MASTERPLAN

NORTH WEST BRAINTREE
SUSTAINABLE URBAN EXTENSION

August 2013
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### Background to the Masterplan

The Braintree District Core Strategy was adopted by the Council in September 2011. The Core Strategy identifies four strategic Growth Locations which will act as a focus for future development in the District. In each case, the Core Strategy requires Masterplans to be prepared, to set a framework for future planning applications.

This Master Plan was adopted by Braintree District Council as a Supplementary Planning Document on the 10th December 2012.

### Purpose and Status of the Masterplan

The purpose of this Masterplan document is essentially twofold:

(a) It aims to provide more detail on how the strategic requirements established for North-West Braintree in the Core Strategy may be delivered within the defined Growth Location area; and

(b) It aims to set a framework to guide the preparation of future planning applications for the Growth Location, and to provide a framework against which future applications can be considered.

The Masterplan will form a "transition" between the broad strategic principles established in the Core Strategy, and detailed development proposals that will eventually be the subject of specific planning applications. At each stage of the process, the development proposals become more refined and greater detail can be established, leading ultimately to a high quality deliverable development.

The Masterplan does not attempt to be prescriptive as to the content of future planning applications, but once adopted by the Council as a Supplementary Planning Document, the Masterplan will be a material consideration in the determination of those future planning applications.

### Planning Policy Context - The Adopted Braintree District Core Strategy

The proposed Masterplan for North-West Braintree is firmly rooted in the Council’s Adopted Core Strategy, which provides for a major mixed-use urban extension at this location.

The Core Strategy allocates land to the north of Springwood Industrial Estate and west of Panfield Lane as the site for this mixed-use urban extension.

The area of land allocated in the Core Strategy at North-West Braintree extends to some 44 ha. On its southern side,
the allocated land adjoins the existing Springwood Drive Industrial Estate, and the Tabor Science College. On the eastern side, the land adjoins Panfield Lane. To the north, the boundary of the land lies to the south of the former Towerlands golf course.

Specifically, the Core Strategy says that this development should look to include:

- A minimum of 600 new homes, including 30% affordable housing (Policies CS1 and CS2);
- 2 ha of land for educational purposes (Table 2);
- 15 ha of land for Business purposes including the earmarking of a new home for Braintree Football Club (Policy CS4);
- A Neighbourhood centre including health and community facilities as necessary (Policy CS4);
- Open Space in accordance with Policy CS10;
- A new road linking Springwood Drive to Panfield Lane, for local access (Table 2).

This Masterplan provides the framework which demonstrates how these various elements may be delivered as part of an overall comprehensive scheme.

**Earlier Consultation and Future Stages**

The Council consulted extensively on the proposal for a major mixed-use growth location at North West Braintree as part of the preparation of the Core Strategy itself, particularly over the period from the ‘One District One Vision’ consultation in 2008, through to the Submission Draft in 2010, and subsequent changes to the Submission Draft in 2010 and 2011.

The North-West Braintree Growth Location was part of the Core Strategy that was tested at the 2011 Core Strategy Public Examination, and found to be ‘sound’ by the Inspector.

This Masterplan has been informed by the consultation carried out in March 2012 and July 2012. There will also be consultation carried out in due course on any planning applications submitted for the site.
Masterplan Consultation March 2012

A public exhibition held on the 2nd and 3rd of March was attended by 244 people over the two days. The exhibition and the associated publicity resulted in the submission of 52 written responses, 51 of which included the completion of the questionnaire provided. A further 42 questionnaires were completed using the online questionnaire at www.braintreenorthwest.co.uk

The response to the consultation were broadly distinguished between those comments that have a direct impact on the overall layout of the Masterplan, and those that raise detailed comments that will need to be considered in conjunction with more detailed planning applications in the future.

