices across a broad area, which would not have the capacity to meet the demands of an additional circa 24,000 residents. This would require a new surgery premises facility on site of at least 1,200m <sup>2</sup> (net internal area) to meet this type of projected population growth.
Villages	Increases in local populations will impact on existing surgery premises facilities, Standon & Puckeridge may be particularly affected, which may therefore, in due course, require the expansion of the existing surgery premises, if this can be achieved on the existing site.
Welwyn Garden City (East)	In our view this proposed development site would have limited implications on the capacity of practices in the East Herts District Council area. However, such a development would have implications for Welwyn Garden City practices, local to the area, but as these fall outside the remit of East Herts the NHS has not commented on this.

### 5.3 Hospitals

5.3.1 The major hospitals lie outside East Herts, at the Lister Hospital in Stevenage and the Princess Alexandra in Harlow. East Herts Council has had direct discussions around the Key Diagram with staff from both hospitals, and it is clear that the main implications relate to the need for improved outpatient facilities. The text below is based on discussions with both hospitals.

#### Lister Hospital, Stevenage

5.3.2 The East and North Hertfordshire NHS Trust identified in its Our Changing Hospitals (OCH) business case in 2009 a programme of works to consolidate acute clinical services in a specialist unit whilst delivering care closer to home for the majority of patients within its catchment area.

5.3.3 The Lister Hospital is to become the focal point for acute clinical services and has seen investment of approximately £150m. This work includes additional wards which will increase the number of beds at the Lister to 682 (including 30 x Special Care Baby Unit cots, 20 x Critical Care beds and a 30 bedded decant ward) a significant increase on the current number of beds to compensate for the changes in Welwyn Garden City at the QEII hospital.

5.3.4 The Lister Hospital is also increasing the number of operating theatres and are providing an expanded specialist Emergency Department and all work is due to be completed in 2014. Hertfordshire Partnership



University NHS Foundation Trust is also making changes at the Lister and QEII hospitals but this is not part of the OCH development.

- 5.3.5 The service model underpinning the OCH programme is for patients to visit the Lister Hospital for their acute care and receive the remainder of their care from the hospital nearest to them. The residents of the East Herts area will be able to receive the majority of their care closer to their homes from both Hertford County and the new QEII Hospitals. The OCH business case factored in population growth so that appropriate capacity will be provided in the new facilities.
- 5.3.6 In order to strengthen this service model, the Trust will look to develop more out-reach services and plans to expand Hertford County Hospital will undoubtedly be considered in the future. Hertford County Hospital is a modern purpose built facility providing out patients, diagnostics, therapies and children's services.
- 5.3.7 The new QEII Hospital is currently under construction and is due to be completed in 2015. It will provide ambulatory care services including Local A&E, rapid assessment unit, out patients, diagnostics, children's services, therapies, endoscopy and specialist day treatments.

#### **Princess Alexandra Hospital, Harlow**

- 5.3.8 Princess Alexandra Hospital (PAH) is a small to medium sized District General Hospital with 420 adult beds. The hospital has had no major investment since its completion in the 1960s, yet it has a very high level of usage of its Accident and Emergency and maternity services, with occupancy rates often running close to capacity.
- 5.3.9 The restructuring of health services at other sites in the sub-region, including in Enfield and Barnet, QEII in Welwyn Garden City, and Herts and Essex in Bishop's Stortford, has led to the growth of the number of GP surgeries which refer patients to PAH, currently in the region of 25-30 separate practices. This combined with an aging population and significant population growth in the hospital's catchment, means that the hospital anticipates significant growth in demand over the next twenty years.
- 5.3.10 In order to meet this projected increase, the hospital is seeking to expand outpatient facilities at Broxbourne and Cheshunt and is also seeking to provide new wards and a larger Accident and Emergency unit at its current site. These measures would alleviate pressure on the hospital from across the catchment area, including East Herts. The majority of funding for provision of this additional capacity will come from mainstream funding sources through the Department for Health.
- 5.3.11 In terms of patient demand from within the East Herts District area, the majority of referrals come from the eastern side of the district, including Sawbridgeworth, Bishop's Stortford and the villages. Patients from

Ware and Hertford tend to visit Lister Hospital in Stevenage and residents of Buntingford primarily look to Lister.

