PREFACE

Background

Work on SNAP (the Stevenage and North Hertfordshire Action Plan), forming a part of the Local Development Frameworks of both Stevenage Borough and North Hertfordshire District Councils, began in 2007.


Analysis of the representations received during the consultation period was undertaken in 2008/9 and further joint evidence studies were also undertaken during this period. Officers of the two councils began work on the next iteration of the plan (the preferred options version) in early 2009.

The preferred options version of SNAP

Substantial technical work and text-drafting was undertaken by officers of both councils during 2009/10. Also at this time, informal direction was taken from representative senior Members of both councils. It was from this latter process that material was leaked to the local press.

Following a change of government in May 2010, North Hertfordshire District Council (NHDC) unilaterally resolved to place work on SNAP into abeyance at a Cabinet meeting on 15 June 2010. The Borough Council (SBC) expressed its disappointment at that decision.

In a statement on 15 July to the Inspector conducting the examination into the SBC Core Strategy, NHDC stated that “…whilst the North Hertfordshire Cabinet resolution refers to all work on SNAP ceasing until there is further clarity, it is extremely unlikely that SNAP will be resumed in its current form once that clarity is found.”

Their statement also said that their proposed work on setting local housing numbers “…is highly unlikely to reach the same conclusions reached by the East of England Plan (EoEP) with respect to the Stevenage and North Hertfordshire areas. The EoEP was predicated upon there being a major growth area here.”

Against the background of this statement, the Borough Council believes that non-publication of the SNAP work undertaken to date would no longer be defensible against requests made under the Freedom of Information Act or the Environmental Information Regulations. Consequently, SBC have decided to publish SNAP as it stood when work was placed into abeyance.

Availability of documents

The attached documents fall into two inter-related parts: (i) a partial draft of a preferred options version of SNAP; and (ii) a schedule of the outstanding work that it was considered was necessary to complete the preferred options version document.
The draft plan represents an incomplete but agreed officer-level draft preferred options document. The ‘To Do’ list represents an agreed list of work that both sets of officers felt that it was necessary to undertake in order to complete the plan to publishable standard. The two should be read together.

Neither the draft plan nor the list takes account of legislative or other circumstantial changes since work was placed into abeyance.

**Status of draft plan document**

It should be emphasised that the draft plan is neither a full nor a complete Development Plan Document (DPD) and nor has it been seen or endorsed by Members of either council.

As such, the draft plan should be viewed as a 'work in progress' that “it is extremely unlikely …will be resumed in its current form”, containing gaps and inconsistencies which would have been resolved had the document continued to be prepared for publication as a DPD.

The draft plan and the associated ‘To Do’ list are published purely for information purposes.

They are not the subject of public consultation nor were they ever intended to be in this form.

Essentially, they are presented as reference items of historical interest. They indicate how far work had progressed towards developing three new neighbourhoods to the west and north of Stevenage.

**SNAP-related evidence studies**

Associated SBC evidence studies are posted elsewhere on this web-site.

The Stevenage Urban Transport Plan – which models the transport impact of the new neighbourhoods and proposes various remedial measures - is posted on the Hertfordshire County Council web-site.

The availability of NHDC evidence studies connected with the preparation of SNAP should be checked with the District Council.