

Hemel Garden Communities Evidence Paper

St Albans City and District Council – November 2024

1. Introduction

- 1.1. The Hemel Garden Communities (HGC) Programme is an ambitious proposal which will transform and grow Hemel Hempstead and create attractive, sustainable new neighbourhoods to its north and east by 2050.
- 1.2. Collaborating as a partnership (The HGC Partners) St Albans City and District Council (SADC), Dacorum Borough Council (DBC), Hertfordshire County Council (HCC), Hertfordshire Futures (Formerly Hertfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership (Herts LEP)) and the Hertfordshire Enviro-Tech Enterprise Zone, known as Hertfordshire Innovation Quarter (Herts IQ), are working together, alongside stakeholders and landowners.
- 1.3. The HGC Programme Area, which is located in both St Albans District and Dacorum Borough, encompasses the existing town of Hemel Hempstead, Growth Areas and other site allocations set out in Dacorum Borough Council's Local Plan. The HGC Programme Area will support the transformation of Hemel Hempstead.
- 1.4. The HGC Growth Areas include land to the east and north of Hemel Hempstead within St Albans District and Dacorum Borough, which will provide a network of garden communities, as well as further site allocations coming forward through the Dacorum Borough Local Plan. The HGC Growth Areas to the north and east of Hemel Hempstead are expected to extend beyond the Plan period and will deliver up to 11,000 new homes and 10,000 new jobs by 2050 across St Albans District and Dacorum Borough.
- 1.5. Within St Albans District, the Hemel Garden Communities programme will deliver at least 4,300 new homes by 2041, and 5,500 homes in total by 2050, delivering this through a network of new garden communities to the north east and east of Hemel Hempstead.
- 1.6. The transformation will include an extended Maylands Business Park through the delivery of Hertfordshire Innovation Quarter (Herts IQ), which will deliver around 6,000 of the 10,000 jobs, and a regenerated and transformed town centre for Hemel Hempstead and further infrastructure across the rest of the town.
- 1.7. The HGC Growth Areas, located to the north and east of Hemel Hempstead, cover approximately 1,066 hectares. A significant portion of the site, particularly to the east of Hemel Hempstead and in the north-west, is owned by a single landowner, The Crown Estate. The remainder is held by multiple landowners, with key strategic landowners and site promoters including Pigeon, Bloor, and Kitewood.

2. Progress to date

Since 2018, the HGC partnership has been progressing work to develop a strategic approach to ensure the homes, employment opportunities and new infrastructure is transformative to the whole town of Hemel Hempstead and the wider area. This includes:

- **November 2018** - a Hemel Garden Communities bid was submitted to the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG). The bid was prepared by the three authorities, alongside Hertfordshire LEP, Herts IQ and The Crown Estate.
- **2018** - HGC Charter published as part of bid to MHCLG
- **2019** – Awarded Garden Town status
- **2020** – HGC Governance Structure established with Memorandum of Understanding signed by the HGC Partners. The formal governance structure includes representatives from key authorities and partners. The HGC Delivery Board; Councillor Review Group; Partner Steering Group; Stakeholder Steering Group and a HGC programme team are established.
- **2020 – Ongoing** - HGC has carried out various engagement activities in collaboration with stakeholders, members and the community. Through different engagement activities, HGC have collaborated with local interest groups, stakeholders and local residents to inform a vision for future plans. Further details are set out within the [HGC Delivery Statement](#).
- **2020 – Ongoing** – Establishment of workstream focused sub-groups including the Stakeholder Steering Group (6 weekly basis) which includes representation from Key Landowners (The Crown Estate; Bloor; Pigeon; Kitewood; Appin Land (2024)); Homes England and National Highways.
- **2021 – [HGC Spatial Vision](#)** published establishing Vision and thematic pillars to guide the transformation of Hemel Hempstead and its strategic growth
- **2020 - 2024** - Development of the HGC Framework Plan and resulting Concept Plan through the Framework Plan Steering group. The FPSG includes the 4 strategic landowners (The Crown Estate, Bloor, Pigeon and Kitewood) across the HGC Growth Areas.
- **July 2023 - SADC Regulation 18 Consultation published** – including Joint HGC Local Plan Policies developed with DBC and HGC programme team
- **August 2023** – Early discussions on entering a Planning Performance Agreement (PPA) between The Crown Estate and the 3 Authorities for Land East of Hemel Hempstead: 4,000 homes (Site Allocation H2 and H4) and 53ha of employment land (Site Allocation H3).
- **October 2023 - DBC Regulation 18 Consultation (2023) published**
- **December 2023** – PPA preparation discussions begin with The Crown Estate (TCE) for Land East of Hemel Hempstead (Site Allocation H2, H3 and H4)
- **2020 – 2024** - Preparation of the HGC Transport Vision & Strategy Document which was endorsed by Hertfordshire County Council in 2024
- **August 2024 – Ongoing** - Planning Performance Agreement (PPA) signed between The Crown Estate and the 3 Authorities for 4,000 homes (Site Allocation H2 and H4) and 53ha of employment land (Site Allocation H3). The anticipated timing for Planning Application Submission is Q3 2025.
- **September 2024 - SADC Regulation 19 Consultation (2024)** - Publication of Regulation 19 including the joint HGC Local Plan Policies
- **October 2024** - Further potential PPAs with Key Landowners are in early discussion.
- **November 2024 – DBC Regulation 19** - Publication of Regulation 19 including the joint HGC Local Plan Policies

