

Welwyn Hatfield Local Plan – Review of Policy compliance with NPPF 2023

The Welwyn Hatfield Local Plan was produced and examined under the provision of the NPPF 2012. This table provides a review of existing Local Plan Policies against the provisions of the recently published NPPF 2023. It also identifies where policies may require updating to reflect changes to local circumstances.

Local Plan Policy (ref and name)	Purpose	Comments (e.g. compliance with NPPF, monitoring, delivery etc)	Ref in NPPF	Does the policy need reviewing? (Yes/No)	Reason (National Policy Change / Local Change)
Sustainable Development					
SP1 Delivering Sustainable Development	To provide a set of guiding principles on sustainable development. These have been used to shape this plan	In general conformity with NPPF but requires greater emphasis on climate change/resilience and reflect other change from a new vision and objectives		Yes	NPPF 2023 places greater emphasis on climate change than 2012 version
Targets for Growth					
SP 2 Targets for Growth	Sets out the level of need for housing, employment and retail growth	Will need updating to reflect the standard method, new use classes and up-to-date evidence.		Yes	National policy change
Settlement Strategy and Green Belt Boundaries					
SP 3 Settlement Strategy and Green Belt Boundaries	Directs growth to the most sustainable locations, including releasing limited land from the Green Belt	In general conformity with NPPF	NPPF Para 145 - 148	No	National policy change / accommodating additional growth in the borough may lead to a review
SADM 1 Windfall Development	Supports windfall development, subject to meeting the criteria	In general conformity with NPPF	NPPF Para 70	No	
Movement					
SP 4 Transport and Travel	Ensures safety of highway users, provision of appropriate transport infrastructure, promotion of sustainable transport	In general conformity with NPPF	NPPF Paras 108-117	No	

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SADM 2 Highway Network and Safety	Management of the growth in traffic on the highway network resulting from development	In general conformity with NPPF	NPPF Para 117	No	
SADM 3 Sustainable Travel for All	Facilitating sustainable modes of transport	In general conformity with NPPF	NPPF Paras 108-117	No	
Centres, Services and Facilities					
SP 5 Quantity and Location of Retail Development	Maintain and enhance the vitality and viability of towns, neighbourhood and village centres, including villages and the rural economy.	Needs updating to specifically refer to the need for an impact assessment. The default floorspace figure in the NPPF is 2,500m ² gross floorspace, ours is 300m ² – justification is needed for this figure. NPPF states the sequential approach should not be applied to small scale office or other small scale rural development, policy needs to include this. Check Retail floorspace requirements to 2026 figures, and identified shopping frontages still apply (evidence base)	NPPF Para 90 - 95	Yes	National Policy Change/Local Change
SADM 4 Development in Designated Centres	To support the strategy set out in Policy SP5	As Policy SP5 needs updating, this policy will also require an update to reflect changes in the NPPF. Including retaining existing markets and creating new ones, allowing a mix of suitable uses, identifying residential, leisure, and office as suitable town centre uses, encouraging residential development on appropriate town centre sites. Use Classes Order has been amended.	NPPF Paras 90 – 95; Glossary ‘Main town centre uses’	Yes	National Policy Change

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		See NPPF Glossary "Main town centre uses."			
SADM 5 Development outside Designated Centres	To protect retail units located outside designated areas and resist out-of-centre retail development	The NPPF supports the retention and development of local services, including local shops. Justification for floorspace figure of 280m2 based on Sunday Trading Regulations small shops, is this still appropriate?	NPPF Paras 88-89	Yes	National Policy Change
SADM 6 Shopfronts, Advertisements and Signage	The provision of a high standard of design	In general conformity with NPPF	NPPF Para 131,132, 141	No	
SP 6 Community Services and Facilities	To ensure communities can easily access a range of community services	In general conformity with NPPF	NPPF Para 97	No	
SADM 7 New Community Services and facilities and loss of Community Services and facilities	Supporting the provision of new community services and facilities, in appropriate, accessible locations.	Both SP6 and SADM7 refer to guarding against the loss of existing community services and facilities and requiring the provision of new neighbourhoods to provide community services to meet the needs of the new communities. Suggest that this policy is consolidated into one policy to avoid duplication.	NPPF paras 96 - 107	Yes	Local change
SADM 8 Cemetery extension at South Way, Hatfield	Site allocation for cemetery	In general conformity with NPPF Site completed?	NPPF Para 154	No/ Delete?	Local Change
Housing					
SP 7 Type and Mix of	To provide a range of housing to meet the differing	NPPF 2023 Requires 10% off Affordable housing to be for home ownership. This	NPPF Para 60, 128;	Yes	National Policy Change/Local change

