

**Colney Heath Parish Council**  
Planning application – Land at Roundhouse Farm

## **Introduction**

This document has been prepared by Colney Heath Parish Council to summarise and review the application for the benefit of parishioners.

***The Parish Council will also be producing a detailed response to the full application which will available shortly***

This document is about a planning application that has been made for the site known as Land at Roundhouse Farm seeking outline permission for the erection of up to 100 dwellings, with all matters reserved except access.

The site is between Fellowes and Bullens Green Lanes and Roestock Park with the proposed site access from Bullens Green Lane

It covers 2.48 Hectares (Ha) in St Albans District Council (SADC) and 2.77 Ha in Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council (WHBC) in the parishes of Colney Heath and North Mymms.

The application will be considered by both SADC and WHBC Councils under the following **application numbers and links**. All documents can be found on either website. Both are identical.

St Albans                    [Planning Application 5/2020/1992](#)

Welwyn Hatfield        [Planning Application 6/2020/2248/OUTLINE](#)

## **Important Note**

If a resident wishes to comment on this application should be sent to both Councils.

Welwyn Hatfield BC	<b>due by 19/10/2020</b>
St Albans DC	<b>due by 24/10/2020</b>

## **The application**

Outline permission is sought for the erection of up to 100 dwellings, with all planning matters reserved except access from Bullens Green Lane

The application states that the development will contain the following homes:

Market Housing	45 units
Social, Affordable, or intermediate rent	38 units
Affordable Home Ownership	7 units
Self-build and Custom Build	10 units

**The application is for outline permission for the erection of up 100 dwellings**

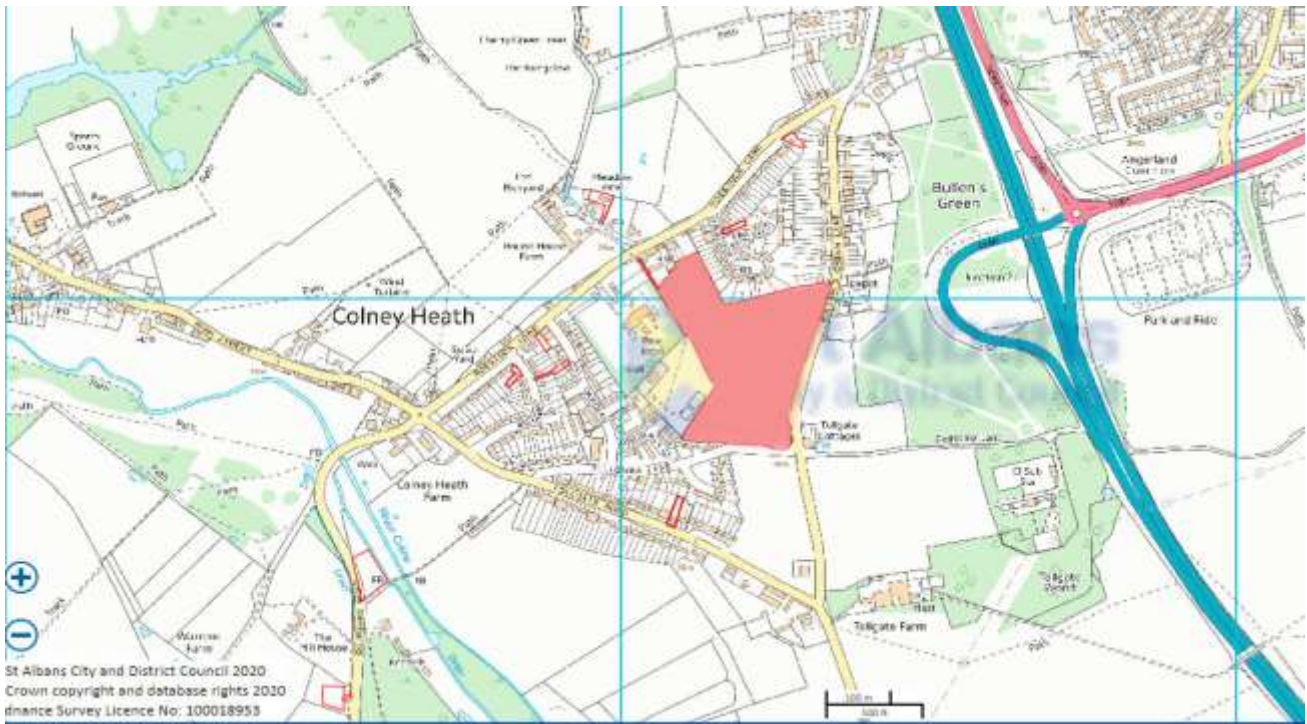
**NOTE: The units could be varied in future applications and the housing mix should be a condition if permission is granted.**

## **Summary**

The application states that 45 will be affordable housing units. The technical definition of affordable housing is these are let at 20% below current market prices or lower

The applicant shows the need for housing with the districts of St Albans and Welwyn Hatfield of many sizes including affordable homes.

**Site location**



**Green Belt**

Green Belt policies apply to this application as the site is within the Metropolitan Green Belt (MGB) and is outside of the Colney Heath Green Belt community envelope.

