

Hertfordshire Local Industrial Strategy

Summary of consultation
responses

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Hertfordshire
Local Enterprise Partnership

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**INDUSTRIAL
STRATEGY**

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Introduction

The draft Local Industrial Strategy (LIS) for Hertfordshire was published by Hertfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) and made available for public consultation between 9th September and 14th October 2019. During this period, stakeholders and partners were invited to offer general comments on the LIS and to respond to 10 consultation questions outlined in the draft strategy.

In total, 26 responses were received through the public consultation. The table below shows that respondents were drawn from organisations in a range of sectors (public, private, voluntary, local authority) and from across (and beyond) Hertfordshire.

Organisations that provided a consultation response	
Arts Council England	London Stansted Cambridge Consortium
Better Business for All	Nemco Limited
Broxbourne Borough Council	North Herts District Council
Dacorum Borough Council	Ocado
East Hertfordshire District Council	Sales Masters Guild
Enterprise Hertfordshire	St Albans City and District Council
Environment Agency	Stevenage Borough Council
Hertfordshire Chamber of Commerce	The Crown Estate
Hertfordshire Community Foundation	Visit Herts
Hertfordshire Growth Board	Watford Borough Council
Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust	Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council
Hyperlocal Cities	Wenta
Innovate UK	
Letchworth Garden City Heritage Foundation	

The following chapters report the results of the Local Industrial Strategy consultation by summarising responses to each question.

Responses to question 1

“The challenges of productivity and inclusive growth are the two overarching priorities in government’s Industrial Strategy White Paper. Do you agree that they are also overarching priorities for Hertfordshire?”

There was widespread agreement amongst respondents that productivity and inclusive growth are overarching priorities for Hertfordshire.

Many respondents outlined **additional priorities** for Hertfordshire. For example, local authorities consistently emphasised the importance of the climate crisis, with one stating that:

“a third priority on adjusting to Climate Change and reducing CO2 emissions should also be included [in the LIS] following government’s declaration of a Climate Emergency in May 2019 and that many authorities in Hertfordshire have signed up to the Climate Emergency declaration.”

Two respondents also stated that the **sustainability of towns** as commercial, cultural and social centres should be given equal or greater consideration than the two overarching national priorities.

Further views expressed by individual respondents included:

- ▼ prioritising the adoption and diffusion of existing and new technologies and finding best practices to achieve this;
- ▼ prioritising the quality of the natural environment: one response stated that “it mustn’t be underestimated the potential benefits of improving the natural environment on attracting, retaining and keeping healthy the county’s workforce”;
- ▼ combatting infrastructure, employment and housing land deficits.

Responses to question 2

“Do you recognise the two growth scenarios outlined (on page 19 of the draft strategy)? What do you consider to be the challenges and opportunities linked to each – and how should partners across Hertfordshire respond to them?”

The first growth scenario outlined on page 19 of the draft LIS centres around Hertfordshire fulfilling the potential of the Golden Triangle. In this scenario, Stevenage, Welwyn Garden City and Hatfield together define a “science corridor” that plays a complementary and synergistic role to the overheating powerhouses of London and Cambridge. Wider cluster development is encouraged and facilitated, generating a variety of jobs, and major global corporates are retained and encouraged to (re-)invest.

In the second growth scenario Hertfordshire facilitates London’s growth. In this situation, the county continues to grow rapidly in terms of population, fuelling demand for local services which means that jobs growth continues apace. Employment land continues to be lost so jobs are increasingly peripatetic and/or service based. Commuting to London accelerates whilst the growing numbers of jobs in Hertfordshire attract in-commuting from areas to the north. Finally, transport infrastructure is under pressure and congestion is a challenge.

From the consultation responses, there was widespread recognition of the two growth scenarios amongst respondents. Several respondents agreed that Scenario 1 is more desirable than Scenario 2.

Some respondents stated that **they did not view the scenarios as mutually exclusive.**

The Metropolitan Green Belt and the restrictions on space for commercial and residential expansion it entails was mentioned as a challenge on two separate occasions.

