Colchester City Council

Local Impact Report

Norwich to Tilbury Project by National Grid Electricity Transmission

1 Terms of Reference

Introduction

1.1 This report comprises the Local Impact Report (LIR) for Colchester City Council (CCC) to the Norwich to Tilbury Development Consent Order (DCO).

1.2 As set out in the Planning Act 2008, the purpose of the LIR is to provide written details of the likely impact the proposed development (the 'Project') would have on any part of CCC's authority area. The local knowledge and evidence held by Local Authorities is valuable to the NSIP process and can provide further insight to that provided by the applicant in the Development Consent Order (DCO) application. The LIR does not seek to make a judgement on the acceptability of the project. Instead, it assesses the extent to which the proposals accord with national policy and in particular, local plan policy, highlighting any areas of tension or conflict and distinguishing between impacts of greatest potential significance and those that are temporary or of lesser importance in the longer term.

1.3 Colchester City Council has had regard to the purpose of LIRs as set out in s60(3) of the Planning Act 2008 (as amended), the Planning Inspectorate's guidance 'Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects: Advice for Local Authorities, and the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) guidance 'Planning Act 2008: Examination Stage for Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects' in preparing this LIR.

1.4 National Grid Electricity Transmission has submitted a DCO application for 400kV grid reinforcement between Norwich Main substation and Tilbury Substation.

1.5 This LIR identifies the local impacts of the proposal. It also considers the impacts of the proposed development as a whole but focusses in on the impacts for Colchester City Council administrative area in Essex. Other host authorities along the route of the proposal will outline the impacts of the development on their respective administrative areas. The Council has worked with the other host authorities to collaborate and share expertise to understand the impacts of the proposal.

Scope

1.6 The LIR describes the impacts of the proposed scheme as they affect the administrative area of Colchester City Council.

1.7 The details of the proposed scheme can be summarised as:

- A new 400 kilovolt (“kV”) electricity transmission connection of approximately 180 kilometres ("km”) in overall length from Norwich Main Substation to Tilbury Substation via Bramford Substation, a new East Anglian Connection Nodd (EACN) substation and a new Tilbury North Substation, including:
    - Approximately 159 km of new overhead line supported on approximately 509 pylons, either standard steel lattice pylons (approximately 50 m in height) or low height steel lattice pylons (approximately 40 m in height) and some of which would be gantries (typically up to 15 m in height) within proposed Cable Sealing End (CSE) compounds or existing or proposed substations
    - Approximately 21 km of 400 kV underground cabling, some of which would be located through the Dedham Vale National Landscape (an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)
- Up to seven new CSE compounds (with permanent access) to connect the overhead lines to the underground cables
- Modification works to connect into the existing Norwich Main Substation and a substation extension at the existing Bramford Substation
- A new 400 kV substation on the Tendring Peninsula, referred to as the EACN Substation (with a new permanent access). This is proposed to be an Air Insulated Switchgear (AIS) substation
- A new 400 kV substation to the south of Orsett Golf Course in Essex, referred to as the Tilbury North Substation (with a new permanent access). This is proposed to be a Gas Insulated Switchgear (GIS) substation
- Modifications to the existing National Grid Electricity Transmission overhead lines to facilitate the connection of the existing network into the new Tilbury North Substation to provide connection to the Tilbury Substation
- Ancillary and/or temporary works associated with the construction of the Project.

Purpose and Structure of the LIR

1.8 The Local Impact Report's primary purpose is to identify the policies in the Local Plan in so far as they are relevant to the proposed development and the extent to which the developments accord with those policies. The key issues are identified, following by commentary on the extent to which the applicant addresses those issues. Finally, the adequacy of the application/Development Consent Order is considered.

1.9 The LIR gives a brief overview of the description of the site and surroundings and a general review of the details of the proposal to highlight particular features. However, the applicants Environmental Statement (ES) provides sufficient description and details of the proposal.

1.10 This LIR covers areas where Colchester City Council (CCC) has a statutory function or holds particular expertise. CCC defers to Essex County Council on all other matters, to that set out in this Local Impact Report.

1.11 A Statement of Common Ground (SoCG) is under preparation with the applicants and the LIR does not intend to duplicate this, however, there may be some matters, for example, 'Requirements' where there is overlap.

2 Description of the area of the proposed development

2.1 The development covers the 400kV transmission line spanning from the Norwich Main Substation in Norfolk into Tilbury Substation in Essex.

2.2 The project route is separated into several sections as set out in the Environmental Statement, passing through multiple administrative areas as outlined below.

Section A – South Norfolk Council

Section B – Mid-Suffolk District Council

Section C – Babergh District Council, Colchester City Council and Tendring District Council

Section D – Colchester City Council

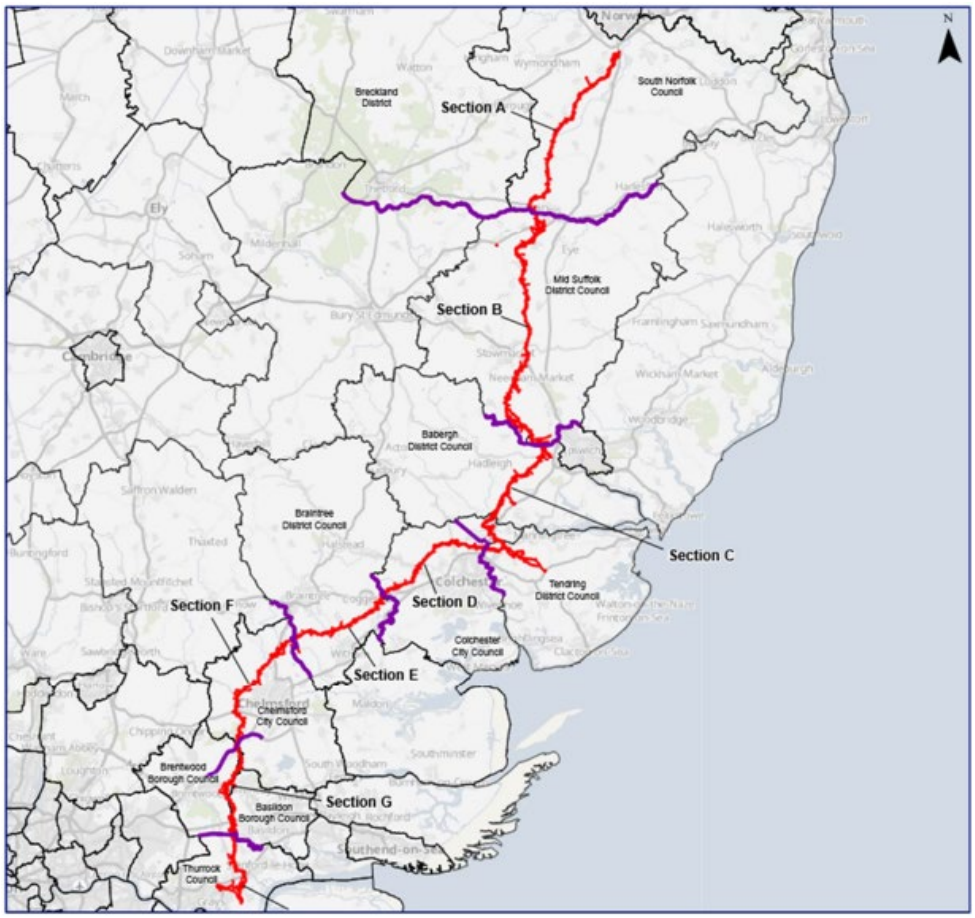
Section E – Braintree District Council

Section F – Chelmsford City Council and Brentwood Borough Council

Section G – Basildon Borough Council and Brentwood Borough Council (and part of Chelmsford City Council)

Section H – Thurrock Council

2.3 A map of the route is shown below.



2.4 As identified above, Colchester City Council is included within two sections of the project route. A further description of the project route in sections C and D is outlined below.

Section C and D

2.5 Section C begins from Bramford Substation, heading south-easterly through Suffolk and into Colchester city's administrative area via Langham before heading further east to the EACN substation location in Ardleigh.

2.6 From the EACN, the route heads west through North Colchester, passing through or near several settlements before dropping south-west running north of Marks Tey and into the Braintree district.

2.7 The key sections coming through the Colchester district can be identified as:

- **Bramford substation to EACN** – This section is fully undergrounded, entering the Colchester district in Langham, passing near Dedham, before heading into Tendring where the EACN is located. This section passes through a large section of the Dedham Vale National Landscape, an agricultural landscape valued for its iconic lowland river valley, scattered woodlands, grazing meadows, ancient woodland and its long distance views from higher ground. It then enters the Langham Farmland Plateau character area, a predominantly open, arable landscape with large fields, scattered woodland and dispersed farmsteads and cottages, contributing to an overall rural character.

- **EACN to Great Horkesley CSEC** – Overhead line will be built from the EACN to the Great Horkesley cable sealing end compound. The line will cut across the North of Colchester passing through settlements including Boxted, Langham and Great Horkesley. It passes through Langham Farmland Plateau character area, before entering the Great Horkesley Farmland Plateau area. The latter character area is predominantly arable, with dispersed small villages and farmsteads connected along main routes from Colchester

- **Great Horkesley undergrounding** – The line is then undergrounded through Great Horkesley heading west to Colchester Road, north of West Bergholt towards another CSEC. This falls within the Great Horkesley Farmland Plateau character area before entering Colne River Valley Slopes character area. The latter is characterised by steep valleys, scattered woodland, dispersed villages and farmsteads and numerous listed houses, halls and farmhouses created an overall rural, historic character.

- **Colchester Road (north of West Bergholt) to Marks Tey** – Overhead lines then continue south-west passing through or alongside many villages including Fordham, Fordstreet and Aldham, Eight Ash Green and Great Tey before heading just north of Marks Tey. The route passes through the Colne River Valley Slopes and Colne River Valley Floor landscape character areas, before entering the Great Tey Farmland Plateau. The slopes area is a mix of wet meadows, floodplain and arable fields with generally open views and a rural character. The farmland plateau is predominantly arable with scattered woodland, open landscapes with views and dispersed small villages, creating a rural character overall.

Planning history

2.8 A full consideration of the planning history is set out in the applicants Environmental Statement (ES). Details of committed developments which interact with the Order Limits are listed below:

- Ref 240279 The restoration of wetland features and habitats at Fiddler's Hill Meadow through naturalising the river with its floodplain by lowering the river bank at two locations (maximum 60cm deep) and the excavation of very shallow scrapes (maximum 30 cm deep). Conditional Approval 6/1/2025. The proposed pylon will sit within the red line boundary of this development.

- Ref: 223183 Anglian Water Pipeline, Dedham to Great Horkesley. Proposed hybrid planning application for section of the proposed Bury St Edmunds to Colchester Pipeline Scheme with full planning consent sought for a pipeline and associated above ground infrastructure; and outline consent for above ground infrastructure. Approved 08/11/2023. The consented water pipeline intersects the Order Limits for the Project in proximity to Docura’s Farm, Langham.

- 212006 Fordham Place, Bergholt Road, Fordham Colchester CO6 3NU Excavation of reservoir for agricultural irrigation purposes with access track. Prior Approval Required (Approved) 13/08/21. Overlaps with the Order Limits for the Project, particularly in relation to part of an access track around the irrigation reservoir.

2.9 There are currently no adopted local plan allocations within or close to the Order Limits in Section D. However, the Preferred Options Local Plan for Colchester includes proposed allocations, which carry no weight at this early stage of plan making.

3 Policy Context/Relevant Planning Policy

National Policy

National Policy Statements

3.1 NPS (EN-1) is the overarching national policy statement for energy and was published in November 2023 and updated in January 2024. This sets out the UK Government's commitment to increasing renewable generation capacity and recognises that in the short to medium term, much of the new capacity is likely to come from onshore and offshore wind.

3.2 NPS (EN-3) is the UK Government's strategy for renewable energy infrastructure.

3.3 NPS (EN-5) is the UK Government's strategy for electricity networks infrastructure. This policy statement applies to not only transmission systems but also associated infrastructure such as substations and converter stations. This policy statement sets out the general principles that should be applied in the assessment of development consent application across the range of energy technologies.

National Planning Policy Framework

3.4 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was last updated in December 2024/January 2025. It sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied for assessing applications for planning permission and related determinations under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended).

3.5 The NPPF does not contain specific policies or guidance for NSIPs; these are determined in accordance with the decision-making framework in the Planning Act 2008 (as amended). However, the NPPF does contain information which may be a material consideration when considering NSIP proposals

Horlock and Holford Rules

3.6 The Holford Rules are the National Grid's guidelines for the routing of new high voltage overhead transmission lines. The Horlock Rules are the National Grid's guidelines on the siting and design of new substations.

Local Planning Policy

3.7 The City Council's Adopted Local Plan is in two parts, Section 1 which provides a shared strategic policy context and addressing cross boundary matters for North Essex together with Braintree and Tendring Councils and was adopted on 2 February 2021. Section 2 of the Colchester Local Plan 2017-2033 provides the policy framework, site allocations and development management policies for the City up to 2033 and was adopted on 4 July 2022.

3.8 There are several local planning policies within the Section 1 and Section 2 adopted Local Plan that are relevant to the consideration of the proposal. These include:

3.9 **Section 1 Local Plan:**

Policy SP1: Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development

Policy SP2: Recreational disturbance Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy (RAMS)

Policy SP3: Spatial Strategy for North Essex

Policy SP5: Employment

Policy SP6: Infrastructure and Connectivity

3.10 **Section 2 Local Plan:**

Policy SG1: Colchester's Spatial Strategy

Policy SG7: Infrastructure Delivery and Impact Mitigation

Policy ENV1: Environment

Policy ENV3: Green Infrastructure

Policy ENV4: Dedham Vale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

Policy CC1: Climate Change

Policy DM6: Economic Development in Rural Areas and the Countryside

Policy DM1: Health and Wellbeing

Policy DM5: Tourism, Leisure, Culture and Heritage

Policy DM16: Historic Environment

3.11 Across the city, several town or parish councils have created or are in the process of creating neighbourhood plans. At the time of writing, 10 neighbourhood plans have been created and adopted. The land within the neighbourhood plans of Boxted, Eight Ash Green, Great Tey, Marks Tey and West Bergholt would be affected by the development proposal.

3.12 Additionally, several town or parish councils have written Village Design Statements. The land within the Village Design Statements of Boxted, Dedham Eight Ash Green, Langham, Little Horkesley, West Bergholt would be affected by the development proposal.

3.13 The Council is currently reviewing its local plan to consider National Policy and ensure its stays up to date. The reviewed Local Plan will have a plan period from 2026-2041. The Plan has been through Regulation 18 consultation from November 2025 – January 2026, being prepared for final submission by December 2026. However, at its current stage it is not yet a material consideration for the Norwich to Tilbury project, but further information will be provided on the status of the document during the examination period.

3.14 The Dedham Vale National Landscape and Stour Valley Management Plan has been prepared by the Dedham Vale National Landscape and Stour Valley Partnership. It seeks to guide the management decisions in the Dedham Vale National Landscape and Stour Valley project area for the five-year period of its lifespan. The Plan aims to protect the natural beauty and quality of the landscape, considering how the management can benefit place, people, nature and climate. ‘Relevant authorities must seek to further the purposes’ of the designated national landscape. This includes Colchester City Council. The 2026-2031 Management Plan was endorsed by Colchester City Council in February 2026.

4 Principle of project

4.1 CCC acknowledge that enhanced transmission infrastructure will play a central role in tackling climate change and in meeting Government targets in the lead up to net-zero by 2050. As part of the Great Grid Upgrade therefore, Norwich to Tilbury is recognised as a proposal that would contribute to the decarbonisation of the UK's energy supply, in accordance with the Clean Power 2030 Action Plan, helping to deliver the Government targets of net zero.

4.2 CCC also accepts that network reinforcement is necessary to accommodate the expected growth in demand for electricity taking account of the additional contracted / planned electricity generation in the East Anglia region, and that timing for the project is driven by the need for capacity in the transmission system taking account of the requirements of the National Electricity Transmission System Security and Quality of Supply Standard (SQSS). The Council is supportive of the national transition towards a low or zero carbon economy but considers the shift towards the delivery of low carbon energy will only be successfully achieved if developments such as Norwich to Tilbury can be appropriately located taking into account and suitably mitigating the very real impacts they have on the natural environment, landscapes and local communities within which they are situated. However, such national benefit should not be secured at the expense of local host communities, landscapes and environments that would be affected by such development. From the outset of its engagement on this project and through all stages of consultation,

4.3 CCC has maintained a position that its preferred strategic option for meeting the need for additional transmission capacity is that of securing an integrated offshore technology that minimises onshore transmission infrastructure and does not include overhead lines (OHL's) and pylons along its entire length. CCC is strongly of the view that a more sensitively designed scheme could deliver the best outcome for Essex in the interests of safeguarding the amenities of local communities and the environment. ECC's concern, informing its preferred option and reflected in the comments of many residents, is founded on the significant impact a scheme based on the transmission of energy lines via overhead power cables will have on affected communities, the environment and the economy of Essex.

4.4 The proposed technical solution involving overhead powerlines supported on pylons, would result in the introduction of a significant number of incongruous and intrusive features of industrial character into a predominantly open rural landscape; the effects of which would be permanent and due to the height and scale of the structures involved, cannot be successfully mitigated. CCC notes that an offshore High Voltage Direct Current (HVDC) cable solution would be more expensive than the preferred onshore solution with OHLs, although it would be less expensive than an onshore solution with underground High Voltage Alternate Current (HVAC) cables, as set out by 6.3 Environmental Statement Chapter 3 – Alternatives (APP-127). Where proposed, the areas of undergrounding are supported due to the reduction of visual impact on sensitive landscapes, but the Council is conscious of the concerns regarding the visual impact of the remaining sections of OHLs. A more extensive combination of onshore and offshore technologies to mitigate the clear harm could therefore have been considered, beyond the areas of underground cabling currently proposed, to address the real and significant impacts the OHLs have on the natural environment, landscapes and local communities within which they are situated. It is contended that there has been too great a reliance by NGET on the contracted energy generation position to identify the maximum requirement for additional transmission capacity in East Anglia.

4.5 The Hiorns Report (as submitted to the ExA with the Norfolk County Council Relevant Representation (RR-2753)) identified that it is extremely unlikely that all of the contracted energy generation projects would come forward and/or connect at the volumes stated or dates contracted. It identified a need for sensitivity analysis to assess the likelihood of all contracted projects proceeding (either at all, or by the dates assumed). The report concluded that there was more time available to consider further analysis of potential options, including a potential offshore HVDC link, without prejudicing the development of offshore projects in the East Anglian region. It could not be concluded that the NGET proposal was the best option. In response, NGET suggested it could not delay its reinforcement of the transmission network beyond 2030 without being in breach of its contractual and licence obligations. CCC has accepted the relevance of those contractual and licence obligations. In so doing, the CCC response concluded that a further review of the contracted electricity generation was needed as part of the DCO submission.

4.6 CCC does not believe that NGET has provided any new evidence or sensitivity testing to refute the conclusion of the Hiorns report that the Norwich to Tilbury project is not needed by 2030. While CCC has had regard to the TEC Register in the submitted DCO, CCC considers it essential that in determining what future expansion is needed, more transparency is provided about the status of the contracted connections and the likelihood of those projects being ready to connect to the transmission network by 2030. The Applicant must not restrict the justification for future network expansion solely to the ESO contracted position. This clarification of the contractual position to inform the need and timescale for the planned Norwich to Tilbury Project is still required. Until this is evidenced, CCC maintains its position that credible alternatives such as an offshore-centred approach or HVDC undergrounding, delivered at pace, to minimise onshore infrastructure in Essex should continue to be fully explored so as to minimise the visual instruction and environmental impact.

4.7 In summary, the current application proposes OHLs supported on 50m high lattice pylons, with undergrounding primarily in the Dedham Vale National Landscape and Little Horkesley area. As such, the scheme as put forward would have very significant impacts as set out in sections of this local impact report. If indeed the timing for the network reinforcement is less acute, as suggested in the Hiorns Report, alternative schemes to the current lattice pylons scheme should be explored in more detail (such as offshore connections and HVDC undergrounding) to ascertain whether they would achieve better environmental outcomes overall, than the current submitted scheme, at acceptable costs, and if so put them forward at pace to achieve the required network reinforcement instead of the submitted scheme. Despite these in principle concerns, CCC considers the shift towards the delivery of low carbon energy will only be successfully achieved if developments such as Norwich to Tilbury take into account and mitigate the very real impacts they have on the natural environment, landscapes and local communities within which they are situated.

4.8 If the proposal is to receive favourable consideration it is important that appropriate levels of mitigation and legacy benefits are secured. In particular, alongside community benefits for local residents and communities, CCC strongly believes the Norwich to Tilbury project should deliver significant beneficial socio-economic benefits to the host communities. CCC is concerned that this issue - and especially the associated social value opportunities around skills, training, and future employment - have not been fully addressed. NGET needs to address this significant shortcoming as a matter of priority.

Impacts by Issue

5 Agriculture and soils

Policy Context

National Policy Statements

Overarching National Policy Statement for Energy (EN-1)

5.1 5.11.4 states “Development of land will affect soil resources, including physical loss of and damage to soil resources, through land contamination and structural damage. Indirect impacts may also arise from changes in the local water regime, organic matter content, soil biodiversity and soil process”.

5.2 5.11.12 states “Applicants should seek to minimise impacts on the best and most versatile agricultural land (defined as land in grades 1, 2 and 3a of the Agricultural Land Classification) and preferably use land in areas of poorer quality (grades 3b, 4 and 5)”.

5.3 5.11.13 states “Applicants should also identify any effects and seek to minimise impacts on soil health and protect and improve soil quality taking into account any mitigation measures proposed”.

5.4 5.11.4 states “Applicants are encouraged to develop and implement a Soil Management Plan which could help minimise potential land contamination. The sustainable reuse of soils needs to be carefully considered in line with good practice guidance where large quantities of soils are surplus to requirements or are affected by contamination”.

5.5 5.11.34 states “The Secretary of State should ensure that applicants do not site their scheme on the best and most versatile agricultural land without justification. Where schemes are to be sited on best and most versatile agricultural land the Secretary of State should take into account the economic and other benefits of that land. Where development of agricultural land is demonstrated to be necessary, areas of poorer quality land should be preferred to those of a higher quality”.

National Planning Policy Framework

5.6 Paragraph 187 states that “Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:

a) protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity or geological value and soils (in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the development plan);

b) recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services – including the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land, and of trees and woodland;"

Local Plan Policy

5.7 Whilst there are no local plan policies of direct relevance to this chapter, the adopted Section 2 Local Plan does recognise the importance of agriculture for supporting local economies and communities. Additionally, the second theme for the objectives of the borough states that the Council wants to "protect and enhance designated sites, geodiversity and soils".

Local Impact Assessment

5.8 **Construction Phase Impacts**

Positive

5.9 None identified.

Neutral

5.10 None identified.

Negative

5.11 There would be a temporary reduction of Best and Most Versatile (BMV - agricultural land class grades 1, 2 and 3a) agricultural land due to occupation by surface infrastructure (e.g. construction compounds, haul roads). This could impact on the soil quality of the area and any field drainage system, further affecting productivity and drainage, particularly in areas where cables are being undergrounded.

5.12 There would be a permanent loss of agricultural land where cable sealing end compounds are built near Great Horkesley and West Bergholt.

5.13 **Operational Phase Impacts**

Positive

5.14 None identified

Neutral

5.15 None identified

Negative

5.16 There would be a permanent loss of agricultural land where cable sealing end compounds are built near Great Horkesley and West Bergholt. There may be ongoing impacts on field drainage and soil quality as a result of works completed during construction.

Required mitigation/compensation

5.17 To address the impacts, BMV land would need to be remediated to the same standard following construction and decommissioning, and ensure any field drainage systems were restored/replaced. This includes land where underground cabling will be laid which has the potential to have the greatest impact on drainage.

5.18 The Council notes the temporary loss of best and most versatile agricultural land (agricultural land class grades 1, 2 and 3a) during construction, alongside the permanent loss where design features like the Cable Sealing End Compounds (CSECs) are built. Both are unfortunate.

6 Air Quality

Policy Context

National Policy Statements

Overarching National Policy Statement for Energy (EN-1)

6.1 Paragraph 5.2.1 states “Energy infrastructure development can have adverse effects on air quality. The construction, operation and decommissioning phases can involve emissions to air which could lead to adverse impacts on health, on protected species and habitats, or on the wider countryside and species”.

National Planning Policy Framework

6.2 Paragraph 187 states that “planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by: e) preventing new and existing development from contributing to, being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by, unacceptable levels of soil, air, water or noise pollution or land instability. Development should, wherever possible, help to improve local environmental conditions such as air and water quality, taking into account relevant information such as river basin management plans”.

6.3 Paragraph 199 states that “planning policies and decisions should sustain and contribute towards compliance with relevant limit values or national objectives for pollutants, taking into account the presence of Air Quality Management Areas and Clean Air Zones, and the cumulative impacts from individual sites in local areas. Opportunities to improve air quality or mitigate impacts should be identified, such as through traffic and travel management, and green infrastructure provision and enhancement”.

Local Plan Policy

Policy ENV5: Pollution and Contaminated Land

“Proposals will be supported that will not result in an unacceptable risk to public health or safety (…)or existing uses due to the potential of air pollution, noise nuisance (…). Proposals for developments within designated Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs) or where development within a nearby locality may impact on an AQMA are required, first, to be located in such a way as to reduce emissions overall, and secondly to reduce the direct impacts of those developments”.

6.4 It should be noted that whilst the project does not pass through designated AQMAs in Colchester, the project has the potential to have knock-on effects to worsen congestion and thus air quality in designated AQMAs..

6.5 **Local Impact Assessment**

6.6 **Construction Phase Impacts**

Positive

6.7 None identified

Neutral

6.8 None identified

Negative

6.9 The project will contribute to emissions of nitrogen dioxide and particulate matter. However, the Environmental Statement determines that these impacts on receptors will be negligible. The Council agrees with this judgement.

6.10 The project will produce construction dust emissions which will produce medium ecological risk and low risk to human health.

6.11 The standard mitigation set out in the Outline Dust Management Plan appears acceptable.

6.12 The use of generators in temporary construction areas will produce impacts on air quality. However, as the Environmental Statement has not detailed the size, type or exact location of where these generators will be located within the temporary construction areas, it is not possible to determine the full impact of the use of these on air quality.

6.13 **Operational Phase Impacts**

Positive

6.14 None identified

Neutral

6.15 None identified

Negative

6.16 None identified

Required mitigation/compensation

6.17 The Environmental Statement sets out that there are no predicted exceedances of the air quality objectives for annual mean NO2 or PM10 and no predicted exceedances of the PM2.5 Environmental Target at human receptor locations along the affected road network. The magnitude of change at all receptors for all pollutants assessed has been considered to be negligible and therefore not significant.

Dust

6.18 The potential construction dust emissions from demolition, earthworks, construction and track-out activities have been considered using the approaches set out in the current IAQM guidance. The assessment sets out that there is a high risk from dust soiling, medium ecological risk and low risk to human health. Standard mitigation is proposed by implementation of Dust Management Plans. Document 7.2 Appendix D Outline Dust Management Plan appears acceptable.

6.19 Generators and Non-Road Mobile Machinery (NRMM)

It is not clear where generators will be located. Chapter 4 sets out a list of proposed temporary construction compounds. However, Chapter 7 Figure 7.7 identifies temporary construction areas, some of the temporary construction compounds set out in Chapter 4 and other construction areas with 100m buffers. Figure 7.7 needs to be updated to clearly identify where generators are to be housed. There is no information relating to the potential type/size of generators. With the current lack of information, it is not possible to review this any further.

6.20 Nitrogen Deposition

Chapter 7 identifies no significant residual effect at any sensitive ecological sites.
The Senior Scientific Officer advising the Council on air quality impacts of the project has reviewed the air quality documentation and is content that the air quality impacts of the project on human receptors and mitigation and management plans to manage the impacts have been identified and are acceptable.

6.21 However, it has been noted that the size, type or location of generators to be used in the temporary construction areas are not detailed within the Air Quality chapter of the Environmental Statement. The applicant needs to outline these details in further plans in order for the impact of the use of generators on air quality to be assessed.

7 Ecology and Biodiversity

7.1 **Policy Context**

7.2 **National Policy Statements**

Overarching National Policy Statement for Energy (EN-1)

7.3 Paragraph 4.6.6 states that “Energy NSIP proposals, whether onshore or offshore, should seek opportunities to contribute to and enhance the natural environment by providing net gains for biodiversity, and the wider environment where possible”.

7.4 Paragraph 4.6.12 states that “When delivering biodiversity net gain off-site, developments should do this in a manner that best contributes to the achievement of relevant wider strategic outcomes, for example by increasing habitat connectivity, enhancing other ecosystem service outcomes, or considering use of green infrastructure strategies. Reference should be made to relevant national or local plans and strategies, to inform off-site biodiversity net gain delivery. If published, the relevant strategy is the Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS)”.

7.5 Paragraph 5.4.17 states that “Where the development is subject to EIA, the applicant should ensure that the ES clearly sets out any effects on internationally, nationally, and locally designated sites of ecological or geological conservation importance (including those outside England), on protected species and on habitats and other species identified as being of principal importance for the conservation of biodiversity, including irreplaceable habitats”.

7.6 Paragraph 5.4.18 states that “The applicant should provide environmental information proportionate to the infrastructure where EIA is not required to help the Secretary of State consider thoroughly the potential effects of a proposed project”

7.7 Paragraph 5.4.19 states that “The applicant should show how the project has taken advantage of opportunities to conserve and enhance biodiversity and geological conservation interests”.

7.8 Paragraph 5.4.20 states that “Applicants should consider any reasonable opportunities to maximise the restoration, creation, and enhancement of wider biodiversity, and the protection and restoration of the ability of habitats to store or sequester carbon as set out under Section 4.6”.

7.9 Paragraph 5.4.34 states that “Consideration should be given to improvements to, and impacts on, habitats and species in, around and beyond developments, for wider ecosystem services and natural capital benefits, beyond those under protection and identified as being of principal importance. This may include considerations and opportunities identified through Local Nature Recovery Strategies, and national goals and targets set through the Environment Act 2021 and the Environmental Improvement Plan 2023”.

7.10 Paragraph 5.4.35 states that “Applicants should include appropriate avoidance, mitigation, compensation, and enhancement measures as an integral part of the proposed development. In particular, the Applicant should demonstrate that:

- during construction, they will seek to ensure that activities will be confined to the minimum areas required for the works.
- the timing of construction has been planned to avoid or limit disturbance
- during construction and operation best practice will be followed to ensure that risk of disturbance or damage to species or habitats is minimised, including as a consequence of transport access arrangements.
- habitats will, where practicable, be restored after construction works have finished.
- opportunities will be taken to enhance existing habitats rather than replace them, and where practicable, create new habitats of value within the site landscaping proposals. Where habitat creation is required as mitigation, compensation, or enhancement, the location and quality will be of key importance. In this regard habitat creation should be focused on areas where the most ecological and ecosystems benefits can be realised.
- mitigations required as a result of legal protection of habitats and species will be complied with”.

7.11 Paragraph 5.4.44 states that “The Secretary of State should consider what appropriate requirements should be attached to any consent and/or in any planning obligations entered into, in order to ensure that any mitigation or biodiversity net gain measures, if offered, are delivered and maintained. Any habitat creation or enhancement delivered including linkages with existing habitats for compensation or biodiversity net gain should generally be maintained for a minimum period of 30 years, or for the lifetime of the project, if longer”.

National Policy Statement for electricity networks infrastructure (EN-5)

7.12 Paragraph 2.5.1 states that “When planning and evaluating the proposed development’s contribution to environmental and biodiversity net gain, it will be important – for both the applicant and the Secretary of State – to supplement the generic guidance set out in EN-1 (Section 4.6) with recognition that the linear nature of electricity networks infrastructure can allow for excellent opportunities to: i. reconnect important habitats via green corridors, biodiversity stepping zones, and reestablishment of appropriate hedgerows”;

7.13 Paragraph 2.9.3 states that “Electricity networks infrastructure pose a particular potential risk to birdlife including large birds, such as swans and geese, and perching birds. These may collide with overhead lines and risk being electrocuted. Large birds may also be electrocuted when landing or taking off by completing an electric circuit between live and ground wires. Even perching birds can be killed as soon as their wings touch energised parts of the infrastructure”.

7.14 Paragraph 2.9.4 states that “Applicants should consider measures to make lines more visible such as bird flappers and diverters which are covered in more detail in paragraphs 2.10.3 and 2.10.4”.

7.15 Paragraph 2.9.5 states that “The applicant will need to consider whether the proposed line will cause such problems at any point along its length and take this into consideration in the preparation of the ES (see Section 4.3 of EN-1)”.

7.16 Paragraph 2.9.6 states that “Particular consideration should be given to feeding and hunting grounds, migration corridors and breeding grounds, where they are functionally linked to sites designated or allocated under the ‘national site network’ provisions of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations”.

National Planning Policy Framework

7.17 Paragraph 187 states that planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:

a) protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity or geological value and soils (in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the development plan)
b) minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures and incorporating features which support priority or threatened species such as swifts, bats and hedgehogs;

Local Plan Policy

7.18 **Policy ENV1 - Environment**

“The Local Planning Authority will safeguard the Borough’s biodiversity, geology, history and archaeology”

“D. Irreplaceable habitats Proposals that would result in the loss of irreplaceable habitats, such as ancient woodland, Important Hedgerows and veteran trees will not be permitted unless there are wholly exceptional reasons and a suitable compensation strategy, to the satisfaction of the local planning authority, exists”

Neighbourhood Plans

Great Tey - POLICY GTTEY5: WILDLIFE-FRIENDLY DEVELOPMENT A. All development proposals requiring planning permission should deliver a minimum of 10% net gain in biodiversity in addition to protecting existing habitats and species, including hedgerows and mature trees. Development should take a ‘biodiversity-first’ approach and should maximise the delivery of biodiversity net gains on site. If on-site delivery is not possible then it must be clearly demonstrated that all reasonable options for on-site provision have been considered prior to off-site provision. B. The incorporation of design features into new development that encourages local wildlife and biodiversity to thrive will be supported. C. Where appropriate and practicable, development should be designed to retain trees, shrubs and hedgerows of arboricultural, habitat and amenity value on. site and to conserve and enhance connectivity to the wider multifunctional green and blue infrastructure networks.

West Bergholt Neighbourhood Plan – Policy PP7: Natural Environment “Development proposals which provide protection and where appropriate enhance biodiversity”. Policy PP8: Recreation disturbance Avoidance & Mitigation Strategy “All residential development within the zones of influence of Habitat Sites will be required to make a financial contribution”

7.19 **Marks Tey Neighbourhood Plans –** Policy MT11: Protecting and enhancing our natural environment. Development proposals will be expected to retain existing features of biodiversity value on site or likely to be affected by the development and provide a measurable net gain in biodiversity through for example: • The creation of new natural habitats; • The planting of additional trees and hedgerows; and • Creating new wildlife corridors linking up existing ones

Local Impact Assessment

7.20 **Construction Phase Impacts**

Positive

7.21 None identified

Neutral

7.22 None identified

Negative

7.23 There will be temporary impacts on habitats during the construction of pylons, overhead lines and underground cable sections. This includes species collision with machinery and infrastructure, habitat disturbance, loss and fragmentation.

7.24 During the construction of the overhead lines, a 40m wide swathe of vegetation will have to be removed. This is greater for underground cabling, where a 120m wide swathe of vegetation may be removed in addition to vegetation loss caused by the construction of the cable sealing end compounds.

7.25 There are two local wildlife sites (LWS) in Colchester falling within the Order Limits, Black Brook LWS and Harrow Wood LWS.

7.26 At Black Brook LWS, there is identified potential for water quality deterioration due to silted or polluted runoff which without mitigation is considered to have a small negative impact. There is also potential for habitat loss due to accidental encroachment, which without mitigation is considered to have a medium negative impact. With mitigation, the impacts are outlined to not be significant. Within the 2025 Landscape Character Assessment it is noted that the Black Brook includes “an extensive mosaic of habitats(…) which forms a valuable wildlife corridor”.

7.27 At Harrow Wood LWS, there is identified potential for accidental encroachment into ancient woodland which without mitigation is considered to have a medium negative impact. With mitigation, impacts are outlined to be not be significant.

7.28 There will also be approximately 47 individual trees and substantial portions of 20 groups within Colchester (≈ 32 800 m² of canopy) removed during the construction of the pipeline, including 1 ancient woodland tree. This will have an impact on reducing local wildlife habitat, for birds and bats.

7.29 There is particular concern that the surveys conducted on bat roosts have underestimated impacts on bat populations. The surveys appear to have not looked at the impacts on all protected bat species and tree roost surveys have only covered a small fraction of where bat roost impacts could occur.

7.30 The impact of tree loss is covered later in this Local Impact Report on in the Landscape and Visual Impact in relation to the Arboricultural Impact Assessment.

7.31 **Operational Phase Impacts**

Positive

7.32 There is the potential for the project to support positive outcomes for biodiversity by enhancing or creating new habitats to support with the delivery of biodiversity net gain and screening of surface infrastructure such as cable sealing end compounds. However, it has yet to be determined how and where any BNG will be delivered and therefore the impacts for wildlife cannot be determined. The Council request that the BNG for the Colchester Area must be delivered within the Colchester Area.

Neutral

7.33 None identified

Negative

7.34 The overhead lines will cross through landscapes used as bird migratory routes. EN-5 notes the impact that overhead lines may have on birds coming into contact with the electrified lines.

7.35 Whilst there will be no direct impacts during the operational phase, at this time habitat restoration should be taking place post-construction. This is critical for reducing the impacts on wildlife and there is concern that habitat restoration may not be as successful as assumed within the ES, or be achieved as quickly as outlined. Specifically, the five year post completion monitoring period for replacement planting of trees is considered too short, and will be unlikely to result in comprehensive success. This monitoring period should either be extended, or a replacement planning failure percentage should be factors into the mitigation to ensure the habitat and protected species impact assessments are more reliable.

Required mitigation/compensation

7.36 The role of the Ecological Clerk of Works (ECoW) is critical to limiting ecological impacts, and ensuring compliance and delivery of measures in the CoCP, LEMP and appropriate mitigation. The Council request confirmation of ECoW qualifications, experience and decisions-making authority, given the scale and complexity of the project.

7.37 Whilst the Environmental Statement outlines useful mitigation measures to minimise impacts on ecology, it is important that these are enforced appropriately. There is concern that wording in the ES such as “where practicable” risk mitigation not being completed effectively.

7.38 It is important that BNG that is delivered off-site is delivered as locally as possible, and is designed with attention paid to the 'Strategic Opportunity Areas' of the Essex Local Nature Recovery Strategy, spaces that could provide the greatest benefits for nature if managed positively to support habitat protection.

7.39 At this stage, the Council notes that there is still some areas of the Order Limits where ecological surveys are still ongoing. Therefore, it is difficult to determine the full scale of the impacts, and thus whether appropriate mitigation will be identified.

Survey effort

7.40 Cable/pipeline routes are reasonably straightforward developments from an ecological survey and assessment perspective, but when the scale is very large that can be an overwhelming challenge. Arcadis appears to have been able to effectively cope with the project scale.

7.41 Multiple consultations were undertaken with relevant stakeholders concerning the survey methods. Natural England was consulted regarding the survey scope for bats, breeding birds, wintering/passage birds, and hazel dormouse. The Environment Agency were consulted regarding the scope of aquatic ecology surveys.

7.42 The scope of the survey effort is acceptable across the suite of ecological impact receptors within the Essex LPA areas. It is recognised that circa 12.5% of the Order Limits are still undergoing ecological survey, and there are certain surveys where the results are more incomplete (e.g. for otter and water vole only 65% reported; see also ES Chapter 8, Table 8.4). This missing information in the dataset is anticipated to be provided in November 2025. It is expected that the results of those surveys will not significantly deviate from the precedent set by the rest of the results so far reported.

7.43 Overall, it is Place Services' assessment that the scope of ecology survey results presented by Arcadis is by-in-large suitably comprehensive and compatible with the survey methodology as was presented within the PEIR.

Notable impact assessments for Essex LPAs

7.44 The ES Chapter 8, Table 8.23 impacts assessment summary includes assessments of predicted impacts pre-mitigation, which is useful transparency and best practice. Some of the assessed 'negligible' magnitude residual impacts could be argued as more accurately classifiable as 'small' magnitude (per the ES Chapter 8, Table 8.6 criteria), but that would not change the predictions of no significant effect. The residual impact assessments could be more transparent by providing assessments of predicted impacts in the short – medium terms and not just long term.

7.45 The predicted construction phase impacts to all County Wildlife Sites (CWS) and Local Wildlife Sites (LWS) falling within the Order Limits are rated as minor, temporary, and reversible, and the residual impacts post mitigation are all appraised as negligible. For Colchester City Council, this includes possible hydrological impacts to Black Brook LWS, and potential for accidental encroachment into ancient woodland at Harrow Wood LWS.

7.46 The operational phase impact potentials for all designated sites are assessed as negligible. The Appendix 8.8 Wintering and Passage Bird Report provides a reasonable evidence base for this assessment with respect to the qualifying species and assemblages of the Blackwater Estuary SPA & Ramsar site and the possibility of Annex 1 species at Ardleigh Reservoir.

7.47 Given the length and nature of the project, impacts to Priority Habitats within the Essex LPA areas are inevitable. Embedded mitigation (routing for avoidance) has reportedly been applied to avoid key habitat as best as possible. The impact potential of the project on 'important' hedgerows (as classified under the Hedgerows Regulations 1997 using the wildlife and landscape criteria) and other Priority Habitats is rated by Arcadis as negligible based on the assumption of the effective execution of a combination of replacement planting and compensation planting (some of which would not be in the same locations).

7.48 Some potential impacts on protected species are not yet fully measured. For some species, the practicality of applying seasonal avoidance mitigation measures (e.g. breeding birds – general and Schedule 1) is to be decided on a per situation basis post DCO consent. For others (e.g. badger, water vole), surveys have been completed but certain further surveys will be needed pre-construction to account for potential changes between the original survey dates and the eventual start of works. With respect to bats, aerial inspections and/or emergence surveys of trees rated for roosting bat potential as Further Assessment Required (FAR) or Potential Roosting Feature – Multiple Bats (PRF-M) are planned to be undertaken post DCO consent. The statement in the oCoCP Commitment Reference B16 that, "*Natural England will only issue a derogation licence in relation to a development proposal if the licensed actions are reasonably anticipated to maintain the favourable conservation status of a species or provide a conservation benefit. Thus, overall effects are anticipated to be neutral/beneficial.*", is held to be a dubious assumption. Place Services considers that the widespread lack of effective post mitigation licence monitoring makes 'reasonable anticipation' as to when a mitigation proposal is likely to be successful a highly uncertain prospect at best.

7.49 For now, acceptance that significant negative impacts to protected species' district-level conservation statuses will be prevented requires a faith in the ongoing survey effort completion (to a good standard) and in the total efficacy of the planned mitigation measures. This is not a sound approach; impacts on protected species need to be assessed with reasonable confidence and the proposed mitigation considered appropriate, prior to determination to support a lawful decision. Whilst BCT guideline-compliant survey efforts for every PRF-M tree predicted for impact may not be a reasonable expectation, we believe further survey effort prior to DCO consent is feasible (i.e. climbing inspection). Climbing will not be possible for every tree, but enough surveys should be possible to allow for a data-based estimation of the percentage of the PRF-M trees that evidently (or very likely) support a significant level of bat roosting and will be lost to the project. This would allow for a worst-case scenario estimation of impact and the design of a more confidently proportionate mitigation/compensation scheme.

7.50 Survey completion can be reconsidered after November 2025 when more survey results are anticipated. Ultimately, a satisfactory completeness of ecological survey must inform the DCO to support the Inspectorate recommendation.

Mitigation

7.51 The ‘Embedded’ mitigation for the project is described in the ES Chapter 8 sections 8.62. – 8.6.6. ‘Standard’ and ‘Additional’ mitigation measures are detailed in the ES Chapter 8 sections 8.6.7 – 8.6.26, the oCoCP, and oLEMP. Natural England were reportedly consulted regarding the mitigation approaches for great crested newt, bats, hazel dormouse, otter, water vole, and badger.

7.52 The non mandatory BNG scheme offered by National Grid is understood will inform the area habitats, hedgerow, and watercourse compensation requirement, which must be delivered first. Additionally, the BNG scheme will deliver the new habitat creation/enhancement such that will provide a 10% increase in respective habitat units over the baseline habitat unit calculations as calculated via BNG Metric. Details remain to be resolved as to where off-site habitat creation will be for Essex LPA areas, and who will be responsible for management and monitoring. As noted above, the BNG must be delivered in the Colchester Area.

7.53 The reliabilities of the residual ecological impact predictions stated within the ES Chapter 8, Table 8.23 are dependent upon the correct execution of the prescribed ‘Standard’ and ‘Additional’ mitigation measures. Of course, that is the case with any development proposal. However, when the scale of development is as large as it is with Norwich to Tilbury project, the negative consequences from the poor execution of mitigation could become cumulatively significant.

7.54 There are multiple ways in which the ‘Standard’ and ‘Additional’ mitigation measures could fall short of expectation. There could be errors in construction exclusion zone placement and maintenance. Errors could be made in following protected species mitigation licence conditions, which may not always be rectifiable after the fact. Replacement plantings may not be suitably managed or replaced until reliably established, given that the 5-year post completion time limit for habitat reinstatement is considered too short. Where the project’s replacement planting will be outside of National Grid land control and only 5-years post completion time monitoring will be achievable, we advise that the Essex LPAs should ask that a mutually agreed replacement planting failure percentage be factored into the compensation requirement.

7.55 Phrases of “where practicable” (and other proviso-type equivalents) are included in multiple of the mitigation measures / environmental commitments statements within the ES Chapter 8, oCoCP and oLEMP. It is understood that there are circumstances where having stipulations is realistic and unavoidable. Nevertheless, any provisos to applying mitigation will be open to subjective interpretation of necessity and could therefore see varying degrees of diligence.

7.56 The Ecological Clerk of Works (ECoW) functionality during the construction works is going to be critical to determining what ecological impact the Norwich to Tilbury project does or does not have. The oCoCP and oLEMP both state the ECoW responsibilities in their respective Table 3.1. The oLEMP section 11 Implementation mentions commitments to site checks during the works and monitoring post construction; however, these are brief and undetailed statements. Given the critical importance of the ECoW oversight and influence throughout the construction stage of the Norwich to Tilbury project, a commitment should be made as to the qualifications/experience of the ECoWs to be used. We also advise a clarification of ECoW decision capability and hierarchy, assuming that there will be multiple ECoWs employed on the project.

7.57 Those concerns aside, it should be acknowledged that the project's commitment to BNG to (by-in-large) Natural England trading rules is extremely positive. The BNG provisions should provide considerable ecological gains, though it will be important to ensure that Essex LPA areas receive their fair share of any off-site provision. The BNG gains will provide an offset to any mitigation/compensation/habitat reinstatement failures that become apparent over the long term. That is not the intended purpose of BNG but, thinking realistically, this is something to recognise. BNG has a narrow focus on habitats, so designing BNG habitat units creation that also provides improvements for targeted species groups will require focused planning.

Ecology Conclusions

7.58 The ecological survey scoping, methods, and execution for Norwich to Tilbury, as they have been reported to date, are considered to have been generally achieved to a good standard. Missing information in the dataset is anticipated to be provided. Further assessment is still required on roosting bats in trees along the project length, and this is a matter we advise to be currently unagreed for the Statement of Common / Uncommon Ground.

7.59 The ecological impact assessments are largely transparent and thorough, and the impact predictions are reasonable. The planned mitigation measures are also thorough and apply good practice. However, the ecological impact assessments for the project generally have a heavy reliance on either the quality execution of surveys to be completed post DCO consent or/and on the proper implementation of mitigation measures across a very large constructions works area and throughout an extended construction period. Further commitment to ensuring a high-quality ECoW oversight of the project is thought to be the best means of avoiding significant mitigation failures.

7.60 Designated nature conservation sites within the Colchester CC, which are present either within or a relevant proximity to the Order Limits include:

- Stour & Orwell Estuaries SPA/Ramsar (Colchester CC, Tendring DC)
- Cattawade Marshes SSSI (Colchester CC, Tendring DC)

LWSs falling within the Order Limits

o Black Brook; Harrow Wood (Colchester CC)

LWSs adjacent to the Order Limits

o Aldham Hall Wood; Church House Wood; Fiddler's Wood; Gun Hill

Place; Stonefield Strip (Colchester CC)

7.61 Several 'irreplaceable habitat' ancient woodlands sites (included in LWSs) fall within or adjacent to the Order Limits through the combined Chelmsford CC, Colchester CC, and Tendring DC area.

7.62 Habitats of Principal Importance (i.e. habitats that are a priority for biodiversity conservation) falling within the Order Limits through the combined Chelmsford CC, Colchester CC, and Tendring DC area include:

- Arable field margins
- Lowland dry acid grassland
- Reedbeds
- Ponds
- Lowland mixed deciduous woodland
- Hedgerows
- Rivers and streams

7.63 A comprehensive list of national, regional, and local policies relating to conservation and biodiversity is provided in the 8.2 Regulatory and Planning Policy Context section of the Environmental Statement Chapter 8

7.64 Where the electricity connection will be via new 400kV overhead line and will require vegetation removal, a 40m wide swathe will be removed to facilitate construction activities. An additional up to 8m of vegetation either side of the 40m would be managed during construction, operation, and maintenance, to allow for clearance to be maintained, and an additional up to 22m of vegetation either side would potentially be affected. This adds up to a potential impact corridor of 100m width

7.65 Where the electricity connection will be via underground cabling, this will be installed by a combination of open-cut trenching and trenchless techniques (e.g. horizontal directional drilling). For the open-cut installation, a 120 m wide swathe of vegetation may be removed and up to 50 m of vegetation either side of this could potentially be affected during construction. Therefore, the potential impact corridor for open-cut installation would be 220m wide. Trenchless installation still requires a 200m wide construction corridor, but the interaction with vegetation should be far less outside of the drilling/boring ingress and egress locations.

7.66 There will also be new cable sealing end compounds and substation developments with associated construction footprints.

7.67 The ecological receptors included for impact assessment within the ES Chapter 8 are:

- International (Statutory) Designated Sites
- National (Statutory) Designated Sites
- Local (Non-statutory) Designated Sites
- Habitats (Ancient Woodland, Priority Habitats, Species-rich/Important Hedgerows, Groundwater Dependent Terrestrial Ecosystems, Other Habitat),
- Protected Species/Species of Conservation Concern (Flora) (Vascular and Non-vascular Plants and Fungi o Invasive Non-Native Species – Plants)
- Protected Species/Species of Conservation Concern (Fauna) (Terrestrial Invertebrates, Aquatic Macroinvertebrates, Invasive Non-Native Species – Aquatic Macroinvertebrates ,Fish, Reptiles, Birds (Schedule 1, breeding, wintering and passage), Bats (roosting, foraging and commuting), Hazel Dormouse, Otter, Water Vole, Badger, Species of Principal Importance (common toad, brown hare, harvest mouse, hedgehog and polecat), Great Crested Newt)

7.68 Based on our review of the completed ecological survey work, the **ES chapter generally provides an appropriate assessment of likely impacts on the identified ecological receptors**. This includes for both statutory and non-statutory designated sites, habitats, and protected and Priority species

7.69 The project's embedded mitigation has very largely avoided a potential for significant impacts on designated sites

7.70 **A concern we do have about the impact assessments (as mentioned in our Relevant Representation), is the approach taken to the tree bat roost surveys**. Where static bat detector surveys within the Order Limits recorded barbastelle bat activity above a defined threshold, robust roost survey methods were employed, including aerial inspections, dusk emergence surveys, backtracking surveys, and radio-tracking. This level of tree roost survey was undertaken at only 12 discrete locations, which covers only a fraction of the overall potential for bat roost tree impacts. ES says 2875 trees along whole route could support bats – 113 to be removed that could support multiple bats and 257 to be removed which could support individual bats.

7.71 This survey deficit appears to be justified by the supposition that: (1) barbastelle are a more important conservation concern than other bat species (despite the roosts of other species having equivalent legal protection); and (2) simply going through the Natural England bat mitigation licensing process wherever it is found to be needed will ultimately and inevitably result in a neutral or positive impact outcome. We regard this as a flawed approach lacking evidence to support it. Impacts on all protected bat species need to be assessed with reasonable confidence and the proposed mitigation considered appropriate, prior to determination, to support a lawful decision. Supposing that a greater level of roost tree survey is not feasible pre DCO, we advise an evidence-based, worst-case scenario estimation of the bat tree roost impact, and the design of a more confidently proportionate bat tree roost mitigation/compensation scheme.

7.72 It is also noted that **most predicted habitat impacts are being regarded as temporary and ultimately of negligible significance because of the commitment to restore the habitats after the construction phase of the project**. This temporary habitat loss reasoning is also applied to certain protected species/ species of conservation concern impact assessments (e.g. bat foraging and commuting). For long-term assessments, this is not an unreasonable deduction in principle; however, the **potential short-medium term impacts on local fauna species populations are under-emphasised, as is the potential that not all habitat restoration may be successful to a like-for-like standard. The 5-year post completion time limit for habitat re-establishment is minimal and we consider that such short-term involvement in the habitat restoration is unlikely to result in comprehensive success.** If the habitat re-establishment is not as successful as assumed within the ES, then habitat and protected species (e.g. bats and breeding birds) impacts from the project will be higher than predicted. With respect to habitats, a commensuration portion of the proposed BNG will actually be compensation as opposed to net gain. If increasing the 5-year time limit for habitat re-establishment works is not feasible, then an evidence-based replacement planting failure percentage should be factored into the planned mitigation so that the 'negligible' habitat and protected species impact assessments are cushioned and more reliable.

7.73 We approve of other mitigation measures and compensation commitments made, which are expected to be finalised in consultation with the LPAs and secured by Requirements of any DCO made (e.g. outline CoCP and LEMP).

Cumulative impacts

Norwich to Tilbury Environmental Statement Chapter 17 – Cumulative Effects

Ecology and Biodiversity

7.74 Based on the data available on other developments it was determined that inter-project cumulative effects on ecology and biodiversity receptors within the areas surrounding the Project would be not significant during both construction and operation (and maintenance). This is either due to the distance of the Project to other development, or due to a lack of notable ecological receptors/lack of connectivity for any protected species to reach the Project, or because of different habitats being affected within the ZOI of other developments.

7.75 This statement is **not challenged**, owing to the characteristics of the Norwich to Tilbury project with respect to its potential for ecological impact, namely:

• The embedded mitigation of the project route has very largely avoided a potential for significant impacts on any designated sites.

• **The construction phase is expected to have primarily temporary impacts**. After the construction of the pylons, overhead lines, and underground cable sections, those areas are anticipated to be restored back to similar, if not equivalent, natural habitats (although bearing in mind a currently limited habitat establishment commitment and on-going vegetation height management requirements).

• The **operational stage of the project has very few and limited potential ecological impact pathways**.

• The Norwich to Tilbury project as a whole has significant ecological impact potential owing to its scale – a 180km electricity transmission route plus compounds and construction infrastructure. However, where a lesser component section of the project may share a zone of influence with another development proposal, that section alone would be expected to have a much lower impact potential (see the reasoning points above)

Draft Development Consent Order

7.76 A post-consent programme of ecological mitigation measures and a BNG delivery plan will both need to be secured through DCO Requirements. The strength of the DCO Requirements in ensuring the delivery of the mitigation measures and BNG plan will be critical to determining what ecological impact the Norwich to Tilbury project ultimately renders (positive or negative) for Essex local authority districts.

Management Plans

7.77 As stated by our Relevant Representation, we believe that Ecological Clerk of Works (ECoW) oversight and influence throughout the construction stage of the Norwich to Tilbury project will be critical to the faithful execution of the CoCP and LEMP directives and the resulting degree of mitigation success. We advise that a commitment/ requirement should be made as to the **qualifications/ experience of the ECoWs to be used, and a clarification made of ECoW decision capability and hierarchy**, assuming that there will be multiple ECoWs employed on the project.

7.78 We appreciate the willingness to identify 10% offsite Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) despite this not being a mandatory requirement for NSIPs yet, and seek to continue to work with the applicant's team to secure effective and functional BNG in line with the emerging Essex LNRS. We seek reassurance that BNG habitats created or enhanced will have a minimum of 30 years secured for management.

8 Contaminated Land, Geology and Hydrogeology

Policy Context

National Policy Statements

Overarching National Policy Statement for Energy (EN-1)

8.1 Paragraph 5.11.4 states development of land will affect soil resources, including physical loss of and damage to soil resources, through land contamination and structural damage. Indirect impacts may also arise from changes in the local water regime, organic matter content, soil biodiversity and soil process.

National Planning Policy Framework

8.2 Paragraph 196 states that planning policies and decisions should ensure that: a) a site is suitable for its proposed use taking account of ground conditions and any risks arising from land instability and contamination

Local Plan Policy

8.3 **Policy ENV5: Pollution and Contaminated Land**

> "Development proposals on contaminated land, or where there is reason to suspect contamination, must include an assessment of the extent of contamination and any possible risks. The onus is on the applicant to demonstrate that there is no likely risk to health or the environment due to contamination".

Neighbourhood Plans

Marks Tey Neighbourhood Plan -

8.4 Policy MT11: Protecting and enhancing our natural environment. Land that may have been affected by contamination. Preliminary risk Assessment. Requires assurance that the risk to the water environment is fully understood.

Local Impact Assessment

Construction Phase Impacts

Positive

8.5 None identified

Neutral

8.6 None identified

Negative

8.7 The majority of the land impacted by the project in Colchester is largely agricultural and undeveloped, meaning that the risk of existing contamination is low. However, it is noted that there is a higher risk of contamination on the Former RAF Boxted site.

Operational Phase Impacts

Positive

8.8 None identified

Neutral

8.9 None identified

Negative

8.10 None identified

Required mitigation/compensation

8.11 None identified.

8.12 The Council's Contaminated Land Officer has reviewed the Contaminated Land Geology and Hydrogeology chapter of the ES. The Council notes that there is a relatively low level of contamination risk as the project will mainly affect agricultural and undeveloped land since the late 1800s. Therefore, there are no main concerns the Council would like to raise.

9 Health and Wellbeing

Policy Context

National Policy Statements

Overarching National Policy Statement for Energy (EN-1)

9.1 Paragraph 4.4.1 states that "Energy infrastructure has the potential to impact on the health and well-being ("health") of the population. Access to energy is clearly beneficial to society and to our health as a whole. However, the construction of energy infrastructure and the production, distribution and use of energy may have negative impacts on some people's health".

9.2 Paragraph 4.4.2 states that "The direct impacts on health may include

- increased traffic
- air or water pollution
- dust, odour
- hazardous waste and substances
- noise
- exposure to radiation, and
- increases in pests"

9.3 Paragraph 4.4.3 states that "New energy infrastructure may also affect the composition and size of the local population, and in doing so have indirect health impacts, for example if it in some way affects access to key public services, transport, or the use of open space for recreation and physical activity".

9.4 Paragraph 4.4.5 states that "The impacts of more than one development may affect people simultaneously, so the applicant should consider the cumulative impact on health in the ES where appropriate".

9.5 Paragraph 4.4.6 states that "Opportunities should be taken to mitigate indirect impacts, by promoting local improvements to encourage health and wellbeing, this includes potential impacts on vulnerable groups within society and impacts on those with protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010, i.e. those groups which may be differentially impacted by a development compared to wider society as a whole".

9.6 Paragraph 5.12.2 states that “The Government’s policy on noise is set out in the Noise Policy Statement for England. It promotes good health and good quality of life through effective noise management. Similar considerations apply to vibration, which can also cause damage to buildings. In this section, in line with current legislation, references to “noise” below apply equally to the assessment of impacts of vibration”.

National Policy Statement for electricity networks infrastructure (EN-5)

9.7 Paragraph 2.9.46 states that “All overhead power lines produce EMFs. These tend to be highest directly under a line and decrease to the sides at increasing distance. Although putting cables underground eliminates the electric field, they still produce magnetic fields, which are highest directly above the cable. EMFs can have both direct and indirect effects on human health, aquatic and terrestrial organisms”.

9.8 Paragraph 2.9.47 states that “The direct effects occur in terms of impacts on the central nervous system resulting in its normal functioning being affected. Indirect effects occur through electric charges building up on the surface of the body producing a microshock on contact with a grounded object, or vice versa, which, depending on the field strength and other exposure factors, can range from barely perceptible to being an annoyance or even painful”.

9.9 Paragraph 2.9.48 states that “To prevent these known effects, the International Commission on Non-Ionizing Radiation Protection (ICNIRP) developed health protection guidelines in 1998 for both public and occupational exposure. These are expressed in terms of the induced current density in affected tissues of the body, ‘basic restrictions’, and in terms of measurable ‘reference levels’ of electric field strength (for electric fields), and magnetic flux density (for magnetic fields). The relationship between the (measurable) electric field strength or magnetic flux density and induced current density in body tissues requires complex dosimetric modelling”.

National Planning Policy Framework

9.10 Paragraph 96 states that “Planning policies and decisions should aim to achieve healthy, inclusive and safe places which:

a) promote social interaction, including opportunities for meetings between people who might not otherwise come into contact with each other – for example through mixed-use developments, strong neighbourhood centres, street layouts that allow for easy pedestrian and cycle connections within and between neighbourhoods, and active street frontages;

b)are safe and accessible, so that crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion – for example through the use of well-designed, clear and legible pedestrian and cycle routes, and high quality public space, which encourage the active and continual use of public areas

9.11 Paragraph 103 states that “Access to a network of high quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and physical activity is important for the health and well-being of communities, and can deliver wider benefits for nature and support efforts to address climate change. Planning policies should be based on robust and up-to-date assessments of the need for open space, sport and recreation facilities (including quantitative or qualitative deficits or surpluses) and opportunities for new provision. Information gained from the assessments should be used to determine what open space, sport and recreational provision is needed, which plans should then seek to accommodate.”

Local Plan Policy

9.12 **Policy ENV3: Green Infrastructure**

“The Local Planning Authority will aim to protect, enhance and deliver a comprehensive green infrastructure network comprising strategic green links between the rural hinterland, urban Colchester, river corridors and open spaces across the Borough. It will seek to protect and enhance the existing network of green and blue infrastructure features and to secure the delivery of new green infrastructure where deficiencies and gaps are identified that will benefit communities, wildlife and the environment”.

9.13 **Policy DM1: Health and Wellbeing**

“All development should be designed to help promote healthy and active lifestyles and avoid causing adverse impacts on public health through:

(i) Ensuring good access to health facilities and services;
(ii) (Providing a healthy living environment where healthy lifestyles can be promoted including green space and creating attractive opportunities for activities including walking, cycling, horse riding and formal sport, as well as clearly seeking to improve opportunities to increase levels of physical activity within the community; and
(iii) Providing appropriate mitigation to avoid harmful emissions.

Developments which will have an unacceptable significant adverse impact on health and wellbeing which cannot be mitigated, or that fail to offer reasonable provisions, will not be permitted”.

9.14 Policy DM17: Retention of Open Space and Recreation Facilities

“The Council will protect and enhance the existing network of green links and open spaces and secure additional areas where deficiencies are identified. The provision of public open space in developments should be informed by an appraisal of local context and community need and up to date evidence, with a particular regard to the impact of site development on biodiversity.

A) Development, including change of use, of any existing or proposed public or private open space, including allotments, will not be supported unless it can be

demonstrated that: (i) Alternative and improved provision will be created in a location well related to the functional requirements of the relocated use and its existing and future users; and, (ii) The proposal would not result in the loss of an area important for its amenity or contribution to the green infrastructure network or to the character of the area in general; and (iii) It achieves the aims of any relevant prevailing strategy relating to open space and recreation.

B) Development proposals resulting in a loss of open space must additionally demonstrate that: (i) There is an identified excess provision within the catchment of the facility and no likely shortfall is expected within the plan period; or (ii) Alternative and improved provision will be supplied in a location well-related to the functional requirements of the relocated use and its existing and future users.

Additionally, development that would result in the loss of any small incidental areas of open space, not specifically identified on the policies map but which contribute to amenity value and the character of existing residential neighbourhoods, and any registered common, heathland or village green or which contribute to green infrastructure will not be permitted".

Neighbourhood Plans

9.15 West Bergholt Neighbourhood Plan -

PP1: Protection of Community Facilities "All development proposals must ensure that they do not give rise to adverse impacts on the quality of life and wellbeing of the local community and provide enhancements wherever possible and, where appropriate, promote diversity and enhance community cohesion through the provision of new multiuse facilities or contributions to existing facilities"

PP2: New Community Facilities Proposals that improve the quality and/or range of community facilities, particularly those for younger and older age groups, will be supported provided that the development is of a scale appropriate to the needs of the locality and is conveniently accessible for residents of the village. Provision for a parish office/community hub will be supported.

Local Impact Assessment

Construction Phase Impacts

Positive

9.16 None identified

Neutral

9.17 None identified

Negative

9.18 The construction phase will have numerous impacts on residents each of which are discussed below.

9.19 During construction, public access to the PROW network and use of local roads will be restricted and negatively affected as a result of diversions, closures, increased traffic movements and incursion of overhead line infrastructure into rural countryside. This will impact on the safety of residents who want to travel within and outside where they live. It is worth repeating that open access land and PROW near Fordham regularly used by residents will be severely impacted by the pylons, leading to diversion and closure of sections of the PROW.

9.20 During construction the increased traffic movements, including heavy goods vehicles and abnormal loads, will lead to increased noise and disruption in villages. This will affect the safety of residents, particularly pedestrians and cyclists who may be moving within and through these villages. These impacts will be addressed in more detail in the Traffic and Transport section. These impacts are exacerbated by the proposed working hours which extend into weekends and bank holidays, providing residents very limited respite from the disruption.

9.21 Notably, many of the places directly affected are rural villages with higher proportion of elderly population than the national average. These residents are likely to spend a greater amount of time in their villages, relying on local services to meet their needs. This includes access to health infrastructure such as GP practices and pharmacies, services which in many cases will be critical for vulnerable populations. Therefore, they are likely to be inordinately affected by the impacts of construction.

9.22 As mentioned in the chapter on Landscape and Visual Impacts, changes to the character and views of where people currently live will be significantly affected, reducing residents' sense of place and belonging.

9.23 Cumulatively these impacts will have a negative impact on residents mental and physical health, particularly those with limited mobility. Therefore, disruption caused will widen existing health inequalities. The Council considers that the applicant has not effectively considered and understated the impacts of the project on the health and wellbeing of the communities affected.

9.24 It is worth noting that the latest data on deprivation and inequalities, the 2025 Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) published in October 2025 will provide additional information on resident inequalities which should be used by the applicant (as opposed by the 2019 dataset which the applicant has used so far).

Operational Phase Impacts

Positive

9.25 None identified

Neutral

9.26 The overhead lines will produce electromagnetic fields (EMFs). This has the potential to impact on human health, directly and indirectly. However, the applicant will ensure the project is designed to the recommended guidelines produced by the International Commission on Non-Ionizing Radiation Protection(ICNIRP) to ensure impacts will be limited.

Negative

9.27 Once operational, the permanence of the change to landscape through the introduction of overhead lines and pylons will have fundamentally altered the landscape character in many villages, affecting people's sense of place and belonging.

9.28 Impacts from any maintenance that may need to take place, such as noise and vibration from maintenance vehicles could continue to affect resident's way of life.

9.29 It is important that communication remains between the applicant and affected residents to ensure they are aware of any monitoring or maintenance works that might happen to help alleviate anxiety.

Required mitigation/compensation

9.30 Given the disruption that will be caused, it is important that the applicant communicates effectively with residents about the timeline for the stages of construction, what the impacts may be and for how long disruption will be caused. This will enable residents to prepare the best they can for the impacts.

9.31 It is particularly important that communication can be tailored to vulnerable groups in society, including those with limited English proficiency or mental capacity. Without this, anxiety amongst these groups will only increase. Therefore it is recommended that the applicant adopt a range of methods to inclusively communicate and engage with residents including using translated materials, 'easy read' summaries of communications and collaboration with any local community and faith groups who can help disseminate communications.

9.32 The Council also considers it critical that the impacts of the scheme are monitored to determine the disruption caused to residents. A Health and Wellbeing Monitoring Framework should be established, including baseline data on active travel, green space access, amenity satisfaction, and mental wellbeing. Indicators and reporting intervals should be clearly defined and co-developed with local communities

9.33 The Council has stated in the 'Noise and Vibration' section the recommended mitigation of reducing working hours.

9.34 The Council is concerned about the project's potential health and wellbeing impacts on communities within Colchester, with our concerns set out below:

9.35 The Overarching National Policy Statement for Energy (EN-1) requires Environmental Statements to identify and mitigate adverse health impacts, including cumulative effects and impacts on vulnerable groups. The Health and Wellbeing chapter does not provide any view on cumulative health effects as required under EN-1. The Council considers that the ES does not yet meet these expectations and requires further work to ensure compliance.

9.36 The ES relies heavily on the 2019 Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) to define community sensitivity. This approach risks masking inequalities within wards. IMD data was updated in October 2025, and the Council expects the assessment to be revisited to reflect any changes. More granular Lower Super Output Area (LSOA) data should be used to reveal localised deprivation, particularly in Colchester where health inequalities are most acute. Failure to do so risks underestimating differential health effects, contrary to EN-1 requirements.

9.37 Table 10.1 of the ES omits reference to local health and wellbeing strategies and Integrated Care System Joint Forward Plans. This weakens alignment with the Essex Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy, which prioritises tackling inequalities, supporting mental wellbeing, and enabling healthier, more active communities. The Council expects these strategies to be integrated into the assessment.

9.38 The ES baseline acknowledges language vulnerability along the route but does not incorporate this into sensitivity or mitigation planning. Communities with limited English proficiency may face barriers to understanding consultation materials and health information, leading to heightened anxiety and exclusion from mitigation measures. The Council recommends inclusive engagement methods, including translated materials, interpreters, and collaboration with local community and faith organisations.

9.39 EN-1 paragraph 4.4.5 requires consideration of cumulative impacts where multiple developments may affect people simultaneously. Colchester communities may experience compounded psychological stress from overlapping NSIPs and growth schemes. Mental Wellbeing Impact Assessment (MWIA) workshops, recommended at PEIR stage, were not undertaken. The Council advises revisiting this through targeted community engagement to ensure cumulative mental health impacts are adequately evaluated.

9.40 The ES concludes that no additional mitigation or monitoring is required beyond embedded measures. The Council considers this inadequate given the scale and duration of construction and the socioeconomic characteristics of affected communities. A Health and Wellbeing Monitoring Framework should be established, including baseline data on active travel, green space access, amenity satisfaction, and mental wellbeing. Indicators and reporting intervals should be clearly defined and co-developed with local communities.

9.41 The ES concludes that no additional mitigation or monitoring is required beyond embedded measures. The Council considers this inadequate given the scale and duration of construction and the socioeconomic characteristics of affected communities. A Health and Wellbeing Monitoring Framework should be established, including baseline data on active travel, green space access, amenity satisfaction, and mental wellbeing. Indicators and reporting intervals should be clearly defined and co-developed with local communities.

9.42 To address these concerns, the Council requests that the applicant provide:

- Updated assessment incorporating October 2025 IMD and LSOA-level data for Colchester.
- Integration of local health and wellbeing strategies and ICS Joint Forward Plans.
- Inclusive engagement measures for language-vulnerable communities.
- Consideration of cumulative mental health impacts through MWIA workshops.
- A robust Health and Wellbeing Monitoring Framework with enforceable commitments.

9.43 Additionally, as raised in the section on noise of this representation, the Council is aware that noise, particularly during construction phases of the project, would likely have negative impacts on people’s mental health. Residents require periods of respite and so it is important that the proposed working hours are not lengthy. As proposed, working during Sundays and bank holidays should be avoided.

10 Historic Environment

Policy Context

National Policy Statements

Overarching National Policy Statement for Energy (EN-1)

10.1 Paragraph 5.9.1 states the "construction, operation and decommissioning of energy infrastructure has the potential to result in adverse impacts on the historic environment above, at and below the surface of the ground".

10.2 Paragraph 5.9.2 states the "historic environment includes all aspects of the environment resulting from the interaction between people and places through time, including all surviving physical remains of past human activity, whether visible, buried or submerged, landscaped and planted or managed flora".

10.3 Paragraph 5.9.3 states "those elements of the historic environment that hold value to this and future generations because of their historic, archaeological, architectural or artistic interest are called 'heritage assets'. Heritage assets may be buildings, monuments, sites, places, areas or landscapes, or any combination of these. The sum of the heritage interests that a heritage asset holds is referred to as its significance. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting".

10.4 Paragraph 5.9.7 states the "Secretary of State should also consider the impacts on other non-designated heritage assets (as identified either through the development plan making process by plan-making bodies, including 'local listing', or through the application, examination and decision making process). This is on the basis of clear evidence that such heritage assets have a significance that merits consideration in that process, even though those assets are of lesser significance than designated heritage assets".

National Planning Policy Framework

10.5 Paragraph 212 states that "when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance".

10.6 Paragraph 215 states that “where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use”.

10.7 Paragraph 216 states that “the effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application. In weighing applications that directly or indirectly affect non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset”.

Local Plan Policy

10.8 **Policy ENV1: Environment**

“The Local Planning Authority will conserve and enhance Colchester’s natural and historic environment, countryside and coastline. The Local Planning Authority will safeguard the Borough’s biodiversity, geology, history and archaeology, which help define the landscape character of the Borough, through the protection and enhancement of sites of international, national, regional and local importance. The Local Planning Authority will require development to be in compliance with, and contribute positively towards, delivering the aims and objectives of the Anglian River Basin Management Plan”.

10.9 **Policy DM16: Historic Environment**

“Development that will lead to substantial harm to or total loss of significance of a listed building, conservation area, historic park or garden or important archaeological remains (including the setting of heritage assets) will only be permitted in exceptional circumstances where the harm or loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh the harm or loss. Where development will lead to less than substantial harm this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal.

Heritage Impact Assessments and/or Archaeological Evaluations will be required for proposals related to or impacting on the setting of heritage assets and/or known or possible archaeological sites, and where there is potential for encountering archaeological sites so that sufficient information is provided to assess the significance of the heritage assets and to assess the impacts of development on historic assets together with any proposed mitigation measures”.

Neighbourhood Plans

10.10 **Marks Tey Neighbourhood Plan** -

Policy MT07 - The following buildings and assets, as described in Appendix 3 to the Plan, have been identified as non-designated heritage assets. Proposals should seek to conserve or enhance the significance of the heritage assets listed in this policy as well as any additional non-designated heritage assets which are located in the plan area and included in the most up to date Colchester Borough Local List. Where proposals have any effect on a non-designated heritage asset, a balanced judgement will be applied having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset

10.11 Accordingly, no additional neighbourhood Plan policies are considered directly relevant to the Historic Environment assessment for the Norwich to Tilbury Project.

Local Impact Assessment

10.12 Construction Phase Impacts

Positive

10.13 None identified.

Neutral

10.14 None identified.

Negative

10.15 The scheme will have temporary, albeit prolonged, impact on the setting of the heritage assets in the vicinity by virtue of the construction phase as set out below.

Operational Phase Impacts

Positive

10.16 None identified.

Neutral

10.17 None identified.

Negative

Comments Relating to Historic Environment (Archaeology)

Description of the project area

10.18 Given the linear nature of the proposed route of the project, which will traverse diverse archaeological landscapes of Essex (river terraces, covers and plateaus, and valley floors), there is potential for the presence of archaeological remains and deposits of local to national significance.

10.19 There are no scheduled monuments located within the Order Limits, however a small number of scheduled monuments are located within close proximity to the Order Limits. Non-designated heritage assets within the Order Limits are primarily below ground, archaeological remains. A number of these are recorded on the Essex Historic Environment Record and there is potential for further, currently unknown, archaeological remains of high significance within the Order Limits.

National Policy

10.20 Relevant legislation and policies for archaeology are largely as listed and described in the Applicants submission in Section 11.2 (Document reference APP-208-ES Chapter 11 Historic Environment).

10.21 At a national level, the following policy document (and parts thereof) is particularly relevant to the consideration of the impact on archaeology arising from the development scheme:

- Department for Energy Security & Net Zero, Overarching National Policy Statement for Energy (EN-1) (Updated January 2024) – Section 5.9 Historic Environment.

10.22 EN 1 section 5.9 requires impacts (both direct and indirect) to be understood, and harm avoided or minimised through design and mitigation, with loss of archaeological assets preserved by record where justified.

10.23 Paragraph 5.9.11 states ‘Where a site on which development is proposed includes, or the available evidence suggests it has the potential to include, heritage assets with an archaeological interest, the applicant should carry out appropriate desk-based assessment and, where such desk-based research is insufficient to properly assess the interest, a field evaluation’.

10.24 From extensive discussions with the Applicant it was agreed at an early stage that a field evaluation would be required to support the application and provide sufficient evidence to allow the determination of the impact of the scheme on archaeological remains. A programme of geophysical survey and trial trench evaluation was agreed with the identification of Priority Areas and non-Priority Areas. Priority areas were defined based on reduced design flexibility, construction methodology, and the associated extent of archaeological impact likely to result from their construction.

10.25 Geophysical survey of Priority Areas is near complete while trial trenching for Priority Areas is currently ongoing though near completion. The full results of the trial trench evaluations will not be available with time to review prior to determination of the application. A number of the trial trench reports submitted are interim only and do not include full assessment of the archaeological remains. The application fails to include sufficient evidence from the field evaluations carried out within Essex to support the baseline data across the scheme. The Applicant has failed to fully comply with the policy set out in paragraph 5.9.11 with regards to archaeology and geoarchaeology and National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) Paragraph 207 (2024).

10.26 Relevant National Legislation and Policy for archaeology is listed in Section 11.2.15 and includes the National Planning Policy Framework, (Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, 2024). Archaeology is considered within Chapter 16. Conserving and enhancing the historic environment.

10.27 The following National guidance is also considered relevant for archaeology, and should have been included in section 11.2.19 for compliance:

- National Planning Practice Guidance: Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment (2019)

Assessment of Impacts

10.28 Designated and non-designated heritage assets are presented in Environmental Statement (ES) Chapter 11. Historic Environment (AS-068 Revision B) and supported by a number of assessments including; Historic Environment Baseline Report (Final Issue A)(APP-209), Historic Environment Assessment Tables (Final Issue B)(AS-070), EACN Substation Geophysical Survey Report (Final Issue A)(APP-211)), Geophysical Survey Results Reports (APP-212, AS-072, AS-072, AS-074, AS-076), Trial Trenching Results Reports (APP-213 and AS-078), and Geoarchaeological Monitoring of Ground Investigation Works Report (Final Issue A)(APP-214)).

10.29 These are supplemented by Figures; Historic Environment Study Area (Final Issue A)(APP-216-6.11.F1 ES Figure 11.1), Designated Heritage Assets Assessed in the ES Chapter (AS- 080), Non-Designated Heritage Assets Assessed in the ES Chapter (Final Issue A)(AS-081), Phase 1 and 2 Geophysical Survey Areas and Archaeological Trial Trenching Priority Areas (Final Issue B) (AS-082) and Phase 2 Geophysical Survey Preliminary Results (AS-083).

10.30 The Applicant's assessment of the impacts of the project on the historic environment have been provided taking account of all proposed mitigation measures. The overall approach to mitigating the negative effects of the development is set out in document 6.5 Environmental Statement Chapter 5 - EIA Approach and Method (Final Issue A) (APP-135) of the submission. Mitigation has been split into three types by the Applicant in relation to heritage assets: embedded, standard and additional. Descriptions of these are outlined on pages 118-121 of document 6.11 Environmental Statement Chapter 11- Historic Environment (Final Issue B) (AS-069).

10.31 The level of impact upon non-designated heritage assets, specifically archaeological remains, set out in document AS-079: 6.11.A2 Environmental Statement Appendix 11.2 - Historic Environment Assessment Tables (Final Issue B) cannot be fully agreed until further assessment on archaeological and geoarchaeological remains is completed and the information made available for review.

10.32 Within Essex the project will include considerable sections of underground cabling, including two trenchless crossings of the River Stour as well as many kilometers of access roads to serve the overhead lines and pylons. New substations are proposed in Tendring (640m x 740m) and Thurrock (340m x 530m). The cable corridor in underground sections is likely to be up to 120m wide, pylon bases will be a minimum of 60m by 60m and haul roads would require topsoil strips of at least 21m wide.

10.33 In terms of archaeology and geoarchaeology, significant negative impacts are anticipated from the construction phase of the development where the groundworks proposed would cause truncation of potential archaeological remains. Impacts to the historic environment, specifically archaeology, are identified as direct physical and indirect effects during construction and are listed in section 11.4.23 (AS-069). They include, but are not limited to, groundworks associated with the underground cabling, pylon bases, creation of access routes, temporary construction compounds and working/storage areas. In addition, the potential impact of other associated environmental mitigation, such as ecological habitat creation or landscape planting and drainage works. It is acknowledged that standard construction methods and groundworks for ecological and drainage measures are assumed to cause removal of all near-surface archaeology within the footprint of the works 11.4.33 (AS-069).

10.34 In addition, changes to the local water and burial environment could alter the preservation of archaeological sites within and beyond the development areas.

10.35 Deeper impacts, such as at Horizontal Directional Drilling (HDD) locations and piling for pylon bases could impact geoarchaeological sediments.

10.36 The route crosses areas where known archaeological remains are recorded on the Essex Historic Environment Record (EHER) as well as areas of unknown archaeological potential. Extensive cropmark complexes, identified through aerial photography, are recorded on the EHER along or adjacent to the route of the undergrounding section of the project. Features include a probable barrow cemetery, Roman settlement and other occupation, with some potential for nationally significant sites, especially on the valley slopes above the Stour and within the district of Thurrock.

10.37 Geoarchaeological deposits of high potential for palaeoenvironmental remains, dating and potential for Palaeolithic remains have been identified from Ground Investigation (GI) monitoring (APP-214) within Colchester, Tendring and Thurrock. There is potential for the presence of deposits which may contain Palaeolithic archaeological and geoarchaeological evidence that would contribute to national and regional research themes and priorities due to their rarity .The application is supported by a suitable level of desk-based research, as listed in section 11.4.2 (APP-208).

10.38 Geophysical survey and archaeological trial trenching are currently ongoing. The first stage of geophysical survey for Priority Areas is largely complete. The ES chapter concludes that “the historic environment baseline presents a reasonable basis for assessment, but further information is forthcoming.” (AS-069 Section 11.4.32). It is agreed that the historic environment baseline provides a reasonable basis for known archaeological remains, however potential for further archaeological remains within the Order Limits has not been fully assessed through field evaluation and this information would be required to provide a more comprehensive basis for assessment.

10.39 At the time of submission one trial trench report on the EACN Substation (APP-211) is reported in full, however the remaining trial trench evaluations are presented as interim reports. Additional supplementary information has since been submitted including a further three geophysical reports and additional interim trial trench reports.

10.40 Despite the adequacy of desk-based research and ongoing field evaluations, the level of information submitted with the application fails to provide sufficient information on the nature, extent and significance of heritage assets in order to determine the impact on archaeological remains by the proposed scheme.

10.41 This is due to factors such as incomplete coverage of the non-Priority geophysical survey and trial trench evaluation across the scheme, lack of intrusive investigation to allow corroboration of the geophysical survey and cropmark data, and lack of full reporting on the trial trench evaluations that have been completed.

10.42 Within the scheme the site is divided into sections. For Essex this incorporates Section C to Section G. The level of field evaluation completed to date is listed below by section.

10.43 **Section C (Tendring and Colchester)**

10.44 One of seven Priority geophysical surveys remains to be completed within Section C. The Phase 2 (non-priority) geophysical survey is being carried out which demonstrates some correlation with existing cropmark evidence. One of two priority trial trench evaluations have been completed which indicates there may be continuation of activity associated with the Scheduled cropmark site South of Ardleigh (1002146).

10.45 Section C includes complex cropmark complexes near the River Stour which have not been fully investigated by geophysics or trial trenching and which are likely to be of high significance.

10.46 **Section D Colchester City Council**

10.47 All nine Priority geophysical surveys have been completed within Section D. These have identified features of moderate significance including a potential moated feature and ring ditch features of possible ritual origin. Priority trial trenching has taken place on one of two Priority trial trenching sites identified for investigation. Site 10 has revealed a medieval farmstead and Romano-British enclosure complex with metalled surfaces and material which indicates high status settlement. The second Priority trial trench area has not yet been undertaken.

10.48 With the additional trial trenching and geophysical surveys completed since the initial submission the application has provided a suitable amount of supporting information for parts of the scheme. While there appears to be some corroboration between the geophysical results and the features identified during trial trenching the reliability of the geophysical survey to detect archaeological features has been demonstrated to be inconsistent. The geophysical survey report (APP-211) suggests the likely poor magnetic contrast is due to the sandy nature of soils accounting for apparent lack of visibility. This is significant in areas such as Colchester and Tendring District where sandy soils are widespread. In addition there are archaeological features that are of a nature and scale that are difficult to detect through geophysical survey and aerial photographic assessment. These include features such as cremations, small pits, graves and post holes which could represent sites of high significance.

10.49 Due to incomplete evaluation of the scheme through intrusive methods and the limitations of the non-intrusive methods employed the archaeological potential of the proposed scheme is not fully understood to the required level, and previously unknown archaeological remains are likely to be present within the proposed scheme area. The risk of encountering high value heritage assets remains a significant risk.

10.50 The assessment has followed the EIA methodology (APP-135) to determine the impact on archaeological remains listed in the Historic Environment Baseline Report (APP 209) and assigned values based largely on desk-based research. Establishing the ‘value’ and significance of below ground archaeological remains and deeply buried geoarchaeological deposits requires evaluation (geophysical survey, trial trenching, coring, and deposit modelling), as required by EN-1. For this reason the ‘value’ of many of the archaeological remains listed is unsubstantiated and the assessment methodology cannot be effectively used on all of the assets listed in the historic environment baseline report.

10.51 There is general agreement with the assessment of residual effects for archaeological remains of both designated and non-designated status where they are considered significant. However, without further information from the results of intrusive evaluation, the conclusions of the ES regarding what is significant in terms of residual effect cannot be fully determined. Specifically those archaeological sites identified through cropmarks, finds scatters and geoarchaeological deposits. This information would be required to determine an appropriate mitigation strategy.

10.52 In addition, without further evaluation in areas where there is no record of archaeological remains, the potential presence of heritage assets or their significance remains difficult to assess to the required level. Further intrusive assessment by trial trenching and geoarchaeological assessment would provide clarity on significance and reduces project risk.

10.53 A number of Protected Lanes have been identified within the Order Limits. Negative impacts are anticipated on their significance from construction; in order to provide access or for underground cabling. While reinstatement of any lost trees/hedgerow following the completion of construction will assist in offsetting this negative impact, more certainty is required about the recording and monitoring of this impact.

10.54 Section 11.8.1 (AS-069) states that mitigation would be undertaken during pre-construction works or prior to the aspects of construction that would affect the heritage asset. This could include preservation in situ of archaeological remains, non-intrusive archaeological fieldwork and intrusive archaeological fieldwork. This should also specify geoarchaeological investigation to ensure any significant geoarchaeological remains have been identified prior to finalising the design for the trenchless crossings in the Stour Valley.

10.55 The development would potentially result in a direct permanent and harmful change to a range of non-designated heritage assets. This would be a significant effect. The applicants have provided information to inform the examination via the Historic Environment chapters of the ES. Further information and documents are however required to establish an appropriate programme of evaluation and mitigation for archaeology and geoarchaeology. This information is necessary to fully inform the decision-making process, and the planning balance as set out in the relevant policies.

Cumulative impacts

10.56 There are a number of developments which are proposed, or under construction across Essex (in particular, within the Tendring Peninsula, Thurrock and other Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIPs) schemes dependant on Norwich to Tilbury) which have potential to have cumulative effects on archaeology due to the scale and nature of the development.

10.57 Cumulative effects of the development are split by the application into two categories: intra-project and inter-project. Archaeological remains are not considered potential receptors to give rise to intra-project cumulative effects.

10.58 Inter-project cumulative effects are those which are resultant of the combination of the Norwich to Tilbury project and other existing projects. Effects to non-designated heritage assets/archaeological remains have been identified for the Project and separately for other developments and are listed in Table A17.3.1 in Document 6.17.A3 Environmental Statement Appendix 17.3 - Inter-Project Cumulative Effects (APP 284).

10.59 No significant inter-project cumulative effects have been identified for archaeological remains as part of the assessment. The reasoning for this is expanded in Section 17.5.52 (APP-281) which states:

10.60 “While there would be overlap of the Order Limits for other developments and the Project, effects to archaeology would only occur once by whichever construction would take place first. These effects would be mitigated as appropriate and agreed with the LPA (such as through excavation, recording, and publication). Any affected archaeology would be removed as a result of the mitigation/construction and therefore the inter-project effects for construction and operation (and maintenance) would be negligible and not significant.

10.61 The cumulative impact of the project would be because of the increase in the total area of land take and not overlap, and therefore the scale of potential archaeological remains which could be lost as a result of the mitigation / construction is increased. Archaeological remains are a finite and non-renewable resource. This cumulative impact may not be determined as significant through the process of the assessment but should be considered an adverse effect of the project wherever they are removed. As the nature of the archaeological remains that may be affected is currently unknown the impact and significance cannot be determined effectively through this form of assessment. While mitigation by record may reduce the cumulative impact in EIA terms, the ability to record evidence of our past should not be a factor in deciding whether such loss should be permitted (NPPF, 2004 Paragraph 218).

Draft Development Consent order

10.62 The Requirement wording for Archaeology (Requirement 5) (APP-056) does not currently take into account the post-consent programme of archaeological trenching required, or secure timescales for delivery of the Post-Excavation Assessments. It is suggested that article 5(4) is replaced with the wording below and an additional point, 5(5), is included. This will give clarity for sign-off (our proposed condition 5(4)) and also provide reassurance of a robust mechanism for securing both the field and post-excavation works:

5 (4) *Intrusive site preparation works must not take place until an archaeological or geoarchaeological written scheme(s) of investigation in accordance with the outline written scheme(s) of investigation as appropriate has been submitted to and approved by the discharging authority in consultation with Historic England. The archaeological or geoarchaeological written scheme(s) of investigation required under this sub-paragraph must be implemented as approved.*

5 (5) *Unless otherwise agreed with the local planning authority.*

(a) No later than one year following the completion of the fieldwork specified in each site-specific written scheme of investigation, a site-specific post excavation assessment (PXA) for that site must be completed in accordance with the Written Scheme of Investigation and submitted to the local planning authority for approval.

(b) No later than one year following the approval of the final site-specific post excavation assessment, an archaeological updated project design for all applicable sites, must be submitted to the local planning authority for approval. The archaeological updated project design must be produced in general accordance with the detailed Written Scheme of Investigation for each stage, include details of the scope of post-excavation analysis and publication and have regard to the site-specific research agendas set out in the site-specific written schemes of investigation.

(c) Post-excavation analysis and publication must be carried out in accordance with the approved archaeological updated project design and provision made for the full archive to be submitted to the appropriate museum.

Management Plans

Outline Archaeological Mitigation Strategy and Outline Written Scheme of Investigation (AMS/WSI)

10.63 The proposed approaches and commitments to archaeological investigations to be undertaken post-consent are set out in document 7.5 Outline Archaeological Mitigation Strategy and Outline Written Scheme of Investigation (Final Issue A) (APP-328). This document will form the basis of detailed Written Scheme of Investigations (WSIs) for archaeology and geoarchaeology. The document will be directly referenced in the DCO under Requirement 5 and therefore it is paramount that it is approved early in the examination process to ensure the completion of evaluation of the archaeological and geoarchaeological resource following consent and that appropriate measures are in place to successfully mitigate any archaeological or geoarchaeological remains that will be impacted upon by the scheme.

10.64 The Outline AMS/WSI requires amendments for it to be considered an adequate management plan for the archaeology and geoarchaeology. Further detail is required in the Outline WSI as it forms the foundation of later strategies, so it is clear how this work will proceed, and what is expected of the contracting unit(s) responsible for investigation. It has been agreed, with the archaeological representatives for National Grid, that detailed comments be provided separately in combination with other County Officers in order to come to agreement on the content of the Outline AMS/WSI.

10.65 The document considers that “Appropriate and proportionate geophysical (magnetometer) survey and archaeological trial trenching has been undertaken to date (Section 1.3.4). The levels of evaluation proposed prior to submission were agreed between National Grid and relevant parties during the pre-application stage. The evaluation, including geophysics and trial trenching, was not completed prior to submission. Full reporting of these investigations has not been completed. This would not be considered sufficient information to submit with an application.

10.66 The report proposes that post-consent archaeological evaluation would be limited in extent and to certain locations. These comments need to be re-considered in light of the current stage of the evaluation fieldwork. It would be expected that all areas where impact to the archaeological or geoarchaeological resource is expected would be evaluated through intrusive archaeological methods (archaeological trenching).

10.67 The document requires clarity on the scope and extent of further evaluation required prior to any agreed mitigation. Evaluation will be required in all areas of potential impact where topsoil will be removed, including (but not limited to) undergrounding, pylon bases, haul roads, ecological mitigation measures and drainage measures. The evaluation would include further geophysical survey, archaeological trial trenching and geoarchaeological investigation. The Outline WSI could be supported with the addition of a figure illustrating the areas that remain to be evaluated. This will allow all parties to be clear about the scope and level of evaluation that may be required should consent be given.

10.68 The Outline AMS and WSI do not fully incorporate all potential methodologies and strategies for the post consent mitigation of the archaeological and geoarchaeological resource. The main mitigation methods proposed are agreed in principle including preservation *in situ*, excavation and strip, map and sample excavation. It is agreed that avoidance of significant archaeological remains would be the preferred approach to mitigation.

10.69 It would not be acceptable to rely on archaeological monitoring and recording (Section 5.3.131- 5.3.138) as a mitigation method during construction unless undertaken on areas that have been previously evaluated and the extent/significance of potential archaeology has been adequately understood.

10.70 With regard to preservation of sites through burial, Section 5.3.6 to 5.3.11 may need updating following current research into the most suitable methods and materials. The most up to date methods and practices for burial or sealing of remains will need to be agreed in discussion with the Historic England Regional Scientific Advisor.

10.71 The sections covering geoarchaeological evaluation and mitigation lack detail in their methodologies and outputs and need further detail as well as consideration of other geoarchaeological assessment techniques that may be more appropriate.

10.72 Geoarchaeological deposit modelling is listed as an assessment technique however a methodology for this is not provided. Section 5.3.22 refers to archaeological site investigations where geoarchaeology may be recorded and inspected. There is also reference to historic borehole records being consulted. This does not provide a robust strategy for the collection of geoarchaeological data to inform a deposit model. More details on sources and methodologies for the updating or creation of a deposit model should be included.

10.73 Should there be potential for further monitoring of ground Investigation (GI) works across the scheme this should also be included as an assessment method and details of the proposed methodology provided. Any further GI works would need to be monitored under geoarchaeological control to enable recording and incorporation into the deposit model. Commitment to this needs to be included in the Outline WSI as a mitigation method.

10.74 The evaluation methodology proposed for Geoarchaeological and Paleoenvironmental investigation (5.3.115) are boreholes or cores across the evaluation area. Any purposive borehole strategy should be guided by the updated deposit model.

10.75 Dependant on the depth, nature and extent of the geoarchaeological deposits to be investigated (which should be derived from a deposit model) there may be other more suitable geoarchaeological techniques which could better address the aims and objectives of the mitigation.

10.76 Geoarchaeological test pits and trenches should be included as potential geoarchaeological methodologies for mitigation in areas where the lateral extent and sampling methodologies would benefit from open excavations rather than borehole cores.

10.77 Section 6.1.1 makes reference to the processing of finds however no further details are provided. A section on finds processing and processes for the treatment and conservation of metal finds should be included within the Outline WSI. Finds would need to be examined by a suitable qualified specialist so that the results can be included in the evaluation reports. This information would be required for the identification of mitigation areas.

10.78 The proposals for reporting and provision of updated information need further consideration. The full reporting of the previous, current and forthcoming evaluations is considered a priority as this will be the basis for the selection of sites for mitigation. The reporting of trial trench evaluations should be included as a separate section within the outline WSI as the information required to make a balanced decision on mitigation will differ from a site that has been chosen for mitigation.

10.79 Agreement on the content of the Post-excavation Assessment Report (6.3) needs to be discussed in conjunction with both Norfolk and Suffolk archaeological advisors to ensure the requirements do not clash across county boundaries. It would be preferable to only include Essex sites within each post ex report and not a combination across the counties unless the sites cover a landscape that crosses county boundaries such as the Stour Valley.

10.80 It is considered there would be scope to demonstrate a commitment to delivering enhanced public understanding/benefit and legacy as part of the mitigation (section 6.8) considering the significant size of the scheme and the interest in the heritage of the area. There is more opportunity for publication and outreach which should be expanded on in the Outline WSI.

Outline Code of Construction Practice (CoCP)

10.81 Standard and additional mitigation measures for archaeology set out in the Outline CoCP (APP-300). Mitigation requirements are included within Section 6 (6.1.13) of the outline CoCP with reference to the Outline AMS and WSI (APP-328) and mitigation measures listed in Table 6.1. Register of Environmental Commitments.

10.82 Historic Environment (archaeology) is covered under H01 to H05 and are agreed as appropriate.

10.83 H04 should add “The Principal Contractor(s) will be responsible for making sure staff are aware of what to do in the event of an unexpected heritage asset. This should include toolbox talks within site inductions.”

10.84 Mitigation for Protected Lanes is included under H06. In order to protect the historic features of the protected lane a permanent record should be completed prior to any changes which would allow more accurate re-instatement. The requirement for this should be included under H06 and the mode and mechanism for this process included in the final Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (LEMP). It is noted that the measures proposed by the National Grid Bramford to Twinstead project (H05) included a more robust mechanism for their protection. It is recommended that this measure is adopted. See below:

10.85 “A topographic survey will be undertaken in advance of construction of each Protected Lane (Essex) and Historic Lane (Suffolk) within the Order Limits where likely to be affected by physical works. The survey will include mapping of any historic earthwork features associated with the lane, including banks and ditches. During construction, the contractor will seek to limit the working area to the narrowest section of lane that is practicable for the works. Any historic features associated with the lane will be reinstated at the end of construction to the pre-work condition, including the replanting of hedgerows and reinstatement of historic earthworks.”

Outline Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (LEMP)

10.86 The Outline Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (LEMP) (APP-321) includes measures to protect and reinstate historic landscape features including protected lanes, in addition to the commitment set out in H06 of the Outline CoCP (APP-300). The plan does not include sufficient controls to ensure the accurate re-instatement of historic features should removal or changes be required during construction. The following should be added to Section 7.9:

10.87 Should removal of features, other than hedgerows, associated with the protected lane be required, such as banks, verges, earthworks, a suitable method of recording of all historic features associated with the protected lane should be carried out in order to facilitate accurate re-instatement.

Comments Relating to Historic Environment - Built heritage

10.88 NG have conducted assessments of how the proposed Norwich to Tilbury project will affect heritage assets within or close to the proposed Order Limits. There are no designated heritage assets within the Order Limits, however there many instances where the Order Limits contains areas of land which form part of the setting of designated heritage assets.

10.89 There are also instances where the proposals will directly affect non-designated heritage assets, however it is our understanding that these are only archaeological (below ground) assets, and that no non-designated built assets (above ground) have been identified or assessed as part of the walk-over survey conducted by National Grid. This is, ultimately, a concern, however we understand and appreciate that the scope and scale of the assessment conducted by NG places a lower value on non-designated building of historic or architectural interest, meaning they were automatically scoped out of their assessment. This is particularly unfortunate when it relates to locally listed buildings.

Policy Context

National Policy

10.90 At a national level, the following policy document (and parts thereof) is particularly relevant to the consideration of the impact on the significance of built heritage arising from the development scheme:

• Department for Energy Security & Net Zero, Overarching National Policy Statement for Energy (EN-1) (November 2023) – Section 5.9 Historic Environment.

10.91 Paragraphs 5.9.9 to 5.9.15 relate to the Applicant assessment. Paragraph 5.9.7 relates specifically to the consideration of non-designated heritage assets (NDHAs). We consider the Applicant's assessment is compliant with the policy set out in these paragraphs with regards to designated heritage assets.

10.92 Clarification has been sought by the Council's consultant from the Applicant regarding the identification of built NDHAs as part of the baseline assessment carried out for the Environmental Statement. Locally listed buildings 'or those of equivalent quality in their fabric or historical associations' and 'Assets of local importance' have been assigned a Low Value/Sensitivity in the Applicant's Assessment Methodology and the settings of these assets have not been assessed due to 'the lack of potential for any impacts to these assets to result in significant effects…'. Further clarification has been provided by the applicant that 'As they would not experience physical impacts there is no potential for significant effects as a result of change to setting for assets of these values.'

10.93 The impact of the development on the setting and significance of some built NDHAs has, therefore, not been assessed.

10.94 Paragraphs of EN-1 5.9.16 to 5.9.21 relate to Mitigation.

10.95 Paragraphs 5.9.22 to 5.9.36 relate to Secretary of State decision making. Paragraph 5.9.27 and 5.9.28 are particularly relevant with regards to designated heritage assets. The highest level of harm to the significance of designated heritage assets identified by the Applicant (listed buildings and conservation areas) arising from the scheme is a mid-level of Less than Substantial harm.

10.96 Paragraph 5.9.33 of the same document requires that 'in weighing applications that directly or indirectly affect NDHAs, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset'. The Applicant has not expressed impacts on built NDHAs specifically in terms of 'harm to significance.' Their assessment identifies whether any element of an asset would be physically impacted (lost/removed) by the project and assesses impact through change to setting that affects value for medium and high value non-designated heritage assets.

National Guidance

10.97 The following guidance is relevant to the consideration of built heritage assets, their setting and significance:

- National Planning Practice Guidance: Conserving and Enhancing the Historic
- Environment (2019)
- Historic England, Historic Environment Good Practice Advice Note 2: Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment (2015);
- Historic England, Historic Environment Good Practice Advice Note 3: The Setting of Heritage Assets (2017);
- Historic England Advice Note 1: Conservation Area Appraisal, Designationand Management, (2019, Second Edition)
- Historic England Advice Note 12: Statements of Heritage Significance: Analysing Significance in Heritage Assets (2019)

<u>Colchester</u>

10.98 The sections of Colchester affected by this application area in Sections C and D of the project area and concerns sections of new pylons and above ground cabling. NG have identified a level of less than substantial harm to the significance of the following designated heritage assets arising from development within their setting.

- One Grade I listed building:
  - Church of St Mary, Langham (1223452), with less than substantial harm during the construction phase and no harm during the operational phase.
- Five Grade II* listed buildings:
  - The Hall (1223465), with lower less than substantial harm to the building in both phases.
  - Barn to South West of Little Tey House (1266779), lower less than substantial harm in both phases.
  - Church of St Margaret and St Catherine (1170063), lower less than substantial harm during the construction phase with a mid-level of harm during the operational phase.
  - Chapel Cottage (1222607), mid less than substantial harm during the construction phase, with no harm during the operational phase.
- Seventy-three Grade II listed buildings, forty of which will experience no harm during the operational phase.
- One Conservation Area:
  - Fordstreet Conservation Area, which will experience a mid-level of less than substantial harm during both phases.

10.99 Based on a desk-based review of the NG assessments, the conclusions regarding the resulting harm to significance are agreed. Where the proposals will result in ‘no harm’ to the significance of the asset during the operational phase, this is due to the nature of the proposals in the area surrounding these assets – whereby overhead lines are being replaced with underground cables.

Assessment of Impact and Cumulative Effects

10.100 The assessment of impacts provided by National Grid was discussed in the response provided to the Relevant Representation stage of the project, in the letter dated 29th October 2025. The level of impact upon the setting of designated heritage assets set out in document APP-210: 6.11.A2 Environmental Statement Appendix 11.2 - Historic Environment Assessment Tables (Final Issue A) is agreed; this impact assessment is understood to be based upon the route shown in the Works Plans, documents APP-019, APP-020, APP-022 and APP-023 of the Examination Library.

Cumulative effects of the development are split by the application into two categories: intra-project and inter-project.

10.101 Intra-project cumulative effects identified by National Grid are those caused by the project and therefore formally assessed within the Environmental Statement. These include contamination of below ground deposits due to construction, setting effects and changes to groundwater. No further comment on this is necessary, as the intra-project effects are part of the overarching assessment. 1.16. Inter-project cumulative effects are those which are resultant of the combination of the Norwich to Tilbury project (this application) and other existing projects. One significant cumulative effect has been identified that is relevant to this consultation. This concerns Dunton Hills Farmhouse, a Grade II listed building within the Brentwood district (list entry number: 1208245), which, National Grid summarises, will experience a greater level of change to its setting, were additional planned projects to also go ahead. I agree with this conclusion, as well as the conclusions set out within the document 6.17.A3 Environmental Statement Appendix 17.3 - InterProject Cumulative Effects (Final Issue A). 1.17. However, the limits of deviation included within the Draft Development Consent Order are a concern, due to how the changes this will allow for movement and adaptation to the route as work commences. This is discussed in the following section.

Draft Development Consent Order (DCO)

10.102 Article 5 (Limits of Deviation)

The Order Limits are generally 100 m wide for the proposed overhead line (50 metres either side of the centre line of the proposed overhead line). There are concerns regarding the lateral, longitudinal (horizontal) and vertical limits of deviation set out in Article 5 of the Draft DCO with regards to the potential worsening of temporary (construction) and permanent impacts on the setting and significance of heritage assets to those set out in the Applicant's Environmental Statement assessments (which are based on the Works Plan (document 2.3), Figure 4.1 Proposed Project Design (document 6.4.F1) and 4.2 Project Design – Permanent Features (document 6.4.F2).

10.103 The limits of deviation could bring pylons and overhead lines up to 50 metres closer to heritage assets (laterally) and allow movement anywhere along the line of the project (longitudinally), exacerbating their detracting visual impacts. Pylons may also be of an additional height of up to 6 metres from the pylon design heights set out in the Works Plan, and up to 18 metres for certain pylons where it is necessary to allow a change from proposed low height pylons to standard height pylons.

10.104 Article 5 also sets out horizontal limits of deviation for other permanent above ground structures, erections and apparatus including substations and sealing end compounds such that they may be located anywhere within the parameters shown by the pink dashed lines on the Works Plans. They may also be up to 10% above the maximum height shown on the table of parameters forming part of the Works Plans (and may also be any amount lower in height as the undertaker considers convenient).

10.105 The limits of deviation are of particular potential concern with regards to the following designated heritage assets which are in closest proximity to the Order Limits and where a Mid-level of Less than Substantial Harm (LTSH) to their significance has been identified by the Applicant at the Operation and Maintenance phase of the project. NB These are provided as examples and are not intended to be an exhaustive list of all assets where there are potential concerns with regards to the limits of deviation. There is the potential for designated heritage assets that have been assessed as having a Low level of LTSH to their significance during the operational phase to instead experience a Mid-level of LTSH due to pylons, overhead lines and other permanent above ground structures being in closer proximity than the existing plans, due to the proposed lateral and longitudinal limits of deviation.

Colchester

Name	List Entry	Grade
1,2 & 3 Brick Cottages	1169966	II
The Old Rectory	1224447	II
King's Farmhouse	1266530	II
Knaves Farmhouse	1266773	II
Range South of Barn to South of Knaves Farmhouse	1266775	II
Barn to South of Knaves Farmhouse	1266822	II
Little Tey House	1266823	II
Barn to South West of Little Tey House	1266779	II*
Aldham Hall	1306270	II*
Wagon Lodge to North of Aldham Hall	1337391	II
Church of St Margaret and St Catherine	1170063	II*
Ford Street Conservation Area	N/A	N/A

10.106 Commitment GG34 in Table 6.1 of Document 7.2 Outline Code of Construction Practice, sets out commitments to restricting the movement of specific pylons or infrastructure along the longitudinal limits of deviation, however these are sections of the project which are not relevant to this consultation.

10.107 Following our review and assessment of NG's conclusions on the impacts of the project on heritage assets, for each designated heritage asset where a Mid-Level of less than substantial harm has been identified to its significance at the Operation and Maintenance phase of the project we would request further details are provided by National Grid regarding the embedded mitigation measures that have been employed, for example, the selected overhead line routes and pylon locations.

Mitigation

10.108 The overall approach to mitigating any resulting negative effects of the development is set out in Chapter 5: EIA Approach and Method (document reference 6.5) of the submission and has informed the proposals set out by NG in their submission. The three mitigation types have been split into three types by National Grid in relation to heritage assets: embedded, standard and additional. Descriptions of these is outlined on pages 98-100 of document EN020027-000406-6.11.

10.109 The embedded and standard mitigation measures are acceptable in principle. However, the residual effects of the proposals at both Construction and Operation and Management phases of the project include a Mid-Level of less than substantial harm to the significance of some designated heritage assets (a summary is provided below).

10.110 Regarding additional mitigation measures, the document reads:

11.6.10 As a result of the assessment within this ES, as defined in Section 11.7, additional mitigation is required. Any mitigation for historic buildings or historic landscapes would be secured through the measures set out in embedded and standard mitigation above.

10.111 We assume this is meant to read 'additional mitigation is **not** required'.

10.112 Following our reading and assessment of NG's conclusions on the impact of the project on heritage assets, we feel the application of the **embedded** mitigation measures should be increased regarding the following assets:

Colchester**:** Aldham Hall (II*, 1306270), Wagon Lodge to North of Aldham Hall (1337391) and the II* Church St Margaret and St Catherine.

10.113 Positioning the Order Limits, associated access roads and pylons further away from the listed buildings than proposed, would be beneficial, better retaining the current undeveloped, agricultural qualities of their settings. Whilst we appreciate that care has been taken to avoid settlements, the resulting change to the countryside will still be notable in the landscape surrounding these buildings. We do, nevertheless, agree this change results in 'less than substantial' harm, as is discussed in the following sections and do not dispute the resulting level of harm to the significance of these assets ascribed by NG in their conclusions.

10.114 **Standard** mitigation measures relate to the Construction phase of the project. Of these, the following are relevant:

H06: Where practicable, maintain elements within the landscape such as vegetation, hedgerows, walls and earthworks (such as boundary banks or ditches). Where such features cannot be retained, replacement will be installed as appropriate (including reinstating hedgerows, fences, walls and earthworks).

10.115 We recommend that this is further expanded to clarify the definitions of ‘appropriate’ replacements, and ask for the relevant local authorities to be contacted before such elements are removed, in order to discuss the manner of replacement as well as the extent of any removals of fences, walls, etc.

H07: Commitment NV04 (see Outline CoCP (document reference 7.2)) will be applied in relation to any designated historic buildings with potential to be impacted by construction vibration.

10.116 We recommend expansion of H07, to create a hotline or method of contact for building owners who are concerned about the effects of construction vibration on their buildings as works are undertaken, to allay fears and monitor effects.

10.117 It is agreed that in many cases, the introduction of measures such as additional planting to screen the proposed development in views from, towards and including built heritage assets would not be desirable where it would have the effect of curtailing or truncating views across an open agrarian landscape setting which contributes to the understanding of an asset’s historic function and which helps reveal its architectural interest. Therefore, we understand and appreciate why this has not been suggested as an additional mitigation measure.

10.118 Following our review and assessment of NG’s conclusions on the impacts of the project on heritage assets, for each designated heritage asset where a Mid Level of less than substantial harm has been identified to its significance at the Construction phase of the project we would request further details are provided by NG regarding the mitigation measures that have been employed, for example, the selected locations of haul roads and other aspects of construction related activity and infrastructure and whether or what, if any, alternatives were assessed prior to the submitted project design.

11 Hydrology, Land Drainage and Flood Risk

Policy Context

Overarching National Policy Statement for Energy (EN-1)

11.1 Paragraph 5.8.7 states “Where new energy infrastructure is, exceptionally, necessary in flood risk areas (for example where there are no reasonably available sites in areas at lower risk), policy aims to make it safe for its lifetime without increasing flood risk elsewhere and, where possible, by reducing flood risk overall. It should also be designed and constructed to remain operational in times of flood”.

11.2 Paragraph 5.8.12 states “Development should be designed to ensure there is no increase in flood risk elsewhere, accounting for the predicted impacts of climate change throughout the lifetime of the development. There should be no net loss of floodplain storage and any deflection or constriction of flood flow routes should be safely managed within the site. Mitigation measures should make as much use as possible of natural flood management techniques”.

National Planning Policy Framework

11.3 Paragraph 162 states that “Plans should take a proactive approach to mitigating and adapting to climate change, taking into account the long-term implications for flood risk, coastal change, water supply, biodiversity and landscapes, and the risk of overheating and drought from rising temperatures”.

11.4 Paragraph 170 states that “inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding should be avoided by directing development away from areas at highest risk (whether existing or future). Where development is necessary in such areas, the development should be made safe for its lifetime without increasing flood risk elsewhere”.

Local Plan Policy

11.5 **Policy CC1: Climate Change**

“A low carbon future for Colchester will be achieved by:

(x) Development will be directed to locations with the least impact on flooding or water resources. All development should consider the impact of and promotion of design responses to flood risk for the lifetime of the development and the availability of water and wastewater infrastructure for the lifetime of the development”.

11.6 **Policy DM23: Flood Risk and Water Management**

“The Local Planning Authority will seek to direct development away from land at risk of flooding in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework and the Planning Practice Guidance”.

11.7 **Policy DM24: Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems**

“All new residential and commercial development, car parks and hard standings should incorporate Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) appropriate to the nature of the site. Such systems shall provide optimum water runoff rates and volumes taking into account relevant local or national standards; and shall ensure that the quality of runoff is consistent with the requirements of the Water Framework Directive. SuDS design quality will be expected to conform with standards encompassed in the relevant BRE, CIRIA standards and Essex County Council’s SuDS Design Guide (and as updated) to the satisfaction of the Lead Local Flood Authority.

Opportunities should be taken to integrate sustainable drainage within the design of the development, to create amenity space, enhance biodiversity and manage pollution. Existing drainage features such as ditches and ponds should be retained on site where possible as part of SuDS schemes”.

Neighbourhood Plans

11.8 **Marks Tey Neighbourhood Plan** -

Policy T12: Managing Flood Risk and Sustainable Drainage

Development proposals should demonstrate that flood risk is not increased elsewhere and that opportunities to reduce flood risk overall have been taken. Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) should be incorporated into all development proposals unless demonstrated to be inappropriate.

11.9 **Eight Ash Green** -

Environment Policy 5 (EP 5): Development will be supported where it is shown that drainage strategies for major development within the Plan area accord with the Essex SuDs Guide and will not negatively impact upon the existing network of drainage ditches within the Neighbourhood Area. The protection, extension and enhancement of these facilities are encouraged. Where it is necessary to enable development, any changes to a watercourse may require consent from Essex County Council as the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) for an ordinary watercourse, or the Environment Agency for main rivers. Developers should contact the LLFA or Environment Agency for further advice.

Local Impact Assessment

11.10 **Construction Phase Impacts**

Positive

11.11 None identified

Neutral

11.12 None identified

Negative

11.13 As set out below

11.14 **Operational Phase Impacts**

Positive

11.15 None identified

Neutral

11.16 None identified

Negative

11.17 Also as set out below

11.18 Colchester City Council defer to ECC as Lead Local Flood Authority ("LLFA") for the area. The LLFA is responsible for managing risk of flooding from surface water, ground water and from ordinary watercourses. As such, the LLFA has engaged collaboratively with the Applicant's commissioned drainage consultants to scope the detail required to assess the proposed Surface Water Drainage Strategy and other supporting documents including Flood Risk Assessment (APP-331), Ground Investigation Report (APP-214), Water Quality Assessment, and flood management during the construction phase of the scheme.

11.19 The development as proposed has been assessed in relation to, national planning policies, local standards and guidance documents and industry best practice standards (NPPF 2021, NPS-EN1, Suds Design Guide 2020, Ciria SuDS Manual C753, Flood and Water Management Act 2010).

11.20 The proposed Norwich to Tilbury project comprises a mix of permanent and temporary works on largely greenfield land. The LLFA requests further clarity on the location of permanent and temporary construction works, but all works will require appropriate flood mitigation and surface runoff management, to ensure any excess runoff from drainage systems does not impact third party land.

11.21 In principle, the management of surface runoff from these sites should mitigate any increased risk of flooding. However, based on the submitted information, the LLFA retains certain concerns that have not been addressed from previous discussions and that have been set out in consultation responses to the Applicant, without feedback or discussion from the Applicant. This gives cause for concern for the project.

Adaptation to Climate Change

11.22 The LLFA notes that the allowance for climate change as proposed in the FRA, is 40% for drainage serving permanent assets. With reference to standard policy and guidance however, the normal expectation for climate change allowances for peak rainfall is 45%. This latter figure should form the basis for assessment in the FRA.

Surface Water Runoff

11.23 In general, the FRA details how good practice will be employed during the construction phase to mitigate surface water run and how pollution will be managed. However, while the LLFA is generally satisfied with the approach of the FRA, there is concern that information previously requested in respect of the control and management of surface water discharge has not been provided.

11.24 For surface runoff disposal during construction and from built areas (offices, storage compounds), this will need to be designed in accordance with 'The Sustainable Drainage Systems Design Guide for Essex 2020' and should capture / control all surface water discharge. Unrestricted runoff from the site into any open water body or sewer is not considered acceptable.

11.25 The submitted FRA contains no specified discharge limits. Further, there are no details of how surface water will be managed when control limits are exceeded. In particular, there is concern that details for flow rates and dimensions for a culvert proposed under a construction laydown area associated with the proposed Tilbury North Substation have not been provided. It is therefore impossible to assess whether the capacity of the proposed culvert is sufficient to manage the predicted peak flow. In the absence of this detail, the LLFA is concerned that the situation could lead to unacceptable surface water run-off and flooding.

11.26 In accordance with the aforementioned policy and guidance, surface water runoff from permanent and temporary built-up areas should be managed on site using infiltration or runoff and should be restricted to 1-year greenfield rates. Additionally, network modelling should be done for 100 years plus climate change allowance. Information contained in the application does not provide sufficient certainty that measures will be in place for the 1 in 30 and 1 in 100 rainfall events.

Temporary works

11.27 It is requested that the Applicant provide a plan identifying the location of permanent and temporary works to aid assessment and ensure appropriate mitigation measures are in place.

11.28 All of the above comments have been raised in previous consultation responses by the LLFA and ECC. Furthermore, concerns were raised when responding to the targeted consultation about the revised placement of pylons which would be located in Flood Zone 3. At this time however, the LLFA has not received any information to address the aforementioned concerns.

11.28 In terms of site specific flooding, CCC wanted to take this opportunity to note that at the time of writing this LIR, the river valleys of the CCC area are extremely flooded. For example but not limited to, the split undergrounded section that crosses the River Stour on both sides of the Essex/Suffolk border is an extensive wetland currently. This can be viewed from the Langham Hall Estate. High speed directional drilling would not be possible at the present time due to the extent of the flooding so this will need to be factored in. The same is true south of Fordham where a biodiversity area creating a wetland alongside the natural river flooding has created a significant area of water that sits in within the order limits, however that is an area where OHL is proposed.

12 Landscape and visual

Policy Context

National Policy Statements

Overarching National Policy Statement for Energy (EN-1)

12.1 Paragraph 5.10.4 states “landscape effects arise not only from the sensitivity of the landscape but also the nature and magnitude of change proposed by the development, whose specific siting and design make the assessment a case-by-case judgement”.

12.2 Paragraph 5.10.6 states “projects need to be designed carefully, taking account of the potential impact on the landscape. Having regard to siting, operational and other relevant constraints the aim should be to minimise harm to the landscape, providing reasonable mitigation where possible and appropriate”.

12.3 Paragraph 5.10.7 states “national Parks, the Broads and AONBs have been confirmed by the government as having the highest status of protection in relation to landscape and natural beauty. Each of these designated areas has specific statutory purposes. Projects should be designed sensitively given the various siting, operational, and other relevant constraints. For development proposals located within designated landscapes the Secretary of State should be satisfied that measures which seek to further purposes of the designation are sufficient, appropriate and proportionate to the type and scale of the development”.

12.4 Paragraph 5.10.8 states “the duty to seek to further the purposes of nationally designated landscapes also applies when considering applications for projects outside the boundaries of these areas which may have impacts within them. In these locations, projects should be designed sensitively given the various siting, operational, and other relevant constraints. The Secretary of State should be satisfied that measures which seek to further the purposes of the designation are sufficient, appropriate and proportionate to the type and scale of the development”.

12.5 Paragraph 5.10.12 states “outside nationally designated areas, there are local landscapes that may be highly valued locally. Where a local development document in England or a local development plan in Wales has policies based on landscape or waterscape character assessment, these should be paid particular attention. However, locally valued landscapes should not be used in themselves to refuse consent, as this may unduly restrict acceptable development”.

12.6 Paragraph 5.10.16 states the “applicant should carry out a landscape and visual impact assessment and report it in the ES, including cumulative effects (see Section 4.3). Several guides have been produced to assist in addressing landscape issues[1]”.

12.7 Paragraph 5.10.17 states the “landscape and visual assessment should include reference to any landscape character assessment and associated studies as a means of assessing landscape impacts relevant to the proposed project. The applicant’s assessment should also take account of any relevant policies based on these assessments in local development documents in England”.

12.8 Paragraph 5.10.26 states “reducing the scale of a project can help to mitigate the visual and landscape effects of a proposed project. However, reducing the scale or otherwise amending the design of a proposed energy infrastructure project may result in a significant operational constraint and reduction in function – for example, electricity generation output. There may, however, be exceptional circumstances, where mitigation could have a very significant benefit and warrant a small reduction in function. In these circumstances, the Secretary of State may decide that the benefits of the mitigation to reduce the landscape and/or visual effects outweigh the marginal loss of function”.

12.9 Paragraph 5.10.27 states “adverse landscape and visual effects may be minimised through appropriate siting of infrastructure within its development site and wider setting. The careful consideration of colours and materials will support the delivery of a well-designed scheme, as will sympathetic landscaping and management of its immediate surroundings”.

[1] The Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment: Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (2013, 3rd edition); Landscape and Seascape Character Assessments – see https://www.gov.uk/guidance/landscape-and-seascape-character-assessments; Countryside Council for Wales/Cadw (2007) Guide to Good Practice on Using the Register of Landscapes of Historic Interest in Wales in the Planning and Development Process; or any successor documents

12.10 Paragraph 5.10.32 states “when considering applications for development within National Parks, the Broads and AONBs the conservation and enhancement of the natural beauty should be given substantial weight by the Secretary of State in deciding on applications for development consent in these areas. The Secretary of State may grant development consent in these areas in exceptional circumstances. Such development should be demonstrated to be in the public interest and consideration of such applications should include an assessment of:

• the need for the development, including in terms of national considerations[2], and the impact of consenting or not consenting it upon the local economy;

• the cost of, and scope for, developing all or part of the development elsewhere outside the designated area or meeting the need for it in some other way, taking account of the policy on alternatives set out in Section 4.3; and

• any detrimental effect on the environment, the landscape and recreational opportunities, and the extent to which that could be moderated”

12.11 Paragraph 5.10.33 states “for development proposals located within designated landscapes the Secretary of State should be satisfied that measures which seek to further purposes of the designation are sufficient, appropriate and proportionate to the type and scale of the development. The Secretary of State should ensure that any projects consented in these designated areas should be carried out to high environmental standards, including through the application of appropriate requirements where necessary”.

12.12 Paragraph 5.10.34 states the “duty to seek to further the purposes of nationally designated landscapes also applies when considering applications for projects outside the boundaries of these areas, which may have impacts within them. The aim should be to avoid harming the purposes of designation or to minimise adverse effects on designated landscapes, and such projects should be designed sensitively given the various siting, operational, and other relevant constraints. The fact that a proposed project will be visible from within a designated area should not in itself be a reason for the Secretary of State to refuse consent”.

12.13 Paragraph 5.10.35 states the “scale of energy projects means that they will often be visible across a very wide area. The Secretary of State should judge whether any adverse impact on the landscape would be so damaging that it is not offset by the benefits (including need) of the project”.

[2] National considerations should be understood to include the national need for the infrastructure as set out in Part 3 of this NPS and the contribution of the infrastructure to the national economy.

National Policy Statement for electricity networks infrastructure (EN-5)

12.14 Paragraph 2.9.8 states “these impacts depend on the type (for example, whether lines are supported by towers or monopole structures), scale, siting, and degree of screening of the lines, as well as the characteristics of the landscape and local environment through which they are routed”.

12.15 Paragraph 2.9.9 states “new substations, sealing end compounds (including terminal towers), and other above-ground installations that serve as connection, switching, and voltage transformation points on the electricity network may also give rise to adverse landscape and visual impacts”.

12.16 Paragraph 2.9.14 states “where the nature or proposed route of an overhead line will likely result in particularly significant landscape and visual impacts, as would be assessed through landscape, seascape and visual impact assessment, the applicant should demonstrate that they have given due consideration to the costs and benefits of feasible alternatives to the overhead line. This could include – where appropriate – re-routing, underground or subsea cables and the feasibility e.g. in cost, engineering or environmental terms of these. Applicants should note the position on nationally designated landscapes at section 2.9.20 below”.

12.17 Paragraph 2.9.16 sets out “The Holford Rules – guidelines for the routing of new overhead lines – were originally set out in 1959. These guidelines, intended as a common-sense approach to overhead line route design, were Withdrawn National Policy Statement for Electricity Networks Infrastructure (EN-5) 19 reviewed and updated by the industry in the 1990s, and they should be embodied in the applicants’ proposals for new overhead lines”.

12.18 Paragraph 2.9.17 states “in brief, the Holford Rules state that applicants should:

- avoid altogether, if possible, the major areas of highest amenity value, by so planning the general route of the line in the first place, even if total mileage is somewhat increased in consequence;
- avoid smaller areas of high amenity value or scientific interest by deviation, provided this can be done without using too many angle towers, i.e. the bigger structures which are used when lines change direction;
- other things being equal, choose the most direct line, with no sharp changes of direction and thus with fewer angle towers;
- choose tree and hill backgrounds in preference to sky backgrounds wherever possible. When a line has to cross a ridge, secure this opaque background as long as possible, cross obliquely when a dip in the ridge provides an opportunity. Where it does not, cross directly, preferably between belts of trees;

- prefer moderately open valleys with medium or moderate levels of tree cover where the apparent height of towers will be reduced, and views of the line will be broken by trees;
- where country is flat and sparsely planted, and unless specifically preferred otherwise by relevant stakeholders, keep the high voltage lines as far as possible independent of smaller lines, converging routes, distribution poles and other masts, wires and cables, so as to avoid a concentration of lines or ‘wirescape’; and
- approach urban areas through industrial zones, where they exist; and when pleasant residential and recreational land intervenes between the approach line and the substation, carefully assess the comparative costs of undergrounding”

12.19 Paragraph 2.9.20 states that “although it is the government’s position that overhead lines should be the strong starting presumption for electricity networks developments in general, this presumption is reversed when proposed developments will cross part of a nationally designated landscape (i.e. National Park, The Broads, or Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty)”.

12.20 Paragraph 2.9.21 states “in these areas, and where harm to the landscape, visual amenity and natural beauty of these areas cannot feasibly be avoided by rerouting overhead lines, the strong starting presumption will be that the applicant should underground the relevant section of the line”.

12.21 Paragraph 2.9.22 states that “however, undergrounding will not be required where it is infeasible in engineering terms, or where the harm that it causes (see section 2.11.4) is not outweighed by its corresponding landscape, visual amenity and natural beauty benefits. Regardless of the option, the scheme through its design, delivery, and operation, should seek to further the statutory purposes of the designated landscape. These enhancements may go beyond the mitigation measures needed to minimise the adverse effects of the scheme”.

12.22 Paragraph 2.9.23 states “additionally, cases will arise where – though no part of the proposed development crosses a designated landscape – a high potential for widespread and significant adverse landscape and/or visual impacts along certain sections of its route may result in recommendations to use undergrounding for relevant segments of the line or alternatively consideration of using a route including subsea cabling”.

12.23 Paragraph 2.9.24 states “in these cases, and taking account of the fact that the government has not laid down any further rule on the circumstances requiring use of underground or subsea cables, the Secretary of State must weigh the feasibility, cost, and any harm of the undergrounding or subsea option against: • the adverse implications of the overhead line proposal; • the cost and feasibility of re-routing overhead lines or mitigation proposals Withdrawn for the relevant line section; and

- the cost and feasibility of the reconfiguration, rationalisation, and/or use of underground or subsea cabling of proximate existing or proposed electricity networks infrastructure”

National Planning Policy Framework

12.24 Paragraph 189 states “great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks, the Broads and National Landscapes which have the highest status of protection in relation to these issues. The conservation and enhancement of wildlife and cultural heritage are also important considerations in these areas, and should be given great weight in National Parks and the Broads. The scale and extent of development within all these designated areas should be limited, while development within their setting should be sensitively located and designed to avoid or minimise adverse impacts on the designated areas”.

12.25 Paragraph 190 states “that when considering applications for development within National Parks, the Broads and National Landscapes, permission should be refused for major development other than in exceptional circumstances, and where it can be demonstrated that the development is in the public interest. Consideration of such applications should include an assessment of: a) the need for the development, including in terms of any national considerations, and the impact of permitting it, or refusing it, upon the local economy; b) the cost of, and scope for, developing outside the designated area, or meeting the need for it in some other way; and c) any detrimental effect on the environment, the landscape and recreational opportunities, and the extent to which that could be moderated”.

Local Plan Policy

12.26 **Policy SG1: Colchester’s Spatial Strategy**

“New development in the open countryside will be required to respect the character and appearance of landscapes and the built environment and preserve or enhance the historic environment and biodiversity to safeguard the rural character of the Borough”.

12.27 **Policy ENV1: Environment**

“The Local Planning Authority will conserve and enhance Colchester’s natural and historic environment, countryside and coastline. The Local Planning Authority will safeguard the Borough’s biodiversity, geology, history and archaeology, which help define the landscape character of the Borough, through the protection and enhancement of sites of international, national, regional and local importance.

A. Designated sites

Development proposals that have adverse effects on the integrity of habitats sites, Sites of Special Scientific Interest or significant adverse impacts on the special qualities of the Dedham Vale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (including its setting) (either alone or in-combination) will not be supported.

D. Irreplaceable habitats

Proposals that would result in the loss of irreplaceable habitats, such as ancient woodland, Important Hedgerows and veteran trees will not be permitted unless there are wholly exceptional reasons and a suitable compensation strategy, to the satisfaction of the local planning authority, exists.

E. Countryside

The local planning authority will carefully balance the requirement for new development within the countryside to meet identified development needs in accordance with Colchester's spatial strategy, and to support the vitality of rural communities, whilst ensuring that development does not have an adverse impact on the different roles, the relationship between and separate identities of settlements, valued landscapes, the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside and visual amenity. The intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside will be recognised and assessed, and development will only be permitted where it would not adversely affect the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside and complies with other relevant policies. Within valued landscapes, development will only be permitted where it would not impact upon and would protect and enhance the factors that contribute to valued landscapes".

12.28 **Policy ENV3: Green Infrastructure**

"Proposals that cause loss or harm to the green infrastructure network will not be permitted unless the need for and benefits of the development outweigh any adverse impacts. Where adverse impacts on green infrastructure are unavoidable, development will only be permitted if suitable mitigation measures for the network are provided".

12.29 **Policy ENV4: Dedham Vale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty**

"Development will only be supported in or on land within the setting of the Dedham Vale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) that: (i) Makes a positive contribution to the natural beauty and special qualities of the AONB, including tranquillity and the AONB's good quality night/dark skies; and, (ii) Does not adversely affect the character, quality views, into and out of the AONB and distinctiveness of the AONB or threaten public enjoyment of these areas, including by increased motorised vehicle movement; and, (iii) That there are no adverse impacts on the setting of the AONB which cannot reasonably be mitigated against and, (iv) Supports the wider environmental, social and economic objectives as set out in the Dedham Vale AONB and Stour Valley Management Plan.

Where exceptional development is suitable, landscape enhancements, mitigation or compensation measures must be provided. The Local Planning Authority will seek opportunities to mitigate the impact of features identified as having adverse impacts.

The Local Planning Authority will also encourage proposals in or near the AONB to underground new infrastructure associated with electricity schemes or communication equipment where financially viable, to help protect its landscape qualities".

12.30 **Policy CC1: Climate Change**

Criterion (iv) states that "A Canopy Cover Assessment will be required for all major applications[3]. Development proposals should seek where appropriate to increase the level of canopy cover on site by a minimum of 10%. In circumstances, where this is not possible or desirable, compensatory provision should be identified and secured through a legal obligation".

Neighbourhood Plans

12.31 **West Bergholt neighbourhood Plan -**

PP12: Coalescence Development will not be supported in the area shown on Map PP12 if individually or cumulatively it would result in increasing the coalescence between West Bergholt village and Braiswick, reducing their separate identity by reducing the separation between these two settlements.

PP10: Design All new development should be of a high-quality design and sustainable construction is encouraged. Account should be taken of the guidance and principles in the Neighbourhood Plan, which seeks to promote or reinforce local distinctiveness. : • Have an acceptable visual impact on the valley sides; and • Give careful consideration to mitigating the impact on views across the village;

12.32 **Marks Tey Neighbourhood Plan** -

Policy MT06: Landscape character, views and setting states "The landscape capacity of Marks Tey parish has limited ability to be able to accommodate development without degradation of landscape characteristics that are of local value. Mitigation and enhancement measures would be required where change does take place". The supporting text to Policy MT06 further states "Care should be taken to avoid loss of the woodlands and hedgerows/field boundaries that form screening elements in views from the edge of Marks Tey area".

Please note this section is divided into landscape and visual matters including arboriculture, however due to the nature of the theme, there is inevitable cross over between them.

[3] Major applications are defined as per Article 2 of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management) Procedure (England) Order 2015 as: Development involving any one or more of the following— (a) the winning and working of minerals or the use of land for mineral-working deposits; (b) waste development; (c) the provision of dwellinghouses where— (i) the number of dwellinghouses to be provided is 10 or more; or (ii)the development is to be carried out on a site having an area of 0.5 hectares or more and it is not known whether the development falls within sub-paragraph ; (d) the provision of a building or buildings where the floor space to be created by the development is 1,000 square metres or more; or (e) development carried out on a site having an area of 1 hectare or more

Landscape Impacts

12.33 **Construction Phase Impacts**

Positive

12.34 None identified

Neutral

12.35 None identified

Negative

12.36 Construction of overhead lines and undergrounded infrastructure will have a significant negative impact on the predominantly rural, agricultural and undeveloped landscapes in Northern Colchester. Many of these landscapes could be identified as 'valued landscapes'. We note that the applicant has undertaken a landscape value assessment, but as it was not made available until the submission of the Environmental Statement, it appears to have not informed the alteration of the alignment in any meaningful way. The Council believe that needs the proposed alignment and consideration of undergrounding needs to be looked at again in light of this data.

12.37 Additionally, it appears that valuation of landscapes had been done at a district level, rather than considering the specific site and setting. Omitting this detailed consideration means the site-specific characteristics that contribute to the individual value of different sites is ignored, thus meaning judgments of impact significance may be understated.

12.38 The Environmental Statement also makes reference to the Colchester Borough Landscape Assessment 2005 and this appears to have been used to inform the Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment in the Environmental Statement produced by the applicant. An updated Colchester Landscape Assessment was produced in November 2024 and it is advised that this should be reviewed by the applicant to ensure its assessment is up to date and accurate.

12.39 Changing the landscape from rural to highly developed will affect people's enjoyment of that landscape and their 'sense of place'. It will impact how they experience and interact with the landscape, for example through leisure activities. It will have consequential negative impacts for their physical and mental health and wellbeing.

The significant effects will likely extend up to 1.5km from the order limits, but this could be greater towards the end of the construction period.

12.40 The effects of the project on the landscape will vary significantly along the route in Colchester. These are separated out below:

Langham to A12 (Heading towards EACN)

12.41 This section of the route is being undergrounded as it passes through the Dedham Vale National Landscape. During construction, the 120m wide swathe of vegetation that will need to be removed to lay the underground cables will significantly alter this landscape. A large section of trees will be removed along Black Brook which will impact upon the characteristics of the landscape, particularly during the operational phase.

Langham to Great Horkesley (Eastern cable sealing end compound)

12.42 Construction of the overhead line through the Southern part of Langham will mean that this area's character will be impacted doubly by the project taking into account the influence of the undergrounding. It is noted that the character of this area is largely rural, albeit with some man-made features such as Boxted Airfield and the solar farm. However, we deem that the height, spatial extent and visual dominance of the pylons would have more far-reaching impacts on the landscape in the area than the existing man-made infrastructure.

12.43 We query the Sensitivity assessment for this landscape as being Medium sensitive to this sort of infrastructure as this is an open, gently undulating landscape in which there is high intervisibility and for which '*long distance framed views'* are characteristic. We consider the Sensitivity to be at least Medium – High.

12.44 In relation to Construction effects, we do not agree that the effect would only be moderate and significant (adverse) within 1.5 km of the Order Limits. As we consider the landscape is at least of Medium-High Sensitivity we consider the effects would be moderate-major (adverse) at least for the first 0.5Kms. We agree the effect would be minor and not significant (adverse) beyond 1.5Kms.

Undergrounding through Great Horkesley

12.45 This section of the route will involve removal of a large swathe of vegetation for the underground cabling, as well as the construction of two cable sealing end compounds. The impact on the character of the area will be felt most during the operational phase, albeit the construction of the cable sealing end compounds and associated temporary work compounds will impact upon the character and 'feel' of the surroundings.

12.46 In Visual Receptor Area D2 Little Horkesley and Wormingford, We agree that within 0.5 km of the project line, the scale of change would be large, the magnitude of effect would be high, and the effect would be major and significant (adverse). Viewpoint 4.27 B1508 Colchester Road, near Grove Lodge 0.12Km demonstrates the major significant adverse effect of the pylons close to. However, we disagree that major effects are limited to below 0.5KM and that between 0.5 km and 1.5 km the scale of change would necessarily be medium and the effect only moderate and significant (adverse).

12.47 Whilst we agree that from Viewpoint 4.04 PRoW off Holt's Road, east of Wormingford (Little Horkesley 18) from 0.76Km, the visualisation does demonstrate a moderate significant adverse impact, we hold that in a more open landscape we consider the effects could remain major adverse up to 1Km. Similar receptors between 0.5Km-1Km, particularly receptors on linear features such as PRoW, would be affected by close to medium distance views of this construction activity and by the operational Project. Between approximately 1 km and 2 km intermittent medium to long distance views of construction activity and the completed overhead line would be seen, including from the National Landscape and the Stour Valley Path.

Western Cable Sealing End Compound to Fordham

12.48 The route changes to overhead lines, with pylons heading south past the northern edge of West Bergholt, through rural landscapes mixed with farmland and open access land. This landscape will be significantly impacted during construction of overhead lines and pylons, with 3 pylons set to be sited on the open access land and a loss of hedgerows, hedgerow trees, semi-mature and mature field trees, clumps of woodland/scrub and recently planted young woodland in open access land to the south of Fordham and riparian vegetation along the River Colne This is judged to cause a disturbance to the '*attractive and open'* character of the LCA.

12.49 The Essex Way and Public Right of Way (PRoW) network cut across this landscape, which used to be a Special Landscape Area and is the most accessible section of unspoiled riverside landscape to the west of Colchester.

12.50 During construction we do not accept that beyond 1Km, the valley topography and layers of vegetation including woodland, riparian vegetation, hedgerows, and field boundary trees would reduce intervisibility within the wider LCA, nor reduce the significant effects, due to the height of the infrastructure, during construction and at operation.

12.51 We judge that there will be long views from Mill Road, the Essex Way, the PRoW network to the west of Hillhouse Woods, within the Open Access Land itself, from the PRoW east of the Shoulder of Mutton at Ford Street (where the pylons parallel the Essex Way for 700m at only 200-300m distance), from the PRoW network on the south side of the Colne north of Porters Lane. The alignment appears to take almost the longest route that could be chosen along the Colne Valley slopes. The opportunity should be explored further for either realignment north and west of the Open Access Land or undergrounding the overhead line.

12.52 It is identified that construction activity would be visible in close views from the south-eastern fringes of the Visual Receptor Area D5 Fordham from the local road network (which is predominantly rural lanes), the PRoW network, NCN Route 13, and Open Access Land, as well as scattered properties such as north-east of Fordham within the Colne Valley. The Project run of pylons is approximately 3Km through this area and would generate major significant adverse effects along this line as it crosses the valley between Fordham and the outskirts of West Bergholt parish. Part of this area would have formed part of the previous Special Landscape Area. There is concern that the proposed building on the publicly accessible greenspace of the open access land, and the negative landscape and visual impacts of this, is not being proposed to be compensated by the applicant. This is addressed in the Required Mitigation/Compensation section for this issue.

Fordham to Aldham

12.53 The alignment continues south towards Fordstreet, a conservation area, before then bisecting the village of Aldham. It is clear that during construction of overhead line infrastructure that it will disturb the “peaceful and tranquil” character of the area. The route passes very close to residential and listed properties in Aldham, severely eroding the historic character of the area.

12.54 The construction of multiple pylons, close to PROW and residential areas would create an overall significant adverse effect on views.

Aldham to Braintree Border (via Marks Tey)

12.55 The route then heads west, south of Great Tey across the Roman River Valley and then North of Marks Tey, before crossing the A120 near Surrex to then head south towards Feering in Braintree.

12.56 The landscapes here are largely rural and agricultural, providing beneficial views from the more developed area of Marks Tey. Viewed looking south from PRoWs crossing the Marks Tey-Sudbury Branch Line it is a predominantly natural landscape with no significant buildings or structures in view, an unusual feature in North Essex and one that should be protected. Construction would impact on the rural landscape, affecting key locally valued landscape views (views 1a and 2) identified in the Marks Tey Neighbourhood Plan.

12.57 The effect on landscape character in the area is judged likely to be significant (negative) within approximately 1 km of the draft Order Limits. However, viewpoint 4.12 which views the Project from 1.2Km shows that the effects are still significant. Therefore, we cannot agree that once operational the effect on the LCA would only likely be significant (negative) within approximately 1 km of the Project.

Impact on arboriculture

12.58 Throughout the alignment, there will be significant loss of canopy cover. Within Section D covering Colchester City Council, it is identified that 47 individual trees will be removed, 18 partially removed, 15 trees affected/managed, 50 trees retained with protection measures and 20 trees unaffected. This equates to 10 291 m² removed, 4 606 m² affected, and 3 992 m² retained with protection measures, giving an overall canopy resource of 30 301 m² within Colchester.

12.59 There will also be 1 tree group fully removed, 20 partially removed, 2 affected / managed, 5 retained with protection, and 20 unaffected, totalling 48 groups. This equates to 27 m² fully removed, 22 496 m² partially removed, and 4 454 m² affected / managed, representing a total group canopy of 171 251 m².

12.60 The combined canopy subtotal across all trees and groups in Colchester is 201 551 m², with approximately 32 815 m² (≈ 16 %) removed or disturbed. This represents a moderate-to-major adverse effect before mitigation, reducing to minor–moderate with replacement and recovery measures, as the AIA identifies.

12.61 However, there would also be significant tree loss within Section C of the AIA (covering Babergh, Colchester and Tendring jointly). The AIA records a further 10 130 m² of tree canopy and 28 020 m² of group canopy removed, a portion of which would fall within Colchester’s boundary but cannot be disaggregated.

12.62 Such losses will produce a moderate-to-major adverse impact on landscape character and green infrastructure.

12.63 It is identified that a Veteran Tree (T566) would be removed which constitutes irreplaceable habitat loss under paragraph 187 (c) of the NPPF (2024) and Policy ENV1 of the Colchester Local Plan. This is of significant concern, particularly as the reason for the removal is unclear. Full justification for its removal needs to be provided. **Compensation is required.**

12.64 There are also several mature oaks and mixed native tree belts being removed that define Colchester's rural field pattern and contribute significantly to the local landscape character. These are listed below:

T571 – English oak (Category B2). Boundary oak forming part of a hedge; loss will open views along the road corridor and reduce canopy enclosure.

T651 – English oak (B2). Field oak adjacent to the working area; removal creates a gap in a continuous hedgerow line.

T655 – English oak (B2). Mature, lapsed coppice within agricultural boundary; loss diminishes hedgerow rhythm and visual continuity.

T657 – English oak (B2). Lapsed coppice, moderate quality; forms part of a boundary hedge/roadside hedge. Loss destroys sylvan rural nature of lane.

T658 – English Oak (B2). Early Mature tree; as above.

T670 – English oak (B2). Potentially affected; large visually important tree.

T672 – English oak (B2). Removal; large visually important tree.

T674 – English oak (B3). Hedgerow oak; very large, mature tree.

12.65 Groups G190, G193, G194, G195, G196, G200, G201, G203, G204, G206 and G207 are mixed native assemblages (oak, field maple, hazel, hawthorn, blackthorn) of Category A2–B2 quality forming treed boundaries and ecological corridors. Partial and full removals (notably G196, G201 and G206) will fragment canopy continuity and reduce biodiversity linkages until restoration planting establishes.

12.66 There are also Fifteen Category A/B trees and two groups that are stated to be retained but lie close to the working corridor.

Operational Phase Impacts

Positive

12.67 None identified.

Neutral

12.68 None identified.

12.69 Negative

12.70 There will be significant negative impacts. The Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment suggests that significant effects would likely be substantially limited to within 1.5 Km of the Project at operational stages. It is not agreed that this would be the case at the operational stage where the finished infrastructure consists substantially of an overhead line with 50m pylons as opposed to undergrounding, and in landscapes where intervisibility is frequently quite high. The visualisations demonstrate that within Colchester City Council's boundaries, the landscapes affected by the Project are substantially undeveloped and rural where intervisibility can be quite high due to being large scale flat or gently undulating with undeveloped river valleys, where the scale of the pylons and overhead wires means the effect will potentially significantly industrialise the countryside in places up to 2Km away.

12.71 There is still a shortfall in viewpoints provided which is particularly noticeable from beyond 1.5 Kms and is in danger of undervaluing the significance of the effects on the PRoW network in particular.

Langham to A12 (Heading towards EACN)

12.72 Largely, the majority of the landscape impacts will be limited in this section due to the undergrounding. However, as a result of removal of trees along Black Brook during construction, the character of this area will be altered significantly. Notably, the 2005 Landscape Character Assessment used by the applicant states that a key characteristic of the landscape is “intimate tranquil, relatively steep-sided river valley which is narrow in places and has the narrow meandering Black Brook running through the floodplain”. Within the 2025 Landscape Character Assessment, it is noted that in LCA A7 includes “The wooded steeper tributary valleys, such as that of the Black Brook, and scattered woodland blocks create a sense of enclosure”. These characteristics will be fundamentally changed as a result of removal of trees, creating significant (adverse) effects within approximately 1 km during operation. Due to their intimate character valley landscapes contribute considerably to a sense of place and history which would be affected strongly at a local level. From the information given it is unclear if these long-term significant effects are within the National Landscape as the character sub areas are not clearly marked on the landscape character maps. The approach needs to be rethought if it results in significant residual adverse effects on the National Landscape.

12.73 Within visual receptor area C11 Langham, we agree that within 0.5 km the scale of change would be large, the magnitude of effect would be high and the effect would be major and significant (adverse). However, we disagree that between 0.5 km and 1.5 km the scale of change would be medium and the effect only moderate and significant (adverse). Whilst Viewpoint 4.01 Boxted Airfield Memorial, Park Lane visualisation from 1.16Km does demonstrate a moderate significant adverse impact, up to 1Km we judge the effects would still be major adverse. Whilst we agree that generally, beyond 1.5 km the scale of change would be small and effect would be minor and not significant partly due to intervening vegetation, Viewpoint 4.16 Langham Playing Field off School Road, Langham from 1.71Km indicates there are still effects, which we would suggest, in open sections of the landscape would be more significant.

12.74 We consider that the cumulative effect of multiple pylons and the continuous overhead linear character of the project, means that the collective effects within the VRA creates an **overall significant adverse effect** at both construction and operation.

Langham to Great Horkesley (Eastern Cable sealing end compound)

12.75 The overhead line will head west from the East Anglian Connection Node, through Southern part of Langham. It is noted that much of this landscape is open in this area, and thus the impacts would be particularly significant, at least moderate-major and significant adverse within 1km of the overhead line (not within 0.5km as stated by the applicant), moderate and significant adverse between 1-1.5km.