In terms of those comments relating to the overall draft Masterplan, a number of changes have now been incorporated, including the following:
• **Sports** - A further review of the indicative proposals for strategic open space within the site was undertaken following comments received, it was felt that the initial proposals suggested a heavily ‘football focussed’ approach to open space provision. Whilst the football club and an area for training/football is retained, the revised Masterplan indicates a broader range of outdoor activities could be accommodated;

• **Open space** – coupled with the above, the revised Masterplan gives further consideration to the possible location of additional open spaces uses such as allotments and children’s play space;

• **Panfield Lane** - A revised approach to the frontage of Panfield Lane is now proposed. A number of respondents suggested retaining more greenspace, and the frontage to Panfield Lane is one area where this has been accommodated;

• **Northern site boundary** – In similar vein, and taking in to account potential habitat issues and the need to accommodate land for surface water attenuation, the Masterplan shows a wider ‘buffer’ area to the northern boundary, which can act as an area for ecological enhancement/protection, form an extension of the adjoining woodland and, assist with providing access to the countryside;

• **Neighbourhood centre** - The approach to delivering the neighbourhood centre has been reviewed, and the revised Masterplan looks to create a more substantial mixed-use area that would include space for small business uses, alongside shops and community uses, forming a wider mixed-used ‘heart’ to the development;

• **Protecting existing residents** – the revised Masterplan includes new areas identified as ‘buffers’ between any proposed new development and existing residents who would live adjacent to the new development.

More generally, this Masterplan document seeks to provide more detail in respect of key elements of the Masterplan, and this is set out in the following section of this document.

Although some respondents did query the principle of the whole development, or the need for specific elements of the overall scheme (e.g. the Football Club), the Masterplan needs to remain consistent with the Core Strategy, and therefore the overall balance of land-uses is not altered.

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**Masterplan Adoption December 2012**

After further consultation in July 2012, Braintree District Councils Local Development Framework Sub-Committee recommended that the North West Braintree Master Plan be approved as guidance in the determination of planning applications, subject to some minor alterations on the 27th September 2012. This recommendation was then considered and agreed by Cabinet on the 29th October 2012 and then agreed by Full Council on the 10th of December.
SITE CONTEXT, ANALYSIS AND EVIDENCE BASE

Landscape and Townscape Analysis

The topography of the land is shaped by the rolling tributary valleys to the rivers Brain and Blackwater. These generally fall from west to east and towards the existing settlement edge. Within the site, the southern half is relatively more elevated and gently rolling whereas the northern part comprises predominantly the southern slopes of a small valley that falls towards Panfield Lane.

The land is contained by existing settlement and urban uses to the south and east. Existing residential development dominates the area to the east of the site and beyond Panfield Lane, whilst the townscape to the south includes Tabor School and Leisure Centre and the Springwood Drive Industrial Estate. West of the site the landscape comprises farmland and woodland areas and belts, leading towards the settlement of Panfield.

The land is dominated by arable farmland and comprises a relatively small number of medium to large scale fields. A farm access track extends east – west centrally into the site from Panfield Lane and this is lined by mature vegetation and trees. This forms a strong visual feature and broadly
divides the southern and northern parts of the site. To the south, the site comprises two large arable fields sub divided by a tall mature hedgerow and to the north are four fields, some further hedgerows and a small watercourse/ditch.

Public Rights of Way exist within and immediately surrounding the site. A public footpath runs east to west through the centre of the site and links Panfield Lane to the east with both the Springwood Drive Industrial Estate and the countryside beyond to the west. A further Public Right of Way and cycleway extends across the southern site boundary and also links Panfield Lane to the existing Industrial Estate.

Overall, the site is strongly influenced by the existing urban edge of Braintree. In particular, the immediately adjoining housing areas along Panfield Lane and the Springwood Industrial Estate and other uses including Tabor School and Leisure Centre to the south exert a significant influence over the adjoining parts of the site. The north western part of the site is less affected by these existing urban uses, although this area is visually enclosed and does naturally slope back towards the urban edge.

The existing mature trees and planting lining the farm access track are important in sub dividing the site and form an important landscape and visual feature. Other mature hedgerows within the site are generally tall and continuous and similarly form valuable local landscape features.

Visually, the site benefits from natural enclosure provided by the mature woodlands and tree belts (both within and beyond the site to the west and north west) and the general aspect of the landform which falls both northwards and back towards the settlement edge. Whilst there are views into and across parts of the site from some of the existing properties fronting onto Panfield Lane, views from beyond these immediate houses are very limited. Similarly, because of the undulating nature of the landform to the west and the presence of mature woodlands and tree belts, views towards the site are also limited from the wider countryside in this direction.

In terms of pedestrian and cycle access there are existing links and connections within and around the southern and eastern boundaries of the site and there is good potential to connect to public footpaths that extend westwards into the countryside.
Ecology and Bio-diversity

The site does not contain any designated wildlife sites. The closest designated site is the Bocking Blackwater local nature reserve, around 1km away. The closest site of special scientific interest is around 6km away, at Belcher’s and Broadfields Woods.

