



AGENDA ITEM: 11

SUMMARY

Report for:	Cabinet
Date of meeting:	21st July 2015
PART:	1
If Part II, reason:	

Title of report:	Two Waters Planning Framework
Contact:	Cllr Graham Sutton , Portfolio Holder for Planning & Regeneration Author/Responsible Officer Chris Taylor Group Manager for Strategic Planning & Regeneration
Purpose of report:	To agree the draft planning framework for the Two Waters area of Hemel Hempstead for the purposes of public consultation
Recommendations	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. That Cabinet agree the draft Two Waters Framework that sets out a vision for the area into the future, as a basis for future planning guidance and to be incorporated with the early partial review of the Core Strategy. 2. That the draft Two Waters Framework be approved for public consultation, and that authority be delegated to the Assistant Director – Planning, Development and Regeneration to carry this out and for a final version of the framework be reported back to Cabinet and Council for use in planning decisions. 3. That the need for further work as set out in the report and the draft framework be noted.
Corporate objectives:	Delivery of housing particularly affordable housing and economic growth for the area. Attracting investment into Dacorum and improving the quality

	and identity of the Two Waters area.
Implications:	<u>Financial</u> No implications in this report.
'Value For Money Implications'	<u>Value for Money</u> The study will highlight areas within the plan that will allow for future growth and investment into the area
Risk Implications	None arising from this report as the framework is at an early stage of development.
Equalities Implications	An Equality Impact Assessment will be completed on the draft framework before it goes to consultation. The framework aims to deliver new development to support access to affordable housing, employment opportunities and open space and recreation for all sectors of the community.
Health And Safety Implications	Not applicable in this report
Monitoring Officer/S.151 Officer Comments	Deputy Monitoring Officer: The framework will provide greater certainty for developers and enable development in the area to come forward in a more co-ordinated manner. It will also assist members and officers to make more consistent planning decisions and reduce the likelihood of planning appeals. Deputy S.151 Officer There are no direct financial implications arising as a result of the recommendations in this report. Any future financial implications resulting from the adoption of this framework as a basis for future planning guidance will need to be reported in due course.
Consultees:	Residents businesses and stakeholders within the Two Waters area were invited to attend the two workshops held in May and June 2015
Background papers:	Two Waters Briefing Note Dacorum Local Planning Framework Core Strategy 2013
Glossary of acronyms and any other abbreviations used in this report:	

BACKGROUND

1. The overall aim of the project is to create a strategic framework that can guide change in the Two Waters area. This framework has been based on stakeholder consultation to help ensure that future interventions and proposals in the area are responsive to local opinions and views. The methodology that was used to prepare the framework is set out below.

1.1 An inception meeting with project officers from Dacorum Borough Council was held in February. To follow, the appointed consultants – Feria Urbanism - then undertook full site visits to get a better understanding of the development opportunities, the landscape and topography and the specific sites that will be the focus of much of the discussion and debate.

1.2 The consultants then held a series of one-to-one meetings with key stakeholders including major landowners, such as the Boxmoor Trust, specific local developers and their agents and others with a keen interest in the future of the area. These one-to-one meetings allowed individuals and/or organisations to build a picture of the area and contribute their own thoughts and ideas before we bring people together into a workshop environment.

1.3 The results of these first two tasks (i.e. the inception meeting, the site visits and the one-to-one meetings) helped to inform the design, planning and content of the first workshop event.

1.4 Letters and e-mails were sent to around a hundred businesses and stakeholders to invite attendance to the two workshops. The following letter was sent in hard copy and electronically where contacts were known and around twenty five people attended each event.

You are invited to take part in two important events to help plan the future of the Two Waters district of Hemel Hempstead. You have been invited as Dacorum Borough Council considers you to be a key stakeholder in the area with vital local knowledge and experience to share.

Dacorum Borough Council is preparing a planning framework to manage change in the Two Water area over the coming years. This framework will help ensure that changes in the area affecting businesses, housing, open spaces, transport and community services are planned and designed in the best possible way to ensure we have an attractive, sustainable and balanced town fit for the future.

With this in mind, the Borough Council has recently appointed Feria Urbanism, an independent planning and design practice (www.feria-urbanism.eu) to provide expert advice on the process of developing the plan and to provide fresh ideas and new ways of thinking.

The team from Feria Urbanism will be organising and running the two events to which you are invited, as follows:

This first event will examine some of the critical issue affecting the area and the Borough Council and the independent planning team would like to hear

your views. The event will be task-based and participants will be required to come prepared to share their views on living, working and visiting the area. You are asked to come along and take part in this event.

At this second event, the independent planning team will present new ideas about living, working and visiting the area based on what was shared at the first workshop event. Workshop participants will be asked to test and challenge these ideas. You are also asked to come along and take part in this event. The results will go towards the refinement of the framework and a report on the work so far.

2. The draft framework in summary

2.1 The area covered by the framework is broadly triangular in area, stretching from Hemel Hempstead station in the west, across and including Box Moor, up as far as the Plough (Magic) roundabout and eastwards across Durrants Lakes into Apsley village. The area includes the major junction at Two Waters Way with the A4251 London Road and the A41 bypass, the extent of commercial premises around and close to the junction, and the section of London Road and associated roads westwards back towards Hemel Station. Observations in the workshops noted that the area covered by the proposed framework may extend too far towards Apsley and, given that the three focal points for growth (see below) are all to the centre and East of the site that the boundary be reconsidered to stop near Durrants Hill Road.

2.2 Following stakeholder consultation, the draft framework proposes three new focal points for growth:

- Land to the south of the Plough roundabout and extending south along Two Waters Road;
- Land around the A41/Two Waters Way junction
- Hemel Station and close by commercial land and premises.

2.3 The following proposals are advocated:

- General spread of land uses, including an indicative rebalancing between residential and employment in areas where pressure to change is starting to present itself (e.g. London Road, Two Waters Road)
- Ground floor uses, including a strong steer on areas where there should be “active” ground floors such as retail, food and drink or a less active but nevertheless “positive” frontage such as attractive residential ground floors, to create a safe and secure public realm
- Areas of maintained and enhanced recreational open spaces, that are well-used at the present time but require future investment and protection

- Areas of open space with newly accessed (or with enhanced access) such as the water courses and bodies of water to the east of Two Waters Road, together with the logic for this enhanced access.

3. Next Steps for the Framework

3.1 Following the two workshops officers met with the Consultants to consider the shape and scope of the report. Attached is Briefing Note setting out the intended scope of the framework, however full draft framework will be available for the meeting of Cabinet on 21 July 2015

3.2 Cabinet is invited to approve the draft framework for consultation purposes. A six week targeted consultation is proposed during this summer/early autumn.

3.3 The document, once consulted on and approved by the Council, will become a material consideration for use in making planning decisions; however further detailed master planning of specific areas identified within the Two Waters Zone will need to be completed to enshrine the work within planning policy.

3.4 The work will also form part of the evidence base to be used for the Early Partial Review of the Core Strategy and indicate where potential housing sites could be identified and additionally used to work with the county council in relation to road and transport infrastructure in the area.

3.5 Further work will be required to progress the proposals set out in the framework. This will include transport assessments, design work and viability assessments. A further report will be brought back to Cabinet to set out these requirements in more detail once consultation on the draft framework has taken place.

Annex 1 Masterplan area map

Annex 2 Briefing Note setting out the proposed scope of the framework (full report expected 14th July will contain drawings, photographs and maps along with the workshop outputs)

32.3 The full report will be made available in Members rooms before the meeting