

**FOSTER PARTNERSHIP FARMS**

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M/CS/ALL/WDF008887/1247  
 REG28/CS REG28/ALL

Dear Sir

**Core Strategy and Development Control Policy Development Plan Document**

Thank you again for the opportunity to comment on this consultation. We have a few points which we would like to make but with the overriding comment that development over a period of 20 years may not be able to be approached as easily as is apparent in your consultation and preferred option document.

It is important to attract a resident population in Essex by way of all types of housing being available, from small and larger village houses to semi urban houses and onto urban flats and houses. To concentrate large numbers of houses into one or two vast conurbations of dwellings all built in one 10 year period risks building an extremely unsatisfactory development. It is of course a fact that such large developments will lift the maximum planning gain contribution and reduce the demands on Council funds and officers' time through the ease of the planning process, but this should not be the overall driver in the choice of area for development.

Any very large development will bring extensive additional traffic with this traffic concentrated onto a small area instead of being spread across the county. It is unwise to consider that an increased public transport infrastructure is a simple solution. Unfortunately even with improved public transport the car and delivery van will remain the dominant transport means.

Approximately one third of the Chelmsford Borough area is designated as Green Belt. Government recognises that these areas cannot remain completely sterilised with a no development policy. This is not a sustainable policy. Equally, of course in the villages beyond the green belt a policy of no development is not sustainable, sensible or indeed helpful to the village community, the landscape or the viability of the village or area. Essex has developed its character through slow organic growth and a Chelmsford Borough maintaining that organic growth pattern and character even if this means at an accelerated rate for the moment must be the preferable way to proceed.

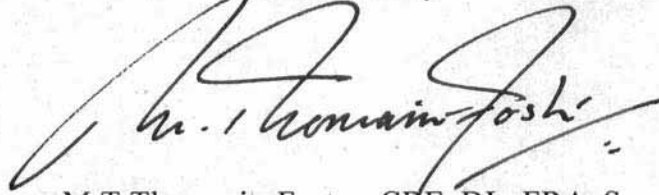
Having said this some larger developments will be necessary. However the planning approach should be to ascertain the numbers of dwellings that can be sited first, within the urban areas and/or on brown field sites, then to assess where it is sensible to allow smaller areas of development placed discreetly adjacent to larger villages or the town before being forced into selecting very large new areas

of development. We appreciate this sort of multi site approach involves the planning departments in considerably more work but if we project our thinking forward for 50 to 100 years it is likely that we will have then developed a much more attractive and socially successful area to the Borough.

The point we make is that an imaginative proactive approach needs to be taken to all the opportunities available and not immediately to use a system, which selects a large area and just allows development to take place on it. Such a block approach should be a last resort.

To this end we refer you of our earlier submission on the potential small sites at Stock and Great Leighs. These submissions make the case for small but discreet development proposals providing a useful contribution to the overall housing need to the year 2021. If this sort of imaginative approach were to be adopted across the Borough it would allow the easier assimilation into the community of a meaningful number of the new houses demanded of the Borough by government and reduce the extent and impact of any very large new conurbations.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M.T. Thomasin-Foster', written in a cursive style.

M.T.Thomasin-Foster CBE, DL, FRAGS.

