



## Castle Hedingham Parish Council and Burial Board

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15 August 2024

Dear Sirs

### **Call for Sites, Braintree Local Plan Review to 2041**

Castle Hedingham Parish Council considered the Local Plan Review sites submitted in the parish at a full council meeting held on Monday 12<sup>th</sup> August. Included in this response are the Parish Council's views on issues to be considered in the Local Plan Review to 2041, including housing, employment, green spaces, transportation, infrastructure or any other aspect of the community as requested in your email.

The comments of the Parish Council are based on the document Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessments Practice Guidance July 2007 which is a requirement of Planning Policy Statement 3 (PPS3).

It is noted that some sites are submitted for housing, one for employment and some as "mixed use". In any further consultation, Castle Hedingham Parish Council requests that more specific detail is given of the nature of the "mixed use" proposed.

General considerations for Castle Hedingham parish which apply to all sites submitted:

- Castle Hedingham generally must be considered as a poor location for new housing as it does not benefit from sustainable or green access – a very limited and unreliable bus service, no cycle paths, limited footpaths, narrow roads and no trains. As a third tier settlement in the Spatial Strategy (Braintree District Local Plan 2022) it lacks many facilities to meet day to day needs and is not considered to meet the tests for sustainable development.
- Due to the historic mediaeval character of the settlement including an extensive conservation area, many listed buildings and a Grade 1 ancient scheduled monument, Castle Hedingham benefits from the tourist economy with little scope for other employment opportunities for younger residents or anyone without access to a private car. Conservation of the character and heritage of the settlement and the reference to the

adopted Castle Hedingham Village Design Statement as a material consideration is requested for all decisions when considering the suitability of sites.

- If new housing is to be considered for Castle Hedingham, the most pressing need is for affordable housing to enable younger residents to stay in the village and help it to thrive for future generations. No affordable housing has been built in Castle Hedingham in recent years. New housing applications submitted for sites within the development boundary have all been for properties of 4 bedrooms or more, well out of the price range of the majority of younger residents wishing to purchase their first property or older residents wishing to downsize and free up a family-sized home.
- There are already two sites within the development boundary which have not yet been used. The local plan revision should take this into account for any new housing including affordable to meet local needs.

With specific reference to the sites submitted, the Parish Council has the following comments:

<b>REF</b>	<b>Proposed use</b>	<b>Address</b>
CASH2072	Housing	Sudbury Road, Rosemary Lane, Rushley Green, Castle Hedingham
	Comment:	Although there are existing houses adjoining the site it is isolated from the settlement boundary and could encourage ribbon development. Access to the village centre on foot or by cycling is potentially unsafe. Being an isolated site there is no immediate access to surface water or mains drainage. Loss of agricultural land.
CASH2073	Housing	Site between 112 & 110 Nunnery Street, Castle Hedingham
	Comment:	Already refused by Braintree Planning on more than one occasion. Outside the development boundary and would set a precedent for further “backfill” development in many other rear gardens currently outside of the existing settlement boundary.
CASH2074	Housing or Mixed Use	Land to the south of Sudbury Road, Castle Hedingham
	Comment:	Loss of agricultural land. Development on a scale of this size would completely change the character and nature of the village. Lack of infrastructure to support increased population, difficult and unsafe access by road from Sudbury Hill (steep hill) or Sheepcot Road (narrow country lane with national speed limit) and unsafe pedestrian or cycling access. Negative impact on landscape character of village approaching from Sudbury.
CASH2075	Housing	Land west of Kirby Hall Road
	Comment:	Outside the development boundary. Difficult access via Kirby Hall Road which already experiences traffic safety and parking problems due to De Vere Primary School. Loss of agricultural land.

CASH2076	Employment	Colne Valley Railway, Yeldham Road, Castle Hedingham
	Comment:	Development in keeping with the leisure and heritage nature of the Colne Valley Railway and respecting the landscape character could provide employment opportunities for local residents.
CASH2077	Mixed Use	Land to the south of Queen Street, Castle Hedingham
	Comment:	Designated Green Buffer LPP68 separating Castle and Sible Hedingham. Flood Zone and Local Wildlife site. The buffer is also adjacent to the Conservation Area in Castle Hedingham and listed buildings at Queen Street. Queen Street is already prone to bad flooding from surface water which would be worsened with increased hard surfaces of development without significant infrastructure works
CASH2078	Housing	Public House with Car Park, 1 Crouch Green, Castle Hedingham
	Comment:	Outside the development boundary, but as a brownfield site this may be suitable for small development including affordable homes and small-scale retail/hospitality use e.g. existing takeaway food premises. Good access from the main road. A mixed use development of this previously developed site could be suitable. Minimal impact on existing residents in the locality. Would possibly suit 1, 2 and 3-bedroom housing including apartments above retail.
CASH2079	Housing	Land behind Memories, Crouch Green, Castle Hedingham
	Comment:	Flood Zone and outside the development boundary. If developed together with CASH2078 would create a development of a size which would put pressure on existing village infrastructure and services.

In addition to these comments, Castle Hedingham Parish Council has been sent a copy of the “Braintree District – Better Together” document “Seeking the most sustainable, community-led plan in the country...” submitted by Rosie Pearson on behalf of the group. The Parish Council found it to be a thorough and well thought out document and is in general agreement with the concerns raised and recommendations made.

Yours faithfully

*Claire Waters*

Claire Waters  
Parish Clerk