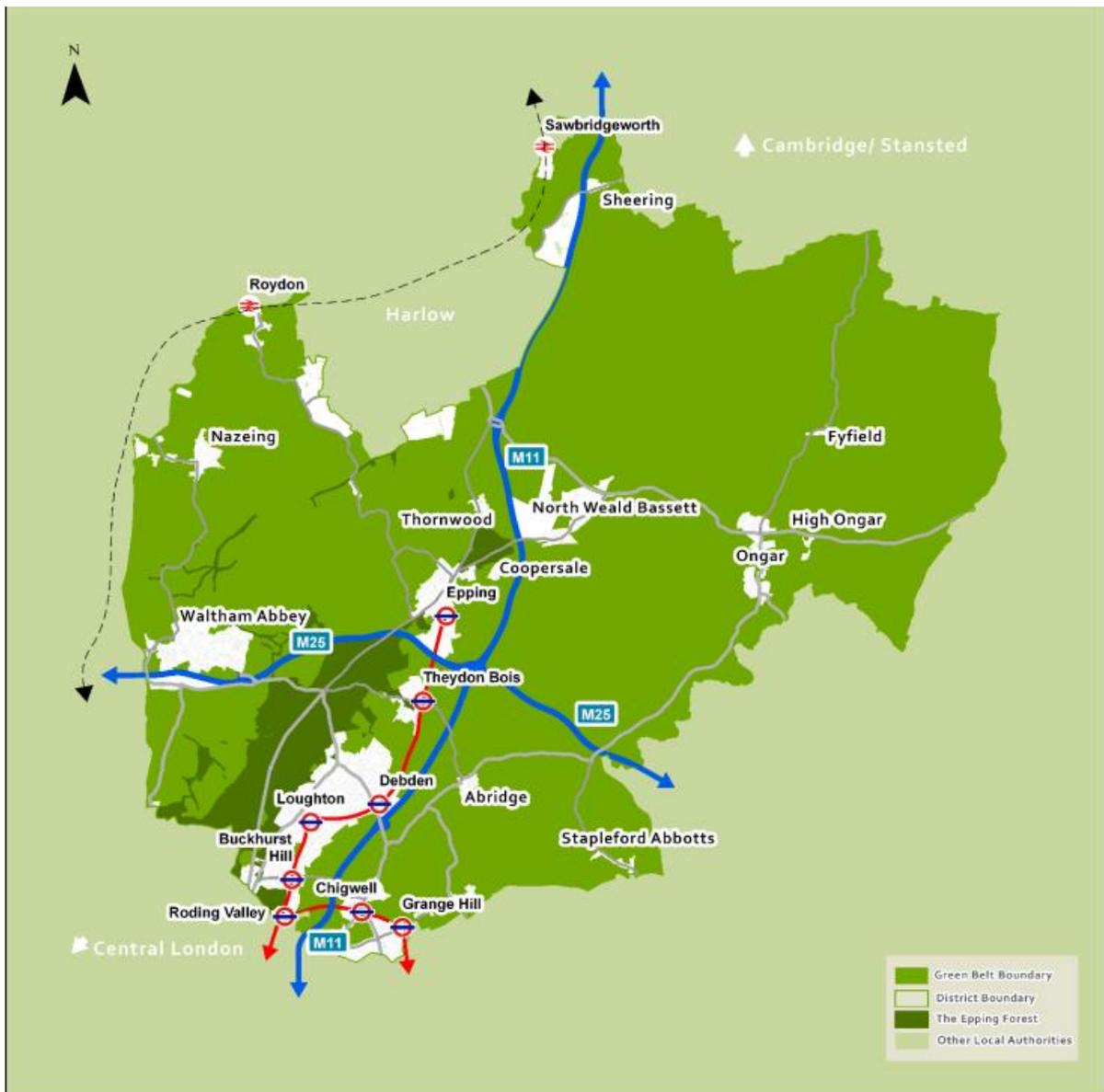


# A Place Delivery Strategy for Epping Forest District



December 2023

# 1 Introduction

- 1.1 The Council has a range of roles and responsibilities in providing services to the community of Epping Forest District. It also has a range of land and property assets ranging from social housing through to commercial properties and open spaces. How it manages and uses those land and property assets in the short, medium and long term is a critical component in achieving the Council's ambitions for Epping Forest District. As the Council's Corporate Plan states:

*As your local council, we are afforded a unique opportunity to oversee the wellbeing of the district and its residents. With this custodial role comes the responsibility of making sure that everything we do is for the benefit of our district and our residents.*

## 2 The Purpose of the Strategy

- 2.1 The purpose of developing a Place Delivery Strategy for Epping Forest District is to provide a 'high-level' corporate framework which draws on a range of existing plans and strategies in order to support the delivery of the Council's ambitions through the use of its land and property holdings. It also provides the opportunity moving forward to inform the development of other plans and strategies which are relevant to the use of those land and property assets whether they are within its direct ownership or through its delivery arm Qualis.
- 2.2 The Council has a range of strategies, both statutory and non-statutory, which are relevant to, and need to be drawn on, to inform its approach in taking forward future development and regeneration proposals involving the Council's land and property assets. It is important to acknowledge that one of the Council's roles is as a local planning authority. As such the approach taken to the use of its land and property assets needs to be developed within the context of the Council's adopted Local Plan and, where relevant, support the delivery of the ambitions of the Harlow and Gilston Garden Town.
- 2.3 The overarching framework for the Council's priorities is provided through the Council Plan 2023-2027. In addition, the Epping Forest District Local Plan 2011 – 2033 (the adopted Local Plan) provides the long-term planning policy framework against which development proposals within the district will be assessed.
- 2.4 There are a number of development sites within the Council's/Qualis's control that have been allocated for development through the adopted Local Plan. Beyond these, there are further opportunities to support the economic, social and environmental objectives of Council Strategies and Plans (ranging from the Corporate Plan through to the adopted Climate Change Action Plan) and the adopted Local Plan through the use of the Council's property and land assets. Opportunities also exist to influence how other public bodies make use of their own property and land assets within the district to support the achievement of the Council's objectives and priorities.

- 2.5 The Council/Qualis land and property portfolios include a number of existing employment and high street mixed-use sites, the regeneration of which can make a positive contribution to the delivery of the Council's priorities.
- 2.6 A key purpose of this Strategy is to provide the framework for bringing forward investment in the Council's property portfolio in a coherent way in order to support the achievement of corporate priorities and strategies, manage resources effectively and capture the long-term benefits to the community of Epping Forest District that such investment can bring. As such it intended to act as the 'backbone' for bringing forward investment in our places using our own portfolio of land and property assets and help influence how our partners can help support our ambitions for the district's people and places.

### **3 Key Plans and Strategies**

- 3.1 It is essential that the use of Council land and property assets supports the delivery of the aims and objectives of relevant Council plans and strategies or partnership strategies that the Council has signed up to. These have been developed following engagement with key stakeholders and often the community of Epping Forest District.
- 3.2 The main plans and strategies that have been taken into account in developing this Strategy and which should inform its delivery moving forward are set out below with additional information included at Appendix 1. It is acknowledged that, in moving forward, other plans and strategies of the Council and its partners will also help to inform the delivery of this Strategy and that some of the plans and strategies referenced below will be updated in due course.

#### **Your Epping Forest: The Corporate Plan for 2023 -2027<sup>1</sup>**

- 3.3 The Corporate Plan is the articulation of the Council's ambitions for the district and how it will operate in delivering those ambitions. It therefore provides the 'golden thread' that informs the way the Council will operate and the focus for its priorities. The introduction to the Corporate Plan provides a summary of the Council's ambitions and the Plan provides the 'direction of travel' for the development of this Strategy. In particular it states:

*Employment and economic prosperity have always underpinned our district. Ensuring continued growth in jobs and creating career expanding opportunities are also central to our plans. By maximising the opportunities for existing employers, and at the same time attracting new and exciting investors and wealth creators to the district, we want to be seen as a place that is positively welcoming to businesses.*

*At its heart, our district is built from many distinct, strong, and diverse communities. These should be celebrated, nurtured, and supported so they are best able to help the*

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.eppingforestdc.gov.uk/your-council/your-epping-forest-our-plan-2023-2027>

*people that live here. Working with community groups and partners, we aim to provide housing options and improved health outcomes that meet their needs. A sense of community and belonging is vital to a healthy and happy district. We will be there to help it grow.*

3.4 The Corporate Plan is focused on three core themes as follows:

***Stronger communities***

- *We will safeguard vulnerable people. Our teams will support residents in need, providing support and equality of opportunity in a district that is safe for everyone.*
- *We will work with our partners to achieve wellbeing and health equity for all our residents.*
- *We will listen to our communities and work with them when making decisions, developing policies, and designing services.*

***Stronger place***

- *We will strive to reduce pollution and protect our environment, encouraging jobs, housing, and infrastructure that complements, rather than competes with the natural world.*
- *We will improve existing spaces and create new places for people to live, play, gain skills and do business.*
- *We will protect and enhance our green spaces for future generations while providing decent, safe homes to meet all our needs.*

***Stronger council***

- *We will be an Employer of Choice.*
- *We will improve customer access to our services.*
- *We will provide the highest standards of financial competence, management and governance.*

## **Epping Forest District Local Plan 2011-2033<sup>2</sup>**

3.5 The Epping Forest District Local Plan 2011-2033 was adopted by the Council on 6 March 2023. It represents an important milestone for the district as it facilitates the delivery of much needed new homes and jobs whilst protecting the important natural and built environment which makes Epping Forest District so special.

3.6 The Local Plan forms part of the Council's Statutory Policy Framework and will help shape the future of the district by guiding where and how development will come forward. Importantly, it allocates land for the new homes (including affordable homes)

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.eppingforestdc.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/EFD-Local-Plan-2011-2033-Part-One.pdf>  
<https://www.eppingforestdc.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/EFD-Local-Plan-2011-2033-Part-Two.pdf>

and jobs to be delivered across the district, supported by new infrastructure, including for education, health and transport. The Plan's policies will be used to assess planning applications and other related development proposals, to ensure that new development is sustainable, well designed, and supported by the required infrastructure, for the future needs of residents and businesses in the district. It also provides protection for the district's important open spaces, and the natural and historic environment, setting a high bar for the creation of safe, healthy and accessible places.

### **Epping Forest Health and Well-being Strategy 2022-2026<sup>3</sup>**

- 3.7 The Epping Forest Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2022-2026 sets out the vision and priorities for the district. The Strategy explains how the Council, working in partnership through the Epping Forest District Health and Wellbeing Board (which includes representatives from the Council, Essex County Council, the West Essex Health and Care Partnership, the NHS and a wide range of local health and voluntary sector organisations), will address the health inequalities that exist in the district. This includes working better with health and third sector partners and, most importantly, with the district's communities using a 'place-based' approach.

