

## ESSENTIAL REFERENCE PAPER 'L': CHAPTER 6 - HERTFORD

### **Question 30: Growth Options for Hertford**

**Please rank the growth options for Hertford in order of preference, and comment on their suitability.**

**Are there any other options we have not considered?**

147 people/organisations provided comments in relation to Question 30. These included:

- 122 Individuals
- 13 Developers/landowners/agents/businesses
- 10 Stakeholders/organisations:
  - Environment Agency
  - Hertford Civic Society
  - Hertfordshire Biological Records Centre
  - Hertfordshire County Council – Passenger Transport Unit
  - National Grid Property Holdings/National Grid Gas
  - Stop Stansted Expansion
  - Thames Water Property Services
  - The Thatching Information Service
  - The Ware Society
  - Transition Hertford
- 2 Town and Parish Councils:
  - Hertford Heath
  - Hertford Town

Q30 - Summary Comment	Q30 - Detailed Comment
<b>Hertford Growth Options - General</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>While it is hoped that the final number of new houses allocated to Hertford is limited, by both a stringent and careful analysis of the numbers used from the East of England Regional Plan, and an equitable spread of houses across the District's existing settlements, it is clear that Hertford will still be asked to build a significant number of houses during the period of the LDF. Should current pressures continue, Hertford would have to grow as a town beyond 2031 therefore all options for future growth need to be considered with great foresight.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There is not enough information here to make a decision. The areas outlined are too 'woolly'.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This option excludes east of Welwyn Garden City &amp; Stevenage which adds pressure therefore to the towns not on periphery</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Best to build in areas already built on.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hertford Civic Society recommends that a study (Town Plan?) should be conducted to identify Hertford's needs up to 2031 before any searching for sites to expand the town.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>None are perfect but development is necessary.</li> </ul>
<b>All Options Object</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>None of the options preferred.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>None of options supported due to some or all of the following issues: increased pressures on an already congested road infrastructure which is too antiquated/inferior to accommodate all the new developments, especially the A414 in Hertford (thorough review of the road network in and around Hertford needed with the funding secured for additional infrastructure before any development is permitted); trains on both Hertford North and East lines are over subscribed; parking is difficult; public services already strained (e.g. doctors); education; beauty; cultural heritage..</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Equal last preference to all options.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To avoid further ribbon development and keeping space between major towns, Hertford should be restricted in further development.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Impact of increased housing on the town of Hertford and Ware significantly higher than other towns because of the proximity to each other and to London. Prospect of Hertford and Ware to coalesce will happen if the Green Belt between these two towns is not kept and protected from development.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hertford &amp; Ware town centres are far too crowded so adding more housing would destroy the towns further. By keeping developments within bypass roads you reduce the town footprints impact on the countryside.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reject the assumption that we need these homes.</li> <li>Prefer no growth.</li> </ul>
<b>Option 1 Support</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No more new dwellings than can be accommodated on brownfield land within towns only. Avoid other options.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Option 1 is the Town Council's first preference for the future growth of Hertford. However, this cannot be at the expense of employment land which must be retained for the benefit of the town and not transferred to other parts of the District.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use all available brownfield land first, including disused office blocks, commercial and industrial sites and appropriate railway sidings/land. Conserve East Herts countryside and rural character.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>PTU - Existing built up area located close to existing transport provision and able to enhance existing services, though could increase town centre congestion. This is likely to have an adverse effect on service provision and in particular buses in terms of frequency and reliability</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Within the built-up area, I do <u>not</u> think gardens should be built on, but redundant industrial or employment land should be used for housing. Important to keep some green spaces within the towns. Homes should have gardens for recreation and to grow vegetables and fruit.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To maximise reuse of previously developed sites in urban areas flexible approach to be taken to reuse of underused or vacant employment sites for housing with compensatory employment land provided on edge of settlement to offer sustainable location for residents in accessing services.</li> </ul>

