

Consultation
ends
Wednesday
2 October



Issue 3: September 2013

Brentwood Local Development Plan Newsletter

Welcome to the third Brentwood Local Development Plan Newsletter, updating you on progress of the Council's forthcoming Local Development Plan (LDP). This issue is being sent to everyone who has requested to receive future LDP updates.

Update from the Consultation

The public consultation on the Local Plan 2015-2030 Preferred Options launched on 24 July and is now in its final week. To date over 800 people have participated in four Family Fun Days, four consultation street events and eight Parish Council meetings spread across the Borough. A good response has been received so far, with a third of comments being made online at the Council's website.

How long have I got to respond?

With the consultation now drawing to a close we would encourage anyone who has not yet responded to take a few moments to do so. All comments must be received by Wednesday 2 October 2013. Responding online is the quickest way to comment. Alternatively, you can complete a comment form, available from the Town Hall or downloaded from our website and return this to us. Please see www.brentwood.gov.uk/localplan for more information.

Frequently Asked Questions

Listed below are the most frequently asked questions received during the consultation to date and a brief response to some of the main issues:

Why do we need so many houses?

There have been various changes to the planning system in the last few years. This has included abolishing regional plans and introducing the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). These changes affect how the Council plans for the Borough's future housing requirements. We now have to identify and seek to meet the housing, business and other development needs of the Borough. For housing, this includes both affordable and market 'objectively assessed' need.

To establish how many new homes are needed we have commissioned work to identify the Borough's housing need. Based on future population projections the work concludes that a range of up to 5,600 new homes represents local need for the next 15-years.

Further work has been carried out to assess whether the Borough can sustainably accommodate this level of growth over the next 15 years. Local capacity constraints, including impact on infrastructure, transport and services, landscape and Green Belt, mean that the Draft Local Plan instead proposes a figure of 3,500 new homes over the Plan period, as this would be more sustainable and deliverable.

Why do we need to build on land in the Green Belt?

The Council's preferred approach is to focus new development on brownfield land in existing urban areas. Brownfield sites alone do not meet housing need and recent decisions made by Planning Inspectors do not consider Green Belt a reason to not meet local housing need. Therefore, sites in the Green Belt have been proposed in order to help meet future growth.

The Plan proposes three allocations on land that is currently brownfield (i.e. has buildings or development on it) and within the Green Belt. Two of these sites are for proposed housing and one is for new employment floorspace. There is just one site proposed that is greenfield land within the Green Belt and this is part of the proposed strategic allocation at West Horndon. This approach aims to protect the Borough's Green Belt as much as possible while meeting future growth needs.

Which areas are being identified for development and why?

The Council needs to allocate land in order to make possible the provision of new homes and jobs. Broad locations for growth are set out in the Plan's proposed spatial strategy, which focus growth in the most sustainable locations (Brentwood, Shenfield, and West Horndon). The Plan then proposes specific allocations for housing, employment and retail growth. This needs to be informed by evidence as to where the most appropriate locations for growth are.

Why are estimated numbers of dwellings on proposed sites so high?

An estimate of how many dwellings each site could accommodate has been made by calculating what density on site might be appropriate and the site area. The draft spatial strategy suggests it is necessary to maximise density where appropriate in order provide new homes without encroaching on the countryside. At this stage these figures are estimates, more work will be required to establish the right density in terms of dwelling mix, landscaping, parking, site characteristics and location.

How will doctors and schools cope with the increase in population?

All development, regardless of size and scale, places additional demands on services and facilities which will affect their ability to meet the needs of local communities. Timely delivery of necessary infrastructure that supports and mitigates the impact of new development is therefore essential to support the future Local Plan.

The Council will require all new development to meet infrastructure requirements necessary to support development proposals and mitigate their impacts. This includes transport improvements, schools, community facilities, open spaces and affordable housing. This will be secured through contributions secured through Section 106 Agreements and in future the Council's emerging Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL).

How will pressure on local roads and public transport be resolved?

Transport impacts of all proposals will need to be assessed to ensure that vehicle access and traffic generation do not result in unacceptable levels of congestion on unsuitable roads or within environmentally sensitive areas. In order to consider the transport

implications of development proposals, applications will need to be accompanied by a Transport Assessment.