12.76 From Langham, the pylons would continue west through Boxted and towards Great Horkesley. It would go through a more rural part of Boxted village, specifically a 'green gap' between Boxted and Urban Colchester identified in the Boxted Neighbourhood Plan. A specific policy, LC1, in the Boxted Neighbourhood Plan seeks to ensure this green gap is not 'materially reduced'.

From Boxted, the overhead line could be closely viewed from the scattered properties along Straight Road. It also cuts across the local PRoW network. Significant visual impacts could extend beyond 1km, however additional viewpoints would be required to determine this.

12.77 In Visual Receptor Areas D1 Tye Green and Boxted, between approximately 0.5 km and 1 km, there would be close to medium views of the Project from scattered properties and the local PRoW and road network. Between approximately 1 km and 2 km, it is stated that views of the Project would likely be filtered and screened by layers of vegetation including woodlands and hedgerows resulting in intermittent medium to long distance views from scattered properties, a number of local PRoW, the Essex Way and roads.

12.78 However, at viewpoint 4.01 Boxted Airfield Memorial**,** which is to outside the Receptor Area D1 and to the north, the pylons to the south remain prominent on the skyline even though they re 1.2Km away. An additional viewpoint is needed, therefore, within D1 but between 1-1.5Km away from the Project so that the effects can be clearly identified as significant or not.

Undergrounding through Great Horkesley

12.79 Whilst the area is more developed around Great Horkesley, the surrounding landscape which is largely rural and agricultural would be altered by the presence of the underground cabling and the cable sealing end compound infrastructure. Although there is proposed planting around the cable sealing end compounds which in the long term would help screen the negative visual impacts, these compounds will still impact the landscape given their scale and height.

12.80 The Western Sealing End Compound would be particularly impactful on the landscape, sitting on an exposed ridge, visible from within the Dedham Vale National Landscape boundary within Little Horkesley. An alternative location for this CSEC was previously put forward further south of the proposed location, which was at a lower elevation and better screened from the national landscape. Moving the compounds further south-west, potentially south of King's Farm, extending the undergrounding would be beneficial to reduce long term visual impacts on the setting of the national landscape.

12.81 In Visual Receptor Area D2 Little Horkesley and Wormingford we would suggest that effects on visual receptors would likely be significant (negative) between 1-2 km of the Project. however, additional viewpoint assessments and visualisations are needed to demonstrate this. We consider that the cumulative effect of multiple pylons and the lengthy overhead linear character of the project, means that the collective effects within the study area creates an **overall significant adverse effect** on the perception of the wider countryside for both local householders and visitors.

12.82 Whilst largely the visual impacts are likely contained within the 3km study area surrounding the order limits, there is still theoretical impacts beyond this and therefore we consider that the visual assessment should more explicitly extend into sensitive areas beyond the 3Km line including the National Landscape in order to demonstrate the effects are not significant.

12.83 Within Visual Receptor Area D3 Great Horkesley, we do not accept that either construction or operational impacts would be major significant adverse only within 0.5km.

Western Cable Sealing End Compound to Fordham

12.84 The impacts experienced within this section during operation will be similar to that during construction. The permanent pylons and overhead line infrastructure will remain as oppressive features in the landscape, and will likely impede on people's use of the PROW, further impacting their physical and mental health and wellbeing.

12.85 Of concern is that there appears to be no assessment of the effects of the overhead line on the surrounding landscape character at pylon TB35 where the undergrounding finishes and transitions to pylons and overhead lines. Assessment of this element of the Project is required. Viewpoint 4.34 Crabtree Lane, north of West Bergholt nearby demonstrates the significant major adverse impact which seriously impacts the view across the valley to Fordham. The mitigation proposed hides the pylons but also completely hides the view and therefore part of the character.

12.86 The run of pylons across the Colne Valley between Fordham and West Bergholt will have major significant adverse effects, as can be seen particularly from viewpoint 4.14 north-east of Fordham where the view of the valley is interrupted by a major industrial element into what is currently an unspoilt, rural landscape.

12.87 It is hard to judge the view of the pylons from the village of Fordham as the viewpoint 4.08, which has a close-to view and is at the heart of the village just in front of the church and the pub, is only presented as a wireline. The assertion that '*Views from within Fordham would be screened and filtered in places by woodland blocks'* is at best misleading as the vegetation in the baseline photos and visualisations of Viewpoint 4.08 Fordham are generally uncut hedgerows. Substantially unfiltered views of the overhead line would be visible from most of the Fordham Hall Estate Open Access Land with three of the pylons actually being sited on this land, therefore producing significant major adverse un-mitigatable effects.

Fordham to Aldham

12.88 South of Fordham, viewpoint 4.30 shows the wide-ranging and prominent visibility of the overhead line, views that are from open access land surrounding Fordham. The overhead line would frame views looking back towards Fordham, creating an industrial feel. We do not accept that intervening woodland provides much filtering.

12.89 Heading from Fordham towards Fordstreet, it is clear there would be major significant adverse impacts on the view in a scenic part of the valley, in what used to be the Special Landscape Area. We do not agree that significant impacts would be limited to within 1.5Km at the operational stage, as there would be wide views up and down the valley to the pylons and wide views back up to the pylons and OH line as they come down the valley slope. We consider the line should be either undergrounded or diverted from this part of the valley and that this is justified by the value and sensitivity of this distinctive landscape feature and the visual amenity it provides.

12.90 The assessment identifies that, at both the construction and operational stage, the Project and its construction, would be visible in close views from the local road network, such as A1124, (but also from the many lanes) alongside scattered properties such as southeast of Fordham, NCN Route 13, PRoW (including the Essex Way) and from Open Access Land within the Colne Valley and along the Essex Way where the overhead line would be visible on the skyline crossing the valley. Demonstrated in Viewpoint 4.25 Essex Way, Mill Road, south of Fordham 0.24Km**.** From properties and people travelling along the B1508, in the north-east of the area, there would be open and elevated views along the valley, towards the Project as pylons would be stacked in views.

12.91 The pylons are very prominent next to the village of Aldham looming over existing housing and creating really negative place-making. The alignment is not acceptable and needs undergrounding or setting back. Viewpoints 4.11 and 4.37 show the severity of the impact close to residential areas and surrounding PROW. We consider that the effect would be moderate and significant (adverse) between only 1.0-1.5 Km. Between approximately 1 km and 2 km, the overhead line would be visible in medium to long views and would most often be seen on the skyline and above intervening trees, with visibility decreasing with distance as layers of vegetation and topography further screen out views. However, there are no viewpoint images to demonstrate this. Effects on visual receptors would likely be significant (negative) within approximately 1.5 km of the Project.

Aldham to Braintree Border (via Marks Tey)

12.92 The route then heads west, south of Great Tey and then North of Marks Tey, before crossing the A120 near Surrex to then head south towards Feering in Braintree.

12.93 South of Aldham, Viewpoint 4.21 near Aldham Hall shows how the overhead line and pylons would significantly impact on views from this Grade II* listed building and its surroundings, which would impact on viewpoints and the setting of the building.

12.94 From Great Tey, views of the overhead line appear to be limited, considering much of the village is in a slight dip. However, there would be close views within 0.5km from the local roads and PRoW network along scattered properties south of Great Tey and properties at East Gores. However, a visualisation from **Viewpoint 4.22 PRoW between Great Tey and Little Tey** is needed from VP 4.22 to demonstrate the effects.

12.95 The landscapes here are largely rural and agricultural, providing beneficial views from the more developed area of Marks Tey. The overhead lines would therefore introduce pylons and overhead line that would backdrop these views, interrupting the unspoiled rural landscape. The overhead line infrastructure would substantially impact on the key locally valued landscape views (views 1a and 2) identified in the Marks Tey Neighbourhood Plan. This is also shown from viewpoint 4.12, where there would be wide views of the overhead line from along the A120 and the properties along the road, where vegetation is limited and the landscape opens up.

12.96 Further along the A120 at viewpoint 4.06, the pylons and overhead line would be in closer proximity to the road. However, it would be filtered in places by existing vegetation, including dense roadside vegetation and hedgerows.

Required mitigation/compensation

12.97 Currently there is no compensation package outlined for the project's impact on landscape and views. The Council believes this is inadequate and that compensation is needed in several areas as outlined below:

Arboriculture:

12.98 The AIA outlines that replacement planting will take place using a 3:1 replacement ratio by number. However this is not aligned with Policy CC1 of the Council's Local Plan which requires canopy-based accounting. As canopy data is not clear, particularly within Section C, the Council requests/recommends that National Grid prepare a Colchester-specific Canopy Cover Assessment, quantifying:

- baseline canopy area within the Borough;
- canopy loss and disturbance (≈ 32 800 m² plus additional undisaggregated Section C tree loss); and
- projected canopy recovery over 5, 10 and 15 years.

12.99 The Council also seeks confirmation via the LEMP that reinstatement planting restores rural field-boundary character and that a tree protection monitoring plan is included within the Construction Environment Management Plan (CEMP).

12.100 The assessment should demonstrate that canopy parity will be achieved within 15 years, in line with Policy CC1. If not achievable on-site, the assessment should specify off-site compensatory planting through an Off-Site Planting Delivery Scheme.

12.101 Replacement planting should:

- reinstate boundary oak and hedgerow patterns using native, climate-resilient species;
- prioritise canopy continuity and ecological connectivity;
- include a 10-year aftercare programme and 30-year monitoring for veteran compensation planting; and
- be tied to DCO Requirements mandating outcome-based canopy recovery.

12.102 The applicant proposes compensation through the Ancient Woodland and Veteran Tree Strategy, including creation of replacement veteran features, retention of felled timber for in-situ habitat, and targeted veteranisation of younger oaks. The Council recognises these measures as good practice. However, as the Council considers the impact to be major adverse, it is considered that a Veteran Tree Compensation and Management Plan securing local delivery and a minimum 30-year management term is required.

Landscape

12.103 The Council considers that a significant strategic landscape compensation package should be put in place as part of the submission or a significant strategic financial compensation package put in place as a side agreement to offset the landscape and visual harm across the route of the overhead line. This should be distinct from separate funding for community benefits and the proposed fund to compensate for impacts on the Dedham Vale National Landscape.

12.104 Additionally, there is a concern that the impact of constructing three pylons on open access land near Fordham is not proposed to be satisfactorily compensated by the applicant.

12.105 National Policy Statement EN-1 states that “5.11.9 Applicants will need to consult the local community on their proposals to build on existing open space, sports or recreational buildings and land. Taking account of the consultations, applicants should consider providing new or additional open space including green and blue infrastructure, sport or recreation facilities, to substitute for any losses as a result of their proposal”

12.106 Paragraph 5.11.24 of EN-1 goes on to state that ‘Where green infrastructure is affected, the Secretary of State should consider imposing requirements to ensure the functionality and connectivity of the green infrastructure network is maintained in the vicinity of the development and that any necessary works are undertaken, where possible, to mitigate any adverse impact and, where appropriate, to improve that network and other areas of open space’.

12.107 Paragraph 5.11.25 of EN-1 adds that ‘The Secretary of State should also consider whether any adverse effect on green infrastructure and other forms of open space is adequately mitigated or compensated by means of any planning obligations, for example exchange land and provide for appropriate management and maintenance agreements. Any exchange land should be at least as good in terms of size, usefulness, attractiveness and quality, and accessibility’.

12.108 It is requested that the applicant provides clarity as to how the impact on open access land in Fordham will be compensated.

Viewpoints

12.109 Whilst the Environmental Statement includes many viewpoints surrounding the project alignment, it is still considered that additional viewpoints would be beneficial to adequately assess the significance of the visual impacts in certain locations. A list of these is provided below:

- Within receptor area D1 (Tye Green and Boxted) but between 1-1.5km of the project.
- Within receptor area D2 (Little Horkesley and Wormingford) 1-2km of the project, particularly considering view from the national landscape.
- Within receptor area D3 (Great Horkesley) there is a lack of viewpoints beyond 0.5km, particularly near the Western Cable Sealing End Compound. These are required.
- Within receptor area D5 (Fordham), a photomontage visualisation should be provided from viewpoint 4.08 to provide a clearer visual of the project from the centre of the village (in contrast to the wireline currently provided)
- Within receptor area D6 (Fordham Heath and Eight Ash Green), the viewpoint 4.28 needs at least to have a wireframe as this is taken from the Essex Way. Currently only baseline photographs from this viewpoint are shown.
- Within receptor area D7 (Fordstreet and Aldham), there should be provision of viewpoints between 1-2km of the alignment
- Within receptor area D10 (Copford) there are no viewpoints located, although it would be expected views would be limited due to the majority of the area being well screened.

Summary

12.110 **Policy**: Our position is that the proposals as they stand do not meet (EN-1) 4.3.4 which states '… the applicant must … show how any likely significant negative effects would be avoided, reduced, mitigated **or compensated for**, following the mitigation hierarchy… (Our underlining) We judge this policy has not been followed as there is no compensation offered for the significant adverse landscape and visual effects of the overhead line and pylons.

12.111 **Visual effects:** The ES acknowledges that the proposals will have a significant negative visual impact over the length of the Project. This is identified as up to 1.5Km from the Project line in most situations. Generally, beyond 1.5Km we accept that individual impacts will not be significant. However, as a result of open landscapes, multiple pylons in view and cumulative effects when passing from one visual receptor area to another along the line, we consider that the cumulative effect is likely to result in an overall significant adverse effect generally within the study area at both construction and operation.

12.112 **Value of the view:** Generally, we do not agree that the value of the view should be judged substantially on identified viewpoints and promoted views in tourist-focussed documents and argue that, in lieu of local landscape designation and district-wide Valued Landscape Assessments. The value of the view should be judged by how it relates to the LCA. The value of view indicators as presented in the assessment downplay the subtle character of East Anglian landscapes and appear concentrated on topography, woodland and water. This approach pre-determines visual value based on certain characters and not others.

12.113 **Landscape effects;** The Colchester Borough Landscape Assessment has bene updated since the PEIR was submitted, however, there are still references to it in the ES. We advise that the judgements are updated to reflect the Colchester Landscape Character Assessment (LUC November 2024) if that has not already been done.

12.114 The ES acknowledges that the proposals will have a significant negative landscape impact at both construction and operational stages over the length of the Project. Where negative effects are judged not to be significant further away from the Project line, the visual character of the landscape and its perceptual nature is likely to combine to significantly negatively affect the landscape over a wide area, reducing scenic beauty and tranquillity, aesthetic enjoyment, a sense of place, history and identity, and inspiration for learning throughout the landscape and visual study area.

12.115 **Landscape Value:** Valued landscape criteria have now been included in the landscape assessment; however, we are concerned that some of the evaluation is flawed. In addition, as the baseline evaluation and judgements appear to be made solely at a district and not a site/setting level, they do not necessarily address the value of the key characteristics of the landscapes in the study area that are directly affected, particularly river valleys. In order to reduce significant landscape and visual impacts at the operational stage over the length of the Project, more consideration of undergrounding is required to protect valued local landscapes, notably river valleys, long-distant rights of way and rural amenity sites.

12.116 **Compensation**: There does not appear to be any compensation offered in relation to the significant residual adverse landscape and visual effects created by the pylons and OH line along its length. Our position is that the Project should not go ahead, without a substantial funded landscape and visual compensation scheme, alongside but distinct from any proposed community benefits, to recognise the long-term significant residual negative and un-mitigatable operational effects on both landscape and visual receptors that this Project will generate.

12.117 **Generally:** It would have been helpful if the written text of the LVIA had been presented as a track changes document so we could see at a glance which changes had been made since the PEIR was submitted. We have not made reference in detail about issues relating to vegetation removal in this response, but it is expected for these to be fully quantified and identified, including on plan, in the emerging LEMP and/or other emerging documents. We reserve the right to raise additional issues as the pre-examination process progresses.

Visual Impacts

12.118 Our representations in relation to landscape and visual issues rests substantially on the information contained in the Environmental Statement Chapter 13 LVIA, its Figures and Appendices, but also includes the draft Landscape and Ecological Management Plan, ES Chapter17, Cumulative Effects, the Design Development Report and its Appendices, as well as background documents, consultation reports and materials.

12.119 The approach to the Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment is identified as in accordance with the '*Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment,' Third Edition (GLVIA3, 2013*). Whilst this appears to be broadly the case, we remain concerned about several aspects of the methodology, particularly in the approach to landscape value and value of the view, as well as a downplaying of the significance of impacts between 0.5Km and 1Km. We also still take major issue with the fact that no compensation is being offered in the form of strategic landscape enhancement or a compensatory sum, for the significant adverse residual landscape and visual effects along the length of the route over a wide area. Our concerns are detailed below.

12.120 The Project runs through one National Landscape (Dedham Vale National Landscape) and the Stour Valley Project Area.

Policy

12.121 Overarching National Policy Statement for Energy (EN-1) Para 5.10.6 'Projects need to be designed carefully, taking account of the potential impact on the landscape. Having regard to siting, operational and other relevant constraints the aim should be to minimise harm to the landscape, providing reasonable mitigation where possible and appropriate.' (Our underlining)

12.122 Our position is that the approach to the project in relation to the use of pylons and the overhead line does not minimise harm to the landscape nor provides reasonable mitigation/compensation for the use of overhead infrastructure.

12.123 (EN-1) 5.10.12 Outside nationally designated areas, there are local landscapes that may be highly valued locally.

12.124 County, district and local level landscape designation, as such, was not government policy in the late 1990s and 2000s, and Valued Landscape Assessments have not been carried out at a district or local level to replace local landscape designation. We have concerns this has led to harm to landscape not being minimised.

12.125 (EN-1) 5.10.35 ‘The scale of energy projects means that they will often be visible across a very wide area. The Secretary of State should judge whether any adverse impact on the landscape would be so damaging that it is not offset by the benefits (including need) of the project.’

12.126 We consider the significant adverse landscape and visual effects at a wide scale need to be offset through landscape enhancement or compensation at a strategic scale.

12.127 (EN-1) 4.3.4 ‘To consider the potential effects, including benefits, of a proposal for a project, the applicant must set out information on the likely significant environmental, social and economic effects of the development, and show how any likely significant negative effects would be avoided, reduced, mitigated or compensated for, following the mitigation hierarchy…’ (Our underlining)

12.128 The application does not show how the residual significant adverse landscape and visual effects of the pylons and OH line will be compensated for along its length.

12.129 (EN-1) 4.6.1 ‘Environmental net gain is an approach to development that aims to leave the natural environment in a measurably better state than beforehand. Projects should therefore not only avoid, mitigate and compensate harms, following the mitigation hierarchy, but also consider whether there are opportunities for enhancements.’ (Our underlining)

12.130 This information has not been provided in relation to compensation for the residual adverse landscape and visual effects of the pylons and OH line along its length.

12.131 (EN-1) 4.2.12 ‘Applicants should set out how residual impacts will be compensated for as far as possible. …. The cumulative impacts of multiple developments with residual impacts should also be considered.’

12.132 We do not consider that residual landscape and visual impacts compensation for the overhead line or cumulative effects has been addressed in any meaningful way within the submission.

Landscape value

12.133 We welcome the inclusion of landscape value criteria as part of the landscape value assessment methodology, as identified in Table A13.1.4 Factors contributing to landscape value, based on The Landscape Institute's *Technical Guidance Note (TGN) 02/21 Assessing landscape value outside national designations* (Landscape Institute, 2021). We have some concerns that this value assessment has been carried out just at a character area level rather than looking at the details of the landscape value within the Order Limits and their setting. This could result in the downplaying of specific qualities and value related to the development corridor itself, particularly of river valleys. In order to reduce significant landscape and visual impacts at the operational stage over the length of the Project, more consideration of undergrounding is required to protect valued local landscapes, notably river valleys, long-distant rights of way and rural amenity sites.

12.134 In relation to the landscape value assessments, we have concerns that the detailed assessments identified in **Annex A to Appendix 13.2: Landscape Baseline and Assessment** appear to undervalue factors, particularly in relation to '*Distinctiveness'*, '*Perceptual'* and '*Functional'* criteria.

12.135 Para 13.2.9 of **Document 6.13.A2 Environmental Statement Appendix 13.2 Landscape Baseline and Assessment** states, *'There are no locally designated landscapes within the 3 km Study Area'*, without reference to the fact that the districts through which the Project line passes no longer designate landscapes locally, in keeping with National policy from the late 1990s and 2000s. It is concerning that judgements may be being made regarding landscape value and sensitivity based on an assumption that because there are no designations, the landscape lacks value. A caveat to the statement in the documentation needs to be made that recognises that fact.

12.136 Lack of local landscape designation does not imply lack of landscape qualities or value. The current Holford Rules advise 'Where possible choose routes which minimise the effect on Special Landscape Areas, areas of Great Landscape Value and other similar designations of County, District or Local value.' And yet districts which adhere to national policy from the late 1990s and 2000s and base their policy on local landscape assessments not designation are effectively penalised via this advice. The Holford Rules were last updated in the 1990s. We are not aware of local authorities in Essex using Valued Landscape Assessment at a district scale to inform their local plans, except as part of landscape sensitivity assessment of specific sites.

12.137 Whilst nationally protected landscapes such as AONBs and their settings, have the benefit in landscape and visual terms of proposed cabling being substantially undergrounded, the remaining rural landscapes along the route are not identified as a constraint when it comes to alignment, even though some of these are of strong and distinctive local character, and we would suggest, could be identified as being 'Valued Landscapes'. The landscape value assessment was not made available until the submission of the ES and so has not, to our knowledge, informed the alignment in any meaningful way. We consider the proposed alignment and consideration of undergrounding needs to be looked at again in light of this data.

12.138 Many of these landscapes have value at a local level but successive Local Plans have discarded local protections to fit with national policy. The treatment of undesignated landscape as blank space is compounded by adherence to Rule 5 of the Holford Rules which states that routes of overhead transmission lines, should '… *be kept as far as possible from smaller lines, converging routes and other poles, masts, wires, and vales to avoid a concentration or 'wirescape'*. This has the perverse effect of distributing adverse impacts over a wider area of unspoilt countryside rather than containing them in a narrower corridor. We consider the Holford Rules need updating in light of these concerns.

Compensation

12.139 An element identified as Landscape Compensation has now been included in the *7.4 Landscape and Ecological Management Plan*. Whilst the inclusion of this element of compensation within the LEMP is to be welcomed, it has been confirmed by National Grid that this refers only to Replacement Planting on a 3:1 basis of trees to be removed within the Order Limits. We do not consider this to be 'compensation' in Landscape and Visual Impact terms, judging it to be at best reinstatement for existing mature and semi-mature vegetation that is to be removed during construction. It does little to compensate for the permanent significant adverse landscape effects caused by the construction of the pylons, overhead line and CSE's within the district and does not address any of the significant permanent adverse visual effects that will occur.

12.140 Overarching National Policy Statement for Energy Policy (EN-1) 4.3.4 states 'To consider the potential effects, including benefits, of a proposal for a project, the applicant must set out information on the likely significant environmental, social and economic effects of the development, and show how any likely significant negative effects would be avoided, reduced, mitigated or compensated for, following the mitigation hierarchy…' (Our underlining) There does not appear to be any compensation offered in relation to the residual negative landscape and visual effects of the pylons and OH line along its length.

12.141 Our position is that a significant strategic landscape compensation package should be put in place as part of the submission or a significant strategic financial compensation package put in place as a side agreement to offset the landscape and visual harm across the route of the overhead line.

Cumulative Effects

12.142 Intra-project: 6.17 Environmental Statement Chapter 17; Cumulative Effects identifies 'Intra-project cumulative effects are those that may arise when several different effects resulting from the same Project have the potential to affect a single receptor for example, a footpath…'

12.143 At paragraph 17.4.17 the common receptors that have potential to give rise to intra-project cumulative effects, and therefore included in the assessment are identified only as Land and Community Assets, Development Land and Businesses, and Pedestrians, Cyclists and Horse Riders and these only at Construction Stage. We are concerned that no intra-project cumulative effects are identified at the Construction and Operational Stage for Agricultural and Soil, Landscape, Ecology and Historic receptors.

12.144 Significant cumulative effects at the Construction stage are identified on Pedestrians, Cyclists and Horse Riders in many Visual Receptor Areas (VRAs) and yet Paragraph 17.4.21 identifies '*… no additional mitigation measures were identified in addition to those already identified within the environmental topic assessments'* (Our underlining). The decision-making assumptions that gave rise to these conclusions need clarifying. In these circumstances we would argue that a compensatory sum should be provided as part of a Side Agreement for significant cumulative effects that cannot be further mitigated

12.145 Paragraph 17.4.18 identifies that '*No effects on common receptors during the operation (and maintenance) phase of the Project have been identified which could give rise to intra-project cumulative effects and are therefore not considered further*.' We query this in relation to Agricultural and soil receptors, Landscape, Ecology and Historic receptors.

12.146 Inter-project: A large number of significant landscape and visual effects associated with the Project have been identified, as reported in *Chapter 13: Landscape and Visual (document reference 6.13).* Based on the data available on the other developments, the assessment identified 47 shortlisted other development with the potential to contribute to **significant** inter-project effects on landscape and visual receptors during construction, and 34 during operation (and maintenance).

12.147 These other developments have the potential to contribute to major and **significant** inter-project effects on Landscape Character Types (LCT) or Visual Receptors Areas (VRA). Despite this, para 17.5.58 states '*No additional mitigation measures beyond those proposed in Chapter 13: Landscape and Visual (Ref 6.13) have been identified'*. Whilst it is agreed that it is not practicable to mitigate these due to scale of the works and the height of the pylons, this being the case, then significant compensation in the form of a funding package should be secured under a side agreement in partnership with the relevant authorities and environmental partners in order to create landscape enhancement elsewhere within the character area, district or County, on third party land.

Landscape Character Baseline and Assessment

12.148 National Character Assessment: The Project runs through two National Character Areas within the Essex authorities (Excluding Thurrock for the purpose of this response):

- NCA 86 South Suffolk and North Essex Clayland
- NCA 111 Northern Thames Basin

12.149 Despite the scale of the project, it does not appear as though the effects of the Project on national or regional landscape character have been assessed. We question the judgement of this approach considering this is a proposal that at least of a regional scale if not national and is identified as having significant negative operational landscape and visual effects along the whole length of the approximately 184Km of new infrastructure.

12.150 Construction stage: The Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment suggests that at Construction, **significant effects** occur generally within 1.5 Km of the Project. We generally accept this judgement, however, would consider that towards the end of the construction period the adverse effects, especially visual, could extend beyond this distance, especially in open landscapes as multiple pylons and overhead line runs become visible.

12.151 At the operational stage it is identified that **significant** landscape effects are predicted within 1.5Kms of the project line. However, many of the judgements suggest these impacts are **moderate** significant rather than **major** significant beyond 0.5Kms, which we question. This is particularly true where multiple pylons 50m high are visible in sequence coupled with the overhead line and often in landscapes where intervisibility is high.

12.152 The visualisations demonstrate that, the landscapes affected by the Project are substantially undeveloped and rural where intervisibility is often high due to large scale flat or gently undulating landscapes or shallow river valleys, where the scale of the pylons and overhead wires means the effect is to industrialise the countryside in places up to 2Km away. These are often landscapes without existing significant detractors.

12.153 Our position is that at the operational stage impacts are likely to still be **major** significant rather than **moderate** significant beyond 0.5Kms.

Colchester City Council

12.154 The landscape character assessment covering Colchester City Council is the Colchester Landscape Character Assessment (LUC November 2024). This is an update on the previous assessment Colchester Borough Landscape Character Assessment (2005). It looks as though the Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment in the Environmental Impact Assessment has not been updated to reflect this change. We have scrutinised the work as submitted but suggest the LVIA in this area to be reviewed in relation to the updated LCA.

12.155 The Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment suggests that significant effects would likely be substantially limited to within 1.5 Km of the Project, generally at both construction and operations stages. Whilst accepting that at construction stage this is likely to be the situation, it is not agreed that this would be the case at the operational stage where the finished infrastructure consists substantially of an overhead line with 50m pylons as opposed to undergrounding, and in landscapes where intervisibility is frequently quite high.

The visualisations demonstrate that within Colchester City Council's boundaries, the landscapes affected by the Project are substantially undeveloped and rural where intervisibility can be quite high due to being large scale flat or gently undulating with undeveloped river valleys, where the scale of the pylons and overhead wires means the effect will potentially significantly industrialise the countryside in places up to 2Km away. These are often landscapes without existing significant detractors.

12.156 Even where the effects are deemed not significant, the character of the landscape is changed over a much wider area, with proposed overhead lines reducing the provision of what GLVIA3 (Page 18. Para 2.11) describes as:

- Opportunities for aesthetic enjoyment
- A sense of place and a sense of history which contributes to individual, local, national and European identity.
- Inspiration for learning, as well as for art and other forms of creativity

12.157 The cumulative effects of minor adverse impacts over a wide geographical area can in themselves result in a significant effect.

In relation to specific Landscape Character Areas:

12.158 **LCA B7: Langham Farmland Plateau**: The Langham Farmland Plateau LCA encompasses the area around Langham and Dedham Heath, extending south of Langham to the A120 on the outskirts of Colchester. A small part of this LCA is located within Dedham Vale National Landscape (an AONB). It is identified that central and southern parts of the Langham Farmland Plateau LCA would be directly affected due to proposed underground cables between Lamb Corner and Langham and proposed overhead line through the former airfield south of Langham and east of the A12. We suggest that the cable route is more north-eastern rather than central.

12.159 The updated LCA lists additional key characteristics:

- Gently undulating plateau …
- A predominantly arable landscape characterised by large open fields in the south and smaller more irregular fields in the north
- … Smaller patches of newer woodland around the settlements in the north.
- Good levels of public access via a network of public rights of way…
- Historic settlement pattern of dispersed farmsteads and cottages…
- A generally open landscape with occasional long distance framed views… some localised sense of visual enclosure near woodland and along tree-lined roads.
- An overall rural character with some urban influence … and intrusion form the A12 …

12.160 We agree that the setting of the overhead line route is one of a more open landscape, partly due to accommodating the old airfield. However, the 'major road' namely the A12, only runs along the very eastern and southern most boundaries of the character area, not through the middle. The modern infill is small scale and is within the parish of Langham whose overall population was just over 1000 in the 2021 census.

12.161 We query the Sensitivity assessment for this landscape as being **Medium** sensitive to this sort of infrastructure as this is an open, gently undulating landscape in which there is high intervisibility and for which '*long distance framed views'* are characteristic. We consider the Sensitivity to be at least **Medium – High**.

12.162 In relation to Construction effects, we do not agree that the effect would only be **moderate and significant (**adverse**)** within 1.5 km of the Order Limits. As we consider the landscape is at least of Medium-High Sensitivity we consider the effects would be **moderate-major** (adverse) at least for the first 0.5Kms. We agree the effect would be **minor and not significant (adverse)** beyond 1.5Kms.

12.163 We disagree with the judgement that '…*would not affect the underlying scale of the LCA due to its relatively large-scale.'* In addition, the A12 is peripheral to this LCA, not central, and the other man-made infrastructure, including the solar farm, do not match the Project for height, spatial extent or visual dominance.

12.164 In relation to the overhead line, we consider the geographical effects would be wider than 0.5Kms due to the relatively open landscape spreading visual effects wider and reducing perceptual factors of tranquillity and amenity. We agree the magnitude of effect would be **high** but suggest it would be up to 1.0Km of the Project Line. We agree the effect is **moderate-major and significant** (adverse) but suggest that this is within 1.0 km of the lateral overhead line not 0.5Km; **moderate and significant (**adverse**)** between 1.0-1.5 km and **minor and not significant (**adverse**)** elsewhere in the LCA.

LCA A8: Stour River Valley Floor: The Stour River Valley Floor LCA is located along the south side of the River Stour, west of Stratford St Mary and east of Dedham. It is almost entirely located within Dedham Vale National Landscape. A small portion of the central part of the Stour River Valley Floor LCA (west of Stratford St Mary and north of Langham) would be directly affected at the construction stage by the undergrounding of the cable run.
We agree that the assessments for susceptibility, value and overall sensitivity are **high**. Taking account of the high sensitivity, we agree the effect would be **moderate and significant (**adverse**)** within 0.5 km of the Project, and **negligible (not significant)** elsewhere in the LCA.

12.165 We haven't commented on judgements made on the severity of the impact on the special qualities of the National Landscape nor on whether the duty has been met in relation to Section 245 of the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act in relation to actively **"seek to further"** the statutory purposes of the protected landscapes or their functions at this stage. However we may comment at a later date.

12.166 **LCA A7: Stour River Valley Slopes**: The Stour River Valley Slopes is located to the south of the Stour River valley floor and includes the settlement of Boxted and Langham Hall and is almost entirely located within Dedham Vale National Landscape (an AONB). There appear to be no viewpoint assessments in this area. A short linear section of the Stour River Valley Slopes LCA to the southwest of Stratford St Mary would be directly affected by construction activity

12.167 We agree with the judgements of **high** susceptibility and value, and that overall sensitivity is judged to be high. We agree the effect of the underground sections of cable at construction would be **minor and not significant** (adverse) reducing to **negligible** elsewhere in the LCA. However there appears to be no assessment of the effects of the overhead line e.g. at TB35, on the LCA just to the north-east where there is a tributary of the Stour to the east of Little Horkesley. Assessment of this element of the Project is required.

12.168 We haven't commented on judgements made on the severity of the impact on the special qualities of the National Landscape nor on whether the duty has been met in relation to Section 245 of the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act in relation to actively **"seek to further"** the statutory purposes of the protected landscapes or functions outside a protected landscape if they affect land within it. We reserve the right to comment at a later date.

12.169 **LCA Sub Area A7a: Stour River Valley Slopes**: The Stour River Valley Slopes LCA has a sub area (A7a) which is centred on small streams near Vinesse Road, to the south of Little Horkesley, approximately half of which is located within Dedham Vale National Landscape. The Stour River Valley Slopes LCA sub area A7a would not be directly affected by construction activity. There appear to be no viewpoint assessments or visualisations in the sub character area.

12.170 The effect on the LCA is identified as likely **significant** (adverse) within approximately 1 km of the draft Order Limits at construction stage and the effect on the LCA at an operational stage is identified as likely adverse but not likely significant. We generally agree with this judgement. However, we would seek to caveat this with the result of any judgements made on the severity of the impact on the special qualities of the National Landscape.

12.171 **LCA Sub Area A7b Stour River Valley Slopes:** The Stour River Valley Slopes LCA has a sub area (A7b) which is centred on Black Brook to the north of Langham a small part of which is located within Dedham Vale National Landscape. A section of this area would be directly affected by construction activity. There would be a notable loss of trees including sections of woodland and other vegetation.

12.172 The effect on the LCA is identified as likely to be **significant** (adverse) within approximately 1 km of the Project during construction. There would be a long-term direct effect, notably due to the fragmentation of tree cover along Black Brook. This would affect the key characteristic of the '*intimate tranquil, relatively steep-sided river valley which is narrow in places and has the narrow meandering Black Brook running through the floodplain'* with **significant** (adverse) effects within approximately 1 km during operation. Due to their intimate character valley landscapes contribute considerably to a sense of place and history which would be affected strongly at a local level. From the information given it is unclear if these long-term significant effects are within the National Landscape as the character sub areas are not clearly marked on the landscape character maps. The approach needs to be rethought if it results in **significant** residual adverse effects on the National Landscape.

12.173 **LCA Sub Area A7c: Stour River Valley Slopes**: This LCA has a sub area (A7c) which is centred on small streams and ponds to the north of Workhouse Hill, part of which is located within Dedham Vale National Landscape. Although the draft Order Limits just fall within 1 km of the Stour River Valley Slopes LCA sub area A7c, we agree it is unlikely that construction activity would be perceptible due to intervening landform, buildings, and layers of vegetation. We agree that there would likely be no effect on the LCA at either the construction or operational stage. However we have concerns about the cumulative effects on this part of the National Landscape overall during the construction stage.

12.174 **LCA B5: Rochfords Farmland Plateau:** The Rochfords Farmland Plateau LCA is located to the south of the Stour Valley and includes the settlement of Wormingford. Northern parts of the LCA fall within Dedham Vale National Landscape. A small part of the eastern fringe would be directly affected by construction activity. A CSE compound and associated gantries would be introduced to a localised part of the LCA. There would be disturbance to the '*open and exposed'* character of the LCA. We agree that the effect on the LCA would likely be significant (negative) within approximately 1 km of the draft Order Limits at construction. In the longer term, proposed planting within the Environmental Area around the CSE compound would reduce effects. The effect on the LCA would likely be significant (negative) within approximately 1 km of the Project once operational. Generally, we agree with this judgement.

12.175 **LCA B6: Great Horkesley Farmland Plateau**: This LCA is located to the north of Colchester and includes the settlements of Great Horkesley and West Bergholt and a small section of the northern part of this LCA is located within Dedham Vale National Landscape. A central part of the Great Horkesley Farmland Plateau LCA would be directly affected by construction activity across a large section from the western edge of the former airfield at Langham to Vinesse Road, southwest of Little Horkesley.

12.176 A CSE compound is to be created. The effect on the LCA would likely be significant (negative) within approximately 1 km of the draft Order Limits. Once operational a central part of the character area would be directly affected by the Project and where the CSE compound would also be located. Whilst there are existing detractors close to the A12 such as the road itself, large commercial buildings and telecoms masts, there is still an air of rurality closer to the Project line. Whilst in the longer term, proposed planting within the Environmental Area around the CSE compound would reduce negative effects these are likely to remain significant due to its sheer scale and height. We agree the effect on the LCA would likely remain significant (negative) within approximately 1 km of the Project.

12.177 **LCA A5: Colne River Valley Slopes:** This LCA is located either side of the River Colne to the west of Colchester. A central part of the Colne River Valley Slopes LCA would be directly affected by construction activity, to the east of Fordham and Fordstreet crossing the River Colne.

12.178 During construction there would be disturbance to farmland and open access land (3 No pylons are due to be sited on the Access Land with the overhead line oversailing the land), and a loss of hedgerows, hedgerow trees, semi-mature and mature field trees, clumps of woodland/scrub and recently planted young woodland in open access land to the south of Fordham and riparian vegetation along the River Colne This is judged to cause a disturbance to the '*attractive and open'* character of the LCA. Even though the valley sides of the Colne are quite steep at this point, we do not accept that beyond 1Km, the valley topography and layers of vegetation including woodland, riparian vegetation, hedgerows, and field boundary trees would reduce intervisibility within the wider LCA, nor reduce the significant effects, due to the height of the infrastructure, during construction and at operation.

12.179 We judge that there will be long views from Mill Road, the Essex Way, the PRoW network to the west of Hillhouse Woods, within the Open Access Land itself, from the PRoW east of the Shoulder of Mutton at Ford Street (where the pylons parallel the Essex Way for 700m at only 200-300m distance), from the PRoW network on the south side of the Colne north of Porters Lane. The alignment appears to take almost the longest route that could be chosen along the Colne Valley slopes. This area used to be a Special Landscape Area and would likely be identified as Valued Landscape if an assessment was carried out. It is the most accessible section of unspoiled riverside landscape to the west of Colchester and used extensively by walkers. The opportunity should be explored further for either realignment north and west of the Open Access Land or undergrounding the overhead line.

12.180 **LCA A4: Colne River Valley Floor:** This LCA is located along the River Colne to the west of Colchester. A narrow part of the Colne River Valley Floor LCA would be directly affected by construction activity to the east of Fordstreet. As above we judge the significant effects would be more widespread, both towards the end of the construction period and during operation, as this is an unspoiled river valley and views in and out of the valley, including from Mill Lane and along the Essex Way that follows the river for some distance, are quite widespread. This area used to be a Special Landscape Area and would likely be identified as Valued Landscape if an assessment was carried out. It is the most accessible section of unspoiled riverside landscape to the west of Colchester and used extensively by walkers. The opportunity should be explored for either realignment north and west of the Open Access Land explored or undergrounding be proposed as an alternative.

12.181 **LCA B4: Great Tey Farmland Plateau:** The Great Tey Farmland Plateau LCA is located to the south of the River Colne and contains the settlements of Great Tey and Aldham The eastern part of the Great Tey Farmland Plateau LCA would be directly affected by construction The preliminary assessment identifies there would also be disturbance to the '*peaceful and tranquil'* character of the LCA. The LCA would also be indirectly affected by the construction activity, which it is identified would be perceptible within approximately 1 km of the draft Order Limits. **VP4.10 at Great Tey** shows how, even at 1.6Km, the effects of the overhead line are significantly negative over a wide area once operational. We do not support the assertion, therefore that, significant effects only occur within 1.0Km of the Project line. An assessment and visualisation should be prepared for VP 4.15 or 4.22 where there are wide views of the proposals, or on one of the PRoW closer to the scheme between 1-1.5KM.

12.182 **LCA B2: Easthorpe Farmland Plateau:** The Blackwater and Brain Valley LCA is located to the west of Colchester and contains the settlements of Marks Tey and Copford. The northern part of the Easthorpe Farmland Plateau LCA would be directly affected by construction activity, north of Marks Tey and Little Tey and running broadly parallel to the north of the A120. The effect on the LCA is judged likely to be significant (negative) within approximately 1 km of the draft Order Limits. However, **VP 4.12** which views the Project from 1.2Km shows that the effects are still significant. Therefore, we cannot agree that once operational the effect on the LCA would only likely be significant (negative) within approximately 1 km of the Project.

12.183 **LCA A2: Wooded Roman River Valley**: The Wooded Roman River Valley LCA is located along the Roman River to the south of Colchester. As the draft Order Limits fall only just within 2 km of the Wooded Roman River Valley LCA it is unlikely that construction activity or the finished Project would be perceptible. We agree with the judgement that there's likely no effect on this LCA.

12.184 **LCA B3: Southern Colchester Farmland Plateau**: This LCA is located to the southwest of Colchester. The draft Order Limits would be more than 2 km from the Southern Colchester Plateau LCA and is not likely to be perceptible. We agree there would likely be no effect on the LCA during construction nor during operation.

12.185 **LCA F1: Messing Wooded Farmland**. The draft Order Limits and finished Project line would be more than 2 km from the Southern Colchester Plateau LCA and is not likely to be perceptible. We agree with the judgement that there would likely be no effect on the LCA.

Visual Assessment

12.186 Generally**,** the LVIA has been supported by Photographic Baseline images and Wireline visualisations. *Figures 13.7 Landscape and Visual Receptors and Viewpoints* identifies viewpoint locations that are considered for the Environmental Statement (ES). Additional Historic Environment Viewpoints are also identified.

We welcome the 206 Viewpoint assessments that have been identified over the whole project length which is a considerable increase on the number presented in the PEIR, but note that there are still considerable gaps in the provision including in VRA C12 Ardleigh (Longer distance), VRA D3 Great Horkesley and Horkesley Heath (Longer distance) VR10 D10 Copford VRA E3 Kelvedon. The shortfall is particularly noticeable from beyond 1.5 Kms and is in danger of undervaluing the significance of the effects on the PRoW network in particular.

Theoretical visibility of Project

12.187 *Fig 13.12 - ZTV of East Anglia Connection Node EACN* shows that theoretical visibility of the whole structure of the substation is extensive and goes beyond the 3 Km study area in several places, Including into the Dedham Vale National Landscape. Fig 13.13 - ZTV of Great Horkesley EACN side CSE Compound and Figure 13.14 - Landscape and Visual -ZTV of Great Horkesley (Tilbury Side) CSE Compound show these are largely contained within the 3 KM study area. However, the structure is theoretically visible within the Dedham Vale National Landscape.

12.188 We consider that the visual assessment should more explicitly extend into sensitive areas beyond the 3Km line including the National Landscape in order to demonstrate the effects are not significant.

12.189 Figure 13.15 - Landscape and Visual -ZTV of Fairstead (EACN Side) and Fairstead (Tilbury Side) CSE Compounds shows that theoretical visibility of the whole structure of the substation is extensive and goes beyond the 3 Km study area in several places. We consider that the visual assessment should more explicitly extend into sensitive areas beyond the 3Km line in order to demonstrate the effects are not significant.

12.190 *Figure 13.9 - Landscape and Visual - ZTV of Proposed 400kV Overhead Line* (*proportions of structures visible*) indicates relatively widespread theoretical visibility of the whole pylon structure and overhead line both within the 3 km study area and beyond 5Km, including from villages, the PRoW network, National Cycle Network routes in this area, from the rural lanes and road network. This highlights how widespread the potential significant negative landscape and visual effects of the scheme are and also suggests that some visual assessment needs to extend beyond the 3Km study area.

12.191 We consider that the visual assessment should more explicitly extend into sensitive areas beyond the 3Km line in order to demonstrate the effects are not significant.

Visual Receptors and Groupings

12.192 The LVIA groups the visual receptors into Visual Receptor Areas. These Visual Receptor Areas have been identified based on geographical location, shared landscape characteristics and a similarity in the nature of views.

12.193 We understand that, as the Project area is so large, the Visual Receptor Areas are a pragmatic way of organising the data, but fear clarity and detail around individual receptors has been lost as a result.

12.194 Generally, we do not agree that the value of the view should be judged substantially on identified viewpoints and promoted views in tourist-focussed documents and argue that in lieu of local landscape designation and district-wide Valued Landscape Assessments. The value of the view should be judged by how it relates to the LCA. The value of view indicators as presented in the assessment downplay the subtle character of East Anglian landscapes and appear concentrated on topography, woodland and water. This approach pre-determines visual value based on certain characters and not others.

Visual Effects

12.195 The assessment acknowledges that at Year 1 of operation, there would '…be **significant adverse** visual effects on visual receptors within most of the VRAs which are directly affected by the Project'. This is related to the introduction of the proposed overhead line, CSE compounds, substations or substation extensions into close to medium distance views. We acknowledge that by Year 15, effects on some visual receptors in proximity to CSE compounds, substations and substation extensions would reduce as a result of landscape mitigation within Environmental Areas. However, this explicitly recognises that the significant adverse visual effects caused by pylons and overhead lines are not mitigatable and do not reduce.

In relation to the Visual Receptor Areas:

Colchester City Council

Theoretical visibility of Project

12.196 Section D is located broadly between the north-east of Colchester and Marks Tey in the south-west and therefore captures most of the effects on the Colchester City Council's area. The landscape comprises plateau farmlands incised by valley slopes associated with the River Colne and its tributary valleys. The ZTV indicates relatively widespread theoretical visibility of the overhead line within the 3 km study area in Section D. However, this highlights how widespread the potential significant visual effects of the scheme are.

12.197 Theoretical visibility of CSE compounds south of Dedham Vale National Landscape (an AONB) indicates that theoretical visibility of the CSE compounds in Section D would be relatively widespread within approximately 1 km of each CSE compound, with more intermittent theoretical visibility between 1 km and 3 km. Theoretical visibility is also indicated from the fringes of Dedham Vale National Landscape (an AONB) including from parts of Wormingford.

VRAs C11 Langham (Section C) and Area D (in Colchester)

12.198 **C11 Langham (Section C)** This VRA is located to the north and west of the Project, in the area surrounding Langham, Boxted, Boxted Cross and Ardleigh Heath. A small part of the area in the north is located within Dedham Vale National Landscape.

- **Viewpoint 3.31 Ardleigh Heath**
- **Viewpoint 4.01 Boxted Airfield Memorial, Park Lane**
- **Viewpoint 4.02 PRoW, Oldhouse Farm, south of Boxted (Boxted 38)**
- **Viewpoint 4.16 Langham Playing Field off School Road, Langham**

12.199 We agree that within 0.5 km the scale of change would be large, the magnitude of effect would be high and the effect would be **major and significant** (adverse). **Viewpoint 3.31 Ardleigh Heath** at 0.49Km illustrates the scale and extent of the effect and its **major significant** adverse impact. However, we disagree that between 0.5 km and 1.5 km the scale of change would be medium and the effect only **moderate and significant** (adverse). Whilst **Viewpoint 4.01 Boxted Airfield Memorial, Park Lane** visualisation from 1.16Km does demonstrate a **moderate significant** adverse impact, up to 1Km we judge the effects would still be **major adverse.** Whilst we agree that generally, beyond 1.5 km the scale of change would be small and effect would be minor and not significant partly due to intervening vegetation, **Viewpoint 4.16 Langham Playing Field off School Road, Langham** from 1.71Km indicates there are still effects, which we would suggest, in open sections of the landscape would be more significant.

12.200 We consider that the cumulative effect of multiple pylons and the continuous overhead linear character of the project, means that the collective effects within the VRA creates an **overall significant adverse effect** at both construction and operation.

12.201 **D1 Tye Green and Boxted:** This Visual Receptor Area is located to the north of the Project, broadly between the farmland south of Langham and to the east of Little Horkesley and the northern part is located within Dedham Vale National Landscape (an AONB). The only Representative Viewpoints in this receptor area is:

- **Viewpoint 4.02 Oldhouse Lane PRoW**

12.202 The assessment identifies that construction activity would be visible in close views from the south of the Visual Receptor Area as it runs along the southern boundary. During construction, we agree that it is likely that effects on visual receptors would likely be significant (negative) within approximately 1.0 km of the draft Order Limits. It is likely that the enormous impact of access for construction and operational purposes and the temporary and permanent haul roads throughout the Project merits the creation of a haul road decommissioning plan so that the effects of this infrastructure's removal is also understood.

12.203 At operation, within approximately 0.5 km it is identified that there would be close views of the overhead line and a CSE compound from scattered properties, including properties along Straight Road, the local PRoW network NCN Route 1 and people travelling along the A143 and local road networks Pylons would remain prominent in the view. Between approximately 0.5 km and 1 km, there would be close to medium views of the Project from scattered properties and the local PRoW and road network. Between approximately 1 km and 2 km, it is stated that views of the Project would likely be filtered and screened by layers of vegetation including woodlands and hedgerows resulting in intermittent medium to long distance views from scattered properties, a number of local PRoW, the Essex Way and roads. However, at **VP 4.01 Boxted Airfield Memorial,** which is to outside the Receptor Area D1 and to the north, the pylons to the south remain prominent on the skyline even though they re 1.2Km away. An additional viewpoint is needed, therefore, within D1 but between 1-1.5Km away from the Project so that the effects can be clearly identified as significant or not.

12.204 **D2 Little Horkesley and Wormingford:** This Visual Receptor Area is located to the north and west of the Project, broadly between Little Horkesley and Wormingford and the northern part is located within Dedham Vale National Landscape (an AONB). Representative Viewpoints are identified as:

- **Viewpoint 4.04 PRoW off Holt's Road, east of Wormingford (Little Horkesley 18)**
- **Viewpoint 4.07 School Road / Stour Valley Path, west of Little Horkesley**
- **Viewpoint 4.13 B1508 Main Road, Wormingford**
- **Viewpoint 4.27 B1508 Colchester Road, near Grove Lodge**

12.205 It is identified that construction activity and the finished Project would be visible in close views from the southern fringes of the Visual Receptor Area, and that within approximately 0.5 km, there would be close views of construction activity associated with the underground cable, overhead line and CSE compound, from the local road network, alongside local PRoW and scattered properties.

12.206 We agree that within 0.5 km of the project line, the scale of change would be large, the magnitude of effect would be high, and the effect would be **major and significant (adverse). Viewpoint 4.27 B1508 Colchester Road, near Grove Lodge 0.12Km** demonstrates the major significant adverse effect of the pylons close to. We welcome this additional viewpoint. However, we disagree that major effects are limited to below 0.5KM and that between 0.5 km and 1.5 km the scale of change would necessarily be medium and the effect only **moderate and significant** (adverse).

12.207 Whilst we agree that from **Viewpoint 4.04 PRoW off Holt's Road, east of Wormingford (Little Horkesley 18)** from 0.76Km, the visualisation does demonstrate a **moderate significant adverse** impact, we hold that in a more open landscape we consider the effects could remain **major adverse up to 1Km.** Similar receptors between 0.5Km-1Km, particularly receptors on linear features such as PRoW, would be affected by close to medium distance views of this construction activity and by the operational Project. Between approximately 1 km and 2 km intermittent medium to long distance views of construction activity and the completed overhead line would be seen, including from the National Landscape and the Stour Valley Path.

12.208 Whilst we agree that generally, beyond 1.5 km, the effects would be minor and not significant (adverse), partly due to intervening vegetation, the visualisation from **Viewpoint 4.13 B1508 Main Road, Wormingford** at 1.90Km on the edge of Dedham Vale National Landscape, shows **moderate adverse significant effects** would still occur because of the elevation. This will generate a long-term impact on the setting of the National Landscape if it goes ahead. We would argue that further undergrounding is needed and that the CSE compound needs to be moved further south-west, potentially south of King's Farm.

12.209 We would suggest that effects on visual receptors would likely be significant (negative) between 1-2 km of the Project. however, additional viewpoint assessments and visualisations are needed to demonstrate this. We consider that the cumulative effect of multiple pylons and the lengthy overhead linear character of the project, means that the collective effects within the study area creates an **overall significant adverse effect** on the perception of the wider countryside for both local householders and visitors.

12.210 **D3 Great Horkesley:** This Visual Receptor Area is located to the south of the Project, broadly between the A12 near Ardleigh Reservoir and West Bergholt. The identified Representative viewpoints for this area are

- **Viewpoint 4.03 Broad Lane / Essex Way, east of Great Horkesley**
- **Viewpoint 4.17 Lodge Lane, Colchester Viewpoint 4.18 NCN Route 1 / Langham Lane, north of Colchester**
- **Viewpoint 4.19 PRoW at Peppers Lane, east of Great Horkesley (Boxsted 28)**
- **Viewpoint 4.34 Crabtree Lane, north of West Bergholt**

12.211 We welcome the additional viewpoints.

12.212 It is identified that construction activity relating to both the overhead line, underground cable and two CSE compounds would be visible in close views from the northern fringes of the VRA. Within approximately 0.5 km, there would be close views of construction activity from PRoW such as Essex Way. This diminishes with distance.

12.213 Once operational, **Viewpoint 4.03 Essex Way** 0.42Km demonstrates the major significant adverse effect of the CSE at completion but also that the mitigation does reduce the significant effects at Year 15. We welcome the additional viewpoint assessments from VP 4.17 and VP 4.19 that give a more accurate understanding of negative effects close to. It is disappointing that **Viewpoint 4.17 Lodge Lane, Colchester NCN Route 1 / Langham Lane, north of Colchester** 0.38Km from the project line, is only presented as a wireline especially as it represents NCN Route 1. The effects are large, widespread and **major adverse significant**. We don't accept that either construction or operational impacts would be major significant adverse only within 0.5KM.

12.214 **Viewpoint 4.19 PRoW at Peppers Lane, east of Great Horkesley (Boxsted 28)** 0.23Km from the project line shows the significant vegetation loss required. **Viewpoint 4.34 Crabtree Lane, north of West Bergholt** 0.19Km demonstrates the significant major adverse impact which seriously impacts the view across the valley to Fordham. The mitigation hides the pylons but also completely hides the view and therefore part of the character.

12.215 There is a complete lack of viewpoints from beyond 0.5Km therefore we do not accept that effects are not **major significant adverse** up to 1Km nor that effects are not **significant moderate adverse** beyond 1.5Km.

12.216 We consider that the cumulative effect of multiple pylons and the continuous overhead linear character of the project, means that the collective effects within the VRA creates an **overall significant adverse effect** at both construction and operation.

12.217 **D4 North Colchester:** This Visual Receptor Area is located to the south of the Project and south of the A12, broadly encompassing the northern urban edge of Colchester. There are no representative viewpoints within this Visual Receptor Area which we don't think is acceptable.There would be no construction activity within the Visual Receptor Area.

12.218 We accept that effects on visual receptors would likely be negative but not significant during the construction phase and the operational phase but suggest a viewpoint is needed from e.g., the edge of the Receptor Area from National Cyle Network as it passes along Severall's Lane crossing over the A12 to demonstrate this. This is c 1Km from the Project line and it is known from elsewhere in the Project area that significant effects can be perceived at 1 Km.

12.219 **D5 Fordham:** This VRA is located to the north-west of the Project, broadly between Rochfords and Rose Green. The topography consists of a gently rolling elevated plateau which slopes down to the south and east towards the Colne Valley and one of its tributary valleys. The Representative Viewpoints are identified as:

- **Viewpoint 4.08 Fordham**
- **Viewpoint 4.14 Fordham Road, north-east of Fordham**
- **Viewpoint 4.24 Essex Way near Fordstreet**
- **Viewpoint 4.30 Mill Road, south of Fordham**
- **Viewpoint 4.35 PRoW, Hemps Green (Fordham 5)**

12.220 It is identified that construction activity would be visible in close views from the south-eastern fringes of the Visual Receptor Area from the local road network (which is predominantly rural lanes), the PRoW network, NCN Route 13, and Open Access Land, as well as scattered properties such as north-east of Fordham within the Colne Valley. The Project run of pylons is approximately 3Km through this area and would generate **major significant adverse** effects along this line as it crosses the valley between Fordham and the outskirts of West Bergholt parish. Part of this area would have formed part of the previous Special Landscape Area. Colchester no longer designates local landscape designations.

12.221 **Viewpoint 4.08 Fordham** 0.47Km from the project: It is unclear why this is only presented as a wireline as this VP has a close-to view, and is at the heart of the village just in front of the church and the pub. A full photomontage should be produced for VP4.08 to better demonstrate the effects. The assertion that '*Views from within Fordham would be screened and filtered in places by woodland blocks'* is at best misleading as the vegetation in the baseline photos and visualisations of **Viewpoint 4.08 Fordham** are generally uncut hedgerows. Substantially unfiltered views of the overhead line would be visible from most of the Fordham Hall Estate Open Access Land with three of the pylons actually being sited on this land, therefore producing **significant major adverse** un-mitigatable effects.

12.222 EN1 5.11.9 states ‘Applicants will need to consult the local community on their proposals to build on existing open space, sports or recreational buildings and land’. It should be made clear if the local community accepts the building of this infrastructure within publicly accessible greenspace. Further ‘applicants should consider providing new or additional open space including green and blue infrastructure’, And 5.11.24 ‘Where green infrastructure is affected, the Secretary of State should consider imposing requirements to ensure the functionality and connectivity of the green infrastructure network is maintained’ and ‘any necessary works are undertaken, where possible, to mitigate any adverse impact and, where appropriate, to improve that network and other areas of open space’ And 5.11.25 ‘The Secretary of State should also consider whether any adverse effect on green infrastructure and other forms of open space is adequately mitigated or compensated by means of any planning obligations, for example exchange land and provide for appropriate management and maintenance agreements. Any exchange land should be at least as good in terms of size, usefulness, attractiveness and quality, and accessibility’.

12.223 We would be interested to know what direct consultation has taken place with the community about siting three pylons on newly created Open Access Land.

12.224 **Viewpoint 4.14 Fordham Road, north-east of Fordham** 0.31Km from the project line. The visualisation demonstrates how significant the impact will be from this viewpoint, introducing a major industrial element over a 270-degree angle into an unspoilt, rural landscape. The baseline view is over an unspoilt shallow valley to higher ground beyond. The pylon run substantially fills the whole view of the valley. This landscape either forms part of the old Colne Valley SLA or is part of its setting. The OH line at Fordham itself is at an elevated level and so would be visible over a wide area including on the valley bottom and the Essex Way.

12.225 **Viewpoint 4.24 Essex Way near Fordstreet** 0.48Km This VP is sited in the bottom of the Colne Valley in what used to be the Special Landscape Area. It demonstrates the major significant adverse effects that would occur across the valley. We consider the line should be either undergrounded or diverted from this part of the valley and that this is justified by the value and sensitivity of this distinctive landscape feature and the visual amenity it provides. There would be wide views up and down the valley to the pylons and wide views back up to the pylons and OH line as they come down the valley slope. We do not agree that significant impacts would be limited to <1.5Km at the operational stage.

12.226 **Viewpoint 4.30 Mill Road, south of Fordham** 0.21Km from line demonstrates the wide-ranging and prominent visibility of the overhead line from this viewpoint south of Fordham. This represents many of the views from the Open Access Land that surrounds Fordham. The overhead line is prominent in views over the Colne Valley. Looking back from the valley, the proposed overhead line is likely to be seen on the skyline framing views back to Fordham. The views in at least 180 degrees around Fordham are potentially industrialised. The scenic value of the views will be irrevocably changed. We do not accept that intervening woodland provides much filtering.

12.227 We do not accept that major adverse significant effects only occur within 0.5 km. We consider they extend to at least 1km due to the prominent location of much of the infrastructure. We agree the effects would be **major and significant (adverse)** but suggest this would be over a much wider area causing irrevocable degradation to the visual amenity of the Colne Valley and its surroundings.

12.228 We consider that the cumulative effect of multiple pylons and the continuous overhead linear character of the project, means that the collective effects within the VRA creates an **overall significant adverse effect** at both construction and operation. We do not accept that its reasonable that no additional mitigation or any compensation is proposed within the VRA.

12.229 **D6 Fordham Heath and Eight Ash Green:** This Visual Receptor Area is located to the south and east of the Project, broadly between West Bergholt and the railway line north of Copford and Marks Tey. The sole identified Representative Viewpoints is:

- **Viewpoint 4.05 PRoW near Hillhouse Wood, west of West Bergholt (West Bergholt 5)**
- **Viewpoint 4.09 NCR 13, Fiddlers Hill**
- **Viewpoint 4.20 PRoW near Bullbanks Farm, west of Fordham Heath (Aldham 4)**
- **Viewpoint 4.21 Brook Road, north of Marks Tey**
- **Viewpoint 4.25 Essex Way, Mill Road, south of Fordham**
- **Viewpoint 4.28 Essex Way near Poole's Farm**
- **Viewpoint 4.29 PRoW north of Eight Ash Green / Fordham Heath (Eight Ash Green 1)**
- **Viewpoint 4.33 Marks Tey Railway Station**
  Viewpoint 4.38 Essex Way, West Bergholt

12.230 The additional viewpoints are to be welcomed. **Viewpoint 4.28 Essex Way near Poole's Farm** needs at least to have a wireframe as this VP is taken from the Essex Way.

12.231 The assessment identifies that, at both the construction and operational stage, the Project and its construction, would be visible in close views from the local road network, such as A1124, (but also from the many lanes) alongside scattered properties such as southeast of Fordham, NCN Route 13, PRoW (including the Essex Way) and from Open Access Land within the Colne Valley and along the Essex Way where the overhead line would be visible on the skyline crossing the valley. Demonstrated in **Viewpoint 4.25 Essex Way, Mill Road, south of Fordham 0.24Km.** From properties and people travelling along the B1508, in the north-east of the area, there would be open and elevated views along the valley, towards the Project as pylons would be stacked in views.

12.232 There are still significant views greater than 0.5 km as evidenced by **Viewpoint 4.05 PRoW near Hillhouse Wood, (West Bergholt 5)** 0.9Km**, Viewpoint 4.20 PRoW near Bullbanks Farm, (Aldham 4)** 0.59KM **Viewpoint 4.28 Essex Way near Poole's Farm** 0.98Km. VP4.05, 4.20 and 4.28 are greater than 0.5Km from the Project line, therefore, we dispute that significant effects would not be found at greater distances than 1Km.

12.233 Between approximately 1 km and 2 km, the overhead line would most often be seen on the skyline and above intervening trees in medium to long distance views. **Viewpoint 4.29 PRoW north of Eight Ash Green / Fordham Heath (Eight Ash Green 1)** demonstrates though that the effects are still **moderate significant adverse** and that significance doesn't stop at 1.5 Km. It is accepted that visibility would decrease in the south-east of the Receptor Area and between approximately 2 km and 3 km.

12.234 We consider the scale of change would be large and the effect would be **major and significant (adverse) up to 1Km** and not 0.5Km as stated, due to the frequent open views and elevated pylon runs. We consider the scale of change would be medium and the effect would be **moderate and significant (adverse**) between 1.0 km and up to 2.0 km. Beyond 1.5 km, whilst the scale of change would be smaller, and the individual effects could be minor and not significant (adverse), we consider that the cumulative effect of multiple pylons and the continuous overhead linear character of the project, means that the collective effects creates an **overall significant adverse effect** within the VRA at both construction and operation.

12.235 **D7 Fordstreet and Aldham:** This Visual Receptor Area is located to the north and west of the Project, broadly between Chappel, Fordstreet and Aldham. The Representative Viewpoints are:

- **Viewpoint 4.11 PRoW south of Aldham (Aldham 15)**
- **Viewpoint 4.31 Rectory Road near Hoe Farm, east of Great Tey**
- **Viewpoint 4.37 Hines Close, Aldham**

12.236 We agree that the Project would be visible in close views from the south-east of the VRA, demonstrated in **Viewpoint 4.11 PRoW south of Aldham (Aldham 15) and Viewpoint 4.37 Hines Close, Aldham** which show the severity of the impact at 0.17Km distant from the project line at Aldham including as it crosses over the Colne Valley south of Fordstreet. The pylons are very prominent next to the village of Aldham looming over existing housing and creating really negative place-making. The alignment is not acceptable and needs undergrounding or setting back.

12.237 The proposed overhead line is likely to be seen on the skyline and would be prominent in views, particularly from Fordstreet and Aldham where there are some open views to the east in neighbouring VRA D5. There would also be close views from parts of the Essex Way and open access land within the Colne Valley. The Project would be introduced into a landscape otherwise absent of overhead lines. We consider the scale of change would be large and the effect would be **major and significant (adverse) within 1.0Km** of the project not 0.5Km due to the openness and elevation. **Viewpoint 4.31 Rectory Road near Hoe Farm, east of Great Tey** 0.95KM demonstrates how major effects persist beyond 0.5Kms.

12.238 We consider there would be medium distance views of the Project from between approximately 1.0Km and 1.5 km, and that woodland cover would do little in the way of filtering and screening due to the sheer height of the pylons and their extent. We consider that the effect would be **moderate and significant (adverse**) between only 1.0-1.5 Km. Between approximately 1 km and 2 km, the overhead line would be visible in medium to long views and would most often be seen on the skyline and above intervening trees, with visibility decreasing with distance as layers of vegetation and topography further screen out views. However, there are no viewpoint images to demonstrate this. Effects on visual receptors would likely be significant (negative) within approximately 1.5 km of the Project.

12.239 Beyond approximately 1.5 km, it is less likely that effects would be significant due to a reduction in perceptibility of the overhead line which would increase with distance. However, we consider that the cumulative effect of multiple pylons and the continuous overhead linear character of the project, means that the collective effects creates an **overall significant adverse effect** within the VRA at both construction and operation.

12.240 **D8 Great Tey:** This Visual Receptor Area is located to the north of the Project, broadly between Swan Street and East Gores. The Representative Viewpoints are:

- **Viewpoint 4.10 Moor Road, Great Tey**
- **Viewpoint 4.22 PRoW between Great Tey and Little Tey**
- **Viewpoint 4.26 Essex Way, East Gores**
- **Viewpoint 4.32 Essex Way, west of Teybrook Farm**

12.241 The assessment identifies that the Project would be visible in close views (within 0.5 km) from the south of the VRA,from the local road and PRoW network, such as Essex Way, alongside scattered properties such as those south of Great Tey and properties at East Gores.The overhead line is likely to be seen on the skyline and would be prominent in views, particularly from the Essex Way and East Gores (see **Viewpoint 4.26 Essex Way, East Gores).** However, we consider major significant adverse impacts extend up to 1Km from the project line, See **Viewpoint 4.32 Essex Way, west of Teybrook Farm** 0.63Km). Between approximately 0.5 km and 1 km, close to medium distance views of the Project would be visible from the local road and PRoW network, alongside scattered properties such as those southwest of Great Tey.

12.242 The Project would be introduced into unspoiled rural landscapes. We consider that the scale of change would be large, and the effect would be **major and significant** (adverse) up to 1KM (not 0.5Km) from the project line.

12.243 Between approximately 1 km and 2 km, the overhead line would most often be seen on the skyline in medium to long views and above intervening trees, with visibility decreasing with distance as layers of vegetation further screen out views and as much of Great Tey is in a slight dip, views towards the Project would be limited in places as demonstrated **in Viewpoint 4.10 Moor Road, Great Tey.** (1.59Km) and **Viewpoint 4.22 PRoW between Great Tey and Little Tey** 1.08Km. A visualisation is needed from VP 4.22 to demonstrate the effects.

12.244 We consider it is between 1.0 km (not 0.5Km) and 1.5 km that the scale of change would be medium, and the effect would be **moderate and significant** (adverse), reducing to minor and not significant (adverse) within the Roman River valley. Beyond approximately 1.5 km, it is less likely that effects would be significant due to a reduction in perceptibility of the overhead line which would increase with distance. However, we consider that the cumulative effect of multiple pylons and the continuous overhead linear character of the project, means that the collective effects create an **overall significant adverse effect** within the VRA at both construction and operation.

12.245 **D9 Marks Tey:** This Visual Receptor Area is located to the south of the Project, broadly between East Gores and Marks Tey. The Representative Viewpoints are:

- **Viewpoint 4.06 A120 Coggeshall Road, Broad Green**
- **Viewpoint 4.12 A120 Coggeshall Road, Marks Tey**
- **Viewpoint 4.23 Great Tey Road**

12.246 The assessment identifies the Project would be visible in close views (within 0.5 km) from the north of the VRA. The overhead line is likely to be seen on the skyline and would be prominent in views (as represented by Viewpoint 4.06 A120 Coggeshall Road, Broad Green (0.46Km) particularly from Salmon's Lane and Great Tey Road which are both crossed by the Project. The Project would be filtered in places by existing vegetation, including dense roadside vegetation and hedgerows. Within 0.5 km the scale of change would be large and the magnitude of effect would be high. The effect would be major and significant (adverse).

12.247 The Project would be visible in close views from the northern fringes of the Visual Receptor Area on its northern boundary. Within approximately 0.5 km, there would be close views of the overhead line from the PRoW and local road network including Salmon's Lane, Great Tey Road and the A120 alongside scattered properties such as those north-west of Marks Tey and near East Gores. Between approximately 0.5 km and 1 km the settlement of Little Tey would be exposed to close to medium distance views of the Project however views would be filtered and screened in places by vegetation surrounding the settlement.

12.248 Between approximately 1 km and 2 km, (**Viewpoint 4.12 A120 Coggeshall Road, Marks Tey** (1.15Km) the assessment identifies medium to long distance views of the Project but suggests these are reduced by layers of vegetation. The 'distant' views of the Project are actually quite prominent where the landscape opens and layers of vegetation are reduced. We agree there would be wide views of the overhead line from along the A120 and from properties along the road where the overhead line would be visible on the skyline across a wide view. We further agree that effects on visual receptors would likely be **significant (adverse**) within approximately 1.5 km of the Project, but that they are likely **major significant adverse** up to 1Km.

12.249 Beyond approximately 1.5 km, it is less likely that effects would be significant due to a reduction in perceptibility of the overhead line which would increase with distance. However, we consider that the cumulative effect of multiple pylons and the continuous overhead linear character of the project, means that the collective effects creates an **overall significant adverse effect** within the VRA at both construction and operation.

12.250 **VRA D10 Copford**: This VRA is located to the south of the Project, broadly between the western edge of Colchester and farmland north of Easthorpe. The landform consists of an elevated farmland plateau crossed by the valley of the Roman River east of Copford.

12.251 There are no viewpoints located within the VRA. This VRA is located 1 km to the south-east of the Project. so we agree views towards the Project from the majority of the VRA are well screened, particularly in the east from Copford and along the valley of the Roman River. The Project would be perceptible from PRoW on slightly higher ground west of Copford Green, where it would form a small part of distant views. Between 1 km and 1.5 km there would be a barely perceptible scale of change and the effect would be negligible and not significant.

Landscape and Visual Conclusion

12.252 The scheme creates impact that fail to clearly fail to comply with EN5. There is no dispute that the scheme is very harmful, although Colchester City Council dispute the level and extent of the Landscape and Visual Harm as set out above.

12.253 With regards to the National Landscape, NPS EN5 require the applicant to avoid the National Landscape if at all possible. It is Colchester City Council's opinion that the applicant has not demonstrated that they have considered all the options with regards to the location of the EACN and therefore the need to dissect the Dedham Vale National Landscape in the first place. The scheme does not therefore comply with EN5.

Arboriculture

12.254 The following have been considered: Environmental Statement Appendix 13.6 – Arboricultural Impact Assessment (AIA, APP-236), the Ancient Woodland and Veteran Tree Strategy (APP-323), and the Trees and Hedgerows to be Removed or Managed Plans (APP-050 / 051) covering Sections C and D of the project where the route passes through Colchester.

12.255 The comments concern only Category A and B trees and groups, which the AIA identifies as material to the assessment of significant effects. Category C and U features are omitted as their loss or disturbance is not considered significant in EIA terms.

Baseline and Arboricultural Context

12.256 The relevant crosses a rural, mixed-agricultural landscape characterised by mature field-boundary oaks, short treed belts, and species-rich hedgerows.

12.257 The surveyed tree stock includes approximately twelve Category A trees and groups, and around thirty Category B features, the majority being English oak (Quercus robur) with smaller numbers of field maple, ash, and hornbeam.

12.258 A single veteran oak (T566) is recorded as of exceptional ecological and cultural importance (Category A3).

12.259 Collectively, these trees and groups form an integral part of the Borough's green infrastructure, providing visual enclosure, habitat continuity and canopy cover consistent with the objectives of Local Plan Policies ENV1, ENV3 and CC1.

Nature of Impacts (as per AIA Table A13.6.2)

12.260 The AIA (Colchester City Council area) identifies:

- 47 individual trees removed
- 18 trees partially removed
- 15 trees affected / managed
- 50 trees retained with protection measures
- 20 trees unaffected,

giving a total of 130 individual trees.

12.261 For tree canopy this equates to 10 291 m² removed, 4 606 m² affected, and 3 992 m² retained with protection measures, giving an overall canopy resource of 30 301 m² within Colchester.

12.262 For tree groups: 1 group fully removed, 20 partially removed, 2 affected / managed, 5 retained with protection, and 20 unaffected, totalling 48 groups.

12.263 Group canopy figures are substantial – 27 m² fully removed, 22 496 m² partially removed, and 4 454 m² affected / managed, representing a total group canopy of 171 251 m².

12.264 The combined canopy subtotal across all trees and groups in Colchester is 201 551 m², with approximately 32 815 m² (≈ 16 %) removed or disturbed. This represents a moderate-to-major adverse effect before mitigation, reducing to minor–moderate with replacement and recovery measures, as the AIA identifies.

12.265 However, these figures under-represent the total canopy loss within Colchester.

12.266 The AIA (covering Babergh, Colchester and Tendring jointly) records a further 10 130 m² of tree canopy and 28 020 m² of group canopy removed. A portion of those losses falls within Colchester's boundary but cannot be disaggregated. Consequently, the true canopy loss attributable to Colchester is likely higher than 32 800 m², reinforcing the need for a local canopy assessment under Policy CC1 to quantify total and residual canopy change accurately.

Veteran Tree T566

12.267 T566 – a large lapsed-pollard English oak (Quercus robur) – is classified Category A3 (veteran). Its removal constitutes irreplaceable habitat loss under paragraph 187 (c) of the NPPF (2024) and Policy ENV1 of the Colchester Local Plan.

12.268 The applicant proposes compensation through the Ancient Woodland and Veteran Tree Strategy, including creation of replacement veteran features, retention of felled timber for in-situ habitat, and targeted veteranisation of younger oaks.

12.269 While these measures align with good practice, the Council considers the impact major adverse and requires a Veteran Tree Compensation and Management Plan securing local delivery and a minimum 30-year management term.

Other Category A and B Tree Removals

12.270 The confirmed removals include mature oaks and mixed native belts that define Colchester's rural field pattern and contribute significantly to the local landscape character.

T571 – English oak (Category B2). Boundary oak forming part of a hedge; loss will open views along the road corridor and reduce canopy enclosure.

T651 – English oak (B2). Field oak adjacent to the working area; removal creates a gap in a continuous hedgerow line.

T655 – English oak (B2). Mature, lapsed coppice within agricultural boundary; loss diminishes hedgerow rhythm and visual continuity.

T657 – English oak (B2). Lapsed coppice, moderate quality; forms part of a boundary hedge/roadside hedge. Loss destroys sylvan rural nature of lane.

T658 – English Oak (B2). Early Mature tree; as above.

T670 – English oak (B2). Potentially affected; large visually important tree.

T672 – English oak (B2). Removal; large visually important tree.

T674 – English oak (B3). Hedgerow oak; very large, mature tree.

12.271 Groups G190, G193, G194, G195, G196, G200, G201, G203, G204, G206 and G207 are mixed native assemblages (oak, field maple, hazel, hawthorn, blackthorn) of Category A2–B2 quality forming treed boundaries and ecological corridors. Partial and full removals (notably G196, G201 and G206) will fragment canopy continuity and reduce biodiversity linkages until restoration planting establishes.

12.272 The combined effect of these confirmed removals and potential losses equates to approximately 32 800 m² of canopy, a moderate–major adverse arboricultural and landscape effect until replacement planting matures.

Potentially Affected Retained Trees and Groups

12.273 Fifteen Category A/B trees and two groups are retained but lie close to the working corridor. The AIA prescribes temporary fencing, ground-protection systems and supervision by an Arboricultural Clerk of Works, which is proportionate given the project scale. A CEMP should include a Tree Protection Monitoring Plan with inspection intervals, reporting lines, and remedial protocols.

12.274 Post-construction reinstatement (sub-soil decompaction, ripping, mulching) should be undertaken to restore rooting potential and soil permeability. Residual effects are therefore likely minor adverse and reversible.

Replacement Planting and Canopy Recovery

12.275 The AIA's current mitigation strategy cites a 3:1 replacement ratio by number, but this is not aligned with Policy CC1, which requires canopy-based accounting. The applicant's canopy data aggregates Babergh, Colchester and Tendring, preventing a clear view of canopy loss and recovery within Colchester.

12.276 Colchester City Council therefore recommends that National Grid prepare a Colchester-specific Canopy Cover Assessment, quantifying:

- baseline canopy area within the Borough;
- canopy loss and disturbance (≈ 32 800 m² plus additional undisaggregated Section C loss); and
- projected canopy recovery over 5, 10 and 15 years.

12.277 The assessment should demonstrate that canopy parity will be achieved within 15 years, in line with Policy CC1. If not achievable on-site, the assessment should specify off-site compensatory planting through an Off-Site Planting Delivery Scheme.

12.278 Replacement planting should:

- reinstate boundary oak and hedgerow patterns using native, climate-resilient species;
- prioritise canopy continuity and ecological connectivity;
- include a 10-year aftercare programme and 30-year monitoring for veteran compensation planting; and
- be tied to DCO Requirements mandating outcome-based canopy recovery.

Adequacy of the AIA Mitigation Framework

12.279 The AIA's methodology accords with BS 5837:2012 but remains broad. The Council considers that local quantification and enforceability are insufficient to ensure canopy recovery meets Policy CC1 standards. It will therefore seek:

- a Colchester-specific Canopy Cover Assessment and Recovery Plan;
- a Veteran Tree Compensation and Management Plan;
- a Tree Protection Monitoring Plan within the CEMP; and
- confirmation via the LEMP that reinstatement planting restores rural field-boundary character.

Policy Considerations

12.280 Policy ENV1 – Protects and enhances green infrastructure: loss of mature hedgerow oaks will create canopy discontinuity unless reinstated.

12.281 Policy ENV3 – Seeks to conserve landscape character: targeted boundary planting will be required.

12.282 Policy CC1 – Promotes measurable canopy gain: a quantified canopy assessment specific to Colchester is essential to demonstrate compliance and guide any off-site mitigation.

Overall Assessment and Council Position

12.283 The Norwich–Tilbury project will unavoidably remove 47 individual trees and substantial portions of 20 groups within Colchester (≈ 32 800 m² of canopy), and further, undisaggregated losses within Section C that also fall partly inside Colchester's boundary. When combined, the total canopy reduction within the Borough may exceed 40 000 m², a significant loss of green-infrastructure cover contrary to Policies ENV1 and CC1 without effective mitigation.

12.284 The Council acknowledges avoidance is not feasible for a project of this scale but maintains that Policy CC1 compliance requires:

- quantification of all Colchester-based losses (including Section C proportion);
- local delivery of veteran compensation; and
- replanting to restore ecological and visual continuity.

12.285 With these safeguards in place, residual effects could reduce to minor–moderate adverse, with canopy restoration achievable within 15–20 years.

Conclusion

12.286 The AIA presents a credible framework but understates Colchester's actual canopy loss because Section C data cannot be separated. Within Colchester, confirmed removals of 47 trees and partial loss of 20 groups account for ≈ 32 800 m² of canopy, with additional losses from Section C likely bringing the true figure to or beyond 40 000 m². Such losses will produce a moderate-to-major adverse impact on landscape character and green infrastructure.

12.287 These impacts can be mitigated through a Colchester-specific Canopy Assessment and Recovery Plan, veteran tree management, and native replanting to restore field-boundary structure. Subject to these being secured through the DCO, residual effects would be manageable and policy-compliant – except for the veteran tree loss, which remains a significant and irreplaceable adverse impact requiring exceptional justification and local compensation.

13 Noise and Vibration

Policy Context

National Policy Statements

Overarching National Policy Statement for Energy (EN-1)

13.1 Paragraph 5.12.1 states “excessive noise can have wide-ranging impacts on the quality of human life and health such as annoyance, sleep disturbance, cardiovascular disease and mental ill-health. It can also have an impact on the environment and the use and enjoyment of areas of value such as quiet places and areas with high landscape quality”.

13.2 Paragraph 5.12.5 states “factors that will determine the likely noise impact of a proposed development include:

- the inherent operational noise from the proposed development, and its characteristics
- the proximity of the proposed development to noise sensitive premises (including residential properties, schools and hospitals) and noise sensitive areas (including certain parks and open spaces)
- the proximity of the proposed development to quiet places and other areas that are particularly valued for their soundscape or landscape quality”

National Policy Statement for electricity networks infrastructure (EN-5)

13.3 Paragraph 2.9.26 states that “all high voltage transmission lines have the potential to generate noise under certain conditions”.

13.4 Paragraph 2.9.27 states “line noise is most commonly caused by corona noise when the conductor surface electric stress exceeds the inception level for corona discharge activity which is released as acoustic energy and radiates into the air as sound. Transmission line conductors are normally designed to operate below this threshold”.

13.5 Paragraph 2.9.42 states that “when assessing the impact of noise generated by overhead lines in wet weather relative to existing background sound levels, the applicant should consider the effect of varying background sound levels due to rainfall”.

National Planning Policy Framework

13.6 Paragraph 187 states that “Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:

e) preventing new and existing development from contributing to, being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by, unacceptable levels of soil, air, water or noise pollution or land instability”.

Local Plan Policy

13.7 **Policy ENV5: Pollution and Contaminated Land**

This policy states that “Proposals will be supported that will not result in an unacceptable risk to public health or safety, the environment, general amenity, or existing uses due to the potential of air pollution, noise nuisance, surface / ground water sources or land pollution”.

Neighbourhood Plans

13.8 **Marks Tey Neighbourhood Plan** - Policy MT01 - Any development proposals found to be generating significant transport movements1 , the impacts of which would be severe, will not be supported in advance of the A12 road widening scheme and a dualled A120 from Braintree to the A12 being delivered. And seek to mitigate the effect of traffic on noise and vibration and poor air quality.

Local Impact Assessment

13.9 **Construction Phase Impacts**

Positive

13.10 None identified

Neutral

13.11 None identified

Negative

13.12 As set out below.

13.13 **Operational Phase Impacts**

Positive

13.14 None identified

Neutral

13.15 None identified

Negative

13.16 As set out below.

13.17 In Colchester there are no substations, so noise will arise from linear works, which are those that would move along the route, such as cabling or overhead line works, with works lasting for a relatively short duration at any specific location. There are also some construction compounds.

13.18 Specific sources of construction noise are:

- Operation of temporary construction compounds.
- Construction of underground cables.
- Trenchless crossings for example horizontal directional drilling (HDD).
- Construction of pylons and overhead lines.
- Modification works to existing pylons and overhead lines.
- Removal of existing pylons and overhead lines.

13.19 With the use of mitigation in the form of Best Practicable Means (BPM), the magnitude of impact of construction noise is expected to be negligible to small at all nearby residential and low to medium sensitivity non-residential noise sensitive receptors (NSRs), and negligible at all nearby high sensitivity non-residential NSRs during daytime periods. The residual effect of construction noise is therefore not significant at all nearby NSRs during daytime periods. Normal working hours are restricted to daytime periods.

13.20 Additionally, with appropriate mitigation in the form of BPM, significant adverse effects from weekend or bank holiday noise can be avoided. With appropriate mitigation measures, the effects of construction noise during weekend and bank holiday periods would be not significant.

Construction vibration

13.21 Potential sources of vibration during the construction phase are:

- Ground compaction – this may be required during activities such as the construction of temporary access routes.
- Percussive or vibratory piling – this may be required for activities such as the foundation works of new pylons.

13.22 The assessment indicates that the construction vibration SOAEL may be exceeded without mitigation at some NSRs. The majority relate to potential compaction activities associated with highway works, haul road construction, and the construction of temporary construction compounds. These activities would be expected to be of relatively short duration (typically less than a day) and construction vibration from compaction activities would therefore cause a minor effect at these NSRs and be not significant.

13.23 There are no buildings within the Colchester Borough where damage from construction vibration (including piling) is predicted.

Construction traffic noise

13.24 During construction, there would be additional vehicle traffic (including Heavy Goods Vehicles) on the local road network, travelling to and from the work sites. An assessment of potential noise impacts from construction traffic is presented in Appendix 14.2: Construction Traffic Noise Assessment (document reference 6.14.A2).

13.25 The assessment indicates that construction traffic noise impacts are negligible or small on all routes in Colchester. The impact of noise from construction traffic is therefore not significant.

Mitigation for construction noise/vibration

13.26 Further detailed assessments of construction noise and vibration effects would be undertaken by the Main Works Contractor(s) and, where necessary, specific mitigation measures would be determined and implemented based on their assessment.

Embedded mitigation

13.27 The route alignment and siting have been designed as far as practicable to avoid sensitive Noise and Vibration features as set out in the Corridor and Preliminary Routeing and Siting Study (National Grid, 2022). This included avoiding settlements and residential areas, passing predominantly through rural areas, with the majority of nearby NSRs being isolated dwellings and small settlements.

Standard mitigation

13.28 The Outline Code of Construction Practice (CoCP) (document reference 7.2) contains relevant standard/good practice measures and best practicable means (BPM) relating to Noise and Vibration which will be included in the Noise and vibration Management Plan.

13.29 These measures include but are not limited to the following:

13.30 Main Works Contractor(s) will be required to follow good construction practices and BPM as outlined in British Standard 5228:2009+A1:2014 Code of practice for noise and vibration control on construction and open sites Part 1: Noise (BS 5228-1) and Part 2: Vibration (BS 5228-2) for the control of noise and Vibration.

13.31 BPM measures will be identified within the CoCP and may include, but is not limited to, housing continuous noisy plant in acoustic enclosures, siting semistatic equipment as far as reasonably practicable away from occupied buildings and fitting equipment with suitable enclosures or screening.

13.32 Where there is potential for works to generate vibration at, or approaching, levels exceeding 12.5 mm PPV at buildings or structures (or lower levels if the building or structure is deemed particularly sensitive to vibration), pre and post work condition surveys will be conducted. Any damage (cosmetic or otherwise) deemed to be caused by the works will be rectified.

13.33 An Outline Noise and Vibration Management Plan to set out the framework for how noise and vibration will be controlled and managed has been prepared (as shown in Appendix F [of the Outline CoCP (document reference 7.2)]). The Main Works Contractor(s) will conduct detailed construction noise and vibration assessments to determine whether any additional measures, including site specific BPM, may be required. A Noise and Vibration Management Plan will be prepared by the Main Works Contractor(s) prior to the commencement of construction and updated and managed during the construction phase as appropriate.

- Avoid unnecessary revving of engines and switch off equipment when not required.
- Keep internal haul roads well maintained and avoid steep gradients, where practicable.
- Use rubber linings in, for example, chutes and dumpers to reduce impact noise, where practicable.
- Minimise drop height of materials.
- Start-up plant and vehicles sequentially rather than all together where such items are located near NSRs.
- Continuous noisy plant should be housed in acoustic enclosures, where practicable and efficacious.
- Exhaust silencing and plant muffling equipment should be fitted and maintained in good working order.
- Static plant known to generate significant levels of vibration should be fitted with vibration dampening features.
- For the construction of pylon foundations, non-percussive piling methods will be used where practicable.
- Any activity carried out or equipment located within a temporary construction compound that may produce a noticeable nuisance, including but not limited to dust, noise, vibration, and lighting, will be located away from sensitive receptors such as residential properties or ecological sites where reasonably practicable.
- Members of the community, local businesses and local stakeholders will be kept informed regularly of the works through active community liaison.

Operational phase

Noise from overhead power lines during operation

13.34 In certain atmospheric conditions crackle or hum can occur at overhead power lines. Crackle is a sound containing a random mixture of frequencies over a wide range, typically 1kHz to 10kHz. No individual pure tone can be identified for any significant duration. Crackle has a generally similar spectral content to the sound of rainfall. Hum is only likely to occur during rain when rates of rainfall exceed 1mm/hr. Hum is a sound consisting of a single pure tone or tones.

13.35 The lateral LoD for overhead lines would not lead to any additional significant effects for operational noise as significant effects would not be expected, even directly underneath the line. Operational noise from overhead lines is scoped out of the ES (Volume 6 of the DCO application), in accordance with the EIA Scoping Opinion (document reference 6.20), on the basis that a low noise conductor system is proposed.

Mitigation for operational noise

13.36 The project would include triple Araucaria conductors (or alternative technology that performs to the same or better standard on standard lattice pylons). These are regarded as practically quiet.

13.37 Pylon fittings, such as insulators, dampers, spacers and clamps, are designed and procured in accordance with a series of National Grid Technical Specifications and must be type registered. These processes reduce the potential for audible noise and tones to occur from all types of fittings, including insulators.

Noise from substantial maintenance activities

13.38 Routine operational maintenance is not expected to generate high levels of noise or vibration and would generally involve relatively short-term activities. The impacts of noise and vibration from routine maintenance activities would be expected to be lower than those during construction and therefore, have a negligible to small impact at all nearby residential and low to medium sensitivity non-residential NSRs, and negligible impact at all nearby high-sensitivity NSRs, resulting in a negligible to minor effect, which is considered to be not significant.

13.39 Noise and vibration effects from more substantial maintenance activities, such as reconductoring or transformer replacement, would be expected to be similar to those during the construction phase. In these circumstances the Main Works Contractor(s) would undertake detailed noise and vibration assessments and determine BPM to reduce the effects of noise and vibration at nearby NSRs. Noise and vibration from substantial maintenance activities would therefore not have a significant impact.

Mitigation for maintenance noise

13.40 Mitigation measures to be used during substantial maintenance activities are as per those described above for construction noise and vibration mitigation.

Working Hours

13.41 We are concerned with the core working hours for construction outlined by National Grid (07:00am-19:00pm on Mondays to Fridays and 07:00am-17:00pm on Saturdays, Sundays, Bank Holidays and other public holidays).

13.42 These are far beyond what would ordinarily be accepted as reasonable working hours.

13.43 **The Council requests working hours should be 08:00am-18:00pm on Mondays to Fridays, 08:00am-13:00pm on Saturdays and non-construction work on Sundays, Bank Holidays and other public holidays** in order to provide neighbours with respite during the construction phase.

14 Socioeconomics and Tourism

Policy Context

National Policy Statements

Overarching National Policy Statement for Energy (EN-1)

14.1 Paragraph 5.13.2 states “where the project is likely to have socio-economic impacts at local or regional levels, the applicant should undertake and include in their application an assessment of these impacts as part of the ES”.

14.2 Paragraph 5.13.3 states “the applicant is strongly encouraged to engage with relevant local authorities during early stages of project development so that the applicant can gain a better understanding of local or regional issues and opportunities”.

14.3 Paragraph 5.13.4 states “that applicant should consider relevant socio-economic impacts which may include creation of jobs and training opportunities, contribute to developing low carbon industries, use of local support services and supply chains, effects on tourism and changing influx of workers during construction”.

14.4 Paragraph 5.13.6 states “socio-economic impacts may be linked to other impacts, for example visual impacts considered in Section 5.10 but may also have an impact on tourism and local businesses. Applicants are encouraged, where possible, to demonstrate that local suppliers have been considered in any supply chain”.

14.5 Paragraph 5.13.7 states that “applicants should consider developing accommodation strategies where appropriate, especially during construction and decommissioning phases, that would include the need to provide temporary accommodation for construction workers if required”.

National Planning Policy Framework

14.6 Paragraph 85 states “planning policies and decisions should help create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt. Significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity, taking into account both local business needs and wider opportunities for development”.

14.7 Paragraph 190 states that “When considering applications for development within National Parks, the Broads and National Landscapes, permission should be refused for major development other than in exceptional circumstances, and where it can be demonstrated that the development is in the public interest. Consideration of such applications should include an assessment of: a) the need for the development, including in terms of any national considerations, and the impact of permitting it, or refusing it, upon the local economy”.

Local Plan Policy

14.8 **Policy ENV4: Dedham Vale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty**

“Development will only be supported in or on land within the setting of the Dedham Vale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) that:

(i) Makes a positive contribution to the natural beauty and special qualities of the AONB, including tranquillity and the AONB’s good quality night/dark skies; and,
(ii) Does not adversely affect the character, quality views, into and out of the AONB and distinctiveness of the AONB or threaten public enjoyment of these areas, including by increased motorised vehicle movement; and,
(iii) That there are no adverse impacts on the setting of the AONB which cannot reasonably be mitigated against and,
(iv) Supports the wider environmental, social and economic objectives as set out in the Dedham Vale AONB and Stour Valley Management Plan”

14.9 **Policy DM5: Tourism, Leisure, Culture and Heritage**

“Proposals that are likely to have an adverse impact on the integrity of habitats sites or the Dedham Vale AONB will not be supported”

14.10 **Colchester Economic Strategy 2022-2025**

Whilst not a local plan policy, the Colchester Economic Strategy 2022-2025 is important for supporting the direction and support for the growth of the local economy in Colchester, and is therefore an important strategy to consider for this issue.

The strategy highlights key economic challenges for Colchester including skills gaps, particularly in relation to supporting clean energy infrastructure.

Neighbourhood Plans

14.11 Eight Ash Green Neighbourhood Plan – **Businesses Policy 1 (BP1)** Proposals should demonstrate how likely significant adverse environmental effects of development will be mitigated during construction, subsequent use and estate management, as appropriate. Proposals encouraging more sustainable means of transport will be supported.

Local Impact Assessment

14.12 **Construction Phase Impacts**

Positive

14.13 There is the potential for the project to contribute positively the local economy during construction by providing jobs that can be filled by the local community. The applicant states that it expects 10% of construction jobs across the whole project could be filled by local people so the benefits possible would be limited.

Neutral

14.14 None identified

Negative

14.15 During construction, the Council anticipates that significant disruption will be caused which could impact on local businesses, residents and the tourism sector. The local business and tourism sector is under significant pressure from rising labour and material costs, cyber attacks, supply chain issues and more. There is concern that disruption from the project during construction will bring additional pressure.

14.16 Increased traffic movements could impede the ability for businesses to send and receive deliveries of goods, for staff to access places of work and for people to visit businesses and tourist attractions. This would be compounded by direct impacts of construction work such as noise and industrial work which may make certain areas unattractive to visit, particularly those which are currently situated in idyllic rural settings. There is concern that these impacts would be heightened by the lengthy construction working hours which extend into the weekend, a time when many businesses rely on trade and tourism.

14.17 While it is noted that during construction, workers on the project will be brought to the area which would contribute to the local economy through spending with local businesses and using accommodation. However, there is concern that workforce numbers could overwhelm bedspace capacity, particularly in budget accommodation, and leave limited availability for tourists visiting the area. Whilst the Environmental Statement outlines sufficient bedspace availability to accommodate the workforce, it does not identify that some accommodation (e.g. 4* or 5* hotels) may not necessarily be appropriate for construction workers, which if taken into account would reduce available bedspace.

14.18 The Council note the concerns of Essex and Suffolk Police as set out at their Open Floor Hearing submission. It is clear that they will need to be adequately funded to ensure that a bespoke team can deal with the significant additional policing requirements a scheme like this will demand to ensure it does not come at the detriment of day-to-day policing in the Essex area.

14.19 Further to this it is critical that the applicants fund a dedicated traffic police team to deal with the matter of escorting abnormal loads on the public highway.

Operational Phase Impacts

Positive

14.20 None identified.

Neutral

14.21 None identified.

Negative

14.22 While impacts are expected to be reduced during the operational phase, there is concern that the presence of overhead line and pylon infrastructure could permanently blight areas of Colchester, harming visitor numbers long term. As noted in the Landscape and Visual Impact section, the harm to the landscape and views of the rural areas would likely discourage people from visiting the area in turn reducing spending with local businesses and use of the PRoW network. Many local businesses and tourist attractions are based around the current scenic nature of the rural countryside, and therefore they will be inordinately affected by the project.

Required mitigation/compensation

14.23 It is clear that the negative impacts on the local economy and tourism will need to be mitigated and compensated by the applicant. The Council believes there are several ways this can be done:

Communication:

14.24 Businesses would be negatively impacted by construction of project infrastructure, and without regular communication and notification about project works may struggle to adapt. Therefore, it is considered that the applicant should ensure a specific local business co-ordinator role is funded to enable businesses can be notified of disruption in advance, enabling them to prepare where they can.

Working hours:

14.25 As raised in other sections, including Noise and Vibration, reducing working hours during weekends would help to reduce negative impacts on businesses.

Local Procurement:

14.26 The Council is keen to see that the applicant can enable local businesses and workers to contribute to construction of the project. Therefore, encouragement would be given to the applicant working with Essex County Council to identify opportunities for the local supply chain to be engaged in supporting the programme, to ensure they can access any procurement opportunities.

Skills and Training:

14.27 This project is one of many nationally significant infrastructure projects taking place in East Anglia, requiring key skills in construction and renewable technologies. Rather than just sourcing supply chain from outside of the locality, it would be beneficial to see investment being made in training local people so they can contribute to these projects and ensure work is not delayed by a lack of skilled workers.

14.28 To contribute to this, the Council recommends that the applicant works with Essex County Council to provide detailed labour market demand data as early as possible to allow for timely coordination with local education and training providers including those in Colchester, enabling the development of targeted upskilling programmes and reducing the risk of workforce shortages that could delay project delivery.

14.29 Further, the Council would recommend that the applicant dedicates funding to support local education and skills providers to upskill local people. This funding could contribute to fund courses as well as improvements to sustainable travel options to ensure local people can access these courses. A potential opportunity for funding could support Colchester Institute, a further education provider, who have the ambition to expand their site, creating a new Sustainable Skills Centre at the planned Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community, to build on their established Net Zero Centre.

14.30 Colchester City Council has been involved in discussions with ECC and a number of other Greater Essex LPAs regarding a coordinated approach to delivering socio-economic, employment and skills benefits and would look to secure this mitigation via a Section 106 agreement between those councils and NGET. CCC therefore echoes the comments of Essex Country Council regarding the Essex wide impact of the scheme which for completeness is set out in full below:

ECC is concerned that the Norwich to Tilbury project could result in detrimental socio-economic impacts for Essex, particularly affecting local businesses, residents, and the tourism sector. The scale and nature of the development, alongside other concurrent infrastructure projects, raises the risk of cumulative disruption to the local economy, including reduced footfall for tourism-dependent areas, strain on local services, and displacement of existing business activity. It is essential that the applicant proactively explores mitigation strategies to minimise these impacts and works closely with local partners to identify opportunities to support and strengthen the local economy. This includes ensuring that Essex-based businesses are able to benefit from the project through meaningful engagement with the supply chain, procurement opportunities, and targeted support to help them meet project requirements. A coordinated approach to infrastructure planning and delivery, including co-location and alignment with other schemes, will be vital to reducing adverse effects and maximising socio-economic benefits for the region.

The potential socio-economic impact of the Norwich to Tilbury proposal is substantial. This development forms part of a wider cluster of energy Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIPs) in and around Essex, which are critical to achieving national net zero targets and supporting post-pandemic economic recovery. Given the acute national and local skills shortages, the employment and skills benefits—both during construction and operation—are significant and must be fully recognised and planned for.

Essex County Council (ECC) welcomes the opportunity to work collaboratively with the applicant to maximise the education, skills and employment benefits of the project for Essex residents. According to MACE's Construction Growth in Essex 2020–2040 report, major projects across the county could generate demand for up to 15,000 additional workers at peak, with shortages expected to intensify by 2031. The Essex Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP) further highlights the cumulative impact of NSIPs on the construction skills landscape.

To enable effective planning and ensure Essex residents are equipped to take advantage of employment opportunities arising from this project, ECC strongly urges the developer to provide detailed labour market demand data as early as possible. This will allow for timely coordination with local education and training providers, enabling the development of targeted upskilling programmes and reducing the risk of workforce shortages that could delay project delivery.

The applicant should actively engage with relevant partners to mitigate risks associated with skills shortages and consider opportunities for shared apprenticeships, traineeships, and collaborative training programmes across concurrent projects. A strategic approach that considers the wider infrastructure pipeline will help maximise social value and ensure long-term benefits for the local workforce.

Securing employment and skills benefits must be a central focus of this development. There is a real opportunity not only to mitigate potential negative impacts but to leave a lasting legacy by upskilling Essex residents and addressing existing sectoral skills gaps. ECC expects the developer to work with local partners

to ensure that jobs created by the project are accessible to local people and that appropriate training pathways are in place.

To support this, ECC strongly recommends the establishment of a dedicated Employment and Skills Fund. This fund should be proportionate to the scale and impact of the development and used to:

- *Invest in local further education facilities and provision*
- *Support employment and skills programmes*
- *Enhance careers education and school engagement*
- *Fund ECC officer resource for consultation and monitoring of the employment and skills strategy*

ECC also expects the developer to adhere to ECC's guidance, including the Skills and Employment Principles for Major Projects and Developments and section 5.4 of the Essex Developer's Guide to Infrastructure Contributions. The developer should produce a comprehensive Employment and Skills Strategy that includes:

- *Clear delivery plans for apprenticeships, work placements, school engagement, and training programmes*
- *Commitments to local job creation and use of local contractors where feasible*
- *Evidence-based interventions informed by community engagement and local labour market data*
- *A sustainability and legacy framework to ensure initiatives continue from construction through to operation*

ECC encourages the formation of a local stakeholder working group to co-design and inform the strategy and associated programmes. We are keen to collaborate with the developer to establish a skills initiative tailored to Essex, drawing on successful models implemented elsewhere.

The Essex Developers' Guide to Infrastructure Contributions is a well-established vehicle for setting out planning obligation requirements relating to the work of Essex County Council. It contains specific requirements around the preparation of Employment and Skills plans/strategies to ensure residents of the County benefit from opportunities presented by development projects.

Essex County Council (ECC) is currently engaged with 12 NSIPs, four garden communities and several other major projects across the county. Subsequently there is increased development pressure, with cumulative impacts and opportunities across the geographic area. ECC are looking to collaborate with the developer to secure tangible benefits for the delivery of skills, employment and the supply chain. Recommendations for this application are summarised below:

- *Input from relevant education stakeholders to deliver appropriate skills and training*
- *Embedding local suppliers in every stage of the project - inception, design, construction, operation and decommissioning*
- *Local suppliers to benefit from positive discrimination in the bidding process, favourable weighting based on local connections*

- *Contracts that will be up for tender to be shared as early as possible to assist local firms who are looking to make necessary adjustments to their work practices so they can bid for the work*
- *Existing mechanisms across the region be explored as a route to access local suppliers and local employment*

Local issues

Essex is home to some of the world's leading companies with concentrations of high-skill, high-wage jobs as well as two leading universities and cutting-edge skills providers. Economic growth is the engine that will drive and enable so many of ECC's wider ambitions – as set out in Everyone's Essex.
ECC is concerned that the Norwich to Tilbury project could result in detrimental socio-economic impacts for Essex, particularly affecting local businesses, residents, and the tourism sector. The scale and nature of the development, alongside other concurrent infrastructure projects, raises the risk of cumulative disruption to the local economy, including reduced footfall for tourism-dependent areas, strain on local services, and displacement of existing business activity. It is essential that the applicant proactively explores mitigation strategies to minimise these impacts and works closely with local partners to identify opportunities to support and strengthen the local economy. This includes ensuring that Essex-based businesses are able to benefit from the project through meaningful engagement with the supply chain, procurement opportunities, and targeted support to help them meet project requirements. This would be set out in an Employment, Education, Skills and Supply Chain strategy for the project and secured with appropriate funding through a Section 106 agreement.
A coordinated approach to infrastructure planning and delivery, including co-location and alignment with other schemes, will be vital to reducing adverse effects and maximising socio-economic benefits for the region.

Jobs and skills

The potential socio-economic impact of the Norwich to Tilbury proposal is substantial. This development forms part of a wider cluster of energy focused Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIPs) in and around Essex, which are critical to achieving national net zero targets and supporting post-pandemic economic recovery. Given the acute national and local skills shortages, the employment and skills benefits—both during construction and operation—are significant and must be fully recognised and planned for.

The proposed development is a major project which could result in increased demand for construction skills and equipment at a time when other major projects may also commence with similar timeframes and result in shortages. Essex County Council welcomes the opportunity to work collaboratively with the applicant to maximise the education, skills and employment benefits of the project for Essex residents. According to MACE's Construction Growth in Essex 2020–2040 report, which was commissioned to identify the construction skills and jobs required across the county, considering the impact of nationally significant infrastructure projects, garden communities, and other major developments on the sector's workforce in

Essex, these major projects across the county could generate demand for up to 15,000 additional workers at peak, with shortages expected to intensify by 2031.

The Essex Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP) further highlights the cumulative impact of NSIPs on the construction skills landscape. The Plan covers Essex, Southend and Thurrock ('Greater Essex') and is one of the largest LSIPs nationally. The geography has a population of nearly 1.9 million (1,863,314) of which 62.2% are of working age and is home to nearly 81,000 businesses (80,800). The LSIP identifies a number of objectives with skills and recruitment needs remaining a key priority for businesses locally and are a key focus of the Essex LSIP.

The applicant should therefore cooperate and work with relevant partners, including ECC and representatives of other major projects across the county and in collaboration with ECC, use the Employment, Education, Skills and Supply Chain strategy to reduce the likelihood and severity of skills and construction worker shortages, as other projects may come forward within similar timeframes. Mitigation is likely to require investment in further education, apprenticeships, and training within the local area to deliver the required workforce for the construction phase, in order to reduce the risk of disruption to this projects and other projects coming forward. The applicant should consider the potential opportunities resulting from looking at how this project will run alongside other projects and the potential employment opportunities that this could offer, including the potential for skills training programmes, shared apprenticeships and traineeships. Approaching this within the wider context of various concurring schemes will ensure that social value is maximised. ECC recognises the need for discussions on this subject but expects to see commitments to this and the measures mentioned within the Employment, education, skills and supply chain strategy.

As highlighted in paragraphs 15.5.13 and 15.5.20-15.5.22 of the socio economic chapter of the EIA, there is an existing skills gap, which will only be exasperated by the cumulative developments taking place and the applicant therefore needs to ensure they work with the relevant LPAs, other projects and relevant organisations to provide opportunities to upskill local residents so that they may undertake the employment opportunities that the project creates; 'economic activity rates are generally high, suggesting a generally strong workforce population across the area, with some local variations, for example Mid Suffolk and Tendring, which exhibit a below national average economic activity rate. The workforce shows diverse occupational distribution, however there is a noticeable skills gap, with higher proportions of the population with lower or no qualifications compared to regional and national figures.' As concluded in the ES at 15.5.22, 'Although there is a readily available labour force, there is also potential skills gap in the area'.
To enable effective planning and ensure Essex residents are equipped to take advantage of employment opportunities arising from this project, ECC strongly urges the developer to provide detailed labour market demand data as early as possible. This will allow for timely coordination with local education and training providers, enabling the development of targeted upskilling programmes and reducing the risk of workforce shortages that could delay project delivery.
Securing employment and skills benefits must be a central focus of this development. There is a real opportunity not only to mitigate potential negative impacts but to leave a lasting legacy by upskilling Essex residents and addressing

existing sectoral skills gaps. ECC expects the developer to work with local partners to ensure that jobs created by the project are accessible to local people and that appropriate training pathways are in place.
There is potential for disruption to access to workplaces and businesses for local residents during construction. The applicant should seek to minimise the disruption caused during the construction phase and allow access to be maintained as far as possible to mitigate the impact that the work will inevitably have on local residents and businesses.

Adequacy of the application/DCO

The structure and methodology of the Environmental Statement (ES) is generally accepted, although it is noted Essex County Council is not included in the study area, despite both Norfolk County Council and Suffolk County Councils being included. While this omission might be an oversight, it should be addressed as going forward, ECC will be an important participant in the discussions and the delivery of the Employment, Education, Skill and Supply Chain Strategy.

Essex County Council wish to minimise short term negative impacts during the construction phase of development. ECC believe there is potential for significant (although) short term impact to businesses along the planned route, including in particular wedding venues and equestrian centres. Although the disruption will be short term, it has the potential to have a significant financial impact if not all parts of the site are usable, or accessibility is impacted. This needs careful management and consideration to ensure appropriate mitigation and compensation for these businesses.

The cumulative impact of significant construction/infrastructure projects in the county requires consideration. This includes 12 NSIPs, four new Garden Communities and two Freeports in Essex. Consideration should include the timing/phasing of the projects and inter-project impacts – including the transportation of construction materials and availability of labour. This should be considered as part of the 'future baseline' scenario.

Currently there is no reference to an employment and skills plan or strategy.
An Employment, Education, Skills and Supply Chain strategy should be prepared prior to the commencement of construction and submitted to ECC for approval. This should set out measures that the applicant will implement in order to advertise and promote employment opportunities associated with the proposed development locally. Further the applicant should also make a skills and education contribution to assist and encourage local people to access apprenticeships and training. These elements should be secured by way of a DCO requirement / S106 obligation and should help maximise positive gains for the local economy, including upskilling the construction workforce, including within education settings to support emerging modern green methods of construction, jobs and skills retention within Essex.
ECC has produced a 'Skills and Employment Principles for Major Project and Developments' document, which outlines ECC expectations of what a Local Employment and Skills Plan should cover. The requirement for the skills and employment plan/strategy is justified in the Essex Developers' Guide to Planning Contributions document which details the scope and range

of contributions towards infrastructure ECC may seek from developers in order to mitigate the impact in a consistent and transparent manner where developers and local residents can understand how development is making a positive contribution to local communities.

ECC would therefore welcome assurances that a Skills and Employment Plan or strategy, will be secured by way of a DCO /S106 requirement, which should help maximise positive gains for the local economy, including upskilling the construction workforce, including within education settings to support emerging renewable technology innovation, jobs and skills retention within Essex. ECC would also welcome assurances on how any employment and skills strategy will be monitored and the process for reporting on the progress against the objectives set within the strategy, consistent with the Construction National Skills Academy KPIs established by Construction Industry Training Board (CITB).

Opportunities/legacy

The following could be considered as part of the proposals and secured through either the DCO and / or a S106 legal agreement with ECC:

- *Work with local further education providers to invest in and support the development of training and skills programmes.*
- *Contractual targets to create local jobs.*
- *Apprenticeship target, shaped to reflect local economic strategy.*
- *A financial contribution to enable local authorities to target those furthest from employment.*
- *Contractual targets to create local jobs.*

15 Traffic and Transport

Policy Context

National Policy Statements

Overarching National Policy Statement for Energy (EN-1)

15.1 Paragraph 5.14.1 states the transport of materials, goods and personnel to and from a development during all project phases can have a variety of impacts on the surrounding transport infrastructure and potentially on connecting transport networks, for example through increased congestion. Impacts may include economic, social and environmental effects.

15.2 Paragraph 5.14.2 states environmental impacts may result particularly from trips generated on roads which may increase noise and air pollution as well as greenhouse gas emissions.

15.3 Paragraph 5.14.3 states disturbance caused by traffic and abnormal loads generated during the construction phase will depend on the scale and type of the proposal.

15.4 Paragraph 5.14.4 states the consideration and mitigation of transport impacts is an essential part of Government's wider policy objectives for sustainable development as set out in Section 2.6 of the NPS.

15.5 Paragraph 5.14.7 states the applicant should prepare a travel plan including demand management and monitoring measures to mitigate transport impacts. The applicant should also provide details of proposed measures to improve access by active, public and shared transport to:

- reduce the need for parking associated with the proposal
- contribute to decarbonisation of the transport network
- improve user travel options by offering genuine modal choice

Paragraph 5.14.8 states the assessment should also consider any possible disruption to services and infrastructure (such as road, rail and airports)

Paragraph 5.14.11 states where mitigation is needed, possible demand management measures must be considered. This could include identifying opportunities to:

- reduce the need to travel by consolidating trips
- locate development in areas already accessible by active travel and public transport
- provide opportunities for shared mobility
- re-mode by shifting travel to a sustainable mode that is more beneficial to the network
- retime travel outside of the known peak times
- reroute to use parts of the network that are less busy

15.6 Paragraph 5.14.12 states if feasible and operationally reasonable, such mitigation should be required, before considering requirements for the provision of new inland transport infrastructure to deal with remaining transport impacts. All stages of the project should support and encourage a modal shift of freight from road to more environmentally sustainable alternatives, such as rail, cargo bike, maritime and inland waterways, as well as making appropriate provision for and infrastructure needed to support the use of alternative fuels including charging for electric vehicles.

15.7 Paragraph 5.14.13 states regard should always be given to the needs of freight at all stages in the construction and operation of the development including the need to provide appropriate facilities for HGV drivers as appropriate.

15.8 Paragraph 5.14.14 states the Secretary of State may attach requirements to a consent where there is likely to be substantial HGV traffic that:

- control numbers of HGV movements to and from the site in a specified period during its construction and possibly on the routing of such movements
- make sufficient provision for HGV parking and associated high quality drive facilities either on the site or at dedicated facilities elsewhere, to support driver welfare, avoid ‘overspill’ parking on public roads, prolonged queuing on approach roads and uncontrolled on-street HGV parking in normal operating conditions
- ensure satisfactory arrangements for reasonably foreseeable abnormal disruption, in consultation with network providers and the responsible police force.

15.9 Paragraph 5.14.18 states a new energy NSIP may give rise to substantial impacts on the surrounding transport infrastructure and the Secretary of State should therefore ensure that the applicant has sought to mitigate these impacts, including during the construction phase of the development and by enhancing active, public and shared transport provision and accessibility.

15.10 Paragraph 5.14.19 states where the proposed mitigation measures are insufficient to reduce the impact on the transport infrastructure to acceptable levels, the Secretary of State should consider requirements to mitigate adverse impacts on transport networks arising from the development, as set out below.

15.11 Paragraph 5.14.20 states development consent should not be withheld provided that the applicant is willing to enter into planning obligations for funding new infrastructure or requirements can be imposed to mitigate transport impacts. In this situation the Secretary of State should apply appropriately limited weight to residual effects on the surrounding transport infrastructure.

15.12 Paragraph 5.14.21 states the Secretary of State should only consider refusing development on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe, or it does not show how consideration has been given to the provision of adequate active public or shared transport access and provision.

National Planning Policy Framework

15.13 Paragraph 109 states that Transport issues should be considered from the earliest stages of plan-making and development proposals, using a vision-led approach to identify transport solutions that deliver well-designed, sustainable and popular places. This should involve:

a) making transport considerations an important part of early engagement with local communities;

b) ensuring patterns of movement, streets, parking and other transport considerations are integral to the design of schemes, and contribute to making high quality places;

c) understanding and addressing the potential impacts of development on transport networks;

d) realising opportunities from existing or proposed transport infrastructure, and changing transport technology and usage – for example in relation to the scale, location or density of development that can be accommodated;

e) identifying and pursuing opportunities to promote walking, cycling and public transport use; and

f) identifying, assessing and taking into account the environmental impacts of traffic and transport infrastructure – including appropriate opportunities for avoiding and mitigating any adverse effects, and for net environmental gains.

15.14 Paragraph 116 states In assessing sites that may be allocated for development in plans, or specific applications for development, it should be ensured that: a) sustainable transport modes are prioritised taking account of the vision for the site, the type of development and its location; b) safe and suitable access to the site can be achieved for all users; c) the design of streets, parking areas, other transport elements and the content of associated standards reflects current national guidance, including the National Design Guide and the National Model Design Code48; and d) any significant impacts from the development on the transport network (in terms of capacity and congestion), or on highway safety, can be cost effectively mitigated to an acceptable degree through a vision-led approach.

15.15 Paragraph 117 states that Within this context, applications for development should: a) give priority first to pedestrian and cycle movements, both within the scheme and with neighbouring areas; and second – so far as possible – to facilitating access to high quality public transport, with layouts that maximise the catchment area for bus or other public transport services, and appropriate facilities that encourage public transport use; b) address the needs of people with disabilities and reduced mobility in relation to all modes of transport; c) create places that are safe, secure and attractive – which minimise the scope for conflicts between pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles, avoid unnecessary street clutter, and respond to local character and design standards; d) allow for the efficient delivery of goods, and access by service and emergency vehicles; and e) be designed to enable charging of plug-in and other ultra-low emission vehicles in safe, accessible and convenient locations.

15.16 Paragraph 118 states that All developments that will generate significant amounts of movement should be required to provide a travel plan, and the application should be supported by a vision-led transport statement or transport assessment so that the likely impacts of the proposal can be assessed and monitored.

Local Plan Policy

Policy ENV5: Pollution and Contaminated land

15.17 Proposals will be supported that will not result in an unacceptable risk to public health or safety, the environment, general amenity, or existing uses due to the potential of air pollution, noise nuisance, surface / ground water sources or land pollution.

Policy DM20: Promoting Sustainable Transport and Changing Travel Behaviour

15.18 The Local Planning Authority will work with developers and other partners to increase modal shift towards sustainable modes by improving accessibility of development through the promotion of walking and cycling as an integral part of development, and by further improving public transport.

Neighbourhood Plans

15.19 **Marks Tey Neighbourhood Plan** -

POLICY MT01 – A12, A120 AND STATION INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS
Any development proposals found to be generating significant transport movements1 , the impacts of which would be severe, will not be supported in advance of the A12 road widening scheme and a dualled A120 from Braintree to the A12 being delivered

15.20 **West Bergholt Neighbourhood plan** -

PP20: Access Development proposals demonstrating designs that incorporate safe pedestrian and vehicular access and adequate sight lines will be supported.

PP21: Traffic Congestion Where development proposals are likely to add to traffic congestion in the village or encourage through or additional traffic on rural lanes causing significant harm, proposals that include sustainable measures to mitigate unacceptable traffic impact, or contribute funding towards appropriate sustainable village transport safety schemes, will be supported

PP23: Sustainable Transport Where appropriate and subject to viability, new development which offers contributions to encourage walking, cycling and public transport use, in mitigation commensurate with the scale and likely impact of the proposed development, will be supported.

Local Impact Assessment

15.21 **Construction Phase Impacts**

Positive

15.22 None identified

Neutral

15.23 None identified

Negative

15.24 As set out below.

Operational Phase Impacts

Positive

15.25 None identified

Neutral

15.26 None identified

Negative

15.27 As set out below

Required mitigation/compensation

15.28 Colchester City Council will defer to Essex County Council on matters of Highway Safety and Efficiency. CCC echo their comments which are set out in full below:

Generally, ECC are content with how the highways and transportation assessments have been undertaken (subject to clarifications on the junction modelling and review of committed development (discussed later)) but have concerns around the control and mitigation of impacts proposed which need further discussion. The highways design, road safety elements, traffic management, road diversions and AIL route proposals require further discussion with the applicant.

Particular issues related to control and mitigation of the impacts to be discussed further include the cumulative impact of NSIPs and Strategic Sites; impacts of AILs on wider Essex residents and businesses; mitigation of traffic impacts at sensitive junction locations on the wider network; mitigation of construction routes on sensitive receptors ; measures to reduce localised impacts associated with construction workers and construction traffic; and the design and monitoring of the traffic management in the relatively long term situations.

Cumulative Impacts

Firstly on cumulative impact, the concerns include overlapping of works (in the case of the Bentley Road area where three NSIPs interact) which will have a localised impact for residents and users of this part of the network; the number of construction vehicles and workers overlapping on parts of the local network (again in the case of Bentley Road); and the challenge of accommodating all the competing demands on the network through the Permit Scheme. On this latter point there could potentially be multiple roadworks occurring at the same time around Essex which would impact on overall journey times around the county for road users. In addition, the NSIPs generate AILs which will slow traffic all along the designated routes and create queuing at key interchanges of the strategic road network and major roads of the local highway network as well at junctions along the primary access routes on the minor and rural lanes. This is likely to cause disruption to road users and will occur over a prolonged period of time due to the cumulative nature of the works and could potentially be within a condensed period depending on the various programmes for the NSIPs. It is anticipated that the level of AILs in any one day will be limited by police escort resource and the capacity of the ports, and so the cumulative impact of multiple AILs taking place on any one day is unlikely. We would welcome confirmation that this latter point is the case.

The applicant has stated they will be using the Permit Scheme which will ensure that ECC have some control over reducing overlap between roadworks for the all the various schemes, notwithstanding this it is anticipated there will pressure to accommodate the critical infrastructure projects. It is welcomed that the applicant has confirmed they will liaise with other developments (notably North Falls, Five Estuaries and Lower Thames Crossing) taking place at the same time as Norwich to Tilbury to reduce cumulative impacts. However, we would like the commitment to go further in joining and positively engaging with a Developer's Forum to be set up by ECC with key members of the other NSIP Teams as well as other Strategic Site Teams, alongside Local Highway Authority and Planning Authority participation. The forum would be used to develop a collaborative approach with a view to minimising the impacts on residents and businesses in Essex.

Turning to the likely disruption caused by the AILs, we believe a wider communication strategy is needed that includes all residents and businesses in Essex that use the AIL routes. It is important that not only those local to the site or likely to be impacted are given advance warning of forthcoming AILs but also those using the wider network so they can plan their journeys appropriately. VMS boards at local congestion hotspots and other key locations would be an obvious way of getting this information across alongside the other stated means of communication (website, press releases and notifications to residents/businesses that may be impacted). The VMS boards could also be used to provide live information and advertise how road users could register for ongoing updates.

Another point of concern around the cumulative impact is the pressure on existing facilities for HGV drivers due to the number of NSIPs and Strategic Sites in Essex. We would welcome further discussion on how the Norwich to Tilbury project could assist with this matter.

Junction Mitigation

The TA/ES highlights that mitigation for sensitive junctions are to be agreed with ECC. We understand that the applicant's consultants have commissioned some additional traffic surveys to review against those used in the modelling and so we await commentary on the conclusions reached. At this point, we note that the transport reports do not specify the start and end times of the traffic surveys so it is unclear if the worst case hour has been reviewed, and there is no data to compare the model output with observed traffic conditions to validate the models. Putting aside these technical points on the modelling it is well understood that the sensitive junctions are congested during the peak hours and that any additional traffic would have a further impact on them. The level of impact remains to be seen following the receipt of the additional surveys and confirmation on the peak hour, but based on an already congested network there needs to be some form of mitigation. It is accepted that the impacts will be temporary in nature and that a suitable level of mitigation is needed that is reasonable and proportional in planning terms. Our preferred

approach, where physical interventions are unrealistic due to constraints, is for the applicant to reduce the amount of traffic associated with the scheme using the junction. This could involve constraining multiple work activities and/or restricting movements associated with construction (including visitors/office based staff) during the peak hours through the junctions as has been discussed to date. Other options could include reducing background flows through the junctions by enhancing sustainable infrastructure in the area.

Mitigation on Primary Access Routes (PARs)

As a consequence of the NSIP proposals there are a number of roads on the local highway network that will impact the maintenance regime required due to the different usage and higher 'wear and tear' associated with large vehicles – notably the rural lanes that have minimal existing levels of heavy goods vehicles. Whilst there is a commitment to undertake before and after road condition surveys which will highlight any defects to be corrected, there is a concern that the maintenance liability for Essex will be increased. We would welcome further dialogue with the applicant as to how this can be managed.

Further concerns include managing impacts on the PARs where there is school related activity on the local highway network. It is acknowledged that the applicant has included restrictions on HGV movements using some routes during the school start/finish periods where schools are directly located, but we believe further consideration is needed where schools are not directly located but do have a level of activity associated with it. Those missing from the current restrictions include A129 and A176, Billericay – Quilters Infant & Junior School, The Billericay School (secondary school); B1018, Tye Green – Cressing Primary School; and Spinks Lane/Spa Road, Wickham – Maltings Academy (secondary school) and Powers Hall Academy (primary school).

Other issues include the effective width of the footways in rural locations along the PARs; lack of crossing facilities associated with key desire lines along the PARs; consideration of the existing traffic calming features on Spa Road, Witham in relation to accommodating HGVs along this PAR; and inclusion of mitigation for all PRoW routes that cross or enter the highway network along the PARs where there are no footways to wait or walk on.

Controls on Vehicle Numbers

On mitigation and controls on local communities there are two areas for further consideration. One relates to further measures and commitments in the Construction Workers Travel Plan (CWTP) to assist with controlling the number of vehicles associated with the scheme, and the other monitoring and review of construction vehicles against assumed traffic generation included in the TA/ES assessments. It is noted that there is no commitment in the CTMP for the Contractor to consider ways of reducing freight by road – potential options to reduce impacts on the local highway

network could include using consolidation centres and working with other developers on shared delivery logistics planning alongside the wider considerations of the Multi-Modal Strategy using rail and port facilities to replace long distance road freight. On the two Multi-Modal Strategies set out in the assessment we have reservations on the front loaded delivery option on the basis that there is more disruption compared to the other scenario, although over a shorter time period. However, we are open to discuss further when a more detailed programme is available which will provide more information on the expected duration of impacts and specific locations.

The transport assessments assume that construction workers will travel to/from the site outside of the highway network peak hours. Our concern is whether this will be adhered to during the autumn/winter seasons with the prevailing weather and reduced daylight hours, and how this would be monitored and managed.

Whilst the arrival/departure times of workers are assumed to be outside of the peak hours there will still be a local impact on users of the local highway network surrounding the site until the traffic from the site disperses onto various routes. This will also be pronounced where routes are shared with other sites. One commitment that appears to be a reasonable way of limiting impacts is the provision of a mini-bus on a flexible timetable between various locations or shuttle bus running on a fixed service between specific locations. This would connect workers with key locations such as train stations, bus stops, towns and shared accommodation. Further consideration is also needed in the CWTP on measures that will be adopted to encourage and facilitate car sharing, monitoring of car occupancy rates alongside the mode share so as to review the assumptions used in the assessment, and interventions in the event that targets are not achieved.

On the construction vehicle monitoring there appears to be a lack of commitment to reviewing the number of vehicles against the proposed numbers used in the ES assessment. This is an important point to enable the local highway authority to hold the developer to account if there are more vehicles arriving/departing than assessed and in particular where there is potential for localised issues on the rural road network along with cumulative impacts.

<u>Site Access, Crossover Points and Local Highway Mitigation Design</u>

There has been progress on the site access, crossover points and local highway mitigation designs to enable access to the site, although they are not yet fully agreed. Further details/confirmations have been requested which ECC will need to consider before agreeing to the principle of the designs. A specific issue has been raised on the highway mitigation works at Wick Lane in relation to the operation of the temporary traffic lights which requires further consideration by the applicant. Concerns have been consistently raised around anti-social behaviour due to speeding as a result of the permanent widening on the Ardleigh Road/Bentley Road which requires some thought on how additional measures could be implemented. In addition, the haul road/permanent access road between Ardleigh Road and Bentley

Road crosses two Public Rights of Way (PRoWs) – the proposals include permanently stopping up and diversions of the PRoWs however there is no detail at this stage. We have concerns around the impact on the PRoW network and require more surety on the design and protection of rights. Further discussions are ongoing to hopefully reach agreement on the designs prior to examination. The diversion routes for the TROs are not agreed at present as ECC have requested further information to assist in reviewing the appropriateness of the routes proposed.

Road Safety

There are concerns over the longevity of some of the traffic management associated with the works and whether a more semi-permanent design may be more appropriate to consider alongside daily checks to ensure it remains in place. The issue is around keeping the traffic management in position over a prolonged period of time and up to standard to ensure the level of safety required,

It is noted that one of the PARs is along the A1060 Roxwell Road which is the subject of a potential new road safety scheme involving average speed cameras. The scheme is being worked up as part of Essex County Council's Vision Zero approach to road safety with the aspiration of eliminating all road deaths and serious injuries in Essex by 2040. We have concerns that with the extra number of construction vehicles and large vehicle types using the link as part of the designated construction route that there will be an additional impact on safety. Further discussions are needed on areas of the network where accidents have been identified along the construction routes.

Abnormal Indivisible Loads (AILs)

We are continuing to work with the applicant's consultants to review structural capacity for assets affected by the proposals.

The AIL Strategy highlights that National Highways have restrictions on the A12 in the Colchester area and as a result have considered a potential viable route through Colchester Town Centre. This is not an option that ECC would want in place due to the level of disruption through the town and surrounding highway network. Further work is needed to discuss the restrictions with National Highways to find a suitable way forward using the strategic highway network to avoid the use of Colchester Town Centre. Notwithstanding our objection to the use of the town centre route, ECC will continue to engage with the applicant on this route and explore other options if available. It should be noted that there is one structure on the route through Colchester Town Centre that is part of a planned inspection regime due next year. We strongly suggest that the applicant undertakes their own review at this time so as not to be dependent on ECC timescales if they are relying on this town centre route as an option. In addition, major road works are currently planned for next year in Colchester which co-incides with the AIL route option at St. Boltoph's Street.

There a few instances on other structures on the AIL routes proposed where there is no information available on the structures and more discussions are needed on agreeing a way forward. It is anticipated that this will involve the need for further review of these specific structures by the applicant such as investigative works, structural calculations and risk assessments. The outcome of these reviews could be that the structure is capable of accepting the AIL, but there is also a possibility that it won't in which case works may be required or an alternative route considered. Therefore, these reviews should be undertaken to understand if the routes are acceptable.

A specific point should be noted on the AIL Strategy Document in relation to frequency of inspections. ECC undertake General Inspections (GIs) every two years (not annually as stated by the applicant) and Principal Inspections (PIs) are carried out based on a risk based assessment where intervals vary between 4 – 12 years (not every 6 years as stated by the applicant). The applicant should satisfy themselves of this risk in relation to the AIL routes using these structures.

16 Cumulative Effects

Policy Context

National Policy Statements

Overarching National Policy Statement for Energy (EN-1)

16.1 Paragraph 4.3.3 states the "Regulations require an assessment of the likely significant effects of the proposed project on the environment, covering the direct effects and any indirect, secondary, cumulative, transboundary, short, medium, and long-term, permanent and temporary, positive and negative effects at all stages of the project, and also of the measures envisaged for avoiding or mitigating significant adverse effects".

16.2 Paragraph 4.4.5. states the "impacts of more than one development may affect people simultaneously, so the applicant should consider the cumulative impact on health in the ES where appropriate".

16.3 Paragraph 5.9.9. states the "applicant should undertake an assessment of any likely significant heritage impacts of the proposed development as part of the EIA, and describe these along with how the mitigation hierarchy has been applied in the ES (see Section 4.3). This should include consideration of heritage assets above, at, and below the surface of the ground. Consideration will also need to be given to the possible impacts, including cumulative, on the wider historic environment".

16.4 Paragraph 5.10.16 states the "applicant should carry out a landscape and visual impact assessment and report it in the ES, including cumulative effects (see Section 4.3). Several guides have been produced to assist in addressing landscape issues".

National Planning Policy Framework

16.5 Paragraph 165 states that "to help increase the use and supply of renewable and low carbon energy and heat, plans should:

a) provide a positive strategy for energy from these sources, that maximises the potential for suitable development, and their future re-powering and life extension, while ensuring that adverse impacts are addressed appropriately (including cumulative landscape and visual impacts)".

16.6 Paragraph 198 states that "Planning policies and decisions should also ensure that new development is appropriate for its location taking into account the likely effects (including cumulative effects) of pollution on health, living conditions and the natural environment, as well as the potential sensitivity of the site or the wider area to impacts that could arise from the development".

Impacts

16.7 The Council is concerned about the cumulative impacts that will be generated by the project, both between the several different effects resulting from the project in isolation (intra project impacts) and those produced between other projects and schemes happening (inter project impacts).

16.8 In relation to inter-project impacts, the Council is currently undertaking a review of its Local Plan. While this has recently passed Regulation 18 consultation stage, we are aware that the project could impact on land availability/viability for housing and employment sites.

16.9 Additionally, alongside this nationally significant infrastructure project, there are others taking place in the East of England which together will exacerbate impacts on many factors including landscape and visual impacts, economic impacts, traffic congestion and more. Consideration should be given to the timing of the projects and how interactions of impacts can be minimised through effective co-ordination of project stages.

16.10 The Council also notes that the applicant identifies several intra-project impacts between different receptors including Land and Community Assets, Development Land and Businesses, and Pedestrians, Cyclists and Horse Riders and these only at Construction Stage. We are concerned that no intra-project cumulative effects are identified at the Construction and Operational Stage for Agricultural and Soil, Landscape, Ecology and Historic receptors.

17 Draft Development Consent Order

17.1 CCC are collaborating with Essex Couty Council on legal matters and would like to echo the comments from ECC's legal team with regards to the wording of the DCO. This is set out in ECC's LIR but replicated in full below for completeness:

Draft development Consent Order

Overview

As raised within ECC's Relevant Representation (RR-1083, section 6.1) the Applicant offered an opportunity to review some elements of the draft DCO ahead of the submission. On 28th July 2025, ECC provided detailed, considered comments. However, the Applicant failed to give any feedback and it appears from the draft Development Consent Order ("dDCO") as submitted (APP-056) that many of ECC's comments have not been picked up.

The Applicant has still not offered any explanation nor provided any feedback.

Consequently, comments on the DCO contained in this LIR may have previously been raised, but in the absence of any response , ECC feels it necessary to restate some of these points to facilitate further discussion with the Applicant. ECC looks forward to a positive working relationship with the Applicant and is looking for proactive engagement with both the Applicant and the ExA to progress this DCO alongside other local authorities.

Following Previously Approved DCOs

Two important points arise:

(a) The need to move away from some precedents especially in respect of timescales, where justified because it better facilitates the approval and implementation of the DCO; and.

(b) The potentially unjustified omission of Requirements included in other National Grid DCOs.

In more detail:

(a) ECC acknowledges the drafting of the DCO follows the format and content of previously approved DCOs, however, ECC considers it important, when considering the wording of the DCO for Norwich to Tilbury, that the drafting must recognise local circumstances and experiences within Essex. In particular, when commenting on the dDCO, ECC has drawn on practical experience from the implementation of other NSIPs and how they have interacted with established internal procedures. It is respectfully considered both necessary and sensible to recognise local situations and available resources and apply flexibility to precedents and the use of standard text, where this better facilitates the discharge of requirements process and implementation of the DCO.

(b) ECC notes that several Requirements commonly included in other National Grid DCOs are absent, including provisions relating to artificial lighting, species-specific mitigation, residential amenity, construction compounds and noise and vibration controls.

The Council requests that the Examining Authority carefully consider whether additional Requirements are necessary (beyond what is requested within this LIR).

In what follows, ECC will refer to the Bramford to Twinstead DCO, or the B2T DCO (DCO reference EN020002).

ECC have confirmed their desire to enter into a Framework Highways Agreement or similar side agreement with the Applicant both verbally and in writing when responding to informal comments on the Protected Provisions. ECC have not received any confirmation from the Applicant and so have included this point in the Local Impact Report.

ECC would welcome further engagement on this point to provide a level of surety for ECC ahead of the close of the examination. This is of importance as ECC are not satisfied with the level of detail included in the Protected Provisions. As the LHA, ECC would expect (and indeed the public and County Council members would expect) a level of oversight and management of the local highway network. ECC believe the Framework Highways Agreement has worked well on Bramford to Twinstead, providing sufficient oversight, and collaboration between the local highway authority and the developer. From experience at the implementation stage, contractors welcome the 'business as usual' approach which is our standard practice rather than bespoke arrangements that neither the LHA or the contractor are familiar with.

Part 1 Preliminary

Article 2 - Interpretation

For consistency within the DCO, there are a number of definitions and drafting points to be addressed (such as the use of 'business day,' 'working day' and 'day' interchangeably; and 'discharging authority' and 'relevant authority').

The Permit Scheme and Traffic Regulation Order ("TRO") definitions need to be aligned with each other in terms of timescales and process. For clarity, the Permit Scheme includes the temporary TRO process within it.

It is further queried whether the Environmental Permitting (England and Wales) Regulations 2016 and the Energy Act 2004 should also be mentioned in this section. They are relevant to the dDCO "Pre-commencement operations"

There are concerns with the definition of pre-commencement operations in respect of works 'excluded from the commencement of development' and associated with the establishment of construction compounds. These operations are extensive and include temporary laydown areas and compounds and the creation of bell mouths all of which could necessitate the potential removal of trees and hedgerows in advance of any Requirement for a Vegetation Retention and Removal Plan being discharged.

This is also of specific concern in respect of historic buildings where it is noted that specified pre-commencement operations could proceed without triggering necessary mitigation likely to be set out in the Requirements.

While the submitted ES assumes that the excluded works and operations would be unlikely to have any significant environmental effects, ECC is of the opinion the effects of some of these works could have major impacts locally that need mitigating, or which could cumulatively give rise to significant effects needing mitigation.

As a result, these works have the potential to be so significant as to give rise to materially new/different environmental effects which ought properly to be subject to further checks before being allowed to proceed. In light of this, ideally many operations (such as the establishment of construction compounds), should be excluded from the definition of pre-commencement operations. If this is not acceptable, a compromise could be the addition of a tailpiece:

'those operations which the relevant planning authority considers give rise to a materially new or different environmental effect beyond that considered in the Environmental Statement as notified to the Undertaker by the relevant planning authority'

Pre-commencement surveys of listed buildings should be included in the list of pre commencement operations, as they have the potential to be impacted by vibration once the development commences.

“Environmental Statement”

Given the scale and complexity of the project, it may be challenging to keep track of the up-to-date Environmental Statement which will include additional environmental material submitted to a variety of consenting authorities after the dDCO has been approved. The Applicant should make available a central public repository where such additional environmental information will be made available for transparency/clarity.

“Maintain”

The definition of “maintain” includes a wide range of specified operations in relation to the authorised development, providing that as long as such works do not give rise to any materially new or materially different environmental effects to those identified in the Environmental Statement, these specified operations can take place without further consent.

To provide clarity and avoid any dispute, the DCO should incorporate a mechanism for assessing and determining whether such maintenance works give rise to materially new/different environmental effects. As a result, the definition of ‘maintain’ be amended to include “provided such works do not in the opinion of the local planning authority give rise to any materially new or materially different environmental effects to those identified in the Environmental Statement, and any derivative of “maintain” must be construed accordingly..”

Omission of outline management plans

The dDCO omits reference to outline management plans which were included in the B2T DCO, namely: a Outline Construction Environmental Management Plan.

It also omits reference to an outline Noise and Vibration Management Plan (APP-306), and an outline Dust Management Plan (APP-304), both of which are envisaged in the Applicant’s Environmental Statement (as appendices to the Code of Construction Practice, but worthy of separate definition in ECC’s view).

The need for these plans is addressed further in the section concerning the Requirements. Any other outline management plans should also be defined in Article 2.

“Provisional Advance Authorisation”

A definition of “provisional advance authorisation” (as per Reg 2 Traffic Management Permit Scheme Regs 2007) should be included in the dDCO to ensure consistency with other DCO, including the Bramford to Twinsted project.

Part 2 Principal Powers

Article 3. Development consent etc. granted by the Order

While Article 3(1) confirms that, subject to the provisions of the Order (including the Requirements) National Grid is granted development consent, the extent of the consented development should be clarified by the addition of "to be carried out within the Order limits" (as defined in the dDCO). This is so that the scope and limits of the development consent are clearly set out and reflect the development subject to the examination.

Article 3(6) provides for the authorised development to include and permit the alteration, removal, clearance, refurbishment, reconstruction, decommissioning and demolition of any other building or other structure within the Order limits, to the extent that they relate to, are required by or are incidental to the carrying out of the authorised development. As this is not limited to the authorised development described in Schedule 1 (and "authorised development" is defined more broadly than that in Article 2), the dDCO should incorporate a mechanism for assessing and addressing any materially new or different environmental effects which have not previously been assessed in the Environmental Statement arising from the development authorised in Article 3(6).

Article 4 4. Maintenance of authorised development

As raised within Part 1 Preliminary, Article 2 – Interpretation, the scope of works permitted to maintain the authorised development is broad. The dDCO should incorporate a mechanism for assessing and addressing any materially new or different environmental effects which have not previously been assessed in the Environmental Statement arising from such works.

In addition, under this Article, there should be an 'in principle' obligation on the Undertaker to decommission (part of) the authorised works as and when they become obsolete due to improvements in technology or otherwise.

Article 5. Limits of Deviation (LoD).

ECC considers that the LoD potentially have significant implications for how the development is experienced and in terms of its relationship to a variety of receptors.

Firstly, at Article 5(1)(a) the term 'lines or situations' should be defined and added to list of definitions as the language lacks the clarity required given the importance and potential significance of this element of the DCO.

The Limits of Deviation (LoD) allow for longitudinal and lateral deviation within the limits shown on the Work Plans, as well as vertical deviation.

ECC notes that Article 5(1)(b)(i) would permit a vertical limit of deviation of 6 metres for the majority of the pylons. The explanatory memorandum (APP-057) explains that the rationale for the 6m limit is intended to provide a necessary but proportionate degree of flexibility. While noted, ECC is of the opinion this is a considerable extent of deviation, which as proposed, is not suitable for particularly sensitive areas such as nearby residential properties, in or nearby protected landscapes and nearby Grade 1 listed buildings, where the potential impact would potentially be greater than in other areas.

The limits of deviation are of particular potential concern with regards to the following designated heritage assets which are in closest proximity to the Order Limits and where a Mid-level of Less than Substantial Harm (LTSH) to their significance has been identified by the Applicant at the Operation and Maintenance phase of the project.

Colchester

Name	***List Entry***	***Grade***
1,2 & 3 Brick Cottages	*1169966*	*II*
The Old Rectory	*1224447*	*II*
King's Farmhouse	*1266530*	*II*
Knaves Farmhouse	*1266773*	*II*
Range South of Barn to South of Knaves Farmhouse	*1266775*	*II*
Barn to South of Knaves Farmhouse	*1266822*	*II*
Little Tey House	*1266823*	*II*
Barn to South West of Little Tey House	*1266779*	*II**
Aldham Hall	*1306270*	*II**
Wagon Lodge to North of Aldham Hall	*1337391*	*II*
Church of St Margaret and St Catherine	*1170063*	*II**
Ford Street Conservation Area	*N/A*	*N/A*

Tendring

Name		List Entry	Grade
Bounds Farmhouse	*1147743*	*II*	

Brentwood

Name	List Entry	Grade
Stable and Coach House at Hutton House	*1197242*	*II*
Ingatestone Bridge over River Wid	*1207790*	*II*
Hutton House	*1279616*	*II*
Wardropers Farmhouse	*1293259*	*II*
Ellices	*1297247*	*II*
Hutton Village Conservation Area	*N/A*	*N/A*

Basildon

Name	List Entry	Grade
Sudbury's Farmhouse	*1170946*	*II*
Botney Hill Farmhouse	*1197182*	*II*
Wayletts	*1121459*	*II*
Church of St Mary	*1170946*	*II*
Dunton Hall	*1338380*	*II*

These properties are provided as examples and are not intended to be an exhaustive list of all assets where there are potential concerns with regards to the limits of deviation. There is the potential for designated heritage assets that have been assessed as having a Low level of LTSH to their significance during the operational phase to instead experience a Mid-level of LTSH due to pylons, overhead lines and other permanent above ground structures being in closer proximity than the existing plans, due to the proposed lateral and longitudinal limits of deviation

It is therefore proposed that the limit vertical deviation should be no more than 4 metres (as per Bramford to Twinstead DCO) with anything beyond this requiring prior approval from the relevant planning authority.

At Article 5 (1)(d)(ii), the draft Order would also allow underground cables to be moved downwards to such extent as the undertaker considers necessary or convenient. While this may be acceptable in certain locations, other locations may be more sensitive due to ground conditions, water tables, archaeology or the cumulative effects of other structures being constructed. In certain defined locations (which should be discussed and agreed with the district authorities) therefore; the limit of deviation downwards should be restricted unless otherwise agreed by the local planning authority. This concern also extends to downward deviation permitted under Article 5 (3)(b).

The proposed level of deviation within Article 5(3)(a) allows permanent above ground structures, erections and apparatus forming part of the authorised development, including substations, converter stations and cable sealing end compounds to be located anywhere within the parameters shown by the pink dashed lines on the Works Plans. They may also be up to 10% above the maximum height shown on the table of parameters forming part of the Works Plans. This is not appropriate in designated sensitive areas, where this provision needs to be reduced. These sensitive areas must be discussed and agreed between the applicant and all relevant authorities. In this regard, it is suggested for those designated locations, a lower level of deviation is agreed or a process of prior approval with the relevant local planning authority is introduced.

In addition, it is assumed that the level of deviation proposed is consistent with the principles of the Rochdale Envelope which involves defining a set of parameters (e.g., maximum building height, footprint, etc.) within which a development can vary. In any event, confirmation is requested that the impacts and worst case scenarios arising from the limits of deviation are fully assessed in the Environment Statement.

Part 3 Streets

Article 11. Street Works

It is noted that this Article at part 11 (3) would enable envisaged works in the highway to proceed without express consent from the Street Authority if a decision is not provided within 28 days. It is understood that the principle of the decision making is included in other similar DCOs but ECC do not agree the timescale is appropriate . The Bramford to Twinstead DCO included a timescale of 35 days whichECC would request for the Norwich to Tilbury DCO. Providing a longer timescale allows the authority to have sufficient time for necessary internal procedures to consider an application and has been achievable when working on Bramford to Twinstead. It also avoids the need to request repeated extensions of time which ECC has had to seek in respect of both Bramford to Twinsted and Longfield Solar Farm.

Further clarity is required on the process for works to take place outside the Order limits as referenced in part 11 (2). ECC's concern is that the assessment of the works is based on the Order limits and anything beyond that will not have been reviewed as part of the DCO process.

Article 12. Application of Permit Schemes

*ECC operates an established Permit Scheme which applies to all adopted streets. It applies to all works promoters, including the Highway Authority (Essex County Council's own works). It involves the promoter applying for a permit to occupy the highway within a specified timescale for different levels of activity. Activities that require a Temporary Traffic Regulation Order ("**TTRO**") are defined as "Major Activities".*

The Permit Scheme requires submission of a Provisional Advance Authorisation (PAA) at least three months in advance of a proposed activity, and a permit ten working days before the activity is due to start. As currently drafted, the DCO references the Permit Scheme and in doing so accepts the timescales associated with it. However, the TTRO (at Article 16(8) does not give the standard timescales expected for Permit Schemes. ECC are not able to agree to shorter timescales as the Authority deals with many requests from promoters and the standard timescales given allow sufficient time to deal with the full workload involved. As already shown through the cumulative impact section there is expected to be an overlap of works in Essex of other NSIPs, Garden Communities and Strategic Sites. These works are aside from the many other smaller scale developments and utility works which will all require Permit Scheme applications. It is considered that following ECC's established standard processes rather than trying to set up new processes with tighter deadlines will provide a more streamlined approach and collaborative working.

It is therefore requested that the timescales for the TTROs are altered to reflect ECC's standard timescales for the Permit Scheme and that the wording reflects that the Temporary Traffic Regulation Order is part of the Permit Scheme. .

14. Power to alter layout etc of streets

ECC do not accept the 28 day timescale as noted at Article 14(5) in relation to a street authority failing to respond to an application for consent. ECC request that the timescale of 35 days given in the Bramford to Twinstead DCO is included. This is on the basis that 28 days does not allow sufficient time for the necessary consultation and assessment to be carried out to consider the submitted details which has been achievable when working on Bramford to Twinstead.

Article 16 Temporary closure of streets and public rights of way

ECC do not accept the 28 day timescale as noted at Article 16(8) in relation to a street authority failing to respond to an application for consent. This is on the basis

that a Temporary Traffic Regulation Order for temporary closure of streets would be required and as already highlighted above (under Article 12) is intrinsic within the Permit Scheme which takes 3 months to process. The Temporary Traffic Regulation Order for public rights of way would also require up to 3 months to process.

