



Planning Policy
Maldon District Council
Council Offices
Princes Road
Maldon
Essex
CM9 5DL

Our ref: MSP.268/mjs

4 October 2013

Dear Sir / Madam

**MALDON DISTRICT DRAFT LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN CONSULATION
28 AUGUST 2013 – 14 OCTOBER 2013
REPRESENTATIONS ON BEHALF OF BAXTER AND KING LIMITED, IN
RESPECT OF LAND AT LATCHINGDON (NORTH OF RAMSAY CHASE AND
MEADOW WAY**

On behalf of Baxter & King Limited, of Squirrels Lodge, Hards Lane, Froggall, Peterborough, PE6 8RL, we are writing to make representations upon the above draft document. We have made submissions via the pro-forma document on the Council's website. However, this allows for only limited response opportunities in response to specific questions. This response is therefore being made in writing to elaborate on the key points that we wish to make. We have previously made requests to be notified of any future publication of LDF documents although we note that we have not been formally notified as requested. We would request therefore that our details are added to the Council's mailing list, with a view to notification of future publications in due course.

My client's interest in this case relates to a parcel of land situated to the north of Ramsay Chase / Meadow Way, Latchingdon. The site has an area of approximately 1.1ha, and is considered to be eminently suitable for a residential development of approximately 30 dwellings. We will be making separate representations for the allocation of this land as part of the future Rural Allocations DPD.

We note that the Local Development Plan, makes provision for development in the rural parts of the district, principally within what are termed Larger and Smaller Settlements. Whilst we support the general principles of the policy approach, we consider that in certain important respects the Plan is unsound and unjustified.

As a first principle, we consider that the Strategic Growth policy as outlined in policy S2 places an undue, and unjustified emphasis upon development in the urban areas of the district (Maldon, Heybridge and Burnham). Whilst recognising that these centres should serve as the primary focus for growth, that should not be to the detriment of the rural parts of the district. The proposed rural housing allocation as set out in Policy S2, at 420 dwellings, represents less than 10% of the overall district wide housing allocation. This in our view represents a significant and unjustified bias towards urban areas, and a policy approach that will not help to sustain and enhance the viability and sustainability of the many rural communities across the district. Crudely put, this level of housing

growth outside of the urban areas represents a about 1 dwelling per annum per identified settlement, including substantial settlements like Southminster and Tollesbury. This cannot be seen to represent a sustainable level of growth for rural settlements. Furthermore , as we shall point out further below, the proposed settlement boundaries in each case are very tightly drawn around villages, with a resultant limited scope for infill development within those defined boundaries. These tightly defined boundaries will actually serve as an impediment to rural growth and development.

In our view, a more appropriate urban : rural split would be in the order of a 70:30 split in terms of overall dwelling numbers. In this respect, it is important to note that appropriately scaled and located village development can serve not only to sustain existing village services and facilities in larger settlements, but also enable sub-optimally scaled and serviced settlements to become more sustainable, in terms of delivering additional services and facilities. New residential development should be seen as a mechanism to enhance the sustainability of settlements rather than simply perpetuating the status quo. The limited growth in the rural parts of the district, in our view, runs the risk of promoting a decline in local services and facilities as they increasingly compete with more substantial and attractive facilities in the urban areas.

We consider therefore that the overall rural dwelling figure should increase. We do not consider that the alternative growth scenarios set out in Appendix 6 represents a valid and reasonable range of options. Whilst Scenario 4 would represent the preferred option of the ones presented, the scenarios which target the majority of growth to one centre (either North Fambridge, Southminster or Latchington (one specific site)) are in our view unrealistic and unjustified. In reality, they appear to have been presented as sacrificial options to be rejected in order to actually justify the preferred approach.

