

Minutes



Local Development Framework Panel

20th May 2009

Present:

Councillors	Present	Councillors	Present
G Butland	Apologies	H J Messenger	Yes
A V E Everard	Yes	Lady Newton	Apologies
N R H O Harley	Yes	Mrs W D Scattergood	Apologies
M C M Lager	Yes	Miss M Thorogood	Yes
N G McCrea	Yes	R G Walters	Apologies

3 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

INFORMATION: The following declarations of interest were made:

Councillor M C M Lager declared a personal interest in Agenda Item 5 – Core Strategy as he was a Member of Witham Town Council which had submitted representations.

Councillor Miss M Thorogood declared a personal interest in Agenda Item 5 – Core Strategy with respect to Sporting 77.

4 MINUTES

DECISION: It was noted that the Minutes of the meeting of the Local Development Framework Panel held on 15th April 2009 were not available and it was agreed to defer them for consideration at the next meeting.

5 QUESTION TIME

INFORMATION: There were nine statements made, a summary of which is contained in the Appendix to these Minutes.

6 CORE STRATEGY

INFORMATION: Consideration was given to a report summarising the representations of objection and support in respect of the One District - One Vision Core Strategy which had been submitted during the period of public consultation in November and December 2008. The report covered the representations relating to the proposed growth locations and, specifically Paragraph 4.30 to CS5 ALT3 (excluding CS1-4) of the Core Strategy. Members were requested to approve changes to the wording of the Core

Strategy and to make recommendations to Council concerning the growth locations.

DECISION: That the following amendments be made to the relevant sections of the Core Strategy:-

Part 4 – Planning for the Future Growth of Braintree District (continued)

Statement 1 Proposed Growth Locations

(Land to the north-west of Braintree off Panfield Lane.

Land to the west of the A131 at Great Notley.

Land to the south-west of Witham off Hatfield Road.

Land to the north-east of Witham off Forest Road in the Parish of Rivenhall.

Land to the north-east of Witham (adjacent to Eastways Waterside Park)).

DECISION:

- (1) That Statement 1 be included within the growth location policy.
- (2) That the factors used to examine the growth locations be expanded upon and the reasons for rejecting sites set out.
- (3) That planning issues relating to the growth of Haverhill and other adjoining large towns be taken into account.

Land to the north-west of Braintree - off Panfield Lane

DECISION: That it be **Recommended to Council:-**

- (1) That a proposed growth location at land to the north-west of Braintree - west of Panfield Lane – be included in the Core Strategy.
- (2) That land east of Panfield Lane be excluded from the proposed growth location, in order to retain open space and sporting facilities to serve this part of Bocking.
- (3) That a Master Plan be prepared for the proposed growth location to be approved as a Supplementary Planning Document.

Land to the west of A131, Great Notley

DECISION: That it be **Recommended to Council:-**

- (1) That the proposed employment growth location at land to the west of the A131 at Great Notley be retained, but warehousing type development discouraged
- (2) That a significant landscape buffer be provided between the Country Park and the employment area.
- (3) That advice be sought from Essex County Highways on the size of the site that could be developed based upon the junction capacity.

- (4) That the Core Strategy be amended to include tourism and hotel use on the site.

Land to the south-west of Witham off Hatfield Road

DECISION: That it be **Recommended to Council:-**

- (1) That the proposed growth location of 600 dwellings at land to the south-west of Witham off Hatfield Road be retained.
- (2) That the suitability of the proposed growth location at land to the south west of Witham for employment development be examined in terms of highway access.

Land to the north east of Witham – off Forest Road in the Parish of Rivenhall

DECISION: That it be **Recommended to Council:-**

That the proposed growth location of 300 dwellings at land to the north-east of Witham off Forest Road is not retained in the Core Strategy.

Land to the north-east of Witham (adjacent to Eastways/Waterside Park) in the Parish of Rivenhall

DECISION: That it be **Recommended to Council:-**

That the proposed growth location (for 6.0 hectares of general employment) at land to the north-east of Witham (adjacent to Eastways/Waterside Park) be removed from the Core Strategy.

Paragraphs 4.35 – 4.46

DECISION:

- (1) That a full list of factors considered in relation to potential growth areas, as listed on page 50 of the technical study, be included in paragraph 4.31 of the Draft Strategy for People and Places in the Braintree District to 2025.
- (2) That a further paragraph explaining why the growth locations have been chosen be included in paragraph 4.33.
- (3) That the wording be amended relating to the Highways Agency.
- (4) That details of proposed growth locations be included (eg. as set out in paragraph 4.42 and Statement 1).

Paragraphs 5.13 to 5.23

DECISION: That paragraph 5.18 of the Draft Strategy for People and Places in the Braintree District to 2025 be amended to read – ‘Provision of a

minimum of 3 hectares of employment land per annum throughout the plan period.'

Policy CS5 – Distribution of Employment

DECISION:

- (1) That further reference be made in the preamble to the Employment Land Review in order to provide robust justification for Policy CS5.
- (2) That 'phasing' be defined as part of the wording in Policy CS5.
- (3) That reference be made to the provision of jobs.

7 GYPSIES, TRAVELLERS AND TRAVELLING SHOW-PEOPLE – CHANGES TO REGIONAL POLICY ON ACCOMMODATION

INFORMATION: Consideration was given to a report on the Secretary of State's proposed changes to the East of England policy on accommodation for gypsies, travellers and travelling show-people. The proposed changes were currently subject to public consultation and the submission of comments was required by 22nd May 2009.

It was reported that key elements of the proposed changes included increasing the number of additional pitches to be provided in the East of England by 2011 to 1,237 and treating this as a minimum; the provision of 160 transit site pitches by 2011; the provision of 184 pitches for travelling show-people by 2011; and lowering the number of pitches required in the Basildon and Epping Forest Districts in view of the particular delivery challenges affecting them. The proposed changes would also increase the pitch provision for the Braintree District by 9 to 25.

