



We've sharpened our policy focus – and renewed our commitment to a goal of seeing our Plan adopted by early 2022

9 September 2020

At our latest video conference, held yesterday afternoon, we completed a review of draft policy documents and reckon we'll soon be in a position to take the next major step forward – the appointment of a consultant who'll help us develop a formal submission.

Our draft policy documents have evolved to reflect the full range of issues and concerns raised by the people of Ware in response to our online survey earlier this year. Now we need to translate these aspirations and goals into crystal-clear and workable proposals. A consultant will then draft a formal Neighbourhood Plan in appropriate "Planner Speak" ready for consideration by the planning authorities.

So we're now working to sharpen our policy focus and we've also been able to identify areas where similar aspirations have been duplicated under separate headings. Additionally, we've identified proposals that are already covered off by provisions in the East Herts District Plan and can therefore be dropped from our Neighbourhood Plan.

<https://www.eastherts.gov.uk/planning-building/east-herts-district-plan/east-herts-district-plan-2018>

As a result, we've decided to take our six original headings and boil them down into five new categories: Town Centre, Sustainable Transport, Housing, Economic Development and, last but not least, Leisure.

In short, we're almost at the stage where we can begin talking to prospective consultants. A draft brief will hopefully be ready for discussion at our next meeting.

We're also mindful that some of our policy proposals are specific to the "town centre" – and it's now absolutely essential that we define this unambiguously. Our final submission must include a map

accurately delineating this zone – and agreeing its boundary will be high on the agenda at our next meeting, scheduled for 13 October.

As always, we'd welcome your input on this.

Lastly, we did of course discuss the possible impact of the Government's "Planning for the Future" White Paper published recently. Early indications are that there will continue to be an important role for Neighbourhood Plans after the implementation of proposed planning reforms – so there is absolutely no reason from us to be deflected from our existing schedule.

We're still aiming to have our Plan adopted in early 2022.

Thank you for your continued support – and we'd love to hear your views, whether via social media or directly via this site...