



CITY & PROVINCIAL
PROPERTIES PLC

STATEMENT OF COMMON GROUND

**MATTERS OF AGREEMENT BETWEEN PLACES FOR PEOPLE, CITY AND
PROVINCIAL PROPERTIES AND EAST HERTS DISTRICT COUNCIL**

GILSTON AREA (POLICIES GA1 AND GA2)

November 2017

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Documents

Document 1 - Ownership plan

Document 2 – Previous Consultation Activity

Document 3 - Village Buffers Plan

Document 4 - Position Statement with Arriva

Document 5 – SoCG between PfP and HCC Highways

Document 6 - Heritage Impact Assessment

Document 7 - Revised Policy GA1

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This Statement of Common Ground (SoCG) has been prepared by Places for People (PfP) & City and Provincial Properties (CPP) in respect of the proposed Site Allocation and delivery of a residential-led mixed use development at the Gilston Area.
- 1.2 The signatories to this SoCG are PfP, CPP and East Herts District Council (EHDC).
- 1.3 The land ownership within the Site Allocation for Policy GA1, as shown on the Proposals Map which accompanies it in the East Herts Pre-Submission District Plan, is shown on a plan provided at **Document 1**.
- 1.4 This SoCG sets out those matters which have been agreed between PfP, CPP and EHDC, as Local Planning Authority, relating to the proposed release of land from the Green Belt and its allocation for a residential-led mixed use development in the Submission District Plan.
- 1.5 PfP and CPP have been working closely with EHDC planning officers for a considerable period of time regarding the allocation of the Gilston Area. During the various stages of the District Plan preparation process PfP and CPP commissioned and submitted comprehensive technical evidence to demonstrate the role that the Gilston Area can play in assisting EHDC meet its housing needs, whilst also supporting the economic and social regeneration of Harlow. This technical evidence, alongside the additional evidence summarised at Section 6 of the Gilston Area Settlement Appraisal (Ref No: SSS/008), has demonstrated that there are no insurmountable obstacles to the delivery of 10,000 homes at the Gilston Area, leading to the promotion of the site from a 'broad location for development' as stated in the Preferred Options District Plan (February 2014), to a Site Allocation for 10,000 homes.
- 1.6 This engagement led to the preparation of the jointly agreed draft Gilston Area Concept Framework, and following that, the Site Allocation of the Gilston Area in draft Policy GA1. As a result, there is significant agreement between PfP, CPP and EHDC on most matters in connection with the District Plan process.
- 1.7 The Gilston Area has a central role to play in assisting East Herts meet its objectively assessed market and affordable housing needs. In light of the substantial and growing housing need identified in the

overlapping Housing Market Areas within which East Herts operates, there is a need for development outside of current settlement boundaries, on greenfield and/or Green Belt land. The Gilston Area has been demonstrated to represent one of the most appropriate and sustainable locations to accommodate residential development partially due to its proximity to existing employment opportunities (and future employment opportunities within the Harlow Enterprise Zone), public transport facilities (including Harlow Train station and bus services), as well as other services and facilities, within Harlow.

- 1.8 As well as assisting to address East Herts housing need, the Gilston Area development will also support the regeneration of Harlow by helping to draw investment to the town and enhance its economic performance. In particular the development will support the Government's designation of the Harlow Enterprise Zone, and the Harlow and Gilston Garden Town (of which the Gilston Area forms part). It will enhance the range and quality of the housing offer surrounding the town and support the delivery of necessary strategic road infrastructure.
- 1.9 The site has been recognised previously in the East of England Regional Spatial Strategy (2008), with Policy HA1 supporting at least 10,000 homes north of Harlow.
- 1.10 It is agreed that the proposed development at the Gilston Area is substantially different from previous schemes promoted at the site, for example the 10,000 home and 25,000 home schemes first promoted by Ropemaker. The proposals for the site have evolved substantially since that time, with the key stakeholders and the local communities having been invited to engage on the proposed development in the Gilston Area for more than a decade. **Document 2** summarises some of the key engagement PfP have made to date.
- 1.11 The Gilston Area will not just be about houses, it will deliver the schools, healthcare, shops and amenities to make a place where people can build a strong and stable community. There will also be jobs – construction and permanent roles - in the new business, retail, care, health and education space. Its proximity to major employment anchors like the Harlow Enterprise Zone mean that people can live closer to where they work, in high quality homes of all tenures.
- 1.12 This SoCG has been prepared to assist the Local Plan Inspector in the consideration of the proposed Site Allocation at the Examination of the District Plan and reflects the main matters upon which PfP,

CPP and EHDC are agreed, as well as identifying those areas where further work is required to reach agreement.

1.13 This SoCG is structured as follows:

- Section 2 – explains the role and progress on the preparation of the Concept Framework;
- Section 3 – provides an overview of the development proposals;
- Section 4 – summarises the proposals ambitions regarding housing mix;
- Section 5 – outlines the approach to green infrastructure and the commitment to delivery of landscape buffers, especially adjacent to existing settlements;
- Section 6 – explains the approach to education provision on site and recent engagement with Hertfordshire County Council;
- Section 7 – describes the transport and infrastructure commitments of the Gilston Area proposals;
- Section 8 – summarises the approach to key heritage assets on site and the recent engagement with Historic England;
- Section 9 – summarises engagement with Natural England to date;
- Section 10 – outlines the approach to utility provision on site;
- Section 11 – describes the community infrastructure proposed as part of the development;
- Section 12 – summarises the proposed Governance Strategy;
- Section 13 – describes the proposed delivery of the Gilston Area including key milestones;
- Section 14 - outlines the areas still to be agreed between PfP/ CPP and EHDC; and

- Section 15 – provides an overall summary.

