

East Hemel

Reports on Stage 1
Stakeholder Workshop
and Community Drop-in
Engagement Events

October 2024

Executive Summary

This consolidated report combines the distinct elements of engagement that form Stage 1 of the community and stakeholder engagement programme for East Hemel. The two main elements overlapped within a period of a week, spanning Saturday 12th – Thursday 17th October 2024, with an earlier youth event.

The proposed development at East Hemel covers a 975-acre area of land on the east side of Hemel Hempstead, owned by The Crown Estate. The land lies to the east of the Woodhall Farm and Leverstock Green neighbourhoods, and Maylands Industrial area. East Hemel falls within the Hemel Garden Communities (HGC) development area, an area identified as part of a long-term commitment to transform Hemel Hempstead, aiming to deliver up to 11,000 new homes and 10,000 new jobs by 2050. The East Hemel site covers approximately half the land within the HGC area.

The East Hemel development will aim to deliver a mix of housing, schools, health care, employment and green spaces. It will be led by a masterplan, produced through a process that considers the outputs of a number of stages of community and stakeholder engagement and brought together by a design team of specialist consultants.

This document forms a record of the '**Community Drop-In Exhibitions**' of 12th-17th October and the '**Meet the Team – Scoping Issues**' Stakeholder Workshop of 17th October. The reports within this document have been compiled from the diverse material and contributions across Stage 1.

Throughout the Stage 1 engagement events, The Crown Estate and consultant team engaged directly with approximately 751 people. This included 23 people at early-stage introductory meetings with local stakeholders (a list of these meetings is included in Appendix A), attendees at Generation Dacorum and the five community drop-ins, online and hard copy survey responses, and the stakeholder workshop. In addition to this, there were 1,022 visits to the East Hemel Commonplace website.

Community Drop-ins (Report A)

Community drop-ins were held across five venues, including: Leverstock Green Village Hall, Hemel Hempstead Library, Adeyfield Free Church, Holtsmere End Junior School and Redbourn Village Hall.

At each event there were representatives from The Crown Estate (TCE), Kevin Murray Associates (KMA) and members of the design team, with a range of technical specialisms, able to discuss various aspects of the site, context and planning status of East Hemel.

Topics raised and discussed at these events included:

- East Hemel site boundaries
- The SADC Local Plan allocation and local authority boundary
- Housing needs and demand locally
- The amount/scale of development likely to be involved
- The green belt
- Nature, wildlife and conservation
- Capacity for utilities and community services – like health and school
- Infrastructure phasing
- Flooding
- Traffic – including M1, rat-running, and construction implications
- Public transport
- Buncefield – safety context
- Pollution
- Design, character and identity
- Housing – types and density, design standards
- Local living and active travel
- Amenities and services
- Business and employment
- Phasing and delivery

In the responses received at the events, people indicated that they were appreciative of the open, explanatory approach taken by The Crown Estate at this point, and looked forward to more information in the future stages. They also

provided detailed feedback on many key topics, including those listed above, which is provided in Section 9 of Report A.

Generation Dacorum Event

In addition to the wider community drop-in sessions, on Wednesday 2nd October 2024, a number of The Crown Estate Team attended the Generation Dacorum event at Shendish Manor Hotel, held in partnership with Community Action Dacorum and Hertfordshire Futures. Targeted at year 11, the majority of attendees were 15-16 years old, with approximately 1000 students from across 20 schools attending on the day.

There were 61 written responses to the question '**What would make East Hemel a great place?**', with responses including:

Employment A need for more local business and modern shops.

Housing Many requested larger houses with bigger gardens, solar panels and EV charging.

Leisure New and larger parks with teen-friendly things to do.

Education A need for more schools and desire for technology in schools.

Culture and heritage There were calls for arts venues and a keenness to connect with 'old Hemel'.

Travel Cycling and cheap, effective and reliable public transport was a priority.

Sustainability Concerns around global warming, and keenness to explore renewable energy, improving biodiversity and wildlife habitats.

Green space Value was placed on green space and nature, desire for tree planting.

Safety Concerns around safety, lighting, and desire for increased surveillance.

Youth Voice Youth input was very important to attendees.

Stakeholder workshop (Report B)

The first stakeholder workshop was held on Thursday 17th October 2024 between 9:30 – 12:30 at the Holiday Inn on Breakspear Way, Hemel Hempstead. Invitees were drawn from a range of local representative bodies, interest groups and service providers, alongside The Crown Estate and various members of the design team.

The event had briefing presentations and questions on:

- The Crown Estate role, aspiration & place vision

- The statutory planning context
- The overall masterplanning approach for East Hemel
- The engagement approach

There followed workshop group discussions on future scenarios, around the themes of:

- Group 1 Celebrating Pride of Place - livable communities & homes
- Group 2 Nurturing our Natural World - landscape, open spaces, play
- Group 3 Fostering Prosperity and New Economies - skills, employment, creativity, value
- Group 4 Connecting Places and People - movement, connectivity, activity
- Group 5 Promoting Community Participation - wellbeing, sustainable lifestyles
- Group 6 More Sustainable Communities - energy, materials, climate resilience

The groups provided feedback on issues, ideas and aspirations. The workshop closed with a reflection on key issues from the session, which included access to nature and greenery, and stronger public transport links. This was supplemented by discussions about whether there could be priority for local people in relation to new housing; concerns around integration along the boundary line, particularly in relation to services, with a desire in the room to move the council border; the need for a new way of thinking in terms of transport and moving around.

Next steps

The next steps in the engagement process were indicated to be:

- undertake a study tour to Cambridge (December)
- a community design workshop process (January-February)

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1. Report purpose and layout

This consolidated report combines two distinct elements of engagement that form Stage 1 of the community and stakeholder engagement programme for East Hemel. The two elements overlapped within a period of a week, spanning Saturday 12th – Thursday 17th October 2024.

These two report elements (Report A and B) form a record of the '**Community Drop-In Exhibitions**' of 12th-17th October and the '**Meet the Team – Scoping Issues**' Stakeholder Workshop of 17th October. The material combines notes from the workshop and feedback provided by participants, through discussions with team members and the feedback form, which were available at the events and online via the [Commonplace digital engagement platform](#). The purpose of these events was to introduce The Crown Estate, their team and approach, and to seek initial views from participants, to inform the process of taking the East Hemel proposals forward.

The report has been compiled by KMA from the diverse material and contributions across Stage 1. Apologies are offered for any omissions or misinterpretations. The report does not constitute the views of either The Crown Estate, design team, Hemel Garden Community or either of the Councils.

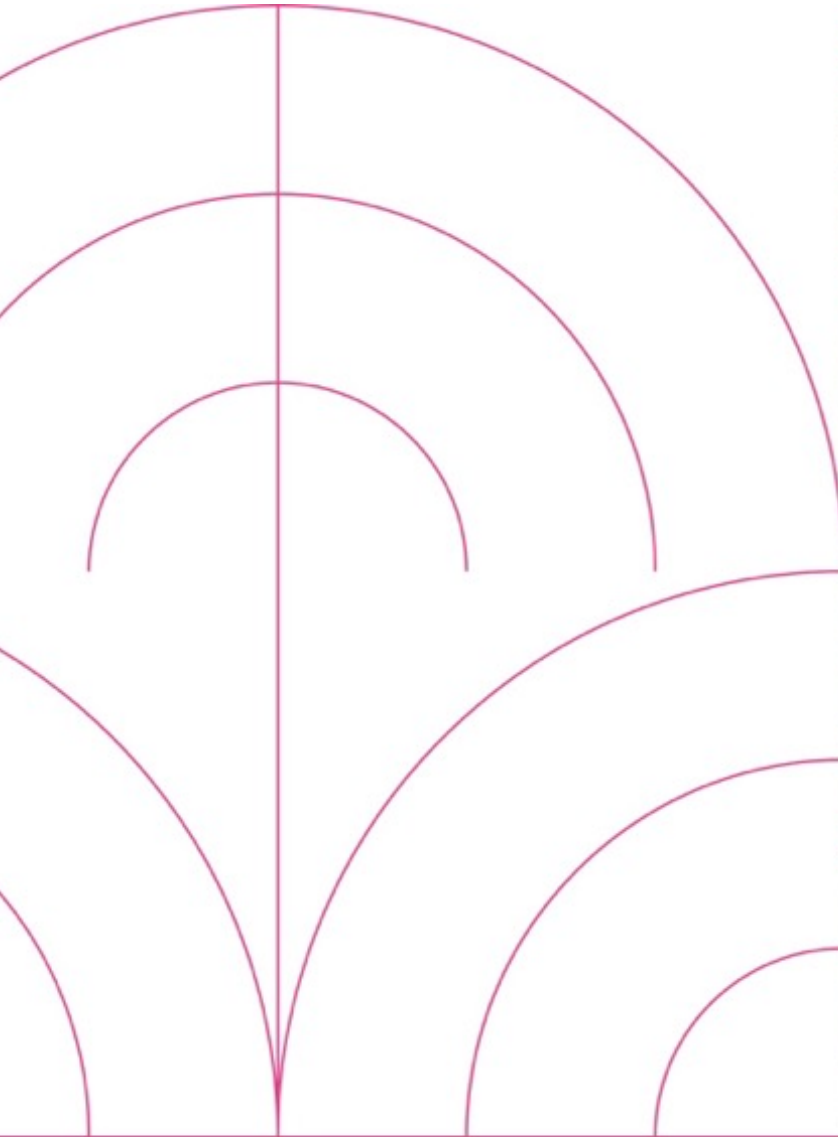
2. Reports A and B

Report A is a record of the community drop-in sessions, while Report B details the content, themes and outputs from the stakeholder workshop.

These two reports are records of the events and issues raised. To retain authenticity, they have not been overly restructured or processed, therefore some material may appear as raw or repetitive to non-participants.

3. Next steps

The next steps in the engagement process are to share this report with participants by email and via the website, to undertake a study tour to Cambridge, and a community design workshop process. During the engagement undertaken, participants were asked to indicate their interest in being involved in the study tour and design workshops.



Report A:

East Hemel
Community Drop-in Events
Stage 1 Engagement

October 2024

4. Purpose of the community drop-ins

A number of drop-in exhibitions were held in five different locations relevant to the East Hemel site. They were geographically spread around the adjacent neighbouring areas of Hemel Hempstead and Redbourn, in addition to a Hemel Hempstead town centre location. The events were hosted across a variety of dates, times and venues to ensure that as many residents as possible could attend. Though all were welcome, the session at Maylands was selected to encourage representation from the business community.

The events were widely publicised through information flyers (Appendix B), which were enclosed with letters sent by Royal Mail to households within and around the site boundary (Appendix C). Events were also widely promoted on social media, with many of the stakeholders who engaged through early meetings sharing details through their own networks.

5. Location and schedule

Community drop-ins were held across five venues:

Leverstock Green

Leverstock Green Village Hall	Saturday 12 th October	12:30-16:30
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Town Centre

Hemel Hempstead Library	Tuesday 15 th October	15:00-17:00
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Maylands

Adeyfield Free Church	Wednesday 16 th October	13:30-15:30
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Woodhall Farm

Holtsmere End Junior School	Wednesday 16 th October	17:00-20:00
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Redbourn

Redbourn Village Hall	Thursday 17 th October	18:00-21:00
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6. Event format

At each venue there was a welcome desk with the option for attendees to sign in. There were eleven pop-up panels (Appendix D) around the room, displaying background information and outlining The Crown Estate's approach to East Hemel, while team members circulated and engaged with attendees. Two large floor maps were also used to show the wider East Hemel site and the area specific to each of the five drop-in locations.

At each event, representatives from The Crown Estate (TCE), Kevin Murray Associates (KMA) and members of the design team, with a range of technical specialisms, were able to discuss various aspects of the East Hemel site, its context and planning status.

At Leverstock Green, members of the TOWN team were also present, with an exhibition specific to the Westwick Row development, which is a separate scheme, also being brought forward by TCE and at a more advanced stage than the wider East Hemel development.



Each drop-in had information panels and floor maps

7. Attendance

Across the five events there were 509 attendees, who represented a mix of ages, ethnicities and households, although there was a bias towards an older demographic.

The busiest events were at Leverstock Green, with 243 people attending, 145 at Redbourn, while the quietest was at Hemel Hempstead Library (town centre) where 24 people attended.

8. Emerging Themes Across All Drop-ins

The main discussion points raised across the five events are shown here.

8.1. Planning Context

Site boundaries

There were questions about where the site red line crossed the motorway and whether there would be development on the east side. Most were reassured when explained that this is for infrastructure.

Questions were asked in relation to whether there will be additional development south of Leverstock Green, beyond the red line boundary.

SADC allocation and authority boundary

A recurring issue arose from some around the site falling mainly within St Albans City and District Council (SADC) area and a sense that St Alban's housing should be primarily concentrated around St Albans, rather than adjoining Hemel Hempstead. Some questioned why houses are not being built elsewhere in SADC, and even further north (north of England and Scotland).

Some linked questions arose around exactly which parts of the site are in SADC and which are in Dacorum Borough Council (DBC).

Many people had the impression that Council tax generated from the site would go straight to SADC, with no benefits to DBC or Hertfordshire County Council.

Iterations of plans

There was a level of confusion among some around which plan is which, or which iterations are relevant. Many referenced an earlier plan, with some questions around

previous iterations and local input into them, and why queries as to why the process was (re) starting from scratch.

