



Braintree District Council

Local Plan Examination of Section 2

Main Matter 10 - A Prosperous District – Homes
– Specialist Housing and Residential Allocation

June 2021

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Policy LPP 25 Specialist Housing - Mount Hill, Halstead
Policy LPP 32 Residential Allocation - Gimsons, Witham

- **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?**

Specialist Housing - Mount Hill, Halstead (LPP 25)

- 10.1. The National Planning Policy Framework (2012) states at paragraph 50 that Local Planning Authorities should Plan for a variety of homes to meet the *'needs of different groups in the community'* including for people with disabilities.
- 10.2. Policy SP 4 of the Section 1 Plan provides the overall housing requirement for Braintree District of 14,320 across the plan period but leaves the detail to the Section 2 Plan. The allocation at Mount Hill, Halstead is consistent with the spatial strategy set out within BLP – Section 1 and 2. The site is within the Town of Halstead, which is considered to be a top tier settlement in terms of sustainability.
- 10.3. Pages 71 – 74 of the Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2015 Update (EB019) provides details of households with specific needs. Figure 6.3 of the assessment shows a projected increase of 189 people aged 18-64 with a serious physical disability and 51 people with a moderate or severe learning disability (all ages) within Braintree District between 2015 and 2030.
- 10.4. The Council considers that the allocation of this site for specialist housing will contribute towards meeting the future needs of people with physical impairments and learning disabilities. An outline planning permission (16/01646/OUT) has now been granted on the site for 16 no. supported living homes and 9no. market homes which was issued in April 2020.

Gimsons, Witham (LPP 32)

- 10.5. This is a 3.48 hectare site near the centre of Witham which was previously protected as Visually Important Green Space before being allocated as a residential development site WITC421 on the relevant Proposals Map. The site is close to the centre of the town of Witham and is in private ownership. A number of TPOs exist onsite as well as semi-natural open space and the areas sensitive to views from the river walk. Policy LPP32 sought to balance the sustainable location of the site and the district's overall housing need with the above constraints.

10.6. Since the submission of the Local Plan a full planning permission (18/02010/FUL) has now been granted on the site for 78 residential dwellings. This permission includes the demolition of Gimsons House and the utilisation of the land directly adjacent to the house. This has meant that the yield of the site has increased compared to what was set out within the policy. MM38 and MP24 have been submitted to make the minimal amount of change to the policy while reflecting the position which was agreed through the planning application process.

- **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?**

Specialist Housing - Mount Hill, Halstead (LPP 25)

10.7. Mount Hill, Halstead (LPP 25) is shown in the revised housing trajectory within the Housing Topic Paper and is anticipated to be delivered within the 24/25 and 25/26 monitoring years. The specialist housing element of the scheme is self-contained and therefore counted as a complete C3 dwellings for the purpose of housing monitoring. With a full planning permission granted last year, the Council has no concerns that the site will not come forward in line with the housing trajectory.

Gimsons, Witham (LPP 32)

10.8 Gimsons, Witham (LPP 32) is shown in the revised housing trajectory within the Housing Topic Paper and is anticipated to be delivered within 23/24 and 24/25 monitoring years. A full planning permission has been granted, which was subject to a rejected High Court challenge, but this was rejected and legal proceedings has now been exhausted. The developer and the Council are therefore confident that work on the site will begin soon and the will be completed as per the housing trajectory.

- **Do policies LPP 25 and LPP 32 provide clear direction as to how a decision maker should react to a development proposal in relation to these allocations?**

Specialist Housing - Mount Hill, Halstead (LPP 25)

10.9. Policy LPP 25 provides a clear policy framework for the development to come forward and ensure the provision of specialist housing to meet the District need. Although outline planning permission (16/01646/OUT) has been granted, it is considered that the policy should remain in place due to its specific requirements

and as the site is not yet under construction. For example, the minimum number of market houses being provided to ensure viability.

Gimsons, Witham (LPP 32)

- 10.10. Yes, the Council considers that the policy as amended provides a clear framework for the development to come forward on this site. Full planning permission has been granted, but has not yet started construction and as such the policy could remain in place in case the development under this permission were not to come forward. However with full planning permission from a major housebuilder that is considered a low risk.