

# Connect

**SHENFIELD LIBRARY**

**HUTTON ROAD, SHENFIELD**

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PROPOSED REDEVELOPMENT  
STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Prepared for Essex Housing | March 2021

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# 1 INTRODUCTION

## 1.1. SHENFIELD LIBRARY

This Statement of Community Involvement ('SCI' hereafter) is submitted with Essex Housing's (Essex County Council's in-house development team) planning application for the proposed redevelopment of the Shenfield Library site at Hutton Road, Shenfield ('the site' hereafter).

## 1.2. OVERVIEW OF THE PROPOSALS

The proposals for the redevelopment of the site include:

- A modern library with a floorspace of 286 sqm.
- A meeting room available for use by library users and local groups.
- A commercial unit in a prime location on the corner of Hutton Road and Friars Avenue.
- Enhanced outdoor public space at the front of the library.
- Nine residential units above the ground floor.

## 1.3. PURPOSE OF THE STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

This SCI has been produced to assist Essex County Council ('ECC' hereafter) in its assessment of the planning application for the site. It details the pre-submission consultation activities that have been undertaken by Essex Housing to inform the final proposals. It should be read alongside other documents that have been submitted in support of the planning application.

## 1.4. PLANNING POLICY AND CONSULTATION

Essex Housing have sought to reflect and go beyond recommendations for public consultation on planning applications set out in planning policy both at a national and local level.

### NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK

The Government's National Planning Policy Framework (February 2019) encourages pre-application consultation. Paragraph 39 states that *"good quality pre-application discussion enables better coordination between public and private resources and improved outcomes for the community."* Paragraph 41 states *"The more issues that can be resolved at pre-application stage, including the need to deliver improvements in infrastructure and affordable housing, the greater the benefits."*

### LOCAL STATEMENTS OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

While the planning application will be considered by Essex County Council rather than Brentwood Borough Council ('BBC' hereafter), Essex Housing has been guided by the advice of both local authorities to ensure that their pre-application consultation met their requirements and was comprehensive and inclusive.

The ECC SCI gives the following advice to developers: *"We encourage all potential applicants to discuss their proposals with us and to engage with the local community before submitting their planning application."*

The BBC SCI gives the following advice to developers: *"The Council encourages applicants for large scale development proposals to involve local communities before the formal application stage begins. This enables local communities to provide initial constructive comments and suggestions and may lead to fewer objections being made later in the process, which are then material to the determination of the application."*

*"It is recommended that involvement of local communities should be in the form of meetings, presentations and/or exhibitions. Applicants are encouraged to speak with the Council before arranging these events, so that they can be undertaken in a manner that is sensitive to local community concerns. However, any pre-application engagement undertaken with the community is done so by the applicant independent of the Council. Therefore, it is important that any comments being made are directed to the applicant and not to the Council at this stage."*

### **1.5. OVERVIEW OF CONSULTATION APPROACH**

This document highlights Essex Housing's commitment to pre-submission community consultation and explains the consultation activity that has been undertaken. It also illustrates the consultative processes that were used, and that feedback was sought and received through differing channels of response including engagement with key local stakeholders and groups and a public consultation process.

The contents of the SCI includes:

- Methods of community involvement and stakeholder engagement that were used.
- Details of feedback received.
- Analysis and conclusions from feedback.
- Responses to public feedback.

### **1.6. IMPACT OF COVID-19**

The outbreak of COVID-19 meant that Essex Housing's consultation process needed to reflect the restrictions placed on face-to-face interaction. As such, the consultation was conducted via a range of online and offline methods, which ensured wide access to the process while ensuring that residents who may not have been able to view information via digital means were still fully included.

### **1.7. CONNECT PUBLIC AFFAIRS**

Connect Public Affairs, a specialist community consultation and engagement consultancy, were appointed by Essex Housing to organise and manage their consultation process on the proposals for the site.

## **2 SUMMARY**

This document highlights Essex Housing's commitment and approach to pre-submission consultation on the proposed Masterplan to redevelop the site.

### **2.1. PRE-CONSULTATION**

Essex Housing's starting point for public consultation was to conduct a stakeholder mapping exercise. This ran alongside preparations to organise and advertise the public consultation process for local stakeholders, community groups and the wider public.

### **2.2. CONSULTATION**

Essex Housing conducted a comprehensive public consultation process between 16 November and 14 December 2020. The consultation was widely advertised to local residents and stakeholders and included a range of methods to access information and feedback.

### **2.3. POST-CONSULTATION**

Essex Housing continued to engage with local stakeholders and residents following the formal close of the consultation process.

They have also responded to a number of concerns and suggestions raised by residents and stakeholders during the consultation process.

Connect Public Affairs have prepared this SCI to highlight the consultation work undertaken and response to feedback as a consequence.

### 3 CONSULTATION

As outlined above, Essex Housing conducted an extensive public consultation process in three phases on the proposed Masterplan for the site.

#### 3.1. PRE-CONSULTATION

At the outset of their consultation process, Essex Housing conducted a stakeholder mapping exercise to identify key elected representatives, community stakeholders and groups who had a clear stake in the future of the site.

The outcome of this exercise steered their approach to community consultation and engagement throughout their consultation process. The stakeholder matrix is below:

STAKEHOLDER (INDIVIDUAL/GROUP)	STAKEHOLDER TYPE	REASON FOR ENGAGEMENT
Shenfield ward BBC councillors	Elected representatives	BBC councillors representing the ward including the site
Brentwood Hutton, Brentwood North, Brentwood Rural and Brentwood South ECC councillors	Elected representatives	ECC councillors representing a ward that borders close to the site
Leader of BBC	Elected representative	Senior CCC stakeholder
Member of Parliament for Brentwood & Ongar	Elected representative	MP for the site
Shenfield Library Supporters Group	Community	Library supporter and interest group
Parish Church of St Mary the Virgin	Community	Nearby church
Friends Meeting House	Community	Nearby meeting house and community hall
St Mary's CE Primary School	Community	Nearby school
Shenfield High School	Community	Nearby school
Hutton and Shenfield Union Church	Community	Nearby church

#### 3.2. PREPARATIONS FOR PUBLIC CONSULTATION

Essex Housing organised a range of methods for stakeholders and residents to view information and feedback on the redevelopment proposals. These included:

- A special consultation website at the web page <https://shenfieldlibrary.co.uk/> (see appendix 1). This included detailed information about the redevelopment proposals as well as an opportunity to provide comprehensive feedback. The website was live from 16 November 2020. This was the primary tool for the consultation.
- Two public 'webinar' events were held on the Zoom meeting platform, where residents could watch a presentation on the plans by members of the project team. They were also able to ask questions and feedback via a Q&A function. The events took place on 27 November and 8 December, with RSVPs from local residents for each session being 59 and 24, respectively. The first event was advertised in the leaflet sent to residents, and they were invited to register. A second event was organised due to demand.
- A consultation hotline (020 7592 9592) for residents to get in touch with queries about the proposals and/or feedback. Residents without access to the digital tools for the consultation were particularly encouraged to use the hotline to get in touch and/or to request detailed information to be posted direct to them.

