

Committee	FULL COUNCIL
Date	19th March 2018
Agenda Item	16

Town Infrastructure Report

Housing Growth

Braintree District Council has published its updated housing trajectory dated 31st December 2017. This is available on their website under Local Plan.

This update increases the total number of houses expected to be built in the next five years from 539 to 617. No further developments have been added; the increase comes from an expectation that some of the developments will be built a bit earlier than previously thought.

Doctors Surgery

We continue to have further meetings to try to understand what actions are being taken to increase the capacity at the Surgery.

We have had an update with Dr Kreis in February and last week we had a good meeting with Kerry Harding the Head of Estates at NHS England in Chelmsford. At this meeting we expressed the concerns raised to us by residents about insufficient capacity at the Surgery.

Kerry Harding recognised that capacity needs to be increased and confirmed that they, together with the Practice and CCG were evaluating ideas to reconfigure the Surgery to support the population growth. It was evident that the NHS England Estates team has a high degree of experience and expertise in developing suitable solutions.

We discussed the Section 106 developer contributions in the pipeline and this will form part of the funding, however further additional funding will be needed to support the overall investment required.

The next step is for the Practice, CCG and NHS England to meet together with the landlord to identify and develop the best ideas.

We now have a better understanding of the relationships between the various parties involved. We felt that this was another positive step forward and gave us confidence that something will be done. Further follow up meetings will be arranged for us to continue to push for progress.

Education

Following our meeting with Cllr. Ray Gooding and his team at Essex County Council we have been requested by Sarah Donnelly, Head teacher of Richard De Clare School, to give her a feedback. We have arranged to do this on 19th March.

Highways

In line with the infrastructure brief, on 5th March we had a meeting with Highways officers Matthew Bradley, Development Manager and Martin Mason, Strategic Development Officer at Essex County Council to discuss highways issues related to the growth in housing in Halstead.

Essex County Council is a consultee in the BDC planning process and they comment on each application where there is a potential highways impact. Under the 2012 NPPF, a “development should only be prevented or refused on transport grounds where the residual cumulative impacts of development are severe”.

We were introduced to a report that the ECC Strategic Development team have produced and submitted to BDC as an input into the Draft Local Plan for the Braintree District - this report is available on the BDC Local Plan website.

The report is called “Preferred Option Assessment – Highways/Transport Planning” and is dated March 2017. This is a 64 page report covering the Braintree district, however, there are some significant points to note related to Halstead.

Section 1.2 Key Junctions

This lists sixteen road junctions that have been identified that require specific modelling of traffic flows. One of these was the A131 junction Head St / A1124 Hedingham Road / A1124 Colchester Road in Halstead.

Section 5.2.14 Head Street, Halstead

This shows the results of the modelling. It concludes that the junction is currently operating at capacity and that increased traffic flows will exacerbate the existing congestion issues. Mitigation was investigated and no options were found for this junction to address the impact of growth.

It has been identified in the report that a longer-term proposal for a bypass remains a priority for ECC. Halstead is the only town on the A131 from North Chelmsford through to Sudbury without a bypass. It is likely that growth on the A131 corridor from North Chelmsford, Braintree and at Sudbury will result in the need to commence development work on the scheme during the plan period.

Braintree District Cycling Action Plan – January 2018

We were also made aware of the Braintree District Cycling Action Plan. This is one of the initiatives to reduce the dependency upon the road network - this report is also available on the BDC Local Plan website.

The report lists opportunities to develop the cycle route network in the Braintree district. Contained in the report are listed eighteen potential routes in Halstead.

No further meetings are planned at this stage.

Recommendation: that HTC notes this report.

Cllr. Mick Radley
Cllr. Dave Gronland