

Local Plan Sub-Committee AGENDA



THE PUBLIC MAY ATTEND THIS MEETING

Please note this meeting will be webcast and audio recorded.

Date: Thursday, 14 January 2016

Time: 18:00

Venue: Council Chamber, Causeway House, Bocking End, Braintree, CM7 9HB

Membership:

Councillor D Bebb
Councillor Mrs L Bowers-Flint (Chairman)
Councillor G Butland
Councillor T Cunningham
Councillor D Hume

Councillor Mrs J Money
Councillor Lady Newton
Councillor O'Reilly-Cicconi
Councillor Mrs W Scattergood
Councillor Miss M Thorogood

Members are requested to attend this meeting, to transact the following business:-

PUBLIC SESSION

1 Apologies for Absence

2 Declarations of Interest

To declare the existence and nature of any Disclosable Pecuniary Interest, other Pecuniary Interest, or Non-Pecuniary Interest relating to Items on the Agenda having regard to the Code of Conduct for Members and having taken appropriate advice where necessary before the meeting.

3 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting of the Local Plan Sub-Committee held on 2nd December 2015 (copy previously circulated).

4 Public Question Time

(See paragraph below)

5 Draft Development Management Policies - Homes, Transport and Infrastructure, Community Facilities and Protecting the

4 - 55

Environment

- 6 Chelmsford City Council Local Plan Issues and Options - Braintree District Council Response 56 - 63**

7 Urgent Business - Public Session

To consider any matter which, in the opinion of the Chairman, should be considered in public by reason of special circumstances (to be specified) as a matter of urgency.

8 Exclusion of the Public and Press

To agree the exclusion of the public and press for the consideration of any Items for the reasons set out in Part 1 of Schedule 12(A) of the Local Government Act 1972.

At the time of compiling this Agenda there were none.

PRIVATE SESSION

9 Urgent Business - Private Session

To consider any matter which, in the opinion of the Chairman, should be considered in private by reason of special circumstances (to be specified) as a matter of urgency.

E WISBEY
Governance and Member Manager

Contact Details

If you require any further information please contact the Governance and Members Team on 01376 552525 or email demse@braintree.gov.uk

Public Question Time

Immediately after the Minutes of the previous meeting have been approved there will be a period of up to 30 minutes when members of the public can speak.

Members of the public wishing to speak should contact the Governance and Members Team on 01376 552525 or email demse@braintree.gov.uk at least 2 working days prior to the meeting.

Members of the public can remain to observe the whole of the public part of the meeting.

Health and Safety

Any persons attending meetings at Causeway House are requested to take a few moments to familiarise themselves with the nearest available fire exit, indicated by the fire evacuation signs. In the event of a continuous alarm sounding during the meeting, you must evacuate the building immediately and follow all instructions provided by a Council officer who will identify him/herself should the alarm sound. You will be assisted to the nearest designated assembly point until it is safe to return to the building.

Mobile Phones

Please ensure that your mobile phone is either switched to silent or switched off during the meeting.

Comments

Braintree District Council welcomes comments from members of the public in order to make its services as efficient and effective as possible. We would appreciate any suggestions regarding the usefulness of the paperwork for this meeting, or the conduct of the meeting you have attended.

Please let us have your comments setting out the following information

Meeting Attended..... Date of Meeting

Comment

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Contact Details:

Braintree District Council Draft Development Management Policies – Homes, Transport and Infrastructure, Community Facilities and Protecting the Environment	Agenda No: 5
<p>Corporate Priority: Securing appropriate infrastructure and housing growth Portfolio: Planning and Housing Report Presented by: Emma Goodings and David Feeney Report Prepared by: Emma Goodings, David Feeney and Julie O'Hara</p>	
<p>Background Papers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) • National Planning Practise Guidance (NPPG) • Localism Act (2011) • Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004) • Local Plan Review (2005) • Core Strategy (2011) • Pre-Submission Site Allocations and Development Management Plan (2014) 	<p>Public Report: Yes</p>
<p>Options:</p> <p>To approve, not approve or amend the policies in relation to Homes, Transport and Infrastructure, Community Facilities, The District's Natural Environment and to recommend to Council their inclusion within the Braintree District Council draft Local Plan</p>	<p>Key Decision: No</p>
<p>Executive Summary:</p> <p>Braintree District Councils new Local Plan to guide development up to 2033 will contain all the policies that are used in the determination of planning applications in the District, (commonly known as the Development Management Policies) as well as strategic policies to guide overall growth and development in the District.</p> <p>As set out in national guidance there is no set guidance for what the Local Plan policies contain but they should be concise and focussed tackling the main issues of the area and not repeat themselves or national guidance.</p> <p>This report contains the draft policies for four chapters in the new Local Plan which are on 'Homes', 'Transport and Infrastructure' 'Community Facilities' and 'Protecting the Environment'. Policies which relate to specific allocations have been excluded at this stage and these will be dealt with during the site selection process.</p> <p>The policies are currently the subject of a Sustainability Appraisal and this will be reported to Members in due course. The full draft Preferred Options Local Plan will then be considered by Members in June 2016, before an extensive public consultation takes place.</p>	

Decision:

To recommend to Council that they approve the ‘Homes’ policies as set out in Appendix 1.

To recommend to Council that they approve the ‘Transport and Infrastructure’ policies as set out in Appendix 2.

To recommend to Council that they approve the Community Facilities’ policies as set out in Appendix 3.

To recommend to Council that they approve the ‘The Natural Environment’ policies as set out in Appendix 4.

To recommend to Council that they approve the revised policies in the Strong Economy and Retail and High Quality Spaces chapters as set out in Appendix 5.

Purpose of Decision:

To guide Council on the acceptability of the Local Plan development management policies for consultation in the draft Preferred Options Braintree District Local Plan.

Corporate Implications

Financial:	The preparation of the Plans set out within the LDS will be a significant cost which will be met through the Local Plan budget.
Legal:	To comply with Governments legislation and guidance.
Equalities/Diversity:	The Councils policies should take account of equalities and diversity.
Safeguarding:	None
Customer Impact:	There will be public consultation during various stages of the emerging Local Plan.
Environment and Climate Change:	This will form part of the evidence base for the emerging Local Plan and will inform policies and allocations.
Consultation/Community Engagement:	There will be public consultation during various stages of the emerging Local Plan.
Risks:	The Local Plan examination may not take place. The Local Plan could be found unsound. Risk of High Court challenge.

Officer Contact:	Emma Goodings
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1 Background

- 1.1 Braintree District Council is working on a new Local Plan which will guide development in the District between now and 2033. Once adopted this will replace the 2011 Core Strategy and the 2005 Local Plan.

- 1.2 As well as providing allocations for new development, an essential part of the Local Plan is to provide the strategic and detailed policies on which all planning applications in the District are considered against.
- 1.3 National guidance in the National Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) sets out what Local Plans should contain in paragraph 10. *“While the content of Local Plans will vary depending on the nature of the area and issues to be addressed, all Local Plans should be as focused, concise and accessible as possible. They should concentrate on the critical issues facing the area – including its development needs – and the strategy and opportunities for addressing them, paying careful attention to both deliverability and viability.....In drafting policies the local planning authority should avoid undue repetition, for example by using generic policies to set out principles that may be common to different types of development. There should be no need to reiterate policies that are already set out in the National Planning Policy Framework”*. Policies in the Local Plan should therefore cover the main issues in a concise way that does not repeat national government policy or other policies within the Plan.
- 1.4 The draft Local Plan will follow the layout of the Issues and Scoping document, consultation on which took place at the beginning of the year. The document was split into three main themes which reflected the three forms of sustainable development, with detailed chapters contained within them;

A Prosperous District

- A Strong Economy
- Shops and Services
- Homes
- Transport and Infrastructure

Creating Better Places

- Community facilities
- Creating High Quality Spaces
- A healthy and active District

The District's Natural Environment

- Climate Change and Renewable Energy
- Nature Conservation and landscape character

- 1.5 This report is to consider the policies in relation to 'Homes', 'Transport and Infrastructure' 'Community Facilities' and 'The Natural Environment'. It also considers a small number of policies from other chapters where changes are being proposed from that which was previously agreed.

2 Policy Formation

- 2.1 The starting point for the formation of the new policies is to look at the existing policies which are set out in the Local Plan Review 2005 and the Core Strategy and those proposed detailed policies which were set out in the 2014 Site Allocations and Development Management Plan.

- 2.2 The policies were then updated as appropriate to take into account changing District needs, any changes to national government policy or guidance and following comments received during the Issues and Scoping consultation. Policies have also been the subject of consultation with appropriate internal stakeholders.
- 2.3 All policies and the alternative options of policy formation are currently subject to a Sustainability Appraisal. The results of this appraisal will be reported to Members before the final draft Preferred Options Local Plan is agreed for consultation in June 2016.
- 2.4 The policies as set out in this report are subject to minor changes by officers to ensure legibility and accuracy. The supporting text which sits alongside the policy is provided for information only and may be subject to additional revisions before the final draft Preferred Options Local Plan is approved by Members in June 2016. Officer commentary is provided in *red italics* where necessary at the start of each section
- 2.5 It should be noted that no policies which relate to site specific allocations for land for a specific purpose are included within the chapters at present. These will be subject to detailed consideration in 2016 when specific sites are considered.

3 Homes

- 3.1 This chapter deals with detailed policies which would be used in the determination of planning applications for new homes, extensions and alterations. It establishes principles such as density and house type which will be applied to all developments. It does not include site specific proposals, allocations or housing numbers which will be agreed at future sub-committee meetings.
- 3.2 The site includes two policies in relation to affordable housing. Depending on the outcome of government consultation in relation to affordable housing, these may be subject to change, possible prior to the consultation in June 2016.
- 3.3 Compared to the Pre Submission Site Allocations and Development Management Plan (ADMP) the policies cover similar topic areas and have been amended to reflect current guidance and experience. Applications would also need to comply with the general design policy in the 'High Quality Spaces' chapter.
- 3.4 The 'Homes' chapter is set out in **Appendix 1**.

4 Transport and Infrastructure

- 4.1 This chapter primarily deals with all aspects of access and transport arrangements where this is not dealt with by policies from the Highways Authority. It also includes a policy on broadband provision.
- 4.2 The chapter will need to include policy and more specific references to the projects underway at the A12 and A120 as well as any other new or improved

road schemes which are proposed in the District when this information is available.

4.3 The 'Transport and Infrastructure' chapter is set out in **Appendix 2**.

5 Community Facilities

5.1 This section within the 'Creating Better Places' theme primarily deals with provision and enhancement of local community facilities including schools which are crucial to ensure sustainable, attractive communities.

5.2 The policies are similar to those set out in the ADMP with the provision and enhancement of community facilities policies being consolidated into a single policy.

5.3 The 'Community Facilities' chapter is set out in **Appendix 3**

6 Protecting the Environment

6.1 The 'Protecting the Environment' theme includes sections on biodiversity, landscape character and agriculture, land, water and air quality and energy flood risk and climate change. It includes policies in relation to landscape and biodiversity, flood risk, energy efficiency and renewable energy.

6.2 Policies, in particular relating to sustainable drainage and renewable energy have been amended to reflect current guidance and in conjunction with Essex County Council as lead flood authority.

6.3 The 'Protecting the Environment' theme is set out in **Appendix 4**

7 A Healthy and Active District

7.1 This section will contain policies relating to the standards for open space and other recreation spaces. The Council has been carrying out an Open Space and Playing Pitch Review for over a year which is expected to be completed early in 2016. These policies will need to be written in conformity with this key piece of evidence and will be presented to the Local Plan Sub Committee at a future meeting.

8 Policies in the 'A Strong Economy', 'Retail' and Creating High Quality Places chapters

8.1 Following further internal consultation and the completion of all the non site specific policies, it is proposed to make changes to five policies which were approved by committee on the 2nd December. These changes are to ensure that the policies are able to deal effectively with the type of applications which are being received at the moment. These policies are Rural Enterprise, Strategic policy on Town Centres, Retailing and Regeneration, Primary Shopping Areas, District Centres and Layout and Design of Development. These policies are set out in **Appendix 5**.

9 Conclusion and Next Steps

- 9.1 The NPPF indicates that Local Plan policies should be focused, concise and accessible and they should not repeat each other or national policy, but set out how the critical areas facing each local authority should be dealt with. The proposed policies in the appendix to this report, aim to achieve this for their particular area.
- 9.2 All policies considered by the Local Plan subcommittee tonight and on the 2nd December 2015, will be considered by Council on the 25th January 2016. It is then expected that the full document and accompanying sustainability appraisal will be considered by Members for consultation in June 2016.

10 Recommendation

To recommend to Council that they approve the ‘Homes’ policies as set out in Appendix 1.

To recommend to Council that they approve the ‘Transport and Infrastructure policies as set out in Appendix 2.

To recommend to Council that they approve the ‘Community Facilities’ policies as set out in Appendix 3.