As with the provision of community infrastructure outlined above, local transport mitigation will also be obtained through planning obligations through Section 106 agreements and once adopted, according to the Council's CIL.

Has flood risk and increased demand on drainage systems been considered?

The Local Plan makes provision for flood risk, surface water flooding and sustainable drainage through a range of policies. It is recognised within the Plan that developing inappropriately in areas at risk from flooding, can put property and lives at risk and therefore policies seek to ensure this does not happen. The Draft Local Plan emphasises the importance of designing new development to adapt to the impacts of climate change. Draft policies propose development be located appropriately with Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) incorporating to increase levels of water capture and storage.

New development will be required to contribute to the improvement of existing foul and mains water drainage, where an infrastructure requirement has been identified. Larger development proposals will require significant mitigation where flood risk is an issue.

What provision has been made for Affordable Housing?

The Plan seeks to maximise affordable housing provision in light of identified needs. Draft Policies DM24 and DM25 propose that either affordable housing provision is achieved on site, or if this is not possible, a financial contribution is made for each new dwelling towards affordable housing provision elsewhere in the Borough.

Why are separate allocations being proposed for Gypsies and Travellers?

The Council has a duty to identify land to meet the local needs of Gypsies and Travellers. All Local Planning Authorities are required to identify and update annually a supply of deliverable sites sufficient for five years' worth of Traveller sites against locally set targets, together with identifying a supply or broad locations for future growth.

Why has land I own been proposed without my knowledge?

Everyone has the opportunity to put sites forward for consideration. In some cases landowners have not been aware of proposals on their land because of some sites being identified in evidence that is now several years old. We want to work with landowners and so no development will take place without their consent.

Will the Council compulsory purchase land proposed to be allocated?

There is no intention to seek a Compulsory Purchase Order on any site.

Area Specific Questions

Why has West Horndon been allocated such a large percentage of the Borough's housing provision?

The Council's preferred approach is to focus new development in existing urban areas. The spatial strategy proposes the majority of growth take place in the north of the Borough. However, capacity issues mean that the Draft Plan does not propose to meet full objectively assessed housing need (as discussed above). West Horndon is included as part of the proposed spatial strategy because of its sustainable location in terms of good access to road and rail. West Horndon has potential for improvement such as opportunities to address current conflicts from competing uses, most notably, heavy

freight passing through residential areas; improve the quality of the public realm; provide multi-functional, accessible green space; and strengthen the village centre.

A figure of 1,500 new homes has been identified over the entire strategic allocation of West Horndon along with approximately 5 hectares of employment land, supporting retail, community facilities, green spaces etc. This number of new homes (and other development) could help to deliver improvements to local infrastructure and community services/facilities.

Where is the proposed location of the Shenfield Park and Walk site?

In response to the arrival of Crossrail the Council proposes that a suitable site be sought to provide a 'Park & Walk' facility in Shenfield. At this stage the Plan sets out the most appropriate area for the site. No specific site boundaries have been identified. The Council will work with landowners to determine the best way forward.

What is happening with the William Hunter Way development?

William Hunter Way has been identified as a strategic site within the Draft Local Plan. Redevelopment of this key Town Centre site will provide opportunities for investment and attract more visitors, helping to ensure Brentwood Town Centre remains a competitive retail location

The site currently has planning permission for a mixed-use development including a cinema, foodstore, retail, multi-storey car park and housing. The Council has recently received an application for an extension of time to commence approved development. For more information please see www.brentwood.gov.uk/planning.

Will redeveloping the Ingatestone Garden Centre for new housing not result in the loss of employment and a community facility?

As part of the process of considering proposed allocations, or if a planning application were submitted, evidence would need to be provided about the viability of existing uses on site.

What happens next?

After the close of consultation, the Council will consider carefully all comments received. In light of these, a revised Plan will be prepared, the Proposed Submission document. This document will be available for public consultation in early 2014, at which point you will be able to make formal representations. Subject to approval by Ward Members, the Plan will then be submitted to the Planning Inspectorate before an Examination in Public takes place to determine whether the Plan is 'sound'. Subject to the decision of the Planning Inspector the Council hopes to be able to adopt the new Local Plan by late 2014.

For more information:

please go online to www.brentwood.gov.uk/localplan

or contact the Planning Policy Team at planning.policy@brentwood.gov.uk
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