2 CONCEPT FRAMEWORK

- 2.1 The draft Gilston Area Concept Framework (Ref No: SSS/014) has been agreed by PFP, CPP and EHDC to support the Site Allocation in the emerging East Herts District Plan.
- 2.2 The Concept Framework was originally published in draft in September 2016 as an evidence base document to the Pre Submission District Plan. The rationale behind the Concept Framework, as stated in paragraph 3.4 of the Gilston Area Settlement Appraisal (Ref No: SSS/008), was to provide greater certainty about the deliverability of the site prior to the Examination of the District Plan by identifying general development principles and potential land uses.
- 2.3 It is agreed that the Concept Framework serves (as indicated in paragraph 3.5 of the Gilston Area Settlement Appraisal) to:
- support the comprehensive approach to development across the Gilston Area;
 - establish a basis for high quality design and placemaking;
 - establish key principles for the development including, land use, movement, green infrastructure, etc.; and
 - inform future masterplanning and planning decisions.
- 2.4 The status of the Concept Framework is explained at Page 6 of the document which states that *“the Gilston Area Concept Framework is as an evidence based document produced to inform plan making and specifically support the Site Allocation policy for the Gilston Area in the Publication [Pre Submission] version of the District Plan. East Herts may in the future decide to ‘adopt’ the document for Development Management purposes, or undertake the further necessary work to evolve the document into a supplementary planning document”*.
- 2.5 It is agreed that the plans contained within the document are purely illustrative, providing an indication of one way in which the key site principles could be developed into a spatial layout.
- 2.6 It is agreed that detailed proposals for the Gilston Area will need to be shaped by further technical and design work, which will involve the participation of key stakeholders including the local

communities. However, the Concept Framework demonstrates how a high quality outcome could be achieved and forms the basis for assessing broad development impact and mitigation as a result of the proposals.

- 2.7 Following the publication of the draft Concept Framework (September 2016) as part of the consultation on the Pre Submission District Plan, it was agreed that further stakeholder and community consultation would be undertaken on the document, in accordance with Policy GA1 of the District Plan. This comprised a programme of workshops with key representatives of the Parish and District Councils together with the County Councils and other key stakeholders. These workshops explored the different themes of the Concept Framework and allowed the local community to feedback comments, concerns and suggestions. The themes covered have included governance, site constraints/opportunities and infrastructure. In addition, a Gilston Area Steering Group has also been established, comprising East Herts Members and Officers, the landowners and representatives of the local community. The role of the Steering Group is to provide a forum for discussion in relation to emerging work and technical studies, including the Concept Framework.
- 2.8 It was agreed that wider community feedback would be sought and EHDC ran a consultation on the Concept Framework during summer 2017. In order to support this consultation process, the developers ran an Information Event to allow local people to ask questions of the full professional team prior to submitting their views to EHDC.
- 2.9 Furthermore, Places for People has provided the funding for the Parish Council Neighbourhood Planning Group to have an independent community adviser to work with them on collating the views of local people including a community only workshop held on 23 September 2017.
- 2.10 Through the consultation process, a number of constructive representations were made by a range of respondents including members of the local community and statutory organisations. EHDC and PFP/PPP have agreed a process to review all comments and finalise any amendments, which will include discussion with parish representatives at the Gilston Steering Group. The Concept Framework will be finalised post the conclusion of the District Plan Examination and will inform future masterplanning and planning decisions for the Gilston Area.

- 2.11 In light of the progress identified above, PfP, CPP and EHDC agree that the relevant references to the Concept Framework in Policy GA1 (Criteria II) and the supporting text (para 11.1.4) should be updated as follows (edits shown in underline and strike through):

Para 11.1.4 A Concept Framework ~~is being~~ has been prepared jointly by the landowners and the Council, in consultation with local communities, which ~~will identify~~ identifies design principles, land uses, infrastructure requirements and phasing.

Policy GA1, Criteria II - A Concept Framework ~~will be~~ has been jointly prepared by the landowners and the Council, in consultation with local communities and other stakeholders, which ~~will identify~~ identifies design principles, potential land uses, infrastructure requirements and phasing. Prior to the submission of any planning application(s) further detailed design work will be required in order to agree, among other things, the quantum and distribution of land uses, access and layout principles.

- 2.12 It is also agreed that the Concept Framework ought to be amended to make clear that all sites which neighbour the Site Allocation and come forward within the plan period need to have regard to the principles of the Concept Framework.

