



## 7. HOUSING

### Housing Objectives

- To ensure an adequate supply of housing to meet the needs of the Parish
- To ensure there is an integrated mix of housing types, sizes and tenures to meet local need
- To encourage a focus on providing genuinely affordable housing for existing residents and those with an existing connection with Broomfield
- To promote sustainable housing that provides for home-working and other environmentally friendly initiatives.

### Current Position

7.1 At the last fully reported Census in 2011, there were 1,850 households in Broomfield, occupying 1,892 dwellings, with a further 84 recorded as vacant. We believe the current (2021) figure is about 2,250 dwellings, due to significant development during the last few years. This has mainly taken place on medium and large greenfield sites: Greater Beaulieu Park, Channels, North of Copperfield Road, North of Hospital Approach and Saxon Gate. Tenure is also likely to have changed in the last decade, with more people renting.

7.2 However, due to boundary changes following the Community Governance Review, there will be a significant fall in both dwellings and households. We estimate that the new Parish and Neighbourhood Plan Area will initially contain about 1,750 dwellings. During the lifetime of the Plan, this is expected to increase again from 2027 onwards, mainly due to around 250 new dwellings in Broomfield's share of the 'North of Broomfield' strategic site.

### Local Plan Context

7.3 As already noted, the Chelmsford Local Plan was adopted in 2020 and identifies how the housing requirements will be met across the City Council area to 2036. Approximately 21,800 homes are expected to be built across the area between 2013 and 2036, of which all but 5% have been identified through planning permissions or sites being allocated in the Local Plan. The remaining 5% will be met through windfall permissions.

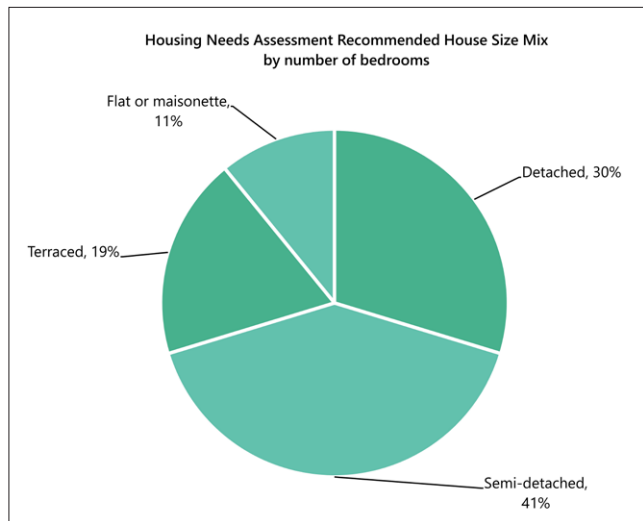


Figure 2

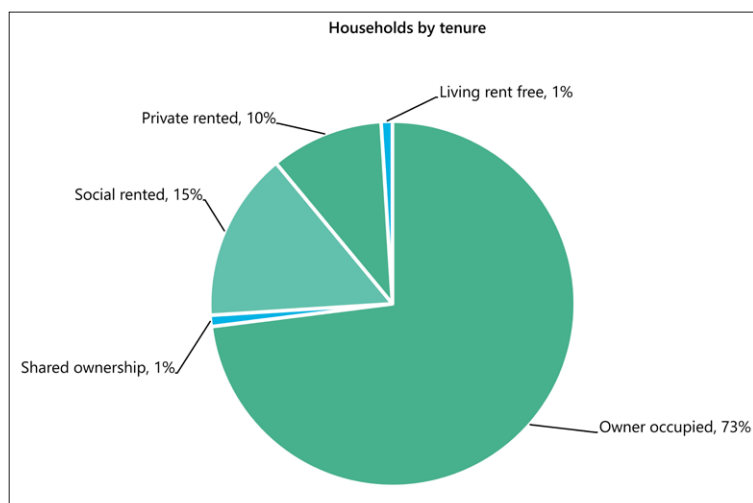


Figure 3

7.4 The Local Plan also allocates an area of land that straddles the Broomfield and Little Waltham parish boundary as a strategic site for landscape-led housing development. This is known as 'North of Broomfield' and Strategic Growth Site 8 and provides for about 450 dwellings. A masterplan for the site has been agreed and a planning application has been approved for up to 512 dwellings. These suggest that at least half the new dwellings will be in Broomfield Parish. Although about 60% of the site area falls within Little Waltham Parish, that part contains a large area of green space. Therefore, it is likely that at least 225 – 255 of the new dwellings will be in Broomfield.

### Housing Need up to 2036

7.5 Data for the Local Plan has largely been processed on a city/area-wide basis, rather than for individual parishes. Therefore, a full Housing Needs Assessment (HNA) was commissioned to support and inform the Neighbourhood Plan process. It was carried out by AECOM (July 2019) as part of the Government's neighbourhood planning support package.

