

Cllr Cook and Mike Rawlins (the NPPO) attended St Albans Planning Policy virtual committee (PPC) meeting on 09 June 2020. They also held a virtual meeting with Chris Briggs and Daley Wilson of SADC on Friday 12th June to review Neighbourhood Plan progress.

With the uncertainty of St Albans Local Plan some members of the steering group raised the question if the neighbourhood plan should delay until the direction of travel becomes clearer for St Albans Local plan (as per Redbourn). However, we wish to continue with the Colney Heath Neighbourhood Plan for the following reasons.

- 1) We still have quite a lot of work still to complete, most of which we will need complete whatever St Albans DC decide.
- 2) SADC are going to lose the Park Street aerodrome site to the rail freight terminal.

At PPC some councillors did or could not accept this. The rail freight terminal is national strategic infrastructure so will take precedence over SADC Local Plan. One long standing Councillor said "it will be a Rail freight Terminal or a field of sheep – not housing"

This will mean to loss of 2300 new homes to SADC Local Plan, this in part could be made up with the site at Redbourn promoted by Laws agricultural trust c1100 new homes.

The other 1200 new homes will need to be replaced with other sites, most likely smaller ones.

The A414 corridor looks particularly at risk much of that is in Colney Heath parish. NOTE – assumes Housing target remains the same

- 3) Colney Heath is much less impacted by the large strategic sites than Redbourn, but with the need for smaller sites to be considered now this will change as Colney Heath has many smaller sites (<500 new homes).
- 4) It has been clear for some time that SADC needed to consider smaller sites meet its housing needs in the early years of the Local Plan. Smaller sites deliver new homes more rapidly than the larger strategic sites.
- 5) Chris Briggs indicated that they would be looking at all sites across the district (similar to Welwyn Hatfield) from 1 or 2 homes to larger strategic sites. This follows on the Inspectors' comments in their letter on the need for smaller sites' evaluation. He was very clear that we will require supporting evidence to be able to protect or promote sites.

Glinwells and Smallford works were cited at PPC as sites which would be considered.

- 6) If we want to protect sites important to our residents, we must have a clear and transparent process to prevent challenge from developers and their legal teams

The next step is a Parish Call for Sites to be independent of SADC as we may reach different conclusions on sites 'developability' to them. This will require a modest budget for a local press advert/s.

The call for site needs to be widely publicised via local press, CHPC website and in the CHPC newsletter.

Our aim is to run the call for sites Monday 6th July 2020 – Tuesday 1st September 2020. The document is broadly based on SADC call for sites document with additional text relating to CHNP needs.

Actions required by CHPC to

- a) approve a call for sites
- b) agree the required documents to be put CHPC website
- c) agree budget for local press advert/s

The next step will be then to assess all promoted site using the Locality's Neighbourhood Plans Site assessment methodology.

The use of Locality's methodology was recommended by St Albans DC planning dept. as being the gold standard for neighbourhood plans.

Best practice is to publish your site assessment methodology prior to the Call for Sites, I would recommend that CHPC also does this.

Locality <https://locality.org.uk/services-tools/neighbourhood-planning/>

Site assessment <https://neighbourhoodplanning.org/toolkits-and-guidance/assess-allocate-sites-development/>

Actions required by CHPC

- a) agree in principle the use of Locality's site assessment methodology
- b) agree to publish the methodology on parish website

Locality's site assessment uses a traffic light system (red, amber, green) for scoring however if Colney Heath Neighbourhood Plan is required to find/allocate sites for development this would have issues, therefore a number-based scoring system will also be used. A number-based system can be designed to give greater differentiation between sites and facilitates in giving the residents an input into the final scoring via a survey. This will result in a robust evidence based and multi-level site scoring system.

We want to keep the momentum and rhythm of the group finalising the policies we can whilst monitoring the Local Plan process

Cllr Peter Cook
Mike Rawlins (NPPO)

Colney Heath Neighbourhood Plan

Call for sites 2020

As part of the Colney Heath Neighbourhood Plan, it is important for us to consider the merits of making site allocations for development in the parish of Colney Heath in order to address local needs. This therefore is a call to all landowners in the parish, however large or small the area of land may be, who have an interest in promoting their land for development over a period from now until 2036, in line with St Albans Local Plan.

