

Epsom & Ewell Local Plan Partial Review of Core Strategy Issues & Options Consultation – Initial Outputs: Week 4



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Introduction

The following Paper sets out the initial outputs from the on-going Issues & Options Consultation at the Week 4 Stage. The Paper is broken down on the basis of the Issues & Options Consultation Paper Questions, which are numbered and titled in this Paper.

Question 1: Should we adopt Option 1 and rely on urban intensification using high densities?

- At Week 4 we have received 119 responses to this question.
- 35.3% (42) of respondents stated **YES** we should rely on urban intensification using high densities.
- 64.7% (77) of respondents stated **NO**.

Question 2: Should we follow Option 2 and review our Green Belt boundaries in order to help meet our long-term housing needs?

- At Week 4 we had received 119 responses to this question.
- 33.3% (40) of respondents stated **YES** we should review our Green Belt boundaries to help meet our long-term housing needs.
- 66.4% (79) of respondents stated **NO**.

Question 3: Are there any areas that should be added to the Green Belt?

- At Week 4 we received 114 responses to this question.
- 21.1% of those responding stated **YES** there are areas that should be added to the Green Belt.
- 78.9% (90) said **NO**.
- Only 21 respondents identified areas that they believed should be added to the Green Belt.
- The areas identified for addition to the Green Belt were:
 - Nonsuch Park
 - School fields
 - Golf courses & education fields
 - Plot of land near Nonsuch Park
 - Parks and parkland areas
 - Not sure where but somewhere
 - As per the Atkins Study
 - Additional areas in the Horton Area
 - Green Corridors
 - Langley Bottom Farm

Question 4: Would you be willing to support Option 3 - using extensive areas of the Green Belt?

- At Week 4 we had received 121 responses to this question.
- Only 5.8% stated **YES** they would support Options 3 using extensive areas of the Green Belt.
- 94.2% stated **NO**.

Question 5: Would you be willing accommodate the needs of other areas outside of the Borough?

- At Week 4 we had received 118 responses to this question.
- 19.5% of respondents stated that **YES** they would be willing to accommodate the needs of other areas outside of the Borough.
- 80.5% stated **NO**.

Question 6: Would you support Option 4 - a balanced approach where much of our need is met within the urban area but some is allocated to land currently within the Green Belt?

- At Week 4 we had received 118 responses to this question.
- 55.9% (66) of respondents stated **YES** they would support a balanced approach.
- 44.1% (52) stated **NO**.

Question 7: Where should higher density or taller buildings go?

- Not all of the respondents commented on this question – at Week 4, we had received 118 responses. Those that did made the following suggestions –
 - Town Centres – the most popular with 84 respondents identifying this as a suitable location.
 - By train stations – the second most popular with 74 respondents identifying this as a suitable location.
 - Everywhere – not very popular with only five respondents identifying this as a solution.
 - Nowhere – 14 respondents identified this as an answer.
 - Other – 15 respondents identified this as an answer.

Question 8: Do you have an alternative suggestion to significantly boost housing and meet our housing need?

- 87 respondents answered this questions. The following are samples taken from their responses –

Surrey

Compulsory purchase of suitable sites, including golf courses. Encourage increase in height where building

I completely disagree with altering the boundaries of the Green Belt. It is imperative that we keep urban development under control within certain boundaries, or we run the risk of losing open spaces of great importance to the environment. Reading this plan, I get the impression that the council is simply trying to fill a quota the government has 'suggested' for new houses. This document has suggested plans for the development of new houses, but has not addressed the issues that go hand in hand with increasing the population size of an area. Naturally more houses mean more people, and people need hospitals, schools, jobs, shops, community spaces, parks and playgrounds. If we barely have the space for more houses, how can anyone expect to provide the necessary resources for these new neighbors? I'm seriously concerned that we are heading towards becoming a 'dormitory' town. Yes there is some space left for more housing, but this shouldn't be to the detriment of the residents already in place. We should build the houses that can realistically fit in the borough, without focusing too much on figures. If we really do run out of space in the area, then what can the government actually do about it other than stamp their foot and throw a wobbly?! Lets focus less on statistics and more on welfare and quality of life. There are other, more suitable spaces in the UK to build houses.