There was also a degree of confusion around the HGC framework plan and an assumption that this is a definitive/final version. There were some associated questions around when HGC was formed and their precise role and remit.

Housing demand

Many people recognised the pressing need for new homes, some felt local people being prioritised for housing, while others felt that housing should be sited elsewhere.

Government housing targets were also raised, at times leading to expressions of varying political and social sentiment, depending on age, location and personal circumstances.

There were a significant number of comments about population growth and demand for housing. Points were made regarding a slowing of population growth and pressure arising from immigration, with some anti-immigration sentiment.

Amount of local development

A variety of comments were made concerning the amount of proposed development in the area, with a feeling by some that the scale of the HGC programme may be 'too much'.

There were a number of concerns relating to the other proposed (northern) HGC development which in many cases more directly affects residents.

Green belt

Some expressed disagreement with the principle of releasing green belt land to enable development and indicated a keenness to ensure a local precedent for green belt erosion was not set. Specific reference was made to the role of the green belt in keeping settlements separate, with distinct identities.

Nature and conservation

Many residents wanted to protect local wildlife habitats, including specific species and raised questions around how this would be approached and measured. There were specific conversations around butterflies with the Butterfly Conservation Trust.

There was widespread sentiment that the development would result in a loss of green space, habitat and natural environment, regardless of the Biodiversity Net Gain requirement.



Attendees at Leverstock Green examining the pop-up panels and floor map

Traveller sites

There were questions about provision for travellers and in some cases a nervousness about where the placement of the sites will be and how those communities would co-exist with existing and new residents and businesses

8.2. Infrastructure

Current capacity

There were issues raised about the delivery of infrastructure, with some concerned that development would be purely housing, and possibly business, with limited community infrastructure. Many attendees questioned whether there would be the necessary infrastructure to support new development and whether existing facilities would have to take any additional load.

Concerns included sewage problems associated with the new development on Westwick Row and Thames Water wastewater treatment facilities at capacity.

There were also questions about who would be accountable for the running of the infrastructure/facilities/drainage/electricity and TCE's long-term role in the area.

Health

Access to hospitals for existing and future residents was raised, with a number of people discussing the impact of losing services at Hemel Hospital, which was well regarded and had an emotional attachment for many. Challenges around accessing Watford were raised, in addition to concerns around standards of care.

Some felt that TCE should help provide a new hospital, while others understood this is not the role of a landowner or developer. People felt aggrieved that the council would propose thousands of new homes without additional healthcare capacity in an already stretched system. When discussed further, some appreciated this is a wider NHS/health system issue and not specific to East Hemel, but pressed for dialogue with the relevant authorities in planning for future needs.

Many attendees raised questions about what doctors/dentists provision there would be, noting existing capacity issues and lack of access to GPs in some areas.



A discussion at the Town Centre event

Flooding

Residents were keen to ensure that local flooding issues are understood and addressed, particularly regular flooding in fields and on roads and lanes, and the

impact of more hard surfaces and run-off. Many people identified specific problem areas for flooding alongside concern that issues such as these are not adequately considered in the preparation of these kinds of developments.

Issues around pressure on water supply network were also identified.

Schools

Several discussions around schools included questions around whether there would be new schools, how many, where, what type (significant demand for SEND school provision noted) and when.

Many people were surprised and supportive of the amount of school provision proposed, although there were questions around the locations identified in the SADC framework (often related to pollution and traffic).

There was mixed feedback on the current state and capacity of schools in the area and a number of questions on catchment areas for schools, with some wanting access to new schools, while others (particularly Redbourn) were concerned that their current zoning may change.

There was a general desire to make sure that there were safe routes and good public transport links to schools and a keenness that new schools are delivered early in order to avoid children being displaced due to overcapacity.

Infrastructure first

There were various questions raised about infrastructure and how this would be phased, with a clear desire to see infrastructure first, to minimise short to medium term pain for existing residents. While many accepted that there would be new facilities, they requested that these were not in the last stage of the development, resulting in pressure to their already-struggling education and healthcare facilities as well as roads and utilities.

A consistent sentiment was that, to build trust and effective places, the infrastructure has to be delivered early on.

8.3. Traffic, Transport and Roads

Current capacity

Traffic and road infrastructure was a key topic of discussion, with concerns that 'currently overloaded' roads will not cope with further strain. Feedback included how old, small, lanes struggle to cope and are often seen to be dangerous.

Residents were worried that development will exacerbate this.

Some conversations were around motorway capacity, the length of time commuting via the M1 and concern about the impact on commuting to London. Problems around rat running, queues to get onto the motorway and the impact of any diversions/issues on the M1 were all raised.

There were specific concerns around the impact of Westwick Row on local roads and discussions around potential for making roads in East Hemel into no through routes or quiet ways.

The ambition to generate trips via sustainable means is considered unrealistic by some, particularly at rush hour, as most people at that time are driving to their place of work (Luton and Watford were mentioned). It was argued cycle ways would not make a great difference to that pattern.

M1/Junction 8

Questions were asked about what a new traffic network might look like, including whether there will be changes to existing M1 junctions (Junction 8), or if new exit/access is likely. Traffic on and off the motorway is already an issue and there are concerns around the cumulative loading of access on/off M1. Rat running is a problem for many. There was a general feeling that the current road network does not work well.

Site traffic (during development)

A number of people were concerned about access to the East Hemel site during construction and that this would add to existing traffic problems. The Centurion Club golf course was referenced as taking a toll on local roads during construction. Safety concerns around construction traffic on residential roads and around schools were also raised.



Discussions at the Woodhall Farm event

Public transport

Comments were made in relation to existing public transport in the area, particularly buses. Limited or no access to the town centre and train station was identified, as were a lack of buses to surrounding towns such as Harpenden. In some instances community transport has been necessary to compensate for lack of services.

Some were keen to see bus priority into Hemel Hempstead and St Albans, while there were also conversations around whether there was a way to better connect surrounding places like Harpenden through cycling routes or reliable bus services.

People were keen to understand what public transport interventions are being considered as part of the East Hemel scheme.

8.4. Environmental Factors

Pollution

Questions were raised around noise and air pollution, how that is to be managed and how it impacts development nearer the motorway. Discussions were around its impact on health, quality of life and the desirability of properties.

The noise impact from the M1 was particularly relevant in Redbourn, with a number of residents noting that they can hear the M1 from their houses (including at

Leverstock Green and Woodhall Farm). Questions were around the implications for future noise levels, ensuring they did not worsen impacts.

Buncefield

There were strong feelings expressed around how future development relates to Buncefield. Most attendees had been residents at the time of the 2005 explosion and had stories about their experiences.

They were clear that TCE & the design team need to understand the danger and impact they feel/felt. There is concern from some that the proposed development may be putting people at risk by building too close. Although attendees were advised that TCE would work with EA, HSE and BPA, the issue of community safety was stressed as an important point for many.

Personal impact

Several attendees discussed the impact of development on the value of their properties, with some expecting to sell in the short / medium term.

Some attendees were disappointed at having moved to the area or bought houses in part due to the views/setting which may now change considerably.

8.5. East Hemel Impact and Design

Character and design

There were a number of questions about heritage and the recognition and protection of existing important and listed buildings, spaces, features, conservation of hedgerows and trees. There were also questions about existing equestrian facilities, their preservation and use and what provision there might be in terms of bridleway routes/loops.

Nickey Line preservation was noted a number of times at Redbourn and Woodhall Farm, including poorly maintained sections and opportunities to restore it for future use.

Identity

People feel strongly about the identity and neighbourhood/village character of some areas, such as Leverstock Green and Redbourn, with concerns around eroding that identity.

There was feeling expressed that Hemel Hempstead is a very green town and should be kept that way, with suggestions that neighbourhood scale is vital in nurturing community, with sufficient access to green space, parks, gardens, etc.

There were concerns over erosion of the green belt and development approaching the boundary of Redbourn village, associated with a loss of village identity and perceived 'absorption into Hemel Hempstead'. Explanation of the new green belt boundary alleviated some concerns.

In many instances, there was a strong sense of pride in place, community and local identity.



In Redbourn, many residents were concerned with any erosion of local identity

Housing density, typology and tenure

A number of people agreed that more housing was needed and the affordability of homes in Hemel and specific neighbourhoods was raised, while many knew friends/family who were struggling to buy property or had to move away to buy.

There were concerns over housing affordability and that the site may only provide market housing, with some desire for affordable houses (not just social housing) for

the next generation to live and stay in Hemel. This included a desire for starter homes and for whole life provision.

There were concerns over the definition and reality of affordable housing in the local context.

There were a number of questions around housing type and tenure (particularly Westwick Row, where the 80 proposed units were compared against the adjacent development with 50-60 units).

There were varying viewpoints on houses versus flats and what would be a suitable mix. This also related to the existing character and how new development of a different density would impact this.

Design standards

Many residents had a pre-conceived idea of what development might look like. based on previous and on-going developments around Hemel. There was often concern around the design of new builds (seen as boring, boxy, bland). It was considered important that newer development enhanced, and did not detract from, local character. There were also questions about how quality housing can be designed and provided beside such a large industrial area.

There were some comments that if everything promised (including approach, values and details) is actually delivered, the development could be viewed positively. In some cases such support was contingent on very specific deliverables, like community facilities.

Local living and active travel

Several people were keen to see Hemel new town design principles embedded in the new community, specifically the downgrading of existing routes to lanes, greenways or quiet ways, local centres and the provision of local facilities.

There were comments around connectivity through walking and cycling and addressing the current conflict with traffic, with a need for improved, safer pedestrian crossings cycling routes, including connections to the east. Points were made about routes to new schools needing to be safe and accessible.

There was resistance from some to Garden City principles.

Local amenities and services

Residents near Woodhall Farm identified a lack of facilities within walking distance, with some desire for locally-owned restaurants/cafes and high-quality sporting facilities. Safe access to nature was also raised.

Integration

Leverstock Green Village Association (and Church) were keen to build relationships between the existing and the new community, with opportunities for a new community facility to help build good relationships. This linked to wider questions about community facilities and services to be provided in the new development.



Employment and industry was a topic of interest at the Maylands event

Business and employment

There was discussion around employment areas, including what kind of employment is likely to be supported and any traffic implications (for instance, in relation to any logistics focus).

There was a general feeling that there has been some loss of traditional employment and business as Maylands has become logistics centred, and suggestion of lower employment numbers and pay levels from some jobs

generated. Several attendees noted current issues around attracting and retaining staff locally.

Questions were raised around implications of East Hemel for the town centre and whether development is helpful or harmful and how it relates to, or influences patterns of activity behaviour and spend.

Connections

Some feedback suggested that improved connections from Maylands to the train station would be helpful, linking to other comments that it is harder get to Hemel Hempstead station (20 mins) than St Albans station (10 mins) by bus.

8.6. Delivery

There were numerous questions raised around the delivery timeline, in relation to

- the Local Plan process towards adoption and how the land uses are fixed in each of the site allocations
- the Outline Application and subsequent stages
- when residents will be able to comment on detailed proposals as they evolve
- the development phasing
- some in relation to attendees wishing to sell property

There were a number of questions about phasing. People wanted to know if important infrastructure would be delivered early on, including 'community benefit' elements such as the country park.

There was some surprise at the overall length of time development may take and, for some older attendees, a sense this may have little real impact on them. For others, the consideration of the provision for future generations, some members of their own families, the future dimension was hugely significant.

8.7. Event feedback

In the responses received at the events, people indicated that they were generally appreciative of the open, explanatory approach taken by The Crown Estate at this point, and looked forward to more information in the future:

- There was some interest in being part of community panels, visits and other activities.
- Illustrative images on pop-up panels were at times mistakenly interpreted as proposals.

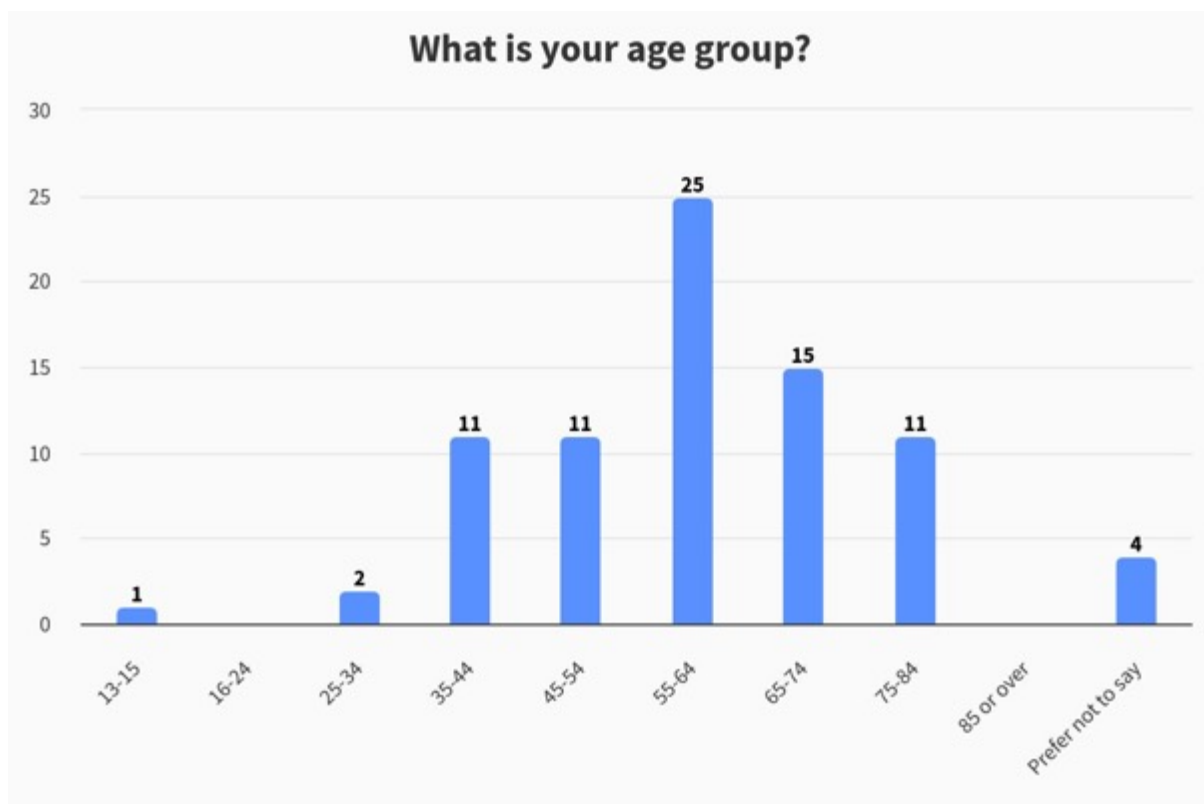
- There was some criticism that pop-ups were Hemel Hempstead focused and did not reference Redbourn enough.
- There was also a challenge around the wording of the selection process of attendees of design events for Westwick Row * (this is a separate process)
- For some, the notice period for the events was not considered long enough.



