



Andrea Copsey
Examination Office,
PO Box 12607,
Clacton-on-Sea,
CO15 9GN

Our ref:62261650

15 June 2021

PUBLIC

Dear Ms Copsey,

BRAINTREE LOCAL PLAN – SECTION 2 EXAMINATION MAIN MATTERS, ISSUES AND QUESTIONS – MAIN MATTER 12 – INFRASTRUCTURE

1. Introduction

- 1.1. This response to the Braintree District Council's (BDC's) Local Plan Part 2 Examination, has been prepared on behalf of Ptarmigan Land Ltd. The Hearing Statement specifically addresses Main Matter 12 of the Inspectors' Matters, Issues and Questions (MIQs), specifically LPP48 – New Road Infrastructure
- 1.2. Ptarmigan Land Ltd are the promoters of the Land South of Halstead, a Sustainable Urban Extension that was omitted from the Section 1 and Section 2 plans but has the potential to deliver a number of strategic aspirations for the Town through the delivery of physical and social infrastructure. This Statement considers Policy LPP48 – New Road Infrastructure, and specifically how the Halstead Bypass could be facilitated.

2. New Road Infrastructure – Halstead Bypass

Can the Council identify how these roads were identified, what their current status is and how will funding for the projects will be secured?

- 2.1. The Halstead Bypass has been a long-term aspiration of BDC and the County Council, stemming back as far as the 1990s but it has failed to be delivered due to a lack of funding. The evidence base to the Local Plan includes Essex County Council's (ECC's) *Braintree Local Plan Preferred Option Assessment Highways/Transport Planning* report which confirms that it remains a priority:

“122. The Halstead bypass scheme was first developed and protected from development in the 1990s. Whilst the scheme has not come forward in the intervening time, it remains a priority for ECC and it is likely that growth on the corridor from North Chelmsford, Braintree and at Sudbury will result in a need to commence development work on the scheme during the plan period.”

- 2.2. Currently the A131 which provides a strategic road between Braintree and Sudbury cuts through the historic centre of the town where there is a bottleneck at the two mini-

roundabouts at Market Hill and Colchester Road, causing congestion and disturbance. This is exacerbated by the need for HGV traffic to use this route to access the Bluebridge Industrial Estate via Colchester Road.

- 2.3. The Halstead bypass would relieve much of this traffic and congestion and, therefore, is very much a strategic infrastructure priority.
- 2.4. There is, however, no identified funding for the bypass hence it has not been progressed by ECC. The plan as drafted, whilst safeguarding land for the bypass, does nothing to help address this funding shortfall. We, therefore, propose an amendment to Policy LPP48 and its supporting text to assist with the deliverability of the bypass in the scenario where public funding cannot be identified. Our proposed minor amendments are shown below in red:

6.173 *The road at present is a single carriageway with a major pinch-point at the two mini roundabout junctions of the A131 Head St / A1124 Hedingham Road / A1124 Colchester Road intersection within Halstead town centre. The junction currently operates at capacity and will be further exacerbated in the plan period, without **minimal opportunities** for mitigation. There will be a significant need to encourage modal shift measures such as improving public transport and cycling, which is being considered by the A131 Braintree to Sudbury Route Based Strategy and Braintree Cycling Action Plan.*

6.174 *The Halstead bypass scheme was first developed and protected from development in the 1990s. Whilst the scheme has not come forward in the intervening time it remains a priority for the County Council and it is likely that growth on the corridor from north Chelmsford, Braintree and at Sudbury will result in a need to commence development work on the scheme during the plan period. **In the absence of public-funding to deliver the bypass, the Council will explore opportunities to deliver the bypass through facilitating development either directly by the site owners or S106 contributions.***

Policy LPP 48

New Road Infrastructure

The following schemes are proposed in the District and will be safeguarded from development.

- *A131 Halstead Bypass (The bypass route has not been subject to recent survey or design and is therefore shown as a diagrammatic corridor only, which will be subject to change), **in the absence of public funding, the Council will explore opportunities to deliver the bypass through facilitating development either directly by the site owners or S106 contributions.***



- 2.5. The wording above would help facilitate the exploration of alternative delivery methods, such as an urban extension, to help provide the road in part or in full.
- 2.6. Without this amended text we would still support the safeguarding of the bypass as it remains much needed infrastructure for the town of Halstead. However, it is unlikely to be delivered within the plan-period.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Michael Wood', written in a cursive style.

Michael Wood
Associate Director