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Brentwood Borough Local Plan

Strategic Growth Options Consultation

January 2015

Consultation questionnaire

This consultation questionnaire relates to the Brentwood Local Plan Strategic Growth Options Consultation and is provided for you to make comments. Please take the opportunity to read the consultation document before filling in this form and returning to:

Planning Policy Team, Brentwood Borough Council Town Hall, Brentwood, Essex, CM15 8AY
or by email to planning.policy@brentwood.gov.uk

Comments need to be received by 5pm on Tuesday 17 February 2015

If you need any help completing this form please contact the Planning Policy Team using the contact details given above or by telephoning 01277 312620.

Personal Details

Questions

The Council is seeking responses on key issues. Focused questions appear in bold boxes throughout the Strategic Growth Options document. These questions are summarised in this consultation questionnaire. More information can be found at www.brentwood.gov.uk/localplan.

Please use an additional sheet if necessary. Please note that all responses will be published online.



Q1: Do you agree with the broad areas, for the purpose of considering approaches to growth?

No

No, I believe some development is needed in the north of the Borough to ensure these country villages continue to be both viable and vibrant, however I do not agree with the proposed development at Dunton Garden Suburb on the periphery of the Borough. If one of the goals of BBC is to further economic prosperity within the Borough why focus investment on one small area on the periphery to the detriment of maintaining viable services and thriving communities elsewhere in the Borough.

I also agree that it makes sense to have some growth within the A12 corridor where infrastructure already exists although I would be cautious about creating too much of a band of urban sprawl across the Borough.



Q2: Do you agree with the issues raised within each of these areas?

Yes

Given that BB comprises over 89% Greenbelt (GB) land and that in order to meet objectively assessed housing needs of some 5,500 dwellings in the next 15 years some GB land will need to be released, I support incremental development around existing villages to the north of the Borough. The viability and vitality of these villages can only be ensured by having a cross section of the population which necessitates some movement and growth in these areas. Is the definition of meeting local housing needs based on, for example, a circa 10% increase to the existing household population (the approach some nearby local authorities have taken)? I would support this definition for the villages in the north of the Borough. There must be a balance between protecting and constraining in these areas. A circa 10% target increase would ensure these villages are more sustainable and avoids economic prosperity being centred in one or two locations in the Borough.



Q3: Do you have any comments on the appropriateness of particular sites? Yes

Yes, I support Blackmore site 076 as a potential site. While it is still classified as GB land it lies on a natural boundary of the village with housing to the south, east and north and is compact, enabling a small development of perhaps 40 units which would provide the incremental development mentioned above for a village like Blackmore to maintain its vitality.

As a landowner of site 076, I have given my support to Crest

Nicholson (National Housebuilder of the Year) who would be able to deliver a high quality scheme within 5 years.

Please note we chose Crest Nicholson over Anderson Group who first sought to offer us an option for site 076 believing this site to be the preferred site in Blackmore. We felt that with Crest Nicholson's size and experience they would be in the best position to deliver in a reasonable timeframe should planning permission be granted.

In my opinion the open aspect of site 077 would lead to a much more significant and sprawling development while not providing a natural boundary to the village. Furthermore this development would detrimentally impact the north west, green gateway into the village.

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Q4: Given the greater capacity for growth along the A127 corridor, which of the sites put forward do you think is the best location for growth?

I do not agree with any of the proposed developments on the periphery of the Borough as mentioned above under point 1. Development in this region will not assist in meeting the needs of villages in the north of the Borough. The scale of proposed development is also unrealistic in terms of the flood plain and infrastructure constraints. Neither will such a proposal be able to deliver housing in the short term. In my opinion it makes most sense to develop housing adjacent to Basildon Town within the Dunton Garden Suburb area.

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Q5: Should the A12 corridor accommodate growth by releasing sites on the edge of urban areas? Yes X

Yes, I agree that it makes sense to have some growth in this area as the infrastructure exists to support it. However, as mentioned above, I would caution against a significant increase in housing in this area or a continuous urban sprawl may develop across the centre of the Borough.