Attendees at Leverstock Green met with the design team and gave feedback

9. Responses to the feedback form

The feedback form, shown in Appendix E, was available both online via Commonplace and as a hard copy at the public drop-in sessions. The commonplace site was visited 1022 times and there were a total of 113 respondents to the digital and hard copy feedback forms, with 119 total contributions. Respondents were not required to submit demographic data, but of those who did, there was a spread of ages with the largest proportion of responses coming from those aged 55-64.



The questions were consistent across the Commonplace platform and the hard copy feedback forms and were analysed together. A summary of the responses to the questions posed, is detailed below.

9.1. What are the major features of Hemel Hempstead's history that you think should be considered or celebrated?

For many people the Old Town in Hemel is a key feature, with a distinct character and origins as a market town. Residents also value the local links to previous ages including Roman buildings and roads, links to Henry VIII and the murals at Piccotts End.

Hemel's role following the war and its history as an early new town is also a source of pride, with Jellicoe referenced. For some people this linked to being a welcoming place with a strong sense of community. Gadebridge Park and the Water Gardens are well regarded features while relatively modern history including the Buncefield incident is also seen to be important.

Grand Union Canal was regularly mentioned as a defining feature in Hemel now and through its history, while unique features such as the Magic Roundabout were identified as important.

The green belt and countryside are seen as key, with many people talking about the valuable landscape which defines the area, including waterways, woodlands, open space, farmland and wildlife.

Specific areas such as Boxmoor and Apsley were identified as important, while Dickinson Mill and the Apsley Paper Trail were recognised. Important to many is the village feel to significant parts of the area, with multiple references to churches and their role in building place and community.

A number of respondents specifically referenced Redbourn and its identity as a totally separate place from Hemel and the importance to them of retaining that.

9.2. What is your favourite thing about living in Hemel Hempstead / the local area?

Many people spoke about the value of community, friendships, family networks and a neighbourhood feel, while others mentioned the welcoming nature of its residents.

Many people specifically noted that their interest only extended to either Leverstock Green or Redbourn and that they enjoyed the rural or village feel of those places. In some cases this related to safety, and for others it was more generally about community and networks.

People value living by the countryside and access to open green spaces in and around the area, with the green belt often specifically referenced. Green spaces, estates and networks within Hemel were also seen to be valuable breathing space for the town.

For many, the ease of commuting to London and wider connectivity is key, but distinct local shops and services are also valued.

9.3. What characteristics of Hemel Hempstead / the local area do you value?

Green space is a key characteristic that people value, with access to the countryside and urban green spaces both important. There was a sentiment that replacing the ability to view and walk through rugged and natural landscapes with manufactured green space is a net loss for local people. People value the wildlife and nature around them and the canal was also referenced.

There is a feeling that each/or many area(s) of Hemel are essentially villages, with a unique feel and identity, which is enhanced by local activities and services and good walkability. Local neighbourhood centres, networks of people and the smaller scale design (roads, buildings) and historical architecture contribute to an at times rural feeling and quietness, which is counterbalanced by easy access to urban areas and a feeling that there were good sports and leisure facilities within reach.

At every point, the separation of Redbourn and the unique identity of Leverstock Green were emphasised by respondents.

A number of specific references to: the history of the old town; Heath Barn and the Bury; Gadebridge; Bunkers Park; Coronation Fields; the Nickey Line; and Boxmoor.

9.4. Are there any new ideas, innovations or ways of working, you would like considered for East Hemel?

Better cycleways (ideally segregated) and bike facilities were requested. Improved pedestrian routes, with good surfaces and lighting to improve safety, with some desire to promote active travel as the primary mode of connection and local living as far as possible. Overall, respondents wanted a well connected series of neighbourhoods.

Improved public transport, particularly buses, but also suggestions for a tram or shuttle bus to better link the train station and town centre to other neighbourhoods.

Roads, traffic and parking are a concern, with a desire for roads that are suitable for the traffic load they experience and a concern that existing single track roads will be adversely affected by increasing traffic. Access to the M1 is seen as key, including possible new access. Respondents expressed a need to ensure residential roads were not used as rat runs or alternatives when there are issues on the M1. Speed and weight limits were suggested, as were speed controls on roads.

There were comments suggesting maximising the historical interest of both the town and surrounding villages, retaining heritage and making more of the canal.

Social and human infrastructure is considered key, including requests for schools (including SEN provision and with safe routes to and from), doctors, dentists, sports facilities, local shops and a number of comments about the need for a new hospital. There were also suggestions around expanding health care provision in the area in other ways, such as walk-in blood tests and x-ray facilities.

A desire for community centres and churches was expressed, linked to a need to foster a sense of community, along with the provision of key services such as youth groups. There were also suggestions around developing communities through communal facilities and outdoor space

A number of comments were made about ensuring that the area is not over developed and that density is carefully considered, with concern around the introduction of flats in some places, linking to requests to protect the green belt.

There were suggestions for sensitive natural screening along the M1, with concerns about pollution, particularly in relation to housing and schools being placed too close to the road.

There was support for creating a modern, digitally and geographically connected environment that caters to flexible working.

Consideration of the environment and nature was important, improving natural habitats for wildlife and hedgerows/woods. Suggestions included creating chalk grassland, new woodland, wildflower meadows and green corridors. Also a strong plan for the management of green infrastructure in the future, including a possible independent endowed trust model.

A mix of housing, with provision for families, some large houses and a desire for affordable homes.

9.5. How can we embed nature at the heart of our neighbourhoods?

Many respondents simply say not to build, while others were concerned that the proposed densities are too high, with comments around ensuring there is breathing space between properties and that residents have access to good quality and sizeable gardens.

There is a desire to see free and accessible good quality green space included throughout development, particularly where there may be flats or homes with

limited garden space. For many this includes natural, wild space. There were also concerns that green spaces are accessible to all ages and abilities.

Some retention of the green belt was seen as key, as were strong links to the countryside from and through new neighbourhoods.

Preservation of existing trees, woodland areas and hedgerows, with a desire for more trees planted where possible. Proactive protection for internationally important chalk streams.

A number of people expressed a desire to see 'friends of' or similar community action groups, with allotments, orchards and community gardens for private or community growing, ensuring that groups and communities are inclusive and equitable.

There was a desire to protect and preserve nature and wildlife, including:

- Wildflower areas on verges
- Bat and bee boxes on trees
- Birdwatching boxes and enclosures
- Ponds and wetlands
- Wildlife corridors and waterways
- Bee friendly plants
- Integration of breeding and hibernation spaces within development
- Space and facilities for horses
- Quietways/pedestrian only routes

There was a desire for a sustainable approach to development including SUDS, sustainable transport and travel, drainable car parking spaces, living walls, solar panels, utilising wind power, robust recycling facilities.

9.6. How can we encourage communities to live more sustainably?

A strong public transport system, with comments specific to:

- Ensuring that routes take in key neighbourhoods
- Links to Hemel and St Albans train stations
- Reinstating a coach service to London
- Re-use of the Nickey Line
- Light rail
- Free buses

Car share schemes and strong active travel links were suggested as ways to reduce private vehicle use.

Requests for simple and free recycling and composting schemes with clear and easily available information, and incentivising the reduction of non-recyclable waste. Reward based activities were proposed, such as local voucher systems related to recycling. Fly-tipping was raised as a concern

People were keen to see development with sustainability built in right from the start, including in house and workspace design, with support for solar panels, heat pumps, EV charge points, insulation, rainwater capture and energy saving measures.

A desire to ensure a preference for green over grey and for education to be a key tool in driving sustainability, from early ages through to adult workshops. Allotments and community growing spaces with community ownership were suggested as ways to give local people agency and to take the lead in some ways. Swap shops and repair shops were suggested.

9.7. How might we help foster a sense of community, identity and belonging?

Easily accessible, inclusive community facilities and clubs (including sports clubs) were seen to be important in building community and identity. This linked to a feeling that good communities often have a village hall with local events at their centre. A number of respondents also identified churches as being important in this aspect. There was also a desire for informal meeting places, such as small local shops, cafes and schools, which linked to a clear want for strong services and facilities to support local living. Some also felt that investment in existing neighbourhood facilities and services (such as Leverstock Green) would support both new and existing communities.

Respondents made a number of suggestions for activity that would draw people together, including: live music; picnics; outdoor cinema, youth clubs and provision for the elderly as well; book borrowing or swapping; intergenerational activities and training; cycle hub and repairs.

There was often a feeling that building/developing in smaller parcels and creating neighbourhoods – rather than blanket development across the site – with strong and legible centres could help to foster identity. There were also a number of respondents whose advice was to keep the development smaller than what was proposed.

There were a number of respondents who were clear that they wanted local people to receive priority for new housing. Other issues which people felt needed to be dealt with proactively included a fear of crime and ensuring the maintenance and cleanliness of East Hemel.

Shared green and open spaces were identified as building community, as were community gardens and allotments, with sustainability and nature suggested as pillars to build on. Cultural centres were also a proposal for building identity.

Diversity was identified by a number of people as key: of design, tenure, age and demographic, while support for first-time buyers was specifically identified.

Respondents wanted to feel listened to and to be supported, while design workshops were also identified as a potentially useful exercise.

9.8. What new ways of living can we explore so neighbours can better support each other?

A need for a range of housing was identified, including for families, single occupants, elderly and supported living, with diversity in properties and occupants seen as important in encouraging equality.

Some felt that there are already too many flats in the area and that there is a need for 2/3 bed homes and the focus should be on semi and detached properties with gardens, driveways and on bungalows. The type of housing was also related to a demand for good quality construction and support for smaller developers/house builders, encouraging quality and variety.

There was a demand for social housing and a clear feeling that property classed as affordable was not in fact attainable for many people due to the high property prices in the area (a desire to revisit the definition of affordable homes). People also felt that affordable and social housing should be mixed and integrated with others, rather than separated and that there should be opportunities for shared ownership.

Common and open spaces (and green space) for people to meet and socialise was often referenced as important in fostering neighbourliness, while there were suggestions around ensuring that residents were involved in the management and maintenance of their area, whether in an ambassadorial or community/group action role.



Feedback forms were available at drop-in events

9.9. How can we create an inclusive place that welcomes people of all ages and abilities, helping them to contribute meaningfully in their neighbourhood?

Flexible community spaces (sometimes identified as village halls) with a mix of activities, with a desire to ensure that community groups can participate through the planning and development stages, as well as community garden areas.

There was a general desire across respondents (with several exceptions) to build a truly communal place where everyone of any age, ethnicity, ability, or gender orientation can feel welcome and participate. Respondents were keen to see inclusivity and accessibility factored in from the early stages of design and considered at every point, with seating and lighting; signage; ramps and dropped kerbs; better walking routes; wheelchair facilities and adapted/accessible community facilities. They also wanted to see facilities and areas well maintained and cared for beyond their initial development.

A mix of housing was identified, catering across generations and abilities and nurturing integration. Informal meeting spaces and services were also again identified as having an important role.

Support for third sector and churches (through provision of facilities or financial support) in effectively reaching their service users was seen to be key to supporting inclusivity. Facilities such as Sure Start centres were suggested and allotments, clubs, sports facilities and teams, and retail were all mentioned.

9.10. What type of indoor and outdoor community activities might be important in East Hemel?

Suggested community activities included:

- Sports – tennis (covered or indoor), golf, football, rugby, cricket, indoor and outdoor gyms, bowling greens, athletics track, BMX track and skatepark, squash, badminton, cycling velodrome and outdoor routes and networks, swimming, basketball.
- Activities - park runs, running and cycling clubs, youth clubs (including provision for young people with additional needs), wellness groups.
- Facilities – Allotments, community halls, theatre/performance spaces (Pavilion was mentioned as not being replaced), general desire for outdoor open

space and parks, children's playgrounds, churches, pubs (possibly a community pub), libraries, cafes.