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- A special consultation email address was set up ([shenfieldlibrary@connectpa.co.uk](mailto:shenfieldlibrary@connectpa.co.uk)) for residents to get in touch with queries and/or feedback.
- A consultation Freepost address was set up (Shenfield Library, Freepost CONNECT CONSULTATION) for residents to send feedback if they could not or preferred not to use the online feedback form.



*Image from one of the public 'webinar' events*

### 3.3. NOTICE OF THE PUBLIC CONSULTATION

Essex Housing gave notice of the public consultation to local residents, neighbours, stakeholders, and groups in a range of ways outlined in the table below.

- Elected representatives were sent direct email notices before the consultation website went live (see appendix 5). This included an electronic copy of the leaflet that was to be delivered to residents. Local ECC members, the Leader of Brentwood Council and the local MP were invited to meet virtually with the Essex Housing team to discuss the redevelopment proposals.
- Immediate site neighbours were sent a letter notice before the consultation website went live (see appendix xx).
- Community groups and organisations were sent direct email notices before the consultation website went live (see appendix 5). They were again emailed with an electronic copy of the leaflet to be delivered to residents.
- Residents in a radius of approximately 13,000 properties around the site (see appendix 6 for radius) were sent a leaflet to announce the start of the consultation, with information about the redevelopment proposals and ways to feedback (see appendix 2).
- A press release was issued to local media outlets to announce the consultation (see appendix 4).

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STAKEHOLDER TYPE	METHODS OF NOTIFICATION	DATE
Elected representatives	Email notification prior to start of consultation	Brentwood ward Members notified of coming consultation and given details with who to engage with on 5/11/20. Presentation to Leader of Brentwood Borough Council, ECC Members representing a Brentwood ward and a representative of the Member of Parliament for Brentwood and Ongar took place on the 9/11/20. Public consultation materials shared with all elected representatives by email on 16/11/20.
Neighbours	Letter notification prior to start of consultation	9/11/20
Community groups/organisations	Email notification prior to start of consultation	11/11/20
Residents	Leaflet drop confirming start of consultation	16/11/20
Library staff	Internal briefing	12/11/20



## **4 CONSULTATION FEEDBACK**

### **4.1. STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT FEEDBACK**

On 9 November 2020, the project team held a virtual meeting with a range of political stakeholders who represent the local area via Zoom.

The meeting was attended by the following political stakeholders: Local ECC councillors, the Leader of Brentwood Borough Council, a representative from the office of Alex Burghart MP.

The meeting was attended by members of the project team from Essex Housing, ECC Cabinet members with responsibility for Economic development and libraries, the scheme architect from Chetwoods and public engagement consultants Connect Communications.

The project team gave a presentation on the redevelopment proposals and plans for public consultation before taking questions and feedback.

Key areas of discussion included:

- Feedback on building and public realm design proposals.
- Questions about the parking arrangements.
- Potential uses for the proposed commercial unit.
- Questions about the plans for wider consultation.

### **4.2. PUBLIC CONSULTATION FEEDBACK**

The following section reviews and analyses feedback from the recent public consultation on the development proposals for the Shenfield Library site.

It focuses heavily on responses to the feedback form from the consultation website, which makes up close to two thirds of the total responses and are relatively straightforward to extract data from and compare.

In the period from the consultation website going live on 16 November 2020 to the close of the consultation on 14 December there were 1,561 unique visitors to the website. 197 feedback responses were received via various methods available to residents to respond.

Key points:

- 130 completed online feedback forms were received.
- 67 residents provided feedback by email or telephone.
- A majority of residents (69) who responded supported the principle of a mixed-use development of the site. A further 51 indicated their support would depend on the specific proposals. Only 8 residents opposed the principle of development.
- The vast majority of residents (116) indicated that they were either supportive of the specific proposals for redevelopment, or broadly supportive but felt they could be improved, with a marginal plurality for the latter.
- Residents highlighted modern facilities and a larger library space as the most popular aspects of the proposals.
- The overwhelming preference between the public open space options that were presented was option A.
- There was no prevalent theme in written feedback related to the development proposals, however issues such as a preference for a separate lobby area for the library, a pitched

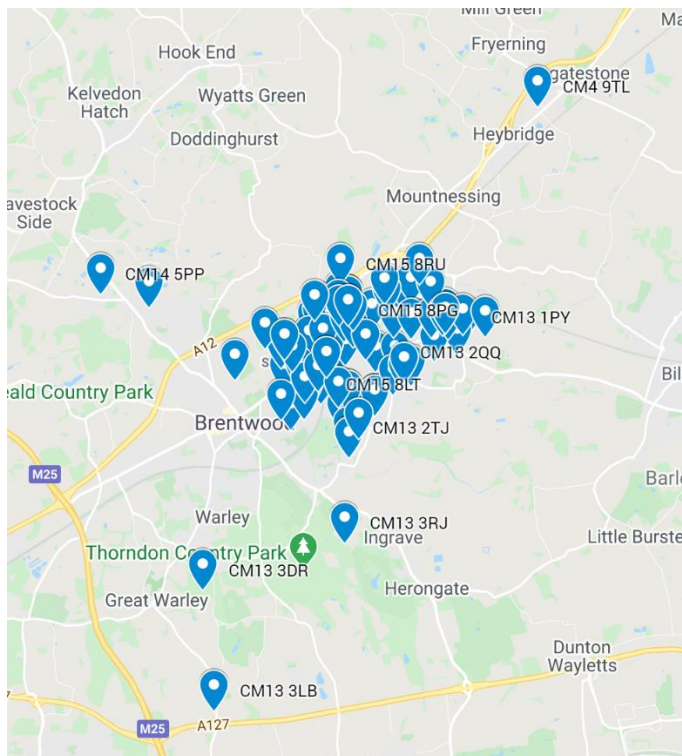
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rather than flat roof and more environmental sustainability measures are examples of suggestions that were raised by multiple residents.

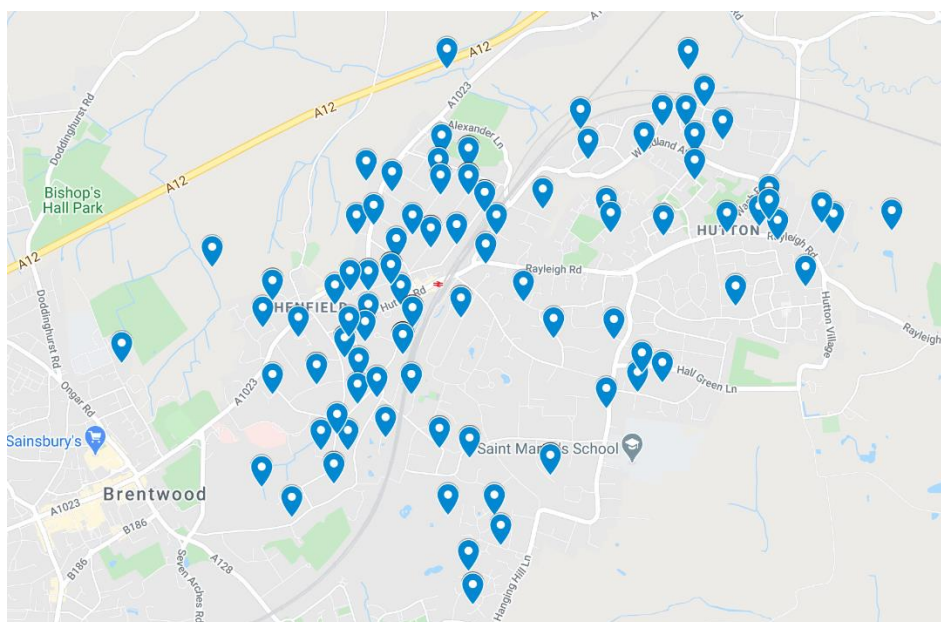
- There was widespread feedback related to long term library provision and library management/operational issues.
- The proposed temporary library provision at Bishops Hill Adult Education Centre was considered generally acceptable though there were concerns about public transport access to the site.

