



Questionnaire

South West Hertfordshire 2050

Realising our Potential

September 2022

YOUR INFORMATION

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* **Denotes minimum information required**

By providing this information, you agree to be added to the Joint Strategic Plan's consultation database and will be directly notified of future consultations on this document. Information will be held in accordance with data protection laws and only shared with parties listed in our privacy policy.

The privacy policy can be found here: <https://www.swhertsplan.com/privacy>.

If at any time you wish to withdraw your consent and be removed from the consultation database please contact: SWHJSP@dacorum.gov.uk.

YOUR RESPONSE

If you have internet access it is recommended that you give your feedback online at: www.swhertsplan.com

This questionnaire should be read in conjunction with 'SW Hertfordshire 2050: Realising Our Potential.' This document is available online via the link above. Alternatively, paper copies are held for reference at libraries within the SW Herts area, as well as district / borough council offices in Hemel Hempstead, Borehamwood, St Albans, Rickmansworth and Watford.

You do not have to provide feedback on all of the questions asked - just answer those questions that are most relevant to you.

Please note: Your comments may be made available for public inspection and therefore cannot be treated as confidential. Your name and postcode must be completed as a minimum for your comments to be considered. Your contact details will remain confidential and will not be published.

Our World is changing

(1) Are there any other national or global issues or trends that we should take account of when preparing the Joint Strategic Plan?

YES

NO

If YES, please explain what these are and why they are important:

Nature loss - Nature is in decline across the whole country and without immediate action it is likely to decline further, including species and habitat loss. The JSP needs to address this directly and to identify solutions that embrace nature recovery. It is essential that conservation sites are protected, including European protected sites such as the Chilterns Beechwoods SAC. Where nature is likely to be impacted by development, there needs to be a strong and co-ordinated approach to delivering biodiversity net gain of at least 10%. We would like to see 20% in the Chilterns AONB. It is essential that wildlife sites are considered as interconnected networks and that new habitat linkages between sites are a priority. There is an opportunity of the JSP to make a real statement on nature recovery and to encourage a pro-active approach in all subsequent Local Plans and Neighbourhood Plans.

Net zero – The JSP needs to embrace net zero carbon and to clearly set out policies for making real improvements as part of its approach to addressing climate change.

Water management - Water usage, water quality and reducing the risk of flooding need to be fully addressed as a key priority in the JSP. The Hertfordshire part of the Chilterns contains a number of internationally important chalk streams. These are sensitive habitats that can be directly affected by the over-abstraction of water to serve new and existing developments. In an area where water resources are scarce, this must be a key consideration in planning new development. A strategic approach is also required to providing wastewater treatment facilities to avoid additional risks of sewage pollution to the water environment due to storm sewage overflows.

Sustainability - This must be an overarching theme for the whole plan. The environment must be put at the heart of the JSP and a long-term perspective is required as many species and habitats enhancements take a long time to establish.

Housing development – The JSP needs to include an approach to housing that fully respects the areas of Green Belt and AONB. These should be valid reasons for reducing the housing numbers required below nationally calculated figures.

HS2 – The JSP needs to recognise the impacts of the construction of HS2 and make a commitment to minimising and compensating for impacts on biodiversity and landscape.

Airport development – The proposed expansion of Luton Airport has the potential to impact on local communities and the tranquillity of the countryside.

SW Herts today

(2) Do you agree with our summary of the current issues relating to OUR ENVIRONMENT in SW Herts?

YES

NO

If NO, please explain why:

We agree with the list as far as it goes and are particularly pleased to see a reference to the importance of the Chilterns AONB and the chalk streams, commons and beechwoods it contains. The chalk areas of the Chilterns extend beyond the boundary of the AONB and also provide sensitive habitats and opportunities for nature recovery.

A strategic plan such as the JSP needs to be much more visionary and to seek real long-term change to society's attitude to the environment. Otherwise, our environment is likely to be in a much poorer condition by 2050.

The JSP should make links beyond the traditional remit of town planning and other environmental initiatives. In particular, there is a need to establish links between nature recovery through biodiversity net gain and enhancements to farmland through the Environmental Land Management Scheme (ELMS). In the Chilterns policies need to be aligned with policies for the water environment to enhance the Chilterns Chalk Streams.

(3) Are there any issues or opportunities (relating to OUR ENVIRONMENT in SW Herts) we have missed?