Many people wanted to see facilities free to hire for local people, while there were also a number of comments around the need for GPs, a new hospital, dentists, schools and shops. There were comments relating to provision for childcare, including after school and holiday services.

There was a general desire for a strong outdoors network with dog walking areas, good paths and trails, community allotments and gardens, and spaces for festivals and markets.

There were also questions about the ongoing revenue costs associated with sports and community facilities, with concern that after an initial investment there would be a reduction in upkeep and provision.

9.11. How can we support both new and existing local businesses to grow?

There was some scepticism from respondents that supporting existing or new local businesses mattered to TCE, with concern that East Hemel may have a detrimental impact on existing neighbourhood businesses. Some suggested local wealth building through the delivery of East Hemel, with the creation of innovative business and manufacturing onsite to support the building/development.

There was generally supportive sentiment for smaller, independent and distinctly local businesses, while some also expressed a preference for manufacturing.

There was support for lower business rates and subsidised rents and property costs, particularly for start-ups and small, local businesses.

Adequate infrastructure was a concern for many, with a stated need for sufficient roads and high-speed internet. People felt that improving the public transport offering would help with recruitment and retention, while there was concern about the relationship between increased business and a high volume of traffic, and others felt that the provision of free or affordable parking would be vital. There was also a feeling that the delivery of a strong and attractive development at East Hemel would attract a wide range of people to work in the area, but that this must include a mix of housing and be sensitively integrated with the business areas. There were suggestions for promotional packs for new residents, local community events and business networks.

The town centre was seen as an important and currently substandard part of the conversation, with a feeling that it has deteriorated over recent years. There were concerns about the current types of shops in Hemel (particularly fast food, nail bars, betting shops, barbers, vape shops) and comments supporting a tighter control of the kinds of business allowed to operate in the area and encouragement of sustainable business, socially responsible entrepreneurship and larger, well recognised chains and anchor retail/businesses. There was also support for an improved evening economy, with some demand for restaurants and entertainment, including theatre.

Offering good quality, flexible premises, including office space, with scope for businesses to easily transition to larger or smaller premises as required.

There was support expressed for local market space, as well as pop-up spaces and temporary/meanwhile business space, such as shipping containers.

There were a number of comments supporting stronger links between business and education, with suggestions for a technical college and/or a satellite university campus and comments around looking to comparators as case studies (Chiswell Green and Olympic Park mentioned).

People tended to feel that a pleasant environment – in terms of maintenance, accessibility, land and streetscape, efficient and clean, well lit, some comments around it being smoke-free – would support the growth of local business and attract people to the area.

9.12. What are the industries of tomorrow? How might we welcome and support them?

A number of opportunities related to future industries were identified, including:

- Technology, aerospace, biochemistry (linking to King's Cross), genetics
- IT, particularly AI and data, with opportunities relating to training people
- A desire to return to manufacturing, with suggestions that this may be linked to sustainable industries such as turbines or to aircraft manufacture or repair
- Renewables, including solar, hydrogen, district heating and EV infrastructure
- New ways of engaging with the landscape and agriculture, including vertical farming (linking to Rothamsted Research Station)
- Health and pharma (linking to GSK at Stevenage)
- Media (linking to Warner Bros at Watford)

- Creative industries, as a long-term alternative to AI and the digitalisation of work
- Some acceptance that warehouses, delivery and logistics is becoming important, but trepidation about further encouraging it in the area
- A desire to provide training or apprenticeships for young people or retraining, both in practical skills and newer industries
- Support for small spaces to encourage start-ups and flexible working, with mixed feeling about hybrid working and working from home
- Other suggestions included: recycling/restorations, sport and exercise, food, entertainment, suppliers of security for homes/individual companies, pets and animal services, gardens, indoor house plants, 3D printing

9.13. What creates a sense of pride in Hemel Hempstead / the local area for you?

For some there was a distinct lack of pride in the area and others made it clear that their pride was limited to Redbourn or Leverstock Green.

Green space was a recurring source of pride – the topography of the town and the beauty of the surrounding countryside, the nature and greenery throughout and around Hemel. The history of the old town, including Gadebridge Park, churches and the Roman ruins were identified.

For many people they associated pride with the people and communities that reside in the area. In a number of areas they identified a village feel and a sense of neighbourliness, community and friendship, as well as a sense of ownership and community responsibility for caring for their area. Some spoke about a growing diversity and there was also an importance attached to community events, markets, fetes and fireworks.

People had pride in Hemel's role as a new town and in the design of the town and its network of neighbourhoods.

A number of respondents linked pride in Hemel to the tidiness and maintenance of the town, and for some safety was important. Some were keen to see more local, independent shops or to support local sports teams. Others valued local services and facilities, including cultural centres, sports facilities and cafes.

9.14. What features or stories could help shape the future identity of East Hemel?

Some important local physical features – the Nickey Line, the railway bridge and Aubreys Iron Age Fort nearby. Hemel Old Town was cited as example of strong identity with charm and uniqueness in style and content. The canal was also noted as providing a particular identity.

Respondents pointed to how Hemel had changed and evolved over the years, from the stories and legacies of the Romans, through the time of Henry VIII and his visits to the area, his hunting lodge and exploits.

The importance of Hemel's location as a route to London and the North for highwaymen and drovers, through to the canal and railway building. Hemel's role in chalk mining, the lime used for making tiles, Dickinson's paper mill, farming, the day the plug was pulled from the canal at Boxmoor and the resulting flood.

The development of the new town – including the experiences of those who were there – through to the recent history of Buncefield, which was seen to be an important local event.

Churches were noted as an important part of local history and a number of people spoke about the importance of the hospital, while organisations such as Sunnyside and their work were mentioned.

There were also comments around the natural landscape; green open space and forests, with proposals for new forest areas.

Some respondents identified an opportunity to create a new identity to be proud of, one which they tied to being ambitious and progressive, with sustainability and biodiversity at its heart and well designed, affordable homes that cater to the needs of local people built around strong infrastructure.

9.15. What do you want to see in local neighbourhood centres in the future?

Things that people wanted to see in neighbourhood centres included:

- Well resourced and maintained community centres and services. Community activity and events, with entertainment (and spaces for entertainment)
- Churches
- Healthcare, including GPs, health centre, hospital, pharmacy, dentists, mental health support, care for the elderly, an urgent care centre

- Schools and education, with adequate provision for new and existing children and young people. Nurseries and youth clubs
- Local shops, including general convenience and food, with support for independent shops. Cafes and restaurants, pubs, places for people to gather and socialise
- Sports facilities, leisure centre(s) and clubs
- Employment for local people, including office space
- Green space, open space and walking routes, with space for nature and horses
- Other suggestions included banks, theatre and libraries

9.16. What would encourage you to walk, cycle and use public transport more?

Respondents were keen to see affordable and reliable public transport.

There is a feeling that buses are currently unreliable and bus shelters are uncomfortable and can be exposed to the elements. People requested smaller buses better suited to local roads and free or affordable buses with regular, local routes, including evenings and weekends. There was a desire for comprehensive connections (including local shopping centres and train stations) and direct routes to limit the time spent commuting. A number of respondents mentioned having to hop from one bus to another to reach destinations, with a feeling that services are not currently joined up.

Cycling and walking were both said to currently feel unsafe for many due to traffic, with an appetite for dedicated, segregated cycle routes with supporting infrastructure such as parking and bays, bike pop-ups and services. People wanted wide, pedestrian only footpaths (ensuring cars are not parked on pavements), with good crossing points and a network of routes beyond the streets that allow residents to access green space and nature with ease.

Cycle and pedestrian routes need to be well lit and maintained, with respondents desiring a feeling of safety.

Some respondents mentioned the Nickey Line's potential as a good connector, both for active travel and light rail/tram.

Other general feedback included some agreement with TCE ambitions for active travel, linking routes to destinations such as cafes, building elsewhere, and contacting Stephen Joseph at the University of Hertfordshire.

9.17. What needs to be put in place to aid accessibility throughout and around East Hemel for all?

Priorities included an improved road system that eases the current load, with well maintained surfaces. An infrastructure-first approach to mitigate future loading/capacity issues and deal with site traffic through construction. Many wanted to see improved access to the M1, including direct routes to the industrial estate.

Improved public transport was also important, including frequent trains, bus services and links with increased local stops (including elderly estates so that older people can go door-to-door), more regular routes that run into the evening and weekend and linking to train station(s), suggestion of free travel for residents or community transport.

Some suggested a tram network, linking to stations.

Segregated cycle routes, a good quality pedestrian network with resting places and pavements that are fully accessible, well-maintained, direct, well-lit with good drainage, good signage, and link to local centres (specific request for pedestrian routes on Redbourn Lane). There was a desire for wider pavements and parking enforcement to ensure pavements are kept clear.

There were a number of comments about ensuring there is adequate parking, including off-street parking for residents and sufficient provision for people with disabilities.

There were differing opinions about travel hierarchy, with some suggesting that there should be more road space or provision for private vehicles and others indicating a desire to prioritise active travel locally, with car free areas.

Some responses focussed on health provision including GP surgeries, an elderly care centre, dentists and a new hospital. Others want to ensure that equality and accessibility is considered throughout East Hemel from the early stages of design, with accessible toilets and buses, wheelchair accessible buildings and wide doors, and consideration of invisible disabilities.

9.18. What do you think is important when planning and designing new neighbourhoods for East Hemel?

Many identified Redbourn and Leverstock Green, while Boxmoor and Woodhall Farm were also popular responses. A number identified Milton Keynes while there were also positive responses about the original design of Hemel and the Old Town.

Many responses related to the positive aspects of villages.

Other responses included:

- Harpenden
- Parts of St Albans including Chiswell Green
- Elmsbrook
- Bourne End - Westbrook Moorings
- German cities
- Kings Lynn
- Poundbury
- Bicester
- Heartwood Forest, Sandridge
- Welwyn
- Parts of South London - Dulwich, Penge, Peckham
- Chessington
- Cornwall
- The housing estate built on the old Buttons demolition site
- Kings Langley, Chipperfield
- South African and Spanish golf estates
- London with its 24/7 facilities and transport
- Central Cambridge
- Ashbourne, parts of Leeds, Crawley
- Gadebridge/Warners End, Adeyfield

9.19. Is there anything else you would like to add?

- Objections to the development of East Hemel and to building on the green belt. A feeling that the plans show over-saturation, with requests for project to be scaled down
- Desire for good quality community space that is sustainable and maintained, also for church/religious buildings. Keen to see provision of youth services and opportunities for young people locally. Desire for leisure and hospitality venues and statement of need to nurture social value
- A desire to prevent encroaching upon Redbourn and perceived negative impacts on village character and property values. A feeling that there needs to be more demonstrable benefit for Redbourn residents in particular

- Concern that The Crown Estate could use Compulsory Purchase Orders to purchase farmland and force locals (including farmers) out
- Dissatisfaction with the name 'East Hemel'
- People want to see schools built. Demands for a new hospital and health services, with concern that an already overwhelmed system will crumble. Local infrastructure is key, questions about phasing and demands for infrastructure first
- Concerns about water supply
- Effect of new development on local traffic load and creation of rat runs through existing neighbourhoods, particularly Leverstock Green – desire for residential roads to be inaccessible to site traffic, deliveries and heavy vehicles. A number of questions about how new road infrastructure will be delivered and ensuring that existing problems are not exacerbated. Requests for improved access to M1
- Concerns about the impact of site traffic, building etc. as East Hemel (and HGC) is delivered
- Requests for trams
- Provision for the management and upkeep of all green infrastructure on site, with opportunities for locals to be involved
- Desire for smaller properties and resistance to flats. Concern about proximity of homes to the motorway and links between pollution and poor health, similar concerns about school placement
- Dissatisfaction with both local Councils in relation to strategic approach and day-to-day services. Expectation that Council Tax will go to SADC with no benefit to locals and request for local council representatives at future consultations
- Concern about increasing population locally and some complaints around local travellers
- Desire to embrace and improve existing neighbourhoods and landscapes rather than destroying them. Desire to be aspirational, including prioritising sustainability. Some support for East Hemel if delivered well
- Request for the King to open East Hemel

10. Generation Dacorum Event

In addition to wider community drop-in sessions, on Wednesday 2nd October 2024, a number of The Crown Estate Team attended the Generation Dacorum event at Shendish Manor Hotel.

Generation Dacorum is held in partnership with Community Action Dacorum and Hertfordshire Futures annually and is designed to engage and enlighten young people with impartial careers insight.

Targeted at year 11, the majority of attendees were 15-16 years old, with approximately 1000 students from across 20 schools attending on the day. Young people arrived with staggered start times, often as a school cohort and sometimes with multiple schools at once. Attendees were free to roam with their peer groups amongst approximately 20 employers.

The Crown Estate Team were situated with a pop-up giving a brief introduction to TCE and the East Hemel project; a large floor map showing the site; and a desk with post-its and 'postcards from the future'. The primary purpose of engaging at this event was to hear from local young people about:

1. How best to engage with young people.
2. What they feel makes a great place.

Feedback was gathered in a number of ways:

1. Verbally, as members of The Crown Estate Team engaged with attendees through the day.
2. Notes and comments captured on post-it notes.
3. Through 'postcards from the future', where young people are invited to imagine a place (in this case East Hemel) a number of years into the future, and to send someone a postcard from that time which describes how it has changed for the better.

It should be noted that Hemel Garden Communities were also present at the event to garner feedback.

