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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?

Yes No

Comments

- Splitting the borough in to the three areas of “North”, “A12 Corridor” and “A127 Corridor” appears to make sense given the different characteristics of these areas.



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

Yes No

Comments

- There will be a lack of schools, GPs etc. wherever new houses are built, so wherever development occurs new infrastructure will be needed. So in that respect it makes no difference if there is already currently a lack of schools in the North of the Borough because the issue will have to be dealt with anyway.
- Just because there is more ‘easy’ space to put land on round West Horndon, that doesn’t mean that large volumes of houses should just be dumped there as quick solution to the problem.
- I like the landscape around West Horndon, just because it is different to that to the North doesn’t make it any less valuable. I personally find it just as pleasant as the North which is deemed to be ‘attractive’ in the consultation. I appreciate the open space, farm land and rural-ness of the area. It was a major aspect that I missed when living away from home and I would want a similar landscape for my children, I would hate to see it destroyed as part of an easy fix.
- The flood risk is not considered in the summary of any of the 3 areas. The ‘fenland landscape’ in the A127 corridor is essential in the management of flooding for the area, not only for protecting West Horndon itself but also the surrounding areas and draining major transport links such as the A127 and the c2C railway. The current drainage system has failed (or only just coped) over a number of recent winters causing flooding within West Horndon. Admittedly previous flooding was a result of poor management rather than the innate capacity of the drainage ditches. But good management was not enforced by the council and there is no reason to suppose this should be any better in the future. The system certainly could not cope if there was a substantial increase in urban area without substantial improvement in drainage. Building on land round West Horndon, especially green belt, will only exacerbate the situation and flood risks (in all 3 areas) need to be fully assessed before any development is decision is made.
- Road and rail infrastructure in the A127 Corridor is already at (and during the rush hour well over) capacity. During the rush hour seats are already very few and far between by the time the train has reached West Horndon let alone any

of the Greater London stops. Also queuing frequently extends on the A127 from the A130 junction back past West Horndon towards Havering at rush hour, a distance of some 8 or 9 miles.

- The A127 also runs through the neighbouring councils of Basildon, Castle Point, Southend-on-sea all of which will also be building large numbers of houses, which will only add to the congestion on the A127. Large scale development in the A127 corridor, whilst allowing possible joint projects with other councils, means development next to that of 3 other adjoining areas whereas in the North this is less.
- Whilst I can see that large development within Brentwood town centre would be difficult, it is not clear why the A127 Corridor has greater potential for improvements than the A12. The A127 is tightly bounded by Southend (where it is in essence, a local road) and the London area where traffic is extremely heavy. There are also many areas where houses run all the way to the edge of the A127. As such, widening of the A127 is not necessarily easy. The A12 could potentially be expanded in a number of areas without material impact to the surrounding residential properties.
- I can see that a large amount of development will almost certainly have to occur in the West Horndon area and that a dispersed growth strategy would be more expensive for the council to enact in terms of infrastructure provision. But in many ways it would seem the most sensible plan for not putting undue strain on any one area due to sudden localised increases in population and help maintain the character of the Borough.



Q3: Do you have any comments on the appropriateness of particular sites? Yes ✓ No

Comments

- **Summary: Whilst I do not want a large expansion of West Horndon I know it cannot be escaped entirely and so long as there were improvements in infrastructure it would be acceptable. I can accept the development of the Industrial Estates. However, the development of green belt fields around West Horndon would not only deeply sadden me as to the loss of green open space and completely destroying the character of my home village but also I believe be highly inappropriate in terms of flood risk. This harm would not be outweighed by the need to find space for housing in the Borough. I would propose Dutton Suburb as being a better site for large scale residential development in the area instead of the green belt directly round West Horndon village.**
- The development of the Industrial Estates (020 and 021) being brownfield sites could be achieved in a positive manner for West Horndon village, although probably at a lower density than the 500 indicated in the 5 year land supply .
- It should be noted however that development of these sites alone could increase the residential size of West Horndon village by c. 90% and as such, sufficient planning and infrastructure will need to ensure that the impact to existing residents is managed appropriately. The present infrastructure including roads,

school, healthcare provision, public transport- especially buses but also rail would be extremely inadequate in light of such expansion of the village.

- 037A, B and C, 038A and B, and 126, are all Green Belt sites surrounding West Horndon village. Development of these sites would change the existing West Horndon village beyond all recognition, and put a very significant strain on local residents and infrastructure.
- Site 200 (Dunton Garden Suburb) would be strongly preferred to building on the Green belt fields directly round West Horndon, to provide the required level of housing within the Borough, whilst managing this growth in a sustainable manner.
- However, given the level of infrastructure that would be required, again this would need to be managed in a sustainable and appropriate manner to safeguard the existing West Horndon community, and create a self sufficient community within the Garden Suburb.
- It would also be necessary to ensure a sufficient buffer of land is maintained going forwards, between the Garden Suburb and the land surrounding West Horndon village.



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?