We can identify no specific justification to specifically identify an allocation in North Fambridge as part of Policy S2. The scale of development proposed, at 75 dwellings does not reasonably bring the site into what might be termed the strategic category. Its allocation is no fundamental to the strategy and we feel that it should therefore be deleted. The merits of the particular site should be considered alongside the merits of other sites in other locations. One may perhaps of understood the logic if the settlement was one of several larger villages, and each of those larger villages also incorporated a similar level of proposed growth. Instead, North Fambridge comprises one of 21 Smaller Settlements. There is no logic or justification for identifying one non-strategic site specifically within Policy S2. Furthermore, whether by intention or not, the singling out of one village in this manner may well have implications at later stages in the process when the Rural Allocations DPD is considered. For example, if it is deemed that a 75 dwelling development in Fambridge is a strategic allocation, it would be likely to preclude consideration of similar or greater scales of development in similar, equally worthy settlements. Identification of the village in Policy S2 sets a bar at a particular level which will be potentially prejudicial to the future consideration of sites in other locations.

At this stage in the process we would question the definition of settlement boundaries within the Plan, under Policy S8. The settlement boundaries, we not are very tightly defined, and offer limited scope for infill development within the defined boundaries. Tightly constrained boundaries serve to restrict development, and this acts as an impediment to growth. Tightly constrained boundaries can also lead to pressures to develop constrained sites with consequent impacts upon townscape quality. In our view, the definition of settlement boundaries should follow the identification and

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allocation of sites. If only a limited number of sites are allocated, this will point towards the need for a higher windfall component. This would require a more flexible approach to the definition of settlement boundaries, and indeed, many authorities now do not include settlement boundaries at all, but base decisions upon a defined set of criteria and terminology such as 'within and adjoining the built up parts of the settlement'. If a larger number of allocations are contemplated then more tightly defined boundaries may be justified. In either case, pre-determination of settlement boundaries is considered to be pre-empting decisions that should reasonably be taken as part of the site allocation process.

Furthermore, the consequence of defining and adopting settlement boundaries as part of the Local Development Plan is that the allocated sites will inevitably fall outside of the settlement boundary. This has significant longer term implications as future proposals in such areas, once developed, will technically fall within open countryside.

Our view is that the settlement boundaries should be deleted, either until they can be considered as part of the site allocation process, or, deleted altogether, and a more flexible criteria based policy approach adopted.

There would appear to be a measure of inconsistency between Policy S2 and S8 in terms of allocations. Policy S2 states *"strategic growth in the rural villages will be related to the settlement hierarchy, reflecting the size, function and physical capacity of the settlement and will not result in unsustainable spatial patterns to the detriment of the wider area."* This implies that the level of growth will be based on the broadly defined hierarchy, and might be inferred, crudely, to mean that the larger the settlement, the greater the allocation. However, this sits somewhat at odds with para 2.90 of Policy S8, which states; *"it should be noted that the hierarchy does not in itself dictate the levels of growth of individual settlements"*. This latter quote suggests a greater measure of flexibility in its approach, according to a broader range of considerations. In our view the two comments are contradictory and require reconsideration.

In terms of Latchingdon village, we note that it is identified as a Smaller Village. We consider this to be an inappropriate designation for the village. Paragraph 2.92 of the Plan states that a Smaller Village is;

"Defined settlements containing few or no services and facilities with limited or no access to public transport, and very limited or no employment opportunities."

By contrast, a Larger Village is defined as;

"defined settlements with a limited range of services and opportunities for employment, retail and education. They serve a limited local catchment and contain a lower level of access to public transport."

In our view, this latter description more accurately reflects the current status of Latchingdon. The village incorporates a good range of services and facilities including a shop, filling station, public house, primary school, village hall, sports ground, restaurant and an indoor bowling centre. Furthermore, there is a very good level of public transport provision, with hourly services between Maldon and Southminster and hourly services between Chelmsford and Burnham on Crouch. For a rural area, this represents an exemplary level of services. It represents a far better level of service than for example

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Tollesbury, or Mayland which are higher order centres. For a village of its size, it is well provided with services and facilities, with good connectivity. This in our view justifies the site being identified as a Larger Village.