It has to be acknowledged that any closure of access will be difficult for residents – especially where the access is being used for a site compound which could be situated somewhere else/ or where it is for a vague/open-ended period. It is therefore requested that the length of time for a temporary closure is specified in the dDCO.

With reference to Art 16 (6), there have been discussions through the PRoW Management Plan around providing 4m wide routes for bridleways which may be a betterment to existing in some cases - however, this is because the horses need space to turn due to spooking associated with the construction works. In effect this is mitigation. This clause is potentially at odds with this 4m requirement and as such should be reworded.

Article 17 Access to works

Article 17(2) gives the street authority a 28 determination period for applications. Based on the experience of processing such requests and the availability of resources ECC do not agree that this timescale is sufficient. ECC request that the timescale of 35 days given in the Bramford to Twinstead DCO is included..

Article 18 Construction alteration and maintenance of streets and other structures

The wording of Article 18 does not set out how infrastructure will be maintained by the Applicant where the authority does not wish to adopt it. This is namely the proposed footway/cycleway provision on Bentley Road which is to remain temporarily in place until the works have been completed. This is on the basis that the infrastructure is only needed whilst the works are taking place due to the high level of HGV activity and the impact on cyclists. ECC require the infrastructure to be maintained by the Applicant until such time as it is removed and the land returned to its previous state. ECC requires wording in the dDCO to deal with this point.

The completion of works and maintenance timescale is more complex due to the need for multiple DCOs to use the proposed infrastructure. Further clarity is required on how these matters will be managed, and evidence in the form of a collaboration agreement between the various DCOs benefiting from the proposed mitigation. The infrastructure should be maintained at the same excellent standard as required by the LHA and with continuity between each DCO. The above should be included and evidenced in the N2T DCO to ensure that the mitigation measures proposed will remain in good order for the duration of their availability to the public.

Part 4 Supplemental Powers

Article 20 Discharge of water

The timings set out within Article20(9) must be increased to 42 days to give sufficient time for the Lead Local Flood Authority to consider any application for consent under this part of the DCO without having to arrange for an extension to the decision making period . This request reflects the available internal resourcing and the increase in time would also bring the DCO in line with other DCOs, such as Bramford to Twinsted.

Part 6 Miscellaneous and General

Article 48 Defence to proceedings in respect of statutory nuisance (s82 EPA 1990)

Given the extent of this article, ECC suggests that a Noise and Vibration Management Plan should be prepared, envisaged in the Applicant's Environmental Statement (APP-306).

Article 49 – Traffic Regulation

ECC require the timescales at 49(10) for dealing with the permanent TROs to be 12 weeks to align with the Temporary Traffic Regulation Order process. This is to take account of resource and the cumulative impacts that are discussed at length in this LIR.

At Article 49(10) there is reference to consent having been deemed to be granted after 28 days. This is considered too short given the available resources and the requirement to consult with external consultees including the Police. It is requested this period be extended to .

Article 50 – Felling or Lopping

ECC recognised that this Article allows for wide powers to do the tree work which the undertaker reasonably believes to be necessary and this consequently gives the Applicant powers to lop prune, cut, trim, coppice, pollard, reduce in height or width any tree shrub, shrubbery, hedgerow or important hedge under or within the overhanging or near part of the authorised development if it reasonably believes it necessary to do so to prevent obstruction/interference with construction, operation or maintenance of authorised development or any apparatus or from constituting a danger to persons constructing maintaining or operating the authorised development.

While a caveat about not causing unnecessary damage to trees / vegetation is included as is the requirement for consent where works involving trees / vegetation overhanging the highway, ECC maintains a concern that the use of the term 'near' is too ambiguous. This will lead to uncertainty and the potential for more works to be undertaken than absolutely necessary. As such, we consider that 'near' should either

be removed, or defined as a specific value e.g. 2m, with works only occurring with some prior notice to the relevant LPA.

An open ended option for vegetation to be removed without the impact of this being appraised is not supported as the impacts on protected hedgerows requires proper assessment.

It is also noted that the areas marked 'affected vegetation' would need careful review once available and it assumed that any additional works would be within the parameters of the approved OLEMP.

At Article 50(5) there is reference to consent having been deemed to be granted after 28 days. This is considered too short given the available resources and it is requested this period be extended to 42 days to allow for the appropriate consultation to take place with and to avoid the need to request extensions of time which has been the experience of the Authority when dealing with the discharge of Requirements under this Article on other NSIP schemes.

It is also considered the term 'affected vegetation' should be defined.

There is concern that as drafted, this section gives extensive powers and unless further defined in the Trees / Hedgerows to be Removed / Management Plans (i.e. to define limits to the extent of pruning of TPO beyond which prior approval would be required), the powers could result in harm to TPO trees with significant visual amenity. This will need to be reviewed once the Trees / Hedgerows to be Removed / Management Plans are submitted.

<u>50 Felling or Lopping / 51 Trees subject to Tree Preservation Order</u>

Reinstatement and Compensation

Article 51 permits an undertaker to carry out extensive tree works to TP trees if it reasonably believes it is necessary to do so in connection with the implementation of the DCO and gives deemed consent to do so. Owing to the special importance of trees subject to TPOs, a definition of "near" is required for the avoidance of doubt (ideally defined as a specific value e.g. 2m for example, or as otherwise agreed).

Additional wording should also be included in this Article to the effect that advance notice of proposed works must be given to the Local Planning Authority and opportunity given for the planning authority to impose reasonable conditions (i.e.as to method of pruning/appropriate timing of tree work).

<u>56 Safeguarding</u>

Article 56(3)(b) should be amended as follows: "they may not determine the application before the end of the period of 21 days, beginning five business days

after the relevant planning authority has sent the notice to the undertaker by first class post or by such other means of service as may be agreed with the relevant planning authority, which will be deemed to be the date on which the undertaker receives the notice or copy of the application." This is to ensure that adequate time is offered for all parties engaged in the process.

ECC notes and accepts the following amend made to Article 56(5) "In determining an application for planning permission a relevant planning authority must take into account any representations received in accordance with this article".

The term "business days" is used in this Article but not elsewhere in the dDCO. ECC recommends that all time limits are expressed consistently.

61 Service of Notices

It is acknowledged direct email contacts/ methods of service between the Essex Authorities and Undertaker to promote efficient communication is required with a preference for email communication.

Schedule 3 – Requirements

General

Given the scale and complexity of the project across multiple areas, ECC would encourage that the dDCO requires the Applicant to maintain a 'Register of Requirements' such as that seen in the Lower Thames Crossing Development Consent Order to ensure ongoing fairness, public confidence and transparency.

In various Articles of this Schedule, reference is made interchangeably to the term days or business days. For clarity, these terms should be defined and used consistently throughout the dDCO

Requirement 1 - Interpretation

The definition of reinstatement planting needs to distinguish between replacement planting and what constitutes mitigation and compensation planting.

The definition of "start up and close down activities" is noted in it's relevance to Requirement 7. A query is raised as to the level of potential noise which could be generated by these activities which may cause a noise disturbance to local communities. For example, it is not clear what is meant by "low key maintenance" and what this could involve. This matter is addressed further below concerning Requirement 7.

Requirement 3 - Stages of authorised development

Paragraph 3(1) should refer to "seven business days" to ensure consistency across the dDCO.

ECC's view is that submissions under this article to the relevant planning authority should be for approval as opposed to notification given the scale of the project and potential for cumulative impacts arising from the project. ECC thus requests that paragraph 3(1) is amended and "for approval" is added at end of the text at 3(2).

Paragraph 3(a) makes reference to "any revisions to the written scheme referred to in sub-paragraph (2) above must be submitted to the relevant planning authority in advance of the commencement of the stage of the authorised development to which the revisions relate" To avoid confusion and dispute, this paragraph should specify how far in advance this should be provided to the relevant planning authority to ensure they have due notice.

In respect of Paragraph 4 and the reference to 28 days, ECC requests the term 'days' is defined with Requirement 1

Requirement 4 – Construction Environment Management Plans

ECC seeks an explanation from the applicant why it has not submitted a Construction Environment Management Plan ("CEMP"). The B2T DCO requires such a plan. It is not clear that a Code of Construction Practice (which is proposed) will provide the same sorts of protections as a CEMP. If it is intended to do so, in particular because of various outline plans appended to it, that should be made clear by the outline plans being listed. Furthermore, there are additional management plans which should be secured via this dDCO as noted above in paragraphs XXXX.

Reference is made to "Natural England" within Paragraph 4(1) – however there are many stakeholders who should also be engaged in consultation on these management plans which should be reflected within this requirement, including the Local Highway Authority for example.

At Paragraph 4(2), any agreement under this clause should be made in writing.

Paragraph 4(3) should refer to the approved outline management plans. As above any agreement should be made in writing. Furthermore, there should be a record of how amendments and updates will be captured and recorded to ensure transparency.

Requirement 5 – Archaeology

The Requirement wording for Archaeology does not currently take into account the post-consent programme of archaeological trenching required, or secure timescales

for delivery of the Post-Excavation Assessments. It is suggested that Paragraph 5(4) is replaced with the wording below and a new Paragraph 5(5), is included. This will give clarity for sign-off and also provide reassurance of a robust mechanism for securing both the field and post-excavation works

5 (4) Intrusive site preparation works must not take place until an archaeological or geoarchaeological written scheme(s) of investigation in accordance with the outline written scheme(s) of investigation as appropriate has been submitted to and approved by the discharging authority in consultation with Historic England. The archaeological or geoarchaeological written scheme(s) of investigation required under this sub-paragraph must be implemented as approved.

5 (5) Unless otherwise agreed with the local planning authority.

(a) No later than one year following the completion of the fieldwork specified in each site-specific written scheme of investigation, a site-specific post excavation assessment (PXA) for that site must be completed in accordance with the Written Scheme of Investigation and submitted to the local planning authority for approval.

(b) No later than one year following the approval of the final site-specific post excavation assessment, an archaeological updated project design for all applicable sites, must be submitted to the local planning authority for approval. The archaeological updated project design must be produced in general accordance with the detailed Written Scheme of Investigation for each stage, include details of the scope of post-excavation analysis and publication and have regard to the site-specific research agendas set out in the site-specific written schemes of investigation.

(c) Post-excavation analysis and publication must be carried out in accordance with the approved archaeological updated project design and provision made for the full archive to be submitted to the appropriate museum.

Requirement 6 – Design and layout plans (elevations)

ECC is concerned with the use of "general accordance" and the subjectivity that would be involved in the assessment of whether any materially new or materially different environmental effects from those identified in the environmental statement

have occurred which informs "general accordance" . No explicit consideration is given to how some areas may be more sensitive to departures than others.

The ES generally assumes the pylons as in the mid line of the Limits of Deviation shown on the work plans. If a pylon is subsequently moved within those limits of deviation and closer to a receptor, but also higher, then there is likely to be a negative impact on said receptor experience of the development hence the concerns regarding the term "general accordance" and the desire to restrict the limits of deviation expressed

ECC also considers that the host local planning authority should have a say in whether any changes from the design and layout plans give rise to any materially new or materially different environmental effects from those identified in the environmental statement. As such, the wording of paragraph 6(2) should be updated:

The authorised development will not be in substantial accordance with the design and layout plans (elevations) to the extent that any departure from the design and layout plans (elevations) in the opinion of the Local Planning Authority gives rise to any materially new or materially different effects…

ECC considers this could operate by way of a prior approval process similar to that in effect for many areas of the T&CP regime

Requirement 7 – Construction hours

ECC has considerable concerns with this requirement due to the cumulative noise and environmental impacts arising from the development. Taken together with the other projects, especially in the Tendring area, but all along the route, the proposals have the potential to lead to significant adverse effects on communities and the environment. It is crucial that respite is offered to the communities affected by the development through reasonable working hours and construction traffic management. ECC is therefore seeking substantially better controls within the dDCO and the Management Plans to ensure this respite is secured.

Construction activities have the potential to cause significant effects on nearby residents and the environment. It is therefore imperative that construction activities (and associated noise impacts) are appropriately controlled, as reinforced by Paragraph 5.12.18 of EN-1 (2023).

Focusing on Requirement 7(1) there should not be any construction works which take place on Sunday or bank holidays, ensuring that communities have some respite from any works which are taking place. In Paragraphs 7(1) and 7(2) the construction hours for Saturday should be 07.00 and 13:00. Consequently, ECC considers that if these reasonable construction working hours were adopted, i.e.

Monday to Friday 07:00–19:00 and Saturday 08:00–13:00, in line with the recommended limits set out in BS 5228-1, and in combination with the other amendments identified above, the likely impacts on noise and vibration sensitive receptors (NSRs) would be significantly reduced.

ECC would also recommend that a communication and engagement strategy is prepared by the applicant setting out how relevant authorities and the community will be kept up to date on construction works. This should also consider notification around when work is required outside of core hours.

Requirement 7(2) – The County Council recommends this is amended to remove reference to 'percussive' piling works. There should be "no progressive piling works outside the hours…". There must be clear consideration demonstrate of trenchless crossing and the noise implication of these works.

Requirement 7 (3) – It is recommended that no "HGV deliveries" is amended to "HGV movements" to ensure the sub paragraph takes account of all HGV activities which may take place and cause a disruption to communities. Engagement with ECC highways is needed regarding all AIL / HGV movements to ensure these are appropriately managed on the highway network.

Requirement 7(4) – ECC is concerned with the level of noise arising from these activities listed in this sub paragraph clause – there may be some locations where construction works are due to take place which will be more sensitive to these works taking place outside of core hours. A solution is for the sub paragraph to require a commitment to liaison and engagement with the relevant local authority and representatives or liaison groups regarding works undertaken outside of the core hours. Furthermore, ECC recommends a noise limitation is included within this Requirement – "A 50dBA noise limit (LOAEL) will apply at the nearest noise-sensitive receptors for start-up and close down activities up to one hour either side of the core working hours" – this would be in line with other comparable DCOs including Bramford to Twinsted.

ECC considers that the submitted noise and vibration assessment does not robustly reflect a worst-case scenario. Pylon construction has been assessed from fixed locations and defined construction areas, rather than across the full extent of potential longitudinal and lateral movement permitted by the Limits of Deviation (LoD).

Requirement 7(4)(g) – ECC recommends the following additional text to ensure the DCO is comparable with other relevant dDCOs – "The completion of works delayed or held up by severe weather conditions which disrupted or interrupted normal construction activities at the undertaker and its contractor agree forms the critical path for the accepted construction programme. In such cases, the undertaker must, as soon as practicable, notify the relevant planning authority of the disruption or

interruption and explain why that work could not be completed within the core working hours referred to in sub-paragraph (1)"

Part 9(4)(m) – The Local Highway Authority must be engaged around the movement of any AILs and this should be secured in the Requirement.

Requirement 9 - Reinstatement Planting Plan

A Reinstatement Planting Plan is supported.

Requirement 9(7) currently specifies a five-year maintenance period for landscaping from the date planting is completed. ECC's Relevant Representation (RR-1083) recommend extending this period to ten years to allow for full establishment and replacement of planting. If a ten-year period is not feasible, it is proposed that the wording be amended to state that if any planting fails and requires replacement, the five-year maintenance period should reset from the date of replanting. Additionally, it is recommended that a 30-year maintenance and monitoring period be secured for all BNG and GI, within land owned or managed by the applicant, in line with statutory BNG requirements and best practice.

There are measures for early establishment of new trees to be considered at the time of planting, which can boost the survival rate of young trees. This should include weeding, mulching and watering. All newly planted trees with a trunk diameter of 6cm or more will be watered for three years via a buried watering tube, irrigation bag or irrigation well; applying 60 litres per visit, at least 14 times between May and September. Mulch, stakes, ties and weed establishment will also be inspected and actioned as required. Stakes and ties should be removed 3 years after planting.

Requirement 10 – Reinstatement schemes

ECC notes the repeated reference to 'former use' within this part of the DCO and questions whether this should be defined to ensure that there is clarity around what is considered a 'former use' of a site. There needs to be clarity around who determines what the former use of a site, alongside any enforcement actions around this. It is therefore suggested that 'former use' is defined as "the condition and appearance of the land prior to the commencement of the development"

Requirement 10(2) – ECC notes the exclusion from the reinstatement requirement of land within 10 metres of any underground cables. It would be helpful to clarify what will happen to this land.

Requirement 13 – Decommissioning

ECC would welcome more detail around the decommissioning process, especially any impacts arising on communities and the local environment.

There is an expectation for restoration to contribute to sustainable land stewardship, climate change mitigation and adaptation, biodiversity and environmental net gain through the delivery of natural GI. If the restoration proposal is to return the site to arable land it will need to a better grade than before and demonstrate how it will deliver sustainable land stewardship with potential to link to Landscape recovery.

Suggested Additional Requirements

ECC recommends the inclusion of the following requirements.

1. Health and wellbeing mitigation strategy and monitoring framework

EN-1 requires applicants to avoid, reduce or mitigate adverse health impacts and monitoring where health effects are uncertain or where vulnerable groups may be affected (ES Chapter 10 – paragraphs 4.4.4 – 4.4.6). Therefore, the dDCO should include a standalone Health and Wellbeing mitigation strategy and a health and wellbeing monitoring plan .

The dDCO relies on "embedded mitigation", however, it is unclear how the embedded mitigation addresses mental health impacts, protect vulnerable groups, ensure community benefit delivery and provide adaptive mitigation if impacts are worse than predicted.

Therefore, the additional requirements below are recommended to ensure public health protection is robust and enforceable. ECC would welcome engagement with the Applicant to discuss how these requirements could be appropriately worded.

a) *Health and wellbeing mitigation strategy - Public Health recommend adding a new mandatory requirement requiring a Health and Wellbeing mitigation strategy that includes identification of vulnerable groups, community-specific mitigation packages, Mental Health Impact Action plan, engagement approach for EMF concerns, provisions for active travel support during construction, measures to maintain community cohesion and reduce severance and communication protocols in accessible and translated formats.*

b) *Health and wellbeing monitoring framework - A Health and Wellbeing Monitoring Framework must be submitted and approved. Monitoring must include air quality, noise, PRoW continuity, active travel metrics, green space access and community wellbeing indicators. Annual reports must be published and adaptive mitigation provided where adverse impacts exceed predictions.*

Biodiversity Net Gain

A stark omission from the dDCO is any mention of biodiversity or BNG. The B2T DCO includes an Requirement securing that written evidence be provided to the relevant planning authorities on delivering at least 10% BNG.

A post-consent programme of ecological mitigation measures and a BNG delivery plan will both need to be secured through the dDCO Requirements.

The strength of the DCO Requirements in ensuring the delivery of the mitigation measures and BNG plan will be critical to determining what ecological impact the Norwich to Tilbury project ultimately renders (positive or negative) for Essex local authority districts.

The BNG Report (APP-299) based on current proposals predict that there will be a combined positive net gain of 10% for hedgerows and for +10.64% for watercourses, but there is a net loss of – 8.25% of habitats. This does not meet the statutory 10% requirement for habitats. Additional off-site biodiversity units will be needed to satisfy the trading rules.

It is acknowledged that on-site delivery might not always be feasible, and off-site delivery could offer additional benefits, including the protection of areas with local natural and wildlife value. It is recommended to discuss off-site and unit purchases, with the Local Planning Authorities to ensure that biodiversity benefits are delivered locally within Essex.

It is understood the BNG Assessment is to be updated once the landscape provisions for both on-site and off-site are determined and finalised. This is welcomed. However, while the DAS, BNG Report Environment Statement (Chapter 8 – APP-158) and OLEMP references a commitment to achieving 10% BNG, there is a lack of clarity on delivery mechanisms, monitoring of which should be included within the dDCO. Integration with LNRS objectives should also be considered. Transparent

monitoring and reporting obligations should also be included to ensure compliance with the Environment Act 2021

Integrated Green Infrastructure Strategy

GI is only indirectly referenced through landscaping and mitigation planting, with no requirement for an integrated GI strategy. GI is not explicitly defined or required beyond basic landscaping measures, and there is no obligation to deliver multifunctional benefits such as habitat connectivity, climate resilience, or sustainable drainage systems (SuDS). ECCC recommends an additional requirement regarding a Green Infrastructure Strategy to address the alignment between measures set out in the OLEMP (APP-321) and BNG Report (APP-299). Ongoing discussions with the Applicant is applicant on how a requirement to secure this matter would be welcomed by ECC but suggested wording should include details such as: "The undertaker must prepare and implement a Green Infrastructure Strategy or incorporated with Landscape Strategy. Landscape and Ecological Management Plans, in consultation with ECC and Landscape professional, demonstrating integration of habitat connectivity, sustainable drainage, and climate resilience."

Monitoring & Reporting on BNG and GI delivery.

Additionally, the Environment Statement recommend other ecological enhancements not captured by the metric, such as bird and bat boxes and habitat piles. These enhancement and mitigation measure identified are instrumental in contributing to producing quality GI therefore all these GI threads should be carried through to detail stages of the application and secured through a suitably worded Requirement . This should include requiring that all landscaping and ecological mitigation works align with Essex Local Nature Recovery Strategy priorities, including habitat creation and species corridors."

Schedule 4 Discharge of Requirements

Applications made under Requirements

At Paragraph 1(1) LPA's are required to give notice of their decision on the discharge of requirements within 28 days. This is considered too short given the available resources and the processes involved in the discharge of Requirements, some of which will no doubt be complex and supported (properly) by a lot of detailed information. This period should be extended to at least 56 days. This is consistent

with the statutory determination period for the discharge of conditions under the TCPA regime.

In addition, at Paragraph 1(1)(b) where further information is required, the Clause should be altered from the day immediately following the date the information was supplied by the undertaker to the day after the receipt by the local planning authority of the further information.

Further information

At Paragraph 2 (2), the timescale should be increased to at least seven business days consistent with that specified in the Bramford to Twinstead DCO.

At Paragraph 2 (3) the timescales for the local planning authority to issue the consultation following the receipt of information / additional information should be increased to ten business days. In addition, the backstop date by which the relevant authority must notify the undertaker should be increased to ten business days after the 21 day consultation period or the receipt of the Requirement Consultees response requesting the need for additional information. This is to reflect the pressure on resources of likely required consultees and to the relevant authority having to seek an extension.

The burden on LPA's could be further reduced if the Undertaker were to notify the Requirement Consultee directly at same time as LPA so ECC. suggests discussion with the Applicant as to how that could work

The County Council would also question the process where the supplied information is not acceptable and does not address the issue.

Fees

ECC is giving further consideration to what the specified fee at part 3(b) should be and its relationship to prescribed fees and any post consent PPA and will update the Applicant and the ExA as soon as practicable.

The period within which the application has to be determined should be increased to 42 days, as should the period for the refund This more realistically reflects the processing time which will be needed to carry out the necessary consultation key consultees and for them to consider the submitted information which on a project of this scale will no doubt be extensive and detailed. This situation is further exacerbated by the number of DCO's may LPA's are currently having to process.

Any refund of application fee should be subject to a 20% retention to cover the initial administration costs of processing the submission.

The dDCO should clarify whether the fees will be index linked.

Schedule 16 Protective Provisions

Paragraph 3 for the protection of drainage and flood authorities

Approval of Plans

Paragraph 3(1)(a) – The Lead Local Flood Authority recommends the inclusion of approval under Section 23 of the Land Drainage Act 199.

Furthermore, with reference to Paragraph 3(6), where the drainage strategy plan changes the LLFA should be consulted regarding the changes at the earliest opportunity to ensure there is adequate time to consider any request. A minimum of 20 business days is suggested.

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Part 4 for the protection of the highway authorities

As mentioned previously, our preference is to enter into a Framework Highways Agreement or similar side agreement with the applicant to deal with the design approvals rather than the use of Protected Provisions. This is on the basis that ECC expect (as indeed the public would expect) a level of oversight and control of the local highway network. However, we have provided comments on the text provided should the Protected Provisions be the only route available.

The "Approval period" is defined as 14 days for Minor Works and 28 days for Major Works. ECC refer to the discussion points around this at Schedule 11 where ECC have requested that the formal decision period is extended to 35 days to be in line with the Bramford to Twinstead DCO.

We would like to have a description of the types of work that constitutes "early works" as is shown for the pre-commencement definition.

We would request that the agreed wording from the recently consented Five Estuaries DCO (Protected Provisions, Article 131) as follows is included for the definition of "road safety audits":

"(1) The undertaker must procure that an appropriately qualified RSA team (as defined in HPN039 or DMRB Volume 5 Section 2 Part 2 (GG 119) as advised by the local highway authority (acting reasonably) or any replacement or modification of that standard) undertakes road safety audit in accordance with the standard as set out in HPN039 or DMRB standard GG 119 as advised by the local highway authority (acting reasonably) for works which involve creation, alteration, expansion or other modifications of the local highway but not for works which consist only of trenchless installation beneath highways, and must provide copies of the reports of such audits

to the local highway authority within 10 business days of their receipt by the undertaker.

(2) The local highway authority must be invited to participate in the road safety audit conducted under sub-paragraph (1)

(3) No works on a local highway must be commenced out until a satifactory Stage 1 and Stage 2 Road Safety Audit has been carried out and all reasonable recommendation raised by them or any exceptions are approved by the local highway authority (acting reasonably)

(4) Where the report of the stage 3 and 4 road safety audit identifies any recommended measures in respect of the local highway, the undertaken must carry out, at its own expense and to the reasonable satisfaction of the local highway authority, those measures identified as part of stage 3 and 4 audit which the undertaker considers necessary (acting reasonably) and for the avoidance of doubt any matters related to the health and safety will be considered as reasonable, and which do not give rise to any new or materially different environmental effects in comparison with those identified in the environmental statement."

The definition of "security" includes either (a) a letter of credit; or (b) such other information that evidences the credit standing of the undertaker. This is a non-standard way for ECC to deal with the form of security which is usually required as a bond. ECC notes the applicant's solicitors were reviewing the form of security through ongoing internal discussions and the drafting was to be updated accordingly where necessary. It does not appear that there have been changes made and the Explanatory Memorandum (Document 3.2) offers no further detail on this point.

At Article 6 (2) ECC requests that a timescale is included to provide notice to the local authority on pre-commencement works. Currently the statement is vague.

Article 8 requires wording to be added around suitably qualified persons to be involved in the initial and formal engagement with the local highway authority. ECC have had previous experience on other DCOs where there was a lack of knowledge of the design which meant that ECC were having to spend more time dealing with issues. Therefore, we believe this requirement should be tightened up.

Article 11 (1b) sets out that the formal approval can only commence when the initial checking fee has been paid. It would appear reasonable to include this requirement in Article 10 such that the fee is paid in advance of the time involved for the initial engagement.

Schedule 19 Certified Documents

The dDCO should secure that certified documents remain readily available to local authorities engaged in the discharge of requirement, in the interests of clarity, efficiency of process and transparency.

18 Annex

18.1 Local Plan and Neighbourhood Plan policies are referenced throughout the policy sections of the LIR. All of the documents referred to are included in this Annex. These are:

- Annex A: Colchester Borough Local Plan 2013-2033 Section 1: North Essex Authorities' Shared Strategic Section 1 Plan (adopted February 2021)
- Annex B: Colchester Borough Local Plan 2017-2033 Section 2 (adopted July 2022)
- Annex C: Boxted Neighbourhood Plan 2014-2029 (adopted December 2016)
- Annex D: Eight Ash Green Neighbourhood Plan 2017 – 2033 (adopted December 2019)
- Annex E: Great Tey Neighbourhood Plan 2022-2033 (adopted October 2024)
- Annex F: Marks Tey Neighbourhood Plan 2020 – 2033 (adopted April 2022)
- Annex G: West Bergholt Neighbourhood Plan (adopted October 2019 and updated October 2024 with minor non-material amends)
- Annex H: Boxted Village Design Statement
- Annex I: Dedham Village Design Statement
- Annex J: Eight Ash Green Village Design Statement
- Annex K: Langham Village Design Statement
- Annex L: Little Horkesley Village Design Statement
- Annex M: West Bergholt Village Design Statement
- Annex N: Colchester Economic Strategy 2022-2025

Annex A

Colchester Borough Local Plan 2013-2033

Section 1

North Essex Authorities' Shared Strategic Section 1 Plan

Adopted February 2021

Tendring District Council

Local Plan COLCHESTER BOROUGH

Braintree District Council LOCAL PLAN Shape your district

In accordance with Regulations 26 and 35 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended), Colchester Borough Council, by decision at the meeting of Full Council on Monday 1 February 2021, has formally adopted the Colchester Borough Council Local Plan 2013-2033: North Essex Authorities' Shared Strategic Section 1 Plan (hereafter the 'Section 1 Plan).

The 'Section 1 Plan' was prepared jointly by Colchester Borough Council, Braintree District Council and Tendring District Council, – the 'local planning authorities' (LPAs) collectively known as the 'North Essex Authorities' (NEAs) to form the first part of each of the authorities' respective Local Plans.

Following examination by an independent Planning Inspector, a 'Final Report on the Examination of the North Essex Authorities' Shared Strategic Section 1 Plan' under section 21(9) of the Act, was received by Colchester Borough Council and the other NEAs on 10th December 2020. The above-mentioned report confirmed that, subject the Inspector's recommended 'main modifications' (pursuant to section 23(3) of the Act) (which have been agreed by the Council and incorporated into this document), the Section 1 Plan meets legal requirements of the national planning system and the 'tests of soundness' contained within national planning policy – as necessary for it to proceed to formal adoption.

The formal adoption of the Section 1 Local Plan by Colchester Borough Council has the effect of replacing, in part, a number of the strategic policies contained within the Colchester Borough Core Strategy, adopted in 2008 and subject to a Focused Review in 2014. The Colchester Borough Local Plan will be replaced, in full, on the formal adoption of Section 2 of Local Plan which contains further specific local policies and proposals applicable to the Colchester Borough only.

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Introduction

1 Introduction

Shared Strategic Plan

1.1 North Essex is a vibrant and attractive place to live and work. It has a rich archaeological, natural and built heritage that continues to influence local character, which is distinguished by its extensive legacy of human habitation from Palaeolithic times onwards. The area has experienced significant population, housing and employment growth in recent years and this is forecast to continue. The local authorities and their partners wish to respond to this opportunity by planning positively for the area as a whole. Working together to address some of the key strategic issues in North Essex will get the best outcomes for current and future communities. In particular, it will deliver sustainable development that respects local environments and provides new jobs and essential infrastructure.

1.2 For these reasons Braintree District Council, Colchester Borough Council and Tendring District Council have agreed to work together to address strategic planning matters across their areas. Collectively they are known as the North Essex Authorities.

1.3 The North Essex local Authorities border a large number of other local authorities who will continue to be engaged and involved on an active and ongoing basis on strategic cross border issues. These authorities include Babergh, Chelmsford, Maldon, Mid Suffolk, West Suffolk, South Cambridgeshire, Uttlesford, and Suffolk and Cambridgeshire County Councils.

1.4 Essex County Council (ECC) is a key partner in its strategic role for infrastructure and service provision and as the Highway Authority, Lead Local Flood Authority, Local Education Authority and Minerals and Waste Planning Authority.

1.5 An initial outcome of this collaboration is this strategic planning chapter, which each of the local planning authorities have included in their Publication Local Plan. The Local Plans together with the Essex Minerals Local Plan and the Essex and Southend-on-Sea Waste Local Plan (prepared by ECC) and any Neighbourhood Plans, form the Development Plan for the respective areas.

The Need for a Strategic Approach

1.6 In Essex, as elsewhere, the influences of population and economic growth do not stop at administrative boundaries. Settlement patterns, migration flows, commuting and strategic infrastructure needs all have significant influences within and between local authority areas.

1.7 Local Plans are the main vehicle for conveying an area's growth requirements and how these will be accommodated. However, individual local authority boundaries cannot encapsulate the geographies of issues that transcend those boundaries. Through active and on-going collaboration the authorities can jointly plan, manage and review strategic objectives and requirements for the effective implementation of sustainable development (including minerals and waste) and enhanced environments.

1.8 The geographic and functional relationship between the authorities' areas is demonstrated by the fact that, with Chelmsford City Council, they form a single Housing Market Area (HMA) for planning purposes; and they are a major part of the Haven Gateway, an established economic partnership. Within this context, the forecast levels of future population growth together with the geography of North Essex means that considerations for future growth will include options that have clear cross-boundary implications. These include both the expansion of existing towns and villages as well as possible new communities.

1.9 Consequently, Braintree, Colchester and Tendring, together referred to in this plan as the North Essex Authorities, have agreed to come together and prepare a common Section 1 Local Plan because of their shared desire to promote a sustainable growth strategy for the longer term; and the particular need to articulate the strategic priorities within the wider area and how these priorities will be addressed. Central to this is the effective delivery of planned strategic growth, particularly housing and employment development, with the necessary supporting infrastructure.

1.10 Uttlesford District Council, Maldon District Council as well as other neighbouring authorities, sit within separate housing market areas. However the authorities are actively and continuously engaged to ensure that cross-boundary and strategic issues are dealt with.

1.11 The Localism Act 2011 places a Duty to Co-operate on local planning authorities and other public bodies. This requires them to engage constructively, actively and on an on-going basis in the preparation of plans where this involves strategic matters. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) adds to this statutory duty as it expects local planning authorities to demonstrate evidence of having co-operated effectively to plan for issues with cross-boundary impacts.

1.12 This strategic Section 1 of the authorities' Local Plans reflects the Duty to Co-operate as it concerns strategic matters with cross-boundary impacts in North Essex. Section 2 of each plan contains policies and allocations addressing authority-specific issues.

1.13 Against this background, the main purposes of this strategic chapter of the Local Plan are to:

- Articulate a spatial portrait of the area, including its main settlements and strategic infrastructure, as a framework for accommodating future planned growth;
- Provide a strategic vision for how planned growth in North Essex will be realised; set strategic objectives and policies for key growth topics;
- Set out the numbers of additional homes and jobs across the area that will be needed covering the period to 2033. The choices made, particularly in relation to the location of garden communities, will also set the framework for development well beyond the plan period; and
- Highlight the key strategic growth locations across the area and the necessary new or upgraded infrastructure to support this growth.

Spatial Portrait

1.14 Braintree, Colchester and Tendring districts are located to the north of Essex between the east coast ports and London Stansted airport. The principal towns are Braintree, Colchester and Clacton-on-Sea and a number of secondary settlements: Witham, Halstead, Wivenhoe, Tiptree, Brightlingsea, Manningtree, Harwich, Walton and Frinton. The Key Diagram at 10.1 identifies the settlements that link with the main roads and/or rail infrastructure.

1.15 Beyond these settlements much of the area has a rural character.

1.16 The area covered by this strategic planning approach comprises a large part of the Haven Gateway, an established partnership area which is identified in a range of existing strategy and investment documents. The Haven Gateway includes the Essex administrative areas of Braintree, Colchester, Maldon and Tendring Councils and extends northwards into parts of Suffolk.

1.17 The area's strategic road and rail network is heavily used, particularly given the proximity to and connectivity with London. The principal roads are the A12 and A120, while the A130, A131, A133 and A414 also form important parts of the strategic road network.

1.18 The Great Eastern Main Line provides rail services between London Liverpool Street and the East of England, including Witham, Chelmsford, Colchester and Clacton-on-Sea. It also carries freight traffic to and from the Haven Ports including Harwich International Port, which handles container ships and freight transport to and from the rest of the UK. Harwich is also one of the major UK ports for ferry and cruise departures.

1.19 Crossrail is expected to start operating in the first part of this plan period with services commencing just south of Chelmsford in Shenfield. The opportunities that Crossrail will bring in terms of additional capacity and quicker journeys to a wider choice of destinations will be a contributor to the continued attractiveness of north Essex as a place to live and to do business.

1.20 The growing demand for the use of airports, including London Stansted, will create additional associated pressures on road and rail infrastructure. The County Council, along with South East Local Enterprise Partnership, local and national agencies and other organisations, will also need to work collaboratively with the Local Planning Authorities to ensure infrastructure meets demand for enhanced economic growth.

1.21 Braintree and Colchester are the major centres of employment within the strategic area. While there are high levels of commuting to London, many residents work and live within the area with significant commuting across borough and district boundaries, reflecting a functional economic geography.

1.22 The area has a mixed economy focused on the service sector, including wholesale and retail, business services, tourism, health and education, alongside manufacturing, logistics and construction. Due to the extensive rural area outside urban settlements, agriculture and its related industries play an important part in the overall economy.

1.23 This rurality also means that there are large areas of open countryside, including protected natural and historic landscapes. Areas of importance for nature conservation are to be found particularly along the coast and river estuaries, while the villages and towns include many built heritage assets.

1.24 A more detailed assessment of the characteristics of each area is provided in the second part of this Local Plan.

Key Strategic Issues: Opportunities and Challenges

1.25 Due to its strong economic base, proximity to London and attractiveness as a place to live and work, North Essex has seen significant growth over recent years. The area is well-placed and connected to key growth points in the wider region including London, Cambridge and Stansted Airport and as a result is likely to continue to be a successful location for growth. In particular Braintree and Colchester have regularly exceeded planned house building targets and this is expected to continue. Planning for and managing future population growth requires an appropriate response from the local authorities to ensure that sufficient homes, employment premises and land, and supporting social and other infrastructure are provided in a sustainable way.

1.26 Notwithstanding its strong economic base and steady growth, the North Essex area faces a range of challenges, notably the need to improve economic and social conditions across the area and reduce health inequalities, pockets of deprivation, infrastructure deficits and low skills; the need to ensure that the infrastructure needed to support continued housing and jobs growth is in place at the right time; and the need to ensure that continued growth continues to conserve and where possible enhance the historic and natural environment including landscape and habitat creation, and will also seek net environmental gains, possibly making use of the Defra biodiversity accounting metric 2.0 to account for possible effects.

1.27 The education, health and other service needs of a growing population must be addressed, requiring careful planning to assess future needs such as pupil numbers and further adult education needs. The assessed need must in turn be translated into new or expanded education, health and other facilities which are available to meet the needs of new communities at the appropriate time. The ageing profile of residents also requires a proactive response to provide the right type of homes, including independent living and supporting services; as well as sufficient healthcare facilities to support both older residents and the population as a whole.

1.28 New development should be located and designed so that day-to-day needs of residents can be met locally and be accessible by sustainable forms of transport, including walking and cycling, and wherever possible reduce the number of car based trips. Growth will create demand for additional road and rail use with the associated need for new and upgraded infrastructure. Future planned growth provides the opportunity to address some of these infrastructure needs, although growth locations and sites need to be considered carefully with regard to the balance of providing necessary infrastructure and the viability and deliverability of development.

1.29 The NPPF expects local authorities to set out the strategic priorities for the area in the Local Plan. Of those listed in the Framework and based on the above key issues, this strategic plan chapter addresses:

- the homes and jobs needed in the area
- the provision of infrastructure for transport and telecommunications
- the provision of education, health, and community infrastructure, and
- conservation and enhancement of the natural and historic environment, including landscape.

Vision for the Strategic Area

1.30 It is important that addressing growth at any spatial scale is founded on a clear vision of how and where change should occur. The vision for North Essex sets this out at a strategic level and provides a context for the more detailed vision for the growth of each individual authority's area.The joint vision set out below should be read in conjunction with the vision for each local authority set out in Section 2 of each Local Plan. The high housing need identified for North Essex, constraints in many existing urban areas and the desire to support a sustainable form of development in the long term, as part of the strategy for the development has led to the Local Plans proposing standalone new settlements that follow the principles of Garden Cities.

Vision for North Essex

North Essex will be an area of significant growth over the period to 2033 and beyond, embracing positively the need to build well-designed new homes, create jobs and improve and develop infrastructure for the benefit of existing and new communities.

It will continue to be an attractive and vibrant area in which to live and work, making the most of its rich heritage, town centres, natural environment, coastal resorts, excellent educational facilities and strategic transport links which provide access to the ports, Stansted Airport, London and beyond. Rural and urban communities will be encouraged to thrive and prosper and will be supported by adequate community infrastructure.

Sustainable development principles will be at the core of the strategic area's response to its growth needs, balancing social, economic and environmental issues. Green and blue infrastructure and new and expanded education and health care facilities enabling healthy and active lifestyles will be planned and provided along with other facilities to support the development of substantial new growth; while the undeveloped countryside and the natural and historic environment will be conserved and enhanced. Key to delivering sustainable development is that new development will address the requirement to protect and enhance the historic environment and settlement character.

At the heart of our strategic vision for North Essex is a new garden community, to be sensitively integrated within the existing historic built and natural environment, and based on Garden City principles.

The garden community provides an opportunity to create the right balance of jobs, housing and infrastructure in the right locations and will attract residents and businesses who value innovation, community cohesion and a high quality environment, and who will be provided with opportunities to take an active role in managing the garden community to ensure its continuing success.

Residents will live in high quality, innovatively designed, homes, accommodating a variety of needs and aspirations, located in well-designed neighbourhoods where they can meet their day-to-day needs. There will be a network of tree-lined streets and green spaces, incorporating and enhancing existing landscape features and also accommodating safe and attractive routes and space for sustainable drainage solutions; and leisure and recreation opportunities for both residents and visitors of the garden community.

Suitable models for the long term stewardship of community assets will be established and funded to provide long term management and governance of assets. All Garden City principles as specified in the North Essex Garden Communities Charter will be positively embraced including where appropriate, new approaches to delivery and partnership working for the benefit of the new community. Central to this will be the comprehensive planning and development of the garden community, and the aligned delivery of homes and supporting infrastructure.

Strategic Objectives

1.31 The following strategic objectives are designed to support the vision for the area and provide a basis for the development of strategic topic-based policies that will help in achieving the vision.

1.32 Providing Sufficient New Homes – to provide for a level and quality of new homes to meet the needs of a growing and ageing population in North Essex; to achieve this by ensuring the availability of developable land in appropriate locations and that the market delivers a suitable mix of housing types and tenures.

1.33 Fostering Economic Development – to strengthen and diversify local economies to provide more jobs; and to achieve a better balance between the location of jobs and housing, which will reduce the need to travel and promote sustainable growth.

1.34 Providing New and Improved Transport & Communication Infrastructure – to make efficient use of existing transport infrastructure and to ensure sustainable transport opportunities are promoted to support new and existing communities. Where additional capacity is required in the form of new or upgraded transport infrastructure to support new development, ensuring that this is delivered in a phased & timely way to minimise the impact of new development. To ensure that enabled communication is provided as part of new developments as enabled communication is essential for modern living and broadband infrastructure and related services will be essential for business, education and residential properties.

1.35 Addressing Education and Healthcare Needs – to provide good quality educational opportunities as part of a sustainable growth strategy, including practical vocational training and apprenticeships linked to local job opportunities. To work with partners in the NHS, Public Health and local health partnerships to ensure adequate provision of healthcare facilities to support new and growing communities.

1.36 Ensuring High Quality Outcomes – to promote greater ambition in planning and delivering high-quality sustainable new communities. Overall, new development must secure high standards of urban design and green infrastructure which creates attractive and sustainable places where

people want to live and spend time. New development needs to be informed by an understanding of the historic environment resource gained through the preparation of Historic Impact Assessments, and to conserve and enhance the significance of heritage assets including any contribution made to their significance by their settings.

Strategic Issues and Policies

1.37 This section includes the Councils' response to the opportunities and challenges facing the wider area, in the form of strategic policies that will help to deliver the vision and objectives. These policies only cover those matters that are of strategic relevance to all three authorities. Policies that address local matters are included in the following section of the plan. The Plan as a whole, including both Sections 1 and 2, will supersede previous Local Plan Policies and allocations upon its adoption. A list of the policies superseded by Section 1 and Section 2 of the Plan respectively is included as an appendix to each section.

Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development

2 Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development

Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development

2.1 The authorities will apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development in accordance with guidance in the National Planning Policy Framework.

Policy SP 1

Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development

When considering development proposals the Local Planning Authorities will take a positive approach that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained in the National Planning Policy Framework. They will always work pro-actively with applicants to find solutions which mean that proposals can be approved wherever possible, and to secure development that improves the economic, social and environmental conditions in the area.

Development that complies with the Plan will be approved without delay, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

2.2 A Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) was completed for Section 1 of the Plan. The loss of off-site habitat, water quality and increased recreational disturbance were identified as issues with the potential to result in likely significant effects on European Sites, without mitigation to address the effects.

2.3 The Appropriate Assessment (AA) identified a number of avoidance and mitigation measures to be implemented, to ensure that development proposals in the Plan will not result in adverse effects on the integrity of any Special Area of Conservation, Special Protection Area or Ramsar site, and are HRA compliant.

2.4 To mitigate for the loss of off-site habitat, the AA identified the need for wintering bird surveys for the Tendring/Colchester Borders Garden Community as part of any project level development proposals and masterplanning (see also paragraph 8.3 and Policy SP8 paragraph F.20).

2.5 To protect water quality, the AA recommended the inclusion of policy safeguards to ensure that adequate water and waste water treatment capacity or infrastructure upgrades are in place prior to development proceeding.

2.6 Recreation activities can potentially harm Habitats Sites. The AA identified disturbance of water birds from people and dogs, and impacts from water sports/watercraft as the key recreational threats to Habitats Sites.

2.7 To mitigate for any increases in recreational disturbance at Habitats Sites, the AA identified the need for a mitigation strategy. Natural England's West Anglian Team identified the Essex coast as a priority for a strategic and proactive planning approach as it is rich and diverse ecologically, and many of the coastal habitats are designated as Habitats Sites. Consequently, 12 local planning authorities in Essex have prepared an Essex Coast Recreational disturbance Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy (RAMS).

2.8 The Essex Coast RAMS sets out specific avoidance and mitigation measures by which disturbance from increased recreation can be avoided and mitigated thus enabling the delivery of growth without adversely affecting Habitats sites.These measures are deliverable, realistic, underpinned by robust up to date evidence, precautionary and provide certainty for developers around deliverability and contributions. The Essex Coast RAMS Strategy Document was completed in 2019 and is supported by a SPD.

Policy SP 2

Recreational disturbance Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy (RAMS)

Contributions will be secured from development towards mitigation measures in accordance with the Essex Coast Recreational disturbance Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy 2018-2038 (RAMS).

Spatial Context

3 Spatial Context

3.1 Future growth will contribute to maintaining and enhancing a well-connected network of sustainable settlements across North Essex. New homes, jobs, retail and leisure facilities serviced by new and upgraded infrastructure will be accommodated as part of existing settlements according to their scale, sustainability and role, and by the creation of a strategic scale new settlement embracing the principles in the North Essex Garden Community Charter. The countryside will be protected and enhanced.

3.2 For the majority of settlements these issues are addressed in the second section of the Local Plan dealing with each authority's area. However, it is relevant here to set out the spatial context of the North Essex Area as it relates to the main settlements and strategic-scale new development.

3.3 In Braintree District the growth will be mainly addressed via urban extensions. Braintree town, as the largest service centre in the District, will have a number of new urban extensions. Over 4,000 new homes will be allocated in this area. The other main focus for development will be the A12 corridor with the main town of Witham and service villages of Hatfield Peverel, Kelvedon and Feering with allocations of over 2,000 new homes. Other parts of the District, including the town of Halstead, will have smaller allocations to reflect a more local need and make the best use of brownfield sites, recognising that these areas are not as sustainable.

3.4 In Colchester Borough, the urban area of Colchester will continue to be a focus for growth due to its pre-eminent role as a centre for jobs, services and transport, with 4,000 new homes expected to be delivered over the Local Plan period. The urban area of Colchester, however, has a limited and diminishing supply of available brownfield sites, so a new community is included in the spatial hierarchy as a sustainable option for further growth of homes and jobs, to the east of Colchester on the border with Tendring District. Approximately 1,050 new homes will be allocated in the Rural District Centres of Tiptree, West Mersea and Wivenhoe. Smaller sustainable settlements will receive limited allocations proportionate to their role in the spatial hierarchy.

3.5 In Tendring District the spatial hierarchy promotes growth in settlements that are the most accessible to the strategic road network, public transport and offer a range of services. Clacton and Harwich with Dovercourt are classified as strategic urban settlements and will accommodate around 5,000 new homes. A new cross-boundary garden community will be located in the west of the district and to the east of Colchester. The smaller urban settlements of Frinton with Walton and Kirby Cross, Manningtree with Lawford and Mistley, Brightlingsea and Weeley will accommodate between 1,500 and 2,500 new homes. The rural service centres and smaller rural settlements will accommodate around 1,500 new homes including a windfall allowance.

3.6 The new Garden Community is identified as new a new settlement in Colchester and Tendring Section 2 settlement hierarchies. Over time the Garden Community will grow to influence the area's spatial hierarchy and will be included in the tiers underneath the sub-regional centre role played by Colchester. Future reviews of the plans will address this point, but the Garden Community will not grow to a size that will affect the spatial hierarchy within the plan period to 2033.

Policy SP 3

Spatial Strategy for North Essex

Existing settlements will be the principal focus for additional growth across the North Essex Authorities area within the Local Plan period. Development will be accommodated within or adjoining settlements according to their scale, sustainability and existing role both within each individual district and, where relevant, across the wider strategic area.

Future growth will be planned to ensure existing settlements maintain their distinctive character and role, to avoid coalescence between them and to conserve their setting. Re-use of previously developed land within settlements is an important objective, although this will be assessed within the broader context of sustainable development principles, particularly to ensure that development locations are accessible by a choice of means of travel.

In Section 2 of its Local Plan each local planning authority will identify a hierarchy of settlements where new development will be accommodated according to the role of the settlement, sustainability, its physical capacity and local needs.

Beyond the main settlements the authorities will support diversification of the rural economy and conservation and enhancement of the natural environment.

As part of the sustainable strategy for growth, the Tendring / Colchester Borders Garden Community will be developed and delivered at the broad location shown on Key Diagram 10.2 and on the Colchester and Tendring Local Plans Policies Maps. This new community will provide a strategic location for homes and employment within the Plan period in North Essex. The expectation is that substantial additional housing and employment development will be delivered in the Garden Community beyond the current Local Plan period.

Meeting the need for New Homes

4 Meeting the need for New Homes

4.1 Provision of sufficient housing is critical to meet the needs of a growing population and for the effective functioning of local economies.

4.2 The North Essex Authorities are committed to plan positively for new homes and to significantly boost the supply of housing to meet the needs of the area, including the need to provide a workforce for forecast jobs. To meet the requirements of national policy to establish the number and type of new homes, the authorities commissioned Peter Brett Associates to produce an Objectively Assessed Housing Need Study building on earlier work. This was first published in July 2015 and updated in November 2016. It meets the requirements of the NPPF to prepare a Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA).

4.3 Detailed analysis in the report suggests that a Housing Market Area comprising Braintree, Colchester, Chelmsford and Tendring Council areas forms a sound basis for assessing housing need.

4.4 Demographic projections are the starting point for assessing how much housing will be required across an area. Based on 2014 national projections covering the period 2013 to 2037, the conclusion reached is that the objectively assessed need across the Housing Market Area is 2,999 new homes a year over the period 2013 – 2037. The total requirement across north Essex, excluding Chelmsford City Council's area, is 2,186 new homes per year.

4.5 This figure includes a figure of 550 new homes per year for Tendring. Calculation of housing need in the District is complicated by uncertainty arising from unattributed population change (UPC).

4.6 Evidence on overall levels of affordable housing provision elsewhere in the Districts will be set out in more detail within the individual Local Plans and will take account of identified needs. The Tendring Colchester Garden Community needs to be a mixed and balanced community and will be expected to provide 30% affordable housing.

4.7 The Garden Community will be expected to provide suitable sites for Gypsies and Travellers. Additional requirements for sites to meet District wide needs will be set out in Section Two of each District/Borough Local Plan.

4.8 The North Essex Authorities will identify and update annually a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide five years' worth of housing against their individual housing requirements set out in Policy SP4 below. Each authority will incorporate an additional buffer as required by national planning policy to ensure choice and competition for land.

Policy SP 4

Meeting Housing Needs

The local planning authorities will identify sufficient deliverable sites, developable sites and/or broad locations for their respective plan period, to meet the housing requirements in the table below, and will incorporate additional provision to ensure flexibility and choice and competition for land.

Each authority will maintain a sufficient supply of deliverable sites to provide for at least five years' worth of housing, plus an appropriate buffer in accordance with national policy, and will work proactively with applicants to bring forward sites that accord with the overall spatial strategy and relevant policies in the plan. The annual housing requirement figures set out below will be used as the basis for assessing each authority's five-year housing land supply, subject to any adjustments in Section 2 of each plan to address any undersupply since 2013.

The authorities will review their housing requirements regularly in accordance with national policy requirements, and in doing so will have regard to the housing needs of the wider area.

Local Authority	Housing requirement per annum	Total minimum housing requirement for the plan period (2013 – 2033)
Braintree	716	14,320
Colchester	920	18,400
Tendring	550	11,000
Total	**2,186**	**43,720**

Providing for Employment

5 Providing for Employment

5.1 A key objective for the area is to strengthen and diversify local economies to provide more jobs and to achieve a better balance between the location of jobs and housing, which will reduce the need to travel and promote sustainable growth.

5.2 Braintree District's employment is relatively focused on industrial-type sectors, including construction and manufacturing. London Stansted airport, in neighbouring Uttlesford, plays a significant role in employing residents of the District and through the indirect economic benefits associated with proximity to such a large employment hub.

5.3 Retail is the second largest sector by employment and plays an important role in sustaining the District's three key town centres. The financial and insurance sector, where Braintree District traditionally has a relatively small proportion of employment, has seen some strong growth in recent years. This may be a growth sector in the future.

5.4 Colchester is the dominant urban centre within the Essex Haven Gateway. The Borough has developed a strong economy, linked to its "central place" functions and to the town's historic character, cultural activities and the university. Major retail and leisure services are also located both within and adjacent to Colchester town.

5.5 Health, education and retail each provide over 10% of employee jobs and collectively contribute 42% to the Borough's total employment. A further six major Groups each account for between 5 – 10% of total jobs: Manufacturing; Construction; Accommodation and Food Services; Professional, Scientific & Technical; Business Administration & Support Services; and Arts, entertainment, recreation, etc.

5.6 Tendring District has a diverse economy with local employment across a range of activities. Health, retail and education are the largest sectors in terms of the number of jobs and together represent 45% of the District's total employment.

5.7 Within the western part of Tendring district, the economy and labour market of Manningtree is influenced by its relative proximity to Colchester and good transport links to London. The interior of the District is largely rural and is characterised by a high-quality environment, interspersed with small settlements.

5.8 Opportunities have been identified for Tendring to develop potential future strengths in offshore wind and the care and assisted living sector.

5.9 As part of the work to assess housing requirements, an analysis of economic forecasts was undertaken together with demographic projections to establish the inter-relationship between population growth, forecasts of new jobs and the number of new homes needed to accommodate these levels of growth. Employment forecasts have been developed using two standard models (East of England Forecasting Model (EEFM) and Experian 2016) which forecast total job growth for each of the local authorities based on past trends. Each local authority has been advised on the most appropriate modelling figure to use in the context of reconciling job and housing demand. The forecast growth figures for the housing area for the period 2013-2037 are as set

out in Policy SP5. Employment Land Needs Assessments have been carried out by each authority which set out the amount of employment land that is required within the Plan period. In terms of specific B use land provision, each local authority has undertaken work to establish what quantum of employment land would be required within the Plan period to meet the demand identified below for additional B use employment land. These B use employment areas are distributed between each local authority area and based on achieving a sustainable balance between jobs and the available labour force through population growth. As noted above, calculations of employment land required are affected by a range of issues that lead to different employment land portfolios for each local authority area, resulting in a proportionately greater quantum of new floorspace per job in Braintree and Tendring than in Colchester. This is a function of the prominence of higher density office requirements in Colchester and lower density logistics and industrial uses in Braintree and Tendring. The table in Policy SP5 below sets out the three authorities' employment land (B Class uses) requirements for the period 2016 – 33 for two plausible scenarios, baseline and higher growth These two bookends provide flexibility to allow for each authority's supply trajectory to reflect their differing requirements. Site specific employment allocations meeting the needs of different sectors in each local authority are set out in Section 2 of their Local Plan.

5.10 Braintree, Colchester and Tendring commissioned work to explore the employment opportunities associated with the development of innovative Garden Communities based on the likely demographic profile of these new communities and to develop quantified scenarios for future employment growth. The consultants concluded that assuming political commitment and proactive delivery on the part of local authorities, Garden Communities had the potential to deliver one job per household, in line with the Garden Communities charter, and to support employment growth in surrounding areas. The Tendring Colchester Border Garden Community is considered to perform well in employment terms given the opportunities provided by its location adjacent to the University Essex.

5.11 Employment forecasts for the three authorities accordingly factor in the longer-term aspirations for employment growth arising from the positive spin-offs associated with Garden Communities. It is important to note, however, that while job numbers can be expected to grow at a consistent rate, current trends point to overall lower requirements for additional B1 floorspace. This reflects the growth of home working enabled by enhanced digital connectivity; the continuing decline of manufacturing with its need for large floor areas; and the prevalence of 'hot desking' leading to lower requirements for office floorspace.

Policy SP 5

Employment

A strong, sustainable and diverse economy will be promoted across North Essex with the local planning authorities pursuing a flexible approach to economic sectors showing growth potential across the Plan period.

In order to meet the requirements for office, research & development, industrial, storage and distribution uses and to maintain appropriate flexibility in provision to meet the needs of different sectors, Section 2 of each plan will allocate employment land to ensure that provision is made within the ranges set out in the table below.

Hectares of employment land required for office, research & development, industrial, storage and distribution uses**:**

	Baseline	**Higher Growth Scenario**
Braintree	20.9	43.3
Colchester	22.0	30
Tendring	12.0	20.0
North Essex	**54.9**	**93.3**

Infrastructure and Connectivity

6 Infrastructure and Connectivity

6.1 A coordinated and integrated approach to infrastructure planning and delivery is required to implement the vision for North Essex. Provision of appropriate and timely infrastructure to support growth will be central to the area's continuing prosperity, attractiveness and sustainability. Section 1 of the Local Plan highlights strategic and cross-boundary infrastructure, identifying the strategic transport infrastructure projects required to underpin delivery of the planned growth in the area including the proposed Garden Community, and sets priorities for other infrastructure requirements such as education, healthcare, digital connectivity, water supply and wastewater infrastructure and treatment. Section 2 of the Local Plan contains the infrastructure requirements for allocations made in that section of the plan. The Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) provides the phasing and costing of infrastructure requirements for the Garden Communities and the Section 2 allocations required within the plan period.The infrastructure planning process will include the identification of funding sources, and may include using appropriate mechanisms of shared public sector delivery financing mechanisms and the implementation of a strategic infrastructure tariff or other suitable mechanisms to apply across North Essex.

A Garden Community

6.2 The challenge in the Garden Community will be to create a community in which people move around in a different way to most of the existing towns in North Essex . Networks need to give priority to people for short everyday trips to link people to work, education, retail, leisure, creating an independent safe environment.

6.3 The new garden community will seek to manage travel demand, providing retailing, jobs, services and facilities within the site to help reduce the need to travel, and integrate and connect with the rest of North Essex and beyond through transport infrastructure and measures that promote sustainable travel patterns and reduce adverse impacts on the highway network. The North Essex Garden Communities Charter seeks to ensure that land use planning of the new community maximises the provision and use of sustainable transport internally and connects externally to key urban centres. Given the Charter's commitment to the timely delivery of infrastructure, policies SP8-9 will ensure that key transport projects align with housing and employment delivery.

6.4 To maximise the use of public transport new forms of high quality rapid transit networks will be provided to serve existing urban centres such as Colchester; key destinations such as the University of Essex; and key transport interchanges in North Essex. To achieve the desired step change in sustainable transport, policy will require that this infrastructure will be funded and its delivery phased to align with the development phases.

B Transportation and Travel

6.5 North Essex is well placed in the context of connections by road, rail, air and sea to the wider region and beyond, and these connections will need to be strengthened as part of developing sustainable transport networks.

6.6 The challenge is to provide North Essex with a sustainable transport system that provides good access to jobs and services, to support economic growth. Growth promoted through the new Local Plans, particularly via large scale new developments where delivery will extend beyond the plan period, provides an opportunity to prioritise, facilitate and deliver larger scale transport infrastructure projects that can significantly improve connectivity across and within the area. A focus on sustainable transport in and around urban areas and the Garden Community will positively alter travel patterns and behaviour to reduce reliance on the private car.

6.7 The Local Plans seek to improve transport infrastructure to enable the efficient movement of people, goods and ensure that new development is accessible by sustainable forms of transport. Measures designed to encourage people to make sustainable travel choices such as better public transport provision, car clubs, electric vehicle charging points and provision of cycle links and foot ways will also be required to achieve such a change. It will also help to enhance air quality and improve health and well-being.

6.8 Braintree, Colchester and Tendring will continue to work closely with government departments, Highways England, Essex County Council, Network Rail, rail and bus operators, developers and other partners to better integrate all forms of transport and improve roads and public transport and to promote cycling and walking. Key projects during the plan period will see improvements to the A12, A120, Great Eastern Main Line including rail services, and provision of rapid transit connections in the Garden Community and the adjacent urban areas. An integrated and sustainable transport system will be delivered that supports economic growth and helps deliver the best quality of life.

The Inter-Urban Road Network

6.9 The A12 is set to have major improvements as part of the Government's Roads Investment Strategy (RIS1 and RIS), with the aim of improving capacity and relieving congestion. The A12 is being widened between junction 19 (Chelmsford) and junction 25 (A120 interchange) to increase safety, improve journey time reliability, provide a benefit to the local road network, and in doing so support long term sustainable growth. Highways England (HE) has announced its preferred route between junction 19 and 23 (October 2019) and between junction 23 and 25 in August 2020. The A12 J19 to J25 widening scheme will go ahead as part of the Road Investment Strategy 2 (RIS2) programme, and is now a fully funded scheme. It is expected the route will be open for traffic in 2027 – 2028. RIS2 stated that the A12 scheme will need to take account of the evolving proposals for the A120 Braintree to A12 improvements, and any potential future road link to the improvements for the A120 will be incorporated into the A12 scheme.

6.10 The A120 is a key east-west corridor across Essex providing access to London Stansted Airport in the west to the Harwich ports in the east and serving the economies of Braintree, Colchester and Tendring, with links to Chelmsford via the A130.

6.11 Consultation on A120 route improvement options between Braintree and the A12 ended in March 2017. ECC has identified a favoured route which has been recommended to Highways England and the Department of Transport for inclusion in Road Investment Strategy 2 (RIS2), which is the next funding period for the strategic road network and will run from 2020 to 2025. In addition a series of short term interventions will be delivered along the route to improve safety and relieve congestion. The A120 from the A12 to Harwich is subject to a Highways England

Route Based Strategy and improvements to this section of road are expected over the plan period. ECC and Highways England have progressed work with regards a new and improved A120 between Braintree and the A12. The new A120 is necessary to help address the volume of existing A120 movements which by far exceeds the current standard of carriageway provision. The route will be instrumental in catering for growth in the corridor and will provide a better route for freight traffic, improve safety and relieve existing communities from a range of externalities such as through traffic, noise, severance and poor air quality. ECC has identified its favoured Route D which would join the A12 south of Kelvedon. In March 2020 the government announced its Road Investment Strategy (RIS2) which included a commitment to progressing further development work on the A120 dualling to prepare the scheme for delivery. The A120 dualling scheme will be considered for inclusion in the RIS3 programme (2025 – 2030), and is now considered a pipeline project to be progressed by Highways England.

Rail

6.12 The Anglia Route Study prepared by Network Rail (March 2016) shows that while capacity varies along the Great Eastern Main Line, capacity to accommodate growth is limited and is particularly constrained in peak times from Chelmsford to London. Improvements are required along the line to accommodate growth and provide a faster more competitive service across the region.

6.13 The Study identifies a package of improvements necessary to respond to the need for increased capacity, which are seen as priorities to enable growth, improve services and journey reliability.

6.14 A franchise was awarded to Greater Anglia for passenger services in the region which commenced in 2018 followed by the replacement of the entire fleet of trains to add capacity.

Public Transport, Walking and Cycling

6.15 Alternative forms of transport to the private car (public transport, walking, and cycling) to travel to work and other trips are essential in managing congestion and to accommodate sustainable growth. The levels of growth proposed in the Local Plans will require that the consequent need to travel is managed. Travel planning and smarter choices initiatives will be promoted to ensure that all residents have good access to local jobs, services and facilities, preferably by either walking or cycling. For longer trips and in rural areas where there are fewer local services and employment opportunities, public transport will be promoted.

6.16 Essex County Council prioritises passenger transport (bus, minibus, taxi and community transport) according to the 'Getting Around in Essex Strategy'. The County Council will work in partnership with stakeholders to improve bus services and their supporting infrastructure to provide a real alternative to the private car. This will be achieved by identifying opportunities for a better bus network (routes, frequency, community based services); integrating school and commercial bus networks; the implementation of travel planning (work, business, school and health); provision of digital information measures; provision of park and ride; and supporting the growth in key commuter and inter urban routes. Conventional local bus services, and in particular improving existing services, will be an important part of promoting sustainable travel across North Essex, and will complement the new high quality rapid transit network.

6.17 Through implementation of the Essex Cycling Strategy (2016), Cycling Action Plans have been prepared in all the NEAs to increase cycle levels; identify safety issues; identify gaps on key routes; identify ways of closing gaps; and create better cycle connectivity to key employment areas, development zones and schools. The provision of continuous cycle routes and a coherent cycle network will encourage people to make short trips by bicycle rather than by car.

Policies and Delivery Mechanisms for Sustainable Transport

6.18 Creating development that is accessible by different modes of transport, especially walking and cycling and the use of public transport is essential to promoting sustainable development as it reduces car dependency. An important policy tool to achieve this is a people orientated transport hierarchy i.e. prioritising walking and providing access for people with mobility impairment; cycling; public transport; cars (for occupiers on site and visitors); powered two wheelers; and commercial vehicles). The modal hierarchy will be used to ensure that if not all modes can be satisfactorily accommodated, those towards the top of the hierarchy are considered first and given greater priority.

6.19 Sustainable transport management will be based on promoting modes which minimise environmental impact and promote social inclusion. It is important that developments are well located in relation to existing walking, cycling and public transport networks, and where appropriate provide enhanced facilities, as this will ensure that there is the maximum potential to use these modes as attractive alternatives to cars.

C Social Infrastructure

Education

6.20 New development must provide for the educational needs of new communities and this is set out in more detail within the Infrastructure Delivery Plan. This will involve the expansion of existing schools where feasible and the construction of new schools, together with provision for special educational needs, early years and childcare places. Education requirements will need to be based on a strong understanding of future pupil numbers, with co-operation between county, district and borough councils. A range of educational opportunities will need to be addressed as part of a sustainable growth strategy, including practical vocational training, apprenticeships, and further and higher education.

6.21 New schools are an important place-making component of Garden Communities where early provision is usually critical in providing core social infrastructure to help a new community thrive, improve social integration and support the creation of sustainable travel patterns and a healthy environment.

Healthcare

6.22 Local authorities have a role in creating a healthy community. The North Essex Authorities will work closely with relevant stakeholders such as the NHS, Public Health and local health partnerships, developers and communities to ensure that future development in North Essex takes into account the need to improve health and wellbeing of local residents (and workers) including access to appropriate health and care infrastructure to support new and growing

communities. Requirements are set out in more detail within the Infrastructure Delivery Plan. This will be particularly important given the ageing profile of existing and future residents. There is already a need for more and better quality health care facilities across North Essex with some areas having relatively poor access to health care facilities. The Garden Community will provide the conditions for a healthy community through the pattern of development, good urban design, good access to local services and facilities; green open space and safe places for active play and food growing, and which is accessible by walking and cycling and public transport. Support will be given to meet cross-boundary need for hospice facilities.

D Digital Connectivity

6.23 The NPPF indicates how high quality communications infrastructure is essential for economic growth and social well-being The availability of high speed and reliable broadband, particularly in rural areas, is a key factor in unlocking new development opportunities and ensuring that people can access services online and work from home. The Government is committed to making gigabit-enabling connectivity available to all premises in the UK by 2025 and the Local Plan can contribute towards achieving this goal by requiring developers to ensure such technology is in place.

6.24 Fast broadband connections and telecommunications are an increasingly important requirement to serve all development. New development should contribute to the creation of a comprehensive and effective network in both urban and rural areas to promote economic competitiveness and to reduce the need to travel. The priority is to secure gigabit-enabling connectivity to all existing and new developments. Developers are encouraged to engage with communication network providers at the earliest opportunity. Where provision is possible preference is indicated for open-access infrastructure, enabling multiple service providers access to end users.

E Water Supply and Wastewater

6.25 The authorities will need to work with Anglian Water, Affinity Water, Environment Agency and developers to ensure sufficient capacity and provision of an adequate water supply and foul drainage and wastewater treatment to support growing communities as outlined in the Integrated Water Management Strategy and Infrastructure Delivery Plan. This will be particularly important as water supplies continue to be threatened by climate change and pressures from continuing growth and development. Water provisions need to be protected and it is essential for adequate water and wastewater infrastructure to be in place to accommodate the demands of growth and development in accordance with the Water Framework Directive and the Habitats Directive. The new Garden Community has the opportunity to minimise demand and wastewater generation, through exploring opportunities at both the strategic and local level.

Policy SP 6

Infrastructure & Connectivity

All development must be supported by the provision of the infrastructure, services and facilities that are identified to serve the needs arising from the development.

The requirements in section A of this policy apply only to the Tendring / Colchester Borders Garden Community, whilst the remaining sections B, C, D and E apply to all allocations and development proposals in the North Essex Authorities area.

A. Tendring / Colchester Borders Garden Community

1. The Development Plan Document (DPD) for the Tendring / Colchester Borders Garden Community will include:

a) An infrastructure delivery strategy and phasing plan that sets out how infrastructure, services and facilities will be provided. Infrastructure delivery will align with each development phase and be supported by suitable mechanisms to deliver the infrastructure both on and off-site;

b) Details of the design and delivery of Route 1 of the rapid transit system, and a programme for the integration of the garden community into the system. The route will be designed to accommodate future route enhancements and technology improvements; and

c) Target modal shares for each transport mode and details of sustainable transport measures to support their achievement.

2. Before any planning approval is granted for development forming part of the Tendring / Colchester Borders Garden Community, the following strategic transport infrastructure must have secured planning consent and funding approval:

a) A120-A133 link road: and

b) Route 1 of the rapid transit system as defined in the North Essex Rapid Transit System: From Vision to Plan document (July 2019).

3. Sustainable transport measures will be provided from first occupation at the Tendring / Colchester Borders Garden Community to support the achievement of the target modal shares as defined in the DPD for the garden community.

4. Other strategic infrastructure requirements for the Tendring / Colchester Borders Garden Community are set out in sections D, E and F of Policy SP9, and will be further defined in the DPD for the garden community.

B. Transportation and Travel

The local planning authorities will work with government departments, Highways England, Essex County Council, Network Rail, rail and bus operators, developers and other partners to deliver the following;

- Changes in travel behaviour by applying the modal hierarchy and increasing opportunities for sustainable modes of transport that can compete effectively with private vehicles;
- A comprehensive network of segregated walking and cycling routes linking key centres of activity;
- Improved urban and inter-urban public transport, and new and innovative ways of providing public transport, including:
    - high quality rapid transit networks and connections in and around urban areas with links to the new garden community;
    - maximising the use of the local rail network to serve existing communities and locations for large-scale growth;
    - a bus network providing a high-frequency, reliable and efficient service, integrated with other transport modes serving areas of new demand;
    - promoting wider use of community transport schemes;
- Increased rail capacity, reliability and punctuality, and reduced overall journey times by rail;
- New and improved road infrastructure and strategic highway connections to reduce congestion and provide more reliable journey times along the A12, A120 and A133, specifically:
    - Improved access to and capacity of junctions on the A12 and other main roads;
    - A dualled A120 from Braintree to the A12.
- Innovative strategies for the management of private car use and parking including the promotion of car clubs and car sharing, and provision of electric car charging points.

C. Social Infrastructure

The local planning authorities will work with relevant providers and developers to facilitate the delivery of a wide range of social infrastructure required for healthy, active and inclusive communities, minimising negative health and social impacts, both in avoidance and mitigation, as far as is practicable.

Education

- Sufficient school places will be provided in the form of expanded or new primary and secondary schools together with early years and childcare facilities that are phased with new development, with larger developments setting aside land and/or contributing to the cost of delivering land for new schools where required.
- Practical vocational training, apprenticeships, and further and higher education will be provided and supported.

Health and Wellbeing

- Healthcare infrastructure will be provided as part of new developments of appropriate scale in the form of expanded or new facilities including primary and acute care; pharmacies; dental surgeries; opticians; supporting community services including hospices, treatment and counselling centres.
- Require new development to maximise its positive contribution in creating healthy communities and minimise its negative health impacts, both in avoidance and mitigation, as far as is practicable.
- The conditions for a healthy community will be provided through the pattern of development, good urban design, access to local services and facilities; green open space and safe places for active play and food growing, and which are all accessible by walking, cycling and public transport.

D. Digital Connectivity

Comprehensive digital access to support business and community activity will be delivered through the roll-out of ultrafast broadband across North Essex to secure the earliest availability of full fibre connections for all existing and new developments (residential and non-residential). All new properties will allow for the provision for ultrafast broadband in order to allow connection to that network as and when it is made available.

E. Water & Waste water

The local planning authorities will work with Anglian Water, Affinity Water, the Environment Agency and developers to ensure that there is sufficient capacity in the water supply and waste water infrastructure to serve new development. Where necessary, improvements to water infrastructure, waste water treatment and off-site drainage should be made ahead of the occupation of dwellings to ensure compliance with environmental legislation.

Creating Quality Places

7 Creating Quality Places

7.1 The North Essex area has a great variety of natural environments, and wonderful towns and villages. It is critical that new development must incorporate high standards of place-making along with urban and architectural design to respect the character of these environments. Major new developments will be planned carefully with the use of masterplans and design codes where appropriate.

7.2 Networks of green and blue infrastructure should be provided across new developments, linking new developments within existing networks of open space. These areas can be multi use, providing space for natural species and habitats as well as space for informal recreation, walking, cycling and equestrian links.

7.3 This requirement for high design standards will apply across all scales of new development as well as to infrastructure projects. Enhancements to the public realm, landscaping measures and attention to architectural detail will be important features that the authorities will wish to see included in new developments. Strategic scale and more local green infrastructure can make a vital contribution to quality of place, biodiversity gains, alleviating recreational pressure, and health outcomes if properly integrated into the design and delivery of new development. The Defra biodiversity accounting metric 2.0, or future iterations of this, can be used to accurately assess habitat impacts. Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) provide abundant opportunities to introduce wildflower strips and soft landscaping to a development or urban area. This not only brings an attractive feature to the area for people but acts as a wildlife corridor, connecting the rivers, ditches, hedges, verges and gardens, allowing movement of wildlife throughout an area, connecting to the wider environment and therefore greatly enhancing the biodiversity value of the site.

Policy SP 7

Place Shaping Principles

All new development must meet high standards of urban and architectural design. Development frameworks, masterplans, design codes, and other design guidance documents will be prepared in consultation with stakeholders where they are needed to support this objective.

All new development should reflect the following place shaping principles, where applicable:

- Respond positively to local character and context to preserve and enhance the quality of existing places and their environs;
- Provide buildings that exhibit individual architectural quality within well-considered public and private realms;
- Protect and enhance assets of historical or natural value;
- Incorporate biodiversity creation and enhancement measures;
- Create well-connected places that prioritise the needs of pedestrians, cyclists and public transport services above use of the private car;
- Provide a mix of land uses, services and densities with well-defined public and private spaces to create sustainable well-designed neighbourhoods;
- Enhance the public realm through additional landscaping, street furniture and other distinctive features that help to create a sense of place;
- Provide streets and spaces that are overlooked and active and promote inclusive access;
- Include parking facilities that are well integrated as part of the overall design and are adaptable if levels of private car ownership fall;
- Provide an integrated and connected network of biodiverse public open space and green and blue infrastructure, thereby helping to alleviate recreational pressure on designated sites;
- Include measures to promote environmental sustainability including addressing energy and water efficiency, and provision of appropriate water and wastewater and flood mitigation measures including the use of open space to provide flora and fauna rich sustainable drainage solutions; and
- Protect the amenity of existing and future residents and users with regard to noise, vibration, smell, loss of light, overbearing and overlooking.

Cross Boundary Garden Community

8 Cross Boundary Garden Community

8.1 A key element of the spatial growth strategy for North Essex is the development of a new sustainable garden community.

8.2 Garden communities were amongst a range of options which were considered by the local authorities to deliver their housing and employment needs. A number of sites of sufficient scale to accommodate a garden community were identified through the Call for Sites, the Strategic Land Availability Assessment (SLAA) and wider evidence gathering processes by each of the local authorities. All these options were evaluated and the assessments can be seen as part of the Sustainability Appraisal.

8.3 An Appropriate Assessment has also been completed to consider the effects of proposals in Section 1 on the integrity of the European sites either alone or in combination with other plans and projects. At the Screening Stage the likely significant effects on European Sites, either alone or in combination with other plan and projects, were loss of offsite habitat, recreational impacts and water quality. These issues were further considered through the Appropriate Assessment.

- Loss of off-site habitat - To mitigate for the loss of off-site habitat, the Appropriate Assessment identified the need for wintering bird surveys for the Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community as part of any project level development proposals and masterplanning, to determine the sites individual importance for golden plover and lapwing and inform mitigation proposals. Depending on the findings of the wintering bird surveys, development may need to be phased to take into account the cumulative numbers of SPA birds. In the unlikely but possible event that cumulative numbers of SPA birds affected are likely to exceed the threshold of significance (i.e >1% of the associated European Site), appropriate mitigation in the form of habitat creation and management in perpetuity, either on-site or through provision of strategic sites for these species elsewhere, will be required. Where that mitigation requires the creation and management of suitably located habitat, feeding productivity for these SPA species should be maximised, and such mitigatory habitat would need to be provided and fully functional prior to development which would affect significant numbers of SPA birds.

- Recreational Impacts - To mitigate for any increase in recreational pressures at the European sites, the Appropriate Assessment recommended the production of Recreational disturbance Avoidance and Mitigation Strategies (RAMS) for the Colne & Blackwater, Stour and Orwell SPAs/Ramsar sites and Essex Estuaries SAC.

- Water quality – To ensure that the water quality of the European Sites are not adversely affected by growth proposals in Section 1, the Appropriate Assessment recommended the inclusion of policy safeguards to ensure that adequate water treatment capacity exists prior

to developments proceeding and a commitment that the phasing of development would not exceed water and sewage infrastructure capacity and that the necessary infrastructure upgrades would be in place prior to developments coming forward.

- The three authorities are committed to implementing the recommendations in the Section 1 Appropriate Assessment and these will be further progressed through the Strategic Growth DPDs.

8.4 Due to the scale of development proposed across North Essex and the infrastructure constraints which exist in many of the existing main settlements, new garden communities were considered the most deliverable and sustainable option, providing a major long-term supply of new homes if they could be delivered to the right standards at the right time.

8.5 A new community will address housing and employment growth planned for North Essex within the plan period and beyond in a sustainable way that meets the vision and strategic objectives, and provides a quality of development and community that would not occur in the absence of a holistic approach to planning and delivery. In the absence of commitment and a policy framework that secures the principles of garden communities development in the identified location would not be acceptable. Other options for meeting the growth would have to be considered.

8.6 The Tendring/Colchester Borders Garden Community will be a planned new settlement that responds directly to the regional, local and individual site context and opportunities to create development underpinned by a series of interrelated principles which are based on the Town and Country Planning Association (TCPA) Garden City Principles, adapted for the specific North Essex context as set out in the North Essex Garden Communities Charter.

8.7 The Garden Community is located within a Minerals Safeguarding Area. In line with the Essex Minerals Local Plan, the Mineral Planning Authority requires a Minerals Resource Assessment to be undertaken to assess if the sites contain a minerals resource that would require extraction prior to development. Should the viability of extraction be proven, the mineral shall be worked in accordance with the phased delivery of the non-mineral development.

Policy SP 8

Development & Delivery of a New Garden Community in North Essex

The following new garden community is proposed at the broad location shown on Map 10.2.

Tendring/Colchester Borders, a new garden community which will deliver between 2,200 and 2,500 homes, 7 hectares of employment land and provision for Gypsies and Travellers within the Plan period (as part of an expected overall total of between 7,000 and 9,000 homes and 25 hectares of employment land to be delivered beyond 2033).

The garden community will be holistically and comprehensively planned with a distinct identity that responds directly to its context and is of sufficient scale to incorporate a range of homes, employment, education & community facilities, green space and other uses to enable residents to meet the majority of their day-to-day needs, reducing the need for outward commuting. It will be comprehensively planned from the outset, with delivery phased to achieve the whole development, and will be underpinned by a comprehensive package of infrastructure.

A Development Plan Document (DPD) will be prepared for the garden community, containing policies setting out how the new community will be designed, developed and delivered in phases, in accordance with the principles in paragraphs i-xiv below. No planning consent for development forming part of the garden community will be granted until the DPD has been adopted. All development forming part of the garden community will comply with these principles.

i. Community and stakeholder participation in the design and delivery of the garden community from the outset and a long-term community engagement and activation strategy.
ii. The public sector working pro-actively and collaboratively with the private sector to design, and bring forward the garden community, deploying new models of delivery where appropriate and ensuring that the cost of achieving the following is borne by landowners and those promoting the developments: (a) securing a high-quality of place-making, (b) ensuring the timely delivery of both on-site and off-site infrastructure required to address the impact of the new community, and (c) providing and funding a mechanism for future stewardship, management, maintenance and renewal of community infrastructure and assets. Where appropriate, developers will be expected to contribute towards publicly-funded infrastructure, including a contribution towards the A120-A133 link road. Given the scale of and time period for development of the new garden community, the appropriate model of delivery will need to secure a comprehensive approach to delivery in order to achieve the outcomes outlined in points (a) - (c) in this paragraph, avoid a piecemeal approach to development, provide the funding and phasing of both development and infrastructure, and be sustainable and accountable in the long term.
iii. Promotion and execution of the highest quality of planning, design and management of the built and public realm so that the Garden Community is characterised as a distinctive place that capitalises on local assets, respects its context,and establishes an environment that promotes health, happiness and well-being.
iv. Sequencing of development and infrastructure provision (both on-site and off-site) to ensure that the latter is provided ahead of or in tandem with the development it supports to address

the impacts of the new garden community, meet the needs of its residents and establish sustainable travel patterns. To ensure new development does not have an adverse effect on any European Protected or nationally important sites and complies with environmental legislation (notably the Water Framework Directive and the Habitats Directive), the required waste water treatment capacity must be available ahead of the occupation of dwellings.

v. Development that provides for a truly balanced and inclusive community and meets the housing needs of local people including a mix of dwelling sizes, tenures and types, provision for self- and custom-built homes, provision for the aging population; and provision for Gypsies and Travellers; and that meets the requirements of those most in need including the provision of 30% affordable housing in the garden community.

vi. Provide and promote opportunities for employment within the new community and within sustainable commuting distance of it.

vii. Plan the new community around a step change in integrated and sustainable transport systems for the North Essex area that put walking, cycling and rapid public transit networks and connections at the heart of growth in the area, encouraging and incentivising more sustainable active travel patterns.

viii. Structure the new community to create sociable, vibrant and walkable neighbourhoods with equality of access for all to a range of community services and facilities including health, education, retail, culture, community meeting spaces, multi-functional open space, sports and leisure facilities.

ix. Develop specific garden community parking approaches and standards that help promote the use of sustainable transport and make efficient use of land.

x. Create distinctive environments which are based on comprehensive assessments of the surrounding environment and that celebrate natural and historic environments and systems, utilise a multi-functional green-grid to create significant networks of new green infrastructure including a new country park at the garden community, provide a high degree of connectivity to existing corridors and networks and enhance biodiversity.

xi. Secure a smart and sustainable approach that fosters climate resilience and a 21st century environment in the design and construction of the garden community to secure net gains in local biodiversity, highest standards of energy efficiency and innovation in technology to reduce the impact of climate change, the incorporation of innovative water efficiency/re-use measures (with the aim of being water neutral in areas of serious water stress), and sustainable waste and mineral management.

xii. Ensure that the costs and benefits of developing a garden community are shared by all landowners, with appropriate measures being put in place to equalise the costs and land contributions.

xiii. Consideration of potential on-site mineral resources through a Minerals Resource Assessment as required by the Minerals Planning Authority.

xiv. Establishment at an early stage in the development of the garden community, of appropriate and sustainable long-term governance and stewardship arrangements for community assets including green space, public realm areas and community and other relevant facilities; such arrangements to be funded by the development and include community representation to ensure residents have a stake in the long term development, stewardship and management of their community.

Policy SP 9

Tendring/Colchester Borders Garden Community

The Development Plan Document (DPD) required for the Tendring / Colchester Borders Garden Community by Policy SP8 will define the boundary of the new community and the amount of development it will contain. The adoption of the DPD will be contingent on the completion of a Heritage Impact Assessment carried out in accordance with Historic England guidance. The Heritage Impact Assessment will assess the impact of proposed allocations upon the historic environment, inform the appropriate extent and capacity of the development and establish any mitigation measures necessary. The DPD will be produced in consultation with the local community and stakeholders and will include a concept plan showing the disposition and quantity of future land-uses, and give a three dimensional indication of the urban design and landscape parameters which will be incorporated into any future planning applications; together with a phasing and implementation strategy which sets out how the rate of development will be linked to the provision of the necessary social, physical and environmental infrastructure to ensure that the respective phases of the development do not come forward until the necessary infrastructure has been secured. The DPD and any application for planning permission for development forming part of the garden community must be consistent with the requirements set out in this policy.

For the Plan period up to 2033, housing delivery from the garden community, irrespective of its actual location, will be distributed equally between Colchester Borough Council and Tendring District Council. If, after taking into account its share of delivery from the garden community, either of those authorities has a shortfall in delivery against the housing requirement for its area, it will need to make up the shortfall within its own area. It may not use the other authority's share of delivery from the garden community to make up the shortfall.

The DPD and any planning application will address the following principles and requirements in the design, development and delivery of the new garden community:

A. Place-Making and Design Quality

1. The development of a new garden community to high standards of design and layout drawing on its context and the considerable assets within its boundaries such as woodland, streams and changes in topography, as well as the opportunities afforded by the proximity of the University of Essex campus to create a new garden community that is innovative, contemporary and technologically enabled, set within a strong green framework with new neighbourhood centres at its heart. It will be designed and developed to have its own identity and be as self-sustaining as possible recognising its location close to the edge of Colchester. It will secure appropriate integration with Colchester and the nearby University of Essex campus by the provision of suitable walking and cycling links and rapid public transport systems and connections to enable residents of the new community to have convenient access to town centre services and facilities in Colchester as well as Elmstead Market. Clear separation will be maintained between the new garden community and the nearby villages of Elmstead Market and Wivenhoe. Safeguarding the important green edge to Colchester

will be essential with a new country park provided along the Salary Brook corridor and incorporating Churn Wood.

2. Detailed masterplans and design guidance, based on a robust assessment of historic and natural environmental constraints and opportunities for enhancement, will be adopted to inform and guide development proposals and planning applications for the garden community.

B. Housing

3. A mix of housing types and tenures including self- and custom-build and starter homes will be provided on the site, including a minimum of 30% affordable housing. The affordable housing will be phased through the development.
4. New residential development will seek to achieve appropriate densities which reflect both context, place-making aspirations and opportunities for increased levels of development around neighbourhood centres and transport hubs.

C. Employment and Jobs

5. The garden community will make provision for a wide range of jobs, skills and training opportunities. The DPD will allocate about 25 hectares of B use employment land within the garden community. This may include provision for office, research & development, light industrial and/or other employment generating uses towards the south of the site in proximity to the existing University of Essex and Knowledge Gateway and provision for office, research & development, industrial, storage and distribution uses towards the north of the site close to the A120.
6. High speed and reliable broadband will be provided and homes will include specific spaces to enable working from home.

D. Transportation

7. A package of measures will be introduced to encourage smarter transport choices to meet the needs of the new community and to maximise the opportunities for sustainable travel. Policy SP6 requires planning consent and full funding approval for the A120-A133 link road and Route 1 of the rapid transit system to have been secured before planning approval is granted for any development at the garden community. Additional transport priorities include the provision of a network of footpaths, cycleways and bridleways to enhance permeability within the site and to access and to access the adjoining areas; park and ride facilities and other effective integrated measures to mitigate the transport impacts of the proposed development on the strategic and local road network. Longer term transport interventions will need to be carefully designed to minimise the impacts on the strategic and local transport network and fully mitigate any environmental or traffic impacts arising from the development.
8. Foot and cycle ways shall be provided throughout the development and connecting with the surrounding urban areas and countryside, including seamlessly linking key development areas to the University of Essex, Hythe station and Colchester Town Centre.

9. Primary vehicular access to the site will be provided off the A120 and A133. Any other road improvements required to meet needs arising from the garden community will be set out in the DPD and further defined as part of the masterplanning process.
10. Other specific transport-related infrastructure requirements identified through the Strategic Growth Development Plan Document and masterplans for this garden community will be delivered in a phased manner.

E. Community Infrastructure

11. District and neighbourhood centres of an appropriate scale will be provided to serve the proposed development. The centres will be located where they will be easily accessible by walking, cycling and public transit to the majority of residents in the garden community.
12. Community meeting places will be provided within the local centres.
13. Increased primary healthcare capacity will be provided to serve the new development as appropriate. This may be by means of new infrastructure or improvement, reconfiguration, extension or relocation of existing medical facilities.
14. A secondary school, primary schools and early-years facilities will be provided to serve the new development.
15. A network of multi-functional green infrastructure will be provided within the garden community incorporating key elements of the existing green assets within the site. It will include community parks, allotments, a new country park, the provision of sports areas with associated facilities; and play facilities.
16. Indoor leisure and sports facilities will be provided within the new community, or contributions made to the improvement of off-site leisure facilities to serve the new development.

F. Other Requirements

17. The delivery of smart, innovative and sustainable water efficiency/re-use solutions that fosters climate resilience and a 21st century approach towards water supply, water and waste water treatment and flood risk management. Taking a strategic approach to flood risk through the use of Strategic Flood Risk Assessments and the updated Climate Projections 2019 and identifying opportunities for Natural Flood Risk Management. Provision of improvements to waste water treatment plant including an upgrade to the Colchester Waste Water Treatment Plan and off-site drainage improvements aligned with the phasing of the development within the plan period and that proposed post 2033. To ensure new development does not have an adverse effect on any European Protected or nationally important site and complies with environmental legislation (notably the Water Framework Directive and the Habitats Directive), the required waste water treatment capacity must be available ahead of the occupation of dwellings.
18. Landscape buffers between the site and existing development in Colchester, Wivenhoe and Elmstead Market.
19. Conserve and where appropriate enhance the significance of heritage assets (including any contribution made by their settings) both within and surrounding the site. Designated heritage assets within the garden community area include Grade II listed Allen's Farmhouse, Ivy Cottage, Lamberts, and three buildings at Hill farmhouse. Designated heritage assets nearby include the grade I listed Church of St Anne and St Lawrence, grade II* listed Wivenhoe

House, Elmstead Hall and Spring Valley Mill and numerous grade II listed buildings as well as the grade II listed Wivenhoe Registered Park and Garden. Harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset should be avoided in the first instance.

20. Avoidance,protection and/or enhancement of biodiversity assets within and surrounding the site; including Bullock Wood SSSI, Ardleigh Gravel Pits SSSI, Wivenhoe Pits SSSI and Upper Colne Marshes SSSI and relevant European protected sites. Contributions will be secured towards mitigation measures in accordance with the Essex Coast Recreational disturbance Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy. Wintering bird surveys will be undertaken at the appropriate time of year as part of the DPD preparation to identify any offsite functional habitat. Should any be identified, development must firstly avoid impacts. Where this is not possible, development must be phased to deliver habitat creation and management either on- or off-site to mitigate any significant impacts. Any such habitat must be provided and fully functional before any development takes place which would affect significant numbers of SPA birds.
21. Provision of appropriate buffers along strategic road and rail infrastructure to protect new development.
22. Provision of appropriate design and infrastructure that incorporates the highest standards of innovation in energy efficiency and technology to reduce impact of climate change, water efficiency (with the aim of being water neutral in areas of serious water stress), and sustainable waste / recycling management facilities.
23. Measures to support the development of the new community including provision of community development support workers (or other provision) for a minimum of ten years from initial occupation of the first homes and appropriate community governance structures.
24. Establishment at an early stage in the development of the garden community, of appropriate and sustainable long-term governance and stewardship arrangements for community assets including green space, public realm areas and community and other relevant facilities; such arrangements to be funded by the development and include community representation to ensure residents have a stake in the long term development, stewardship and management of their community.
25. Allocation of additional land within the garden community, to accommodate University expansion, which is at least equivalent in size to the allocation in the Colchester Local Development Framework Site Allocations document October 2010.

Delivery, Implementation & Monitoring

9 Delivery, Implementation & Monitoring

9.1 The North Essex Authorities will work together to deliver cross-authority strategic proposals contained in section 1 of their plans, including the garden community. This entails consideration of appropriate models for the governance, funding and comprehensive delivery of this innovative large scale and long term growth project in line with the principles set out in policy SP8. In view of the scale and long term nature of the proposed garden community, the authorities intend to have a significant role in how the community is phased and delivered and to ensure that the infrastructure and other supporting measures to support the residents of the new community are delivered in advance of or at the same time as new homes. This should also help ensure delivery throughout different economic cycles.

9.2 The North Essex Authorities will monitor these section 1 policies to ensure that they are effective and delivering the intended outcomes, including their collective implications for the area as a whole. Monitoring of Section 1 objectives and outcomes as outlined in the table below will be assessed regularly by the authorities in their annual Authority Monitoring Reports (AMR), in addition to the monitoring of the individual Section 2 of each Local Plan. It should be noted that where there is an unacceptable delay in delivery of development and/or infrastructure occurs, the local authorities will use mechanisms and powers including establishing locally-led Development Corporations and the use of Compulsory Purchase Orders, to intervene.

9.3 Table 1: Monitoring Requirements for Section 1

Section One Objectives	Section One Policies	Targets	Key Indicators in Authority Monitoring Reports
Providing sufficient new homes Fostering economic	SP1 Presumption in favour of Sustainable Development	Delivery of new development in accordance with the Development Plan	Record of planning decisions including appeals
Providing new and improved infrastructure Addressing education and healthcare needs Ensuring high quality outcomes	SP2 Recreational disturbance Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy	Secure contributions from development towards mitigation measures	Monitor levels of mitigation contributions received
	SP3 Spatial Strategy for North Essex	Deliver a new Garden Community as the most sustainable options for large scale, long term growth	Local authority agreement and delivery of governance, community involvement, stewardship arrangements and funding arrangements for the new Garden Community
	SP4 Meeting Housing Needs	Deliver new housing in line with spatial strategy and Objectively Assessed Need targets	Market and affordable housing completions per annum (net)
	SP5 Employment	Deliver new employment land in line with spatial strategy and evidence base targets	Amount of floorspace development for employment and leisure by type

continued on next page

Table 1: Monitoring Requirements for Section 1 (continued)

Section One Objectives	Section One Policies	Targets	Key Indicators in Authority Monitoring Reports
	SP6 Infrastructure and Connectivity	Delivery of identified infrastructure schemes including transport, education, community, healthcare, green/blue infrastructure and environmental protection Increase modal share of non-motorised transport	Identify and monitor progress of strategic infrastructure projects Monitor modal splits and self-containment via Census and measure traffic levels on key routes
	SP7 Place Shaping Principles	Approved DPDs, masterplans & other planning & design guidance prior to the commencement of development of the new Garden Community. Deliver communities that are sensitively integrated into the existing historic built and natural environment	Monitor availability of DPDs and other planning guidance relative to the submission & determination of planning applications for the development it relates to. Planning permissions granted without objection from relevant statutory consultees and local authority specialist advisors
	SP8 Development and Delivery of a New Garden Community in North Essex	Development and delivery of a new Garden Community	Local authority agreement and delivery of governance, community involvement, stewardship arrangements and funding arrangements for new Garden Community

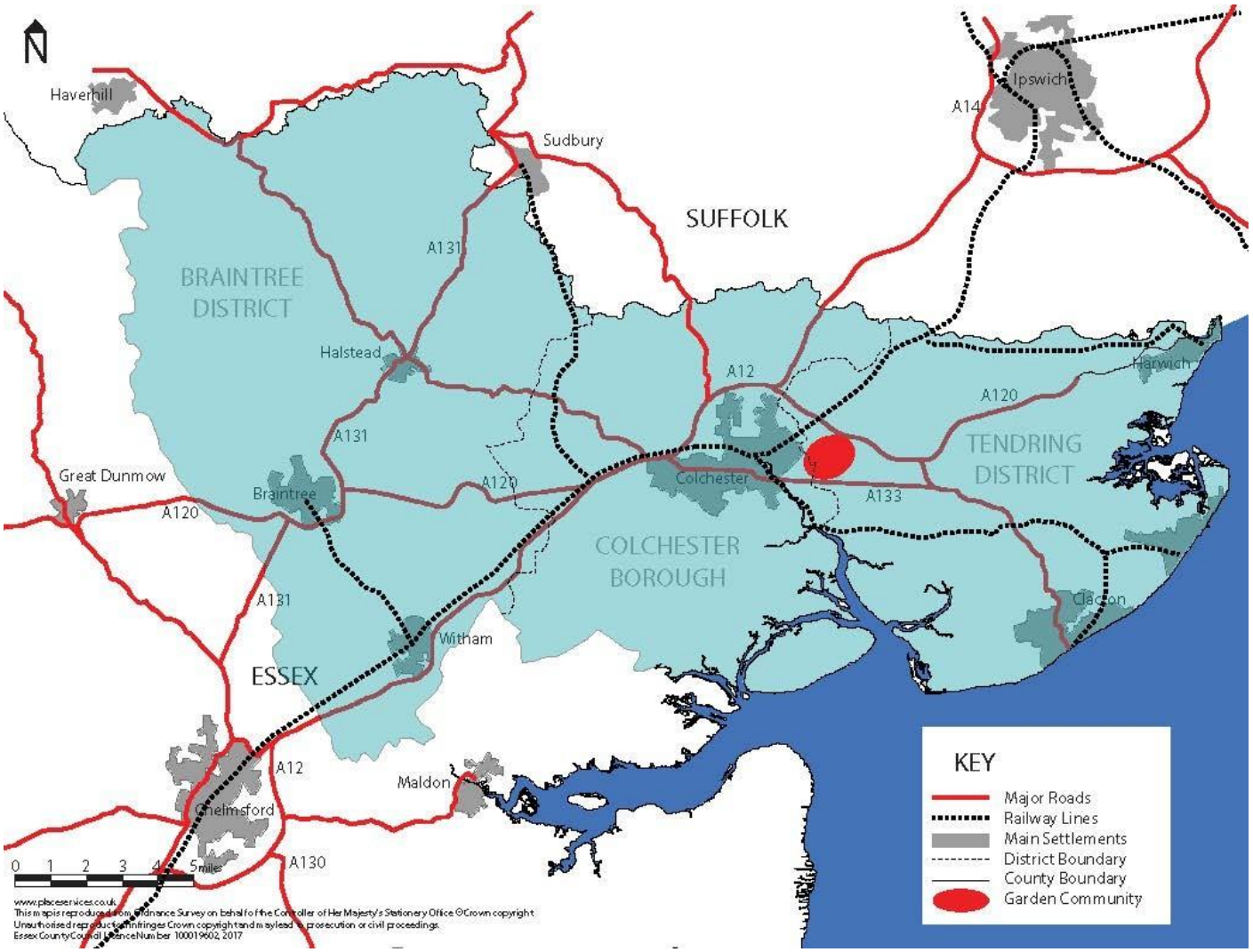
Section One Objectives	Section One Policies	Targets	Key Indicators in Authority Monitoring Reports
	SP9 Tendring/Colchester Borders Garden Community	Deliver a sustainable new community in accordance with guidance as adopted	Delivery rates of all development including supporting infrastructure as documented in housing trajectories and other monitoring data

Appendices & Maps

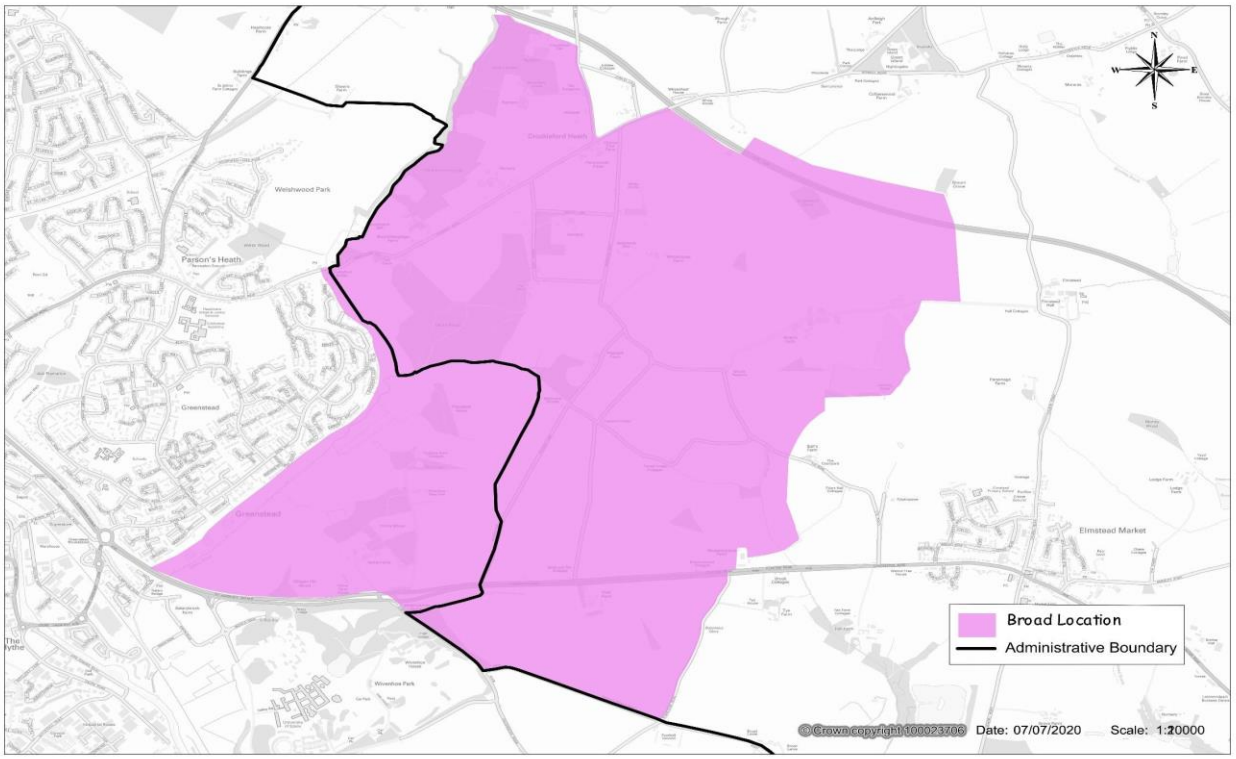
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Appendix A: List of policies superseded by Section 1 of the Plan

Section 1 Local Plan Policy		Policies superseded by the Section 1 Local Plan Policy		
Policy Number	**Policy Title**	**Braintree District Council 2011 Core Strategy**	**Colchester Borough Council Adopted Core Strategy 2014 Focused Review**	**Tendring District Council Adopted 2007 Local Plan**
SP1	Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development	-	-	-
SP2	Recreational disturbance Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy (RAMS)	-	-	-
SP3	Spatial Strategy for North Essex	CS1	H1	QL1
SP4	Meeting Housing Needs	CS3	H1	HG1
SP5	Employment	CS4	CE1	QL4
SP6	Infrastructure and Connectivity	CS11	SD2	-
SP7	Place Shaping Principles	CS9	-	QL8 / QL9 / QL10 / QL11 (in part)
SP8	Development and Delivery of a New Garden Community in North Essex	-	-	-
SP9	Tendring / Colchester Borders Garden Community	-	-	-



10.1 Key Diagram



10.2 Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community - Broad Location

Tendring
District Council

Local Plan
COLCHESTER BOROUGH

Braintree
District
Council
LOCAL
PLAN
Shape your district

Annex B

Colchester
Borough Council

Local Plan

Colchester Borough

Local Plan 2017 – 2033
Section 2 | Adopted July 2022



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1. Introduction

1.1 This Plan is the second section of a two part Local Plan for Colchester, which is a diverse and growing borough, with a vibrant town centre, attractive villages and important natural landscapes. Over the next 15 years the Borough will face many challenges, such as population growth and change, evolving economic trends and the need for more sustainable transportation. The Local Plan addresses these challenges to meet the needs of current and future generations whilst also protecting and enhancing the environment and people's quality of life.

1.2 The Local Plan sets out a vision, strategy, objectives and policies for planning and delivery across the Borough. It is in 2 Sections (contained in separate documents) with Section 1 providing a shared strategic policy context and addressing cross boundary matters for North Essex together with Braintree and Tendring Councils. The North Essex Authorities' Shared Strategic Section 1 Plan comprises the Section 1 of the Colchester Local Plan. This was adopted by Colchester Borough Council on 2 February 2021.

1.3 The second part of the Plan is set out in this document comprising The Colchester Local Plan Section 2 which provides the policy framework, site allocations and development management policies for the Borough up to 2033. This was adopted by Colchester Borough Council in July 2022.

1.4 Taken together, these two sections of the Plan combine to provide a spatial framework that brings together and co-ordinates a range of strategies prepared by the Council, its partners and other agencies and authorities. It includes policies for deciding development proposals. It takes account of projected changes in the economy, employment, housing need, transport demand, and seeks to maintain the quality of the natural and built environment as well as its historic environment. It provides the strategy and policies for shaping the Borough until 2033 and beyond.

1.5 The production of the Local Plan represents years of work, starting with extensive technical evidence, significant public engagement, negotiation and co-operation from many partners and stakeholders including developers, campaign groups and local residents. Finally, it was subject to scrutiny from an Independent Government Inspector from the Planning Inspectorate to ensure the Plan is legally compliant, sound and consistent with national policy. Following Submission in October 2017 and independent Examination in April 2021, the Colchester Local Plan Section 2 was found to be legally compliant and sound subject to Main Modifications which have all been incorporated.

1.6 This Local Plan like all others has benefitted from a significant number of contributors over a number of years. There are 2 individuals who sadly passed away during 2021, who both had a significant influence on shaping and informing the content or process, which has enriched the final Plan:

Tributes

- [redacted] *- (1963 – 2021) Planning Law Partner at Dentons.* [redacted] *worked with the Council and other partners for many years to support and guide the Plan preparation for both Sections of the Local Plan.* [redacted]*s intellect, passion, dedication and pragmatic, solution focused approach to planning provided a steer throughout the process. Without a doubt, the Plan is better for all his contributions.*

- [redacted] *– (1970 - 2021) Principal Planning & Specialists Manager.* [redacted]*worked tirelessly as an Officer at Colchester Borough Council for over 20 years, and it is without doubt a better place for his involvement.* [redacted] *quietly influenced the plan making team with understated contributions to many of the policies, which will ensure his legacy continues to live on for many years to come, well beyond the Plan period.*

Local Plan: The Process

1.7 The Borough cannot be planned in isolation. The Local Plan has been developed in the context of a range of other plans and strategies operating at the national, county, and local levels.

National Planning Guidance

1.8 The Local Plan must reflect the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) issued by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government. Further national guidance on planning policies is provided in Planning Practice Guidance (PPG). The NPPF establishes a presumption in favour of sustainable development, which the Local Planning Authority will implement in making its planning decisions. It is a statutory requirement for the Local Planning Authority to produce planning policies for the Borough. The policies must comply with national planning policy unless there is overwhelming evidence to demonstrate why this is not the case.

South East Local Enterprise Partnership

1.9 To bridge the gap between the national and local levels, business-led Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) have been established across the country. The South East LEP (SELEP) includes the Colchester Borough and comprises the areas of Essex, Kent and East Sussex. Whilst the LEP has no statutory land use planning powers, it is responsible for determining local economic priorities and undertaking activities to encourage economic growth and local job creation.

County Level Plans

1.10 The following County level plans provide a relevant background to the Local Plan.

Essex Local Transport Plan

1.11 The Essex Local Transport Plan contains the Essex Transport Strategy and sets out the 15 year vision to improve travel in the county and underlines the importance of the transport network in achieving sustainable, long term economic growth and enriching the life of residents. It is supplemented by delivery strategies for public transport, highways, cycling and public rights of way.

Economic Plan for Essex and North Essex Economic Strategy

1.12 The Economic Plan for Essex is based on the collective ambitions of all local authorities in Essex with a Strategy for North Essex prepared more recently - The North Essex Economic Strategy, covering Colchester, Braintree, Tendring and Uttlesford, which aims to ensure the area can rise to the economic challenges and opportunities.

Essex Minerals Local Plan

1.13 Essex County Council is the Minerals Planning Authority for the Borough, and is responsible for preparing planning policies, and also for assessing applications for mineral development. The Essex Minerals Local Plan (2014) is a statutory Development Plan and should be read alongside the Colchester Local Plan. The role of the Minerals Local Plan is to identify sites for the extraction of sufficient quantities of mineral within Essex to facilitate development over the Plan period.

1.14 There are active quarry sites in the Borough as well as currently unworked sand and gravel and brick clay deposits which are subject to a Minerals Safeguarding policy within the Minerals Local Plan. The safeguarding policy requires the Minerals Planning Authority – Essex County Council – to be consulted on development proposals covering 5 hectares or more within the sand and gravel minerals safeguarding area and greater than one dwelling for the brick clay safeguarded area. The Minerals Safeguarding Areas which may apply within Colchester Borough are highlighted on the relevant Policies Maps, sign posting to the Essex Minerals Local Plan for more information. Refer to the Essex Mineral Local Plan for information about potential Minerals Safeguarding Areas in parts of the Borough outside the scope of the Local Plan Policies Maps. Regard should be had to the requirements of the Minerals Local Plan where a development falls within a Minerals Safeguarding Area.

1.15 The Minerals Local Plan also designates Mineral Consultation Areas at a distance of 250 metres around active quarries, mineral infrastructure and mineral deposits permitted for extraction. Essex County Council will be required to be consulted on all non-mineral related development within these areas.

Essex and Southend-on-Sea Waste Local Plan

1.16 Essex County Council is the Waste Planning Authority for the Borough, and is responsible for preparing planning policies, and also for assessing applications for waste management development. The Essex and Southend-on-Sea Waste Local Plan (2017) is a statutory Development Plan which should be read alongside the Colchester Local Plan. It sets out where and how waste management developments can occur and is the planning policy against which waste management development planning applications are assessed.

1.17 The Waste Local Plan covers the period to 2033. The Waste Local Plan allocates new waste development at Bellhouse Farm, Stanway; Fingringhoe Quarry and Wivenhoe Quarry. It also identifies Areas of Search to meet the need for additional small scale waste management facilities. These Areas of Search are existing industrial estates within the Borough and are located away from residential and other uses sensitive to amenity impacts such as schools, retail, leisure and office development.

1.18 The Plan also designates Waste Consultation Areas at a distance of 250 metres around waste management facilities. Essex County Council will be required to be consulted on all non-waste related development within these areas.

Borough Strategies

1.19 The Local Plan brings together the spatial elements of a number of key Borough strategies and provides a focus for future development.

Colchester Borough Council Strategic Plan

1.20 This plan sets out the direction and future potential for the Borough, with the aim of making the Borough a vibrant, thriving, prosperous and welcoming place.

Colchester Economic Strategy

1.21 This plan provides an overarching vision and framework for economic interventions in Colchester, including guidance on partnership work and prioritising resources.

Colchester Environmental Sustainability Strategy

1.22 This provides information about the Council's approach to environmental issues. It responds to the increasing importance of environmental issues recognising that the Council has a key role to play at a local and regional level in promoting environmental sustainability.

1.23 Other Strategies which form part of the evidence base, for example, Playing Pitch Strategy, Indoor Sports Strategy, Green Infrastructure Strategy and draft Cultural Strategy also provide guidance and context for planning policy.

Duty to Co-operate

1.24 In preparing the Local Plan, the Local Planning Authority co-operates with a range of other bodies to ensure a co-ordinated approach in the development of its policies in line with national guidance, in the context of strategic cross-boundary matters. These bodies include Essex County Council, the neighbouring districts of Braintree, Tendring, Maldon and Babergh, together with agencies responsible for transport, health and the environment.

1.25 Further information on the duty is provided in The North Essex Authorities' Shared Strategic Section 1 Plan, which discusses the strategic approach to Local Plan issues across Colchester, Braintree and Tendring.

Evidence Base

1.26 Policy development goes hand in hand with the development of an evidence base of research and information. The Evidence Base contains documents from local, county and national levels. National guidance is not listed to avoid repetition, given that the Local Plan has been produced in accordance with national planning policy. The evidence gathered from the documents covering topics including housing, economy, natural and built environment, climate change, transport, infrastructure and site specific matters where relevant, has been employed in the formulation of the Spatial Strategy and Policies. Evidence is kept

under review and updated where necessary. All of the evidence base can be viewed on the Council's website.

Sustainability Appraisal

1.27 Policy development has been carried out in the light of a Sustainability Appraisal, incorporating a Strategic Environmental Assessment. The Sustainability Appraisal tests the sustainability of the Plan options throughout the production process. It does this by considering how different policy choices perform against a range of 'sustainability' criteria. For example, it looks at whether policies or allocations would provide new jobs, make efficient use of land and help to improve health and wellbeing. The Sustainability Appraisal also helps to identify amendments to policies, or measures that could help to minimise any negative impacts identified and maximise the sustainability of the Local Plan.

Habitat Regulations Assessment

1.28 The Habitats Regulations Assessment is the process for determining whether a plan or project will have adverse effects on European sites. The Local Planning Authority carried out a Habitat Regulations Assessment screening opinion and concluded that a high level of growth, regardless of location, has the potential to lead to adverse effects on European sites in the Borough, primarily owing to increased levels of recreational disturbance. The draft Local Plan was re-screened with input from Natural England in 2016, and policies and issues were identified to be assessed for likely significant effect in the appropriate assessment.

1.29 An appropriate assessment was undertaken, which concluded that the Local Plan, alone and in-combination, will not adversely affect the integrity of European sites.

1.30 All this evidence is made publicly available. The Local Planning Authority will keep the evidence base under review and monitor the implementation of the Local Plan's objectives and policies. Monitoring reports on key Local Plan issues will be published on an annual basis and will highlight whether circumstances have changed sufficiently to require a review of the Local Plan in its entirety or a review of selected policies.

Local Plan: Structure of the Plan and other related documents

1.31 Development Plan Documents for Colchester will comprise:

- The Colchester Borough Local Plan setting out the overarching spatial vision for development of the Borough to 2033; broad locations for strategic growth; other detailed allocations; and development management policies. The Local Plan provides the planning framework for the other Documents listed below. The North Essex Authorities Strategic Section 1 Plan outlines policy for strategic growth across North Essex, including a cross-boundary Garden Community,

while this Plan - Colchester Local Plan Section 2 details specific policies and allocations within the Borough. The allocations provided in the plan are shown on the associated Policies Maps.

- A Joint Local Plan (Development Plan Document) is being produced with Tendring District Council which allocates land within a Garden Community. It will also provide relevant policy guidance, and set out policies for the management of development, against which planning applications for the development and use of land will be considered.
- Neighbourhood Plans when adopted/made for different areas of Colchester will form part of the Development Plan and will guide new development in their areas.
- The Essex Minerals Local Plan and Essex and Southend-on-Sea Waste Local Plan, prepared by the County Council, apply to minerals and waste development matters.

Other Colchester Planning Documents

1.32 The Local Plan is accompanied by a number of other planning documents that provide policies, guidance and feedback:

- Policies Maps which show where Local Plan policies apply to specific locations;
- Local Development Scheme (LDS) – this lists and describes all planning policy documents and the timetable for preparing them;
- Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) – sets out how we will consult the public in preparing planning policies;
- Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) – set out in more detail how some of the Local Plan's policies will be applied;
- Authority Monitoring Report (AMR) - provides an annual summary of key statistics that monitor the effectiveness of the Local Plan.
- Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) – A charging schedule may be developed to set out how the CIL will be applied to various categories of development. This is subject to change when the Government announces how it is to proceed with a new Infrastructure Levy.

2. Vision and Objectives for Section Two

Local Characteristics and Key Issues for Colchester

2.1 The unique characteristics of Colchester create specific issues, opportunities and challenges for the future, which need to be addressed by the Local Plan. The sub-regional issues identified in Section1 of the Plan, combined with the following issues for Colchester provide the basis and context for the development of the Section 2 Colchester Vision and Objectives, the Spatial Strategy and Policies.

Making the most of the Borough's location and links between communities

2.2 Spatially, Colchester benefits from its southeast location with good access to London, London Stansted Airport and the port of Harwich. The Borough's population has grown by 17.9% between 2001 and 2015 and was estimated to stand at 183,939 people in mid-2015. The Borough's growing population is accommodated within a spatial structure defined by the urban area at its centre, surrounded by a rural hinterland with three smaller centres, Tiptree, West Mersea and Wivenhoe. While Colchester is less deprived than Essex as a whole, two small areas in Colchester were in the top 10% most deprived in England in 2010, Magnolia in St. Andrew's Ward and St Anne's Estate in St Anne's ward. Sustainable development for the future will require the development of sustainable land use patterns that maximise accessibility between jobs, homes, services and facilities.

Deliver economic growth in response to new challenges and trends

2.3 Colchester has maintained good levels of employment growth over the last two decades with declining industrial employment being offset by a growth in office jobs. Colchester registered 92,300 workforce jobs in 2014 representing an increase of 20% over 1991 levels. This increase was higher than in the UK (14.6%) and similar to the East of England (19.6%) but was lower than employment growth recorded across Essex as a whole (27.9%) over the same period. The challenge for Colchester will be to retain existing office employers and to increase the supply of better-quality modern space catering to small and start-up businesses.

Supporting the Town Centre as the heart of the Borough

2.4 Colchester Town Centre serves as a centre not only for the Borough but for a much wider area of North East Essex, with residents of Braintree, Maldon and Tendring districts travelling into the town to work, shop and use its community facilities. The Town Centre's present character reflects its rich and diverse history dating back to the Iron Age and including its period as the Roman capital of Britain, its importance as a wool and cloth centre in medieval and Tudor times, and its focus as a hub for Victorian and 20th century industry. In addition to its wealth of historic buildings and environments the Town Centre is also valued for its shops; employment opportunities; institutions of learning and culture; and services catering to a wide variety of users. The Local Plan seeks to retain the

pre-eminence and vitality of the Town Centre in the face of changing economic and lifestyle trends and the rapid pace of technological innovation.

Building houses fit for the 21st century

2.5 Colchester delivered 12,644 new homes between 2001/02 and 2014/15 at an average rate of 903 dwellings per year. Given the continuing pressures on the South East housing market, Colchester will need to maintain its good rate of delivery over the next plan period to meet the Objectively Assessed Need figure of 920 houses a year, while also ensuring that increasing quantity is matched with high design quality, a suitable housing mix and sustainable construction.

Improving Accessibility

2.6 The car currently dominates the way people travel, with the 2011 Census showing that the car represents 55% of all journeys to work in the Borough. The Borough's self-containment rate (share of residents who also work within the Borough) was 69% in 2011, with 24,850 employed residents leaving the Borough to work. Of these 25% go to Greater London, 15% to Tendring District, 15% to Braintree District and 10% to Chelmsford City. The Local Plan will need to manage the continuing pressures of vehicle congestion and parking while developing practical solutions to minimise the need to travel and provide non-car-based alternatives to movement around the Borough.

Vision: Colchester in 2033

2.7 The following Vision sets out where we want to be in 2033. The objectives that follow address the issues, opportunities and problems faced by the Borough.

Colchester will be an active and welcoming town with its rich and prestigious heritage treasured and showcased for all to enjoy. Colchester will be acclaimed for the creative, innovative and sustainable ways in which it addresses the wide range of challenges facing the Borough, including climate change; population growth and its changing composition; new lifestyle and technological innovations; creating and maintaining strong safe, healthy communities; and shifting market forces.

The Council will work proactively to ensure that the historic Town Centre continues its role as the cultural and economic heart of the Borough and international visitor destination. The surrounding urban area of Colchester will continue to provide a focus for new housing and employment with good transport accessibility and links to green spaces within both urban areas and the adjacent countryside. Tiptree, Wivenhoe and West Mersea are the largest of the Borough's sustainable settlements and will provide essential services and facilities to their rural hinterland. The rural hinterland will remain home to an array of distinctive and thriving villages, set amidst beautiful landscapes and coastal areas which will be protected and enhanced for the enjoyment of all. Colchester's heritage will continue to be a source of pride and community identity

and heritage assets will be protected and enhanced.

Colchester has made the most of its brownfield sites in recent years, revitalising large areas of the town, providing an array of high-quality new homes, businesses, and facilities. Colchester will build on this progress with the delivery of a range of high quality greenfield developments and regenerating further brownfield sites where they become available. Working in partnership with our neighbours and local communities, a new exemplary Garden Community to the East will become an innovatively designed, sustainable community enabling a strong sense of local identity, social inclusion, and involvement; well-co-ordinated and timely delivery of high quality infrastructure and facilities; good links to the Borough's primary hub at Colchester Town Centre; a range of market and affordable housing, and an array of job opportunities, together with opportunities for sport; renewable energy; leisure and recreation; walking and cycling, and growing produce.

The Borough will enable the provision of a wide range of new housing that addresses the need for affordable, well-designed and adaptable homes that meet the needs of a diverse market, including families, young people/students, and an increasing number of older residents. New development will be designed and located to ensure that residents are, from the start, able to reach a wide range of destinations using sustainable transport methods. The Council with its partners will pursue a range of funding options to ensure the timely delivery of new infrastructure and facilities.

Colchester will boast a diverse and thriving economy within a prosperous South East region, supported by high-quality digital infrastructure and accessible locations for new employment development, providing job opportunities for all. The Borough Council will pursue commercial opportunities that support job creation and generate revenue to help sustain the delivery of essential public services to the whole community, working in partnership with public and private sector partners. Colchester will provide an array of high quality training and educational opportunities at all levels, providing equality of opportunity for all. In particular, the University of Essex will grow in its role as a leading higher education institution, developing strong links to the new Garden Community as well as the Town Centre and East Colchester.

Objectives

2.8 The Objectives for the Borough can be broken down into three themes as set out below:

1. **Sustainable Growth**
   - Ensure new development is sustainable and minimises the use of scarce natural resources and addresses the causes and potential impacts of climate change, and encourages renewable energy.
   - Focus new development at sustainable locations to create new communities with distinctive identities whilst supporting existing communities, local businesses, and sustainable transport.
   - Provide high quality housing of all tenures at accessible locations to accommodate our growing community.
   - Ensure there are sufficient sites allocated in the right locations to support employment growth over the plan period.
   - Focus development at accessible locations which support public transport, walking and cycling, and reduce the need to travel, and enhance sustainable travel connections.
   - Protect and enhance the vitality and viability of Colchester's historic Town Centre.
   - Secure infrastructure to support new development.
   - Promotion of healthy lifestyles through the provision and enhancement of sport, leisure and recreation facilities, public open space and green infrastructure.

2. **Natural Environment**
   - Protect the countryside and coast.
   - Develop a green infrastructure network across the Borough.
   - Ensure new development avoids areas of flood risk and reduces future flood risk where possible.
   - Protect and enhance landscapes, biodiversity, green spaces, air and water quality, and river corridors.
   - Protect and enhance designated sites, geodiversity and soils.

3. **Places**
   - Ensure the unique qualities of different communities and environments, paying particular attention to heritage assets, in the Borough are identified, protected and enhanced through policies and allocations which ensure high quality, consistency, equity and responsiveness to local character.
   - Promote high quality design and sustain Colchester's historic character, found in its buildings, townscape and archaeology.
   - Improve streetscapes, open spaces and green links to provide attractive and accessible spaces for residents to live, work and play.

3. Sustainable Growth Policies

The Spatial Strategy

3.1 The Spatial Strategy directs development towards the most sustainable locations, as illustrated by the Key Diagrams, and provides for supporting facilities and infrastructure to create sustainable local communities. The Spatial Strategy provides the framework for the place-based approach of the Local Plan and relates allocations to the unique characteristics of particular communities within the Borough. The Spatial Strategy reflects the Local Planning Authority's evidence base, which includes a Sustainability Appraisal and Strategic Land Availability Assessment, along with a range of associated issues including development needs, environmental constraints, and deliverability. It also reflects sustainable development principles underpinned by the NPPF which seeks to achieve all development meeting the three dimensions of sustainable development, that is; social, economic and environmental sustainability. Examples of development which may meet all of these are illustrated below:

(a) Development being located at accessible locations where residents will have good access to employment opportunities and be in close proximity to regularly used services, facilities, shops, etc, to contribute towards the economic and social dimensions of sustainable development.
(b) Proposals showing how new users can access social services and facilities to contribute towards the social dimension of sustainable development.
(c) Proposals which demonstrate that they will not adversely affect landscape character and the undeveloped nature of the countryside and coast and would not lead to reliance on the private car, increasing carbon emissions, to contribute towards the environmental element of sustainable development.

3.2 All development will need to be in accordance with the spatial strategy and should meet the three dimensions of sustainable development.

3.3 Following on from the Spatial Strategy for North Essex set forth in Section 1 of the plan, the Strategic Growth policies in Section 2 of the Plan provide the complete strategic picture of the role and functions of different areas of Colchester within its sub-regional context.

Growth Locations

Urban Area of Colchester

3.4 In Colchester's spatial hierarchy, the urban area of Colchester is ranked as the most sustainable location for growth, given its high level of accessibility and concentration of housing, jobs and services. Within this urban area, the Central Area of Colchester including the Town Centre is the most sustainable location for new development given that it can accommodate higher densities, it has good access to public transport, walking and cycling routes and provides a concentrated mix of uses which minimise the need to travel. The surrounding built up, North, South, East and West (including Stanway) urban areas of Colchester provide the next tier of sustainable locations for growth.

3.5 Policy SG3 sets out the Centres Hierarchy. Proposals for town centre uses such as retail, offices, leisure, culture and entertainment facilities, and food/drink establishments will accordingly be directed to Colchester Town Centre in the first instance. Policy TC1 provides further guidance on the mechanisms for maintaining Colchester Town Centre's pre-eminent position.

3.6 Some areas of Colchester have been a focus for regeneration over a number of years, with significant progress and delivery evident in some areas such as the Garrison and North Colchester. Other areas will continue to be a focus for regeneration and enhancement delivered via a range of mixed use, commercial, social and residential opportunities. Estate regeneration in line with the Government's Estate Regeneration Strategy will be explored in estate areas such as Greenstead that could benefit from a comprehensive upgrading of community facilities, infrastructure and housing in line with overall strategic priorities. Special Policy Areas have been designated where required to provide a clear context against which to promote opportunities for appropriate growth, enhanced public realm and connectivity. Site allocations along with specific policy considerations for other parts of the urban area of Colchester are contained in the policies indicated below:

3.7 Urban Colchester comprises of the following areas listed below along with relevant policy references:

Central Colchester

- TC1 - Town Centre Policy and Hierarchy
- TC2 - Retail Frontages
- TC3 - Central Colchester other allocations
- TC4 - Transport in Colchester Town Centre

North Colchester

- NC1- Northern Gateway/Severalls Strategic Economic Area
- NC2 - North Station Special Policy Area
- NC3 - North Colchester other allocations
- NC4 - Transport in North Colchester

South Colchester

- SC1- South Colchester Allocations
- SC2 - Middlewick Ranges
- SC3 - Transport in South Colchester

East Colchester

- EC1 - Knowledge Gateway and University Strategic Economic Area
- EC2 - East Colchester- The Hythe Special Policy Area
- EC3 - East Colchester other allocations
- EC4 - Transport in East Colchester

West Colchester

- WC1 - Stanway Strategic Economic Area
- WC2 - Stanway
- WC3 - Colchester Zoo Special Policy Area
- WC4 - West Colchester other allocations
- WC5 - Transport in West Colchester

Sustainable Settlements

3.8 The next tier in the spatial hierarchy includes larger existing 'Sustainable Settlements', which are considered to have the potential to accommodate further proportionate growth and the Garden Community, which is programmed for long term strategic growth beyond the plan period. Policy SP9 in Part One describes the requirements of the new Garden Community to the East of Colchester.

3.9 As the underlying principle of the NPPF and therefore the Local Plan is to support the principle of sustainable development, it is important that new allocations for growth and the associated settlement boundaries relate to sustainable locations. The Local Plan therefore defines those settlements which are 'sustainable'. This is justified using evidence from the Strategic Land Availability Assessment, Sustainability Appraisal and Settlement Boundary Review. By implication any other settlements are less sustainable, although it is recognised that these 'Other Villages' serve an important community function within the rural areas of the Borough.

3.10 To develop a list of settlements considered to qualify as 'sustainable', each village was assessed as part of the Settlement Boundary Review against criteria related to the NPPF identification of the three dimensions of sustainability. Tiptree, West Mersea and Wivenhoe have automatically been included in the Sustainable Settlements category due to their larger populations and concentrations of jobs, facilities, services and function.

3.11 Settlement boundaries are an essential tool for the management of development and contribute to the achievement of sustainable development by preventing the encroachment of development into the countryside. The Borough's settlement boundaries have been reviewed as part of the evidence base of the Local Plan and drawn tightly to exclude areas that are more rural in character. This approach protects Colchester's rich countryside, seeks to avoid development that

would be detrimental to the character and identity of the Borough's villages and reduces the likelihood of the private car being the sole mode of transport.

3.12 Those settlements which tend to have the most sustainable characteristics are, for the most part the larger villages which have a population of at least 500. This reflects the historic development of settlements which have evolved around good accessibility and key community facilities such as churches and primary schools. The approach in the Local Plan is to channel some growth to the most sustainable settlements to encourage their continued growth recognising the key function they play beyond the urban area of Colchester. Site allocations are identified in each of the place policies, providing a more proactive approach to new development in these settlements. The growth provided for in these settlements is considered appropriate to the size of the settlement, local landscape character, other local constraints, identified need and the availability of infrastructure.

3.13 There are a number of active Neighbourhood Plan working groups which have either made or are preparing Neighbourhood Plans under the Localism Act 2011 across the Borough. More detailed proposals for site allocations and other policy matters are set out in the Neighbourhood Plan for these areas, Policy SG8 and the relevant Place Policy.

Other Villages

3.14 Other Villages tend to be small villages with only limited facilities, which local communities rely on for basic needs and as social hubs. Settlements classed as Other Villages are listed in Table SG1. These smaller rural villages often operate as clusters by sharing key services and facilities which help provide a strong sense of identity for the communities living and working there. Although the Local Plan does not promote substantial housing growth or other development in these Other Villages, their role in serving a community function in the rural areas is recognised. Other Villages are defined by tightly drawn settlement boundaries which reflect the core community focus of each village and protect the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside. Other Villages can accommodate a limited amount of small scale development and the policy context setting out the types of development considered appropriate is set out in policy OV1.

Countryside

3.15 Within the countryside, there are a number of very small isolated clusters of dwellings or small hamlets across the Borough, which lack any community facilities or services and rely on nearby villages or towns to meet their daily needs. Although they provide a community function for residents, their location is physically detached and sometimes remote, from the larger village to which they relate, and accordingly they are classed as countryside. Development within the countryside will be restricted to activities that either require a rural location or proposals that help sustain a rural community and local economy and which help protect the rural character of the areas where the development is being proposed. The type of development considered appropriate within the countryside is set out in policy OV2 of the Local Plan.

Policy SG1: Colchester's Spatial Strategy

Throughout the Borough, growth will be located at the most accessible and sustainable locations in accordance with the spatial strategy for North Essex set forth in Policy SP3 in Section One and with the spatial hierarchy set out in Table SG1. The spatial hierarchy ranks areas of the Borough in order of their sustainability merits and the size, function and services provided in each area. The centres hierarchy is set out in Policy SG3.

Development will be focused on accessible locations to reduce the need to travel. Development will be supported where a real travel choice is provided and sustainable travel for different purposes is promoted throughout the day.

This spatial hierarchy focuses growth on the urban area of Colchester, reflecting its position as the main location for jobs, housing, services, and transport. Within this urban area, the Central Area of Colchester including the Town Centre is the most sustainable location for new development given that it can accommodate higher densities reliant on its good access to public transport and concentrated mix of uses which minimise the need to travel. The surrounding built up, North, South, East and West (including Stanway) urban areas of Colchester provide the next sub-level of well-connected, sustainable locations for growth. The next tier of preferred growth includes a Garden Community straddling the boundary with Tendring District Council providing a new greenfield sustainable community which will grow gradually, over time, extending beyond the plan period. The second tier also includes existing Sustainable Settlements within the Borough most of which are planned for appropriate growth.

In the remaining Other Villages and Countryside of Colchester, new development will only be acceptable where it accords with policies OV1 and OV2. New development in the open countryside will be required to respect the character and appearance of landscapes and the built environment and preserve or enhance the historic environment and biodiversity to safeguard the rural character of the Borough.

<table>
<tr><th colspan="2">Table SG1: Spatial Hierarchy</th></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Urban Area of Colchester</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Central Colchester</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">South, East, North and West Colchester, including Stanway and Myland and Braiswick (Neighbourhood Plan made 2016),</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2"></td></tr>
<tr><td>Garden Community

Tendring/Colchester Borders Garden Community</td><td>Sustainable Settlements

Abberton and Langenhoe
Boxted (Neighbourhood Plan made 2016)
Chappel and Wakes Colne
Copford and Copford Green
Dedham
Eight Ash Green
Fordham
Great Horkesley
Great Tey
Langham
Layer de la Haye
Marks Tey
Rowhedge
Tiptree
West Bergholt
West Mersea
Wivenhoe</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2"></td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Other Villages
Aldham
Birch
Dedham Heath
Easthorpe
East Mersea
Fingringhoe
Great Wigborough
Layer Breton
Little Horkesley
Messing
Mount Bures
Peldon
Salcott
Wormingford</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2"></td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Countryside</td></tr>
</table>

Housing Delivery

3.16 Colchester Borough shares its housing market area with Braintree District, Tendring District and Chelmsford City. The Council has worked with all of these authorities in jointly commissioning housing studies to determine the respective levels of housing needs for each district over the plan period. For Colchester these studies have determined that the Objectively Assessed Housing Needs (OAHN) for Colchester Borough is 920 new dwellings per year or 14,720 new homes over the plan period between 2017 and 2033. Since the plan was submitted, 3,337 new dwellings were delivered between 2017 and 31.3.2020. Accordingly, during the remainder of the plan period, the Council needs to plan for a minimum of 11,383 dwellings in order to meet the objectively assessed need.

3.17 Colchester has an excellent track record of housing delivery. Since 1974 an average of 833 new dwellings have been delivered in the Borough every year. Over the previous plan period to date of submission (2001 – 2016) the Council exceeded its cumulative housing target by almost 900 dwellings. Therefore, at the beginning of the new plan period the Council was not in a position where it needed to make up any previous shortfall in housing delivery.

3.18 To plan for the Borough's OAHN, the Council needs to ensure enough land is allocated for residential uses to accommodate the predicted level of housing growth over the plan period. The land required to accommodate this housing growth is known as the housing land supply. The housing land supply comprises existing commitments, new allocations and broad locations for growth.

3.19 Existing commitments are residential sites with planning permission or where the granting of planning permission is considered to be imminent. Many of these sites, particularly the larger sites, were allocated for residential use in the previous Local Plan. For the remainder of the new Local Plan period these existing commitments account for approximately 5,900 new dwellings. Site specific information on existing commitments can be found in the Housing Trajectory.

3.20 New allocations are sites which have been allocated for residential uses as part of the preparation of this Local Plan. Colchester has a very good track record of regenerating previously developed land within its urban area and as a result the Borough has a limited and diminishing supply of brownfield sites that can contribute to accommodating new growth. Accordingly, new allocations within the plan include a level of new greenfield sites. These sites have been subject to thorough assessment and public consultation to determine their sustainability and suitability for residential uses. All new allocations have also been subject to exhaustive discussions with stakeholders including landowners and service providers to ensure sites have been selected based on their availability, achievability and deliverability.

3.21 The Place policies in this plan provide detail on specific new allocations along with further information on infrastructure improvements and mitigation measures required to address site constraints and opportunities at each location. Given the time that elapsed between submission of the plan and adoption, some of the allocations were converted into commitments following the grant of planning

permission. Within the remainder of the Plan period new allocations account for approximately 7,100 new dwellings. New allocations are set out in their respective Place policies as well as detailed in the Housing Trajectory.

3.22 Housing land supply is also comprised of a broad location for growth. As set out in Section One of the Local Plan the broad location for a Garden Community is expected to contribute 1,100 to 1,250 new dwellings to Colchester Borough's housing supply within the plan period. Information relating to the broad location for growth is detailed in Section One and listed in the Housing Trajectory.

3.23 Ensuring the quality of new housing development is equivalent in importance to ensuring its quantity. Policies in the Development Management section of this plan accordingly provide for affordable housing (DM8), housing to meet the needs of a range of different groups within the population (Housing Diversity DM10), and good design (Design and Amenity DM15).

Policy SG2: Housing Delivery

The Local Planning Authority will plan, monitor and manage the delivery of at least 14,720 new homes in Colchester Borough between 2017 and 2033. The housing target is based on a robust Objectively Assessed Housing Need figure of 920 homes a year and provides alignment with the targets for the delivery of employment land.

The overall distribution of new housing, as shown in Table SG2, is guided by the settlement hierarchy set out in the Spatial Strategy and Policy SG1. New housing development will be focused on the following key areas:

- Colchester urban area (Place policies for Central, North, South, East and West Colchester)
- Tendring / Colchester Borders Garden Community (Section 1 Policy SP9)

Detailed decisions on the location, type and level of development to be carried out in the Garden Community will be made through a joint plan to be agreed with Tendring District Council, as outlined in Section1 of this plan.

To maintain the vitality and viability of the Borough's smaller towns and villages, an appropriate level of new development will be brought forward in Sustainable Settlements to support new homes and economic and social development. Details on those allocations are provided in Policies SS1- SS16 (Sustainable Settlements).

Table SG2: Colchester's Housing Provision

Settlements and Key Development Areas		Homes Delivered 2017-2021	Existing commitments (2021-2033)	New Allocations (2021-2033)	Policy reference
Colchester Urban Area		2544	4011	2201	TC3, NC3, SC1, SC2 EC3, WC4
Stanway		502	919	956	WC2
Tendring / Colchester Borders Garden Community				1,100 - 1,250	Section 1 SP8 and SP9
Tiptree		149	326	400	SS14
Sustainable Settlements	Abberton and Langenhoe	6	899	55	SS1-16
	Boxted	28			
	Chappel and Wakes Colne	2		30	
	Copford and Copford Green	1		120	
	Fordham	1		20	
	Great Horkesley	22		13	
	Great Tey	1		45	
	Langham	0		40	
	Layer de la Haye	8		70	
	Marks Tey	39		0	
	Rowhedge	209		40	
	West Bergholt	15		50	
	West Mersea	29		200	
	Wivenhoe	297		250	
Other Areas		222		0	
Total		4075	6155	5740	15,970

Source: CBC, Colchester Housing Trajectory 2017-33, May 2021

Note SP3 in Section One refers to the housing supply period of 2013-2033 therefore refers to a higher supply total of 18,400. There have been 7,804 new dwellings completed since 2013/14 which when added to the supply of 11,895 results in a total of 19,699 units. 4,075 dwellings have been completed since the Local Plan was submitted in 2017.

Economic Delivery Policies

3.24 This section of the Plan sets out the Council's approach to economic growth, including retailing.

3.25 In accordance with the NPPF, the Council has set forth a clear strategy for Economic Growth in its Economic Development Strategy 2015-21, which has the following priorities:

- Creating new jobs;
- Raising the employability and skill levels of our residents and retaining talent;
- Creating, supporting and retaining businesses;
- Improving 'hard' (road, rail and broadband connectivity) and 'soft' infrastructure (business and employment support, employment sites); and
- Securing greater inward investment and funding.

3.26 The focus on digital connectivity in the Economic Development Strategy is further supported by a Digital Strategy for the Borough (2017), with a vision for Colchester to be 'the best-connected borough in the East of England, offering all businesses and all new residential developments world-class, future-proofed connectivity and to drive the uptake of digital technology to make the best of its potential for delivering economic growth and job creation'. Advanced digital connectivity will enhance economic growth and public service delivery, reducing costs while improving coverage and introducing new products and processes. Delivering improved digital connectivity will involve making optimum use of national initiatives, combined with the innovative use of local assets and suppliers.

3.27 The Local Planning Authority's allocations support these strategies and also reflect the need for economic growth to be targeted at the most marketable, accessible and sustainable locations. The Council commissioned studies including an Employment Land Needs Assessment, (ELNA) (January 2015) to update the evidence base and enable effective planning to facilitate the provision of appropriate employment to reflect current trends, market changes and projections for the plan period. The ELNA analysed the forecast fastest growing sectors in the Borough and found that of these, three are fully B class occupiers– Professional Services, Business Services and Real Estate – and one part B class – Construction. The inability of existing stock to accommodate job growth in these sectors requires new suitable land and premises which are well-located within the Borough. Inevitably, this will be predominantly on greenfield employment land as previous development has absorbed the Borough's brownfield land availability.

3.28 The ELNA looked at demand for employment land using four scenarios and concludes that the Council should plan to accommodate at least the 2012 demographic baseline scenario to ensure that the Borough's growth potential arising from its resident workforce is not constrained by lack of spatial capacity in future.

3.29 As part of the preparation of the Local Plan a full review of the unimplemented Strategic and Local Employment sites has been considered, informed by the

ELNA as well as settlement assessments, strategic land availability assessments and policy review in the light of national guidance and other evidence as relevant. The employment land allocations listed in Table SG3 below provide for a total of 28.5 ha of B use employment land in Strategic and Local Employment Areas and a further 3.5 ha of B use employment land in the Garden Community within Colchester during the plan period. This total figure of 32 ha accords with the baseline scenario. Table SG3 also illustrates the potential B use floorspace that could be delivered on these sites. It is also recognised that a major contribution to jobs in the Borough comes from other economic uses which are not classified as B class uses. Essex County Council has undertaken a 'Grow on Space Feasibility Study' to explore the need for employment 'Grow-On Space' within the County. Such flexible employment space, between 100 – 300 sqm in scale, is required to enable flexible premises for businesses to move on from incubation / enterprise centres / start-up spaces, and free up these units for other start-ups. The Essex Economic Commission also identified an inadequate supply of flexible tenures (e.g. Grow-on Space), which is holding back successful businesses that want to expand and grow. The Council will consider which interventions are the most appropriate and viable to ensure the provision of flexible local employment space (by tenure) in the plan area.

3.30 In order to bring forward these sites and maintain an appropriate level and type of employment provision a specific policy approach for each area is appropriate. Around the edge of urban Colchester there are three Strategic Locations for economic growth; to the east, north and west of Colchester. Local Economic Areas (LEAs) are dispersed around the Borough. Some LEAs are located within sustainable settlements which provide a key role in supporting the economic sustainability of the settlements. Other established sites are operating successfully in more remote rural locations. While the latter are less sustainable in terms of accessibility, the role they play in contributing to the wider rural economy and their function within the Borough-wide economic area is important, hence the continued protection of some of these sites. The ELNA highlights some sites as being somewhat dated and that modernisation should be encouraged if opportunities arise through reuse or expansion proposals.

Strategic Economic Areas

3.31 The Strategic Economic Areas (SEAs) are the best employment sites in the Borough and should be retained for employment purposes to meet anticipated needs over the plan period, in accordance with the NPPF. Up to date evidence however suggests not all the land previously allocated for employment will be required and, accordingly, the boundaries of each SEA has been reassessed.

3.32 The Knowledge Gateway and University SEA reflects opportunities associated with the growth plans for the University of Essex and the benefits linked to the new Garden Community to the east of Colchester. Additional land to expand the Knowledge Gateway is expected to be allocated within the Garden Community to the east.

3.33 The Northern Gateway and Severalls SEA responds to the potential to maximise its prime location adjacent to Junctions 28 and 29 of the A12, for the retention and expansion of the Business Park and for opportunities to deliver an enhanced sports and leisure hub. A reconfiguration on the previous allocation has taken place to reflect approvals and the changing economic market which has seen a reducing demand for land for B uses.

3.34 The third SEA at Stanway continues to be a favoured location for strategic economic opportunities taking advantage of good access to the A12 and A120. The Stanway SEA has been reviewed and reflects planning approvals and the decreasing demand for traditional employment land.

3.35 To allow for flexibility, the SEAs are divided into sub areas (zones), the policy context for which is set out in the individual place policies. The Local Planning Authority will work with other key stakeholders to ensure a comprehensive approach to the delivery of employment land and other mixed commercial uses within the SEAs in accordance with policies NC1, EC1 and WC1.

Garden Community Strategic Allocation

3.36 Policy SP3 in Section 1 of this plan indicates that the new garden community will make a strategic contribution to employment provision serving the sustainable community and the rest of the Borough. The extent, location and policy context for the garden community to the east of Colchester will be informed by future master planning and Development Plan Documents for the area.

Policy SG3: Economic Growth Provision

The Local Planning Authority will encourage economic development and have allocated 32 hectares of land to plan for the delivery of employment land (principally Class B2, B8 uses, supporting Class E uses and any associated employment generating sui generis uses) in Colchester Borough up to 2033. An additional 3.5 hectares of employment land is expected to come forward in Colchester within the Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community with a further 25 hectares to be allocated in the overall Garden Community for development post-2033. Existing economic uses on the sites identified will be safeguarded in accordance with the relevant policies. New development for employment uses will primarily be provided on a range of sites to ensure jobs are accessible to new and existing communities across the borough. Sites include;

- Land within Strategic Economic Areas as indicated on the policies maps (policies NC1, EC1 and WC1)
- Land within Local Economic Areas identified on the policies maps
- Land within defined mixed use special policy areas as shown on the policies maps (Policies TC3, NC2-3, EC2)
- Existing sites with planning permission.

Within some of the defined economic areas alternative economic non-B class uses contribute to the provision of jobs providing flexibility and securing delivery of the additional jobs. Suitable alternative economic uses will be supported within the defined areas where they are in accordance with all relevant policies in the plan.

Table SG3: Colchester Employment Land Supply 2017-2033

Location / Allocations		Site area (ha.)	Office (B1 a/b) sqm	Industrial (B1c/2/8) sqm	Total sqm
Strategic Economic Areas (SEAs)					
North Colchester		10.4	56,696	0	56,696
Stanway		1.4	0	5,600	5,600
Knowledge Gateway		7.0	22,538	0	22,538
Local Economic Areas (LEAs)					
Colchester Town Centre	Town Centre Core	0.7	3,160	0	3,160
	Edge of Centre	3.5	0	13,959	13,959
District Centres (outside Colchester)		1.5	3,078	3,078	6,156
Other Rural Areas		4.0	2,000	14,000	16,000
Total SEAs and LEAs		28.5	87,472	36,637	124,109
Tendring Colchester Borders GC		3.5	TBD	TBD	TBD
Total all allocations		32			

Sources: Lichfields (March 2017); CBC Planning Policy (April, 2017)

3.37 Additionally, further floorspace for non-B class economic uses will be provided within the following areas of urban Colchester:

- Colchester Town Centre (Policy TC3)
- North Station Special Policy Area (Policy NC2)
- East Colchester – Hythe Special Policy Area (Policy EC2)
- Colchester Zoo (Policy WC4).

Local Economic Areas

3.38 The Local Economic Areas provide an important contribution to the Colchester economy alongside the Strategic Economic Areas. Local Economic Areas are listed in policy/table SG4 and in each case they are cross referenced in the place policies.

3.39 The Economic Areas shown on the Policies Maps provide a framework within which Colchester's business community can develop and compete at a local, regional, national and international level. The Council will work with businesses within these areas to encourage them to adapt and respond to changing economic conditions in order to support business growth and ensure the economic viability of local communities.

3.40 Employment sites are under increasing pressure to be developed for housing and other uses, but it is important to retain existing employment sites where possible and appropriate. Employment site retention and provision is particularly necessary to enable balanced job and housing growth and to provide choices for businesses looking to expand or relocate.

3.41 Economic Areas contain a range of sites and premises that meet the needs of the business community and offers flexibility and choice. However, the NPPF advises local planning authorities to take a pragmatic approach to the protection of employment sites where there are high vacancy rates and/or where there is no reasonable prospect of a site being used for the allocated employment use. To build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, policies need to be flexible whilst ensuring that the needs of the community are met. To this end, the Local Planning Authority will, where possible, seek to retain Class B uses at employment sites whilst at the same time preventing the long-term vacancy of land and units where other non-Class B uses may be appropriate.

