

Issues and Options Consultation

Basildon Borough Local Plan

The First Conversation about our new Local Plan

June 2023

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Basildon Council



I am delighted to present this Issues and Options Consultation, as we seek your views on the future development of our vibrant and diverse borough.

Basildon is a place of great opportunity, with a rich history and promising future. Our five towns and surrounding areas have evolved over the years, reflecting the needs and aspirations of our residents.

The Local Plan serves as a guiding framework, ensuring that growth and development occur in a sustainable manner, while preserving the unique character that defines our borough.

The Issues and Options Consultation represents a crucial phase in the development of a new Local Plan. It provides a platform for engagement, encouraging participation from residents, businesses, and community groups. We want to hear from as many people as possible – your thoughts, ideas and concerns – the issues that matter most to you.

The consultation explores a wide range of topics, including housing, transportation, infrastructure, employment and environmental sustainability. You will see various options and approaches, each with their own implications and considerations. Your input will help us make informed decisions and ensure that the Local Plan truly reflects the needs and aspirations of our communities as they grow over the coming decades.

I encourage you to actively engage with this process. Your insights and views will guide the policies and strategies that will shape the future of Basildon Borough.

Thank you for your involvement in shaping the future of our borough. I look forward to reviewing your feedback and working together to create a Local Plan that sets the stage for an inclusive and prosperous future.

Cllr Richard Moore

Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning, Infrastructure and Planning Enforcement

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1. Preparing a New Local Plan for Basildon Borough

1.1 This document sets out the first conversation on a new Local Plan for Basildon Borough, also known as the Issues and Options Consultation. It has been prepared for the purposes of consultation under Regulation 18 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012. Regulation 18 requires different policy options to be made available for consultation purposes to ensure that the final plan is the most appropriate.

1.2 The material presented here is intended to start a conversation as to the type of place that we all want Basildon Borough to become in the future. It represents the beginning of the formal process of consultation on the new Local Plan.

1.3 As we are at an early stage, this document does not contain any future policy wording or new site allocations for housing or other uses. This will follow on from further work, feedback from this consultation and evidence gathering, and be presented in the next stage. Throughout the document we ask questions to help capture your views. You can respond to any or all of the questions, as well as raise any other planning issues you feel are important in creating this new Local Plan.

1.4 We would like to hear your views on the key issues for Basildon Borough and understand what you consider is important. There will be other opportunities to comment on the Local Plan as it progresses to more detailed stages.

What is the Local Plan?

1.5 A Local Plan is a legal document that councils are required to prepare. It sets out a long-term blueprint for the future development of an area; typically, over a period of 15 to 20 years.

1.6 The Basildon Borough Local Plan is intended to shape how the borough changes over the years to 2042 and possibly beyond. It will provide a positive vision for the future of Basildon Borough, help guide future investment, and identify future land use by allocating development sites. It will also set out the planning policies that will help guide local decision making on planning applications to ensure that they contribute towards its vision and objectives.

1.7 All Local Plans are prepared using a balanced evidence base. This means that any policies and site allocations identified must be rational, and most likely to be effective in delivering the development and change required in a sustainable way.

How did we get here?

1.8 The council currently has a single Local Plan covering the whole borough called the Adopted Basildon Local Plan Saved Policies 2007. This contains elements of the plan that was originally adopted in 1998. In 2007, a number of policies were abolished but some were saved following approval by the Secretary of State via a Direction issued on 20 September 2007.These policies now makeup the Basildon District Local Plan Saved Policies 2007, which represents the local planning policies currently applied by the council to inform the determination of planning applications and enforce planning control.

1.9 In December 2014, the council commenced work on a new Local Plan for the borough covering the period from 2014 to 2034. The Basildon Borough Local Plan 2014 - 2034 was submitted to the Secretary of State on 28 March 2019 and an independent Planning Inspector was appointed to carry out the Local Plan Examination.

1.10 On 3 March 2022, the council resolved to withdraw the Basildon Borough Local Plan 2014 - 2034 from examination. The withdrawal of the plan was intended to give the council an opportunity to make a new Local Plan, which would seek to address current local issues, particularly around Green Belt and infrastructure.

Why do we need a new Local Plan?

1.11 The Government's planning policies for England are set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)[1]. This is supported by Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)[2] that explains in more detail how to achieve national policies. These provide a useful context for the development of our Local Plan. In broad terms, Local Plans should:

- Be clear and unambiguous;
- Be as focused, concise and accessible as possible;
- Contribute to the achievement of sustainable development;
- Be prepared positively, in a way that is aspirational but deliverable; and
- Avoid unnecessary duplication of existing policies, including those in the NPPF.

[1] https://www.gov.uk/guidance/national-planning-policy-framework
[2] https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/planning-practice-guidance

1.12 Government legislation and guidance has significantly evolved since the last Local Plan was adopted in 1998. It has therefore become imperative to prepare a new Local Plan that can address current and emerging development needs.

1.13 An up-to-date Local Plan would provide a high degree of certainty about how Basildon Borough would grow and evolve over the coming years. It would also ensure a high degree of local democratic control over decisions about planning matters in the borough. The absence of an up-to-date Local Plan increases the likelihood of 'planning by appeal', where decisions are not made locally by representatives of the community.

1.14 It is important to bear in mind that as we move forward with plan-making, there will be further evidence produced that will inform decisions on policies and proposals. We also need to be mindful of any changes to national policy that the Local Plan may need to respond to.

What is the timeframe for the new Local Plan?

1.15 We are currently at an early stage in the development of the new Local Plan, which will be prepared in stages over the next four years. The diagram below shows the timetable outlined in the adopted Local Development Scheme (LDS) 2022-2027. The LDS is a document we are required to produce which sets out our plan making timetable. At each stage we will check that the process is moving forward positively towards a new Local Plan and, if necessary, we will adjust the timetable.



Figure 1.1: Timetable for the new Local Plan

1.16 National planning policy requires Local Plans to include strategic policies and proposals addressing development needs over a minimum 15-year period from adoption. While development and change are an ongoing process, we need to identify a start and end date for the new Local Plan in order to monitor our progress in meeting the targets we set.

1.17 The current LDS sets out a four-year programme for preparing the Local Plan and identifies adoption of the Plan in 2027. Given that we hope to adopt the new Local Plan in 2027, we are proposing its start date to be 2027, to provide a baseline for us to monitor against. This means that in order for the Local Plan to respond effectively to national policy, its timeframe is proposed to be from 2027 to 2042, thereby meeting the minimum 15-year plan period.

How can I have my say?

1.18 The Issues and Options consultation will be available for ten weeks from Tuesday 27 June 2023 to Tuesday 5 September 2023.

1.19 The best way to make your comments is through our consultation portal at https://basildonlocalplan.commonplace.is/. This ensures that your comments are recorded accurately and are processed quickly. This system also allows you to download the consultation documents and sign up for alerts to future consultation events. To find out more about how to use the consultation portal, please see: www.basildon.gov.uk/issuesandoptions.

1.20 Written representations are also acceptable. The Council can provide a form that can be requested to assist with email and written responses.

1.21 When making comments you must supply your full name, and either a contact email or contact address and your postcode. Comments which do not include these details will not be accepted.

1.22 Alongside the Issues and Options consultation, we are also consulting on an Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA). This assesses the sustainability, health and equality performance of the new Local Plan. You can read and comment on it using the same details above.

1.23 There will also be a series of events where residents will have opportunities to participate in the consultation. Please visit our website for details at www.basildon.gov.uk/issuesandoptions.

1.24 If you are experiencing problems providing your views during the consultation, you can contact us on 01268 533333 or by emailing planningpolicy@basildon.gov.uk to access further assistance.

Why is it important to be involved with the making of the Local Plan?

1.25 The Council is committed to ensuring that it explains both the plan-making process clearly and the challenges that are involved with plan-making and decision taking. To make the plan locally distinctive, it is important that opportunities are provided for local people, businesses and partners to help shape their surroundings and voice their priorities. This can help generate a wider sense of ownership of the plan.

1.26 The Local Plan will directly affect the lives of everyone in the area so we want to ensure we have an active and open public conversation about how it should take shape. This means involving all parts of our community – individuals, groups, businesses, academic institutions, local councils and stakeholders of all kinds.

What happens next?

1.27 All the comments received during the consultation will be analysed and a summary report produced and published on the Council's website.

1.28 The views expressed during this consultation will help the Council decide on the vision, strategic objectives and key issues that it intends to address in the Local Plan. Once all representations have been considered and balanced with other evidence that we gather, the Council will consult on a range of policies and proposals, before publishing its final version for submission and public examination. An independent inspector appointed by the Planning Inspectorate will assess the plan to determine its degree of accordance with the 'Tests of Soundness[3]' set out by Government before it can be formally adopted.

[3] This means that the Local Plan will be tested on whether it is realistic, deliverable, and based on strong, up-to-date evidence.

2. Spatial Portrait

Key Characteristics of the Borough

2.1 Basildon Borough lies at the heart of South Essex, 30 miles (48 kilometres) east of the City of London. It covers an area of approximately 42 square miles (110 square kilometres) and has a population of 187,500 (ONS 2020 mid-year estimates).

2.2 The borough comprises the urban areas of Basildon (including Laindon and Pitsea), Billericay and Wickford, and the three serviced villages of Bowers Gifford, Crays Hill and Ramsden Bellhouse. Its main settlements are separated by countryside designated as Green Belt, containing several smaller rural settlements. The Green Belt contains two unserviced villages and thirteen plotland settlements. Basildon is the principal town in the borough and offers a wide range of services and facilities.

2.3 The borough is highly diverse in its social and economic make-up, landscape, ecology and built environment. The borough includes areas of recent development and growth together with historic and pre-historic environments. Its geography is varied, and the physical characteristics have and will continue to impact patterns of land use and activity.

2.4 The town of Basildon is the largest employment centre in Thames Gateway South Essex (part of the wider Thames Gateway, a government priority area for regeneration) and is home to the A127 Enterprise Corridor, the largest concentration of employment in Essex.

2.5 Basildon Borough is a place where businesses thrive, where established and new communities have flourished, but where pressures on infrastructure and the diverse natural environment are challenging. In addition, changing working practices and new technologies are changing businesses premises requirements.

Our Neighbours and Partners

2.6 We cannot plan for Basildon Borough in isolation. As well as national policy and local evidence, we have a legal duty to cooperate with key stakeholders and surrounding areas on strategic, cross boundary issues. Active, on-going engagement with neighbouring authorities is therefore essential to address strategic matters that may have cross-boundary implications.

2.7 Strategic matters do not stop at administrative boundaries; development and issues in other places can impact on our borough and vice versa. As

such, Basildon Borough sits at the heart of many other cross-boundary structures and initiatives. These include:

- South East (Inshore) Marine Plan to provide a consistent approach for planning on land, and within the borough's inter-tidal and marine environment.
- South East Local Enterprise Partnership (SELEP) responsible for determining local economic priorities and undertaking activities to encourage economic growth and local job creation.
- Essex County Council responsible for highways, education, waste and minerals, and flood risk.
- Association of South Essex Local Authorities (ASELA)[4] responsible for preparing the South Essex Framework. This collaboration is underpinned by a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed in January 2018 creating ASELA, with the aim of developing a long-term growth ambition that would underpin strategic spatial, infrastructure and economic priorities across the sub-region.
- Transport East responsible for the transformation of transport connections to help drive long term economic growth.

2.8 In addition, focused engagement with service and infrastructure providers, key statutory consultees (such as the Environment Agency, Historic England, Natural England, National Highways, NHS England, Integrated Care Board (ICB), Town and Parish Councils and Neighbourhood Plan Groups), as well as site promoters would enable the Council to plan more effectively for development, aware of the full range of infrastructure, environmental and delivery considerations surrounding proposals in the Local Plan.

2.9 The formal consultation activities are to be supplemented with ongoing engagement on a wider strategic scale with all relevant bodies and at an ongoing local scale with residents and businesses.

Relationship with the South Essex Plan

2.10 Basildon sits at the heart of South Essex where the joint authorities are working together through ASELA to make South Essex a better place by sharing resources, lobbying government and collaborating with business and residents. ASELA's work will help the Councils meet the requirements of the Localism Act 2011, which places a Duty to

[4] Comprising the South Essex councils of Basildon, Brentwood, Castle Point, Rochford, Southend-On-Sea and Thurrock and Essex County Council.

Cooperate on local planning authorities and county councils (amongst other public sector organisations), requiring them to engage constructively, actively and on an on-going basis in the preparation of plans where this involves strategic matters.

2.11 The South Essex Framework will provide the overarching framework for development across the sub-region and the key principles that need to be applied to achieve good sustainable growth (see https://www.southessexplan.co.uk/ for more details).

