

Interim Planning Policy Statement.
Approved Full Council 15th September 2014.

This statement sets out the Braintree District Council position in relation to the site allocations and development management policies which are contained within the Braintree District Pre Submission Site Allocations and Development Management Plan (ADMP), including the further proposed amendments which were agreed by Full Council on the 23rd April 2014.

BDC has been working on the Site Allocations and Development Management Plan (ADMP), to build on the strategic policies set out in the Core Strategy, since the adoption of the Core Strategy in 2011. This was to complete the suite of documents required in the Local Development Framework to guide development in the District.

The ADMP and in particular the site allocations and development boundaries contained within it have been the subject of extensive public and stakeholder engagement. Over 500 sites in the District were submitted to the Council for a variety of uses and each was investigated individually for their suitability for development. Once this officer assessment had been completed, between 2011 and 2012, officers contacted each Parish and Town Council in the District and either corresponded via letter/email or arranged a meeting to discuss the issues for each area and any land allocations which were required for either protection of land for uses such as open space, allotments and community uses and considered options for new residential, retail and employment development. Development boundaries were also reviewed and changes were discussed as appropriate. These were approved for a first formal round of public consultation through 14 meetings of the LDF Sub Committee.

A first stage of formal public consultation was then held in 2013 to which there were over 1600 comments. This included the Council's preferred option for growth as well as the alternative options which had been considered. These were also subject to individual consideration and were reported back to 8 meetings of the LDF Sub Committee in 2013, where changes to the ADMP were proposed and these were agreed by Full Council in September 2013.

A second formal period of public engagement was then held in February and March 2014 when around 800 comments were received and reported back to a meeting of the LDF Sub Committee and Full Council to agree further amendments which were subject to a further 6 week public engagement period in May and June 2014.

The ADMP has also been the subject of a full assessment in terms of the evidence base produced to support it. This has included work with key stakeholders on highways improvements, education, healthcare, water and drainage. The ADMP has also been the subject of a full Sustainability Appraisal/Strategic Environment Assessment (SA/SEA) and a Habitats Regulation Screening Report, all of which are set out on the Council's website.

Due to changes in national government policy and the requirement to meet an objectively assessed need for housing in full within Local Plans, despite the much progressed state of the ADMP, the Council is not intending to submit the Pre

Submission ADMP for examination by the Planning Inspectorate. Work has begun on a new Local Plan which will include new strategic policies and site allocations, as well as the non-strategic sites and policies which are contained in the Pre Submission ADMP (unless new evidence or further changes in government policy require changes to be made).

However in the interim period, whilst the new Local Plan is emerging, the Council must maintain a housing land supply for the District and ensure that housing and other types of development continue to come forward to meet the needs of local residents, providing that the necessary infrastructure is also in place. The Council must also ensure that sites identified for community uses or open space are protected for those purposes.

The Council believes that the site allocations and policies contained within the Pre Submission ADMP are based on robust and credible evidence and have undergone a significant amount of public consultation and Member engagement. The Council therefore consider these are acceptable in principle.

The Council accordingly adopts the land allocations and development management policies detailed within the ADMP for use within development management decision-making. The Council is of the view that these robust and clear statements should be given appropriate weight in all matters under consideration and that these are material considerations for the Council.

The Council actively encourages the development of sites and allocations in accordance with these principles and will seek to support those who conform to the requirements of the NPPF and other statutory development plans. The Council recognises that the emerging local plan will gain weight as it is developed, however this statement provide a clear indication of the Council's position in the interim period.