### 4.2.1 FEEDBACK RESPONSE MAP

Postcodes from which online feedback forms were received are flagged below.



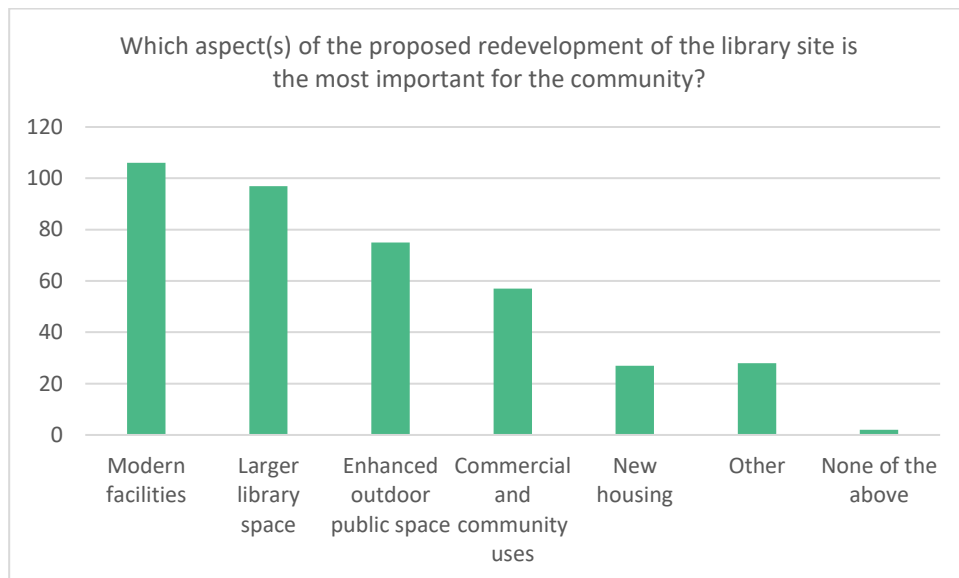
The above highlights all postcodes where feedback forms were received from.



The above highlights the approximate area in which information about the development and consultation was distributed. Unsurprisingly all but a handful of the 130 online feedback forms were received from postcodes within this area.

#### 4.2.2 VIEWS ON ASPECTS OF THE DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS

Residents were asked which aspects of the development proposals they felt were the most important for the community. They were given a list of options and invited to choose as many as they felt were appropriate. The graph below outlines the results.

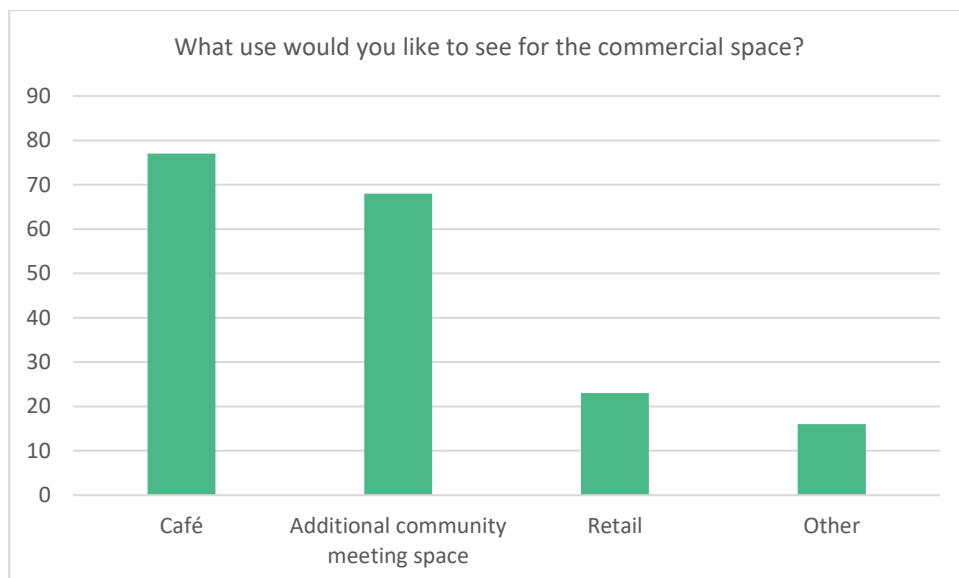


Modern facilities and larger library space were the standout most popular aspects, with enhanced outdoor public space the next most popular. This perhaps unsurprisingly indicates that many residents viewed the positive aspects of the proposed development through the prism of how it would enhance the library. For likely the same reasons, new housing was the least popular aspect.

#### 4.2.3 VIEWS ON POTENTIAL USE FOR THE COMMERCIAL SPACE

Residents were asked what use(s) they would like to see for the commercial space proposed as part of the development. They were given some options and also the opportunity to make alternative suggestions. The graph below outlines the results.

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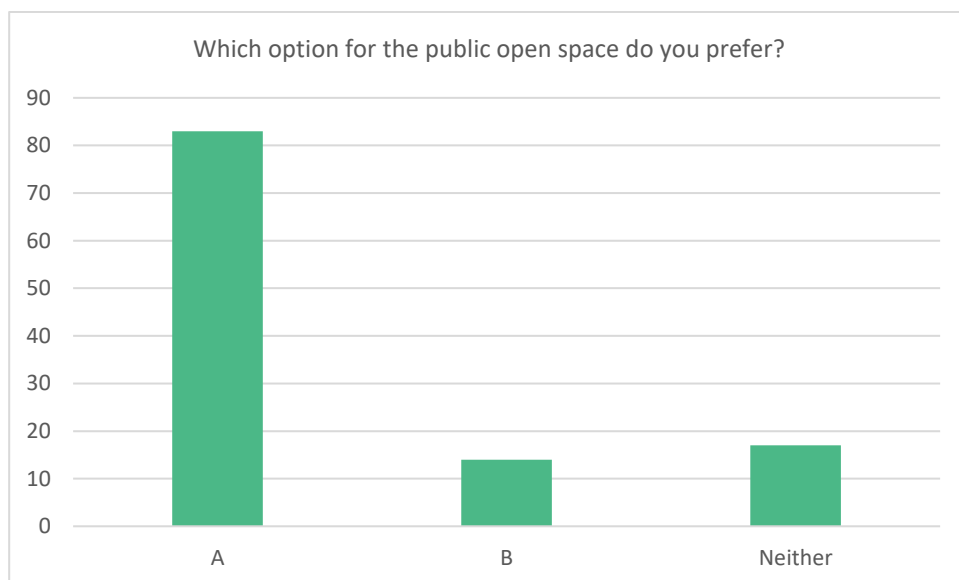


A café was the most popular use option, with an additional community meeting space also gathering notable support. A retail option was far less popular.

