

EXAMINATION STATEMENT MATTER 6B

CHELMSFORD LOCAL PLAN
TRITTON FARMING PARTNERSHIP LLP



Rural Solutions

EXAMINATION STATEMENT – MATTER 6b

LOCAL AUTHORITY
CHELMSFORD LOCAL PLAN

ON BEHALF OF
TRITTON FARMING PARTNERSHIP LLP

ISSUE DATE
16TH NOVEMBER 2018

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AUTHOR	VERSION	DATE
FT	VERSION 1.0	12/11/18
CE	VERSION 1.1	14/11/18

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I. INTRODUCTION

- I.1: This Examination Statement has been prepared on behalf of the Tritton Farming Partnership LLP (TFP) whom own land adjoining the existing settlement of Great Leighs. TFP are also associated with Fulbournes Trust Land which adjoins the site of the existing primary school and existing residential development in the eastern apex of the village.
- I.2: This Statement addresses our direct response to the Inspectors Matters, Issues and Questions (MIQs) on Matter 6b.
- I.3: Representations have been made on behalf of our Client through the production of the Local Plan.
- I.4: Our representations to the preferred options consultation document provided for a southern extension to Great Leighs which provided a strategic option for housing development with associated infrastructure at Great Leighs.
- I.5: The representation included a Masterplan and Vision Document to explain the masterplan and vision for the site(s). For ease of reference, three images from the 37-page Masterplan Document are attached at appendices A, B and C of this document. These images are on matters of land ownership, site context and overarching aerial views. In particular, appendix B highlights the promoted site along with the Fulbournes Trust land referred to above and pinpoints the location of the existing village school adjacent to this land.
- I.6: Representations made have also included technical work in the form of an ecology assessment, a landscape assessment, a transport assessment and discussions with a key stakeholder – Anglian Water.
- I.7: This robust evidence highlighted that the Tritton Farming Partnership land is a credible and sustainable option which will support the appointed growth of the Great Leighs settlement.
- I.8: Housing growth on the southern extension to Great Leighs will also deliver new additional facilities – such as retail, education, and healthcare – which will support the existing community of Great Leighs. An allocation of the site will support sustainable development.
- I.9: The site is in one ownership and can be delivered.
- I.10: It is also notable that TFP own part of the land which has been earmarked for safeguarding of the Chelmsford North East Bypass. Again for ease of reference appendix D highlights this position.
- I.11: This introduction section shows that TFP has made detailed submission on previous versions of the emerging plan and therefore our responses are proportionate in terms of detail.

2. RESPONSE ON MATTER 6b – HOUSING PROVISION IN GROWTH AREA 2 – NORTH CHELMSFORD

MAIN ISSUE – WHETHER THE SUPPLY OF HOUSING DEVELOPMENT IN GROWTH AREA 2 – NORTH CHELMSFORD (GA2) IS SOUND

Q. 65. Are the housing site allocations in GA2 within locations 4: North East Chelmsford, Location 5: Great Leighs and Location 6: North of Broomfield justified and deliverable? In particular:

Q65a. Is the scale of housing for each site allocation, particularly the large new Garden Community for North East Chelmsford and other Strategic Growth Sites, justified having regard to any constraints, existing local infrastructure and the provision of necessary additional infrastructure?

- 2.1: The choice of Great Leighs, a Service Settlement (Strategic Policy S9), as a Growth Location with Growth Area 2 and the scale of growth is common ground with the Authority. The allocation of the land at Moulsham Hall (site 5a) is not however considered sound.
- 2.2: The significant constraints of providing an extension to the Great Leighs community on the other side of the bypass (a four-lane carriageway with substantial banks) is not addressed in any evidence produced by the Local Planning Authority.
- 2.3: The assertion that good connections exist is plainly wrong and is evidenced on plan and inspection. Connectivity to Great Leighs village is very weak.
- 2.4: No additional infrastructure provision is proposed for integrated walking/cycling links between Moulsham Hall allocation (site 5a) and the existing community of Great Leighs or the proposed site allocations at 5b and 5c which are on the same side of the bypass as the existing community.
- 2.5: Sites 5b (250units for the elderly) and 5c (100 units) are both situated on the eastern side to the bypass at the northern edge of the existing village boundary and are proposed to be constructed in the plan period of 2023-2028). The difficulties of delivering site 5a mean that only an initial isolated development of 142 houses is proposed to be in place on the other side of the bypass by 2028.
- 2.6: Such a small quantum of development for this period means that is almost impossible to plan for a new primary school provision and neighbourhood centre as neither will be viable or sustainable to serve such a small element of the population. These facilities will be isolated from the existing community and from new residents at sites 5b and 5c, although it is noted that the delivery of site 5c is dependent on the delivery of the new primary school.