7.6 The HNA identified that the overall need for the Parish is around 176 dwellings up to 2036. Given the Local Plan allocation for housing at 'North of Broomfield', this requirement will be more than met by that allocation, regardless of any infill and windfall permissions that come forward during the Plan period. Therefore, there is no requirement for the Neighbourhood Plan to allocate sites for housing purely to meet overall needs in the Parish.

7.7 The other main findings and conclusions of the Housing Needs Assessment were:

- the existence of affordability pressures within the Parish, resulting in a high need for affordable housing. Prices for market tenures are well above the means of households earning the average income
- the current most significant net need is for two and three bedroom units, followed by one-bedroom units
- Starter Homes (when the HNA was produced in 2019, this was a Government scheme that offered first-time buyers a 20% discount on a new-build home) are out-of-reach of the group they are intended for, first-time buyers.

This product should consequently be excluded from the tenure mix, as every one of this type effectively reduces the provision of more useful affordable homes

- 25% of new residential units should be social or affordable rent, mostly with one to two bedrooms
- 10% of homes in a new development should be for affordable home ownership. Most of these dwellings should be for either 25% or 50% shared ownership
- private renting in Broomfield increased by 178% between 2001 and 2011. This is an affordable alternative to homeownership and AECOM recommend more homes in this tenure.
- The type of home to be provided (detached, semi-detached, terraced or flat) is of secondary importance in the context of an HNA. Notwithstanding this, the housing types most likely to meet assessed needs, based on recent transactions in the current stock, are smaller detached and semi-detached homes.
- Additionally, bungalows appeal to an elderly population and this type should be promoted to support the needs of the growing elderly population.

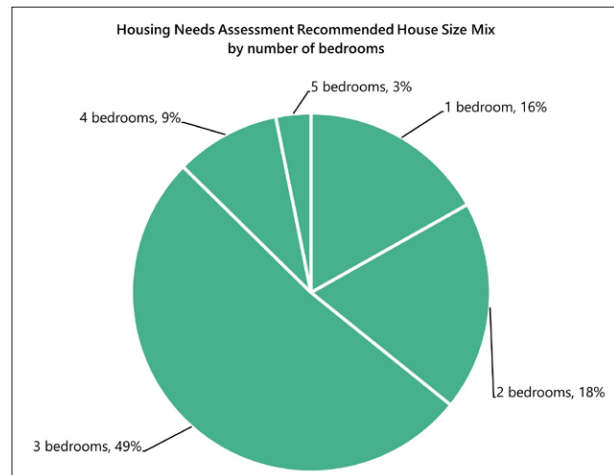


Figure 4

7.8 An Affordable Housing Needs Survey was conducted alongside the Regulation 14 Consultation for this Plan to provide further detail about the affordability pressures that the AECOM study has identified. The results will be used by the Parish Council to inform initiatives to deliver affordable housing to meet local needs.