# LAND AT SCHOOL LANE, STOCK



**ILLUSTRATIVE HOUSING PROPOSAL**

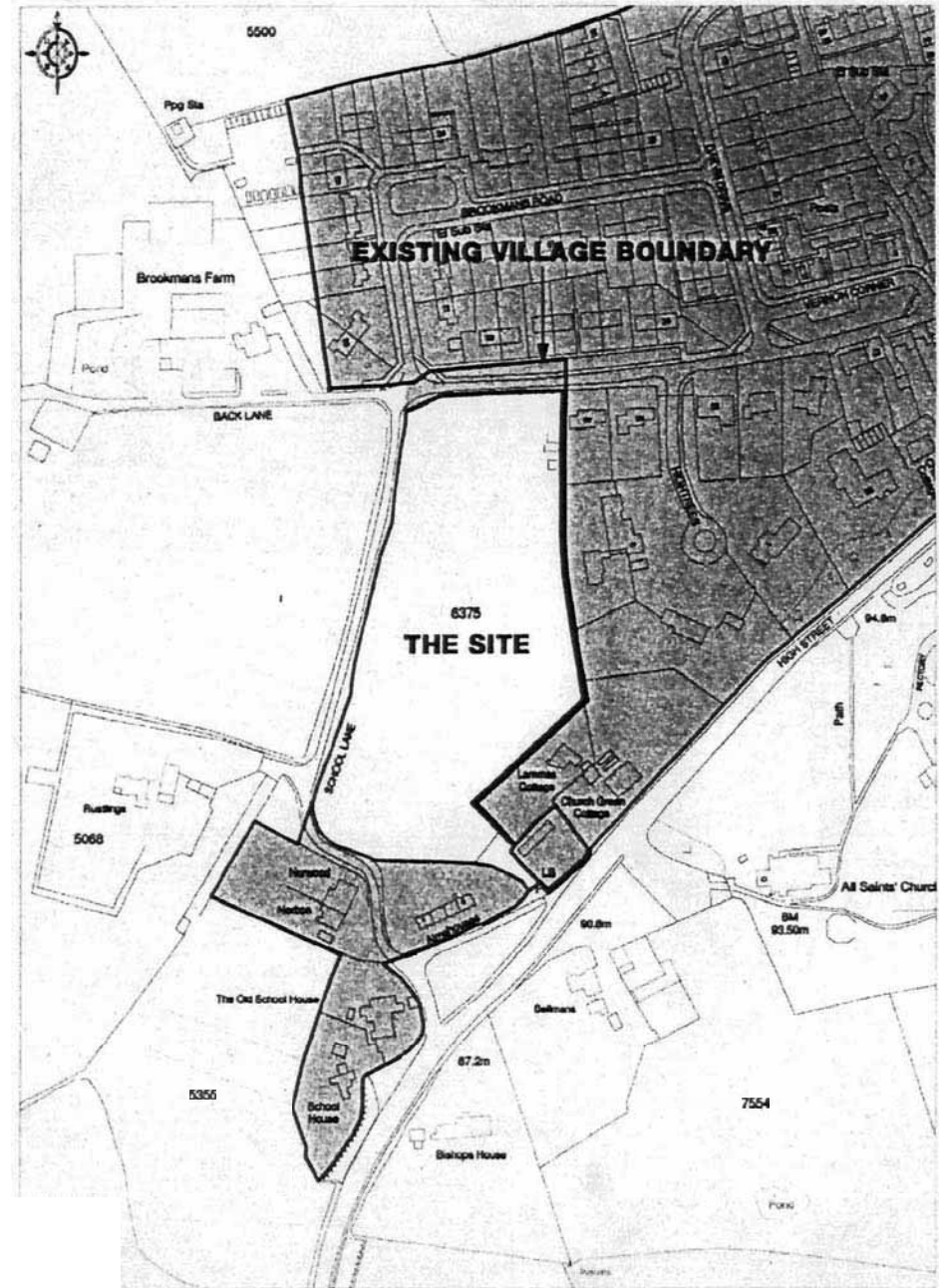
## Introduction to the Site and Town Planning Context

Over the next 20 years to 2021, Chelmsford Borough Council will be required to make available land to provide for a significant increase in new housing. The exact number is not yet known, but current drafts of emerging Regional Planning Guidance suggests that the requirement could be in the region of 14,000 or more new homes. Many of these will be provided on recycled land within the main urban areas, and particularly Chelmsford itself, but it is widely recognised that there will be a need for some new sites to come forward elsewhere in the Borough. A balanced strategy for new housing would include new development in the County town, a 'strategic' development elsewhere, and some smaller scale development at the largest rural centres, to accommodate a broad range of housing needs, including in the rural areas.

As well as new housing generally to meet future needs, it is also widely recognised that there is a lack of low cost or affordable housing within many of the more rural areas of the Borough, and Stock is no exception - the attractiveness of the village and its highly sought after location has resulted in increasingly high house prices, which prevents many households, including younger families, from being able to stay in the area.

In the past, Chelmsford Borough Council has identified the land at School Road, Stock, as being potentially suitable to provide new housing, in the event that the village expands.

This leaflet sets out in illustrative form only, proposals for creating a sympathetic residential development on the School Lane site, which would provide a mixture of affordable housing, lower cost smaller units, and family housing, to meet the requirement for new homes. Discussions have already taken place with a Housing Association who are keen to provide a discreet affordable housing scheme within the site.





