MALDON DISTRICT
Approved
Local Development Plan
2014 – 2029

July 2017
4.33 KEY EVIDENCE BASE DOCUMENTS:

- Heart of Essex Economic Futures (NLP, 2012) (EB060)
- Living Working Countryside: The Taylor Review of Rural Economy and Affordable Housing
- Maldon District Retail Monitoring Survey (MDC, 2012) (EB049)
- North Essex Authorities Retail Study (GVA Grimley, 2006) (EB012a and b)
- North Essex Retail Study, Retail Capacity Update (GVA Grimley, 2009) (EB012c)
- Rural Facilities Survey (MDC, 2011) (EB038)
- Maldon Retail Study (WYG, 2015)

Policy E4 Agricultural and Rural Diversification

Context

4.34 The diversification of agricultural land and buildings to alternative activities is vital to the viability of many farm enterprises. The Council recognises that the District’s economic functions are not only based on formally allocated employment sites but also through employment activities that occur on farm conversions and similar rural sites which provide relatively lower cost accommodation and encourage local entrepreneurial activity.

4.35 The Council recognises the importance of encouraging economic growth in rural areas in order to create jobs and prosperity. Therefore, the Council will seek to promote the development and diversification of agricultural and other land-based rural business where appropriate.
Policy E4
Agricultural and Rural Diversification

The Council will support the development of new buildings or activities associated with agriculture and other land-based rural businesses where:

1) There is a justifiable and functional need for the building/activity;
2) The function of the proposed building/activity is directly linked, and ancillary to, the existing use; and
3) The building/activity could not reasonably be located in existing towns, villages or allocated employment areas.

The Council will support the change of use of existing rural buildings to other employment generation uses if it can be demonstrated that:

a) There is a justifiable and functional need for the proposal;
b) It will contribute to the viability of the agricultural business as a whole;
c) Any development respects the building’s historic or architectural significance;
d) Any development will not negatively impact upon wildlife and the natural environment;
e) No storage of raw materials or finished goods is to take place outside the building if it would be detrimental to the visual amenity of the area; and
f) The use of the building would not lead to dispersal of activity on such a scale as to prejudice the vitality and viability of existing businesses in nearby towns and villages.

Policy Clarification

4.36 Agricultural and rural diversification relates to the change of farm resources, such as land and buildings, into alternative uses. There is a wide range of potential alternative uses which may be appropriate for the diversification of agricultural land and buildings in the District. The appropriateness of the proposed use will be considered by the Council in relation to local needs and the impact of the proposal on the site and the surrounding area.

4.37 KEY EVIDENCE BASE DOCUMENTS:

- Heart of Essex Economic Futures (NLP, 2012) (EB060)
- Employment Land Review (RTP, 2009) (EB035a and b and EB202a and b)
- The Taylor Review of Rural Economy and Affordable Housing (DCLG, 2009)
- Maldon Historic Barns Project (ECC, 2009) (EB019)