YES

NO

If YES, please explain why:

Nature loss and recovery – This needs to be addressed at a variety of scales, from regional approaches working with neighbouring counties to more local community-led initiatives. One example of this is the Tring Wildbelt Project, which is being developed by the Chiltern Society in association with parish councils and other environmental organisations. The aim is to address nature recovery at a very local scale and to consider how networks of habitats can be created to aid the expansion of species. This model could be adapted for other parts of SW Herts.

Water environment – see above

Green Belt - The JSP should include a positive vision for the Green Belt. Whilst it is not strictly an environmental designation there is an opportunity to use the Green Belt more positively to aid nature recovery and provide Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) to provide for local recreation and take pressure off honeypot sites such as Ashridge.

(4) Do you agree with our summary of the current issues relating to LIVING in SW Herts?

YES

NO

If NO please explain why:

Housing numbers – SW Herts is a highly constrained area with large areas of Green Belt and AONB. It is an area where there should be an opportunity to reduce housing numbers below the standard national calculations under the provisions of paragraph 11b and footnote 7 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2021. New development needs to prioritise brownfield sites, ideally within the existing built up areas to avoid encroachment into the countryside and the Green Belt.

(5) Are there any issues or opportunities (relating to LIVING in SW Herts) we have missed?

YES

NO

If YES please explain why:

Sustainable design – This should be promoted through the JSP and supported by design guidance. If we are to address water shortage issues and achieve net zero by 2050 then sustainable designs are essential for new houses and existing houses will require a comprehensive programme of insulation and retrofitting. The JSP provides an opportunity to co-ordinate these initiatives over a wider area and therefore to maximise potential gains.

Green Spaces – These are an essential part of living in SW Herts and can also make a significant contribution to tackling the nature emergency through new habitat creation and linking of existing habitats.

(6) Do you agree with our summary of the current issues relating to WORKING in SW Herts?

YES

X NO

If NO please explain why:

A long-term plan such as the JSP needs to be more visionary and consider different future scenarios for work patterns. Recent years have seen an increase in home working and a reduction in commuting 5 days a week, particularly into London. The JSP could look at creating new jobs in the local area to reduce commuting and the use of fossil fuels for transport. The development of Artificial Intelligence could radically change the way people work in future.

(7) Are there any issues or opportunities (relating to WORKING in SW Herts) we have missed?

YES

NO

If YES please explain why:

(8) Do you agree with our summary of the current issues relating to PLAYING in SW Herts?

X YES

NO

If NO please explain why:

(9) Are there any issues or opportunities (relating to PLAYING in SW Herts) we have missed?

YES

NO

If YES please explain why:

(10) Do you agree with our summary of the current issues relating to MOVING in SW Herts?

YES

NO

If NO please explain why:

(11) Are there any issues or opportunities (relating to MOVING in SW Herts) we have missed?

YES

NO

If YES please explain why:

Planning for infrastructure

(12) Are there any long-term infrastructure challenges or opportunities that you would like to make us aware of as we begin work on the plan?

YES

NO

If YES please explain what these are and why:

The main current and future infrastructure concerns for the Chiltern Society are the development of the HS2 railway line and the potential expansions to London Luton and Heathrow airports.

HS2 needs to be recognised in the JSP as it will have significant physical impacts on the JSP area, including the destruction of wildlife habitats and landscape change. Its operational phase will also increase noise impacts.

Airport expansion at Luton and Heathrow has the potential to create additional traffic in the JSP area to serve the airports as well as creating additional disturbance to residents due to overflying. Flightpaths will need to be carefully planned so as not to have a significant impact on the tranquillity of the Chilterns AONB and on the residents of local settlements.

The aim of the JSP should be to reduce road traffic through the Chilterns and not to create new roads to increase commuting to and from London.

The draft vision

(13) Does the draft vision statement summarise your aspirations for the future of South West Hertfordshire to 2050?

- YES
 NO

(14) Are there any changes you would like to see to the vision statement?

- YES
 NO

If YES, please explain what these are and why:

We would like to see the Vision relate more closely to sustainability principles – community, economy, environment. At present there is no reference to addressing the climate or nature emergencies or to creating a high quality and accessible local environment.

(15) Do you support the draft objectives relating to LIVING GREEN IN A HEALTHY NATURAL ENVIRONMENT?

- YES
 NO

Please explain your answer and any suggested changes:

We support the emphasis on addressing climate change in this objective, but it needs to go further in committing the Councils to addressing nature recovery and conserving and enhancing the landscape of the Chilterns AONB.

