

Local Plan Sub-Committee AGENDA



THE PUBLIC MAY ATTEND THIS MEETING

Please note this meeting will be webcast and audio recorded.

Date: Wednesday, 17th February 2016

Time: 6.00pm

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 J 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 14th January 2016 (copy previously circulated).

4 Public Question Time

(See paragraph below)

5 Garden Communities Update

4 - 10

- | | | |
|----------|--|----------------|
| 6 | Draft Tree Strategy Document | 11 - 22 |
| | | |
| 7 | Braintree District Council – Strategic Housing Market Assessment Update - Affordable Housing Needs | 23 - 28 |
| | | |
| 8 | 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. | |
| 9 | 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

- | | |
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| 10 | 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:
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Garden Communities Update		Agenda No:
Corporate Priority:	Securing appropriate infrastructure and housing growth	
Portfolio:	Planning and Housing	
Report Presented by:	Chris Outtersides and Allen Duff (Garden City Developments)	
Report Prepared by:	Chris Outtersides	
Background Papers:	Public Report	
<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)		
Decisions Required: To note the progress made in relation to the consideration and assessment of Garden Communities as part of the Local Plan process. To note the award of £640,000 of grant assistance from the Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG) for information. There is no alternative option; the report is for information only.	Key Decision: No	
Executive Summary:		
<p>Braintree District Council is in the process of preparing a new Local Plan to help shape, enhance and protect the economic, social, natural and built environments within Braintree. Tendring and Colchester Councils' are producing their Local Plans to a common timetable with Braintree. Together with Essex County Council the local authorities have committed to plan for current and future growth needs in North East Essex to 2032 and beyond.</p> <p>To aid co-ordination and the legal requirements of the Duty to Co-operate, the Councils are working on a Memorandum of Understanding and a joint approach to strategic plan-making. This includes exploring the concept of Garden Communities to potentially deliver part of the growth required within the North East Essex area.</p> <p>In addition, as part of the Local Plan processes, a common evidence base has been developed (as appropriate). This has included evidence on housing, the economy,</p>		

transport and the natural environment.

In accordance with this strategic approach, each Council's Local Plan Issues and Options consultations have included the potential for new settlements.

To aid the consideration of Garden Communities, the local authorities have jointly appointed Garden City Developments CIC (GCD), a not for profit community interest company, to promote and establish partnerships with third party landowners and option holders to investigate the feasibility of Garden Communities.

A Garden Community may contribute to achieving a proportion of the assessed housing needs of the district; however it is not the only solution and other sites will also be required to make the Council's 'preferred options' consultation robust. A Garden Community needs to be of sufficient scale to be viable and therefore development is likely to extend throughout and beyond the emerging Local Plan period.

Each local planning authority has committed considerable expenditure for their plan making processes; supported as appropriate by Essex County Council. However, the strategic scale and specialist nature Garden Communities requires dedicated resources and specialist advice to investigate and potentially develop proposals. In recognition of this and in promotion of the Garden Communities movement, the Government has awarded the North East Essex authorities dedicated funding of £640,000 to explore the potential of such settlements. .

This funding does not commit the Council to including a Garden Community in its preferred options consultation; that decision is the responsibility of this Committee and Council.

Decision: To note the progress made in relation to the consideration and assessment of Garden Communities as part of the Local Plan process.

To note the award of £640,000 of grant assistance from the Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG) for information.

Any Corporate implications in relation to the following should be explained in detail	
Financial:	<p>The financial implications of the Local Plan – Preferred Options are included within the budget which has been allocated for the review of the Local Plan including updating of evidence based documents, consultation and examination.</p> <p>The funding secured from the DCLG will specifically be related to work in relation to the Garden Communities programme.</p>
Legal:	<p>Section 33A of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004), as amended by Section 110 of the Localism Act 2011 places a duty upon local authorities and other public bodies to cooperate on strategic matters of cross-boundary significance, which includes housing supply. Before a Planning Inspector can begin the process of examining a Local Plan, he or she needs to be satisfied, with evidence, that the local authority has done everything it can to ensure effective cooperation with neighbouring authorities and other partner organisations and has sought to resolve, as far as is possible, any cross-boundary planning issues. With this in mind, Members should note that the Council is working closely with Colchester Borough Council, Tendring District Council as well as Essex County Council in relation to the consideration of Garden Communities.</p> <p>Finally, Members should also note that whilst the Local Plan functions and responsibilities fall to the Local Plan Committee and full Council, strategic planning and partnership working, land negotiations, establishing appropriate delivery vehicles and requisite funding decisions sit with Cabinet.</p>
Equalities/Diversity	<p>Consideration has been given to the implications of the proposed decision in respect of the following: Crime and Disorder / Equality and Diversity / Health Inequalities /Area or Ward affected / Consultation/Public Engagement and no significant issues are identified as this paper is for noting the further investigation of Garden Communities across Colchester, Tending and Braintree.</p>