2.12 Work on the South Essex Framework has begun, to provide the overarching framework to implement the South Essex vision and to make South Essex a better place to live. Whilst this is a non-statutory plan (i.e., it does not require formal approval by Government), it nevertheless provides an opportunity to both cooperate with our neighbours and prepare an overarching plan for our strategic growth needs in South Essex.

2.13 The Framework will contain high level strategies on topics such as housing, employment, and environmental protection, and will form a context informing the preparation of Local Plans. It will also help when bidding for key strategic infrastructure projects in the borough and elsewhere in South Essex, such as junction improvements on the A127 corridor.

Relationship with Neighbourhood Planning

2.14 Neighbourhood planning is a way for local communities to set out additional planning policies for the management of development in smaller, distinctive localities. It is a right, not a legal requirement.

2.15 Neighbourhood Plans need to conform to the strategic policies of the Local Plan to be valid. Where they are “made” (formally adopted), Neighbourhood Plans are part of the statutory Development Plan for the area which they cover and have equal weight in the planning system to the Local Plan.

2.16 In Basildon Borough, Neighbourhood Plans are normally prepared by Town and Parish Councils or formally established community groups known as ‘neighbourhood forums’. No draft neighbourhood plans have yet been made for any part of the borough, although four Neighbourhood Areas have been designated to date. Their status is set out below and further information can be found on https://www.basildon.gov.uk/neighbourhoodplanning.

Table 2.1: The Status of Neighbourhood Areas in Basildon Borough

Neighbourhood Area	Key Dates/ Status	Website
Hovefields and Honiley Neighbourhood Area	Designated 25 May 2016 Neighbourhood Forum expired May 2021	https://www.hhnf.co.uk/
Bowers Gifford and North Benfleet Neighbourhood Area	Designated 18 July 2016 Preparing a draft Neighbourhood Plan	https://e-voice.org.uk/bgnb-parishcouncil/land-at-north-benfleet-hall/
Ramsden Bellhouse Neighbourhood Area	Designated 29 August 2018 Preparing a draft Neighbourhood Plan	https://ramsdenbellhouseparishcouncil.co.uk/neighbourhood-plan/
Noak Bridge Neighbourhood Area	Designated 22 November 2018 Preparing a draft Neighbourhood Plan	https://e-voice.org.uk/noakbridgepc/neighbourhood-plan/

3. Our Vision and Strategic Objectives

The Vision

3.1 A Local Plan Vision is a high-level guiding statement that sets out what is important for a place and how change will be managed in the future. It is a core part of a Local Plan and all the policies in the Plan will together deliver the Vision.

3.2 The vision for the new Local Plan needs to set out the council's aspirations for growth, change and sustainable development up to the proposed plan period in 2042. The council's Corporate Plan 2022-2026 sets out three key strategic themes which cover the full range of the council's responsibilities and priorities. The vision for the Local Plan should build on these themes.

People: We want Basildon to be home to healthy and active local communities able to support themselves and each other.

Place: We want Basildon to offer a high quality of life for all residents through attractive, liveable, accessible and safe neighbourhoods and towns along with the provision of enduring facilities, green spaces and town centres that meet the needs of the community.

Prosperity: We want Basildon to have a thriving, dynamic and diverse economy where all our communities benefit from increased opportunity and our workforce has the right skills for our local economy and beyond.

3.3 To help develop a new vision for Basildon Borough, the key themes referenced above will form an essential part of the vision for Basildon Borough.

Question 1

In addition to the 3 key strategic themes of 'People, Place and Prosperity' set out in the Corporate Plan, are there any others that are important to you that are not covered (please specify)?

e.g. this and that

3.4 When reading and responding to this document it is important to bear in mind the future of the borough and what kind of place you would like it to

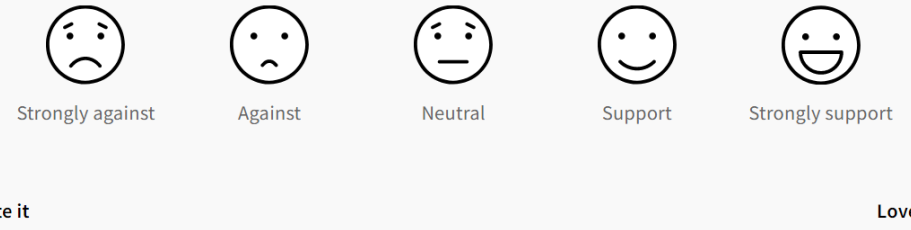
be by the end of the proposed plan period in 2042. This may reflect your personal or professional circumstances and goals, or wider objectives and priorities related to groups to which you are part of. Regardless of how you approach this, it is important to remember that the vision needs to be aspirational but deliverable.

3.5 We are in the process of developing a new vision for the borough currently proposed as:

'By 2042, we want to accelerate Basildon Borough's ambition. We want a prosperous economy providing employment for all our residents, including higher value jobs. We need housing and a wider range of housing for all resident's needs. We want to protect and enhance our natural environment and biodiversity. The Borough will be safe, and residents will benefit from high standards of health and wellbeing. There needs to be an improved cultural offer, more vibrant town centres and higher educational attainment and aspirations. We need to encourage more resilient communities, reflecting the diversity within the Borough.'

Question 2

How do you feel about this vision for Basildon Borough?



3.6 The new Local Plan Vision and its supporting text will be informed by the feedback from this consultation as well as further evidence gathering and presented in the next stage. To help us develop a vision for the new Local Plan, we need to understand what kind of place you want Basildon Borough to be by 2042.

Question 3

What from Basildon Borough of today would you still like to see in 2042?

Drop a pin on the map to show a place or thing you would still like to see in 2042

Open map

Tell us why you dropped the pin here or leave a comment

Question 4

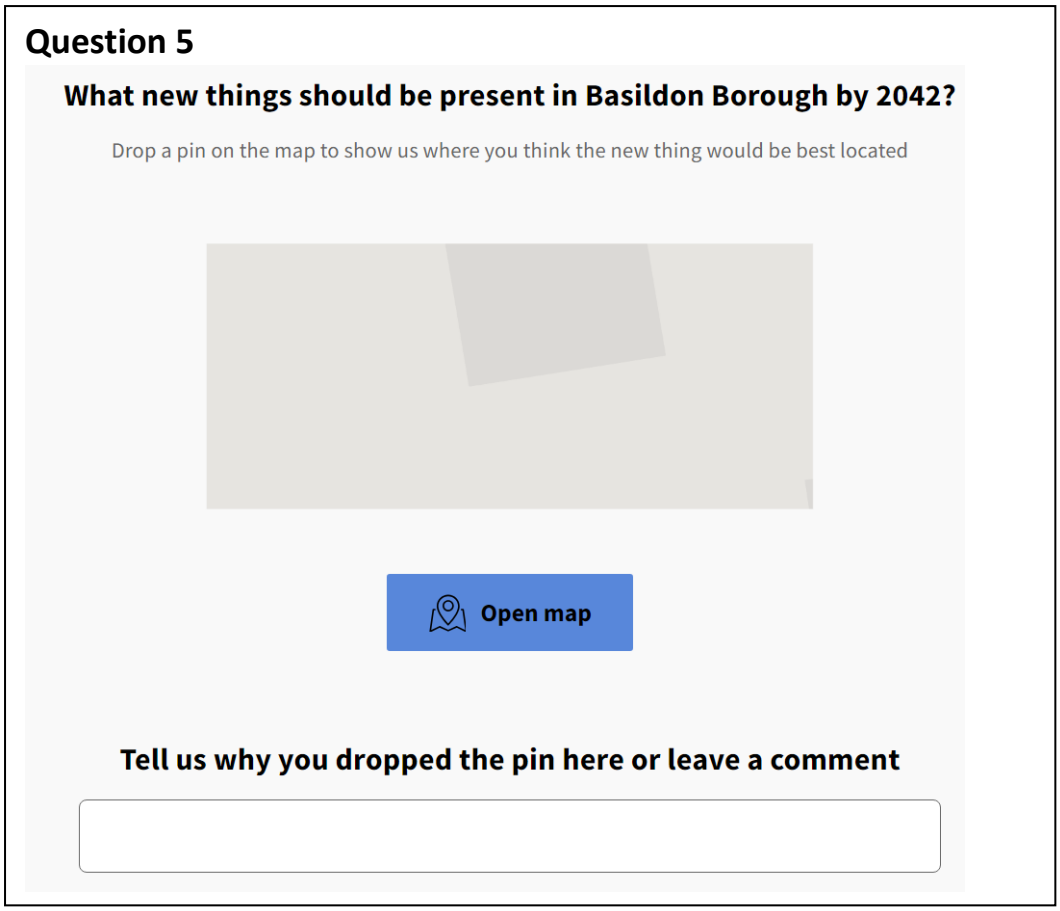
What from Basildon Borough of today would you not want to see in 2042?

Drop a pin on the map to show places or things you would not want to see in 2042

Open map

Tell us why you dropped the pin here or leave a comment

e.g. pavement



Strategic Objectives

3.7 Setting Strategic Objectives are a way of ensuring the vision becomes a reality. These key priorities form the basis of the Local Plan and shape how it will be delivered. It is very important that we consider how these strategic objectives might have an impact, not only within but also outside the borough. These objectives will set the overall policy direction for all the strategic policies, site allocations and development management policies in the Local Plan.

3.8 We are in the process of developing the Strategic Objectives for the borough to deliver the spatial requirements of the Local Plan.

Question 6

How do you feel about the following proposed Strategic Objectives:

Can you please tell us how you feel about the following key priorities?

Turn your device horizontal - for a better experience

	Unhappy ☹	Dissatisfied 😕	Neutral 😐	Satisfied 🙂	Happy 😃
Protecting and enhancing the quality of the local environment	○	○	○	○	○
Improving the quality and value of the green belt	○	○	○	○	○
Minimising our impact on the environment	○	○	○	○	○
Creating vibrant and thriving town centres	○	○	○	○	○
Strengthening the competitiveness of the local economy	○	○	○	○	○
Delivering new homes	○	○	○	○	○
Capitalising on local tourism opportunities	○	○	○	○	○
Helping local people maintain healthier lifestyles	○	○	○	○	○
Enhancing the quality of life for all	○	○	○	○	○
Securing the delivery of supporting infrastructure	○	○	○	○	○

3.9 Strategic Objectives for the new Local Plan need to be aligned to ensure compatibility with the borough's spatial and policy context, as well as the vision and ambitions of the council. They will also be assessed to ensure they contribute to sustainable development and provide a good foundation on which to base the remainder of the Local Plan.

Question 7

Are there any other strategic objectives you think should be added and why?

e.g. this and that

Question 8

Do you have any other comments on the 'Our Vision and Strategic Objectives' section?

e.g. this and that

Question 9

How do you feel about the 'Our Vision and Strategic Objectives' section?



Unhappy Dissatisfied Neutral Satisfied Happy

Dislike Love it

4. Strategic Matters and Key Issues

4.1 With a 15-year plan period proposed from 2027 to 2042, we will need new homes, new employment space, new open space and leisure facilities and new transport and other social infrastructure, and all in the right places to meet the needs of our growing Borough.

4.2 When deciding on the plan period for the new Local Plan, we must ensure that any assessed needs are deliverable over the plan period. Starting the plan period earlier than 2027 would allow us to account for growth delivered in the borough whilst the plan is being developed. However, this could also present difficulties in delivering sustained growth over the plan period. We could also choose to extend the plan period beyond 2042. One advantage of doing this would be that it would provide a buffer against the minimum 15-year plan period required, should the Local Plan be adopted later than 2027.

Question 10

Do you think the Local Plan period should run from 2027 to 2042?

Select one option

- Yes
- No

Question 11

If you answered 'No', which statement(s) best represents your view?

Select one or more options

- The Local Plan period should start earlier than 2027
- The Local Plan period should be extended beyond 2042

Question 12

Explain the reason(s) for the option(s) you selected

4.3 There are a host of key issues and opportunities that need to be considered as part of the development of the new Local Plan. These cover requirements of national planning policy and regulations that we must meet, as well as local issues that we need to respond to. We will therefore need to balance many competing priorities and issues if we are to deliver a positive vision for the future of Basildon Borough.

4.4 We have identified the following list of strategic matters and key issues that we think are relevant to Basildon Borough and need to be addressed in the Local Plan.

Delivering Growth & Continued Prosperity

4.5 Basildon Borough includes a diverse range of settlements. This includes the built-up urban areas of Basildon (including Laindon and Pitsea), Billericay and Wickford, plus the serviced villages of Bowers Gifford, Crays Hill and Ramsden Bellhouse. Around two-thirds of the borough, or all of the land outside the main settlements is within the Metropolitan Green Belt[5]. As one third of the borough is already developed urban land, it is difficult to deliver our development needs without considering the development of additional land. It is recognised this can impact on the character of an area.

