

# St Stephen Parish Neighbourhood Plan 2019 -2036



**Pre-Submission (Regulation 14) Version  
For consultation**

**Summary of the Policies**

**October 2020**

# St Stephen Neighbourhood Plan

## *...now open for Public Consultation*

The St Stephen Neighbourhood Plan is based upon the thoughts, concerns and aspirations of local residents, as identified by the Community Survey – sent out to every household in the Parish - and numerous public meetings. The Plan covers five distinct topics (described below) and a resultant 29 policies, which will sit alongside the St Albans City and District Council Plan.



### **Housing - Understanding needs and shaping development appropriately**

There is a recognised need for affordable housing to enable younger families to remain or move into a parish where the average age of residents is far older than the national norm and also for smaller dwellings suitable for downsizing. Five sites have been identified primarily on land which, whilst technically in the Green Belt, do nothing to enhance the appearance of the local area.



### **Green Spaces and Environment - Green spaces, footpaths, woodlands, rivers**

Any development must be appropriate to the character and features of St Stephen Parish and be expected to minimise environmental impact, including the protection of river corridors, wildlife habitats and woodlands and mitigate the effects of climate change. It is essential that identified Green Spaces within the Parish are protected and retained and seven such sites have been identified.



### **Transport and Movement - Public transport, traffic, parking, cycling and walking**

The Plan is limited in what it can do to tackle transport issues, as these are dealt with by Hertfordshire County Council. The Plan does, however, suggest improvements to many of the major road junctions within and adjacent to the Parish, reduce traffic, ease congestion and, in turn, promote a cleaner and safer environment. Public transport needs are addressed in terms of improved bus and rail services.



### **Community Facilities - Improving and developing community and leisure facilities**

The Plan seeks to ensure that there are sufficient medical, educational, recreational and general community facilities for residents of all ages and to ensure the long term future of such facilities. These range from the adequate provision of children's play areas, through to the protection of public houses and the need for retirement and care home accommodation.



### **Business & Local Economy - Supporting local commercial and retail enterprise**

This section of the Plan addresses the need for a vibrant local economy through a suite of policies ranging from the preservation of retail outlets, supporting commercial operations providing local employment (including the reasonable expansion of existing businesses) through to the provision of high speed broadband to support all local commerce including home-based operations.

## *...time to “have your say”*

The Plan has now reached its Public Consultation stage, providing the opportunity for residents and other bodies with interests in the Parish to “*have their say*” on the Plan's content and policies. The Plan can be accessed and comments made via the St Stephen Parish website ([www.ststephenparishcouncil.gov.uk](http://www.ststephenparishcouncil.gov.uk)).

Residents without Internet access should contact St Stephen Parish Office on 01923 874867 for further information.

*The Public Consultation will be open from the beginning of October and close at the end of November*

At this point any necessary revisions will be made to the Plan which will then be sent to St Albans City and District Council, who will organise a further round of consultation, after which the Plan will be placed in the hands of an external Examiner for comment. The final stage will be the Public Referendum, with residents voting – with a simple Yes or No - on the Plan and its influence on the face of the Parish over coming years.

## To review the Plan and comment visit...

[www.ststephenparishcouncil.gov.uk](http://www.ststephenparishcouncil.gov.uk)

Complete the questionnaire - <https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/StStephenNPRReg14>

# Important Notice about the St Stephen Parish

## Pre-Submission Version Neighbourhood Plan

Please note that the Pre-Submission Version St Stephen Parish Neighbourhood Plan has been developed in parallel with the emerging St Albans City and District (SADC) Local Plan, which was anticipated to be adopted before the Neighbourhood Plan.

The policies in the St Stephen Neighbourhood Plan conform to the adopted saved policies of SADC's current District Local Plan Review (1994) and have additionally sought to synchronise with the policies of the emerging SADC Local Plan.

There is now a strong possibility that the SADC's emerging Local Plan will not progress as previously scheduled. If this occurs, it will directly impact a number of the proposed policies in the Pre-Submission St Stephen Parish Neighbourhood Plan, namely reference to site allocations and the following sections associated with the allocation of sites:

- Policy S1: Spatial Strategy
- Policy S2: Housing Scale and Location
- AIM 3: Community facilities at the Donkey Field
- Policy S20: Burston Nurseries
- Policies S25 to S29: Site allocations

The reason for this is that all of the proposed sites in the Neighbourhood Plan are currently within the Green Belt. The Neighbourhood Plan proposes to remove these sites from the Green Belt to enable the delivery of homes to meet an identified local need. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), at paragraph 1361, allows Neighbourhood Plans to amend Green Belt boundaries, but only where a need has been established through strategic policies. The emerging St Albans City and District Local Plan would have provided this need. However, if this Plan does not progress as originally scheduled, this strategic need will not be established. Further, such a strategic need is not contained in the current saved policies of SADC's Local Plan Review 1994.

