

EAST HERTS COUNCIL

DISTRICT PLANNING EXECUTIVE PANEL – 8 SEPTEMBER 2016

REPORT BY LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

EAST HERTS DRAFT DISTRICT PLAN – BUNTINGFORD –  
SETTLEMENT APPRAISAL AND NEW DRAFT CHAPTER 6

WARD(S) AFFECTED: ALL

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**Purpose/Summary of Report**

The purpose of this report is:

- To present to Members a Settlement Appraisal for Buntingford, together with a draft revised chapter, for subsequent incorporation into the final draft District Plan.

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

<b>(A)</b>	<b>the Buntingford Settlement Appraisal as detailed at Essential Reference Paper ‘B’ to this report, be agreed; and</b>
<b>(B)</b>	<b>the draft revised Chapter 6 (Buntingford), 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.</b>

1.0 Background

- 1.1 The Council published its Draft District Plan Preferred Options for consultation for a period of twelve weeks between 27<sup>th</sup> February and 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2014.
- 1.2 The issues raised through the consultation with regard to the Buntingford Chapter were considered at the District Planning Executive Panel on the 25<sup>th</sup> August 2016.

- 1.3 This report presents a Settlement Appraisal for Buntingford. The Settlement Appraisal provides the Council's justification for the proposed redrafted chapter having regard to the issues raised during the Preferred Options consultation, further technical and delivery assessment and sustainability appraisal.
- 1.4 **Essential Reference Paper 'B'** contains the Settlement Appraisal for Buntingford and **Essential Reference Paper 'C'** contains the revised draft chapter.
- 2.0 Report
- 2.1 The Preferred Options District Plan presented a draft development strategy for Buntingford that included two proposed allocations:
- Land to the south of the town, on land to the east of London Road for 300 dwellings; and
  - Land to the north of the town, on land to the west of Ermine Street for 180 dwellings.
- 2.2 However, 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 that have been submitted prior to the adoption of the District Plan. Since the Preferred Options District Plan was published in 2014, planning permission has been granted for the development of 1,035 dwellings on sites delivering 10+ units, with planning applications totalling an additional 480 dwellings awaiting determination.
- 2.3 The Settlement Appraisal identifies how the proposed strategy for the town has been refined following the Preferred Options consultation. As the proposed allocations to the north and south of the town have now received planning permission the revised draft chapter does not contain specific policies relating to these sites.
- 2.4 The Settlement Appraisal identifies that further development in excess of the level already permitted in the town is not viewed as being sustainable due to the likely increase in out-commuting from the town by car to access services, facilities and employment opportunities in nearby towns. Therefore the revised draft chapter does not propose any further site allocations for residential development.
- 2.5 The emerging strategy for the town in the District Plan is now

concerned with ensuring the cumulative impacts of development are managed appropriately, particularly through the provision of additional employment opportunities and education infrastructure. A site allocation has been made on land west of London Road for the provision of a new first school to meet the growing demand for school places forecast in the town.

2.6 The policies contained in the draft revised chapter set out what the proposed development in Buntingford will be expected to deliver. These requirements will form the basis of future 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

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