

PART 3:

Themed Planning Policies: Strategic Policies

Chapter 4: Meeting our Growth Needs

4.1 This chapter explains how Basildon Borough is expected to grow and develop over the next 20 years. It outlines the policies for providing new homes and employment space, ensuring there is enough land to meet the needs of both current and future residents. It also supports opportunities for local businesses to grow and succeed, helping our communities to thrive.

POLICY SG1: Growth Needs

HOUSING

Over the period 1/4/2023- 31/3/2043, the Local Plan will:

1. Make provision for a minimum of 27,918 dwellings in order to meet the assessed housing need calculated using the Standard Method.
2. Make provision for a minimum of 10,420 of these to be affordable homes.
3. Make provision for a minimum of 302 new Gypsy and Traveller pitches and a minimum of 14 Travelling Show people yards to meet identified needs.

This will be delivered as outlined in the table below.

EMPLOYMENT

Over the period 1/4/2023 - 31/3/2043, the Local Plan will deliver a minimum of 135 hectares of new employment land.

Supply	Up to no. of Dwellings
Net delivery in the period 1/4/2023 to 31/3/2026	1,329
Current development consents deliverable in the next five years	3,006
Development consents on stalled sites and long-term deliverable sites	693
Potential additional capacity in the Urban Area and on brownfield sites	4,665
Windfall Allowance	378
Housing Allocations H1 to H29 (excluding sites already delivered or granted planning consent)	18,305
Infill within the Green Belt	54
Total	**28,430**

Reasoned Justification

4.2 Basildon Council is committed to meeting the housing needs of everyone in our borough. The *National Planning Policy Framework (2024) (NPPF)* requires that the minimum number of homes required in each area be informed by a local housing need assessment, conducted using the standard method set out in national planning practice guidance.

4.3 For Basildon Borough this equates to a minimum annual need of 1,284 homes per annum. Planning practice guidance requires a 20% buffer be added, for at least the next five years, to reflect the fact that Basildon Borough has previously failed to deliver at least 85% of its annual housing need. This buffer is 257 homes per annum. This means that at a minimum Basildon Council must plan to deliver at least 1,541 homes per year for the next five years. Following this a buffer of at least 5% is required to allow flexibility and choice. The table below sets out the minimum need for housing across the Local Plan period.

4.4 The *South Essex Housing Need Assessment* 2022 assessed the need for affordable housing for households unable to rent or buy a home on the open market. This concluded that Basildon Borough has a need for at least 10,420 of the new homes set out above to meet the *NPPF* definition of "affordable homes".

Local Plan Period	1/4/2023 - 31/3/2025	1/4/2025 - 30/3/2026	1/4/2026 - 30/3/2031	1/4/2031 - 30/3/2036	1/4/2036 - 31/3/2043	**Total**
Need per annum	1,039	1,285	1,284	1,284	1,284	
20% Buffer	208	257	257	N/A	N/A	
5% Buffer	N/A	N/A	N/A	64	64	
Total need PA	1,247	1,542	1,541	1,348	1,348	
No. of Years	2	1	5	5	7	
Total Need	**2,494**	**1,542**	**7,704**	**6,741**	**9,437**	**27,918**

HOUSING SUPPLY

4.5 So far, 1,329 dwellings have been completed in the plan period and a further 3,010 dwellings have been granted planning permission and are expected to be built within the next five years.

4.6 Planning permission has been granted for 693 dwellings on sites which have either stalled or are expected to be built in the longer term. The Council will prioritise working with landowners and developers to get these homes built. These planning permissions are detailed below.

4.7 Windfall development sites have formed an important part of Basildon Borough's housing supply, historically delivering an average of 126 homes per annum. Therefore, an allowance has been made for homes to be delivered on windfall sites in years 18-20 of the plan period.

4.8 The *NPPF* requires Local Plans to make the best possible use of suitable brownfield sites and underutilised land. It also encourages optimising space through high-density development, particularly in town centres and other locations well served by public transport. However, not all land within the urban area is suitable for housing. Some sites provide valuable informal open space, while others, in particular brownfield sites in employment areas, would offer a poor living environment for any future residents and are better suited to supporting business growth. To assess opportunities for development, the Council has undertaken an Urban Capacity Review. This has involved holding a 'Call for Sites', an assessment of all potential sites in the urban area, and a review of Council-owned land. Basildon Council has a house building programme to deliver new homes on sites within the urban area and through intensification of current council owned housing including estate regeneration projects, roof top development and redevelopment of ageing council housing stock. Appropriate sites within the urban area, alongside brownfield land, could potentially deliver around 4,665 net additional homes.

