

## Epping Forest District Council Local Plan Developer Forum

### Terms of Reference

#### **1. Context:**

1.1. The Epping Forest District Draft Local Plan identifies four Strategic Allocations around Harlow, and a number of smaller allocations on sites dispersed across the District in order to meet the development needs of the District up until 2033. Draft Policies SP 2 (Spatial Development Strategy 2011-2033), SP 3 (Strategic Allocations around Harlow) and Policies P 1 – P 12 within Chapter 5 of the Plan identify the allocations. In addition, Draft Policy SP 4 (Place Shaping) provides place shaping principles that future proposals for development within the allocations must adhere to. Appendix A provides further details of the policy context.

#### **2. Scope and Purpose:**

2.1. A Developer Forum is being established alongside the progression of the Local Plan, to provide a basis for ongoing discussions with relevant landowners, site promoters and stakeholders. The Developer Forum will provide a basis for the long term planning and implementation of sites identified for allocation.

2.2. It is vitally important that the Council liaises closely on an ongoing basis with relevant landowners and promoters of the sites proposed for allocation within the Draft Plan, and with other stakeholders as required, in order to:

2.2.1. Demonstrate that the Local Plan is 'effective' and that the allocations in the Local Plan will be deliverable and developable, and therefore meet the 'tests of soundness' at Examination-in-Public; and

2.2.2. Ensure that a joined up and 'frontloaded' approach is taken to the masterplanning, design, phasing and delivery of development of sites proposed for allocation and all necessary and associated infrastructure is accommodated within the phasing and infrastructure inputs to the masterplanning, including promoting joint working for sites in multiple ownership, or adjacent allocations.

2.3. The EFDC Local Plan Developer Forum will:

2.3.1. Disseminate progress with the Local Plan and provide a forum for discussion on the implications for sites proposed for allocation;

- 2.3.2. Provide a basis to produce and agree Statements of Common Ground and / or Memoranda of Understanding to help demonstrate the deliverability of the Local Plan at Examination-in-Public;
  - 2.3.3. Promote the adoption and implementation of the Place Shaping principles outlined in Draft Policy SP 4, and other policy requirements of the Plan, by all site promoters;
  - 2.3.4. Provide an overview of progress and programming of Strategic Masterplans;
  - 2.3.5. Provide a basis for the consideration and consistent implementation of corporate approaches to EFDC responsibilities in relation to future development aligned with the Draft Local Plan. For example, this could include confirmation of future arrangements for the management, maintenance and adoption of open spaces and Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems, or EFDC approaches to the delivery of affordable housing and working with Registered Social Landlords.
  - 2.3.6. Ensure that EFDC resources are utilised effectively;
  - 2.3.7. Provide a basis for the consideration and consistent implementation of utilities and statutory providers' approaches. For example, this could include confirmation regarding the education provision, and masterplanning considerations in conjunction with the Local Education Authority and the Education Funding Agency, or NHS/CCG/Health & Wellbeing Board requirement for facilities and/or revenue funding;
  - 2.3.8. Provide a forum for the incorporation of community and stakeholder views, aspirations and input as appropriate;
  - 2.3.9. Further inform the production of the Viability Study and Infrastructure Delivery Plan as required; and
  - 2.3.10. Inform the Local Plan housing delivery trajectory, and help the Council to ensure an adequate supply of housing land at all phases of the Local Plan period.
- 2.4. The Forum does not provide an additional way of making comments on the merits of the Draft Plan itself. Rather the Forum provides part of EFDC's project management arrangements for preparing, and ultimately implementing, the Local Plan.
- 2.5. The Developer Forum does not preclude discussions in relation to individual sites with the Council or other relevant organisations, but rather provides a basis for the coordination and management of Strategic Masterplans and planning proposals associated with sites proposed for allocation within the Local Plan. The Council will seek to agree Planning Performance

Agreements to provide a basis for the consideration of planning applications on sites where possible.

### **3. EFDC Local Plan Developer Forum Structure:**

3.1. The Developer Forum will include two separate but interrelated elements:

#### **1. EFDC Local Plan Developer Forum – Strategic Sites around Harlow**

- This will provide a forum to discuss the progress of the Local Plan in relation to the Strategic Sites around Harlow associated with Draft Policy SP 3.

#### **2. EFDC Local Plan Developer Forum – Other Sites**

- This will provide a forum to discuss the progress of the Local Plan in relation to sites identified for allocation through Draft Policy P 1 – P 12.

3.2. It is anticipated that the Developer Forum will evolve over time, and that sub-groups will be established and progressed in due course to consider specific areas, themes or topics as required.

### **4. Membership:**

4.1. Membership of both groups will comprise those parties set out under 4.2. Whilst these parties have been identified at this stage, it should be noted that over time the membership may change in line with the progression of the Local Plan. It should be acknowledged at the outset that the work undertaken by the Developer Forum membership does not bind the Council to taking sites forward through the Local Plan. The membership should acknowledge that Draft Local Plan may change prior to Pre-Submission publication, Examination in Public and Adoption, and the Council reserves the right to amend the list of parties to which an invitation is extended should it become clear that a particular site is no longer being progressed.

