

Danbury Neighbourhood Plan

Highway Access Technical Note

Danbury Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group

August 2021

Introduction

This report has been prepared to support the development of the Danbury Neighbourhood Plan.

Chelmsford City Council's Local Plan (adopted May 2020) allocates 100 new homes in Danbury, under Strategic Growth Site Policy 13. The allocation is for around 100 new homes to be accommodated within or adjoining the Defined Settlement Boundary. Sites are to be identified and consulted upon through the emerging Danbury Neighbourhood Plan.

Danbury is classed as a Key Service Settlement with a good range of local services and facilities. The main road through the village is the A414 (Maldon Road), a busy road connecting Chelmsford with settlements to the east. It is recognised that future development in Danbury is restricted by significant constraints including landscape, ecology and highway capacity.

Site selection

Danbury Parish Council conducted a 'call for sites' to identify potential development sites, in addition to sites submitted to CCC's Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment. Of a total of 21 sites considered, 9 were discounted as not being within or adjacent to the Defined Settlement Boundary. Two have been discounted for other reasons. The remainder are indicated on the Map on Page 2.

A combination of public consultation responses and other evidence, such as landscape impact, led the Parish Council to consider distributing homes across a number of sites up to a maximum of 30 per site.

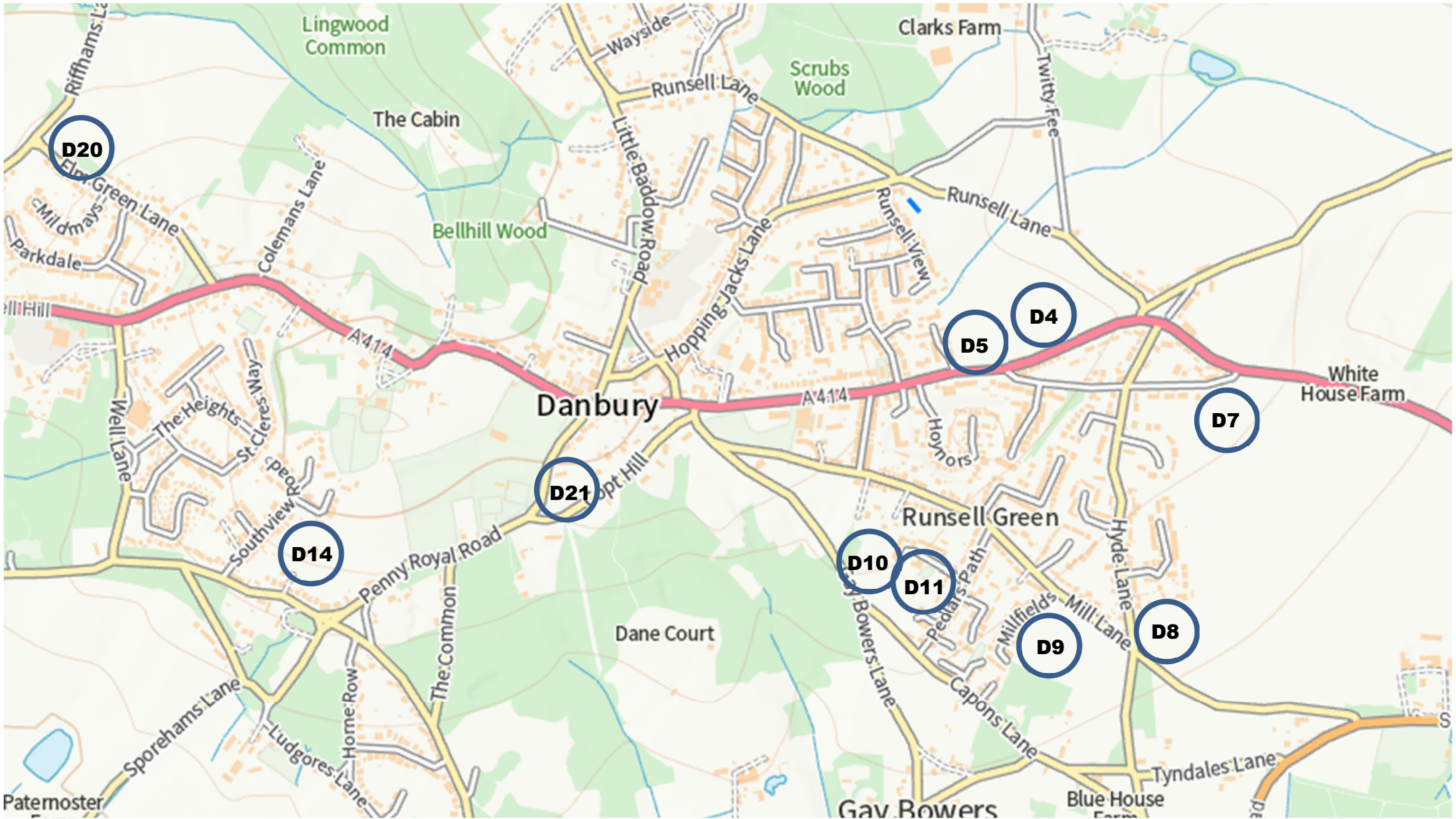
Essex Highways provided an initial assessment of the 10 remaining submitted sites in January 2020 on that basis, and following further investigations and site visits, updated that advice in March 2020. Further advice relating to Sites D9 and D20 was added in July 2021.