Q30 - Summary Comment	Q30 - Detailed Comment
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4 of the 5 towns are surrounded by Green Belt. For these only Option 1 is totally acceptable.</li> <li>Building should be restricted to the towns as much as possible to preserve Green Belt, reduce congestion on roads (i.e. people driving to facilities in towns), and to ensure shops in towns remain open and used by local residents.</li> <li>All options other than 1 would be disastrous for Hertford unless on a very limited scale.</li> </ul>
<b>Option 1 Object</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Further building in already over-populated towns isn't or shouldn't be a suitable option. Lack of available land. Overloaded roads.</li> <li>Town Centre of Hertford should be a priority to provide good trade and jobs before the population is increased.</li> </ul>
<b>Option 1 Reservations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In order to protect Hertford's employment land, which centralised location helps support the town centre, it is very difficult to support development on any brownfield sites as proposed by Option 1 which would involve the loss of employment land. Any proposed change of use from employment land to residential would be regretted and should not be considered without a thorough, viable and approved plan to relocate the employment capacity lost within Hertford.</li> <li>Would seem impossible to develop in existing built up areas due to absence of available land.</li> </ul>
<b>Option 1 Observation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Environment Agency – Preference 4. Significant areas within the centre of Hertford that are already at high risk of flooding. Unlikely to be sustainable or achievable to promote major growth in this area. The floodplain of the Rivers Beane and Lee a constraint on development in land in the floodplain.</li> <li>Unselective infilling of existing urban area risks affecting adversely the quality of the built environment and/or the loss of employment floorspace. Selective infilling, particularly of obsolete commercial floorspace or non-employment premises washed over by existing Local Plan employment designations, would be a reasonable and appropriate solution to meet some of the town's housing requirement.</li> <li>Keep pressure off town centre areas (ranked 3<sup>rd</sup> preference)</li> <li>Need all the land we can use for agriculture to feed present and future generations - hence my choice for Option 1.</li> <li>Centre already very congested. Ring road/bypass needed.</li> <li>In-town sites are preferable provided they do not destroy more of the historic layout, fabric and character of the town.</li> </ul>
<b>Option 2 Support</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support</li> <li>Environment Agency – Preference 1. This area contains the smallest amount of floodplain and development here would be more sustainable than other sites. Floodplain of the River Mimram will need to be regarded when considering development in the valley immediately adjacent to the river. Not be acceptable to put new development at risk of flooding in the area of Flood Zone 3. Also encourage a natural buffer zone to be left free of development along the River itself.</li> <li>Options 2 and 3 are best but with small developments linking to old industrial areas. Good trains to London, shops and banks. Good for most adults and young.</li> <li>Based on rail transportation and best bus services.</li> <li>PTU - Area to the west of the existing settlement is most likely to have potential to extend existing commercial bus service provision to/from town centre</li> </ul>
<b>Option 2 Observation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Options 2 and 3 ranked as preference 2 =</li> <li>Options 2 and 4 ranked as preference 2 =</li> <li>Options 2 and 4 ranked as preference 4 =</li> <li>Both Options 2 and 4 are close to Secondary Schools, not just Option 4.</li> <li>Hertford Civic Society considers that the expansion of Welwyn Garden City eastwards should be taken into consideration when looking at the growth options for Hertford, on the grounds that it will remain important to maintain a sufficiently wide rural belt between the two settlements. If there are to be any extensions of Hertford's boundaries, they should be sited alongside areas already served by local schools, shopping facilities and bus routes to the town centre.</li> </ul>

Q30 - Summary Comment	Q30 - Detailed Comment
<b>Option 2 Object</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hertfordshire Biological Records Centre – do not support</li> <li>Problem is a lack of road capacity through Bengeo, so the only route (for buses or private vehicles) available is towards the A602 (Ware to Stevenage) road. There is no rail alternative for the north and I assume no spare utility capacity (electric, gas, water, sewerage).</li> </ul>
<b>Options 2 to 4 Comment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Options 2 to 4 may offer the best chance to provide the diversity of housing stock which Hertford will require for future generations. They also provide the opportunity to release the volume of land needed for accompanying infrastructure, not least primary school places. However, this is at enormous expense to the Green Belt.</li> </ul>
<b>Option 3 Support</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Whilst development within the existing built up area may seem most sustainable, as there is limited land available for development and problems with congestion it is not the most suitable location for additional development. Development to the north of the settlement is more appropriate and support is given to green belt land release required to meet housing requirements.</li> <li>Options 2 and 3 are best but with small developments linking to old industrial areas. Good trains to London, shops and banks. Good for most adults and young.</li> </ul>
<b>Option 3 Observation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>PTU - Development likely to access highly congested roads to/from town centre. Existing bus services are contracted and any increase in congestion is likely to have a significant impact on provision and reliability.</li> <li>Environment Agency – Preference 3. Would be constrained by the floodplains of the Rivers Beane and Rib so flood risk will pose more of a constraint to development in this location.</li> <li>Options 2 and 3 ranked as preference 2 =</li> </ul>
<b>Option 3 Object</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The impact on existing road infrastructure would be particularly acute under Option 3</li> <li>Completely unsuitable due to lack of transport links and existing traffic congestion. Plus flooding issues due to lack of capacity in drainage system.</li> <li>Would increase traffic in Porthill and the "rat run" through lower Bengeo.</li> </ul>
<b>Option 4 Support</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support</li> <li>There is sufficient land available to ensure a critical mass of development can also provide a new primary school to meet the identified requirement. Development in this sustainable location will respect Hertford's unique character, integrate well and avoid coalescence with Ware, Chapmore End, Hertingfordbury and Hertford Heath.</li> <li>Equal second preference given to Options 2 and 4.</li> <li>HCC - Mangrove Road/Balls Park – Need for primary school places in this part of Hertford. One of these two sites could be allocated as reserve primary school site or used as detached playing field if expanded existing school resulted in playing pitch deficiency as result.</li> <li>Option 4 (land to the south) provides the most sustainable option for future growth of the town when compared to Options 2 and 3 (comparison table supplied).</li> </ul>
<b>Option 4 Observation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>PTU - Development locations are likely to be remote from transport provision and are likely to require additional subsidised routes as would be unlikely to reach such critical mass to become commercially viable</li> <li>Environment Agency – Preference 2. Watercourses in this area have smaller floodplain extents and amount of developable land here may be greater. Floodplain of the Rivers Lee and Bayford Brook &amp; the Brickendon Brook main rivers will be a constraint on development in land in the floodplain.</li> <li>Options 2 and 4 ranked as preference 2 =</li> <li>Options 2 and 4 ranked as preference 4 =</li> <li>Option 4 not ranked.</li> </ul>
<b>Option 4 Object</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Current road congestion problems and no options for solving those current problems have been identified. Creating additional demand for movements into the town centre rules out this option. Although the railway loop line runs through some of the potential area, I cannot believe another station could be constructed between Bayford and Hertford North to offer any alternative transport.</li> </ul>
<b>Support All</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Any substantial growth in one area risks upsetting the natural balance of a town</li> </ul>

