

#### **What is a Local Plan?**

A Local Plan is a document produced by the local planning authority for an area – in this case Hertsmere Borough Council - in consultation with local people and the many other organisations whose activities influence or are affected by what happens in the borough. It identifies the number of new homes and jobs required to meet local needs over the next 15 years and where development should take place to accommodate growth. The plan also identifies areas which need protecting or improving and the factors we will take into account when planning applications for any sort of development are being determined. It is an important document and has as a major influence on how the local area will change, develop, look and feel in the future.

#### **Why does Hertsmere need a new Local Plan?**

The current Local Plan consists of a suite of different documents to guide development. It is based on evidence which was produced quite a long time ago and restricts new development to built-up areas. If we were to follow the current plan then we would meet under half of the expected housing need in the borough. This would result in an even more acute shortage of new and affordable homes. It is now time to create a new overarching plan that will help shape the way the borough develops into the 2030s, based on up-to-date, objective evidence.

#### **Why are you consulting people now?**

We will be working on the new Local Plan over the next few years but at each stage – as we do more work and the plan gets more detailed - we want to hear the views of people who live and work in the borough. At this Issues and Options stage, we want to hear your views on the different approaches which could be taken to meet development needs over the next 15 years.

#### **Why are you considering building in the Green Belt?**

Our approach over several decades has been to focus new development within built up areas through the re-use of brownfield or previously developed land. The studies we commissioned last year showed that we need to be building more than double the number of homes we are currently looking to have built. We also need some additional land for employment development as this will help ensure our areas do not become dormitory towns over time.

There isn't room within our existing towns and villages to provide land for all this growth – and in fact 63 per cent of people responding to the first consultation said that new homes should not be built within the existing larger settlements. The only realistic option for meeting some of Hertsmere's need for new homes, jobs and infrastructure is to plan to build in areas of the borough which are currently undeveloped. This could be on the edge of the existing built up area or in a new settlement altogether. What is important is to ensure that this is achieved in the most sustainable and attractive way possible.

#### **9,000 new homes seems an awful lot – where has this figure come from?**

9,000 is the scale of the housing need as estimated in the South West Hertfordshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment. This was an assessment published last year and conducted by

independent consultants which we commissioned along with other councils. Their findings will be used to help inform our housing targets, but other factors, such as the availability of land, environmental constraints and infrastructure capacity will play a role. There are lots of things that will affect how many homes are built in the borough and where, but before we plan anything we want to hear from residents and people who work in the borough to get their thoughts on this issue and others.

#### **What about infrastructure? We need new GP surgeries, schools, public transport, power supplies, drainage.**

The Local Plan is not just about new homes and jobs; we also need infrastructure including schools, GPs, public transport, roads, utilities, parks and leisure facilities to support that growth. The plan will set out clearly what other provision is needed when new homes are being built. Development will be carefully controlled to ensure that the necessary infrastructure is provided. This is most likely to be possible when larger numbers of homes are being built together as these infrastructure requirements can be planned and delivered as part of the overall development.

The next stage of preparing the Local Plan – our Preferred Options - will include an Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP). This will include a careful assessment of the infrastructure needed to support the development being suggested. The IDP will ensure that infrastructure requirements are fully taken into account in preparing the plan, and ensure that all the necessary infrastructure providers are involved in the Plan process.

#### **Why do the approaches being considered include a new garden village?**

We need to look at areas beyond existing towns and villages if we are to be able to deliver all the homes, jobs and services that people in the borough need. Nearly half of the people that took part in the first consultation felt that a new settlement should be built. A significant advantage of providing some of the new development needed in this way is that the infrastructure required – including education, health, open space and transport facilities – can be planned and funded as part of the development as a whole. So a garden village may provide an opportunity to create an attractive, sustainable new community within the borough.

#### **How have you chosen the areas of search for possible new development?**

The areas of search we have indicated in the Issues and Options document are suggestions on which we would like your comments. You may agree with some of these areas of search, and disagree with others. You may have alternative suggestions. We want to hear all your views.

We have taken into account all the information that we have currently gathered in identifying these areas of search – in particular the need to avoid the risk of different settlements joining up (coalescing). There may be reasons of which we are not yet aware for some of these areas not being suitable for new development: these could include land availability, insufficient infrastructure capacity which it would not be physically possible or financially viable to overcome, or other environmental constraints.

Any areas which are eventually selected must be capable of providing attractive, sustainable developments, which also do not impact negatively on neighbouring areas. We will be looking in more detail at these issues as we analyse responses to the consultation and collect more evidence about the area and what is needed to support our future communities.

#### How can I find out more?

Every resident in the borough should have received the second edition of our newsletter called Planning for Growth through their door between late September and mid October. This gives a summary of the consultation material, how to find out more, and how to make sure you can get your views heard.

