

# Land at Wickham Hall Estate Bishops Stortford

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## Essex Police Response

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Strategic Planning Team

Essex Police

## Essex Police response to Land at Wickham Hall Estate, Bishops Stortford

As a key emergency service provider, Essex Police advocates to continuously adapt and reflect its practices to ensure that the service provided is efficient and effective in keeping our communities safe. With the policing landscape continually changing we welcome any opportunities to develop and enhance this provision.

We note the scheme proposes the Erection of a Solar Photovoltaic Farm with supporting infrastructure and battery storage, inverters and transformers, fencing, landscaping works and connecting cable.

This document provides an initial response to this proposal and outlines the Essex Police considerations to development and infrastructure change which forms part of the organisations strategic planning considerations and provides key information on our policing priorities.

If further information or clarification is required to support this development, please contact the Strategic Planning team at [Strategic.Planning@essex.police.uk](mailto:Strategic.Planning@essex.police.uk).

## Essex Design Guide

This document supports the content and key objectives outlined in the Essex Design Guide for engaging with the emergency services during the design process for the creation of safe and secure communities and sustainable estate provision.

By working directly with developers and local planning authorities to influence the design and build of new places, we can collectively make new and existing communities as safe as they can be, delivering real benefits to the residents of Essex as well as those who visit for business or leisure activities<sup>1</sup>.

## Emergency Services engagement

### Key considerations

- To encourage effective engagement between Essex Police, Local Authorities and Developers at the earliest opportunity.
- To create a proactive, consistent, and informed early response to the new demand placed on emergency services that housing developments and infrastructure change will bring.
- To endeavour to create a collaboration programme with emergency services and other partners that will enhance our ability to achieve service benefits and property performance targets for the efficiency of the estate.

## Community Safety Partnership and Emergency Service Estates Provision

### Key considerations:

- Encouragement of proactive police service-related communication to new residents and communities that promote public confidence and cohesion.
- To deliver estates provision that responds to the demands of modern policing, embracing the digital and cultural enablers that allow us to reduce our physical footprint.
- Explore opportunities for a shared, environmentally sustainable co-located community estate that shares facilities in appropriate locations within the community to provide flexible spaces to

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<sup>1</sup> [Essex Design Guide](#)



accommodate the changing needs of policing and create a more local, visible, and accessible policing provision.

## Designing out crime and Secured by design

### Key considerations:

- To work with planners, architects, and developers to ensure that new developments in Essex provide a mix of well-designed homes, open spaces and promote neighbourhoods that consider community safety and wellbeing that provide benefit to all communities.
- That the prevention of Crime and Disorder is supported through well-designed places that includes the provision of a sense of community and safety.
- Ensuring 'Secured by Design' standards and applicable 'Police Crime Prevention Initiatives' are incorporated and fully exhausted throughout new development (including associated buildings) as a minimum whilst maximising opportunities against current and future and crime pattern changes.
- Implement a 'Crime Impact Statement' within the 'Design and Access Statement'. Such statements are devised to identify specific measures that will be adopted to reduce crime.

When considering future developments, it is imperative to achieve sustainable reductions in crime, to help people live and work in a safer society. Designing out Crime Officers, (DOCO's) specialise in the application of designing out crime and provide expert advice on crime prevention through environmental design, (CPTED principles) to a wide range of design and build professionals. Their role is fundamental in the development of safe and secure communities. The DOCO role is underpinned by National Planning Policy and Home Office agendas. DOCO's recommend developers to consider the foreseeability of crime and maximise on the opportunity to design such issues out, as to prevent the need for bespoke situational crime prevention measures in the future.

Police Crime Prevention Initiatives are a police-owned organisation working on behalf of the Police Service, to deliver a wide range of crime prevention initiatives, of which they promote Secured by Design (SBD). Supported by the DOCO, SBD provide a series of 'design guides' that enable the DOCO to work closely with architects, developers, and local authority planners throughout the life cycle of the proposed development. This will enable the DOCO to assist the developer to 'design out crime' by improving the layout and physical security of buildings from the initial conception, construction, and occupation.

