



TPA/005

# East Herts District Plan: Topic Papers

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## Employment







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## 1 Introduction

**1.1** The purpose of this Topic Paper is to detail the District Plan's approach to Employment Land and jobs growth. It summarises the evidence prepared and provides signposts for where to find more detail if necessary.

**1.2** The authority is required to plan proactively to meet the development needs of business and support an economy fit for the 21st century. To do so, the authority must, *inter alia*, set out a clear economic vision and strategy which positively and proactively encourages sustainable economic growth, sets criteria or identifies sites to match the strategy and to meet anticipated needs over the Plan period. At the same time, the authority must prepare flexible policies and should not seek to retain all employment sites where there is no reasonable prospect of a site being used for that purpose.

**1.3** The documents to which this Paper refers are as follows:

- East Herts Employment Land and Policy Review, October 2008 (**EER/010**)
- East Hertfordshire Employment Forecasts and Strategic Economic Development Advice, November 2012 (**EER/002**)
- East Herts Employment Land Review Update, June 2013 (**EER/004**)
- Town Wide Employment Study for Bishop's Stortford, June 2013 (**EER/007**)
- Buntingford Employment Study, June 2014 (**EER/006**)
- Economic Evidence to Support the Development of the OAHN for West Essex and East Herts, September 2015 (**EER/002**)
- Economic Development Vision and Action Plan, April 2016 (**EER/001**)
- Hertford and Ware Employment Study, June 2016 (**EER/005**)

**1.4** Section two below sets out the scope and key recommendations of each study. It is worth noting that it is not always appropriate or possible to simply translate the recommendations of such studies directly in to policy. Evidence on employment and the economy focuses on a particular issue, one which may sometimes be contrary to other aspects of Plan-making. It is therefore necessary to consider how these studies interact and relate to other specialist areas and then take a balanced decision on how best to apply the findings to the Plan as a whole.

**1.5** Section three of this paper sets out how employment land and the economy have been considered through the Plan-making stages. Section four looks at how the cross-boundary considerations of the economy have been taken into account, while Section five concludes the Paper.



## 2 A Summary of the Evidence Base

**2.1** This section below summarises each of the studies that form the evidence base behind the consideration of employment land and economy issues in preparation of the District Plan.

### **East Herts Employment Land and Policy Review, October 2008, Halcrow Ltd. (EER/010)**

**2.2** The primary objective of this study was to assess the demand for and supply of employment land and premises in the District to 2021. A comprehensive survey was carried out to identify the amount of land used for different B class uses; each area was given a traffic-light multi-criteria assessment. A range of growth scenarios were considered and a stakeholder consultation was used to inform consideration of future growth locations.

**2.3** The Review examined a range of potential growth scenarios, all of which forecast a significant growth of B1 uses, decline in B2 uses and growth in B8 uses. The Experian Business Strategy 2003 was used as the baseline for the business as usual scenario forecast, correlated by the 2006 Annual Business Inquiry data. The study used the East of England target of 83,200 new homes for Hertfordshire between 2001 and 2021, which related to a jobs target of 68,000 new jobs. This equated to a ratio of 0.817 jobs per home. The housing target identified in the East of England Plan for East Herts was 12,000 new homes. Using this ratio, a target of 9,808 jobs was identified for the district to 2021.

**2.4** In terms of floorspace, the additional need for employment land was projected to be between 2 and 5 ha derived from a number of growth scenarios, one of which included growth associated with a second runway at Stansted Airport. Following the traffic-light assessment, if 5 ha of the existing 'red' employment areas were to be lost to other uses, between 7 and 10 ha of additional employment land would be required between 2008 and 2021. The Review suggests that in order to safeguard the district's economic growth and competitiveness, careful consideration should be given to sites currently within the Green Belt and the Areas of Special Restraint to the north of Bishop's Stortford.

### **East Hertfordshire Employment Forecasts and Strategic Economic Development Advice, November 2012, DTZ (EER/003)**

**2.5** The purpose of this advice was not only to provide updated forecasts of employment growth for the district using the 2012 East of England Forecasting Model, and evaluate what these forecasts mean for the provision of land for employment purposes, but also to inform the spatial strategy for the district, in terms of providing information and advice on the pattern of employment growth and the locations where employers are likely to want to locate.