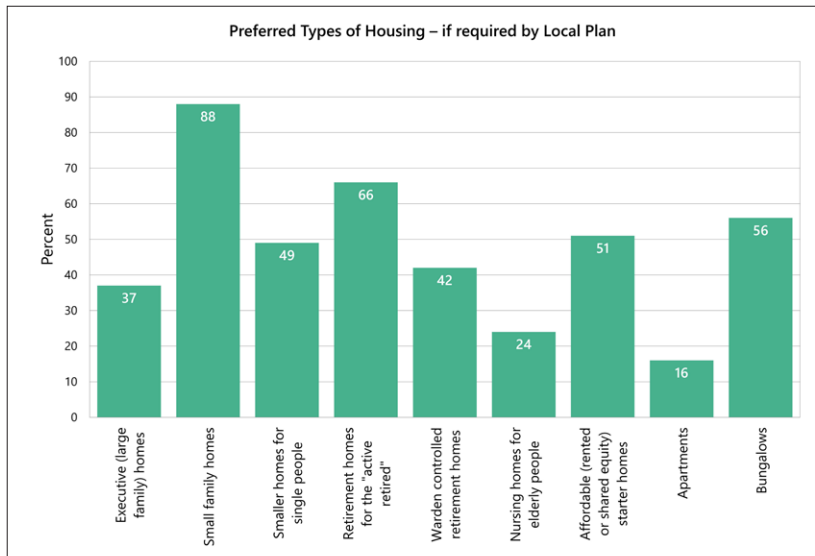


Fig. 5 - Preferred house types

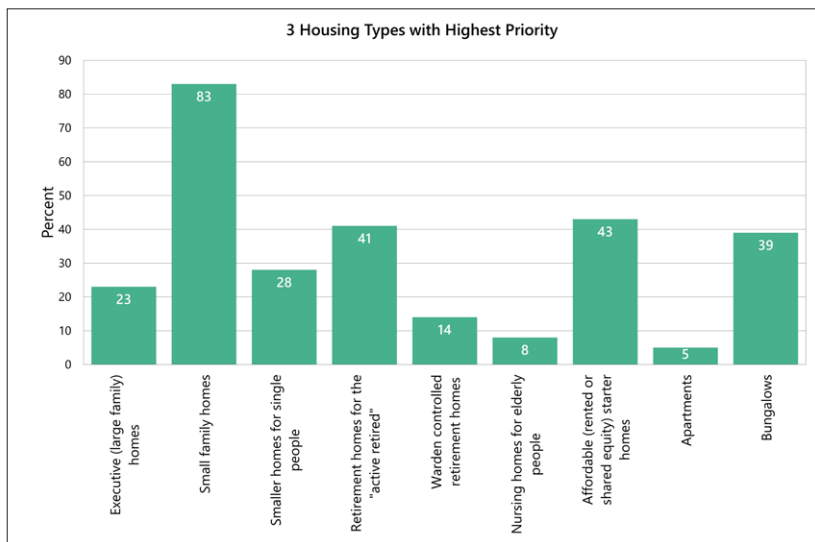


Fig. 6 - Priority house types

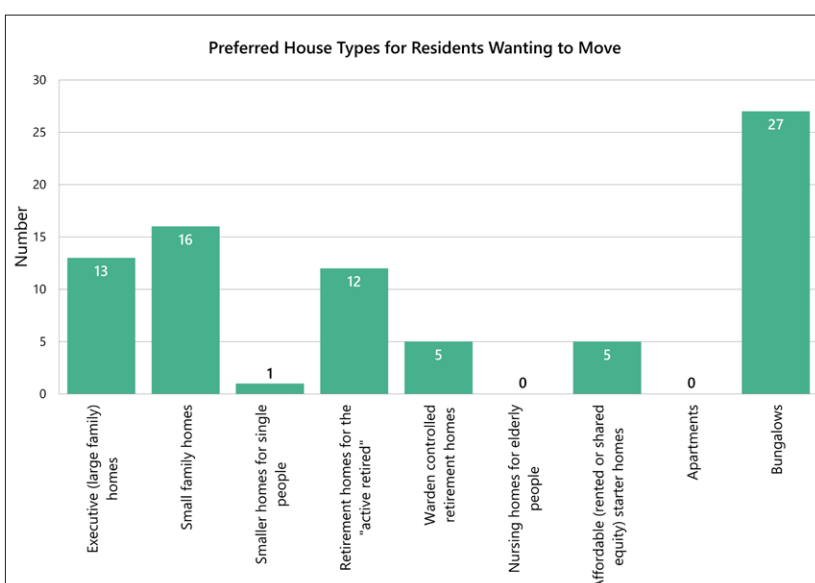


Fig. 7 - Preferred house types

## Community Views and Perceptions about Housing

7.9 In the household questionnaire, residents were asked for their views about the types of housing most needed in Broomfield. Initially, they were asked about types that should be included in any new strategic housing allocations within the Local Plan.

7.10 In general, responses indicate that community views and perceptions are very much in line with the findings of the HNA. There is no particular perceived need for extra housing over and above Local Plan allocations, but where housing allocations are made, there is a strong preference for:

- small family homes (three-bedroom homes) in preference to larger ones
- affordable housing, particularly rented or shared equity homes
- retirement homes for the active retired (ie older people who don't need any support)
- bungalows.

7.11 Residents were also asked if they were likely to need to move within Broomfield in the next five years and, if so, why. A relatively small proportion of overall respondents answered this question – only those who need to move in the next five years and wish to stay in Broomfield. But of these, a significant proportion would like to downsize within Broomfield, particularly to a bungalow or to another type of property suited to the 'active retired'.

Interestingly, the proportion of responses indicating a need to move to a large family home ('executive home') in the next five years was 18% - very similar to the proportion indicating a need for 'homes for the active retired' (17%). On the assumption that these 'active retired' people may well currently occupy larger family homes, it suggests that providing local homes of sufficient quality/size for people to downsize would in turn free up larger family homes for younger people with expanding families.