One respondent stated that Scenario 1:

“should recognise the potential opportunity of 100,000 square metres of business floor space on 90 acres of land at Park Plaza in Broxbourne; this is a mid-point on the shortest journey from Hertfordshire IQ to Harlow Science Park.”

The respondent added that Park Plaza should specifically be recognised as a major prospect for the development of B1a (offices) or B1b (research and development) grade use-classes.

Another respondent explicitly mentioned a **third growth scenario** which concerned changing commuting patterns. The observation was made that there is a growing outward commuting pattern from London to Hertfordshire, particularly to destinations in south Hertfordshire that have strong employment opportunities and regional

shopping and leisure facilities. A different respondent also highlighted that several companies are relocating from London to Hertfordshire due to employment land availability pressures in the capital. The apparent outflow from London to Hertfordshire could offer potential opportunities to which the LIS might respond.

Challenges and opportunities

There was consistency across the responses with regards to the challenges and opportunities associated with the two growth scenarios.

Scenario 1

*The **key opportunities** highlighted for Scenario 1 included **Hertfordshire's strengths in life sciences** and the potential for building on the foundations of innovation that were originally laid during the development and implementation of the pioneering garden city model.*

*The **key challenges** highlighted for Scenario 1 centred around **infrastructure pressures** (housing, employment land, transport) to accommodate new growth whilst also addressing existing deficits. There were additional concerns that **too much emphasis was being placed on the Golden Triangle** compared to other issues in the county. One respondent was also hesitant about the **focus on big business** and the impact this could have locally, stating that:*

“there is inevitably a focus on big business and whilst this may be of benefit to the local economy, it is important that broad opportunities are provided to local people.”

Scenario 2

*With regards to Scenario 2, the **main opportunity** outlined by respondents was the potential for the **development of sustainable transport plans** that Hertfordshire's increasingly close links with London offer. This opportunity was cited as being of upmost importance amid a climate emergency.*

*In contrast, the **main challenges** of Scenario 2 included increased **congestion, infrastructure and public service pressures** (in particular health and social care), and the challenge of how to meet the needs of a growing population without impacting on quality of life.*

*One respondent suggested that areas of south Hertfordshire will eventually be **“subsumed into London”** and highlighted that this would have subsequent impacts on the supply and affordability of housing and employment land.*

Responses to question 3

“Do you agree with the seven strategic themes for Hertfordshire (on page 20 of the draft strategy)? Are there too many? Are we missing any?”

In general, there was **broad agreement around the choice of strategic themes**.

However, a number of respondents expressed the view that seven themes was too many. It seemed that there was a shared desire amongst respondents to see more prioritisation within the themes and several were keen to see the themes developed further. Equally, though, a number of additional themes were also suggested.

Comments in relation to specific themes

Theme-specific observations are detailed below.

Theme 1: Digital foundations, frontiers and future

One respondent stated that the absence of a digital strategy for Hertfordshire acts as a significant barrier to securing digital infrastructure and funding. Consequently, they believed that developing a digital strategy should be listed as one of the key priorities for this theme. The type of digital infrastructure required in Hertfordshire was identified by another respondent to include the roll out of superfast broadband and 5G services across the county.

Theme 2: Old New Towns and new New Towns

This was repeatedly identified as being of upmost importance. Acknowledgement of the importance of new towns was accompanied by suggestions

that old towns also need to be afforded priority. One respondent offered the example of Waltham Cross which has long been recognised as an area *“suffering a particularly high level of deprivation and low skill levels.”*

Theme 3: Unlocking science-based clusters in the Golden Triangle

Responses focused on the potential repercussions of prioritising the Golden Triangle. One local authority response stated that this could be *“to the detriment of other sectors and a whole range of job opportunities”* and that there is a risk that *“Hertfordshire will not have a balanced economy. A diverse economy is a more balanced economy.”*

Another respondent stated that the theme should be expanded to include the pharmaceuticals industry.

Theme 4: East-west growth corridors

Most respondents agreed that connectivity is particularly important for Hertfordshire. However several respondents wanted to see greater emphasis on sustainable forms of travel.

Two respondents expressed the desire to see more references to the northern corridor along the A505 and the opportunity this link provides in connecting Hertfordshire with the London Luton Enterprise Zone to the west, Stansted Airport to the east and Bedford and Cambridge to the north.