The advice is summarised in the tables below, using the following rating:

Red – unsuitable

Amber – potentially suitable with mitigation

Green - suitable



D4 – Land off Runsell Lane				
Possible Site Access/Road	Site Area (ha)	Road Speed (mph)	Highways Initial advice (Jan 2020)	Highways revised advice (Mar 2020)
Runsell Lane/A414 Maldon Road	6.65	60/40	Access possible from southern end of Runsell Lane with 30 metre distance from existing junctions. Possible access via A414 Maldon Road.	Previous planning application refers - 17/01902/OUT: Shows provision of a new access into the site with right turn lane on the A414 Maldon Road as shown in principle on drawing number: 17-T098 03 C. Such access should be provided with 2.4m x 120m clear to ground visibility splays, 5.5m minimum carriageway access and 2x 2 metre footways. (Application refused on other grounds). Should an access be provided from Runsell Lane this would require carriageway widening however this would be on the boundary of the site to the south west.

D5 – Sandpit Field, East of Littlefields				
Possible Site Access/Road	Site Area (ha)	Road Speed (mph)	Highways Initial advice (Jan 2020)	Highways revised advice (Mar 2020)
A414 Maldon Road/Littlefields	2.27	40/30	Access not acceptable via Littlefields. Possible access via A414 Maldon Road. Access possibly achievable via internal access on adjacent site by agreement with adjacent landowner.	Following a further site visit the access has been reassessed for the proposed 10 Alms houses. Littlefields is lightly trafficked and can be considered a minor access road. If the proposed site access can be achieved allowing for a minimum 20 metre distance from the A414 main distributor road if appropriate visibility splays can be achieved based on Manual for Streets guidance, then it is likely to be acceptable for this reduced level of development.

				An access from Littlefields would be preferable to an access from A414 which, although is likely to be achievable within the 30mph speed limit extent, would create an additional junction on the main road.
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D7 – Land East of Barley Mead, Hyde Lane				
Possible Site Access/Road	Site Area (ha)	Road Speed (mph)	Highways Initial advice (Jan 2020)	Highways revised advice (Mar 2020)
A414 Maldon Road	2.5	40/30	No access via Cherry Garden Lane. To gain access via A414 Maldon road would require reconfiguration of existing layout with possible realignment of Cherry Garden Lane into the site. Intensification of this junction would not be possible due to lack of visibility from current location and 60mph to the east. New access from site onto the A414 not possible with current site boundaries as would require 3rd party land. Should this adjacent land belong to the same landowner this could be reconsidered as long as 30 metre distance from the existing junction and if 125 metre visibility splay can be met.	Additional documentation has been provided showing provision of a new junction for site D7 together with an associated diversion of Cherry Garden Lane east into a proposed access road. This indicates that this access would be achievable in principle, subject to detailed design including provision of bus stops and associated crossing points on the A414. This access could in principle serve D07 and D08 should a suitable link between sites be agreed and would need to be without ransom for either site. This is a sustainable location close to bus stops and footways.

