

6th October 1977

SCENT OF VICTORY IN "THE HYDE" CAMPAIGN

Bedfordshire County Council has decided to remove all references to housing development at the Hyde from its proposed Structure Plan, a decision that has been greeted with considerable relief by the St. Albans District Council and the Harpenden community.

The Hyde's inclusion in the Plan - a document outlining Bedfordshire's planning, housing and transport policies up to 1991 - as a potential site for a major housing development, generated vast opposition, particularly from the nearby Harpenden area.

A Steering Committee of local Councillors and Organisations was formed following a public meeting in Harpenden in April and since then has been actively fighting the scheme.

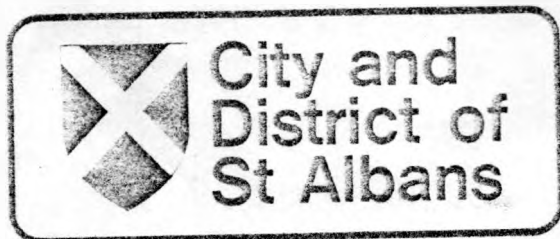
Bedfordshire's decision has delighted District Councillor Mike Harrison who chaired the Steering Group. "The whole concept of housing at the Hyde was totally wrong," he said, "the landscape value of the Hyde is very important, the transport problems would have been enormous, and the pressure on Harpenden and its services as well as other local communities would have been intense. I'm very glad and grateful that Bedfordshire has had a change of heart."

The ultimate decision on the development of the Hyde rests with the Secretary of State at the Department of the Environment, but Bedfordshire's decision is a major factor towards the total rejection of the scheme. As Councillor Harrison says "It would be an extraordinary decision if the Secretary of State was to go against the wishes of all the local authorities and local communities and insist on a provision that everyone now opposes."

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He also stressed the significance of the public response - "The support we received was tremendous and I am sure that the public's written objections and the pressure that was brought to bear on the County was instrumental in Bedfordshire dropping this project."

The final decision will be made by the Secretary of State based on his Inspector's findings at the November Examination in Public into the Structure Plan.



MEMBERS' SECRETARY

16 St. Peter's Street,
St. Albans, Herts. AL1 3LU

Telephone: St. Albans 66100

Please reply to:

Societies and
Organisations in
Harpenden

Councillor M. R. Harrison

Dear Sir/Madam,

The Hyde - Bedfordshire County Council's Structure Plan

I write to advise you that the Bedfordshire County Council's Structure Plan has now been submitted to the Secretary of State of the Department of the Environment and it is important that all objections to the plan should be submitted by Friday, June 17th. You will no doubt have read of this in the local press.

The basic objective of this letter is to remind you of this deadline and to set out the basic objections which the St. Albans District Council will be making to the Secretary of State with particular reference to the Hyde.

1. The area is within a proposed green belt and is contrary to the Bedfordshire County Council's Policy as outlined in their own Plan.
2. The Hyde area is classified as an area of Great Landscape Value (Policy 59) and any housing area is completely contrary to this policy.
3. The land is also of good agricultural value, undisturbed by urban intrusion, in large, viable and intensively farmed units.
4. The closeness of Hyde to Harpenden and North Herts would create intensity of labour demand within Hertfordshire - defeating Bedfordshire's aims of providing local labour needs and encouraging "growth spiral" in Hertfordshire.
5. Harpenden's proximity to any such development would lead to enormous and insufferable demands on its services, e.g. education facilities, health, welfare, drainage. As a result of Appeal decisions much more development than was ever envisaged in the non-statutory "Hertfordshire 1981" document has already had to be absorbed within Harpenden.

6. The already overloaded A6 trunk road would suffer the problems of even greater congestion particularly in the Town Centre.

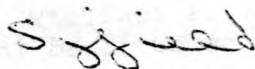
The District Council have already objected most strenuously to the Secretary of State on the total lack of consultation that has taken place concerning the Hyde's inclusion in the Structure Plan and will be submitting these additional points to the Secretary of State this week.

It is essential that as many objectives as possible should be submitted to enable the whole matter to be considered when the Examination in Public takes place probably in November this year.