4.9 There is limited capacity to deliver infill development within the Green Belt. This can deliver around 54 homes including self and custom build opportunities.

4.10 The Council considers that the only option to deliver the remaining homes is to amend the boundary of the Green Belt to make sufficient land available to deliver at least 27,918 new homes. Exceptional circumstances justify these amendments. Recognising the possibility that over the whole plan period, sites may deliver fewer homes than predicted or cease to be available for development, sufficient land should be provided to deliver a buffer in the available supply of homes. Housing completions will be assessed annually against targets, to monitor performance and determine whether any action is required to improve delivery rates. This will be reported in the Authority Monitoring Report (AMR).

4.11 The *Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Accommodation Assessment 2024* identified a need for additional pitches and yards to meet both future growth requirements and the needs of households either currently living on unauthorised sites, or over-occupying authorised sites.

4.12 Taking into account the dependency on delivering large scale sites released from the Green Belt with realistic lead in

times and build out rates and to allow for delivery of necessary infrastructure in a timely manner, it is expected that in 2026-2031, only 6,905 homes can realistically be delivered. This will necessitate a slightly reduced housing requirement in the early years of the housing trajectory, stepping up to higher requirements in the later years. The Council will take a proactive approach to monitoring delivery and seeking opportunities to accelerate delivery.

	Expected Delivery in April 2026 - March 2031	Expected Delivery in April 2031 - March 2036	Expected Delivery in April 2036 - March 2043
No. of homes	6,824	12,345	7,932
Minimum requirement	7,704	6,741	9,437

EMPLOYMENT NEED

4.13 The Council's *Employment Land Review* identifies a need to deliver a minimum of 133-135 hectares (ha) of new employment land allocations of which 13-15ha is for employment use and 120ha is for industrial and distribution uses. This could increase to up to 217ha if the Council seeks to address historic under-provision of new employment space. In delivering sustainable development, there is a need to maintain a balance between housing and employment growth.

4.14 Basildon Borough seeks to drive economic growth, facilitate the growth of local businesses and create new jobs in the area and, therefore, seeks to deliver sufficient employment land to address historic under provision.

Policy Links

- EMP - Building a Strong Competitive Economy
- HOU1 – Meeting our Housing Needs
- CC1 - Meeting the Challenge of Climate Change: resilience, flood risk and greenhouse gas reduction
- D1 - Design and Place Shaping Principles
- D2 - Major Developments - Design
- D3 - Design in Smaller Scale Projects
- HC1 - Health and Well-Being Strategy
- NE1 - Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment
- HE1 - Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment
- AQMP1 - Mitigating Environmental Pollution
- STAT1 - Strategic Transport
- INF1 - Infrastructure Delivery
- INF2 - Securing Infrastructure Contributions
- INF3 - Social and Community Infrastructure

Evidence Links

- South Essex Housing Needs Assessment (2022)
- Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Accommodation Assessment (GTAA) (2024)
- Basildon Employment Land Needs Assessment (2025)

POLICY SG2: Settlement Hierarchy

New housing and employment allocations will be located in the most sustainable locations according to the settlement hierarchy, as set out below.

Settlement Type	Locations	Ability to accommodate growth
Large Town	• Basildon Town (incorporating Laindon, Langdon Hills, Noak Bridge and Pitsea)	There is a presumption in favour of sustainable development in these locations. Development outside the existing boundaries of these settlements would only be permitted where it has been allocated in a Local Plan or has been allocated within a made Neighbourhood Development Plan.
Medium Towns	• Billericay (incorporating Great Burstead & South Green, and Break Egg Hill) • Wickford (incorporating Shotgate, plus Newhouse Road and Castledon Farm plotland)	
Serviced Villages	• Bowers Gifford and North Benfleet • Crays Hill Village • Ramsden Bellhouse Village • Little Burstead Village and Broomshill Chase	Limited infill development in the village environment will be supported where it: 1. is in keeping with local character, 2. is proportionate in scale, and 3. meets local housing or employment needs or provides services or facilities for the village. Development outside the existing boundaries of these settlements would only be permitted where it has been allocated in a Local Plan or has been allocated within a made Neighbourhood Development Plan.
Un-serviced Settlements	• Dunton Village • Crooked Brook/Fobbing Plotland • Bells Hill Road Plotland • Crays Hill Plotland • Fairmead Plotland • Green Lane Plotland • Noak Hill Road • Northlands Plotland • Ramsdens View Road Plotland • Stormont Way Plotland • Wickford Lawn Plotland	Development in these settlements will only be permitted where it has been allocated in a Local Plan or has been allocated within an adopted Neighbourhood Development Plan or is supported by national policy.