To recommend to Council that they approve the ‘Protecting the Environment’ policies as set out in Appendix 4.

To recommend to Council that they approve the revised policies in the Strong Economy, Retail and Creating High Quality Spaces chapters as set out in Appendix 5.

Appendix 1 – Homes

Affordable Housing

At present these policies are very similar to that which are in the Site Allocations and Development Management Plan (ADMP) including the thresholds and percentages for affordable housing, which remain justified by the evidence collected. Potential changes to national government policy on affordable housing may have an impact on these policies when it is finalised.

Affordable housing need is defined with the National Planning Practice Guidance as the 'number of households and projected households who lack their own housing or live in unsuitable housing and who cannot afford to meet their housing needs in the market'.

The PPG goes on to set out the types of households to be considered in housing need:

- 'homeless households or insecure tenure (e.g. housing that is too expensive compared to disposable income);
- households where there is a mismatch between the housing needed and the actual dwelling (e.g. overcrowded households);
- households containing people with social or physical impairment or other specific needs living in unsuitable dwellings (e.g. accessed via steps) which cannot be made suitable in-situ
- households that lack basic facilities (e.g. a bathroom or kitchen) and those subject to major disrepair or that are unfit for habitation;
- households containing people with particular social needs (e.g. escaping harassment) which cannot be resolved except through a move.'

The Council alongside its partner authorities within the housing market area (Chelmsford, Colchester and Tendring) commissioned a Strategic Housing Market Assessment Update which was completed in 2015. This built on other pieces of work carried out on Objectively Assessed Housing Need and was particularly to look at affordable housing need in the District. This report, which is available as part of the evidence base for the Local Plan, sets out that 218 affordable homes are needed in the District per year to meet our needs. This is approximately 25% of the total of objectively assessed need.

The Council separately commissioned a viability study to look at the viability of affordable housing on a range of sites in the District. This report is also available as part of the evidence base and concluded that 30 to 40% affordable housing would be viable in most cases.

It also provided strong evidence that the site thresholds set in the 2011 Core Strategy were at an appropriate level, recognising that the profile of site supply in rural areas, coupled with high levels of need, indicates that adopting a low threshold in rural areas is justified. Indeed the report indicated that an even lower threshold could be set.

The figures for affordable housing are targets which given the evidence that we have gathered, will be achievable on almost all new developments. In exceptional circumstances, applicants may seek to provide information to the local planning authority that it is economically unviable to achieve the affordable housing target. In this instance a full viability appraisal of the whole scheme must be submitted to the local planning authority which will be independently verified at the applicants expense. If it is agreed that a policy compliant housing target cannot be met, then affordable housing will be required to be provided at the maximum viable level.

Affordable Housing

Affordable housing will be directly provided by the developer within housing schemes at the targets set out below.

A target of 30% of the total number of residential units on sites located in the main towns of Braintree (including Great Notley, Bocking and High Garrett), Witham, Halstead, Sible Hedingham and development sites directly adjacent to these areas.

A target of 40% of the total number of residential units sites in all other areas

A threshold of 15 dwellings or 0.50ha will apply in the main towns of Braintree (including Great Notley, Bocking and High Garrett), Witham and Halstead

A threshold of 5 dwellings or 0.16ha will apply in all other areas of the District

Where it is impractical to achieve on site provision, off site provision, or a financial contribution or land in lieu of broadly equivalent value, may be accepted.

A mix of units to reflect the current local need will be required to be delivered on the site.

If the affordable housing targets set out in the policy cannot be met then the applicant must provide a viability appraisal which will be independently verified and the affordable housing contribution will be set at the maximum viable level.

Stand-alone new settlements by virtue of their size which will be subject to separate viability appraisals, including on affordable housing, however the starting point should be 30% for affordable housing provision.

In rural areas, whilst there is a lower site threshold for affordable housing, the limited number of housing developments that come forward may mean that some villages still need additional affordable housing to meet identified local needs. In these cases as set out by the NPPF paragraph 54, small rural exception sites for affordable housing can be provided outside the development boundary to meet the needs of that village or a collection of villages. Some open market housing can be provided on these sites to ensure viable delivery of affordable homes.

Affordable housing exception sites should be developed only where there is a clear local need for affordable housing which cannot be met through allocated development sites in the area. All rural affordable housing schemes are subject to a full open book viability appraisal so the minimum possible open market housing is built on site to support the affordable housing. The NPPF paragraph 54 sets out that these sites would need to deliver significant affordable housing and therefore the maximum open market housing on a site would be 40%.

The policy below therefore sets out the criteria under which proposals would be judged and is an exception to the normal policies of restraint in the countryside.

Affordable Housing in Rural Areas

In rural areas, schemes to provide affordable housing will be permitted, providing that all the following criteria are met:

The development is adjacent to a development boundary with reasonable access to services and facilities

The settlement within which the development is to take place should have a population of less than 3,000

A proven local need for affordable housing must exist to the satisfaction of the local planning authority, which cannot be met within the development boundary.

Market housing should be provided at the minimum level to support viability and at no more than 30%

The development should be for less than 15 dwellings.

Specialist Housing

This policy is largely unchanged from that in the ADMP, with only minor changes for clarity.

National government guidance states that local authorities should plan for a mix of housing based on current and future demographic trends and needs of the different groups in society. Some people, such as the elderly or disabled, may need specialist housing provision, which is specially designed for their needs. This can include extra care, sheltered and registered care homes for the elderly and disabled, as well as any other facilities for the homeless or those escaping violence. These uses generally fall within the C2 residential institutions, or in some cases C3 dwelling homes use class and this is determined usually by the amount of care available on site and whether the units are self-contained.

Essex County Council provide adult social care facilities in the District and make assessments of the requirements for specialist homes needed in the District.

Many of the considerations for specialist housing will be similar to those of general housing such as attractive and practical design and materials, bulk, impact on neighbourhood amenity etc, but each use will have specific needs. For example, elderly or disabled accommodation should provide storage and charging points for wheelchairs and other walking aids; whilst those accommodating children should have appropriate indoor and outdoor play space. In all cases, residents are less likely to have access to a private vehicle and so the nearby provision of shops and services is essential, in addition to good public transport links for trips further afield.

Specialist housing has the potential to be an intensive use of a site and care should be taken to ensure the privacy and amenities of neighbouring properties. The cumulative impact of a number of such developments in an area which will also be taken into account

Specialist Housing

Specialist housing is defined as accommodation which has been specifically designed and built to meet the needs of the elderly, disabled, young or vulnerable adults, and may include some elements of care and support for everyone who lives there.

Proposals for specialist housing provision will be permitted within development boundaries providing that:

- Everyday services that users would expect to access, such as shops should be available on site, or should be located close by and be able to be accessed by a range of transport modes
- Health services should be available on site or in close proximity and have capacity to accommodate the additional services required from residents
- Parking should be provided in line with the Council's adopted standards
- There is an appropriate level of private amenity space to meet the needs of residents.

Minor extensions to or the expansion of existing specialist housing in the countryside may be acceptable if the scale, siting and design of proposals is sympathetic to the landscape character and host property.

The Council will have regard to the cumulative impact of extensions on the original character of the property and its surroundings.

A travel plan should be provided which sets out how additional staff, visitors and residents will access the site and ways to minimise the number of journeys by private vehicle.

New specialist housing on unallocated sites in the countryside will not be supported

On sites allocated for specialist housing, general needs housing will not be permitted.

Alternative Options

To only allow proposals for specialist housing on specifically designated sites both inside and outside development boundaries.

To not have any specific policies or allocations for specialist housing and use the generic housing policies to make decisions

Gypsy and Travellers and Travelling Showpersons Provision

The criteria set out in this policy are largely unchanged from that set out in Core Strategy policy CS3. It sets out how sites will be judged if they are not those that are allocated in the plan for development. The spatial strategy and allocation for new sites will take place in due course. Should larger residential sites be allocated in the Plan it is likely that these will be asked to deliver a % of gypsy and traveller sites within them. This will be considered as part of the spatial strategy.

Government Guidance sets out the approach Local Authorities should take when making provision for Gypsy and Travellers. It requires local authorities to make their own assessment of need, develop fair and effective strategies to meet need through the identification of land for sites, to plan for sites over a reasonable timescale, to increase the number of traveller sites in appropriate locations in order to address under provision and maintain an appropriate level of supply. As of July 2014 the District has 58 pitches split between public and private ownership.

An assessment of Gypsy and Traveller site need was published in 2014 (Essex Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Showpersons Accommodation Assessment 2014). This shows that the Gypsy and Traveller requirement for this District up to 2033 was for a minimum of 61 extra pitches for Gypsy and Travellers, and 1 additional plot for traveller show persons. No requirement for transit sites has been identified in the evidence base. Planning permission has since been granted for 21 pitches at the Twin Oaks site, meaning that a residual requirement of 40 sites and 1 show persons plot has to be identified up till 2033.

It will be necessary for the Council to review traveller accommodation needs in the district in future, and to monitor the delivery of sites to ensure a 5 year supply of sites is available.

Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Showpersons Accommodation

The Council will allocate the following sites for Gypsy and Traveller accommodation, as shown on the Proposals Map.

To help meet the identified requirement, pitches or plots, will be allocated, however if insufficient sites have been proposed or sites are no longer likely to come forward then any additional sites must;

- Be well related to existing communities in terms of size, location, local population size, and density
- Be within a reasonable distance of services and amenities such as shops, schools and medical facilities
- Be located, designed and landscape to minimise their impact on the environment and to protect local amenity
- Have a safe vehicular, pedestrian, and cycle access to and from the public highway
- Be located within areas not at risk of flooding
- Be capable of being provided with appropriate drainage, water supply and other necessary utility services,
- Be of an appropriate size to provide the planned number of caravans, parking, turning and servicing vehicles, amenity blocks, play areas, access roads and structural landscaping, and should be safe and secure.

In addition plots for travelling show persons must be large enough for the safe storage and maintenance of rides and equipment.

Alternative Options

To allocate alternative, or additional permanent Gypsy and Traveller sites

To allocate a specific transit site

To allocate a specific Travelling Showpersons plot

Housing Mix and Density

Since the previous policies were written changes have been made to government policy in this area and new nationwide standards have been introduced to stop local authorities having different standards. The revised policy also includes reference to the size mix of housing that the evidence base has suggested we need. This will ensure that developments cater to the needs of residents.

The Council seeks to create sustainable, inclusive and mixed communities in line with government guidance set out in the NPPF. New housing developments can help secure a good social mix, by avoiding the creation of large areas of similar housing. A mix of housing, based on current and future demographic trends and on the needs of different groups in society, should be provided.

Evidence carried out for the Council by independent consultants indicates that the size need of open market housing in the District is 4% one bedroom, 31% two bedroom, 45% 3 bedroom and 20% 4 bedroom. All new developments are expected to meet this broad range of sizes for open market housing, unless it can be proven to the satisfaction of the local planning authority that the site may be more suited to an alternative mix of housing types.

The density of a new development will depend on a number of factors, including the location of the site, access point/s, local road network and characteristics of the surrounding area. The layout will need to provide garden sizes and car parking in line with the Council's standards and any required landscaping, open space and requirements for water and drainage.

As a general guide the Council would not expect densities in the District below 30 dwellings per hectare to ensure the most efficient use of land. In neighbourhood centres, town centres or sites well served by public transport and walking and cycling facilities, higher densities could be appropriate.

Although the detailed internal layout of buildings is not generally a planning matter, it must be ensured that all units have a satisfactory aspect, will have access to appropriate natural daylight. In 2015 the government introduced technical housing standards which are a nationally described internal space standard. All new development should be in accordance with these standards.

Part M of the building regulations was also updated in 2015 and dwelling types were separated into a number of types defined as category 1 visitable, category 2 accessible and adoptable and category 3 wheelchair user dwellings. In order to ensure that new housing in the District meets the requirements of all residents, including those who may be older or suffer from a disability or mobility problems. Homes which are more adaptable and accessible will ensure that people can live safely in their homes for longer and may prevent accidents in the home which could lead to injuries such as hip fractures which are over the national average in the District. This policy therefore specifies that, subject to viability, all new homes in the District should be built to category 2 and on larger sites a proportion of the homes should meet category 3.

Housing Type and Density

Development should seek to create sustainable, inclusive and mixed communities through providing a mix of house types and size at an appropriate density for the area, which reflects the local need.

The density and massing of residential development will be related to;

- The character of the site and its immediate surroundings, as well as the wider locality
- The adequacy of the access and the local road system to accommodate the traffic likely to be generated
- The existing vegetation, including trees on the site and the necessity for further landscaping
- On site amenity space to be provided in accordance with the adopted guidance
- An appropriate standard of residential accommodation is provided for the occupants

Housing sizes should be broadly in line with the identified local need as set out in the 2015 SHMA update (or its successor), unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

All new development should be in accordance with the national technical housing standards.

10% of new homes on sites of 10 or more dwellings must meet category 2 or 3 of part M of building regulations 2015. The provision should be across all house types and tenures.

