

# How would YOU plan Harlow's future?

## Have your say!

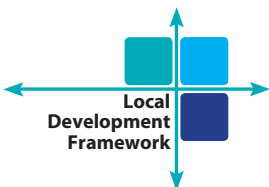


## Core Strategy Issues and Options Consultation **Summary Leaflet**

Consultation ends 5pm  
on Friday 28 January 2011

[www.harlow.gov.uk/issuesandoptions](http://www.harlow.gov.uk/issuesandoptions)

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**Harlow**  
Council  
*Working together for Harlow*

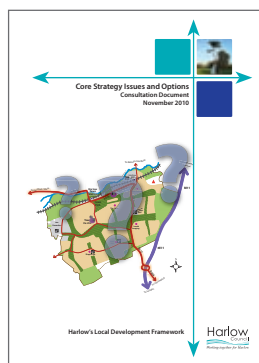
## What is the Core Strategy?

Harlow Council is preparing a new plan for Harlow called the Local Development Framework (LDF). The Core Strategy will be the main planning document in Harlow's emerging LDF which will guide development in the district to 2026 and beyond.

The Core Strategy will set out the location of:

- New housing
- Employment areas
- Shops
- Schools
- Community and leisure facilities
- Green spaces
- Transport improvements

**The Council is now consulting on the first stage of Harlow's Core Strategy called "Issues and Options".** This sets out the key issues that need addressing in Harlow and proposes possible options for planning the town's future.



This summary leaflet provides a brief outline of the 'Issues and Options' consultation document. The full version of the consultation document and questionnaire can be viewed online at [www.harlow.gov.uk/issuesandoptions](http://www.harlow.gov.uk/issuesandoptions)

## Give your views on how Harlow should develop!

The Government has stated its intention to formally abolish the Regional Plan which set out the development strategy and requirements for Harlow. This is called the East of England Plan. This will mean decision-making powers in planning and housing will be returned to local authorities and Harlow will be able to determine how Harlow should change in the future.

**This consultation is your opportunity to have your say on this first stage of preparing and developing the future plan for Harlow.**

## The Vision for Harlow

The Core Strategy will be based on the vision and priorities in the Community Strategy, the Harlow 2020 Vision. The 2020 Vision sets the overall vision for the district which is as follows:

**"A clean, safe, sustainable and healthy town with good educational prospects for its citizens, a variety of homes and jobs to meet local needs, and a range of sporting, leisure and cultural opportunities contributing to a higher quality of life."**

The Core Strategy provides the "spatial planning framework" (the location for new development) to put this vision into practice. This will be achieved by developing key themes and strategic objectives that will help to address the issues that have been identified so far affecting Harlow.

Five core themes have been set out to help develop the new plan:

- **Placeshaping** - Enhancing the quality of the built and natural environment
- **Housing** - Delivering housing at the right scale, of the right type and in the right location to meet the needs of the whole community
- **Prosperity** - Securing economic growth and regeneration in order to improve employment and educational opportunities in the town and reflect its strategic role
- **Infrastructure** - Ensuring growth and regeneration is supported by appropriate levels of infrastructure provision
- **Lifestyles** - Meeting the leisure, recreational and cultural requirements of the community in a sustainable manner

26 strategic objectives have also been identified which will form the basis of the policies and proposals to deliver the vision for Harlow.

**Your comments on the vision, themes and strategic objectives are needed as they will be the basis of Harlow's Core Strategy.**

*See Part 4 of the full consultation document for more details.*

## What are the Issues?

In each theme there are a number of common issues affecting Harlow. These issues have been identified through informal consultations and evidence that has been gathered over the past couple of years. The issues you consider are important will be taken forward into the Core Strategy.

