

EAST HERTS COUNCIL

DISTRICT PLANNING EXECUTIVE PANEL – 25 AUGUST 2016

REPORT BY LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

EAST HERTS DRAFT DISTRICT PLAN – CHAPTER 6 –
BUNTINGFORD: 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 6 (Buntingford) 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:**

(A)	the issues raised in respect of Chapter 6 (Buntingford) 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 Buntingford 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 8th September, along with the relevant Settlement Appraisal.
- 2.4 It should be noted that, for Buntingford, there have been significant changes since the Preferred Options consultation in 2014. Due to its position as the only town in the District that is not constrained by Green Belt, Buntingford has been subject to a number of speculative planning applications brought forward in advance of the adoption of the District Plan.

- 2.5 The proposed site allocation in the draft District Plan, BUNT2 South of Buntingford, has received planning permission for 316 dwellings and development has commenced on site. Therefore, it is Officers view that Policy BUNT2 is no longer required to be included in the Plan. However, it is considered that the policy relating to Employment in Buntingford (BUNT4 in draft District Plan) should be amended, with the 2 hectares of land provided as part of the planning permission being designated as an Employment Area, for B1(a), B1(c) and/or D1 uses.
- 2.6 The proposed site allocation in the draft District Plan, BUNT3 North of Buntingford, has received planning permission for 180 dwellings and development is due to commence on site shortly. In addition, two planning applications relating to the provision of specialist residential accommodation for the elderly on the site have been submitted to the Council. The first application for 25 retirement bungalows has recently been approved, whilst the second application for 37 retirement apartments is awaiting determination. Therefore, it is Officers view that Policy BUNT3 is no longer required to be included in the Plan.
- 2.7 Land north of Hare Street Road, land south of Hare Street Road and land east of Aspenden Road have all received planning permission on appeal for a total of 501 dwellings. The settlement boundary of the town will be amended to incorporate these sites.
- 2.8 Taking into account the amount of development that has been approved in Buntingford, as detailed above, and the response of HCC Property to the Preferred Options consultation, it is the view of Officers that a site allocation should be made for the development of a new first school. It is clear that the pupil yield arising from all approved development sites cannot be accommodated within the town's existing first schools, even taking account of their extension potential. Therefore, a new first school site will be required to ensure that there are sufficient places for the town's residents. This issue will be addressed through the Buntingford Settlement Appraisal which will be presented to the District Planning Executive Panel on 8th September.
- 2.9 Members are therefore invited to agree the Issue Report, as detailed in **Essential Reference Paper 'B'** to this report, as a basis for informing a redrafted chapter on Buntingford 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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