**2.6** The forecast extended between 2012 and 2031, with 9,700 additional jobs forecast for East Herts over this period. 1,600 of the jobs are associated with an increase in self-employment, and some of this jobs growth will be in sectors that do not give rise to demand for B1, B2 and B8 floorspace.

**2.7** The forecast indicated a decline in manufacturing, while service sectors were increasing, leading to a reduction in demand for B2 floorspace and a growth in demand for B1 floorspace, particularly as not all B2 floorspace would be suitable for B1 uses. While the forecast did not extrapolate the jobs growth to floorspace, the study indicated that due to efficiency in employment densities, less B1 floorspace is needed per job than in the previous studies. However, employment densities had fallen for B2 and B8 uses, therefore for any given number of employees in these businesses, more space is required.

**2.8** The attraction of East Herts to businesses is the quality of the environment and lifestyle associated with living and working in the district, as it does not benefit from good road connectivity. However, Bishop's Stortford with its proximity to Stansted Airport and the M11 would be best placed to capture growth, particularly on the A120 close to the M11. The study also discusses the presence of larger competing centres in neighbouring towns which would draw interest from East Herts.

**2.9** The study advises that the authority should seek to retain existing major employers and enable the growth of small and medium sized enterprises that have a local connection and provide benefits to these key employers in terms of ancillary or linked business. Sites and premises need to be made available in each of the main settlements suited to a range of users, and there is a need to protect existing employment sites from redevelopment to non-business uses and a need to encourage the renewal and regeneration of some of these sites.

**2.10** The 2012 East of England Forecasting Model extended to 2031 enabling a tie in with the District Plan period. However, the model was released soon after the double-dip recession. The consultant therefore advised that there were doubts as to the recovery of the economy given uncertainties in the Eurozone, and that the forecasts may be too optimistic over the short term, but the longer term forecast would be more credible.

### **East Herts Employment Land Review Update, June 2013 (EER/004)**

**2.11** This Update comprised an assessment of just the employment land audit element of the 2008 Review. The aim of the study was to identify opportunities for interventions to improve the quality and quantity of employment land and local jobs. All the sites identified in the 2008 study were reassessed using the same criteria, with some sites receiving a more detailed examination.



**2.12** The most important employment location in the District was again identified as being Bishop's Stortford, where some low-key interventions to improve signage and minor interventions to improve access were identified. The Mill Site and other town centre sites were identified as being suitable for redevelopment opportunities to support the economy of the town centre.

**2.13** In Hertford, employment land tends to serve a more local market compared to Bishop's Stortford. A variety of interventions were suggested ranging from low-key to major, including improvements to signage to improved access or redevelopment. A large number of sites in Hertford are older, more constrained sites where access is an issue.

### **Town Wide Employment Study for Bishop's Stortford, June 2013 (EER/007)**

**2.14** Following on from the previous two studies which identified Bishop's Stortford as the town with the greatest prospects in terms of providing new employment land, the Council commissioned a town-wide employment land study to look in more detail at the town, and also the surrounding area, including Stansted Airport. The airport is the biggest employer in the area and therefore any consideration of employment in Bishop's Stortford cannot be done without recognising the importance of the airport to the local economy.

**2.15** Given the good representation of small to medium sized office-based businesses in the town and the forecast growth in financial, professional and computing industries for example, the study recommends that the authority be proactive in seeking to promote the development of new office space in the town centre and the redevelopment and re-provision of outdated office accommodation in acceptable locations. It particularly recommends that the Goods Yard site provides a significant element of B1a office floorspace, given its location immediately adjacent to the train station and close proximity to the town centre. Similarly, in the longer term, the Mill Site provides a significant opportunity for the redevelopment for mixed uses including B1a office space.

**2.16** The study recommends that the existing stock of office floorspace in the town centre is maintained at least at current levels. If older premises that are no longer fit for purpose are lost to other uses, they should be replaced with newly built or refurbished space. Smaller units provide cheaper options for new or growing small businesses and are therefore a valuable asset. Their future could be secured through bringing them together under a form of common management. In addition, the authority should identify a range of edge of town sites for office floorspace to come forward over the next 20 years.

**2.17** The study identifies six locations which would be well-suited for employment floorspace (page 31) and discusses the merits of each option. Land with direct or easy access to the A120 is preferred. The consultants indicate a preference for a business park model of provision rather than offices above shops within a



neighbourhood centre in order to provide for a range of employer size and to avoid conflicts with different users, but recognises that the delivery of smaller sites may be more achievable (page 30).

