

**Uttlesford Local Plan - Consultation on Additional Housing
Numbers and Sites November 2013**

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Foreword

Foreword from the Leader of the Council

The preparation of a new Local Plan for Uttlesford is a key priority for the District Council. It has been a long and at times difficult process with many issues needing to be resolved and different interests reconciled. The national planning context has also changed over the years as Government priorities have shifted significantly in favour of development and the provision of infrastructure as a key driver for economic growth.

The Council previously agreed on the number of new homes to be built based on an economic forecast and sites to meet this figure were identified in the Draft Plan which we consulted on in June 2012. Some of these sites now have planning permission and much needed homes including affordable homes will soon be provided on these sites.

With the publication of more recent information it is apparent that the economic forecast is no longer a robust basis on which to base the plan. The number of houses will not meet the need for homes in the District and more housing sites need to be found. The Council is putting forward four potential extra sites in this consultation and would welcome your views on them.

Councillor Jim Ketteridge

Leader

Uttlesford District Council

Introduction

Why is the Council Consulting Again?

1.0 The Government expects each Local Authority to show in their Local Plans how the full, objectively assessed needs for market and affordable housing will be met. The purpose of this consultation is to seek views on the Council's assessment of the amount of housing which will be needed during the period of the new Local Plan up to 2031. The Council previously consulted on a Draft Plan in June 2012. The housing requirement in this plan was for 9870 new homes between 2001 and 2028. The number of homes was calculated using an Economic Scenario where the number of homes is constrained by the number of jobs available. More recent advice and experience suggests that a plan based on such a constrained scenario will not meet the objectively assessed need for the District and so is unlikely to be found acceptable when the plan is examined by an independent Inspector. Further work has now been done and a new figure arrived at. This will mean additional housing sites have to be found. The second part of this consultation document sets out the Council's preferred sites to meet this additional requirement and seeks your views on these sites. **Please note that the sites put forward in the 2012 Draft Plan will remain in the plan subject to the further changes agreed in October 2013. The sites in this consultation are extra sites which will be added into the Draft Plan.**

How can I Make my Comments?

You can make your comments in the following ways:

On-Line

Please make your comments on-line. It is the most efficient way for the Council to deal with your comments - it speeds up the process of registering and considering your comments and makes sure that what you want to say is captured in full.

To register on the on-line system please go to:

<http://uttlesford-consult.limehouse.co.uk/portal>

Or go to the Uttlesford website at:

<http://uttlesford.gov.uk/DevelopingUttlesford> and use the link.

If you made comments on other Local Plan consultations and gave us your e-mail address you should have received an automatic e-mail with log in details etc. You can use this login to make comments on this document. You do not need to register again. If you have any questions about using the on-line system please contact the Planning Policy Team.

Introduction

By E-Mail or Letter

If you would prefer to send a letter or e-mail please make sure you state clearly which part of the document your comments relate to, whether you are supporting or objecting, the reasons for your support or objection and what changes you think the Council should make.

You can e-mail your comments to planningpolicy@uttlesford.gov.uk or send them to this address:

The Planning Policy Team, Uttlesford District Council, Council Offices, London Road, Saffron Walden, Essex, CB11 4ER.

However you choose to make comments they must be received by **5pm on Friday 10th January 2014**. This deadline cannot be extended and any comments received after it may not be considered.

If you have any questions about the consultation please phone the Planning Policy Team on 01799 510461, 01799 510454 or 01799 510637.

If you require this document in another language or in large print, Braille or other format please phone 01799 510510.

What Happens Next?

1.1 At the end of the consultation officers will prepare a report of the responses. This will be considered by Members of the Council and the necessary changes made to the Draft Local Plan. This will then be the subject of further consultation in Spring 2014. The purpose of this consultation will be to identify the issues which an independent Inspector will consider when the plan is examined in the Autumn of 2014. Once the Inspector has submitted their report, providing the plan is found to be "sound" it can be adopted by the Council.