3 THE DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS

- 3.1 The Gilston Area is allocated in the draft District Plan to accommodate 10,000 homes, along with supporting infrastructure including roads and sustainable transport provision, schools, health centres and open space.
- 3.2 As set out in the Concept Framework, the Gilston Area development will form seven linked villages. Six of the villages are located within land owned by PfP, with the seventh within land owned by CPP.
- 3.3 Development within each of the villages, including homes, nurseries, health facilities, local shops, as well as primary and secondary school places, will all be accommodated within the Site Allocation boundary as shown at Document 1. Work on the vehicular crossings over the River Stort will occur on land outside of the Site Allocation, as described in the relevant section of this SoCG.
- 3.4 The plans contained within the draft Concept Framework show one way in which the key site principles could be developed into a spatial layout. Detailed proposals for the Gilston Area will be shaped in the future by further technical and design work, which will involve the participation of key stakeholders including the local communities.
- 3.5 It is agreed that the scheme will proceed through the following masterplanning/design stages:
- Stage 1: Finalised Concept Framework - EHDC and PfP/ CPP are reviewing all of the consultation comments received prior to producing a finalised version of the document. The document will be finalised swiftly after the conclusion of the District Plan Examination.
 - Stage 2: Outline Planning Application - The outline planning application will respond to the East Herts District Plan, having regard to the Concept Framework, and demonstrate how the policy requirements have been incorporated into the development. It will set a spatial framework for the detailed masterplanning of the villages, establishing parameters for the location of built development, protection of open space and heritage assets, provision of infrastructure, etc. The application will also be supported by a set of design guidelines to inform future design work and ensure a high quality approach is delivered;

- Stage 3: Village Masterplans - Adhering to the principles in the outline planning application, masterplanning work will be undertaken for each village as well as the landscape areas which will fix the location of key village components such as the primary road network, key open spaces, the location of primary and secondary schools, key cycling and pedestrian links etc. Building on the design guidelines each masterplan will also provide a specific design guide/code which will inform Stage 4 detailed design. Key stakeholders and the local communities will be involved in the preparation of this masterplanning work.
- Stage 4: Reserved Matters Applications/Detailed planning applications - The reserved matters and/or detailed planning applications process is the mechanism for submitting detailed designs for individual buildings or types of building which will be required to accord with the relevant approved Village Masterplan.

3.6 Policy GA1 indicates that EHDC anticipate approximately 3,000 homes being delivered within the plan period to 2033. It is agreed that the policy wording does not impose a cap or limit on development, which is logical given the extent of the local housing need. This approach is consistent with the NPPF which advises that sustainable development should be approved without delay (para 15) and the Government's clear commitment to accelerating the delivery of housing beyond that achieved historically.

3.7 The potential to accelerate delivery, in tandem with the provision of infrastructure, will be considered in light of the ongoing work on the Harlow and Gilston Garden Town, and in particular the recent bid for funding as part the Government's Housing Infrastructure Fund. The bid, which is for a total of £150 million, seeks support for the delivery of the two Stort crossings and the section of the Sustainable Transport Corridor between the Gilston Area development and Harlow town centre. This package of measures will help facilitate a significant step change away from car use.

4 HOUSING MIX

4.1 Evidence shows that East Hertfordshire is an increasingly unaffordable place to live. The Gilston Area intends to help resolve this and it is agreed that the housing objectives for this strategic site are to:

- Create socially sustainable new communities, meeting local need in its widest sense, incorporating a mix of household types and tenure, as well as the appropriate community facilities to support people at each stage of their life.
- Create economically sustainable new communities, with local retail and businesses which are able to thrive and serve the community in the long term.
- Create environmentally sustainable new communities that has long term viability and is adaptable to future change.
- Deliver homes aligned to the needs of local business, supporting economic growth.
- Support the regeneration of Harlow, in particular assisting in providing homes that help attract and retain a skilled workforce.
- Consistent with the objectives set out in EHDC's Housing Strategy 2013-16.

4.2 It is agreed that achieving these objectives will require the Gilston Area to deliver a range of:

- Homes to rent, for those who do not wish to buy or cannot afford to buy;
- Homes to buy, which will include outright sale and other intermediate home ownership options;
- Affordable homes, of a variety of tenures;
- Specialist housing, for the elderly and those with disabilities or support needs including homes for rent as well as sale; and
- A range of homes for self build/custom build.

4.3 Whilst the principles set out above are agreed, specific aspects of the housing offer are yet to be resolved, as summarised in Section 14 of this SoCG.

5 GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE AND LANDSCAPE BUFFERS

- 5.1 A fundamental part of the Gilston Area development has been to identify and develop the unique landscape signature of the site. The Baseline Summary section of the Concept Framework (Ref No: SSS/014) describes the extensive assessment work undertaken to establish the landscape, ecology and visual character of the site.
- 5.2 It is agreed that the development proposals must respond to this site context, informing decisions on the location of development and the creation of a network of open spaces and green infrastructure. These key place making principles are clearly set out in Section 5 of the Concept Framework.
- 5.3 It is agreed that the boundaries of proposed development areas will be sensitively positioned and respect the setting of the existing settlements, in particular Eastwick and Gilston, with a commitment to provide appropriate landscape buffers (as outlined on Section 5 of the Concept Framework) – see the plan at **Document 3**.
- 5.4 Landscape buffers will take into account the setting of heritage assets, seeking to mitigate or minimise any harmful impacts, and maximising the opportunity for conservation and public enjoyment.
- 5.5 It is agreed that the ownership and stewardship of land to the north west of the route of the existing electricity pylons will be transferred to a company or trust as an integral part of the wider governance strategy, to enable the existing and proposed new community to decide how to use and manage the asset in the long term.