Some other isolated suggestions were made including space for exercise classes, art and handicraft lessons or a clinic, but most other comments focused on a preference for the commercial space to be incorporated into the library for community use.

### 4.2.4 VIEWS ON OPTIONS FOR THE PUBLIC OPEN SPACE

Residents were invited to view the options for the proposed public open space outside the library and to indicate their preference. The graph below outlines the results.



Very clearly the overwhelming preference of responders was option A.

### 4.2.4 FEEDBACK THEMES

Below is a summary of some of the key themes of suggestions raised by residents where they were asked to input their thoughts and ideas in the online feedback form.

### Internal design of the library

The internal design of the library, particularly the current absence of a lobby area, was the basis for several comments. Consideration of inclusion of a lobby would likely be a well-received response to the consultation feedback.

Example comments:

- *Enclosed lobby at front, useful when raining enabling umbrellas to be put down without splashing books also provides more secluded feel to library away from street.*
- *Entrance should be a Lobby, double doors foyer, to be energy efficient. Seems 'daft' to me to have large doors opening to outside wind and weather.*
- *Automatic door entry at library and any café. Not the heavy glass type.*
- *Consider visually impaired users in the glass areas and doors.*

An analysis of all the answers to the feedback forms showed that the absence of a desk for the library staff was mentioned nine times.

### External design of the development

With regards to the external design of the development, amongst those who thought the scheme could be improved, concern over the height was mentioned four times, and the potential for overlooking of the building to neighbouring buildings was mentioned three times. The design of the flat roof was raised three times, with a preference for a pitched or gabled roof cited. While these issues were present, they generally came from a small number of residents living close to the site.

Eleven of the 60 people who thought the scheme could be improved, referred to ensuring the development was environmentally friendly or “green”, with suggestions for elements such as a green roof, which was mentioned four times, and green walling also being mentioned once.

Within the feedback forms of those who thought there was scope for improvement, provision for bicycle storage was mentioned four times, space for buggy storage was also mentioned five times, with space for scooter storage or charging mentioned three times. Clarification was also sought over parking at the site, specifically for disabled users of the library (mentioned three times) and for library staff (mentioned four times).

Example comments:

- *Why is there no question about the building itself. It is too tall and overpowering compared to the nearest buildings or houses and not the shops as the architects consider. The balconies overlook these houses.*
- *I think the outside design is unimaginative. Why use a brick colour that is not used anywhere else in Shenfield and why have a flat roof? Red brick and a pitched roof would be much better! E.G. Brentwood School new 6<sup>th</sup> form block.*
- *The apartments could just be one floor. The height would then be more in keeping with the surrounding properties.*
- *I think that the building would blend in better with the area if it had a gabled roof.*

### Environmental suggestions

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- *Huge flat roof perfect for photo voltaic cells or at least a green roof. Please collect water run off. Could build a large underground tank to collect water. All those new trees will need watering.*
- *Public cycle rack please integrated into design, preferably covered - maybe with a green roof?*
- *This would be a wasted opportunity not to demonstrate the use of renewable energy technology and the importance of greening the environment. Some of the side elevations could incorporate full green walling and the flat roof is ideal to incorporate a green roof to encourage biodiversity into this suburban environment. Beehives have been also been successfully installed on similar projects.*

**Parking – cars, bikes, scooters, buggies**

- *Is there parking for the librarians? Would be sad to lose our professional staff due to all spaces allocated to housing above.*
- *There are no Blue Badge parking bays for library users, there must be at least 2.*
- *A Scooter charging point would be useful in library and 1 in apartment parking area.*
- *I see parking for residents but would also like to see 2 spaces each for library staff and the commercial unit. Parking in Shenfield is hard to come by and/or expensive so I feel this will be needed.*
- *I think it's fine - but at the moment i can't see where the 15+ pushchairs that used to line the ramp will end up on rhyme time mornings? Also the children's library fronting the high street is lovely - but if you don't plan for buggy and scooter parking the area in front will just be a buggy / scooter park.*
- *This could be an incredible space - but if you don't plan for the users (predominantly young families and older residents) it will end up cluttered with pushchairs, scooters and mobility scooters. Having space for these that's designed with the users will make a huge difference to the reality of the public realm.*
- *I cannot see that you have allowed for bicycle parking unless the bike store at the back is for everyone to use. Was assuming as it is accessed via residents parking area it is for residents use only. I think this should be included otherwise it may lead to people randomly tying bikes to seats etc whilst using the library. I think cycling to the library should be encouraged over other vehicle use.*

**Freehold of the site**

The freehold of the library was mentioned eight times, with a typical comment reading: *"It is really important that Essex County Council would be able to retain the ownership of the freehold of the site to provide security to the library."*

In addition, there were some questions asked about future library usage. An example comment for this was *"Please ensure that the planned opening hours are as broad as possible."*

**Safety**



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The issue of children's safety was raised five times in the feedback forms, as shown below. The need to create a "safe environment" or "safe place" was also mentioned several times in a more general context.

- *I like the glass front (though the images are misleading as they suggest that light will come from the front of a North facing building). I like the potential for flexible use of the central space, opening up the possibility of community-run events like concerts or author evenings. There appears to be adequate shelving. The level floor inside the library and flat access will assist users with disabilities. I like the potential access from the library to the garden area, subject to suitable safety measures.*
- *A lobby entrance area to provide an extra barrier for the safety of young children. It would also be a draught excluder to the main building.*
- *I would like to see double entrance doors creating a porch to retain heat in the building making it greener and providing a safety feature as the entrance is not far from the children's library area.*
- *I do not think the entrance is very safe for children and would cause draughts in winter. Would it not be better to have a lobby?*
- *An area to sit and read, child friendly and safe (Ongar library has sliding doors that need you press a button to get out) stops kids escaping.*

It is worth noting that while concerns about the safety of the access from the children's library to the garden space at the front of the development were raised in the webinar, it did not emerge as significant theme in feedback form responses. Indeed, there seemed to be general approval for the concept.

### Temporary library provision

Across all feedback forms the general feeling towards the proposed temporary library provision at Bishops Hill Adult Education Centre was general acceptance as a temporary measure and that this was better than no library provision. However, there were some concerns raised with regards to transport provision to the site given the perceived distance from the centre of Shenfield.

For those who could drive, there were questions relating to parking at the site. For those without access to a car, poor public transport links were cited. There was some concern about how easy the site would be to access for elderly residents or for people with disabilities. To combat this, the idea of a mobile library was raised.