4.6 National planning policy requires us to look at the development of brownfield sites first, before looking at areas outside the built-up urban areas i.e., greenfield sites. Brownfield sites are those which have previously been developed e.g., former industrial land, commercial or retail property, or land formerly occupied by housing. Greenfield sites on the other hand are sites which have not previously been built on e.g. agricultural land, forestry land, wildland or amenity land used for recreational purposes. Greenfield is not the same as Green Belt; although many greenfield locations are also Green Belt, there are greenfield sites in urban areas.

[5] The Metropolitan Green Belt is a statutory land designation that encircles London, with strict planning regulations to keep it open and undeveloped.

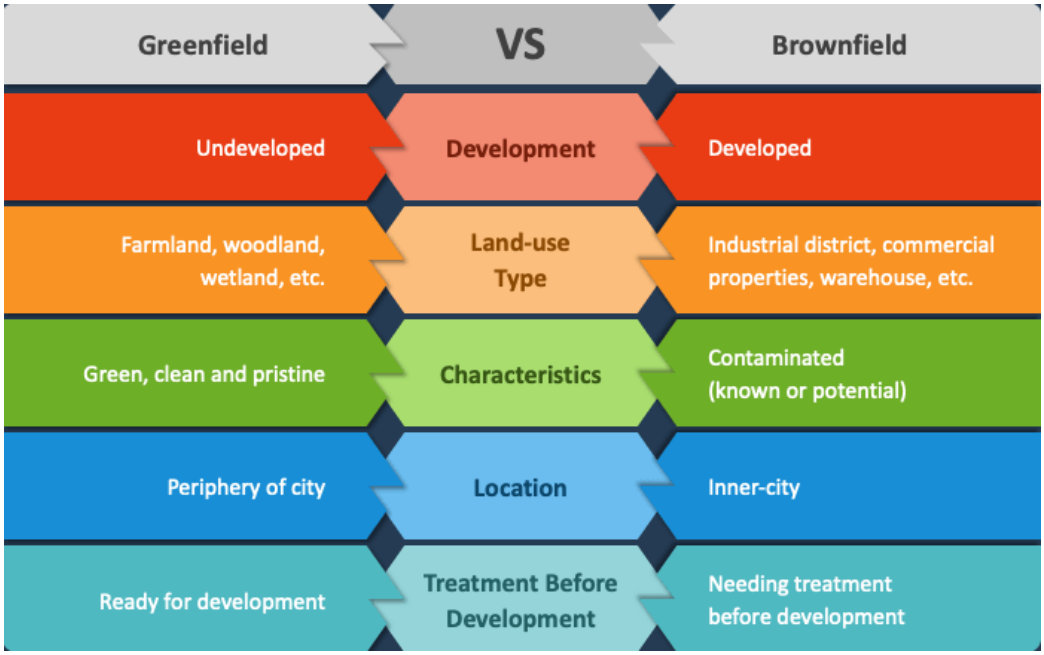


Figure 4.1: Greenfield versus Brownfield Sites

4.7 For many years now, the council has endeavoured to make best use of previously developed land in built up areas such as Basildon, Billericay and Wickford, including town centre regeneration schemes. However, these types of sites are becoming less common as many have already been developed. We will be exploring our urban capacity in significant depth to help us with this issue, including considering the appropriate density of development in urban areas, areas close to transport interchanges and the town centres.

4.8 It will also be necessary to consider the use of under-utilised or surplus greenfield sites within our urban areas to meet our development needs. This could see the redevelopment of greenfield sites such as open spaces or other recreational land for housing, employment, and other uses. However, this will need to be based on a robust and up-to-date assessment of the need for open space, sport and recreation land (including quantitative or qualitative deficits or surpluses) and opportunities for new provision.

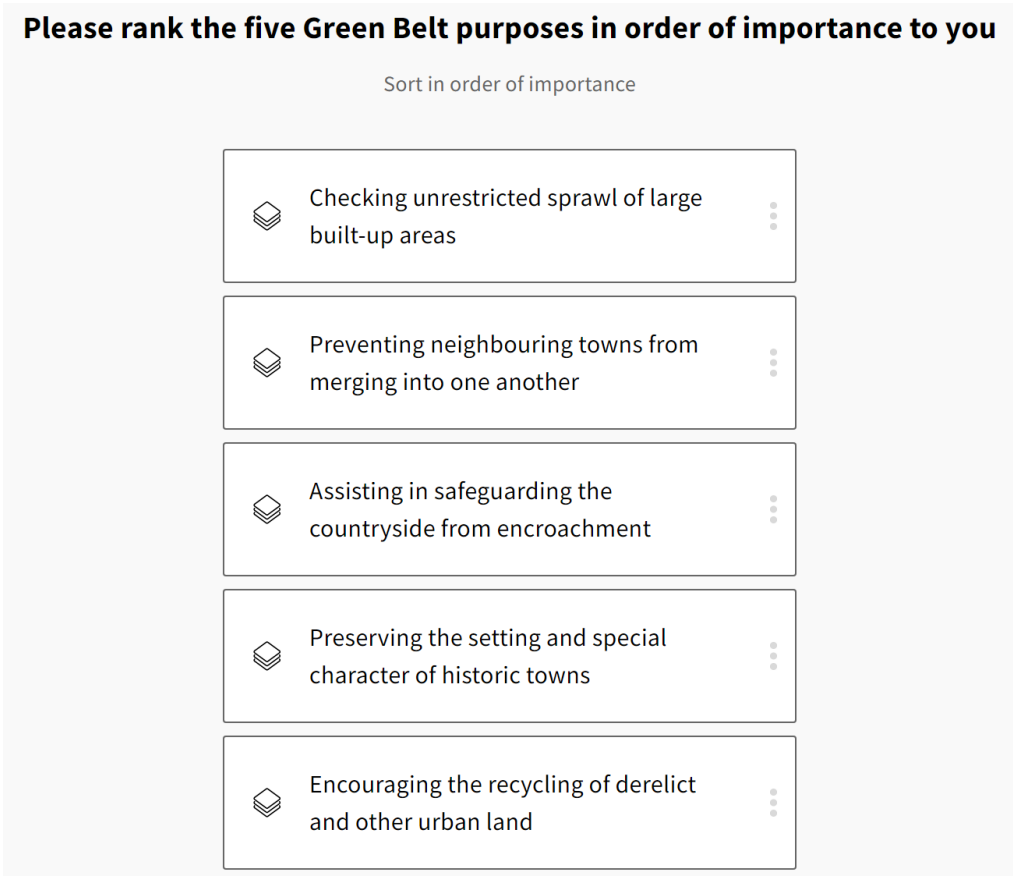
4.9 Whilst additional urban development will reduce the need for releasing Green Belt for development, it is likely that some Green Belt release will still be required to accommodate our needs over the plan period.

4.10 At the plan-making stage, there is an opportunity to consider how land identified as Green Belt currently contributes to the five Green Belt purposes set out by national policy[6]. This could include recommending that some of the land currently within the Green Belt could be made

[6] National Planning Policy Framework - 13. Protecting Green Belt land - Guidance - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

available for redevelopment because it is no longer needed to fulfil some, or all, of those purposes. We are currently undertaking a Green Belt assessment as part of our evidence base for the new Local Plan, which will also assist in making some recommendations on delivering our growth.

Question 13



4.11 The increasing need for productive agricultural land, both to produce food for an increasing population and as a source of energy for wind and solar farms will also be a key issue for the new Local Plan. Loss of farmland for development purposes needs to be considered carefully for this reason, as well as for other landscape and environmental reasons.

4.12 For more detail on what these may mean for the location of new development in the borough, see Chapter 5 'Spatial Options to Delivering Growth' which discusses a range of location choices.

Question 14

Please rank your preferred option for allocating land for future development in order of importance to you

Sort in order of importance

- Brownfield land
- Under-utilised or surplus greenfield sites in urban areas
- Green Belt (agricultural land)
- Green Belt (other uses)

Question 15

Explain the reason(s) for the preferred option(s) you have selected

Question 16

Should we consider any other options for allocating land for future development

Select one option

- Yes
- No

Question 17

Explain the reason for your selected option

Tackling Climate Change

4.13 Climate change refers to long-term shifts in temperatures and weather patterns. National planning policy requires local planning policies to take a proactive approach to mitigating and adapting to climate change, in line with the objectives and provisions of the Climate Change Act 2008. In August 2019, the Climate Change Act was amended to set a target for carbon emissions in the UK to become net zero carbon[7] by 2050. In response, Basildon Council as a local authority has set an ambitious target to work towards net zero carbon emissions from the council's operations by 2030, and the borough by 2050[8].

4.14 The Local Plan will play a key part in helping us mitigate and adapt to climate change. To comply with national policy, the plan will have to consider how we move to a lower carbon future by helping to shape development in ways that:

- contribute to reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, minimise vulnerability and improve resilience;
- encourage the reuse of existing resources, including the conversion of existing buildings; and
- support renewable and alternative energy sources.

4.15 The council adopted the Basildon Council Climate Change Policy in March 2021. Following this, the Basildon Council Climate Change and Strategy Action Plan was adopted in July 2021. These set out our strategic approach to reducing carbon emissions that arise from activities occurring in the borough and identifies a set of high-level actions that are required to become a carbon neutral council by 2030 and borough by 2050. These corporate strategies will form an integral part of the Local Plan's response to climate change.

[7] Net zero means achieving a balance between the carbon emitted into the atmosphere, and the carbon removed from it.

[8] https://www.basildon.gov.uk/climate

4.16 We are also working in collaboration with Essex County Council to help us understand our potential to achieve net zero carbon and to inform future policy. We want to hear from you about how we should best meet the climate change challenge and balance this with other issues for the Local Plan.

Question 18

How ambitious should the Local Plan be in tackling climate change?

1 2 3 4 5

Minimum legally required — Very ambitious

Question 19

In what ways do you think the Local Plan can help the borough mitigate and adapt to climate change?

Select one or more options

- Sustainable design and construction
- Energy and water efficiency
- Providing greater opportunities for renewables
- Infrastructure for active and sustainable travel
- Sustainable urban drainage systems
- Carbon offsetting through tree planting

Add something else

Enhancing Biodiversity and Green and Blue Infrastructure

4.17 Biodiversity refers to the variety of plant and animal life around us, a high level of which is usually considered to be important and desirable. Biodiversity is supported by green and blue infrastructure, a term for the network of natural and semi-natural spaces across the area.

4.18 Green infrastructure refers to landscape elements such as hedgerows, bushes, orchards, parks and recreation grounds as well as more wild spaces like woodland, scrubland and grassland areas. Blue infrastructure is linked to water and includes pools, ponds and water courses. Neither list is exhaustive.



Figure 4.2: Biodiversity and Green and Blue Infrastructure

4.19 Biodiversity is being seen as increasingly important by government, and the Environment Act 2021 means that developers will need to demonstrate exactly how their Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) plans will increase the biodiversity value of a site.