## **6. Water**

## **6.1 Introduction**

6.1.1 Water supply and waste water services are delivered by private sector companies which are regulated nationally. The sections below have been drafted with input from Thames Water and Affinity Water.

## **6.2 Water Supply**

6.2.1 Affinity Water is the water supply company for the area. Water resources and water supply infrastructure are the two main operational areas. The company's plans for the former are set out in a Water Resources Management Plan (WRMP) which is subject to agreement of the Environment Agency as environmental regulator, OFWAT as the consumer regulator and the Secretary of State. As a water company Affinity has a statutory requirement to supply water. It does not object to development proposals in principle although it does advise on their technical feasibility and potential cost.

6.2.2 Given the national regulatory requirements, the main focus of concern for the water companies is around the logistics of water supply. The principle of water supply and the impact of abstraction on the environment is a separate matter, which falls outside the scope of the Infrastructure Topic Paper. Supported by Affinity Water and the Environment Agency, the draft East Herts District Plan includes water efficiency targets for new development in excess of Building Regulation requirements – see Policy WAT3: Efficient Use of Water Resources.

6.2.3 However, East Herts Council has expressed concerns to Affinity Water and the Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) in respect of the company's draft WRMP, which relies on increased demand management including leakage reduction, metering and water efficiency measures to offset the projected increase in consumption from population increases. The issue of water resources is also a matter for the national regulatory framework.

6.2.4 The Planning Inspectorate does not view general water resources issues as a reason to reduce the housing requirement. Reflecting this, the Council does not view water supply issues as a basis for seeking to lower the amount of development in the District Plan. However, the Council recognises that in meeting the new demand, Affinity Water will incur additional costs.

6.2.5 The focus of the East Herts Infrastructure Topic Paper is in relation to water supply infrastructure. In general it is easier to supply sites that neighbour existing developed areas as the mains network is better adapted to cope. Affinity Water has reviewed the Draft District Plan Key Diagram. Since most of the proposed areas in the draft District Plan are adjacent to existing towns / villages, the overall cost to developers of supply to these sites should be viable. Given this, together with the statutory requirement to supply water, Affinity Water's

position is that it can supply any of the potential sites and Broad Locations within the draft District Plan.

- 6.2.6 Affinity Water's network of infrastructure and pipes has been designed to be suitable for existing developments with a limited amount of spare capacity to accept incremental growth. Where large scale development is required, the network may require infrastructure improvements to be made to ensure that the new developments have an appropriate supply network and source of water, and that existing customers do not experience deterioration in service.
- 6.2.6 Affinity Water plans for new infrastructure as new development sites emerge and planning applications are made. The company then works with developers to ensure that new infrastructure needed is appropriate for the developments proposed and funded by them. It is impossible for Affinity Water to give accurate information on the type and cost of infrastructure needed until detailed plans for new developments have been completed.
- 6.2.7 This detailed work does not form part of the plan-making process. For the purposes of production of an Infrastructure Delivery Plan to support the East Herts District Plan Affinity Water does not consider it appropriate to undertake significant additional work in relation to water supply infrastructure.
- 6.2.8 Finally, East Herts Council is aware of complaints from local people about low water pressure for domestic supplies in Ware. The Council is currently working with Affinity Water to investigate the causes and possible solutions to this problem.

### **6.3 Waste Water**

- 6.3.1 East Herts Council has worked closely with Thames Water in relation to the shortlisted areas of search (summer 2012). Thames Water has commented on the emerging plan in some detail, and this section is based on the company's comments.
- 6.3.2 In relation to the proposed development locations including site allocations and broad locations, the position for the existing infrastructure assets has been set out in Table 6.1 below. This consists of Thames Water's comments on work that would be required to the main sewage treatment works (STWs) serving the district and the sewerage network in order to support growth.
- 6.3.3 It should be noted that the sewerage networks and the sewage treatment works also receive flows from neighbouring local authorities and as such the need for upgrades can also be affected by the timing and scale of development elsewhere.

