

Report on Preparation of the Site Allocations and Development Management Plan and Draft Inset Plans to be included in that Plan	Agenda No: 5
<p>Corporate Priority: Environment is clean and green, business is encouraged and local economy prospers, housing and transport meet local needs</p> <p>Report presented by: Juliet Kirkaldy / Eleanor Dash</p> <p>Report prepared by: Juliet Kirkaldy / Eleanor Dash</p>	
<p>Background Papers: Local Plan Review Village Inset Plans. Correspondence from landowners and agents proposing development sites. Correspondence with Parish Council's discussing draft Village Inset Plans. Correspondence with Witham Town Council.</p>	<p>Public Report Yes</p>
<p>Options:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To approve or not approve the draft Village Inset Plans and proposals for Bradwell/Pattiswick, Great Maplestead, the former Polish Campsite in Kelvedon and the Main Town of Witham, to be included in the Site Allocations and Development Management Plan. 2. To amend the draft Inset Plans. 3. To request further discussion with Ward Members, Parish Councils, or other persons, on the draft Inset Plans. 	<p>Key Decision: No (There will be a recommendation to Council to approve the draft Site Allocations and Development Management Plan for public consultation in its entirety, when the whole of the draft plan, supporting evidence and SEA has been prepared).</p>
<p>Executive Summary: This report sets out the purpose and content of the Site Allocations and Development Management Plan. It specifies the amount of housing land and employment that the Plan should provide, to be in conformity with the adopted Core Strategy. It sets out proposed allocations and inset maps for Bradwell/Pattiswick, Great Maplestead, the former Polish Campsite in Kelvedon and Witham. It also sets out the views of these Parish Council's and Witham Town Council upon sites that have been suggested for development in these areas and other allocations. (It is likely that further development sites will be put forward by landowners/ agents when there is public consultation on the Site Allocation and Development Management Plan.)</p>	
<p>Decision: To approve the draft Inset Plans and recommendations for Bradwell/Pattiswick, Great Maplestead, the former Polish Campsite in Kelvedon and Witham for public consultation.</p>	
<p>Purpose of Decision: The draft Inset Plans will form part of the Site Allocations and Development Management Plan which, together with the Core Strategy, will allocate development sites and protect other areas in the District from development over the next fifteen years.</p>	

Corporate implications [should be explained in detail]	
Financial:	Costs of LDF Evidence and Site Allocations and Development Management Plan Preparation and Examination. Land values relating to development proposed. New Homes Bonus payment is related to housing development. Infrastructure costs. S106 and CIL payments will be related to future development.
Legal:	Plan preparation and adoption process follows legal procedures
Equalities/Diversity	Proposed development and protection of the environment have an impact upon equality/diversity
Customer Impact:	Impact of planning proposals and future planning decisions
Environment and Climate Change:	Report makes recommendations relating to development of land and protection of land for open space, allotments and other uses which will have effects upon the environment and climate change.
Consultation/Community Engagement:	Parish Councils and Witham Town Council have been consulted on the preparation of the Inset Maps. The public will be consulted when the draft plan has been prepared, subject to the draft plan being approved by the Council.
Risks:	Risk of Site Allocations and Development Management Policies Plan not being adopted.
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Bradwell/Pattiswick

- **Core Strategy Proposals - Non Key Service Village**
- **Background:** The proposals map of the Braintree District Local Plan Review 2005 for Bradwell identifies an allotment garden and playing field to the rear of The Street. Part of the north-eastern development boundary is within the flood plain.
- Pattiswick does not have a development boundary.
- There have been no representations by landowners/developers for Bradwell and Pattiswick.
- **Bradwell – Map 1/Pattiswick - Map 1**

These maps were sent to the Parish Council for comment and include the existing Local Plan Review village envelope for Bradwell.

Please see Appendix 1.

- **Parish Council Views:**

At the time of writing the Committee report Officers had not yet received the views and comments of the Parish Council. Officers anticipate providing a verbal update at the Local Development Framework Panel on 22nd February.

- **Bradwell – Map 2/Pattiswick - Map 2 – proposed Draft Site Allocations Inset:**

Please see Appendix 1.

- **Officer Comments**

- Bradwell

The existing development boundary is contained south of Coggeshall Road. Officers do not support extension or amendment of Village Envelope. Bradwell has a public hall and pub, but lacks other key facilities and services to support further development.

- Pattiswick

The existing built development in Pattiswick is sporadic. It would therefore be difficult to draw a development boundary around Pattiswick without including large areas of open countryside which would allow large infill.

- **Officer Recommendations**

To approve Bradwell Map 2 as the Draft Site Allocations Inset.

To approve Pattiswick Map 2 as the Draft Site Allocations Inset Plan (without a village envelope).

Great Maplestead

- **Core Strategy Proposals-** Non Key Service Village
- **Background:** The proposals map of the Braintree District Local Plan Review 2005 for Great Maplestead identifies 3 development boundaries. The largest development boundary includes the primary school, hall and the church. Part of the development boundary adjacent to Brook Cottage and Croft Cottage is in a flood plain.
- **Representations for sites put forward by landowners/developers:**

Sites	Details
LDF Site Ref: GRM1 Site Address/Name: Land at Long Fen, Great Maplestead	Gross Site Area Ha: 0.80 est Summary of Proposals: Proposed inclusion of land within the development boundary for residential development
LDF Site Ref: GRM2 Site Address/Name: Land adjacent to St Mary's, Toldish Hall Road, Great Maplestead	Gross Site Area Ha: 0.148 est Summary of Proposals: Proposed inclusion of land within the development boundary for residential use for 1 dwelling
LDF Site Ref: GRM3 Site Address/Name: Pink Cottage, Purls Hill, Great Maplestead	Gross Site Area Ha: 1.00 est. Summary of Proposals: Proposed use of land for a residential use of 1 dwelling.
LDF Site Ref: GRM4 Site Address/Name: Monks Lodge Farm, Great Maplestead	Gross Site Area Ha: 0.6 est Summary of Proposals: Proposal for five "warden assisted" bungalows on land at Monks Lodge Farm Gt. Maplestead.
LDF Site Ref: GRM5 Site Address/Name: Land adjacent to Treeways, Church Street, Great Maplestead	Gross Site Area Ha: 0.3 est Summary of Proposals: Re-alignment of the village envelope

- **Great Maplestead - Map 1/Map 1a**

These maps were sent to the Parish Council for comment and include the existing Local Plan Review village envelopes, representations so far from landowners/developers and questions about allocations.

Please see **Appendix 1**.

- **Parish Council Views:**

- The Parish Council rejects GRM 1, GRM 2, GRM 3, GRM 4 and GRM 5 as they believe there should be much wider community involvement during the public consultation of the Site Allocations in September/October 2012.
- The Parish Council made no comment regarding changes or amendments to the existing Village Envelope.

- **Great Maplestead- Map 2/Map 2a** – proposed Draft Site Allocations Inset:

Please see **Appendix 1**.

- **Officer Comments**

GRM 1, GRM 5 – Although Great Maplestead has a primary school, church and hall it lacks other key facilities such as a grocery store, doctor's surgery, post office etc... and therefore it would be an unsustainable location for greenfield development.

GRM 2, GRM 3, GRM 4 – These 3 sites do not adjoin the existing village envelope. It would therefore be impossible to include these sites within the village envelope without allowing large areas of land for infill. Although GRM 2/GRM 4 are located within a small cluster of dwellings, a village envelope here could not be justified as they lack key facilities and services and therefore would be an unsustainable location for Greenfield development.

The Landscape Character Assessment identifies this area as having a relatively high sensitivity to change.

