

Employment and Economy Topic Paper (February 2025)

1 Introduction

- 1.1 Three Rivers District Council is preparing a new Local Plan, which will guide development up to 2041. In order to explain and support many of the themes in the emerging Local Plan, the Council will produce a number of topic papers, which present background information and evidence to set the scene for discussion and engagement.
- 1.2 The topic papers are intended to be 'living' documents, which will be updated throughout the plan-making process in order to reflect updated evidence, changes to the policy context, and the outcomes of the various stages of consultation and engagement. The topic papers do not contain any policies, proposals, or site allocations.
- 1.3 This Employment and Economy Topic Paper aims to provide a holistic overview of the important subject of employment and economy, important elements within the emerging Local Plan. The topic paper provides a summary of relevant national and local policy as well as discussing local context. A review of the evidence base guiding the emerging Local Plan is undertaken, with specific regard being given to the findings of the South-West Hertfordshire Economic Study (September 2024), prepared by Hatch.
- 1.4 In addition to providing housing, the economic development of the District needs to be considered. This includes meeting the projected need for a range of employment uses including office uses, industry and warehousing uses, public and community uses, leisure and tourism uses and main town centre uses.
- 1.5 The economy of the south-west Hertfordshire functional economic market area (Dacorum, Hertsmere, St Albans, Three Rivers and Watford) is highly dependent on professional services as well as construction, retail and hospitality. These sectors provide the greatest opportunity for economic growth in the future. Three Rivers specifically has a strong TV and Film sector (at Warner Bros. Studios Leavesden and Langleybury) and a high concentration of knowledge-based industries.
- 1.6 The influence of surrounding areas on the economy of Three Rivers is also significant. This is demonstrated for example by the relatively high levels of out-commuting from the District, reflecting proximity to the London job market and to other larger centres such as Watford and Hemel Hempstead. However, it must be noted that current data suggests that since Covid, the level of commuting into London has fallen significantly (although this trend may reverse in the future).
- 1.7 Employment in the area has continued to grow at a strong rate and there has been a large fall in unemployment in recent years. This combined with out-commuting from the District could limit the labour supply. As such, growth levels planned for in the Local Plan will assist in providing a significant boost to the labour supply and local economy more generally.

2 Policy Context

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

2.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) published in December 2024 sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these should be applied. It provides a framework within which Local plans must be produced.

2.2 The NPPF states that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. Paragraph 8 sets out the three objectives that contribute towards sustainable development as a.) economic b.) social and c.) environmental. The economic objective is as follows:

“to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure”.

2.3 Building a Strong, Competitive Economy

2.4 Chapter 6 of the NPPF is titled “building a strong, competitive economy”

2.5 Paragraph 85 of the NPPF states that *“planning policies and decisions should help create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt. Significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity, taking into account both local business needs and wider opportunities for development. The approach taken should allow each area to build on it...”*

2.6 Paragraph 86 expands on this setting out that planning policies should:

- *“Set out a clear economic vision and strategy which positively and proactively encourages sustainable growth, having regard to Local Industrial Strategies and other local policies for economic development and regeneration*
- *“Set criteria, and identify strategic sites, for local and inward investment to match the strategy and to meet anticipated needs over the plan period;*
- *“Pay particular regard to facilitating development to meet the needs of a modern economy, including by identifying suitable locations for uses such as laboratories, gigafactories, data centres, digital infrastructure, freight and logistics;*
- *“Seek to address potential barriers to investment, such as inadequate infrastructure, services or housing, or a poor environment; and*
- *“be flexible enough to accommodate needs not anticipated in the plan, and allow for new and flexible working practices and spaces to enable a rapid response to changes in economic circumstances”*

2.7 Paragraph 87 sets out that *“planning policies and decisions should recognise and address the specific locational requirements of different sectors. This includes making provision for:*

- a) *clusters or networks of knowledge and data-driven, creative or high technology industries; and for new, expanded or upgraded facilities and*

infrastructure that are needed to support the growth of these industries (including data centres and grid connections);

- b) storage and distribution operations at a variety of scales and in suitably accessible locations that allow for the efficient and reliable handling of goods, especially where this is needed to support the supply chain, transport innovation and decarbonisation; and*
- c) the expansion or modernisation of other industries of local, regional or national importance to support economic growth and resilience”.*

2.8 With regards to supporting a prosperous rural economy, paragraph 88 of the NPPF sets out that planning policies and decisions should enable:

- a) “the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business in rural areas, both through conversion of existing buildings and well-designed, new buildings;*
- b) the development and diversification of agricultural and other land-based rural businesses;*
- c) sustainable rural tourism and leisure developments which respect the character of the countryside; and*
- d) the retention and development of accessible local services and community facilities, such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, open space, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship”*

Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)

2.9 In relation specifically to the economy and employment, the PPG advises that a Housing and Economic Needs Assessment should be undertaken.

2.10 The Economic needs assessment should consider the type of employment land needed; future employment trend forecasts and its location within its functional economic market (Paragraph: 025 Reference ID: 2a-025-20190220).

2.11 The PPG sets out that an assessment should be made of the stock of employment land together with its loss over recent years and future supply. This should be informed by forecasts of future employment and land requirements and their relationship to the locational needs of key sectors / businesses and emerging sectors (Paragraph: 026 Reference ID: 2a-026-20190220).

2.12 Local Context

2.13 South-West Hertfordshire Joint Strategic Plan

2.13.1 The South-West Hertfordshire Joint Strategic Plan (JSP) will cover the area covered by the South-West Hertfordshire partner authorities. These are Dacorum Borough Council, Hertsmere Borough Council, St Albans City and District Council, Watford Borough Council and Three Rivers District Council.

2.13.2 As set out on its website, the South-West Hertfordshire Joint Strategic Plan will “*provide a long-term blueprint for the south-west Hertfordshire area to 2050. It will consider and address issues that cross council boundaries and will set out a strategic vision for the area. It will also help guide future Local Plans and strategies by setting*

out high level policies on topics such as climate change, net zero carbon, infrastructure provision, environmental protection, employment and housing. Once approved, the Joint Strategic Plan will provide a coordinated overarching framework that will guide local decision making on planning matters”.

2.13.3 In the summer of 2022, a formal public consultation (Regulation 18) was carried out. In August 2023, a “shared vision” and set of principles used to inform progress of the JSP was published. The next stages of the JSP involve consultation on options for the scale and pattern of growth.

2.14 Three Rivers’ Current Development Plan

2.14.1 Three Rivers District Council adopted the “Core Strategy” on 17th October 2011 and this document forms part of the Local Development Framework. Policy CP6 of the Core Strategy is titled “Employment and Economic Development” and sets out a range of policy criteria to promote and enhance employment and economic development within the District.