Safeguarding	None
Customer Impact:	There will be public consultation during various stages of the emerging Local Plan.
Environment and Climate Change:	<p>The Garden City Principles are taken forward as 'Garden Communities' and advocate the creation of new places that are inclusive and provide genuinely affordable, well designed homes, local jobs and schools, integrated transport systems, high standards of green infrastructure and promotion of health.</p> <p>As such, the Garden City Principles are designed as an indivisible and interlocking framework for the delivery of high quality, well considered places.</p>
Consultation/Community Engagement:	<p>Should the Council decide to proceed with a Garden Community(s) as part of their Local Plan Preferred Options, this will be subject to specific public consultation in line with the statutory regulations at the appropriate time.</p> <p>Consultation on the Local Plan, Preferred Options and any subsequent Development Plan Document will be publicised on the Braintree District Council website and by press release. Notification will also be sent to people and companies on the Council's Local Plan consultation database at the start of every public consultation period.</p>
Risks:	Ensuring members are fully briefed on the Local Plan review process will help reduce the risk of inappropriate development being permitted.
Officer Contact:	Chris Outtersides
Designation:	Project Manager – Major Development
Phone Number	07867 578548
E-mail:	chris.outtersides@colchester.gov.uk

1. Background

- 1.1. Braintree District Council is in the process of preparing a new Local Plan to address future growth and need within the district to 2033 and beyond. The new Local Plan is an important document which will determine the way forward for Braintree. It will provide the strategy for the growth of the District, setting out what development will take place and where. The intention is for the Council to publish its Preferred Options mid-2016
- 1.2. As part of the Local Plan process, the Objectively Assessed Housing Need suggests that the Council needs to allocate land for approximately 12,700 houses (845 a year) for the plan period.
- 1.3. To help address this need, and in accordance with the Duty to Cooperate, the Council is working closely with Colchester Borough Council (CBC) and Tendring District Council (TDC), who are at similar stages in their respective Local Plan preparation to collectively consider Garden Communities.
- 1.4. The Committee will recall that the Braintree Issues and Options Scoping Report published in 2015 and their Call for Sites both included reference to new villages; areas where new housing could fund major infrastructure; and the consideration of larger sites/new settlements to meet the combined housing need of adjoining authorities in a sustainable way.

1 What are Garden Communities?

- 2.1. Garden Communities (Cities) are described by the Town & Country Planning Association (TCPA) as *“holistically planned new settlements which enhance the natural environment and offer high-quality affordable housing and locally accessible work in beautiful, healthy and sociable communities”*
- 2.2. Garden Cities are underpinned by a set of principles. These principles have evolved from Ebenezer Howard’s original vision in 1898 which described how *‘the advantages of the most energetic and active town life, with all the beauty and delight of the country, may be secured in perfect combination’* and include:
 - land value capture for the benefit of the community;
 - strong vision, leadership and community engagement;
 - community ownership of land and long-term stewardship of assets;
 - mixed-tenure homes and housing types that are affordable for ordinary people;

- a strong local jobs offer in the Garden City itself, with a variety of employment opportunities within easy commuting distance of homes;
- beautifully and imaginatively designed homes with gardens, combining the very best of town and country living to create healthy homes in vibrant communities;
- generous green space linked to the wider natural environment, including a surrounding belt of countryside to prevent sprawl, well connected and biodiversity rich public parks, and a mix of public and private networks of well-managed, high-quality gardens, tree-lined streets and open spaces;
- opportunities for residents to grow their own food, including generous allotments;
- strong local cultural, recreational and shopping facilities in walkable neighbourhoods; and
- integrated and accessible local transport systems with walking, cycling and public transport being the most convenient and affordable – with a series of settlements linked by rapid transport providing a full range of employment opportunities (as set out in Ebenezer Howard’s vision of the ‘Social City’ in his book – *To-Morrow: A Peaceful Path to Real Reform* (1898)).