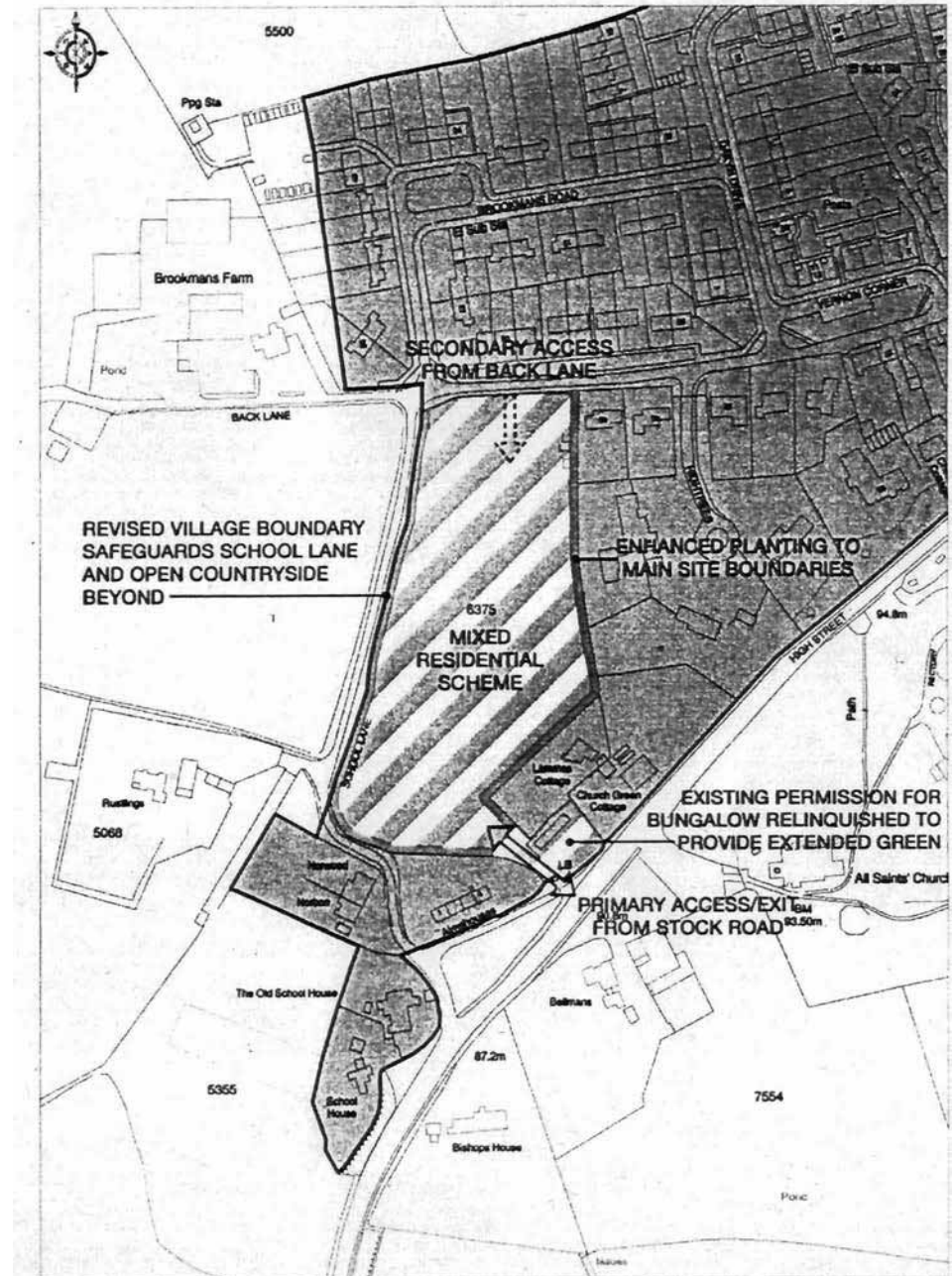
## The Site and its Location

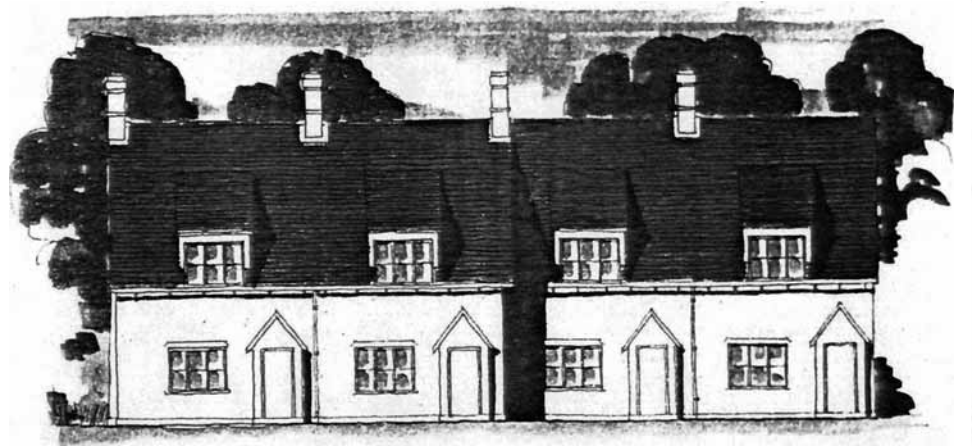
The site lies towards the southern end of Stock, and is effectively contained by existing housing to the north at Brookmans Road, to the east at Hightrees, and to the south by frontage development to the High Street. School Lane provides an effective boundary marking the western extent of the site.

The main vehicular access to the new homes would be from the High Street. Back Lane would provide an alternative route for pedestrians and cyclists going to the village centre, but measures would be incorporated to reduce car usage. Indeed, a link through the site would provide an alternative exit for Brookmans Road traffic, thereby helping to reduce the number of vehicles on Back Lane going towards the village.

The whole site is within 400m of the centre of the village, which provides a range of local services and facilities to meet everyday needs, including shops, take-away food, hairdressers, groceries, doctor's surgery, pubs, the primary school, library and other community facilities. The High Street itself provides access to a good bus service to Billericay (and on to Basildon/Lakeside) and Chelmsford, which provide 'higher order' shops and services, and of course main line rail services to London. Services are regular, including weekends.

There is a bus stop immediately adjacent to the entrance to the site, providing maximum opportunity for new residents to utilise these services, and indeed the route through the site will make access quicker and much safer for Brookmans Road residents.





