

St Albans City and District Next Local Plan 2029

Scoping Consultation and
Comment Form

INTRODUCTION

St Albans City & District Council is preparing our next Local Plan 2029 to guide development in the district over the coming years. The Local Plan will set out the vision, objectives, and planning policies that will shape how St Albans District grows and changes. It will address matters such as housing, employment, infrastructure, the natural and historic environment, and the health and wellbeing of communities.

The Government has required the Council to update the shortly-to-be-adopted Local Plan (expected adoption September 2026) to ensure that planning policies remain up to date. This review process requires us to ensure ongoing conformity with national planning policy, and respond to new or emerging social, environmental, and economic priorities. The preparation of the Local Plan will be informed by the Government's planning law and regulations as well as the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), which sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these should be applied.

How to complete the consultation response form

This is the first consultation as part of the new plan-making system.

Questions raised are:

- The opportunities and constraints the next Local Plan 2029 should address;
- What the next Local Plan 2029 should contain; and
- How St Albans City & District Council should engage with stakeholders in the preparation for the next Local Plan 2029.

Please complete each section of this document. Comments can be submitted by email or post, with details on how to submit provided at the end of the document.

This consultation is open for comments from **Monday 3 August at 10am to Monday 14 September 2026 at 5pm.**

All responses received during the consultation period will be considered and will help inform the next stages of Local Plan preparation.

Respondent details

Personal Details*

**If an agent is appointed, please complete only the Title, Name and Organisation (if applicable) boxes below but complete the full contact details of the agent in 2.*

Agent's Details (if applicable)

Title	Mr	
First Name	Chris	
Last Name	Berry	
Job Title (where relevant)	Planning Manager	
Organisation (where relevant)	CPRE Hertfordshire	
Address Line 1	31a Church Street	
Line 2	Welwyn	
Line 3	Hertfordshire	
Line 4		
Post Code	AL6 9LW	
Telephone Number	01438 717587	
E-mail Address (where relevant)	planning@cpreherts.org.uk	

CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

The preparation of the next Local Plan 2029 presents both challenges and opportunities for St Albans City & District. In particular, the Plan will need to seek to deliver the Government's Standard Method for housing figure for the District of 1,653 homes per annum. It will also need to tackle Climate Change, improve biodiversity locally, deliver local jobs, schools, GP surgeries, public transport, cycle paths, play areas, parks and access to nature as well as the protection, preservation, and enhancement of the district's distinctive characteristics.

What do you consider to be the main challenges and opportunities facing St Albans City & District in coming years?

CPRE Hertfordshire deplores the presentation of the Scoping Consultation for the new St Albans Local Plan as two open questions with neither context nor supporting content. This challenges fundamentally good practice in Local Plan preparation and casts significant doubt on the ability of St Albans City & District Council (SADC) to prepare an adequate and sound Local Plan.

The inability of SADC Council to prepare and adopt a sound Local Plan for over thirty years testifies to the severe technical shortcomings of the Council in this matter. At the very least in the scoping Consultation, the Council should present a vision for the District in terms of its priorities for development and the environment in the future.

A Local Plan is not prepared in a vacuum and it is a key role of political leadership to indicate its priorities and the most significant constraints and opportunities affecting future development. Without an awareness of the boundaries of what is appropriate and within the scope of a Local Plan, there is a likely risk of contributions from residents and businesses being irrelevant, leading to wasted effort and frustration with what should be a positive and useful endeavour.

The Council should indicate the scope of the Local Plan in terms of its comprehensive nature and its role in defining the principal factors affecting future development and protection of the countryside. It is a dereliction of the local planning authority's duty not to provide a framework for responses to the challenges and opportunities facing St Albans in coming years in terms of the topics and subjects for policy-making and decision-taking.

CPRE Hertfordshire believes that primary challenges and opportunities should be concerned with protecting and valuing the countryside, nature, waterways and valued green spaces while balancing the need for economic growth and new housing.

What do you think the next Local Plan 2029 should contain?

It is entirely inappropriate to derogate responsibility for providing any guidance with regard to the form and function of a Local Plan which should be a comprehensive and robust review and analysis of the characteristics of the City and District area leading to the preparation of priorities and policy guiding physical development in the future. For residents and businesses not familiar with the process of Local Plan preparation the lack of any guidance is likely to lead to wasteful and irrelevant commentary which is at best unhelpful and engenders frustration with the planning process.

The context for considering challenges and opportunities should be provided within an outline structure of topics which may comprise:

- Housing
- Employment
- Environment and Landscape
- Town Centres
- Community Facilities
- Recreation and Leisure
- Infrastructure
- Urban Design and Conservation
- Climate Change
- Movement
- Sustainability.

For CPRE Hertfordshire, it is crucial that a future Local Plan identifies the 81.5% of the land area of the St Albans City and District which is designated as Green Belt as a primary feature of the Local Plan, together with the presence of the River Ver as a globally significant chalk stream as significant constraints to development in the future.

Over the past few decades there has been some highly successful regeneration of previously developed land within the City of St Albans. Now, the regeneration of previously developed land throughout the whole of the District, as well as the implementation of previously granted consents and bringing empty homes back into occupation, should be the highest priorities for the Local Plan.

ENGAGEMENT

The Council is also seeking views on how it should engage with residents, businesses, landowners, infrastructure providers, community groups, and other stakeholders in the preparation of the next Local Plan 2029.

How would you prefer to be engaged during the Local Plan process? e.g. Online consultations • Public events • Written updates • Social media • Other methods, please specify.

CPRE Hertfordshire wishes to be involved at all stages of the preparation of the Local Plan.

In addition to the above methods, we prefer to have the option to participate in consultations by email, as do many of our members.

Please return the completed form as follows:

By Email: planning.policy@stalbans.gov.uk

By Post: St Albans City & District Council, Spatial Planning Team, Civic Centre, St Peter's Street, St Albans, Hertfordshire, AL1 3JE

Hand delivered during office opening hours:

- **Monday:** 9.00am to 5.00pm
- **Tuesday:** 9.00am to 1:00pm
- **Wednesday:** 9.00am to 5.00pm
- **Thursday:** 9.00am to 1:00pm
- **Friday:** 9.00am to 3.00pm

PRIVACY NOTICE

Please see <https://stalbans-consult.objective.co.uk/kse/terms/tnc> and <https://www.objective.com/privacy-policy>.