7.12 Finally, residents were asked their views about the form of development that new housing should take from these options:

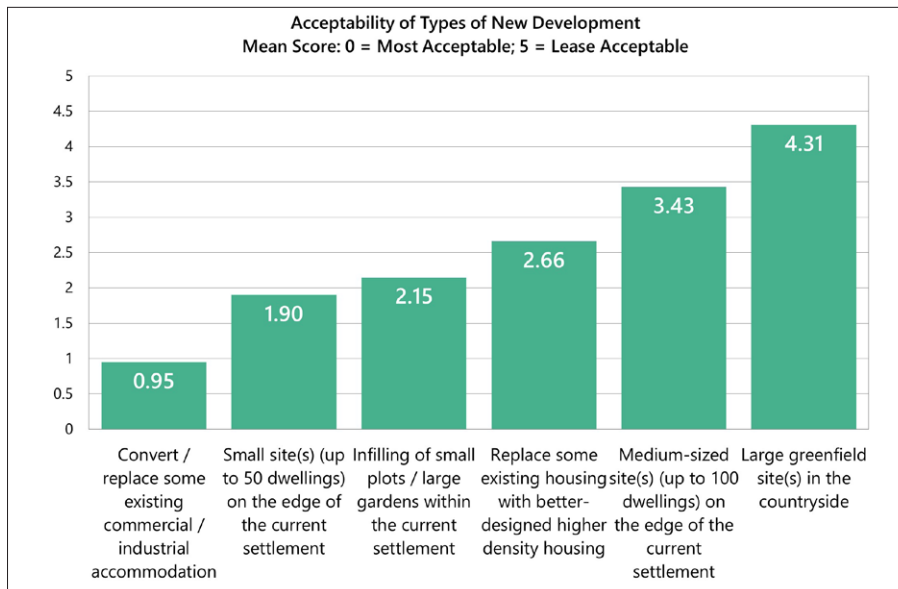


Fig. 8 - Acceptability of types of new development

### Relevant Local Plan Policies

7.13 The Local Plan contains several general housing policies. These are still up to date, albeit they may be re-examined over the next two years as part of the forthcoming Local Plan Review. There is therefore no need currently to introduce Broomfield-specific requirements in respect of these policies, which include:

#### Local Plan POLICY DM1 size and type of housing

The policy sets requirements for the construction standards and house types for new homes, the level of requirements being dependent upon the size of the development.

#### Local Plan POLICY DM2 - Affordable housing and rural exception sites

The policy requires that 35% of all new housing on sites of 11 homes or more be affordable, as defined by the NPPF.

### Neighbourhood Plan Housing Policies

7.14 The following policies will supplement Local Plan policies with specific regard to Broomfield. They are based on data in the Neighbourhood Plan Evidence Base, specifically the Housing Needs Assessment (HNA) and the residents' questionnaire data. In terms of house sizes, the HNA identified that the biggest need was for three-bedroomed homes in order to redress the current imbalance and meet forecast needs over the Neighbourhood Plan period. To achieve a better balance, Policy BFD8 will be implemented for all proposals for ten or more dwellings, except for the development of the strategic site to the north of Broomfield as allocated in the Chelmsford Local Plan. These requirements may be adjusted should a more up-to-date and locally assessed needs assessment support a different mix.

7.15 Policy BFD8 applies to developments of ten or more dwellings to be consistent with the Government's definition of a major housing development. The policy also acknowledges that the housing mix set out in the policy may have an implication on the commercial viability of certain sites. This may apply particularly to sites which would deliver houses just above the size threshold and/or those with difficult site conditions. In these circumstances, developers should set out a robust case to justify the delivery of a different housing mix on the site concerned.

## POLICY BFD8 - HOUSING MIX

Developments of ten or more dwellings should provide the following mix of open market housing, unless it can be demonstrated that more up-to-date and locally assessed needs support a different mix or that the mix would not be commercially viable on the site concerned:

1 bedroomed homes	approximately 15%
2 bedroomed homes	approximately 15%
3 bedroomed homes	approximately 50%
4 bedroomed homes	approximately 10%
5 bedroomed or more homes	approximately 10%