2.14.2 The Site Allocations Local Development Document (2014) allocates four employment areas within the District. These are located at Croxley Business Park (site ref: E(a)), Tolpits Lane (site ref: E(b)), Carpenders Park/Delta Gain (site ref: E(c)), and Maple Cross/Maple Lodge (site ref: E(d)). Kings Langley Employment Area has been allocated as a mixed use site (site ref: E(e)), whereby uses other than employment would be acceptable. The purpose of these allocations is to safeguard existing employment uses within these locations and also to address employment needs highlighted in the Core Strategy

2.15 Three Rivers’ Emerging Local Plan

2.15.1 The Council have undertaken the following consultations with regards to its emerging Local Plan:

- Local Plan ‘Issues & Options and Call for Sites Consultation Document’, July 2017
- Local Plan ‘Potential Sites Consultation’, October 2018
- Local Plan “Preferred Policy Options” (Part 1) and “Sites for Potential Allocation (Part 2)” Regulation 18 Consultation, June 2021
- Local Plan “Additional Sites for Potential Allocation” (Part 3) Regulation 18 Consultation, January 2023
- Local Plan “Three Rivers’ Preferred Local Plan Lower Housing Growth Option Protecting More Green Belt Land” (Part 4) Regulation 18 Consultation, October 2023

2.15.2 Regulation 18 Part 1 Preferred Policy Options

2.15.2.1 The Regulation 18 (Part 1) Consultation set out policies for employment and economic development in order to maintain and improve economic performance of the District. Central to this was Preferred Policy Option 7: Employment and Economic Development.

2.15.2.2 The policy stated that the council will support the delivery of at least 5.5ha of B-class employment space with a focus on industrial and warehouse uses. These will be prioritised within town centres and allocated employment sites. These employment sites will be safeguarded for business, industrial and storage uses and intensified and expanded where appropriate. Proposals providing a range of small, medium and large business premises will be supported and non-employment uses on allocated employment sites will only be permitted where there is no impact on amenity or site operation. Proposals which result in the loss of B class floor space will only be supported if it is shown there is no longer a need for employment use and the property has been vacant for at least 12 months and marketed over that 12 month period.

2.15.2.3 A specific policy for Warner Bros. Studios was also provided. It states that development on the Leavesden Studio site must be in relation to the Warner Bros. Studios Operations and associated uses and the allocated site will be safeguarded for studio operations and associated uses.

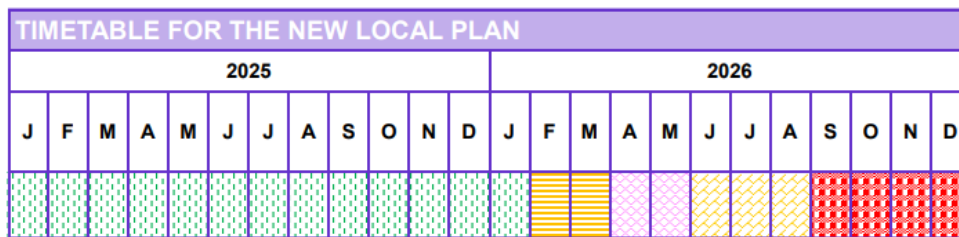
2.15.3 Regulation 18 Part 2 Allocations

2.15.3.1 The Reg 18 (Part 2) Consultation set out employment sites for the emerging local plan. There was expected to be a demand of 30,100sqm of office space for the period to 2036 and 39,945sqm of industrial and warehousing space.

2.15.3.2 The allocated employment sites were as follows:

- Croxley Business Park – Separated into two sites, CFS70a and CFS70b, this allocation proposed the use of storage and distribution uses, office uses and ancillary space. The sites total 0.8ha in size and are both located within the Green Belt.
- Land at Lynsters Farm – This site was allocated to provide industry and warehousing. It is 10.7ha in size and is located within the Green Belt.
- Warner Bros. Studios – Separated into two expansion sites, CFS28 and OSPF6, the allocation proposed for the expansion of the Warner Bros Studios and green infrastructure to be used as public open space. The sites total 28ha in total and are located within the Green Belt.

2.15.4 The adopted Local Development Scheme which was formally adopted at Full Council on 10th December 2024 sets out the timetable for the Local Plan. The timetable can be seen below:



	Preparation
	Publication Stage (Regulation 19)
	Submission Stage (Start of Examination Process)
	Examination
	Adoption

Document	Local Plan	Policies Map
Description	Will update the strategic planning policies for the District, allocate land for housing and employment and update Development Management Policies	Will show policy designations and sites with specific allocations
Area	District	District
Publication Date	February / March 2026	Alongside Local Plan
Submission to Secretary of State	April / May 2026	Alongside Local Plan
Adoption	September / October 2026	Alongside Local Plan
Review	Annual Monitoring Report	Alongside Local Plan

2.15.5 However, it must be noted that following the Extraordinary Full Council Meeting on 7th January 2025, Members have agreed that officers should aim to publish the Regulation 19 by 7th November 2025.

2.16 Neighbourhood Plans

2.16.1 There are currently two adopted Neighbourhood Plans within the District (Croxley Green Neighbourhood Plan and Chorleywood Neighbourhood Plan). Three other Parish/Community Councils (Batchworth, Sarratt and Abbots Langley) are also currently producing Neighbourhood Plans. In their current iterations, neither the adopted nor any of the emerging Neighbourhood Plans include specific site allocations for employment, however, the Neighbourhood Plans do include employment and economic related policies, as set out below.

Croxley Green Neighbourhood Plan:

Policy RE1: Protection of retail uses – a presumption against any proposed change of use from any A use classes to residential subject to marketing evidence and viability.

Policy RE2: Safeguarding employment – a presumption against change of use from any B Use Classes to residential subject to marketing evidence and viability.

Policy RE3: Encouraging new employment – new and existing businesses that are compatible with neighbouring properties will be encouraged.

Chorleywood Neighbourhood Plan:

The Chorleywood Neighbourhood plan is less specific regarding policies and employment. Its overall aims do however seek to achieve sustainable development and facilitate a ‘vibrant local economy’.

Emerging Batchworth Neighbourhood Plan:

Policy BW CO7: Employment:

Proposals that provide small-scale retail, office and research and development opportunities will be supported.

Proposals that create new employment opportunities will be supported where: they respect immediate surroundings, are well integrated and complement existing businesses, they do not impact on the local environment and the amenities of adjacent residential properties, they do not result in a material increase in large and heavy vehicle traffic and where appropriate, they enable active travel through delivery of new walking and cycling routes.

Proposals for flexible workspaces that are designed to accommodate local green ventures will be supported.

Emerging Sarratt Neighbourhood Plan:

The Sarratt Parish neighbourhood plan does not specify economic or employment policies but aims to “ensure any property development in the parish consists of a mix of properties that best meets the housing needs of the community, promoting a thriving and balanced population that will maintain the viability of these businesses and services”.

Emerging Abbots Langley Neighbourhood Plan:

Policy AL7: “Retaining and enhancing the vitality and viability of local centres” relates to local level employment and economic growth, primarily regarding to retail uses.