An extended Phase 1 habitat survey was undertaken by PJC Ecology in September 2011, which included desk-based research, a walkover habitat survey, a badger survey, internal inspection of buildings for bats, a Great Crested Newt habitat suitability assessment, and a hedgerow assessment. The purpose of the survey was to identify potential habitats of significance to inform the preparation of the initial Masterplan, and to identify the need or otherwise for more detailed survey work in due course.

The arable fields and majority of the grass margins were found to be of little ecological value. Several mature trees and areas of existing hedgerow were considered to offer habitat potential, and the survey recommended their retention within the overall Masterplan. An area of grassland likely to be suitable for reptiles was also identified. Existing wet ditches were identified and proposed for retention. Evidence of badgers was identified to the north of the site.

The report identified possible practical measures for protecting and enhancing bio-diversity as part of the Masterplan proposals, and identified additional survey work that would be needed to inform planning application proposals in due course.

As a result of the March 2012 consultation, PJC Ecology contacted the North-East Essex Badger Group to discuss further the possible implications of known setts on the northern side of the site, and that additional information has been factored in to the revised proposals presented in this document.

Transportation

The site is bordered on its eastern side by the single carriageway of Panfield Lane which runs north-south in the immediate vicinity. This section is lit with houses fronting mainly to the west side, together with a footway, and is subject to a 30mph speed limit to the south of the Churchill Road junction. Panfield Lane leads towards Braintree town centre to the east, via Aetheric Road. Panfield Lane is a bus route with hourly services running in each direction along the section past the site on weekdays and Saturdays during the daytime.

Access to the site can also be gained from Springwood Drive, which serves the adjoining Springwood Industrial Estate. Springwood Drive was recently extended to serve the new civic amenity site and its whole length is adopted by ECC.

An assessment of the impact of the predicted traffic associated with the proposed development on the operation of two off-site junctions on Rayne Road (the Aetheric Road/Pierfitte Way signals and the Springwood Drive/Pods Brook Road roundabout) has previously been undertaken. This appraisal included the provision of a local link road between Springwood Drive and Panfield Lane, which would provide an alternative route to/from the A120 (east) and A131 (south) for those living on the northern side of Barintree.

The assessment found that the roads around the site had sufficient capacity to accommodate the predicted traffic associated with the scheme. It concluded that the new link would reduce the volume of traffic passing through the Rayne Road/Aetheric Road signals and reduce congestion at this junction. However it was also found that improvements would be required to the Rayne Road/Springwood Drive roundabout to mitigate the impact of the additional traffic on Springwood Drive and a scheme which achieved this, and which could be accommodated within adopted highway land, was identified.
**Flood Risk and Drainage**

The site is not within an area identified as being at risk of flooding from existing watercourses (it falls within Flood Zone 1 on the Environment Agency’s mapping). There is a watercourse running along the northern site boundary (i.e. where site runoff ultimately discharges to) and the principal issue to be considered in terms of flood risk is not the protection of the new development, but ensuring that surface water generated by the development is not increased from its current greenfield value in order to reduce flood risks downstream.

A hydrological model of the existing situation has been developed to assist in understanding how the existing site drainage works, and to inform the preparation of a surface water drainage strategy for the new development. Results from this study have allowed the identification of a sustainable urban drainage strategy which has informed the preparation of the Masterplan.

**Services and Utilities**

An infrastructure delivery appraisal was undertaken based on consultation with the principal statutory undertakers in respect of the possible implications of the development on local services and utilities, including foul drainage, electricity supply, water supply, and other relevant services.

Anglian Water has undertaken a Development Impact Assessment Report regarding foul drainage, which identifies two broad options for connecting the site to the existing network. For each option, Anglian Water has identified specific parts of the existing network which can be upgraded to accommodate the development without delay but will necessitate a financial contribution from the developer.

In relation to potable water supply, Anglian Water have confirmed that the existing network has the capacity to serve the development, although some off-site reinforcement and other works will be required as part of the development.

There are two substantial existing water mains that cross the site which are to be retained in place due to the high costs and disruption of relocating them. These water mains have therefore acted as a constraint upon the Masterplan, because access for future maintenance will need to be maintained.

In terms of electricity, the development will require some upgrading to the Braintree primary sub-station, new cabling, and the provision of sub-stations within the site for local connections. This infrastructure would be provided as part of the development. Connections to the gas network are available locally.