## **Buntingford Employment Study, June 2014 (EER/006)**

**2.18** The scope of this study was to assess the extent of employment growth required in Buntingford in association with the recent permitted and planned growth arising from the District Plan; to consider how and where employment growth can be delivered in the town; and consider the likelihood of land at Buntingford South, which was a Sainsbury's Distribution Depot, being used as a single employer, the adequacy of employment generating development proposed in the planning application for this site and the likelihood of that being taken up.

**2.19** Buntingford, East Herts' smallest market town lies within a wide rural hinterland, in the centre of a ring of larger towns. Local businesses are small and medium sized often with local connections, and tend to have a local customer base within the hinterland and surrounding towns. The closure of the Sainsbury's Depot in 2004 resulted in a loss of between 600 and 750 jobs, with further losses experienced since the 2008 economic recession. Interestingly, Buntingford has a higher level of part time employment compared to District as a whole. There is also an older population than average within the town, with fewer young families.

**2.20** In terms of the balance between workforce and jobs in Buntingford, the study indicates a high level of out commuting. While the town is reasonably well connected by road, there is no railway line and a limited rural bus network, meaning that commuting is largely undertaken by private vehicle. Acknowledging the need to ensure there are local job opportunities, the study recommends the creation of new employment land in the town. Even if all opportunities were taken to maximise the potential of existing employment areas, more land would be required for B uses. Land at the Buntingford Business Park is likely to be attractive to B2 or B8 uses given the dominance of B8 uses on the existing site, while new employment land which should come forward as part of strategic allocations is more likely to be attractive to B1 uses.

## **Economic Evidence to Support the Development of the OAHN for West Essex and East Herts, September 2015 (EER/002)**

**2.21** This study, commissioned by the Co-operation for Sustainable Development Board (comprising East Herts, Epping forest, Harlow and Uttlesford District Councils), looked at historic jobs growth and projections of future jobs growth at the Strategic Housing Market Area (SHMA) level. The study then suggested how this projected growth might be distributed across the four local authority areas on a 'policy-off' basis, and therefore does not account for policies that the local authorities may choose to implement to alter the future scale of growth or distribution of jobs.



**2.22** The report considers historic patterns of job creation from a variety of data sources. It analyses the difference between this historic pattern and actual jobs growth, the emerging evidence and the East of England Forecasting Model (EEFM) projection of future jobs growth. Importantly, this report took account of the anticipated growth in jobs at Stansted Airport since Manchester Airport Group took ownership of the airport.

**2.23** The report concentrates on the projected jobs growth using two scenarios; distribution based on historic trends, in which East Herts would see a projected growth of 525 jobs per year based on a 33% market share; and distribution based on projected market share indicated in the EEFM, in which East Herts would have a 28% share and a projected growth of 455 jobs per year. Taking the addition of Stansted Airport related growth into account, which would be largely located in Uttlesford, this results in a reduced share of jobs directed to the other areas. Subsequently, in the two scenarios, East Herts would see a projected 505 and 435 jobs respectively. This range of between 435 and 505 jobs was used to inform Policy DPS1 of the District Plan.

**2.24** This report was used to inform the finalisation of the SHMA for the four authorities. Page 87 of the SHMA considers how employment trends and the projected growth of the economically active population fit with the future changes in jobs numbers. Planning Practice Guidance states that where the supply of working age population that is economically active is less than the projected job growth, this could result in unsustainable commuting patterns and could reduce the resilience of local businesses. In such circumstances, plan makers will need to consider how the location of new housing or infrastructure development could help address these problems. The SHMA identifies (page 88 and 89) that the projected growth in jobs exceeds the potential number of workers arising from housing growth, therefore, there is a need to increase housing delivery to ensure there will be enough workers for the likely increase in jobs in the area. However, the uplift of 20% (7,676 dwellings) of the identified housing need required to address market signals such as affordability, exceed the additional homes required (5,600 dwellings) to provide sufficient workers to fill the projected growth in jobs across the area. Therefore, no further uplift to balance workers and jobs would be required.