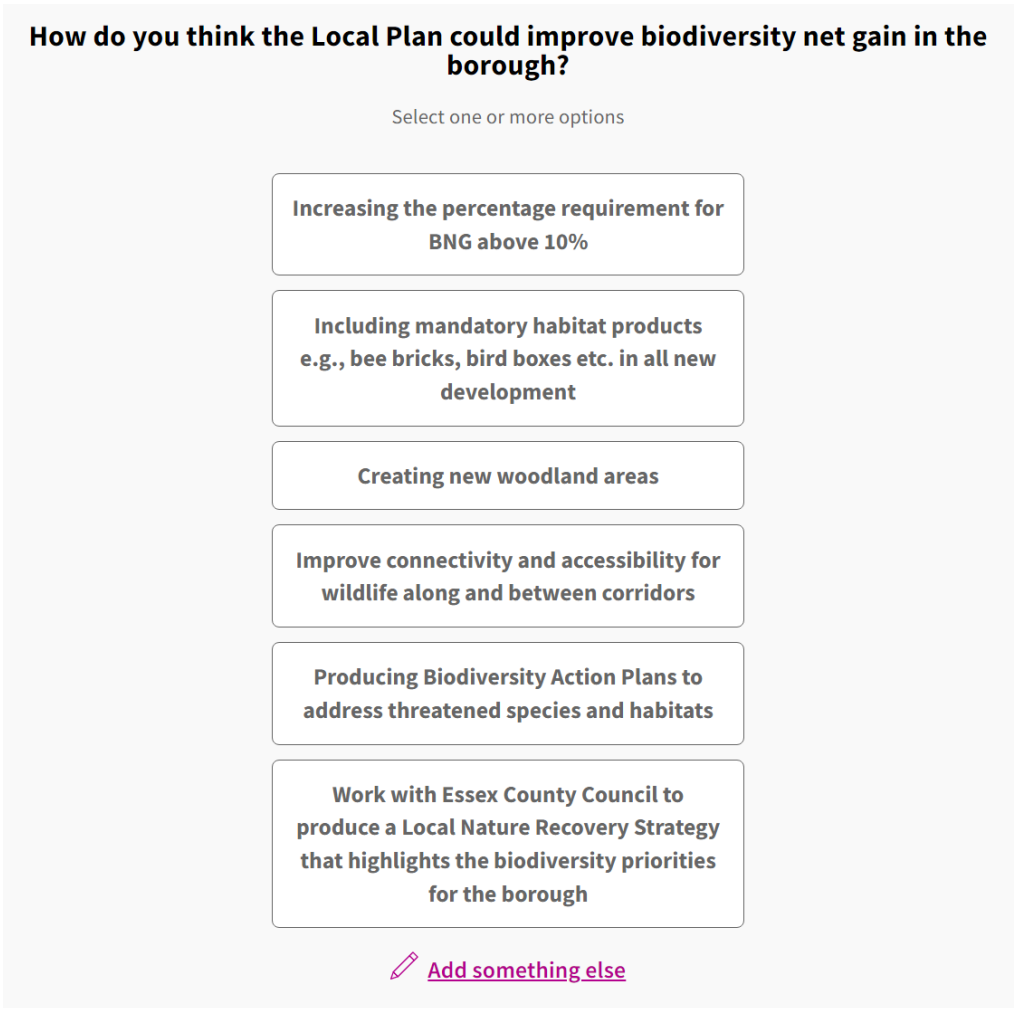
4.20 BNG is the term used to describe the process of increasing a development site's overall biodiversity value. 'Net gain' means that development enhances the biodiversity value of the site post-completion rather than decreasing the biodiversity value of the site. From November 2023, all new applicable developments that apply for planning permission must ensure they increase the biodiversity value of the site by 10% at minimum. This will be a new legal requirement under the Environment Act 2021 and goes further than the current national planning policy position.

Question 20

How ambitious should the Local Plan be in improving biodiversity?

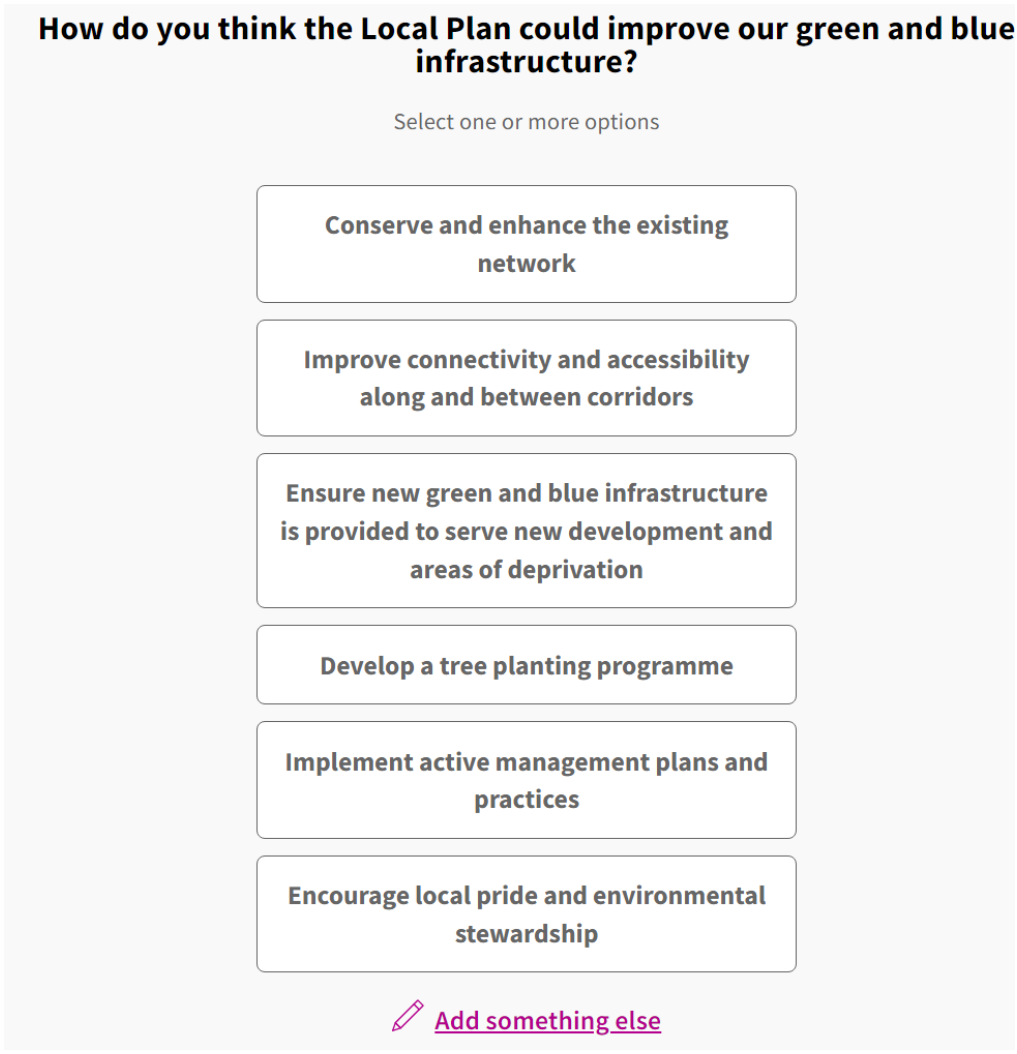
1	2	3	4	5
Not ambitious at all				Very ambitious

Question 21



4.21 The provision of green and blue infrastructure is important for both the health and wellbeing of people, as well as for wildlife to thrive and is an important part of the wider response to climate change. The South Essex Green and Blue Infrastructure Study identifies the potential for developing a network of such spaces across the area. The Local Plan will need to respond to these issues and take a strategic approach to promoting the restoration and enhancement of the green and blue infrastructure network to support biodiversity.

Question 22



Healthy and Sustainable Communities

4.22 The NPPF identifies the role of the planning system in facilitating healthy, inclusive, and safe places. The design and planning of places has a big influence on our health through the creation of a network of great places and spaces which promote social cohesion and encourage healthy lifestyles for example by providing new green spaces, and enhanced walking and cycling infrastructure.

4.23 In addition to enhancing the quality of the environment, the Local Plan needs to help create the homes and jobs people need, and to help people access local services and a broad range of amenities including sports, social and education facilities. We need to reduce pressure on our health services by preventing health issues from occurring or worsening, whilst ensuring that support, services and facilities are available at the right time for the community.

4.24 Whilst the council expects development to minimise health impacts, there will remain a need for additional healthcare provision, and developments will be expected to contribute towards the expansion of services necessary to support growth.

Question 23

Can you please tell us how you feel about the following key priorities?

Turn your device horizontal - for a better experience

	Strongly disagree ☹	Somewhat disagree 😕	Neutral 😐	Somewhat agree 🙂	Strongly agree 😃
Provide housing, jobs and infrastructure for all parts of the community	○	○	○	○	○
Provide opportunities to travel by walking, cycling and public transport to promote safer, greener, and healthier streets	○	○	○	○	○
Provide infrastructure to support electric vehicles	○	○	○	○	○
Create well-used and active public places which help to foster a sense of community	○	○	○	○	○
Provide greenspaces and sports facilities to encourage walking, cycling and exercise as part of daily life	○	○	○	○	○

Add something else (please specify)

Creating Beautiful Places

4.25 In planning for the future, it will be important to enhance and celebrate what is best about our landscape and townscape, and the historic environment such as listed buildings and conservation areas. We must not just protect the best places created by past generations, we should be creating high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places that will become the treasured heritage of future generations.

4.26 Local Plans should set out a clear design vision and expectations of developers, including place-specific design guidance and design codes,

where appropriate. The plan will also need to respond to the new National Design Guide[9] which illustrates how well-designed places that are beautiful, enduring and successful can be achieved in practice. The guide identifies ten characteristics of well-designed places as illustrated below:



Figure 4.3: Ten Characteristics of Well-Designed Places

[9] https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-design-guide

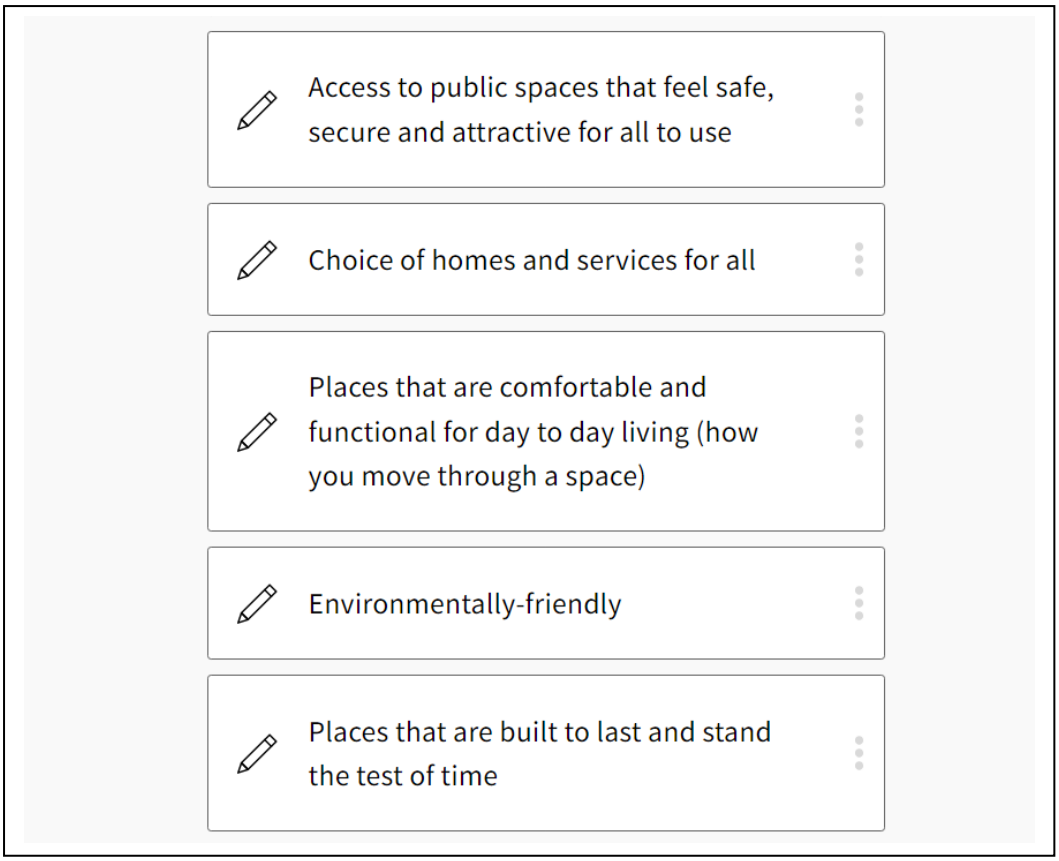
4.27 We also want to create high quality homes which are safe, secure, and long-lasting. The National Space Standards set minimum room sizes to ensure homes are fit for purpose. In addition to this, we will need to consider whether we should have specific standards for energy efficiency, accessibility, and adaptability to reflect our local needs. Housing design should also respond to the increasing trend for working from home, and other changing lifestyle demands.

Question 24

What do you feel makes a beautiful and well-designed place.

Sort in order of importance

- Heritage and Conservation (the need to preserve tradition, and long standing, historical features)
- Sense of place and a clear identity for the place
- Layout and how buildings interact (how buildings look together in one space)
- Connectivity for all modes of transport (i.e. the ability to go from one form of transport to another with ease)
- Access to nature such as a variety of natural and designed landscapes for play, food production, recreation and sport



Question 25

Are there any other qualities you feel are important in making a beautiful and well-designed place?

Improving Access to Housing

4.28 Housing is one of the most important issues in planning. The cost of buying or renting a home, and the shortage of homes available for those on low to middle incomes, are a real issue for many of those living and wanting to live in the borough. If we do not plan for enough homes, this could worsen affordability, limit our local economy, damage social inclusion, and have implications for climate change as people travel further to access jobs. Indeed, these issues do not only affect Basildon Borough.