People should move to the city.

Use RAC/Epsom College.

Survey questions seem odd - why 'adopt' for #1, 'follow' for #2, 'willing to support' for #3 and 'support' for #4?

Encourage development of upper retail accommodation in parts of town centres where retail is no longer in demand. Poss demolish some retail units and build flats in town centres.

Compulsory purchase derelict/brownfield/industrial sites - e.g. old dairy site on Alexandra Road - what is happening with that?

High density does not have to mean tower blocks! Flats tend to be cheaper and therefore more accessible for first time buyers/younger people. Where the

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density of population is going to increase it will be vital to maintain the integrity of green spaces and allotments for the well being of the community.

Taller buildings should be built wherever they can be without spoiling the area for anybody already living there. I am more worried about the infrastructure as the schools are already overcrowded, the hospitals are not managing the increasing population and the traffic, as anybody who lives here knows, is often at a standstill at certain times of the day. How will the infrastructure cope with an extra 20,000 people.

Why build Retail space, it is no longer required - many of the existing shops have problems getting tenants. There is insufficient car parking to encourage retail or Office users already. You will need more allotment type space but 1, 2 and 3 bed-roomed flats will use up less space and be more affordable. 5 or 6 story blocks would be fine by me. There will need to be a lot more car parking spaces to go with such developments.

The 'housing need' should be re-assessed. This is a mainly media perceived necessity and not an actual market demand! If the actual need was there, there would be no houses for sale in estate agents and swarms of homeless people on the streets. This is not the case, therefore lack of access to affordable finance is the real problem.

Suggest new developments should be high rises that incorporate parking, nurseries, nhs surgery, small offices, homes incorporating studio flats to 3 bedroom apartments to make it mixed use for businesses and residents. Might mean higher than 6 storeys but rather than than loose more green belt. This should be designed taking into account the increase in population density and the services they need being built in as part of the planning.

Conduct a review of the use of land currently being leased to large retail outlets and other commercial enterprises to establish if these sites are being used efficiently. Could some of these sites be compulsory purchased by the council if they are not being used efficiently? The large industrial site between East Street and Longmead Road in Epsom offers great potential for housing development.

Improve transport connections to other areas where development could be supported.

Build (on stilts) on Upper High Street and Depot Road Car Parks, or incorporate multi-storey car park in plans.

Empty office buildings

Develop homes with smaller gardens, reduce number of office buildings and encourage virtual offices Reduce number of shops, redevelop shops into houses and encourage online shopping

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Taller buildings could provide additional housing provided they are situated in suitable selected locations with minimal impact on the surrounding areas.

As wonderful as allotments are, there are some that are no longer fertile and are unused.

Properly evaluate brownfield sites first.

The council should identify locations suited (visually and in terms of achievable infrastructure and amenities) to medium-rise development, and begin purchases to stitch together these medium-sized development areas to deliver the required housing units over the next 15-25 years. Run-down areas just outside town centres would be easiest.

Using modern living options such as communal living, becoming popular in Central London, would allow young people (local university students and young workers) to live in attractive housing which would deliver high living densities.

Additional housing only to meet local needs. No loss of Green Belt that is properly functioning.

Review how other green spaces are used e.g. local parks and recreation grounds and if they are suitable for housing which could provide funds to upgrade the remaining green space. Epsom and Ewell has vast amounts of green space but it is difficult to see how housing demands can be met without using some of it. This need not necessarily be detrimental to the environment. Allotment sites should be a last resort and only if they are grossly underused since with more housing there will conceivably more need for allotments in the future.

Considering the number of dwellings required, I think we must think about building flats. I know that there will be complaints about the lack of a garden _ but do we have the room?