## **Economic Development Vision and Action Plan, April 2016 (EER/001)**

**2.25** While the Economic Development Vision and Action Plan is not a piece of technical evidence, the approaches within the document have directly informed the preparation of the Pre-Submission Plan. The vision itself is summarised within the Economic Development chapter of the Plan and the Vision refers to the District Plan as a means of achieving a number of objectives.

## **Hertford and Ware Employment Study, June 2016 (EER/005)**

**2.26** The purpose of this study was to provide advice on the future role of employment sites in Hertford and Ware in supporting economic growth. The study comprises an audit of existing stock, analyses the strengths and weaknesses of the

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economy of the two towns, and makes recommendations on the policy approach and strategy for planning for employment land in Hertford and Ware. The study is the first that responds to the East Herts Economic Development Vision and Action Plan, 2016.

**2.27** For the purpose of this study, the two towns are captured together, reflecting their demographic and physical similarities, their road and rail connections and their close geographic proximity. The study describes how both towns have a relatively well qualified workforce and a high proportion of out-commuting, enabled by the ease of access to London-bound rail lines. This generally high level of skills should act as an attraction to businesses. While there are some areas of the towns with lower qualifications and higher levels of unemployment, these are still lower than county, regional and national levels.

**2.28** The two towns have experienced a loss of 600 jobs between 2009 and 2014. This is not reflected across the district as a whole, where a growth of 3,800 jobs occurred in the same time period. However, the towns benefit from being home to local government offices for both County and District Councils (Hertford) and the district's largest private employer, GSK (Ware), along with Hertford Regional College's base (Ware), and five large secondary schools. Overall, however, there is a dominance of small to medium sized businesses, serving a mostly local catchment.

**2.29** Despite some gains, there has been a significant net loss of employment floorspace across the two towns over the period 2010/11 to 2014/15, with a very substantial net loss within the 2014/15 financial year (Fig 17, page 23). Recent losses are anticipated to continue due to the introduction of permitted development rights allowing office to residential conversion. There are significant pressures within Hertford and Ware for the redevelopment of land to higher value land uses such as residential uses. The recent lack of a five year supply of land for housing has hampered the retention of employment land against such incentives. Despite this, there is a relatively low level of vacancy, particularly in relation to office space. The study suggests (page 25) that this may not be due to a significant demand for offices, but, rather, that there has been an overall loss of office floorspace available. The study also suggests that the limited availability of such floorspace may be a detractor to new businesses as there is little choice, and what modern floorspace exists is located in constrained areas of differing quality. This lack of supply limits demand, thus reducing the attractiveness to new building interest. This picture is similar for industrial and warehouse floorspace.

**2.30** The study recommends a strategy that seeks to stem the on-going loss of employment floorspace in Hertford and Ware and states that the Council 'should resist the loss of further employment sites, unless it is convincingly proved they are not fit for purpose; even then the aim should be to ensure some element for employment floorspace provision through mixed use development'. In seeking both the retention and improvement of existing employment land, it should further plan for the provision of new good quality B1 floorspace in an attractive, well accessed strategic location. Town centre office locations are also recommended, particularly for small enterprises in close reach of rail stations. The study suggests that there is



demand for shared business space for new and growing businesses, some of which would be suitable for integration with mixed-use developments. There is however, also demand for locations with direct access to the trunk road network. The availability of land for less neighbourly uses such as MOT and car repair workshops is a growing issue, particularly given their reliance on local trade networks and customer base.

**2.31** The study recognises the need to ensure there are local job opportunities for residents within Hertford and Ware that are suitable for those with lower skills and qualifications, as well as a need to encourage sustainable patterns of commuting and delivery of goods and services. A range of employment floorspace should be planned for and the inter-relationship between businesses and wider town centre functions should be maximised.

## 3 The Consideration of the Economy and Economic Development Through the Plan-making Process

**3.1** This section sets out how the issue of jobs growth and employment land has been considered throughout the Plan-making stages of the East Herts District Plan.

### Issues and Options

**3.2** The Issues and Options Consultation set out that there was a need for more than 13 hectares of land for B1, B2 and B8 uses between 2009 and 2031, based upon the 2008 Employment Land and Policy Review (EER/010). This study was superseded by later work undertaken during the Preferred Options and Pre-Submission stages.

