

Report to the Cabinet

Report reference: C-031-2024/25

Date of meeting: 11 November 2024



**Epping Forest
District Council**

Portfolio: Shaping our district – Cllr. K Williamson

Subject: South Nazeing Concept Masterplan Framework (*Residential*)

**Responsible Officer: Rick Schunemann
rschunemann@eppingforestdc.gov.uk**

Democratic Services Officer: V Messenger (democraticservices@eppingforestdc.gov.uk)

Recommendations/Decisions Required:

(1) First Recommendation;

To note the process undertaken in the development of the South Nazeing Concept Framework Plans between 2023 and 2024, the engagement process with EFDC and ECC officers throughout the development of the masterplan and the informal consultation undertaken with the local community and district and parish councillors by the site promoters and design team between the 16.07.24 and the 31.07.24

(2) Second Recommendation;

To agree that the South Nazeing Concept Framework Plans be formally endorsed in order for it to be taken into account as an important material consideration in the determination of future planning applications, and to inform pre-application advice, assessing planning and any other development management and implementation related purposes relating to the site.

and

(3) Third Recommendation.

To agree that the Planning Services Director, in consultation with the Planning Portfolio Holder, be authorised to make minor amendments to the South Nazeing Concept Framework Plans, including any document accessibility requirements, prior to publication.

Executive Summary:

The development of the South Nazeing Concept Framework Plans (CFP) responds to the adopted Epping Forest District Local Plan 2011-2033 and Policy P10 'Nazeing'. The South Nazeing Concept Masterplan Area forms one of the allocated Strategic Masterplan sites where the need for an CMF is identified. Following the requirements in policies SP2 and P10, a strategic masterplan has been developed for the allocated strategic area.

Since 2018 Orchestra Land Ltd. and Boldshire Ltd (the land promoters) have been engaging with the South Nazeing Parish Council, and the local community in general.

Land ownership is split between 3 sub allocations, NAZE.R1, NAZE.R3 and NAZE.R4. The land promoters have been engaging with EFDC and ECC officers since 2018 in the development of the South Nazeing CFP in accordance with the Concept Framework Briefing Note, which was endorsed by the Council's Cabinet in 2018. The Briefing Note sets out the detailed approach to concept Framework development to support the requirement of Policy P10 which states:

"...Planning applications for sites NAZE.R1, NAZE.R3 and NAZE.R4 should be accompanied by and have regard to a Concept Framework Plan (as defined in Policy SP2) which has been endorsed by the Council. The endorsed Concept Framework Plan will be taken into account as an important material consideration in the determination of any planning applications..."

The Concept Framework Plans has been subject to extensive review and scrutiny by the applicant team engaged in drafting the CFP, the Council, as Local Planning Authority and Essex County Council as the highways authority. The proposals have also been reviewed by the Quality Review Panel in March 2024.

The informal public consultation on the Draft South Nazeing Concept Framework Plans took place on the 16th of July 2024 with the local community, district and parish councillors following a rigorous process of engagement with EFDC and ECC officers. The CFP has been reviewed and amended to incorporate and respond to, where necessary and appropriate, the consultation responses and engagement with officers. Key points raised during the consultation, and response to these, are outlines in the report below, and set out in more detail in the Consultation Report (Appendix B).

Following this review and amendments to the CFP, officers are of the view that meaningful public consultation has been undertaken, and the Concept Framework Plans can now be formally endorsed to support high quality development proposals to come forward.

Reasons for Proposed Decision:

The CFP have undergone extensive scrutiny and where necessary and appropriate changes have been undertaken in accordance with the Concept Framework process set out in the Council's Concept Framework Briefing Note which was endorsed by the Council's Cabinet in October 2018. This has included review of the emerging Concept Framework Plans by EFDC's Quality Review Panel (QRP) and following receipt of responses to the informal public consultation. The Concept Framework Plans are considered to be capable of endorsement as an important material consideration in the determination of any planning applications and will be taken into account as such. It will also be used to inform the provision of pre-application advice and other development related purposes.

To ensure that members are kept fully up to date on the progress of Masterplans and Concept Frameworks and other major proposals being promoted within the District.