Theme 5: Spaces to grow

Alongside the second theme, this theme was identified as being of crucial importance for Hertfordshire. One respondent emphasised the importance of dispersing affordable space across Hertfordshire:

“with regard to ‘Space to Grow’, this is strongly supported by [the respondent] but affordable and flexible ‘grow on’ space needs to be spread across the county.”

Suggestions in terms of “missing” themes

There were several missing themes highlighted by respondents, including:

- ▼ **Logistics, freight and future mobility:** one respondent wrote that following England’s Economic Heartland Freight study, which identified “*the key role freight and logistics will play in servicing the needs of the Cambridge-Milton Keynes-Oxford arc and the wider Heartland area over the next 30 years*”, it is justifiable that logistics, freight and future mobility be recognised as a theme.

Theme 6: Beyond boundaries – a new relationship with London

One respondent highlighted that due to London’s growth pressures and the loss of floor space in Hertfordshire that has occurred over the last 10 years, there is a “*real risk that once independent areas of Hertfordshire could become dormitories for London*”. This would mean that a new relationship with London would need to be carefully managed and this would need to be considered in the theme.

Theme 7: Creative sectors, creative people

One respondent wanted to see clarification around which sectors and skills should be included within this theme.

- ▼ **The third sector:** one respondent highlighted the vital role third sector organisations play in Hertfordshire:

“12,000 [third sector] organisations provide jobs and volunteering opportunities for over 150,000 residents and contribute in excess of £2 billion to the Hertfordshire economy.”

Furthermore, the respondent stressed the key role third sector organisations play in helping the public sector deliver health and social care and community services as well as affordable housing.

- ▼ **Tourism:** one respondent noted the relevance of the new Tourism Sector Deal which presents:

“important opportunities on how to boost productivity in the visitor economy, develop the skills of our workforce and support destinations to enhance their visitor offer and experience.”

The respondent highlighted the potential benefits of applying to become a tourism zone through the deal which would provide targeted support to address barriers to growth and capitalise on opportunities. The respondent explained that in order to bid to become a tourism zone, a demonstration of LEP support will be required. This could be shown through the addition of a tourism theme in the LIS.

- ▼ **Head office locations:** one respondent stated an abundance of head offices has traditionally been a key strength of the county making it surprising that it was not included as a theme.

- ▼ **Agricultural economy:** one response suggested a need to recognise the importance of the agricultural economy particularly in rural areas.

- ▼ **Science park development:** one respondent stated that science park development should be an additional theme.

Additional comments in relation to themes

Lastly, one respondent presented a diagram which showed how the key delivery programmes proposed by the Hertfordshire Growth Board aligned with the themes discussed in the draft LIS. The respondent stated that:

“It would be beneficial if the Hertfordshire LIS could recognise these key programmes and in particular the “strategic fit” with the LIS. A strong reflection of these key delivery programmes will be critical for a successful Hertfordshire LIS.”

The respondent commented on the nature of the dialogue between Hertfordshire LEP and other organisations that would be required in the future, saying:

“There will clearly need to be more constructive dialogue between the LEP, the local authorities and other organisations to take forward delivery and implementation of the LIS strategic themes and Hertfordshire Growth Board key delivery programmes.”

Responses to question 4

“In relation to the Ideas Foundation from the White Paper (see page 27 of the draft strategy), what do you consider to be the key priority for Hertfordshire?”

*The Industrial Strategy White Paper is organised around Five Foundations of Productivity: **Ideas, People, Infrastructure, Business Environment and Place**. These foundations are identified by government as being relevant across the whole of the UK and crucial in terms of boosting productivity performance. They are also viewed as the principal focus for Local Industrial Strategies.*

*The **Ideas Foundation primarily concerns innovation**, namely the development and deployment of new ideas. Four main priorities were mentioned in response.*

From the four priorities set out under “Ideas” within the draft LIS, each of the following were identified as the key priority by three or more respondents:

Creating a business environment that encourages businesses involved in R&D to locate in the county

One respondent explained that:

“the key commodity of these companies is the expertise and their staff”, and in order to continue attracting inward investment “the environment needs to be attractive to their employees not only in terms of ease of access (perhaps from London, Cambridge or further afield), but also the working environment and environs with a suitably academic campus atmosphere to attract the top talent.”

