

A photograph of a lush green field filled with numerous bright yellow flowers, likely buttercups, in the foreground. In the background, a house with a dark roof and a chimney is visible against a clear blue sky. The image is partially covered by a green semi-transparent box on the right side, which contains the title and date information.

# **Broomfield Neighbourhood Plan 2022 - 2036**

March 2025

Broomfield Parish Council

**Dear Residents**

## **Welcome to the Broomfield Neighbourhood Plan**

This Plan will guide how our village may change in the period to 2036 - and which aspects should remain unchanged.

It is based on feedback from public events, like the launch and the residents' questionnaire. There has also been a massive amount of research and other work going on behind the scenes – analysing data, commissioning studies and drafting policies.

The Parish Council consulted on the Draft Plan at the end of 2022 and, where necessary, made changes to the Plan.

It was then subject to further consultation carried out by Chelmsford City Council prior to it being assessed by an Independent Examiner and culminating in a parish referendum.

As well as the core planning policies, the Plan contains Community Actions and Aspirations. These are things we would like to achieve for our village and are also based on the feedback we've had from residents and stakeholders. They cover important issues like reducing the impact of traffic, getting more public open space, enhancing the countryside and biodiversity, and much more. To make them happen, we'll need lots of help. So, if you are enthusiastic about any of these actions and aspirations, please tell us or email us at [clerk@broomfield-pc.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@broomfield-pc.gov.uk). We can't do it without you.

Finally, I want to say a huge thank you to the residents and parish councillors on the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group. They have put in a massive amount of work over the last nine years to make sure we conserve and enhance the best of Broomfield.

Thank you for caring about our village. We passionately believe that Broomfield is a great place to live, and, with your help, we want to make it even better.

**Councillor Margaret Bleet**  
**Chair of Broomfield Parish Council**



Prepared by Broomfield Parish Council with support from Places4People Planning Consultancy

**PLACES4PEOPLE** P4P  
PLANNING CONSULTANCY

## WHAT IS A NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN?

It is a new kind of planning document designed to allow local people to play an active part in planning their area. It can guide the development and conservation of the village.

It can, for example, also identify proposals for:

- improving areas
- providing new facilities
- sites for new development
- protecting sites of environmental or historic quality

It forms part of the statutory development plan for the area, meaning Chelmsford City Council and planning inspectors take it into account when considering planning applications.

Community involvement is a major part of developing a neighbourhood plan and the plan has been approved in a local referendum.

### WHY A NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN FOR BROOMFIELD?

In 2016, the future of Broomfield as a separate village was under threat. A huge development was proposed to the west of the village. The Parish Council concluded that, over time, this would lead to the village being subsumed within 'Greater Chelmsford'.

Thanks to a successful campaign by the Parish Council, this threat was significantly reduced. However, it made councillors even more aware that our local community needs a strong voice about where development takes place and what form it takes. Having a neighbourhood plan is not about stopping development, but it is about enabling the community to guide the process.

As well as giving us more control over our future, a neighbourhood plan is an opportunity to agree on what facilities are needed and how we might get them. Parishes with an agreed neighbourhood plan in place also get a bigger share of any development money (Community Infrastructure Levy), which helps to get much-needed new facilities.

When we first started, we probably didn't realise how much work was involved or how long it would take! But now we've reached this stage, we're glad that we did.



# CONTENTS

<b>1. Vision and Objectives</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>2. Introduction to the Neighbourhood Plan</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>3. Broomfield Past and Present</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>4. Planning Policy Context</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>5. Landscape Setting</b>	<b>19</b>
Policy BFD1 - Preventing Coalescence	24
Community Action CA1 - Enhancing the 'Felsted Field Gap'	24
Policy BFD2 - Protecting Broomfield's Landscape Character	26
Community Action CA2 - Conserving and Enhancing the Landscape	27
<b>6. The Natural Environment</b>	<b>29</b>
Policy BFD3 - Recreational Disturbance Avoidance and Mitigation	30
Policy BFD4 - Trees, Woodland and Hedgerows	30
Community Action CA3 - Creation and Maintenance of Woodland and Hedgerows	31
Policy BFD5 - Protecting the Highest Grade Agricultural Land	32
Community Action CA4 - Further Study of the Natural Environment	33
Community Action CA5 - Extension to the Local Nature Reserve	34
Community Action CA6 - Improving Public Access to the Chelmer River Valley	35
Policy BFD6 - Broomfield Green Wedge	35
Policy BFD7 - Local Green Spaces	36
Community Action CA7 - Conserving and Enhancing the Special Features of Local Green Spaces	37
<b>7. Housing</b>	<b>41</b>
Policy BFD8 - Housing Mix	45
Policy BFD9 - Adaptable Homes	45
Community Action CA8 - Setting up a Community Land Trust (CLT)	46
Policy BFD 10 - Land east of Saxon Way	50
<b>8. Development Design</b>	<b>51</b>
Policy BFD11 - Development Design Considerations	54
Community Action CA9 - Village Design Guidance	54
Policy BFD12 - Sustainable Construction Practices	55
<b>9. The Historic Environment</b>	<b>57</b>
Community Action CA10 - Promoting Awareness of Historic Features	58
Community Action CA11 - Review of Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Enhancement of the Area	59
Policy BFD13 - Special Character Areas	60
<b>10. Community Services and Facilities</b>	<b>61</b>
Community Action CA12 - Meeting the Need for New Community Facilities	62
Policy BFD14 - Land South of Broomfield Place	65
Community Action CA13 - Open Green Space south and west of Broomfield Place	65



<b>11. Traffic and Travel</b>	<b>67</b>
Policy BFD15 – Public Rights of Way	72
Community Action CA14 – Strategy to Encourage Sustainable Travel	72
Community Action CA15 – Reducing the Impact of Traffic	75
<b>12. The Challenge of Climate Change</b>	<b>77</b>
Policy BFD16 – Flood Risk Mitigation	82
Community Action CA16 – Strategy to Encourage the Generation and Use of Renewable Energy	83
Policy BFD17 - Micro Hydroelectricity Schemes	83
<b>13. Community Infrastructure Levy</b>	<b>84</b>
Appendix 1 – Essex Landscape Character Assessment Character Areas	85
Appendix 2 – Development Design Checklist	87
Appendix 3 – Listed Buildings and Buildings of Local Value	89
Appendix 4 – Special Character Areas	90

# 1. VISION AND OBJECTIVES

- 1.1 **What kind of place do we want Broomfield to be in 2036?** Reading the responses to our residents' questionnaire, it's striking just how much people love living in Broomfield. Apart from the level of traffic and, to a lesser extent, the lack of affordable housing, residents feel that Broomfield is a great place to live and want to stay here if they can.
- 1.2 So, our overall aim should be to ensure that the best aspects of Broomfield are still here and flourishing in 2036. However, the world does not stand still and, even if it could, there are some things (like the level of traffic) that do need to change. That is why we need a clear vision about what we want to conserve and enhance and what we'd like to change. Having a clear vision and realistic objectives will give us the best chance of success through this new Neighbourhood Plan for Broomfield.
- 1.3 In terms of planning, the biggest challenge for Broomfield is that it might be subsumed into 'Greater Chelmsford', losing its identity and much of its valued green space. Indeed, over the last century, Broomfield Parish has witnessed the gradual encroachment of the urban area of Chelmsford, both along the southern boundary and now in the east through the development at Beaulieu Park. Without the right policies in place, the historic and natural characteristics of the Parish could experience significant harm and Broomfield could become just a suburb of the City.
- 1.4 With this in mind, the Neighbourhood Plan vision includes protecting the distinctiveness of Broomfield while recognising that some development will be needed to meet the increasing housing and service needs of the Parish. Change cannot (and should not) be avoided, but it can be managed and channelled to get the best possible outcomes for our village and its residents. So, the ambitious vision of this Neighbourhood Plan is that:

**In 2036, Broomfield will continue to be a flourishing village community, with its own distinct identity. Sustainable infrastructure and flourishing facilities will help meet the needs of residents, so that it will be a community, as well as a convenient place to live. Its historic character, green spaces and rural surroundings will be sustained and enhanced, promoting the wellbeing of everyone who lives and works here.**

- 1.5 To deliver the Vision, the Neighbourhood Plan has the following Objectives. These have provided a benchmark for the preparation of its planning policies and community actions.

## Overarching Neighbourhood Plan Objective

- To set out a suite of planning policies, in general conformity with the strategic policies of the Chelmsford Local Plan, the Essex Minerals Local Plan and the Essex and Southend-on-Sea Waste Local Plan, that address the particular planning issues which apply in Broomfield

## Landscape Setting Objectives

- To ensure that valued and sensitive landscapes are conserved and enhanced
- To ensure that the village of Broomfield remains a distinct settlement, separate from the Chelmsford urban settlement area

## Housing Objectives

- To ensure an adequate supply of housing to meet the needs of the Parish
- To ensure there is an integrated mix of housing types, sizes and tenures to meet local need
- To encourage a focus on providing genuinely affordable housing for existing residents and those with an existing connection with Broomfield
- To promote sustainable housing that provides for home-working and other environmentally friendly initiatives



### **Natural Environment Objectives**

- To protect and enhance biodiversity, responding to the threat of climate change
- To protect the richest and most versatile agricultural land within the Parish
- To create and enhance public green open spaces
- To conserve and enhance identified Local Green Spaces

### **Historic Environment Objectives**

- To conserve and where possible enhance all aspects of the historic environment - built heritage, archaeology and historic landscape features
- To identify, conserve and enhance areas of special character
- To promote awareness of the historic features that help to make Broomfield special
- By celebrating these historic assets, to promote a sense of place and community

### **Development Design Objectives**

- To ensure new development is designed to reflect the character and setting of Broomfield in general and of the immediate locality
- To promote an awareness of locally-important design features and encourage their use
- To identify, conserve and enhance areas of special character
- To encourage new development to incorporate measures that reduce environmental impact

### **Community Services and Facilities Objectives**

- To protect the existing community, educational, leisure and retail facilities
- To create new community facilities where feasible and appropriate

### **Traffic and Travel Objectives**

- To support measures that reduce the need for travel by private cars, such as cycling, walking and public transport
- To encourage cycling and walking by creating new safe cycle routes (cycle paths) and footpaths; and by protecting existing footways (pavements), cycle routes (cycle paths), footpaths and public rights of way
- To promote measures to improve highway safety and to reduce the impact of traffic
- Where appropriate, to create 'home zones' and similar areas that help to re-balance priority between cars and other users

### **Climate Change Objectives**

- To ensure that there is a consistent thread of policies and actions throughout the Neighbourhood Plan that will help respond to the Climate and Ecology Emergency
- To initiate a Parish Council strategy to meet the Climate and Ecology Emergency through supporting measures to encourage energy efficiency and green energy generation



## 2. INTRODUCTION TO THE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

### What is a Neighbourhood Plan? (Longer Answer)

- 2.1 A neighbourhood plan is a document produced by a local community to say how they want their local area or neighbourhood to develop in the future. The idea was introduced through the Localism Act 2011 to give local people more say. Government guidance states: *'Neighbourhood planning gives communities direct power to develop a shared vision for their neighbourhood and shape the development and growth of their local area. They are able to choose where they want new homes, shops and offices to be built, have their say on what those new buildings look like and what infrastructure should be provided...'*
  - 2.2 Most planning documents are drawn up by planning authorities, in our case Chelmsford City Council. They will consult with local communities when they produce these local plans, but the initiative comes from above. By contrast, a neighbourhood plan starts with the local community in the parish or neighbourhood that it will affect. As well as local people being consulted about the neighbourhood plan while it is being prepared, they also get a vote on the final version. It can only be agreed (or 'made') if more than half of local voters support it.
  - 2.3 In a parish like Broomfield, the parish council takes the lead and will normally set up a working group of parish councillors and residents to do the work. A huge amount of work is involved in researching data, consulting local people, commissioning surveys and professional studies as well as eventually drafting a plan to present to the parish council.
  - 2.4 A neighbourhood plan is not just about coming up with a list of popular ideas. Like a local plan, a neighbourhood plan must be based on evidence. It must also be in general conformity with the main policies of the local plan - it cannot simply override them. So, for instance, in Broomfield the Neighbourhood Plan cannot stop the 'North of Broomfield' housing development, as this is a strategic policy within the Chelmsford Local Plan, although it can help to shape the development.
  - 2.5 A neighbourhood plan must go through several stages of consultation. Like a local plan, it must also be considered or 'examined' by an independent planning inspector who can suggest or require changes to be made before the final version is put to a referendum. However, once it has been through all these stages successfully, the neighbourhood plan forms part of the legal planning framework for the parish or neighbourhood and all planning applications will be decided by reference to it.
  - 2.6 So, a neighbourhood plan is different from other community-led plans because it has legal weight in planning and land use. Other community-led plans such as parish plans can set out what the local community would like to happen (or not happen) but cannot enforce it, as they are only advisory.
  - 2.7 That said, neighbourhood plans can include community aspirations or actions as well, but they are not part of the legally binding planning policies that form the core of a neighbourhood plan. They are useful because they help to set targets or aims for the parish council and others to follow.
- ### The Broomfield Neighbourhood Plan
- 2.8 In March 2016 Broomfield Parish Council agreed to prepare a neighbourhood plan for the Parish and in the following June, Chelmsford City Council endorsed this decision and specified the area to be covered. So, this Neighbourhood Plan represents the culmination of nine years of work.
  - 2.9 The area covered by the Neighbourhood Plan and its policies is called the Neighbourhood Plan Area (NPA). For a parished area, the NPA normally has the same boundaries as the parish. So, when we started the Neighbourhood Plan, the NPA was defined by the existing Parish boundary.

2.10 However, in March 2022, Chelmsford City Council agreed to change some parish boundaries, following a Community Governance Review. The changes for Broomfield were:

- the eastern part of the Parish (east of the A130) was taken away and added to a new parish (Chelmsford Garden Community or Belsteads)

- Petty Croft, which was in Little Waltham Parish, became part of Broomfield.

These changes took effect from 1st April 2023.

2.11 The Parish Council agreed it would be confusing if the NPA and the new Parish covered different areas. It would mean the Broomfield Neighbourhood Plan policies would not apply in all areas of the Parish but would apply to some areas in different parishes. It therefore asked the City Council to change the NPA to match the new Parish boundary.

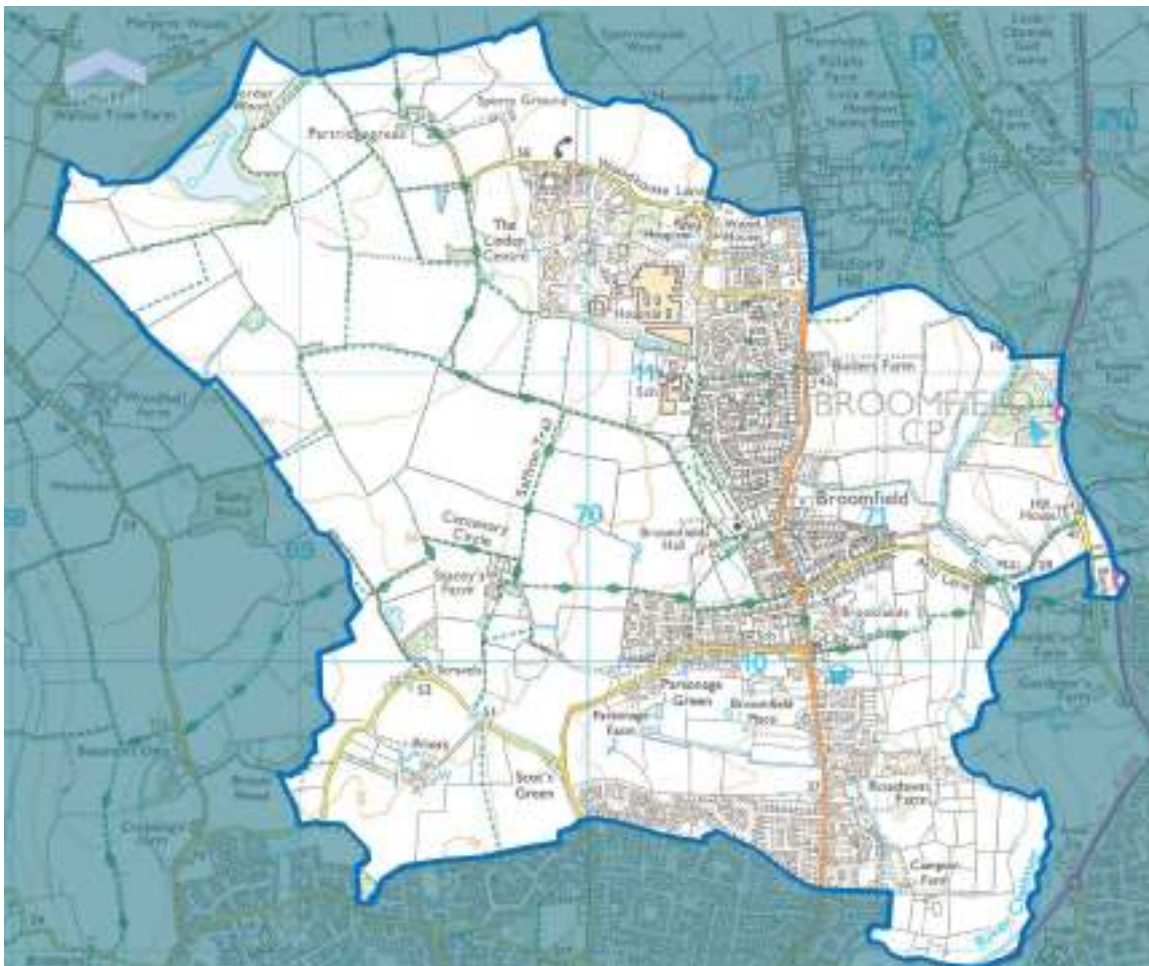
2.12 After a statutory consultation period, this was agreed by the City Council on 12 July 2022. The revised NPA is shown on **Map 1**. In many of the supporting evidence documents, the old Parish boundaries

are shown, as these defined the NPA when those documents were produced. However, the policies and community actions in this Neighbourhood Plan only apply within the NPA as shown. The Plan period is 2022 to 2036.

### How the Plan Has Been Prepared

2.13 The Neighbourhood Plan Regulations require a neighbourhood plan to:

- be appropriate, having regard to national planning policy;
- contribute to achieving sustainable development;
- be in general conformity with strategic policies in the development plan for the local area;
- be compatible with EU obligations and Human Rights requirements; and
- not breach the requirements of Chapter 8 of Part 6 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017.



Map 1 - Broomfield Neighbourhood Plan Area (as amended July 2022)

2.14 The Broomfield Neighbourhood Plan is in general conformity with the strategic planning policies of the Chelmsford Local Plan (adopted in 2020), as well as the Essex Minerals Local Plan (2014) and the Essex and Southend-on-Sea Waste Local Plan (2017). In addition, the Plan was prepared in the context of the National Planning Policy Framework (December 2023) and examined before the December 2024 version was published. Most importantly, the Plan reflects the aspirations of the residents of Broomfield.

2.15 The Neighbourhood Plan was submitted for examination in January 2024 and the Examiner's report received in October 2024, recommending that subject to a series of recommended modifications, the Plan meets all the necessary legal requirements and should proceed to referendum.

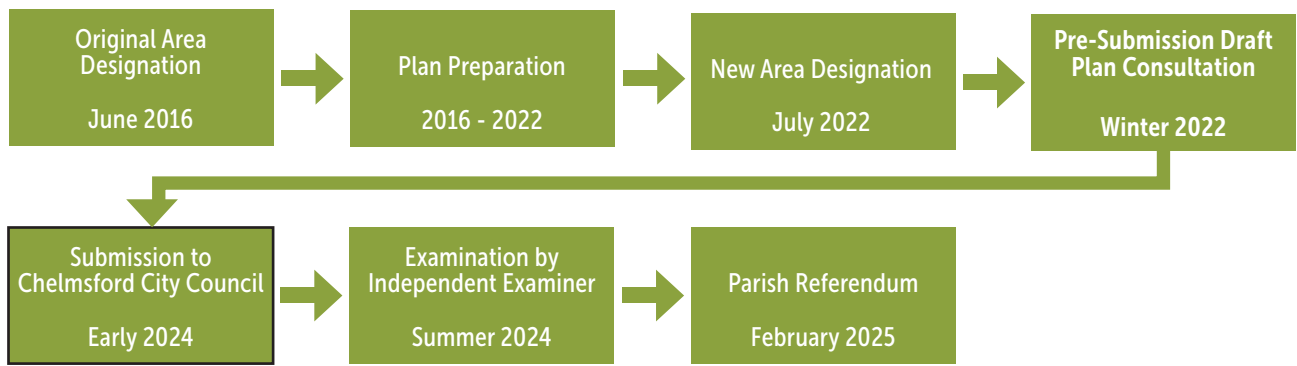


Fig. 1 Progress of the Neighbourhood Plan

### Scope and Structure of Plan

2.16 The Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared to provide a layer of local policies which reflect the specific context of Broomfield. The Plan covers eight main topic areas:

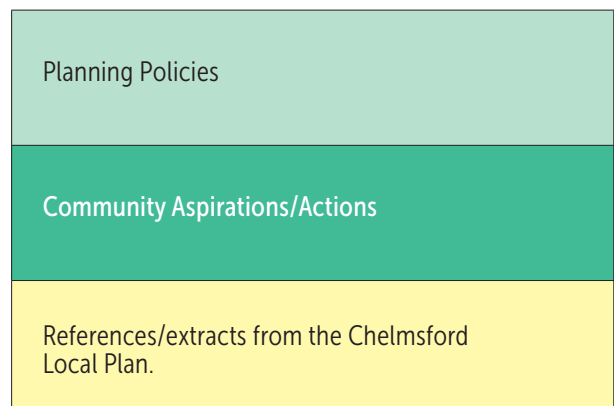
- Landscape Setting
- The Natural Environment
- Housing
- Development Design
- The Historic Environment
- Community Services and Facilities
- Traffic and Travel
- Responding to the Challenge of Climate Change.

2.17 These areas form the basis for the content of the Plan. The various chapters cover the policies and aspirations for each topic. Each chapter contains a reminder of the relevant objectives and a summary of the relevant evidence collected during the preparation of the Plan, culminating in planning policies and community aspirations/actions. Community aspirations and actions do not form part of the statutory Neighbourhood Plan but may be just as important in terms of their impact on the everyday life of parishioners.

2.18 These chapters are preceded by introductory sections:

- Vision and Objectives of the Plan
- Introduction ('What is a Neighbourhood Plan' etc)
- About Broomfield – a short history of the village and its landscape, together with current issues.

2.19 Throughout the Plan there are planning policies, community actions/aspirations and references/extracts to the relevant Chelmsford Local Plan policies. These are shown as follows:







### 3. BROOMFIELD PAST AND PRESENT

3.1 The Parish of Broomfield lies directly to the north of Chelmsford and has for many centuries been described as 'pleasantly situated' due to its location astride the gentle valley of the River Chelmer. To the north, it borders the large parish of Great Waltham along with smaller Little Waltham, to the east Springfield and to the west, variously, Writtle and the Chignals. The earliest record of the name occurs, like so many places, in the Domesday survey of 1086, where it is Brumfeldam.

3.2 In the Saxon period, Broomfield comprised three major manors, Broomfield Hall, Belstead Hall and Patching Hall. Of these three manors, only Broomfield Hall survives today to any great extent, not only its land but also its fifteenth-century farmhouse. The other two have mainly been built upon due to Chelmsford's ever-increasing need for housing.

3.3 Apart from Saxon personal and place names, little is known about the early inhabitants of Broomfield. The remains of a Roman building lie in the northwest of the Parish. An important early seventh-century princely Saxon burial was found in the last quarter of the nineteenth century during gravel extraction, not far from Main Road, overlooking the Chelmer Valley, most of the surviving finds being housed now in Chelmsford Museum.

3.4 Broomfield was historically reliant on agriculture, mainly arable, for which its soils were well suited being chiefly loam, gravel and clay; subsoil, sand, marl and clay. But there is some pasture along the valley floor and latterly a significant nursery and market gardening sector. In the late nineteenth century, the chief crops were wheat, barley, beans and mangold.

3.5 While never a populous parish to rival some of its larger neighbours, it was certainly not the smallest either. The 1801 census recorded that there were 467 inhabitants, which compared to 3,755 in Chelmsford, 1,475 in Great Waltham and 53 in Chignal Smealy. One hundred years later the population was 834 while Chelmsford's had swelled to 12,627, Great Waltham's to 2,021 and Chignal Smealey's to 98.

3.6 The bounds of the ancient Parish, coterminous at the time with the ecclesiastical Parish of St Marys, reached as far south as Kings Road and west along Chignal Road, while a large, detached portion of Chelmsford was situated in the area around the Co-op. Later nineteenth and twentieth-century local government re-organisations pruned the Parish to its current extent.

*(\* Philip Morant, The History and Antiquities of the County of Essex, 2 (London, 1768). Morant was Vicar of Broomfield from 1735-8).*

#### How the landscape has developed

3.7 Broomfield has always been in close association with its landscape setting, extending along shallow upper slopes of the Chelmer Valley on land farmed from the earliest times. This landscape of small, irregular fields enclosed by ancient hedges, ditches (some deep) and scattered small woods and ponds was here at least a thousand years ago. Its texture remains, even in areas now within Broomfield village where old field boundaries can still be detected.

3.8 The sequence of farmsteads, running along the road north out of Chelmsford, below the Pleshey Farmland Plateau edge and above the meadows of the Chelmer Valley, defined the village outline as it grew around its manor house and church. Principal features are

Church Green, Angel Green and Parsonage Green uniting the heart of Broomfield with the open countryside surrounding it. Church Green finds its link via the ancient pastureland of Broom Pightle and Night Pasture. Angel Green connects down into the Chelmer Valley. Parsonage Green looks out to the Plateau.

- 3.9 The open background is still framed well, in a landscape very like it would have been in Roman times. Looking outward in almost any direction, the distant horizon seems to be woodland; an illusion created by the convergence of the many small woods, copses and trees in view. Although the prospect into the valley from the south of the village was lost when building extended out of Chelmsford along Gutters Hill, those significant views remain expansive from the north.
- 3.10 The river is lined with willows and has alder too. There are many fine field trees. Numerous hedgerows have been conserved but others lost, and some need restoration, particularly along surviving lanes which are all important in this delicate north Essex landscape.
- 3.11 From the outside, especially from the Plateau, Broomfield is marked by the spire of its church and tall trees in private grounds but is otherwise largely unseen, except in the tranquil valley itself from which buildings are seen running along its western rim. It is a settlement still in harmony with its surroundings.

### **The Village of Five Greens**

- 3.12 Broomfield boasts five greens: Angel, Church, Parsonage, Partridge and Scot's, of which the first three are registered village greens. The greens were probably created in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, as new areas were taken into cultivation to support a growing population. However, Church Green, next to the ancient church and manor house (Broomfield Hall), is probably earlier and may once have been stockaded.
- 3.13 Settlements based on greens are a feature of Essex north of the A12. Felsted has the most, with eleven greens named in the Chapman and Andre map of 1777. It is even suggested that the whole pattern of polyfocal greens in Essex dates back to Roman times and is a feature of areas where the transition from Roman Britain to Anglo-Saxon England was earlier and less disruptive.

- 3.14 Standing on the edge of modern Chelmsford with its pattern of 'onion-ring' suburban development, the Parish of Broomfield marks a change in the landscape to this much older pattern of rural settlement.

### **Broomfield Present**

- 3.15 Until recently, Broomfield Parish had a population of approximately 6,400 residents. Recent population growth has been focused on development extending north from the urban area of Chelmsford and Beaulieu Park. With the creation in 2023 of a new Chelmsford Garden Community Council, the population of Broomfield Parish is expected to fall to about 4,000. Although there is no designated employment area in the Parish, Broomfield Hospital is one of the most significant medical campuses in the County and is also a major employer and trip generator.
- 3.16 The Parish is also well-served with facilities and services, which include:
- pre-schools and childcare, primary and secondary schools and a library
  - small food outlets and a small supermarket
  - two pubs, takeaways and a community café
  - a village hall and associated playing fields, a football and a cricket club
  - two churches and charitable organisations such as the Scouts
  - allotments, angling facilities and clubs such as the Broomfield Cottage Gardeners Society.

### **Current Issues**

- 3.17 To understand residents' current concerns and ambitions for Broomfield, a questionnaire was sent to every household (approx. 1,750) in April 2017. We had 493 responses, reflecting the views of almost 800 people. The full summary of the responses is available on our website, as well as the statistical analysis of the data.
- 3.18 **The key findings of the survey were:**
- people love living in Broomfield – 97% want to stay here if their circumstances permit!
  - over 90% said they liked living in a village, the closeness to Chelmsford and its facilities, their friends and neighbours; and 100% said they liked the closeness to open countryside
  - the only major dislike is the level of traffic (94%). A large majority of journeys by residents are made by car, but a significant majority also said they would consider making more use of cycling, walking and the buses if the conditions were right



- all suggestions for reducing the impact of through traffic were supported (eg signposting hospital traffic along Essex Regiment Way). So were 20 mph zones and speed cushions to reduce speed on small/residential roads
- 100% said it was important that Broomfield is surrounded by countryside, with over 90% citing the tranquillity, opportunity for recreation, openness, wildlife, views and the natural break between Broomfield and other settlements
- when asked to prioritise the three areas of countryside people most like and want to protect, the following areas got the most mentions:
  - west of Church Green,
  - east of Hospital Approach
  - the gap between Broomfield and Chelmsford
  - the farmland west and north of the village and the Mill Lane area
- Broomfield's historic buildings are important to 98% of people
- when offered some different views about the design and planning of buildings, the following got the most support (though not necessarily over 50%):
  - new buildings should fit in with surrounding buildings, provided the surrounding buildings look attractive
  - generally new buildings should be of traditional design
  - new houses should be spread out, with plenty of space in between
  - generally new houses and buildings should be limited to two storeys - blocks of apartments are not acceptable
  - smaller gardens are okay, provided there is communal open space within two minutes' walk
  - new houses should generally be built in small cul-de-sacs, with a maximum of around 25 houses in each
- where Broomfield must accommodate more housing, the most acceptable types would be small family homes, retirement houses for the active retired, bungalows, and affordable starter homes
- 37% of responses thought at least one type of housing should be built anyway – the most common suggestion being small family homes
- where Broomfield must accommodate more housing, converting/replacing some existing commercial/industrial accommodation is the most acceptable option, followed by small sites (up to 50 dwellings) on the edge of the current settlement. Large greenfield sites in the countryside are the least desirable option
- 53% think that the current local facilities in Broomfield are sufficient
- 95% think we should continue to work on plans for a network of cycle paths away from main roads.