**Employment and commerce**

The Core Strategy proposal for an additional 15 ha of employment land (within which the football club may be relocated) was based upon an analysis of both need and potential for economic growth over the Plan period to 2026.

An Employment Land Review assessment of all existing employment land in the District noted that around 50% of this was at Witham, compared to only 30% at Braintree. Based upon an analysis of the commercial property market and past rates of employment land take up, the evidence suggested that the market should require some 3-5 ha of land per annum over the economic cycle/Plan period (i.e. evening out periods of recession and growth).

In terms of providing new employment land at Braintree, the Core Strategy identified the expansion of the Springwood Drive Industrial Estate as appropriate in the context of North-West Braintree Growth Location. The Core Strategy supports a range of employment generating development within the ‘B’ use classes (i.e. B1 offices and light industry, B2 industry and B8 storage and distribution) but also a mix of neighbourhood centre uses, an innovation/enterprise centre and possible hotel uses.
**Housing**

In order to inform its Core Strategy, the Council undertook a Strategic Housing Market Assessment, which shows that there are high levels of housing need within the District, including a need for new affordable housing to help those persons unable to access housing by other means.

The Council has also undertaken a detailed analysis of the availability of existing land available for housing, with a view to making efficient use of existing opportunities. This analysis has showed that additional land was required, and the Core Strategy duly identified the Growth Locations (of which North-West Braintree is one) as a result.

The Council’s policies will require a mix of housing types to be provided as part of the North-West Braintree development. Given the location of the site and the surrounding context, and having regard to the likely demand/need for housing in the area, it is considered that the location is suited more towards housing than high density flats.

The Council has also identified a need for specialist accommodation for the elderly, and the opportunity may exist to include such accommodation within the North-West Braintree proposals.
Employment Proposals

Employment uses would be principally sited within the western half of the site, with an area also identified more centrally as part of the new mixed use neighbourhood centre in the heart of the development.

The main commercial area north of the Springwood Industrial area should be located away from the existing residential properties on Panfield Lane and would be separated from the future housing within the site by the required sports facilities and landscape areas. Importantly, existing mature tree belts and planting around the western boundary of the site would be effective in screening and filtering views towards this part of the proposed development from beyond the site to the west.

The identified employment areas in the west will form a logical extension to the existing Springwood Industrial Estate and would be served by an extension to the existing Springwood Drive. This would ensure that all of these employment uses would have direct access from or to Springwood Drive, and HGV vehicles will be prevented from accessing through to Panfield Lane.

Collectively, the proposals for the Springwood Drive extension will cater for a potential range of business, manufacturing, general industrial and distribution uses. It is envisaged that these development areas will comprise contemporary and sustainable buildings set within an attractive landscape setting, utilising new and conserved green infrastructure.

Immediately to the north of the Springwood Industrial Estate, the employment area could also accommodate the relocation of Braintree football club. This location for the football club takes advantage of the existing tree belt backdrop on the western site boundary and is suitably distanced from the existing residential properties on Panfield Lane and settlement edge to the east. It would also be suitably accessed directly from the Springwood Drive extension for vehicular users and would have good pedestrian and cycling connections to the east.

The employment area in the north west of the site would occupy the lower and more enclosed parts of the site and would be divided by a conserved watercourse ditch. This area would be further defined by a number of surrounding green infrastructure corridors.

Towards the centre of the site, the proposed mixed-use neighbourhood centre would also provide space for smaller business or offices. This area would need to be carefully designed as an integral part of the Neighbourhood Centre to form a mixed use core to the scheme that fits well with the predominately residential area.
Housing Proposals

The proposed housing areas are located throughout the eastern half of the site and located off Panfield Lane. The draft masterplan has structured the housing areas around the existing retained planting and landscape features and with particular attention paid to its relationship to Panfield Lane and the existing properties fronting onto it.

In terms of the siting of the housing areas, in the north east of the site, the existing hedgerow to the Panfield Lane boundary would be conserved (with the exception of the removal of a short stretch to facilitate the new road junction with Panfield Lane). This would maintain a mature planted frontage to this stretch of the existing road and a visual buffer to the existing Panfield Lane properties. The proposed housing in this part of the site would therefore be set back from the road beyond a landscape corridor and would step down the slope towards the northern site boundary.

