

Oaklands College & Land south of Sandpit Lane, St Albans

Education Report (Oaklands Blossom)

October 2025



Education Report

Oaklands Blossom and Oaklands
College, Sandpit Lane, St Albans

Taylor Wimpey and Oaklands College

BEN HUNTER
BA DipMS

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1.0 Introduction

1.1 This Education Report is in relation to a Hybrid Planning Application which seeks to bring forward a new mixed-use development for education facilities at Oaklands College and new residential dwellings, extra care units, new local centre, community floorspace and provision of land for a primary school at Oaklands College on land located south of Sandpit Lane, St Albans.

1.2 The description of the development as a “hybrid” planning application is as follows:

A Hybrid planning application for a severable phased development comprising:

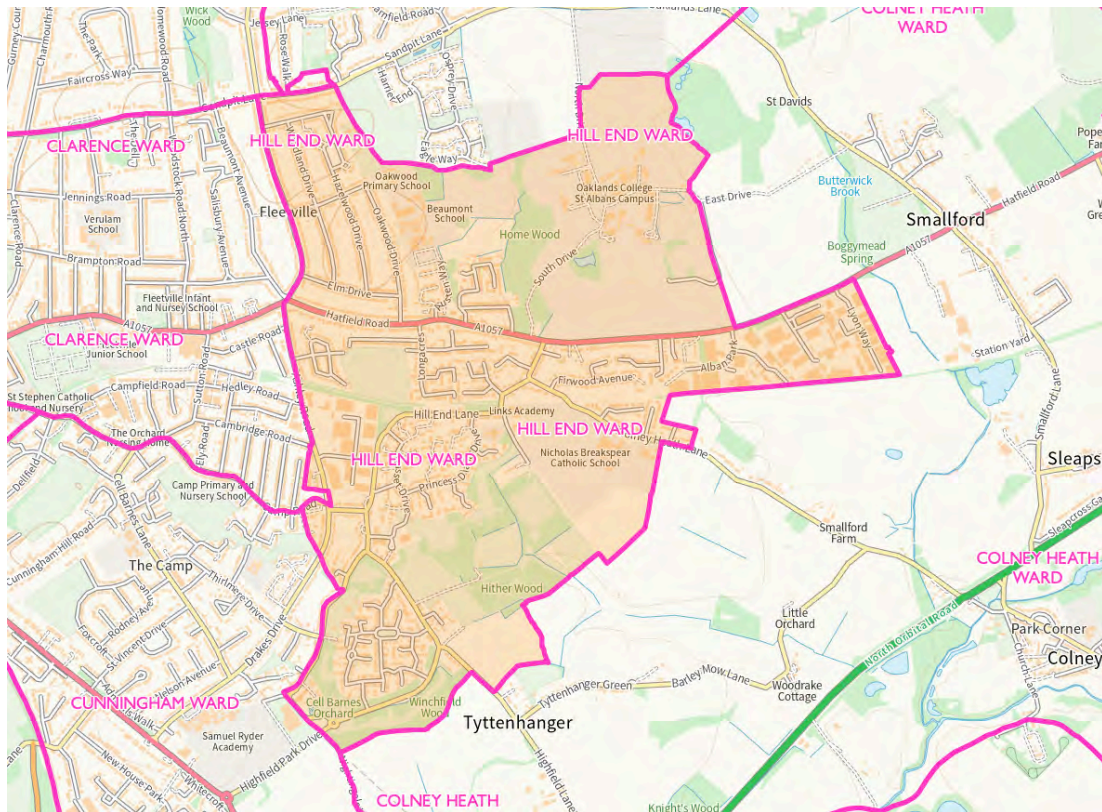
- *Full planning application for the construction of homes (use class C3); new local centre and community facility (use classes E(a to f) and F); a children’s home (use class C2); demolition and renovation of existing college buildings; construction of new college buildings (use class F1.); the creation of Active Travel Routes including footpaths for walking, cycling and equestrian activities; removal and planting of trees; along with the laying out of green infrastructure (including publicly accessible open space) and habitat creation; drainage infrastructure, earthworks, new means of access and alterations to existing access points.*
- *Outline planning application (access only, all other matters reserved) for the construction new homes (use class C3); new extra care home dwellings (use class C2); land for the construction of a new primary school (use class F.1); demolition and renovation of existing college buildings; construction of new college buildings (use class F1.); the construction of new sports facilities and pitches; the creation of Active Travel Routes including footpaths for walking, cycling and equestrian activities; removal and planting of trees; new energy centre; new recycling facilities; new car parking facilities; along with the laying out of green infrastructure and habitat creation; drainage infrastructure, earthworks, pedestrian and cycle routes, alterations to existing access points.*
- *The phasing of the development is indicative allowing different phases to commence at different times and independently (severable) from each other. The outline phases are the subject of parameter plans and design codes.*

1.3 The approximate redline boundary of the development can be seen below in Map 1:



Map 1: Approximate Development Outline

1.4 Oaklands College is located within the Hill End Ward (“the Ward”), with some of this development site also being located within the neighbouring Marshalswick East and Jersey Farm Ward, within the St Albans City and District Council (“SACDC”) Planning Area. The Education Authority for the area is Hertfordshire County Council (“HCC”). Map 2 demonstrates the Ward boundaries:



Map 2: Ward Map

1.5 This Report looks in detail at the trends in dwelling delivery, of births and the age of the population over the last decade to create a context for this proposed development. The history of dwelling delivery identifies the likely proportion of new households, which are characterised by a younger population. The trend in birth numbers, too, is often linked to dwelling delivery and, if rising, to younger populations. Births also indicate the future demand for school places. Finally, the trend in the median age of the population is an indicator of the nature of the area and how sustainable it is. The assumption is that the population should reflect national norms, which includes its ageing. When the balance of dwelling delivery does not maintain the median age of the population at around the national norm, there are implications for social infrastructure.

1.6 Existing local schools are identified and mapped with Google Earth, providing the approximate walking distances from the proposed development. The relevant schools, having been sorted by distance, are then described for capacity, numbers of pupils by age, and occupancy levels, all at January 2025 (the previous academic year).

1.7 SACDC is not a Community Infrastructure Levy (“CIL”) charging authority. On that basis, any education-related development mitigation will be expected to be secured via Section 106 planning obligations.

1.8 This Report will explore the existing education landscape, but first will look at the demographic data of the area, in order to understand the local context in which the new residents will be located.

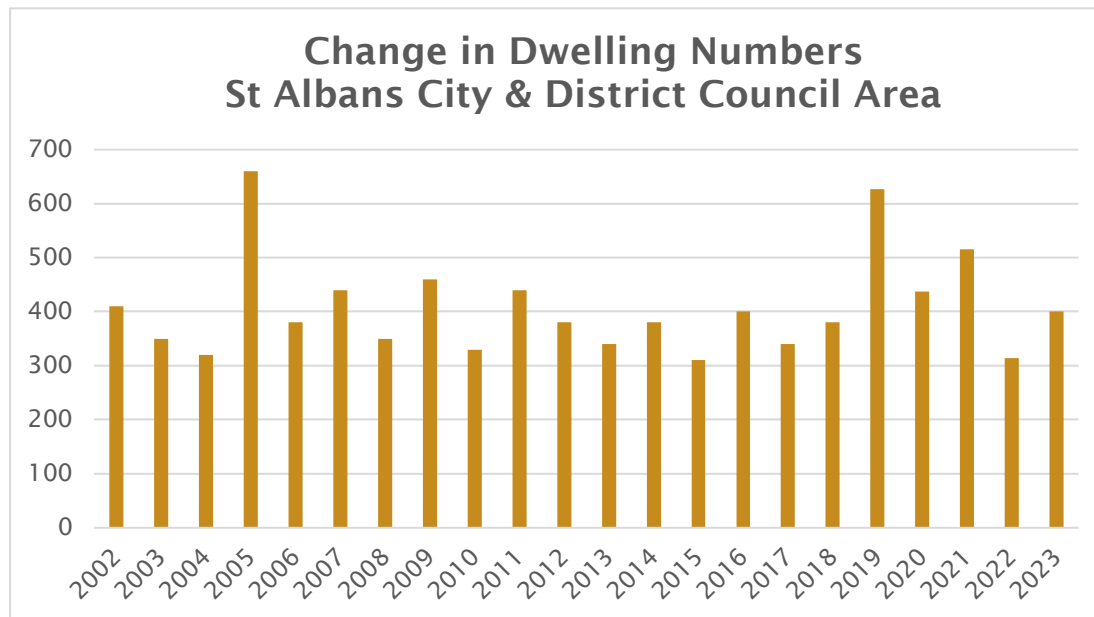
2.0 Dwellings

2.1 The SADC administrative area consisted of 54,160 dwellings at mid-2001. By mid-2023, this had increased to 62,715 dwellings. This is an additional 8,965 dwellings (an increase of 17%) or an average of 408 new dwellings per annum:

2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
54,160	54,510	54,830	55,490	55,870	56,310	56,660	57,120	57,450	57,890	58,270
2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
58,610	58,990	59,300	59,700	60,040	60,420	61,047	61,484	62,000	62,314	62,715

Table 1: Dwelling Numbers in the SACDC Administrative Area

2.2 The trend in new housing delivery can be seen below in Graph 1. It demonstrates that new dwelling delivery has been reasonably consistent over the previous two decades:



Graph 1: Change in Dwelling Numbers per Annum - SACDC

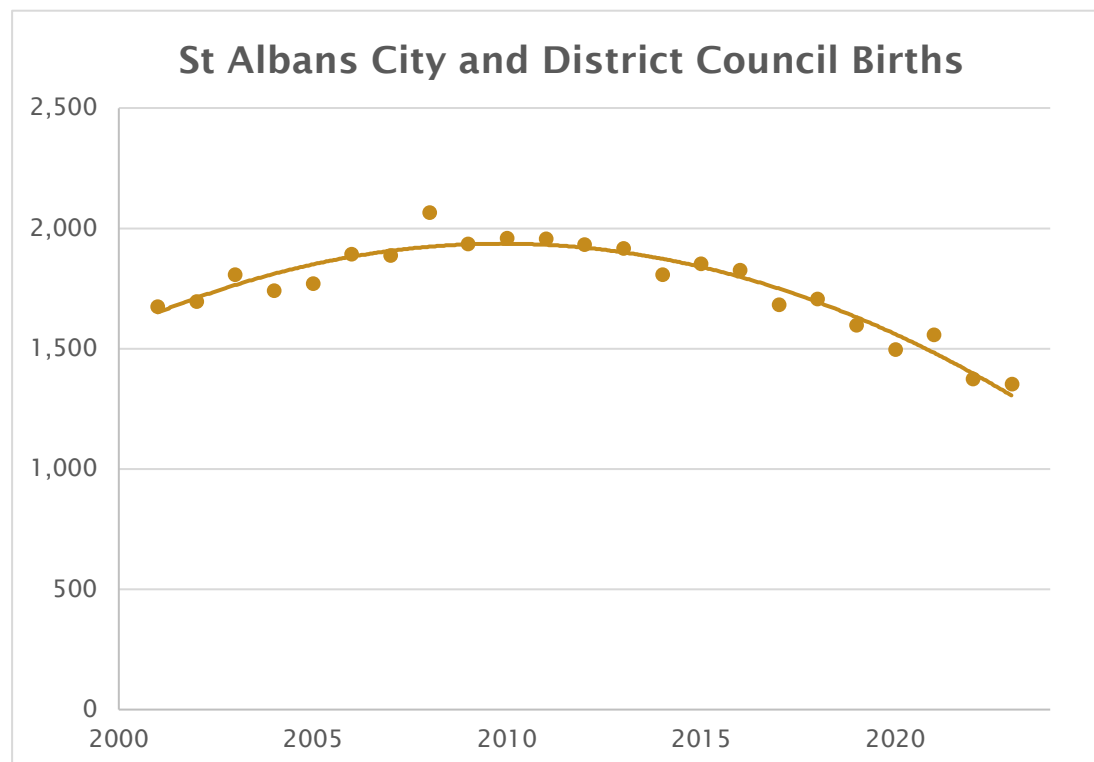
3.0 Births

3.1 Births in the SACDC administrative area averaged 1,759 per annum in the period 2001-2023. Births peaked in 2008 at 2,064, and were at their lowest in 2023 at 1,352:

2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
1,693	1,805	1,740	1,769	1,890	1,885	2,064	1,933	1,958	1,954	1,932
2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
1,916	1,807	1,851	1,824	1,682	1,704	1,595	1,494	1,557	1,372	1,352

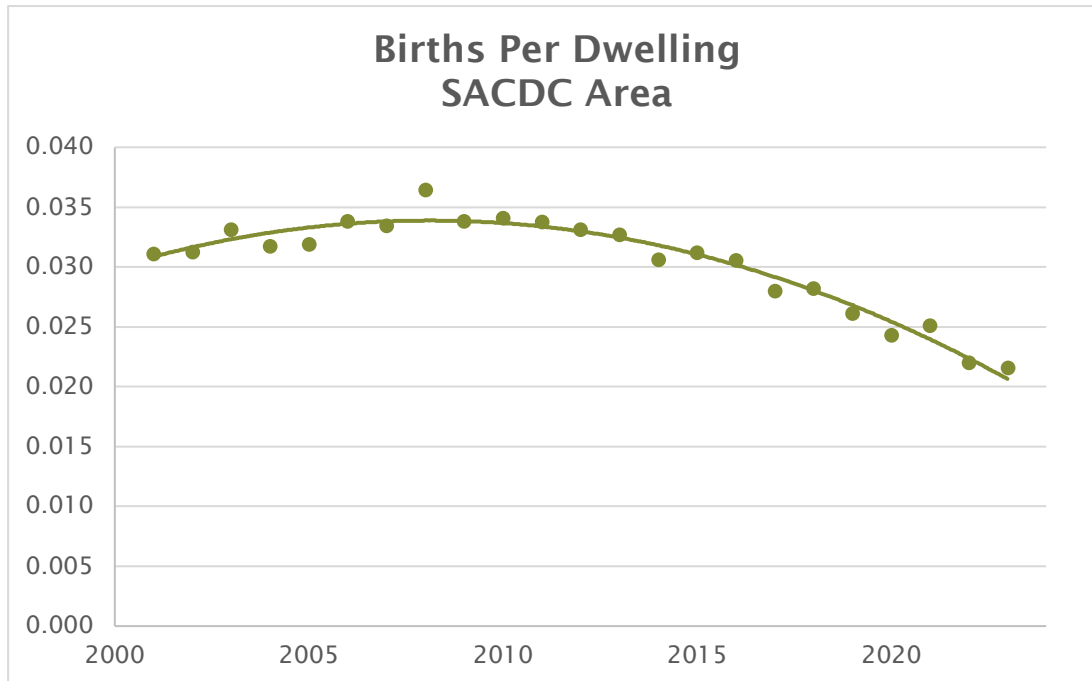
Table 2: Births in the SACDC Administrative Area

3.2 The trend over the review period can be seen below in Graph 2. It demonstrates that there has a significant fall in birth numbers in recent years. Births fell 34% from the peak in 2008. This falling trend in births is consistent with the wider population of the UK, where in 2023 births were the lowest they had been nationwide since 1977.



Graph 2: SACDC Area Births per Annum

3.3 When looking at the births per dwelling in the SACDC area, they are falling significantly, demonstrating that birth numbers are not keeping pace with housing delivery:



Graph 3: Births per Dwelling – SACDC Area

4.0 Age

4.1 This report has reviewed the median age profile of the SACDC administrative area and the national picture. In the year 2001, the difference between the median age profile of St Alban's population and the wider national picture was zero – the age profile was an accurate reflection of the wider UK. In 2021, the SACDC area had a median age of 42, which is circa one-year older than the national picture:

Code	E07000240
Name	St Albans
Geography	Non-metropolitan District
Mid 2024	42.2
Mid 2023	42.1
Mid 2022	42
Mid 2021	41.7
Mid 2020	41.5
Mid 2019	41.3
Mid 2018	41
Mid 2017	40.6
Mid 2016	40.3
Mid 2015	40.1
Mid 2014	39.9
Mid 2013	39.8
Mid 2012	39.8
Mid 2011	39.6

Table 3: Median Age Change

4.2 To summarise the demographic data of the administrative area: new dwelling delivery has been consistent throughout the previous two decades; birth numbers are at a historic low in the SACDC area; and the age profile is marginally older than that of the wider population of the UK.

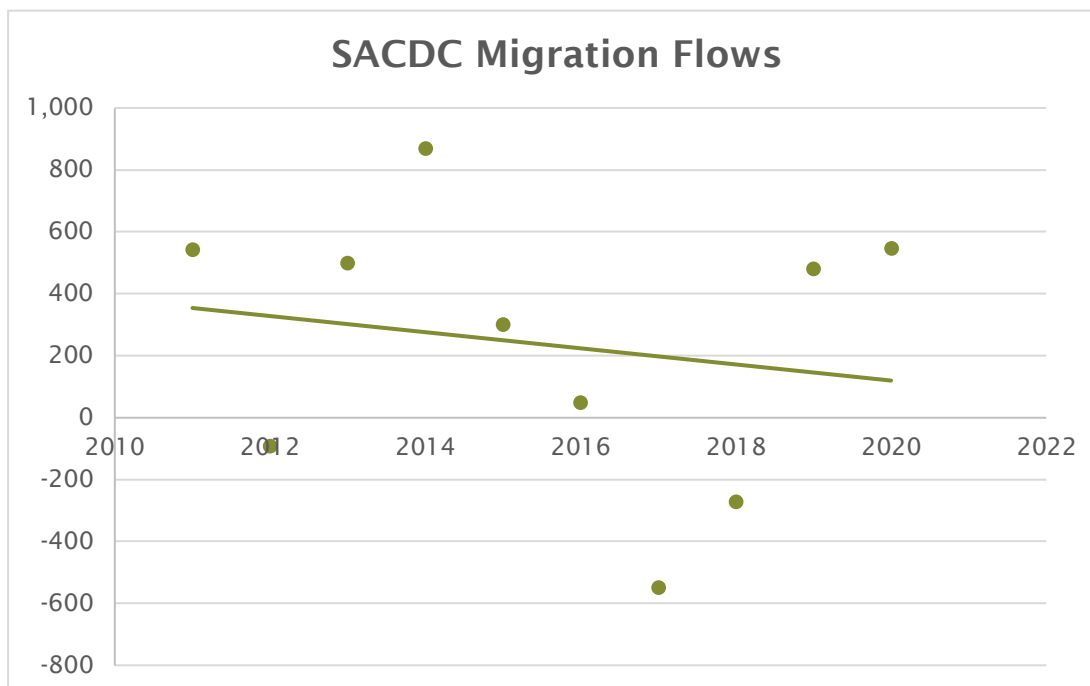
5.0 Migration

5.1 When looking at the inward and outward migration data of people moving in and out of the SACDC administrative area, of the ten most recent financial years for which data is available, the SACDC area has been a net importer of people in seven of those years. The average a net inward migration of 237 per annum moving to the area from a different one:

Year	Mid Year Population Estimate	Long-Term International Migration		Internal Migration (within UK)		Change	
		Inflow	Outflow	Inflow	Outflow		
2010/11	141,248	772	897	7,812	7,146	541	0.38%
2011/12	142,137	597	938	8,154	7,906	-93	-0.07%
2012/13	143,458	635	679	8,198	7,655	499	0.35%
2013/14	145,208	769	518	8,599	7,981	869	0.60%
2014/15	146,188	828	459	8,210	8,279	300	0.21%
2015/16	147,025	907	412	7,817	8,263	49	0.03%
2016/17	147,095	807	498	8,446	9,304	-549	-0.37%
2017/18	147,373	799	626	8,615	9,060	-272	-0.18%
2018/19	148,452	706	516	9,251	8,960	481	0.32%
2019/20	149,317	635	543	8,371	7,917	546	0.37%

Table 4: Migration Flows in the SACDC Administrative Area

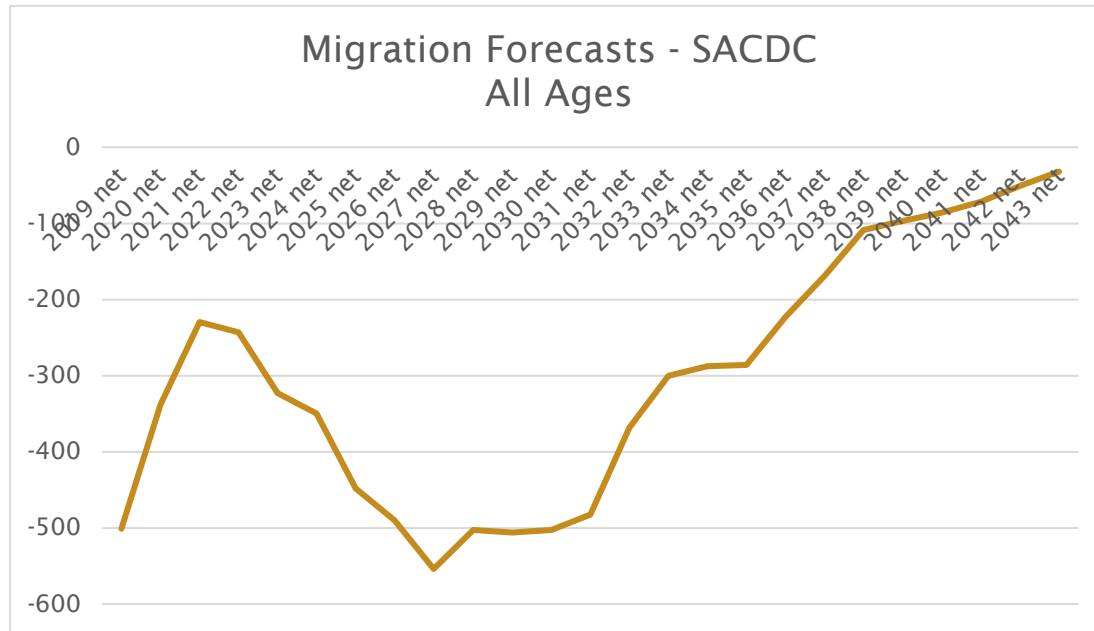
5.2 When plotting these numbers on a graph, it is evident that the trend is a falling one. The peak of inward migration was in 2013/14 at a net 869 people, whereas the peak of outward migration was seen in 2016/17 with a net 549 people leaving the administrative area:



Graph 4: Migration Flows in the SACDC Administrative Area

5.3 Looking further ahead at migration projections produced by the Office for National Statistics (“ONS”) up to 2043, it is forecast the number of new people moving

out of the area will be a net 7,553. In other words, ONS expects more people leaving than entering the SACDC area in the next two plus decades:



Graph 5: ONS Migration Projections

5.4 ONS produced projections for the migration of individual age groups, which is shown below in Table 5. This suggests that the SACDC area will be a net importer of children of all ages between now and 2043. They are forecasting an average of 136 Early Years aged children moving in to the area per annum; an average of 134 (0.64FE) Primary School aged children moving in to the area per annum; and finally, an average of 57 (0.38FE) Secondary School aged children moving in to the area per annum:

Age Group	2019 net	2020 net	2021 net	2022 net	2023 net	2024 net	2025 net	2026 net	2027 net	2028 net	2029 net	2030 net	2031 net	2032 net	2033 net	2034 net	2035 net	2036 net	2037 net	2038 net	2039 net	2040 net	2041 net	2042 net	2043 net	Average
0	29	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	31	31	31	32	32	33	33	33	33	33	33	33	31
1	50	49	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	51	51	52	52	53	54	54	55	55	56	56	56	52
2	22	21	21	22	22	22	22	22	22	22	22	23	23	23	23	24	24	25	25	26	26	26	26	26	26	23
3	25	30	29	28	29	29	29	29	29	29	29	29	29	29	29	29	30	30	30	31	31	32	32	32	32	30
4	26	25	29	28	27	28	28	28	27	27	27	27	27	27	27	28	28	28	28	28	29	29	30	30	30	28
5	19	18	18	21	20	19	19	19	19	19	19	19	19	19	19	19	19	19	19	20	20	20	20	21	21	19
6	12	14	13	13	15	14	14	14	14	14	14	14	14	14	14	14	14	14	14	14	14	15	15	15	15	14
7	11	13	14	13	13	16	15	14	14	14	14	14	14	14	14	14	14	14	14	14	14	15	15	15	15	14
8	19	21	22	22	22	24	23	22	22	22	22	22	21	21	21	21	21	21	21	21	21	21	22	22	22	22
9	4	5	7	9	10	9	9	11	11	10	10	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	10
10	25	25	26	27	27	29	28	28	29	28	28	27	27	27	27	27	27	26	26	26	26	26	26	26	26	27
11	17	19	19	20	22	22	23	23	22	24	24	22	22	22	22	22	22	22	22	22	22	22	22	22	22	22
12	14	14	15	15	15	17	18	19	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	17
13	4	3	2	4	3	4	5	6	8	7	7	9	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	7
14	6	5	4	4	5	4	5	6	7	9	9	8	10	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	8
15	2	3	1	1	0	1	1	2	2	3	3	4	3	5	4	4	4	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	3
16	10	9	9	9	8	9	8	9	9	10	11	11	11	12	11	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	11
0-3	126	130	130	130	131	131	131	131	131	131	131	132	132	134	134	136	138	140	142	144	145	146	147	147	147	136
4-10	116	121	129	135	134	137	137	137	136	134	134	134	133	133	133	134	133	133	133	133	135	136	139	139	140	134
11-15	43	44	41	44	45	48	52	56	57	65	61	62	61	62	61	61	61	62	62	62	62	62	62	62	62	57

Table 5: ONS Individual Age Group Migration Projections

5.5 When looking at the population forecasts of the St Albans area: in 2014, the SACDC administrative area had a population of 144,800 people. By 2039, this is

expected to increase to 177,700; this is an increase of 32,900 people (23%) over the 25-year period, or an average of 956 people per annum. When looking at households, they are expected to increase from 57,805 in 2014, to 73,666 in 2039; this is an increase of 15,861 households (27%), or an average of 634 per annum. Finally, the average household size is expected to decrease from 2.5 to 2.41 over the same period¹.

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
Population	144800	146200	147600	149200	150700	152400	154000	155600	157200	158700	160100	161500	162900
Households	57805	58408	59043	59703	60383	61063	61719	62367	63008	63651	64294	64923	65565
Av Household Size	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.49	2.49	2.49	2.49	2.49	2.48
Age 0-4	10400	10500	10400	10400	10500	10600	10800	10900	11000	11100	11200	11300	11300
Age 5-9	10400	10800	11100	11400	11300	11300	11300	11200	11200	11300	11500	11800	11700
Age 10-14	9100	9200	9500	9800	10400	10700	11000	11300	11600	11800	11500	11500	11500
Natural Household Growth	603	635	650	680	680	680	656	648	641	643	643	629	642
Local Plan													