(16) Do you support the draft objectives relating to GROWING OPPORTUNITIES TO WORK LOCALLY?

- YES
 NO

Please explain your answer and any suggested changes:

(17) Do you support the draft objectives relating to LIVING IN HEALTHY, THRIVING LOCAL COMMUNITIES?

- YES
 NO

Please explain your answer and any suggested changes:

(18) Do you support the draft objectives relating to MOVING EASILY IN CONNECTED PLACES?

YES

NO

Please explain your answer and any suggested changes:

(19) Do you support the draft objectives relating to BUILDING HOMES AND PLACES THAT PEOPLE ARE PROUD OF?

YES

NO

Please explain your answer and any suggested changes:

We support these objectives, but an additional objective should be added to encourage sustainable design and reuse of resources where possible.

(20) Do you support the draft objectives relating to DELIVERING ROBUST AND SUSTAINABLE INFRASTRUCTURE?

YES

NO

Please explain your answer and any suggested changes:

We support commitment to the circular economy, but it should be applied across all development and not just infrastructure. Links will need to be made with the Hertfordshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan to maximise opportunities for the reuse and recycling of materials.

(21) Which of the six topics covered by the 'pillars' is of most importance to you?

Please tick the relevant box below:

Living green in a healthy natural environment

Growing opportunities to work locally

Living in healthy, thriving local communities

Moving easily in well connected places

Building homes and places that people are proud of

Delivering robust and sustainable infrastructure

Please explain the reasons for your choice:

Shaping the future

(22) Which option or options do you think is the most appropriate way to shape future growth in SW Herts?

Please tick **ALL** that apply:

- (a) Growth within existing large settlements
- (b) Outwards growth of existing large settlements
- (c) New settlements
- (d) Growth of groups of settlements
- (e) Growth along key transport corridors
- (f) Growing the best connected places
- (g) Scattered growth

Please explain the reasons for your answer, relating this to the draft vision and objectives for the plan where possible.

The emphasis of the JSP needs to be on 'brownfield first', making best use of previously developed land within existing settlements.

Within the existing settlements there may be opportunities to increase the density of development to avoid additional pressure to develop in the surrounding areas of Green Belt.

(23) Are there any other growth types we have not mentioned that you think should be considered?

- YES
- NO

If YES, please explain what these are and why. (Note: we are not considering specific locations or sites at this stage).

Making it happen

(24) Are there any other 'good practice' examples you feel should be considered for SW Herts?

- YES
- NO

If YES, please explain what these are and why:

(25) Are there any further comments you would like to make on the SW Herts Joint Strategic Plan?

YES

NO

If YES, please explain what these are and why:

The Chiltern Society is a charity with 6500 members whose purpose is to campaign for the conservation and enhancement of the Chilterns Hills, including the Chilterns AONB and parts of the London Green Belt.

We have created our own Manifesto for Chilterns Wildlife, which identifies key opportunities for nature recovery across the Chilterns

<https://chilternsociety.org.uk/chiltern-manifesto/>

Our view is that the environment, climate change and nature recovery should be at the heart of all plan making. We are at a critical time where action cannot wait and a co-ordinated approach needs to be taken to address these issues.

Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report

We have published a Sustainability Appraisal (SA) Scoping Report alongside our 'Realising our Potential' consultation.

SAs are prepared to help us compare different options and see which is the most sustainable in terms of a range of social, economic and environmental factors.

We realise that the SA Scoping Report is quite a long and technical document, but it contains information about sustainability issues facing the area you may find interesting and wish to comment on. If so, please let us have your feedback so that it can inform the next version of the Sustainability Appraisal process.

(26) Do you have any comments on the Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report that is published alongside the 'SW Hertfordshire 2050: Realising Our Potential' document?

YES

NO

If YES, please explain what these are:

Please ensure that this completed questionnaire is received by the Joint Strategic Plan team by 5pm on Friday 4th November 2022. Comments received after this date may not be considered.

This questionnaire can be sent to us in the following ways:

POST: Joint Strategic Plan team
 c/o Dacorum Borough Council
 The Forum
 Marlowes
 Hemel Hempstead
 Hertfordshire
 HP1 1DN

EMAIL: haveyoursay@swhertsplan.com

Further copies of this questionnaire can be downloaded from the JSP website at www.swhertsplan.com.