



our ref: **PM/Q10058**  
your ref:  
email: [REDACTED]  
date: 12 October 2015

[REDACTED]  
Planning Policy Team  
East Herts Council  
Wallsfields  
Pegs Lane  
Hertford  
SG13 8EQ

Dear [REDACTED]

**NEIGHBOURHOOD AREA DESIGNATION APPLICATION**  
**SAWBRIDGEWORTH TOWN COUNCIL**

I write on behalf of Places for People in respect of an application that has been made by Sawbridgeworth Town Council to form a Neighbourhood Area.

As East Herts District Council ("EHDC") are aware, Places for People are the freehold owners of over 1,000 hectares of land referred to as the Gilston Park Estate. This land falls outside of the proposed Neighbourhood Area. However, Places for People have been working closely with Essex County Council regarding the delivery of a vehicular crossing of the River Stort to the east of the existing 'Central Crossing', which is required to support the wider growth aspirations of the Harlow area. The current proposals for the crossing overlap with the south western boundary of the proposed Neighbourhood Area boundary.

Places for People have been engaging with EHDC planning officers for a number of years regarding the identification of the Gilston Area for a residential led development that would address the significant evidenced local housing need, whilst also materially contributing to the urgent economic and social regeneration of Harlow. The preparation of detailed evidence by EHDC and Places for People has led to the identification of the site within the Gilston Area Broad Location as set out in the District Plan Preferred Options. Based on the detailed evidence prepared, the Preferred Options states that the Gilston Area is a strategic scale location where the "*Council accepts the principle of development*" although there are certain aspects that require additional testing (paragraph 3.3.10).

Our client is therefore concerned to ensure that the Neighbourhood Area designation recognises EHDC's development plan approach for the area and as a result we request that the Council carefully considers this application prior to making any decision.

A Neighbourhood Plan is required to be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the development plan in force. The Guidance advises that it is important to minimise any conflicts between policies in the neighbourhood plan and those in the emerging Local Plan, and that where any conflict occurs weight will be afforded to the last document to become part of the development plan.

If the District Plan continues to support the development of the Gilston Area and is adopted post the adoption of a Neighbourhood Plan, depending on the content, the former could be immediately be out of date and require review. This is a factor that can be taken into account when considering the application for a Neighbourhood Area.

We have discussed the application with my client's joint promoters of the Gilston Area, City & Provincial Properties, and we're aware they are submitting similar representations.

In summary, the Gilston Area is a critical element of the EHDC's emerging District Plan (as supported by up to date evidence) and is fundamental to the successful economic regeneration of Harlow. As a result it is important for EHDC to ensure that the Neighbourhood Area designation does not impact on the planned growth for the area.

Yours sincerely,