Policy AL8: “Supporting recreation and sustainable tourism” also relates to general employment and economy. It states that proposals for recreational and sustainable tourism activities will be supported if they are economically and socially beneficial.

2.17 Neighbouring Local Plans

2.17.1 The other south-west Hertfordshire authorities and other adjoining authorities (outside of south-west Hertfordshire) are at different stages of the Local Plan process. A summary of these different stages can be seen below:

Watford Borough Council:

2.17.2 The Watford Local Plan was adopted on 17th October 2022.

2.17.2.1 The plan makes provision for 25,206sqm net additional industrial floorspace and 85,488sqm of net additional office floorspace. Policies include protecting and

supporting existing employment land. The district contains five industrial areas hosting businesses and workshops with employment space encouraged within these areas.

2.17.2.2 Allocated employment land is spread in this plan between mixed-use developments and employment specific sites. The employment specific sites are EMO1: Cassiobury House, EMO2: Land to the South of Wiggshall Industrial Estate, EMO3: Gateway Zone and EMO4: Land Between 14-18 Greenhill Crescent.

St Albans City and District Council:

2.17.3 The St. Albans City & District Local Plan was submitted to the Secretary of State for Independent Examination on 29 November 2024.

2.17.3.1 Chapter 5 of the St Albans' Local Plan (submission version) discusses the economy and employment. Strategic Policy SP5 (Employment and the Local Economy) sets out the Council's approach to employment areas in order to support economic growth and productivity. Protected Employment Areas will be retained for appropriate business with new industrial business locations designated at East Hemel Hempstead and at the former Radlett aerodrome.

2.17.3.2 The Protected Employment Areas provide an agreed oversupply for the St Albans District, therefore the excess can assist other South West Herts local authorities in meeting their employment requirements.

2.17.3.3 The plan has allocated a protected employment area in Brickett Wood, adjacent to the Three Rivers District boundary. As per policy EMP1 (Protected Employment Areas), these locations must demonstrate no net loss of employment floorspace with redevelopment or intensification supported, use classes will normally be B2, B8 or E(g) with conditions applied to prevent a change of use to E(a-f) and small scale services ancillary and should not compromise the functioning of the location for these class uses.

2.17.3.4 Through Policy EMP5 (Employment Skills), the plan ensures that larger proposals must ensure the employment of local people. Local people are defined as residents of South West Hertfordshire Local Authorities including Three Rivers.

2.17.3.5 The plan also sets out Strategic Policy SP6 (City, Town and Village Centres and Retail). This supports the vitality and viability of centres through a 'town centre first' approach to proposals for retail, services and other uses and supporting proposals that improve the quality and range of retail, service, leisure in St Albans City Centre.

Dacorum Borough Council:

2.17.4 Dacorum Borough Council have undertaken a Regulation 19 Consultation and are preparing to submit their Local Plan to the Secretary of State for public examination.

2.17.4.1 The Dacorum Regulation 19 plan sets out its Employment Strategy through a number of policies. Strategic Policy E1 (Delivering the Employment Strategy) states employment needs will be delivered through the continued development of Hemel Hempstead as an important economic centre, including further development on the Maylands Business Park, supporting the principle of new office development in town, district and local centres, safeguarding the General Employment Areas and attracting new businesses particularly in General Employment Areas. These General Employment Areas (GEA) will be the focus for future employment through supporting

development which will strengthen the role of the GEA and provide important services and facilities that would enhance the GEA as an economic centre.

2.17.4.2 The majority of the borough's employment needs will be met by the expansion of the Maylands Business Park to the east of Hemel Hempstead. This includes land within the St. Albans City District.

2.17.4.3 The plan's GEAs which are located nearby to the Three Rivers District are in Riversend Road, Whiteleaf Road and Doolittle Meadows in Apsley and Sunderland's Yard in Kings Langley. An overview of these sites are provided below:

- Riversend Road – Offices, industrial, warehousing. Planning requirements are high quality, well landscaped landmark buildings required in two locations due to their prominent locations on the main approach into the town centre. Environmental improvement sought and proposals must respect the setting of the listed building.
- Whiteleaf Road – Offices, industrial, warehousing. Good quality offices should be retained and changes of use from employment uses to housing will be resisted.
- Doolittle Meadows – offices. Good quality offices should be retained and changes of use from employment uses to housing will be resisted. Existing landscaping should be maintained.
- Sunderland's Yard – offices, industrial. Small units to be retained

2.17.4.4 The plan also discusses loss of employment in retail and other main town centres. Policy E4 (Loss of Employment, Retail and Other Main Town Centre Uses) states that the loss of employment will be permitted only where there is evidence that a site cannot be used for its current or allocated use. While there is no significant requirement for new retail floorspace, existing retailing will be supported.

Hertsmere Borough Council:

2.17.5 The most recent Regulation 18 Consultation took place between May and June 2024.

London Borough of Harrow:

2.17.6 The London Borough of Harrow have undertaken a Regulation 19 Consultation.

London Borough of Hillingdon:

2.17.7 The call for views consultation (Regulation 18) finished on Monday 24 June 2024. The Local Development Scheme (July 2024) sets out that the Regulation 19 Consultation will take place from March 2025 to April 2025, with submission to the Secretary of State in May/June 2025.

Buckinghamshire Council:

According to their website, Buckinghamshire Council are at an early stage of their plan-making process. Buckinghamshire Council have undertaken an early engagement questionnaire, vision and objectives consultation and a call for sites. The LDS sets out that publication and submission will take place between January 2026 and August 2026.

2.18 Article 4 Directions

2.18.1 In March 2024, a modified Article 4 Direction issued by the secretary of State came into force in relation to development consisting of Class MA change of use from commercial, business and service (Class E) use to residential (Class C3). The Article 4 Direction covers certain employment sites and town and district centres. The effect of the Direction means that a change of use from a town centre use to residential and an office use to residential in these locations will require planning permission and will be assessed against Local Plan policies.

2.19 Annual Monitoring Report

2.19.1 The Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) provides an update of progress made in developing planning policies for the District and uses information against a variety of indicators and targets to assess the extent to which policy objectives are being achieved.

2.19.2 Policy CP6 of the Core Strategy relates to employment and economic development and seeks to support the sustainable growth of the Three Rivers economy. The results of the Annual Monitoring Report for the 2023/2024 monitoring period are summarised below:

2.19.3 The AMR sets out that within the 2023/2024 monitoring period, 689sqm of gross additional employment floorspace was created. Once losses have been taken into account (6,236sqm gross loss), there was a net decrease of 5,547sqm of employment floorspace across the District, leaving total employment floorspace figure of approximately 212,618sqm.