Objections should be sent to:

The Regional Director
Department of the Environment
Eastern Regional Office
Charles House
375 Kensington High Street
London W14 8QH

Yours faithfully,



Councillor M. R. Harrison



EXECUTIVE SERVICES

R. J. Osborn,
Public Relations Officer
16 St. Peter's Street,
St. Albans, Herts. AL1 3LU
Telephone: St. Albans 66100

Local Organisation
Parish Councils

My Ref: PRO/RJO/SJF
Your Ref:
Date: 3rd March 1977
Please ask for: Roger Osborn
Extension: 256

Dear Sir/Madam,

The enclosed leaflet, outlining the Hertfordshire County Council's objections to the possible expansion of Luton and Stansted Airports, is sent to you for your information. The District Council fully supports the County's objections.

The leaflet has particular relevance in the light of the Bedfordshire County Council's proposals to make provision in its Draft Structure Plan for a major housing development to the North of Harpenden. Their proposals are based to some extent on the increased housing need that would stem from this Airport expansion.

We will keep you advised of this Council's policy in this matter.

Copies of the leaflet are now being distributed through Libraries, St. Albans District Council Offices and to Parish Councils and relevant local organisations. Further supplies are available on request from the Public Relations Officer, 16 St. Peters Street, St. Albans

The District Council has already advised Bedfordshire County Council of its strong objections to the proposed development and at its March 7 meeting of the District's Planning Committee will be considering the matter in more detail.

Yours faithfully,

Roger Osborn

Public Relations Officer

Please reply to: 90 Cravells Road, Harpenden. Herts.
Tel.No.Harpenden 61265



The Harpenden Society

Dear Sir,

re: Land at West Hyde near Harpenden.

This Society views with absolute dismay last minute proposals to be entered in the Bedfordshire County Structure Plan to develop the above land as an extension of Luton.

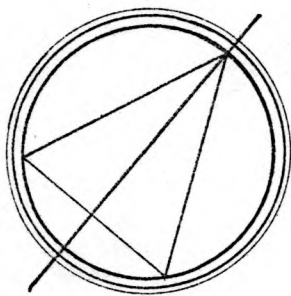
The proposals, which emanate from Luton District Council, were rejected in the Draft County Structure Plan published last September by the Beds County Council on grounds 1 to 5 on the attached list of objections, which are a direct quote from the Draft Structure Plan. The land is also designated elsewhere in the Report as part of the South Bedfordshire Green Belt and as an area of great landscape value.

We hope you will join with us in raising the strongest possible objection to the proposed development at Hyde and to its inclusion at the latest moment in the Draft Structure Plan. We would also stress that the original proposals as detailed in the existing Draft Plan should remain unaltered.

Your objections should be forwarded by Thursday 24th February, which is the date of the County Council's meeting to approve the Draft Plan and be addressed to A.T.Blowers, with a copy to G.Cowley, the Chief Planning Officer. We enclose a stamped addressed envelope for your assistance, a plan of the area and a spare copy of the list of objections.

Yours faithfully,

Roger Evans
Roger Evans ARICS ARVA
For and on behalf of the
Harpenden Society.