#### **Developer Requirements**

- 6.3.4 It is essential that developers discuss proposals with Thames Water at an early stage so that the impacts on the sewerage network and sewage treatment works can be understood. Where upgrades are required it will be necessary for developers to identify how they will be delivered.
- 6.3.5 Where necessary, planning conditions may need to be used to ensure that any sewerage network upgrades are delivered ahead of the occupation of development to avoid adverse impacts such as sewer flooding. Thames Water requested that policies should be included in the District Plan to support this approach and ensure the delivery of this essential infrastructure required to support growth. East Herts Council has addressed this through Policy DPS5: Infrastructure Requirements.

#### **Rye Meads Sewage Treatment Works**

- 6.3.6 This will be impacted on by growth proposals in East Herts District, potentially the Gilston Area (north of Harlow), Sawbridgeworth, Hertford, Ware and Welwyn Garden City sites, as well as the growth proposals from many of the neighbouring Districts. Thames Water had identified upgrade works within the Water Cycle Study (WCS) and these generally remain valid however, the solutions and timing of them is fluid.
- 6.3.7 Within the WCS documents Thames Water were required to state when the upgrades would be undertaken however, due to the recent economic downturn and the uncertainty on growth numbers and timescales, the majority of these upgrades have not yet been put in

place and are currently being reviewed. Thames Water are monitoring the loads into the STW and the quality and volumes of effluent produced and do not foresee an immediate need to upgrade the STW. The delivery of any STW upgrade will be aligned with house completion requirements.

6.3.8 Table 6.1 below presents Thames Water’s comments for each broad development area, splitting out the comments on the sewerage network (piped sewers) and the treatment works.

**Table 6.1: Thames Water comments on shortlisted options**

<b>Location</b>		<b>Thames Water Comment</b>
Bishop’s Stortford	Sewerage network	With regard to sewerage network upgrades, the most significant development site is to the north-west of the town and Thames Water are already discussing requirements with the developers.
	Treatment Works	Bishops Stortford STW was upgraded recently to accommodate flows from Stansted Airport and for some major development sites within the catchment. Passenger numbers at the airport have dropped since the upgrade was implemented however; the onus is on Thames Water to monitor the performance of the STW and react accordingly and within appropriate timescales.
Buntingford	Sewerage network	As a result of the suggested development, Thames Water are undertaking scenario planning to identify the extent of capacity deficiencies that may exist and possible solutions. A hydraulic model of the catchment is to be built and work on this has recently commenced. It is acknowledged that to upgrade the sewers within the main High Street would be disruptive to the community and this will be avoided if at all possible. Depending on the exact location of any chosen development site, new connections directly to the STW following the line of the bypass are most likely. Alternative options could be to provide local tank sewers to balance the flows.
	Treatment Works	Buntingford STW has seen a reduction in foul flows in recent years but these have now started to increase again as a result of some small housing developments being completed. Some spare capacity exists for further development to commence, however an upgrade to the STW will be required to cater for flows from all the developments proposed. The extent of the upgrades cannot, at this time be detailed but Thames Water is carrying out investigations and modelling work to enable the upgrades to be scoped.