### Solar Farm considerations

Current Home Office research suggests that thefts from solar farms are rising exponentially and are fuelled by the rising metal prices with items from solar panels to cabling, batteries and ancillary equipment being targeted. The Solar Trade Association have consulted with the National Metal Crime Working Group, which comprises of national police organisations, metal trade and recycling bodies, infrastructure organisations and other allied stakeholders, with a view to seeking risk commensurate options for security measures at solar farms.

Essex Police request the consideration for safety and crime prevention is included throughout all aspects of the design and planning process for this development and highlight the following points:

- A Risk Reduction Strategy should be available to cover the construction, operation and decommissioning of the Solar Farm.

- "Deer/stock boundary fencing" in relation to crime is not sufficient to deter or mitigate a crime risk and only provides a symbolic boundary.
- Mature dense natural hedging ideally of a spiky nature such as hawthorn and blackthorn can provide a strong deterrent especially when supplementing 'Deer Fencing' though should not be considered a substitute for security fencing protecting more vulnerable parts of the site. As with other measures hedging requires regular inspection to ensure its growth is not obstructing CCTV cameras and its ability to detect intrusion attempts.
- Open site lines across the countryside should be preserved and combined with stronger boundary treatments wherever possible.
- Inclusion of suitably mounted and monitored CCTV and Perimeter Intrusion Detection System (PIDS), 24-hour response, and enhanced building and compound security.
- Reference should be made to the BREEAM<sup>2</sup> document that suggest risk commensurate measures to reduce crime risk: [Planning guide to large scale ground mounted solar PV systems](#)
- Inclusion of suitable emergency service access points and implementation of vision zero principles where there are introductions of or changes to the road network.

The Essex Police DOCO response to this proposal will be provided under separate cover. For any queries relating to secured by design and designing out crime matters relating to new developments please contact: [designingoutcrime@essex.police.uk](mailto:designingoutcrime@essex.police.uk)

## Traffic management Considerations

### Key considerations:

- To ensure an understanding of the key objectives for managing road infrastructure, improved vehicle design, redesigning speed limits and renewing Essex Police enforcement policy, all of which will be forefront in Essex Police strategic road safety campaigns.
- To be engaged with master-planning for any transport related developments, collaboratively working with the relevant authorities to ensure that new developments are planned and designed to improve safety on the various road networks. This will include preventing those Killed or Seriously Injured (KSI) and Road Traffic Collisions where possible.
- To engage in the Safe System approach 'Vision Zero', recognise that human beings' lives and health should never be compromised by their need to travel and any fatal or serious injuries that occur within the road system are unacceptable. This is considered as best practice in road safety according to the World Health Organisation and the Organisation of Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD).

In the interest of road safety and reducing casualties linked to highways usage, Essex Police believe that developers should contribute to designing out the need for enforcement within the construction of newly built roads. This would apply to estate roads where the introduction of any desired speed limit is largely self-enforcing through design. This is especially relevant to the strong desire for 20mph limits or zones on new estates. Residents have an expectation that the 20mph limit or zone will be enforced, where it then becomes a local policing issue. Creative design can take out the need for enforcement.

For distributor roads we identify more and more roads being built by developers which become roads for distributing high volumes of traffic around new estates and potentially towns. These new roads have the

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<sup>2</sup> Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method



potential to become roads where young drivers may use them as roads to test their ability for travelling at high speeds.

For such examples we would look to ensure:

- Speed limits are appropriate and meet the needs of all road users and residents.
- With an evidenced case, and where possible, a developer is requested to install average speed detections systems to ensure road user compliance, thereby reducing the need for police presence to enforce speed limits on newly built roads.

Additionally, technology exists for red light enforcement at traffic lights and developers should consider enforcement technology as part of any traffic light systems installed, improving overall safety of the location but also providing an efficient way to enforce the restriction.

Considering the prevention of crime and to enhance community safety, Essex Police believe that commercial and residential developers should contribute to the costs of installing Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) systems on newly designed roads.

Developers also need to consider how their planning decisions can have a negative long-term impact upon neighbours and communities around simple things such as parking disputes through the lack of available parking, which can be factored into Designing Out Crime.