South of the existing mature trees and landscaping lining the existing farm access track, the proposed housing would stretch along the western side of Panfield Lane and around the neighbourhood centre. It is proposed that this housing would also include a landscape corridor and planted frontage to Panfield Lane and further landscape corridors to define the housing areas. A further road junction onto Panfield Lane would provide the main vehicular access into this part of the proposed housing development.

Residential areas will provide for a broad range of house types that cater for modern living and for a wide demographic, yet with a strong emphasis on family homes. It will include affordable housing and could also include some housing for the elderly and some self-build plots.

Opportunities for self build plots
The Mixed-Use Neighbourhood Centre

Similar to traditional places and communities, it is anticipated that the neighbourhood centre will include a variety of jobs, retail and community facilities, which will generate a vibrant focus. This part of the development would have a visual presence on Panfield Lane and is shown sited alongside the new road junction into the southern half of the site.

It is envisaged that the neighbourhood centre will include shops, healthcare/pharmacy, cafes, a community facility as well as employment uses, and potentially some residential uses over ground floor commercial properties, to create a truly diverse and mixed-use ‘heart’ to the development. The range of uses could include A1 (shops), A2 (offices/services), A3 (restaurants), A5 (hot food take away), B1 (offices and light commercial uses), C3 (residential) and D1 (health and community uses). Any supermarket proposal will be limited to a maximum floor area (net) of 1,250 sq metres.

The main design principles for the layout of the neighbourhood centre are:

• Creation of a sustainable communal space, which will be defined and enclosed by good quality and attractive buildings that will form a strong local focus;
• Positive and active building frontages towards Panfield Lane and the new primary street on the northern side of the neighbourhood centre;
• Footway, cycleway and public transport connections from the green corridor alongside Panfield Lane, including a key public realm area along this frontage;
• A good quality public realm with appropriate street furniture, lighting and tree planting.

The Mixed-Use neighbourhood centre will provide a place for congregation, interaction and activity and will have good connections to both the proposed new development and the existing housing areas east of Panfield Lane. It would also sit alongside and be designed to have a strong association with the adjoining employment and housing areas.
**Education**

One of the advantages of the North-West Braintree growth location is that it has excellent access to existing schools, but it is recognised that the increase in population in this part of the town will mean that additional school capacity will be needed.

Essex County Council, as Education Authority, has stated that an area of 2ha will be required, and that this should be located as an extension to the existing Tabor College, and the Masterplan identifies this area accordingly. The Education Authority advises that this area could be used for both primary and secondary school purposes, although the exact arrangements have yet to be finalised.

The layout, design and landscape treatment of the site will need to respect the amenity and privacy of the existing and new properties.

**Braintree Football Club**

The Masterplan allocates land for the possible relocation of Braintree Town Football Club. The proposed location to the north of the extended Springwood Drive has been selected for a number of reasons, including:

- It would have easy access via Springwood Drive, including for coaches;
- The land is already largely flat and unconstrained;
- This area of land is likely to come forward as part of the early phases of development (see Phasing section);
- It would be located away from existing and proposed residential properties, to minimise disturbance to residents.

In addition to the site for the Football Club itself, the Masterplan proposes a substantial area of open space on adjoining land, upon which a training pitch could be located, alongside other sports/open spaces uses.

The provision of a new site for the Football Club would create the opportunity for modern facilities to be provided which meet the requisite standards for entry to the Football League with the benefit of potential dual use with the community.
Flood Risk and Drainage

The draft Masterplan has taken into account the natural topography of the site and seeks to retain the existing network of ditches which allow surface water to drain from the site. In order to take account of the increase in impermeable surfaces, a series of new ponds, ditches and ‘holding’ features are required as part of an overall sustainable urban drainage system (SuDs).

This network of drainage features will need to be integrated into the development, and will comprise a number of solutions. For example, dry watercourses and ponds will be provided within the network of green corridors, and will be used to store water only in extreme conditions. In other areas, water will be stored in ditches and ponds that are permanently wet, and which will help to enhance the biodiversity of the land.
Landscape and Green Infrastructure

The development’s landscape and green infrastructure is based around delivering well designed and functional green spaces that take advantage of the existing character, planting and features of the site. The proposals include the conservation of existing woodland, trees and hedgerows. Importantly, this includes the corridor of mature woodland and planting lining the farm access track at the centre of the site and other tall mature hedgerows running through and around the site.

