

Stevenage Borough Local Plan

# Public Examination

Matter 11 Statement

January 2017



## Stevenage Borough Local Plan 2011 – 2031 - Public Examination

### Statement by Stevenage Borough Council (SBC)

#### Matter 11 – Community facilities

##### NB: SBC responses set out in blue font

1. ***What consideration has been given to the increase in demand for medical facilities as a result of the increase in population during the Plan period?***
  - 1.1 The Infrastructure Delivery Plan ([TI1](#)) sets out the detailed consideration that has been given to the increase in the demand for medical facilities as a result of the increase in population during the Plan period. For Doctor's surgeries, table 8 and paragraph 4.6 on page 55, set out the existing GP surgeries within Stevenage. It can be seen that there are some GP surgeries that currently have capacity for new patient registrations. The text at para 4.6 explains that planning permission has been granted for a replacement doctor's surgery in Shephall at the western end of Ridlins Playing Fields. Funding for this has been approved (para 4.18) and construction is imminent. The Clinical Commissioning Group has considered the number of new GP surgeries that will be required during the plan period, preferred locations and potential funding sources and this is set out in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan at paragraphs 4.16 to 4.19.
  - 1.2 The table at the end of the Infrastructure Delivery Plan summarises the cost of additional practice floorspace for Primary Care General Medical Services (Doctor's surgeries). This is based on a pro rata figure of £621.00 per dwelling supplied by the Clinical Commissioning Group. For clarity, the figure included is for the entire plan period from 2011-2031 and is based on 7600 homes. The housing monitoring update in the Housing Technical Paper ([ED123](#)), identifies that since 2011, 746 new homes have been completed and a further 1982 are committed supply (para 2.7). This leaves approximately 4872 dwellings to come forward through the planning system during the plan period.
  - 1.3 For acute services (Lister Hospital) and secondary healthcare, consisting of community services, mental health services and acute health care, the Infrastructure Delivery Plan sets out what the Clinical Commissioning Group anticipates will be required during the plan period. The approach taken to assessing the need is set out at paragraphs 4.40 to 4.43 of the IDP. Potential funding sources are considered at paragraph 4.47 of the IDP and no specific commitments have been made. The CCG and other providers have yet to determine the most appropriate location and configuration for this provision (IDP, para 4.49) but the policy framework of the Local Plan provides appropriate guidance to govern the provision.

1.4 In relation to Adult Social Care, the Infrastructure Delivery Plan sets out the projected adult social care requirements to 2030 at table 9, page 65. Para 4.61 concludes that the total need is for 190 additional individuals over the twenty year plan period. Hertfordshire County Council is responsible for delivering adult social care across the County. In addition, some services and facilities can be provided through RSLs and privately on a commercial basis or on behalf of public providers.

## **2 What new facilities are proposed and what is the justification for them?**

2.1 In relation to GP surgeries, a new GP surgery is to be built at Ridlins (as answer to question 1, para 1.1 above). The CCG also estimates that in the region of three to four new GP surgeries will be needed over the plan period as a result of new development in the borough (TI1, para 4.16). The CCG has suggested broad locations to be considered for future provision. This is followed through in the Local Plan policies for the strategic sites. Policy HO2 Stevenage West, criterion k, Policy HO3 North of Stevenage, criterion h, and Policy HO4 South East of Stevenage, criterion h, each require that: '*local facilities to serve the community are incorporated, including a GP surgery.*' The Local Plan Policies for the town centre, policies TC2, TC3, TC5, TC7, TC8 and TC9 all provide appropriate guidance to govern the provision of new and replacement D1 uses in the town centre.

2.2 In relation to acute services (Lister Hospital), The Trust has set out its short term capacity requirements in Appendix A of its Local Plan response. These are a satellite radiotherapy centre and car parking. The Trust estimates the land required is 0.8 – 1.2 hectares, depending on the configuration. The longer term requirements for the plan period to 2031 include redevelopment of the staff residences leased to Origin Housing Association to provide more modern accommodation. The Healthcare Campus Policy HC3 safeguards the existing hospital site and allocates a parcel of undeveloped land within this campus for healthcare related uses.

2.3 In relation to secondary healthcare, consisting of community services, mental health services and acute health care, the CCG and other providers have yet to determine the most appropriate location and configuration of future provision within the plan period to 2031 (as answer to question 1, para 1.3 above).