Collaboration

One respondent stated that:

“In order to support the Ideas Foundation...there needs to be a greater collaboration between businesses, research assets, including the University of Hertfordshire and government around innovation, technology, R&D and higher skills development to support key sectors locally.”

Innovation

The development of Hertfordshire Innovation Quarter and the role innovation plays in the Golden Triangle was mentioned by respondents as being a key priority for Hertfordshire in relation to the Ideas Foundation. One local authority also added that ensuring the space and finance for innovation should be an integral aspect of this priority.

Developing the role of the University of Hertfordshire as an anchor institution

Respondents explained that this would involve strengthening the University's links with feeder further education routes and wider businesses, and that this in turn will help facilitate other developments in the county, such as research into cell and gene therapy.

Additional possible priorities within Ideas

Healthcare was an additional priority mentioned by one private sector respondent:

“one of the four grand challenges is Ageing Society and given Hertfordshire has a large and growing elderly population and the County Council and NHS face increasing financial pressures, I believe healthcare will become the key priority in the future.”

Responses to question 5

“In relation to the People Foundation from the White Paper (see page 30 of the draft strategy), what do you consider to be the key priority for Hertfordshire?”

*The **People Foundation** in the Industrial Strategy White Paper centres around **generating good jobs and greater earning power for all.***

Responses to this question tended to be longer and more in-depth compared to those for other foundations.

The majority of respondents stated that **inclusive growth should be the key priority** for Hertfordshire. Many respondents explained that Hertfordshire is a net exporter of highly skilled employees and a net importer of low-skilled employees and that achieving inclusive growth is intrinsically linked to upskilling the resident population. One local authority respondent stated that the LIS strategy:

“should not only address the high end top research area, but even more importantly address the relative skills deficit of some of the lower earning parts of the community.”

A linked sentiment echoed by several respondents was succinctly summarised by one local authority respondent who stated that:

“the linkage between Higher and Further Education, universities, industry and schools is paramount in upskilling the population and almost as importantly, instilling the ambition in people to follow a career path to higher skilled, high productivity jobs.”

Many respondents noted the importance of **promoting STEM** (science, technology, engineering and maths) **and STEAM** (including arts) in schools, the latter playing to Hertfordshire’s strengths in the creative industries. Additionally, several responses stressed the importance of promoting upskilling through apprenticeships for those who do not wish to go to university.

There was agreement around the overarching strategy to ensure that Hertfordshire’s residents have **skills relevant to local businesses**. This centred on ideas to do with developing outposts of the University of Hertfordshire and enhancing the role of further education colleges, particularly in the county’s New Towns.

Responses to question 6

“In relation to the Infrastructure Foundation from the White Paper (see page 33 of the draft strategy), what do you consider to be the key priority for Hertfordshire?”

The Infrastructure Foundation in the Industrial Strategy White Paper concerns planning and implementing major upgrades to the UK’s infrastructure.

The responses to this question centred around six priorities.

Transport

Responses relating to transport focused on east-west connectivity, the development of Crossrail 2, encouraging a shift away from single occupancy car use, and the implementation of green technology.

East-west connectivity (in terms of both road and rail) was mentioned frequently as a priority by respondents. North-south connectivity was also raised as an area of concern in terms of long commuting times due to congestion.

One local authority espoused a view around the benefits of **behaviour shift and sustainability** over traditional delivery of infrastructure, in terms of the challenges posed by the growing population and house building, stating:

“Given the amount of house building proposed in Hertfordshire in the period to 2032 and beyond, the answer is not necessarily to build more roads, but to change behaviours and modes of

transport. Indeed, the sustainability of some developments is predicated on the use of sustainable transport and investment should be focused towards making provision for such infrastructure to encourage modal shift.”

Smarter transport options, including the idea of developing the A505 and A414 with a smart motorway, were seen as a priority by at least three respondents. Other statements included:

“Smarter, more connected and electrified transport should be a priority.”

