

Waltham Forest Local Plan (LP1) 'Shaping the Borough' Examination

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Virtual Hearing Sessions Participation Guidance Note

This note provides more detail on the about the way participants are expected to take part and conduct themselves in the virtual hearing sessions.

The aim is to make the virtual hearing sessions as similar as possible to physical sessions in the way they run and the way you participate.

At the start of each hearing session, the Inspector leading the session will briefly explain the proceedings and introduce each topic and ask specific questions about the topic. If you want to respond to a question, please use the 'raise hand' facility in Microsoft Teams to indicate your wish to speak.

Only one participant may speak at a time. Participants in a session should have their video turned on, but their microphone muted until invited to speak. When you are invited to speak, please unmute your microphone, and state your name and, if any, your organisation if it is your first time speaking during the session, before making your point. If we have agreed the attendance of more than one participant in advance of the hearing session, only the main speaker should have their video switched on, the other participant should remain on mute, with their camera off, until they are invited to speak.

Connectivity

If you experience interference during a session, try moving your mobile phone away from your computer. If you experience other connectivity issues, try switching off other devices which share your Wi-Fi, or move closer to your router.

If you are unable to join, or lose connection, try again to join using the link provided in your invitation. The hearing may continue in your absence. As a backup you can re-join by telephone, using the number in the invitation. If you do use the dial-in facility, you should dial 141 before dialling the main number, so that your personal number cannot be viewed in Microsoft Teams. Transferring from Wi-Fi to mobile data or making a Wi-Fi hotspot using a mobile phone are other contingencies that you may wish to use. If none of these resolves the issue, please contact the Programme Officer (PO) for assistance.

The virtual hearing sessions will start at the time indicated on the agenda. You will receive an invitation from the Programme Officer to the relevant session or sessions. You must join the hearing on Microsoft Teams at least 20 minutes before the time indicated on the agenda. The Programme Officer is responsible for admitting participants into the hearing session, so you must wait to be admitted. You will be held in a waiting lobby until you are admitted by the Programme Officer. Attempting to join the hearing after the time indicated on the agenda will cause disruption and you may not be admitted for that reason.

Please ensure that your camera is positioned to provide a clear, front-on view of your face and avoid sitting where you are silhouetted in front of a window or light. You must make sure that you attend the hearing session you are invited to from start to finish.

The chat facility in Microsoft Teams must **not** be used. The Hearing will **not** use the document sharing facility available on Microsoft Teams and you should not hold any document in front of your camera.

Privacy

The hearing will be conducted in line with the Council's data protection policies and processes as set out here: [Planning Policy Privacy Notice](#)

Please do not make your own recording of the hearing. Each session will be live streamed, as well as being recorded and published on the Council's website and/or YouTube within 24 hours for anyone to view and will be available until our report has been submitted to the Council. A link to the live streaming and recording will be provided on the Examination website

<https://www.walthamforest.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy/local-plan/local-plan-examination-lp1>

If you do not want your image to be viewed, please turn your camera off before entering the hearing session. You must ensure that no-one else appears on your camera unless it has been otherwise agreed, and you should clear your background of personal information. If you prefer, Microsoft teams allows you to blur your background, but please do not use any of the other backgrounds that are available. You must also not share any personal information during the hearing, either yours, or anyone else's.

Only one person will be permitted to represent and participate on behalf of each representor at any one session. If you consider that you need more than one person, please supply the reasons to the Programme Officer in advance of the hearing sessions and we will consider them. In view of their particular position covering the whole Plan, more Council representatives may take part in a session.

In those cases where there is more than one participant per representor, we expect only one participant to keep their camera on, but with their microphone

muted, unless they are invited to speak. All other participants should join with their cameras and microphones off. For those areas of the discussion where a different participant needs to speak, they must 'virtually' change places with the current participant by switching their camera on and the current participant switching off theirs, to ensure that only one participant from each representor is sitting around the 'virtual' table at any one time.

Representors are requested to keep in touch with the Programme Officer and/or the Examination website regarding the Hearing programme, which may be subject to change.

Sarah Housden and Catherine Jack

INSPECTORS