Green Belt policies in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) state that planning consent should only be granted in Very Special Circumstances (VSC)

The application acknowledges the site lies within the MGB and that there will be some harm to the “openness” of the land from its development for housing

The applicant ‘claims’ the perception of this will largely be limited to within the site itself.

The Landscape Value Assessment (LVA) produced by FPCR on behalf of the applicant also demonstrates that the site makes only a very limited to no contribution to the purposes for including land within the Green Belt.

SKM report prepared for Welwyn Hatfield, St Albans and Dacorum found that area 34 for the purposes of the Green Belt, of which this is part of, performed as –

**NPPF criteria**

- To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas
- To prevent neighbouring towns from merging
- To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment
- To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns
- Maintaining existing settlement pattern

**Analysis**

- Limited /no
- Partial
- Significant**
- Partial
- Significant**

**The Parish Council supports this analysis**

**The applicant’s consultants argue for a different conclusion**

## **Sustainability**

The sustainability assessment did not record that the site is within

Herts County Council 30 landscape assessment where it is identified for protection and improvement

The site is within Watling Chase Community Forest.

**The Green Travel Plan** and related documents have a number of significant weaknesses in meeting the requirements of a key element of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) covering sustainable transport.

The application attempts to demonstrate the sustainability of the site by quoting percentage of people with the Colney Heath E04004802 who currently walk or cycle to work and therefore similar numbers would walk cycle from the proposed site.

The data used relates to the entire parish of Colney Heath E04004802 rather than Colney Heath village.

The urban part of the parish, approximately 53% of the electorate and 3.4% of the total area, is effectively part of St Albans with employment opportunities available with good public transport access from the residential areas, predominantly Highfield.

Public transport especially on the main arterial routes such as London Road (A10811) and Hatfield Road (A1057) has a regular timetable throughout the day.

The rural part of the Parish, particularly the 27% of the parish electorate living in Colney Heath village have one bus journey a day.

The Plan says “a once a week shoppers bus going to London Colney offers sustainable public transport for commuters.

**There is no access to towns as stated in the Green Travel Plan**

**There is no public transport for commuters who must rely on cars to travel to work and shopping.**

**The facts are presented inaccurately**

*‘7.10 It is considered that the 230 bus service can be used for commuting purposes to Welwyn Garden City and St Albans.’*

Route 230 Wednesday only (Centrebus timetable)

	Outbound	inbound
Welwyn Garden City	10.32	15.05
Colney Heath village	11.14	14.23
St Albans	11.37	14.00

**Colney Heath Parish Council**  
Planning application – Land at Roundhouse Farm

## **Traffic**

The assessment fails to consider traffic within the village notably the latest HCC Comet modelling which shows considerable delays in Tollgate Road.

Colney Heath village is accessed by vehicles via one three routes

Coursers Road to Bell roundabout London Colney bypass and M25

High Street to A414 Colney Heath Long-about

Tollgate Road to Welham Green and A1000

The village is highly dependent on cars due to the limited bus service

Route 200 Welwyn Garden City- Colney Fields Monday only dept 10.26 return 12.40

Route 230 Welwyn Garden City-St Albans Wednesday only see above

Route 305 Potter Bar-Sandridge two through journeys, two start/terminate in the village.

No bus service on Sundays

A cycle and walking route also link to South Hatfield via a tunnel under A1M

## **Transport**

The application identified problems with agricultural vehicles entering and leaving the site thus unsuitable for farming as one of the reasons supporting the application for change of land use.

**The applicant's forecast of vehicles using the site and associated traffic generation is considerably below the SADC approach (using the applicant's data).**

## **Planning History**

### **WHBC**

No record has been found within Welwyn Hatfield BC call for sites (SHLAA 2010 – current).

**As this site was not promoted for development it has not been assessed alongside other sites within Welwyn Hatfield. It has not been subject or an independent review along other sites within Welwyn Hatfield on its suitability for development.**

### **SADC**

The site was promoted for development in St Albans DC call for site in 2009 and has been retained in later call for site assessment ref. SHLAA 2009-CH-37

**St Albans DC decided only to assess larger sites within the Local Plan as smaller sites would not provide the additional infrastructure required.**

## Illustrative scheme shown with the application



This shows access direct to Roestock Park

**Colney Heath Parish Council, as head leaseholder, has not agreed to this**

**The only information received has been the above plan and an 'illustrative sketch'.**

**The Parish Council will not decide until full details have been provided and debated at Full Council**

**Matters not taken into account in detail when determining the application**

### Employment

The largest employer in the village is Primary school with no other significant large employers within the village.

### Impact on local facilities

The application makes no assessment on the ability of local facilities to cope with the additional demand. It is well known and accepted that local schools and medical services are under considerable pressure.

- Colney Heath JMI school limited to 30 children per school year
- Parents have been protesting in St Albans after nearly 200 pupils in Hertfordshire were left without a secondary school place in September. BBC 9/3/2019
- Nearest Doctors surgery North Down Road South Hatfield (restricted hours)1230metres
- Lister Hospital Stevenage 18.5miles, Watford General Hospital 13.2miles