

Part I

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All Wards

WELWYN HATFIELD BOROUGH COUNCIL CABINET PLANNING & PARKING PANEL – 5 OCTOBER 2023 REPORT OF THE ASSISTANT DIRECTOR (PLANNING) ADOPTION OF WELWYN HATFIELD LOCAL PLAN (2016)

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1. Before a Local Plan can be formally adopted by the Council as the statutory development plan for the Borough it must be examined by a government-appointed Inspector.
- 1.2. The Welwyn Hatfield Draft Local Plan Proposed Submission Version was submitted to Government in May 2017 for examination. Following:
 - 1.2.1. examination hearings, consultation upon specific changes to the Plan, known as Main Modifications, in January/February 2023; and,
 - 1.2.2. consultation on further Main Modifications to the Plan in June/July 2023.
- 1.3. The Planning Inspector issued his Final Report (Appendix 1), together with a Schedule of Main Modifications (Appendix 2) on the soundness and legal compliance of the Welwyn Hatfield Local Plan (2016) on 25 September 2023.
- 1.4. With the incorporation of all Main Modifications as set out in the Appendix to the Inspector's Final Report the Inspector concludes that the Welwyn Hatfield Local Plan (2016) is sound and legally compliant. This enables the Council, with the inclusion of all the recommended Main Modifications, to adopt the Local Plan.

2. Recommendation

- 2.1. Note the content of the Inspector's Report on the Examination of the Welwyn Hatfield Local Plan (2016) alongside the appended Schedule of Main Modifications (Appendix 1 and 2 to this report) and his conclusion that the Welwyn Hatfield Local Plan (2016) provides an appropriate basis for the planning of the Borough provided that a number of Main Modifications are made to it.
- 2.2. Recommend to Council that:
 - 2.2.1. Council notes the Inspector's Report and its conclusions;
 - 2.2.2. the Welwyn Hatfield Local Plan (2016), which was submitted to the Secretary of State for examination and amended by the Main Modifications (Appendix 2) and Additional Modifications (Appendix 4), be adopted as part of the statutory development plan for Welwyn Hatfield Borough (in accordance with Section 23 (3) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended));
 - 2.2.3. authority be delegated to the Assistant Director (Planning), in consultation with the Executive Member for planning, to make changes to text, graphics and layout of the Plan of a minor or inconsequential nature or in order to ensure consistency with the Main Modifications (Appendix 2) and Additional Modifications Schedules (Appendix 4) to this report, as considered appropriate and necessary prior to the publication of the final version of the adopted Welwyn Hatfield Local Plan (2016)

and associated Policies Map in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended); and,

- 2.2.4. Council note that, on adoption of the Welwyn Hatfield Local Plan (2016) the saved policies of the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan (adopted 2005) and associated Proposals Maps will have been replaced and will not be used for decision-making thereafter.

3. **Background**

- 3.1. In line with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) must prepare a Local Plan, which sets planning policies in a local authority area. In accordance with the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (the Act), the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended)) (the Regulations), the NPPF and Planning Practice Guidance made under the NPPF, Local Plans must be positively prepared, justified, effective and consistent with national policy (the 'tests of soundness').
- 3.2. Members will be aware that the Local Plan has been developed over several years, details of consultation undertaken in the preparation of the Local Plan are set out in paragraph 3.33. Previous reports to Council and Cabinet are listed as background papers and, along with the Council website which contains full details of the Examination, should be referred to for any additional information.
- 3.3. In 2016/17, public consultation was undertaken on the publication of the Draft Local Plan and accompanying policies maps prior to its submission for examination. The consultation took place in accordance with Regulation 19 of the Town and Country Planning Regulations 2012, and was held between 30 August and 24 October 2016.
- 3.4. The Local Plan was presented to Full Council on 10 April 2017 seeking approval to submit it to the Secretary of State for Examination. Following the subsequent resolution, the Local Plan was submitted to the Secretary of State in May 2017 for Examination.
- 3.5. The submitted Draft Local Plan covered the period from 2013 to 2032. However, during the examination the Council agreed that the start date of the plan should move to 2016 and the end date of the plan to 2036. During the examination the soundness and legal compliance of the plan were considered. The process included a number of hearing sessions of the Examination in Public (EIP); these sessions commenced in September 2017 and concluded in March 2021:
- Stage 1 - Legal soundness and duty to co-operate (21st - 22nd September 2017);
 - Stage 2 - Objectively assessed needs, Green Belt, spatial vision and targets and housing land availability (24th - 27th October 2017);
 - Joint Session with EHDC - Birchall Garden Suburb (30th January 2018);
 - Stage 3 - Topic specific and development management policies, including: community services, transport, retail, housing, the local economy, infrastructure and new schools (20th – 22nd February 2018);
 - Stage 4 - Sites in Welwyn Garden City and Hatfield (28th – 29th June 2018);
 - Stage 5 - Green Belt Study (6th - 7th November 2018);