6 EDUCATION

- 6.1 The Gilston Area development will provide a school place for every child on site.
- 6.2 Subject to detailed modelling, the Gilston Area may provide for 20 forms of entry for both primary and secondary education, including Early Years facilities.
- 6.3 The location of the education facilities is to be discussed and agreed with Hertfordshire County Council as part of the planning application process. However, at this stage it is anticipated that the primary schools will be located in the five largest villages - villages 1, 2, 4, 6 and 7. The schools are likely to be close to the village centre enabling them to be the focus for the communities that they serve.
- 6.4 Secondary school provision will either be located in a dedicated education zone and/or within Village 1, possibly as part of an all-through school. Secondary school provision will include sixth forms.
- 6.5 It is agreed that both primary and secondary school(s) would be designed and managed to allow community access for facilities such as sports and halls, and perhaps provide a strategic hub for the community of the Gilston Area as a whole.
- 6.6 PfP and CPP have undertaken productive engagement with Hertfordshire County Council (HCC) and have agreed (as set out in the signed SoCG between EHDC and HCC Property (Development Services) dated September 2017) the following amendment to Criteria III(k) of Policy GA1 of the Pre Submission District Plan:
- “education facilities, including Early Years facilities, 15fe of primary school provision and 14fe of secondary school provision land for twenty forms of entry for both primary and secondary education, including Early Years facilities, subject to more detailed modelling. All schools should provide for the dual use of facilities for community purposes”**
- 6.7 On the basis of this revised wording, HCC Property (Development Services) have confirmed that this addresses their previous objection to the Site Allocation.

7 TRANSPORT INFRASTRUCTURE

7.1 The agreed transport vision for the Gilston Area, as set out in Section 5 of the draft Concept Framework, seeks to create a development where people have the opportunity to undertake many day to day activities within the site via a choice of sustainable transport modes. The approach has been to develop a Sustainable Transport Strategy and then consider the residual traffic effects that need to be mitigated by highway interventions.

7.2 PfP/PPP are content to work with EHDC and other stakeholders in developing objectives for the Sustainable Transport Strategy including modal shift targets. Such targets will, in any case, be included within the Gilston Area Travel Plan that supports a future planning application at the site.

a) **Sustainable Transport Strategy**

7.3 It is agreed that the primary elements of the Sustainable Transport Strategy are as follows:

- **Spatial Framework:** The mix of uses proposed is intended to lead to a containment of trips within the Gilston Area, with the aim of minimising the external effects. This is particularly the case for retail and education trips with the provision of local centres and primary and secondary education;
- **Walking and Cycling Links:** Good quality links will be provided to the main origins/destinations within Harlow including the rail station, town centre, hospital and employment locations. Links will also be provided to local communities in East Hertfordshire as well as the wider countryside. In particular a segregated footway/cycleway will be provided within the proposed Eastwick crossing improvement including a new bridge over the A414;
- **Bus Strategy:** Many of the bus services in Harlow terminate at the rail station or town centre. Opportunities exist to extend them into the site, and during a series of meetings, Arriva have agreed that direct services from the Gilston Area to Harlow Town Rail Station, Harlow Town Centre, Hertford and Templefields are feasible. Arriva's proposed routes would include services that use the primary vehicular corridor created on site, and it may also be possible to divert some services serving

Much Hadham, Hunsdon, Widford, Bishop's Stortford, Hertford and Sawbridgeworth through the site, increasing connectivity between communities across East Hertfordshire. Arriva have suggested that a service frequency better than one service every 10 minutes should be achievable. A copy of an agreed Position Statement with Arriva is contained at **Document 4**;

- **Rail Strategy:** The Gilston Area is very well located for Harlow Town rail station. There are six services to central London during the peak periods, as well as services to Stansted and Cambridge. Detailed engagement has been undertaken with Network Rail and Abellio (the Train Operating Company). Abellio's franchise includes service enhancements to respond to the plans for growth within emerging Local Plans in the greater Harlow area.
- Abellio are due to roll out their new Electric Bombardier trains over the coming years. The new trains will be a combination of 10 carriage walk-through trains (equivalent in length to the current 12 carriage trains) or five carriage walk-through trains (equivalent in length to the current six carriage trains). These trains will significantly increase capacity compared to existing trains.
- Connectivity to the wider London area is expected to be enhanced in 2018 by the commencement of Crossrail services through Liverpool Street.
- Although Harlow station is already accessible from the Gilston Area, it is proposed to further increase accessibility with the provision of a northern station access for pedestrians and cyclists, and possibly some bus services. Abellio, who operate the station are supportive in principle of this proposal.