If you are a landowner and wish your land to be considered in the Neighbourhood Plan, we are primarily looking for sites for a mix of affordable social housing and open market residential use. However, if you have aspirations for alternative uses then we would also like to hear from you. In particular, we would welcome details of land that you may wish to see taken forward to provide wider community benefit. For example, this could be as space for children's play areas, an allotment, or an area to be designated for purposes such as leisure facilities, or educational use. These are examples only and all ideas would be considered.

It is understood that any response represents a draft position and at this stage does not automatically bind a landowner to make any such provisions. Landowners should bear in mind that any potential land which is not put forward at this stage may not be considered for allocation during the period of the Plan i.e. 2020 – 2036. Equally sites can only be proposed for allocation if they are demonstrably deliverable and this is a matter which you may wish to address in your submission.

At this stage Colney Heath Parish Council are unable to commit to allocating any sites within the Neighbourhood Plan.

Please return the site map and form to Lisa Chaplin, Parish Clerk, Colney Heath Neighbourhood Plan either by:

e-mail to ourplan@colneyheathparishcouncil.gov.uk or;

post to: Colney Heath Parish Council, Highfield Park Office, Hill End Lane, Hertfordshire AL4 0RA

This form has two parts –

Part A – Site Identification. Please submit a separate form for each site you wish to promote.

Part B – Contact details

Please provide a map clearly identifying the extent of the site.

Please give your email address/postal address so that we can contact you to clarify site information if needed.

You are invited to put forward any sites, and the latest information/position regarding existing/known sites, that you would like the Steering Group to consider for the Neighbourhood Plan.

Although this 'Call for Sites' focuses primarily on sites for residential development, we are also looking for sites for other uses, such as sites for Employment, Health, Schools, Gypsy and Traveller, and 'Other' uses.

Unfortunately, we cannot treat any of the site information you provide as confidential, however your personal contact details will remain confidential.

Colney Heath Parish Council and the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group are aware of all the sites submitted to St Albans City & District Council in response to previous Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) surveys. These sites on the District Council's database will be considered in drawing up the Colney Heath Neighbourhood Plan, but landowners or other interested parties must re-affirm whether or not the sites are still available for development.

Please do not submit sites that already have planning permission for development, unless a new and different proposal is likely in the future.

Please return by midnight on Tuesday 1st September 2020

Part A: Site Identification Form

Site address: Please provide a brief description

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Ownership details: Please indicate whether freehold or leasehold and length of lease (it is possible that a site may be in multiple ownership). **Please include registered Title Number(s)**

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Area of site (hectares)

--

Current use(s)

--

Are there any factors that could make the site unavailable for development? (Please provide any details in the boxes labelled a to d below)

a. Ownership Constraints (e.g. multiple ownerships, ransom strips, tenancies, operational requirements)

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b. Awaiting relocation of current use

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c. Level of developer interest (i.e. low, medium, high)

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d. Likely timeframe for development (i.e. completion). Please indicate if you anticipate that development may be split over different time periods.

2020-2036

2036 onwards

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Are you aware of any particular constraints that might make the site unsuitable for development? (Please provide any details in the boxes labelled a to d below)

a. Environmental Constraints e.g. floodplain, Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) or Local Nature Reserve, sites of geological importance.

b. Other Designations e.g. Conservation Area, Listed Buildings, Archaeological Sites.

c. Physical Constraints e.g. poor access, steep slopes, uneven terrain, ground contamination, Tree Preservation Orders

d. Policy Constraints e.g. Green Belt, Landscape Character Area, high quality agricultural land, designated employment area, public or private green space, site with social or community value.

If any constraints have been identified above, do you think that they could be overcome? If so, how?

If submitting a site for Residential or Gypsy and Traveller uses, what is the estimated number of dwellings that could be provided on the site?