### Preferred Options

**3.3** The Preferred Options Supporting Document sets out how a 'stepped approach' was followed, which comprised a number of assessment processes, from the strategic overview of key issues through to a number of area and site assessments and shortlisting exercises and consideration of the cumulative impacts of development.

**3.4** The Preferred Options District Plan set an ambitious requirement for between 11 and 13 hectares of employment land. This figure differed from the 7 and 10 hectare range identified in the 2008 study for a number of reasons. Firstly, several employment sites had been lost in the interim period (2001-2012) which needed to be replaced. Secondly, the 2012 and 2015 studies identified a need for 9,700 jobs between 2012 and 2031. While this jobs growth was lower than the previous study, the Council's ambition was to replace the jobs lost during the recession and encourage the creation of new jobs, brought about by an increase in available employment land. Thirdly, there was a desire to capture and capitalise on the growing interest in the M11 corridor and growth associated with Stansted Airport through the creation of new employment land in Bishop's Stortford.

**3.5** The additional 11-13 hectares were identified as being provided in the following locations:



- 3 ha to the North of Buntingford Business Park
- 4-5 ha North of Bishop's Stortford
- 4-5 ha South of Bishop's Stortford

**3.6** In order to recognise the role of existing businesses, the following sites were proposed to be designated as Employment Areas:

- 0.23 ha Millside Industrial Estate, Bishop's Stortford
- 0.36 ha Southmill Trading Estate, Bishop's Stortford
- 9.36 ha Pegs Lane/Hale Road, Hertford
- 0.84 ha Taylor Trading Estate, Hertford
- 0.43 ha Leaside Works, Stanstead Abbots
- 0.59 ha Riverside Works, Amwell End, Stanstead Abbots

### Pre-Submission

**3.7** Between the Preferred Options and Pre-Submission stages, several proposed sites received planning permission for residential development which diminished the opportunity to create new employment land (see the settlement specific sections below). Further work on the assessment of settlements identified that the quantum of new employment land set out in the Preferred Options Plan was not going to be achievable and that an alternative approach would be needed to provide resilience against the continuing loss of employment land, particularly within Hertford and Ware. Therefore the Plan seeks to create new employment land in the southern part of the district and the creation of mixed-use developments which include employment uses in order to ensure the viability and deliverability of such uses.

**3.8** The Pre-Submission District Plan Policy DPS1 therefore plans for between 10 and 11 hectares of employment land through to 2033, provided in the following locations:

- 3 ha to the North of Buntingford Business Park
- 4-5 ha South of Bishop's Stortford
- 3 ha North and East of Ware

**3.9** Since the Preferred Options Plan, much of the Taylor Trading Estate has been changed to residential development and part of the Pegs Lane area was converted to a care home. Therefore, the following existing locations were proposed to be designated as Employment Land:

- 0.23 ha Millside Industrial Estate, Bishop's Stortford
- 0.36 ha Southmill Trading Estate, Bishop's Stortford
- 7.71 ha Pegs Lane/Hale Road, Hertford



- 0.43 ha Leaside Works, Stanstead Abbots
- 0.59 ha Riverside Works, Amwell End, Stanstead Abbots

**3.10** In addition, employment land is anticipated to come forward as part of mixed use development schemes within Bishop's Stortford (Goods Yard, Mill Site and Old River Lane) and through other strategic allocations.

## **Bishop's Stortford**

**3.11** Bishop's Stortford has been consistently identified as the town with the greatest prospects in terms of the creation of new successful employment land. There is already a good presence of small and medium enterprises as well as some larger businesses that have connections with Stansted Airport. As the largest town in East Herts it is set to receive the greatest number of homes over the short to medium term, therefore it is necessary to ensure that new employment opportunities are provided for new residents.

**3.12** Opportunities to create a new dedicated business park close to the A120 were lost through the various applications for Bishop's Stortford North. The delivery of employment land at the current Woodside grounds of the Bishop's Stortford Community Football Club is dependent upon the relocation of the club to an alternative location, which is currently not progressing. Therefore, whilst it is acknowledged that this would be an ideal location for new employment land, it is not considered deliverable at the moment. The Council is committed to the early review of the Plan; therefore this option may become more deliverable at that stage. As an alternative, and to ensure that new employment land is delivered within the Plan period, the strategic allocation to the south of the town proposes 4-5 ha of new employment land.