If it is considered expedient to identify a site at North Fambridge as part of Policy S2, we consider that all proposed allocations should similarly be identified within the policy. To this end, we would propose that the site at Latchingdon, as identified on the attached plan be considered for allocation as part of Policy S2. If necessary, the settlement boundary should be amended to reflect this.

I would be grateful if these representations could be taken into account. We would also request acknowledgement of receipt.

Yours sincerely



Mike Sibthorp
Mike Sibthorp Planning



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Our ref: MSP.268/mjs

4 October 2013



Dear Sir / Madam

**RURAL ALLOCATIONS DPD
REPRESENTATIONS ON BEHALF OF BAXTER AND KING LIMITED, IN
RESPECT OF LAND AT LATCHINGDON (NORTH OF RAMSAY CHASE AND
MEADOW WAY**

On behalf of Baxter & King Limited, of Squirrels Lodge, Hards Lane, Froggall, Peterborough, PE6 8RL, we are writing to make representations in respect of the above document. Whilst we understand that the Council have yet to commence the preparation of this DPD, we are wishing to provide you with advance notice of a site we would wish to see considered for allocation in Latchingdon. In parallel with this we are making representations upon the Draft Local Development Plan which is presently the subject of consultation.

The site in question comprises an approximate 1.1ha parcel of land situated to the north of the Ramsay Chase / Meadow way estate on the northern side of the village. The site offers the potential to be accessed directly from a spur at the northern end of Meadow Way as illustrated on the attached plan. There are well defined defensible boundaries to the site. There is a well-defined ditch and hedgerow feature to the north. To the east is the village school, and to the west is a lane. There is potential for some development to be accessed via this lane.

In our view the site identified offers the potential to provide additional housing development in the village, with minimal environmental impacts. The site is well screened from public vantage points, and where visible will be seen in the context of existing housing development.

Latchingdon enjoys a good range of services and facilities for a village of its size, including a village school, and a petrol filling station / shop, and public house and restaurant. There is also a well equipped village hall and playing fields and an indoor bowls centre. The village enjoys regular frequency bus services between Maldon and Southminster and between Chelmsford and Burnham on Crouch.

The site is capable of delivering approximately 25-30 dwellings, which would be general in line with the density of the adjoining development. Any development of this scale would be capable of delivering an appropriate quantum of affordable housing in line with prevailing affordable housing policies.

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The site may be seen as being available, viable and deliverable. The site is immediately available.

From our initial enquiries we can identify no substantive technical barriers to the development of the site. If required we can furnish technical appraisals in support of these proposals.

Should you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely



Mike Sibthorp

Mike Sibthorp Planning

Local Development Plan Consultation (2013)

Draft Proposals Map

The Draft Proposals Map for MALDON DISTRICT DRAFT LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2013 PUBLIC CONSULTATION.

Policies shown on the map are detailed in the LDP Policies and Annex 5.

Postcode: Find now

Zoom to

- Goldhanger
- Great Braxted
- Great Totham
- Hazeleigh
- Heybridge
- Langford
- Latchingdon
- Little Braxted
- Little Totham
- Maldon
- Mayland
- Mundon