## 4. PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

4.1 Regulations governing the preparation of neighbourhood plans require that they have regard to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and are in general conformity with the strategic policies of the local development plan.

### National Planning Policy

4.2 The Plan has been prepared and examined in the context of the December 2023 NPPF. In December 2024 a revised NPPF was published, after the examination was complete. All references in the Plan are to the 2023 NPPF. The NPPF states that the national planning system has three overarching objectives:

- **an economic objective** – to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure;
- **a social objective** – to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering well-designed, beautiful and safe places, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities' health, social and cultural well-being; and
- **an environmental objective** – to protect and enhance our natural, built and historic environment, including making effective use of land, improving biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.

4.3 The NPPF requires that communities preparing neighbourhood plans should:

- develop plans that support the strategic development needs set out in local plans, including policies for housing and economic

- development; and
- plan positively to support local development, shaping and directing development in their area that is outside the strategic elements of the local plan.

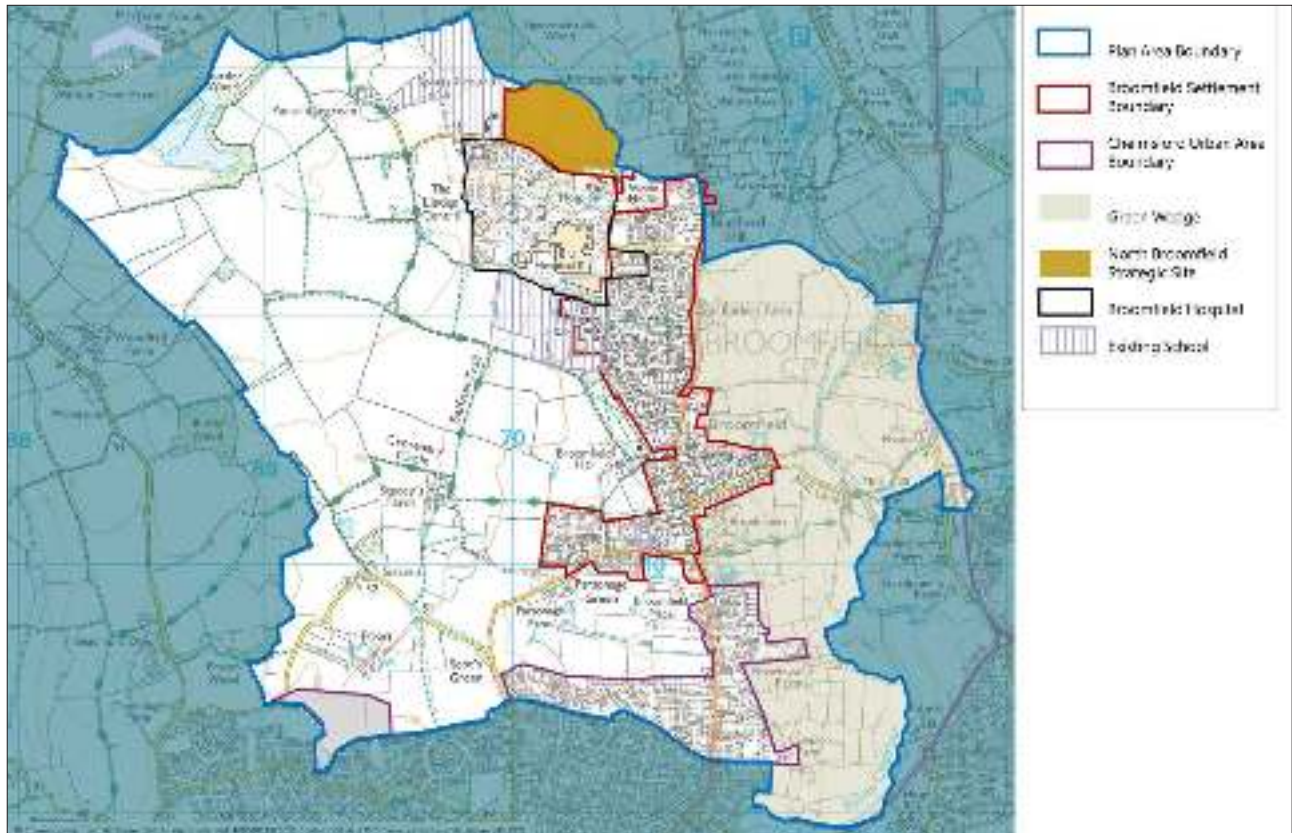
### Local Planning Policy

4.4 At the local level, a new Local Plan for the Chelmsford City Council area was adopted in May 2020. It provides up-to-date planning policies and identifies sites for development to meet the expected growth to 2036. The Local Plan provides the current strategic planning framework against which the Neighbourhood Plan has had regard. In Autumn 2022 the City Council consulted on Issues and Options for the review of the adopted Local Plan. It is intended that this will extend the Local Plan period to 2041 and is anticipated that the Local Plan will be adopted in late 2025/early 2026.

4.5 **The Local Plan:**

- identifies Broomfield as a Key Service Settlement due to it providing a range of services and facilities for its residents, providing a focus for housing development outside Chelmsford and South Woodham Ferrers
- designates Broomfield Hospital as a Special Policy Area: *'to enable the operational and functional requirements of Broomfield Hospital to be planned in a strategic and phased manner as it is outside the Defined Settlement of Broomfield where ordinarily policy would constrain new development.'*
- identifies a strategic growth site north of Broomfield Hospital for around 450 homes, a neighbourhood centre, a new early years and childcare nursery and a new access to Broomfield Hospital. This landscape-led development, known as 'North of Broomfield' or Strategic Growth Site 8 (SGS8), straddles the boundary between Broomfield and Little Waltham Parishes. A masterplan for the site has been approved by the City Council. At the time of preparing the Neighbourhood Plan, the City Council had resolved to grant outline planning permission with a number of planning conditions and subject to the signing of a Section 106 Planning Agreement.

4.6 Map 2 shows these designations on a map of the Neighbourhood Plan Area (NPA). The Local Plan identifies a Defined Settlement Boundary around the main built-up area of the village while the southern part of the Parish and Beaulieu Park east of the A130 are, for planning purposes, included within the wider Urban Area of Chelmsford. The map also illustrates the Local Plan Green Wedge designation as it applies to Broomfield.



Map 2 - Current Local Plan designations in the Neighbourhood Area. The remaining area in white is the Rural Area (outside the Green Belt and Green Wedge).

#### Essex Minerals and Waste Local Plans

- 4.7 Essex County Council is the Minerals and Waste Authority for the Plan area and is responsible for the production of mineral and waste local plans. The Development Plan in Broomfield therefore also comprises of the Essex Minerals Local Plan 2014 (MLP) and the Essex and Southend-on-Sea Waste Local Plan 2017 (WLP). These plans set out the policy framework within which minerals and waste planning applications are assessed. They also contain policies which safeguard known mineral bearing land from sterilisation, and existing, permitted and allocated mineral and waste infrastructure from proximal development which may compromise their operation.
- 4.8 As well as the planning policies in this Neighbourhood Plan, reference should be made to the above Plans, or later versions, to ensure that proposals are in general conformity with them. The Essex Design Guide was updated in 2018 and provides design advice and guidance to inform proposed new development across Essex.

#### Relationship between the Neighbourhood Plan and Chelmsford Local Plan

- 4.9 Our Neighbourhood Plan forms part of the development plan and sits alongside the Chelmsford Local Plan prepared by the City Council. Decisions on planning applications will be made using both the Local Plan and the Neighbourhood Plan, taking into account any other material considerations.
- 4.10 The Neighbourhood Plan cannot, and does not, contradict adopted Local Plan strategic designations and policies. Rather, it delivers locally derived policies based on local, more detailed evidence that complements the Local Plan.
- 4.11 For the Broomfield Neighbourhood Plan Area, the focus for new development will be within the Broomfield Settlement Boundary, those parts of the Chelmsford Urban Area in the Neighbourhood Area or the Special Policy Area designation for Broomfield Hospital which supports 'health-related proposals





which support the role, function and operation' of the hospital. Outside of these areas, Policies DM7 (New Buildings and Structures in the Green Wedge) and DM8 (New Buildings and Structures in the Rural Area) of the adopted Local Plan generally restrict development to specific types of proposal and where it 'will not adversely impact on the identified intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside'.

- 4.12 This Neighbourhood Plan's complementary and locally specific policies will now be used in combination with those of the Local Plan and, specifically, help to define the 'intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside' when determining any planning applications that come forward on land outside the Defined Settlement Boundary or Chelmsford Urban Area.

**Other policy guidance**

- 4.13 Broomfield also benefits from a Village Design Statement (VDS). This was published in 2011 and formed Supplementary Planning Guidance to the previous Chelmsford Local Plan. The findings and recommendations of the VDS have helped to inform relevant policies in the Neighbourhood Plan, which supersedes the VDS. However, we propose to re-issue the VDS as a Village Design Guide, to give practical advice and suggestions for all types of developments and changes to built form (including those that don't require planning consent).







## 5. LANDSCAPE SETTING

### Landscape Setting Objectives

- to ensure that valued and sensitive landscapes are conserved and enhanced
- to ensure that the village of Broomfield remains a distinct settlement, separate from the Chelmsford urban settlement area.

### Current Position

5.1 Most of Broomfield Parish is undeveloped. It contains arable fields, meadows, hedges, specimen trees, woods, the River Chelmer, several lakes and ponds and a nature reserve. The Parish is crisscrossed by a network of footpaths, bridleways and other rights of way, some of these many centuries old. These natural features and access points combine to offer pleasant walking with views across the open countryside – an aspect much valued by local residents. It is mostly a working landscape, without the city-wide pull of a country park or similar, so the qualities of the landscape are perhaps not as widely appreciated outside Broomfield and adjoining parishes as they could be.

5.2 The rural area also helps to define the main village of Broomfield. The southern parts of the Parish fall within the Chelmsford Urban Area, but the village – the historic core around Angel Green and Church Green – remains a distinct settlement, separate from Chelmsford. The countryside around Broomfield plays a vital role in maintaining this degree of separation and, with it, Broomfield's sense of place and identity.

### Public Perceptions of the Rural Area

5.3 Broomfield's status as a separate community and its closeness to open countryside are highly significant within the residents' questionnaire data, with 100% of responses saying they liked/liked a lot that Broomfield is close to open countryside. This headline statistic was explored further in Section 4 of the questionnaire. The following aspects of the countryside were considered important or very important by residents as indicated:

Tranquillity	99%
Opportunity for recreation (eg walking, jogging)	96%
Openness	99%
Natural break between Broomfield and other settlements	93%
Wildlife	96%
Views	96%

52% of responses said they used Broomfield's network of footpaths often; with a further 40% saying they used footpaths occasionally.

### A Landscape-Led Plan

5.4 After analysis of the residents' questionnaire data, the importance placed on conserving and enhancing the landscape and rural area became very clear. In contrast, there remains a longstanding interest from developers in land in the Parish, seen for instance in the City Council's 'Call for Sites' process.

5.5 Local Plan policies controlling the Green Wedge and the Rural Area outside the Green Belt and Green Wedge (Policies DM7 and DM8) offer some protection against inappropriate development. However not all development is necessarily covered by the relevant Local Plan policies, and, with regular reviews of local plans, it is important to have a clear understanding of the relative sensitivities of different landscapes within Broomfield to development.

- 5.6 The Neighbourhood Plan therefore focuses on the importance of the Parish's landscape and the considerations that need to be taken into account when proposals that could impact it are considered. This approach has been informed through:
- the content of the Braintree, Brentwood, Chelmsford, Maldon and Uttlesford Landscape Character Assessment (Chris Blandford Associates, September 2006), referred to below as the Blandford Landscape Character Assessment. The Assessment indicated the presence of sensitive features within the Broomfield landscape, for instance, the noted tranquillity of rural areas away from main roads
  - more detailed studies commissioned by the Parish Council from Alison Farmer Associates, namely the Broomfield Neighbourhood Plan Landscape Appraisal (February 2019) and the Review of Local Green Space, Valued Landscape and Key Views (September 2021).

5.7 The themes of openness, the natural break between settlements and views are addressed in this section of the Plan, with the remainder considered in the Natural Environment Section which follows.

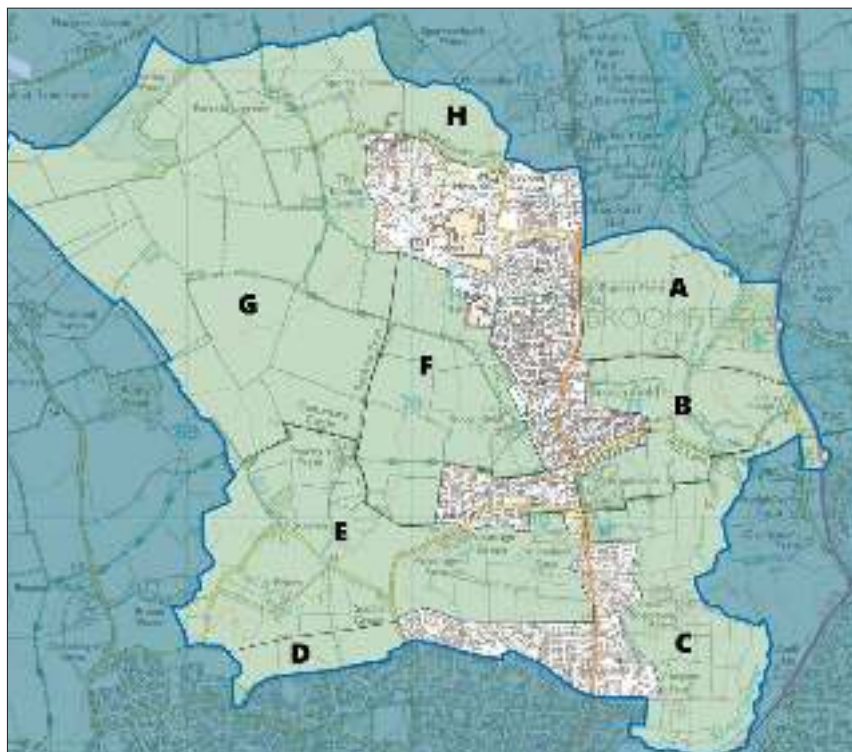
**The Braintree, Brentwood, Chelmsford, Maldon and Uttlesford Landscape Character Assessments**

5.8 This was prepared by Chris Blandford Associates for the named local authorities in September 2006 and

divides the Parish into two landscape character areas: the Pleshey Farmland Plateau and the Upper Chelmer River Valley. Both extend into other parishes and districts. While still relevant to the Neighbourhood Plan Area, the detail of the character areas, which is reproduced in Appendix 1, is supplemented by the detailed studies prepared by Alison Farmer Associates referred to below.

**Broomfield Neighbourhood Plan Landscape Appraisal**

5.9 Given the high-level nature of the 2006 wider Blandford Landscape Character Assessment, the opportunity was taken to prepare a more detailed local assessment for the Neighbourhood Plan Area. This would enable a more granular approach to examining the sensitivity of the landscape and its capacity for absorbing development. The objective of the Broomfield Neighbourhood Plan Landscape Appraisal was to provide a robust understanding of the character and qualities of the Neighbourhood Plan Area and to make sound judgements as to the sensitivity and capacity of land to accommodate development. It was carried out in accordance with Guidelines on Landscape Character Assessment and Guidelines in Assessing Landscape and Visual Impact Assessments. For this purpose, the rural area within the Neighbourhood Plan Area (NPA) was divided into eight local landscape areas as shown on **Map 3**.



Map 3 - Broomfield Neighbourhood Plan Landscape Appraisal Character Areas

5.10 The following tables set out the function and sensitivity/capacity of each local landscape area. Please refer to the full document for other aspects of each area.

Area A: Chelmer Valley at Butler's Farm

Function	This area is valued for its setting to the village and as part of the gateway to the settlement. This area forms an important role in connecting people with the wider landscape via existing public rights of way which run across and adjacent to the area and reinforces the location of Broomfield on the upper valley slopes of the River Chelmer Valley.
Sensitivity/ Capacity	The sensitivity of this site relates to its position at the gateway between the existing urban edge and the wider landscape. The valley slopes are visually sensitive in views across the valley. While the eastern slopes are less visible they nonetheless form a rural wooded setting to Broomfield village and the hedgerow along the B1008 reinforces rural character. Overall this area is not considered to have capacity for residential development. Development on the upper slopes would be highly visible and would have an urbanising influence on the otherwise rural character of this part of the valley.

Area B: Chelmer Valley at Mill Lane

Function	This area forms an accessible part of the Upper Chelmer Valley via Mill Lane and long-distance footpath of Centenary Circle. These routes create east west connections from the existing urban area, offering a high-quality landscape setting to the settlement and easily accessible natural green space which bolsters the sense of place and local distinctiveness. The area is also important for outdoor recreation with concentration of sports pitches forming a transitional landscape between river valley and urban form.
Sensitivity/ Capacity	This area is highly sensitive due to its rural unspoilt character and accessibility from the existing urban edge. It is also sensitive because of its role in reinforcing the historical association of the settlement of Broomfield with the Chelmer Valley and for the collection of historic features which remain legible and give rise to a strong time depth. The area is also valued for its outdoor recreation in terms of formal recreation and informal countryside access. Development in this area would risk the undermining and integrity of these qualities. As a result, this landscape is not considered suitable for residential or commercial development.

Area C: Chelmer Valley at Roselawn and Campion Farms

Function	Important setting to Broomfield and significant role in reinforcing perceived separation from Chelmsford especially following development east of the A130.
Sensitivity/ Capacity	The sensitivity of this area lies in its elevated slopes and views across the valley and its role in reinforcing the rural character and separation between Broomfield and Chelmsford. Nevertheless, the nature of the valley topography and gentle knoll of higher land south of Roselawn Farm presents some opportunities for a carefully thought through extension of the urban edge, ensuring that new development does not extend onto the higher land and that from the elevated knoll opportunities for viewing the wider valley are embraced. The collection of buildings at Roselawn Farm also offer opportunities for reorganisation and redevelopment although in all scenarios access restrictions from the existing urban edge may present significant constraints. Care would need to be taken to ensure the outer edge of any new development is rural in character and possibly adopts a farm courtyard arrangement. A modest small-scale development in this area of the valley may also present opportunities for improved access and changes to land management which restores the quality and condition of the landscape, strengthening its character and its valued role adjacent to urban areas.

#### Area D: Northwest Chelmsford Between Patching Hall Lane and Hollow Lane

Function	Important landscape in ensuring Chelmsford appears to sit comfortably in the landscape and does not appear to advance onto the elevated Pleshey Farmland Plateau.
Sensitivity/ Capacity	The sensitivity of this landscape lies in its contribution to the perceived sense of separation between Chelmsford and Broomfield and its role in containing the growth of Chelmsford. This landscape has some capacity for residential development associated with Chelmsford where the character of development can reflect the rural fringe location ie lower density housing and rural vernacular styles.

#### Area E: Broomfield Place to Broom Wood

Function	Important physical landscape gap and valued as an area which helps retain a sense of separation between Chelmsford and Broomfield and in forming a rural setting to the settlements and reinforcing sense of place. The arable fields west of the B1008 are especially important in articulating the gateway between Chelmsford and Broomfield although this is currently impinged on by adjoining land uses and character along Main Road.
Sensitivity/ Capacity	The sensitivity of this area lies in its role as a setting to adjacent settlement and in retaining a sense of local and individual identity. This area has little capacity for development in terms of further growth as an extension to the existing urban edges where it may undermine perceptions of separation between Chelmsford and Broomfield as a result of loss of open space and rural character. There may be some capacity for limited small-scale development in the area between Broomfield Place and the allotments although it will be important for any new development to conserve and enhance parkland character and the setting of Broomfield Place (Grade II listed building) ie the area may be able to accommodate a limited low-rise/low-density bespoke development or single building set within parkland. There is also some scope for the redevelopment or expansion of one of the farm complexes which sit within this area for small-scale employment use. Care would need to be taken to minimise visual intrusion and avoid the urbanisation of rural lanes.

#### Area F: West Broomfield Plateau Farmland

Function	This landscape is highly valued as a setting to the Conservation Area and historic assets and offers easy access from existing urban areas to open countryside.
Sensitivity/ Capacity	This landscape is highly sensitive to change and development. Although its topography and partial enclosure by existing urban development including the hospital to the north and Parsonage Green to the south suggests that it may be suitable for residential development, its unique juxtaposition with the historic core of Broomfield and its role in providing a distinctive high-quality setting to the settlement and easy access to countryside outweigh this. On this basis, this area is considered unsuitable for residential and commercial development. Furthermore, consideration should be given to the designation of Night Pasture and Broom Pightle as areas of Local Green Space in light of their importance historically and in association with the Conservation Area.

#### Area G: West of Broomfield

Function	Forms a wider landscape setting to Broomfield and Broomfield Hospital and contains a network of public rights of way offering access into the wider countryside.
Sensitivity/ Capacity	This landscape is highly sensitive to change and development due to its rural characteristics and elevation. It is therefore considered unsuitable for residential and commercial development.

## Area H: North Broomfield

Function	This landscape forms a setting to Blasford Hill and Little Waltham and reinforces the sense of separation between these settlements and Broomfield. The area also forms the upper valley slopes of the Chelmer Valley.
Sensitivity/ Capacity	<p>The sensitivities of this area include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The physical and perceived gap between Little Waltham and Blasford Hill which is sensitive to urbanisation of the road corridor, loss of rural views and perceived merging of the two settlements.</li> <li>• Existing vegetation and landscape features which make a positive contribution to landscape character and are of historic value including woodland, parish boundary hedgerows and mature/veteran trees.</li> <li>• Rural valley landscape which is visually sensitive to development on the upper valley sides. Development here may intensify the depth and extent of development visible from within the valley.</li> <li>• Rural character of the Pleshey Plateau which is sensitive to visual intrusion from development including night lighting.</li> </ul>

### Preventing Settlement Coalescence

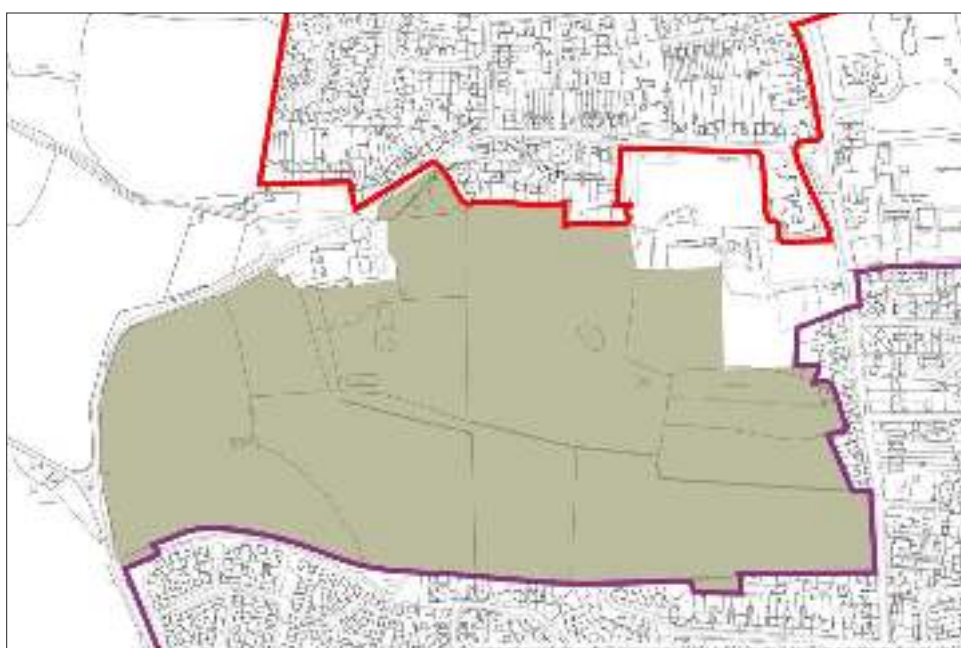
5.11 The first theme to consider is the role of the landscape in providing a natural break between Broomfield and neighbouring settlements, which helps to define Broomfield's identity. Strategic Policy S7 of the Local Plan states that:

'All development allocations will be located to ensure existing settlements maintain their distinctive character and to avoid coalescence between them'

5.12 To the east a natural break between Broomfield and Springfield, Beaulieu Park and Channels is provided by the flood plain of the River Chelmer. Avoiding settlement coalescence is one of the functions of the Green Wedge policy which applies to it.

5.13 To the north, the need to avoid coalescence between the north of Broomfield and Little Waltham will become important once the strategic site SGS8, 'North of Broomfield' has been fully built out. However, the undeveloped area that might be identified as a settlement buffer lies in the Parish of Little Waltham, so it cannot be designated as such in the Broomfield Neighbourhood Plan.

5.14 In the southern part of the Parish, there is a small but very important undeveloped area, between Main Road and Patching Hall Lane, that separates the urban area of the City from the village of Broomfield. It forms a significant part of Area E in the Neighbourhood Plan Landscape Appraisal. The area has continued to be eroded over time as new housing allocations have been made over time along the northern edge of the Chelmsford Urban Area.



Map 4 - Settlement Buffer (shaded area)



5.15 Having regard to this, the Neighbourhood Plan defines a Settlement Buffer, as illustrated in Map 4, and known locally as the Felsted Field Gap. The Settlement Buffer aims to maintain the separate identity of Broomfield and development in the Buffer will only be supported in exceptional circumstances and where it can be demonstrated that the proposal would not have a detrimental impact on the openness of the landscape.

## POLICY BFD1 – PREVENTING COALESCENCE

Land between Main Road and Patching Hall Lane, as shown in **Map 4** is identified as a Settlement Buffer to maintain the separation between the urban area of Chelmsford and Broomfield village.

Development proposals in the Settlement Buffer will only be supported where they are in accordance with national and district level policies and they conserve or, where possible, enhance the openness and landscape character of the Settlement Buffer and will not result in an unacceptable reduction in the physical or visual gap between the settlements or otherwise undermine their distinct and separate identities. As appropriate to their scale and nature, development proposals should be accompanied by a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (or other appropriate and proportionate evidence) that demonstrates that there would be no harmful impact on the open character and landscape of the Settlement Buffer.

5.16 In terms of land management, the Neighbourhood Plan Landscape Appraisal adds that:  
‘Consideration should be given to the creation of a more open edge to the B1008 with views across agricultural land westwards and the creation of a wider grass verge with tree planting along the road in order to reinforce the gateway and break in built form.’

The landowner has given permission to re-design the bank along Main Road adjoining Felsted Field. The scheme may also include a new bus shelter and retaining sleepers to prevent slippage of the existing bank onto the pavement below. Through wildflower planting on the bank, it will enhance sustainable environments and attractive landscapes.

### Valued Landscapes

5.17 Paragraph 180 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2023) (NPPF) notes that ‘Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by ‘protecting and enhancing valued landscapes’.