Q30 - Summary Comment	Q30 - Detailed Comment
<b>Options partially delivered</b>	<p>which has developed according to its needs over centuries. If greenfield development is required, the town's future development is best achieved through the considerate use of all, rather than the single exploitation of one, of the external growth Options.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Favours Option 1 but generally supportive of remaining development options for Hertford.</li> </ul>
<b>Hertford Growth Options - Employment Land Protection</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Growth options were preferenced within the built environment but employment land must be preserved and protected (Hertford Town Council).</li> </ul>
<b>Suggestions for Alternative Options</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Watton at Stone should be considered as it has a rail link.</li> <li>• Stanstead Abbots should be considered as it has a rail link.</li> <li>• The amount of brownfield land is limited, therefore additional options (after Option 1) are likely to be required which should: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Take into account public transport links.</li> <li>• Concentrate dense development near to public transport links (bus routes, option 2 sites within walking distance of railway station, not encroaching on ancient woodland) as an absolute priority.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• It is noted that land to the north revealed limited land available in the Call, but the town centre and the railway stations all lie to the north of the A119/A414 corridor. Subject to satisfying highways and flooding issues, there are pockets of land to the north which, Green Belt aside (which applies to all 3 non-central options), are not constrained by environmental designations.</li> <li>• Use land lying between the area marked option 2 and the A10 dual carriageway. A new development on the higher land in this area could be given the character of an urban village so that it had a community feel, much as Bengeo does today. It would benefit in sharing some of its infrastructure with Hertford and some with Ware, although as a significant amount of housing would need new infrastructure on its own account.</li> <li>• Extend Option 4 to include land to the west of Brickendon Lane which would ensure that part of the site was not located within a 'Green Finger'. (Comparison table of growth options supplied)</li> <li>• Stortford, Hertford, Ware are already crammed and over populated. Room for expansion in Buntingford, Sawbridgeworth.</li> <li>• Ware, Hertford &amp; Sawbridgeworth haven't got good roads through the towns in rush hours. Buntingford &amp; Bishop's Stortford have got better roads.</li> <li>• Extend towns around perimeter of each.</li> <li>• Expansion outwards is the best method - keep centres more open.</li> <li>• Renovate empty properties.</li> <li>• Use the Olympics stadia infrastructure of the Olympics stadia - underused after 2012. Build close to them to generate the usage and capitalise on the services provided; make them economically used. Also on a direct route up to Stansted.</li> <li>• Moratorium on new development.</li> <li>• Drastically cut-down the number of homes supposedly "needed".</li> <li>• Quite a lot of sites where planning permission has already been given, but the houses not yet available. Might be better to review whether there is still a need for more housing after all those have been built.</li> <li>• Not considered the option that without enormous infrastructure investment private housing is not the option. Concentrate on social housing where car use / travel is not the priority and rebuild communities.</li> <li>• Try to keep within 'ring roads'.</li> <li>• Put Gascoyne Way in a tunnel under Hertford. There would then be space above for plenty of homes, green spaces etc and needn't spread out Hertford any further.</li> <li>• Bypass Hertford to the south - as proposed in the 1960s. Line still available - then fill in.</li> <li>• Any schemes that would impact on A414 traffic through Hertford. A Hertford bypass would be essential. This could run from Rush Green roundabout on A10 through farmlands &amp; Balls Park to the roundabout on A414 at Letty Green. This would alleviate the heavy traffic in and around Hertford.</li> </ul>