Calculating Housing Need

Setting the Context - National Guidance

2.1 When the Council prepares its local plan it must take into account national guidance which is set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). At the heart of the NPPF is a general presumption in favour of sustainable development. For plan making this means that:

- Local planning authorities should positively seek opportunities to meet the development needs of their area;
- Local plans should meet objectively assessed needs, with sufficient flexibility to adapt to rapid change, unless:
 - any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits when assessed against the policies in the Framework taken as a whole; or
 - Specific policies in the Framework indicate development should be restricted. For example those policies relating to sites protected under the Birds and Habitats Directives and/or designated as Sites of Special Scientific Interest: land designated as Green Belt, Local Green Space, an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Heritage Coast or within a National Park (or the Broads Authority); designated heritage assets; and locations at risk of flooding or coastal erosion.

2.2 In relation to housing local planning authorities are required to make sure that their Local Plan meets the full objectively assessed needs for market and affordable housing in the housing market area, as far as is consistent with the policies set out in the Framework. The only reason given for not meeting this need is if any adverse impacts would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits when assessed against the policies in the Framework as a whole or specific policies which indicate that development should be restricted. Advice and evidence from examinations into other Local Plans confirms that Planning Inspectors are rigorously complying with government policy.

2.3 The studies which have been carried for the Local Plan demonstrate that there are no fundamental reasons why Uttlesford should not meet its own objectively assessed housing need. Uttlesford does not contain any Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Heritage Coast or National Park. There is enough land available to choose sites which do not impact on Sites of Special Scientific Interest, Metropolitan Green Belt, Local Green Space, designated heritage assets and areas which might be at risk from flooding.

2.4 If the Council does not meet the objectively assessed need for housing it risks the plan being found "unsound" at the examination. If there is no Local Plan which identifies appropriate sites for development then the Council will have to determine planning applications in line with the guidance in the Framework with its presumption in favour of sustainable development.

Calculating Housing Need

How Long Do We Need to Plan For?

2.5 The National Planning Policy Framework makes clear that Local Plans need to be "drawn up over an appropriate timescale, preferably a 15 year time horizon, take account of longer term requirements and be kept up to date"

2.6 The Position Statement published in March 2013 indicated that the time period for the local plan would be from 2011 (the end date of the current local plan) to 2026 to provide a 15 year plan. At the time the Council thought that the new plan would be adopted by the end of 2013. The plan is now unlikely to be adopted before 2015 which would mean that the length of the plan post adoption would only be 12 years rather than the 15 years required in the NPPF. The Council has sought advice on this and considered a number of issues which are set out in a report to the Local Plan Member Working Group on 17 October and available on the Council's website.

2.7 The Council has considered examples from other examinations and there does appear to be some discretion over the plan period but there would need to be particular issues facing the district to justify the Council producing a plan with less than 15 years from adoption.

2.8 The Council has considered producing a short plan with a commitment to review it in 2015 or 2016 following the outcome of the Davis Commission on Airports and any Government response to its findings. This was rejected as future Government policy on airports is too uncertain to form a sensible basis for planning.

2.9 There is a clear indication that the plan should cover at least 15 years from the expected adoption date. The Council is now proposing that the plan period should be 2011 to 2031.

Question 1

Are there any reasons why the Council should not comply with government policy and prepare a plan for 15 years after it is adopted? Please clearly explain your reasons, set out what plan period you think is appropriate and explain how this can be justified against government policy.

What is the Objectively Assessed Need?

Population Forecasts

2.10 The Council has looked at a range of scenarios to work out the objectively assessed need for the district. The following scenarios were included in the Greater Essex Demographic Study

- the scenario based on the 2010-based sub-national population projections (SNPP) forecasts a high housing and jobs growth;

Calculating Housing Need

- the economic scenario constrains population growth and forecasts a mid range housing and jobs figure
- the approved (but now revoked) Regional Plan which endorsed a mid-range housing and jobs figure;
- growth based only on the sites in the Annual Monitoring Report Dwelling Trajectory being built out, a low growth scenario
- nil net migration forecast, a low growth scenario

2.11 The Government has published more recent statistics partly based on the 2011 Census (the interim 2011 SNPP and interim household projections). These only forecast for a 10 year period to 2021 and trends in fertility, mortality and migration have not been updated to 2011. The Council considers that the 2010 population projections reflect a more buoyant economic period when the household formation rates were higher and that this should form the basis for calculating housing need.