- **Officer Recommendations**

To approve Great Maplestead Map 2/Map 2a as the Draft Site Allocation Inset Plan.
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Former Polish Camp Site – Allshots Farm, Kelvedon

- **Core Strategy Proposals** – No specific allocation
- **Background:** Following the Second World War, the former Polish Camp Buildings were used to provide an administrative and amenity facility for Polish Refugees. It is located south of Rivenhall Airfield in Kelvedon Parish, between Kelvedon and Silver End.
- The former Polish Campsite, Allshots Farm was granted planning permission in 1989 (BTE/2306/89) for '*change of use of seven redundant buildings to workshop/storage to attract small businesses to the site*'. Prior to this the site was occupied by Marconi from 1964. There are now 11 buildings on the site which are all in active use – see appendix 3 (A).
- The site does not currently have a designated employment boundary. The landowner has put forward a representation asking that an employment boundary be drawn around the site as indicated on Map 1.
- **Representations for sites put forward by landowner:**

LDF Site Ref: KEL5 Site Address/Name: Polish Camp Site, Rivenhall Airfield	Gross Site Area Ha: 1.76 est. Type of Development: Employment Summary of Proposals: Formal designation of an employment area
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Former Polish Campsite, Allshots Farm, Kelvedon - Map 1

This map was sent to Kelvedon, Rivenhall and Silver End Parish Council for comment and includes the representation from the landowner/developer.

Please see Appendix 1.

- **Parish Council Views:**
 - **Kelvedon Parish Council** – Support employment boundary around the whole site. Stated the importance of the former Polish Campsite in respect of employment in the area and highlighted that a recent survey carried out suggests that the majority of people working on the site are from Kelvedon, with the remainder being from Silver End, Rivenhall and Coggeshall. Including the top north eastern corner of the site within the employment boundary and therefore allowing further expansion of the site, can only be advantageous to Kelvedon with regards to local employment.
 - **Silver End Parish Council** – Support employment boundary around the site – but the north eastern boundary drawn tight to existing development.

- **Rivenhall Parish Council** – Support employment boundary around the site –but the northern boundary drawn tight to existing development.
- **Former Polish Campsite, Allshots Farm, Kelvedon - Map 2** – proposed Draft Site Allocations Inset:

Please see Appendix 1.

- **Officer Comments**

The proposed site is in active employment use and provides local job opportunities. Following a site visit the visual appearance of the buildings seem to indicate that they are in a fair condition. There have been various planning applications for additional employment units in recent years. Officers have empathy with the adjacent Parish Councils of Rivenhall and Silver End who have raised concern that further units on the site could have a detrimental impact on the open countryside and local roads.

Officers agree with the Parish Councils that a formal employment boundary should be drawn around the site to control and contain the type of development within it.

Officers carried out a site visit particularly to look at the north eastern corner of the site, which Rivenhall and Silver End Parish Council proposed should be excluded. It became apparent on site that a physical boundary, with a planted hedgerow (although it has not fully been established yet) forms the logical boundary to the site. It would be difficult to justify exclusion of the north eastern corner as there are already 3 units on the northern boundary of the site. A further additional one unit could probably be accommodated on the north eastern corner.

This is a small scale employment site, which provides local employment opportunities, which would contribute overall to 2.02 ha of non residential land. The vacant areas of land in the north eastern and the north western corners measure approximately 0.3ha.

Although the owners have experienced difficulty in planting a hedgerow, further attempts should be made. Having a strong hedge screening/structural landscaping along the whole boundary of the site would reduce the visual impact of the development on the open countryside.

As the site is in an unsustainable location, a travel plan should be implemented to support further development and the proposed allocation of a formal employment boundary.

The whole site would also be subject to the requirements of the External Lighting Supplementary Planning Document.

Officer Recommendations

- To approve Map 2 and the proposed formal employment boundary with a landscape buffer/structural landscaping around the whole site.

1. Witham

- **Core Strategy Proposals** – Main Town
- **Background:** Witham is identified in the Core Strategy as a main town, the second largest town in Braintree District and has a population of 22,470 (2001 Census).
- There is a Town Plan 'A future for our town' (2003) which was published following consultation undertaken with focus groups/Town Plan Steering Groups. The Town Plan emphasises that future housing development should be balanced to ensure there are local employment opportunities available to reduce out-commuting.
- There are two Conservation Areas in Witham which include Newland Street, Collingwood Road, The Avenue and Chipping Hill and Church Street.
- Witham has excellent transport connections with access to the A12 and a railway station on the main line to London. There are also good bus service links to Chelmsford, Maldon, Colchester and surrounding villages. However, it should be noted that many of the local roads in Witham suffer from traffic congestion and parking problems associated with commuters.
- Witham is the hub for many of the surrounding villages. It provides public halls, doctors surgeries, dentists, supermarkets, primary and secondary schools, library and a primary shopping area.
- Witham has two large industrial estates, Freebournes and Eastways on the east of Witham. Witham has the largest area of B2/B8 floor space in the District as identified in the employment land review.

Housing Land Supply

- The Core Strategy (Policy CS1) identifies a minimum housing provision target of 1,700 dwellings from 2009 to 2026 as can be seen in the summarised table below:

Settlement	Minimum Housing Provision dwellings	Indicative Provisional Dates
Witham excluding growth locations	800	2009-2026
Witham south west Growth Location north of Hatfield Road	600	Phased between 2017-2026
Witham north east Growth Location off Forest Road	300	Phased between 2021-2026

- The two growth locations have already been allocated for development in the Core Strategy and will not be considered in the preparation of the Site Allocations and Development Management Plan.
- Of the remaining 800 dwelling target, 199 dwellings have been completed and 288 have been granted planning permission. Therefore, there are a minimum of **313** dwellings to allocate through the Site Allocations Development Plan Document. However, it would be preferable to have additional dwellings over and above the minimum in case any of the sites are slow in coming forward for development. At least a further 10% of the balance should be provided, giving a minimum of 344 dwellings. If sufficient dwelling sites are not identified, there is a risk that speculative applications could be submitted by developers for unallocated sites.

Meetings with Witham Town Council

Officers attended meetings with Witham Town Council on the 6th December 2011, 10th January and 16th January 2012 to seek their views on the Allocations Development Plan Document and Maps 1-12, which can be viewed in Appendix 1. These maps were sent to the Town Council for their comments and included the existing Local Plan Review allocations, representations so far from landowners/developers and questions about future allocations.

2. Description of Sites Submitted, Witham Town Council Views, Officer Comments and Recommendation for each map are considered below.

Map 1

Sites Submitted

LDF Site Ref: WCH6 Site Address/Name: Land between 38 and 50 Maldon Road	Gross Site Area Ha: 0.03 Type of Development: Open Space Summary of Proposals: To include within the boundary of Witham Park.
LDF Site Ref: WCH8 Site Address/Name: Coach House Way, Newland Street	Gross Site Area Ha: 0.02 Type of Development: Residential Summary of Proposals: Proposed development of land for residential purposes.
LDF Site Ref: WCH9 Site Address/Name: Land south of Maldon Road (rear of HSBC Bank, 57 Newland Street)	Gross Site Area Ha: 0.229 Summary of Proposals: Currently allocated in the Local Plan Review 2005 as a residential site for 12 or more dwellings.

Town Council Views:

- WCH 6 - Land between 38 and 50 Maldon Road

The Town Council consider that this area should be included within the boundary of the park to provide a road frontage to the park and therefore should be allocated as informal recreation.

- **WCH 8 – Coach House Way**

The Town Council consider that this site should be allocated for a housing site of 10 or more dwellings.

- **WCH 9 - Land south of Maldon Road (rear of HSBC Bank, 57 Newland Street)**

The Town Council consider that as this piece of land had no clear suitable access, it is inappropriate to be included as a potential site allocation for housing. The proposed road access on Map 1 should also be removed.

