



Potential Housing Sites - Toppesfield

May 2013

Planning Context

- Braintree District Council adopted its Core Strategy in 2011. This document sets out the high level strategic framework for growth within the District up until 2026.
- The Core Strategy defines Toppesfield as an “Other Village”
- The Core Strategy confirms that a total of 4,800 new dwellings are to be provided within the District up until 2026, 3,621 of which are to come from new allocations.
- A minimum of 300 of these dwellings are to be provided on sites within “Other Villages”.
- Braintree District Council is now developing its Site Allocations and Policies Development Plan Document which will identify suitable sites to accommodate the planned growth that is set out within the Core Strategy. The following sites have been put forward by the landowner as locations that are considered to be suitable for housing development.

Land to the west of The Causeway, Toppesfield

Site overview

The land measures 1.4ha in area. The land is used for agricultural purposes and sits beyond the current village framework of Toppesfield. Due to the increasing size of machinery the farming of this land is becoming less viable and more problematic.

The site benefits from direct access onto The Causeway and is visually well contained. A gap exists in the tree belt provided alongside the road through which a vehicular access could be provided.

The existing ribbon of development located along The Causeway is located to the east of the identified site. The residential dwelling of the Old Rectory is located to the south while Berwick Hall is located to the west. The land enjoys a good level of separation to all existing houses which surround the site.

The site falls within the designated 30mph speed limit and sits beyond the Toppesfield Conservation Area.

The site is illustrated on the attached Plan (Plan 1)

Potential Benefits of development

Toppesfield enjoys access to established services including a Community Public House, a Community Shop, a Post Office and a Primary School. A bus link to Hedingham Secondary School and Sixth Form College is also provided. Toppesfield is therefore one of the more sustainable villages in the District and offers the opportunity to provide a sustainable form of development within the identified category of "Other Villages", as defined within the Core Strategy.

At present any additional housing development within Toppesfield is limited to infill development, the opportunities for which are very limited and the potential local impacts of which can be significant. The identification of additional land beyond the village framework would enable additional housing to be provided in a less constrained manner. Any development can be appropriately planned to ensure it is well integrated with the existing buildings.

The likelihood of delivering affordable housing in the village through infill development only is extremely limited. A planned housing development will enable affordable housing to be delivered alongside market housing to help address the local need.

Additional infrastructure can be delivered as part of any development, including a new Village Green. It is considered that a Village Green could be centred on the site frontage, close to the centre of the village. The land could be given over to the Parish Council for the use and benefit of the village.

Being located in this relatively isolated location, development on this site would allow the amenities of adjacent properties to be protected. New dwellings would be located some distance away from existing properties and would not have any overlooking, overbearing or overshadowing impact.

New development will help sustain the existing services that are already provided within the village and with greater patronage, will help strengthen facilities such as local Public Transport links.

Clearly the scale of any new development is important. While the land is physically capable of accommodating circa 28 dwellings, fewer dwellings could be provided alongside a village green if this was considered to better respond to the identified local need.

Site Specific design standards could be developed as part of any site allocation to ensure a high standard of development is achieved and to ensure that an appropriate quantum of development is delivered.

An indicative illustration of how development could proceed on this site is provided on the attached 'Sketch Plan'.

Land to the East of The Causeway/Gainsford End Road

Site overview

An area of land of some 0.94 hectares has been identified to the east of The Causeway/Gainsford End Road. The site currently forms part of a large field. The identified land enjoys highway frontage. It is envisaged that any housing development here could be provided as a ribbon of development alongside the road.

The site falls beyond the 30mph speed limit but if more development were to occur here this speed restriction could be extended.

The land is again visually contained and would be viewed in the context of the existing houses located on the opposite side of the road. Good separation could still be provided to the buildings sited opposite with additional landscaping also able to be provided in-between.

The site's location is illustrated on the attached Plan (Plan 2)

Potential benefits of development

This site could accommodate circa 15 dwellings. It would again therefore provide an opportunity to deliver much needed affordable housing within the village that is very unlikely to be delivered through infill development only.

Development alongside this side of the road could extend the village limit south. This would help connect the existing houses located on the opposite side of the road with the main centre of the village to the north. While space for a village green does not exist, a footpath link back onto the Causeway could be provided to the benefit of future and existing residents.