To comply with the Council's general obligations as a local planning authority and the requirements set out in national planning guidance.

Other Options for Action:

To not endorse the South Nazeing Concept Framework Plans as an important material consideration in the determination of planning applications. This could result in a delay in delivering a high-quality neighbourhood and homes in the District.

Report:

1. The South Nazeing allocated Concept Framework Area is located south of Lower Nazeing village and it sits along the eastern edge of St Leonard rd. The site sits within Nazeing Parish and it is within the administrative area of EFDC.
2. The site is allocated as part of the adopted Epping Forest District Local Plan 2011-2033 and Policy P10 'Nazeing'.
3. The masterplan area is made up of three separate site allocations which reflect separate site ownerships as follows:
 - NAZE.R1 Land East of St Leonards Road,
 - NAZE.R3 Land to the rear of Pound Close
 - NAZE.R4 Land St Leonards Farm
4. The three sites are roughly the of a similar area and together add up to 3.33Ha out of which 2.98Ha are deemed to be developable. The allocation is for a minimum of 93 dwellings.
5. The CFP addresses surface water flooding, the preservation or enhancement of the special architectural or historic interest of the Grade II Listed Building Cutlands to the Northwest of the site, provide a pavement along St Leonards to increase pedestrian and cycling safety, provide a new crossing point to the north of the site,
6. To ensure a comprehensive and cohesive approach is taken to the planning and delivery of development and infrastructure on site, the Local Plan requires a Concept Framework Plan to be produced for the Soth Nazeing site. The Strategic Concept Framework Briefing Note was agreed by the Council's Cabinet in October 2018. This document sets out the requirement for the endorsement of Concept Frameworks as allocated in the Adopted Local Plan. This requirement is set out in Policy SP2 Place Shaping and in the place specific policy relating to South Nazeing (Policy P10). The Concept Framework Plan for South Nazeing needs to adhere to the place-shaping and development principles set out under Policy SP2 (place-shaping) and the site-specific considerations identified.

Concept Framework Plan Development and Engagement process

7. In accordance with best practice the Local Plan contains a requirement that Concept Framework Plan for South Nazeing allocation area is produced. This is in order to ensure that proposed development on the site is brought forward in a comprehensive and co-ordinated manner in order to achieve high quality and sustainable development which incorporates the place making principles of the Local Plan. This includes meeting the Council's expectations in terms of the quality, scale and nature of development to be delivered, providing sustainable transport opportunities and other supporting infrastructure and services, responding to the environmental context, and responding appropriately to the outputs from community engagement.
8. The preparation of the Concept Framework Plan was supported by a wide range of technical work including, environmental issues, biodiversity, transport, heritage, sustainability considerations and place-making.

9. The site promoters for South Nazeing, have been engaging with EFDC and ECC officers since 2023 in the development of the South Nazeing CFP following the Concept Framework Briefing Note, which was agreed by the Council's Cabinet in 2018. This document sets out the requirement for the endorsement of Concept Framework Plans as allocated in the EFDC Adopted Local Plan
10. The Concept Framework Plan has been subject to extensive review and scrutiny by the applicant's professional team engaged in drafting the CPF, the Council, as Local Planning Authority, Essex County Council and other statutory consultees including The QRP Panel.
11. The South Nazeing site promoter team have been engaging with the local community of Lower Nazeing since 2023. A consultation report which notes this background can be found at Appendix B.
12. During 2023-2024 several meetings and workshops (as described in the endorsed Concept Framework Plan Briefing Note 2018) have been held between key stakeholders including EFDC, the main site promoters and ECC.
13. Between 2023 and 2024 the site promoters and officers from EFDC and ECC took part in the following Topic Based Meetings:
 - 25.10.23 – Design Workshop 1 where the following topics were discussed:
 - i. Site constraints and opportunities;
 - ii. Highway safety;
 - iii. Relationship between the Site and South Nazeing;
 - iv. Biodiversity net gain potential;
 - v. SuDS approach;
 - vi. Pedestrian access and connectivity on/off site;
 - vii. Density; and
 - viii. Planning Application Programme.
 - 05.12.23 - Design Workshop 2 where the following topics were discussed:
 - i. Access and traffic calming measures;
 - ii. Landscape and urban character areas;
 - iii. Density;
 - iv. Parking solutions;
 - v. Design vision and principles;
 - vi. Sustainability, Essex net zero policy;
 - vii. PPA; and
 - viii. Planning Application Programme.
 - 15.03.24 – QRP Review
 - 01.05.24 – Post QRP feedback session and parking strategy
 - 03.07.24 - Design Workshop 3 where the following topics were discussed:
 - i. Public Consultation approach and engagement with
 - ii. Nazeing Parish Council;
 - iii. ECC's Highways response and comments raised by the
 - iv. Parish Council relating to pedestrian crossing
 - v. provision; and
 - vi. Revised masterplan presentation and feedback from
 - vii. EFDC officers – overall positive direction with minor
 - viii. recommendations made in relation to rear gardens