5.18 It is important to note that in this context ‘Valued Landscapes’ have a particular meaning. This is different to both ‘popular landscapes’ and ‘landscape character’. The range of factors that can be considered when identifying landscape value is set out in

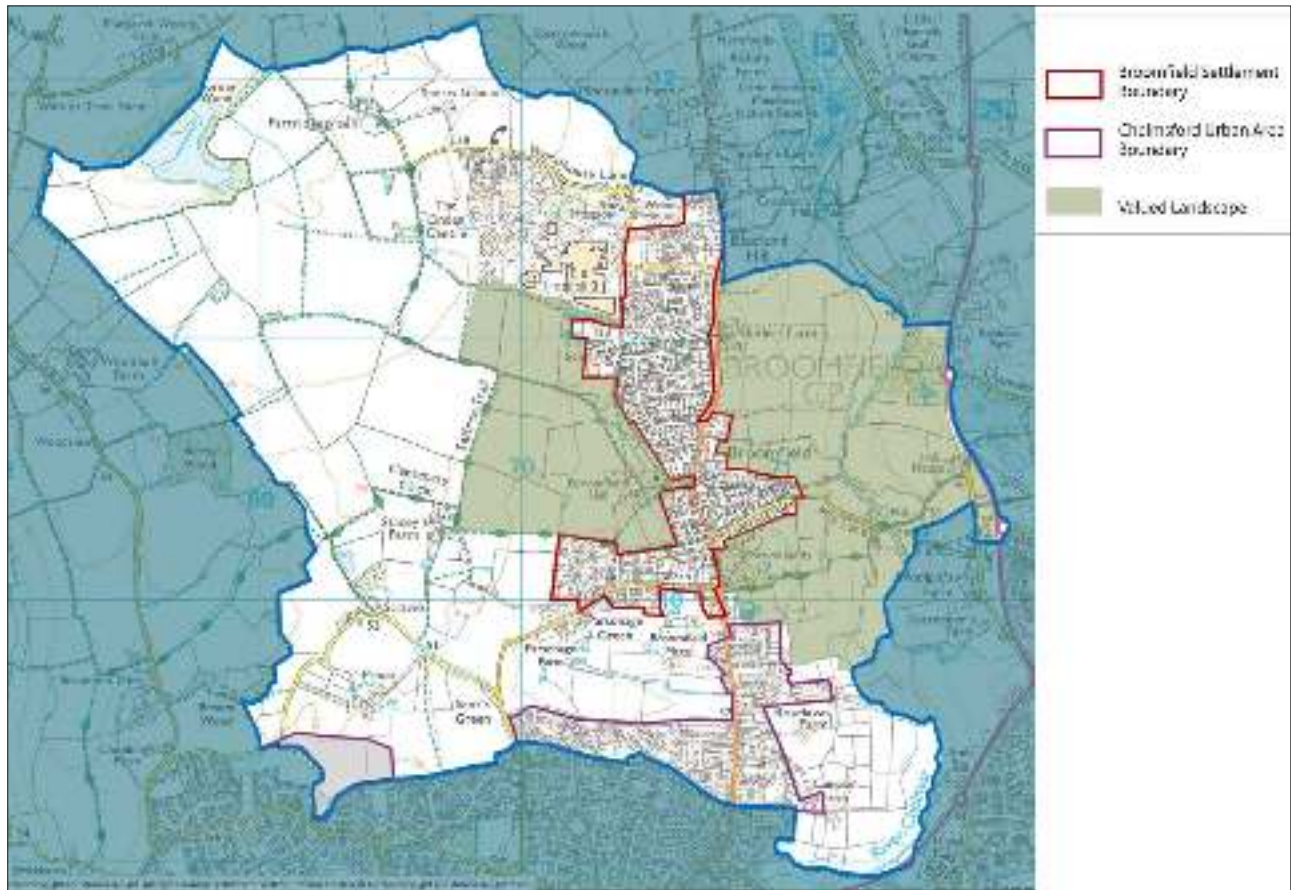
### Community Action CA1 – Enhancing the ‘Felsted Field Gap’

The Parish Council will implement a re-design of the Felsted Field bank on Main Road to:

- further enhance the visual impact of the settlement buffer; and
- improve the appearance of the bank by replacing degraded hedgerow and through wildflower planting; and
- install retaining sleepers to protect the pavement from soil creep; and
- erect a new bus shelter at the southern end of the Gap.

Table 1 of the Landscape Institute Technical Guidance Note 02/21, Assessing Landscape Value Outside National Designations. This Guidance Note has been used in the assessment of Valued Landscape for the Neighbourhood Plan, which is contained in the separate Review of Local Green Space, Valued Landscape and Key Views, section 3, pages 10 – 12.

5.19 The Review identifies that the northern part of the Upper Chelmer River Valley and an area west of the Church, as identified on the **Map 5**, meet the criteria for designation as Valued Landscapes.



Map 5 - Valued Landscapes in Broomfield

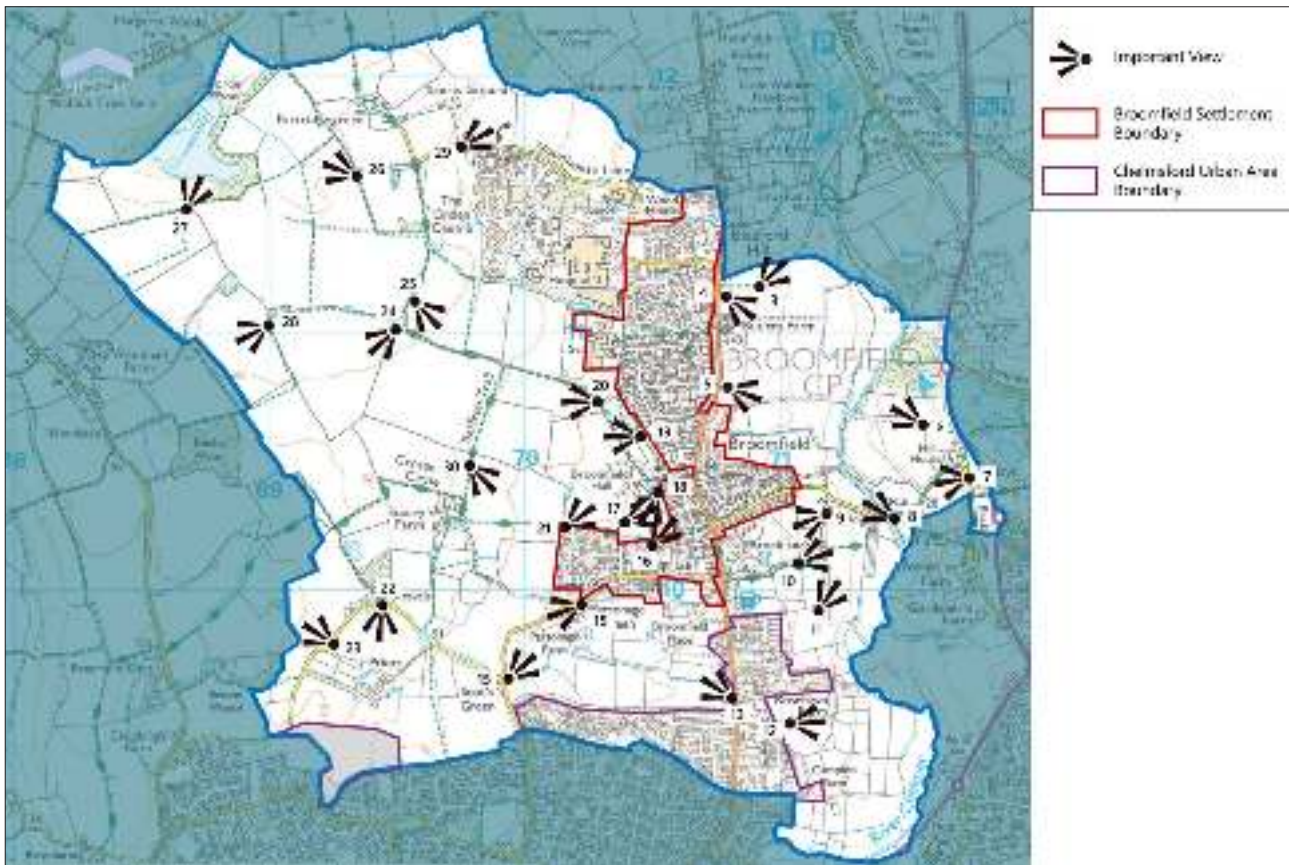
### Protection of Important Views

5.20 The Review of Local Green Space, Valued Landscape and Key Views lists and describes 29 important views within the Parish and their degree of sensitivity to development. The majority were initially identified as part of the Landscape Appraisal, with a few others arising from the residents' questionnaire and general work involved in preparing the Plan. These views are shown in **Map 6**.

5.21 When development proposals are being prepared, it will be necessary to take account of the potential impact that the development could have on views and demonstrate how the development can be satisfactorily accommodated within the landscape. Applicants must demonstrate how the visual impact of the development has been considered, along with measures for any mitigation where necessary. Depending on the scale of the proposed development, proposals could be supported by a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA). An LVIA is a recognised tool that specifically aims

to ensure that all possible effects of change and development both on the landscape itself and on views and visual amenity, are considered in decision-making. Policy BFD2 has been designed to add value to national and local planning policies in relation to development proposals outside the Settlement Boundary. The Chelmsford Local Plan provides an important local planning context and Policy Map 10 covers Broomfield. Policies S7, DM2, DM8, DM11 and DM12 comment about development outside Settlement Boundaries.





Map 6 - Important views (numbered), listed and described in the Review of Local Green Space, Valued Landscape and Key Views

## POLICY BFD2- PROTECTING BROOMFIELD'S LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

Proposals for development outside the Settlement Boundary should to be accompanied by a Landscape Visual Impact Assessment or other appropriate evidence proportionate to the scale of the proposal, that demonstrates how the proposal:

- i. can be accommodated in the countryside without having a significant detrimental impact, by reason of the development's scale, materials and location, on the character and appearance of the countryside and its tranquillity and distinction from the main built-up areas; and
- ii. conserves and enhances the unique landscape and scenic beauty within the Parish, having regard to the Neighbourhood Plan Landscape Appraisal and Neighbourhood Plan Review of Local Green Space, Valued Landscape and Key Views and the Valued Landscape identified on Map 5 and Important Views on Map 6.

### Enhancing the Landscape

5.22 Landscape studies for the Neighbourhood Plan contain considerable guidance about how the various landscape character areas around Broomfield can be well-managed and enhanced as well as conserved. The Parish Council would like to encourage interested community groups to get involved in landscape enhancement, either working with landowners or even through buying land, where feasible opportunities arise.

5.23 Centenary Wood is an example of how the process can work very successfully. This piece of land was purchased by the Parish Council in 1994 to mark its centenary and has led to the creation of a small community woodland, involving the Primary School and local residents as volunteers, creating a valued spot for leisure, tranquillity and outdoor activity.



5.24 Applications for grant funding will be considered for landscape enhancement projects, whilst recognising that this will inevitably be limited by the availability of funding and finding volunteers with relevant skills and experience.

### Community Action CA2 - Conserving and Enhancing the Landscape

As resources allow over the lifetime of the Neighbourhood Plan, the Parish Council will consider grant applications from local voluntary groups for landscape conservation and enhancement. Criteria for awarding funding will include the following:

- Bids must explain by reference to the Landscape Appraisal or the Review how they will lead to landscape enhancement
- The purpose must be to conserve and enhance land as a natural environment, so this particular funding stream would not be appropriate for converting land to sports pitches, playgrounds or constructing buildings
- Where significant funding is requested (eg for land purchase), grants must be match funded; and a management group must be formally constituted, with evidence of strong community support, a clear plan and sustainable management arrangements.









## 6. NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

### Natural Environment Objectives

- To protect and enhance biodiversity, responding to the threat of climate change
- To protect the richest and most versatile agricultural land within the Parish
- To create and enhance public green open spaces
- To conserve and enhance identified Local Green Spaces

### Introduction

- 6.1 The preceding section on Broomfield’s Landscape Setting outlined the importance of the landscape and rural setting of the Parish and the reasons for describing the Neighbourhood Plan as landscape-led.
- 6.2 This section explores other aspects of the natural environment as a resource to help manage the effects of development growth within the Parish. It includes policies and aspirations to ensure that, wherever possible, growth is linked to improvements in quality of life, health and well-being and biodiversity.

### Residents’ Questionnaire

- 6.3 This section responds to the following aspects of the natural environment evidenced in the feedback from community consultation (percentages indicate the proportion of responses saying this aspect was important or very important):

Tranquillity	99%
Opportunity for recreation (eg walking, jogging)	96%
Wildlife	96%

### Climate and Ecology Emergency

- 6.4 This section also responds to widespread concern about the effects of climate change on ecology and biodiversity, noting that Chelmsford City Council declared a Climate and Ecology Emergency on 16 July 2019.
- 6.5 Climate change both presents a threat to the natural environment (eg through increased flooding and loss of habitats) and highlights the importance of the natural environment. For instance, through

increased tree planting for carbon capture, extending hedgerows to support habitats, and protecting the best and most versatile soils to limit dependence on unsustainable food supply chains.

- 6.6 Therefore, the first part of this section illustrates how Broomfield will contribute to these local/national aspirations, linking to local/national policies as appropriate.

### Essex Coast Recreational Disturbance Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy

- 6.7 Chelmsford City Council and other local authorities in Essex have prepared the Essex Coast Recreational Disturbance Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy (RAMS) which has been adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) by the City Council. This sets out the mitigation strategy necessary to protect the birds of the Essex coast and their habitats from increased visitor pressure associated with new residential development in combination with other plans and projects. It also sets out how this strategy will be funded, with the Planning Obligations SPD adopted by the City Council providing the mechanism for collecting contributions associated with the mitigation strategy from residential development in the Chelmsford administrative area.
- 6.8 In addition to payment of the RAMS tariff, all development sites over 100 dwellings should include provision of well-designed open space/ green infrastructure, proportionate to its scale, to avoid likely significant effects from recreational disturbance alone. Such provisions can help minimise any predicted increase in recreational pressure on habitats sites by containing most of the recreation within and around the development site, away

from habitats sites. New Suitable Accessible Natural Greenspace (SANG) should include:

- high-quality, informal, semi-natural areas
- a circular dog walking route of 2.7 km
- dedicated 'dogs-off-lead' areas
- dog waste bins
- signage/information leaflets to householders to promote these areas for recreation; and
- a commitment to the long-term maintenance and management of these provisions.

6.9 The Neighbourhood Plan Area falls entirely within the zone of influence of the RAMS area and all proposals for residential development in the Neighbourhood Plan area will be subject to the overarching RAMS policy set out below.

### **POLICY BFD3 - RECREATIONAL DISTURBANCE AVOIDANCE AND MITIGATION**

Where appropriate, residential development should make a financial contribution towards mitigation measures, as detailed in the Essex Coast Recreational Disturbance Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy (RAMS) Supplementary Planning Document, to avoid adverse in-combination recreational disturbance effects on European Sites.

All residential development within the zones of influence should deliver all measures identified (including strategic measures) through project-level Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRAs), or otherwise, to mitigate any recreational disturbance impacts in compliance with the Habitats Regulations and Habitats Directive.

#### **Trees, Woodland and Hedgerows**

6.10 Local Plan Policy DM17 and supporting paragraphs (8.104 – 8.107) reflect the importance of trees and woodland and their contribution to the well-being of the public and the environment. In particular:

'the provision of shelter and shade, stabilisation of soil, filtering air pollution, reducing noise, improving and softening the landscape, and creating and connecting wildlife habitats.' (para 8.104).

6.11 The starting point for the consideration of all development proposals should be to avoid the unnecessary loss of, or damage to, established trees, woodland and hedgerows and to include measures that will supplement these features. Where new or replacement planting is proposed, the specification should use native species of a size that, when mature, are appropriate to the location. Policy BFD4 and community action CA3 give effect to this policy.

### **POLICY BFD4 - TREES, WOODLAND AND HEDGEROWS**

Development proposals should avoid the loss of, or substantial harm to, important trees, woodland and hedgerows. Where such losses or harm are unavoidable:

- i. the public benefits of the development proposal must be demonstrated to clearly outweigh any harm; and
- ii. suitable mitigation measures, which may include equivalent or better replacement using native species, will be required.

Where a new access is created, or an existing access is widened, through an existing hedgerow, replacement hedgerow of native species shall be planted a minimum of 1m behind the visibility splays to maintain the appearance and continuity of hedgerows in the vicinity.

Wherever practicable, the planting of additional trees and boundary hedges within development proposals should incorporate native species.

As appropriate to their scale, nature and location, development proposals which adjoin the Rural Area, should incorporate new woodland on its rural boundaries designed to mitigate visual impact, reduce noise and light pollution, create and connect wildlife habitats, and provide opportunities for walking and leisure.



6.12 Through the Neighbourhood Plan process, the promoters of SGS8 'North of Broomfield' site have been encouraged to create a significant new woodland belt on the western boundary of the site. This forms an important aspiration in the Plan, specifically aimed to:

- provide a net benefit to wildlife by creating a new corridor from Sparrowhawk Wood to Puddings Wood
- limit the visual impact and noise/light pollution of new development when looking from the higher Pleshey Farmland Plateau land to the west
- thereby protecting the amenity of residents in the western part of Woodhouse Lane and Partridge Green
- provide a woodland leisure and walking trail for the benefit of new residents within the development.

The Parish Council is grateful to King Edward VI Grammar School for agreeing to extend planting onto the eastern edge of Bedford Fields (which will remain the School's private land).

6.13 The Parish Council has supported tree planting over many years (for instance Centenary Wood; and the Tree for Life scheme). The Council will seek more opportunities to plant woodland and hedgerows, for instance by planting hedgerows alongside new cycle paths.

### Community Action CA3 - Creation and Maintenance of Woodland and Hedgerows

The Parish Council will seek to establish a new belt of woodland on the western boundary of the 'North of Broomfield' strategic site, creating a wildlife corridor and green buffer between Sparrowhawk Wood and Puddings Wood.

The Council will also look for other opportunities to create new woodland and copses during the lifetime of the Neighbourhood Plan. In addition, working with landowners, it will seek to establish a group of volunteers to support and encourage good maintenance of existing trees, woodland and hedgerows for the benefit of wildlife and the public.

Where new cycle paths are created in the countryside, new hedgerows of native species should normally be planted so that both sides of the path are lined with hedgerow. The purpose is to create new habitats and wildlife corridors; discourage trespass and crop damage on adjacent land; and minimise the visual impact of the cycle path.

6.14 Wildlife depends on (and is part of) a wider network of biodiversity, which includes woods, hedgerows, streams and varied types of soil/land use. There could also be merit in carrying out a biodiversity mapping assessment or natural capital assessment. These studies define core assets and map the main opportunities for enhancing biodiversity. They would enable a better understanding of the biodiversity value/potential of the natural environment in Broomfield; how it can be enhanced; and the likely impact of any new development (see Community Action 4)

### Protecting the Highest-Grade Agricultural Land

6.15 The NPPF requires planning policies to protect and enhance the natural environment by (amongst other things): 'recognising the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services – including the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land.' (Para. 180). The Best and Most Versatile Land is defined nationally as Grades 1, 2 and 3a. This is reflected in Local Plan Strategic Policy S4:

'The Council will seek to minimise the loss of the best and most versatile agricultural land (Grades 1, 2 and 3a) to major new development.'

6.16 Other City Council Planning Documents such as the Solar Farm Development SPD also recognise development pressures on the best agricultural land, as well as the importance of protecting it. The Local Validation Requirement List requires an agricultural land classification survey for planning applications on agricultural land which are for major development. Nonetheless, part of SGS8 'North of Broomfield' strategic development site is located on Grade 2 agricultural land. The Strategic Housing and Employment Land Availability Assessment (SHELAA) calls for sites indicate the continued interest of developers in developing high grade agricultural land in Broomfield.

6.17 The Climate Emergency increases the importance of protecting high-quality agricultural land, so that food production can take place as close as possible to consumption and limit reliance on importing food, which increases carbon emissions.

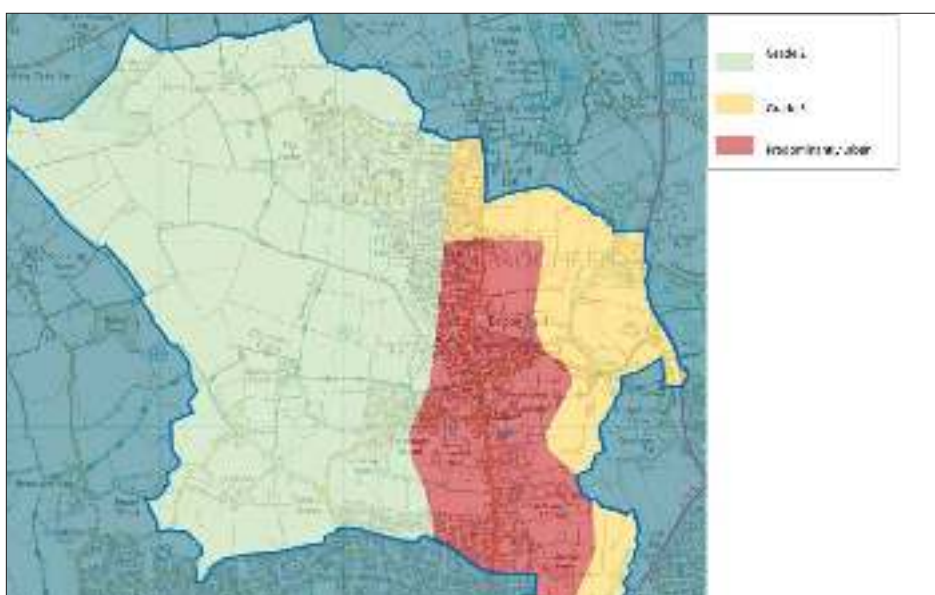
6.18 Map 7 shows that most of the agricultural land in Broomfield Parish is classed as Grade 2 Very Good, with the remainder as Grade 3 Good to Moderate.

6.19 It is important that the best agricultural land in Broomfield is protected from major development. Building on Strategic Policy S11 of the Local Plan, the following policy is designed to provide additional protection to Grade 2 land.

### POLICY BFD5 - PROTECTING THE HIGHEST GRADE AGRICULTURAL LAND

Where development is proposed on Grade 2 agricultural land, as defined in the Natural England Agricultural Land Classification Maps, and outside the Broomfield Settlement Boundary or Chelmsford Urban Area Boundary, proposals will be supported where they are:

- i. replacements for existing buildings or structures; or
- ii. previously developed land; or
- iii. essential to support an existing agriculture, forestry, equestrian or other land-based rural business; and
- iv. supported by evidence, to the satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority, that the proposed development cannot reasonably be accommodated on land other than Grade 2 agricultural land.



Map 7 - Agricultural Land Quality in Broomfield



## Tranquillity

- 6.20 99% of responses to the residents' questionnaire considered tranquillity to be an important or very important benefit of the countryside. Since then, COVID lockdowns have further highlighted the importance of accessing tranquil spaces in maintaining mental health.
- 6.21 The Blandford Landscape Character Assessment (2006) also notes the strong sense of tranquillity of the Pleshey Farmland Plateau (the rural area to the west and northwest of Broomfield village). It shows this landscape area is the only area around Chelmsford where the sense of tranquillity is not adversely affected, at least in part, by major roads or the railway line.
- 6.22 DEFRA statistical data on road and rail noise (2017 – shown on Map 8) also illustrates Broomfield's role in offering tranquil countryside that is accessible to many people across Chelmsford. This is clearly an important environmental asset both for Broomfield and the wider area which should be valued and conserved, as it offers a means of mitigation for the impact of new development. While planning policies can help to conserve this kind of community benefit, tranquillity can also be affected by other factors, such as national infrastructure proposals, changes to flight paths and airport expansion.
- 6.23 Given these pressures, it could be helpful to study and give expression to these qualities through 'tranquillity mapping' or a 'tranquillity audit'.

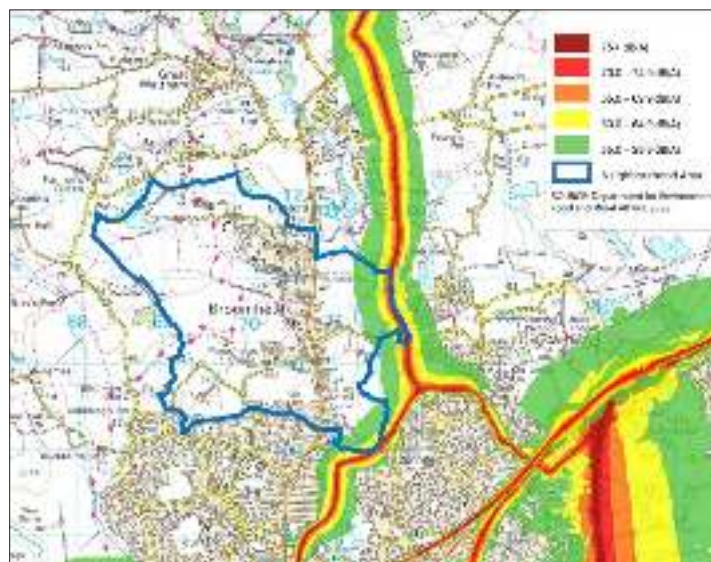
For examples of this approach see:

<https://www.cpre.org.uk/resources/mapping-tranquillity> and <https://www.newforestnpa.gov.uk/app/uploads/2018/05/New-Forest-National-Park-Tranquil-Area-Mapping-Report-March-2015-FINAL2.pdf>.

The purpose is to better describe the importance of this aspect of the natural environment and be able to evaluate and express the impact of development proposals.

### Community Action CA4 - Further Study of the Natural Environment

The Parish Council will investigate the potential benefits of tranquillity and biodiversity mapping, as a means to better understand, conserve and enhance these aspects of Broomfield's natural environment.



Map 8 - Road and rail noise levels averaged over a 24-hour period (source DEFRA)

## New Accessible Open Space

- 6.24 Chelmsford Local Plan identifies a number of Open Spaces, Local Wildlife Sites (LoWS) and Essex Wildlife Trust Nature Reserves, all of which can be found in Broomfield. Designated open spaces also include playing fields that are not attached to a school. All of these can be found in Broomfield, both in the Green Wedge and other areas.
- 6.25 As indicated above, feedback suggests that 'opportunity for recreation (eg walking, jogging)' is an important or very important aspect of the countryside for 96% of the local community. In response to this feedback, the Neighbourhood Plan proposes two new areas of publicly accessible open space on the settlement/rural area boundary.

## The Chelmer Valley

- 6.26 This area of the Parish is part of the Green Wedge, covered by Local Plan Strategic Policy S11b which states:

'The Green Wedge has an identified intrinsic character and beauty and is a multi-faceted distinctive landscape providing important open green networks, which have been instrumental in shaping the City's growth, character and appearance. These networks prevent urban sprawl and settlement coalescence and provide for wildlife, flood storage capacity, leisure and recreation, and travel by cycling and walking, which allows for good public access which will be further improved through the requirements of development allocated in the Local Plan.'



6.27 The northern part of the Chelmer Valley from the Parish Council and Football Club playing fields northwards, has been identified as Valued Landscape and enjoys good public access for leisure and recreation, travel by walking and (along Mill Lane) travel by cycling. There is some scope for further enhancement, as set out in the following Community Action:

### Community Action CA5 - Extension to the Local Nature Reserve

The Parish Council will work with the landowner and the Essex Wildlife Trust to investigate the possibility of expanding the Newlands Grove Nature Reserve. It will also explore whether some of the informal footpaths in this section of the Chelmer Valley could be formalised.

6.28 However, the southern part of the Chelmer Valley has no public access, so offers no opportunities for leisure, recreation or travel by either cycling or walking. The Neighbourhood Plan identifies this as a significant deficiency. This should be addressed in order to support recent/planned development within the Parish and mitigate its impacts.

6.29 Opportunities have arisen through the Plan consultation to improve this situation, by creating:

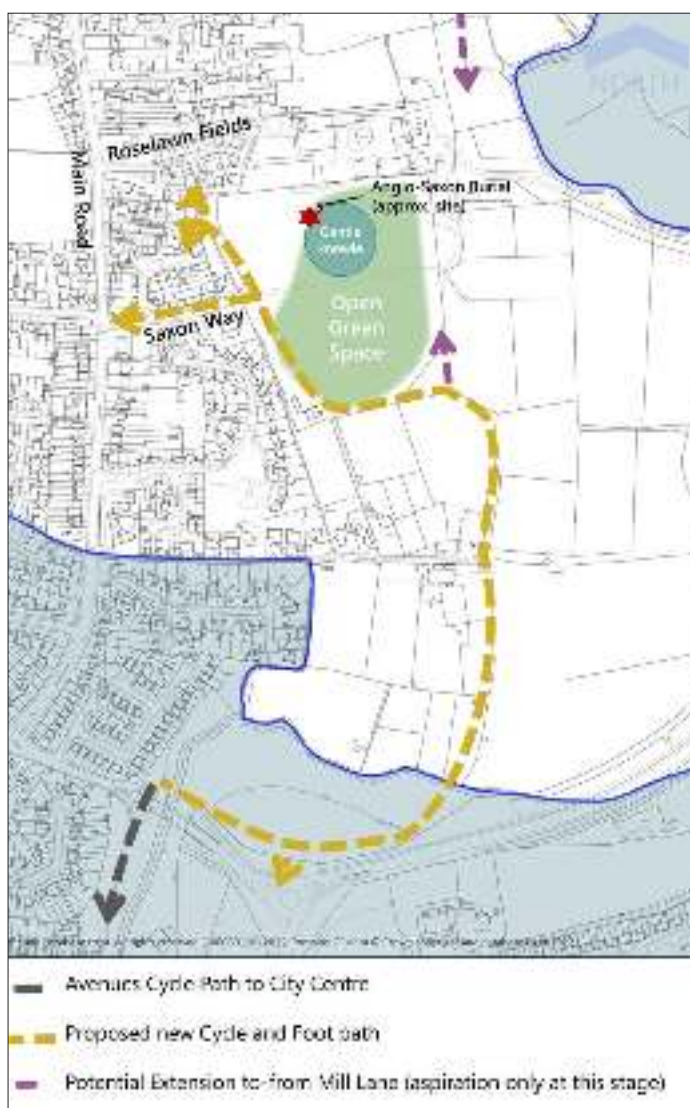
- access for walking and cycling
- accessible open space for leisure and recreation
- scope for projects to enhance biodiversity and reduce the risk of surface water flooding.

These opportunities are shown in **Map 9**. and outlined in the following paragraphs.

#### Cycle and Footpaths

6.30 The proposal is to create a new cycle path and footpath from Valley Bridge to Saxon Way and Ashford Place (marked as a dashed yellow line in **Map 9**). This would link to the existing Avenues cycle path that leads to the City Centre, railway station and university, making it possible to walk or cycle safely from Broomfield village to the centre of Chelmsford. It would form a commuting as well as a leisure route.