You will need to take into account matters such as:

- appropriate site densities to reflect local circumstances.
- overall size and character of the site
- suitable housing mix for the site

Sketch scheme (submitted for information if necessary)

Yes / No

Is there any other information that you would like to provide in relation to your proposed site? If yes, please give details below (and attach if necessary)

Part B: Contact Details (these details to remain confidential)

Name

--

Company/Organisation (if relevant)

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Address

--

Telephone number

--

Email address(es)

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Please tick all of the following that apply to you:

Landowner	
Land agent	
Planning consultant	
Registered social landlord	
Developer	
Other	

**Colney Heath Neighbourhood Plan
Site Assessment methodology (Locality)**

Neighbourhood Planning Site Assessment

Site Details

Detail	Assessment
Site Reference / Name / Registered Title	
[Insert site plan showing boundary of site]	[Insert site photo]
Site Address / Location	
Gross Site Area (Hectares)	
SHLAA/SHELAA Reference (if applicable)	
Existing land use	
Land use being considered, if known (e.g. housing, community use, commercial, mixed use)	
Landowner estimate of development capacity (if known)	
Site identification method / source (e.g. SHELAA, Call for Sites consultation, identified by neighbourhood planning group)	
Planning history (Live or previous planning applications/decisions)	
Neighbouring uses	

ASSESSMENT OF SUITABILITY

Environmental Constraints

Indicator of Suitability	Assessment	Scoring	Scoring numeric
Site is predominantly, or wholly, within or adjacent to the following statutory environmental designations: Ancient Woodland Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) Biosphere Reserve Local Nature Reserve (LNR) National Nature Reserve (NNR) National Park Ramsar Site Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) Special Area of Conservation (SAC) Special Protection Area (SPA) Yes/ No/ Unknown Does the site fall within a SSSI Impact Risk Zone and would the proposed use/development trigger the requirement to consult Natural England? Yes/ No/ Unknown			
Site is predominantly, or wholly, within or adjacent to an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA)? Yes / No / Unknown			
Is the land classified as the best and most versatile agricultural land (Grades 1, 2 or 3a) Yes / No / Unknown			

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Site Assessment methodology (Locality)**

Indicator of Suitability	Assessment	Scoring	Scoring numeric
Site is predominantly, or wholly, within or adjacent to the following non statutory environmental designations: Green Infrastructure Corridor Local Wildlife Site (LWS) Public Open Space Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC) Nature Improvement Area Regionally Important Geological Site Other Yes/ No/ Unknown			
Site is predominantly, or wholly, within Flood Zones 2 or 3? See guidance notes: Flood Zone 1: Low Risk Flood Zone 2: Medium Risk Flood Zone 3 (less or more vulnerable site use): Medium Risk Flood Zone 3 (highly vulnerable site use): High Risk			
Site is at risk of surface water flooding? See guidance notes: Less than 15% of the site is affected by medium or high risk of surface water flooding – Low Risk >15% of the site is affected by medium or high risk of surface water flooding – Medium Risk			

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Site Assessment methodology (Locality)

Indicator of Suitability	Assessment	Scoring	Scoring numeric
Site contains habitats with the potential to support priority species? Does the site contain local wildlife-rich habitats? Is the site part of: A wider ecological network (including the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites of importance for biodiversity); wildlife corridors (and stepping stones that connect them); and/or An area identified by national and local partnerships for habitat management, enhancement, restoration or creation? Yes / No / Unknown			

Physical Constraints

Indicator of Suitability	Assessment	Scoring RAG	Scoring numeric
Is the site: Flat or relatively flat Gently sloping or uneven Steeply sloping			
Is there existing vehicle access, or potential to create vehicle access to the site? Yes / No / Unknown			
Is there existing pedestrian/cycle access, or potential to create pedestrian/cycle access to the site? Pedestrian? Yes / No / Unknown Cycle? Yes / No / Unknown			

**Colney Heath Neighbourhood Plan
Site Assessment methodology (Locality)**

Indicator of Suitability	Assessment	Scoring RAG	Scoring numeric
Are there any known Tree Preservation Orders on the site? Yes / No / Unknown			
Are there veteran/ancient or other significant trees within or adjacent to the site? Are they owned by third parties? Significant trees? Yes, within / Yes, adjacent / No / Unknown Potentially veteran or ancient trees present? Yes, within / Yes, adjacent / No / Unknown Owned by third parties? Yes / No / Unknown			
Are there any Public Rights of Way (PRoW) crossing the site? Yes / No / Unknown			
Is the site likely to be affected by ground contamination? Yes / No / Unknown			
Is there any utilities infrastructure crossing the site i.e. power lines/pipe lines, or is the site in close proximity to hazardous installations? Yes / No / Unknown			
Would development of the site result in a loss of social, amenity or community value? Yes / No / Unknown			

ACCESSIBILITY

Landscape and Visual Constraints

This section should be answered based on existing evidence (see guidance notes) or by a qualified landscape consultant.

