

LAND AT BRAINTREE ROAD FELSTED

WELCOME

Thank you for attending this public consultation in relation to land south of Braintree Road, Felsted ("the site"). Please take time to review all of the information presented and ask any questions you may have. Representatives from both Catesby Estates Limited and the appointed consultant team are here to assist.

The need for housing to meet the needs of the Parish is high on the agenda, and you will no doubt be aware of the recent Felsted Neighbourhood Plan workshop on the subject of housing needs. We are promoting a site in Felsted as a sustainable and suitable location for housing and want to gain the valued feedback of the community to help shape high quality proposals in keeping with the undoubted charm and attraction of this rural village.

We take public consultation very seriously on all of our schemes and we are keen to engage with and hear the views of the local community and various stakeholders. Catesby specialise in the promotion of land through the planning system to deliver sustainable residential development in areas with an identified housing need.



Introducing the land at Braintree Road

The extent of the site is outlined in red on the Aerial View shown below, with the Site Context inset showing how the site (marked with an asterisk) relates to the wider context.

Immediately north of site runs the B1417 Braintree Road which links to the A120 connecting Braintree with Bishop's Stortford via the M11 and London Stansted Airport. Jollyboys Lane North (byway) abuts the site along the southern section of the western boundary.

The site is well related to the eastern edge of the village and its facilities. It is visually contained by mature trees and hedgerows and comprises a single elongated arable field totalling 3.41 hectares (8.43 acres) in area. The designated Conservation Area extends across two properties found to abut the site at the north-west corner, the extent of which is shown tinted on successive boards.



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SUSTAINABILITY

Any potential housing sites proposed for development need to be in sustainable locations. This is at the heart of the Government's agenda in national planning policy, and is also being reflected at the District level in the Council's emerging Local Plan evidence base. This board seeks to illustrate the sustainability credentials of the site in the context of the services and facilities of the village.

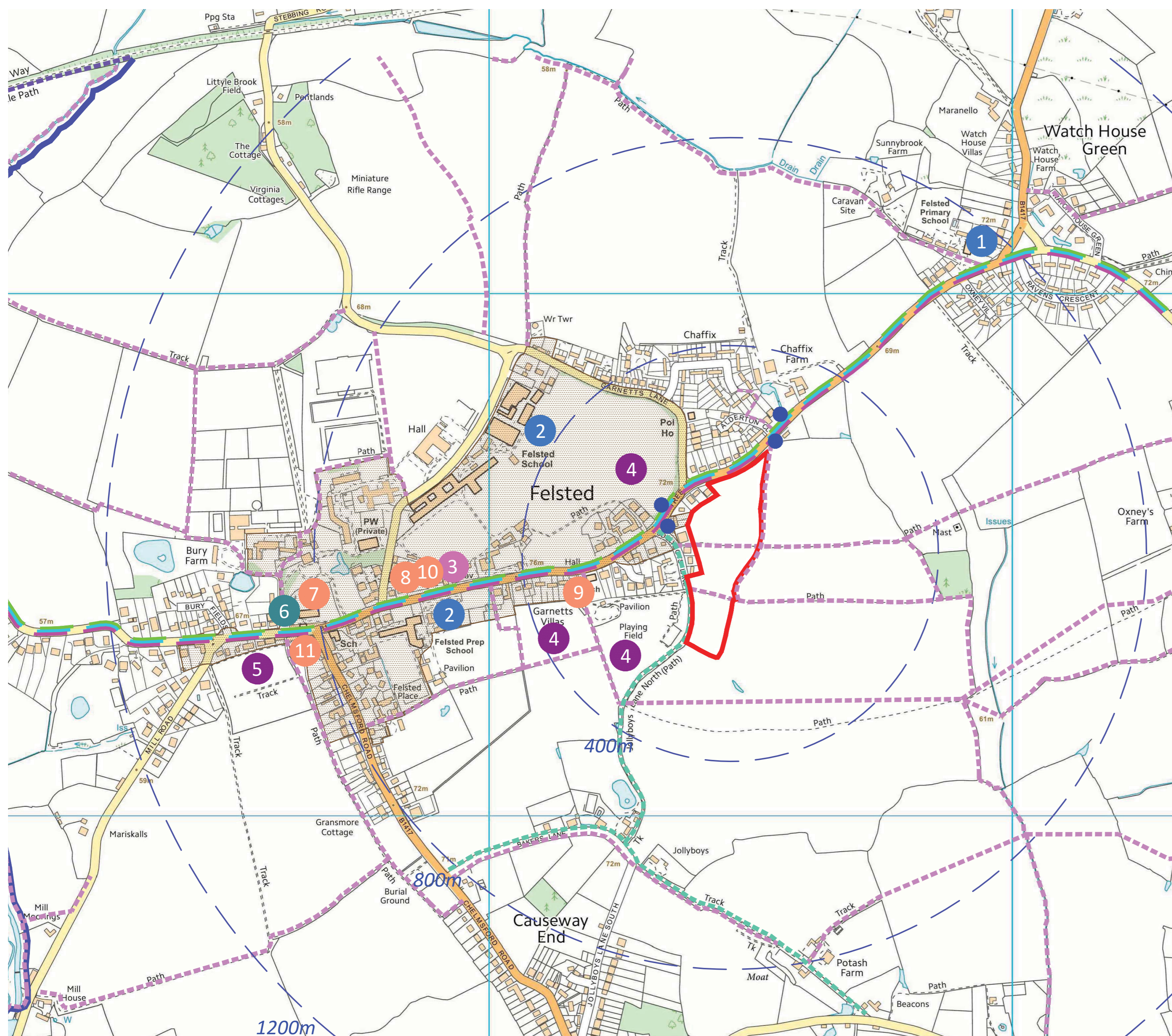
In short, to be considered as a sustainable location for housing, the Council consider a site should have access to various services and facilities including a bus stop, shop or post office, primary school, secondary school and doctors surgery.