**3.13** Within the urban area, three town centre sites are identified for their employment opportunities as part of mixed-use developments. These locations benefit from their proximity to the railway station, high visibility, good passenger transport connections and proximity to ancillary businesses such as shops and banks for example. These locations will provide office space as well as community facilities and retail uses.

## **Buntingford**

**3.14** Within Buntingford, opportunities to create new employment land are limited due to the size and physical constraints of the town. New employment land is proposed to the rear of an existing employment area at Buntingford Business Park. This land would be suitable for B2 and B8 uses, but not so attractive to B1 uses. There are a number of small employment areas that provide space for businesses that have a more local customer base, but have limited means to expand to create further employment opportunities in the town. Watermill Industrial Estate to the south of the town is constrained by narrow access roads, flood plain and proximity to a sewage treatment works. Land to the north of Park Farm Industrial Estate, which



was previously retained for employment land has been proposed for residential development. This application was refused but is currently awaiting an appeal decision.

**3.15** At the Preferred Options stage, the Plan made provision for new employment land as part of the Buntingford South allocation. Since the consultation, the site promoters were granted planning permission for a residential-led, mixed-use development that set aside approximately 2 ha for employment uses. Subsequent to this, part of the employment area has been granted permission for a care home, which whilst not a traditional employment use, still provides local employment opportunities. Negotiations are ongoing with regards to the location of a first school required to serve the growing population.

**3.16** The employment study for Buntingford raised concerns about the high level of out commuting from the town. This was also highlighted in the Inspector's Decisions for several recent appeals. The Council considers that without the commensurate growth in employment in the town, it is not suitable to propose any further residential development in Buntingford.

## Hertford

**3.17** The approach to Employment land in Hertford is one of protecting existing employment land against redevelopment to other uses, including through the policy designation of established areas of business such as the District and County Council offices. A large number of existing employment areas are constrained in size and location and are in need of refurbishment to make them more attractive to businesses. Hertford has experienced a loss of office space since the introduction of permitted development and prior approval rights; yet the greatest demand for new employment space is for B1 uses.

**3.18** The Mead Lane Area is a long established and successful employment area, yet over recent years parts of the area have been developed for residential purposes, recognising that this location, immediately adjacent to the railway station, is ideal for higher density residential accommodation. While the Mead Lane Urban Design Framework and Policy HERT2 make provision for some further residential development in that area, the overall policy approach for the majority of the area seeks to protect and continue industrial employment uses (B1, B2 and B8), through District Plan policies ED1 (Employment) and HERT6 (Employment in Hertford).

**3.19** In terms of new employment land, the Council acknowledges the constraints within Hertford and therefore, in context of the close proximity and inter-relationship between the two towns, proposes the creation of a purpose-built employment area (which will be accessible to the A10 and A414) as part of the proposed strategic allocation to the North and East of Ware.



## Sawbridgeworth

**3.20** No new employment areas are proposed for Sawbridgeworth. Existing employment areas will be protected for their contribution to local job opportunities. However, given the location of the town mid-way between Bishop's Stortford and Harlow with their greater job opportunities, it is acknowledged that a large proportion of residents commute the short distance to these larger centres or via the railway line to London, Stansted Airport or Cambridge.

## Ware

**3.21** Ware benefits from the presence of GSK, which is the largest single employer in the District. However, this also creates a vulnerability of major local job losses should the company decide to relocate in the future (although recent job creation at the site offers current reassurance in this respect). Like Hertford, employment areas within the urban area are constrained, leaving limited opportunities to create new jobs. Several areas have also been redeveloped in the recent past for residential uses. Marsh Lane and Crane Mead in Ware have been identified as key locations with the potential to maximise their capacity for new business and job creation.

**3.22** In terms of new employment land, the Council acknowledges the constraints within Ware and therefore proposes the creation of a purpose-built employment area which will be accessible to the A10 and A414 as part of the proposed strategic allocation to the North and East of Ware. In addition, new employment opportunities will be created through the development of new community facilities including schools and local retail uses.

## Rural Area

**3.23** There are several designated employment areas distributed amongst the rural area of East Herts. These serve predominantly local customer bases and provide valuable alternatives to urban locations, often with cheaper rents and less pressure for redevelopment. The approach set out in the District Plan seeks to protect these rural employment areas in Policy VILL5, and any new proposals are supported in principle subject to other policies in the Plan.