Reasoned Justification

4.15 Settlements provide a range of services for their residents and for a surrounding area. Typically, the bigger the settlement, the more services it provides, and the wider an area it will serve. Settlement hierarchies can therefore help understand the role and character of different settlements.

4.16 The *Basildon Borough Settlement Hierarchy Review 2024* concluded that the Borough contains four settlement types: large town, medium town, serviced villages, and un-serviced settlements. Settlements were characterised into these four types by evaluating the population they hold and the range of services they contain within the boundary of the settlement. This is set out in Table 1.

4.17 Development in un-serviced settlements, or outside the boundaries of the large town, medium towns and serviced villages, will be permitted where it has been allocated in a Local Plan or an adoptedmade Neighbourhood Development Plan, or where it is supported by national policy. This approach ensures that, through the plan making process, development is supported by the necessary new or improved infrastructure.

Place	Sports Venues	Education Facilities	Post Office	Places of Worship	Town Centres*	Local Centre**	Convenience Store Provision	GP Health Facilities	Employment Opportunities ***	Frequent Public Transport	Mixed Housing Provision	Arts, Culture and Tourism Facilitiesa	Public Open Space	Public Houses	Total
Basildon	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	14
Billericay	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	14
Wickford	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	13
G. Burstead & South Green		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	11
Crays Hill	✓	✓	✓				✓		✓	✓			✓	✓	8
Bowers Gifford & North Benfleet		✓	✓	✓			✓		✓	✓	✓		✓		8
Ramsden Bellhouse		✓	✓	✓			✓						✓		5
Little Burstead				✓						✓			✓	✓	4
Broomshill Chase				✓						✓				✓	3
Crooked Brook - Fobbing										✓	✓			✓	3
Crays Hill Plotlands	✓									✓	✓				3
Dunton									✓		✓		✓		3
Noak Hill Road	✓									✓					2
Bells Hill										✓				✓	2
Northlands													✓	✓	2
Break Egg Hill										✓			✓		2
Fairmead											✓				1
Newhouse Farm & Castledon Road														✓	1
Ramsden View Road										✓					1
Stormonts Way													✓		1
Wickford Lawns															0
Green Lane															0

Table 1: Review of Services and Facilities in Settlements

**Mixture of Comparison and Convenience Shopping Services; **Where a smaller parade of convenience shops, takeaways or community hall are available; ***Not within the other services/facilities present*

Policy Links

- SG1 – Growth Needs
- EMP1 - Securing Economic Growth
- EMP2 - Protecting Employment Areas
- EMP4 - Rural Enterprise Sites
- HOU1 - Size, Type and Quality of New Housing
- R1 - Supporting Town Centres
- CC1 - Meeting the Challenge of Climate Change: resilience, flood risk and greenhouse gas reduction
- D1 - Design and Place Shaping Principles
- HC1 - Health and Well-Being Strategy
- GB1 - Protecting the Green Belt
- GB2 - New Development in the Green Belt
- AQMP1 - Mitigating Air Quality and Wider Environmental Pollution Issues
- STAT1 - Strategic Transport
- INF1 - Infrastructure Delivery
- INF2 - Securing Infrastructure Contributions
- INF3 - Social and Community Infrastructure

Evidence Links

- Settlement Hierarchy Review (2024)
- Policy Map

POLICY SG3: Spatial Distribution of Growth

The Council will require all new development to generally accord with the following Spatial Principles where appropriate to the proposed development:

1. Optimise the use of suitable previously developed land.
2. Redevelop underutilised land in the urban area.
3. Locate development to avoid or manage flood risk.
4. Focus development on 1) the large town (Basildon Town) and 2) the medium towns (Billericay and Wickford) as set out in the settlement hierarchy.
5. Where suitable, deliver development in plotland areas.
6. Respect the character and appearance of landscapes, preserve the historic environment and enhance biodiversity.
7. Utilise existing and planned infrastructure effectively.

To provide for at least 27,918 new homes, growth will be distributed through densification of the existing urban area and as urban extensions to the following settlements listed on the tables on p.39-40.