7.4 A key element of the Gilston Area proposals is the forming of a Sustainable Transport Corridor between the site and Burnt Mill roundabout including improvements to the roundabout itself. This will link to the overall Sustainable Transport Corridor being developed as part of the Harlow and Gilston Garden Town to link Gilston with development to the south of the town, as identified in draft Policy GA1 III (I). It is intended that the northern part of the corridor will contain a number of elements including:

- A dedicated off-road footway/cycleway linking to the rail station and town centre;
- Dedicated bus provision to allow buses significant priority over general traffic and therefore providing for improvements in journey times and reliability; and
- Links to a northern access to the rail station for sustainable modes

7.5 It is agreed that Policy DSP4 should make greater reference to the delivery of infrastructure to support sustainable transport modes. Furthermore, it is agreed that amendments will be made to Policy GA1 Criteria III (I) to refer to “sustainable transport measures which encourage walking, cycling and the use of public transport”. An additional bullet point is suggested which states:

- The setting of objectives and targets for the use of sustainable transport modes.

b) Highway Infrastructure

7.6 Paragraphs 14.9 to 14.11 of the Infrastructure Delivery Plan (Ref No: IDM/001) set out how the authorities have worked together on the main elements of off-site highway infrastructure required to serve the proposed growth by 2033 including that at Gilston along with extensive employment growth. The infrastructure includes the widening of the existing (Eastwick) Stort crossing and provision of a second crossing. Paragraph 14.17 identifies that a mix of funding sources are likely to be used for the required infrastructure of which S106 Agreements form a part. The Gilston Area will be a major contributor to the identified infrastructure and EHDC agrees to continue working with the neighbouring authorities, the County Councils and Highways England in order to apply for different funding streams.

7.7 Building on the above, PfP and CPP continue to work closely with the transport authorities (ECC, HCC and Highway’s England) on the detail of the transport enhancements to facilitate the delivery of the Gilston Area, along with other planned developments in the wider Harlow area.

7.8 The Gilston Area development will assist in the provision of new highway infrastructure in a planned and coordinated manner. In particular, PfP and CPP have included within their cost estimates the funding and delivery of two new crossings of the River Stort - enhancements to the existing A414 Eastwick (Central) Crossing and a new crossing to the east of the existing. It is agreed that these crossings represent items of strategic infrastructure which support growth across the Harlow &

Gilston Garden Town, not just mitigating the impact of the Gilston Area development. In particular, the East Herts Infrastructure Delivery Plan (Ref No: IDM/001) notes at Appendix H in relation to the Second Stort Crossing that *'Other developments in the Harlow area could be expected to provide contributions to this scheme depending on the timing of their delivery'*. As a result, EHDC will, in conjunction with the highway authorities, seek to secure appropriate contributions from all development that benefit from the infrastructure and promote that this funding issue be considered as part of the Garden Town and the Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) that is to be prepared for that area.

- 7.9 The crossings are located beyond the Gilston Area Site Allocation boundary. There are no current agreements in place with the relevant landowners for the two crossings although the great majority of the land required for the Eastwick Crossing is within the control of PfP, HCA and the Land Restoration Trust. Reasonable efforts will continue to be made to secure the land by agreement for both crossings, however, if agreement is not reached EHDC agreed in-principle, at a District Planning Executive Panel meeting on the 21st September 2017, that they are prepared to use their Compulsory Purchase Order powers to secure the land for the Eastern Crossing, if necessary.
- 7.10 There are a series of other highway improvements that are being promoted in Harlow by ECC, which focus on the A414 corridor and towards the town centre. Most notable is the proposed Junction 7a on the M11 which has planning permission and is funded. Furthermore, local highway improvements are proposed within Hertfordshire including on the A1184 towards High Wych and Sawbridgeworth. Other junction improvements will be considered as planning applications for developments, including the Gilston Area, progress.
- 7.11 The Gilston Area development will provide comprehensive provision of all on-site infrastructure, as well as make substantial contributions to the off-site infrastructure identified within the EHDC's Infrastructure Delivery Plan. It is agreed that CPP and PfP will contribute towards the on-site and offsite infrastructure in proportions equal to their relative share of the 10,000 home allocation.
- 7.12 It is agreed that the Infrastructure Delivery Plan provides the correct balance between certainty and flexibility in relation to timing of delivery of key infrastructure. Paragraph 14.12 envisages the widening of the existing crossing being delivered first and facilitating the provision of a sustainable transport corridor. However it is acknowledged that the Council and the joint working authorities

(Epping Forest and Harlow District Councils and Essex and Hertfordshire County Councils), have an aspiration to deliver the Eastern Crossing early as part of a package of measures described within Paragraph 3.7 of this Statement.

- 7.13 As set out at paragraphs 14.11 and 14.15, the precise timing of infrastructure should be considered in the light of the location and timing of other development around the Harlow area. The triggers for delivery of all infrastructure will be informed by the Transport Assessment that will be submitted by PfP/PPP in support of the forthcoming planning application.
- 7.14 Extensive testing of the effects of the full development in the Gilston Area has been undertaken using strategic models (VISUM and COMET) as well as a more detailed Paramics model of Harlow and Sawbridgeworth. The work has been undertaken in a collaborative way between HCC, ECC and PfP/PPP with Highways England becoming involved where impacts affect the motorway network.
- 7.15 A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on Highways and Transportation Infrastructure has been signed by the four Housing Market Area authorities. The Harlow Northern Bypass does not form part of the MoU and it is agreed that it is not required to support the growth proposed within the plan period. It is acknowledged that further modelling is being undertaken in this regard. This matter is covered in a SoCG between PfP and HCC Highways which is attached at **Document 5**.
- 7.16 In summary, the transport strategy has been discussed with both highway authorities and subject to the provision of the necessary mitigation identified through any further modelling work, it is agreed that there is no impediment to the delivery of 10,000 homes at the Gilston Area.

