

Great Tey Neighbourhood Plan Group
Village Hall
Great Tey

30th September 2019

Dear Sir,

Great Tey Neighbourhood Plan: Call for Sites

“Developing a Vision to Secure a Long-Term Sustainable Village”

As a part of the ‘call for sites’ consultation and to inform the Neighbourhood Plan, we have set out a number of sites that we believe will contribute towards developing Great Tey into long-term sustainable rural settlement and will enhance its environmental, social and economic infrastructure. These sites are submitted on behalf of our client, Mr Fairs.

As a part of the Neighbourhood Plan process, it is important that a vision for Great Tey is developed that explores what the term ‘sustainability’ means for the village. Sustainable development is about action, not just maintaining the status quo, and it is about more than just the environment, it has to address environmental, social and economic issues together. With this in mind, the key question that the Neighbourhood Plan should ask and answer, is what the village community will look like in the next two decades or more and how this can be achieved.

We have set out below a number of matters for consideration during the Neighbourhood Plan process, and indicated how the site allocations put forward by Mr Fairs can make a contribution towards achieving those aims.

Climate Change

Climate change poses the most significant and urgent challenge globally. There is an increasingly growing movement working towards a low carbon economy and making sure that as a population, we are resilient to climate change. The UK Government recently set the target to bring all greenhouse gas emissions to net zero by 2050. Every aspect of society, including at the local level, will need to adopt actions to tackle the causes and effects of climate change and contribute towards this zero-carbon target. The Neighbourhood Plan provides the tool in which Great Tey can make its contribution towards being a zero-carbon rural community.

We have set out a number of initiatives on our enclosed ‘Great Tey - Sustainability Vision’ that could be explored through the Neighbourhood Plan process, and are summarised below:

Community Woodland

The Neighbourhood Plan could allocate land as a 'Community Woodland'. The enclosed 'Great Tey - Sustainability Vision' identifies potential land for this use to the south of the village, which is currently in agricultural use and offers very low ecological or landscape benefits.

A Community Woodland can be either partly or completely controlled by the local community, through a community woodland group. A community woodland can deliver a huge range of public benefits, including:

- **Recreation** - providing opportunities for outdoor recreation, through the creation of informal paths, community woodland group activities etc.
- **Biodiversity & Conservation** - restoring and expanding native woodlands, and creating and carrying out ecological habitat improvements, to increase and enhance Great Tey's local biodiversity.
- **Carbon Capture** – The new trees will absorb carbon dioxide to produce oxygen and wood.

Nature Reserve

The Neighbourhood Plan could allocate land as a nature reserve. The enclosed 'Great Tey - Sustainability Vision' identifies land to the north west of the village that could be developed into a local nature reserve. This land is currently in agricultural use and offers very low ecological or landscape benefits.

A nature reserve would provide a number of social and environmental benefits to Great Tey. Firstly, and critically, the creation of a nature reserve will significantly enhance local biodiversity on land that currently has low ecological value. However, the benefits extend beyond ecological enhancement and includes educational and community engagement benefits, by developing the nature reserve in partnership with Great Tey Primary School, the Parish Council and other local community groups. It would also provide a new recreation space that is different from anything that the village currently has.

Recreational Enhancements

We have already referred to recreational and community benefits that a community woodland and nature reserve could bring to Great Tey. The enclosed 'Great Tey - Sustainability Vision' also indicates how a 2.7km circular walking route could be developed in Great Tey. Such a route will encourage physical activity through increased opportunities for walking and running, thereby improving personal health. It would also have the potential to encourage social interaction and engagement amongst of the local villagers.

Digital Connectivity

Internet access is critical to rural life as it reduces isolation and opens up access to services like banking, shopping, education, healthcare, communication, and employment, but would also encourage home-working and business growth. The Neighbourhood Plan provides an opportunity to develop local policy initiatives that encourages broadband providers to ensure that digital connectivity is always maintained at an appropriate level for the needs of Great Tey. The Parish and the Village Hall could also have a role in providing a technological hub to assist those who require digital assistance and support.

The Village Economy

Rural business plays a key role in community life in terms of providing local employment and/or services to the community. However, increasingly, people work outside of the village as skilled employment opportunities are scarce. The Neighbourhood Plan provides an opportunity to remove constraints to economic enterprise and revitalise the local economy. Possible initiatives could include:

- Protection of existing businesses – the enclosed ‘Great Tey - Sustainability Vision’ identifies land currently used by existing businesses that could be protected as an employment site, with appropriate policies to allow its long-term modernisation and growth.
- Employment growth – safeguarding land for long-term employment growth to support expanding local businesses, develop a local business hub etc.
- Encourage home-working – this will reduce the need to travel and increase day-time population in the village, which in turn will support local services and facilities.