Therefore, if SADC's emerging Local Plan does not progress as anticipated, the policies noted above would **not form** part of the Submission Version St Stephen Parish Neighbourhood Plan.

As a decision on SADC's emerging Local Plan is yet to be taken these policies are, therefore, retained for the purposes of the consultation and your views on them are welcomed.

**It is important to note**, however, that should SADC's emerging Local Plan be significantly delayed, the Neighbourhood Plan will be the primary document guiding development and the determination of planning applications with the Parish. We would encourage you to provide feedback on **all** of the policies in the Neighbourhood Plan, and not focus solely on the proposed site allocations. The rest of the policies and aims of the Neighbourhood Plan are vital in shaping our villages, helping our local economy and protecting our local environment, both now and into the future.

**Bill Pryce, Chair, St Stephen Parish Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group**

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[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/810197/NPPF\\_Feb\\_2019\\_revised.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/810197/NPPF_Feb_2019_revised.pdf)

## Policies included in the Plan

We encourage you to read the Plan to appreciate the full context of the policies. Summaries are shown here:

Policies	Main intent
<b>Spatial Strategy</b>	
Policy S1: Spatial Strategy (page 23)	Sets out where development should be directed to within the parish
<b>Housing</b>	
Policy S2: Housing Strategy (page 25)	Indicates potential housing numbers and development sites
Policy S3: Dwelling Mix (page 27)	Sets out the type of housing needed in St Stephen
Policy S4: Design of Development (page 29)	Details criteria that all development should meet
<b>Green Spaces and the Environment</b>	
Policy S5: Minimising the Environmental Impact of Development (page 32)	Sets out environmental considerations that development proposals should consider
Policy S6: Protection of Natural Habitats (page 33)	Seeks to protect local habitats and species
Policy S7: Protection and Retention of Local Green Spaces (page 37)	Designates 7 local green spaces that should be protected from inappropriate development
Policy S8: Protecting the Setting and Function of the River Ver, the River Colne and their Tributaries (page 38)	Sets out criteria to help protect the rivers and their settings from negative impacts of development
Policy S9: Green Infrastructure and Development (page 39)	Maps the wildlife corridors worthy of protection
<b>Transport and Movement</b>	
Policy S10: Improvements to Local Key Junctions and Pinch Points (page 46)	Seeks to ensure that certain challenging parts of the local road network are not made worse
Policy S11: Off-Street Car Parking (page 48)	Safeguards parking, particularly in village centres
Policy S12: Bus Services & Community Transport (page 49)	Supports proposals that would contribute to improving public transport services and infrastructure
Policy S13: Provision for Walking & Cycling (page 50)	Supports proposals that will augment the local walking and cycling route network
Policy S14: Improving the Bridleway Network (page 51)	Supports proposals that will augment the local bridleway network
<b>Community Facilities</b>	
Policy S15: Community Facilities (page 52)	Making sure we retain our existing facilities
Policy S16: Provision of Leisure Facilities for Children and Teenagers (page 58)	Providing new and improved facilities for children and young people
Policy S17: Protection of Public Houses (page 56)	Trying to avoid losing our last public houses
Policy S18: Allotments and Community Growing Spaces (page 57)	Protecting our existing ones and providing opportunities for new 'growing spaces' in the future
Policy S19: Retirement / Care Home Facilities (page 58)	Addressing local care needs by supporting provision
Policy S20: Burston Nurseries (page 60)	Supporting the proposal for retirement properties
<b>Business and Local Economy</b>	
Policy S21: Supporting Expansion of Businesses (page 62)	Encouraging businesses to stay and grown locally
Policy S22: Village Retail Areas (page 63)	Supporting the role of our individual village centres
Policy 23: Protection of Existing Employment Premises or Land (page 63)	Protecting jobs within the parish
Policy 24: High Speed Broadband (page 65)	Securing high speed access across the parish
<b>Site Allocations (from page 67)</b>	
Policy S25: Land at Orchard Drive, Park Street Policy S26: Land at Park Street Baptist Church, Park Street Policy S27: Land south of Park Street Lane, Park Street Policy 28: Land to the rear of 42 to 75 Bucknalls Drive, Bricket Wood Policy 29: Land at Frogmore, Park Street	These policies seek to allocate housing to sites within the parish, in order to address the local housing need. All sites are within the green belt and require green belt boundary changes. Depending on the progress of the emerging St Albans Local Plan, these policies may not be feasible, as per the Important Notice above.