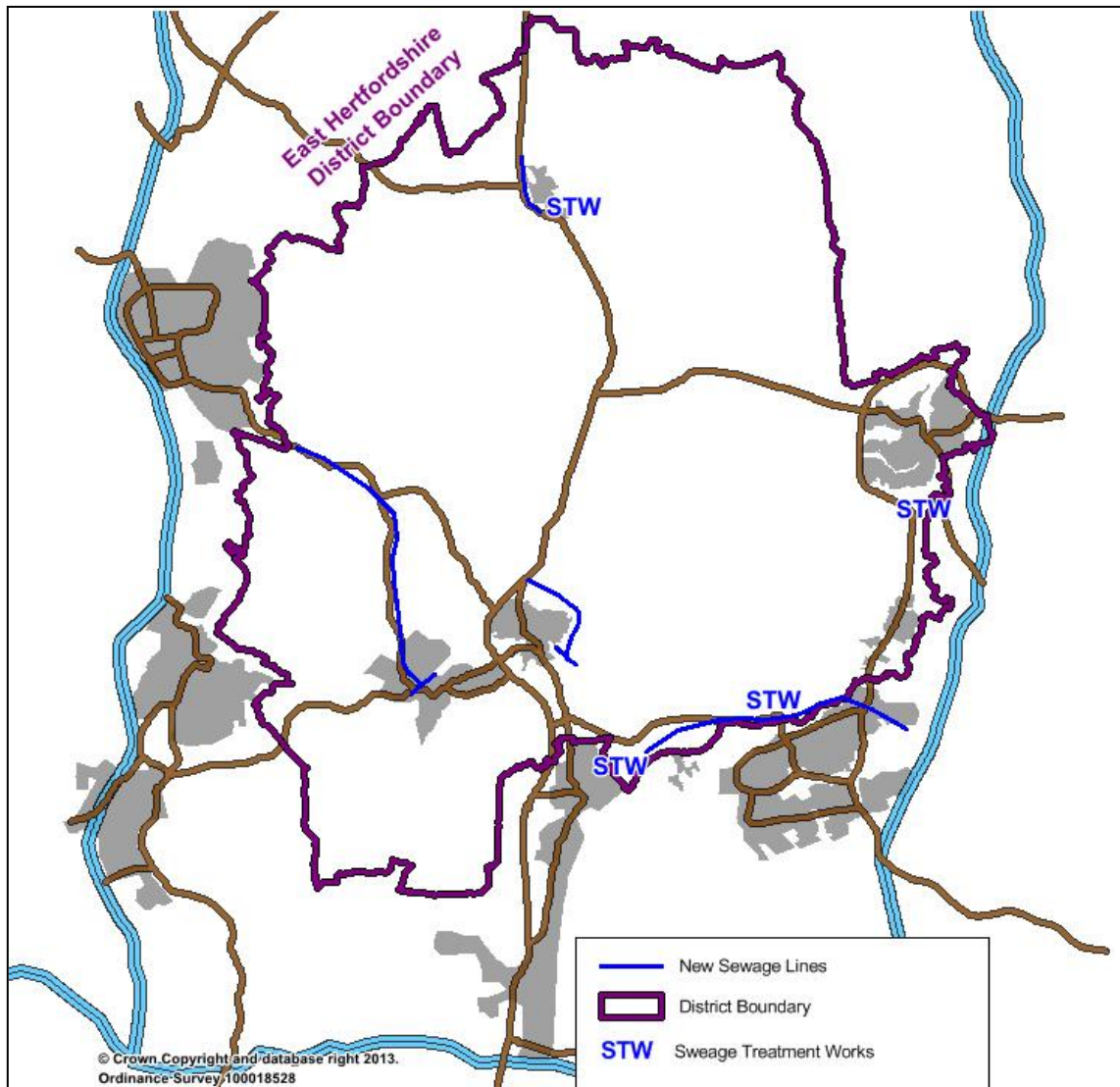
Location		Thames Water Comment
Hertford	Sewerage network	Local network upgrades will be required. Because these sites are separated from each other in drainage terms, Thames Water would require each developer to present a drainage strategy for their site for Thames Water to consider with the LPA through the planning process. This is because it is unlikely that all the sites will be the subject to parallel timescales that would enable a co-ordinated solution to be planned and constructed. Thames Water would also expect the developers to fund any upgrades required for these areas through the requisition process or, construct the upgrades by their own means. It may be necessary for planning conditions to be used to ensure that any upgrades required are delivered ahead of the occupation of development.
	Treatment Works	Served by Rye Meads Sewage Treatment Works
Sawbridge-Worth	Sewerage network	This area drains to Rye Meads STW and the housing numbers are insignificant in terms of additional foul flows onto the treatment works. However, the location of development sites on the west side of town may increase the risk of sewer flooding and therefore sewerage network upgrades maybe required, possibly in the form of underground balancing tanks.
	Treatment Works	Served by Rye Meads Sewage Treatment Works
Ware	Sewerage network	Large scale development would require the provision of a new sewer to the north and east of the town to connect with the trunk sewer. The existing sewer lies underneath the High Street and this new sewer to the north and east would therefore avoid disruption here.
	Sewerage network	Served by Rye Meads Sewage Treatment Works
Gilston Area (north of Harlow)	Sewerage network	<p>This is linked with other development proposals within Harlow District and the need for a new outfall sewer from Harlow to Rye Meads STW has already been established. Thames Water are proposing to seek funding in the next business plan (2015-2020).</p> <p>Thames Water is aware of proposals by Places for People to construct a new sewage treatment works serving the development area. This is feasible but would need to comply with all the necessary environmental regulations and safeguards.</p>
East of Welwyn	Sewerage network	This proposal will be in addition to any similar proposals made by Welwyn Hatfield Council in their



