



David Burton-Sampson

Member of Parliament for Southend West and Leigh
House of Commons, London SW1A 0AA
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HM Planning Inspectorate
C/O Castle Point Borough council,

21/07/2026

Dear Inspector,

I am writing to provide clarification regarding the status of Hadleigh Farm (previously identified as site GB8) within the Castle Point planning process.

It is my view that Castle Point are right not to have submitted this as part of the plan.

While Hadleigh Farm does not form part of the adopted Castle Point Local Plan (2018–2033) and is therefore not an allocated development site, the land has been promoted for consideration through the emerging Local Plan (2023–2043). The site was submitted through the council's "Call for Sites" process and has been identified as a potential location for development, although no allocation decision has yet been made.

The landowner, the Salvation Army's Hadleigh Farm Estate, has publicly stated its intention to seek allocation of parts of the estate for development in the emerging Local Plan.

The council has previously advised that, at this stage of the Local Plan process, it did not have the legal powers to remove sites from consideration before the necessary technical assessments and consultations had been completed.

The key decisions will therefore arise through the draft Local Plan allocation process, formal consultation stages and, ultimately, this examination by the Planning Inspector.

While I understand that the planning inspectorate has condemned Castle Point not achieving sufficient housing numbers in its targets for development, that does not justify including the Hadleigh site. Although it is not my role to comment on the plan overall, Hadleigh is a site that has a particular impact on my neighbouring constituency and my comment on Castle Point Council's local plan is that I support their non-inclusion.

I lay out below my reasons for doing so.

This submission reflects concerns raised locally, including at a recent meeting of Leigh Town Council and sets out my support for the council's objection to the principle of development on this site.

My position remains unchanged. I object to the allocation and development of Hadleigh Farm, including proposals associated with the Salvation Army or any future residential or mixed-use development on this land. In my view, the site is unsuitable for development and should not be released for such purposes through the Local Plan process.

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As the Member of Parliament for the neighbouring constituency of Southend West and Leigh, I have a direct interest in the potential cross-boundary consequences of development at this location. Any significant housing allocation is likely to increase pressure on transport networks, healthcare provision and other public services that serve residents on both sides of the borough boundary. These effects would not be confined to Castle Point and would have implications for neighbouring communities. At present, there remains insufficient clarity as to how such impacts would be mitigated or accommodated, and I believe these considerations should be afforded substantial weight when assessing the soundness of the Plan.

The site also forms part of the Metropolitan Green Belt, and its release would conflict with the fundamental purposes of Green Belt policy as established in national planning guidance. The land makes an important contribution to maintaining separation between Hadleigh and Southend, helping to prevent the coalescence of settlements and preserving the openness that characterises this part of Essex.

The site provides a clear physical break between the urban areas of Hadleigh and Southend and development would inevitably erode that openness and could create a precedent for the incremental loss of Green Belt protections elsewhere. Once lost, this open land and the function it performs cannot easily be replaced. Taken together, these impacts would significantly undermine the integrity and purpose of the Green Belt in this location.

I do recognise and support the need for new housing, particularly in helping younger people and first-time buyers gain access to the housing market. However, housing delivery must take place in appropriate and sustainable locations. The need for additional homes cannot justify development that compromises strategic planning objectives, including Green Belt protection and the need to ensure that infrastructure is capable of supporting growth. My objection is therefore not to the principle of development itself, but to the suitability of this particular site.

For these reasons, I believe that the inclusion of Hadleigh Farm as a development allocation raises significant concerns. It is not clear that the site represents the most appropriate option when considered against reasonable alternatives. Unresolved infrastructure and cross-boundary impacts call into question whether the allocation would be effective and the proposed release of Green Belt land does not appear to be supported by sufficiently compelling exceptional circumstances consistent with national policy.

Accordingly, I support the council's objection to the inclusion of Hadleigh Farm as a development allocation within the Local Plan and to any proposal that would result in the release of this section of Green Belt. Should the site continue to be promoted through the examination process, I will maintain my support for the council's position on the grounds outlined above.

Kind regards,



David Burton-Sampson
Member of Parliament for Southend West and Leigh