Other Issues

- The Town Council consider that the NHS building, Collingwood Road should be allocated as a mixed development site with up to 60 dwellings.
- The Town Council support the retention of the existing 'environmental improvement area' along Newland Street.
- The Town Council consider that the Newlands Precinct (WCH14), including Pantile House, Newlands car park (WCH13), and rear of 1 – 8 Collingwood Road/Lockram Lane should be identified as a 'comprehensive development area'. It was noted subject to pressure for parking facilities the site may also be appropriate for additional residential development.
- The Town Council consider that Mayland House and Grove House should be allocated for employment uses.
- The Town Council consider that a cycle/footpath should be designated through Witham Park.

Officer Comments:

- **WCH 6 - Land between 38 and 50 Maldon Road**

The site is only partially surfaced and is currently leased as a small car park. As can be seen from photograph A in Appendix 2, the site is rather unattractive and neglected. The inclusion of this site into the boundary of Witham Park would provide a road frontage to the park and improve visibility into the park. If this area was landscaped and surfaced, it would enhance the appearance of this area and improve access into the park. The site could also be used to provide a few disabled parking spaces for the park.

- **WCH 8 – Coach House Way**

A planning application for the site has recently been submitted 11/01735/FUL to replace an extant permission 08/02228/FUL. The principle of development on this site has already been agreed. The site is in a good location with good access to the town centre and public transport links. Officers therefore support the allocation of the site for a residential development for 10 or more dwellings, as the Town Council does.

- **WCH 9 - Land south of Maldon Road (rear of HSBC Bank, 57 Newland Street)**

The site is currently identified on the proposals map of the Local Plan Review as a proposed residential site. Unfortunately the site has not come forward for development. The access to the site is poor and would involve access through third party land (part of the pub car park on Maldon Road), it is currently shown as a road proposal on the proposals map of the Local Plan Review. Officers consider that the access road proposal should be removed and the site should no longer be allocated for residential development, as there are deliverability concerns.

- **NHS building, Collingwood Road**

The NHS building, Collingwood Road is not currently allocated on the proposals map of the Local Plan Review 2005 for employment or any other use. It is currently only partially occupied. The site is located in a sustainable location in close proximity to the town centre and railway station. It could be suitable for residential development, if the current uses relocated and there is already residential development in close proximity to the site. However, it is also a sustainable location for employment, if there is sufficient demand for offices. Officers consider that discussions should be held with the current occupiers concerning whether they intend to continue to use the site. The offices will also be assessed in the employment land review to establish whether there is a need to retain these as a future employment use, or whether the site could be allocated for housing. Officers are concerned that if this was allocated for housing, subject to the two issues above, it may not be able to accommodate 60 dwellings as suggested by the Town Council and realistically only a maximum of 30 dwellings could be achieved here, taking into account open space and parking requirements.

- **Environmental Improvement Area' Newland Street**

The 'environmental improvement area' is currently identified on the proposals map of the Local Plan Review. Designation as such has previously secured funding to improve Newlands Street.

A key objective of the Core Strategy relating to town centres is *'to maintain and develop vibrant and prosperous main towns, by encouraging new development and regeneration schemes'*.

Officers therefore support the Town Council's view that the designation should remain.

- **Newlands Shopping Centre, including Pantile House, and rear of 1 – 8 Collingwood Road, Newlands Drive car park**

The 'comprehensive development area' is currently identified on the proposals map of the Local Plan Review, but currently excludes 'Pantile House'.

Newlands Drive car park is currently allocated as an 'environmental improvement area'. The Town Council suggested that the boundary of the 'comprehensive area' should be retained, but extended to include Lockram Lane to the rear of 1-8 Collingwood Road and Newlands car park.

Officers are supportive of this, as the wider area could benefit from a larger regeneration scheme. However, plans for this site should seek to retain the amount of car parking spaces currently available at Newlands Street/Lockram

Lane car park to ensure that there are sufficient parking spaces available to serve the town centre.

- **Mayland House/Grove House – Employment Uses**

Mayland House and Grove House are in active employment use. These sites are in good sustainable locations in relation to the town centre, railway station, and bus stops. Allocation as 'employment use' would safeguard them for future employment use, providing local employment opportunities and contribute towards the Core Strategy target to provide 14,000 jobs in the District.

- **Proposed cycle/footpath through Witham Park and between Blackwater Lane and Pasture Road**

The allocation of the cycle/footpaths will assist in securing future s106 monies from nearby developments to deliver the path.

Officer Recommendations:

Map 1 b

To allocate land between 38 and 50 Maldon Road (WCH 6) as informal recreation.

To allocate a residential site for 10 or more dwellings at Coach House Way (WCH 8).

To remove the residential allocation at WCH 9 (Land south of Maldon Road (rear of HSBC Bank, 57 Newland Street) and associated proposed access road.

Discussions should be held with the occupiers/owners of the NHS offices Collingwood Road about its future use and this site should be considered in the Employment Land Review.

To retain an 'environmental improvement area' designation on Newland Street.

To allocate a 'comprehensive development area' to include Newlands Centre (WCH 14), Newlands Drive car park (WCH 13), Pantile House, and rear of 1-8 Collingwood Road/Lockram Lane.

To allocate Mayland House for employment use.

To allocate Grove House for employment use.

To allocate a proposed cycle/footpath link through Witham Park.

To allocate a proposed cycle/footpath link between Blackwater Lane and Pasture Road.

To approve Map 1b as part of the draft Site Allocations Inset Map for Witham.

Map 2

Sites Submitted

LDF Site Ref: WCH2 Site Address/Name: Land at Gimsoms, Kings Chase	Gross Site Area Ha: 2.54 Development Capacity (units/floor space): 90 units Type of Development: Residential, open space, landscaping Summary of Proposals: Residential
LDF Site Ref: WCH4 Site Address/Name: Land at Shelleys, Blackwater Lane	Gross Site Area Ha: 0.35 Type of Development: Open air storage
LDF Site Ref: WIS2 Site Address/Name: Land off Constance Close	Gross Site Area Ha: 1.84 Type of Development: Residential Summary of Proposals: Development of land off Constance Close Witham for residential development.
LDF Site Ref: WIS2 Site Address/Name: Land off Constance Close	Gross Site Area Ha: 0.40 Type of Development: Open Space Summary of Proposals: Reallocate as 'Visually Important Space'.
LDF Site Ref: WIS3 Site Address/Name: Land off Carraways	Gross Site Area Ha: 0.06 Development Capacity (units/floor space): 4 units Average Density: Not specified Type of Development: Residential Summary of Proposals: Proposed development of land at Carraways Witham for 4 dwellings.

Town Council Views:

- **WCH 2 - Land at Gimsoms, Kings Chase**

Witham Town Council strongly believe that development here would be inappropriate and could impinge on the River Walk. Access to the site from 'Kings Chase' would be inappropriate as would access from 'River View' as it is adjacent to the care home. Witham Town Council concluded that the site should remain as Visually Important Space.

- **WCH 4 - Land at Shelleys, Blackwater Lane**

Witham Town Council conclude that they did not support the allocation of this site for open storage, and requested that this site should not receive any specific allocation, noting that the current use for fairground equipment storage has planning consent.

- **WIS 2 – Land off Constance Close** Witham Town Council considers that this land should remain designated for housing.

- **WIS 3 – Land off Carraways**

Witham Town Council considers that this land could be identified for housing.

Other Issues

- Witham Town Council considers that the cycle/footpath from Witham Park to the river walk should be identified.

- Witham Town Council considers that the cycle/footpath from Maldon Road, via WIS 2 (land off Constance Close), over the River Brain to Pasture Road should be identified.

Officer Comments:

- WCH 2 - Land at Gimsons, Kings Chase

The site currently comprises a large 1920's style house named 'Gimsons' set in substantial gardens, the total site area is approximately 2.54 ha. Access to the house is currently gained off Kings Chase.