3.42 There is pressure to change commercial land and premises into higher value uses but if an employment site were lost to a higher value use every time an application was made then this would run the risk of a declining stock of employment premises that would hamper the ability of the Borough to maintain and increase employment growth. The loss of commercial space to other uses could also lead to future economic and social problems such as increased unemployment and increased out commuting.

Policy SG4: Local Economic Areas

The Local Economic Areas as defined on the policies maps and listed in policy tables SG3 and SG4, will be safeguarded primarily for B class uses and office use within E Class where appropriate to provide, protect and enhance employment provision in a range of locations across the borough to enable balanced job and housing growth. Planning permission will be granted for the redevelopment or change of use for non-Class B uses where:

(i) it can be demonstrated that there is no reasonable prospect of the site concerned being used for Class B purposes; and
(ii) the supply, availability and variety of B use class employment land is sufficient to meet Borough and local needs; and
(iii) it can be demonstrated that the alternative use cannot be reasonably located elsewhere within the area it serves; and
(iv) the proposal does not generate potential conflict with the existing proposed B class uses / activities on the site; and
(v) the use will not give rise to unacceptable traffic generation, noise, smells or vehicle parking; and
(vi) The proposal provides the opportunity to maximise the sites potential for economic growth and support the continued operation of existing employment uses within the economic area.

Opportunities to enhance and renew more dated buildings within Local Economic Areas will be supported when proposals are promoted for improvements to existing operations or for new operations where the use and scale is appropriate.

Table SG4: Local Economic Areas

Local Economic Area	Place Policy Reference
Colchester	
Barrack Street	EC3
Brook Street	EC3
Chandlers Row (Port Lane)	EC3
COLBEA (George Williams Way)	EC3
Crown Interchange	NC3
Davey Close (including Oyster Park)	EC3
Gosbecks Road	SC1
Maldon Road (including Shrub End Depot)	SC1
Middleborough Area (including Fairfax House/Digby House, Causton Road and Sheepen Road)	TC3
Eastgates (including Moorside)	EC3
Southway	TC3
Whitehall Industrial Estate	EC3
Outside Colchester	
Abberton - Pantiles Farm, Peldon Road	SS1
Boxted - Classic Pot Emporium	SS2
Boxted - Tin Bins Skip Hire)	SS2
Dedham/Langham - Depot (Old Ipswich Road)	SS9
Great Horkesley - Holly Lodge	SS7
Great Tey - Tey Brook Farm	SS8
Langham – Lodge Lane	SS9
Langham - Powerplus Engineering and Whitnell Contractors Site, School Road	SS9
Marks Tey – Timber Yard	SS11
Tiptree - Alexander Cleghorn	SS14
Tiptree - Tower Business Park	SS14
Tiptree - Wilkins & Son	SS14
Tiptree – Basket Works	SS14
West Bergholt - Pattens Yard, Nayland Road	SS15
West Mersea - Waldegraves Farm	SS12a
West Mersea - Boat Yards, Coast Road	SS12c
West Mersea - Rushmere Close	SS12a
Wormingford Airfield – (Packards Lane, Fordham Road North and South)	OV1

Retailing

Centres Hierarchy

3.43 The NPPF provides specific guidance on town centre uses and requires that local authorities should define a network and hierarchy of centres to help ensure their vitality. The Local Planning Authority's Centre Hierarchy accordingly, identifies Colchester Town Centre at the top of the hierarchy, followed by District and then Local Centres, in accordance with the recommendations of the 2016 Retail and Town Centre Study.

3.44 The hierarchy in Colchester Borough has two principal functions. Firstly, it will help to establish the Local Planning Authority's overarching strategy for the growth and management of town centre uses in the Borough's centres. It should therefore influence developer's decisions about where they seek to bring forward new development and of what type and scale. Secondly, when planning applications are submitted, the hierarchy will inform decisions on whether a particular centre is an appropriate location for the type and scale of town centre use(s) proposed, having regard for the primary role and function of that centre refer to Policy SG5 'definitions' below.

3.45 National planning guidance provides for the definition of Primary Shopping Areas to safeguard concentrations of retail uses which underpin the vitality and viability of Town Centres. In Colchester, Primary Shopping Areas have been defined for the Town and District Centres and will be used for the purposes of assessing sequentially preferable locations for retail developments. Within the Town Centre Primary Shopping Area, further refinement of town centre character is made in Policy TC2 through the definition of primary and secondary retail frontages in recognition of the Town Centre's more diverse character and larger size in relation to the District Centres. To help manage the appropriate growth of the District Centres, Primary Shopping Areas (PSA) are defined primarily having regard to the extent of main retail and service uses.

Town Centre

3.46 Colchester Town Centre is the principal comparison goods shopping destination in the Borough supported by a number of non-retail facilities including services, leisure, cultural, and community uses. Research and analysis has established that the Town Centre is relatively healthy, although there are areas of weakness and concerns over longer term investment prospects. New retail and leisure development in particular is necessary to ensure the Town Centre's vitality and viability over the plan period. To address this, a robust 'town centre first' approach is adopted to ensure that larger scale development is focused on the Town Centre, helping to protect it against competition from other shopping destinations and maintain its position at the top of the Borough's retail hierarchy. Policy TC3 provides detail on the allocation of land within the Town Centre to provide additional town centre use capacity. Policy TC1 (Town Centre) provides more detail on the implementation of this approach. In line with the requirements of the NPPF the Town Centre Boundary is defined on the policies map, together with the

Primary Shopping Area and within this both Primary and Secondary Street Frontages referred to in Policy TC2.

District Centres

3.47 Colchester Borough has a number of district centres, each with their own characteristics and functions but each serving the day-to-day needs of their local populations as well as providing access to shops and services for neighbouring areas across and beyond the Borough, but not to a level comparable with Colchester Town Centre. Further district centres will be planned within the new garden community to serve their population as the master planning for the area progresses.

3.48 The evidence indicates that the overall strategy for the Borough's district centres should focus on the appropriate diversification of the non-retail offer, including services and community facilities, to better serve the day-to-day needs of their local communities. They do not require substantial new retail development to ensure their vitality and viability over the plan period. Instead, larger scale retail development should be focused on Colchester Town Centre in accordance with the hierarchy to help strengthen its primary role as a sub-regional shopping destination.

District Centres within Colchester Urban Area

Tollgate

3.49 Tollgate is located in Stanway (approximately 4.8 km) to the west of Colchester Town Centre) and is the largest of Colchester's district centres. It has evolved from a predominantly 'bulky' retail park into an established shopping destination with a substantial range of multiple comparison goods retailers (such as Next, Argos, Sport Direct, Boots, Currys and PC World), a Sainsbury's food / non-food superstore, and a number of food and drink uses.

3.50 Tollgate competes with Colchester Town Centre for comparison goods expenditure. This is likely to be intensified by two schemes for additional development of town centre uses allowed on appeal. It is important that planning policy for Tollgate District Centre ensures that it plays a subsidiary position to the Town Centre in the centre hierarchy as set out in Policy SG5 and Table SG5. Its role and function as a district centre would be enhanced through the introduction of new services and/or community facilities.

Turner Rise

3.51 Turner Rise is a District Centre dominated by large buildings set around extensive areas of surface car parking. It is located approximately 1km to the north of the town centre, and within 250m to the east of Colchester Rail Station. The surrounding area is characterised by a mix of uses with residential development to the north and east of the site, and commercial uses to the west around the railway station. The Turner Rise District Centre consists of a large supermarket, retail units and a restaurant. The retail mix has changed over recent

years from mainly bulky goods retail to an increased range of retail units. In 2016, two new food and drink pod units were constructed. Overall, the retail evidence confirms that Turner Rise is performing well, largely underpinned by the Asda superstore and a 'value' focused comparison goods retail offer. Its role and function as a district centre would be enhanced through the introduction of new services and/or community facilities, as opposed to new retail development. The PSA is defined on the policies Map and will be the focus for any further retail uses, in accordance with Policy SG6.

Peartree Road

3.52 The Peartree Road District Centre is located approximately 3.5km to the southwest of the town centre and the surrounding area is predominantly residential. It consists of three separate areas:

- North of Peartree Road – supermarket, retail units, offices and food outlets.
- The Peartree Business Centre and Peartree Road – variety of small retail units ranging from bicycle sales, bulky goods and builders merchants in addition to services such as dry cleaners and a gym.
- South of Peartree Road and Moss Road – variety of units including bulky goods retail, offices, builders merchants and leisure units

3.53 Overall, the retail evidence confirms that Peartree Road is performing well albeit is lacking in terms of services and/or community facilities. Its role and function as a District Centre would be enhanced through the introduction of such uses, to complement the existing retail and leisure attractions. The PSA is defined on the policies Map and will be the focus for any further retail uses, in accordance with Policy SG 6.

Highwoods

3.54 The Highwoods District Centre is located approximately 2.5km to the northeast of the town centre and serves a distinct surrounding residential catchment area. It consists of a large supermarket and local community facilities and services such as a dry cleaners, post office, surgery and community centre. Overall, the retail evidence confirms that Highwoods District Centre is performing well for the main food shopping needs of the surrounding communities. It also has a limited but important service-based role and function. The PSA is defined on the policies Map and will be the focus for any further retail uses, in accordance with Policy SG6.

District Centres Outside Colchester Urban Area

Tiptree

3.55 Tiptree is situated approximately 16 km to the southwest of Colchester Town Centre. It is dominated by Tesco and Asda superstores with Tesco in particular, given its closer relationship with the core shopping area focused along Church Road, being an important anchor to the centre. According to the market share evidence, Tiptree's substantial convenience goods shopping offer also principally serves the western parts of the Borough, including some smaller rural settlements where there is a very limited retail offer. The centre is situated within a substantial residential area which is reasonably well served by bus. It includes a wider range of retail, service and community uses including a library. Key retailers include Iceland and Boots, while there are also several independents.

3.56 Overall, the retail evidence confirms that Tiptree performs an important role in terms of serving predominately localised shopping and service needs, and it is a vital and viable centre.

West Mersea

3.57 West Mersea is situated approximately 16 km to the south of Colchester Town Centre. It includes a range of retail, service and community facilities (i.e. Post Office, library, leisure and / community centre and several food and drink establishments). Key retailers include Boots, Tesco Express, Co-Op and Spar. Reflecting its Island location, the market share evidence indicates that the centre principally draws trade from its immediate catchment. Mersea Island also has a tourist/ holidaymaker function, which is likely to help support its shops and other facilities. The centre's retail offer is somewhat dispersed but relatively distinct owing to the diversity of independent retailers. It has a substantial walk-in catchment and is reasonably well served by bus.

3.58 Overall, the retail evidence confirms that West Mersea is a vital and viable centre within the limitations of its small scale and localised nature. The mix of uses and the high level of occupancy would suggest that it serves an important role in the retail hierarchy.

Wivenhoe

3.59 Wivenhoe is situated approximately 6.4 km to the southeast of Colchester Town Centre. It has a limited range of retail, service and community facilities (i.e. Post Office, library, hair/ beauty salon). There are also a number of food and drink establishments and the Co-op. Thus, the centre has a convenience-based function, principally serving the day-to-day needs of the local community, and this is reflected by the market share evidence. The centre has an attractive historic character and is reasonably well served by bus and rail.

3.60 Overall, the retail evidence confirms that Wivenhoe is a vital and viable centre within the limitations of its small scale and localised nature. The mix of uses

(albeit very limited) and the high level of occupancy would suggest that it serves an important role in the retail hierarchy.

Local Centres

3.61 The Retail and Town Centre study commented that local centres "perform an important role in terms of providing small scale retail and service uses to meet the basic needs of local communities."

3.62 Local centres are categorised as containing at least one food store or convenience store and a small range of other shops/ services/ community facilities of local importance. Smaller retail areas are neighbourhood parades and whilst they fulfil an important role for local communities, they do not form part of the centre's hierarchy.

3.63 It is important to retain retail, retail services, community uses, financial/ business uses and leisure services within local centres at ground floor level. These uses serve local communities and reduce the need to travel for basic services. If lost to residential use and / or alternative uses they are unlikely to return, to the detriment of local communities. Many of the Borough's local centres include residential within upper floors, which the Local Planning Authority encourages.

3.64 The Local Planning Authority will consider favourably proposals for expansion of local centres where they are of an appropriate scale and type, having regard to the definition set out in Policy SG5, which would enhance the vitality of the local centre and would not adversely affect residential amenity. Where appropriate, measures will be required to promote sustainable travel to ensure that the amount of vehicular movements to / from the local centre is not increased as a result of the expansion. Where necessary conditions will be attached to control hours of operation, types of use etc to protect residential amenity.

3.65 The Borough's local centres are largely located within the heart of residential areas within the urban area of Colchester. Local centres outside of the urban area of Colchester include Dedham; London Road, Marks Tey; and Vine Road, Wivenhoe.

3.66 Dedham is situated in a rural location approximately 11.2 km to the northeast of Colchester Town Centre. It has a limited range of retail, service and community facilities including a community centre, various retail outlets and several food and drink establishments. Dedham also has a tourism industry, which is likely to help support its retail shops and other facilities. The centre's retail offer is concentrated along the High Street and whilst limited, it does serve as a Local Centre providing a vital role for the settlement and for other surrounding villages in North Colchester where there are very few shops and services. The mix of uses and the high level of occupancy would suggest that it serves an important role in the retail hierarchy in a local context.

3.67 London Road, Marks Tey local centre is remote from the main residential area of Marks Tey. There are high end convenience uses in this centre; a butchers and Chateau Wines, as well as three take-aways and a garage with a shop.

3.68 Vine Road in Wivenhoe includes a One Stop convenience store, estate agent, pharmacy, hairdressers and beauty salon, and take away. These uses serve a local catchment and parking is located in front of this linear local centre.

3.69 As the master planning work on the garden community develops local centres will be planned to serve communities and compliment the district centres, as appropriate.

Policy SG5: Centre Hierarchy

In accordance with the NPPF the centres identified in the following hierarchy will be the preferred location for main town centre uses such as retail, office, leisure and entertainment.

Definitions of centres:

Town Centre: the Borough's principal and a sub-regional centre for comparison goods shopping, services, culture, leisure, with 'regional' aspirations.

District centre: important role serving the day-to-day needs of their local populations as well as providing access to shops and services for neighbouring areas across and beyond the Borough, but not to a level comparable with Colchester Town Centre.

Local centre: essential role providing a range of small shops and services to meet the basic needs of local communities, serving a small catchment.

Table SG5: Colchester Borough's Hierarchy of Centres

<table>
<tr><td colspan="2">Town Centre
Colchester Town Centre</td></tr>
<tr><td>District Centres
Tiptree
West Mersea
Wivenhoe
Tollgate
Peartree Road
Turner Rise
Highwoods</td><td>Proposed District Centre
Tendring / Colchester Borders Garden Community</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Local Centres:
St Christopher Road, St Johns
Hawthorne Avenue, Greenstead
Iceni Way, Shrub End
William Harris Way, Garrison
Homefield Road, Garrison
Monkwick and Mersea Road
The Willows
Old Heath Road
Hythe Quay
London Road, Stanway
Villa Road, Stanway
Blackberry Road, Stanway
The Commons, Prettygate
Dedham
London Road, Marks Tey
Vine Road, Wivenhoe

The new Garden Community will include local centres to compliment district centres and build on the network of centres in the hierarchy.</td></tr>
</table>

3.70 In order to manage appropriate growth within the Town and District Centres and to help safeguard the current hierarchy and the role and function of each of the centres, planning applications will be required to address the provisions in the National Planning Policy Framework concerning the sequential test and retail impact assessments.

Sequential Test

3.71 Applications for main town centre uses that are not in an existing centre and are not in accordance with an up-to-date Local Plan should demonstrate that sequentially preferable sites have been thoroughly considered. Centre sites are sequentially preferable, followed by edge of centre sites. Only if suitable sites are not available should out of centre sites be considered. In accordance with Paragraph 24 of the Framework, sequential testing will start from the Primary Shopping Area boundary for retail uses and the town centre boundary for all other town centre uses.

Impact Assessments

3.72 Above a specified threshold, planning applications for town centre uses, not in an existing centre and not in accordance with an up-to-date Local Plan, will be required to include a Retail Impact Assessment. The NPPF provides for Local Planning Authorities to set local floorspace thresholds, above which retail impact assessments will be required. Based on this floorspace thresholds will apply to Colchester Town Centre and the District Centres as set out in the table below.

3.73 In addition, proposals for retail and leisure uses outside the Town and District Centres, above the floorspace thresholds set out below will also be subject to an Impact Assessment and will be supported where no significant adverse impacts to Colchester Town Centre (and/or any other defined centre) are demonstrated. This policy response seeks to manage the growth of the District Centres and protect the Town Centre's position at the apex of the hierarchy.

3.74 Where a retail impact assessment is required, this should be carried out in accordance with the guidance set out in the Assessment Specification 2021 or any updated guidance which applies at the time.

3.75 In accordance with the NPPF in cases where a planning application fails to satisfy the sequential test or is likely to have significant adverse impact on one or more of the factors identified above in the impact assessment, it should be refused.

Policy SG6: Town Centre Uses

Proposals for town centre uses that are not within a defined centre and are not in accordance with this Plan, including proposals for a change or intensification of use, or variation of a planning condition, will need to demonstrate that a sequential approach has been undertaken to site selection as required by national policy.

Applicants should demonstrate flexibility on issues such as format and scale. Only when in-centre sites are not suitable and/or available should edge and then out of centre sites be considered.

In cases where the Local Planning Authority are satisfied that the sequential test has been met, proposals will be supported where they also comply with each of the requirements set out in criteria (i- vi below).

(i) Proposals for main town centre uses in or on the edge of centres are of a type, proportion and scale appropriate to the role and function of the centre and would not threaten the primacy of Colchester Town Centre at the apex of the centre hierarchy, either individually or cumulatively with other committed proposals, and;

(ii) Proposals for main town centre uses in or on the edge of centres are suitable to the town / district centre function and maintains or adds to its viability and vitality and enhances the diversity of the centre without changing the position of the centre within the overall hierarchy and;

(iii) Proposals would not give rise to a detrimental effect, individually or cumulatively, on the character or amenity of the area through smell, litter, noise or traffic problems and;

(iv) The proposal would not have a significant adverse impact on the vitality and viability of Colchester Town Centre and/or any other defined centre either individually or cumulatively with other committed proposals and;

(v) The proposal would not have a significant adverse impact on committed and / planned public or private investment in Colchester Town Centre and /or any other defined centre either individually or cumulatively with other committed proposals and;

(vi) In relation to criteria (iv) and (v) above an Impact Assessment must be provided where the proposal;

- Exceeds the thresholds set out in table SG6 below.

Table SG6 Impact Assessments Thresholds

Centre	Retail and/or leisure floorspace (sqm gross)
Colchester Tollgate Peartree Road Turner Rise Highwoods	1,500
Tiptree West Mersea Wivenhoe	1,000

Policy SG6a Local Centres

Local centres will be protected and enhanced to provide shops, services and community facilities for local communities. Proposals for change of use within designated local centres will need to demonstrate that it will provide a retail use, retail service, community use, financial/ businesses service or a leisure service and will meet the basic needs of local communities.

Proposals to expand a local centre will be considered favourably where it can be demonstrated that the use is small scale proportionate to the role and function of such centres and will serve the basic needs of local communities. Proposals outside of local centres will be assessed in accordance with the sequential test.

Proposals will be required to demonstrate that they will not adversely affect residential amenity, particularly in terms of car parking, noise and hours of operation. Proposals should take every opportunity to promote sustainable travel behaviour.

New strategic residential sites should incorporate local centres at accessible locations within the site where appropriate to provide for the needs of new communities.

Infrastructure

3.76 The Local Planning Authority fully appreciates that the delivery of new homes and jobs needs to be supported by infrastructure, including a wide range of transport options, utilities, and community facilities. This issue is of particular concern to existing residents and businesses. The Local Planning Authority has prepared an Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP), to inform the local plan, based on other evidence work; studies prepared for the Garden Community; relevant Neighbourhood Plans; topic based national and local studies; and discussions with infrastructure providers. The IDP will sit alongside this plan and provide specifics on the main items of infrastructure required, when they are likely to be provided, and who will pay for them. Additionally, the place policies in this plan will highlight essential pieces of site-specific infrastructure as relevant for all new allocations.

3.77 The broad categories of necessary infrastructure covered in the IDP include:

- Water and Drainage – water supply, waste water, flood risk management and resilience, and water quality.
- Energy – electricity, gas, and renewable energy.
- Communications – broadband coverage and provision.
- Leisure and green infrastructure – sport, open space and community facilities.
- Education – early years and childcare, primary, secondary, further education, and higher education.
- Health – hospitals, health centres, GP surgeries, dentists, public health, and preventative health care.
- Transport – highways, cycle and pedestrian facilities, rail, bus, park and ride, travel management, and car parking.

3.78 For the purposes of this policy the widest reasonable definition of infrastructure and infrastructure providers will be applied. Examples of types of infrastructure are provided in the glossary appended to this plan. Regard should be had to the latest version of the ECC Developers' Guide to Infrastructure Contributions as well as Council Guidance.

3.79 Infrastructure and community facilities are mainly provided by partner agencies and service providers such as water and energy provision by the utility companies; a range of services including highways and social services by Essex County Council; education by a range of public and private sector providers, and healthcare services and facilities by the North East Essex Clinical Commissioning Group and National Health Service England Midlands and East (NHSE) England. The IDP identifies the different investment and development time scales for these providers and the Council will work with those providers to help deliver a co-ordinated approach to new infrastructure delivery.

3.80 Telecommunications and digital infrastructure technologies are evolving rapidly, and proposals will need to enable sites to access high quality digital infrastructure including fibre and wireless services (5G and Long-Term Evolution i.e. successor technologies) which are accessible from a range of providers.

3.81 Developers will be expected to contribute towards meeting appropriate infrastructure costs. This will include contributions to both on-site costs and strategic off-site infrastructure costs. Contributions will be secured under S106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) and/or secured through a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) as appropriate. CIL will complement and not duplicate planning obligations. A CIL charging schedule linked to this Plan would stipulate a charge, per square metre of gross internal floorspace, for relevant classes of development. A proportion of CIL funds would be passed to Parish/Town councils. The Government is currently considering changes to CIL and it may be that contributions are secured under other provisions in future legislation.

3.82 In the event that essential infrastructure cannot be appropriately delivered to support new development it may be necessary to restrict development from being commenced or, in certain cases, from being permitted. When infrastructure cannot be provided within, or is not appropriate to be located on, the development site itself, developers will be expected to make a contribution to the cost to provide the infrastructure elsewhere.

3.83 Section 1 provides the strategic priorities for infrastructure provision or improvement in Policy SP4, and Policies SP7, 8 and 9 provide further information on specific Garden Community infrastructure requirements. In Section 2, Policy PP1 provides generic infrastructure requirements for new allocations. Locational specific infrastructure requirements are identified within allocation policies for urban Colchester and the Sustainable Settlements.

Policy SG7: Infrastructure Delivery and Impact Mitigation

All new development should be supported by, and have good access to, all necessary infrastructure.

Permission will only be granted if it can be demonstrated that there is sufficient appropriate infrastructure capacity to support the development or that such capacity will be delivered by the proposal. It must further be demonstrated that such capacity as is required will prove sustainable over time both in physical and financial terms.

Where a development proposal requires additional infrastructure capacity, to be deemed acceptable, mitigation measures must be agreed with the Local Planning Authority and the appropriate infrastructure provider. Such measures may include (not exclusively):

(i) Financial contributions towards new or expanded facilities and the maintenance thereof;
(ii) On-site provision (which may include building works);
(iii) Off-site capacity improvement works; and/or
(iv) The provision of land.

Developers will be expected to contribute towards the delivery of relevant infrastructure. They will either make direct provision or will contribute towards the provision of local and strategic infrastructure required by the development either alone or cumulatively with other developments.

Measures required to mitigate the impacts of recreational disturbance on habitats sites will be delivered as detailed in the adopted Essex Coast Recreational disturbance Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy.

Small sites can have a cumulative effect on infrastructure and proportional contributions will be sought from all developments where this is demonstrated to be the case. Developers and landowners must work positively with the Local Planning Authority, neighbouring authorities and other infrastructure providers throughout the planning process to ensure that the cumulative impact of development is considered and then mitigated, at the appropriate time, in line with published policies and guidance.

Exceptions to this policy will only be considered whereby:

(i) It is proven that the benefit of the development proceeding without full mitigation outweighs the collective harm;
(ii) A fully transparent open book viability assessment has proven that full mitigation cannot be afforded, allowing only for the minimum level of developer profit and landowner receipt necessary for the development to proceed;
(iii) Full and thorough investigation has been undertaken to find innovative solutions to issues and all possible steps have been taken to minimise the residual level of unmitigated impacts; and
(iv) Obligations are entered into by the developer that provide for appropriate additional mitigation in the event that viability improves prior to completion of the development.

Neighbourhood Plans

3.84 The 2011 Localism Act introduced the concept of Neighbourhood Planning. Under this Act local communities in urban and rural areas were given new powers to prepare Neighbourhood Plans enabling these communities to have a greater influence over the future land use within their areas.

3.85 Neighbourhood Plans can vary in terms of their complexity and approach and can cover one or more of the following topics areas: site allocations, housing type/size, local housing need, affordable housing, local character considerations, design and building materials, boundary fences/walls design criteria, community facilitates and services to sustainable development. The Local Planning Authority will be supportive of communities who want to prepare Neighbourhood Plans.

3.86 Neighbourhood Plans are subject to examination and referendum and Plans which successfully pass these two tests will be made (adopted) as part of the Development Plan for Colchester. Any issues which are not covered by the scope of a Neighbourhood Plan will be determined in accordance with the Local Plan.

3.87 Practice has shown that the process of developing Neighbourhood Plans is very time intensive for local communities and they face many challenges which are not always anticipated. Where a community has committed to undertake a Neighbourhood Plan, the Local Planning Authority wishes to support them with this and encourage continued commitment to lead to successfully made Neighbourhood Plans. Where circumstances lead to the significant stalling of Plans, serious blockages with little likelihood of solution or failing a Referendum, every effort will be made to work with the Neighbourhood Plan Group to resolve issues, but where this is unsuccessful, there will be a need for the planning function to revert to the Local Planning Authority, in particular when this impacts on planned housing delivery. In such circumstances the Local Planning Authority will intervene as appropriate.

3.88 The policy approach for each Neighbourhood Plan allocating sites is set out in the relevant place policy. Neighbourhood Plans not allocating sites will be progressed in accordance with the NPPF/PPG and the most current Neighbourhood Plan Regulations. The preparation of all plans will be reviewed under the Authority Monitoring Report and where progress is stalled for any significant time, in particular for those plans which are allocating sites, the Local Planning Authority will consider the need for intervention.

Policy SG8: Neighbourhood Plans

Towns and villages are encouraged to plan for the specific needs of their communities by developing Neighbourhood Plans. The Local Planning Authority will support Parish and Town Councils and Neighbourhood Forums (in unparished areas) to prepare Neighbourhood Plans containing locally determined policies to guide land use and meet future development needs in their areas.

Once a Neighbourhood Plan is made, this becomes part of the Development Plan.

Neighbourhood Plans have been made for Boxted, Myland and Braiswick, Wivenhoe, West Bergholt and Eight Ash Green and these now form part of the Development Plan for Colchester.

Neighbourhood Plans are required to be compliant with the following Strategic Policies in this Plan: Section 1 Policies SP1-9 and Section 2 Policies SG1-8, ENV1- 5, CC1 and PP1.

4. Environmental Assets Policies

Environment

4.1 Colchester's countryside and coastline is extremely diverse and important in terms of its natural and historic environment, including biodiversity, landscape character, archaeology and cultural heritage. The countryside provides the attractive landscape setting that defines and characterises the villages and rural communities of Colchester Borough. The countryside and coastal areas also provide important agricultural, tourism and recreational opportunities that support local economies and communities. The Dedham Vale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty extends into the northern part of the Borough and has the highest status of protection in relation to its natural beauty and special qualities.

Habitats Sites and Other Designations

4.2 The Council has statutory obligations under the Habitats Directive and Birds Directive to protect important habitats and species designated as habitats sites. This policy aims to protect the undeveloped areas of the Colne and Blackwater Estuaries and coast and Abberton Reservoir, and support regeneration that enhances the river's recreation and nature conservation values.

4.3 Where a proposal is likely to have a significant effect on a habitats site (alone or in-combination) the Local Planning Authority will make an appropriate assessment of the implications of the proposal for the habitats site(s) in view of the site(s) conservation objectives. Applicants will be expected to provide information for the purposes of the Habitat Regulations Assessment. The Local Planning Authority will only grant planning consent where it can be ascertained that the proposal will not adversely affect the integrity of a habitats site, unless the exceptional requirements of Regulations 62 and 66 of the Habitats Regulations relating to the absence of alternative solutions, imperative reasons of overriding public interest and provision of compensation have been met.

4.4 The Essex Coast Recreational disturbance Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy (RAMS) Strategy Document was adopted in 2019 and SPD was adopted in 2020. The Essex Coast RAMS, which has the brand name Bird Aware Essex Coast, aims to deliver the mitigation necessary to avoid adverse effects on the integrity of habitats sites from the in-combination impacts of residential development in Essex. The Essex Coast RAMS identifies a detailed programme of strategic avoidance and mitigation measures which are to be funded by developer contributions from all qualifying residential development within the Zones of Influence as defined in the adopted RAMS.

4.5 The Borough contains a range of other sites designated for their wildlife interest, including Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), National Nature Reserves, Local Nature Reserves, Local Sites and Special Roadside Verges. Brownfield sites can also be important for biodiversity.

4.6 All development proposals should initially be assessed to establish the likely presence or absence of Protected Species or Species /Habitats of Principal

Importance on the development site. This may be through a Phase 1 Habitat assessment combined with site visits. Where there is a confirmed presence, or reasonable likelihood, of a legally protected species or Species of Principal Importance, on an application site (or where present on adjacent land) and where the species is likely to be affected then detailed ecological surveys should be carried out at the appropriate time of year in accordance with current best practice. Applicants will be required to follow the mitigation hierarchy and demonstrate that adverse impacts upon the species have been avoided. Where impacts cannot be avoided a detailed Ecological Enhancement and Mitigation Plan should be prepared and submitted and agreed with the Local Planning Authority. Where ecological assessments are required, a biosecurity protocol method statement should be included to ensure the introduction of invasive non-native species is prevented. Where district licensing schemes exist, applicants can fulfil their legal obligations regarding protected species by participating in the district licensing scheme. Mitigation must provide net gains for biodiversity and conform to the requirements of relevant legislation and Government Standing Advice.

4.7 Where Priority Habitats are likely to be adversely impacted by a proposal, the developer must demonstrate that adverse impacts will be avoided, and impacts that cannot be avoided are mitigated on-site and supplemented with measurable net gains for biodiversity. Where residual impacts remain, off-site compensation and enhancement may be required so that there is a measurable net gain and no net loss in quantity and quality of Priority Habitat in the Borough.

4.8 All development proposals must comply with current requirements and best practice for measurable biodiversity net gain and Nature Recovery Strategies and Networks. As a minimum, 10% biodiversity net gain is required or as otherwise indicated in policy and legislation. This is in addition to the requirement to follow the mitigation hierarchy. Biodiversity net gain requirements must not undermine the existing range of protections, in planning policy and legislation, for irreplaceable habitats and protected sites. As part of the planning process a calculation in line with the latest Natural England Biodiversity Metric should be submitted and strict adherence to the mitigation hierarchy should be used to ensure harm is avoided in the first instance, that provision for a minimum 10% measurable net gain in biodiversity is made onsite wherever possible and that offsite compensation with a long-term management plan is used as a last resort. All projects should have regard to reducing the impacts of climate change and delivering multiple benefits in terms of but not exclusive to habitats, carbon storage and Natural Flood Management.

Wildlife and Biodiversity

4.9 Hedgerows subject to a Hedgerow Retention Notice must be assessed by the Local Planning Authority's Landscape Officer against criteria in the Hedgerows Regulations 1997. Where a hedgerow is deemed to be 'Important' under the Hedgerows Regulations, the developer must demonstrate that adverse impacts upon the important hedgerow will be avoided. This is necessary as the loss of both 'Important' and other significant hedgerows is difficult to mitigate against as they cannot easily be recreated as either a landscape or ecological feature.

4.10 The European Water Framework Directive imposes legal requirements to improve the water environment. All waterbodies must achieve 'good ecological status' by 2027, prevent deterioration of surface water and groundwater and seek enhancements where rivers, lakes and estuaries are not achieving good ecological status or potential. The local planning authority supports the directive and proposals which seek to further these aims where it is possible to do so. In pursuit of this aim, proposals should seek to minimise disturbance to riverbeds. Proposals are encouraged to be in compliance with the Anglian River Basin Management Plan (2015) or its successor, which addresses pressures on the water environment and whose environmental objectives are legally binding on all public bodies whose decisions affect the quality of the water environment.

4.11 The Coastal Protection Belt protects the open and undeveloped stretches of coastline in the Borough which could be harmed by development that might otherwise be acceptable in a countryside area. The original designation of 1984 has been reviewed with some amendment to the Borough's Coastal Protection Belt and is shown on the policies map.

4.12 A major threat to the low lying coastal and estuary areas is rising sea levels as a result of climate change. This threat will be addressed by increasing the network of green corridors and areas of open space to aid the dispersal of species that will need to migrate as climate change renders their existing habitat unsuitable. Climate change impacts, particularly sea level rise, will also be addressed by accommodating future flood waters and inter-tidal habitats through managed realignment projects identified in the Essex and South Suffolk Shoreline Management Plan, without harm to landscape character and the built and historic environment.

Countryside

4.13 Policy ENV1 aims to control development outside of settlements to protect open stretches of countryside around and between existing settlements, to protect landscape character, to prevent coalescence and retain settlement identity. Any development in the countryside, i.e. land outside of settlement boundaries, must be compatible with local landscape character and setting. Development will be supported provided it does not adversely impact on the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, the relationship between and the separate identities of settlements, visual amenity, or the factors that contribute to valued landscapes, whilst also complying with other relevant policies of the Local Plan. Proposals are required to have regard to Colchester's Landscape Character Assessment and the Council's adopted Landscape Guidance for Developers alongside any other relevant or updated evidence, in order to identify and evaluate the effect of a proposed development on the character, value and sensitivity to change of a proposed site and its setting to help conserve the Borough's landscape character.

Heritage

4.14 The historic environment will be protected across the Borough with reference to studies including the Townscape Character Assessment, the Urban Archaeological Database and Historic Environment Characterisation Study and updated evidence as produced. Policy DM16 provides criteria for development affecting heritage assets. The Local Plan as a whole protects heritage assets through general and site-specific policy criteria, which ensures that the protection of heritage assets is an integral part of every aspect of the Local Plan.

Policy ENV1: Environment

The Local Planning Authority will conserve and enhance Colchester's natural and historic environment, countryside and coastline. The Local Planning Authority will safeguard the Borough's biodiversity, geology, history and archaeology, which help define the landscape character of the Borough, through the protection and enhancement of sites of international, national, regional and local importance. The Local Planning Authority will require development to be in compliance with, and contribute positively towards, delivering the aims and objectives of the Anglian River Basin Management Plan.

A. Designated sites
Development proposals that have adverse effects on the integrity of habitats sites, Sites of Special Scientific Interest or significant adverse impacts on the special qualities of the Dedham Vale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (including its setting) (either alone or in-combination) will not be supported.

B. Essex Coast RAMS
A Recreational disturbance Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy has been completed in compliance with the Habitats Directive and Habitats Regulations. Further to Section 1 Policy SP2, contributions will be secured from qualifying residential development, within the Zones of Influence as defined in the adopted RAMS, towards mitigation measures identified in the Essex Coast Recreational disturbance Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy (RAMS).

C. Biodiversity and geodiversity
Development proposals where the principal objective is to conserve or enhance biodiversity and geodiversity interests will be supported in principle.

For all proposals, development will only be supported where it:

(i) Is supported with appropriate ecological surveys where necessary; and
(ii) Where there is reason to suspect the presence of a protected species (and impact to), or Species/Habitats of Principal Importance, applications should be accompanied by an ecological survey assessing their presence and, if present, the proposal must be sensitive to, and make provision for their needs and demonstrate the mitigation hierarchy has been followed; and
(iii) Will conserve or enhance the biodiversity value of greenfield and brownfield sites and minimise fragmentation of habitats; and

(iv) Maximises opportunities for the preservation, restoration, enhancement and connection of natural habitats in accordance with the UK and Essex Biodiversity Action Plans or future replacements; and
(v) Incorporates beneficial biodiversity conservation features, measurable biodiversity net gain of at least 10% in line with the principles outlined in the Natural England Biodiversity Metric, and habitat creation where appropriate.

Proposals for development that would cause significant direct or indirect adverse harm to nationally designated sites or other designated areas, protected species, Habitats and Species of Principle Importance, will not be permitted unless:

(i) They cannot be located on alternative sites that would cause less harm; and
(ii) The benefits of the development clearly outweigh the impacts on the features of the site and the wider network of natural habitats; and
(iii) Satisfactory biodiversity net gain, mitigation, or as a last resort, compensation measures are provided.

The Local Planning Authority will take a precautionary approach where insufficient information is provided about avoidance, mitigation and compensation measures and secure mitigation and compensation through planning conditions/obligations where necessary.

D. Irreplaceable habitats
Proposals that would result in the loss of irreplaceable habitats, such as ancient woodland, Important Hedgerows and veteran trees will not be permitted unless there are wholly exceptional reasons and a suitable compensation strategy, to the satisfaction of the local planning authority, exists.

E. Countryside
The local planning authority will carefully balance the requirement for new development within the countryside to meet identified development needs in accordance with Colchester's spatial strategy, and to support the vitality of rural communities, whilst ensuring that development does not have an adverse impact on the different roles, the relationship between and separate identities of settlements, valued landscapes, the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside and visual amenity.

The intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside will be recognised and assessed, and development will only be permitted where it would not adversely affect the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside and complies with other relevant policies. Within valued landscapes, development will only be permitted where it would not impact upon and would protect and enhance the factors that contribute to valued landscapes.

Coastal Areas

4.15 The open, undeveloped and rural landscape character of the coastal area of Colchester Borough is an extremely rich, diverse and irreplaceable natural asset in terms of its natural and cultural features. It includes substantial parts of the Colne and Blackwater Estuaries. The ecological importance of the Colne and Blackwater Estuaries is reflected by the variety of international and European designations covering them i.e. Ramsar sites, Special Protection Areas (Birds Directive), and the Essex Estuaries Special Area of Conservation (SAC) designated under the Habitats Directive. The Colne and Blackwater Estuaries are also protected as part of the larger Colne, Blackwater, Roach and Crouch Marine Conservation Zone. There are also a number of Sites of Special Scientific Interest and Local Wildlife Sites designated around the estuaries.

4.16 The Borough's coastline is also home to a number of sizeable communities in West Mersea, Rowhedge, and Wivenhoe. As a consequence, there are a number of diverse planning considerations and land uses which all need to be managed in an integrated way within the Borough's coastal belt. These include internationally important habitats, land and water-based recreation, fishing, and heritage assets (including archaeological). Obligations to protect the important natural and heritage assets have to be carefully considered against the need to satisfy legislative requirements and the wider socio-economic needs of the Borough's coastal communities.

4.17 Climate change including sea level rise is likely to present increasing pressure on the management of coastal habitats and coastal communities along Colchester's coastal fringe. The Essex and South Suffolk Shoreline Management Plan (October 2010) has shown that sections of the coastal frontage within the Borough are highly vulnerable to the effects of climate change and coastal processes and four potential managed realignment sites have been identified. Two of the managed realignment sites are located along the Colne Estuary (SMP ref D6b Wivenhoe Marshes and D8a Inner Colne West Bank) and the other two are on Mersea Island (SMP ref E2 - Seaward frontage between North Barn and West Mersea and E4a North Strood Channel). All four sites have been identified for re-alignment between 2025 -2055. The sites are shown on the Policies map and will be safeguarded over the lifetime of the Local Plan for the delivery of setback schemes in accordance with the Shoreline Management Plan timetable. It will be important that future land uses and developments along the Borough's frontage, in particular built-up frontages, can demonstrate a high level of resilience in response to changing local climatic conditions.

4.18 In 1984, Essex County Council produced the Essex Coast Protection Subject Plan. This defined a county wide Coastal Protection Belt, which was reviewed and updated in 2016 by the Local Planning Authority. The Colchester Coastal Protection Belt aims to protect the rural and undeveloped coastline in the Borough from inappropriate development that would adversely affect its rural, undeveloped and open character and irreplaceable assets, landward and marine sites of nature conservation importance, and buildings and areas of special architectural, historic or archaeological importance. The Belt's rural and undeveloped coastline is of international and national significance for its historic environment assets and

nature conservation interest. These multiple assets are strongly focussed and interrelated within the defined area, including between the coastline and adjoining inland areas.

4.19 The Coastal Protection Belt has a unique character, which should be strongly protected and enhanced. There is a local need for greater priority to be given to the restraint of potentially damaging development than is normally possible under national planning policies. The Coastal Protection Belt adopts the precautionary principle and seeks to restrict development to within the built-up areas of the coast. Some developments however require a coastal location and cannot be located elsewhere or are needed to help sustain the socio-economic base of a coastal area or serve the needs of the local coastal community. This may include sustainable tourism or leisure related developments where they meet the requirements of policies elsewhere in the Plan. There are also a number of new housing allocations being proposed within Abberton, and West Mersea which are located within the revised Colchester Coastal Protection Belt. Allocating residential development on the edge of these settlements is considered appropriate as it will deliver social and economic benefits to the communities where they are built and ensure that the new housing is sustainably located close to existing facilities and infrastructure. It also helps protect the character of the Coastal Protection Belt by preventing urban sprawl into the more open and undeveloped stretches of the Borough's coastline. Where development is proposed within the Coastal Protection Belt, and where flood risk is also a constraint, the proposed use must be appropriate to the flood zone in which it is to be sited and to the flood vulnerability classification.

4.20 The Marine Management Organisation (MMO) has commenced work on the preparation of the first South East (Inshore) Marine Plan. Colchester falls within this plan area. The Marine Plan once completed will cover the area up to Mean High Water Springs, the Borough's coastline and the tidal reaches of the Colne Estuary/ River Colne. The Marine Plan's jurisdiction will overlap with the Local Planning Authority's responsibilities (which extend to mean low water) and due regard must be paid to the Marine Plan. This new and evolving concept of a Marine Plan will at a local level be implemented in accordance with the national Marine Policy Statements. The Local Plan will be integrated with the South East (Inshore) Marine Plan, once it is complete, to provide a consistent approach for planning on land, and within the Borough's inter-tidal and marine environment.

4.21 A new coastal path is currently being planned around the whole of England's coastline. The delivery of the England Coast Path is embedded in the Marine and Coastal Access Act and Natural England is charged with its delivery by 2020. Once completed in addition to delivering a new long distance walking route, areas of 'spreading room' may also be delivered beside the route where people can explore and relax.

4.22 The Salcott to Jaywick and Mersea Island stretches of the England Coast Path fall within Colchester Borough. Designating these routes as part of the England Coast Path will contribute to coastal regeneration by supporting coastal businesses and services, through increased visitor spending where additional visits are made. This aligns well with the Council's aspirations to support coastal

communities and sustainable coastal tourism initiatives in the Borough. The England Coast Path will avoid private houses and gardens and major ports. The path will also avoid sensitive habitats and areas important for sensitive species. This is important in Colchester as much of the Borough's coast is designated under national, European and international designations.

4.23 The Borough Council supports the principle of creating an England Coast Path and will work with Natural England to secure its delivery along the Borough's coastline.

Policy ENV2: Coastal Areas

Until such time as the South East (Inshore Marine Plan) is completed, any planning proposals within the Borough's coastal, estuarine, intertidal and tidal environment, will need to accord with guidance set out in the national Marine Policy Statement.

Within the Coastal Protection Belt and along the undeveloped coast an integrated approach to coastal management will be promoted and development will only be supported where it can be demonstrated that it:

(i) Requires a coastal location and is located within the developed area of the coast; and
(ii) Is a land use type that is appropriate to the Flood Zone, will be safe from flooding over its planned lifetime and will not have an unacceptable impact on coastal change; and
(iii) Will not be significantly detrimental to conserving important nature conservation, heritage assets, maritime uses and the landscape and seascape character of the coast; and
(iv) Will deliver or sustain social and economic sustainability benefits considered important to the well-being of the coastal communities; and
(v) Provides opportunities and scope for adaptation to climate change; and
(vi) Will not hinder the future creation and maintenance of a continuous signed and managed England Coast Path.

Green Infrastructure

4.24 Green Infrastructure is a strategic network of multifunctional green and blue (water) spaces, and the connections between them, in both urban and rural areas. A Green Infrastructure network may comprise spaces in public or private ownership, with or without public access that is capable of delivering a range of environmental, economic, health and quality of life benefits for local communities and wildlife.

4.25 In Colchester, green infrastructure covers a range of green and blue spaces including allotments, community gardens, amenity greenspaces, cemeteries, natural and semi natural green spaces, river and estuary corridors, play areas, parks and gardens.

4.26 The benefits delivered by well-connected green infrastructure networks are diverse. Green infrastructure provides an important landscape function by protecting green gaps/buffers and areas of open space within and between developments and settlements. Ecologically, green infrastructure provides important wildlife corridors that species use to move between sites for feeding and breeding. Such networks also provide valuable corridors which aide the dispersal of species in response to changing climatic conditions. Well-designed green infrastructure networks can also play a key role in flood prevention /alleviation as part of new development.

4.27 Strategic green links provide valuable corridors for the movement of people. Existing open spaces, sports facilities and green link networks provide the people of Colchester with opportunities for passive and active recreation and encourages healthy and active lifestyles. The availability of a well-functioning green infrastructure network close to centres of population provides an important role in alleviating pressure on sensitive designated habitats sites (Special Areas of Conservation, Special Protection Areas and Ramsar sites) by providing alternative green spaces that people can use for dog walking and general recreational use. It is therefore important that all residents have access to green (or blue) infrastructure close to where they live or work.

4.28 The green spaces along the Colne River, connect the town centre, suburbs, countryside, villages and the coast. These corridors provide alternative means for people making journeys into and across Colchester. Safeguarding the important green edge to Colchester will be essential with a new country park provided along the Salary Brook corridor and incorporating Churn Wood. It is important that the existing green infrastructure network is protected and enhanced, and new links created as part of future developments to improve Green Infrastructure provision overall including the delivery of sustainable transport corridors across the Borough where gaps exist.

4.29 The Council has been working with a range of access groups to deliver a new green infrastructure asset, the Colchester Orbital route. Approximately 14-15 miles in length, the Colchester Orbital is a circular multi-user route around the town's periphery, connecting green spaces, where possible, with cycle routes and bridleways to appeal to the widest range of users. It currently comprises an Inner

Route with proposals to create a secondary outer Orbital route over the plan period. The key aims of the Colchester Orbital project are to create a route that links Colchester's valuable green spaces, to enhance connectivity between them as wildlife habitats, and to create a sense of a green corridor around the town. The project also seeks to strengthen walking links between Colchester, its suburbs and surrounding villages to deliver real alternative sustainable commuting routes, to enhance tourism opportunities and to improve opportunities for active healthy lifestyles, including the expansion of walking horizons of mobility-restricted users.

4.30 While much of the Inner Orbital network already exists, it is not complete. The route will serve walkers including mobility-restricted users, cyclists and where practical horse riders. Opportunities to improve connectivity between existing Green Infrastructure assets, the Orbital and new development should be maximised. Not all sections of the existing route are currently fully accessible for all potential users. New developments will be expected to contribute towards the creation of new paths /green infrastructure where gaps exist and to improve linkages and connectivity with other spurs of the GI network such as the Wivenhoe Trail or wildlife areas. New paths/links should be constructed to a standard to ensure that they provide direct links to services, facilities and infrastructure, are useable all year round and make users feel secure and minimise maintenance costs. Designs will need to be sympathetic to the Green Infrastructure environment but not allow the Green Infrastructure to become a barrier to sustainable active travel. Contributions will also be sought, where related to development, to enhance the quality of the existing Orbital route through improved signage, drainage improvements or new landscaping.

4.31 The Colchester Orbital route is shown in Appendix 1. An audit of the Orbital route has been completed by the Orbital Access Group and this information will be used to inform improvements that need to be made from development contributions where appropriate.

Policy ENV3: Green Infrastructure

The Local Planning Authority will aim to protect, enhance and deliver a comprehensive green infrastructure network comprising strategic green links between the rural hinterland, urban Colchester, river corridors and open spaces across the Borough. It will seek to protect and enhance the existing network of green and blue infrastructure features and to secure the delivery of new green infrastructure where deficiencies and gaps are identified that will benefit communities, wildlife and the environment. The Council will work with access stakeholder/groups to support the delivery of a 'new' multi-user route, the Colchester Orbital, around urban Colchester.

Development proposals that contribute to the delivery of projects identified in the Colchester Green Infrastructure Strategy, the Orbital Project Audit Paper and the Public Rights of Way Improvement Plan for Essex will be positively supported.

The Local Planning Authority will seek opportunities from future developments, where appropriate, to improve the connectivity between the Colchester Orbital route, new developments and the wider countryside. Radial connections will be secured between existing green infrastructure assets, existing development, and the Orbital routes new development. This will improve the choices available to residents to access and participate more easily in healthy activities, such as walking, cycling and horse riding.

Proposals that cause loss or harm to the green infrastructure network will not be permitted unless the need for and benefits of the development outweigh any adverse impacts. Where adverse impacts on green infrastructure are unavoidable, development will only be permitted if suitable mitigation measures for the network are provided. Key linkages will be constructed to a suitable standard to allow year-round secure usage by all.

The Local Planning Authority will seek contributions or require work to be undertaken as part of new development where appropriate, to create new paths where gaps are evident in the existing green infrastructure network/Orbital routes or to enhance the quality of the existing route.

The use of land and buildings as new allotments, orchards, community gardens and for local food growing spaces and production will be supported, including the temporary use of vacant or derelict land or buildings and the use of incidental open space on housing estates and other open space areas, where this does not conflict with other policy objectives.

Green infrastructure that contributes to the protection and enhancement of water bodies will be supported, including de-culverting, creation and management of ecological buffer strips and new wetland areas to help manage flood risk and reduce diffuse pollution.

Dedham Vale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

4.32 The Dedham Vale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) has been designated for its national importance in terms of landscape quality and is further enhanced through its close association with the works of artist John Constable. The quality of the landscape is defined by its natural beauty and special qualities and the integration of the man-made elements within it, and the primary aim of the designation is to conserve and enhance its natural beauty.

4.33 The features that define the Natural Beauty and Special Qualities of the Dedham Vale AONB have been identified in the Dedham Vale AONB Natural Beauty and Special Qualities and Perceived and Anticipated Risks Report commissioned by the Dedham Vale AONB and Stour Valley Joint Advisory Committee and prepared by Alison Farmer Associates in 2016.

4.34 In this report, Natural Beauty has been defined in terms of Landscape Quality, Scenic Quality, Relative Wildness, Relative Tranquillity and Natural and Cultural Heritage Features. The special qualities have been influenced by factors such as traditional land use patterns, evidence of human habitation through history, geology, river valleys and woodlands or association with artists and writers.

4.35 Applications within or close to the AONB will need to consider how proposals impact on the Natural Beauty and Special Qualities of the Dedham Vale AONB as outlined in the Natural Beauty and Special Qualities document referred to above. Major applications may need to be supported with a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment.

4.36 A recent report by the International Dark Sky Association concluded that the Dedham Vale night sky was good enough quality to qualify for Bronze level International Dark Sky status. Work started in 2017 on securing this international designation for the Dedham Vale. To help secure this designation in the future it will be essential to minimise and manage light pollution from all future developments within and on the edge of the AONB.

4.37 It is essential that the AONB and its setting is conserved and enhanced. However, it is acknowledged that the Dedham Vale is a ‘living’ landscape which needs to be able to adapt, change and respond positively to changing social, economic and environmental issues (climate change, changing agricultural sector, recreational pressures) to meet the needs of the local community and visitors to the area. In exceptional cases development proposals that help maintain the economic and social wellbeing of the AONB will be supported where these do not detract from the natural beauty and special qualities of the AONB or its setting. Minor house extensions may provide little opportunity to enhance the landscape qualities of the AONB and accordingly will not be exclusively rejected on this basis where otherwise acceptable. Developer contributions can be paid to the Stour Valley Environment Fund to secure environmental gains elsewhere in the Stour Valley.

4.38 Solar farms and wind turbines are large developments that can have landscape and visual impacts. Proposals for solar farm or wind farms/turbines within or near

the Dedham Vale AONB should accord with the most current national policy and best practice to help conserve and enhance the natural beauty and special qualities of the AONB.

4.39 Proposals outside of the AONB will not be supported where, in the opinion of the Local Planning Authority, they will have a negative impact on the natural beauty, tranquillity, special qualities, setting and public enjoyment of the AONB.

Policy ENV4: Dedham Vale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

Development will only be supported in or on land within the setting of the Dedham Vale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) that:

(i) Makes a positive contribution to the natural beauty and special qualities of the AONB, including tranquillity and the AONB's good quality night/dark skies; and,
(ii) Does not adversely affect the character, quality views, into and out of the AONB and distinctiveness of the AONB or threaten public enjoyment of these areas, including by increased motorised vehicle movement; and,
(iii) That there are no adverse impacts on the setting of the AONB which cannot reasonably be mitigated against and,
(iv) Supports the wider environmental, social and economic objectives as set out in the Dedham Vale AONB and Stour Valley Management Plan.

Applications for major development within or in close proximity to the boundary of the Dedham Vale AONB will be refused unless in exceptional circumstances it can be demonstrated that the development is in the public interest, and this outweighs other material considerations.

Where exceptional development is suitable, landscape enhancements, mitigation or compensation measures must be provided. The Local Planning Authority will seek opportunities to mitigate the impact of features identified as having adverse impacts. Residual impacts may be offset by other planning gain within the AONB or contributions to the Stour Valley Environment Fund.

Proposals for solar farm developments or wind turbine/wind farms within or on land within the setting of the Dedham Vale AONB should have regard to the advice in the Local Planning Authority's Guidance Note '*Designing solar farm renewable energy development*' and in the '*Dedham Vale AONB Position Statement Renewable Energy in the Dedham Vale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (March 2013).*

The Local Planning Authority will also encourage proposals in or near the AONB to underground new infrastructure associated with electricity schemes or communication equipment where financially viable, to help protect its landscape qualities.

Pollution and Contaminated Land

4.40 Land and air pollution are subject to regulatory controls under Environmental Health Legislation including the Environmental Protection Act 1990, Pollution Prevention Act 1999 and the Environment Act 1995. There is some overlap with planning in considering proposals for new development, with the need to ensure that in granting planning permission for something it does not create any unacceptable pollution, or worsen an existing issue, and where necessary implements mitigation measures to reduce / eliminate the problem.

4.41 Local Authorities have a duty to review and assess local air quality under Part IV of the Environment Act 1995. Where a Local Authority considers that one or more of the objectives are unlikely to be met and there is relevant exposure, an Air Quality Management Areas (AQMA) must be declared and an action plan developed setting out measures to work towards an improvement of the air quality in the area. Within Colchester there are 4 such designated areas. Applications within an AQMA and all major planning applications, may be required to submit an air quality impact assessment to assess and quantify the impact on local air quality and to identify appropriate mitigation measures to ensure that development is acceptable on the grounds of air quality. Contributions may also be required towards the cost of air quality mitigation measures.

4.42 Where there are applications for planning permission that will also require an Environmental Permit, consideration should be given to submitting applications in parallel.

4.43 Land contamination is also a material consideration for planning purposes. There are some locations where a previous land use has caused an effect on the suitability of the land for some alternative uses or development. In some cases, remediation works may be required to make land suitable for the proposed use prior to allowing development to take place. A precautionary approach to considering potentially contaminated land is essential to ensure there is no unacceptable risk to health, or to the environment or amenity. The Local Planning Authority will require the applicant to demonstrate by way of adequate site investigation information, prepared by a competent person, that there is no unacceptable risk to health, or the environment and where unacceptable contamination is found there will be a requirement for mitigation / remediation/verification, as agreed with the Council. Sufficient information must be provided to clearly demonstrate that the risk from contamination can be satisfactorily reduced to an acceptable level before the application can be determined. Where appropriate, investigations and remediation may need to be implemented prior to any development commencing. Where mitigation / remediation cannot be satisfactorily achieved development will be refused.

Policy ENV5: Pollution and Contaminated Land

Proposals will be supported that will not result in an unacceptable risk to public health or safety, the environment, general amenity, or existing uses due to the potential of air pollution, noise nuisance, surface / ground water sources or land pollution.

Proposals for developments within designated Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs) or where development within a nearby locality may impact on an AQMA are required, first, to be located in such a way as to reduce emissions overall, and secondly to reduce the direct impacts of those developments. Applicants shall, prepare and submit with their application a relevant assessment, taking into account guidance current at the time of the application, which must be to the satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority. Permission will only be granted where the Council is satisfied that after selection of appropriate mitigation the development, alone and cumulatively, will not have an unacceptable significant impact on air quality, health and well-being.

Development proposals on contaminated land, or where there is reason to suspect contamination, must include an assessment of the extent of contamination and any possible risks. The onus is on the applicant to demonstrate that there is no likely risk to health or the environment due to contamination. Where planning permission is granted, conditions may be imposed requiring the execution of any necessary remedial works. Where a site is affected by land contamination, responsibility for securing a safe development rests with the developer and/or landowner, who will be required to carry out the above. After remediation, as a minimum, land should not be capable of being determined as contaminated land under Part IIA of the Environmental Protection Act 1990.

5. Climate Change Policy

5.1 The NPPF states that mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy, is part of the role of the planning system. It recognises that planning can help shape places to secure radical reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, minimise vulnerability and provide resilience to the impacts of climate change, and support the delivery of renewable and low carbon energy and associated infrastructure. This is fundamental to the achievement of sustainable development.

5.2 Sustainable development is at the heart of the Local Plan. Through the Local Plan the Council is seeking to create communities that secure reductions in greenhouse gas emissions through the location, mix and design of development, provide resilience to the impacts of a changing climate, support the delivery of renewable energy technologies and district heating systems, and minimise waste.

5.3 The Local Plan as a whole sets out a strategy for climate change mitigation and adaptation. Examples of climate change mitigation are:

- Reducing the need to travel and providing for sustainable transport;
- Providing opportunities for renewable and low carbon energy technologies;
- Providing opportunities for decentralised energy and heating;
- Promoting low carbon design approaches to reduce energy consumption in buildings, such as passive solar design.

Examples of climate change adaptation are:

- Considering future climate risks when allocating development sites to ensure risks are understood over the development's lifetime;
- Avoiding areas that are most vulnerable to future flood risk;
- Considering the impact of and promoting design responses to flood risk and coastal change for the lifetime of the development;
- Considering availability of water and water infrastructure for the lifetime of the development and design responses to promote water efficiency and protect water quality;
- Promoting adaptation approaches in design policies for developments and the public realm.

5.4 New development should be planned to avoid increased vulnerability to the range of impacts arising from climate change. Developers will be expected to demonstrate how the scheme mitigates and adapts to climate change. In particular proposals will be expected to demonstrate how they have taken account of flood risk, water efficiency, biodiversity, landform, layout, building orientation, massing, tree planting and landscaping to minimise energy consumption and provide resilience to a changing climate.

5.5 Policy ENV3 includes detailed criteria relating to green infrastructure. Where possible, connections should be made to the Colchester Orbital. Landscaping and tree planting are important climate change adaptation measures and new

development should take every opportunity to enhance the Borough's green infrastructure network. Landscaping schemes should include species that will tolerate a changing climate, which will help future proof towns and urban areas against rising temperatures. The benefits for the natural and local environment and climate change of tree canopy cover are widely recognised. A study (The Canopy Cover of England's Towns and Cities: baselining and setting targets to improve human health and well-being) carried out in 2017, concluded the following:

- An average TCC of 20% should be set as the minimum standard for most UK towns and cities, with a lower target of 15% for coastal towns;
- Towns and cities with at least 20% cover should set targets to increase cover by at least 5% (i.e. above the ±2% tolerance of i-Tree Canopy) within ten to 20 years (depending on what is achievable against their baseline); and
- Targets and strategies for increasing tree cover should be set according to the species, size and age composition of the existing urban forest, based upon a ward/district level and land-use assessment.

5.6 The tree canopy coverage for Colchester Borough is currently 18% varying between wards / locations there are some areas with larger and better canopy cover and others with significantly less. As per the recommendation above, the long-term aim should be to increase the canopy cover of the borough to 20% and then 25%. It is recognised that this is an aspirational target, but that new development should seek to contribute to increase tree canopy cover where appropriate. It is considered that 10% as a target on development sites where appropriate would help to mitigate the likely losses of trees over the plan period whilst steadily increasing the overall canopy cover of the borough.

5.7 A Canopy Cover Assessment will be required for all major applications[1]. Development proposals should seek where appropriate to increase the level of canopy cover on site by a minimum of 10%. In circumstances, where this is not possible or desirable, compensatory provision should be identified and secured through a legal obligation. This will increase the overall canopy cover of the

1 Major applications are defined as per Article 2 of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management) Procedure (England) Order 2015 as: Development involving any one or more of the following —
(a) the winning and working of minerals or the use of land for mineral-working deposits;
(b) waste development;
(c) the provision of dwellinghouses where—
(i) the number of dwellinghouses to be provided is 10 or more; or
(ii) the development is to be carried out on a site having an area of 0.5 hectares or more and it is not known whether the development falls within sub-paragraph ;
(d) the provision of a building or buildings where the floor space to be created by the development is 1,000 square metres or more; or
(e) development carried out on a site having an area of 1 hectare or more

borough, enable sites to mitigate and adapt to climate change and deliver biodiversity net gain.

5.8 To help contribute towards achieving the national climate change target set out in the Climate Change Act 2008 of net zero carbon by 2050 from a 1990 baseline, the Local Planning Authority will encourage development to meet a proportion of energy needs from renewable or low carbon sources. In 2019, the Council made a Climate Emergency declaration. The Council is committed to firm action and has set a target to be net zero carbon by 2030 and is committed to a significant programme of environmental stewardship. A Climate Challenge and Sustainability Strategy and a Carbon Management Plan will support the Climate Emergency Action Plan and will set out detailed specific carbon reduction projects.

5.9 The Local Planning Authority will support proposals for renewable energy development providing that there would be no adverse effects on Special Protection Areas, Special Areas of Conservation, Sites of Special Scientific Interest, or the Dedham Vale AONB. Policy DM25 includes criteria that will be used to assess proposals for renewable energy schemes.

5.10 Whilst renewable energy has an important role to play in contributing to a reduction in Colchester's greenhouse gas emissions, regard should be had to the energy hierarchy. The energy hierarchy sets out the order in which energy issues should be tackled:

1. Reduce the need for energy;
2. Use energy more efficiently;
3. Use renewable energy;
4. Any continuing use of fossil fuels should be clean and efficient.

5.11 The Council is supporting the development of a low carbon district heating system using an open loop ground source heat pump at Colchester Northern Gateway for a mixed used development in conjunction with the Department of Business Energy and Industrial Strategy Heat Network Investment Project.

5.12 Existing buildings can also play an important role in reducing greenhouse gas emissions through improved energy efficiency measures where appropriate. Householders and businesses will be encouraged to make energy efficiency improvements to existing buildings as part of proposals for extensions/ alterations. Appropriate energy efficiency measures for historic buildings will be different in relation to certain classes of historic buildings.

Policy CC1: Climate Change

Colchester Borough Council made a Climate Emergency declaration in 2019. A Climate Challenge and Sustainability Strategy and a Carbon Management Plan will support the Climate Emergency Action Plan and will set out detailed specific carbon reduction projects. In addressing the move to a low carbon future for Colchester, the Local Planning Authority will plan for new development in locations and ways that reduce greenhouse gas emissions, adopt the principles set out in the energy hierarchy and provide resilience to the impacts of a changing climate.

A low carbon future for Colchester will be achieved by:

(i) Encouraging and supporting the provision of renewable and low carbon technologies.
(ii) Encouraging new development to provide a proportion of the energy demand through renewable or low carbon sources.
(iii) Encouraging design and construction techniques which contribute to climate change mitigation and adaptation by using landform, layout, building orientation, massing, tree planting and landscaping to minimise energy consumption and provide resilience to a changing climate.
(iv) A Canopy Cover Assessment will be required for all major applications[2]. Development proposals should seek where appropriate to increase the level of canopy cover on site by a minimum of 10%. In circumstances, where this is not possible or desirable, compensatory provision should be identified and secured through a legal obligation.
(v) Requiring both innovative design and technologies that reduce the impacts of climate change within the garden community.
(vi) Supporting opportunities to deliver decentralised energy systems, particularly those which are powered by a renewable or low carbon source. Supporting connection to an existing decentralised energy supply system where there is capacity to supply the proposed development, or design for future connection where there are proposals for such a system.
(vii) Requiring development in the Northern Gateway to connect to or be

[2] Major applications are defined as per Article 2 of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management) Procedure (England) Order 2015 as: Development involving any one or more of the following—
(a) the winning and working of minerals or the use of land for mineral-working deposits;
(b) waste development;
(c) the provision of dwellinghouses where—
(i) the number of dwellinghouses to be provided is 10 or more; or
(ii)the development is to be carried out on a site having an area of 0.5 hectares or more and it is not known whether the development falls within sub-paragraph ;
(d) the provision of a building or buildings where the floor space to be created by the development is 1,000 square metres or more; or
(e) development carried out on a site having an area of 1 hectare or more

capable of connecting to the district heating scheme where there is capacity to supply the proposed development and where it is appropriate and viable to do so.

(viii) Supporting energy efficiency improvements to existing buildings in the Borough where appropriate.

(ix) Minimising waste and improving reuse and recycling rates.

(x) Development will be directed to locations with the least impact on flooding or water resources. All development should consider the impact of and promotion of design responses to flood risk for the lifetime of the development and the availability of water and wastewater infrastructure for the lifetime of the development.

(xi) Green infrastructure should be used to manage and enhance existing habitats. Opportunities should be taken to create new habitats and assist with species migration. Consideration should be given to the use of green infrastructure to provide shade during higher temperatures and for flood mitigation. The potential role of green infrastructure as 'productive landscapes' should also be considered.

6. Place Policies

6.1 The policies and text contained within this section set out allocations for specific parts of the Borough and explain how those allocations align with the Plan's overall spatial strategy and policy objectives. The allocations contain site specific requirements for infrastructure and mitigation and management of any site constraints. These will be required in addition to general requirements for infrastructure contained in Policy PP1 and other requirements as relevant contained in Development Management policies. Policy PP1 highlights general issues concerning infrastructure provision, archaeology and developer contributions that affect proposals across the Borough and are essential to ensuring that new development adequately mitigates its impact on the surrounding area and makes a positive contribution to its character and amenity.

Policy PP1: Generic Infrastructure and Mitigation Requirements

In addition to site specific requirements identified in relevant policies, all proposals will be required to make contributions to the cost of infrastructure improvements and/or community facilities, including education, as required and supported by up-to-date evidence from appropriate sources including the Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP), Parish/Town Council, or specially commissioned work. Contributions will be secured to an appropriate level by way of legal agreement or through CIL as required. In addition, proposals must, as relevant, address all of the following Borough wide requirements:

(i) Adequate wastewater treatment, water supply network enhancements, and sewage infrastructure enhancements for the relevant catchment area;
(ii) Appropriate SuDS for managing surface water runoff within the overall design and layout of the site;
(iii) Proportionate mitigation for area-wide transport issues as identified in the policies for North, East, South and West Colchester contained in the 'Places' section of the plan;
(iv) Safe pedestrian access from the site to existing footways to enhance connectivity;
(v) Suitable design and screening/landscaping to minimise any negative impact on the surrounding landscape and/or heritage assets;
(vi) Potential archaeological significance of the site as required, by way of pre-determination evaluation (geophysical survey and trial trenching). Any findings from the evaluation will need to be reflected in a detailed mitigation strategy for further investigation to be agreed and submitted with the application to preserve in-situ or adequately recorded by excavation, secured by a planning condition; and
(vii) Further to Section 1 Policy SP2, developments will be required to contribute towards mitigation measures in accordance with the Essex Coast Recreational disturbance Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy 2018-2038 (RAMS).

Colchester

6.2 As a regional centre Colchester is the key focus for a wide range of development opportunities and challenges. This section covers the area of Colchester, divided up into five broad geographic areas designed to help the user and follow a place based Local Plan. The policies relating to Colchester are set out below under the headings, Central, North, South, East and West Colchester.

Central Colchester

Town Centre

6.3 The Town Centre remains largely defined by the Town Walls first constructed by the Romans two thousand years ago and which led to the development of a compact commercial core built to a higher density and different character to development outside the walls. The insertion of new roads on Balkerne Hill and Southway in the 1960-70s created boundaries between the Town Centre and surrounding residential areas to the west and south sides and limits the potential for Town Centre expansion in those directions. Within this plan, the Town Centre boundary has been extended to include the Crouch Street shopping area. This recognises Crouch Street's role in strengthening the Town Centre's presence of independent retailers, food/drink establishments, and small offices.

6.4 Policy for the Town Centre is intended to support its pre-eminent position in the Borough's spatial hierarchy and provide a flexible approach to adapting to changing economic and social circumstances. Town centres have been evolving to provide a greater mix of leisure and food/drink uses in previously retail-only areas. In recognition of this trend, the Local Planning Authority will accept a greater diversity of town centre uses in primary shopping areas to support the core retail uses. This approach is intended to increase the mix of compatible uses in Colchester's historic core to provide a more robust economic environment which also stimulate a greater diversity of evening activities. The Town Centre will therefore attract people of various ages and interests at different times of the day and night, and when combined with effective Town Centre management policies, safety and inclusiveness will be improved.

6.5 The Town Centre boasts important historic character which must be protected and enhanced by all development as set out in Policy DM16 Historic Environment and relevant supporting guidance as required. Opportunities to enhance the public realm and attractiveness of the street environment will be encouraged wherever possible.

6.6 The town centre is the most accessible location in the Borough by all modes of transport. There is an extensive walking network from all directions with approximately 15,900 people (7,600 dwellings) within an 800m walk distance of the town centre; there is a cycle network serving the town centre from all directions with a mixture of on and off-road routes. Barriers to cycling have been improved with new shared use bridges across the river to the north and across Balkerne Hill to the west, with cycling allowed through subways under the main

roads to the south and west. Cycle parking is available in the core of the town centre. With a bus travel time of 20 minutes 95% of the urban area of Colchester is served by a regular bus service to the town centre – some services working through the day on a 12 minute frequency. Nearly all the bus services in Colchester pass through the town centre, including those serving the rural areas and the interurban coach services. Park and ride on a 15 minute frequency serves the town centre from the north. Buses pick up and drop off in the heart of the town centre providing excellent access, with the opportunity to interchange between services. The town centre is also served by two railway stations – Colchester Town is on the southeast edge of the town centre, with a 30 minute service from the mainline and the line to Clacton. Colchester station is 1 mile to the north but has regular mainline services and is a straight walk to the town centre or a 5 minute wait for a bus. The main vehicle parking is provided around the edge of the town centre with some 3,200 public spaces aimed mainly at short stay shoppers. The road network feeds into the town centre from all directions with an urban dual carriageway to the west and south. No other location in the Borough has this level of accessibility for all modes of transport.

6.7 Colchester Borough Council has worked with partners to deliver pure fibre connectivity, delivering up to gigabit speeds, to businesses in the Town Centre. The new infrastructure makes Colchester Town Centre one of the best-connected places in the UK and positions it ideally for the future deployment of 5G mobile telephony as well as “smart city” innovations.

Policy TC1: Town Centre Policy and Hierarchy

Colchester Town Centre is at the top of the retail hierarchy set forth in Policy SG5. Accordingly, it will be the priority focus for new Town Centre uses and larger scale development.

The Local Planning Authority will encourage development in the Town Centre (as defined on the Policies Map) which is focused on retail (particularly comparison) and supporting leisure, culture, and restaurant / café uses to enhance the Borough’s role as a sub-regional shopping and leisure destination and important tourist destination.

The Council will seek to deliver more attractive public spaces and streetscapes in the Town Centre. The Local Planning Authority will support proposals that positively contribute towards creating an attractive, vibrant and safe Town Centre that offers a diverse mix of uses, including shared mixed-use spaces and short-term uses, and extend the time when the Town Centre is active subject to their impact on local amenity.

Retail Frontages

6.8 The extent of the Primary Shopping Area has been reviewed to address the requirement in the NPPF to provide and define the extent of primary and secondary shopping frontages in town centres. The previous Local Plan provided for the Inner and Outer Core where the requirement for the Inner Core was 85% of frontages to be in retail use with a lower requirement of 50% in the Outer Core. The primary shopping areas illustrated on the Policies map include those selected areas, largely within the previous Inner Core designation, where it is reasonable to maintain a high percentage of retail uses within each street frontage. Greater flexibility for changes of use is provided to maximise the number of occupied units and sustain a more diverse composition of uses. This reflects the increasing predominance of leisure, food/drink and cultural uses within town centre areas historically confined to retail uses only. It will also help accommodate the need for additional capacity for town centre uses in the main Town Centre area.

6.9 Town Centre sites are the Council's strong preference for future retail development in line with the retail hierarchy. The need for further development capacity within the Town Centre will largely be met by redevelopment of existing areas, given the land use, environmental and topographic constraints on further Town Centre expansion. The St. Botolph's area to the east will continue to be a focus for new development in the Town Centre, with the Firstsite gallery, which opened in 2011, serving as a catalyst for further culture and leisure-focused development. With permission granted for an arthouse cinema, further development is programmed to include development of town centre floorspace including a hotel; restaurant cluster; and student accommodation.

Policy TC2: Retail Frontages

Given that the Town Centre is at the top of the centre hierarchy in the Borough as a whole, within Colchester Town Centre the Local Planning Authority will seek to maintain a high proportion of retail uses on each Primary Street Frontage within the Primary Shopping Area shown on the Policies Map. Development proposals for non-retail uses within primary frontages will be permitted where they would enhance vitality and viability, be appropriate to the character and function of the area and not compromise the appearance of the frontage and its contribution to the streetscape.

Within the Secondary Street Frontages in the Primary Shopping Area as defined on the Policies map, support will be given for the continuing role of retail uses supported by other activity-generating town centre uses which enhance the vitality and activity of the area, including food and drink premises, non-residential institutions and leisure uses, at ground floor level.

Where planning applications are required, alternative non-retail town centre uses in the Primary Shopping area will be supported where they meet the following criteria:

- Maintain a 70% (Primary Street Frontage) or 50% (Secondary Street Frontage) level of retail uses on the relevant street frontage unless non-

viability of retail use can be demonstrated as detailed above and;

- Make a positive contribution to footfall and levels of activity throughout the day; and;
- Retain and /or enhances the quality and design of the street frontage through the inclusion of active frontages and / displays; appropriate use of materials; sympathetic scale; retention of historic features; and relationship to surrounding streetscape and;
- Are compatible with adjacent uses – the proposal complements the town centre uses in the immediate area.

Proposals which provide premises occupying small footprints and flexible ground floor footprints will be supported in these frontages to help encourage the town's small / independent town centre businesses.

Town Centre Allocations

6.10 Reflecting its position at the top of the retail hierarchy, Colchester Town Centre will be the focus for additional retail floorspace in line with the requirement in the NPPF to meet in full the demand for town centre uses.

6.11 Medium to longer term need for town centre use floorspace will be addressed by redevelopment of the St. Botolph's and Priory Walk developments, providing potential opportunities for redevelopment of existing buildings and car parks. At Priory Walk, which provides a key pedestrian link between Firstsite /St Botolphs and the core shopping area, redevelopment could improve the public realm and retail offer either through reconfiguration and refurbishment of the existing outdated centre, or by redevelopment. At St. Botolph's, the Council is actively pursuing a co-ordinated scheme for redevelopment of the outdated buildings and vacant land in line with long-standing Council objectives for the area to achieve a mixed-use development with a focus on leisure and related uses. The need for further floorspace will be kept under review and if required updated evidence will inform specific allocations within these areas and additional areas will be allocated within the Town Centre if necessary.

6.12 Additional office floorspace to sustain the Town Centre will be supported at the adjacent Middleborough Local Economic Area as shown on the Policies Map. This is specifically safeguarded for the retention of office uses and also allows scope for redevelopment to provide additional purpose-built modern accommodation well-connected to Town Centre facilities. The area's edge of centre location means it would be considered to be sequentially preferable, if land was available, suitable and deliverable, to other potential locations for offices in the Borough. The Town Centre fringe areas also contain areas of existing employment floorspace at South St. Peters Street, George Williams Way and Southway which will be safeguarded to ensure the supply of well-located business use premises.

Residential allocations

6.13 Residential uses will be supported within the Town Centre to support vitality, diversity, and economic activity. In addition, it is expected that further residential units will be created through the permitted development change of use from office to residential, as well as the refurbishment of upper floors over town centre uses. New residential allocations are provided for in the Britannia Street car park and for a portion of the St Runwald Street car park. Development of these car parks would require Transport Assessment work to demonstrate that they would result in a neutral impact on parking provision for the Town Centre, or, to provide alternatives including new spaces or demand management measures as appropriate.

Employment allocations

6.14 All planning proposals for new town centre development will need to have regard to the historic nature of the town centre and proposals will be required to meet high design standards, respect the surrounding diverse architectural heritage and meet policy requirements on archaeological investigation in accordance with the generic requirements in PP1 and other requirements as appropriate.

6.15 Vineyard Gate, St. Botolphs, Priory Street and Britannia St. fall within Critical Drainage Areas CDA 03 as shown in the Surface Water Management Plan for Colchester. Developer contributions will be sought towards the costs of delivering flood defence / flood management solutions within this CDA as specified in the SWMP to help manage flood risk in this part of Colchester. Solutions should be agreed between Essex County (Local Lead Flood Authority), the Environment Agency, developers and the Local Planning Authority.

Policy TC3: Town Centre Allocations

Town Centre Uses - Allocations

Development will need to protect and enhance the character of the conservation area, listed buildings, heritage assets and their setting on and in the vicinity of the site, including where appropriate, the Scheduled Monument (Town Walls).

To address the identified need for additional town centre use floorspace providing a mix of comparison shopping; food and drink; entertainment; and residential uses over the plan period to 2033, additional potential capacity has been identified as follows and is shown on the Policies Map:

Vineyard Gate
Redevelopment of Vineyard Gate over the plan period to provide a residential-led mixed use scheme:
Requirements:

- Approximately 100 dwellings;
- Development will need to protect and enhance the character of the Scheduled Ancient Monument (Town Walls).
- Provide direct pedestrian connections to/from Lion Walk.

Contributions needed towards to the delivery of flood defence/flood management solutions as identified in the SWMP for CDA 03.

St. Botolphs
Mixed use scheme providing cinema, hotel; restaurant cluster; retail; student accommodation; Creative Business Centre (1.86 ha)
Requirements:

- Access off Queen Street.
- Development will need to protect and enhance the character of the Conservation Area and listed buildings.

Priory Walk
Redevelopment and/or extension of Priory Walk area to provide retail and mixed use floorspace (0.95ha)
Requirements;

- Development will need to protect and enhance the setting of nearby listed buildings and the town centre conservation area.
- Provide for pedestrian connections between St Botolphs and Long / Short Wyre Street.

The 2016 Retail Study Update identified limited capacity for convenience goods floorspace over the plan period (after allowing for existing commitments).

Residential allocations:
Residential allocations as identified on the Policies Map will be supported where they meet the requirements identified for each site below in addition to generic infrastructure requirements in PP1 and pollution/contamination mitigation in ENV5:

Land at Britannia Car Park

- Allocated for 150 dwellings;
- Residential development to have neutral effect on overall town centre car parking capacity.
- Development will need to protect and enhance the setting of the Scheduled Monument (The Priory).
- Development will need to protect and enhance the setting of nearby listed buildings and the town centre conservation area.
- Contribute towards flood risk solutions, in accordance with Flood Risk Management policy DM23 and SWMP recommendations for CDA 03.

Part of St Runwalds Car park

- Allocated for 40 dwellings;
- Access to be agreed with the Highway Authority.
- Development will need to protect and enhance the setting of nearby listed buildings and the town centre conservation area.

Employment allocations:
Additional office floorspace to sustain the Town Centre will be supported just outside the Town Centre boundary within the Middleborough Local Economic Area as shown on the Policies Map. In addition, proposals for office use elsewhere in the Town Centre will be supported where they comply with other policy requirements.

The following LEAs are safeguarded for economic use in accordance with Policy SG4 and as shown on the Policies Map:

- Southway
- COLBEA Business Centre George Williams Way

Transport in Colchester Town Centre

6.16 The town centre is a highly accessible location by all transport modes and is central to urban Colchester. Being the town centre there is a high level of pedestrian movement and within the central core pedestrians are given priority. Elsewhere pedestrian movement is managed alongside other users.

6.17 The National Cycle network passes through the town centre with routes from the north (NCN1) Highwoods/Ipswich Road Route, west (NCN1) Lexden Route, and the Wivenhoe trail (NCN 51 from the east). The Garrison Cycle Route connects from the south passing through Southway subway.

6.18 Nearly all of the urban bus services penetrate into the town centre, with bus priority provided on certain routes to provide a greater reliability of service. Park and Ride also serves the town from the north.

6.19 Within the Town Centre there are areas designated Air Quality Management Areas. Measures which help improve the air quality in the area such as, sustainable transport, promotion of low emission vehicles, cleaner vehicles, smoothing traffic flows and improving the street design will be required together with mitigation against any identified impacts.

6.20 Strategic Transport Modelling and other ongoing studies identify locations in the Town Centre where improvements to, and investment in, the transport network have been identified as being necessary. Where proposals are demonstrated to add pressure to the transport network measures will be required to mitigate the impact. The transport evidence base is continuously evolving and additional issues and schemes may be identified during the Plan period. The exact scale, timing and nature of this infrastructure will be determined through more detailed assessment as the planning process develops.

Policy TC4: Transport in Colchester Town Centre
Developments in Colchester Town Centre will be expected to contribute to a package of sustainable transport measures including walking, cycling, public transport, travel planning and the promotion of sustainable travel.

Where it is demonstrated that proposals will impact on the highway network, contributions will be sought towards mitigation and improvements, including to the following projects;

- Enhancement to Southway / St Botolphs Roundabout, taking into consideration traffic flows, the quality of place and improving access to the Town Centre and Colchester Town Railway Station.
- Provision for public transport within the town centre area, including; space for bus stops, shelters and linkage to real-time information.
- Provision for Rapid Transit services including space to provide capacity for these and connections onto other locations including the route connecting the Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community with East Colchester, the Town Centre and North Colchester required by Section 1 Policy SP6.
- Improvements to the pedestrian and cycling network to ensure that developments are accessible and permeable.

For areas with large multiple sites located in close proximity to each other the cumulative impact of all the development in the area must be considered.

The positioning and size of bus shelters, signs and other highways infrastructure must have regard to the historic character of the area and setting of heritage assets.

North Colchester

6.21 The North Colchester area has been the subject of various planning applications and development in recent years and this is expected to continue through the plan period. The road infrastructure has already seen significant change with Axial Way, United Way, A12 Junction 28 and the Northern Approaches Road all opened by April 2015. The early delivery of transport infrastructure allowed Colchester United football club to relocate to the Weston Homes Community Stadium in 2008. The stadium was part of a comprehensive development granted planning permission in 2006. The applications allowed for an element of leisure use as well as employment space to support future housing growth in the area. The uses permitted included the community stadium, health and fitness centre, a hotel, public house and other food/drink uses, some of which are under construction. The mix of uses was permitted to enable funding of the stadium and local road infrastructure.

6.22 The North Transit Corridor will facilitate high quality public transport services that can bypass traffic and provide easy access by a range of sustainable modes to the town centre, North Colchester and the Park and Ride via Colchester Station. The last section of the North Transit Corridor, referred to as NAR2 Busway in the previous Local Plan, is yet to be delivered and is subject to an existing legal agreement. The remaining link is shown on the policies map and the Council will actively seek to secure its delivery.

6.23 All new development must be well connected for walking and cycling to existing and new communities. The dual carriageway A12 trunk road serves the development areas north and south of the A12. Measures need to be included in the masterplan to provide safe, direct, cohesive walking and cycle linkages to allow people to move independently between the development areas and the new opportunities on offer.

6.24 The Myland and Braiswick Neighbourhood Plan identifies the Northern Gateway proposals as having the potential to deliver an array of sport and leisure facilities which will provide much needed opportunities for sport and recreation and which will make an important contribution to the sustainability of the Myland area. The Plan indicates that Myland Community Council will work with Colchester Borough Council to ensure the proposed sport and leisure development area will help to satisfy resident aspirations.

Zone 1 – Strategic Employment Area

6.25 The Employment Land Needs Assessment identifies North Colchester and Severalls Strategic Economic Area as one of the Borough's best located and connected sites for business, benefiting from excellent access to the strategic road network and as such additional land is allocated for employment purposes. The area is well placed to accommodate over-spill demand from the Colchester and Severalls Business Parks, as expansion and development opportunities become increasingly rare on these well performing and popular business areas. A limited range of non-B class uses will be supported in accordance with the policy where they do not undermine or constrain the main purpose of the economic

function of the area to deliver significant job growth. Main town centre uses will only be supported where they are ancillary to, and related in scale to, the primary employment focus of the area. Examples of acceptable uses include trade counters and services to support employees at the business park.

Zone 2 – Cuckoo Farm North West

6.26 Land adjacent to the community stadium is allocated for mixed use. It is expected that a mixed leisure and commercial scheme will be delivered to complement the sport offer elsewhere in the SEA.

Zone 3 - Northern Gateway area north of the A12

6.27 It is proposed that the Council will deliver the next phase of the Northern Gateway Masterplan vision through the development of a new sports and recreational hub on land in its ownership to the north of the A12, referred to as zone 3 on the policies map. The scheme provides an opportunity to bring forward the site as a sub-regional leisure destination and to enhance and expand the range of sport and recreational facilities available for local clubs and residents in order to increase participation levels across the Borough.

6.28 Development of land to the north of the A12 provides opportunities to deliver a range of new complementary indoor and outdoor sports facilities. The Indoor Sports Facility Strategy has identified a need for more indoor sports facilities to support the growing population of Colchester, especially in north Colchester. The Playing Pitch Strategy has identified the need to increase the number of sports pitches (including artificial grass pitches) and to enhance the quality of existing pitches to improve provision, maintain quality and to meet growing demand. The Playing Pitch strategy has also identified a number of indoor facilities required to complement outdoor provision, including an indoor sports hub and a rugby club pavilion. New cycling training facilities will be delivered and the needs of sports clubs currently using facilities at Mill Road will be accommodated where practical. Investment will be made in infrastructure to ensure sustainable multi-user access to the development from the local communities and car parking.

Land at and adjacent to the Rugby Club

6.29 The Rugby Club site is allocated for residential development and open space to provide enabling development to help deliver the sport facilities detailed above, which will benefit the whole borough. Provision of significant open space will be required within the site to ensure that some of the existing benefits are retained for local residents. There will also be a requirement to provide a community space which may include provision for a church. As with the proposals in zones 2 and 3, there will be a masterplan agreed which will provide a more detailed framework for the area as a whole. Proposals will be expected to comply with this. It is anticipated that development of this site will deliver approximately 300 dwellings. Land within this allocation will also provide 260 units of Extra Care accommodation.

6.30 The Council is seeking to deliver sustainable initiatives as part of the development objectives within this area including opportunities for sustainable energy and potential for a District Heat Network, ultrafast broadband, and sustainable lighting initiative. Opportunities to showcase exemplar elements, such as achieving ambitious sustainability objectives will be encouraged where appropriate. The Council has been successful in a bid for funding for the delivery of the Heat Network in this area.

Policy NC1: North Colchester and Severalls Strategic Economic Area

All land and premises within the North Colchester and Severalls Strategic Economic Area including the areas known as the Northern Gateway and Severalls and Colchester Business Parks will be safeguarded for the identified uses based on a zoned approach as indicated below.

A master plan will be prepared to provide a detailed guidance covering parts of the economic area. Proposals which are in accordance with the agreed masterplan will be supported.

All proposals within the North Colchester and Severalls Strategic Economic Area will be required to provide good public transport, pedestrian and cycle links ensuring good connectivity within the area, with neighbouring communities, to the Colchester Orbital Route, and to and from the town centre and Colchester Station.

Development will be expected to contribute to the cost of infrastructure improvements where necessary and identified in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) or subsequent evidence.

Zone 1: as defined on the Policies Map (existing and proposed employment land) will be the primary focus for employment uses and as such, alternative uses will only be supported where they:

(i) Are ancillary to the existing employment uses on the site intended to serve the primary function of the site as an employment area; and
(ii) Provide the opportunity to maximise the sites potential for economic growth and support the continued operation of existing employment uses within the economic area; and
(iii) Do not generate potential conflict with the existing or proposed uses / activities on the site; and
(iv) There is no reasonable prospect of the site being used for appropriate employment uses.

Zone 2: The area defined on the policies map as zone 2 (adjacent to the Stadium) is being developed by the Council as a leisure / community hub and will be safeguarded for a mix of uses including sport, leisure and recreation. Uses will be permitted where they clearly demonstrate the potential for job creation and provided that they do not undermine or constrain the main purpose of the economic function of the wider area. Uses may include an appropriate scale of

leisure and commercial space, open space and green infrastructure to enhance connectivity. No retail use will be permitted unless it is ancillary to another use and meets the requirements of the sequential test and impact test if required.

Zone 3 as defined on the Policies Map (including areas known as the Northern Gateway area north of the A12) land will be safeguarded primarily for a range of sport and recreation uses within use classes D, subject to up-to-date evidence supporting a need for such use. Proposals will need to be in accordance with an agreed master plan.

Allocation for Residential and Open Space Uses
The area shown on the policies map which comprises the existing Rugby Club will be safeguarded for employment use (as set out above) as well as residential use to provide enabling development to deliver the sport and leisure / community uses in Zone 3. Development of the site will provide for approximately 300 new dwellings, 260 units of Extra Care accommodation and community space which may include a church. Access will be taken from Axial Way unless other considerations prevent this.

Proposals will be permitted in accordance with a masterplan to be approved by the Local Planning Authority which will incorporate an appropriate design approach and enhanced public realm to ensure the different uses can be accommodated in a compatible way.

North Station Special Policy Area

6.31 Colchester Station is a key gateway to Colchester with the mainline railway station facilitating high frequency services including intercity routes between Norwich and London and services to Clacton and into Suffolk. Regeneration of this area remains key to the continued development of Colchester in a manner that is attractive to investment, visitors and residents.

6.32 The North Station area of Colchester was designated as a regeneration area in the Core Strategy and some initial work on developing a masterplan was undertaken post 2010. Implementation of some of the initiatives arising from this, including the Fixing the Link project, have been delivered during the early part of 2016. Many of the concepts remain relevant and the principle of the overall vision remains, to create a welcoming gateway to the town, set within a balanced mix of uses, with enhanced connectivity to and from this area of Colchester.

6.33 The North Station Special Policy Area is based on a review of the boundary that was defined in the previous draft masterplan. The area designated on the Policies Map focuses on the North Station Gateway and the existing traditional urban village on North Station Road. Other areas are now covered by different policies. However, the North Station Special Policy Area still builds on opportunities to improve the public realm and enhance connectivity within the wider area including the Town Centre, Cowdray Avenue and Turner Rise, the surrounding residential areas and green infrastructure links in Castle Park, Highwoods Country Park and the Colchester Orbital Route.

6.34 Colchester Station has been upgraded over the past few years as part of the National Stations Improvement Programme and through the Station Travel Plan initiative. The Colchester Station Travel Plan was developed in partnership with successive Train Operating Companies and Essex County Council and has been running since 2008.

6.35 As part of the Station Travel Plan, objectives have been agreed for improvements to the station forecourt. This will include access to the station for all modes and from all directions and prioritise access to the station for sustainable modes.

6.36 The station forecourt needs to become not only an efficient transition point between modes of transport, but also to be seen as a public square and a new public space in its own right. There are regeneration opportunities adjoining the station and off Clarendon Road, including the car sales site adjacent to the railway bridge.

6.37 The completion of the North Transit Corridor will provide easy access by a range of sustainable modes to the Town Centre, North Colchester and the Park and Ride, via Colchester Station. The Transit Corridor will facilitate high quality public transport services that can bypass traffic congestion in the area.

6.38 The traditional urban area that is situated on either side of North Station Road has a distinctive character. The Fixing the Link project has created new wayfinding to improve the walking route from Colchester Station to the Town Centre. The North Station Road area will be enhanced as a walkable environment which is the focus for the day to day needs of its immediate community, but also improves the route for those passing through the area to and from the Town Centre and the station.

Policy NC2: North Station Special Policy Area

Within the area designated on the policies map as the North Station Special Policy Area, development which contributes to regeneration of the area will be supported. Development will need to address the following criteria:

(i) Creation of a positive sense of arrival at the station, providing a quality public transport interchange as part of the Station Gateway, improving the accessibility and function of the station;
(ii) Creation of new areas of high quality public realm in the station area to provide greater legibility within the area;
(iii) Supports public transport and related physical improvements, including the North Transit Corridor, and encourages more sustainable transport choices, particularly by commuters;
(iv) Support for redevelopment and appropriate new proposals which enhance built character and promote compatible land uses and activities including office floorspace, leisure uses, retail related to the primary function of the area associated with the station, residential and open space;
(v) Improves the quality of the public realm and streetscape through improvements to footpaths, cycle routes and direct crossings in order to encourage walking and cycling, particularly between the town centre, neighbouring commercial areas, communities and the railway station. Opportunities will be sought to widen footpaths and cycleways in the vicinity of the station when opportunities arise and encouragement will be given to the creation of a green link between High Woods Country Park and Castle Park;
(vi) Assess the impact of development proposals on pollution levels in the Air Quality Management Area and if necessary, provide adequate mitigation against any harmful effects to air quality. Wherever possible opportunities will be sought to improve the quality of air in the AQMA including through improvements to congestion levels and traffic flows;
(vii) Supports and enhances the vibrancy of the North Station Road area as a focus for the day to day needs of its immediate community and to improve the route for those passing to and from the town centre and the station.

North Colchester other allocations/policies

6.39 North Colchester is designated for the following areas of new residential and employment development:

Land at Braiswick

6.40 Land has been identified at Braiswick at St Botolph's Farm and land south of Colchester Golf Club to accommodate some residential growth over the plan period. These two sites have been promoted for residential uses separately however given their proximity to one another and in order to make the most efficient use of the land, the sites should be planned comprehensively as one development. Planning this development as one site will reduce the number of access points on to Braiswick. Moreover, a comprehensive approach will be capable of delivering better local infrastructure, including combined onsite open space provision; enhanced connectivity; and integrated landscaping. A comprehensive masterplan will therefore be required to accompany any application for residential uses in this area.

6.41 Landscaping within the sites will be an important aspect of any successful scheme given the site's location on the edge of town; its proximity to the A12; its proximity to the golf course; and to reduce the impact of development on neighbouring residents. Therefore, a landscape assessment should be carried out as part of any proposed residential development taking into account these local constraints. Existing belts of trees along the western and northern boundaries of the site should be retained and where possible improved because they help to screen the site from the golf course to the north and provide a soft transition from the Colchester urban area to open countryside and West Bergholt to the west. Furthermore, existing landscape features along the western boundary of the site should be retained and enhanced to mitigate the impact of noise from the A12. The most western part of the site is within flood zone 3 therefore no residential uses will be permitted in this area. Finally, an existing Public Right of Way runs alongside the eastern boundary of the site and this route should be retained, enhanced and integrated into the development.

Policy NC3: North Colchester

Land at Braiswick

In addition to the infrastructure and mitigation requirements identified in policy PP1, development will be supported on land within the area identified on the policies map, which must be comprehensively planned setting out how any proposal will provide:

(i) Up to 70 dwellings; and
(i) Access from Braiswick (road); and
(ii) Contributions to highway improvements on the local road network, in particular at North station; and
(iii) The retention and enhancement of existing tree belts within the site in addition to a landscape appraisal to look at opportunities to further improve other landscape features within the site; and
(iv) Effective noise mitigation measures; and
(v) No residential development in the area of site within Flood Zone 3; and
(vi) Retention and improvements to the existing Public Right of Way which runs along the eastern boundary of the site.

Transport in North Colchester

6.42 The transport network in North Colchester is characterised by access to two strategic routes – the A12 via junction 28 and 29 and the Great Eastern Mainline at Colchester Station. The Great Eastern Mainline runs east west through Colchester splitting north Colchester from Central Colchester. These networks serve significant employment and residential areas which are continuing to grow.

6.43 The station and hospital provide a focus for public transport services with regular bus services radiating out from the town centre. There is limited east to west connectivity by bus.

6.44 The National Cycle Network (NCN1) runs from the north via the North Colchester Business Park, Highwoods, including the Country Park, under the railway and through to Leisure World and the Town Centre. A connection is also made through the Highwoods Country Park to the railway station. There is an alternative north south cycle route via the A1232 Ipswich Road leading from Cowdray Avenue to the Severalls Business Park.

6.45 Strategic Transport Modelling and other ongoing studies identify locations in North Colchester where improvements to, and investment in, the transport network are required. Development that will add pressure to the transport network will be required to help mitigate the impact.

Policy NC4: Transport in North Colchester

Developments in North Colchester will be expected to contribute to a package of sustainable transport measures including walking, cycling, public transport, travel planning and the promotion of sustainable travel.

Where it is demonstrated that proposals will impact on the highway network, contributions will be sought towards mitigation and improvements, including to the following projects;

- Improvements to A12 Junction 28, including the operation of Axial Way/United Way/Via Urbis Romanae.
- Improvements to the Ipswich Road approach to the A12 Junction 29 Investment in the Colchester Station area to significantly enhance a Key Gateway into Colchester, providing ongoing improvements including; access for all, interchange and enhancements to encourage walking and cycling to the station.
- Improvements to the current cycle network to provide linkages between developments and access to key locations including; across Highwoods Country Park, Ipswich Road, Mile End Road and Bergholt Road leading to the station and southwards to the Town Centre;
- Enhancements to the East / West public transport services, to serve the area to connect existing and new residential developments with employment and leisure opportunities. This includes the route connecting the Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community with East Colchester, the Town Centre, and North Colchester required by Section 1 Policy SP6.

The type of public transport service may vary.
- Delivery of The NAR2 busway.

For areas with large multiple sites located in close proximity to each other the cumulative impact of all the development in the area must be considered.

6.46 There are other known improvements to, and investment in, the transport network which have been identified through the Strategic Transport Modelling and other ongoing studies, listed below. In some cases, schemes have also been identified to overcome these issues. The transport evidence base is continuously evolving and additional issues and schemes may be identified during the Plan period. The exact scale, timing and nature of this infrastructure will be determined through more detailed assessment as the planning process develops.

- A1232 Ipswich Road – modification to the A1232 Ipswich Road/A133 Cowdray Road/St Andrews Ave. Funding secured through Local Growth Fund for construction to commence in 2017/18
- A120 upgrades – ECC and Highways England have progressed regarding a new and improved A120 between Braintree and the A12. In March 2020, the government announced its Road Investment Strategy (RIS) which included a commitment to progress further development work on the A120 dualling to prepare the scheme for delivery. The A120 dualling scheme be considered for inclusion in the RIS3 programme 2025 – 2030
- A133/A134 Colne Bank Roundabout capacity enhancements – scheme to improve operation of this key junction on the local road network.
- Support to be given to additional car parking provision at Dedham to address an identified need and associated transport implications within Dedham and the surrounding transport network at peak times.

South Colchester

6.47 Development has gradually extended south of Colchester following the relocation of the Garrison. Further opportunities to expand the urban area southwards presents itself on land which the Ministry of Defence wish to dispose of around part of Middlewick Ranges as well as a number of smaller sites.

Land at Gosbecks Phase 2

6.48 The site at Gosbecks Road, Colchester is well supported by infrastructure including a supermarket. However, the immediate area is not well served by public transport with a lack of bus stops on Gosbecks Road. This site has the potential to deliver up to 150 dwellings as part of a logical second phase of residential development at Gosbecks. Any development would be required to demonstrate that development would not cause an unacceptable impact to the adjacent Scheduled Monument (the landowners having previously gifted the land to CBC with funds for preservation), as well as contributions towards public realm improvements. Adequate protection and enhancement of the Scheduled Monument and its setting will be required and agreed by the Local Planning Authority.

South of Berechurch Hall Road

6.49 The proposal for 150 units opposite an existing residential area on Berechurch Hall Road would entail comprehensive planning of two smaller sites accommodating approximately 50 units with an adjacent site accommodating 100 units. Consideration of a cohesive layout, access and design approach to the site will provide a sustainable urban extension to Colchester's southern boundary. Landscaping to this boundary will need to reflect the edge of urban area location to respect the transition of character to the countryside. To address the poor public transport provision in the vicinity of the site, new development will provide improvements, and access to the existing bus service. Development will also need to ensure acceptable access is provided onto Berechurch Hall Road and ensure archaeological investigations are carried out.

Land at Maldon Road / Shrub End

6.50 The employment area at Maldon Road has been extended to include a further 0.8 hectare which is allocated within the 3.5ha shown in Table SG3 for Edge of Centre areas to provide further opportunities in this area for local employment, building on the benefits provided by its location, existing operations and access.

ABRO Site

6.51 The site, known as the ABRO site, was previously part of the Royal Artillery Barracks (latterly known as Le Cateau Barracks), forming a northern most part of the old Colchester Garrison. Now vacant the ABRO site is 4.26 hectares, including a 3.80 hectare area allocated for residential use. The site is predominantly flattened hard surfacing, with some buildings of mixed size and architectural/historic significance. The northeast corner of the site is former green

space converted to car parking in recent times. The Roman Circus Scheduled Monument (SAM) extends over the 0.46 hectare southern part of the site and is allocated for open space. A development brief been prepared for the site and was subject to public consultation 2020/21. The requirements and quantum of development on the site will be set out in the final Development Brief.

Employment Land at Gosbecks

6.52 Gosbecks Farm, Gosbecks Road, Colchester is safeguarded as a Local Economic Area which will support the existing employment uses at the site. As an economic area a range of mixed uses will be appropriate with the primary focus of the site being to deliver further employment.

Policy SC1: South Colchester Allocations

Allocations as shown on the policies map will be safeguarded for residential uses. In addition to the requirements in Policy PP1, proposals will be required to satisfy the Local Planning Authority with regard to the site-specific requirements as identified below.

Land at Gosbecks Phase 2

Development of this site will be supported where it provides:

(i) Up to 150 new dwellings of a mix and type of housing to be compatible with the surrounding development;
(ii) New bus stop provision to service the site and improve sustainable transport links to Colchester Town Centre;
(iii) New public art and improvements to the public realm; and
(iv) A contribution to Gosbecks Archaeological Park.

South of Berechurch Hall Road

Development of this site will be supported where it provides:

(i) Up to 150 new dwellings of a mix and type of housing to be compatible with the surrounding development;
(ii) Contributions to/delivery of improvements to the local road network;
(iii) New bus stop provision to service the site and improve sustainable transport links to Colchester town centre; and
(iv) A comprehensive approach to development of the three separate parcels of land which together make up the allocation.

ABRO site

The 4.26 hectare site will provide 3.80 hectares for residential development and 0.46 hectares for open space. Development of this site will be supported where it accords with the ABRO Development Brief.

Any proposals will also take into account the Essex Minerals Local Plan and the

developer will be required to submit a Minerals Resource Assessment as part of any planning application. Should the viability of extraction be proven, the mineral shall be worked in accordance with a scheme/masterplan as part of the phased delivery of the non-mineral development.

The following Local Economic Areas as shown on the Policies Map will be allocated/safeguarded for economic uses in accordance with Table SG3 and polices SG3 and SG4:

- Land at Maldon Road / Shrub End and
- Land at Gosbecks.

Land at Middlewick Ranges

6.53 Middlewick Ranges is a 76ha site owned by the Defence Infrastructure Organisation, located between Mersea Road and Abbots Road on the south-eastern boundary of urban Colchester. The site is well positioned to key services and is reasonably accessible by public transport. It is located approximately 2.5km to Colchester Town train station and there are buses serving Monkwick and West Mersea that provide regular services past this site. Middlewick Ranges is therefore considered to be sustainable in principle.

6.54 The Defence Infrastructure Organisation is disposing of a number of sites nationally including Middlewick Ranges. The site was originally proposed for the allocation of 2000 dwellings, however as there are a number of constraints at the site which will restrict the final number of dwellings that can be delivered at this location, the allocation is for up to 1000 dwellings. Given the potential constraints and opportunities associated with the site, there will be a requirement for a master planning approach working together with the MOD, and any future landowners, to inform the best opportunities for delivering housing and supporting infrastructure, as well as ensuring the delivery of a development appropriate to its setting. More guidance in respect of the approach, scope and requirements for master planning for this site are set out below.

6.55 Vehicular access to the site, the impact of any development on the local road network and necessary mitigation, will need to be determined prior to any detailed scheme being submitted. The development would need to be supported by a Transport Assessment that stresses the importance of sustainable transport as the primary means of access and movement to, from and within the site. The Transport Assessment should set out that where impacts would occur and the necessary mitigation to address those impacts; any mitigation which would need to be agreed with CBC and ECC and secured as part of the planning permission. As a minimum the Transport Assessment would need to include details regarding:

- Support for local bus services to traverse the site and provide frequent and regular connections to the town centre, railway stations and any other identified and agreed destinations;
- Provision of bus stops within the site and upgrade of existing bus stops in the vicinity of the site (specification to ECC standards);
- Bus priority measures at key junctions;
- Demonstration of an extensive network of footpaths and cycleways within the site and connections at the site boundaries into the external network. Improvements to the external network of footpaths and cycleways in the vicinity of the site as agreed;
- Provision of a distributor road across the site with dedicated footpath and cycleways alongside it over its entire length;
- Provision of new sections of footway, cycleway and uncontrolled and controlled crossings in the vicinity of the site as agreed;
- Improvements to the Public Rights of Way Network across and in the vicinity of the site; and

- Delivery of a bespoke Travel Plan for the development of the site, with the appointment of a Travel Plan Co-ordinator and commitment to provision of tailored Residential Travel Information Packs for each household.

6.56 In the event that the detailed transport assessment work indicates that the traffic constraints cannot be adequately addressed, the number of homes permitted will be reduced to reflect this with support for up to 1,000 once the traffic impacts can be adequately resolved.

6.57 Middlewick Ranges is a designated Local Wildlife Site (reference Co122). The site was reviewed as part of a wider Local Sites Review in 2015 and as a result of the review the area designated has been extended. The Ecological Evidence Report confirms that the habitats within the site are of high biodiversity value, including 53 Ha of acid grassland. The site supports a range of protected species such as invertebrates, breeding birds and bats, therefore given the site's ecological sensitivity, full ecological assessments will need to be undertaken as part of any planning application including for all Protected Species, and Species of Principal Importance during the appropriate survey season. The Council will also be seeking a minimum 10% biodiversity net gain on the development site, following application of the mitigation hierarchy, in line with the Environment Act 2021. The Council will require a developer to commit to a suitable legal mechanism to ensure the long-term establishment, management and maintenance of the mitigation/compensation land for a minimum of 30 years and a strategy for the monitoring of key mitigation and/or compensation as part of the grant of any planning permission.

6.58 The area is a well-used recreational space, particularly with dog walkers. Any future development proposal will be expected to deliver new open space as well as strategic green infrastructure to meet the needs of existing and new residents in this part of Colchester, to minimise subsequent footfall on the Essex coastal sites and nearby Roman River SSSI, and provide substantial buffers to existing sensitive habitats. The range of typologies may include accessible natural greenspace, formal playing pitches, parks and play space, green corridors and land for future cemetery use (including potential for a woodland cemetery), if suitable and required. The master planning process will need to inform further consideration in respect of the type, layout and configuration of open space and green infrastructure. A key requirement will be to ensure connectivity between green walking routes across the site and the existing Colchester Orbital, a circular walking and cycling route around the town's perimeter, which runs through the north-west of the Middlewick Ranges linking some of the town's key open spaces, heritage sites and PRoW. The Council will seek to retain and enhance PRoW within the development along with the route and character of the Colchester Orbital.

6.59 The site has archaeological interest due to the potential for the presence of buried archaeological remains, in particular, relating to prehistoric, Roman and civil war and World War II defences. The WW2 pill boxes, and tank line form an important landscape opportunity. The Council believes they also represent an important heritage interpretation and visitor opportunity. Further investigations will be required at a planning application stage, prior to the commencement of any

development. Policy PP1 (vi) will apply in this respect to any planning application on this site. It is also possible that a future management plan for the redoubt may be required as part of the planning permission, which will need to be agreed with the Council.

6.60 In terms of local character, the site sits in an area of gently sloping open landscape bordered by Colchester to the north and the wooded Roman River to the south. It currently provides some physical and visual separation between the existing urban area and the Roman River Valley. Any development will need to minimise and mitigate potential impacts on the wider landscape, on adjoining minor roads and recreational pressure on the landscape and biodiversity assets. New development should respond to the existing settlement pattern, screen any existing visual intrusions, conserve and manage existing woodland and hedgerows, and use materials appropriate to local character. An LVIA will be required to inform the proposed masterplan and any subsequent planning application. Extra High Voltage electricity pylons lie at the north of the site. There would be visual benefits to these being undergrounded but in the event that this is not feasible they would act as a constraint on the layout of development.

6.61 Development of Middlewick Ranges may be further constrained by pockets of contamination therefore an investigation into all potential sources of contamination will need to be carried out as part of any future development proposals and submitted as part of any planning application. Any investigation will need to include assessment of areas inaccessible during the 2018 site visit, together with any activity since the date of reporting including detail of any fly tipping, and continued MoD uses. Policy ENV5 will be relevant to any planning application in respect of this matter.

6.62 The Middlewick Ranges site falls within Critical Drainage Area 01 (Old Heath Area) as defined in Colchester's Surface Water Management Plan (SWMP). Contributions will be sought towards the costs of delivering flood defence/flood management solutions within CDA 01 as set out in the SWMP.

6.63 A Masterplan must be agreed with the Local Planning Authority prior to the submission of any planning application, in order to inform the detailed definition and mix of uses within the site. The masterplan process should include engagement of the local community, use of design advice and review where available, and assessment frameworks such as Building for a Healthy Life or similar. The masterplan will be supported, as appropriate, with site wide parameter plans, design codes or design guidance.

6.64 Developer contributions will be sought where required towards the cost of mitigation including ecological mitigation, remediation of any on site contamination as part of the development of the site; community infrastructure including education provision; traffic and highways mitigation including enhancements to the public transport, walking and cycling infrastructure; accessible natural green space and public open space.

6.65 Development at Middlewick Ranges will be phased to start towards the middle of the plan period. This is necessary to enable further detailed work to be carried out to inform a comprehensive masterplan process as described above and to allow for appropriate engagement with all relevant parties including the local residents. This will also allow for the commencement of soil preparation for the required biodiversity mitigation, compensation and net gain allowing for the soil conditions to respond to changes in pH, which is imperative to the practical use of turves from the ranges to create new areas of acid grassland. This will help inform or refine the later stages of the net gain strategy. The masterplan will inform any subsequent planning application.

6.66 Due to the high distinctiveness of the biodiversity of the site and the complexity of recreating and managing protected habitats for the long term, both onsite and in the mitigation lands, the Council will require the appointment, by the developer, of a suitably qualified and experienced nature conservation management organisation as a partner to take forward this element of the development. The Council will require the developer to enter into an appropriate legal agreement to secure the long term (minimum 30-year) management and monitoring of retained protected habitats, the biodiversity mitigation, compensation and net gain land, by the nature conservation organisation, including a mechanism for funding and governance that ensures both the nature conservation value and local community interest. The landowner of the mitigation land will need to be party to such an agreement.

Policy SC2: Middlewick Ranges

The allocation shown on the Policies Map is expected to deliver up to 1000 new dwellings. The final number of dwellings will only be confirmed through master planning. In addition to the infrastructure and mitigation requirements identified in policy PP1, development will be supported on land within the area identified on the policies map where it:

(i) Delivers up to 1000 new houses of a mix and type of housing to be compatible with surrounding development; and
(ii) Is supported by a Transport Assessment which sets out where impacts would occur and any mitigation to address those impacts, as well as measures proposed to ensure sustainable transport is the primary means of access and movement to, from and within the site. The Transport Assessment and mitigation measures are to be agreed with the Highway Authority and The Council as part of any planning permission; and
(iii) Delivers access and highway works on the local road network, including new junctions, to be agreed with the Highway Authority and delivered at the appropriate time commensurate with the development; and
(iv) Delivers enhancements to sustainable travel connectivity including public transport, cycling and walking infrastructure, including connection and enhancement to the Colchester Orbital; and
(v) Provides for retention or diversion of any existing public rights of way within the site and incorporation wherever possible into the green infrastructure network; and
(vi) The built footprint of the development has been sited to minimise the effects on protected habitats and species; and
(vii) Is supported by the submission of appropriate mitigation and net gain plans to enhance the ecology of the remaining areas of the Local Wildlife Site to provide compensatory habitat to replace habitat lost to development and a minimum of 10% biodiversity net gain; and
(viii) Secures the appointment, by the developer, of a suitably qualified and experienced nature conservation management organisation as a partner to take forward the habitat conservation, creation and management of the development; and
(ix) Identifies and commits to a legal mechanism, in a form to be agreed with the Council, to ensure the long-term establishment, management and maintenance of the retained acid grassland, the biodiversity mitigation/ compensation and net gain land and a strategy for the monitoring of key mitigation, compensation and net gain. The legal mechanism will identify the funding mechanism and governance structure (including the option of designation as a Local Nature Reserve) that ensures both the nature conservation value and local community interest in the retained acid grassland, other protected habitats, the biodiversity mitigation and compensation land, and areas of net gain; and
(x) Includes a detailed strategy and management plan, to be agreed with the Council, for the existing and proposed green infrastructure and public open space network, including formal playing pitches, strategic green corridors, green buffers and structural landscape; and
(xi) Includes a detailed Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment in order to

minimise and mitigate potential impacts on the wider landscape and urban character; and

(xii) Delivers Mitigation measures to address site contamination; and

(xiii) Provides for Primary and early years education as follows;

a. a new primary school with co-located 56 place early years and childcare nursery on 3 hectares of suitable land allocated for education and childcare use; and
b. a new 56 place stand-alone early years and childcare nursery on 0.13 hectares of suitable land allocated for education and childcare use; and

(xiv) Secures financial contribution to early years and childcare, primary and secondary education provision as required by the Local Planning Authority primarily through Section 106 Planning Obligations or the Community Infrastructure Levy.

A Masterplan for the whole site is to be agreed with the Council prior to submission of any planning application. The masterplan must be informed by, or supported by, as appropriate, site wide parameter plans, design codes or guidance, developed through engagement with the local community, be informed by use of design review where available, and assessment frameworks such as Building for a Healthy Life or similar.

Before granting planning consent, wintering bird surveys will be undertaken at the appropriate time of year to identify any offsite functional habitat. In the unlikely event that significant numbers are identified, development must firstly avoid impacts. Where this is not possible, development must be phased to deliver habitat creation and management either on or off-site to mitigate any significant impacts. Any such habitat must be provided and fully functional before any development takes place which would affect significant numbers of SPA birds.

Transport in South Colchester

6.67 This area is characterised by a series of B roads radiating out from the town centre, with a number of unclassified roads linking these B roads together. Berechurch Hall Road and Gosbecks Road acts as an informal southern distributor route connecting in the east with the B1025 Mersea Road and in the west to the B1022 Maldon Road.

6.68 The bus network radiates out from the town centre, with high frequency services interspersed with lower frequency services serving the rural areas and villages to the south and west. There are no east-west public transport routes. The Garrison development has provided an excellent north south walking and cycle route with a mix of on road and off-road routes leading to Southway in the town centre and will be used as an example of good practice in future developments. The Boadicea route provides a link to the west from Berechurch. There are however gaps in the network and east-west routes are limited.

6.69 Strategic Transport Modelling and other ongoing studies identifies locations in South Colchester where improvements to, and investment in, the transport network are required. Development that will add pressure to the transport network will be required to help mitigate the impact. The transport evidence base is continuously evolving and additional issues and schemes may be identified during the Plan period. The exact scale, timing and nature of this infrastructure will be determined through more detailed assessment as the planning process develops.

Policy SC3: Transport in South Colchester

Developments in South Colchester will be expected to contribute to a package of sustainable transport measures including walking, cycling, public transport, travel planning and the promotion of sustainable travel.

Where it is demonstrated that proposals will impact on the highway network, contributions will be sought towards mitigation and improvements, including to the following projects;

- Improvements to junctions including; Circular Road South/Berechurch Road and Shrub End Road/Maldon Road.
- Improvements to manage the flow of traffic along Gosbecks Road and Berechurch Hall Road.
- Improvements to public transport including potential east / west service and bus priority at junctions, especially where buses are experiencing delays.
- Improvements to routes for walking, cycling and horse riding where appropriate, including links to the Garrison and Boadicea Routes and complete gaps in the network.

For areas with large multiple sites located in close proximity to each other the cumulative impact of all the development in the area must be considered.

East Colchester

Knowledge Gateway and University Strategic Economic Area

6.70 The University of Essex is a leading research-intensive university and is ranked in the top 20 for research excellence within the UK. The University currently provides 1870 jobs and indirectly supports a further 2693 jobs, as well as contributing £404 million in turnover and indirect economic impact to the East of England. On the basis of the current Strategic Plan, by 2018, the University will grow to some 15,000 students. Continuation of this current rate of growth in student numbers would see the University achieve a student body of approximately 20,000 by 2025 and 25,000 students by the end of the Local Plan period.

6.71 These ambitious plans for the growth of the University have many benefits for Colchester Borough as a whole, the Town Centre and in particular east Colchester, including allowing the development of clusters of companies that can take advantage of co-location whilst minimising the costs of further infrastructure development. Through £13 million of investment and partnership with new and growing businesses, the expansion of the Knowledge Gateway research and technology park on the Colchester Campus has the potential to bring 2000 further jobs to the local economy by 2025.

6.72 Colchester's evidence base, the Employment Land Needs Assessment, acknowledges the role and importance of the Knowledge Gateway for developing technological and creative businesses. Unlocking some of the barriers, particularly associated with the existing transport infrastructure, will assist in bringing forward further development on this site. This primarily seeks to promote B1 uses within the area but acknowledges that some flexibility to this approach is beneficial, with the key principle being that proposals should be related to the key function of the economic area.

6.73 The University is supporting the designation of a fifth national University Enterprise Zone (UEZ), in addition to those in Bradford, Bristol, Liverpool and Nottingham. UEZs do not come with the same tax and business rate incentives or promises of high-speed broadband that are features of Enterprise Zones. However, they are granted support in driving export trade and attracting inward investment through the government's UK Trade and Investment (UKTI), as well as being subject to simplified planning arrangements. The Essex UEZ would have a focus on digital and creative industries, a sector that contributes £2.5 billion per year to the economy of the South East LEP area. Colchester has the largest concentration of digital creative businesses in Essex and the Haven Gateway, with over 3500 people employed in this sector across more than 600 companies. A UEZ for Colchester can help to ensure that developments in the Knowledge Gateway will also support developments in Colchester Town Centre.

6.74 The University competes globally for staff and students and there is a clear need for good quality and affordable accommodation. On the Colchester campus, the University already offers a mix of medium and high-rise student accommodation,

and it is likely that future need will mirror this pattern to allow for an efficient use of space, protection of the historic Wivenhoe House, and surrounding parkland and ensure that as many students as possible can be accommodated on the campus. High quality staff housing will also be in demand, with the development of the new Garden Community also providing attractive new locations for University staff to live, adding to the existing blend of urban and rural dwellings in the area. The University strongly supports a vision for a proposed Garden Community to the east of Colchester, providing a sustainable, mixed academic, commercial and residential community that offers a high quality of life to enhance both Colchester and the University. The University will therefore be a key partner in the master planning process for the Garden Community, recognising the importance and mutual benefit to establishing an integrated approach to planning and engagement.

6.75 The significant growth envisaged by the University and the associated expansion opportunities for the Knowledge Gateway technology park will be released over the long term with phases being delivered throughout the plan period and potentially beyond associated with the new Garden Community. This will provide a framework for the expansion of both the University and the Knowledge Gateway and also provide the opportunity to maximise any benefits associated with the new Garden Community. A joined up approach and the mutual opportunities for both are evident, particularly associated with infrastructure improvements with alternative public transport options being a key factor for East Colchester.

6.76 It is recognised that the University makes a significant contribution to the economy of Colchester Borough and to the vitality and viability of the Town Centre. There are unique opportunities for the community and the university to feed off each other, particularly as sports and cultural facilities are improved with the potential to create opportunities for the community to benefit from extensive facilities providing a hub in this area of Colchester which would not otherwise be available to them. The benefits and opportunities for shared use will be further explored through the Sports Strategy Delivery Board. In addition, opportunities for the University to pursue a greater physical presence in the town centre will be encouraged. Expansion proposals for the University will be supported in response to programmed growth.

Policy EC1: Knowledge Gateway and University of Essex Strategic Economic Area

The Council recognises the value of the University of Essex to Colchester Borough's economy and the vitality and viability of the town centre, and will work in partnership to maximise the economic and social benefits associated with it.

The area shown on the Policies Map is designated as the University and Knowledge Gateway Strategic Economic Area. Within this area development will be supported which enables significant expansion of the University of Essex as reflected in its current Strategic Plan 2013-19 as well as the retention and expansion of the Knowledge Gateway. Proposals which provide for the retention and expansion of the Knowledge Gateway and which build on the benefits of the growing University will be supported.

There will be a need for a comprehensive approach to development in conjunction with the Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community proposed to the east of Colchester, working in partnership with key stakeholders including the University.

Proposals for the expansion of the University will be required to provide good public transport, pedestrian and cycle links ensuring good connectivity to and from the town centre, the Hythe Station and surrounding area, the Knowledge Gateway and the proposed Garden Community to the East of Colchester including contributing to the Orbital route as shown on the Policies Map.

Proposals will need to pay special regard to the preservation and enhancement of the Grade II listed Wivenhoe House and its Registered Park and Garden, including the wider setting of these heritage assets.

Development will be expected to contribute to the cost of direct infrastructure improvements as required, supported by up-to-date evidence in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) or subsequent evidence which will be secured to an appropriate level by way of legal agreement or through CIL as required.

In addition, contributions may be sought to promote the delivery of infrastructure and Green Infrastructure improvements specifically the East Transit Corridor shown on the and the Proposals Map and the Orbital Route, improvements to upgrading the footbridge across the railway between the Meadows 1 and the University Quays to enhance opportunities to the walking and cycling network accessing the university campus with the Town Centre. These will also help to achieve wider objectives which are also linked to University and Knowledge Gateway.

Knowledge Gateway

The area shown on the East Colchester Proposals Map will be safeguarded for the expansion of the Knowledge Gateway associated with the Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community to allow for provision of a range for additional jobs and to accommodate expansion of the existing research and

technology uses.

Within this area, the Local Planning Authority will continue to support the growth and retention of the University Research Park. All land and premises within this area will be safeguarded for employment uses, primarily for office use within E class where appropriate and non- B class employment generating uses of a scale and type compatible with the Research Park. Encouragement will also be given to uses which can be shown to be directly linked to the development of research associated with the University and to the provision of business incubator units. Proposals for uses which are not for office use within E class or where it cannot be demonstrated that they are linked to the Research Park will only be supported where they:

(i) Are ancillary to the existing employment uses on the site and are intended to serve the primary function of the site as an employment area and research park;
(ii) Provide the opportunity to maximise the sites potential for economic growth;
(iii) Support the continued operation of existing employment uses within the employment area and in particular its focus for research and technology contributing towards the delivery of the overall vision;
(iv) Are generally in accordance with the most up to date masterplan / Strategy for the University and Knowledge Gateway; and
(v) Do not generate potential conflict with the existing proposed B class uses / activities on the site.

East Colchester/Hythe Special Policy Area

6.77 The Hythe area is a former commercial harbour which includes some rundown and underused industrial land in East Colchester. Together with the University of Essex, the eastern area of Colchester has experienced a period of significant change and growth. The area provides good access to Hythe Station and is located close to the University of Essex but is currently constrained by flooding issues.

6.78 The Hythe is an established regeneration area that seeks to deliver sustainable, mixed-use neighbourhoods, oriented towards the River Colne, which respect the historic character of the area. Over the plan period the East Colchester/Hythe Special Policy Area provides capacity to accommodate approximately 800 new dwellings including those already committed. The regeneration of this area needs to secure the viable re-use of heritage assets and provision of a distinctive public realm. Growth needs to be supported by improvements to transport infrastructure and services, flood mitigation and open space to ensure that sufficient amenity space is included to support the increasing population. Regeneration will involve partnership working with public sector agencies, the local community, and the private sector, including support for community-based initiatives such as community land trusts. The Hythe Conservation Area includes the historic port of the Hythe, the medieval church of St Leonard's and a number of listed buildings, in addition to later infill and some modern regeneration. Development proposals must ensure that it responds to the distinctive historic character. Every opportunity should be taken to enhance heritage assets and reinforce the significance of the Hythe Conservation Area.

6.79 The river forms a natural corridor and amenity. Riverside walking and cycle routes which exist should be retained and extended for walking and cycling as part of a green link giving riverside traffic free routes for both commuting and leisure trips; with links to the Town Centre and Wivenhoe along the National Cycle Network Route 1, the Rowhedge Trail and links to New Town, Distillery Pond and Bourne Ponds. The river also forms an east-west barrier to movement. More links across the river are required to access local opportunities and create a cohesive development area. Opportunities should be sought to bridge the Colne to the south of Colne Causeway Bridge.

6.80 The area is also split by the road and rail network. Peak hour traffic congestion is severe in this area, especially at Greenstead roundabout. The rail line forms an east-west physical barrier especially for pedestrians and cyclists. Improvements are required to address congestion and severance, linking together development areas and opportunities offered by the expansion of the University and the Knowledge Gateway.

6.81 Much of the Hythe area is in flood zone 3. Development must respect this designation and be designed accordingly to minimise the impact of any potential flooding on people and property. The Hythe Special Policy Area also falls within Critical Drainage Areas CDA 01, CDA 02 and CDA03 as shown in the Surface Water Management Plan for Colchester. The Local Planning Authority will work with key stakeholders with responsibilities for flood risk and drainage and

developers to deliver infrastructure schemes that provide sufficient capacity in the drainage network to support new developments and regeneration and to manage flood risk. Developer contributions will be sought towards the costs of delivering flood defence/flood management solutions within these Critical Drainage Areas to help manage flood risk in this part of Colchester. Solutions should be agreed between Essex County Council (Local Lead Flood Authority), the Environment Agency, developers and the Local Planning Authority.

6.82 As a working port many of the industries based there historically were “dirty” in nature but suitably located. As the area changes it will be important not to locate residential properties on or near to contaminated land if satisfactory mitigation cannot be achieved. The major Colchester Sewage/Wastewater plant lies at the south end of the area and includes a cordon sanitaire restricting the type of development which can be located here.

6.83 The river and the quayside is a natural place for residential moorings. Boats for residential purpose will be supported if they are of appropriate quality and enhance the marine environment. Improvements will be sought to the landscape and the utility infrastructure to serve boats.

Policy EC2: East Colchester / Hythe Special Policy Area

Development within the area defined on the Policies Map as the East Colchester/ Hythe Special Policy Area will be encouraged and supported where it contributes to achieving the following key objectives:

(i) Regeneration of the area at densities appropriate to an urban area with good public transport connections and a mix of commercial, community and residential uses to provide additional jobs, homes and community and environmental enhancements, in line with the site allocations shown on the East Colchester Policies EC1-4 map, and create a strong sense of identity for the area;
(ii) Maximise the potential benefits of the location adjacent to the University, enhanced by its expansion (Policy EC1) and supporting development associated with the University Research Park to provide significant office floor space and high-quality new jobs;
(iii) Deliver significant public realm enhancements appropriate to local context, maximising the potential of the riverside location and improving the environment, increasing connectivity and providing convenient public access for pedestrians and cyclists;
(iv) Ensure new developments are responsive to the distinctive historic character of the area and reinforce the significance of the Conservation Area designation through the re-use of heritage assets;
(v) Contribute to the delivery of the East Transit Corridor which will bring significant improvements to public transport and accessibility, through enhanced services, improved links to the Town Centre and new Garden Community;
(vi) Enhance provision of Green Infrastructure to maximise potential opportunities for biodiversity and habitat creation, benefit nature conservation and landscape, enhance connectivity including linkages with

the new garden community and establish new areas of open space for public enjoyment including an urban park to serve the community;

(vii) Contribute towards flood risk solutions, in accordance with Flood Risk Management policy DM23 and SWMP recommendations for CDAs 01, 02 and 03;

(viii) Provide for a compatible mix of uses having regard to neighbouring amenity;

(ix) Situate proposals for residential development away from land which is contaminated. Where necessary mitigation measures will be required to be agreed with the Local Planning Authority; and

(x) Support the use of residential moorings by boats of acceptable quality which enhance the marine environment and which also satisfy flood risk tests including the provision of safe access from land to the moorings in a flood event.

Development should also seek to soften the environment around the electricity sub-station to minimise its intrusive impact on the surrounding area. Opportunities to maximise the potential for comprehensive regeneration of King Edward Quay will be encouraged including exploring the potential to redistribute uses to allow for clustering of complementary uses and to respond to site constraints such as flood risk and land contamination.

East Colchester other allocations / policies

6.84 The following areas of new residential and employment development have been allocated to areas of East Colchester, excluding the Hythe area covered by Policy EC2 on the Hythe Special Policy Area.

Port Lane

6.85 This site formed part of the former Paxmans Factory site. In the event of cessation of all industrial uses, the site can deliver up to 130 dwellings. Access to the site will be off Port Lane. Given the site's previous industrial use, assessment of contamination and implementation of any required remediation measures will be required. The site is located within an area of archaeological interest recorded in the Colchester Urban Archaeological Database. There is high potential for encountering early occupation remains at this location so a trial-trenched archaeological evaluation will be required to establish the archaeological potential of the site. Decisions on the need for any further investigation (excavation before any groundworks commence and/or monitoring during groundworks) will be made on the basis of the results of the evaluation. Any permission granted is likely to include a condition requiring a programme of archaeological work. This site falls within Critical Drainage Areas CDA02 & CDA03 (New Town and Colchester Town Centre Areas). Developer contributions will be sought towards the costs of delivering flood defence/flood management measures within CDA 03 as specified in the Surface Water Management Plan for Colchester to help manage flood risk in this part of Colchester.

East Bay Mill

6.86 This site includes a listed mill which has been badly damaged by fire. Redevelopment of the site will involve retention and restoration of this important landmark along with sympathetic development of other dwellings up to a total of 22 units, either independently or as part of a comprehensive scheme. In either case, proposals will need to be in keeping with the site's location within a Conservation Area. The site lies within a flood risk area, so it would need to in the first instance satisfy the exception test for development in such areas, and secondly if that is met, provide adequate mitigation for flood risk such as residential on upper floors only. There is high potential for encountering early occupation remains at this location so a trial-trenched archaeological evaluation will be required to establish the archaeological potential of the site. Decisions on the need for any further investigation (excavation before any groundworks commence and/or monitoring during groundworks) will be made on the basis of the results of the evaluation. Any permission granted is likely to include a condition requiring a programme of archaeological work. Development will need to ensure contamination and flood risk issues are addressed. Vehicle, pedestrian and cycles arrangements to and within the site will need to have regard to restrictions on access as well as opportunities to provide a riverside path.

Site off Barrington and Bourne Roads

6.87 This 1 hectare site is comprised of vacant greenfield land within a predominantly residential area. The area was allocated for residential development in the previous Local Plan as part of a wider scheme, but this portion did not come forward. Open space delivery on the smaller remaining part of the site will need to address the shortfall in open space left over from the earlier phase of development. To address the issue of the divided ownership of the site, a scheme will need to provide a coordinated approach to secure satisfactory access arrangements, residential amenity and landscaping. This site falls within Critical Drainage Area 02. Developer contributions will be sought towards the costs of delivering flood defence/flood management measures within CDA 02 as specified in the Surface Water Management Plan for Colchester to help manage flood risk in this part of Colchester.

Magdalen Street sites

6.88 Magdalen Street contains a number of older commercial buildings suitable for reuse and/or redevelopment. The area could accommodate up to 200 new residential units. The Local Planning Authority produced an updated Development Brief for the site in February 2014 to release a vision for the area to create a vibrant community. Architecturally, the Local Planning Authority will seek contemporary responses to the existing character and densities and parking appropriate to the edge of centre location. Magdalen Street is within an Air Quality Management Area and proposals will accordingly need to provide mitigation. The Local Planning Authority will expect development to be set back from the carriageway with large scale forecourts and tree planting to help improve air quality in this part of the town. Vehicular access will only be available via Magdalen Street. Pedestrian and cycle opportunities also need to be addressed as part of any future design and site layout. These sites fall within CDA 03 (Colchester Town Centre Area). Developer contributions will be sought towards the costs of delivering flood defence/flood management measures within Critical Drainage Area 03 as specified in the Surface Water Management Plan for Colchester to help manage flood risk in this part of Colchester.

Employment Sites

6.89 East Colchester contains a number of historic employment sites, a number of which, have already been redeveloped for residential and mixed uses. The Whitehall Industrial Estate is the largest remaining industrial area and will be a preferred location for new employment development in East Colchester. The employment land allocation in Table SG3 includes 2.7ha in Whitehall. Sites on Barrack Street, Brook Street and Port Lane contain further small areas of employment floorspace which will be safeguarded for employment use.

Policy EC3: East Colchester Allocations

Allocations shown on the policies map will be supported for residential uses. In addition to the requirements in Policy PP1, proposals will be required to satisfy the Local Planning Authority with regard to the site-specific requirements as identified below.

Land at Port Lane

Development of this site will be supported where it provides:

(i) Up to 130 new dwellings of a mix and type of housing to be compatible with surrounding development;
(ii) Access via Port Lane;
(iii) Contamination mitigation measures as required; and
(iv) Contributes towards flood risk solutions, in accordance with Flood Risk Management policy DM23 and SWMP recommendations for CDA 03

East Bay Mill

Development of this site will be supported where it provides:

(i) Up to 22 new dwellings of a mix and type of housing to be compatible with surrounding development, including the Listed Building;
(ii) Adequate access including appropriate treatment / diversion of the existing Public Right of Way;
(iii) A satisfactory NPPF flood risk exception test and if met, provide flood risk mitigation measures;
(iv) Protection and enhancement of the setting of listed buildings and the Hythe conservation area;
(v) Appropriate conversion of the listed mill; and
(vi) Satisfactory contamination mitigation measures as required; and
(vii) An air quality assessment and mitigation against any harmful effects to the AQMA likely to be caused by proposals;
(viii) Access to river frontage.

Barrington Road/Bourne Road vacant site

Development of this site will be supported where it provides:
(i) Approximately 28 new dwellings of a mix and type of housing to be compatible with surrounding development;
(ii) A design and layout in keeping with the development on the other part of the site;
(iii) Suitable landscaping and open space; and
(iv) Access via Knightsfield.

Magdalen Street sites

Development of these sites will be supported where they:

(i) Accord with the Magdalen Street Development Brief (adopted February 2014);
(ii) Include an assessment of air quality and mitigation against any harmful effects to the AQMA likely to be caused by proposals; and
(iii) Contribute towards flood risk solutions, in accordance with Flood Risk Management policy DM23 and SWMP recommendations for CDA 03.

Place Farm
Development of the site will be supported where it provides:

(i) 2.7 ha of employment land, as shown in Table SG3
(ii) Up to 30 new dwellings of a mix and type of housing to be compatible with development in the adjacent Old Heath area
(iii) Access via Whitehall for the employment and via Rowhedge Road for the residential development.

Local Economic Areas as shown on the policies map will be allocated/safeguarded for economic uses in accordance with Table SG4 and policies SG3 and SG4. The following areas will be protected to retain their function and role as key clusters for a range of businesses including start-ups:

- Whitehall Industrial Estate
- Land at Barrack Street
- Land at Brook Street
- Moorside Business Park, Eastgates
- Port Lane

Transport in East Colchester

6.90 In East Colchester the transport network is fragmented due to the historic nature of development in the area, the physical barrier of the River Colne and the railway which serves and passes through the area. There is a focus of transport routes which converge or cross each other in the Colne Harbour area creating a complexity of competing demands and movements. To the north of the area the A120 trunk road provides access to North Colchester and the A12.

6.91 The roads radiating out from the town centre to the east are designated Air Quality Management Areas, where vehicular transport is the major contributor to the poor air quality. Measures which help improve the air quality in the area such as sustainable transport, promotion of low emission vehicles, cleaner vehicles, smoothing traffic flows and improving the street design will be required together with mitigation against any identified impacts.

6.92 The Clacton Branch Line links the coastal towns and rural villages of Tendring with Colchester and the Great Eastern Mainline, with an additional branch to Colchester Town Station. Within Colchester other stations served by the branch line are Wivenhoe and The Hythe which is the closet station to the University. There are two level crossings which impact on both train and road operation.

6.93 The area is served by a number of high frequency bus routes, passing through the area from the Town Centre to serve the University and Greenstead. These bus services are heavily utilised routes. The Garden Community and University expansion provide the opportunity and demand for a rapid transit system in the area to link growth in east Colchester and in Tendring through the Hythe Area with Colchester Town Centre and other key destinations.

6.94 The National Cycle Network (NCN51) passes through the area as the Wivenhoe Trail running from Wivenhoe through to Lower Castle Park. The Salary Brook Route (also part of the proposed Orbital route) links the large Greenstead Estate through to the University and Knowledge Gateway.

6.95 Strategic Transport Modelling and other ongoing studies have identified locations in East Colchester where improvements to, and investment in, the transport network are required. Development that will add pressure to the transport network will be required to help mitigate the impact.

Policy EC4: Transport in East Colchester

Developments in East Colchester will be expected to contribute to a package of sustainable transport measures including walking, cycling, public transport, travel planning and the promotion of sustainable travel.

Where it is demonstrated that proposals will impact on the highway network, contributions will be sought towards mitigation and improvements, including to the following projects;

- Improvements to the A134/A137 corridor including; Greenstead Junction,

Colne Causeway, Elmstead Road Junction, Haven Road/ Hythe Quay

- Enhancements to the interchange at Hythe Station and improvements to existing public transport services, including the potential for extension to existing services and North Colchester along with the provision of a rapid transit route connecting the Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community with East Colchester, the Town Centre, and North Colchester required by Section 1 Policy SP6.
- Improvements to connectivity for pedestrians, cyclists and horse riders where appropriate including; existing and new bridges, links to the Wivenhoe Trail and the Salary Brook Route and other routes identified in the Essex Cycle Strategy and the Colchester Cycle Delivery Plan.

For areas with large multiple sites located in close proximity to each other the cumulative impact of all the development in the area must be considered.

6.96 There are other known improvements to, and investment in, the transport network which have been identified through the Strategic Transport Modelling and other ongoing studies, listed below. In some cases, schemes have also been identified to overcome these issues. The transport evidence base is continuously evolving and additional issues and schemes may be identified during the Plan period. The exact scale, timing and nature of this infrastructure will be determined through more detailed assessment as the planning process develops. The following requirements are linked to the transport infrastructure identified to support the Tendring/Colchester Borders Garden Community to be informed by further stages of master planning.

- Rapid Transit – any Rapid Transit system serving the Garden Community will also serve the University, associated employment areas and the Hythe and through to the town centre. It is expected that the system will have a Park and Ride stop in the A133 area.
- A120 – A133 link - It is expected that this new link will be provided as part of the Garden Community, but it will draw traffic from east Colchester and provide an alternative access to the A120 and A12 trunk route to the north of Colchester. This link will have an impact on the operation of the Greenstead Roundabout and capacity gained here should primarily be allocated to rapid transit or public transport.

West Colchester

Stanway Strategic Economic Area

6.97 The Stanway Strategic Economic Growth Area is situated at the western end of the urban area of Colchester, with good access to the strategic road network at Junction 26 of the A12. It contains a mix of commercial uses including retail and employment floorspace and is the Borough's largest District Centre. A significant amount of new commercial development has been constructed over the last decade, in part enabled by the completion of a new bypass. The 2013 Tollgate Vision Framework prepared with local landowners in the area set forth a vision for the area 'to create a sustainable and balanced place as the heart of the Stanway Growth Area and to transform the character of the Tollgate area to become a stimulating, attractive and economically vibrant hub for the growing population, building on its success as a retail and commercial destination'. There are a number of listed buildings in the area whose setting and continued beneficial use should be considered as the area continues to develop.

6.98 The area shown as Zone 1 of the Stanway Strategic Economic Area on the Policies Map is allocated for further employment land supporting the basis of the areas good location and potential for development of high-quality additional employment floorspace to contribute to the Borough's supply of employment land. Table SG3 shows an allocation of 1.4 ha of employment land in Stanway. Alternative uses will only be supported where they are ancillary to the employment focus of the area and they support the continued operation of the employment uses within the SEA. The retail / leisure element within the area will expand following the grant of planning permission on appeal for a range of main town centre uses.

6.99 The area shown as Zone 2 comprises Tollgate District Centre. It has evolved from a predominantly 'bulky' retail park into an established shopping destination with a substantial range of multiple comparison goods retailers (such as Next, Argos, Sports Direct, Boots, Currys and PC World), a Sainsbury's food/non-food superstore, and a number of food and drink uses. Tollgate competes with Colchester Town Centre for comparison goods expenditure, and this has been reinforced by the additional food / drink uses and retail-led expansion allowed on appeal. Accordingly, it is important that planning policy for Tollgate District Centre ensures that it plays a subsidiary position to the Town Centre in the centre hierarchy as set out in Policy SG5 and Table SG5. Its role and function as a district centre would be enhanced through the introduction of new services and/or community facilities.

6.100 In order to help manage the future growth of this centre to ensure it retains its role and function in relation to its position in Colchester's hierarchy. Further retail development will only be supported outside of the District Centre where it meets the sequential test and can demonstrate that it will not have a significant adverse impact on Colchester Town Centre (and / or any other centre) where an impact assessment is required.

6.101 In addition, to help protect the Centre Hierarchy with Colchester Town Centre at the apex and to manage the potential impacts of any further retail and leisure growth at Tollgate on the Town Centre, proposals for town centre uses outside of the defined centres, which are not in accordance with an up-to-date plan, above the floorspace thresholds set out in Policy SG6 (Table SG6), including change of use or variation of planning conditions, will need to demonstrate that there will not be any significant adverse impacts on the Town Centre (and /or any other defined centre), through an Impact Assessment. The retail evidence concludes that Tollgate does not require substantial new retail development to ensure its vitality and viability over the plan period. Instead, larger scale retail development should be focused on Colchester Town Centre to help strengthen its primary role as a sub-regional shopping destination.

Policy WC1: Stanway Strategic Economic Area and Tollgate District Centre

Any proposals within the Stanway Strategic Economic Area will be required to provide good public transport, pedestrian and cycle links ensuring good connectivity within the area and Zones, to the neighbouring communities, and to and from the Town Centre.

Development will be expected to contribute to the cost of infrastructure improvements as required, supported by up-to-date evidence in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) or subsequent evidence which will be secured to an appropriate level by way of legal agreement or through CIL as required. Such infrastructure is likely to include improvement works to Junction 26 on the A12.

All land and premises within the area allocated as the Stanway Economic Area and Tollgate District Centre will be safeguarded for appropriate commercial uses based on a zoned approach in accordance with the following principles:

Zone 1: as defined on the West Colchester Policies Map and incorporating the Stanway allocations listed in Table SG3 will be the primary focus for employment uses and as such, alternative uses will only be supported where they:

(i) Are ancillary to the employment uses on the site intended to serve the function of the site as an employment area; and,
(ii) Provide the opportunity to maximise the sites potential for economic growth and support the continued operation of existing employment uses within the economic area; and,
(iii) Do not generate potential conflict with the existing or proposed uses / activities on the site; and,
(iv) There is no reasonable prospect of the site being used for employment purposes.

Zone 2: Within the area shown on the West Colchester Policies Map, comprising the Tollgate District Centre, proposals for main town centre uses will be supported.

Proposals must be of a scale and type appropriate to the centre (having regard the Centre Hierarchy and the definitions under Policy SG5). Proposals should:

(i) Seek to enhance the role of the centre through the introduction of new services and/or community facilities; and,
(ii) Proposals outside the Tollgate District Centre should meet the requirements of the sequential test as set out in policy SG6 in so far as the Local Planning Authority should be satisfied that there are no suitable alternative sites located more centrally in or on the edge of the District Centre or any other centre (within an appropriately defined catchment area); and,
(iii) Where the scale of the proposal requires an impact assessment, in accordance with policy SG6, the Local Planning Authority are satisfied that the proposal will not have a significant adverse impact on a) existing, committed and planned public and private investment in a centre or centres in the catchment area of the proposal and b) the vitality and viability of Colchester Town Centre and / or any other defined centre.

Stanway Residential Sites

6.102 Stanway is a parished area on the western edge of Colchester and lies adjacent to the A12. Over recent years it has been the location for significant growth seeing the delivery of the former Stanway Growth Area. Approximately half of the 1800 houses allocated in this Growth Area have been delivered together with elements of infrastructure including new roads. The remaining areas of housing, including Fiveways Fruit Farm and Lakelands remain allocated in this Plan for residential development. Further infrastructure previously agreed, linked to this, will also be delivered as part of these developments including a primary school, road improvements and areas of public open space, including strategic green infrastructure associated with the minerals working restoration.

6.103 Stanway Parish Council has commenced work on a Neighbourhood Plan and the Neighbourhood Plan Group is considering the potential scope of the plan working with the community and stakeholders. The Local Plan therefore provides for the strategic significance of the area, particularly for economic growth and the existing commitments associated with the former growth area.

6.104 It is considered that there are opportunities for further development in Stanway. Sites off London Road; to the west of Lakelands; the former Sainsbury's site and at Chitts Hill are identified in this plan for additional housing growth. These sites are detailed below.

6.105 Existing capacity issues at the primary schools in Stanway will be addressed in the short term by planned expansion at a number of the schools. Further capacity will be created by the provision of a new primary school at Lakelands and a new school on land being allocated off London Road. Additional nursery provision will also be required to accommodate the growth.

Land to the North of London Road

6.106 Land between the A12 and London Road has been identified for 630 new dwellings over the plan period. Two sites in separate ownership are included and given the close spatial relationship of these sites it is fundamental to the success of the area that they are comprehensively planned and do not result in competing developments which could prejudice each other's delivery. The Local Planning Authority therefore recommends a masterplan is prepared to inform development proposals in this area.

6.107 New development proposals will be expected to deliver a new primary school with integrated early years and childcare provision. This will complement the additional school provision elsewhere in Stanway including planned expansion of the existing facilities and new provision at Lakelands. This new educational facility should be situated in an area within the sites which maximises the use of sustainable transport modes and reduces the need to pick-up and drop-off pupils by car.

6.108 A key component of the comprehensive planning of these sites will be the highway arrangements which must minimise the number of vehicular access points onto London Road. Furthermore, pedestrian and cycle links should be integrated as far as possible in order to maximise the connectivity of this area of Stanway and reduce the need to travel by car to access local services, facilities and public transport hubs.

Land north of London Road- Almshouse Allocation

6.109 Land is allocated north of London Road to expand the existing Rosemary Almshouse site. The site will provide for 26 Almshouse units developed in a way to reflect site constraints including retention of key trees and access.

Land to the West of Lakelands

6.110 A site to the west of Lakelands is allocated for a residential development to include approximately 250 dwellings.

Land at Chitts Hill

6.111 The site is in a sustainable location with access to public transport. It has natural existing defensible boundaries and is surrounded by areas of predominantly residential development and an existing private school with associated playing fields which are safeguarded as private open space. The proximity of the site to the mainline railway on the northern boundary and the school to the south requires a substantive landscape buffer to minimise amenity impacts.

Land off Dyers Road including Fiveways Fruit Farm

6.112 Sites off Dyers Lane including Fiveways Fruit Farm, for approximately 490 dwellings, remain unimplemented and are therefore re-allocated in this Plan as continued progress demonstrates that these sites will be delivered early in this Plan period. Those requirements, previously identified remain relevant to ensure adequate mitigation is provided against impacts including, ecology/landscaping, archaeology/heritage assets, flood risk/drainage, access and highways management, as well as ensuring adequate provision of open space and community infrastructure. The generic policy requirements are set out in Policy PP1 and the site-specific elements identified in Policy WC2 below.

