



Gosfield Neighbourhood Plan

Basic Conditions Statement

Prepared by LUC
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Gosfield Neighbourhood Plan Basic Conditions Statement

Project Number
13056

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Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1 This Basic Conditions Statement has been produced to accompany the Gosfield Neighbourhood Plan (GNP).

1.2 The relevant legal framework for the preparation and making of neighbourhood plans is supported by the Localism Act 2011 and the Neighbourhood Planning Act 2017 and found in the:

- Town and Country Planning Act 1990: ss. 61F, 61I, 61M-P and Schedule 4B
- Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004: ss 38A-C
- Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (2012 No.637) (as amended).

1.3 Paragraph 8(2) of Schedule 4B to the Town & Country Planning Act 1990 requires a neighbourhood plan to meet five basic conditions before it can proceed to a referendum. These are:

- (i) Having regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State it is appropriate to make the neighbourhood plan;
- (iv) The making of the neighbourhood development plan contributes to the achievement of sustainable development;
- (v) The making of the neighbourhood development plan would not have the effect of preventing development from taking place which:
 - (a) is proposed in the development plan for the area of the authority (or any part of the area); and
 - (b) if it took place, would provide housing;
- (vi) The making of the neighbourhood development plan does not breach, and is otherwise compatible with, EU obligations; and
- (vii) Prescribed conditions are met in relation to the neighbourhood plan and prescribed matters have been complied with in connection with the proposal for the neighbourhood plan. The prescribed condition is that the making of the neighbourhood plan does not breach the requirements of Chapter 8 of Part 6 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017.

1.4 This document sets out how the Plan meets the Basic Conditions.

Key Statements

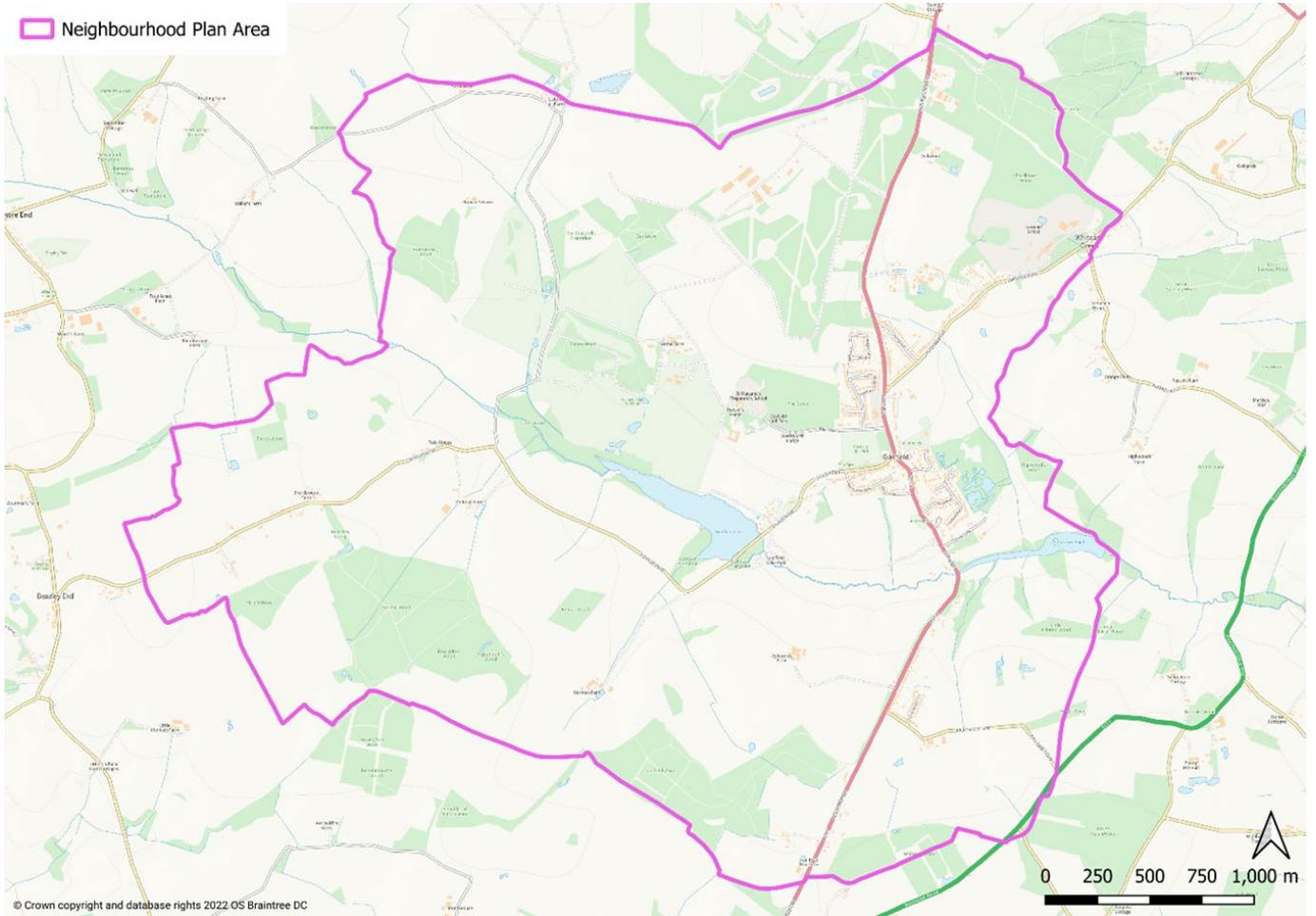
1.5 Braintree District Council (BDC), as the local planning authority, designated the Gosfield Neighbourhood Area in March 2021. This enabled Gosfield Parish Council to prepare the Gosfield Neighbourhood Plan (GNP). The Plan has been prepared by the community through the Gosfield Neighbourhood Plan Group.