### **Climate Change Action Plan<sup>4</sup>**

- 3.8 Epping Forest District Council declared a climate emergency in September 2019 and made a commitment to do everything within its power to become a carbon neutral District by 2030. To act on this commitment the Council adopted a Climate Change Action Plan in April 2022. The Action Plan identifies ways in which both the Council, including through the use of its land and property, and the community of Epping Forest District can reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

### **Housing Strategy 2023 - 2027<sup>5</sup>**

- 3.9 The Council's Housing Strategy 2023 - 2027 provides a golden thread from the Corporate Plan 2023 - 2027 through to the housing related services that the Council provides in the district. The collectively agreed five key housing priorities to focus on between 2023-2027:

Priority 1: Increasing the supply of affordable housing.

Priority 2: Ensuring quality, safety and high standards.

Priority 3 Promoting health, wellbeing and independence.

Priority 4: Facilitating economic growth and regeneration.

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<sup>3</sup> <https://www.eppingforestdc.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/Epping-Forest-Health-Wellbeing-Strategy-2022-26.pdf>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.eppingforestdc.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/Climate-Change-Action-Plan-Final.pdf>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.eppingforestdc.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/08/Housing-Strategy-2023-2027-V2.pdf>

Priority 5: Protecting and enhancing the environment.

- 3.10 The Housing Strategy includes a housing delivery plan with clear measurable outcomes that the Council is committed to achieving and reviewing on an annual basis or more frequently if required.

### **Housing Asset Management Strategy**

- 3.11 EFDC has a 30-year HRA finance business plan which outlines the available annual finances to meet the Council's obligations under the decent home standard and the social housing white paper. The Council is currently developing an up-to-date housing asset management strategy document that will run alongside the 30-year finance plan which will direct Council spending including its investment priorities, outline its aims and goals including its approach to achieving Net Zero across the Council managed housing stock and inform its approach to disposal and development options. The Council's Housing Stock Condition survey and Housing Delivery Plan will also be key considerations moving forward.

### **Nurturing Growth 2020-2025<sup>6</sup>**

- 3.12 The Council aims to deliver a great place to live and work in Epping Forest district. The district's economy is vibrant and diverse, based in a region that is successful and thriving and located between the 2 international economic powerhouses of London and Cambridge. Taking these and the other key issues that have been identified, the Council's vision within the 'Nurturing Growth' strategy is for a future economy that reflects the aims and aspirations for all those who live and work in the district.

## **4 Our Expectations**

- 4.1 We need to ensure that the way we use our land and property assets maximises the delivery of our aspirations as articulated in the above plans and strategies. These need to be embedded into how we make our decisions and how we take forward individual schemes and to recognise these are 'once in a generation' opportunities and we need to get it right.
- 4.2 Our overall spatial vision for the district is clearly articulated in our Local Plan and this aligns with, and supports the achievement of, the ambitions we have set through both the Corporate Plan and other key plans and strategies. Our expectations for the use of our own land and property assets is that we support the achievement of the Local Plan Vision which is set out below.

### **Vision for the District**

*By 2033 Epping Forest District will be a place where:*

*(i) residents continue to enjoy a healthy, happy and good quality of life;*

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<sup>6</sup> <https://www.eppingforestdc.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/Nurturing-Growth-16-March-2020.pdf>

*(ii) new homes of an appropriate mix of sizes, types and tenures to meet local needs will be provided and well-integrated communities created;*

*(iii) development respects the attributes of the different towns and villages;*

*(iv) development needs will be met in the most sustainable locations;*

*(v) Epping Forest will be conserved and enhanced;*

*(vi) the historic environment will be preserved or enhanced;*

*(vii) the recreational and nature conservation aims of Lee Valley Regional Park will be supported;*

*(viii) a more sustainable local economy including tourism, aviation, research and development, construction and food production will be developed;*

*(ix) a distinctive and attractive network of town and village centres will have been maintained;*

*(x) the natural environment and landscape character will be protected and opportunities to improve access to the countryside will be taken, including by enhancing the District's green and blue infrastructure networks;*

*(xi) public transport, walking and cycling infrastructure will be promoted to residents of new and existing developments to encourage sustainable travel;*

*(xii) significant residential development will be located around Harlow to support the economic regeneration of the town; and*

*(xiii) air quality will be improved.*

- 4.3 The Local Plan also includes Visions for the district's Places. These are included at Appendix 2. Our land and property assets will be used in a way that supports the delivery of these Visions, alongside those of other key plans and strategies using a 'Place' based approach. Leading by example also means that we can demonstrate what 'quality' looks like so that we can challenge others who are bringing development forward in the district when what is being proposed simply isn't good enough.
- 4.4 To achieve this we will 'work smart' by working together across the Council and with place-based partners. We will also need to recognise that we are working within the context of a challenging financial environment – not just in terms of our own financial context but also that of our partners, our residents and our businesses. This means that we will use our own funding wisely, think about the costs now balanced against longer term savings and to reflect that using our land and property, whether as homes, shops, business space or for community uses needs to be affordable and accessible.

## **5 Our approach to Delivery**

### **The role of the Council**

- 5.1 The Council has a clear leadership role in ensuring that its corporate priorities, as articulated in the range of Strategies and Plans identified above, are taken from ambition into delivery in an integrated way.

- 5.2 This next section identifies the tools that the Council will use in achieving this both in terms of how an integrated approach will be achieved, establishing priorities, and maximising funding opportunities.

### **Leading by example**

- 5.3 The Council will embed best practice in how it approaches the delivery of schemes. In doing so it needs to balance achieving ‘value for money’ in the costs of bringing forward schemes against the wider benefits that can be delivered in the short, medium and long-term both in terms of the benefits to the community of Epping Forest District and to longer term financial benefits and savings. For example, investing in high quality materials can reduce future revenue and capital cost burdens in terms of operational costs and longer-term maintenance requirements (invest to save approach) and reduce financial burdens to occupiers and users of the Council’s property.

### **Asset Management Plans**

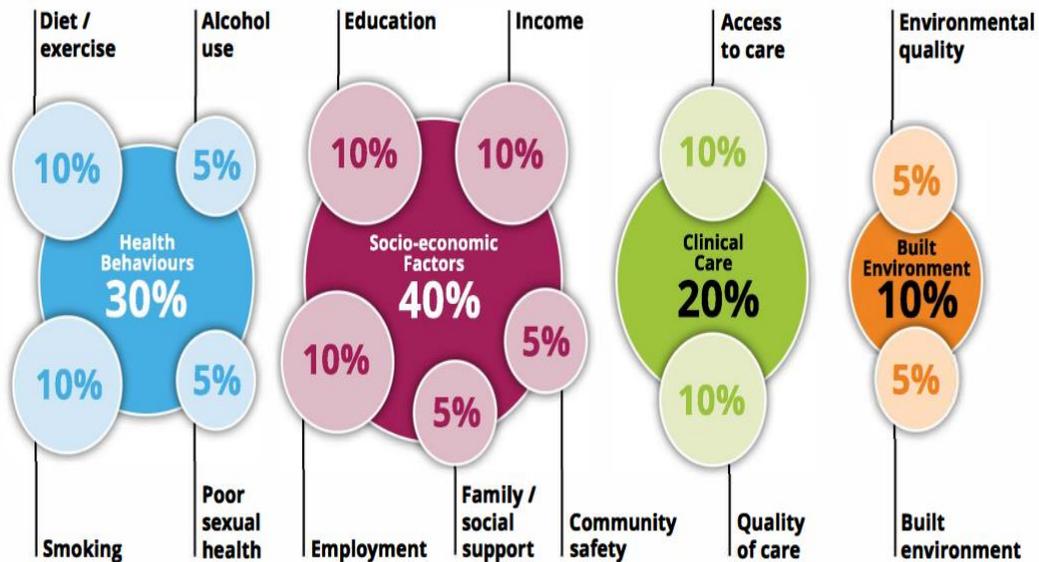
- 5.4 A first step is to ensure that the long-term approach to managing the Council’s property assets embed an integrated approach to delivering the aims and objectives of the key strategies identified above. Asset Management Plans are a key tool in embedding this approach and support the development of the Council’s financial planning (primarily through its Capital Programme and Medium-Term Financial Strategy).
- 5.5 The Council is currently developing its Housing Asset Management Plan (HAMP). The Plan will be a critical part of the Council’s housing delivery strategy for ensuring that an integrated approach is taken to achieving its priorities and meeting its statutory responsibilities. In financial terms the HAMP is linked to the Council’s Housing Revenue Account Business Plan and the timing and phasing of developments. Co-ordinating and linking the Housing Revenue Account and Operational Asset Management Strategies and taking a Place based approach will help to maximise the impact of any investment.
- 5.6 The development of the HAMP will take into account:
- The policies and objectives of the adopted Local Plan and the associated Visions.
  - The need to support the delivery of the Climate Change Action Plan priorities.
  - The Health and Wellbeing Strategy
  - The Housing Management Strategy
  - The Council’s financial plans and strategies.
- 5.7 In developing the HAMP the Council will ensure that the priorities included in the above plans and strategies are clearly embedded into it. The most efficient and effective processes will be put in place to ensure that a ‘One Council’ approach to the delivery of the Council’s priorities and its plans and strategies so that opportunities are identified and achieved.

- 5.8 The Council recognises the importance of ensuring that capital assets continue to be of long-term use and, especially in a post pandemic world, where there has been a step change increase in the speed of legislative, technological and operational change. Consequently, a new Asset Management Strategy (AMS) for General Fund assets is under development. Backed by a comprehensive review of Council assets, the AMS will take a longer-term view comprising:
- ‘Good’ information about existing assets
  - The optimal asset base for the efficient delivery of Council objectives
  - The gap between existing assets and optimal assets
  - Strategies for purchasing and constructing new assets, investments in existing assets, transferring of assets to other organisations and the disposal of surplus assets; and
  - Plans for individual assets.
- 5.9 The Council is also committed to rapidly achieving Zero Carbon status for all its buildings; it is an ambition that will be embedded within the new Asset Management Strategy as well as reflecting the need to support the delivery of the Council’s ‘Nurturing Growth’ ambitions in particular. Where relevant the AMS will have taken into consideration the policies of the Local Plan and the need for any development proposals to be compliant with those policies.

