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Dear Ms Masters

### **Epsom and Ewell Local Plan – Publication of documentation and Consultation**

Thank you for your fifth post hearing letter dated 23 April 2026 (document reference ID-022) which responds to my letter dated 9 April 2026 (document reference COUD-028).

We welcome the opportunity to publish the six documents and undertake public consultation on them in addition to the two documents published as part of the Examination Library in January 2026 (COUD\_020 and COUD\_021), following the elections for the East Surrey Shadow Authority where polling will take place on 7 May 2026.

As you will be aware, the council is currently subject to the Pre-Election Period for the elections detailed above. This commenced on 23 March during which all local authorities are subject to strict statutory restrictions on communications and decision-making. These derive from Section 2 of the Local Government Act 1986, which prohibits the publication of any material that could be perceived as influencing the outcome of an election, and from the requirement under Section 4 to comply with the Code of Recommended Practice on Local Authority Publicity 2011.

The Council has adopted Pre-Election Guidance (March 2026) – as previously shared with you, that applies across all Surrey boroughs during the pre-election period - that reinforces the statutory duties, making clear that:

- Local authorities must avoid any action that could be perceived as politically sensitive or as influencing an election outcome.
- Councils should not launch new initiatives, policies or consultations, nor make politically contentious decisions, during this period of heightened sensitivity.
- Particular care is required in relation to public-facing activity, including anything that may “compete with candidates for public attention” or generate publicity relating to controversial matters.

It remains the view of the Council’s Monitoring Officer that publishing the submitted materials as part of the Examination Library or holding a public consultation during the pre-election period sits directly within these constraints.

Therefore, the earliest that we will be able to publish and commence public consultation on the specified documents is Monday 11 May 2026.

I would be grateful if you could confirm the next steps for the examination.

Yours sincerely

*I Mawer*

Ian Mawer  
Head of Planning Policy and Economic Development  
Epsom and Ewell Borough Council