2 Current Position

- 3.1. Following the Issues and Options consultation, the Council (in conjunction with Tendring, Colchester and Essex Councils’) jointly appointed Garden City Developments CIC (GCD), a not for profit community interest company, to promote and establish partnerships with local landowners and option holders to investigate the feasibility of the proposed Garden Communities. GCD has met the Leaders from each Council, has held numerous meetings with key landowners and is currently undertaking discussions with these landowners and option holders.
- 3.2. The intention of these discussions is to develop the Councils’ options around applying land value capture and long term stewardship arrangements and to specifically explore landowners’ appetites for engaging with the councils on these issues and willingness to enter into legally binding agreements with the respective councils to such effect.
- 3.3. Parallel to this, the Councils are actively seeking to evolve the policy process to evidence if the Garden Communities should become broad locations for growth in their Local Plan Preferred Options consultations.

- 3.4. Garden Communities are at the forefront of current strategic thinking in planning and the government is supporting this approach both through grant funding and through its Homes and Communities Agency / Atlas.

3 Department for Communities & Local Government (DCLG) funding

- 4.1. In 2014 the DCLG issued a prospectus entitled '*Locally-led Garden Cities*'. This document invited expressions of interest from Councils' interested in developing new Garden Communities, along with an indication of how Government could support such development.
- 4.2. In response to this prospectus, the Councils bid for, and have been successful in obtaining, dedicated funding of £640,000 from the DCLG to further investigate the feasibility of Garden Communities
- 4.3. This funding will assist in facilitating a number of work streams to develop emerging proposals, to meet key milestones and secure delivery if identified for development. These include brokerage assistance, direct planning support and capacity funding. The funding will also enable the Councils to both dedicate sufficient technical input and undertake a range of key studies and assessments.

5 Recommendation

To note the progress made in relation to the consideration of Garden Communities as part of the Local Plan process.

To note the funding secured from DCLG to investigate Garden Communities.

Draft Tree Strategy Document		Agenda No:
Corporate Priority:	The environment is clean and green	
Portfolio:	Environment and Place	
Report Presented by:	Shaun Taylor	
Report Prepared by:	Shaun Taylor	
Background Papers:	Public Report	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)		
Options: To approve or not approve the Tree Strategy as a support and advisory reference document to the Council's Core Strategy and Local Plan.	Key Decision: No	
Executive Summary:		
<p>The Tree Strategy aims to provide a comprehensive approach to the management and maintenance of trees in the geographical area administered by Braintree District Council. The strategy has been prepared as a two part document.</p> <p>Part 1 provides a policy framework which supports the Council's Core Strategy and Part 2 details practical guidance and implications of trees and development.</p> <p>A draft version of the document was open for comment and consultation by Town and Parish Councils, community tree wardens and specialist interest groups during the month of October 2015. This report provides a summary of the salient points within the strategy document and includes the responses to the consultation as an Appendix 1 at the end of the report.</p> <p>An updated version of the Tree Strategy is available for reference on the Council's website and paper copies are available on request.</p>		
Decision: To approve the Tree Strategy as a planning guidance document		
Purpose of Decision: To provide validation to the document		

Any Corporate implications in relation to the following should be explained in detail	
Financial:	None at this stage
Legal:	To comply with Government legislation and guidance on tree protection.
Equalities/Diversity	Council policies should take account of equalities and diversity.
Safeguarding	None
Customer Impact:	The strategy explains the Council's approach to tree management/protection and its responsibilities as a landowner with a 'duty of care' to neighbouring properties.
Environment and Climate Change:	The document identifies the importance of trees in meeting the challenges to our environmental welfare and the implications of global warming.
Consultation/Community Engagement:	Comments received on the draft document can be found in Appendix 1
Risks:	N/A.
Officer Contact:	Shaun Taylor
Designation:	Tree and Landscape Officer and Team Supervisor.
Ext. No.	2315
E-mail:	shaun.taylor@braintree.gov.uk

1 Background and Introduction

- 1.1 The Council's Landscape Services team has prepared a draft tree strategy document which is intended to provide a comprehensive approach to the management and maintenance of trees across the District. The strategy has been prepared in two parts firstly to present the broad context and policy framework for the conservation and management of trees as a resource in the Braintree landscape and secondly to offer practical guidance for the protection and maintenance of trees.
- 1.2 The document also includes an action plan identifying ways in which the Council will help to meet the corporate objectives of *protecting the environment* and *providing greenspace for everyone to enjoy*. In this respect it also outlines the Council's approach towards protecting trees throughout the District and the ways the Council - as a landowner - will manage its own significant stock of mature trees.