- 2.7: Development of a new neighbourhood hub on the eastern side of the bypass adjacent to the existing village would ensure the necessary community and service facilities could be delivered in a timely manner to support the sustainable growth of Great Leighs. Additional education provision can relieve the pressures on the existing primary school, giving existing parents a choice of facility within close, proximity (walking) to the existing school premises.
- 2.8: The Chelmsford Infrastructure Development Plan Report Update June 2018 advises that

Great Leighs school is full and forecast to remain so. Depending on the precise location of early phases, the cost of busing pupils and temporary expansions may need to be met.

How the actions this statement brings forth are to be delivered is not addressed by the council. It should be noted that the land adjoining the existing school is owned by an associated party as described in the introduction section.

- 2.9: The Chelmsford Infrastructure Development Plan (IDP) Update June 2018 and the consultation responses from Anglian Water highlight the problems with the capacity for water recycling (WRC) at Great Leighs. As such, difficulties in phasing development to take account of the need to provide enhancement to treatment capacity at Great Leighs need to be addressed.
- 2.10: The IDP states the need to upgrade provision at Great Leigh WRC and to
- provide strategic sewer solutions means that it will be difficult for any significant growth to come forward before 2024... The exact technical specification of the upgrades required should be determined by AWS for the AMP7 (2020-2025) and AMO8 (2025-2030) asset planning periods. Once funding has been confirmed, there will be a lead in time for the necessary upgrades to be completed. This is therefore a critical item.
- 2.11: No assessment is undertaken as to how the existing Great Leighs sewerage WRC (which is adjacent to the TFP land on the eastern side of the bypass) can provide for a large strategic extension at site 5a on the western side of a four-lane bypass.

Q65b. Is the housing trajectory realistic and are there any sites which might not be delivered in accordance with the timescale site?

- 2.12: The timetable for delivery of site 5a is not established. Although the housing trajectory plan advises that in the years 2023-2028 142 houses are to be provided, this provision is highly dependent on upgrades to the WRC, upgrades to the highway network and dependent on the provision of a primary school.

- 2.13: The opportunity to utilise the infrastructure of the existing Great Leighs community is not available to site 5a due to its severed location and distance from existing village facilities, services and governance.

Q65c. Are the planning and master planning principles justified?

- 2.14: No. The development at site 5a will create a severed community at Great Leighs. Access is to remain via an existing underpass and via an overpass at the far side of the site. Overall, it fails to integrate into the existing community, its facilities and its governance.
- 2.15: The fundamental basics of supplying new homes via planning for larger scale development fails to follow the principles of Garden Cities.
- 2.16: Strategic Objectives for the Plan are not followed to provide for appropriate development.
- 2.17: Strategic objective 1 seeks to conserve and enhance biodiversity, geodiversity and to promote improvement to the green infrastructure network. Strategic Growth site 5a has been assessed as having a significant negative effect on biodiversity due to the presence of nature conservation sites within close proximity to the site boundary and the River Ter SSSI.
- 2.18: Strategic objective 4 seeks to support the vitality of rural centres by maintaining and enhancing community facilities and services, to enhance accessibility to key community facilities and service and foster social cohesion. The SA states:

There is a risk that growth could place pressure on existing community facilities and services, particularly in Great Leighs which has more limited existing provision. However the preferred Spatial Strategy may also improve the vitality of existing shops, services and facilities commensurate with an increased local population. Additionally there would be the delivery of a range of community facilities and served, alongside retail provision, at the key growth locations. This would be expected to help address increased demand arising from new development and could also benefit existing residents.

