



Stanstead Abbotts
St Margarets

Webinar Q&A

Is there to be a separate neighbourhood plan for Great Amwell?

At this time, Great Amwell is classified as a category 2 village. Limited in-fill development within the built-up parts of the village is permissible subject to concordance with EHDC Planning policies. However, no specific target for new housing is applicable so Great Amwell Parish Council has decided to postpone any decision on a Neighbourhood Plan until EHDC planning policies with respect to villages change if, and when any policy changes might occur.

Can you please make the slides available on your website?

The video of the webinar is available on our website and Facebook page. We will not be making the slides available on the website.

The plan mentioned barges and moorings, is this to ensure control of these as opposed to increasing them?

New moorings have been mentioned to ensure that if any new permanent moorings were to be put forward that they are in the most appropriate location, do not interfere with the recreational or commercial use of the river, as well as to make sure there is infrastructure in place such as utilities, parking, waste and recycling facilities.

Was any part of the Maltings considered as conversion to housing accommodation?

The Maltings is a Designated Employment Area in the District Plan so it would be unsuitable for residential development. An Article 4 Direction came into force on 2nd January 2021 which provides further protection for designated employment areas.

Did you consider giving a "score" or points to sites that could deliver community benefits? Not just housing?

Yes, we had a specific criterion which asked 'Does the site have potential to provide community infrastructure? It should be noted that this is a general overall score, not per benefit as mostly these would not be known.

Is the conservation area considered to be one of the constraints on the plan?

The conservation area is always indicated on the EHDP Proposals Map that we showed as the first constraint (but missed referring to it specifically). It is an important constraint, though it should be noted that you can build in a conservation area.

Could the 2021 census make the council change the number of dwellings that the village must build by 2033?

The adopted District Plan sets the planning framework until 2033, including the target of 94 homes for our village. The Council may choose to review the District Plan before this date however we are not aware of any current plans for this number to be changed.

The land south of the A414, is that within our boundary? Or part of Broxbourne Borough?

The land south of the A414 is part of St Margarets Parish and so is part of the Neighbourhood Plan Area. However, it is outside of the settlement boundary of Stanstead Abbots & St Margarets. The Borough of Broxbourne starts just to the south of St Margarets Road.

Are we taking into consideration coalescence with the Gilston area?

Yes, we are keeping a watching brief on these developments, but the Harlow sites are at a significant distance from the village, further away than the settlements to the west of the village.

An outline planning application has been submitted for Village 7 as part of the Harlow Gilston development (ref 3/19/2124/OUT). It does not pose a risk of coalescence with SASM.

You said that H7 would probably fall away. Can you explain that a bit more?

The site is owned by East Herts District Council however we have yet to receive confirmation that it is available for development within the plan period. There are also significant constraints on the site itself such as trees and a pumping station. Even if it was put forward for development it is likely the number of homes there would be fewer than our estimates.

How many housing units have you considered in your plan for permitted development both recently completed and future development? If zero, why have you not accounted for them?

Permitted development rights do not extend to the creation of new dwellings - only for the alteration, enlargement or improvement of dwellings. Therefore, we have not considered this as we are only concerned with new dwellings. It should also be noted that much of the village is within a conservation area in which generally permitted development rights have been limited even further. We have however looked at planning permissions for new dwellings and have located several single unit new dwellings/sub-division of properties that are been completed since April 2017 and these have been included in our numbers. We have already accounted for between 19-23 homes already built, consented or pending consent during the plan period.

With the change in high streets, have any shop units in the high street been considered for units?

To date no sites on the high street have come forward for conversion to residential homes. However, our policy is to retain as many retail units in the village as possible. We have already lost over 25% of our shops over the years.

Surely the requirements of the landowner are not the key consideration, it should be the interests of the residents that is key?

Residents need to work with the NP team to determine the key aspects that the developer needs to take in to account.

We need to engage with landowners who are proposing to bring sites forward within their ownership as part of the neighbourhood plan process. This enables us to build up an understanding of what they are proposing to develop on their land, and the extent to which this complies with planning policy. Engagement with local residents will help the NP team to provide further clarity on policies which are relevant to development and will help determine the key aspects that any developer will need to take into account.

Have the flood risk zones taken account of global warming--as required by the Environment Agency?

We have accessed the latest available flood mapping data from the Environment Agency to inform the SASM plan. These are future-proofed.

Aecom have criticised the scoring process but this has been ignored by the NP, why is this?

Aecom made a number of recommendations which have led to some revisions of the methodology for selecting sites; this is awaiting agreement from the parish councils. These recommendations did not lead to any change in the sites on which we are now consulting.

Will carbon footprint be considered in new applications - can all new houses have car charging points for instance? Be good to stop so many fumes from cars queuing at the level crossing

We expect East Herts District Plan requirements and the Sustainability Supplementary Planning Document to be fully complied with.

The centre of the 3 parishes cannot be the co-op; it should be the train station or the river?