- Stage 6 - Birchall Garden Suburb, Housing need forecasts, Employment land need (16th – 18th December 2019);
 - Stage 7 - Birchall Garden Suburb (Southern Section) and Symondshyde (10th - 12th March 2020);
 - Stage 8 – Covering the villages – Oaklands & Mardley Heath, Welwyn, Woolmer Green, Brookmans Park, Little Heath, Cuffley, Welham Green, as well as Development Management Policies SP7, SP8, SP17 and SP21 (28th - 30th July 2020, 18th - 19th August 2020, 25th - 26th August 2020).
 - Stage 9 – Green Belt Boundaries, Objectively Assessed Need, Windfall (22nd - 24th February 2021), Further settlement sessions (March 2021).
- 3.6. Throughout the examination, further technical work has been requested by the examining Inspector and a number of modifications have been proposed. This included further work in relation to the Green Belt and consequently the Stage 3 Green Belt Study was commissioned, published and subsequently examined at the Stage 5 hearing session in November 2018.
- 3.7. During the examination, the Inspector indicated a need for modifications to the plan to increase the housing target in order to meet the objectively assessed need for housing (OAN), which at that point was acknowledged to be around 16,000 homes.
- 3.8. A Call for Sites was undertaken in January 2019 and consultation on sites promoted through the Call for Sites took place in May/June 2019. An update to the Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (HELAA), which was published in January 2020, assessed the suitability, availability and achievability of these promoted sites for development, while the Site Selection Background Paper considered different options for the selection of sites and was presented to Cabinet Planning and Parking Panel (CPPP) on 23 and 29 January 2020.
- 3.9. Following the release of the 2018-household projections in June 2020, the Council commissioned a review on the implications of the updated projections on its Objectively Assessed Need for housing which was published in September 2020. This was subject to consultation which was carried out by the Inspector and consequently examined at a Hearing session in February 2021. In a series of letters and notes issued in June 2021, the examining Inspector concluded that the new projections represented a meaningful change to the OAN, justifying a reduction in the target from 16,000 (800 dwellings per annum) to 15,200 (760 dwellings per annum), over the 2016-36 plan period.
- 3.10. At a meeting of the Cabinet Planning and Parking Panel (CPPP) on 13 January 2022, members agreed that a strategy to meet an OAN of 15,200 could not be supported. Following a further review of the sites available, the Council then agreed - in July 2022 - to a strategy which would provide 12,775 dwellings over the plan period 2016-2036, of which 8,517 of these dwellings would be delivered over the first ten years following adoption (assumed to be in 2023/24). An early review would then consider opportunities to meet the remaining need, which would be undertaken in the context of housing need and national policy at the time of the review. Following this, the Council received a response from the Inspector in September 2022 which indicated that a supply of 9,200 dwellings over the first ten years could be found sound.
- 3.11. At a meeting of Council in December 2022, the Council agreed to progress to main modifications consultation based on a strategy which amounted to 9,209 dwellings over the first ten years and 13,392 dwellings over the plan period, with an early review to consider any remaining need. The Local Plan Main Modifications Consultation ran from 4 January

2023 to 15 February 2023, and a subsequent consultation on Further Main Modifications ran from 12 June 2023 and 30 July 2023.