With regards to transport, one respondent noted that the LIS was high-level and that scrutiny should be applied to more specific issues such as the growing number of delivery vans/vehicles in Hertfordshire. This was linked to sustainability in that the local logistics sector could be analysed to try and encourage greener transport patterns.

Sustainable growth

Several respondents, in particular local authorities, touched upon the importance of **green infrastructure and sustainability** in their responses. Specific technologies such as encouraging the county's electric vehicle charging infrastructure were mentioned.

One respondent suggested that whilst the LIS noted some specific projects of merit:

“none will contribute to the long-term goals of reduced emissions, increased long term growth and improvement in the quality of life.”

Digital and 5G

The majority of respondents mentioned the importance of digital infrastructure in terms of its ability to **support experimentation with new mobility solutions** and attract businesses to the LEP. Several respondents stated that **5G coverage** should be extended as far as is feasible and as quickly as possible:

“We need to build a digital twin of Hertfordshire (London has 8!) to support faster experimentation with, and adoption of, new technologies.”

Energy provision

One respondent raised a concern around **local power generation** suggesting that Hertfordshire should raise its profile with the National Grid and other key infrastructure providers to ensure that new developments include advanced local power generation and battery storage facilities and other technologies such as electric vehicle charging points.

Climate change resilience

One response focused on the importance of **flood defences**, highlighting its role as a catalyst for economic growth and regeneration. Alongside the role of green infrastructure, the response also noted improvements that could be made to water supply and waste management, encouraging biodiversity, and capturing the economic benefits of natural capital.

Housing delivery

One respondent suggested housing delivery is a priority and a significant challenge for Hertfordshire, particularly the provision of affordable housing, as low-income households are being priced out of the market and demand exceeds supply.

One respondent from an organisation working to support local businesses suggested that:

“Whilst recognising that housing and transportation infrastructure is a challenge and a priority which go well beyond the scope of the strategy the response is not nearly visionary enough. In the case of housing this presents a particular risk as if not addressed Hertfordshire could end up becoming a dormitory county with increasing congestion during peak commute times and could make Hertfordshire a less attractive place to work as a commuter.”

Responses to question 7

“In relation to the Business Environment Foundation from the White Paper (see page 36 of the draft strategy), what do you consider to be the key priority for Hertfordshire?”

*The **Business Environment Foundation** in the Industrial Strategy White Paper concerns making locations across the UK the best places to start and grow a business.*

In response to question seven, respondents **broadly agreed with the priorities in the LIS**. The most commonly cited priority was the **availability of employment land**, followed by **business start-up and scale-up support**.

Employment land

Several local authority respondents stated that the availability of employment land was a **major barrier to business growth** and supported the acknowledgement in the LIS that **direct investment** may be required to provide ‘grow-on’ space. One respondent suggested that planning authorities should be more ‘proactive’ in retaining employment space:

“Local authorities need to work with the LEP and other bodies to identify land suitable for redevelopment and development as modern commercial space, both for expanding and incoming companies. Without these high growth companies, the second and third tier suppliers who are often the commercial lifeblood of the local economy will suffer and could turn into decline. We therefore consider the first priority in this section to be the most important.”

Another suggested that it required some new ways of thinking by the LEP:

“Potential solutions and partners to deliver these solutions are in abundance, it just requires some focus and rigour on the part of the LEP in seeing and utilising the support and ‘asset’ landscape through the widest possible lens.”

One respondent stated they fully agreed with the statement from the LIS around understanding the relationship between employment and floorspace and how that is being challenged in a digitally-enabled world. The respondent suggested that programmes such as ‘Smarter Working Herts’ would help to relieve some of the pressures on employment space collaboratively and move the conversation forward so that the LEP can evolve. The respondent suggested that digital infrastructure was therefore a priority, as was a network of diverse spaces for co-working. Another stated that because of the lack of floor space, supporting SMEs to look for **innovate ways grow** would be important.

