

Examination of the Welwyn Hatfield Local Plan

Council's Statement - Stage 8 Hearing session

Southern Settlements

Settlement: Welham Green

Policy Number: SADM26 (Hatfield)

Site Reference: HS11 (Hat11)

Matter number: 1

Issue: Sustainability

Question Numbers: Q1-7



Policy SADM26, Site HS11 (Hat11), Land at South Way

Matter 1 – Sustainability

Section 9 of the Framework promotes sustainable transport. It requires the promotion of opportunities to use walking, cycling and public transport through the planning system and for it to actively manage patterns of growth in support of this objective. At Paragraph 103, it also says that significant development should be focused on locations which are or can be made sustainable, through limiting the need to travel and offering a genuine choice of transport modes.

1) Where are the schools that children living on the development would attend?

Welwyn Hatfield Response

- a. It is envisaged that a new primary school (2FE) will be provided as part of the proposed development site **HS11 (Hat11)**. This has been agreed in principle with Hertfordshire County Council (HCC) as education authority and a Statement of Common Ground (SOCG) has been signed between the Council, HSS and the landowner regarding provision of the school. A modification to Policy **SADM 26 – New Dwellings in Hatfield** has been proposed in line with the SOCG, which adds the following to the policy requirements (Table 10), which states:
 - “Provision of land for a new 2FE Primary School site and playing field. Access to be provided through the housing allocation from South Way”.
- b. The wider strategy for primary education provision at Hatfield includes a new primary school (2FE) within the **SDS5 (Hat1)** proposed allocation and the expansion (1FE) of two existing schools Green Lanes Primary School and De Havilland Primary School.
- c. Secondary school provision is considered strategically for the borough as a whole and the Local Plan proposes two new secondary schools at the Birchall Garden Suburb and North-West Hatfield strategic allocations. The provision of a new secondary school at Hatfield provides sufficient capacity at this settlement, including for new residents at the **HS11 (Hat11)** site. However, should a further new secondary school be required, for example if the level of planned growth goes above the level originally envisaged in the Local Plan as submitted, the New Barnfield site, located close to **HS11 (Hat11)** is preferred. The Council has signed a Statement of Common Ground with the County Council (HCC) confirming the acceptability, in principle, of the New Barnfield site for a new secondary school. An updated/revised version of this is currently being prepared with HCC, to recognise the joint work of the authorities to provide a site for a Household Waste Recycling Centre elsewhere in the borough and confirms the availability of the site for a new school. This is expected to be submitted shortly (See response to Q28 for more details).
- d. For the above reasons, it is considered that there is sufficient primary and secondary education provision planned for with further expansion catered for, if additional secondary capacity is required.

2) Where are the primary care medical facilities that would be used by the residents of this site?

Welwyn Hatfield Response

- a. There are a range of health care services within proximity of the proposed development. These include, services at the High View Neighbourhood Centre, which is around 600m from the site. In addition, the Northdown Surgery, which is a branch of the Wrafton House Surgery (Wellfield Road), is located close (40m) to the southern edge of the Neighbourhood Centre. The intention is to work with NHS Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) and GPs to relocate this surgery into the above redeveloped Neighbourhood Centre. This Neighbourhood Centre is easily accessed from the proposed development and also benefits from a range of bus services.
- b. Hatfield itself is one of two main towns within the borough and provides a wide range of medical facilities including a hospital near Hatfield Business Park.
- c. It is understood that the NHS CCG and partner organisations are keen to align their own planning with the Local Plan process in the future. The CCG has not raised any issues associated with the proposed level of growth per se, although they have made it clear that any development would need to make a pro-rata contribution towards delivering an appropriate increase in services.

3) Where are the local shops and community facilities that residents of this site would mainly use?

Welwyn Hatfield Response

- a. As noted in the question above, the future residents of Site HS11 (Hat11) are likely to use the local shops and community facilities within Highview Neighbourhood Centre (600m, north), Hatfield. An application for the redevelopment of this centre has been approved for mixed residential led scheme. This will deliver new and enhanced local shops and community facility, with improved accessibility for pedestrian, cyclists and public realm.
- b. The Highview Neighbourhood Centre is located within close proximity to the site and can be easily be accessed from the site by non-car modes such as walking, cycling and by bus.
- c. In addition, the Welham Green Village Centre is located within proximity to Site **HS11 (Hat11)**, to the south of it (circa 1km). This can also be easily be accessed from the site, by non-car modes such as walking, cycling and bus.