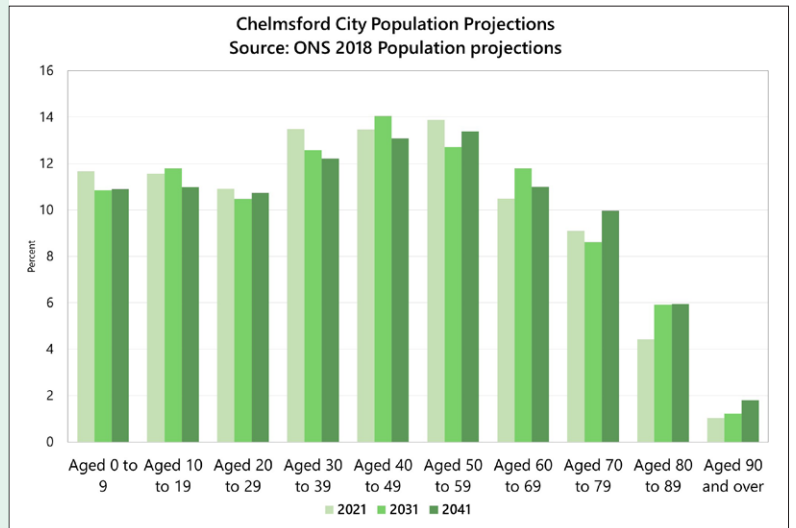


Fig. 9 - Chelmsford Population Projections

### Providing Accessible Housing for Older Residents and those Working from Home

- 7.16 Our life expectancy continues to increase, so more and more people will likely remain in their own home until much later in life. The Government's 2018-based population projections for the City Council area show that the proportion of residents aged over 60 will continue to rise over the next 20 years with those aged 90 or over almost doubling. The earlier national Lifetime Homes initiative, whereby homes would be built to enable adaptation to changing needs, has now been incorporated into the Building Regulations Part M4 Category 2 (Accessible and Adaptable Dwellings).
- 7.17 The Essex Design Guide notes that '*accommodating the needs of older people requires the introduction of standardised measurements and designs that enable dwellings to withstand the loads of mobility or safety aids. The Building Regulations Part M4 Category 2 (Accessible and Adaptable Dwellings) should be adopted into all new designs so as to correctly address such fundamentals of accessibility and approach. New homes should also consider designing to accommodate the shift towards digital healthcare*'
- 7.18 Policy DM26 of the adopted Local Plan already requires new homes to achieve appropriate internal space through adherence to the Nationally Described Space Standards. Additionally, the City Council's Making Places Supplementary Planning

Document (2021) seeks to ensure that all buildings are accessible and inclusive for all. Such adaptations have, as noted in paragraph 153 of the Neighbourhood Plan Housing Needs Assessment, the potential to substitute for a proportion of the need for new sheltered housing.

- 7.19 The COVID Pandemic resulted in a changed way of working for many, with working from home becoming normal practice for many office workers. The ability to adapt homes for such purposes has become a key consideration in making decisions to purchase a house. The installation of technology and space at the time of building homes is much more cost-effective than retrofitting. As such, proposals for new homes are encouraged to incorporate space and technology to enable home working.

## POLICY BFD9 - ADAPTABLE HOMES

Proposals for new dwellings that are designed to be accessible and inclusive, including meeting Building Regulations M4 (2) standards, will be supported.



### A New Approach to Housing in Broomfield

- 7.20 As indicated above, the 2019 Housing Needs Assessment (HNA) highlighted severe affordability pressures which make it very difficult for local people on average incomes to find housing and stay within their local community. The greatest identified need was for smaller properties that are genuinely affordable (shared equity or social rent), along with properties that enable older people to downsize. The same needs are reflected in the residents' questionnaire.
- 7.21 The Parish Council believes each community should identify and provide for its own housing need. The currently-predominant 'top down', market-led approach tends to produce large developments, led by large commercial house builders, often on greenfield land. These are more likely to produce a general mix of housing, rather than one that is specifically related to the needs of the neighbourhood. By contrast, the Parish Council would like to encourage new housing to be targeted at the existing community of Broomfield and its needs.
- 7.22 The current pressure on all communities in the South-East to accommodate more housing is likely to continue in the future. For example, the initial Issues and Options stage of the Local Plan Review indicates significant increases in housing requirement, compared to the Adopted Local Plan. The following paragraphs are set against this background. They recognise that some increase in house-building will be required, but also seek to ensure growth meets the specific needs of Broomfield people, not just top-down housing targets or developer opportunities.

#### Community Land Trusts

- 7.23 One option for securing affordable housing that meets identified local needs and remains available for the local community for all time is a Community Land Trust (CLT). This is a form of community-led housing, set up and run by local people to develop and manage homes as well as other assets. CLTs act as long-term stewards of housing, ensuring that it remains genuinely affordable, based on what people actually earn in their area, not just for now but for every future occupier. CLTs enjoy the discretion not to offer tenants the Right to Buy and those partnering with housing associations can ensure the same discretion is applied.