### Placeshaping

- The quality of green spaces should be maintained and protected
- The New Town principles are important
- High quality sustainable architecture and design should be promoted
- Brownfield land should be developed before Greenfield
- The Green Wedges should be strengthened in order to improve aesthetic appeal, sense of place and links to the countryside



### Housing

- A range of house types and tenures is required to meet the needs of all the community
- Some housing densities are too high
- Extra care housing is needed
- About 35% of new dwellings should be affordable



### Prosperity

- The town centre should be more attractive and vibrant
- Education, training and skills base needs to be improved in the town
- The choice of shops in the town and neighbourhood centres needs to be improved
- Harlow has below average provision of convenience and service units and high quality retailers compared with competing centres



### Infrastructure

- Road and other infrastructure must be provided to accommodate growth
- Traffic congestion in the town needs to be addressed
- Cycleway and footpath connections in the town need to be improved
- Children's centres and youth facilities will be needed to support the new communities



### Lifestyles

- Recreational facilities should be protected and enhanced
- Crime, safety and anti-social behaviour in the town should be addressed
- Policies should raise the levels of aspiration within the town
- Quality green spaces for public health and leisure use should be protected and maintained
- Theatre provision for Harlow and the wider area should be improved
- The River Stort and its floodplain should be promoted as areas for recreational use



**Do you think all the issues have been identified? Or are there any other issues that you think should be addressed by the Core Strategy?**

*You can get more details about the issues in Part 2 of the full consultation document.*

## What are the Options?

### Guiding future development

To meet Harlow's current and future needs, the town needs to regenerate. To do this requires new housing and economic growth, alongside associated infrastructure improvements.

But how much new development is required, and what principles should guide growth?

### The level of growth

The Core Strategy will need to ensure that the issues and future development needs of the community are met.

The evidence that supported the East of England Plan shows that the provision of 16,000 new homes and approximately 8,000 jobs in the Harlow area would help to address Harlow's issues by stimulating the regeneration and renewal of the town.

The Council believes that this level of growth will not only meet the needs of the existing community but also help address the other issues affecting Harlow's future prosperity.

**Do you agree that the community needs should be met and the regeneration of Harlow secured through this scale of growth?**

*See Part 3 of the consultation document for more information.*



Regeneration at Clifton Hatch



### What principles should guide growth?

The Council believes that new development should support regeneration and be sustainable. This will ensure that the new plan delivers the Community Strategy vision and strategic objectives for Harlow.

In order to achieve this, the opportunities for development within the urban area boundary will be examined before land in other locations such as the Green Belt. This will ensure that there are close links between where people live, work and spend their leisure time and the services they require.

Options that could achieve new development are set out below:

- Increasing the density of development at appropriate locations within the urban area of Harlow
- Examining the opportunities for development on undeveloped land
- Examining the development potential on unused or underused open spaces
- Appraising the function and effectiveness of Harlow's Green Wedges to ensure they meet current expectations

If the additional development needed to meet the community's future needs cannot be achieved through these options, the role and location of urban extensions will be considered.

Additional issues that also need considering are:

- The ability of existing employment sites to meet current and future employment needs
- The role and function of the town's shopping centres (from the Town Centre down to Hatches)

**What do you think about the suggested principles and options for directing regeneration and growth?**

*These issues are covered in detail in Part 5 of the full consultation document.*



## Consultant's suggested growth options

A level of growth of 16,000 new homes was proposed in the East of England Plan to secure the regeneration of the town. An independent assessment was undertaken to review possible growth options proposing 5,000 in the built up area of the town and 11,000 in other locations.

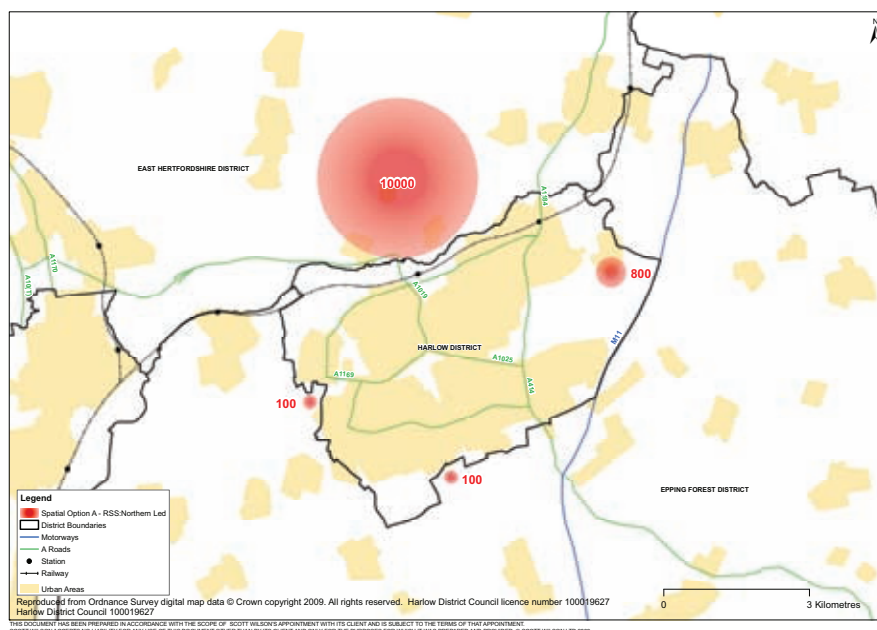
Although the East of England Plan is likely to be withdrawn, the Council believes the assessment remains relevant for examining a range of possible options for growth that may be required around Harlow. **View the report: [www.harlow.gov.uk/ldf](http://www.harlow.gov.uk/ldf) (following the link to 'LDF Evidence Base')**