6.31 The cycle path route shown would form part of the wider network outlined in Section 11. It has been discussed with the relevant landowners. Discussions will continue and final agreement will be subject to contract in the normal way. There may be possibilities in the future to extend the route to Mill Lane (as indicated by the purple dotted line in Map 9) but this does not have support from all the necessary landowners at the moment.



Map 9 - Improving Access in the Chelmer Valley

### Public Open Space

- 6.32 There is also an opportunity to create public open space on land at the east end of Saxon Way. This land is currently degraded grassland on the site of former gravel workings. It has no agricultural use and is divided by a rough track leading to light industrial/ service units at Roselawn Farm. The track is not a public right of way and there is no public access to the land.
- 6.33 The land includes the site of the Anglo-Saxon Princely Burial, an archaeological site of national importance which was discovered in the 1880s. The current archaeological position is outlined in M. Gee, 'Broomfield Barrow Pit', in Essex Archaeology and History, 3rd Series, 17 (1986), pp.144-7. This shows that, apart from a small 'unquarried ridge', there is no known archaeology left to discover, as the whole site has been excavated for gravel. But it presents an opportunity to create and celebrate a local historic focal point, in line with Policy DM15 of the Local Plan.
- 6.34 If acquired for public use, there would be a more detailed consultation beforehand about exactly how the site could best be used. Given its location on the rural edge, informal space for walking and wildlife might be more appropriate than formal uses (such as sports pitches), though the site is large enough to accommodate several uses. It would be important to enhance landscape quality, which could include planting around the boundaries to protect the amenity of neighbouring properties. There would be scope for biodiversity projects, including sustainable drainage ponds to promote the management of surface water issues in the wider area.
- 6.35 There may also be scope to re-align and upgrade the existing rough track to make it less prominent and more serviceable, though this would need to be discussed and agreed with all the landowners affected.

### Securing and Funding New Access and Open Space

- 6.36 This project is supported by Policy BFD6 and Community Action CA7. In terms of funding, it could be supported by:
- the Parish share of Community Infrastructure Levy or CIL (money from development). Parishes with an adopted neighbourhood plan receive a greater proportion of CIL
  - Lottery funding and charitable grant funding for heritage and biodiversity projects
  - funding to improve cycle path infrastructure.

- 6.37 However, these are unlikely to be sufficient by themselves and will require a direct contribution through development. This is one reason for the small community housing project proposed in Policy BFD10 (see section 7 for further details).

### Community Action CA6 - Improving Public Access to the Chelmer River Valley

The Parish Council will continue discussions with relevant landowners in order to create new cycle paths, footpaths and community open space at the east end of Saxon Way.

### POLICY BFD6 - BROOMFIELD GREEN WEDGE

Proposals that secure enhanced access for recreational uses, including footpaths and cycle routes, in the Green Wedge will be supported, subject to the development being in accordance with the relevant strategic policies of the adopted Local Plan.

#### Land South of Broomfield Place

- 6.38 New accessible public open space of 10 hectares will be created as part of a wider allocation for community facilities on land south and west of Broomfield Place. This is shown in Figure 12 and described in Para.s 10.10 – 10.19 of Section 10 Community Facilities.

#### Local Green Space (LGS)

- 6.39 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) enables the designation and protection of land of particular importance to local communities as Local Green Space (LGS) in neighbourhood plans. Such designations rule out new development on them other than in very special circumstances. Paragraph 106 of the NPPF states that the designation should only be used where the green space is:

- in reasonably proximity to the community it serves
- demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance, for example, because of its beauty, historic significance, recreational value (including as a playing field), tranquillity or richness of its wildlife
- where the green area concerned is local in character and is not an extensive tract of land.

The designation of Local Green Spaces should not be used simply to block development.

6.40 It's also important to note that **LGS is not the same as public open space**. Whilst LGS may include forms of public access, such as public footpaths, the designation does not give the public further rights of access. Existing rights and restrictions must therefore continue to be respected. Also, designation as LGS does not imply any changes in existing land use.

**Process for identifying LGS.**

6.41 The residents' questionnaire asked Question 19: Are there any specific pieces of land you would like to see designated as green space, to prevent them from being developed?

Many answers suggested extensive rather than specific pieces of land, so do not meet the criteria for designation as LGS. However, some more discrete, specific pieces of land were proposed (see Appendix 4). This helped to indicate which pieces of land are demonstrably special to the local community.

6.42 The Broomfield Landscape Appraisal identified that in addition to the Local Plan designations mentioned above *'there are a number of other areas of open space within the Parish and within the urban fabric of the settlement which are important areas which have significance due to the aesthetic quality, historic significance, recreational value, biodiversity and sense of place'* (Para. 5.4.1).

6.43 In the course of considering the suitability of land for development, the AECOM Site Allocation Document noted which sites might, in their judgement, be suitable for allocation as LGS.

6.44 In light of all this, the Review of Local Green Space, Valued Landscape and Key Views (the Review) was commissioned to examine (amongst other things) which sites meet the criteria set out in the NPPF for designation. The Review looked at 26 sites with potential for LGS and concluded that 22 of them met the criteria. These are set out in Section 2 of the Review. Also, an additional site *'Open space to the north of Hospital Approach within existing new housing'* (para.2.2.1, 4th bullet point) was identified as suitable, if the Parish/NPA boundary was amended to include the whole site.

6.45 Finally, 3 further criteria were applied to the sites recommended in the Review:

- effect of the subsequent amendment to the Parish NPA boundary (agreed July 2022)
- whether the recommended site was already covered by an equivalent designation that would offer the same degree of protection

- whether significant changes could be made to the recommended site without the need for planning permission, in which case designation would be rendered largely ineffective.

6.46 These 15 sites are designated in Policy BFD7 (the numbers in brackets relate to the numbering of the LGS in Section 2 of the Review). Should development proposals come forward on these sites they will be considered against the Green Belt policies of the NPPF and Local Plan.

**POLICY BFD7 - LOCAL GREEN SPACES**

The following Local Green Spaces are designated in the Plan and identified on the Policies Map. Management of development within the Local Green Spaces will be consistent with national policy on the management of development in Green Belts.

- a. Newland Grove Nature Reserve and adjoining land (1)
- b. Centenary Wood (7)
- c. Roselawn Play Area (8)
- d. Vellacotts Green (9)
- e. Scot's Green (13)
- f. Play area/linear landscape at Cowlin Mead and Oat Leys (14)
- g. Daffy Wood (16)
- h. Night Pasture and Broom Pightle (18)
- i. Old Church Avenue Playground (19)
- j. Church Avenue open space and grass verges (20)
- k. Open space between Mandeville Way and Court Road (22)
- l. Linear green space and woodland south of Nash Drive (23)
- m. Long Shapely Belt (24)
- n. Puddings Wood (26) (excluding the section where planning consent has already been granted for the proposed new access road)
- o. Open space to the north of Hospital Approach, at Petty Croft (n/a)

6.47 Where land is designated as LGS for its special nature and local significance, there may be costs in conserving and enhancing its character, for instance in terms of its beauty, historic features, recreational value, tranquillity or richness of its wildlife. Where appropriate, the Parish Council will consider making grants towards the maintenance and enhancement of such features.

**Community Action CA7 - Conserving and Enhancing the Special Features of Local Green Spaces**

The Parish Council will consider grants towards the conservation and enhancement of designated Local Green Space (LGS). Grants must relate to the special features and characteristics which have led to the designation, as outlined in the 'Review of Local Green Space, Valued Landscape and Key Views'. Routine maintenance unrelated to special features or character will not be eligible.



a. Newland Grove



b. Centenary Wood



c. Roselawn Play Area



d. Vellacotts Green



e. Scot's Green



f. Cowlin Mead and Oat Leys





g. Daffy Wood



h. Night Pasture and Broom Pightle



i. Old Church Avenue Playground



j. Church Avenue



k. Mandeville Way and Court Road



l. Nash Drive



m. Long Shapley Belt





n. Puddings Wood



o. Petty Croft



## 7. HOUSING

### Housing Objectives

- To ensure an adequate supply of housing to meet the needs of the Parish
- To ensure there is an integrated mix of housing types, sizes and tenures to meet local need
- To encourage a focus on providing genuinely affordable housing for existing residents and those with an existing connection with Broomfield
- To promote sustainable housing that provides for home-working and other environmentally friendly initiatives.

### Current Position

7.1 At the last fully reported Census in 2011, there were 1,850 households in Broomfield, occupying 1,892 dwellings, with a further 84 recorded as vacant. We believe the current (2021) figure is about 2,250 dwellings, due to significant development during the last few years. This has mainly taken place on medium and large greenfield sites: Greater Beaulieu Park, Channels, North of Copperfield Road, North of Hospital Approach and Saxon Gate. Tenure is also likely to have changed in the last decade, with more people renting.

7.2 However, due to boundary changes following the Community Governance Review, there will be a significant fall in both dwellings and households. We estimate that the new Parish and Neighbourhood Plan Area will initially contain about 1,750 dwellings. During the lifetime of the Plan, this is expected to increase again from 2027 onwards, mainly due to around 250 new dwellings in Broomfield's share of the 'North of Broomfield' strategic site.

### Local Plan Context

7.3 As already noted, the Chelmsford Local Plan was adopted in 2020 and identifies how the housing requirements will be met across the City Council area to 2036. Approximately 21,800 homes are expected to be built across the area between 2013 and 2036, of which all but 5% have been identified through planning permissions or sites being allocated in the Local Plan. The remaining 5% will be met through windfall permissions.

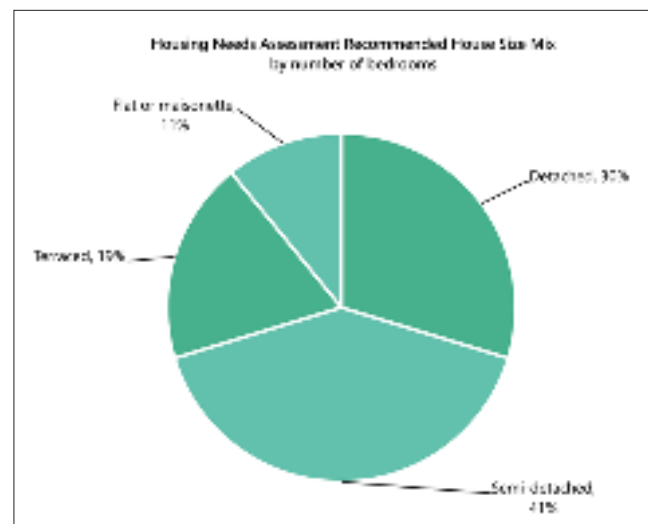


Figure 2

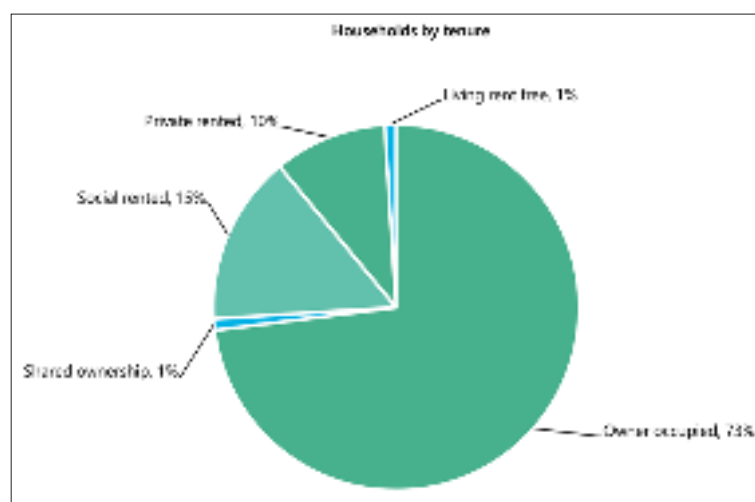


Figure 3



7.4 The Local Plan also allocates an area of land that straddles the Broomfield and Little Waltham parish boundary as a strategic site for landscape-led housing development. This is known as 'North of Broomfield' and Strategic Growth Site 8 and provides for about 450 dwellings. A masterplan for the site has been agreed and a planning application has been approved for up to 512 dwellings. These suggest that at least half the new dwellings will be in Broomfield Parish. Although about 60% of the site area falls within Little Waltham Parish, that part contains a large area of green space. Therefore, it is likely that at least 225 – 255 of the new dwellings will be in Broomfield.

### Housing Need up to 2036

7.5 Data for the Local Plan has largely been processed on a city/area-wide basis, rather than for individual parishes. Therefore, a full Housing Needs Assessment (HNA) was commissioned to support and inform the Neighbourhood Plan process. It was carried out by AECOM (July 2019) as part of the Government's neighbourhood planning support package.

7.6 The HNA identified that the overall need for the Parish is around 176 dwellings up to 2036. Given the Local Plan allocation for housing at 'North of Broomfield', this requirement will be more than met by that allocation, regardless of any infill and windfall permissions that come forward during the Plan period. Therefore, there is no requirement for the Neighbourhood Plan to allocate sites for housing purely to meet overall needs in the Parish.

7.7 The other main findings and conclusions of the Housing Needs Assessment were:

- the existence of affordability pressures within the Parish, resulting in a high need for affordable housing. Prices for market tenures are well above the means of households earning the average income
- the current most significant net need is for two and three bedroom units, followed by one-bedroom units
- Starter Homes (when the HNA was produced in 2019, this was a Government scheme that offered first-time buyers a 20% discount on a new-build home) are out-of-reach of the group they are intended for, first-time buyers.

This product should consequently be excluded from the tenure mix, as every one of this type effectively reduces the provision of more useful affordable homes

- 25% of new residential units should be social or affordable rent, mostly with one to two bedrooms
- 10% of homes in a new development should be for affordable home ownership. Most of these dwellings should be for either 25% or 50% shared ownership
- private renting in Broomfield increased by 178% between 2001 and 2011. This is an affordable alternative to homeownership and AECOM recommend more homes in this tenure.
- The type of home to be provided (detached, semi-detached, terraced or flat) is of secondary importance in the context of an HNA. Notwithstanding this, the housing types most likely to meet assessed needs, based on recent transactions in the current stock, are smaller detached and semi-detached homes.
- Additionally, bungalows appeal to an elderly population and this type should be promoted to support the needs of the growing elderly population.

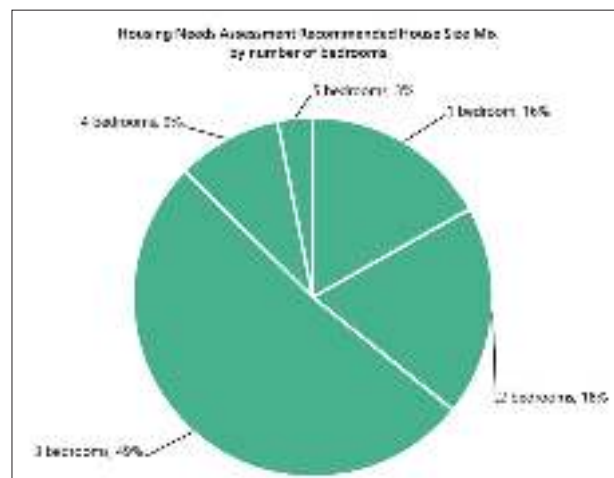


Figure 4

7.8 An Affordable Housing Needs Survey was conducted alongside the Regulation 14 Consultation for this Plan to provide further detail about the affordability pressures that the AECOM study has identified. The results will be used by the Parish Council to inform initiatives to deliver affordable housing to meet local needs.



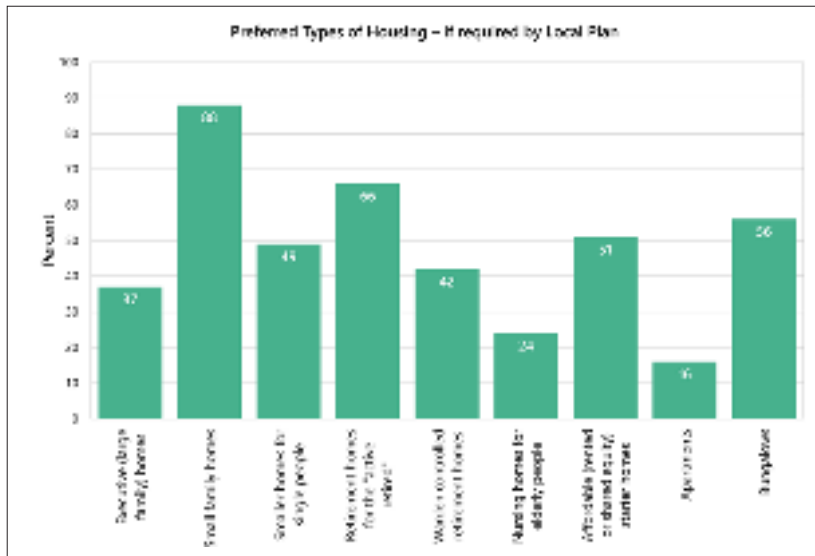


Fig. 5 - Preferred house types

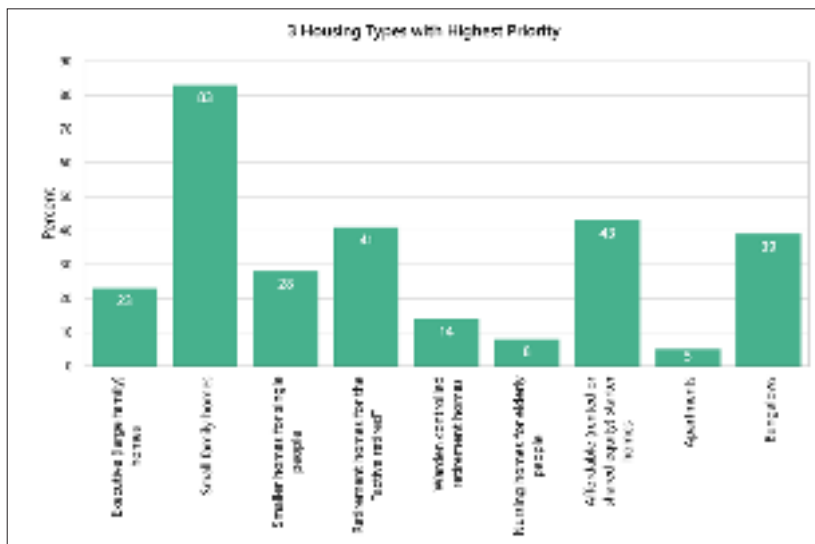


Fig. 6 - Priority house types

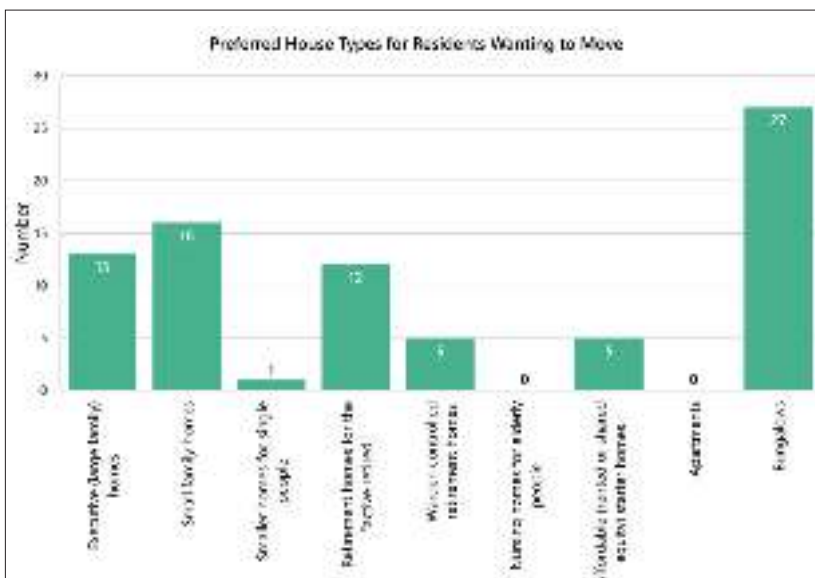


Fig. 7 - Preferred house types

### Community Views and Perceptions about Housing

7.9 In the household questionnaire, residents were asked for their views about the types of housing most needed in Broomfield. Initially, they were asked about types that should be included in any new strategic housing allocations within the Local Plan.

7.10 In general, responses indicate that community views and perceptions are very much in line with the findings of the HNA. There is no particular perceived need for extra housing over and above Local Plan allocations, but where housing allocations are made, there is a strong preference for:

- small family homes (three-bedroom homes) in preference to larger ones
- affordable housing, particularly rented or shared equity homes
- retirement homes for the active retired (ie older people who don't need any support)
- bungalows.

7.11 Residents were also asked if they were likely to need to move within Broomfield in the next five years and, if so, why. A relatively small proportion of overall respondents answered this question – only those who need to move in the next five years and wish to stay in Broomfield. But of these, a significant proportion would like to downsize within Broomfield, particularly to a bungalow or to another type of property suited to the 'active retired'.

Interestingly, the proportion of responses indicating a need to move to a large family home ('executive home') in the next five years was 18% - very similar to the proportion indicating a need for 'homes for the active retired' (17%). On the assumption that these 'active retired' people may well currently occupy larger family homes, it suggests that providing local homes of sufficient quality/size for people to downsize would in turn free up larger family homes for younger people with expanding families.

7.12 Finally, residents were asked their views about the form of development that new housing should take from these options:

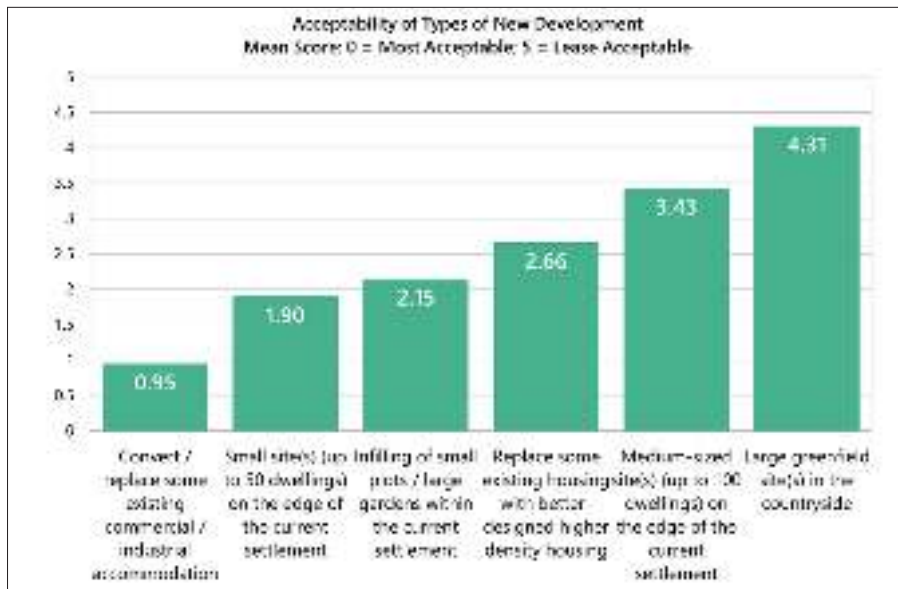


Fig. 8 - Acceptability of types of new development

### Relevant Local Plan Policies

7.13 The Local Plan contains several general housing policies. These are still up to date, albeit they may be re-examined over the next two years as part of the forthcoming Local Plan Review. There is therefore no need currently to introduce Broomfield-specific requirements in respect of these policies, which include:

#### Local Plan POLICY DM1 size and type of housing

The policy sets requirements for the construction standards and house types for new homes, the level of requirements being dependent upon the size of the development.

#### Local Plan POLICY DM2 - Affordable housing and rural exception sites

The policy requires that 35% of all new housing on sites of 11 homes or more be affordable, as defined by the NPPF.

### Neighbourhood Plan Housing Policies

7.14 The following policies will supplement Local Plan policies with specific regard to Broomfield. They are based on data in the Neighbourhood Plan Evidence Base, specifically the Housing Needs Assessment (HNA) and the residents' questionnaire data. In terms of house sizes, the HNA identified that the biggest need was for three-bedroomed homes in order to redress the current imbalance and meet forecast needs over the Neighbourhood Plan period. To achieve a better balance, Policy BFD8 will be implemented for all proposals for ten or more dwellings, except for the development of the strategic site to the north of Broomfield as allocated in the Chelmsford Local Plan. These requirements may be adjusted should a more up-to-date and locally assessed needs assessment support a different mix.

7.15 Policy BFD8 applies to developments of ten or more dwellings to be consistent with the Government's definition of a major housing development. The policy also acknowledges that the housing mix set out in the policy may have an implication on the commercial viability of certain sites. This may apply particularly to sites which would deliver houses just above the size threshold and/or those with difficult site conditions. In these circumstances, developers should set out a robust case to justify the delivery of a different housing mix on the site concerned.

## POLICY BFD8 - HOUSING MIX

Developments of ten or more dwellings should provide the following mix of open market housing, unless it can be demonstrated that more up-to-date and locally assessed needs support a different mix or that the mix would not be commercially viable on the site concerned:

1 bedroomed homes	approximately 15%
2 bedroomed homes	approximately 15%
3 bedroomed homes	approximately 50%
4 bedroomed homes	approximately 10%
5 bedroomed or more homes	approximately 10%

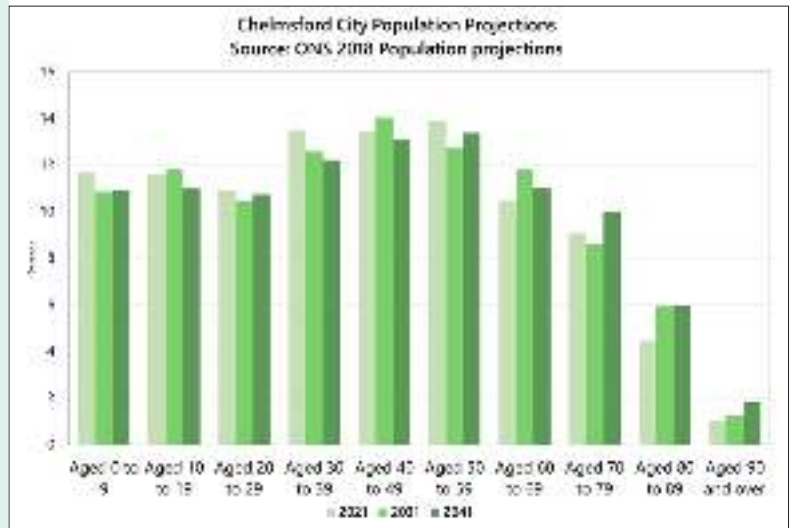


Fig. 9 - Chelmsford Population Projections

### Providing Accessible Housing for Older Residents and those Working from Home

- 7.16 Our life expectancy continues to increase, so more and more people will likely remain in their own home until much later in life. The Government's 2018-based population projections for the City Council area show that the proportion of residents aged over 60 will continue to rise over the next 20 years with those aged 90 or over almost doubling. The earlier national Lifetime Homes initiative, whereby homes would be built to enable adaptation to changing needs, has now been incorporated into the Building Regulations Part M4 Category 2 (Accessible and Adaptable Dwellings).
- 7.17 The Essex Design Guide notes that '*accommodating the needs of older people requires the introduction of standardised measurements and designs that enable dwellings to withstand the loads of mobility or safety aids. The Building Regulations Part M4 Category 2 (Accessible and Adaptable Dwellings) should be adopted into all new designs so as to correctly address such fundamentals of accessibility and approach. New homes should also consider designing to accommodate the shift towards digital healthcare*'
- 7.18 Policy DM26 of the adopted Local Plan already requires new homes to achieve appropriate internal space through adherence to the Nationally Described Space Standards. Additionally, the City Council's Making Places Supplementary Planning

Document (2021) seeks to ensure that all buildings are accessible and inclusive for all. Such adaptations have, as noted in paragraph 153 of the Neighbourhood Plan Housing Needs Assessment, the potential to substitute for a proportion of the need for new sheltered housing.

- 7.19 The COVID Pandemic resulted in a changed way of working for many, with working from home becoming normal practice for many office workers. The ability to adapt homes for such purposes has become a key consideration in making decisions to purchase a house. The installation of technology and space at the time of building homes is much more cost-effective than retrofitting. As such, proposals for new homes are encouraged to incorporate space and technology to enable home working.

## POLICY BFD9 - ADAPTABLE HOMES

Proposals for new dwellings that are designed to be accessible and inclusive, including meeting Building Regulations M4 (2) standards, will be supported.



### A New Approach to Housing in Broomfield

- 7.20 As indicated above, the 2019 Housing Needs Assessment (HNA) highlighted severe affordability pressures which make it very difficult for local people on average incomes to find housing and stay within their local community. The greatest identified need was for smaller properties that are genuinely affordable (shared equity or social rent), along with properties that enable older people to downsize. The same needs are reflected in the residents' questionnaire.
- 7.21 The Parish Council believes each community should identify and provide for its own housing need. The currently-predominant 'top down', market-led approach tends to produce large developments, led by large commercial house builders, often on greenfield land. These are more likely to produce a general mix of housing, rather than one that is specifically related to the needs of the neighbourhood. By contrast, the Parish Council would like to encourage new housing to be targeted at the existing community of Broomfield and its needs.
- 7.22 The current pressure on all communities in the South-East to accommodate more housing is likely to continue in the future. For example, the initial Issues and Options stage of the Local Plan Review indicates significant increases in housing requirement, compared to the Adopted Local Plan. The following paragraphs are set against this background. They recognise that some increase in house-building will be required, but also seek to ensure growth meets the specific needs of Broomfield people, not just top-down housing targets or developer opportunities.