The Inspector's report

- 3.12. There are three potential outcomes from a Local Plan examination. The first is that the Plan is found 'sound' and capable of adoption with no further modifications required. The second is that the submitted plan is unsound, but that the Inspector can remedy this through recommending main modifications so that the plan (as modified) can be found sound. The third outcome is that the plan is found unsound or legally non-compliant and the Inspector is unable to remedy this. In this instance, the Inspector will ask the local authority to withdraw the plan and / or issue a report setting out their findings. The Inspector's Report is attached as Appendix 1. The overall conclusion and recommendation is at the end of the report:

396. The Plan has a number of deficiencies in respect of soundness and legal compliance for the reasons set out above, which mean that I recommend non-adoption of it as submitted, in accordance with Section 20(7A) of the 2004 Act. These deficiencies have been explained in the main issues set out above.

397. The Council has requested that I recommend MMs to make the Plan sound and legally compliant and capable of adoption. I conclude that the duty to cooperate has been met and that with the recommended main modifications, further main modifications and consequential modifications, set out in the Appendix, the Welwyn Hatfield Local Plan (2016) satisfies the requirements referred to in Section 20(5)(a) of the 2004 Act and is sound.

- 3.13. This conclusion is preceded by the Inspector's detailed consideration of procedural matters, legal compliance and key issues of soundness. These range from significant matters of principle, such as overall housing provision and the release of land from the Green Belt, to detailed matters of policy relating to design and the natural environment. The Inspector's Report should be referred to for the full detail of his findings.
- 3.14. The Main Modifications recommended by the Inspector are attached as Appendix 2. These are substantively the same as those consulted upon during the two consultation periods referenced in paragraph 3.11 above.
- 3.15. The Inspector summarises the main modifications as follows in the non-technical summary of the Inspector's Report:
- *Amendment to the plan period to one that covers the period 2016-36*
 - *Amendment to confirm that the policies of this plan replace the saved policies of the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005.*
 - *Changes to the Spatial Vision, the Strategic Objectives and Policies SP2 and SP3, to clearly set out the plan's revised targets for the delivery of employment, retail floorspace and housing numbers.*
 - *Amendments to Policy SP2 to confirm that the Council is committed to undertaking an immediate review of the plan, with a submission date no later than three years after the date that this plan is adopted.*
 - *Amendments to the settlement chapters and to Table 2 Distribution of Housing Growth, to include additional or extended development sites, amendments to housing capacities and the removal of sites or parts of sites that I have found to be unsound.*
 - *Additions and amendments to individual site development considerations.*
 - *Changes to elements of the Centre Services and Facilities chapter to account for the ramifications of the Covid 19 pandemic, the further movement of some retail expenditure from shops to on-line facilities and changes to the Use Classes Order.*
 - *Updates to the Economy chapter to account for changes in the employment forecasts, employment land supply and to the Use Classes Order.*

- *Amendments to the Housing policies to comply with national policy and for effectiveness.*
- *Changes to Policy SP 9 to require the provision of master plans, in order to create a spatial framework for developments on large sites and in other specified site circumstances.*
- *Improved requirements and advice concerning development considerations that reflect national policy, in relation to heritage matters, tall buildings, and the quality of new development.*
- *Further clarification of the policies that relate to Environmental Assets.*
- *Improvements to the policies that affect the delivery of infrastructure, especially that concerned with the delivery of sewage improvements.*
- *Clarification that there is a requirement for neighbourhood plans to conform to the strategic policies of Local Plans.*
- *Changes to the Implementation and monitoring chapter to reflect the Council's progress on introducing a Community Infrastructure Levy and the revisions to the plan period, Use Classes Order and the plan's targets.*
- *A number of other modifications to ensure that the plan is positively prepared, justified, effective and consistent with national policy.*

The proposed adoption version of the Welwyn Hatfield Local Plan (2016)

- 3.16. An updated version of the Local Plan submitted for Examination in May 2017 has been prepared to incorporate all of the Inspector's Main Modifications.
- 3.17. In addition to the Inspector's Main Modifications, a number of additional modifications are included in the Local Plan. Additional modifications are changes that can be made to the plan by the Local Authority following the examination and included in the adopted version of the Plan. Additional modifications must not materially affect the policies in the document and normally relate to factual information, the correction of identified errors in the text or other minor typographical changes.
- 3.18. The proposed adoption version of the Local Plan is attached as Appendix 3 with a schedule of the proposed additional modifications attached as Appendix 4.