8 HERITAGE

- 8.1 As set out in Section 3 of the Concept Framework (Ref No: SSS/014) extensive research and evaluation has been undertaken on the heritage and archaeological context of the Gilston Area.
- 8.2 As a result of detailed and ongoing engagement with the Historic England a Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) has been prepared at their request. The HIA builds on the previous heritage analysis undertaken by LP Archaeology and identifies the potential impacts that development could have on above ground heritage assets and historic landscapes.
- 8.3 The HIA defines all key assets on site, assesses in heritage terms the suitability of the land for development, and identifies principles and guidelines to ensure any harm is minimised and enhancements maximised. The HIA sets out detailed observations on the setting considerations pertaining to St Mary's Church, the Eastwick Moated Sites, and The Mount Scheduled Monument. The HIA identifies the significance of designated and non-designated heritage assets, and identifies how setting contributes to their significance.
- 8.4 A meeting took place with Historic England on 7 September 2017 to review the draft HIA. The draft HIA has also been reviewed by the Conservation and Urban Design Officer at EHDC.
- 8.5 A final copy of the HIA as amended is attached at **Document 6**.
- 8.6 As a result of this positive engagement it has been agreed between Pfp/CPP, EHDC and Historic England that the following amendments will be made to Policy GA1 (Criteria III(o)) and supporting text para 11.2.9, as well as Policy GA2 supporting text (new para 11.3.5):

Criteria III(o): the protection and enhancement of heritage assets and their settings, both on-site and in the wider area through appropriate mitigation measures, having regard to the Heritage Impact Assessment. Gilston church and the Johnston Monument (both grade I listed), the moated site Schedule Monuments at Eastwick, the Mount Scheduled Monument, and Gilston Park house (grade II*) are of particular significance and sensitivity and any planning application should seek to ensure that these assets and their settings are conserved, and where appropriate, enhanced, through careful design, landscaping, open space, buffer zones, protection of key views and better management and interpretation of assets where appropriate;

11.2.9 Heritage: The site contains a number of heritage assets, including listed buildings and scheduled monuments. The development will be designed in order to ensure that these assets and their settings are conserved and, where appropriate, enhanced within the context of the overall development, through appropriate mitigation measures, having regard to the Heritage Impact Assessment (Montagu Evans, October 2017). Gilston Park (the designed landscape), a locally important historic asset, is also located within the Gilston Area. Development should be designed to respect this asset.

11.3.5: Development proposals for both Stort Crossings should protect and, where appropriate, enhance heritage assets and their settings through appropriate mitigation measures, having regard to recommendations in the Heritage Impact Assessment.

9 NATURAL ENGLAND

- 9.1 A letter from Natural England to EHDC on 14 December 2016 set out objections to the Pre Submission District Plan.
- 9.2 Amongst other matters Natural England raised concerns with potential impact on the Epping Forest Special Area of Conservation (SAC), particularly in respect of air quality.
- 9.3 The joint working Councils that comprise the Housing Market Area, in addition to Essex and Hertfordshire County Councils and the Conservators of Epping Forest, signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Natural England in March 2017, which sets out the commitment to develop a joint strategy to address potential adverse impacts on the integrity of the Epping Forest SAC. This work has now commenced.
- 9.4 It is agreed that the process set out in the MoU will address Natural England's concerns, and as set out in paragraph 4.2 of the MoU, any application that is advanced prior to the preparation of the joint strategy will be required to submit the necessary information to ascertain whether any adverse impacts will be caused in Epping Forest, taking into account the proposed development and other relevant forecast growth. Issues of air quality will be addressed as part of the Environmental Impact Assessment submitted with the outline planning application.

10 UTILITIES

10.1 It is agreed that the relevant utilities infrastructure necessary to service the development comprises diversion and reinforcements for water, foul water, gas, electricity, and broadband.

10.2 Discussions are ongoing with the respective utility providers. A summary of the current position and engagement to date is provided below.

a) Water Supply

10.3 Affinity Water are the water supply authority for the Harlow area. An assessment of the proposed water demand for the proposed Gilston Area has been undertaken by Affinity Water and they have confirmed verbally that there is capacity to supply the proposed Gilston Area development from their existing twin trunk mains which run north-south through the site to the east of Eastwick.

b) Foul Water

10.4 Thames Water manage foul water infrastructure and sewage treatment works (STW) in the area. Both the STW and the existing sewer network are undergoing assessment in order to determine the level of upgrade appropriate for the next Asset Management Plan (AMP 7) period which runs from 2020 to 2025. Further assessments will be undertaken on a rolling 5 year basis which will determine the ongoing upgrade requirements.

10.5 The STW sewage stream infrastructure is currently undergoing upgrades which will create capacity up to 2036. Some further upgrades may be required during AMP 7 depending on further assessment. Thames Water have confirmed that there is sufficient space within Rye Meads for further upgrades should they be required.