The Key Facilities Plan below demonstrates the sites proximity to the services and facilities nearby within 400m, 800m and 1,200m isocromes. The majority of the facilities are within 800m (a 10 minute walk) of the centre of the site, including the primary school, recreational ground/playing facilities, a public house and the doctors surgery. Other key facilities, including another public house, local shop and post office are just over 800m from the site.

Sustainability is also measured in economic, environmental and social considerations too:

- **Economic** – Housing development will positively contribute to the growth of the local economy, delivering new homes, supporting local facilities and businesses, and creating new jobs during construction.
- **Social** – Housing development will help to meet the clear housing needs of the area through the provision of much needed market and affordable housing.
- **Environmental** – Housing development will ensure the provision of a high quality environment to live, with publically accessible areas of open space plus the retention of key existing features of the site such as hedgerows and mature trees. The heritage of the village will be carefully assessed and preserved through any proposals.

We believe that this is a highly sustainable site that could appropriately accommodate housing to meet local needs.



KEY:-

- The SITE
 - ISOCHRONES SHOWN AT 400, 800 AND 1200m SPACINGS
 - CIVIL PARISH BOUNDARY
 - DESIGNATED CONSERVATION AREA
- ### LINKS
- PUBLIC FOOTPATHS
 - PUBLIC BYWAY
 - PUBLIC BRIDLEWAY
- ### TRANSPORT LINKS
- SX CONNECT BUS SERVICE 133: Colchester-Stansted Airport - Monday-Sunday every hour
 - TRAVELINE SOUTH AND EAST BUS SERVICE 16: Chelmsford-Wethersfield - Operates 4 times a day
 - TRAVELINE SOUTH AND EAST BUS SERVICE M1: Stansted Mountfitchet-High Easter (School Service)
 - NEAREST BUS STOP TO SITE
- ### EDUCATION
- 1 FELSTED PRIMARY SCHOOL - RECEPTION TO YEAR 6
 - 2 FELSTED SCHOOL (INCLUDING PREPARATORY SCHOOL) RECEPTION TO SIXTH FORM (INDEPENDENT)
- ### HEALTH AND WELFARE
- 3 FELSTED SURGERY
- ### RECREATION AND LEISURE
- 4 RECREATION GROUND AND PLAYING FIELDS
 - 5 ALLOTMENT GARDENS
- ### RETAIL
- 6 LONDIS CONVENIENCE STORE WITH POST OFFICE
- ### COMMUNITY
- 7 HOLY CROSS CHURCH
 - 8 FELSTED UNITED REFORMED CHURCH
 - 9 FELSTED MEMORIAL HALL
 - 10 THE CHEQUERS P.H
 - 11 THE SWAN INN P.H

Key Facilities Plan

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PLANNING POLICY



'Development that is sustainable should go ahead, without delay - a presumption in favour of sustainable development that is the basis for every plan and every decision.'

