

**Threshold for Affordable Housing in the Urban Parts of the District
Agenda Item 9**

Portfolio Area:	Cllr Harley Cabinet Member for Enterprise and Culture
Report Presented by:	Eleanor Dash Planning Policy Manager

Background Papers:	Report on Affordable Housing Provision and Developer Contributions in the District of Braintree by Three Dragons. 2009 Residential Land Availability Survey and 2008-2009 Residential Completions Information. Please refer to table at end of report.
Corporate Implications:	
Options:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To approve the dwelling number threshold for urban areas, to be included in the Core Strategy affordable housing policy. • Not to approve the dwelling number threshold for urban areas. • To amend the dwelling number threshold for urban areas.
Risks:	That the Core Strategy could be found unsound.

Executive Summary

A further assessment of housing supply in the urban areas could not demonstrate that there was justification to reduce the national threshold for affordable housing provision below 15 dwellings, or 0.5 ha.

Decision

To approve an amendment to the Core Strategy policy on affordable housing to require that there should be a threshold of 15 dwellings, or 0.5ha for the provision of affordable housing, in the urban areas comprising the urban wards of Braintree and Bocking, Witham and Halstead.

Background

1.1 Members of the Panel received a report on Affordable Housing Provision and Developer Contributions from Three Dragons and approved the Core Strategy affordable housing policy details set out below, at the meeting on 18th November:-

a) 40% affordable housing contribution in the rural areas, excluding the parishes of Sible Hedingham and Great Notley and the proposed growth location in the Parish of Rivenhall.

b) 30% affordable housing in the urban wards of Braintree and Bocking and Witham, including the proposed growth locations and in Halstead, the Parishes of Sible Hedingham and Great Notley and the proposed growth location in the Parish of Rivenhall.

c) A threshold of 5 dwellings, or 0.16ha, in the rural areas, that is the whole District excluding the urban wards of Braintree and Bocking, Witham and Halstead.

1.2 It was agreed that further information would be provided on housing supply in the urban areas, before a decision was reached on the threshold for affordable housing in these areas.

1.3 The Three Dragons Report suggested that the national threshold for affordable housing provision on development sites, set out in Planning Policy Statement 3, of 15 dwellings (or 0.5 ha) was appropriate in the urban areas and that there was no justification for adopting a lower threshold.

1.4 They had proposed that a lower threshold was justified in the rural areas, because of the very few sites of over 15 dwellings that would come forward in those areas.

1.5 However, officers were aware of a large number of previous applications in urban areas for 14 dwellings, which had avoided the need to provide any affordable housing and wished to investigate whether there was any justification for a lower threshold, of 10 dwellings or 0.33 ha. in the urban areas.

1.6 An assessment of residential land availability sites for all urban wards, as at April 2009 (which does not include the Core Strategy growth locations) showed that 79.3% of dwellings (1594 dws) in urban areas were on sites of 15 dwellings or more and only 9.1% of dwellings (184 dws) were on sites of between 11-14 dwellings, with only 5.1% of dwellings (103) on sites of 6-10 dwellings.

1.7 The low percentage - 9.1% of dwelling supply on sites of between 11 and 14 would not be sufficient to justify a departure from the national policy threshold of 15 dwellings.

Table of Size of Dwelling Site Supply 2009

Village/town	1-3	4	5	6-10	11-14	15 or more	Total
Ashen	5						5
Bardfield	2						2
Saling							
Belchamp Otten							0
Belchamp St Paul	3						3
Belchamp Walter	2						2
Birdbrook	2						2
Black Notley	9						9
Borley	1						1
Bradwell	1						1
Bocking Blackwater	4			6	26		36
Bocking North	10			6	28	120	164
Bocking South	4		5		14	48	71
Braintree Central	15	16	5	33	34	253	356
Braintree East	5			9	27		41
Braintree South	3	4				400	407
Bulmer	1						1
Bures Hamlet							0
Castle Hedingham	1	4					5
Coggeshall	18	12	5				35
Cressing and Tye Green	7			8	14		29
Earls Colne	6						6
Fairstead	1						1
Faulkbourne	0						0
Feering	5						5
Finchingfield	9						9
Foxearth	2						2
Gestingthorpe	1			6			7
Gosfield	8			8			16
Gt Bardfield	1						1
Gt and Lt Henny	1						1