3 Evidence Base

South-West Hertfordshire Retail and Leisure Study

3.1 The south-west Hertfordshire authorities undertook a joint evidence study, the South West Hertfordshire Retail and Leisure Study (September 2018), prepared by Nexus Planning. The aims of the study included the following:

- Establish a retail market (catchment) area for the local authority areas
- Review the hierarchy of centres within all five local authorities
- Undertake an assessment of the existing vitality and viability of each of the authority area's defined town and district retail centres
- Produce a quantitative assessment of the future demand for retail floorspace across the authority areas

3.2 However, given that this study was completed in 2018, it is considered that a new study should be commissioned providing more up-to-date data (including post-covid) and reflecting any changes to national policy. As such, the Council will commission and undertake an updated Retail and Leisure Study before publishing the Regulation 19 version of the Local Plan.

South West Hertfordshire Economic Study

3.3 Introduction

- 3.3.1 The south-west Hertfordshire authorities have undertaken a joint evidence study, the South West Hertfordshire Economic Study (2024), prepared by Hatch. The study provides current evidence, context and subsequent findings which will help shape future employment needs within the Three Rivers District and the wider sub-region.
- 3.3.2 The report provides an update to previous versions of the study undertaken in 2016 and 2019 to review trends since the Covid pandemic and provide more-up-to-date evidence and needs analysis.
- 3.3.3 The earlier studies identified the south-west Hertfordshire functional economic market area (FEMA) as of the local authority areas of Dacorum, Hertsmere, St Albans, Three Rivers and Watford. The updated 2024 study finds that *“the five local authority areas continue to share strong links in terms of migration, commuting and strategic transport infrastructure. Therefore, we conclude that the definition of the FEMA is still valid”*.
- 3.3.4 As explained in the study, the need to define FEMA's arises *“because the geography of local economies rarely adhere to local authority boundaries. There are important cross-boundary relationships in local labour markets, housing markets and supply chains which means the policy decisions taken in one authority have an effect on its neighbours. This means the need for employment land needs to be considered across a more functional geography than looking at each district in isolation”*. It should be noted that as we are required to plan for employment needs at a District level, there must be a District level breakdown of needs rather than looking at the FEMA as a whole.
- 3.3.5 However, as set out in the study, it must be noted that *“there are particular issues in certain sectors such as temporary employment agencies, where the jobs are allocated to the address of the employment agency rather than the address where the employees are working, resulting in an overestimate of employment in areas with large employment agencies (such as Dacorum)”*. As a result this could skew some of the data.

3.4 Travel to Work Areas

- 3.4.1 The 2021 Census provides updated information on the commuting patterns of south-west Herts residents. However, an important caveat is that it was undertaken in early 2021 when a large proportion of people were working from home due to the Covid pandemic. As such, it is unlikely to be representative of current commuting patterns in the FEMA. Figure 1 below shows the Percentage of employed residents who identify their home as their main workplace or base, 2019 to 2022

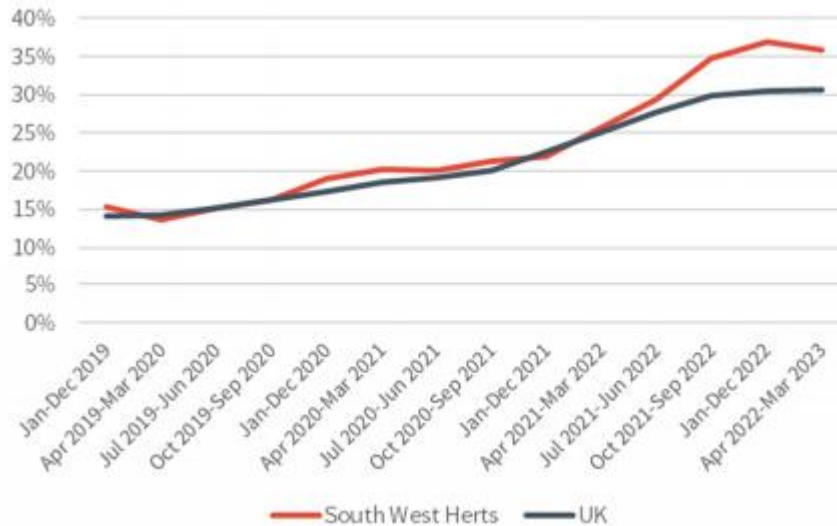


Figure 1 - Percentage of Employed Residents who Identify their Home as their Main Workplace or Base, 2019 to 2022

3.4.2 Figure 2 below sets out the Top 5 destinations of working residents and percentage of working residents who commute to each area. It shows that within each FEMA authority, over two thirds of working residents reported that their workplace is in their home local authority area (due to homeworking).

Table 3.1 Top 5 destinations of working residents and percentage of working residents who commute to each area				
Dacorum	Hertsmere	St Albans	Three Rivers	Watford
Dacorum: 77%	Hertsmere: 68%	St Albans: 81%	Three Rivers: 67%	Watford: 70%
St Albans: 4%	Barnet: 6%	Wel-Hatfield: 3%	Watford: 7%	Three Rivers: 5%
Bucks: 3%	Watford: 3%	Hertsmere: 2%	Hillingdon: 3%	Hertsmere: 4%
Watford: 3%	St Albans: 2%	Dacorum: 2%	Hertsmere: 3%	Dacorum: 2%
Three Rivers: 2%	Harrow: 2%	Watford: 1%	Harrow: 2%	St Albans: 2%
% in FEMA: 86%	% in FEMA: 75%	% in FEMA: 86%	% in FEMA: 80%	% in FEMA: 83%

Figure 2- Top 5 destinations of working residents and percentage of working residents who commute to each area.

3.5 Migration

3.5.1 As per the 2021 Census, the most popular destination for Three Rivers residents to move to within 2020/21 was within the District itself, with 32% of all movements. 9% moved to Watford, Dacorum and Hillingdon respectively. A total of 54% of residents moved to within the FEMA.

3.6 Relationship With London

3.6.1 In terms of commuting, the proportion of employed Three Rivers residents whose main workplace is in London fell considerably from 38% in 2011 to 14% in 2021 (in line with other FEMA authorities). However, it must be noted that this is heavily influenced by the fact that the census was undertaken during the Covid Pandemic when a large proportion of people were working from home.

3.6.2 In terms of migration, the number of residents migrating from London to Three Rivers in 2021 was 1,300, up from 700 in 2011. There is some evidence that the Covid pandemic led to an increase of people moving out of London due to an increase in flexible working, house prices and desire for more space. Three Rivers was in the top ten most popular destinations for people moving out of London during the pandemic.

3.7 Recent Economic Performance

3.7.1 Gross value added (GVA) is the measure of the value of goods and services produced in an area, industry or sector of an economy. It is the key metric used to understand the overall size and economic performance of an area. South West Herts's economy performed well between 2016 and 2019, growing at a rate of 2.6% p.a. compared to 2.0% p.a. in the UK as a whole. This was followed by a sharp decline in GVA between 2019 and 2020 as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic. Although there was a partial recovery in 2021, total GVA was still 4% below its pre-pandemic level. The main driver of growth was admin and support services (although this is predicted to be overstated due to the inclusion of temporary employment agencies). Other high performing sectors were arts, entertainment and recreation, education and ICT. The worst performing sectors were professional, scientific and technical, financial and insurance and other service activities.