The solution created by Nescot has been positive in my opinion, so my question would be, before we take away green belt, or build higher, can we use any land that isn't currently being used for any specific purpose? Or at least any real useful purpose. Yes this may cost money to purchase the land, but it's better than taking away green belt that that there is no going back on later. Also, maybe we have to be tougher buildings that are empty. Office blocks that can be converted into housing. There seems to be options before automatically going to greenbelt areas.

Consider use of golf courses.

Some areas such as Watersedge and Longmead could be progressively redeveloped with the introduction of taller buildings, of better quality, to increase use of these areas. There should also be a focus on building smaller

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units for first time, and last time buyers, to meet the needs of these sectors. As they would be smaller 1-2 bedroom units, we can provide more dwellings on same space.

I BELIEVE THERE ARE AREAS LABELLED GREEN BELT WHICH NO LONGER APPLY TO OUR CHANGEING WORLD. WE LIVE FOR INSTANCE WITH FIELDS WHICH WHILST ONCE MAY HAVE HAD A PURPOSE MAY BE PRACTICAL TO LOOK AT.

Industrial areas that exist in the area are predominantly low rise and not space effective. These should be made far more intensive - minimum 3-4 stories high so it frees up residential space. There isn't a register of brownfield sites at present so suggesting green belt needs to be used is absurd. This register needs to be completed so residents can respond appropriately to the options available. Over a quarter of 'green belt' land is used for agriculture so has minimal benefit to public, wildlife or the purposes green belt should have - if any green belt has to be used it should be this. Recently 91 houses were built on a 14 acre site - 'brown field land - this density is not sustainable - this plot of land should have had double this number to meet housing targets for a year, no more land needed. Mid rise flats are more affordable and help protect surrounding green areas.

We should look at any land which the Council owns, even small parks and see if they could be used. Some school land could be used for very limited small developments.

Question 9: Would you like to promote any particular site or location for development?

- 41 respondents provided an answer to this question. These included the following –

Priest Hill had had development around its fringes, it is a large area that is seldom used and would give us a long term option for more housing for many years to come. The industrial estate where the Council dump is situated should be redeveloped for housing, the waste site could be merged with another Boroughs. Horton Park Golf Club is another prime site for redevelopment.

Epsom and Ewell has seen so much housing development and it's a shame completely unrealistic targets are being set. If I had to suggest areas places like Horton Farm and the land that spans between Hook Road and Horton road (not Hobbledown/Horton country park) has little benefit as 'green belt' not usable for public or beneficial for wildlife. Any development should have a traffic survey to prevent pollution and accidents. Essential services are dwindling - schools, Dr's, etc

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Around Horton

Reigate road site, p52. Hook road arena site.

There is quite a gap between Ebbisham and the Wells along the railway for example and I do wonder if there could be some development here. The infrastructure in terms of schools is lacking in this area but it is close to the town centre. We need to review all these green spaces to balance the need for a wildlife corridor with the need for housing.

The gas holder site near to Hook Road is suitable for development.

Above existing shops and car parks.

Hook Road arena is a massive area, even if 90-95% of that was untouched, could the remaining 5-10% be used for development purpose?

KT18 5JL

Some areas around Horton. High quality infrastructure could handle additional low / medium density developments.

Around the hospital, area near Tolworth town centre and intersection with A3 would benefit from developing and would be a good alternative to other areas.

Hollywood Lodge, Horton Lane area (nothing happening with it for years) could be a cluster of starter homes/flats (low level).

I would say West Ewell Allotment site and Hollywood Lodge.