Q30 - Summary Comment	Q30 - Detailed Comment
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Has to be the prerogative of the inhabitants of these towns</li> <li>• Office blocks and empty buildings could be used for flats and houses etc. This would be a much better investment than spending millions of pounds on new homes and would benefit more families and communities, we cannot keep building over our countryside in this way</li> <li>• Instead of adding more supermarkets and office buildings - putting housing on those sites</li> <li>• Land south of A414 Hertford to A10 link road; limited in extent to prevent coalescence with Hertford Heath</li> <li>• Disused areas and reuse empty properties.</li> <li>• Many!!</li> <li>• None</li> </ul>
<b>Carbon Reduction</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Consultation states that green house gas emissions, can be reduced by providing opportunities for non-car transport through the location of new development. From the Call for Sites, there is limited land available to provide the number of houses in a central location. Also, there is still high car dependency in new homes within central locations. Given the amount of land available outside of Hertford, it is likely that the town's urban sprawl will have to grow as per Options 2 to 4 to fulfil any significant homes allocated to the town. Therefore, it is very doubtful that the desired objective of reducing carbon dioxide emissions, in a town heavily dependant on the car for transport, will be achieved under any of the Options</li> </ul>
<b>Green Belt</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No Green Belt incursion</li> <li>• Preserve Green Belt as far as possible</li> <li>• If you have to use Green Belt land, let it be on the edge of towns.</li> <li>• Concur that there will be a need to release greenfield sites on the edge of Hertford in order to accommodate the required level of housing to 2031 and that as a result there will need to be a local review of the Green Belt.</li> </ul>
<b>General</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Most people like towns, not rural areas. Old people for transport, doctors, libraries. Young people for schools, sports centres, towns.</li> <li>• None of the options can be properly ranked without a clear vision of plans for the necessary road, rail and services infrastructure that will be needed, including how it will be funded.</li> <li>• There must be road improvements to cater for increased traffic volumes. These are not mentioned.</li> <li>• While there are good train links, buses, doctors and schools there will be a need for increased infrastructure to support development.</li> <li>• Growth without infrastructure is plain stupid!!</li> <li>• Infrastructure elements will present difficulties for sustainability within the built environment and hurtful for all towns. Would this call for major demolition and start again from scratch.</li> <li>• Suitability: Important to be near to present major roads.</li> <li>• These options already preclude Q1* options D, C - why? North of Harlow (*Q1 Summary Leaflet = Q22 Full Consultation)</li> <li>• Need to avoid coalescence (Hertford and Ware and other areas).</li> <li>• Need to avoid an urban build-up: Ware-Hertford-Welwyn Garden City-Hatfield-St Albans-Hemel-Berkhamsted</li> </ul>
<b>Future Housing</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Should create mixed housing stock.</li> </ul>
<b>Sewerage and Water Networks</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Growth in all of these areas would be served by Rye Meads STW as such the options for growth in these areas should consider the outcomes of the Rye Meads Water Cycle Study.</li> </ul>
<b>Environment Agency General Observations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development in the floodplain should be avoided, and opportunities to reduce flood risk should be sought where possible. Re-development may offer the opportunity to reduce the flood risk by either setting back development out of the floodplain or incorporating flood resistant and resilient technologies into existing developments. Natural buffer zones should also be left free of development along the rivers corridors themselves, not only to provide a green corridor, but to ensure access can be maintained to the watercourses and existing flood defences, and space is left for potential future flood defence work.</li> </ul>

Q30 - Summary Comment	Q30 - Detailed Comment
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consideration to be given should land be on designated flood plane. Environment Agency consultation required.</li> </ul>
<b>Hertford Town Council Detailed Comments</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hertford Town Council submitted detailed comments beyond the scope of this consultation (which may be viewed via full response) appertaining to: Climate change; protection of Green Fingers; use of green technologies in development; location of housing for elderly; concerns over recent developments not providing balanced housing stock; protection of Hertford's character; the need for an enhanced town centre; Health, wellbeing and play issues; funding of infrastructure;</li> </ul>
<b>Villages</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It might be that some of the small settlements to the north of Hertford could grow with sustainability advantages.</li> </ul>
<b>Site Specific Comments</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hertford Road North</li> <li>However galling to reward landowner for neglect of land, Archers Spring area is well served by local centre and would resolve longstanding misuse problem.</li> <li>Compulsory purchase the land back from Lloyds at Archers Spring plus add on housing at Sele Farm (don't want to lose Blakemore Wood)</li> <li>Land adjacent to 145 North Road (ref 03/023)</li> <li>Dunkirksbury Farm (ref 03/011)</li> <li>Land North of London Road</li> <li>Hertford Fire &amp; Ambulance Station, Old London Road</li> <li>West Street Allotments, West Street</li> <li>Mangrove Road/Balls Park</li> <li>Thieves Lane</li> <li>13 – 19 Castle Mead Gardens</li> <li>Hertford Police Station (former)</li> <li>Land to the west of Brickendon Lane</li> <li>Option 1. Land fronted by Mill Road and Mead Lane adjacent to Hertford East Station including redundant railway sidings should be considered ripe for high density development.</li> <li>Option 1 Land in Churchfields presently GPO sorting office. Relocate sorting office to ease traffic congestion in town centre build medium density housing on site.</li> <li>Sainsbury's store at McMullen's site – request to include within town centre boundary.</li> </ul>
<b>Miscellaneous</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>As usual the Council are dictating and this consultation is a token gesture.</li> <li>If some pressure arises from not enough houses as opposed to flats, presumably EHDC will immediately refuse applications for flats on land that could take houses</li> </ul>

