

Draft Strategic Memorandum of Understanding:

High level strategic cross-boundary approach to Hemel Garden Communities

DRAFT

June 2019

This is a Memorandum of Understanding between the following authorities:

Dacorum Borough Council
St. Albans City and District Council
Hertfordshire County Council

1. Background

1.1. Hemel Garden Communities (“HGC”), a proposed development area of around 11,000 homes and 10,000 jobs, is located on the eastern and northern edge of Hemel Hempstead, and divided roughly equally between the administrative area of St. Albans City and District Council (“SADC”) and Dacorum Borough Council (“DBC”) who are the Local Planning Authorities. It is also wholly within the administrative area of Hertfordshire County Council (“HCC”).

1.2. In November 2018 a Hemel Garden Communities bid was submitted. In March 2019, the Government awarded the ‘Garden Town’ status to Hemel Garden Communities. The bid was submitted by the three authorities, Hertfordshire LEP, Herts Innovation Quarter (the Hertfordshire Enviro-Tech Enterprise Zone) and The Crown Estate.

1.3. The HGC area as a whole is shown on a map in Appendix 1.

2. Purpose, Scope and Nature

2.1 This MoU is prepared in accordance with the legal Duty to Cooperate, but is not in itself intended to address soundness concerns raised by any of the parties to the emerging Development Plans for St. Albans City and District Council (SADC) Dacorum Borough Council (DBC) and Hertfordshire County Council (HCC).

2.2 In the event that there is an inconsistency between the provisions of this MoU and the constitutional and governance requirements of any of the Parties, the latter will prevail.

2.3 The Parties will seek respective approvals for the arrangements and responsibilities contained within this MoU where necessary in accordance with their constitutional arrangements and to such Member clearance processes as are required.

2.4 Hemel Hempstead Garden Town (HHGT) Mission Statement

The transformation from New Town to Garden Town by Dacorum Borough Council, supported by its partners, will improve overall self-sufficiency and sustainable movement between key destinations, facilitating a mix of high tech new jobs within Hertfordshire Innovation Quarter and well-balanced healthy communities anchored by the HGC extension.

2.5 Hemel Garden Communities (HGC) Mission Statement

Hemel Garden Communities will take the best of the New Town heritage into the 21st century with over 10,000 homes and 10,000 jobs, and Hertfordshire Innovation Quarter at its heart.

2.6 Purpose

Collaborating as a partnership Dacorum Borough Council, St. Albans City and District Council and landowners together with Hertfordshire County Council, the Hertfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership and the Hertfordshire Enviro-Tech Enterprise Zone are working to deliver a large scale housing-led mixed use development, embracing Garden Town Principles¹.

3. Approach to Hemel Garden Communities

3.1. The Parties identified will cooperate on the delivery of HGC to ensure consistency with the National Planning Policy Framework (“NPPF”) policies, particularly:

- Paragraph 72, planning for large scale development
- Paragraph 49, presumption in favour of sustainable development
- Paragraph 110; delivers development that promotes sustainable transport giving priority to pedestrian and cyclists.

3.2 Decision making is taken in the context of the statutory Development Plan(s) (both existing and emerging) and all other material considerations. This includes national policy, guidance and emerging statutory Development Plans. It also includes future work and studies including a Charter, HGC Strategic Masterplan (SPD), Hemel Hempstead Transformational Plan (SPD) and Joint Strategic Sites Design Guide (SPD). The process for adopting these future studies as Supplementary Planning Documents will ultimately be defined by the emerging Local Plans and will be a matter for SADC and DBC to consider in due course.

3.3 A strong and effective partnership between the Parties is important at both officer and Member level. Therefore, a clear and agreed Project Plan will be required to help guide the Authorities.

4. Approach to Masterplanning Hemel Garden Community phases

4.1 The SADC draft Local Plan, emerging DBC Local Plan, HGC Charter, HGC Vision, HGC High Level Masterplan and Hemel Hempstead Transformational Plan will set the expectations for shaping development within HGC. The phases must fit within the wider Hemel Hempstead Garden Town context so must be guided by the place and be designed in accordance with this strategic fit.

4.2 The Hemel Hempstead Transformational Plan (SPD) will identify infrastructural and environmental opportunities for improvements which achieves Garden City principles, including encouraging and achieving behavioural change by encouraging walking, cycling and use of public transport as part of new place making. This will be achieved by primarily strengthening grey, green and blue connectivity the built and natural

¹ <https://www.tcpa.org.uk/garden-city-principles>

environment of Hemel Hempstead, its accompanying infrastructure/connections, and helping to integrate HGC with the wider town and identifying community focused leisure and social requirements.

4.3 Key projects will be identified to support this transformation. Examples of such improvements could include enhanced sustainability measures, new/enhanced green infrastructure, public realm improvements, new foot/cycle paths and new/enhanced public transport corridors linking key destinations with new communities. The Applicants will be expected to help deliver or contribute to some of these improvements where appropriate.

5. Approach to Planning Performance Agreements (PPAs)

5.1 The Parties will work jointly and co-operatively with the Applicants in accordance with joint PPAs and any other agreed terms for that engagement.

5.2 Joint PPAs will identify an agreed programme of actions, timescales, consultation requirements and charging arrangements. Advice provided before the formal start date of the PPA is still relevant and should be recognised outside of the scope of a formal pre-application process and agreed charging arrangement.

6. Governance

6.1 The Parties will agree the Governance structure, Terms of Reference and review this MOU at the first Delivery Board meeting. An indicative structure (based loosely on arrangements for other Garden Communities) is at Appendix 2.