3.7.2 GVA per filled job is a way to measure labour productivity. GVA per filled job was around £62,400 in South West Herts in 2021, which is slightly higher than the UK and Hertfordshire average. However, this has fallen from over £70,000 in 2018. Whilst this was partly due to Covid, the fall in labour productivity was much greater in south-west Hertfordshire than comparable areas.

3.8 Employment Trends

3.8.1 Figure 3 below illustrates employment growth by local authority area (2016 to 2021)

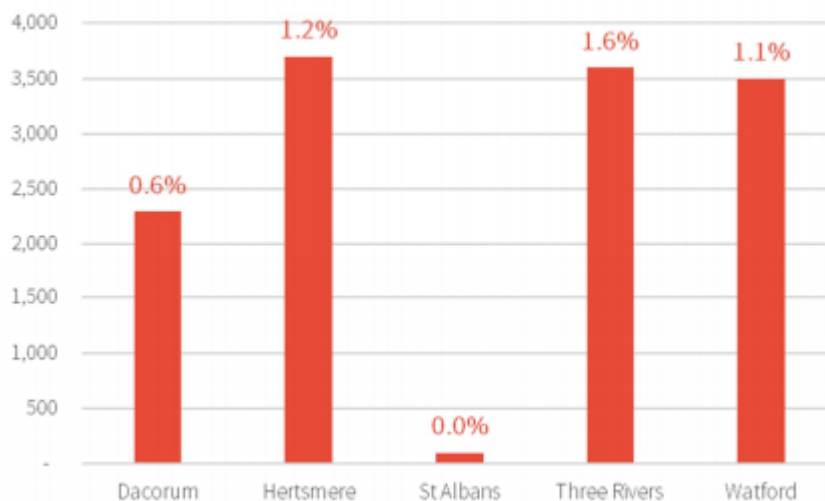


Figure 3 - Employment growth by local authority area (2016 to 2021)

3.8.2 Within the FEMA, the largest growing sectors since 2016 are public admin, education and health (6.2%), ICT and media (4.3%) and business support services (4.3%). The largest declining sectors were manufacturing (-2.5%), transport and distribution (-1.6%) and finance and insurance (-1.6%).

3.9 Sector Strengths in South-West Hertfordshire

3.9.1 Employment within ICT and media is 81% more within the FEMA when compared to the UK average. Professional services and business support services are also overrepresented with 65% and 61% above the national average. Construction is also 39% higher than the UK average. Comparatively, primary industries (including agriculture and mining) are underrepresented within the FEMA and are 67% below the national average. Manufacturing is also underrepresented at 56% below the GB average.

3.9.2 The ICT sector within Three Rivers has a high specialisation compared to the UK average. However, unlike elsewhere within the FEMA, there was no growth of employment within the sector between 2016 and 2021.

3.9.3 Similarly, within the professional services sector in Three Rivers there has been no growth of employment between 2016 and 2021, although has a relatively high specialisation compared to the UK average.

3.9.4 The film and TV industry sector has experienced significant growth since 2016 with the strongest growth occurring within Three Rivers and Watford. This is due to recent investment in Warner Bros. Studios Leavesden.

3.10 Business Characteristics

3.10.1 There were 34,900 businesses within the FEMA in 2022. This is dominated by small to medium businesses which employ fewer than 50 people and account for 99.6% of all businesses in the area.

3.10.2 The largest sectors for businesses in the FEMA are professional, scientific and technical activities (6800), construction (5,200) and wholesale and retail (4,300). The most specialised sectors are ICT and business administration and support.

3.11 Business Starts and Survival

3.11.1 In 2021, there were 11 new businesses for every 1,000 working age residents in south-west Hertfordshire. This is higher than the average in both Hertfordshire (10) and the UK (9) but is down from 16 in 2016. The FEMA has a higher business survival rate than the regional average with 39% of businesses which started in 2016 still operating in 2021.

3.11.2 In terms of main barriers to growth within south-west Hertfordshire, the following reasons were listed:

- Staff recruitment and retention issues (including due to low unemployment and lack of affordable housing)
- Rising costs (including materials, rents and business rates)
- Access to employment sites and premises

3.12 Labour Supply

3.12.1 Population projections predict the population of the FEMA will increase by around 20,000 people between 2018 and 2043. This will be driven by growth in the number of people aged 65 or over. The working age population is forecast to decline from 2028 onwards, falling by 10,600 people by 2043. However, the actual change that

occurs in the working age population will be driven by the level and rates at which housing growth occurs.

3.13 Supply of Employment Land

3.13.1 Figure 4 below sets out the existing commitments for south-west Hertfordshire (correct as of August 2023). If all of the extant permissions were implemented it would result in a net increase of approximately 33,200sqm of office space and 508,800sqm of industrial, storage and distribution space across south-west Hertfordshire. However, it should be noted that a significant proportion of committed industrial, storage and distribution space is at a single site (Radlett Strategic Rail Freight Interchange in St Albans).

	Office		Industrial and warehousing	
	Commitments	Net after losses	Commitments	Net after losses
Dacorum	1,818	-7,525	75,660	52,327
Hertsmere	12,173	8,258	44,532	43,261
St Albans	4,717	3,373	388,285	378,026
Three Rivers	497	497	24,659	21,443
Watford	39,080	28,566	15,605	13,787
South West Herts	58,285	33,169	548,741	508,844

Figure 4 - Existing Commitments for South-West Hertfordshire (correct as of August 2023).

3.13.2 The study provided a list of the strategic sites across the FEMA authorities. Figure 5 below sets out the summary of strategic sites (within Three Rivers).

	Status	Counted towards available supply	Suitable uses	Land with development potential (Ha) ⁵⁷	
	Land off Stephenson Way	Potential allocation	Yes	B1c/B2/B8 (small to large units)	3.1
	Total for Hertsmere				13.3
	Total available				13.3
St Albans	East Hemel Hempstead Central	Allocated in emerging local plan	Yes	Mix (small to large units)	52.7*
	Strategic Rail Freight Interchange, Radlett	Allocated in emerging Local Plan	Yes	B8 (large units)	0.0
	Total for St Albans				52.7
	Total available				52.7
Three Rivers	Croxley Business Park	Allocated/existing site	Yes	n/a	0.0
	Tolpits Lane	Allocated/existing site	Yes	n/a	0.0
	Maple Cross/Maple Lodge	Allocated/existing site	Yes	Mix (small to large units)	0.0
	Kings Langley	Allocated/existing site	Yes	n/a	0.0
	Leavesden Employment Area	Proposed to emerging Local Plan	No	Mix, targeted at creative industries	0.0
	Lynsters Farm	Green belt site	No	Mix (small to medium units)	10.7
	Total for Three Rivers				10.7
	Total available				0.0

Figure 5 - List of the Strategic Sites across the FEMA Authorities (Three Rivers & St Albans)

3.13.3 Overall, the study identified 93.2 Ha of land with development potential across all of the authorities. However, only 67.4 Ha of this land is on sites which are realistically available (i.e. they are already allocated or safeguarded or are not currently in the Green Belt).