3. Local Plan Policies

- 3.1. The Local Plan Policies surrounding Hemel Garden Communities have been developed in collaboration with the SADC and DBC Local Plans teams and the HGC Programme team.
- 3.2. The HGC policies have been developed to be mirrored within the SADC and DBC Local Plans and have been developed within the context of the Hemel Garden Communities (HGC) Programme area with reference to the growth areas and sites, and the wider transformation of the existing Hemel Hempstead urban area. Within the SADC Local Plan these policies are:

Local Plan 2024 Reg 19 Part A

- LG2 – Support for Transformation of Hemel Hempstead
- LG3 - Hemel Garden Communities Growth Areas Place Principles

Local Plan 2024 Reg 19 Part B

The sites within the HGC Programme are set out in Part B:

- H1 - North Hemel Hempstead
- H2 - East Hemel Hempstead (North)
- H3 – East Hemel Hempstead (Central)
- H4 - East Hemel Hempstead (South)

4. HGC Local Plan Evidence Base

- 4.1. The HGC Programme is underpinned by a comprehensive evidence base, supporting Local Plans for SADC and DBC.

The HGC specific Local Plan Evidence base includes:

- **Framework Plan:**
The Framework Plan is a suite of evidence documents which form part of the Local Plans evidence bases to support the anticipated growth of around 11,000 homes within the growth areas and additional homes within Hemel Hempstead comprising of the:
 - a) Indicative Concept Plan
[HGC 04.01 - Indicative Concept Plan \(2024\).pdf](#)
 - b) Framework Plan Story document
[HGC 04.02 - Framework Plan Story Document \(2024\).pdf](#)
 - c) Framework Plan Evidence Report and Appendices
[HGC 04.03 - Framework Plan Technical Evidence Report \(2024\).pdf](#)
[HGC 04.04 - Framework Plan Technical Evidence Appendices \(2024\).pdf](#)
- **Delivery Statement:**
[HGC 02.01 - Delivery Statement - update \(Nov 2024\).pdf](#)
The Delivery Statement is an overview document which sets out in detail the background, several studies and strategies have been developed to support the HGC Programme Area and its transformation.
- **Transport Vision & Strategy:**
[HGC 05.01 - Transport Vision & Strategy Executive Summary Endorsed by HCC \(2024\).pdf](#)
[HGC 05.02 - Transport Vision & Strategy Full Report Endorsed by HCC \(2024\).pdf](#)
The HGC Transport Vision and Strategy document (TV&S) sets out a sustainable movement network approach for the long-term growth and transformation of Hemel Hempstead and wider routes. The TV&S identifies the key and local networks, set out within the TV&S, to achieve a town-wide sustainable transport network with a target of 60% of all journeys starting, ending or within the HGC growth areas and 40% of all journeys starting, ending or within the existing town of Hemel Hempstead, to be undertaken by active and sustainable modes by 2050.
- **Hemel Hempstead Modal Shift Study – Opportunity to shift modes**
[HGC 05.03 - Hemel Hempstead Modal Shift Study Full Report \(2023\)](#)
[HGC 05.04 - Hemel Hempstead Modal Shift Study Executive Summary \(2023\)](#)
- **HGC Heritage Impact Assessment**
[EDH 04.02 - Heritage Impact Assessment Appendix 1 Hemel Garden Communities \(2024\).pdf](#)
- **Hemel Hempstead Historic Study Report**
[HGC 06.02 - Hemel Hempstead Historic Study Report \(2023\)](#)

