

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
DISTRICT PLANNING EXECUTIVE PANEL
HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER,
WALLFIELDS, HERTFORD ON THURSDAY
8 SEPTEMBER 2016, AT 7.00 PM

PRESENT: Councillor L Haysey (Chairman).
Councillors E Buckmaster and G Jones.

ALSO PRESENT:

Councillors A Alder, M Allen, D Andrews,
P Ballam, R Brunton, S Bull, M Casey,
G Cutting, M Freeman, J Goodeve,
A Jackson, T Page, M Pope, S Rutland-
Barsby, K Warnell and C Woodward.

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Chris Butcher	- Principal Planning Officer
Peter Mannings	- Democratic Services Officer
James Mead	- Assistant Planning Officer
Kay Mead	- Principal Planning Officer
Laura Pattison	- Senior Planning Officer
George Pavey	- Planning Officer
Jenny Pierce	- Principal Planning Officer
Claire Sime	- Planning Policy Manager
Kevin Steptoe	- Head of Planning and Building Control Services
Liz Watts	- Chief Executive

42 **EAST HERTS DRAFT DISTRICT PLAN – NEW DRAFT
CHAPTER 3 – DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY**

The Panel considered a new draft Chapter 3 Development Strategy for subsequent incorporation into the final draft District Plan. Officers summarized a number of issues that were relevant to the report. Members were advised that the objectively assessed housing need figure was for 16,390 homes by the end of the plan period. Ongoing initial assessment work had identified a higher figure of 19,500 homes and the revised chapter identified sufficient sites for 18,000 homes over the course of the plan period.

Officers advised that the detailed amendments to chapter 3 would be reported to the 15 September 2016 meeting of the Panel. The Panel supported the recommendations as now detailed.

RECOMMENDED – that the draft revised Chapter 3 (Development Strategy), as detailed in Essential Reference Paper ‘B’ to the report submitted, be agreed as a basis for inclusion in the final draft District Plan, with the content being finalised when the consolidated plan was presented in September 2016.

43 **EAST HERTS DRAFT DISTRICT PLAN – NEW DRAFT
CHAPTER 4 – GREEN BELT AND RURAL AREA BEYOND
THE GREEN BELT**

The Panel considered a new draft Chapter 4 (Green Belt and Rural Area beyond the Green Belt) for subsequent incorporation into the final draft District Plan. Officers detailed a number of proposed changes and advised that the detailed amendments would be submitted to the 15 September 2016 Panel meeting.

In response to Members’ comments and questions, Officers summarized a number of factors that constituted exceptional circumstances that justified

the amendment of Green Belt boundaries. Officers referred in particular to the uplift in housing need, an acute demand for affordable homes and a backlog of unmet housing need. Members were also reminded that there were insufficient brownfield sites to provide an additional 16,390 homes in the District.

The Panel supported the recommendation as now detailed.

RECOMMENDED – that the draft revised Chapter 4 (Green Belt and Rural Area Beyond the Green Belt), as detailed in Essential Reference Paper ‘B’ to the report submitted, be agreed as a basis for inclusion in the final draft District Plan, with the content being finalised when the consolidated plan was presented in September 2016.

44 **EAST HERTS DRAFT DISTRICT PLAN – CHAPTER 5 – BISHOP’S STORTFORD: RESPONSE TO ISSUES RAISED DURING PREFERRED OPTIONS CONSULTATION**

The Panel gave consideration to the issues raised through the Preferred Options consultation in connection with Chapter 5 (Bishop’s Stortford) of the Draft District Plan Preferred Options version, together with Officer responses to those issues.

The Chairman took Members through the District Plan response summaries for Bishop’s Stortford page by page. Officers responded to a significant number of questions and queries from Members.

The Panel supported the recommendation as now detailed.

RECOMMENDED – that (A) the issues raised in respect of Chapter 5 (Bishop’s Stortford) of the Draft District Plan Preferred Options, as detailed in Essential Reference Paper ‘B’ to the report submitted, 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 the report submitted, be agreed.

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

The Panel considered the Settlement Appraisal for Buntingford, together with a draft revised chapter 6, for subsequent incorporation into the final draft District Plan. Officers advised that Buntingford had been the subject of a number of speculative applications as there was no Green Belt protection against development around the town.

Officers advised that since the publication of the preferred options District Plan in 2014, there had been planning permission granted for over 1000 dwellings around Buntingford with a further 480 dwellings yet to be determined. Members were advised that there would be an increase in out commuting by car and no further site allocations would be made for Buntingford.

Officers concluded that a site had been identified for a new first school on land to the south of Buntingford and this site would remain outside the settlement boundary of the town. The Chairman and Councillor S Bull referred to the importance of securing the appropriate infrastructure. Councillor S Bull stated that residents were concerned that the scale of the increase in dwellings outnumbered the infrastructure.

The Panel supported the recommendation as now detailed.

RECOMMENDED – that (A) the Buntingford Settlement Appraisal, as detailed in Essential Reference Paper 'B' to the report submitted, be

agreed; and

(B) the draft revised Chapter 6 (Buntingford), as detailed in Essential Reference Paper 'C' to the report submitted, be agreed as a basis for inclusion in the final draft District Plan, with the content being finalised when the consolidated plan was presented in September 2016.

