

Draft Local Plan

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Comment by	Great Saling Parish Council (Mrs Cathryn Carlisle)
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Comment Text Below

Great Saling Parish Council have taken time to consider our response to the Local Plan proposals, have consulted residents, and attended the exhibition arranged in our Village Hall. Unfortunately we are of the opinion that the current proposals are completely unacceptable and the so called consultation is ill conceived, poorly presented, inaccurate and therefore fatally flawed as a meaningful consultation. The proposal which affects Great Saling is the proposed settlement "West of Braintree". Residents and Parish Councillors attended the exhibition on 7th July 2016 expecting to be able to consider proposals and options. Unlike other specific sites that are contained within the Local Plan there were none; the only information available consisted of some rather basic plans showing an "orange dot" somewhere between Rayne, Great Saling and Stebbing. The planning officers present appeared to be embarrassed at the lack of any detail or information. The current consultation seems to give no "options" to consider. The number of new homes proposed within the district equals the governments requirements and there seem to be no ideas on how numbers would be made up if any of the existing sites were not to proceed. This suggests BDC officers or councillors have already made up their minds and the current consultation is purely being done to satisfy statutory requirements. Comments made by the leader of Braintree Council seem to back up our opinion that he has definitely made up his mind. Our main concerns with the idea of a new settlement are as follows: 1. Lack of transport facility and increased pressure on the existing roads. 2. Merging of existing rural communities. 3. Failure to investigate all site options within Braintree and surrounding areas. 4. Loss of agricultural land (Andrewsfield is not a brownfield site). 5. Loss of natural habitat - we are aware of a number of protected species present on the proposed sites - there needs to be an investigation of what is present and how these species will be affected by the proposals. 6. Ability to deliver in current economic climate. 7. The negative effect on the numerous Heritage sites, listed buildings and other sites of interest in the area (as detailed in the report dated 18 May 2016 by Place Services). There are a few specific points we wish to make. Some documents suggest that the new A120 is available as a transport link and it is "a free flowing road". It is not free flowing, just try and drive west in the morning or east in the evening. We believe that increased traffic to and from the proposed site will have a huge impact on the whole of the A120 bypass, and also the old A120. In recent years' proposals for developments west of Braintree have been made and have been turned down as being completely inappropriate. We have seen nothing in the current consultation to change those previous decisions. Finally we feel the current

figures for new homes required are out of date and need to be reviewed. Since the figures were calculated there has been a downturn in economic activity, as vote to leave the EU, and proposals to limit immigration. It seems the current number of new homes proposed is excessive and should be reduced.