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Housing	needs of different households	policy will need reviewing in the light of the updated evidence base. Change to G&T definition and anticipated change to PPTS (2024)	G&T definition in PPTS		
SADM 9 Loss of Residential	Supporting SP2 there is a presumption against loss of residential	In general conformity with NPPF which seeks to boost the supply of homes	NPPF Para 60	No	
Economy					
SP 8 The Local Economy	Sets of the strategic plan for jobs, guide the future of the local economy, consistent with the LEP	In general conformity with NPPF, however, the Government has stated its intention to end funding of LEPs in 2024, so the policy may need to be reviewed to reflect this if Hertfordshire LEP no longer exists	NPPF Paras 85 - 89	Yes	National change
SADM 10 Employment Development	Supports the implementation of SP8	In general conformity with NPPF, however, will need to be reviewed in the light of the new evidence base	NPPF Paras 85 - 89	Yes	Local change
Quality of New Development					
SP 9 Place Making and High Quality Design	Sets out the strategic framework to deliver high-quality design and places.	In general conformity with NPPF.	NPPF Paras 131 - 141	No	
SADM 11 Amenity and Layout	To create and protect the provision of a good standard of amenity and external open space	In general conformity with NPPF and Nationally Described Space Standards	NPPF Paras 131 – 141 and the NDSS	No	
SADM 12 Parking, Servicing and Refuse	The provision of an appropriate level of parking and designing parking, servicing, and refuse facilities to achieve a high quality public realm.	The policy refers to the Council's car parking standards. Policy complies with NPPF but car parking standards date from 2014.	NPPF Para 112	No but Review car parking standards is advised.	National and Local

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SP 10 Sustainable Design and Construction	Sets out the strategic approach to promoting sustainable design	Not compliant with NPPF. Policy needs updating to refer to biodiversity net gain.	NPPF Para 180	Yes	National change
SADM 13 Sustainability Requirements	Reducing water and energy consumption	Policy needs reviewing to widen its scope beyond water and energy consumption, to mitigation of climate change.	NPPF Para 158	Yes	National change
SADM 14 Flood Risk and Surface Water Management	Managing flood risk and surface water	In general conformity with NPPF	NPPF Para 165 - 175	No	
Environmental Assets					
SP 11 Protection and Enhancement of Critical Environmental Assets	Sets out the strategic approach to protecting and enhancing the borough's critical environmental assets	Review and update policy to reflect national PPG on biodiversity net gain and the Local Nature Recovery Strategy	NPPF para 180	Yes	National change
SP 12 Green Infrastructure	To build on the NPPF and plan for the creation, protection, enhancement and management of networks of GI	In general conformity with the NPPF		No	
SADM 15 Heritage	Protection of Heritage assets	In general conformity with NPPF		No	
SADM 16 Ecology and Landscape	Securing measurable net gain in biodiversity	New PPG on BNG. Introduction of mandatory BNG takes precedence over local policy so that part of SADM16 can no longer be applied in decision-making (for statutory BNG). Review the need for a BNG policy to support offsite biodiversity sites, and any local justification and evidence for	NPPF Paras 180/185 and PPG on BNG	Yes	National (statutory and policy guidance) change