Luton

Luton Hoo

A6

West Hyde

Proposed development
area

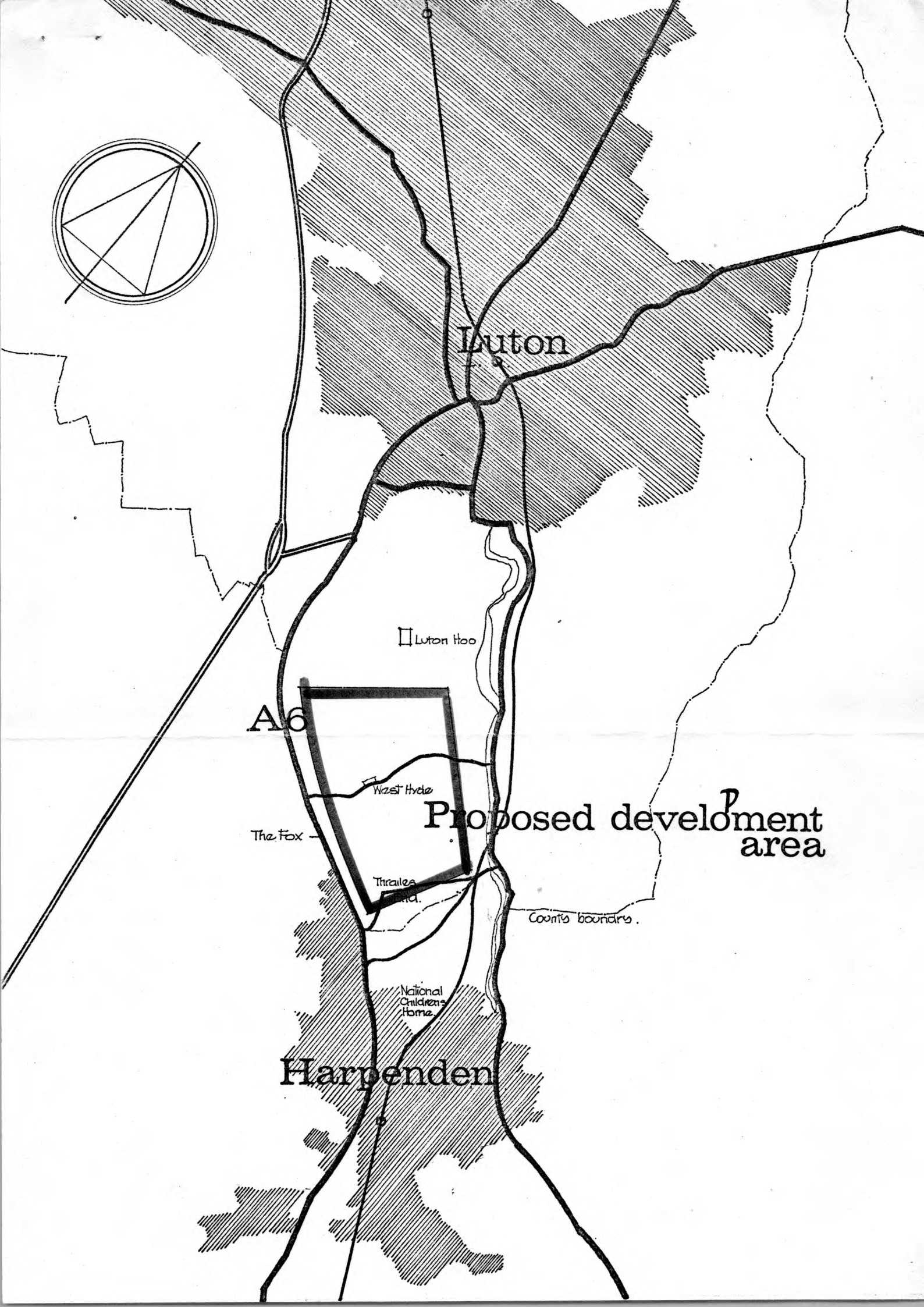
The Fox

Thrales

County boundary

National
Children's
Home

Harpenden



LIST OF OBJECTIONS TO THE DESIGNATION OF LAND AT
HYDE AS AN EXTENSION OF LUTON.

From Draft Structure Plan

- A) Designated as an area of Great Landscape Value.
- B) Included in the South Bedfordshire Green Belt.
- C) 'After examining the implications of each option area it was considered that West Hyde should not be proceeded with primarily for the following main reasons :
 - 1) It represents a Green Field Site which would be expensive to develop and relatively inflexible in that it would require a large initial commitment of resources.
 - 2) It lies within a suggested area of great landscape value in a vulnerable location between Luton and Harpenden and could lead to coalescence with Harpenden.
 - 3) Overloading would occur on transport routes to the centre of Luton.
 - 4) Although not Grade 1 or 2 it is nevertheless good agricultural land at present undisturbed by Urban intrusion.
 - 5) Of areas examined it was considered the least likely to meet the main housing aims i.e. to limit growth and meet Local Housing needs because its likely pressure from commuters to Hertfordshire.

Other objections

- A) The Hyde sewage works are at capacity and therefore unable to take any additional load.
- B) The proposal is, in reality an expansion of Harpenden not of Luton (See Plan)
- C) The proposal is directly contrary to the Secretary of State's recent directive that inner city areas rather than virgin land should be developed for the needs of expanding towns.

Objections to:

A.T. Blower, Esq.,
Chairman, Environmental Services Committee,
2 Merlin Gardens,
BEDFORD.

Copy to:

G. Cowley, Esq.,
County Planning Officer,
County Hall,
Bedford MK42 9AP



The Harpenden Society

Right Honorable Peter Shore,
Secretary of State,
2 Marshan Street,
London SW1P 3EG

7th April 1977

Please reply to: 90 Cravells Road, Harpenden, Herts.