- 7.24 CLTs can be included within larger development allocations, but this would depend on a developer being willing to provide land below the market price. CLTs are therefore more likely to provide homes on small pieces of land within or on the edge of the existing settlement, where a philanthropic landowner is willing to donate land that is not designated for market housing or to sell well below market prices. Fig. 10 illustrates how the CLT process works:

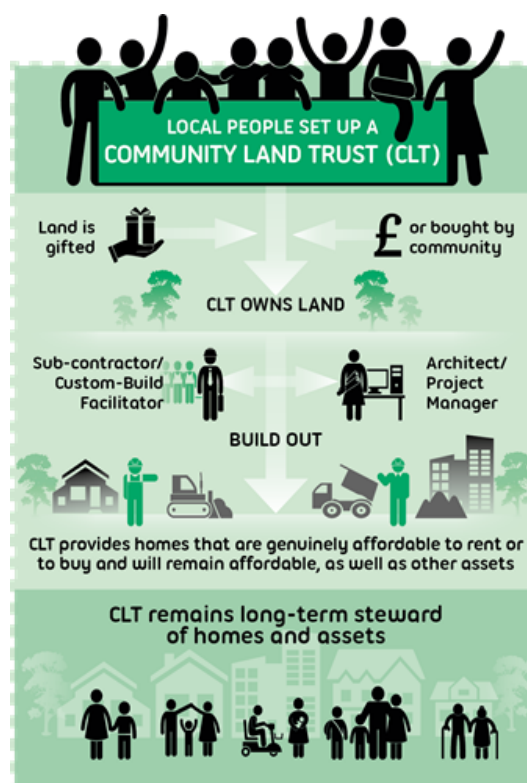


Fig. 10 - Community Land Trust

- 7.25 Working with the Rural Community Council of Essex (RCCE), the Parish Council will set up a Community Land Trust, to pioneer a more community-based approach to housebuilding in Broomfield in the future. As shown in Fig.10, this will need some local people to come forward to form the Broomfield CLT Board. Once established, the CLT can plan and secure community housing through a Registered Provider (normally a housing association), which eases the pressure on the CLT board members.

#### Community Action CA8 - Setting up a Community Land Trust (CLT)

The Parish Council will seek to set up a CLT to ensure that, in future, a greater proportion of new housing is genuinely affordable and designed to meet the specific needs of the people of Broomfield.

### Identifying a Site for a Community Housing Project

7.26 As part of the consultation with stakeholders, landowners and agents were invited to put forward proposals for developments that might offer a community benefit. The overall identified housing need of 176 dwellings will be met within the Broomfield portion of the 'North of Broomfield' development (Local Plan strategic site SGS8). Therefore, this Call of Sites invited proposals that would meet the following 3 criteria, rather than simply providing general housing to meet an overall target:

- include the provision of community facilities identified as desirable in the residents' questionnaire response, (especially Q.42 – 45)
- include the provision of new green open space with public access or landscape improvements of the type outlined in the Landscape Appraisal
- provide housing types prioritised in the HNA and residents' questionnaire response, for instance: one to three-bedroom homes, affordable rental homes, affordable shared equity homes, and homes for the active retired (including bungalows).

Responses were assessed by AECOM as part of a study of all the Local Plan and Neighbourhood Plan Call for Sites proposals and the Site Assessment report is published on the Neighbourhood Plan website.

7.27 One site, east of Saxon Way, was considered to offer the potential for all three and is therefore identified in the Neighbourhood Plan for development as described below and outlined in the site selection document on our website:

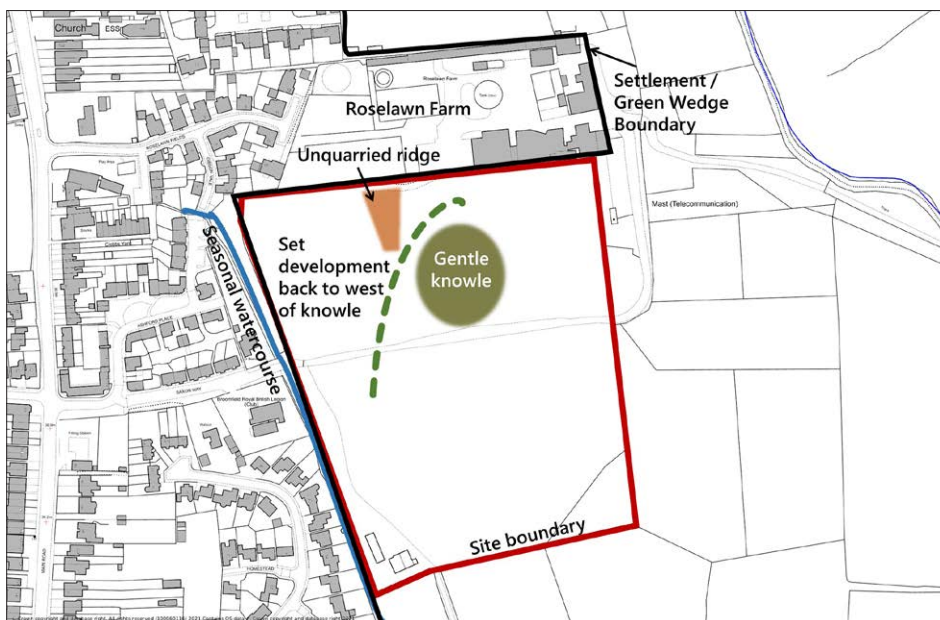


Fig. 11 - Site Constraints, Land east of Saxon Way



7.28 The following constraints to development have been identified through the site assessment process. Development proposals for this area will need to demonstrate how due regard has been given to these matters.

