

**ALTERATIONS AND ADDITIONS TO CHELMSFORD POLICY BOARD  
16 July 2020**

**Item 5**

Section 4 of the report should be superseded with the following text:

**4. Consultation Responses**

**Consultee comments – public bodies**

**Writtle PC**

1. Number of dwellings – noted to be 880; increased traffic and demand on existing services
2. Traffic/highways – lack of discouragement of traffic through Writtle; no indications of improvements to Lordship Road; bus link forms part of phase 2; greater emphasis on alternative modes to car; crossing points at second roundabout unclear
3. Public footpaths – plotting inaccurate; lack of landscaping surrounding; landscaping to footpaths more important than central green space; highest density adjacent to footpaths
4. Design and Construction techniques – lack of regard to Writtle Design Guide (specifically Policy WNP D3); lack of clarity on phasing; limited information on sustainability and energy consumption; density lacks illustration
5. Landscape and ecology – question appropriateness of large green space arc, suggest smaller areas and landscaping around footpath routes; buffer to Roxwell Road broadly acceptable but may need additions, particularly at roundabouts and rear of car wash; ecology park welcomed but management and phasing queried.
6. Play Areas – more information and certainty over content required
7. Sports facilities – question amount and type; external traffic generator
8. Travelling Show People (TSP) – question evaluation of need; location inappropriate; access should be reconsidered
9. Health Centre/Neighbourhood Centre – uncertainty over provision; insufficient detail on content of NC
10. Education/Neighbourhood Centre – concern over phasing
11. Community Engagement – lack of consultation; request for further meetings
12. Timing – should be more accurately indicated

**Council response**

1. The allocation policy notes the number to be around 800. 880 has been mentioned within public meetings by the developer. Traffic levels and any necessary mitigation will be considered by the highway authority in the assessment of the planning application. The phasing of community facilities is subject to negotiation through the legal agreement attached to any planning permission.
2. The phasing of the bus link is subject to negotiation through the legal agreement attached to any planning permission. The further considerations in the officer report note that ECC Highways recommendations need to be addressed.
3. Plotting needs to be addressed in the next revision – to make clear any proposed alterations. The officer report recommends further consideration of densities.
4. Design Guide matters are for the planning application stage. The issues with phasing are acknowledged – see ‘further considerations’ within report. In terms of energy consumption, the developer will be bound by the local plan policy requirements and the Making Places SPD once adopted. Density plans are provided - such plans are sufficient in principle to consider the acceptability of a masterplan.
5. The masterplan does include landscaping along footpath routes. The green arc accommodate SUDs features and provides a green link between the urban area and the western recreation areas. Management of ecology park is not a detail required at masterplan stage - the Council’s preference would be a commuted sum to enable Council management. The issues with phasing are acknowledged – see ‘further considerations’ within report.
6. Noted. Further detail will follow within the planning application.
7. The sports facility provision has been influenced by the Local Plan evidence base. Traffic generation will need to be subject to a Transport Assessment.
8. The ‘need’ has been found to be sound through examination of the Local Plan. The location balances a number of factors – see report. An entrance on Roxwell Road provides direct access to the highway network.
9. The developer is committed to provision of a health centre. The composition of the NC is not yet finalised, but the masterplan provides an indication of potential uses.
10. The officer report notes that the phasing requires further consideration. Phasing will ultimately be controlled through legal agreement.
11. Officers do not accept that there has been a lack of consultation – several meetings have been held between officers, developer and Writtle representatives. Further meetings can be arranged where required.
12. This is essentially a phasing point which officers have acknowledged will be subject to further attention.

### **Chignal Estate Residents Association (CERA)**

1. Consultation documents and sample precedents – take issue with timeline for CERA input into bus link, issue with detail within the Local Plan, highlight differences with masterplan revision, additional implications now listed in revised masterplan, other bus gate examples do not support precedent, safety standards of bus gate have been disregarded
2. Justification for Avon Road bus gate principle – lack of justification for necessity, alternative bus stops along Roxwell Road can serve those residents to be served by bus link, quicker to walk to Avon Road bus stops
3. Information supporting proposed bus gate – acoustic survey, vehicle emissions, vibrations, lighting levels, construction techniques, privacy of adjoining residents, absence of pedestrian crossing, impact during construction, adequacy of traffic survey, spatial standards compromised