Alternative Options

An alternative option would be to set a minimum or maximum density standard for all development. This would ensure that land was used efficiently but it would not respect the character of the local area or be able to respond to local circumstances. In an area with such a diverse pattern of development as Braintree District, it is not considered appropriate.

A further option would be to rely on national guidance set out in the NPPF. This does provide some detail in relation to mix of housing etc but asks that Local Authority set out their own approach to housing density which is done in this policy.

Residential Alterations

These policies remain largely unchanged from those which were considered in the ADMP with minor changes for clarity.

Within development boundaries, the extension or alteration of existing dwellings is normally considered acceptable in principle, subject to the other policies in this document, in particular those relating to design and protection of residential amenity and which maintain the Council's adopted standards of parking, access and private amenity space. Listed buildings or buildings within a conservation area are also subject to further controls.

However, inappropriate extensions or alterations of existing dwellings in the countryside can have a detrimental effect on the openness and rural character of the countryside. One of the key objectives of this policy is therefore to restrict the extension or replacement of dwellings, outside development boundaries, to that which is appropriate to the countryside setting.

Traditional rural qualities are those which are commonly associated with the countryside and rural areas, such as; agricultural land uses with fields enclosed mainly by hedgerows and mature trees; some areas of woodland and common land; quiet and narrow rural roads; a network of footpaths and bridleways; a settlement pattern of villages, hamlets and dispersed farm houses with associated agricultural buildings; some historic country houses set in parkland; tranquillity and 'dark skies' (i.e. Little light spillage visible). These qualities may be different in different parts of the District, depending upon the landscape characteristics, topography, geology and historic settlement patterns.

In all cases proposals should respect the character of the locality and of the nearby dwellings. Proposals which result in a dwelling which is considerably larger than the original dwelling, or adjoining dwellings or which result in a cramped or overdeveloped plot, compared with the characteristics of surrounding development will not be considered acceptable. In this context original refers to the dwelling as at 1st July 1948 or, if built after this date, as originally built.

Permitted development rights may be removed from dwellings extended under this policy.

Residential Alterations, Extensions and Outbuildings within Development Boundaries

Residential alterations, extensions and outbuildings within development boundaries will be permitted, provided that they meet the following criteria;

- There should be no over-development of the plot, when taking into account the footprint of the existing dwelling and the relationship to plot boundaries
- The siting, bulk, form and materials of the alteration, extension, or outbuilding should be compatible with the original dwelling
- There should be no unacceptable adverse impact on the amenities of adjoining residential properties, including on privacy, overshadowing or loss of light or an overbearing impact
- There should be no adverse material impact on the identity of the street scene and character of the area

Alternative Options

No policy and rely on the General Permitted Development Order and NPPF.

Residential Alterations, Extensions and Outbuildings in the Countryside

Planning permission will be granted for the extension of a habitable, permanent dwelling in the countryside and for the erection of outbuildings ancillary to the residential use, provided that they meet the following criteria:

- The siting, design and materials must be in harmony with the countryside setting
- They are compatible with the scale, appearance and character of the original dwelling
- Extensions and outbuildings will be required to be subordinate to the original dwelling in terms of bulk, height, width and position
- New outbuildings should be well related to the existing development on the site
- There should be unacceptable adverse impact on the amenities of adjoining residential properties, including on privacy, overshadowing, loss of light or an overbearing impact.

The Council will have regard to the cumulative impact of extensions and outbuildings on the original character of the property and its surroundings.

Alternative Options

No policy and rely on the General Permitted Development Order and NPPF.

Replacement Dwellings

This policy remains largely unchanged from that which was included within the ADMP.

The replacement of existing dwellings in the countryside with new dwellings will be considered in certain circumstances, but should not result in the replacement of smaller buildings with much larger dwellings or the consolidation of the footprint or volume of outbuildings not containing residential living space into the living space of a new dwelling.

The size of the replacement dwelling should be commensurate with the original building and in most cases in the same position on the plot, in order to minimise the impacts of the replacement dwelling on the local landscape character and the rural character of the area. Whilst no specific volume increase is specified here, the amount acceptable will need to be compatible with the size and shape of the original dwelling and the plot upon which it stands. In general terms it is considered that the volume of the original dwelling, plus that increase allowed by permitted development rights, is an appropriate guide to the likely permissible size of any replacement

dwelling. The impact of the replacement dwelling will be considered alongside any outbuildings such as cart lodges which are being proposed.

The original plot must be able to accommodate the replacement dwelling plus private amenity space and car parking and turning arrangements in line with the Council's adopted standards. No increases in the size of the plot into the open countryside will be permitted.

In some cases permitted development rights for any additional outbuildings will be restricted when a replacement dwelling is allowed under this policy.

The Council will expect a very high standard of design of replacement dwellings to meet the criteria set out in other policies in this document.

In order to offset the often unsustainable location of replacement dwellings within the countryside, all proposals which are considered under this policy should conform to high standards of sustainability, both in terms of the build and the ongoing running costs.

Replacement Dwellings in the Countryside

Proposals to replace an existing habitable, permanent dwelling of conventional construction in the countryside, with a single new dwelling, will be acceptable if the following criteria are met;

- The existing dwelling is not a building of architectural or historical value, which makes a positive contribution to the locality
- The replacement dwelling and any outbuildings, would not have a more harmful impact, or be more intrusive in the landscape, or countryside setting, than the original dwelling, by virtue of its siting, scale, height, character and design
- Any new replacement dwelling should be positioned on or close to the footprint of the existing dwelling, unless on design, landscape, highway safety, residential amenity or other environmental grounds indicate that a more appropriate location on the plot can be justified.
- The size of the replacement dwelling should not be significantly larger than the original dwelling, irrespective of any outbuildings demolished on the site and should be appropriate to the countryside setting

Increases in plot size to form additional garden, parking or amenity land will not be permitted.

Alternative Options

A further option would to be more prescriptive than above in terms of the size of the replacement dwelling that would be permitted, by specifying a maximum increase in volume or footprint that would be permitted.

Rural Workers Dwellings

This policy remains unchanged from that which was included within the ADMP.

Paragraph 55 of the NPPF makes clear that local planning authorities should avoid isolated new homes in the countryside, unless there are special circumstances. One of these circumstances is; "*the essential need for a rural worker to live permanently at or near their place of work in the countryside*". Rural workers are normally those involved in the agricultural or forestry industries but in exceptional circumstances may be associated with other rural-based enterprises. It will often be as convenient and more sustainable for such workers to live in nearby towns or villages, or suitable existing dwellings, so avoiding new and potentially intrusive development in the countryside.

However, there will be some cases where the nature and demand of work in agriculture, forestry or other rural industries makes it essential for one or more people engaged in the enterprise to live at, or very close to, the site of their work.

The Council will assess all applications for planning permission for new rural workers dwellings in the countryside in detail, to ensure that these are genuine proposals, which are reasonably likely to materialise and are capable of being sustained for a reasonable period of time. To this end all applications will need to pass both a functional and financial test.

A functional test is necessary to establish whether it is essential, for the proper functioning of the enterprise, for one or more workers to be readily available at most times. Such a requirement might arise, for example, if workers are needed to be on hand day and night:

1. In case animals, or agricultural processes require essential care at short notice
2. To deal quickly with emergencies that could otherwise cause serious loss of crops or products

The protection of livestock from theft or injury by intruders may contribute, on animal welfare grounds, to the need for an agricultural dwelling, although it will not by itself justify one. Requirements arising from food processing, or retirement homes for farmers, cannot be used to justify an agricultural dwelling.

A financial test will also need to be passed to ensure that the rural enterprise is economically viable. The Council will take a realistic approach to the level of profitability, noting that some rural enterprises, particularly where there are wider benefits, can be sustained on relatively low financial returns. The financial test will also assess whether the proposed dwelling can be sustained in the long term by the agricultural activity. It should be noted that it is the agricultural enterprise, rather than the owner or occupiers personal circumstances, or preferences that are relevant in determining the size of the dwelling that is appropriate.

The applicant will need to ensure that all necessary information is included with any planning applications in order for the Council to carry out to its satisfaction, the functional and financial tests.

If permission is given for a temporary dwelling, the period of the temporary permission will be clearly set out and extensions to the temporary period beyond three years will not normally be given. If permanent permission is granted, or the agricultural use of the site ceases, the temporary dwelling will be required to be removed.

The Council will also consider removing certain permitted development rights for any dwelling permitted under this policy, to ensure that the dwelling remains at a size which can be justified by the functional need and can be supported by the income from the agricultural unit.

Rural Workers Dwellings in the Countryside

Applications for rural workers dwellings in the countryside will only be permitted in the following circumstances:-

- (a) There is a clearly established functional need for a full-time worker to live on this site in the countryside
- (b) The functional need could not be fulfilled by an existing dwelling either on the site, or in the vicinity
- (c) There is no building on the site, or in the vicinity, which is capable of conversion to such a dwelling
- (d) The dwelling should be well-related to existing buildings, whilst retaining the ability to meet the identified functional need
- (e) The dwelling should be of a size commensurate with the rural enterprise's need and should be able to be supported long-term by the agricultural unit
- (f) The unit and the rural activity concerned have been established for at least three years, have been profitable for at least one of them, are currently financially viable, and have a clear prospect of remaining so.

An application for a temporary rural workers dwelling in the form of a caravan, wooden building, or other easily dismantled structure, which does not comply with criteria (f) above may be granted for a period of up to three years if;

- There is clear evidence of a firm intention to develop the enterprise concerned;
- There is clear evidence that the proposed enterprise has been planned on a sound financial basis.

Applications for the removal of occupancy conditions will only be considered if evidence is provided to show that the need for a dwelling, on that unit, has ceased and that the property has been marketed in a way that reflects its limited occupancy condition.

Infill Developments in hamlets

These policies are virtually unchanged from that which was included in the ADMP. The policy on infill sites in the Countryside was suggested by members during the ADMP process due to a number of recent cases that had come up. However its scope its likely to be limited and it may be more appropriate to deal with any further such applications on a case by case basis.

There are some small groups of dwellings in the countryside, which do not have a defined development boundary, but which clearly form a small hamlet normally around a cross roads or road junction. Occasionally within these groups, there are gaps between existing residential buildings along a classified road frontage, which may be able to accommodate a single dwelling, without adversely affecting the character and appearance of the area. Properties which are situated substantially away from the classified road frontages, or set within large grounds with a sizeable gap to neighbouring properties, or which are part of very small groups of less than ten dwellings, are not considered to form part of a hamlet.

The size of the gap which may be considered suitable for development under this policy is not set and will be comparable to the size and scale of the plots of adjoining and nearby properties. However, large gaps which could accommodate more than one dwelling, field parcels, artificially separated plots or land including private garden, which make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the locality, will not be considered acceptable. If a suitable plot has been identified, the siting, design and materials of the new dwelling should be in harmony with the countryside setting and the scale and character of the dwelling should reflect other properties in the hamlet and the character of the locality and there should be no adverse impact upon protected species.

This policy should not be used for individual isolated new dwellings, or for the consolidation of sporadic development such as that which is commonly found on the main routes into many villages. Properties which are permitted under this policy are expected to meet the criteria set out in policy XXX Residential Alterations, Extensions and Outbuildings within Development Boundaries.

Hamlets

Where there is a defined nucleus of at least ten dwellings and where it would not be detrimental to the character of the surroundings, exceptions may be made to policies X and X for the filling of a gap, for a single dwelling, between existing dwellings in hamlets and small groups of dwellings.

This policy will not apply to proposals for isolated new dwellings, or the extension of ribbon development, and will not apply to gaps, which could accommodate more than one dwelling. Proposals for the consolidation or extension of sporadic or ribbon development will also be resisted.

Alternative Options

To not allow any infill development within the countryside and focus all development to development boundaries.

For the Council to set out the areas/small groups of dwellings which it considers would be acceptable for new infill development.

In addition there are some brownfield sites in the countryside, which have become disused or redundant. These could be builder's yards or rural workshop for example whose previous use has ceased. These sites may be located in smaller settlements and are likely to be located in larger gaps between dwellings which would therefore not meet with the criteria set out in XX. However, given the detrimental environmental impact that these sites often have, it is considered appropriate that they could be considered for redevelopment for a single dwelling. Any scheme would need to show that improvements would be provided to neighbouring amenity by the introduction of residential development. The size of dwellings proposed under this policy will need to be in character with the surrounding development and the plot upon which it stands. Appropriate garden and parking areas would also need to be provided within the brownfield site and not encroach upon open countryside.

Developments proposed under this policy would be expected to meet the criteria set out in policy XXX Residential Alterations, Extensions and Outbuildings within Development Boundaries.

Previously Developed Sites in the Countryside

Where there is a group of at least ten dwellings and where it would not be detrimental to the character of the surroundings, exceptions may be made to Policies X and X for the re-development of previously developed land for a single dwelling within small groups of dwellings. This policy will not apply to proposals for isolated new dwellings, or the extension of ribbon development.