Dear Sir,

LAND AT WEST HYDE NEAR HARPENDEN INCLUDED IN THE BEDFORDSHIRE
COUNTY COUNCILS STRUCTURE PLAN AS AN AREA FOR FUTURE LUTON
HOUSING GROWTH

Set out below are details of last minute proposals to include the above land in the Bedfordshire County Council Structure Plan as an area for future housing growth for Luton, instead of the original proposals for future growth at Houghton Regis as set out in the Structure Plan Draft Written Statement published in September 1976, prior to the Public Participation Phase II

THE ORDER OF EVENTS ARE DETAILED AS FOLLOWS :-

- A. The Background -
- B. Order of Events leading to the complete changeover of the two areas.
- C. Comments - Deals with the question of inadequate public participation and consultation.

A. BACKGROUND

The Bedfordshire County Structure Plan is shortly to be submitted to you by the Bedfordshire County Council for confirmation under Part 2 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1971.

The general policy and chosen strategy on which the Structure Plan is based is on the assumption that there will be, and that there is a preference for, low growth in population within the County, both from natural increase and migration, during the Structure Plan period.

The Report and Survey showed that Bedfordshire had had a higher growth of population than many other areas in the Country during the past 20 years and although there is evidence that the population growth is slowing down there is very little substantial evidence to show this decline will continue.

The Population and Housing Policies of the Structure Plan and the evidence on which they are based, are fundamental to all other matters contained in the Structure Plan.

Policy Area 1 - Luton/Dunstable/Houghton Regis being the area of greatest population and therefore of greatest population and housing growth and housing need, is therefore, also fundamental to the Structure Plan as a whole. Policy Area 3 - South Bedfordshire in which the land in question is contained practically surrounds Policy Area 1.

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Therefore any proposals for future housing growth located in any of the above-mentioned areas are of outstanding importance to Bedfordshire County (The Structure Plan) and the districts affected by any such proposals i.e. by land being used in those districts and by surrounding districts within the County of Bedfordshire by Hertfordshire and by surrounding districts and Parishes within Hertfordshire which have borders with this part of Bedfordshire.

B.

ORDER OF EVENTS LEADING TO THE INCLUSION OF LAND AT WEST HYDE
IN THE BEDFORDSHIRE STRUCTURE PLAN.

1. The County Structure Plan Report of Survey Consultation Draft January 1976 was published.
2. The County Structure Plan Alternative Strategies Consultation Report January 1976 was published.
3. Public Participation Phase I 6th January 1976 to 31st March 1976 Published in June 1976. Observations were received from the Luton Borough Council and various other authorities, including the Hertfordshire County Council and South Beds District Council. Observations by the Luton Borough Council referred to land at West Hyde for future housing growth in several contexts, and the attached copy plan from their Observations clearly shows the land in question. None of the Five Alternative Strategies suggested by the Bedfordshire County Council showed the area in question as an area for future housing growth. In fact the areas amenity value was considered to be important. e.g. Strategy 1 - Improved access to the country side.
Strategy 3 - Country side protected. A recreational zone requiring management.
4. The County Structure Plan Draft Written Statement. Consultation Report was published September 6th 1976.

It rejected West Hyde as an area for future housing growth viz :

Paragraph 5.1.13 of Draft Structure Plan Written Statement.

"After examining the implications of each option area it was considered that West Hyde should not be proceeded with primarily for the following reasons :-

- I. It represents a green field site which would be expensive to develop and relatively inflexible in that it would require a large initial commitment and resources.
- II. It lies within a suggested area of great landscape value in a vulnerable location between Luton and Harpenden and could lead to coalescence with Harpenden.
- III. Overloading would occur on transport routes to the centre of Luton.
- IV. Although not Grades 1 or 2 it is nevertheless good agricultural land at present undisturbed by Urban intrusion.
- V. Of the areas examined it was considered the least likely to meet the main housing ^{aims} area i.e. 'to limit growth and to meet the local housing needs because of likely pressure from commuters to Hertfordshire'

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5. Caddington and Chaul End were also rejected because of their proximity to Luton Airport, although it was admitted that the area had many advantages. Houghton Regis was the chosen area for future housing growth.
6. The County Structure Plan Public Participation Phase II Report December 1976 was apparently published in late December 1976. The exact date is not known, but Luton Public Library for instance did not receive a copy until early February. The document was available to the general public on the 4th March 1977 and a further supplement arrived on the writers desk today, April 7th 1977.