Adoption

- 3.19. The Council formally invited the Inspector to recommend Main Modifications to the Local Plan, if necessary, to make the Local Plan sound. The Examination of the Local Plan closed on the day the report was issued to the Council. There is no further recourse to the Inspector. The Council now has a binary choice: to adopt the plan in line with the Inspector's recommendations and modifications, or to not adopt it. There is no power for the Council to:

- adopt the Plan whilst rejecting any of the Main Modifications;
- promote and include any alternative main modifications;
- otherwise choose to only partially accept the Inspector's findings; or
- materially change the Plan from the version incorporating the Main Modifications.

- 3.20. Government Planning Practice Guidance is clear in its advice:

While the local planning authority is not legally required to adopt its local plan following examination, it will have been through a significant process locally to engage communities and other interests in discussions about the future of the area, and it is to be expected that the authority will proceed quickly with adopting a plan that has been found sound.

- 3.21. Given that no further adjustments to the Local Plan can be made at this stage, the only alternative option would be for the Council to withdraw the Local Plan and commence the

plan-making process again. This would have significant financial, resource and reputational implications. Should Members not support the recommendations of this report officers will prepare a report to be considered at a subsequent meeting of the Council setting out the implications of withdrawing the plan and a timetable for commencing a new plan.

- 3.22. It should be noted that to not adopt the Local Plan would leave the Council without an up-to-date planning policy framework tailored to local circumstances and would leave it vulnerable to 'planning by appeal'. As such, it is likely that the Borough would quickly be faced with speculative planning applications determined within the context of the NPPF's 'presumption in favour of sustainable development'.
- 3.23. Upon adoption, the new Local Plan would form part of the statutory Development Plan and have full weight in the determination of planning applications. It would immediately supersede and replace the saved policies of the 2005 District Plan. It is the clear recommendation to Members that the Plan is adopted.

The Policies Map

- 3.24. The Council is required to maintain an adopted Policies Map which details geographically how and where the policies in its plan have effect. A set of proposed Policies Maps were submitted to the examination alongside the plan. Potential changes to the maps, reflecting the proposed changes to the relevant written policies, were consulted upon in January/February 2023 and June/July 2023.
- 3.25. The Inspector has no formal powers to recommend modifications to, or adoption of, the Policies Map. However, his report is clear in his expectation that this will occur. The adoption Policies Map is illustrated by Appendices 5a to 5ac. It is recommended these are approved alongside the new Local Plan.

Next Steps

- 3.26. Following a resolution to adopt the Local Plan there are several formal steps that need to be taken. This includes the publication of a Local Plan Adoption Statement, a Sustainability Appraisal (incorporating Strategic Environmental Assessment) Post Adoption Statement, a Habitats Regulations Assessment Post Adoption Statement and making the adopted Plan available for inspection. Following this, the adopted Plan is then subject to a legal challenge period of six weeks, when the Plan could be challenged through an application to the High Court under Section 113 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. The grounds for such a challenge will be set out in the Adoption Statement and are that (a) the document is not within the appropriate power and/or (b) a procedural requirement has not been complied with.

Importance of adopting the Local Plan

- 3.27. The importance of ensuring the Council has an up-to-date adopted Local Plan cannot be overstated. The adoption of the Local Plan will help support the achievement of a number of the Council's ambitions as set out in the Council's Corporate Business Plan 2023–24 and in particular ensuring quality homes through managed growth and supporting vibrant town centres and a growing economy. It also has a key role to play in supporting the implementation of the Council's Housing, homelessness and rough sleeping strategy and Climate Change Action Plan.
- 3.28. The existing Local Plan (2005) is significantly out of date and therefore is limited in how it can support the Council's ambitions as set out in the Corporate Business Plan 2023-2024. This is primarily as a result of the weight attributed to the 'presumption in favour of sustainable development' as set out in the NPPF 2021 (the relevant version as it relates to decision-making) under paragraph 11 (d) which states that:

“where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date, permission should be granted unless:

- (i). the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed; or*
- (ii). any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole.”*