Comments

- Firstly I question the assumption that the A127 corridor has the greater capacity for growth than the A12 corridor.
- However, this aside, I believe development of the Dunton Garden Suburb (site 200) is the best location for growth, causing the least harm and definitely being preferable to building on the green belt land round West Horndon. Development of the land immediately adjacent to the village would destroy the current village environment.
- I think the Dunton Garden Suburb, if properly planned and managed, has the potential to provide Brentwood Borough Council with the required level of residential development, whilst creating a self sufficient, sustainable development with access to all levels of infrastructure funding that would offer the best chance for a positive outcome for existing and new residents of the A127 Corridor.
- The Dunton Gardens suburb should also limit the potential residential growth around West Horndon village that occurring on the industrial estates. Whilst such development would still significantly alter the nature of West Horndon village, if undertaken appropriately, the village could retain its current “small community” feel, with surrounding farmland, open spaces and nature preserved.
- Whilst the Dunton Garden suburb is my preferred option, there would be a need for appropriate buffer zone to be incorporated on the western edge of the development up to the A128 to prevent future urban creep, and minimise the impact of development on existing residents.
- Brentwood Borough Council must use the duty to cooperate to negotiate with other authorities to prevent development taking place in Thurrock to the south of West Horndon. Since such development was cause similar harm to that identified by building

on the green belt directly around West Horndon village.

- The consultation document fails to identify the flood risk issues, including where it exists and how it will be managed. Given the recent history of flooding in the West Horndon area it is essential this is addressed. Sites 037A, B and C, 038A and B, and 126 all act as buffer stores and are prone to becoming water logged following heavy rain.



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

Yes No

Comments

- Given the level of projected housing need within the Borough, sustainable development requires Brentwood Borough Council to consider all available and suitable sites across the rest of the Borough. The A12 Corridor has the ability to meet a significant portion of the Borough's increased housing needs, and suitable sites should be included in any spatial strategy.



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)?

Comments

- Whenever possible brownfield should always be considered above greenfield sites. There may be instances where the release of small amounts of Green Belt land around villages provides opportunities for these villages to grow in a sustainable manner. However, this should only be considered once brownfield options have been exhausted, and where the development would create a positive and balanced impact on the community.
- Releasing all of the Green Belt land around West Horndon village for example would not create a positive or balanced impact on to the existing community.
- There may be some isolated instances where limited development in the Green Belt provides benefits which exceed the harm they cause. E.g. In West Horndon the current access to the park is limited. A small amount of development which improves the access is an example of such a possible development.



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 No

Comments

- With the industrial estates at West Horndon expected to be developed for primarily residential development, it is key that replacement employment opportunities are provided within the local area (A127 Corridor). These must however be accessible via public transport as well as via road.



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 No

Comments

- Shops should be provided within smaller communities, primary “destination” shopping locations should be focused within existing town centres.
- Town Centre First retail development must also be accompanied (or preferably, preceded by) appropriate infrastructure improvements including regular and reliable public transport to all areas including the more rural ones, car parking facilities, and improvements to the road network to prevent unmanageable congestion. For example the bus service to Brentwood from West Horndon is very poor, it is much more convenient to go to Upminster via the train line in order to do shopping.



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

Yes No

Comments

- West Horndon village has a small community park on Cadogan Avenue. As part of any potential future development within the village there are significant opportunities to enhance this park, both from a facilities and access perspective.

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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

? 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

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

Comments

- It should be noted that much of the infrastructure in the area (not just Brentwood but also surrounding councils) is already nearing breaking point; this

includes roads, trains, education and health care.

- Development must not increase the challenges to the borough's infrastructure (i.e. it must be small enough not to create a significant demand on current infrastructure, or big enough to generate money to create/improve infrastructure to meet the new need).
- Whilst transport is considered, the focus appears to be on Crossrail and links to Brentwood Town Centre. Although important, given the scale of potential development within the A127 Corridor, a completely fresh transport strategy needs to be developed for this area.
- Crossrail will have much less impact on those who live near the c2c line- there is no good reason for those living in developments around West Hornodon or in the proposed Dunton Garden Suburb to travel to Brentwood to take the Crossrail when the c2c line is much closer by. Indeed it would cause significant problems if large numbers of people from the A127 corridor were to try to use Crossrail- both in terms of traffic congestion in getting there but also car parking.
- Transport strategies will need to consider both the impact of Brentwood and Basildon's development along the c2c rail line, and other local councils, such as Southend and Castle Point, looking to develop along this line as well. Significant knock-on impact of these developments may not be appreciated by looking at just Brentwood and Basildon's plans alone. Consideration also needs to be given as to how residents of the Garden Suburb (if developed) would travel to West Horndon, Laindon and Basildon, and how West Horndon village residents travel to the Garden Suburb, Brentwood and Basildon town centres. The transport strategy will also need to incorporate regular public transport to local employment locations given the potential redevelopment of the West Horndon industrial estates.
- From a road perspective, the consultation document focuses heavily on the A12 and A127. However the A128 links these two roads, and importantly links the south of the Borough to Brentwood Town Centre (including related infrastructure, importantly, secondary schools). Any development within the A127 or A12 corridors will need to consider how to alleviate what will become intolerable strain on the A128
- Detail on other identified infrastructure areas: education, healthcare, community facilities and green spaces is limited. Significantly more detail will be necessary to ensure future development is carried out sustainably.
- Timing of infrastructure needs to have a stronger focus than currently seen in the consultation. Given the scale of potential development within the A127 Corridor, supporting infrastructure needs to be in place **first**, to prevent a significant and materially negative impact on existing residents. This will also ensure that any new development is undertaken in a sustainable manner.



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

Comments

- Given the scale of development proposed within the A127 Corridor, infrastructure spending will be required across all areas: education, healthcare, transport, green space, community facilities etc.
- Failure to provide any one element of this infrastructure will have a materially negative impact on both existing residents, and the new development. As such, a holistic infrastructure plan needs to be delivered to ensure the development is undertaken in a sustainable manner.
- Green spaces and communities facilities are vital for the well being of communities. I would however say that education, healthcare and transport are absolute necessities for life and so if compromises on spending have to be made it should not be in these 3 areas.

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)