#### Community Land Trusts

- 7.23 One option for securing affordable housing that meets identified local needs and remains available for the local community for all time is a Community Land Trust (CLT). This is a form of community-led housing, set up and run by local people to develop and manage homes as well as other assets. CLTs act as long-term stewards of housing, ensuring that it remains genuinely affordable, based on what people actually earn in their area, not just for now but for every future occupier. CLTs enjoy the discretion not to offer tenants the Right to Buy and those partnering with housing associations can ensure the same discretion is applied.

- 7.24 CLTs can be included within larger development allocations, but this would depend on a developer being willing to provide land below the market price. CLTs are therefore more likely to provide homes on small pieces of land within or on the edge of the existing settlement, where a philanthropic landowner is willing to donate land that is not designated for market housing or to sell well below market prices. Fig. 10 illustrates how the CLT process works:



Fig. 10 - Community Land Trust

- 7.25 Working with the Rural Community Council of Essex (RCCE), the Parish Council will set up a Community Land Trust, to pioneer a more community-based approach to housebuilding in Broomfield in the future. As shown in Fig.10, this will need some local people to come forward to form the Broomfield CLT Board. Once established, the CLT can plan and secure community housing through a Registered Provider (normally a housing association), which eases the pressure on the CLT board members.

#### Community Action CA8 - Setting up a Community Land Trust (CLT)

The Parish Council will seek to set up a CLT to ensure that, in future, a greater proportion of new housing is genuinely affordable and designed to meet the specific needs of the people of Broomfield.

### Identifying a Site for a Community Housing Project

7.26 As part of the consultation with stakeholders, landowners and agents were invited to put forward proposals for developments that might offer a community benefit. The overall identified housing need of 176 dwellings will be met within the Broomfield portion of the 'North of Broomfield' development (Local Plan strategic site SGS8). Therefore, this Call of Sites invited proposals that would meet the following 3 criteria, rather than simply providing general housing to meet an overall target:

- include the provision of community facilities identified as desirable in the residents' questionnaire response, (especially Q.42 – 45)
- include the provision of new green open space with public access or landscape improvements of the type outlined in the Landscape Appraisal
- provide housing types prioritised in the HNA and residents' questionnaire response, for instance: one to three-bedroom homes, affordable rental homes, affordable shared equity homes, and homes for the active retired (including bungalows).

Responses were assessed by AECOM as part of a study of all the Local Plan and Neighbourhood Plan Call for Sites proposals and the Site Assessment report is published on the Neighbourhood Plan website.

7.27 One site, east of Saxon Way, was considered to offer the potential for all three and is therefore identified in the Neighbourhood Plan for development as described below and outlined in the site selection document on our website:



Fig. 11 - Site Constraints, Land east of Saxon Way

7.28 The following constraints to development have been identified through the site assessment process. Development proposals for this area will need to demonstrate how due regard has been given to these matters.

#### Green Wedge

The site lies just inside the Green Wedge identified in Policy S11 of the adopted Local Plan, where development must not 'materially harm the role, function and intrinsic character and beauty of the Green Wedge'. It must not lead to 'urban sprawl and settlement coalescence' and must provide for 'wildlife, flood storage capacity, leisure and recreation, and travel by cycling and walking' and allow for good public access. To achieve this, development should not extend further east than the buildings at Roselawn Farm, as that would reduce the settlement gap between Broomfield and Springfield. Open space should include water features for flood storage and features to encourage biodiversity, as well as opportunities for cycling, walking and informal leisure.

#### Landscape

The Neighbourhood Plan Landscape Appraisal identifies landscape constraints for the locality, for instance:

- development to be set back from the 'elevated knowle' and not impede views of the river valley from the knowle
- outer edge of any new development must be rural in character and could adopt a farm courtyard arrangement
- careful planting to avoid new development appearing prominently on the skyline and intruding and undermining the rural qualities of the valley.

#### Archaeology

The site has known archaeological interest. All features are recorded as being removed by investigation or by gravel extraction, except for a small unquarried ridge (see Transactions of the Essex Society for Archaeology and History, 3rd Series, Vol 17, 1986, p. 144-147).

#### Watercourse

Although the developable area is comfortably outside the flood zone, there is a seasonal watercourse to the west to which development should have regard.

#### The amenity of neighbouring properties

Boundaries with existing properties are mostly covered by hedgerows, trees or scrub. However, in some places new or enhanced planting may be required.

7.29 These constraints suggest that the developable area is around 1.25 hectares, in the northwest section of the overall 5.3-hectare site.

#### Site Proposals

7.30 In the light of the preceding paragraphs and the identified needs in Broomfield for affordable housing and community facilities, the Neighbourhood Plan identifies an area 5.3 hectares east of Saxon Way for:

- community facilities
- community-led affordable housing
- informal open space.

#### Development Concept

7.31 To guide the development of this site, a development concept has been included in the Neighbourhood Plan against which any development proposals are judged. The concept has been refined through discussion between the landowner and the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group and is illustrated in Fig. 12.

7.32 In summary, the development should provide the following:

##### a. Community facilities

- a cycle path between the existing built-up area and the Chelmer Valley cycle path
- if the Integrated Care Board wish to pursue this option, land for a GP surgery and associated facilities.

##### b. New open green space

- around four hectares of new accessible informal green space with associated extensive landscape improvements, on land which is currently unused and degraded. The open space achieved would be over three times the area to be developed.

##### c. Affordable housing

- the development would be led by affordable housing for local people, through a Community Land Trust, responding to needs identified in an up-to-date Affordable Housing Needs Survey.



- d. Structural landscaping and integrated sustainable urban drainage facilities
- the northern and western boundaries should include a significant landscaped belt including screening trees using native species of local provenance to reinforce existing planting
  - elsewhere within the site, existing trees and hedgerows should be retained and reinforced as appropriate.

Plainly the policy addresses a complex set of issues. Developers are encouraged to organise pre application meetings with the City Council and the County Council as necessary. Depending on the number of dwellings proposed on the site, a full Transport Assessment may need to be undertaken considering opportunities for sustainable transport measures, access arrangements, and the impact on the highway network in terms of safety and capacity. Any proposals for amendments to and/or the provision of new cycle routes/footways should involve consultation with the County Council, as the highway authority, and Essex Highways.

#### Development Design and Considerations

- 7.33 Before any development is approved, an extensive pre-application stage of archaeological work, including geophysics and trial-trenching, should be undertaken and submitted with the planning application. A written scheme of archaeological investigation will be required prior to any part of the development commencing. The final layout, whilst having regard to the Site Concept in Figure 12, should also take account of this archaeological work. The development should include initiatives to enhance, interpret and celebrate the significance of the site, i.e. through information boards, public art and community involvement.
- 7.34 The design of the development should take account of its setting outside the Settlement Boundary and the proximity of the farm buildings to the north. It is envisaged that the development could take the form of farmhouse or barn-style buildings, divided into dwellings of a size and form to meet the identified need and/or the GP surgery.



Fig. 12 - Site Concept Diagram, Land east of Saxon Way

## POLICY BFD 10 - LAND EAST OF SAXON WAY

A site of 5.3 hectares east of Saxon way, as identified on Figure 12, is allocated for:

- community open space, cycle paths and footpaths;
- community affordable housing to meet the specific needs of local people in Broomfield; and/or
- a GP surgery should the Mid and South Essex Integrated Care Board provide evidence that the surgery is required and deliverable at the time a planning application for the development is submitted.

The development of the site should be carried out in accordance with the principles illustrated in the Concept Diagram (Figure 12) and with its main vehicular and pedestrian access point from Saxon Way.

The community housing element should come forward alongside the use of the whole site for community open space, cycle paths and footpaths and only where it is:

- delivered and managed through a Community Land Trust or similar body; and
- offered in the first instance to people with a demonstrable local connection with the Parish of Broomfield and who are unable to buy or rent properties in the village at open-market prices.

Where necessary, based on its eventual composition, the development should:

- make financial contributions to early years, primary and secondary education provision, and other community facilities such as healthcare provision;
- make financial contributions to new or enhanced sport, leisure, and recreation facilities; and
- deliver appropriate improvements, as necessary, to the local and strategic road network.





## 8. DEVELOPMENT DESIGN

### Development Design Objectives

- To ensure new development is designed to reflect the character and setting of Broomfield in general and of the immediate locality
- To promote an awareness of locally-important design features and encourage their use
- To encourage new development to incorporate measures that reduce environmental impact.

### Neighbourhood Plan Residents' Questionnaire

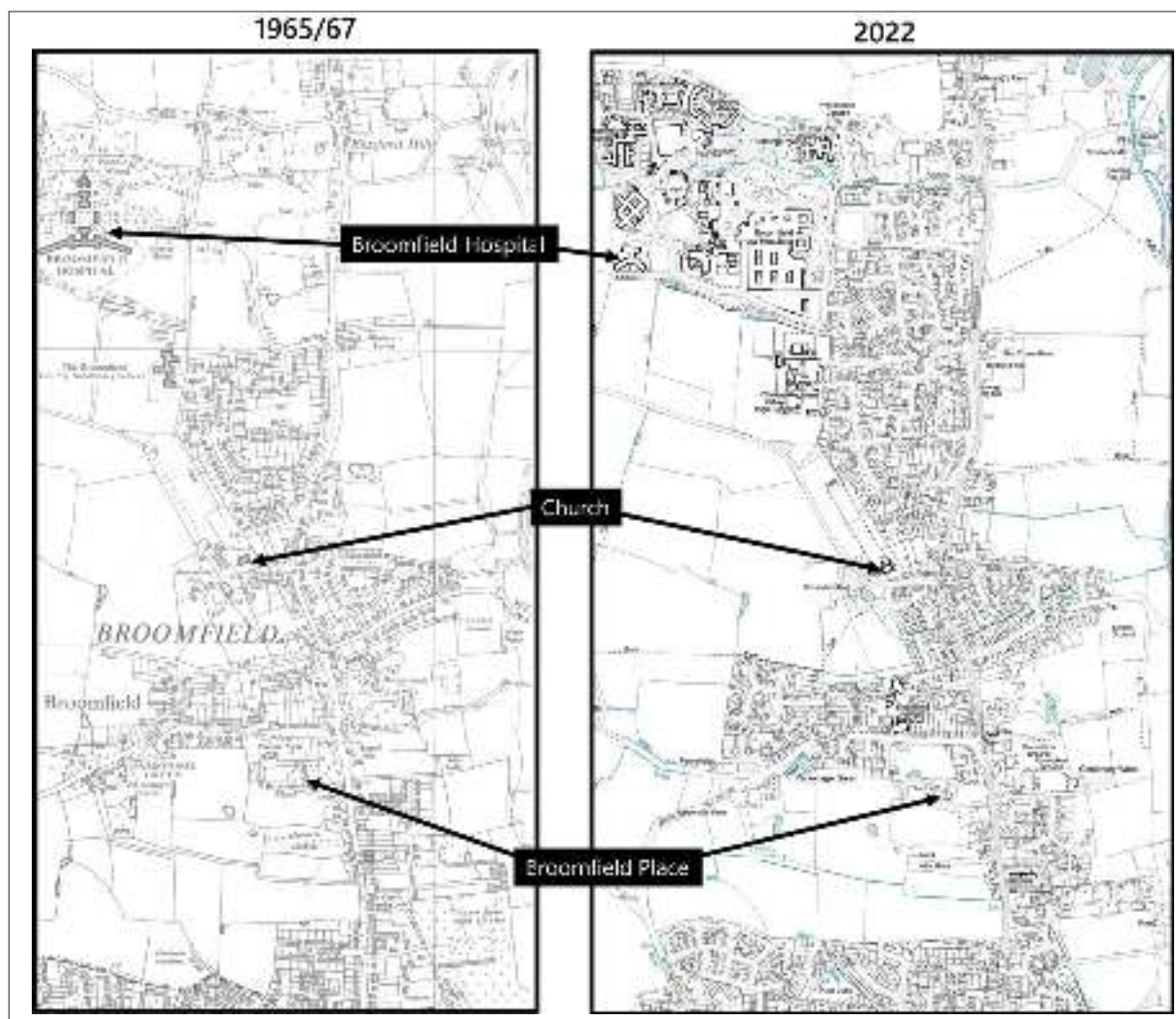
- 8.1 Section 5 (questions 21 - 36) asked about Village Design. The clear outcome was that residents wholeheartedly appreciate Broomfield's historic buildings, with 98% of responses saying that Broomfield's historic buildings are important or very important to them.
- 8.2 The buildings that respondents most liked were also the most historic ones, with a clear focus on Church Green and adjoining buildings. Church Green was also the most common response to the question about where Broomfield's heart or centre lies, though there was also a strong response for Angel Green.
- 8.3 Support for public art in principle was limited, with almost 50% of respondents preferring not to have it and some expressing strong feelings against it. Where supported, the preferred theme was Broomfield heritage and a tasteful, classic/traditional or natural style.
- 8.4 The preference for traditional styles continued through responses to seven statements. These showed the strongest support for the following ideas:
- New buildings should fit in with surrounding buildings, provided the surrounding buildings look attractive
  - 'Generally, I prefer new buildings to have a traditional design' (90% support compared to 10% for modern design)
  - New houses should be spread out, with plenty of space in between
  - Generally, new houses and buildings should be limited to two storeys (53% support, though there was 35% support for two and a half storeys)

- Blocks of apartments are not acceptable at all (50% support this view, though there was 38% support for apartment blocks of no more than three storeys)
- Smaller gardens are okay, provided there is communal open space within two minutes' walk (47% support, whilst 30% preferred homes to have big gardens of more than 80 sqm and 27% said that small gardens are okay anyway)
- New houses should generally be built in small cul-de-sacs, with a maximum of around 25 houses in each.

### Existing Design Styles and Phases

- 8.5 While little apart from the Church survives from the Middle Ages, a few of Broomfield's existing houses date back to the fourteenth to sixteenth centuries, as do the Angel and Kings Arms public houses. Gradual development has taken place over the years, most extensively during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries along Main Road, New Road, and School Lane, including Broomfield Primary School. The latter half of the twentieth century saw Broomfield's population expand considerably with the building of several sizeable housing developments, notably those at Church Avenue and surrounds, Longshots, Erick Avenue and surrounds, and Court Road. Other twentieth-century developments include Berwick Avenue, Glebe Crescent, Cricketers Close, Mandeville Way, Willow Close, Williams Road and Ayletts.





Map 10 – Phases of Development

8.6 Outside the Defined Settlement area, Broomfield Hospital was opened in the 1930s and has been developing ever since, with a significant expansion programme begun in the late 1990s. At the rear of the site are the Linden Centre and the Crystal Centre, facilities maintained by the North Essex Partnership University NHS Foundation Trust, and Broomfield Care Home.

8.7 Map 10 shows how Broomfield has grown in a period of just over 50 years.

8.8 Proposals for enhancing the Church Green Conservation Area and for designating new Special Character Areas are included in the Historic Environment Section below (para.s 9.10 – 9.17).

### Design Guidance Context

8.9 The consideration of development proposals in Broomfield is already guided by a range of planning

policies and guidance. These include:

- The National Design Guide (2021)
- The National Model Design Codes (2021)
- The Essex Design Guide

### National Design Guide

8.10 The National Design Guide is a comprehensive document that sets out the rationale and role of good design. It identifies and illustrates the Government's priorities for well-designed places in the form of ten characteristics, namely:

- i. Context (enhance the surroundings)
- ii. Identify (attractive and distinctive)
- iii. Built form (a coherent pattern of development)
- iv. Movement (accessible and easy to move around)
- v. Nature (enhanced and optimised)
- vi. Public spaces (safe, social and inclusive)
- vii. Uses (mixed and integrated)
- viii. Homes and buildings (functional, healthy and sustainable)
- ix. Resources (efficient and resilient)
- x. Lifespan (made to last)

### National Model Design Codes

- 8.11 The Model Design Codes complement the National Design Guide, providing detailed guidance on the production of design codes, guides and policies as a toolkit for local planning authorities to use when producing their own documents.

### Essex Design Guide

- 8.12 Originally published in 1973, the Essex Design Guide was a pioneering approach to providing guidance for developers, primarily on the design of new housing. The Guidance was revamped in 2018 with an online interactive version now providing updated guidance on a range of themes including active design, the ageing population, health and wellbeing, digital and smart technology and garden communities.

### Broomfield Village Design Statement 2011/12 (VDS)

- 8.13 A Village Design Statement (VDS) for Broomfield was adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance by Chelmsford City Council in 2011. However, with the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan Design Guidelines, referred to below, it is now superseded.
- 8.14 Development proposals will, as appropriate to the nature of the proposal, need to have regard to the relevant content of the design guidance referred to above.

### AECOM Design Guidelines

- 8.15 Notwithstanding the above, the design of new development will need to have regard to the Broomfield Design Guide prepared specifically for the Neighbourhood Plan. As part of the Government Technical Support package for neighbourhood plans, AECOM was commissioned to produce a Design Guide for the Parish. The aim was to 'provide general design guidance that will influence the form of development in the Neighbourhood Plan Area by advising on how it can reflect local character.' It also contains a checklist of general questions (reproduced in Appendix 2) for applicants to ask and consider when preparing a development proposal, to ensure proposals are consistent with the Design Guide.

- 8.16 The Design Guide and Checklist are very comprehensive and all new development should have regard to it. It requires that proposals should:
- a. Harmonise and enhance existing settlement in terms of physical form pattern or movement and land use
  - b. Relate well to local topography and landscape features, including prominent ridge lines
  - c. Reinforce or enhance the established urban character of streets, squares and other spaces
  - d. Reflect, respect and reinforce local architecture and historic distinctiveness
  - e. Retain and incorporate important existing features into the development
  - f. Respect surrounding buildings in terms of scale, height, form and massing
  - g. Adopt appropriate materials and details
  - h. Integrate with existing paths, streets, circulation networks and patterns of activity
  - i. Provide adequate open space for the development in terms of both quantity and quality
  - j. Incorporate necessary services and drainage infrastructure without causing unacceptable harm to retained features
  - k. Ensure all components eg buildings, landscapes, access routes, parking and open space are well related to each other, to provide a safe and attractive environment
  - l. Make sufficient provision for sustainable waste management (including facilities for kerbside collection, waste separation and minimisation where appropriate) without adverse impact on the street scene, the local landscape or the amenities of neighbours.

## POLICY BFD11 - DEVELOPMENT DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS

In addition to the requirements of the adopted Chelmsford Local Plan, development proposals should demonstrate how the proposal reflects the character and setting of Broomfield and the locality within which the site is located.

As appropriate to their scale, nature, and location, development proposals should demonstrate how they have regard to the Essex Design Guide and the Broomfield Neighbourhood Plan Design Guidelines (April 2020) and the requirements of the Development Design Checklist in Appendix 2 of this Plan.

In particular, applications should demonstrate how they comply with the following principles:

- i. Size and heights of the buildings should be sympathetic with the surroundings and the wider landscape;
- ii. Traditional materials should be used for exterior walls and roofs, e.g., Essex or London stock brick, plain or pargetted rendering, flint, decorative brick coursing;
- iii. Boundary treatments, including fencing, should be complementary to neighbouring buildings and boundary features;
- iv. Where public green spaces are provided within a development, they should be designed for a specific purpose (e.g. play areas); and
- v. Cycling should be encouraged by introducing cycle routes (cycle paths) and providing bicycle parking and storage where appropriate.

8.17 Some property changes (such as new garden walls, hedging, minor changes to exterior walls of buildings and other forms of permitted development) can have a significant effect on the street scene but don't need planning permission. Such plans are unlikely to encounter the Guidelines and Checklist, as they wouldn't need a formal planning application.

8.18 So, it may be helpful to promote design advice and guidance in a very positive and user-friendly way to cover all types and levels of development and change. This should aim to inspire and motivate, not just to regulate so that everyone making changes to their property can see how good design can make a positive contribution to the built environment. This could be done through a revision and update to the Village Design Statement (VDS). The VDS is based on 11 character areas, so is well-placed to offer very specific guidance for the relevant road or block.

### Community Action CA9 – Village Design Guidance

The Parish Council will consider updating the Village Design Statement to form short, user-friendly guidance about extensions and upgrades (including permitted development), bringing it into line with the new AECOM Design Guide.

#### Sustainable Construction

8.19 Neighbourhood plans are limited as to what requirements for energy saving they can place on new residential development. Notwithstanding those restrictions, proposals that include measures to reduce energy consumption and waste will be welcomed.





## POLICY BFD12 – SUSTAINABLE CONSTRUCTION PRACTICES

Development proposals that incorporate energy conservation and sustainable construction, including the following measures as appropriate to the proposal, will be supported where such measures are designed to be integral to the building design and minimise any detrimental impact on the building or its surroundings:

- a. maximising the benefits of solar gain through site layouts and orientation of buildings;
- b. incorporating best practice in energy conservation and efficiency;
- c. installing renewable heating technology;
- d. incorporating sustainable building design and construction measures which minimise waste reduction, re-use and recycle minerals, and use sustainable materials, including in relation to their procurement and energy and water efficiency measures such as ground/air source heat pumps, solar panels and greywater recycling/rainwater and stormwater harvesting; and
- e. where it possible to do so, adapt and reuse structures already on the development site.







## 9. THE HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT

### Historic Environment Objectives

- To conserve and where possible enhance all aspects of the historic environment - built heritage, archaeology and historic landscape features
- To identify, conserve and enhance areas of special character
- To promote awareness of the historic features that help to make Broomfield special
- By celebrating these historic assets, to promote a sense of place and community.

### Feedback from the Community

- 9.1 86% of responses to the residents' questionnaire said that 'Old buildings and/or sense of heritage' was important or very important, with hardly any opposing responses.
- 9.2 In Question 24, residents were asked: 'How important are Broomfield's historic buildings to you? (eg the Angel, Butlers, Broomfield Hall, St. Mary's Church). 98% of responses said important or very important; with only 1% stating the opposite. About half of these responses went on to make suggestions for more conservation areas in Broomfield, in addition to the existing one at Church Green.
- 9.3 Finally, when asked to indicate which buildings or parts of the village residents most liked, responses showed an overwhelming preference for historic buildings/parts of the village (see responses to Questions 21 and 22).
- 9.4 From this data, we can conclude that a general sense of heritage and appreciation of historic buildings in particular are very important aspects of the village for local residents. They help to define the village and create a distinctive sense of place.
- 9.5 The history of the village might also be a way of enhancing community spirit, through involvement and enjoyment in exploring it further. The local history group, Brumfelda, the U3A, local schools and interested local residents might be able to bring people together to enhance Broomfield's sense of place and community spirit.

### Local Plan Policies

- 9.6 The Local Plan seeks to conserve and enhance the historic environment through:

Strategic Policy S3 – Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment  
Policy DM13 – Designated Heritage Assets. This includes policies to protect Listed Buildings, Conservation Areas, Registered Parks and Gardens and Scheduled Monuments.  
Policy DM14 – Non-Designated Heritage Assets  
Policy DM15 – Archaeology.

### Historic Buildings

- 9.7 Broomfield has 25 listed buildings as indicated in Appendix 3. In addition, the City Council has identified 14 structures (or groups of structures) in a Register of Buildings of Local Value (non-designated historic assets of local interest). These are also identified in Appendix 3. Adopted Local Plan Policy DM14 – Non-Designated Heritage Assets addresses the protection and retention of non-designated heritage assets, as identified on the City Council's Buildings of Local Value List.

### Anglo-Saxon Burial Site

- 9.8 In 1888, workmen excavating a gravel pit behind Clobbs Row found a collection of iron objects and high-status jewellery. This led to a full excavation in 1894, which uncovered the grave of an Anglo-Saxon warrior, complete with a sword, spear and shield; drinking vessels, cups and a bowl; a lamp, glass jars and other items. Most of these are in a new exhibition at the Chelmsford Museum (on long-



term loan from the British Museum). By the 1980s, almost the whole area had been subject to gravel extraction. A watching brief revealed a very few Anglo-Saxon features nearby. These are reported in the Transactions of the Essex Society for Archaeology and History (3rd Series, Volume 17, 1986).

- 9.9 In 1888, this was a discovery of national importance, as many similar burials had been robbed a long time ago. The Broomfield Burial has since been eclipsed by the grander Anglo-Saxon Burial site at Sutton Hoo in Suffolk and, more recently, by a well-preserved site at Prittlewell in Southend. Nonetheless, it remains a very significant discovery which puts Broomfield on the historical map. It is therefore an important aspect of Broomfield's heritage to be celebrated, especially since the new exhibition in Chelmsford Museum is giving it greater publicity.

### Community Action CA10 - Promoting Awareness of Historic Features

The Parish Council will work with the Local History Group and other interested residents, land/building owners, the Village Hall Charity and others to:

- design and install interpretation boards to enhance the impact of important heritage assets, such as the village greens, the Parish Church and other historic buildings (with the agreement of the owners)
- facilitate displays about local history at the Village Hall and/or other public buildings, linked to heritage trails around the village
- as part of plans to create public open space east of Saxon Way (CA6 and BFD10), prepare a design for the Anglo-Saxon Burial Site to celebrate its significance and value as a public asset; and seek funding from the Heritage Lottery and similar sources to support implementation.

### Broomfield Conservation Area

- 9.10 Broomfield has one conservation area, based on the historic buildings around Church Green (a registered village green) and as identified on Map 11. The City Council prepared a draft Conservation Area Character Appraisal in 2009 which is available to view on the City Council website at <https://www.chelmsford.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/conservation-areas-and-listed-buildings/conservation-areas-in-chelmsford/>. The draft Appraisal (never formally adopted) identified several enhancement projects and, some 16 years on, it is appropriate that the list is reviewed to identify whether the projects remain relevant.

- 9.11 For some years, there have been discussions about enhancing the Green and repairing degraded features. The City Council commissioned a study in 2012 which summed up the issues as follows:

*'Church Green is at the centre of the Broomfield conservation area and forms the setting to a number of a number of listed buildings. It is a high-quality space but is currently degraded by the impact of highway paraphernalia and car parking. The Parish Council has a desire to see the space enhanced.'*

*'There is scope to enhance Church Green with redesign of the space, including tree planting and management, road surfacing, highway paraphernalia (including kerbs, road markings and signs), footpath surfacing and soft landscaping. Parking provision can be reconsidered, but should not be significantly reduced.'*



Map 11 - Broomfield Conservation Area

- 9.12 The study proposed four options for enhancing the Green, though it did not come with any funding for implementation. So, for any proposals to be progressed, funding streams (such as National Lottery Heritage Fund or Community Infrastructure Levy) will need to be investigated. The agreement of the County Council Highways Department for any changes affecting roads and establishing community consensus among Church Green residents will also be necessary before the project can be implemented.



### Community Action CA11 - Review of Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Enhancement of the Area

The Parish Council will work in partnership with City Council officers to review the enhancements identified in the Conservation Area Character Appraisal and determine whether they remain valid and whether additional Conservation Area enhancements are needed. As appropriate, the Parish Council will seek to bring forward a feasible scheme to enhance the Conservation Area, taking into account the views of Church Green residents.

#### Special Character Areas

- 9.13 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), para. 195, encourages plans to conserve historic assets in a manner appropriate to their significance. It notes that these include sites and buildings of local historic value as well as those of national/international importance.
- 9.14 Due to development pressures and high land values, Broomfield is an area where historic character might be eroded, for instance through the pressure to accommodate new buildings in small green spaces within the village; to adapt existing buildings to better accommodate commercial activities; and to construct or extend buildings as economically as possible.
- 9.15 Given these pressures, the Neighbourhood Plan process has included consideration of potential areas of special character in the Parish which have distinctive built and natural features that,

in combination, are worthy of recognition and protection from inappropriate development.

The criteria for selection are:

- whether the area contains listed buildings and/or buildings of local historical interest
- whether these buildings interact with adjacent buildings and landscape features (trees, hedgerows, meadows, gardens, village greens, open spaces) to form a coherent character area, distinct from adjoining areas
- whether there is evidence that they are 'enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life' (NPPF, para 195) by the local community – for example, through evidence in the residents questionnaire.

- 9.16 Leaving aside Church Green (which is a Conservation Area, so needs no further designation in the Neighbourhood Plan), the areas identified as meeting these criteria are:
- Angel Green and Broomfield Place
  - Parsonage Green
  - Broomfield Mill and the surrounding area
- Separate assessments of each, including maps to identify their scope, are contained in Appendix 4.
- 9.17 Because of their qualities, these three areas are designated as Areas of Special Character within which development proposals will need to demonstrate how they preserve and enhance the special characteristics of the area.



## POLICY BFD13 - SPECIAL CHARACTER AREAS

Three areas at Angel Green/Broomfield Place, Parsonage Green and Broomfield Mill (Mill Lane), as identified on the Policies Map, are designated as Special Character Areas.

Development proposals in these areas will be supported where it can be demonstrated that:

- i. The siting, design and scale would preserve or enhance the character and appearance (listed in Appendix 4) of the Special Character Area; and
- ii. Building materials and finishes are appropriate to the local context; and
- iii. Features which contribute to the character of the area are retained; and
- iv. Important views are preserved; and
- v. Significant open spaces are protected, where appropriate; and
- vi. The setting and significance of any heritage assets are protected in accordance with Local Plan policy.

In addition to the above criteria, development will be supported where:

- a. **Angel Green**
  - i. The alignment of any new structures respect the shape of the Green and avoid overshadowing it; and
  - ii. The relationship between historic buildings and the Green is respected; and
  - iii. The relationship between historic buildings and other prominent lawns/grassland is respected.
- b. **Parsonage Green**
  - i. New buildings are set back from the Green to conserve the sense of openness; and
  - ii. The sense of transition between the Green and the wider countryside to the west is conserved.
- c. **Broomfield Mill**
  - i. boundary treatments respect the existing features of traditional brick, small hedges, brick walls and wooden fences/gates.