To provide for at least 135ha of new employment land, growth will be distributed through the provision of new employment areas at:

Settlement	Proposed Allocation	Employment Space
Basildon Town (incorporating Laindon, Langdon Hills, Noak Bridge and Pitsea)	E1 - Burnt Mills E2 - Dunton Boot Sale E4 - Land West of Canvey Way E5 - Friern Manor Farm E8 – Bonvilles Farm Extension	114.11 Ha
Wickford (incorporating Shotgate)	E3 - Land Adjacent to Hovefields Avenue E6 - South of Nevendon Road E7 - South of Fanton Hall Farm	109.21 Ha

Settlement	Proposed Allocation	Dwellings
Basildon Town (incorporating Laindon, Langdon Hills, Noak Bridge and Pitsea)	Current planning consents	2,384
	Capacity in Basildon Town Centre (excluding current planning consents)	2,002
	Additional urban capacity, brownfield land and infill	2,333
	H7 - Land West of Bowers Gifford H8 - Land North of A13 H9 - Land West of West Mayne H10 - Land Adjacent to Dunton Road H11 - London Road, Vange H18 - Land North of Wash Road H19 - Bowers Gifford Plotland H20 - Land North of Dry Street H21 - Gardiners Lane South H22 - Land South of Wash Road H27 - Land East of Bowers Gifford H29 - Land at Bells Hill Road, Vange	7,990
	Total	14,709
Billericay (incorporating Great Burstead & South Green, and Break Egg Hill)	Current planning consents	682
	Capacity in Billericay Town Centre (excluding current planning consents)	144
	Additional urban capacity, brownfield land and infill	38
	H1 - Southeast Billericay H2A - Land at Kennel Lane H2B – Land West of Great Burstead H3 - Land South of Great Burstead H4 - Land West of Laindon Road H5 - Land Adjacent to Tye Common Road and South of London Road H6 - Land North of London Road, Billericay H26 - Land at Mountnessing Road H28 – Land East of Laindon Road	6,995
	Total	7,859

Settlement	Proposed Allocation	Dwellings
Wickford (incorporating Shotgate)	Current planning consents	619
	Capacity in Wickford Town Centre (excluding current planning consents)	36
	Additional urban capacity, brownfield land and infill	166
	H12 - Land Adjacent to Nevendon Road H13 - Land Adjacent to Wick Country Park H14 - Land North of Southend Road, Shotgate H15 – Land South of Barn Hall, Wickford H16 - Land North of London Road, Wickford H17 - Land South of London Road, Wickford	2,991
	Total	3,812
Crays Hill	Current planning consents	7
	H23A-J –Crays Hill	206
	Total	213
Ramsden Bellhouse	Current planning consents	7
	H25 – Ramsden Bellhouse	123
	Total	130

Reasoned Justification

4.18 Paragraph 147 of the *NPPF* (2024) sets out that:

"Before concluding that exceptional circumstances exist to justify changes to Green Belt boundaries, the strategic policy-making authority should be able to demonstrate that it has examined fully all other reasonable options for meeting its identified need for development. This will be assessed through the examination of its strategic policies, which will take into account the preceding paragraph and whether the strategy: a) makes as much use as possible of suitable brownfield sites and underutilised land; b) optimises the density of development in line with the policies in chapter 11 of this Framework, including whether policies promote a significant uplift in minimum density standards in town and city centres and other locations well served by public transport; and c) has been informed by discussions with neighbouring authorities about whether they could accommodate some of the identified need for development, as demonstrated through the statement of common ground."

Paragraph 148 states that:

"Where it is necessary to release Green Belt land for development, plans should give priority to previously developed land, then consider grey belt which is not previously developed, and then other Green Belt locations. However, when drawing up or reviewing Green Belt boundaries, the need to promote sustainable patterns of development should determine whether a site's location is appropriate with particular reference to paragraphs 110 and 115 of this Framework. Strategic policy-making authorities should consider the consequences for sustainable development of channelling development towards urban areas inside the Green Belt boundary, towards towns and villages inset within the Green Belt or towards locations beyond the outer Green Belt boundary."

Having identified insufficient capacity within brownfield and underutilised land as set out in policy SG1, the Council has engaged with other Essex Local Authorities about potential to accommodate some of the identified need for development. No capacity was identified.

4.19 In order to identify land available for development, the Council held a 'Call for Sites' for both potential housing and employment land. These sites were evaluated to consider opportunities and constraints on their ability to accommodate sustainable growth.