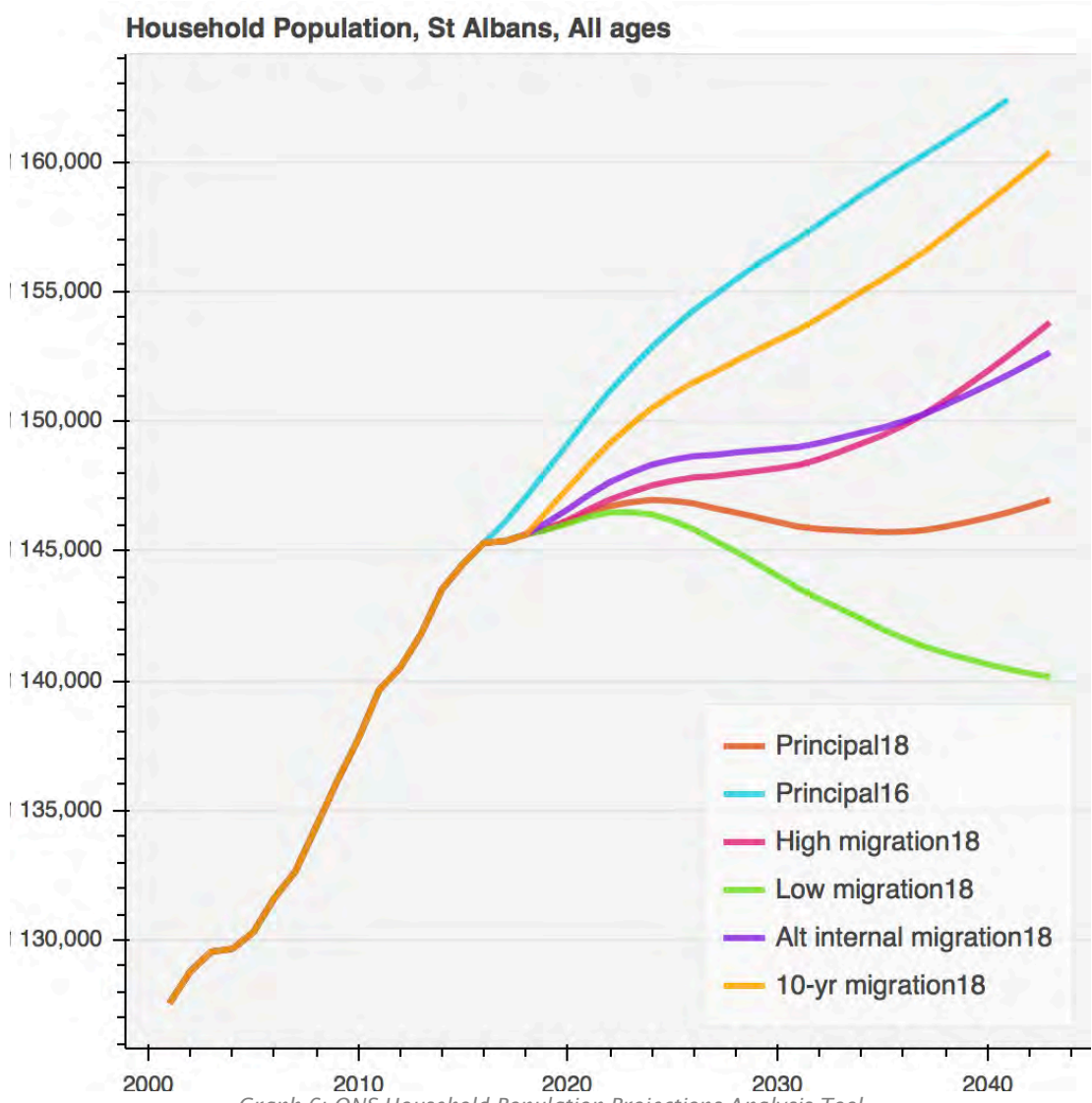
	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033	2034	2035	2036	2037	2038	2039
Population	164100	165400	166900	167600	168900	170100	171300	172500	173600	174600	175600	176600	177700
Households	66197	66827	67462	68097	68738	69367	69990	70612	71226	71848	72471	73076	73666
Av Household Size	2.48	2.48	2.47	2.46	2.46	2.45	2.45	2.44	2.44	2.43	2.42	2.42	2.41
Age 0-4	11400	11400	11400	11300	11300	11300	11200	11200	11200	11100	11200	11200	11200
Age 5-9	11800	12000	12000	12100	12100	12200	12200	12100	12100	12000	12000	12000	12000
Age 10-14	11800	11500	11700	11800	12000	12100	12200	12300	12300	12400	12400	12400	12300

Table 6: 2014 Population Forecasts

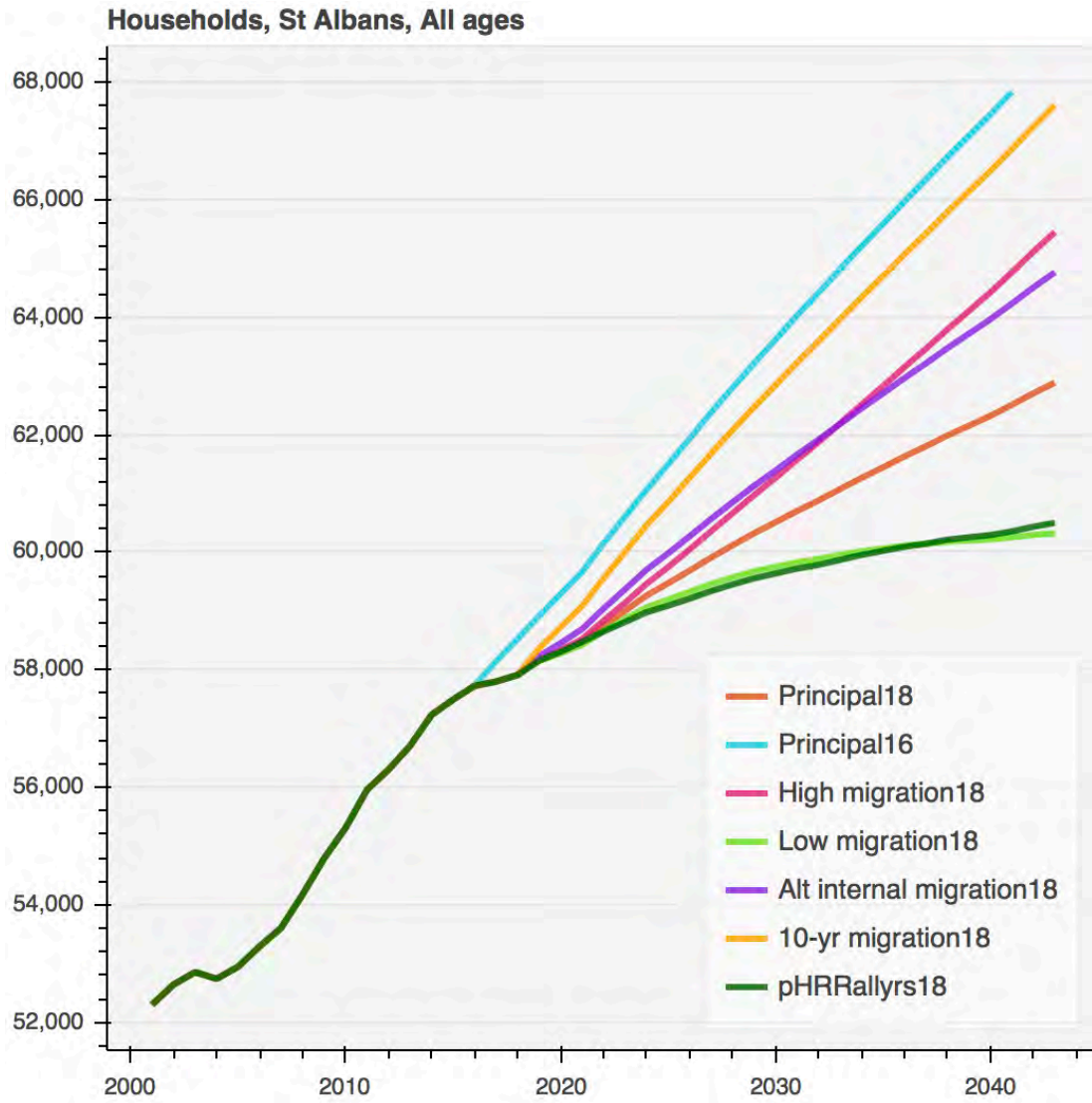
5.6 Comparing the 2016 population projections to the 2014 version shown above, they are lower, with the 2016 version projecting a population of 161,313 in 2039, compared to 177,700 in the 2014 projection. The Government has adopted the 2014 projection for the planning system as a safeguard.

5.7 ONS show a number of different scenarios below in Graphs 6 and 7 for projected population and household numbers. All of the scenarios show significant growth, with high migration being the biggest factor in potentially increasing both people and households into the forthcoming decades.

¹ The 2016 based forecasts tell the same story albeit at a slightly lower rate. For town planning purposes, the Government position is to retain the 2014 based forecasts.



Graph 6: ONS Household Population Projections Analysis Tool



Graph 7: ONS Household Projections Analysis Tool

6.0 Child Yield

6.1 HCC adopted their “Guide to Developer Infrastructure Contributions” in 2021². This discusses their demographic model for child yields, which is a methodology that HCC do not share in the public domain. What we do know is that HCC operate a Tier system for Primary School child yields:

- Tier 1 = 400 dwellings per 1FE (0.525 per dwelling)
- Tier 2 = 500 dwellings per 1FE (0.42 per dwelling)
- Tier 3 = 1,000 dwellings per 1FE (0.21 per dwelling)

6.2 Therefore, working on a worst-case scenario basis of 0.525 Primary School aged pupils per dwelling, and 0.36 Secondary School aged pupils per dwelling, the child yield of 472 dwellings can be seen below:

Dwelling Numbers	472
Primary	248 (1.2FE)
Secondary	170 (1.1FE)

Table 7: Child Yield Multipliers

6.3 In each of these cases the child yield numbers shown above can be considered the “worst-case scenario”, as this does not factor in any, for example, one-bedroom dwellings, elderly residential accommodation, or flatted development; the more of any of these types of dwellings that reside on the development, the lower the child yield will be expected to be.

6.4 As discussed, once the development mix goes through the demographic model, a more likely child yield will be in the region of 0.43 for Primary, which would equate to 203 Primary School aged pupils (circa 1FE). This figure will be used when assessing the need for new infrastructure provision on site.

6.5 There are a number of reasons why a higher than average child yield has been seen in Hertfordshire: a more commercially focused dwelling mix of new developments; a decade of very low interest rates (which may now be at an end); the

² <https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/about-the-council/freedom-of-information-and-council-data/open-data-statistics-about-hertfordshire/who-we-are-and-what-we-do/property/planning-obligations-guidance.aspx#developercontributions>

Help to Buy programme; a broader range of shared ownership options; novel mortgage arrangements skewed towards younger households; the way that new housing is marketed; and the spare room penalty applicable to social rented homes. The result is a concentration of families with young children on new housing developments, despite a fall in the number of births, and as a consequence fewer children overall.