Location		Thames Water Comment
Garden City		adjacent area. Thames Water must consider the total impact on the existing wastewater network taking account of flows from Welwyn Hatfield. The initial drainage solution for the site remains valid, connecting to the recently constructed outfall sewer from the town, however, despite this being a very large underground balancing tank with flow control, it will be necessary to ensure that there is no additional impact on the network either upstream or downstream of the tank. It is considered that all the flows currently being proposed can be accommodated but sensitivity checking will be required when the final numbers from both local authorities are agreed.
	Treatment Works	Served by Rye Meads Sewage Treatment Works

6.3.9 Figure 6.1 shows the location of potential new and upgraded sewerage infrastructure. It shows the possible route of new sewers avoiding the High Streets in Buntingford and Ware which could provide additional capacity to serve development to the north of these areas. It also shows the upgrades needed to Sewage Treatment Works at Buntingford and Rye Meads, and the potential new treatment works in the Gilston Area (north of Harlow). Potential upgrades to the trunk sewer along the Beane from Stevenage to Hertford are also shown.

Figure 6.1: Potential new/upgraded sewers and sewage treatment works



## **7. Other Utilities**

## **7.1 Introduction**

7.1.1 There are a number of other utilities which provide essential services to existing and new development. Funding gas and electricity provision is arranged directly between developer and provider, and the costs are commercially sensitive and therefore unavailable. Broadband internet is supported by national grant. The arrangements around these utilities are areas where plan-making plays a very limited, if any, role. The overviews presented here provide background context.

## **7.2 Gas**

- 7.2.1 The gas industry can be split into the infrastructure for production, transmission, distribution and metering and the supply of the gas.
- 7.2.2 Production infrastructure is a competitive market and includes the production and importing infrastructure of the major oil companies (e.g. BP/Shell). Gas transmission occurs through the National Transmission System (NTS) operated by the regulated monopoly of National Grid Gas. Three off-takes from the National Grid system supply the whole of the Hertfordshire area.
- 7.2.3 Local Gas Distribution Networks (GDNs) supply the gas from the transmission network to the consumer. GDNs prepare long term development statements (10 year periods – reviewed annually). Reinforcement Plans are produced annually. GDN investment plans cover 5 year periods and are based on consumer demand growth trends, known locations of capacity limitation and slow rollout into rural areas.
- 7.2.4 The cost of network infrastructure both on-site and off-site will be borne by developers. The gas company may wish to install strategic pipelines at an early stage of the developments and will recharge a proportion of the costs to each developer. National Grid will not install infrastructure on a speculative basis to serve potential developments and will need to enter into agreement with developers before any work is commenced. Ofgem (the gas and electricity regulator) will not accept the practice of speculative main laying as this would be seen as anti-competitive and against the interests of the consumer.

## **7.3 Electricity**

7.3.1 Generation sources include fossil-fuelled power stations, nuclear power stations, waste incineration and on-and offshore wind power. Electricity is then transmitted through a national network of electricity lines operated by National Grid, before connecting to local networks owned by distribution network operators (DNOs). EDF Energy Ltd is the DNO covering all of East Herts District. DNOs prepare Long Term Development Statements for 5 year periods, reviewed annually based

on consumer growth trends for whole DNO area, and known locations of capacity limits.