### **Developing Schemes**

- 5.10 The approach to how schemes are designed, developed and managed will need to demonstrate that the Council’s ambitions will be delivered. As well as reflecting the strategic objectives articulated through the Council’s plans and strategies the ‘place-based’ approach will be adopted. This reflects the fact that both the Council, and place-based partners (including Essex County Council and Healthcare operators) have land and property assets located across the district. As such the Council will maximise opportunities to work with and seek to influence the approach taken by public sector partners with regard to the use of their own property and land assets to secure the delivery of its ambitions.
- 5.11 Development proposals should be fully compliant with the policies contained in the Council’s adopted Local Plan and informed by development related guidance but they will also need to be deliverable. Development proposals that are brought forward by the Council will demonstrate how they support the Vision for that place and conform with the place-specific policies that are relevant to that particular scheme. The approach to achieving such a ‘place-based’ approach would be through the development of the Place Plans using the Local Plan Visions as a starting point and drawing on the plans and strategies identified above. The Place Plans will also include a more detailed understanding of the community characteristics of each ‘Place’ using place-based wellbeing indicators. The relationship between each ‘Place’ and its rural hinterland will also need to be considered.

5.12 There is a significant amount of existing qualitative and quantitative information that we can draw on. The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation provides an example of the approach we can take in developing a framework for understanding factors that contribute to the health and wellbeing of our communities (both urban and rural) as set out in the figure below.



SOURCE: Robert Wood Johnson Foundation

5.13 As well as demonstrating how any development proposals support the Council’s Place ambitions, where appropriate, schemes will take into account the things that have gone well, and not so well, in previous projects – the ‘feedback loop.’ Examples that will help to inform future proposals include:

- [The Broadway, Debden](#)
- [The Limes Farm Regeneration Project, Chigwell](#)
- [Ninefields Estate safer streets project Waltham Abbey](#)

5.14 Ensuring that proposals address the needs of our residents and businesses will be a critical component to scheme design and all proposals will need to be supported by project specific communication and engagement strategies which are guided by:

- Learning from recent projects
- The Resident Engagement Strategy
- The Statement of Community Involvement.

5.15 Decisions made in relation to individual development proposals or in relation to the wider use of the Council’s property and land assets will be subject to the Council’s normal governance routes and decision-making processes.

## **Approaches to Procurement**

- 5.16 How the Council assesses the appointment of technical support for both the design of schemes and their implementation is a key tool to ensure that an appropriate balance is achieved between securing ‘value for money’ and ensuring that quality and wider benefits that support the Council’s ambitions are achieved. The Council will review its approaches to procurement to ensure that the weighting of how tenders are assessed support these objectives.

## **The Role of Qualis**

- 5.17 The Qualis Group was established by Epping Forest District Council (EFDC) in 2020 to support the Council’s objectives to create more jobs, grow the local economy, and improve housing and public amenities. Qualis is set up to operate with flexibility and commercial focus, with any benefit generated returned directly to the Council and the community. A Shareholders’ Agreement is in place between both parties which ensures the Council retains ultimate control. Additional oversight is exercised through the Council’s Section 151 Officer in the role of “Shareholder’s Representative”, through regular performance reporting into Council and via Council representation on the Qualis Board.

- 5.18 Qualis is made up of the following group of companies:

**Qualis Group Ltd.** Qualis Group Ltd is wholly owned by the Council and the parent company of the Group. It has oversight of the overall performance and governance arrangements of the subsidiary companies.

**Qualis Commercial Ltd.** The company works closely in partnership with the Council to develop homes and business premises and to manage its commercial property portfolio.

**Qualis Property Solutions Ltd.** The company undertakes a property maintenance role including in relation to the Council’s retained housing stock.

**Qualis Homes Ltd.** This company is the brand used to sell new homes developed by Qualis Commercial.

**Qualis Community Ltd.** This is a Community Interest Company that will support activities and projects that provide a direct benefit to the community.

**Qualis Land Ltd.** This company is a subsidiary of Qualis Commercial Ltd and is used to facilitate the purchase of land and assets from the Council.

- 5.19 This Strategy will help to inform Qualis’s Business Plan and underlying programme and the Council will expect Qualis to engage with the ‘place-based’ approach.

## 6 Funding Our Approach

6.1 The primary sources of revenue funding for local authorities come from:

- Government grants – money from central government for local services known as the Revenue Support Grant
- Council tax – the tax levied on residential properties (with restrictions on how much this is increased each year without holding a referendum – the level is currently 5% for the Council).
- Business rates – a tax levied on business premises (councils collect business rates but only retain 50% of the monies and the business rates themselves are determined through a nationally set approach)<sup>7</sup>.

6.2 Unlike central government, local authorities cannot borrow to finance day-to-day spending, and so they must either run balanced budgets or draw down reserves – money built up by underspending in earlier years – so as not to exceed their annual revenue. All local authorities have therefore had to find ways to do more with less in the face of cuts to their spending power.

6.3 This financial context means that we need to use our finances prudently. The Council has a number of funding streams that can be used to support the delivery of the Council's ambitions and the approach set out in this Strategy. These are as follows:

### **Housing Revenue Account**

6.4 The Housing Revenue Account (HRA) records expenditure and income arising from managing the council's own housing stock and closely related services or facilities, which are provided primarily for the benefit of the council's own tenants. The Council's own housing stock comprises over 6,000 homes across the district.

6.5 The main features of the HRA are that:

- it is a landlord account, recording expenditure and income arising from the provision of housing accommodation by local housing authorities (under the powers and duties conferred on them in Part II of the Housing Act 1985 and certain provisions of earlier legislation)
- it is not a separate fund but a ring-fenced account of certain defined transactions, relating to local authority housing, within the General Fund
- the main items of expenditure included in the account are management and maintenance costs, major repairs, loan charges, and depreciation costs

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<sup>7</sup> Since reforms in 2013/14, local authorities have kept 50% of the business rates revenues raised locally, while the grant they receive from central government has been adjusted to compensate. To calculate the amount returned, the government applies either a 'tariff' or 'top-up' when providing funding to local authorities. A tariff is placed on any authorities it deems need less than the 50% of business rates sent to the Treasury, whereas for authorities deemed to be struggling a 'top up' will be added to that 50%.

- the main sources of income are from tenants in the form of rents and service charges
- the HRA should be based on accruals in accordance with proper accounting practices, rather than cash accounting

6.6 Legislative features are that:

- it is a ring-fenced account within the General Fund.
- Credits and Debits are prescribed by statute.
- There is no general discretion to breach the ring-fence.
- The Council cannot budget for a deficit.
- That all borrowing within the HRA is in line with the [CIPFA Prudential Code](#).

6.7 As the Council already has housing stock held in an HRA, it is free to borrow in line with the Prudential Code, in order to be able to build the council housing needed by the community of Epping Forest District.

6.8 Local authorities with an HRA are not constrained by government controls over borrowing for housebuilding and are able to borrow against their expected rental income, in line with the Prudential Code.

### **General Fund**

6.9 The General Fund comprises the monies available to the Council (both revenue and capital) through Council Tax, Business Rates and general grants from Government to support the delivery of Council services and associated activities. These are discrete from Council Housing activities which are funded from rents, and which are ring-fenced within the Housing Revenue Account.

### **Medium Term Financial Plan**

6.10 The Council's Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) provides the cornerstone on which the Council can build and deliver services in accordance with the aims and objectives outlined in the Corporate Plan. The latest iteration of the Council's MTFP (within the 2023/24 budget cycle) covers both the General Fund and the ring-fenced Housing Revenue Account. It is a forward-looking document which provides a tentative look at the Council's General Fund financial picture over the period 2023/24 – 2027/28 and reflects the Council's agreed budget for 2023/24.

### **Capital Programme**

6.11 The Capital Programme plays a vital part in the delivery of the Council's Corporate Plan since long-term investment is required to deliver many of the objectives in the Plan. It has been developed in the form of a five-year rolling programme.

## **Maximising opportunities to secure additional funding**

- 6.12 The Council will continue to maximise opportunities to secure additional funding to achieve its ambitions. As well as accelerating delivery securing funding in this way gives us an opportunity to make our money go further.
- 6.13 Recent examples of where the Council has been successful in securing funding are included below. Not only will the funding help households on the lowest incomes to save money on their energy bills but will also support the delivery of our Climate Change Action Plan and create jobs. Supporting the delivery of multiple benefits not only helps to create a strong bid but also maximises the benefits for our residents and businesses.

## **Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund**

- 6.14 The Council has received £1.6m through the governments Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund to install energy efficiency upgrades for those homes in our housing stock that are currently below an Energy Performance Certificate C rating.

## **Homes Upgrade Grant**

- 6.15 The Council also took a collaborative approach with a number of other authorities to secure Home Upgrade Grant monies which will be used to fund energy efficiency upgrades and low carbon heating to low-income households and off the gas grid homes with an Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) between D and G.

## **Maximising opportunities arising from new development**

- 6.16 As well as making sure that the impacts of development on communities is mitigated there are also opportunities for the Council to use some of its land assets to support new legal requirements being placed on developers. For example, we have the opportunity to put forward some of our green spaces to support the delivery of Biodiversity Net Gain through the selling of 'credits' that can then be used to invest in some of our green spaces to enhance their biodiversity value and support their long-term maintenance.

## **Maximising opportunities to align funding pots**

- 6.17 To support the delivery of infrastructure from new development and to mitigate the impacts of development on local communities the Council secures monies through legal obligations attached to relevant planning permissions. Depending on the nature of the mitigation the monies are either required to support the delivery of specific measures either locally or within the district. We will identify where there may be opportunities across different parts of the district for us to use our own resources to deliver enhanced benefits for the wider community.

## **Partnership Funding**

6.18 We will review where we may be able to add value, or our partners may be able to add value by aligning funding to achieve wider community benefits. These could range from working with Essex County Council through to our Town and Parish Councils.

### **6.19 Securing Public Works Board Loans**

Epping Forest District Council, as a public sector organisation, is able to borrow Government Funds from the Public Works Loan Board (PWLB) to support the delivery of capital projects, including those proposed by the Qualis group. Accessing such funding can help the Council to supplement its own cash surpluses in order to deliver projects and programmes across the district.

## **7 Conclusion**

7.1 This Strategy provides the framework within which the Council will operate to bring our ambitions for our communities and places to life in a co-ordinated and effective way. It provides the platform for developing a 'place-based' approach for using our land and property assets, influencing how our partners look to using their assets, helping to inform and prioritise how and where we focus our resources and embedding a 'One Council' approach to our activities. An Action Plan will be developed to take forward the approaches identified in the Strategy.

7.2 We recognise that change will not happen overnight, but the approach set out in this Strategy and the development of the approaches to delivery identified will move us in the right direction.

