

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 your Plan for the area. This Draft Local Plan sets out the proposed strategy for the next 17 years to meet the economic and housing growth in the District, identifying potential sites for development and regeneration and sets out our proposed draft development management policies. The key, however, is that this is a genuine consultation that provides proposals and alternatives. This Draft Local Plan gives a proposed direction but we particularly want clear and positive feedback to help finalise the Plan. At the heart of Epping Forest District's Draft Local Plan is your feedback.

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.

This will be your Local Plan and the consultation is our opportunity as a community to ensure development in Epping Forest District takes place how and where we want it to. 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, and we are trying to do this by ensuring it is delivered in as sensitive, sustainable and fair a way as possible across the whole District.

We have been clear all along that we will do our best to follow what you told us and so it 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. We recognise, and the Plan provides for, that with development comes 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 formal stage of the consultation will be launched on 31 October 2016, after the Draft Local Plan is approved for consultation at a whole Council meeting on 18 October 2016.

The draft documents have been available on the Council website from 28 September 2016. There will be many ways to get involved in this stage of the Draft Local Plan, access relevant information and provide your feedback. Copies of the document, background papers and evidence, together with the dates and locations of the exhibitions, are available on the new Planning Our Future website www.eppingforestdc.gov.uk/planningourfuture. Further information will be provided in a Local Plan Update newsletter that will be issued District-wide and via the Council's Twitter and Facebook feeds.

We believe that it is vital for as many of you to provide feedback on the proposals as possible.

Please let us know what you think about the proposals so that we can incorporate your views into the Plan before we firm it up for publication and then examination by the Planning Inspectorate. Please fill in the questionnaire online or on paper, and tell us what you think. The closing date for comments is 12 December 2016.

Please fill in the questionnaire online or on paper, and tell us what you think. The closing date for comments is 5pm 12 December 2016.



C. Whitbread.

Councillor Christopher Whitbread,
Leader of the Council



John Philip

Councillor John Philip,
Planning Policy Portfolio Holder