

EAST HERTS COUNCIL

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE – 22 MAY 2019

REPORT BY HEAD OF PLANNING AND BUILDING CONTROL

PUBLIC SPEAKING ARRANGEMENTS FOR DISTRICT PLAN STRATEGIC
SITE ALLOCATIONS

WARD(S) AFFECTED: ALL

Purpose/Summary of Report:

- To consider public speaking arrangements for the District Plan strategic sites.

RECOMMENDATION FOR DECISION That:

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| (A) | The revised arrangements for public speaking on the District Plan Strategic Site Allocations, as detailed in this report, be agreed. |
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1.0 Background

1.1 The District Council is committed to extending public involvement in the planning process. In particular the Council has a scheme whereby members of the public can speak at Development Management committee meetings.

1.2 Under normal arrangements, three minutes are permitted for speakers in favour and three minutes for speakers in objection to any proposal. Three minutes are also permitted for the relevant town or parish council. Where multiple speakers wish to address the meeting, they are normally required to combine their presentations within the overall three minute period, with one spokesperson speaking on behalf of everyone.

1.3 Occasionally and at the discretion of the committee chairman, more than one speaker will be allowed (either in support or in objection) but the time limit is still three minutes.

1.4 This report considers whether the current arrangements are appropriate for the District Plan strategic site allocations; or whether additional time for public speaking is justified.

2.0 Revised Public Speaking

2.1 The District Plan contains a number of strategic site allocations as follows:

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| Bishop's Stortford | |
| BISH3 | Bishop's Stortford North |
| BISH4 | Land South of Hadham Road |
| BISH5 | Bishop's Stortford South |
| BISH6 | Bishop's Stortford High School Site, London Road |
| BISH7 | The Goods Yard |
| BISH8 | Old River Lane |
| BISH9 | East of Manor Links |
| BISH10 | The Mill Site |
| Hertford | |
| HERT2 | Mead Lane Area |
| HERT3 | West of Hertford |
| HERT4 | North of Hertford |
| HERT5 | South of Hertford |
| Sawbridgeworth | |
| SAWB2 | Land to the North of West Road |
| SAWB3 | Land to the South of West Road |
| SAWB4 | Land to the North of Sawbridgeworth |
| Ware | |
| WARE2 | Land North and East of Ware |
| The Gilston Area | |
| GA1 | The Gilston Area |
| East of Stevenage | |
| EOS1 | Land East of Stevenage |

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| East of Welwyn Garden City | |
| EWEL1 | Land East of Welwyn Garden City |

- 2.2 These sites are all at various stages in the planning process; some have already received planning permission subject to Section 106; there are others where a planning application is currently being considered by Officers; whilst others are at a much earlier stage in the process, with masterplanning work being undertaken.
- 2.3 The District Plan strategic sites range in size and complexity from 50 dwellings to 10,000 dwellings in the Gilston Area. There was significant local interest in all of the sites through the plan-making process and it is anticipated that this interest will continue. As such it is considered appropriate to review the current public speaking arrangements.
- 2.4 There have been previous departures from the normal public speaking arrangements where proposals have been of significant local interest, which is permitted within the Council's Constitution.
- 2.5 For example, in respect of the Bishop's Stortford South application a total period of six minutes was permitted for those who spoke in objection, with the same offered to those who spoke in support. On this occasion there were two relevant town/parish councils who were also offered a total period of up to six minutes between them (i.e. three minutes each).
- 2.6 Given the ongoing significant local interest in these sites, it is recommended that for all District Plan strategic site allocations (*except for the Gilston Area*) a period of up to **six** minutes (rather than the normal three minutes) be permitted for those who wish to speak in objection; with the same total period offered to any supporting parties. Given the scale of development proposed for the Gilston Area the public

speaking arrangements for this committee will be considered separately in due course.

- 2.7 All other normal arrangements for public speaking will apply. Where any matter is raised with regard to the arrangements which are not addressed here, it will be subject to decision by the chairman of the committee.
- 2.8 To be clear, the public speaking arrangements for the District Plan strategic site allocations will therefore be as follows:
1. The committee chairman calls the item.
 2. A Planning Officer presents the report containing the Officer recommendation.
 3. Objectors may speak against the application (six minutes maximum). If there is more than one person wishing to speak, they will be encouraged to appoint a single spokesperson.
 4. Supporters, including the applicant, may speak for the application (six minutes maximum). If there is more than one person wishing to speak, they will be encouraged to appoint a single spokesperson.
 5. A town or parish councillor may speak against or in favour of the application (six minutes maximum).
 6. Local Members may speak against or in favour of the application.
 7. There will be no further opportunity for public speaking.
 8. The Development Management Committee will proceed to determine the application.

- 2.9 As with current arrangements, occasionally and at the discretion of the committee chairman, more than one speaker will be allowed (either in support or in objection) but the time limit is still six minutes for each side as set out above.
- 2.10 Members are asked to consider and endorse the revised arrangement proposed for the District Plan strategic site allocations (excluding the Gilston Area). This would apply to all applications relating to these sites, including outline, full and any subsequent reserved matters 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

Contact Member: Cllr Jan Goodeve – Executive Member for Planning and Growth jan.goodeve@eastherts.gov.uk

Contact Officer: Sara Saunders – Head of Planning and Building Control, Tel: 01992 531656
sara.saunders@eastherts.gov.uk

Report Author: Claire Sime – Service Manager (Policy and Implementation), Tel: 01992 531626
claire.sime@eastherts.gov.uk