Local Plan Policy (ref and name)	Purpose	Comments (e.g. compliance with NPPF, monitoring, delivery etc)	Ref in NPPF	Does the policy need reviewing? (Yes/No)	Reason (National Policy Change / Local Change)
		a higher percentage.			
SADM 17 Urban Open Land	Protection of areas of Urban Open Land	WH is unique in having this designation, due to the planned nature of the Garden City and New Town. Complies with NPPF	NPPF 181	No	
SADM 18 Environmental Pollution	To ensure there is no unacceptable impact on human health, amenity or the natural environment	Generally compliant with NPPF, but river basin management plans not referenced. Include more on water quality/pollution (e.g. nutrient neutrality)? There is need to check policy is up to date with associated legislation (Environment Act etc)	NPPF para 180 e), 189-194	Yes	National Policy Change
Infrastructure					
SP 13 Infrastructure Delivery	Provision of sufficient infrastructure to support growth	Policy wording is quite generic so still relevant. Infrastructure Development Plan (which is referenced in policy) and Planning Obligations SPD May require update. Supporting text to reflect wider range of infrastructure e.g. increased emphasis on digital infrastructure, alternative forms of electricity generation, EV charging and need for electricity networks to support such provision.	NPPF para 20, 34, 41, 57, Ch10, Ch14	No but supporting documents/text may need review	National Policy Change
SP 14 New Schools	Provision of sufficient secondary and primary education to support growth	Estimated provision is based on housing targets. May need review if housing numbers/site locations change	NPPF para 20 c), 34, 99, 110 a)	Yes	Local Change
Welwyn Garden City					
SP 15 The Historic Environment of	To protect and maintain the unique character of WGC	Increased national emphasis on design codes. Introduce design code for WGC instead of masterplans/SPDs (as SPDs may	NPPF Ch12	Yes	National Policy Change

Local Plan Policy (ref and name)	Purpose	Comments (e.g. compliance with NPPF, monitoring, delivery etc)	Ref in NPPF	Does the policy need reviewing? (Yes/No)	Reason (National Policy Change / Local Change)
Welwyn Garden City		be decommissioned?)			
SP 16 Welwyn Garden City Town Centre Strategy	Strategy for development of WGC Town Centre	<p>Update policy following work done on public realm at HS7.</p> <p>Use Classes Order has been amended – an update could reflect this. Are there any additional uses which would/would not be acceptable here (e.g. food/drink establishments)</p> <p>Include other considerations e.g. EV charging points</p> <p>Needs to reflect any updates to vision for town centre post pandemic.</p>	NPPF Ch7, Ch8, Ch9, glossary 'Main town centre uses'; Use Classes Order	Yes	National Policy Change/Local Change
SADM 19 Town Centre North Development – HS7	Site allocation policy	<p>Update policy following work done on public realm at HS7.</p> <p>Use Classes Order has been amended. Are there any additional uses which would/would not be acceptable here (e.g. food/drink establishments)</p> <p>Include other considerations e.g. EV charging points.</p>	NPPF Ch7, Ch8, Ch9, glossary 'Main town centre uses'; Use Classes Order	Yes	National Policy Change/Local Change
SADM 20 Acceptable uses outside WGC Core retail Zone (The Campus, Parkway, and	To provide guidance on acceptable uses/redevelopment of these sites	<p>Use Classes Order has been amended. Are there any additional uses which would/would not be acceptable here (e.g. food/drink establishments)</p> <p>Include other considerations e.g. EV</p>	NPPF Ch7, Ch8, Ch9, glossary 'Main town centre uses'; Use	Yes	National Policy Change/Local Change

Local Plan Policy (ref and name)	Purpose	Comments (e.g. compliance with NPPF, monitoring, delivery etc)	Ref in NPPF	Does the policy need reviewing? (Yes/No)	Reason (National Policy Change / Local Change)
Church Road)		charging points	Classes Order		
SADM 21 Housing Allocations in WGC	Site/strategic site allocation policy	<p>SDS1 – 2 applications: phase 1 granted (650 units), phase 2 awaiting s106 (210 units)</p> <p>SDS2 – application for original site under consideration. Masterplan endorsed</p> <p>SDS3 – multiple planning applications</p> <p>HS2 – awaiting s106 (340 units)</p> <p>HS3 - no application submitted yet</p> <p>HS4 – complete (110 units)</p> <p>HS5 – permission granted (13 units), relocation of 46 care bed spaces to another site</p> <p>HS7 - no application submitted yet</p> <p>HS6 - no application submitted yet</p> <p>HS8 - no application submitted yet</p> <p>HS12 – under consideration (313 units)</p> <p>HS31 – permission granted (outline, 29 units), 125 hostel bedspaces existing, 100 new hostel bedspaces = -14 dwelling equivalents + 43 C3 = 29</p> <p>HS34 - no application submitted yet</p> <p>The policy should be retained until all sites are completed. Amend to reflect updates to numbers/latest position on site/completions.</p>		Yes	Local Change
SP 17 Mixed Use Development site at Broadwater Road West	Strategic site allocation policy	<p>SDS3 – multiple planning applications</p> <p>The policy should be retained until all sites are completed but amend to reflect updates to numbers/latest position on site/any</p>		Yes	Local Change