Gt Maplestead	5						5
Great Notley	13						13
Great Saling	2						2
Great Yeldham	5						5
Greenstead Green & Halstead Rural	1						1
Halstead St Andrews	15	4	5	6	28	265	323
Halstead Trinity	3					11	14
Hatfield Peverel	14	4			13		31
Helions Bumpstead	7						7
Kelvedon	10	4	5		13	32	64
Lamarsh	2						2
Liston	0						0
Lt Maplestead	0						0
Lt Yeldham	3	4					7
Middleton	2						2
Ovington	3						3
Panfield	5						5
Pebmarsh	2			10			12
Pentlow	0						0
Rayne	5					82	87
Ridgewell	1						1
Rivenhall	0						0
Shalford	5						5
Sible Hedingham	16			8	3		27
Silver End	2				12		14
Stambourne	1						1
Steeple Bumpstead	6		5				11
Stisted	5						5
Sturmer	0						0
Terling	3						3
Tilbury Juxta Clare	1						1
Toppesfield	3						3
Twinstead	2						2
Wethersfield	5						5
White Colne	1						1

White Notley	3						3
Wickham St Paul	1						1
Witham Ch Hill & Central	21			39	27	55	142
Witham North	1						1
Witham South	4		5	4		368	381
Witham West	1					74	75
Total	306	52	35	143	239	1708	2483
% of total	12.3%	2.1%	1.4%	5.8%	9.6%	68.8%	100%
Rural totals (excludes Braintree, Halstead and Witham wards)	220	28	15	40	55	114	472
Rural % of total rural	46.6%	5.9%	3.2%	8.5%	11.6%	24.2%	100%
Urban (Braintree, Halstead and Witham)	86	24	20	103	184	1594	2011
Urban % of total urban	4.3%	1.2%	1.0%	5.1%	9.1%	79.3%	100%

Based on Residential Land Availability as at 31.3.09 Gross figures (ie excludes losses).

Village/town	1-3	4	5	6-10	11-14	15 or more	Total
Premdor Sible Hedingham						183	183
Crittalls Silver End						70	70
Panfield Lane Braintree						500	500
Hatfield Road Witham						600	600
Forest Road Witham						300	300
Total resid. la + regeneration	306	52	35	143	239	3361	4136

& growth locations							
% of total	7.4%	1.3%	0.8%	3.4%	5.8%	81.3%	100
Rural total including regeneration	220	28	15	40	55	367	725
% of total rural including regeneration	30.3%	3.9%	2.1%	5.5%	7.6%	50.6%	100
Urban + growth locations	86	24	20	103	184	2994	3411
% urban + growth locations	2.5%	0.7%	0.6%	3.0%	5.4%	87.8%	100

Growth Locations

Urban area	Planning Status	Site Capacity
Panfield Lane Braintree	Proposed growth location	500
Hatfield Road Witham	Proposed growth location	600
Forest Road Witham	Proposed growth location	300

Corporate Implications

Financial:	Amount of affordable housing / or financial contributions for affordable housing that policy would provide.			
Legal:	LDF Planning Policy Guidance S106 agreements for affordable housing.			
Equalities & Diversity:	n/a			
Customer Impact:	Provision of affordable housing.			
Environment & Climate Change:	n/a			
Consultation/Community Engagement:	Submission Core Strategy will be published for consultation		Partners	✓
	Public	✓	Staff	
Key Decision:	No			
Public/Private Report:	Public			
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