

South Mimms Parish Council

Response to Hertsmere Local Plan – November 2021

St Albans Road north-west (land owned by HCC): SMPC is pleased to note the inclusion of a community green space fronting the Blanche Lane / St Albans Road junction, as this will act as a buffer to the existing housing and soften the impact of new housing as visible from St Albans Road. The diagram on page 104 of the local plan shows a retail unit in the south-east corner of this site, which understand could be an error, but we request confirmation of this please. A small site was bought forward at the top of Blanch Lane which SMPC and Hertsmere rejected due to the already heavy burden on Blanche Lane, however it has been suggested that this site could be viable if accessed from the adjacent larger HCC site, SMPC would welcome your thoughts as we suspect the landowner will press ahead with a separate application regardless.

M25

Residents near the existing M25 Bund have reported that there is a gap in the protection it provides from the M25 and noise is funnelling towards some of the homes on the southernmost end of the village. They have requested that this is looked at as part of the wider plans to develop the above HCC site.

St Albans Road north-east (25 houses) This site near the top of Black Horse Lane is of concern due to the safety aspect of traffic pulling out onto St Albans Road. It is close to an already troublesome junction that was identified by Highways as the site for our SID. SMPC believe it would be better if this allocation was incorporated within the owner's main site and a slight increase in the north-west site (above). It is also important that more traffic is not pushed onto Black Horse Lane as this is narrow and already congested and floods, so access from all the new houses must be pedestrian only (to get to the pub).

St Albans Road north-east (80 homes) This site contains the flood risk zone and SMPC are concerned that a lack of maintenance of Catherine Bourne is already leading to extensive flooding in Blackhorse Land and 'The Meadow' behind Brookside. Houses in the area are being refused flood risk insurance because of repeated incidents. SMPC would therefore like reassurances of the work to improve the water course and drainage of the whole area prior to construction starting.

Cecil Road North (40 homes)

The land is owned by The Charity of Alderman James Hickson (with the brewers being the Charity's single Trustee), who incidentally also own the Almshouses in South Mimms. A proportion of the charities money is spent on the upkeep of the Almshouse, but the larger balance is directed towards grant distribution to the Aldgate and Allhallows Foundation, an educational charity in London. The Charity controls both the north and south sides of Ceecil Road (with the Southern Side rejected by Hertsmere to remaining in green belt). SMPC believe and this could be an excellent place for bungalows to give accessible housing for elderly and the disabled.

Whilst the onus for providing accessible housing falls across all the sites, this site has a bus stop right outside it and is small and compact and would allow a small community to form.

The developer has requested demographic data for the village as a whole to demonstrate the need for housing suitable for the elderly.

School

We know that Hertsmere have committed to doubling the class intake at St Giles school, but don't have details of how this is to be achieved within the current site, we would like more details when these are available. The landowner adjacent to the school is still requesting to work with SMPC and Hertsmere to find a commercially viable solution for the site. SMPC would be happy to explore ideas that would facilitate improvements to child safety at school drop-off / pick-up times from St Albans Road, whilst protecting the green vistas in Blanche Lane and Greyhound Lane. This could also divert existing school traffic from Blanche Lane. A potential solution would be to split the site horizontally, so that Blanche Lane and Greyhound Lane remain 'green' protecting the historic part of the village.

Then a trade-off could be some barn-like office or retail units (like Battlers Green Farm shopping) that could still be suitable for green-belt development, but give some form of return for the land owner, without building homes there.

St. Albans Road North and Bowman's Cross:

We would like to see more details of the traffic calming proposed for St Albans Road as many residents felt this was important, especially as there will also be access to Bowmans Cross further up.

SMPC have spoken to Urban and Civic regarding the entrance to the site that comes onto St Albans Road. This is currently sited by Canonbury Antiques is on a tight bend by the bridge and is an accident hot-spot already. SMPC would prefer the entrance to be via the existing M25 underpass which would be safer as on a straight stretch of road near the Mosquito Museum. Urban and Civic have told us that each zone within Bowman's Cross will not be accessible from the other for private vehicles to prevent 'rat run' use, and we would like to see details of the volume of homes to be built on the site that will exit onto St Albans Road and understand the timings of this within the whole project.