46 **EAST HERTS DRAFT DISTRICT PLAN – HERTFORD – SETTLEMENT APPRAISAL AND NEW DRAFT CHAPTER 7**

The Panel considered the Settlement Appraisal for Hertford, together with a draft revised chapter, for subsequent incorporation into the final draft District Plan. Officers referred to a number of developments in and to the north, south and west of Hertford.

Officers referred to a number of minor amendments and advised that the detailed amendments would be submitted to the 15 September 2016 Panel meeting. Councillor M Pope expressed concerns regarding the Hertford and Ware employment study. He sought and was given assurances by Officers regarding employment areas in Hertford and Ware.

The Panel supported the recommendation as now detailed.

RECOMMENDED – that (A) the Hertford Settlement Appraisal, as detailed in Essential Reference Paper 'B' to the report submitted, be agreed; and

(B) the draft revised Chapter 7 (Hertford), as detailed in Essential Reference Paper 'C' to the report submitted, be agreed as a basis for inclusion in the final draft District Plan, with the content being finalised when the consolidated plan was presented in September 2016.

47 **EAST HERTS DRAFT DISTRICT PLAN – THE GILSTON AREA – DRAFT CONCEPT FRAMEWORK, SETTLEMENT APPRAISAL AND NEW DRAFT CHAPTER 11**

The Panel considered a Settlement Appraisal for the Gilston Area, together with a proposed new chapter, for subsequent incorporation into the final draft District Plan and a first draft of the Concept Framework.

Officers advised that the Gilston Area would now be allocated for 10,000 homes along with supporting infrastructure and it was likely that approximately 3,000 dwellings would be provided in the plan period with the remainder being delivered after 2033.

Members were reminded of plans for a new junction 7a for the M11 as well as planned improvements to existing M11 junctions 7 and 8 and the Amwell roundabout. Councillor E Buckmaster acknowledged the concerns of residents and referred to his expectations regarding one of the largest areas included in the draft District Plan.

Officers responded to a number of comments from Members regarding infrastructure delivery and open space provision. The Chairman referred to the transfer of open spaces to community trusts as a secure method of maintaining larger open spaces and ensuring they wouldn't be built on. The Panel supported the recommendation as now detailed.

RECOMMENDED – that (A) Gilston Area Settlement Appraisal, as detailed in Essential Reference Paper 'B' to the report submitted, be agreed; and

(B) the draft revised Chapter 11 (The Gilston Area), as detailed in Essential Reference Paper 'C' to the report submitted, be agreed as a basis for inclusion in the final draft District Plan, with the content being finalised when the

consolidated plan was presented in September 2016; and

(C) the Gilston Area Concept Framework, as detailed at Essential Reference 'D' to the report submitted, be agreed as a first draft, with further work to take place in consultation with local communities, in order to prepare of final version prior to Submission of the District Plan in March 2017.

48 **EAST HERTS DRAFT DISTRICT PLAN – EAST OF STEVENAGE – SETTLEMENT APPRAISAL AND NEW DRAFT CHAPTER 12**

The Panel considered a Settlement Appraisal for East of Stevenage, together with a proposed new chapter, for subsequent incorporation into the final draft District Plan.

Councillor T Jackson commented on the importance of assisting residents in articulating their concerns to enable them to formulate their own representation for the planning inspectorate. Officers responded to a number of detailed comments and queries from Councillor T Jackson. Councillor T Jackson referred to the importance of shaping the place beyond 2033 as this detail was not included in the draft District Plan.

The Panel supported the recommendation as now detailed.

RECOMMENDED – that (A) the East of Stevenage Settlement Appraisal, as detailed in Essential Reference Paper 'B' to the report submitted, be agreed; and

(B) the draft revised Chapter 12 (East of Stevenage), as detailed in Essential Reference Paper 'C' to the report submitted, be agreed as a basis for inclusion in the final draft District Plan, with the content being finalised when the consolidated plan was presented in September

2016.

49 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman advised that following the 15 September 2016 meeting of the Panel the East Herts Draft District Plan would be reported to the Executive on 19 September 2016 then to Council on 22 September 2016. She also referred to the 20 September 2016 meeting of the East Herts Association of Town and Parish Council's.

Members were advised that the Draft District Plan would be printed in October and public consultation would commence on 3 November 2016 and conclude on 15 December 2016. The timescale was tight in order to avoid the consultation running into or over Christmas.

Following the 5 pm deadline on the 15 December, all of the comments would be collated and made publically available. Officers would then format the comments for submission to the planning inspector by the end of March deadline. The Chairman referred to some difficult decisions to ensure that the Draft District Plan was sound and in compliance with the NPPF whilst catering for the development needs of East Herts for the next 20 to 25 years.

50 MINUTES – 25 AUGUST 2016

RESOLVED – that the Minutes of the meeting held on 25 August 2016 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

The meeting closed at 9.38 pm

Chairman
Date