ix. and reducing the potential for ad hoc parking.

- 16.07.24 – District and Parish Councillors Briefing where the following topics were discussed:
 - i. Parking provision/ strategy;
 - ii. Housing provision/ affordable housing levels;
 - iii. Community infrastructure/ S106 obligations;
 - iv. Traffic calming measures; and
 - v. Sustainability, e.g. cycle parking provision/solar
 - vi. panels.

- 16.07.24 – Informal Public Consultation Event where the following topics were presented to the community:
 - i. Traffic calming measures;
 - ii. Flood risk and drainage (including off-site);
 - iii. Community infrastructure/ S106 obligations;
 - iv. Pedestrian accessibility and safety; and
 - v. Affordable housing provision.

- July 2024 – Gathering Public feedback on Concept Framework Plan on the following topics:
 - i. Principle of residential development;
 - ii. Masterplan layout and design; and
 - iii. Issues in the community (such as flooding, school
 - iv. place capacity and GP wait times etc.)

14. Due to the reduced requirements for a CPF (compared to an SMF) the project has been reviewed by the QRP panel once. The review took place in March 2024, when the officer team concluded the Concept Framework Plan was developed enough to receive meaningful actionable feedback.
15. Following the QRP review the officer team, and the promoter team met to discuss feedback and agree changes to be made to the CPF.
16. The Concept Framework Plan has been developed in a comprehensive manner and it includes the whole allocation area spanning across different land ownerships. The site promoters and design team have provided the council with satisfactory options to ensure that the masterplan can be delivered around this landholding.

17. Concept Framework Plan

Specific Site requirements

Policy P10 specifically identifies the following requirements for the masterplan:

Flood Risk

A. Except for essential infrastructure and water compatible developments, no built development on residential allocations will be permitted on land within Flood Zones 2 and 3 as shown on the Council's latest Strategic Flood Risk Assessment maps, including the appropriate allowance for climate change.

Ecology

B. Development of the Area may affect a Protected Species (Great Crested Newts) population. Development proposals should demonstrate that they have assessed the impacts of the proposal on the Great Crested Newts, informed by a full survey and site assessment. Development proposals should demonstrate that they have sought to avoid any adverse impact on the Great Crested Newts or their habitat. Where adverse impacts of development proposals on Great Crested Newts are unavoidable, they should be addressed in accordance with the requirements of Policy DM1.

Design

C. The Concept Framework Plan should address the place shaping issues identified in Policy SP2 and the following requirements:

(i) the mix of homes to be provided including tenures, types and sizes;

(ii) the principles of the design including key design features, integration of the development into the wider landscape and materials palette;

(iii) the approach to amenity/greenspace provision and landscaping;

(iv) the approach to minimising the impact on the adjacent and nearby heritage assets;

(v) the Movement Strategy for vehicles, pedestrians and cyclists. This should include connections within and between the sites as well as linkages with the wider area; and

(vi) the on-site and off-site infrastructure required to support the development proposals and how this will be provided ahead of or in tandem with the development it supports.

D. The Concept Framework Plan and development proposals for the sites located within the Concept Framework Plan Area should be considered and informed by the Quality Review Panel.

Heritage

E. Development of the Area, particularly to the North, may impact upon the setting of the Grade II listed Cutlands, located to the North West of the site. Proposals that may affect the setting of this heritage asset should preserve or wherever possible, enhance the asset's significance, having regard to its special architectural or historic interest, character, appearance and the contribution made by its setting.