10.6 The Stort Valley Trunk Main which will serve the Gilston Area will be subject to a modelling assessment by Thames Water in order to determine if there will be any requirement for upgrades within the plan period.

c) Gas

10.7 Cadent Gas operates the National Gas Transmission System and have carried out an assessment for the provision of gas to the proposed Gilston Area. Cadent Gas have confirmed that there is capacity within their existing infrastructure at Redricks Lane to supply the proposed development. It is agreed that a main will be laid from the connection point at Redricks Lane to the development via Eastwick Road.

d) Electricity

10.8 UKPowerNetworks (UKPN) are responsible for the power network in the Harlow area. There are existing 400kVA overhead power lines to the north west of the site. The proposed Gilston Area development will sit outside the safeguarding zone of these power lines. UKPN have confirmed that the proposed Gilston Area can be supplied from the existing Harlow West primary sub-station to the west of Harlow. It is agreed that a new primary sub-station will be required within the Gilston Area development in order to provide the power supply to the proposed secondary sub-stations throughout the Gilston Area.

e) Superfast Fibre Broadband

10.9 The parties agree that, subject to agreement with the necessary organisations, Superfast Fibre Broadband will be supplied to the area (potentially including the surrounding communities) and that this may be provided in conjunction with the “Connected Counties” broadband programme depending on timings and roll out.

10.10 Based on engagement to date and acknowledging that future detailed work is required at the appropriate time, for the purposes of the District Plan it is agreed that sufficient comfort exists about there being solutions which can deliver a satisfactory utility network to support the Gilston Area development.

11 COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES

- 11.1 It is agreed that the Gilston Area will provide an appropriate range of community facilities. As set out in Policy GA1 this includes schools provision as well as 'neighbourhood centres in accessible locations, providing local retail and community uses, including healthcare facilities to meet the day-to-day retail and health needs of new residents' (GA1(III)(p)). These are indicatively set out in the Concept Framework within village centres where they can add to the active frontage along the primary public transport route and provide meeting places and event venues for local festivals and activities.
- 11.2 It is agreed that it is too early in the Gilston Area design and delivery process to identify precise community facility requirements. Details of flexible floorspace allowances will be discussed as part of the planning application process, however, in accordance with Policy GA1 Criteria III(p) this will include appropriate health care facilities as well as services and facilities to serve the day to day needs of the Gilston Area residents.

12 GOVERNANCE

- 12.1 It is agreed that Governance arrangements need to be put in place from the outset of the development to ensure that both current and future residents can shape and influence the development and that long term arrangements are in place for the stewardship of assets on the site.
- 12.2 Policy GA1 III(h) requires that the Open Space and Parkland area be transferred to a community trust or other mechanism that ensures long term Governance. This is agreed.
- 12.3 It is also agreed that wider arrangements will need to be put in place to deliver and manage the open space, public realm and community facilities required by Policy GA1 and included in the Concept Framework (Ref No: SSS/014).
- 12.4 PfP and CPP propose a two-level structure for this:
- At village level – following the village based nature of the proposals, with potential funding from resident charges and other contributions;
 - Area-wide level – which will include the parkland and involve a Trust/Community Interest Company type structure with involvement from the current parishes and stakeholders, the landowners, and over time residents of the development.
- 12.5 PfP and CPP have discussed these issues in principle with the Council and are willing to formally commit to this approach on site allocation, and establish the initial structures at the time of planning permission.
- 12.6 PfP and CPP made suggestions in representations to the Pre-Submission Local Plan that would expand on the policy requirement on these matters in Policy GA1. Notwithstanding whether these are included in the final policy, PfP and CPP are willing to make legal commitments to secure these principles.

13 DELIVERY AND MILESTONES

- 13.1 It is agreed that the technical evidence supplied to date by PfP & CPP, alongside the evidence collected by EHDC, is extensive and more advanced than would ordinarily be expected for a site that EHDC does not anticipate coming forward in the first 5 years of the plan period.
- 13.2 It is agreed that the deliverability of the project is significantly assisted by the fact that the land required to deliver the 'villages' is entirely within the control of the two landowners – PfP and CPP.
- 13.3 EHDC and PfP/ CPP are committed to delivering the Gilston Area as swiftly as possible and substantial progress has already been made to advance the proposals in accordance with the four (4) stages explained at paragraph 3.5 of this SoCG. Specifically:
- In respect of **Stage 1** and the finalisation of the Concept Framework, EHDC and PfP/ CPP are currently reviewing the consultation responses received, and will update the document shortly after the end of the District Plan Examination.
 - In respect of **Stage 2**, PfP/ CPP has commissioned a full consultant team who have commenced the preparation of an outline planning application for 10,000 homes across 7 villages, as well as 2 separate detailed planning applications for enhancements to the existing River Stort crossing and a new crossing of the Stort Valley to the east of the existing.
 - Initial pre-application consultation has been undertaken with EHDC planning officers, considering the form, content and detail of the applications. Detailed and productive engagement has been undertaken with key stakeholders and consultees including Environment Agency, the highway authorities, Historic England, Thames Water and Harlow District Council..
 - Two public consultation events were held in September 2017, as well as two further bespoke events with the local communities within Gilston and Hunsdon. All feedback from the events is currently being reviewed and will be incorporated into the development proposals where possible, and reflected in the Statement of Community Involvement.