Indicator of Suitability	Assessment	Scoring	Scoring numeric
Is the site low, medium or high sensitivity in terms of landscape? Low sensitivity: the site has few or no valued features, and/or valued features that are less susceptible to development and can accommodate change. Medium sensitivity: the site has many valued features, and/or valued features that are susceptible to development but could potentially accommodate some change with appropriate mitigation. High sensitivity: the site has highly valued features, and/or valued features that are highly susceptible to development. The site can accommodate minimal change.			
Is the site low, medium or high sensitivity in terms of visual amenity? Low sensitivity: the site is visually enclosed and has low intervisibility with the surrounding landscape, and/or it would not adversely impact any identified views. Medium sensitivity: the site is somewhat enclosed and has some intervisibility with the surrounding landscape, and/or it may adversely impact any identified views. High sensitivity: the site is visually open and has high intervisibility with the surrounding landscape, and/or it would adversely impact any recognised views.			

**Colney Heath Neighbourhood Plan
Site Assessment methodology (Locality)**

Heritage Constraints

Indicator of Suitability	Assessment	Scoring	Scoring numeric
Would the development of the site cause harm to a designated heritage asset or its setting? Directly impact and/or mitigation not possible Some impact, and/or mitigation possible Limited or no impact or no requirement for mitigation			
Would the development of the site cause harm to a non-designated heritage asset or its setting? Directly impact and/or mitigation not possible Some impact, and/or mitigation possible Limited or no impact or no requirement for mitigation			

Planning policy constraints

Indicator of Suitability	Assessment	Scoring	Scoring numeric
Is the site in the Green Belt? Yes / No / Unknown			
Is the site allocated for a particular use (e.g. housing / employment) or designated as open space in the adopted and / or emerging Local Plan? Yes / No / Unknown			
Are there any other relevant planning policies relating to the site?			

Colney Heath Neighbourhood Plan
Site Assessment methodology (Locality)

Indicator of Suitability	Assessment	Scoring	Scoring numeric
Is the site: Greenfield A mix of greenfield and previously developed land Previously developed land?			
Is the site within, adjacent to or outside the existing built up area? Within the existing built up area (infill)? Adjacent to and connected to the existing built up area? Outside and not connected to the existing built up area?			
Is the site within, adjacent to or outside the existing settlement boundary (if one exists)? Within the existing settlement boundary? Adjacent to and connected to the existing settlement boundary? Outside and not connected to the existing settlement boundary?			
Would development of the site result in neighbouring settlements merging into one another? Yes / No / Unknown			
Is the size of the site large enough to significantly change the size and character of the existing settlement? Yes / No / Unknown			

**Colney Heath Neighbourhood Plan
Site Assessment methodology (Locality)**

Assessment of Availability

Indicator of Availability	Assessment	Scoring	Scoring numeric
Is the site available for development? Yes / No / Unknown.			
Are there any known legal or ownership problems such as unresolved multiple ownerships, ransom strips, tenancies, or operational requirements of landowners? Yes / No / Unknown.			
Is there a known time frame for availability? Available now / 0-5 years / 6-10 years / 11-15 years.			

Viability

Indicators of Viability	Assessment	Scoring	Scoring numeric
Is the site subject to any abnormal costs that could affect viability, such as demolition, land remediation or relocating utilities? Yes / No / Unknown. What evidence is available to support this judgement?			

Conclusions

Conclusions	Assessment	Scoring	Scoring numeric
Summary of key development constraints affecting the site			
What is the estimated development capacity of the site?			
What is the likely timeframe for development? (0-5 / 6-10 / 11-15 / 15+ years)			
Other key information			
Overall rating (Red/Amber/Green) The site is suitable, available and achievable The site is potentially suitable, available and achievable The site is not currently suitable, available and achievable			
Summary of justification for rating			