

<b>Report on the Panfield Lane Master Plan Public Consultation</b>		<b>Agenda No: 7</b>
<b>Corporate Priority:</b>	Environment is clean and green, business is encouraged and local economy prospers, housing and transport meet local needs	
<b>Report presented by:</b>	Alan Massow	
<b>Report prepared by:</b>	Alan Massow	
<b>Background Papers:</b> <b>Braintree District Council Core Strategy (2011)</b> <a href="http://www.braintreenorthwest.co.uk/">http://www.braintreenorthwest.co.uk/</a> <b>Braintree North-West Strategic Growth Location Preliminary Master Plan Proposals February 2012</b>	<b>Public Report</b> Yes	
<b>Options:</b> 1 To note the Panfield Lane Master Plan consultation responses and to approve or not approve the officer response. 2 To add additional points to the officer response.	<b>Key Decision:</b> No	
<b>Executive Summary:</b> This report sets out the preliminary master plan proposals and initial consultation responses for the Panfield Lane Master Plan. It provides a brief summary of responses received and sets out the response sent by officers which Members are requested to approve. Full consultation responses are available to view in the Appendices on the website.		
<b>Decision:</b> To note the responses to the preliminary Master Plan consultation and to agree the Braintree District Council response set out in Section 3 of this report.		
<b>Purpose of Decision:</b> To note the results of the public consultation and to agree the response to the Panfield Lane Master Plan.		
<b>Corporate implications [should be explained in detail]</b>		
<b>Financial:</b>	Land values relating to development proposed.	
<b>Legal:</b>	Master Plan preparation process follows legal procedures	
<b>Equalities/Diversity</b>	Proposed development and protection of the environment have an impact upon equality/diversity	
<b>Customer Impact:</b>	Impact of planning proposals and future planning decisions	
<b>Environment and Climate Change:</b>	Report makes reference to development of land for housing and employment uses as well as open space and landscaping.	
<b>Consultation/Community Engagement:</b>	A public consultation took place which involved writing to residents in the locality, press releases and advertisements	

	and publicity via a website. A public exhibition was also held which was attended by the developer and Council Officers and the exhibition boards were then displayed at Causeway House.
<b>Risks:</b>	Risk of Master Plan not being approved which would delay the outline planning application for the site.
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## 1. Introduction

1.1 Braintree District Council adopted its Core Strategy in September 2011. This document allocated strategic growth locations for development in the District. A strategic site at Panfield Lane was allocated comprising housing and employment uses, as set out in policy CS1 Table 1. The development site comprises land for 600 dwellings with community facilities, open space and 15 ha of employment land, which could include a new site for Braintree Town Football Club. The growth location also provides for a spine road linking Springwood Drive with Panfield Lane, which would be designed for local traffic. It is anticipated that the housing element would be delivered between 2018 and 2026. The employment element of the site is not phased. A map showing the draft layout of the site is shown at Appendix 1. Policy CS1 of the Core Strategy stated that 'The development of the mixed use growth locations will be in accordance with Master Plans to be approved as supplementary planning documents by the Council.'

## 2. Consultation Responses

2.1 The developers Mersea Homes and Hills Residential are currently preparing a Master Plan for the Panfield Lane growth location and held an informal public consultation on 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> March at Tabor science College, with a view to seeking comments from the public and stakeholders on the preliminary proposals.

2.2 A summary of responses received has been prepared by the developers agent and is at Appendix 2. All comments received during the consultation are set out in Appendices 3, 4 and 5 with the agenda on the Council's website.

2.3 An e-mail from residents at April Cottage and Cambria Cottage has also been received following a meeting the Council and developer had with those residents on the 19<sup>th</sup> April 2012. This e-mail raised a number of concerns; the majority of which will be addressed at the detailed planning stage. A landscape buffer was requested around these cottages, which the Council recommends that the developer includes in the Master Plan.

2.4 The consultation responses can be summarised as follows;

**Comments on Highways** - The main points raised covering highway safety with support for the link road, provision of non-car use options such as more and safer cycle/pedestrian routes and great use of buses.

**2.5 Comments on Employment** - In terms of employment, there was a mixed reaction to the provision of further employment areas as it was felt that under utilised land should be used first. Concern was raised regarding the proximity of employment to housing.

**2.6 Comments on Education** - There was support for further school provision in particular for secondary schools and the issue of pre-school spaces was also raised.

**2.7 Neighbourhood Centre** - There were mixed view on the provision of the neighbourhood centre, however provision of a doctors or dentist surgery were supported. Other uses suggested were for retail, pharmacy, vets, pub, petrol station and facilities for young people among others.

**2.8 Housing** - There was some support for family housing, but concern was raised regarding a lack of affordable housing and housing for single people in the area.

**2.9 Sport** - Concern was raised regarding the traffic impact of the football ground in terms of traffic impact and nuisance. Additional sporting facilities were also suggested for other games and children's play areas.

**2.10 Conservation and Wildlife** – Some respondents did not want the development to take place in order to retain wildlife others wanted the retention of as much vegetation and natural features as possible. It was also suggested to include community planting as well as renewable energy collection. Provision of a landscaped buffer strip should also be provided.

2.11 A more detailed summary of responses received has been prepared by the developers agent and is at Appendix 2. All comments received during the consultation are set out in Appendices 3, 4 and 5 on the website.