- A request for an EIA Scoping Opinion has been submitted to EHDC and Harlow District Council. Draft Scoping Opinions have been prepared following feedback from the statutory consultees and other stakeholders, and final versions are expected to be issued imminently.
- **Stage 3** involves the preparation of Village Masterplans, which facilitate the submission of reserved matters/detailed planning applications (Stage 4). Rather than wait for the determination of the outline application before commencing Village Masterplanning, EHDC and PFP/PPP intend to commence initial work on the Village 1 in early 2018. Key stakeholders and the local communities will be fully involved in the preparation of this village masterplanning work.
- The timing for the submission of the Village 1 Masterplan will in part depend on progress with the determination of the outline application, however, the determination processes could run in parallel if required. Detailed applications as part of **Stage 4** for buildings within Village 1 would then follow thereafter.

13.4 On account of the progress made to date, the parties agree that the planning milestones listed in the table below offer a conservative but reasonable delivery estimate for the project.

13.5 It is also agreed that all reasonable endeavours will be made to accelerate and exceed these delivery milestones wherever possible.

Table 1: Planning Milestones for the Delivery of the Gilston Area

No.	Milestone Criteria	Milestone Deadline
1	Completion of Concept Framework	Q4 2017
2	Submission of Outline Application	Q1 2018
3	Submission of Village 1 Masterplan	Q4 2018
4	First Reserved Matters Application/Detailed Application for plots within Village 1	Q1 2019

14 OUTSTANDING MATTERS

- 14.1 This SoCG confirms in principle support to the delivery of 10,000 homes at the Gilston Area within the plan period and beyond. However, there are some particular matters of detail within Policy GA1 that still need to be agreed between the parties, as summarised below.
- 14.2 **Policy GA1 Criteria III(a and b) (Affordable Housing)** – PFP and CPP consider it important that Policy GA1 Criteria III (a) and III (b) be amended to acknowledge that a bespoke mix of housing types and tenures for the Gilston Area should be developed having regard to the need to create a mixed and sustainable community which contributes to the regeneration of Harlow. PFP and CPP intend to deliver a much wider range of market homes than policy envisages, including for market sale, for market rent, for custom / self-build and for older persons. PFP and CPP intend to provide a range of dwelling types and mix that is responsive to changing local housing needs and the need to create a mixed and balanced community which is economically and socially sustainable in the long term. PFP/ CPP consider that Policy GA1 Criteria III (a) and III (b) ought to be amended to recognise the need for the Gilston Area to have added flexibility.
- 14.3 The Council does not intend to amend the policy position in this regard, and propose that the issue be addressed through more detailed work following the District Plan Examination.
- 14.4 **Policy GA1 Criteria III(e and f) (Gypsies and Travellers)** - The Council commissioned a Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople Accommodation Needs Assessment (May 2016) which forecasts needs to 2033 of 5 permanent pitches for gypsies and travellers, and 9 plots for travelling showpeople. The document recognises that given the frequency of the changing needs of gypsies and travellers it is not possible to forecast needs with any certainty for a 10 year period and as a result the forecast needs are to be kept under review. PFP/ CPP consider that the policy requirement to deliver an additional 15 pitches and 8 plots as part of the Gilston Area development is excessive in light of the published evidence. However, EHDC has included this requirement in order to provide for needs beyond 2033.
- 14.5 **Policy GA1 Criteria III(m) (Princess Alexandra Hospital)** - PAH is currently in premises that are not fit for purpose. It is understood that in the short term (5-10 years) the PAH Hospital Trust is hoping to secure grant funding for maintenance to their current site in the centre of Harlow. In the longer term,

PAH is hoping to secure a site for complete relocation in the Harlow area. The ongoing Business Case analysis is expected to narrow down the site selection criteria and may set out a preferred site/sites. PFP/PPP and EHDC will continue to engage proactively with the Trust and provide a joined-up approach to strategic health delivery for the Gilston Area and the Garden Town as a whole. However, PFP/PPP are of the view that the relocation of PAH within the Gilston Area would not be appropriate, potentially compromising the core objectives of the Site Allocation (i.e. the delivery of 10,000 homes over 7 individual villages), and as a result Criteria III(m) should be deleted from Policy GA1. EHDC does not agree to any amendments to Criteria III(m) of the Policy, on the basis that site assessment work is still ongoing.

15 SUMMARY

- 15.1 This SoCG sets out the areas of agreement between PfP/ CPP and EHDC, as well as highlighting the limited areas of disagreement.
- 15.2 As set out in this SoCG, the parties have agreed to a number of amendments to Policy GA1, including the agreed minor changes to the policy set out in paragraph 4.23 of the Main Representations submitted by PfP/ CPP in December 2016, a composite version of Policy GA1 showing all agreed changes is attached at **Document 7**.

Signed on behalf of East Herts District Council:

Signature: 

Name: Claire Sime

Position: Planning Policy Manager

Date: 3rd November 2017

Signed on behalf of Places for People:

Signature:



Name: Mary Parsons

Position: Group Director, Placemaking and Regeneration

Date: 3rd November 2017

Signed on behalf of City and Provincial Properties:

Signature:



Name:



Position: DIRECTOR.

Date: 3rd November 2017