

INTRODUCTION

Our Borough is a great place to live, work and visit. We are preparing a new Local Plan to protect the essential qualities of the Borough, while at the same time delivering the housing, jobs, open space and other infrastructure that will be required in the future.

Much has changed since 2013, when the Council last consulted on the Local Plan (Preferred Options). We now know we need to meet all of the 5,500 new homes needed in Brentwood Borough over the next 15 years. This is 2,000 more than the 2013 consultation proposed. The capacity of brownfield sites in urban areas is 2,500, some 3,000 short of the total number of homes needed. For this reason we are reconsidering key issues and sites such as:

- Sites that have been suggested to the Council to meet local development needs; and
- Key issues to consider as part of assessing sites, such as appropriate areas for growth in light of transport infrastructure, local services and the environment.

Options for development will need to be considered in light of Borough-wide issues, such as infrastructure, the environment and Green Belt policy. 89% of the Borough is Green Belt; this helps protect the Borough's high quality environment, but also constrains development opportunities, making it difficult to meet local need.

The Local Plan is required to be consistent with national policy and guidance, such as the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and Planning Practice Guidance. The Council must follow processes and requirements as set nationally within planning law. The risk of not considering all options is that the Plan would likely be found "unsound" at examination. This could lead to development going ahead in an unplanned way.

The Council is required to cooperate on strategic planning matters and has been working with its neighbours on cross-boundary issues. The Council is also working with utility providers and other statutory bodies.



What's Changed Since 2013?

Objectively assessed housing need: Objections were received from neighbouring authorities because the Preferred Options document did not propose to meet all of the Borough's housing need. It also became clear that the consequences of failing to meet full need meant that several other authorities plans' were found "unsound" and could not be adopted.

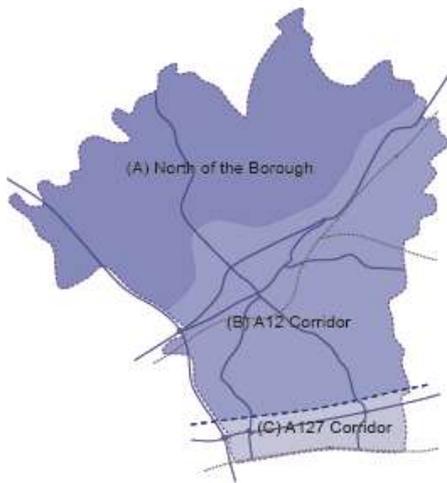
The need to gather further **evidence** on economic issues, renewable energy, the impacts of Crossrail and Planning for Gypsies and Travellers.

Basildon Borough Council consulted on proposals to allocate land for development at Dunton up to the Brentwood Borough boundary.

MANAGING GROWTH

The Local Plan will set out a spatial strategy for where development of all kinds is located. The 2013 Preferred Options consultation document proposed a spatial strategy that was a variation on a transport-led growth approach. However, in light of changes since 2013 the level of growth is now higher, specifically the need to meet full housing need. Therefore, this strategy needs to be reconsidered.

For the purposes of considering future development the Borough can be divided into three broad areas.



(A) North of the Borough- a collection of villages set amidst attractive natural landscape. It is important to consider allowing villages to grow in order to provide for local need. Brownfield land in Green Belt could be redeveloped on limited sites, and/or sites on the edge of villages could be released. These options will need to be considered in addition to maximising brownfield land within villages, although this type of land is not readily available. Transport connections and local facilities are not as good in this part of the Borough and so it would not be sustainable to locate significant growth here.

(B) A12 Corridor- Contains Brentwood, Shenfield, Hutton, Pilgrims Hatch, Warley as part of the Brentwood urban area, and villages along the A12, such as Ingatestone. Brownfield land in existing urban areas would need to be utilised efficiently. However, there are development opportunities surrounding the urban areas in Green Belt.

(C) A127 Corridor- A fenland landscape, different to the rest of the Borough, containing the single settlement of West Horndon. Due to the different character and availability of suitable land the capacity for growth is potentially greater than elsewhere in the Borough. Although the A127 suffers from congestion problems it has more scope for improvements than the A12.



The consultation sets out maps of the three areas. For more information see www.brentwood.gov.uk/localplan

SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES

The Council is required to meet projected local housing needs. This need is significantly higher than previous requirements and the amount of new homes built in previous years. The previous East of England Plan target was 175 new homes a year, but since this plan has now been revoked evidence commissioned by the Council to conform with new national policy suggests a requirement of 360 new homes a year.

The capacity of all Brownfield sites within urban areas in the Borough could provide for a maximum of 2,500 new homes. That means any housing provision above this would need to consider the use of Green Belt land.