Business start-up and scale-up support

Sectorally, respondents mentioned the importance of **life-sciences, defence and aerospace, enviro-tech clusters and the science corridor** and gave examples of how employment land and scale-up support would help these sectors locally. Three respondents mentioned the **creative cluster** in south west Hertfordshire, suggesting that it would be beneficial to consider how to support businesses and encourage growth in smaller companies ‘spinning out’ of the creative cluster.

One respondent mentioned the importance of **support for different types of entrepreneurs:**

“there is also need to nurture entrepreneurialism and business development particularly for entrants in the service and retail economies locally who often lack investment and business skills to make their new business a sustainable success.”

A respondent from the scale-up and business support sector said that their experience of scale-up is that it is infinitely diverse, resource

heavy and requires a long-term commitment between partners; they advised that a written productivity and growth strategy would go some way to understanding the “*capacity and capability required to devise a coherent strategy around making scale up, scalable*”. One local authority respondent mentioned prioritising the promotion of Hertfordshire Innovation Quarter.

One respondent mentioned the role of institutes of higher education in terms of their ability to support business growth and upskilling. One response focused on how improving skills provision would attract inward investment.

A final local priority mentioned in the responses was around the promotion of Maylands Business Park.

Responses to question 8

“In relation to the Place Foundation from the White Paper (see page 39 of the draft strategy), what do you consider to be the key priority for Hertfordshire?”

*The **Place Foundation** in the Industrial Strategy White Paper centres around **creating prosperous communities across the UK.***

Most respondents agreed with the LIS’s priorities for the Place Foundation in terms of prioritising the **revitalisation of New Towns and the re-energising of high streets and town centres**. The role of town centres in place shaping was repeatedly linked to other issues including employment opportunities, skills, housing and culture.

Responses prioritised the **regeneration of old New Towns**, seeing this as essential to their functions as economic, social and cultural hubs. Several respondents suggested this aim could be facilitated by the development of **town centre creative and cultural strategies** and through **prioritising local strengths and heritage**. A few respondents noted the variation of town centres in Hertfordshire; more detail on specific towns and the challenges facing them were provided by local authorities.

Several respondents (including those from the private sector) noted the pivotal role of town centres as places for business to flourish and encourage a diverse economy.

“It is important that the emerging settlements reflect that changing nature of work and create new environments for new industries to start, grow and flourish and add to the economic and industrial variety that already exists.”

“[Revitalisation of the local town is important] to support to become a more attractive place to invest and visit, including building on its existing heritage and supporting a cultural offer, which is currently missing and is vital to support its business community attract talent into the area who also reside in the area.”

“Hertfordshire LEP and local authorities need to focus on creating the right environment for business to thrive alongside expected housing growth, this work needs to sit alongside the district and borough council local plans and other strategies.”

One respondent urged the LEP to prioritise some longer-term strategic thinking to identify **future growth spaces for employment as well as homes**. They suggested that the county has done some impressive work on a 2050 infrastructure document, which sets the ground for a longer-term plan.

Two respondents agreed with the LIS's position in terms of the importance of designing emerging communities to be economically vibrant. One response suggested that, in light of the climate crisis, garden communities and intelligent design should be a priority:

“Herts has a great heritage linked with the Garden Cities movement and this idea is even more key given the climate emergency. Ideas on updating the model for a sustainable and digitally enabled future are exciting, given some of the powers and governance that these models have.”

Respondents from different sectors emphasised the importance of the prioritisation of **green and smart infrastructure** in place design and regeneration. Similarly, the importance of **digital connectivity** in place-making was stressed by more than one respondent.

Two respondents referred to **interconnectivity and place**. One noted the importance of maintaining the ‘connection’ between north and south Hertfordshire. A further respondent stated:

“There is an opportunity that hasn’t been identified to consider creating a better network of towns and the clustering of complementary economic activity to help address some of the scale issues we face through a lack of a core city.”

Other specific comments made by individual respondents included:

- ▼ that the regeneration of Hatfield should be a priority, focused on Hatfield Business Park and the Galleria, to create an attractive and self-sufficient environment;
- ▼ that Brookfield should be included in the LIS along with Waltham Cross town centre;
- ▼ that some of the more deprived areas in the county would benefit from investment.

Responses to question 9

“Government has made it clear that there is (as yet) no new resource with which to deliver LISs. How might your organisation contribute to delivering the priorities set out in this document?”