## 10. COMMUNITY SERVICES AND FACILITIES

### Community Services and Facilities Objectives

- To protect existing community, educational, leisure and retail facilities
- To create new community facilities where feasible and appropriate

### Current Facilities

- 10.1 Broomfield has a broad range of sites and premises that are used for community facilities in the widest sense. These include:
- commercial premises such as shops and pubs
  - not-for-profit buildings such as churches, the Village Hall and the Scout Hut
  - public authority buildings such as schools, the Library and Broomfield Hospital
  - outdoor recreation sites, often linked to clubs and societies, such as the cricket and football clubs, angling clubs, allotment gardens and other sports facilities.

To the best of our knowledge, we have included all such facilities in the Parish (as of October 2022) in the list and map of current community facilities in the Evidence Base. However, this will inevitably change over time, so the list and map are only intended to be a snapshot.

### Protecting Existing Facilities

- 10.2 Paragraph 5.34 of the adopted Local Plan acknowledges the importance of community assets in the community. It notes that:

‘an important element of sustainable development and creating sustainable communities is the provision and protection of community uses such as schools, health and recreation, education, community halls, pavilions, scout huts, places of worship and other cultural buildings at locations that are readily accessible.’

- 10.3 Policy DM21 of the Local Plan provides a comprehensive policy to protect existing facilities and against which proposals for their loss will be

considered. The Parish Council wants existing community facilities to continue and thrive wherever possible, so supports this policy to minimise their loss. There is no need for the Neighbourhood Plan to include additional policies in this regard.

### Creating New Facilities

#### The Residents’ Questionnaire

- 10.4 When asked if the current facilities are sufficient (Q.43), there was a roughly 50/50 split, with 53% saying ‘yes’ and 47% saying ‘no’. However, there was overwhelming support for continuing attempts to get:
- a network of cycle paths away from main roads (95% support)
  - an expanded two forms of entry primary school (83% support).

There were many other suggestions for new facilities. Those with the greatest number of mentions were:

GP surgery	96	Pub	39
Improved better (corner) shops	50	Café/tea shop/ coffee shop	30
Better/New Primary School	47	Bakery/deli/ farm shop	30



### Recent Developments

- 10.5 Since the residents' questionnaire in 2017, there has been some progress in meeting these aspirations:
- Broomfield Primary School has been extended to two forms of entry (60 children per year group). This has taken place on the existing site, rather than on a completely new site as originally planned
  - A new general store has opened on Angel Green, in the same building as the former Angel Stores. New retail premises have opened on Hospital Approach.
  - A new café, the Cheerful Chai, has opened in the Angel Pavilion
  - A new off-road cycle path from Broomfield Hospital to School Lane is under construction, though under current plans does not extend further south.

On the other hand, at least one retail unit (the former hairdressers on Church Green) has been converted into residential.

- 10.6 The recent planning consent for the 'North of Broomfield' development includes a requirement for a space to be reserved for a future GP surgery, together with a capital sum towards healthcare provision. The Parish Council would prefer a surgery to be created in the centre of the village and will continue to lobby the Integrated Care Board (formerly the Clinical Commissioning Group) to this effect. One possible location could be within the proposed community housing site East of Saxon Way (see Section 7 and Policy BFD10 above), but there may well be other potentially suitable sites in the centre of the village if landowners want to put them forward. Ultimately, the Integrated Care Board decides, so the Parish Council can only lobby.

### Creating an Affordable Meeting Space to Support Home Working

- 10.7 Responses to the residents' questionnaire in 2017 suggested that nearly half of those in work carry out paid work from home, either regularly (19%) or occasionally (29%). That was before COVID and the consequent widespread working from home. With many workers and employers appreciating the benefits of home working, it is likely the proportion of people working from home will be higher in the future than it was in 2017.

- 10.8 There are advantages to working from home, for instance, reduced travel costs, better work/life balance and less traffic, so lower vehicle emissions. So, for both individual and community reasons, home working should be encouraged. Policy BFD9 – Adaptable Homes – helps by promoting home office space and good internet connection in new homes.

- 10.9 Disadvantages to home working could include lack of space in existing properties; the difficulty of holding some meetings at home; and the distractions of family life. Local hospitality venues may offer good facilities for meetings but at some cost. There is a case, therefore, for creating a meeting and workspace which local residents could hire flexibly and at a very affordable rate. This could potentially be provided cost-effectively as part of new or extended facilities, for instance at the Village Hall or the neighbourhood centre in the 'North of Broomfield' development site.

### Community Action CA12 – Meeting the Need for New Community Facilities

The Parish Council will continue to monitor the need for new community facilities to serve the residents of Broomfield. Where gaps are identified, the Council will work with relevant organisations and seek to secure new facilities.

It will keep under review the needs of residents who work at home and consider opportunities to create a free or affordable meeting/workspace to support home working. The Council will continue to make the case for a GP surgery in the village.

### Creating New Facilities on Land South of Broomfield Place

- 10.10 During the course of the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan, the County Council submitted a proposal to the Parish Council for a purpose-built facility to meet the needs of disabled adults and those with support needs. It has identified a need for such facilities in the wider area to enhance the independence, well-being and skills of vulnerable adults and increase their life opportunities.
- 10.11 As part of this facility, it also proposes several community facilities more specific to Broomfield:
- The facility would include space for small enterprises to be set up by clients, which would include interaction with the local community, such as craft or plant sales
  - space for local informal carers, to meet peers and access daytime respite.

- safe space for people living with dementia to socialise, receive therapy etc.
- affordable space for voluntary groups to hire
- about half the site (1 1/3 hectares) would be open green space, with public access via permissive paths, as shown in the map in Fig. 13

10.12 The proposal complies with the relevant professional studies in the Neighbourhood Plan Evidence Base. The Landscape Appraisal judged the land to have only limited capacity for development and the Neighbourhood Plan Site Options and Assessment document categorised the land as partially suitable for site allocation - the part on or around the old car park in the east of the site.



Fig. 13 - Site Concept Diagram for land south of Broomfield Place

10.13 A specific, detailed consultation on the proposal was held with the local community in March/April 2021. This showed overwhelming support for the proposed package of facilities, especially the large amount of publicly accessible open space but also the support for disadvantaged groups through the facility. The full consultation leaflet and a summary of consultation responses are available to view on the Neighbourhood Plan website. The headline response is shown on Fig 14.

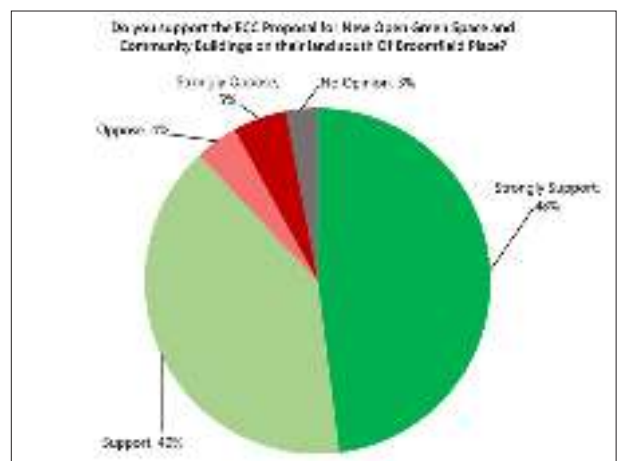


Fig. 14 - Level of support for County Council proposals for land south of Broomfield Place



10.14 Given this compliance with the Neighbourhood Plan Evidence Base and the strong level of support from the local community, Policy BFD14 allocates the site for community facilities. To guide development, a site concept diagram has been agreed, as illustrated in Fig. 13. This is based on the County Council's original submission but refined through discussion between the County Council and the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group. Development proposals will be expected to have regard to the concept diagram, which will be taken into account in determining planning applications.

10.15 The building(s), highlighted in purple, are allocated for community facilities - a sui generis (in a class of its own) planning class. This is to allow flexibility and integration in the operation of the facility, as the range of community facilities proposed does not fall neatly within any one of the prescribed planning classes. However, the site is only allocated for community facilities as outlined above and in Fig. 13. These do not include any other types of development, such as market housing.

10.16 Development will need to:

1. have appropriate regard to the setting of Broomfield Place, a Grade II Listed Building, taking into account advice from the relevant team in the City Council's planning department; and
2. comply with the requirements of the Angel Green/Broomfield Special Character Area (Policy BFD13); and
3. minimise the visual impact on the open nature of the land to the west of the site; and
4. ensure that the residential amenity of adjoining residents is maintained by way of managing noise pollution, overlooking, light pollution and vehicle movements.

10.17 The green space is identified on the Fig 13 as Open Space. It offers an opportunity to:

- create an inclusive, quiet, natural haven for those who are unable to access the open countryside due to mobility or safety, for instance, those living with dementia or physical disability (potentially linking with the

adjacent Madelayne Court care home) or with emotional/psychological needs

- create a haven for young families and for children, which could also be used by the adjacent Primary School, day nursery and Scout HQ
- recreate the parkland associated with the grand house (Broomfield Place), before it became disused and overgrown during the last two decades
- provide a section of the north/south cycle path network, if required.
- offer a quieter alternative to the 'noisier' community area around the Village Hall.

10.18 The Parish Council will work with the County Council (as landowner) to create and consult on a masterplan for the green space. This will set out how the space can best be used for the benefit of the local community and to support the activities run in the facility. Elements of the master plan could include:

- creating stable but natural-looking pathways for wheelchairs or people with limited mobility, which would be permissive paths
- creating a sensory garden and spaces for quiet reflection, with benches, planting etc
- setting up a group of community volunteers to restore and maintain the parkland
- working with local schools and youth organisations
- working with relevant professionals, such as Writtle University College, the Gardens Trust etc.

10.19 The Parish Council will secure the necessary funds for the green space, for instance through applying for grants or by allocating Community Infrastructure Levy (development funding). The masterplan may be implemented over several years, depending on resources and on the community's priorities that emerge through the consultation. The timescale will be set out in the final masterplan.

## POLICY BFD14 - LAND SOUTH OF BROOMFIELD PLACE

A site of 2.57 hectares south and west of Broomfield Place, identified on the Policies Map, is allocated for non-residential day facilities, associated community uses and local/informal green space. to be accessed off Main Road

Development of the site should be carried out in accordance with the principles illustrated in the Concept Diagram (Figure 13) and will be expected to:

- i. Provide new walking/cycling routes linking the site to Main Road and School Lane; and
- ii. Provide a green space layout developed through a community-led masterplan and landscape strategy that minimises the visual impact of the development on the open nature of the land to the west of the site; and
- iii. Through the preparation and submission of a Heritage Statement, demonstrate how the proposal will preserve and where appropriate enhance the setting of Grade II listed Broomfield Place; and
- iv. Comply with the requirements of the Angel Green/Broomfield Special Character Area (Policy BFD13); and
- v. Protect existing preserved trees within the allocation site; and
- vi. Protect living and working environments of occupiers of nearby residential property by ensuring that development is not overbearing and does not result in unacceptable overlooking or overshadowing; and does not result in excessive noise, activity or vehicle movements.

### Community Action CA13 – Open Green Space south and west of Broomfield Place

The Parish Council will work with the County Council, other interested groups and residents to create a tranquil, high-quality open space for the community to enjoy.







## 11. TRAFFIC AND TRAVEL

### Traffic and Travel Objectives

- To support measures that reduce the need for travel by private cars, such as cycling, walking and public transport
- To encourage cycling and walking by creating new safe cycle paths and footpaths and by protecting existing pavements, footpaths and public rights of way
- To promote measures to improve safety and reduce the impact of traffic
- Where appropriate, to create 'home zones' and similar areas that help to re-balance priority between cars and other users

### Background

- 11.1 The level of traffic is Broomfield's bugbear, the only major dislike about living here. The village sits astride the B1008, which is classed as a Principal Route One (PR1) - a major route into Chelmsford City Centre from the north. It also forms the only road access to Broomfield Hospital, the City's general hospital and largest employer. It was developed on the site of a former isolation hospital, in an age when increases in car traffic were considered less of a problem.
- 11.2 Due to this combination of factors and local traffic, the B1008 is at 96% capacity, one of the most congested routes in Chelmsford. This is evidenced in a range of professional studies, such as the Broomfield Corridor & Access to Broomfield Hospital Study (ECC/Mouchel 2007); and the Local Plan Evidence Base, Strategic & Local Junction Modelling, Preferred Option Addendum-2 February 2018 (please see our website for a full list). Particular pressure points are the section around the junction with Hospital Approach and the junction with School Lane at Angel Green (which is already over capacity and will become more so with planned new housing).
- 11.3 There is also a psychological impact to this heavy traffic. The current layout of Main Road tends to emphasise the village's ribbon development - a busy main road with some side roads tagged on, rather than a village community. It also tends to divide the village into east and west of Main Road, with just a few safe crossing points spread along the road.

Focal points, such as Angel Green and Church Green, sit alongside Main Road rather than sitting astride it - which would help to join the two sides of the village together. This psychological impact could be addressed by better design, as well as by seeking to reduce the volume of traffic.

- 11.4 There has been discussion about re-establishing the B1008's original function of serving the communities along the corridor (eg as identified in Chelmsford's Future Transport Network Study (CFTN) but to date, there has been little progress.

### Feedback from the Community

- 11.5 The level of traffic is the only major dislike about living in Broomfield shown in the Residents' Questionnaire. 94% of respondents disliked or disliked it a lot. A later question showed a similar response:
- Do you think that the level of traffic going through Broomfield is:**
- Satisfactory 2%  
Mostly satisfactory but too heavy at peak time 38%  
Too heavy most of the time 60%
- 11.6 The questionnaire also showed that most residents use private cars as their principal means of transport for all journeys. However, large percentages of responses suggested that buses, cycling and walking would be considered as alternatives given certain conditions. Further details can be found in the questionnaire summary (Q.7).

11.7 There was almost universal support (95% of responses) for continuing to work towards a network of safe cycle paths. There was also support for several other measures to reduce traffic or the impact of traffic:

	Support	Oppose
Village entry treatment near Main Road/Hospital Approach junction (gateway and markings to indicate entry to the village)	73%	5%
Vehicle-activated speed warning signs	86%	5%
Traffic islands/pedestrian refuges	47%	9%
More pedestrian lights/crossings	55%	12%
Speed camera(s)	49%	25%
Signpost hospital traffic along the A130 Essex Regiment Way	89%	3%
New access road into the northern side of Broomfield Hospital site from Blasford Hill	78%	12%

And specifically on small/residential roads:

	Support	Oppose
20 mph speed limits	80%	13%
Speed cushions (small humps at intervals across the road)	50%	14%

### Neighbourhood Plan Travel Strategy

11.8 As traffic levels are such a key concern for residents, the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group has invested a lot of time in researching the feasibility of various possibilities for 'doing something about traffic'. The Plan puts forward a parish strategy for achieving improvements, while recognising the need for it to be dynamic, as situations will change and opportunities arise or close down, so it will continue to evolve long after the Neighbourhood Plan has been adopted.

11.9 Planning policies can play some role in mitigating the traffic impact of future development. However, most of the following strategy consists of community actions, because traffic problems already exist, so cannot be prevented by planning policy. The parish share of new development money (CIL) is one source of funding for solutions to traffic problems.

### Travel Strategy - Cycling

11.10 The key component of the Strategy is to radically improve facilities for safe cycling. There are several reasons for placing this emphasis on cycling infrastructure:

- 95% of questionnaire responses want the NP to secure a network of safe cycle paths
- There are few safe cycle paths in Broomfield at the moment, so investing in this should make a big difference compared to other options
- Current County and Government thinking support a switch from car use to cycling for a range of reasons. These include health benefits (see the Essex Cycling Strategy) and the response to COVID (see Government guidance about re-allocating road space)
- In turn, this means that changes that might discourage through traffic are more likely to be achieved if they are part of measures to promote cycling, for instance, lane narrowing to accommodate cycle lanes or creating more safe road crossings.

### Current Cycling Infrastructure

11.11 Existing cycle paths to/from Chelmsford City Centre stop short of the Parish boundary. The existing off-road cycle path at the eastern end of the Avenues stops at Valley Bridge. So do the new segregated cycle lanes along Broomfield Road, which stop at the junction with Patching Hall Lane (Broomfield Parade).

11.12 The new Chelmsford City Growth Package (CCGP) has introduced two significant improvements within the Parish:

- An off-road cycle path from Goulton Road to Broomfield Hospital. However, the proposed on-road section from Goulton Road to the City Centre is currently unfunded. Also, if completed, it would take users towards Admirals Park rather than the train station/immediate City Centre.
- A new Pegasus crossing across the A130, connecting the eastern (Beaulieu/ Channels) part of the Parish with the village via Mill Lane. At the western end of Mill Lane, however, cyclists have to re-join the busy Main Road.

A cycle path connecting Broomfield Hospital to the Chelmer Valley Park and Ride is also expected to come forward at some stage, as part of infrastructure for the North-East Chelmsford Garden Village.

### Our Proposals for New Cycle Paths

11.13 The main part of the Strategy is to achieve safe north/south routes, by joining the new cycle path at Goulton Road with the Avenues Cycle Path and the new Broomfield Road cycle lanes. If achieved, that would enable safe cycling from any part of Broomfield to the City Centre and train station.

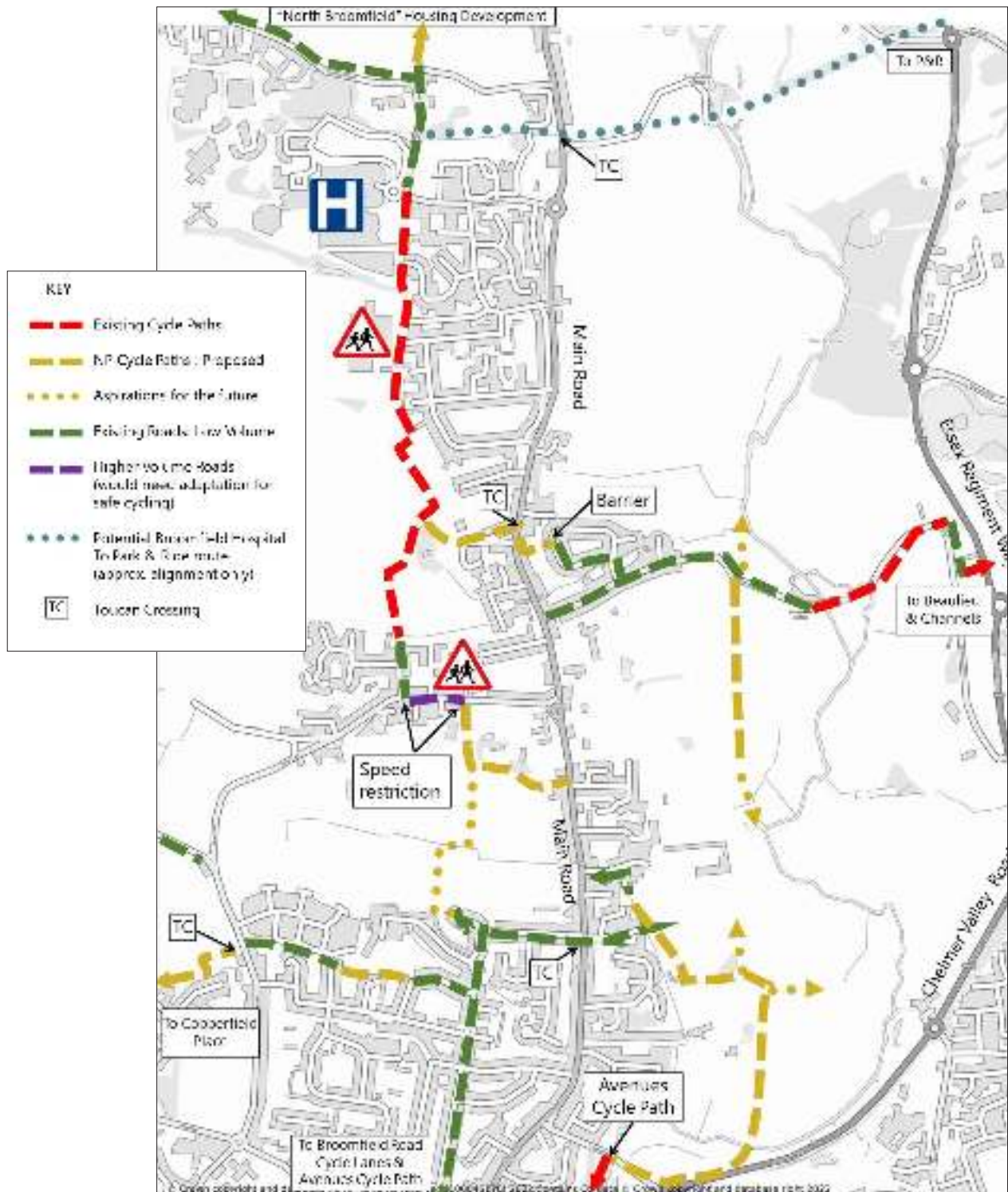


Fig 14 - Neighbourhood Plan Proposals for New Cycle Routes





11.14 The ultimate aim (shown on the map in Fig 14) is for there to be:

- a new cycle path to the west of the village from School Lane to Heathfield Road. From Heathfield Road, it is possible to use low-volume roads to reach the new Broomfield Road Cycle Lanes and the Avenues Cycle Path. Altogether, this would link Broomfield Hospital with the City Centre by the most direct route
- a new cycle path to the east of the village from Valley Bridge to Mill Lane. This would serve a dual function as a commuter cycling route and a leisure cycle path and footpath.

11.15 The map in Fig. 14 shows progress to date. Parts of these routes have already received a positive response from the relevant landowners, with final agreement subject to further negotiation and contract. These are shown as 'Proposed' in Fig 14. Other parts will need a lot more discussion and final agreement is still a long way off. These are shown as 'Aspirations' in Fig 14.

11.16 New rural cycle paths will generally be enclosed by hedgerows on both sides – see Community Action CA3 – Creation and Maintenance of Woodland and Hedgerows.

#### Cycle Hire

11.17 Schemes have recently been proposed to enable residents to hire bikes from the Village Hall at an affordable rate and to provide a re-charging base for e-scooters there. These will be investigated further, alongside the provision of new cycle paths.

#### Travel Strategy - Encouraging Walking

11.18 Like cycling, walking is a healthy and sustainable alternative to car use and is encouraged by national and local government policy. 70% of responses to the Residents' Questionnaire were positive about walking more, subject to improvements such as:

- better paths (eg wider pavements)
- safer footpaths, mostly in terms of protection from road traffic, including pollution
- better lighting and road crossings.

11.19 Most of the Parish is well served by rural footpaths, which are well-used for leisure walking but are less useful for walking to work or facilities within the village.

11.20 The recently developed eastern part of Broomfield (Beaulieu and Channels) has been masterplanned to promote walking and other forms of sustainable transport, but walking infrastructure is more varied in older parts of the Parish. Most residential roads have pavements on both sides. However, these can be very narrow (for instance, Main Road south of the junction with Vellacotts). In addition, pavements are affected by:

- Vehicles part-parked on the pavement in some areas (for instance, outside shops near the Roselawn Fields/Main Road junction) – a particular problem for people with pushchairs or in wheelchairs
- Cycling on the pavements, due to the lack of safe cycle paths/lanes.

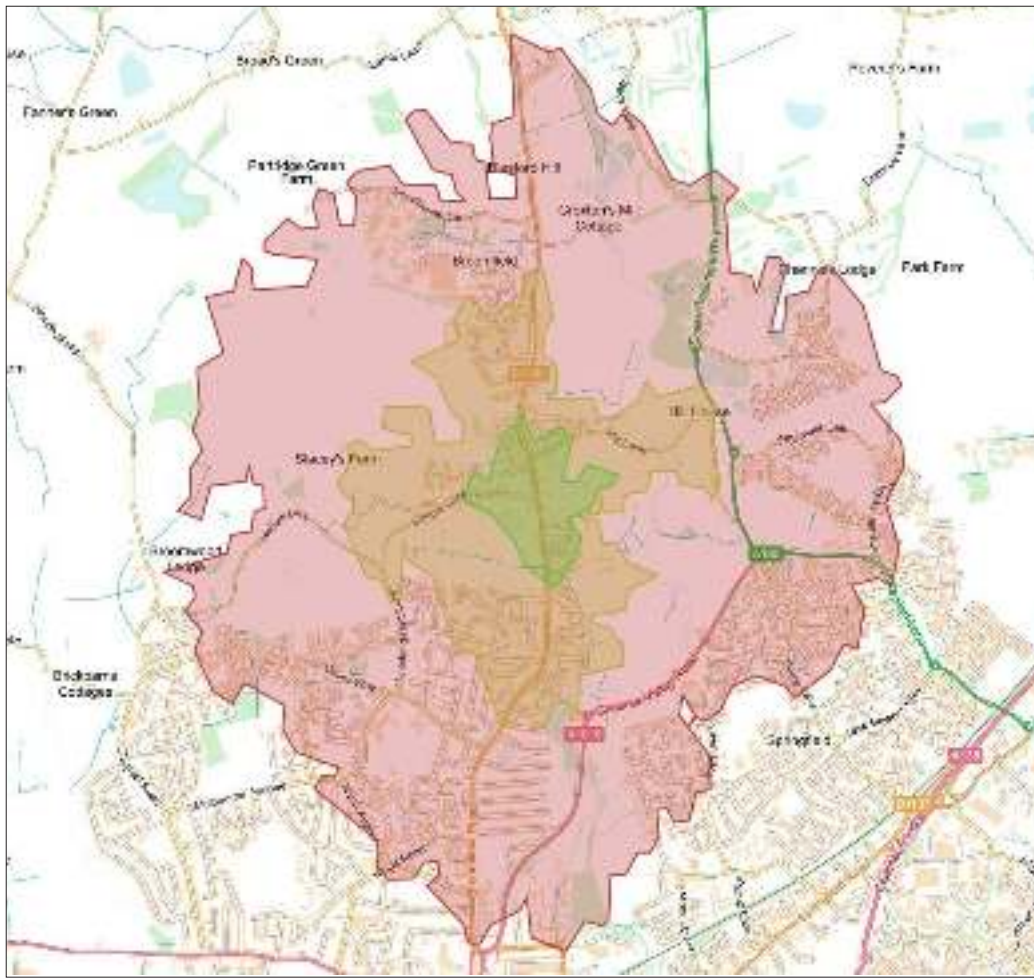
11.21 In terms of crossing points along Main Road, there are several pedestrian refuges, though less so in the narrower section in the south of the Parish.

- One zebra crossing near the junction with Erick Avenue
- Two pelican crossings, near the Angel pub and the junction with Williams Road.

However, there are none in the southern part of the Parish.

11.22 Not all obvious walking routes benefit from suitable crossings – for instance, there is no zebra or pelican crossing near Chelmer Valley High School. Difficulties in crossing may also deter some residents from catching the bus.

11.23 The walking distance from Broomfield to the train station ranges from around 1.5 miles to 3 miles. As illustrated on Map 12, this equates to between 30 and 45 minutes' walk from the village centre. It is a direct route from the village, but it is not an attractive one at peak times as it follows the busy B1008. Although air quality is not seen as a problem in Broomfield officially, some sections of the B1008 – for instance where peak traffic tends to queue – appear to have poor air quality, which makes walking unpleasant. Air quality needs greater research and monitoring.



Map 12 - Indicative walking times from the village centre (library). – 15, 30 and 45 minutes

- 11.24 The new cycle paths proposed above will be built to enable walking as well. This should encourage people who are willing to walk long distances to the city centre, by providing routes away from main roads (including providing easier access to the existing Avenues foot and cycle path). However, the greatest scope for increasing walking will be for shorter distances from home to school, shops and other local facilities.
- 11.25 We propose to encourage walking through the following community actions. Again, these should be taken as the start of an evolving strategy, as new opportunities will arise during the lifetime of the Neighbourhood Plan, depending partly on funding opportunities and on the willingness of residents to get involved.

#### Public Rights of Way

- 11.26 As indicated above, most of the Parish is well-served by rural footpaths and public rights of way. These are generally unmetalled, so more appropriate for leisure

use, but are nonetheless important for encouraging walking. So, they need to be protected where new developments take place.

#### Travel Strategy - Encouraging Bus Use

- 11.27 The Broomfield Road Corridor is well-served by buses, largely due to the needs of Broomfield Hospital, with route C1 services running approximately every 10-15 minutes during the day. However, it is expensive for anyone without a concession, currently around £4 to £5 for an adult day return to the City Centre (though single fares are currently capped at £3).
- 11.28 The Chelmer Valley Park and Ride is situated on the A130 Essex Regiment Way, just north of the Parish boundary. This doubtless draws away car traffic that might otherwise use the B1008. Before COVID, it also operated a bus to Broomfield Hospital. This service has recently restarted.

11.29 When the 'North of Broomfield' housing development takes place, the developers will be required to operate a 'Smarter Choices Campaign' for 10 years. This includes the appointment of a co-ordinator to support better publicity about bus services, subsidised public transport promotions and personalised travel plans. The area of benefit would be the existing village from School Lane northwards.

11.30 Responses to the Residents' Questionnaire indicated that the following measures would encourage greater bus use:

- cheaper fares - this was mentioned by over half the respondents who commented
- greater frequency (especially to coincide with hospital shift changes and visitor times)
- more reliability, additional destinations and better child and disabled access.

Unfortunately, these measures are largely beyond the powers and budget of a parish council. Nonetheless, the Parish Council may be able to encourage bus use, especially through publicity.