6.6 Net migration to new dwellings increases the number of pupils locally, but this need is predominantly focused in Reception Year in the primary phase, and Year 7 in the secondary phase. If a child is already in a Primary or Secondary School when they move on to this proposed development, they are very unlikely to change schools once habits have been formed. It is fair to say that a proportion of the children moving in to the new homes will already be in the school system, as a proportion of people moving in to new homes do not move far. There is also the consideration that a proportion of pupils will attend Independent Schools. Therefore, the likely impact on the school system will be less than forecast, and should be focused in either Reception Year or Year 7, as any other year group would likely necessitate a change of school.

6.7 The Department for Education (“DfE”) has produced Planning Policy Guidance for education entitled “Securing developer contributions for education”. A key point in the Guidance is that pupil yield factors should be based on up-to-date evidence from recent local housing developments. At its paragraph 32, the Guidance recommends costs to be based on the published ‘scorecards’. These are DfE published financial statements of school places delivery via extensions and new schools on an individual school and number of places basis, standardised to a regional factor of 1.00 and a common date. This is discussed further below.

6.8 When the DfE produced their latest best practice guidance (August 2023) they included a child yield study. The figures for St Albans can be seen below:

Year	LocalAuthority	EducationPhase	EducationType	TenureType	HousingType	Numberof...	Numberof...	Numero...	PupilYield
2021/22	St Albans	Early Years	Mainstream	All	All	All	133	2688	0.049479167
2021/22	St Albans	Post-16	Mainstream	All	All	All	39	2688	0.014508929
2021/22	St Albans	Primary	Mainstream	All	All	All	568	2688	0.211309524
2021/22	St Albans	Secondary	Mainstream	All	All	All	257	2688	0.095610119

Table 8: DfE Child Yield - SACDC

6.9 The figures in Table 9 are consistent with national averages, and considerably lower than Tiers 1 and 2 discussed previously.

6.10 Moving on to the costs per pupil place: the national average costs for new and expanded Primary and Secondary School places can be seen in the Table below:

Type	England	Type	England
New School	£24,416	New School	£29,579
Permanent Expansion	£20,450	Permanent Expansion	£28,127
Temporary Expansion	£9,668	Temporary Expansion	£10,854

Table 9: National School Costs (via 2024 Scorecards)

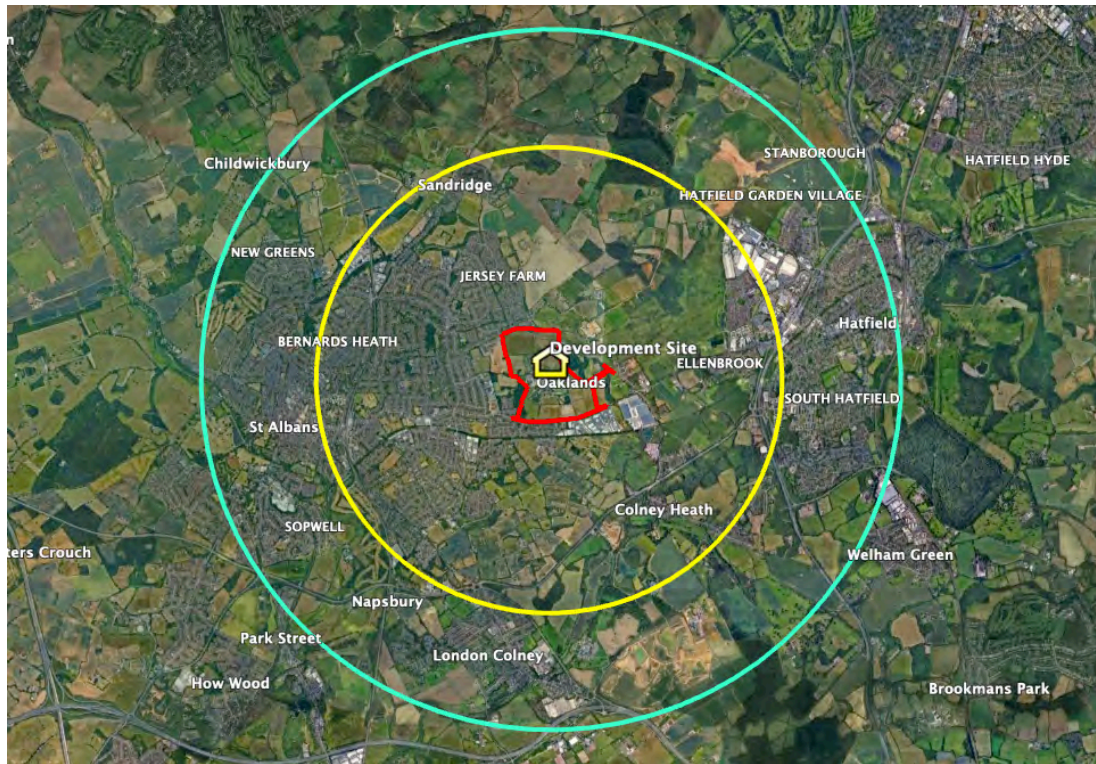
6.11 When this development comes forward, costs applied by HCC will have to be consistent with national averages, adjusted for Hertfordshire's regional weighting.

6.12 The remainder of this Report will look at the education landscape in order to establish whether additional school infrastructure projects are necessary in order to mitigate the impact of this development.

7.0 Schools

7.1 In our assessment, we consider all primary schools within a two-mile walking distance³, and all secondary schools that lie within a three-mile walking distance of the development. The two and three-mile criteria are the distances prescribed in the Education Act beyond which local authorities are required to provide/fund transport where the nearest available school is further away.

³ Distances have been calculated based upon coordinates near to the development. Once the development is built out, some parts of the site will be further/closer than shown.



Map 3: Two and Three-mile boundary around the development site

7.2 The authority is required to make pupil forecasts to the Department for Education on a year of age basis by 'school planning area' and identify each school in the cluster and its capacity. The forecasts cover the period for which birth data is available. Forecasts covered by Section 106 agreements are submitted separately to avoid double funding. For Primary School age pupils, the current published data runs to 2028/29 and for Secondary School aged pupils 2030/31. These are known as the School Capacity ("SCAP") returns. This is how Government allocates its funding for additional school places that are its responsibility to provide.

7.3 Schools should be operationally full to meet the financial audit requirement for best value from public assets. This is demonstrative of a properly functioning school system. School funding is predicated on the number of pupils that are on a school's roll, so it is in the best interest of schools to maximise intake within their capacity. Accordingly, many schools take from a wide catchment area and some enrol over capacity.

7.4 The statutory rules on enrolment are that whilst schools may have a catchment area and ordered criteria for admissions, the rules only apply if the school is oversubscribed. Otherwise, whoever applies is admitted irrespective of where they

live. This is known as ‘More Open Enrolment’. It fosters parental choice of school.

7.5 The overarching duty to provide sufficient schools and school places rests with central Government. (Education Act 1996 Section 11) The duty excludes those otherwise provided for (private education, home schooling, those in new housing with a **Section 106/CIL in place** (my emphasis)).

7.6 The education authority’s duty in such matters is to secure sufficient schools and school places for their area (Education Act 1996 Section 14). ‘For their area’:

The duties of a [local] education authority do not require the authority to secure the provision of schools for pupils from outside the area of the authority, even though it may be convenient for a pupil to attend a school in an area other than that in which he lives.⁴

7.7 Within the State-funded school sector there are Community Schools funded by the local authority, and there are other providers than the local authority; these are Academies, Free Schools, the Voluntary Sector (e.g. Church Schools) and Foundation Schools. Academies and Free Schools are funded directly by Central Government, whereas Church Schools and Foundation Schools are maintained by the local authority.

7.8 The provision of school places, where there is a shortfall, is made via a funding stream from the Department for Education (“DfE”) known as Basic Need. Basic Need funding is allocated as ‘a number of pupil places times a unit cost’, differentiated by school phase and local building costs. Allocations are made on the basis of projected shortfalls in local School Planning Areas against current pupil numbers and the actual numbers of school places in that Planning Area. Each planning area is treated as a discrete area and shortfalls met through the allocation of resources.⁵ A surplus in one school planning area is not offset against another with a shortfall. In this case, providing housing in the East St Albans Primary Planning Area (for whatever planning reason) will be reflected in the forecasts for the East St Albans Primary Planning Area, and nowhere else.