Proposals which would consolidate sporadic or ribbon development or the infilling of very large gaps, will be resisted.

Conversion of buildings in the Countryside

This policy is an amended version of a policy which had previously also included criteria on conversion to employment uses. This policy would only apply in cases where permitted development rights would not apply.

Existing buildings in the countryside can provide opportunities for sustainable economic growth and enterprise in rural areas which the NPPF sets out must be supported in paragraph 28. If these buildings are no longer suitable for commercial uses, and therefore have become redundant or disused, then the site must have been marketed for commercial uses for at least a year and the application must be accompanied by a marketing appraisal which may be independently verified at the expense of the applicant.

Applications for residential development of a redundant building in the countryside are also required to show that a significant environmental improvement will be achieved through the residential redevelopment of the site. The deliberate mismanagement of a site, or building, in order to achieve an environmental improvement, will not be considered in this policy.

This policy will only come into effect in cases where permitted development rights do not apply.

Any application for residential development would need to apply by other policies in this Plan in relation to development impacts and suitable amenity, parking and access available.

Residential Conversion of Buildings in the Countryside

The conversion of rural buildings that are of permanent and substantial construction and capable of conversion without complete re-building to residential use will only be permitted where they meet the following criteria:

- The location of the site is accessible and sustainable in the terms of the Framework
- There is no unacceptable impact on protected species or the historic environment
- The site is served by a suitable existing access
- There is no unacceptable impact on residential amenity
- There is no unacceptable impact on the character of the site or the surrounding countryside and its landscape value.

Applications for such proposals must be supported by a frame survey, structural survey and, where listed, a heritage statement setting out the implications of the development on the special architectural or historic interest of the subject building/s and their setting.

Garden Extensions

This policy remains largely unchanged from that which is set out in the ADMP, with minor changes for clarity.

Uncontrolled garden extensions, particularly in the countryside, can have a serious impact on the landscape due to the domestic garden paraphernalia which normally accompanies garden use such as garden furniture, sheds and children's play equipment extending out into undeveloped areas, as well as changes to the way in which the land is used and looked after with mown grass, flower beds etc. As such, the inclusion of agricultural land, including paddocks of other land, within the curtilage of a dwelling, or the incorporation of 'open space' within residential areas into a garden is a material change of use requiring planning permission.

In all cases garden extensions should relate well to the existing built form of the settlement and have an affinity with the built up part of the settlement. Therefore the character of the landscape and the area in general will be important considerations in the determination of applications. Proposals which abut an established boundary, such as an existing field hedgerow or fence, or which do not extend beyond the extent of neighbouring properties gardens are more likely to be considered acceptable. Furthermore the Council will consider issues such as privacy, overlooking and the impact of the proposal on existing public rights of way, when examining proposals to extend gardens.

Garden Extensions

The extension of a garden within a defined settlement boundary or within the countryside will only be permitted where all the following criteria are met;

- The size of the garden extension is proportionate with the size of the dwelling
- There is no material adverse impact on the character and appearance of the surrounding countryside or street scene
- It would have no adverse impact on the amenity of neighbouring properties
- It does not enclose areas intended for amenity open space including but not limited to those identified on the Proposals Maps for visually important open space, allotments, informal or formal recreation
- There would be no loss of protected natural features, or areas of high wildlife value
- It would not enclose a public right of way, or impact on highway safety or visibility
- It would not interfere with any neighbouring use, including farming

In the countryside, garden extensions along road frontages will be resisted.

The Council will impose conditions removing permitted development rights over the new area of the garden.

Appendix 2 – Transport and Infrastructure

The Council will ensure that development set out in this document contributes to the creation of sustainable communities, where appropriate infrastructure is provided. Infrastructure can be very large schemes such as a major piece of new road, or much smaller such as a piece of play equipment or signage.

Transport infrastructure is one of the major requirements of the Plan

Infrastructure could also include community facilities and open space which are covered in detail in other parts of the Local Plan.

The Braintree District is a large and substantially rural District in which just over half the residents live in the three main urban centres of Braintree, Halstead and Witham, with the remainder in rural areas. As such, car ownership in the District is high, and cars are the primary means of transport for many residents. The NPPF requires that the transport system should be balanced in favour of sustainable transport modes such as buses and cycling. However it is also recognised that different policies and solutions will be necessary in different areas.

There are particular stretches of roads or junctions in the District that can become congested, especially at peak times when people are travelling to and from school or work, and we are working on solutions to this congestion, including new roads or changes to junction arrangements as appropriate. Traffic growth can also occur when new homes or offices are built in neighbouring areas, and councils must work together to minimise these impacts on all communities. Transport and congestion can have a negative impact on air quality and this will need to be carefully monitored and managed. Encouraging alternative approaches to private vehicle travel such as electric cars and facilitating the infrastructure required such as charging points may assist in reducing harmful emissions which can impact on health.

Public transport networks in the town are adequate during the day on weekdays but during the evening and in rural areas the availability of public transport can be limited. With the increasingly elderly population of the District, we need to ensure that public transport is accessible and available to all, providing access to key facilities. Fragmented cycleway networks are available in mainly Witham and Braintree.

Essex County Council is responsible for roads and public transport in the District, whilst the Highways Agency is responsible for the major routes of the A120 and A12. Braintree District Council has a good relationship with these organisations and will need to continue to work in partnership with them and our neighbouring authorities to deliver the required projects.

The availability of high speed and reliable broadband, particularly in rural parts of the District is a key factor in unlocking new development opportunities and ensuring that people can access services online and work from home.

Other infrastructure requirements of new development include the availability of utilities such as telecommunications, electricity, gas, water and waste water

treatment facilities, and the Council will need to work with the organisations responsible for delivering this essential infrastructure in the District.

The Core Strategy seeks to reduce carbon emissions by promoting sustainable modes of transport and reducing the need to travel by locating development in sustainable locations, where people will be able to access employment, housing, retail provision, public transport and key services, such as education, health care, recreational facilities and open space.

Promoting sustainable travel such as walking and cycling can also have health benefits, encouraging a healthy community which is a priority of the National Planning Policy Framework.

This policy remains largely unchanged from policy CS7 in the Core Strategy with some minor amendments to delete repetitions with sustainable access for all policy.

Transport and Infrastructure – Strategic Policy

The Council will work with partners and the development industry to ensure that the infrastructure services and facilities, required to provide for the future needs of the community, are delivered in a timely, efficient and effective manner.

Development will be planned to take place in the most accessible locations and to have to appropriate day to day facilities within it, to reduce the need to travel.

The Council will work with partners to reduce congestion and improve safety on the road network in the District.

Sustainable transport will be strongly supported and all new development will be expected to make appropriate contributions to walking, cycling and public transport.

The timing of the provision of infrastructure will be set out in master plans, legal agreements or planning obligations.

In order to promote the most sustainable forms of transport, the spatial strategy in this Local Plan proposes to allocate development in locations where it can be well served by existing public transport networks (including rail) and where services may be in close proximity to facilitate walking and cycling.

Walking and cycling are a sustainable method of travel, in particular for short journeys, although also becoming increasingly popular longer commutes in some areas. As well as the benefits in terms of reduced congestion and pollution, they provide health and wellbeing benefits for the participant and should be encouraged wherever feasible, across the District.

There are existing cycle networks in the District, in Braintree, Witham and Great Notley, which have been constructed as part of development schemes, or have been

delivered through s106 financial contributions, however it is recognised that these are fragmented or non-existent in some areas of the District.

Essex County Council is currently producing a Cycle Strategy for Braintree District which will provide the most up to date advice on the improvements that are required to the network.

The internal design of new developments should prioritise walking and cycling as well as public transport, over private vehicle movements, to ensure that they encourage shorter internal journeys to take place by these modes. New developments will also be expected to connect to the existing external footpath and cycle way routes in the local area and contributions will be sought as appropriate to improve connections from new developments to the main commuter or recreational links.

Cycle parking will also be expected to be provided at homes and also at destination points such as work places, train stations and the town centre. The amount of cycle parking required is set out in the Essex County Council vehicle parking standards, as adopted. This document also includes guidance on layout and positioning of the parking.

This policy is largely unchanged from that which was included within the ADMP and the policy on cycling and walking in the ADMP. Combined, with some minor amendments to delete repetitions with sustainable access for all policy and strengthening the protection of the rights of way network.

Sustainable Access for All

Sustainable modes of transport should be facilitated through new developments to promote accessibility and integration into the wider community and existing networks.

Priority should be given to cycle and pedestrian movements and access to public transport.

Therefore, development proposals should provide appropriate provision for:-

- Cyclists, through safe design and layout of routes integrated into the new development and contributing towards the development and enhancement of the cycle network and provision of secure covered cycle parking and where appropriate, changing and shower facilities
- Pedestrians (including disabled persons and those with impaired mobility), through safe, accessible, direct and convenient design and layout of routes within the new development and wider pedestrian network.
- Public transport, through measures that will improve and support public transport and provide new public transport routes
- Community transport, through measures that will promote car pools, car sharing and voluntary community buses, community services and cycle schemes
- Servicing and emergency vehicles
- Facilities for charging plug-in and other ultra low emission vehicles where appropriate

Development will be required to be consistent with and contribute to the implementation of the 'Essex Transport Strategy' Local Transport Plan for Essex.

Developers may be required to produce Travel Plans as considered appropriate by the Local Planning Authority. The Essex County Council Transportation Development Management Policies provides further detail on requirements relating to accessibility and access including Transport Assessment and Statement thresholds for each land use category.

Transport Assessments and Statements will be required in accordance with Essex County Council's Development Management Policies, in order to assess the impact of development in terms of highway safety and capacity for both access to the proposed development and the wider highway network.

Financial contributions from development proposals will be sought, where appropriate, towards achieving the above objectives and additional off site car parking, if required

Development which would adversely affect the character of, or result in the loss of existing or proposed rights of way, will not be permitted unless alternative provision or diversions can be arranged which are at least as attractive, safe and convenient for public use. This will apply to rights of way for pedestrian, cyclist or horse rider use.

Improvements to such rights will be sought in association with new development to enable new or improve links to the created within the settlement, between settlements and/or providing access to the countryside or green infrastructure sites.

Parking

The parking policy is a consolidation of a number of policies included within the ADMP, for the first time it protects some residential parking courts as well. The parking courts which this refers to will be considered during the site specific discussions.

The geography of the District is predominantly rural and therefore people travel substantial distances to reach some of the main service centres, often by private vehicle. Car parking therefore will always be a key issues for the towns and villages in the District.

As well as the main shopping areas of the District, the main parking requirements are related to the train stations, particularly those on the mainline to London but at lesser extent those stations on the branch line between Witham and Braintree. Due to the quick frequent service from these stations, commuters are attracted in from the wider District as well as beyond. It is important that residents have good access to rail stations as this can ensure there is the opportunity to travel longer distances by train.

Parking on new developments, both commercial and residential, is covered in the Essex County Council Vehicle Parking Standards. This sets out the amount of car parking and visitor spaces that are required for new developments, the size of bays and suggestions of layouts. Developments are expected to meet the requirements of this document, in all cases.

The provision of additional off street car parking provision, either through improvements to existing car parks or the provision of new car parks, will be supported in appropriate locations.

Parking Provision

Development will be required to provide vehicular and cycle parking in accordance with the adopted Essex County Council's Vehicle Parking Standards.

Car parks serving the main town centres, retail and leisure facilities and train stations, and some residential car parking areas which are seen as critical for off street parking provision, are allocated on the proposals maps, and will be protected for this use. Proposals for alternative uses will only be acceptable where it can be shown to the satisfaction of the local planning authority that the car parking spaces are being re-provided in an equal or better position to serve that the main use.

Alternative Options

To have no policy; the Vehicle Parking Standards have been subject to SA/SEA.

To have no protection of specific car parks and instead criteria for those that require protection.

Protected Lanes

This policy remains unchanged from that which is included within the ADMP.

There are a number of lanes within the District, which have been identified as having a particular historic and landscape value for the character of the countryside. A assessment of protected lanes in the District has been produced and is available in the evidence base for the Local Plan. This document reviews the original protected lanes and updates the evidence on whether they are suitable for protection. It also included an assessment of a number of additional lanes which were put forward for consideration as protected lanes.

Protected lanes are often enclosed by a mix of deciduous hedges and raised verges that can be indications of great age. The Council will seek to protect and influence others to protect the features of a protected lane including their verges. Material increases in traffic using a protected lane due to development proposals will not be permitted.

Protected Lanes

The District Council will seek to conserve the traditional landscape and nature conservation character of roads designated on the Proposals Map as Protected Lanes, including their verges, banks, ditches and natural features such as hedgerows and other structural elements contributing to the historic features of the lanes.

Any proposals that would materially adversely affect the physical appearance of these protected lanes, or generate traffic of a type or amount, inappropriate for the traditional landscape and nature conservation character of a protected lane, will not be permitted.

