

EAST HERTS COUNCIL

DISTRICT PLANNING EXECUTIVE PANEL – 8 SEPTEMBER 2016

REPORT BY LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

EAST HERTS DRAFT DISTRICT PLAN – EAST OF STEVENAGE –
SETTLEMENT APPRAISAL AND NEW DRAFT CHAPTER 12

WARD(S) AFFECTED: ALL

Purpose/Summary of Report

The purpose of this report is:

- To present to Members a Settlement Appraisal for East of Stevenage, together with a proposed new chapter, for subsequent incorporation into the final draft District Plan.

**RECOMMENDATIONS FOR DISTRICT PLANNING EXECUTIVE
PANEL: That Council, via the Executive, be advised that:**

(A)	the East of Stevenage Settlement Appraisal as detailed at Essential Reference Paper ‘B’ to this report, be agreed; and
(B)	the draft revised Chapter 12 (East of Stevenage), as detailed in Essential Reference Paper ‘C’ to this report, be agreed as a basis for inclusion in the final draft District Plan, with the content being finalised when the consolidated plan is presented in September 2016.

1.0 Background

1.1 The Council published its Draft District Plan Preferred Options for consultation for a period of twelve weeks between 27th February and 22nd May 2014.

1.2 This report presents a Settlement Appraisal for East of Stevenage. The Settlement Appraisal provides the Council’s justification for the proposed chapter having regard to the issues

raised during the Preferred Options consultation, further technical and delivery assessment and sustainability appraisal.

1.3 **Essential Reference Paper ‘B’** contains the Settlement Appraisal for East of Stevenage and **Essential Reference Paper ‘C’** contains the proposed chapter.

2.0 Report

2.1 As discussed in the Development Strategy Chapter, the Council has a duty to meet its identified housing need and, due to the lack of brownfield opportunities, this results in a consequential need to release some Green Belt land in order to achieve sustainable development in the District. Officers acknowledge that the assessment of the area to the east of Stevenage would not in itself suggest that the land would be suitable for Green Belt release. However, it should be noted that the Green Belt Study should be viewed in its overall context, whereby the majority of land assessed throughout the district via this process resulted in similar ratings being achieved. Therefore, of necessity, the imperative of meeting the District’s housing need brings into deliberation locations that may not otherwise have been considered suitable to be brought forward for development.

2.2 On balance it is considered that, in order to allow for an urban extension to the sustainable settlement of Stevenage, it would be appropriate to allow some Green Belt release in this instance in order to meet identified housing need.

2.3 Consequently, land to the East of Stevenage at Gresley Park is allocated for development in the East Herts District Plan to accommodate 600 new homes within the first five years of the Plan.

2.4 The site will provide a variety of new homes in an established travel to work corridor, will provide new employment opportunities and will make provision for Travelling Showpeople. The site will provide a number of benefits to both the new and existing community, namely through the provision of a new school and other community facilities. The site will also contribute towards the improvement of infrastructure which is necessary to support the wider growth within the town, namely the reinstatement of Barnwell East Secondary School and improvements to the A602/Gresley Way junction. The primary school and early-years facility will be in the centre of the development alongside

community facilities, serving to create a focal point for the new community. The new school and healthcare facilities will also serve the wider population.

2.5 The draft revised chapter sets out what the development will be expected to achieve including an illustrative conceptual diagram which will be used to inform the masterplanning process and any planning applications.

3.0 Implications/Consultations

3.1 Information on any corporate issues and consultation associated with this report can be found within **Essential Reference Paper 'A'**.

Background Papers

None

Contact Member: Cllr Linda Haysey – Leader of the Council
linda.haysey@eastherts.gov.uk

Contact Officer: Kevin Steptoe – Head of Planning and Building Control
01992 531407
kevin.steptoe@eastherts.gov.uk

Report Author: Jenny Pierce – Principal Planning Officer
jenny.pierce@eastherts.gov.uk