- 3.29. The ability for the Council to control and influence matters which are rightly covered in the Local Plan is significantly reduced in the event of not having an up-to-date Local Plan.
- 3.30. The Welwyn Hatfield Local Plan (2016) has been developed with the involvement of a significant number of important stakeholders including residents, businesses and key partners. It is based on a comprehensive suite of evidence reflecting the local circumstances, characteristics and issues relevant to the Borough. As well as supporting the development of the Local Plan, this evidence base adds valuable context and guidance and, in some cases, detailed requirements relevant to the Council’s decision-making role.
- 3.31. An up-to-date Local Plan enables decisions to be considered against the most relevant Local Policy Framework, with an expectation that decisions would be required to comply with the policies in the Local Plan as a whole. Whilst seeking to support and achieve sustainable development, the ability for the Council to shape and influence planning decisions is significantly enhanced with an up-to-date Local Plan. This is because planning law requires that applications for planning permission be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Consultation

- 3.32. The Welwyn Hatfield Local (2016) has been developed within the context of a significant amount of consultation and engagement including with local residents, businesses, community groups, statutory consultees and key stakeholders over a number of years. The approach to consultation and engagement has been undertaken in accordance with the Council’s adopted Statement of Community Involvement and the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012.
- 3.33. The various stages of consultation that have been undertaken during the plan-making process include:
- Pre-Issues and Options Consultation (2007/08)
 - Core Strategy Issues and Options (2009)
 - Community Representatives - Neighbourhood Workshops (2010)
 - Housing Targets Consultation (2011)
 - How Many New Homes – Housing Targets (2011)
 - Emerging Core Strategy and Land for Housing Outside Urban Areas (2012/13)
 - Draft Local Plan Consultation (2016)
 - Consultation on Sites Promoted through the Call for Sites (2019)
 - Consultation on Proposed Changes to the Submitted Draft Local Plan 2016 – Site Allocations (2020)
 - Main Modifications (2023)
 - Further Main Modifications (2023)

4. Legal Implications

- 4.1. Planning legislation and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (both the 2012 version applicable to this Local Plan and the most recent version published in 2023) place

Local Plans at the heart of the planning system, such that it is essential that they are in place and kept up-to-date.

- 4.2. The NPPF expects local plans to set out a vision and a framework for the future development of the area, addressing the needs and opportunities in relation to housing, the economy, community facilities and infrastructure – as well as a basis for safeguarding the environment. Failure to have an up-to-date and adopted Local Plan by the end of 2023 could place the Council at risk of Government intervention.
- 4.3. The NPPF states that where the development plan policies which are most relevant for the application are out of date permission should be granted unless any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the NPPF as a whole. It is the application of this “tilted balance” which is often relied upon by developers in making planning applications and appeals in the absence of up-to-date local plans. It is therefore important to proceed with the adoption of the Local Plan to ensure that the Council has an up-to-date statutory development plan in place which meets the requirements of national planning policy and which can be relied on by the Council as the decision-maker on planning applications and other development related activities. In doing so, the adopted Local Plan will replace the saved Policies of the current District Plan 2005.
- 4.4. The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 place certain requirements on the Local Planning Authority in complying with the plan-making process, which are also tested at examination. These include:
 - a legal duty upon local authorities and other public bodies to engage constructively, actively and on an on-going basis to maximise the effectiveness of Local Plan preparation. This is known as the ‘Duty to Cooperate’ on strategic matters of cross-boundary significance, which includes housing supply;
 - provision relating to the preparation, publication and representations relating to a local plan and the independent examination;
 - a requirement for a local planning authority to carry out a Sustainability Appraisal of the Local Plan and the consequence of reasonable alternatives, during its preparation and in addition prepare a report of the findings of the Sustainability Appraisal;
 - a requirement for a local planning authority to submit a plan for examination which it considers to be “sound” meaning that it is positively prepared, justified, effective and in accordance with national policy. The job of the Planning Inspector is to test that the Local Plan meets legal and procedural requirements and the above tests of soundness and the legal requirements of the plan.
 - provision that an inspector must, if asked to do so by the local planning authority, recommend modifications to the local plan that they consider would satisfy the requirements mentioned in subsection 20(5)(a) to make it sound.
- 4.5. The appointed Local Plan Inspector is required to assess whether the Local Plan meets legal and procedural requirements and the above tests of soundness. The Inspector appointed to do so has confirmed that legal and procedural requirements have been met but that the Local Plan will require modifications to ensure that it is sound. These modifications were published for consultation in their own right, alongside an addenda to the Sustainability Appraisal and the Habitat Regulations Assessment which consider the impact of the Local Plan including the Main Modifications on amongst other things, international wildlife sites. With the recommended main modifications, further main modifications, and consequential modifications, set out in the Appendix 2 the plan has been