4.20 The following options for distributing growth throughout the Borough were considered:

- Northern extension to Basildon Town
- Eastern extension to Basildon Town
- Smaller urban extensions dispersed around Basildon Town
- Extensions to Billericay
- Extensions to Wickford

4.21 It was recognised that all options offered both opportunities and challenges. A hybrid option has therefore been adopted, which allocates growth in the following order of priority:

1. **Previously developed land and**

underutilised land within the urban area – this includes opportunities for regeneration in town centres and, where appropriate, uplifting density. However, there is insufficient urban land available to fully meet housing needs, and the largely flatted developments on urban regeneration sites will not meet the needs of all residents.

2. **Urban extensions to Basildon Town –** Basildon Town (which includes Laindon, Langdon Hills, Noak Bridge and Pitsea) is the highest order settlement in the Basildon Borough settlement hierarchy. There is significant potential to extend the town to the east and west. However, opportunities to the north are more limited due to the risk of merging with the towns of Billericay and Wickford, while expansion to the south is constrained by environmental constraints including the Pitsea, Vange, and Fobbing Marshes.

3. **Urban extensions to Billericay and Wickford –** Billericay and Wickford are classed as medium towns in the Basildon Borough settlement hierarchy and have capacity for urban extension.

4. **Limited infill development within the Green Belt –** this will apply in plotland areas and in villages where appropriate.

4.22 The term 'plotland' refers to areas of land laid out in regular plots, where many self-built settlements were established in the south-east of England between the late 1800s and the Second World War. Plotland development began during the agricultural depression of the late 19th and early 20th centuries, when farmland was subdivided and sold as housing parcels. It reached its peak in the 1920s and 1930s but largely came to an end following the introduction of greater planning regulations after the Second World War. Over time, most plotland areas have gradually been upgraded, with many original structures replaced by more modern suburban homes such as bungalows and chalets. Those areas of plotland that were not extensively developed were often included within the Green Belt when it was established in 1947, effectively freezing further development within these locations.

4.23 The *Basildon Borough Plotlands Growth Potential Study* explored if, and how, sustainable development consistent with the *NPPF* (2024), could be accommodated within plotland areas, taking into account landscape, visual, and Green Belt considerations. As all 13 plotlands areas within the Borough are located in the Green Belt, the routes to deliver and encourage plotland development are limited to two main routes:

1. Releasing areas of plotland from the Green Belt where 'exceptional circumstances' can be demonstrated, as set out in *NPPF* paragraphs 144-148; or

2. Guiding development towards areas where plotland development within the Green Belt is more likely to be appropriate in line with *NPPF* paragraph 154.

4.24 The *NPPF* (2024) introduced the definition of Grey Belt land. This refers to land within the Green Belt that consists of previously developed land and/or other land that does not strongly contribute to any of the following Green Belt purposes: (a) to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas; (b) to prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another; or (d) preserve the setting and special character of historic towns.

'Grey belt' excludes land where the application of the policies relating to the areas or assets in footnote 7 of the NPPF (other than Green Belt) would provide a strong reason for refusing or restricting development.

4.25 Where Grey Belt land is identified, it does not automatically follow that it should be allocated for development, released from the Green Belt, or that development proposals will be approved in all circumstances. The contribution Green Belt land makes to Green Belt purposes is one consideration in making decisions about Green Belt land.

4.26 The Policy Map sets out the extent to which the Green Belt boundaries should be amended for each potential strategic housing and employment allocation.

Policy Links

- SG1 – Growth Needs
- EMP1 - Securing Economic Growth
- EMP3 - Changes of Use of Employment Land or Premises
- R1 - Supporting Town Centres
- R2 - Development in Basildon Town Centre
- CC1 - Responding to Climate Change
- CC2 - Addressing Flood Risk
- D1 - Design and Place Shaping Principles
- D2 - Major Developments - Design
- D3 - Design in Smaller Scale Projects
- GB1 - Protecting the Green Belt
- GB2 - New Development in the Green Belt
- HE1 - Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment
- STAT1 - Strategic Transport
- INF1 - Infrastructure Delivery

Evidence Links

- South Essex Housing Needs Assessment (2022)
- Basildon Employment Land Needs Assessment (2025)
- Settlement Hierarchy Review (2024)
- Policy Map


east
Toilets
Baby Change
RELAX
AND
REFRESH