Consultations were received from the Luton Borough Council dated November 1976. The South Beds District Council and others viz. Luton Borough Council commenting on paragraphs 3. 1. (c) 2.15 and 3.4.1 5.1.2 5.1.14 Structure Plan paragraphs. "The Luton Borough Council wished to discuss further, the selection of sites East of Luton as they do not offer the same advantages as Hyde" "The L.B.C. will wish to discuss further the inclusion of the land at Hyde as an area of outstanding landscape value" "The Luton Borough Council want more information on why Houghton Regis was chosen in preference to Hyde". South Beds District Council refers to inclusion of Houghton Regis and strongly disagreed, but does not like growth at all.
7. However, on the 29th November 1976 3 days after the end of the public participation period the Structure Plan Advisory Group met (a sub-committee of the Environmental Services Committee for Bedfordshire County Council) to report on suggested changes in the Structure Plan subsequent to the public consultation, although from the above it seems that there was no overwhelming support for any changeover to West Hyde.
8. On the 1st December the Environmental Services Committee met to confirm the deletion of Houghton Regis as an area for future housing growth, and the inclusion of West Hyde as the area for future housing growth.
9. On the 3rd December 1976 the Policy and Resources Committee met to receive a report from the Environmental Services Committee, Minute 76/K/304 the County Planning Officer providing background information for the Committee to make their decision. It was resolved that the recommendation of the Environmental Services Committee should be supported and put to the full County Council, Minute 76/A/150.
10. On the 16th December the full County Council met (Minute 76/176) and resolved that the report from the Policy and Resources Committee should be received.
11. On the 14th January 1977 the Environmental Services Committee met, (Agenda - Item No.4) and agreed the wording for the changeover from Houghton Regis to West Hyde, and also that any development at Caddington and Chaul End should be rejected because of the Luton Airport noise shadow. There was no public consultation whatsoever during this period, with the general public or with the district Councils of surrounding areas in Hertfordshire.
12. On the 11th February 1976 it came to this Society's notice via the

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National Farmers' Union that the proposal had been included.

13. On the 24th February 1977 the full County Council met to reject the specific wording of West Hyde and instead to include only, the word Hyde.

However, owing to the campaign started by this Society two amendments were put forward :

One deleting West Hyde altogether from the Structure Plan which was defeated and the second to delete the specific inclusion of West Hyde, leaving the area in for further consultations: This was carried. Houghton Regis however was not re-introduced because as the County Council had voted for its deletion on the 16th December, it apparently could not be re-introduced.

At the County Council meeting Councillor Blowers (Chairman of the Environmental Services Committee) said that the Hertfordshire County Council had been informed about the change, but this of course was after the proposal had been made public by this Society.

COMMENTS

Copies of amendments contained in the Draft Structure Plan, shortly to be submitted to you, are enclosed.

Under the 1972 Town and Country Planning Act, Part II Section 6 (3) and under Regulations made under Section 18 i.e. the Structure and Local Plans Regulations 1974 SI 1974 1486 and in accordance with Ministerial Circulars 44/71 and 52/72 procedures are laid down for the Local Authority to follow in respect of public consultations and public participation in the making and alteration of Structure Plans or any proposals contained therein. It would seem that the spirit of these statutory obligations and ministerial recommendations are to give the public an adequate opportunity to make representations to the Local Planning Authority for any proposal or alterations in their Structure Plan before it is submitted to the Secretary of State for confirmation.

