



Braintree District Council

Local Plan Examination of Section 2

Main Matter 6 - A Prosperous District – Homes – Strategic Growth Locations 1

June 2021

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A Prosperous District – Homes – Strategic Growth Locations 1

Policy LPP 18 Strategic Growth Location - Land East of Great Notley, south of Braintree

Policy LPP 19 Strategic Growth Location - Land East of Broad Road, Braintree

Policy LPP 20 Strategic Growth Location - Former Towerlands Park Site

- **Are the above policies and site allocations justified by appropriate available evidence, having regard to national guidance, and local context, including the meeting the requirements of the BLP SECTION 1?**

- 6.1 Yes, all three growth locations are consistent with the BLP Section 1 policy SP3 – Spatial Strategy for North Essex which proposes that:

“Existing settlements will be the principal focus for additional growth across the North Essex Authorities area within the Local Plan period, Development will be accommodated within or adjoining settlements according to their scale, sustainability and existing role both within each individual district and, where relevant, across the wider strategic area.”

- 6.2 All three sites have been subject to assessment through the Council’s evidence base and assessed through the SA/SEA. Each of these sites is located adjacent to the main town of Braintree which is considered to be a sustainable location for development, as it provides access to existing services, transport options and employment opportunities. This is compatible with the principles of sustainability set out in paragraph 7 of the NPPF.
- 6.3 The allocation of these sites is supported by an extensive evidence base¹ which assess each site on their individual issues such as landscape character, transport, and the historic environment among others as well as considering the overall impact of the sites taken as a whole.
- 6.4 These sites are considered to be deliverable and will make a significant contribute toward the housing requirements for the district as set out in policy SP4 – Meeting Housing Needs, of the Section 1 Local Plan with Land East of Great Notley, south of Braintree providing 1750 by 2033, Land East of Broad Road contributing 1000 and the Former Towerlands Site providing 575. Further details of delivery rate of these sites is contained within the Council’s housing trajectory (see Housing Topic Paper 2).
- 6.5 Land East of Broad Road and the Former Towerlands Park site both have the benefit of planning permission. As such they have gone through a detailed planning process and have found to be acceptable. The sites continue to

¹ <https://www.braintree.gov.uk/planning-building-control/section-2-examination-local-plan/6>

progress and the Council has every confidence that the developments will deliver the homes as set out in the housing trajectory.

- 6.6 Land East of Great Notley does not currently have a planning application submitted or planning permission but work is being progressed to masterplan the site with the consortium of landowners, the Council and key stakeholders. There are no statutory consultee objections to the allocation of the site and the developers are committed to bringing the site forward in line with policy LPP17 of the BLP Section 2, as set out within the Statement of Common Ground (SOCG011). As Planning Performance Agreement has also been signed with a view to submitting a planning application in September 2021.
- 6.7 This site is well located as it is adjacent to Braintree and Great Notley, with transport connections including cycling connections to both locations. It is adjacent to the A120 and A131 which provides excellent access to Chelmsford and Stansted Airport, key local areas of employment and leisure facilities.
- 6.8 In terms of the SA/SEA (BDC0023), this site scores either as having significant positive or minor positive effects against SA objectives. The one negative effect was to do with sewage, however this effect can be mitigated through improvements to the local sewage network as per the Infrastructure Delivery Plan (BDC012 – Section 5).
- 6.9 The site is considered to be viable with case study assumptions in the evidence base (BDC008 – Appendix 2) taking into account the scale and requirements associated with the allocation. Testing assumptions are able to capture the requirements of the development, including open space, affordable housing and planning contributions as well as taking account of typical development costs associated with access, highway works, pedestrian accessibility and contributions to sustainable transport measures.
- 6.10 Opening up costs for larger sites include allowances for additional on-site infrastructure provision and increased provision of S106 obligations associated with the potential delivery of strategic highways infrastructure projects. A detailed assessment of the viability of these proposals is set out in the Council's evidence base document BDC008.
- 6.11 The Infrastructure Delivery Plan (BDC012 - Table 13.1) sets out the infrastructure provision that this site will be required to deliver, this includes provision for new school places including nursery provision, NHS facilities and it will be necessary to provide improvements for sewage provision.
- 6.12 In terms constraints for flood risk, the site is not located within any identified flood zones. A number of listed buildings are included within the site, as well as adjacent to it, meaning that their settings will have to be carefully considered through the design process. A Heritage Impact Assessment (BDC057) has been produced on this issue. One of the main concerns raised by residents is traffic impact, however any traffic impacts are able to be mitigated.

- 6.13 Comments have been submitted on the need for green buffers between the new site and properties on London Road, traffic impact, pollution, infrastructure concerns, the impact of wildlife and the need for areas to be preserved for conservation. Concerns have also been raised on heritage impact, lack of detail for the proposal, and that the delivery of the site would be too slow. Alternative sites have also been suggested.
- 6.14 It is agreed that some alterations are needed to the policy in respect to additional references to school sizes, the requirement for an NHS contribution or facility, and an appropriate contribution toward the Chelmsford North West By-pass. Many of the comments relate to detail and would be addressed through the Master Planning for the site. It is also agreed that a Heritage Impact Assessment is required and this has been produced. Concerns regarding transport are addressed through the highways evidence base (BDC31/BDC35/BDC36), and the wording of the policy seeks to limit the impact of traffic on Bakers Lane. The IDP outlines the infrastructure that the new site would be expected to provide.
- 6.15 The Council considers this site to be deliverable and is supported by a robust and credible evidence base.
- **Do the housing land site allocations identified above show how they will contribute to the achievement of the overall housing requirement of the BLP Section 1 (14320 new homes) and its timescale for delivery?**
- 6.16 Yes, all three sites are included in the Housing Trajectory (Topic Paper 2, Appendix 1) which sets out the likely delivery rate and timescales for these developments. This is supported by detailed assessment of the likely delivery in Appendix 2 of the Topic Paper 2.
- 6.17 On the Land East of Broad Road site and former Towerlands site the number of homes that can be delivered on the site has been carefully considered and parameter plans have been approved as part of the planning permissions which show how this level of development alongside supporting development and infrastructure will be provided on the site. In terms of the timescale for delivery the Towerlands site is expected to commence development with the first completions in 2023/24 and completion of the site in 2032/33. Land East of Broad Road is expected to have completions in 2022/23 and is completed in 2032/3. This information has been provided by the agents for these sites, and the Council consider that there are no planning reasons why this is not a robust and credible assessment of the current position.
- 6.18 The developers for the site to the East of Great Notley are due to submit a planning application on this site in September 2021, with completions due to start in 2023/24. The revised housing trajectory proposed in Topic Paper 2 Housing contains an updated assessment of housing delivery from this site which both the Council and the consortium of landowners consider to be a robust and realistic assessment of completions on the site.

- **Do policies LPP 18 to LPP 20 provide clear direction as to how a decision maker should react to a development proposal in relation to these allocations?**

6.19 Yes. All three policies (as amended) set out the level of development provision, and associated infrastructure that they are expected to provide. A policy for each Strategic Growth Location is considered the appropriate way to provide this clear direction which allows specific important infrastructure requirements for each site to be clearly set out within the policy, alongside identifying the most pertinent local issues which will need to be addressed in a future planning application. In this way the decision maker will be very clear as to the expectations for delivery from each of these sites.

6.20 Each site is also shown on its respective Inset Map with a clear boundary within which that development is expected to take place.