2. Context

- 2.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (2012) refers specifically to trees and woodlands in paragraph 118 (Ancient Woodland) and also to Community woodlands and forests at paragraph 92. Trees and woodlands are key elements of green infrastructure, and urban trees bring this benefit to the doors of individual householders.
- 2.2 There are two policies within the Core Strategy document (2011) which refer to the protection of the countryside and the natural environment, namely - Policy CS 5 Countryside and Policy CS 8 Natural Environment and Biodiversity. These policies are relevant to the broader issues of trees in the landscape and their value as a key indicator in biodiversity assessments and a benchmark for the quality of the natural environment.
- 2.3 Trees are a major component of the lowland landscapes of Essex and as such make a considerable contribution to the amenity and character of individual settlements and the wider countryside. The document sets the scene for trees in the Braintree District landscape and makes reference to the recently completed Landscape Character Analysis prepared by The Landscape Partnership which evaluated the sensitivity of eight key settlements to further development. In this analysis there is an acknowledgement of the importance of trees, hedgerows and woodland in the capacity of any landscape setting to absorb and screen new residential development.
- 2.4 Reference is also made to the position statement released by The Landscape Institute in 2013 entitled 'Public Health and Landscape reflecting the

acknowledged importance of parks and well managed open spaces to the health and wellbeing of the individual and the wider community.

3. Tree Strategy Objectives

3.1 The policies and management objectives contained within the strategy are intended to provide a framework for decision making, assist with the targeting of resources, provide uniformity of purpose across all council departments and help all interested sections of the community to understand Council decisions on the environment. The key corporate objectives in this strategy are: - *Protecting our environment and - Providing green space for everyone to enjoy.*

3.2 The key management objectives are:

- To promote a sustainable tree population by using best practice in arboriculture and forestry to enhance tree longevity, new planting design, establishment and maintenance.
- Maintain and, where possible, improve the character and appearance of the District.
- Maintain a diverse tree stock of mixed age and encourage species diversity.
- Adopt pro-active management and maintenance of trees and woodland in line with established management plans.
- Promote the concepts of arboriculture, forestry and biodiversity inside and outside the Council.
- Promote community involvement to achieve these objectives.

In seeking to meet these objectives we shall inspect our own trees on a regular basis and carry out works appropriate to their location as dictated by health and safety considerations for risk to life and property. In this respect the document contains a number of illustrations highlighting the challenges brought about by frequent stormy weather conditions. The frequency and strength of these storms has been connected to global warming and is a risk factor the Council needs to be aware of as a major landowner; it is also germane to the consideration of planning applications where the desire to keep mature established trees within developments needs to be reflected in the masterplans for these sites so that layouts are agreed that provide sufficient space for large trees, often mature field oaks, to be themselves without inducing anxiety and calls for reduction (and at worst felling) because of concerns from householders about proximity of their dwellings to these key landmark features.

A five year action plan shown in Table 1 of the document will support the management objectives identified in the strategy and the broader corporate

objectives for Environment and Place in the Council's Business Plan. These actions will cover the period 2016 – 2021 and be subject to annual review.

4. Practical Guidance and Implications

4.1 Part 2 of the Strategy provides advice and information on the protection and management of trees in relation to life and property. Trees and property do not always make good neighbours and this section examines key areas of discussion, and sometimes contention, namely:

- Trees and Subsidence
- Trees and Development
- Tree Health
- Tree Risk

In addition there are a number of appendices at the rear of the document; these have been compiled to provide a reference framework of mapping information, detailed advice on tree health issues and legal cases relating to trees.

5. Consultation

5.1 There were seven written responses to the draft strategy document and these were largely positive and supportive in tone; they are shown in full in **Appendix 1**. Where appropriate the tree strategy has been amended to reflect the comments made. The changes have been confirmed in the final column of the table in the appendix.

5.2 Following the consultation the nature and extent of the information available in the appendices to the document has been amended; Appendix 1 of the document now shows the location and distribution of ancient woodland sites across the district; the subsequent appendix shows the location of woodlands owned by Braintree District Council with suitable management prescriptions for their future guidance and use. This also shows the results of a desktop study investigation into the possible opportunities for establishing new community woodlands around the major settlement areas. These sites were partly identified on the basis of their proximity and linkage to other woodland areas, either privately or publicly owned and to provide a possible discussion point with developers of larger sites where the character and type of large areas of new public open space are a pre-requisite to a planning consent.

6. Conclusion

In preparing the tree strategy the intention has been to provide an advisory and informative document drawing on the knowledge of the tree and landscape officers who have been employed at the Council over that time, - reflecting on the practical experiences of meetings with householders, - when considering the issues around protected trees - and meetings with developers at the pre-application stage of major developments. Particular attention has been paid to collecting specialist information from other contemporaneous sources and a recognition that if the strategy is to be of value and relevance over the next few years, then it will need to be revisited and revised to include further information on the spectrum of pertinent issues from the progress of ash dieback to the development of garden village settlements.