# Appendix 1: Summary of key Plans and Strategies

## Your Epping Forest: The Corporate Plan for 2023 -2027

<https://www.eppingforestdc.gov.uk/your-council/your-epping-forest-our-plan-2023-2027/>

The Corporate Plan is the articulation of the Council's ambitions for the district and how it will operate in delivering those ambitions. It therefore provides the 'golden thread' that informs the way the Council will operate and the focus for its priorities. The introduction to the Corporate Plan summarises the Council's ambitions as follows:

*'.... by continually striving to deliver an efficient, innovative, and well-run council that always puts the customer first. In doing so, we aim to ensure that the cost to deliver our services reduces whilst quality and value improves.*

*Employment and economic prosperity have always underpinned our district. Ensuring continued growth in jobs and creating career expanding opportunities are also central to our plans. By maximising the opportunities for existing employers, and at the same time attracting new and exciting investors and wealth creators to the district, we want to be seen as a place that is positively welcoming to businesses.*

*At its heart, our district is built from many distinct, strong, and diverse communities. These should be celebrated, nurtured, and supported so they are best able to help the people that live here. Working with community groups and partners, we aim to provide housing options and improved health outcomes that meet their needs. A sense of community and belonging is vital to a healthy and happy district. We will be there to help it grow.*

*For convenience and the ease of reporting, we have brought all our plans together under the three broad headings of Community, Place and Council but in reality, these are all inter-related.*

*As your local council, we are afforded a unique opportunity to oversee the wellbeing of the district and its residents. With this custodial role comes the responsibility of making sure that everything we do is for the benefit of our district and our residents. This plan sets out how we intend to do that over the next 4 years.'*

The three core themes underpinning the Council's activities:

The Corporate Plan three broad headings are as follows:

### **Stronger communities**

*We will safeguard vulnerable people. Our teams will support residents in need, providing support and equality of opportunity in a district that is safe for everyone.*

- *Consistent in our approach, we will strive to ensure all our residents can live in a safe and well-maintained environment.*
- *Break the cycle of domestic abuse by working in partnerships to reduce violence against women and girls.*

- *Use our place on the Epping Forest Community Safety Partnership with Essex Police, County Council, Fire and Rescue, and community groups, to deal with emerging local threats and issues.*

*We will work with our partners to achieve wellbeing and health equity for all our residents.*

- *We will adopt the Robert Wood Johnson Wider Determinants of Health Model as a framework through which to deliver multi-agency health and wellbeing improvement initiatives.*
- *Focusing our partnerships, resources and capacity in key locations, we will address individual needs to reduce health inequalities across the district.*
- *We will contribute to the delivery of the objectives detailed in the multi-agency Epping Forest Health & Wellbeing Strategy 2022-2026.*

*We will listen to our communities and work with them when making decisions, developing policies, and designing services.*

- *We will coordinate our consultation and engagement to ensure residents' views shape the services we provide.*
- *Strengthen and empower individuals and communities to help themselves.*
- *Invite families living in council housing to help us develop a resident involvement strategy, with a range of options to support involvement in our decision making.*

\* The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation works to build a culture of health in society. The [Epping Forest Health & Wellbeing Strategy 2022-2026](#) provides more information on the approach being adopted.

### **Stronger place**

*We will strive to reduce pollution and protect our environment, encouraging jobs, housing, and infrastructure that complements, rather than competes with the natural world.*

- *Investment and innovation to reduce energy consumption. Adopt cleaner forms of energy. Enable reduction of the council's carbon emissions to net-zero by 2030.*
- *Reduce, reuse, and recycle more of the waste generated within local homes and businesses.*
- *Encouraging residents, businesses and other organisations to reduce their own carbon emissions through the engagement actions set out in the Climate Change Action Plan.*

*We will improve existing spaces and create new places for people to live, play, gain skills and do business.*

- *Providing places for new businesses to start and opportunities for existing businesses to grow.*
- *Maximising economic investment, potential and growth through partnerships and commercial opportunities.*
- *Providing affordable homes within sustainable developments, served by transport, leisure, health, and other infrastructure to meet our residents' needs.*
- *Consultation and engagement with our residents in decisions affecting their place.*

*We will protect and enhance our green spaces for future generations while providing decent, safe homes to meet all our needs.*

- *Negotiate developer contributions towards green spaces and the environment as part of planning applications.*
- *Meet standards for good quality homes in sustainable locations enshrined within the Local Plan.*
- *Protect, maintain, and enhance the ecology, landscape, and heritage of our district.*

### ***Stronger council***

*We will be an Employer of Choice.*

*Through the delivery of the People Strategy. We will progress the strategy and it will be reviewed and reported through the Council's performance processes to members and senior leaders. The main themes of the People Strategy are:*

- *Maximising organisational capacity and capability*
- *Effective and inspirational leadership, values and culture*
- *Employee experience and engagement*

*We will improve customer access to our services.*

- *Generating higher customer satisfaction through better accuracy and faster response*
- *Making high-quality digital services the default choice for most residents, businesses, and visitors.*
- *Understanding and delivering better outcomes through data use, capture, and sharing according to our customers' needs.*
- *Providing digital solutions within a secure online environment, keeping us and our customers safe.*

*We will provide the highest standards of financial competence, management and governance.*

- *Ensuring value for money in the use of resources and delivery of services.*
- *Maintaining low Council Tax, embracing commercial opportunities, and achieving long-term financial sustainability.*
- *Optimising decision making and risk management through strong governance and best practice.*
- *Being accountable through transparent finance, governance and decision making.*

## **Epping Forest District Local Plan 2011-2033**

<https://www.eppingforestdc.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/EFD-Local-Plan-2011-2033-Part-One.pdf>

<https://www.eppingforestdc.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/EFD-Local-Plan-2011-2033-Part-Two.pdf>

The Epping Forest District Local Plan 2011-2033 was adopted by the Council on 6 March 2023. It represents an important milestone for the district as it facilitates the delivery of much needed new homes and jobs whilst protecting the important natural and built environment which makes Epping Forest District so special.

The Local Plan forms part of the Council's Statutory Policy Framework and will help shape the future of the district by guiding where and how development will come forward. Importantly, it allocates land for the new homes (including affordable homes) and jobs to be delivered across the district, supported by new infrastructure, including for education, health and transport. The Plan's policies will be used to assess planning applications and other related development proposals, to ensure that new development is sustainable, well designed, and supported by the required infrastructure, for the future needs of residents and businesses in the district. It also provides protection for the district's important open spaces, and the natural and historic environment, setting a high bar for the creation of safe, healthy and accessible places.

The adoption of the Local Plan provides the Council with an up-to-date and robust planning policy framework for decision-making. The Plan was developed with the involvement of many important stakeholders including residents, businesses and key partners and is based on a comprehensive suite of evidence reflecting the local circumstances, characteristics and issues relevant to the district and has a key role in the implementation of important strategic priorities, including the Council's Corporate Plan, Housing Strategy and Climate Change Action Plan.

## **Epping Forest Health and Well-being Strategy 2022-2026**

<https://www.eppingforestdc.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/Epping-Forest-Health-Wellbeing-Strategy-2022-26.pdf>

The Epping Forest Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2022-2026 sets out the vision and priorities for the district. The Strategy explains how the Council, working in partnership through the

Epping Forest District Health and Wellbeing Board (which includes representatives from the Council, Essex County Council, the West Essex Health and Care Partnership, the NHS and a wide range of local health and voluntary sector organisations), will address the health inequalities that exist in the district. This includes working better with health and third sector partners and, most importantly, with the district's communities.

The Strategy's Vision is: *"Working together to improve the health and wellbeing of Epping Forest residents by promoting a culture and environment that encourages health equity."*

The Vision aligns with that of the Joint Essex Health and Wellbeing Strategy and the West Essex Health and Care Partnership 10-year Plan.

## **Climate Change Action Plan**

<https://www.eppingforestdc.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/Climate-Change-Action-Plan-Final.pdf>

Epping Forest District Council declared a climate emergency in September 2019 and made a commitment to do everything within its power to become a carbon neutral District by 2030. To act on this commitment the Council adopted a Climate Change Action Plan in April 2022. The Action Plan identifies ways in which both the Council, including through the use of its land and property, and the community of Epping Forest District can reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

The priority initiatives identified for 2023/24 that the Council can directly implement, which have the most significant benefits, and which are the most relevant to this Strategy are:

- Making energy efficiency improvements across the Council's property estate including its social housing and sheltered housing portfolio.
- Reviewing renewable energy and storage potential at existing council owned sites
- Including consideration of the Climate Emergency in Council decision-making processes.
- Increasing Electric Vehicle Charging points on Council owned land.
- Leading by example through the integration of best practice in new Council developments.

It will be expected that all new buildings adopt an approach which maximises energy efficiency through their design and the materials used for their construction, minimise emissions from energy use, ensure fossil fuel free generation of energy (which will also help to improve local air quality) and be able to adapt to climate change. Existing buildings will need to be assessed on their suitability to meet carbon efficiency standards in the future and where appropriate undertake retrofitting to be more efficient and resilient to the effects of climate change.

As well as incorporating energy efficiency the Council has a role to plan in supporting the maintenance and enhancement of the natural environment including through community

greenspace improvements, implement tree planting and increase the amount of greenspace.

## **Housing Strategy 2023 - 2027**

The Council's Housing Strategy 2023 - 2027 provides a golden thread from Corporate Plan 2023 - 2027 through to the housing related services that the Council provides in the district. The vision for housing in the district over the next five years which was developed following consultation and engagement with key stakeholders is as follows:

'Working with our communities to provide great places where people want to live, work, thrive and prosper in safe good quality homes that meet their needs.'

Using the broad themes from the Council Plan the Strategy sets out the following:

For Stronger communities the Council will:

- safeguard vulnerable people. Our teams will support residents in need, providing support and equality of opportunity in a district that is safe for everyone.

For Stronger place the Council will:

- protect and enhance our green spaces for future generations while providing decent, safe homes to meet all our needs.

For a Stronger Council the Council will:

- improve customer access to our services.

These corporate objectives will be delivered through the Council's commitment to listen, work with partners and target resources where they are needed most and make a positive impact on people's lives by:

- making every penny count,
- striving to improve services, and
- delivering value for money.

The collectively agreed five key housing priorities to focus on between 2023-2027:

- Priority 1: Increasing the supply of affordable housing.
- Priority 2: Ensuring quality, safety and high standards.
- Priority 3 Promoting health, wellbeing and independence.
- Priority 4: Facilitating economic growth and regeneration.
- Priority 5: Protecting and enhancing the environment.

The Housing Strategy includes a housing delivery plan with clear measurable outcomes that the Council is committed to achieving and reviewing on an annual basis or more frequently if required.

## **Housing Asset Management Strategy**

EFDC has a 30-year HRA finance business plan which outlines the available annual finances to meet the Council's obligations under the decent home standard and the social housing white paper. The Council is currently developing an up-to-date housing asset management strategy document that will run alongside the 30-year finance plan which will direct Council spending including its investment priorities, outline its aims and goals including its approach to achieving Net Zero across the Council managed housing stock and inform its approach to disposal and development options.

