



Datchworth

PARISH COUNCIL

SERVING THE COMMUNITIES OF DATCHWORTH, BULLS GREEN, BURNHAM GREEN & HOOKS CROSS

Datchworth Parish Council Briefing Note

Agenda item heading East Herts Local Plan Scoping Consultation - Briefing note no.2	Date 17th July, 2026 Committee/ Working Group Planning
Why This is the second briefing note following the first issued on 11th July, 2026. It provides an important update and suggestions for discussion at the forthcoming DPC meeting on 28th July, 2026 This first briefing note stated that the Parish Council has been unable to comment on the Local Plan Scoping Consultation exercise given the late receipt of the invitation, and end-date for submission of online responses on 10th July, 2026. However, following discussion with EHDC planning department we have negotiated with the planning department and afforded an extension until the end of July.	
How (including Time and Money) The scoping consultation is conducted via a series of questions to which responses are requested. Below are the questions listed in the document (<u>underlined</u>) and possible suggestions as to potential responses (in red italics). These are intended to form the basis for discussion at DPC meeting on 28th July. Responses are therefore draft only and can be altered. <u>Q1. What do you consider to be the main challenges and opportunities facing East Hertfordshire over the plan period, and how should the new Local Plan respond to them?</u> - <i>Housing. Make provision for suitable new housing to accommodate local need and demand whilst retaining protective planning policies which retain village identity and character;</i> - <i>Employment. Encourage and protect local employment facilities which provide key services to the local community;</i> - <i>Support the retention and improvement of local community and recreation facilities;</i> - <i>Ensure key conservation and design policies and guidance are provided to protect and enhance local character and sense of place;</i> - <i>To reflect climate change, planning policies should promote energy-efficient buildings, low-carbon energy generation and development that reduces the need to travel.</i> <u>Q2. Are there any other issues, in addition to those identified above, that you think the new Local Plan should address?</u>	

Specifically, the new local plan should include policies and associated text which supports and encourages new businesses in the rural community and the continued support of existing vital existing businesses including public houses, eating establishments and retail units.

Q3. What do you consider to be the three most important issues that should be addressed by the new Local Plan to help shape the future of East Hertfordshire? Please select up to three topics from the list below and provide reasons for your choices.

- ☒ *Housing*
- ☒ *Green Belt and the Introduction of 'Grey Belt'*
- ☐ *Employment*
- ☐ *Town centres*
- ☐ *Recreation and leisure*
- ☐ *Community Facilities and Infrastructure*
- ☐ *Urban Design and Conservation*
- ☒ *Climate Change*
- ☐ *Employment and Landscape*
- ☐ *Movement*
- ☐ *Sustainability*

Q4. Is there anything else you would like to tell us that should be considered as part of the new Local Plan?

Given the district is significantly rural in nature and the likelihood of increasing demand for local food production, consideration should be given to protecting agricultural land for this purpose.

Q5. Does the Vision Statement reflect your aspirations for East Hertfordshire over the next 20 years? Please explain your views.

VISION STATEMENT

"Renowned for our unique and charming historic market towns and villages set within beautiful countryside, rare chalk streams and rich heritage, East Herts will be an exemplar of sustainability, where innovative design solutions respect local character and are harnessed to mitigate and adapt to climate change and enhance biodiversity.

Our communities will continue to thrive, supported by affordable and accessible housing, reliable public transport, and improved public open spaces—promoting active lifestyles and creating inclusive places for all.

By nurturing local businesses, we will create a resilient, prosperous and secure future for all residents and visitors.

Collectively, we will recognise the responsibility we have to create a district fit for future generations".

The vision statement needs to reflect and take full account of the main challenges and opportunities facing the district as identified in Q1, above.

Q6. Do you have any suggestions for how the wording of the Vision Statement could be improved?

Please refer to the answer to Q5, above.

Q7. Do you agree that the six themes (people, place, economy, environment, infrastructure and movement) reflect the key priorities for East Hertfordshire?

The Vision has six key themes, which together capture the district's strengths, challenges and aspirations and will guide future policies and decision-making. The six themes are:

People – supporting healthy, inclusive and resilient communities, with access to high-quality homes, services, and opportunities for all.

Place – protecting and enhancing the distinctive character of towns, villages and the countryside, ensuring that new development responds positively to its surroundings.

Economy – promoting a diverse, adaptable, and productive local economy, supporting existing businesses, attracting new investment, and enabling innovation.

Environment – safeguarding and enhancing the natural environment, addressing climate change, and protecting biodiversity, landscapes and heritage assets.

Infrastructure – ensuring that growth is supported by timely and appropriate infrastructure, including utilities, health, education, and community facilities.

Movement – improving connectivity and accessibility, encouraging sustainable travel choices, and reducing reliance on the private car.

Across these themes, the draft Vision document highlights the need to balance growth with environmental protection, respond to climate change, and ensure a high quality of life for existing and future residents.

Yes.

Q8. Are there any themes you think should be changed, added to, or given more emphasis? Please explain your reasons.

No.

Q9. How would you prefer to be engaged during the Local Plan process?

- a) Online consultations *Yes*
- b) Public events
- c) Workshops
- d) Focus groups
- e) Written updates
- f) Social media
- g) Other methods, please specify.

Q10. Are there any specific engagement methods you think would be particularly effective in helping people understand and contribute to the Local Plan?

No.

Q11. How can the council ensure that engagement is inclusive and accessible, and that opportunities to participate are available to a wide range of communities and stakeholders?

It is important to involve all stakeholders including residents, businesses, landowners, infrastructure providers, community groups, and others. Subject to available resources the Parish Council would encourage thorough and meaningful consultation at all key stages.

Q12 Is there anything else the council should consider when developing its approach to community and stakeholder engagement for the new Local Plan?

Joint exercises with Parish Councils at key stages in the consultation process(es) leading-up to adoption of the new Local Plan, would be beneficial

Q13. Do you have any comments on the SA/SEA Scoping document? (Editors note: the SEA refers to the Sustainability Appraisal whilst the SEA refers to the Strategic Environmental Assessment, both of which have been carried out by EHDC in a combined document dated May, 2026 and can be viewed at: <https://consult.eastherts.gov.uk/kpse/event/AECCFD42-BBAA-47CF-8B47-FACB018845B2>

No.

Q14. Is there anything else that should be included within the SA/SEA Scoping document? If so, please specify.

No.

When

As mentioned in briefing note no.1 on this subject, earlier this month, this EHDC scoping consultation took place between 11th June – 10th July, 2026. DPC was informed of the consultation exercise by e-mail on 7th July, 2026 which gave little time to effectively formulate its response. Through negotiation, we have obtained an extension until the end of July, 2026 in order for DPC to properly formulate its considered response.