Land between Churchfields Avenue, Church Lane and Partridge Way

6.113 Planning Permission is granted for 28 dwellings on this site, associated with the wider development at Lakelands. It is expected that these dwellings will be delivered during the Plan Period.

Open Space

6.114 An area of land to the east of Tollgate Road is allocated for public open space, recognising its value as a linear link with potential benefits for landscape / amenity, recreation and biodiversity interests.

6.115 Land between Church Lane and Maldon Road including Stanway Hall Farm and Bellhouse Pit, comprising the area of the quarry workings is reallocated for strategic open space which will be delivered post restoration of the quarry (Essex Minerals Local Plan) and previously covered by Policy SA STA5 Open Space in Stanway Growth Area. (Adopted Site Allocations Plan). The use of this for built formal, indoor and outdoor leisure uses will be limited and need to complement the nearby employment and housing allocations and the adjoining open countryside.

Policy WC2: Stanway

Allocations as shown on the policies map will be safeguarded for predominantly residential uses unless otherwise stated. In addition to meeting the requirements set out in Policy PP1, a new primary school will also be required on 2.1 hectares of suitable land allocated for education and childcare use to the north of London Road in a location to be decided. The primary school will be secured through a S106 agreement and will be co-located with an early years and childcare nursery. An additional 0.13 hectares of suitable land for a 56 place early years and childcare nursery will also be required in Stanway in a location to be decided. All new residential developments in Stanway will be expected to contribute towards new education facilities. Commercial developments may be expected to contribute to Early Years and Childcare facilities.

All proposals must also satisfy the Local Planning Authority with regard to the site-specific requirements as identified below.

Before granting planning consent for Land to the North of London Road and Land to the West of Lakelands, wintering bird surveys will be undertaken at the appropriate time of year to identify any offsite functional habitat. In the unlikely event that significant numbers are identified, development must firstly avoid impacts. Where this is not possible, development must be phased to deliver habitat creation and management either on or off-site to mitigate any significant impacts. Any such habitat must be provided and fully functional before any development takes place which would affect significant numbers of SPA birds.

Land to the North of London Road

Development of these sites will be supported where they provide;

(i) Up to 630 dwellings of a mix and type compatible with surrounding development;
(ii) A new primary school with co-located early years and childcare nursery places;
(i) A comprehensively planned highways access which takes into account adjoining residential allocations in order to minimise the number of new access points onto London Road but without prejudice to the development of the adjoining sites;
(iii) Suitable landscaping and open space provision to the north of the site to form a buffer between future residential uses and the A12;
(iv) An integrated cycleway and footway serving the development and connecting to the existing network;
(v) A design and layout to minimise the impacts from, and mitigate against any impacts associated with noise from the A12; and
(vi) Suitable landscaping and open space provision to the west of the site to form a defensible boundary and visual separation from Copford.

Up to 26 additional Almshouses (for affordable housing) on land to the north of London Road will be supported where it also provides:

(i) Safe vehicular, pedestrian and cycle access;
(ii) A Tree Survey, to be agreed with the Local Planning Authority;
(i) Retention of important landscape features on the northern and eastern boundaries of the site; and
(iii) Enhancement of the street frontage and the setting of the street scene.

The best way of securing a comprehensive approach to development of these sites north of London Road is through the use of a masterplan which will be prepared prior to the first application being submitted.

Any proposals will also take into account the Essex Minerals Local Plan and the developer will be required to submit a Minerals Resource Assessment as part of any planning application. Should the viability of extraction be proven, the mineral shall be worked in accordance with a scheme/masterplan as part of the phased delivery of the non-mineral development.

Land to the West of Lakelands

Development of this site will be supported where it provides:

(i) Approximately 250 new dwellings;
(ii) An ecological survey with appropriate mitigation;
(iii) Satisfactory access to be agreed with the Highway Authority;
(iv) Provision for retention or diversion of any existing public rights of way within the site

Land at Chitts Hill

Development of this site will be supported where it provides:

(i) Up to a maximum of 100 new dwellings of a mix and type of housing to be compatible with surrounding development;
(i) Substantive landscaping in particular to reflect appropriate boundary treatment to the north along the railway line and the south around the school;
(ii) Access to the site to be restricted to Chitts Hill;
(iii) Open space / green infrastructure provision to compliment the biodiversity and wildlife interests of the neighbouring Local Wildlife designation (CO68) at Iron Latch Lane Woods and Meadows;
(iv) Adequate noise mitigation from the adjacent railway line; and
(ii) Further exploration of potential archaeological significance of the site.

Land off Dyers Road including Fiveways Fruit Farm

Development of this site will be supported where it provides:

(i) A mix and type of approximately 490 dwellings;
(ii) Proposals which accord with the agreed masterplan for the Stanway Growth Area;
(iii) Local road improvements, including, but not limited to, the closure of Dyers Road to through traffic;
(iv) Strategic area of open space to the south of the site; and
(v) An ecological survey with appropriate mitigation.

Open Space
Land between Church Lane and Maldon Road, including Stanway Hall Farm and Bellhouse Pit will be safeguarded for strategic open space following restoration works associated with the minerals extraction at the quarry, as shown on the Policies Map. Any built development associated with formal indoor and outdoor leisure provision will be limited in extent and closely related to allocated employment and housing areas to safeguard the more open countryside from built development.

Land to the east of Tollgate Road is allocated for public open space as shown on the Policies Map and will be safeguarded as such.

Colchester Zoo

6.116 Colchester Zoo is an important visitor attraction in the Borough and has operated successfully in its current location for over 50 years. The Council recognises that tourist attractions require constant updating and that expansion in its current location could have strong justification. Development that provides enhanced visitor facilities and opportunities whilst having regard to the sensitive location of the zoo will be supported. The extent of any development ancillary to the zoo, such as additional retail, hotel and food and drink outlets, would need to be related to the function of the zoo and assessed against the potential negative impact on the town centre and countryside.

6.117 Any proposals for the expansion of the zoo, and associated facilities, should be undertaken through a Masterplan approach, taking into account the sensitive location of the zoo including the issues identified below, and the impact on the Town Centre.

6.118 The site is in an environmentally sensitive location adjacent to the Roman River and includes a Scheduled Monument and Gosbecks Archaeological Park. Creation of new wildlife habitats accordingly would need to have regard to the existing habitats and the landscape character of the area.

6.119 Additionally, the impact of increased visitor numbers would need to be carefully managed to minimise any impact on the local highway network and ensure safe access to the site via Maldon Road, including the Warren Lane junction. A comprehensive Transport Assessment would be required. Any proposals should promote access by Bus from the Town Centre and local train stations, as well as promoting local access via cycle, footpaths and equestrian routes, where appropriate and improvements to these routes where necessary. There are a number of Public Rights of Way in the area and these would need to be taken into account in any further expansion plans.

6.120 Colchester Zoo is located adjacent to an existing sand and gravel minerals extraction site and is in a Minerals Safeguarding Area for sand and gravel as detailed in the Essex Minerals Local Plan 2014. In accordance with national mineral policy and the Essex Minerals Local Plan, a Minerals Resource Assessment must be submitted as part of any planning application. The Minerals Resource Assessment must assess economic viability of prior extraction and be prepared using the latest PERC standard. Should the viability of extraction be proven, the mineral shall be worked in accordance with a scheme/masterplan as part of the phased delivery of the non-mineral development. Consultation with the MPA and LPA will be required to determine whether a separate minerals planning application would be required.

Policy WC3: Colchester Zoo

The Council recognises the importance of Colchester Zoo as a visitor attraction and as a contributor to the local economy. The Local Planning Authority will work in partnership with the Zoo to maximise the social and economic benefits associated with its development while ensuring any development proposals have regard to the environmentally sensitive location.

The area shown on the West Colchester Policies Map will be safeguarded for potential further expansion of Colchester Zoo to provide additional facilities associated with the Zoo's vision for growth. The extent of any development ancillary to the zoo, such as additional retail, hotel and food and drink outlets, will need to be related to the function of the zoo and assessed against potential negative impacts on the Town Centre.

Any proposals for the expansion of the Zoo will be undertaken through a master plan approach taking into account landscape and Scheduled Monument impact, safe access to the site via Maldon Road, existing public rights of way and accessibility by sustainable transport modes. A comprehensive transport assessment would be required. Proposals will need to ensure any necessary road improvements as required in Maldon Road and at the Warren Lane Junction are secured and delivered before expansion takes place. These works may require land and / or financial contributions. An off-road cycle route should be provided linking the Zoo with Gosbecks Archaeological Park to facilitate sustainable modes of travel.

Any proposals will include an appropriate SuDS for managing surface water runoff within the overall design and layout of the site.

Any proposals will also take into account the Essex Minerals Local Plan and the developer will be required to submit a Minerals Resource Assessment as part of any planning application. Should the viability of extraction be proven, the mineral shall be worked in accordance with a scheme/masterplan as part of the phased delivery of the non-mineral development.

Before granting planning consent, wintering bird surveys will be undertaken at the appropriate time of year to identify any offsite functional habitat. In the unlikely event that significant numbers are identified, development must firstly avoid impacts. Where this is not possible, development must be phased to deliver habitat creation and management either on or off-site to mitigate any significant impacts. Any such habitat must be provided and fully functional before any development takes place which would affect significant numbers of SPA birds.

West Colchester other allocations / policies

6.121 The following areas in West Colchester are allocated for residential and economic uses, excluding those areas within Stanway which is covered by Policy WC2.

Essex County Hospital site

6.122 The Essex County Hospital site lies within the Lexden Conservation Area on a prominent site lying over a Roman burial area just outside the Town Centre on Lexden Road. The site contains a number of hospital buildings constructed over its two hundred year history, including a Grade II listed main building and a locally listed nurses block. In 2015, the Council received notice of the Health Trust's intention to dispose of the site for redevelopment, with the remaining hospital uses on the site being transferred to other sites. The Local Planning Authority has prepared a Development Brief for the site, adopted in December 2014, which provides guidance to ensure appropriate development of the sensitive hospital site within the Lexden Conservation Area. Parking and amenity requirements for the site will reflect the site's sustainable location near the Town Centre.

Land at Irvine Road

6.123 This 0.6ha site is located northwest and to the rear of existing residential properties on Irvine Road. The site is currently designated as a Local Site (ref CO97) and along with the Philip Morant playing fields contributes to the green infrastructure in this part of Colchester. The site is accessed via a private track, however there is no public access to this plot of land.

6.124 The 2016 Local Site Review concluded that this site is in favourable but declining status as an orchard with no management of the fruit trees or other vegetation in recent years. The grassland is becoming rank and the Prunus scrub, which is spreading, is already dominant in some areas. The northern edge of the site is also being managed inappropriately, from a conservation point of view. This lack of active and appropriate management if not addressed over time, will result in further decline in the ecological value of the site. This could result in it eventually being de-designated as a Local Site if it fails to meet the qualifying criteria for designation.

6.125 Whilst the site has some limited wildlife value, a small amount of development, of up to a maximum 8 dwellings, covering no more than 40% of the site is considered appropriate at this location. The remaining 60% of the site should be brought back into suitable condition with management to improve the sites ecological value and to ensure it continues to contribute to the local Green Infrastructure network. A detailed ecological management plan and mitigation plan should be prepared as part of any future development proposal to conserve the most valuable habitats/part at this site.

Policy WC4: West Colchester

Allocations shown on the policies map will be safeguarded for residential uses. In addition to the requirements in Policy PP1, proposals will be required to satisfy the Local Planning Authority with regard to the site specific requirements as identified below.

Essex County Hospital site, Lexden Road

Development of this site will be supported where it accords with the Essex County Hospital adopted Development Brief (December 2014).

Land at Irvine Road

Development of this site will be supported where it provides:

(i) Up to 8 new dwellings of a mix and type of housing to be compatible with surrounding development;
  (i) Access via existing track off Irvine Road;
  (ii) A maximum development area of 40% of the site;
  (iii) An Ecological Management Plan and Mitigation Plan for the remaining 60% of the site to improve and enhance its ecological value.

Transport in West Colchester

6.126 The transport network in West Colchester is characterised by the A12 trunk road running east west carrying very high volumes of traffic, with access via junction 25 at Marks Tey (also giving a connection to the A120 westwards towards Braintree), junction 26 at Eight Ash Green giving access to Stanway and Tollgate. These two trunk road junctions suffer from significant peak hour queuing impacting on the village of Marks Tey and queuing back onto the A12 trunk road. The Great Eastern Mainline runs parallel to the A12, with a station at Marks Tey with a branch line to Sudbury.

6.127 Stanway/Tollgate currently forms a natural destination point for buses radiating out from the town centre using London Road. There are high frequency bus routes serving the West Colchester area. A small number of interurban bus services also pass through the area.

6.128 The National Cycle Network (NCN1) heads from the town centre through the area prior to heading southwest past the Colchester Zoo towards Tiptree. The Lexden Cycle route follows a mix of on-road and off-road routes linking the town centre to Stanway.

6.129 Strategic traffic modelling has been undertaken which has shown a number of links and junctions operating over capacity at peak times. Development will add pressure to the transport network and measures will be required to help mitigate the impact.

Policy WC5: Transport in West Colchester

Developments in West Colchester will be expected to contribute to a package of sustainable transport measures including walking, cycling, public transport, travel planning and the promotion of sustainable travel.

Where it is demonstrated that proposals will impact on the highway network, contributions will be sought towards mitigation and improvements, including to the following projects;

- Improvements to the A12 Junctions 25 and 26 to provide measures which reduce queuing at junctions.
- Improvements to the southern distribution road network to smooth the flow of traffic along this route including the Maldon Road/Warren Lane junction.
- Improvements and extension to the current bus services and routes, to serve developments and link the key attractors in the area and to the town centre. Provision of additional routes to serve the area as it develops further towards the West.
- Improvements to the existing cycle and walking network providing connections from Stanway through the Lakelands and Tollgate area to ensure that the new developments are permeable and connected to the existing services as identified in the Essex Cycle Strategy and the Colchester Cycle Delivery Plan.

For areas with large multiple sites located in close proximity to each other the cumulative impact of all the development in the area must be considered.

6.130 There are other known improvements to, and investment in, the transport network which have been identified through the Strategic Transport Modelling and other ongoing studies listed below. In some cases, schemes have also been identified to overcome these issues. The transport evidence base is continuously evolving and additional issues and schemes may be identified during the Plan period. The exact scale, timing and nature of this infrastructure will be determined through more detailed assessment as the planning process develops.

- A133/A134 Colne Bank Roundabout – scheme to improve operation of key junction on the local road network.
- A120 upgrades – ECC and Highways England have progressed regarding a new and improved A120 between Braintree and the A12. In March 2020 the government announced its Road Investment Strategy (RIS) which included a commitment to progress further development work on the A120 dualling to prepare the scheme for delivery. The A120 dualling scheme be considered for inclusion in the RIS3 programme 2025 – 2030.

Sustainable Settlements

Abberton and Langenhoe

6.131 Abberton and Langenhoe were originally two separate settlements but have now effectively merged into one village which share services and facilities. The facilities in the village include a primary school, community hall, and public open space. The village benefits from good road connections to Colchester being situated along the B1025 which has bus stops situated along it which are served by the Mersea Bus.

6.132 There are a number of constraints within Abberton and Langenhoe which restrict new development including the fact that much of the land to the south of the village lies within the Coastal Protection Belt. Furthermore there is also a current deficit of pupil places at Langenhoe Primary School so new development proposals will be required to contribute towards improvements and/or expansion of the school to accommodate new provision. Similarly, there is also a shortage of early years and childcare places across the age range in the village.

6.133 Land has been identified either side of Peldon Road, adjacent to the existing settlement, which represents a logical extension to the village. Development at these locations will have to be contained within the wider landscape by suitable screening and landscaping to provide a defensible settlement boundary and minimise impacts on the wider landscape. Land to the east of Peldon Road is situated close to a listed building and considerate design will be required to ensure no adverse effects on its setting result from new development at the site.

6.134 Development proposals in Abberton and Langenhoe will have to address existing highways issues in the village including a persistent problem with vehicles travelling over the 30mph speed limit along Peldon Road and safety concerns at the junction of Peldon Road with Layer Road. The larger proposal should be supported by a transport statement, which among other issues, should include solutions to these issues where necessary and/or appropriate. Development proposals will also be required to address congestion associated with Langenhoe Primary School through the provision of a new drop-off/pick-up area outside the school. Whilst the provision of such a facility is not normally encouraged, the specific circumstances in Abberton and Langenhoe, including its rural nature, lends itself to such a pragmatic solution.

6.135 Additionally development proposals will need to provide improved pedestrian links to the village, including a safe road crossing facility on Peldon Road and a new footpath from Peldon Road to the primary school. Importantly the two sites should be planned comprehensively, taking into account the opportunities presented by their locations.

Policy SS1: Abberton and Langenhoe

In addition to the infrastructure and mitigation requirements identified in policy PP1, development of the sites below, as shown on the Policies Map will be supported where they meet the requirements identified for each site below;

Land to the west of Peldon Road

Development will be supported which provides;

(i) 50 dwellings of a mix and type of housing for which there is a demonstrated need; and
(ii) A transport statement to include but not limited to a safety assessment of the Peldon Road/Layer Road junction and any necessary mitigation; and
(iii) Provision of a new drop-off/pick-up point at Langenhoe Primary School; and,
(iv) Provision of new public footpaths to the north of the site connecting to the school and village.

Land to the east of Peldon Road

Development will be supported which provides:

(i) 5 dwellings;
(ii) A new pedestrian access route from Peldon Road to the grounds of Langenhoe Primary School;
(iii) Provision of a new drop-off/pick-up point at Langenhoe Primary School.

Development must conserve, and where appropriate, enhance the significance of heritage assets (including any contribution made by their settings).
Designated heritage assets close to the sites include the Grade II Pete Tye Hill and Old Cottage.

Pantiles Farm on Peldon Road is allocated as a Local Economic Area and will continue to be protected for this use. Any future development proposals will be required to comply with policy SG4.

Boxted

6.136 Boxted is a rural parish located approximately 3km to the northeast of urban Colchester. Development in Boxted is currently concentrated within three distinct settlement areas: Boxted Cross, Workhouse Hill and Mill Road. These latter two settlement areas are not considered suitable locations for new growth as they have no community facilities and are not well served by public transport. Boxted Cross is considered to be a sustainable location for limited growth only as the few community facilities that Boxted does have are concentrated in this northern part of the parish. Like the rest of Boxted, this area also has limited access to public transport. Community facilities comprise a primary school, village hall, playing field, social club and community shop.

6.137 The Dedham Vale AONB abuts the northeastern edge of Boxted Cross settlement boundary in the vicinity of Cooks Lane. This restricts development opportunities northwards to ensure that the qualities of the Dedham Vale AONB are protected. Development is constrained to the northwest and west by arable land and land used as orchards/vineyard. Growth opportunities are constrained to the east by the sports and recreation ground and arable land. A local wildlife designation (Local Site Co136 Black Brook), is an extensive mosaic of habitats forming an important wildlife corridor on the eastern edge of Boxted Cross and represents a further constraint on development in this direction. Development southwards is also constrained due to the desire to prevent further ribbon development along Boxted Straight Road leading to the coalescence of settlements and to discourage further housing away from existing village services and facilities.

6.138 Boxted Parish Council has produced a Neighbourhood Plan that covers the whole of the Parish and was made on 8 December 2016. The Neighbourhood Plan sets out a policy framework the wider Parish that all future development proposals in Boxted will have to accord with, now that the Neighbourhood Plan has been made. Development proposals will also be required to comply with Local Plan policies where relevant and outside of the scope of the Boxted Neighbourhood Plan.

Policy SS2: Boxted

All development proposals in Boxted parish will be determined against and be required to comply with policies in the Boxted Neighbourhood Plan and any relevant Local Plan policies.

6.139 There are two Local Economic Areas on Boxted Straight Road. Development proposals affecting these sites will be required to comply with policy SG4.

Chappel and Wakes Colne

6.140 Chappel and Wakes Colne are two parishes located 7km to the northwest of Colchester separated by the A1124 (Colchester to Halstead road) and the River Colne. Although separate Parishes they have a close inter-dependency in respect of shared community facilities split between the two settlements either side of the A1124.

6.141 Chappel has one core settlement area with three remote/dispersed small clusters of housing at Rose Green, Swan Street and Wakes Street. Wakes Colne is also the main settlement area with smaller dispersed clusters of housing around Inworth Lane and at Middle Green.

6.142 Despite being two distinct villages, both provide an important community function in terms of the provision of local services which all residents use and benefit from including the railway station at Wakes Colne. The main part of Chappel has a village shop, post office, primary school and pub.

6.143 A site in Chappel, to the east of Chappel Hill and to the south of the Swan Grove development is considered suitable for some limited development. This site is well located relative to the existing facilities in Chappel and within walking distance of the train station in Wakes Colne. This site could deliver 30 units which is considered appropriate given the available services in Chappel and Wakes Colne and the capacity based on constraints and opportunities. Chappel and Wakes Colne is served by Earls Colne Water Recycling Centre which has sufficient headroom capacity to serve the proposed development.

6.144 Suitable screening/landscaping will be needed to replace any hedgerows removed to accommodate the development and to minimise any visual and landscape impacts. A single access should be provided via Swan Grove and development will need to provide a suitable pedestrian access from the site into Chappel. Good design will be needed to complement the existing built character and to protect the setting of Hill House, Martyn's Croft and Brook Hall which are all Grade II listed buildings.

Policy SS3: Chappel and Wakes Colne

In addition to the infrastructure and mitigation requirements identified in policy PP1, development will be supported on land within the area identified on the policies map which provides:

(i) 30 new dwellings of a mix and type of housing to be compatible with surrounding development; and
(ii) A single site access via Swan Grove; and,
(iii) A design and layout which complements the listed buildings and their setting.

Copford and Copford Green

6.145 Copford represents an appropriate location for additional growth over the plan period given its proximity to Marks Tey train station, the A12/A120, and the main urban area of Colchester. To contribute to the continued sustainability of Copford two sites have been allocated for housing development over the plan period: land to the East of Queensberry Avenue north of London Road and land to the west of Hall Road, south of London Road. These sites will deliver an additional 120 houses by 2033.

6.146 Copford's close proximity to Marks Tey means that it is important to seek to prevent coalescence between the two settlements to ensure that both villages retain their individual identities. Development that would not represent a logical extension to the existing built up areas of Copford will be discouraged to prevent coalescence between settlements. Development will also be discouraged in the most northern part of the village, adjacent to the A12 to protect local amenity, and open spaces and to avoid land at risk from flooding. Growth will be discouraged to the east where the character is more rural/or is open countryside and to the south to discourage further development away from existing village services and facilities and to help protect the setting of Copford Green Conservation Area.

6.147 Wastewater and sewage infrastructure is over capacity and it will be necessary for these issues to be resolved prior to the start of development. Copford Primary School is also currently at capacity. Contributions will be sought to replace the temporary accommodation at the primary school to meet the increased demand that the new development will generate and to improve secondary school provision where a need is demonstrated.

6.148 Development of land to the east of Queensberry Avenue represents a sensible and logical extension to the existing built up area of Copford to the north of London Road. The site has been proposed for allocation for residential use, but the delivery of new extra care facilities at this location would also be supported, given its proximity to existing similar facilities to the north of London Road. Access to this site will be via Queensberry Avenue or London Road, where feasible. There is a Public Right of Way running along the western boundary of the site and development proposals will need to consider a permanent diversion or upgrade to the public footpath.

6.149 Good design will be needed to complement the existing built character, to provide suitable screening / landscaping, to replace any hedgerows removed to accommodate the development, to minimise visual impacts on the local landscape and to protect the setting of any Listed Buildings close to the development site.

6.150 Development of land to the west of Hall Road represents an appropriate extension to the existing built up area to the south of London Road. Development will need to provide suitable vehicular and pedestrian access between the site and London Road into Copford. Good design will be needed to complement the existing built character and to protect the setting of Brewers Cottage, Old Mill

House and Shrub House which are Grade II Listed Buildings. The land to the south of this site is in agricultural use, therefore suitable screening / landscaping will also be needed to replace any hedgerows removed to accommodate the development and to minimise any visual and landscape impacts. The proposed site is of potential archaeological significance. It is, therefore, likely that heritage assets of archaeological interest will be found, i.e. below-ground archaeological remains and site investigations will need to be completed prior to the start of development. Detailed flood modelling will also need to be completed to assess flood risk from the Roman River.

6.151 The potential archaeological significance of the site should be further explored, by way of a pre-determination evaluation (geophysical survey and trial trenching), before any decision is made as to whether all or part of the site would be acceptable for development. The Local Planning Authority will, on request, provide a brief for each stage of the archaeological evaluation.

6.152 There is a Water Recycling Centre located to the east of Copford village. Anglian Water has indicated that there are significant water supply and wastewater infrastructure capacity issues in Copford. To address this waste and water treatment from new developments in Copford will be directed to Colchester's Water Recycling Centre. As a precautionary approach, development of these sites cannot come forward until there is sufficient water supply, network capacity, wastewater treatment and sewage infrastructure capacity to cope with the two developments. Where this cannot be demonstrated it will be necessary to seek further advice from Anglian Water.

Policy SS4: Copford

East of Queensberry Avenue

In addition to the infrastructure and mitigation requirements identified in policy PP1, development will be supported on land within the area identified on the policies map which provides:

(i) 70 new dwellings of a mix and type of housing to be compatible with surrounding development;
(ii) Access via Queensberry Avenue and/or London Road;
(iii) The permanent diversion and/or upgrade to the existing Public Right of Way which runs along the western boundary edge of the site.

West of Hall Road

In addition to the infrastructure and mitigation requirements identified in policy PP1, development will be supported on land within the area identified on the policies map which provides:

(i) Up to 50 new dwellings of a mix and type of housing to be compatible with surrounding development;
(ii) A single site access via Hall Road;
(iii) Detailed flood modelling to assess flood risk at Hall Road from Roman River; and
(iv) A safe pedestrian footway agreed with the Highways Authority from the site to London Road to enhance connectivity with Copford.

Development must conserve, and where appropriate, enhance the significance of heritage assets (including any contribution made by their settings). Designated heritage assets close to the two allocated sites include the Grade II Copford Place and stable, Brewers Cottage, Stanway Bridge and Brook Cottage.

Dedham

6.153 Most of the Dedham parish area falls within the Dedham Vale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The largest settlement within the parish is the historic village of Dedham to the north. The smaller settlement of Dedham Heath lies to the south of the parish along with two smaller clusters of properties to the west and east of Dedham Heath known as Lamb Corner and Bargate Lane, respectively.

6.154 Dedham village has a range of services and facilities, including its own primary school, a GP, Post Office and a number of shops and services. As such Dedham is designated as a Local Centre providing a range of small shops and services which meet the basic needs of local communities, in the rural north of the borough. The other settlement clusters within Dedham parish not only lack such essential services and facilities but also have limited safe walking and cycling access to them. Dedham village therefore is considered a sustainable settlement for the purposes of the spatial strategy but the other clusters of housing in Dedham Parish are not considered to be suitable to support further residential growth.

6.155 Despite Dedham village's status as a sustainable settlement, it is heavily constrained by its location within the AONB. Furthermore a lack of suitable and available development land means that no growth has been proposed for Dedham village during the plan period.

6.156 As well as being a service centre for surrounding villages, Dedham is also a popular tourist destination. At certain times the existing roads and car parks struggle to cope with the additional traffic and the Parish Council have indicated that they would support additional car parking. Applications which help address this issue will be supported where they meet other policy objectives.

6.157 Dedham Heath as a smaller settlement with limited sustainability is an Other Village in the spatial hierarchy and not therefore been identified for any additional growth. The two more remote clusters of residential development to the west and east of the Heath are within the countryside and as such are not sustainable locations for growth.

Eight Ash Green

6.158 Eight Ash Green is a rural parish located approximately 6km to the northwest of urban Colchester. Within Eight Ash Green development is mainly concentrated around Fordham Heath and Choats Corner. There is also a small cluster of housing at Seven Star Green, located to the south of Halstead Road which separates these dwellings from the key facilities in Eight Ash Green village.

6.159 Despite being located approximately 5km from both Marks Tey and Colchester train stations, Eight Ash Green is considered a Sustainable Settlement as it has a reasonable number of local services and facilities which serve the needs of local residents. Local facilities include a village hall, three shops, a takeaway, convenience store, beauty salon and a pub. There is also a primary school located within the Choats Corner settlement boundary.

6.160 The Eight Ash Green Neighbourhood Plan was made in 2019. The Neighbourhood Plan allocates land to deliver 150 new dwellings at Fiddlers Field in Eight Ash Green over the Local Plan period.

Policy SS5: Eight Ash Green

All development proposals in Eight Ash Green parish will be determined against and be required to comply with policies in the Eight Ash Green Neighbourhood Plan and any relevant Local Plan policies.

Fordham

6.161 Fordham is identified as a sustainable settlement and is a linear village with a core concentration of development which has evolved over time, including a number of small estate type developments. Although spread out, it is well served by key community facilities including, a primary school, village hall and playing field. Also within the village is a community orchard maintained by the local community as well as an area of community woodland managed by the Woodland Trust.

6.162 The character of the village is influenced by a few significant listed buildings and their setting and the extensive areas of well established, locally managed woodland. It is important to protect and where possible enhance these characteristics. Small scale development adjacent to Plummers Road has recently delivered an attractive enhancement to the connectivity between this area and the rest of the village via a landscaped footway set back from the road. Further enhancement to connectivity through the village would be beneficial to existing and future residents.

6.163 Allocation of a site to the east of Plummers Road for additional small scale growth of up to 20 dwellings is considered a logical extension to the settlement. This provides for the continued sustainability of the key services in the village and accommodates an appropriate level of growth over the plan period. Development of this site will need to respond to particular site constraints including sensitive consideration in relation to the setting of a Listed Building.

6.164 Fordham Parish Council has indicated a wish to deliver a rural exception site in the village to provide housing for local people. Numbers and house types will be informed by a local housing needs survey. Land adjacent to the allocated site in Plummers Road may be a suitable location for the rural exception site. Due to the nature of rural exception sites, this development will be delivered outside the Local Plan process. Despite this, if two adjacent sites are brought forward there are benefits to planning them in a comprehensive manner, for example through shared highways access, community infrastructure, affordable housing delivery and complementary design. If a rural exception site is to be delivered on the adjacent site, a masterplan will be required which demonstrates how the allocated residential site will positively and comprehensively relate to any future rural exception site. The masterplan should accompany any planning application for residential uses in this area.

6.165 The proposed site is of potential archaeological significance. It is therefore likely that heritage assets of archaeological interest will be found, i.e. below-ground archaeological remains. This will require further investigation initially by way of pre-determination evaluation report. Decisions on the scale of development and also the need for, and scope of, any further archaeological work, should be based upon the results of this evaluation.

Policy SS6: Fordham

In addition to the infrastructure and mitigation requirements identified in policy PP1, development will be supported on land within the area identified on the policies map which provides:

(i) Up to 20 new dwellings, the mix and type to be informed by evidence including the Fordham Housing Needs Survey and archaeological evaluation;
(ii) Access from Plummers Road with appropriate junction improvements;
(iii) A new footway along the frontage/behind the existing hedgerow to provide safe pedestrian access from the site linking with existing footways and the rest of the village;
(iv) Conserve, and where appropriate, enhance the significance of heritage assets (including any contribution made by their settings). Designated heritage assets close to the site include the Grade II Plummers Farmhouse, Grade II Thrifts Cottage and Plummers Green Monument.

Great Horkesley

6.166 Great Horkesley is essentially linear in shape and has developed over time along the old Roman road that radiates away from north Colchester (now the A134). Development has spread westwards along a number of roads off the main road. Great Horkesley is fragmented with the main core of the settlement to the south and two smaller fragments to the north along the A134. The southern edge of the main part of the village is approximately 0.6km from the Colchester urban edge and is located north of the A12. There is a primary school, new village hall, church and dental surgery within the main village and a petrol station, post office, shop, scout hut and the old village hall, as well as a number of public houses along the A134.

6.167 Great Horkesley's close proximity to the main Colchester urban area means that it is important to seek to prevent coalescence between the southern edge of Great Horkesley and the northern edge of Colchester in order to retain the individual identity of the village. Development that would not represent a logical extension to the existing built up area will be discouraged in order to prevent further ribbon development to the north along the A134 and to the west; away from existing village services and facilities and where it is more rural in character.

6.168 Infrastructure in the village is at capacity and will need to be improved / enhanced to support any new development. Requirements include new allotments, enhanced community buildings and a new scout hut. Improvements will also be sought to the A134 between the village and North Colchester to promote walking and cycling and to improve accessibility to services and facilities in Myland.

6.169 Land at Great Horkesley Manor represents a logical extension to the village between existing dwellings at the heart of the village and development would be contained within the wider landscape by a belt of trees and small brook to the east. Access will be from Nayland Road (A134) and access points will need to be kept to a minimum to avoid disrupting the flow of traffic along this busy main road. Footways, suitable traffic management and crossing opportunities will be needed as development will require school pupils to cross the main road. Appropriate design and landscaping will be required to preserve the setting of the existing manor building and the tree-lined approach road from the main road. Whilst the existing manor building is not listed it is considered to be a visually prominent local building set within large, open grounds, the character of which should be protected. There is an area of low/ medium risk of surface water flooding along the eastern boundary of the site. Site layouts should take this into account to ensure that flood risk is not increased.

6.170 Land off School Lane to the north of the village offers the opportunity for a small development which includes the redevelopment of a brownfield site, improved access to the old village hall and improvements to the scout hut. The site includes a listed building and care will need to be taken to safeguard its setting. The existing scout hut is in poor condition and development proposals should look to replace and/or contribute to its relocation.

Policy SS7: Great Horkesley

Great Horkesley Manor

In addition to the infrastructure and mitigation requirements identified in policy PP1, development will be supported on land within the area identified on the policies map which provides:

(i) 80 new dwellings of a mix and type of housing for which there is a demonstrated need;
(ii) Provision of allotments;
(iii) Contributions to enhancing community buildings;
(iv) Provision of a scout hut with parking;
(v) Retention of the belt of trees to the east of the site;
(vi) Access from Nayland Road;
(vii) Contributions towards improving walking and cycling facilities along the A134; and
(viii) Provision of footways and suitable traffic management and crossing opportunities on Nayland Road.

Any proposals will also take into account the Essex Minerals Local Plan and the developer will be required to submit a Minerals Resource Assessment as part of any planning application. Should the viability of extraction be proven, the mineral shall be worked in accordance with a scheme/masterplan as part of the phased delivery of the non-mineral development.

School Lane

In addition to the infrastructure and mitigation requirements identified in policy PP1, development will be supported on land within the area identified on the policies map which provides:

(i) 13 new dwellings;
(ii) Development will facilitate access to the old village hall and either contribute to the replacement of the scout hut or to the enhancement of community buildings other than the old village hall;
(iii) Access from School Lane;
(iv) Development must conserve, and where appropriate, enhance the significance of heritage assets (including any contribution made by their settings). Designated heritage assets close to the site include the Grade II Church of England School, School House and Oak Cottage.

The designated Local Economic Area at Holly Lodge Farm shown on the policies map will be retained and any future development proposals at this site will be required to accord with policy SG4.

Great Tey

6.171 Great Tey is situated north of the Roman River and is a small rural community that contains a few local amenities including a village pub, a school, and a church. Bus services operate between Great Tey, Marks Tey railway station, Tollgate Retail Park and Colchester.

6.172 The RCCE completed a Rural Housing Needs Survey in 2012 which indicated a need for four affordable units. The Parish Council thus acknowledge a need for lower cost/smaller houses in the village to contribute to the continued sustainability of the key services in the village and accommodate an appropriate level of growth over the plan period, two sites for housing development are allocated in accordance with Policy SS8 below.

6.173 Land at Brook Road is capable of accommodating 10 dwellings. The number reflects the edge of settlement location, the adjacent Conservation Area and Listed Building and the desire for single storey dwellings with a larger land take. The site is adjacent to a listed building and a Conservation Area and care will need to be taken to safeguard its setting. There is also a Public Right of Way immediately adjacent to the site. Suitable footways will be needed to link the development with the rest of the village.

6.174 Land off Greenfield Drive is capable of accommodating 30 dwellings with access off Greenfield Road. The site is adjacent to the existing public open space and the opportunity will be sought to extend this open space as part of the proposal to provide for a wider range of facilities.

6.175 Great Tey Parish Council has confirmed that it intends to prepare a Neighbourhood Plan for the village, which will determine how each of the sites allocated in this local plan will be developed. The Neighbourhood Plan will develop a policy framework to guide and meet the strategic policies in this Plan and for all other development or community needs identified in the village.

Policy SS8: Great Tey

Land on Brook Road

In addition to the infrastructure and mitigation requirements identified in policy PP1, development will be supported on land within the area identified on the policies map which provides:

(i) 10 new dwellings, which shall include single storey units;
(ii) Suitable design and screening/landscaping to maintain and where possible enhance the character and setting of the adjacent Conservation Area and listed building (Rectory Cottage) including its setting.

Land off Greenfield Drive

In addition to the infrastructure and mitigation requirements identified in policy PP1, development will be supported on land within the policy area identified on the policies map which provides:

(i) 30 new dwellings with pedestrian and cycle access off Greenfield Drive (Harvesters' Way and/or Farmfield Road) and vehicle access from Newbarn Road; and
(ii) A minimum of 1ha of public open space.
(iii) The emerging Neighbourhood Plan is intended to shape the character of the development.

Tey Brook Farm is an allocated Local Economic Area as shown on the policies map and will be protected for this use. Any future development proposals will be required to comply with Policy SG4.

Langham

6.176 Langham includes two settlements, Langham Moor and St. Margaret's Cross, linked by School Road. A former WWII airfield lies between the two areas. The village contains a mixture of historic properties and farmhouses along with more recent development.

6.177 Langham has a number of facilities including a community centre and shop, public house and a primary school. Langham has limited access to public transport. Dedham Vale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty adjoins the village to the east, although it is separated by the A12.

6.178 Langham is considered an appropriate location for limited development. Accordingly, three small sites have been allocated. Approximately 10 dwellings are appropriate on Land at Wick Road in keeping with the existing detached housing adjoining and opposite. Land at Wick Road abuts the former airfield and development will need to have regard to both its landscape character and connectivity to existing footways.

6.179 Land at School Road represents a logical extension to the village as it lies between existing housing and employment sites and is well located for the school and community centre/shop. Two sites are allocated there providing a total of 70 dwellings, a school car park and extension to the playing fields. Whilst the Parish Council favour frontage development there is potential on these sites for an estate or green approach to layout given that they are at the heart of the village. Both sites abut the former airfield, and development would need to have regard to both its landscape character and connectivity to existing footways.

6.180 The 2016 Water Cycle Study identified a lack of head room capacity at the Langham Water Recycling Centre (WRC). With regards to wastewater, the report also identified the need for upgrades at the Langham Water Recycling Centre (WRC) to enable it to accept all wastewater flows from the proposed development. Discussions are underway between the Local Planning Authority, the Environment Agency and Anglian Water to resolve the above issues.

6.181 A joint Position Statement is currently being prepared between The Local Planning Authority, the Environment Agency and Anglian Water. The Position Statement will identify water and sewage capacity shortfalls at the Langham WRC, infrastructure upgrades needed to address these, consider the need for a review of current licences/permits and recommend any further changes needed to the policy SS9.

6.182 The Water Cycle Study also identified water quality issues in the receiving water bodies feeding into the Stour Estuary. This has been further considered in the Appropriate Assessment completed as part of the evidence base of the Local Plan. Any proposed WRC infrastructure upgrades and/or permit reviews identified in the Position Statement provide the mitigation needed to ensure that quality of the water bodies feeding the Stour do not deteriorate further as a result of development in Langham. The delivery of wastewater and sewage infrastructure

upgrades specified in policy PP1 will be essential in Langham as they are required as mitigation to ensure compliance with the Habitats Regulations 2010 (as amended).

Policy SS9: Langham

In addition to the infrastructure and mitigation requirements identified in policy PP1 developers could be required to demonstrate the impact of their proposals on the strategic and local transport networks, including the cumulative impact of multiple developments (in line with national guidance). Development should not commence until adequate wastewater and sewage treatment capacity is available to serve the new housing.

Development on land shown the Policies Map will be supported where they meet the requirements identified below for each site;

Wick Road

Development will be supported provides:

(i) 10 new dwellings of a mix and type of housing to be compatible with surrounding development;

Development must conserve, and where appropriate, enhance the significance of heritage assets (including any contribution made by their settings). Designated heritage assets close to the site includes the Grade II New House.

School Road

Development will be supported which provides:

(i) 70 new dwellings of a mix and type of housing for which there is a demonstrated need, including smaller family homes and sheltered housing;
    - One site to the east of the Powerplus site to accommodate 40 dwellings plus a car park for the school;
    - One site to the west of the Powerplus site to accommodate 30 dwellings plus an extension to the adjacent recreation ground;

(ii) A landscape Appraisal which will then inform appropriate design and suitable screening/landscaping to minimise any negative impact on the surrounding landscape, including visual screening around the School Road employment site and;

(iii) A design and layout which protects and enhances the listed buildings including their setting including suitable screening/landscaping. Development must conserve, and where appropriate, enhance the significance of heritage assets (including any contribution made by their settings). Designated heritage assets close to the site includes the Grade II School Farmhouse.

The Powerplus Engineering and Whitnell Contractors site on School Road, Langham Airfield (Lodge Lane) and The Depot, Old Ipswich Road, in Langham are designated Local Economic Areas as shown on the polices map. The sites will remain allocated, including an extension to Lodge Lane, and any future development proposals at this location will be required to accord with policy SG4.

Layer de la Haye

6.183 Layer de la Haye is an historic village, located approximately 2.5km southwest of the Colchester urban area. The village is well served by community facilities including a primary school, village shop, GP surgery, public open space at New Cut and Malting Green, and two public houses. Layer de la Haye is also well connected to Colchester by road with several bus stops providing public transport to residents.

6.184 Layer de la Haye is therefore considered a sustainable settlement and suitable for some additional residential growth over the plan period. However the GP surgery is currently at capacity and ECC has indicated that the school will require investment in the coming years to maintain its current capacity. Therefore new development will be required to contribute to this local infrastructure to mitigate the impact of additional residents in the village.

6.185 Land has been identified for residential growth for up to 35 dwellings on land adjacent The Folley. This site is in a location which integrates well with the existing settlement by utilising existing screening features and new open space can be delivered without detrimental impact on neighbouring residents and the surrounding landscape. In addition to contributing towards existing infrastructure, new development will also provide new facilities on site including areas of open space, an equipped children's play area and a footpath connecting new dwellings to existing village facilities.

6.186 Layer de la Haye Parish Council has carried out a local housing needs survey which has demonstrated a need for up to eight new affordable homes for occupation by existing residents or by those with a close connection to the village. Land has been identified which could accommodate a rural exception site to provide for this local need adjacent the residential allocation mentioned above. Due to the nature of rural exception sites, this development will be delivered outside the Local Plan process. Despite this, there are benefits to planning the two sites in a comprehensive manner, for example through shared highways access, community infrastructure, affordable housing delivery and complementary design. If a rural exception site is to be delivered on the adjacent site, a masterplan will be required which demonstrates how the allocated residential site will positively and comprehensively relate to any future rural exception site. If the sites are developed concurrently, the affordable housing provided for on the exception site will be discounted from the overall requirements for affordable housing on the allocated site. The masterplan should accompany any planning application for residential uses in this area. It will also be required that the overall provision shall not exceed 50 dwellings.

Policy SS10: Layer de la Haye

In addition to the infrastructure and mitigation requirements identified in policy PP1, development will be supported on land within the area identified on the policies map which provides:

(i) At least 35 new dwellings of a mix and type compatible with surrounding development, to include bungalows and small family homes;
(ii) Primary highways access to serve the development from Great House Farm Road with secondary, non-thoroughfare access, from The Folley to serve a limited number of dwellings;
(iii) New areas of public open space, to include an equipped children's play area; and
(iv) A masterplan demonstrating how the development will positively and comprehensively relate to the future delivery of a rural exceptions site on adjacent land.

Any proposals will also take into account the Essex Minerals Local Plan and the developer will be required to submit a Minerals Resource Assessment as part of any planning application. Should the viability of extraction be proven, the mineral shall be worked in accordance with a scheme/masterplan as part of the phased delivery of the non-mineral development.

Before granting planning consent, wintering bird surveys will be undertaken at the appropriate time of year to identify any offsite functional habitat. In the unlikely event that significant numbers are identified, development must firstly avoid impacts. Where this is not possible, development must be phased to deliver habitat creation and management either on or off-site to mitigate any significant impacts. Any such habitat must be provided and fully functional before any development takes place which would affect significant numbers of SPA birds.

Marks Tey

6.187 Marks Tey is located at the busy junction of the A12 with the A120. Marks Tey is essentially a linear settlement that, while being sustainably located has been fragmented by the railway and A12/A120. Its good range of facilities are provided in different sections of the village with a railway station providing an interchange between mainline to London and branch services to the east, a larger area of modern housing, village hall, and the primary school to the west and retail facilities to the south of the A12.

6.188 Development constraints in Marks Tey include the community separation resulting from the two roads and the rail line running through the village, with only limited pedestrian accessibility currently possible over these barriers. The northeast is affected by environmental constraints including the head of the Roman River valley and associated flood risk. Any development in the area will be required to deliver SuDs to manage the risk from surface water management. In addition there may be a need for contributions towards sewage infrastructure capacity which will depend upon the scale of development which is delivered in. In addition there is a minerals and waste safeguarding zone around the historic brickworks, which is designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). Marks Tey also contains a significant number of grade II listed buildings, including the scheduled brick kilns and the Grade I Church of St Andrew which would need to be protected and enhanced as part of any development proposals.

6.189 The road infrastructure in the area is to be further developed over the plan period. The A12 is programmed in the Road Investment Strategy for widening between junction 19 at northeast Chelmsford and junction 25 at Marks Tey. Consultation on A120 route improvements between Braintree and the A12 ended in March 2017. ECC has identified a favoured route which has been recommended to Highways England and the Department of Transport. In March 2020 the government announced its Road Investment Strategy (RIS2) which included a commitment to progressing further development work on the A120 dualling to prepare the scheme for delivery. The scheme will be considered for inclusion in the RIS3 programme (2025-2030) and is now considered a pipeline project to be progressed by Highways England.

6.190 Future development of the area will be guided by the Neighbourhood Plan being developed by Marks Tey Parish Council.

6.191 The site known as Anderson’s will be retained as a Local Employment Area having been reviewed as part of the Council’s evidence update on employment.

Policy SS11: Marks Tey

Growth within the Marks Tey area will largely be guided by the following documents in addition to this Local Plan:

(i) The Marks Tey Neighbourhood Plan will provide flexibility, including the scope for the allocation of any small parcels of land for development to be considered in the Neighbourhood Plan at the appropriate time.

The Anderson's site is allocated as a Local Economic Area as shown on the Policies Map.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the generic Neighbourhood Planning policy SG8.

Mersea Island

6.192 West Mersea is a small coastal town located on the confluence of the Colne and Blackwater Estuaries approximately 15km from the centre of Colchester Town. West Mersea is the larger of two settlements on Mersea Island, the other being the much smaller village of East Mersea. Early development in West Mersea was concentrated around the harbour and nearby oyster pits to the southwest of the island. Development has since expanded to the north and west.

6.193 West Mersea is a District Centre with a high number of key services and community facilities. There are two supermarkets, a primary school a community centre, as well as a range of independent shops, cafes and restaurants but no secondary school. These services support the needs of local residents and businesses on Mersea as well as communities from the surrounding rural areas in the south of the Borough. It will be important to protect the function of the District Centre in Mersea to ensure that it continues to meet the needs of the local coastal communities who use it. There are frequent bus routes serving the town to and from Colchester and serving the local secondary schools. Accordingly, West Mersea is considered to be a sustainable settlement suitable for growth during the plan period.

6.194 West Mersea Town Council is currently preparing a Neighbourhood Plan for the town, which will determine how each of the sites allocated in this local plan will be developed. Given the current number of dwellings in West Mersea and the range of available facilities on the Island, it is considered that an appropriate level of growth across the plan period would see the delivery of approximately 200 dwellings. The Neighbourhood Plan will develop a policy framework to guide and meet the strategic policies in this Plan and for all other development or community needs identified in the town. Accordingly, the Dawes Road allocation incorporates residential and open space allocations and the Brierley Paddocks site is shown as mixed use to provide flexibility to respond to the content of the Neighbourhood plan. As well as delivering 100 dwellings and open space this site could deliver community facilities for new and existing residents if a need is identified in the Neighbourhood Plan.

6.195 The Parish of East Mersea is a smaller settlement situated on the eastern side of Mersea Island. It comprises a small cluster of dwellings and a limited range of community facilities. It is also home to Cudmore Grove Country Park which is very popular with visitors at weekends and in the holidays. Due to its size and limited facilities, East Mersea is not considered a sustainable location to accommodate substantial additional growth and is defined as an Other Village in the spatial hierarchy to reflect the important community function the village provides.

Policy SS12a: West Mersea

In addition to the infrastructure and mitigation requirements identified in policy PP1, development will be supported on land within the areas identified on the policies map which contributes towards expanding Mersea Island Primary School, provides suitable landscaping to screen the development to minimise any negative impact on the surrounding landscape and protect the open rural character of land within the Coastal Protection Belt, and meets the requirements for each site indicated below. Housing on both sites should address local needs which will be detailed in the Neighbourhood Plan but are likely to include starter homes and single storey dwellings.

Dawes Lane

Development will be supported which provides:

(i) 100 new dwellings of a mix and type of housing to be compatible with surrounding development;
(ii) Public Open Space, including sports pitches;
(iii) Children's play area/land for a sports pavilion if identified in the Neighbourhood Plan;
(iv) A single site access off Dawes Lane.

Brierley Paddocks

Development will be supported which provides:

(i) 100 new dwellings of a mix and type of housing to be compatible with surrounding development;
(ii) A satisfactory vehicular access;
(iii) New public open space; and
(iv) Community facilities if identified in the Neighbourhood Plan.

There are three existing designated Local Economic Areas in Mersea as shown on the policies map that will continue to be safeguarded for this use. Any future development proposals at these sites will be required to comply with policies SG4.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the generic Neighbourhood Planning Policy SG8 and the West Mersea Neighbourhood Plan, once adopted.

Coast Road, West Mersea

6.196 The coastal area of the Borough around Mersea Island is an extremely rich, diverse and irreplaceable natural asset in terms of its natural and cultural features. It includes substantial parts of the Colne and Blackwater Estuaries. The ecological importance of the Colne and Blackwater Estuaries is reflected by the variety of international and European designations covering them i.e. Ramsar sites, Special Protection Areas (Birds Directive), and the Essex Estuaries Special Area of Conservation (SAC) designated under the Habitats Directive. There are also a number of Sites of Special Scientific Interest designated along the estuaries. Accordingly, proposals along Coast Road will need to be screened for likely significant effects on adjacent habitats sites in accordance with Habitats Regulations 2010 (as amended).

6.197 Tourism makes an important contribution to both the local Mersea economy and the wider Borough economy. As a consequence, there are a number of diverse and competing interests which all need to be managed in an integrated way within the Borough's coastal zone. These include internationally important habitats, land and water-based recreation, tourism, fishing, archaeological and historic environment assets.

6.198 Climate change including sea level rise is also likely to increase pressure regarding the management of coastal habitats and coastal communities along the Borough's coastal fringe.

6.199 Future development proposals will have to balance the need to protect the important natural and cultural assets at the coast against competing development pressures and the need to support wider socio-economic needs of the Borough's coastal communities.

6.200 Development proposals on the landward and seaward side of Coast Road will have to further balance these issues against the need to protect and enhance the traditional maritime character of this part of West Mersea. Sequentially preferred maritime related uses which could be supported along Coast Road include boatyards, boat restoration business; ancillary uses related to boating, sailing, chandlers, fishing, specialised fish restaurants and shops, fish cookery schools and water based leisure businesses. Proposals for additional residential development on Coast Road will generally not be considered suitable or sustainable and will only be supported on upper floors where sequentially preferred maritime related uses have been discounted in agreement with the Local Planning Authority.

6.201 The current Essex and South Suffolk Shoreline Management Plan has shown that the West Mersea coastal frontage is highly vulnerable to the effects of climate change and coastal processes. Future land uses and developments along the coastal frontage will be required to demonstrate the ability to adopt a roll back approach in response to changing local climatic conditions.

Policy SS12b: Coast Road, West Mersea

Development proposals on the seaward and landward side of Coast Road, West Mersea, will be supported where they:

(i) Are located within the area defined as the developed coast and the development is such that a coastal location is required;
(ii) Enhance heritage assets, maritime uses, the traditional maritime character of Coast Road and the landscape character of the coast;
(iii) Can demonstrate no likely significant effects on adjacent Habitats sites and, where appropriate, provide mitigation in accordance with the Essex Coast Recreational disturbance Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy (RAMS);
(iv) Will deliver or sustain social and economic benefits considered important to the wellbeing of the coastal communities;
(v) Will not generate a significant increase in traffic; and
(vi) Represent an appropriate use with regards to flood risk.

Proposals for all development and change of use on both the landward and seaward side of Coast Road will be expected to enhance the West Mersea Conservation Area and the traditional maritime character of Coast Road, as well as its role as a major yachting, fishing and boating centre. Proposals that would result in the development of existing undeveloped areas of foreshore will not generally be supported unless they accord with criteria in the Coastal Areas policy ENV2.

In exceptional circumstances, development may be permitted where it is proven that the proposal provides an over-whelming public or community benefit that outweighs all other material considerations. In such instances applications must demonstrate that the site is the only available option and be acceptable in terms of its other planning merits.

Houseboats - Proposals for new moorings for permanent residential houseboats will not be permitted in coastal areas including Coast Road because of their landscape and environmental impact on the internationally designated habitats. Houseboat proposals for new moorings on historical vacant sites or houseboats of historical maritime significance, may be acceptable, subject to an installation method statement being submitted which avoids impacts to saltmarsh habitats and which satisfy all other policy criteria. Applications for infrastructure to support existing houseboats including jetties, sheds, platforms and fences and for replacement houseboats or houseboat alterations considered to result in material alterations will be considered on the basis of their scale and impact on surrounding amenity, environment and landscape.

Caravan Parks

6.202 There are six caravan/holiday parks on Mersea Island; Firs Chase, Waldegraves, Seaview, Coopers Beach, Mersea Island Holiday Park and Fen Farm. As these are leisure businesses, the caravans and chalets at the caravan parks should only be used as short-term holiday accommodation and not for permanent residential use. Where evidence is provided, that people are living in any of the caravan parks on Mersea on a permanent basis, the Local Planning Authority will take appropriate action.

6.203 The Local Planning Authority recognises the valuable contribution that the caravan parks make to the supply of holiday accommodation for visitors to Mersea and the rest of the Borough. They are also an important element of the local tourism industry and their retention and improvement is generally supported.

6.204 Caravan Parks are under increasing pressure to extend both the length of their opening season and also the range of activities and events operating on the sites to help sustain their business. This has the potential to impact on Mersea residents and sensitive habitats sites and any resulting need to be carefully managed.

6.205 The caravan parks on Mersea are located adjacent to internationally designated habitats sites and because of their coastal frontage locations can be potentially vulnerable to increased risk from flooding. As an important tourist destination, the protection of the EU designated bathing waters around Mersea is an important consideration. All tourism related development proposals including the extension of caravan parks will have to demonstrate that there is adequate wastewater and sewage treatment infrastructure in place to serve the proposed development to help protect EU designated coastal bathing waters and to satisfy EU Water Framework Directive requirements. As part of this process applicants should consult with the Environment Agency and Anglian Water at an early stage in the planning application process to ensure that sewage disposal options are fully considered.

6.206 All coastal tourism developments must also be sensitive to and integrate well with their sensitive coastal environment and surrounding rural landscape and respect the special characteristics of the Coastal Protection Belt defined on the policies map.

6.207 All future development proposals at holiday parks on Mersea located adjacent to designated habitats Sites will only be supported where a sympathetic development approach is followed. It must be demonstrated that proposals will not result in likely significant effects on the habitats Sites and where necessary appropriate mitigation measures implemented to minimise environmental impacts on neighbouring habitats sites. Mitigation proposals will need to be agreed with the Local Planning Authority and Natural England prior to development commencing.

6.208 Extensions to existing caravan parks should not impact on the amenity of residents living and working in close proximity to the parks, through increased noise or light pollution. Proposals should promote a range of measures to encourage sustainable travel for leisure to help mitigate and reduce the impact of leisure related traffic on Mersea Island.

6.209 Sites allocated as Caravan Parks as shown on the policies map will be safeguarded for this use against other less appropriate types of development.

Policy SS12c: Mersea Island Caravan Parks

Development proposals at caravan parks on Mersea Island, including change of use, intensification of an existing use, or change in activities on site will only be supported where they meet all of the following criteria:

(i) Have adequate wastewater treatment and sewage infrastructure capacity to serve the caravan park and to protect the EU designated coastal bathing water quality and to help meet EU Water Framework Directive requirements;
(ii) Help protect the integrity of habitats sites and minimise disturbance to designated breeding and wintering species using the sites. Any future extensions to caravan parks will require their own HRA and where required appropriate assessment;
(iii) Minimise impact on the amenity of residents or businesses living or operating near the site;
(iv) Are supported with a Site Specific Flood Risk Assessment and Flood Management and Flood Evacuation Plan; and
(v) Are supported by measures to promote sustainable travel for leisure on Mersea.

Permission will not be granted for caravans or chalets at the caravan parks to be used as permanent residences. They should only be used for holiday accommodation at all times.

All caravan park proposals should be supported by a site specific Flood Risk Assessment and Flood Management and Evacuation Plan. Proposals for caravan extensions in flood zone 3 will not generally be supported due to the increased risk to people and property from coastal flooding.

Rowhedge

6.210 Rowhedge is situated to the southeast of Colchester on the western banks of the Rover Colne; it is the only settlement in the parish of East Donyland.

6.211 The village has a strong sense of identity which is emphasised by a conservation area at its core and a number of listed buildings, predominately on the riverfront. Rowhedge benefits from its own primary school, GP surgery, village shop, public houses and public open space provision. However due to its history as a fishing village the settlement has grown from the port outwards and this has resulted in new development being situated further away from Rowhedge's historic centre where many of its limited services and facilities are located.

6.212 Rowhedge is bordered by the River Colne to the east, and the surrounding land's estuarine nature gives rise to a number of ecological designations which run along the coast and inland to the south of the village. The north of the village is separated from the urban area of Colchester by a relatively short, but nonetheless valuable, expanse of greenfield land. In addition to providing a valuable buffer between Rowhedge and Colchester, much of this land is designated as Coastal Protection Belt because of its high landscape value.

6.213 The commenced development at Rowhedge Wharf and the exceptional constraints to expansion surrounding the village renders Rowhedge unsuitable for extensive new development. However redevelopment of Rowhedge Business Centre offers an opportunity to convert low value and underused storage land with limited employment use into new housing in a sustainable location with low landscape impact. Provision of a new healthcare facility is currently being explored by North East Essex Clinical Commissioning Group, however, no infrastructure has yet been formally approved for this community in isolation.

Policy SS13: Rowhedge

In addition to the infrastructure and mitigation requirements identified in policy PP1, development will be supported on land within the area identified on the policies map which provides:

(i) 40 new dwellings of a mix and type compatible with the surrounding area including affordable housing in line with adopted policy;
(ii) Ecological and arboricultural assessments of the site and mitigation as required; and
(iii) An area of open space between the site and existing housing which will include protection of trees deemed as valuable in the arboricultural assessment.

Tiptree

6.214 Tiptree is a large village located on the southwest boundary of the Borough and approximately 15km from Colchester itself. Development has grown up around key highway intersections in a roughly triangular built form. There is a small separate cluster of houses to the southwest of the main village known as Tiptree Heath.

6.215 Tiptree is a District Centre with a high number of key services and community facilities. There are two supermarkets, 4 primary schools, a secondary school, a community centre, 1 GP surgery, as well as a range of independent shops, cafes and restaurants. These services support the needs of local residents and businesses in Tiptree as well as communities from the surrounding rural areas. It will be important to protect the function of the District Centre in Tiptree to ensure that it continues to meet the needs of the local communities who use it. There are regular bus routes serving the village to and from Colchester Accordingly, Tiptree is considered to be a sustainable settlement suitable for growth during the plan period.

6.216 Tiptree is very well served in terms of educational facilities as it has four primary schools and Thurstable Secondary School within the village. There is also a Leisure Centre located at Thurstable School and Colchester United's training ground is located off Grange Road. There are four Local Economic Areas in Tiptree.

6.217 There are a number of constraints which limit the amount of land available for growth in Tiptree. Development to the southeast is constrained by Tiptree Jam Factory and Birch Wood Local Wildlife Site. Development in this direction would also reduce the green gap between the village and Tolleshunt Knights. Developing in this direction would also be constrained by Layer Brook which is Flood Zone 2. Expansion to the northeast of Tiptree is constrained by Thurstable School and Warriors Rest while expansion to the southwest is constrained by Tiptree Heath SSSI and Inworth Grange and Brook Meadows Local Wildlife Site.

6.218 Tiptree Parish Council is currently preparing a Neighbourhood Plan which will allocate sites for further growth in the Parish. In discussion with the Neighbourhood Plan Group, it has been agreed that Tiptree will deliver 600 new dwellings over the plan period given the current number of dwellings in Tiptree, the good availability and access to services and facilities, and the fact that Tiptree is a District Centre. This is considered an appropriate level of growth for Tiptree.

6.219 Infrastructure necessary to deliver the growth up to 2033 will need to consider cross boundary issues with neighbouring Local Planning Authorities and neighbouring Parishes. This will include acknowledgement of the additional traffic generation forecasts for the proposed new junction 24 onto the A12 as well as from the growth locations. With the northern growth location there is potential for a new road which would ultimately link the B1022 and B1023. The Tiptree Neighbourhood Plan will be expected to deliver the first phases of the road through a design which allows future completion/linkage.

6.220 Following the Tiptree Neighbourhood Plan examination which concluded in October 2020, it was recommended that the Tiptree Neighbourhood Plan could not proceed to referendum. The Tiptree Neighbourhood Plan Working Group are preparing a revised draft plan which will include site allocation(s) and be subject to further public consultation. The Plan will allocate final site boundaries and will include a policy framework to support the delivery of a minimum of 400 houses up to 2033 and to guide all other planning issues in the village. The Plan will be subject to examination and referendum prior to being made.

Barbrook Lane

6.221 Planning Permission has been granted for up to 200 dwellings at Barbrook Lane. It is expected that these dwellings will be delivered during the Plan Period. The extent of the application site is reflected on Policy Map SS14 as an existing commitment. Within the site area there will be provision for public open space as well as land reserved for future education purposes as shown on the policies map.

Policy SS14: Tiptree

Within the preferred directions of growth shown on the Tiptree policies map, to the southwest and north/northwest, subject to existing constraints, the Tiptree Neighbourhood Plan will:

(i) Define the extent of a new settlement boundary for Tiptree;
(ii) Allocate specific sites for housing allocations to deliver a minimum of 400 dwellings;
(iii) Set out any associated policies needed to support this housing delivery i.e. housing mix, type of housing and density for each site allocated for housing;
(iv) Set out the policy framework within the parish to guide the delivery of any infrastructure/community facilities required to support the development in accordance with the requirements of Policies SG7 and PP1. This will include a strategic transport appraisal with a view to confirming provision of phased delivery of a road between the B1022 and B1023;
(v) Consider cross boundary issues;
(vi) Identify other allocations in the Parish, including employment and open space.

Proposals for development outside of the settlement boundary, or settlement boundary defined by the Tiptree Neighbourhood Plan once adopted, will not be supported. This policy should be read in conjunction with the generic Neighbourhood Planning policy SG8, policy SG3 and policies in the Tiptree Neighbourhood Plan, once it has been adopted.

Before granting planning consent, wintering bird surveys will be undertaken at the appropriate time of year to identify any offsite functional habitat. In the unlikely event that significant numbers are identified, development must firstly avoid impacts. Where this is not possible, development must be phased to deliver

habitat creation and management either on or off-site to mitigate any significant impacts. Any such habitat must be provided and fully functional before any development takes place which would affect significant numbers of SPA birds.

6.222 There are currently four designated Local Economic Areas (LEAs) in Tiptree; the Alexander Cleghorn Site, Tiptree Jam Factory, the Basketworks Site and the Tower Business Park. These will continue to be protected for employment purposes. Any development proposals affecting these sites or any other sites providing an economic/employment use in Tiptree over the Local Plan period will be required to comply with policy SG4 unless they are reviewed and amended through the Tiptree Neighbourhood Plan.

West Bergholt

6.223 West Bergholt is a rural parish located approximately 1km to the northwest of Colchester. It is considered a Sustainable Settlement as it has a sufficient population base and a range of community facilities and infrastructure to support appropriate growth which can be physically accommodated in West Bergholt without compromising the existing settlement shape, form and character.

6.224 There are a number of constraints which restrict the availability of sites suitable for development. To maintain the current settlement pattern, development will continue to be located around the three main roads with facilities located centrally where possible.

6.225 There is currently limited inter-visibility between Colchester and West Bergholt. However, there is a relatively high potential for visual coalescence of settlements and any new built development on land to the south of the village may undermine the sense of settlement separation. Development to the south of the village towards Colchester on Colchester Road is therefore not considered suitable due to the high potential of visual coalescence.

6.226 Development to the north of the village on Colchester Road/Nayland Road would extend new development away from existing key facilities and into open countryside, which is not considered sustainable.

6.227 The West Bergholt Neighbourhood Plan was made in 2019. It sets out the planning policy framework needed to support the delivery of 120 houses to 2033 and to guide and meet all other development or community needs identified by the community in West Bergholt.

6.228 Pattens Yard in West Bergholt is allocated as a Local Economic Area. This site will remain allocated for this use and any future planning applications will be required to accord with policy SG4. Any development proposals affecting this site or any other sites providing an economic/employment use in West Bergholt over the Local Plan period will be required to comply with policy SG4**.**

Policy SS15: West Bergholt

All development proposals in West Bergholt parish will be determined against and be required to comply with policies in the West Bergholt Neighbourhood Plan and any relevant Local Plan policies.

Wivenhoe

6.229 Originally Wivenhoe comprised two separate settlements: Wivenhoe Cross which was centred on the crossroads of Colchester Road, Rectory Road and The Avenue; and Wivenhoe to the south which was centred on the quay. More recent development has resulted in the coalescence of these two distinct settlements into one.

6.230 Since the 1970's growth has included significant 'estate' development including Dene Park during the 1970s; Broomgrove to the west in the 1970/80s; Ferry Marsh in the 2000's and most recently Cooks Shipyard.

6.231 The town benefits from good infrastructure provision including a mainline train station, a GP surgery, two primary schools, numerous shops and restaurants and abundant open space provision. This is reflected in the designation of the town as Rural District Centre. There are also frequent bus services between Wivenhoe and Colchester and a cycle path between Wivenhoe, and the University of Essex has recently been built. There is a well-used footpath and cycle route to Colchester along the River Colne (the Wivenhoe Trail), which increases the sustainable nature of the settlement and makes it suitable for additional future growth within the Local Plan period.

6.232 An additional 250 dwellings will be delivered in Wivenhoe by 2033. This is an appropriate number of new dwellings along with a number of new dwellings within the parish which will be allocated in the Colchester/ Tendring Borders Garden Community. There are a number of constraints which has influenced the amount of growth considered appropriate for Wivenhoe.

6.233 Broomgrove and Millfields schools are both operating at capacity but are currently accepting a small number of pupils from outside of Wivenhoe. There is not a secondary school within Wivenhoe with most children attending the Colne Academy in Brightlingsea or Colchester Academy in Greenstead. Wivenhoe is bordered by the River Colne to the west and south. In addition to the physical boundary that the river presents, there are also other associated constraints such as flood risk zone 3 areas, SSSI, Special Protection Area and the Coastal Protection Belt, which reduces the availability of suitable sites for new development.

6.234 The Wivenhoe Neighbourhood Plan was made in 2019. The Plan sets out the planning policy framework needed to support the delivery of 250 houses up to 2033. The Neighbourhood Plan also allocates sites for other uses identified by the local community as being important in Wivenhoe and develops the policy framework needed to support any such allocations.

Policy SS16: Wivenhoe

The Wivenhoe Neighbourhood Plan has been made and:

(i) Identifies the settlement boundary for Wivenhoe;
(ii) Identifies specific sites for housing allocations needed to deliver 250 dwellings with additional land for a care home outside the settlement boundary at the housing allocation, at Land Behind the Fire Station, Colchester Road, should an appropriate scheme be forthcoming;
(iii) Sets out policies needed to support this housing delivery i.e. housing mix, type of housing and density for each site allocated for housing;
(iv) Identifies other allocations in the Parish, including employment and open space; and
(v) Identifies the infrastructure requirements to support new development.

Proposals for development outside of the settlement boundary will not be supported unless the Neighbourhood Plan or other Local Plan policy specifically allows for it.

All development proposals in Wivenhoe Neighbourhood Plan Area will be determined against and be required to comply with policies in the Wivenhoe Neighbourhood Plan and any relevant Local Plan policies.

Other Villages and Countryside

6.235 The purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. The NPPF recognises that there are three dimensions to sustainable development: economic, social and environmental. Settlement boundaries are an essential tool for the management of development and contribute to the achievement of sustainable development by preventing the encroachment of development into the countryside, protecting rural character. The spatial hierarchy (Policy SG1 and Table SG1) directs development to the most sustainable locations by defining different tiers for growth. In the first instance development is directed to the urban area of Colchester, which is the main location for jobs, housing, services and choice of means of transport. The second tier is the Garden Community and Sustainable Settlements. Other Villages and then Countryside are next. This approach was informed by evidence in the Settlement Boundary Review, which assessed the sustainability of each of the Borough's settlements, using criteria relating to the NPPF definition of sustainable development.

6.236 The Local Plan contributes to the economic dimension of sustainable development through the supply of employment land and retention of employment sites. Allocations and the strategy for future development ensures that development will be located at accessible locations where residents will have good access to employment opportunities and be in close proximity to regularly used services, facilities, shops, etc.

6.237 The Local Plan contributes to the social element of sustainable development through the allocation of 14,720 homes between 2017 and 2033, which meets the Borough's objectively assessed need for housing. Residential development in the countryside is not needed to contribute to the social element of sustainable development. Furthermore, residential development in the countryside would be functionally isolated. This would have a negative impact on the ability of residents to access social services and facilities.

6.238 The Local Plan contributes to the environmental element of sustainable development by protecting the Borough's landscape character, countryside and coast, and directing development to locations that reduce the need to travel and make sustainable travel a realistic option. Residential development in the countryside could adversely affect landscape character and the undeveloped nature of the countryside and coast. It would lead to reliance on the private car, increasing carbon emissions. Residential development in the countryside would have a negative impact on the environmental dimension of sustainable development.

6.239 National evidence indicates that villages in the catchment area of larger towns struggle to retain facilities, even when more housing is built. Colchester Town is the main provider of shopping, services, employment, and community facilities for the Borough as a whole. Elsewhere in the Borough, only Wivenhoe, Tiptree and West Mersea provide a sufficient level of shops, services and employment to maintain a reasonable level of self-containment. In general, rural communities do

not provide sufficient employment opportunities, shops, services and facilities to support significant growth.

6.240 Settlements within the Other Villages category as defined in the spatial hierarchy are small villages which functionally act as local service centres which the local communities rely on for basic facilities and as social hubs. These smaller rural villages often operate as clusters by sharing key services which help provide a strong sense of community for the communities living and working there. These settlements can accommodate a limited amount of small-scale development. Appropriate development proposals therefore, that meet a local housing need, increase rural employment opportunities, optimise the sustainability of villages by contributing towards community facilities, or which help retain the vitality and sense of community will be supported in principle where they also comply with other policies in the Plan. Policy OV1 applies to Other Villages and Policy OV2 applies to proposals in the countryside outside of settlement boundaries.

6.241 Due to the relative sustainability of the Other Villages any development in these areas would inevitably place a greater reliance on the use of the car. As a result this will generate higher levels of carbon emissions, than development located in more sustainable settlements. It is acknowledged that access to alternative modes of transport is a key indicator of sustainable development, it is not however the only factor influencing carbon footprint. Design and construction can significantly contribute to reducing the carbon footprint of residents and as such any residential development permitted in Other Villages should be provide high standards of design and sustainable construction to contribute to achieving wider sustainable development principles.

6.242 Areas outside of settlement boundaries are defined as Countryside. Within the countryside, there are a number of very small villages/hamlets and isolated clusters of dwellings which lack any community facilities or access to services and rely on nearby larger villages or towns to meet their daily needs. It is essential that development is restricted in the countryside to protect the landscape, character, quality and tranquillity. Development within the countryside will accordingly be limited to activities that either require a rural location or help sustain a rural community and local economy and which help protect the rural character of the areas where a development is being delivered. The NPPF includes examples of exceptions whereby proposals for isolated dwellings in the countryside may be acceptable. The Local Planning Authority's interpretation of 'isolated' are sites that are physically isolated relative to existing settlements, and sites that are functionally isolated relative to services and facilities.

6.243 The Local Planning Authority is aware that certain buildings within the Borough benefit from Prior Approval for residential use under Class Q of the Permitted Development Order. However, this provision is in place to facilitate the speedy delivery of low-cost rural dwellings, not to add value to land and buildings. Therefore, the Local Planning Authority will not accept this as a "fall-back" position and will treat each application purely on its planning merits whether or not Prior Approval exists.

6.244 The Local Planning Authority is also seeking to sustain and enhance local employment and rural enterprises in the Borough. Regard should be had to policy DM6 which sets out the planning approach for economic development in rural Colchester. Regard should also be had to policy DM13, which provides criteria for proposals for residential alterations, extensions and outbuildings, and policy DM14 on rural workers housing.

Policy OV1: Development in Other Villages

The Local Planning Authority will support proposals that enhance the vitality of rural communities and help maintain the sense of community provided by smaller rural villages and in rural areas.

Within settlements classed as Other Villages, the Local Planning Authority will support proposals for appropriate new infill developments, development on previously developed sites, and extensions, restorations or alterations to existing buildings. Policy PP1 includes infrastructure and mitigation requirements, which may be relevant.

The design and construction of new village development must be high quality in all respects, including design, sustainability and compatibility with the distinctive character of the locality.

Proposals in close proximity to a habitats site must demonstrate through HRA screening that the scheme will not lead to likely significant effects to the integrity of the habitats site. Where this cannot be ruled out a full appropriate assessment will be required to be undertaken.

Policy OV2: Countryside

Proposals for sustainable rural business, leisure and tourism schemes, development essential to the effective operation of agriculture, horticulture, forestry, equestrian use, infrastructure, renewable energy generation, and minerals or waste operations in the adopted Essex Minerals and Waste Local Plans may require a countryside location.

Policy DM6 (Economic development in rural areas and the countryside) provides further guidance. In general, proposals for sustainable rural businesses will be supported if they are of an appropriate scale, meet a local employment need, minimise negative environmental impacts, and harmonise with the local character and surrounding countryside where they are being proposed.

Residential development proposals in the countryside, outside defined settlement boundaries, will need to demonstrate that the scheme respects the character and appearance of landscapes and the built environment and preserves or enhances the historic environment and biodiversity. Small scale rural exception sites needed to meet local affordable housing needs will be considered favourably on appropriate sites provided a local need is demonstrated by the Parish Council on

behalf of their residents, based on evidence gained from an approved local housing needs survey. Where there is an identified need for certain types of housing, schemes must demonstrate how these needs have been met.

Proposals in close proximity to a habitats site must demonstrate through HRA screening that the scheme will not lead to likely significant effects to the integrity of the habitats site. Where this cannot be ruled out a full appropriate assessment will be required to be undertaken.

7. Development Management Policies

7.1 The policies below will guide the development management (planning application) process. They set out how development will be managed to ensure that it contributes towards the vision and objectives, via the strategic framework put in place by the policies contained in Section 1 and those covering Sustainable Growth, Climate Change, Environmental Assets and Places in Section 2.

Health and Wellbeing

7.2 There is a strong evidence base that shows the impact that the built environment has on the health and wellbeing of residents. This evidence base is growing and consideration must be given to how new development will support and integrate health, wellbeing and lifestyle choices through the life course of residents, workers and visitors to these new developments.

7.3 Most development has a potential impact upon the health services and facilities that are provided in the Borough. Likewise, through the design of new development, healthy living can be promoted. The extent of these impacts needs to be assessed to ensure that adequate health services continue to be provided for the community as a whole. For developments which have relatively little impact upon health services, an initial assessment may be sufficient to satisfy the requirements of this policy. For developments where an initial assessment indicates more significant health impacts, a comprehensive Health Impact Assessment (HIA) will be required. The Council will liaise with the NHS East Essex Clinical Commissioning Group and ECC Public Health when assessing the scope and scale of likely impacts. A HIA should be prepared following the current best practice advice and reflect the most up to date evidence. Further details on preparing HIAs can be found in the Health Impact Assessment section of the Essex Design Guide (www.essexdesignguide.co.uk).

7.4 Primary care is adopting a Digital First approach to primary care investment. An agreed Integrated Care System Road map for Suffolk and North East Essex was introduced in 2019, many of the initiatives were brought forward as a result of the response to Covid 19 and have already proven successful. GP practices, care homes and community service providers have been using telephone/video consultations, smartphone applications to enable patients to request prescriptions and appointments. Practices within Primary Care networks will enable digital first options to improve fast access to primary care, reducing waiting and travelling time for patients, services will include outpatient follow up appointments and medication reviews. Consequently, the need for high-speed broadband access and flexibility in terms of the provision of digital health infrastructure to any new housing development is crucial in order to ensure the success of the Digital First approach.

Policy DM1: Health and Wellbeing

All development should be designed to help promote healthy and active lifestyles and avoid causing adverse impacts on public health through:

(i) Ensuring good access to health facilities and services;
(ii) Providing a healthy living environment where healthy lifestyles can be promoted including green space and creating attractive opportunities for activities including walking, cycling, horse riding and formal sport, as well as clearly seeking to improve opportunities to increase levels of physical activity within the community; and
(iii) Providing appropriate mitigation to avoid harmful emissions.

Health Impact Assessments (HIA) will be required for all residential development in excess of 100 units and non-residential development in excess of 2500 square metres and for other developments where the proposal is likely to have a significant impact on health and wellbeing. The purpose of the HIA will be to identify the potential health consequences of a proposal on a given population, maximise the positive health benefits and minimise potential adverse effects on health and inequalities. Any HIA must be prepared in accordance with up to date advice and best practice for such assessments.

All developments with the potential to cause a deterioration in air quality will be required to provide comply with Policy ENV5.

Measures to mitigate any adverse impacts of the development will be provided and / or secured by planning conditions, Section 106 contributions or CIL.

Developments which will have an unacceptable significant adverse impact on health and wellbeing which cannot be mitigated, or that fail to offer reasonable provisions, will not be permitted.

Community Facilities

7.5 Community facilities are an essential element of sustainable communities providing for education, childcare, health, culture, recreation, religion and policing (see Glossary). Policies elsewhere in the plan also cover protection and provision of open space, sport and recreation facilities.

7.6 The Local Planning Authority needs to deliver a comprehensive range of high quality and accessible community facilities to meet the needs of new and existing communities in Colchester. Community projects such as the Community Stadium and Firstsite, have regional and national significance. Local facilities such as schools and health centres also need to be delivered to support new and existing communities.

7.7 The Local Planning Authority will safeguard existing community facilities and will work with partners including the local community to bring together funding from a variety of public and private sources to improve existing and deliver new community facilities. Development proposals will be required to review community needs and provide community facilities to meet the needs of the new population, which will have positive impacts on existing communities.

7.8 The Local Planning Authority wishes to protect viable community facilities and services that play an important role in the social infrastructure of the area and support sustainable communities. In communities where access to alternatives may be very limited, the presence of key facilities may be very important in maintaining quality of life. Examples of community sites and buildings include amenity open space, children's play areas, sports fields, village halls, local shops, leisure and cultural centres, public houses, community centres, churches, cemeteries, allotments, post offices, petrol stations, doctor’s surgeries, libraries and schools, etc. In line with the NPPF the Local Planning Authority will guard against unnecessary loss of important facilities using processes such as listing facilities as Assets of Community Value where appropriate (under the provisions the Localism Act 2011).

7.9 The loss of any community facilities must be fully justified. The Local Planning Authority will require any application involving the loss of a facility to be supported by written evidence and applicants should contact the Local Planning Authority at the earliest stage to discuss the details. The level of detail to be submitted will vary according to the level of access to alternative facilities and the extent to which the facility contributes towards sustainable communities but could be expected to include such evidence as:

(i) In the case of a business, the current and projected trading performance;
(ii) In the case of a community facility, the current and projected patterns of use;
(iii) The nature and condition of the building and the cost of repairs, renovations or improvements needed to allow the facility to continue in operation;

(iv) The extent of the local catchment including the location of the premises in relation to local settlement pattern and accessibility;
(v) The nature and location of comparable facilities;
(vi) The potential to relocate the use into other premises in the community;
(vii) In respect of public houses, the approaches and attempts to transfer from a chain of tied pubs to a free house;
(viii) In the case of a business, evidence that it has been offered on the open market as a whole (parts having not been identified for separate sale) and at a realistic market value. This should be for a period of not less than six months by a competent agent. Evidence should include sales literature, details of approaches, and details of offers; and
(ix) Evidence that the local community has been notified in writing of the intention to close the facility and has not, within a period of six months come forward with a realistic proposal to assume operation of the facility, including its proposals to finance and operate the facility.

7.10 The importance of particular facilities will vary between communities, and it is essential that the community is involved in considering the importance of any facility and the suitability of any proposals for alternative forms (and locations) of provision, and in developing means of retaining facilities, should their continued viability of operation be in doubt. Applicants proposing to redevelop or convert facilities valued by the community will be expected to consult local communities about the relative importance of the facilities which could be lost. Not all facilities satisfactorily meet the needs of local communities, and it may be that combining or rationalising facilities might be appropriate. This will be informed by the most up to date relevant evidence.

7.11 Support will be given to the provision of additional facilities where this will enhance the sustainability of community life and will meet the anticipated needs of a growing and changing population. The use of developer contributions and/or the Community Infrastructure Levy may well be appropriate in this respect. The Local Planning Authority will work with local partners, such as Town/ Parish Councils or Community Associations, to plan and manage community facilities.

Policy DM2: Community Facilities

The Local Planning Authority will seek the retention of all existing community facilities and services and allocations for such uses where they meet or will meet an identified local need.

Any proposal that would result in the loss of a site or building currently or last used for, or allocated for the provision of facilities, services, leisure or cultural activities that benefit the community, will only be supported in cases where the Local Planning Authority is satisfied that:

(i) An alternative, equivalent community facility to meet local needs is, or will be, provided in an equally or more accessible location within walking distance of the locality (800 m); or
(ii) It has been proven that it would not be economically viable to retain the site/building for a community use; and (in both cases)

(iii) The community facility could not be provided or operated by either the current occupier or by any alternative occupier, and it has been marketed to the satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority in order to confirm that there is no interest and the site or building is genuinely redundant;
(iv) The proposal involves a state funded school which is seeking to relocate into new buildings or sell assets to fund improved education services.

New development will be required to provide, or contribute towards the provision of community facilities including education, to meet the needs of new and expanded communities and mitigate impacts on existing communities, which will be secured by Section 106 contributions or CIL/equivalent infrastructure levy.

Where existing facilities can be enhanced to serve new development, the Local Planning Authority will work with developers and local partners to audit existing facilities and deliver any requirements for such facilities to deliver comprehensive provision of services to serve these extended communities.

Education Provision

7.12 Expansion to existing as well as new primary schools, secondary schools and early years provision, including special educational needs, will be required in the Borough to support the new homes and communities that are being created. The NPPF states that great importance should be placed on the need to provide new school places. It also states that local planning authorities should take a proactive, positive and collaborative approach to meeting this requirement, giving great weight to the need to create, expand or alter schools. The amount of land required is specified by Essex County Council as Local Education Authority. New designations will be subject to detailed design and layout to ensure that schools are located in the best positions for new communities.

7.13 Existing schools and education facilities, including early years, special needs, higher and further education will be supported to ensure they are able to deliver high quality educational provision and act as hubs for their local community. Remodelling and expansion of schools and education facilities will be supported wherever possible. The loss of school grounds or school buildings themselves will only be supported where it has been proven that there is no longer an educational need for the site, now or in the future, or that improved accommodation is being provided in an alternative location. Applications for existing schools are often dealt with by Essex County Council, but in some circumstances the Borough Council will be the relevant local planning authority. The policy below will apply for decisions made by Colchester Borough Council and will be used to inform any consultation responses submitted to applications which are determined by Essex County Council, or any other appropriate agency.

7.14 The Local Planning Authority recognises the differences in location and design requirements between rural and urban based education proposals in the Borough and will assess applications accordingly. For example, a school with a rural based catchment must promote safe walking and cycling routes. Residential developments may need to contribute to upgrading such routes and to providing adequate and reliable public transport provision for students.

Policy DM3: Education Provision

Sites that are in private or public education use or have recently ceased to be used for education purposes will be protected for that use.

Where in whole or in part educational use of a site is redundant or proposals for alternative use are put forward, re-development of buildings and/or the grounds will be supported where the local community is and will remain adequately served by alternative provision and receipts from the sale of land will be invested in improved or expanded education facilities.

The Local Planning Authority will respond positively to appropriate and well-designed applications regarding the creation of new school and education facilities. As expressed in the NPPF, the Local Planning Authority will use a presumption in favour of the development of schools and educational uses. The Local Planning Authority will engage in pre-application discussions with promoters to develop a collaborative approach to suitable applications.

Sports Provision

7.15 The existing sport, leisure and public and private open spaces within the Borough represent important assets serving the communities in which they are located (or in some instances wider areas). This importance can relate not only to their function, but also to the amenity value and contribution to the character of an area in general in providing a 'green lung', opportunities for a well-designed and inclusive public realm, and visual breaks in the built environment. If such provisions are lost to other uses it can be extremely difficult to find alternative locations particularly as open land is scarce and, therefore, at a premium.

7.16 Against this background, it is intended to secure the retention and enhancement of existing facilities unless a case can be made that alternative provision will be provided in a wholly acceptable manner. There are a wide range of organisations currently delivering sport and leisure facilities within the Borough including strategic sports providers such as the University of Essex, the Garrison and Colchester Institute as well as Colchester Borough Council.

7.17 A Strategic Sports Board has been established and a Sports Delivery Group is being formed to ensure that the delivery of sports and leisure facilities is planned and delivered in a coherent way.

7.18 The Local Planning Authority will work with the strategic sports providers as well as developers, schools, sports governing bodies, sports clubs, Active Essex/Active Colchester and Sport England to plan for and secure the delivery of a range of new sport and leisure facilities across the Borough over the plan period to serve residents' needs, encourage active lifestyles and increase participation in formal and informal recreation.

7.19 A number of documents will be used by the Local Planning Authority when assessing planning applications relating to proposed development of open space and sports facilities. These include the Sports Facilities Strategies (and subsequent updates) and Sports Development Plans prepared by other strategic sports providers in Colchester. Sport England will be consulted on any application that is likely to prejudice the use of or lead to the loss of use of land used as a playing field (whether presently used, or used within the last 5 years, or allocated for such use).

Policy DM4: Sports Provision

Colchester Borough Council will work with sports providers across the Borough to protect, enhance and deliver new sports and leisure facilities to encourage active lifestyles and to increase participation in formal and informal recreation.

The delivery of new strategic sports facilities will be focused at hub sites including the Garden Community; North Colchester; the University of Essex and the Garrison. Development at these locations will be required to contribute to the delivery of the sport and leisure needs identified in the Sports Facilities Strategies, in the respective Sports Development Plans for The Garrison, University of Essex and North Colchester (Northern Gateway).

New residential development, outside the strategic sports hubs in the Borough will also be required to contribute to the provision or enhancement of sport or leisure facilities where a need has been identified.

The Local Planning Authority will seek to secure community use as part of all new strategic sports proposals and as part of other smaller sport and leisure schemes submitted, including school sports facilities, where it is practical to do so.

A) Development, including change of use, of any existing or proposed sports ground or playing field will only be supported where it can be demonstrated that:

(i) Alternative and improved provision will be created in a location well related to the functional requirements of the relocated use and its existing and future users; and
(ii) The proposal would not result in the loss of an area important for its amenity or contribution to the green infrastructure network or to the character of the area in general; and
(iii) It achieves the aims of the Colchester Sports Facilities Strategy.

B) Development proposals resulting in a loss of indoor or outdoor sport/recreational facilities must additionally demonstrate that:

(iv) There is an identified excess provision within the catchment of the facility and no likely shortfall is expected within the plan period; or
(v) Alternative and improved sport /recreational provision will be delivered at a location well-related to the functional requirements of the relocated use and its existing and future users.

In all cases, development will not be permitted that would result in any deficiencies in sports provision or increase existing deficiencies in the area either at the time of the proposal or be likely to result in a shortfall within the plan period.

Tourism, Leisure, Culture and Heritage

7.20 Colchester's rich historic environment and range of beautiful landscapes provides the basis for an important tourism sector which creates jobs and provides facilities, attractions and environments for visitors that also enhance the quality of life for local residents. Proposals to support this sector will accordingly be supported subject to their accordance with the Local Planning Authority's spatial hierarchy and policies. It is important to ensure that new development does not detract from the settings and features that make visitor destinations attractive and distinctive.

7.21 The Borough's historic Town Centre is the focal point for visitor attractions and accommodation as well as leisure and cultural facilities. In line with national policy, proposals falling within the category of 'town centre uses' as defined in the NPPF glossary will be subject to a sequential test to ensure they align with the Local Planning Authority's spatial hierarchy and centres hierarchy, which prioritises the Town Centre.

7.22 In rural areas, the Local Planning Authority recognises that existing visitor accommodation sites may be an acceptable location for further small-scale development although not readily accessible by public transport. In order to maximise the benefits of tourism to rural economies it is important to locate new tourism development in locations where visitors can help to support local shops, pubs and other rural services. Some leisure and cultural facilities including sports facilities such as golf courses, sports pitches and water-based attractions require significant amount of open space and accordingly can be appropriate for suitable countryside locations. Given that they also entail environmental and visual impacts from built structures, increased traffic and landscape and habitat changes, it is important to ensure new facilities are evaluated carefully in light of considerations of amenity, environmental and landscape impact and accessibility. Proposals for new or extended visitor facilities will be assessed against their ability to help deliver policies SG1, SG5, ENV1, ENV4, OV1, OV2, DM16, DM23, DM24, WC3 and other relevant policies.

Policy DM5: Tourism, Leisure, Culture and Heritage

Development for new and extended visitor attractions, leisure, cultural and heritage facilities along with visitor accommodation (including hotels, bed and breakfast accommodation, self-catering accommodation, holiday lodges, static and touring caravans and camping sites) will be supported in suitable locations subject to minimising their impact on, and demonstrating how the development could make a positive contribution to neighbouring areas and provide biodiversity enhancements.

Proposals for tourism, leisure, culture and heritage development should be appropriate in scale and function to the surrounding area; be accessible by a choice of means of transport; and not cause significant harm to the amenity of people living and working nearby.

Proposals that are likely to have an adverse impact on the integrity of habitats sites or the Dedham Vale AONB will not be supported.

In locations where residential use would be inappropriate, developments of visitor accommodation will be limited by condition or legal agreement to holiday use only and/or certain periods of the year in order to prevent permanent or long-term occupation.

Economic Development in Rural Areas and the Countryside

7.23 The Local Plan supports rural communities and sets out a flexible approach that maintains a balance between environmental considerations and appropriate business growth. The countryside is viewed as a good location for some businesses, particularly those specific to rural tourism. Business preference for rural sites also reflects the pleasant environment and the availability of relatively cheaper premises in comparison with built-up areas. The Borough is also coming under particular pressure for employment-based development in the countryside because there are a significant number of large agricultural buildings and other rural buildings that are potentially suitable for conversion to employment use. Improvements to broadband is also enabling more businesses to locate to rural areas. This demand needs to be considered in the context of environmental impacts and accessibility.

7.24 Policy SG4 sets out the Local Planning Authority's approach for appropriate land uses within all employment sites in the rural area and the criteria for consideration of proposals involving alternative use of employment land. The 'B' Use Class traditionally encompassed the majority of uses considered to constitute employment uses in planning terms. In some cases a more flexible approach around employment uses is now needed to ensure compliance with national planning policy and guidance.

7.25 Economic development proposals in the countryside, within a designated Local Economic Area or on a rural site serving a similar function, must contribute to the local rural economy and help sustain rural communities. The proposed use is likely to be small scale and not harm the rural character of the local area either by the nature and level of activity (including the amount of additional traffic generation on rural roads) or any other detrimental effects such as noise, fumes and pollution.

7.26 The loss of employment land in the Borough could affect the Council's ability to achieve its economic development objectives. The Local Plan establishes the scale and general location of land for employment purposes and states that as a general principle such land should be safeguarded. However, in accordance with the NPPF, land and premises will not be protected where there is no reasonable prospect of it being developed for an economic use.

7.27 Proposals for alternative uses on existing rural employment sites may exceptionally be acceptable, providing evidence is submitted in support of the alternative use and it complies with other policies in this Plan. Consideration of overall economic benefits must also extend to include addressing the future of any firms displaced through the redevelopment, including redevelopment for a new employment use. Applicants will need to demonstrate that the site is no longer usable and viable for another form of employment use, for example where continuation of the employment use would be detrimental to other planning objectives such as regeneration, protecting or enhancing the appearance of the countryside, or where other economic benefits to the area might result such as through tourism.

7.28 The Local Planning Authority is more likely to be supportive of the re-use and conversion of rural buildings that are adjacent to or closely related to a sustainable settlement. Conversely, change of use of isolated buildings is unlikely to be acceptable unless they would ensure the retention and preservation of a heritage asset and the use does not result in a significant increase in the level of activity and traffic generation to and from the site. Each proposal will be considered on its merits in line with this policy and other relevant policies in the Local Plan.

7.29 Schemes involving the re-use of historic rural buildings will be required to comply with the provisions of policy DM16. Proposals that are small-scale in nature and which respect local character are more likely to be supported, whereas those with the potential to generate traffic related problems may not be supported. There is a presumption that heritage assets will be retained rather than replaced. The replacement of heritage assets in the countryside, which have suffered deliberate neglect or damage will not be supported.

7.30 Preference will always be towards re-use and conversion of existing buildings where this is possible rather than the construction of new buildings. Consequently, where a building is to be replaced applicants will need to demonstrate to the satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority that any available buildings are not capable of renovation and may be requested to submit a structural survey.

7.31 There are a number of well-established employment sites in the rural areas of the Borough, where some important local businesses are located. Companies are often seeking to expand their operations within their site and this can be more appropriate than the company seeking alternative premises outside of the Borough, in order to retain the economic and social benefits which can arise from companies located in rural areas. It will be beneficial for applications to expand existing operations to be supported by a business plan, depending on the scale of the development proposed. In some cases for the purposes of business or employment use, replacement buildings can be more appropriate than the continued use of existing buildings. There are a number of sites in the rural areas of the Borough which are visually intrusive and where redevelopment could significantly enhance the local environment.

7.32 Landscaping and planting should be used to mitigate the impact of new development on the countryside. Proposals for new isolated buildings in the countryside will not normally be permitted in accordance with national policies. Change of use to residential will not be supported within allocated Local Economic Areas or at unallocated rural sites providing an economic uses.

Policy DM6: Economic Development in Rural Areas and the Countryside

The Local Planning Authority will protect Local Economic Areas in rural Colchester that provide an economic function both on allocated sites shown on the policies maps and at other rural locations that provide a similar function.

Sites and premises currently used or allocated for employment purposes in rural parts of the Borough will be safeguarded for appropriate economic uses to ensure local residents have access to local job opportunities without the need to travel. Proposals for alternative uses will be supported where they comply with policy SG4.

Within allocated rural Local Economic Areas and on rural sites providing an economic function, the following uses are considered appropriate in principle:

(i) Offices to carry out any operational or administrative functions- E(g)(i); Research and development of products or processes -E(g)(ii); Industrial processes - E(g)(iii), general industrial (B2), storage and distribution (B8);
(ii) Repair and storage of vehicles and vehicle parts, including cars, boats and caravans; and
(iii) Other employment-generating uses, such as those related to recreation and tourism, which meet local needs and/or promote rural enterprise.

The following additional considerations will also be taken into account where relevant:

(A) Conversion and re-use of existing rural buildings:
Proposals for acceptable uses will only be supported where the building is capable of re-use without significant rebuilding, and the building is deemed to be desirable for retention. In the case of former agricultural or forestry buildings of recent construction (less than 10 years), it will also need to be demonstrated that the original need for the building was genuine and that it is no longer required for agricultural or forestry purposes.

(B) Extension of existing rural employment buildings:
Proposals for extensions will be supported where these are limited to plans which are essential to the operation of an established business. All extensions shall be accommodated satisfactorily in terms of design, scale and appearance within the existing employment site boundary.

(C) Replacement rural employment buildings:
Replacement buildings will only be supported where the existing development is visually intrusive or otherwise inappropriate in its context and a substantial improvement in the landscape and surroundings will be secured through replacement. New buildings should not significantly increase the scale, height and built form of the original building. There is a presumption that heritage assets will be retained rather than replaced.

(D) New rural employment buildings:
Proposals will only be supported in exceptional cases where there are no

appropriate existing buildings, there is no available employment land in the locality and a site/area specific business need has been adequately demonstrated.

(E) Expansion of an existing business:
Proposals to expand an existing employment use into the countryside will only be supported in exceptional cases where there is no space for the required use on the existing site, the need has been adequately demonstrated, and the proposals are essential to the operation of an established business on the site. Consideration must be given to the relocation of the business to available land within a Strategic or Local Economic Area or alternative rural site providing an economic function and in a more sustainable location.

In all cases, any new development will be expected to have adequate landscape mitigation to compensate for any additional impact upon the surrounding countryside.

Proposals in close proximity to a habitats site must demonstrate through HRA screening that the scheme will not lead to likely significant effects to the integrity of the habitats site. Where this cannot be ruled out a full appropriate assessment will be required to be undertaken. Additionally, any planning application within 400 metres of a habitats site must provide mechanisms to prevent fly tipping, the introduction of invasive species and vandalism.

Agricultural Development and Diversification

7.33 The NPPF promotes the development and diversification of agricultural and other land-based rural businesses. This may well involve adaptation to new markets and ways of operation and diversification of activities.

7.34 The agricultural economy in the Borough is changing, as increasingly farmers are seeking to diversify in order to remain in farming. Accordingly the Local Planning Authority is seeking to encourage farm diversification schemes that are planned on a comprehensive basis to retain a viable agricultural unit by seeking additional incomes from other sources which still relate to the countryside. Whilst the Local Planning Authority will support appropriate farm diversification schemes, proposals that would harm the rural area or segregate the existing agricultural use or farm holding will be resisted. A farm shop selling products produced on the farm unit itself and which does not require a new building is unlikely to require planning permission.

7.35 In order to protect the quality and distinctiveness of the local landscape, the Local Planning Authority wishes to prevent un-coordinated development in rural areas and the gradual stripping of assets from farms without regard for the viability of the holding. Appropriate sustainable business proposals could include tourism, or conversion of buildings for employment and other uses related to an activity that would normally be found in rural areas. However, schemes that include or could lead to future pressure for new residential dwellings will not be permitted unless there are exceptional circumstances, in line with national policy.

7.36 Proposals for farm diversification should also take account of other relevant policy criteria, in particular but not exclusively, policy DM6 in relation to the re-use of existing buildings and appropriate rural employment uses; policy DM16 in relation to the re-use of historic farm buildings and policy DM21 in relation to access considerations.

7.37 The Local Planning Authority recognises that provisions within the General Permitted Development Order 2015 (such as Classes P, Q, R and S) are in place to enable a speedy supply of rural-based businesses and a housing stock of smaller rural dwellings, that utilises existing buildings. However, these measures should not be regarded as “fall-back” positions for speculative development by rural landowners and will not be treated as such by the Local Planning Authority. Any applications falling outside the scope of Permitted Development will be considered against other relevant policies in the Local Plan in the interests of sustainable development.

Policy DM7: Agricultural Development and Diversification

The Local Planning Authority will support and encourage appropriate farm diversification proposals where they help support the rural economy, are compatible with the rural environment and help to sustain the existing agricultural enterprise without the need for subdivision of the holding or separate enterprises unrelated to the existing agricultural use.

All proposals must be accompanied by a satisfactory diversification plan according to the scale of proposals, which describes how it will assist in retaining the viability of the farm and how it links with any other short or long-term business plans for the farm. Proposals for farm shops as part of a farm diversification scheme must identify the products produced on site or locally and demonstrate that the location of farm-based retailing is necessary to assure farm income where their needs cannot be met within a nearby settlement or district or local centre.

Proposals that are likely to have an adverse impact on the integrity of habitats sites, Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) or the Dedham Vale AONB will not be supported.

Proposals for farm diversification schemes will be supported where they meet the following criteria:

(i) Existing buildings are re-used wherever possible. Schemes involving the re-use of historic farm buildings shall maintain and enhance the historic environment; including the character of the built heritage; or
(ii) The development is well-related to existing buildings if no suitable buildings are available for re-use; and
(iii) The development is secondary to the main agricultural use of the farm; and
(iv) The proposal will not be likely to require new dwellings within the rural area to support the enterprise either at the time of first submission or at any future date.

Where new buildings are proposed, the development should incorporate the removal of any redundant, under-used, unsightly or otherwise harmful buildings elsewhere within a site as part of the compensatory mitigation for the additional development being proposed.

In all cases, any new development will be expected to have adequate landscape mitigation to compensate for any additional impact upon the surrounding countryside.

New agricultural buildings requiring planning permission will be guided to locations on the farm which are sensitive to their environment.

Affordable Housing

7.38 The need for affordable housing is high in Colchester Borough, as it is elsewhere in the Eastern region. The evidence in the Strategic Housing Market Assessment supports a target of 30-35% affordable housing in new developments, but this target must be balanced with viability considerations and the fact that some sites may not deliver affordable housing for example, due to government policy thresholds. The urban area threshold is over 10 units, but a lower policy threshold of 6 or more dwellings in rural areas has been set to allow for the provision or contribution towards affordable housing in areas where larger schemes are very infrequent. Policy DM10 (Housing Diversity) provides further guidance on how developers will be expected to meet demand identified in the Strategic Housing Market Assessment for those with particular housing needs. Viability work will be updated as required to ensure the target reflects the balance between essential housing need and viability. Where 30% is not considered to be viable, applicants will need to submit information on viability. The Local Planning Authority will expect developers to meet the Council's reasonable costs associated with viability appraisals in instances where the level of affordable housing is disputed.

7.39 In instances where the provision of affordable housing is supported by the delivery of some open market units on a rural exception site, it will be essential to ensure that the number of open market units never dominates a particular scheme. In determining the number of open market units required to facilitate the delivery of affordable units, the Local Planning Authority will expect applicants to demonstrate viability calculations starting with 100% affordable housing. The same calculations should then be applied with the introduction of one open market unit at a time until a point is reached where the delivery of the rural exception site becomes viable. The number of open market units on a rural exception site should be less than the number of affordable units delivered.

Policy DM8: Affordable Housing

The Council is committed to improving housing affordability in Colchester. Accordingly 30% of new dwellings (including conversions) on housing developments of 10 or more dwellings (major developments) in urban areas and above 5 units in designated rural areas (in accordance with Planning Policy Guidance), should be provided as affordable housing (normally on site).

Where it is considered that a site forms part of a larger development area, affordable housing will be apportioned with reference to the site area as a whole.

This level balances the objectively assessed need for affordable housing in the Borough established by the evidence base, against the requirement for flexibility to take account of changing market conditions. At present the overwhelming need in Colchester is for affordable rented properties, which should be reflected in development proposals. For sites where an alternative level of affordable housing is proposed below the target, it will need to be supported by evidence in the form of a viability appraisal.

In exceptional circumstances, where high development costs undermine the viability of housing delivery, developers will be expected to demonstrate an alternative affordable housing provision.

The Local Planning Authority will require developments to integrate affordable housing and market housing, with a consistent standard of quality design and public spaces, to create mixed and sustainable communities. The affordable housing provision should proportionately reflect the mix of market units unless otherwise specified by the Local Planning Authority. In schemes over 15 units the affordable housing should be provided in more than one single parcel. Elsewhere the affordable housing mix on any site should normally be “pepper potted” throughout the scheme in groups, the size and location of which should be discussed and agreed with the Local Planning Authority.

Affordable housing development in villages will be supported on rural exception sites adjacent or continuous to village settlement boundaries or where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities, provided a local need is demonstrated by the Parish Council on behalf of their residents, based on evidence gained from an approved local housing needs survey. A proportion of market housing which facilitates the provision of significant additional affordable housing may be appropriate on rural exception sites. Information to demonstrate that the market housing is essential to cross-subsidise the delivery of the affordable housing and that the development would not be viable without this cross-subsidy will be required. At the scheme level, the number of open market units on the rural exception site will be strictly limited to only the number of units required to facilitate the provision of significant affordable housing units on a rural exception site. The number of affordable units and total floorspace on a site should always be greater than the number of open market units or floorspace. The actual number will be determined on local circumstances, evidence of local need and the overall viability of the scheme.

Development Density

7.40 The density of new developments can have significant implications for sustainability, local character, travel behaviour, the efficient use of land and residential amenity. In practice many factors will have a moderating effect on densities including the provision of on-site facilities such as the provision of public open space, vehicular access, sustainable drainage systems, vehicle parking and cycle storage facilities.

7.41 Where development is proposed in highly accessible locations, it is important to optimise capacity through the use of higher densities. For example locations with good accessibility to services and sustainable transport, such as the Town Centre, are more suited to higher density development than areas with poor accessibility to services and sustainable transport. Higher densities in accessible locations can accommodate more people and allow residents to easily access their needs by walking and cycling as well as providing a sufficient threshold of demand to support public transport provision which in turn supports the viability of local businesses, and other forms of key economic and social infrastructure.

7.42 However it is important that the Local Planning Authority has a flexible approach to housing densities in order to reflect site-specific considerations such as local character and townscape because development that is poorly located or poorly designed can have adverse impacts on the quality of life of both existing and future residents. It is therefore vital that high density developments are well designed and have regard to the provision of adequate open spaces and a high quality public realm whilst also enhancing heritage and biodiversity conservation.

7.43 Densities therefore may need to be moderated at less accessible locations and to reflect local character. The provision of open space, parking and a mix of housing will also have moderating effect on densities. The density of developments also needs to be informed by the provision of open space, parking, the character of the area, and the mix of housing.

Policy DM9: Development Density

The Local Planning Authority will support development densities that make efficient use of land and relate to the specific opportunities and constraints of proposed development sites. Proposals with development densities that encourage sustainable transport and help sustain local amenities will be supported. In particular all residential development will need to be at an appropriate density and massing, having regard to:

(i) The character of the site and its immediate surroundings, as well as the wider locality, including where applicable the setting of important heritage assets;
(ii) The adequacy of the access and the local road network to accommodate the traffic likely to be generated by the proposed development as well as the scope to enhance walking and cycling access to local amenities and public transport;
(iii) The existing landscaping, trees and hedgerows on the site and the need for further landscaping;
(iv) The provision of appropriate on-site amenities to serve the development in accordance with policy SG6 and any relevant adopted guidance including the provision of open space and sustainable drainage facilities where suitable;
(v) The provision of appropriate parking to serve the development in accordance with the relevant standards and policy DM22.
(vi) An adequate standard of residential accommodation being provided for future occupants in accordance with policy DM12.
(vii) An appropriate mix and type of housing as informed by the various housing policies set out in the Local Plan.

Housing Diversity

7.44 All housing developments in Colchester should be inclusive and accommodate a diverse range of households and housing need to create mixed communities. Housing developments must provide a range of housing types that can accommodate a range of different households, including families, single persons, older persons, those with care and/or support needs, and low-income households.

7.45 There is an important relationship between housing diversity, density and the accessibility of the location. Town Centre locations, for example, are highly accessible and can support high density flats, but they also need to accommodate a range of household sizes. Suburban locations have moderate access and should accommodate a range of housing types and household sizes. Rural locations have low accessibility and will suit low density development, but should also still provide for small and low-income households.

7.46 In 2011, the average household size was 2.33 persons. Approximately 29% were single person households, roughly 36% were 2 person households, and another 29% of households had dependent children. In 2021, the average household size is projected to shrink to around 2.31 persons, and single person households are likely to grow to about 35% of the total. The Council's Strategic Housing Market Assessment indicates that the number of lone parent households is expected to increase the most in the Housing Market Area over the period 2015-2037, followed by one person households. Couples with children are projected to fall in number.

7.47 All housing developments therefore need to provide a more balanced range of housing types to reflect identified community need. The mix of housing should reflect the housing needs of the community, and therefore higher density developments in the urbanised areas still need to provide accommodation suitable to families and larger households, and low-density developments in villages still need to provide housing for small and low-income households.

7.48 The NPPF requires local authorities to have a clear idea of the housing needs of various subgroups in the population. The Strategic Housing Market Assessment undertaken to provide this understanding provides information on the following sub-groups:

A. Older persons and specialist housing – Colchester is expected to record a 60.6% increase in its population of those age 65 and over. In response to this growth, the SHMA indicates that if occupation patterns of specialist accommodation remain at current levels there is a requirement for 2,147 additional specialist units of which 2,066 should be specialist and older person's housing and 81 extra care housing. In Colchester, this means that an additional 94 specialist and extra care housing units should be provided each year. This is in addition to the requirement for housing suitable for the needs of older people which allows people to live in their own homes for as long as possible. Addressing this need will entail a number of solutions as people have

different housing requirements. As well as the adaption and design of buildings to allow people to stay in their own homes, the need may also be met through the delivery of smaller properties or small-scale residential complexes in areas where a demand can be demonstrated.

This approach, as well as increasing the stock of small-scale properties, enables older people to downsize to smaller houses and to continue to live independently in an area they know well, and also enables larger dwellings to be freed up within the housing market. An extra care scheme is planned as part of the Northern Gateway proposals.

Essex County Council is the provider of social services in the Borough. Its Independent Living Programme is encouraging the provision of specialist accommodation in Essex as a means by which older people can continue to live healthy and active lives within existing communities and for Colchester Borough has set the target of delivering 297 additional units of specialist accommodation (124 through rental and 173 through ownership) to enable older people to live independently within the community by 2020. This target is set out in the Essex County Council's Independent Living Position Statement (2016). This approach to meeting the specialist accommodation needs of older people is intended to reduce the demand for residential/nursing home care, which is a considerably more expensive way of meeting the needs of older people, and can unnecessarily restrict independence within this age group.

B. **Self-build/custom build housing** – As required by national guidance, the Council maintains a register of persons interested in purchasing self-build/custom build plots. This register requires applicants to disclose their financial capacity and the Local Planning Authority will use this information to ensure that stated demand is realistic before using it to assess demand for this housing type. The Council will work with developers and housing providers to bring forward self-build allocations to meet identified need in appropriate development sites. The Garden Community (Part One policy SP9) will provide specific allocations for self-build allocations.

C. **Gypsies and travellers** – The Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment prepared for Essex local authorities provides that Colchester should provide 15 pitches to 2033 to meet need overall need. Policy DM11 provides criteria and allocations for meeting this need**.**

D. **Students** – The University of Essex had 11,657 students registered for the 2015/16 academic year. The University plans to expand to accommodate around 15,000 students by 2019. The University has long term plans to extend its accommodation provision to respond to increasing numbers. Additionally,

Wivenhoe, Greenstead and the Hythe areas house a number of students in both purpose-built and private rented accommodation.

E. **Hospice Provision** – St Helena Hospice currently provides hospice care for residents of Colchester and Tendring. In response to a rising need and a rising population in northeast Essex, the Hospice is considering options as to how it provides care in future. This may involve a new site, new facilities and/or different options for delivering care. The hospice service is much valued in the local community and the Council will support proposals which increase the number of patients who are able to receive care and support.

Policy DM10: Housing Diversity

The Local Planning Authority will seek to secure a range of housing types and tenures on developments across the Borough in order to create inclusive and sustainable communities. Housing developments should provide a mix of housing types to suit a range of different households as identified in the latest Strategic Housing Market Assessment, whilst also realising the opportunities presented by accessible locations.

The Local Planning Authority will seek to provide for the needs of particular groups as follows:

Older people – The Local Planning Authority will require developers to demonstrate how their proposal will be capable of meeting and adapting to the long term needs of the increasing number of older residents. This would include the provision of dwellings constructed to meet requirements M4(2) of the Building Regulations 2015 (accessible or adaptable dwellings) as provided in the Housing Standards policy DM12, or subsequent government standards as appropriate, where there is proven need. The Council will also support proposals that make specific provision for older persons housing, subject to proposals meeting other policy requirements or the need outweighing other considerations.

Specialist Housing – The Local Planning Authority will support provision of schemes providing higher levels of care for specialist groups including those eligible under Essex County Council's Independent Living Programme; disabled people; people with care needs; and other vulnerable people. New development proposals for these groups will be supported where there is a proven need; they are located within settlements; and are accessible by public transport. As provided in the Housing Standards policy DM12, the Council will require a provision of dwellings constructed to meet requirements of M4(3) of the Building Regulations 2015 (wheelchair user dwellings), or subsequent government standard as appropriate, where there is proven need.

Self-build/custom-build housing – The Local Planning Authority will support proposals for self-build/custom-build housing, to meet demand as indicated by registrations on the Council's Self-Build Register. Registrations should accord with eligibility criteria as appropriate, which may include demonstration of

sufficient financial resources and a sufficient local connection. Proposals will be encouraged both on individual sites and as part of larger schemes, including rural exception sites.

Gypsies and Travellers – The Local Planning Authority will meet identified need for gypsy and traveller accommodation, with specific allocations and policy considerations set out in Policy DM11.

Students - Planning permission will be granted for purpose-built student accommodation subject to other policies in this plan and where:

(i) the location is appropriate in terms of access to public transport and university and college facilities; and
(ii) the proposal will not result in an excessive concentration of student accommodation in any one locality.

Specific proposals for University based accommodation are contained in policy EC1**.**

Hospice provision – The Local Planning Authority will support the provision of hospice care in the local community through the use of existing or new sites.

Gypsies, Travellers, and Travelling Showpeople

7.49 The Local Planning Authority will seek to provide appropriate sites to meet the needs of gypsies, travellers and travelling showpeople in the Borough as identified through the latest Gypsy and Traveller assessment work and further guidance from the government set forth in 'Planning Policy for Traveller Sites'. These sites need to provide gypsy and traveller communities with good access to education, health, welfare, water, sewage and employment infrastructure, bearing in mind the need to have due regard to the protection of local amenity and local environment. Sites should not be located in areas at risk from flooding and where practical to achieve be connected to the mains sewer system.

7.50 In August 2015 a new definition of Gypsy and Traveller was introduced via 'Planning Policy for Traveller Sites' which limits the definition of gypsies and travellers to those who continue to travel as part of their work. This required an update to the existing evidence base looking only at those households that fall within the new planning definition. As a result of this assessment only two pitches were identified as being needed to meet the needs of nomadic travellers. It is however still considered necessary to provide for the full need of those identifying as gypsies and travellers as they are amongst the groups identified as having particular needs in the Strategic Housing Market Assessment. This is reflected in the provision of a further 13 units to meet the needs of non-nomadic travellers.

7.51 No current need has been identified in the Borough for accommodation for travelling showpeople, however any need that arises over the life of the plan will be addressed using the criteria based policy approach below.

Policy DM11: Gypsies, Travellers, and Travelling Showpeople

The Local Planning Authority will identify sites to meet the established needs of gypsies, travellers and travelling showpeople in the Borough.

There is an overall need for 15 pitches over the life of the plan to 2033 which takes into account the need for both the statutory requirement to provide 2 pitches for nomadic travellers as well as the additional need for 13 pitches for those identifying as gypsies and travellers.

The need for 6 pitches by 2021 can be met by expansion of the existing site at Severalls Lane. The existing site has successfully operated since 2012 and is considered a sustainable location for small scale expansion. The need for the remainder of the plan period will be met through strategic sites and allocations within the Garden Community, to be finalised through the process of agreeing detailed allocations and masterplans for those areas.

Proposals for any further applications will be judged on the basis that sites should be located within reasonable proximity to existing sustainable settlements, and with access to shops, schools and other community facilities. Sites should also provide adequate space for vehicles and appropriate highway access.

Planning permission will be refused for the change of use of all Gypsy and Traveller sites or Travelling Showpeople yards identified in the Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment unless acceptable replacement accommodation can be provided, or it can be demonstrated that the site is no longer required to meet any identified needs.

Site selection should ensure that pitches are not located within areas at risk of flooding and are capable of being provided with appropriate drainage, water supply and other necessary utility services. For sewerage, a connection to the main sewer system will be preferable except when it is impractical to achieve.

Housing Standards

7.52 It is important to strike an appropriate balance between providing freedom and flexibility for the housing market to operate and ensuring that a range of sites are available for different areas of the housing market. However, the different types of dwelling should be suitably designed to consider the potential needs of their perspective occupiers and the Design and Access Statements submitted with planning permissions should cover this point.

7.53 The revised Part M Building Regulations stipulate the minimum standard for all new dwellings which make them suitable to be visited by a wheelchair user. The Council has identified a baseline standard of a minimum of 10% of market housing and 95% of affordable housing to meet Building Regulations 2015 Part M4 (2) accessible and adaptable standards and 5% affordable homes to be Part M4 (3)(2)(b) - wheelchair user standards. This means that new affordable housing will be suitable at all stages of life. The application of these Part M requirements will be subject to consideration of the impact on viability as well as site constraints, in accordance with national policy and guidance.

7.54 Building for a Healthy Life is endorsed by government and is the industry standard for the design of new residential developments. The assessment tool can be used by local authorities, developers and community groups to help highlight design quality, local design constraints and opportunities for improvement. The Local Planning Authority will encourage new developments to apply the Building for a Healthy Life design standard.

7.55 Accessible, well-designed and easy to use waste and recycling facilities (or storage) will be needed in new developments to help the Local Planning Authority meet its recycling targets. High quality sustainable development must also include adequate arrangements for servicing and refuse vehicles, storage, parking for cars and cycles and electric vehicle charging points, in accordance with Policy DM22.

Policy DM12: Housing Standards

Residential development will be supported where high standards of design, construction and layout are promoted. In considering proposals for new residential development, the Local Planning Authority will have regard to the following:

(i) New buildings or extensions should be designed to minimise the overshadowing of neighbouring properties as well as to avoid other adverse microclimatic effects;
(ii) Acceptable levels of daylight to all habitable rooms and no single aspect north-facing homes;
(iii) Acceptable levels of privacy for rear-facing habitable rooms and sitting-out areas;
(iv) A management and maintenance plan to be prepared for multi- occupancy buildings and implemented via planning conditions to ensure the future maintenance of the building and external spaces;
(v) Internal space standards demonstrated to be in accordance with the National Described Space Standards (DCLG, 2015) or any future replacement of this;
(vi) A minimum of 10% of market housing and 95% of affordable housing to meet Building Regulations 2015 Part M4 (2) accessible and adaptable standards and 5% of affordable homes to be Part M4 (3)(2)(b) wheelchair user standards.
(vii) Vehicle parking standards as set out in Policy DM22 including the requirements for cycle parking facilities. In the case of flats, secure cycle storage should be incorporated into flat blocks and readily located at the building entrances;
(viii) An accessible refuse and recycling storage area, and external drying areas;
(ix) Measures to maximise the potential of broadband provision and ensure other infrastructure requirements are met as referenced in Policy SG6; and
(x) All new applications for accommodation, with a top storey above 11m (about 4 storeys) in height, are required in accordance with Building Regulations to provide sprinkler systems. Consideration should also be given to the inclusion of sprinklers in houses in multiple occupation (HMOs), care homes and sheltered accommodation.

Domestic Development: Residential alterations, extensions, conversions and replacement dwellings

7.56 There have been a number of changes to planning regulations in recent years which have increased the forms and scope of domestic development proposals not requiring planning permission. Further guidance on the types of development that do not require planning permission can be obtained from the government's Planning Portal website.

7.57 This policy should be read in conjunction with Policy DM15 (Design and Amenity). Together the policies set out the criteria for assessing planning applications for domestic development proposals which includes residential alterations, extensions and annexes as well as replacement dwellings and flat conversions. In addition to these policies the Local Planning Authority may publish further guidance relevant to domestic development which should be consulted prior to submitting a planning application.

7.58 The Local Planning Authority wishes to retain and promote a balanced mix of dwelling types and sizes in the Borough and avoid the loss of smaller and more affordable units. Therefore extensions and annexes should always be compatible and subordinate to the original dwelling and not result in the over-development of residential plots.

7.59 The Local Planning Authority also wishes to ensure that dwellings do not incrementally grow by a succession of small extensions which cumulatively can alter the scale and character of the original dwelling. Therefore the cumulative impact of proposals will be taken into account when determining applications for domestic alterations. For the purposes of this policy, the 'original' dwelling is defined as the building as it existed on 1st July 1948, or as it was originally built, if later than this date.

7.60 In order to retain the availability of smaller and more affordable dwellings in the countryside, it will be appropriate to require replacement dwellings to be of an appropriate scale.

7.61 Extensions to and replacement dwellings in the countryside should respect their rural setting and not result in any greater adverse impacts than the original dwelling. Countryside means all areas outside of defined settlement boundaries.

7.62 In order to protect the Borough's countryside, proposals for extensions of domestic gardens into the open countryside will not be permitted if they result in an adverse impact on the surrounding countryside; result in the loss of good quality agricultural land; or set a precedent for unacceptable extensions to gardens at one or more neighbouring properties. Where planning permission is granted, applicants may be expected to relinquish their permitted development rights over the new area of garden.

7.63 The Local Planning Authority recognises the important contribution flat conversions make to the provision of smaller and more affordable dwellings in the

Borough, particularly in urban areas where demand for such units are at their highest. However flat conversions will only be permitted where they are sympathetic to the original dwelling and make appropriate provision for amenity, storage and parking. Importantly flat conversions should not result in unsatisfactory living conditions for future residents.

7.64 Domestic development proposals represent a large number of planning applications received by the Local Planning Authority. It is important to reflect the competing interests of planning applicants and other stakeholders, including those most affected by development proposals such as those occupying neighbouring dwellings.

7.65 Policy DM13 allows householders the freedom to develop their property in a manner they choose whilst ensuring that proposals do not adversely affect the original dwelling or the surrounding area or residential amenity.

7.66 From a strategic perspective the policy recognises the requirement to retain and promote a balanced housing stock by preventing smaller and more affordable properties from being either extended into a much larger property or being replaced with a larger dwelling. Existing buildings can play an important role in reducing greenhouse gas emissions through improved energy efficiency measures where appropriate. Householders should consider the opportunities for improving energy efficiency as part of proposals for extensions/ alterations. For example, improved insulation, draught proofing, orientation for solar gain, energy efficient appliances and lighting, and water saving devices.

Policy DM13: Domestic development

Residential alterations, extensions and outbuildings
Residential alterations, extensions and outbuildings will be permitted, provided the proposal meets the following criteria:

(i) The proposal is compatible with the scale, appearance and character of the original dwelling including taking into account the cumulative impact of such development;
(ii) The proposal does not result in the over-development of the site, and demonstrates design in scale with its surroundings, taking into account the footprint of the existing dwelling and the relationship to neighbouring site boundaries;
(iii) Proposals for extensions and outbuildings are subordinate to the original dwelling in terms of design and setting;
(iv) The proposal will not result in unacceptable adverse impacts on the amenities of neighbouring residential properties, including on privacy, overbearing impact, overshadowing or loss of light;
(v) The proposal will not result in adverse impact to the appearance of the street scene and character of the area.

Residential annexes
Residential annexes will be supported where the need for additional space cannot be met within an existing dwelling or buildings suitable for conversion on the site in the first instance, provided the proposal meets the following criteria:

(i) The proposal is physically attached or closely related to the main dwelling so that it cannot be subdivided from the main dwelling;
(ii) The proposal retains some form of demonstrable dependence on the main dwelling, such as shared access (including both vehicular access and doorways) and communal amenity spaces (the use of annexes as a separate dwelling will not be permitted and the desire for annexed occupants to be independent from existing residents will not be considered as adequate justification to allow self-contained dwellings in annexes);
(iii) The proposal respects and enhances both the character of the original dwelling and the context of the surrounding area through high quality design; and
(iv) The proposal does not result in the loss of amenity to neighbouring properties.

Replacement dwellings in the countryside
Replacement dwellings in the countryside within existing curtilages will be supported, provided the proposal meets the following criteria:

(i) It is on a one-for-one basis and the property to be demolished is a permanent lawful dwelling;
(ii) It is of a high quality design that is appropriate to the rural area in scale and character and preserves or enhances access, siting and dwelling orientation;
(iii) It is of a scale appropriate to the size of the original dwelling to maintain a

supply of smaller more affordable dwellings in the countryside;
(iv) It provides high quality landscaping, where necessary, to integrate the new dwelling into the wider rural context with no greater adverse impacts than the existing dwelling;
(v) There is a presumption against the demolition of properties considered to be heritage assets and/or properties which positively contribute to the character of a rural conservation area. Note: there is a presumption in favour of retaining properties considered to be heritage assets and/or properties which positively contribute to the character of a rural conservation area; and
(vi) The flood risk sequential test will have to be applied.

Flat conversions
Proposals for the conversion and sub-division of existing residential premises within settlement boundaries into flats and other self-contained residential units will be considered having regard to the intensity of the use proposed and the sustainability of the location in respect of the proximity of the site to key services and public transport provision. Proposals should also be in accordance with the requirements set out in the Housing Standards policy.

In addition, proposals for the conversion and sub-division of existing residential premises and, conversions of non-residential buildings where planning permission is required, will only be supported if they meet the following criteria:

(i) The proposal does not result in detrimental effects to the appearance of the building by reason of unsympathetic additions or alterations, either in isolation or due to cumulative impact;
(ii) Opportunities are taken for improving the character and quality of an area and the way it functions;
(iii) Appropriate provision is made for parking, private amenity space, cycle storage and refuse storage facilities, in a visually acceptable manner;
(iv) The internal layout minimises possible noise disturbance and/or overlooking to the immediate neighbours; and
(v) Overall, the proposal will not result in an unsatisfactory living environment for prospective occupiers.

Rural Workers Housing

7.67 The NPPF states that one of the few circumstances where a new dwelling within the countryside may be justified is when accommodation is required to enable agricultural or rural workers to live at or in the immediate vicinity of their place of work.

7.68 While the Local Planning Authority's preference is for such workers to live in nearby towns or villages, or suitable existing dwellings to avoid new and potentially intrusive development in the countryside, it acknowledges that there will be some instances where the nature and demands of certain rural businesses will make it essential for one or more people engaged in the enterprise to live at, or very close to, their place of work.

7.69 Such a need however must be essential to the successful operation of the rural business. Any proposal for a new agricultural/rural workers dwelling will be expected to satisfy all the criteria set out in Policy DM14.

7.70 The need for a rural workers dwelling could be generated by a range of traditional rural land activities such as agriculture, forestry, fisheries, rural estate management, certain equestrian businesses and horticulture.

7.71 Applications will be subject to a functions test to establish whether it is essential for the proper functioning of the business enterprise for one or more workers to be readily available. Such a requirement might arise where a worker or workers need to be available round the clock to respond to situations where livestock/animals or agricultural processes require essential care at short notice or emergencies that could otherwise cause a serious loss of crops or products e.g. by frost or failure of automatic systems.

7.72 Given the restrictions on the delivery of new dwellings in the countryside, the scale and design of any proposals for rural workers' dwellings should reflect their countryside location and their function as housing for a rural worker. While many people work in rural areas e.g. in offices, schools, workshops, garages and garden centres, it is unlikely that they will have an essential need to live permanently at or near their place of work. Being employed in a rural location is not considered sufficient justification to qualify as a rural worker with an essential housing need.

7.73 Changes in the scale and character of agricultural and forestry businesses have the potential to affect the longer-term requirement for dwellings in the countryside particularly where these had an "agricultural worker occupancy" condition attached when planning permission was granted. In such cases, the Local Planning Authority recognises that it would fulfil no purpose to keep such dwellings vacant, or that existing occupiers should be obliged to remain in occupation simply by virtue of a planning condition that has outlived its usefulness.

7.74 Nevertheless, the Local Planning Authority will expect applications for the removal of an occupancy condition to demonstrate convincingly that there is no long-term need for an agricultural dwelling in the locality. Such dwellings could be used by other agricultural and rural workers seeking accommodation within the wider surrounding area, therefore it will need to be demonstrated to the Local Planning Authority that the dwelling tied to an occupancy condition has been effectively marketed to likely interested parties in the area concerned, over a period of time, and that no genuine interest has been shown regarding the purchase or rental of the dwelling for a rural worker with an essential need to live in the local community.

Policy DM14: Rural Workers' Housing

Permanent Rural Workers' Dwellings
Planning permission will be granted for new agricultural/rural workers' dwellings as part of existing businesses where all of the following criteria are met:

(i) Evidence is provided to show that there is an essential functional need for a permanent dwelling;
(ii) The need is related to a full-time worker who is primarily employed locally in agriculture, forestry or some other rural based business that requires a new dwelling in the countryside;
(iii) The size and design of dwelling is commensurate with the needs of the rural business;
(iv) The business has been established for at least 3 years, has been profitable for at least one of them, is financially viable and is likely to remain so in the future;
(v) The functional need cannot be met by another suitable and available dwelling;
(vi) The conversion of an existing building should be considered in preference to new build;
(vii) The proposed development is not located in a recognised area of flood risk; and
(viii) The proposed development satisfies all other Local Plan policy requirements.

Temporary Rural Workers Dwellings
Where a new dwelling is essential to support a new activity, whether a newly created unit or an established one, it will normally, for the first three years, be provided by a caravan or other temporary accommodation.
Applications will need to be supported with the following information:

(i) Clear evidence of a firm intention and ability to develop the enterprise concerned (significant investment in new buildings is often a good indication of intentions);
(ii) Evidence is provided to show that there is an essential functional need;
(iii) Clear evidence that the proposed enterprise has been planned on a sound financial basis. The evidence should include a business plan of at least 3 years duration;
(iv) The functional need could not be fulfilled by another existing dwelling on

the unit, or any other existing accommodation in the area;

(v) If permission for temporary accommodation is granted, permission for a permanent dwelling is unlikely to be granted within 3 years. If, after 3 years, a permanent dwelling is approved, the temporary dwelling must be removed from the site; and

(vi) The proposed temporary accommodation is not located in a recognised area of flood risk.

Conditions will be attached to all permissions granted for new rural workers dwellings to remove permitted development rights and restrict the occupancy to that required for the rural business concerned or other agricultural/rural uses nearby.

Existing Rural Workers Dwellings

Where a rural dwelling is no longer needed to support a rural business, applications to remove the occupancy restrictions will have to submit evidence demonstrating that an essential functional need no longer exists for the property and is unlikely to in the foreseeable future. The applicant will be expected to provide details of instructions to estate agents, and the response to that advertising, demonstrating that:

(i) The property has been continuously marketed for rent and sale for at least 12 months and advertised in that period at a price reflecting the occupancy condition;

(ii) The advertising should include on-line advertising, local newspapers and relevant national agricultural magazines; and

(iii) The property has been offered both for sale and to rent on the same basis as above to all farmers, horticulturalists and other rural businesses where a dwelling may be justified in the locality (i.e. having holdings within a two-mile radius of the dwelling.)

Design and Amenity

7.75 Good design is indivisible from good planning and a key NPPF requirement for ensuring sustainable development. High quality design benefits everyday users and society as a whole, by creating desirable, functional and efficient places, which help support improved amenities, inclusive communities, economic activity and reduced environmental impact. Design quality is particularly relevant in Colchester given the need to generate local support for planned growth, complement historic assets and to ensure regeneration activities leave a lasting place-making legacy.

7.76 In Colchester, as elsewhere in the UK, there is a need to deliver high quality design, whilst still ensuring sustainable development is viable. As a result there is a need to make sure policy guidance helps achieve best practice, providing clarity and securing development which is both good enough to approve and deliverable.

7.77 The promotion of good processes will be important in raising standards, including as appropriate for guidance/development:

- Good design team selection;
- Design guidance (e.g. masterplans, design codes, development briefs and neighbourhood plans) for priority growth and regeneration areas. These might be produced by the Local Planning Authority or other key stakeholders as appropriate;
- Site and context analysis to identify issues and opportunities;
- Alternative options to test the pros and cons of alternative proposals;
- Pre-application dialogue (perhaps as part of a Planning Performance Agreement), to help identify improvements;
- Independent Design Review on appropriate schemes;
- Proposals being informed by key stakeholder consultation;
- Supporting well designed self and community led development;
- Submission of design material which allows for accurate assessment.

7.78 Requests by the Local Planning Authority for information in relation to applicant's design proposals will be reasonable and proportionate to the nature and scale of the proposal. The NPPF highlights the importance of plan-led development through to detailing, especially on larger scale developments. This can be achieved by following the principles of Garden Cities (TCPA publication) or those of other potentially appropriate urban design models, such as urban, village and arcadian case studies outlined in the Essex Design Guide.

7.79 Development must positively contribute to the public realm, preserving or enhancing the sense of place, including historic interest, landscape, townscape, streetscape, character areas, route hierarchy, roofscapes, key views, gateways, nodes, edges, landmarks, green links and spaces. However it is important guidance does not attempt to impose architectural styles or personal tastes, though high quality traditional/contemporary designs and materials should positively respond to their physical and cultural context and be correctly interpreted through to forms and detailing. Common design risks should be

avoided such as excessive standardisation, mono-use sprawl, ungainly forms, uninspired public realm design, parking dominated streets, use of second-rate materials, poorly applied design styles, weakly defined spatial enclosure, screening as justification for poor design and a lack of townscape interest or legibility.

7.80 Retail centres can play an important role in promoting community vitality, lifestyle and well-being, yet good design and place-making is often particularly challenged by narrow private interests and competing uses. New development should contribute to centres which are compact, genuinely mixed-use, including vertically where appropriate, in particular offering viable retail and service circuits meeting local need, business uses offering local jobs, and residential dwellings providing a self-policing community presence. Centres should be highly accessible, prioritising sustainable transport, and offer a high quality public realm for pedestrians which is not vehicle dominated.

7.81 The promotion of walking, cycling and public transport will assist in creating an environment that is attractive, healthy, sociable and safe, whilst more generally helping promote sustainable forms of development. This can be achieved through good connectivity especially for strategic desire lines, high quality streetscape and landscape, shared space, filtered permeability, car-free zones and wayfinding measures.

7.82 Well thought out site plans include a consideration of how design can reduce anti-social behaviour by orientating and placing buildings, windows and access points to provide clear lines of sight and natural surveillance. Public and private open space should be clearly differentiated, avoiding piecemeal and isolated patches of public space that could be prone to vandalism.

7.83 The Local Planning Authority's Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) provide further design guidance, which is updated from time to time. Reference may also be made to relevant nationally produced guidance, such as the government's 2018 National Design Guide which sets out the characteristics of well-designed places and demonstrates what good design means in practice, and the National Design Code 2021. The Building for a Healthy Life assessment tool is promoted for use on major housing schemes. It is the industry standard, endorsed by government, for well-designed homes and neighbourhoods, helping prompt improvements, qualitative review and performance monitoring.

7.84 Internal infrastructure and services necessary for a development to function effectively should be provided in conjunction with the commencement of the development so as not to place undue strain on the existing environment and local economy.

Policy DM15: Design and Amenity

All development, including new build, extensions and alterations, must be designed to a high standard, positively respond to its context, achieve good standards of amenity, and demonstrate social, economic and environmental sustainability. Great weight will be given to outstanding or innovative designs which help raise the standard of design more generally in the area. Poor design will be refused including that which fails to take the opportunity for good design or improving the local area.

The Local Planning Authority will use and/or promote a range of planning processes and tools to help achieve high quality design. Ultimately, development proposals must demonstrate that they, and any ancillary activities associated with them, will:

(i) Respect and, wherever possible, enhance the character of the site, its context and surroundings in terms of its layout, architectural approach, height, scale, form, massing, density, proportions, materials, townscape and/or landscape qualities, and detailed design features. Wherever possible development should positively integrate the existing built environment and other landscape, heritage, biodiversity and arboricultural assets and remove problems as part of the overall development proposal;
(ii) Help establish a visually attractive sense of place for living, working and visiting, through good architecture and landscaping;
(iii) Promote and sustain an appropriate mix and density of uses which are well located and integrated, optimise the efficient use of land (including sharing), contribute to inclusive communities, and support retail centres and sustainable transport networks;
(iv) Provide attractive, well connected and legible streets and spaces, which encourage walking, cycling, public transport and community vitality, whilst adequately integrating safe vehicle access;
(v) Protect and promote public and residential amenity, particularly with regard to privacy, overlooking, security, noise and disturbance, pollution (including light and odour pollution), daylight and sunlight;
(vi) Create a safe, resilient and secure environment, which supports community cohesion and is not vulnerable to neglect;
(vii) Provide functional, robust and adaptable designs, which contribute to the long-term quality of the area and, as appropriate, can facilitate alternative activities, alterations and possible future development;
(viii) Minimise energy consumption/emissions and promote sustainable drainage, particularly with regard to transport, landform, layout, building orientation, massing, tree planting and landscaping;
(ix) Incorporate any necessary infrastructure and services including utilities, recycling and waste facilities to meet current collection requirements, highways and parking. This should be sensitively integrated to promote successful place-making;
(x) Demonstrate an appreciation of the views of those directly affected and explain the design response adopted. Proposals that can demonstrate this inclusive approach will be looked on more favourably;
(xi) Encourage Active Design; and

(xii) Provide a network of green infrastructure, open space and landscape as part of the design of the development to reflect the importance of these networks to biodiversity, climate change mitigation, healthy living and creating beautiful places.

For the purpose of this policy ancillary activities associated with development will be considered to include vehicle movement.

Historic Environment

7.85 Colchester's importance as a historic town warrants a policy detailing and reinforcing the need to protect and enhance the historic environment. The policy is also applicable to heritage assets in rural areas of the Borough and will help to protect and enhance assets in these areas. In the local area there are a number of buildings which detract from the appearance of heritage assets and the opportunities for redevelopment should be encouraged.

7.86 There will be a presumption in favour of the physical preservation *in situ* of nationally important archaeological remains (whether scheduled or not). The more important the asset, the greater the weight will be for preservation *in situ*. In accordance with national legislation, preservation of remains may require the refusal of development that could be detrimental.

7.87 Developers will be required to make provision for the recording of any heritage assets adversely impacted by development and to make provision for full analysis and reporting, and to ensure this, and any archive generated, is publicly accessible. Provision will be required to enhance the Urban Archaeological Database and to provide for the long-term curation of the archive.

7.88 Where appropriate, provision will be required for interpretation and access *in situ*, where public access is possible without detriment to the site, or at a suitable off-site location, and for realising the social, cultural, economic and environment benefits of the historic environment.

7.89 There are a number of existing buildings and built environments within the Borough, which do not have a statutory basis for protection, but which nevertheless retain a distinctive historical or architectural character that it is considered desirable to keep. The Local Planning Authority, working with local experts, will prepare a Local List of buildings and groups of buildings, which are considered to be of particular historic or architectural merit; this will be used to ensure that when assessing applications for planning permission their particular character is considered. Conditions will be applied to allow for the inspection and recording of buildings on the Local List.

7.90 There are also a number of neighbourhoods within the Borough that are characterised by spacious properties built at low density within a well treed setting, or else that retain a particular "period" character. Context appraisals will be required for all development and where a proposal is within a neighbourhood with a distinctive character which it is desirable to keep, the proposal will need to demonstrate that it protects and enhances the special qualities of the area.

Policy DM16: Historic Environment

Development that will lead to substantial harm to or total loss of significance of a listed building, conservation area, historic park or garden or important archaeological remains (including the setting of heritage assets) will only be permitted in exceptional circumstances where the harm or loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh the harm or loss. Where development will lead to less than substantial harm this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal.

Development affecting the historic environment should seek to conserve and enhance the significance of the heritage asset and any features of specific historic, archaeological, architectural or artistic interest. In all cases there will be an expectation that any new development will enhance the historic environment or better reveal the significance of the heritage asset unless there are no identifiable opportunities available. In instances where existing features have a negative impact on the historic environment, as identified through character appraisals (or other method of identification of historic assets), the Local Planning Authority will request the removal of the features that undermine the historic environment as part of any proposed development. The Local Planning Authority will request the provision of creative and accessible interpretations of heritage assets impacted by development.

Conservation of the historic environment will also be ensured by:

(i) Identifying, characterising, protecting and enhancing Conservation Areas;
(ii) Protection and enhancement of existing buildings and built areas which do not have Listed Building or Conservation Area status but have a particular local importance or character which it is desirable to keep;
(iii) Preserving and enhancing Listed Buildings, Scheduled Monuments, Historic Parks and Gardens, including their respective settings, and other features, which contribute to the heritage of the Borough; and
(iv) Sites of archaeological interest will be clearly identified and protected, and sites that become known, whether through formal evaluation as part of a Planning Application or otherwise, will similarly be protected according to their importance.

Heritage Impact Assessments and/or Archaeological Evaluations will be required for proposals related to or impacting on the setting of heritage assets and/or known or possible archaeological sites, and where there is potential for encountering archaeological sites so that sufficient information is provided to assess the significance of the heritage assets and to assess the impacts of development on historic assets together with any proposed mitigation measures.

Open Space

7.91 Existing open spaces, green link networks and allotments provide the people of Colchester with opportunities for passive and active recreation and encourage healthy and active lifestyles. Open space also includes areas of water, which offer important opportunities for sport and recreation, and can act as a visual amenity. It is important that all residents have access to open space within walking distance of their home. Strategic green links provide valuable corridors for the movement of people and biodiversity. The green spaces along the Colne River, for example, connect the town centre, suburbs, countryside, villages and the coast. These corridors provide alternative means for people making journeys into and across Colchester. The Local Planning Authority will therefore seek to protect and enhance these important links. The Colchester Orbital project (see Appendix 1) celebrates and protects Colchester's existing green spaces and creates a sense of environmental connectivity between them.

7.92 The Local Planning Authority commissioned an Open Space Study in accordance with the NPPF to identify areas with deficiencies of open space. Development will be required to make contributions towards meeting these deficiencies where they will exacerbate the situation in accordance with the Local Planning Authority's adopted SPD for Open Space, Sport and Recreation (updated as required). The Open Space Study sets specific targets to guide the provision of different types of open space across the Borough.

7.93 The existing public and private open spaces, including allotments, within the Borough, represent important assets serving the communities in which they are located (or in some instances wider areas). This importance can relate not only to their function, but also to the amenity value and contribution they make to the character of an area in general by providing a 'green lung', opportunities for a well-designed and inclusive public realm, and visual breaks in the built environment. They also provide alternative green spaces which help alleviate pressure on internationally designated nature conservation sites. If such provisions are lost to other uses it can be extremely difficult to find alternative locations particularly as open land is scarce and, therefore, at a premium.

7.94 Well-designed open spaces can deliver multiple functions. As well as their value for wildlife, quality of life, health and recreation, they also provide opportunities for Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDs) for surface water runoff management. Open space provides opportunities for climate change adaptation through the management and enhancement of existing habitats and the creation of new ones to assist with species migration, to provide shade during higher temperatures, and for flood mitigation.

7.95 Against this background, it is intended to secure the retention of existing facilities unless a case can be made that alternative provision will be provided in a wholly acceptable manner. Alternative provision could comprise existing provision in the locality of the type of open space as defined by the NPPF, providing there is not a deficiency in that type of open space. A number of documents including the PPG17 Audit and Assessment of the Borough's public open spaces, Colchester

Parks and Green Spaces Strategy (2008) and Colchester's Green Infrastructure Strategy (2011) and any updated evidence as appropriate, will be used by the Local Planning Authority when assessing planning applications relating to proposed development of open space and sports facilities.

7.96 New development can place increasing pressure on existing open spaces. Developments therefore will be expected to deliver areas of open space to meet the varying needs of residents for recreation and leisure and also deliver attractive high quality neighbourhoods for people to live in. At least 10% of the total gross site area should be provided as local open space as an integral part of new development proposals. Exceptionally, where this is not possible, particularly where a development site is small, the site developer will be expected to provide a commuted sum towards the provision of open space off site.

7.97 Developments should help contribute to the accessibility, quantity and quality standards set out in Appendices N, P and Q in the Local Planning Authority's PPG17 Open Space, Sport and Recreation study (or updates as required). All open space shall be provided in a timely manner (so as to enable reasonable and appropriate access by new residents to this facility); should be fully equipped in a satisfactory manner as agreed by the Local Planning Authority; and, laid out at the expense of the developer and where appropriate, dedicated to the Local Planning Authority with suitable provision for ongoing maintenance. Further guidance on the level of contributions for commuted sums and the methodology for their calculation is set out in the Supplementary Planning Document on Provision of Open Space, Sports and Recreation Facilities (which will be updated as required).

7.98 All housing developments, including higher density development, should provide new residents with access to private and/or communal open space, in addition to public open space requirements. At least 25m^2 per dwelling of private/communal open space will be sought for flats and maisonettes, whilst houses should provide larger private gardens. Higher density schemes will be encouraged to utilise innovative design solutions to provide open space on difficult sites.

7.99 The Essex Design Guide sets standards for amenity space provision for new residential developments. The Urban Place Supplement recognised these standards were not always helpful for producing good quality development in compact urban developments and this evaluation has informed the requirement of this policy that generally seeks the provision of a minimum of 25m^2 of high quality, private amenity space for each dwelling. It is important that new development avoids the piecemeal provision of small areas of open space and instead provides sufficiently large areas of open space to serve as accessible and attractive zones for residents' leisure activity and recreation. Green links alongside existing hedgerows and tree lines can also have high amenity value.

Policy DM17: Retention of Open Space and Recreation Facilities

The Council will protect and enhance the existing network of green links and open spaces and secure additional areas where deficiencies are identified. The provision of public open space in developments should be informed by an appraisal of local context and community need and up to date evidence, with a particular regard to the impact of site development on biodiversity.

A) Development, including change of use, of any existing or proposed public or private open space, including allotments, will not be supported unless it can be demonstrated that:

(i) Alternative and improved provision will be created in a location well related to the functional requirements of the relocated use and its existing and future users; and,
(ii) The proposal would not result in the loss of an area important for its amenity or contribution to the green infrastructure network or to the character of the area in general; and
(iii) It achieves the aims of any relevant prevailing strategy relating to open space and recreation.

B) Development proposals resulting in a loss of open space must additionally demonstrate that:

(i) There is an identified excess provision within the catchment of the facility and no likely shortfall is expected within the plan period; or
(ii) Alternative and improved provision will be supplied in a location well-related to the functional requirements of the relocated use and its existing and future users.

In all cases, development will not be permitted that would result in any deficiencies in public open space requirements or increase existing deficiencies in the area either at the time of the proposal or be likely to result in a shortfall within the plan period.

Additionally, development that would result in the loss of any small incidental areas of open space, not specifically identified on the policies map but which contribute to amenity value and the character of existing residential neighbourhoods, and any registered common, heathland or village green or which contribute to green infrastructure will not be permitted.

Policy DM18: Provision of Public Open Space

New residential development must provide for the recreational needs of new communities. The provision of open space helps to alleviate recreational pressure on sites of high nature conservation value (e.g. habitats sites) and also increases opportunities for participation in healthy lifestyles.

All new residential development will be expected to provide new public areas of accessible open space. Precise levels of provision will depend on the location of the proposal and the nature of open space needs in the area but as a guideline, at least 10% of the gross site area should be provided as useable open space. The Local Planning Authority will expect large sites of 5 hectares or more to provide at least one strategic area of open space within the site. This will be secured through planning obligations or CIL/equivalent infrastructure levy.

Where the Local Planning Authority accepts commuted sums in lieu of open space, the commuted sums will be used to provide additional open space or to improve existing open space in the locality of the development. Contributions may be pooled towards larger infrastructure projects and/or to provide larger areas of strategic open space where a need has been identified. A commuted sum is only likely to be acceptable in the following circumstances:

(i) smaller developments of less than 0.5 ha, or where for some other reason open space requirements cannot be met within the site; or
(ii) developments of dwellings which are legally secured for occupation by the elderly (where some compensating increase in private amenity space may be required); or
(iii) in a town centre location or where it is justified by an outstanding urban design approach based on site constraints and opportunities.