- 2.19: Site 5a at Moulsham Hall is severely constrained by its distance across the A131 bypass. As such at site 5a, this separate area of built form will not be a garden community in its own right nor will it realistically form part of the existing Great Leighs community. Indeed, due to its location (both physical and perceived) development at Moulsham Hall (site 5a) will not add to the vitality of the existing Great Leighs community in any significant way. It will completely fail to meet strategic objective 4 of the emerging plan.
- 2.20: Strategic Objective 12 (waste and resource use) remains uncertain for site 5a. The timescales for delivery of the site is therefore not determined.

- 2.21: Strategic Objectives 13 (Cultural Heritage) and 14 (Landscape and Townscape) are not met in that the SA considered that the potential for significant negative effects remains for site 5a which has been assessed as an encroachment on the rural area.
- 2.22: Paragraph 5.4.13 within the section Growth Area 2 – North Chelmsford is simply incorrect when it states that ‘the majority of the proposed site allocation in Growth Area 2 is also well served by community facilities and services and have therefore been assessed as having a positive effect on sustainable living and revitalisation’ (SA Objective 4). A new development across a bypass is not a well-connected development to the existing community facilities, services and village governance.
- 2.23: The inclusion of the TFP land as a southern extension to Great Leighs could be sustainably and comprehensively master planned in a way that delivers greater benefits to the existing community of Great Leighs. It also can capitalise on being a deliverable new neighbourhood which can support and appropriately integrate with the existing community and its facilities and services.

Q65d. Are the specific development and site infrastructure requirements clearly identified for each site allocation, are they necessary and are they justified by robust evidence? Is any other infrastructure necessary for site delivery?

- 2.24: Site 5a fails to deliver appropriate linkages (pedestrian, cycling and highway ones) to the existing community.
- 2.25: No timescales are given for the delivery of the new primary school and neighbourhood facilities on site 5a. It is highly likely that these necessary facilities will not be available to the proposed 142 households which are set out in the housing trajectory up until 2028. Due to the location of site 5a away from the existing Great Leighs community, this is akin to allowing an unsustainable new housing development in the middle of a rural area which is unsupported by any services and facilities.

Q65e. Are the site boundaries justified?

- 2.26: Site 5a intrudes into the rural area and is unjustified. Instead, for being contained, the proposed allocation has no particular logical western and southern boundaries.

Q65f. Will the site allocations in these locations achieve sustainable development?

- 2.27: No, the proposed allocation of site 5a will not achieve sustainable development. It is located across the A131 Strategic Non – truck Route (dual carriageway) and its cutting. The allocation of site 5a would not be a coherent

extension to Great Leighs and would create a separate built-up area which, because of its isolation from the existing Great Leighs community, would fail to add to the vitality of the existing community.

- 2.28: It is also extraordinary that an argument that the TFP which adjoins and overall is in close proximity to the existing village is considered not to respect the existing settlement pattern of Great Leighs.
- 2.29: It is common ground that the existing primary school is full and that expansion or a further school is required. Providing a new school separated from the village by a major road and with limited links would be an unacceptable solution in terms of sustainability. Similarly, a new provision of services and facilities should be located where they can conveniently serve the whole of Great Leighs. New housing should be able to easily access existing provision and provide vitality to the existing village.
- 2.30: The landscape impact of the Moulsham Hall (site 5a) proposal is greater than that of the alternative southern and eastern extension of the village. The latter is enclosed by the landform and can be readily further enclosed by reinforcing existing features. The former would be a substantial intrusion of built development to the north, just to the south of the Chelmsford City Racecourse. It is to the south and west of Moulsham Hall, a substantial Grade II listed building, the setting of which requires protection. Site 5a also lies primarily in a landscape of high sensitivity.
- 2.31: There is already significant light and noise pollution from the racecourse (numerous evening events, races, live concerts) which affects the amenities of existing local residents in the near locality. Essentially it is unsustainable and poor planning to introduce a substantial number of additional residents at site 5a even closer to the existing racecourse and the disturbances that are created. If complaints emanate from new residents the established racecourse events which provide for economic development, and leisure and recreational opportunities will be put in jeopardy.
- 2.32: It is not considered that a successful allocation at Moulsham Hall can be delivered. There is a particular difficulty in connection with the Primary School proposal; the requirement for its early delivery. The representations made on behalf of Bellway / Fullbornes Trust in this regard are supported. The failure to provide needed community facilities does not provide sustainable development.
- 2.33: There is also doubt as to the deliverability of new services on a relatively isolated site for a total of 750 units, particularly in the short to medium term.
- 2.34: A site allocation for 5a will fail to promote sustainable transport as effectively as the alternative of extension to the south and east (paragraphs 29 and 34.) The Moulsham development will add traffic to the Deeres roundabout from the site and this is already in 2018 over 100% utilisation (there are large tail

backs at peak times). The TFP development links straight into the new feeder system for the NE bypass.