Evidence from the Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA)

2.12 The SHMA identifies a high requirement for affordable housing, with this need increasing with rising house prices. In order to meet this affordable housing need a housing requirement based on the 2010 SNPP forecast is most likely to provide the greatest amount of affordable housing. The requirement is for family market houses but smaller 1 and 2 bed social affordable homes. This reflects the growth in 1 person households and couples with or without dependent children, identified in the 2011 interim household projections. Uttlesford lies within 3 sub-market housing areas and the distribution of housing needs to reflect this. The majority of Uttlesford lies within the Harlow M11 submarket area, with the northern part of the district lying within the Cambridge submarket area and the south eastern edge within the Chelmsford submarket area.

Conclusion

2.13 The Council considers the objectively assessed housing need arises from the 2010-based SNPP. This takes account of migration and demographic change and is based on buoyant demographic household formation rates so it plans positively for the future needs of the District. The Council considers this housing need can be met without any adverse impacts on the policies in the NPPF as a whole or specific policies which indicate development should be restricted.

2.14 A Local Plan based on the 2010 SNPP would need to provide a total of 10,460 homes between 2011 and 2031, an annual requirement of 523 homes.

2.15 The Council has produced a detailed technical paper on how it has calculated the objectively assessed need. This is available on the Council's website at www.uttlesford.gov.uk

Calculating Housing Need

Question 2

Do you agree with the Council's assessment of objectively assessed need. If you do not please set out your preferred alternative method of calculating housing need and supply appropriate evidence. You should also explain how your calculation meets Government policy.

What Does This Mean?

2.16 The new Local Plan needs to deliver 10,460 homes in total between 2011 and 2031. Around 7781 homes have already been identified as contributing to the supply from the following sources: homes which have already been built between 2011 and 2013 (1,061); homes on sites of 6 or more which have planning permission (2,517); homes which are considered to be deliverable but which do not have planning permission (243); windfall sites (900) and sites which have already been proposed in the Draft Local Plan published in June 2012 and the further changes agreed in October 2013 and which do not have planning permission (3,060). The shortfall is around 2680 homes. The rest of this consultation paper looks at the sites which could be delivered to make up this shortfall

Identifying Additional Sites

Introduction

3.0 The process of selecting the additional sites for 2,680 new homes should be based on the results of the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA), the Sustainability Appraisal (SA) and the evidence base which the Council has been preparing to support the Local Plan. A paper setting out the background to the selection of the following sites is available on the Council's website at www.uttlesford.gov.uk

3.1 Additional allocations are proposed in the following settlements:

- Saffron Walden
- Great Dunmow
- Elsenham

Settlement	No of Homes
Saffron Walden <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ashdon Road Commercial Centre 	167
Great Dunmow <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Land west of Great Dunmow, south of Stortford Road • Helena Romanes School 	400 100
Elsenham <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Land north east of Elsenham 	2,100
	2,767

Table 1

Saffron Walden

SAFFRON WALDEN - ADDITIONAL SITE ALLOCATIONS

Ashdon Road Commercial Centre

4.1 Ashdon Road Commercial Centre is a 13 hectare site to the north east of Saffron Walden. There are currently 12 units on the site which provide a mix of large warehouses and small industrial units as well as Ridgeons Builders Merchants. The existing buildings are in a poor state of repair and coming to the end of their useful life. The proposal is that the site could provide new premises for the builders merchant alongside other uses. A 100% commercial development would not be viable and so an enabling residential element is proposed as part of the scheme. This site forms a key approach to Saffron Walden and improvements to this approach are sought as part of the development.

4.2 An outline planning application has been submitted (UTT/13/2423/OP) for a mixed use scheme including up to 167 homes, builders merchants and yard, 0.47ha of land for offices (B1(a)) 0.4ha for Class B1 (Offices and or Research and Development and/or Light Industry), up to 1.16ha for Classes B1, B2 and B8 (Business, General Industry and Storage and Distribution Uses), a local centre of 0.86ha including a retail store, and a cafe/restaurant, public house and a hotel.