Policy DM19: Private Amenity Space

The Local Planning Authority will expect all new residential development to provide easy access to private amenity space and in the case of flatted development, private communal amenity space. The area of amenity space should be informed by the needs of residents and the accessibility of the location. Private amenity space and communal amenity space must be designed to optimise its use and meet the recreational needs of residents.

All new residential development shall provide private amenity space to a high standard, where the siting, orientation, size and layout make for a secure and usable space, which has an inviting appearance for residents and is appropriate to the surrounding context. All private amenity spaces shall be designed so as to avoid significant overlooking.

The following standards shall apply:

For houses:

- One or two bedroom houses – a minimum of 50m^2
- Three bedroom houses – a minimum of 60m^2
- Four bedroom houses – a minimum of 100m^2

For flats:

- A minimum of 25m^2 per flat provided communally (where balconies are provided the space provided may be taken off the communal requirement).

A larger amount of private amenity space may be required for small infill (including backland) schemes to reflect the character of the surrounding area. Proposals for infill development will not be permitted if they unacceptably reduce the level of existing private amenity space provision for existing dwellings.

For proposals in accessible locations (in accordance with Policy DM9) where higher densities may be appropriate, reduced garden sizes for houses may be acceptable but a minimum of 25m^2 of useable private amenity space shall be provided for every home (either as gardens, balconies or roof gardens/terraces).

Promoting Sustainable Transport and Changing Travel Behaviour

7.100 The Spatial Strategy ensures that development is located to reduce the need to travel or development is of a scale that promotes sustainable transport that is accessible for all.

7.101 The NPPF requires the transport system to be balanced in favour of sustainable transport modes while recognising that different policies and solutions will be necessary in different areas. 2011 Census data shows that car ownership is highest in the rural areas of the Borough and lower in urban areas. However, the car is still the highest mode of travel used for journeys to work, even in urban areas, and congestion and air quality affect many of the roads within the urban areas. Therefore, sustainable transport will continue to be encouraged where possible, particularly where growth is planned.

7.102 Good accessibility and access to a high quality and efficient transport network is essential to support new development and ensure that it is sustainable, enabling the community to access their needs (e.g. employment, shopping, schools) easily and without always needing a car. The Local Planning Authority will continue to work closely with Essex County Council, as the highway authority, Highways England, Network Rail, public transport infrastructure providers and operators or third-party organisations with the ability and resources to deliver projects in the Borough.

7.103 Active modes such as walking and cycling are a high priority, being an essential and highly sustainable means of transport, which also support a healthy lifestyle and a strong economy. Census data shows that 69% of people who live within Colchester Borough work within the Borough. The majority of Colchester residents live within 5km of the town centre and therefore walking and cycling have great potential as modes of transport. Travel change behaviour programmes will be pursued to encourage greater use of alternative modes. The Essex Cycling Strategy sets out the key elements of a long-term plan that will lead to a significant and sustained increase in cycling in Essex. It acts as the over-arching policy framework to enable, provide and promote cycling in Essex. To encourage walking and cycling within Colchester, and to the town centre, the Local Planning Authority will seek to make improvements to the network to remove barriers to pedestrians and cyclists and enhancing the environment to provide people-friendly streets which give priority to sustainable modes of transport. Priority, safety and convenience for walking and cycling should be ensured at the design stage of any road schemes and all users should be considered.

7.104 Public transport has a crucial role to play in Colchester. Providing a quality public transport network that offers a genuinely attractive alternative to the car is vital. Transit corridors that prioritise public transport over other traffic will attract people to use public transport. Park and Ride facilities that offer easy access to the town via transit corridors will also help reduce congestion. For this reason it is important to safeguard land for new public transport infrastructure, such as bus lanes, interchange facilities and junction improvements.

7.105 The Local Planning Authority will also seek to deliver improvements to transport interchanges and public transport gateways. At present there are over 5 million passenger movements at Colchester's railway stations each year. Enhancing transport interchanges such as the railway and bus stations will present a more attractive gateway to businesses, commuters, tourists and local residents. The Colchester Station Travel Plan aims to manage congestion in the area by investing in infrastructure; increasing accessibility; encouraging access by sustainable travel and encouraging a high level of connectivity linking the station to the town centre and other key destinations.

7.106 The private car will continue to be a major mode of transport. However, growth in car travel and traffic needs to be managed to reduce congestion, improve air quality and promote a high quality of life and economic growth in Colchester. Car travel demand can be more carefully managed in urban areas through the use of alternatives and new technologies. Combining demand management of car traffic with improvements to sustainable alternatives and improved street design can greatly benefit the local community, businesses and the environment. All development should consider the content of Essex County Council's Highway Authority Development Management Policies.

7.107 Road freight and servicing will be facilitated where appropriate to promote economic and employment growth. Support will be given for improvements to the strategic road and rail network to accommodate growth. Consideration will be given to measures that discourage the use of high emission vehicles.

7.108 It is recognised that different policies and measures will be required in different communities and opportunities to maximise sustainable transport solutions will vary from urban to rural areas. Those living in rural areas are often most affected by lack of transport choices. Where appropriate, the Local Planning Authority will encourage connectivity by sustainable modes of transport including enhancing and promoting rural bus services.

7.109 There are two rail branch lines off the Great Eastern mainline in the Borough serving rural communities: the Gainsborough Line that links Marks Tey to Sudbury, serving both Chappel and Wakes Colne and Bures Stations; and the Sunshine Coast line; the Colchester to Clacton/Walton line. The Local Planning Authority will work with partners, including the Community Rail Partnership, to make the best use of rural rail stations, increase accessibility to stations and promote and increase the use of the branch lines in the Borough. The Local Planning Authority supports the aim to provide at least two trains an hour to all stations, including the rural branches.

7.110 The green infrastructure network in Colchester provides alternative sustainable transport corridors for people making journeys into and out of Colchester by active modes of transport. Policy ENV3 seeks to develop green infrastructure in the Borough, and the Local Planning Authority will support the development of the Colchester Orbital route around urban Colchester. The Local Planning Authority will seek opportunities from future developments where appropriate to improve

connectivity between the Colchester Orbital route, the new developments and the wider countryside. The Local Planning Authority will also seek opportunities where appropriate to improve the creation of and connectivity to the England/Essex Coast Path.

Policy DM20: Promoting Sustainable Transport and Changing Travel Behaviour

The Local Planning Authority will work with developers and other partners to increase modal shift towards sustainable modes by improving accessibility of development through the promotion of walking and cycling as an integral part of development, and by further improving public transport. In line with policy SG1 (Spatial Strategy), development that reduces the need to travel will be encouraged and sustainable transport will be improved to provide better connections between communities and their needs. This will be achieved by:

(i) Safeguarding existing and proposed routes for walking, cycling and public transport, including rapid transit, park and ride, and green infrastructure, from development. New development will be expected to contribute towards maintaining continuity and enhancing these connections where appropriate;
(ii) Focusing new walking and cycling improvements on areas of employment, education and health facilities, and on the town centre and public transport interchanges;
(iii) Ensuring new developments are supported by quality public transport linking them to the main urban areas and major centres of employment, health and education. Access to public transport should be within walking or cycling distance of any new development;
(iv) Reducing the need to travel by car by promoting higher densities near retail centres and public transport hubs, and encouraging mixed use development in appropriate locations;
(v) Enhancing public transport gateways to Colchester to provide attractive entry points to, and excellent onward connections from, the rail stations in urban Colchester and Marks Tey, Wivenhoe, and Colchester Bus Station.

The Local Planning Authority will also work with partners to accommodate necessary car travel making the best use of the existing network and managing the demand for road traffic. The Local Planning Authority will support improvements to the strategic road, rail and cycle network where appropriate evidence is provided and local consultation undertaken.

Improvements will be made to the road network to support sustainable development and to reduce the impact of congestion. The demand for car travel will be managed to prevent adverse impacts on sustainable transportation, air quality, safety, local amenity and built character by:

(vi) Encouraging a reduction in through traffic in the town centre to encourage trips to be undertaken by more sustainable modes;
(vii) Encouraging use of new technology to better manage traffic, provide alternatives, facilitate the use of ultra-low emission vehicles and reduce

the need to travel, particularly at peak times.

Where appropriate the use of sustainable travel in rural areas will be encouraged to minimise the impact of transport on sensitive rural areas. The Local Planning Authority will seek to make best use of rural rail services through promotion and improving access at stations.

Sustainable Access to Development

7.111 Good easy access to a high quality and efficient transport network is essential to support new development and ensure that it is sustainable. The NPPF sets out the government's approach to the location and design of developments to ensure that plans protect and exploit opportunities for the use of sustainable transport modes for the movement of goods or people. The Local Planning Authority will work closely with Essex County Council as the highways authority to help promote good access to high quality, sustainable modes of travel within and from new developments.

7.112 One of the best ways to encourage sustainable modes is to fully consider the needs of all users at the design stage. Public transport has a crucial role to play in encouraging sustainable travel patterns at an early stage from new developments. Walking and cycling are also a high priority being healthy, affordable sustainable modes of travel and priority, convenience and safety for both modes should be ensured through design layout and the provision of on-site facilities. The current Colchester Cycling Delivery Strategy was adopted as an SPD in January 2012. The latest version of this document should be taken into account in the design stage of new development to ensure cyclists and cycling facilities are taken into consideration through the provision of quality infrastructure, and funding promotion and cycle training to increase levels of cycling and create more sustainable and healthy travel patterns. The infrastructure appendix to the current SPD illustrates the network of existing and planned routes in Colchester.

7.113 Electric vehicle charging points and facilities for other ultra-low emission vehicles, or the infrastructure to ensure their future provision, should be provided within a development where appropriate to help reduce carbon emissions from transport. Providing for the future could include the provision of sufficient capacity on the electrical consumer unit and conduit to install an external charging point at a later date. Electric charging points should be provided within new commercial developments and car parks.

7.114 Any proposals must include sufficient information to assess the likely impact of the development. Transport Assessments or Transport Statements will be required for all developments likely to generate significant amounts of movement. Development should consider the Essex County Council (ECC) Development Management Policies which also provide further detail on the thresholds for Transport Assessments and Statements. Developers will need to demonstrate that the opportunities for sustainable transport modes have been taken up, safe and suitable access for all can be achieved and the impacts can be effectively mitigated within the transport network. Where lower than standard trip rates are proposed development will be expected to demonstrate through a package of sustainable transport measures that the proposed trip rates can be achieved. Where significant impacts are identified, development will not be permitted when the residual cumulative impacts are severe.

7.115 Developers will also be required to provide a Travel Plan for developments that generate significant amounts of movement in accordance with Essex County

Council Travel Plan guidelines. Current Essex County Council guidance requires all non-residential development proposals with 50 employees or more, residential developments of 250 dwellings or more, and new schools to produce a Travel Plan. Residential Travel Information Packs will be provided to all dwellings on new residential developments. Developments that generate significant amounts of movement will also be required to become members of the Colchester Travel Plan Club which provides a range of resources to promote travel behaviour change for local business and organisations in Colchester.

Policy DM21: Sustainable Access to Development

All new developments should seek to enhance accessibility for sustainable modes of transport. Proposals for development should:

(i) Give priority to the movement of people walking and cycling;
(ii) Create safe, secure, convenient and attractive layouts which minimise conflicts between traffic, cyclists and pedestrians;
(iii) Link the development to the surrounding walking, cycling and public transport networks taking into consideration the Cycle Strategy SPD;
(iv) Provide and give access to quality public transport facilities;
(v) Ensure streets and junctions are designed to provide people-friendly street environments and to give priority to sustainable transport;
(vi) Incorporate charging facilities for electric and other ultra-low emission vehicles where appropriate, or as a minimum the ability to easily introduce such facilities in the future;
(vii) Ensuring accessibility for those with impaired mobility; and
(viii) Accommodate the efficient delivery of goods and services.

Access to all development should be created in a manner which maintains the right and safe passage of all highway users. Where development requires a new road or road access it should be designed to give high priority to the needs of pedestrians and cyclists.

Development will only be allowed where there is physical and environmental capacity to accommodate the type and amount of traffic generated in a safe manner. Developments that generate significant amounts of movement will require a Transport Statement or Transport Assessment in line with the thresholds set in the latest Essex County Council development management policies relating to highways. Where lower than standard trip rates are proposed development will be expected to demonstrate through a package of sustainable transport measures that the proposed trip rates can be achieved. A masterplan approach to assess cumulative impacts may be required in complex locations with closely related and located developments.

All non-residential developments that generate significant amounts of movement will be required to produce a Travel Plan in accordance with Essex County Council Travel Plan Framework guidance and where appropriate will be required to become members of the Colchester Travel Plan Club. All new residential developments and schools will be required to produce a Travel Plan or provide Residential Travel Packs in accordance with Essex County Council Travel Plan Framework guidance.

Parking

7.116 The Local Planning Authority will work with partners to ensure that car parking is managed to support the economy and sustainable communities. The lack of, or poor planning of parking provision, can have a negative impact on the public realm and the local highway network and can restrict the accessibility and mobility needs of people and businesses. Over provision and poor management can lead to the inefficient use of land and can also discourage greater use of more sustainable modes of transport.

7.117 The Essex Parking Standards 2009 provide the Local Planning Authority with advice and guidance on the provision and role of parking within residential, commercial and leisure areas. However, the Local Planning Authority recognises that there needs to be flexibility to provide appropriate car and cycle parking based on local circumstances. The adopted SPD will continue to inform this policy and will provide guidance on levels of parking considered necessary to serve development. Developers will be expected to provide car parking on new developments in accordance with the most up to date standards, having regard to the nature of the development and location. The parking standard will be used as a point of reference for non-residential development but a more flexible approach will be considered if the applicant can demonstrate through parking surveys and accumulation data, provision of alternative forms of transport and or use of an alternative car park that a lower level of parking is acceptable. However, a lower standard will not be permitted where local evidence demonstrates a high demand for parking spaces, i.e., convenience stores.

7.118 The Parking SPD will be reviewed to ensure it is applicable locally with regard to the most recent evidence and Census data regarding local car ownership and car usage.

7.119 Where new development requires the submission of a Travel Plan, it will be necessary to ensure that the Travel Plan integrates proposals for parking with proposals to encourage the use of sustainable modes of transport. Parking for staff, visitors and operational uses will be managed as part of the Travel Plan.

7.120 Car free and low car development will be allowed in the Town Centre where it can be demonstrated that this is appropriate as a result of effective alternative modes of transport, and or access to a car provided through a car club.

7.121 Where the Local Planning Authority receives an application for a stand-alone new car park, or for the expansion of an existing car park, this will be considered on its merits based on evidence of need. Proposals should include the provision of electric charging points. In the town centre, short stay car parking will be provided where necessary to facilitate the economic and social wellbeing of the town centre. Redevelopment of existing surface car parks will be considered in the context of needing to ensure a neutral effect on the overall supply of town centre parking. Greater use of park and ride will be encouraged and additional sites will be sought that support growth, help manage congestion and can deliver more people sustainably to the key destinations in and around the town centre.

7.122 Encouraging the use of electric and other ultra-low emission vehicles helps reduce carbon emissions and reduces harmful emissions, particularly as Colchester has a number of transportation related air quality areas. With the growth in electric vehicles, owners will need to have suitable infrastructure to re-charge vehicles. Infrastructure needs to be installed at a variety of locations to enable effective recharging. Different chargers will be needed such as slow, fast or rapid chargers depending on location and the target market. The market and technology are still developing and the situation may change significantly during the plan period.

7.123 To encourage greater take up of electric vehicles more charging points are required particularly in public places or in car parks (public and private). In order to ensure that new developments are equipped with the necessary infrastructure, proposals should include appropriate provision for electric car charging points. For larger developments, details of how electric vehicle charging will be allocated, located and managed should, where applicable, be included within the relevant Transport Assessment and Transport Statement.

Policy DM22: Parking

The amount of car parking to be provided in association with new residential development will be assessed using the most recent local Parking Standards taking account of the following factors:

(i) Levels of local accessibility;
(ii) Historic and forecast car ownership levels;
(iii) The size, type, tenure and location of the dwellings;
(iv) The appropriate mix of parking types including opportunities for car-sharing (e.g., unallocated, on-street, visitor, car club etc);
(v) The need to ensure facilities are incorporated for electric and other ultra-low emission vehicles.

Parking Standards for non-residential development should be agreed through joint discussions with the local Highway Authority and the Local Planning Authority in accordance with the most recent local Parking Standards, with a more flexible approach to the parking standards only considered if supported by a parking survey and accumulation data. Local evidence suggests some uses require the maximum parking standard to be applied. Non-residential development shall include provision of electric charging points. Parking for staff, visitors and operational uses should be managed as part of a Travel Plan. Where opportunities arise, for example on mixed use sites, shared parking and car sharing will be encouraged as part of an agreed Travel Plan to make efficient use of land to support quality development.

Secure cycle parking should be incorporated into all residential development proposals and should be accessible, convenient to use, well laid out and used exclusively for cycle parking. In the case of flats and shared accommodation, secure cycle parking will be incorporated into development proposals and located near the entrance to the building. Cycle parking must be useable and function to serve its purpose and Sheffield type stands will be the preferred cycle stand.

In appropriate circumstances, namely urban locations served by sustainable travel options and alternative car parking spaces in public/communal facilities within approximately 400m, parking standards may be relaxed or car-free development may be acceptable in order to reflect accessibility by non-car modes, and/or to enhance the character of sensitive locations. The use/establishment of a car club may be required.

Applications for new or expanded car parking provision will be considered on an individual basis in relation to evidence and need. The existing car parking availability, current usage and, where appropriate, the existence of a Travel Plan and the current use of non-car modes, should all be demonstrated. New car parks should include electric charging points.

Where possible large car parks, for example serving town centres and out of town retail, leisure and business parks, should be stacked and/or underground to facilitate improved place-making, provide town centre equality, and result in more compact forms of development which use less land and prioritise sustainable transport. Redevelopment of existing surface car parking will also be considered to make efficient use of land, improve the townscape and support regeneration.

Greater use of Park & Ride will be encouraged especially for trips to the town centre and other major establishments along the route of the service. Further Park and Ride sites will be developed to help support growth and give access to the town centre.

Proposals for additional car parking in Dedham will be supported where they comply with all other policies in the Local Plan.

The Local Planning Authority will work with transport providers and highways authorities to provide facilities for freight and servicing.

Flood Risk and Water Management

7.124 National policy categorises zones of flood risk as Zone 1 (low probability), Zone 2 (medium probability), Zone 3a (high probability) and Zone 3b (functional floodplain). These flood zones are defined in Table 1 in the Flood Risk and Coastal Change National Planning Practice Guidance and are shown on the Government's Flood Map for Planning. The Environment Agency have also produced the updated Flood Map for Surface Water. Both are available on the GOV.UK website.

7.125 The overall aim of national policy and guidance on flood risk is to steer new development to land with the lowest risk from flooding, (Flood Zone 1) as a priority and to ensure that the development being proposed is compatible and safe over its lifetime relative to the Flood Zone it will be located in. Table 2 of the Planning Practice Guidance sets out a flood risk vulnerability classification for different land uses while Table 3 provides a 'compatibility' table for specific land uses in the different flood zones (including in Flood Zones 3a and 3b). The notes accompanying Table 3 set out the principles to be followed in relation to the application of the Sequential Test and Exception Test, including the need to consider risk from all sources of flooding and not just from rivers and sea.

7.126 It is important that flood risk is assessed early in the plan making process. National policy/guidance requires the production of Strategic Flood Risk Assessments to enable flood risk from all types of flooding (including an allowance for climate change) to be considered at a strategic level. The SFRA is the key piece of evidence used to allocate land in the Local Plan. The NPPF and PPG also requires Local Planning Authorities to adopt a sequential approach when allocating development sites in their Local Plans relative to their flood risk, flood vulnerability and proposed use.

7.127 The Sequential Test and (Exception Test where applicable) enables Local Planning Authorities to employ this sequential approach when allocating land.

7.128 Flood risk was considered early in the site selection process in the Colchester Local Plan. As part of the site assessment process (SLAA), greenfield sites where more than 50% fell within Flood Zone 3 were immediately ruled out. On completion of the SLAA, the Local Planning Authority commissioned a Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) for Colchester. The SFRA was then used to apply the Sequential and Exceptions Test (where necessary) to assist the allocation of development sites in the emerging Local Plan.

7.129 The application of the Sequential Test involved initially directing new development to land in Flood Zone 1 (areas with a low probability of river or sea flooding). Where there were no reasonably available sites in Flood Zone 1, reasonably available sites in Flood Zone 2 (areas with a medium probability of river or sea flooding), were then considered. Where there were no reasonably available sites in Flood Zones 1 or 2 the suitability of developing sites in Flood Zone 3 (areas with a high probability of river or sea flooding) was then considered. When considering the allocation of sites in Flood Zones 2 & 3, the

Local Planning Authority also took flood risk vulnerability of the proposed land uses and the need for the application of the Exception Test into account.

7.130 When applying the Sequential Test, the area of search for reasonably available sites was applied at the Borough level. The exception to this was in East Colchester Special Policy Area where the area of search for reasonably available alternative sites was restricted to East Colchester.

7.131 This alternative approach for East Colchester which was agreed by both DCLG and the Environment Agency in 2008 when the Core Strategy was being prepared was deemed necessary to enable the continued regeneration of this part of town. The regeneration of East Colchester is still ongoing therefore the Council will continue to apply the alternative approach.

7.132 The methodology for the application of the Sequential Test has been agreed with the Environment Agency. The Sequential Test Report is published as part of the Local Plan evidence base. When preparing planning applications, developers should refer to the Flood Risk Sequential Test Report, for detailed site specific measures and mitigations that need to be delivered to ensure that flood risk is properly addressed as part of development proposals.

7.133 The NPPF and PPG also require individual Flood Risk Assessments to be prepared in certain circumstances to assess flood risk at the site specific level. Site specific Flood Risk Assessments must therefore be submitted with planning applications for all development proposals in Flood Zone 2 or 3 and in Flood Zone 1 for sites over 1 hectare (ha), land which has been identified by the Environment Agency as having critical drainage problems, land identified in a strategic flood risk assessment as being at increased flood risk in future, or land that may be subject to other sources of flooding, where its development would introduce a more vulnerable use.

7.134 The NPPF and PPG also set out the requirements for the use for Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) to minimise the risk of flooding from new development. While all development should include SuDS within their design, only major development proposals are subject to consultation with Essex County Council as Local Lead Flood Authority. A surface water drainage strategy should therefore be submitted with all major planning applications to ensure that the need for SuDS has been properly considered as part of the planning application process. These and the Local Planning Authority's most up to date SFRA will be used to consider planning applications where relevant.

7.135 Development in higher risk flood zones will be restricted to certain categories where an identified need for that type of development in that location exists. The Exception Test allows for development in high risk areas but is only to be applied where there is no other option i.e. where there are large areas of land in Flood Zones 2 and 3 and the Sequential Test cannot deliver acceptable alternative sites, but where some continuing development is necessary. Advice on the Exception test is included in the PPG. Where development proceeds in areas with a known flood risk, mitigation measures will need to be delivered as part of

proposals not only to alleviate risk to people and property, but also to ensure that the development is safe over its planned lifetime.

7.136 Small sites (less than 1ha) in Flood Zone 1 that are surrounded by Flood Zone 2 or 3 land, i.e., dry islands, are likely to be treated in the same way as the surrounding land. Each area will have its unique characteristics and a site specific Flood Risk Assessment may be required even for those sites less than 1ha to ensure that safe access / egress exists for the development and that residents are safe during the duration of the flood period.

7.137 The use of SuDS to manage water run-off can be an important tool in minimising flooding by increasing the provision of permeable surfaces in an area that allow water to seep gradually into the ground rather than running directly into a drainage network, thereby reducing the risk of overloading the system. SuDS can also help reduce the impact of diffuse pollution from run-off and flooding. The effective use of permeable surfaces, soakaways and water storage areas should be incorporated in all new development where technically possible. Early consideration should be given to the potential to use SuDS to identify when/where the use of such technologies is feasible and to also identify which type of SuDS is most appropriate to local site conditions. Only where there is a significant risk of pollution to the water environment, inappropriate soil conditions and/or engineering difficulties, should alternative methods of drainage discharge of water from a site be considered.

7.138 Developers will be encouraged to enter into early discussions with the Local Planning Authority and the Lead Local Flood Authority and as part of discussions, maintenance and long term adoption responsibilities should be explored and agreed, where possible, as part of the SuDS approval process, prior to the start of development.

7.139 Colchester's Surface Water Management Plan (SWMP) 2013, which only covers Urban Colchester, has identified 9 Critical Drainage Areas (CDAs) and Local Flood Risk Zones (LFRZs). Essex County Council have produced an update to the SWMP Action Plan in 2018. As of April 2018, there are now 12 CDAs and LFRZs within urban Colchester. These can be found on the Essex County Council Asset Register. These delineate the areas where the impact of surface water flooding is expected to be greatest within Colchester. It is acknowledged that the CDAs (and LFRZs) do not account for all the areas that could be affected by surface water flooding. It is therefore important that the policies seek to reduce the risk from surface water flooding throughout the whole Borough. The SWMP also encourages Essex County Council to implement similar policies, so that both authorities promote and apply best management practises regarding the implementation of SuDS and the reduction of runoff volumes.

7.140 All new developments in Urban Colchester falling within Critical Drainage Areas will be required to contribute towards the delivery of flood defence solutions within the respective CDAs as specified in the SWMP for Colchester.

Policy DM23: Flood Risk and Water Management

The Local Planning Authority will seek to direct development away from land at risk of flooding in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework and the Planning Practice Guidance. Sites proposed for allocation in the Local Plan have been considered sequentially with respect to flood risk. The Sequential Test will be applied to planning applications for new sites coming forward that have not been allocated through the Plan.

Development will only be supported where it can be demonstrated that the proposal meets flood management requirements in the NPPF, the PPG and policy DM23.

Development proposals will be required to deliver or contribute to the delivery of flood defence/protection measures and/or flood mitigation measures to minimise the risk of increased flooding both within the development boundary and off-site in all flood zones and to ensure that the development remains safe throughout the life of the development. Proposals that include measures to enhance the flood resilience of new or renovated buildings will be encouraged, particularly in areas with a history of local flooding.

Where proposals that require planning permission include driveways, hardstanding or paving, the use of permeable materials and landscaping will be sought to minimise the cumulative impacts of flooding from such developments.

Developments will also be required to comply with the following as indicated in the Colchester Surface Water Management Plan (or updates if appropriate):

(i) All developments across the catchment (excluding minor house extensions less than 50m^2) which result in a net increase in impermeable area are to include at least one 'at source' SuDS measure e.g., bio-retention planter box, green/brown roofs). This is to help reduce the peak volume of run off discharging from development sites. It is recommended that a SuDS treatment train is utilised to assist in this reduction;

(ii) All major development proposals are required to reduce post-development runoff rate back to the greenfield 1 in 1 year rate, with an allowance for climate change. On brownfield sites where this is not achievable, then a minimum betterment of 50% should be demonstrated for all flood events. This approach accords with the NPPF/PPG and the most up to date UKCIP guidance). All minor sites should limit discharge rates as much as practical while considering the increased risk of blockage associated with smaller outfall orifice sizing;

(iii) Developments located in any of the Critical Drainage Areas (CDAs) as defined in Colchester's Surface Water Management Plan or Local Flood Risk Zones (LFRZs) and redevelopments of more than one property or area greater than 0.1 hectare should seek betterment to a greenfield runoff rate;

(iv) New developments in Critical Drainage Areas will be required to provide or contribute towards the provision of flood mitigation options via CIL/S106 contributions, identified in the Colchester Surface Water Management Plan, to reduce or mitigate the risk of flooding to existing properties located

within the CDA and to accommodate the drainage needs of the new developments.

Policy DM24: Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems

All new residential and commercial development, car parks and hard standings should incorporate Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) appropriate to the nature of the site. Such systems shall provide optimum water runoff rates and volumes taking into account relevant local or national standards; and shall ensure that the quality of runoff is consistent with the requirements of the Water Framework Directive. SuDS design quality will be expected to conform with standards encompassed in the relevant BRE, CIRIA standards and Essex County Council's SuDS Design Guide (and as updated) to the satisfaction of the Lead Local Flood Authority.

Surface water should be managed as close to its source as possible and on the surface where practicable to do so through the use of green roofs, rain gardens, soakaways and permeable paving. Maximum use should also be made of low land take drainage measures such as rain water recycling, green roofs, permeable surfaces and water butts. Appropriate pollution control measures should be incorporated as part of SuDS to reduce the risk of pollution. Including through reference to the CIRIA SuDS Manual, it must be ensured that sufficient treatment steps are provided prior to any surface water discharge. Regard should be given to both the nature of the proposed development and the sensitivity of the receiving water environment.

Opportunities should be taken to integrate sustainable drainage within the design of the development, to create amenity space, enhance biodiversity and manage pollution. Existing drainage features such as ditches and ponds should be retained on site where possible as part of SuDS schemes.

Only where there is a significant risk of pollution to the water environment, inappropriate soil conditions and/or engineering difficulties, should alternative methods of drainage be considered. It will be necessary to demonstrate why it is not achievable. If alternative methods are to be considered, adequate assessment and justification should be provided and consideration should still be given to pre- and post-runoff rates.

SuDS design should be an integral part of design proposals and clear details of proposed SuDS together with how they will be managed and maintained will be required as part of any planning application. Only proposals which clearly demonstrate that a satisfactory SuDS layout with appropriate maintenance is possible, or compelling justification as to why SuDS should not be incorporated into a scheme, or are unviable, are likely to be successful. Contributions in the form of commuted sums may be sought in legal agreements to ensure that the drainage systems can be adequately maintained into the future. The SuDS should be designed to ensure that the maintenance and operation requirements are economically proportionate.

Renewable Energy, Water, Waste and Recycling

7.141 Climate change is an important issue, which underpins the Local Plan. New developments will need to help address the challenges of climate change and contribute positively towards the future sustainability of Colchester Borough. Policy CC1 sets out how the Local Planning Authority will achieve a low carbon future for Colchester.

7.142 To tackle climate change and improve sustainability, it is important for the Local Planning Authority to promote energy, water, waste and recycling efficiency and renewable energy in new developments. In its commitment to deliver sustainable communities, the Local Planning Authority is seeking to create communities that use natural resources sustainably and minimise waste.

7.143 The Local Planning Authority will support proposals for onshore and offshore wind farms (and associated infrastructure) and solar farms that satisfy the broad objectives set out in Policy DM25. Preferable locations include industrial areas and utilising roofs. The Local Planning Authority will also support the development of community led renewable energy schemes as part of Neighbourhood Plans and encourage the delivery of District Heating Schemes within the Garden Community and as part of future development in the Northern Gateway.

7.144 BRE has developed the Home Quality Mark (HQM) as part of the BREEAM family of quality and sustainability standards. The HQM will enable developers to showcase the quality of their new homes, and identify them as having the added benefits of being likely to need less maintenance, cheaper to run, better located, and more able to cope with the demands of a changing climate. The HQM demonstrates a home's environmental footprint and its resilience to flooding and overheating in a changing climate, highlights the impact of a home on the occupant's health and wellbeing, and evaluates the digital connectivity and performance of the home. The Local Planning Authority will support developers who choose to register their homes under the HQM. Non-residential development will be encouraged to achieve a BREEAM rating of ‘very good’.

7.145 Ensuring a continual supply of water in the Borough is likely to become increasingly important in light of climate change. It will be important that water resources continue to be protected for present and future generations. They should be used efficiently to make the maximum use of the resource and to reduce the need for major new water storage facilities and related infrastructure.

7.146 The Water Cycle Study report concluded that development at sites shown to have potentially limited sewer network capacity should be subject to pre-development enquiry with Anglian Water to determine if infrastructure upgrades are needed prior to planning permission being granted.

7.147 With regards to water supply, the overall recommendation in the Water Cycle Study was the need to move towards a more water neutral position to enhance the sustainability of new development coming forward. To achieve this, the report recommended reducing water demand and retrofitting easy fit water savings

devices into the existing domestic housing stock and business premises where practical to do so.

7.148 Colchester Borough falls within an area classified as having serious water stress (See the Environment Agency 2013 'Water stressed areas final classification report' and the Joint advice to Local Planning Authorities: Optional Higher Water efficiency standard for new housing (February 2020)). The Anglian River Basin Management Plan (2015) highlights the role that increased efficiency can play in preventing deterioration in water bodies. In recognition of the increasing demand for water and serious water stress within the Borough, the Local Planning Authority will require developments to incorporate water saving measures, in line with the tighter optional requirement of Part G2 of national Building Regulations of 110/l/h/d.

7.149 The Council is seeking to minimise waste and improve reuse and recycling rates through better recycling services and public awareness programs. It has a current aspirational target of 60% recycling of household waste. At present approximately 48% of household waste is recycled. The Council will continue to improve services and information to further help increase recycling rates over the Local Plan period. New developments will be expected to support this target by employing best practice technology to optimise the opportunities for recycling and minimising waste and by providing better recycling facilities. This will include easy recycling systems for the householder as required in DM12 Housing Standards, but also recycling on the go facilities in public areas.

Policy DM25: Renewable Energy, Water, Waste and Recycling

The Local Planning Authority's commitment to carbon reduction includes the promotion of efficient use of energy and resources, alongside waste minimisation and recycling.

The Local Planning Authority will support residential developments that help reduce carbon emissions in accordance with national Building Regulations. The use of the Home Quality Mark will be supported. Non-residential developments will be encouraged to achieve a minimum BREEAM rating of 'Very Good'.

The Local Planning Authority will encourage the use of sustainable construction techniques in tandem with high quality design and materials to reduce energy demand, waste and the use of natural resources, including the sustainable management of the Borough's water resources.

To achieve greater water efficiencies new residential developments will be required to meet the Building Regulation optional higher water efficiency standard of 110 litres per person per day, as set out in Building Regulations part G2.

To help meet waste reduction and recycling targets, the Local Planning Authority will support proposals for sustainable waste management facilities identified in the Waste Management Plan which minimise impacts on the communities living close to the sites (noise, pollution, traffic) and on the local environment and landscape. New developments will be expected to support this objective by

employing best practice technology to optimise the opportunities for recycling and minimising waste and by providing better recycling facilities.

The Local Planning Authority will support proposals for renewable energy projects including micro-generation, offshore wind farms (plus land based ancillary infrastructure) solar farms, solar panels on buildings, wind farms, District Heating Networks and community led renewable energy initiatives at appropriate locations in the Borough, which will need to be subject to a Habitats Regulations Assessment and if necessary an Appropriate Assessment, to help reduce Colchester's carbon footprint.

Renewable energy schemes with potential for adverse effects on internationally or nationally designated nature conservation sites, sites or nationally designated landscapes (Dedham Vale AONB) and heritage assets, will only be supported in exceptional circumstances, where it can be demonstrated that the designation objectives for the area will not be compromised, that adverse impacts can be adequately mitigated or where it can be demonstrated that any adverse impacts are clearly outweighed by the social and economic benefits provided by the energy proposal.

All applications for renewable energy proposals should be located and designed in such a way to minimise increases in ambient noise levels. Landscape and visual impacts should be mitigated through good design, careful siting and layout and landscaping measures. Transport Assessments covering the construction, operation and decommissioning of any wind farm or solar farm proposal will be required and should be produced at the pre-application stage so acceptability can be determined and mitigation measures identified. A condition will be attached to planning consents for wind turbines and solar farm proposals to ensure that the site is restored when the turbines or panels are taken out of service.

8. Delivery Strategy and Implementation

8.1 The Local Planning Authority will work in partnership with a range of public, private and voluntary sector organisations to co-ordinate investment and ensure the successful implementation and delivery of the Local Plan Vision, Objectives and Policies. To achieve this aim, the Local Planning Authority will use a range of mechanisms including masterplanning, Planning Performance Agreements (PPAs), and formation of delivery bodies. This work will occur both at the strategic Garden Community level, as explained in Section 1 of the Plan, and at the more local level, as provided in the policies and allocations for sites in Colchester set forth in Section 2 of the Plan. The Local Planning Authority's Infrastructure Delivery Plan sets out the strategic infrastructure requirements of new development across the Borough along with information on delivery partners, timing and funding.

8.2 A key mechanism for implementing the Local Plan is the consideration of planning applications through the development management process. The Local Plan should be read as a whole and applications for planning permission will be considered against all relevant policies in the Local Plan, the NPPF and other material considerations.

8.3 The Local Planning Authority has assessed the Local Plan to ensure its policies and allocations support economic prosperity and development viability. As explained in Policy SG7, developers will be required to contribute towards providing and enhancing infrastructure. Planning obligations through Section 106 will continue to provide funding to mitigate negative impacts relating to a specific development. CIL will complement and not duplicate planning obligations.

9. Monitoring

9.1 The Local Plan will need to be monitored regularly in order to assess the effectiveness of policies and identify the need for review of any or all policies. The following table of Targets and Monitoring Indicators, lists the indicators that will be used to monitor delivery and progress on plan targets. The Local Planning Authority will gather monitoring information together in its annual Authority Monitoring Report (AMR). The AMR will measure progress on the implementation of policies and the delivery of new development and supporting infrastructure using appropriate targets and indicators. The AMR will include an annual updated housing trajectory which will set out the net additional dwellings completed to date and the estimated future completions for the remainder of the Plan Period.

Table 1: Monitoring Targets and Indicators

Policies	Local Plan Objectives	Targets	Key Indicators in Authority Monitoring Report
SG-Sustainable Growth Policies	Ensure new development is sustainable and minimises the use of scarce natural resources and addresses the causes and potential impacts of climate change and encourages renewable energy.	Allocate sufficient employment land in line with spatial strategy and evidence base.	Permissions granted for employment and leisure by type
	Focus new development at sustainable locations to create new communities with distinctive identities whilst supporting existing communities, local businesses, and sustainable transport. Provide high quality housing of all tenures at accessible locations to accommodate our growing community.	Deliver new housing in line with spatial strategy and Objectively Assessed Need target of 920 units per annum.	Housing completions per annum (net)
	Ensure there are sufficient sites allocated in the right locations to support employment growth over the plan period.		
	Focus development at accessible locations which support public transport, walking and cycling, and reduce the need to travel.	Increase share of non-motorised transport.	Monitor modal splits and self-containment via Census; take-up of Travel Plans
	Secure infrastructure to support new development.	Delivery of infrastructure schemes identified in the Local Plan.	Key infrastructure projects delivered
	Promotion of healthy lifestyles through		

Policies	Local Plan Objectives	Targets	Key Indicators in Authority Monitoring Report
	the provision and enhancement of sport and recreation facilities, public open space and green infrastructure.		
CC Climate Change Policy	Shape places and secure new development so as to minimise vulnerability and provide resilience to impacts arising from climate change, and to do so in ways consistent with cutting wider greenhouse gas emissions that are outside of the Council's own building services and operations.	The target to reduce carbon emissions by 40% from 2008 baseline data by 2020 applies to the Council's own buildings, services and operations. New development to comply with building regulations requiring reductions in carbon emissions.	Greenhouse Gas Emissions reporting Local Authority Carbon Management Plan
ENV Environment Policies	Protection of the countryside and coast. Developing a green infrastructure network across the borough. Ensure new development avoids areas of flood risk and reduce future flood risk where possible. Protection and enhancement of landscapes, biodiversity, green spaces, air and water quality, and river corridors.	Minimise impact of new development in areas designated due to their environmental importance. Zero applications to be approved contrary to Environment Agency advice of flood risk/flood defence grounds. All developments to incorporate water management schemes including Sustainable Urban Drainage (SUDs). Zero percent loss of Local Wildlife Sites; ancient woodland; and priority habitats and species. Manage visitor numbers at habitats Sites at levels that do not cause damage or affect site integrity.	Amount of development in designated areas Number of planning applications approved contrary to advice given by the EA Number of major schemes incorporating water management schemes. Number and area of sites/habitats within the Borough Record number of visitors to habitats sites

Policies	Local Plan Objectives	Targets	Key Indicators in Authority Monitoring Report
		No increase in number of Air quality management Districts (AQMDs)	Number of AQMDs
Place Policies	Ensure the unique qualities of different communities and environments paying particular attention to heritage assets, in the Borough are identified, protected and enhanced through policies and allocations which ensure high quality, consistency, equity and responsiveness to local character.	Assist communities in the preparation of Neighbourhood Plans. Zero percent of new developments to result in loss of Grade I and II* and scheduled monuments at risk.	Number of Neighbourhood Plans adopted Number of listed buildings lost
	Promote high quality design and sustain Colchester's historic character, found in its buildings, townscape and archaeology.	New development to contribute to open space, green infrastructure and streetscape improvements.	Delivery of public open space, green infrastructure and streetscape improvements
	Improve streetscapes, open spaces and green links to provide attractive and accessible spaces for residents to live, work and play.	Provide 30% of all housing on qualifying sites as affordable housing.	Percentage of affordable housing units provided on qualifying sites

Glossary

Affordable Housing – The Council's definition will accord with the current definition in the National Planning Policy Framework (or any successor document) but will also include those uses eligible under Essex County Council's Independent Living Programme. It includes social rented, affordable rented and intermediate housing, provided to eligible households whose needs are not met by the market. Affordable housing should meet the needs of eligible households including availability at a cost low enough for them to afford, determined with regard to local incomes and local house prices.

Air Quality Management Areas (AQMA) – Areas designated by local authorities because they are not likely to achieve national air quality objectives by the relevant deadlines.

Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) – Areas of high scenic quality that have statutory protection in order to conserve and enhance the natural beauty of their landscapes.

Authority Monitoring Report (AMR) – A report published annually by the Local Planning Authority, monitoring progress in delivering progress in Local Plan policies and allocations.

Brownfield Land (also known as Previously Developed Land) - Land which is or was occupied by a permanent structure, including the curtilage of the developed land (although it should not be assumed that the whole of the curtilage should be developed) and any associated fixed surface infrastructure. This excludes: land that is or has been occupied by agricultural or forestry buildings; land that has been developed for minerals extraction or waste disposal by landfill purposes where provision for restoration has been made through development management procedures; land in built-up areas such as private residential gardens, parks, recreation grounds and allotments; and land that was previously-developed but where the remains of the permanent structure or fixed surface structure have blended into the landscape in the process of time.

Community Facilities - Are buildings, which enable a variety of local activity to take place including, but not limited to, the following:

- Schools, Universities and other educational facilities
- Libraries and community centres
- Doctors surgeries, medical centres and hospitals
- Public houses and local shops
- Museums and art galleries
- Child care centres
- Sport and recreational facilities
- Youth clubs
- Playgrounds
- Cemeteries
- Places of worship

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) – A mechanism by which local authorities can set a standard charge on specified development in their area to pay for new infrastructure required to support growth.

Competent person (to prepare site investigation information) - A person with a recognised relevant qualification, sufficient experience in dealing with the type(s) of pollution or land instability, and membership of a relevant professional organisation.

Development – The definition in Section 55 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 is 'means the carrying out of building, engineering, mining or other operation in, on, over or under land, or the making of any material change in the use of any building or other land'.

Development Plan – This includes adopted Local Plans and Neighbourhood Plans and is defined in Section 38 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. The Development Plan is the starting point for decision making.

District Centre – important role serving the day-to-day needs of their local populations as well as providing access to shops and services for neighbouring areas across and beyond the Borough, but not to a level comparable with Colchester Town Centre.

Edge of centre - For retail purposes, a location that is well connected and up to 300 metres of the primary shopping area. For all other main town centre uses, a location within 300 metres of a town centre boundary. For office development, this includes locations outside the town centre but within 500 metres of a public transport interchange. In determining whether a site falls within the definition of edge of centre, account should be taken of local circumstances.

Habitats Sites - The network of protected sites established under the Birds Directive and Habitats Directive (includes SPA, SAC, and Ramsar sites).

Garden Community – Communities which are holistically planned new settlements that respond directly to their regional, local and individual site context and opportunities to create developments underpinned by a series of interrelated principles which are based on the following TCPA Garden City Principles:

- Land value capture for the benefit of the community.
- Strong vision, leadership and community engagement.
- Community ownership of land and long-term stewardship of assets.
- Mixed-tenure homes and housing types that are genuinely affordable.
- A wide range of local jobs in the Garden City within easy commuting distance of homes.
- Beautifully and imaginatively designed homes with gardens, combining the best of town and country to create healthy communities, and including opportunities to grow food.
- Development that enhances the natural environment, providing a comprehensive green infrastructure network and net biodiversity gains, and that uses zero-carbon and energy-positive technology to ensure climate resilience.

- Strong cultural, recreational and shopping facilities in walkable, vibrant, sociable neighbourhoods.
- Integrated and accessible transport systems, with walking, cycling and public transport designed to be the most attractive forms of local transport.

Green Infrastructure – A network of multi-functional green space, urban and rural, which is capable of delivering a wide range of environmental and quality of life benefits for local communities.

Greenfield Site - Land which has never been built on before or where the remains of any structure or activity have blended into the landscape over time.

Gypsies and Travellers - Persons of nomadic habit of life whatever their race or origin, including such persons who on grounds only of their own or their family's or dependants' educational or health needs or old age have ceased to travel temporarily, but excluding members of an organised group of travelling showpeople or circus people travelling together as such. In determining whether persons are "gypsies and travellers" consideration will be given to the following issues amongst other relevant matters:

a) whether they previously led a nomadic habit of life
b) the reasons for ceasing their nomadic habit of life
c) whether there is an intention of living a nomadic habit of life in the future, and if so, how soon and in what circumstances.

Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) - The Habitat Regulation Assessment is a statutory requirement under the Conservation (Natural Habitats) (Amendment) (England and Wales) Regulations 2010 (as amended). An HRA is required for a plan or project which, either alone or in combination with other plans or projects is likely to have a significant effect on the integrity of a European/Habitats site.

Infrastructure - Infrastructure means any structure, building, system, facility and/or provision required by an area for its social and/or economic function and/or well-being including (but not exclusively):

- footways, cycleways and highways
- public transport
- drainage and flood protection
- waste recycling facilities
- education and childcare
- healthcare
- sports, leisure and recreation facilities
- community and social facilities
- cultural facilities
- emergency services
- green infrastructure
- open space
- affordable housing
- broadband
- facilities for specific sections of the community such as youth or the elderly.

Local Centre – An essential role providing a range of small shops and services to meet the basic needs of local communities, serving a small catchment.

Local Development Scheme (LDS) - This is the project plan for a three year period for the production of all documents that will comprise the Local Plan. It identifies each Local Development Document and establishes a timetable for preparing each.

Local Plan - The plan for the future development of the local area, drawn up by the Local Planning Authority in consultation with the community. In law this is described as the Development Plan Documents adopted under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. Current core strategies or other planning policies, which under the regulations would be considered to be Development Plan Documents, form part of the Local Plan.

Local Wildlife Sites – Habitats identified by Essex Wildlife Trust as important for the conservation of wildlife.

Main Town Centre Uses – As defined in the National Planning Policy Framework, main Town Centre uses include retail development (Including warehouse clubs and factory outlet centres); leisure, entertainment facilities the more intensive sport and recreation uses (including cinemas, restaurants, drive-through restaurants, bars and pubs, night-clubs, casinos, health and fitness centres, indoor bowling centres, and bingo halls); offices; and arts, culture and tourism development (including theatres, museums, galleries and convert halls, hotels and conference facilities).

Mineral Safeguarding Area - An area designated by the Minerals Planning Authority (Essex County Council) which covers known deposits of minerals which are desired to be kept safeguarded from unnecessary sterilisation by non-mineral development.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) - Government planning policy which replaces a large number of Planning Policy Guidance notes and Planning Policy Statements with one single document. It sets out new planning requirements and objectives in relation to issues such as housing, employment, transport and the historic and natural environment amongst others.

Neighbourhood Plan - A plan prepared by a Parish Council, Neighbourhood Forum, or other locally constituted community group, for a particular neighbourhood.

Objectively Assessed Housing Need (OAHN) – The National Planning Policy Framework requires that local planning authorities should use their evidence base to ensure that their Local Plan meets the full, objectively assessed needs for market and affordable housing in the housing market area, including identifying key sites which are critical to the delivery of the housing strategy over the Plan Period. Further guidance provided in Planning Practice Guidance provides that 'The assessment of development needs is an objective assessment of need based on facts and unbiased evidence. Plan makers should not apply constraints to the overall assessment of need, such as limitations imposed by the supply of land for new development, historic under performance, viability, infrastructure or environmental constraints. However, these considerations will need to be addressed when bringing evidence bases together to identify specific policies within development plans.'

Open space - All open space of public value, including not just land, but also areas of water (such as rivers, canals, lakes and reservoirs) which offer important opportunities for sport and recreation and can act as a visual amenity.

Original building - A building as it existed on 1 July 1948 or, if constructed after 1 July 1948, as it was built originally.

Out of centre - A location which is not in or on the edge of a centre but not necessarily outside the urban area.

Out of town - A location out of centre that is outside the existing urban area.

Permitted Development Rights – The level of development that can take place before planning permission is required, as stated in The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995, as amended.

Planning Practice Guidance – Guidance and detail supporting the National Planning Policy Framework which is published online and regularly updated.

Planning Obligation/Section 106 Agreement – A legally binding agreement between a Local Planning Authority and any person interested in land within the area of the local authority, or an undertaking by such person, under which development is restricted, activities or uses required; or a financial contribution to be made. Used to mitigate the impacts of development.

Previously Developed Land - see brownfield land above.

Primary shopping area - Defined area where retail development is concentrated (generally comprising the primary and those secondary frontages which are adjoining and closely related to the primary shopping frontage).

Primary and secondary frontages - Primary frontages are likely to include a high proportion of retail uses which may include food, drinks, clothing and household goods. Secondary frontages provide greater opportunities for a diversity of uses such as restaurants, cinemas and businesses.

Ramsar Site – An area identified by international agreement on endangered habitats.

Recreation Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy (RAMS) – A tool used to manage and mitigate the adverse effects from new developments on habitats Sites.

Rural Diversification (also known as Farm Diversification) – The alternative use of land or buildings which were once used for farming purposes or rural activity such as grain store, stables or poultry shed. The Local Plan definition is “alternative use of land or buildings that remains within the farming unit in the ownership of the farmer and run from the existing house”.

Rural exception sites - Small sites used for affordable housing in perpetuity where sites would not normally be used for housing. Rural exception sites seek to address the needs of the local community by accommodating households who are either current residents

or have an existing family or employment connection. Small numbers of market homes may be allowed at the local authority's discretion, for example where essential to enable the delivery of affordable units without grant funding.

Sequential Test (Retail) – A test required to demonstrate that no other sites are available in a location which is ranked as preferable. Centre sites are sequentially preferable, followed by edge of centre sites. Sequential testing starts from the Primary Shopping Area for Retail Uses and the Town Centre Boundary for all other main town centre uses.

Setting of a heritage asset - The surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral.

Shoreline Management Plans - A plan providing a large-scale assessment of the risk to people and to the developed, historic and natural environment associated with coastal processes.

Significance (for heritage policy) - The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. That interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting.

Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) - Land notified under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 as an ecosystem of flora and/or fauna considered by English Heritage (now Natural England) to be of significant national value and interest to merit its conservation and management.

Special Area of Conservation (SAC) - A site of European Community importance designated by the member states, where necessary conservation measures are applied for the maintenance or restoration, at favourable conservation status, of the habitats and/or species for which the site is designated.

Special Protection Area (SPA) - A site designated under the Birds Directive by the member states where appropriate steps are taken to protect the bird species for which the site is designated.

Starter Homes – Newly built properties that must be sold to someone who is a first-time buyer below the age of 40, with a discount of at least 20 per cent off the market value.

Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) - This will set out the standards that the Local Planning Authority intend to achieve in relation to involving the community and all stakeholders in the preparation, alteration and continuing review of all Local Development Plan Documents and in significant planning applications, and also how the Local Planning Authority intends to achieve those standards. The Statement of Community Involvement will not be a Development Plan Document (see above) but will be subject to independent examination. A consultation statement showing how the Local Planning Authority has complied with its Statement of Community Involvement should accompany all Local Development Documents.

Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) - A study prepared for the Local Planning Authority's Evidence Base further to national guidance which assesses the overall state of the housing market and advises on future housing policies used to inform the Local Planning Authority's Housing Strategy.

Strategic Land Availability Assessment (SLAA) - A study prepared for the Local Planning Authority's Evidence Base further to national guidance which identifies sites with development potential for development and assesses their developability, deliverability and capacity.

Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) – A document produced by the Local Planning Authority to add further detailed guidance and information on a particular subject such as Sustainable Construction or Open Space, Sport and Recreational Facilities. An SPD is subject to a formal consultation period and then is used as a material consideration when determining planning applications.

Sustainability Appraisal (SA) - An appraisal of the economic, social and environmental effects of a plan from the outset of the preparation process, so that decisions can be made that accord with sustainable development.

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) - A procedure (set out in the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004) which requires the formal environmental assessment of certain plans and programmes which are likely to have significant effects on the environment.

Sustainable Communities - places where people want to live and work, now and in the future. They meet the diverse needs of existing and future residents, are sensitive to their environment, and contribute to a high quality of life. They are safe and inclusive, well planned, built and run, and offer equality of opportunity and good services for all.

Sustainable Construction – is the name given to building in an energy efficient way. The incorporation of many new technologies and energy saving techniques into a building can dramatically reduce the CO2 emissions and carbon foot print of a building. Initiatives include grey water recycling systems, solar panels, home recycling, wind turbines and ground water heating systems.

Sustainable Development - Development which meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

Sustainable Urban Drainage (SUDs) – A sustainable drainage system is designed to reduce the potential impact of new and existing developments with respect to surface water drainage discharges.

Sustainable Transport - Sustainable Transport refers to walking, cycling and public transport, including train and bus. Sustainable Transport is transport that makes efficient use of natural resources and minimises pollution. In particular, Sustainable Transport seeks to minimise the emissions of carbon dioxide – a greenhouse gas associated with climate change – as well as nitrogen oxides, sulphur oxides, carbon monoxide and particulates, all of which affect local air quality.

Town Centre - Area defined on the proposal map, including the primary shopping area and areas predominantly occupied by main town centre uses within or adjacent to the primary shopping area. References to town centres or centres apply to town centres, district centres and local centres but exclude small parades of shops. At a local level, Colchester Town Centre is the cultural and commercial heart of the Borough. Colchester's Town Centre includes the historic core of Colchester and is characterised by a mix of retail, residential, office, community facilities and other uses. See **Main Town Centre Uses** for a list of town centre uses.

Travel Plan - A plan demonstrating how a development would encourage its users to use more sustainable methods of transport to access a development.

Use Class - Different uses are given a classification as defined by The Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (As amended). For example, a C3 use would refer to a residential use.

Appendix 1 – Policies Maps Index

Colchester Borough Local Plan Policy Map

Colchester Borough Local Plan Policy Map (Insets)

Colchester Urban Area

Colchester Town Centre – Policy TC1-4
Colchester Town Centre Retail Frontages
North Colchester – Policy NC1
North Colchester – Policies NC2-4
South Colchester – Policies SC1-3
East Colchester – Policies EC1-4
West Colchester – Policies WC1-5
West Colchester – Policy WC3

Sustainable Settlements
Abberton and Langenhoe – Policy SS1
Boxted – Policy SS2
Chappel and Wakes Colne – Policy SS3
Copford and Copford Green – Policy SS4
Dedham and Dedham Heath – Policy SG1 and OV1
Eight Ash Green – Policy SS5
Fordham – Policy SS6
Great Horkesley – Policy SS7
Great Tey – Policy SS8
Langham – Policy SS9
Layer de la Haye – Policy SS10
Marks Tey – Policy SS11
Mersea Island – Policy SS12b
Mersea Island – Policy SS12a, SS12b and SS12c
Rowhedge – Policy SS13
Tiptree – Policy SS14
West Bergholt – Policy SS15
Wivenhoe – Policy SS16

Other Villages
Aldham – Policy OV1
Birch and Layer Breton – Policy OV1
Easthorpe – Policy OV1
Fingringhoe – Policy OV1
Great Wigborough – Policy OV1
Little Horkesley – Policy OV1
Messing – Policy OV1
Mount Bures – Policy OV1
Peldon – Policy OV1
Salcott – Policy OV1
Wormingford – Policy OV1

Appendix 2 – Superseded Policies

Core Strategy Focused Review Version (July 2014), Site Allocations Adopted October 2010, Development Policies Focused Review Version (July 2014) - Superseded by the Colchester Local Plan 2013-2033

New Policy Number	Policy ref on 2017-2033 Local Plan	Replaces Policy
Section 1		
SP1	Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development	SD1
SP2	Recreational disturbance Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy (RAMS)	-
SP3	Spatial Strategy for North Essex	H1
SP4	Meeting Housing Needs	H1
SP5	Providing for Employment	CE1
SP6	Infrastructure and Connectivity	SD2
SP7	Place Shaping Principles	-
SP8	Development and Delivery of New Garden Community in North Essex	-
SP9	Tendring/Colchester Borders Garden Community	-
Section 2		
SG1	Colchester's Spatial Strategy	H1
SG2	Housing Delivery	H1
SG3	Economic Growth Provision	CE3/DP5
SG4	Local Economic Areas	CE3/DP5
SG5	Centre Hierarchy	CE1
SG6	Town Centre Uses	DP6
SG6a	Local Centres	CE2c/DP7
SG7	Infrastructure Delivery and Impact Mitigation	SD2/SD3
SG8	Neighbourhood Plan	ENV2
ENV1	Environment	ENV1/DP 21
ENV2	Coastal Areas	ENV1/DP23
ENV3	Green Infrastructure	ENV1/PR1
ENV4	Dedham Vale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty	ENV1/DP22
ENV5	Pollution and Contaminated Land	DP1
CC1	Climate Change	ER1
PP1	Generic Infrastructure and Mitigation Requirements	DP3
TC1	Town Centre Policy and Hierarchy	CE1
TC2	Retail Frontages	DP6
TC3	Town Centre allocations	SA TC1
TC4	Transport in Colchester Town centre	TA4/DP18
NC1	North Colchester and Severalls Strategic Economic Areas	CE1/SA NGA1/SA NGA3
NC2	North Station Special Policy Area	SA TC1
NC3	North Colchester	-
NC4	Transport in North Colchester	TA4/DP18
SC1	South Colchester Allocations	CE3*
SC2	Middlewick Ranges	-
SC3	Transport in South Colchester	TA4/DP18
EC1	Knowledge gateway and University of Essex Strategic Economic Area	CE1/SA EC7
EC2	East Colchester / Hythe Special Policy Area	SA EC2/SA EC3 Area 1/ SA EC4 Area 2/SA

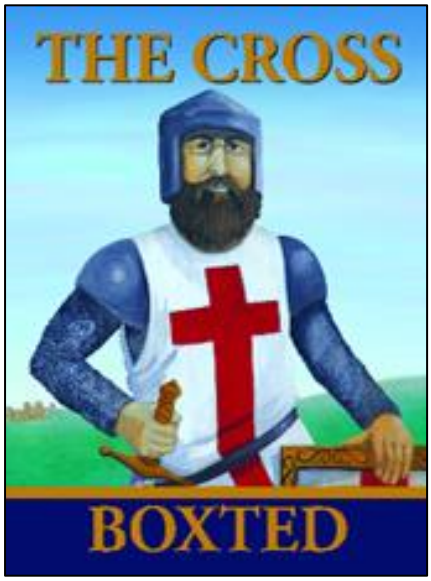
New Policy Number	Policy ref on 2017-2033 Local Plan	Replaces Policy
		EC6 Area 4
EC3	East Colchester	SA H1/ SA EC1/SA EC5 Area 3 CE3
EC4	Transport in East Colchester	TA4 / DP18/SA EC8
WC1	Stanway Strategic Economic Area	CE1/ SA STA1/ SA STA3
WC2	Stanway	SA STA1/SA STA5
WC3	Colchester Zoo	-
WC4	West Colchester	-
WC5	Transport in Colchester	TA4 /DP18/SA STA4
SS1	Abberton and Langenhoe	CE3*
SS2	Boxted	-
SS3	Chappel and Wakes Colne	-
SS4	Copford	-
SS5	Eight Ash Green	-
SS6	Fordham	-
SS7	Great Horkesley	CE3*
SS8	Great Tey	CE3*
SS9	Langham	CE3*
SS10	Layer de La Haye	-
SS11	Marks Tey	CE3*
SS12a	West Mersea	-
SS12b	Coast Road West Mersea	DP23
SS12c	Mersea Island Caravan Parks	DP10/ DP21/DP23
SS13	Rowhedge	-
SS14	Tiptree	SA TIP2
SS15	West Bergholt	-
SS16	Wivenhoe	-
OV1	Development in Other Villages	ENV2
OV2	Countryside	ENV2/DP9
DM1	Health and Wellbeing	DP2
DM2	Community Facilities	DP4
DM3	Education Provision	SD3
DM4	Sports Provision	DP15
DM5	Tourism, leisure, Culture and Heritage	DP10
DM6	Economic Development in Rural Areas and the Countryside	DP5/DP9
DM7	Agricultural Development and Diversification	DP8
DM8	Affordable Housing	H4
DM9	Development Density	H2
DM10	Housing Diversity	H3
DM11	Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople	H5/SA H2
DM12	Housing Standards	DP12
DM13	Domestic Development	DP11/DP13
DM14	Rural Workers Dwellings	H6
DM15	Design and Amenity	UR2/DP1
DM16	Historic Environment	UR2/DP14
DM17	Retention of Open Space	DP15
DM18	Provision of Open Space and Recreation Facilities	PR1/ PR2/DP16

New Policy Number	Policy ref on 2017-2033 Local Plan	Replaces Policy
DM19	Private Amenity Space	DP16
DM20	Promoting Sustainable Transport and Changing Travel Behaviour	TA1/TA2/TA3/DP17
DM21	Sustainable Access to development	PR2/TA2/DP17
DM22	Parking	TA5/DP19
DM23	Flood Risk and Water Management	ENV1/ DP20
DM24	Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems	DP20
DM25	Renewable Energy, Water Waste and Recycling	ER1/DP25

* Please note that the housing allocation elements of the policy are new and do not supersede adopted policies. However, these policies include reference to Local Employment Areas and this part of the policy supersedes adopted policy CE3.

Annex C

Boxted Neighbourhood Plan 2014-2029



Referendum Version

July 2016

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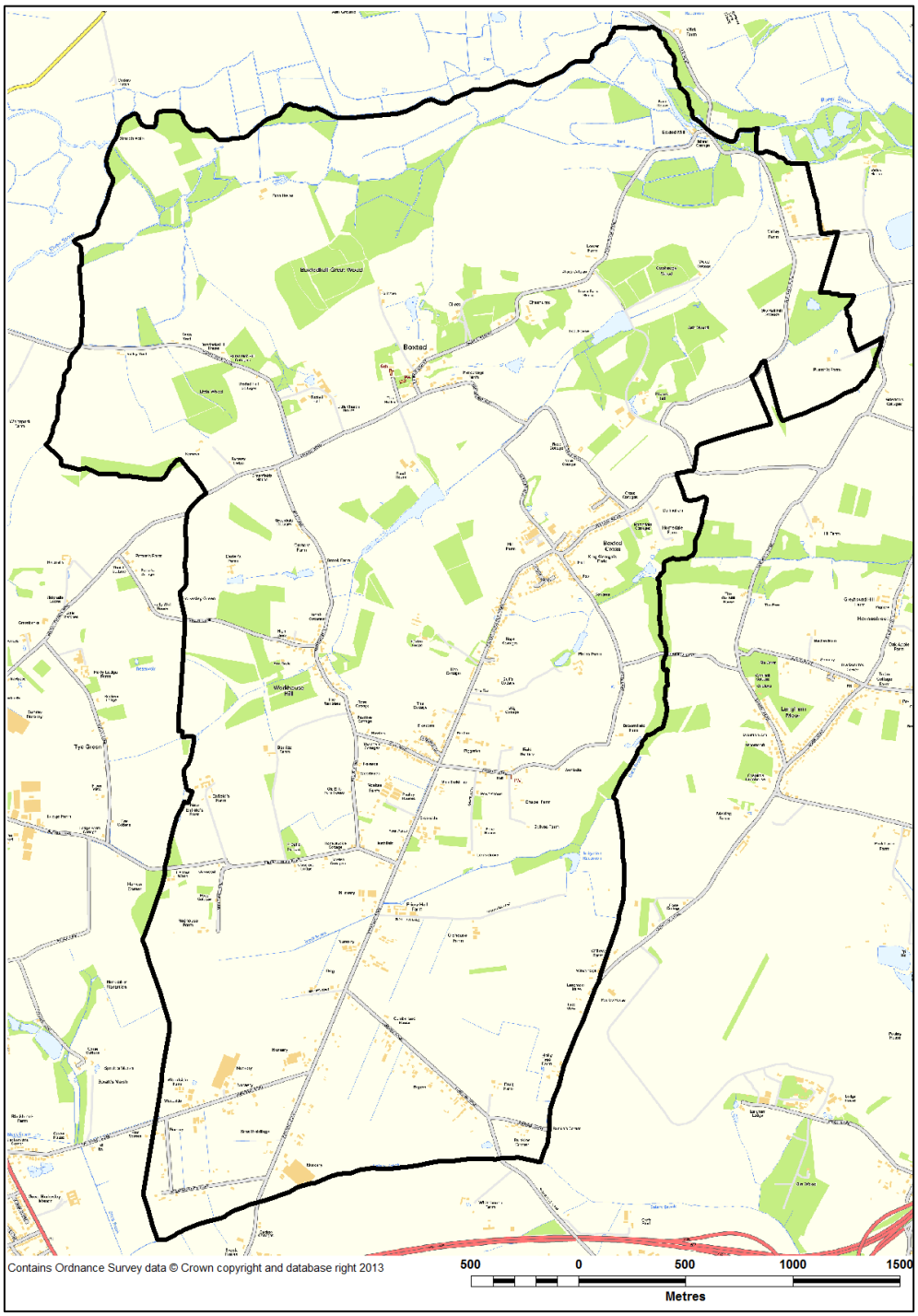
Delivery of plan proposals 40

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 This is the Neighbourhood Plan for Boxted Parish. It seeks to represent one part of the development plan for the parish over the period 2014 to 2029. For clarity, the development plan consists of any planning policies currently adopted by the local planning authority, Colchester Borough Council, and this Neighbourhood Plan.

1.2 The map in Figure 1.1 below shows the boundary of the Neighbourhood Plan area, which is the same as the administrative boundary of Boxted Parish.

Figure 1.1: Boxted Neighbourhood Plan boundary



1.3 The principal purpose of the Neighbourhood Plan is to guide development within the parish and enable planning applications to be determined through a clear policy framework. The process of producing a plan has sought to involve the community as widely as possible. In particular there has been considerable consultation and a Neighbourhood Plan questionnaire that has provided a substantial amount of evidence. The different topic areas addressed in the Neighbourhood Plan are reflective of matters that are of considerable importance to Boxted, its residents, businesses and community groups.

1.4 This submission version of the Boxted Neighbourhood Plan is accompanied by a Basic Conditions Statement and a Consultation Statement. The Basic Conditions Statement includes a short appraisal of the sustainability of the site proposed for allocation at Hill Farm. It also confirms that a Strategic Environmental Assessment of the Neighbourhood Plan was not required.

How to read this document

Each section of the plan covers a different topic. Under each heading there is the justification for the policies presented which provides the necessary understanding of the policy and what it is seeking to achieve. There is also a summary of how each policy contributes towards the objectives of the plan. The policies themselves are presented in the blue boxes. It is these policies against which planning applications will be assessed by Colchester Borough Council in its role as local planning authority. It is advisable that, in order to understand the full context for any individual policy, it is read in conjunction with the supporting text.

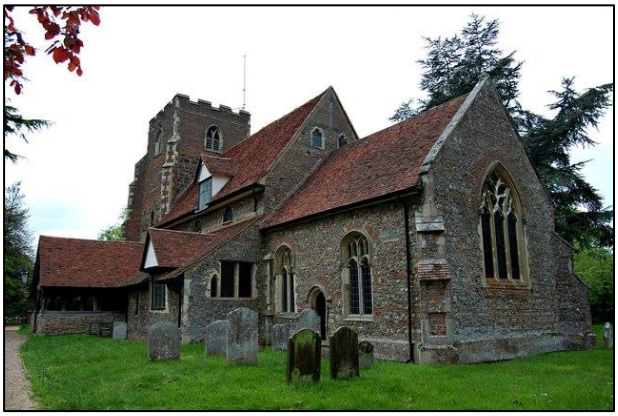
conjunction with the supporting text.

2 LOCAL CONTEXT

History of Boxted

2.1 Boxted is a sprawling parish of some 3,177 acres situated on the Essex/Suffolk border, part in Dedham Vale, north of Colchester. Its history stretches from Neolithic and Trinovante tribesman, Romans, Anglo-Saxons, Normans, Plantagenets, Tudors, Stuarts, King William and Queen Anne, The Georges, Victoria, and her descendants to the present day.

2.2 The Parish Church of St Peter stands on a ridge to the south of the River Stour. This was a building started by the Saxons and completed by the Normans. It has been greatly altered through the centuries, the Tudors put in the dormer and lattice windows, the porch is 17th century and in the 18/19th century the thatched roof was replaced with tiles. It remains a small compact building made from pudding stone, rubble, and Roman brick



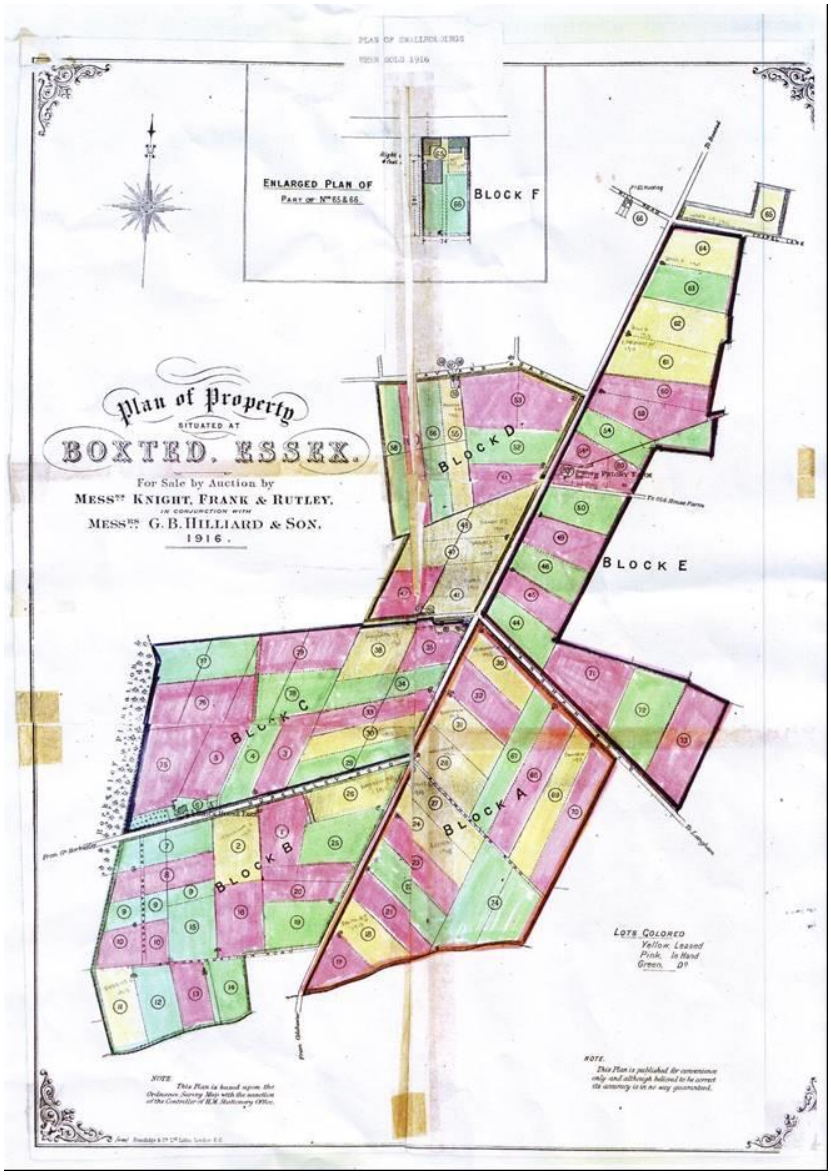
2.3 Various manor houses were built; the present Hall and Pond House are by the church, but Rivers Hall, a partly moated dwelling is on the eastern outskirts of the parish, and its lands take in the Cross Area. Rivers Hall was surveyed in 1586 by John Walker and these maps still exist today, giving minute detail of the fields and dwellings on the estate. The oldest thatched cottage in Essex, if not in Europe, was on part of the 1586 Rivers Hall estate – this is Songers dated 1260, situated in Cage Lane. There are many thatched cottages in the village, some at peculiar angles to the road pattern – they were built to an earlier road design . Most of these cottages are 17th century.



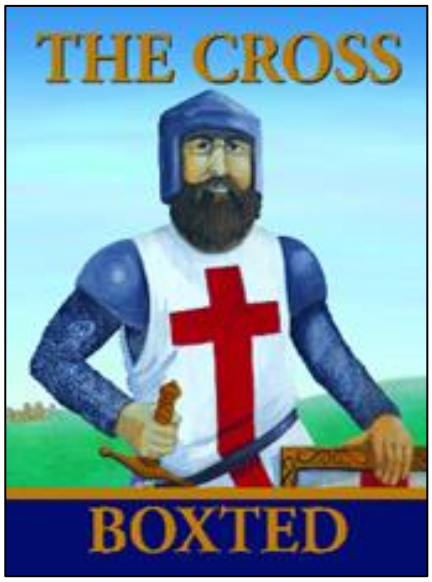
2.4 Prior to the Enclosures Act 1813, a large heath separated Boxted from Myland (Mile End), how Colchester. The heath was crossed by two distinct cart tracks, one going to the east of Colchester, the other linking up with Great Horkesley and on into Myland. After the enclosure of the heath (1815) and the laying out of the Straight Road, which is three miles in length, the character of the village changed. The Straight Road led directly to Myland, which expanded with the coming of the railway to Colchester in 1840.

2.5 In 1906 the Salvation Army set up a 'Labour Colony' to put 'landless people on the people less land'. As a result, 67 smallholdings were created and at least 50 were occupied when General Booth visited Boxted in 1910.

Plan showing the Boxted smallholdings in 1916



2.6 Discontent by the smallholders with the administration of the scheme led to tenants being evicted and by 1916 the scheme was wound up and the smallholding sold. Most holdings were bought by Essex County Council to resettle servicemen returning from the Great War 1914-18.



2.7 At one time there were seven public houses in the village, but today there are none. The oldest, The Cross Inn, was recently refurbished and sold as a private residence. Whilst restoring, the builders found a priest hole in the roof rafters, where supposedly Lord Goring was hidden whilst escaping from Colchester in 1648, the time of the Civil War. A battle was fought near the Cross and Hill Farm and in 1925 when Hill Farm House was being renovated, a skeleton in 17th century armour was found in a rooftop hideaway. It is thought to be the remains of Colonel Farr, a double agent. Boxted now has a new primary school built near the Cross site the original school was built near the church in 1837. There is also a Methodist Church in Chapel Road dating back to 1852, and in 1910 the Methodists opened a schoolroom near their church. There is also a silver band, one of the oldest Methodist bands in Essex.

2.8 Just before the Second World War the King George V Jubilee Trust enabled the villagers to create a Sports Field in Cage Lane. Alongside the sports field is the village hall. There are also well defined footpaths across the village. Today the village no longer has a post office or any shops and, in fact, only a limited number of businesses of any sort. Once a vibrant agricultural community, and for 200 years a prosperous weaving 'Towne', it now largely functions as a commuter dormitory.

2.9 Today, the historic legacy still remains, with two Grade I listed buildings (the Parish Church and Songers') and several Grade II listed buildings dispersed across the parish. In the north there is also the conservation area.

Character of Boxted

2.10 The village has no common architectural style or theme and has a wide variety of styles and designs of house building. These reflect the historical span of construction which started in the thirteenth century. Additionally there is considerable variety of size extending from the three-storey flats as at White Arch Place to large manor houses such as Boxted Hall and Rivers Hall. The character of the village is enhanced by a series of

thatched cottages dotted around the village such as Songers in Cage Lane, also Medlars and Holly Cottage in Straight Road, a number of thatched cottages in Ellis Road and others along Church Street.

Songers Cottage (1280)



2.11 A number of historic houses such as Aubrey's Cottages are centred on the church in Church Street. The Wheelwright's House and the old bakery exist close to Boxted Cross and represent the second original focal area of the village. There are other interesting old properties scattered around the village such as Harbutts and Wenlocks in Cage Lane dating from Tudor times, Thatchers and Went (now the Thatched Cottage) in Mill Road, and Oak Cottage in Chapel Road. There are a number of large distinctive properties within the village boundary such as Cheshunts at the end of Church Street, Hill House on Carter's Hill, Boxted House and Pond House, all with their distinctive styles.

2.12 What was originally council housing was built post war near Boxted Cross and private housing was built such as in Hobbs Drive and East Side. These are typical urban-type twentieth century housing. More recently, building has been mainly in-fill such as on the car-park area of Boxted Cross Inn (now a private house) and along Straight Road.

Key facilities

2.13 Boxted has a primary school – Boxted Primary School – that caters for the education needs of the community between the ages of 4 and 11. The school has recently expanded to take up to approximately 30 pupils per year. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 are taught in a mixed-age class. The February 2014 Ofsted Inspection showed that, at that time, there were 144 children on the school roll, with a theoretical capacity to accommodate 210 pupils. It is understood that a number of the children at the school come from outside its catchment area.

2.14 The expansion of the school was against the wishes of the Parish Council, which was concerned about the impact that additional traffic would have on child safety.

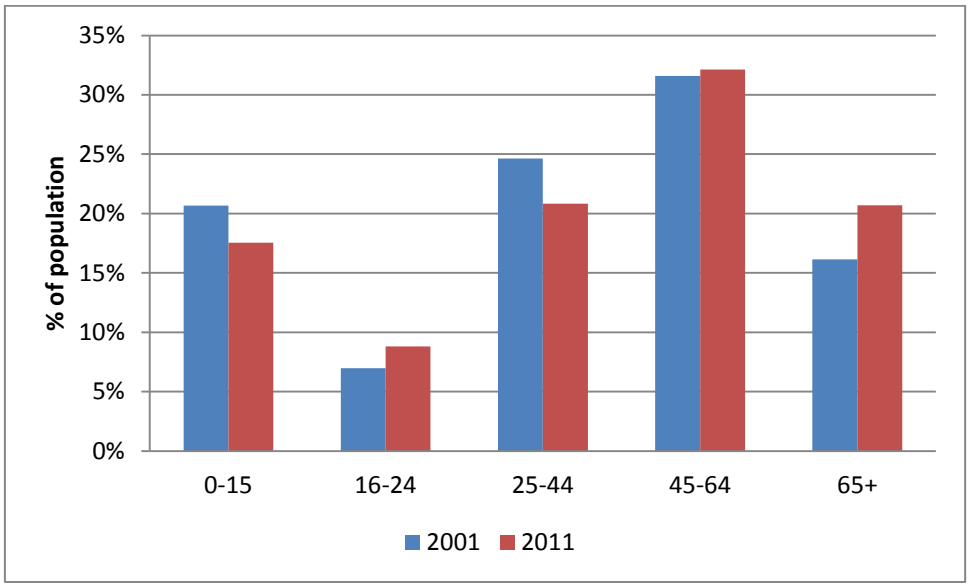
Socio-economic profile

Population

2.15 In 2011, the population of Boxted parish was 1,363 people. Over the decade since 2001, the population remained static, whilst the population of Colchester Borough increased by 10%.

2.16 However, as Figure 2.1 shows, the profile of Boxted parish's population changed quite considerably. The proportion of people of retirement age rose by 5% whereas the proportion of children and adults of traditional 'family' age (25-44) fell by a total of 7%. This shows that Boxted has an increasing proportion of older people and is losing younger families from its community.

Figure 2.1: Population profile change, 2001-2011

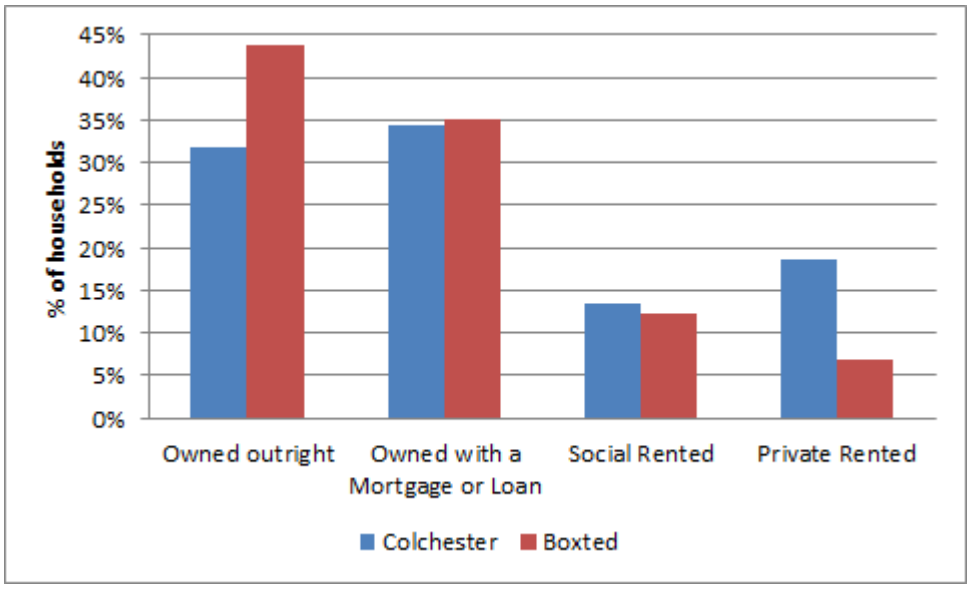


Source: 2001 and 2011 Census

Dwellings and households

2.17 There were a total of 553 households in Boxted parish in 2011 living in 579 dwellings. As is shown in Figure 2.2, the vast majority of these are either owned outright or owned with a mortgage. Boxted parish has a much lower proportion of people living in private rented accommodation. In total, 12% of households are in social rented accommodation.

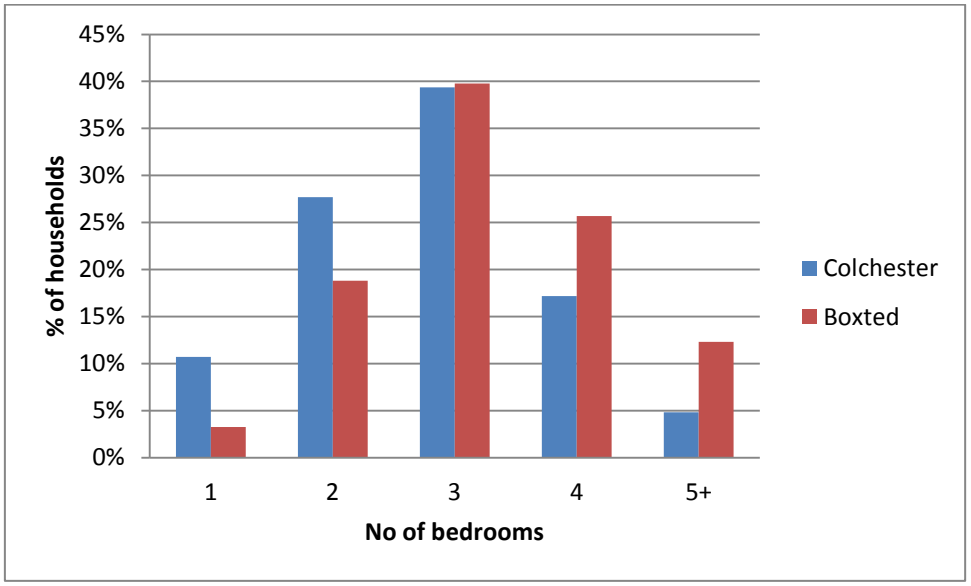
Figure 2.2: Tenure of households



Source: 2011 Census

2.18 The profile of dwellings shows that there is a greater proportion of larger properties in Boxted than in Colchester Borough. Figure 2.3 shows that Boxted parish has a far higher proportion of 4- and 5+-bed properties than Colchester Borough – 38% compared to 22%. By contrast, it has a much lower proportion of smaller properties – just 22% are 1- or 2-beds compared to 39% across the Borough as a whole.

Figure 2.3: Number of bedrooms



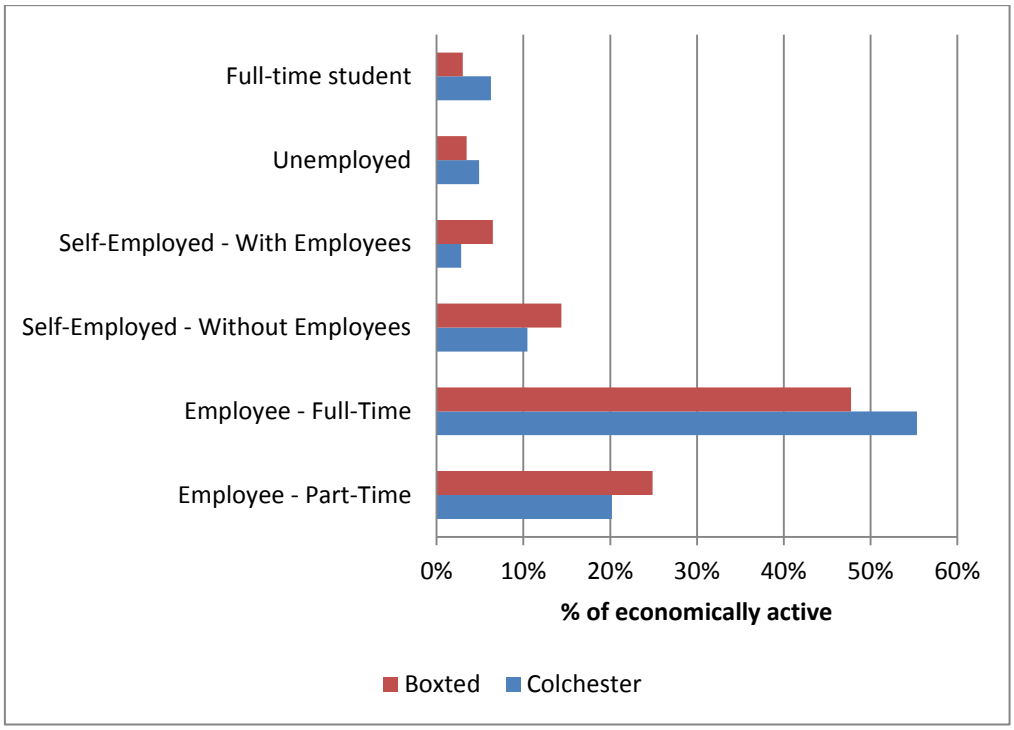
Source: 2011 Census

Economic activity

2.19 Boxted parish does show some differences from the Borough profile in terms of the economic activity of its residents of working age. Figure 2.4 shows that it has a lower proportion of full-time employees but a higher proportion of part-time employees. What is also noticeable is the proportion of people that are self-employed – 21% of the population are self-employed, either with or without employees. This compares to just 13% across

the Borough. In particular, 14% are self-employed but do not have any employees, suggesting that they work on their own. This is supported by the fact that 7% of the parish's population works mainly at or from home, compared to just 3% across the Borough.

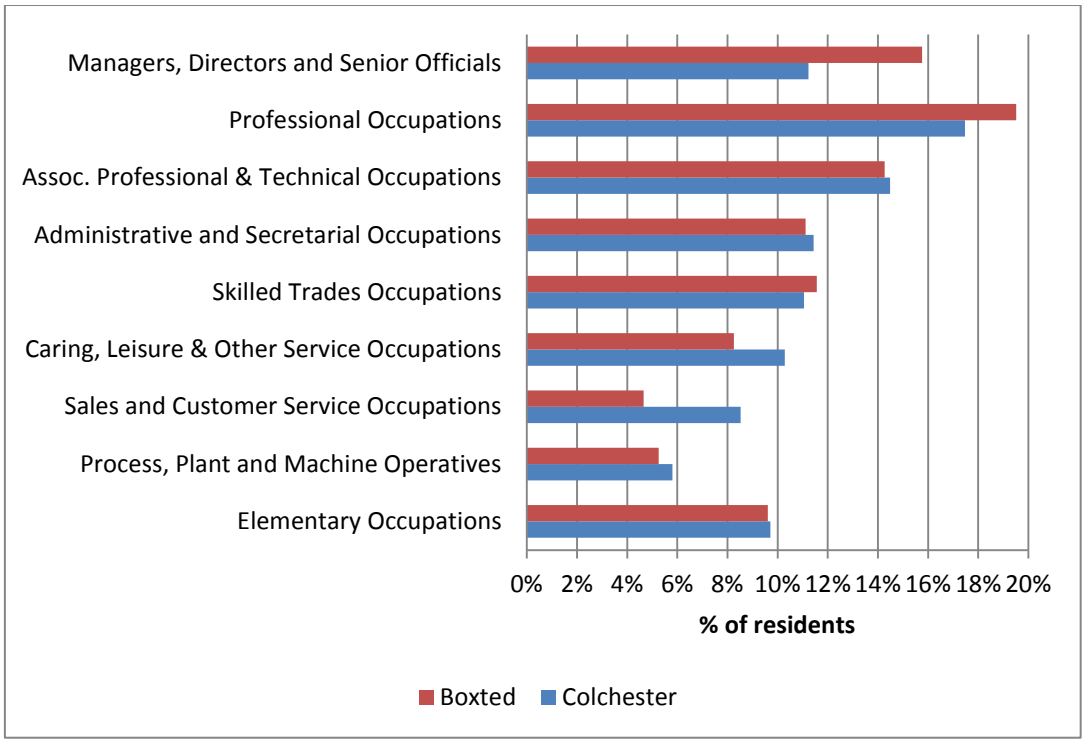
Figure 2.4: Economic activity



Source: 2011 Census

2.20 What Boxted parish clearly shows is that its workforce works at very senior levels. Table 2.5 shows that 35% of its workers are either at manager/director level or work in professional occupations – this compares to 29% across Colchester Borough. By contrast, Boxted has a very low proportion of people working in the service sector – just 13% working in the care/leisure or sales sectors compared to 19% across the Borough.

Figure 2.5: Type of occupation



Source: 2011 Census

Summary

2.21 The socio-economic profile of Boxted parish suggests that the community has the following features:

- It is an increasingly ageing population living predominantly in large houses that are owned.
- It is losing young people and young families.
- It has a significant number of self-employed people, many of whom work from home.
- Its workforce has a significant proportion working in high value occupations which are most likely to be located outside the parish.

3 VISION AND OBJECTIVES

Planning context

3.1 National planning policy is provided by the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). The 'golden thread' running through the NPPF is the presumption in favour of sustainable development. For plan-making this means positively seeking opportunities to meet the development needs of the area. Neighbourhood plans should:

- develop plans that support the strategic development needs set out in Local Plans, including policies for housing and economic development; and
- plan positively to support local development, shaping and directing development in their area that is outside the strategic elements of the Local Plan" (paragraph 16).

3.2 This and other matters are supported by Planning Practice Guidance (PPG), which was issued in March 2014.

3.3 The NPPF in paragraph 184 states that Neighbourhood Plans must be in general conformity with the strategic policies in the Local Plan. The Local Plan is prepared by Colchester Borough. The key strategic policies in the Colchester Local Plan of relevance to the Boxted Neighbourhood Plan are as follows:

Topic	Key Local Plan Policies
Sustainable Development	SD1
Housing	H1, H2, H3 & H4
Employment	CE1, DP5, DP8 & DP9
Transport	TA1
Environment	PR1, ENV1

3.4 It should also be noted that part of Boxted parish is in the Dedham Vale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and therefore subject to the Dedham Vale AONB Management Plan and the NPPF as well as Local Plan policy relating to the AONB.

3.5 The Neighbourhood Plan is considered to be in general conformity with these policies and this is articulated in the Basic Conditions Statement which has been submitted along with this document as required at the Submission Stage (Regulation 15).

Challenges for Boxted

3.6 The Neighbourhood Plan seeks to address, as far as is possible, the challenges that face the community of Boxted Parish. The community itself considers these challenges to be:

- **Housing** – ensuring that any new housing recognises the rural setting of Boxted.
- **Affordable housing** – addressing a shortage of affordable housing required to serve the needs of the parish.
- **Landscape** – recognising that part of Boxted lies within the Dedham Vale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.
- **Coalescence with Colchester** – ensuring that development does not cause the coalescence of the parish with urban Colchester.
- **Community facilities** – the need to improve the quality and availability of community infrastructure, particularly leisure and local retail facilities.

- **Movement by non-car modes** – the need to protect and enhance the bridleway network for use by cyclists, horse riders and pedestrians in the parish.
- **Traffic and highways** – addressing issues of highway safety, particularly along Boxted Straight Road, movement of non-local HGV traffic through Boxted village and parking associated with Boxted Primary School.
- **Rural character** – the need to balance the vitality of the local economic base with the importance of avoiding industrialisation of rural premises, e.g. smallholdings.
- **Infrastructure** – in particular improved broadband speeds are needed to provide for the growing number of small businesses and levels of working from home that are reflective of the modern economy.

Vision for Boxted

3.7 The vision for Boxted Parish is as follows:

'In 2029, Boxted Parish will be a thriving rural community. It will have provided for many of the needs of its residents, both in terms of market and affordable housing.

Importantly, development will not have been at the expense of the character of Boxted parish, both of its settlements and its landscape and in particular, the Dedham Vale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

It will have retained and protected its green and blue spaces of value and created new ones.

This will be complemented by new and improved facilities, both for sports and leisure and for day-to-day shopping needs through the provision of a community shop.'

Rural employment will continue to thrive and the provision of high speed broadband will enable the network of self-employed people to run global businesses from home or from small, local offices.

The road network and its safety for drivers and pedestrians alike will be improved and people will be benefitting from the expanded bridleway network. Congestion at Boxted Primary School has been resolved through a 'Park and Walk' initiative.

Objectives of the Neighbourhood Plan

3.8 The objectives of the Neighbourhood Plan as identified by the community are as follows:

- **Objective One:** Conserve and enhance the character and landscape of the parish and ensure that it does not coalesce with urban Colchester
- **Objective Two:** Provide additional community infrastructure to maintain and improve the sustainability of Boxted as a rural parish
- **Objective Three:** Ensure housing developments meet the needs of the local community, including for affordable housing
- **Objective Four:** Ensure that the rural employment base is, where possible, retained and the supporting infrastructure for rural working is provided
- **Objective Five:** Address highway safety and parking issues and improve the potential for movement by non-car modes

4 VILLAGE SETTLEMENT BOUNDARIES

4.1 The Colchester Local Plan, which covers the period to 2021, is clear that rural villages such as those in Boxted parish are not appropriate locations for significant growth. It is therefore important to balance the need for growth that addresses the needs of the community with the necessary protection to ensure that unrestricted growth and sprawl of rural settlements does not occur.

Policy justification

4.2 There are four built-up areas within the parish of Boxted. The largest is Boxted Cross. The other built-up areas are Boxted Mill Road, Boxted Workhouse Hill and Boxted Church Hamlet. All of these areas, apart from Boxted Church Hamlet, have defined settlement boundaries in the Colchester Local Plan.

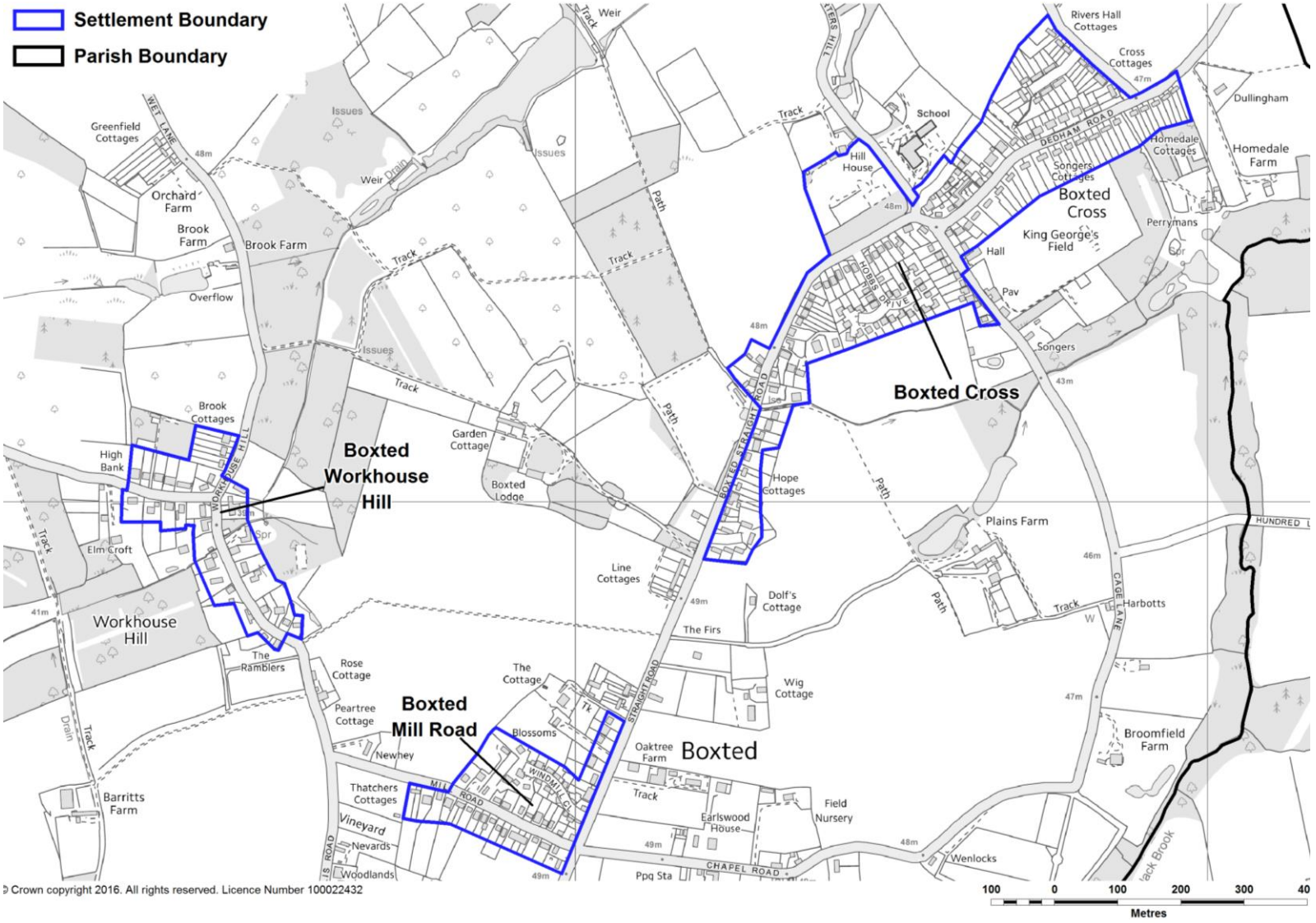
4.3 Policy ENV2 of the Colchester Local Plan recognises the importance of appropriate development in rural communities. It states:

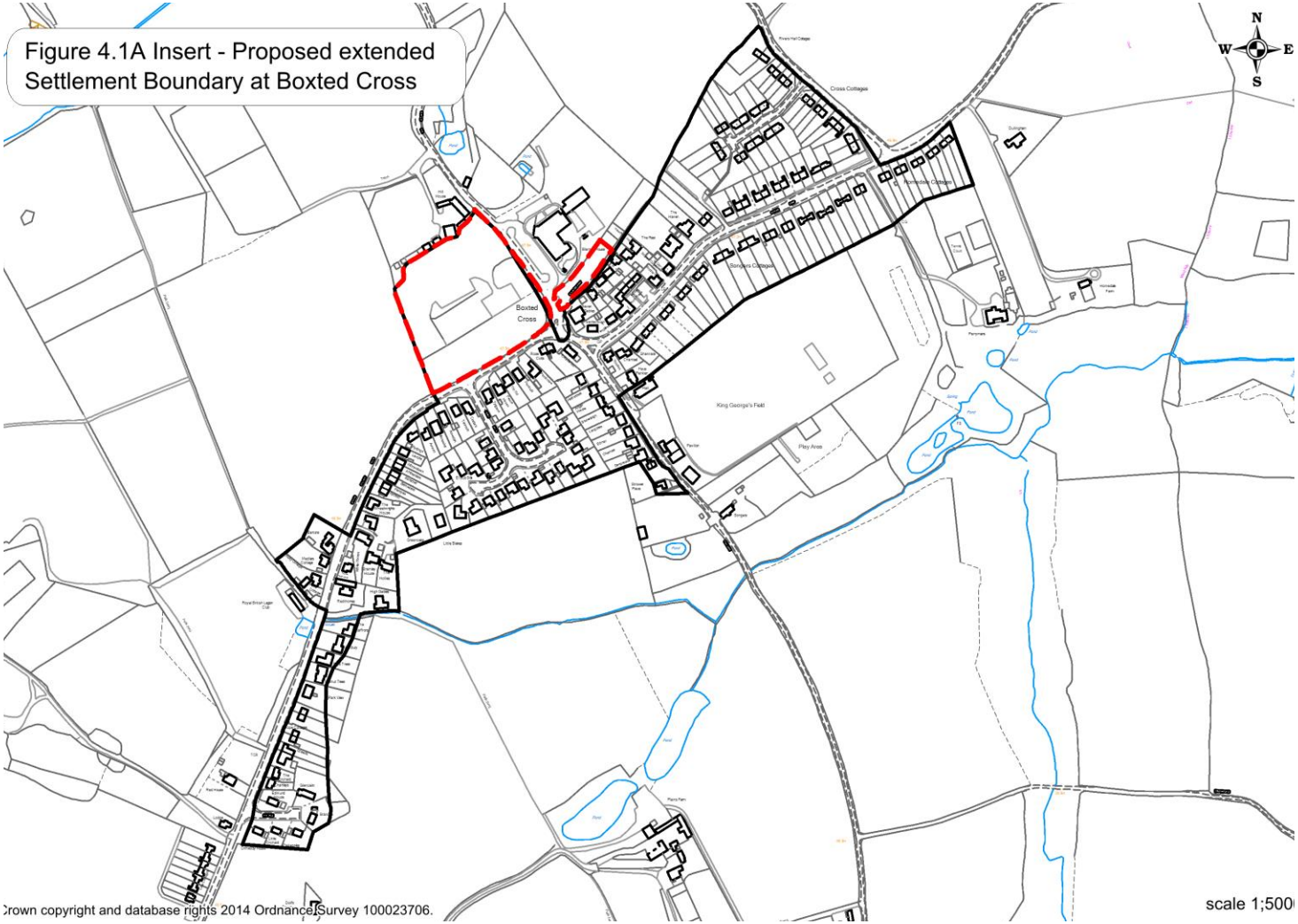
"The Borough Council will enhance the vitality of rural communities by supporting appropriate development of infill sites and previously developed land (PDL) within the settlement development boundaries of villages. The design and construction of new village development must be high quality in all respects, including design, sustainability and compatibility with the distinctive character of the locality. Development should also contribute to the local community through the provision of relevant community needs such as affordable housing, open space, local employment, and community facilities.

Outside village boundaries, the Council will favourably consider sustainable small-scale rural business, leisure and tourism schemes that are of an appropriate scale and which help meet appropriate to local employment needs, minimise negative environmental impacts, and harmonise with the local character and surrounding natural environment. Development outside but contiguous to village settlement boundaries may be supported, primarily where it constitutes an exception to meet identified local affordable housing needs.

Towns and villages are encouraged to plan for the specific needs of their communities by developing Neighbourhood Plans which provide locally-determined policies on future development needs. Communities are also encouraged to continue to develop other plans, where appropriate, such as Community Led Plans Parish Plans and Village Design Statements, for adoption as guidance."

Figure 4.1: Settlement boundaries in Boxted Parish




Figure 4.1A Insert - Proposed extended Settlement Boundary at Boxted Cross
N
W
E
S
Boxted Cross
King George's Field
Play Area
Crown copyright and database rights 2014 Ordnance Survey 100023706.
scale 1;500

4.4. The Neighbourhood Plan reiterates this policy and Figure 4.1 shows the extent of the settlement boundaries in Boxted parish. This includes the Hill Farm site that is proposed for allocation for residential development in Policy HF1. This would increase the size of the settlement of Boxted Cross so is included within the proposed change to the settlement boundary as shown in Figure 4.1.

Policy

POLICY SB1: VILLAGE SETTLEMENT BOUNDARIES
The settlement boundaries within Boxted parish are shown in Figure 4.1.
The settlement boundary of Boxted Cross shall include the allocation of the Hill Farm site (Policy HF1) and the land between the primary school and Crossfield Way.
Development within the settlement boundaries will be supported in principle where other policy requirements can be satisfied.
Outside of the settlement boundaries in Boxted parish, small-scale rural business, leisure and tourism schemes that are appropriate to local employment needs, minimise negative environmental impacts and harmonise with the local character and surrounding natural environment will be considered favourably. Development outside but contiguous to village settlement boundaries may be supported where it constitutes an exception to meet identified local affordable housing needs.

Policy SB1	
Objective 1: Conserve and enhance the character and landscape of the parish and ensure that it does not coalesce with urban Colchester	**YES**
Objective 2: Protect and enhance the green spaces within the Parish which are of value to the community	
Objective 3: Ensure housing developments meet the needs of the local community, including for affordable housing	
Objective 4: Ensure that the rural employment base is, where possible, retained and the supporting infrastructure for rural working is provided	
Objective 5: Address highway safety and parking issues and improve the potential for movement by non-car modes	

5 LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

5.1 As a series of rural settlements, the community of Boxted parish greatly values the benefits that living in such a setting provides. Whilst the landscape is not generally considered to be of the value of the adjacent Dedham Vale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, it is characterised by attractive valleys and woodland. Development that is not carefully considered and which fails to properly mitigate any negative impacts would have a detrimental impact on the quality of this environment.

5.2 The policies in this section of the Neighbourhood Plan seek to balance the recognition that growth can bring benefits with the need to ensure that it does not have a detrimental impact on the landscape.

Policy justification

5.3 Boxted parish encompasses three landscape character areas – the Stour River Valley Slopes, the Great Horkesley Farmland Plateau and the Stour River Valley Floor. These are shown in Figure 5.1.

5.4 The Colchester Borough Landscape Character Assessment[1] (LCA) summarised the key characteristics of the relevant parts of the Stour River Valley Slopes as:

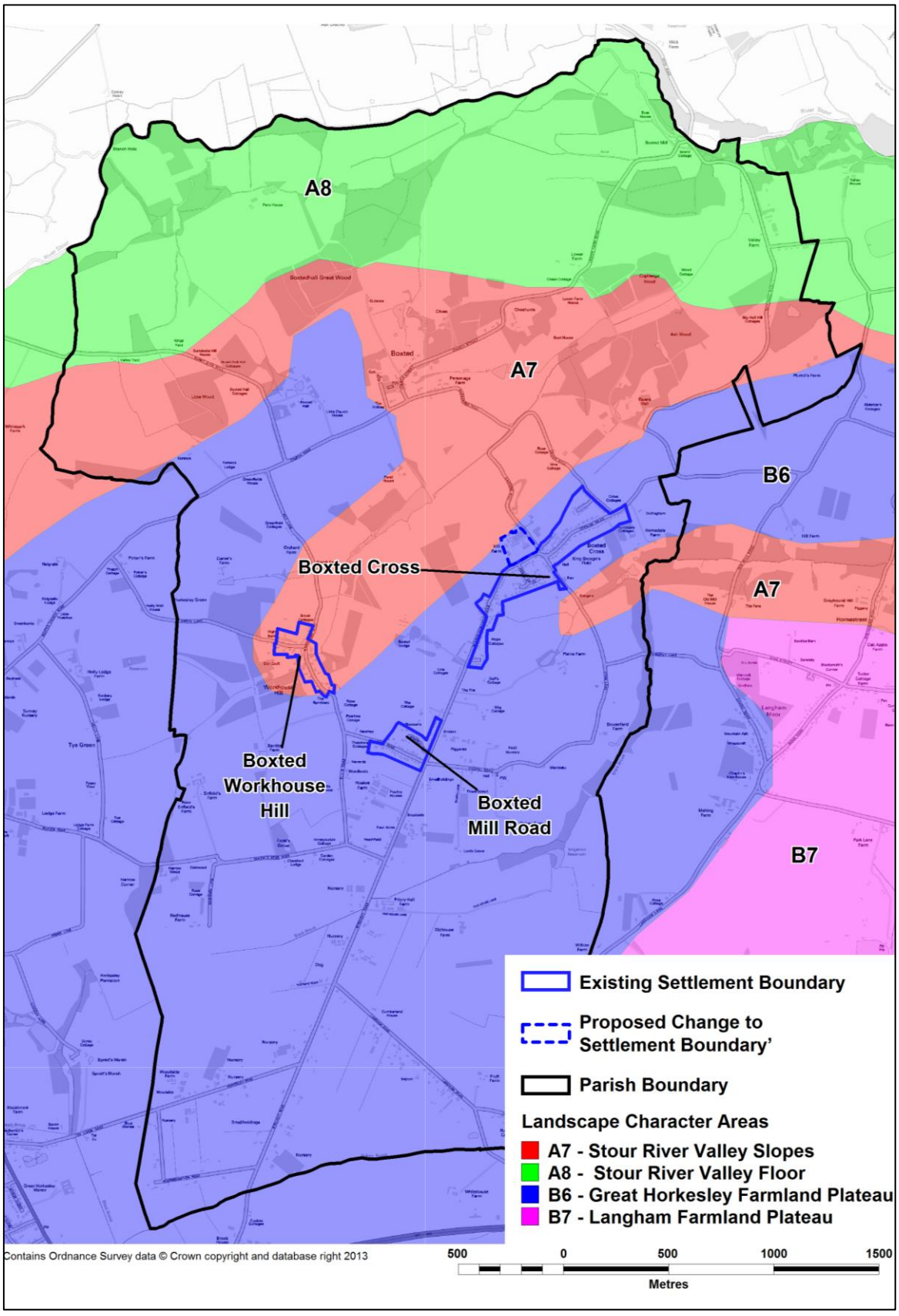
- Steep sided river valleys
- Damp pasture and willows
- Patches of mixed woodland
- Small farmsteads and orchards
- Network of public footpaths

5.5 The LCA recommends a landscape strategy objective of preserving and enhancing these areas. The specific planning guidelines provided are to:

- conserve the tranquil undeveloped character of the intimate tributary valley of the River Stour;
- conserve the landscape setting of historic settlements such as Boxted;
- maintain cross-valley views and conserve characteristic views along the valley; and
- ensure any new small-scale development in or on the edges of historic villages of the area is of an appropriate scale, form, design and uses materials which respond to historic settlement character.

[1] Chris Blandford Associates (2005) *Colchester Borough Landscape Character Assessment*, for Colchester Borough Council

Figure 5.1: Landscape character areas in Boxted Parish



Source: Chris Blandford Associates (2005) Colchester Borough Landscape Character Assessment, for Colchester Borough Council

5.6 The assessment of the Great Horkesley Farmland Plateau, which covers the majority of the parish, summarised this area as:

- Arable fields with mature trees at field boundaries
- Interesting field pattern consisting of small, regular fields
- Orchards

5.7 The LCA recommends a landscape strategy objective of conserving and enhancing these areas. The specific planning guidelines provide are to:

- ensure that any appropriate new development responds to historic settlement pattern and uses materials, which are appropriate to local landscape character;
- conserve the landscape setting of existing settlements, such as Boxted, ensuring where appropriate that infill development does not cause linkage with the main Colchester settlement; and
- conserve panoramic and framed views into the Stour River Valley corridor to the north of the character area;

5.8 The assessment of the Stour River Valley Floor summarised this area as:

- Wet floodplain consisting of several areas of damp pasture and meadows and ponds;
- Willow and remnant poplar plantations following the alignment of the River Stour;
- Numerous mills, weirs, water works and pumping stations (human influences) associated with the River;
- Large areas of open grazed grassland traversed by a ditch network;
- Intimate small fields enclosed by tall hedges and/or wet ditches.

5.9 The LCA recommends a landscape strategy objective of conserving and enhancing these areas. Planning Practice Guidance on flood zones indicates that only water compatible development and essential infrastructure developments which have passed the necessary exception test should be considered within the functional floodplain. Essential infrastructure that passes the exemption test should:

- remain operational and safe for users in times of flood;
- result in no net loss of floodplain storage; and
- not impede water flows and not increase flood risk elsewhere.

5.10 Colchester Borough Council's 'Assessment of open countryside between settlements in the Borough of Colchester'[2] provides evidence that the character of the landscape between the settlements of Boxted and Colchester (including its Northern Growth Area) makes a high contribution towards the separation of settlements. It summarises at paragraph 9.4.2 as follows:

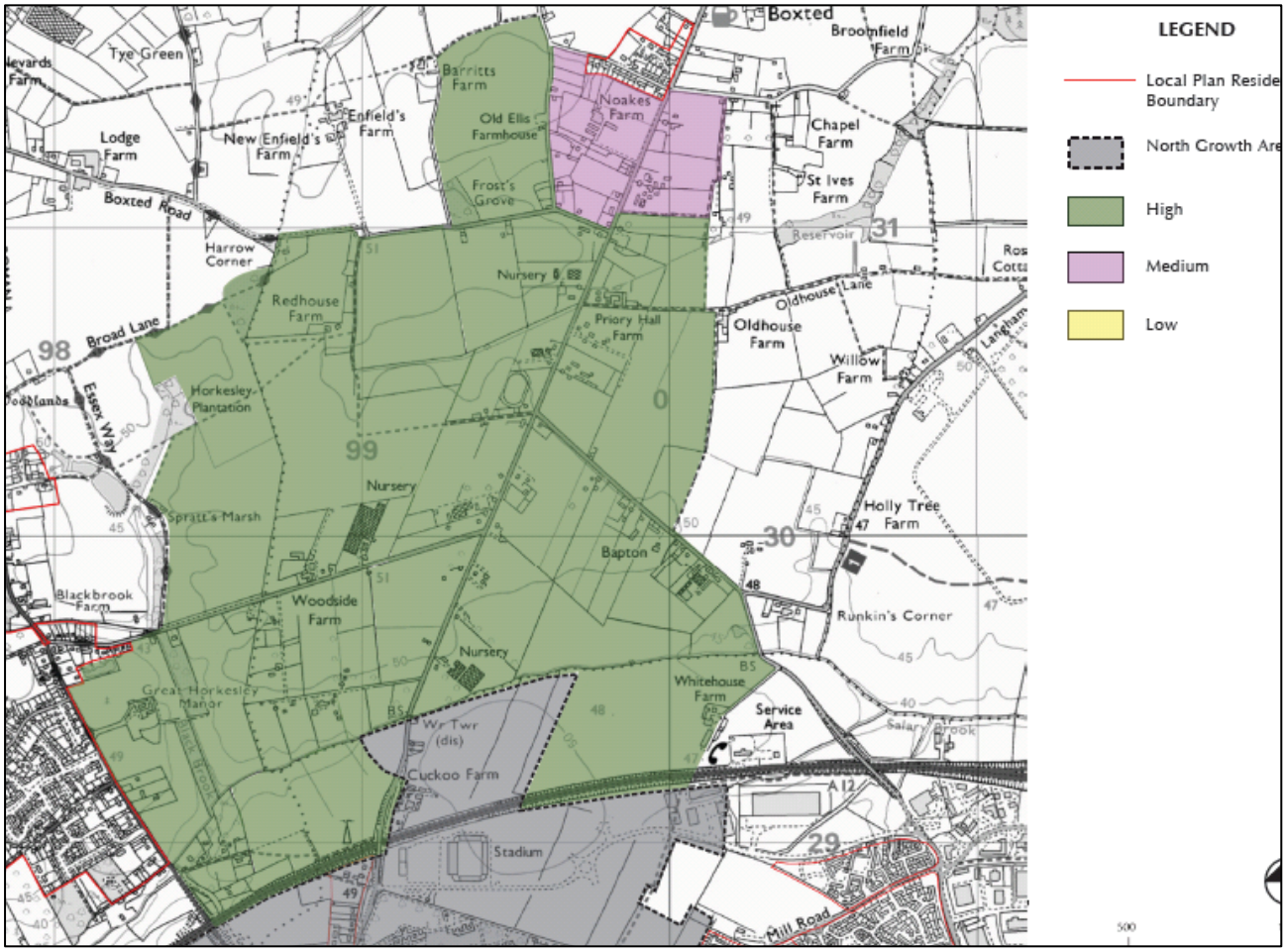
> *"Any new built development, as defined, between Boxted and Colchester is likely to seriously undermine the sense of settlement separation and the rural character of the intervening land, as perceived by people moving along public rights of way between Boxted and Colchester, or along Straight*

[2] Colchester Borough Council (2009) *Assessment of open countryside between settlements in the Borough of Colchester,* Final Report

Road. Any such development is likely to result in visual coalescence with Colchester and/or Boxted and also visual coalescence with existing houses alongside Straight Road, particularly as perceived from the public rights of way across the adjacent farmland. This visual coalescence is likely to seriously undermine the sense of settlement separation and the predominantly rural character of this land. The sense of leaving one settlement and entering another would also be significantly diminished."

5.11 This is shown in Figure 5.2.

Figure 5.2: Contribution to separation of settlements of Boxted and Colchester



Source: Colchester Borough Council (2009) Assessment of open countryside between settlements in the Borough of Colchester, Final Report, Figure 9.3

5.12 The community of Boxted is particularly concerned about encroachment from the Colchester Northern Growth Area. Whilst the A12 forms a robust barrier to prevent further sprawl of Colchester, in recent years there has been the development of a petrol station on the north side of the A12 and planning permission granted for a fast food outlet and the Cuckoo Farm park-and-ride development. The community considers that further development in these locations will serve to have a permanent and detrimental impact on the function of Boxted as a rural parish and settlements.

5.13 It is important therefore that development in Boxted parish is provided with an appropriate and clear policy context to ensure that the character of the local landscape is properly respected and that coalescence with the Colchester Northern Growth Area is prevented.

5.14 In addition, a further concern of the community is the impact of light pollution from large scale developments. The floodlights from the Weston Homes Community Stadium on the north side of the A12 were altered due to having a detrimental light pollution impact on residents of Boxted (indeed residents still consider that the alteration has not completely addressed the light pollution caused). There is concern that the Cuckoo Farm Park and Ride development, which is closer to residential properties in Boxted than the stadium, will have a similarly unacceptable impact on the amenity of residents. Whilst outside the parish boundary and therefore the influence of this Neighbourhood Plan, the community considers it important that the impacts of light pollution on local residents by major developments such as the Park and Ride and properly mitigated.

Policy

5.15 There are two policies in the Neighbourhood Plan that protect the local landscape character and serve to prevent coalescence.

5.16 Policy LC1 seeks to ensure that the ongoing growth of the Colchester urban area does not serve to reduce the gap in any way between Colchester and Boxted, thereby eroding Boxted's function as a rural settlement.

5.17 It is important to be clear that, within Policy LC1, there are certain types of development that are generally not considered to be sustainable in this location and are likely to materially reduce the green gap. These are very much guided by the requirements of Policy SB1 in respect of development outside of settlement boundaries and would commonly include residential development or any commercial or leisure development that was not of a small-scale nature appropriate for such a rural setting.

POLICY LC1: COALESCENCE WITH COLCHESTER URBAN AREA

Developments in Boxted parish which can be demonstrated to be sustainable and which do not materially reduce the green gap between Boxted and urban Colchester will be supported. This must reflect the requirements of Policy SB1 in respect of development outside of settlement boundaries.

Policy LC1	
Objective 1: Conserve and enhance the character and landscape of the parish and ensure that it does not coalesce with urban Colchester	YES
Objective 2: Protect and enhance the green spaces within the Parish which are of value to the community	YES
Objective 3: Ensure housing developments meet the needs of the local community, including for affordable housing	
Objective 4: Ensure that the rural employment base is, where possible, retained and the supporting infrastructure for rural working is provided	
Objective 5: Address highway safety and parking issues and improve the potential for movement by non-car modes	

5.18 The second policy (Policy LC2) seeks generally to protect the local landscape character of the parish by requiring a landscape assessment to accompany anything but the smallest planning applications where those applications are anywhere other than in the middle of a settlement identified in Policy SB1. This assessment must demonstrate that

the scheme is not going to have a detrimental impact on the landscape or that any such impacts can fully be mitigated.

5.19 A threshold of three dwellings has been used to avoid those wishing to deliver small scale development of just one or two dwellings from having an unnecessary burden when they submit a planning application. In most cases, it is not expected that just one or two dwellings could have a significant detrimental impact on landscape character. Equally, a threshold of 500m² of commercial floorspace broadly equates to a level of floorspace above which multiple light industrial units are being provided. In other words, below the threshold only a single unit would be provided which, following the same principle as that applied to single dwellings, would be unlikely to have a significant detrimental impact on landscape character.

POLICY LC2: PROTECTION OF LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

Where a new development of three or more dwellings or 500m² or more of floorspace is either outside a settlement boundary or inside a settlement boundary but contiguous to it, it must be accompanied by a landscape assessment. This landscape assessment must consider the impact that development would have on the local landscape character and must demonstrate that any impacts can be appropriately mitigated. Any proposal that is not capable of mitigating the impacts of development will not be permitted.

Policy LC2	
Objective 1: Conserve and enhance the character and landscape of the parish and ensure that it does not coalesce with urban Colchester	**YES**
Objective 2: Protect and enhance the green spaces within the Parish which are of value to the community	**YES**
Objective 3: Ensure housing developments meet the needs of the local community, including for affordable housing	
Objective 4: Ensure that the rural employment base is, where possible, retained and the supporting infrastructure for rural working is provided	
Objective 5: Address highway safety and parking issues and improve the potential for movement by non-car modes	

6 COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT

6.1 One of the predominant and sustained features of Boxted parish is the number of smallholdings. There are approximately sixty smallholdings along Boxted Straight Road alone.

6.2 Whilst these smallholdings were traditionally used to grow food for the local and wider community, this has changed significantly over time. Today very few produce food for commercial sale. Most are owned by people who either use the land to grow food for their own personal consumption or for equestrian use. The equestrian use is not insignificant for the local economy as it helps to support employment at Priory Saddlery, as well as at feed and equipment suppliers, farm contractors and blacksmiths.

6.3 The reality is that the majority of the smallholdings are now residential properties where the owners make a living elsewhere. However, these uses still, to a certain degree, reflect the rural nature of Boxted and provide for local needs and leisure pursuits, as well as supporting the local economy. It is considered that such uses are in keeping with the rural environment and therefore should not be discouraged.

6.4 Yet in recent years there has been constant pressure for some of the smallholdings to be used for businesses or interests ancillary to the construction industry, light industrial or storage areas for plant, machinery, caravans or vehicles. Very often these activities result in piecemeal and untidy developments that individually result in a loss of visual amenity and collectively are prejudicial to the appearance of the locality with a gradual erosion of the rural character of the parish. In addition, some these activities create significant noise which can also have a detrimental impact on the amenity of neighbours.

6.5 The historic effectiveness of CBC policies that have sought to protect visual amenity in relation to these smallholdings has been limited. Policy EMP6 in the 2004 Local Plan (now superseded) identified Boxted Straight Road as a special protection area but this did not prevent a loss of visual amenity as a result of development on some of the smallholdings.

6.6 Policy DP5 (Appropriate Employment Uses and Protection of Employment Land and Existing Businesses) in the CBC Local Plan seeks to direct appropriate employment uses within designated employment zones and this includes small areas within Boxted parish that contain some smallholdings. However, this is by no means extensive enough to cover all the smallholdings. In the areas outside the employment zones, Policy DP9 (Employment Uses in the Countryside) does provide policy guidance in respect of employment uses having to be appropriate to the countryside.

6.7 In addition, Policy DP1(i) and (iii) on Design and Amenity seeks to ensure that the character of the site's surroundings and its design features are respected and that public and residential amenity is protected, particularly with regard to privacy, overlooking, security, noise and disturbance, pollution (including light and odour pollution), daylight and sunlight. However, the community still feels that this is not preventing the loss of visual amenity where such commercial uses are permitted.

6.8 It is therefore considered necessary to have a policy in respect of commercial development within the parish that seeks to ensure development:

- protects visual and noise amenity;
- does not prejudice the appearance of the locality; and
- protects the rural character of the area.

6.9 This may be achieved through actions such as appropriate screening/planting on the border of a commercial area. However, it must be able to demonstrate that the activity will not impact detrimentally on the visual amenity of the surrounding area and the parish in general as well as not creating unacceptable levels of noise.

6.10 This policy applies not only to smallholdings but all commercial activity in the parish in order to ensure that the issue is comprehensively addressed.

POLICY SM1: LOSS OF VISUAL AMENITY/UNACCEPTABLE NOISE IMPACT FROM COMMERCIAL ACTIVITY

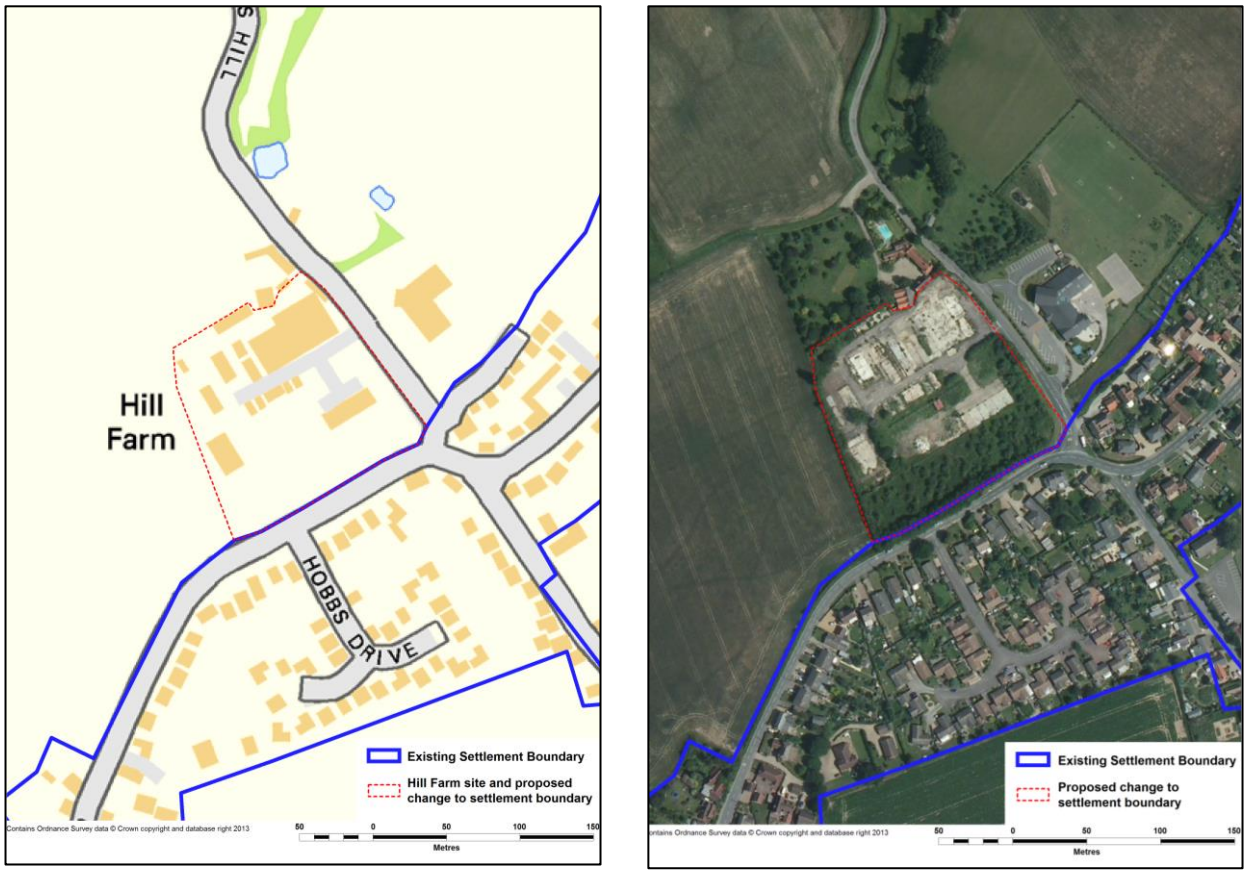
Any unacceptable loss of visual amenity and unacceptable levels of noise impact on the surrounding area and the parish in general arising as a result of commercial development in Boxted parish will not be permitted. Proposals for such commercial activity must demonstrate that any impacts can be properly mitigated through actions such as appropriate visual and noise screening.

Policy SM1	
Objective 1: Conserve and enhance the character and landscape of the parish and ensure that it does not coalesce with urban Colchester	**YES**
Objective 2: Protect and enhance the green spaces within the Parish which are of value to the community	
Objective 3: Ensure housing developments meet the needs of the local community, including for affordable housing	
Objective 4: Ensure that the rural employment base is, where possible, retained and the supporting infrastructure for rural working is provided	
Objective 5: Address highway safety and parking issues and improve the potential for movement by non-car modes	

7 HILL FARM SITE

7.1 As part of the Neighbourhood Plan process, the community identified that the Hill Farm site was an appropriate location for development. They were asked to consider what an appropriate future use for the site should be. This is the only brownfield site of significance within the parish. It covers an area of approximately 1.2 hectares and is located on the corner of Boxted Straight Road and Carters Hill, opposite Boxted Primary School. The site is located adjacent to the existing Boxted Cross village envelope as per the current Local Plan Proposals Map and as shown on Figure 7.1.

Figure 7.1: Boundaries of Hill Farm site



7.2 The most recent active use of the site was as light industrial estate providing basic commercial units for a range of users, such as a joiners and machine repair. Only a small number of these units provided services of direct value to the local community but did provide some employment.

7.3 These units were demolished and the site currently lies derelict. In 2007 permission was granted for the development of new commercial units totalling over 2,000m². Of this, just over 600m² would be offices, with the remainder light industrial units. Access would be from Carters Hill, opposite the Primary School. This permission has since been renewed twice but development has not commenced. The site owners have not received any interest for industrial or office use, largely because of the significant amount of employment land that is available on the edge of Colchester with good access to the A12.

7.4 It is considered that the site represents the best opportunity for development that can meet the needs of the community in a sustainable manner. These needs relate to

affordable and market housing, but also securing contributions that address particular infrastructure issues in the parish. In particular these infrastructure needs relate to improvements to open space, sports and recreation provision at King George Playing Fields, with a specific need for improvements to the Sports and Social Club.

7.5 A particular issue of importance to the community is the opportunity for the site to provide a 'village green' in the form of green open space which all the community of Boxted can use and enjoy collectively. It is important that this is properly maintained, so if responsibility for this is given to the Parish Council then an appropriate contribution towards its ongoing maintenance should be made.

7.6 It is important that development is appropriately screened along its boundary, particularly along Boxted Straight Road where there is existing housing opposite. This will help to minimise the potential for development to have an inappropriate 'urban' feel. This should be done, where possible, by retaining existing trees and hedgerows and through additional planting. There are also trees on the site that have tree preservation orders (TPOs) on them which should be retained as part of any scheme.

7.7 Another particular issue is the density and massing[3] of the scheme. Policy H2 of the Colchester Local Plan (Housing Density) considers that the density of new housing schemes at locations such as Boxted which do not have good accessibility to town centres/urban gateways or to public transport should be moderated and reflect the character and density of the surrounding built form.

7.8 A mix of dwelling sizes should be provided in line with Policy H3 of the Colchester Local Plan. This policy states that the mix should be informed by 'an appraisal of community context and housing need.'

7.9 In order to help retain an element of employment use on the site, a proportion of residential units should be built with an element of 'live-work' in their design. This is distinct from specifically 'live-work' units which are less flexible and are considered unlikely to have a market in this location. Where, for example, it can be incorporated into the design, some units could have out-buildings/sheds built so that they may double up as an office.

7.10 The Boxted Housing Needs Survey suggested that all the local need for market housing was for housing of 1-3 bedrooms and the Colchester Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2013 found that 75% of need for market housing is for houses of 3 bedrooms or less. The policy seeks to reflect this need with an element of flexibility to assist the viability of the development and during the plan period more up to date assessments of housing need may identify a need for a different mix of dwellings.

7.11 A particular issue of importance to the community is ensuring that affordable housing provided on the site addresses local needs. The Boxted Affordable Housing Needs Survey (undertaken in November 2013) identified a requirement for five units to address the affordable housing needs of local people. These units would need to be a mix of 1- and 2-bed properties. When a scheme goes ahead, the size and tenure of these units should be reviewed in consultation with Boxted Parish Council, the selected housing association and Colchester Borough Council.

7.12 It is considered that, because this site represents the only significant opportunity for development within or adjacent to the settlements in the parish, it is imperative that the affordable housing provided addresses the needs of local people or those with a local connection as identified in the Affordable Housing Needs Survey. If it does not then there

[3] 'Massing' refers to the shape and size of the buildings

will be little if any opportunity for these people to access their needs locally unless an existing affordable property becomes available and they successfully apply for it. It is therefore considered that a 'cascade' system of allocating affordable housing should be adopted for the development, thereby giving local people the first option on the affordable dwellings.

7.13 Parking around the adjacent Boxted Primary School is an issue for many in the community. It is therefore important that any development does not result in more on-street parking on the existing highway which would worsen the problems at school drop-off and pick-up times. On a related theme, a travel plan should be prepared in conjunction with Boxted Primary School, which specifically seeks to address parking issues at the school.

7.14 The allocation of the site creates an opportunity to provide a community shop. However, this should only be included if there is demonstrable interest from the community. If, at the time of the application, there is no interest, then Policy RE1 in respect of the provision of a community will apply for when, in the future, there is sufficient interest to provide a unit elsewhere in Boxted.

7.15 There is a grade II listed building on the land immediately to the north of the site and any redevelopment of the site must respect its setting.

7.16 There is the potential issue of archaeological remains on the site. Cannon and musket balls were found when buildings were erected on the site as packing sheds for fruit in 1927/1928. These buildings, which situated mainly near the Hill House side of the site, have subsequently been demolished. In addition, in 1925 Hill House (next to the site) was renovated and a skeleton in armour was found in a hideaway in the roof. It is therefore considered necessary that an archaeological investigation is undertaken before development commences.

POLICY HF1: HILL FARM SITE, CARTERS HILL/BOXTED STRAIGHT ROAD

Development of the Hill Farm site, Carters Hill/Boxted Straight Road, will be permitted provided it complies with the following criteria:

- It shall deliver a residential scheme at a density that respects the surrounding built-up area and its rural setting.
- It shall provide the following mix of residential properties:
  - For market housing - at least 25% of the market properties delivered should be 1-2 bed properties and at least 25% should be 3-bed properties unless up-to-date published evidence of housing needs suggests otherwise.
  - For affordable housing – at least three no. 1-bed properties and at least two no. 2-bed properties in line with the Boxted Affordable Housing Needs Survey. This requirement may change if a subsequent Parish Affordable Housing Needs Survey identifies an alternative level and mix of local affordable housing need.
- The total number of affordable housing units delivered must comply with Colchester Borough Council Local Plan Policy H4, with a proportion of these expected to be required specifically to address local needs in line with the most recent Boxted Affordable Housing Needs Survey. It is expected that the applicant will seek to agree with Colchester Borough Council the mechanism for allocating the required number and mix of affordable housing units to local residents in Boxted as a priority.
- Proposals which incorporate an element of 'live-work' into their design will be encouraged.
- It shall provide appropriately located public open space, in the form of a village green or equivalent, which is accessible and available for use by all the community, rather than just the residents of the new development. Contributions towards the ongoing maintenance of this space will be required.
- The boundary of the site shall have effective natural screening, both through retention of existing trees and hedgerows and new planting. Existing trees that are subject to Tree Preservation Orders shall be retained within the development.
- Subject to the statutory requirements for planning obligations, a contribution will be sought through a planning obligation or Community Infrastructure Levy income may be used for improvements to, and expansion of, open space, sports and recreation facilities at King George Playing Fields in Boxted, with a specific need for improvement of the Sports and Social Club.
- It shall include an appropriate scheme of sustainable urban drainage (SUDS).
- It shall be accompanied by a travel plan, prepared in conjunction with Boxted Primary School, which specifically seeks to address parking issues at the school.
- Parking provision needs to adhere to adopted parking standards in order to avoid increasing parking problems in the vicinity of Boxted Cross around Boxted Primary School.
- Subject to the effect on the viability of the development as a whole, if there is demonstrable interest from the community at the time, a community shop shall be provided on site.
- It must ensure that the setting of the Grade II listed building to the north of the site is respected.
- An archaeological investigation shall be undertaken prior to commencement of development.

Policy HF1	
Objective 1: Conserve and enhance the character and landscape of the parish and ensure that it does not coalesce with urban Colchester	YES
Objective 2: Protect and enhance the green spaces within the Parish which are of value to the community	YES
Objective 3: Ensure housing developments meet the needs of the local community, including for affordable housing	YES
Objective 4: Ensure that the rural employment base is, where possible, retained and the supporting infrastructure for rural working is provided	
Objective 5: Address highway safety and parking issues and improve the potential for movement by non-car modes	

8 RETAIL

8.1 As part of the Neighbourhood Plan process, the community was asked to consider if any new retail services were required in the parish. Rural communities such as Boxted need community facilities to act as its lifeblood. However, over recent years such facilities – pubs, post offices, local shops – have been closing in rural communities across the country. This puts the sustainability of small settlements at risk.

8.2 The community of Boxted has recognised the value of having a shop serving the community. Currently it does not have any such facility, with the nearest shops selling everyday convenience goods being located in Great Horkesley. In addition, there is Coleman's, a butcher on Langham Road which also sells dairy products, fish, bakery goods and fruit and vegetables. There is also a well-stocked community shop in Langham. For older people and those without access to a car, these retail facilities are difficult to get to on a regular basis.

8.3 The principal issue in providing a new retail facility is the commercial viability of such a unit. There is no obvious generic demand for single rural convenience units even in times of economic prosperity, let alone during a prolonged economic downturn. The 'story' for why such units come forward is usually bound up in the individual shop owners' personal circumstances and motivations, or a very specific market niche. Therefore it is recognised that whilst the Neighbourhood Plan could in theory facilitate the delivery of a retail unit, it cannot guarantee that it will be occupied, nor can it guarantee that it will be occupied by a retailer selling the type of goods that the community wishes to see.

8.4 It is therefore considered that the most appropriate way of addressing local retail needs in Boxted is to facilitate the provision of a community shop. This is in line with paragraph 28 of the NPPF which promotes the retention and/or development of local services and facilities such as local shops.

8.5 Such a shop would be run by the community and would provide a range of goods that the community needs. The most common examples are local convenience goods where such a facility acts as a 'top-up' facility to the weekly grocery shop that is most commonly done in large supermarkets.

8.6 The Neighbourhood Plan therefore seeks to facilitate the provision of an appropriate unit from which such a community shop can operate. Whether this is in an existing unit or provided as a new unit has not yet been identified. Certainly it would be preferable to occupy a unit as this would not require funding to cover the cost of a new building to be found.

8.7 It will be important that any unit can provide appropriate levels of parking as well as safe access to and from the site.

8.8 As at January 2014 there was no available commercial unit appropriate for use as a community shop in Boxted. It may be possible to use other types of existing buildings that do not immediately lend themselves to such a use – examples include garages or derelict buildings on smallholdings – so there is the possibility that this situation will change.

8.9 In order to ensure that, if a suitable unit is found, a community shop is ready to be opened, volunteers were invited in January 2014 to come forward and show interest in being part of such an organisation. To date, one volunteer has come forward and Boxted Parish Council is hopeful that further volunteers will come forward in the future.

Policy

8.10 The following policy provides for the opportunity to deliver a community shop in Boxted:

POLICY RE1: PROVISION OF A COMMUNITY SHOP

The provision of a community shop (Use Class A1) will be supported. Any planning application to change the use of an existing building to a retail facility that is capable of serving the local community will be strongly supported.

This support will be subject to any application ensuring that sufficient parking and safe access can be provided at the site.

Policy LG1	
Objective 1: Conserve and enhance the character and landscape of the parish and ensure that it does not coalesce with urban Colchester	
Objective 2: Protect and enhance the green spaces within the Parish which are of value to the community	
Objective 3: Ensure housing developments meet the needs of the local community, including for affordable housing	
Objective 4: Ensure that the rural employment base is, where possible, retained and the supporting infrastructure for rural working is provided	**YES**
Objective 5: Address highway safety and parking issues and improve the potential for movement by non-car modes	

9 BROADBAND INFRASTRUCTURE

9.1 The modern economy is changing and increasingly needs good communications infrastructure as a basic requirement. The 2011 Census highlights how people are working differently to a generation ago - in Boxted parish, 7% of people work from home and 21% are self-employed. Of these self-employed people, 14% have no employees so effectively work for themselves with no support. Commonly this is in service activities that simply require access to a computer and a broadband connection.

9.2 The need for high speed broadband to serve Boxted is therefore paramount. Broadband speeds are reported by residents to be poor and it is therefore a fundamental constraint to the continuing expansion of self-employed activity for those working from home or from a small office.

9.3 Government has recognised that there is a significant gap in availability of basic and superfast broadband, particularly in rural areas where British Telecom (BT) and other national providers have not invested in upgrades to the network and have allocated £530m through the Broadband Delivery UK (BDUK) programme to deliver superfast broadband to 90% of premises by 2015 and have recently allocated an additional £250m to increase coverage to 95% of premises by 2017 and 99% by 2018.

9.4 The Essex County Council Community Broadband scheme has a roll-out programme for the delivery of superfast broadband infrastructure (24mbps+) and for Boxted, as of October 2014, work was in the process of being undertaken. It is also important to note that other broadband providers such as County Broadband Ltd also have roll-out programmes within the county and may include Boxted parish in the future.

9.5 Whilst BT has an obligation to provide a landline to every household in the UK and developers are expected to want to facilitate high speed broadband provision otherwise their developments will be substantially less marketable, there have been instances where developers have not contacted BT early enough in the process for fibre and ducting to be laid, or they have a national agreement with a cable provider that is not active in the area, leaving new housing developments with little or no connections.

9.6 Policy BE3 seeks to ensure that all new housing, community and commercial development in the parish is connected to superfast broadband. If this is not possible, the developer will be expected to make a contribution via the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), if this is in place, or through a Section 106 agreement towards off-site works that would enable those properties to gain access to superfast broadband, either via fibre-optic cable or wireless technology in the future.

POLICY BI1: HIGH SPEED BROADBAND

On new developments within or adjacent to the settlement boundaries, all new properties where possible must be served by a superfast broadband connection which must be installed on an open access basis. This will need to be directly accessible from the nearest British Telecom exchange and provided in such a way as to enable future repair, replacement or upgrading. If superfast broadband is not available at the time of construction, then the necessary infrastructure must be installed to ensure that superfast broadband can be accessed when it is ready.

Elsewhere, it is expected that all properties will also have access to this standard of connection when available, unless it can be demonstrated, through consultation with British Telecom, that this would not be possible, practical or economically viable - in which case the District or Parish Council may utilise Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) monies or seek an equivalent developer contribution, toward off-site works that would enable those properties access to super-fast broadband, either via fibre-optic cable or wireless technology, in the future.

Policy BI1	
Objective 1: Conserve and enhance the character and landscape of the parish and ensure that it does not coalesce with urban Colchester	
Objective 2: Protect and enhance the green spaces within the Parish which are of value to the community	
Objective 3: Ensure housing developments meet the needs of the local community, including for affordable housing	
Objective 4: Ensure that the rural employment base is, where possible, retained and the supporting infrastructure for rural working is provided	**YES**
Objective 5: Address highway safety and parking issues and improve the potential for movement by non-car modes	

10 TRANSPORT AND MOVEMENT

10.1 As part of the Neighbourhood Plan process, the community was asked to consider if there were any particular issues relating to transport and movement (both by car and non-car modes) in the parish.

Highway safety and parking

10.2 As identified in Section 7 in respect of Hill Farm, one of the biggest pinch-points in the parish is Boxted Cross, where Boxted Primary School is located and where Policy HF1 proposes the allocation of the Hill Farm site for residential development.

10.3 It is vital that new development – and in particular any development at Hill Farm – adheres to adopted parking standards, as set by Essex County Council.

10.4 In addition, highway safety is a concern in the parish. The particular issues that were raised by the community in consultation were speed and safety along Boxted Straight Road, particularly at junctions, and parking/safety issues in respect of school drop-off and pick-up at Boxted Primary School. Where new development has a direct impact on these issues it may be appropriate to seek a contribution towards measures to improve highway safety. To assess the impact on road safety, a transport assessment or statement proportionate with the scale of development is required but this would not be an onerous requirement for small scale development.

10.5 This issue is dealt with in more detail in Section 11 which addresses non-planning matters.

POLICY TM1: HIGHWAY SAFETY AND PARKING

All development proposals will be required to meet adopted parking standards to avoid increasing parking issues in the village.

All proposals for new development which impacts on the highway will be accompanied by a transport assessment or transport statement proportionate to the scale of the proposed development.

Where appropriate, developments will be expected to contribute through a planning obligation towards measures to improve road safety, including junction improvements and signage. Community Infrastructure Levy income may also be used for this purpose.

Policy TM1	
Objective 1: Conserve and enhance the character and landscape of the parish and ensure that it does not coalesce with urban Colchester	
Objective 2: Protect and enhance the green spaces within the Parish which are of value to the community	
Objective 3: Ensure housing developments meet the needs of the local community, including for affordable housing	
Objective 4: Ensure that the rural employment base is, where possible, retained and the supporting infrastructure for rural working is provided	
Objective 5: Address highway safety and parking issues and improve the potential for movement by non-car modes	**YES**

11 NON-PLANNING ACTIONS AND DELIVERY OF PLAN PROPOSALS

Action plan for non-planning matters

11.1 The process of preparing the Neighbourhood Plan has resulted in the community raising a significant number of actions that are not specifically relevant to a Neighbourhood Plan. However, this is not to say that they are any less important. Indeed, many of these actions will help to address the problems that have been created by development in the past and will be able to mitigate the impacts of future development in the Neighbourhood Plan.

Traffic and safety

11.2 The particular issues that were raised by the community in consultation were speed and safety along Boxted Straight Road, particularly at junctions, and parking/safety issues in respect of school drop-off and pick-up at Boxted Primary School. A traffic report[4] was commissioned to look at these issues in more detail.

11.3 The following recommendations were made to address the highways issues:

a. A 40mph limit be introduced along Straight Road, Langham Road and Horkesley Road. This has now been implemented.

b. The refurbishment and improvement of the Straight Road junctions. Whilst junction solutions such as mini-roundabouts have been raised by members of the community, it is understood that these are unlikely to be feasible, due to space constraints. However, Essex County Council has committed to make highway improvements to address these problems.

c. The refurbishment and improvement of the Straight Road signage – certain actions relating to signage have been approved in principle by Essex County Council and require budgets to be secured before they are implemented.

d. Once the Northern Approach Link Road to Mill Road is complete, to provide new signage for heavy goods vehicles (HGVs) in order to direct them along the A134 from Severalls Business Park. This will serve to reduce non-local HGV traffic from coming through Boxted village and, in some cases, seeking access along very small country lanes that are inaccessible for such traffic.

e. A travel plan be produced jointly by Boxted Primary School, Essex County Council and Boxted Parish Council to identify solutions to parking and safety problems associated with school drop-off and pick-up. In particular, this should identify proposals to ensure parents park in the Village Hall car park in Cage Lane and a 'Park and Walk' initiative is set up to allow parents to then walk their children safely to and from school. This could also consider the use of double yellow lines on Carters Hill to prevent parking adjacent to the school on inappropriate verges.

f. Boxted Parish Council to request more use of Essex County Council 'Ranger' resources to carry out minor maintenance on signs, vegetation, etc, in order to ensure that junctions and roadways are maintained to an appropriate standard.

Improving bus services

11.4 It is important that the Parish Council continues to push for a bus service to serve Boxted parish.

[4] Waterman Boreham (2013) *Boxted Traffic Issues: Neighbourhood Development Plan*

Access and Leisure

11.5 The very location of rural communities means that the car is the predominant mode of transport. Certainly the need to access employment, services and, to a lesser extent, leisure opportunities outside of the immediate local area means that a car is the only realistic option, given the lack of public transport services. Also, there are opportunities to address issues of the volume of traffic on the road such as through car sharing[5].