4.29 The Local Plan has an important role to play in ensuring we get the right types of homes in the right places to meet the needs of our communities and the growing economy. It will define the number of new homes we should be planning for, and where they should be built. It will also need to establish the size, type and tenure of housing needed for different

groups in the community, and plan for how those needs can be met. We must also consider how we can encourage the development industry to build houses more quickly to meet our needs.

Question 26

Do you think allocating more land for housing would help improve access to housing?

Select one option

Yes

No

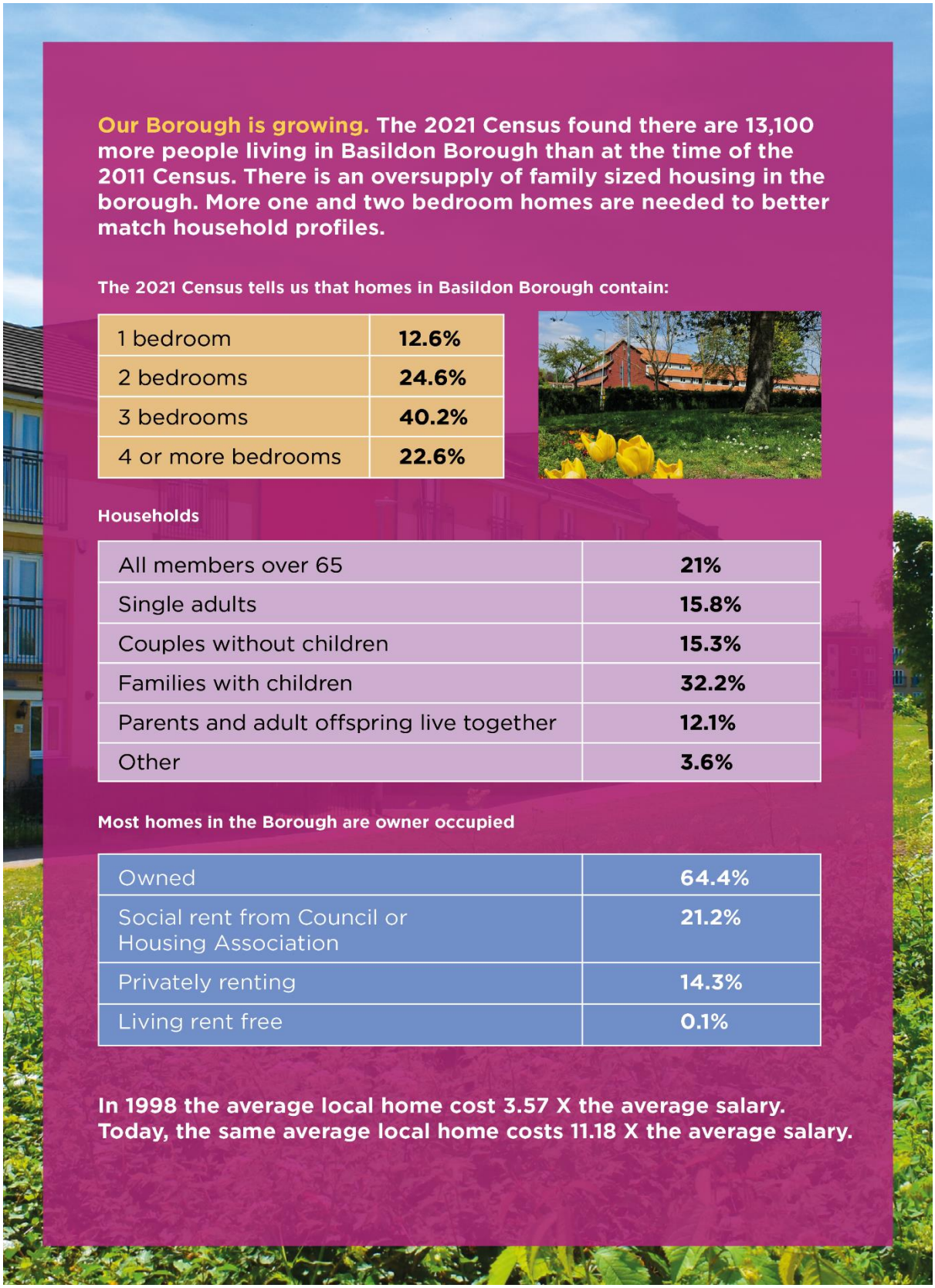


Figure 4.4: Housing Mix in Basildon Borough

4.30 Currently, national planning policy has a way of calculating housing needs, referred to as the 'standard method' for determining 'the minimum number of homes needed'. The NPPF makes clear that strategic policies should be informed by a local housing need assessment conducted using this method, which takes account of population growth and affordability issues. The Government has announced the intention to make changes to this 'standard method', but we are not currently clear on what these changes might be.

4.31 Our current calculations using the Government's 'standard method' indicate a need for at least 1,041 homes per year. At this time, we would need around 20,820 more homes by 2042 but this number could go up or down, depending on any changes made to the 'standard method'. This figure is substantially more than the average number of homes delivered in the borough in past years.

4.32 Following a ministerial statement in December 2022, the Government now intends for standard method numbers to be a starting point only. Therefore, it will be possible for the Council to produce a Local Plan which includes a different housing number than using the outcome of standard method calculations. This could have implications on the amount of land released from the Green Belt. However, a lower figure than the recommended level may not fully address current need and may contribute to a further increase in house prices should the demand for housing continue to grow. This could also risk further overcrowding as a lower level of housing growth will also not address the historic under-delivery of housing in the borough. Furthermore, there are strong links between housing and personal health (including mental health). Poor housing conditions may create further demands for healthcare services such as GPs and can aggravate any health conditions which people may suffer.

Question 27

What do you think are the most important things we should consider when determining how many homes are needed in the borough?

Sort in order of importance

- Population growth
- Changes in population characteristics
- Rental costs and affordability
- Homeownership costs and affordability
- Adequacy of past housing delivery
- The need to support economic growth

Question 28

Are there other things you think we should consider when determining housing numbers?

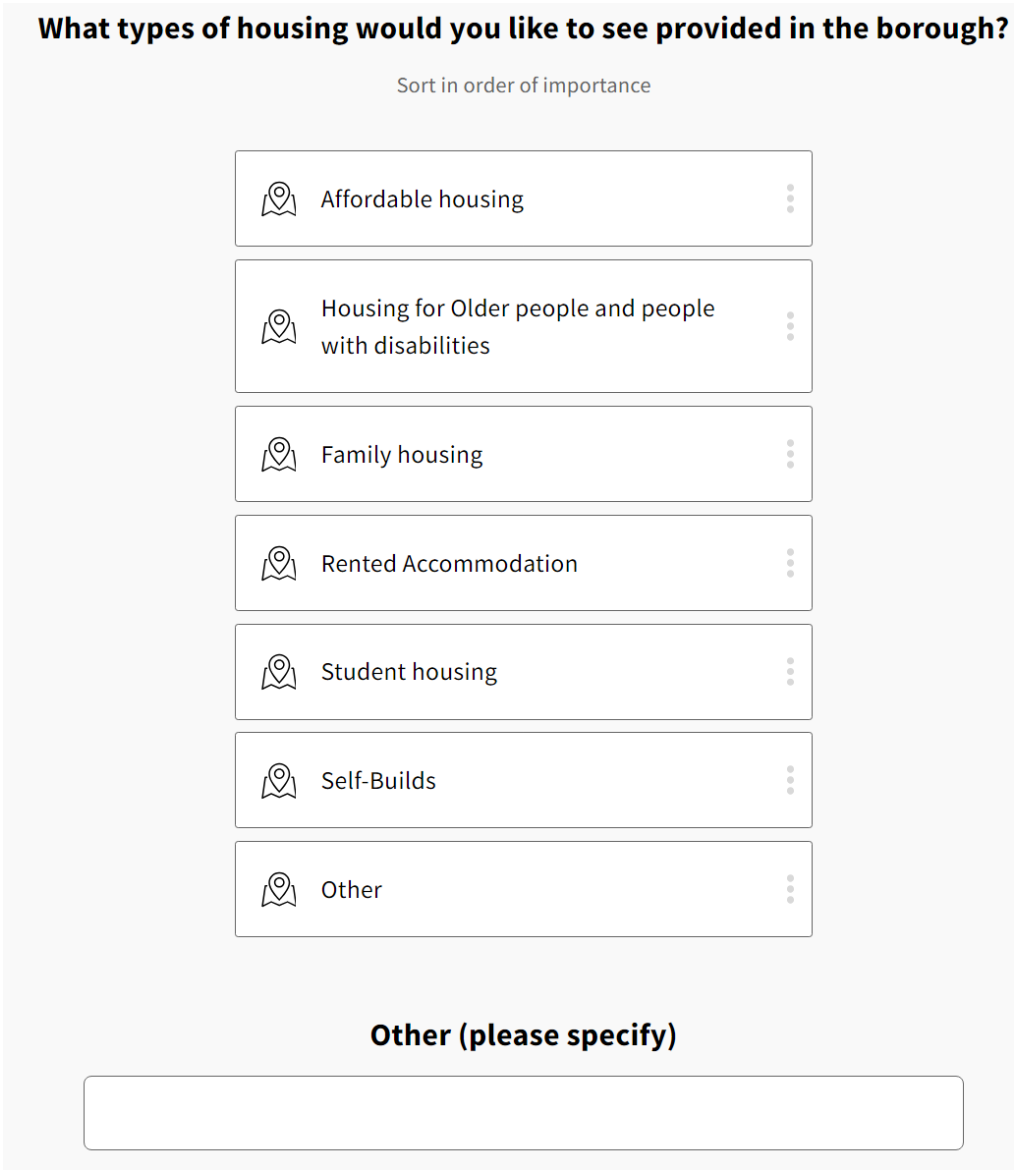
4.33 We need to provide market and affordable homes that meet the varied needs of our communities and ensure that those who need specialist housing can find a home that is right for them.

4.34 Housing affordability is a significant issue that has worsened over time. Ten years ago, the average resident would expect to be able to buy a home for 4.49 times their annual wage. Today the average resident would have to pay about 10.38 times their income. This means that residents are finding it harder to get a home.

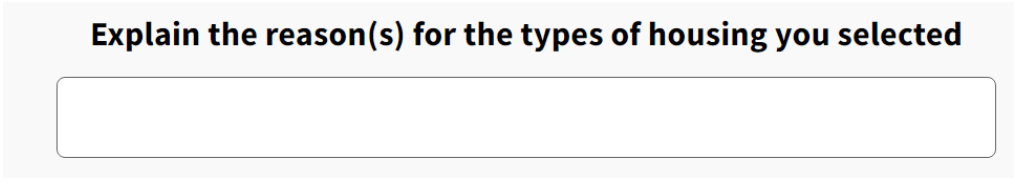
4.35 With people living longer, we need more homes that are flexible in terms of their accessibility and adaptability as we age, as well as specialist housing for older people and people with disabilities. Providing suitable homes in the right locations for those looking to downsize will also

enable family homes to be freed up, making best use of the housing that exists already.

Question 29



Question 30



4.36 Basildon Borough also has a large Gypsy and Traveller community. Under the Housing & Planning Act 2016, local authorities have a duty to assess the housing needs of those residing in caravans. The Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (PPTS) in conjunction with the NPPF also set

out how the planning system should make provision for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople.

4.37 A key priority for the council is to identify new sites to accommodate its Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople population. The latest assessment identifies a need for 85 Gypsy & Traveller pitches and 3 Travelling Showpeople plots over the period 2019-2038, for those meeting the planning definition (in essence those who have a nomadic habit of life). It also shows a need to provide 93 Gypsy & Traveller pitches and 86 Travelling Showpeople plots over the period 2019-2038 for those residing in caravans who no longer travel and therefore do not meet the planning definition. We will be reviewing our evidence to inform the new Local Plan.

Question 31

Do you think allocating new sites would improve access to Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople accommodation?

Select one option

Yes

No

Question 32

How should the Local Plan seek to meet the need for additional Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople sites in the borough?

Sort in order of importance

- Expand existing sites
- Allocate New Sites (using Green Belt Locations)
- Allocate New Sites (using Non-Green Belt Locations)
- Delivered as part of future housing and employment allocations i.e., develop mixed-use sites
- Granting Planning Permission to Existing Unauthorised Sites
- Other

'Other' please specify

Question 33

Please explain the reason(s) for the option(s) you selected

Prosperous Economy

4.38 In addition to ensuring there is sufficient land available to support future housing needs, we also need to ensure there is sufficient land to support the growth of businesses. Having a strong local business base ensures

our future prosperity, ensures there are ‘good jobs’ for local people and enables our economy to adapt to changing business practices.