## **POLICY BFD15 - PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY**

Development proposals shall safeguard all public rights identified on the Definitive Rights of Way Map including footpaths, bridleways, and byways, and where possible, informal routes on green lanes, unclassified county roads, and local paths.

Development proposals will not be supported which:

- i. adversely affect any existing public right of way or informal route, and the public's enjoyment of it; or
- ii. detract from the character of any existing right of way or informal route, including the urbanisation of it; or
- iii. do not accord with the need to improve and provide access to the countryside for the disabled.

Development proposals that would result in the diversion of the route of an existing right of way will only be supported in exceptional circumstances.

## **Community Action CA14 - Strategy to Encourage Sustainable Travel**

Working with Essex Highways, the City Council, interested residents and others, the Parish Council will:

### **Cycling**

Seek to achieve a network of safe cycle routes, as indicated in Fig. 14. The first priority will be to create north/south routes that will link with existing routes into the City Centre.

Investigate and (where appropriate) implement other measures to encourage cycling, such as an affordable cycle hire scheme, provision of more cycle racks where necessary and a re-charging base for e-scooters at the Village Hall.

### **Walking**

Encourage walking by:

- carrying out an audit of footways (pavements) and where necessary, submitting bids to the Local Highways Partnership (LHP) for widening, improving, installing better lighting etc
- where parking on footways (pavements) is a persistent problem, installing notices to discourage it
- working with schools to support initiatives such as the Walking Bus
- installing a footpath or steps from the northern end of Vellacotts to Ashford Place/Main Road, subject to landowners' agreement
- investigating the possibility of a new crossing near the Main Road/Court Road junction, to encourage safe walking to Chelmer Valley High School, and at other points on Main Road
- setting up air quality monitoring points along Main Road and, where problems are identified, campaign for improvements.

### **Encourage Bus Use**

Work with the 'Smarter Choices Campaign' to ensure that local residents get the greatest possible benefit from it (eg by running awareness campaigns in the Broomfield Times and on the Parish website; seeking to extend the area of benefit to include the southern part of the Parish).

Work with the Broomfield Hospital transport co-ordinator to increase the number of Hospital-related journeys made by bus or other forms of sustainable transport.

Install a new bus shelter at the northbound Erick Avenue stop (opposite Clobbs Yard).



## Reducing the Impact of Traffic

11.31 This section is about reducing the impact of traffic in ways other than encouraging sustainable travel.

### Main Road (B1008)

11.32 Main Road is classified in the Essex Highways hierarchy as a Principal Route One (PR1). In the Essex Speed Management Strategy, these are defined as: Priority 1 County Routes may be interurban or connecting routes, radial feeder or town centre access routes. What is important is the need to maintain free flowing traffic movement on them due to the function they perform within the network.

11.33 There is clearly tension between this role and the aspiration for the B1008 to serve the local communities along the Broomfield corridor (as proposed in the Mouchel study). While the PR1 status remains, it will be difficult to introduce many of the traffic calming measures that residents would like to see. Nonetheless, the Government is keen to see the appropriate continuation of measures introduced during the COVID emergency and has re-stated statutory guidance to this effect (July 2021).

These aim to increase road space for cyclists and walkers, which inevitably means reducing road space for private vehicles. Furthermore, when the Radial Distributor Road around Beaulieu Park is completed and as work is progressed on the Chelmsford North-East Bypass, there may be scope to re-examine the role of the B1008.

11.34 There is therefore a need for a flexible traffic reduction strategy and an ongoing dialogue with Essex Highways and relevant stakeholders to ensure that all opportunities to mitigate the impact of through traffic are taken. Chelmsford's Future Transport Network Study looks to reduce traffic along Broomfield Road and encourage sustainable transport use. The permitted Chelmsford North-East Bypass (CNEB) will enable strategic transport movements to be made via that route, enabling the reclassification of A130 Essex Regiment Way as a sustainable transport corridor for local and city centre bound traffic. This subsequently encourages removal of city centre bound traffic from using Broomfield Road, thereby reducing traffic levels along the corridor for local residents and hospital users.

11.35 The preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan has enabled an opportunity to examine measures which might slow traffic speeds and reduce the impact of through traffic. Some of these are linked to the proposals for new cycle paths, which include toucan crossings to ensure the safety of both cyclists and pedestrians. More crossings would also help to reduce the psychological impact of traffic, by increasing connectivity across Main Road.

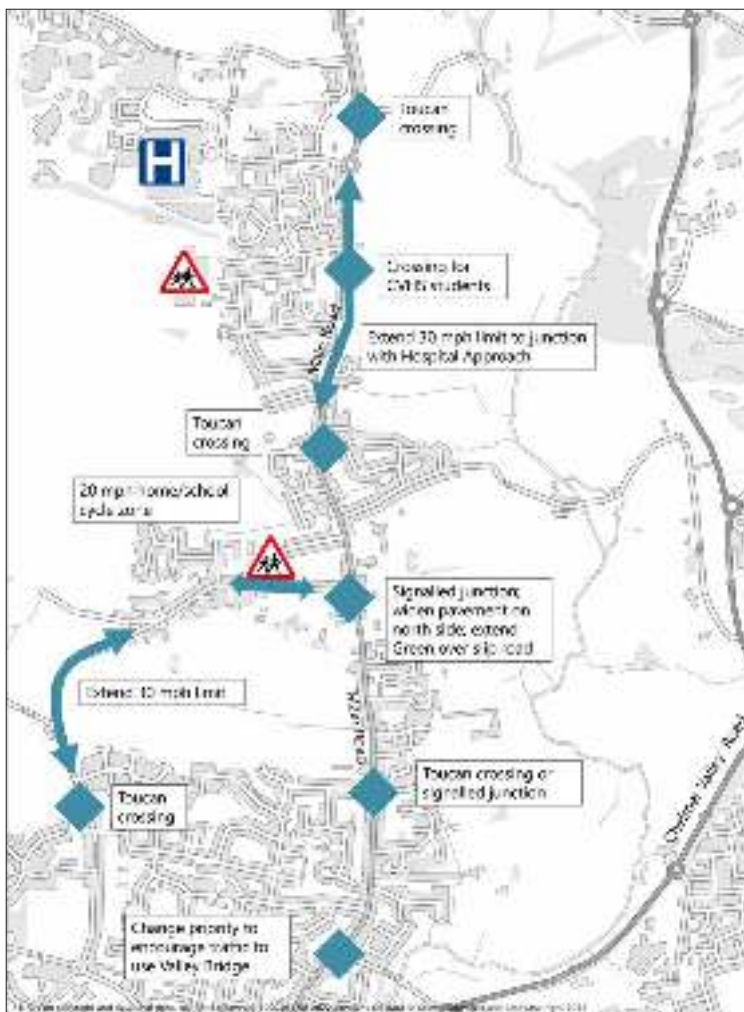


Fig 15 - Suggestions for traffic mitigation (larger scale maps can be found on the Neighbourhood Plan website)

11.36 Suggested measures are outlined on the map in Fig 15, with some more detailed maps on the Neighbourhood Plan website. However, these are just suggestions at this stage, and they will need to be discussed in greater detail with the Highways Authority. As indicated, Main Road is classified as a Principal Route 1 (PR1) and some may be considered to conflict with this role. Nonetheless, residents' views on these suggestions are welcomed during the Neighbourhood Plan consultation and beyond. Further suggestions are also welcome.

11.37 Responses to the Residents Questionnaire also showed general support for:

- Vehicle-activated speed warning signs
- Traffic islands/pedestrian refuges
- More pedestrian lights/crossings
- Speed camera(s).

11.38 More detailed work needs to be done to identify appropriate locations for these and gather the evidence needed to support their introduction. Suggestions are welcomed as part of the Neighbourhood Plan consultation.

11.39 Finally, the long-awaited village gateway near Hospital Approach needs to be implemented and, following the decision to scrap the new Hospital Access Road, pressure should be maintained for the money saved to be spent on local sustainable transport infrastructure instead.

#### Other Roads

11.40 All other roads in Broomfield are classified as local roads or private roads. There is greater flexibility with local roads to introduce traffic calming and other measures to re-adjust the balance in favour of pedestrians and cyclists. Many local roads in Broomfield are also residential cul-de-sacs.

11.41 The Essex Speed Management Strategy allows 20mph speed limits and zones to be considered on local roads (which is the norm for new residential roads). It also includes the option of Home Zones, where streets are re-designed to reclaim space for non-car users. Advisory 20mph speed limits can be set up in the vicinity of schools, an idea that is also referred to in the Government's new post-COVID guidance (referred to as 'school streets').

11.42 The Parish Council would like to see more existing residential roads 'retro-fitted' to enable lower speed limits and re-allocated road space during the lifetime of the Neighbourhood Plan. 20mph limits on such roads attracted 80% support in the residents' questionnaire. And the additional Community Infrastructure Levy funding that the Parish will receive from development once the Plan is adopted is a potential source of funding for such schemes.

11.43 It is important that such schemes have strong community support on the roads affected. Consultation with the residents concerned also helps to flag up any issues that may not be obvious to others. So, at a future date, the Parish Council will invite residents who would like their roads to be considered for 20mph zones or home zones to put their road forward. The Parish Council can then work with them to develop a scheme and seek the necessary permission and funding.

11.44 In 2014, the Parish Council consulted residents of Hollow Lane about the impact of the new development north of Copperfield Road. Residents' strong preference was for closure at the western end. The Council has been lobbying for this ever since and was very pleased that the County Council has now decided to go ahead. We think Hollow Lane will be a good local example of how restricting vehicle access can create an excellent resource for leisure, walking and cycling which the local community can enjoy.

11.45 More recently, the Council was approached by residents in School Lane about speed restrictions and is working with them and the Primary School to explore this. This has already led to the zebra crossing outside the School being re-painted; overgrown vegetation being cut back to improve visibility; Community Speedwatch being revived; and to a 'Twenty's Plenty' campaign being prepared. A map outlining further plans for a 20mph Home/School Zone can be found on the website.

11.46 The work being carried out in School Lane could form a model for other roads where residents want to address traffic concerns.

## Community Action CA15 - Reducing the Impact of Traffic

The Parish Council will progress a strategy to reduce the impact of traffic and (where possible) to reduce traffic levels. This will be a dynamic strategy, taking advantage of opportunities that arise during the Neighbourhood Plan period, such as improving cycle path infrastructure and other County/Government initiatives. Potential measures for consideration include those shown in Fig. 15, together with:

- Village entry treatment near Main Road/Hospital Approach junction (gateway and markings to indicate entry to village)
- More vehicle-activated speed warning signs
- Traffic islands/pedestrian refuges
- Pedestrian lights/crossings
- Speed camera(s)

The strategy will be developed in partnership with the Highways Authority and other stakeholders such as the Local Highways Partnership, the City Council, Broomfield Hospital, East of England Ambulance Service and bus service providers.

The Council will continue to work with School Lane residents and the Primary School to develop proposals for reduced speed limits and an environment that promotes walking to school and cycling.

The Council will also invite expressions of interest from residents who would like to introduce speed restrictions or re-design their roads to re-balance road use between cars and other users. Where appropriate, the Council will resource further work and develop proposals to submit to the Highways Authority.







## 12. THE CHALLENGE OF CLIMATE CHANGE

### Climate Change Objectives

- To ensure that there is a consistent thread of policies and actions throughout the Neighbourhood Plan that will help respond to the Climate and Ecology Emergency
- To initiate a Parish Council strategy to meet the Climate and Ecology Emergency through supporting measures to encourage energy efficiency and green energy generation.

### National and Local Background

12.1 The Climate Change Act 2008 sets out the UK's response to the Challenge of Climate Change. Including an amendment in 2019, it commits the UK to net zero carbon emissions by 2050. Government guidance sees the planning system as an important part of the UK's response to climate change. The National Policy Planning Framework says:

'The planning system should support the transition to a low carbon future in a changing climate, taking full account of flood risk and coastal change. It should help to shape places in ways that contribute to radical reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, minimise vulnerability and improve resilience; encourage the reuse of existing resources, including the conversion of existing buildings; and support renewable and low carbon energy and associated infrastructure.' (para. 157)

12.2 As well as helping to 'increase the use and supply of renewable and low carbon energy and heat' through Local Plans (para. 160), local planning authorities:

'should support community-led initiatives for renewable and low carbon energy, including developments outside areas identified in local plans or other strategic policies that are being taken forward through neighbourhood planning' (para 161).

12.3 Planning Guidance on Climate change also refers to: '..... the expectation that neighbourhood plans will contribute to the achievement of sustainable development.'

12.4 The Broomfield Neighbourhood Plan has therefore been prepared in a way that meets this expectation. In doing so, it also takes account of:

- the Chelmsford Local Plan, particularly Strategic Policy S2 - Addressing Climate Change and Flood Risk
- Chelmsford City Council declaring a Climate and Ecology Emergency on 16th July 2019 and its Climate and Ecological Emergency Action Plan (January 2020)
- the views of local residents, as indicated by the residents' questionnaire in 2017. This indicated the overwhelming importance of the natural environment for the local community, including the importance of wildlife. It also revealed deep concern about the level of traffic and a willingness to consider alternative green transport modes if the infrastructure is provided.

### Fuel Poverty

12.5 In the 2011 Census, 9.8% of households in Broomfield were recorded as living in fuel poverty, not far short of the average for England of 10.9%. 22 (1.2%) of households had no central heating.

**Links with other sections of the Neighbourhood Plan**

12.6 This section has been guided by 'Neighbourhood Planning in a Climate Emergency', a guidance document published by the Centre for Sustainable Energy in February 2020, with the endorsement of the Town & Country Planning Association. This document emphasises that sustainability should not be confined to one section of a neighbourhood plan but should rather be embedded in the overall vision and should be reflected in a range of policies throughout the plan.

12.7 So, it's important to stress the links with the policies and community actions in other sections of this Neighbourhood Plan. A number of these contribute to the Plan's overall response to the challenge of climate change and to promoting biodiversity and sustainability, as follows:

Section and Policy/Community Action	Link to Sustainability etc
<b>Section 5: Landscape Setting</b>	
Policy BFD1 - Preventing Coalescence	Maintains a Settlement Buffer between Broomfield and Chelmsford, which will help to maintain a wildlife corridor
Policy BFD2 - Protecting Broomfield's Landscape Character	Requires any development in the Rural Area to protect its distinctive features, which are likely to include trees, hedgerows etc
Community Action CA2 - Conserving and Enhancing the Landscape	Enabling conservation and enhancement of landscape features (including biodiversity)
<b>Section 6: The Natural Environment</b>	
Policy BFD3 - Recreational Disturbance Avoidance and Mitigation	Mitigation strategy to protect the birds of the Essex coast and their habitats from increased visitor pressure associated with new residential development.
Policy BFD4 – Trees, Woodland and Hedgerows	These policies/actions aim to protect or enhance habitats in order to protect/enhance biodiversity.
Community Action CA3 – Creation and Maintenance of Woodland and Hedgerows	
Community Action CA4 - Further Study of the Natural Environment	Aims to increase the data on sensitive local landscapes and biodiversity assets, to better inform future planning strategies and to highlight where positive action can be taken to enhance biodiversity.
Policy BFD5 - Protecting the Highest-Grade Agricultural Land	Aims to protect Grade 2 (high-grade) farmland, reducing the need to import food through less sustainable food sourcing.
Community Action CA5 - Extension to the Local Nature Reserve	Aims to increase biodiversity.
Policy BFD6 – Broomfield Green Wedge	Improve walking and cycling paths to encourage sustainable journeys
Community Action CA6 - Improving Public Access to the Chelmer River Valley	
Policy BFD7 - Local Green Spaces	Aim to protect green spaces, including habitats, from inappropriate development and ensure the maintenance of a network of green spaces within/adjoining the built area, to support both humans and wildlife.
Community Action CA7 - Conserving and Enhancing the Special Features of Local Green Spaces	



Section and Policy/Community Action	Link to Sustainability etc
<b>Section 7: Housing</b>	
Policy BFD9 - Adaptable Homes	Aims to support home working through the provision of home office space and broadband connection, reducing the need to commute.
<b>Section 8: Development Design</b>	
Policy BFD12 - Sustainable Construction Practices	Encourages current best practice in energy conservation and the use of green energy sources.
<b>Section 10: Community Facilities</b>	
Community Action CA12 - Meeting the Need for New Community Facilities	Aims to minimise the need to travel, by creating new local facilities, including support for working from home.
Community Action CA13 - Open Green Space south and west of Broomfield Place.	Aims to use the opportunity of new open space to, amongst other things, enhance biodiversity.
<b>Section 11: Traffic and Travel</b>	
Community Action CA14 - Strategy to Encourage Sustainable Travel Community Action CA15 - Reducing the Impact of Traffic	These aim to promote sustainable transport by making it easier/safer to walk, cycle or use public transport; and to reduce the impact of high-volume vehicle use on the community.

### Flooding and Flood Risk

- 12.8 The natural environment in the Parish plays an important role in managing flooding and flood risk - issues that have become more severe due to climate change. Its role includes:
- absorbing surface water run-off from built-up areas;
  - providing a network of ditches and streams which, if properly managed and maintained, can help to reduce the risk of flooding; and
  - providing flood storage capacity, for instance within the Green Wedge; and on a smaller scale the network of ponds which is extensive in the countryside around Broomfield.
- 12.9 Paragraph 5.7 of the adopted Local Plan lists the range of flood risks across the City area. Of these, the greatest risks in Broomfield are:
- river flooding (from the Chelmer);
  - directly from rainfall on the ground surface and rising groundwater; and
  - overwhelmed sewers and drainage systems.



### Risk of River Flooding

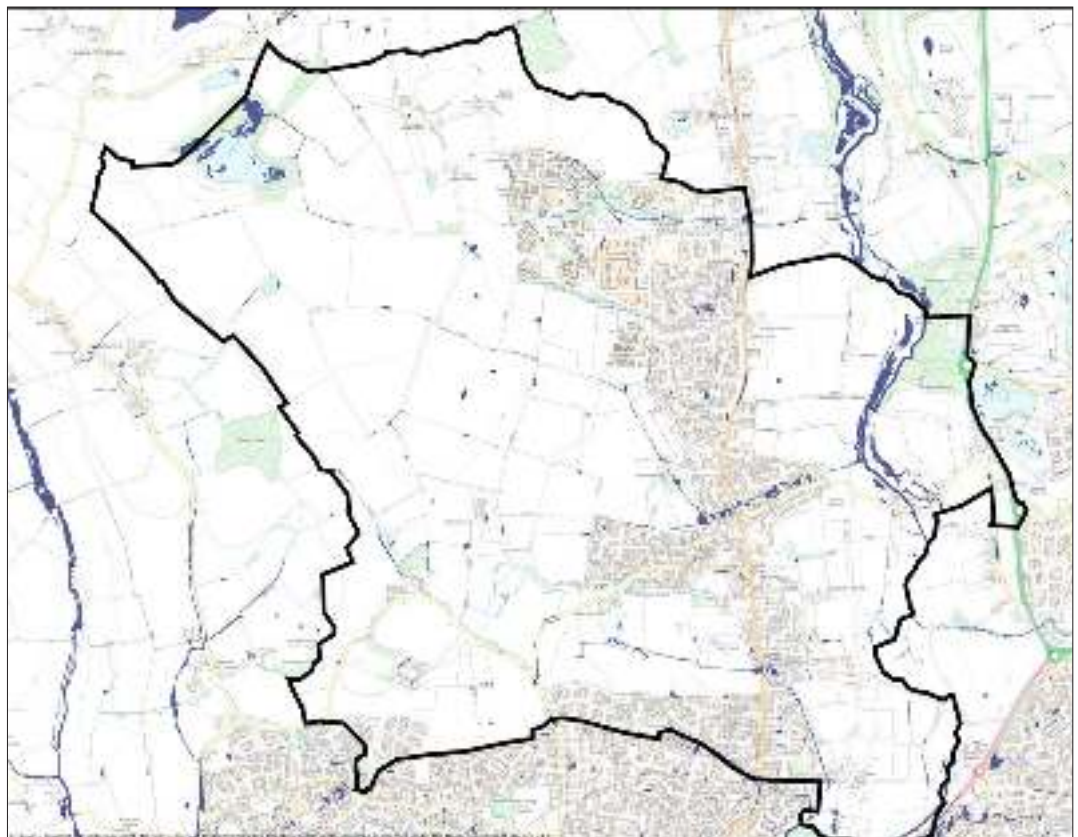
- 12.10 In Broomfield, all land at risk from river flooding falls within the Chelmer Valley Green Wedge (along with other land not at risk). The NPPF requires that a site-specific flood risk assessment is provided for all proposals in Flood Zones 2 and 3 and the NPPF sequential test should be applied that steers new development to areas with the lowest risk of flooding.



Map 13 - Map indicating the potential threat from river flooding  
Source: Environment Agency

Zone 2 (turquoise): Land considered to have a 1 in 1,000 (0.1%) chance of flooding each year.

Zone 3 (blue): Land considered to have a 1 in 100 (1%) chance of flooding each year.



Map 14 - Map showing areas at high risk (1 in 30 chance) of surface water flooding Source: Environment Agency

### Surface Water Flooding

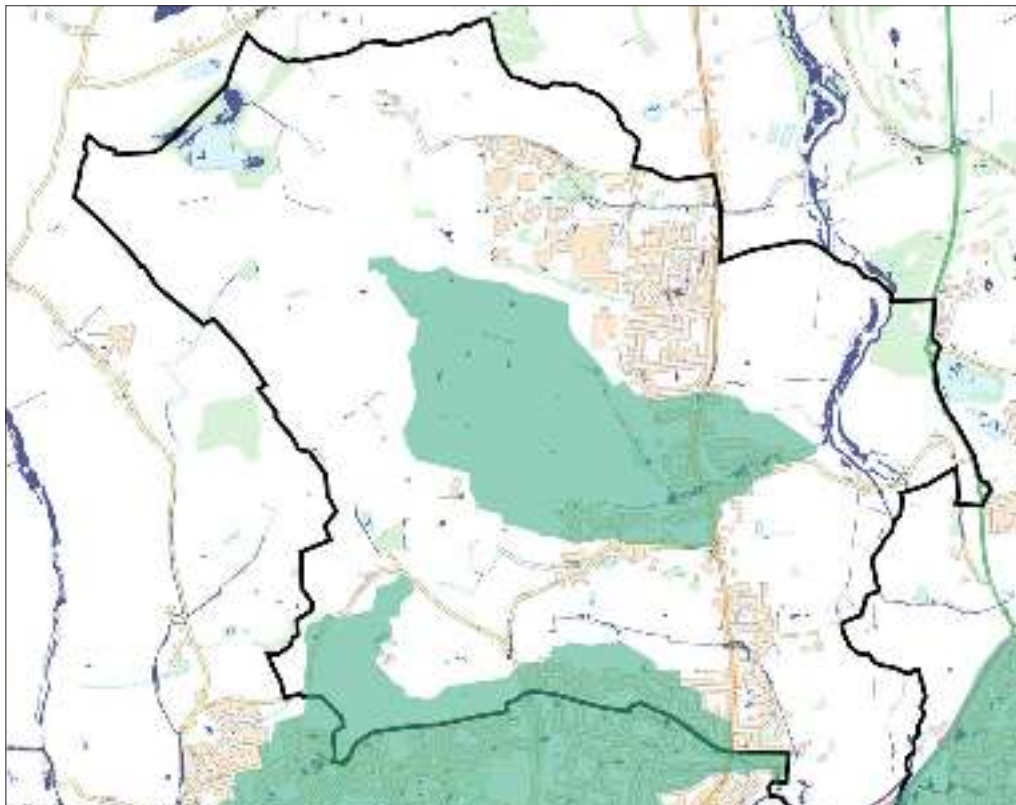
12.11 The Local Flood Authority is Essex County Council. Areas in Broomfield at risk of surface water flooding are identified on the County Council's website at: <https://flood.essex.gov.uk/mapped-flood-information/> and illustrated on the map in Map 15.

12.12 Significant amounts of Broomfield Parish fall within what is termed locally as 'Critical Drainage Areas', which are areas where multiple and interlinked sources of flood risk (surface water, groundwater, sewer and river) cause flooding in one or more Local Flood Risk Zones during severe weather, thereby affecting people, property or local infrastructure. In Broomfield, the Critical Drainage Areas have been identified broadly as:

1. along the southern parish boundary; and
2. the area between School Lane and Broomfield Hospital, stretching eastwards to include Mill Lane and Glebe Crescent.

These are shown on the map in Map 15.

12.13 The continued management of flood risk, especially from surface water flooding, remains a priority in the Neighbourhood Area. The Local Plan provides an up-to-date policy approach for the management of flood risk across the City Council area, but further reinforcement of the Local Plan approach is needed to manage the risks in the Broomfield Critical Drainage Areas. Proposals in these areas will be required to demonstrate how they will not increase and, where possible, improve surface water run-off rates.



Map 15 – Map showing Critical Drainage Areas in Broomfield (shaded green) Source: Essex County Council



## POLICY BFD16 - FLOOD RISK MITIGATION

In addition to the requirements of the Chelmsford Local Plan (2020), proposals for development in or which are likely to have an impact on the Critical Drainage Areas as identified on Map 15 should, where appropriate and through the use of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems and/or storm water harvesting and recycling, result in a surface water run-off rate equal or better than the 1 year greenfield surface water run-off rate for that Area. The design of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems should have regard to the standards set out in the Essex SUDS Design Guide.

### Supporting the Generation and Use of Renewable Energy

- 12.14 As indicated above, the NPPF requires the planning system to 'support renewable and low carbon energy and associated infrastructure'.
- 12.15 Broomfield has some capacity to support the generation of renewable energy, although not all forms would be appropriate bearing in mind the Evidence Base and the wider planning context:
- **Large-scale solar farms.**  
Chelmsford City Council has recently published Supplementary Planning Guidance about the best location for solar farms. This proposes that high-grade farmland is inappropriate for large-scale solar farms. Broomfield consists of high-quality Grade 2 and 3 agricultural land, so only Grade 3b land should be considered. Even that would be subject to other criteria in the Guidance.
  - **Wind turbines.**  
As with large-scale solar farms, wind turbines can have a high impact on landscape quality, so would be inappropriate in sensitive landscape areas. Small-scale development in specific locations may be acceptable – like the installation at the Chelmer Valley Park and Ride.

Small-scale wind generation with the purlieu of a complex of large buildings (such as the Hospital) might be appropriate.

- **Wood chip**  
Broomfield does not have a lot of woodland, so it would be difficult to use this particular form of biomass energy sustainably.

12.16 On the other hand, Broomfield does have the potential for other forms of green energy:

- Building-mounted solar panels
- Air and ground source heating.  
In particular, there may be potential to create ground source heating systems where homes are located around a green or open space
- **Micro hydroelectricity.**  
Broomfield has had a watermill from at least 1086 (recorded in the Domesday Book) and well into modern times, with the last one closing in the 1920s. Some of the infrastructure of the mill remains. Although the technology for creating hydroelectricity is different, it suggests there is potential at least for a micro electricity scheme on the River Chelmer.

### Towards a Parish Strategy to Increase the Use of Green Energy

12.17 Developing a Parish Strategy will depend on obtaining sufficient expertise, either through a working group of interested residents and councillors or through a professional consultant. A strategy will require more research than has been undertaken to date; and it would need to evolve – for instance, as the climate and biodiversity crisis evolves; and as government support and funding develops.

12.18 Currently, the following could be opportunities for the Parish Council and local community to make a significant contribution to increasing the use of green energy in Broomfield:

- **Supporting the introduction of charging points for electric vehicles**  
The achievement of the Government's targets depends not only on the cost and availability of electric vehicles but also on the infrastructure

of charging points. Parish councils can participate in a grant-funded scheme to instal on-street charging points where dwellings do not have off-street parking. The scheme also covers parish-owned car parks.

- **Supporting the expansion of roof-mounted solar panels**  
The County and City Councils participate in a scheme called Solar Together, which aims to achieve better prices by grouping customers together and by vetting suppliers/providing expertise. The Parish Council could work with them to give the scheme greater publicity and possibly, on a targeted basis, to subsidise the cost for Broomfield residents.
- **Retaining a professional service to support/ make it easier for residents to switch to greener and cheaper energy providers, and take advantage of grants for home insulation**  
Schemes already exist, such as Essex Energy Switch, Solar Together Essex and the Energy Saving Trust. However, many residents may be reluctant to use them because of a perceived fear of complexity, paperwork etc. A free professional service that can offer independent advice and complete paperwork on behalf of residents might increase uptake in Broomfield and, in particular, provide support for households living in fuel poverty.
- **Exploring the opportunity for ground-sourced heating systems and district heating networks**  
In new developments, this would involve working with developers to encourage consideration. Within the existing built-up area, it could involve a feasibility study and, where feasible, liaising with residents and professional installers.
- **Exploring the feasibility of a micro hydroelectricity scheme on the River Chelmer**  
Where the Strategy involves energy generation, it would be good for this to be community-owned and led, so that any profits can be ploughed back into the local community- perhaps aimed particularly at sustainability and

biodiversity projects. The extent to which this is possible may depend on the level of expertise required from outside companies and agencies.

### Community Action CA16 – Strategy to Encourage the Generation and Use of Renewable Energy

Subject to engaging sufficient expertise, the Parish Council will develop and implement a strategy to encourage the generation and use renewable energy; and to reduce fuel poverty.