The conservation of this existing mature planting will help create a mature landscape setting for the built development and establish logical well defined development parcels. The existing habitats and features will be supported by new planting including grassland, meadows, native hedgerows, trees and shrubs and wetland features. This combination of conserved existing and new landscape areas will form a connected network of corridors and spaces running throughout the site. These will ensure that not only is a strong landscape framework established for the built development areas but also that there are valuable benefits for wildlife, for pedestrians and cyclists and for the sustainable drainage of the development.

Towards the north and around the site’s perimeter to the west the landscape areas would be designed and managed predominantly for wildlife interest, whereas the design of the landscape corridors running alongside Panfield Lane are likely to have a stronger emphasis on visual filtering and amenity and the inclusion of good footway and cycleway links.

Notably, most of the landscape corridors and open spaces will also accommodate Sustainable Drainage (SuD’s) features, in the form of open ponds or swales. In addition to their functional drainage objectives, these features would also be designed and managed to positively contribute towards the landscape enhancement, visual amenity and wildlife interest of the development.
Open Space, Leisure and Sports

As an important part of the proposed development, new areas of open space to serve the increased number of people that will be living in the area will be created.

A large area of open space that would be suitable for a variety of sporting and recreational uses is shown towards the centre of the site and would act as a focus for this activity. This open space and the activities therein would be readily accessible from the new development and existing nearby settlement and would also act as an appropriate buffer between the extension to Springwood Drive employment area and the housing.

In addition to this large central area of open space, the development would also provide informal areas and semi-natural areas, links to the countryside to the west and will also include new areas of children’s playspace and allotments alongside the new homes.

In addition, the development will integrate with smaller pockets of land laid out for outdoor recreation, including local play areas for children, incidental greenspace, and allotments. The open space proposals will be designed with reference to BDC’s Open Spaces Supplementary Planning Document (SPD).
Public Transport

Initial discussions have been held with First as the main bus operator in the area, who have agreed the principle of a new route being provided to serve the development. It is anticipated that any new service would connect the site to the town centre, bus station and railway station via Rayne Road and Springwood Drive.

Such a route would have the added benefit of providing bus services along the whole length of Springwood Drive for the first time and so greatly improve the accessibility of the existing employment area by public transport.

Existing bus services along Panfield Lane and Coldnailhurst Avenue would remain unchanged.

Walking and Cycling

Pedestrian linkages will be provided to the existing public footpaths to the north and west of the development, which provide links with adjoining countryside. Links should also be provided to the footway on the east side of Panfield Lane and the footpath links running east from Panfield Lane.

The existing public footpath running alongside the tree-lined ditch running west from Panfield Lane to Park Farm is shown as maintained.

A link should be provided to the existing foot/cyclepath running along the southern boundary between Panfield Lane and Springwood Drive. Investigations should be undertaken to provide a link to the recently-constructed pedestrian and cycle route running south from Panfield Lane at the Tabor College roundabout through the St Michael’s Hospital development to Rayne Road.

New footways / cycleways would extend throughout the development and connect to existing surrounding routes.
Proposed Footway and / or Cycleway Links (Indicative)

Existing Public Right of Way / Footpaths

Bus Route and Site Access

Public Transport and Walking / Cycling Proposals
Highways

Through discussions with Essex County Council as local highway authority, the principles of providing vehicle access to the development have been agreed as follows:

- Extension of Springwood Drive to the north to serve the new employment development and Football Club, with the current 7.3m wide carriageway and two 2m footways maintained;
- Provision of a new 4-arm roundabout at the existing Panfield Lane/Churchill Road junction, which would help slow southbound traffic entering the town and so improve highway safety;
- A second access from Panfield Lane, in the form of either a priority T-junction or 3-arm roundabout (to be agreed with ECC/BDC), north of Pegasus Way;
- HGV movement restrictions with adjoining bus gate at the link between the employment and residential areas to prevent HGVs from accessing to or from Panfield Lane; and
- Two internal access roads running from the bus gate through to Panfield Lane, where the provision of bus routes are required the carriageway width would need to be predominately 6.75m.

A Transport Assessment would need to be submitted with a planning application for development on the site which would assess the impact on development traffic on the operation of off-site junctions and in particular the necessary improvement to Pod’s Brook Road / Rayne Road roundabout.