Overwhelmingly respondents suggested that they were **willing and eager contribute to the delivery of the priorities set out in the LIS**.

Most respondents, all local authority respondents and many local specialist organisations broadly stated that their own **strategic aims would align with those of the LEP** and emphasised inter-organisational **collaboration**. One local authority respondent said:

“[Local Authority] will consider the synergies with the LEP Industrial Strategy when preparing our own strategies and setting our budgets and work with public and private sector investors to maximise leveraged funding possibilities. We will also consider committing staff time to specific projects and working positively with the LEP and other partners and stakeholders to maximise benefits.”

A key theme across all the responses was around **collaboration**. For example, the London Stansted Cambridge Consortium outlined their role in facilitating collaboration across local government, businesses, colleges and universities.

In their responses to this question, local authorities tended to position their contribution in relation to local characteristics and aspirations.

For example:

“Watford has an important role to play in supporting the delivery of the LIS. This will tend to be more urban, economic and infrastructure focused, based on the current growth trajectories. In that respect Watford would be a supporting partner of the programme and would work with the LEP and partners to develop Hertfordshire’s long term industrial resilience.”

One local authority respondent referred to their ability to deliver **innovative office space** and outlined the potential contribution of employment space retention, regeneration and development, skills provisions and town centre regeneration programmes.

Another local authority respondent suggested that they would consider **committing staff time** to specific projects and working with the LEP and other partners and stakeholders to maximise benefits. A further local authority respondent highlighted how they would support collaboration between public and private sectors to maximise funding possibilities.

A private sector respondent highlighted that, in addition to the investment and resources they had already invested into Hertfordshire, they had **additional assets and capacity** that they were willing to contribute around the housing supply chain.

Respondents from the voluntary and community sector emphasised the potential for increasing dependency on their services in light of resource constraints, population growth and ageing:

“Coupled with an ageing population a thriving voluntary sector with sufficient investment will be fundamental in supporting the vision set out in the LIS.”

One voluntary sector organisation respondent committed to working with the LEP to target and support areas of greatest need.

Some individual stakeholders laid out in detail the specific ways they could support the priorities of the LIS, including through **involvement in developing strategies and delivery plans**. In some cases, stakeholders made reference to specific issues they could contribute to, such as the employment of residents that have reached retirement age and in terms of digital expertise.

Sector-specific organisations highlighted how their **particular expertise** would benefit the delivery of the LEPs priorities by working

collaboratively to achieve multiple integrated benefits (e.g. in areas such as flooding, biodiversity and resource management). Another highlighted its expertise in tourism, its desire to lead on a bid to become a tourism zone and how it may be able to increase the value of the visitor economy in other ways such as collaborating with universities and businesses to develop skills in the sector.

Other means of support mentioned included **lobbying Hertfordshire County Council** to promote the development of coherent strategic planning in areas such as ‘digital’ and ‘the future of mobility’ and supporting the delivery of the LIS through the **Hertfordshire Economic Development Officers Group (HEDOG)** (once completed), which the stakeholder stated:

“would also represent both a clear delivery arm for the LIS once completed with funding opportunities being promoted through this channel, and also to identify investment opportunities with private business.”

Responses to question 10

“Do you have any further feedback on the draft Local Industrial Strategy for Hertfordshire?”

Overarching comments

Overwhelmingly respondents **welcomed the opportunity to take part in the process of moving the Local Industrial Strategy forward.**

Generally, responses to question 10 either made general comments about the LIS in its entirety, which were largely positive, or highlighted opportunities for further consultation and specific issues or concerns outside the scope of the LIS, which respondents wanted to bring to the attention of the LEP. Some respondents also posed questions about the delivery of the LIS's strategic aims or made suggestions about its dissemination and the role of the LEP in moving the strategy forward.

Most respondents commented that they **broadly supported the LIS** and agreed with its themes and priorities. Several respondents took the opportunity to say positive things about the LIS, calling it:

“A great document based on very thorough analysis of the county.”

“It is a really readable, focussed and clear strategy with a compelling vision and an achievable set of action points.”

