

Kelvedon Hatch Parish Council; submission on Local Plan Consultation.
[2015 Strategic Growth Options]

Dear Sir,

The Kelvedon Hatch Parish Council discussed the Local Plan at both our January and February Council Meetings held on the 8th and 12th respectively. We have a series of observations to make.

In general we accept that more residential and employment sites are required over the next few decades, but would still prefer to protect the Green Belt where ever possible in line with the new NPPF guidance. We would favour development within “brown field” sites where previously green or agricultural activities have not been carried out for some time. We felt that of the four options given on page 11 of the Consultation Document either Nos. 3 or 4 would be preferable in order that “the pain was to be shared out more equally”.

With particular reference to our parish of Kelvedon Hatch we realise that “brown field” development opportunities are very limited and nearly all the suggested sites given within the appendix on page 43 lie within the Green Belt. In general we felt that the preferable sites should be limited to the “in-fill” sites round the ragged development curtilage of the village itself. The most acceptable sites being those with three sides of attachment, reducing to two sides as less acceptable and with only one side or totally separated as least acceptable. We prefer infill sites as this is in agreement with the new NPPF guidance on Green Belt considerations.

Without going into consideration of each individual suggested site for our parish some examples would illustrate. The number of each site is as given in your appendix 2 for the Brizes and Doddinghurst Ward. Examples of more acceptable in-fill sites are 066, 168, 182, 194, 075 and 217. Although site 182, land adjacent to Heathlands, School Road, has recently been refused permission by the Borough Council, but it is still at appeal with the Inspectorate. Land to the rear of the Spinney, School Road (site 139) has been refused permission by the Borough Council and the subsequent appeal was dismissed by the Inspectorate. We would also like to point out that Woodlands, School Road (site 009) is privately owned, within the development envelope of the village and was the subject of an uproar within the village at the presentation of the earlier consultation in 2013. This was due to the fact that the first the owners had heard about their “redevelopment” was from the Brentwood Gazette. At the meeting the owners were reassured by the Borough Council Officers stating that no compulsory purchases were to be made.

Least acceptable sites are those such as 201, GT004, GT013 and those isolated areas to the south of the village such as 191, 221 and 210. A possible site that has yet to be included, which has more of an appropriate in-fill aspect is land to the west of Ongar Road between the Whitehouse (already granted planning permission, but with stringent conditions attached with regard to land decontamination) and Fairview. Ownership of this land would have to be established, but the land is in a neglected condition and has been so for many decades. Whilst the above examples are by no means a definitive list they give a flavour of the Parish Councils deliberations. In the fullness of time we would appreciate being consulted on each individual site that the Authority chooses to recommend if any at all.

The Consultation also requested our views on the proposed Dunton Garden Suburb. Much was made of the fact that we should not deign to comment on someone else's patch, however, it was noted that much of the area was brown field and also that the relevant Parish Council has been reported in the local press as having reluctantly agreed to the proposal after reassurances were made about suitable infrastructures considerations and improvements. It was also observed that such a large development would relieve pressure on the rest of the borough. It was felt that the Parish Council should be in favour of the Garden Suburb. In all these discussions mention was made of the need to properly assess and provide upgrades to the required infrastructure for any developments within the Borough. This would include all services such as sewerage, electricity, gas, internet as well as roads, cycle paths and pavements. Considerations should also be made with regard to schools and medical service provision. Such upgrades would of course be part of the developer's conditions in order not to overload, any further, the existing services.

The Parish Council hopes that these views will be helpful to the consultation and we would appreciate receiving the results and any further decisions by the Borough Council on the Local Plan.

Yours faithfully,

Richard North
Chairman
Kelvedon Hatch Parish Council.