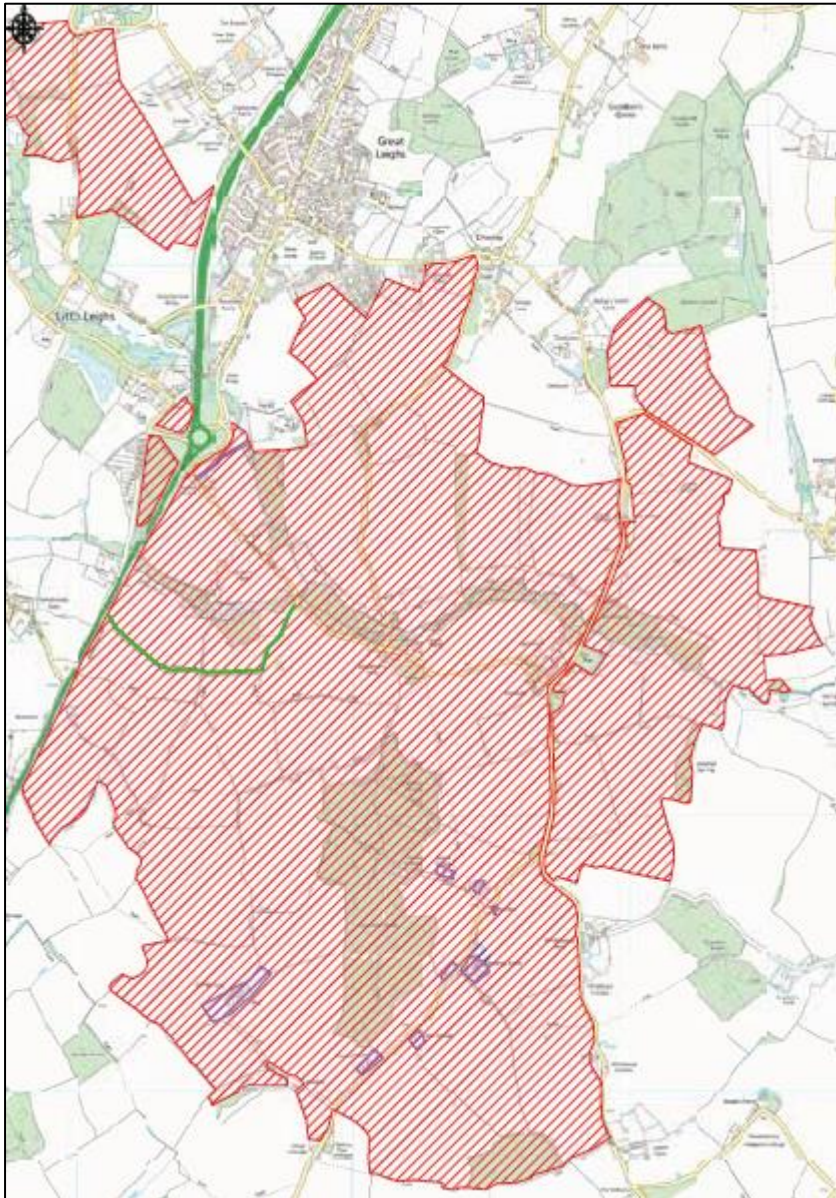
Q65g. Is any amendment necessary to ensure soundness?

- 2.35: No additional comments. The previous representation has provided a complete list of changes to policy details and paragraph numbers which are required to allocation the southern extension to Great Leighs as opposed to site 5a at Moulsham Hall.