Saffron Walden

Site 1

Ashdon Road Commercial Centre

The land to the north east of Saffron Walden is allocated for a mixed use development consisting of 167 residential dwellings and 4 hectares of employment land.

The following criteria must be met:

- The development provides for a mixed and balanced community to include:
 - At least 5% older persons and 1 and 2 bed bungalows across tenure
- The housing allocation is subject to a linked employment allocation which should come forward as part of the Master Plan. The employment element will consist of 4 hectares of employment uses comprising offices, and/or industry and/or warehousing and/or similar "sui generis" uses.
- It provides for informal recreation open space within the development. The provision of children's play space 2 LAPs and a LEAP. The provision of a strategic landscape buffer to include 4 hectares of natural and semi-natural green space to the northern and eastern edges of the allocation.
- The development is designed to mitigate adverse effects upon existing residential and community interests and may be required, by legal obligation, to provide or contribute towards wider and longer term planning benefits reasonably associated with the alleviation of any such impact.




The application should be accompanied by a Transport Assessment, Drainage Strategy and Air Quality Assessment and other required documents and any recommended improvements/remedial works will be controlled through the legal obligation.

Development will need to be implemented in accordance with the Master Plan and design guidance approved by the Council and other Development Management Policies. Implementation of the Master Plan proposals will be regulated by legal obligation in association with the grant of planning permissions.

Saffron Walden



Legend

-  Employment site
-  Proposed housing area
-  GreenSpace

Saffron Walden - Ashdon Road



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Saffron Walden

Question 3

Do you have any comments on this proposed site allocation or the above policy?
If you think the policy should be changed please set out clearly in your comments what changes you would like to see.

Great Dunmow

GREAT DUNMOW - ADDITIONAL SITE ALLOCATIONS

Land west of Great Dunmow, south of Stortford Road

5.1 This 17 hectare site to the west of Great Dunmow, south of Stortford Road and north of the Flitch way is a strategic allocation for an enabling residential development to support the provision of a medical centre and a new secondary school with playing fields. The provision of the new school site and buildings will be funded by the redevelopment of the existing Helena Romanes School site for residential use. This site is on a key approach to Great Dunmow and improvements to this approach will be sought as part of the development.

Land adjacent to Buttleys Lane

6.1 A 14 hectare site adjacent to Buttleys Lane, is a strategic allocation, safeguarded for the development of a new secondary school to be provided as part of the residential development on the land to the east. The school buildings will be located on land north of the Flitch Way and east of Buttleys Lane. Land to the south of the Flitch Way, west and east of Buttleys Lane is safeguarded for playing fields associated with the school.

Helena Romanes School

5.2 The 10.4 hectare site of the existing Helena Romanes School is a strategic allocation for residential development. This is an enabling development to fund the building of a new school on the land south of Stortford Road. Because the full value of the development is required to part fund the building of the new school there will be no requirement for the site to provide the usual community benefits in terms of affordable housing etc. The existing leisure centre is not affected by this proposal and will remain on the site.

Great Dunmow

Site 2

Land West of Great Dunmow and south of Stortford Road

The land to the west of Great Dunmow and south of Stortford Road is allocated for 400 dwellings.

The following criteria must be met:

- The development provides for a mixed and balanced community to include:
 - At least 5% older persons and 1 and 2 bed bungalows across tenure
- It provides land and the provision of a new Health Centre of approximately 1800m² floorspace together with parking and an ambulance pick up/drop off point.
- It provides for open space within the development including informal recreation areas, the provision of children's play spaces (LAPS, LEAPS and NEAPS) and a substantial strategic landscape buffer to the south along the boundary of the Flitch Way Country Park.
- The development is designed to mitigate adverse effects upon existing residential and community interests and may be required by legal obligation, to provide or contribute towards wider and longer term planning benefits reasonably associated with the alleviation of any such impact.

The application should be accompanied by a Transport Assessment and Drainage Strategy and other required documents and any recommended improvements/remedial works will be controlled through the legal obligation.

Development will need to be implemented in accordance with the Master Plan and design guidance approved by the Council and other Development Management Policies. Implementation of the Master Plan proposals will be regulated by legal obligation in association with the grant of planning permissions.