3.13.4 The study's summary of Three Rivers' strategic sites can be seen below:

Croxley Business Park is a high quality office park within the urban settlement of Watford. This includes mid to large floorplate buildings (generally over 2-3 storeys) set in an attractive tree-lined environment, with off street parking and communal facilities within the Hive in the centre of the site. However, the site is fully built out and there are unlikely to be any opportunities for intensification in the foreseeable future. Land with development potential: 0 Ha

Tolpits Lane is a large employment area comprising three distinct areas. Wolsley Business Park is an office park with mid to large floorplates, with buildings of a moderate quality. A high level of vacancies was observed. Units along Dwight Lane are a mix of small industrial and hybrid units, which had a more moderate level of vacancies and generally comprised of moderate to good quality units. The employment uses along Olds Approach and Moor Ln comprise a typical industrial estate. This site is also fully built out and there are unlikely to be any opportunities for intensification in the foreseeable future. Land with development potential: 0 Ha.

Maple Cross/Maple Lodge is made up of a number of units along Denham Way (A412), comprising a large office complex occupied by Renault and Nissan, a high quality office building occupied by Skanska and a derelict commercial building with MSSCP at the rear. Planning permission has been granted for the demolition of the existing derelict office block and multi-storey car park and redevelopment to provide six warehouses for a flexible range of employment uses (within Classes E(g)(iii), B2 and / or B8) with ancillary offices together with associated works. A recent application was allowed in appeal (21/0573/FUL) and one extant application for a hotel(green) for which certificate of lawful implementation was issued although nothing has happened on site. Land with development potential: 0 Ha.

Leavesden Park Employment Area comprises Leavesden Studios, now owned by Warner Brothers, together with MEPC's Leavesden Park office development. The site supports strategic activities relating to the creative industries sector and the planned investment will enable an enhanced role. The area is protected through Article 4 Direction that came into effect in March 2024. The site is allocated in the current Local Plan and has been submitted for allocation in the emerging Local Plan. Land with development potential: 0 Ha

Council Note: The Leavesden Park Employment Area does not comprise Leavesden Studios and is not allocated within the current Local Plan.

Kings Langley is an office and commercial park along Home Park Mill Link Rd. It comprises mid-sized office buildings, though not within a dedicated business park. Some buildings have been reconverted to apartments (Bellway, Pinnacle Apartments), with likely interest for further conversions in coming years. There is the potential for regeneration of the site but, in our view this is likely to be for non-employment uses. Land with development potential: 0 Ha

Council Note: The Kings Langley allocation is allocated for mixed use employment and housing.

Lynsters Farm is a green belt site comprising a flat, field area around the Grade II listed Lynsters Farm House and Cottages. The site is well-positioned for employment uses close to the M25 (J17), the nearby Maple Cross employment area and HS2 south portal works. There are a number of ecological and flood zone constraints,

although the site is of a scale and in a location which may be suitable for a range of industrial or warehousing uses. Land with development potential: 0 Ha.

Council Note: The study found this site to not be suitable for development given its location in the Green Belt.

Economic Study Conclusions and Recommendations

3.14 Priority Sectors

- 3.14.1 The film and TV sector has seen significant growth in south-west Herts and particularly Three Rivers in recent years. Further growth in demand for film and TV space is possible but there is uncertainty. The main challenge is accessing the ancillary space needed to support production, including offices, industrial and storage space. This is often needed at short notice and for short amounts of time. It is therefore difficult to provide a robust estimate for quantity and type of floorspace needed. This sector is highly relevant for Three Rivers.
- 3.14.2 The agri-tech sector is slowly growing within south-west Hertfordshire, with the main cluster being located at the Rothamsted Campus. The East Hemel Hempstead Central site has been identified as a suitable location for expansion, so this sector may not be as relevant for Three Rivers.
- 3.14.3 The life sciences sector is slowly growing within south-west Hertfordshire, with the main cluster being located in Hemel Hempstead (with larger clusters in Stevenage). However there may be demand in the wider South West Herts for HQ offices and storage & distribution space. Again, the East Hemel Hempstead Central site has been identified as a suitable location for expansion for this sector, so this sector may not be as relevant for Three Rivers.
- 3.14.4 The clean growth sector is harder to analyse, but given the county's approach to Net Zero, there may be opportunities to expand the sector across the sub-region.

3.15 Office Market Trends

- 3.15.1 The quantity of leased office space in south-west Herts has fallen significantly since the Covid pandemic. This fall was greatest in large offices over 1,000 sqm and has resulted in a large increase in the vacancy and availability rates for office space across the FEMA. There are also a large number of leases which have not been reviewed since the pandemic and there is a high probability that tenants with large amounts of underutilised office space may choose to reduce their requirements. It may therefore be a number of years before the office market reaches 'a new normal' (i.e a sustained demand for office space).

3.16 Industrial and Storage and Distribution Market Trends

- 3.16.1 Demand for industrial and storage & distribution space in the FEMA has remained strong since the last study was undertaken. Availability rates for the FEMA have been consistently below 8% meaning there is an undersupply of space.
- 3.16.2 Although the market has been dominated by large scale storage and distribution, commercial agents also report there is a shortage of smaller industrial space to meet the needs of growing businesses in south-west Herts.

3.17 Future Scenarios

3.17.1 The study has modelled a number of different scenarios to understand the future demand for employment space in south-west Hertfordshire (including scenarios based on employment forecasts, population projections, development rates and trends in net absorption). The study's preferred scenario is based on trends in net-absorption, with a number of modifications based on market intelligence. These include:

- A downward adjustment to the scenario for office space in the short term as more leases expire and the office market adjusts to new patterns of working brought about by the Covid pandemic

- An upward adjustment to the net-absorption of industrial and storage & distribution space to account for latent demand which has been suppressed as a result of low availability rates in the FEMA

3.17.2 Net-absorption can be defined as the measure of the total of employment floorspace occupied minus floorspace vacated. This essentially measures the change in the quantity of occupied floorspace in south-west Hertfordshire over a given period. Because this is a net figure, it can be used to provide an estimate of the additional floorspace/land required to meet demand if demand followed past trends.

3.17.3 The study concludes that based on the preferred scenario, south-west Hertfordshire authorities should plan on the basis that there will be no net-increase in demand for office space from its 2021 level over the period 2021 to 2041. The preferred scenario points to demand for 32,000 sqm between 2041 and 2050, although there is uncertainty with the longer term projection (given that it is far into the future).

3.17.4 In terms of industrial space and storage and distribution space, the study concludes that the FEMA authorities should plan for:

Industrial Space: 110,200sqm (27.6 Ha of land) for the period 2021-2041 and 49,700sqm (12.4 Ha) for the period 2041-2050.

