

EPPING FOREST DISTRICT LOCAL PLAN

EXAMINATION HEARINGS

MATTER 3 THE QUANTITATIVE REQUIREMENTS FOR DEVELOPMENT

ISSUE 4: IS THE PLAN JUSTIFIED, EFFECTIVE AND CONSISTENT WITH NATIONAL POLICY IN RESPECT OF THE APPROACH TO MEETING IDENTIFIED NEEDS FOR RETAIL DEVELOPMENT

HARLOW LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

POLICY RS2

1. The Council provides this note which concerns Matter 3, Issue 4 and the Inspector's request for a copy of Policy RS2 from the Harlow Local Development Plan.
2. A copy is attached.

14 February 2019

RS2 Future Retail Floorspace

There is an identified need to provide up to 18,100sqm of comparison floorspace and up to 3,200sqm of convenience floorspace in Harlow up to 2026.

In order to plan for residential development coming forward in the Harlow and Gilston Garden Town beyond this period, an indicative requirement for up to 40,200sqm of comparison floorspace and up to 5,500sqm of convenience floorspace has been identified.

A Town Centre Area Action Plan (HTCAAP) will be prepared for Harlow Town Centre. The town centre boundary is shown on the Policies Map, reference RS2-1.

The HTCAAP will look to deliver a significant proportion of the retail floorspace requirements through site redevelopment and regeneration opportunities, and will identify the future retail floorspace capacity of the town centre.

The HTCAAP will also identify environmental and public realm improvements, access and infrastructure schemes, and opportunities for providing a broader range of uses in the town centre including community, leisure, commercial and residential uses.

The remaining floorspace requirement will be delivered through redevelopment opportunities in the district's Neighbourhood Centres and Hatches.

New retail centres which provide a mix of retail facilities and community services will be delivered in new settlements. They must be well connected and within walking distance for the residents of that development.

Justification

9.7 The Retail and Leisure Needs Study identified future retail floorspace needs for the district based on housing growth coming forward in the Harlow and Gilston Garden Town. The Study recommends floorspace requirements for both convenience and comparison facilities up to 2026 where housing development is more defined and an indicative requirement post 2026. A review may be required to understand the exact housing growth coming forward in the Harlow and Gilston Garden Town and therefore further retail floorspace requirements beyond this period.

9.8 The Study suggests that the majority of retail growth should be directed to the town centre, particularly to the north of the town centre with the largest proportion of remaining growth directed to other town centre sites. This corresponds with the Retail Hierarchy and will ensure that the town centre can provide the facilities and services for the population of the Garden Town. The Neighbourhood Centres will accommodate a proportion of the identified floorspace requirements, albeit small, in order to maintain their role and function as a provider of day-to-day services.

9.9 An Area Action Plan for Harlow Town Centre is to be prepared to identify the most suitable and sustainable locations for retail facilities, and set out the capacity of the

town centre to deliver retail floorspace provision. The population growth generated through the Harlow and Gilston Garden Town will encourage investment and stimulate regeneration in Harlow Town Centre and will support the case for new retailers to locate to Harlow.

- 9.10 The Harlow Future Prospects Study stated that a town of 110,000 residents would be able to support a night-time economy and comparator towns of this size can attract department stores. The HTCAAP will investigate options and opportunities for providing such uses.
- 9.11 It is important that new housing within the Harlow and Gilston Garden Town is well-served by local retail and community facilities. The provision of Hatches or Neighbourhood Centres which provide for day-to-day needs must be well connected and within walking distance of the residents of that related neighbourhood area or accessible by public transport. This conforms to Sir Frederick Gibberd's principles of sustainable neighbourhoods in the original master plan for Harlow.

Implementation

- 9.12 An Area Action Plan is being prepared for Harlow Town Centre in conformity with the Council's Statement of Community Involvement, working closely with landowners, traders, businesses and other relevant stakeholders. The HTCAAP will identify sites and opportunities for providing new retail floorspace requirements through regeneration and redevelopment and new commercial leisure floorspace. The HTCAAP will also look to improve the public realm of the town centre, access to, from and within the centre and opportunities for community facilities.
- 9.13 The boundary for Harlow Town Centre has been expanded to include Sainsbury's to the north and Harlow College and Harlow Leisurezone to the east. This wider boundary change encourages greater emphasis on the potential regeneration opportunities of sites beyond the immediate core area of the town centre. By including them there is potential to encourage a more joined up approach. The boundary change will also assist in achieving a comprehensive context for movement and public realm projects as it includes the main transport network around the town centre.
- 9.14 The Development Management policies further strengthen the roles of the district's retail centres by applying a sequential approach to new retail provision in the district.
- 9.15 New retail facilities have been identified as part of the Strategic Housing Site East of Harlow, serving the catchment of the new development.