A) The site Lidl currently have ownership of on upper high street in Epsom. It would be wise to allow Aldi to build their proposed store in place of the derelict dairy site as they have put forward plans that are accommodating to the housing crisis. The Lidl site is larger therefore more houses could be built here, possibly high rise flat developments. It is crucial to maximise brownfield development before even considering building on greenbelt land. B) The green land on West Hill adjacent to Wheeler's lane. This area seems to serve no purpose and there is a park nearby and Epsom common so it would not severely affect the amount of green land in the area. C) Moderate height flats in the car parks in Epsom - some to consider would be the one between TK Max and Station Approach, the one opposite the Health Clinic and Fire Station or the large seemingly linked one between Depot Road and Pikes Hill. Building on car parks would not only increase the housing in the area but it could also deter people from driving into the town centre and adding to the already atrocious congestion. More bike racks could encourage people to cycle into the town centre thereby increasing the health of the local area. The only parking available should be for disabled people who require access. More yellow lines could be used to deter people parking in other places.

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Flyers with bus routes into town or safe cycle routes into town from various parts of the borough may also be useful to people. This could be a step towards not only a town with more housing but also a more environmentally friendly town with a healthier population.

Build (on stilts) on Upper High Street and Depot Road Car Parks, or incorporate multi-storey car park in plans.

KT18 7QT

Low rise commercial buildings on Chessington road, Ewell, Epsom town centre etc should be redeveloped into high rises for mixed use. The current playground between Chessington Road and Parkviews could be moved to Hook Arena (side nearer to Parkviews) and the playground area turned into one or two bedroom flats. Other areas where playgrounds are very near green spaces, should consider moving the play grounds into the green spaces and release the current playarea for housing. Would like to see Hook Arena remain a venue for community activities if possible as there does not seem to be another suitable venue that does fun fairs, fire works, boot sales etc.

There is an area of scrubland, former allotment, by the railway line near Portland Place that is not used for recreation and is unkempt. Is it feasible to develop this? The site acquired for a Tesco close to the Odeon is huge and an eyesore.

I think a limited amount of green belt land should be used if it is needed for social/council housing.

The Mill - previously occupied by Rawlinson & Hunter, would make a good site

My heart tells me greenbelt land should not be used, but my brain tells me perhaps parts of it have to be. Having had a daughter who was born and bred in Ewell who had to travel to Thornton Heath for 8 months with her family to very unsuitable conditions before finally being housed on the new Noble Park estate, I realise how difficult it is for families, but I think that priority should be given to people from this area before bringing in people from elsewhere.

Kiln Lane area, West Ewell industrial parks

Behind Linden Bridge school and the Hogsmill pub where the old Worcester Park House and stables were. Opposite this in Old Malden Lane on the industrial site which is not well used an eyesore with empty burnt out houses. Parkers field on royal ave. Field behind Scout hut on Salisbury Road. Noble Park House imon the corner land is a large area.

Area at the Wells Estate on left as you go over the railway bridge.

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There is a building at the junction of Horton Lane and Christchurch Road that has been empty for decades.

Priest Hill is the ideal development area, there is a huge amount of empty space available with main train connections at East Ewell station and good road network connections to the A3 and M25. This WOULD however require a new schooling facility, as the areas schools are already way over subscribed! Also the large area of greenbelt along the A240 Kingston bypass towards Tolworth could be developed, alongside parts of the Barwell Industrial estate. Again school facilities would need to be provided. Charrington Bowl area and the land Tesco no longer are developing are also ideal, being left derelict for many many years now.

Scrubby land north west of Chantilly way through to Hook road and Horton lane.

KT19 8FU

The old gasworks next to the rainbow centre, More tall buildings near Ewell West station. Increase number of services from Epsom Downs/Tattenham Corner stations to attract more development and reduce the burden on Epsom town centre for new buildings.

Old pub site on Ewell by pass/London Road junction Dairy site and Upper High Street (formerly Iceland)

KT17 1LL

Question 10: Which Option, in your opinion, is the least bad?

- Of those who have responded to date – 97 provided an answer to this question.
- The answers were broken down along the following lines:
 - Option 1 – 32.2% or 28 respondents supported this option.
 - Option 2 – 10.3% or 9 respondents supported this option.
 - Option 3 – 2.3% or 2 respondents supported this question.
 - Option 4 – 55.2% or 48 respondents supported this option.