In terms of road safety, Developers should make provision for all road users and in particular the most vulnerable road users, cyclists and pedestrians. Essex Police request developers to engage, educate and enforce on the road network alongside the ethos of the five essential pillars in the Safe System approach, ultimately to reach zero road related deaths, these being:

- **Safe Speeds:** Road users understand the risks and implications of exceeding the speed limit and therefore, travel at appropriate speeds to the conditions and within posted speed limits.
- **Safe Road Use:** Road users who know and comply with the rules of the road and take responsibility for the safety of themselves and others, especially the vulnerable.
- **Safe Roads & Roadsides:** Road design encourages safe travel and one that is predictable and forgiving of mistakes.
- **Safe Vehicles:** That vehicle fleets comprise of well-maintained vehicles that reduce the risk of collisions and, in the event of a collision, reduce the harm to road users, including pedestrians, pedal cyclists, motorcyclists and vehicle occupants.
- **Post Collision Response & Care:** Provision of a more operative response to collisions by working effectively with all emergency services and the National Health Service (NHS). Road victims receive appropriate medical care and rehabilitation to minimise the severity and long-term impact of their injuries. Learnings from collisions are captured and acted upon. Families of those killed or seriously injured are appropriately supported.

## Zero Emission Fleet and Infrastructure Strategy

### Key considerations:

- To include infrastructure considerations to ensure and develop an efficient policing response in the future. This includes such matters as community based Electric Vehicle charging points to support the Essex Police Zero Emission Fleet and Infrastructure Strategy.

As part of Essex Police's comprehensive Zero Emission Fleet and Infrastructure Strategy, we are committed to achieving a fully electrified vehicle fleet by 2035. In pursuit of this objective, we have developed plans to install electric vehicle charging points across all our police premises. The broader strategy also recognises the crucial role of community-based charging infrastructure in supporting extended patrols and recharging vehicles during and after operations.

One of the primary challenges of electric vehicles is their limited range and lengthy charging time and access to external charging facilities is vital for the force to carry out their duties effectively. To ensure that we can recharge our vehicles locally and work in specific areas away from police premises for an extended period, we ask developers to consider the inclusion of charging facilities into their design, with one or two charging points allocated for emergency services use to support our operations.

By providing dedicated charging points for emergency services, we can expand our patrols in the area and increase visible police presence, thereby contributing to a safer environment for local communities and visitors. As well as promoting safer communities, this infrastructure plan aligns with our commitment to promote sustainable practices and support the transition towards a greener future.

## **Information on Essex policing priorities and context.**

### **PFCC Police and Crime plan 2021 - 2024<sup>3</sup>**

The Police and Crime Plan sets out the policing priorities and aims for keeping Essex safe. It brings together police, partners, and the people of Essex to build safe and secure communities. The commitments set out in the plan build on existing partnerships and seek to develop them in new and ambitious ways. These include greater collaboration between police and fire and closer working with local councils, community safety partnerships, and the voluntary, community and health sectors.

The Police and Crime Plan 2021 – 2024 will make a strategic commitment to prevention, a shift in our main effort from rapid response into a model of targeted prevention and early intervention.

The twelve plan priorities:

- Further investment in crime prevention
- Reducing drug driven violence
- Protecting vulnerable people and breaking the cycle of domestic abuse
- Reducing violence against women and girls
- Improving support for victims of crime
- Protecting rural and isolated areas
- Preventing dog theft
- Preventing business crime, fraud, and cyber crime
- Improving safety on our roads
- Encouraging volunteers and community support
- Supporting our officers and staff
- Increasing collaboration

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<sup>3</sup> [Police and Crime Plan - Essex Police, Fire & Crime Commissioner \(pfcc.police.uk\)](https://www.pfcc.police.uk)

## Essex Police Force Plan<sup>4</sup>

Essex Police force priorities are drawn from the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner's (PFCC) Police and Crime plan. The plan provides our main effort, which helps us focus our energies on our priorities and think about helping victims, identifying vulnerability, preventing violence, and being visible in everything we do, whatever role we do to ensure we:

- **Help people:** Deliver the best possible service prioritising threat, harm, risk and putting victims at heart of what we do.
- **Keep people safe:** Prevent crime, protect the vulnerable, keep our communities and people safe and work with partners to do this.
- **Catch criminals:** Identify suspects and bring them to justice targeting the most harmful and paying attention to the needs and views of victims.

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Document end

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<sup>4</sup> [The Essex Police Force Plan \(essex.police.uk\)](https://www.essex.police.uk)