### Option A - Regional Spatial Strategy: Northern-led

This approach is based on the policy in the East of England Plan. This placed the bulk of growth to the north of Harlow, with some growth to the east and smaller growth to the south and west.

The consultant suggested that this is not a reasonable option as there is an unacceptable risk that the development would not be delivered during the plan period.

**For a full summary of this approach and the consultant's recommendation see Part 6, sections 6.7.2 and 6.7.3 in the full consultation document.**

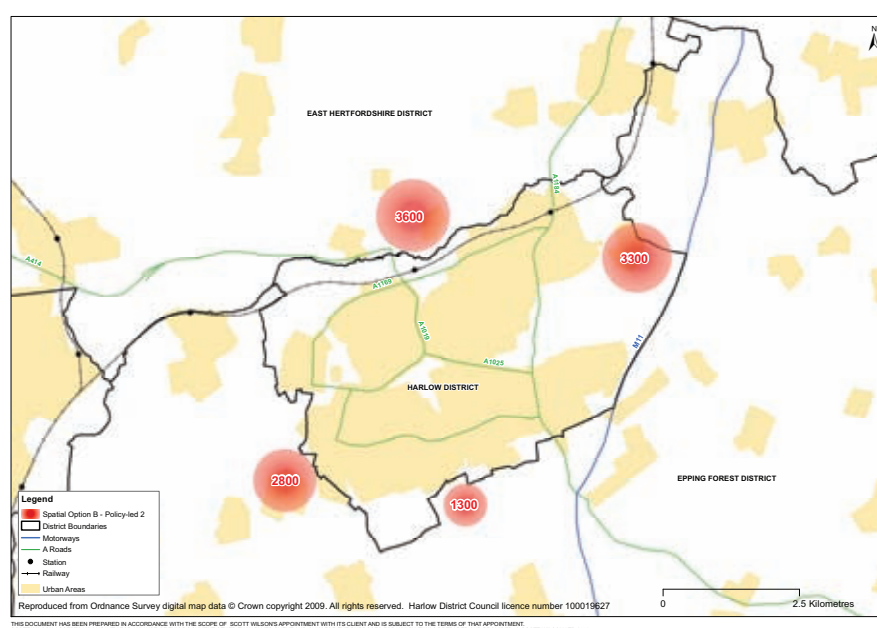


### Option B – Policy led 2

This approach reflects the broad directional and distributional elements of the growth requirements set out in the East of England Plan, but does not focus the bulk of the new housing provision to the north of Harlow.

The consultant felt this would be a reasonable option if lower levels of housing growth were proposed for the area west of Harlow with greater growth explored to the east and south.

**For a full summary of this approach and the consultant's recommendation see Part 6, sections 6.7.4 - 6.7.6 in the full consultation document.**



## Option C – Combined criteria led

This approach is based on an assessment of Green Belt, landscape sensitivity, flood zones, regeneration objectives and transport accessibility, but ignores the specific strategic directions for growth set out in the East of England Plan.

The consultant concluded that situating significant numbers of new dwellings close to Junction 7 of the M11 would encourage private car use within an area unable to cope with increased traffic without a southern bypass. Growth to the south could affect the ridgeline that provides a southern edge and setting for the town.

