

Memorandum

To: Councillor Dr Harvey Cohen

also to:

Simon Warner

From:

Officer: Sarah Churchard

Extn: 5830

File: GS AL Report

Date: 26 March 2013

Subject: Green Spaces and Amenity Land Report – Consultation Results

Consultation: The consultation with all Members, and all known resident and community groups in the Borough. It was undertaken over four weeks from 19 February to 19 March 2013. Nine representations were received: two were from Members, three were from resident or community groups, two from and town or parish Council and two from the other areas of local government.

Results: There was general support for the document and the approach taken towards protecting green spaces in the Borough. There were some particularly positive comments, such as:

- The recognition of the important objectives for the study;
- The importance of the subject in light of various applications and issues to do with green space; and
- The recognition of the value of green spaces and in addition the role they play for the Highway Authority.

There were no sites identified where people disagreed with the proposed designation. Other sites were suggested for inclusion and including strips of highway verge and a site in Radlett which is primarily a watercourse. Support was expressed for the inclusion of The Paddock site as a 'local green space'.

The other issues raised were:

1. The wording of the 'major green space' policy was described as being unclear and verbose;
2. The wording for 'minor amenity land' should have more
3. The question of the protection of town and village greens and why it has not been included in the recommended policies; and
4. That there should be additional consultation for proposals that affect 'major green space'.

Response: The Council can respond the above site suggestions, concerns or points in the following way, which may result in a couple of minor alterations to the proposed policies for the purposes of the Site Allocations and Development Management DPDs.

Regarding the proposed sites, some suggestions were not suitable for the survey, due to their size or character. Strips of highway verge have not been included. It is unlikely that these sites would be at risk of development and should there be a proposed for such a site the 'minor amenity land' policy can be used to assess applications. There was suggestion that several sites in the Green Belt be included, including Fishers Field, Woodcock Hill and Aldenham Country Park. One site has been included at Torrington Drive in Potters Bar, although not recommended for major or local green space designation. The score is low at 13 out of a maximum of 48, and will therefore fall within the non-spatial 'minor amenity land' category.

Additional attention will be given to the wording of each of the policies, in order to ensure a coherent and easily understandable policy. These policies will be subject to thorough public consultation when the Site Allocations and Development Management Policies DPD is published later in 2013.

Hertsmere currently has one village green, which is Woodcock Hill in Borehamwood. This site is also Green Belt, and therefore has not been included in the survey. There is another proposed village green in Potters Bar, which is currently the subject of a judicial review. Development had started on the site, and was therefore not included as a green space for the purposes of the assessment.

It was also noted that the former allotment gardens at Fishers Field should be identified as allotments, rather than as semi-natural green space. In actual fact the site is located in the Green Belt and has not been included in the survey.

Regarding the suggestion of further consultation for applications made on sites allocated as 'major green space', it is required that neighbours are consulted on planning applications where they adjoin any site. This still applies to 'major green space' and will continue to do so.

Conclusions:

Given the generally support for the approach in the document, and the nature of the representations received, it is recommended that minor amendments are undertaken on the report to include matters of clarity and consistency, in particular to highway matters and village green status. A number of sites in the survey will need to be updated to reflect more local knowledge on particular sites in relation to accessibility and description, and one site has been added to the survey.

The recommendations will be incorporated in the forthcoming Site Allocations and Development Management Policies DPD, which will be subject to the Executive consideration and the statutory period of public consultation.

Sarah Churchard – Senior Planning Officer (Policy and Transport)