#### **Green Wedge**

The site lies just inside the Green Wedge identified in Policy S11 of the adopted Local Plan, where development must not 'materially harm the role, function and intrinsic character and beauty of the Green Wedge'. It must not lead to 'urban sprawl and settlement coalescence' and must provide for 'wildlife, flood storage capacity, leisure and recreation, and travel by cycling and walking' and allow for good public access. To achieve this, development should not extend further east than the buildings at Roselawn Farm, as that would reduce the settlement gap between Broomfield and Springfield. Open space should include water features for flood storage and features to encourage biodiversity, as well as opportunities for cycling, walking and informal leisure.

#### **Landscape**

The Neighbourhood Plan Landscape Appraisal identifies landscape constraints for the locality, for instance:

- development to be set back from the 'elevated knowle' and not impede views of the river valley from the knowle
- outer edge of any new development must be rural in character and could adopt a farm courtyard arrangement
- careful planting to avoid new development appearing prominently on the skyline and intruding and undermining the rural qualities of the valley.

#### **Archaeology**

The site has known archaeological interest. All features are recorded as being removed by investigation or by gravel extraction, except for a small unquarried ridge (see Transactions of the Essex Society for Archaeology and History, 3rd Series, Vol 17, 1986, p. 144-147).

#### **Watercourse**

Although the developable area is comfortably outside the flood zone, there is a seasonal watercourse to the west to which development should have regard.

#### **The amenity of neighbouring properties**

Boundaries with existing properties are mostly covered by hedgerows, trees or scrub. However, in some places new or enhanced planting may be required.

7.29 These constraints suggest that the developable area is around 1.25 hectares, in the northwest section of the overall 5.3-hectare site.

#### **Site Proposals**

7.30 In the light of the preceding paragraphs and the identified needs in Broomfield for affordable housing and community facilities, the Neighbourhood Plan identifies an area 5.3 hectares east of Saxon Way for:

- community facilities
- community-led affordable housing
- informal open space.

#### **Development Concept**

7.31 To guide the development of this site, a development concept has been included in the Neighbourhood Plan against which any development proposals are judged. The concept has been refined through discussion between the landowner and the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group and is illustrated in Fig. 12.

7.32 In summary, the development should provide the following:

##### **a. Community facilities**

- a cycle path between the existing built-up area and the Chelmer Valley cycle path
- if the Integrated Care Board wish to pursue this option, land for a GP surgery and associated facilities.

##### **b. New open green space**

- around four hectares of new accessible informal green space with associated extensive landscape improvements, on land which is currently unused and degraded. The open space achieved would be over three times the area to be developed.

##### **c. Affordable housing**

- the development would be led by affordable housing for local people, through a Community Land Trust, responding to needs identified in an up-to-date Affordable Housing Needs Survey.

- d. Structural landscaping and integrated sustainable urban drainage facilities
- the northern and western boundaries should include a significant landscaped belt including screening trees using native species of local provenance to reinforce existing planting
  - elsewhere within the site, existing trees and hedgerows should be retained and reinforced as appropriate.

Plainly the policy addresses a complex set of issues. Developers are encouraged to organise pre application meetings with the City Council and the County Council as necessary. Depending on the number of dwellings proposed on the site, a full Transport Assessment may need to be undertaken considering opportunities for sustainable transport measures, access arrangements, and the impact on the highway network in terms of safety and capacity. Any proposals for amendments to and/or the provision of new cycle routes/footways should involve consultation with the County Council, as the highway authority, and Essex Highways.

#### Development Design and Considerations

7.33 Before any development is approved, an extensive pre-application stage of archaeological work, including geophysics and trial-trenching, should be undertaken and submitted with the planning application. A written scheme of archaeological investigation will be required prior to any part of the development commencing. The final layout, whilst having regard to the Site Concept in Figure 12, should also take account of this archaeological work. The development should include initiatives to enhance, interpret and celebrate the significance of the site, i.e. through information boards, public art and community involvement.

7.34 The design of the development should take account of its setting outside the Settlement Boundary and the proximity of the farm buildings to the north. It is envisaged that the development could take the form of farmhouse or barn-style buildings, divided into dwellings of a size and form to meet the identified need and/or the GP surgery.

