

Foreword

Dear Resident

We are now well on the way to production of a new Local Plan that will help shape our District for the coming years until 2033. This is not the Council's Local Plan, but rather a Plan which belongs to all of us for our area. The Local Plan sets out the strategy for the next 16 years to meet the economic and housing growth in the District, identifying potential sites for development and regeneration and sets out the development management policies. We developed this Plan through many years of evidence gathering, hard work and regular checkpoints with input from you and your representatives.

Previously, you have helped us shape the emerging Plan through the Community Visioning consultation in 2010/2011 and then the Community Choices (Issues and Options) consultation in 2012. Most recently, we have the Draft Local Plan consultation in 2016. The feedback from all of those has been listened to, analysed, considered and factored into the decisions before reaching this point. This document is the one we intend to submit to the Planning Inspectorate for examination and is the Plan that the Council would like to adopt subject to that examination. The six-week publication period gives you the opportunity to make any representations on the soundness of the plan for the Inspector to consider. This is not a consultation looking for changes to be considered in the future, but rather an assessment of whether the Plan has followed guidance and is therefore sound.

This Plan is necessarily a balance between the requirement from Government to deliver the identified and evidenced need for economic and housing growth, and the need to protect the greenness of our District. We continue to do this by ensuring it is delivered in as sensitive, sustainable and fair a way as possible across the whole District. You may have seen in the Press the government announcements around changes to housing targets. We are on schedule to deliver the Plan to the Inspectorate before the end of March 2018 deadline. By doing this we will be able to continue to make use of our extensively researched housing requirement. To fail to do this

would expose us all to the risk of the housing requirement rising from 11,400 to over 20,000 homes by 2033.

We have been clear all along that we will do our best to follow what you told us and so the Plan seeks to ensure that, as far as possible, the Green Belt is protected for future generations, whilst providing for our housing needs. Failing to provide for the evidenced need of housing would result in a greater risk to the Green Belt from undirected development. We recognise that development comes with a need for infrastructure for transport, health, education, leisure and social needs. This Plan outlines the necessary infrastructure to support the development and good planning of the District. It also takes the design of places very seriously and we seek to ensure that the new streets that are delivered, as well as changes to existing places, happen in a way that gives residents and users a high quality of environment.

The Plan will be published for a period of six weeks to allow representations to be made between 18 December 2017 and 29 January 2018 after the Local Plan was approved for publication at a special Council meeting on 14 December 2017. Copies of the document, background papers and evidence, are available on the new Planning Our Future website www.eppingforestdc.gov.uk/planningourfuture. Further information will be via the Council's Twitter and Facebook feeds.

The Local Plan should be read as a whole. Proposals will be judged against all relevant policies.

If you wish to make representations please fill in the form online or on paper. The closing date for representations is 5pm on 29 January 2018.



C. Whitbread.

Councillor Chris Whitbread
Leader of the Council



John Philip

Councillor John Philip
Planning and Governance Portfolio Holder

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