Broadband

This is a new section which recognises the key importance of broadband to modern life. The policy aims to strike a balance between what is reasonable and proportional for developers to provide, with the essential need for a certain standard of modern within all new developments. The policy also recognises that in a small proportion of cases, broadband will not be able to be provided to new developments due to their very rural location. The policy therefore includes the potential to provide a sum of money to contribute towards an alternative solution.

The availability of fast and reliable broadband is now seen as an essential component of everyday life and as such will be a requirement for all new commercial and residential development in Braintree District. This will allow residents and businesses to have the most up to date speeds and technological improvements and will improve commercial opportunities and facilitate working from home, improve

educational availability and improve resident's connections to essential services and social networks online.

The Council is working with broadband infrastructure providers and the County Council to ensure as wider coverage as possible with high speed, reliable broadband and that this is carried out as soon as possible.

However it is recognised that as a rural District, there will be some properties and areas where at present high speed broadband is not available as it is uneconomic or unviable to install cable over long distances to serve small numbers of properties. These places are generally the least sustainable in the District with poor access to other facilities and as such would not be expected to provide significant levels of growth. However on occasion new development take place in these locations.

Where large scale new development may be being proposed in rural areas, investment in high speed reliable broadband will be required.

In these situations it is down to the applicant to provide sufficient information to the local planning authority which sets out why the development cannot meet the requirements of this policy. In these instances, applicants may be required to make a contribution to proposed scheme to serve the area by other methods of

Broadband

The Council will work with the telecommunications industry to maximise access to super fast broadband, wireless hotspots and improved mobile signals for all residents and businesses, assisting them in delivering their investment plans and securing funding to address any infrastructure deficiencies or barriers

All new properties (both residential and commercial) must be served by a high speed and reliable broadband connection. This will need to be directly accessed from the nearest BT exchange and threaded through resistant tubing to enable easy access to the cable for future repair, replacement and upgrading.

Exceptions will be made to the above, in exceptional circumstances where applicants must show through consultation with broadband infrastructure providers, that this would not be possible, practical or economically viable. In these cases an equivalent developer contribution towards off site works may be sought which could enable greater access in the future.

Tourism

This policy is largely unchanged from that which is included within the ADMP, with the addition of suitable waste storage and disposal facilities to be provided on site.

The District is predominantly rural with opportunities for tourism related development in the attractive villages, towns and surrounding areas. However, a balance should

be achieved between supporting the rural economy and protecting the countryside, as stated in the NPPF.

The District has a number of villages and towns that are popular destinations for tourism due to the high quality of their built, or historic environment. Such settlements include Finchingfield, Castle Hedingham and Coggeshall. It is important that within these settlements facilities for visitors are maintained and enhanced in order to promote tourism, without detracting from the features that make them attractive to visitors.

To maximise the benefits of tourism to rural economies, tourist development should be located where visitors can access local shops, pubs and other services.

Camping and caravan sites contribute in an important way to tourism and to the supply of tourist accommodation supporting the rural economy. However, they should be located appropriately and sufficiently screened to avoid any harmful impact on the setting and character of the countryside.

Appropriate research should have been carried out into the local tourism market before submitting an application to show that there is a need for tourist accommodation in that area. In some cases this will be subject to independent verification at the cost of the applicant. Proposals to remove occupancy conditions or to change the use of tourist accommodation to permanent residential use will not normally be approved.

Tourist Development within the Countryside

Proposals for new tourism accommodation and facilities within the countryside will be permitted provided that:

- The demand for the development has been clearly demonstrated
- Proposals are connected to and associated with existing facilities or located at a site that relates well to defined settlements in the area and are accessible to adequate transport, cycling and walking links
- They would not materially adversely affect character, appearance and amenity of the surrounding area and should be well screened.
- Appropriate, convenient and safe vehicular access can be gained to/from the public highway and appropriate parking is provided
- They would not use the best and most versatile agricultural land
- They will be served by adequate water, sewerage and waste storage and disposal systems
- They will include a high quality landscaping scheme.

The occupation of new tourist accommodation will be restricted via condition or legal agreement to ensure a tourist use solely and not permanent residential occupation

Equestrian Facilities

This policy is similar to a policy in the ADMP but is limited to the needs for equestrian facilities which are a particular issue in the District. Any new buildings would also need to accord with other policies in the Plan for example in relation to design and impact on the historic environment.

Equestrian related development refers to all horse-related facilities, including commercial and householder development of stables, manéges and ancillary buildings. Whilst it is recognised that equestrian development is a rural use, development needs to be carefully managed to ensure that there is not a detrimental impact on the countryside character, or other rural uses.

Equestrian development should be well related to the person managing the facility's existing dwelling, to avoid the creation of new journeys within the countryside, to assist with security and animal welfare and to remove the pressure for new residential accommodation in support of the development.

Equestrian Facilities

New riding schools, stable buildings or other equestrian facilities, or extensions to such facilities will be permitted where;

There is no significant effect on important landscape or nature conservation interests or any adjacent residential area

No alterations to vehicular highways in the area are required

Bridleways and byways in the vicinity are located and designed to accommodate horse riders from the site

Sufficient land is available for grazing and exercise where necessary

Floodlighting will not be allowed in association with such facilities.

Proposals for new or extended residential accommodation will only be permitted if a submitted business plan demonstrates that there is a convincing case for residential accommodating, and provided that they accord with criteria above. The accommodation permitted will only be the minimum required to meet the needs of the relevant business.

Appendix 3 – Creating Better Places

Community Facilities

Education

This is a more detailed policy than that which has been included in the past. Whilst the criteria remain as per the ADMP policy, additional sections have been added to recognise the importance of schools on the local community and environment.

New primary schools, secondary schools and early years provision will be needed in the District to support the new homes and communities that are being created. The NPPF (paragraph 72) sets out that great importance should be placed on the need to provide new school places. It also states that local planning authorities such take a proactive, positive and collaborative approach to meeting this requirement, giving great weight to the need to create, expand or alter schools.

Land for education is allocated on the proposals map, and the amounts of land required is noted in site specific policies. These designations will be subject to further design and master planning to locate the schools in the best positions for new communities.

Existing schools and education facilities, including early years, higher and further education will be supported to ensure they are able to deliver high quality educational provision and act as hubs for their local community. Remodelling and expansion of schools and education facilities will be supported wherever possible. The loss of school grounds or school buildings themselves will only be supported where it has been proven that there is no longer an educational need for the site, now or in the future, or that improved accommodation is being provided in an alternative location.

Applications for existing schools are often dealt with by the County Council, but in some circumstances the District Council will be the relevant local planning authority. The policy below will apply for decisions made by Braintree District Council, and will be used to inform any consultation responses submitted to applications which are determined by Essex County Council.

Educational Establishments

Sites proposed, or in current educational use, are protected on the Proposals Map for that use. The change of use, or re-development of educational establishments and their grounds, will not be permitted unless:

- It can be clearly demonstrated that the use of the site is genuinely redundant and no other alternative educational, or community use can be found
- Satisfactory alternative and improved facilities will be provided
- The area of the site to be redeveloped is genuinely in excess of Government guidelines for playing field provision, taking into account future educational projections.

The Council will respond positively to and support appropriate and well-designed applications regarding the creation of new school and education facilities. As expressed in the NPPF, the Council will use a presumption in favour of the development of state-funded schools and educational uses.

The Council will engage in pre-application discussions with promoters to develop a collaborative approach to suitable applications. Where necessary, the Council will utilise planning obligations to help to mitigate any adverse impacts of an educational development and assist in delivering development that has a positive impact on the community.

The Council recognises the differences in location and design requirements between rural and urban based education proposals in the District, and will assess applications accordingly. For example, a rural based school application in particular must promote adequate and reliable public transport provision for its students.

Retention of services

This section combines two policies in the ADMP into a single policy which deals with both the provision of new services and the retention of existing ones. The criteria for the retention of services remain largely unchanged and proposals for enhanced local facilities has been reduced to a single line. This is because any application would still need to be in line with other policies within the Plan.

In existing communities, the Council seeks to retain existing community facilities, and will aim to create new facilities with the establishment of new communities. These facilities can include village and community halls, shops, public houses, post offices, banks, places of worship, doctors surgeries and other services. Together, they provide facilities to meet local needs, create sustainable communities and reduce the need to travel. The provision and enhancement of these facilities or their diversification to support their ongoing viability will be supported wherever possible, subject to other policies within this document.

The policy below applies to all areas outside of the three main towns of the District. Within the towns, the provision and retention of local community facilities will continue to be strongly supported. However, there is more likely to be alternative facilities close by for residents to access. Within the villages and the countryside, there is less likely to be alternative local facilities located within reasonable distance which makes their provision and enhancement key to local life.

There are some community facilities in the District such as public houses which have been successfully nominated as assets of community value. Where applications involve the change of use of an asset of community value, the period for community purchase of the asset before sale must be adhered to and the fact that the building or land is an asset of community value will be a material consideration in the determination of the planning application.

Applications for the change of use or loss of a community facility will be expected to be accompanied by a marketing and viability appraisal which will be independently verified at the cost of the applicant before the application is determined. The appraisal will be expected to cover at least a 12 month period.

Retention of Local Community Services and Facilities

The Council will seek the retention of all existing community facilities and services outside the three main towns where they meet an identified local need. Proposals for the change of use of community facilities to other uses will not be permitted unless:

- An independently verified and robust marketing exercise has been carried out and submitted with the application demonstrating that the facility is unviable and cannot be made viable in the future
- All other reasonable options for retaining the facility have been considered
- Proposals for the change of use of health care facilities to other uses will not be permitted unless proposals are consistent with the service providers strategy for infrastructure provision in the wider area and/or modernisation programme for delivery of that service or facility
- If a proposal involves the redevelopment of an existing community facility which is still in use, a replacement facility of equal or better quality will be provided.

Proposals for the enhancement or extension of existing community facilities will be supported wherever possible.

Appendix 4 – The District’s Natural Environment

Section 11 of the NPPF emphasises the importance of the planning system in contributing and enhancing the natural and local environment. This chapter first contains an overarching Strategic Policy on the Natural Environment which covers policies on biodiversity, geodiversity, resource use, climate change and agricultural.

Strategic Policy

Natural Environment

Development proposals must take all available measures to ensure the protection, and where possible, the enhancement of the natural environment, habitats, biodiversity and geodiversity of the District. This will include, where appropriate, protection from all types of pollution and the excessive use of water and other resources.

Development proposals should take account of the potential impacts of climate change in their design, and propose measures to reduce greenhouse gas emissions where necessary.

Where required, the Council will prioritise the development of poorer quality agricultural land.

Biodiversity, Landscape Character, and Agriculture

This section joins together the topics of biodiversity, landscape character and agriculture as these subject areas are closely entwined in terms of the planning policies that can be employed to protect and enhance them. For example, coherent policies which aim to protect and enhance biodiversity can generally have positive effects on the safeguarding of landscape character and agricultural land.

- **Biodiversity and Geodiversity**

This sub-section also includes a description of what comprises geodiversity, and emphasises the importance in protecting geodiversity features throughout the District. Furthermore, building on what was laid out in the ADMP, this section strengthens the detail on green infrastructure networks. It emphasises how green infrastructure networks can deliver a wide range of environmental and associated quality of life benefits for local communities, in addition to enhancing the biodiversity value of wildlife corridors and ecological networks.

This sub-section also details the importance of referencing and collaborating with the recommendations of the Essex Biodiversity Action Plan, which was first prepared and produced in 1999, and most recently updated in 2011. It is important that ecological surveys are carried out by a suitably qualified person and include an adequate desk top survey. It is emphasised that these surveys must identify threats to the environment and/or its wildlife where they are identified to occur, and adequate and sound mitigation measures in the surveys are required where necessary.

Protected Species

Where development is proposed that may have an adverse impact on protected species, the Local Planning Authority will require the applicant to carry out a full ecological assessment. The Local Planning Authority will assess the impacts of the development upon both habitats and species, and consider the extent to which such impacts will be mitigated or habitats enhanced through the development. Where appropriate, the Local Planning Authority will impose conditions and/or planning obligations to achieve appropriate mitigation and/or compensatory measures to ensure that any potential harm is kept to a minimum.

Where an adverse impact on protected species and/or habitats is evident, and where there are no appropriate measures to secure mitigation of protected species and/or habitats, planning permission will not be granted.

Enhancement, Management and Monitoring of Biodiversity

Development proposals shall provide for the protection of biodiversity and the mitigation of any adverse impacts. Additionally, enhancement for biodiversity should be included in all proposals, commensurate with the scale of the development. For example, such enhancement could include watercourse improvements to benefit biodiversity and improve water quality, habitat creation, wildlife links (including as part of green or blue infrastructure), and building design which creates wildlife habitat (e.g. green roofs, bird and/or bat boxes).

- **Landscape Character**

The NPPF states that “the planning system should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by protecting and enhancing valued landscapes”. However, as there can be some confusion as to what ‘valued landscapes’ are and consist of, this sub-section explains in detail what generally constitutes ‘value’ in landscapes to people, in terms of benefits to society. It also explains how Landscape Character Assessment works as a technique, and references the importance of the Braintree District Landscape Character Assessment in this regard.

