

Heybridge Parish Council

David Coleman
Strategic Planning Policy Manager
Maldon District Council
Princes Road
MALDON
CM9 5DL

11 October 2013

**RE: MALDON DISTRICT DRAFT LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN CONSULTATION 28
AUGUST 2013 – 14 OCTOBER 2013**

Dear Mr. Coleman,

Please find attached the collective response from the Parish Council to the
aforementioned consultation. The comments were agreed by Members of the
Planning Committee on Thursday 3rd October 2013.

Many thanks,

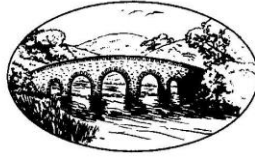
Laurie Wiebe
Clerk to Heybridge Parish Council

Enc. 1

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Heybridge Parish Council

COMMENTS ON DRAFT LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

1. This paper sets out Council comment on the draft Local Development Plan for the District during the period 2014-2029. Comments are presented in the topic order of that plan.

Council draws to the attention of the Planning Authority the lack of definition of detail. The suggestion that the implementation of the details of the plan in any specific instance cannot happen, in our opinion, without some process of general definition which is overall, independent of specific developer-led projects, and incorporates regular stakeholder feedback. Council believes this to be a fundamental flaw.

2. Specific policy comment

a) Policy S: The spatial vision strategy assumes development to be concentrated in already developed areas. Council believes this assumption to be arbitrary and that other options based on effects of more widely distributed development and the consequences of resulting economic and social health of villages have not been adequately studied.

Council is concerned that the intentions summarised in respect of transport, place-shaping, and social infrastructure appear wholly without substantive plans for their realisation. Council would expect defined arrangements particularly in respect of the development of Heybridge and the Central Area to outline how connectivity to existing retail and commercial areas to schools and to transport routes might be achieved. There are no specific plans to safeguard leisure and footpath facilities and these should be outlined in more detail should it be determined that the intensive development of Heybridge proposed is in fact one that is sustainable.

Council notes with concern that the needed masterplan for development is expected to develop as developers make known their proposals and believes that this approach will neither generate nor lead to a consolidated approach to development and that the likely outcome will be a piece-meal approach to the whole of the project. We request an initial detailed planning exercise which can guide developers in the identification of a co-ordinated generation of a properly joined-up village expansion.

Council refers to its earlier response to the draft consultation which clearly sets out its concerns in respect of the specific North Heybridge Garden Suburb proposals. There are any number of detailed issues all of which are not addressed and appear not to have any identified mechanism for resolution without some material change in the method of masterplan generation.

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b) Policy D: This section of the plan combines climate change strategies with built environment parameters and Council finds this unhelpful. The nature of the various conservation areas in the District and their strategies for protection are of course rightly entwined in policies relating to building construction and design, but are insufficiently identified so as to permit the compromise of their character by in-fill or adjacent development.

Whilst it is clear that concerns are rightly expressed in respect of flooding Council believes that insufficient account has been taken of the effects of possible flooding following development as proposed in the Heybridge Garden Suburb and that the methods of analysis and proposed mitigation are incomplete and inadequate.

Council are unaware of detailed information about flooding issues throughout the District but suggests that this matter should receive clear transparent and adequate study.

c.) Policy E: Council broadly supports the strategy in this policy, with specific requests that retail provision be such as to preserve existing town centre areas and the appropriate development of community facilities and tourism areas to sustain related employment,'

It is clear that education is a key component of economic growth and Council supports the appropriate development of schemes and facilities to permit the expansion of skill improvement and job generation.

d.) Policy H: The mix of affordable housing is noted and Council would simply make the point that such provisions should be adequately supported by associated infrastructure social facilities and access.

It is particularly tempting for infill housing to be approved without original density and aesthetics typical of any given area and Council feels the relevant policies to address in-fill and 'brownfield' should be sufficiently prescriptive to preserve existing character overall density and quality of housing.

e.) Policy N: Council supports the thrust of this section but notes that in order fully to implement its detail there again is a pre-requisite of overall planning and mechanisms of implementation and monitoring. There is no indication how this might be generated or happen, with the reasonable assumption that as with masterplans such strategy will evolve as areas are developed. Council believes this to be a fundamental flaw not only overall but specially in this policy. We would comment that without sufficient strategic planning and resources to effect this planning District development cannot evolve towards and focus upon the detail of these policies.

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f.) Policy T: Council broadly endorses these policies, and would point out the importance of sustaining public transport throughout the District and in particular the remote village settlements.

g.) Policy I: We note the intention to monitor assess and document the implementation of LDP policies using the continuous methods, but are concerned that there are made available on an on-going basis sufficient resources to achieve this programme and to sustain its quality.

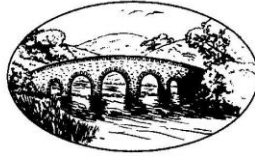
The two areas of concern are Health and Infrastructure and Services, both of which require regular and sustained dialogue with any number of third parties on an on-going basis. It is noted that no overall accountability process is outlined in this policy set; how will the work be noted and reviewed publicly? Council suggests the formation of relevant stakeholder groups to consider issues arising from implementation of the Plan and its various detailed aspects.

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FURTHER COMMENTS ON DRAFT LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

1. This set of further comment on the draft Maldon Local Development Plan is submitted for the avoidance of doubt in the interpretation of Council position in respect of the Plan content. It should be read in conjunction with our initial comments earlier submitted.

2. Council wishes to draw to the attention of the Local Planning Authority the following facts:

a). There is virtually no support for the Heybridge Garden Suburb amongst residents of Heybridge, and we draw to your attention the responses on your on-line petition in this regard.

b). Much of the land targetted for development in the area is not now for sale or independent development and Council has every indication that this lack of land availability will be sustained in the medium- to long-term.

c.) The natural fall of the land North of Holloway Road is known to create flooding issues and the method of mitigation of flooding is far from proven or even extensively studied. Development on significant sections of that land will without doubt create runoff difficulties which Council believe have yet to be resolved or indeed even exhaustively studied.

3. Whilst Council understands the requirement placed upon the District by Central Government it does not believe that arbitrary selection of land irrespective of its current status or location makes any sense. Moreover, without a proper planning stage during which selection of land available for development and infrastructure and other supporting place-shaping concerns are determined and stable Council believes that any development should not begin.

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4. Council hopes that its earlier comment in respect of development not only of the North Heybridge Garden Suburb but also its later comment in respect of the LDP draft itself is not taken out of context and interpreted as our sanction for development generally.

It should be clear that whilst we support in general development according to the requirements imposed upon District by Central Government we cannot support nor sanction any development projects without pre-planning and identification of what infrastructure and place-shaping works and schemes need to be in place and which are the result of a master plan identifying in detail solutions thereto.

Submitted to Maldon District Council on 14 October 2013.

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