7. Recommendation

To approve the Tree Strategy as a planning guidance document.

**Appendix 1 Consultation Responses to Draft Tree Strategy document
(Rev. G) – October 2015**

Respondent	Comment	Action/response
1. Cressing Parish Council	Cressing Parish Council have reviewed the draft tree strategy and are concerned about the removal of trees in the parish due to potential development when our understanding is that Braintree District Council have not yet approved the sites for development.	This comment has been addressed separately
2. Great Notley Parish Council	<p>The Parish Council are pleased to note on page 29 point 6.10 that a Tree management plan is considered suitable for the Parish however on page 24 Table 1 under 'Measuring Output – A Five Year Action Plan - Measuring the Duty of Care/Maintenance It states – “Securing 80% of all maintenance as programmed or pro-active rather than by complaint over the 5 year period of this plan” Does this mean that Great Notley Parish will only receive 80% of planned maintenance over the 5 year plan? If so would it be more appropriate for the District Council to reconsider the feasibility or works to be carried out in order to reach a more realistic target for ongoing maintenance. Page 31 Para 6.14 The Parish Council would wish consideration to be given to the Forest Schools initiative being included here. In Great Notley Parish both Notley Green and White Court Primary are Forest Schools and enjoy local use of Cuckoo Wood and White Court Wood for educational purposes. P62 Map of Great Notley area. The quality of this map is poor and it would be useful for the map included in the final version to</p>	<p>The strategy identifies the importance of the planned vegetation management periods of trees, woodland and hedgerows managed by the Council to ensure that the majority of the work that is carried out each year is pro-active and planned rather than reactive, on the basis the establishment of this approach to management should reduce the number of reactionary items generated on the basis of telephone calls/written complaints from householders about</p>

	<p>be clearer particularly for those consulting the plan who do not have specific knowledge of the area. Page Cuckoo Wood.</p> <p>This is a gated and fenced Ancient Woodland with access controlled by Braintree District Council. The Parish primary schools, Notley Green and White Court use the wood for educational trips under the Forest Schools initiative. It is also understood that the scouts and brownies have also used it. Few from the wider local community experience enjoyment from this amenity. The Action column says, 'arrange local access events to promote the wood'. Few Great Notley residents have ever had a reasonable opportunity to visit this publically-supported wood and the Parish Council feels that consideration ought to be given to promoting more opportunities for residents to have free access. Furthermore, the Parish Council (or its Tree Warden) does not appear to be considered in any use promotion activities in any event, but would be very willing to be so.</p> <p>The strategy might usefully recognise the apparent shortcoming identified and the Parish Council's offer. P64 Central Spine and Levens Wood.</p> <p>The Parish Council Tree Warden has highlighted that if Leven's Wood is to be coppiced, in part to provide better access and avoid the fly tipping who will be responsible for the removal of the fly tipped waste? Coppicing could expose lots of fly tipping initially.</p>	<p>overhanging branches and contact with property. The 80% figure refers to this split in proactive and reactive work and not the percentage of planned maintenance for the parish.</p> <p>Other points raised in these comments have been addressed by the Community Landscape Officer.</p>
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<p>3. Cllr O'Reilly-Cicconi</p>	<p>It is a very good document and a good piece of work. But from a Planning point of view and what would be useful to the Planners and the Local Planning Committee Members would be that on page 19 you refer to building extra rooms in houses and adding conservatories will in future lead to subsidence and trees having to be removed, he thinks that we need to include a guide and rules as to how close to a tree a house or conservatory can be built, as the Planning Committee members are not aware of these rules when granting or refusing Planning Applications.</p>	<p>An information sheet has been added to the Appendices to cover the point raised by Cllr. O'Reilly-Cicconi</p>
<p>4. David Mattham – (Tree Warden – Braintree)</p>	<p>Report and record vandalism to the police. Grade tree planting protection according to risk. Contract for care of tree for first year. Policy for removal of support ties. Map showing potential planting areas such as Coldnailhurst and Bradford Meadows would be useful.</p>	<p>These points have been noted and addressed separately with grounds maintenance staff where appropriate.</p>
<p>5. Andrew Adair (Tree Warden – Black Notley)</p>	<p>More can be done with a view to protection, management and monitoring of ancient woodland within BDC's jurisdiction while not finding anything to disagree with in Dr Charles Mynors assessment of how these sites should be managed in the future. There are enhancements that can be made at local district level short of full legal protection from harm conferred by the National Government on ancient woodland sites. As a statutory right that AW areas should continue to exist in perpetuity free from damage or alteration. The issuing of felling licences by the Forestry Commission on trees within a designated Ancient Wood to be</p>	<p>A set of maps showing the location and extent of all the sites of Ancient Semi-natural woodland in each electoral ward across the district. The maps also show the parish boundaries for ease of use by the community tree wardens. The broader points made in Mr. Adair's response have been addressed in a</p>