## **Nurturing Growth 2020-2025**

<https://www.eppingforestdc.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/Nurturing-Growth-16-March-2020.pdf>

The Council aims to deliver a great place to live and work in Epping Forest district. The district's economy is vibrant and diverse, based in a region that is successful and thriving and located between the 2 international economic powerhouses of London and Cambridge. Taking these and the other key issues that have been identified, the Council's vision within the 'Nurturing Growth' strategy is for a future economy that reflects the aims and aspirations for all those who live and work in the district. The key priorities set out in the Strategy are to:

- Promote our vibrant, diverse and resilient high streets and town centres.
- Support rural areas to grow and thrive.
- Make our district an attractive place for entrepreneurs and businesses.
- Deliver 21st century infrastructure for business growth.
- Exploit opportunities, developments and investment from outside the district.
- Build and grow partnerships with key stakeholders.
- Provide residents with opportunities in education, skills and training opportunities.

## Appendix 2: Areas of Opportunity and Place ambitions

The text set out in this appendix, including the visions and policy extracts, are taken from the Epping Forest District Local Plan 2011-2033 which was adopted by the Council in March 2023.

The key for the maps included below is:

Green – Sites Qualis own or are actively involved with planning

Orange – Sites Qualis has undertaken some work and has outline proposals

Blue – HRA sites with Commercial units underneath with good local centre type development opportunity

Yellow – Strategic Sites allocated in the local plan (some owned by EFDC)

### Waltham Abbey

Waltham Abbey is located in the west of the district. It has a strong historic character with a number of heritage and natural assets including Waltham Abbey Church and Gardens, the Royal Gunpowder Mills and the Lee Valley Regional Park strongly contribute towards Waltham Abbey's character. The District Centre is focused on the pedestrianised Sun Street and Market Square, which comprises a large number of cafes and restaurants alongside a small comparison retail offer.

#### Vision for Waltham Abbey

*'Waltham Abbey will be a revitalised town with a thriving daytime and night-time economy. A mix of new housing will play a strong role in the town's regeneration, providing the population to support a healthy town centre economy, whilst also enabling the required community and social infrastructure, supporting a fully sustainable community. The town will seek to develop and maximise retail, employment, and tourism-based opportunities. In particular, the town will build upon Waltham Abbey's existing assets, including Waltham Abbey Church and Gardens, Royal Gunpowder Mills and adjacent Lee Valley Regional Park, developing a niche identity based primarily on tourism, built heritage and outdoor leisure activities. New opportunities for enhanced provision of open spaces, leisure and amenity activities for residents will be supported and complement existing high value open spaces such as Town Mead. Walking and cycling access from the town to these spaces will be maintained and improved. Improvements to sustainable transport infrastructure will be made. The town will support a diverse population of young people, families and the elderly, reducing inequality through the provision of high-quality residential development in the most sustainable locations. Waltham Abbey will create local business and employment opportunities that underpin the local economy, particularly in the leisure industry.'*

#### Extracts from Local Plan Policy P3 Waltham Abbey

##### Infrastructure Requirements

F. New development must be served and supported by appropriate on and off-site infrastructure and services. Development should deliver and/or contribute towards the delivery of infrastructure where this is necessary and fairly and reasonably related to the

development having full regard to the Infrastructure Delivery Plan Schedule and its wider infrastructure objectives.

G. Development proposals in Waltham Abbey will be expected to deliver and/or contribute proportionately towards infrastructure items as required, including:

- i) education provision including early years, primary school and secondary school places;
- ii) appropriate provision of health facilities;
- iii) provision of walking and cycling facilities, providing linkages both within the site and to key destinations, including to the Lee Valley Regional Park;
- iv) enhancements to public transport provision or other initiatives which reduce the need to travel by car;
- v) appropriate provision of surface water drainage measures;
- vi) highways and junction upgrades;
- vii) upgrade and improvement of utility infrastructure including water, waste water, solid waste, gas, electricity and telecommunications; and
- viii) improvements to existing, and provision of new, green and blue infrastructure assets including open space in accordance with the Council's adopted Green Infrastructure Strategy.

#### District Centre Uses

H. In accordance with Policy E2, in Waltham Abbey District Centre, at least 45% of the ground floor Primary Commercial, Business, and Service Frontage and at least 25% of the ground floor Secondary Commercial, Business, and Service Frontage will be maintained in Use Class E uses.

#### Air Pollution

I. The development of sites within Waltham Abbey has the potential to produce air pollution that could impact upon air quality in the District, including the Epping Forest. All development proposals will need to demonstrate that they are in accordance with Policy DM2 and Policy DM22 and should have regard to the Council's adopted Air Pollution Mitigation Strategy for the Epping Forest. This includes, where necessary, the provision of financial contributions for the purposes of implementing air pollution mitigation initiatives and undertaking air quality monitoring and any necessary future air quality assessments.

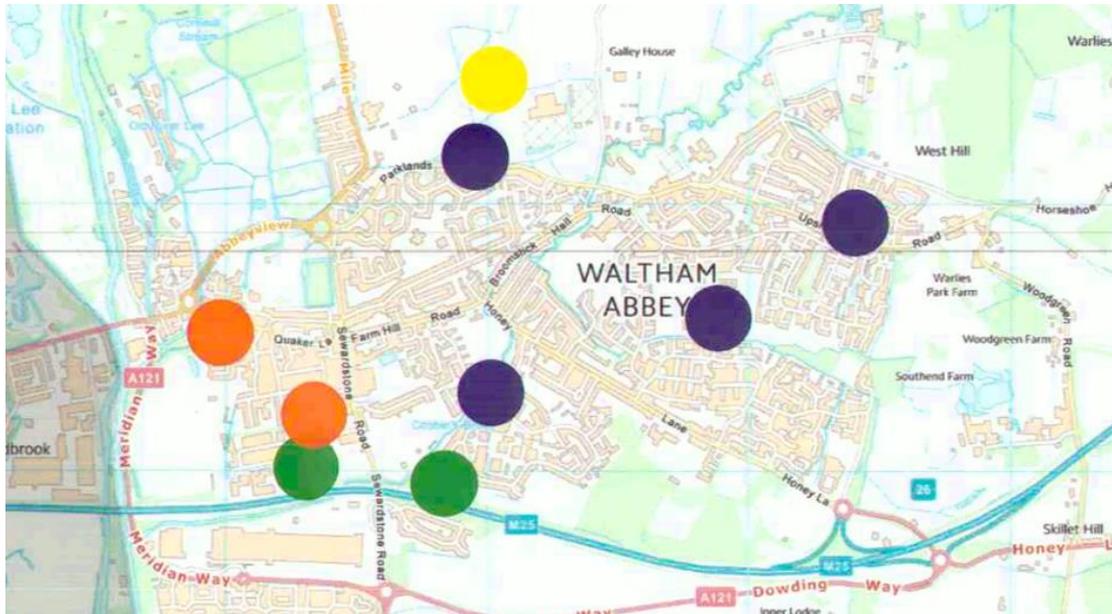
#### Recreational Pressure

J. Developments within Waltham Abbey which would result in a net increase in dwellings have the potential to result in recreational pressure on the Epping Forest Special Area of Conservation. All such developments will need to demonstrate that they are in accordance with Policy DM2. This includes, where necessary, the provision of financial contributions towards mitigation and monitoring measures.

#### Flood Risk

K. Except for essential infrastructure and water compatible developments, no built development on residential allocations will be permitted on land within Flood Zones 2 and 3

as shown on the Council's latest Strategic Flood Risk Assessment maps, including the appropriate allowance for climate change.



## Buckhurst Hill

Buckhurst Hill is located in the south of the district in close proximity to Loughton. The settlement has good transport links and is connected via the Central Line to the London Underground network. It benefits from a District Centre that has a range of retailers, with a number of units currently in use by independent fashion and beauty-related businesses.

### Vision for Buckhurst Hill

*'Buckhurst Hill will maintain its unique identity and separation from Loughton. It will provide services and amenities to meet the needs of its community, whilst seeking to improve connectivity between the station, Queens Road and the wider settlement. The village will provide various types of employment including professional services as part of a successful and prosperous high street. New opportunities for additional employment uses will be maximised. A focus on improving sustainable transport connections will seek to maximise the good public transport accessibility.'*

### Extracts from Local Plan Policy P5 Buckhurst Hill

#### Infrastructure Requirements

C. New development must be served and supported by appropriate on and off-site infrastructure and services. Development should deliver and/or contribute towards the delivery of infrastructure where this is necessary and fairly and reasonably related to the development having full regard to the Infrastructure Delivery Plan Schedule and its wider infrastructure objectives.

D. Development proposals in Buckhurst Hill will be expected to deliver and/or contribute proportionately towards infrastructure items as required, including:

- i) appropriate education provision including early years, primary school and secondary school places;
- ii) appropriate provision of health facilities;
- iii) provision of walking and cycling facilities, and linkages both within the site and to key destinations;
- iv) enhancements to public transport provision or other initiatives which reduce the need to travel by car; and
- v) improvements and provision of green and blue infrastructure and open space throughout the settlement.

#### District Centre Uses

E. In accordance with Policy E2, at least 65% of the ground floor Primary Commercial, Business and Service Frontage and at least 40% of the ground floor Secondary Commercial, Business and Service Frontage will be maintained in Use Class E uses in Buckhurst Hill District Centre.

#### Air Pollution

F. The development of sites within Buckhurst Hill has the potential to produce air pollution that could impact upon air quality in the District, including the Epping Forest. All development proposals will need to demonstrate that they are in accordance with Policy DM2 and Policy DM22 and should have regard to the Council's adopted Air Pollution Mitigation Strategy for the Epping Forest. This includes, where necessary, the provision of financial contributions for the purposes of implementing air pollution mitigation initiatives and undertaking air quality monitoring and any necessary future air quality assessments.

#### Recreational Pressure

G. Developments within Buckhurst Hill which would result in a net increase in dwellings have the potential to result in recreational pressure on the Epping Forest Special Area of Conservation. All such developments will need to demonstrate that they are in accordance with Policy DM2. This includes, where necessary, the provision of financial contributions towards mitigation and monitoring measures.

#### Flood Risk

H. Except for essential infrastructure and water compatible developments, no built development on residential allocations will be permitted on land within Flood Zones 2 and 3 as shown on the Council's latest Strategic Flood Risk Assessment maps, including the appropriate allowance for climate change.