The north-eastern edge of the site is defined by the Town Park and the footpath that runs from Kings Chase to River View, the north-western edge is formed by the rear of the existing properties in Newland Street, whilst the southern side follows a hedge that runs parallel to the river.

The adjoining uses include that of Witham Park, Newland Street (Witham Town Centre), Witham River Walk and Helen Court. This site is currently identified on the proposals map of the Local Plan Review 2005 as Visually Important Space. It cannot be accessed for public use.

The proposal put forward by the developer suggests development of 84 dwellings, with the retention of the large house (Gimsons) and its immediate garden. Vehicular access would be from Riverview, with cycle/pedestrian access only off Kings Chase. If the site were to come forward for development it would provide planning obligations to benefit the local area, including affordable housing. The proposed site layout can be viewed in Appendix 2 Plan C. The developers held a public consultation on these proposals to which there was public opposition. If the Council supported the allocation of this site for development, they could choose to amend the boundary of the area proposed for development.

A small part of the site (south west) is in flood zone 3 although as can be seen from the site layout, this is proposed as a landscaped buffer between the river walk and the site. There are also tree preservation orders within the site. The development proposes the retention and management of the mature trees as part of the creation of a new public realm.

Plan D and aerial photograph B in Appendix 2 illustrate the extent of the Witham River Walk. As can be seen from the map, it adjoins the southern boundary of the proposed development. Although this part of the River Walk does not have a tarmac path, it does provide woodland walks. There are also views of the site across the river from the footpath /cycleway along the River Walk south of Bridge Street. Photographs E in Appendix 2 illustrate the views into the site from River View. The River Walk can be seen on the far left of the photograph, and the Gimsons site can be seen on the right.

Witham Town Council is strongly opposed to development of this site and is particularly concerned about the impact on the River Walk. There is also strong local opposition to development of the site, including opposition from residents of Helen Court on the basis of the effect upon the river walk and upon access from Riverview.

This is a large site in a sustainable location, with easy pedestrian access to the town centre, bus routes, open space and the railway station. In terms of site constraints, development is not being proposed on land at risk of flooding and trees protected by tree preservation orders would be retained. The proposed site boundary is situated some distance from the River Brain and development of the site does not include any of the existing river walk, which obviously has important public and environmental value. Vehicular access is achievable from Riverview.

The key issue here is whether this site should continue to be protected as a visually important space, or not and to what extent development would impact upon the usage of, or views from the River Walk.

At the previous Local Plan Inquiry in 2005 the Planning Inspector concluded that the site *'is an urban green area that complements the sports and recreation areas and the green areas alongside the river. Together with these areas the site makes a valuable contribution to the setting of the town and is essential to the character and appearance of the area.'* This conclusion remains relevant when reviewing the allocation of the site for residential development.

Officers suggest that it would assist Members in their consideration of these issues, if they visited the site to look at the impact of the proposed development upon the River Walk and Helen Court before making a decision. An accompanied site visit can be arranged which could also look at several other proposed development sites.

- WCH 4 - Land at Shelleys, Blackwater Lane

The site is adjacent to the River Brain off Maldon Road and is currently used by travelling show persons for storage of fairground equipment.

In 2008 an appeal on the site was allowed against a refusal to grant planning permission (04/01631/COU) for the 'use of land for the storage of fairground equipment and vehicles (retrospective application)'. A condition was attached to the appeal which states *'within a period of 3 months following such cessation shall agree with the LPA a timetable and measures for restoration of the land to its former use as grassland following removal of plant machinery, vehicles, all gates and fencing'*

The site is located in close proximity to the Witham River Walk and Whetmead Nature Reserve and it is also within flood zone 2 therefore it would be an unsuitable site to allocate permanently for open storage. The permission which has been granted relates only to the existing user. Should

the existing use cease the site should be restored to its former use as grassland.

- WIS 2 – Land off Constance Close

The site is situated to the rear of Constance Close on vacant open land adjacent to the A12. The proposed site is currently identified as a residential site on the proposals map of the Local Plan Review. A planning application was submitted (10/00431/OUT), but was subsequently refused on grounds of noise impact from the A12, due to the design of the development and the concerns regarding the affordable housing split. The proposed development proposes 32 social rented houses within Phase 1, with no shared ownership or market housing. The applicant submitted an appeal which was subsequently withdrawn.

Officers consider that the site should remain as a residential allocation to provide 100 dwellings towards the housing provision target for Witham and that the area between the site and the A12 should be allocated as structural landscaping to form a landscape buffer. A proposed foot/cycleway should also be identified through the site to link with Maldon Road to Pasture Road north of the River Brain.

- WIS 3 – Land off Carraways

This proposed vacant site has been put forward for 4 residential units. This falls below the threshold of 10 units and therefore would not be allocated for a residential site in the Allocations Development Plan Document. As the site lies within the development boundary, there is a presumption in favour of development.

Other Issues

- **Proposed cycle/footpath link over the River Brain**
- **Proposed cycle/footpath link from Witham Park to River Walk**

The allocation of cycle/footpaths will assist in securing future s106 monies from nearby developments to deliver the paths.

Officer Recommendations:

Map 2 b

To arrange an accompanied site visit to the River Walk to assess impact of proposed development at Gimson's site off Kings Chase.

To not approve the allocation of WCH4 Land at Shelleys, adjacent to River Brain Maldon Road, for open storage.

To retain the residential allocation at WIS2, off Constance Close adjacent to A12, plus an associated cycleway and area of structural landscaping.

To not approve the allocation of WIS3 off Carraways for a residential site of 10 or more dwellings.

To allocate proposed cycle/footpath link over the River Brain.

To allocate proposed cycle/footpath link from Witham Park to River Walk.

To approve Map 2b as part of the draft Site Allocations Inset Map for Witham.

Map 3

Sites Submitted

<p>LDF Site Ref: WIW1 Site Address/Name: Land at Blunts Hall Road, Witham</p>	<p>Gross Site Area Ha: 1.71 est. Development Capacity (units/floor space): Not specified Average Density: Not specified Type of Development: Residential Summary of Proposals: Proposed development of site for residential use.</p>
<p>LDF Site Ref: WIS 8 Site Address/Name: Witham Fire Station, Hatfield Road</p>	<p>Gross Site Area Ha: 0.018 Development Capacity (units/floorspace): Not specified Average Density: Approx 10 dwellings Type of Development: Residential Summary of Proposals: Residential</p>

Town Council Views:

- WIW 1 – Land at Blunts Hall Road, Witham

Witham Town Council considers that whilst housing would be acceptable there would be a problem with the access from a protected lane. However with the current demand for allotments the Town Council considered that at present this land should be designated for community allotments.

- WIS 8 – Witham Fire Station, Hatfield Road

The Town Council were averse to the proposal unless an alternative site for the fire station was identified.

Other Issues

The Town Council consider that the adult educational facility on Spinks Lane should be allocated as 'education land'.

The Town Council consider that the proposed new leisure centre on Spinks Lane should be allocated as 'indoor sport and recreation'.

The Town Council consider that that the proposed cycle/footpath link should be identified.

Officer Comments:

- WIW 1 – Land at Blunts Hall Road, Witham

This site of 1.71ha has been put forward for residential development. It is currently located outside of the existing Town Development Boundary. The site is currently well screened from Blunts Hall Road with a Public Footpath that follows the eastern boundary of the site. Blunts Hall Road, just to the west of the proposed site is identified as a Protected Lane (see photograph in Appendix 2 F/G). The Local Plan Review policy states that proposals that would adversely affect the physical appearance of Protected Lanes, or give rise to a material increase in the amount of traffic using them should be resisted.

The site is currently situated between agricultural land to the west, the Rugby Club to the east and the Witham River Walk to the north of the river.

The site is currently vacant open land. There is open access onto the land from the Public Footpath.