Site 3

Land adjacent to Buttleys Lane

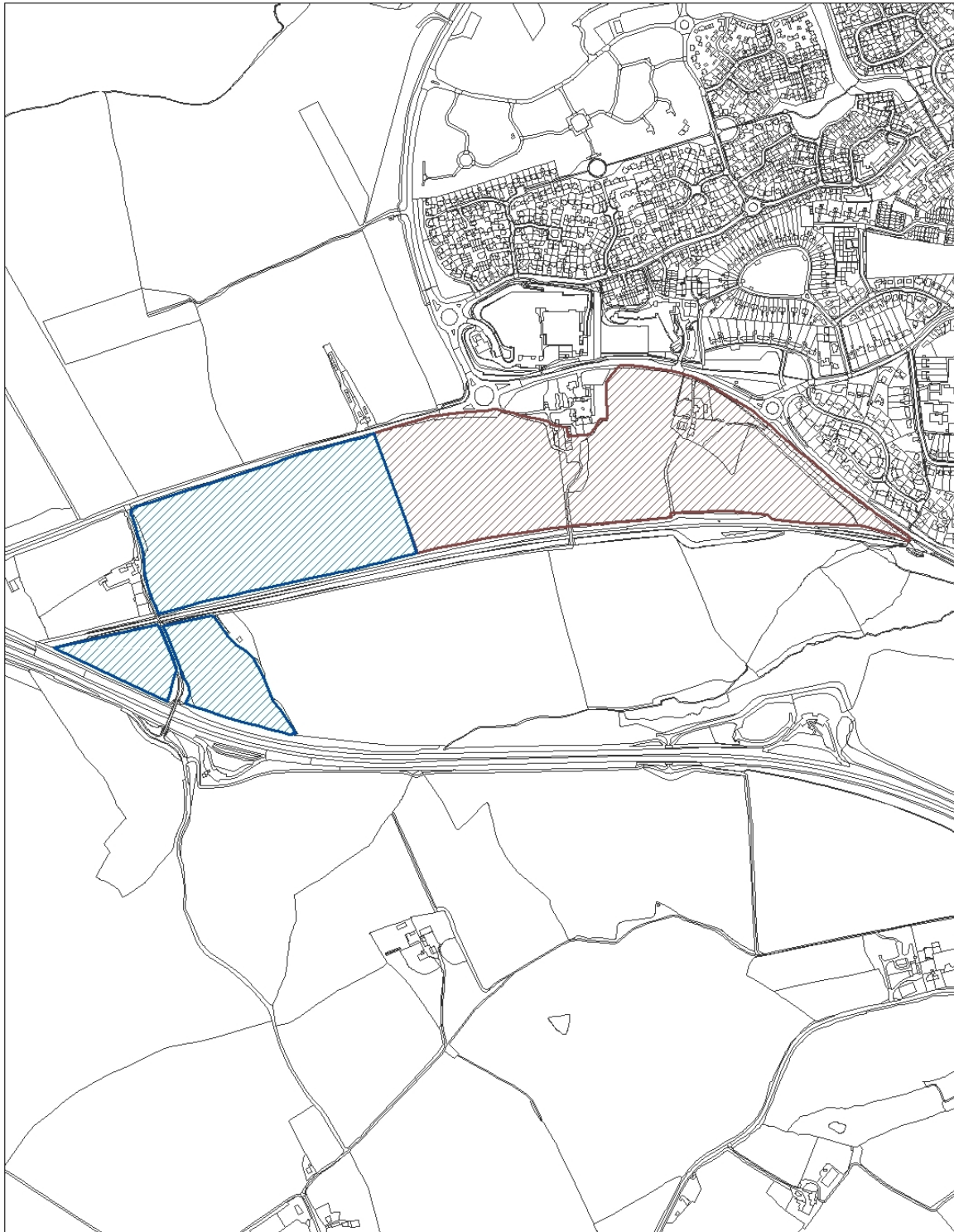
Land adjacent to Buttleys Lane is safeguarded for potential future education use.