11.6 However, this does not mean that there is no role for access by non-car modes. The continued promotion of public transport is still an important issue for rural communities such as Boxted. Also though there is a role for walking, cycling and horse riding, both for 'necessary' trips (e.g. to employment, education, etc) and for leisure purposes. This often creates a difficulty where non-car travellers and those using vehicles are forced to share road space. In a rural setting, this is particularly dangerous.

11.7 It is therefore considered by the community of Boxted that there is a need to improve access by non-car modes on dedicated routes away from traffic. Within the villages, footpaths are generally considered to be sufficient in number and quality.

11.8 This local evidence is supported by the fact that less than 10% of Colchester Borough's public rights of way (PROW) are bridleways. Of the thirteen districts in Essex, only Maldon and Tendring have fewer bridleways by percentage. Colchester Borough is therefore seriously lacking in bridleways and this problem must be addressed in accordance with Government requirements.

11.9 The Boxted Neighbourhood Plan supports the Essex Public Rights of Way Improvement Plan (PROWIP)[6], which acknowledges that a good public rights of way network promotes health and social benefits to local communities.

11.10 Many respondents to the community survey considered that a dedicated cyclepath direct to Colchester would be of benefit, not only to Boxted but also to the surrounding villages. However, such provision is considered to be beyond the scope of what can be achieved through a single Neighbourhood Plan. In particular, there is presently insufficient width along Straight Road to be able to physically accommodate a dedicated cyclepath.

11.11 The PROWIP states that there needs to be a particular focus on the provision of bridleways. There is an absence of bridlepaths in Boxted for use by horse riders and cyclists in addition to walkers. At present there is just one relatively short bridleway - One Hundred Lane - connecting Boxted and Langham.

11.12 The aspiration is to create an improved network of bridleways that can be used by residents and visitors alike to reduce the risk to cyclists and horses and riders, currently restricted to using the busy roads. In particular, the opportunity to link the parish to the Northern Growth Area would be a significant one because of the benefits that it would bring in improving accessibility for the local community.

11.13 In this context, all footpaths in Boxted parish should be considered for upgrade to bridleways. Creating safe, off road circular routes for horse riders and cyclists within Boxted, as well as safely linking Boxted with Great Horkesley, Langham and Myland is the ambition. All development in Boxted should be considered in light of the need to upgrade footpaths to bridleways and developer contributions and grants should be sought to pay for the legal process to upgrade a footpath and/or for fencing, drainage and

[5] The Essex Care Share scheme is available (see https://essex.liftshare.com)
[6] Essex County Council (2009) *Essex Public Rights of Way Improvement Plan,* Research undertaken by Steer Davies Gleave

surfacing. Existing landowners will be encouraged by the Parish Council to upgrade their footpaths.

11.14 The development of a more comprehensive bridleway network requires the agreement of the relevant landowners and it will be important that the Parish Council and other interested parties work with Colchester Borough Council and Essex County Council to achieve this under the requirements of the relevant legislation.

11.15 Funding for this project will come from a variety of sources. There are a number of bodies that provide grants for this, including Entrust, the Environment Agency, the Heritage Lottery Fund, Grant Net and the Charity Commission. More locally, the Essex Bridleways Trust is a grant-giving body for the creation of new bridleways in Essex. This could also be supported by the use of developer contributions (assuming a Community Infrastructure Levy is in place).

Walnut Orchard

11.16 The Parish Council is in the process of seeking to list the Walnut Orchard as an Asset of Community Value (ACV). This would mean that, if the Orchard came up for sale, then the community would have time to raise the funds to submit a competitive bid for it. In addition, the ACV listing is also material in the consideration of any planning application for development on the site, should that come forward.

11.17 In addition, it is considered that a Tree Preservation Order (TPO) should be sought for the whole of the Orchard. This is to be taken forward by the Parish Council.

Broadband

11.18 Alongside the policy to ensure that new developments have access to superfast broadband, there is a general aspiration to improve broadband speeds for all in the parish. The Parish Council is working with Essex County Council to ensure that the roll-out of its broadband upgrades delivers faster broadband for all.

Summary

11.19 Table 11.1 shows a summary of the non-planning actions:

Table 11.1: Non-planning actions

Theme	Action	Lead partners	Priority
Traffic safety	40mph limit be introduced along Straight Road, Langham Road and Horkesley Road	Essex County Council	High
Traffic safety	Refurbishment and improvement of the Straight Road junctions	Essex County Council	High
Traffic safety	Refurbishment and improvement of the Straight Road signage	Essex County Council	High
Traffic safety	New signage for HGVs	Essex County Council	Low
Traffic and parking	Preparation of a travel plan to identify solutions to parking and safety problems associated with school drop-off and pick-up	Boxted Primary School, Essex County Council, Boxted Parish Council	Medium
Traffic safety	More use of Essex County Council 'Ranger' resources to carry out minor maintenance on signs and vegetation	Boxted Parish Council	Medium
Bus services	Continue to push for a bus service to serve Boxted	Boxted Parish Council	Low
Access and Leisure	Put in place a bridleway network in order to create safe off-road rights of way for vulnerable road users in accordance with relevant legislation.	Boxted Parish Council, Boxted Neighbourhood Development Plan Committee, Colchester Borough Council, Essex County Council	Medium
Walnut Orchard	List as an ACV	Boxted Parish Council	High
Walnut Orchard	Seek a blanket TPO designation	Boxted Parish Council	Medium
Broadband	Improve broadband speeds for residents and businesses	Essex County Council Boxted Parish Council	Medium
Bridleways	Work with landowners to ascertain the feasibility of upgrading all footpaths to bridleways	Boxted Parish Council	Medium

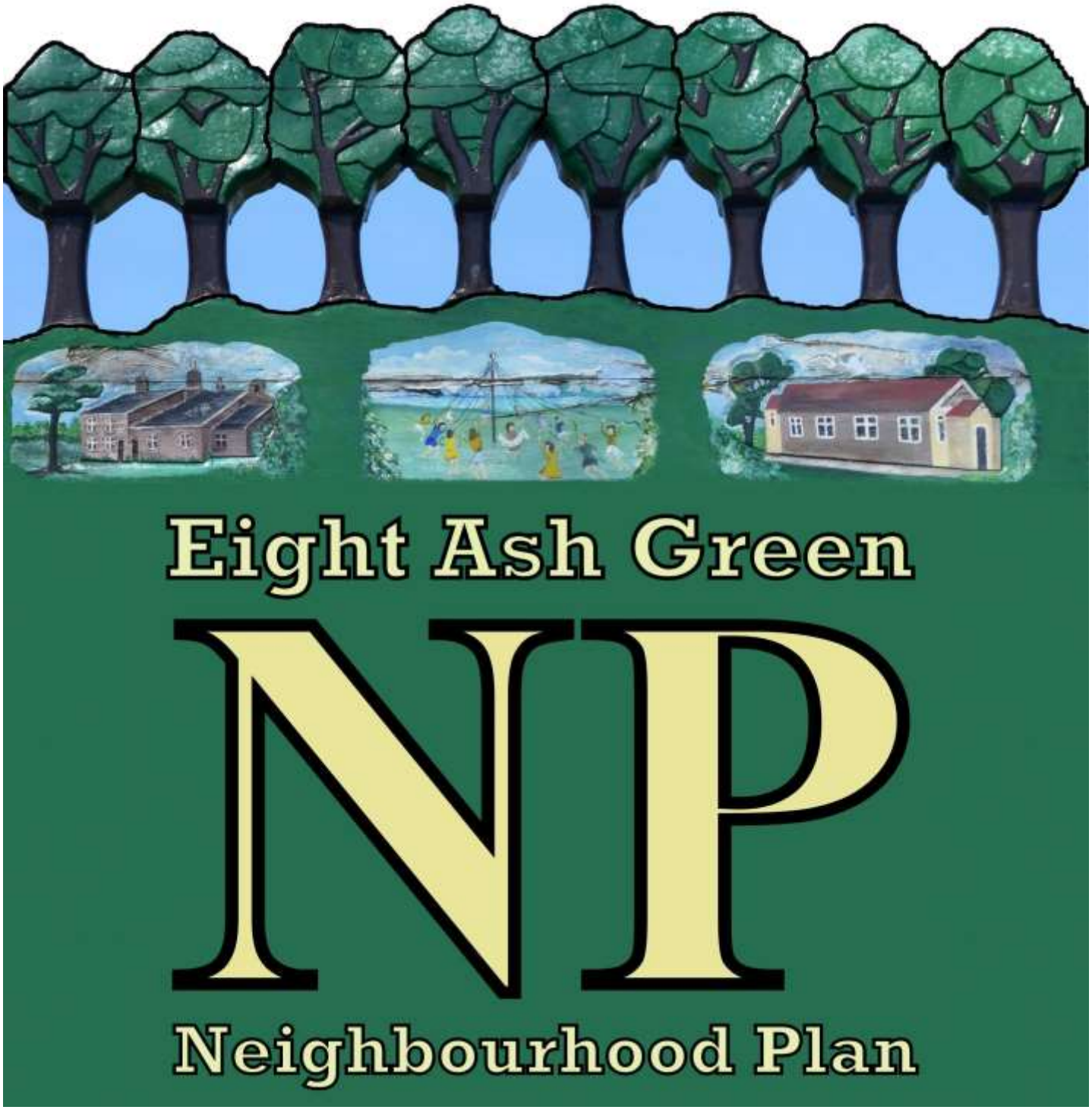
Delivery of plan proposals

11.20 The Neighbourhood Plan has identified a number of items of community infrastructure and their maintenance which will require funding. For these items it is considered that developer contributions will be an important source of funding, at least for part of the cost. Table 11.2 shows what projects are to be delivered, timescales for delivery where known, and key partners.

Table 11.2: Delivery of Neighbourhood Plan proposals

Project	Cost	Timescale	Key partners
Maintenance of public open space at Hill Farm development	Approx. £2,000 per annum	On completion of Hill Farm development	Boxted Parish Council, developer/landowner
Improvements to open space, sports and recreation facilities at King George Playing Fields	Not known	On commencement of development of Hill Farm	Boxted Parish Council, developer/landowner
Improvements to Boxted Sports and Social Club (refurbishment of hall and facilities)	Not known, but assume approx. £200,000	On commencement of development of Hill Farm	Boxted Parish Council, developer/landowner
Improvement of broadband infrastructure	Not known	Ongoing	Boxted Parish Council, developer/landowner/ Essex County Council/ BT Open Reach
Preparation of a travel plan for Boxted Primary School	£3,000	Ongoing	Boxted Parish Council, Boxted Primary School, Essex County Council/ Colchester Borough Council
Identification of bridleway network	Not known	Ongoing	Boxted Parish Council, landowners

Annex D



The Vision for Eight Ash Green **is that it should remain a small village located in a rural setting, mainly consisting of residential dwellings interspersed with open farmland but also containing some small business premises. Eight Ash Green should continue to enjoy wide open spaces within the village with uninterrupted views of the countryside. It should remain clearly separated from other nearby villages - it is not and should not become a suburb of either Stanway, Colchester or the proposed West Tey Garden Community/New Town.**

Eight Ash Green Neighbourhood Plan 2017 – 2033
Date: November 2019

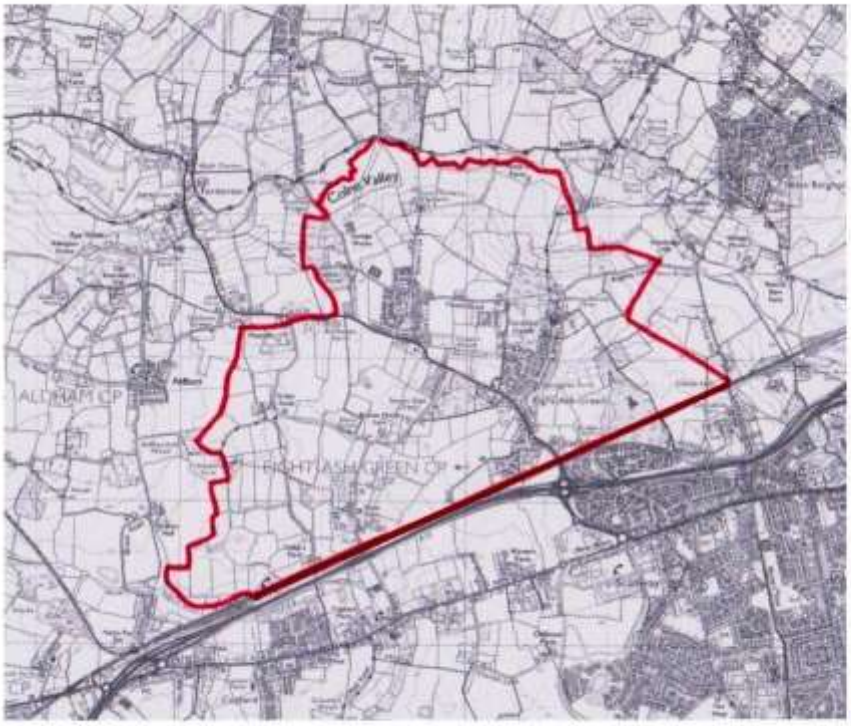
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Foreword

1.1 Following over three years of work by the Neighbourhood Plan Group, this document represents the Neighbourhood Plan for Eight Ash Green in respect of the period 2017 – 2033. It covers the area within our parish boundary including the distinct communities of Eight Ash Green, Fordham Heath, Daisy Green, Lexden Heath and Seven Star Green. – see below. Colchester Borough Council approved this designation in June 2015.

Map of the Eight Ash Green 'Neighbourhood Area'



1.2 In developing the Plan, wide ranging and continuous consultation has taken place both informally and formally to include the Parish Council, the villagers of the Parish, landowners/agents and business owners working in close liaison with Colchester Borough Council. Advice has also been sought from Colchester Borough Council; the Rural Community Council for Essex and a very experienced town planner who has examined some 50 neighbourhood plans and Health Checks for Neighbourhood Plan groups. Full details are set out in the Consultation Statement available at www.eightashgreen.net

1.3 The outcome from the six week (42 days) consultation of v26 of the Neighbourhood Plan (12th February 00.00 – 25th March 2018 24.00), undertaken under Regulation 14 of the Neighbourhood Plan Regulations 2012, showed over 90 per cent of the villagers fully supported the Plan and its contents, with 633 hits on the website, 177 hits on the comments form and 70 comments form completed. Detailed comments and observations from this exercise can be found in the Consultation Statement and have been incorporated in the Plan where appropriate.

1.4 The very strong measure of support from the village not only for the Plan itself but also the Objectives and Policies, reflects the extensive consultation process undertaken, as reflected in Section 7 below.

Eight Ash Green Neighbourhood Plan Group

Authorised by the Eight Ash Green Parish Council to prepare this Neighbourhood Plan

November 2019



Lower Fordham Heath

Introduction

2.1 A Neighbourhood Plan sets out a vision for an area and the planning policies for the use and development of land. It forms part of the statutory planning framework. The policies and proposals contained within it will be used as a basis for the determination of planning applications. The Plan must be in conformity with the Government's National Planning Policy Framework and must satisfy the Basic Conditions which are:

- The policies, having regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State, are appropriate to make the Neighbourhood Plan.
- The plan contributes towards the achievement of sustainable development.
- The policies are in general conformity with the strategic policies in the Development Plan prepared by the Local Planning Authority.
- The Plan is compatible with and otherwise does not breach EU obligations.
- The making of the neighbourhood plan is not likely to have significant effect on a European site (as defined in the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2012) or a European offshore marine site (as defined in the Offshore Marine Conservation (Natural Habitats) Regulations 2007) (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects).

2.2 The Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared with regard to the 2012 National Planning Policy Framework[1] as well as guidance set out in the National Planning Practice Guidance. The policies in the Neighbourhood Plan are in general conformity with the strategic policies in the adopted development plan which consists of the Core Strategy adopted in 2008 and amended in 2014, the Site Allocations Development Plan Document (DPD) adopted in 2010 and the Development Policies DPD adopted in 2010 and amended in 2014. Colchester Borough Council is currently preparing a new Local Plan 2017 - 2033. The general direction and policies of the emerging Local Plan have also been taken into account in preparing this Neighbourhood Plan.

[1] (March 2012) *National Planning Policy Framework*

2.3 In accordance with the notice given by the Eight Ash Green Parish Council to the Local Planning Authority on 15th June 2015, the area contained within the Parish boundary is designated as the formal Neighbourhood Area. The Parish Council is able to confirm that this is the only Neighbourhood Plan for the Parish.

2.4 A Neighbourhood Plan ensures communities play a greater role in determining the future of their area. Once it is adopted following a successful result at a local referendum, it becomes part of the statutory development plan. Together with the Local Plan prepared by Colchester Borough Council, the policies in the Neighbourhood Plan, which relate to the development and use of land, will provide the statutory basis for the determination of planning applications (by Colchester Borough Council) in the Eight Ash Green Neighbourhood Area. Neighbourhood planning policies only affect development that requires a planning application. The Plan cannot therefore include projects that fall outside the remit of planning control. In the course of consulting the residents about the Neighbourhood Plan, a number of other issues arose that could not be included in the Plan as planning policies. These are dealt with in the 'Projects' section (see Annex C) and whilst these cannot be delivered by a Neighbourhood Plan, they are considered by the Parish Council as equally important to pursue.

2.5 In support of the Neighbourhood Plan, there are a number of documents which are available on line at www.eightashgreen.net[2]. They include the Project Plan; the Basic Conditions Statement; the Consultation Statement; the Regulation 14 Process – Consultation – Outcomes document; the Evidence Base; the Village Settlement Boundary; the Site Selection process; and the Neighbourhood Plan Objectives and Policies - Supporting Evidence.

[2] www.eightashgreen.net

The Parish of Eight Ash Green

Brief History

3.1 The Parish of Eight Ash Green came into existence in 1947 taking land from the surrounding Parishes – 641 acres from Fordham, 844 acres from Copford, 125 acres from Stanway and 4 acres from Aldham. At the time, the population was approximately some 600 and the villagers were mainly involved in agriculture and local trades. There were scattered farms and cottages with two main dwelling areas around Fordham Heath as well as the crossroads by what was the Brick and Tile Public House. The Commons at Seven Star Green and Daisy Green were given to our Parish Council in 1973 by deed of gift by the Lord of the Manor of Copford.

Socio-economic profile

3.2 The current socio economic profile of the village shows:-

- Some 1,730 people live locally made up of 1,070 working age adults (62%); 295 children under age 16 (17%); and 365 people over age 65 (21%) - 2011 census[3]
- The majority who work are employed at locations outside the village. Agriculture is no longer a principal class of work. (responses to the 2017 questionnaire)[4]
- There are four distinct areas of residential housing:-
    - Spring Lane / Fordham Heath / Heathfields and Searle Way/The Walk and the Rise (medium density);
    - Wood Lane and adjacent cul de sacs (low density);
    - Fiddlers Folly/Porters Lane and Close (high density); &
    - Seven Star Green (low density).
- The 2017 physical survey of the village undertaken by the Neighbourhood Plan Group shows there are some 680 dwellings containing a mixture of housing types comprising:-

[3] (2011) *Office for National Statistics Census*
[4] (2017) *Eight Ash Green Neighbourhood Plan Questionnaire*





- 252 detached houses (37%)
- 129 semi-detached houses (19%)
- 7 semi-detached bungalows (1%)
- 143 terraced houses (21%)
- 122 bungalows (18%)
- 27 flats (4%)

Key facilities and assets

3.3 Within the village is an ancient 36 acre Heath which is both a registered green and has common land status; an open, green landscape both internal and external to the village with several conservation areas; thirteen Grade 2 listed buildings; a public house; a village hall; a church; allotments; a hotel and leisure club; two dental surgeries; a play area for children; eight ponds that support a myriad of wildlife; an Ofsted rated good primary school; and recreation facilities by way of both a cricket and football pitch.

3.4 Assets within 5 kilometres include Colchester town with its multitude of shops and facilities; a good transport infrastructure with links via the A12 and the main London to Norwich rail line at Colchester and local rail services at Marks Tey station; the Stanway shopping and leisure facilities; three GP surgeries including a health centre; and good secondary and further education establishments.

The future

3.5 Following extensive consultations within the village, residents are prepared to accept 150 additional dwellings as outlined in the emerging Local Plan. This represents a twenty-two per cent uplift on the present housing stock but there is no desire to expand any further either in terms of the number of houses or building on any more land in the village during that plan period. That said, the intention is to welcome and integrate the newcomers to the village and way of life.

3.6 The overriding wish of the village is to remain a sustainable, quiet, rural Parish, which overlooks and is part of the beautiful Colne Valley to the north,

and is sited on the edge of, but not part of, Colchester/Stanway or the proposed West Tey Garden Community/ New Town.

Landscape Character of the village

3.7 The Colchester Borough Council Landscape Character Assessment[5] provides a baseline inventory and description of the Borough's landscape character types and areas. "Character" is defined as a distinct, recognisable and consistent pattern of elements that make each landscape (or townscape) different. Character is influenced by particular combinations of visual, ecological, historical, settlement, built components, and other intangible aspects such as tranquillity and sense of place.

3.8 The need to protect landscape character has been recognised by Essex County Council together with the need to protect the distinctive character of villages and countryside. The unique character of the village has been set out in the Eight Ash Green Village Design Statement of 2013[6] refreshed by the responses to the questionnaire of spring 2017.

3.9 Regionally, Eight Ash Green is categorised as being in the North Thames Regional Character Area. In terms of the Essex County Character Areas, it is categorised as being in the E2 South Colchester Farmlands Area, nestled right up against the C7 Colne Valley Character Area to the north. See map below. It is described as being a "small linear village settlement" with its "setting providing visual and physical separation from Colchester".



Pond at bottom of Lower Heath

[5] Chris Blandford Associates (2005) *Colchester Borough Landscape Character Assessment* – for Colchester Borough Council

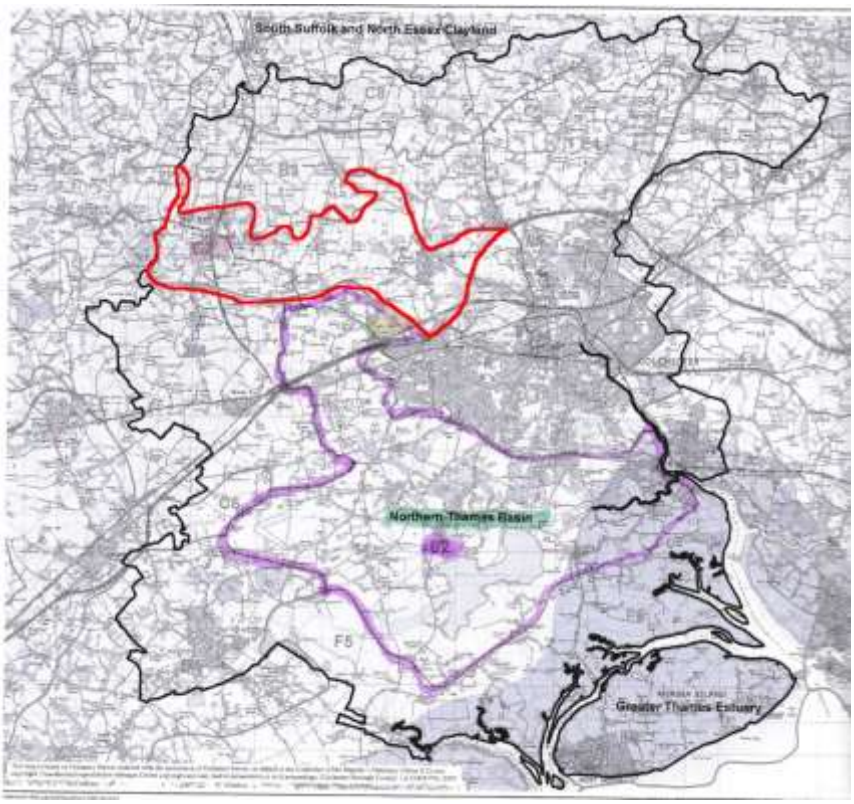
[6] (July 2013) *Eight Ash Green Village Design Statement*

3.10 The village is based on sediments of sand and gravel as well as clay deposits and comprises a gently undulating broad plateau predominantly used for arable or improved pasture. It interspersed with woodland and natural habitats in an open environment that provides wildlife corridors, combined with an ancient 36 acre heath.

3.11 The community of Eight Ash Green greatly values the benefits of living in a truly rural village where it does not wish to become a suburb of Colchester as part of a creeping urban sprawl. Whilst the landscape does not merit the award of being an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, it is characterised by a lovely open feel with many natural features such as the Heath, mature trees and woods, ponds and fields lined with ancient hedgerows, footpaths and bridleways. These distinctive features are much valued by the community.

3.12 The Landscape Character Assessment recommends a landscape strategy that will preserve and enhance the distinctive character of villages and countryside. References to and support for such a strategy, are set out below in the appropriate Objectives and Policies sections.

Landscape Character Area



Colne Valley (Eight Ash Green)

South Colchester Farmlands

The key issues for Eight Ash Green and our Vision Statement

4.1 The key issues were identified from extensive meetings with villagers, businesses, landowners and the Parish Council, the responses to the 2017 questionnaire and local knowledge and include:-

- retaining the rural character of the village by protecting the environment – landscape/open spaces, thus helping to support nature conservation
- ensuring there is no coalescence with Stanway and/or Colchester or the proposed West Tey Garden Community/New Town i.e. the prevention of urban sprawl and urbanisation of the village
- providing high quality housing with good design and layout on a site chosen by the villagers.

4.2 These are reflected in the Vision Statement for the village:-

The Vision for Eight Ash Green is that it should remain a small village located in a rural setting, mainly consisting of residential dwellings interspersed with open farmland but also containing some small business premises. Eight Ash Green should continue to enjoy wide open spaces within the village with uninterrupted views of the countryside. It should remain clearly separated from other nearby villages - it is not and should not become a suburb of either Stanway, Colchester or the proposed West Tey Garden Community/New Town.

4.3 Other key issues which are important include:-

- encouraging the domestic use of green energy
- looking after the biodiversity present in the village
- jobs – encouraging local employment/businesses and the best use of land
- having effective and convenient transport links in the village
- valuing the local heritage
- the provision of effective wired broadband.

Background

5.1 In broad terms, what is the Eight Ash Green Neighbourhood Plan seeking to achieve?

- To define a new settlement boundary for the village;
- To set out an overarching Vision for the locality underpinned by a broad set of Objectives and detailed Policies on the development and use of land both for domestic properties and for businesses;
- To identify how and where in Eight Ash Green, growth proposed in the emerging Local Plan for Colchester is to be met; and
- To set out how the residents of Eight Ash Green would like to see their community develop and prosper in a sustainable way over a particular time frame of 2017 to 2033.

5.2 What are the issues the villagers of Eight Ash Green are seeking to address in the Plan?

Fundamentally, there are four issues:-

- First, how to preserve all that is good about living in a small rural village, the latter being an important factor as to why people like living in Eight Ash Green;
- Second, how to play a responsible part in the continuing growth of the Borough of Colchester;
- Third, how to ensure that over the proposed Local Plan period of 2017 to 2033, future development is managed to ensure 150 dwellings are built on a location chosen by the villagers; and
- Fourth, to encourage more small businesses into the village with the aim of expanding the opportunities for local employment.

5.3 How does the Neighbourhood Plan link with the emerging Colchester Borough Council Local Plan?

- Section 3 of the Basic Conditions Statement explains how this Neighbourhood Plan fully conforms to the current Colchester Borough Council's Core Strategy Policies as set out in the 2014 Focussed Review.
- Colchester Borough Council is in the throes of producing a Local Plan that will set out the future development of the Borough over their

plan period of 2017 – 2033 which will include the vision and strategic objectives for Colchester as a whole. As part of this process, it will detail the policies for those areas identified as having the capacity to help deliver the future growth of the population. The Eight Ash Green Neighbourhood Plan will deliver 150 new dwellings, thereby contributing to the Borough's wider housing target of 18,400 new dwellings. The Neighbourhood Plan will also seek to deliver a range of supporting infrastructure needed to ensure that all new growth is as sustainable as possible.

5.4 What does the Publication draft of the proposed Local Plan[7] for Colchester say about Eight Ash Green?

• Paragraph 6.161 says "A preferred site for development in Eight Ash Green has been identified by the Neighbourhood Plan Group through consultation with the local community".

- The Local Plan Policy SS5 describes the proposals for Eight Ash Green in which it states that the Neighbourhood Plan will:-

  - Define the extent of a new Settlement Development Boundary for Eight Ash Green
  - Allocate a preferred site(s) for 150 dwellings in Eight Ash Green
  - Set out any associated policies needed to support the site allocation i.e. housing mix, type of new housing and density for each site allocated for housing
  - The Neighbourhood Plan will also set out the policy framework to guide the delivery of any infrastructure/ community facilities required to support the development.

[7] (May 2017) *The publication Draft stage of the Colchester Borough Council Local Plan 2017 - 2033*

In detail, what does the Neighbourhood Plan do?

6.1 The various elements set out below reflect the strongly held views of the villagers and what they want to see happen in the village. They were obtained by way of village meetings, responses to the 2017 questionnaire, surveys carried out by the Neighbourhood Plan Group and the Regulation 14 consultation exercise.

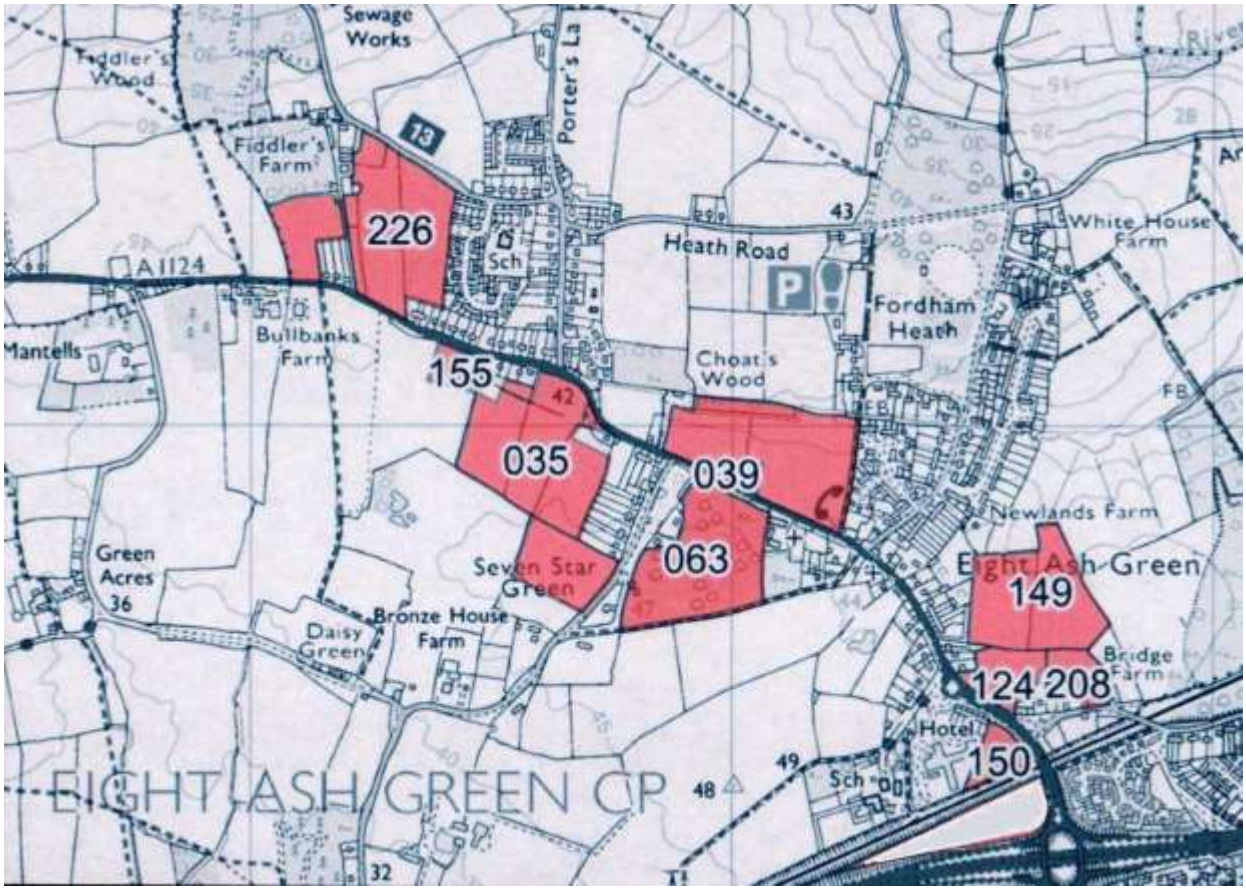
Subject	NP Policy	What does it do?
Housing	FF 2-3 DH1	Provides for an increase and mixture of residential dwellings of no more than 2 storeys high, for first time buyers, downsizers, families and executives by way of a medium density with reference to a percentage of affordable housing
Design	FF 2	Provides for the layout and design to be compatible with the character and context of the village
Environment	FF4	Provides for a new direct access road across Fiddlers Field
	FF 8 DH1	Provides for wiring to be installed to allow for charging of electric vehicles
	FF 8 DH1	Provides for storage of renewable energy
	FF 7, EP5	Provides for mitigation of any potential flooding
	FF 6	Provides for improved landscaping and noise reduction measures
	FF 5	Proposes a new footpath linking the new estate with the local primary school
	EP1	Provides for retention of existing gap between Eight Ash Green and other settlements
	EP2	Provides for protection of green spaces
	EP3	Provides for protection for hedgerows
	EP4	Provides for protection and enhancement of footpaths, cycle and bridleways
	RE 1-2	Provides for efficient use of the Earth's natural resources
	Her1	Provides for any listed building or Heritage Asset to be maintained or where possible enhanced to protect from any future

		development
Business	BP1	Provides for the provision of a Designated Business area
Transport	FF 5	Proposes two new bus stops
Connectivity	FF 8 DH1	Provides for access to the internet
Roads and pavements	FF 4 -5 DH1	Provides for a new access road coupled with an improved pavement along the A1124
Community amenities	FF 9 CS1	Provides for a new play area and recreational routes Designates land for a new village community hub/hall
	Projects	
	Environment Business Infrastructure Roads Education Comms Land Safety Access and Leisure	Support for wildlife Support for the local economy – business Protection for the rural nature of village Promotion of safety for the local primary school Support for the local primary school Provision of superfast broadband Promotion of maintenance of land and parking Promotion for modern street lighting Maintenance of sports pitches; dog poo bins; National Cycle Route No 13 – dedicated cycle network and stands; footpaths and bridleways; the annual Music Festival

Consultation and process

7.1 Development of the Plan throughout its whole process has been based on continuous consultation with a wide variety of different parties with a particular focus on the villagers. Full details are contained in the Consultation Statement but broadly speaking, these were the main steps:-

- Following the decision taken by the Parish Council in February 2015 to produce a Plan, a Neighbourhood Plan Group was formed (see Annex A)
- The Group then undertook a wide programme of work (full details are contained in our Project Plan and Consultation Statement both of which are available on the Neighbourhood Plan website) to:
    - obtain agreement of Colchester Borough Council of the Designated Area for the Neighbourhood Plan (the Parish boundary)
    - obtain the necessary funds at various stages to support the programme of work
    - draw up a list of potential stakeholders
    - undertake a physical housing survey to establish the number, type and location of all the houses currently in the village
    - undertake a physical survey of the nine potential sites put forward as part of the Colchester Borough Council Call for Sites programme (see below) as well as three other possible sites identified by Colchester Borough Council but not put forward by the respective landowners
- meet with and fully consult with all the landowners and/or agents for the 9 Call for Sites localities
    - audit the existing infrastructure in the village
    - create a profile of the area
    - meet with various businesses/owner in the village
    - meet with the local farmers
    - carry out (3) surveys, to include an assessment of all the sites being put forward for development; the number and location of houses in the village; as well as obtaining details of the traffic survey carried out by Essex County Council



MAP OF EIGHT ASH GREEN
showing the nine Call for Sites localities.
(Site 226 now know as "Fiddlers Field")

- gather the evidence required from local stakeholders e.g. health, education, transport, the church
- consult the villagers as appropriate by way of (3) focus group meetings, (11) open village meetings (e.g. 254/102 villagers attended) as well as (3) home visits and displays at (3) village festivals, all the while keeping them informed of progress e.g. (12) flyers – updates delivered to every household; (11) articles in the village newsletter delivered to every household; and (14) regular updates to the Neighbourhood Plan website
- hold an Annual Public Meeting every year (3) to remind villagers about progress over the previous year; to seek their views and answer questions; and to set out the forthcoming programme of work

- distribute a questionnaire to every household to obtain the views of the villagers on a number of specific points (477 responses received equivalent to a 33 per cent response rate)
- continue close liaison with Colchester Borough Council throughout the whole process (18 meetings)
- establish a good working relationship with the Rural Community Council for Essex (participated in 7 training – network events) to include obtaining their neighbourhood profile of our village
- deliver (29) presentations/updates to the Parish Council to include the submission of 2 papers
- being mentioned (9) times in the local newspaper

The future provision of additional housing in the village

8.1 A number of steps have been taken to validate where the additional housing should be located in support of the emerging Local Plan. Full details are contained in the “Site Selection process” document available on the Neighbourhood Plan website.

VILLAGE SETTLEMENT BOUNDARY

Objective

To provide for a new Village Settlement Boundary for Eight Ash Green

Policy

VSB 1: The Village Settlement Boundary includes Fiddlers Field (formerly known as Site 226) and excludes land south of Seven Star Green, to the south of the A1124, as shown on the Village Boundary Map. On land outside the Village Settlement Boundary, there will be a general presumption against new development, unless it accords with the special circumstances set out in the Development Plan or the National Planning Policy Framework

Context

Colchester Borough Council undertook a Settlement Boundary Review[8] as part of the evidence base for the proposed Local Plan 2017 - 2033. The Review makes reference to the development of a Neighbourhood Plan for Eight Ash Green; an appropriate level of growth of around 150 additional dwellings in the village; and site RNW67 – referred later on as Site 226 – now known as Fiddlers Field.

As mentioned in Section 5 above, the draft Local Plan Policy SS5 states the Neighbourhood Plan will "Define the extent of a new Settlement Development Boundary for Eight Ash Green".

Intent

Although the proposed Local Plan has not yet been adopted, nevertheless, the Eight Ash Green Parish Council has long recognised and accepted that as a result of the exponential growth of the population in Colchester and surrounding localities, it is inevitable that additional housing will be developed

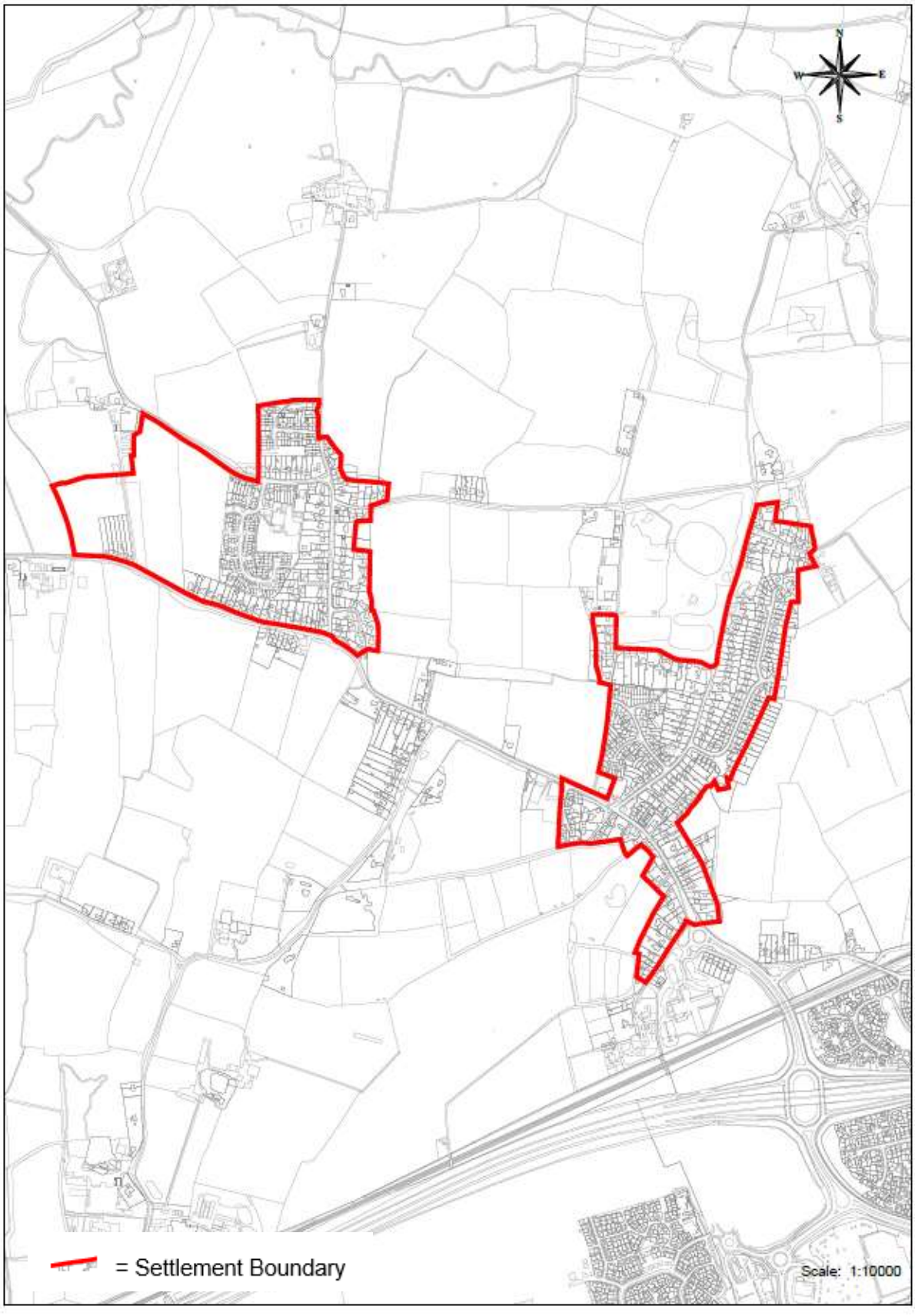
[8] (July 2016) *Colchester Borough Council Local Plan Settlement Boundary Review*

in the village at some stage in the future[9], irrespective of the outcome of the proposed 2017-2033 Local Plan. As a consequence, the current Settlement Boundary will need to be extended in due course to accommodate further housing. Following consultations with the villagers about their preferred location for any potential future development, the Parish Council subsequently agreed to the extension of the Village Settlement Boundary to include the Fiddlers Field site[10] - see below - therefore providing the opportunity for additional domestic housing to be built, in keeping with the existing dwellings in the village.

Further details can be found in the Village Settlement Boundary document available on the Neighbourhood Plan website.

[9] (13th January 2016) *Eight Ash Green Parish Council meeting*
[10] (8th February 2017) *Eight Ash Green Parish Council meeting*

Village Settlement Boundary Map



FIDDLERS FIELD DEVELOPMENT (FORMERLY SITE 226)

Objectives

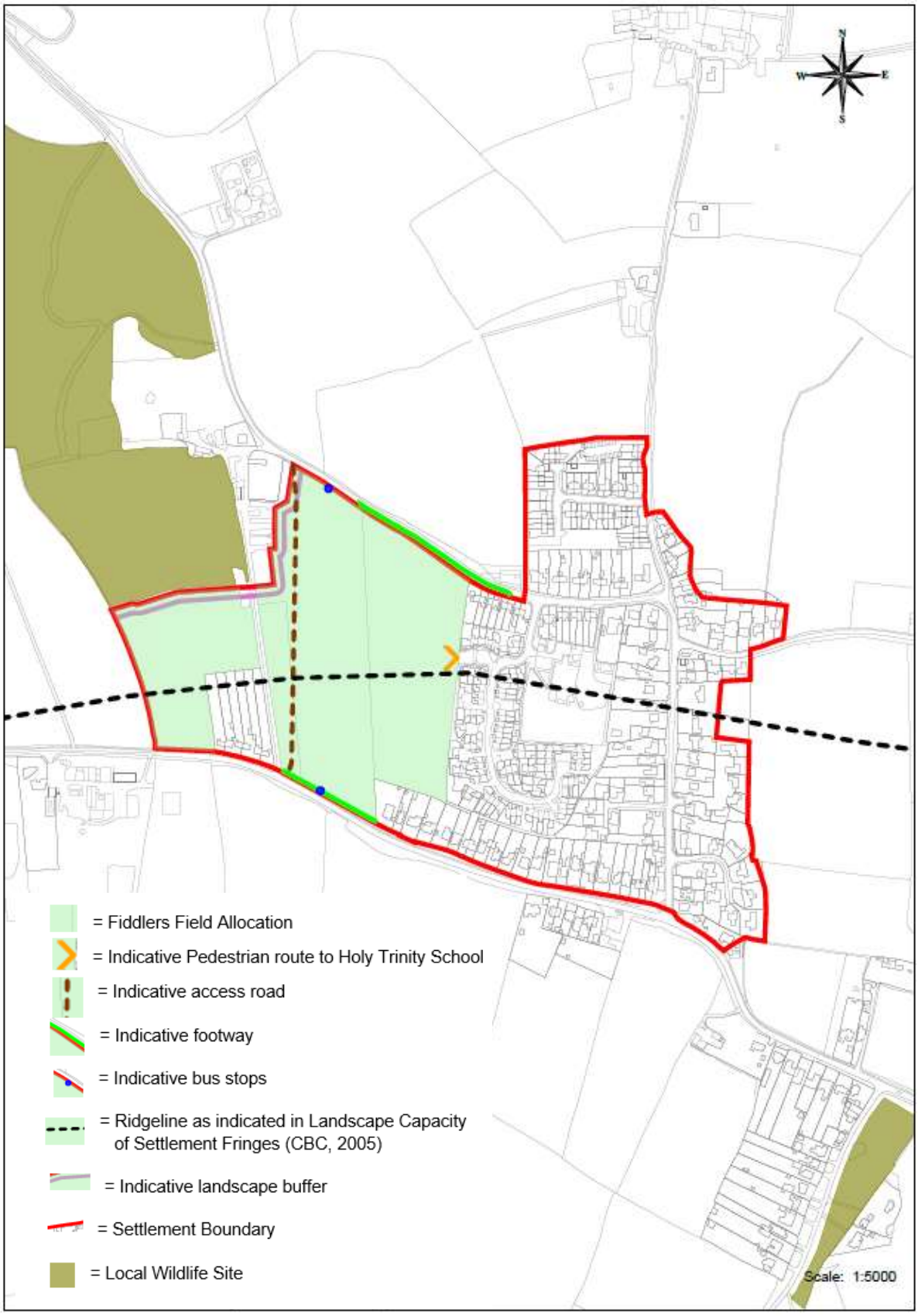
To provide for one new, single Strategic Site for development of 150 domestic dwellings as part of the emerging Colchester Borough Council Local Plan

To provide high quality housing that reflects the existing, distinct open character area of the village and meets the appropriate needs of the community both now and in the future

Policy

FF 1 – To designate Fiddlers Field as a single Strategic Site for the development of 150 dwellings as shown on the Eight Ash Green Neighbourhood Plan Policies Map

Fiddlers Field Policy Map



Policy

Development proposals will be supported where it can be clearly demonstrated by way of relevant plans and supporting documents that they will provide:-

FF 2 – Up to 150 residential dwellings on Fiddlers Field with a layout of medium density and design to be compatible with the character and context of the village

FF 3 – A mix of residential dwellings comprising houses, bungalows and flats of no more than two storeys high which meet the evidenced housing needs of the village offering housing choice across the local housing market, including first time buyers, downsizers, families and executives. Proposals offering to deliver 30% affordable housing in accordance with the expectations of the emerging Local Plan will be supported

FF 4 - A new direct access road built to a standard which can accommodate HGV traffic and to the satisfaction of the local Highways Authority, will be provided directly linking Fiddlers Hill to the A1124 with access to the said road being provided by way of priority junctions

FF 5 – Proposals, including the following transport improvements, prepared in accordance with the Essex Design Guide[11] comprising:

a) a new footway provided along the northern edge of the A1124 to connect the site to the village facilities;

b) a pedestrian through route linking to the Holy Trinity School and the Fiddlers Folly development; and

c) two new bus stops located on the A1124 within a safe and convenient distance of the site entrance, will be supported

FF 6 – A suitable landscaping plan which provides screening to the existing businesses on Fiddlers Farm and adjacent houses, to include the Grade 2 listed Fiddlers Farmhouse, all of which border and limit any expansion of the site, to ensure that ambient noise and amenity currently enjoyed at these properties is maintained

[11] (2018) *Essex Design Guide, Highways Technical Manual*

FF 7 – A scheme demonstrating that appropriate surface water drainage is provided within the site conforming to the guidance within the Sustainable Drainage Systems Design Guide, published by Essex County Council, April 2016 and any subsequent revisions

FF 8 – Appropriate wiring to be installed within each property to provide for charging for electric cars/vehicles; and ducting for the provision of superfast broadband. Development proposals that demonstrate that the design and layout of dwellings on the site have the potential for the effective installation of sustainable battery pods that stores energy from renewable sources will be supported

FF 9 – a) Financial contributions will be required, as appropriate, from each developer of the Fiddlers Field site, as identified on Fiddlers Field Policy Plan, to mitigate the impact of new development by providing necessary community facilities, open space, transport infrastructure and other requirements to meet the community needs arising from the proposals including:

*** a recreational play area on the site;**

*** provision for open space to meet the recreational needs of the new residents including for dog walking;**

*** a contribution towards the delivery of a new community centre/hub;**

*** a contribution towards the expansion of the local primary school;**

*** a contribution towards the expansion of capacity of Junction 26 of the A12;**

*** safe, direct routes for walking and cycling and appropriate bus services to serve the new communities;**

b) financial contributions will be required, as appropriate, from each developer to fund additional healthcare, education and leisure services justified by reference to the Colchester Local Plan Adopted Focussed Review[12] Core Strategy Policy SD2 – Delivering facilities and infrastructure or subsequent adopted Local Plan policies relating to planning obligations over the life of the Eight Ash Green Neighbourhood Plan

FF 10 – Development proposals will make provision for a sufficient and accessible area of public open space within the Fiddlers Field site for public access, appropriately laid out with facilities for informal recreation and dog walking designed to avoid adversely affecting the Local Wildlife Site. Ownership of the open

[12] (2008) *Colchester Local Plan Adopted Focussed Review of the Core Strategy* and (2010), July 2014 *Development Policies*

space together with an appropriate commuted management and maintenance sum shall be transferred, for that purpose by the developer to the Parish Council or residents' association if established, at the discretion of the Parish Council, on occupation of the 135th dwelling

Context

Eight Ash Green is a small, quiet village with its own distinct open character made up not just of the open views to be found externally to the settlement, but also within the village, both of which reproduces a sense of spaciousness. There is a strong link here with the Landscape Character Assessment referred to in Section 3 above where "Character is influenced by ....other intangible aspects such as tranquillity and sense of place".

Having accepted that the village is to deliver 150 dwellings in support of the emerging Colchester Borough Council Local Plan, the primary question is where they should be located.

Intent

The intent behind the various elements of the Policy is to ensure they support the Objectives set out above. They do this by clarifying there is to be a single Strategic Site (Fiddlers Field) (FF 1) that is to accommodate the number of dwellings agreed with Colchester Borough Council (FF 2); the layout of the new housing to be in keeping with the character and context of the village (FF 2); the new development to accommodate the different types of housing (FF 3) to include having appropriate landscape measures (FF 6 and 9) that help to reinforce the rural nature of the village e.g. the protected Fiddlers Wood on the North West boundary of Fiddlers Field; and the provision of effective pedestrian and transport links (FF 5).

Supporting Evidence

Supporting Evidence for the Policies FF1-10 can be found in the "Neighbourhood Plan Objectives and Policies – Supporting Evidence" document available on the Neighbourhood Plan website.

FF1 – To designate Fiddlers Field as a single Strategic Site for the development of 150 dwellings as shown on the Eight Ash Green Neighbourhood Plan Policies Map

Rationale

- As fully described in the Site Selection process document, as part of the democratic process, Fiddlers Field has become the Chosen Site by the villagers for future development in the village in support of the emerging Local Plan. The assessment of all the sites put forward for potential development, undertaken by the Neighbourhood Plan Group, fully supports the Fiddlers Field choice.

- Discussions with both the villagers and the Parish Council has shown that there is no appetite for the 150 houses to be built across numerous sites or plots around the village - the strong preference is for them to be built on a new single "strategic" site chosen by the villagers. The present estates are well defined with distinct boundaries and any extension to these could lead to the development of urban sprawl and/or ribbon development difficult to control coupled with additional traffic passing through the already busy estate roads, potentially posing a danger to children and/or elderly residents.

FF 2 – Up to 150 residential dwellings on Fiddlers Field with a layout of medium density and design to be compatible with the character and context of the village

Rationale

- Having an open layout to a development not only encourages wellbeing but also is more in keeping with living in Eight Ash Green which is a rural village with its wide open spaces nestled in the beautiful Essex countryside.

- Medium density housing is more in keeping with the feel of a rural village like Eight Ash Green whereas high density housing is more in keeping with an urban environment. See also paragraph 3.2 above which shows that three out of the four existing settlement areas in Eight Ash Green have medium or low density housing.

FF 3 – A mix of residential dwellings comprising houses, bungalows and flats of no more than two storeys high which meet the evidenced housing needs of the village offering housing choice across the local housing market, including first time buyers, downsizers, families and executives. Proposals offering to deliver 30% affordable housing in accordance with the expectations of the emerging Local Plan will be supported

Rationale

- The provision of a mixture of different types of housing not only contributes to the sustainability of a community providing the opportunity to meet and mix with other family units but it also provides a measure of choice for potential residents. In addition, a mixture will provide housing for first time buyers such as young people who want to get on the housing ladder and for elderly people to downsize and be able to continue to live within the village. Annex B provides an indicative housing mix providing broad ranges of the housing composition expected to be delivered to meet local need and demand at Eight Ash Green.
- Although the adopted Core Strategy expects the delivery of 20% affordable housing for site allocation of the scale anticipated at Fiddlers Field, the adopted Core Strategy policies are out of date in relation to the as yet unadopted Local Plan expectations and related evidence upon which the emerging policies are founded. Furthermore, the applicant for the long-standing planning proposals at Fiddlers Field for a proposal for 150 dwellings on this site, acknowledges and accepts that 30% affordable housing is acceptable together with a tenure mix of affordable rent and shared ownership dwellings as sought by the Borough Council. In relation to the tenure mix of affordable housing and shared ownership dwellings as sought by the Borough Council. In relation to the tenure mix of affordable housing to be delivered at Fiddlers Field, it is reasonable to expect the delivery of 30% affordable housing, (45 dwellings), of which, not less than 80% would be for affordable rent and no more than 20% for shared ownership.

- It is important that the new dwellings to be built on Fiddlers Field do not materially alter the character of the village (see for example details of the physical survey of the village carried out in 2017 as set out in Section 3.2 above) and an indication of both the type/number and style/number of properties that may be built on Site 226, reflecting the views of the villagers are set out in Annex B.
- Eight Ash Green is an open, rural village with plenty of open spaces and views. The construction of either very tall houses and/or high rise flats of more than 2 storeys would not only look odd but would not be in keeping with the current feel and look of the village.
- Another strong link with the Landscape Character Assessment referred to in Section 3 above is relevant here where Character is defined "as a distinct, recognisable and consistent pattern of elements that make each landscape different". The "consistent pattern of elements" referred to are that in the village, there are no dwellings more than two storeys high.

FF 4 - A new direct access road built to a standard which can accommodate HGV traffic and to the satisfaction of the local Highways Authority, will be provided directly linking Fiddlers Hill to the A1124 with access to the said road being provided by way of priority junctions

Rationale

- The key reasons why the villagers chose Fiddlers Field (in March & April 2016 and January 2017 and the 2017 Annual Public Meeting of the Neighbourhood Plan Group) as their preferred option for future development, were:-
    - the proposed link road directly connecting the A1124 and Fiddlers Hill, thus taking traffic and HGVs in particular, away from the school at Fiddlers Folly and the dangerous bend by Porters Cottages; and
    - the proposed priority junctions by way of mini-roundabouts on the A1124 and Fiddlers Hill which in the case of the former, would have the ability to slow the traffic down – motorists are observed exceeding the 40mph speed limit on the A1124 and also ignoring the 30mph speed limit upon entering the village itself on the edge of Fiddlers Field

FF 5 – Proposals, including the following transport improvements, prepared in accordance with the Essex Design Guide[13] comprising:
a) a new footway provided along the northern edge of the A1124 to connect the site to the village facilities;
b) a pedestrian through route linking the Holy Trinity School and the Fiddlers Folly development; and
c) two new bus stops located on the A1124 within a safe and convenient distance of the site entrance, will be supported

Rationale

- It is vital that pedestrians, particularly parents with children in prams/buggies, people using wheelchairs and/or the elderly are able to walk safely in the village alongside the road network, in the knowledge that they are doing so on a safe and stable surface, clearly separated from the nearby traffic. The current pavement that sits alongside the very busy A1124 and the Fiddlers Field site is both very low, narrow and is poorly maintained.
- It is anticipated by both the local primary school, and Essex County Council (which is planning for up to 45 new school places) that amongst the new residents of Fiddlers Field, there will be a number of young children who will be attending the local primary school Holy Trinity, located in Fiddlers Folly. At present, a pavement does extend from Fiddlers Folly along Fiddlers Hill but not as far as the anticipated new development which means that without a new pavement, parents and children would have to walk on the road to access the school. A new pedestrian route providing a connection between the existing pavement and the new development would not only mean a safe route for parents and children but also reduce the number of potential car journeys to and from Fiddlers Folly thus helping to reduce emissions.

- As the nearest bus stop to Fiddlers Field is some 200m away along the A1124 and some 80m to the east on Fiddlers Hill, the provision of new bus stops are important not just to encourage greater use of public transport, thus helping to reduce reliance on cars and reduce the carbon footprint, but also for elderly residents who may not either be able to walk 200m or do not have access to a car or no longer wish to drive.

[13] Essex Design Guide 2018, Highways Technical Manual

- A new bus stop will also provide an improvement to access for services for residents of Fiddlers Folly.
- The A1124 is a very busy road with the need to ensure that the traffic flows freely and is not held up unnecessarily, possibly leading to drivers getting impatient and thereby taking risks and/or speeding to "make up lost time". The provision of a designated bus stop only lay by will help in this regard.

FF 6 – A suitable landscaping plan which provides screening to the existing businesses on Fiddlers Farm and adjacent houses, to include the Grade 2 listed Fiddlers Farmhouse, all of which border and limit any expansion of the site, to ensure that ambient noise and amenity currently enjoyed at these properties is maintained

Rationale

- Some of the new domestic housing on Fiddlers Field will sit alongside the existing small commercial premises at Fiddlers Farm to the north, so the latter should be screened off from the new development. Such screening may include the planting of native hedgerows and/or trees so as to provide a natural, environmentally friendly buffer zone as well as appropriate aesthetic acoustic barriers.
- Domestic housing on Fiddlers Field will also sit alongside the existing houses located in both Fiddlers Folly (to the east) and Choats Cottages (to the south) so they should be screened off on the field boundary from the new development. Such screening may include the planting of native hedgerows and/or trees so as to provide a natural, environmentally friendly buffer zone.
- The aim is to protect a residential amenity and privacy so as to prevent undesirable overlooking, noise and dust disturbance and to encourage good neighbourliness.

FF 7 – A scheme demonstrating that appropriate surface water drainage is provided within the site conforming to the guidance within the Sustainable Drainage Systems Design Guide, published by Essex County Council[14], April 2016 and any subsequent revisions

[14] www.essex.gov.uk

Rationale

- At present, Fiddlers Field comprises open, uncultivated fields that have never been subject to flooding. However, with the prospect of 150 houses and a road network being built on the site, it will be prudent to ensure an appropriate draining system is incorporated into the development.

FF 8 – Appropriate wiring to be installed within each property to provide for charging for electric cars/vehicles; and ducting for the provision of superfast broadband. Development proposals that demonstrate that the design and layout of dwellings on the site have the potential for the effective installation of sustainable battery pods that stores energy from renewable sources will be supported

Rationale

- The installation of wiring that can lead to the provision of electric charging facilities represents a measure of "future proofing" whereby the Government and the car industry is encouraging/supporting the move toward more electronic/hybrid vehicles. For example, Volvo cars have announced they will only produce partially or fully battery powered vehicles by 2019 and Jaguar/Land Rover have said the same but from 2020 onwards.[15]
- There is no additional burden here as the installation of appropriate wiring for the potential provision of external electric charging facilities can be accommodated as part and parcel of the general wiring provision for any new dwelling e.g. for lights, power etc.
- High speed broadband is necessary for domestic properties, both for leisure purposes and to enable people to work from home.
- There is no additional burden here as ducting can be installed as part and parcel of the build of any new dwelling.
- Sustainable battery pods are being developed as a way to store energy for the future and their introduction into domestic housing would be welcomed and supported. Recent studies released during the preparation of the Eight Ash Green Neighbourhood Plan have demonstrated the expected growth in demand for sustainable residential renewable energy and storage systems in the UK. To

[15] (23rd October 2017) *BBC News and* (25th March 2018) *the Sunday Times*

encourage this more sustainable form of development and to allow households to exercise greater choice over future domestic energy supply and storage, development proposals at Fiddlers Field will be expected to demonstrate how site layout, orientation and housing design will facilitate the effective installation of this technology. This may be provided in the Design and Access statement forming part of the planning application, or through a separate energy statement forming part of the planning application.

FF 9 – a) Financial contributions will be required, as appropriate, from each developer of the Fiddlers Field site as identified on Fiddlers Field Policy Plan, to mitigate the impact of the new development by providing necessary community facilities, open space, transport infrastructure and other requirements to meet the community needs arising from the proposals, including:
** a recreational play area on the site;*
**provision for open space to meet the recreational needs of the new residents including for dog walking;*
** a contribution towards the delivery of a new community centre/hub;*
** a contribution towards the expansion of the local primary school;*
**a contribution towards the expansion of capacity of Junction 26 of the A12;*
** safe, direct routes for walking and cycling and appropriate bus services to serve the new communities;*
b) financial contributions will be required, as appropriate, from each developer to fund additional healthcare, education and leisure services justified by reference to the Colchester Local Plan Adopted Focussed Review [16]Core Strategy Policy SD2 – delivering facilities and infrastructure or subsequent adopted Local Plan policies relating to planning obligations over the life of the Eight Ash Green Neighbourhood Plan

Rationale

- Financial contributions from each developer are about providing support for measures that will encourage sustainability and bio-diversity, helping to mitigate the impact of building new homes. One example of this is the need to ensure the residents of the new development on Fiddlers Field

[16] Colchester Local Plan Adopted Focused Review of the Core Strategy (2008) and Development Policies (2010), July 2014

have access to a green open space on the site to include a recreational play area rather than having to access the existing facilities on the Heath which is one kilometre away as the crow flies. The items shown in Policy FF 9 help achieve such goals.

FF 10 – Development proposals will make provision for a sufficient and accessible area of public open space within the Fiddlers Field site for public access, appropriately laid out with facilities for informal recreation and dog walking designed to avoid adversely affecting the Local Wildlife Site. Ownership of the open space together with an appropriate commuted management and maintenance sum shall be transferred, for that purpose by the developer to the Parish Council or residents' association if established, at the discretion of the Parish Council, on occupation of the 135th dwelling

Rationale

- During the preparation of the Strategic Environment Assessment in conjunction with the Appropriate Assessment Report for the Eight Ash Green Neighbourhood Plan compiled in January 2019, it was evident that the allocation of Fiddlers Field for 150 dwellings and subsequent development could give rise to some harmful environment effects caused by increase use of the adjacent wildlife site. To mitigate such potentially harmful effects and in order that housing proposals may be supported, planning applications should make provision of open space to meet the recreational needs of the new residents including for dog walking to ensure that adverse effects including harm to biodiversity on the adjacent wildlife site is avoided.
- On occupation of 90% of the development, the Parish Council will expect that such additional open space would be transferred to the Council for nominal consideration (£1.00), together with a commuted maintenance and management sum to cover these costs for not less than 20 years, including anticipated inflation, in order that the open space is not a burden on the local community over that period. Alternatively, these ownership, maintenance and management responsibilities could be transferred to a Fiddlers Field residents' association, if established by that time, at the discretion of the Parish Council. These arrangements would be included as planning obligations in the s106 Agreement.

FUTURE DOMESTIC HOUSING

Objective

To ensure that any future domestic housing built in Eight Ash Green reflects the existing, distinct open character area of the village, is of high quality and meets the appropriate needs of the community both now and in the future

Context

Whilst the immediate focus for future house building in the village is on the proposed development of 150 dwellings on Fiddlers Field, it is recognised that in the future, other developments may well occur whether they are in respect of a single house, the construction of more than one property and/or rural exception sites.

Intent

The intent behind the Policy set out below is to ensure where applicable, that any future housing is both appropriate to and in scale with the existing settlement.

In terms of the first two bullet points below in Policy DH1 (density, design and mix etc), the bullet points 3 to 5 set out above in Policy FF3 under "Rationale" are particularly relevant here as they clearly both reflect the views of the villagers as well as referring to the existing nature and make-up of the current housing in the village.

In terms of the third and fourth bullet points below in Policy DH1 (wiring, energy storage and broadband connections), all 5 of the bullet points set out above in Policy FF8 under "Rationale" are also relevant here.

Domestic Housing Policy (DH1): Residential development proposals other than at Fiddlers Field, should:

- *Be of a density, design, and layout that respects and responds to the local character of the village and the location/site's context and not extend more than two storeys above ground level*
- *Provide a mix of dwelling size, type and tenure that reflects the housing*

needs of the Parish as indicated in the Technical Report 2017[17]

- *Provide appropriate wiring within each property for charging for electric cars/vehicles and demonstrate that the design and layout of the dwelling(s) on the site has the potential for the effective installation of sustainable battery pods to store energy from renewable resources*
- *Provide suitable connections for the installation of high quality telecommunications infrastructure including ducting for the provision of superfast broadband*

[17] Eight Ash Green Neighbourhood Plan Questionnaire, Technical Report, May 2017
http://eightashgreen.net/Reg16Docs/EAG%20NP%20Questionnaire%20-%20Technical%20Report.pdf

ENVIRONMENT

Reference has already been made to the rural nature of the village, (see Sections 3, 4 and 5 above), which is highly valued by the residents. “It is one of the reasons why I came to live in Eight Ash Green” is a common refrain.

There is a sense of spaciousness and calm to be found in the village. The Heath, open fields, network of footpaths, hedgerows, trees and woods, the biodiversity, play and sports facilities, and clean fresh air all contribute to an environment conducive towards a healthy, vibrant community across the whole age range from children, young families to senior citizens.

The green infrastructure also contributes to and helps sustain an abundance of wildlife utilising the numerous green corridors that includes a myriad of birds (sparrows, blackbirds, jays, pigeons, robins, pheasants, owls to name but a few) but also “land based” animals such as squirrels, deer, foxes, badgers for example as well as aquatic wildlife in the ponds located across the village such as ducks, moorhens, dragonflies, the Essex Skipper butterfly, Foesel’s Bush cricket and the Meadow grasshopper.

And finally, Seven Star Green, which is a registered Village Green of medieval legacy, contains some 125 species of wildflower grasses that have been uncultivated for hundreds of years with plants such as the Meadow Foxtail and Soft Rush to be found there.



Seven Star Green

Collectively, these provide the opportunity for a safe habitat for the animal kingdom as well as a tranquil setting and backdrop for the human population to enjoy nature at its best, helping to improve the physical/mental well-being and generally adding to the quality of life.

COALESCENCE

Objective

To maintain the existing gap between Eight Ash Green and Stanway/Colchester and other potential settlements such as the proposed West Tey Garden Community/New Town

Policy

Environment Policy 1 (EP1): Development beyond the settlement boundary of Eight Ash Green as defined on the Village Settlement Boundary Map resulting in coalescence between Eight Ash Green and neighbouring and existing and proposed settlements in adopted plans will not be supported

Rationale

The separation of Eight Ash Green from existing nearby developments/localities is very important to the village which is one of the key issues for the village, as set out in the Vision Statement. The defined settlement boundary is clearly marked out on the Village Settlement Boundary Map.

Context

Eight Ash Green is geographically separated from other nearby settlements both large and small. It is the wish of the villagers to maintain that separation and therefore the distinct identity of living in Eight Ash Green. The Landscape Character Assessment referred to in Section 3 above adds weight where the village is described as being a "small linear settlement" with its "setting providing visual and *physical separation* from Colchester".

Intent

The intent behind this Policy is to help maintain a clear separation of Eight Ash Green, both from current and potential future settlements. The Policy EP1 clearly supports the Objective above.

Supporting Evidence

Supporting Evidence for the Policies EP1–5 can be found in the "Neighbourhood Plan Objectives and Policies – Supporting Evidence" document available on the Neighbourhood Plan website.



Aerial view of Eight Ash Green showing the green spaces in and around the village

PROTECTION FOR THE GREEN OPEN SPACES IN THE VILLAGE

Objective

To protect and where possible, enhance green/open spaces and biodiversity in the whole of the village

Policy

Environment Policy 2 (EP 2): *The areas of green space indicated on the Eight Ash Green Neighbourhood Area Policies Map are protected from development, including change of use.*

Proposals for development will not be supported unless it is demonstrated that:

- *the chosen site represents the only available location for the development proposal;*
- *the proposal would not result in significant loss of amenity, contribution to biodiversity, recreation or landscape character within Eight Ash Green; and*
- *Alternative appropriate provision is provided in a location well related to the functional requirements of the relocated use*

Rationale

- Protection, enhancement and where practical, the "connectivity" of the open aspects, both within and external to the settlement, and the rural nature and feel of the village are important to the villagers. Such a small village is fortunate to have two Registered Village Greens, Protected Lanes, as well as the 10.5 acre Iron Latch nature reserve consisting of a flower-rich meadow and four acres of woodland where nightingales nest. There are five designated wildlife sites in the village – Fordham Heath, Fiddlers Wood, Seven Star Green, Iron Latch and Daisy Green Grove.

Context

Eight Ash Green sits in a truly rural setting surrounded by green, wide open spaces, containing a habitat rich in biodiversity.

Intent

The intent behind this Policy is to provide protection of the open spaces within the neighbourhood area. Development proposals will only be supported where no other locations are available to meet the development need and where such development would not cause significant harm through loss of amenity, biodiversity, recreation or landscape character within Eight Ash Green. To be acceptable, development proposals, will also need to provide appropriate alternative provision to mitigate loss of open space as a consequence of the proposed development.

The intention is not to seek compensatory mitigation which might be considered as inappropriate and unlawful.

PROTECTION FOR HEDGEROWS, TREES AND WOODS

Objective

To protect the existing hedgerows in the whole of the village

Policy

Environment Policy 3 (EP 3): D*evelopment proposals in the Neighbourhood Plan Area resulting in the destruction and/or removal of existing hedgerows will only be supported if replaced, on the same site*

Rationale

- Protection and enhancement of the open aspect, rural nature and feel of the village is important to and much valued by the villagers. In addition, hedgerows, trees and woods provide a vital habitat and wildlife corridors for a wide variety of species enhancing the biodiversity and ecology of a locality which also helps to reduce carbon dioxide in the atmosphere.
- The village contains a Priority Deciduous Woodland Habitat alongside the south east corner of Choats Wood, a Priority Woodland and Old Orchard Habitat site alongside Blind Lane. The protection of trees and woodland are a material consideration in determining planning applications. In addition, guidance provides for formal protection is available through designation by Tree Preservation Orders and within conservation areas.

Context

The Hedgerow Regulations 1997 make provision for the appropriate protection of important hedgerows in England and Wales. The Landscape Character Assessment referred to in Section 3 above makes reference to the “Character” of a locality by reference to a combination of factors to include its ecological component i.e. the existing hedgerows, trees and woods in the village.

Intent

The intent behind this Policy is to ensure that should any damage be caused to the existing hedgerows in the village as a result of any development, that mitigation measures are put in place to restore what was there before.

FOOTPATHS, CYCLE & BRIDLEWAYS

Objective

To protect the existing footpaths, cycleways and bridleways in the village

Policy

Environment Policy 4 (EP 4): *Existing footpaths, cycleways and bridleways shown on the Eight Ash Green Neighbourhood Areas Policies Map provide a high level of amenity value and will be protected. New developments which integrate with the current green infrastructure network improving the connectivity between local wildlife sites and green spaces improving and extending the existing footpath and cycle path network, allowing greater access to housing and retail facilities, green spaces, public open spaces and the countryside will be supported*

Rationale

- There are 15 numbered footpaths in the village coupled with other non-numbered paths that provide a good network of walking opportunities coupled with two bridleways all of which are used regularly. They also provide opportunities for social interaction and informal meeting points.
- The Neighbourhood Areas Policies Map shows the existing public footpaths, bridleways and cycleways in the neighbourhood area.

Context

The Parish Paths Partnership working party undertakes a regular programme of maintenance throughout the year to keep the footpaths in good order and to ensure the finger posts and way markers can clearly be seen.

The Neighbourhood Plan Group met with the Essex Bridleway Association on 14th November 2016 to discuss the two, unconnected bridleways in Eight Ash Green. They confirmed that it is possible to divert a bridleway but this would involve a public consultation process.

The Neighbourhood Plan Group met with Sustrans, the national cycling organisation, on 24th January 2017 to discuss potential development of a network of new cycle routes in the village potential linking up with the existing National Cycle Network Route no 13 that runs through the centre of Eight Ash Green. [18] Reference to this may be found in the Access and Leisure Project No 3.

Intent

The intent behind this Policy is to ensure that existing footpaths, cycleways and bridleways are protected. To enhance sustainability, the policy seeks to encourage a modal shift from car to walking and cycling associated with new development proposals by linking publicly accessible green space wherever possible to walking and cycling routes.

[18] (2013) *Ordnance Survey OS Explorer Map 184 - Colchester*

PREVENTION OF FLOODING

Objective

To take steps to prevent flooding in the village

Policy

Environment Policy 5 (EP 5): *Development will be supported where it is shown that drainage strategies for major development within the Plan area accord with the Essex SuDs Guide and will not negatively impact upon the existing network of drainage ditches within the Neighbourhood Area. The protection, extension and enhancement of these facilities are encouraged. Where it is necessary to enable development, any changes to a watercourse may require consent from Essex County Council as the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) for an ordinary watercourse, or the Environment Agency for main rivers. Developers should contact the LLFA or Environment Agency for further advice.*

Rationale

- Flooding as a result of new domestic or business developments would not be welcomed in the village.

Context

Apart from a narrow strip of land on the northern edge of the Parish boundary along the River Colne (the Neighbourhood Area), the risk of flooding is low with the village mainly positioned on the high ground having a surface geology consisting mostly of thin layers of sand and gravel. Up to date information/maps can be obtained from the Environment Agency and/or Colchester Borough Council.

However, should the existing ditches become blocked, coupled with heavy downpours of rain, then there is a risk of localised flooding. There are eight ponds in the village that might be able to absorb flood waters should they occur although not all are located near domestic housing.

Intent

The intent behind this Policy is to ensure that any development will not result in any part of the village being flooded. Developers for major development within the Plan area, such as Fiddlers Field, should refer to the Essex SuDs Guide (or future versions) and the recommendation is that they should engage in pre-applications discussions with the LLFA to ensure that any recommendations can be incorporated into site design as early into the planning process as possible.

HERITAGE

Objective

To protect the ancient heritage of our village

Context

Although the Civil Parish of Eight Ash Green as a separate, identifiable community is only some 70 years old, the village settlement pre-dates that, containing some ancient heritage, both man-made and natural.

Intent

Although listed buildings have some protection under primary legislation in the 1990 Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act and the NPPF we see the provision of such a Policy in the Neighbourhood Plan as sending out a clear signal of the importance attached to the preservation and long term survival of our ancient heritage in its present form. Aside from Listed Buildings, there are also a number of other Heritage Assets within the village which require protection. These include, for example the 36 acre Fordham Heath, the Protected Lanes and the five designated wildlife sites in the village. A list of the 13 Grade 2 listed buildings; a map showing where they are located and a table listing the Assets are set out below.

Policy

Heritage Policy 1 (Her 1):
Any Listed Building or Heritage Asset and their setting within the Neighbourhood Plan Area should be maintained or where possible enhanced to protect from any future development.

Rationale

- The 13 Grade 2 Listed Buildings in Eight Ash Green, the oldest of which dates back to circa 1500, represent a priceless ancient heritage which needs to be preserved and protected.

- Although the village of Eight Ash Green is not an ancient village as a separate entity, nevertheless elements that make up the modern settlement have some very long standing characteristics such as the 13 listed buildings and the Registered Village Greens for example and these help to shape the Landscape Character of our village where “Character is influenced by particular combinations of visual .... historical and settlement components...”.

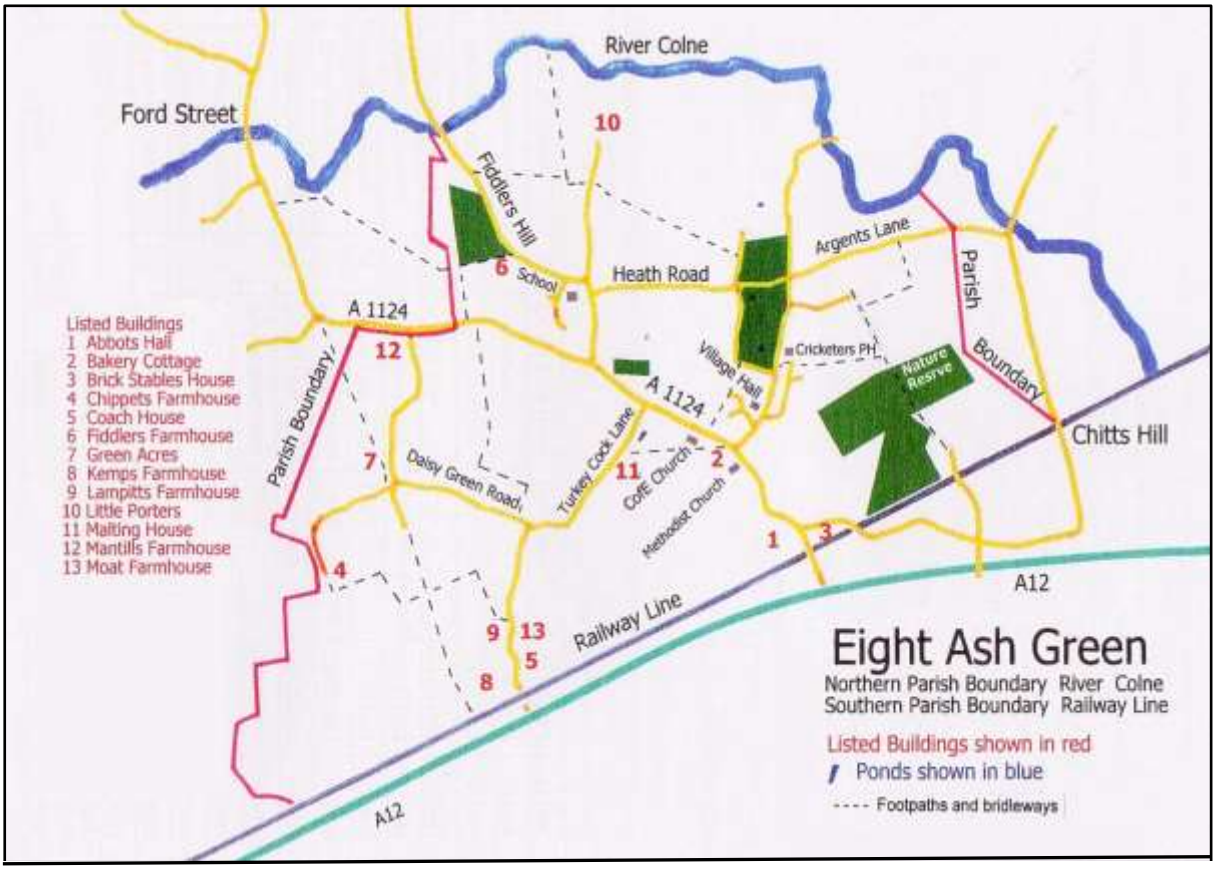
A table setting out details of our 13 Listed Buildings

Listed Buildings in EAG

No	Name	Grade	Location	Age	Date Listed	English Heritage Building ID
1	Abbots Hall	2	Abbots Lane	Circa 1500	23/6/1952	417617
2	Bakery Cottage	2	A1124, EAG	17th C	27/1/1982	417652
3	Brick Stables House	2	Halstead Road	16th C	27/1/1982	417692
4	Chippetts Farmhouse	2	Chippetts Lane	Late 16th C	27/1/1982	417644
5	Coach House	2	Turkey Cock Lane	18th C	27/1/1982	417698
6	Fiddlers Farmhouse	2	Fiddlers Hill	Circa 1900	27/1/1982	417649
7	Green Acres	2	Foxes Lane	16th C	27/1/1982	417650
8	Kemps Farmhouse	2	Turkey Cock Lane	17th C	27/1/1982	417696
9	Lampitts Farmhouse	2	Turkey Cock Lane	Circa 1560 & 17th C	27/1/1982	417697
10	Little Porters	2	Porters Lane	17th C	27/1/1982	417693
11	Malting House	2	Turkey Cock Lane	18th C	27/1/1982	417694
12	Mantills Farmhouse	2	Foxes Lane	17th C	27/1/1982	417651
13	Moat Farmhouse	2	Turkey Cock Lane	Circa 1690	27/1/1982	417695

Further details can be found at
http://www.britishlistedbuildings.co.uk/england/essex/eight+ash+green

A map showing the locations of our 13 Listed Buildings



Heritage Assets in Eight Ash Green

Serial	Grouping	Heritage item	Date	Protected status	Location Name and Grid ref
1	The National Heritage List for England	Thirteen Grade 2 listed buildings	Various	Yes	See table and map above
2	NMR Excavation Index	Excavation	1996	No	Choats Wood TL 943258
3	Church Heritage Records	All Saints Church (Church code 608942)	Not stated	No	Beside A1124 TL 941257
4	Colchester Heritage Register (CHR)	Cropmarks	Undated	No	North side of Bullbanks Farm TL 930264
5	CHR	Cropmarks	Undated	No	East of Moat Farm TL 937249
6	CHR	Cropmarks	Undated	No	South East of Bronze House Farm TL 938253
7	CHR	Cropmarks	Undated	No	Newlands Farm TL 947258
8	CHR	Cropmarks	Undated	No	West of Heathside Farm TL 939261
9	CHR	Cropmarks	Undated	No	West of Fordham Heath TL 940266
10	CHR	Cropmarks	Undated	No	South of White House Farm TL 945262
11	CHR	Cropmarks	Undated	No	South of Pooles Farm TL 945270
12	CHR	Cropmarks	Undated	No	North East of Chitts Hill TL 953258
13	CHR	Cropmarks	Undated	No	West of Great Porters Farm TL 932271
14	CHR	Cropmarks	Undated	No	South East of Thurgoods Farm TL 930252 & 928253
15	CHR	Cropmarks	Undated	No	White House Farm TL 949263
16	CHR	Cropmarks	Undated	No	White House Farm TL 947265
17	CHR	Cropmarks	Undated	No	Porters Lane TL 937267

18	CHR	Milestone Inscription reads “IV to Colchester IX to Halstead”	Late c18 – early c19	No	Milestone Farm TL 937259
19	CHR	Pillbox AA type	WW2	No	Porters Farm TL 940271
20	CHR	Pillbox AA type	WW2	No	Porters Farm TL 934272
21	CHR	Pillbox	WW2	No	Porters Farm TL 946273
22	CHR	Pillbox	WW2	No	Porters Farm TL 939273
23	CHR	Pillbox	WW2	No	Porters Farm TL 934274
24	CHR	Pillbox	WW2	No	Porters Farm TL 932273
25	CHR	Pillbox AA type	WW2	No	Argents Lane TL 950266
26	CHR	Pillbox	WW2	No	North West corner of Fiddlers Wood TL 928269
27	CHR	Ammunition shelter	WW2	No	Fiddlers Wood TL 930269
28	CHR	Fordham Heath Registered Village Green VG 187	1391	No	Fordham Heath TL 944264 (The 36 acre Heath, first recorded in 1391 is shown on the 1777 Chapman & Andre Historic Map and the “Epoch and Historic Map 1876-1887”)
29	CHR	“Eight Ash Green”	1777	No	East of Spring Lane TL 946257 Ancient green, no longer in existence. Shown on the Chapman & Andre Historic Map
30	CHR	Seven Star Green Registered Village Green VG 188	Medieval “1066 AD to 1539 AD”	No	NE to SW along Turkey Cock Lane TL 936256 VG 188 designation also includes Daisy Green
31	CHR	Axes Neolithic polished axe and other flint axes	Neolithic	No	South of White House Farm TL 949262 Found c 1968 Now in Colchester museum
32	PROW	Footpaths	Undated	No	Details on OS Explorer Map 184 Colchester TL 92 -96 Eastings TL 24 – 28 Northings
33		Bridleways	Undated	Yes	
34	Protected Lanes	Daisy Green Highway	1970’s	Yes	TL 9225

35	Wildlife sites	Fiddlers Wood HC1 – Ancient Woodland Site	Undated	Yes	Co43 TL 929267
36	Wildlife sites	Daisy Green Grove HC1 – Ancient Woodland Site	Undated	Yes	Co47 TL 932258
37	Wildlife sites	Seven Star Green HC9 – Lowland Meadows HC13 – Heathland and Acid Grassland		Yes	Co55 TL 939258
38	Wildlife sites	Fordham Heath HC2 – Lowland Mixed Deciduous Woodland on non ancient sites HC9 – Lowland Meadows HC13 – Heathland and Acid Grassland SC1 – Vascular Plants		Yes	Co60 TL 945264
39	Wildlife sites	Iron Latch Lane HC2 – Lowland Mixed Deciduous Woodland on non ancient sites HC3 – Other Priority Habitat Woodland Types on non ancient sites HC9 – Lowland Meadows HC11 – Other Neutral Grasslands	Undated	Yes	Co68 TL 956260
40	Ponds	Fordham Heath	Undated	No	TL 944264
41	Ponds	Lower Heath	Undated	No	TL 945268
42	Ponds	Seven Star Green	Undated	No	TL 939258
43	Ponds	Daisy Green	Undated	No	TL 933258

NATURAL RESOURCES – RENEWABLE ENERGY

Objective

To encourage and support the effective and efficient use of the Earth's natural resources and promote energy efficiency in Eight Ash Green

Context

At a time when there are continual reminders and/or warnings of the effects of climate change and the need to harness the earth's natural resources, it seems only right that there should be a level of support and encouragement where possible at the local level.

Intent

The intent behind these Policies is not only to make it clear where the Neighbourhood Plan supports appropriate provision regarding domestic properties but in respect of possible commercial enterprises, where the geographical boundaries or limitations should apply.

Policy

Renewable Energy 1 - (Homes) (RE 1): *Proposals for small-scale renewable energy generation associated within single residential properties will be supported provided it can be shown that they are located and designed in such a manner so as to minimise any increase in ambient noise levels and avoid any unacceptable impacts upon visual amenity*

Rationale

- In terms of domestic properties, it is vital to ensure the maximum use is made of the Earth's natural resources as well as harnessing both existing and potential future renewable energy sources, thus helping to reduce reliance on fossil fuels. Existing domestic properties can already install solar panels without planning permission through their permitted development rights.

Policy

Renewable Energy 2 - (Solar Farms) (RE 2): *Proposals for commercial solar farms will be supported where they are directed towards low grade agricultural land or brownfield sites and are designed in such a way so as to minimise increases in ambient noise levels and deliver adequate natural screening to avoid impacts upon visual amenity*

Rationale

- Currently, there is little appetite in the village for commercial solar panel farms as they would detract from the rural feel and look of the village. However, should such developments be proposed, then they should be located on low grade agricultural land and/or brownfield sites. Appropriate screening should be considered should, for example, any solar farm be located adjacent to any domestic housing.

Supporting Evidence

Supporting Evidence for the Policies RE1–2 can be found in the "Neighbourhood Plan Objectives and Policies – Supporting Evidence" document available on the Neighbourhood Plan website.

LOCAL BUSINESSES

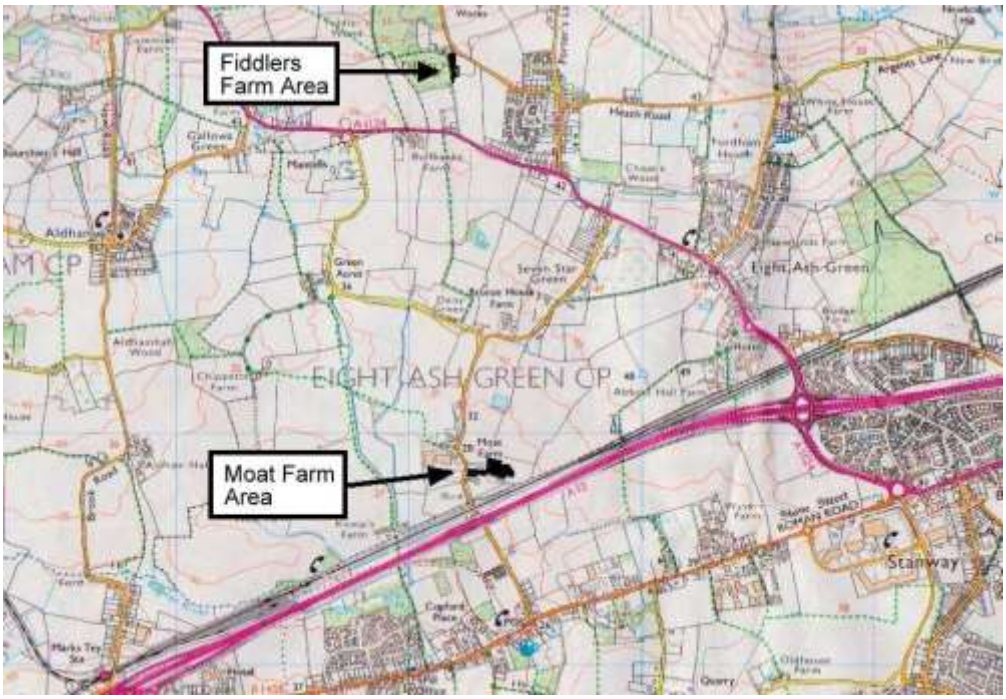
Objective

To support and where appropriate, expand the local businesses to boost the local economy and employment

Context

A Neighbourhood Plan addresses both the development and use of land for domestic housing and also for business use. In keeping with a small, rural village, Eight Ash Green only has a limited amount of land designated or approved for business use and therefore employment opportunities. Currently, there are two main parcels of land for business use in the village, the six acre Moat Farm complex (currently with some twelve small businesses) and Fiddlers Farm (currently with some three small businesses). See map below.
There are also a number of other enterprises primarily at the Holiday Inn hotel, a cluster of shops and a garage at Wood Corner, as well as farm shop and garden centre/cafe in Turkey Cock Lane.

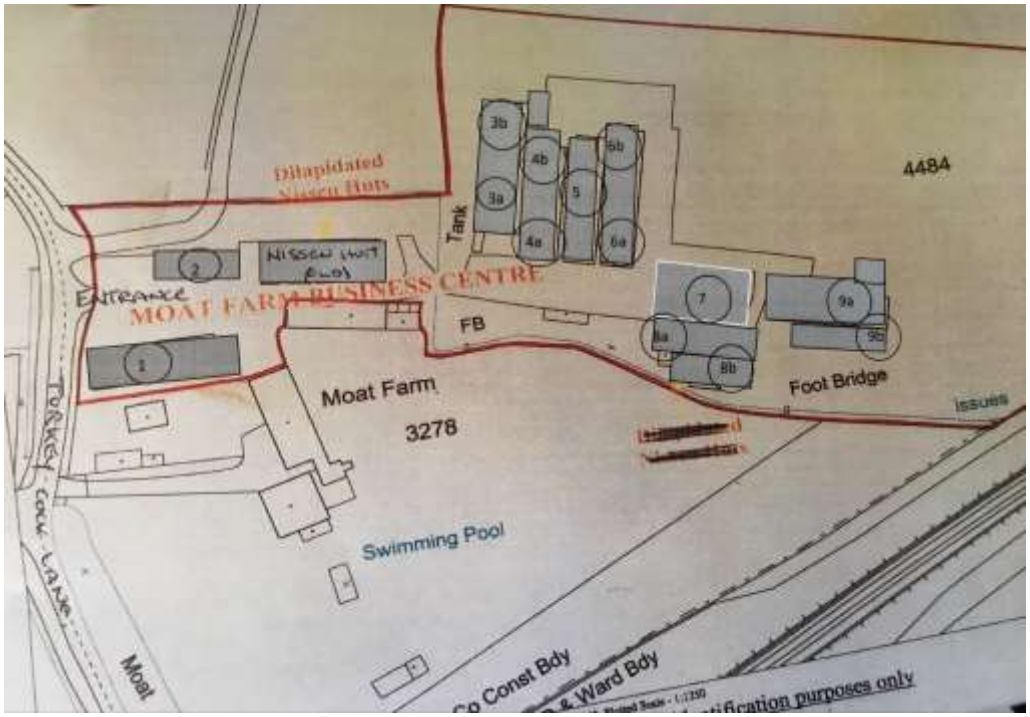
The two Business Areas



Moat Farm

It has emerged from discussions with the land owner at Moat Farm that he is looking to improve and expand the site so as to encourage more small firms to come to the village and thereby helping to create the opportunity for more local employment. The Neighbourhood Plan Group and the Parish Council are keen to support such an approach and therefore intend that the land comprising the Moat Farm complex should become a "Designated Business Area" whereby, in future, if small businesses wish to set up in Eight Ash Green, they will be directed towards that site.

Layout of the Moat Farm business area



Moat Farm has been chosen because it is a good, open site capable of expansion. In addition, the owner is working hard to improve both the layout and the infrastructure and it has good access.

Moat Farm is capable of absorbing some additional small businesses. It is located on the southern boundary of our Neighbourhood Area/Parish Boundary away from what are the more densely populated areas of the village. The site, which has good access for medium size vehicles, (vehicles over four metres in height cannot obtain access from London Road, Stanway) is nestled

in the countryside surrounded by trees and fields and the existing buildings do not detract from the wider ambience of the area. Whilst the Parish Council wants to help encourage more local employment, large commercial enterprises requiring premises of three or more storeys e.g. warehouses, storage, distribution centres or large industrial premises would not be appropriate on this land. The aim is to encourage/bring small, new single or two storey businesses on to the Moat Farm site.

The Neighbourhood Plan Group met with the owner of the Moat Farm business area on 7th August 2017 who confirmed he agrees with the rationale set out above – as owner of the site, he does not wish to see large businesses/commercial concerns on his land.

Intent

The intent behind *Policy BP1* below, which clearly supports the Objective above, is to clarify the expectations for the future businesses in the village, to help boost the local economy by expanding the opportunities for local employment where it is appropriate to do so.

Policy

Businesses Policy 1 (BP 1): Moat Farm (shown on the Eight Ash Green Neighbourhood Area Policies Map) is designated as a business area.

Proposals should demonstrate how likely significant adverse environmental effects of development will be mitigated during construction, subsequent use and estate management, as appropriate. Proposals encouraging more sustainable means of transport will be supported.

Rationale

- In designating the existing employment at Moat Farm as a Business Area in the Eight Ash Green Neighbourhood Plan, the Parish Council supports the retention and proposals for expansion of employment activity on the site in buildings constructed on up to two storeys, within use classes[19]

[19] The Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987, Statutory Instruments 1987 No 764
See also the amendments to the original order at
http://www.legislation.gov.uk/changes/affected/uksi/1987/764

B1, B2 and B8 where it is demonstrated that the rural character of the area will not be significantly harmed.

- The Moat Farm site is the preferred location for small businesses in the neighbourhood area to boost the local economy, encourage local employment and the provision of additional services.
- To mitigate possible adverse environmental impact associated with additional employment development at Moat Farm, as identifies in the Strategic Environmental Assessment, policy precautions were considered necessary to mitigate possible environmental harm.
- To meet this concern and acknowledging that further employment development at Moat Farm will deliver positive economic benefits, development proposals should demonstrate through Design and Access Statements and where appropriate, construction management statements, the measures incorporated to mitigate likely adverse effects.
- Development at Moat Farm, for which the objective is to boost local employment opportunities should encourage cycling as a means of accessing the site as a sustainable choice through design and provision of appropriate facilities.
- Promotion of this site for additional employment development will increase the opportunity for improvements to be realised for on-site infrastructure and provision of acceptable waste is subject to agreement with the County Council as waste authority.
- It is understood that the site has capacity for development of approximately 3,000m^2 provided in 5 to 6 units of accommodation.



Moat House Farm Business Area

COMMUNITY AMENITIES

Objective

To provide, support, maintain and where appropriate, introduce a range of amenities in the village

Context

Eight Ash Green has a range of good quality community amenities that includes a public house, allotments, two dental surgeries and a hotel with a leisure centre. In addition, there is a designated play area on the Heath, the Heath itself and footpaths for walkers, two bridleways, two sports pitches and National Cycle Route No 13 which runs from NW to SE across the Parish.



Village Pub (The Cricketers)



Eight Ash Green Football Club



Children's Play Area on Fordham Heath



Cricket Pitch and Pavilion on Fordham Heath

Intent

To ensure there is a range of modern community facilities in the village which people can participate in either collectively or individually that will help to reinforce a sense of community.

Policy

Community Site (CS 1): Land on the site of the Church of England Church (as shown on the Eight Ash Green Neighbourhood Area Policies Map) is designated as the site for a new Community Hub/Hall and shall be safeguarded for that purpose. Development proposals which promote alternative uses on the site will not be supported.

Layout of the Church site



Rationale

- The current village hall located in Spring Lane to the East of the village, which was formerly an army hut located in Matching Green, having moved to Eight Ash Green in 1948, is no longer fit for purpose. It is small, it will be at least 70 years old in 2018 and the facilities such as the toilets are in need of updating, hooks are available rather than a proper cloakroom and storage is poor. In addition, the car park only has some ten spaces which means that visitors either have to park on the busy

Spring Lane, thus blocking the views of drivers looking either north or south (the hall is located on a sloping bend in the road) or park in nearby streets.

- The owner of the site of the Church is the Diocese of Chelmsford and the local vicar is supportive of the proposed Policy.
- The proposed site is located in the centre of the village, has good access, there is plenty of land for parking and room to build a new, bigger hub/community hall which will be able to host larger audiences and provide more modern facilities such as film showings, dance hall, indoor badminton court, gymnasium equipment etc.
- The site of the existing village hall, which is on a different locality and at one end of the village, is owned by the Parish Council. Upon the erection of a new hall/hub, it is likely the old village hall will be dismantled and the site used for other purposes that might include a new domestic dwelling.

<u>Supporting evidence</u>

Supporting Evidence for the Policies CA1 and CS1 can be found in the "Neighbourhood Plan Objectives and Policies – Supporting Evidence" document available on the Neighbourhood Plan website.

Habitat Regulations Assessment

10.1 Habitat Regulations Assessments have been completed for Colchester Borough Council's Section 1 Local Plan and Section 2 Local Plan. Both of these assessments identified that the in-combination effects of the Section 1 and Section 2 Local Plans (including the cumulative effects of the Section 2 allocations), together with neighbouring local planning authorities Local Plans and neighbourhood plans are likely to adversely affect the integrity of European designated nature conservation sites[i20] ('European Sites').

10.2 In view of that Colchester Borough Council is working with ten other Greater Essex local planning authorities, and Natural England, on a Recreational disturbance Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy (RAMS) for the Essex coast. RAMS is a strategic solution to protect the Essex coast from the recreational pressures of a growing population. A RAMS is usually driven by challenges and opportunities arising from planning issues. RAMS generally applies more broadly than at a single designated European site, provides strategic scale mitigation and enables the development of a generic approach to evidence collection and use.

10.3 Financial contributions will be sought for all residential development, which falls within the zones of influence, towards a package of measures to avoid and mitigate likely significant adverse effects in accordance with policy SP2b of the Shared Strategic Section 1 Plan and policy ENV1 (Environment) of the Section 2 Colchester Borough Local Plan. This includes development allocated in Neighbourhood Plans within Colchester Borough. Details of the zones of influence and the necessary measures will be included in the Essex Coast RAMS Supplementary Planning Document (SPD).

10.4 In the interim period, before the Essex Coast RAMS is completed, proposals within the zones of influence for recreational disturbance to European sites will need to carry out a project level Habitat Regulations Assessment and implement bespoke mitigation measures to ensure that in-combination recreational disturbance effects are avoided and/or mitigated.

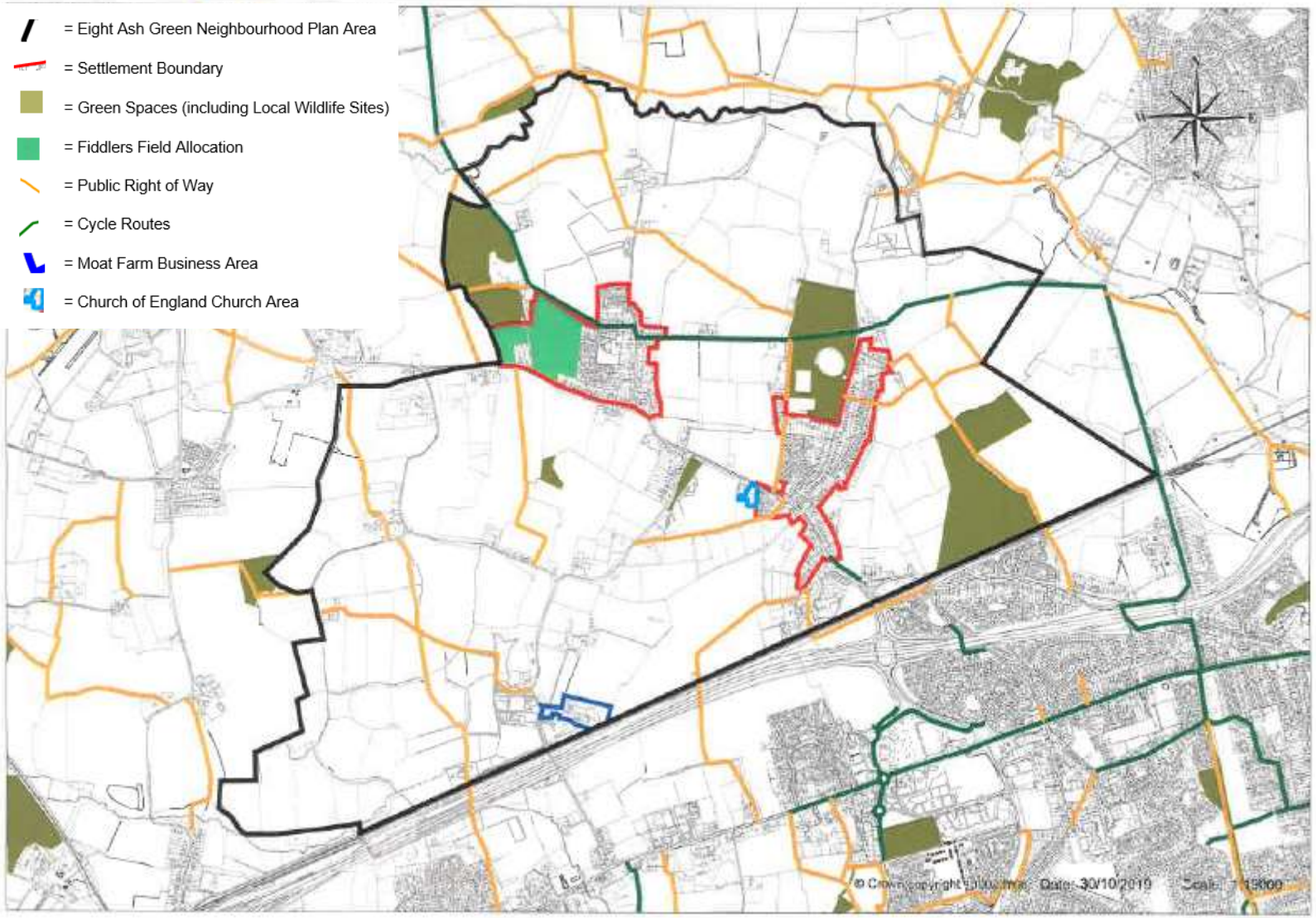
[20] *Colne Estuary Special Protection Area and Ramsar, Blackwater Estuary Special Protection Area and Ramsar and Essex Estuaries Special Area of Conservation*

Recreational disturbance Avoidance and Mitigation Policy

RAMS 1 - All residential development within the zones of influence of European Sites will be required to make a financial contribution towards mitigation measures, as detailed in the Essex coast RAMS, to avoid adverse in-combination recreational disturbance effects on European Sites.

In the interim period, before the Essex Coast RAMS is completed, all residential development within the zones of influence will need to deliver all measures identified (including strategic measures) through project level HRAs, or otherwise, to mitigate any recreational disturbance impacts in compliance with the Habitat Regulations and Habitats Directive.

Eight Ash Green Neighbourhood Area Policies Map



Supporting documents

11.1 In support of this Neighbourhood Plan, there are a number of documents available at www.eightashgreen.net :-

- A Project Plan
- A Basis Conditions Statement
- A Consultation Statement
- An Evidence base
- Village Settlement Boundary
- Site Selection process
- Assessment of sites put forward in Eight Ash Green
- The Neighbourhood Plan Objectives and Policies Supporting Evidence
- Regulation 14 – Process – Consultation - Outcomes
- The March 2017 questionnaire and Technical report setting out the results
- The Village Design Statement of 2013

Annex A: Members of the Neighbourhood Plan Group and acknowledgements

Annex B: The type/number and style/number of properties that may be built on Fiddlers Field

Annex C: Projects

Key milestones, next steps and monitoring

KEY MILESTONES

12.1 Full details are contained in the Project Plan available on the website but the key milestones have been:

- Agreement by the Parish Council to develop a Neighbourhood Plan in February 2015
- The formation of a Neighbourhood Plan Group in March 2015
- Informing the village of the proposal to develop a Neighbourhood Plan in April 2015
- Designation of the Neighbourhood Area by Colchester Borough Council in June 2015
- Setting up the Neighbourhood Plan website in June 2015
- Obtain the neighbourhood profile of the village from the Rural Community Council for Essex in July 2015
- Meeting with relevant stakeholders 2015 – 2018
- Distribution of questionnaire to villagers in March 2017
- Undertaking the Regulation 14 consultation – February to March 2018

MONITORING

13.1 It is anticipated the Parish Council will monitor this Plan on a regular basis taking into account any new national guidance and developments undertaken or introduced by Colchester Borough Council. This will take place annually as part of the preparations for the Annual Public meeting of the Parish Council.

Annex A

Members of the Neighbourhood Plan Group and acknowledgements

Members

- [redacted] (Chairman) [ex 8th February 2017]
- [redacted] (Chairman) – from 29th March 2017
- [redacted] (Vice Chair)
- [redacted] (Secretary)
- [redacted] (Member) – from 29th November 2016 to 21st June 2017
- [redacted] (Analyst) – from 29th June 2015
- [redacted] (Treasurer)
- [redacted] Member) - from 27th May 2015 to 8th August 2018
- [redacted] (Adviser)

Acknowledgements

- The villagers of Eight Ash Green
- Colchester Borough Council
  - [redacted]
  - Rural Community Council for Essex
    - [redacted]
- [redacted] Planning)
- [redacted] (Examiner)

Annex B

Illustrative Housing Mix

1. Type and number of properties

	Range	Number of Properties
First Time Buyers & downsizers (1-2 Beds)	37-45%	61
Family Homes (2-4 Beds)	39-47%	65
Larger Family Homes (5+ beds)	14-18%	24
TOTAL		**150**

2. Style and number of properties

	Range	Number of Properties
Houses	65-75%	105
Bungalows	22-30%	39
Flats	3-5%	6
TOTAL		**150**

3. High degree of support (90%) for some 'adapted' properties for independent living

	Range	Number of Properties
Adapted Properties	8-12%	15

4. In addition, there is a requirement for 'affordable housing'

Proposed housing budget at Fiddlers Field of 150 new dwellings	Rate %	Number of Properties
Policy compliant affordable housing	30%	45
Target Affordable Housing Tenure		
Affordable rent	>=80%	>=36
Shared ownership	<= 20%	<= 9

Notes:

1. If a higher number of one type and/or style of property is chosen in respect of any of the three elements in either sections 1 and 2, then it needs to correspond with an equivalent lower amount in any of the other two elements so as to keep within the total of 150 properties.
2. The indicative figures in sections 3 and 4 are to be included within the overall total of 150 properties i.e. they are NOT in addition.
3. Section 4 to include the target Affordable Tenure agreed with the applicant at Fiddlers Field on 19th May 2019.

Annex C

Projects

14.1 The Neighbourhood Plan Group has identified a number of projects the village wishes to pursue/see adopted. The projects listed below are matters that are outside the scope of the statutory neighbourhood plan i.e. they fall outside the remit of the planning system. Taken in conjunction with the various Objectives and Policies that form part of the Neighbourhood Plan, they provide a package of measures the villagers wish to see implemented.

The natural environment

14.2 Protection and enhancement of the open aspect, rural nature and feel of the village is important. The Parish Council owns and maintains the Heath, the "Jewel in the Crown" of the village. Project 1 below garnered 100 per cent support at the village open meeting of 6th May 2017.

Environment Project 1: Support and encouragement is to be provided to farmers and other land-owners who wish to introduce new and/or maintain current natural habitats for wildlife

Environment Project 2: To retain and protect the five designated wildlife sites in the village, ensuring they are well maintained and kept in good condition

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Economy – Business

14.3 Although the installation of charging points for electric vehicles is a widespread permitted development, Business Project 1 below sends a clear signal of support for such an expansion thus helping to reduce the carbon footprint in the village.

Business Project 1: To support the introduction of charging points for electric cars and commercial vehicles on both the Moat Farm and Fiddlers Farm business areas

14.4 Separate to the two business areas in the village (Moat and Fiddlers Farms), there are a number of small retail outlets that includes the cluster of shops and a garage at Wood Corner, as well as farm shop and garden centre/cafe in Turkey Cock Lane. Project 2 below garnered some 88 per cent support at the village open meeting of 6th May 2017.

Business Project 2: To support the various small retail businesses located in the village by encouraging local people to use these facilities where practicable, thus helping to contribute towards the sustainability of the village

Infrastructure

14.5 The village, which contains the very busy A1124, is only some 5 km from the very large town of Colchester. Nevertheless, Eight Ash Green is a rural village much valued by all who live here. In addition, there are some truly rural parts of the village and these include Foxes Lane (which is a Protected Lane) and Daisy Green for example. Seven Star Green is a registered Village Green of medieval legacy and Abbotts Lane has the historical feature of its pond which provides a safe habitat for wildlife. The desire to maintain the rurality of these locations remains strong with no wish to "urbanise" any of these locations. The Project below garnered support in the 90s in percentage terms at the village open meeting of 6th May 2017.

Infrastructure Project: To continue to retain and protect the unique rural nature of the village and in particular Foxes Lane; Daisy Green; Seven Star Green; Turkey Cock Lane; and Abbotts Lane by not introducing any form of "urban" infrastructure such as road widening, street lights, yellow lines or pavements

---

Road safety

14.6 Anti-social parking in Abbotts Lane can prevent, or make difficult, access to Doucecroft School which is located at the far south eastern end of the narrow Lane. Design Guideline no 67 of the Village Design Statement of 2013 provides the basis of Project 1 below.

Road safety Project 1: To ensure that parking in Abbotts Lane does not obstruct access to the school by the emergency services, by way of the introduction of appropriate traffic orders

14.7 Due to the substantial number of HGV vehicles using the unclassified road between Fordham Heath and Fordham in the vicinity of the Holy Trinity School and Fiddlers Folly, traffic calming measures would help to ensure the possibility of an incident is reduced. Design Guideline no 68 of our Village Design Statement of 2013 provides the basis of Project 2 below.

Road safety Project 2: To ensure safe and appropriate access to the Holy Trinity School by the installation of traffic calming measures such as chicanes on both sides of the local road and its junction with Fiddlers Folly

Education

14.8 A good primary school education provides the foundation for pupils as they progress through the education system and any appropriate development on the school land/premises that supports this, is to be encouraged and supported. The Project below garnered some 98 per cent support at the village open meeting of 6th May 2017.

Education Project: To encourage and support the effective and optimum use of the land at the school with the aim of maintaining and where appropriate, enhancing the education provided to the pupils

---

Communications

14.9 High speed broadband is the lifeblood of business and is highly desirable for domestic properties, not only for leisure purposes but also to enable people to work effectively from home. The Project below garnered 100 per cent support at the specific Focus Group meeting of 25th February 2017 and in response to question 28 of the March 2017 questionnaire, some 80 per cent of householders said they would wish to change to superfast broadband. Action Plan no 9 of the 2011 Parish Plan concerned "Broadband in the Village" where the expectation was described as follows:-

- An improvement in Broadband speed for the whole village, by the best economical means possible".

Communications Project: The provision of effective fibre superfast broadband to both the Designated Business Area in the village and the existing houses in Eight Ash Green is to be supported.

Effective use of land

14.10 There are various parcels of land in the village that include areas where people park their cars so as to use the appropriate facility as per below. They should be kept in good order, safe to use and navigate, especially in view of the number of different groups, ages and disabilities of people who regularly use them. These include the Village Hall booked by numerous groups or societies; the Cricketers Public House which is a really key asset, well supported by the villagers (and beyond); the C of E Church especially if this area is to become a "community hub" with the introduction of a new village hall in due course; and the car park along Heath Road to the north of the football pitch.

Land Project: To maintain and where appropriate, to improve both the land itself and the areas for parking at the existing Village Hall on Spring Lane, the Cricketers Public House; the C of E Church; and along Heath Road

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Community safety

14.11 To help ensure the safety of both pedestrians and motorists, it is important all the street lights in the village are in good working order and effective use is made of the latest technology. The Project below garnered some 99 per cent support at the village open meeting of 6th May 2017.

Community Safety Project: To work with Essex County Council to ensure the existing street lights are kept in good order and, where necessary, are repaired promptly and to encourage ECC to replace the existing street lights with LED technology. A similar approach should be taken by the Parish Council in respect of the street lights that are the responsibility of the Parish Council

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Access and leisure

14.12 If the activities set out below are to be enjoyed, particularly by the participants, then it is vital the land is kept in good condition especially in terms of the playing surface for cricket. As owners of both pitches, the Parish Council fully supports Project 1 below.

Access and Leisure Project 1: To ensure that both the football and cricket pitches are well maintained and are kept in good condition

14.13 To help counter irresponsible dog fouling, having safe and effective dog "poo" bins is essential.

14.14 An article in the village newsletter of November 2015, reminded dog owners of the need to act responsibly and use the dog "poo" bins. The article in the Essex County Standard of Friday 10th February 2017 highlighted how "dirty dog owners" were making residents' lives a misery around the Holy Trinity School leaving their dogs' mess on the ground.

Access and Leisure Project 2: To ensure the existing dog "poo" pins are well maintained and are kept in good condition

14.15 If cycling is to be encouraged and supported, it is vital to ensure the National Cycle Network Route 13 route is kept open and as safe as possible. Discussions with Sustrans, the national cycling organisation, emphasised the importance of this Route as a means of access to and from Colchester.

Access and Leisure Project 3: To work with Essex County Council and Colchester Borough Council to ensure that the route of the National Cycle Network Route 13 within the village is well maintained and is kept in good condition

14.16 Again, if cycling is to be encouraged and supported, a dedicated cycle path would be a key component, linking in with the village footpaths. Some 49 per cent of villagers who responded to question 22 of the March 2017

questionnaire said they would be encouraged to make use of a cycle network in the village should one be developed.

Access and Leisure Project 4: Working with Sustrans, to support and encourage the introduction of a dedicated cycle network in the village and where possible, linking this with the footpath network in the village

14.17 The provision of cycle stands located in four frequently used/visited areas covering the breadth of the village, may help encourage the villagers to cycle more often.

Access and Leisure Project 5: The placement of cycle stands at the Holy Trinity school; the car park on the northern edge of the Heath by the play area; the Cricketers PH; and at the southern end of Wood Lane by the post box is to be supported

14.18 So as to ensure both the enjoyment and safety of participants, it is vital that the footpaths and bridleways are kept in good condition. So as to encourage villagers to participate in/adopt a healthy lifestyle, it is important they have a clear and safe access to the countryside via Public Rights of Ways. Members of the village work under the auspices of the Parish Paths Partnership arrangements to clear and maintain the footpaths and bridleways on a regular basis. Design Guideline 18 of our Village Design Statement of 2013 underpins Project 6 below.
11.19 In addition, farmers and other landowners should be encouraged to report any problems in respect of the routes, way markers and finger posts to Essex County Council.

Access and Leisure Project 6: To ensure the footpaths and bridleways are well maintained and are kept in good condition and to encourage and support farmers/landowners to maintain, mark out and where appropriate, improve the Public Rights of Ways and Bridleways on their land

14.20 The annual village music festival is by now an annual tradition enjoyed by many hundreds of people (Eight Ash Green residents and beyond).

Access and Leisure Project 7: To support and encourage the continuation of the annual village music festival on Parish Council land

SUMMARY

The table below summarises the Projects with regard to non-planning issues; the proposed Action(s); the lead organisation; and the Priorities:

Serial	Project	Theme	Action	Lead and *partners*	Priority
1	Environment 1	Encouragement of natural habitats for wildlife	PC to meet with farmers and landowners	PC in conjunction with *farmers and landowners*	Long term
2	Environment 2	Retention and protection of the five designated wildlife sites	PC to monitor the status of the sites annually	PC	Long term
3	Business 1	Charging points for electric vehicles	In conjunction with the land owners, PC to survey businesses	PC with *land owners*	Long term
4	Business 2	Support for small businesses	Adverts – flyers printed and distributed by business owners Articles (i.e. not just adverts) in the village newsletters "Sponsorship" for NPG flyers	PC *working with businesses*	On-going

5	Infrastructure	Protection of rural areas	PC to monitor any potential developments very closely	PC	On-going
6	Road safety 1	Parking in Abbots Lane	PC to survey households in Abbots Lane to ascertain the extent of any problems (if any)	PC with *households and ECC*	Low
7	Road safety 2	Traffic calming near the school	PC to survey/ask parents and the Head of the Holy Trinity School about the extent of any problems	PC with *households and Head of school*	Medium
8	Education	Effective use of school land	To approach the PC about any desirable proposals and/or developments	School Head	On-going
9	Comms	Provision of superfast fibre broadband	PC to survey businesses about their current speeds and requirements	PC with *appropriate suppliers*	High
10	Use of land	Enhancement of parking areas	Landowners to monitor use of land and to record any adverse comments	Landowners *working with PC where appropriate*	On-going

11	Community safety	Improvement to street lights	PC to check on standard and type of street lights	PC with *ECC*	Long term
12	Access and Leisure 1	Maintenance of the football and cricket pitches		PC *with sports clubs*	On-going
13	Access and Leisure 2	Maintenance of the dog poo bins	PC to monitor bins on a regular basis	PC	On-going
14	Access and Leisure 3	Maintenance of National Cycle Network Route 13	PC to monitor on a regular basis	PC *with ECC and CBC*	On-going
15	Access and Leisure 4	To consider establishing a dedicated cycle network in the village	PC to consider a feasibility study in conjunction with Sustrans	PC *with Sustrans*	Medium
16	Access and Leisure 5	New cycle stands	PC to survey residents to establish a need	PC	High
17	Access and Leisure 6	Maintenance of footpaths and bridleways	PC to establish a working group of interested parties	PC in conjunction with *farmers and landowners*	On-going
18	Access and Leisure 7	Annual music festival	PC to support the Festival Committee	Festival Committee *with PC*	On-going

Annex E

Great Tey Parish Council



Great Tey Neighbourhood Plan 2022-2033

Referendum Version
July 2024

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FOREWORD

When the Localism Act 2011 came into force, it gave communities the opportunity to prepare neighbourhood plans that will have a meaningful say in what happens in those communities over many years.

A Neighbourhood Plan, once 'made', is a legally binding document that will shape and guide the development of the parish. The Great Tey Neighbourhood Plan is the vehicle to determine the parish's future and the final document will be a material consideration that Colchester City Council (as the local planning authority that determines planning applications), is required to use in the decision-making process for planning applications.

Neighbourhood plans are not opportunities to simply say 'no' to development. They must work alongside national planning policy and the recently-adopted Colchester Local Plan (Sections 1 and 2) to shape growth over the period to 2033. As the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2023 states, "Neighbourhood planning gives communities the power to develop a shared vision for their area" (paragraph 29).

The Neighbourhood Plan Team would like to thank everyone that has engaged with and supported the development of the Great Tey Neighbourhood Plan.

1 INTRODUCTION

What this document is

1.1 This document represents the Neighbourhood Plan for the parish of Great Tey for the period 2022 to 2033. The Plan contains a vision for the future of Great Tey and sets out clear planning policies to realise this vision.

Purpose of the plan

1.2 The principal purpose of the Neighbourhood Plan is to guide development within the parish. It also provides guidance to anyone wishing to submit a planning application for development within the parish. The process of producing a plan has sought to involve the community as widely as possible. The different topic areas are reflective of matters that are of considerable importance to Great Tey, its residents, businesses and community groups. It should be noted that planning applications are submitted to and determined by Colchester City Council. However, the Neighbourhood Plan forms part of the development plan and therefore is given equal weight to the Colchester Local Plan in the decision-making process.

1.3 Some of the Neighbourhood Plan policies are general and apply throughout the Plan area, whilst others are site or area-specific and apply only to the appropriate areas illustrated on the relevant map. Nevertheless, in considering proposals for development, Colchester City Council will apply all relevant policies of the Plan. It is therefore assumed that the Plan will be read as a whole, although some cross-referencing between Plan policies has been provided.

1.4 The process of producing the Neighbourhood Plan has identified a number of actions which have not been included in the policies' sections. This is because these are not specifically related to land use matters and therefore sit outside the jurisdiction of a Neighbourhood Plan. These actions will be addressed by the Parish Council outside of the Neighbourhood Plan process. They are presented in the pink boxes, each with a heading 'Non-Policy Action'.

Policy context

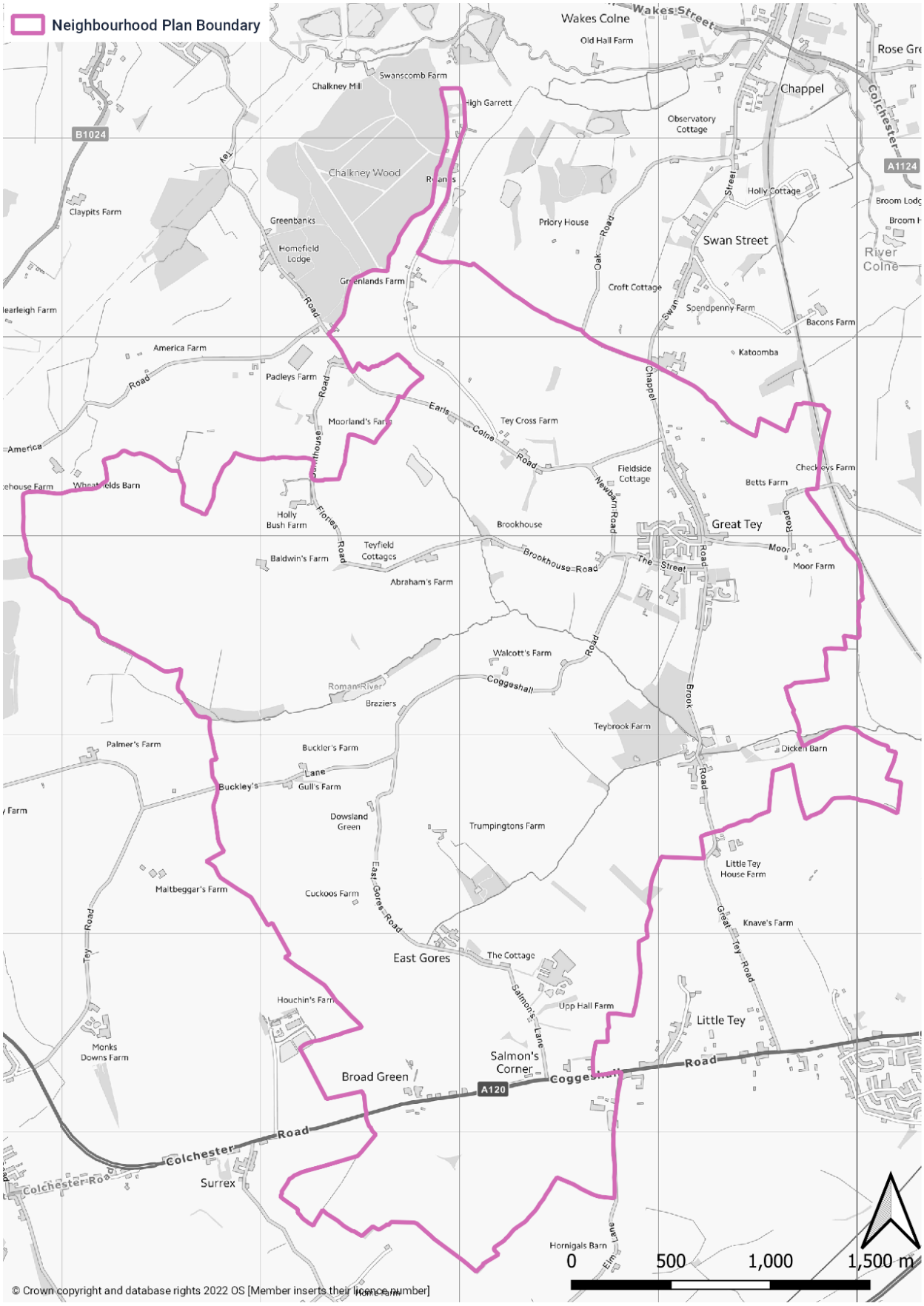
1.5 The Neighbourhood Plan represents one part of the development plan for the neighbourhood area over the period 2022 to 2033, the other part being the Colchester Local Plan (Sections 1 and 2). Essex County Council is the Minerals and Waste Authority for the Plan area and is responsible for the production of mineral and waste local plans. The Development Plan in Great Tey therefore also comprises of the Essex Minerals Local Plan 2014 (MLP) and the Essex and Southend-on-Sea Waste Local Plan 2017 (WLP). These plans set out the policy framework within which minerals and waste planning applications are assessed. They also contain policies which safeguard known mineral bearing land from sterilisation, and existing, permitted and allocated mineral and waste infrastructure from proximal development which may compromise their operation.

1.6 Colchester City Council, as the local planning authority, designated the Great Tey Neighbourhood Area in June 2017 to enable Great Tey Parish Council to prepare the Neighbourhood Plan. The Plan has been prepared by the community through the Great Tey Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group.

1.7 The Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared in accordance with the Town & Country Planning Act 1990, the Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, the Localism Act 2011 and the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations 2012 (which were amended in 2015). The Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group has prepared the plan to establish a vision for the future of the parish and to set out how that vision will be realised through planning and controlling land use and development change over the plan period.

1.8 The map in Figure 1.1 below shows the boundary of the Neighbourhood Plan area, which is the same as the administrative boundary of Great Tey parish.

Figure 1.1: Great Tey neighbourhood plan area

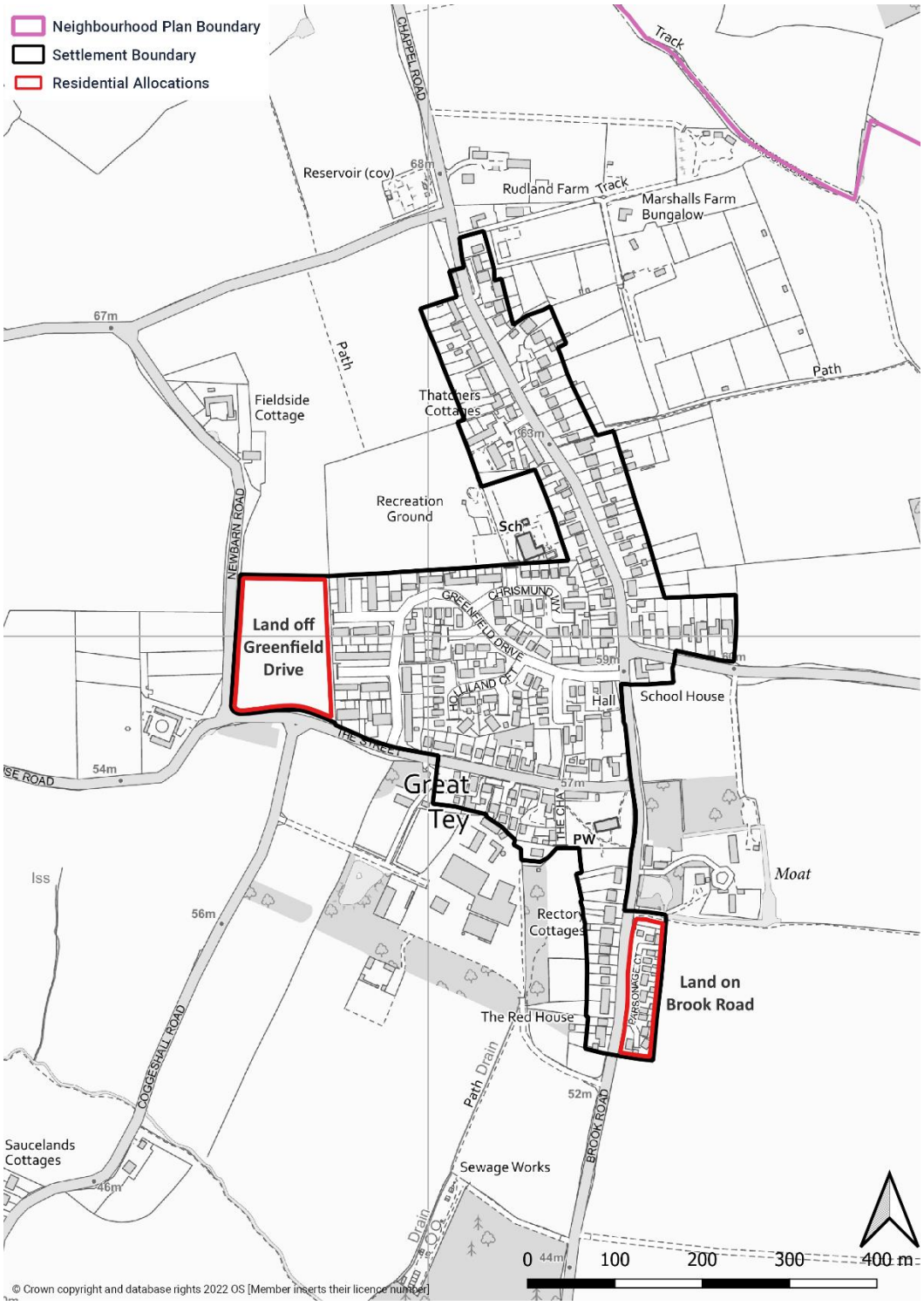


How our Neighbourhood Plan was created

Process

1.9 In early 2017 Colchester City Council issued its draft Local Plan Section 2, including Policy SS8 covering Great Tey, which proposed two site allocations for new dwellings in the village (land off Greenfield Drive and land on Brook Road – see Figure 1.2).

Figure 1.2: Site allocations in Colchester Local Plan Section 2



1.10 Following well-attended open meetings in February 2017 Great Tey Parish Council undertook to produce a Neighbourhood Plan (NP). A request for neighbourhood area designation of the entire parish of Great Tey by the newly formed Neighbourhood Plan Group (NPG) on behalf of the Parish Council was approved in June 2017.

1.11 On 30th September 2017 a drop-in meeting was held in the village hall, at which parishioners were invited to give their views on a number of issues concerning future development in the community. Over the next few months members of the NPG attended meetings of a range of groups in the community to ascertain their views.

1.12 The responses were collated and analysed, then used to produce a Public Consultation Review. This document was published on the Village website and publicised by means of the village newsletter in June 2019.

1.13 In October 2019 the NPG issued a Call for Sites to all landowners in the Parish inviting them to put forward sites for consideration for residential use. In response three sites were proposed. One of these was a long-range vision by a local landowner which comprised a number of uses, including residential development and an extension to an existing commercial site.

1.14 Following meetings with the landowners and potential developers of the land off Greenfield Drive, the NPG issued a survey in November 2020 inviting parishioners to give their views on the three sites put forward, as well as on the proposed options for the layout of the Greenfield Drive site allocation. It should be noted that at this time the Local Plan Section 2 site allocation of land on Brook Road had already come forward for development.

1.15 The responses to this survey were collated and analysed and, along with responses to previous community engagement exercises, were used to formulate the Vision and Objectives for our Neighbourhood Plan. It also informed the decision not to allocate further sites in addition to the two site allocations already in the Local Plan Section 2.

2 LOCAL CONTEXT

History of Great Tey parish[1]

2.1 For centuries Great Tey has been a farming community, with the main source of employment being on the farms across the parish. This was the case right up to the latter part of the 20th century.

2.2 Settlements have existed in Great Tey since before the Roman conquest of Britain, around 45 A.D. There is evidence of the use of Great Tey as an area for rest and relaxation for Roman soldiers from the Colchester garrison and remains of a Roman villa have been found close to what is now Tey Brook Farm.

2.3 Following the Norman invasion, the Domesday Book records Great and Little Tey in 1086 as being in the hands of Count Eustace of Boulogne. There were almost 40 households, representing quite a large settlement at that time.

2.4 At one time there were four pubs in the village, as well as two shops and all the services useful for a farming community.

2.5 It is thought that St Barnabas Church, which dates back to Saxon times, with additions in Norman times and later, was originally built using materials from the Roman villa. It remains an important and iconic building at the centre of the village.



St Barnabas Church

2.6 The Old Playing Field is one of two playing fields in the village. It is accessed via The Chase and lies behind the Church. It has been in use as a playing field from well before 1727, when it was central to what was termed 'the Great Tey riot'.

2.7 Also along The Chase by the Church, was the Guildhall, that was converted to the parish Workhouse in 1752. Workhouses were designed to make the poor work for 'relief' but also to house the sick, orphans; the elderly and unmarried mothers.

[1] We are grateful to Dr Jane Pearson whose book 'Living in the Past Great Tey 1600-1900' has helped inform aspects of this section.

2.8 The current Village Hall was built in 1926 by Reuben Hunt, who left a fund in trust in perpetuity for its upkeep and maintenance. The last major development in the village took place in the 1970s, doubling the area of the existing village, and leading to the new school being built. Since then, development has been organic, with new houses being built within the village envelope, although many dwellings have been extended and improved and other buildings have been converted to residential use.

Present day

2.9 Great Tey Parish today has around 400 dwellings and approximately 1,000 inhabitants. It extends as far as the A120 to the south and west, with small hamlets such as Broad Green on the western outskirts and a variety of other small settlements. The A120 has developed from the Roman Stane Street originally linking Colchester with St Albans but better known now as a link between the A12 and the M11, by Stansted Airport.

2.10 Many residents are commuters and use Marks Tey railway station to travel to work predominantly in Colchester, Chelmsford and London (see Figure 2.1).

Figure 2.1: Local context map

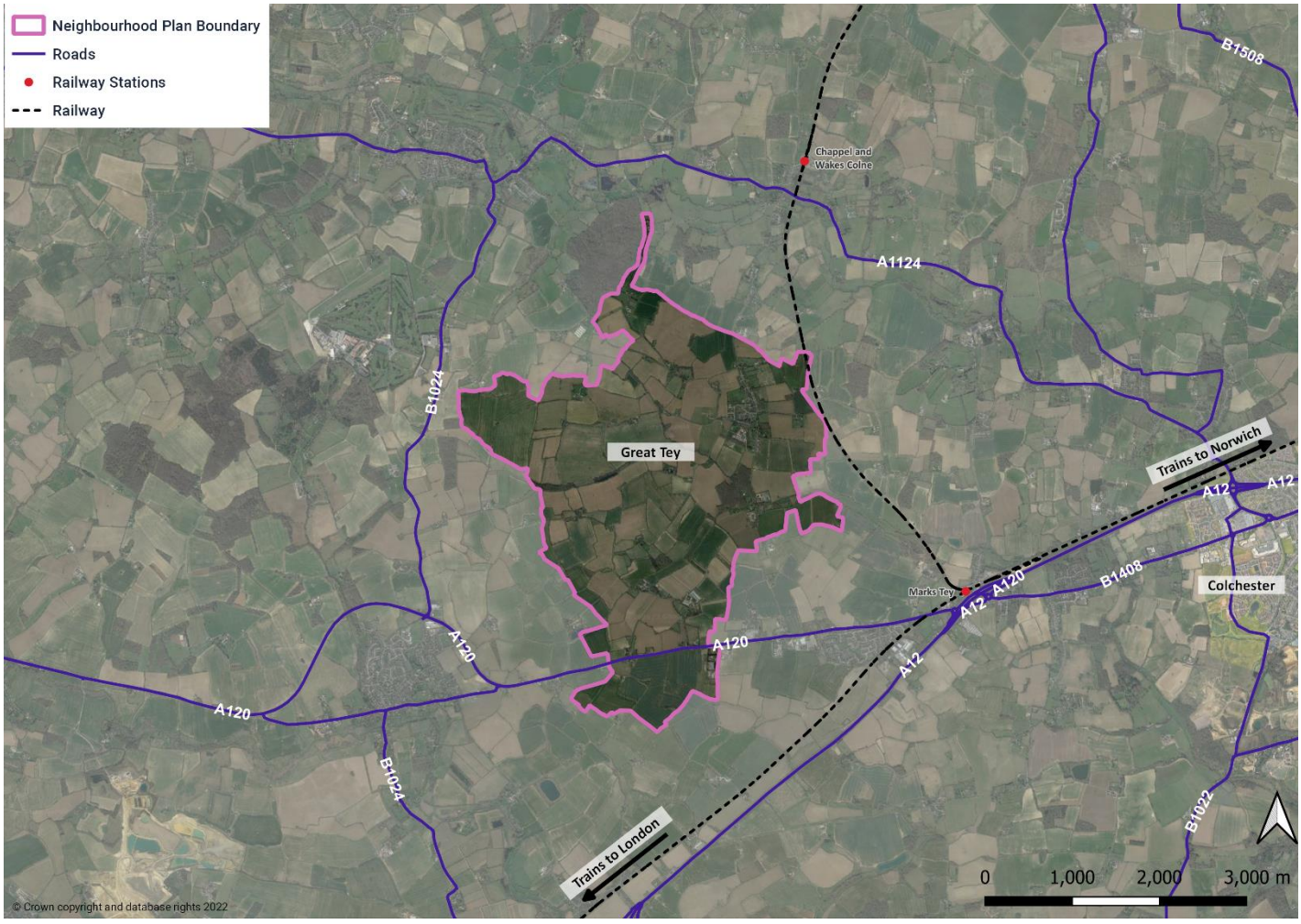


Figure 2.2: Listed buildings and conservation area - parish

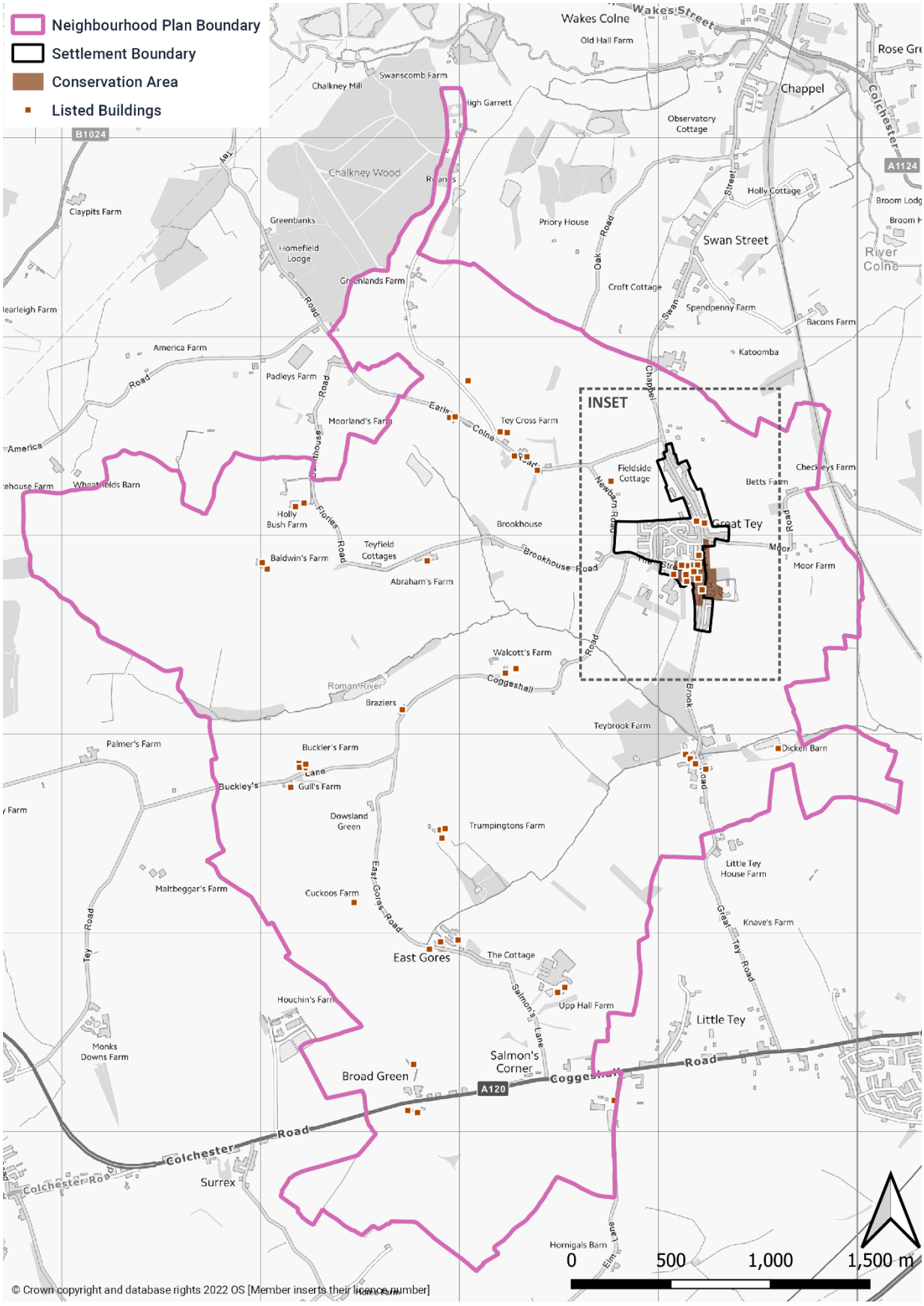
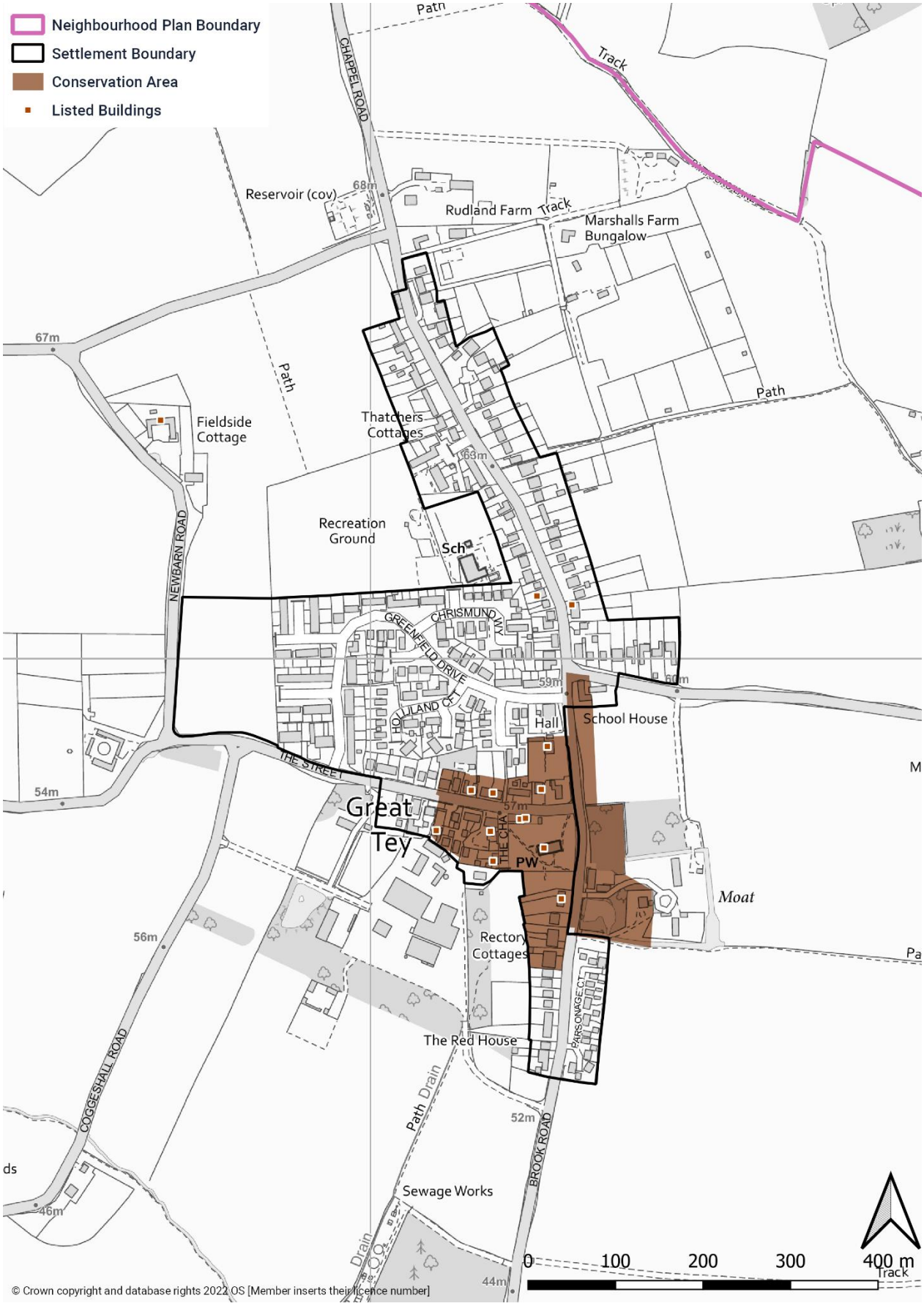


Figure 2.3: Listed buildings and conservation area – Great Tey village



2.11 To the north the parish adjoins Chappel and Wakes Colne that has the A1124 running through it. However, the village of Great Tey is the principal part of the parish. The parish today has an eclectic range of dwellings, some with long histories, many without. There are 56 properties listed as being of historical interest and there is a conservation area as shown in Figures 2.2 and 2.3. There is a second playing field, the Harold Fairs Recreation Ground, which is located next to the school. It has a small children's playground and is used for football and cricket matches, and other recreation. Both areas are owned and maintained by the Parish Council. Nowadays there are 2 pubs, the Chequers in the village and the Kings Arms along the A120.



The Chequers Pub

2.12 The village school is thriving, although many of the children come from outside the village. The village has no shop, but a local refrigerated van comes around weekly, and is well supported.

2.13 The Village Hall is in constant use, providing a home for the local pre-school group, as well as hosting a number of clubs, societies and activities including children's and youth groups such as beavers, brownies, cubs, scouts and guides, the Women's Institute, and various special interest groups. An outreach Post Office service is available twice a week, on Tuesday and Friday afternoons. It is also frequently used for private hire for parties or events, mainly at weekends, and it is a polling station for elections.

2.14 There are 15 new houses along Brook Road, all occupied, and there is outline planning permission for 30 houses in New Barn Road. These are the two sites allocated in the now-adopted Colchester Local Plan Section 2.

2.15 The village is surrounded by farms and agricultural land where there is a network of bridle ways and public footpaths. These include a section of the Essex Way, reputed to have been an old drovers' road, linking the Essex coast near Harwich to Epping, a distance of approximately 80 miles altogether.

2.16 As well as farms and farm related businesses, there are four commercial areas and other small facilities providing employment within the Parish: at Tey Brook Farm and Warren's Farm on Brook Road; Upp Hall Farm on Salmon's Lane and the nearby East Gores Farm. These are mainly offices and workshops, primarily for a variety of local firms.