Examples of feedback:

- *Seems to be the best choice available. Public owned so no cost to ECC. On a bus route and reasonably close to existing.*
- *Good idea but there would have to be regular public transport for the elderly and disabled members of the community.*
- *Of course, the central position of the library will be missed, even in the short term but Bishops Hill is acceptable but it there should be provision for a reasonably frequent and reasonably priced transport link. Not everyone will be able to drive there.*
- *I am worried that it would be not accessible for those without a car, therefore it is vital that adequate transport links are provided for those in our community who would need it. The library is a lifeline for some members of the community.*

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- *If that's the nearest option fine - but what about also using a mobile library as well for those residents who can currently walk to the library but who might struggle to get to Bishops Hill?*
- *In the absence of a viable accessible alternative in the High Street it will be acceptable, provided that there is a reasonably frequent and reasonably priced transport link. It might be expected that use of the facility will be less in this 'out of village' location and if this happens ECC should not rely on this as a reason for reducing services in the new library.*
- *I would very much prefer the library to remain in a central location as many existing elderly library users without cars will find it hard to get to Bishops Hill in the absence of a regular bus service. I think that footfall is also likely to decrease, even among car users.*
- *ECC has not so far provided any details on the space and library facilities which they are proposing to make available at Bishops Hill so it is impossible to tell whether they will be suitable.*
- *Not a problem for me personally as I have a car, but Shenfield is poorly served by public transport (half hourly service) and the steep hill up to Bishops Hill from village would be a problem for elderly or unwell library users. Could the hospital transport bus serve the library during opening hours?*

#### 4.2.5 FEEDBACK THEMES

In addition to feedback submitted via the online form, feedback and/or queries were received from 67 residents by other methods. This was predominantly by email, but a small number of responses were also received by phone call.

The responses received cannot be assessed quantitatively in the same way as online feedback. However, our conclusions from a broad assessment of the content and tone of the communications are that 31 were explicitly in support of the proposals, 5 were opposed, and the remaining 31 were neutral or open-minded. This is broadly in line with the balance of views within the online feedback, though it should be reiterated that it is based on our assessment not clear quantitative data.

As mentioned above, 31 of the 67 emails and phone calls offered strong support for the proposals with limited other feedback, such as:

- *We think it is a brilliant use of public space and amenities and at zero cost to the public purse as well as providing lower cost entry accommodation in an area which is very expensive. A new up to date library will be a massive benefit to the local community. We therefore give it our strongest approval. More innovative ideas such as these will be wonderful to see.*
- *I have just received the leaflet about the proposed new library. I am very impressed with the plan and what a good idea to fund it by building apartments above. The plan for a cafe attached is a great idea too. I look forward to being able to use this new facility in the future.*
- *Please may I congratulate you on what appears to be a well thought through plan, both functionally, aesthetically and financially.*
- *What a joy in these trying times to read details of the proposed new library which has so much positivity.*

Themes and issues raised through these means of feedback followed a similar pattern to online feedback. Concerns about the height of the development were raised by seven people, overlooking was raised five times, having a pitched versus a flat roof was preferred by six people and overdevelopment was noted four times,



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There were also 11 comments on the potential use of the commercial unit, and 13 comments on the usage of the library itself.

### Density/Overlooking

- *Whilst, we are not opposed to the overall development of this site, we do not feel that a 3-storey development is in keeping with the area in which it is sited.*
- *A further concern regarding flats 2.03 and 3.03 are the proposals for these flats to have balconies. The balconies would directly overlook the private rear gardens of adjacent and nearby residential properties. With many young families living in the affected properties, including my own, I cannot over-emphasise the level of concern with regard to this particular aspect of the proposals. It is clear that the balconies should cease to be a part of the proposed redevelopment.*

### Roof

- *Flat roofs are expensive to maintain and can cause problems.*
- *Please could you consider a pitched roof for the new library? I think this would greatly improve the appearance and would help to give the Shenfield town centre a more attractive community atmosphere, rather than appearing as a street full of blocks of flats.*

### Commercial unit

- *I do see here a massive opportunity here to help put a heart back into the Shenfield area. Unlike some of the villages in Brentwood there is no Council funded community centre in Shenfield. This is a fantastic opportunity to add a space that could be used for local performance e.g., drama, music, dance, quizzes & other community events etc.*
- *I do however think there is no need for any further restaurants or cafes . My suggestion would be , bookshop , upmarket toy shop or a much needed dedicated Post Office. In my view, the key to a successful new building must be to enhance its relevance to modern vibrant sociable Shenfield. That is why I think a 'funky' comfortable coffee shop - which must include both an attractive indoor and outdoor sitting area - is a great way to give the building renewed relevance to a wider public.*

### Environmental considerations

- *In line with the drive for 'green' developments, surely there is ample scope for roof-top greenery and beehives etc.*

In addition, similarly to the feedback forms, whilst the majority did not raise issue, there were a handful of concerns raised over the temporary library accommodation, with one resident writing *"Bishops Hill Adult Education Centre has been suggested but are you aware that there is no bus service coming up Rayleigh Road hill apart from two an hour between the hours of 5-7p.m.? This will cause problems for elderly borrowers."*

## 5 RESPONSE TO FEEDBACK

Throughout the consultation process the project team has sought to take on board local views and address these whilst evolving the design of the proposals. The following two tables provide a summary of the issues identified by Essex Housing as important for representatives, groups, and residents.

The below table illustrates common feedback received through the public consultation, and the response and/or adjustments made to the proposals by Essex Housing:

ISSUE	RESPONSE
Preference for landscape Option A	Essex Housing has adopted Landscape Option A for the proposed public open space into the final design.
Add lobby area to library entrance	A lobby area has been incorporated in the library entrance.
Preference for a pitched rather than flat roof	A pitched roof has been ruled out, as a flat roof is integral to the current design feasibility
Additional environmental sustainability measures, including PV panels and green walls	Photovoltaic cells and Air Source Heat Pumps are to be used, and some greenery has been added to the rear wall.
Freehold of library should be retained	Cllr Ball has confirmed that the freehold of the library will be retained.

The below table displays additional issues that were raised in smaller numbers, and the response and/or adjustments made to the proposals by Essex Housing:

ISSUE	RESPONSE
Height of building and overlooking of neighbouring properties.	One unit has been removed from the top floor meaning that the design now creates a good distance between the 2nd floor residential units and the boundary of No 61 Hutton Road. The remaining units are set well back from neighbouring properties and achieve a good degree of separation. Overhanging balconies at the rear have replaced with inset balconies creating further distance from neighbouring properties and obscuring sightlines into gardens. Window placement has been revisited to avoid overlooking.
Provision for bicycle storage	Bicycle storage has been added to the design.
Space for buggy storage	The library service is content that a specific space is not required. However, there will now be covered bike storage and a lobby that could be used.

Parking for disabled users	The library service will now have two (improved from one) parking spaces at their disposal, and at least one is wide enough for disabled use.
Parking for library staff	The library service is content that parking is not provided for staff which is common across ECC library sites.
Concern about the risk of outdoor space at front being used by children. Boundary between space road requested.	Railings and planting have been added to boundary of outdoor space
Commercial unit - how it should be used.	Legal advice has been sought on how usage can be restricted to ensure usage is complementary to the library service and supported by the community. The intention is to identify a business use which meets both to these criteria.

## 6 SUMMARY

A comprehensive consultation process was conducted by Essex Housing on the proposed redevelopment of the Shenfield Library site at Hutton Road, Shenfield, with feedback received from 197 individual residents. The team also engaged widely with local elected representatives covering the site, and local community groups and organisations.

