



## Duty to Cooperate meeting between St Albans DC and Central Beds C

**VENUE: Via MS Teams**

**DATE: 3 February 2021 @ 11.30**

### Meeting Notes

#### 1. Introductions

##### St Albans District Council

Cllr Day

Chris Briggs, Spatial Planning  
Manager (CB)

Charlotte Morphet, Team Leader  
Spatial Planning and Design (CM)

##### Central Beds Council

Cllr Colins

Lynsey Hillman-Gamble, Strategic Cross  
Boundaries Lead (LHG)

Andrew Maxted, Planning Policy Manager  
(AM)

- Cllr Day confirmed that SADC will produce a note of the meeting.
- CM noted started in September 2020.

#### 2. Update on St Albans Local Plan

- CB provided an update that SADC withdrew its Local Plan on 23 November 2020 following issues raised at examination in relation to Duty to Cooperate.
- A new Local Development Scheme has been prepared and taken to Planning Policy Committee and the intention is to consultant on a Regulation 18 Draft Local Plan in January 2022.
- Aim is to adopt a new Local Plan before the end of 2023.
- Starting with 'blank sheet of paper' including new Sustainability Appraisal and Green Belt Review. Noted that some other evidence base (e.g. joint South West Hertfordshire Local Housing Need Assessment) can be used for new Local Plan. Consultation on Statement of Community Involvement, Sustainability Appraisal Scoping and Call for Sites go live on 25 January
- Draft Vision, Strategic Priorities and Objectives paper has been taken to Planning Policy Committee. Emphasis for new Local Plan is on Climate Crisis and sustainability, recognising the Council has called a Climate Emergency
- Question around whether a new strategy. CB confirmed 'blank sheet of paper'.

### 3. Update on Central Beds Local Plan

- AM stated still in examination and have recently published a letter from the Inspector. CBC hope to be able to respond by circa March and then undertake a Main Modifications consultation
- Adoption is expected in June/ July and the Local Plan will be subject to an early review within 6 months of adoption.
- CB asked if anything around M1 junction 10A and AM confirmed not.
- AM stated that the Sundon Railfreight interchange (RFI) is to be included but it is still an RFI and it does not meet the size criteria to be defined as an SRFI.

### 4. Potential Strategic Cross Boundary Issues, inc.

#### a) Duty to Cooperate – General inc. SW Herts Area

- CB updated that continuing to work effectively across the South West Hertfordshire geography. The Joint Strategy Plan evidence base work is progressing. Current timescales for the draft SWH JSP are for 2036-2050.
- Statement of Common Ground will be produced with the South West Hertfordshire authorities and will start with Watford Local Plan examination.
- Discussion around Joint Strategic Plan. Interface with Local Plans will be minimal and it will not release Green Belt this will still be through Local Plans route. However, the current intention is for the Joint Strategic Plan to be statutory.
- LHG – CBC joint work with neighbours such as Luton BC and North Herts DC fed into current LP.
- CB – following SADC Inspectors' approach, SADC asking CBC if you have any capacity to meet SADC's housing need or appropriate land for an SRFI. SADC will send a follow-up letter asking formally in due course. LHG/AM - CBC no such capacity and will respond as expected to a future letter in due course.

#### b) Housing

- CB stated that SADC approach is seeking to meet circa 900 pa housing need set out in the standard methodology within the District - subject to technical work.
- Green Belt Review expected in summer 2021
- CB updated on the Gypsy and Travellers Study. It has been completed relatively recently and states there is a need for circa 70 pitches across the Plan period. SADC is seeking to meet that need in full in the District - subject to technical work.
- LHG - CBC meeting need and agreed Luton need in full - no significant change from the Local Plan submitted (being examined under NPPF 2012). Need was identified through the SHMA and Local Plan is providing a buffer of 13% and identified a number of sites beyond the plan period.
- Cllr Collins / LHG - meeting Gypsies and Travellers site need. Undertook reappraisal of need when the definition changed.

#### c) Employment

- CB stated that SADC would seek to meet its employment need in full - subject to technical work and may have capacity to support other South West Hertfordshire

districts in meeting their need. SADC acknowledged the strong relationship between the potential Employment area at East Hemel in St Albans and the existing Maylands site in DBC.

- An update was provided on the permitted Strategic Rail Freight interchange. The direction of travel is to follow advice from Inspectors in the recent examination to allocate the site - subject to technical work. Work ongoing to understand the reasonable allocation between meeting national and local employment need.
- LHG – CBC meeting all own need; originally were going to assist NH in employment needs – but not now needed; 3 standalone employment sites and some extensions

d) Transport

- Discussion on HCC COMET Model and updates to the GTPs. No showstoppers.
- Brief discussion about A414 and A505
- Brief discussion about Luton Airport
- LHG - M1 to A6 has been approved. Working towards updated business case.

e) Education

- CB stated that SADC would meet within the District and there are early high level discussions on possibly providing a school to meet Dacorum Borough Council's need in Hemel area.
- LHG – CBC no education issues relevant to SADC

f) Health

- CB stated meeting GP need within SADC and that support improvements expected for St Albans Hospital. Watford Hospital also being upgraded. No cross boundary impact.
- CB/LHG – acknowledge some SADC residents in the north of the District look to L&D for some hospital services

g) Green Infrastructure

- AM - updated that CBC are progressing a new Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy. AM/CB - Noted cross boundary Green/Blue corridors - opportunities for improvement in particular cross-boundary walking/cycling routes on old Railway Lines and river Lea.

h) Strategic Rail Freight Interchange

- CB - An update was provided on Strategic Rail Freight interchange. The direction of travel is to follow advice from Inspectors in recent examination to allocate the site - subject to technical work. Recognise that it is a complex issue and seeking as much certainty from landowners/developers as possible.

i) Potential sites near LPA boundaries - inc. Land to the West of Luton, Land North of NW Harpenden

- In previous Local Plan North West Harpenden Broad Location was cross boundary issue – though no problematic matters identified. New SADC Green Belt Review is underway.

- CBC currently no updates beyond the adopted Local Plan
- j) Potential unmet needs from Watford BC
- CB – SWH LPAs been asked, but SADC said currently no capacity to meet any potential Watford Borough Council's unmet housing need
- CB stated SADC may be able to assist WBC on the employment need, subject to further work, but that this needs to be decided taking an overall South West Hertfordshire basis into account.

## **5. Arrangements for future DTC working and SOCG**

- Discussion of potential Memorandum of understanding at next meeting.

## **6. A.O.B and Date of Next Meeting**

- Autumn 2021