Whilst the Secretary of State had referred to constraints to delivery in Basildon, the demand for pitches there had not been acknowledged. Members were advised that, in contrast, an independent assessment had indicated that there was a low demand for gypsy and traveller sites in the Braintree District and this was reflected in the low number of authorised and unauthorised sites. There was no evidence of additional need within the Braintree District and it was considered that allocating sites outside those areas of Essex which traditionally had been preferred by gypsies and travellers was not the appropriate response to meeting their needs, or to the problems being experienced at Basildon.

The proximity of Braintree to Basildon was also questioned as the two Districts were not adjacent and the Secretary of State had given no explanation as to why the authorities which were closer to Basildon were considered to be unsuitable for accommodating higher provision.

DECISION: That an objection be submitted in the strongest terms to the Secretary of State's proposed changes to the East of England policy on accommodation for gypsies, travellers and travelling show-people, including the proposed increase by five in the allocation of pitches for the Braintree District, for the reasons set out in the report attached to the Agenda.

The meeting commenced at 6.00pm and closed at 7.46pm.

N G McCrea
(Chairman)

APPENDIX

LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK PANEL

20TH MAY 2009

PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

Summary of Questions Asked / Statements Made During Public Question Time

1. Statements Relating to Agenda Item 5 – Core Strategy

- (i) Statement by Councillor Bob Wright, Rivenhall Parish Council, 303 Rickstones Road, Rivenhall

Councillor Wright made reference to the distance between Witham town centre and the possible development sites at Conrad Road and Forest Road. Councillor Wright indicated that the Conrad Road site was nearer to the town and that it would be closer to schools including the proposed new Academy and existing local shopping facilities

- (ii) Statement by Mr Jack Prime, Chairman of Rivenhall Parish Plan Steering Group, 475 Rickstones Road, Rivenhall

Mr Prime expressed concern about the effect which the proposed development of land at Forest Road would have on Rectory Lane which was a protected lane. Mr Prime indicated that this lane was popular with walkers. Mr Prime stated that arable farmland was located on one side of Rectory Lane and he considered that the proposed development would change the character of the area and make it less safe. Mr Prime indicated that the proposal went against the Parish Appraisal and Village Design Statement.

- (iii) Statement by Mr George Harris, Glebe Farm Cottage, Rectory Lane, Rivenhall

Mr Harris stated that he was a resident of Rectory Lane, Rivenhall and that he objected to the development proposals for land at Forest Road. Mr Harris considered that the development would encroach on green areas which had attracted him to the area and he felt that the Council had not given due diligence to other sites.

- (iv) Statement by Mr John McLarty, Bidwells, Number One, Legg Street, Chelmsford

Mr McLarty stated that he was speaking on behalf of the Flich Way Settlement. Mr McLarty referred to a public exhibition which had been held to highlight the proposal and he referred to some of the concerns which local people had expressed. These had included concerns about traffic and the release of greenfield land. Mr McLarty indicated that the proposal now included additional land to the east of

Pods Brook to incorporate the provision of a new football stadium. Mr McLarty considered that the proposal would provide improved sporting facilities for the town and that the site provided a sustainable urban extension to the town which had easy access to the town centre.

(v) Statement by Mr Trevor Dodkin, Strutt and Parker, Coval Hall, Chelmsford

Mr Dodkins stated that he represented landowners at Eastways Industrial Estate, Witham. Mr Dodkins queried the information set out on page 28 of the Agenda. Mr Dodkins stated that a large area of employment land did not necessarily mean a high employment level and he considered that, despite the slow down in the economy, there should be diversification and a mix of development opportunities. In the circumstances, Mr Dodkins requested that the employment provision for Witham should be retained.

(vi) Statement by Councillor James Abbott, 1 Waterfall Cottages, Park Road, Rivenhall

In his opening comments, Councillor Abbott declared a personal interest in his capacity as Chairman of Rivenhall Parish Council which had submitted representations on the Core Strategy.

With regard to employment provision, Councillor Abbott supported the recommendation to remove the proposed employment growth location on land adjacent to Eastways, Witham from the Core Strategy as he considered that there was a large area of vacant employment land in Witham plus facilities at the new Maltings Lane site.

With regard to housing provision, Councillor Abbott stated that he was disappointed that the proposed growth location to the north east of Witham off Forest Road was still being recommended for approval. Councillor Abbott considered that the edge of town site was not a suitable, or sustainable location for development.

(vii) Statement by Mr John Getty, The Old Rectory, Rivenhall

Mr Getty stated that he lived at The Old Rectory, Rivenhall which was a very old building which had an architectural heritage and was held in high regard. Mr Getty stated that no account had been taken of the effect of the proposed development on the setting of The Old Rectory. Mr Getty considered also that the development would lead to further erosion of the boundaries between Rivenhall and Witham. Mr Getty expressed concern also about the capacity of Rectory Lane to take additional traffic which would travel along the lane if the development went ahead, and also about the number of houses which would be built.

(viii) Statement by Mr Mark Jackson

Mr Jackson stated that he was representing an owner of land in Halstead who was concerned that there were no plans for the expansion of Halstead. Mr Jackson's client considered that in the long-term this could thwart investment in the town in terms of employment, leisure and health provision. It was felt that the Council should consider some flexibility for development on the fringe of the town.

(ix) Statement by Councillor John Gyford, Blanfred, Chalks Road, Witham

Councillor Gyford supported the views which had been made regarding the development of land to the north-east of Forest Road, Witham, particularly with regard to the extra traffic which would be generated and the effect of this traffic on Witham town centre.