Conclusions

- 2.36: The allocation of site 5a is considered unsound.
- 2.37: The ability to achieve the council's vision would be optimised if its spatial strategy for Strategic Growth includes the southern extension to Great Leighs which is available, deliverable and unconstrained land which abuts the existing settlement boundaries of Great Leighs.
- 2.38: The inclusion of this land, as demonstrated in the Vision document can be sustainably and comprehensively master planned which would deliver a significant and positive contribution towards achieving the vision and objectives of the Local Plan.
- 2.39: It is unfortunate that CCC have failed to assess the additional technical work submitted via the local plan consultation processes. An example of this is that the assessments undertaken by the Council refer to the primary access in the wrong place.

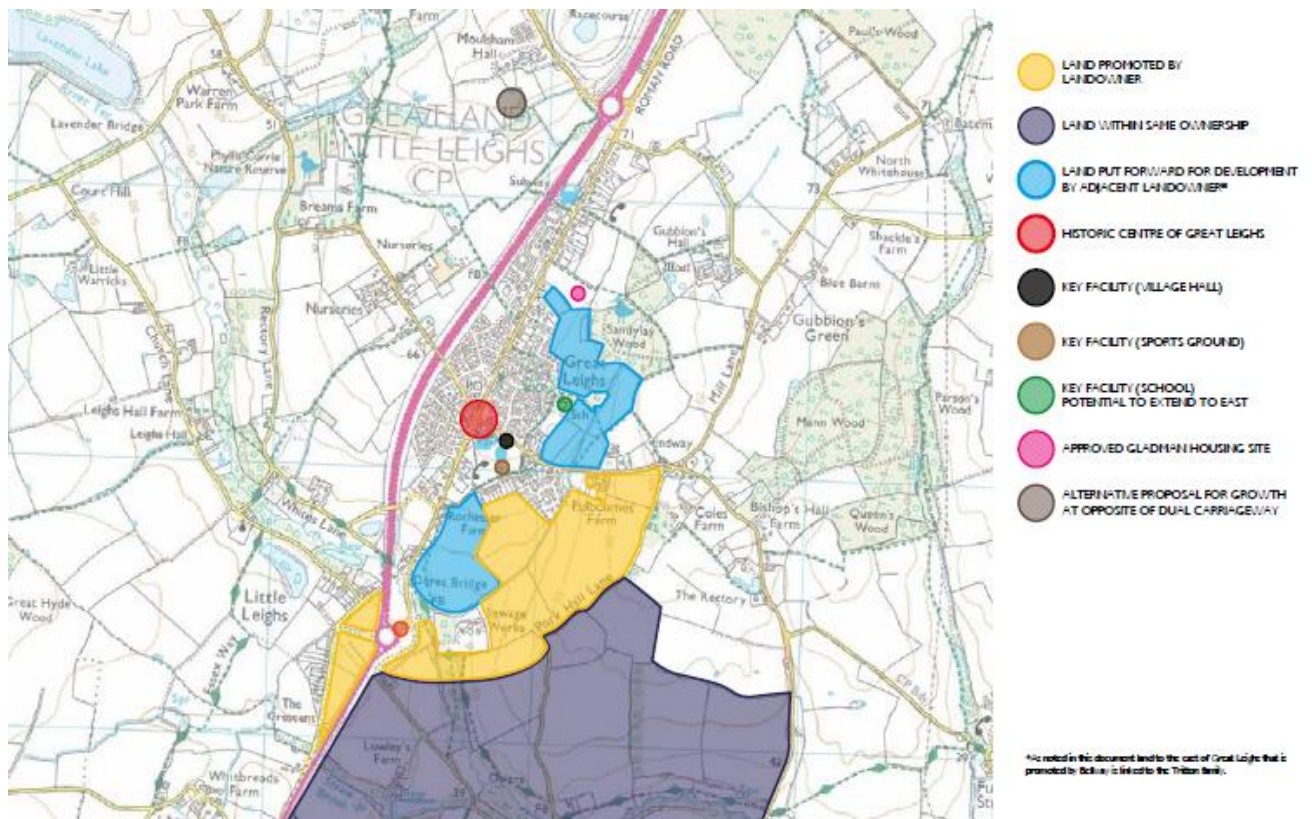
APPENDIX A



Tritton Farming Partnership Land hatched in red

Source: Great Leighs Southern Extension Masterplan prepared by Rural Solutions Ltd

APPENDIX B



Site context. The yellow land is the TFP land, the Fulbournes land is identified in blue to the north and adjacent to the green circle which is the existing primary school. The village core and facilities are identified by the red, black and small brown circles. The larger grey circle to the north west of the village across the A131 is allocated site 5a.