Storage and Distribution Space: 413,400sqm (103.4 Ha) for the period 2021-2041 and 186,100sqm (46.5 Ha) for the period 2041-2050.

3.17.5 It must be noted that the approach adopted in this study is to consider the need for land at the level of FEMA, not individual authority level. Additionally, much of the above need is met by existing commitments and allocations.

3.18 Conclusions on additional floorspace and land requirements – Office

3.18.1 The study concludes that no new office space and the land associated with it is required over either the 2021-41 or 2041-50 periods. The report found that as of July 2023 there was 162,000 sqm of available office space in south-west Hertfordshire, of which 124,000sqm was identified as vacant. There is also a further 36,000sqm of office space with planning permission in the form of commitments. As such, the study concludes there is not a need to identify additional sites for office development, but recognises that there will still be demand for office space, particularly from smaller sized businesses.

3.19 Conclusions on additional floorspace and land requirements – Industrial, Storage and Distribution

- 3.19.1 Whilst the preferred scenario is still based on trends in net-absorption, this scenario was split into a further 2 “scenarios”, regarding the extent to which the Radlett Strategic Rail Freight Interchange would contribute to need.
- 3.19.2 In the first of these scenarios, South West Herts would not be required to identify additional employment sites over the 2021-41 period, largely driven by the contribution of Radlett Strategic Rail Freight Interchange. Taking account of completions and commitments (planning permissions not yet implemented) relative to need leaves a residual requirement for 141,700 sqm equating to 35.4 Ha. In the second scenario, taking account of completions between 2021 and 2023 totalling 29,000 sqm and commitments amounting to 256,800 sqm with a smaller proportion of the Radlett site included leaves an additional requirement for 237,800sqm, equating to 59.5 Ha.
- 3.19.3 The study has identified 67.4 Ha of land available for development on sites. Of this total, around 17 ha is earmarked on the East Hemel Hempstead Central site for business and R&D use, with the implication that the supply of land for industrial, storage and distribution development is just over 50 Ha.
- 3.19.4 In the first of the two supply scenarios, the 50.4 Ha available for development is more than sufficient to meet the 35.4 Ha requirement remaining once completions and commitments are accounted for. However, in the second scenario, south-west Hertfordshire would not have a sufficient supply of allocated land, with the requirement for 59.5 Ha **resulting in a shortfall of 9.5 Ha** (for industrial, storage and distribution combined).
- 3.19.5 If the south-west Herts local authorities determine that the more cautious Scenario 2 is preferred, the question of how to address the shortfall will need to be resolved through planning policies. However, the study identifies need and supply for the FEMA as a whole, with the preferred scenario selected for providing the most appropriate indicator of industrial, storage and distribution need for the area. It does not recommend treating the need figures for individual districts as the level of demand which should be planned for.
- 3.19.6 Figure 6 below shows the commitments and supply of floorspace for industrial and storage & distribution development by local authority area (Scenario 2)

Table 8.6 Scenario 2: Commitments and supply of floorspace for industrial and storage & distribution development by local authority area (sq m)

Area	Net commitments (sq m)	% in area	Estimated floorspace on available sites* (sq m)	% in area	Total (sq m)	% of total in area
Dacorum	52,300	20%	71,400**	35%	123,700	27%
Hertsmere	43,300	17%	53,200	26%	96,500	21%
St Albans	126,000	49%	71,400**	35%	197,400	43%
Three Rivers	21,400	8%	0	0%	21,400	5%
Watford	13,800	5%	5,600	3%	19,400	4%
Total	256,800		201,600		458,400	

*this has been calculated by applying a plot ratio of 0.4 to the available land in Table 7.2. For example, this identifies 13.3 Ha in Hertsmere (133,000 sq m). Applying a plot ratio of 0.4 gives 53,200 sq m.

**this space relates to East Hemel Hempstead Central. Although this is located within St Albans, functionally it is part of the Hemel Hempstead urban area and is therefore better placed to serve the needs of Dacorum than St Albans. Therefore we have assumed that the space is split between the two. The implication is that the site accounts for more than around 70% (142,800 sq m) of the total floorspace on available sites.

Figure 6 - commitments and supply of floorspace for industrial and storage & distribution development by local authority area (Scenario 2).

- 3.19.7 Figure 7 below illustrates the difference between need and supply, industrial and storage and distribution (in sqm).

Area	Industrial	Storage and Distribution	Total Need	Commitments and Sites	Difference
Dacorum	98,800	337,600	436,400	123,700	-312,700
Hertsmere	5,500	52,800	58,300	96,500	38,200
St. Albans	4,800	5,900	10,700	293,500* 197,400**	282,800* 186,700**
Three Rivers	11,400	13,100	24,500	21,400	-3,100
Watford	-7,700	-27,800	-35,500	19,400	54,900
SW Herts	112,800	381,600	494,400	458,400	-36,000

* Scenario 1; ** Scenario 2

Figure 7 - Difference Between Need and Supply, Industrial and Storage and Distribution

- 3.19.8 As shown in Figure 7 above, the industrial need for Three Rivers is 11,400sqm and the storage and distribution need is 13,100sqm. The total area from commitments and sites is 21,400sqm. As such, in Three Rivers, the supply falls short of the level implied to meet need (for industrial, storage and distribution combined), but by a small amount (3100sqm).
- 3.19.9 As set out in the study, the concentration of both industrial need and supply (commitments & available land for future development) in Dacorum, Hertsmere and St. Albans also presents south-west Herts local authorities with a challenge in ensuring that employment land policies meet the NPPF's requirements for positive plan-making which encourages economic growth. The preferred scenario reflects a pattern of past demand which is dominated by Dacorum. This issue is also reflected in the conclusions on supply, with St Albans dominating future supply as a result of

both Radlett SRFI and East Hemel Hempstead Central sites. The study “*does not recommend treating the need figures for individual districts as the level of demand which should be planned for*”. The topic of meeting employment need has been and will continue to be addressed through Duty to Co-operate meetings.

3.20 Office Space Conversions

- 3.20.1 At the time of the study’s publication there was approximately 124,000 sqm of vacant office space in south-west Hertfordshire, which could increase further over the next few years. The study therefore suggest that the south-west Hertfordshire authorities may consider removing any Article 4 directions in these areas, identifying redundant buildings in their area and work with landowners and developers to identify opportunities for redevelopment and re-purposing (including to residential) where those buildings are of poor quality and cannot be made fit for purpose as office accommodation. However, it must be noted at the time of making the Article 4 Direction in Three Rivers, evidence supported the need to protect Class E uses and the Direction was directly signed off by the Secretary of state (who reviewed the evidence provided). Additionally, the Economic study specifically refers to Three Rivers as having different market conditions in terms of office space, concluding that the authority “should prioritise the protection of office space as far as possible”.
- 3.20.2 Figure 8 below shows the availability and vacancy rate of office space (2019-2023) across the authorities. With specific regard to Three Rivers, the study states “*the one exception to this (availability) was Three Rivers, where the availability rate has fallen since 2019-23 although the vacancy rate has risen. The availability rate in Three Rivers is also much lower than other areas (5.8%). This is likely to be due to local factors affecting demand in Three Rivers, although the exact explanation is unclear. Nevertheless, it suggests market conditions are slightly different in Three Rivers, and the local authority should prioritise the protection of office space as far as possible*”.