Car Parking

It is envisaged that car parking should be provided in accordance with the adopted Essex Planning Officers Association/Essex County Council Vehicle Parking Standards (2009). In the case of new residential development, these are minimum standards of one space per 1-bedroom dwelling, and two spaces for all dwellings with two or more bedrooms, plus 0.25 unallocated visitor spaces per dwelling, but can be reduced in areas which have good links to sustainable transport. For employment developments standards remain as maxima, with up to one space per 30m² for offices (B1), one per 50m² for general industrial (B2) and one per 150m² for warehouse (B8). The ECC Vehicle Parking Standards will also inform the parking provision for the relocated Football Club.
To produce a permeable and pedestrian friendly environment, the development will need to adopt an offset grid of blocks and streets and will generally incorporate the use of closed blocks (i.e. back to back properties). This will allow for secure private rear gardens. It is anticipated that variations in block shape and size will occur especially around the edges of the new housing where it fronts onto open space and landscape areas in the west and north. This will create a looser and more organic arrangement of blocks and buildings in these areas.

The detailed arrangement and design of blocks will also be guided by the site’s levels and topography, with blocks and streets generally following the natural line of the contours, although streets and blocks will still have to step up or down the slopes in places. This is most applicable to the sloping land in the north of the site.

Heights, Density and Form

The proposed development will include changes in building heights, density and forms. This will ensure that there is character and visual interest and will also enable the layout and detailed design of the proposals to respond to its context. In general, it is anticipated that the majority of the new houses will be 2 storey, with any occasional 2.5 or 3 storey properties in appropriate locations.

The density of the housing development will vary, yet will include predominantly lower and medium densities, appropriate to its settlement edge location and to the characteristics of the site landscape. Relative higher densities are envisaged close to the neighbourhood centre in the southern half of the site, with the lower densities elsewhere. The lower density housing will be characterised by detached and some semi-detached properties, with deeper frontages (or “set backs”), tree lined roads and more green elements (trees, front gardens, hedges and open space). The relative higher density areas could include more semi-detached and linked dwellings, with reduced frontages.

The range of building heights, densities and form will be need to be fully explored and defined as the scheme design advances. These factors will be important considerations in defining the different street types or character areas to be established across the site.

Appearance, Architecture and the Public Realm

The intention of this Masterplan document is not to detail all of the design principles to be adopted by the development or at this stage to be rigid or prescriptive in terms of the
appearance or architecture of the proposals. Ultimately, the appearance and character of the development will not just be about the design and architecture of individual buildings but also the way the streets, plots and landscape are all designed and interact.

It is anticipated that the proposed housing will be predominantly traditional in form and appearance, using local character as a template, particularly in terms of respecting materials and colours. Building design and appearance will relate to good examples that can be found within the local area. The emphasis will be on providing new high quality homes and building designs that are enduring, desirable and attractive. Simplicity of form and a good sense of scale and proportion, coupled with the use of quality materials will underpin the designs.

The proposed employment areas will include buildings of varying sizes, forms and design appearance, although it is envisaged that a contemporary architectural style will run throughout these areas. Whilst there will undoubtedly be variations in the appearance and architecture of these units, it is anticipated that through a combination of a consistent landscape treatment to the Springwood Drive extension and the use of similar design approaches, colours or materials, a cohesive and modern employment area will develop.

The public realm proposals will include a variety of new areas and features. New high quality street trees, hedgerows and other planting and habitats would be provided. A mix of planting sizes and stock will be used, with large trees and plants used where an immediate effect would be beneficial. Footways, cycleways and other hard paved areas would be created, utilising a variety of materials and products, with the higher profile spaces (eg within and around the neighbourhood centre) adopting specific materials and specifications.
Streets

A framework and hierarchy of different streets will be formed within the development. These will generally be designed for people and not car dominated based on the ‘Manual for Streets’. They will also be important in creating a legible environment and will contribute towards defining different character areas and giving the development a sense of identity. Different streets will have different characteristics in terms of function, width, building form, landscape and frontage details. The primary streets and access to the site have been the subject of discussions with Essex County Council and these principles are detailed earlier in this document.

At a more detailed level, a permeable and easy to navigate street pattern will be devised that will include opportunities for feature squares and green spaces to be introduced where streets intersect.

Indicative Section Panfield Lane Frontage North

Indicative Section Panfield Lane Frontage South
**Sustainability**

The site is well located for a mixed development of new homes and jobs, with direct access to the Springwood Drive Industrial Estate on one side, easy access to local education facilities at Tabor School, and good access to a wide range of facilities.