The Town Council propose that this site should be used for allotments. Braintree District Council currently holds a waiting list for all the allotments in the District. There is a current allotment waiting list of 40 persons in Witham. The Green Spaces Strategy also recognised that there was a notable deficiency of allotments in Witham. There is currently one Council owned allotment site in north Witham, at Cut Throat Lane, which has recently been enlarged to provide a total of 103 plots.

Land at Blunts Hall Road, or part of this site, would be a suitable location for additional allotments. Development of the whole site for allotments could provide around 80 additional plots. The path to the east of the site provides pedestrian access to this land from the Humber Road estate.

The site would provide a logical rounding off of the development boundary on the west side of Witham and would contribute towards the housing requirement and affordable housing needs. However, a 1.71 ha site could accommodate, at 30 dwellings per hectare, about 50 dwellings. This could have a detrimental impact on the country lane character of Blunts Hall Road, including increased usage of the length to the west of the site which is a protected lane, although most traffic movements are likely to be in the direction of the town. There has previously been strong opposition to proposed development, during the preparation of the Local Plan Review and the Council decided at that time not to allocate it as a residential site.

Officers suggest that it would assist Members in their consideration of these issues, if they also visited this site (together with the Gimsons site) before making a decision.

- WIS 8 – Witham Fire Station, Hatfield Road

This proposed site has been put forward for residential development. The submission suggests 10 dwellings, although recognises that realistically this is more likely to be 7 or 8 dwellings. This falls below the threshold of 10 units and therefore would not be allocated for a residential site in the Allocations Development Plan Document. Officers would not support the redevelopment of Witham Fire Station, an important community facility, unless it could be demonstrated that it would relocate to an alternative suitable site in Witham.

- Adult Educational Facility on Spinks Lane

This site is currently identified as 'formal recreation' on the proposals map of the Local Plan Review. Officers are supportive of the technical amendment to accurately reflect the part of the site which is now the adult education facility as 'educational use'. Officers are also supportive of the Town Council's suggestion that the changing facilities should be included as part of the 'informal recreation' designation.

- New Leisure Centre on Spinks Lane

The site is currently identified as 'educational use' on the proposals map of the Local Plan Review. Following public consultation, planning consent was granted to construct a new leisure centre on this site following the closure of Bramston Leisure Centre. Officers are therefore supportive of the technical amendment to allocate this site as 'indoor sport and recreation'.

Braintree District Council Officers are currently investigating potential uses for the former Bramston Sports Centre/Swimming Pool. Recommendations on its designation will therefore be reported to the Local Development Framework Panel at a later meeting.

- Proposed cycle/footpath from Spa Road along northern edge of informal recreation area

This cycle/footpath was proposed in the Local Plan Review, but has not been constructed yet. The allocation of cycle/footpaths will assist in securing future s106 monies from nearby developments to deliver the paths.

Officer Recommendations:

Map 3b

To arrange an accompanied site visit to Blunts Hall Road (WIW 1) to assess impact of proposed development.

To not approve allocation of WIS 8 (Fire station on Hatfield Road) for a residential site of 10 or more dwellings

To allocate informal recreation on triangle of land between Spa Road and Highfields Road.

To allocate 'educational use' for the adult education centre on Spinks Lane.

Technical amendment – allocate the changing facilities as part of the 'formal recreation' designation on Spinks Lane.

Technical amendment – allocate 'indoor sport and recreation' for the proposed leisure centre on Spinks Lane.

To defer the consideration of Bramston to a later LDF Panel meeting.

To approve Map 3b as part of the draft Site Allocations Inset Map for Witham.

Map 4

Sites Submitted

<p>LDF Site Ref: WIS4 Site Address/Name: Land at Barley Fields, Maltings Lane</p>	<p>Gross Site Area Ha: 0.05 Development Capacity (units/floorspace): 5 units Average Density: Not specified Type of Development: Residential Summary of Proposals: Proposed development of 5 dwellings on land at Barleyfields, Maltings Lane Witham.</p>
<p>LDF Site Ref: WIS6 Site Address/Name: Lodge Farm, Hatfield Road</p>	<p>Gross Site Area Ha: 35.5 Development Capacity (units/floor space): 600 dwellings and associated community infrastructure Average Density: Not specified Type of Development: Urban extension (Core Strategy Submission Draft proposed Growth Location) Summary of Proposals: Proposed urban extension to the southwest of Witham.</p>
<p>LDF Site Ref: WIS 9 Site Address/Name: Western half of Maltings Lane Development</p>	<p>Gross Site Area Ha: 7.94 Type of Development: Residential Summary of Proposals: 143 dwellings</p>

Town Council Views:

- WIS 4 – Land at Barley Fields, Maltings Lane

Witham Town Council considers that this land could be identified for housing and noted that the site location is best described as Elgar Drive.

- WIS 6 – Lodge Farm, Hatfield Road

Witham Town Council supports an additional 100 dwellings to be accommodated at Lodge Farm Growth Location towards meeting their housing target of 313 dwellings.

- **WIS 9 – Maltings Lane**

Witham Town Council strongly supports the requirement for community facilities and infrastructure development set out in the original Master Plan for the Maltings Lane development. They also consider that there is value in considering the additional provision of parking facilities on a parcel of land to the south-east of the site.

- Witham Town Council considers that the existing master plan for Maltings Lane should be reflected in the Allocations Development Plan Document.

- Witham Town Council considers that the area of open space on the Maltings Lane Development should be identified as 'informal recreation'.

Other Issues

- Witham Town Council considers that the Bowling Green on Hatfield Road, adjacent to Ivy Chimneys should remain allocated as 'informal recreation'.

Officer Comments:

- **WIS 4 – Land at Barley Fields, Maltings Lane**

This proposed site has been put forward for 5 residential units. This falls below the threshold of 10 units and therefore would not be allocated for a residential site in the Allocations Development Plan Document. As it lies within the development boundary of Witham, there is already a presumption in favour of development of this site.

- **WIS 6 – Lodge Farm, Hatfield Road**

The growth location North of Hatfield Road is allocated in the Core Strategy for 600 dwelling, to be phased between 2017- 2026. This location covers an area of 35.7ha. The agents for the site have indicated that the site could provide additional dwellings within the existing proposed boundary. Officers have held discussions with the agents for the growth location concerning the capacity of the site and informed Witham Town Council that the agents had stated that there was capacity for more than 100 additional houses at this growth location. However, officers recommend that the number of dwellings should not exceed an additional 100 dwellings as the land north of Hatfield Road is proposed as a mixed use growth location which would provide community facilities including a school and open space and could include some employment provision. Officers consider that an additional 100 dwellings still enables a mixed use development to be delivered, but additional dwellings above a total of 700 dwellings could start to reduce the scope for mixed use development. Officers recommend that the current phasing of the site from 2017 to 2026 is not altered, as this will allow for the completion of the Maltings Lane community facilities and housing prior to commencement of this growth location, as well as ensuring a continuous 5 year housing land supply.

The 'Assessment of Impact of Potential Core Strategy Sites on Existing Junctions' March 2010, which forms part of the evidence base for the LDF,

assessed the growth location North of Hatfield Road, which included a scenario of up to 900 dwellings with ancillary community support services such as shops and a Doctor's Surgery and a Primary School. It concluded that these could be accommodated subject to enlargement junction improvements at Gershwin Boulevard Roundabout/Hatfield Road. A total of 700 dwellings could therefore be accommodated.

- Maltings Lane

There is a current master plan which has been approved for this area of the Maltings Lane development. However, it is expected that a revised master plan will be submitted to the Council shortly for consideration following concerns from the developer that the current master plan is unviable and undeliverable due to the large amount of B1 use currently identified.