4. Environmental impact – tree and landscape removal; adverse landscape alterations; loss of allotments; light pollution from lighting signals, signage; noise pollution and vehicle emissions; effects of vibration; privacy of neighbouring properties
5. Extent of traffic, cyclist and pedestrian usage – impact of bus link on each
6. Spatial and safety standards – lack of conformity with Essex Design Guide, Manual for Streets, Sustrans principles

### **Council response**

1. The Local Plan allocation policy includes a bullet point stating:  
*Provide a new dedicated bus, cycle and pedestrian link into the existing Urban Area.*  
The allocation policy does not set the exact location or detail of the bus link. The masterplan reveals more detail but is still not detailed to the extent that would be found within a planning application. As the detail becomes more apparent then more matters form part of that discussion – a number of trees will be lost through construction of the bridge; four parking spaces along Avon Road would be lost due to the presence of the bus ‘stop line’; allotment space would be lost in order to create a revised access to the allotments; traffic signalling will be required to control the bus link. The revised masterplan does include amendments/further detail from the November 2018 submission and this is why a further public consultation has been undertaken in June 2020. The ‘precedents’ listed do not form part of the masterplan document – the Council would note that the characteristics of this bus link need to be considered on their merit. Safety standards have not been disregarded – they have been considered on their merits by ECC Highways.
2. The necessity for the bus link is borne from the desire for bus permeability into Melbourne (via a more circuitous route than the one which will serve Roxwell Road). The developer is exploring the provision of two bus routes - one serving Roxwell Road to city centre, the other serving Melbourne/Broomfield Rd via the bus link. Those new residents requiring a faster transit into the city centre are likely to choose the Roxwell Road option, which may include buses entering the new site (to be decided).
3. The masterplan document does not include analysis on environmental impact – this will be submitted at planning application stage. The concerns are relevant, but relevant to a planning application when that detail will be presented. Pedestrian crossings are not proposed, and are not being requested by Highways. ECC Highways do not consider that highway standards are being compromised to an unacceptable degree. Access to the park during construction is at present not detailed.
4. The masterplan proposal necessitates the loss of four parking bays along Avon Road. The masterplan suggests that these spaces could be re-provided further north which would result in the loss of several street trees. The trees do not need to be lost if the parking spaces are not re-provided. Other alternative locations can be explored. The bus link would require removal of some trees and a hardening of the landscape due to the levels changes and construction of a bridge. Three allotment plots would be lost in total but can be relocated within the wider allotment site. The masterplan document does not include analysis on environmental impact – this will be submitted at planning application stage. Privacy is a valid planning matter, no details of levels have been submitted – privacy can be mitigated with additional screening.
5. The bus link is not without its physical impacts –these impacts are acceptable, with mitigation measures if required.
6. ECC Highways have made a recommendation and taken a view on the standards – no objection is raised. Both national and local highway standards allow for a reduction in footway width to below the generally recommended width of 2metres, down to a minimum width of 1metre. The

footway is proposed to be 2.0m for the majority of its length along the bus link, narrowing to between 1.5 and 1.8 metres towards the eastern end, and reducing to 1.2metres where it meets the footway in Avon Road. The proposal therefore meets current standards and would be acceptable to ECC as Highway Authority for the expected level of pedestrians using this link.

### **Chignal PC**

1. Consultation – expression of surprise about consultation during Covid-19 restrictions
2. Local Plan preparation – comment on opposition to allocation
3. Masterplan (general) – disappointment that previous comments not taken on board
4. Landscape – introduction of urban intrusion into the rural area; request for planting belt to northern perimeter; query requirement for sports pitches and its associated urban features as they will compromise buffer; suggest new residents can use existing sports facilities in Melbourne or Writtle
5. Transport infrastructure – strategic traffic modelling insufficient for proposals; construction traffic should avoid junction north of Copperfield Road; lack of information on traffic generation
6. Housing density – more detail required

### **Council response**

1. Central government has encouraged Councils to continue as normal where possible. The public consultation was extended from three to four weeks. It was supplemented in this specific case by a leaflet drop, and social media posts.
2. Noted.
3. Noted.
4. There will be a physical change to the landscape, the map accompanying the allocation policy will alter the site to urban area as opposed to rural. The request for a planting belt to the northern perimeter is noted, there is a setback but not to the same degree as the south side, which will offer opportunities for planting. The sports pitches are a requirement of the Local Plan evidence base and are to serve the need created by the development. The western segment of the allocation is allocated for recreation/SUDs – it is not its specific purpose to act as buffer.
5. The planning application will supplement previous modelling for traffic impacts. Comments noted regarding Copperfield Road – this will be a detailed matter for the legal agreement on a planning application.
6. The further considerations have highlighted the need for some changes, however the presentation of densities in three ‘types’ is acceptable for the content of a masterplan.