	<p>reviewed before the planning committee of BDC to either confirm or revoke these licences as the committee sees fit with regard to the trees amenity and value as retained species. All further applications to be dealt with in this manner as a requirement of BDC policy on the protection and retention of Ancient Woodland sites with or without TPOs already in place. Any application to revoke TPOs within Ancient Woodland and grant a felling licence to be considered by the council Planning Department / Planning Committee as a wholly exceptional circumstance; exceptions would be a danger to the public / owner of woodland routes for services where is no viable alternative available to the one proposed. Attention to the numbers of veteran trees existing on the boundaries of and within Ancient Woodland to be numbered identified as at risk of neglect or serious harm from practices not compatible with proper woodland management of a sensitive habitat. Parish tree wardens could be enlisted for this task trained and equipped by BDC to include an offset towards travel costs. The Council would administer this scheme also arrange access with landowners to engage with traditional woodland practises is a worthwhile expectation this would be in the own interest to do so and</p>	<p>separate letter.</p>
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	<p>would enhance the longevity of AWs as habitats of scientific significance. However those landowners who for whatever reason do not consider this worthwhile, AW protection and maintenance remain the number one objectives. Ancient Woodlands are in steep decline throughout the UK at a rate of loss that will push towards extinction without planned action to preserve those that remain. Braintree Council could play a leading part in this endeavour; AW preservation requires an imaginative approach from BDC planners and councillors to put these proposals into practise with long term benefits to the countryside and people of Essex.</p>	
<p>6. Witham Tree Group (Allan Waight – Vice-Chairman)</p>	<p>The Landscape Services Team are to be congratulated on producing an excellent document. As a new community group with an objective to protect and increase the tree cover in and around our town, the Witham Tree Group see this document providing an invaluable source of information to help us develop our plans for achieving our objectives and raising awareness about the benefits of living in an urban environment well stocked with trees. In this context the guidance on what constitutes a 'legal nuisance' is likely to be particularly helpful. Would it be possible please, in the final version, to expand the reproductions in Appendix 2?</p>	<p>The information contained in Appendix 2 'London Tree Officers Guidelines on Tree Management in an Urban Setting' has been made more legible in the revised document.</p>
<p>7. Margaret Robins, Witham Lodge</p>	<p>The report is very thorough and provides an excellent framework for you to operate. I would like to</p>	<p>Comments noted</p>

	<p>make three points: 1. The Witham Tree Group is a value added contribution towards planting of new stock in appropriate areas. Their work is now noticeable throughout Witham. Without their hard work, parts of Witham would look bare and lack presence. Trees add a dimension that nothing else can. 2. I am still not convinced that landscape is given sufficient planning priority in Witham. As residents of Witham Lodge, we now face a large facade of depressing bricks and roofs immediately opposite us. The vista is nothing like what was presented to us at concept stage. House, houses, flats, houses - nothing more. 3. Witham Lodge trees receiving insufficient attention to ensure future viability. Congratulations on an excellent report. A lot of hard work has gone into it. Sadly, I think bricks will always take precedence and as a community, this is what we are forced to endure.</p>	
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Braintree District Council – Strategic Housing Market Assessment Update - Affordable Housing Needs		Agenda No:
Corporate Priority: Securing appropriate infrastructure and housing growth Portfolio: Planning and Housing Report Presented by: Emma Goodings Report Prepared by: Emma Goodings		
Background Papers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) • National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) • Localism Act (2011) • Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004) 		Public Report
Options: To approve or not approve the Strategic Housing Market Assessment Update on Affordable Housing Needs		Key Decision: No
Executive Summary: <p>As part of the new Local Plan, Braintree together with the local authorities within its Strategic Housing Market Area (Chelmsford, Colchester, Tendring and Braintree) have commissioned an update to our assessment of affordable housing need. Whilst the previous work undertaken is relatively recent, new government guidance on the assessment of housing need has been released and this assessment has taken into account the new methodology, producing a robust assessment of affordable housing need.</p> <p>For Braintree District, the findings of the assessment are that there should be 218 new affordable homes in the District per year. Based on the figure for objectively assessed need of 845, this represents 25.8% of the total new homes. Of those 218, the report suggests that 216 of those should be affordable/social rent and 2 should be shared ownership. The assessment also provides evidence on the size requirements of homes for both the open market and affordable sectors.</p> <p>The full assessment is available on the website and in hard copy by request.</p>		
Decision: To approve the Strategic Housing Market Assessment update on Affordable Housing as evidence base for the Local Plan		
Purpose of Decision: To place the document in the evidence base for the new Local Plan and use as a basis for decision making in relation to the policies in the Local Plan on affordable housing need		