Source: Great Leighs Southern Extension Masterplan prepared by Rural Solutions Ltd

APPENDIX C

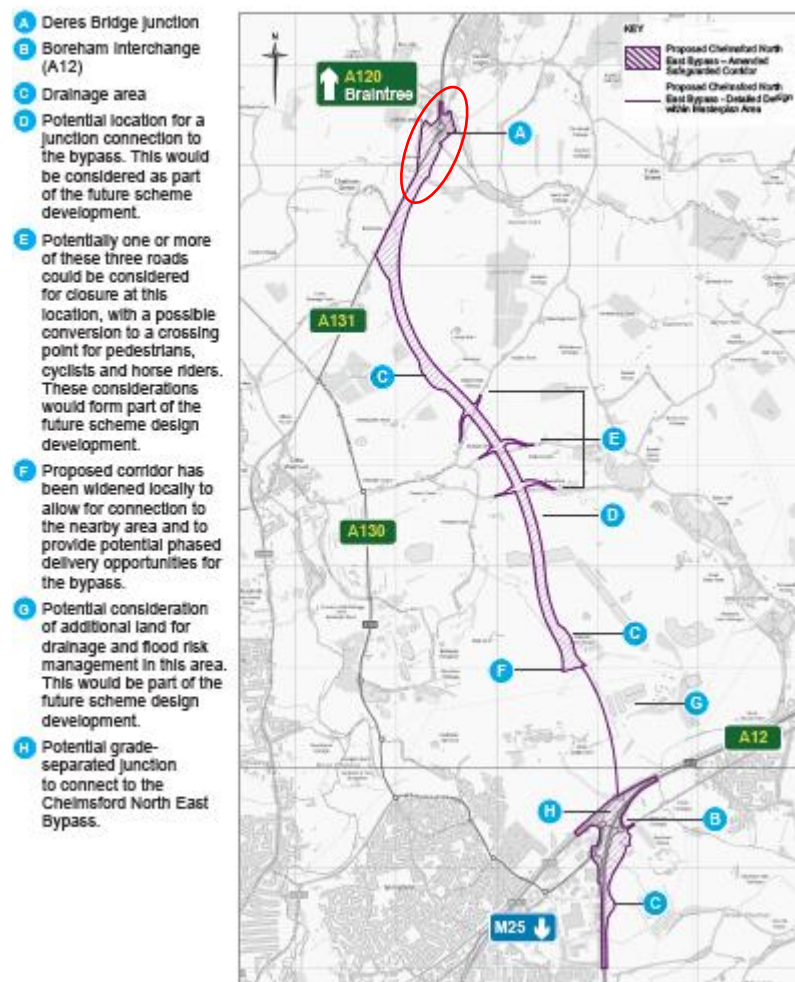


Aerial photograph of the landholding promoted for allocation

Source: Great Leighs Southern Extension Masterplan prepared by Rural Solutions Ltd

APPENDIX D

PROPOSED UPDATES TO THE SAFEGUARDED CORRIDOR

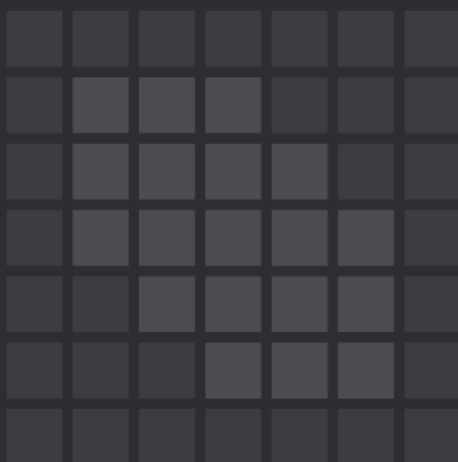


Area of land (circled in red) which is safeguarded for the transport corridor and which is in the TFP ownership.
Source: Chelmsford North East Bypass –Safeguarded Corridor Chelmsford City Council

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