Existing walking and cycling connections to the site would be extended throughout the proposed development. New improved links to the countryside to the north and west are all envisaged as part of the proposed development.

Public transport provision is envisaged to be extended through the site. The existing bus routes running along Panfield Lane and Coldnailhurst Avenue would remain unchanged. With the well connected network of footways and cycleways extending throughout the development and the new and existing bus services, this will reduce the need to travel by car.

A significant proportion of the site would be dedicated to green infrastructure and this will include a Sustainable Urban (SuD's) Strategy, a mix of new and conserved habitats, trees and public open spaces.

All new housing would seek to reduce energy use by improving efficiency and will embrace sustainability standards for housing construction. This will include measures to reduce water consumption and high standards of insulation. Similarly, all other new buildings would be designed to the relevant approved standards.

Waste management and reduction will be encouraged through best practice approaches and will include the provision of space for recycling.
The Illustrative Masterplan shows how the design principles and disposition of proposed uses could be carried forward into a more detailed masterplan solution.

Having gained a good understanding of the existing site and place, through the various environmental and technical studies, it has been possible to formulate an appropriate illustrative scheme. This is a reflection of the design rationale detailed throughout this document and a response to the inherent and underlying characteristics of the site and its surroundings.
Policy CS1 of the Adopted Core Strategy provides an indicative provisional phasing for the new housing element of the Masterplan to be delivered between 2018 and 2026. However, the Core Strategy recognises that if there is a shortage of housing land, this is a location where housing may be delivered earlier.

With regard to the non-residential land it is envisaged that this will be delivered over the plan period (2011 to 2026) and the Council would support this part of the development coming forward as soon as possible.

The Council also recognises that the early delivery of a site for the Football Club and the early provision of the new Link Road would be beneficial.

Before new homes are ready for occupation in 2018, there are a number of stages that would still need to be completed. It is anticipated that an outline planning application would be prepared in 2013, with a view to approval in 2014. Detailed planning permission for the first phase of development would therefore be tentatively programmed for 2015/16, in advance of construction works starting in 2017 allowing completion to begin in 2018.

The accompanying diagram shows the suggested phasing of the development. It is envisaged that the development would commence at the southern end, with a mixture of commercial and residential land, encompassing the release of the proposed Football Club site and Education site, alongside the creation of an initial Panfield Lane-Springwood Drive link. This first phase could also include part of the site of the mixed-use neighbourhood centre, to enable some supporting uses to come forward early on within the development.

It is then envisaged that the development would be built out towards the north, and that in due course a second access to Panfield Lane will be completed.
Infrastructure

Table 2 of the adopted Core Strategy sets out a schedule of infrastructure to be provided alongside the North-West Braintree Growth Area, and identifies the main parties responsible.

Where the developer is required to make a financial contribution towards new community and social infrastructure, this will be achieved via a s106 agreement alongside the grant of planning permission, with appropriate ‘triggers’ to ensure that development cannot proceed in advance of payments being made.

Key infrastructure to be delivered will include:

- **2ha of land for education purposes** – the development will enable the release of this land to Essex County Council, who will then use the land to ensure that adequate school places are made available;

- **Health** – the development will contribute towards either the expansion of existing GP facilities or the delivery of a new GP facility as necessary;

- **Open space** – the development will include the provision of new public open space and children’s play space, which will be delivered in phases by the developers alongside the provision of new housing;

- **Allotments** – the development will include the provision of allotments as part of the on-site open space;

- **Sewage network** – the developer will need to work with Anglian Water to deliver the necessary upgrades to the foul drainage network to accommodate the development;

- **Off-site junction improvements** – the developer will need to implement appropriate improvements to off-site highways to accommodate the traffic flows generated by the development, in conjunction with Essex County Council as set out in appendix 4 of the Core Strategy;

- **Link road** – the developer will need to construct the proposed new Link Road between Panfield Lane and Springwood Drive as part of the new development;

- **Public transport** – the developer will need to facilitate the establishment of a suitable bus service in conjunction with the Bus operator;

- **Public realm** – the developer will contribute towards enhancements to public areas affected by the development, as appropriate;

- **Footpaths and cycleways** – the developer will ensure that a network of footpaths and cycleways will be provided within the development linked to existing routes, and where appropriate will undertake enhancement works to those existing routes;

- **Neighbourhood centre** – the developer will facilitate the construction of the neighbourhood centre, which will include social and community facilities to serve the new development, as well as appropriate small business uses.