2.4 In relation to adult social care, Local Plan Policy HO2 Stevenage West, HO3 North of Stevenage, and HO4 South East of Stevenage, covering the strategic sites, each include a criterion requiring that '*provision for supported or sheltered housing is made in line with Policy HO10*'. Policy HO10 requires large developments in excess of 200 units to provide an element of sheltered and / or supported accommodation within use class C3. The new neighbourhoods to the

west and north of Stevenage (HO2 and HO3) are additionally required to include an element of accommodation in use class C2.

### **3 How will they be funded and is any of the funding in doubt or subject to viability testing?**

- 3.1 The viability testing in the Whole Plan Viability Study, including CIL – September 2015, HDH Planning and Development, (T13) follows the requirements of NPPF Paragraphs 173 and 174 and the PPG, being to test the cumulative impact of all of the Council’s policies.
- 3.2 The impact of affordable houses has been tested relative to the ability to bear developer contributions – see Table 10.6a to 10.6d and specifically considered CIL as a potential method of funding the infrastructure required to deliver the Plan (chapter 13). The affordable housing targets have been set at a level to enable allowable developer contributions to be requested as well.
- 3.3 The Council’s CIL Evidence, Stevenage Borough Infrastructure Funding Strategy (T12) identifies a funding gap thus supporting the introduction of the levy. As is usual, not all of the funding for all of the infrastructure which may be required over the plan period has been identified at this stage. However, the requirements have been prioritised and all infrastructure essential to the delivery of the plan is funded or funding is available to deliver them.
- 3.4 Stevenage Borough Infrastructure Funding Strategy (T12), Table 2.1 sets out the total infrastructure costs by category and prioritisation. This shows under healthcare, the cost for Doctor’s surgeries in Stevenage is £3.3 million. This is categorised as essential. The report found at para 4.6.1 that “*funding available for all scenarios is sufficient to cover the cost of delivering critical and essential infrastructure items.*”
- 3.5 For secondary healthcare Lister hospital / acute healthcare and adult social care, the report found that “*The prime responsibility of funding and delivering secondary healthcare services list with Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) and NHS England. Costs associated with secondary healthcare, including the Lister hospital, and adult social care total £23.8m and are assumed to be met through central Government / NHS funding.*” See table 2.1.

### **4 Is there a need for any additional faith/spiritual facilities?**

- 4.1 The Council is not aware of an unmet demand for faith / spiritual facilities in Stevenage and there are no unauthorised D1 uses within the Borough. The policy framework of the Local Plan provides

adequate guidance for any proposals for such uses which might arise during the plan period.

## **5. *Is the relocation of the Arts and Leisure centre justified?***

- 5.1. The Sports Facility Assessment and Strategy ([CF1a](#)) identifies that the Arts and Leisure Centre is now an ageing, and (in parts) poor quality facility, in need of significant and costly work within the next 15 years (para 2.15). The layout of the centre, coupled with changes in demand over the years, means that the facility is not used to its full extent and does not provide a profitable business. Its combined use as a theatre also reduces the availability for sport.
- 5.2. Options for improvements to the centre have previously been considered, but parking is also an issue, which relates to its location within the town centre.
- 5.3. Plans for the regeneration of the town centre form a key component of the SBLP strategy, providing new homes and jobs to grow the town. This is a key priority for the local community. The regeneration is being led by the Stevenage First partnership, which includes the Hertfordshire LEP, the Borough Council, Hertfordshire County Council and Hertfordshire Chamber of Commerce. This partnership has jointly created an ambitious framework to reinvigorate the centre of Stevenage ([ER2](#)).
- 5.4. The framework provides for the redevelopment of the railway station and the closure of Lytton Way, to remove the physical and perceived barriers between Stevenage Leisure Park and the existing retail core. The location of the Arts and Leisure Centre is such that it currently acts as a barrier to redevelopment within this area. The relocation of the centre is essential to opening up key development sites and to creating a new physical and visual linkage for town centre users, across the railway line ([ER2](#), para 2.7.29).
- 5.5. Its relocation offers the opportunity to reduce an existing financial burden for the Council, as well as improving much-needed sports facilities for residents, and enabling wider regeneration objectives.
- 5.6. A feasibility study is currently underway to identify a preferred site for the leisure centre. A number of opportunities are being explored, with a preferred option to co-locate the swimming pool and leisure centre together on the existing swimming centre site to the east of the town centre.

