



## **Two Waters Masterplan Consultation 1: Frequently Asked Questions**

4<sup>th</sup> – 18<sup>th</sup> of November 2016

Copies are also available at [www.dacorum.gov.uk/regeneration](http://www.dacorum.gov.uk/regeneration)

### **General**

#### **What are the Council's plans for Two Waters?**

The aim of the masterplan is to guide new development in the area and ensure that development comes forward in a planned cohesive manner, particularly in the key sites identified. We can't however predict some development changes that may occur as most are market driven, we can only encourage development and change to secure better quality neighbourhoods which take account of the wider area and maximise a package of improvements with essential infrastructure.

National planning policy requires the Council to significantly increase the delivery of housing across the borough. There is also growing local development pressure in Two Waters from developers, as well as an existing housing site from the Local Plan and isolated development proposals coming forward. The sustainable development of the area will provide an opportunity to make major improvements and bring in new investment to rejuvenate certain areas.

It is envisaged that this masterplan will be developed firstly as an informal planning statement, and will then be adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) supporting the new Dacorum Local Plan around 2019.

#### **What is the purpose of this consultation?**

The consultation forms the first step in the preparation of the Two Waters masterplan.

The Council's consultants BDP have analysed the area and taken account of other background documents in the development of this consultation. The consultation presents constraints and opportunities together with a draft vision and draft objectives and site wide principles for consideration and feedback. Consultation feedback will play an important role in helping to refine guidance and information included in the draft masterplan.

#### **Are all these plans going to happen, is it already decided?**

This consultation forms the first step in the preparation of the Two Waters masterplan and there are no plans decided (please also refer to 'What is the purpose of this consultation?'). Through this consultation we are seeking your views on how you see the area developing. The Council needs your feedback to shape the plans in a way that creates an attractive,

sustainable neighbourhood that is fit for the future and meets national planning policy guidance.

### **How do I comment on the proposals?**

A two week consultation period is being held from the 4<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup> of November. During this time please review the exhibition boards and let us know your thoughts by filling in a questionnaire either at the consultation event or online at [www.dacorum.gov.uk/consultation](http://www.dacorum.gov.uk/consultation). Both boards and questionnaire are available online.

### **What are next steps in the masterplan process?**

Following this consultation we will review your responses and update the evidence and guidance informing the draft masterplan.

Two further consultations are planned for early 2017:

- a focussed workshop for interested parties in January; and
- a 4-6 week online consultation on the draft masterplan in April/May.

After the focussed workshop a draft masterplan will be produced. The draft masterplan will go to the Council's Cabinet for approval before we consult in April/May. Following the 4-6 week online consultation the masterplan will be amended in response to the feedback made. The draft masterplan will go again to the Council's Cabinet and then Full Council for approval as a planning statement; this is likely to be mid 2017.

Following review of the Dacorum Borough Council Local Plan, currently scheduled for 2019, the Council will formally adopt the Two Waters masterplan as a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD). An SPD expands or adds details to policies laid out in a Local Plan.

### **How can I get involved in further rounds of consultation?**

Please fill in the questionnaire for this round of consultation either at the event or online before the deadline and leave your contact details. You can also contact us via [regeneration@dacorum.gov.uk](mailto:regeneration@dacorum.gov.uk) or on 01442 228000 (Regeneration).

If you would like to take part in our next round of consultation - a stakeholder workshop - please leave your contact details on the questionnaire and tick 'Please tick here if you would like to be invited to the next event'. Please note that places at the stakeholder workshop will be limited, and if we receive a high number of requests to take part we will select participants at random. There will a further opportunity for everyone to have their say during the later online consultation on the draft masterplan

### **How does the masterplan differ from the Strategic Framework?**

The Council approved the Two Waters Strategic Framework in November 2015. The Strategic Framework sets out a vision and initial principles for the future development of Two Waters. The vision and initial principles have informed the content in this round of consultation.