This sub-section emphasises that the planning process should seek to protect all landscapes from harmful development, acknowledging that some landscapes may be more sensitive than others to change. Therefore, it will be important for developers to consider the specific details contained in the Landscape Capacity Analysis and Landscape Character Assessment for that particular landscape character area. It is described in detail as to how the Dedham Vale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) benefits from the highest level of protection in relation to landscapes and scenic beauty, as set out in the NPPF.

Landscape Character and Features

In its decision-making on applications, the Local Planning Authority will take into account the different roles and character of the various landscape areas in the District, and recognise the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, in order to ensure that any development permitted is suitable for the local context.

Proposals for new development should be informed by, and be sympathetic to, the character of the landscape as identified in the District Council's Landscape Character Assessments. Applications will be required to include an assessment of their impact on the landscape and should not be detrimental to the distinctive landscape features of the area such as trees, hedges, woodlands, grasslands, ponds and rivers. Development which would not successfully integrate into the local landscape will not be permitted.

Where development is proposed close to existing features, it should be designed and located to ensure that the condition and future retention/management will not be prejudiced and enhanced where appropriate.

Additional landscaping including planting of native species of trees, hedgerows and other flora may be required to maintain and enhance these features.

The restoration and enhancement of the natural environment will be encouraged through:

- Maximising opportunities for creation of new green infrastructure and networks in sites allocated for development;
- Creating green infrastructure networks to link urban areas to the countryside, and creating and enhancing the biodiversity value of wildlife corridors.

• Agricultural Land

The majority of agricultural land in the Braintree District is considered to be the 'best and most versatile'. Whilst the Council will seek to develop poorer quality agricultural land, it is inevitable that due to the significantly increased housing provision requirement, this will lead to unavoidable development on 'best and most versatile agricultural land', as there are insufficient brownfield sites to meet this demand in the District. As stated in the NPPF, the best and most versatile agricultural land can provide economic and other benefits where it is required to be utilised.

Land, Water and Air Quality

This section brings together the subject areas of land, water and air in terms of maintaining the quality of each. Again, it is believed that adequate and proactive policies in the protection of land can often assist in the conservation of water and air.

Similarly, water protection policies can generally help protect land and air from harmful development.

The Council wishes to encourage the use of previously developed land and seeks to ensure appropriate uses of such sites. This is to ensure the least amount of greenfield land is built upon. It is important that appropriate treatment of sites affected by contamination is implemented to bring these sites back into use. This treatment can simultaneously apply to land, water and air in some instances, or two of the three subject areas.

The protection of groundwater is one of the important considerations in dealing with contaminated sites. This section emphasises that all investigations of land potentially affected by contamination should be carried out in accordance with established procedures to comply with the NPPF. The section references the Environment Agency published guidance entitled 'Groundwater Protection: Principles and Practice (GP3)' in 2012. The section contains specific and detailed policy on Contaminated Land, which is deemed important given the existence of large historical manufacturing industries in the Braintree District.

The section emphasises that where connection to the public wastewater sewer for a proposed development is shown not to be feasible, early consultation with the Environment Agency regarding alternative methods of disposal is advisable. Developers will be required to have regard to the Integrated Pollution Prevention and Control Regulations which are designed to prevent, reduce and eliminate pollution at source. Developers will also need to submit a noise assessment where necessary, in cases where proposals could potentially cause harm to nearby residents and amenity.

This section has added a number of new paragraphs focusing on the importance of air quality management in the District. The impact of air quality on health of residents is now emphasised more, and also incorporated into the larger picture of climate change. This is particularly topical and important following the agreements at the Paris Climate Change Conference in December 2015.

Presently, there are no requirements to declare an Air Quality Management Area in any of the District's urban areas. However, this section highlights the importance of monitoring the cumulative impact on air quality of the likely future imposition of residential property developments close to busy road networks, which will lead to the generation of increased emissions to air and greater exposure to sensitive receptors. Therefore, this section recognises that planning policy can play an important role in the minimisation of the sources of air pollution, and details numerous measures and innovative ideas that the Council will look positively on when assessing (particularly larger) development applications.

Protecting and Enhancing Natural Resources, Minimising Pollution and Safeguarding from Hazards

Proposals for all new developments should minimise all emissions and other forms of pollution (including light and noise pollution) and ensure no deterioration to either air or water quality. All applications for development where the existence of, or potential for creation of, pollution is suspected must contain sufficient information to enable the Local Planning Authority to make a full assessment of potential hazards.

Development will not be permitted where, individually or cumulatively, there are likely to be unacceptable impacts arising from the development on:

- a. the natural environment, general amenity and the tranquillity of the wider rural area;
- b. health and safety of the public;
- c. air quality;
- d. surface and groundwater quality;
- e. land quality and condition; or
- f. compliance with statutory environmental quality standards.

Development will not be permitted where there is an unacceptable risk due to:

- a. siting on known or suspected unstable land; or
- b. siting on land which is known to be or potentially affected by contamination or where the land may have a particular sensitive end use;
- c. the storage or use of hazardous substances.

Proposals for development on or adjacent to land which is known to be or potentially affected by contamination, or land which may have a particular sensitive end use, or involving the storage and/or use of hazardous substances, will be required to submit an appropriate assessment of the risk levels, site investigations and other relevant studies, and remediation proposals and implementation schedule prior to or as part of any planning application.

In appropriate cases, the local planning authority may impose planning conditions or through a legal obligation secure remedial works and/or monitoring processes.

Climate Change and Energy

The best available evidence shows that we are seeing, and can expect to see future changes in the global climate. Climate change predictions for the East of England for the 2080s, (medium emissions scenario), show temperature increases in winter of approximately 3°C and in summer by 3.6°C. Mean precipitation is expected to increase by 20% in winter and fall in summer by 20%. There will be a tendency to more stormy conditions during which a greater proportion of total precipitation will fall.

The government has identified a series of risks and vulnerabilities associated with climate change. These include water supply/demand deficits, flooding, higher energy demand for cooling, heat damage/disruption to energy infrastructure, adverse health impacts arising from increased temperatures, changes to flora and fauna.

The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires Local Planning Authorities include in their local plans, policies designed to ensure that development and land use in their area contributes to the mitigation of and adaptation to climate change.

Since the pre Site Allocations and Development Management Plan was issued there have been a number of changes to government advice in the topic area of climate change and these have necessitated some alteration of existing policies. In

particular, flood risk and surface water drainage has increased in prominence particularly as the newly formed Lead Local Flood Authority has become active. New policies have been introduced in this area where none existed before.

The proposed policies for the Draft Braintree Local Plan are discussed individually below.

Energy Efficiency

In order to move towards a low carbon economy, Policy 19 is proposed, with the aim of promoting energy efficiency measures across the district. The council still aspires to energy efficient development that minimises space heating requirements and primary energy demand.

This policy has been updated to incorporate changes required as a result of the Ministerial Statement of the 25th March 2015. The Statement advises that local planning authorities should not set in their emerging local plans (or Supplementary Planning Guidance) any additional local technical standards or requirements relating to the construction, internal layout or performance of new dwellings including references to the Code for Sustainable Homes. Thus, reference to the Code for Sustainable Homes has had to be removed. References in policy 19 to sustainable construction methods and materials have also been removed as the energy efficiency aspect of materials is a matter handled by Building Control. References to BREEAM have also been removed as these standards have also been discontinued.

It is the intention of the government that technical standards relating to housing be implemented through the Building Regulation system and comprising optional standards on access and water. Optional new national technical standards these should only be required through Local Plan Policies if they address a clearly evidenced need and where their impact on viability has been considered. It is considered that sufficient evidence is not available at present, though it could become available in the future.

Other small changes have been made altering the reasons for tree planting, referring to the need for decentralised networks to comply with other plan policies for clarification and including Conservation Areas as some energy efficiency measures might affect Conservation Areas e.g. thermal cladding.

Energy Efficiency

The Local Planning Authority will encourage energy conservation and efficiency measures. Such measures could include site layout and building orientation, natural light and ventilation, air tightness, solar shading, reducing water consumption and increasing water recycling in order to contribute to the reduction in their total energy consumption.

Opportunities for decentralised energy networks will be encouraged and promoted where possible and where they conform to other local plan policies in order to reduce carbon emissions.

Renewable Energy

Policy 20 has been altered to reflect the advice given in the Ministerial statement of the 25th March 2015 and changes in the Planning Technical Guidance. This states that “meeting our energy goals should not be used to justify the wrong development in the wrong location and includes the unnecessary use of high quality agricultural land”. It states that “protecting the local environment is not an excuse to trash the local environment”. Further, the Technical Guidance states that renewable energy developments should be acceptable for their locations. IN view of the above advice, this policy has been changed so that the benefits of low carbon energy generation are not weighed against harms incurred. Instead, development will be assessed in terms of their impact.

At the request of the climate change manager the impacts on electromagnetic transmissions has been removed.

Additional criteria to be used in considering solar farms have been included as a result of advice in the above Ministerial Statement which requires that by preference they are located on brownfield areas, then low quality agricultural land would require compelling justification for positioning on high quality agricultural land. In accordance with paragraph 5-013-20150327 of the Practice Guidance and the statement proposals should also show how agricultural use and/or bio diversity provisions are to be incorporated into the scheme and that reinstatement of land is going to be undertaken. A reference is made to the restoration of soil if appropriate.

Alterations were also made to the requirements for wind turbines so as to be compliant with the Ministerial statement 25th March 2015 and the Planning technical guidance particularly paragraph 5-033-150618 revised on the 18th June 2015.

Renewable Energy Schemes

Proposals for renewable energy schemes will be encouraged where the benefit in terms of low carbon energy generating potential does not result, individually or cumulatively, in serious harm to or loss of:

- natural landscape or other natural assets;
- landscape character;
- nature conservation;
- best and most versatile agricultural land;
- heritage assets, including the setting of heritage assets;
- public rights of way;
- air traffic and safety;
- Ministry of Defence operations;
- watercourse engineering and hydrological impact; and
- pollution.

Renewable energy schemes will also need to demonstrate that they will not result in unacceptable impacts on residential amenity including visual impact, noise, shadow flicker, reflection, odour, fumes and traffic generation.

The development must be capable of efficient connection to existing national energy

infrastructure, or it can be demonstrated that the energy generated would be used for on-site needs only.

Where appropriate, large scale solar farms shall be accompanied by a sequential assessment which considers alternative brownfield sites and lower quality agricultural land. Compelling justification must be provided for proposals on high quality agricultural land. Proposals should demonstrate how the installation allows for agricultural use and enhances biodiversity around the arrays.

A condition will be attached to planning permissions for energy development schemes to require the site to be decommissioned and restored when energy generation use ceases or becomes non-functioning for a period of 6 months or more. Such a scheme shall include, if appropriate, measures to restore and protect soil quality.

Proposals for wind turbines will only be permitted provided that the development site is in an area identified as suitable for wind energy development in a Neighbourhood Plan.

Where any application for wind turbine(s) is submitted, it must include a consultation exercise which demonstrates that the planning impacts identified by affected local communities have been fully addressed and therefore the proposal has their backing.

Renewable energy within new developments

All major planning applications shall include renewable energy technology to provide at least 20% of the projected energy requirements of the development, unless viability evidence demonstrates otherwise.

Flood Risk and Surface Water Drainage

Flood Risk

Flood Risk has been identified by the Government's Climate Change Risk Assessment 2012 as one of the most pressing climate change risks to the country.

Policy on Flood risk issues was represented in CS8 of the Core Strategy and paragraphs 8.53 – 8.54 of the Pre Submission Site Allocations and Development Management Plan. CS8 predates the NPPF and Technical Guidance (15th April 2015) and the policy and chapter has been updated to accord with this advice.

Surface Water Management Plan

This is a new policy without any equivalent in earlier plans. The Lead Local Flood Authority has commenced production of, but not completed, a Surface Water Management Plan for Braintree and Witham. This plan will involve modelling of flood risk in greater detail than is available at present and will make recommendations on

flood protection measures. It will also define Critical Drainage Areas in or around the two towns where flood risk is greater and where such measures are likely to be more urgent.

The Surface Water Management Plan is likely to be adopted by the Lead Local Flood Authority prior to the adoption of the emerging Local Plan and its provisions are important considerations in the prevention of flooding. Policy 22 is intended to make sure that the measures proposed by the forthcoming Surface Water Management Plan are taken into account in decision making and that as far as possible, proposed development does not frustrate proposed measures intended to protect against flooding.

Surface Water Management Plan

The Council will require development to be in compliance with and contribute positively towards delivering the aims and objectives of the Braintree and Witham Surface Water Management Plan.

Developments located in Critical Drainage Areas (CDAs), Local Flood Risk Zones (LFRZs) and for redevelopments of more than one property or area greater than 0.1 hectare should seek betterment to a Greenfield runoff rate.