The majority of residents (69) who responded to the consultation via the website supported the principle of a mixed-use development of the site. A further 51 indicated their support would depend on the specific proposals. Only 8 residents opposed the principle of development.

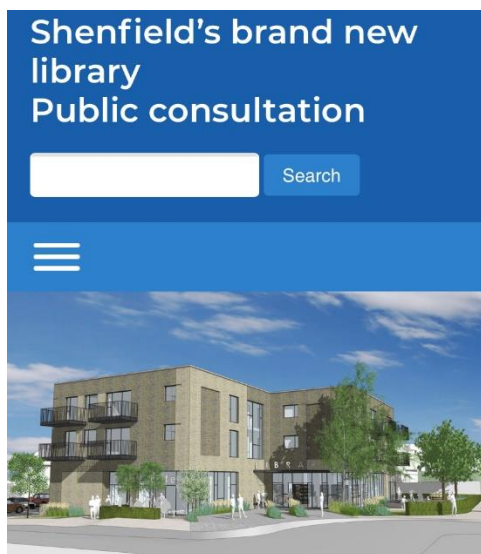
Furthermore, the vast majority of residents (116) indicated that they were either supportive of the specific proposals for redevelopment, or broadly supportive but felt they could be improved, with a marginal plurality for the latter.

Themes of written feedback focused on areas including the internal and external layout and design of the proposed library, environmental measures, and parking/highways arrangements.

Essex Housing have responded to the feedback in a variety of ways by making changes to the redevelopment proposals. Changes that were incorporated into the plans after the public consultation included: adopting landscaping Option A, adding a lobby to the library entrance, incorporating bicycle storage, additional environmental sustainability measures, removing one unit from the top floor, replacing overhanging balconies at the rear with inset balconies and adding railings and planting to the boundary of outdoor space.

## 7 APPENDICES

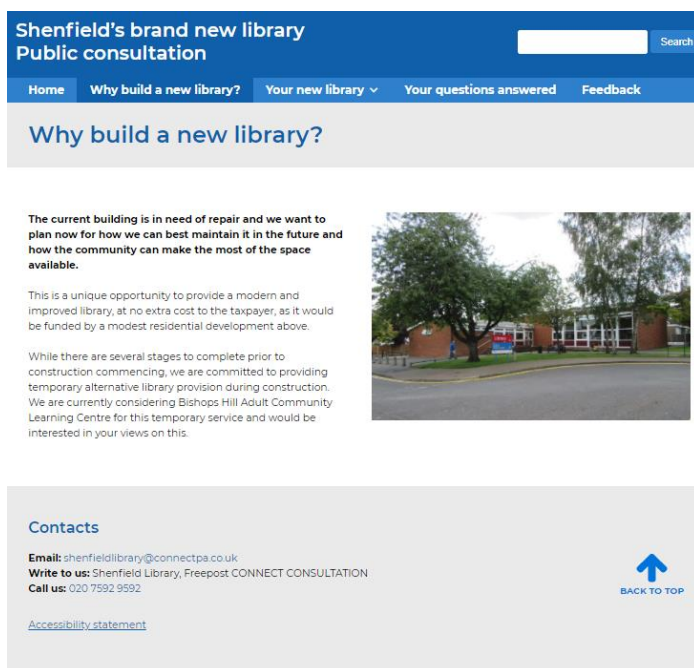
### 7.1. APPENDIX 1 - CONSULTATION WEBSITE



### Shenfield's brand new library

**Essex Housing are bringing forward plans for a new modern library for Shenfield.**

*The consultation website Home page*



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Key proposals

The plan to redevelop the current library site includes a range of exciting proposals that would deliver a modern library and additional facilities.

A modern library with a floorspace of 286 sqm - **larger than the current library**

There would be a meeting room available for use by library users and local groups.

A commercial unit in a prime location on the corner of Hutton Road and Friars Avenue.

The outdoor public space at the front of the library would be enhanced.

Approximately ten apartments, which would fund the development of the new library.

Proposed ground floor layout of new library and outdoor space

Contacts

Email: [shenfieldlibrary@connectpa.co.uk](mailto:shenfieldlibrary@connectpa.co.uk)

Write to us: Shenfield Library, Freepost CONNECT CONSULTATION

Call us: 020 7592 9592

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PREPARED BY CONNECT FOR ESSEX HOUSING

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The Library





Our plans would deliver a modern and improved library for Shenfield.

The new library would have a floorspace of 296sqm, which would be larger than the current library. All aspects of the current facility would be updated and improved, including the main library and the children's library. It would be an improved modern open space and flexible to meet the variety of needs of our users.

The new library would be spacious and open-plan. Floor to ceiling glazed windows at the front and sky lights at the rear would ensure natural light is maximised.

The vision for a target, open library with an abundance of light is guided by aspirations as set out by the library service, planners, local representatives and stakeholders.

Have your say

- What do you like about the internal design proposed?
- What do you think could be improved in the designs?

LEAVE FEEDBACK

Contacts

Email: [shenfield.library@connectpss.uk](mailto:shenfield.library@connectpss.uk)

Write to us: Shenfield Library, Freepost CONNECT CONSULTATION

Call us: 020 7330 0500

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Commercial and community space



**The new library would benefit from more community facilities than the current building, helping to ensure it becomes an even greater valued hub for the community.**

The new facilities would include a community meeting room available for use by library users, local community groups and business meetings.

We also propose a commercial unit in a prime location on the corner of Hutton Road and Friars Avenue, which could be home to a retail or cafe business or another community use. Again, this would have an access directly from the street.

Have your say


- How would you like to see the commercial space utilised?
- Do you think library users, community groups and businesses would use the meeting room for a small charge?

LEAVE FEEDBACK

Contacts

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Write to us: Shenfield Library, Freepost CONNECT CONSULTATION  
Call us: 020 7592 9592

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## PROPOSED REDEVELOPMENT STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

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Apartments



**Our proposals to redevelop the library site include approximately ten apartments in two storeys above ground floor, which would fund the new library.**

All apartments would exceed required spaces standards and have their own amenity space through external balconies.

Every apartment would have a parking space, some of which would include electric vehicle charging points, and secure cycle parking. The vehicle access point would remain the same as the current library and we would be working with Essex Highways to ensure safety is maintained.

A significant part of the rear of the development would be single storey to limit the effect on the existing property that neighbours the library.

Above: Artist's impression of proposed building viewed from the rear  
Below: Proposed first floor plan (click to enlarge)



Contacts

Email: [shenfieldlibrary@connectpa.co.uk](mailto:shenfieldlibrary@connectpa.co.uk)  
Write to us: Shenfield Library, Freepost CONNECT CONSULTATION  
Call us: 020 7592 9592

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High environmental standards

**The new library development would have high standards of environmental sustainability as a core principle.**

The building will be energy efficient and climate resilient. It will have lower energy use and carbon emissions, particularly through the inclusion of an efficient air source heat pump heating system, and will exceed minimum requirements of current regulations in this regard.

On site electric vehicle charging points and secure cycle parking will promote and encourage environmentally-friendly and active travel.

Landscaping at the front of the building will be based upon both community feedback and expert ecological advice.