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Q6: In order to provide for local need is it preferable for Greenfield sites on the edge of villages to be released, or to develop brownfield sites (both within the Green Belt)?

Both. If I understand correctly there are insufficient brownfield sites to meet objectively assessed housing needs for the next 15 years, therefore it is necessary to release some greenfield sites within the GB to accommodate housing needs. I agree that it is preferable for Greenfield sites on the edge of villages to be released which will allow for lower density, high quality and well landscaped housing. As the housing costs associated with brownfield sites are often significantly higher than for greenfield sites, there is potential to deliver some affordable housing on the greenfield sites. As you point out it is a balance between protecting and constraining villages. I think that some limited development (eg 10%) within natural village boundaries would be best (for example site 076 in Blackmore).

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Q7: To enable future employment need to be met do you agree that the most sustainable approach is to allocate new sites close to the strategic highway network?

Yes X

Yes, I would agree that the majority of housing needs be met from areas where infrastructure already exists. Notwithstanding the need to make incremental increases in housing in the villages in the north of the Borough to ensure the vitality and viability of these villages and to spread the economic prosperity across the Borough. In addition it is important to offer different forms of housing for a cross section of the population. Some people would prefer to live in the country side and may not need to commute regularly to undertake their work. Increasing numbers of people work from home.

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Q8: In order to ensure that the Town Centre remains economically sustainable, do you agree that a “Town Centre First” approach should be taken to retail development?

Yes X

I agree but by extension “Village Centre First” approach should be considered when considering retail outside of towns. Villages need basic amenities in order to ensure their longevity. When considering planning for the Borough the future of these villages needs to be taken into account.

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Q9: Are there opportunities for more open space provision in the area where you live?

NA

Blackmore has plenty of open space provision and countryside surrounding it. It does need an incremental housing boost to ensure its continued vitality.

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Q10: Please rate the level to which you value the landscape near where you live (on a scale of 1 to 5), as compared to other areas within Brentwood Borough, for the following aspects:

Aspect:	Very Low	Low	Average	High	Very High
Scenic Beauty / Attractiveness	1	2	3	4	5
Outdoor Recreation / Leisure Use	1	2	3	4	5
Wildlife Interest	1	2	3	4	5
Historic Interest	1	2	3	4	5
Tranquility	1	2	3	4	5
Other – please specify:	1	2	3	4	5

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Q11: To what extent do you think the following are present in the landscape near where you live (on a scale of 1 to 4):

Aspect:	Absent	Occasional	Frequent	Predominant
Houses	1	2	3	4
Commercial / Industrial buildings	1	2	3	4
Nature Reserves / Wildlife	1	2	3	4
Farmland	1	2	3	4
Woodland	1	2	3	4
Degraded / Derelict / Waste land	1	2	3	4
Infrastructure (Road / Rail / Pylons etc.)	1	2	3	4
Leisure / Recreation Facilities	1	2	3	4
Other – please specify:	1	2	3	4

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Q12: Have we considered the main infrastructure issues? Are there other important issues to consider? Yes No

Yes, please consider what is required to maintain village services and social infrastructure in the villages to the north of the Borough like Blackmore. If development is focused in one significant area of the Borough, in particular on the periphery of the Borough, it will create future problems for the sustainability of the Borough as a whole. Also please consider that there are immediate housing needs in the Borough which will not be met by some of the proposals.

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Q13: What do you think the priorities for infrastructure spending should be?

One priority should be educational needs in the Borough in particular at the primary level which is recognised as a national issue. A village primary school is fundamental for ensuring the vitality of any village. Blackmore has the capacity to accommodate an additional 17 pupils (Commissioning on school places in Essex 2013/18). Therefore an incremental housing increase in the village would help to ensure that the school has sufficient roll numbers going forward which will ensure the village has a wider age diversity and does not become an aging village.

Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire

Please ensure that you return comments to the Council by 5pm on Tuesday 17 February 2015
(see page 1 for details)