found sound and the Council can proceed to the adoption of the Welwyn Hatfield Local Plan.

- 4.6. If Council does not approve adoption of the Welwyn Hatfield Local Plan 2016 a further report from Officers will be prepared setting out the implications of a decision to withdraw the plan. This will include a timetable for commencing a new plan in order to enable Council to make a fully informed decision about the next step(s) in the process at a future meeting.

5. Financial Implications

- 5.1. Funding has been approved to progress the Local Plan to date. The additional funding to complete the outstanding work will be minimal and can be covered by existing budgets and is reflected in the Medium-Term Financial Plan.

6. Risk Management Implications

- 6.1. For the reasons set out above, officers do not consider there are any reasonable planning or technical grounds to recommend non-adoption or to explore this as a meaningful alternate course of action. Adoption of the Plan best mitigates and removes the risks faced by the Council.
- 6.2. However, potential implications should Members be minded not to support the recommendation provided are set out below. The following points are by no means exhaustive and a full report on implications and risks would need to be prepared for consideration.
- 6.3. In the absence of an up-to-date plan, the Development Plan for decision-making would remain the saved policies 2005 District Plan (alongside the County Council's Waste & Minerals Plans and any made neighbourhood plans). The District Plan is significantly out-of-date having originally been intended to only cover the period to 2011, and having been made prior to the introduction of the NPPF and related Planning Practice Guidance.
- 6.4. Should the Council resolve to not adopt the Plan as recommended and consequently seek to start again on a replacement, it would not be possible to meet the Government deadline to have an up-to-date plan in place by the end of 2023; the entire evidence base would need to be updated in order to support any new proposals that would need to proceed once more through the statutory stages of preparation and examination. The Secretary of State retains a wide-ranging power to intervene in authorities' whose progress is considered inadequate.
- 6.5. Any replacement plan would need to be prepared against current requirements of national policy and legislation likely resulting in a pressure to consider further development needs and further potential sites to cover this longer period beyond those already identified in the Plan as recommended.
- 6.6. The Council would continue to fail to meet key Government measures in relation to both housing supply and housing delivery and would be obliged to consider planning applications for development favourably under the requirements of national planning policies.
- 6.7. Planning applications have been received on several sites proposed for inclusion in the Local Plan and it is officers' view that many of these – and potentially other developments in less sustainable locations - would be likely to succeed at appeal. The costs of trying to resist developments are generally far higher than the cost of proactively negotiating developments with an up-to-date Local Plan.

6.8. Without the Plan, the Council would not be able to apply the detailed policies it contains. These require (for example) the provision of up to 35% affordable housing on development sites – compared to the minimum 10% set out in national policy – nor apply detailed site-specific criteria aimed at mitigating potential impacts.

7. Security & Terrorism Implications

7.1. There are no security and terrorism issues arising directly from this report.

8. Procurement Implications

8.1. There are no procurement issues arising directly from this report.

9. Climate Change Implications

9.1. The Plan includes policies to meet development needs whilst addressing climate change and protecting and enhancing biodiversity. In relation to mitigating and adapting to climate change, these relate (for example) to sustainable travel, energy efficiency, and flood risk. The Inspector's main modifications maintain this approach.

10. Link to Corporate Priorities

10.1. The Local Plan is a key policy document which sets out the planning framework for the borough. It is a key tool in delivering the objectives of the corporate plan.

11. Health and Wellbeing Implications

11.1. The Local Plan includes policies to require new development to promote more active and healthier lifestyle of our residents, tackle the causes of ill health and health inequalities.