1.6 The GNP sets out policies that relate to the development and use of land within only the Gosfield Neighbourhood Area. This area is shown in **Figure 1.1**.

1.7 The Plan refers only to the administrative boundary of the parish of Gosfield. There are no other adopted Neighbourhood Development Plans that cover the Gosfield Neighbourhood Area.

1.8 Gosfield Parish Council has prepared the Plan to establish a vision for the future of the parish. The community has set out how that vision will be realised through planning and controlling land use and development change over the plan period 2023 to 2033.

Figure 1.1 Gosfield Neighbourhood Plan (GNP) Area



Chapter 2

Basic Condition (i) – Conformity with National Planning Policy

2.1 To meet this condition, the Plan must be shown to have regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State. National policy and guidance is contained within the National Planning Policy Framework ('NPPF') and the Planning Practice Guidance ('PPG').

National Planning Policy Framework

2.2 The NPPF has 13 key objectives:

1. Delivering a sufficient supply of homes
2. Building a strong, competitive economy
3. Ensuring the vitality of town centres
4. Promoting healthy and safe communities
5. Promoting sustainable transport
6. Supporting high quality communications
7. Making effective use of land
8. Achieving well-designed places
9. Protecting Green Belt land
10. Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change
11. Conserving and enhancing the natural environment
12. Conserving and enhancing the historic environment
13. Facilitating the sustainable use of minerals

2.3 This Basic Conditions Statement explains how the Plan contributes to meeting these objectives. It also explains how the policies within the Neighbourhood Plan intend to meet, support and supplement specific national policies.

2.4 The GNP has 7 objectives (Objectives 1 – 7). These objectives are summarised in **Table 2.1** alongside the NPPF goals that each objective seeks to address.

2.5 **Table 2.2** sets out each policy of the GNP alongside the policies in the NPPF that it has had regard to and analyses how each Plan policy contributes to achieving the key objectives of the NPPF.