The Master Plan requires the provision of community facilities and infrastructure on the site to support the existing development. Officers are having ongoing discussions with the developer to ensure that a viable revised master plan is submitted which ensures these facilities are delivered. As a revised master plan has yet to be submitted, officers propose that the existing master plan is accurately reflected on the map. If a revised master plan is approved by the Council during the process of the Allocations Development Plan Document, the allocations for the Maltings Lane site can be updated as a technical amendment prior to the Public Consultation on the draft Site Allocations Plan.

- Open space on the Maltings Lane Development

Officers concur with the Town Council's view that the open spaces on Maltings Lane should be identified as 'informal recreation' as they contribute to the open space provision in the area.

- Bowling Green on Hatfield Road

The site is currently identified as 'formal recreation' on the proposals map of the Local Plan Review, as it is used as a bowling green. The Green Spaces Strategy identifies a deficiency of approximately 12ha of Outdoor Sports Provision (*definition includes bowling greens*) in Witham Urban. There are a further two bowling greens in the town, off The Paddocks and at Mill Lane. Officers consider that this should continue to be designated as formal recreation to protect its current use.

Officer Recommendations:

Map 4a

To not approve allocation for a residential site of 10 or more dwellings at WIS 4 (off Barleyfields).

To increase the number of houses allocated at the Core Strategy growth location north of Hatfield Road from 600 to 700 dwellings.

To approve allocations identifying residential land, employment land, community uses, structural landscaping and educational uses set

out in the current master plan for the Maltings Lane site, as shown on Map 4a.

To amend the allocations of land at the Maltings Lane site later in 2012, to reflect any revisions to the Master Plan, approved by the Council later this year.

To retain the formal recreation designation for the Bowling Green on Hatfield Road.

To approve Map 4a as part of the draft Site Allocations Inset Map for Witham.

Map 5

Sites Submitted

<p>LDF Site Ref: WCH1 Site Address/Name: Witham Glebe (Land adjacent to 'The Old Vicarage'), Chipping Hill</p>	<p>Gross Site Area Ha: 0.16 Summary of Proposals: Proposed development of land adjacent 'The Old Vicarage, Chipping Hill, Witham'.</p>
<p>LDF Site Ref: WCH3 Site Address/Name: Bellfields, Braintree Road</p>	<p>Gross Site Area Ha: 1.01 Type of Development: Residential/Public Open Space Summary of Proposals: Redevelopment of Bellfields and Chipping Hill infant school for residential development.</p>
<p>LDF Site Ref: WCH5 Site Address/Name: Land to rear of 24-40c Church Street, Witham</p>	<p>Gross Site Area Ha: 0.81 Average Density: Not specified Type of Development: Residential Summary of Proposals: Proposed development of land for residential use.</p>
<p>LDF Site Ref: WCH7 Site Address/Name: Rear of Braintree Road, Ramsden Mills</p>	<p>Gross Site Area Ha: 0.31 Type of Development: Residential Summary of Proposals: Proposed development of land for residential use.</p>

Town Council Views:

- WCH 1 - Witham Glebe (Land adjacent to 'The Old Vicarage'), Chipping Hill

Witham Town Council concluded that this area should be retained as Visually Important Space.

- WCH 3 - Bellfields, Braintree Road

Witham Town Council was reminded that land at Bellfields is contaminated and must not be built on unless the ground has been properly treated. Witham Town Council discussed the possibilities for this site and wondered whether the original school building should be listed and used as a medical centre with part of Bellfields used for residential and part as a much needed commuter car park to be accessed from the roundabout on Braintree Road.

- **WCH 5 - Land to rear of 24- 40c Church Street**

The site is currently vacant open land. Witham Town Council considers that this site has never been suitable for housing in the past, but if access could be gained through the proposed car park at Bellfields (WCH 3) housing could be provided.

- **WCH 7 – Land to rear of Braintree Road (Ramsden Mills)**

Witham Town Council considers that this site should be retained as employment land and form part of an Employment Brief.

Other Issues

- Witham Town Council considers that the second access into the station car park should be identified off Easton Road. (Map 5)

- Witham Town Council considers that the existing 'environmental improvement area' on Chipping Hill/Church Street should be retained and extended to include Chipping Hill bridge and the Listed brick wall on Chipping Hill and the cottages in Church Street. (Map 5)

- Witham Town Council considers that Eckard House, Easton Road and Icen House, Colchester Road should be allocated for employment uses.

Officer Comments:

- **WCH 1 - Witham Glebe (Land adjacent to 'The Old Vicarage'), Chipping Hill**

The site is vacant open land and is currently identified on the proposals map of the Local Plan Review 2005 as Visually Important Space. The site lies within the Chipping Hill conservation area and contributes to the setting of the Grade 2 Listed buildings of St Nicholas Church and the Old Vicarage. Officers consider that it should therefore be retained as Visually Important Space.

- **WCH 3 - Bellfields, Braintree Road**

The site is currently part of the former Chipping Hill primary school. It is currently allocated on the proposals map of the Local Plan Review as educational land. However, the school has now relocated to the Maltings Lane development.

The vacant land to the rear (*immediately adjacent to Braintree Road*) which also forms part of the site, is known to be contaminated land and would therefore need to be subject to treatment prior to development. Officers are supportive of Witham Town Council's suggestion that the original school building – Chipping Hill should be retained as it contributes to the setting of the Conservation Area. Officers suggest that this building is allocated for 'community uses', (which could include a doctor's surgery if there was proposed provision of this use.) The allocation of part of this site for housing and part for parking, as suggested by the Town Council, could meet a short-

term need for commuter parking. It is hoped that in the long term there could be multi-storey parking provision nearer to the station to meet these needs.

- **WCH 5 - Land to rear of 24- 40c Church Street**

The site is currently vacant open land. Existing access to the site is poor although as the site WCH 3 – rear of Bellfields is proposed for development, access could be gained through here to enable this site to come forward for development. Officers are supportive of the Town Council view that the site should be allocated for residential development subject to WCH 3 (Bellfields, Braintree Road) coming forward to provide access.

- **WCH 7 – Land to rear of Braintree Road (Ramsden Mills)**

The site is currently in active commercial use as a carpet warehouse providing local employment, although is not currently allocated as employment land on the proposals map of the Local Plan Review. The site is in close proximity to Witham Railway Station, bus stops and is adjacent to existing employment uses at Cullen Mill. Road access into the site is narrow. Officers are supportive of the Town Council's view that the site should be allocated as 'Employment Use'. There is a District target set out in the Core Strategy to provide a minimum of 14,000 jobs up to 2026. Development of this site for uses other than employment would lead to a loss of jobs.

- **Second access into the station car park off Easton Road**

Growth Area Funding and s106 monies have been allocated to provide a second access into the station off Station Road, which will alleviate traffic congestion particularly at the junction of The Avenue, Braintree Road and Easton Road. A second access into the station could also facilitate the opportunity for provision of a multi storey car park on the Easton Road car park in the future.

- **'Environmental Improvement Area' Chipping Hill/Church Street**

Officers support the Town Council suggestion that the 'environmental improvement area' should be extended to include Church Street (up to the cottages) and Chipping Hill up to the bridge, and the listed wall along part of Powers Hall End. Inclusion of these areas would bring additional parts of the conservation area into the area for environmental improvement. s106 monies could be sought from nearby developments to provide improvements to these areas.

- **Eckard House/Iceni House Employment Uses**

Eckard House, which is an office block adjacent to the Easton Road railway station car park, has been vacant for approximately 2 years and a demolition notice has recently been granted. Iceni House, an office block situated on Newland Street opposite the police station, is also empty. These sites are in good sustainable locations in relation to the railway station, local bus stops and the town centre. Allocation as 'employment use' would safeguard them for future employment use, providing local employment opportunities. An allocation for other uses would lead to a loss of employment which would be set against the Core Strategy target to provide 14,000 jobs in the District.