4.39 Basildon is one of the major economic growth areas in Essex, alongside Chelmsford and Colchester, and therefore its economy is of national and regional significance. It has a very strong economy and provides jobs for large numbers of people living both within and outside of the borough. However, the range of industries is not particularly diverse, and is heavily reliant on a small number of key sectors such as retail, manufacturing, warehousing, and logistics. Large areas of industrial estates close to the A127 provide a significant number of these jobs.

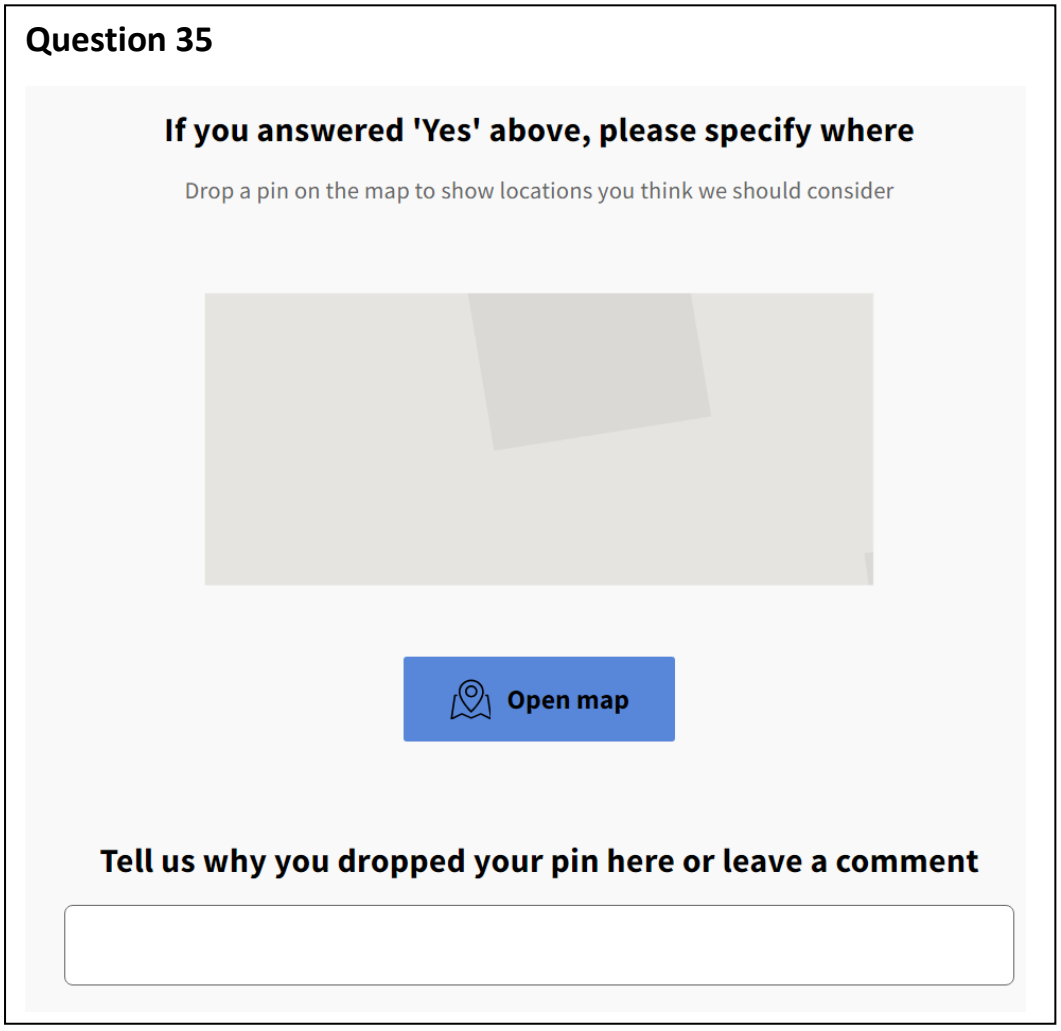
4.40 Current evidence suggests that the current and future demand for larger business premises for international firms and smaller service-based businesses that want to be based outside of main town centre locations continues to outstrip the supply of suitable premises. In order to attract these kinds of businesses, we need to develop more commercial property which meets their needs.

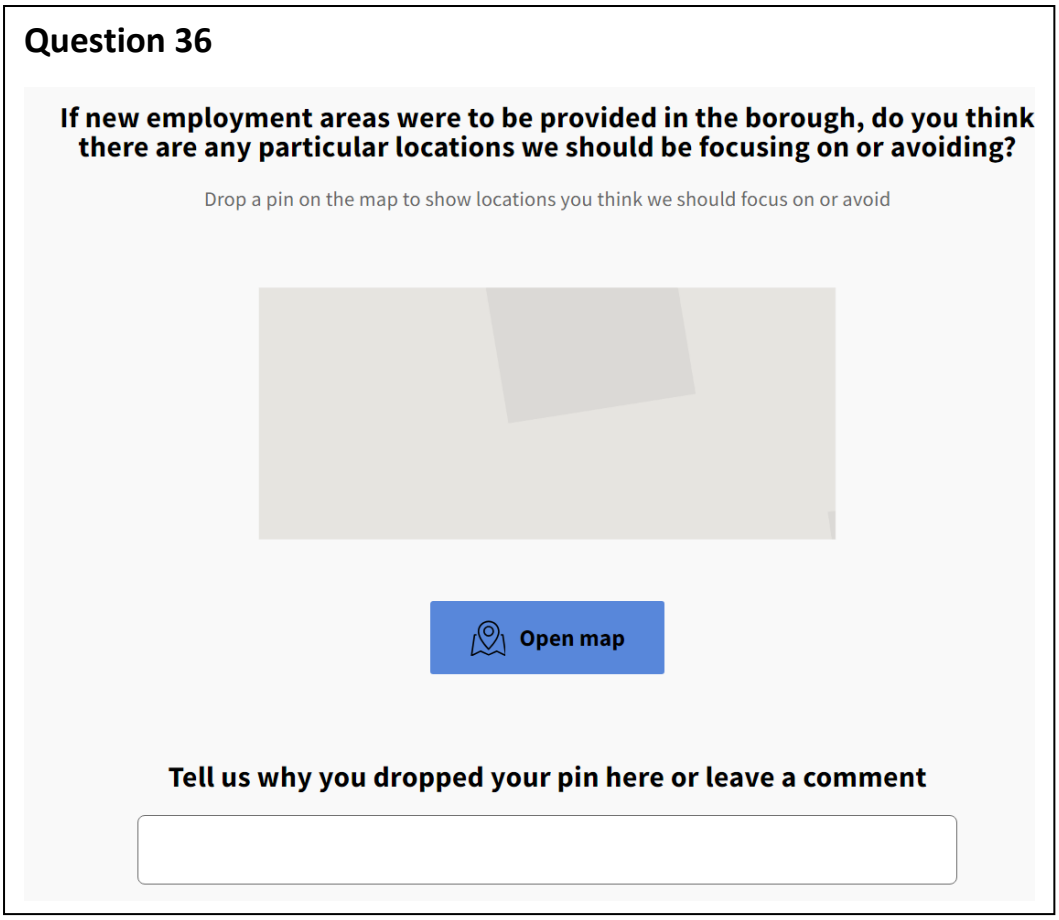
4.41 The A127 Enterprise Corridor is a key business location in Essex and the UK, and a strategically important asset for the South Essex sub-region, linking the seafront tourist attractions of Southend and the employment concentrations in Basildon to the M25. Already home to many multi-national companies, the area has the potential to act as a functional economic hub and represents an opportunity to provide premises that sectors such as advanced manufacturing and green technologies, health technology and transport & logistics could occupy.

4.42 The A127 Corridor has very constrained accessibility by public transport, which may affect the types of activities taking place in the area and often makes workers dependent on car ownership. In addition, premises used for warehouse, storage and logistics uses are typically large, single-storey buildings with a low job density. Site availability is often limited in this area. In terms of making efficient use of land and reducing pressure to release Green Belt land for new allocations, consideration could therefore be given to encouraging some higher density developments along the A127, through constructing new multi-storey industrial premises which will allow the range of businesses to expand. Alternatively, we could seek to increase the amount of floorspace allocated for employment uses elsewhere within the Borough.

4.43 There are several other employment areas and premises across the borough including the Ford Dunton Campus, Radford Way Business Park, Wickford Business Park and several rural enterprise sites, providing part of the borough's employment land supply.









4.44 National policy expects that Local Plans set out a clear economic vision and strategy for their area and pro-actively encourage sustainable economic growth. The borough's Economic Development Policy 2020-2024 sets out a clear economic vision for the borough to ensure that sustainable economic opportunities are accessible to all our residents.

4.45 Basildon is in prime position to take advantage of businesses and sectors looking for alternative space to grow and relocate. In addition, culture-led regeneration to help attract inward investment and the growth of digitisation are likely to become increasingly important during the coming years.

4.46 Evidence work has started on economic issues through a Duty to Co-operate employment workshop and engaging with businesses at the Basildon Business Expo in September 2022. The new Local Plan will need to identify the number and type of jobs that should be planned for, so that we can find appropriate sites for economic growth. It will also be important to consider how the plan provides flexibility so that when this ambitious economic growth is achieved, it is accompanied by the homes and infrastructure to support it. The new evidence that we are commissioning will help us with this.

Question 38

What kind of employment spaces do you think are most needed in the borough?

Select one or more options

Warehousing and storage	Transport and logistics
Construction	Advanced manufacturing
Energy and green technologies	Life sciences and healthcare
Digital and creative services	Finance and business services

Add something else

Question 39

Explain the reason(s) for the option(s) you selected

Question 40

Do you have any other comments on how you would like to see Basildon Borough's economy grow?

4.47 The borough also suffers from a skills shortage, which has led to many jobs in established and emerging high-value companies being taken up by people who commute into the area. We need to improve access to all levels of education, training, and skills enhancement to reduce the current inequalities in employment. This will help to boost the

qualifications and skill levels of residents, in order to promote greater access to the new and higher-level employment opportunities which will be created in the area over the plan period.

4.48 New development helps to pay for infrastructure under a process referred to as 'Section 106'. The process is legally binding on developers. Under Section 106, as well as physical infrastructure such as roads or affordable housing, money can be sought which can help to create education or work experience opportunities where it meets the tests for planning obligations[10].

4.49 The wider processes of seeking inward investment and economic regeneration are matters which are outside of the direct control of our Local Plan. Despite this, planning activities in the form of suitable, sustainable new developments can, however, play their part in creating jobs and training opportunities, bringing wider benefits for the borough.

Question 41

What interventions do you think the Local Plan should introduce to boost local skills levels and support economic growth?

Select one or more options

- Apprenticeship and training posts for young people
- Strengthen higher education presence in the borough
- More opportunities for vocational training
- More opportunities for adult education

Add something else

Resilient Town Centres

4.50 Local Plans should support the continued vitality and viability[11] of town centres. The borough's main centres are Basildon, Billericay, Laindon, Pitsea and Wickford, with Basildon being a regional centre. Further down the retail hierarchy are other local centres, out-of-centre retail facilities and individual local shops within other more rural settlements. Each of these centres serve different catchment areas and are an important part

[10] Planning obligations are legal obligations entered into to mitigate the impacts of a development proposal.
[11] **Vitality** is creating and maintaining high intensity of activities implemented at various times of the day, while **viability** is the ability to attract investments.

of the local economy providing jobs and important goods and services for residents and workers.

4.51 Retail is changing with the growth of internet shopping, and centres need to adapt if they are to remain vibrant destinations. Recent changes to the planning system also mean that there is greater scope for changes of land use to occur within town centres, without the need for full planning permission. The pressure for the development of land in the town centre for competing uses such as housing is immense, and no more so than in Basildon where demand for services and living is high.

4.52 It is therefore essential that we give careful consideration to our town centres in relation to development proposals that may affect their long-term vitality and viability. It is important that residents have access to local services and facilities to meet their day-to-day needs. At the same time, we need to positively support change which promotes the role of the borough's centres as attractive places to visit. Therefore, providing flexibility in policy to support the challenges and opportunities faced by each centre will be an important consideration for the new Local Plan.

What changes or improvements would you like to see in Basildon Borough town centres?

