

CONCLUSION

Three growth options, northern, eastern and dispersed, have been assessed in accordance with the established methodology (Section 1).

This assessment concludes that if significant expansion of Hemel Hempstead is required, this should be taken forward in the form of the eastern growth option. This conclusion is based on information available to the Council as at May 2009 and summarised in Section 2 (Results). The main features in support of this conclusion are:

- the ability to focus infrastructure investment in one area, which helps key providing agencies (especially education and health);
- the proximity of new housing to the Maylands Business Park (i.e. where new homes and jobs can be more easily planned together);
- the M1 demarcates the limit of development (i.e. provides a firm, long term boundary for the Green Belt); and
- a lower impact on landscape character.

Delivery of the Eastern option would require joint-working with St Albans City and District, as part of the land falls within their administrative area. This joint working would be facilitated through a joint Area Action Plan covering land to the east of Hemel Hempstead.

Further detailed technical work is required to determine the precise boundaries of the development sites and detailed development requirements. Significant improvements will be necessary to existing infrastructure and new capacity will need to be provided to accommodate the increased population. This varies according to the location of development. Although the overall landscape impact is assessed to be lower for the eastern than the northern and dispersed options, mitigation measures will still be required.

The Highways Agency (HA) have indicated that should Hemel Hempstead be subject to significant levels of growth, more detailed work will be required to assess the impact upon the strategic road network, and particularly the M1. This advice applies to all three growth scenarios considered. The HA recommend that this testing involves use of their 'Diamond Model' which is specially designed for this purpose. In order to generate the most accurate picture of the scale and location of these traffic impacts, the model should factor in assumptions about the likely scale and location of development in the western part of St Albans City and District.