The Council will be commissioning an employment land review which will also assess future uses of vacant employment premises, which will be reported to the LDF Panel.

- Cut Throat Lane Allotments

The allotments have recently been extended and therefore the area designated as allotments also needs to be extended.

Officer Recommendations:

Map 5a

To retain the allocation of 'Visually Important Space' at WCH1 Witham Glebe.

To allocate WCH3 Bellfields as part residential and part car park and to allocate the former Chipping Hill School building for community uses.

To allocate WCH5 Land rear of 24-40c Church Street for residential development of 10 or more dwellings.

To allocate WCH 7 (*Land to rear of Braintree Road, Ramsden Mills*) for employment uses.

To identify a second access off Station Road into the Station car park.

To retain the allocation of an 'environmental improvement area' at Chipping Hill and to extend it to include part of Church Street, Chipping Hill Bridge and the listed wall at Powers Hall End.

To allocate Eckard House and Icen House for employment uses.

To extend the allotment designation off Cut Throat Lane.

To approve Map 5a as part of the draft Site Allocations Inset Map for Witham.

Map 6

Town Council Views:

No sites submitted for Map 6

Other Issues

- Witham Town Council considers that existing open space as indicated on the map 6 on the Humber Road estate should be identified as informal recreation.
- Witham Town Council considers that the proposed cycle/footpath indicated on map 6 should be allocated.

Officer Comments:

The areas which provide a linear open space on the Humber Road estate are not designated for any use in the Local Plan review. These should be identified as 'informal recreation' as they contribute to the open space provision in the area. This will ensure that they are not developed for any other purposes.

- Proposed cycle/footpath

The designation of the cycle/footpath that runs from Highfields Road across the open space south of the Humber Road Estate could assist in securing future s106 monies from nearby developments to deliver the paths

Officer Recommendations:

Map 6a

To allocate informal recreation on the Humber Road estate as identified on Map 6a and adjacent to ASDA.

To allocate the cycle/footpath south of the Humber Road Estate as identified on Map 6a.

To approve Map 6a as part of the draft Site Allocations Inset Map for Witham.

Map 7

No sites submitted for Map 7

Other issues

Town Council Views:

- Witham Town Council consider that the proposed cycle/footpath links shown on Map 7 should be allocated.

Officer Comments:

- The proposed cycle/footpath routes run across open spaces between Spring Lodge, Bramble Road and Rosebay Close following the lines of current smaller paths. These would join onto the existing cycleway network at Spring Lodge. The designation of cycle/footpaths will assist in securing future s106 monies from nearby developments to deliver the paths.

Officer Recommendations:

Map 7a

To allocate cycle/footpath links between Spring Lodge, Bramble Road and Rosebay Close as shown on Map 7a.

To approve Map 7a as part of the draft Site Allocations Inset Map for Witham.

Map 8

Sites Submitted

LDF Site Ref: WIN1 Site Address/Name: Land adjacent Conrad Road	Gross Site Area Ha: 5.22 Average Density: Not specified Type of Development: Residential Summary of Proposals: Site considered suitable for housing development.
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Town Council Views:

- WIN 1 – Land adjacent Conrad Road

Although Witham Town Council promoted this site as an alternative to the Forest Road growth location during the Core Strategy hearing, they are concerned that the infrastructure in north Witham is insufficient to cope with both the Forest Road growth location and additional development on this site. Congestion along Crossing Road was raised but the point was made that new dwellings would bring s106 funding to include supporting infrastructure. Witham Town Council considers that extension to the development boundary at WIN1 cannot be supported without sufficient infrastructure being in place.

- WIN 2 – Community Orchard

Witham Town Council considers that this site should be identified as a community orchard as it is currently used as such and should therefore be protected.

Other Issues

- Witham Town Council considers that the green at Ebenezer Close should be identified as 'visually important space'.
- Witham Town Council considers that the area of open space, west of Ebenezer Close should be included as part of the River Walk and should be allocated as 'informal recreation'.
- Witham Town Council considers that the shops at Dorothy Sayers/Laburnum Way should be allocated as a 'comprehensive development area'.

- Witham Town Council considers that the proposed cycle/footpath adjacent to Rickstones playing field should be identified.

Officer Comments:

- WIN 1 – Land adjacent Conrad Road

This site is currently outside the existing development boundary for Witham. The Landscape Character Assessment identifies this area as having low to medium capacity for the landscape to accommodate development, Table 3.3.11 of 'volume 8 Landscape Character Settlement Fringe Study' notes that the western part of the character area (where Conrad Road site is located) is generally of higher sensitivity. This site, or part of this site, could be suitable as an extension to the edge of Witham, to provide residential development although it is further from the town centre than some of the sites under consideration. It is suggested that a decision is not made on whether this site should be allocated, until a clearer idea is obtained of the housing number still required in Witham following the completion of the employment land review, further views from the Town Council and a decision on the Gimsons site.

- WIN 2 – Community Orchard

An area of land north of Conrad Road is currently identified on the proposals map as allotments, although it has recently been restored to provide a community orchard. Officers therefore propose that this site should be designated as a community orchard.

- Green at Ebenezer Close

Officers are supportive of the Town Council that the site should be recognised and allocated as 'visually important space' as it contributes to the setting of the Ebenezer Close.

- Open Space adjacent to Ebenezer Close

Officers are supportive of the Town Council that the area should be allocated as 'informal recreation' as it forms part of the Witham River Walk and therefore should be appropriately identified.

- Dorothy Sayers/Laburnum Way Shops

A Development Brief was approved by Planning Committee on the 4th January 2011, for a mixed use scheme to include 23 residential units, pavilion, retail store, pub and garages. Officers therefore propose that the area should be allocated as a 'comprehensive development area'.

- Proposed cycle/footpath

The proposed cycleway adjacent to Rickstones playing field was previously identified in the Local Plan Review, but has not yet been constructed. The allocation of cycle/footpaths will assist in securing future s106 monies from nearby developments to deliver the paths.

Officer Recommendations:

Map 8a

To defer a decision on whether to allocate land off Conrad Road pending the outcome of the Employment Land Review and further discussion with the Town Council.

To designate the community orchard on land north of Conrad Road (replacing the allotment designation, outside the development boundary).

To allocate the green at Ebenezer Close as 'visually important space'.

To allocate the area of open space adjacent to Ebenezer Close, north of Witham River Walk as 'informal recreation'.

To allocate a 'comprehensive development area' at Dorothy Sayers/Laburnum Way shops.

To allocate the cycle/footpath adjacent to Rickstones playing field as identified on Map 8a.

To approve Map 8a as part of the draft Site Allocations Inset Map for Witham.

Map 9

Sites Submitted

LDF Site Ref: WIN 7 Site Address/Name: Forest Road Community Hall, land south of Lime Close.	Gross Site Area Ha: 0.423 Type of Development: Residential Summary of Proposals: Currently allocated in the Local Plan Review as informal recreation, proposal to allocate for residential development.
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Town Council Views:

- WIN 7 – Forest Road Community Hall

Witham Town Council considers that with the new development in Forest Road and the limited facilities in North Ward it would be sensible to retain this site as recreational land.

Other Issues

- Witham Town Council considers that an extension to the existing cemetery adjacent to Rickstones playing field should be identified on the area of open space between Cypress Road and Manor Street. Witham Town Council was not supportive of an extension to the cemetery northwards onto the playing field as this would result in the loss of a football pitch.

- Witham Town Council considers that the area of open space adjacent to Forest Road community hall should be allocated as 'informal recreation'.

Officer Comments:

- WIN 7 – Forest Road Community Hall

The Forest Road community hall has now closed and was deemed surplus to requirement by Cabinet in November 2010. The Town Council stressed that they would like the whole site to be retained for open space, particularly as the Forest Road growth location is in close proximity to this site.