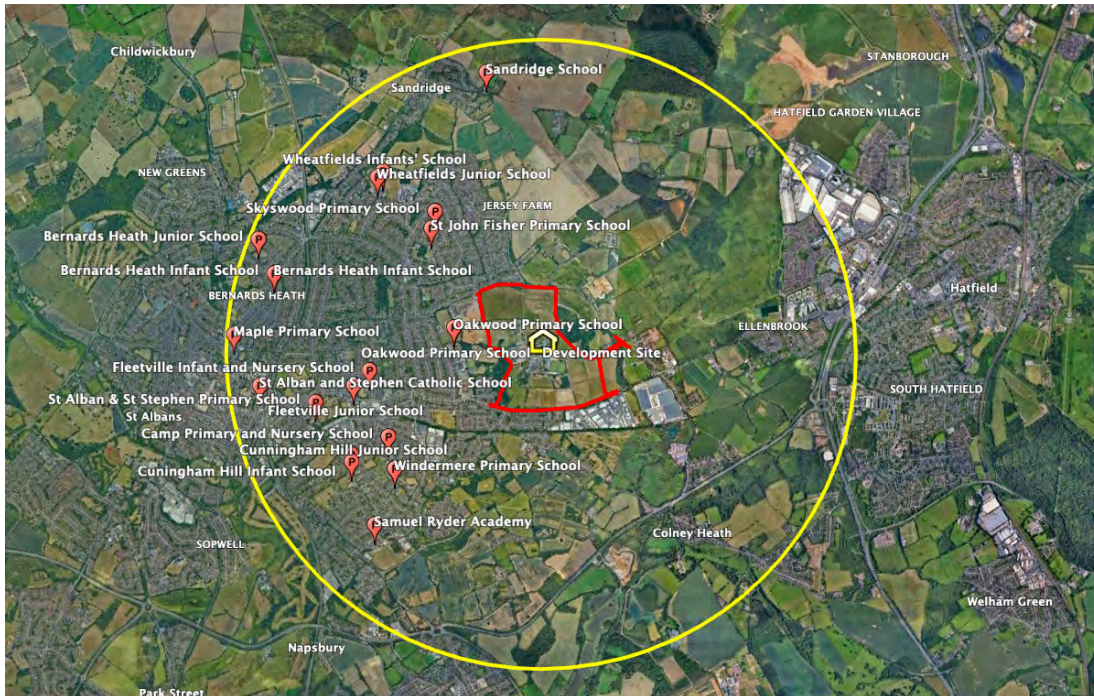
⁴ Law of Education

⁵ Capital Funding for School Places by 2021 – explanatory note on methodology

8.0 Primary Schools

8.1 There are currently 18 state funded schools accommodating primary school aged children within a two-mile radius of the development site. The schools are organised across three primary planning areas, all within the HCC administrative area.

8.2 The schools, in relation to the development site, can be seen below in Map 4:



Map 4: Schools within a two-mile radius of the development site

8.3 The latest school roll data (2024/25 academic year) in the public domain for the schools can be seen below in Table 10:

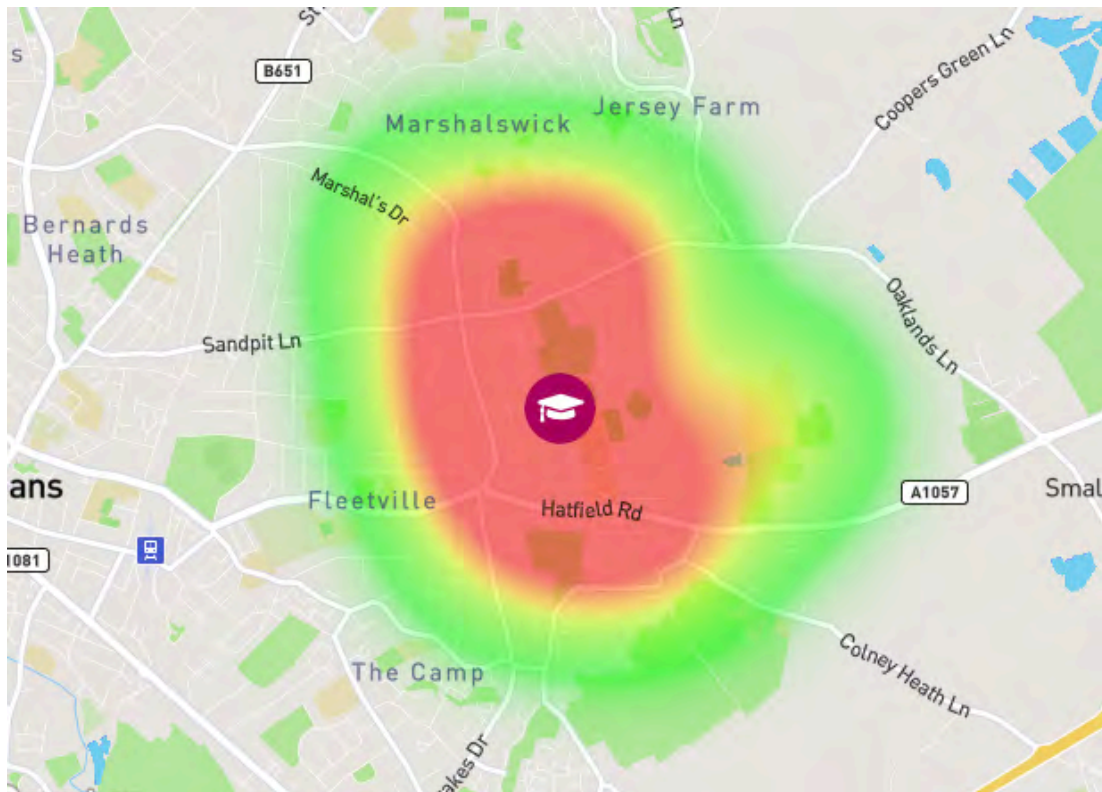
Primary School Name	Postcode	LA Name	Distance (miles)	Capacity	PAN	NoR	Yr R	Yr 1	Yr 2	Yr 3	Yr 4	Yr 5	Yr 6
Oakwood Primary School	AL4 0XA	Hertfordshire	1.1	315	45	313	42	45	45	45	45	44	47
Fleetville Inf/Jnr School	AL1 4LX	Hertfordshire	1.3	630	90	612	87	86	86	85	90	88	90
Skyswood Primary School	AL4 9R5	Hertfordshire	1.4	210	30	213	30	31	30	31	30	31	30
Camp Primary School	AL1 5PE	Hertfordshire	1.5	210	30	202	24	31	31	29	29	30	28
Cunningham Inf/Jnr School	AL1 5QJ	Hertfordshire	1.7	420	60	420	60	60	60	60	60	60	60
Wheatfields Inf/Jnr School	AL4 9NT	Hertfordshire	1.9	630	90	597	60	87	90	90	90	90	90
TOTAL				2,415	345	2,357	303	340	342	340	344	343	345
Surplus							42	5	33	35	31	32	30
Available Surplus %							12%	1%	10%	10%	9%	9%	9%

Table 10: School Roll Data (January 2025)

PAN = Planned Admission Number; NoR = Number on Roll

8.4 The closest school to the proposed new dwellings is Outwood Primary School. This is a 1.5FE primary school approximately 1.1-miles walking distance from a mid-point of the proposed new dwellings. The school, as of the 2024/25 academic year, was at capacity.

8.5 The area that the school draws pupils from, which is focused around the immediate vicinity of the school including the western portion of this development site, can be seen in the map below:



Map 5: Outwood Primary School Catchment Area Heat Map

8.6 When looking across the nine schools that are within statutory walking distance of the proposed new dwellings, they collectively have 208 spare places (1 FE), with the highest proportion of spare places in Reception Year, indicating that rolls may be falling.

8.7 Looking forward: six of the nine closest schools to the proposed new dwellings are grouped with three additional schools to form the East St Albans Primary Planning Area. The schools have a combined capacity of 2,625 pupil places:

Primary Planning A...	Time Period	School Name	Primary Capacity	Secondary Capa...
9191330	202324	Camp Primary and Nursery School	210	0
9191330	202324	Fleetville Junior School	360	0
9191330	202324	Fleetville Infant and Nursery School	270	0
9191330	202324	Windermere Primary School	210	0
9191330	202324	Oakwood Primary School	315	0
9191330	202324	Cunningham Hill Junior School	240	0
9191330	202324	Cunningham Hill Infant School	180	0
9191330	202324	St Alban & St Stephen Catholic Primary School & Nursery	420	0
9191330	202324	Samuel Ryder Academy	420	1120

Table 11: East St Albans Primary Planning Area Schools

8.8 HCC is forecasting that the roll numbers at these schools will fall significantly in the coming years, so that by the 2028/29 academic year they will have a collective spare capacity of 433 spaces, which is over 2FE's worth of spare capacity:

LA name	Year	Planning Area Code	Planning Area Name	Planning Area Phase	nc Year Group	Pupil Forecast...
Hertfordshire	202425	9191330	East St Albans	Primary	Primary total	2479
Hertfordshire	202526	9191330	East St Albans	Primary	Primary total	2429
Hertfordshire	202627	9191330	East St Albans	Primary	Primary total	2361
Hertfordshire	202728	9191330	East St Albans	Primary	Primary total	2273
Hertfordshire	202829	9191330	East St Albans	Primary	Primary total	2192

Table 12: HCC SCAP Forecasts

8.9 The number of spare Reception Year places is expected to rise from 57 (2FE) in 2025/26 to 80 in 2029/30, according to the latest projections by HCC. This is over 22% surplus capacity, and suggests that the pupils of this development will be able to be comfortably accommodated within the existing education landscape:

12.3 East St Albans		Places Available 2025-26	Actuals			Forecast				
School Code	School Name		2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30
2091	Camp Primary and Nursery School	30	30	30	24					
2094	Fleetville Infant and Nursery School	90	90	89	87					
2219	Windermere Primary School	30	17	19	10					
2227	Oakwood Primary School	45	45	45	42					
2332	Cunningham Hill Infant School	60	60	60	60					
3421	St Alban & St Stephen Catholic Primary School & Nursery	60	59	56	43					
4003	Samuel Ryder Academy	60	54	45	49					
Total Year R Pupil Demand			355	344	315	318	311	287	289	280
Total Year R Places Available		375				375	360	360	360	360
Surplus or Shortage of Year R Places (No.)						57	49	73	71	80
Surplus or Shortage of Year R Places (%)						15.2%	13.6%	20.3%	19.7%	22.2%
Surplus or Shortage of Year R Places (FE)						1.9	1.6	2.4	2.4	2.7

Table 13: East St Albans Planning Area Reception Projections

8.10 The remaining three schools within two-miles walking distance are grouped with five additional schools to form the North St Albans Primary Planning Area. These schools have a combined capacity of 2,520 pupil places:

Primary Planning A...	Time Period	School Name	Primary Capacity	Secondary Capa...
9191310	202324	Bernards Heath Infant and Nursery School	270	0
9191310	202324	Garden Fields Junior Mixed and Infant School	630	0
9191310	202324	Bernards Heath Junior School	360	0
9191310	202324	Margaret Wix Primary School	210	0
9191310	202324	Wheatfields Junior Mixed School	360	0
9191310	202324	Skyswood Primary & Nursery School	210	0
9191310	202324	Wheatfields Infants' and Nursery School	270	0
9191310	202324	St John Fisher Catholic Primary School, a Voluntary Academy	210	0

Table 14: North St Albans Primary Planning Area Schools

8.11 HCC is forecasting an even more significant fall in pupil numbers in this area so that by the 2028/29 academic year the schools are expected to have 748 spare places, which is over 3.5FE, or 30% surplus capacity.