### **Good Easter PC**

1. Traffic – impact upon parish to the west, concern over rat running through Chignals, concern over impact on local roads in Writtle
2. Healthcare provision – concern over absence of provision and impact upon appointments for Good Easter residents

### **Council response**

1. The Local Plan included traffic modelling to support the allocation. The planning application will require greater detail.
2. The developer is committed to providing a health care facility within the Neighbourhood Centre. Discussions are ongoing with the NHS.

## Representations

254 representations received on April 2020 consultation, with a total of 333 submissions overall (including 2018 consultation). The majority of submissions raise objections or queries, with some comments in support, as summarised below:

- Principle of allocation and details within it
- Traffic impact – through Writtle, Roxwell Road, Avon Road, Melbourne Avenue, Lordship Road & Lodge Road too narrow, Rainsford Road during construction, during occupation, safety of pedestrians, accommodating larger vehicles, speed restrictions, increase of cars, no encouragement for car alternatives, worsening of route to train station
- Bus link – principle, highway safety, environmental impact, impact on residential amenity, privacy concerns, traffic congestion, no environmental impact assessment or social impact assessment, wheelchair and pushchair access impacted, parking availability, access difficult
- Travelling showperson site – principle, sufficient parking, location, access, highway safety, impact on existing vegetation, not in accordance with Showmen’s Guild requirements, suggest dialogue between Guild and Crest Nicholson, request for future control of site by The Guild, overcrowding potential
- Bus routes – query extent, improvements, increased buses unnecessary, increase of diesel vehicles, consider cost of fares, limited services, lack of usage
- Environmental impact – noise, air and light pollution, greenbelt land, vague green/climate change initiatives, hardening of landscape, reference to Council declaration of climate & ecological emergency, need for swift nests, need for solar panels, loss of village character
- Landscape buffers – position, extent of
- Density and building heights – concerns, key views impacted
- Delivery and phasing – general unacceptability, detail lacking, no regard to future sustainability
- Open/green spaces – content, layout, loss of green space, parks must be maintained, access to green space
- Loss of agricultural land – in principle, allotments, rural amenity, farmland
- Loss of ecological habitats – trees, wildlife
- Flood risk – flooding within site and properties along Roxwell Road, pumping station
- Archaeology – extent of consideration
- Residential parcels – detail lacking
- Neighbourhood centre – content queried, phasing queried
- Medical centre – provision of, new need to be accommodated
- Schools – query completion date, additional funding for secondary, demand, traffic congestion, query capacity
- Pedestrian/cycle connections – location, detail, lack of usage, impact on wildlife, safety
- Sporting facilities – demand for more, allocation of more space, parking provision
- Western relief road/Park and Ride – should be considered
- Housing needs – query how addressed, loss of value, needs to meet all ages, affordable, extra pressure on parking, building standards
- Writtle Neighbourhood Plan/Writtle Design Guide – needs to be reflected in the submission
- Consultation arrangements – criticisms of, limits during pandemic, website issues

- Developer consultation – question extent of
- Masterplan revisions – criticisms of content compared to first, vision inadequate, lack of connection with Neighbourhood Plan, absence of design principles

#### Support

- Plans and principles – supports the improvements
- Environmental impact – supports more nature reserves, opportunity to greatly improve
- Sustainable housing stock – supports the need
- Travelling showperson site – supports location, suitable for business

#### **Petitions**

Two petitions received, one from Chignal Estates Residents Association, one from Writtle residents, titles as follows:

- CERA – ‘Do not build a bus route between Warren Farm Estate and Avon Road’ – 657 online signatures, 142 paper signatures (03/07/20)
- Writtle residents – ‘We the undersigned residents of Writtle request, if the Warren Farm Strategic Growth Site 2 for 800 New Homes is agreed, that to reduce the visual impact & intrusion on Writtle Village and its rural setting, the following:
  1. Retain the rural character along the entire A1060 frontage of the site with the built development substantially set back a minimum of 120 metres (west side) – 90 metres (east side) with an open space green buffer between the development & the road. The existing high mature frontage hedgerow to be retained & continued along the entire frontage & the buffer to be heavily planted with native species trees.
  2. Together with low density development to the built front being no more than two stories high continued along the return quadrant western edge.’
- 1031 signatures (December 2018)