**6. What consideration has been given to the increase in demand for educational provision as a result of the increase in new homes and increased population during the Plan period and what increase in places is planned?**

- 6.1. Hertfordshire County Council (HCC) is responsible for planning and monitoring school provision across the county.
- 6.2. HCC provided consultation responses to the various stages of the SBLP, as well as providing information to the Borough Council to inform the Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) ([TI1](#)).
- 6.3. In producing the IDP, HCC were given a map of proposed allocation sites and asked to assess the likely educational requirements arising from this growth and the schools provision likely to be required.
- 6.4. Duty to co-operate discussions have been ongoing between SBC and HCC (including NHDC, where appropriate, as an authority within the same school planning area) to understand the requirements resulting from the proposed SBLP growth. These discussions directly informed the SBLP (Duty to Co-operate Statement ([SCI](#)), p32).
- 6.5. The Plan makes provision for a new Secondary School at the Barnwell East site (Policy HC9) and new Primary Schools within Stevenage West (HO2), North Stevenage (HO3) and the town centre (TC2). The remaining needs will be met through the expansion of existing schools and a new secondary school on the edge of the Borough in NHDC. This approach is supported by HCC, as evidenced in their publication consultation response ([LP8](#)).

**7. Is the proposed provision justified and based on a sound evidence base?**

- 7.1. HCC have raised no objection to the SBLP publication consultation. Their response clearly sets out what is required in terms of primary and secondary school provision within the Borough. The provision made within the SBLP accords with this response.
- 7.2. In terms of secondary school provision, this results in a small level of unmet need arising from growth within the Borough (2.3FE according to the calculations of HCC on p9 of their representation to the SBLP). HCC have confirmed that this level of need alone is too small to require provision of another new secondary school. An email communication with HCC in Appendix 1 confirms HCC's preference for schools of over 6FE in size. Instead, the HCC SBLP consultation response identifies a requirement for a new 8FE secondary school on the edge of the Borough, in North Herts district, to serve the needs of both authorities (HCC consultation response, [LP8](#)).

- 7.3. Discussions have been on-going between SBC, HCC and NHDC, in relation to the provision to be made outside of the Borough. HCC have confirmed their position that SBC should not be required to make provision for an additional school to meet such a small surplus need, and NHDC would require a school in this area anyway. HCC previously identified a preferred site in NHDC at Great Ashby.
- 7.4. More recently, HCC have undertaken further site search work to identify the most appropriate site to meet this need (CF3 & CF3a). Sites within SBC did not score favourably and the study identified that site NH6 (within NHDC) was best placed to meet these needs. As such, HCC are still pursuing a site in NHDC. Discussions are continuing about how this might be taken forward.
- 7.5. An MoU with NHDC confirms that both authorities agree that the education strategy for Stevenage makes provision for the educational needs arising in the Borough in the future ([ED130](#)).
- 7.6. A MoU with HCC re-confirms that the requirements made by the SBLP are sufficient ([ED103](#)).

**8. *Should the Plan make provision for a hospice as suggested by some representors?***

- 8.1. Healthcare providers were consulted on both the SBLP and the IDP ([TI1](#)). No specific requirement for a hospice has been identified within the Plan period.
- 8.2. However, if the need for a hospice was to arise in the future, the Health Campus allocated under Policy HC3 provides an ideal site for this. This is in close proximity to existing healthcare uses, including Lister Hospital, and is allocated to accommodate additional healthcare-related uses.



## Appendix 1: Email from HCC to SBC

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**From:** Kate Ma [<mailto:Kate.Ma@hertfordshire.gov.uk>]  
**Sent:** 12 January 2017 11:15  
**To:** Zayd Al-Jawad; Alice Carrington  
**Cc:** Jacqueline Nixon; Andrea Gilmour; Pauline Davis  
**Subject:** RE: Meeting agenda for this afternoon

Zayd,

Apologies for the delay in responding to your point round 4fe secondary schools.

I can confirm that Hertfordshire has a preference for secondary schools of at least 6fe as they are better able to offer improved opportunities for the delivery of a broad education curriculum. Secondary schools of 4fe or below would be less able to provide the breadth or depth of curriculum opportunities at Key Stage 4 and beyond, and small schools are at a much greater risk of financial viability issues, particularly with current budget constraints which are expected to fall further during the lifecycle of this parliament.

I hope this is sufficient for your purposes.

Kate

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