## Comments received to Q30 in respect of other Chapters

### Chapter 2: Key Issues and Vision

Q30 - Summary Comment	Q30 - Detailed Comment
<b>Themes</b>	Town Council largely agrees with and support the themes outlined in the Consultation Document. However, they consider that all of the proposed Growth Options for Hertford to 2031 pose serious challenges to achieving these themes.
<b>Theme 5: Economy, Skills &amp; Prosperity</b>	According to the Consultation, Hertford has the highest proportion of the District's employment land at 26%. However this should not be taken for granted by focussing new business based development elsewhere in the District. Some of the town's largest employers are in the public sector, which in light of the shift towards a smaller state, poses a risk to Hertford's employability. It should also be stressed that Hertford has lost a lot of traditional employment land recently to residential use and this is particularly acute in locations close to the town centre. It is alarming to read that lost employment land could be replaced elsewhere in the District (paragraph 6.3.21).
<b>Theme 7: Health, Wellbeing &amp; Play</b>	With a larger population besides having somewhere to live people, especially teenagers, need something to do and not necessarily sports facilities. Is this going to be top of the agenda!!

### Chapter 3: Development Strategy

Q30 - Summary Comment	Q30 - Detailed Comment
<b>Housing Target / Amount of Development</b>	Town Council surprised East Herts Council appeared to have too readily accepted the development of 8500 homes acceptable within East Herts. Town Council's judgment that, in resolutely opposing the north of Harlow development, the District Council may have accepted that the area could cope with an additional 8500 homes. The Town Council opposed this view.
	Do not agree with assumption that such large numbers of houses are needed in the area.
	Concerned that the premise of these options is that a further 8,500 new homes must be built in East Herts by 2031, and Hertford therefore must take many of these. I believe this number is unrealistically high for the district, and should be reviewed following the revocation of the East of England Plan.
	No development is preferable. Population growth and more development can't continue forever. Eventually we must stop. Let's stop now while we still have our countryside.
<b>Approach to identifying housing target</b>	Ignore 'target-driven' options and build according to actual local needs and budgets.
	Demand for housing should only be based on population forecasts for this settlement and the constraints of infrastructure, Green Belt and the prospects for local job creation.
<b>Towns at Capacity</b>	Towns are full to capacity and cannot support extra housing.
	None of these towns can sustain intensive housing development.
<b>Housing Needs</b>	A flexible approach to growth options is required to ensure that long terms housing needs are met. This may include the use of sites in the greenbelt/greenfield and at the edge of towns and villages.
<b>Development Strategy - Options / Locations</b>	Growth in Hertford preferable to Stortford
	Hertford, Ware and Sawbridgeworth have no by-pass roads and much increase in traffic feeding developments could cause through road congestion which already exists in rush hours.
	South of Royston area.
	In prioritising development between towns we suggest Hertford is priority 1, East Stortford 2, Sawbridgeworth 3.
	New towns preferred. Ideas suggested: near established transport links using sites which are run down i.e. old airfields (not North Weald).
	Growth should be upward i.e. well-designed flats/maisonettes, perhaps looking out over Green Belt land. Not high-rise, but sensible.
	I have given my options to each town/village. But feel maybe to add a few dwellings in all options.
	Buntingford and Sawbridgeworth are small towns unlike Hertford, Ware and Bishop's Stortford. Development should be proportionate to keep the character of the towns.
<b>Q23 - Housing Distribution</b>	These towns have had more than their share of over development. Spread a sensible no. of homes (no flats) amongst every town, village and hamlet.
	Uniform distribution within existing town boundaries in proportion to their population.
	Growth of towns should be in proportion to what is already there. Hertford has not suffered as much new housing as Bishop's Stortford so put the extra in Hertford.