Local Plan Policy (ref and name)	Purpose	Comments (e.g. compliance with NPPF, monitoring, delivery etc)	Ref in NPPF	Does the policy need reviewing? (Yes/No)	Reason (National Policy Change / Local Change)
		approved masterplans/design codes/guidance docs			
SP 18 North East of WGC – SDS1	Strategic site allocation policy	SDS1 – 2 applications: phase 1 granted (650 units), phase 2 awaiting s106 (210 units) The policy should be retained until all sites are completed. Amend to reflect updates to numbers/latest position on site/any approved masterplans/design codes/guidance docs		Yes	Local Change
SP 19 South East of WGC – SDS2	Strategic site allocation policy	SDS2 – application for original site under consideration. Masterplan endorsed by Council. Policy to be updated to reflect this.		Yes	Local Change
Hatfield					
SP 20 Hatfield Town Centre Strategy	Strategy for development of Hatfield Town Centre	Use Classes Order has been amended. Review to consider if there are any additional uses which would/would not be acceptable here (e.g. food/drink establishments) HS36 complete so this section of policy no longer required Include other considerations e.g. EV charging points Needs to reflect any updates to vision for town centre	NPPF Ch7, Ch8, Ch9, glossary 'Main town centre uses'; Use Classes Order	Yes	National Policy Change/Local Change
SADM 22 Development within Hatfield	To provide guidance on acceptable uses/redevelopment of the	Use Classes Order has been amended. Review to consider if there are any additional uses which would/would not be	NPPF Ch7, Ch8, Ch9, glossary	Yes	National Policy Change/Local Change

Local Plan Policy (ref and name)	Purpose	Comments (e.g. compliance with NPPF, monitoring, delivery etc)	Ref in NPPF	Does the policy need reviewing? (Yes/No)	Reason (National Policy Change / Local Change)
Town Centre Core Retail Zone	town centre	acceptable here (e.g. food/drink establishments) HS36 complete so this section of policy no longer required Include other considerations e.g. EV charging points	'Main town centre uses'; Use Classes Order		
SADM 23 Acceptable uses outside the core retail zone – The Common and Queensway Opportunity Areas	To provide guidance on acceptable uses/redevelopment of this site	Use Classes Order has been amended. Review to consider if there any additional uses which would/would not be acceptable here (e.g. food/drink establishments) Has this site been redeveloped/permission granted now?	NPPF Ch7, glossary 'Main town centre uses'; Use Classes Order	Yes	National Policy Change/Local Change
SADM 24 Acceptable uses outside the Core Retail Zone – Elmsford Road Opportunity Area	To provide guidance on acceptable uses/redevelopment of this site	Use Classes Order has been amended. Review to consider if there are any additional uses which would/would not be acceptable here (e.g. food/drink establishments)	NPPF Ch7, glossary 'Main town centre uses'; Use Classes Order	Yes	National Policy Change
SADM 25 High View Neighbourhood Shopping Centre – HS37	Link to SPD to guide development of HS37	HS37 is complete so policy no longer required		Delete	Local Change
SP 21 University of Hertfordshire		SP21 – Masterplanning process is underway in compliance with policy.	NPPF para 20 c), 100	No	
SADM 26	Site/strategic site allocation	SDS5 – masterplanning in progress		Yes	Local Change

