

EAST HERTS COUNCIL

DISTRICT PLANNING EXECUTIVE PANEL – 17 JULY 2014

EXECUTIVE – 5 AUGUST 2014

REPORT BY EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR STRATEGIC PLANNING
AND TRANSPORT

DELIVERY STUDY UPDATE REPORT

WARD(S) AFFECTED: ALL

Purpose/Summary of Report

- This report provides an update on progress with the Delivery Study, a critical piece of the evidence base for the emerging District Plan.
- It also explains the Council's approach to engagement with site promoters (landowners and prospective developers), necessary to ensure that the Council meets soundness requirements for Examination in Public.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR DISTRICT PLANNING EXECUTIVE

PANEL: That:

(A)	The specification for the District Plan Delivery Study contained at Essential Reference Paper 'B', be noted; and
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(B)	The presentations to site promoters and subsequent meeting notes contained at Essential Reference Papers 'C' and 'D', be noted.
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1.0 Background

- 1.1 The Council has adopted a 'stepped approach' to the gradual testing and refinement of development options. Early steps in the preparation of the Plan, including options sifting, involved evaluation of the available evidence from a variety of sources, including mapped data and evidence from infrastructure providers.
- 1.2 During the early stages of plan preparation site promoter submissions were gathered as follows:
- Call for Sites (2009+): information submitted for further assessment and testing through the Strategic Land Availability Assessment (SLAA).
 - Landowner/developer Questionnaire responses (summer 2012) for shortlisted site promoters only.
- 1.3 The Council considered that, at the early options sifting stage, prior to agreement of the Preferred Options District Plan in January 2014, further contact with site promoters was not necessary, appropriate, or practical, given the very large number of potential sites being promoted at that stage.
- 1.4 Following on from publication of the Preferred Options District Plan, the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) requires a different approach and more evidence around infrastructure planning and delivery in order that Local Planning Authorities can demonstrate that their plans are effective. This is particularly important given that local authorities rarely deliver development directly, but are reliant on private sector developers and public and private sector infrastructure providers.
- 1.5 The Council has already agreed to undertake a Delivery Study to assist in expanding and evolving the Infrastructure Topic Paper into an Infrastructure Delivery Plan (District Plan Update Report, October 2013 – See Background Papers).
- 1.6 The same report also included a 'Strategic Sites Deliverability Advice Note' prepared by ATLAS, which set out the need for the Council to assemble a range of evidence in relation to infrastructure planning and delivery, and manage uncertainty, particularly in relation to long-term plans.

- 1.7 The Deliverability Advice Note included a number of recommendations, including the need for a strategy for engagement with prospective developers.
- 1.8 This report sets out progress with the commission of the Delivery Study and how it is anticipated to help shape the District Plan. It also sets out what site promoter engagement has been undertaken to date and where site promoter information can be accessed.

2.0 Report

The Delivery Study

- 2.1 The Delivery Study is critical to determining whether or not the development strategy set out in the Preferred Options District Plan can be delivered. The study could result in material changes to the Draft Plan, for example, if mitigation measures at any site or sites are demonstrated to be unviable.
- 2.2 The study is currently out for tender (deadline 27 June 2014) and it is anticipated that the consultants appointed to undertake the study will commence work in July.
- 2.3 Timely progress with the study will be dependent in large part on prompt receipt of inputs from the appointed consultants, as well as from site promoters (see below) and infrastructure providers. The Council has asked prospective applicants for a realistic timetable and this will need to be taken into account in terms of the overall work programme. As with any work dependent on external parties there are scheduling risks and these will need to be carefully managed.
- 2.4 The specification to consultants bidding for the work is contained at **Essential Reference Paper 'B'** and sets out eight tasks:
- Task 1: Review of transport evidence and requirements
 - Task 2: Review of site specific masterplanning
 - Task 3: Infrastructure Delivery Plan
 - Task 4: Local Plan policies
 - Task 5: Plan-wide viability
 - Task 6: Location-specific viability
 - Task 7: Community Infrastructure Levy and Section 106/Section 278 costs
 - Task 8: Review of Objectively Assessed Development Needs

Site Promoter Engagement

- 2.5 A Briefing Session for Site Promoters was held on 4 April 2014. This was an opportunity for Officers to meet site promoters for the first time and to explain the Council's process and approach to ensuring an effective plan. The Briefing Session included presentations by Hertfordshire County Council (highways), the Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust, the Hertfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP), and ATLAS, in addition to presentations by East Herts Officers. All the presentations are attached at **Essential Reference Paper 'C'**.
- 2.6 Following the Briefing Session Officers have been holding meetings with site promoters and relevant infrastructure providers. Notes of all the site promoter meetings hosted by the Council to date are included at **Essential Reference Paper 'D'**. The notes have been agreed with all the attendees.
- 2.7 In accordance with Appendix B of the Delivery Study Specification, a further information request was emailed to all the site promoters on 23 May 2014, with a request for information to be supplied by the end of July 2014 in order to inform the Delivery Study. The approach is in accordance with the recommendations from ATLAS in their Deliverability Advice Note set out in the Background section above.

Site Promoter Information

- 2.8 To date, the Council has published all the information received from site promoters during the options sifting stage at www.eastherts.gov.uk/developerinfo
- 2.9 Going forward, the volume of information received from site promoters is expected to increase as further work on deliverability is undertaken. In order to maintain transparency, and also to enable easy access to this information, separate webpages have been set up for each of the 16 proposed site allocations and broad locations. These webpages can be accessed from the following link: www.eastherts.gov.uk/preferredoptions2014
- 2.10 All relevant information, including meeting notes, consultation responses, technical work, and any other information as appropriate, will be uploaded to these webpages as soon as possible after receipt and agreement to publish.

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

The following reports were presented to the District Planning Executive Panel:

- Infrastructure Topic Paper, 16 January 2014, see also www.eastherts.gov.uk/infrastructure
- District Plan Update Report, 3 October 2013
- ATLAS Strategic Sites Deliverability Advice Note, District Plan Update Report, Essential Reference Paper 'E', 3 October 2013

The call for sites information and SLAA information can be viewed here:
www.eastherts.gov.uk/callforsites
www.eastherts.gov.uk/sl原因

Information received from developers during the options sifting stage prior to January 2014 can be viewed here:
www.eastherts.gov.uk/developerinfo

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