Local Housing

In addition to the sites allocated for development in the emerging Colchester Local Plan (2017-2033), the Neighbourhood Plan provides an opportunity for the village to plan for its long-term growth taking into account the needs of the village as a whole.

Given the changing the demographics that are occurring nationally and locally, for example, an aging population and smaller household sizes, together with a local desire to retain and encourage younger families to live in the village, there may be a need for various different types of houses, for example, retirement bungalows, starter homes, affordable homes, new family homes etc. As such, it would be prudent for the Neighbourhood Plan to be informed by a ‘housing needs assessment’ that considers the broad spectrum of housing that is needed in the village now, but also in the next 10 and 20 years and beyond.

The development of housing not only supports a social need within the village, it also provides a number of other benefits as it can facilitate the development of local infrastructure projects, and unlock land for community use. For example, some of the suggested green infrastructure projects and economic development initiatives may only be deliverable if they form part of a housing development. The benefits to the community and the environment are significant and alone would justify the housing.

The enclosed ‘Great Tey - Sustainability Vision’ sets out three parcels of land adjoining the village that could deliver additional housing in partnership with local aspirations.

Moving Forward

We request that the Great Tey Neighbourhood Plan Group considers each of the land parcels put forward. Each parcel is summarised below:

Parcel	Size (ha)	Proposed Land Use	Capacity	Delivery
A	9.7ha	Community Woodland	9.7 ha	Secured through planning gain as part of a residential development
B	4.2ha	Nature Reserve	9.7 ha	Secured through planning gain as part of a residential development
C	2.3ha	Existing Employment Zone	2.3 ha	Neighbourhood Plan designation
D	2.3 ha	Safeguarded Employment Growth	2.3ha	Neighbourhood Plan designation
E	2.7ha	Village Housing (family homes; affordable homes; starter homes)	54 @ 20 dwellings per hectare	Neighbourhood Plan designation

F	1.1ha	Village Housing (retirement homes)	22 @ 20 dwellings per hectare	Neighbourhood Plan designation
G	2.8ha	Village Housing (family homes; affordable homes; starter homes)	56 @ 20 dwellings per hectare	Neighbourhood Plan designation
H	n/a	Walking Route	2.7 km	Neighbourhood Plan designation, delivered through planning gain, and reliant on the land use presented being also being delivered.
I	n/a	Southern Village Relief Road	n/a	Neighbourhood Plan designation, delivered through planning gain, and reliant on the land use presented being also being delivered.

Our client wants to work with the Great Tey Neighbourhood Plan Group to deliver a sustainable vision for the village. We would be happy to meet with the Neighbourhood Plan Group to run through this vision and explore opportunities of bringing it forward through the Neighbourhood Plan process.

Yours sincerely,

Andrew Ransome

Andrew Ransome MRTPI
Planning Director

Appendix A: 'Great Tey – Sustainability Vision'

Great Tey - Sustainability Vision

Green Infrastructure

- A: Community Woodland: 9.7ha
 - providing recreational opportunities;
 - restoring and expanding native woodland;
 - carbon absorption;
 - ecological net-gain.
- B: Nature Reserve: 4.2ha
 - ecological net-gain;
 - educational opportunities;
 - recreation opportunities.

Employment

- C: Existing Employment Zone: 2.3ha
 - protecting and enhancing existing businesses.
- D: Employment Growth: 2.3ha
 - safeguarding land for the long-term economic growth.

Housing

- E: Village Housing:
 - 2.7ha
 - family housing;
 - affordable living;
 - starter homes.
- F: Village Housing:
 - 1.1ha
 - retirement homes.
- G: Village Housing:
 - 2.8ha
 - family homes;
 - affordable living;
 - starter homes.

Connectivity

- H: Walking Route:
 - 2.7km (minimum) walking route;
 - encourage physical activity through walking and running opportunities.
- I: Southern Village Relief Road



Key

- Key Village Services/Facilities
- Listed Buildings
- Existing Green Infrastructure
- Proposed Green Infrastructure
- ▨ Existing Open Space/Recreation
- Local Nature Reserve
- ▨ Community Woodland
- Local Plan Committed Allocations
- Sustainable Housing Opportunities
- ▨ Existing Employment Zone
- Employment Growth
- Access and Connectivity
- Vehicular Access
- Pedestrian and Cycle links
- Public Footpath Route