Table 2.1 Assessment of the Gosfield Neighbourhood Plan objectives against NPPF goals

Objective	Relevant NPPF goal
Objective 1: Maximise the protection and enhancement of biodiversity.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Conserving and enhancing the nature environment ■ Meeting the challenges of climate change, flooding and coastal change
Objective 2: Maximise the adoption of renewable technologies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Achieving well-designed places ■ Promoting sustainable transport ■ Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change
Objective 3: Incorporate high quality design that reflects the character of Gosfield.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Achieving well-designed places
Objective 4: Protect existing village historical assets and their setting and open spaces.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Conserving and enhancing the natural environment ■ Conserving and enhancing the historic environment ■ Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change
Objective 5: Ensure the potential for residents to have safe and convenient access to village assets and amenities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Promoting healthy and safe communities ■ Promoting sustainable transport
Objective 6: Continue to support local businesses.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Building a strong, competitive economy ■ Ensuring the vitality of town centres
Objective 7: Contribute to addressing the housing needs of Gosfield.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Delivering a sufficient supply of homes ■ Promoting healthy and safe communities

Table 2.2 Assessment of how each policy in the Gosfield Neighbourhood Plan conforms to the NPPF

Policy Title and Reference	NPPF Reference (paragraph)	Commentary
GOS1: Wildlife-friendly development	192	This policy contributes to the NPPF objective of promoting the conservation, restoration and enhancement of priority habitats, ecological networks and protection and recovery of priority habitats and secure measurable gains for biodiversity. The policy states that all development proposals should deliver a minimum of 10% net biodiversity in addition to protecting and enhancing existing habitats and species.
GOS2: Low energy and energy efficiency design	161, 162, 164, 167, 203, 212	The NPPF states that development proposals must support the transition to a low carbon economy by reducing greenhouse gas emissions. This policy contributes to the NPPF objective of meeting the challenge of climate change and flooding, as it seeks to ensure that new developments and the redevelopment and refurbishing of existing building stock should be designed to be sustainable, resource-efficient, and resilient to climate change. Specifically, the policy requires development to including measures which minimise waste reduction, re-use and recycle minerals, and use sustainable materials, including in relation to their procurement and be optimised for energy efficiency, targeting zero carbon emissions.

Policy Title and Reference	NPPF Reference (paragraph)	Commentary
		The policy also seeks to conserve and enhance heritage assets by safeguarding the historic characteristics of listed buildings and buildings in Conservation Areas through sensitive retrofitting. This meets the NPPF requirement of conserving and enhancing the historic environment.
GOS3: Local Green Spaces	106-108	This policy meets the NPPF requirement of promoting healthy communities. National policy enables local communities to identify, for special protection, green areas of importance to them known as Local Green Spaces. This policy designates one area, identified by the local community as important, as a Local Green Space which will be protected. The policy also stipulates that development proposals within the defined Local Green Space will only be supported in very special circumstances, further reinforcing their importance and protection against development.
GOS4: Verges	187, 192	This policy contributes to the NPPF requirements of achieving well designed places and conserving and enhancing the natural environment. The policy supports the retention of existing green verges along the highway, recognising their importance in contributing towards Gosfield's distinctiveness. The policy also supports the design of highways and verges to maximise biodiversity value.
GOS5: Design and character	109, 131, 132, 134, 135	<p>This policy contributes to the NPPF requirement of good design in the built environment, including encouraging neighbourhood planning groups to identify the special qualities of each area. National policy encourages neighbourhood plans to develop design policies that demonstrate high quality, sustainable and inclusive design and architecture that respects and responds positively to the area's character. This policy seeks to preserve and enhance the local character of Gosfield by ensuring that development is cohesive with the local area through appropriate use of design, layout, materials and features.</p> <p>The policy also contributes to the NPPF objective of promoting sustainable transport, as it seeks to ensure that new development provides safe and convenient connectivity for pedestrians and cyclists within the development and to the surrounding countryside and key destinations.</p>
GOS6: Non-designated heritage assets	202, 203	This policy contributes to the NPPF objective of conserving and enhancing the historic environment. The policy seeks to protect heritage assets by ensuring that proposals involving the loss or alteration of non-designated heritage assets are carefully assessed, balancing the scale of harm or loss against the historical significance of an asset.
GOS7: Access for walking, cycling and horse riding	109, 110, 111	The policy contributes to the NPPF objective of promoting sustainable transport and promoting healthy and safe communities. This policy seeks to improve access for pedestrian, cyclists, and horse riders to the countryside, ensuring the safety of users of rural roads and lanes. The policy also promotes the enhancement of public rights of way by improving existing routes and improving connectivity through the creation of new routes.