It should be noted that nowhere in our assessment criteria do we refer to “the centre of the village”. The relevant criteria relates to connectivity (that is, how close or how well connected the various sites are to the main facilities in the village).

The webinar demonstrated clearly why the co-op was chosen as the centre of the village for the purposes of assessing connectivity. It is the point from which we measured distance to each site to arrive at a score. It is in the centre of the High Street where the majority of the village facilities are clustered. The train station is an important facility but it is not the only or the main one. The river is not a facility as such.

Is there a risk that we could end with the 122 homes instead of 94, or do we have control systems to prevent this?

It is necessary to over-allocate as there are a number of uncertainties relating to the provision of sites, particularly those within the village settlement area; some may fall away (such as H7) or constraints on building may become evident as further investigation is carried out, meaning that the site provides fewer homes than we estimated. We will however keep a very close watching brief on this.

How many villagers have been able to join this evening?

We had 50 participants in the webinar – that means 50 computers linked to the session. It is very likely there were more than 50 people watching as we know that several people/households watched it together.

Catesby site questions:

As only a small portion (35%) of the Catesby site is proposed as development, the rest is proposed to be open space to be gifted to the parish council to be used as sport facility, biodiversity or any use the parish council wished. I would suggest your plans are not clear on this point.

The neighbourhood plan has restricted sites and put requirements e.g. restricted to 2 storeys, has to include biodiversity net gain. Could a similar restrictive policy on what a planning application on the Catesby site has to include e.g. a definitive line or amount of land to be handed to parish council?

The Catesby site is giving back 60%of the field back to the village which takes out coalescence

The gifting of 60% of the site mentioned above was not actually formally proposed to the Neighbourhood Plan group prior to the webinar, so it is not clear where the information above has come from. Our site assessment process took into account the information that was made available to us through the call for sites and was scored accordingly.

There is also no guarantee that these constraints would in fact be effective in restricting the number of homes built or potential coalescence. The Catesby site offers significant danger of encroachment into open countryside, being virtually surrounded by fields, and the proximity to Hoddesdon is very clear.

We have only looked at restrictions on sites after they have got through our scoring/assessment process; the Catesby site did not get through.

Our housing policies (which are available on the website) set out what we want to see on each site, such as a net gain in biodiversity. We can discuss with landowners their willingness to enter into restrictive covenants about development on areas not included in the site in order for that site to be included in the plan; however we do not issue planning permission.

What about the amount of social /affordable housing that could be provided by the Catesby estate

Only on larger sites (10 or more homes) is there a requirement for the provision of affordable homes. This is East Herts District council policy, which we are following. Any large site could provide a quota of affordable homes.

If we adopt the plan, will that effectively put a stop to the Catesby site within our boundary?

If the site is not allocated in the plan (and the plan allocates the required number of homes), then it is unlikely that the Catesby site would gain planning permission. It is in the green belt and development would need our specific request, backed up by agreed policies, for it to be released.

Netherfield Lane questions

Why are you putting the Netherfield Lane Brownfield site in with the greenbelt site and deciding to score them as one site?

The landowner wishes to bring them forward as a single site and they are adjacent sites. We did look at them individually and scored them so initially; they both scored quite well which was in part why we agreed to combine them.

The access to Netherfield lane is dangerous, why this has not been taken into account.

The policy for this site refers to the creation of a new access for the development, so this has in fact been considered.

But factors such as safe access would need to be dealt with directly with Herts CC Highways during the application process and it is unlikely that planning permission would be secured without resolving this aspect of the scheme to Highways satisfaction. In our NP, we would simply require that access is safe.

Is the Neighbourhood plan committee in favour or opposed to Webster's plan to take twice as much green belt as proposed in this presentation?

This has not been formally proposed to us; we are aware of this and will discuss it. The housing policy for this site states specifically that “there should be no greater land-take of greenfield land than is necessary to deliver the required regeneration”.

Is the Netherfield Lane developer offering to provide affordable homes or is that a reference to the Baesh trust proposal?

They are intricately linked together; the NL lane owner will be offering the land to the Baesh Trust and it will be up to them if they wish to develop themselves or via Websters’ developer. However, any large site (above 10 homes) is required to provide a certain quota of affordable homes.

I understand that the Baesh trust are happy to work with any developer, not just Webster Estates, that has not been made clear, why is this?

Yes, the Baesh Trust have indicated they are happy to work with any developer; however, Websters are the only ones who have taken them up on this. The site allocated for development is directly behind the Baesh Almshouses so it makes sense for any new affordable housing for the Baesh Trust to be placed there.

Compliments and feedback

I would like to say a huge thank you for the work you have put into this plan, as volunteers your hard work on this very considered plan is much appreciated

This is super thorough and really well explained, thank you

I'd like to thank you for looking out for the village. Clearly a lot of work has been put into this.

Thank you for the session tonight, really well done and considered. Totally agree if we don't support this East Herts will take control and that’s a dangerous prospect!

Very good, thank you.

Totally agree we don’t need more moorings and all the issues that go with them!!