

Issue 10: Place Strategies: Hemel Hempstead

I am responding as a resident of Hemel Hempstead as well as a member of Piccotts End residents' association.

10.1 Is the policy for growth and change justified?

No.

There should be greater emphasis on mixed development in and around the Maylands Business Park.

This summer's hose pipe ban during a very wet summer was a further strong reminder that water in this area is in short supply. River flows in the Gade and the Bulborne were close to their historic lowest volumes. Residents should be told how local water companies plan to increase the numbers of reservoirs ect to cater for this increased requirement for water. It is not sufficient to say that water companies will supply simply because OFWAT places an obligation on them to do so. Nor is it appropriate to suggest that this will all be dealt with through water saving devices for homes, businesses and public buildings.

Another issue of concern is for communities living at the bottom of a valley where they are already vulnerable to flooding. Further flooding would result if there was to be house building near by as a result of the reduction of absorbent surfaces leading to accelerated runoff. Like the mains water issue there is no information to show how the current problem will be rectified.

10.1 continued

We no longer have an accident and emergency hospital locally and our nearest A&E in Watford is miles and vital minutes away. Watford Hospital is over-stretched and any extra house building must take into account the needs for infrastructure reform and updating.

There is also evidence from the Dacorum Environmental Forum that the methods used for predicting housing demands could lead to over supply.

10.3 Are local allocations justified and are the principles of their development sound?

No.

I agree with the comments made by Piccotts End resident and CPRE Hertfordshire member Michael Nidd. I would add that despite suggestions by developers that two-storey dwellings could be screened with trees this would not work. Trees shed their leaf cover for six months of the year. Solar roof panels, required for sustainability, would further emphasise the views of new buildings.