**Question 31: Approach to Development in Hertford**

**Please rank the approaches to development in Hertford in order of preference. Is there another approach we have not considered?**

23 people/organisations provided comments in relation to Question 31. These included:

- 8 Individuals
- 9 Developers/landowners/agents/businesses
- 4 Stakeholders/organisations:
  - Environment Agency
  - Hertfordshire County Council – Passenger Transport Unit
  - The Thatching Information Service
  - Transition Hertford
- 2 Town and Parish Councils:
  - Hertford Heath
  - Hertford Town

Q31 - Summary Comment	Q31 - Detailed Comment
<b>Lower Density Support</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Town Council concerned not only with the preservation of the built environment of Hertford, but also in maintaining the community character and population balance and this could only be maintained through a mixture of housing provision. In recent years sustained development of high density housing in the form of apartments led to density issues in terms of infrastructure, changes in dynamics within communities and the character of the area. Therefore considered important to restore the balance through lower density, higher quality developments.</li> </ul>
<b>Medium Density Comment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Would prefer no prescriptive density but if allocated a specific density then sensible to take the middle ground – Medium density. However, as per 3.3.6 of the Issues and Options paper '<i>density can only be addressed once a clearer idea of the preferred development strategy for the district.</i>'</li> </ul>
<b>Higher Density Support</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>High density earlier traditional "non-flat" housing is now prized, and tends to encourage social interaction and mutual support, and encourages movement by foot or bicycle (though' provision does need to be made for parking). Tight building also needs to ensure access to green space. In this context, the "green fingers" which Hertford has been blessed with must be maintained.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>PTU - In terms of transport provision, higher densities are favoured as these are likely to be more commercially viable.</li> <li>Higher density development would be preferred from the perspective of environmental sustainability as this will tend to provide greater opportunities for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Decentralised energy.</li> <li>Reducing the land take required.</li> <li>Potentially reducing heating demand (by allowing buildings to shelter one another from cool winds and reducing the proportion of external walls).</li> <li>Supporting public transport provision and other local services/ facilities.</li> <li>However, careful design will be critical to ensure new development fits with the existing surrounding development. Development of new housing should be considered in tandem with development of public transport routes, infrastructure to support electric cars, and car clubs.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>No ranking of approach</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Do not consider that any of the general approaches are suitable and have therefore not ranked them.</li> <li>Impossible to rank "general approaches". Across the district as a whole, densities need to be maximised and particularly in the towns. Also depends if net or gross figure. E.g. high density buildings in a parkland setting may be more appropriate on the edge of the town as opposed to a "low density" traditional estate.</li> <li>Do not believe it is possible or realistic to seek to define development densities on a town-wide basis. Rather, development densities should reflect the character, context and potential of individual development sites, with the Core Strategy simply providing a commitment to maximise the development potential of individual sites.</li> <li>Development should not be constrained by a general density minimum or maximum target across the whole of Hertford. Densities should be site and scheme specific in order to assist with the place making process.</li> <li>Do not support the adoption/imposition of a generic density approach for new development. Instead, we encourage a policy based on requiring each new development proposal to achieve the maximum intensity/density of use compatible with local context, design and public transport capacity.</li> <li>High density has been the order of the day in recent years and, as is evidenced every day in Hertford, traffic congestion has worsened. Living and working in Hertford and trying to negotiate the already busy roads has become more difficult with the additional numbers of people. Hertford was once a county town surrounded by green countryside. Today it is being swallowed up by developments of little architectural merit and lived in by commuters. Adding housing of whatever density will worsen the situation.</li> <li>The answer depends on who the housing is intended for and why it is to be built. Why are more houses/flats needed in Hertford? <i>[Examples provided]</i> In</li> </ul>

Q31 - Summary Comment	Q31 - Detailed Comment
	<p>reality there would be a host of different needs to be met, which would indicate different densities for different developments. But if the answer were: "Because the revoked East of England Plan said we had to build n units", how could any sensible density calculation be made?</p>
<b>Other Approach Not Considered</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mix of densities may be a more appropriate approach. Unrealistic to be too prescriptive of density – must relate to site setting, sustainable design and a sense of place that devolves from it.</li> <li>• Development in the urban area of Hertford should continue to be relatively dense, to make the most efficient possible use of land in this most sustainable of locations. The need for small houses rather than flats, and the need to provide developments which respect the existing character of the town are noted. However, by utilising good and innovative design, it should be possible to achieve all of these things. Therefore medium and higher density developments within urban areas are supported.</li> <li>• Another approach, favouring more mixed communities would be to take an 'onion skin' approach. In an area, provide a higher density zone with local services, surrounded by medium density housing with 'fingers' of lower density housing radiating out to an outer zone of lower density housing. This, I believe is the more traditional way that settlements have developed and hence would form more acceptable communities than simply adopting a uniform density.</li> <li>• As advocated in PPS3, density is dependent on the site and the surrounding area, including existing residential densities. PPS3 advises that a range of densities may be appropriate, and would allow for a mix of densities on individual sites thus ensuring sustainable communities and helping to meet Theme 3 of the Vision in the Draft Core Strategy DPD, which is seeking to meet the accommodation needs of the whole community through the provision of a mix of types and sizes of dwellings.</li> <li>• Propose an alternative – the Core Strategy DPD provides general guidance on a range of densities and advises that more detailed density information on individual sites will be considered through the Site Specific DPD.</li> </ul>
<b>Other Comments</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hertford Heath Parish Council - Can Hertford really cope with any more development. The roads are already very congested and the infrastructure must be creaking at the seams.</li> <li>• The question posed over simplifies the issues. Given the need to avoid excessive land take, to concentrate development in sustainable and service-effective formats, and to accommodate small households, a combination of medium and higher densities should be the starting point. Very low densities are wasteful and should only be contemplated in exceptional circumstances.</li> <li>• Environment Agency comments: Higher density development, if development in the floodplain cannot avoided, would place a higher density of people living in areas at risk of flooding. However a higher density of development may involve the use of less land for development and thus be easier to avoid flood risk areas. Lower density developments will require more land take increasing the likelihood that development will occur in areas at risk of flooding.</li> <li>• Green Fingers and similar features need to be preserved.</li> <li>• Concern that Hertford has seen an excessive number of flats built in recent years, and future build should redress this balance to make more houses available.</li> </ul>

