

17th March, 1969

County Planning Officer,  
Herts County Council,  
County Hall,  
Hartford.

Dear Sir,

re: Harpenden Central Area Proposals

On behalf of the Harpenden Society I wish to thank you for giving us the opportunity of discussing with you, at an early stage, the question of the future development of the centre of Harpenden.

The Society have considered the issues which are likely to be involved and would like to submit certain observations. We have no information at our disposal regarding figures of traffic flow nor of the likely increase in the population of Harpenden, but for the purposes of these observations we have assumed that any central area plan must be forward-looking for a period of not less than 25 years, and further, that the local population will continue to increase.

(1) It is considered that any central area plan for Harpenden should be based on the retention of the High Street as the central shopping area, with the retention of the present greens and open spaces. For this reason any plan should avoid any major widening of Trunk Road A.6. through Harpenden.

(2) That relief at traffic congestion in High Street should be based on the premise that a relief road would ultimately be provided either in the form of an inner relief road or a by-pass. A possible route for a relief road could be adjacent to the railway.

(3) As short-term proposals for relief of traffic congestion, consideration should be given to (a) relief routes to assist through traffic in avoiding High Street, and that such relief routes should be well sign-posted (b) that parking should be banned entirely on the A.6. within the central area and (c) that greater use is made of the car parks in Amenbury Lane and Bowers Way and that if necessary additional parking decks be provided on these sites.

(4) The Society considers it essential that every effort is made to avoid "planning blight" by any central area proposals.

(5) Consideration should be given to making Lower High Street a pedestrian precinct and this would have to have coupled with it the provision of rear loading access for the shops fronting Lower High Street; that the present road opposite Station Road should either be closed or make an entry only from the A.6., and finally that the present pedestrian crossings are replaced by panda crossings.

(6) That serious consideration should be given to enlarging the shopping centres at Batford and South Harpenden, particularly with the provisions of adequate parking facilities to encourage out-of-centre shopping.

In conclusion the Society would like to stress its desire to ensure that the present basic character of the central area be retained and that all proposals should hinge on this premise.

The Society will be very happy to discuss these observations and any other points with your representative.

Yours faithfully,

R.G. Dixon, F.R.I.C.S., F.A.I.  
Chairman, Planning Sub-Committee,  
Harpenden Society.

Mr. Hanson } All Ray  
Mr Cole }