#### **1. EFDC Local Plan Developer Forum – Strategic Sites around Harlow**

4.2. Core membership (to be invited to all meetings):

- 4.2.1. Promoters / landowners / planning agents of strategic sites around Harlow identified within Draft Policy SP 3 of the Draft Local Plan
- 4.2.2. EFDC Officers – including Planning Policy, Development Management, Conservation, Housing, Environmental Health and others as required

- 4.2.3. Essex County Council Officers – including Planning, Transport, Education and others as required
- 4.2.4. Harlow District Council Officers
- 4.2.5. East Herts District Council Officers
- 4.3. Other members, to be invited to attend as appropriate and required:
  - 4.3.1. Infrastructure providers and other statutory agencies
  - 4.3.2. Relevant EFDC Councillors
  - 4.3.3. Relevant Parish and Town Councils
  - 4.3.4. Relevant Community Groups and Organisations
  - 4.3.5. ATLAS representative – HCA Advisory Team for Large Applications

## **2. EFDC Local Plan Developer Forum – Other Sites**

- 4.4. Core membership (to be invited to all meetings):
  - 4.4.1. Promoters / landowners / planning agents of sites identified within Draft Policies P 1 – P 12 of the Draft Local Plan
  - 4.4.2. EFDC Officers – including Planning Policy, Development Management, Conservation, Housing, Environmental Health and others as required
  - 4.4.3. Essex County Council Officers – including Planning, Transport, Education and others as required
- 4.5. Other members, to be invited to attend as appropriate and required:
  - 4.5.1. Infrastructure providers and other statutory agencies
  - 4.5.2. Relevant EFDC Councillors
  - 4.5.3. Relevant Parish and Town Councils
  - 4.5.4. Relevant Community Groups and Organisations

## **5. Meeting arrangements:**

- 5.1. The meetings will be chaired by the EFDC Planning Policy Manager.
- 5.2. Meeting attendance will be by invitation, and will vary depending upon the agenda and scope of discussion.
- 5.3. Meetings will be held at EFDC offices.

- 5.4. EFDC will provide the secretariat for the meetings, preparing draft and final agenda, arranging room bookings, and issuing draft and final minutes.
- 5.5. Draft agendas will be issued 10 working days before the next meeting, and all attendees will be invited to comment.
- 5.6. Final agendas will be circulated at least 5 working days in advance of the proposed meetings.
- 5.7. Meetings will be held at least quarterly, and will be expected to last no more than 2 hours. Subsequent meetings may be arranged, as necessary.
- 5.8. Notes of meetings will be cover key discussions and actions arising, and points will not be attributed to individuals. Notes will be circulated to attendees of the Developer Forum only, with summary reports to EFDC Management Board, the Local Plan Officer Working Group and Neighbourhoods Select Committee. Any requests for full disclosure of notes under Freedom of Information or other relevant legislation will be considered against the requirements in place at the time. No financial or commercially sensitive information will be disclosed.
- 5.9. Thematic or topic meetings will be arranged, as necessary on a 'task-and-finish' basis, as instructed by the Local Plan Developer Forum.

## Appendix A

### Epping Forest District Draft Local Plan (October 2016) EXTRACTS

**Draft Policy SP 3 (Strategic Allocations around Harlow)** states that:

*E In order to front-load the planning process and ensure that a comprehensive, joined up and cohesive approach is taken to the planning and delivery of high quality development and associated infrastructure, development proposals in relation to sites SP 3.1-3.4 will be required to be in accordance with a Strategic Masterplan which has been adopted by the Council. The Strategic Masterplan(s) will be produced by the applicant, in partnership with the Council and relevant stakeholders (including adjacent land owners, relevant parish / town councils, infrastructure providers and statutory consultees) and where relevant jointly with Harlow District Council. Strategic Masterplans should be prepared in consultation with the local community, and be capable of being adopted by the Council in due course as Supplementary Planning Documents. For sites in close proximity, joint Strategic Masterplans will be required.*

*F Development proposals for the Strategic Allocations (and where applicable Strategic Masterplans) must reflect and demonstrate that the place shaping principles set out in Policy SP 4 have been adhered to.*

**Draft Policy SP 4 (Place Shaping)** states that:

*Development proposals for allocations in the Local Plan (as identified in Policy SP 3 and Chapter 5) and where applicable Strategic Masterplans must reflect and demonstrate that the following place shaping principles will be adhered to:*

- i. strong vision, leadership and community engagement;*
- ii. provide for the long-term stewardship of assets;*
- iii. provide mixed-tenure homes and housing types that are genuinely affordable for everyone;*
- iv. ensure a robust range of employment opportunities with a variety of jobs within easy commuting distance of homes;*
- v. provide high quality and imaginatively designed homes with gardens or access to usable and accessible amenity space, combining the very best of town and country living to create healthy homes in vibrant communities;*
- vi. generous, well connected and biodiversity rich green space provision;*
- vii. extend, enhance and reinforce strategic green infrastructure and public open space;*

- viii. *ensure that development enhances the natural environment;*
- ix. *deliver strong local cultural, recreational, social (including health and educational where required) and shopping facilities in walkable neighbourhoods;*
- x. *positive integration and connection with adjacent rural and urban communities including contribution to the revitalisation of existing neighbourhoods;*
- xi. *ability to maintain and enhance the important features, character and assets of existing settlements;*
- xii. *conserve and positively enhance key landscapes, habitats and biodiversity;*
- xiii. *provide for sustainable movement and access to local and strategic destinations (including rail, bus and pedestrians/cycling); and*
- xiv. *positively respond to sustainable water management.*

**Draft Policies P 1 – P 12** all require that *proposals for residential development will be expected to comply with the place shaping principles identified in Policy SP 4.*