Headlines from feedback are as follows:

There were 61 written responses to the question '**What would make East Hemel a great place?**', in addition to a significant number of conversations with attendees.

Employment

A need for more local business, with requests for shopping centres and retail parks.

A desire for modern shops as a way to tackle derelict areas and discussion around professional roles and AI roles.

Housing

Many responses requested larger houses with bigger gardens, with significant referral to solar panels and EV charging. There was some discussion of mixed types of housing, including bungalows and accessible housing, and reference to social housing. There was reference to mini villages in one big area and shared housing/family areas.

Leisure

Reference to new and larger parks and to teen-friendly things to do, including: sports, bowling, arts, theatre, gym and swimming, play along paths and accessible play were also discussed.

Education

A need for more schools was raised, as was desire for technology in schools. Other comments included reducing the school week and Higher Education provision.

Culture and heritage

There were calls for arts venues as well as keenness to connect with 'old Hemel'.

Travel

Cycling was referred to often, while cheap, effective and reliable public transport was a priority. Young people also wanted to see safer and better roads.

Sustainability

There were concerns around global warming, with keenness to explore options around renewable energy and improving biodiversity and wildlife habitats. Recycling was considered important, as was water.

Green space

A consistent value was placed on green space and nature, with a desire for increased green space and tree planting.

Safety

A number of young people were concerned about safety, particularly lighting, with a desire for increased surveillance such as neighbourhood watch and police presence.

Youth Voice

Youth input was important to attendees.

Other comments

Some young people made reference to the cost of living.

There was reference to the layout of proposed development, with comments around ensuring it is aesthetically pleasing and colourful.

Health care and/or hospital provision were raised.

Accessibility is important to some.

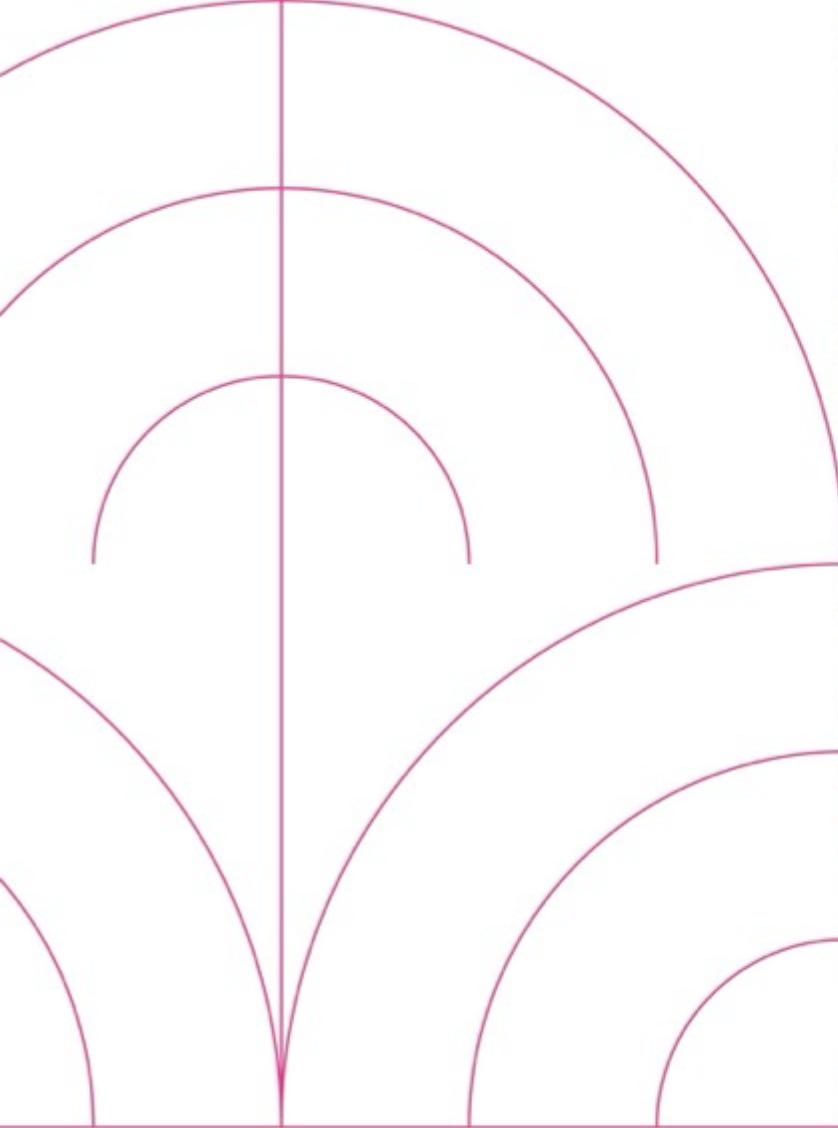
Regeneration of the town centre was discussed.

There were 18 written responses to the question **'How would you like to be engaged?'**

There were responses indicating support for both being incentivised to participate outside of school or being engaged during school time in lieu of other studies or as a CV building exercise.

There was a consistent preference for in-person engagement, rather than digital.

Small groups were suggested as the best way to work, which there was a desire to be rewarded for participation, particularly if out with school hours.



Report B:

East Hemel
Stakeholder Workshop
Stage 1 Engagement

October 2024

11. Outline and purpose

The first stakeholder workshop was held with an invited group of stakeholders, many of whom had been involved in pre-engagement discussions and had indicated a desire to engage further.

The event was held on Thursday 17th October 2024 between 9:30 – 12:30 at the Holiday Inn on Breakspear Way, Hemel Hempstead. The programme of the day can be found in Appendix F.

Invitees were drawn from a range of local representative bodies, interest groups and service providers, alongside the client and various members of the design team. Approximately 27 people were in attendance, in addition to The Crown Estate representatives and the design team. For the initial presentations, attendees were seated in rows and following the break they were asked to split into groups across two rooms, with six groups in total. A list of attendees can be found in Appendix G.

The purpose of this workshop was to:

- Introduce the East Hemel project and its aims
- Introduce TCE team and the approach being taken
- Explain the engagement, design and planning processes up to the submission of a planning application
- Explore possible future scenarios and directions for East Hemel
- Feed in aspirations and ideas from stakeholders
- Build awareness of the project, both directly and indirectly

The workshop was opened by Kevin Murray from Kevin Murray Associates, who introduced the team and outlined the purpose and schedule for the day. This included an invitation for stakeholders to attend any of the ongoing community drop-ins and also reference to historic plans from The Crown Estate, clarifying that this is a new approach from a fresh starting point, based on a different policy premise and following changes in working and lifestyles prompted by the pandemic. While previous plans are not directly relevant, Kevin clarified that there would be some comparable discussions and relevant learnings from previous engagement and design processes.



Attendees at the Stakeholder Workshop listening to briefings throughout the first session

12. Briefing Presentations

TCE aspiration & place vision

Izzy Grigg (The Crown Estate) outlined the objectives and priorities of The Crown Estate, both from an organisational perspective and more specifically with regard to East Hemel, including:

- An overview of TCE's history and role in managing assets
- Explanation of TCE's purpose - to create lasting and shared prosperity for the nation - and how its strategy supports this
- The importance in viewing East Hemel over 100 years and more generally with regards to future generations and long-term stewardship
- Alignment of key principles
- Outlining the place vision and the five guiding principles for East Hemel
- Discussion of radically shifting values toward our natural world, looking at how people can be encouraged to care for natural landscapes and how sustainable neighbourhoods can be delivered

Planning context

Heather Pugh (David Lock Associates) gave a presentation on the planning process, both specifically in relation to the East Hemel site and how this is situated in the wider planning context:

- Describing the planning framework, including the role of local plans and HGC, and capturing the benefits of growth beyond the provision of housing.
- Presenting the HGC concept plan and emphasising the value of a coordinated approach
- Outlining key local plan requirements, including housing and jobs provision
- Setting out the planning process – Outline Planning Application; Outline Consent; Environmental Impact Assessment; and Design Codes, Delivery and Phasing Plans; with engagement embedded within the process
- This included discussion about the importance of representation - particularly of Hemel Hempstead residents - who will feel more impact from East Hemel than the residents of St. Albans

Masterplanning approach

Claire Perrot and Katherine Keyes (Prior and Partners), then presented on the design considerations for East Hemel, considering what kind of place it could be, including:

- Asking what the future of living, culture and community, and energy and utilities are, with each category illustrated by potentially transferrable examples from around the UK and Europe

- An overview of the strategic context, including connectivity via the M1 and M25 and important rail links
- Relationship to the OxCam strategic development arc and the role of Herts IQ
- Evolving urban structure, from market town history, through industrialisation and Jellicoe's vision and masterplan
- The varied and interesting topography that creates interesting features across a distinctive site
- Vulnerabilities to overland flow and flash flooding and to water stress and scarcity
- Site constraints, including the M1 – with reference to air quality and noise pollution – and a number of utilities - 400KV electricity - and pipelines connecting to Buncefield
- The 5 spatial principles visualised and how they relate to TCE's values

The briefing sessions ended with Izzy Grigg emphasising that the design team is considering how the vision can be embedded both spatially and through the encouraging of stewardship and applied opportunities for the community. This was followed by an opportunity for attendees to ask questions of the design team regarding the briefing presentations.

Q&A

Questions and answers included:

Q. Even though the plans show 98% of the redline of East Hemel is in St Albans and only 2% in Dacorum, the reality is that 98% of the impact will be on Hemel residents. How can Hemel residents have a voice in the decision making?

A. At every planning discussion, there will be representatives from DBC, SADC and HCC and HGC will be working closely with DBC and Hemel residents.

Q. Who will have access to and use of amenities in East Hemel, given the boundary with SADC (particularly schools)?

A. Much provision will fall under Hertfordshire County Council (education is provided at county level), therefore it's unlikely that the boundary would prohibit local residents from attending schools within the East Hemel site.

Q. When Reg 18 was issued by SADC, an Arup report said that "the green belt methodology.. will provide buffer zones". The review uses the M1 as a justification to remove buffer zones, while if the buffer zone was retained, the number of houses built would be significantly reduced.

A. If applied on the east side the site, housing numbers would have to be significantly reduced. We do not know what the legal obligations are for this site. SADC are not in favour the buffer zones.

Q. Would like some idea of timescales?

A. The planning application will be submitted in approximately one year's time, in Autumn 2025. This will be followed by a period of determination, which is hard to predict but it may take up to two years to determine. A decision is unlikely before January 2026 but will likely be followed by two years of infrastructure works prior to any build. Westwick Row is likely to progress sooner.

Q. Please could you clarify the total land included in the East Hemel development, particularly where the greenbelt will be built on and where it will be retained?

A. The greenbelt is protected east of the powerlines.

Q. Comment from the executive head of two special schools - lovely to hear about community and the importance of looking 100 years ahead. I could fill my schools 3 times over at the moment and 90% of pupils struggle to get into employment. I would love to be part of the conversation about this.

Q. The motorway network is the elephant in the room. There is a concern that this is being viewed within a bubble (not considering other settlements such as Luton and other developments underway or in the pipeline which are expected to add to the existing load).

A. TCE need to assure National Highways (NH) that the motorway will work as well as or better than previously. If TCE cannot assure them, they will object, so NH are wholeheartedly engaged in that discussion.

Q. Comment - Why are schools being proposed immediately adjacent to the M1?

Q. The Gorhambury Estate is a registered park with particular views, despite limited current public access. Will there be better public access as East Hemel is developed? Particularly improved walking and cycling access?

A. TCE don't own the estate but are looking at where routes can be improved across East Hemel and are talking to active travel officers within local councils.

Q. Comment - there's no mention of new hospitals at all.

A. Hospital and health services have come up a lot in pre-engagement discussions and drop-ins to this point, as has health care generally. We don't know exactly what form that will take and hospital provision is outside TCE's remit, but we will work with both health boards and looking at where services can be improved or complimented within the sites (including looking at offerings in existing

infrastructure that takes away the need to go all the way to hospital i.e. local blood tests).

Q. Who makes final decisions on development?

A. SADC local plans outline what they want to see delivered, with TCE obliged to comply, or to justify anything that cannot be delivered. Both St. Albans City and District Council and Dacorum Council determine what is granted permission.



Attendees participating in the question and answer session following briefings

Engagement process summary

Jas Atwal (KMA) gave an overview of the community engagement process, including outlining the four key stages of engagement and the work undertaken to this point.

Jas described the drop-in events that had taken place throughout the week and some of the emerging themes, which included:

- Traffic & connections: congestion, routes, rat-running, safe crossings; noise, air quality/pollution, horses
- Public transport: links, quality and frequency
- Green space: country park, leisure & play, wildlife, timing

- Housing: numbers, type, location, design, who for?
- Character of areas: identity, authenticity, association, brand
- Local services, facilities: health, schools, shops
- Jobs: types, access, skills, opportunities
- Relationships: other areas & centre, organisations, boundaries
- Fairness, trust: of TCE, Councils, agencies, developers

This concluded the briefing sessions and the attendees broke for coffee.



Kevin Murray presented emerging themes from early engagement

13. Workshop exercise

Following the briefing presentations and discussion, participants were asked to work in groups to construct and describe a plausible East Hemel futures scenario for 2040.

The future scenario planning exercise is a way to explore, without prejudice, future change in a place. Change is assumed as a 'given' and scenarios look beyond immediate policy and market horizons, appreciating changes, sequences and decisions along the way.

In this exercise, each group was provided with maps and tracing paper to visualise their scenario and were given a different perspective to consider as the lead driver of change.

