

Minutes

Local Plan Sub-Committee

12th July 2016

Present:

Councillors	Present	Councillors	Present
D Bebb	Yes	Mrs J Money	Yes
Mrs L Bowers-Flint (Chairman)	Yes	Lady Newton	Yes
G Butland	Yes (from 6.44pm)	J O'Reilly-Cicconi	Yes
T Cunningham	Yes	Mrs W Scattergood	Yes
D Hume	Apologies	Miss M Thorogood	No

Councillor Schwier was also in attendance.

15 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

INFORMATION: There were no interests declared.

16 **MINUTES**

INFORMATION: The Minutes of the meetings of the Local Plan Sub-Committee held on 9th, 25th and 26th May 2016 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

17 **QUESTION TIME**

INFORMATION: There were no questions asked, or statements made.

Principally, these Minutes record decisions taken only and, where appropriate, the reasons for the decisions.

18 **GARDEN COMMUNITIES - LOCAL PLAN EVIDENCE BASE DOCUMENT**

INFORMATION: As part of the preparation of the draft Local Plan, Braintree District Council together with Colchester Borough Council, Tendring District Council and Essex County Council had commissioned AECOM to produce a Concept Feasibility Study into the potential for standalone, new communities within North Essex.

Members were advised that the Study had been completed and that four reports had been produced. These were a 'Garden Communities Charter' which set out 10 place-making principles; a 'Baseline Compendium' which set out the overall key drivers for growth; an 'Opportunities and Constraints' report which included an

assessment of each of the four areas of search for standalone garden communities based on the key themes of connectivity, landscape, market and utilities; and an 'Options and Evaluation' report which identified options for the development of land within the areas of search, broadly assessed the development capacities of each option and the infrastructure requirements, and included high level work on their viability. The reports did not recommend which areas should, or should not be taken forward.

DECISION: That the 'Garden Communities Charter'; 'Baseline Compendium'; 'Opportunities and Constraints'; and 'Options and Evaluation' reports be approved as part of the evidence base of the draft Braintree District Local Plan.

19 **HERITAGE ASSETS IMPACT ASSESSMENT - LOCAL PLAN EVIDENCE BASE DOCUMENT**

INFORMATION: Braintree District Council had commissioned Essex County Council Place Services to undertake an assessment of the potential impact of proposed development sites in the new Local Plan on heritage assets such as listed buildings and conservation areas.

Each site had been assessed and had been allocated a Red, Amber, or Green (RAG) score. Sites with a 'green' score presented no concerns, although some mitigation might be required in the form of archaeological investigations, or landscape enhancements in order to protect the setting of heritage assets. An 'amber' score represented sites which could have a moderate to major impact on heritage assets, which could be overcome by design solutions. A 'red' score represented sites which could have a significant adverse effect which would be difficult to mitigate.

Of the 48 sites assessed, 26 had been rated 'green', 16 'amber', three 'amber' with elements of 'red', and three 'red'. The three sites with amber/red scores were land East of Great Notley/South of Braintree (BLAN114); land West of Marks Tey (FEER231); and land centred on Saling Airfield between Stebbing and Rayne (GRSA269). The scores were, in the main, due to the scale of the development proposed. However, due to the size of these areas of land, it was possible that development could be placed away from heritage assets to ensure that any impact was minimised. The three sites with red scores were land to the West of Street Farm, Ashen (ASHE104); land at Boars Tye Road, adjacent to the allotment gardens, Silver End (SILV387); and Church Farm Barn, Church Lane, Toppesfield (TOPP412). Of these sites, only site TOPP412 had been allocated for development.

Once agreed, the heritage assets impact assessment would form part of the evidence base to support site allocations in the draft Local Plan. Where potential impacts on the heritage environment were identified, landowners/developers would be asked to carry out further assessments to show how the development would be mitigated.

In discussing this item, a Member of the Sub-Committee made specific reference to the proposed allocation of sites BURE165 - Land at Colchester Road, Bures Hamlet

and BURE166 – Land South of Cambridge Way, Bures Hamlet for development. Concern was expressed that an extension to the Dedham Vale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty could be withheld should these areas of land be included within the Local Plan. Officers agreed to investigate the potential impact of these sites and how any impact could be mitigated.

DECISION: That the Heritage Assets Impact Assessment of potential Growth Locations within the Braintree District be approved as part of the evidence base of the draft Braintree District Local Plan.