## Loughton

Loughton is one of the district's main towns and boasts good transport connectivity as a direct result of its two London Underground Stations and bus services. It is host to the district's only further education college and the University of Essex, Loughton Campus. This provides a number of opportunities for Loughton, including the potential to create an 'education hub'. Loughton has a significant retail offer, benefitting from a Town Centre at Loughton High Road, a District Centre at Loughton Broadway, and retail centre at Epping Forest Shopping Park. Loughton is characterised by a diverse retail offer, with a large proportion of national retailers compared to other centres in the district. Loughton High Road provides some comparison retail alongside a range of other retail and non-retail uses. Loughton Broadway is characterised by a local and independent retail offer, with a number of national retailers to meet local needs. The Epping Forest Shopping Park provides a broader retail offer with larger scale comparison shopping opportunities than currently offered elsewhere in the District.

### Vision for Loughton

*'Loughton will continue to be one of the district's major towns, providing a retail, employment and education hub that maximises its good public transport connectivity and proximity to the Epping Forest and the forest-edge environment. The needs of Loughton residents will be met through an appropriate mix of housing in sustainable locations. Future development should maintain separation from neighbouring Theydon Bois, Buckhurst Hill*

*and Chigwell. The main centre of Loughton High Road will be strengthened and future development will support the Centre's continued role as a successful retail centre within the District. Loughton Broadway will be the focus of further enhancement and the Epping Forest Shopping Park will provide a complementary retail offer. Employment will continue to be supported through both strategic employment sites such as Langston Road, and smaller-scale employment provision within the settlement centre. The impact of further development on the Epping Forest, both in terms of air quality and also in terms of further recreational pressure will be minimised and mitigation measures will have been implemented where necessary.'*

### **Extracts from Policy P2 Loughton**

#### **Infrastructure Requirements**

E. New development must be served and supported by appropriate on and off-site infrastructure and services. Development should deliver and/or contribute towards the delivery of infrastructure where this is necessary and fairly and reasonably related to the development having full regard to the Infrastructure Delivery Plan Schedule and its wider objectives.

F. Development proposals in Loughton will be expected to deliver and/or contribute proportionately towards infrastructure items as required, including:

- i) education provision including early years, primary school and secondary school places;
- ii) provision of health facilities;
- iii) highways and junction upgrades;
- iv) provision of walking and cycling facilities, and linkages both within the site and to key destinations;
- v) enhancements to public transport provision or other initiatives which reduce the need to travel by car;
- vi) upgrade and improvement of utility infrastructure including water, waste water, solid waste, gas, electricity and telecommunications; and
- vii) improvements and provision of green and blue infrastructure assets including open space.

#### **Town Centre Uses**

G. In accordance with Policy E2, in Loughton High Road Town Centre, at least 70% of the ground floor Primary Commercial, Business and Service Frontage and at least 35% of the ground floor Secondary Commercial, Business and Service Frontage will be maintained in Use Class E uses.

#### **District Centre Uses**

H. In accordance with Policy E2, in Loughton Broadway District Centre, at least 60% of the ground floor Primary Commercial, Business and Service Frontage will be maintained in Use Class E uses.

## Air Pollution

I. The development of sites within Loughton has the potential to produce air pollution that could impact upon air quality in the District, including the Epping Forest. All development proposals will need to demonstrate that they are in accordance with Policy DM2 and Policy DM22 and should have regard to the Council's adopted Air Pollution Mitigation Strategy for the Epping Forest. This includes, where necessary, the provision of financial contributions for the purposes of implementing air pollution mitigation initiatives and undertaking air quality monitoring and any necessary future air quality assessments.

## Recreational Pressure

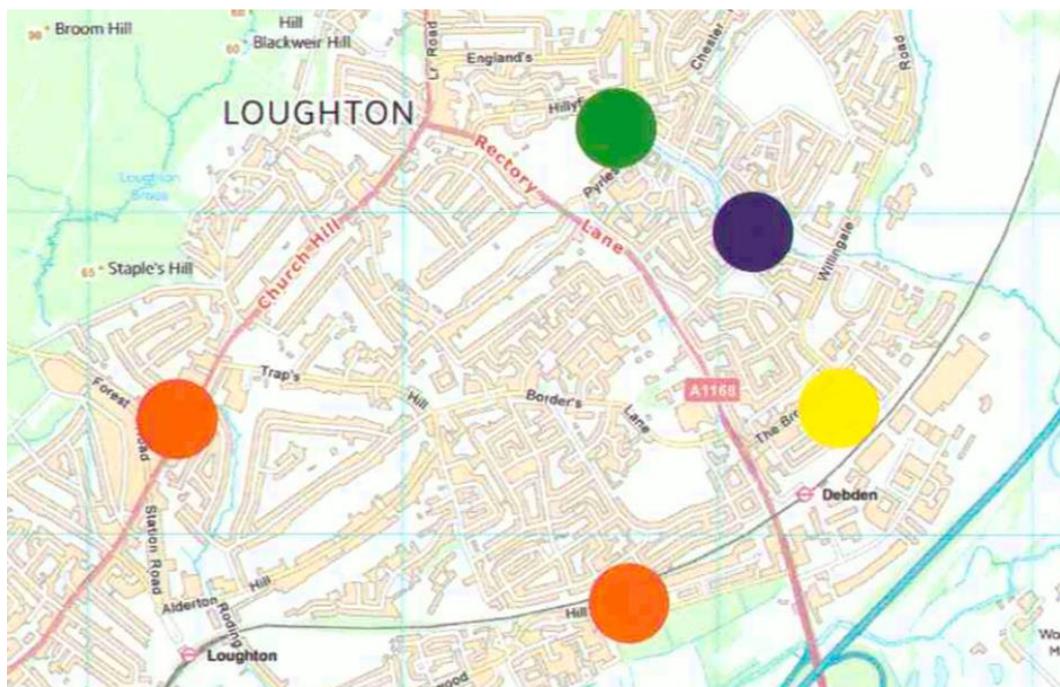
J. Developments within Loughton which would result in a net increase in dwellings have the potential to result in recreational pressure on the Epping Forest Special Area of Conservation. All such developments will need to demonstrate that they are in accordance with Policy DM2. This includes, where necessary, the provision of financial contributions towards mitigation and monitoring measures.

## Flood Risk

K. Except for essential infrastructure and water compatible developments, no built development on residential allocations will be permitted on land within Flood Zones 2 and 3 as shown on the Council's latest Strategic Flood Risk Assessment maps, including the appropriate allowance for climate change.

## Habitat Protection

L. Sites within the Impact Risk Zone for the Roding Valley Meadows Site of Special Scientific Interest and are above the identified development threshold should make provision for any avoidance and mitigation measures to address any impacts on this nationally important habitat.



## Chigwell

Chigwell is located in the south of the District and comprises three relatively distinct areas: the original historic village and retail area of Brook Parade, the Grange Hill and Limes Farm area, and Chigwell Row. The settlement has a rural and historic character and is surrounded by Green Belt.

### Vision for Chigwell

*'Chigwell will provide a range of services and infrastructure to support new and existing communities through the allocation of small and medium sized sites to meet local housing needs. Key priorities for infrastructure in the village are sustainable transport, health care and education. The distinctive communities of Chigwell Village, Grange Hill and Chigwell Row will be celebrated. A focus on brownfield sites and sustainable Green Belt release will ensure the existing visual identity of the settlement is maintained whilst providing future homes. In particular the important gap between Chigwell Row and Hainault will be protected. Care will be taken to maintain the gap between Chigwell and Woodford to the West, whilst the gap with Loughton and Debden will also be retained. Future development will preserve and enhance the rural and historic character of the village, and new development will support new and diverse employment opportunities.'*

### Extracts from Local Plan Policy P7 Chigwell

#### Infrastructure Requirements

C. New development must be served and supported by appropriate on and off-site infrastructure and services. Development should deliver and/or contribute towards the delivery of infrastructure where this is necessary and fairly and reasonably related to the development having full regard to the Infrastructure Delivery Plan Schedule and its wider infrastructure objectives.

D. Development proposals in Chigwell will be expected to deliver and/or contribute proportionately towards infrastructure items including:

- i) appropriate education provision including early years, primary school and secondary school places;
- ii) appropriate provision of health facilities;
- iii) provision of walking and cycling facilities, and linkages both within the site and to key destinations;
- iv) enhancements to public transport provision or other initiatives which reduce the need to travel by car;
- v) upgrade and improvement of utility infrastructure including water, waste water, solid waste, gas, electricity and telecommunications where necessary; and
- vi) improvements and provision of green and blue infrastructure assets including open space.

#### Air Pollution

E. The development of sites within Chigwell has the potential to produce air pollution that could impact air quality in the District, including the Epping Forest. All development

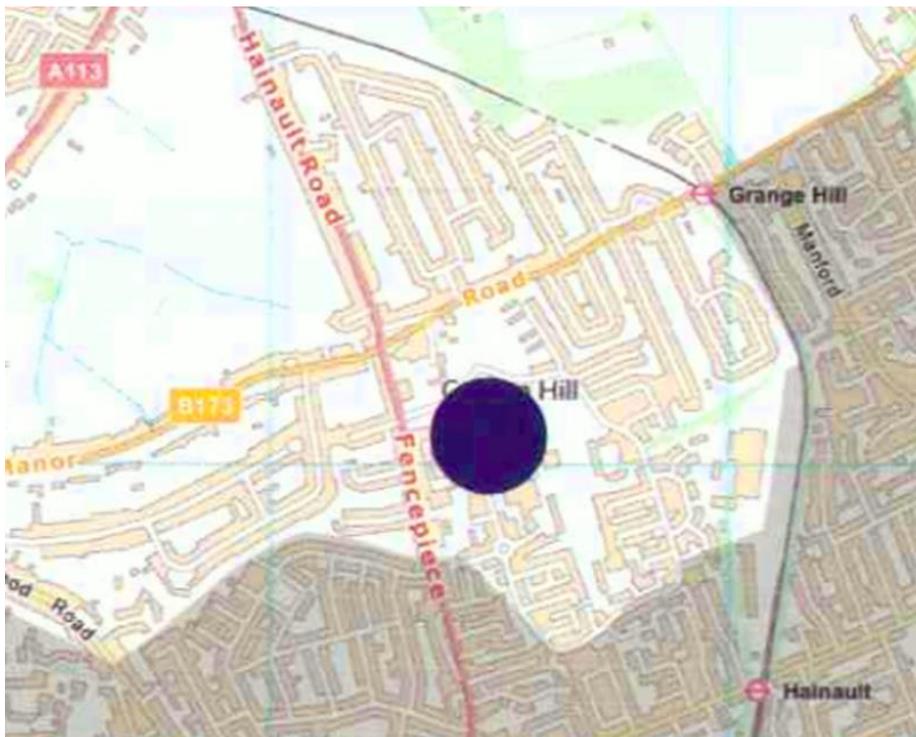
proposals will need to demonstrate that they are in accordance with Policy DM2 and Policy DM22 and have regard to the Council's adopted Air Pollution Mitigation Strategy for the Epping Forest. This includes, where necessary, the provision of financial contributions for the purposes of implementing air pollution mitigation initiatives and undertaking air quality monitoring and any necessary future air quality assessments.