Groups were asked to consider:

- Who/what is there – people, business, jobs, facilities
- What does it look like, feel like?
- What are positive and negative attributes?
- Give it a name – how did you get there?

They were also asked to provide headline outcomes and a name for their scenario.

Group Scenarios and drivers:

Group 1	Celebrating Pride of Place - livable communities & homes
Group 2	Nurturing our Natural World - landscape, open spaces, play
Group 3	Fostering Prosperity and New Economies - skills, employment, creativity, value
Group 4	Connecting Places and People - movement, connectivity, activity
Group 5	Promoting Community Participation - wellbeing, sustainable lifestyles
Group 6	More Sustainable Communities - energy, materials, climate resilience

The feedback from each group is transcribed below.

Group 1: Celebrating Pride of Place

'Simply the Best'

In 2040 the community is at the cutting edge of innovation.

There is a clear answer to the question 'where do you live' because communities are distinctive, both spatially and non-spatially and have a strong identity that reflects the character of Hemel.

There is a strong network of multi-use spaces, which are owned and managed by local people creating a local sense of ownership and there is inclusivity for all needs across the site.

There is proper infrastructure from the start (retail / health / schools etc.) with a sustainable financial model that does not burden the population.

There are holistic homes for all that are affordable to buy, rent, run and live in (not just at point of sale but long-term, in a sustainable approach).

Net Zero is a given – including materials and building methods – with cutting edge ecology and environmental innovation 'the very best' with measures such as rainfall capture are embedded to improve efficiency and minimise costs. Existing spaces and buildings are repurposed.

Thinking about how we can shift away from cars: communal parking areas, car clubs, responsive and interactive public transport that connects to key destinations, good active travel links.

Integrate nature rather than separate it with green spaces for everybody, with community owned communal green spaces with the ability to use and play, for all. Nature is thought about, preserved and included in design.



Group 1 in discussion

Group 2: Nurturing our Natural World

'Skylarks'

The starting point is protecting existing habitats for species including badgers, slow worms, sparrow hawks, red kites, deer, foxes, with both scrubby hedgerows and large green open spaces to support birds such as Skylarks, Sparrows, Sparrowhawks, Kites and Chaffinches. Nature is thriving alongside people with some wild spaces, people can hear the birds. The new Prologis development with lots of hard standing and minimal green was cited as an example of what not to do.

There is an opportunity to change the farming practices to the east of the M1 on estates owned by TCE, with more wildlife friendly practices.

Spaces are inclusive and multifunctional (not designed in silos) and incorporate natural play, with a connected sequence of spaces and groups of trees rather than individuals. They are beautifully designed so people stay closer to home and there are as few artificial surfaces as possible (including no public or private astroturf).

Built environment should be as nature friendly as possible and there would be wilder spaces with brambles, scrub and wide hedges, providing natural barriers and wildlife habitat. Foraging for brambles, wild damsons etc. is encouraged. Mature trees are protected and there is space for saplings and wildflowers.

People have access to nature close to their homes, but there is a balance between access for people and nature (such as Silver Lake, Warmwell in Dorset).

Ideally spaces are managed through a ranger system, although realistically likely to fall to the voluntary sector and management by volunteers who need support, funding, tool storage etc., with an endowed fund for management like Milton Keynes suggested.

Pollution is reduced, with the transition to EV (still particle emissions), planting that absorbs pollution and a reduction in traffic over time. Run-off is collected and water quality is improved.

Well-resourced allotments (including water supply) with 40-50 plots work well and are included in every phase, with social value added in addition to food growing and activity and events inbuilt. Most neighbourhoods have access to a community garden or community orchard and space for composting.

Well-designed multi-generational housing is part of a mix of housing, including; flats, semi-detached, and social housing, providing varying density and catering for a diverse range of people of different backgrounds and ages. Solar panels are not just integrated into housing, but community buildings and bus stops.

East Hemel cannot be just a commuter-ville, but will have people working locally with good community centres and places for neighbours to meet.



Group 2 in discussion

Group 3: Fostering Prosperity and New Economics

'Hemel Innovation District'

Created the scenario on the basis that Hemel Hempstead currently struggles to retain younger generations who aspire to move to London or other large cities, affecting staff retention for business and overall vibrancy of the town. It is about programmes beyond spatial interventions and links to education and skills development.

We need to think about high value sector drivers to move away from the over-reliance on logistics, creating an innovation district in East Hemel that provides higher value jobs around growth industries and key anchors, such as: Rothamsted, Agritech, BRE, Advanced Manufacturing, Film, Modern Methods of Construction.

Consider a USP or sector anchor for the commercial area, such as an education campus (upskilling local residents). Trip internalization is an overall objective for HGC – creating local jobs available for local people.

Public and private sector investment/incentives are required to attract some of these sectors/anchors to East Hemel.

There is skills diversity, driven in part by housing diversity and further strengthened by a higher education offer that attracts and retains people of different ages and backgrounds.

There is a quality work environment with access to green space (both from work and home), walking routes, F&B, spaces for social interaction. This also applies to the residential areas with increased numbers of people working from home.

There is a healthy town centre which is an attractive amenity for workers – it is important to view Hemel Hempstead as one place and the relationship between the town centre and East Hemel is critical.

There are high quality public transport links between the town centre, station, Maylands and East Hemel commercial area. This is critical to attracting high value sectors and should include rapid transit or trams - this needs to be affordable to rival the convenience of the car.

The success of this idea requires high infrastructure costs, cannot be market reliant, will require risk and investment on the part of the private sector, and may need to be reliant on HERT (which is dubious).



Group 3 in discussion

Group 4: Connecting Places and People

'G4S'

With a remaining reliance on cars there is a need more flexible charging for vehicles across community/employments. There are opportunities for 'electric micro-cars' (like those used in the Netherlands) if there is convenient and widespread public fast charging available in neighbourhoods, local centres, sports hubs etc., with implications for parking requirements due to reduced land take.

To encourage walking for short distance trips there is separated infrastructure between cycling (separating bikes from the road), walking (separating people from bikes, scooters etc.) and driving, but issues around driving being more efficient / faster. There are safe walking and cycling routes to the town centre and particularly around schools, with links connected to the Nickey Line.

For those who can't cycle or walk (or need to commute over longer distances) there is an enhanced, modern and efficient public transport offering, with a new tram link to the train station and hopper buses.

There is more flexibility as working patterns and lifestyles change - leisure travel is replacing work travel as proportion of journeys (and flex timing). Fast broadband is 'hardwired' into the development to support home working and high-quality business space. There are work hubs, with an integrated childcare system. There are amenities such as a big park which are well connected and properly resourced in terms of parking and facilities.

Safety and accessibility are built into connections to allow everyone to use them (including underpasses and bridges).



Groups in the breakout room during the visioning exercise

Group 5: Promoting Community Participation

'Westwick Community'

The scenario considered the needs of different demographics, with East Hemel 2040 catering for the aging population as well as young families, professionals and the next generation, with all abilities considered. Young people are engaged in community activities and neighbourhoods are equitable, with no gated communities.

Communities look out for each other with micro groups formed organically with people supporting each other, connecting with neighbours and sharing skills.

Diversity is important, with housing for all ages and abilities, including BtR, low-cost homes, and integrated, intergenerational societies. There is a mixed typology of homes, catering to downsizers and empty nesters, with bungalows, flats and access to garden and green space.

There is a physical buffer creating some breathing space between existing and new development, but not to the extent that it isolates the communities – it is important that existing Hemel and new developments are fully integrated.

There is a sense of pride related to living in greater Hemel and one single community (which differs from what people feel now, with pride often related to smaller neighbourhoods or villages i.e. Leverstock Green), while retaining distinct neighbourhood identities.

The southern village of East Hemel could be called the Westwick Community (naming should consider history/heritage and could entail community input) and should be integrated with Leverstock Green.

The district boundary should be reviewed, as it is seen to be divisive. Playgrounds and streets are for everybody, regardless of which boundary they fall within. The long-term outcome/stewardship/management of East Hemel is dependent on which council area it lies within.

New economies of scale can be created with local shops, flexible workspaces, places to hangout, restaurants, coffee shops; increasing engagement in local area, leisure opportunities and social interaction.

There are community hubs and associated engagement and activities with opportunities to share local centres, places of worship, amenities, and education welcomed. New facilities are available to use by existing communities and

businesses and there is a strong ownership/management model for these shared facilities/amenities.

There is an overarching question of whether we should be building on existing infrastructure, completely new ones or integrated?

Education will look very different with innovative and digitally literate spaces and curriculum that utilise the local environment including green spaces. Education spaces are also flexible as community spaces.

There is reduced reliance on cars, with better east-west connections and improved functionality of train stations, including improved parking (adopted roads need to have porosity). There is safe and segregated walking and cycling provision and connecting neighbourhoods such as Leverstock Green have improved walking and cycling infrastructure.

Note that given the dominance of Leverstock Green representation in Group 5, discussion skewed towards the southern neighbourhoods.



Group 5 in discussion

Group 6: More Sustainable Communities

'A Green Future?'

There is greater electricity capacity and supply, with a self-sufficient community as far as possible (improved grid but also solar panels, batteries, heat pumps and EV charging etc.)

There is innovative sustainability integrated across the site, with vertical greening, ponds and suds, green space, while pollution – noise and particle – is considered and mitigated. A strong water and sewerage infrastructure is vital.

There is a diverse housing mix for full life cycle, catering to all ages including options to downsize and retire with integrated care and/or support. Homes range in typology and affordability, with genuinely attainable properties and social homes including good quality rentals. Affordable homes aren't lumped together in less desirable areas of the site, such as along the M1.

High quality homes and infrastructure are delivered by good quality developers, with a preference for smaller, independent companies in order to nurture quality and diversity.

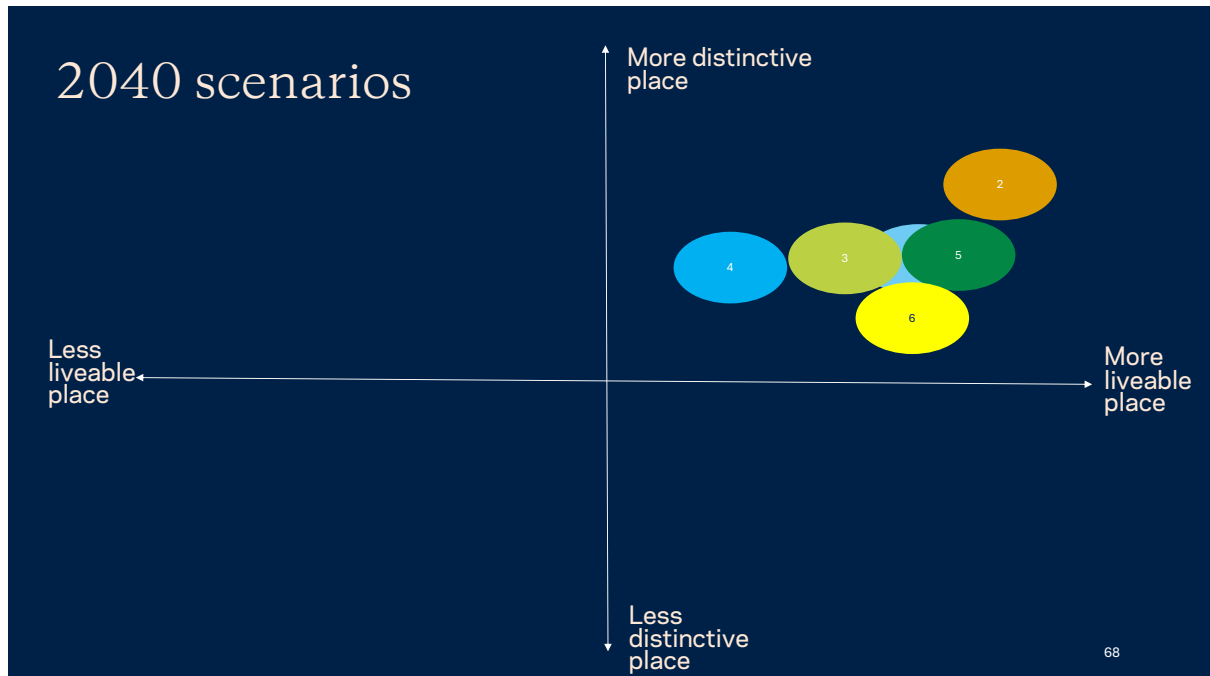
There are links to the train station across East Hemel and feeding into existing neighbourhoods, with effective public transport across the site, with trams/shuttles/rapid transport restored to the Nickey Line or across the site. This is supplemented by active travel network.

Consideration is given to people working from home, with high-speed internet and flexible workspaces.



Group 6 in discussion

Following each group's presentation of their 2040 scenario headline points, other attendees were encouraged to speak up and give their view on the relative plotting exercise, noting the extent to which scenarios improve the distinctiveness and liveability of a place.



Other conversations throughout the day included:

- Discussions with the River Ver society regarding pollution issues and activities they are undertaking to clean up the river. It was noted that EH will drain in this direction, and in particular connecting into River Ver (in Redbourn) which is often polluted, with silts and high nitrogen levels, from agricultural fields and highways. There was an interest in opportunities to enhance the River Ver and ensure natural chalk groundwater recharge cycles, mimicking the natural behaviour of the river.
- Opportunities for level crossing(s) of Nickey Line, with a proper safe, toucan crossing, with limited waiting times (max 1-2mins) for crossing.
- Water stress/supply concerns, in particular affinity water issues with limited aquifer abstraction and relying on Thames Water reservoir construction in Oxfordshire to provide future resilience to water supply network in the region.
- UKPN headroom taken up by regional development and data centre construction, limiting power supply. National Grid infrastructure upgrade


works many years behind demand, and likely to significantly affect energy strategy.