Any Corporate implications in relation to the following should be explained in detail	
Financial:	The preparation of the Plans set out within the Local Development Scheme 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.
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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 In 2013, Braintree District Council alongside Chelmsford City Council, Brentwood Borough Council, Colchester Borough Council and Maldon District Council commissioned consultants to carry out a Strategic Housing Market Assessment. However, assessment methodology in this area of Local Plan production has been changed and in order to ensure the robustness of the evidence base on housing need in the new Local Plan it was recommended that further work be carried out on housing need.
- 1.3 In July 2015, Peter Brett and Associates were commissioned by Braintree District Council, Chelmsford City Council, Colchester Borough Council and Tendring District Council to prepare additional work on objectively assessed housing need. This work set the four authorities as an appropriate housing market area in which work on housing need should be carried out. It also recommended an objectively assessed housing need total for the whole housing market area and each constituent authority. This document was reported to Members of the Local Plan Sub Committee at the meeting in September 2015 and is available on the website. However it did not look at affordable housing need in any detail.
- 1.4 In August 2014 additional work on affordable housing need was commissioned by the four authorities from HDH Planning and Development, a specialist consultancy in this area. Their assessment is the subject of this committee report.

2 Methodology

- 2.1 Government guidance in the National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) sets out in paragraphs 22 to 29 how affordable housing need should be calculated. It defines affordable housing need 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'*
- 2.2 The NPPG goes on to set out the types of households to be considered in housing need including;
 - *'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 impairments 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. 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'*

2.3 The assessment therefore covers the following areas:

- Examination of the latest data on the labour market and the resident population and a profile of the housing stock in the Housing Market Area and the changes that have occurred to it
- Analysis of the price of property in the HMA and the affordability of housing for residents
- Production of an analysis of the entire housing market within the long-term balancing housing markets model (LTBHM)
- Calculation of outputs for the affordable housing needs model strictly in accordance with the PPG approach
- An analysis of the specific housing situation of the particular sub-groups of the population included within the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)
- A conclusion summarising the implications of these results

2.4 As part of the assessment a well-attended stakeholder workshop took place in September 2016 which included representatives from the local authorities, affordable housing providers and market housebuilders. The attendees of this workshop and its discussions are set out in the report.