“An excellent attempt to define the economic and business characteristics of the county and to identify themes for a successful future.”

“[It] brings together a strong, well-informed evidence base about Hertfordshire's economy and outlines a long-term set of priorities that capitalise on existing opportunities and addresses the county's needs.”

In terms of the **tone** of document one respondent suggests that the LIS:

“needs to be more exciting and visionary”... “Think what would it take to get more of the Cambridge Magic into the LIS?”

Alongside general support for the LIS, respondents made some additional comments. These were specific in nature and tended to be **linked to the views of stakeholders** in terms of their local/sectoral priorities.

The need for further engagement

One local authority respondent expressed that the LIS could have been enhanced by further engagement with Hertfordshire's districts in the creation of the strategy and stated that they would:

“Welcome the opportunity for more thorough and regular involvement in the LEP priorities and also opportunities for information to be presented to members.”

A stakeholder from the community and voluntary sector similarly suggested that the LIS would have benefitted from **more engagement with the third sector** and more reference to the sector's role and potential in contributing to Hertfordshire's economy.

Several respondents looked beyond the content of the LIS to its **dissemination and engagement with local stakeholders** in the future:

- ▼ one respondent suggested that Hertfordshire LEP may wish to consider an executive summary, leaflet or publicity campaign which presents the strategy in a format which is easily digestible for the general public;
- ▼ it was thought that a diagram showing how the various organisations and groups within the county fit and align would be helpful (e.g. Hertfordshire LEP, Growth Board);
- ▼ a local authority respondent suggested that the Hertfordshire Economic Development Officers Group should be a key group for the LEP to engage with in the early stages of any consultation to gain a wider view of district priorities.

One local authority respondent made some comments around the role of Hertfordshire LEP:

“Work to allow the ability to share data between the LEP and the districts in order to ensure an aligned approach to strategy and economic growth would be very helpful.”

“We feel that the role of the LEP needs to be more proactive in relation to improving and supporting the districts and areas across the whole of Hertfordshire working collectively to address these issues, though this may be also be structured in more local groups of councils working together with the LEP. Whilst this may prove to be difficult given the political world that oversees strategic planning, the LEP needs to play a greater enabling and lobbying role here as a non-political organisation.”

Thinking about deliverability

Three respondents referred to the **deliverability of the LIS's strategic aims**. One respondent suggested it was not clear how Hertfordshire would deliver its strategic aims in light of the projected funding deficit. A second respondent made a general comment suggesting that there is not enough detail outlined in the LIS about how the strategic aims would be achieved. A further private sector respondent suggested that the LIS's perception of the nature of the productivity problem as attributable to inter-related reasons provided little explanation for how to deliver improvements to productivity.

▼ Summary of consultation responses

Climate change was a recurring theme...

Echoing a concern around climate change seen throughout the responses, in particular from local authorities, one local authority said that they:

“would also like to see more explicit references throughout the document to climate change and the role infrastructure and the business communities can undertake in this area. We would go further and suggest that sustainability and climate change should be identified as an additional (third) overarching priority in the Hertfordshire Industrial strategy.”

Other specific comments

There were many other specific comments which touched upon the scope of the LIS in terms of a desire to see certain issues referenced (or referenced more) in the strategy. These included:

- ▼ an update on Brexit
- ▼ M11 and London-Stansed-Cambridge Corridor
- ▼ a greater emphasis on the role of the third sector
- ▼ reference to jobs provision and upskilling for lower skilled and less able-to-be-skilled people

- ▼ further exploration of cultural education and skills development
- ▼ tourism and hospitality
- ▼ high value logistics
- ▼ Maylands business cluster and how to support its future
- ▼ England’s Economic Heartland and the potential opportunities it offers for partnership working
- ▼ more reference to small and medium sized enterprises

There were two specific technical clarifications suggested by respondents:

- ▼ for references made to Watford Health Campus be changed to Watford Riverwell in future versions of the LIS;
- ▼ for the references in the LIS to the estimate that over 771,000 square meters of commercial floor space has been lost over the last decade in Hertfordshire to divide the figure between office-based space and industrial space.

Hertfordshire

Local Enterprise Partnership

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