Other issues the Council must consider include:

- need for more affordable housing, which is becoming more of a local issue as house prices increase
- needs of Gypsies and Travellers.

These needs should be considered in light of local constraints (such as GPs, schools, road capacity etc).



The consultation document sets out all sites that have been put forward by landowners and others for consideration as housing sites. These sites have come forward at previous stages of the plan-making process. For more information see www.brentwood.gov.uk/localplan

Not all sites will be necessary to meet the needs of the Borough. In addition, not all sites will be suitable for development.

ECONOMIC PROSPERITY

Employment Site Land

The Council is required to plan for future job growth in the Borough. This includes the need for new employment land and retail floorspace. Brentwood Borough Council has an unmet need for new employment land. Evidence suggests the amount of new employment land required is up to 23 hectares (depending on the level of housing growth).

i The consultation document sets out existing employment sites and potential new site options. For more information please see www.brentwood.gov.uk/localplan

Retail and Commercial Leisure Issues

Growth in retail and commercial leisure will make a significant contribution towards job growth in the Borough. The Council will need to consider changing retail trends when planning for future retail development. In the past the Council has applied a “Town Centre first” rule for new retail development, which remains current policy.

Sites identified for future retail capacity are limited. Brentwood Town Centre has two sites that if redeveloped with retail provision could meet the majority of need over the Plan period (Baytree Centre and William Hunter Way car park). In addition local retail at smaller centres and villages need to be considered.

i The consultation document sets out potential new retail options in Brentwood Town Centre. For more information please see www.brentwood.gov.uk/localplan

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION & ENHANCEMENT

It is important to consider the local environment and policy designations when assessing locations for growth.

89% of Brentwood Borough is within Green Belt, the 6th highest in England by percentage of total area. This is important not only because of Brentwood’s location on the edge of London and the green space it provides, but also because it constrains opportunities for growth.

In addition, there are important environmental features to consider such as Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs), open spaces and flood zones.

i The consultation document sets out maps showing environmental considerations. For more information see www.brentwood.gov.uk/localplan

QUALITY OF LIFE AND COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE

A key consideration when assessing new development sites will be their contribution to objectives and policies set out within the Quality of Life & Community Infrastructure section. For the purposes of this document, this is considered in its widest sense to relate to the setting of new development, infrastructure and services.

The Council is preparing an Infrastructure Delivery Plan, to understand better the current facilities in the Borough and to identify where new ones will be needed. It will start the process of prioritising what facilities should be funded by the new Community Infrastructure Levy, to help to identify areas of greatest need and where new facilities will be required.

The main infrastructure issues considered in the document are: education; healthcare; transport; community facilities; green infrastructure, although there will be other issues to take account of.

CONSULTATION QUESTIONS

- Q1:** Do you agree with the three broad areas, for the purpose of considering approaches to growth?
- Q2:** Do you agree with the issues raised for each of these three areas?
- Q3:** Do you have any comments on the appropriateness of particular sites?
- 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?
- Q5:** Should the A12 Corridor accommodate growth by releasing sites on the edge of urban areas?
- 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 Green Belt)?
- 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?
- 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?
- Q9:** Are there opportunities for more open space provision in the area where you live?
- Q10:** Please rate the level to which you value the landscape near where you live.
- Q11:** To what extent do you think the following is present in the landscape near where you live: Houses; Commercial buildings; Nature Reserves; Farmland; Woodland; Wasteland; Infrastructure; Leisure Facilities; other?
- Q12:** Have we considered the main infrastructure issues? Are there other important issues to consider?
- Q13:** What do you think the priorities for infrastructure spending should be?

What Happens Next?

After the end of the consultation, the Council will carefully consider all comments received. A revised Draft Plan will then be prepared, which will reflect the responses from this Consultation, the 2013 Preferred Options Consultation and updated evidence. The Draft Plan will be available for public consultation later in the year.

Following this the plan will be submitted to the Secretary of State for public examination. An independent planning inspector will examine the plan and judge whether it is ‘sound’. If so, the Council can then formally agree to adopt the plan. All future development proposals put forward to the Council would then be judged against policies contained within the new Plan.

How do I comment?



You can respond directly online at our website www.brentwood.gov.uk/localplan

Responding online is the quickest and easiest way to comment. Hard copies of the document will also be available to view during normal opening hours at the Town Hall and at local libraries.

Alternatively, you can also respond by completing a comment form, available from the Town Hall or can be downloaded from our website, and returning to us using the details below.

To view the full consultation document and for more information please visit the Council’s website.

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