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New Dwellings in Hatfield	policy	<p>HS36 – complete (71 units) HS37 – complete (140 units) HS9 - permission granted, under construction (86 units) HS10 – permission granted (8 units) HS11 – under consideration (120 units) HS13 – permission granted (39 units) HS14 - no application submitted yet HS38 - no application submitted yet HS42 - no application submitted yet HS41 – complete (91 units) HS39 – permission granted (80 units) HS40 - no application submitted yet</p> <p>The policy should be retained until all sites are completed. Amend to reflect updates to numbers/latest position on site/completions</p>			
SP 22 North West Hatfield - SDS5	Strategic site allocation policy	SP22 – Masterplanning for the site is underway.		No	
Woolmer Green					
SADM 27 Woolmer Green	Site allocation policy	<p>HS15 – under consideration (150 units) HS43 - no application submitted yet</p> <p>The policy should be retained until all sites are completed. Amend to reflect updates to numbers/latest position on site</p>		Yes	Local Change
Oaklands and Marley Heath					
SADM 28 Oaklands and Marley Heath	Site allocation policy	<p>HS16 – application withdrawn/ no application submitted yet HS32 - under consideration (5 pitches, instead of 6)</p>		Yes	G&T needs assessment to be updated; Local Change

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		The policy should be retained until all sites are completed. Amend to reflect updates to numbers/latest position on site			
Welwyn					
SADM 29 Welwyn	Site allocation policy	HS18 – application withdrawn HS19 – permission granted (36 units, instead of 30) HS20 – under consideration (9 units) The policy should be retained until all sites are completed. Amend to reflect updates to numbers/latest position on site		Yes	Local Change
Welham Green					
SADM 30 Welham Green	Site/strategic site allocation policy	HS35 – under consideration (14 pitches, instead of 12) SDS7 – masterplanning in progress HS44/45 – permission granted for part (7 units of 84) HS46 - no application submitted yet The policy should be retained until all sites are completed. Amend to reflect updates to numbers/latest position on site		Yes	G&T needs assessment to be updated; Local Change
SP 23 Marsh moor Policy Area – SDS7 and wider area	Strategic site allocation policy	SP23 – Masterplanning process is under way.		No	
Brookmans Park					
SADM 31 Brookmans Park	Site allocation policy	HS21 – under consideration (14 units) HS22 - no application submitted yet		Yes	Local Change

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		<p>HS23 - no application submitted yet</p> <p>The policy should be retained until all sites are completed. Amend to reflect latest position on site</p>			
Little Heath					
<p>SADM 32 Little Heath</p>	Site allocation policy	<p>HS25 – permission granted (34 units, instead of 35) HS47 – awaiting s106 (61 units, 2 existing)</p> <p>The policy should be retained until all sites are completed. Amend to reflect updates to numbers/latest position on site</p>		Yes	Local Change
Cuffley					
<p>SADM 33 Cuffley</p>	Site allocation policy	<p>HS26 - permission granted, under construction (5 units, instead of 6) HS27 – under consideration (73 units, instead of 60) HS28 – permission granted (121 units) HS29 – no application submitted yet HS30 – part (14 units of 75) under consideration</p> <p>The policy should be retained until all sites are completed. Amend to reflect updates to numbers/latest position on site</p>		Yes	Local Change
Rural Development					
<p>SP 24 Rural Areas</p>	Supports proposals which contribute to rural economies, limited infill and re-use of buildings, and facilities which support rural	<p>In general conformity with NPPF, but check exact wording since changes to NPPF 2023</p> <p>NPPF 2023 places additional emphasis in NPPF supporting development in rural</p>	NPPF Rural Housing para 82-84; Supporting a	No	

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	communities	areas	prosperous rural economy para 88-89		
SADM 34 Development within the Green Belt	Sets out that planning applications in the Green Belt will be assessed in line with the provisions of the NPPF. Includes supplementary criteria to aid decision making	Generally in conformity with NPPF, but check exact wording since changes to NPPF 2023 Major Developed Sites – do these need review? Any additional criteria useful for decision making?	NPPF Ch13; para 127 b) (w.r.t. major developed sites)	Yes	National Policy Change
SADM 35 Site Allocations within Rural Areas	Site allocation policy	The site does not currently have planning permission. The policy should be retained until the site has been completed	PPTS, G&T Needs Assessment	No	G&T needs assessment to be updated
SP 25 Neighbourhood Planning	Sets out that Neighbourhood Plans are to be in general conformity with strategic objectives and strategic policies of Local Plan	Accords with national guidance and the Localism Act 2011	NPPF para 29-30	No	