- Concerns about BPA assets bisecting the site and possible diversion of pipelines, with assurances that this is not currently on the table.
- Concern over development adjoining attendees' neighbourhoods, homes and gardens and questions around how boundaries will be treated where they adjoin existing residential frontages.
- Comments around how Reg 18 representations with SADC were taken on board and fed into the Reg 19 version.
- Advised of flooding in Punchbowl Lane to the east of the site where it joins Redbourn Road as a result of water from the fields.
- A desire for better looped walking and cycling routes on the east side of the M1 connecting into the Nickey line and a cycle way to St Albans along A4147

The workshop closed with Kevin Murray reflecting on key issues from the session, which included access to nature and greenery, and stronger public transport links. This was supplemented by discussions about whether there could be priority for local people in relation to new housing; concerns around integration along the boundary line, particularly in relation to services, with a desire in the room to move the council border; the need for a new way of thinking in terms of transport and moving around. Attendees were also advised of the format and estimated timeline of subsequent stages of engagement.


Appendix A – Pre-engagement Meetings

17th September 2024	Church of Resurrection; Revd Austin Janes
17th September 2024	Friends of the Nickey Line; Dave Abernathy
20th September 2024	Community Action Dacorum; Simon Aulton
20th September 2024	Redbourn Parish Council; Wendy Bloisi, Victoria Mead, Ian Caldwell, David Mitchell, Tom Finnis
24th September 2024	Sunnyside Rural Trust; Keely Siddiqui Charlick
26th September 2024	St. Luke's School – The Blue Tangerine Foundation; Steven Houlton-Allen, Mark Houlton-Allen, Nick Griffith
27th September 2024	Woodhall Farm Community Centre; Rob Beauchamp
30th September 2024	Leverstock Green Residents; Robert Goldstein, John Walker, Colin Voce
30th September 2024	Westwick Row Resident; Roger Stokoe, David Fleet, Chris Kenny
2nd October 2024	Hemel Hempstead Society of Allotment & Leisure Gardeners; Vanessa Manikin
9th October 2024	Herts Welcomes; Jane Collis, Kate Scott
25th October 2024	Holtsmere End Infants School; Nicola O'Connell



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EAST HEMEL COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT EVENTS

The Crown Estate is starting to develop proposals for land at East Hemel and wants to shape its plans through collaboration and discussion with the local community. We are at the beginning of this process and would like to invite you to a series of events where you can share your thoughts, ideas and experiences of living locally.

The Crown Estate's land at East Hemel forms part of Hemel Garden Communities (HGC). HGC is a long-term and ambitious programme that has the potential to transform Hemel Hempstead, delivering new homes, jobs, green space and community facilities for generations to come.





East Hemel



EAST HEMEL COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT EVENTS

The Crown Estate is an independent business committed to using its resources to benefit communities, the environment and the economy.

We want to work with you to shape our future proposals to ensure that we meet local needs. The land has the potential to provide high quality, sustainable new homes, new schools, workspaces and community facilities, including health care, along with new green spaces to support health, wellbeing and the natural environment.

These events are the first of several opportunities over the next 18 months and beyond where we will be engaging with the local community to listen and learn about life in the area. You are warmly invited to join us at any of the events below that are convenient for you.

If you are unable to attend or would like more information please go to www.easthemel.co.uk

Leverstock Green

Saturday 12th October 2024 12:30-16:30

Leverstock Green Village Hall
Village Centre, Leverstock Green, HP3 8QG

Town Centre

Tuesday 15th October 2024 15:00-17:00

Hemel Hempstead Library
The Forum, Marlowes, HP1 1DN

Maylands

Wednesday 16th October 2024 13:30-15:30

Adeyfield Free Church
Maylands Plaza, Maylands Avenue, HP2 4GZ

Woodhall Farm

Wednesday 16th October 2024 17:00-20:00

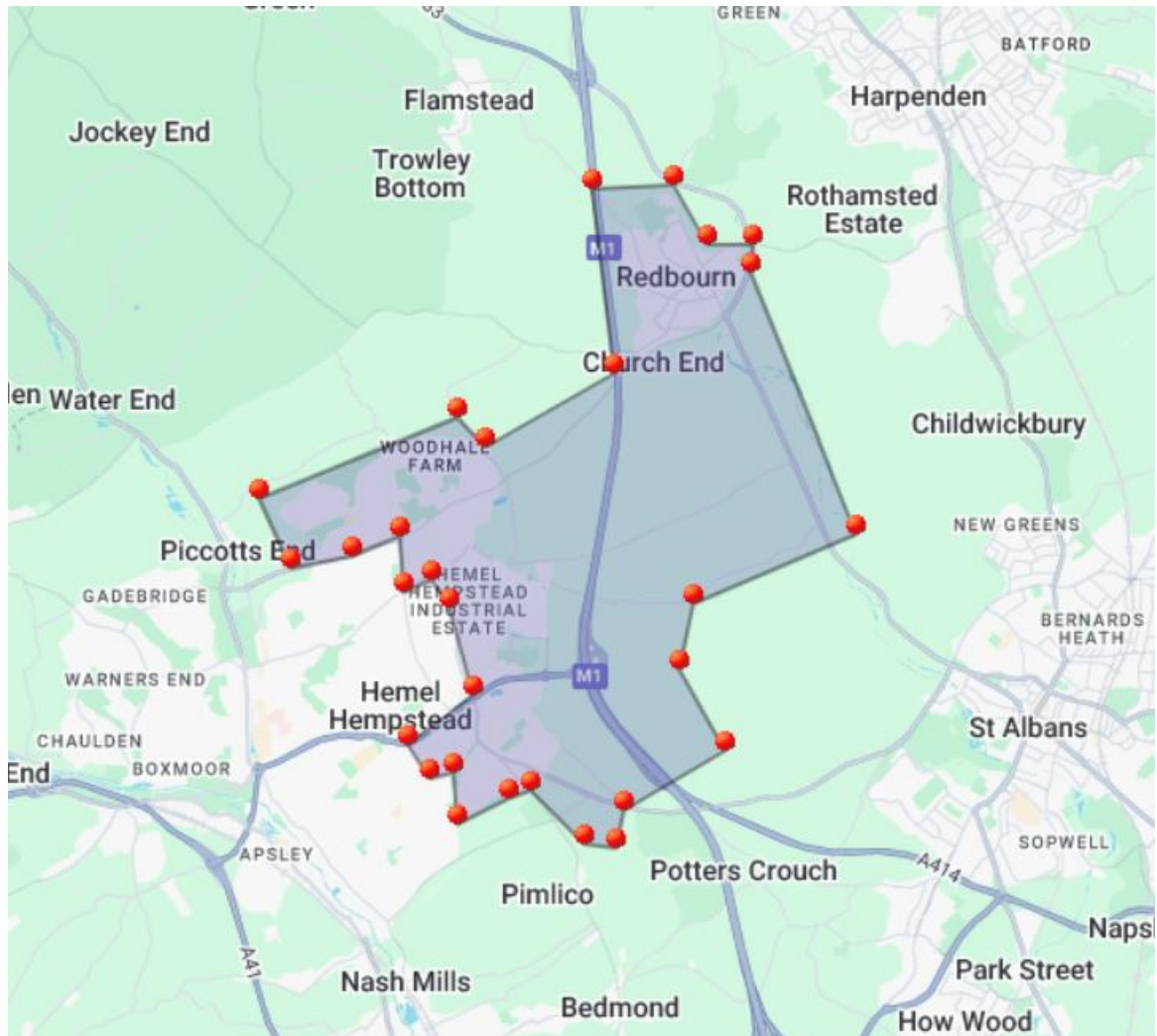
Holtsmere End Junior School
Shenley Rd, Woodhall Farm, HP2 7JZ

Redbourn

Thursday 17th October 2024 18:00-21:00

Redbourn Village Centenary Room
63 High Street, Redbourn, AL3 7LW

Appendix C – Distribution Map



Appendix D – Panels (these can be downloaded [here](#))

<h3>Welcome</h3> <p>This is an engagement event about the development at East Hemel. This is the first of several series of events. The Crown Estate will host as we develop proposals for our land at East Hemel in partnership with the community and local stakeholders.</p> <p>The Crown Estate</p> <p>The Crown Estate is a national landowner which manages land, property and the seabed across England, Wales and Northern Ireland. As well as land within the Hemel Garden Communities growth area, our diverse portfolio includes significant areas such as London's West End and Windsor Great Park. We aim to use our portfolio to make a positive environmental and social impact that will help local communities to thrive.</p> <p>Our emerging vision for East Hemel</p> <p>Our ambition is that East Hemel will be a place built for and with the longer term in mind. This will lead to resilient, environmentally conscious communities and nature recovery. It will recognise the diverse needs of today, while anticipating those of the next generation. We will focus our attention on providing high quality new homes and supporting the growth of communities, while adopting a long-term approach to responsible environmental stewardship.</p> <p>Our emerging vision is informed by five Guiding Principles, which you can explore in this exhibition. We are interested to hear your responses to the questions on the panels, and we will carry your feedback into the next stage of the project.</p> <p>We look forward to seeing you at future events. More information about The Crown Estate and this site can be found on our website www.easthemel.co.uk.</p> 	<h3>Historical context</h3> <p>Hemel Hempstead has become one of the most important towns in Hertfordshire.</p> <p>Favourable geological conditions enabled the Grand Junction Canal to pass through the market town in the 18th century, connecting Hemel Hempstead to the Capital. The London to Birmingham railway was constructed in the 19th Century, followed by the link to Harpenden (now known as the Nicky Line), ensuring good trade connections. Towards the end of the 19th century, the town expanded further with housing developed for London commuters.</p> <p>Designated a 'mark one' New Town in 1946, Hemel provided good family homes in healthy neighbourhoods, easing overcrowding and poor living conditions in many London boroughs. It has grown considerably from that time when the population was around 20,000. Today it is home to 96,000 residents. In the same timeframe, England's population has grown by some 15 million.</p> <p>Hemel Hempstead has a vibrant economy which attracts business investment, jobs and skills. It has been home to major companies such as Kodak, BP, Amazon and The British Standards Institution, and is often used as a film and television location.</p> <p>We now need to plan for the next phase, to help equip Hemel Hempstead's economy for the future, delivering homes and infrastructure to support the changing needs of current residents and the aspirations of future generations.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ What are the major features of Hemel Hempstead's history that you would highlight? ➤ What is your favourite thing about living in Hemel Hempstead? 	<h3>Local planning context</h3> <p>Hemel Garden Communities</p> <p>Hemel Garden Communities (HGC) is a long-term programme to transform Hemel Hempstead. The Growth Area, of which East Hemel is a part, aims to deliver up to 11,000 new homes and 10,000 new jobs by 2050. Attractive neighbourhoods, sustainable travel connections, generous green open spaces and local economic growth will deliver a range of benefits to the community in Hemel Hempstead.</p> <p>A Concept Framework Plan (see below) has been developed for the Growth Area, which will guide future masterplanning at East Hemel (www.hemelgardencommunities.co.uk). We will continue to work with the local authorities and other stakeholders at each stage of the planning process.</p> <p>Local Plan requirements</p> <p>St Albans Council is currently undertaking a separate consultation on its new Local Plan, setting out how it intends to provide for new homes, services and infrastructure up to 2041. You can find details online at www.stalbans.gov.uk/new-local-plan or by using the QR code.</p> <p>Dacorum Borough Council are also in the process of updating their Local Plan. More information can be found using the QR code.</p> <p>The Local Plan policies set out further details on what East Hemel should include, for example, the number of affordable homes. The Local Plan also requires us to deliver Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) to help protect the Chilterns Beechwoods in addition to delivering improvements to the Nicky Line and making provision for new health services.</p>   
		
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Our approach

We have started thinking about how we might approach the continued growth of East Hemel. There is an enduring necessity to create places for people to live in that not only meet their needs but also provides them with an opportunity to thrive and prosper in an environment that is healthy, equitable and uplifting.

As a new town built around a medieval town, Hemel Hempstead has evolved in form, design, economy and activities, yet its people still have the same continuing need for homes, nutrition, comfort, community and connection.

There is much we can learn by combining our experiences with new technologies to help us create places for people that address challenges like climate change, material resources and social inequality.

It is a complex challenge to meet the needs of future generations, and our initial approach is informed by five important principles:

- Nurturing our natural world
- Promoting community participation
- Fostering prosperity & new economies
- Celebrating pride of place
- Connecting places and people

The following panels invite you to offer your thoughts on how to shape the places required for now and for future generations to come.

- What features of Hemel Hempstead do you value?
- What ideas, innovations or themes would you include to inform the approach?



Nurturing our natural world

Our increasing awareness of our impact on the planet demands that we think differently about how we use and treat our land. East Hemel offers a sustainable location for new homes, and there is also much that we can do to limit the impact of development on the environment while protecting and celebrating its best features, including the Nickey Line and mature woodland.