D8 – Land South of Barley Mead, Hyde Lane				
Possible Site Access/Road	Site Area (ha)	Road Speed (mph)	Highways Initial advice (Jan 2020)	Highways revised advice (Mar 2020)
<p>Hyde Lane/Mill Lane</p> <p>Via D7 to A414</p>	2.27	30/60	<p>No access acceptable off Hyde Lane North or Mill Lane east to site. Widening would not be appropriate and would affect the character of these rural lanes and lead to intensification.</p>	<p>No access is acceptable off Hyde Lane North or Mill Lane east to site. Widening would not be appropriate and would affect the character of these rural lanes and lead to intensification. Access to the site would be from predominantly single track roads, with few, if any formal passing places. Intensification of use of these unsuitable routes would be of concern in terms of both safety and capacity. The proposal is therefore not likely to be acceptable to the highway authority unless suitable mitigation can be provided in conjunction with the development, which is unlikely to be achievable in this case. Access via site D7 could be safeguarded as Hyde Lane is not suitable for access to this site.</p>

D9 – Land at Mill Lane (East of Millfields)				
Possible Site Access/Road	Site Area (ha)	Road Speed (mph)	Highways Initial advice (Jan 2020)	Highways revised advice (Mar 2020 & July 2021)
Mill Lane/Millfields	3.35	30/30	<p>Wider access to site is restricted by narrow lanes to the west via Mill Lane and east via Hyde Lane no access to the site would be acceptable at these points. These are single lane rural roads with limited passing places not suited to increase in traffic volumes. Access to the site could possibly be achieved via Millfields at the north east of the site or possibly via Millfields at the end of the current cul-de-sac dependant on land ownership. Access could possibly be achieved from Mill Lane at the north western end but would need to be 30 metres from access to Millfields. Current Road width at this point is 4.4 metres so this would need to be widened on the site side to a minimum of 5.5 metres with a 2 metre footway. South-eastern end of Mill Lane and Hyde lane are too narrow so not suitable for access. Widening would not be appropriate and would affect the character of these rural lanes.</p>	<p>March 2020 - Whilst there are possible points of access to the site as with D8 the surrounding highways network which would need to be utilised to access the site would be a cause for concern in terms of both safety and capacity. The Highway Authority would not support an application for dwellings with access from Mill Lane or Millfields. The capacity of the wider local highway network (Hyde Lane, Mill Lane, The Avenue) would indicate that this site is not suitable.</p> <p>July 2021 - Some concerns remain about the implication of 30 dwellings in Mill Lane. However, following submission of further documentation, access from Millfields to encourage vehicular traffic to turn left out of the site and a package of mitigation measures should be provided in association with any development.</p> <p>This would be on the basis of an absolute maximum of 30 dwellings, with a mitigation package of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Access from Millfields - Footway enhancements as identified in promoter's technical note plus further provision of footway widening in Mill Lane where it can be achieved within the existing highway limits. - Possible contribution to CCC towards maintenance of vegetation to increase available footway widths. - Enhancement/creation of passing places (or widening) in Mill Lane south of Millfields

				and in Hyde Lane south, details to be agreed at application stage. - Traffic management measures to discourage vehicular traffic from using Mill Lane north-west which is a protected lane, and Hyde Lane/Mill Lane south.
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D10 – Field South of Jubilee Rise				
Possible Site Access/Road	Site Area (ha)	Road Speed (mph)	Highways Initial advice (Jan 2020)	Highways revised advice (Mar 2020)
Jubilee Rise/Capons Lane	1.6	30/60	No access acceptable off Capons Lane or Gay Bowers (both designated as Protected Lanes in CCC Local Plan) to site. Widening would not be appropriate and would affect the character of these rural lanes and lead to intensification. Access possible via Jubilee rise at the end of the cul-de-sac dependent on Highway Boundaries and land ownership. Possible access to site via site D11 Play area, Jubilee rise	Whilst access may be achievable via Jubilee Rise with a resolution of ownership to access the site, access from the wider local highway network would be a cause for concern. Access to the site would be from predominantly single track roads, with few, if any formal passing places. Intensification of use of these unsuitable routes, via Capons Lane, Gay Bowers, Mill Lane or Hyde Lane would be of concern in terms of both safety and capacity. Access to D10 is not suitable from Jubilee Rise.