## The Gilston Area

**3.24** The approach taken in the District Plan to employment within the Gilston Area development is to provide small scale office space as part of neighbourhood centres as well as to provide employment opportunities through community facilities and local retail uses. Development in this location will support the regeneration of Harlow and its numerous employment areas, including the growth of the Enterprise Zone. The development is in close proximity to Harlow Mill, Harlow Town and Roydon railway stations, providing sustainable access to employment further afield.



## East of Stevenage

**3.25** This site is located on the edge of Stevenage, which is home to many large employers. Local employment opportunities will be created through the provision of retail and community uses including a school and care home. However, no new designated employment areas will be created.

## East of Welwyn Garden City

**3.26** Land to the East of Welwyn Garden City is located on the A414 and on the main route in to Welwyn Garden City along the B195. To maximise the benefits that this location brings, it is proposed to create a new Employment Area directly accessed from the B195 close to the edge of the existing town, extending the existing corridor of employment uses. This land lies within the Welwyn Hatfield part of the development; however, given that the development as a whole is located within a shared market area for homes and jobs, new employment opportunities created in this location will serve a wide population, not just new residents of the development. Further job opportunities will be created through three new schools, a care home and other community and leisure facilities.

## 4 Cross-Boundary Economic Issues

**4.1** It is recognised that people travel for work, often great distances, particularly for specialist forms of employment. East Herts is not a self-contained economy and in economic terms it plays a supporting role in relation to providing workers for adjacent urban centres. East Herts is part of a wider integrated labour and property market covering much of Hertfordshire and part of Essex and north London, within which the district's small and medium sized businesses play an important role, many of which have links to larger companies within the sub-region, to London and Stansted Airport. It is therefore important that matters such as employment and jobs are considered within this wider economic geography.

**4.2** Established in 2013, the London, Stansted, Cambridge Consortium (LSCC) is a strategic partnership of public and private organisations covering the area north from the Royal Docks in central London towards Peterborough. The core area of the Consortium's interest is the M11 corridor, though through its involvement with the Local Enterprise Partnerships covering the corridor, their interest covers a far greater area. The Vision for the London Stansted Cambridge Corridor Core Area to 2050 covers the four SHMA authorities of East Herts, Epping Forest, Harlow and Uttlesford Districts, and as such forms part of the overall vision and objectives for each authority. The Vision seeks to build on the corridor's skilled workforce and aims to deliver sustainable growth which supports the economic ambitions of the LSCC and the UK as a whole.

**4.3** As part of achieving this ambition, the four SHMA authorities are working together to understand the impacts of jobs growth based on the latest East of England Forecasting Model and to assess the employment land requirements associated with the various growth scenarios. This study – an Assessment of Employment Needs



for the West Essex and East Herts Functional Economic Market Area – expected to be complete by May 2017, will be used to inform an Employment Land Strategy for the Functional Economic Market Area and a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the four authorities.

**4.4** The first phase of this work is to identify employment growth scenarios for the FEMA and to begin to consider options for the distribution of employment growth across the four constituent districts. This stage will comprise a critical review of economic data to ensure a robust understanding of the economic context from which growth scenarios will build. This stage will also undertake consultation with key stakeholders to inform alternative scenario development options aligned with other policies, strategies and economic development investment plans.

**4.5** The second phase will undertake technical work, including the creation of a bespoke model, to assess the future demand for employment land and floorspace arising from the employment growth scenarios established in the first phase. This will then be developed into a headline employment land strategy through further consultation with the key stakeholders. Should the study identify that the latest EEFM forecast for East Herts' will result in a need for employment land beyond that which is planned for in the Pre-Submission District Plan, the MoU will provide the mechanism by which this need can be accommodated through an appropriate employment land strategy for the FEMA as a whole, even if this is delivered outside of East Herts. For example, one way of creating a deliverable solution could be through working with Uttlesford District Council to bring forward new employment land opportunities within close proximity of Bishop's Stortford, which would meet the needs of both authorities as well as capture growth along the LSCC Core Area.

## 5 Conclusion

**5.1** This Topic Paper explains how the East Herts District Plan sets out a clear economic vision and strategy for the district and for the wider functional economic market area, will achieve a sustainable economic growth and will support existing employers, planning positively for the creation of new employment areas and protecting existing jobs and business opportunities.