(Ministerial Forward, National Planning Policy Framework)

Felsted Neighbourhood Plan

Felsted is in the early stages of preparing a Neighbourhood Plan for the village. The emerging Neighbourhood Plan will seek to guide where homes and businesses premises should be built. Catesby are keen to be involved at this early stage of the process.

The Felsted Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group held a public workshop on 26 September 2015 on the themes of Planning to Meet Future Housing Needs and Protecting the Integrity of the Parish including wildlife. Following on from this public workshop, Catesby and the team are keen to showcase what could be developed on the site, and how this could fit into the wider aspirations of the Neighbourhood Plan.

Planning Policy and Housing Need

At the local level, any development proposals for housing need to be subject to the scrutiny of Uttlesford District Council ('the Council').

All proposals for new housing are assessed against the policies of the adopted Development Plan and emerging Development Plan, all of which should be considered in line with overarching National Planning Policy Framework ('the Framework') and associated national Planning Practice Guidance.

The key overarching points relevant to these development proposals are summarised below:

- In order to significantly boost the supply of housing, at the heart of the Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. Paragraph 14 of the Framework requires all local planning authorities to approve development proposals that accord with the Development Plan, and where one is not in place or is out-of-date, grant permission unless there are any adverse impacts of doing so that would outweigh the benefits of development;
- The Council do not have an up-to-date Development Plan as this was adopted in 2005, some 10 years ago;
- The Council are in the early stages of producing their updated Development Plan, but this will not be in place for some time.
- The Council have recognised the role of Felsted as a sustainable settlement within the District, the now withdrawn Local Plan identified Felsted as a "type A rural settlement", ie: a settlement which has a primary school and some local services and capable of accommodating some housing growth.

The site was assessed in the Council's evidence base (the 2013 Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment) as being available, suitable and achievable for residential development.

Catesby considers that this development is much needed and fully justified. It is a sustainable site which can provide significant benefits to the District through the provision of both open market and affordable housing.

HOME BUILDERS FEDERATION Facts and Messages (August 2015)

1. Things are improving.

Measures show that new housing starts in the year to March 2015 (140,500) increased by more than 70% on the trough of 2008/9 and a rise of approximately 40% since the introduction of the Help to Buy Equity Loan.

2. But we're nowhere near to building the number of homes that is needed.

We are still some way off of the 220,000-250,000 homes per year that are needed over a sustained period to meet demand. The consequences of the housing crisis are now being felt by individuals, families and businesses nationwide, with affordability still a critical concern.

3. We need to see more land coming through the planning system.

Currently, too few local authorities have a fully adopted and up-to-date Local Plan. Comprehensive coverage of Local Plans is crucial to achieving the long-term sustained supply of housing that is needed.

4. Recent measures announced by the Government as part of its Productivity Plan are welcomed.

The decision by the Government to maintain pre-existing energy efficiency standards for new homes is a sensible one. The UK already builds some of the most energy efficient homes in the world thanks to exacting regulatory standards.

5. The housebuilding industry is also responsible for huge social and economic benefits for communities.

Independent research has found that the industry supports 600,000 jobs while providing tens of thousands of affordable homes and hundreds of millions of pounds in community facilities and new infrastructure. For instance, it is estimated that the industry paid £225m to local authorities in education funding alone. That is enough for 52,000 classroom places.

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ENVIRONMENTAL



Environmental Constraints

Work has been undertaken by the team to demonstrate that the site is suitable, available and capable of delivering new housing. The environmental work which has been undertaken to date is summarised as follows:

Heritage and Archaeology

- The site adjoins the Felsted Conservation Area but there are limited views of the site from the designated area.
- The nearest listed building is the Grade II listed "Buckcroft" cottage approximately 40m north-east of the site.
- A geophysical survey has indicated that the Archaeological potential of the site is low, this will be investigated further through trial trenching.

Landscape

- The site is visually well contained with views to it generally confined to within 500m. Views include:
 - Infrequent, glimpsed views from Braintree Road at the northern site boundary;
 - Views from the public rights of way running west-east across the site. These are open where the routes cross the site and increasingly filtered to the east;
 - Infrequent, glimpsed and filtered views from the public rights of way network to the south of the site and public open space/playing fields to the west of the site;
 - Glimpsed, heavily filtered and partial views from the southern edge of the playing fields within the Conservation Area to the north-west of the site; and
 - Views from residential properties adjacent, and backing on, to the western and northern boundary.
- There are no landscape designations across or within the site.
- The site does not represent, in a perceptual or physical sense, a landscape of any great importance or character.
- There is little to suggest the local landscape is of particular sensitivity or worthy of protection.

