

## **East Herts Council Report**

### **Development Management Committee**

**Date of meeting:** 21 April 2021

**Report by:** Head of Planning and Building Control

**Report title:** Public Speaking Arrangements for the determination of the Gilston Area planning applications.

**Ward(s) affected:** Hunsdon and Sawbridgeworth

**Summary** – This report sets out details of the proposed public speaking arrangements for the meetings of the committee which will be determining the current Gilston Area planning applications.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

- a) That revised arrangements for public speaking in relation to the Gilston area planning applications, as set out in this report, be agreed.**

#### **1.0 Background**

- 1.1 The Gilston Area District Plan allocation, supporting the delivery of 10,000 new homes and enabling infrastructure, forms part of the wider development and regeneration proposed in and around Harlow as part of the Harlow and Gilston Garden Town. The Council has been working together with four other local authority partners<sup>1</sup> to establish a Vision for the delivery of high quality development in the Garden Town area.

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<sup>1</sup> The Local Authority partners are East Herts District Council, Epping Forest District Council, Harlow District Council, Hertfordshire County Council and Essex County Council (the Garden Town Council partners)

1.2 Planning applications for development in the Gilston Area were submitted to the Council in 2019. There are five applications in total:

- an outline application for residential development (8,500 new homes) on land controlled by the majority landowner, Places for People (PfP) (ref 3/19/1045/OUT);
- an outline application for residential development (1,500 new homes) on land controlled by a second landowner, Briggens Estate No 1 (BE1) (ref 3/19/2124/OUT);
- a full application for enhancement of the existing A414 River Stort crossing between the Gilston Area and Harlow (ref 3/19/1046/FUL);
- a full application for the development of a second River Stort road crossing, to the east of the existing crossing (ref 3/19/1051/FUL);
- a Listed Building Consent application for works to a listed structure that is within the site area of the Eastern Crossing proposals (3/19/1049/LBC).

1.3 This report sets out proposed public speaking arrangements in relation to the outline and full planning applications set out above. It is anticipated that the Listed Building Consent application will be determined under delegated arrangements in the normal way.

## **2.0 Public Speaking arrangements**

2.1 Members will be aware that conventional arrangements allow members of the public to speak for a maximum of 3 minutes for or against planning application proposals. Parish Councils are also allowed a period of 3 minutes. At the meeting of 22 May 2019, the committee considered public speaking arrangements for all strategic sites allocated in the District Plan, with the exception of the Gilston area. The committee

resolved that public speaking for other strategic District Plan sites be extended to 6 minutes each for public speakers and Parish Councils.

- 2.2 Considering public speaking again now in relation to the Gilston area applications, whilst there are a range of planning issues overall which public speakers may want to address, it is considered that the extended 6 minute arrangement is also appropriate for these applications. As the proposals for the site have been sub-divided into four separate planning applications, a 6 minute period (for each) enables reasonable time for speakers to focus on the range of issues that may be relevant in relation to each proposal.
- 2.3 It is proposed then that 6 minutes are permitted for speakers in objection to each of the four planning application proposals. 6 minutes would then be permitted for the applicants (or in combination with any others who wish to speak in support) for each of the applications and 6 minutes permitted for Parish Councils in relation to each application.
- 2.4 With regard to the Parish Councils, the applications are primarily located in the Hunsdon, Eastwick and Gilston Parish Council areas. The site area for the additional River Stort crossing also includes land located in the Sawbridgeworth parish area. Rather than separate slots for each of the parishes, which would lead to extensive public speaking, it is proposed that the Parish Councils be asked to combine their speaking time into one 6 minute slot (for each application).
- 2.5 The current timetable for reporting of the applications is that the 8,500 home outline application will be reported to a meeting of the committee on 21 June. This will be followed on 22 June with reports for both of the river crossing proposals. The proposed public speaking arrangements will enable 18 minutes of speaking at the first of these meetings. The

arrangements would then be repeated twice at the second meeting – once each for the river crossing proposals. It is not yet clear whether the second of the outline applications, for 1,500 new homes, will also be reported to these meetings.

- 2.6 The sequence of speakers will be as per normal arrangements. After introduction of the application proposals by officers, speakers in objection will be followed by those in support and then by Parish/Town councillors. Local District Council members will then be permitted to speak, as per normal arrangements.

### **3.0 Risks**

- 3.1 The proposals seek to ensure robust and effective decision making, enabling public representations to be made.

### **4.0 Implications/Consultations**

#### **Community Safety**

No – not in relation to these procedural arrangements. All planning issues will be addressed in the consideration of the planning applications.

#### **Data Protection**

No

#### **Equalities**

No

#### **Environmental Sustainability**

No – not in relation to these procedural arrangements. All planning issues will be addressed in the consideration of the planning applications.

## **Financial**

The cost of the committee and processing applications is met, in the main, from planning fee income.

## **Health and Safety**

No

## **Human Resources**

No

## **Human Rights**

No

## **Legal**

No

## **Specific Wards**

Yes – Hunsdon and Sawbridgeworth

## **5.0 Background papers, appendices and other relevant material**

- 5.1 Report to the 22 May 2019 meeting of the Development Management Committee where public speaking arrangements in relation to the strategic sites allocated in the District Plan were considered.

## **Contact Member**

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