All developments in Critical Drainage Areas (excluding minor housing extensions less than 50m²) which relate to a net increase in impermeable area to include at least one 'at source' SUDs measure (e.g. water butt, permeable surface). This is to assist in reducing the peak volume of discharging from the site.

Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems

Core Strategy CS8 sets out that the Council will minimise exposure of people and property to the risks of flooding by following national guidance laid out in PPS25. This policy advocated the use of SUDs wherever possible unless following adequate assessment soil conditions and/or engineering feasibility dictate otherwise. The Site Allocations and Development Management Plan mentioned SUDs in paragraph 8.54 but did not include a policy. This policy has been written to refer to the updated advice contained in the NPPF, Technical Guidance and Ministerial Statement of the 18th December 2014. Developments of under 10 dwellings are not obligated to incorporate SUDs proposals. The policy also reflects the necessity to consider Sustainable Drainage Systems at an early stage and to include sufficient details with development proposals to enable proper consideration by the Planning Authority. The issue of SUDs maintenance will be done on a site by site basis.

Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems

All new development of 10 dwellings or more and major commercial development, car parks and hard standings will incorporate Sustainable Drainage Systems (SUDs) appropriate to the nature of the site. Such systems shall provide optimum water runoff rates and volumes taking into account relevant local or national standards and the

impact of the Water Framework Directive on flood risk issues.

SUDs design quality will be expected to conform with standards encompassed in the relevant BRE, CIRIA standards and Essex County Council SUDs Design Guide (and as updated) to the satisfaction of the Lead Local Flood Authority.

Maximum use should be made of low land take drainage measures such as rain water recycling, green roofs, permeable surfaces and water butts. Appropriate pollution control measures shall have been incorporated where necessary.

Surface water should be managed as close to its source as possible and on the surface where practicable to do so.

Opportunities shall be taken to integrate sustainable drainage with the development, creating amenity, and enhancing biodiversity.

Only where there is a significant risk of pollution to the water environment, inappropriate soil conditions and/or engineering difficulties, should alternative methods of drainage be considered. It will be necessary to demonstrate why it is not achievable. If alternative methods are to be considered, adequate assessment and justification should be provided and consideration should still be given to pre and post runoff rates.

SUDS design should be an integral part of the design and clear details of proposed SuDS together with how they will be managed and maintained will be required as part of any planning application. Only proposals which clearly demonstrate that a satisfactory SUDs layout with appropriate maintenance is possible, or compelling justification as to why SUDs should not be incorporated into a scheme, or are unviable, are likely to be successful. Contributions in the form of commuted sums may be sought in legal agreements to ensure that the drainage systems can be adequately maintained into the future. The sustainable urban drainage system should be designed to ensure that the maintenance and operation requirements are economically proportionate.

Runoff Rates

This is a new policy without any equivalent in earlier plans. This policy has been requested by the Lead Local Flood Authority and in order to control the runoff rates.

Run-off Rates

Developments on previously developed land of more than one dwelling or commercial building or development of a site greater than 0.1 hectare are required to reduce post development runoff rates for events up to and including the 1 in 100 year return period event with an allowance for climate change to that of a greenfield condition. A minimum requirement is for a 50% betterment. Calculations to demonstrate that such requirements can be met should be submitted to the Local Planning Authority as part of a planning application.

External Lighting

This section addresses the importance of reducing and/or eliminating non-necessary and harmful sources of artificial light in the District that can come with new development. Although artificial lighting can be essential for reasons of safety, security and some leisure activities, insensitive lighting can cause an intrusive source of pollution, distract and blind motorists, and negatively impact on wildlife. In addition to these particular problems, obtrusive light represents a waste of energy, money and resources.

The Supplementary Planning Document produced by Braintree DC, 'External Artificial Lighting' (2009), supports the implementation of the accompanying policy. This policy has been strengthened with the inclusion of the end paragraph, which states that development applicants need to have an overarching focus on sensitive lighting throughout their development, and eliminate non-necessary and/or harmful light sources.

External Lighting

Proposals for external lighting will only be permitted if:

- The lighting is designed as an integral element of the development;
- Low energy lighting is used in conjunction with features such as movement sensors, daylight sensors and time controls;
- The alignment of lamps and provision of shielding minimises spillage, glare and glow, including into the night sky;
- The lighting intensity is no greater than necessary to provide adequate illumination;
- There is no loss of privacy or amenity to nearby residential properties and no danger to pedestrians and road users;
- There is no harm to biodiversity, natural ecosystems and/or heritage assets;
- Consideration is given to time management and limiting the hours of use for external lighting of all the development.

Appendix 5

Rural Enterprise

Following further consideration of this policy and how it relates to other policies in this Plan, it is proposed to amend the Rural Enterprise policy from that which was approved by Members on the 4th December. The themes for the policy have not changed but the wording has been amended for clarity including the section on when new buildings may be considered acceptable. The proposed revised policy text is then set in full in the text box over the page.

Rural Enterprise

Outside settlement boundaries, proposals for small scale commercial development which involve the conversion and re-use of existing buildings that are of permanent and substantial construction and capable of conversion without complete re-building will be considered acceptable subject to the following criteria;

The location of the site being accessible, well related to the existing settlement pattern and sustainable in terms of the Framework

There is no unacceptable impact on protected species or the historic environment

The access and traffic generated by the development can be accommodated without adverse impact on the local road network

There is no unacceptable impact on residential amenity

There is no unacceptable impact on the character of the site or the surrounding countryside and its landscape value

Where it has been evidenced that the conversion of existing buildings on the site is not practical or where there are no existing buildings on the site, new buildings shall be well designed, appropriately sited and shall be of a form, bulk and design that should not offend local landscape character. All such new development shall also be considered against the criteria above.

Town Centres, Retailing and Regeneration

Changes to the policy wording and layout have been made to ensure that the policy reflects the strategic vision. This policy now also incorporates the impact assessment thresholds and therefore the individual policy on this has been removed.

Strategic Policy, Retailing and Regeneration

To ensure the long term vitality and viability of the District's Towns, District and Local Centres, the town centres of Braintree, Halstead and Witham will be the primary location for main town centre uses such as retail, office, leisure and entertainment in the District.

Proposals that positively contribute towards creating attractive, vibrant and safe centres that offer a diverse mix of uses, that promote and improve choice, and in the main towns support the diversification of the evening economy will be supported subject to amenity impact on residents and surrounding area.

Convenience (Food) retailing across the district is expected to grow. Evidence suggests that across the district 7885sqm (gross) of new floorspace will be required. For comparison goods (electrical goods/furniture 12,501 sqm (gross) will be required, and for food and beverage provision 8304sqm (gross) is needed.

The improvement and regeneration of the town centres will be promoted and the regeneration of the following locations is proposed to meet the identified need for additional retailing, community facilities and services and other main town centre uses:

Proposals for main town centre uses will be permitted when a sequential test, and if required an impact assessment, demonstrates that there are no sequentially preferable sites which could accommodate the development.

Impact Assessments will be required for main town centre use proposals for sites that are not within a town, district, or local centre, which are in excess of the following floor space thresholds;

2500 sqm (Gross) – Affecting Braintree Town Centre;

1500 sqm (Gross) – Affecting Halstead and Witham town centres;

1000 sqm (Gross) – for development potentially affecting Great Notley district centre; and

500 sqm (Gross) – For development potentially affecting a local centre.

The scale of development will need to be consistent with the following hierarchy with larger scale development focused on the town centres;

Town Centres – Braintree, Witham and Halstead town centres;

District Centre – Great Notley Neighbourhood Centre;

Local Centres – Coggeshall, Earls Colne, Hatfield Peverel, Kelvedon, Sible Hedingham and Silver End and within the growth locations at the North West Braintree Growth Location Braintree and within the Maltings Lane development Witham.

Local Centres will be protected from inappropriate development and enhanced to provide small-scale shops, services and community facilities for local residents.

Primary Shopping Areas

This policy has been primarily been reworded for clarity and for ease of use. This includes the change to the assessment of loss of retail units from 75% of a retail frontage to 3 or more units, to make it easier for assessment. It should be noted with this policy and others in this section, that certain changes from different use classes are permitted development and therefore would not require planning permission.

Primary Shopping Area

Within the primary shopping areas, as defined on the proposals maps, primary and secondary frontages have been identified. A balance between A1 retail shops and non-retail town centre uses has to be maintained in order to secure the vitality and viability of the primary shopping area.

The following uses will be permitted within primary frontages;

- Retail development (Use Class A1)

Proposals for uses classes A2 - A5 and D1 – D2 provided that;

- It would not result in 3 or more non Use Class A1 units in adjoining premises within the primary shopping area
- It would not break a continuous A1 primary retail frontage

Residential development (C3) provided that it is not located on the ground floor;

The following uses will be permitted within secondary frontages;

- Use Classes A1 to A5, B1 and D1 to D2.

For proposals within Primary Shopping Areas creating more than 2 residential flats above ground floor level, the development should not result in the loss of ancillary storage space or other beneficial uses, to the extent that it would make a ground floor unit not viable, and the development would not prevent off street servicing of any ground floor unit.

District Centres

The main proposed change to this policy is around when uses other than retail are allowed within the centres. The previous policy proposed that 75% of units should remain retail, the proposed policy puts a more individual judgement on any application to recognise the different nature of District centres to town centres

District Centres

Within the District centre as defined on the proposals map, the following uses will be permitted:

Retail development (Use Class A1);

Proposals for use classes A2 – A5 and D1 – D2 provided that it does not result in the loss of an existing A1 retail, or where a A1 unit has become vacant, it can be demonstrated through a marketing and viability assessment that a A1 user cannot be found.

Residential development (C3) provided that it is not located on the ground floor;

For proposals creating more than 2 residential flats above ground floor level, the development would not result in the loss of ancillary storage space or other beneficial use to the extent that it would make a ground floor unit unviable and the development would not prevent off street servicing of any ground floor unit.

Layout and Design of New Development

This policy has been amended to add in some additional criteria on waste storage, legibility and indoor and outdoor amenity space to ensure that development being proposed is of the highest quality.

Layout and Design of Development

The Council will seek a high standard of layout and design in all developments, in the District, and encourages innovative design where appropriate. Planning permission will only be granted where the following requirements are met:

- The scale, layout, density, height and massing of buildings and overall elevation design should reflect, or enhance the areas local distinctiveness and shall be in harmony with the character and appearance of the surrounding area; including their form, scale and impact on the skyline and the building line;
- There shall be no unacceptable impact on the amenity of any nearby properties
- The public realm including buildings, open areas, circulation spaces, and other townscape and landscape features shall be of a high standard of design and materials and they shall be consistent with affordable long term maintenance ;
- Designs shall be sensitive to the need to conserve local features of architectural, historic and landscape importance, particularly within Conservation Areas and in proximity to listed buildings, parks and gardens of historic interest, ancient monuments and sites of archaeological importance;
- Both the overall planning and detailed design shall incorporate measures
- for environmental sustainability throughout the construction, occupation and demolition of the development; in relation to energy conservation, water efficiency, waste separation (internal and external), climate change, flood resilience and resistant construction, and the use of materials with low overall energy requirements;
- Designs shall incorporate details of waste storage and collection arrangements, including provision for recycling, within the site to ensure that the impact on amenity and character are considered and recycling is optimised
- Designs and layouts shall promote a safe and secure environment, crime
- reduction and prevention, and shall encourage the related objective of enhancing personal safety; with the maximum amount of natural surveillance of roads, paths and all other open areas and all open spaces incorporated into schemes
- Landscape design shall promote and enhance local biodiversity and historic environmental assets. The planting of trees in inappropriate places such as highway verges and in close proximity to dwellings shall be avoided in order to prevent interference with highway sight lines and root damage to roads, pavements and properties
- The design and level of any lighting proposals will need to be in context
- with the local area, comply with national policy and avoid or minimise glare, spill and light pollution;
- Use of sustainable modes of transport are promoted in the design and layout of new development, the highway impact shall be assessed and the resultant traffic generation and its management shall seek to address safety concerns and avoid significant increases in traffic movement, particularly in residential areas;
- Proposals for the long term maintenance of public areas, landscaping and highways are included.