Chapter 3

Basic Condition (iv) – Contribution to Sustainable Development

3.1 The NPPF states in paragraph 10 that a presumption in favour of sustainable development is at the heart of the NPPF.

3.2 For the Plan, sustainable development has been the fundamental basis of each of its policies. The National Planning Practice Guidance advises that *'sufficient and proportionate evidence should be presented on how the draft neighbourhood plan ... guides development to sustainable solutions'*. The evidence base presented alongside the Plan, coupled with the reasoned justification for each policy in the Plan, demonstrates how the Plan guides development towards sustainable solutions.

3.3 **Table 3.1** summarises how the objectives and policies in the GNP contribute towards sustainable development, as defined in the NPPF. Many of the objectives of the GNP overlap the three strands of sustainability, so for the purposes of this document, the most relevant strands have been taken to illustrate conformity.

Table 3.1 Assessment of Gosfield Neighbourhood Plan objectives and policies against sustainable development

Deliver economic sustainability	
NPPF definition – 'Contribute to building a strong, responsive economy'	
GNP Objectives	Objective 6: Continue to support local businesses
GNP Policies	Policy GOS5: Design and character Policy GOS2: Low energy and energy efficient design
Commentary	The NPPF seeks to secure economic growth in order to create jobs and prosperity to further productivity and support the transition to a low carbon future The GNP seeks to contribute to the delivery of this national aim by addressing local design and energy efficient standards to ensure that new development supports both economic growth and sustainability and creates a safe local environment for workers to move around in.
Deliver social sustainability	
NPPF definition: 'Supporting strong, vibrant and healthy communities' and 'support its health, social and cultural well-being'	
GNP Objectives	Objective 3: Incorporate high quality design that reflects the character of Gosfield Objective 4: Protect existing village historical assets and their setting and open spaces. Objective 5: Ensure the potential for residents to have safe and convenient access to village assets and amenities Objective 7: Contribute to addressing the housing needs of Gosfield
GNP Policies	Policy GOS3: Local Green Spaces

