

# **Babergh Core Strategy Examination**

## **Matter - Brantham Regeneration Area (Main Modification 25)**

### **Proof of Evidence from Gary Guiver PGCIM PGDipTP MRTPI Planning Policy Manager for Tendring District Council**

#### **Preamble**

I am the Planning Policy Manager for Tendring District Council (TDC) and have 11 years practical experience in Town and Country Planning. I hold a BSc(Hons) degree and Post-Graduate Diploma in Environmental Planning from Anglia Polytechnic University and a Post-Graduate Certificate in Management from Colchester Institute and I am a Chartered Town Planner and Member of the Royal Town Planning Institute (MRTPI). Most of my experience has related to planning policy at Tendring District Council but I have presented evidence at Public Inquiries relating to both Local Plans and planning appeals.

#### **Background**

1. The district of Babergh shares an administrative boundary with the district of Tendring which, for best part, follows the route of the River Stour with some deviations west of the Cattawade Bridge. The village of Brantham falls under the jurisdiction of Babergh and lies within half a kilometre of the administrative boundary and within one kilometre of the urban settlement of Manningtree, Lawford and Mistley which falls under the jurisdiction of Tendring.
2. As neighbouring authorities, Babergh District Council and TDC have a duty to cooperate on matters of cross-boundary significance in line with the Localism Act and have maintained a positive and constructive dialogue throughout the preparation of their respective Local Plans and other Local Development Documents. TDC remains generally supportive of the policies and proposals

contained within Babergh District Council's Core Strategy and contends that, on the whole, the document presents a sound planning strategy. Babergh District Council has also indicated that it is broadly supportive and has no significant concerns over the content of TDC's emerging Local Plan which is likely to be submitted for examination, following consultation on pre-submission focussed changes, in 2014.

3. This proof of evidence relates to Policy C6a 'Brantham Regeneration Area Allocation', as proposed for amendment through the 'Further Proposed Main Modifications' for which TDC has made representations outlining concerns relating specifically to highways matters. The modifications relating to this policy and its supporting text acknowledge the possibility of a larger scheme than originally envisaged which could include a significant level of housing development on greenfield land. These amendments have been made in response to representations from the landowner that were given due consideration by the Planning Inspector as part of the main examination that took place earlier in 2013.

4. TDC continues to support the concept of a Brantham Regeneration Area subject to the full implications for traffic on the A137 (particularly at the Manningtree railway crossing and Manningtree station) being assessed through the master planning process and appropriately mitigated, where possible utilising financial contributions from the developer(s). TDC is concerned however that the revised policy does not provide sufficient guarantees within its wording to ensure that these matters will be addressed, particularly given the potential for a much larger scheme than originally envisaged.

#### **Statement of Case**

5. TDC's case relates to the high probability that any new residents occupying the expanded residential elements of the scheme (for which it is understood that around 600 dwellings are possible) will tend to use Manningtree and Colchester (as the nearest major towns) for shopping, work and other purposes and will therefore travel southward along the A137, over (or under) the

railway crossing in Lawford. There is also a high probability that many of these new residents will be attracted to this location by the mainline rail services to London provided at nearby Manningtree Station and many of these will chose to drive from the site to park at, or within the vicinity of, the station car park which is located south of the railway crossing.

6. TDC is already concerned about the suitability and safety of the crossing to accommodate the existing traffic that uses this route, the physical dimensions of the crossing to accommodate larger vehicles and the limited amount of parking space available at Manningtree Station for commuters. The development of several hundred new houses on land that lies north of this crossing are likely to add, considerably, to the traffic movements through the crossing, including during the construction phases. It is therefore important that the impacts are understood and, where necessary, mitigated by the development either through direct works or through developer contributions.

7. TDC welcomes the references to the preparation of a masterplan to guide the proposed development and would welcome the opportunity to be a key partner in this process as part of the ongoing Duty to Cooperate. However TDC contends that the wording of the policy and supporting text, as proposed for modification, could be further improved if there were stronger references to the impact of vehicular movements on the railway crossing at Lawford being fully considered through the masterplan process and, if necessary, mitigation measures being put in place. If the policy could be strengthened in this way it would address TDC's concerns about the content of the Core Strategy.

### **Suggested Improvements**

8. To address the concerns detailed above, TDC suggests the following amendments to the proposed wording of Policy C6a and its supporting text:

- That the sixth paragraph of supporting text under 2.8.5 we amended to read as follows (with new text underlined): *“The masterplan and mitigation strategy will need to ensure that direct and indirect negative impacts on the integrity of the Stour and Orwell Estuaries SPA and Ramsar Site are avoided. In particular, provision of alternative Natural Green Space will be required, in line with the Haven Gateway Green Infrastructure Strategy. Provision and funding for the green infrastructure will be provided by the developer(s). It is anticipated that the green infrastructure provision would include creation of a new Public Open Space, for which the design and management plan should aim for a quality suitable for designation as a Local Nature Reserve. The masterplan and mitigation strategy will also need to ensure that the impact of any additional vehicular movements on highway capacity and safety along the A137 over and under the railway crossing in neighbouring Lawford are assessed, understood and, if necessary, mitigated through either direct works or developer contributions.”*

- That under Section C of Policy C6a, a new bullet point is added stating: *“the need to ensure that the impact of any additional vehicular movements on highway capacity and safety along the A137 over the railway crossing in neighbouring Lawford are assessed, understood and, if necessary, mitigated through either direct works or developer contributions;”*

9. TDC contends that through the master planning process and/or subsequent determination of a planning application, two mitigation measures that could resolve any identified issues with regard to highway capacity and safety in the vicinity of the railway crossing could include physical improvements to the railway crossing itself and the expansion of car parking provision at Manningtree Station, ideally on land north of the crossing (to minimise the need for vehicles to pass over or under the crossing).

Gary Guiver BSc(Hons) PGCIM PGDipTP MRTPI  
Planning Policy Manager - Tendring District Council