We must build in measures to protect against climate change and support nature recovery. This includes reducing emissions from travel, designing low carbon homes that are cheap to run, supporting the site's natural drainage systems, improving water quality and growing food locally in ways that help soils to regenerate. We recognise the importance of existing green spaces in the area, noting that there are opportunities to improve diversity on land that was previously farmed.

We can enhance the quality of the places we build. For example, by creating an extensive network of green spaces which include water features, every home will be within a short walk of green open space, and we will also be delivering new areas for wildlife habitats. At the same time, we want to find ways to help people live in harmony with nature and encourage them to help care for their natural landscapes.

- How can we embed nature at the heart of our neighbourhoods?
- What suggestions do you have for future areas of green space? (eg planting, open space, community gardens, footpaths or trails)



Promoting community participation

Our ambition stretches beyond building homes and workplaces. We aim to support the growth of an inclusive and vibrant multi-generational community, where everyone has a sense of belonging and an opportunity to thrive. This means thinking about new ways of living, different housing tenures and models of affordability.

It is important to us that everyone who lives at East Hemel feels like it is 'their place', whether this is achieved by connecting with others who share similar interests, having a say in how their neighbourhood is managed, or leading active lifestyles.

We are committed to delivering the best quality architecture and landscape design possible, to serve the community long into the future. Our masterplan will include three primary schools, a secondary school, community spaces, health care facilities, local shops, play areas, sports pitches and large areas of land for recreation and nature.

These buildings and spaces will provide the setting for community life. As part of the community engagement exercise, we are interested in your ideas about what we might do beyond the 'bricks and mortar' to support the growing community.

- How might we help foster a sense of community among friends and neighbours?
- Can we explore new ways of living, through innovative housing, so neighbours can better support each other?
- How can we create a place that welcomes people of all ages and abilities, and helps them to contribute meaningfully in their neighbourhood?
- What type of indoor and outdoor community activities should we plan for?



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Fostering prosperity & new economies

Successful communities combine opportunities for work together with new homes and services. This has long been part of Hemel Hempstead's success story. As Hemel Hempstead grew in the 1950s and 60s there was a real focus on delivering high skill jobs alongside homes and this relationship applies equally today.

The allocation of a large strategic site at East Hemel is a rare opportunity to grow the local economy at considerable scale to provide the workplaces of the future. We will deploy our experience in fostering skills and capabilities to help support the growth of the existing and future Hertfordshire workforce and equip the next generation with the skills to enhance the economy.

The local planning authorities have identified the potential for 6,000 new jobs at East Hemel. The Crown Estate has committed significant investment to support the growth of the innovation economy and new sectors across Hertfordshire and the UK. We believe there may be potential to create jobs in sustainable construction and have already begun engaging with local education providers and stakeholders through our 'supporting skills' agenda. We will invest in skills and training for local people throughout the design and delivery of development at East Hemel. We will also look to create long term opportunities, once development is complete.

- How can we support local businesses to grow?
- What are the industries of tomorrow? How might we welcome and support them?



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Celebrating pride of place

Our vision is rooted in celebrating pride of place, emphasising the local culture, history and communities that give Hemel Hempstead its unique identity. Hemel Hempstead has a long history which is reflected in medieval landmarks like St. Mary's Church and the Old Town and in historic cottages and farmhouses around the town.

Hemel Hempstead's development as one of Britain's pioneering New Towns saw Geoffrey Jellicoe's masterplan shape the town in a park, which gave rise to a very distinct pattern and several lessons to take forward into our masterplan including:

- Community life flourishing amidst carefully planned neighbourhoods
- A network of green valleys with neighbourhoods on surrounding slopes
- Neighbourhoods served by successful local centres to meet every day needs
- Investment in amenity and social infrastructure – like schools, community centres, parks, playing fields
- Diversity of employment options alongside residential growth
- Innovation in architecture and design

There are many opportunities to celebrate Hemel's wider identity and weave it into a vibrant future. The legacy of farmsteads, cottages, historic lanes, rolling topography and the Nickey Line all connect to Hemel Hempstead's long history, and there is an opportunity to breathe new relevance into these features to inform the identity of the new community elements.

- What current or historic features provide a sense of pride in Hemel Hempstead?
- What features, layers, or stories could help shape the future identity of East Hemel?
- What do you want to see in local centres in the future?



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Connecting places & people

Our vision is for East Hemel to become a place where people are well connected physically and digitally. We want to create a place where people can easily walk, cycle and use public transport, and where sustainable travel can take precedence over vehicles. Digital infrastructure will also play an important role in connecting people and places in a flexible and adaptable way.

We believe this will create a more equitable, healthy and safe place, with greater levels of interaction between neighbours adding to wellbeing and inclusivity. There are lots of ways in which we can achieve this, leading to a very different, more connected type of place, for example:

- Create walkable neighbourhoods, where everything residents need is a short walk away
- Have high quality digital infrastructure, including high speed internet and smart technology to support working and learning from home
- Ensure high quality walking and cycling routes in every neighbourhood that are safe and easy to navigate for everyone, including those with disabilities, the elderly, and children
- Deliver routes where local buses have priority over general traffic to connect to key destinations within the town and beyond
- Manage parking so it doesn't dominate streets, allowing for pedestrian friendly spaces close to people's homes
- Provide multi-modal mobility hubs at key locations so people can interchange between different types of transport e.g. bus to e-bike

- What would encourage you to walk, cycle and use public transport more?
- What things need to be put in place to aid accessibility for all?



Designing East Hemel

Our design team will be exploring a range of factors for further discussion with the community and other stakeholders in the coming months. We anticipate looking at themes like:

Landscape and greenspace

Including parks, woodland, play space, community gardens and wildlife corridors

Routes and links

Both pedestrian and cycleways, routes and trails, and roads including for public transport

Infrastructure networks

For aspects like main services, drainage, power and telecommunications

Neighbourhood 'anchor' facilities

Such as schools, shops, cafés, health, sports and leisure provision

Range of house types

Including styles, sizes, layouts, tenures

Business and workspace

Including locations as well as types of jobs and skills for future needs

Sustainable lifestyles

Future ways of building, living, working and playing

- > What kind of factors do you think are important to consider in the planning and design of new neighbourhoods for East Hemel?
- > Where are there other examples you consider to be good places and why?



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East Hemel

What happens next?

Stage 1 Public Engagement	October 2024
Drop-in Engagement Sessions	October
Study Visits*	Nov/Dec
Stage 2 Public Engagement	Jan - March 2025
Community design workshop	Jan/Feb
Stage 3 Public Engagement	Spring 2025
Design review with community	Spring 2025
Planning application preview	Summer 2025
Submit Planning Application	Autumn 2025

Ways to contribute and stay involved

There are many ways of contributing and staying up to date including:

- Providing contact information to receive updates and news
- Sharing your feedback and ideas through the questionnaire and Commonplace, via the QR code. Commonplace is a citizen engagement platform designed to gather inputs and feedback from wide groups of participants through their digital platform.
- Joining in the study trip
- Participating in future in-person engagement events

Thank you for coming. We look forward to seeing you at future events.

- > *Would you like to participate in any study visits to other places?
- > Would you like to participate in future design workshops?



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Appendix E – Feedback Form



East Hemel Feedback Questionnaire

This questionnaire is an opportunity for you to share your thoughts about future development at East Hemel. We appreciate you taking the time to fill this out, it helps us to better understand Hemel as a place and a community.

Historical context

1. What are the major features of Hemel Hempstead's history that you think should be considered or celebrated?

2. What is your favourite thing about living in Hemel Hempstead / the local area?

Our approach

3. What characteristics of Hemel Hempstead / the local area do you value?

4. Are there any new ideas, innovations or ways of working, you would like considered for East Hemel?

Nurturing our natural world

5. How can we embed nature at the heart of our neighbourhoods?

6. How can we encourage communities to live more sustainably?

Promoting community participation

7. How might we help foster a sense of community, identity and belonging?
8. What new ways of living can we explore so neighbours can better support each other? (For example, a range of tenures, types and sizes of housing and ownership arrangements, and others)
9. How can we create an inclusive place that welcomes people of all ages and abilities, helping them to contribute meaningfully in their neighbourhood?
10. What type of indoor and outdoor community activities might be important in East Hemel?

Fostering prosperity & new economies

11. How can we support both new and existing local businesses to grow?
12. What are the industries of tomorrow? How might we welcome and support them?

Celebrating pride of place

13. What creates a sense of pride in Hemel Hempstead / the local area for you? (for example: people, places, amenities, events, any others.)

14. What features or stories could help shape the future identity of East Hemel?

15. What do you want to see in local neighbourhood centres in the future? (for example: facilities, amenities, employment, any others.)

Connecting places & people

16. What would encourage you to walk, cycle and use public transport more? (for example bicycle storage, safer routes, accessible amenities and others.)

17. What needs to be put in place to aid accessibility throughout and around East Hemel for all?

Designing East Hemel

18. What do you think is important when planning and designing new neighbourhoods for East Hemel?

19. Where are there examples of neighbourhoods that you consider to be good places and why? (These could be in the UK or abroad)

What happens next?

There may be opportunities to participate in study trips to good practice examples in the UK. Please tick here if you would be interested in attending a study visit day

☐

Please tick here if you would like to participate in future design workshops

☐

Demographics

The next few questions are about you to help us ensure we hear from a range of voices. If there are questions you would prefer not to answer, please just leave them blank. The personal information you give us will remain strictly confidential and we will not use it in a way that could identify you.

1. Name

2. Email address

3. Postcode

4. Age ☐ 13-15 ☐ 16-24 ☐ 25-34
☐ 35-44 ☐ 45-54 ☐ 55-64
☐ 75-84 ☐ 85 or over

5. Please tick which of the drop-in exhibitions you attended

6.

- ☐ Leverstock Green
☐ Hemel Hempstead Library, Town Centre
☐ Adeyfield Free Church, Maylands
☐ Holtsmere End Junior School, Woodhall Farm
☐ Redbourn Village Hall, Redbourn
☐ None – I wasn't able to attend any

6. How did you learn about the East Hemel engagement events?

7.

- ☐ Letter and flyer via Royal Mail ☐ Local newspaper
☐ Social media ☐ Website
☐ Community organisation ☐ Friends/neighbours
☐ Other – please say how

GDPR & Privacy: All personal or contact details are held securely by Kevin Murray Associates for the purposes of consulting on this project only for TCE, in line with data protection best practice. They are not shared with any other party. The details are destroyed 1 year or after the planning application is lodged, whichever is sooner. All comments are recorded for the purposes of this project only and are anonymised and aggregated, personal data and responses will not be associated to each other.



More information can be found at
www.easthemel.co.uk



Complete this survey online at
<https://easthemel.commonplace.is>

Appendix F – Stakeholder Workshop Agenda

East Hemel

Stakeholder Workshop Format v1

Holiday Inn Hotel off J8 M1

Thursday 17 October

Diverse public, private, community et al

9.30	Welcome & purpose <i>Fire & safety, inclusive staged engagement approach</i>	TCE & KMA
	Briefing Presentations	
9.40	TCE aspiration & place vision	TCE
9.50	Planning context	DLA
10.05	Masterplanning approach	P+P
10.15	Q&A	All
10.25	Engagement stages	KMA
10.35	Q&A discussion	All
10.50	Coffee break	
	Workshop exercise	
11.00	Scoping scenario workshop	Groups
11.50	Feedback	Groups
12.20	Discussion & next steps <i>Ref study visits</i>	All
12.30	Close & Lunch	

Appendix G – Stakeholder Attendee List

First Name	Surname	Organisation
Adam	Wood	Hertfordshire Futures
Adrienne	Chan	The Crown Estate
Alex	Bottrill	KMA
Alex	Garman	Expedition/Useful Projects
Claire	Perrott	Prior + Partners
Cllr Richard	Bullen	Redbourn Parish Council
Cllr Robin	Bromham	Dacorum Borough Council
Cllr Victoria	Mead	Redbourn Parish Council
Colin	Gage	Leverstock Green Village Association
Dan	Doris	Turner & Townsend
Dave	Abernethy	Friends of the Nickey Line
David	Bird	SLR Consulting
David	Fleet	Westwick Row
Gregor	Henderson	KMA
Heather	Pugh	DLA
Irem	Adal	Gillespies
Izzy	Grigg	The Crown Estate
Jas	Atwal	KMA
Jeffrey	Scott	Hertfordshire Police
John	Pritchard	Ver Valley Society
John	Walker	Leverstock Green Village Association

Katherine	Keyes	Prior + Partners
Keely	Siddiqui Charlick	Sunnyside Rural Trust
Kevin	Murray	KMA
Marcus	Della Croce	SLR Consulting
Mark	Patchett	Community Stewardship Solutions
Martin	Stickley	Dacorum Borough Council
Neil	Paterson	BRE
Peter	Tallantire	Herts & Middlesex Wildlife Trust
Phil	Taylor	British Pipeline Association
Phillipa	Zieba	Hemel Garden Communities
Richard	Pia	Camargue
Rob	Beauchamp	Woodhall Farm Community Centre
Rob	Fletcher	British Pipeline Association
Robert	Goldstein	Leverstock Green Village Association
Ross	Smith	Save Leverstock Green
Ruth	Ambrose	St Albans City & District Council
Sharon	Warner	Cupid Green Lane Allotments
Sheena	Bell	Gillespies
Simon	Aulton	Community Action Dacorum
Stephen	Hoult Allen	St Luke's School
Vanessa	Manikin	Cupid Green Lane Allotments