The Green Spaces Strategy identifies a surplus of amenity green space provision in Witham, '*giving an overprovision of 14.5 hectares in 2011*'. However, it also identifies a deficiency in provision for children and young people of 1.7 hectares.

Although officers recognise the concerns of the Town Council about ensuring that there is sufficient open space provision in the north ward of Witham, particularly with the Forest Road growth location, it is difficult for officers to recommend the provision of additional amenity green space to replace the community hall when there is already a large overprovision. There is also an existing area of informal open space on the opposite side of Forest Road. There will also be a requirement for open space within the Forest Road growth location, to serve that development, which will be identified on the Master Plan in due course.

Appendix 2 H – photograph shows the Forest Road Community Hall.

- Open space adjacent to Forest Road community hall (opposite side of the road)

Officers consider that the open space adjacent to Forest Road community hall on the opposite side of the road should be allocated as 'informal recreation' as it contributes to the open space provision in the area.

- Extension to cemetery off Cypress Road

The land between the pavilion car park and the cemetery is detailed in the covenant (dated 1934/1935) as land for cemetery use. It is currently in active use as a football pitch. Based on calculations it is predicted that the existing site is likely to become full in about 16 years time. The Allocations Development Plan Document is for 15 years. Therefore an extension of the cemetery *could* be required in the plan period.

The site proposed by Witham Town Council for a cemetery extension is constrained by a mains water pipe which dissects diagonally across the site. This site is also considerably smaller than that identified in the covenant. It is therefore likely in the future that a further extension of the cemetery would be required if this site was identified. The site is also beyond the existing gates to the cemetery. Officers therefore do not consider that this area is suitable for cemetery use.

Officers note the concerns of Witham Town Council regarding the loss of a football pitch, if the full extension proposed north of the cemetery was implemented. However, an additional football pitch could be provided in an alternative location in the town. Eg The existing master plan for Maltings Lane proposes two full size football pitches.

Officers recommend that part of the area north of the cemetery (to exclude the existing football pitch) covered under the covenant is allocated as a minor extension to the existing burial ground. This would only be developed when required for cemetery use. Please see Map 9b.

Officer Recommendations:

Map 9b

To allocate the Forest Road Community Hall site as a 'residential site of 10 or more dwellings'.

To allocate the open space across the road from the Forest Road community hall as 'informal recreation'.

To identify a cemetery extension north of the existing cemetery as shown on Map 9b.

To approve Map 9b as part of the draft Site Allocations Inset Map for Witham.

Map 10

No sites submitted for Map 10

Town Council Views:

- Witham Town Council considers that the land required for the Motts Lane foot/cycle Bridge should be identified.

Officer Comments:

- Motts Lane foot/cycle bridge

Officers consider that the allocation of the cycle/footbridge should be identified. The Council are contributing £500,000 Growth Area Funding towards the scheme, which is being implemented by Network Rail. The proposed foot/cycle bridge is also identified in the Core Strategy as 'key infrastructure'.

Officer Recommendations:

Map 10a

To allocate the foot/cycle bridge at Motts Lane.

To approve Map 10a as part of the draft Site Allocations Inset Map for Witham.

Map 11

No sites submitted for Map 11.

Town Council Views:

- Witham Town Council considers that the cycle/footpath from the disused railway line to Newlands Street identified on Map 11 should be allocated.

Officer Comments:

This cycleway was identified in the Local Plan Review but has not yet been provided. Officers support the allocation of the cycle/footpath, which will enable the use of s106 monies to be negotiated from nearby developments in the future to deliver the path.

Officer Recommendations:

Map 11a

To allocate the proposed cycle/footpath from the disused railway line to Newlands Street as identified on Map 11a.

To approve Map 11a as part of the draft Site Allocations Inset Map for Witham.

Map 12

Sites Submitted

<p>LDF Site Ref: WIS1 Site Address/Name: Garden of Ullswater, Maldon Road</p>	<p>Gross Site Area Ha: 0.15 Development Capacity (units/floor space): 1 unit Type of Development: Amendment to Town Boundary/Residential. Summary of Proposals: Proposed extension of development boundary to allow for 1 residential unit.</p>
<p>LDF Site Ref: WIS7 Site Address/Name: Little Croft, Maldon Road</p>	<p>Gross Site Area Ha: 4.00 Development Capacity (units/floor space): Not specified Average Density: Not specified Type of Development: Residential Summary of Proposals: Proposed inclusion of land within the development boundary.</p>

Town Council Views:

Other Issues

- Witham Town Council considers that the area off Maldon Road south of the A12 should be included within the Town Development Boundary. (Map 12).

- **WIS 1 – Garden of Ullswater, Maldon Road and WIS 7 – Little Croft, Maldon Road**

Although the Town Council are happy to extend the boundary to include the built development along Maldon Road, south of A12, they do not want the boundary to extend beyond Blue Mills Hill, as this would encroach into the open countryside beyond Witham. Witham Town Council considers that these sites are too distant and unrelated to the development boundary to be included.

Officer Comments:

- **WIS 1 – Garden of Ullswater, Maldon Road and WIS 7 – Little Croft, Maldon Road**

These sites are situated some distance from the existing development boundary. Officers concur with the views of the Town Council. The properties south of Blue Mills Hill have large gardens and inclusion within the development boundary would allow for significant infill.

- **Inclusion of land south of Maldon Road within Development Boundary**

The built up area south of the A12 along Maldon Road /Pantile Close forms part of urban Witham and should therefore be included within the development boundary. However it should not be drawn further south of Blue Mills Hill as this would allow infill development on large gardens and would encroach on the character of the countryside.

Officer Recommendations:

Map 12a

To include the built up area south of the A12 along Maldon Road as shown on Map 12a within the Town Development Boundary.

To approve Map 12a as part of the draft Site Allocations Inset Map for Witham.

Other Issues

Gypsies and Travellers: 23 authorised pitches are required in the District by 2011 and a further 17 authorised pitches by 2021. Witham Town Council did not

identify any suitable gypsy sites. Officers intend to present a separate report to the LDF Panel examining the issue of provision for Gypsies and Travellers over the District as a whole.

Housing Provision

The following potential sites have been identified in Witham in this report, which were supported by Witham Town Council.

Estimated Capacity of New * Sites Supported by Witham Town Council.

*Excludes sites which already have planning permission

Site	Dwelling Capacity Estimate
WIS 6 Lodge Farm Growth Location	100
Former NHS Building, Collingwood Road	30
WCH 3/WCH 5 Bellfields/Chipping Hill School	20
WIS 2 Rear of Sunday Market site, Constance Close	100
WCH 8 Coach House Way	14
Dorothy Sayers/Laburnum Way Shops	23
Total	287
(Note- The NHS site is being recommended for discussion with office users/owners and consideration in the Employment Land Review and should not be counted towards the total. Officers are also recommending allocation of the Forest Road Community Hall site for housing.)	
Removal of Former NHS Building, Collingwood Road	-30
WIN 7 Forest Road Community Hall Road	+12
Current Total	269

The total number of dwellings that could be provided on sites currently recommended by officers in this report is 269. This is below the minimum requirement of 313 dwellings. It would also be preferable to have a comfortable buffer (for example of 10% - a further 31 dwellings) in the number of houses allocated; in case any identified housing sites are slow in coming forward, in order to avoid any speculative development proposals in the future. This would require sites for a minimum of 344 dwellings. The current shortfall of 75 dwellings (344 minus 269 = 75) will be re-assessed in the light of the employment land review, the site visit to the River Walk and following consideration of further views of the Town Council.

The report therefore recommends that further discussions are held with Witham Town Council to seek their views on additional residential provision and that a further report is prepared for the Panel on this matter. Witham Town Council is due to have a meeting on the 13th February to discuss the shortfall in housing target. Officers can provide a verbal update at the Local Development Framework Panel on 22nd February.