

Essex County Council
Planning and Development
CG05, County Hall
Chelmsford
Essex, CM1 1QH



Castle Point Borough Council
Kiln Road, Thundersley
Benfleet
Essex

Our ref: 37253

Date: 14/10/2022

Dear Sir or Madam

Brook Farm (Land at), Benfleet
Without Prejudice CPT/22/484

Thank you for sending me details of the Full planning application for 173 dwellings including public open space, landscaping, access, drainage, parking, servicing, utilities and all associated infrastructure and ancillary buildings. From the information I have received, I have assessed the application on the basis, of 12 x 1 bed flats (exempt) 6 x 2 bed flats & 155 qualifying houses being 2 or more bedrooms.

A development of this size can be expected to generate the need for up to 14.2 early years & childcare places, 47.4 primary school places and 31.6 secondary school places.

Please note that any developer contribution figures referred to in this letter are calculations only, and that final payments will be based on the actual dwelling unit mix and the inclusion of indexation.

Early Years and Childcare

The proposed development is located within the Victoria Ward. According to Essex County Council's latest childcare sufficiency data, there are 3 providers of early years and childcare in this ward, 2 are day nurseries and 1 is a childminder. A total of only 6 unfilled places were recorded across this ward.

Essex County Council has a statutory duty under the Childcare Act 2006 to ensure that there is sufficient and accessible high quality early years and childcare provision to meet local demand.

An additional 14.2 places would be provided at an estimated total cost of £245,551 at January 2020 prices. This equates to £17,268 per place and so, based on demand generated by this proposal set out above, a developer contribution of £245,551 index linked to Q1 2020, is sought to mitigate its impact on local EY&C provision.

Primary Education

This development would sit within the priority admission area of Hadleigh Infant and Junior Schools, which have published admission numbers of 90 places per year group.

As at the last school census in May, the junior school had sufficient surplus capacity, but the infant school was close to capacity in two, of its three year groups. Provisional data for September 2022 suggests the school is full in Reception and a waiting list for places is in operation. Looking at the wider Hadleigh area, which includes Westwood Primary, forecasts set out in the Essex School Organisation Service's Ten Year Plan suggest that an additional half form of entry of capacity will be required.

An additional 47.4 places would be provided at an estimated total cost of £818,503 at January 2020 prices. This equates to £17,268 per place and so, based on demand generated by this proposal set out above, a developer contribution of £818,503 index linked to Q1 (January 2020), is sought to mitigate its impact on local primary provision.

Secondary Education

We will not be requesting a secondary school contribution on this occasion.

Having reviewed the proximity of the site to the nearest primary and secondary schools, Essex County Council will not be seeking a school transport contribution, however, the developer should ensure that safe direct walking and cycling routes to local schools are available.

Libraries

Based on 173 dwellings, and in accordance with the Essex County Council Developers' Guide to Infrastructure Contribution (Revised 2020), a contribution is therefore considered necessary to improve, enhance and extend the facilities and services at the nearest local Library, the proposed development sits close to two libraries that being South Benfleet and Great Tarpots being just over 3 miles away from this development.

I believe the libraries would be affected by this development, and we would expect an increase in footfall, produced from this development at a cost of £77.80 per unit, respectively. Improvements could include, but is not limited to, additional facilities, additional furniture, provision of learning equipment / play equipment for younger children, improved access, external works such as parking and bike racks and IT. In this case, and taking the above into account, it is calculated that a contribution of £13,459.40 is requested towards local library enhancements.

Employment and skills

Both Central and Local Government have a crucial role to play in identifying opportunities to maximise employment, apprenticeships, and to invest in skills to realise personal and economic aspirations.

ECC has a role to play in supporting Local Planning Authorities and helping to ensure that the development industry has the necessary skills to build the homes and communities the county needs. ECC supports Castle Point Borough Council in securing obligations which will deliver against this crucial role in supporting employment and skills in the district.

In the current economic climate and national skills shortage, ECC supports Castle Point Borough Council in requiring developers to prepare an 'Employment and Skills Plan' (ESP) seeking to drive forward an increase in construction employability levels and workforce numbers. These plans will help to address negative perceptions of the sector and develop a strong future pipeline. This is referred to as the 'development phase'.

ECC also supports Castle Point Borough Council in requiring landowners to produce an ESP for commercial developments, to enable wider employment opportunities for those requiring additional support to enter the job market. This is referred to as the 'end-use phase'. Additionally, ECC encourages Castle Point Borough Council to consider the inclusion of other requirements, including financial contributions, to support appropriate employment and skills outcomes as a result of this application.

In view of the above, I request on behalf of Essex County Council that if planning permission for this development is granted it should be subject to a section 106 agreement to mitigate its impact on EY&C & Primary places, and library enhancements. The contributions requested have been considered in connection with the CIL Regulations 2010 (as Amended) and are CIL compliant. Our standard formula s106 agreement clauses that ensure the contribution would be necessary and fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development are available from Essex Legal Services.

If your council were minded to turn down the application, I would be grateful if the lack of surplus, EY&C & Primary places and library facilities in the area to accommodate the proposed new homes can be noted as an additional reason for refusal, and that we are automatically consulted on any appeal or further application relating to the site.

Thank you for consulting this authority in respect of this application.

Yours faithfully,



Sarah Cutting
Infrastructure Planning Officer

Telephone
E-mail