Question 42

Basildon Town Centre

Select one or more options

- Retail and shopping facilities
- Leisure and recreation facilities e.g., cinemas, restaurants, bars and pubs, night-clubs, casinos, health and fitness centres, indoor bowling centres, bingo halls
- Housing
- Offices and workspaces
- Community and cultural uses e.g., community halls, theatres, galleries, concert halls, hotels and conference facilities
- Public realm i.e., streets, squares, parks and open spaces

Add something else

Question 43

Billericay Town Centre

Select one or more options

- Retail and shopping facilities
- Leisure and recreation facilities e.g., cinemas, restaurants, bars and pubs, night-clubs, casinos, health and fitness centres, indoor bowling centres, bingo halls
- Housing
- Offices and workspaces
- Community and cultural uses e.g., community halls, theatres, galleries, concert halls, hotels and conference facilities
- Public realm i.e., streets, squares, parks and open spaces

Add something else

Question 44

Laindon Town Centre

Select one or more options

- Retail and shopping facilities
- Leisure and recreation facilities e.g., cinemas, restaurants, bars and pubs, night-clubs, casinos, health and fitness centres, indoor bowling centres, bingo halls
- Housing
- Offices and workspaces
- Community and cultural uses e.g., community halls, theatres, galleries, concert halls, hotels and conference facilities
- Public realm i.e., streets, squares, parks and open spaces

Add something else

Question 45

Pitsea Town Centre

Select one or more options

- Retail and shopping facilities
- Leisure and recreation facilities e.g., cinemas, restaurants, bars and pubs, night-clubs, casinos, health and fitness centres, indoor bowling centres, bingo halls
- Housing
- Offices and workspaces
- Community and cultural uses e.g., community halls, theatres, galleries, concert halls, hotels and conference facilities
- Public realm i.e., streets, squares, parks and open spaces

Add something else

Question 46

Wickford Town Centre

Select one or more options

- Retail and shopping facilities
- Leisure and recreation facilities e.g., cinemas, restaurants, bars and pubs, night-clubs, casinos, health and fitness centres, indoor bowling centres, bingo halls
- Housing
- Offices and workspaces
- Community and cultural uses e.g., community halls, theatres, galleries, concert halls, hotels and conference facilities
- Public realm i.e., streets, squares, parks and open spaces

Add something else

Promoting Sustainable Transport

4.53 Relying on the private car is likely to become more expensive and less convenient in the future, so the question of how we can make better plans for sustainable transport including walking, cycling, wheeling (using a wheelchair or mobility aid) and public transport, especially for shorter journeys, is a key issue for the new Local Plan.

4.54 The borough is also experiencing a lack of sustainable transport access to employment areas, reducing the ability of young people and adults without cars to gain and retain employment.

4.55 Investment in transport infrastructure will be key to unlocking the borough's development potential. This will influence the location of new development, in that, sustainable locations (which are accessible by a range of travel modes) will be preferred as this helps to accommodate sustainable forms of transport and promote active travel. Active travel should be encouraged through safe, direct, and attractive walking and cycling networks in new development and good connections to existing routes and networks. Walkable neighbourhoods should be incorporated into new developments to create sustainable communities and help to reduce car travel.

4.56 Although electric cars have been increasingly promoted in recent years to decarbonise the road transport sector, their use importantly does not address the other implications associated with privately owned vehicles, including road safety and congestion.

4.57 Since June 2022, updates to Building Regulations now require the installation of domestic charging points for electric vehicles. During the lifespan of the new Local Plan, it is anticipated that the sale of new petrol and diesel vehicles will be prohibited. Should that occur, it is likely to have significant effects on the transport sector. We therefore need to plan to accelerate a greener transport future.

Question 47

What changes do you think would help reduce reliance on private motor vehicles in the borough?

Select one or more options

- Align new development to sustainable locations which are accessible by a range of travel modes
- Mixed-use development to minimise the number and length of car journeys
- Investments in walking, cycling and public transport networks so you can walk, cycle and use public transport to travel to places more easily
- Car sharing schemes i.e., when two or more people travel together by car for all or part of a trip
- Increasing the use of low or zero-emission transport modes such as electric and hybrid vehicles

Add something else

Question 48

Do you think it is important to incorporate incentives for electric and alternative-fuel private motor vehicles?

1 2 3 4 5

Not important at all — Very important

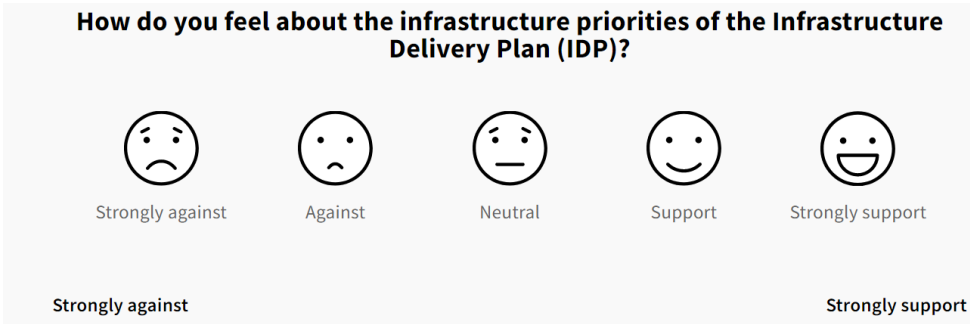
Securing Sufficient Infrastructure to support Growth

4.58 New growth needs new infrastructure, and the new Local Plan needs to show how planned housing and jobs will be accompanied by the services and facilities to support them sustainably. Infrastructure plays a critical role in supporting local communities and the local economy. It can unlock the borough's potential, enabling residents to access new or improved education, health, sports, leisure, community facilities and

access work opportunities. Providing quality improvements to infrastructure and services is fundamental to achieving a high quality of life for a growing population and it is essential that these are planned in such a way that they meet the future demands that are placed on the borough.

4.59 As part of the evidence base, we have a relatively up to date Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP)[12]. We will need to update this IDP for the new Local Plan at a time when we know the new strategic direction for the plan. The IDP currently identifies the main priorities for infrastructure in the borough as transport, education, healthcare, open space and sports provision.

Question 49



4.60 Basildon Council will work with developers and infrastructure providers to ensure that sufficient infrastructure is provided to tackle current and future challenges, and it will be essential that this is funded by allowing sufficient development to take place to support the growth of the borough. It is often the case that contributions received from new housing development via planning obligations will provide the bulk of funding towards new infrastructure. However, additional funding sources will be required to support the delivery of certain infrastructure projects such as those which are not related to growth allocated in the Local Plan.

[12] See Basildon Council Infrastructure Delivery Plan - January 2022.

Question 50

What types of infrastructure do you feel should be prioritised in the new Local Plan?

Sort in order of importance

- Transport including road, rail, cycle paths, footpaths etc.
- Education i.e., schools, childcare, libraries etc.
- Health and social care facilities
- Digital and communications infrastructure i.e., broadband, internet
- Other Community Facilities e.g., cultural centres, sport, leisure and recreation, places of worship etc.
- Utilities i.e., electricity, water, gas, waste
- Other

'Other' please specify

Question 51

Do you have any other comments on the 'Strategic Matters and Key Issues' section?

e.g. this and that

Question 52

How do you feel about the 'Strategic Matters and Key Issues' section?



Dislike Love it

5. Spatial Options to Delivering Growth

5.1 As well as planning for the right amount of growth, it is important to make sure the Local Plan provides the right strategy for where this growth should happen that will bring environmental, economic, and social benefits. There will be significant land requirements to accommodate our growth and the decisions taken around meeting these needs will help to shape the overall spatial strategy, which will in turn influence the location of new development.

5.2 There are a number of broad themes already identified that are likely to be important as we consider the location of development options, and these are described in further detail below.

Densification of Existing Urban Areas

5.3 The Local Plan will aim to maximise development in the towns within reasonable density and environmental limits. This approach would focus new homes and jobs within the main urban areas of Basildon, Billericay and Wickford by encouraging intensive use of brownfield land, building taller buildings, building on existing residential back gardens or in-between existing buildings, or redeveloping underused sites at higher densities.

5.4 Whilst this approach will reduce the need for development in the countryside and the need for Green Belt release, it will not be suitable in all areas due to the need to respond to local character.

5.5 Work is ongoing on this through an Urban Capacity Assessment to understand the realistic urban capacity of each settlement, and whether there is potential to increase average densities.

Urban Extensions

5.6 This approach would necessitate using land from the Green Belt to provide new homes and jobs in extensions on the edge of existing towns. This is because all land outside the defined urban areas within Basildon Borough is designated as Green Belt.

5.7 The advantage of this type of development is that new development would be well related to the existing towns and existing infrastructure within the towns. Large scale urban extensions also present the opportunity for new on-site infrastructure such as schools, local centres and green spaces that can bring benefits to both existing and new communities. However, it does involve the loss of Green Belt on the periphery of our towns.

Infill Development

5.8 This approach to development is generally allowed in policy terms as the NPPF makes provision for limited infilling within villages. It is however likely that only a limited number of new homes would be provided due to the limited opportunities for infilling available in the borough, most of which are in existing areas of established plotland.

5.9 Plotlands refer to the small pockets of self-built settlements outside of the main settlements in the borough. There are 13 plotland settlements in the borough, all located within the Metropolitan Green Belt. As a result of the change to national Green Belt policy permitting limited infilling, it will be necessary to review the borough's plotland areas to determine the extent to which such infilling could take place.

5.10 The scale of any infill development will need to be appropriately managed and must have appropriate access to infrastructure and services.

Expansion of Existing Villages

5.11 This is a more strategic approach to the development of villages. It could be means of meeting localised housing needs and supporting community resilience, as well as making some contribution to meeting the overall housing demand in the borough. This approach would involve release of Green Belt land but may help in mitigating the need for Green Belt release elsewhere.

5.12 The scope for expansion would include defining new or extending village boundaries, insetting villages from the Green Belt, or allocating sites for housing. Development would enable more facilities to be viably located within the village, although the character of the village could change significantly.

New Settlements

5.13 This approach would establish a whole new town or village in a new location within the Green Belt, providing an appropriate mix of uses including homes, jobs and strategic infrastructure that allows the community to be self-sufficient. New settlements could add to the offer and resilience of existing towns and villages and provides an opportunity for services and facilities to be provided at the heart of the new community.

5.14 The choice of location for new settlements would be based on a number of factors to establish the boundary, nature and form of the new settlement, including highway and access arrangements, public

transport, pedestrian and cycle infrastructure, housing types and tenures, design requirements and key infrastructure requirements.

5.15 New settlements tend to be complex, large-scale, multi-faceted development projects requiring both national and local direction, up-front engagement, and a comprehensive masterplan. It would therefore require a level of certainty over delivery and timing.

Strategic Transport Corridors

5.16 Basildon Borough has connections with national and regional strategic road networks via the east-west A127, A13 and north-south A130 corridors. The borough is also served by two railway lines to the north and south. These connect the borough with London and Greater Essex.

5.17 The A127 corridor is an important linear corridor providing accessibility and through transport within the borough and beyond. It is also crucial for the local economy with many of Basildon's major employment areas located to the south of this linear corridor. The Fairglen Interchange (A13/A127 junction) offers good linkages with potential strategic development areas to the south and east of Wickford. It is also recognised as a potential strategic growth area for both Rochford and Castle Point.

5.18 We need to consider the potential of developing along our strategic transport networks either through expansion into the Green Belt, or by increasing building densities around them.

Spatial Options Conclusion

5.19 As described above, there are different spatial options available to accommodate growth in our borough. Our principal guiding ambition is to provide a high quality of life for a growing population, supported by quality infrastructure. To achieve this, we need to grow and develop at a scale that is sufficient to help fund the supporting infrastructure.

5.20 The new Local Plan will have to set out and justify a clear spatial strategy on where we plan for growth and what type of growth. It is likely that the most suitable spatial strategy will involve a balance of elements to provide the most sustainable and achievable strategy. At this early stage in plan making, we would like to hear your views on what the balance should be.

Question 53

Which spatial options should be included within the Council's Spatial Strategy?

Sort in order of importance

- Densification of existing urban areas
- Urban extensions
- Infill Development
- Expansion of existing villages
- New settlements
- Strategic transport corridors

Question 54

Explain the reason(s) for the spatial options you have selected

Question 55

Are there any other themes not covered by these six spatial options that you feel should be considered?

Question 56

Where in the borough do you think growth should be located or avoided?

Drop a pin on the map

Open map

Tell us why you dropped your pin here or leave a comment

Question 57

How do you feel about this location as a place for growth?



Avoid here for growth | There would be problems locating growth here | Neutral | Consider growth here | Focus growth here

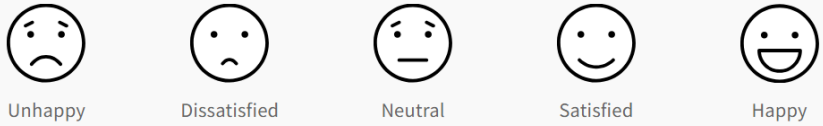
Avoid here | Focus here

Question 58

Do you have any other comments on the 'Spatial Options to Delivering Growth' section?