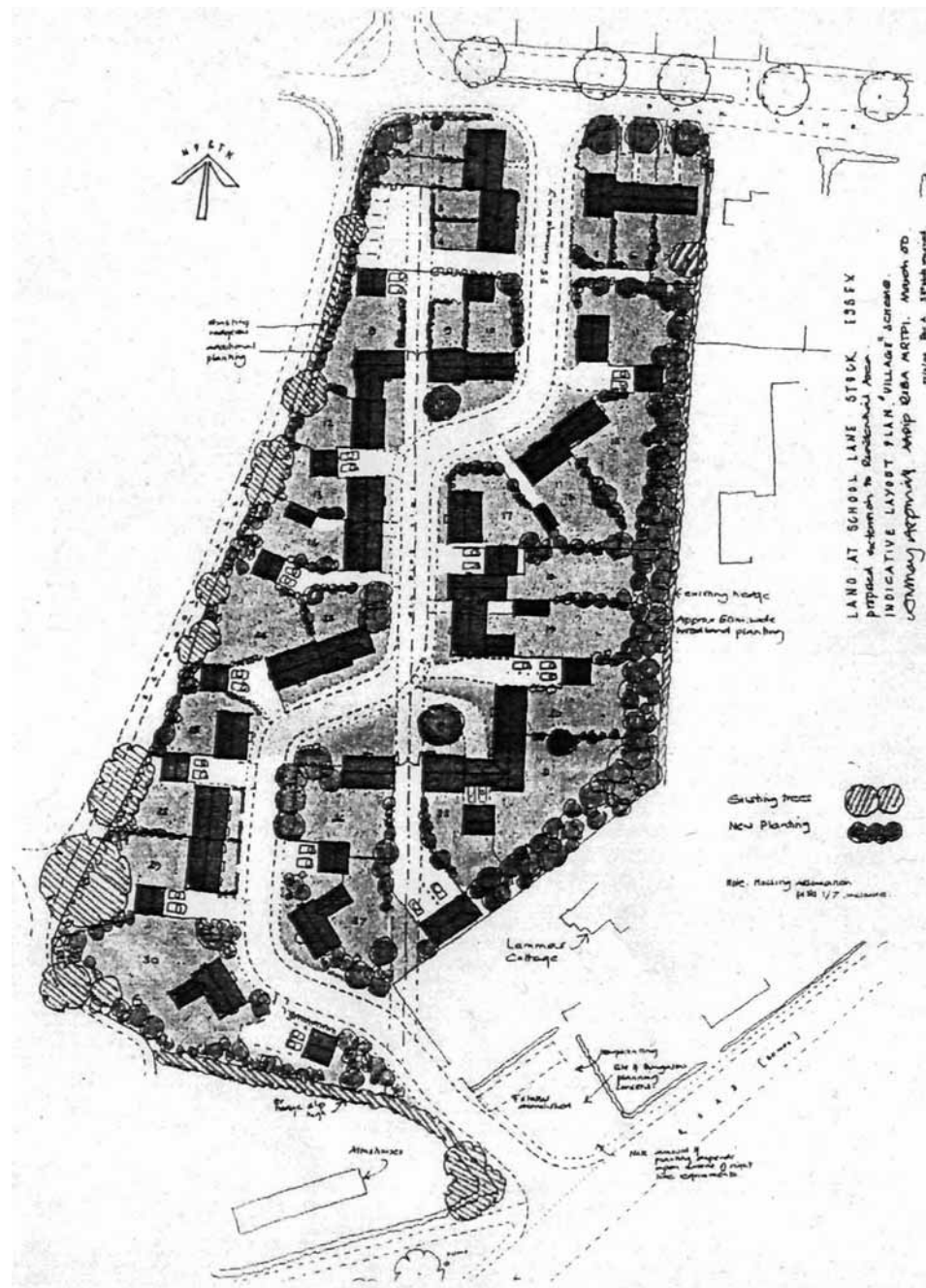
## Illustrative Layout and Character

The illustrative layout (right) shows how the site could be developed (but it is by no means the only option at this stage). The aim has been to make effective use of the land, but recognising also that any new housing will need to be in keeping with the context of the village, respect existing features, and be sensitive to the privacy and amenity of existing residents.

The development would follow the principles of the Essex Design Guide, which encourages housing layouts to be in context with their surrounding area - the illustrative plan shows an essentially 'village' character, with small groups of properties separated by green spaces, allowing mature trees to flourish with ample room for growth. The sketches (left) show typical examples of the type of 'cottage' development that could be provided, and which would range from smaller and lower cost terraced units to larger family housing.

Particular attention has been taken to ensuring that the new access to Stock Road is designed to ensure that the character of this part of the village, which includes All Saints Church and the green, is not adversely affected. Planning permission already exists for a new bungalow to be built in the location of the access, and that permission would be relinquished to make way for the new access and the provision of a new greensward area, similar in character to that which exists already to the front of the Almshouses.

Discussions have already taken place between the Parish Council and a Housing Trust that wishes to provide affordable housing in Stock, and this site is certainly a good option in terms of providing that housing, which would be available for local households. It is envisaged that affordable housing would be provided in accordance with relevant planning policy and guidance and the remaining site would be developed in a mixture of lower cost small dwellings and larger family homes. The site is immediately available for development early in the Framework Period and discussions are at an advanced stage with the Rural Housing Association over the intended gift of the land needed for the affordable houses.



### **Key Features of the Proposal**

In summary, the key features of the proposal are:

- Provision of affordable housing to meet local needs for which discussions are at an advanced stage with a possible provider;
- A scheme of around 30 new homes in total, providing a range of new accommodation to assist in meeting housing requirements in the area;
- The use of a site that has previously been identified by the Borough Council as suitable for new homes in the context of any expansion of the village;
- The use of a site which provides excellent access to the village centre and its facilities on foot; and which enables easy access to the frequent bus services to Billericay, Chelmsford and elsewhere;
- The character of School Lane is preserved. The countryside and School Lane is unaffected;
- A new access to serve the development from Stock Road, with the potential for existing Brooklands Road traffic to utilise this route, thereby reducing traffic in Back Lane;
- New homes to be designed to be in character with the village context;
- Development to be sensitive to the amenity of adjoining residents, allowing appropriate separation and enhanced planting, both to the boundaries and within the layout.

### **Further Information**

For further information, please contact Kevin Coleman at Andrew Martin Associates on 01245 361611 or e-mail to:

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