12. Human Resources Implications

12.1. There are no HR issues arising directly from this report.

13. Communications and Engagement Implications

13.1. The Council wrote to members and all those on the consultation database informing them of the publication of the Inspector's Report. On adoption, the Council will send a copy of the adoption statement to the Secretary of State, statutory consultees and those who commented on the public consultation and set out where the Local Plan is available for inspection.

14. Equality and Diversity Implications

14.1. An Equalities Impact Assessment has been undertaken in respect of the Submission Local Plan and each modification stage. This identified no negative impacts on any of the groups considered.

Author

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Appendices

- Appendix 1 Welwyn Hatfield Local Plan (2016) Inspector's Report, September 2023
- Appendix 2 Welwyn Hatfield Local Plan (2016) Inspector's Report, September 2023, Appendix Main Modifications
- Appendix 3 Welwyn Hatfield Local Plan 2016-2036
- Appendix 4 Schedule of proposed Additional Modifications
- Appendix 5 Local Plan Policies Maps (1-5)

- 5a. Welwyn Hatfield Policies Map 1
- 5b. Welwyn Hatfield Policies Map 2
- 5c. Welwyn Hatfield Policies Map 3
- 5d. Welwyn Hatfield Policies Map 4
- 5e. Welwyn Hatfield Policies Map 5

Local Plan Policies Maps (Inset Maps)

- 5f. Inset 1 Welwyn Garden City Town Centre
- 5g. Inset 2 Hatfield Town Centre
- 5h. Inset 3 Oaklands & Mardley Heath
- 5i. Inset 4 Welwyn
- 5j. Inset 5 Digswell
- 5k. Inset 6 Sherrards, Shoplands
- 5l. Inset 7 Haldens
- 5m. Inset 8 Moors Walk
- 5n. Inset 9 Handside and Inset 10 Peartree
- 5o. Inset 11 Woodhall
- 5p. Inset 12 Hall Grove
- 5q. Inset 13 Hollybush and Inset 14 Manor Parade
- 5r. Inset 15 Crawford Road
- 5s. Inset 16 Birchwood
- 5t. Inset 17 St Albans Road East
- 5u. Inset 18 Old Hatfield
- 5v. Inset 19 Parkhouse Court Neighbourhood Centre
- 5w. Inset 20 Roe Green
- 5x. Inset 21 High View
- 5y. Inset 22 Welham Green
- 5z. Inset 23 Brookmans Park
- 5aa. Inset 24 Cuffley
- 5ab. Inset 25 Monks Walk & Knightsfield Schools
- 5ac. Inset 26 New Barnfield Resources Centre
- 5ad. Inset 27 Queenswood School
- 5ae. Inset 28 The Royal Veterinary College

- Appendix 6 Sustainability Appraisal of Welwyn Hatfield Local Plan Adoption Statement

Background Documents

- [Minutes from meeting of Council 10 April 2017, Submission Local Plan](#)
- [Council 10 April 2017, Recommendation from Cabinet on 4 April 2017, Submission Local Plan](#)
- [Cabinet 4 April 2017, Recommendation from CPPP 16 March 2017, Submission Local Plan](#)
- [Report to CPPP 16 March Submission Local Plan](#)

- [Minutes from meeting of Special, Council 20 December 2022, Local Plan - Inspector's Letter and Proposed Modifications to the Plan](#)
- [Special, Council 20 December 2022, Recommendation from the meeting of the Cabinet on 16 December 2022 on the Local Plan, Inspector's Letter and Proposed Modifications to the Plan.](#)
- [Special, Cabinet 16 December 2022, Recommendation from CPPP on 15 December 2022 on the Local Plan, Inspector's Letter and Proposed Modifications to the Plan](#)
- [Report to CPPP 15 December, Local Plan – Inspector's Letter and Proposed Modifications to the Plan](#)

- [Welwyn Hatfield Local Plan Examination Library \(evidence base\)](#)
- [Welwyn Hatfield Local Plan Examination Documents](#)

- [National Planning Policy Framework 2012](#)
- [Planning Practice Guidance on Local Plans](#)
- [Planning Inspectorate Procedure Guide for Local Plan Examinations](#)