7.3.2 Whilst there is some spare capacity in several East Herts towns, housing growth will require a substantial investment in infrastructure before a connection is permitted. This may be in the form of additional sub-stations and new heavier duty cables. The electricity companies will seek all costs associated with these works, including design, from the developer.

## **7.4 Broadband Internet**

7.4.1 Hertfordshire County Council and Buckinghamshire County Councils have joined together in the 'Connected Counties' initiative to roll out fibre broadband services across both counties. BT has been appointed to install the necessary infrastructure using central government grant money.

7.4.2 The Connected Counties website at [www.connectedcounties.org](http://www.connectedcounties.org) provides useful information on the rollout of the programme. Maps on the website showing proposed fibre broadband deployment indicate differences in approach between the following three broad areas across East Herts District:

- Most of the urban areas including Hertford, Ware, Bishop's Stortford and Sawbridgeworth are expected to achieve fibre broadband by April 2016;
- There are no plans for fibre broadband in much of the rest of the rural area of the district but as part of the Connected Counties programme the aim is to ensure that these areas achieve at least 2MBps by April 2016; and
- There is a substantial area of the District including Buntingford, Standon and Puckeridge, which is currently under investigation for inclusion within the proposed fibre broadband rollout area.

7.4.3 East Herts Council will work with partners through the Connected Counties programme to seek to achieve fibre broadband coverage in the latter area, particularly given the proposals for significant development allocations in Buntingford.

7.4.4 Recognising the particular importance of fast broadband connections to local businesses, East Herts Council will focus in particular on facilitating connections to employment areas in these locations.

7.4.5 Draft District Plan Policy ED3: Communications Infrastructure sets out the Council's proposed approach to dealing with planning applications for structures which may assist in the delivery of information technology.

## **8. Conclusions and Next Steps**

- 8.1 The Infrastructure Topic Paper has shown how infrastructure considerations have been part of the process of developing the draft District Plan. The Topic Paper provides a starting point for further investigation of infrastructure delivery to support the District Plan. Over the coming year, East Herts Council will undertake a significant amount of further work, in partnership with infrastructure and service providers, to assess as far as possible the likely costs of the required infrastructure. This will include not only the infrastructure set out in this Topic Paper, but a range of other infrastructure items where cost data is available.
- 8.2 The remainder of this section explores further some of the main issues which will need to be addressed over the coming year.

### **Developer Contributions**

- 8.3 One issue which has arisen from the Topic Paper is that a number of providers are seeking developer contributions to fund infrastructure, including both capital costs and revenue costs. This will need further investigation in relation to the regulations and financial viability, because the total funding 'pot' available through the uplift in land value arising from the grant of planning permission (which generates the money to finance development and developer contributions) may not be sufficient to meet the legitimate expectations of all providers, taking account of the statutory tests set out in Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Regulation 122.
- 8.4 The aim of the planning system is to deliver sustainable development, supported by the full range of infrastructure and services necessary. However, given the range of competing demands and aspirations, the District Council will need to make some difficult decisions in terms of what infrastructure it considers to be a priority in terms of delivery of the plan. Whilst Part 1 of the draft District Plan sets out the key infrastructure, the Council will need to understand in the context of further assessment of financial viability, where the top priorities for expenditure should be. This will include aspirations for sustainability features, local standards, and importantly, affordable housing.
- 8.5 Another aspect of developer contributions relates to Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL). The Council will set out its position on CIL later in 2014, since this will need to be considered alongside all the other developer costs as an aspect of financial viability. This will be addressed as part of the Delivery Study (see below).

### **New Homes Bonus**

- 8.5 One of the principles of the New Homes Bonus is that money should be directed to the areas where development occurs, to be spent on infrastructure or other items. Under East Herts Council's existing policy

a proportion of this money goes to the Parish Council in which the development is located.

