

**EXAMINATION OF THE WELWYN HATFIELD BOROUGH COUNCIL LOCAL  
PLAN**

**STATEMENT OF HERTFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL PROPERTY  
DEVELOPMENT SERVICES ON BEHALF OF HCC SERVICES**

**REPRESENTOR ID 904332**

**TOPIC SPECIFIC POLICIES  
HEARING SESSION 12 POLICY SADM 17 URBAN OPEN LAND**



## **1.0 Introduction**

- 1.1 This statement updates the position of Hertfordshire County Council (HCC) regarding the stance of Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council (WHBC) in relation to the approach to Urban Open Land (UOL) as set out in Policy SADM 17.
- 1.2 The County Council indicated that UOL designation could be an obstacle to being able to deliver additional capacity at existing school sites in its Regulation 18 representation to the emerging Local Plan (2.18 of the Regulation 18 representation). It also objected specifically to the designation of UOL washing over the whole of the site of the relocated Southfield School on land adjoining the former Howe Dell School at Woods Avenue in its Regulation 19 representation, (paragraphs 10.1 to 10.6 of the representations).

## **2.0 The Inspectors Questions Relevant to SADM 17 Urban Open Land**

- 2.1 The Inspector has posed the questions in relation to policy SADM17:
- (119) What is the intended status of Urban Open Land? and  
(120) Is the Urban Open Land at Howe Dell School appropriately defined?*
- 2.2 Since submission of the Plan to EiP, HCC and WHBC have had various meetings to resolve various education related matters. This includes a Statement of Common Ground (SoCG) between HCC and WHBC in connection with Policy SADM 17. The SoCG commits to revised wording of Policy SADM 17 with the introduction of a fourth criterion to the policy as set out below:
- iv) Be education development associated with the delivery of school facilities required to meet the evidenced need for additional school places where it can be demonstrated that the impact on the Urban Open Land has been reduced to the minimum possible and where the provisions of criterion iii) above have been met.*
- 2.3 HCC is satisfied that the revised wording to Policy SADM 17 proposed by WHBC would deliver the flexibility to provide for new school places. The revised wording is a positive response to the representations made by HCC in relation to the relocated Southfield School. It also provides flexibility to enable HCC to maximise the expansion potential of other existing school sites affected by UOL designations across the Borough, whilst making clear that the policy still requires care to be taken in formulating proposals.
- 2.4 The reworded policy overcomes HCCs objections to Policy SADM17 and the way UOL washes over the Southfield School Site on land adjoining the former Howe Dell School at Woods Avenue. It also responds positively to the overarching concern expressed in the Regulation 18 representations.

Matt Wood 25/01/18