- Development will be planned to minimise vulnerability to climate change impacts and that such development will not exacerbate vulnerability in other areas.
- The development proposed should not have a detrimental impact on Highway, footpath and cycleway safety.
- External alterations to buildings will be supported where they do not have a detrimental impact on heritage assets.
- Developments shall be legible and accessible to all and create or contribute to a coherent sense of place that is well articulated and visually interesting and welcoming
- Developments shall be permeable, well connected to walking and cycling networks, open spaces and facilities
- Residential developments shall provide a high level of accommodation and amenity for all prospective occupants. Single aspect units will be discouraged
- Private outdoor amenity space shall be provided in accordance with the standards set out in the Essex Design Guide and shall be accessible, usable and well related to the development

Braintree District Council response to Chelmsford City Council Local Plan Issues and Options		Agenda No: 6
Corporate Priority: Securing appropriate infrastructure and housing growth Portfolio: Planning and Housing Report Presented by: Emma Goodings Report Prepared by: Emma Goodings and David Feeney		
Background Papers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) • National Planning Practise Guidance (NPPG) • Localism Act (2011) • Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004) • Chelmsford Local Plan Issues and Options consultation document, November 2015 		Public Report: Yes
Options: To approve, not approve or amend the response to the Chelmsford City Council Local Plan Issues and Options		Key Decision: No
Executive Summary: Braintree District Council has been consulted on the Chelmsford City Local Plan Issues and Options. The document includes detail on the number of homes and jobs to be provided within the Local Plan and sets out three options for the spatial distribution of that growth, all of which include growth at Great Leighs which is expected to look to Braintree for its key services and facilities. The report highlights the issues that may need additional consideration as Chelmsford continues in the production of its Local Plan including highways, education, health, retail and leisure facilities and proposes the Braintree District Council response to the consultation which is set out in Appendix 1 .		
Decision: To approve the Braintree District Council response to the Chelmsford City Council Local Plan Issues and Options consultation as set out in Appendix 1.		
Purpose of Decision: To agree the consultation response from Braintree District Council.		

Corporate implications	
Financial:	None at this stage
Legal:	To comply with Governments legislation and guidance.
Equalities/Diversity:	Council policies should take account of equalities and diversity.
Safeguarding:	None
Customer Impact:	There will be public consultation during various stages of the emerging Local Plan.
Environment and Climate Change:	The impacts on environment and climate change will be assessed by Chelmsford as they progress the Local Plan
Consultation/Community Engagement:	There will be public consultation during various stages of the emerging Local Plan.
Risks:	N/A.
Officer Contact:	Emma Goodings
Designation:	Planning Policy and Land Charges Manager
Ext. No.	2511
E-mail:	emma.goodings@braintree.gov.uk

1 Background and Introduction

- 1.1 Chelmsford City Council is in the process of preparing a new Local Plan as the current plan expires in 2021. It is intended that this new document will guide the growth and development that will need to be planned for across Chelmsford City Council's area to 2036. The Council is seeking views on the first stage of preparation of the new Local Plan by publishing an Issues and Options consultation document, which is available for consultation responses until 21 January 2016.
- 1.2 The Issues and Options document sets out the main challenges facing the area, including the likely numbers of new homes and jobs to be provided and associated infrastructure requirements. It also sets out three broad spatial options for where new growth could be located. A Sustainability Appraisal, undertaken to test the proposals in the Issues and Options consultation document, is also available for consultation. In addition, the Council is seeking views on a draft Statement of Community Involvement (SCI).
- 1.3 The City Council has identified three potential Spatial Options to deliver the housing requirement up to 2036, including a 20% uplift added to the Objectively Assessed Housing requirement, which they believe best addresses the spatial development principles outlined in the Plan. The additional 20% to the Objectively Assessed Housing requirement represents a total of 930 houses per year, or a total of 14,000 new homes for the period to 2036. Employment growth of 887 jobs per year is considered a robust number to sustain the local economy and for use in the new Local Plan period.

2 Spatial Options

- 2.1 The three Spatial Options set out below all provide the same amount of development on brownfield sites in Chelmsford's Urban Area, but the

difference between each relates to the distribution of development on greenfield sites. These three options are set out below.

- 2.2 *Urban Focus*: Concentrates new development at locations within and/or close to the existing urban areas that are within Chelmsford. These are the urban areas of Chelmsford city, where the majority of new development would be planned, on land to the north of South Woodham Ferrers, and on land to the north and east of Great Leighs.
- 2.3 *Urban Focus and Growth on Key Transport Corridors*: Promotes development at locations within and/or close to the existing urban areas, but to a lesser extent than contained in Option 1, with the remaining development planned at locations on the key transport corridors serving the district.
- 2.4 *Urban Focus and Growth in Key Villages*: Promotes a more dispersed approach to planning for new development within and/or close to the existing urban areas, but to a lesser scale than Options 1 and 2. The remaining development would be planned at the Service Settlements outside of the Green Belt.

3 Implications for Braintree District

- 3.1 In all three options, new development is proposed at Great Leighs. This ranges from 2,000 homes in option one, 1,500 homes in option two and 1,000 homes in option 3. All three options suggest a series of infrastructure improvements which would be required. These are broadly similar in each option, although the scale of the additional facilities would depend on the number of homes being proposed. There is no additional detail on this, which would come forward at a more advanced stage of the Plan.
- 3.2 The first major concern that officers have with development at Great Leighs is secondary education provision. No option in itself provides sufficient new homes to support a new secondary school, whilst the document does not make it clear what school would cover this area, schools in Braintree are geographically closest to the area. Secondary school place provision in Braintree will need to be considered in conjunction with any growth that may be proposed in Braintree District and close working between the two authorities and Essex County Council as education authority will be required to assess the need for school places. A large number of secondary school pupils travelling into the town may also have implications for the local road network.
- 3.3 Health facilities are also a key concern as currently Great Leighs does not have a doctor's surgery. The nearest doctor's surgery geographically may be at Great Notley. Alongside other health facilities in the District, these are stretched and further consideration of how the health care needs of the new population would need to be carried out alongside any growth proposed in Braintree with the NHS, CCG and local doctors.
- 3.4 The infrastructure list for development at Great Leighs includes a number of highway improvements including public transport and pedestrian and cycleway improvements as well as improvements to the strategic highway, possibly through a north east Chelmsford by-pass. Braintree would welcome the improvements to both the local and more strategic network that are proposed.

The highway implications of the site should be assessed in conjunction with growth being proposed in Braintree District, to be assured that all the growth can be accommodated on the highway network.

- 3.5 Whilst it is recognised that the Local Plan is at an early stage it is therefore recommended that more work be carried out on the implications of development at Great Leighs for Great Notley and Braintree town in particular. If Braintree is proposed to be the main source of services and facilities for the new development then development at Great Leighs must be considered alongside any development which we will be proposing in this area, to meet our own housing needs. Education at secondary level and highways are of particular concern but implications in terms of retail need, health, open space and leisure facilities will also need to be addressed.
- 3.6 Hatfield Peverel village is also located in close proximity to Chelmsford City and the District boundary is just to the west of the village. Additional development is being proposed on this side of Chelmsford city. Whilst given its proximity to the city itself it is likely that development would look internally and towards the city for its services and facilities, it is essential that the Chelmsford City Local Plan assesses the implications that development in its area will have on Hatfield Peverel and the A12 corridor more widely, including but not limited to highways, health, education and community facilities.

4 General Points

- 4.1 Chelmsford City are part of the Braintree District housing market area and joint work with the authorities and Colchester and Tendring has taken place on objectively assessed housing need and affordable housing need. Chelmsford are intending to meet their own housing needs evidenced by these reports and an additional 20% buffer. They are also proposing to meet their own needs in terms of new jobs and employment as set out by their evidence base.
- 4.2 Whilst improvements to the A12 are included within the document, it does not make any reference to the potential for improvements to the A120. These would be beneficial to residents of Chelmsford City and should be referenced in the Local Plan.

5 Conclusion

- 5.1 The Chelmsford Issues and Options Local Plan is proposing to allocate land to meet its own needs for housing and jobs at the levels set out in its evidence base. Officers are strongly support of this approach. However if the proposed development at Great Leighs is to take place which will look towards Braintree town for its key services, then the development here must be assessed in combination with any development within the District. This is also true of any development which may take place which would impact on Hatfield Peverel and the A12 corridor.
- 5.2 A proposed response to the Chelmsford City Local Plan Issues and Options consultation is therefore set out in Appendix 1 to this report. There will be 2 further stages of public consultation on the Chelmsford City Local Plan before it is submitted for examination. Officers and members will also need to continue to

work closely with colleagues in Chelmsford on issues which affect both Districts and with the relevant service providers.

6 Recommendation

To approve the Braintree District Council response to the Chelmsford City Council Local Plan Issues and Options consultation as set out in Appendix 1

Appendix 1 – Response to Chelmsford City Local Plan Issues and Options consultation.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Chelmsford Local Plan Issues and Options. We have the following comments to make;

Question 4

Do you have any comments on how the Council has calculated its Objectively Assessed Housing need? Please explain your answer. Where possible, please support your answer with reference to any evidence.

Question 5

Do you have any comments on the housing number (930 homes per year) used for testing in this consultation? Please explain your answer. Where possible, please support your answer with reference to any evidence.

Braintree District Council has been working with partners including Chelmsford city Council to assess the objectively assessed need for new homes, as set out in the NPPF and NPPG.

Question 6

Do you have any comments on how the new Local Plan could meet the accommodation needs of Travellers?

All Essex authorities are working together to assess the need for Gypsy and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople within the County. Further work is currently underway, following new national guidance. Following the completion of this evidence it is expected that all local authorities to look to provide their own needs within their District boundary.

Questions 7

Do you have any comments on how the Council has calculated its job requirement number? Please explain your answer. Where possible, please support your answer with reference to any evidence.

Question 8

Do you have any comments on the job requirement number (887 jobs per year) used for testing in this consultation? Please explain your answer. Where possible, please support your answer with reference to any evidence.

A significant number of residents within Braintree District travel to Chelmsford for work each day and as set out in the document, Braintree is the largest exporter of workers to the City. The District Council is therefore supportive of appropriate employment growth within the Chelmsford Local Plan, providing that this is not to the detriment of other employment markets within the local area.

Question 14

Do you think that we have missed any issues related to highways, transportation and accessibility to be addressed in the new Local Plan? If yes, please explain why. Where possible, please support your answer with reference to any evidence.

The Council supports improvements to highways networks across the County and notes that joint working and assessment of growth proposals should be carried out to ensure that growth proposed in all Local Plans can be successfully accommodated across District borders. We are strongly supportive of improvements to the A12 and

will work with neighbouring authorities, Essex County Council and Highways England to achieve a successful scheme. The Plan however does not reference schemes to improve the A120. Whilst this road is not within the Chelmsford District it would provide benefit to the wider network and also to residents and business in Chelmsford. As such we would expect support for the scheme to be expressed within their document.

Question 20

How do you think that new development growth in Chelmsford should be provided in the new Local Plan?

It is noted that the strategy sets out that Braintree town acts as a service centre for some areas in the north of Chelmsford District. It would be useful to see some evidence on the level of movement and use of facilities in Braintree from the Chelmsford population to help aid the provision of facilities.

Development proposed at Great Leighs is one which has the potential to have the biggest impact on the Braintree District at the village of Great Notley and the town of Braintree.

The first major concern is secondary education provision. No option in itself provides sufficient new homes to support a new secondary school, whilst the document does not make it clear what school would cover this area, schools in Braintree are geographically closest to the area. Secondary school place provision in Braintree will need to be considered in conjunction with any growth that may be proposed in Braintree District and close working between the two authorities and Essex County Council as education authority will be required to assess the need for school places. At this stage it is unclear as to whether this level of development would be able to be accommodated within the existing schools or whether new schools may be required. A large number of secondary school pupils travelling into the town may also have implications for the local road network which will need to be assessed.

Health facilities are also a key concern as currently Great Leighs does not have a doctor's surgery. The nearest doctor's surgery geographically may be at Great Notley. Alongside other health facilities in the District, these are stretched and further consideration of how the health care needs of the new population would need to be carried out alongside any growth proposed in Braintree with the NHS, CCG and local doctors.

The infrastructure list for development at Great Leighs includes a number of highway improvements including public transport and pedestrian and cycleway improvements as well as improvements to the strategic highway, possibly through a north east Chelmsford by-pass. Braintree would welcome the improvements to both the local and more strategic network that are proposed. The highway implications of the site should be assessed in conjunction with growth being proposed in Braintree District, to be assured that all the growth can be accommodated on the highway network.

Whilst it is recognised that the Local Plan is at an early stage it is asked that more work be carried out on the implications of development at Great Leighs for Great Notley and Braintree town in particular. If Braintree is proposed to be the main source of services and facilities for the new development then development at Great Leighs must be considered alongside any development which we will be proposing in this area, to meet our own housing needs. Education at secondary level and highways are of particular concern but implications in terms of retail need, health, open space and leisure facilities will also need to be addressed.

Hatfield Peverel village is also located in close proximity to Chelmsford City and the District boundary is just to the west of the village. Additional development is being proposed on this side of Chelmsford city. Whilst given its proximity to the city itself it is likely that development would look internally and towards the city for its services and facilities, it is essential that the Chelmsford City Local Plan assesses the implications that development in its area will have on Hatfield Peverel and the A12 corridor more widely, including but not limited to highways, health, education and community facilities. It should be noted that Hatfield Peverel is currently undertaking a Neighbourhood Plan which Chelmsford should consider as it progresses.

We look forward to continuing to work constructively and continuously with Chelmsford City Council on both our respective Local Plans to ensure that sustainable growth and development can take place across the region.