	<p>Policy GOS4: Verges</p> <p>Policy GOS5: Design and character</p> <p>Policy GOS6: Non-designated heritage assets</p> <p>Policy GOS7: Access for walking, cycling and horse riding</p>
Commentary	<p>High quality development is important to the community of Gosfield, both in terms of what development looks like and how it is laid out. Policy GOS5 identifies the character of the area and the design principles that will maintain this. In addition, GOS6 protects the village's non-designated heritage assets.</p> <p>Policy GOS3 protects one Local Green Space which is demonstrably special to the local community, whilst Policy GOS4 seeks to retain existing green verges along the highway, recognising them as a key characteristic of Gosfield village that contributes to its character and visual appeal.</p> <p>In a rural location such as Gosfield, access to the countryside is importance for exercise and mental wellbeing. Policy GOS7 seeks to enhance access to the countryside. Within Gosfield village, improvements to walking and cycling along specific routes will decrease car use for short journeys.</p>
<p>Deliver environmental sustainability</p> <p>NPPF definition: 'Contributing to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment'</p>	
GNP Objectives	<p>Objective 1: Maximise the protection and enhancement of biodiversity</p> <p>Objective 2: Maximise the adoption of renewable technologies</p> <p>Objective 4: Protect existing village historical assets and their setting and open spaces</p>
GNP Policies	<p>Policy GOS1: Wildlife-friendly development</p> <p>Policy GOS2: Low energy and energy efficiency design</p> <p>Policy GOS3: Local Green Spaces</p> <p>Policy GOS4: Verges</p> <p>Policy GOS5: Design and character</p> <p>Policy GOS6: Non-designated heritage assets</p> <p>Policy GOS7: Access for walking, cycling and horse riding</p>
Commentary	<p>As demonstrated by the objectives of GNP, the natural environment and environmental sustainability is of key importance and a strong theme in the Plan. This aligns with the NPPF which seeks to protect and enhance the natural, built and historic environment.</p> <p>Design of development which reflects local character can help to protect and enhance the environment of a rural village such as Gosfield. Policy GOS5 seeks to protect and enhance local character. Policy GOS2 seeks to maximise the use of sustainable, low carbon materials and to minimise water usage.</p> <p>As identified by the NPPF, it is important that new development is able to adapt to climate change. This is reflected in Policy GOS2 which outlines the design principles which should be incorporated into new development it to more extreme weather conditions. Similarly, maximising movement by non-car modes such as walking and cycling will help to reduce pollution by reducing the number of short distance car trips. This is addressed by Policy GOS7.</p> <p>Retaining and enhancing the green infrastructure in the area ensures high environmental quality and ecological benefits. Policies GOS1 (Wildlife-friendly development), GOS3 (Local Green Spaces), and GOS4 (Verges) seek to protect and enhance in this way.</p>

3.4 As demonstrated in **Table 3.1**, the GNP objectives are considered to comprise a balance of social, economic and environmental goals. The policies of the GNP demonstrably contribute to sustainable development in respect of building a strong, responsive economy, supporting a strong, vibrant and healthy community and protecting and enhancing the natural and historic environment.

Chapter 4

Basic Condition (v) – Not preventing development proposed in the development plan

4.1 The development plan currently consists of:

- **Adopted Braintree District Local Plan** – section 1 adopted February 2021, section 2 adopted July 2022.
- **Essex Minerals Local Plan** – adopted July 2014.
- **Essex and Southend-on-Sea Waste Local Plan** – adopted July 2017.

4.2 **Table 4.1** details the GNP policies alongside a consideration of whether they would have the effect of preventing development from taking place which:

- a. is proposed in the development plan for the area (or any part of the area);
- b. would provide housing.

4.3 Where a policy is not identified in **Table 4.1**, it is considered that the GNP does not contain any policies that directly relate to it.

Table 4.1 Assessment of whether Neighbourhood Plan policies prevent development in the development plan

GNP policy	Braintree District Local Plan (Sections 1 and 2)	Commentary	Does the policy prevent development?
GOS1: Wildlife-friendly development	SP7: Place Shaping Principles LPP52: Layout and Design of Development LPP66: Protection, Enhancement, Management and Monitoring of Biodiversity	Policy SP7 requires development to incorporate biodiversity creation and enhancement measures. Policy LPP52 requires biodiversity net gain and Policy LPP66 identifies the ways in which built development can enhance biodiversity.	No. Policy GOS1 encourages a range of specific measures as part of development to help protect, create and enhance habitats for biodiversity.
GOS2: Low energy and energy efficient design	SP7: Place Shaping Principles LPP52: Layout and Design of Development LPP71: Climate Change LPP72: Resource Efficiency, Energy Generation and Energy Efficiency LPP76: Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems	Policy SP7 requires development to include measures to promote environmental sustainability including addressing energy and water efficiency and flood mitigation. Similarly, Policy LPP52 requires development to incorporate measures for environmental sustainability, including energy conservation, water efficiency and surface water flood mitigation. Policies LPP71 and LPP72 require development to incorporate measures to lower carbon emissions and increase renewable energy provision.	No. Policy GOS2 encourages a range of specific measures that development should use to address environmental sustainability and energy efficiency issues.
GOS3: Local Green Spaces	LPP50: Provision for Open Space, Sport and Recreation	Policy LPP50 protects open spaces unless they are surplus to requirements.	No. Policy GOS3 protects one specific green open space which is demonstrably special to the community.
GOS4: Verges	SP7: Place Shaping Principles LPP 63: Natural Environment and Green Infrastructure LPP 69: Protected Lanes	Policy SP7 requires the protection of assets of natural value. Policy LPP 63 requires development to contribute, where appropriate, towards the delivery of new green infrastructure which develops and enhances a network of multi-functional spaces and natural features throughout the district, whilst Policy LPP 69 requires the conservation of traditional landscape and nature conservation character areas of roads designated as Protected Lanes, including their verges, banks, and ditches.	No. Policy GOS4 aligns with the development plan policies by ensuring the retention of existing green verges in order that development does not have a detrimental effect on Gosfield's character and biodiversity.
GOS5: Design and character	SP7: Place Shaping Principles	Policy SP7 requires development to respond positively to local character and to protect and enhance assets of historical or natural value. This is supported	No. Policy GOS5 supports development which is high quality design and layout which respects

