

ECS EPSOM CIVIC SOCIETY

Shaping the future, safeguarding the past

www.epsomcivicsociety.org.uk/ | email: chair@epsomcivicsociety.org.uk

Facebook: EpsomCivicSociety | X (Twitter): @EpsomCivicSoc

Councillor Peter O'Donovan
Councillor Neil Dallen
Councillor Robert Leach
Councillor Rob Geleit
Councillor Shanice Goldman
Councillor Julie Morris
Councillor Phil Neale
Councillor Kieran Persand
Councillor Humphrey Reynolds
Councillor Clive Woodbridge
Epsom & Ewell Borough Council
Town Hall
The Parade
Epsom
KT18 5BY

By email

16 November 2024

Dear Councillors,

Supporting the Draft Local Plan

The Society's committee has read with interest the draft Local Plan and accompanying documents for the Licensing and Planning Policy Committee 20 November meeting.

We have a concern that the draft Plan, understandably falling short of the housing target, may be found unsound by the Planning Inspector, not least given the Elmbridge experience. However, the draft Plan does highlight the local space constraints and concedes significant lower-performing Green Belt area to protect the rest, thus offering a small chance of success. This is better than rejecting this Plan and in consequence having no chance of success at all.

The Society's Committee considers that **rejecting this draft or seeking its amendment in terms of removing any of the proposed site allocations with the consequence of having no meaningful plan to take forward to the next stage is significantly more threatening to the built environment and to the Green Belt**, since the Borough will remain vulnerable for longer to speculative development in the absence of an up-to-date Local Plan, leading to inappropriate development within the Borough's urban areas and putting **even more** Green Belt sites at risk.

The revised NPPF expected in the new year, will almost certainly increase housing delivery pressure still further. The best chance of saving Green Belt is getting a Local Plan in place without further delay.

The Society therefore agrees with the report and its recommendations presented to the Licensing and Planning Policy Committee and requests all Councillors to support it to take advantage of the anticipated transitional provisions in the updated NPPF and to avoid any further slippage to the Local Plan Timetable (the current date for adoption being 8 years behind the original adoption date of July 2018).

Sincerely,

Margaret Hollins

Chair of the Committee
Epsom Civic Society



Cc Steven McCormick, Hannah Dalton, Justin Turvey