Strategic Growth Areas

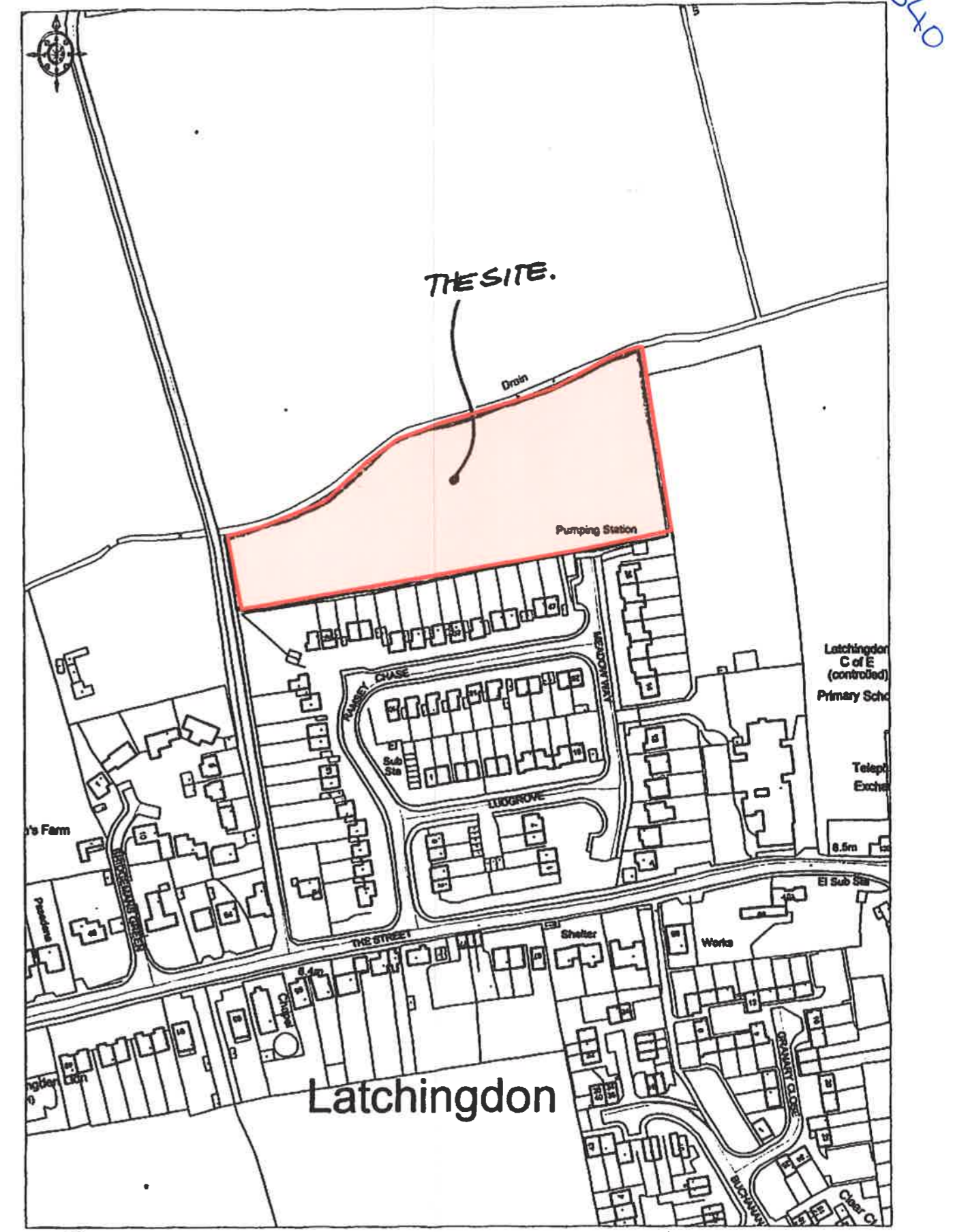
- S2(a) South of Maldon
- S2(b) South of Maldon
- S2(c) South of Maldon
- S2(d) North of Heybridge
- S2(e) North of Heybridge
- S2(f) South of Maldon
- S2(g) Heybridge Swifts
- S2(h) West of Burnham-on-Crouch
- S2(i) North of Burnham-on-Crouch
- S2(j) North of Burnham-on-Crouch

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Maldon District Replacement Local Plan 2005

Touch Screens: Unfortunately some of the tools designed for this map will not work using touch screen devices.

EXTRACT FROM DRAFT LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN SHOWING EXTENT OF SITE AND RELATIONSHIP TO BUILT UP PART OF VILLAGE



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Ordnance Survey © Crown Copyright 2007. All rights reserved. Licence number 100020449. Plotted Scale - 1:2500

Baxter & King
Land north of Ramsey Chase and Meadow Way, Latchingdon
 PROPOSED HOUSING ALLOCATION
 SITE LOCATION PLAN
 Scale: Not to Scale @A3 Drawing No: MSP.268/001


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