Ecology

- The site is dominated by managed agricultural grassland and in its current state, is assessed as being of low ecological value. The field margins support a slightly increased botanical diversity, although not an uncommon assemblage for the area. The site is bound by mature hedgerows with standard trees, and a cluster of three mature oak trees is present at the north of the site.
- Wildlife surveys have established that the development of the site would not raise any issues with protected species. The existing design response would be tailored to minimise any adverse effects on protected species, should they be present, and strive towards a net gain in biodiversity.

TECHNICAL

Technical Work is being undertaken to demonstrate that the site is capable of accommodating housing development without negatively impacting on the surrounding area or the site itself.

Drainage and Flood Risk

- The site falls within an area classified as Flood Zone 1 (Low Probability of Flooding) with a less than 1 in 1000 annual probability of flooding from Rivers or the Sea. This is the lowest classified risk category, consequently the site is considered appropriate for residential development.
- Essex County Council have been contacted in relation to the drainage proposals for the site and it has been agreed that surface water run-off discharged from the site will be lower in comparison to the existing site during heavy rainfall events, this will reduce the rate at which water currently leaves the site.
- The site could be developed to incorporate Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS). A drainage strategy could be completed which will demonstrate how surface water can be sustainably accommodated within the site through the use of an attenuation basin and the existing ditches. Storm water from the site could be released slowly at a controlled rate to the existing ditchcourse, providing an improvement to the existing storm water situation.

Local Highway Infrastructure

- Vehicle speeds and volumes at the site access point on Braintree Road have been recorded in the vicinity of the site to enable the proposed site access to be located in a position to attain the required visibility based upon the actual speed of traffic.
- Current peak hour traffic volumes have been recorded as averaging at 8 vehicles per minute in the AM peak and 7 during the PM peak which is considered a modest level of traffic.
- Accident information for the past five years has been received from the local authority, which demonstrates Braintree Road has a good safety record.

Proposed Site Access

- The proposed primary site access could be designed to accommodate all modes of travel (pedestrian, cycle and vehicular). The primary access will be in the form of a simple priority give-way T-Junction onto the B1417 Braintree Road and the initial feasibility design is shown below.
- The access junction design is compliant with national and local design standards.
- A new footway could be provided from the primary access to the local bus stops to provide direct and safe connections to public transport.
- Other existing pedestrian public rights of way connections will be retained and enhanced as part of the development.

Services & Utilities

Water

- Affinity Water have confirmed that there is sufficient capacity in the existing water network to serve the site.

Electricity

- UK Power Networks have identified that reinforcement works to the existing power network will be required to serve the site.
- The existing pole mounted transformer on site will be removed and replaced with a new electricity substation.
- The existing overhead cables which currently cross the site could be diverted underground within the development proposal.



Site Access Proposals

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DESIGN PRINCIPLES

A review of the Environmental and Technical issues has informed the key design principles. These principles demonstrate how development on the site could integrate within the surrounding area, whilst respecting the character of the surrounding area and existing features and constraints. We take the relationship of any development very seriously with adjoining properties along Jollyboys Lane North and have sought to ensure that nearby properties are sensitively sited and designed. We would welcome your comments with specific regard to this inter-relationship.

Landscape and Ecology

- Retain and enhance existing perimeter hedgerows and trees.
- Native planting will make a positive contribution to the landscape fabric of the local area, whilst aiding biodiversity and improving wildlife habitats.
- Incorporate green spaces along exposed perimeter boundaries, helping to soften the development edge and enabling connection with wider green infrastructure. These connected spaces provide commuting routes and foraging areas for wildlife.
- Locate green space at the north-eastern corner of site to soften the entrance into the village at its eastern edge.
- Locate a key green space around the historic mature oaks in the northwest portion of the site. This offers the potential for a development centre-piece.
- Plant new tree screen at abutment with Conservation Area to limit inter-visibility between heritage assets and new development.
- Landscaped attenuation features located in the north-east and south-east corners of the site will enable the controlled discharge of storm water into the existing ditchcourses.



