

Gilston Area Charter  
Supplementary Planning Document  
**Draft Consultation Statement**

## **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 This statement is the 'Consultation Statement' for the Gilston Area Charter Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) as required by the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012. This statement sets out early stakeholder engagement and how the public and other stakeholders will be consulted upon the SPD. Following the consultation period, this statement will be expanded to summarise the comments received during the consultation period, including details of how the issues raised have been dealt with in working towards a final SPD for adoption.
- 1.2 Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) provide guidance to supplement the policies and proposals in the District Plan. SPDs do not have to go through the formal examination process, but consultation with stakeholders and the wider community is still a vital part of the preparation process. The scope of consultation and decision on who will be consulted will reflect the nature of the SPD.

## **2. Town and Country Planning Regulations**

- 2.1 The SPD is produced in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012. The relevant regulations relating to the consultation process are explained below.
- Regulation 12(a) requires the Council to produce a consultation statement before adoption of the SPD, this must set out who was consulted, a summary of the issues raised, and how these issues were incorporated into the SPD.
  - Regulation 12(b) requires the Council to publish the documents for a minimum 4 week consultation, specify the date when responses should be received and identify the address to which responses should be sent.

- Regulation 35: Regulation 12 states that when seeking representations on an SPD, documents must be available in accordance with Regulation 35. This requires the Council to make documents available by taking the following steps;
  - Make the document available at the principal office and other places within the area that the Council considers appropriate;
  - Publish the document on the Council’s website.

### **3. Statement of Community Involvement (SCI)**

3.1 The Council’s current SCI was adopted in 2019 and sets out how East Herts Council will involve the community in the preparation, alteration and review of planning policy plans and guidance. It also explains how it will involve the community in planning applications.

3.2 Community engagement is a key part of the planning system as it ensures that the Council is able to listen to the views of stakeholders and the community to inform the outcome of planning decisions. This helps local people to become directly involved in place shaping in the district. The Council is committed to maximising publicity of its planning documents and wishes to involve all sectors of the community in the planning process, including in the production of Supplementary Planning Documents.

### **4. Early consultation**

4.1 In October 2019 the Gilston Area Steering Group was briefed on the intention of the Planning Service to commence with the production of the Charter. Representatives from the main parties that attend the Steering Group (Council, landowner, key stakeholder and community representatives) were invited to be part of a smaller “Charter Group” to help inform its production and content.

- 4.2 The Charter Group was subsequently established and has met on several occasions to discuss and inform various elements of the draft Charter and its supporting documents. The group will continue to meet to assist with the production of the final Charter prior to formal adoption.
- 4.3 Partner authorities and statutory bodies have also been informally notified about the production of the Charter and given the opportunity to inform the process. These include Hertfordshire County Council, Essex County Council, the Environment Agency, Historic England and Natural England. No concerns or negative feedback has been received by any of these parties to date. They will also be formally notified and given an opportunity to comment on the draft Charter as part of the public consultation as set out in Section 5 below.
- 4.4 As the Gilston Area forms part of the wider Harlow and Gilston Garden Town (HGGT), the HGGT Board was notified of the production of the Charter in October 2019 and HGGT officers have been party to various work streams associated with developing its content.
- 4.5 Elements of the draft Charter were also presented to HGGT Quality Review Panel (QRP) for a “Chair’s Review” in November 2019. The HGGT QRP is an independent design panel made up of planning and design professionals which can review any emerging work relating to the Garden Town, including planning guidance. The Panel provides an independent critique in relation to matters presented to it and its recommendations and observations may then be considered by applicants or the local planning authority.
- 4.6 Feedback from the QRP was generally supportive and its recommendations have informed the content draft Charter.

## **5. Proposed Consultation**

- 5.1 The draft SPD will be published for consultation commencing mid-February 2020. Hard copies will be available for public inspection during normal office hours at the East Herts Council Offices in Hertford and Bishop's Stortford, town council offices and in libraries across the district.
- 5.2 All consultation documents and further information on how to submit representations will be available to view on the East Herts Council website. All statutory and relevant consultees will be directly contacted, including those on the planning policy database.
- 5.3 Representations can be made via the Council's consultation portal found here: <http://consult.eastherts.gov.uk/portal/>
- 5.4 Alternatively representations can be emailed to [planningpolicy@eastherts.gov.uk](mailto:planningpolicy@eastherts.gov.uk), or hard copy representations should be sent to; Planning Policy, East Herts Council, Wallfields, Pegs Lane, Hertford, SG13 8EQ.