Contacts

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Write to us: Shenfield Library, Freepost CONNECT CONSULTATION  
Call us: 020 7592 9592

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Library provision

— How many computers for public use? Will there be a photocopier?

The library service will determine the internal layout and facilities for the library based on their experience of what works for users. This is yet to be determined but the floor space is larger than the existing library. The allocated areas on the plans in the public domain are indicative, we are keen to hear the views of the community.

+ Will book groups and knitting groups have to pay to use the meeting room?

+ How many books can be stored on the shelves of the new library? (current building is designed for 16,000 books). Or how many metres of shelving for books will there be in the new library versus the old library?

+ Where will the terracotta plaque be placed and where will the art exhibition space be?

+ Are there toilets provided for public use?

+ Is there a kitchen facility for the library staff?

+ How have the library service been involved in development of this?

+ Could you explain the arrangement re the relocation of the library during construction?

+ Will there be transport to the Bishops Hill site?

+ Can you reassure us that if library user numbers drop whilst it is relocated at Bishops Hill this will not be used as evidence to a lack of demand? Is funding for the library guaranteed for the future?

+ Will there still be paid and permanent members of library staff?

+ Does the viability of the library depend on the adjoining shop paying rent?

+ How does the space for the library compare to the existing?

+ What's the size of the children's section today compared with the plan?

+ Will the meeting room be available to hire by anyone?

Future ownership

+ Will ECC own the new building and land? Or will ECC be leasing it back from the developer?

Residential element

+ Will any of the flats be designated as affordable housing?

+ How many one-bedroom flats and how many two bedroomed flats are planned? Will these flats be sold or rented out?

+ Will there be electrical charging points in the parking spaces for the flats?

+ Will residents be able to put up satellite dishes?

Parking

+ How many car parking spaces are proposed and is this sufficient?

+ Where would Amazon, etc. stop to deliver to the existing flats?

+ Is there no requirement to provide a disabled parking space?

Commercial space

+ What could the commercial unit be?

Timeline

+ What is your timeline for this project and how long will construction take?

+ How will you keep residents updated during the build?

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## 7.2. APPENDIX 2 - LEAFLET SENT TO RESIDENTS



### Your new library: key proposals

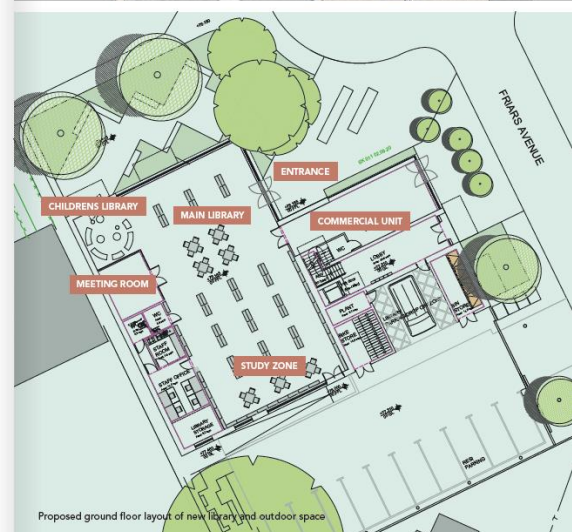
Our proposals for a new modern library for Shenfield include:

- A modern library with a floorspace of 286 sqm – larger than the current library.
- All aspects of the current facility would be updated and improved, including the main library and the children's library.
- It would be spacious and open-plan. Floor to ceiling glazed windows at the front and sky-lights at the rear will ensure natural light is maximised.
- There would be a meeting room available for use by library users and local groups.
- A commercial unit in a prime location on the corner of Hutton Road and Friars Avenue could be home to a retail or café business for example.
- The outdoor public space at the front of the library would be enhanced.
- In creating this design, we have listened to the views of the library service, planners, highways planners, local representatives and stakeholders

### Why build a new library?

The current building is in need of repair and we want to plan now for how we can best maintain it in the future and how the community can make the most of the space available. This is a unique opportunity to provide a modern and improved library, at no extra cost to the taxpayer, as it would be funded by a modest residential development above.

While there are several stages to complete prior to construction commencing, we are committed to providing temporary alternative library provision during construction. We are currently considering Bishops Hill Adult Community Learning Centre for this temporary service and would be interested in your views on this.



### How to take part in our consultation on your new library

The views of the local community are important to us – the new library is for you and should be shaped by you. We will *review* feedback and reflect in the final plans for the library where we can.

Given the ongoing need to ensure safety in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic, we do not intend to hold face-to-face consultation events at present. But our consultation process is open and inclusive nonetheless, with opportunities for residents to view the plans, ask questions and submit feedback through a range of online and offline methods.

#### Our consultation website [shenfieldlibrary.co.uk](https://shenfieldlibrary.co.uk)

- View the full proposals for your new library
- Watch a video walk-through of the proposed layout
- Ask questions about the plans
- Input your feedback and suggestions through to 14 December 2020
- Email your views to – [shenfieldlibrary@connectpa.co.uk](mailto:shenfieldlibrary@connectpa.co.uk)

### Join our consultation webinar

We'll be holding a Zoom webinar where residents can log on, watch a presentation on the library plans and input questions and feedback to the project team. The webinar will take place on Friday 27th November at 2.30pm. Please register by emailing or phoning us. Depending on demand, we will consider holding additional webinars if appropriate.

### Don't have access to the internet? Don't worry, you can still take part

- Call us on 020 7592 9592 to find out more or give your feedback
- We can post more information to you if you can't access it online
- Post your feedback to – Shenfield Library, Freepost CONNECT CONSULTATION

### About Essex Housing

Essex Housing is Essex County Council's housing development team. We were set up to build general needs, affordable and specialist housing, as well as improving and creating new community facilities. No site is the same, but we always set out to deliver well designed homes and neighbourhoods and reinvest any surpluses into public services through Essex County Council.



Rear view of proposed development

## 7.3. APPENDIX 4 – PRESS RELEASE

**ESSEX.GOV.UK**

[Home](#) / [News](#) / Essex Housing launches consultation on plans for new Shenfield Library

### Essex Housing launches consultation on plans for new Shenfield Library



Essex Housing, Essex County Council's housing development team, are set to launch a public consultation on proposals for the redevelopment of the site of Shenfield Library, which will include a new modern library.

The plans would see the current library building replaced with a larger and more flexible new library. It would also include the addition of a commercial unit and community meeting space. The outdoor public area at the front of the library would also be significantly enhanced.

The existing library building is expensive to maintain, in need of significant repair and is an inefficient use of the space available. The new build library would address these issues and be funded through the modest development of up to ten residential apartments above the ground floor.

The public consultation process on the redevelopment plans starts next week when local residents will be sent information about the proposed new library and a consultation website goes live. Essex Housing are inviting comments and feedback through a range of online and offline ways up until the middle of December.

Cllr Tony Bell, Essex County Council Cabinet Member for Economic Development said: "Our existing proposals to redevelop the Shenfield Library site would deliver a new, modern library as well as other potential commercial and community uses, and vastly improved outdoor public space. They have been developed in close consultation with the library service and local stakeholders to ensure the new library will deliver on the needs of library users and staff."