Movement and Connectivity

- The existing public rights of way that cross the site east to west will be retained. These will remain within an informal movement corridor, with green space maximised as much as possible so as to not urbanise the route. These will not be re-routed even where short sections may become shared surfaces (ie: appropriate for pedestrians, cyclists and motorists alike).
- The site is currently well positioned to access many local services such as bus stops, Memorial Hall and recreational facilities. This will encourage alternative modes of travel, an essential requirement when considering any new development.
- A new primary access (all modes) to the site shall be formed off Braintree Road. A simple T-junction is considered to be most appropriate resulting in minimal loss of existing vegetation. No other access points will be formed from Braintree Road. The existing field access shall be closed up with new infill hedgerow planting.
- A new access road with footways on either side, will meander north to south through the site to encourage low vehicle speeds (20mph desired speed)



Layout Concept

- Layout structure shall take reference from the village context. Along the Braintree Road frontage, block mass and scale shall be influenced by nearby housing.
- Blocks shall face towards all existing green infrastructure, ensuring that it is 'included' within the development and accessible from the public realm.
- A formal block structure shall positively address the planned green space to the northeast forming a 'gateway' to the site and the village.
- This formal block structure shall continue along the initial length of the access road and frame the retained mature oak trees.
- A more informal block structure shall be applied to the remainder of the development. Blocks shall be set at varying distances from the carriageway and at differing angles to avoid repetition.
- Opportunities exist for the creation of feature 'nodes' where green corridors and public rights of way intersect the access road. This could include feature tree planting, street furniture and/or landmark buildings.
- Both on-plot and clearly defined on-street parking will be incorporated on-site at a level in accordance with regulatory requirements.
- A high quality development with a commitment to good design will be limited to two storey in height reflecting the character of the village.



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ILLUSTRATIVE MASTERPLAN

The Illustrative Masterplan below demonstrates how the site could accommodate the proposed development, comprising:

- Existing public rights of way which cross the site will remain;
- Up to 85 new dwellings ranging from 2 to 5 bed properties of which 40% would be affordable (a mix of rented and shared ownership). The overall number of dwellings also depends on the appropriate density of development;
- Development will aim to reflect the village character of Felsted;
- A network of spaces is planned helping to create a 'sense of place', these spaces shall be joined-up to aid permeability both on-site and locally;
- Blocks fronting Braintree Road shall reflect existing housing to the north and west;
- Within the site, block structure will positively address streets and spaces;
- A softer block structure will be developed along eastern and southern boundaries where detached blocks will nestle amongst green space;
- Existing field hedgerows and trees shall be largely retained and enhanced, in addition there will be generous levels of new planting throughout;
- Development will respect the designated Conservation Area where it immediately abuts the site, and new tree planting introduced to protect the setting;
- The design of individual dwellings and the way that they are positioned in relation to each other, will ensure that the privacy of both existing and new residents is safeguarded;
- The impact of parked vehicles on the street will be addressed through both on-plot and clearly defined on-street parking;



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POTENTIAL BENEFITS

Housing development on the site could bring a wide range of benefits, such as:

- Boost the supply of housing to meet an identified need.
- Up to 85 new homes are proposed, a policy compliant 40% of these will be affordable. This could equate to a total of 32 dwellings being available to local people, including first time buyers and young families.
- Result in the construction of well designed, high quality, energy efficient, sustainable new homes.
- Broad range of house types to meet varied housing needs, user groups and local demand.
- Enhance the viability of local businesses and services within the settlement by increased user quantum. Valuable contribution to the local economy including an increase in GDP and the creation of full-time and part-time construction jobs. A recent study by the confederation of British Industries demonstrates that construction projects have significant benefits on the local and wider economy, for the report conclude that for every £1 of construction spent, £2.84 is injected into the economy.
- The scheme will contribute to the Council's New Home Bonus Funding.
- Retention of all trees and hedgerows on-site enhanced with new planting and the provision of further green infrastructure alongside, enabling the development to fully integrate into the surroundings and the creation of improved wildlife habitats.

We are keen to hear the opinions of the local community in terms of 'what new facilities does the village need most?'. Whilst a handful of suggestions are shown below, please feel free to complete a Feedback Form and let us have your own thoughts. We might be able to help.



A new community shop (with potential Post Office/Cafe)?



Car parking for the village?



A new village health centre?



New recreational facilities / village hall?

What Happens Next?

Thank-you for taking time to view our proposals, and we hope you have found this exhibition useful.

We are in the early stages and would welcome your comments to help inform our ongoing and evolving proposals for the site. Please do fill out a **Feedback Form** available here today, or take one away and send it to us by **23rd October 2015** at:

*Framptons, Oriel House, 42 North Bar
Banbury, Oxon, OX16 0TH*

The exhibition material is available on:
www.framptons-planning.com

You may make your comments online using this weblink.