**For a full summary of this approach and the consultant's recommendation see Part 6, sections 6.7.8 - 6.7.11 in the full consultation document.**

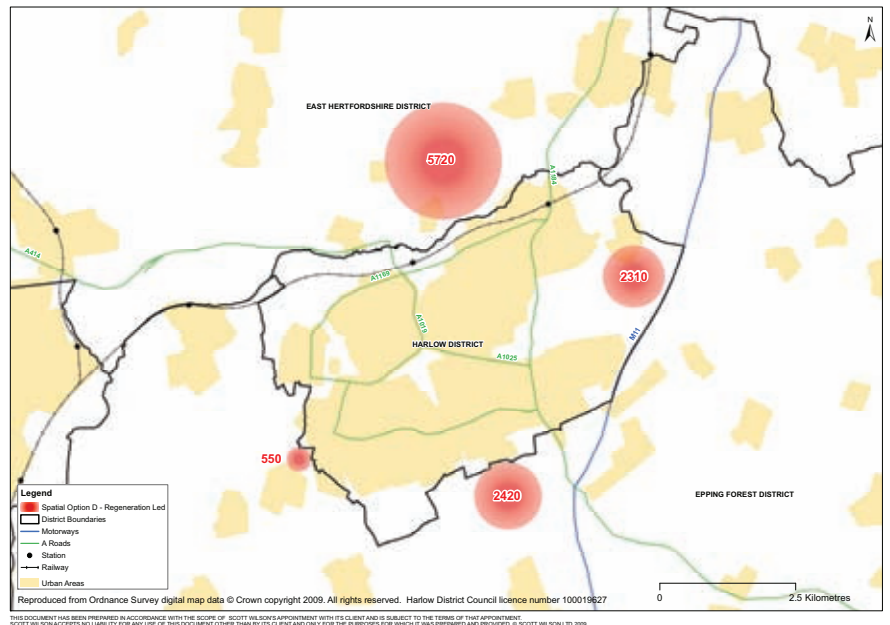


## Option D – Regeneration led

An alternative approach examined the identification of areas of search and distribution of new housing based upon securing the greatest potential regeneration benefits for locations within Harlow.

The consultant suggested that this option is not considered a reasonable option due to transport and sewerage constraints associated with high levels of development to the north.

**For a full summary of this approach and the consultant's recommendation see Part 6, sections 6.7.12 - 6.7.16 in the full consultation document.**