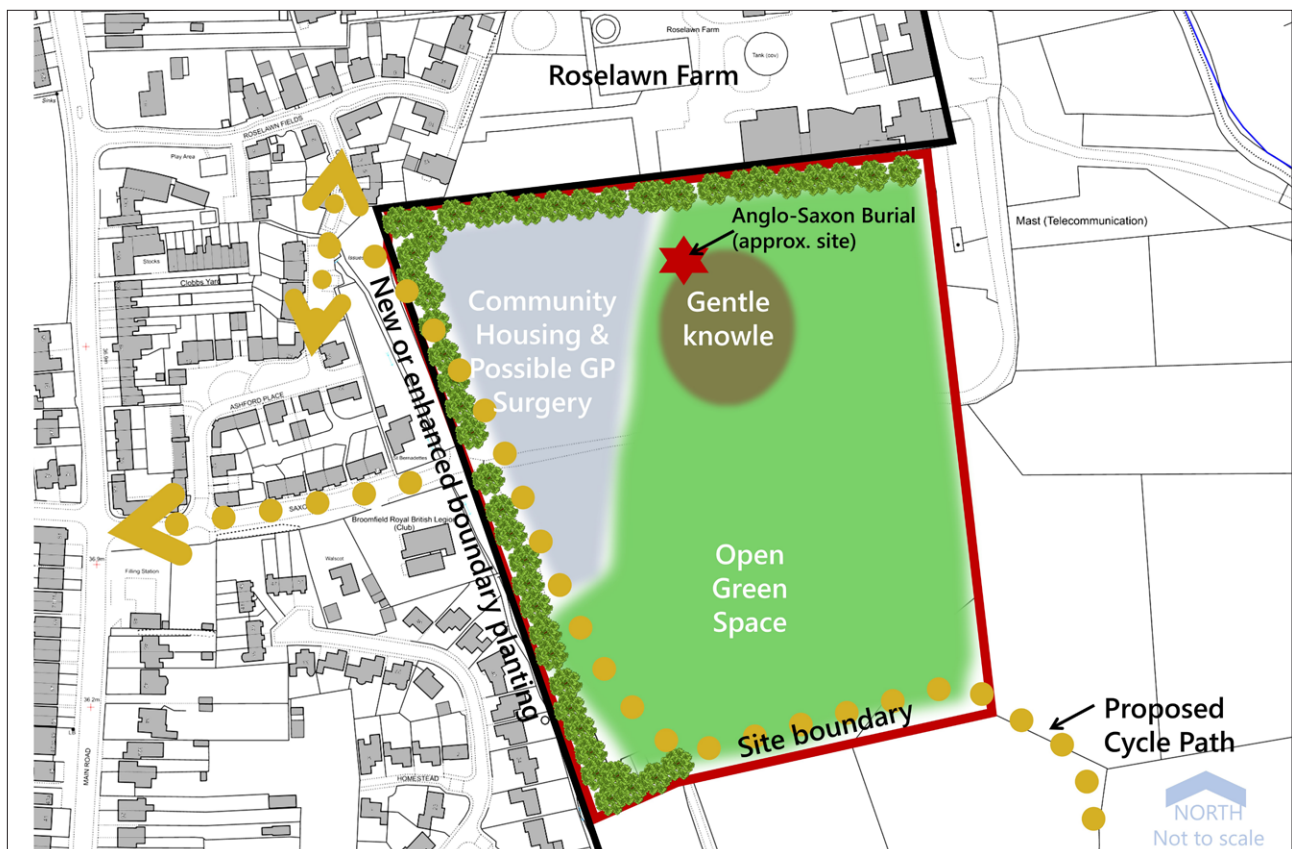


Fig. 12 - Site Concept Diagram, Land east of Saxon Way



## POLICY BFD 10 - LAND EAST OF SAXON WAY

A site of 5.3 hectares east of Saxon way, as identified on Figure 12, is allocated for:

- community open space, cycle paths and footpaths;
- community affordable housing to meet the specific needs of local people in Broomfield; and/or
- a GP surgery should the Mid and South Essex Integrated Care Board provide evidence that the surgery is required and deliverable at the time a planning application for the development is submitted.

The development of the site should be carried out in accordance with the principles illustrated in the Concept Diagram (Figure 12) and with its main vehicular and pedestrian access point from Saxon Way.

The community housing element should come forward alongside the use of the whole site for community open space, cycle paths and footpaths and only where it is:

- delivered and managed through a Community Land Trust or similar body; and
- offered in the first instance to people with a demonstrable local connection with the Parish of Broomfield and who are unable to buy or rent properties in the village at open-market prices.

Where necessary, based on its eventual composition, the development should:

- make financial contributions to early years, primary and secondary education provision, and other community facilities such as healthcare provision;
- make financial contributions to new or enhanced sport, leisure, and recreation facilities; and
- deliver appropriate improvements, as necessary, to the local and strategic road network.