A series of drop-in sessions are being held throughout October and November attended by Council staff. Members of the public can view information about our Issues and Options and ask questions.

Tuesday 24 October 6.30-9pm	Wyllyotts Centre, Wyllyotts Place, Darkes Lane, Potters Bar
Wednesday 25 October 6.30-9pm	Allum Hall, Allum Lane, Elstree/Borehamwood
Tuesday 7 November 6.30-9pm	Bushey Centre, High Street, Bushey
Wednesday 8 November 6.30-9pm	Radlett Centre, 1 Aldenham Ave, Radlett
Monday 13 November 6.30-9pm	Shenley Primary School, London Road, Shenley

As well as these drop-in sessions, we will be holding a number of 'conversations' about the future of the borough. These will provide an opportunity for the public to help shape our plans for the area and local groups are being invited to send representatives. Places are also being set aside to those who are not members of a particular organisation. For more details, please contact [local.plan@hertsmere.gov.uk](mailto:local.plan@hertsmere.gov.uk)

The events, which are ticketed, are being held as follows:

15 November 2017, 6.30pm – 8pm	Wyllyotts Centre, Potters Bar
21 November 2017, 6.30pm – 8pm	Bushey Arena, Bushey Academy
23 November 2017, 6.30pm – 8pm	Civic Offices Borehamwood

We have made a lot of information available online. If you don't have access to the internet you can look at paper copies of all the consultation material at council offices in Borehamwood, Bushey and Potters Bar, public libraries, Shenley and Aldenham Parish Council and Borehamwood Town Council offices during normal opening hours.

#### I don't use the internet or email – how can I respond to the consultation?

Ideally we want as many people as possible to use the dedicated consultation portal on our website to respond. We understand that not everyone has access to or is comfortable using the internet.

You can fill in a response sheet at one of the drop in sessions or write to the Policy and Transport team at the council offices in Borehamwood. If you would like a paper copy of all the questions on which to write your answers and post them back, we can send you one if you call the Policy and Transport team on 020 8207 2277.

#### **What happens next?**

In preparing the new Local Plan, our priorities are to effectively engage the community throughout the process, to ensure concerns around infrastructure are properly addressed and to secure new development that is of the highest quality. We will analyse all the responses to the consultation, and carry on talking to infrastructure providers and assessing the sites put forward through the Call for Sites. Additional studies are also being prepared. This will enable us to identify what we think are the Preferred Options for sites and locations for new development. We will again consult people to find out what they think about these. This is likely to be during the first half of 2018.

#### **Will you be or have you consulted with neighbouring local authorities about your proposals, because some of them could affect communities living outside the borough?**

We have invited all neighbouring boroughs and parish councils to respond to our Issues and Options report. We are consulting on a range of potential approaches and invite as many people as possible to respond to our consultation before it closes on Thursday 30 November, whether you live or work in the borough, or live nearby.

Our Issues and Options report outlines the scale of growth needed in Hertsmere, and sets out different ways this growth could be achieved. However, nothing has been decided and this is the chance for everyone, who lives, works or cares about Hertsmere, to really make a difference to the future of the borough.

#### **How long is this all going to take?**

Preparing a new Local Plan takes time. Apart from the fact that we need to collect lots of information ('evidence') to justify the proposals and policies that the plan will eventually contain, we need to allow time for local people and other organisations to have their say. There are also government regulations setting out a number of stages and timescales with which we have to comply.

After we have consulted on the Preferred Options we anticipate that we will have a draft plan ready for consultation towards late 2018. By 2019 we should be able to publish the version of the plan that the council wants to adopt and this will be submitted to the Secretary of State. A government inspector will consider any further comments made by the local community and other interested parties and examine the plan to check that it complies with the regulations and is 'sound'. Currently we anticipate having a final plan that the council will adopt during 2020.

#### **Key contacts:**

## New Local Plan Issues and Options consultation

### Frequently Asked Questions



If you have any further questions or comments about this briefing or the process of creating a new Local Plan, the following officers should be able to help:

Christine Lyons, Head of Planning and Economic Development, [Christine.lyons@hertsmere.gov.uk](mailto:Christine.lyons@hertsmere.gov.uk)

Mark Silverman, Policy and Transport Manager, [mark.silverman@hertsmere.gov.uk](mailto:mark.silverman@hertsmere.gov.uk)

Grace Middleton, Senior Planning Officer, [grace.middleton@hertsmere.gov.uk](mailto:grace.middleton@hertsmere.gov.uk)

Ann Darnell, Planning Officer, [ann.darnell@hertsmere.gov.uk](mailto:ann.darnell@hertsmere.gov.uk)

*Press office contact:* Gail Anderson, Corporate Communications Officer,  
[gail.anderson@hertsmere.gov.uk](mailto:gail.anderson@hertsmere.gov.uk), 020 8207 7824