On-site Constraints

F. The number of vehicular access points onto St Leonards Road should be minimised. A coordinated approach to vehicular access onto St Leonards Road should be adopted across the Concept Framework Plan Area. The Concept Framework Plan should also demonstrate how vehicular, cyclist and pedestrian connectivity and safety will be maximised across and between the three site allocations. This includes exploring opportunities for safe and convenient cycling and pedestrian routes to access Nazeing Primary School from the South.

G. The Concept Framework Plan Area includes existing Public Rights of Way, which cross NAZE.R1 East to West and NAZE.R3 North to South. They connect St Leonards Road with Perry Hill, Old House Lane and Laundry Lane. These connections should be retained as part of the development and should be integrated within the development layout. Where possible, development proposals should seek to improve connectivity with the wider network, and where appropriate, enhance the Public Right of Way to meet modern requirements in terms of safety, directness, attractiveness and convenience, having regard to the needs of a wide range of users.

Green Belt Boundary

H. As part of the development proposals, a new defensible boundary to the Green Belt will need to be established along the Southern and part of the Eastern edge of the Concept Framework Plan Area.

18. The CFP proposed to be endorsed is enclosed at Appendix A and is commented upon as follows:

Placemaking

19. The CFP has been developed observing EFDC's Adopted Local Plan Policy SP2 Place Shaping, where emphasis has been given to ensure generous, well connected and biodiverse rich green space provision with a sense of place/ identity. The CFP will be well connected through a hierarchy of streets and walking paths along rich green and blue infrastructure features.

Green Infrastructure

20. The South Nazeing CFP is a landscape-led development that will provide Blue and Green Infrastructure features that will enhance biodiversity and the natural environment following EFDC's Adopted Local Plan Policies SP2, SP5 and SP6. The CFP will also provide residents with extensive green spaces and dedicated areas for play.

Sustainability

21. The South Nazeing CFP will be a sustainably connected to Lower Nazeing and through existing and improved PROWs to the wider surrounding landscape of Nazeing. The development of the masterplan has observed the following documents: EFDC Sustainability Guide and Checklist, EFDC Green Infrastructure Strategy.
22. Orientation and form function has also been considered at the masterplanning level in relation to solar gain, walkability, and densities, which all attribute to holistic sustainable development.

Housing Numbers and Tenure

23. The masterplan has a capacity for a minimum of 93 dwellings in line with the EFDC Adopted Local Plan. While the masterplan allows the potential for increases in this number to be explored, any increase in the site capacity at the South Nazeing site will need to be fully assessed in terms of traffic impacts and by reference to the Habitat Assessment Regulations with regards to the potential impact on air quality Epping Forest SAC.
24. Housing tenure is stated as being targeted to be in accordance with the EFDC Adopted Local Plan with a position of 40% affordable housing sought with the right type of housing to assist the delivery of the Council Social Housing List.

Conclusion

25. The development of the South Nazeing Concept Framework Plan has been progressed in consultation with officers from EFDC and ECC. Officers are confident that at this stage of the Masterplanning process the Concept Framework Plan fulfils the intentions of the EFDC Adopted Local Plan and Concept Framework Briefing Note (2018) in enabling meaningful public consultation, and would lead to high quality development, supporting the following EFDC Adopted Local Plan strategic policies:

- Policy SP1 – Spatial Development Strategy 2011-2033

- Policy SP2 – Place Shaping
- Policy SP6 – The Natural Environment, Landscape Character and Green and Blue Infrastructure
- Policy H1 – Housing Mix and Accommodation Types
- Policy H2 – Affordable Homes
- Policy P10 – Nazeing

26. Further guidance documents observed:

- EFDC Green Infrastructure Strategy
- EFDC Statement of Community Involvement
- EFDC Endorsed Strategic Masterplanning Briefing Note
- EFDC Infrastructure Delivery Plan

Scrutiny Comments

Quality Review Panel 2024

27. The Concept Framework Plans was reviewed by the Quality Review Panel (QRP), a key aspect of quality assurance and independent critical friend advice, from an expert panel of built environment practitioners.