Great Dunmow



Question 4

Do you have any comments on this proposed site allocation or the above policies? If you think the policies should be changed please set out clearly in your comments what changes you would like to see.

Great Dunmow



Legend

-  Education site
-  Proposed housing area

Great Dunmow - Land west of Great Dunmow and south of Stortford Road



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Great Dunmow

Site 4

Land at Helena Romanes School

The land at Helena Romanes School is allocated for 100 dwellings.

The following criteria must be met.

- This enabling development will part fund the development of a new secondary school on Land west of Great Dunmow and south of Stortford Road.
- The development should provide childrens play spaces (LEAPs) and a 1.8 hectare landscape buffer to the north and west of the site to form a link with existing woodland habitats.
- The development is designed to mitigate adverse effects upon existing residential and community interests and may be required by legal obligation, to provide or contribute towards wider and longer term planning benefits reasonably associated with the alleviation of any such impact.



The application should be accompanied by a Transport Assessment and Drainage Strategy and other required documents and any recommended improvements/remedial works will be controlled through the legal obligation.

Development will need to be implemented in accordance with the Master Plan and design guidance approved by the Council and other Development Management Policies. Implementation of the Master Plan proposals will be regulated by legal obligation in association with the grant of planning permissions.

Great Dunmow



Legend

-  Proposed housing area
-  GreenSpace

Great Dunmow - Land at Helena Romanes School



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Great Dunmow

Question 5

Do you have any comments on this proposed site allocation or the above policy? If you think the policy should be changed please set out clearly in your comments what changes you would like to see.

Elsenham

ELSENHAM - ADDITIONAL SITE ALLOCATIONS

Land North East of Elsenham

6.1 This is a 131 hectare site to the north east of Elsenham between Elsenham and Henham. This site is a large strategic allocation which has the potential to expand in the future to continue to meet housing requirements beyond the current plan period. An outline planning application for up to 800 dwellings has been submitted (UTT/13/0808/OP). The application includes employment land, retail uses, a primary school, health centre, community building, a waster water treatment works, a link road at Elsenham Cross and other associated infrastructure, landscaping and boundary treatment works. This proposal is for a larger scale development to provide an additional 1300 homes plus supporting infrastructure. The Council aims to secure a comprehensive, mixed use development for the whole site.

Land East of Old Mead Lane

6.1 Land to the east of the allocation (9ha) is safeguarded for the development of a new secondary school.

Elsenham

Site 5

Land North East of Elsenham

The land to the north east of Elsenham is allocated for 2100 homes.

The following criteria must be met:

- The development provides for a mixed and balanced community to include:
 - At least 5% older persons and 1 and 2 bed bungalows across tenure
- It provides for improvements to the railway crossing at Elsenham Station
- It provides for recreation open space within the development to include informal recreations areas, the provision of children's play spaces (LAPS LEAPS and NEAP) playing pitches and allotments. A strategic landscape buffer should be provided to the east and south of the development.
- It provides as part of education contributions 3ha land for a 3 form entry pre/primary school.
- It provides a local centre within the development including provision for retail, employment, community buildings, and a contribution towards a health centre.
- It provides a contribution to public transport.
- It provides a transport interchange adjacent to the station and makes a contribution to highways improvements and traffic management measures required to mitigate the impact of the development.
- It provides a link road from Henham Road to Hall Road, avoiding Elsenham Cross.
- It provides 4ha of employment land.
- The development is designed to mitigate adverse effects upon existing residential and community interests and may be required by legal obligation to provide or contribute towards wider and longer term planning benefits reasonably associated with the alleviation of any such impact.

The application should be accompanied by a Transport Assessment and Drainage Strategy and other required documents and any recommended improvements/remedial works will be controlled through the legal obligation.

Development will need to be implemented in accordance with the Master Plan and design guidance approved by the Council and other Development Management policies. Implementation of the Master Plan proposals will be regulated by legal obligation in association with the grant of planning permissions.