- **North Hemel Hempstead Landscape Assessment**
(H1 Site Allocation and DBC Hm01 Site Allocation)
[HGC 07.02 - North Hemel Landscape Study Main Report \(2024\).pdf](#)
- **Draft HGC Strategic Design Code (Growth Areas)**
[HGC 06.01 - Hemel Strategic Design Code Draft \(2024\).pdf](#)
- **Draft HGC Green Infrastructure Strategy**
[HGC 07.01 - Green Infrastructure Strategy Final Draft \(2024\).pdf](#)
- **HGC Socio-economic and Demography Study**
[HGC 08.01 - Socio-economic and Demography Study \(2024\).pdf](#)
- **Higher Education and Research Opportunities**
[HGC 08.02 - Higher Education and Research Opportunities \(2024\).pdf](#)

5. Ongoing Joint working: Hemel Garden Communities

5.1. SADC continues to progress cross-boundary joint-working and various workstreams through the HGC programme with HGC Partners including Dacorum Borough Council and Hertfordshire County Council. Further detail of the HGC programme workstreams is set out within the HGC Delivery Statement and includes:

5.2. Ongoing Joint working: Transport

Transport forecast modelling has been conducted over several years utilising the Countywide Model of Transport (COMET) which covers the entire county of Hertfordshire and surrounding areas. The COMET 7.0 and COMET 7.1 model runs, were conducted in 2022 and 2024 respectively.

There is continued ongoing work to progress and support the delivery of transport interventions through collaboration with HGC partnership, HGC Transport sub-group and stakeholders. Ongoing continued transport work includes modelling work (combined cumulative COMET model tests for the combined growth for SADC and DBC) and additional work to update the Hemel Hempstead Transport study (as published with DBC Regulation 19) with a focus on Key Network priorities and developing details on the form and function of each route.

5.3. Ongoing Joint Working: The Hemel Garden Communities Infrastructure Delivery Plan to 2050

The HGC Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) to 2050, is underway and is drawing upon the existing 2024 IDPs that have prepared by Arup for St Albans City and District Council (SACDC) and Dacorum Borough Council (DBC), as well as engagement with developers, the county and HGC, as well as a review of any new evidence prepared by HGC, Hertfordshire County Council (HCC), and other infrastructure providers.

The HGC IDP to 2050 will provide an overview of the infrastructure required to support the growth programmed for Hemel Garden Communities, both within the plan periods of up to 2040/41, and beyond to 2050. It will also consider potential approaches to apportioning infrastructure costs across sites to ensure that developers contribute in a fair and equitable way to the infrastructure required to support the delivery of the Garden Town in line with the Spatial Vision. The HGC IDP will consider the wider area of the HGC Programme Area (Wider Hemel Hempstead) and the wider transformation of the town. The HGC IDP will develop a cost apportionment and cost sharing methodology.

5.4. Ongoing Joint Working: The Hemel Garden Communities SPDs

The emerging policies within the SADC Local Plan identify two Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) focused on Hemel Garden Communities:

- HGC Framework & Transformation Plan SPD
- Stewardship & Placemaking SPD

Work is underway to progress these two SPDs. These documents will build upon the emerging Local Plan and policies within the Local Plans. The SPDs will provide detailed guidance on how these policies or proposals will be implemented by the developers.