LA name	Year	Planning Area Code	Planning Area Name	Planning Area Phase	nc Year Group	Pupil Forecast...
Hertfordshire	202425	9191310	North St Albans	Primary	Primary total	2158
Hertfordshire	202526	9191310	North St Albans	Primary	Primary total	2090
Hertfordshire	202627	9191310	North St Albans	Primary	Primary total	1959
Hertfordshire	202728	9191310	North St Albans	Primary	Primary total	1858
Hertfordshire	202829	9191310	North St Albans	Primary	Primary total	1772

Table 15: HCC SCAP Forecasts

8.12 HCC is forecasting that there will be 10% surplus capacity in Reception Year by 2029/30:

12.1 North St Albans		Places Available	Actuals			Forecast				
School Code	School Name		2025-26	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29
2090	Bernards Heath Infants' School	90	90	87	78					
2095	Garden Fields JMI School	30	60	50	46					
2168	Margaret Wix Primary School	30	14	17	14					
2258	Skyswood Primary and Nursery School	30	30	30	30					
2311	Wheatfields Infants' and Nursery School	60	90	89	60					
3403	St John Fisher Roman Catholic Primary School	30	12	10	12					
Total Year R Pupil Demand			296	283	240	248	213	217	224	216
Total Year R Places Available		270				270	240	240	240	240
Surplus or Shortage of Year R Places (No.)						22	27	23	16	24
Surplus or Shortage of Year R Places (%)						8.1%	11.3%	9.6%	6.7%	10.0%
Surplus or Shortage of Year R Places (FE)						0.7	0.9	0.8	0.5	0.8

Table 16: North St Albans Planning Area Reception Projections

8.13 HCC have confirmed in pre-application discussions their preference to see a primary school site reserved on this development, which has been agreed (a 1.6ha site for a 2FE primary school, which is within the Building Bulletin range for a 2FE school with no compromises on space standards). This is on the basis that schools within a safe, statutory walking distance of the proposed new dwellings are unlikely (according to HCC) to be able to accommodate the full child yield of this development. The Business Case for this infrastructure new provision, and for the school land to be provided to HCC, at the time that the dwellings are coming forward and HCC will have

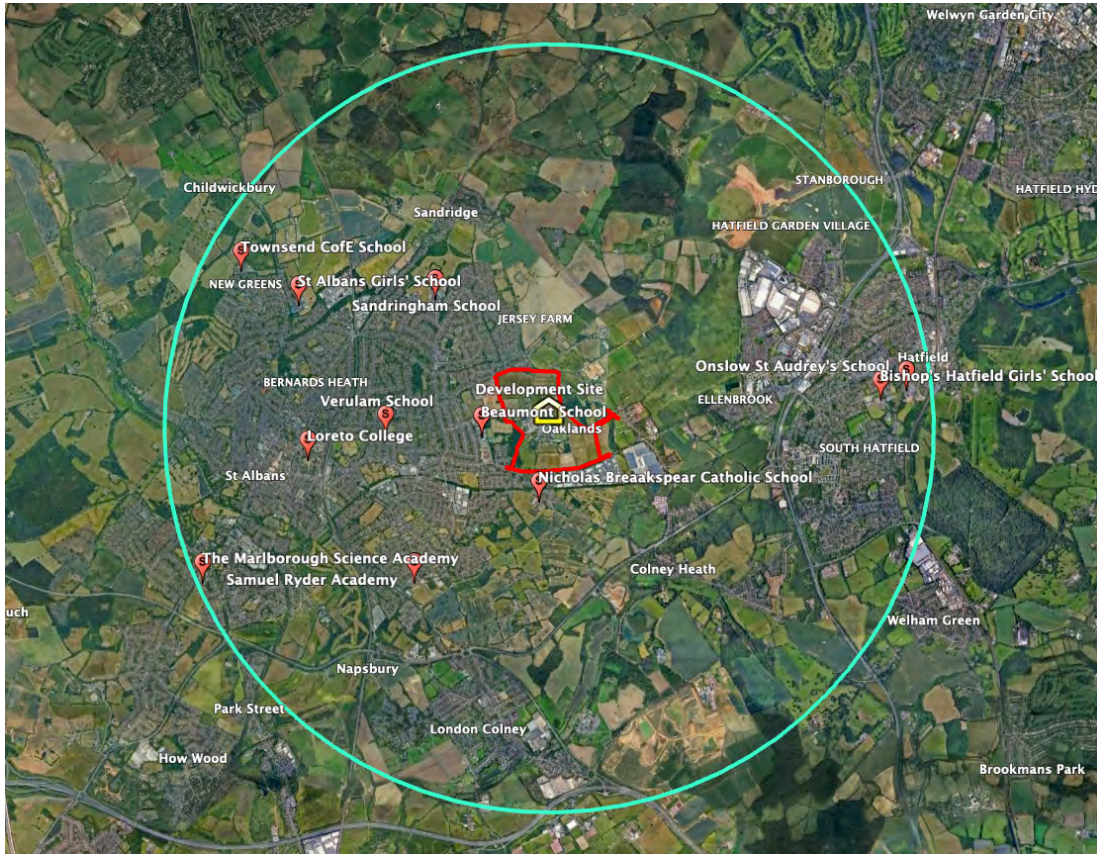
the opportunity to draw down the land, will need to be robust, especially as all of the projections are showing falling roll numbers and growing spare capacity. HCC will not want a new school delivered in an area with a lot of surplus capacity, as it will be detrimental to the schools already open and accepting children.

8.14 However, on the basis of safeguarding future provision, and prioritising place-making, HCC state that this is the preferred form of mitigation, and the Applicants have agreed to reserve this space to allow for this option to come forward if it is required. Accordingly, the primary school site is included in the description of the development, and discussions will be ongoing with HCC regarding the need for this provision at appropriate junctures.

9.0 Secondary Schools

9.1 There are 11 state funded schools accommodating secondary school aged children within a three-mile radius of the proposed new dwellings. The schools are all within the HCC administrative area, and are organised across two secondary planning areas. Of these schools, at least six are within three-miles walking distance of the development site.

9.2 The location of the schools in relation to the development site can be seen below in Map 6:



Map 6: Schools in relation to the Development Site

9.3 The latest school roll data in the public domain (2024/25 academic year) can be seen below in Table 17:

Secondary School Name	Postcode	LA Name	Distance (miles)	Capacity	PAN	NoR 7-11	Yr 7	Yr 8	Yr 9	Yr 10	Yr 11	Post 16
Beaumont School	AL4 0XB	Hertfordshire	0.8	1,580	240	1,142	240	242	240	211	209	509
Verulam School	AL1 4PR	Hertfordshire	1.5	1,200	180	774	148	148	150	175	153	210
Samuel Ryder School	AL1 SAR	Hertfordshire	1.8	1,120	205	1,014	203	229	203	194	185	166
Sandringham School	AL4 9NX	Hertfordshire	1.8	1,700	240	1,206	243	242	242	242	237	682
Loreto College	AL1 3RQ	Hertfordshire	1.9	970	150	776	150	150	159	159	158	154
St Albans Girls School	AL3 6DB	Hertfordshire	2.9	1,450	240	1,189	239	239	241	234	236	239
TOTAL				8,020	1,255	6,101	1,223	1,250	1,235	1,215	1,178	1,960
Surplus							32	5	-10	10	47	
Available Surplus %							3%	0%	-1%	1%	4%	

Table 17: Pupil Numbers – January 2025
NoR = Number on Roll; PAN = Planned Admission Number

9.4 The table above demonstrates that there were (2024/25 academic year) 84 spare places in the six closest schools to the proposed new dwellings. This is likely less than the total child yield of this development.

9.5 St Albans Secondary Schools are popular, and draw from a large geographical area beyond St Albans. This has been confirmed in discussions with HCC. However, as the majority of the pressure on places is within the secondary phase across Hertfordshire (which corresponds with births peaking around 2012 nationally and being high between 2008-2013 in St Albans) there is not a significant amount of spare capacity in alternative schools from the areas in which St Albans Secondary Schools draw pupils. On that basis, there is the potential to require either expansions or new provision to serve the area based on the current demand.

