

25th August 2016

Hertingfordbury Parish Neighbourhood Plan EHDC/WHBC Meeting QUESTIONS regarding East of WGC proposals

HOUSING NEED

1. Is housing need considered an overriding factor in promoting the East of WGC sites? If not what are the other factors that have been considered?

CONSTRAINTS

2. What constraints were identified through the plan making process when considering development East of Welwyn Garden City?

3. In considering and accommodating for constraints. What adjustments have been made to housing allocation numbers through the local plan process?

GREEN BELT

The EHDC Peter Brett Associates Green Belt report identified parcels of land to be tested against how they serve the key purposes of Green Belt. The report stated quite clearly that Green Belt land parcels East of WGC played a paramount role in *Checking the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas* and *Assisting in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment*.

4. What evidence shows that substantial weight has been given to potential harm to the Green Belt through promotion of the sites East of WGC? and where is the evidence of *very special circumstances* where such harm is clearly outweighed by other considerations?

STRATEGIC GREEN CORRIDOR

The NP group believe there is a need to map out the breadth, length and connectivity of a strategic green corridor (in the Green Belt north of A414, south/east of WGC and through to Hertford) that assesses and delivers on current and potential ecosystems services benefits.

5. What work has been done on assessment of ecosystem services across this wider green corridor as a whole? How will the Councils transparently take into account any implications for these ecosystems services benefits/threats in plan making decisions affecting this corridor?

HERITAGE

6. In the notes of the 25th July 2016 East Herts Parish & Town Council meeting it states. "*The Heritage Impact Assessment for Panshanger Park, which was produced in conjunction with Historic England*". What involvement did HE have in this assessment and have HE given any response to the report or its findings/recommendations? Is the recommended further work being completed?

7. In the above HIA only Panshanger and Hatfield are really considered. Where is the evidence that they have looked at local heritage assets (not listed or registered nationally) but still of importance?

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8. Setting is not spatially limited. The HIA does not provide evidence for this interfluvium - which is visible from Mimram valley slopes and south Lea valley slopes. There are a number of heritage assets in these areas whose setting will be affected by development on the site. Has this been considered?

9. The menagerie and ha-ha sites for Capability Brown's Cole Green Landscape are to the west of Panshanger Lane. Have these been considered?

10. What justification is offered for putting in development, not only to East of Welwyn but also Sele Farm/Archers Spring which all cause serious harm to the setting of Panshanger Park? Given that setting is not just the housing but also the noise, the traffic, the air pollution and the light pollution as well as loss of tranquility, how will this be defended?

11. Does the harm to the setting of this asset and also of the setting of Hatfield Park and other heritage assets, outweigh considerations for siting development elsewhere in the district, or arguing a case for lower housing numbers? Where is the evidence that mitigation to setting can be achieved? Example playing fields (lighting, goal posts, fencing, ancillary buildings etc.)

ECOLOGY, NATURAL ENVIRONMENT & BIODIVERSITY

12. What environmental assessments have been completed to assess potential affects of developments East of WGC on species and ecological connectivity?

13. What specific species work has been completed and with what conclusions?

14. Do the Councils have a plan for biodiversity at a landscape-scale across local authority boundaries?

15. What up-to date information are the Councils using about the natural environment and other characteristics of the area including drawing, for example, from River Basin Management Plans, catchment management plans?

GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE & ACCESS

16. Where is the duty to co-operate within the WHBC Green Infrastructure plan? (Connectivity appears to stop at the EHDC border)

17. What work is underway with landowners and other stakeholders to deliver funded green infrastructure and access benefits independent of development?

18. How would developers be required to fund provision and maintenance of foot and cycle paths needed to enhance and connect footpaths and rights of way?

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

19. For East of WGC what stakeholder engagement work, as promised in the Local Plan Draft options consultation, has taken place prior to final plan proposals?

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20. What master planning work has been completed and which groups have input into any master planning?

COLE GREEN TIP / LANDFILL

21. What environmental assessments have been completed with regard to potential risks associated with development within the areas on or close to the historic landfill site? What are the council recommendations in this regard?

22. Are the Councils aware that the Environment Agency has designated some areas, where the promoter is stating it will build houses, as landfill areas?

23. What account has been taken of reports submitted (to WHBC) indicating that on parts of the site East of WGC, not currently earmarked for housing but for parkland, asbestos is currently prone to be exposed as the landfill covering is so shallow?

24. In plans published by the promoter, it shows the area identified for employment as located immediately above the main landfill area, where the fenced off area has been located for decades and where there are gas ventilation shafts currently in place. What is the impact of this on the proposed Local Plans viability?

FLOOD RISK ASSESSMENT

25. What Flood Risk Assessment have the Councils carried out for proposed developments in the corridor potentially increasing flood risks elsewhere such as downstream in and towards Hertford?