4) Would residents be able to easily access public transport?

Welwyn Hatfield Response

- a. Yes. The Council consider that the future residents of this site will be able to easily access public transport. There are a number of bus stops located within close proximity (400m) to it. Hatfield Railway Station to the north (circa 2.3km), and Welham Green Railway Station to the south (circa 1.3km). These provide sustainable links with services, facilities, employment opportunities within Hatfield, as well as connections with other settlements within the borough, wider Hertfordshire and London.
- b. There are bus stops on either side of South Way (near the cemetery. The stop adjacent to the site provides services (404,405, 366) to key destinations within Hatfield, such as the Highview Neighbourhood Centre, secondary schools, Hatfield Town Centre and the railway station.
- c. There is a bus stop on Garden Avenue/Bishops Rise (close to HS11) within the urban area of Hatfield. This provides services (404,405, 366,614,602,653) to key destinations within Hatfield and the wider areas, including the Highview Neighbourhood Centre, secondary schools, University, Galleria, Hatfield Town Centre, the railway station.
- d. In addition there are bus stops on Travellers Lane (Millward Lane). This provides services (230,242,366,404,405) also to the key destinations within Hatfield and the wider area including Hatfield railway station and Welham Green Railway Station, which is also accessible from the site by cycle (via the National cycle route).

5) Would this be an accessible neighbourhood?

Welwyn Hatfield Response

- a. The Council consider the development is too small to form a new neighbourhood by itself but that the development is accessible via a range of sustainable modes of transport.
- b. As discussed in the questions above, this site has good existing pedestrian/cycle links with the urban area of Hatfield. This includes a bridge over the South Way/A1001 (near Travellers Lane) that forms part of the national cycle route 12 and connects with PROW 85 which runs to the boundary of the site. Further, a new signalized junction/crossing for pedestrians, cyclist and vehicles is proposed near the cemetery to access the site. This will enable safe, convenient access and connectivity for all modes of transport and between the site and the southern built up area of Hatfield.
- c. The proposed site is located within close proximity to a number of bus stops that provide services and easy access to and from the site, as well as from Hatfield and Welham Green Railway stations.
- d. There are a number existing public rights of way: (85) near the site's eastern boundary that connects onto pedestrian/cyclist bridge to the national cycle route 12 over the A1001 and linking the site with south Hatfield and Welham Green; PROW 21 and 23 provide links through to Welham Green, the shops and Travellers Lane

employment area. The site promoter's masterplan indicates the potential to create new, enhanced cycle, pedestrian links, to improve connectivity within the site and wider area, as well as with existing footpaths and links.

- e. Policy SADM3 of the submitted Local Plan requires the safeguarding of public rights of way and encourages measures to be incorporated into proposals for sustainable modes of transport within the site and wider area.

6) Has this site been appropriately assessed in the sustainability appraisal?

Welwyn Hatfield Response

- a. Yes. The Council commissioned LUC to undertake the Sustainability Appraisal of the Local Plan. The full assessment of this site can be found in Annex 1 of the 2016 SA Report (*SUB/3*), pages 315 to 318. The appraisal was carried out in a way that was consistent with all other site assessments, in line with the SA Framework and assumptions used for all site assessments (Table 4.1 (pages 29 to 33) and Appendix 2 of the 2016 SA Report)). An assessment of Policy SADM 26, which allocates this site, is presented in paragraphs 6.302 to 6.314 of the 2016 SA Report.

7) Is South Way a sustainable location for development?

Welwyn Hatfield Response

- a. Yes. The proposed site HS11 (Hat11) is considered to be located within a highly sustainable location for development. It is accessible by sustainable modes of transport to key destinations such as Highview Neighbourhood Centre, shops within Welham Green Village Centre, secondary schools, the University, Town Centre and an employment area. Likewise, the proposed primary school will be accessible from the urban area of Hatfield and the wider area by a range of sustainable modes of transport.
- b. Overall, the allocation of this site is considered to be in line with the NPPF. It will promote the use of use walking, cycling and public transport in accordance with paragraph 102 and is considered a sustainable location for development in accordance with paragraph 103.