### **Comments received to Q31 in respect of other Chapters**

#### **Chapter 3: Development Strategy**

Q31 - Summary Comment	Q31 - Detailed Comment
<b>No growth</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No growth</li> </ul>

**Question 32: Hertford Vision**

**Do you agree with the emerging LDF Vision for Hertford?**

27 people/organisations provided comments in relation to Question 32. These included:

- 9 Individuals
- 9 Developers/landowners/agents/businesses
- 6 Stakeholders/organisations:
  - Environment Agency
  - Hertfordshire Biological Records Centre
  - Natural England
  - Sport England
  - The Thatching Information Service
  - Transition Hertford
- 3 Town and Parish Councils:
  - Brickendon Liberty
  - Hertford Heath
  - Hertford Town

Q32 - Summary Comment	Q32 - Detailed Comment
<b>Support</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support</li> <li>• Natural England: supports the emerging LDF Vision for Hertford in 2031</li> <li>• The emerging LDF vision for Hertford seems appropriate given the history and geography of the town.</li> <li>• Particularly agree with the need for future housing to integrate into the existing settlement.</li> </ul>
<b>Partly Agree</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The aspirations for your LDF vision are good, but not convinced it can be achieved.</li> <li>• It would be difficult to disagree with this description of a desirable state, but the aims, objectives and policies for East Herts and Hertford as set out would not lead to the future state described. The town's character has already been eroded, and any further outward growth will erode it further.</li> <li>• To achieve vision, there needs to be more impact on individuals and not convinced people will behave differently whatever decisions follow from the LDF. More development of transport provisions like cycle paths (e.g. alongside the railway across the A414 between North station and the Cole Green Way), and perhaps some intelligent advance notices re routes to avoid could help people to change their ways, but not convinced that decisions on housing will affect the outcome of vision.</li> <li>• Given limited development space available without encroaching onto green field sites, concerned that the vision of a dedicated cinema in the town is not a practical one without having to site this in green field space, particularly in this age of large multiplex cinemas. Hope that the newly refurbished Hertford Theatre will increase its offering of recently released films.</li> </ul>
<b>Object</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The "emerging visions" for the towns may be appropriate in other Council documents but they do not add anything to the Core Strategy and should not be included in a document intended to provide for and guide development. In the September 2009 guidance document resulting from the experience of examining DPDs, PINS states that such documents should be clear and succinct - "Generic statements and vague aspirations that could apply anywhere will not lead to a deliverable and worthwhile plan".</li> <li>• Believe statement " <i>Its town centre will continue as a thriving retail and employment base, with an improved range of services and facilities that will attract an increasing number of visitors</i>" to be quite untrue. Added impetus is needed to revitalise the town centre (The Wash, Maidenhead Street, Bull Plain, and Fore Street).</li> </ul>
<b>Mead Lane</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support vision specifically including regeneration of the Mead Lane area.</li> <li>• Hertford Town Council: Strongly disagree with the element concerning the Mead Lane development proposal. Opposed to regeneration involving major change of use.</li> <li>• Hertford Heath Parish Council: The improved access in the Mead Lane area is essential.</li> </ul>
<b>Additional Matters Required in Vision</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It is surely inevitable that under any chosen Development Strategy there will be greenfield/Green Belt development around the district's towns, and it is misleading not to acknowledge this in the Vision.</li> <li>• Not enough attention paid to "creating harmony between environmental, social and economic needs" - nearly all the emphasis is on social and economic needs with a few tweaks which are hoped to provide a response to climate change. Challenges of climate change, sustainability, peak oil and increasing volatility in global markets and financial systems have not sufficiently been taken into account and are not adequate.</li> <li>• Hertfordshire Biological Records Centre: Vision must include the protection of the natural environment; particularly The Hertford Green Fingers, its rivers, Wildlife Sites, Local Nature Reserve and the species they support.</li> <li>• Countryside issues to be added including: importance of town/country relationships and preservation/expansion of "green fingers" (significant to Hertford's character and provide public access to green space); nature reserves; quality of the surrounding countryside (The Meads, Waterford</li> </ul>