Question 59

How do you feel about the 'Spatial Options to Delivering Growth' section?



Dislike Love it

5.21 This Issues and Options document is intended to provide you with a summary of our early thinking in respect of the Local Plan. This final question is intended to capture any other comments or issues that you would like us to consider.

Question 60

Do you have any other comments to make regarding the key issues and options that need to be considered as part of the Local Plan?

6. Looking Ahead

6.1 Thank you for your feedback. We greatly appreciate you providing your views and opinions on how future growth should take place in Basildon Borough. This will help us to address both our current needs as well as the needs of future generations.

6.2 Once this consultation is concluded, we will carefully consider your responses and prepare a summary of the consultation. The outputs will feed into the next, more detailed stage of plan-making, which will also be informed by other evidence that will be produced over the coming months.

6.3 So far, we have undertaken a Call for Sites exercise in the Autumn of 2022, where we asked anyone with an idea or interest in a potential site for housing, employment, open space or any other uses to let us know of the site by submitting details to us.

6.4 You can still submit sites to the council at any time for an annual review through the Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (HELAA) process. For more information, visit https://www.basildon.gov.uk/article/4954/HELAA-Submit-a-New-Site.

6.5 We will continue to involve you at key stages as the new Local Plan is developed.

Glossary

Relevant Abbreviation	Term	Definition
-	Accessibility	Refers to the extent to which employment, goods and services are made available to people, either through close proximity, or through providing the required physical links to enable people to be transported to locations where they are available. It also refers to the extent of barriers to movement for users who may experience problems getting from one place to another, including people with disabilities.
-	Affordable Housing	Housing for sale or rent, for those whose needs are not met by the market (including housing that provides a subsidised route to home ownership and/or is for essential local workers); and which complies with one or more of the following definitions: **(a) Affordable housing for rent:** meets all of the following conditions: (a) the rent is set in accordance with the Government's rent policy for Social Rent or Affordable Rent, or is at least 20% below local market rents (including service charges where applicable); (b) the landlord is a registered provider, except where it is included as part of a Build to Rent scheme (in which case the landlord need not be a registered provider); and (c) it includes provisions to remain at an affordable price for future eligible households, or for the subsidy to be recycled for alternative affordable housing provision. For Build to Rent schemes affordable housing for rent is expected to be the normal form of affordable housing provision (and, in this context, is known as Affordable Private Rent). **(b) Starter homes:** is as specified in sections 2 and 3 of the Housing and Planning Act 2016 and any secondary legislation made under these sections. The definition of a starter home should reflect the meaning set out in statute and any such secondary legislation at the time of plan-preparation or decision-making. Where secondary legislation has the effect of limiting a household's eligibility to purchase a starter home to those with a particular maximum level

Relevant Abbreviation	Term	Definition
		of household income, those restrictions should be used. **(c) Discounted market sales housing:** is that sold at a discount of at least 20% below local market value. Eligibility is determined with regard to local incomes and local house prices. Provisions should be in place to ensure housing remains at a discount for future eligible households. **(d) Other affordable routes to home ownership:** is housing provided for sale that provides a route to ownership for those who could not achieve home ownership through the market. It includes shared ownership, relevant equity loans, other low cost homes for sale (at a price equivalent to at least 20% below local market value) and rent to buy (which includes a period of intermediate rent). Where public grant funding is provided, there should be provisions for the homes to remain at an affordable price for future eligible households, or for any receipts to be recycled for alternative affordable housing provision, or refunded to government or the relevant authority specified in the funding agreement.
ASELA	The Association of South Essex Local Authorities	The Association of South Essex Local Authorities (ASELA) is a partnership of neighbouring councils Brentwood, Castle Point, Rochford, Southend-on-Sea, Thurrock and Essex County that have come together to promote growth and prosperity in the region.
-	Biodiversity	The variety of life on earth embracing all species, communities, habitats and ecosystems associated with the terrestrial, aquatic and marine environments. Usually, the term refers to the variety of species within a specific area.
BAP	Biodiversity Action Plan	A strategy prepared for a local area aimed at conserving and enhancing biodiversity.
BNG	Biodiversity Net Gain	The process of increasing a development site's overall biodiversity value.
-	Blue Infrastructure	Infrastructure relating to water, such as pools, rivers, ponds, water courses, etc.
-	Brownfield Land	Land that has been previously developed.
-	Building Regulations	Building regulations set standards for the design and construction of buildings to ensure the safety and health for people in or about those buildings

Relevant Abbreviation	Term	Definition
-	Climate Change	Long-term changes in temperature, precipitation, wind and all other aspects of the Earth's climate. Often regarded as a result of human activity and fossil fuel consumption.
-	Conservation Area	An area of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance, designated under section 69 of the *Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Arears) Act 1990.*
-	Cross Boundary	Refers to something that crosses or spans a boundary between two or more different jurisdictions/administrative boundaries.
-	Densification	Making more efficient use of land, through intensive use of brownfield land, building taller buildings, building on existing residential back gardens or in-between existing buildings, or redeveloping underused sites at higher densities.
-	Development	Development is defined in Section 55 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as the carrying out of building, engineering, mining or other operation's in, on, over or under land; or the making of any material change in the use of any buildings or other land.
-	Duty to Cooperate	This is a legal duty that requires Local Planning Authorities and other prescribed public bodies to "engage constructively, actively and on an ongoing basis" to maximise the effectiveness of Local and Marine Plan preparation in the context of strategic cross boundary matters.
-	Employment Area	The main industrial estates and larger core industrial sites and areas which on the basis of condition, environment and location are best suited to long term retention of industry and commerce.
-	Encroachment	When development such as housing begins to gradually move from the edge of towns or villages into the open countryside.
-	Evidence base	The collection of information and studies which a Local Planning Authority will use to draw up suitable planning policies for its area.
GB	Green Belt	A National Planning Policy designation given to open, largely undeveloped land that has been specifically designated for long-term protection. The fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open; the essential characteristics

Relevant Abbreviation	Term	Definition
		of Green Belt are their openness and permanence. Development on Green Belt land is restricted under the National Planning Policy Framework.
-	Green Infrastructure	A network of multi-functional green spaces, in urban and rural areas, which is capable of delivering a wide range of benefits for the environment and quality of life for local communities.
-	Greenfield Land	A general term used to describe all sites that have not previously been developed.
-	Gypsy and Travellers	Person of nomadic habit of life whatever their race or origin, including such persons who on grounds only of their own or their family's dependants' educational or health needs or old age have ceased to travel temporarily, but excluding members of an organised group of travelling show people or circus people travelling together as such.
HELAA	Housing and Employment Land Availability Assessment	The *National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)* and *Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)* requires every Local Planning Authority to assess the amount of land that is available for housing and economic development in its area. This process is known as the Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (HELAA). The HELAA helps to identify future sources of land for housing and economic development to help meet the Borough's future development needs. It was previously referred to as the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment, or SHLAA.
-	Housing Need	Assessed by examining the suitability of present housing and the ability of households to afford market price housing.
-	Infill Development	Development within an urban area that "fills" in a gap between existing built form.
-	Infrastructure	Any facility, service or physical structure which supports or enables proposed development including (but not exclusively) education, healthcare, emergency services, culture and leisure facilities, churches, open space, transport, telecommunications, security, waste collection, disposal and recycling, energy, water supply and drainage.
IDP	Infrastructure Delivery Plan	A document which assesses the existing provision of infrastructure throughout the

Relevant Abbreviation	Term	Definition
		Borough and considers what additional infrastructure will be required in the future to support growth allocated in the Local Plan. The IDP also considers how required infrastructure should be delivered, and if there are any gaps in information or funding which need to be addressed.
-	Listed Building	Buildings designated to be of 'special architectural or historic interest' by the Secretary of State under the *Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas Act 1990.*
LDS	Local Development Scheme	A formal timetable for the preparation of the Local Plan.
LNRS	Local Nature Recovery Strategy	Local Nature Recovery Strategies are a new, England-wide system of spatial strategies that will establish priorities and map proposals for specific actions to drive nature's recovery and provide wider environmental benefits.
-	Local Plan	A comprehensive document outlining the long-term vision for Basildon identifying locations for delivering housing and other strategic development needs such as employment, retail, leisure, community and transport development.
-	Market Housing	Market Housing includes private rented and sale where prices are set in the open market.
	National Design Guide	A document which sets the government's priorities in the form of 10 characteristics which are brought together in a well-designed place and demonstrates what good design means in practice.
NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework	A document setting out the Government's national planning requirements, policies and objectives. The NPPF is a material consideration in the preparation of development plans and when considering planning applications.
-	Neighbourhood Plan	A planning tool to help empower communities to shape and manage development in their local areas. Neighbourhood forums and parish councils will be able to develop planning policies that will become part of the planning framework for their area and grant planning permission for certain types of new development.
-	Net Zero Carbon	Achieving a balance between the carbon emitted into the atmosphere, and the carbon removed from it.

Relevant Abbreviation	Term	Definition
-	Open Space	All open space of public value, including not just land, but also areas of water (such as rivers, canals, lakes and reservoirs) which offer important opportunities for sport and recreation and can act as a visual amenity.
-	Planning Obligations (Section 106 Agreements)	Planning obligations, also known as section 106 agreements, are legally binding agreements typically negotiated between local authorities and developers in the context of planning applications to ensure that certain works which are necessary and relevant to a development are undertaken or financial contributions made to facilitate associated infrastructure works and development. They are a mechanism by which measures are secured to make acceptable development which would otherwise be unacceptable in planning terms.
PPG	Planning Practice Guidance	Provides details to support the effective implementation of the *National Planning Policy Framework.*
-	Plotlands	Thirteen Green Belt settlements in the Borough that originated following the agricultural depression of the early 20th Century. Following the arrival of the railways, many people bought smallholdings, buildings, small shacks and dwellings they could visit at the weekends and for holidays to escape East London. Following the Second World War, many people moved to these areas on a permanent basis despite the majority not having running water, electricity or fuel connections. The majority of Plotlands were cleared during the building of Basildon New Town in the mid-late 20th Century, however, thirteen remain and are home to about 2000 people.
-	Serviced Village	A village developed with basic infrastructure and services to meet the needs of its residents, such as schools, healthcare facilities, retail and/or community facilities.
-	Settlement	A place, typically one which has previously been uninhabited, where people establish a community
-	Spatial	Refers to the organisation and arrangement of physical space and the relationships between different elements within that space. It refers to the distribution and arrangement of land uses,

Relevant Abbreviation	Term	Definition
		buildings, infrastructure, natural features and other physical components within a given area.
-	Spatial Strategy	An approach to delivering the vision for Basildon. It sets out the amount and location of new development, and how places will change and be shaped throughout the Plan period.
-	Stakeholders	A person, group or organisation that has interest in planning for the area.
-	Standard Method	The national standard method uses a formula to identify the minimum number of homes expected to be planned for, in a way which addresses projected household growth and historic under-supply. The standard method identifies a minimum annual housing need figure.
-	Strategic	Identification of long-term or overall aims and interests and the means of achieving them.
-	Sustainable	Able to be maintained at a certain rate or level.
-	Sustainable Development	Development which meets the need of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own need.
-	Sustainable Transport	Any efficient, safe and accessible means of transport with overall low impact on the environment, including walking, cycling and public transport.
-	Test of Soundness	This means that the Local Plan will be tested on whether it is realistic, deliverable, and based on strong, up-to-date evidence.
-	Town	A built-up area with a name, defined boundaries, and local government, that is larger than a village and generally smaller than a city.
-	Town Centre	A defined area, including the primary shopping area where retail development is concentrated, and areas predominately occupied by main town centre uses adjacent to the primary shopping area.
-	Travelling Showpeople	Members of a group organised for the purpose of holding fairs, circuses or shows (whether or not travelling together as such). This includes such persons who on the grounds of their own or their family's or dependants' more localised pattern of trading, education, or health needs or old age have ceased to travel temporarily, but excludes Gypsies and Travellers as defined above.
-	Unserviced Village	A small village which lacks facilities such as schools, healthcare facilities, retail and/or

Relevant Abbreviation	Term	Definition
		community facilities and has limited or no access to public transport.
-	Urban Capacity	The ability of an urban area to accommodate population growth and economic development while maintaining a high quality of life for its residents.
-	Viability	A development is viable if taking account of all costs, including complying with all policy requirements, developing the scheme would provide a competitive profit for the developer. Viability is closely linked to deliverability as it ensures the developer is incentivised to ensure development takes place and persuades land owners to sell land.
-	Village	A small, often rural community or settlement that typically consists of a small group of houses and associated buildings, such as a church, school or community centre.
-	Vitality	Creating and maintaining a high intensity of activities implemented at various times of the day.

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