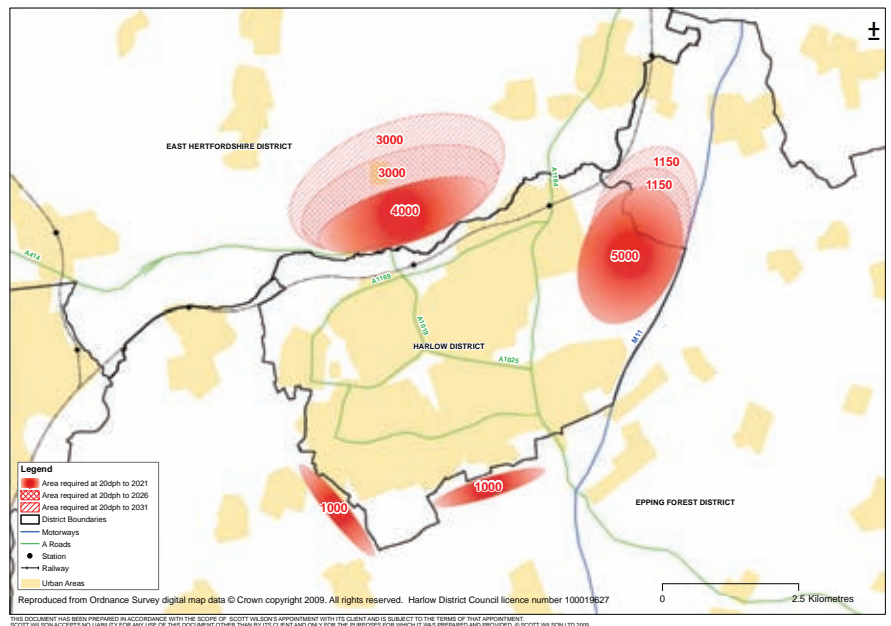
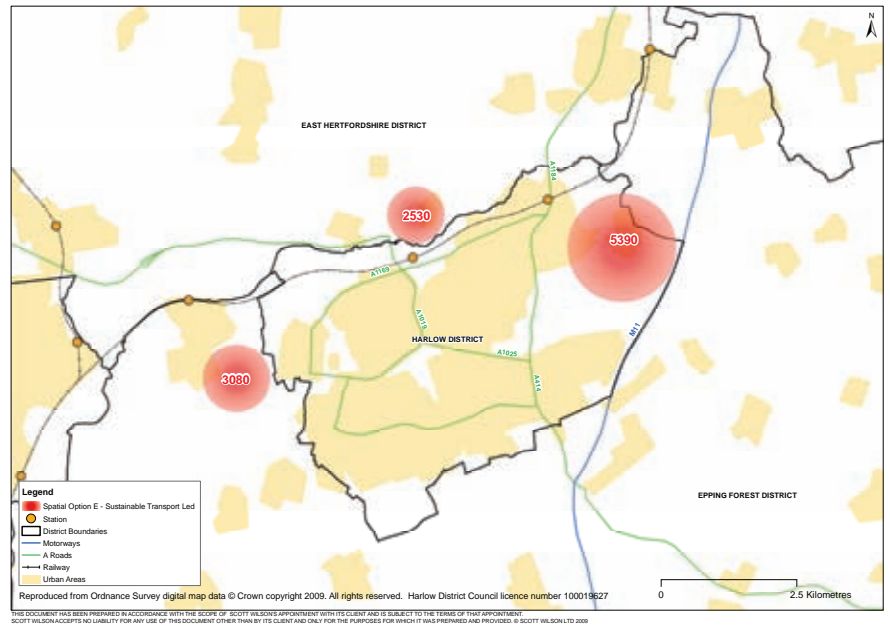


## The Delivery Strategy

Finally, the Core Strategy will need to identify a delivery and implementation strategy and the key infrastructure required to support future development in Harlow. Infrastructure includes transport but also the range of other facilities necessary to support the needs of the community.

Part 7 of the full consultation document sets out the key infrastructure needed to support new development.







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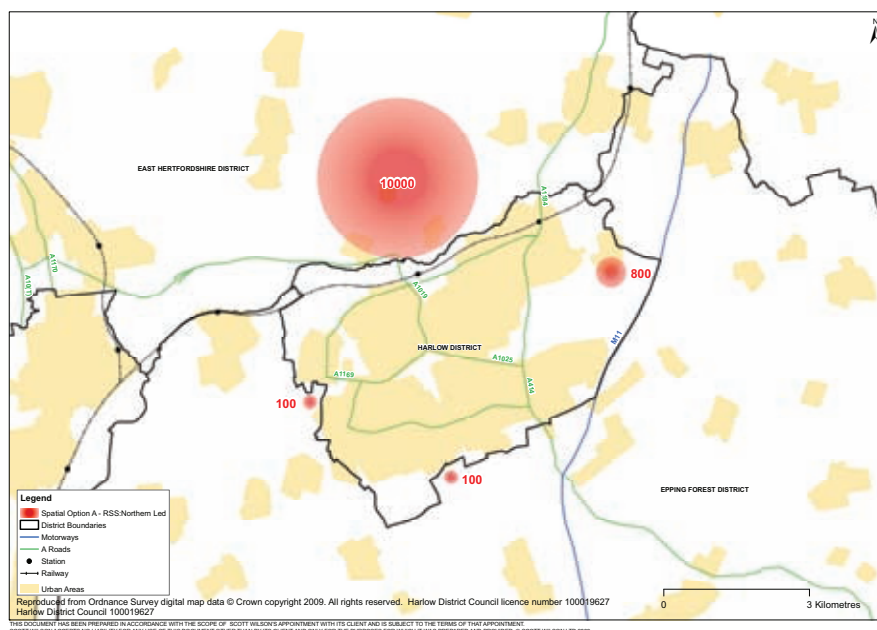
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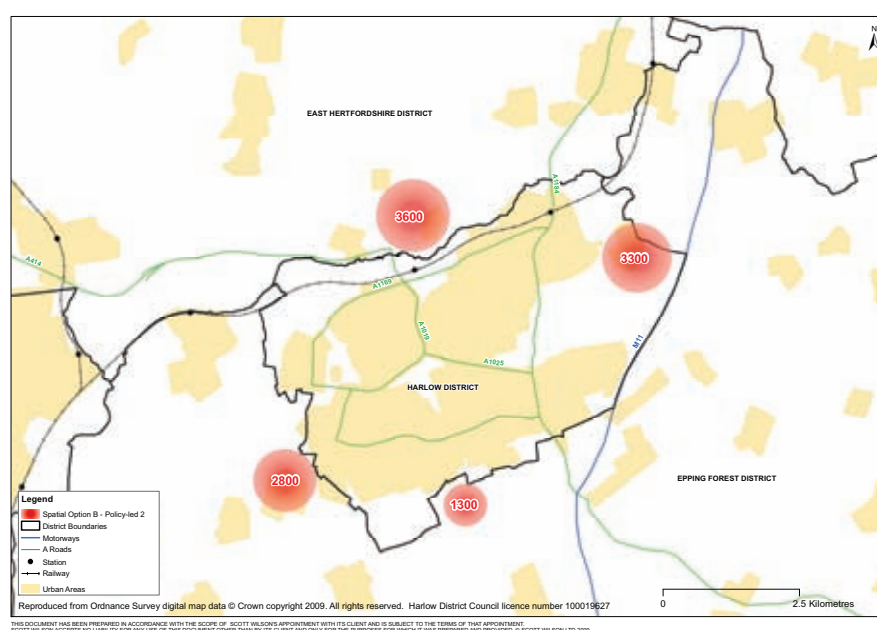


