

Braintree District Council, Colchester Borough Council and Tendring District Council

Local Plan Part 2 Examination Advice Note - 19 August 2020

We have been jointly appointed to examine the Part 2 sections of the Braintree, Colchester and Tendring Local Plans that were submitted to the Planning Inspectorate in October 2017. As you are aware the shared Part 1 element of these plans is still under examination with proposed Main Modifications in the process of being finalised. Consequently, the passing of nearly 3 years combined with the Part 1 Main Modifications identified are likely to have some implications for the Part 2 Examination. Our suggested approach to move things forward in the circumstances pragmatically is set out below.

Workload and capacity

We understand that each Council is still engaged in workstreams associated with the examination of the shared Part 1 element of the plan. As such, it would be helpful for us to know when you will have the staff time/availability and resources available to prepare for and host the Part 2 Examinations. We are also mindful that in setting up a programme of events we will need to take into account the availability of the Programme Officer, particularly when planning/administering examination hearings.

Please do not hesitate to contact us through the Programme Officer if you envisage any particular problems in this regard so we can make the required adjustments to the overall programme.

Administration of the Part 2 Examinations

It is not possible due to Covid 19 to agree an exact format for the Examination Hearings (physical, virtual or a mixture of both(blended)) at this stage. With this in mind it is important to make preparations to ensure that everything is in place to be able hold a 100% virtual event if it is deemed necessary. Therefore, to maintain flexibility moving forwards whilst ensuring that everyone who has made representations can have a meaningful input, it is necessary for the following to take place.

The creation of plan specific standalone Part 2 Examination websites/web pages that should include;

- All of the evidence that each Council is relying upon needs to be in one single part 2 examination library with each document given an examination reference. To ensure the effective running of the Examination library should be broadly arranged to follow the structure/policy order of the submitted Part 2 Plans for example – Spatial Strategy, Housing Land Supply/Trajectory, DM Policies etc.
- All representations received in relation to Part 2 should be arranged to follow the structure/policy order of the submitted Part 2 Plans. Moreover, the Council may wish to include schedule that summarises/identifies what

they consider to be the key issues identified (i.e. coastal flooding, design), along with their brief response.

- In terms of design and layout of the Part 2 Examination websites It would be helpful if the Councils' could adopt a broadly standardised approach as this will help in the effective management of each event.

Topic based update papers

For the reasons set out above you are requested to prepare 2 update topic papers;

Topic Paper 1 - Consequential changes – This should be divided into two parts.

- Part 1 - Specifically address any potential consequential changes to individual policies within the Part 2 plan as a result of the proposed Main Modifications identified within Part 1. Whilst this will predominantly be in the form of a schedule, each Council may wish to expand or give greater detail in relation to issues for example, implications for the spatial strategy etc
- Part 2 – Whilst each plan is being examined under that transition arrangements, it would be helpful if changes in National Legislation/Policy since the submission of each plan (i.e. changes to the Use Classes Order) are identified and if the Council considers if the changes have any bearing on the soundness of the plan. In doing so, it would be helpful to identify any policies which could potentially be affected.

Topic Paper 2 - Housing

We accept that a lot can change in 3 years in terms of housing land supply and delivery. Moreover, we note that whilst the proposed Main Modifications would remove 2 out of the 3 proposed Garden Communities from the plans, other sites may have been granted permission in the intervening period. Therefore, it is necessary to provide an updated housing position paper that should seek to address;

- Whether the plan provides an adequate supply of land to meet the housing requirement (as identified within Part 1 as Modified) over the plan period.
- Whether the plan will provide a five-year supply of deliverable sites from its date of adoption.
- Whether the plan will make appropriate provision for affordable housing, accommodation for gypsies and travellers, accessible and adaptable housing, and housing to meet the needs of particular groups, such as (for example) disabled people, older people, and students.

The requested topic papers should ideally be provided by 26th September 2020. Please advise if there are likely to be any problems in achieving this deadline.

Additional topic papers

Each Council may wish to prepare other topic specific updates in addition to those set out above, if you wish to do this please provide a brief synopsis of the

issues you intend to cover and forward to the Programme Officer for our initial consideration.

Once we have all of your responses there may be a requirement for additional information or clarification prior to finalising our Matters Issues and Questions along with the programming of hearings. We will endeavour to advise you at the earliest opportunity if this is necessary.

In conclusion

We are looking forward to working proactively with each of the Councils and all of the interested parties moving forwards.

Kindest regards,

Jameson Bridgwater and Anne Jordan

INSPECTORS