28. Summary of comments from the QRP March 2024:

- Calls for a comprehensive approach that transcends ownership boundaries and integrates the development with the existing settlement.
- The parking provision should reflect the reality of the site's accessibility, and it may be better to provide more spaces and ensure they are well integrated than to run the risk of ad-hoc parking compromising the landscape and public realm.
- Stresses the need for seamless pedestrian and cycle connections between the new and old areas.
- The project team should also consider orientating some of the housing to face St Leonard's Road. Front doors with direct access paths would help to activate both the existing road and the new route more than an inward-facing layout.
- Encourages exploration of diverse housing typologies and uses to create a vibrant community.
- Recommends measures to ensure the new settlement feels attractive to residents.
- Suggests identifying key nodes like the brook and Cutlands to serve as focal points for the combined settlement.
- Recommends a detailed open space strategy that considers function, character, and biodiversity enhancement.
- Encourages the use of sustainability and energy modelling to inform layout and building design.

Engagement Findings and Summary

29. The South Nazeing CFP team carried out a double engagement session on the 16th of July where District and Parish Councillors were briefed. The main discussion points were the

following:

- Balanced parking provision needs to be achieved
- Housing numbers and typologies (typologies to be established at reserved matters application)
- Stewardship – ensure landscape is cared for and ensure new community is integrated with the local community and village
- Affordable housing to be 40% of provision
- Concern of pressure on local school. Mention of S106 obligations for future school places if needed. As well as contributions for the community hall
- Traffic calming measures along St Leonards Rd
- Cycle storage, solar panels and sustainable materials
- General issues with local infrastructure such as low water pressure in the village, doctors and school places.

30. The second engagement session of the day was open to the local community where the following topics were discussed:

- Flood risk and drainage, linked to recent, localised flooding off-site.
- Traffic along St. Leonards Road, with overall support for traffic calming measures
- Pedestrian safety along St. Leonards Road.
- Infrastructure capacity (e.g. of the school, local doctors/ dentists etc.)
- Visibility from Tatsfield Ave.
- Affordable housing provision and the breakdown (e.g. social housing etc.).
- Sustainable/Active Travel Strategy

31. Wider feedback gathering from local communities

- The project team prepared a feedback form¹, ahead of the consultation event, which sought to understand local views on the proposed CFP and its draft Illustrative Masterplan. Feedback forms could either be completed on the day of the consultation event, or by 31st July 2024. The feedback form was also made available to download from the Arrow Planning website where a copy of the exhibition boards were also available to download as a PDF.
- Arrow Planning received a total of 43 completed feedback forms. The general feedback received was, overall, negative, with many respondents objecting to the delivery of the Site for housing. Several residents incorrectly believed the Site to be located within the Green Belt still.

Detailed feedback from the feedback from can be found in the consultation report in Appedix B

Resource Implications:

The successful delivery of the strategic sites within Epping Forest District will require considerable commitment of officer time from EFDC. The noting of the contents of this report do not give rise to additional resource implications.

Legal and Governance Implications:

The work on Strategic Masterplans has been developed in accordance with Government policy (NPPF and NPPG) and Planning Law

Safer, Cleaner and Greener Implications:

The Local Plan contains a policy designed to promote the notion of making good places to live, work and visit. This will include safer by design principles, sustainable development, the provision of alternatives to the car, energy efficiency and environmental considerations as well as sustainable drainage systems and quality green infrastructure. Strategic Masterplans and Concept Framework Plans will be the mechanism for these place-making measures to be delivered in identified Masterplan Areas.

Background Papers:

Cabinet Report – 11th November 2024

Appendix A: Final Draft South Nazeing Strategic Masterplan Framework

Appendix B: Consultation Report

Risk Management:

If the Council was not to take a pro-active stance on the delivery of Masterplans and major applications arising from the Local Plan, there is a real risk of or development occurring of a type that does not extract maximum value for the provision of social infrastructure and poor-quality development may occur.

Equality:

An Equality Impact Assessment was carried out and there was no significant impact.

(Please amend as required - Note the EIA must be carried out and retained but is not required to be submitted)