

EAST HERTS COUNCIL

DISTRICT PLANNING EXECUTIVE PANEL – 21 JULY 2016

REPORT BY LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

EAST HERTS DRAFT DISTRICT PLAN – CHAPTER 8 –
SAWBRIDGEWORTH: RESPONSE TO ISSUES RAISED DURING
PREFERRED OPTIONS CONSULTATION

WARD(S) AFFECTED: ALL

Purpose/Summary of Report

The purpose of this report is:

- To bring to Members' attention the issues raised through the Preferred Options consultation in connection with Chapter 8 (Sawbridgeworth) of the Draft District Plan Preferred Options version, together with Officer responses to those issues.

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

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| (A) | the issues raised in respect of Chapter 8 (Sawbridgeworth) of the Draft District Plan Preferred Options, as detailed at Essential Reference Paper 'B' to this report, be received and considered; and |
| (B) | the Officer response to the issues referred to in (A) above, as detailed in Essential Reference Paper 'B' to this report, be agreed. |

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. Several thousand comments were received through the consultation exercise from over a thousand stakeholders including statutory consultees and members of the public.

- 1.2 In order to manage these comments, the Council's agreed approach, as set out in its Statement of Community Involvement (October 2013), is to summarise the issues raised through the consultation and record how these issues have been used to inform the next draft of the District Plan.
- 1.3 This report presents the Issue Report for Sawbridgeworth at **Essential Reference Paper 'B'**.
- 2.0 Report
- 2.1 The Issue Report summarises the issues raised through the Preferred Options Consultation and the issues are grouped according to the section of the Draft Plan they relate to. The table presents an officer response to each issue and sets out whether or not it is proposed that any subsequent proposed amendments to the text or policies of the draft Plan be made as a result.
- 2.2 As there have been significant advances in the technical evidence available to support the development strategy, and changes in local and wider circumstance since the publication of the Preferred Options version of the Draft Plan, it is considered appropriate that each of the settlement chapters be rewritten to take these factors into account rather than presenting a 'track change' iteration of the previous version. Therefore, unlike the approach taken for the Topic Chapters, the Issue Report for this Settlement Chapter does not specify a form of wording that any proposed amendment should take.
- 2.3 In consequence, it is likewise not proposed that amendments are shown in the form of 'track changes' for the settlement chapters. Instead, a revised chapter, which incorporates any proposed necessary amendments to the Plan identified in the Issue Report, will be brought before Members for consideration at the District Planning Executive Panel meeting on 25th August, along with the relevant Settlement Appraisal.
- 2.4 The responses to the issues raised identify that, in the view of Officers, amendments should be made to proposed housing allocations in Sawbridgeworth.
- 2.5 Firstly, it is the view of Officers that the quantum of development proposed for the site to the south of West Road should be reduced. This is partly in response to the Green Belt Review (2015) which identified that the western section of this wider parcel of land is particularly sensitive in Green Belt terms. In

addition, reducing the number of homes in this location also responds to the large number of representations made to the Preferred Options consultation that raised concerns about the impact of additional traffic on West Road.

- 2.6 Secondly, it is also the view of Officers that a site to the north of the town should be included within the forthcoming 'Publication' version of the District Plan. Again, this is in response to the Green Belt Review which identified a parcel of land to the east of the A1184 as being of 'high' suitability for development in Green Belt terms.
- 2.7 The quantum of development proposed in these locations will be considered as part of the Settlement Appraisal for Sawbridgeworth which will be presented to Members alongside a revised District Plan chapter at the District Planning Executive Panel meeting on 25th August.
- 2.8 Members are therefore invited to agree the Issue Report, as detailed in Essential Reference Paper 'B', as a basis for informing a redrafted chapter on Sawbridgeworth in the final draft District Plan.
- 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

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