Cllr Susan Barker, Essex County Council Cabinet Member for Customer, Communities, Culture and Corporate added: "We look forward to sharing the current proposals with the local community and encourage residents to look out for the information next week and share their views. Before finalising our designs and submitting a planning application, we will review and reflect community feedback where appropriate so that the new library is shaped by local people."

#### Key proposals for the redevelopment of Shenfield Library

A modern library with a footprint of 286 square metres - larger than the current library. All aspects of the current facility would be updated and improved, including the main library and the children's library.

It would be spacious and open-plan. Floor-to-ceiling glazed windows at the front and sky-lights at the rear will ensure natural light is maximised.

There would be a meeting room available for use by library users and local groups.

A commercial unit in a prime location on the corner Hutton Road and Priant Avenue could be home to a retail or cafe business for example.

The outdoor public space at the front of the library would be enhanced, with two current design options for the layout of the space.

#### Key points about the consultation process

Residents and businesses in a wide radius around the library will receive information through their door about the proposed development and how to feedback.

The detailed plans can be viewed at our consultation website [www.shenfieldlibrary.co.uk](http://www.shenfieldlibrary.co.uk) which will go live next week. From next week residents without access to the internet can call 020 7582 9002 or request more information to be posted direct to them.

The project team will also conduct a public Zoom presentation about the plans, details of which, and how to register will be published on the information delivered to residents.

Residents can provide their feedback via a survey on the website, by phone, email and/or by post to a freepost address.

Feedback is sought until 16 December 2020.

#### About Essex Housing

Essex Housing is Essex County Council's housing development team. We were set up to build general needs, affordable and specialist housing, as well as improving and creating new community facilities. No task is too small, but we always set out to deliver well designed homes and neighbourhoods and reinvest any surpluses into public services through Essex County Council.

Last updated 10 November 2020



#### **7.4. APPENDIX 5 – EXAMPLE OF EMAIL SENT TO STAKEHOLDERS**

Dear X,

As you may be aware Essex Housing, Essex County Council's housing development team, have been developing proposals for a new modern library for Shenfield.

The plans would see the current library building (which is in need of ongoing costly repairs) replaced with a brand new larger, modern, and flexible library space. It would also include the addition of a commercial/community space and an enhanced outdoor public area at the front. The new library would be funded through the modest development of circa ten residential apartments above the ground floor.

Before finalising their designs and submitting a planning application for the new development, Essex Housing are sharing the proposals with the local community and inviting feedback. Essex Housing will review feedback before finalising plans for the library taking on board the views of the community.

A consultation website with more information about the proposals, and an opportunity to feedback, will go live on Monday 16 November. There will also be a range of offline ways to access information and feedback.

As an important local stakeholder we wanted to make you aware of the consultation process in advance.

A leaflet which includes information about the proposals as well as details on how to feedback will be delivered to local residents at the launch of the consultation next week.

If you have any queries about any of the above please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Best wishes,

Best wishes,

Connect

On behalf of Essex Housing

#### **7.5. APPENDIX 6 – LETTER SENT TO IMMEDIATE SITE NEIGHBOURS**

Dear Resident,

As you may be aware Essex Housing, Essex County Council's housing development team, have been developing proposals for a new modern library for Shenfield.

The plans would see the current library building (which is in need of ongoing costly repairs) rebuilt to include a larger, modern, and flexible library space. It would also include the addition of a commercial/community space and an enhanced outdoor public area at the front. The new library would be funded through the modest development of up to ten residential apartments above the ground floor.

## PROPOSED REDEVELOPMENT STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Before finalising their designs and submitting a planning application for the new development, Essex Housing are sharing the proposals with the local community and inviting feedback. Essex Housing will review feedback before finalising plans for the library, taking on board the views of the community. You should receive more information about that process next week.

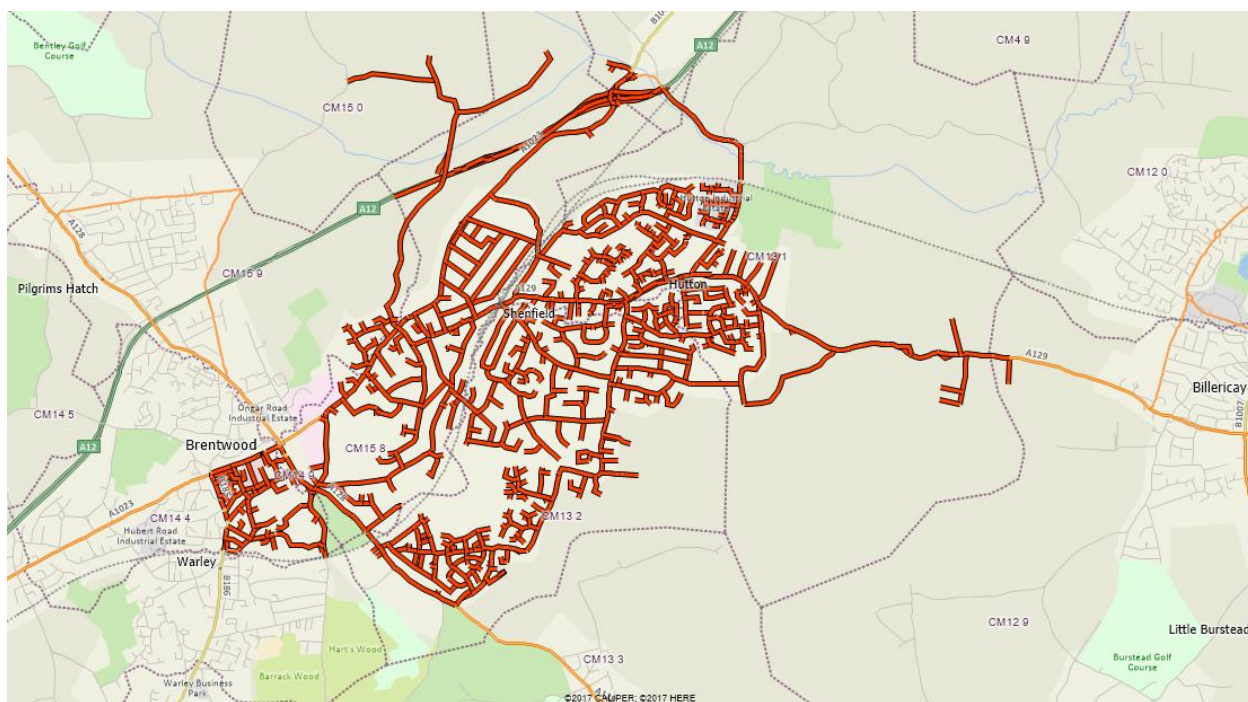
As an immediate neighbour to the library we wanted to make you aware of the consultation process in advance and offer you the opportunity to discuss the plans with the project team. If you would like to discuss with the team please call 0207 592 9592 or email [shenfieldlibrary@connectpa.co.uk](mailto:shenfieldlibrary@connectpa.co.uk).

If you have any queries about any of the above please don't hesitate to get in touch.

Yours faithfully,

Essex Housing

### 7.6. APPENDIX 6 – LEAFLET RADIUS



*Map showing the radius of the leaflet drop*