#### Recreational Pressure

F. Developments within Chigwell which would result in a net increase in dwellings have the potential to result in recreational pressure on the Epping Forest Special Area of Conservation. All such developments will need to demonstrate that they are in accordance with Policy DM2. This includes, where necessary, the provision of financial contributions towards mitigation and monitoring measures.

#### Flood Risk

G. Except for essential infrastructure and water compatible developments, no built development on residential allocations will be permitted on land within Flood Zones 2 and 3 as shown on the Council's latest Strategic Flood Risk Assessment maps, including the appropriate allowance for climate change.



## Ongar

Located in the east of the District, Ongar is a town of medieval origin that boasts a retail and service offer benefiting the local community and those in other settlements further afield. The settlement is surrounded by Green Belt which divides Ongar into the three areas namely Ongar, Shelley and Marden Ash. This creates breaks in the existing development and gives

Ongar a distinctive settlement pattern. The town benefits from a number of local heritage assets including Ongar Castle and the High Street Conservation Area.

### **Vision for Ongar**

*‘Ongar will continue to thrive as a settlement, and its existing local and independent character will be retained and strengthened. Development in Ongar will contribute towards the settlement’s self-sufficiency aspirations, particularly through the provision of additional local services and infrastructure. This will include measures that support alternative, sustainable modes of travel to reduce congestion and reliance on car-based travel. As a District Centre, Ongar will provide services and amenities for a wide catchment of residents and visitors. Development will seek to diversify the employment offer of the town by encouraging appropriate town centre uses. Ongar will capitalise upon its heritage and leisure assets, such as the Epping Ongar Heritage Railway and connection to the Essex Way, through the protection and enhancement of the settlement’s historic environment.’*

### **Extracts from Local Plan Policy P4 Ongar**

#### Infrastructure Requirements

D. New development must be served and supported by appropriate on and off-site infrastructure and services. Development should deliver and/or contribute towards the delivery of infrastructure where this is necessary and fairly and reasonably related to the development having full regard to the Infrastructure Delivery Plan Schedule and its wider infrastructure objectives.

E. Development proposals in Ongar will be expected to deliver and/or contribute proportionately towards infrastructure items as required, including:

- i) education provision including early years, primary school and secondary school places;
- ii) provision of health facilities;
- iii) provision of walking and cycling facilities and linkages both within the site and to key destinations;
- iv) enhancements to public transport provision or other initiatives which reduce the need to travel by car;
- v) highways and junction upgrades;
- vi) upgrade and improvement of utility infrastructure including water, waste water, solid waste, gas, electricity and telecommunications where necessary; and
- vii) improvements and provision of green and blue infrastructure assets including open space.

#### District Centre Uses

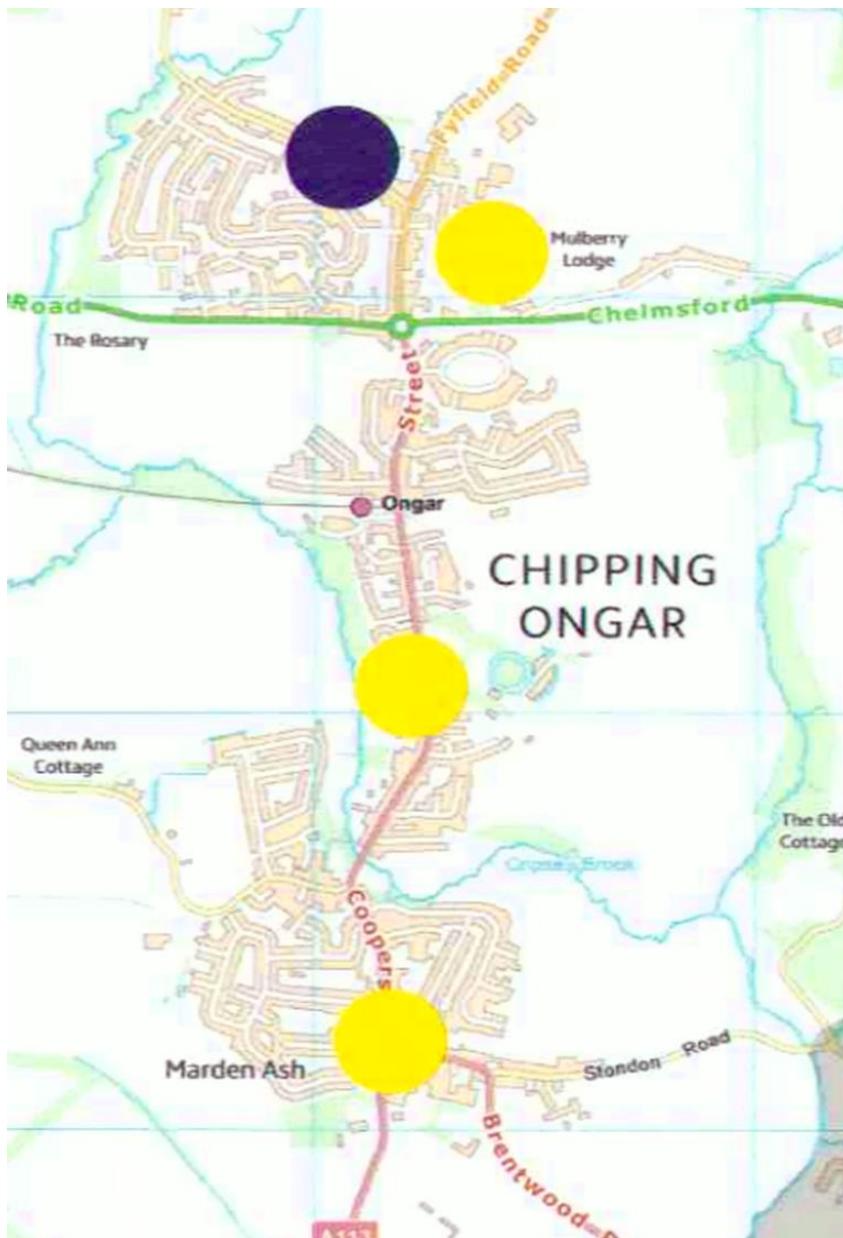
F. In accordance with Policy E2, in Ongar District Centre, at least 50% of the ground floor Primary Commercial, Business, and Service Frontage and at least 45% of the ground floor Secondary Commercial, Business, and Service Frontage will be maintained in Use Class E uses.

### Air Pollution

G. The development of sites within Ongar has the potential to produce air pollution that could impact upon air quality in the District, including the Epping Forest. All development proposals will need to demonstrate that they are in accordance with Policy DM2 and Policy DM22 and should have regard to the Council's adopted Air Pollution Mitigation Strategy for the Epping Forest. This includes, where necessary, the provision of financial contributions for the purposes of implementing air pollution mitigation initiatives and undertaking air quality monitoring and any necessary future air quality assessments.

### Flood Risk

H. Except for essential infrastructure and water compatible developments, no built development on residential allocations will be permitted on land within Flood Zones 2 and 3 as shown on the Council's latest Strategic Flood Risk Assessment maps, including the appropriate allowance for climate change.



## Epping

Epping is one of the district's two Town Centres, and benefits from a range of assets, services and social infrastructure. The town has an attractive setting within the open countryside and the Green Belt. The Green Belt plays an important role in maintaining separation and reducing coalescence between neighbouring settlements, most notably Theydon Bois, Waltham Abbey and North Weald Bassett. Epping has an important civic function within the district and is the location of the Council's Civic Offices. There are a number of employment opportunities located within the settlement, including several professional services firms. A key strength of the Town Centre's retail offer is its diversity, with a mix of convenience and comparison retail, made up of both independent and national retailers. The Town Centre includes development opportunities at St Johns Road and other allocated sites. These will provide increased residential, retail and leisure and other town centre uses within the Town Centre and contribute towards its continued vibrancy.

### Vision for Epping

*'Epping will continue to thrive as one of the main centres in the District, providing excellent community facilities, services and transport connectivity. The settlement will continue to benefit from a strong range of existing facilities and social infrastructure. Future residential development will make a strong contribution to supporting Epping's existing services. The existing character of this historic market town will be protected, and heritage assets will be enhanced wherever possible. A new vibrant community will be delivered at the South of the town. This will integrate fully and complement the existing community. Linkages to Epping's surrounding landscape and highly performing Green Belt will be maximised, and housing will be located and designed in a manner that limits the potential for harm to this important asset. Public open space, footpaths and linkages across the town will be improved. In particular, new connections will be delivered between the town's existing open spaces and planned development. Epping will continue to have a mix of independent and national retailers. New commercial and employment uses will be encouraged where they support local business and start-up enterprises in order to ensure that the town retains a strong employment base. The tourism offer of the town will be promoted and expanded. The impact of further development on Epping Forest, in terms of air quality and further recreational pressure will be minimised. Mitigation measures will be implemented where necessary.'*

### Extracts from Local Plan Policy P1 Epping

#### Sustainable Transport Choices

D. In accordance with Policy T1, all development proposals must demonstrate how opportunities to access jobs, services, education and leisure facilities by means other than the car have been addressed, both within Epping and to the Harlow and Gilston Garden Town. This includes the need to make provision for, improve, enhance and promote use of existing, cycling and walking networks and access to passenger transport services.

## Infrastructure Requirements

E. New development must be served and supported by appropriate on and off-site infrastructure and services. Development should deliver and/or contribute towards the delivery of infrastructure where this is necessary and fairly and reasonably related to the development having full regard to the Infrastructure Delivery Plan Schedule and its wider infrastructure objectives.

F. Development proposals in Epping will be expected to deliver and/or contribute proportionately towards infrastructure items as required, including:

- i) education provision including early years, primary school and secondary school places;
- ii) provision of health facilities;
- iii) provision of walking and cycling facilities and linkages both within the site and to key destinations;
- iv) enhancements to public transport provision or other initiatives which reduce the need to travel by car;
- v) highways and junction upgrades;
- vi) upgrade and improvement of utility infrastructure including water, waste water, solid waste, gas, electricity and telecommunications; and
- vii) improvements and provision of green and blue infrastructure assets including open space.

G. A new leisure centre will be provided in Epping to replace the facility currently located at site EPP.R5.

## Town Centre Uses

H. In accordance with Policy E2, in Epping Town Centre, at least 70% of the ground floor Primary Commercial, Business and Service Frontage and at least 20% of the ground floor Secondary Commercial, Business and Service Frontage will be maintained in Use Class E uses.