## **Planning**

### **What is a Planning Statement?**

The Two Waters masterplan Planning Statement will provide an overarching framework to guide the future development of Two Waters. It takes account of adopted and emerging planning policy and will provide a detailed set of principles to inform developers and ensure future development is appropriate to its surroundings and contributes to the necessary infrastructure improvements. The Planning Statement seeks to ensure a well thought out approach to redevelopment, which balances the interests of stakeholders and the constraints of the site, in order to maximise the benefits and limit the detrimental impacts. Once approved by the Council the Planning Statement will be a material consideration in the determination of planning applications. A material consideration is a matter that should be taken into account in deciding a planning application or on an appeal against a planning decision.

**What is a Local Plan and a Supplementary Planning Document?**

A Local Plan comprises a set of documents that set out the local authority's policies and proposals for the development and use of land in the borough. Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) expand or add details to policies laid out in the borough's Local Plan. Adopting the masterplan as an SPD will allow the greatest amount of material planning weight in the determination of future planning applications.

**What happens if more planning applications come forward in the area before the masterplan is adopted?**

Each application will be considered in accordance with the usual planning application process. In the absence of any planning guidance, the Council cannot control planning applications coming forward and more importantly we cannot refuse them without relevant guidance for material consideration. The new masterplan will eventually give us a sound document to guide new development in the area and avoid inappropriate development.

**Ownership**

**I own/occupy a property on the site – what does this mean for me?**

The masterplan seeks to focus development within key sites, which have been identified for their potential to accommodate development and enhance the quality of the environment. If you are located within a key site, future planning applications will need to consider how properties/occupiers are integrated into the proposals or relocated, in consultation with the local community.

**Design**

**What mix of land uses will be encouraged in the masterplan?**

At this stage the masterplan encourages a comprehensive mix of uses, including residential, office, employment, retail, schools and community uses, whilst safeguarding or relocating existing viable land uses. These will be worked up in more detail in the next stage of the masterplanning process when we will be looking at the key sites. Currently the land use mix is quite broad but it may be refined further in response to consultation feedback.

### **How tall will the masterplan permit buildings to go?**

The masterplan identifies suitable locations for tall buildings, namely in gateway locations, such as Key Site 1 adjacent to the Hemel Hempstead Train Station and Key Site 4 adjacent to the Plough Roundabout. The design of taller buildings in these locations will need to be carefully considered to step down and incorporate with existing building heights, in addition to responding to local views, and open spaces. Outside of the areas identified for taller buildings, buildings are encouraged to stay in keeping with existing building heights.

### **The Moors provide valuable open space, recreation space, and working farmland for the people of Two Waters. How will the masterplan ensure the Moors are protected?**

The masterplan will seek to actively protect and enhance the existing uses of the Moors and provide improvements sensitive to their various roles. New development in the Two Waters area will also be required to create additional new open space as provision towards increases in population and in line with the requirements set out in the Council's Local Plan and contribute to the protection of the Moors.

### **Two Waters Road and London Road experience congestion during peak hours. How will the masterplan ensure new development will not exacerbate the existing situation?**

The masterplan will seek to encourage sustainable travel, including the use of public transport to support a priority route between the main Hemel Hempstead station, the town centre and Maylands Business Park. The masterplan will also act as good leverage with other transport partners to help secure more strategic changes for the wider town.

Walking, cycling and car sharing will also be encouraged through access and movement improvements to reduce the use of single occupancy vehicles and the number of vehicles on the road. The masterplan will secure this through traffic calming measures, enhanced walking and cycling environments and requiring new developments to be supported by a travel plan.

### **How have the key sites been identified?**

The sites have been identified in areas where landowners have expressed an interest in developing their site, or there is a strategically important opportunity to provide improvements to the quality of the area, through an enhanced environment and higher quality buildings, a new mix of land uses, and improvements to the transport network. Development within Key Sites will come forward at different times, in a phased way dependent on market conditions and the landowners aspirations for development.