- 8.6 However, the District Plan proposes three locations for future development which, although physically part of a town, are located within the administrative area of another Parish. These are:
- North of Buntingford (Cottered Parish)
  - North and East of Ware (Wareside Parish)
  - South of Bishop's Stortford (Thorley Parish)
- 8.7 It is proposed that East Herts Council's own regulations be reviewed to ensure that any future new homes bonus arising from development in these locations will be equitably distributed between the Town and Parish Councils, taking account of the need for infrastructure provision within the towns of which the development will form a part.

### **The Delivery Study 2014**

- 8.8 The Council will use the draft District Plan to carry out a Delivery Study during the course of 2014 which will develop the evidence base to a level sufficient to meet the requirements of examination in public. East Herts Council already has initial viability evidence in relation to land values, known as a part 1 viability study.
- 8.9 The main focus of the Delivery Study will be on understanding the financial viability of the full 'basket' of costs on delivery, based on knowledge of specific infrastructure likely to arise from the specific development locations proposed in the draft District Plan. It is only by assessing the full costs of development, including all these site-specific requirements and other planning costs that it is possible to know how much it is realistic to expect developers to contribute to specific items.
- 8.10 In order to undertake the Delivery Study in a robust manner, it will be essential for the Council to work with developers of the larger allocations and Broad Locations to understand and critically appraise the evidence they submit. This work is only possible now that the Council has a clearer idea of the locations of development as proposed in the draft District Plan. The Council will work with developers following the consultation on the draft Plan.
- 8.11 Mainstream public funding and other funding streams will be researched. This work will be necessary to understand how far it is reasonable to seek developer contributions. In some cases there are national funding pots at national and European level which are available to support growth areas.
- 8.12 Once East Herts Council has agreed its draft District Plan for consultation, it will also be possible to collect infrastructure information in earnest, focusing on specific requirements to serve the development proposals set out in the plan.



## **Infrastructure Delivery Plan 2014-15**

- 8.13 All this information will be gathered together into an Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP). The schedule underlying the IDP will show the phasing of development and the supporting infrastructure. The IDP will be updated annually alongside the Annual Monitoring Report, and further information added as it becomes available.
- 8.14 In order to understand financial viability implications of the IDP it will be necessary to work closely with landowners and developers at the development locations identified in the draft District Plan. The Council will commission specialist viability experts to undertake critical appraisal of the evidence submitted and to advise over viability matters.
- 8.15 It is anticipated that infrastructure and service providers will use the consultation on the draft District Plan to provide further information on infrastructure requirements. This information will be supplemented by further partnership working with infrastructure and service providers over the coming months.
- 8.16 The IDP will include a schedule of infrastructure information, consisting of a table showing what infrastructure is required, when it is required, where it is required, whose responsibility it will be to deliver it, and the anticipated funding sources.
- 8.17 Infrastructure planning is an on-going process from initial idea through to delivery. In between those two points there are a number of stages, including feasibility assessment, resource allocation and budgeting, planning permission, and construction.
- 8.18 Recognising the long lead-in times, it is proposed that the IDP should be updated annually with the latest evidence, including a risk assessment around key delivery aspects. This evidence will sit alongside the Annual Monitoring Report which details the housing trajectory, and will alert the Council to any necessary interventions to ensure the sustainable delivery of the District Plan. This may include triggers to look at contingency measures including review of the plan itself. Further details of the approach to delivery (including monitoring) are set out in Part 2 of the District Plan.

## **Partnership Working**

- 8.19 With the exception of parks and Leisure Centres at Hartham in Hertford and Grange Paddocks in Bishop's Stortford, East Herts Council itself delivers very little infrastructure directly. The role of the Council is therefore one of co-ordination and facilitation, rather than direction.