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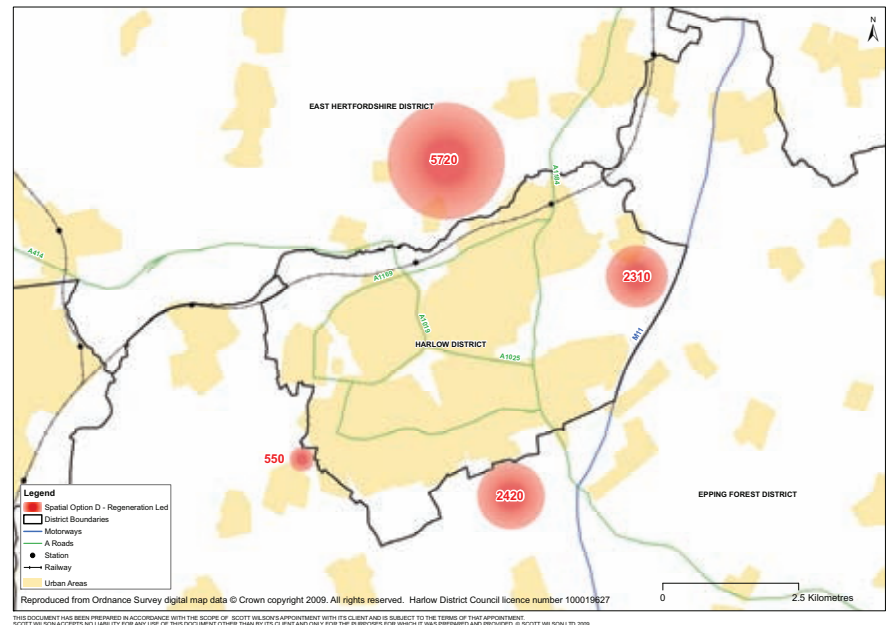