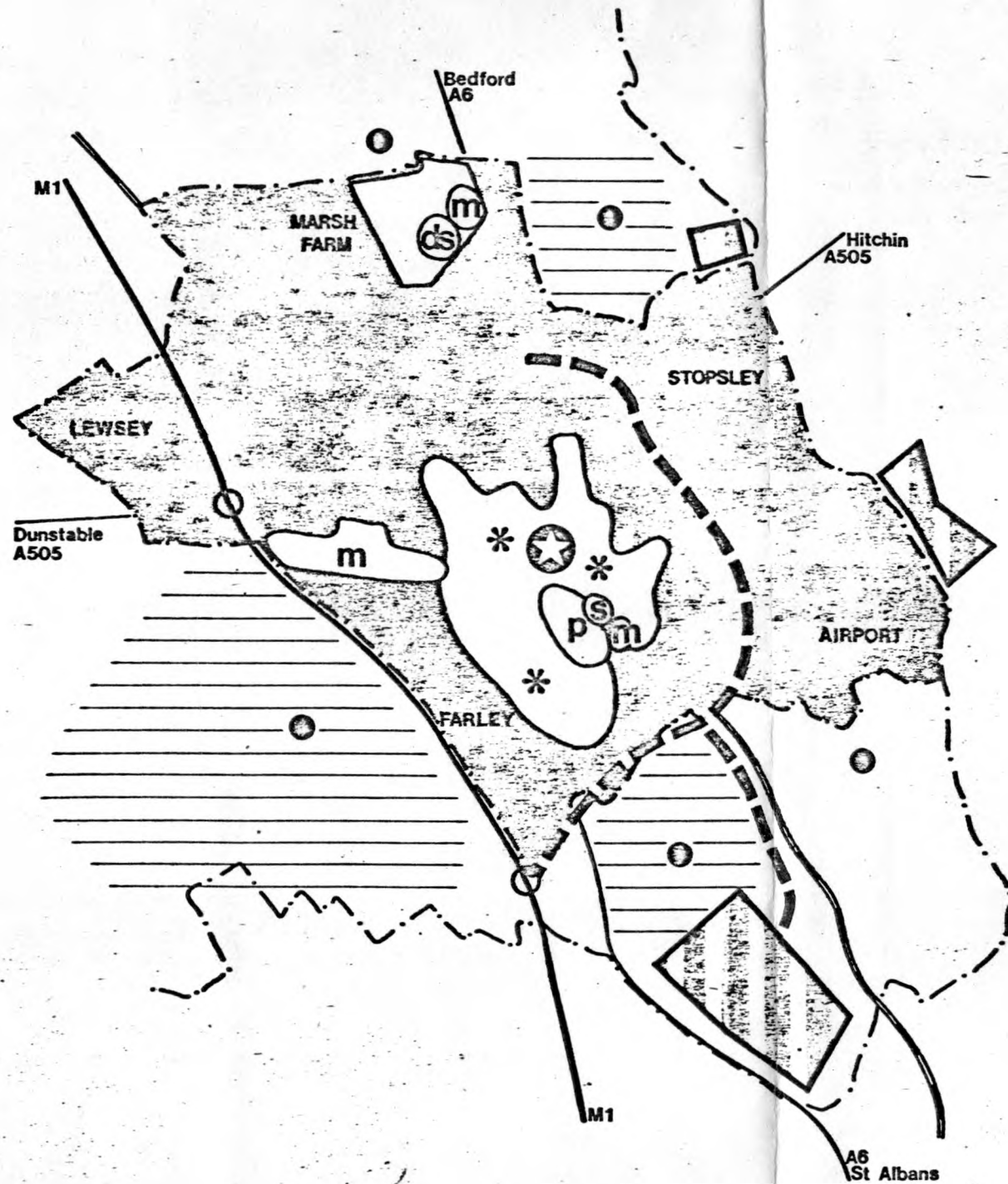
This Society holds that the general public, the surrounding Parish and District Councils, the Hertfordshire County Council and other interested bodies were not given an adequate opportunity of considering the re-classification of the land at West Hyde in the Structure Plan or to make representations to the Bedfordshire County Council about this fundamental change in their Structure Plan Policy.

Under Section 8 (4) & (5) The Secretary of State may reject a Structure Plan if Section 8 (1) with regard to publicity has not been complied with, and this Society would, therefore, ask the Secretary of State to reject the Structure Plan and ask the Bedfordshire Council to re-submit the Plan after further public consultation on this particular point. Alternatively, could the Secretary of State persuade the Bedfordshire County Council, either not to submit the Plan or, if already submitted to withdraw it, in accordance with Section 10b of the 1971 Act.

Yours faithfully,

Roger Evans
Chartered Surveyor
For and on behalf of the
Harpenden Society.

RECOMMENDED STRATEGY



Alternative Areas of Concentrated Growth
for Natural Increase only



Housing & Environment Improvement



Small Increase in Manufacturing
Employment



Increase in Service Employment



Diversification into Service Employment



Reduction of Vehicle/Pedestrian Conflict



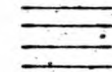
Superbus Service



Road Construction/Improvement



Improved Recreation Facilities



Improved Access to Countryside

S McArdle BSc(Econ)A.R.I.C.S.
Borough Planning Officer
Luton Town Hall