- 8.20 Through the preparation of the draft District Plan East Herts Council has already undertaken a considerable amount of work with key partners including Hertfordshire County Council, Essex County Council and others. This partnership will need to be extended throughout the plan period and will require mutual understanding of the limitations and constraints, including national policy requirements, which all organisations operate under.
- 8.21 East Herts Council has an established approach to cross-boundary strategic issues with all seven neighbouring local planning authorities. This is detailed in Chapter 7 of the Interim Development Strategy Report. Going forward, it is clear that there are particular cross-boundary infrastructure issues with a number of authorities, in particular relating to transport (particularly Uttlesford, Broxbourne, Harlow, Welwyn Hatfield), but also in relation to schools provision (Welwyn Hatfield). These infrastructure issues will need to be subject to further discussion as part of the preparation of the IDP.
- 8.22 The Local Enterprise Partnership LEP provides the gateway to significant funding opportunities. East Herts Council will use the draft District Plan to demonstrate to the LEP that infrastructure funding should be directed to East Herts, given the significant amount of development and the important sub-regional role of the District. East Herts Council will work with the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) to unlock funding opportunities and support bids.
- 8.23 East Herts Council will also need to work with other bodies including the Local Transport Body and the Local Nature Partnership to draw further evidence into the infrastructure planning process.

## **Conclusions**

- 8.24 The main messages from the Infrastructure Topic Paper are as follows.
- The District Plan provides the opportunity to provide a high-level framework for consideration of the cumulative impacts of development proposals before the planning application stage;
  - Utility companies are under a statutory requirement to provide their services and enable connection to developers who request it, and there is limited scope for the District Plan to engage in these areas;
  - There are sometimes wider environmental impacts which need to be addressed by District Plan policies, although some of these, for example in relation to water supply and abstraction, are governed by other regulatory regimes;
  - There will need to be further work to clarify and agree with partners the interpretation of 'severe' traffic impacts as set out in the NPPF;

- Some services such as education and health have experienced considerable changes in their configuration at national level and there is uncertainty about mainstream funding;
- There will always be inherent uncertainty in infrastructure delivery, particularly over the longer term, which the District Plan can to an extent address, but which it cannot fully resolve;
- Annual monitoring should include not only housing and development but also the provision of infrastructure which supports it.

8.25 The Infrastructure Topic Paper has illustrated the ways in which the infrastructure planning process will be taken forward by the District Council in the future. As set out in the introduction, this is part of an evolutionary process and will require capacity building and mutual understanding involving developers, providers, and the public.

# **Appendix A**

## **National Planning Practice Guidance (extract)**

**Extract from the National Planning Practice Guidance (Beta Test Version, August 2013)**

**How can the local planning authority show that a Local Plan is capable of being delivered?**

- A1. A Local Plan is an opportunity for the local planning authority to set out a positive vision for the area, but the plan should also be realistic about what can be achieved and when. This means paying careful attention to providing an adequate supply of land, identifying what infrastructure is required and how it can be funded, and ensuring that the requirements of the plan as a whole will not prejudice the viability of development.
- A2. Early discussion with infrastructure and service providers is particularly important to help understand their investment plans and critical dependencies. The local planning authority should also involve the Local Enterprise Partnership at an early stage in considering the strategic issues facing their area, including the prospects for investment in infrastructure.
- A3. The Local Plan should make clear, for at least the first five years, what infrastructure is required, who is going to fund and provide it, and how it relates to the anticipated rate and phasing of development. For the later stages of the plan period less detail may be provided as the position regarding the provision of infrastructure is likely to be less certain. If it is known that a development is unlikely to come forward until after the plan period due, for example, to uncertainty over deliverability of key infrastructure, then this should be clearly stated in the draft plan.
- A4. Where the deliverability of critical infrastructure is uncertain then the plan should address the consequences of this, including possible contingency arrangements. The detail concerning planned infrastructure provision can be set out in a supporting document such as an infrastructure delivery programme that can be updated regularly. However the key infrastructure requirements on which delivery of the plan depends should be contained in the Local Plan itself.
- A5. The evidence which accompanies a draft Local Plan should show how the policies in the plan have been tested for their impact on the viability of development, including (where relevant) the impact which the Community Infrastructure Levy is expected to have. Where local planning authorities intend to bring forward a Community Infrastructure Levy regime, there is a strong advantage in doing so in parallel with producing the Local Plan, as this allows questions about infrastructure funding and the viability of policies to be addressed in a comprehensive and coordinated way.