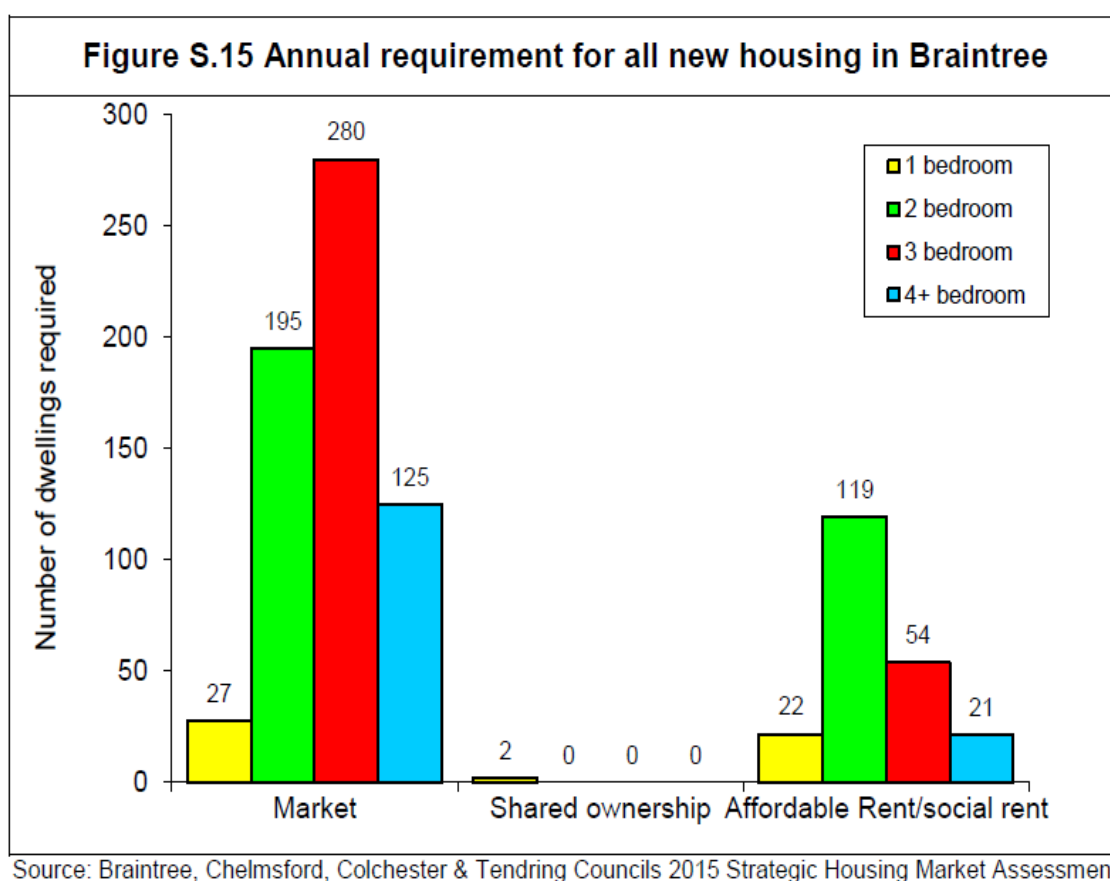
2.5 The model set out in the report contains details of all the different types of households in affordable housing need. This is 1,360 affordable homes per year, across the four local authority areas. However this includes a number of single person households under 35. These individuals are deemed suitable to potential meet their housing needs within the market as part of a shared household. This follows from the Local Housing Allowance Regulations (often known as 'housing benefit') which indicates that single people under 35 are only entitled to the shared accommodation rate rather than the rate for a one bedroom house. Under 35 single person households which can afford a market shared room rate are therefore excluded from this assessment.

3 Findings of the Report

3.1 The report includes a range of useful data in relation to the four local authorities which is presented in a series of easy to read charts and tables

throughout the document. This includes information on changes in property prices, entry level rental and purchase costs, relative affordability, household types etc. The full report is available in on the website and in hard copy by request. A shorter executive summary has also been produced containing the main findings which is also available on the website.

- 3.2 The main findings in relation to affordable housing need and type/size of homes estimated to be needed in the Braintree District, is set out on the graph on the following page. The total figure for new homes is taken as 845 new homes per year as recommended by the Peter Brett and Associates (PBA) report completed last year on Objectively Assessed Housing Need (OAHN). As can be seen from the graph, it suggests that 216 of these should be affordable rent/social rent with over half of those as 2 bedroom units. 2 shared ownership properties are estimated as required at 1 bedroom and of the 627 open market homes, around 75% should be 2 and 3 bedroom homes.



- 3.3 The report has also looked briefly about the potential for discounted home ownership models to address some of the housing need. This would include models such as the starter homes scheme which is a new home available to

first time buyers under 40 at a discounted rate of 20% (up to a value of £250,000). The assessment found that this type of product is more expensive than entry level market accommodation (generally private rent) and entry level home ownership, as such it is not considered suitable to meet the needs of those in housing need identified. It is also worth noting that a 4 bedroom home at 80% of a new home cost, would exceed the £250,000 cap across the housing market area.

4 Conclusion and Next Steps

- 4.1 The Strategic Housing Market Update Assessment produced by HDH Planning and Development is considered a robust piece of evidence, completed in line with the latest methodological guidance. An executive summary of the assessment has also been produced for ease of reference and availability.
- 4.2 Following on from this assessment, PBA will be updating the Objectively Assessed Need study completed in July 2015, to take into account this updated affordable housing need assessment and further work which Tendring District Council have completed on their objectively assessed need. This updated work will be brought before Members in the coming months.
- 4.3 On the basis of all the information, a paper will be presented to Members setting out the factors which have been taken into account on housing need and a recommended housing target for the Local Plan will be proposed.
- 4.4 It should be noted that proposals currently under consideration by central government may change the definition of affordable housing, and there may be a requirement for local authorities to promote starter homes. It remains unclear at this stage how this will affect broader affordable housing policy.

5 Recommendation

To approve the Strategic Housing Market Assessment update on Affordable Housing as evidence base for the Local Plan