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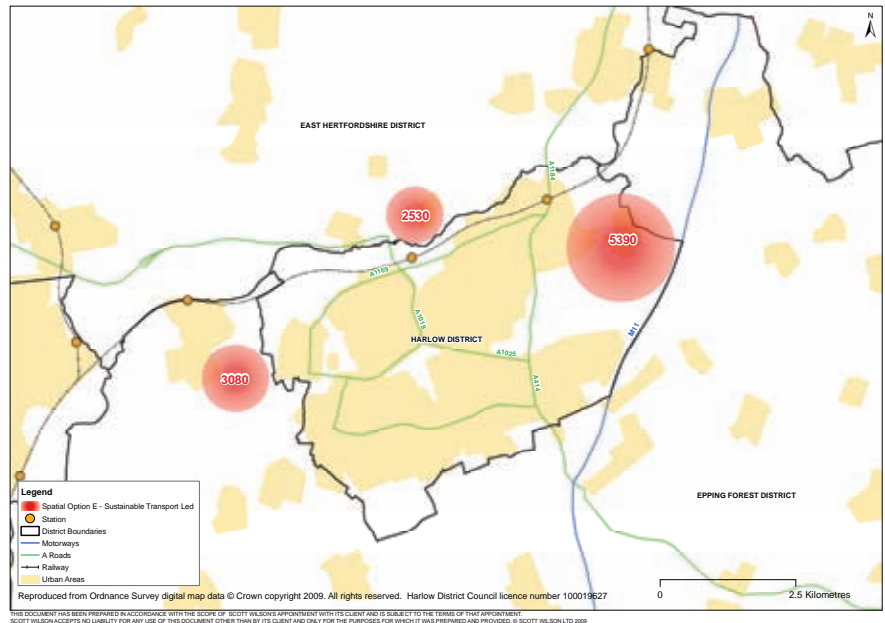


## Option E – Sustainable Transport-led

This approach is based on broad locations for new housing and that can benefit from existing or enhanced transport provision.

The consultant suggested that this option is not a reasonable option primarily in light of transport and sewerage constraints associated with high levels of development allocated to urban extensions in the northern half of Harlow.

**For a full summary of this approach and the consultant's recommendation see Part 6, sections 6.7.17 and 6.7.19 in the full consultation document.**

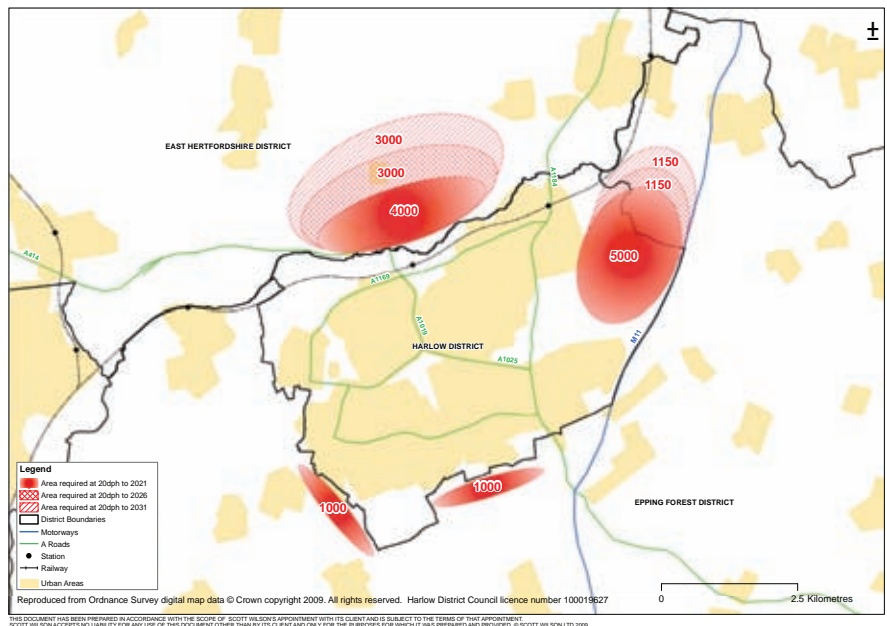


## The Consultant's Suggested Spatial Approach

Following examination of the range of potential options described above, and an assessment of their impact on the town, the consultant suggested the following areas to accommodate housing growth around the town:

**For a full summary of the consultant's Suggested Approach see Part 6, sections 6.7.20 -6.7.22 in the full consultation document.**

**What do you think about the recommendations of the Consultant including their "Suggested Spatial Approach" to growth around Harlow?**



**Do you think all of the key elements of infrastructure have been identified? If not, what additional infrastructure do you think will be needed to support the emerging Core Strategy?**