2.12 In terms of consultation responses from organisations, comments were received from Panfield Parish Council, Braintree Football Club and Essex County Council. Panfield Parish Council consider that there is an opportunity to link the footpath network at Panfield with the new development, that the new roads should be built before the housing and that light pollution should be minimised.

2.13 Braintree Town Football Club were happy with the area provided for the club and suggested that a pedestrian crossing should be used to connect the club with the adjacent sports pitches.

2.14 Essex County Council raised a number of issues including off site highways works and the provision of education facilities among others. Modelling work has been undertaken which demonstrated that growth could be accommodated in NW Braintree subject to the necessary transport mitigation measures, both on and off site.

### **3. Braintree District Council Response**

A provisional response was submitted by officers in response to the consultation. It is recommended that Members of the LDF Panel endorse this response.

#### **Recommendation**

##### **To approve the response in Section 3 of this report as follows:-**

The draft Master Plan is broadly consistent with the Council's Core Strategy. However, it contains insufficient detail for a Master Plan and should identify specific land uses and highway layouts and more information on the local centre.

- Clearer reference should be made to the phasing requirements of the Core Strategy – that subject to sufficient housing development in the District housing completions on the site would be phased between 2018 and 2026.

- The local centre should not form part of the 15 ha employment land provision, as it provides infrastructure and services that are required for the residential development.
- Locations for open space and allotments should be identified within the residential areas, as part of the Master Plan.
- The Master Plan should identify a cycleway/footpath network throughout the residential and employment areas, which links to existing footpaths and cycleways and to schools, the proposed football ground and uses adjoining the growth location.
- The developer should develop a Masterplan in line with the SuDs planning process (CIRIA, 2010). In broad terms, the topography and geology of the site should be the first consideration and this will lead to an understanding of opportunities and constraints within the site. The Masterplan should show where SuDs features are to be located and this would include recreational opportunities around ponds, swales, etc.
- It is unclear why the developer (7) is stating that these would be “a preponderance of family housing”. The Council would require a mix of tenures and types in line with policy RLP8 – Housing Types.
- The proposed bus route information should be shown in more detail.
- Mention of £5 million of New Homes Bonus money is inappropriate.

#### Landscape Issues

- Retention of the existing hedgerow network is welcomed. However, a key point is the need for a structural landscape buffer along the full length of the growth location along Panfield Lane to protect and improve the existing hedgerow and to provide a green corridor to protect biodiversity and to minimise impact on existing residential dwellings along Panfield Lane. This could be made up of a strip of land wide enough to protect the existing hedgerow and to provide a green corridor of linear open space on the western side of the hedgerow, which could include a footpath/cycleway.
- Roads/Cycleways should be adjacent to hedgerows to reduce management conflict with residents. Also having some kind of buffer between roads and hedges would make it more wildlife friendly.
- Planting should be adjacent to the sports fields to help create new wildlife corridors.
- The field boundary which runs through the employment area should be retained.
- The woodland to the north of the area should be extended and connected to wildlife corridors, a bigger area would make the existing wood more viable.
- The habitat survey highlights the importance of the wet ditch that runs

through the E2 area, which adds great weight to retention of this field boundary, connecting the mature woodland to the land to the east.

- The survey proposed provision of a pond and dipping platform for community use. This could tie-in with the woodland extension mentioned, possibly on land south of the mature woodland area. This would also be close to the wet ditch, making its location there more appropriate.
- An area of vegetation adjacent to the Enterprise Centre is identified as having reptile potential. The current plan sees the loss of this area and, even if retained, it would be relatively isolated. Consideration could be given to retaining this habitat and its links with the countryside in some form, particularly if the recommended reptile surveys reveal there is a significant population present. This location may also be suitable as a community wildlife area if the site mentioned above is not feasible.
- A landscaping strip should be included around April and Cambria Cottage to protect residential amenity.

#### Affordable Housing Issues

- The Preliminary Master-Plan proposals indicate the requirement, through the Council's Core Strategy, for 30% affordable housing. We would like it noted that we require a mix of property sizes broadly in line with the overall development – with a relative mix of flats and houses that reflects the overall mix of the development as a whole. We also expect the homes to match the market homes in terms of number of parking spaces and environmental features. We will seek “Lifetime Homes Standard” and would expect design and quality standards in line with Homes and Communities Agency requirements at the time of the development.
- Our Affordable Housing Strategy identifies our aim to secure 5% of affordable housing as suitable for wheelchair users. We will seek to negotiate a mix of unit types to meet this requirement.
- Our Strategic Housing Marketing Assessment recommends 70% rented and 30% intermediate tenure.

#### **4. Future Steps.**

4.1 The Master Plan will be re-drafted in light of comments received. Once this has taken place a revised Master Plan will be published later this year. This document will then have to go out for further public consultation before being adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document.

#### **Appendix 1 – Site Map.**

#### **Appendix 2 – Questionnaire: Summary.**

**(Please note Appendices 3, 4 and 5 are only available on – line, with the agenda on the Council and Democracy LDF Sub-Committee section of the website.)**

#### **Appendix 3 – Questionnaire Responses – Written Version.**

#### **Appendix 4 – Questionnaire Responses – Online Version.**

#### **Appendix 5 – Questionnaire – Consultation Responses from Organisations.**