

Summaries of public statements:

Graham Mott (Elsenham Parish Council):

Inspectors of the Local Plan had recommended a strategy of reducing garden settlements to more small and medium sized sites. Many of the smaller sites were not examined by the inspectors, seeming to assume that there would be many of these sites readily available. One of the inspectors' objections to the garden settlements was on the basis that much of the housing would not become available until after the plan period. Extending the plan period would solve this issue. Government has now decreed that councils have a plan in place by 2023. A new plan would be a slow process, and the Council would do well to draw as much as possible from work already done on the previous plan.

Andy Dodsley (Little Easton Parish Council):

Following the inspectors' letter in January, the peer review carried out at the Council was the correct action to take. The inspectors were clear that they had no appetite for modifications to the plan. There was nothing else to do but withdraw it. The plan is fatally flawed and the Council needs to start again. This should be an open and transparent process, engaging with residents and taking account of their views. The current plan does not reflect the vision and aspirations of local communities. Residents delivered judgment on this in the May 2019 elections. It was necessary to develop a new approach that planning inspectors and residents considered sound.

Vincent Thompson (Stop Easton Park):

Thank you for ensuring the wellbeing of the community. The inspectors and peer review had given a firm base for working together for achieving a local plan that we all need and want. The inspectors' emphasis on the need to engage with residents was welcome, as was the Council's emphasis on protecting the district's heritage, character and natural capital, and insisting on locally led development corporations. A unanimous vote to withdraw would restore the trust of the electorate. There was a need to provide large open and spaces for physical and mental wellbeing. The Council has the power and responsibility to stop development in Easton Park, and the ancient park could be restored.

David Hall:

UDC had stated that any decision taken with regard to the Local Plan would be subject to consultation. However the Council had been subject to criticism that constructive, pro-active, positive planning was lacking in the preparation of the Local Plan from, amongst others, Historic England and Great Chesterford Parish Council. The parish council's requests for additional information went unanswered. He urged consultation with and respect for local opinion in the development of a new local plan.