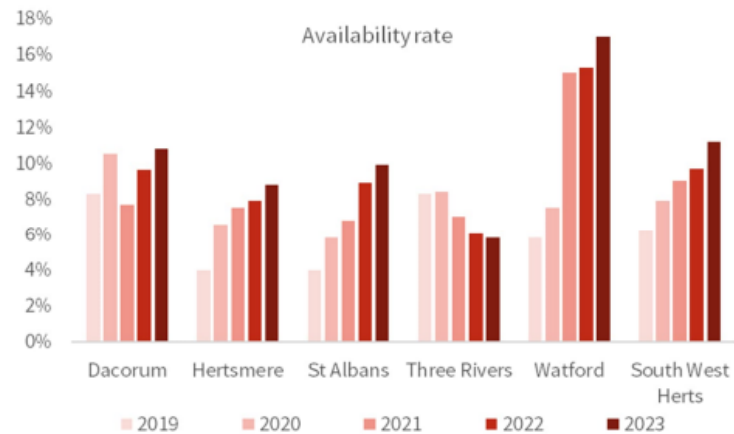


Figure 8 - availability and vacancy rate of office space (2019-2023)

3.21 Meeting the Needs of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs)

3.21.1 SMEs and micro-businesses account for most of the businesses operating in south-west Hertfordshire. The following recommendations could be considered in emerging policies to boost the SMEs:

- Promoting “grow-on” space
- Encouraging flexibility in leasing terms
- Support the retention or delivery of small office accommodation in urban centres and on larger scale new housing sites
- Coordinating the identification and promotion of SME business space
- Consider future allocation of sites explicitly targeting local SME needs

3.22 Supporting the Film and TV sector

3.22.1 Consultees representing the film and TV sector noted that the main property-related challenges for the sector relate to the speed and flexibility of the planning system rather than a lack of sites. The study recommends that the local authorities consider how they could adopt more active and specific policies such as:

- Supporting applications for studio space up to a maximum size
- Supporting new industrial developments or changes of use where they are linked to film and TV production
- Commitment to look favourably and act quickly on applications for new set-builds

3.23 Supporting the Agri-Tech Sector

3.23.1 The study has identified a specific opportunity to support the agri-tech sector by providing new specialised workspace at the East Hemel Hempstead Central site.

3.24 Encouraging Higher Density Industrial Development

3.24.1 The delivery of new industrial and storage space across south-west Hertfordshire may provide opportunities to achieve higher densities of development and the more efficient use of land. At present it is estimated that industrial, storage and distribution floorspace occupies on average 40% of a site.

3.25 Responding to Demand from Hyperscale Data Centres

3.25.1 Although out of the scope of the study, it points to south-west Hertfordshire (and Hertfordshire generally) becoming established as an attractive location for data centres. The report concludes that given the specialist nature of data centres, they should not be seen as contributing to the broader need for industrial, storage and distribution space within the sub-region.

3.26 Monitoring Employment Demand Linked to Future Housing Growth

3.26.1 If the local authorities set planned housing policies on the basis of the standard method, this would generate growth in the resident working age and working population, implying a boost to the labour supply. Combined with pressure to reduce distances travelled to work (i.e for sustainability reasons and strategic objectives for more and higher quality jobs in the area), this could be a source of additional demand for employment floorspace in future years. The report concludes that whilst difficult to predict, labour supply and demand within south-west Hertfordshire should be monitored by the local authorities.

4 Conclusions

4.1 This Employment and Economy Topic Paper provides a holistic overview of the important subject of employment and economy, important elements within the emerging Local Plan because in addition to providing housing, the economic development of the District needs to be considered. This includes meeting the projected need for a range of employment uses including office uses, industry and warehousing uses.

4.2 A key aim of national planning policy is to increase economic growth and enhance employment opportunities. For example, paragraph 85 of the NPPF states that *“planning policies and decisions should help create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt. Significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity, taking into account both local business needs and wider opportunities for development. The approach taken should allow each area to build on it...”*.

- 4.3 The south-west Hertfordshire authorities undertook a joint evidence study, the South West Hertfordshire Retail and Leisure Study (September 2018), prepared by Nexus Planning. However, given that this study was completed in 2018, it is considered that a new study should be commissioned providing more up-to-date data (including post-covid) and reflecting any changes to national policy. As such, the Council will commission and undertake an updated Retail and Leisure Study before publishing the Regulation 19 version of the Local Plan.
- 4.4 The main piece of evidence analysed within the topic paper was the South West Hertfordshire Economic Study (2024), prepared by Hatch. The study provides current evidence, context and subsequent findings which will help shape future employment needs within the Three Rivers District and the wider sub-region.
- 4.5 The study confirms that the five local authority areas (Three Rivers, St Albans, Hertsmere, Dacorum and Watford) continue to share strong links in terms of migration, commuting and strategic transport infrastructure. Therefore, the study concludes that the definition of the functional economic market area (FEMA) is still valid.
- 4.6 The study identifies four “priority sectors” within south-west Hertfordshire; Film and TV, agri-tech, life sciences and clean growth. The TV and film sector is of particular importance to Three Rivers.
- 4.6.1 At the time of the study’s publication there was approximately 124,000 sqm of vacant office space in south-west Hertfordshire. The study concluded there is not a need to identify additional sites for office development, but recognises that there will still be demand for office space, particularly from smaller sized businesses. However, with specific regard to Three Rivers, the study states *“the one exception to this (availability) was Three Rivers, where the availability rate has fallen since 2019-23 although the vacancy rate has risen. The availability rate in Three Rivers is also much lower than other areas (5.8%). This is likely to be due to local factors affecting demand in Three Rivers, although the exact explanation is unclear. Nevertheless, it suggests market conditions are slightly different in Three Rivers, and the local authority should prioritise the protection of office space as far as possible”*.
- 4.6.2 In terms of industrial space and storage and distribution space, the study concludes that the FEMA authorities should plan for:
- Industrial Space: 110,200sqm (27.6 Ha of land) for the period 2021-2041 and 49,700sqm (12.4 Ha) for the period 2041-2050.
- Storage and Distribution Space: 413,400sqm (103.4 Ha) for the period 2021-2041 and 186,100sqm (46.5 Ha) for the period 2041-2050.
- 4.7 However, when taking into account existing commitments and potential development opportunities at available sites, the resulting shortfall for employment land across south-west Hertfordshire is 9.5 Ha (for industrial, storage and distribution combined).