

EPPING FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL: Examination of the District Local Plan, 2011 – 2033.

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HEARING AGENDAS – WEEK 2

The second week of hearing sessions will take place on **Monday 25 February and Tuesday 26 February 2019**. The morning sessions will start at 10am; and the afternoon sessions will start at 2pm. Please see the latest programme on the examination website for further details and a list of participants in each session.

Participants should be aware of my Matters, Issues and Questions (MIQs) (Document **ED5**) as they will provide the framework for discussion at the hearings. They should also be aware of the statements submitted in response to my MIQs by the Council and others. These are available on the website.

Some of my questions have been adequately answered in the statements so that limited discussion should be needed at the hearings themselves. Others require further discussion and I have sought to identify the key areas on the agendas below. The hearings will focus on these outstanding matters.

Louise Phillips

INSPECTOR

15 February 2019.

DAY 4: MONDAY 25 FEBRUARY 2019

MORNING SESSION (10AM) & AFTERNOON SESSION (2PM)

MATTER 4: The Spatial Strategy/Distribution of Development

Issue 1: Does the distribution of development in the Plan place too much reliance upon the Garden Community Sites around Harlow at the expense of testing the capacity of the other settlements in the District?

- Whether the capacity of the Latton Priory allocation has been underestimated and, if it has, whether there are implications for the distribution elsewhere.
- Whether the proportion of housing proposed in the Garden Town sites poses a risk to timely delivery in light of the nature of the housing market; estimated delivery rates; and infrastructure requirements etc.

Issue 2: Beyond the Harlow area, is the distribution of development in the Plan justified having regard to the defined settlement hierarchy?

- How was the distribution of development throughout the District beyond Harlow determined?
 - Consideration of the needs/capacity of settlements vs. a site capacity approach.
 - The role of the settlement hierarchy in determining the amount of development proposed in a settlement, including consideration of the scoring system for assigning a settlement within the hierarchy.
 - Consideration of small settlements without defined boundaries.
 - Account taken of specific local concerns, such as the objections to the Jessel Green allocation in Loughton.
- Discussion of the scale of housing proposed at North Weald Bassett compared to that proposed at other settlements at the same or higher tiers in the hierarchy, including Waltham Abbey, Theydon Bois and Roydon.
 - The master-planning process in NWB.
 - Weight given to the presence of railway stations and other services and facilities.

Issue 3: Is the distribution of employment land in the Plan justified in light of the distribution of housing?

- Whether the balance of housing and employment in the Garden Towns and elsewhere in the District is appropriate and will minimise the need for commuting.

Issue 6: Is the distribution of development justified in respect of its effect upon transport and other infrastructure in the District? Will the Plan be effective in securing the infrastructure necessary to support proposed growth?

Transport

- Findings of the Highway Assessment 2017 vs. the Transport Assessment Report 2019 (TAR). Are any adjustments to the Plan required as a result of the TAR?
- What assumptions have been made about anticipated reductions in car use in the Garden Towns and elsewhere in the District? Are they realistic and what are the implications if they are not realised?
- The findings of the Infrastructure Delivery Plan and the TAR in relation to transport infrastructure.
 - What is the necessary mitigation and is it financially viable and otherwise deliverable?
 - Will the Garden Town Sites be viable in light of the mitigation required?
- Whether the Central Line has adequate capacity to support planned growth.

Other Infrastructure

- Whether there is sufficient confidence from a plan-making perspective that the necessary infrastructure can be delivered to support planned growth.
- Funding gaps and the role of developer contributions. (See in particular Statement submitted by Turley on behalf of 19LAD0119).

End.

DAY 2: TUESDAY 26 FEBRUARY 2019

MORNING SESSION (10AM) & AFTERNOON SESSION (2PM)

MATTER 4: The Spatial Strategy/Distribution of Development

Issue 4: Is the distribution of development justified in respect of the need for, and approach to, Green Belt release?

- Demonstrating exceptional circumstances for Green Belt release:
 - Explanation of the “Land Preference Hierarchy” and its role in site selection.
 - Settlements washed over by the Green Belt: has adequate account been taken of the potential for infill development/development on previously developed land; and should the settlements remain “washed-over”?
 - Whether the evidence would support a windfall allowance above 35dph.
- Robustness of Green Belt Review and its role in site selection:
 - Summary of methodology, including which Green Belt “purposes” were considered and why; and how the overall assessment of harm was reached.
 - Whether the parcels of land assessed were sufficiently fine-grained to identify the impact of small, localised or site-specific releases.
 - Whether “high value” sites in Green Belt terms are proposed to be allocated while “low value” sites are not; and whether this is justified. (Note references to Calverton Parish Council v Greater Nottingham Councils Judgement).
- Justification for the scale of Green Belt release at North Weald Bassett.
- Whether the evidence demonstrates that the optimum amount of Green Belt land is being released. In light of the housing requirement being below the OAN, would it be justified to release more Green Belt?
- Justification for correction of anomalies - treatment of sites with planning permission.
- Whether it is necessary for safeguarded land to be identified, having particular regard to the requirement for Plans to be reviewed within five years of adoption.
- What is the issue concerning Pickfield Nursery having been discounted as a duplicate site?

Issue 5: Is the distribution of development justified in respect of the approach to flood risk; and to protecting water quality?

(Participants in this session should be aware of the Statement of Common Ground between EFDC, the Environment Agency & Thames water, dated October 2018 – Document **ED3**).

- Discussion of proposed modifications in ED3 and the Council's Matter 4, Issue 5 Statement.

End.

Louise Phillips

INSPECTOR