

**NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

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# PRESS RELEASE

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## **Draft housing allocations unveiled for North Hertfordshire Local Plan**

The emerging preferred options for the allocation of land for housing in North Hertfordshire were presented at a Councillor briefing last night (15).

The draft housing allocations were discussed in advance of a Full Council meeting on 27 November, when Councillors will be asked to agree for consultation on a draft Local Plan - Preferred Options, for the period 2011-2031. Consultation would then be held during December and January where comments will be welcomed from the public, interest groups and potential developers. The results of the consultation will be used to prepare the final version of the Draft Local Plan to be put forward, following a further consultation, for examination by the Planning Inspectorate next year.

The draft plan will include 12,100 homes for North Hertfordshire's needs over the period to 2031. It will also consider how we respond to the needs from the Luton area that cannot be met within Luton's borders, which we are required to do under the National Planning Policy Framework.

The plan will identify sites for housing and employment across each of North Hertfordshire's towns and villages. It will also contain a new suite of policies to be used when determining planning applications.

The majority of new development will be focused around North Hertfordshire's towns, to make maximum use of existing facilities, social networks and infrastructure. As some of the sites proposed will be substantial new communities, the Council will prepare masterplans for those sites. The masterplans will consider the infrastructure and facilities necessary to support the development, opportunities to provide employment, and incorporation of open spaces.

Cllr David Levett, NHDC's Portfolio Holder for Planning and Enterprise said: "We need new homes in North Hertfordshire to meet the needs of our growing population, to ensure the district's economic prosperity and that our families have somewhere to live. However those homes must be sustainable, viable, and deliverable and also

ensure that the unique nature of North Hertfordshire, which makes it one of the best places to live in the country, is protected.

“We have given careful consideration to the proposed sites and want to reassure people that all sites will be suitably planned with the accompanying infrastructure and local amenities necessary to create thriving communities, particularly in the case of the major sites which will each require a masterplan to ensure these are delivered.

“Following the meeting of Full Council on 27 November, we will be seeking the views of the public on the draft Local Plan – Preferred Options, and we would encourage everyone to have their say.”

### **Draft allocated key housing sites and estimated dwellings (inclusive of completions since 2011 and permissions at 1 April 2014) for North Hertfordshire**

- **Baldock** – Nine sites have been allocated in and around Baldock, including one of 2,800 dwellings at the Blackhorse Farm site, north of the town. The estimated total number of dwellings for the plan period is 3,591. A masterplan for the Blackhorse Farm site will be prepared to include the provision of a new road and pedestrian bridge across the railway, adequate new schools including a secondary school and a new neighbourhood centre.
- **Great Ashby and North East of Stevenage** – Two sites are allocated for an estimated 857 additional dwellings.
- **Hitchin** – Nine sites are allocated in and around Hitchin. The town is estimated to see 1,342 additional dwellings over the plan period. The largest site is for 484 dwellings on land at Highover Farm. **The Priory Fields site is not included in the allocated sites.**
- **Letchworth Garden City** – 11 sites are allocated in Letchworth, the largest of which being land north of Letchworth with an estimated 1,000 dwellings. The total number of dwellings to be delivered is estimated to be 2,030. A masterplan will be prepared for the site north of Letchworth .
- **Royston** – Eight sites are allocated in Royston with the total number of dwellings estimated at 1,485.
- **Stevenage North** – One site on undeveloped farm land in the parish of Graveley is allocated as a housing site with an estimated 1,000 dwellings. A masterplan will be prepared for the site jointly with Stevenage Borough Council, which controls the adjoining land in the South.

### **National Planning Policy Framework Duty to Cooperate on Unmet Need**

- **Cockernhoe and East of Luton** – Three sites have been identified for up to 2,103 dwellings for this area, to meet possible needs arising from Luton rather than North Hertfordshire. A masterplan will be prepared for all three sites to

consider issues such as minimising visual impacts of development, access into Luton, adequate new schools, a new neighbourhood centre and ensure any development meets Luton's specific needs.

**ENDS**

**Notes to editors**

Please see accompanying table for details of draft housing sites and estimated dwellings across North Hertfordshire.

**Further Information**

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