D11 – Play Area, Jubilee Rise				
Possible Site Access/Road	Site Area (ha)	Road Speed (mph)	Highways Initial advice (Jan 2020)	Highways revised advice (Mar 2020)
Jubilee Rise	0.05	30	Direct access off Jubilee Rise	This would be suitable for a small development of 1 to 2 dwellings with access from Jubilee Rise, which would have a negligible impact on the local highways if access could be achieved. It would, however, result in the loss of an existing area of car parking in order to provide access to the site. Access would also be required to be designed and constructed in accordance to the current standards. The electricity sub-station would have to be considered when looking at achievable visibility from the site entrance.

D14 – Danecroft, Woodhill Road				
Possible Site Access/Road	Site Area (ha)	Road Speed (mph)	Highways Initial advice (Jan 2020)	Highways revised advice (Mar 2020)
Woodhill Road	1	40	Visibility splay of 125 metres to meet DMRB requirements for 40mph speed cannot be achieved at this site. The reduced requirement of 2.4m x 43m is questionable in both directions. Access road width maximum of 6.3m.	The provision of further documentation for this site indicates that the property Lyndhurst on Woodhill Road and adjacent to the proposed access road is under the ownership of the promoter. Plans indicate that parking for this property will be moved to the rear and the frontage used to achieve appropriate junction geometries and visibility splay. Speed surveys have been carried out and indicate visibility appropriate for the speed of vehicles can be achieved from the access. Access is likely to be achievable at this location, subject to detailed design.

				The proposed access road to the development would not be adopted as public highway and would have to remain as a private road.
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D20 – Land at Elm Green Lane/Riffhams Lane				
Possible Site Access/Road	Site Area (ha)	Road Speed (mph)	Highways Initial advice (Jan 2020)	Highways revised advice (Mar 2020 & July 2021)
Elm Green Lane/Riffhams Lane	20	30/60	Both Elm Green Lane, and Riffhams Lane (designated as a Protected Lane in CCC Local Plan) are not acceptable roads for access as both are single lane reduced width. Any access/development would affect the character of the lane.	<p>March 2020 - Access to the site would be from predominantly single track roads, with few, if any formal passing places. Intensification of use of these unsuitable routes would be of concern in terms of both safety and capacity. Widening would not be appropriate and would affect the character of these rural lanes and lead to intensification.</p> <p>This reduced size allocation (5/6 houses) could be suitable for a small number of dwellings with direct frontage access in keeping with the existing properties on Elm Green Lane. This is likely, however, to result in a loss of landscaping along the site frontage and is also likely to require culverting of the ditch.</p> <p>July 2021 – a further submission has shown that frontage access is not achievable because of the impact on TPO trees. Access, serving a maximum of 5 dwellings should therefore be from a private drive, located as far to the east as possible to discourage the use of Riffhams Lane. Improvements to connectivity for pedestrians to the village centre will also be</p>

				required where this can be achieved within the existing highway.
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D21 – Land at Mayes Lane/Copt Hill				
Possible Site Access/Road	Site Area (ha)	Road Speed (mph)	Highways Initial advice (Jan 2020)	Highways revised advice (Mar 2020)
Mayes Lane/Copt Hill	0.9	30/30	2.4m x 43m is questionable whether this can be achieved on Mayes Lane in both directions. Speed survey assessment particularly southbound due to gradient would be required. Copt Hill not acceptable road for access, single lane reduced width. Any access/development would affect the character of the lane.	If access is to be achieved at this location, even for one or two additional dwellings, it would be required to be designed and constructed in accordance with the current standards. This may involve the access being located further to the south on Mayes Lane to achieve visibility splays. The current access location is not suitable for intensification of use even for one or two dwellings because the required visibility cannot be achieved at this location. The gradient, which is significant, would also need to be considered in assessing the suitability of the access.