Q32 - Summary Comment	Q32 - Detailed Comment
	<p>Marsh and Heath, University's Pinetum, the various river valleys, and local rights of way plus routes including Colne Green Way), Sadlers Farm orchard. Also preserve playgrounds.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hertford excellent base for accessing Broxbourne Woods and the Lea Valley Country Park.</li> <li>• Environment Agency: It must be stated that development in the flood plain should be avoided. Vision would benefit from direct reference to managing flood risk and using new development to contribute to reducing existing flood risk wherever possible.</li> <li>• Centre of Hertford has been progressively strangled by unsympathetic developments and road works. Future strategy for Hertford should try to reverse this and strengthen Hertford's character as a country town, and the County Town. This will require significant thought because of the piecemeal development that has taken place in the past and the lack of strategy and general direction for the town. Also difficult to offset the desires of developers. Suggest that as part of the Core Strategy, Hertford Civic Society be given the project to come up with a stronger centre for Hertford and propose a route for implementing this.</li> <li>• Explicit support for the redevelopment of Brownfield land in proximity to the town centre and public transport needed.</li> <li>• Need to preserve employment and shopping features.</li> <li>• Trees etc. Needed not just for climate change reasons but because they make life better for all. Trees which go above roof height are especially valuable in "greening" a town, Preservation of the marvellous planes near the Christ's Hospital and Cross Road roundabouts will be symptomatic of whether the EDF is serious on this point.</li> <li>• Bicycles. While agreed that more cycling is good and there are good routes a key to a successful cycling policy is good maintenance of the metre of road surface nearest the kerb. Potholes, uneven gully and drain covers, utility trenches etc are all dangerous and a deterrent to cyclists.</li> <li>• Sport England – While overall vision broadly supported, core strategy needs to address land use implications for Hertford of the playing pitch strategy as deficiencies in the area are particularly significant e.g. the need for additional playing pitches would justify new sites being identified for outdoor sport and/or major new development should incorporate outdoor sports provision.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Other Hertford Related Comments</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Criticism over traffic congestion in Gascoyne Way due to this.</li> <li>• (Including comments by Brickendon Liberty Parish Council) Requests for 'pay on exit' at Council car parks. Detrimental effect on businesses in the town - people shop elsewhere.</li> <li>• Parking is a major problem at whatever time of the day.</li> <li>• The town centre is now a no-go area during the evening for older residents.</li> <li>• More development will mean more traffic, more congestion, and demands for more road-building. More could be done to encourage cycling, but other 'green modes' of travel would not be relevant to Hertford. People in big cities use public transport as it is frequent and reliable, whereas driving on congested roads is difficult and time-consuming and often nowhere to park. In a place the size of Hertford public transport can never be good because the population base is not there to support it. Any attempt to discourage car use by making parking more difficult would mean people drive to competing centres, as many already do.</li> <li>• There are problems with the town as it exists at the moment - empty shops, congestion, the dominance of commuting into and out of the town over local living and working.</li> <li>• Two stations give protection against impact of railway engineering works and delays. Hertford has buses to a range of destinations with connections to more, although journey times of departure and durations may not suit.</li> <li>• Town council under promotes tourism value - need a Biggles/Johns the author trail, a Wallace the naturalist trail and greater attempts to promote all</li> </ul>

Q32 - Summary Comment	Q32 - Detailed Comment
	our riverside walks as a joined up network.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Renovated Gascoyne Way multi-storey car park could be promoted with its availability of electric car recharging (there are no signs on the A414).</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Considerable expertise among Transition Hertford, other Transition groups throughout East Herts and local eco groups upon which you have not drawn. Would welcome the opportunity to be consulted more extensively to support development of more effective approaches which will support our communities to integrate sustainability more thoroughly towards 2031 and, ultimately, 2050.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support for development at Thieves Lane</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support for development at Mead Lane</li> </ul>

### **Comments received in respect of other issues in Chapter 6**

Q32 - Summary Comment	Q32 - Detailed Comment
<b>Q30 - Growth Options</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Allow Hertford to retain its vestige of county town and do not under any circumstances allow any erosion of the surrounding countryside.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>River valleys, topography, and blocks of woodland (all have important roles to play and should influence the selection of growth options);</li> </ul>
<b>Q31 - Approach to Development</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Most importantly we need to avoid any risk of coalescence with places like Hertford Heath, Tewin, Ware and so on.</li> </ul>

### **Comments received in respect of other Chapters**

#### **Chapter 3: Development Strategy**

Q32 - Summary Comment	Q32 - Detailed Comment
<b>Question 22</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hertford is too important to the county to allow planners to ignore its status and permit ever more housing. Congestion and the loss of the vibrancy of the town have happened in the past decade coinciding with mass house building. More housing does not equate to better quality of life.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No growth.</li> </ul>