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HIGHWAYS STUDIES - LOCAL PLAN EVIDENCE BASE DOCUMENT

INFORMATION: As part of the preparation of the new Local Plan, consultants Ringway Jacobs had been commissioned by Braintree District Council and Essex County Council to provide highways evidence and to carry out a highways assessment of the District. Two studies had been prepared, one of which had assessed a range of scenarios to help form a spatial strategy and the second had considered potential mitigation measures that could be put in place at certain road junctions across the District. Braintree District Council had also been working with Essex County Council and Highways England regarding the highway network across the District and, in particular, projects relating to the A120 and A12 and measures to alleviate major pinch points.

In the first study, six scenarios for growth had been assessed in detail. Of these, sites with high sustainable transport scores; sites spread across the District; and sites centred around Braintree were found to have less impact on junctions across the District than other scenarios. The second study had used the scenario of growth most similar to the overall spatial strategy in the Local Plan in order to consider the effect of additional traffic generated by new development on 16 key junctions across the District. It was envisaged that, without any additional mitigation measures, 11 of the key junctions were likely to be over capacity by 2033, the end of the Plan period. However, this did not account for the impact of improvements to the strategic road network, for example to the A120 and the A12. Braintree District Council would continue to engage with Essex County Council and Highways England on proposals for the A12 and the A120.

In discussing this item, a Member of the Sub-Committee made specific reference to the implications of new development proposed within other Local Authorities' Local Plans on the Braintree District. In particular, concern was expressed about the effect of growth in the Maldon District on roads at Hatfield Peverel. Members were reminded that both Braintree District Council and Maldon District Council had entered into a joint Memorandum of Co-operation to work together to help guide development in the north and central areas of Essex within the next Local Plan cycle and beyond. In addition, Essex County Council could object to proposed development on the basis of its impact on the road network.

DECISION: That the Highways Studies be approved as part of the evidence base of the draft Braintree District Local Plan.

21 **COMMUNITY HALLS IN BRAINTREE, HALSTEAD AND WITHAM - LOCAL PLAN EVIDENCE BASE DOCUMENT**

INFORMATION: Braintree District Council had commissioned the Rural Community Council of Essex (RCCE) to undertake a survey of community hall provision in Braintree, Halstead and Witham in order to provide evidence of any deficiencies in provision and the need for new, or improved community halls.

A questionnaire had been sent to 11 halls seeking information about the current size of the hall; its condition; how well the hall was used; and any projects, or schemes that each hall would like to implement in future. The halls contacted were Glebe Hall, Braintree; Goldingham Hall, Braintree; Marks Farm Community Centre, Braintree; Bocking Arts Theatre, Braintree; Braintree and Bocking Community Centre, Braintree; Braintree Town Hall, Braintree; The Archer Centre, Braintree; Queen's Hall, Halstead; Spring Lodge Community Centre, Witham; Dengie Hall, Witham; and Witham Public Hall, Witham.

A summary of the survey results was set out in the Agenda report. It was noted that possible gaps in provision had been identified in East and South Braintree and in the Maltings Lane and Lodge Farm areas to the South of Witham. The survey report included options for the management and expansion of community halls to ensure that they were fully utilised and fit for purpose to support the growth proposed in the Local Plan.

A further survey of community halls in the remainder of the District would follow.

DECISION: That the survey report on community halls in Braintree, Halstead and Witham be approved as part of the evidence base of the draft Braintree District Local Plan.

22 **COLCHESTER BOROUGH COUNCIL AND TENDRING DISTRICT COUNCIL LOCAL PLANS - CONSULTATION RESPONSES**

INFORMATION: It was reported that Colchester Borough Council's draft Local Plan had been published for public consultation with effect from 9th July 2016 and that Tendring District Council's draft Local Plan had been published for public consultation with effect from 14th July 2016. It was proposed that Braintree District Council should submit a response to each Plan.

Members were reminded that Braintree District Council had been working with Colchester Borough Council, Tendring District Council and Essex County Council towards the strategic development of North Essex and that a shared strategic plan had been included within the Braintree, Colchester and Tendring draft Local Plans. Following an initial review by Officers, it was proposed that Colchester Council's draft Plan should be supported in general, but that reference should be made to the possible effect on the Braintree District of new development at Tiptree, particularly with regard to infrastructure. It was proposed that Tendring Council's draft Plan should be broadly supported.

As the Local Plan Sub-Committee was not scheduled to meet before the end of each consultation period, it was proposed that Braintree District Council's response to each Plan should be approved by Councillor Lady Newton, Portfolio Holder for Planning and Housing. It was agreed that the final responses should be circulated to the Members of the Local Plan Sub-Committee for information.

DECISION: That Councillor Lady Newton, Cabinet Member for Planning and Housing, be authorised to approve Braintree District Council's response to Colchester Borough Council's draft Local Plan and Tendring District Council's draft Local Plan.

The meeting commenced at 6.00pm and closed at 6.50pm.

Councillor Mrs L Bowers-Flint
(Chairman)