9.6 Looking forward, the six schools discussed above are grouped with three additional schools to form the St Albans Secondary Planning Area. The nine schools have a combined capacity of 9,275 pupil places in years 7-11, based on their admission numbers:

Secondary Planning ...	Time Period	School Name	Primary Capacity	Secondary Capa...
9190013	202324	Samuel Ryder Academy	420	1120
9190013	202324	Verulam School	0	1160
9190013	202324	Beaumont School	0	1600
9190013	202324	St Albans Girls' School	0	1450
9190013	202324	Sandringham School	0	1802
9190013	202324	Townsend Church of England School	0	933
9190013	202324	Loreto College	0	970
9190013	202324	Nicholas Breakspeare Catholic School	0	1056
9190013	202324	The Marlborough Science Academy	0	1308

Table 18: St Albans Secondary Planning Area Schools

9.7 In the 2024/25 academic year, the nine schools had a combined roll of 8,866 pupils, which equated to 409 spare places (5% surplus capacity). However, HCC is forecasting a fall in pupil numbers in the coming years, so that by the 2030/31 academic year, the schools will have a combined roll of 8,604, which is 671 spare places (4.5FE, or over 7% surplus capacity):

LA name	Year	Planning Area Code	Planning Area Name	Planning Area Phase	nc Year Group	Pupil Forecast...
Hertfordshire	202425	9190013	St Albans Secondary	Secondary	Secondary total	8866
Hertfordshire	202526	9190013	St Albans Secondary	Secondary	Secondary total	8898
Hertfordshire	202627	9190013	St Albans Secondary	Secondary	Secondary total	8924
Hertfordshire	202728	9190013	St Albans Secondary	Secondary	Secondary total	8913
Hertfordshire	202829	9190013	St Albans Secondary	Secondary	Secondary total	8851
Hertfordshire	202930	9190013	St Albans Secondary	Secondary	Secondary total	8710
Hertfordshire	203031	9190013	St Albans Secondary	Secondary	Secondary total	8604

Table 19: HCC SCAP Forecast

9.8 The number of spare places in Year 7 by 2031/32 is expected to be 255, which is 8.5FE, or over 14% surplus capacity. This is due to the forecast smaller numbers of pupils working their way through the primary phase in to secondary.

12 St Albans		Places Available	Actuals			Forecast						
School Code	School Name		2025-26	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30	2030-31
4003	Samuel Ryder Academy	205	204	230	203							
4011	Verniam School	190	199	133	148							
4043	Berunmont School	240	240	243	240							
4083	St Albans Girls' School	240	240	237	239							
4197	Stammingham School	240	242	240	243							
4606	Townsend CofE School	180	149	137	127							
4620	Larson College	180	160	140	150							
5412	Nicholas Breakspen Catholic School	180	186	183	183							
5414	The Marlborough Science Academy	240	236	239	239							
Total Year 7 Pupil Demand			1,816	1,793	1,772	1,746	1,719	1,743	1,716	1,641	1,640	1,540
Total Year 7 Places Available		1,855				1,855	1,795	1,795	1,795	1,795	1,795	1,795
Surplus or Shortage of Year 7 Places (No.)						109	76	51	85	154	155	255
Surplus or Shortage of Year 7 Places (%)						5.9%	4.2%	2.8%	4.7%	8.5%	8.6%	14.2%
Surplus or Shortage of Year 7 Places (PE)						3.0	2.5	1.7	2.8	5.1	5.2	8.5

Table 20: St Albans Secondary Planning Area Year 7 Projections

9.9 As discussed previously, HCC has confirmed through pre-app consultation in relation to this project that although St Albans Secondary Schools are popular, and draw from a wide geographical area, there is not a significant amount of provision available outside of St Albans, which may necessitate new provision.

9.10 The requirement for a new secondary school will not be within the redline boundary of this development, and is not required to be delivered as part of the proposals, or included within any Section 106 agreement. If land is secured by HCC, it will be dealt with separately by HCC directly.

9.11 The need for new secondary school provision is still very much an uncertainty, as if the projections produced by HCC are accurate, there would no Business Case for this new provision due to falling rolls and growing spare capacity. It would be a detriment to the existing secondary school landscape, and would therefore not be a good use of public funds.

9.12 However, if there is significant growth in and around St Albans, and the projections change in the coming years, HCC has a strategy in order to be able to deliver new provision, and this development can contribute proportionately towards said infrastructure.

10.0 Early Years

10.1 Under the Childcare Act 2006, local authorities have specific duties to secure:

- Sufficient and suitable childcare places to enable parents to work, or to undertake education or training which could lead to employment
- Sufficient and suitable early years places to meet predicted demand

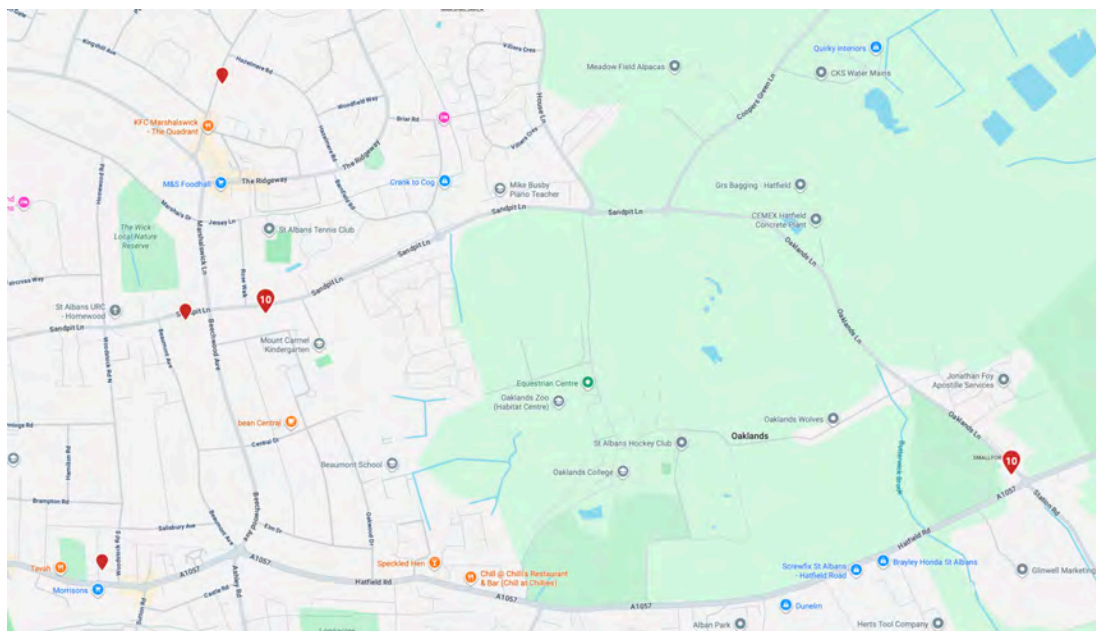
- Free early years provision for all 3 and 4-year olds (and more recently the 40% most vulnerable 2-year olds) of 15 hours per week 38 weeks per year.

10.2 The Childcare Act 2016 includes an extension to the current entitlement and, from September 2017, provides an additional 15 hours (per week 38 weeks per year) of free childcare for 3 and 4-year old children from working families who meet the following criteria:

- Both parents are working (or the sole parent is working in a lone parent family)
- Each parent earns, on average, a weekly minimum equivalent to 16 hours at national minimum wage and less than £100,000 per year.

10.3 HCC's Early Years child yield averages 0.07 pupils per dwelling, which means that a development of 472 dwellings would generate 33 Early Years aged children. If a 2FE primary school facility is provided on site, this would provide 52 pupil places, and would accommodate the entirety of the development's child yield.

10.4 There are also private facilities accommodating nursery age children that would be able to accommodate the demand, especially as birth numbers are falling generally across St Albans, which should indicate growing spare capacity.



Map 7: Nurseries near to the development site

10.5 Early Years provision will be included in ongoing discussions with HCC as the development progresses.

11.0 Special Education Needs

11.1 If HCC can demonstrate that there is a shortfall of available provision, planning obligations may be justifiable. The DfE states in their latest PPG on securing education planning obligations (August 2023):

We advise you to seek developer contributions for expansions required to sixth form and special educational needs and disabilities (SEN) provision, commensurate with the need arising from the development.

11.2 This demonstrates that the best practice guidance supports the requesting of SEN contributions if they are needed, although again establishing that direct need is problematic.

11.3 Government statistics suggest that in 2024 4.7% of children in the UK have an EHC plan/Statement of SEN. 14% of the UK's school age child population has some form of SEN but no EHC plan. Nationally, there is not sufficient SEN provision to accommodate the demand, which is growing.

11.4 There are seven different types of SEN in Hertfordshire:

Learning disabilities schools (LD)

Severe learning difficulty or disability schools (SLD)

**Physical and/or neurological impairment schools/
special provision (PNI)**

Schools for the deaf/ special provision

**Social, emotional and mental health difficulties schools
(SEMH)**

**Autism and / or social, emotional and behavioural
difficulties school**

**Mainstream bases for speech, language and
communication needs (SLCN)**

11.5 HCC requests funding from all developments that are expected to generate children with some form of SEND. Their adopted Guide states (paragraph 2.21, page 14):

Where existing capacity is unable to mitigate the impact of development, the county council will seek planning obligations to create new provision, whether through the expansion of existing special schools or specialist provision, or through the creation of new special schools or specialist resource provision in mainstream schools.

11.6 Around 50% of all children with some form of SEN are accommodated in mainstream Education rather than specialist provision. SEND will be included in discussions with HCC as this development progresses.

12.0 Conclusion

12.1 This development has safeguarded space for a primary school on site, which can be delivered by HCC if the evidence demonstrates that this is necessary at the time land can be drawn down. Consultation with HCC on the need for secondary, early years and SEND development mitigation is ongoing. While the projections show falling rolls and growing spare capacity, there is the potential for this to be reversed if there is considerable growth in the area. If that is the case, the development can contribute proportionately towards additional provision.

Ben Hunter

Associate Director – Education and Social Infrastructure

EFM