## Air Pollution

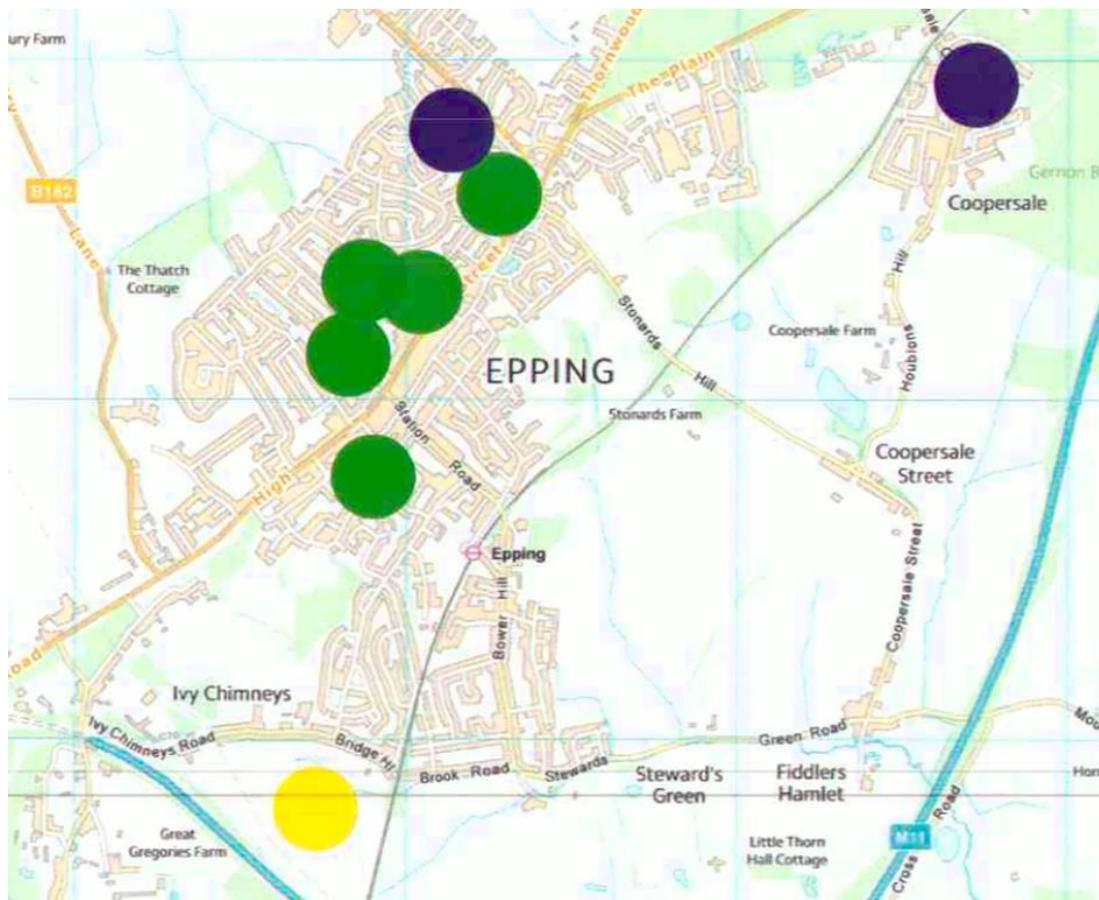
I. The development of sites within Epping has the potential to produce air pollution that could impact upon air quality in the District, including the Epping Forest. All development proposals will need to demonstrate that they are in accordance with Policy DM2 and Policy DM22 and should have regard to the Council's adopted Air Pollution Mitigation Strategy for the Epping Forest. This includes, where necessary, the provision of financial contributions for the purposes of implementing air pollution mitigation initiatives and undertaking air quality monitoring and any necessary future air quality assessments.

## Recreational Pressure

J. Developments within Epping which would result in a net increase in dwellings have the potential to result in recreational pressure on the Epping Forest Special Area of Conservation. All such developments will need to demonstrate that they are in accordance with Policy DM2. This includes, where necessary, the provision of financial contributions towards mitigation and monitoring measures.

## Flood Risk

K. Except for essential infrastructure and water compatible developments, no built development on residential allocations will be permitted on land within Flood Zones 2 and 3 as shown on the Council's latest Strategic Flood Risk Assessment maps, including the appropriate allowance for climate change.



## North Weald Bassett

North Weald Bassett is located in the centre of the district, to the north-east of Epping. The village has a proud military history, mainly characterised through links to aviation at North Weald Airfield to the West. The settlement is surrounded by Green Belt on all sides, and views across the Ongar Redoubt Hill are an asset to the character of the local area.

### Vision for North Weald Bassett

*'North Weald Bassett will become more self-sufficient, enabling the settlement to realise a long-term future as a larger provider of employment, housing and services within the district. The distinct local character of the settlement, surrounded by greatly valued green open space, will be retained by maintaining key landscape areas to the South and promoting its rich military heritage. Future development will be located to the Northern side of the village. Aviation related uses, complemented by a mix of employment and leisure uses will be sought to boost the commercial offer and sustainability of the Airfield. The needs of North Weald*

*Bassett residents will be met through improved health, education, leisure and community facilities, alongside a strengthened range of shops and services that are complemented by enhanced sustainable and public transport provision.'*

#### **Extracts from Local Plan Policy P6 North Weald Bassett**

D. In accordance with Policies SP1 and E1 the following site is allocated for B2/B8 Use Class/ offices, research and development and light industrial (within Use Class E) employment uses.

#### **Sustainable Transport Choices**

F. In accordance with Policy T1, all development proposals must demonstrate how they will respond to the need to make provision for, and improve and promote use of existing cycling and walking networks and access to passenger transport services. The Strategic Masterplans for North Weald Bassett and North Weald Airfield must incorporate measures to promote and encourage the use of sustainable methods of transportation and provide viable alternatives to private car use. Such measures are to be planned in consultation with Essex County Council (and relevant passenger transport providers) through the production of the Strategic Masterplans. The measures should provide for, and encourage, more sustainable travel patterns by contributing toward integrated walking and cycling, and public transport connectivity to the wider areas, including Epping and Harlow. The proposed measures need to be underpinned by feasibility evidence that demonstrates the delivery of modal shift away from single occupancy private car use by way of sustainable travel measures.

#### **Infrastructure Requirements**

G. New development must be served and supported by appropriate on and off-site infrastructure and services. Development should deliver and/or contribute towards the delivery of infrastructure where this is necessary and fairly and reasonably related to the development having full regard to the Infrastructure Delivery Plan Schedule and its wider infrastructure objectives.

H. Development proposals in North Weald Bassett will be expected to deliver and/or contribute proportionately towards infrastructure items as required, including:

- i) appropriate education provision including early years, primary school and secondary school places;
- ii) appropriate provision of health facilities;
- iii) the provision of walking and cycling facilities, providing linkages both within the site and to key destinations;
- iv) enhancements to public transport provision or other initiatives which reduce the need to travel by car;
- v) highways and junction upgrades;
- vi) upgrade and improvement of utility infrastructure including water, waste water, solid waste, gas, electricity and telecommunications where necessary; and
- vii) improvements and provision of green and blue infrastructure and open space throughout the settlement.

### Air Pollution

I. The development of sites within North Weald Bassett has the potential to produce air pollution that could impact upon air quality in the District, including the Epping Forest. All development proposals will need to demonstrate that they are in accordance with Policy DM2 and Policy DM22 and should have regard to the Council's adopted Air Pollution Mitigation Strategy for the Epping Forest. This includes, where necessary, the provision of financial contributions for the purposes of implementing air pollution mitigation initiatives and undertaking air quality monitoring and any necessary future air quality assessments.

### Recreational Pressure

J. Developments within North Weald Bassett which would result in a net increase in dwellings have the potential to result in recreational pressure on the Epping Forest Special Area of Conservation. All such developments will need to demonstrate that they are in accordance with Policy DM2. This includes, where necessary, the provision of financial contributions towards mitigation and monitoring measures.

### Flood Risk

K. Except for essential infrastructure and water compatible developments, no built development on residential allocations will be permitted on land within Flood Zones 2 and 3 as shown on the Council's latest Strategic Flood Risk Assessment maps, including the appropriate allowance for climate change.

### North Weald Airfield Masterplan

O. Planning applications at North Weald Airfield should be accompanied by a Masterplan for the North Weald Airfield which demonstrates that the development requirements set out in this Policy have been accommodated and which has been endorsed by the Council. The endorsed Strategic Masterplan will be taken into account as an important material consideration in the determination of any planning applications.

P. In addition to the requirements set out in parts A-K the Strategic Masterplan must make provision for:

- i) community uses to the East of the main runway;
- ii) retention and expansion of aviation uses to the West of the main runway;
- iii) approximately ten hectares of additional employment land of B2, B8 offices, research and development and light industrial (within Use Class E) uses to the East;
- iv) a new access from Epping Road to service the West of the site;
- v) preserving or enhancing the special architectural or historic interest of the Grade II listed Control Tower and its setting;
- vi) a Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace, the location of which will be determined through the Strategic Masterplanning process; and
- vii) new and improved Public Rights of Way and cycle linkages with the surrounding area including East to West connectivity between the two Masterplan Areas.

Q. The Strategic Masterplan and subsequent applications should be considered and informed by the Quality Review Panel and be subject to public consultation, including in

respect of Masterplans, consultation with all those with a development interest in the defined area.

The adopted North Weald Airfield Masterplan can be viewed [here](#).



## Latton Priory

The planning and delivery of the Harlow and Gilston Garden Communities, including Latton Priory, will be framed by the objectives set out in the Town and Country Planning Association's (TCPA) nine Garden City principles. The level of strategic growth proposed across the Garden Communities, and the holistic, comprehensive approach to planning and delivery will enable the development proposals to achieve 'Garden City' ambitions, whilst delivering development in an efficient and timely manner. The approach to delivery of the Garden Town means that the Garden Communities will not only provide a long-term supply of new homes, but will also deliver a quality of development, environment, infrastructure, services and community that would not otherwise be possible. In line with the TCPA's principles, the planned development will enhance the natural environment and offer high quality affordable homes and locally accessible work in beautiful, healthy and sociable communities. Alongside the new homes that will be provided, the Garden Town will deliver a range of new community facilities, employment opportunities, schools and healthcare facilities.



**Planning guidance includes:**

[Sustainability Guidance and Checklist – Minor Developments](#)

[Sustainability Guidance and Checklist – Major Developments](#)

[Green Infrastructure Strategy](#)