GNP policy	Braintree District Local Plan (Sections 1 and 2)	Commentary	Does the policy prevent development?
	LPP47: Built and Historic Environment LPP52: Layout and Design of Development	by Policies LPP47 and LPP52 which require a high standard of design and layout.	the local character of Gosfield, including appropriate use of design, layout, materials and features.
GOS6: Non-designated heritage assets	SP7: Place Shaping Principles LPP57: Heritage Assets and their Settings	Policy SP7 requires development to protect and enhance assets of historical or natural value. Policy LPP57 includes requirements which protect designated and non-designated heritage assets.	No. Policy GOS6 identifies a specific local non-designated heritage asset which development, where relevant, should protect and enhance where possible.
GOS7: Access for walking, cycling and horse riding	SP6: Infrastructure & Connectivity	Policy SP6 says that the conditions for a healthy community will be provided by spaces and facilities that are accessible by walking and cycling. It also recognises the importance of protecting public rights of way (PROWs).	No. Policy GOS7 encourages the enhancement of the PROW network.

Chapter 5

Basic Condition (vi) – Conformity with EU Obligations

5.1 The Plan and the process under which it was produced conforms to the SEA Directive (EU 2001/42/EC) and the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (the Regulations).

5.2 In October 2025, Braintree District Council published a draft Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Screening Report, prepared by Place Services. This considered that the Gosfield Neighbourhood Plan could be screened out with respect to the requirements of Strategic Environmental Assessment in line with the requirements of Directive 2001/42/EC. This was then consulted on with the statutory bodies (the Environment Agency, Natural England and Historic England). The representations received from the statutory bodies agreed with this assessment and the final Screening Report was published alongside the Submission Version (Regulation 16) of the Gosfield Neighbourhood Plan.

Chapter 6

Basic Condition (vii) – Conformity with the Prescribed Conditions

6.1 Under Directive 92/43/EEC, also known as the Habitats Directive, it must be ascertained whether the draft Plan is likely to breach the requirements of Chapter 8 of Part 6 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017. Assessments under the regulations are known as Habitats Regulation Assessments ("HRA"). An appropriate assessment ("AA") is required only if the Plan is likely to have significant effects on a European protected species or site.

6.2 In October 2025, Braintree District Council published a draft Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) Screening Report, prepared by Place Services. This considered that an HRA was not required.

6.3 This was then consulted on with the statutory body (Natural England) which agreed with the assessment. The final Screening Report was published alongside the Submission Version (Regulation 16) of the Gosfield Neighbourhood Plan.

Chapter 7

Conclusion

7.1 The relevant Basic Conditions as set out in Schedule 4B to the TCPA 1990 are considered to be met by the Gosfield Neighbourhood Plan and all the policies therein. It is therefore respectfully suggested to the Examiner that the Gosfield Neighbourhood Plan complies with Paragraph 8(1)(a) of Schedule 4B of the Act.