

Local Development Framework: Little Bad or Good for Great Baddow

In November Chelmsford Borough Council finally published for consultation its new Local Development Framework. There is relief in Great Baddow that some people's worst fears will not be realised. Baddow Meads and Manor Farm have been confirmed as a protected Green Wedge, and the Green Belt area between Great Baddow and Galleywood remains safeguarded. Expansion of villages like Sandon is also restricted. As a result the Council has rejected seven possible sites for major "greenfield" developments in an arc around Great Baddow.

But this part of the Borough seems to have been ignored in the plans. Of the 6000 homes recently built in the Borough or already approved, around 1000 are in Great Baddow. Key infrastructure improvements are promised for the proposed developments to the north of Chelmsford. But there is no mention of improvements to the south of the town, in which hundreds of new homes will still be accessible from the centre only by the unimproved and officially unhealthily polluted Baddow Road.

The Council has now given outline approval to the largest new development in Great Baddow, on the Marconi Club field in Beehive Lane. The proposal is to build here a new clubhouse and also 190 homes, dwarfing even the current building work lower down Beehive Lane. Meanwhile new playing fields will be provided on Green Belt land in West Hanningfield Road. But there is one piece of good news here: the developers are required to contribute to the cost of improvements to Beehive Lane and Baddow Road, and of a cycle link to the town centre.

Meanwhile none of the 19 venues for the Council's exhibitions about its plans are in Great Baddow, or anywhere in Chelmsford south of the Army and Navy. It seems that the Council is not so interested in opinions from this direction. But the consultation period for the Framework runs until 20th December, so there is still a little time to have your say.

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