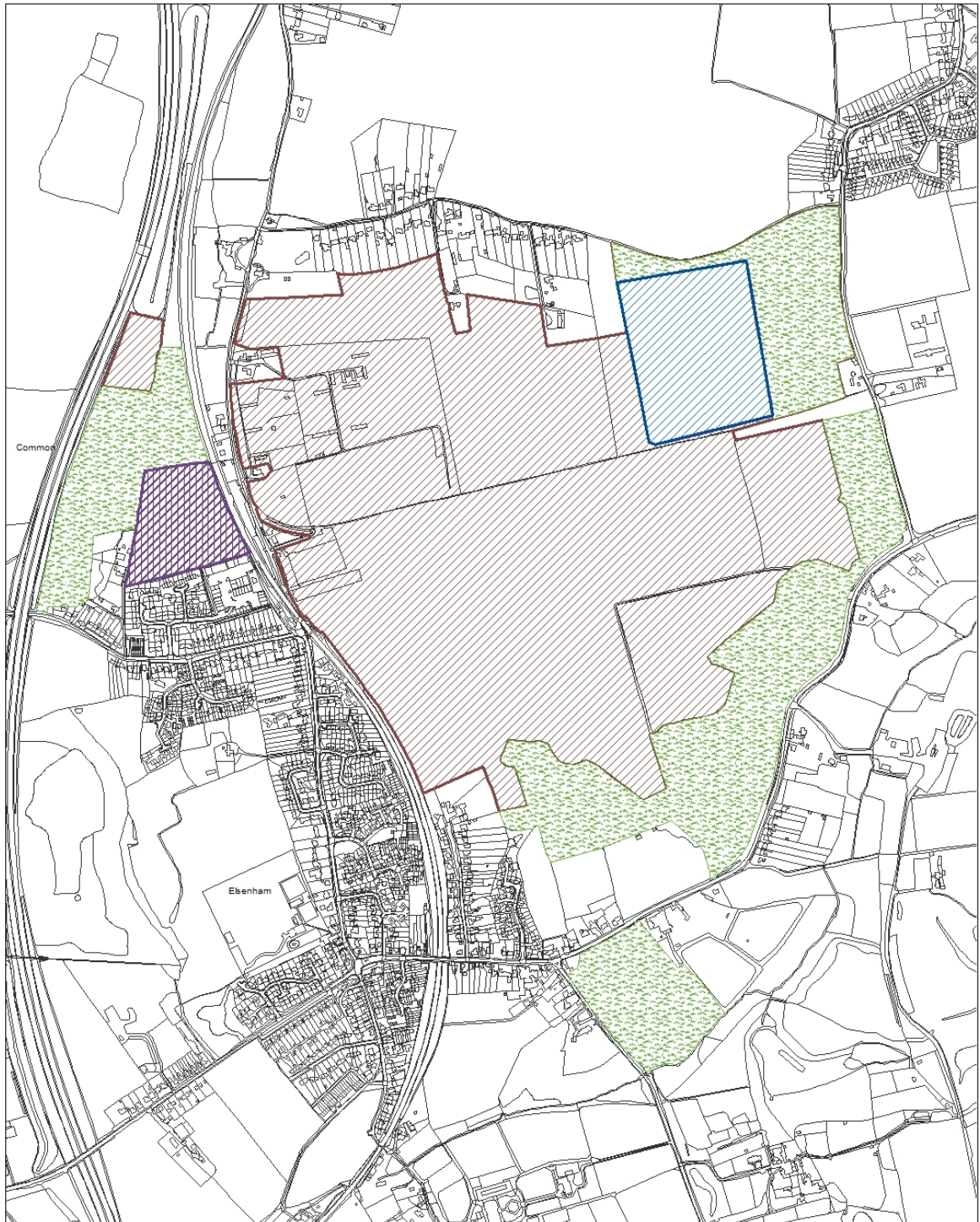
Elsenham

Site 6

Land to the east of Old Mead Lane

Land to the east of Old Mead Lane is safeguarded for potential future education use.

Elsenham



Legend

-  Education site
-  Employment site
-  Proposed housing area
-  GreenSpace

Elsenham - Land North East of Elsenham



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Elsenham

Question 6

Do you have any comments on this proposed site allocation or the above policies?
If you think the policies should be changed please set out clearly in your comments what changes you would like to see.