### POLICY BFD17 – MICRO HYDROELECTRICITY SCHEMES

Proposals for micro hydroelectric schemes will be supported subject to the following criteria:

- i. the siting and scale of the proposed development is appropriate to its setting and position in the wider landscape, including to a Special Character Area if relevant; and
- ii. the proposed development does not create an unacceptable impact on the amenities of local residents; and
- iii. the proposed development does not have an unacceptable impact on a feature of natural or biodiversity importance

Micro hydroelectricity is defined by the British Hydropower Association:

*“Mini hydro power systems convert the potential energy in small streams and waterways into kinetic energy via a mechanical turbine, which drives a generator to produce electricity.”*

## 13. COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY

- 13.1 The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) is a charge levied on development which is payable to the local authority. It must be spent on infrastructure projects across the Chelmsford area that help address the demands resulting from growth. These might include, for example, spending on new transport infrastructure, health and educational facilities, open spaces and sports facilities. You can find further information at: [www.chelmsford.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/community-infrastructure-levy/](http://www.chelmsford.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/community-infrastructure-levy/)
- 13.2 15% of CIL arising from development in a parish is payable to the parish council for spending on local projects. If a parish has an adopted neighbourhood plan in place, this proportion increases to 25%. So, those parishes may have considerably more to allocate to projects that address the demands that development places on the local area.
- 13.3 Given the likely level of development in Broomfield up to 2036 (mostly at the 'North of Broomfield' site), we estimate that Broomfield could receive in the region of an additional £400,000 due to the Neighbourhood Plan. This assumes that the Plan is agreed and is in place by the time that the 'reserved matters' for the relevant planning consents are agreed upon.
- 13.4 The Neighbourhood Plan contains 16 Community Aspirations and Actions, which are based on feedback from the community at earlier stages of the Plan process. If supported during the remaining stages of consultation, the Parish Council will seek to progress them over the lifetime of the Plan.
- 13.5 Most of these 16 Aspirations/Actions have resource implications, both human and financial. Successful implementation will require both support from volunteers and funding. The Parish Council will continue to seek funding from external sources wherever possible, for instance from the County and City Councils, the National Lottery and charitable trusts.
- 13.6 CIL will also be an important source of funding, especially with the anticipated uplift to 25% of receipts. Whilst the detailed funding for individual projects will need to be worked out nearer implementation, the Parish Council will allocate CIL funding to the following broad priorities:
- reducing the impact of traffic
  - supporting sustainable alternatives to car use, including new safe cycle paths
  - creating new open spaces and ensuring they become high-quality places for local people to enjoy
  - expanding community facilities, as needed
  - creating new woodland, hedgerows and other biodiversity projects
  - enhancing the landscape, particularly Valued Landscapes and Local Green Spaces
  - promoting a sense of place through heritage projects and enhancing the historic environment
  - promoting green energy.
- 13.7 We believe these broad priorities will enable the Parish Council to allocate CIL funding to the existing Community Aspirations and Actions in the Plan, if necessary, whilst also retaining flexibility for new projects with similar aims that may be proposed in the future. They therefore provide a framework for the use of CIL money up to 2036.



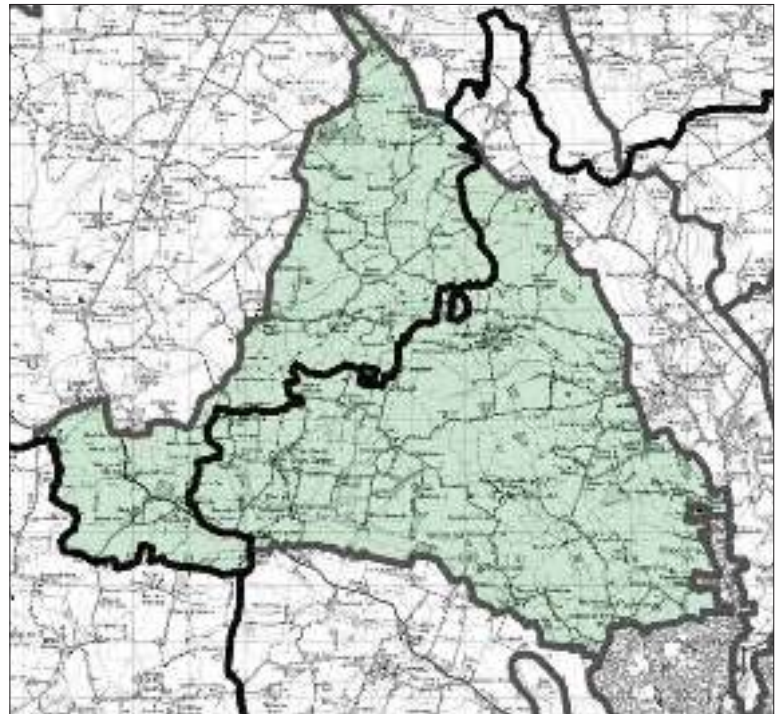
## APPENDIX 1 - ESSEX LANDSCAPE CHARACTER ASSESSMENT CHARACTER AREAS

Source: Braintree, Brentwood, Chelmsford, Maldon and Uttlesford Landscape Character Assessments' (Chris Blandford Associates, September 2006) (Referred to in the Neighbourhood Plan as the 'Blandford Landscape Character Assessment')

### Pleshey Farmland Plateau

#### Key Characteristics

- Irregular field pattern of mainly medium size arable fields, marked by sinuous hedgerows and ditches.
- Small woods and copses provide structure and edges in the landscape.
- Scattered settlement pattern, with frequent small hamlets, typically with greens and occasionally ponds.
- Comprehensive network of narrow, winding lanes.
- Strong sense of tranquillity.



Full Extent of the Pleshey Farmland Plateau

### Sensitivities to Change

Sensitive key characteristics and landscape elements within this character area include sinuous hedgerows and ditches and small pockets of deciduous woodland, (which are sensitive to changes in land management). The comprehensive network of quiet rural lanes and byways, which cross the landscape are sensitive to potential increased traffic flow, associated with new development. In association with this, the overall sense of tranquillity within the area is sensitive to change. There is a sense of historic integrity, resulting from a dispersed historic settlement pattern and several large halls (including Mashbury Hall and Pleshey Grange). There are also several important wildlife habitats within the area (including 16 sites of importance for nature conservation, comprising ancient woodland, unimproved grassland, scrub and wetland habitats) which are sensitive to changes in land management. Overall, this character area has moderate sensitivity to change.

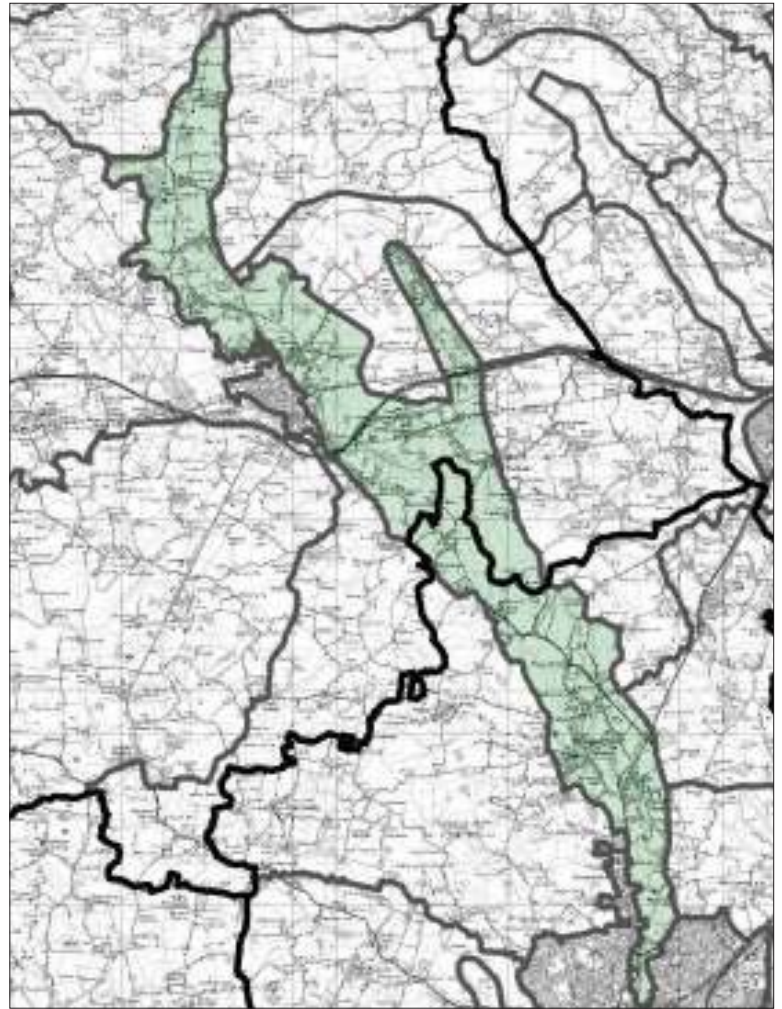
### Suggested Landscape Planning Guidelines

- Consider the visual impact of new residential development and farm buildings upon the surrounding farmland.
- Maintain the mixture of open and enclosed views across the hills and valleys.
- Ensure any new development is small-scale, responding to historic settlement pattern, landscape setting and locally distinctive building styles.

## Upper Chelmer River Valley

### Key Characteristics

- Narrow valley, with a restricted valley floor.
- Small meandering river channel on the left side of the valley close to the rising ground of the valley side.
- Dense riverside trees.
- Arable valley sides with a fairly open character.
- Small linear settlements occupy the upper valley sides or straggle down to a few bridging points.
- Historic watermills and Second World War pillboxes are distinctive features.
- Mostly tranquil away from Great Dunmow, Chelmsford and the A120.



Full Extent of the Upper Chelmer River Valley

### Sensitivities to Change

Sensitive key characteristics and landscape elements within this character area include dense riverside trees and a string of small wet woodland on the sloping valley sides, which are sensitive to changes in land management. The skyline of the valley slopes is visually sensitive, with open and framed cross-valley views and long views along the river corridor potentially affected by new tall or non-screened new development. Views to the valley sides from adjacent Landscape Character Areas are also sensitive. Historic integrity is strong, with a largely surviving pattern of medieval dispersed settlements, isolated farms, moated sites and small hamlets strung out along linear greens, small historic parklands and a number of churches and local vernacular buildings with timber-frames, bright colour-washed walls and thatched roofs. Several important wildlife habitats are scattered throughout the area (including 23 sites of importance for nature conservation, comprising ancient woodland, unimproved grassland, species-rich hedgerows and copses). Overall this character area has relatively high sensitivity to change.

### Suggested Landscape Planning Guidelines

- Consider the visual impact of new residential development and farm buildings upon valley sides.
- Conserve and enhance cross-valley views and characteristic views across and along the valley.
- Ensure any new development on valley sides is small-scale, responding to historic settlement pattern, landscape setting and locally distinctive building styles.
- Protect and enhance the role of the river valley in providing a network of informal open space and nature conservation sites.

## APPENDIX 2 - DEVELOPMENT DESIGN CHECKLIST

Source – Broomfield Design Guidelines – AECOM April 2020

<b>A. Harmonise and enhance existing settlement in terms of physical form pattern or movement and land use.</b>
What are the particular characteristics of this area which have been taken into account in the design?
Is the proposal within a conservation area?
Does the proposal affect or change the setting of a listed building or listed landscape?
<b>B. Relate well to local topography and landscape features, including prominent ridge lines.</b>
Does the proposal harmonise with the adjacent properties?
Has careful attention been paid to height, form, massing and scale?
If a proposal is an extension, is it subsidiary to the existing property so as not to compromise its character?
Does the proposal maintain or enhance the existing landscape features?
How does the proposal affect the character of a rural location?
<b>C. Reinforce or enhance the established urban character of streets, squares and other spaces.</b>
What is the character of the adjacent streets and does this have implications for the new proposals?
Does the new proposal respect or enhance the existing area or adversely change its character?
Does the proposal positively contribute to the quality of the public realm/streetscape and existing pedestrian access?
How does the proposal impact on existing views which are important to the area?
Can any new views be created?
<b>D. Reflect, respect and reinforce local architecture and historic distinctiveness.</b>
What is the local architectural character and has this been demonstrated in the proposals?
If the proposal is a contemporary design, are the details and materials of a sufficiently high enough quality and does it relate specifically to the architectural characteristics and scale of the site?
<b>E. Retain and incorporate important existing features into the development.</b>
What are the important features surrounding the site?
What effect would the proposal have on the streetscape?
How can the important existing features including trees be incorporated into the site?
How does the development relate to any important links both physical and visual that currently exist on the site?
<b>F. Respect surrounding buildings in terms of scale, height, form and massing.</b>
Is the scale of adjacent buildings appropriate to the area?
Should the adjacent scale be reflected?
What would be the reason for making the development higher?
Would a higher development improve the scale of the overall area?
If the proposal is an extension, is it subsidiary to the existing house?
Does the proposed development compromise the amenity of adjoining properties?
Does the proposal overlook any adjacent properties or gardens?



<b>G. Adopt appropriate materials and details</b>
What is the distinctive material in the area, if any?
Does the proposed material harmonise with the local material?
Does the proposal use high-quality materials?
Have the details of the windows, doors, eaves and roof details been addressed in the context of the overall design?
<b>H. Integrate with existing paths, streets, circulation networks and patterns of activity.</b>
What are the essential characteristics of the existing street pattern?
How will the new design or extension integrate with the existing arrangement?
Are the new points of access appropriate in terms of patterns of movement?
Do the points of access conform to the statutory technical requirements?
Do the new points of access have regard for all users of the development (including those with disabilities)?
How can the cycle network be integrated into the existing street network?
How can bicycle parking be integrated into the new design?
<b>I. Provide adequate open space for the development in terms of both quantity and quality.</b>
Is there adequate amenity space for the development?
Does the new development respect and enhance existing amenity space?
Have opportunities for enhancing existing amenity spaces been explored?
Are there existing trees to consider?
Will any communal amenity space be created? If so, how will this be used by the new owners and how will it be managed?
<b>J. Incorporate necessary services and drainage infrastructure without causing unacceptable harm to retained features.</b>
What visual impact will services have on the scheme as a whole?
Can the effect of services be integrated at the planning design stage, or mitigated if harmful?
Has the lighting scheme been designed to avoid light pollution?
<b>K. Ensure all components e.g. buildings, landscapes, access routes, parking and open space are well related to each other, to provide a safe and attractive environment.</b>
Has the proposal been considered in its widest context?
Is the landscaping to be hard or soft?
What are the landscape qualities of the area?
Have all aspects of security been fully considered and integrated into the design of the building and open spaces?
Has the impact on the landscape quality of the area been taken into account?
Have the appropriateness of the boundary treatments been considered in the context of the site?
In rural locations has the impact of the development on the tranquillity of the area been fully considered?
<b>L. Make sufficient provision for sustainable waste management (including facilities for kerbside collection, waste separation and minimisation where appropriate) without adverse impact on the street scene, the local landscape or the amenities of neighbours.</b>
Has adequate provision been made for bin storage?
Has adequate provision been made for waste separation and relevant recycling facilities?
Has the location of the bin storage facilities been considered relative to the travel distance from the collection vehicle?
Has the impact of the design and location of the bin storage facilities been considered in the context of the whole development?

## APPENDIX 3 – LISTED BUILDINGS AND BUILDINGS OF LOCAL VALUE

### Listed Buildings

SOURCE: Historic England database January 2021

#### Grade II\*

- Church of St Mary the Virgin with St Leonard, Church Green

#### Grade II

- The Vineries, 16 Church Green & Bromfields, 18 Church Green
- Broomfield Hall, Church Green
- Barn at Scravels House, Hollow Lane
- The Well House 252 Main Road & 252a Main Road
- 305-313 Main Road
- 321 Main Road
- Parsonage Farmhouse, School Lane
- Outbuildings to the West of Parsonage Farm, School Lane
- 4 School Lane
- Barn at Staceys Farm, School Lane
- The Angel Inn, 160 Main Road
- Butlers, 286 Main Road
- 315 Main Road & The Old Bakehouse, Main Road
- Barn to the West of Parsonage Farm, School Lane
- Staceys Farmhouse, School Lane
- Brooklands, Main Road
- Vault to the West of Partridge Green Farm, Partridge Green
- 2a School Lane & Vine Cottage, 2 School Lane
- The Kings Arms Inn, 295 Main Road
- Woolards Cottages, 9-15 Church Green
- Priors, Hollow Lane
- Broomfield Place, 189 Main Road
- Mill House Cottages, Mill Lane
- Glovers, School Lane

### List of Buildings of Local Value

- Main Road, Catherine Place, 129-135 (odd)
- Church Green, Broomfield Wyck, 12
- Church Green, War Memorial
- Hollow Lane, Scravels
- Main Road, Library, 180
- Main Road, Telephone Kiosk (Opposite The Angel Inn)
- Main Road, The Gables, 210
- Main Road, Ayletts
- School Lane, Broomfield Primary School
- School Lane, Almshouses, 77-83 (odd)
- School Lane, Flint Cottage, 90
- Pillboxes:
  - west of the river Chelmer: East of Butlers Farm (Grid References: TL 7120 1126, TL 7129 1119 and TL 7131 1090);
  - north and south of Broomfield Mill (TL 7134 1036, TL 7139 1011, TL 7132 1006 and TL 7137 0993);
  - south-east of Roselawn Farm (TL 7153 0947) and;
  - east and south of Champions Farm (TL 7148 0921 and TL 7124 0900)

## APPENDIX 4 - SPECIAL CHARACTER AREAS

### Angel Green and Broomfield Place

#### Special character:

A village centre, clustered around a green, with historic vernacular buildings surrounded by extensive grassland, trees and hedges.

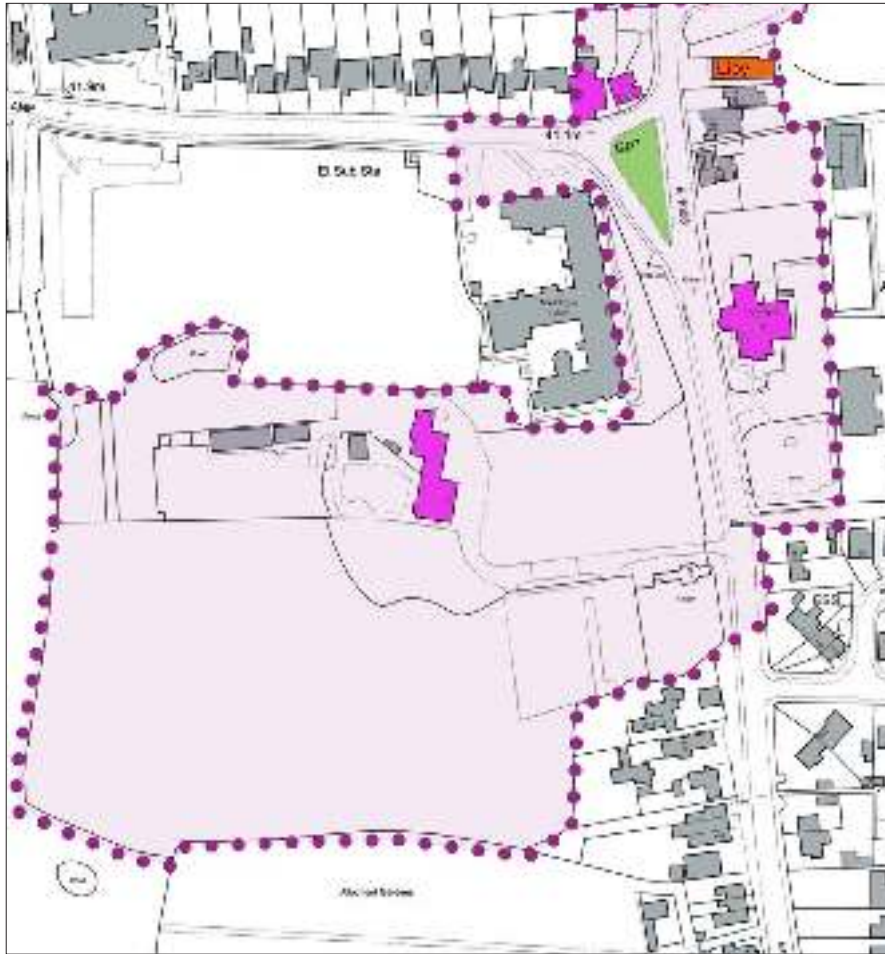
#### Features contributing to and forming part of the special character:

- Angel Green, a registered village green, was originally formed by the junction of School Lane with Main Road. Although small, the Green is bolstered by the wide verges on the west side and by the planting of trees and spring flowers. The trees and wide verge mitigate the impact of Madelayne Court, a large building which is not in keeping with the special character
- Broomfield Place, a substantial Grade 2 listed building, which is set back from the road beyond an imposing lawn and parkland trees - all clearly visible from the road. Along with the Lodge and gates, they provide a setting to the house. This relates well to the Angel Inn and nearby cottages - resembling a 'manor house' alongside a village green.
- Other historic buildings: the listed buildings of the Angel Inn and the cottages on the north side of the Green (2 and 2a School Lane). Also, the phone kiosk and Library (assets of local interest) and the Lodge
- Smaller structures that complement the heritage assets, including the brick and flint wall adjacent to the Library, the picket fence along the Inn garden (which maintains a sense of openness), garden walls in front of the listed cottages and the wooden bus shelter. Also, the old phone kiosk adds a focal point to the Green, re-enforcing the village green character
- The parkland to the south and west of Broomfield Place (including the walled garden, still in the same ownership as the house). This is all part of the original setting of Broomfield Place and contains some landmark redwood trees. Although degraded, this still forms an important context to Broomfield Place.
- Swathes of grass stretching throughout the Special Character Area, from the parkland in the south-west, through the lawns at the front of Broomfield Place, Angel Green and verges to the garden of the Angel Inn to the east
- Trees and hedgerows. The row of grand trees opposite the Angel is an important feature. The hedgerow behind the Angel helps to define the eastern boundary of the Special Character Area (along with the substantial brick wall). Other trees and hedgerows help to limit the visual impact of the Angel car park and the more modern design of Madelayne Court.

#### Threats and opportunities:

- New buildings and extensions need to respect and complement the architecture of the historic buildings. The alignment of any new structures around Angel Green needs to respect the shape of the Green and avoid overshadowing it.
- The relationship between the cluster of historic buildings and the balance between buildings and grassland should be respected. Further three storey buildings (or higher) which intrude within this relationship would be a threat (especially if out of architectural context).
- High levels of traffic detract from the character of the area, both visually and in terms of noise. Sensitive measures to limit the impact of traffic and to strengthen visual links across roads would enhance character.
- Appropriate signs or historical interpretation boards would enhance character and sense of place.





Angel Green/Broomfield Place - Special Character Area

### Parsonage Green

#### Special character:

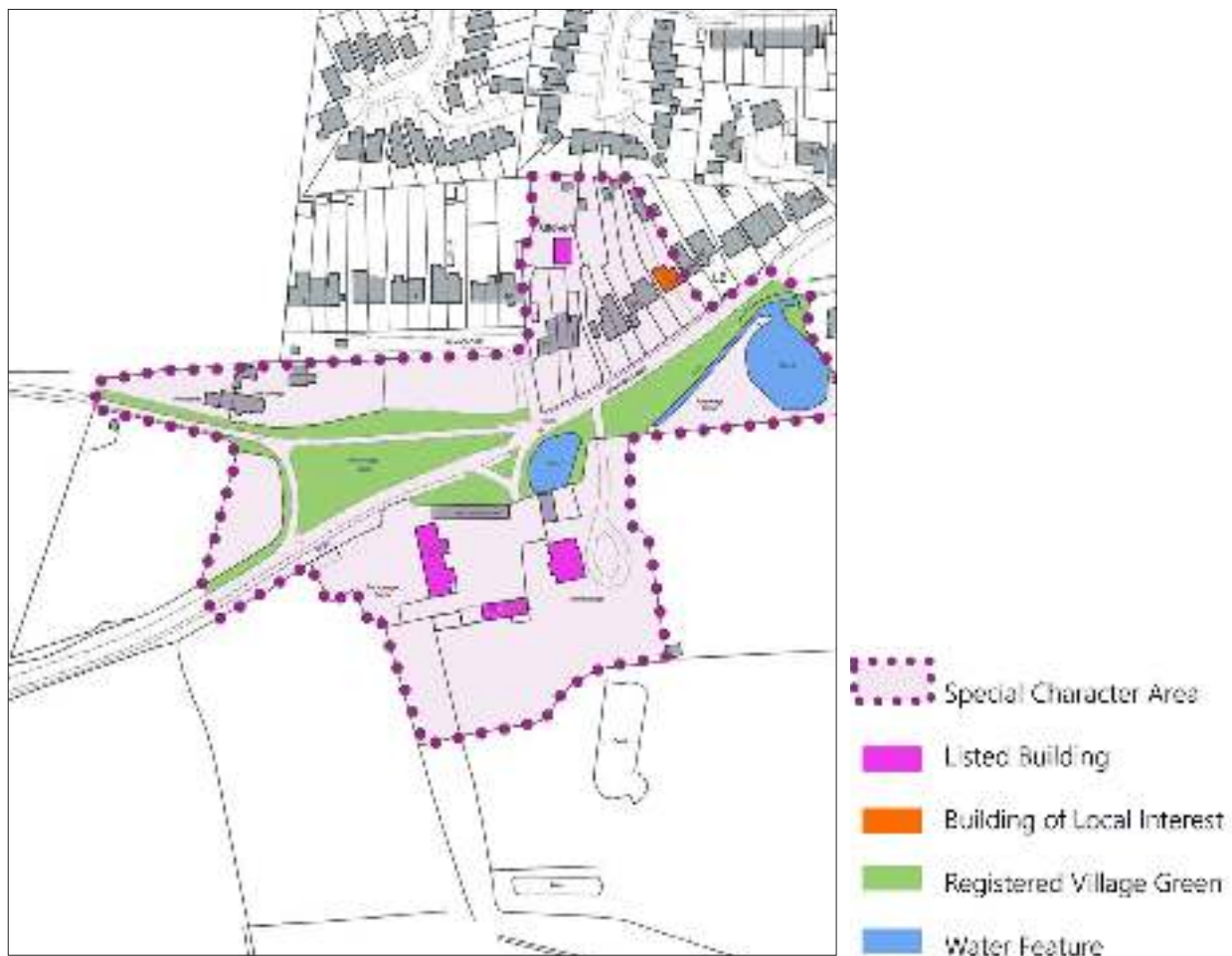
A substantial and well-treed village green which provides a transition from the open countryside in the west, to the edge of the village in the east. Historic buildings are set back behind verges and ponds, giving a sense of space, transitioning from classic barns to cottages as you approach the village.

#### Features contributing to and forming part of the special character:

- The barns around Parsonage Farmyard (including listed buildings) represent the strongest design feature, with their tall roofs. They have been sensitively restored as dwellings in recent years, set around an attractive green which mirrors Parsonage Green itself
- The Parsonage, a very attractive listed building, compact and with noticeable chimneys. Although it does not align to the Green, it provides an important backdrop on the southern edge.
- Cottages on the north side of School Lane (one of which is listed) and set behind them is Glovers (listed, former farmhouse). These buildings feature extensive flint walls, a distinctive style that contrasts with the twentieth century buildings to the east and behind
- The registered village green. This is surprisingly extensive to the east and features two large ponds, plus a ditch/pond to the north. The outside of the Parsonage and Farmyard is particularly striking. There is a public bench nearby.
- Mature trees on the Green itself and the northern edge, supplemented with spring bulbs

### Threats and Opportunities

- Any new buildings or extensions should be set back from the Green to conserve the sense of openness. This is also important to protect the transition from the complete openness of the countryside to the more enclosed space of the village.
- Any new buildings or extensions must respect the architectural style of existing historic buildings: the barn and farmyard style at the west end and the cottage style of the east end, as appropriate
- The Special Character Area could be enhanced by clearing some of the vegetation in and around the two large ponds to improve their visibility. There is room for another/more well-positioned public benches to promote enjoyment of the Green and more wildflower planting
- Appropriate signs or historical interpretation boards would enhance character and sense of place.
- Measures which slowed traffic and reduced queuing would limit its impact and enhance character. Re-locating the existing chicane to the western end of the Green might help to achieve this.



Parsonage - Special Character Area

## Broomfield Mill and surrounding area

### Special character:

A hamlet of distinctive buildings, focussed around the historic mill house and bridge, set amongst water meadows and set apart from the main village

### Features contributing to and forming part of the special character:

- The Mill House (an Historic Asset of Local Interest) and converted barns associated with it
- The brick walls around the southern and western edges of the Mill House compound, which give the impression of a walled garden or enclosure
- Small hedges atop low brick walls – a distinctive boundary treatment in front of the Mill House and the two houses opposite; also, the short brick-lined culvert on the south side of the Lane
- The brick-built bridge and small weir (a remnant of the mill); the wide section of river south of the bridge; and the narrower ancient course of the river, which marks the eastern edge of the character area
- 'Lumps and bumps' marking the site of the old mill (demolished in 1929)
- Extensive water meadows, comprising the floor of the valley – in contrast to arable fields on the valley slopes
- Scattered trees along the river and behind the Mill House
- The absence of vehicular traffic (this section of Mill Lane was closed to traffic in 1989).

### Threats and Opportunities

- Introduction of inappropriate design styles which threaten the coherence of the current tightly-knit assemblage of buildings. Any new buildings or extensions must respect the architectural style of existing houses, especially the Mill House.
- Introduction of inappropriate boundary treatments. The existing combination of traditional brick walls; small hedges atop low brick walls; and wooden fences/gates should be respected. Reducing the amount of metal fencing where possible would enhance the special character.
- Changes to land use (the water meadows) should be avoided



Mill Lane - Special Character Area





# Broomfield Neighbourhood Plan 2022-2036

March 2025

Broomfield Parish Council