Points of interest

2.17 There are a number of points of interests of varying types in Great Tey, as shown in Figures 2.4 and 2.5.

Figure 2.4: Points of interest – parish

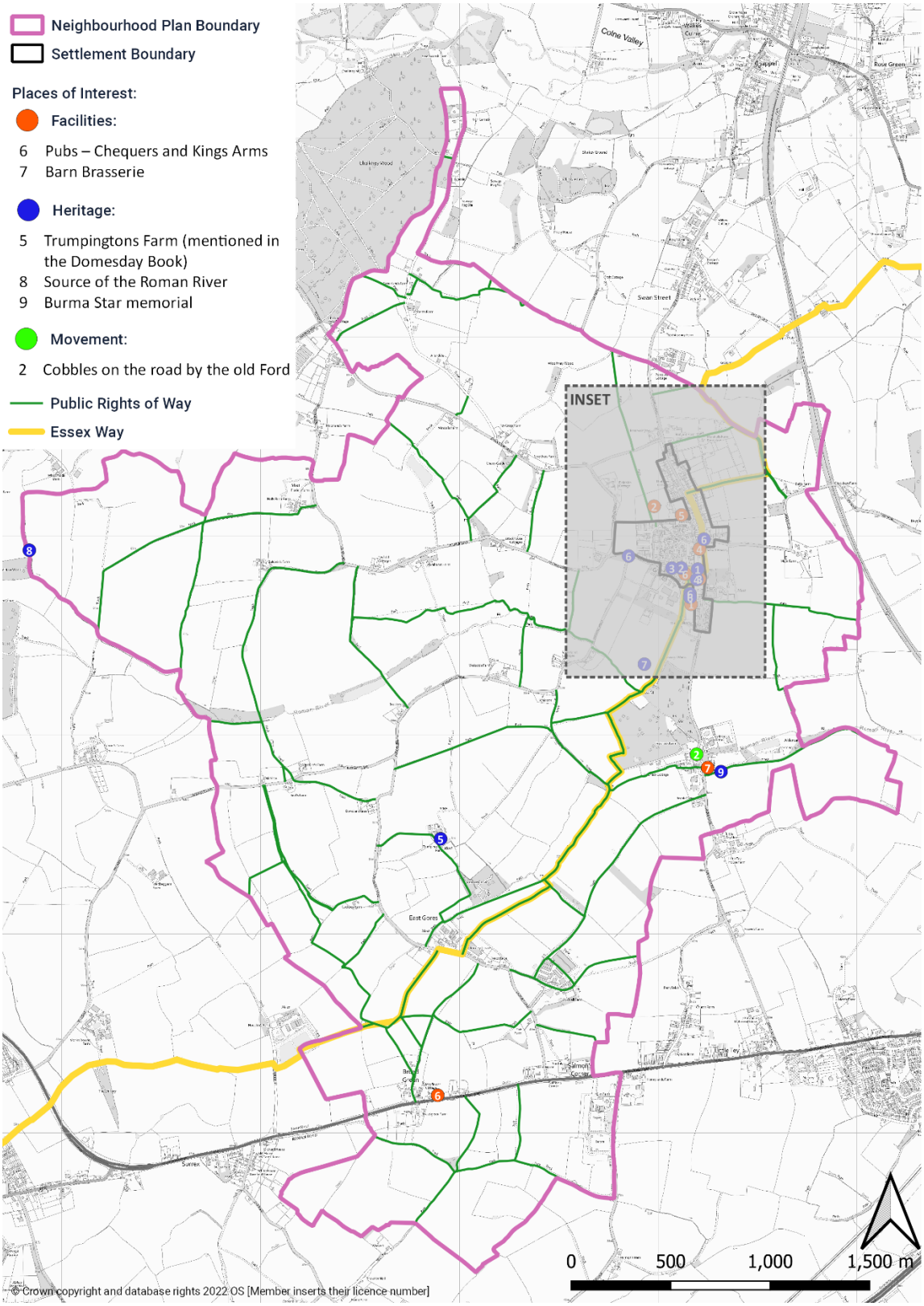
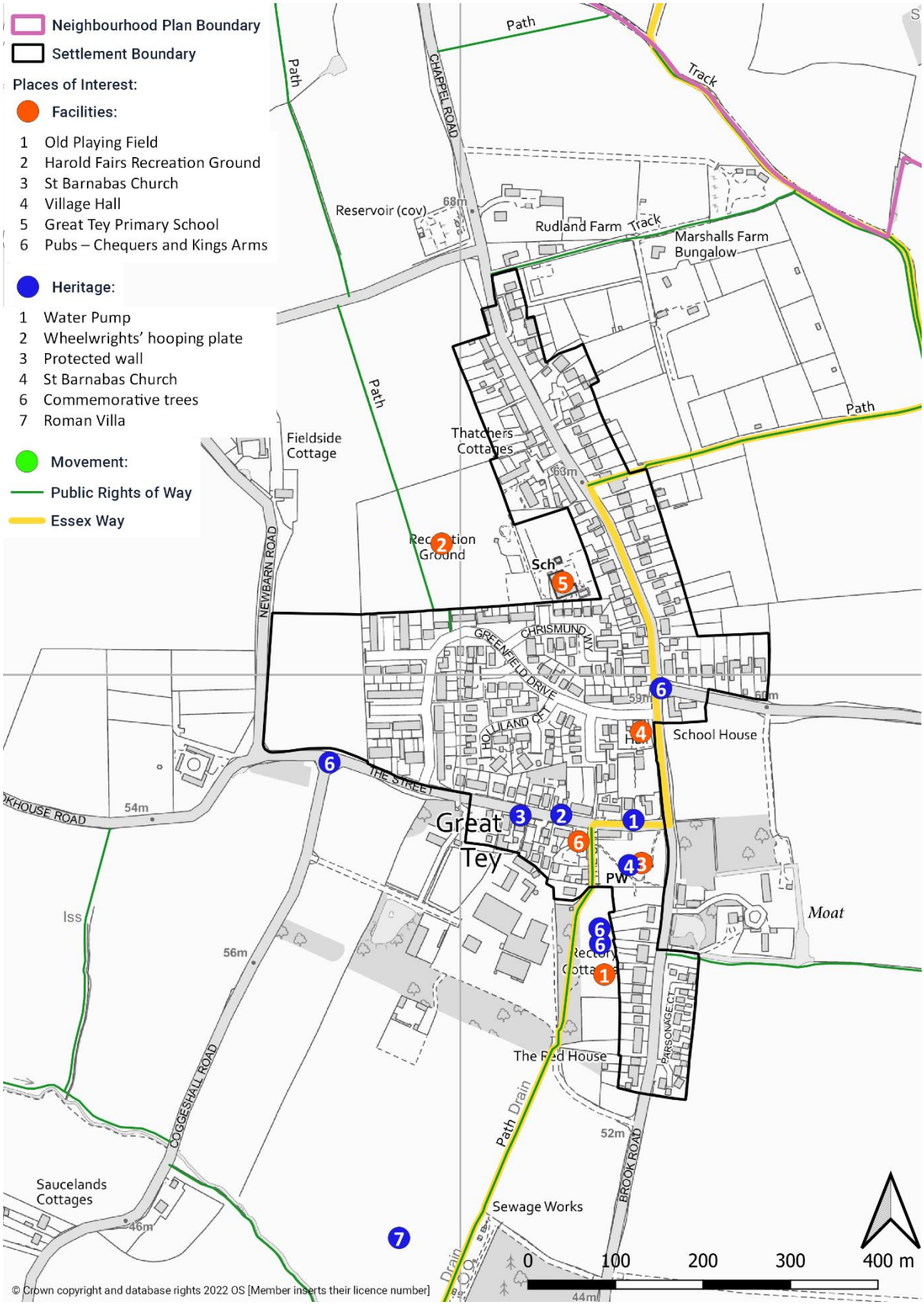


Figure 2.5: Points of interest – Great Tey village



Main issues and challenges in Great Tey

- Maintaining the 'best of Great Tey' – particularly the design of buildings and the rural feel, including the landscape and views.
- Access to the countryside – ensuring that Great Tey remains a small rural village where people can have easy access into nature.
- Poor connectivity – limited public transport.
- Light pollution – ensuring that the dark skies around Great Tey are not intruded by inappropriate lighting.
- Lack of local support services – including medical and post office counter services.
- Poor infrastructure – including water and sewerage.

3 VISION AND OBJECTIVES

Vision for Great Tey

3.1 In consultation with the local community, the following vision for Great Tey was established:

> ***In 2033, Great Tey parish will remain a friendly, community-spirited, rural parish, enhanced by more contemporary facilities that appeal to all ages. The rural landscape, environment and safety of the parish's residents will be maintained and will have been enhanced through well designed, characterful and sustainable development, supported by movement networks and multifunctional green infrastructure which perpetuate the rural nature of the parish. The setting of Great Tey village will have been preserved, avoiding sprawl and amalgamation with other villages.***

Neighbourhood Plan Objectives

3.2 The objectives of the Neighbourhood Plan as identified through engagement with the community are as follows:

- Objective 1: To ensure high quality design of development that reflects the character of Great Tey as a rural community.
- Objective 2: Improve the health and wellbeing of the community by maximising access to the countryside through multifunctional green infrastructure for all and ensuring clean, active and sustainable transport links.
- Objective 3: To minimise the environmental impact of development both in terms of adapting and mitigating against a changing climate and delivering net gain in biodiversity.
- Objective 4: To enhance the viability and range of infrastructure, services and community facilities in Great Tey.

3.3 The sections that follow provide the policies that make up the Neighbourhood Plan. These are required to have regard to national planning policies and guidance and to be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the Colchester Local Plan. They should also not duplicate existing planning policies. With the Colchester Local Plan Section 2 having been adopted in July 2022, the existing policy framework at the borough level is up-to-date and comprehensive. Many of the general matters that the Neighbourhood Plan might otherwise address through its policies are already dealt with by the Colchester Local Plan Section 2. It is therefore not necessary or appropriate to duplicate these matters, even if they are of importance to the community of Great Tey. The Neighbourhood Plan has sought where possible to identify any existing policies which help to address the Plan's objectives.

Design codes and guidelines for design landscaping, access and movement and sustainability

3.4 The local community of Great Tey was clear that the character of the village and its surroundings was one of the major assets of life in the parish. People value how attractive Great Tey is and want new development to fit in with this.

3.5 To provide a clear understanding of the nature of design issues that new development must consider in order to assemble high quality schemes, **the Great Tey Design Guidelines and Codes report** was commissioned. This identified a series of design principles that are specific to Great Tey parish as well as some principles that could be applied more generally in any location. In total, 33 design 'codes' have been identified under five themes:

Design Codes for Great Tey village

Theme	Code	Title
DC.01 In keeping with local character	1	Heritage, views and landmarks
	2	Development affecting heritage assets
	3	Set in rural landscape/ development edges
	4	Patterns of growth within the rural landscape
	5	Housing extensions and conversions
	6	New houses and infill development

Design Codes for new development on larger sites

Theme	Code	Title
DC.02 Access and movement	7	Accessible and attractive footpath network / access to the countryside
	8	Prioritise walking and cycling
	9	People friendly streets
	10	Parking and servicing
	11	Cycle parking
DC.03 Landscape, nature and open space	12	Create a green network
	13	Biodiversity
	14	Water management
	15	Trees
	16	Open spaces
DC.04 Built form	17	Development layout
	18	Building heights
	19	Density
	20	Housing mix
	21	Continuity and enclosure
	22	Legibility and wayfinding
	23	Boundary lines, boundary treatment & corner treatment
	24	Materials and architectural details
	25	Hard landscaping, materials and street furniture

Design Codes on sustainability for new developments in Great Tey Parish

Theme	Code	Title
DC.05 Sustainability	26	Minimising energy use
	27	Lifetime and adaptability
	28	Minimising construction waste
	29	Recycling materials and buildings
	30	Electric vehicle charging points
	31	Storage and slow release
	32	Permeable paving
	33	Reducing car use

3.6 The Neighbourhood Plan addresses each of these as far as they relate to achieving the Plan's objectives:

- Section 4 addresses design/built form, landscaping, and generally being in keeping with local character (design codes under themes DC.01 and DC04)
- Section 5 addresses access and movement (design codes under theme DC.02)
- Section 6 addresses biodiversity, open spaces and sustainability of development (design codes under themes DC.03 and DC.05)

3.7 Whilst all the guidance should apply from the Design Codes and Guidelines Report, the policies in Sections 4 to 6 specifically identify the most important aspects as identified by the local community. It should also be borne in mind that development proposals generally will be expected to have regard to the Essex Design Guide.

3.8 Throughout the Plan items that are not directly addressed by planning policy are considered as 'non-policy actions'.

3.9 It is important that development proposals – and particularly major developments (as defined by the NPPF) – actively demonstrate how they have been informed by these design codes. Their purpose is not to expect all development to slavishly adhere to all codes in all circumstances; rather it is to inform development so that what is built represents high quality development in the context of Great Tey. In this regard, the most important site that must demonstrate it has been fully informed by these design codes and the policies in this Neighbourhood Plan is the Colchester Local Plan Section 2 site allocation for approximately 30 dwellings on land off Greenfield Drive (Policy SS8). This specifically intends that the Neighbourhood Plan shapes the character of development.

4 DESIGN AND LANDSCAPING

Objective 1: To ensure high quality design of development that reflects the character of Great Tey as a rural community

4.1 The design of built development in a rural setting such as Great Tey can have a disproportionate impact on a community, either negatively or positively depending on whether it is a high quality development or not. This is not only the way the buildings are designed and made to look; it also includes how they are laid out, how bulky they are, how well landscaped they are so that they sit comfortably in their surroundings and whether valued views are retained. This section addresses the aspects of design, landscaping and views that are particularly important in Great Tey.

4.2 It should be noted that the Colchester Local Plan Section 2 directs development in the parish to Great Tey village, unless it is appropriate use in the countryside or relates to the Tey Brook Farm Local Economic Area.

Design

POLICY GTTEY1: DESIGN

A. Development should demonstrate high quality design and layout which respects the local character of Great Tey and has regard to the Great Tey Design Guidelines and Codes 2022 (or any successor document).

B. In delivering high quality design, development proposals must demonstrate the appropriate use of design, layout, materials and features. The following principles should be considered as part of design proposals:

- **i. Development should integrate with and enhance the form of its existing surroundings, with all connections including road patterns ensuring permeability for pedestrians and cyclists.**
- **ii. Development should have a density consistent with its surroundings. This is particularly important in sensitive locations at the edges of sites where they meet the open countryside. It should also soften the appearance of buildings on the edge of the development where it meets the open countryside through the use of natural materials and features such as green roofs.**
- **iii. A mix of house types (where appropriate) and plot layouts should be used.**
- **iv. Building heights and rooflines should generally be no more than two storeys but all buildings should respect the surrounding countryside and landscape. Taller buildings will only be permitted where it is clearly demonstrated that they can complement or enhance the local character.**
- **v. New development should be respectful of the architectural styles and use of materials of surrounding buildings, particularly in the case of residential development.**

vi. Development should aim to meet a high level of sustainable design and construction including measures which minimise water use, waste reduction, reuse and recycle minerals, and use sustainable materials, including in relation to their procurement and be optimised for energy efficiency, targeting zero carbon emissions.

C. Domestic extensions must enhance the appearance of the street through high quality design. In particular this will include being set back from the main building, using complementary materials and detailing and ensuring the roof extension harmonises with the original building.

D. All major residential development proposals should include a proportionate statement and illustrations demonstrating how the principles and guidance in the Great Tey Design Guidelines and Codes have been addressed.

4.3 Building height and density are two critical aspects of design that, if out of keeping with the character of a rural area, can have a disproportionately negative impact. Great Tey parish has a low density, reflective of its rural setting. Properties tend to be 1-2 storeys high with decent-sized rear gardens, i.e. the combination of low heights and low density create the open, spacious, rural feel. Development should generally be no more than 2-2.5 storeys, with lower heights towards the edge of developments or adjacent to the edge of the village/open countryside. It should seek to maintain a consistent roofline where this could impact on long distance views; otherwise subtle changes in roofline are encouraged where they create visual interest.



Local example of a continuous roofline, only interrupted by chimneys



The rural character of Brookhouse Road offers a gradual transition from the urban environment to the rural countryside

4.4 Densities should be in keeping with the prevailing densities in the area around the site. This applies to developments both on the edge and closer to the middle of the village. It is particularly important in sensitive locations where development abuts open countryside or green spaces that the density and bulk of development is appropriate.

4.5 The layout of buildings on a site is important to create a successful streetscape with, in the context of Great Tey, a not overly urban feel. Natural boundary treatments such as hedges

are one way to help achieve this and are encouraged, as are low walls using local bricks and tiles. Road layouts should be designed to slow traffic, giving pedestrians more assurance that they are the predominant street user, not the private car.

4.6 The materials and architectural details that are used will go a long way to ensuring that new development feels like it fits in the with the Great Tey vernacular. In particular, pitched roofs with either artificial slate or plain tiles and elevations where brick, render or boarding are predominant are likely to achieve this. Design should take its cues from local design references in both the natural and built environment and the palette of materials used should also reflect this. Any materials used should come from sustainable sources and be procured in a sustainable way.

Roofing



Grey slate tiles



Handmade clay peg tiles



Thatched roof (made from straw)

Walling & building facades



Flint work with flint chipping (galleting) to the joints



Knapped flint



Half timber framing and half flints combined with red bricks



Low height flint and brick wall



Render



Whole beach pebbles set in lime mortar, with red brick

Windows



Casement windows



Sash window



Dark brown frame on casement & cottage style window



Arched shape window

Front doors (timber and painted)









Generic examples of local materials and architectural details

4.7 Housing extensions must meet the general requirements of Colchester Local Plan Section 2 Policy DM13 (Domestic development). However, there are particular design features which will help to ensure a sympathetic, high quality design. These include being set back from the main building and complementing the materials and detailing of the original building and ensuring the roof extension harmonises with the original building.





Positive example of side extensions in Great Tey

4.8 Development should also meet the highest levels of sustainability in its design and construction. This should cover a range of matters including water use and waste reduction. Local Plan Part 2 Policy DM25 (Renewable energy, water, waste and recycling) requires development to meet the Building Regulation optional higher water efficiency standard of 110 litres per person per day. However, the Anglian Water region is an area of serious water stress therefore, to align with the Government's Environmental Improvement Plan[2] which sets ten actions in the Roadmap to Water Efficiency, new developments is encouraged to go further and achieve a figure of 100 litres per person per day. Anglian Water has advised that this can be achieved through a 'fixtures and fittings' approach.

[2] HM Government (2023) *Environmental Improvement Plan 2023*, first revision

Landscaping

POLICY GTTEY2: LANDSCAPING

A. New development must ensure that it minimises the visual impact on the natural and historic environment of Great Tey.

B. Major new development[3] adjacent to the existing built-up area of Great Tey village should not create a hard edge and, where possible, retain a green buffer. A green buffer should be sufficiently wide to accommodate, where appropriate to its location, some or all of the following features:

- **i. the planting of avenues of street trees of which, by virtue of their species, have a large canopy and root structure when mature;**
- **ii. hedges/hedgerows;**
- **iii. recreational facilities such as benches and water features;**
- **iv. wide footways, cycling routes and bridleways.**

C. All development proposals should seek where possible to retain mature trees, hedges, hedgerows and shrubs as part of the design of development. This is particularly important on the boundary of properties that front onto existing roads and lanes.

D. Development which might affect a heritage asset and its setting, and/or the Conservation Area, must demonstrate how this has been adequately mitigated (for example, by the use of appropriate green screening) in accordance with Colchester Local Plan Policy DM17.



Hedgerows and trees forming a mature boundary to the open countryside

4.9 Well designed and well laid out buildings need to be complemented by high quality landscaping to blend into their rural context. In Great Tey this is no exception. Development adjoining public open spaces and important gaps should either face onto

[3] Major development is as defined in the NPPF

them or have a soft landscaped edge. Existing trees, hedges hedgerows and shrubs should be preserved where possible and abrupt edges to development with little vegetation should be avoided. This is particularly important where development is adjacent to open countryside - a high quality landscaping belt must be used to minimise the impact of built development as viewed from open countryside outside Great Tey. Similarly, the impact of development on heritage assets – principally listed buildings but also the Conservation Area – must be minimised through the use of green screening. This aligns with and is informed by the Essex Green Infrastructure Strategy 2020[4] and the Essex Green Infrastructure Standards 2022[5].

4.10 It is important that there is a strategy for maintaining any street trees that are included as part of developments. Applicants should work with highways officers to ensure that the right trees are planted in the right places, and solutions are found that are compatible with highways standards and the needs of different users. Guidance is provided in the Essex Design Guide[6].

Views

POLICY GTTEY3: VIEWS

A. Development must ensure that it does not impact on the historic or natural landscape setting of Great Tey. In particular, the following views as shown on Figure 4.1 should be preserved:

1. **Brookhouse Road looking south towards Walcott Hall**
2. **New Barn Road looking south west towards Brookhouse Road**
3. **Earls Colne Road looking south towards Harold Fairs Recreation Ground and St Barnabas Church**
4. **Warrens Farm gate towards St Barnabas Church**

B. Development is expected to preserve the setting of St Barnabas Church and proposals are required to consider the impact on the view to the church and ensure that it does not have a significantly detrimental impact.

C. Development within or adjacent to the settlement boundary of Great Tey must be designed and arranged in a manner which would safeguard views of the surrounding countryside that occur between buildings.

D. Development adjacent to existing green open spaces in, or close to, Great Tey village will be required to take into account the role such spaces might play in allowing appreciation of the historic form and pattern of development in the village.

[4] Essex County Council (2020) *Essex Green Infrastructure Strategy*, prepared for the Essex Green Infrastructure Partnership
[5] Essex County Council (2022) *Essex Green Infrastructure Standards: Technical Guidance.*
[6] Essex Design Guide - https://www.essexdesignguide.co.uk/




The rural aspect of Great Tey

4.11 Great Tey has a rich heritage dating back to pre-historic times, both in terms of its heritage buildings and its rural landscape. The ability to appreciate both is of fundamental importance to the community of Great Tey.



St Barnabas Church

4.12 New development which could impact on the landscape of Great Tey or its historic buildings should not only protect and preserve them but should look for ways that they can be further promoted. The scenic values and tranquillity of the countryside should be retained. In particular, a series of views that are considered to be important to the identity of Great Tey have been identified. These are shown on Figure 4.1 and described below:

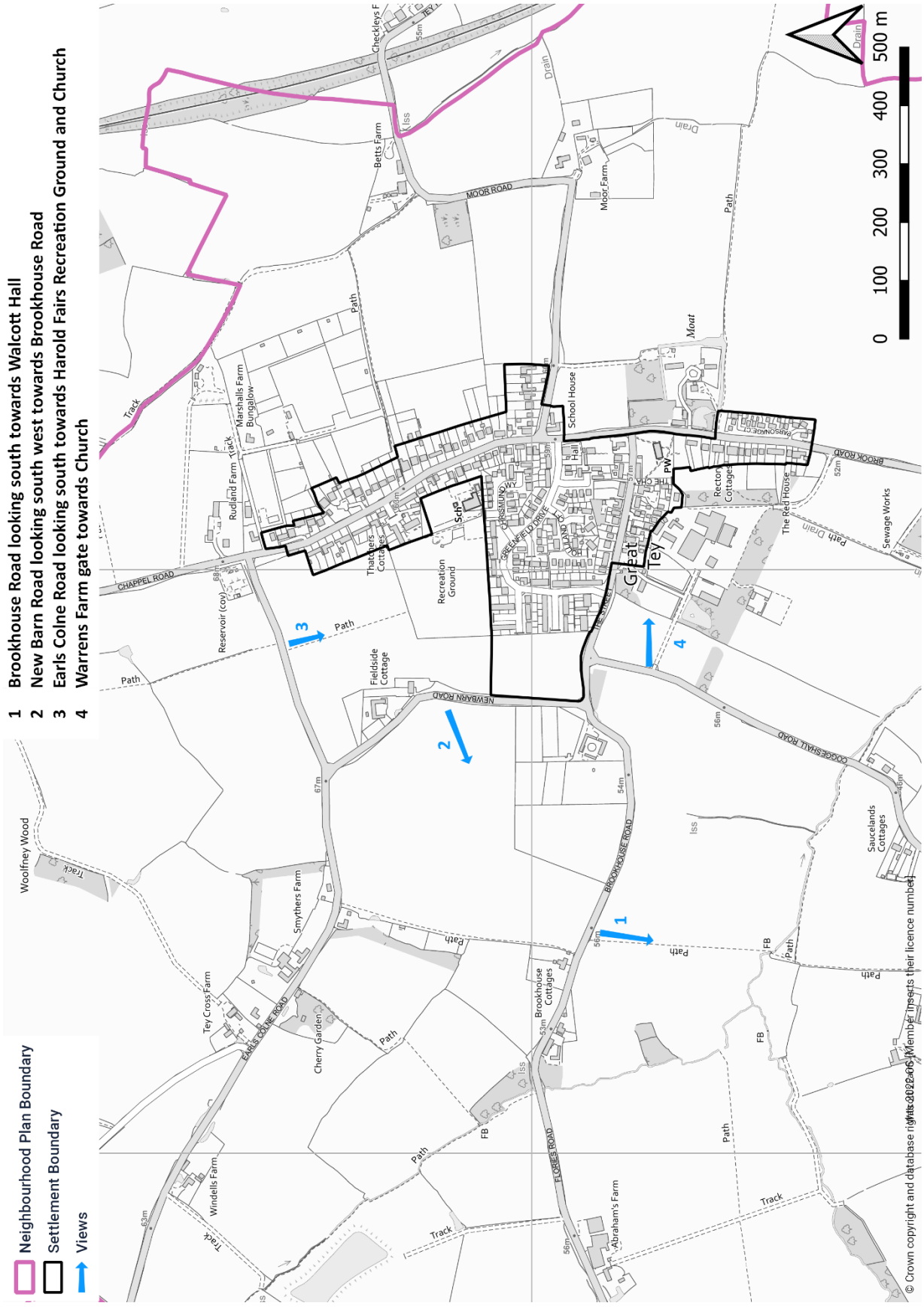


View west from St Barnabas Church



View south from St Barnabas Church

Figure 4.1: Locally valued views



1. Brookhouse Road looking south towards Walcott Hall



4.13 This view is on a common walking route in open countryside to the west of Great Tey village. The wide vista provides an aspect of large, open skies which impose over the landscape. The views in the distance are enhanced as the land drops away to the Roman River.

2. New Barn Road looking south west towards Brookhouse Road



4.14 This view out from the village looking west provides a clear view of the countryside for the regular walkers that use this route. The view, typified by the big skies it encompasses, is enhanced by the sloping of the land away to the west.

3. Earls Colne Road looking south towards Harold Fairs Recreation Ground and St Barnabas Church



4.15 This medium distance view looks south towards the village of Great Tey. It provides both a wide view across open countryside with its big skies and a specific view of St Barnabas Church, the tallest and most distinct feature on the village's skyline.

4. Warrens Farm gate towards St Barnabas Church

4.16 This view looking east from the rural route to the west of Great Tey village is popular with walkers. From a rural aspect it provides the best 'framed' view of St Barnabas Church, set against the rooftops of buildings on the edge of Great Tey and the tree line.



4.17 In addition, the views generally of St Barnabas Church, a grade I listed church, and its tower are important as this is the single most important landmark in the village. There are multiple views of the church in addition to that from Warrens Farm gate and all should be preserved.

4.18 Development should allow for views between buildings of open countryside to be preserved. This is an important feature of rural villages and density is a component of this, dealt with accordingly in Policy GTTEY1.

4.19 More generally, development should preserve the setting of existing open spaces in Great Tey because these provide short distance ‘views’ of the historic form and pattern of development in the village.

5 MOVEMENT

Objective 2: Improve the health and wellbeing of the community by maximising access to the countryside for all and ensuring clean, sustainable transport links

5.1 As a rural parish, access to the countryside is very important to Great Tey and its residents. The village has a limited range of public green spaces and community facilities at its heart, therefore access into the countryside is particularly important. The need for access as a means of exercise, to walk dogs and for general wellbeing is vital. Without this, the community becomes reliant on use of the private car to access leisure opportunities elsewhere, which creates lots of short distance car trips that do not contribute positively to sustainability.



Public rights of way in Great Tey

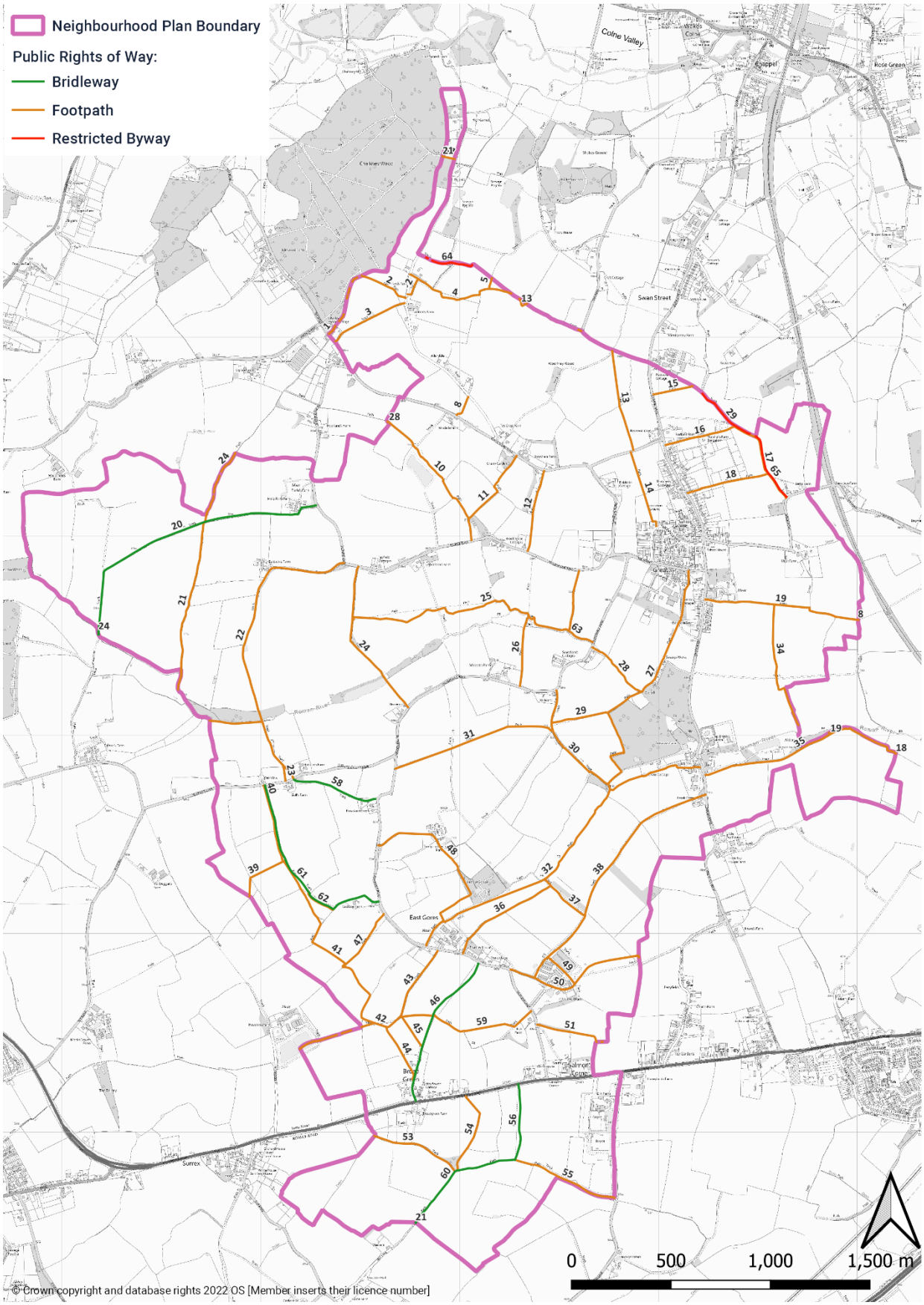
POLICY GTTEY4: ACCESS TO THE COUNTRYSIDE

A. Access to the countryside will be promoted through protection and maintenance of the existing Public Rights of Way (PROW) network (as shown in Figure 5.1), its enhancement where possible, provision of bridleways and the safety of users of rural roads and lanes.

B. Proposals to divert PROWs or cycleways should provide clear and demonstrable benefits for the wider community. Where possible, development should enhance PROWs by improving existing routes and improving connectivity through the creation of new routes. The loss or degradation of any PROW will not be permitted in other than very special circumstances. Any development that will impact upon an existing PROW should have regard to Policy DM11 in the Essex County Council Development Management Policies (2011).

C. Where appropriate to its location and scale, new development will be required to provide well signposted and safe pedestrian and cycle connections within the site and connecting into the existing wider network, to nearby facilities, amenities, schools, public transport network and integrate with the multifunctional green infrastructure network.

Figure 5.1: PROWs and bridleways



5.2 The NPPF states that 'planning policies should protect and enhance public rights of way and access, including taking opportunities to provide better facilities for users, for example by adding links to existing rights of way networks' (paragraph 104).

5.3 The parish of Great Tey has a dense network of Public Rights of Way (PROWs) and some bridleways, as shown in Figure 5.1. This includes the Essex Way, one of the most important and high quality walking routes through the county.

5.4 The Colchester Local Plan Section 2 site allocation in Policy SS8 – land off Greenfield Drive – is required to deliver at least one hectare of public open space to the north of the proposed residential development. This incorporates PROW number 137 14 and it will be important that the PROW is retained (even if diverted within the public open space) and residents of the new development are given easy access to it.

Public transport services

5.5 The limited available public transport is a significant issue both for residents and workers in Great Tey. The number 82 bus service that links the village with Marks Tey railway station, Stanway and Colchester city centre is not conducive to commuting or for those accessing education. The first bus on a weekday morning does not arrive in Colchester until 08:50, with only a further four buses through the day. The last bus returning from Colchester to Great Tey leaves at 16:15. For those working in Great Tey, the first arrival from Colchester is not until nearly 13:00.

5.6 Whilst not a planning policy matter, the Parish Council will continue to lobby Essex County Council for buses at times which enable commuting for work and education. It will also explore the potential for a community bus to provide the most needed services.

NON-POLICY ACTION A: PUBLIC TRANSPORT AND COMMUNITY BUS

Great Tey Parish Council will work with Essex County Council and local bus providers to deliver bus services that enable community for work and education.

Great Tey Parish Council will explore the potential for a community bus service that can provide some of the most needed public transport services to and from Great Tey.

Traffic

5.7 Traffic is an issue of concern to a significant proportion of the population of Great Tey parish. In particular, traffic through the village can cause significant issues. Partly this can be congestion but often it is concerns over safety due to speeding. Whilst this is an issue that the Neighbourhood Plan cannot address through planning policies, it is important that these issues and possible solutions are explored. The community would greatly welcome

any proposals that would help to make the roadways and pedestrian access – much of which is on the roadway – much safer.

NON-POLICY ACTION B: IMPROVING ROAD SAFETY

Great Tey Parish Council will work with Essex County Council and other relevant partners to explore ways in which traffic safety can be improved in Great Tey parish, particularly through Great Tey village.

6 ENVIRONMENT

Objective 3: To minimise the environmental impact of development both in terms of carbon emissions and biodiversity

6.1 The Climate Change Act 2008 committed the UK to an 80% reduction in CO2 emissions by 2050. In June 2019, an announcement was made by Government to reduce this further to almost 100% by 2050. This will be a major task that will require everyone to be engaged, from households and communities, to businesses and local and national government.

6.2 In 2016, the residential sector alone accounted for over 16% of the UK's annual greenhouse gas emissions (source: Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy). The total emissions from all building types will therefore be much greater. Standards for ecologically sustainable homes and developments are now optional[7].



Solar panels integrated into the design of a building

6.3 It is vital that new homes and other buildings are built to the highest possible standards and are designed in a way that minimises their carbon footprint. This not only means that they should be exceptionally well insulated, but they must have low water demand (and maximise use of grey water) and maximise renewable sources in the provision of their energy. Policy CC1 of the Colchester Local Plan Section 2 acknowledges that in 2019, Colchester City Council declared a climate emergency and sets out how development needs to contribute towards a low carbon future. Policy DM25 requires development of buildings to incorporate measures to adapt to and mitigate climate change. The Local Plan Section 2 therefore covers these issues in its policies and this is supported by the Neighbourhood Plan. Development in Great Tey is encouraged to go as far as it can to minimise the impact of development on the environment and climate.

[7] The Code for Sustainable Homes was withdrawn by the Government in 2015 and this has been replaced by national technical standards, which include optional Building Regulations standards regarding water and access as well as a national space standard (this is in addition to the existing mandatory Building Regulations).

6.4 The Local Plan Section 2 also has a number of policies that address the environment and biodiversity. The role of the policies in the Great Tey Neighbourhood Plan are therefore to provide additional local detail regarding how this should be achieved.

Wildlife-friendly development

POLICY GTTEY5: WILDLIFE-FRIENDLY DEVELOPMENT

A. All development proposals requiring planning permission should deliver a minimum of 10% net gain in biodiversity in addition to protecting existing habitats and species, including hedgerows and mature trees. Development should take a 'biodiversity-first' approach and should maximise the delivery of biodiversity net gains on site. If on-site delivery is not possible then it must be clearly demonstrated that all reasonable options for on-site provision have been considered prior to off-site provision.

B. The incorporation of design features into new development that encourages local wildlife and biodiversity to thrive will be supported.

C. Where appropriate and practicable, development should be designed to retain trees, shrubs and hedgerows of arboricultural, habitat and amenity value on-site and to conserve and enhance connectivity to the wider multifunctional green and blue infrastructure networks.

6.5 Whilst a large proportion of the parish of Great Tey is farmland, it does have a number of woodland areas which are important for wildlife. This includes the ancient Chalkney Wood. Located just to the north of the parish boundary and easily accessible, it is woodland that is designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) because of its high biological value.

6.6 The design code for Great Tey suggests a number of areas where development can enhance the environment:

- Tree planting, retention and wildflower strips are considered essential to developments that are providing points of interest and natural screening. It is crucial that plants, trees and shrubs that are planted have a known value to wildlife. Invasive species should be avoided unless they have clear biodiversity benefits. Roadside verges should also be planted with wildflowers for bees and butterflies. This is also addressed in Policy GTTEY2.
- Wildlife corridors, habitat corridors or green corridors are areas of habitat connecting wildlife populations that would otherwise be separated by human activity. These corridors should be encouraged to enhance the existing wildlife and facilitate the re-establishment of populations that have been reduced or eliminated.

Particular attention should be paid to hedgehogs, which require a 12cm x 12cm hole in the corner of fencing in order to move through.



Example of hedgehog fencing



Example of a green roof

- At the edges of development, green roofs can be used to help a building blend into its surroundings. They can help mitigate the urban heat island effect and contribute to rainwater retention. Green roofs can provide full or partial coverage of vegetation, but their design should follow the design codes as well as some design principles such as:
    - They should be incorporated into the initial stages of the design process;
    - They should be easy to access and maintain;
    - It should be ensured that the design, materials and proportions complement the surrounding landscape;
    - Its design should help to integrate the building with the countryside.

6.7 In a rural location such as Great Tey where development typically sits in a rural setting and is relatively low density, there is ample opportunity for good design to maximise biodiversity as part of development. This should be the fundamental principle that informs the first principles of all development.

6.8 There are parts of the parish that are at risk of flooding. Therefore the use of sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) is needed to manage water, reduce flood risk and improve water quality. SuDS should also be seen as an opportunity to enhance biodiversity and ecosystems. Developers need to give consideration to how to make best use of SuDS so that they are seen not only as a drainage solution but for their amenity value, providing a place for residents and others to enjoy and be closer to nature and green infrastructure. Also it is particularly important that they are utilised to address the NPPF requirement for development to provide a net gain for biodiversity. This is addressed by Colchester Local Plan Policy DM24 (Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems) therefore is not addressed by policy in the Neighbourhood Plan. Development should also have regard to the Sustainable Drainage Systems Design Guide for Essex[8].

[8] Essex County Council (2020) *Sustainable Drainage Systems Design Guide*

Light pollution

POLICY GTTEY6: DARK SKIES AND LIGHTING

A. Development proposals should respect the dark skies that are characteristic of the Neighbourhood Area.

B. Development proposals are required to address light spillage and eliminate all unnecessary forms of artificial outdoor lighting. Other than householder development, development proposals are required to demonstrate that they meet or exceed the Institute of Lighting Professionals[9] guidance and other relevant standards or guidance for lighting

C. Building design that results in increased light spill from internal lighting needs to be avoided, unless suitable mitigation measures are implemented.

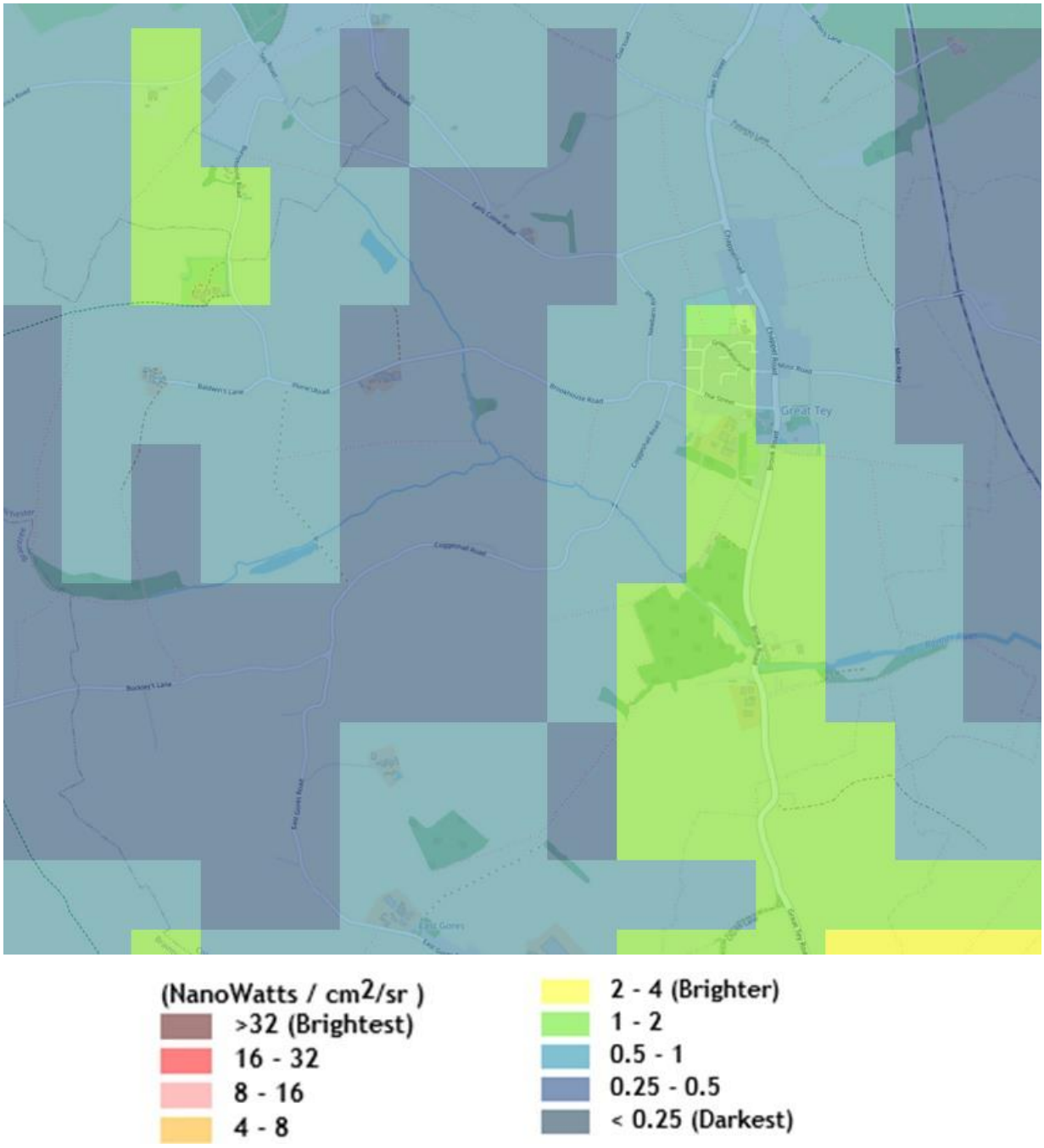
D. Development proposals which incorporate highway lighting will only be supported if required by the Highways Authority for reasons of road safety.

6.9 As a rural community, Great Tey has relatively dark skies and it is a notable feature of the village that it does not have street lighting. CPRE's 'dark skies' map of the UK shows the darkness of the skies across the Neighbourhood Area. As Figure 6.1 shows, the parish is generally dark but there is brighter in and around the village and the main routes in from the A120 to the south. It is important that light pollution does not encroach further or reduce the darkness of the skies in and around Great Tey village.

6.10 Minimising light pollution is also important for bat activity. Lighting should be as low as permitted by guidelines and if the light is not essential the area should not be lit in order to encourage bat activity. Where lighting is needed there should be periods of time when the lights are switched off to provide some dark periods. Roads or trackways located in areas important for foraging bats should not be lit before a stretch totalling at least 10 metres either side of the bat commuting route. This is to avoid isolation of bat colonies which typically roost in older trees and/or buildings.

[9] CIE 150:2003 Guide on the Limitation of the Effects of Obtrusive Light from Outdoor Lighting Installations, www.theilp.org.uk/documents/obtrusive-light/. The Neighbourhood Area is classified as Environment Zone 2.

Figure 6.1: Dark skies in Great Tey



Source: CPRE: England's Light Pollution and Dark Skies (https://www.nightblight.cpre.org.uk/maps/)

Recreational Disturbance Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy

6.11 The Essex Coast Recreational Disturbance Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy (RAMS) applies to the Neighbourhood Plan area. Policy ENV1, particularly Part B, of the Colchester Local Plan Section 2 applies. Attention is drawn to the development plan requirements which indicate a need for residential development within the zone of influence of habitats sites to make a financial contribution towards mitigation measures,

as detailed in the Essex Coast RAMS 2018-2038, and adopted Supplementary Planning Document, to avoid the adverse in-combination effects of increased recreational disturbance to the Essex coast habitats sites.

7 SERVICES, COMMERCE AND INFRASTRUCTURE

Objective 4: To enhance the viability and range of infrastructure, services and community facilities in Great Tey

7.1 Great Tey has a limited number of built community facilities; the Village Hall is the only public building. There are wider public spaces and the provision of public open space is required through the allocation of the land off Greenfield Drive in the Colchester Local Plan Section 2 (Policy SS8).

7.2 Alongside this a range of office- and workshop-based jobs are provided at the four small business bases in the parish. It is important that these are protected and opportunities given for new businesses and ways of working to be established.

POLICY GTTEY7: PROVISION AND ENHANCEMENT OF COMMUNITY AND BUSINESS FACILITIES

A. The provision and enhancement of community facilities and services in Great Tey that contribute to the quality of village life and improve the sustainability of the village are encouraged.

B. Outside the Tey Brook Farm Local Economic Area, proposals for the flexible use and/or expansion of existing buildings for community or office/workshop uses (including meeting spaces) will be permitted, subject to demonstrating good design and that they do not have a significant impact on the landscape.

7.3 The Great Tey Village Hall is very well used for a wide range of activities including the Great Tey Pre School, Rainbows and Brownies, Yoga, Winter bowls, dance classes, Post Office services and by the Parish Council. As the size of the community expands, the demands on the building will inevitably increase. This will not only increase the importance of insuring it is fit for purpose but will also mean that it may need to be expanded or re-provided on another site. The Village Hall is part of the fabric of the community and it is vital that it is allowed to adapt and grow as necessary.

7.4 The main employment area is at Tey Brook Farm; it is designated as a Local Economic Area in the Colchester Local Plan Section 2 (Policy SS8) which protects it for employment uses. There are others including those at the Teybrook Centre, Warren's Farm, East Gores Farm and Upp Hall Farm, but most workers in the parish commute out for employment in the larger urban centres such as Colchester, Braintree, Chelmsford and London. However, with the increase in home working which has partly been enabled by the Covid-19 pandemic, more people are working from home either full-time or part-time. This potentially creates a need for local workspaces and meeting spaces, particularly for those with limited space in their homes to dedicate to an office. Enabling the use of, in particular, underused spaces for such activities will help to sustain, albeit in a small way, the commercial base in Great Tey.

NON-POLICY ACTION C: MAINTAINING PREMISES AND SPACES OF VALUE TO THE COMMUNITY

A. Great Tey Parish Council will undertake a comprehensive, 5-yearly audit of all public premises and spaces in Great Tey. This will inform a maintenance plan that will ensure that all public buildings and spaces are fit for purpose.

B. Great Tey Parish Council will undertake a regular programme of ensuring that all hedges are cut, sight splays maintained, signs cleaning, public litter bins emptied and verges maintained.

Infrastructure

7.5 The local infrastructure – utilities, drains, broadband, telephone – is as important to the community of Great Tey as any other. In a rural community however, such facilities are often prioritised less by the providers, particularly when maintenance is required.

NON-POLICY ACTION D: MAINTAINING LOCAL INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICES

Great Tey Parish Council will lobby infrastructure providers to ensure that local infrastructure services are maintained and, where necessary, improved. This includes re-routing existing overhead cabling underground and ensuring that any new cabling is placed underground wherever possible.

7.6 It should be noted that these local infrastructure needs are different from nationally important infrastructure including the possible routing through the parish of electricity pylons to carry energy generated offshore from south Norfolk, Suffolk and north Essex to supply London, via Tilbury. This is a matter outside the influence of the Neighbourhood Plan.



View from St Barnabas Church looking south, across the proposed electricity pylon route

7.7 However, it is important to note that this matter is of concern to the community of Great Tey. The image below shows the view looking south from St Barnabas Church which is the preferred route for the electricity pylons. This is a landscape much valued by local people and any infrastructure provision should seek to follow a route that minimises its impact on this landscape.

8 PLAN REVIEW

8.1 Great Tey Parish Council, as the responsible body, will be responsible for maintaining and periodically revisiting the Plan to ensure relevance and to monitor delivery throughout the period of the plan to 2033. In light of the relatively short plan period, it is expected that the Plan will be reviewed within five years of being made. Any review of the Colchester Local Plan may also necessitate a concurrent review of the Great Tey Neighbourhood Plan.

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Annex F













MARKS TEY PARISH
"Neighbourhood Planning Committee"
"Your Village, Your Say!"

MARKS TEY
NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN
2020 to 2033

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MARKS TEY NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

2020- 2033

REFERENDUM NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

JANUARY 2022

FOREWORD

On behalf of Marks Tey Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group, I am very pleased to present the Parish Council's Neighbourhood Plan, along with its supporting documents, to Colchester Borough Council for its forthcoming public referendum.

I want to thank the many people and agencies that have contributed to the task and helped create the Neighbourhood Plan. Many of these have toiled consistently since June 2015. These are:

> The current members of the Steering Group, who are [redacted] (who also researched, formatted and compiled the Character Assessment), [redacted], ex Chair of the Parish Council.
>
> Former members of the Steering Group include [redacted] and previous chairs of the Steering Group, [redacted]

However, we could not have reached this stage of the process without the valuable help and guidance of many others, not least our consultant, [redacted] of Modicum Planning, whose patience was often put to the test but never failed, [redacted] of Carroll Planning Design, who provided guidance for the Character Assessment report, and [redacted] of the Out Design team, who compiled the Masterplan report. We are also indebted to our Parish Clerk [redacted], who until she left recently, was a huge help with keeping the Council's records, and an army of volunteers who helped to deliver our leaflets throughout the village. Also invaluable have been members of Colchester Borough Council's Planning Department, especially [redacted], during the later stages of the process, [redacted] and the staff of the Rural Community Council of Essex.

In 2015 Marks Tey Parish Council decided that it should have a Neighbourhood Plan and what we present now is due to the dedication of the Steering Group in constantly relating its plans and proposals to the views of residents and the business community. The reason why the Neighbourhood Plan has been far more complex than many others is because it has been carried out against the background of major road development proposals and plans to have a garden community development locally. Significant progress has been made on both, with the publishing of plans for the new junction of the A12 and the decision to drop the garden community approach. During the long preparation of the Plan these factors put in our way many obstacles which made progress slow and often unpredictable. Our public consultation began on 24th February 2020 but it became necessary to extend the consultation period due to the Covid 19 pandemic twice, and it finally closed 21 weeks later, on 12th July 2020. The responses from residents, businesses, landowners and others reflect wide support for our policies and proposals, and a sympathetic understanding of the difficulties that had been faced, and for this we are very grateful.

Notwithstanding these recent developments, the Steering Group agreed it would be wiser to avoid going through the process of allocating house building sites until the situation becomes much clearer. Then it will incorporate site allocations at a future review of the Neighbourhood Plan.

For centuries the area now occupied by Marks Tey Parish was a group of small individual hamlets, Marks Tey, Potts Green, Long Green and Little Tey, but with the arrival of the first railway line the population expanded, and then the branch line to Sudbury. This has left a legacy of two railway lines and two major roads which have effectively cut Marks Tey into segments. This complex junction of road and rail has left residents with the problems of congestion, pollution and environmental damage, and so at the heart of our Neighbourhood Plan is the desire for a blueprint that sets out policies that will make the parish a more pleasant place to live and work and that provides realistic alternatives to reliance on road and rail. Our 15 policies are related to a few core objectives that reflect this motivation:

Getting Around. Managing the existing volumes of traffic as much as possible, so they at least do not get worse, improving the links between parts of the village.

An environmentally friendly place to live, with a more environmentally friendly way of travelling, both for work and for leisure, with walking and cycling opportunities.

Creating a Sense of Place. Preserving and enhancing those features that make Marks Tey a distinctive place, keeping it separate from nearby parishes, keeping the two Teys separate and maintaining ancient locations in the village along with preserving many old and often listed buildings.

Creating a Stronger Community. Having policies that enhance the sense that Marks Tey is a living community, protecting and providing links between its green and open spaces.

Creating a Healthier Environment. Having policies such as protecting local wildlife, planting hedgerows and trees, and expecting developers will play a part in terms of funding and incorporating such features in their plans.

Housing for Current Needs. This will be delivered through a variety of homes and tenure with building designs that are responsive to the needs of different generations and changes in modern work patterns.

Business and Employment. Regenerating the main sites in the parish, particularly through environmental improvements including the London Road parade of retail businesses. Also helping to turn the now closed Andersons timber merchants and surrounding area into a modern industrial area.

[redacted], Chair of the Steering Group
January 2022

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 This document is the referendum Neighbourhood Plan (NP) for the Marks Tey neighbourhood plan area over the period 2020 to 2033. The purpose of the NP is to set a framework for future development within the plan area. Once made, the NP will carry the same legal weight as plans drawn up by Colchester Borough Council and will form part of the Council's Development Plan. Applications for development must be determined in accordance with policies of the Neighbourhood Plan and other parts of the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise[1].

1.2 The work on the Marks Tey NP has been led by the NP steering group which comprises nine people; all residents in the parish. Of these nine members, one is a parish councillor.

1.3 The NP area is the parish of Marks Tey. It includes Marks Tey village, the hamlet of Little Tey and, to the east, Marks Tey train station. Two historical hamlets, Long Green and Potts Green are now part of Marks Tey village. At the same time as the NP being prepared, Colchester Borough Council are bringing forward the Local Plan 2017 to 2033. Once adopted, this plan will replace the current Local Plan 2001 to 2021 and provide the strategy for growth for the borough up to 2033.

1.4 The Local Plan process has created an uncertain strategic policy context for the Marks Tey NP, not least because of the extended examination period (the examination commenced into Part 1 of the Local Plan in October 2017 and concluded in December 2020) and the removal, during the examination process, of the Colchester/Braintree Borders Garden Community for which previously the entirety of Marks Tey parish had been identified as an area of search. The Marks Tey NP has had an important role to play during this uncertain context in articulating clearly what the priorities for future development are. Part 1 of the Local Plan no longer includes proposals for a Garden Community in Marks Tey parish and neither does it include a local housing figure to be delivered through the Marks Tey NP.

1.5 The vision, objectives and policy proposals in this plan have been directly informed by the results of community consultation. This includes the results of a comprehensive 16-page residents survey covering 48 questions undertaken in January 2017. Over three hundred surveys were returned from either individuals or householders. The survey covered the following topics:

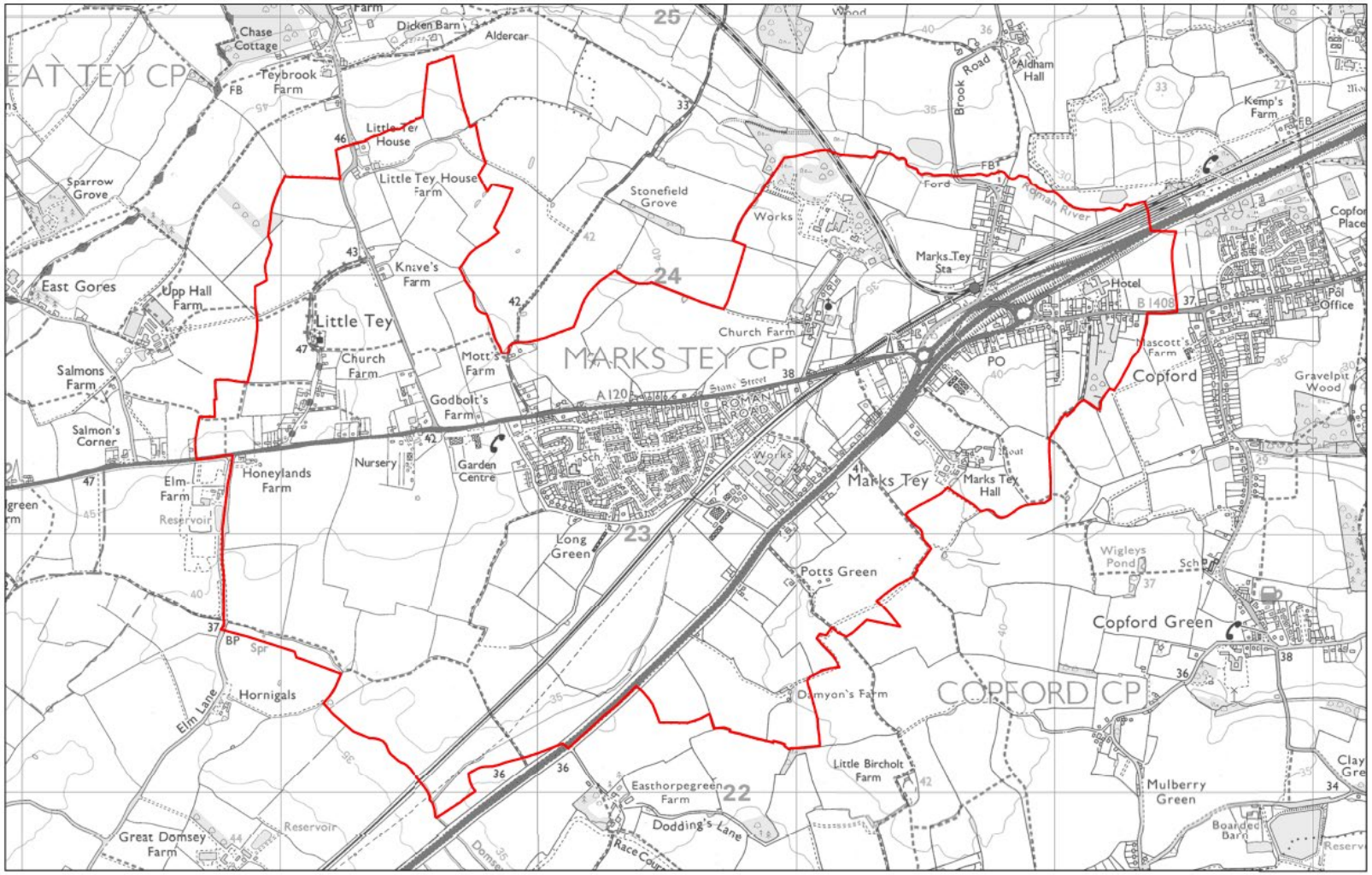
- Getting Around
- Housing
- Facilities
- Environment
- Economy
- Heritage

[1] Many issues are capable of being material considerations, but in broad terms should relate to the use and development of land. As a general principle, the planning system works in the public interest and matters that affect solely private interests are not usually material considerations in planning decisions. However, each application is considered on its merits. *(DCLG, Jan 2015 – A plain English Guide to the Planning System*)

1.6 In addition to listening to the views of the community, the NP steering work have also built up its own evidence base including:

- Marks Tey Character Assessment, NP steering group 2019
- Marks Tey Neighbourhood Plan Masterplanning support document, Out Design 2017 (undertaken by Out Design via the Locality direct support programme)
- July 2017 Estate Agent survey undertaken by NP steering group.

Map 1.1. The Neighbourhood Plan Area



Contains Ordnance Survey data © Crown copyright and database right 2014

2. THE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN AREA

2.1 The Marks Tey NP area was designated on 16 September 2015. The designated area is shown in the Figure above. It has an area of 6.09 square kilometres.

GEOGRAPHY

2.2 Marks Tey parish comprises Marks Tey and the hamlet of Little Tey. The parish is in the borough of Colchester and located approximately 11km west of Colchester town. Marks Tey village lies at the meeting point of the A120 (named at this location as Coggeshall Road or Old Stane Street) and the A12. The A120 joins the dualled A12 northwards at this point, and the old road (B1408) links Marks Tey to Copford and Colchester to the east. The A120 west links to Coggeshall and Braintree.

TRANSPORT

2.3 Marks Tey is a village which is characterised by its road and rail links. The village has a railway station which is on the Great Eastern Main Line (GEML) providing a regular and direct service into London Liverpool Street. It is also a junction for the Sudbury branch line providing direct access to Sudbury in Suffolk. The A12 is a major road which runs diagonally through the southern part of the parish from north-east to south-west linking the east coast with London. The A120, an important trunk road, runs east to west through the parish further north linking Colchester to Stansted Airport and the M11. The A12 and A120 interchange is in the eastern part of the parish.

A COMMUNITY FRAGMENTED BY ROADS AND RAIL

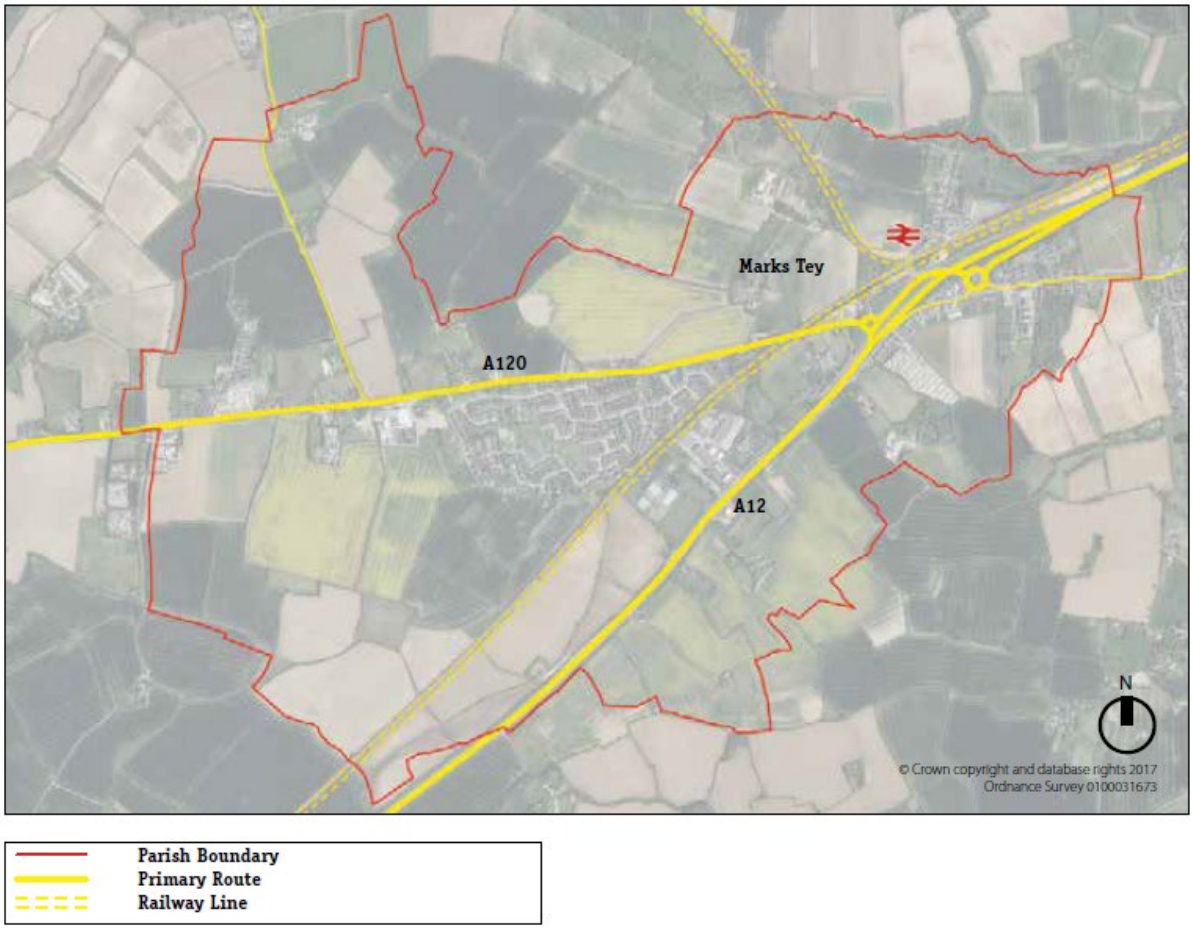
2.4 The two rail lines and the two roads create four separate linear barriers through the parish. There are three crossing points over the GEML; a road bridge at North Lane, a road bridge at the A120 near Church Lane and a pedestrian footbridge to the south of Marks Tey housing estate. The A 12 has one crossing point in the form of a footbridge from the dual carriageway railway station bus stop westbound to London Road/ slip road to A 12 southbound. This is connected to one of the two traffic light controlled pedestrian crossings on the A 120 both designed to give access to the railway station. The first of these allows the crossing of the dual carriageway from the footbridge to the railway station, and the other, approximately 100 yards further west-bound just after the roundabout, is a crossing from the railway station to the estate side of the A 120.

2.5 In addition to the linear barriers, the interchange between the A12 and the A120 takes the form of two large roundabouts which is subject to high levels of congestion during peak periods. The physical infrastructure of the interchange imposes the following barriers:

- between the railway station and main residential areas of the parish;
- between the railway station and the main shopping area; and
- between the shopping area and the residential area.

2.6 The fragmentation caused by the transport infrastructure in the parish is illustrated by Figure 3 in the Marks Tey Masterplanning Support document prepared by Out Design for the Marks Tey NP in December 2017. This is shown overleaf.

Map 2.1: An overview of transport infrastructure in the parish. (Figure 3 of the Marks Tey Masterplanning support document)



POPULATION

2.7 As at the 2011 Census, Marks Tey parish had a population of 2,551. The median age of the population is 43 and as at 2011, nearly 16% of the population was aged 65 or over. The proportion of people aged 65 or over is very similar to the borough and national level but much lower than neighbouring parishes which have a considerably older age profile (Great Tey: 19% is aged 65 or over; Eight Ash Green is 21%; Copford 20%; and Aldham 25%).

DWELLINGS AND HOUSEHOLDS

2.8 In 2011, the parish had 1,053 households and 1,088 dwellings. In May 2017, the NP steering group collected data on dwellings and dwelling type. A total of 1,116 dwellings were counted as follows:

Table 2.1 – Breakdown of dwellings in parish as collected by NP group May 2017

Dwelling Type	Detached House	Semi Detached	Detached Bungalow	Semi-detached bungalow	Terraced/linked	Flats
Numbers	403	330	162	54	37	130
% share	36%	30%	15%	5%	3%	12%

Source: Data collected by NP steering group, May 2017

2.9 The Census 2011 provides a useful overview as to how the number of households in Marks Tey are broken down by number of bedrooms:

Table 2.2 – Breakdown of dwellings in parish by number of bedrooms, Census 2011

Bedrooms	Number of households	%
1 bedroom	47	4
2 bedrooms	241	23
3 bedrooms	428	41
4 bedrooms	277	26
5 or more bedrooms	60	6
All households	1,053	100
Source: Census 2011 (DC1402EW)		

2.10 In terms of tenure the households are broken down as follows:

Table 2.3 – Breakdown of households and tenure, Census 2011

Tenure	Number of households	%
Owned outright	395	37.5
Owned with mortgage	453	43
Shared ownership	1	0.1
Social rented from council	57	5.4
Social rented from other	7	0.7
Private rented (landlord or letting agency)	129	12.3
Private rented (other)	8	0.8
Living rent free	3	0.3
Total households:	**1,053**	
Source: Census 2011		

COMMUNITY

2.11 Marks Tey is fortunate in the range of facilities that it currently enjoys. Few similar sized villages can claim 3 restaurants, 2 vehicle workshops, 3 petrol garages, 2 churches, specialist butchers, cycling and pet food shops and 3 large community halls with good parking which can be hired, and a pub (currently closed) and a community social facility. There is also a generous amount of open amenity space and playing fields and informal access to local countryside. This is partly due to support by the existing community but also largely due to Marks Tey's position on the A120 and the A12 Junction 25. Marks Tey has become a local hub and an accessible location of specialist facilities, but the precariousness of these facilities is indicated by the rise and fall of the specialist food hall business.

BUSINESS COMMUNITY

2.12 The plan area is home to a wide variety of businesses. There are established retail outlets such as Byford's (wholesale & retail florist) and Willsher & Sons (butchers) that are well known and used by customers from Marks Tey and outside the local area. The Marks Tey Hotel, the Shed Centre and Poplar Nurseries are also popular destination businesses. There are other outlets along London Road including a Post Office and general provision store, Auto Spares, Pharmacy and three fast food outlets, serving both Marks Tey and surrounding villages. WH Collier Ltd operate the brickworks which is one of the oldest businesses in Marks Tey.

2.13 Many of the companies are located around the junctions of the A12 & A120 but there are patches of employment spread across the parish.

HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT

2.14 There are 27 buildings listed by English Heritage within the parish. Of these, there are two Grade I listed churches of St. James the Less, Little Tey and St. Andrew's, Marks Tey. There is one Grade II* (starred) building found on the Marks Tey Hall estate. The remaining 24 are all Grade II listed. The oldest of these Grade II listed buildings is the c1400 barn at Knaves Farm, Little Tey shown below.



Figure 2.1 – C14 barn at Knaves Farm, Little Tey, Photo by Patsy Beech

2.15 Included in the parish's built heritage assets is the Circular Brick Kilns at the W H Collier Brick and Tile Works, Church Lane. The site is scheduled by Historic England as national monument. The monument includes two circular kilns and their associated brick working floor, flues and chimney base. The western kiln is a Grade II listed building.

2.16 The Marks Tey Brick Works was established by John Wagstaff, a farmer and brickmaker, in 1863. William Homan Collier, a young brickmaker from Reading, took over the brickworks by 1879 and in the late 19th and early 20th centuries the firm supplied not only local needs, but also the wider market from its own tramway and siding to the adjacent railway.

2.17 The brickworks is still in use today, though the processes employed have changed considerably. The brickworks, having been acquired by Christian Salvesan in 1988, returned to independent ownership as WH Collier Ltd in 2005.

2.18 In addition to historical information available via the national database of records held by Historic England the NP steering group has collected further information on local history. This includes an historical survey of Long Green along Granger's Lane in the south west of the parish. The lane once formed part of a link road between two roads known to be Roman, Stane Street, (now A120) and the road to London (A12) although both these roads could have earlier origins and were up-graded by the Romans. This earlier evidence has been noted by Oliver Rackham in his book History of the Countryside. Granger's Lane became recognised as a formal right of way in the autumn of 2020. It is valued by local walkers and provides important habitat including hedgerows and ponds. It is also valued as an important local heritage asset.

LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

2.19 There are a number of sources that provide information on the character of Marks Tey Landscape Character. This includes:

1. Colchester Landscape Character Assessment published in 2005
2. The Marks Tey Character Assessment produced by the NP steering group to inform this plan.
3. West Colchester Growth Area Option Environmental Audit. This was produced by Chris Blandford Associates in November 2015 to help inform the emerging Borough Plan.

2.20 The parish of Marks Tey falls in two different national character areas; the Northern Thames Basin and Southern Suffolk and North Essex Clayland. The parish of Marks Tey also falls within the Farmland Plateau Landscape Character Type of the Colchester Borough Landscape Character Assessment. This category is broken down into eight sub types, into two of which the parish falls:

- B2: Easthorpe Farmland Plateau; and
- a sub section of B2a specific to Marks Tey village.

2.21 The Colchester Landscape Character Assessment provides a description of key characteristics which include:

- Raised farmland plateau, dissected by the wooded Roman River valley in the east; ·
- A mixture of small, medium and large irregular, predominantly arable fields;
- Small patches of deciduous woodland and several ponds/ reservoirs;
- Area crossed by a network of narrow, sometimes winding lanes;
- Settlement pattern consists of small villages and hamlets with scattered farmsteads amongst predominantly arable agricultural land.

2.22 It also identifies key planning and land management issues, a landscape strategy objective, landscape planning guidelines and land management guidelines. The landscape strategy objective for B2 is "Conserve and Enhance". The landscape planning guidelines applicable to Marks Tey parish include:

- Conserve the mostly rural character of the area.
- Ensure that any appropriate new development responds to historic settlement pattern and use materials, which are appropriate to landscape character.
- Ensure that any development on the edges of Marks Tey responds to traditional settlement patterns and uses design and materials which are appropriate to landscape character.
- New farm buildings such as sheds should be sensitively located within the landscape to respect local character and avoid the skyline.

2.23 The landscape management guidelines applicable to Marks Tey parish include:

- Consider the introduction of new structure planting to shield/mitigate the visual effects on the A12/railway and (Marks Tey village) settlement corridor
- Strengthen and enhance hedgerows with hawthorn where gappy and depleted.

- Conserve historic lanes and unimproved roadside verges.

2.24 The West Colchester Growth Area Option Environmental Report provides an audit of ecology and nature conservation, landscape/townscape character and visual amenity as well as water quality and flood risk for the entirety of the West Colchester Growth Area. Amongst other things, the report provides an assessment of townscape within Marks Tey itself.

2.25 The report includes an assessment of visual amenity within Marks Tey parish (as part of looking at the wider area). As part of this an assessment of fourteen views taken from within the parish was undertaken.

2.26 The conclusions on constraints and opportunities which are applicable to the Marks Tey parish can be summarised as follows:

- In terms of impact (of development) on landscape, the principal effect of development would be a change from rural arable to a residential character
- In terms of townscape, development is unlikely to have a significant overall effect. There is opportunity for development to be complementary to surrounding townscape
- Development would potentially have a negative effect on the visual amenity of public rights of way across the site including those in Marks Tey parish.
- Care should be taken to avoid loss of the woodlands and hedgerows/field boundaries that form screening elements in views from the edge of Marks Tey area.
- In terms of landscape capacity this is identified as being limited ability to be able to accommodate development without degradation of landscape characteristics that are of local value. Mitigation and enhancement measures would be required where change does take place.
- In terms of green gaps, the report finds that
    - The arable fields between Copford and Marks Tey along the B1408 are considered to provide a high contribution to the physical and visual separation between the settlements.
    - It is considered desirable to safeguard the land further south (where the distance between Copford and Marks Tey widens) from inappropriate development.
    - Most of the land between Marks Tey and Little Tey is considered to provide a high contribution to the physical and visual separation between the settlements. It is considered desirable to safeguard this from inappropriate development.
    - Most of the land between Marks Tey and Easthorpe is considered to provide a high contribution to the physical and visual separation between the settlements.
    - At the western end of Marks Tey, arable fields on either side of Dobbies Lane and their associated greenhouses are considered to have no more than a medium contribution to the sense of separation between Marks Tey and Easthorpe.
    - The area of hardstanding south of the intersection of the A12 and A120 has a predominantly urban fringe character and makes a low contribution to sense of separation between the settlements. This also applies to the adjacent field which is enclosed by built development on three sides.
- Existing landscape structure across the site should be retained and strengthened.

NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

2.27 In addition to its importance to heritage, the Marks Tey Brick Works is also designated by Natural England as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) under the Wildlife and Countryside Act. The reason for this designation is:

Marks Tey has uniquely important Pleistocene sediments, which have yielded a continuous pollen record through the entire Hoxnian Interglacial. No other site in the British Isles has so far produced a comparable vegetational record for this or any other interglacial. Of considerable interest also are the laminations (seasonal layers) within these lacustrine (lake) sediments which have made it possible to estimate the duration in years of the Hoxnian Interglacia.

Source: Citation for Marks Tey Brickpit as provided by Natural England at https://designatedsites.naturalengland.org.uk/SiteDetail.aspx?SiteCode=S1004027

2.28 The Marks Tey designated Local Wildlife Sites are:

1. Little Tey Churchyard (reference C014).

2. Marks Tey Brick Pit (reference C031)

2.29 A search using the mapping tool at www.magic.gov.uk identifies nine areas of broadleaved deciduous woodland (a priority habitat for England), three additional areas of woodland and a range of bird life and mammals in the parish.

2.30 Additional information on local wildlife has been collected by the NP steering group. Wildlife surveys were undertaken in 2016 and 2017. The surveys revealed the presence of a wide variety of birdlife throughout the year, amphibians, and many large and small mammals including bats, deer and badgers.

3. KEY ISSUES

3.1 This section of the plan:

- Describes the priority issues shared by the community as identified in engagement work in 2016, 2017 and 2018.
- Summarises the existing planning policy context for the NP area. The existing planning policy context provides important background to the NP and it is essential the NP adds to that context rather than duplicates it
- Includes a SWOT analysis prepared by the steering group in August 2017 as a way of building shared consensus of the key priority concerns

ISSUES IDENTIFIED DURING ENGAGEMENT WORK

Early engagement work:

3.2 The Marks Tey community have been asked about key issues concerning them at the early stages of plan development (2015) and mid-way engagement stage (2017). The output of this work is available in more detail in the accompanying consultation statement. Key findings from survey work throughout the process were the identification of positive aspects of the Marks Tey environs, aspects considered as being negative and top priorities for improvements. Results are summarised below:

Table 3.1 – Positive aspects, negative aspects and top priorities for change

Positive aspects of living in Marks Tey	Negative aspects of living in Marks Tey	Top priorities for change
• Countryside • Park • School • Quiet • Walking • Non-car transport • Lack of crime • Friendly people • Transport links • Recycling • It's a village • The village hall • The church • The playing fields • Community spirit	• A120 • A12 • Traffic • Poor pedestrian environment along A120 • Road safety issues at key points including North Lane bridge and conflict between road users and pedestrians • Divided by roads and railway line • Pollution • Noise from traffic • Commuter parking • Parking • Lighting • Road surfaces • Healthcare • Non car transport	• Reducing congestion on the A120 • A12 • Limit development • Improve infrastructure • Protect countryside • Provision of a GP surgery and dentist in plan area • Parking improvements around the village

	• Crime • Litter/Mess • Loss of hedgerows	

3.3 Other priorities expressed by the community, largely in response to the 16-page householder survey sent out in January 2017 were:

- Strong support for the preservation of a countryside-buffer zone between Marks Tey and other developments
- Strong support for the preservation of views of St Andrew's Church from the A120 including the rural landscape to the north/beyond
- Support for the provision of additional open space around the parish
- Strong support for a stronger village heart given the existence of the A120 and A12
- Support for the protection of employment sites
- Strong support for the preservation of built heritage assets
- Support for the restoration of Granger's Lane as public right of way
- Little Tey should be maintained as a separate community

Business Survey:

3.4 In June 2016, a business survey was distributed. This comprised a six-page survey seeking an understanding of the make-up of the employee base as well as needs of the businesses.

3.5 The survey was delivered to 112 businesses and the response rate was 47% with the general statistics indicating the following:

- Most of the businesses in MT are service-orientated.
- 66% of businesses have been established in MT for more than ten years.
- Only one new business has been established in the last 12 months.
- 28 of 50 businesses have been on the same site in MT for more than ten years.
- About 25% of MT businesses felt that their current site was too small but only 20% were looking for new or extended premises. Of those looking for new or extended premises none were looking outside MT.
- 80% of MT businesses had maintained the same number of employees over the last 12 months. Where there had been change it was in general a reduction although numbers were small.
- Whether full-time or part-time the overwhelming majority of workers were in the 20-59 age group.
- Very broadly speaking part-timers represent 27% of the workforce headcount – based on the age group table.
- The largest group of workers was skilled manual.
- There were as many professional/managerial as there are technical and clerical/admin put together.
- The single largest group of workers working in Marks Tey was from Colchester. 42 workers live in Marks Tey and of the others 71 live within 10 miles of Marks Tey and 46 more than ten miles away.
- By an overwhelming majority the single largest group of employees travelled to Marks Tey by private vehicle.

Other findings of engagement work:

3.6 In July 2017, a survey (the 2017 Train Users Survey) was undertaken by the NP steering group of commuters using the Marks Tey railway station. In total, 175 people were surveyed.

3.7 The survey found that the vast majority of users were regular train commuters and that only 10% of respondents were Marks Tey parish residents. Just under 70% people travelled to the railway station by car with the other 30% travelling by foot, public transport or bicycle. Over 50% of respondents parked their car at or near the station with the remainder getting a lift or travelling by alternative means. 20% of respondents said they would cycle to the train station if better cycle paths were provided and just under 60% stated they would work in Marks Tey parish if job opportunities were available.

PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

Adopted Statutory Development Plan

3.8 The parish of Marks Tey falls within the Colchester Borough Council (CBC) local planning authority area. The Local Plan relevant to the NP is therefore the:

- Adopted Local Plan 2001 to 2021 which includes:
    - Local Plan Focused Review (July 2014).
    - Core Strategy (adopted 2008 but updated in July 2014 as part of the Local Plan Focused Review).
        - Policy ENV2 – Rural Communities. Marks Tey village falls within the Rural Community category of the borough-wide settlement hierarchy and Policy ENV2 provides principles for development proposals coming forward in these locations.
    - Site Allocations DPD (2010) which allocates in the NP area:
        - an area of 8.03 hectares of land suitable for employment use;
        - an area of 2.5 hectares of land suitable for nursery use;

          and identifies:
            - London Road, Marks Tey as a Neighbourhood Centre where shopping/amenity uses are protected by policy DP7 in the Local Plan;
            - Marks Tey Brick Pit SSSI as designated under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 with additional protection provided under Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000.
    - Development Policies Development Plan Document (adopted 2010 and updated in July 2014 as part of the Local Plan Focused Review).
    - Proposals Map 2010.

3.9 The statutory Development Plan applicable to Marks Tey also includes the Essex Minerals Local Plan produced in July 2014 and the Essex and Southend-on-Sea Waste Local Plan (2017).

- A key purpose of the Minerals Local Plan is to *"maintain a plan-led approach to future provision, providing reassurance for Essex residents, the minerals industry, key stakeholders and future*

developers that future needs can be met, whilst also providing a degree of certainty as to where minerals development will take place" (see paragraph 2.39 of the Essex Minerals Local Plan). The plan safeguards the following two sites in the Marks Tey NP area:

- Marks Tey Brickworks for brick clay extraction and brickmaking (Policy S8 – Safeguarding mineral resources and mineral reserves).
- Marks Tey Rail Depot which is a minerals transhipment (Policy S9 -Safeguarding mineral transhipment sites and secondary processing facilities).

3.10 The Essex and Southend-on-Sea Waste Local Plan (WLP) sets out how Essex and Southend-on-Sea aim to manage waste up to 2032. It seeks to deal with waste more sustainably across the plan area by guiding the development of waste management facilities in appropriate locations, encouraging recycling and reducing reliance on landfill.

3.11 The WLP safeguards the following site:

- Honeylands Farm Waste Transfer Station for the recycling of waste arising from highway gullies, including the construction of concrete pads, sumps, ancillary equipment, office and welfare facilities. This site is located on the western boundary of the NP area.

Emerging Local Plan 2017 to 2033

3.12 Colchester Borough Council is relatively advanced with the progression of its new Local Plan and is currently at examination stage. The examination into Part 1 of the Local Plan commenced in October 2017 and closed in December 2020.[2] In July 2018, progress was halted following findings from the Planning Inspectorate. After additional evidence, the Examination in Public restarted in January 2020. In May 2020, the Inspector issued a letter to the NEA concluding that two of the garden communities, including the proposed garden community around Marks Tey, were unviable and recommended their removal from the plan. Significant modifications to Part 1 of the Local Plan were prepared and subject to further consultation. Part 1 of the Local Plan was then adopted on 1 February 2021. The emerging Local Plan does not include a housing requirement figure to be delivered through the Marks Tey Neighbourhood Plan. The examination into Part 2 of the Local Plan started in spring 2021.

PLANNED STRATEGIC ROAD IMPROVEMENTS

A12 Chelmsford to A120 Road Widening

3.13 The expansion and improvement of the A12 was in the 2015 to 2020 Road Improvement Strategy (RIS1) for widening to three lanes each way. It has now been carried forward into the 2020 to 2025 strategy (RIS2). National Highways (formerly Highways England until Sept. 2021) have announced a preferred route which will continue to run through Marks Tey but with its junction moved. It is

[2] Part 2 of the Local Plan was subsequently adopted in February 2021 (after the Marks Tey Neighbourhood Plan was submitted).

anticipated to be completed in 2028. https://nationalhighways.co.uk/our-work/east/a12-chelmsford-to-a120-widening-scheme/

A120 dualling between Braintree and the A12.

3.14 The A120 at Marks Tey, which stretches through the plan area, is the last stretch of single carriageway road between the M11 and Colchester. As part of Essex County Council's (ECC) response to this plan at pre-submission stage in July 2020, ECC have explained that *'Over the years, and particularly since the stretch of the A120 from Stansted and Braintree was upgraded, the single carriageway of the A120 between Braintree and the A12 has become increasingly congested and unreliable. This has led to poor levels of service and safety for road users, impacting on economic growth and development in the region, as well as affecting the well-being of local residents via impacts on the local environment and access to essential services. With traffic volumes expected to increase, congestion on the A120 will get worse, further exacerbating the impacts on travel, local residents and economic growth'.*

3.15 ECC part funded (with then Highways England) and undertook an analysis of options for the dualling. From this, ECC has identified its favoured route as being Route D which would join the A12 south of Kelvedon. ECC considers this would help address A120 movements but would also be instrumental in addressing through traffic issues in the area. The NP steering group however note the ECC analysis of the options published in its 2017 consultation document the *A120 Braintree to A12 Consultation on Route Options 17 January to 14 March 2017.* Figure 6 of this document shows that Route D will leave the A120 in Marks Tey with 82% of its current traffic load, the largest residual traffic load of any of the considered options and this will need to be fully evaluated and planned for.

3.16 The Government's Road Investment Strategy 2 (RIS2) announcement in March 2020 included commitments to progressing further development work on the A120 dualling including detailed design, land assembly and statutory processes that are required to prepare the scheme for delivery. The A120 dualling scheme will be considered for inclusion in the RIS3 programme. ECC have stated in its pre-submission response to this plan that the scheme is considered to be amongst the most advanced unfunded strategic road schemes in the country (in terms of design stage) so once funding is secured it is 'shovel-ready'.

SUMMARY OF KEY CONSTRAINTS AND PLANNING DESIGNATIONS IN THE NP AREA

3.17 The key constraints in the plan area include:

Infrastructure constraints:

- The Railway Line
- The A12
- The A120

Environmental constraints:

- Marks Tey Brick Pit SSSI
- Marks Tey Circular Brick Kilns Scheduled Monument (WH Collier Bricks and Tile Works, Church Lane)

- A number of listed buildings
- Head of the Roman River valley north east of Marks Tey identified in Colchester's emerging spatial strategy
- Limited capacity for landscape to accommodate development without adversely impacting sense of place and character
- Lack of capacity at Water Recycling Centre, under current permit, to treat additional wastewater flows from development without adversely impacting water quality in the Roman River, as advised by the Environment Agency in its response to the pre-submission consultation draft of this plan.
- Parts of the designated NP area lie over (water) source protection zones, as advised by the Environment Agency in its response to the pre-submission consultation draft of this plan

Additional planning policy constraints and designations:

- Marks Tey Brickworks safeguarded in the Essex Minerals Plan for brick clay extraction and brick-making.
- Marks Tey Rail Depot safeguarded in Essex Minerals Plan as a Safeguarded Transhipment site.
- Honeylands Farm Waste Transfer Station safeguarded in the Essex and Southend-on-Sea Waste Local Plan for the recycling of waste arising from highway gullies, including the construction of concrete pads, sumps, ancillary equipment, office and welfare facilities.
- Village settlement boundaries (currently around Marks Tey, Little Tey, A12 small residential area, London Road parade and North Lane residential area).
- Existing employment site allocations:
    - at Anderson's Yard
    - Nursery (not due to be carried through in emerging Local Plan)
- A neighbourhood centre at London Road, Marks Tey.

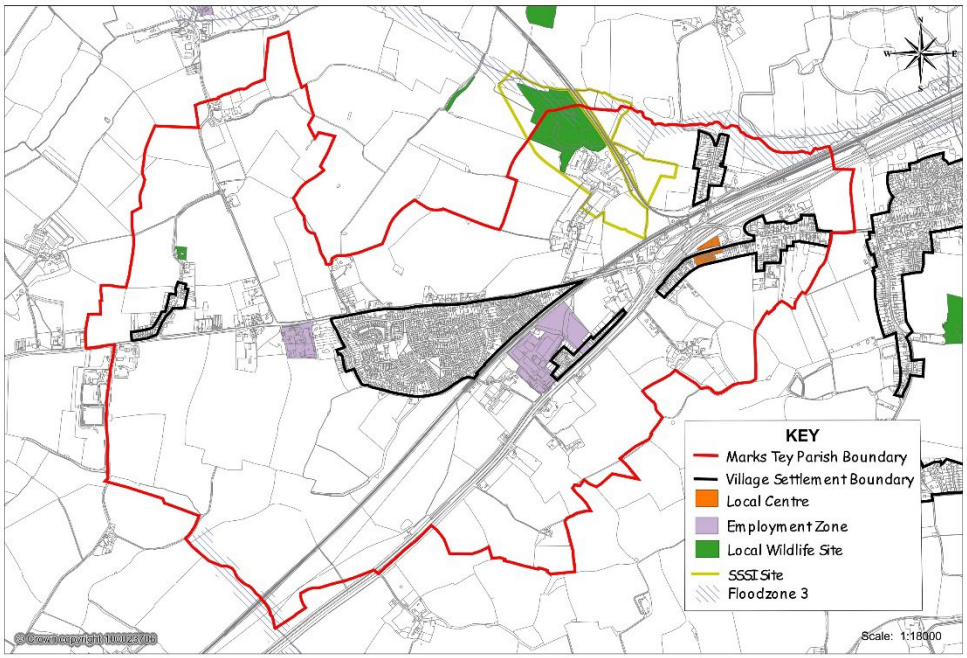
3.18 As well as the active extraction of brick clay, there are unworked deposits of sand and gravel within the parish which are safeguarded through Policy S8 of the Minerals Local Plan. This policy has specific requirements of development proposals when 5ha or more of a proposed non-mineral development falls within a Minerals Safeguarded Areas associated with sand and gravel. There also exists a Minerals Safeguarding Area associated with the brick clay resource. Policy S8 has further requirements when development equating to one dwelling or more is proposed within a brick earth Minerals Safeguarding Area.

3.19 Policy S8, as well as Policy S9, further safeguards existing and allocated minerals infrastructure from proximate new development which may compromise the ability to work or manage minerals. The policy ensures that ECC in its role as the Minerals Planning Authority (MPA) is consulted on all applications within 250m of existing or allocated minerals infrastructure, depending on the nature of that infrastructure. The MPA is likely to object to the permitting of development that would unnecessarily sterilise a mineral resource or compromise the operation of mineral infrastructure unless certain policy tests are met.

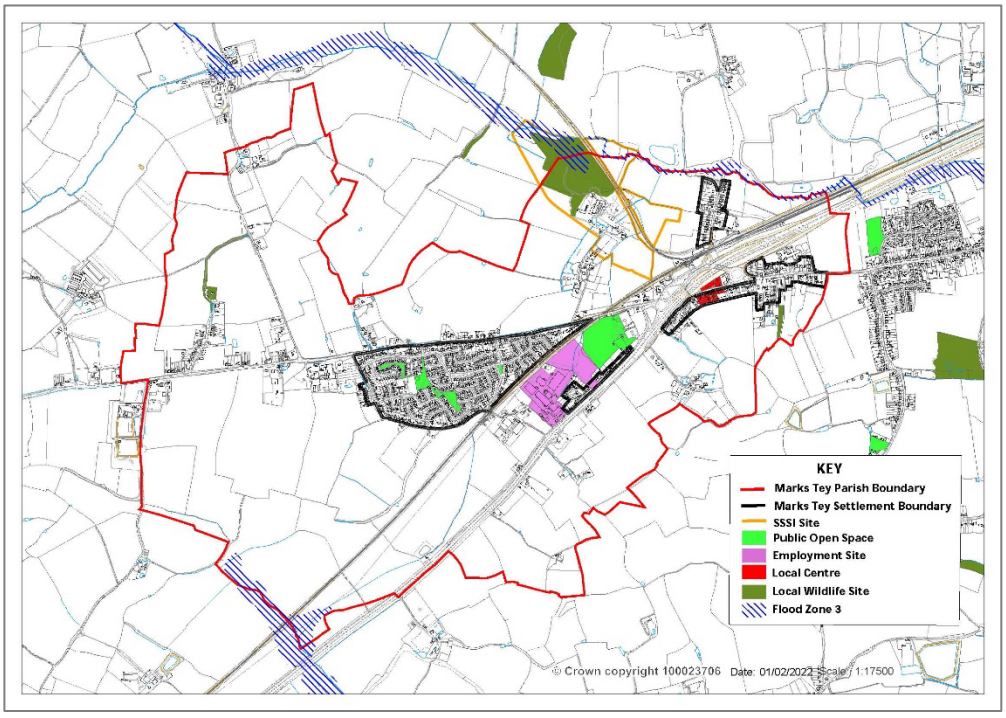
3.20 Policy 2 of the Waste Local Plan designates Waste Consultation Areas up to 250m from existing or allocated waste infrastructure (400m from Water Recycling Centres). ECC in its capacity as the WPA is likely to object to the permitting of development that would unnecessarily compromise the operation of waste infrastructure unless certain policy tests are met.

3.21 The designated planning constraints as per the adopted Local Plan and emerging Local Plan are shown in Maps 3.1 and 3.2 below.

Map 3.1: Planning designations and constraints as per the adopted Colchester Borough Local Plan 2001 to 2021



Map 3.2 Planning designations and constraints as per the emerging Colchester Borough Local Plan (update provided by Colchester Borough January 2022)



STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES, OPPORTUNITIES AND THREATS

3.22 The NP steering group used the consultation results in 2015 and 2016 to identify the strengths in the plan area that should be protected, weaknesses that should be addressed, any threats to be managed and opportunities for improvement. The outcome is shown below:

Table 3.2 – Marks Tey SWOT Analysis

Strengths		Weaknesses
• **Railway station** - Providing interchange between mainline to London and branch services to the north • **Access to London, east coast and Stansted Airport** • **Good range of facilities** - Parish hall, hotel, shops, restaurants, Post Office, primary school, churches, pharmacy • **Heritage assets** - 27 listed buildings, non-listed but locally important historic buildings, historic village greens, 3 roads improved by Romans. • **A historic place** - Connections to important historic figures, QE1 and Henry Compton, Bishop of London 1675 – 1713 • **Rural Setting** - Reasonably good access to countryside including some ancient footpaths and bridleways - Attractive rural landscape - Predominantly Grade II (very good) agricultural land in parish • **Natural Assets** - SSSI, extensive range of wildlife, semi natural habitats, landscape features including hedgerows, mature trees, ponds, small amount of woodland near Methodist church. • **High speed internet infrastructure link on A12** - Would be ideal location for data centres • **Low density development** - The 1970's housing estate was given building permission with only 8 houses to the acre leaving space for building extensions and allowing for open green areas		• **A fragmented community** - Poorly linked residential areas due to A12, A120 and railway corridors acting as barriers. - No village heart or facility that unites the parish - Poor pedestrian connectivity from residential areas to and from services including the railway station (only 1 pedestrian crossing on the A120) • **Poor parking provision** - For station users which leads to on street parking in residential area surrounding station - For London Road shop customers/businesses • **Poor pedestrian environment** - Air and noise pollution - National speed limit on A roads throughout parish • **Very poor accessibility to places, shops and services for mobility impaired** • **Traffic congestion** • **Noise pollution** • **Air pollution** • **Poor local knowledge of heritage and history** • **No health facilities e.g., doctor, dentist** • **Unconnected habitats leading to fragmentation and isolation of areas for wildlife.** • **No secondary school** • **No elderly care provision in parish** • **Lack of employment opportunities for professional occupations**

Table 3.2 – Marks Tey SWOT Analysis		
Opportunities		**Threats**
• **Reconnect a fragmented community** - Can we identify local solutions or priorities for reconnecting fragmented communities? - Can we strengthen sense of place through provision or expansion of community meeting space (outdoor/indoor) with purpose of bringing together parish residents. • **A12 and A120 road improvements:** - A12 programmed in Road Investment Strategy for widening J19 to J25 to start in March 2023. Possible further widening J25 – J29. A120 potential for revised route between Braintree and A12 which would remove the existing cut through the parish. • **Potential to "green" the road corridors** • **NP could raise profile of NP area including its heritage** • **Connect habitats** - Can we identify priority areas for improving or linking habitats? - Where are green corridors needed the most? **MT could in the future become a more attractive location for industry and high tech firms?**		• **Road congestion** • **Impact of new development on existing infrastructure** - e.g., vulnerability of shops to closure of J25 on A12 • **Loss/damage to heritage assets** - Loss of locally important historic buildings e.g., the cottages on Old London Road, bungalow built to showcase collier bricks on A120) - Damage to all heritage assets via air pollution and vibration • **Loss/damage to Rural Character** - Loss of access to countryside - Loss of countryside - Loss of attractive landscapes - Loss of good quality agricultural land • **Loss/damage to Natural Assets** - Loss of mature trees, poor management of natural assets, front gardens being paved over) • **General loss of character through insensitive and intensive development** - Uncertainty over future development. What will actually be delivered on the ground?

4. FURTHER EXPLORATION OF THE KEY ISSUES THROUGH THE MARKS TEY MASTERPLANNING SUPPORT WORK AND THE MARKS TEY CHARACTER ASSESSMENT

OUT DESIGN MASTERPLANNING SUPPORT DOCUMENT

4.1 During the autumn of 2017, and after the NP steering group had undertaken early community engagement and an appraisal of the strengths, weaknesses, threats and opportunities, the NP steering group received master-planning support from Out Design. The work was informed by a combination of baseline research and engagement with the NP steering group. The engagement took the form of two master-planning support workshops. As part of this work Out Design provided an urban design analysis of the plan area. A summary of this analysis taken from the document under the sub-heading *A place with a distinct character and pattern of development, streets and spaces, roofscapes and building materials* is:

"Marks Tey supports a variety of housing and employment uses that reflect the architectural style of the period within which they were constructed. The majority of homes are located within Marks Tey housing estate developed in the 1970's."

...

"Properties fronting Coggeshall Road vary in age and style with a predominance of two storey semi-detached and detached properties. Most properties are set back from the road, however the more historic properties here front directly onto the busy 'A' road providing a degree of enclosure and overlooking.

The predominant building material is red brick with slate roof tiles however there are a wide variety of other materials including white render, timber cladding and occasional historic properties with thatched roofs."

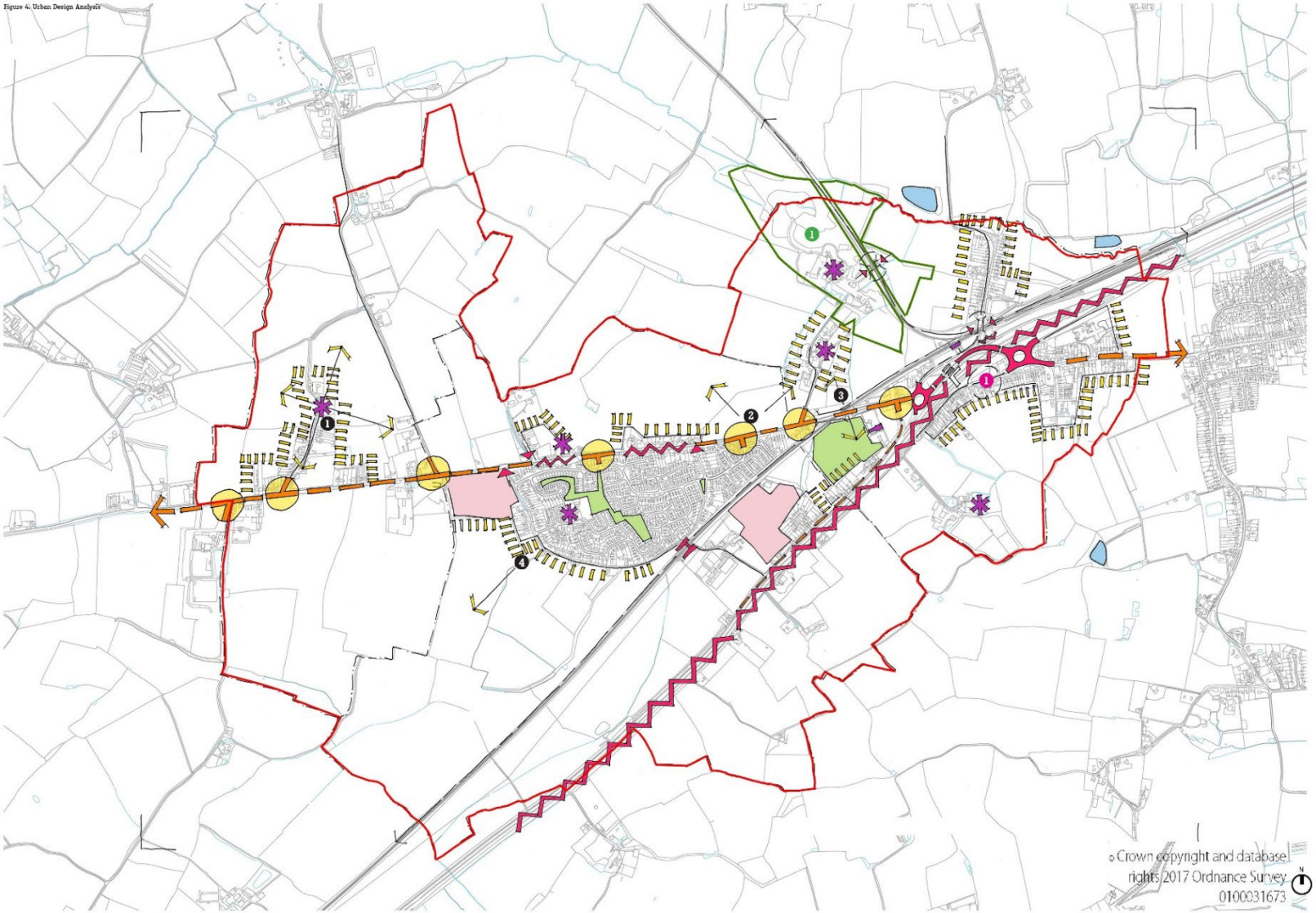
Marks Tey's character is defined to a greater extent by its relationship with the strategic highways and rail lines that pass through the village. The A12/A120 and railway infrastructure effectively sever the village and create a series of dispersed residential areas. In addition to the physical severance the strategic road and rail lines create adverse visual and noise impacts.

Notwithstanding the negative impact of the highway network, Marks Tey sits within an attractive rural setting characterised by gently undulating agricultural land bounded by mature hedgerows and trees. The open nature of the landscape provides residents with views of the wider countryside and glimpses of the areas historic buildings from numerous view points. These buildings include St. James the Less Church at Little Tey and St. Andrew's Church at Marks Tey and the historic Marks Tey Hall, the former parish Manor House.

These historic listed buildings sit within established historic landscape settings that help define Marks Tey's character."

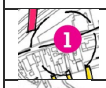
Source: extracts from Marks Tey Masterplanning Support December 2017

4.2 A visual illustration of the key characteristics is provided in Figure 4.1 below which has been extracted from the masterplanning support document. Table 4.1 provides an explanation of the map symbols.



Map 4.1 - Urban design analysis of plan area undertaken by Out Design 2017

Table 4.1: Key to Map 4.1

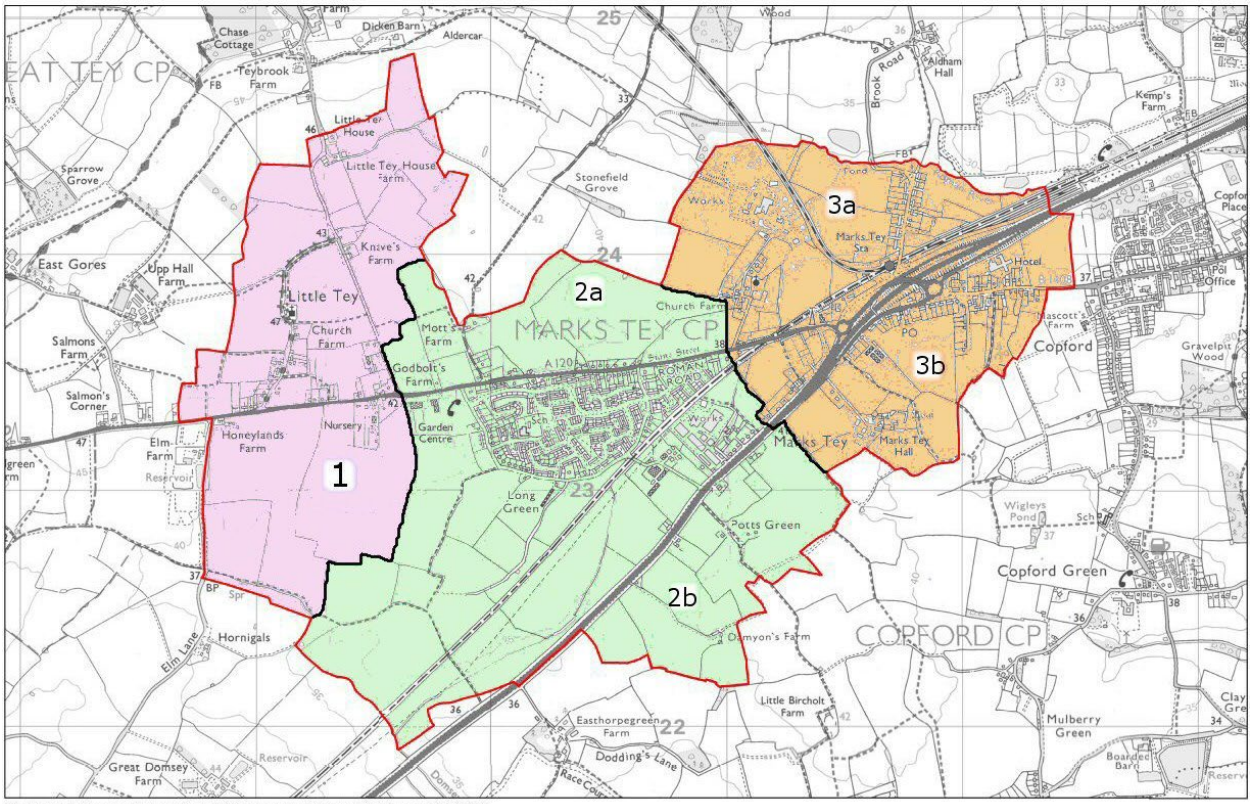
Map Symbol	Description
	A120 road characterised by poor pedestrian and cycling environment with traffic travelling at high speeds
	Severance (physical barrier) created by A120/A12
	Junction
	A120/A12 interchange
	Poor pedestrian access
	Poor pedestrian access across the railway line
	Settlement Edge
	Brick pit SSSI
	Local centre
	Landmark building
	Locally valued views: 1.St James the Less Church, Little Tey 2. A120 to St Andrews Church, Marks Tey 3. Railbridge to St Andrew's Church 4. Long Green looking south west
	Employment site
	Public open space

MARKS TEY CHARACTER ASSESSMENT

4.3 The Marks Tey Character Assessment has been prepared by volunteers in the Neighbourhood Plan steering group. This work provides further detail on the parish's qualities, including those aspects (e.g., viewpoints, locally valued landscape features and buildings) which are most valued by the wider community. The Character Assessment is a key evidence base document supporting this plan and has been subject to formal consultation during the pre-submission stage. The document is available to view on the Parish Council website and on the Colchester Borough website.

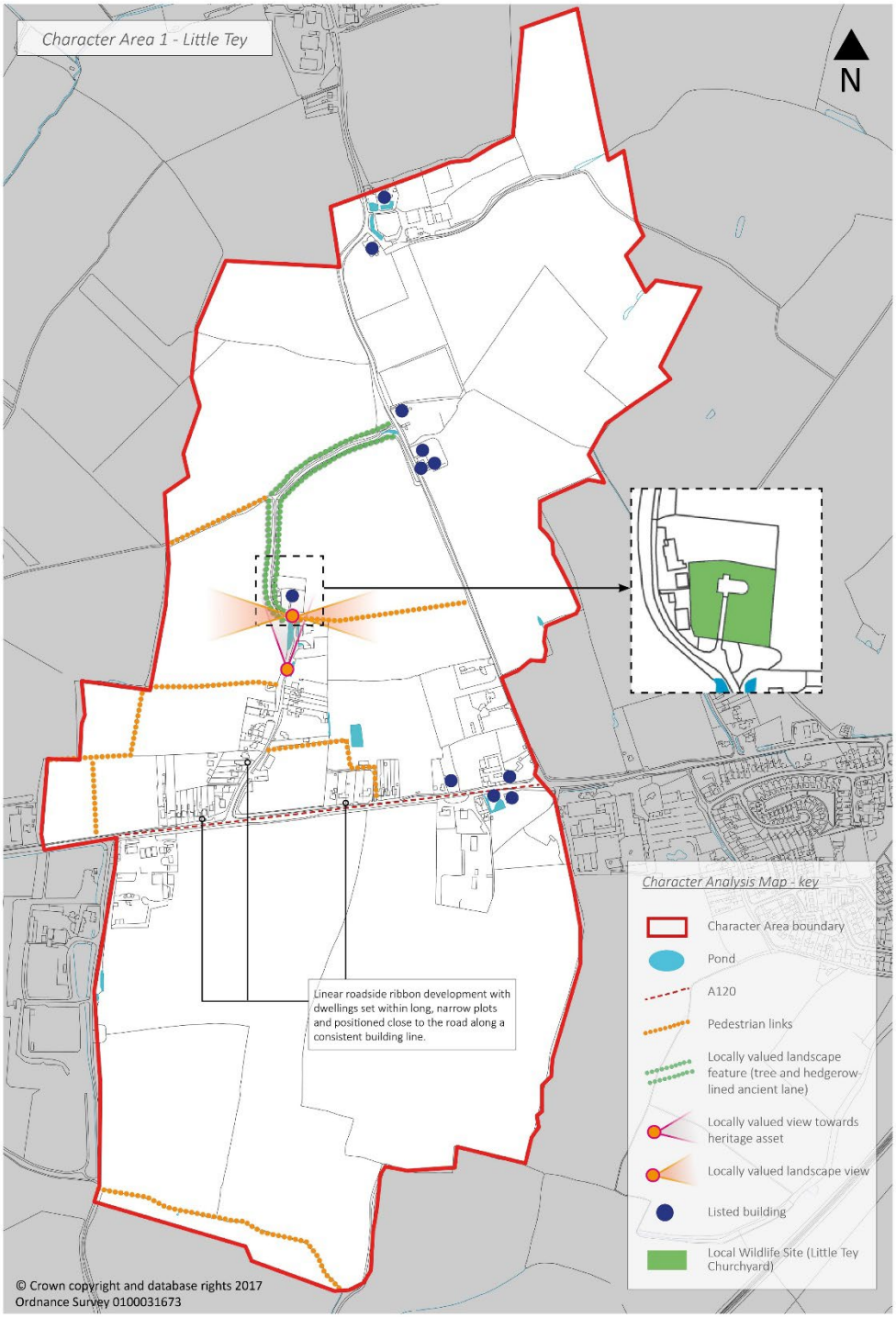
4.4 A key output of the Marks Tey Character Assessment were 5 character area maps identifying

- Important sites of local value (for example tree and hedgerow lined ancient lanes)
- Key views towards heritage assets
- Key views of the wider landscape
- Listed buildings
- Non-designated heritage assets
- Important pedestrian links

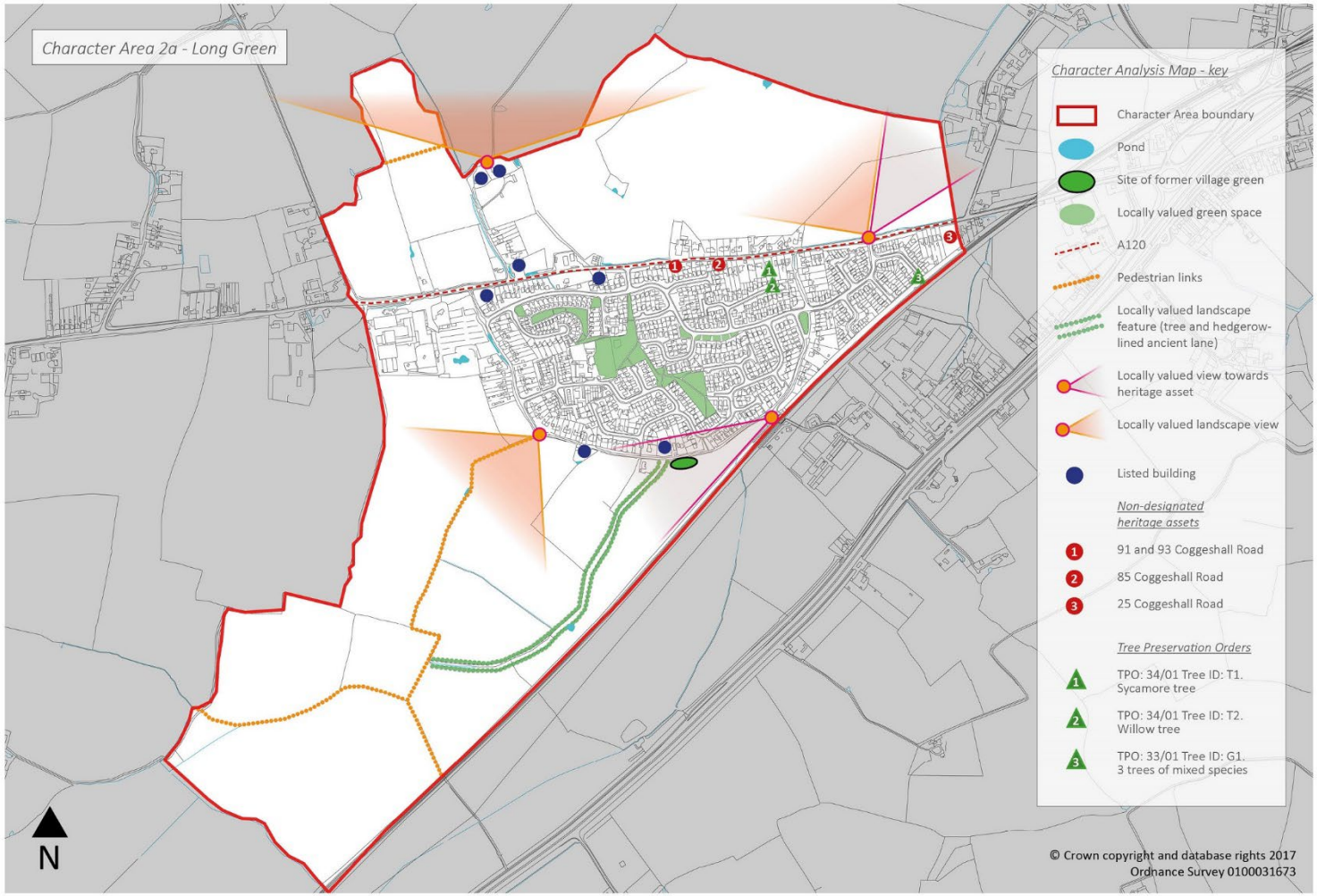


Map 4.2– Map of the NP area divided into five character areas

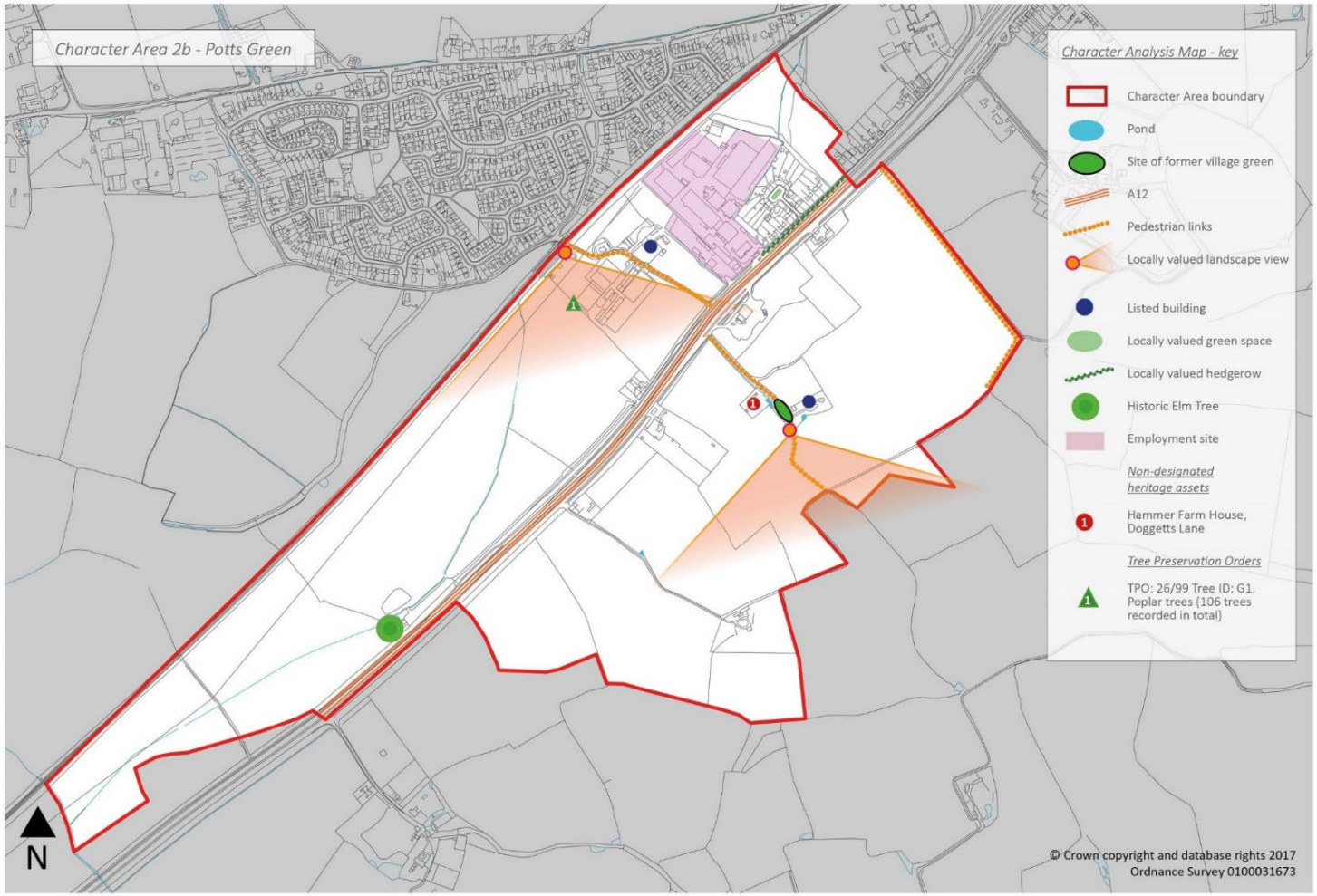
Map 4.3 Character area 1 – Little Tey



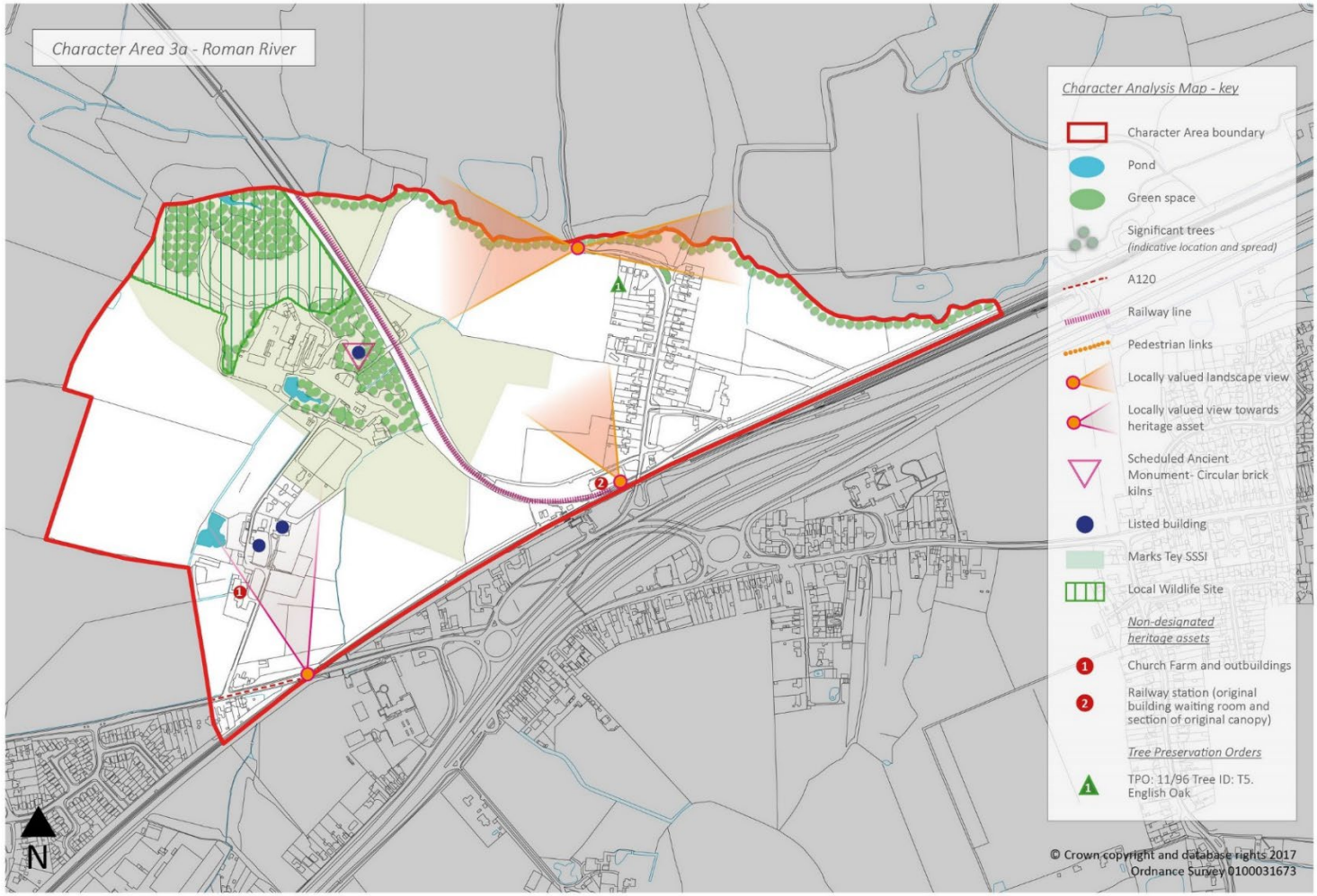
Map 4.4 Character area 2a – Long Green



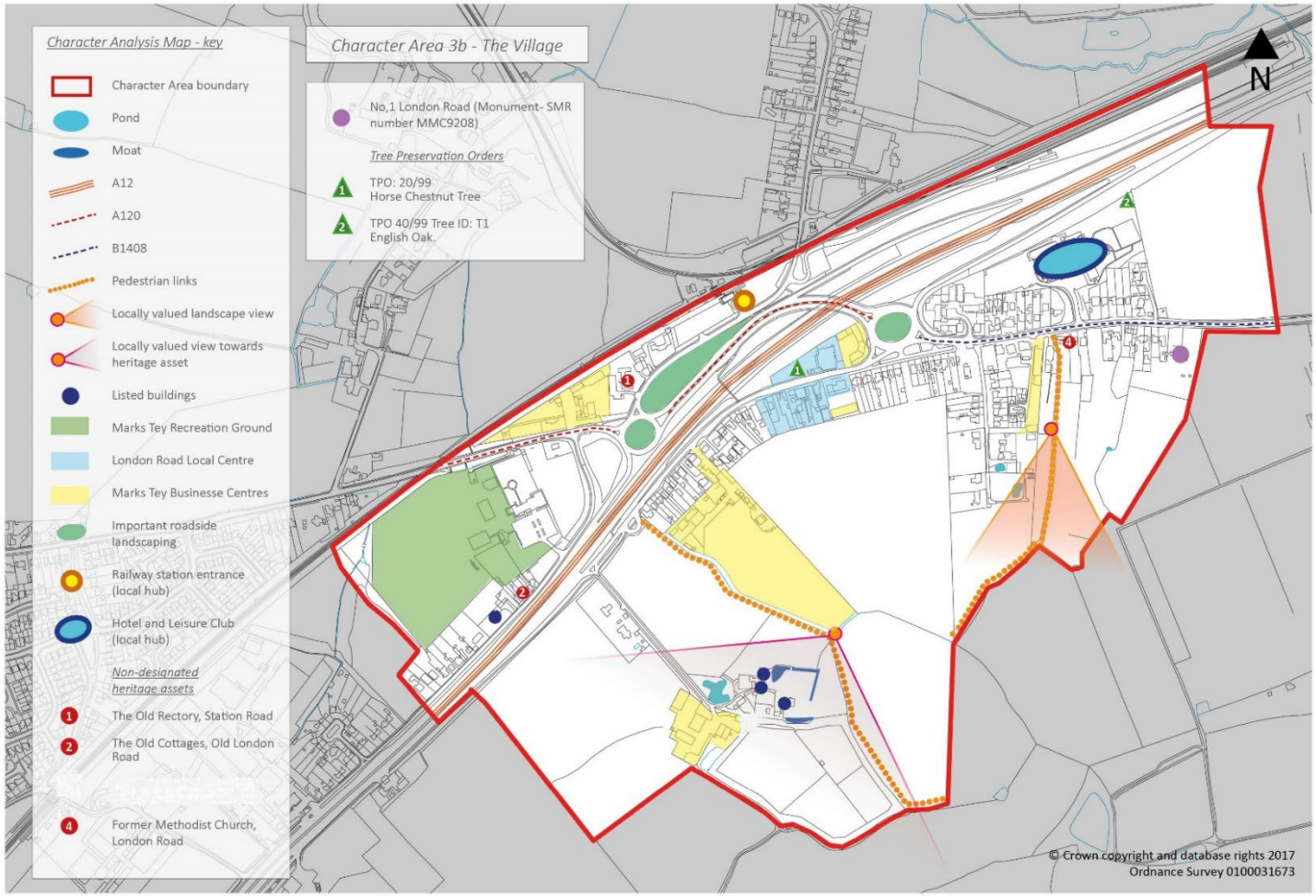
Map 4.5 Character area 2b – Potts Green



Map 4.6 Character area 3a – Roman River



Map 4.7 Character area 3b – The Village



5. NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN VISION AND OBJECTIVES

5.1 An initial draft of a vision for the plan, together with an initial set of eight objectives was sent out to all homes in the plan area as part of the 16-page household leaflet in January 2017. The feedback on this work helped to inform a revised vision as follows:

"A sensitive sustainable community reflecting the housing and employment needs of the locality; helping to build cohesion in the village, maintaining and strengthening a sense of place across the parish, whilst maintaining our countryside surroundings (including access to it) and improving highways, the public rights of way network, paths and cycleways to gain better access to our surrounding environment."

5.2 Six themes and nine core objectives underpin this vision:

Table 5.1: NP themes and objectives

Theme	Core Objectives
Getting Around	1. Existing severe congestion and traffic volumes are not made worse through new development in the parish.
	2. Create a more connected and cohesive community
Sense of place	3. Maintain and strengthen sense of place
	4. Preserving and enhancing our designated and non-designated heritage assets.
A stronger community	5. Existing community facilities including open space will be protected and opportunities to improve existing provision will be realised
A healthier environment	6. Protect and foster the natural environment for the benefit of people, flora and wildlife 7. Noise, air, and light pollution will be effectively managed
Housing	8. New housing developments will include variety and choice and will meet existing local needs (in terms of type and tenure)
Business and employment	9. Businesses will continue to thrive in the parish

5.3 This Neighbourhood Plan does not allocate sites for development. The Out Design Masterplanning report provides guidance to the community in terms of potential options for the future growth of the parish. The work has informed our understanding of priorities for the parish in spatial terms and we will use it when working with stakeholders, in particular, Colchester Borough. However, the NP steering group do not consider it prudent to identify development sites until the implications of the planned strategic transport infrastructure measures are understood in more detail. For instance, it is unknown how National Highway's proposals for a revised Junction 25 on the A12 will impact land around the London Road centre and the Parish Hall recreation ground.

6. PLANNING POLICIES

GETTING AROUND

Core Objectives:

- **Existing severe congestion and traffic volumes are not made worse through new development in the parish**
- **Create a more connected and cohesive community**

6.1 Policy MT01 – A12, A120 and station infrastructure improvements

Policy context and rationale:

6.1.1 It is widely acknowledged by all stakeholders (county, parish council and residents) that traffic volumes, congestion and traffic-related noise can be severe in the parish and that this has significant adverse impacts on the environment, air quality and the ability to move around the parish as well as residential amenity for Marks Tey residents, visitors and employees. Both the Highways Agency and Essex County Council (ECC) fully recognise the existing capacity issues on the A120 and the A12[3]. Traffic volumes on both the A120 and the A12 are only expected to increase leading to further unacceptable congestion on the A120 through the middle of Marks Tey village and along the A12.

6.1.2 To a certain extent some of these issues could be addressed through transport infrastructure projects progressing at the more strategic level and which could be implemented during the plan period.

A12

6.1.3 The A12 for instance was in the 2015 to 2020 Road Improvement Strategy (RIS1) for widening to three lanes each way from Chelmsford (junction 19) to the A120 (junction 25). A public consultation was held by Highways England January to March 2017 where four route options were presented.

6.1.4 In October 2019, a further announcement was made to present the preferred route between junction 19 (Boreham Interchange) to 23 (Kelvedon South) and to clarify that further work was needed to determine their preferred route from junction 23 to junction 25 (in Marks Tey parish) due to complexities created by the garden community proposals presented in the Joint Local Plan. Highways England then produced two alternative options for Marks Tey, one following the existing route past the shops, and an alternative route around the back of the shops. These have been formally consulted upon, and with the Planning Inspector's rejection of the Colchester/Braintree Borders Garden Community, Highways England in August 2020 announced their preferred route option to be on the existing route past the shops and leaving the existing road with a new Junction 25 between the Parish Hall and Anderson's employment site. This is the proposals that the re-named National Highways are now proceeding with.

[3] See their representations made on the Regulation 14 version of this plan

6.1.5 Until further information is made available, it is still uncertain how National Highway's preferred route will impact on current noise and air pollution and community severance issues created by the current A12 alignment (as described in Chapter 2 and illustrated in Figure 2.1 of this NP). The Parish Council will work with National Highways and other stakeholders to seek ways in which traffic burden in Marks Tey from the A12 is minimised and the linkages between different parts of the village could be improved and increased.

A120

6.1.6 ECC and partners continue to lobby for the dualling of the A120 between Braintree and Marks Tey at the earliest opportunity. The Government's Road Investment Strategy 2 (RIS2) announcement in March 2020 included commitments to progressing further development work on the A120 dualling including detailed design, land assembly and statutory processes that are required to prepare the scheme for delivery. The A120 dualling scheme is due to be considered for inclusion for construction in the RIS3 programme (2025 – 30).

6.1.7 The scheme is regarded by ECC as being 'shovel-ready' so as soon as the funding is secured, the scheme is expected to commence.

6.1.8 Due to the unacceptable volume of traffic, congestion and traffic-related noise through the parish which is only expected to get worse, the Marks Tey community feels very strongly that these strategic transport improvements and more need to be delivered ahead of any new development coming forward in the parish.

Marks Tey Station

6.1.9 There were aspirations with the proposed Local Plan for the Marks Tey Mainline Station to be relocated to the centre of the previously proposed Garden Community (between Marks Tey and Feering/Kelvedon). Since the withdrawal of the Garden Community from Part 1 of the Local Plan, it is now likely that it will stay in situ in Marks Tey. This is supported by the NP. The station with its accessibility, parking and activity will remain a prominent and growing feature of Marks Tey. The challenges that this creates pose issues for the Neighbourhood Plan.

6.1.10 The 3 platform Station is on the main line from London to Colchester and is the junction and only connection with the branch line to Sudbury. There are trains into London and to Colchester every 30 mins with an average journey time of 61 mins to London and 9 mins to Colchester, and every 50 mins with a 19 mins journey time to Sudbury every working day. The Station handles some 428,816 passenger movements per year (1,200 per day – 2013 figures) through the Station with approx. 90% of them coming from outside of Marks Tey (2017 Train Users Survey). A majority of these, approx. 70%, travel to the Station by car and approx. 55% of car users, park at or near the Station. The Station has 3 main surface car parks catering for 261 vehicles:

West car park – 102 spaces

North car park – 99 spaces

Informal rail sidings car park – 35

On-street long term parking – 25

6.1.11 The on-street parking opposite the Station entrance restricts Station Road and has been the scene of serious accidents. There is currently no disabled access across the railway through the Station and the adjacent North Lane bridge is narrow with a substandard footpath on one side. Also informal parking by rail users in surrounding areas causes nuisance to Marks Tey residents and those in Copford Parish.

6.1.12 There are aspirations to increase the capacity of the main line rail link into London but currently these are limited by the need to create additional rail lines and/or passing loops but with little capacity to create these within the current RailTrack land ownership.

6.1.13 It would be advantageous to Rail users (greater retail choice) and to the London Road shops (greater footfall) to see if more integration could be achieved between the two facilities. One way of doing this might be to integrate Station related parking with the desire to increase off road parking at the shops.

6.1.14 Currently there are no pleasant and easy pedestrian/cycling routes to the Station from the majority of Marks Tey or Little Tey or beyond.

Policy Intent

6.1.15 The transport impacts of every development proposal on the parish with respect to residential amenity, the street scene environment, air pollution and safety for all users including pedestrians and cyclists should be considered as part of the decision-making process. Traffic movements along the A120, the A12 and existing road junctions in the parish are currently exceeding capacity. Special care therefore needs to be taken to ensure that new development proposals do not exacerbate further the existing problems on these two roads.

6.1.16 Whilst it would not be reasonable to veto all minor development proposals (so long as they wouldn't generate unacceptable impacts on the community) ahead of these strategic transport infrastructure schemes it is appropriate to resist the major and significant proposals on this basis.

6.1.17 With regards to Marks Tey Station, the intention of Policy MT01, whilst encouraging growth in use of the station, is to ensure that proposals that will lead to increased passenger use of Marks Tey Station will only come forward where any potential negative impacts on road safety and residential amenity in Marks Tey parish are anticipated and where possible, avoided, planned for and appropriately mitigated against. No proposals should come forward which will lead to a poorer standard of road and pedestrian safety or residential amenity and all proposals should seek to improve both.

POLICY MT01 – A12, A120 AND STATION INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS

Any development proposals found to be generating significant transport movements[1], the impacts of which would be severe, will not be supported in advance of the A12 road widening scheme and a dualled A120 from Braintree to the A12 being delivered. Furthermore, any such development proposal should be accompanied by:

- evidence that road capacity is in place in Marks Tey, taking into account current and forecast traffic volumes along the A120 and A12; and
- mitigation measures necessary to protect the residential and street-scene environment along Coggeshall Road from traffic-related environmental impacts including noise and vibration, and poor air quality. Proposals which are designed to lead to an overall reduction in traffic volume along the A120 are welcomed.

Other development proposals that will generate additional traffic movements in the parish will only be supported if it can be demonstrated through a transport assessment or, in the case of smaller schemes, in an accompanying Design and Access/Planning Statement, that the traffic impacts of the development on the A120 and the A12 will not lead to unacceptable adverse impacts on residential amenity in the parish, or the street scene environment along Coggeshall Road (through the generation of traffic-related noise, air pollution or disruption) or on road safety for all vulnerable users including pedestrians, cyclists and equestrians.

Development proposals involving expanded facilities (including passenger car parking) at Marks Tey train station should be assessed for their impact on road safety, pedestrian safety and residential amenity in Marks Tey parish. Where potential adverse impacts are identified, proposals will only be supported if accompanied by measures which monitor and, if applicable, appropriately mitigate impacts (for example through further strengthening and widening the North Lane/Station Road rail bridge, street scene enhancement measures along Station Road, screening of noise, pollution or visual impacts).

To be supported, proposals must maintain existing passenger accessibility at the station and seek to take opportunities to secure improvements in passenger accessibility.

Proposals likely to have residual unacceptable impacts on road safety and residential amenity will not be supported.

1: Note: In the case of Marks Tey, because the road infrastructure is already well stretched the threshold where a development will trigger significant transport movements will be low. This is in accordance with Planning Practice Guidance.

6.2 Policy MT02 - Creating walking and cycle friendly neighbourhoods

Policy context and rationale:

6.2.1 The parish is very much characterised by its road and rail links providing excellent connectivity to London by both rail and road. But the three transport corridors (one railway line, the A120 and the A12) also impose physical barriers across the parish creating considerable difficulties for residents and visitors to move around the parish, in particular by foot or by bicycle.

6.2.2 Primary road and rail links in the parish are predominantly used by non-parish residents who are using the roads to travel through the parish or who travel to the station in order to travel on further by train. This creates considerable road congestion including an unpleasant street environment along the A120 (known locally as Coggeshall Road) and a high demand for on street parking for commuters living outside the parish but using the train station to commute by train to London.

6.2.3 The urban design analysis undertaken for the plan area shows that the existing pedestrian and cycleway connections in the plan area are inadequate. The A12, the railway line and the A120 all create linear barriers throughout the plan area. The effects on the pedestrian/cyclist travelling within the parish is particularly severe at the A120 and A12 interchange and alongside the A120. These areas provide the focus of parish-based movement. Residents in Little Tey and Marks Tey Estate need to travel via this road in order to access the railway station, other residential areas and the shops but they feel unsafe walking along this road. Consequently, short potentially walkable trips to Marks Tey Station, the Parish Hall and local shops and services on London Parade are taken by a car.

6.2.4 The urban design analysis shows the following issues on Coggeshall Road/A120:

- Generally characterised by poor pedestrian and cycling environment with traffic travelling at a high speed
- Specific locations along Coggeshall Road where pedestrian movement is particularly compromised by barriers such as wide junctions, narrow pavements and poor access
- Many opportunities for improving the street scene environment.

6.2.5 The Character Assessment supporting this Neighbourhood Plan provides further detail on the challenges and opportunities with regards to roads, streets and routes across the parish (see Chapter Four 'Roads, Streets and Routes' in each of the five character areas.

6.2.6 This plan identifies the following priorities for improving the cyclist and pedestrian environment. These priorities are set out in Tables 6.1 and 6.2 below. The measures have been informed by the masterplanning support document which accompanies this neighbourhood plan and the Marks Tey Character Assessment, together with a stakeholder and community consultation exercise undertaken in summer 2018.

Table 6.1: Priorities for improving pedestrian and cyclist connectivity in the plan area

Provide a Green Bridge across the A12. Currently the A12/A120 interchange imposes a significant barrier to pedestrian and cycle connectivity to residents and visitors wishing to visit the Marks Tey retail parade. Enhanced access could be in the form of an attractive land bridge over the A12 which would connect Marks Tey station with Marks Tey shops. Key benefits:

- Allow pedestrians and cyclists to avoid the A120 and A12 interchange
- Provide a direct link between station and Marks Tey retail parade.
- A direct link to Marks Tey retail parade will give the village back its heart.
- Provide better access for disabled residents who currently have few options for getting around.

This measure is considered necessary in the event of substantial development coming forward in this part of the plan area including south of the Marks Tey row of shops

Upgrade or replace the North Lane railway bridge so that pedestrians and cyclists can move around more safely and quickly: Currently pedestrian and cyclist access over the North Lane bridge is poor. The bridge is narrow making two-way vehicular access difficult. There is a pavement on one side of the bridge but vehicular traffic on the bridge impacts adversely on pedestrian safety (e.g., in early 2018, a male pedestrian was struck on the shoulder by a wing mirror of a vehicle as he walked to his home over the bridge). Sightlines are restricted on the approach to the bridge by both the bend in the road and the hump over the bridge.

Although the railway bridge has recently been reconstructed and strengthened, the railway bridge is still narrow with poor pedestrian and cyclist access. Use of the bridge by HGVs makes the bridge an unsafe crossing point for pedestrians and cyclists.

Provide new pedestrian and cycleway connections.

The following connections and improvements are prioritised:

1. A120 improvements to pedestrian access, environmental enhancements and junction improvements as shown on the emerging framework plan and listed as Coggeshall Road Environmental Enhancement Measures in the supporting text to Policy MT03: A120 Coggeshall Road: A Quality Street for All
2. Creation of new or improved pedestrian routes at the following locations:
    - A new link from Dobbies Lane rail footbridge to the Parish Hall via the Anderson Employment site
    - A new link from Church Lane north of the A120 road bridge, to the west of Marks Tey Station. This would mean pedestrians and cyclists would not have to progress along the dangerous A120, on the narrow pavement. The link would provide a separate, pleasant access route to the main station from any future housing development, well away from road traffic, and access could be directly on to platform 2.
    - Investigate possibilities for a 'quietway' cycle route through Marks Tey estate along Godmans Lane/Ashbury Drive subject to other adverse impacts on this only through route of the village.
3. Maintain existing cycling routes from Marks Tey parish to neighbouring parishes (including the route from Marks Tey to Feering) and utilise opportunities to improve the quality and safety of the network and provide additional routes.

Table 6.1: Priorities for improving pedestrian and cyclist connectivity in the plan area
A new station square around Marks Tey train station to: • Provide a sense of arrival • Reduce our dependence on the car and provide wider footways with direct pedestrian access
Greening the environment close to traffic corridors to help mitigate the impact of air and noise pollution
London Road Parade: Environmental Improvements Continuous footpaths, street lighting, tree and shrub planting, cycle facilities (including cycle parking), public seating and furniture Providing direct, safe and comfortable walking and cycling links between the parade and Marks Tey station for example through replacing the A12 footbridge with a land bridge (see above).

Table 6.2: Priorities for improving accessibility for those with restricted mobility
Improve platform access at Marks Tey train station. Wheelchair users currently have to travel a long way round over the narrow road bridge.
Environmental improvements at the London Road parade including continuous footpaths, street lighting, public seating
London Road Parade: Making the road safer to cross as some traffic tends to speed up as it approaches the A12 slip road.
Pedestrian crossings with a dropped kerb on the A120 at Church Lane, Little Tey, Poplar Nurseries; formal signalised pedestrian crossings adjacent to Godman's Lane roundabout and adjacent to Ashbury Drive roundabout.



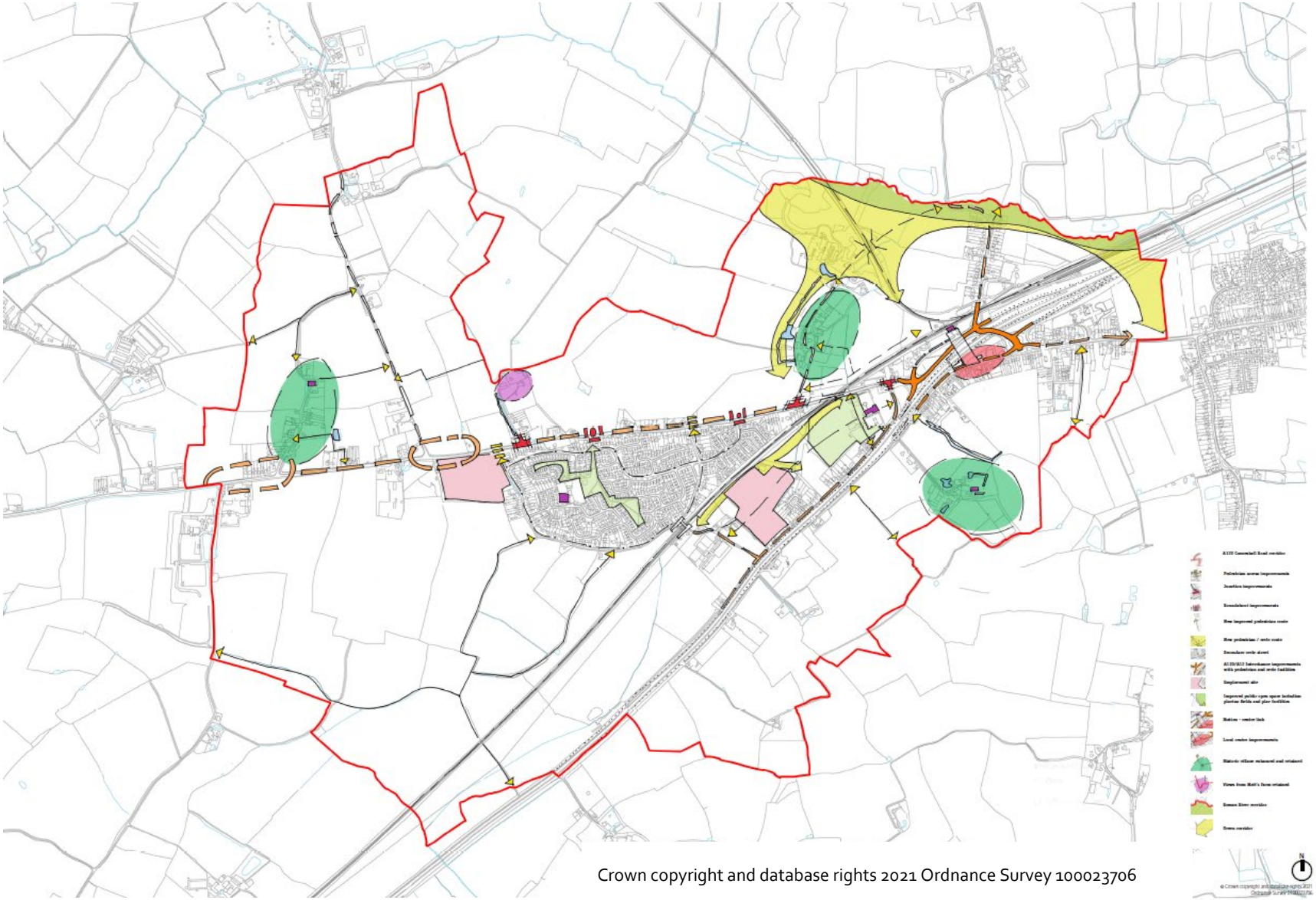
Figure 6.1: Lorry attempting to turn around before the North Lane railway bridge



Figure 6.2 North Lane railway bridge looking north



Figure 6.3 A heavy goods vehicle approaching the Roman River Bridge



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Map 6.1 - Marks Tey Emerging Framework Plan. Marks Tey Masterplanning support document

Table 6.3: Key to Map 6.1



A120 Coggeshall Road corridor



Pedestrian access improvements



Junction improvements



Roundabout improvements



New improved pedestrian route



New pedestrian / cycle route



Secondary cycle street



A120/A12 Interchange improvements with pedestrian and cycle facilities



Employment site



Improved public open space including playing fields and play facilities



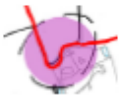
Station - centre link



Local centre improvements



Historic village enhanced and retained



Views from Mott's Farm retained



Roman River corridor



Green corridor

Policy Intent

6.2.7 The intention of Policy MT02 is to ensure that the need and opportunities to improve pedestrian and cyclist connectivity in the parish are considered as part of every development proposal. Proposals which involve new development without providing adequate access will not be supported. The extent to which safe and attractive walking routes can be incorporated into a development site will depend on the size of the development. However, even for minor development such as house extensions and infill development it is essential that safe and easy access for pedestrians and cyclists is provided.

POLICY MT02 – CREATING WALKING AND CYCLE FRIENDLY NEIGHBOURHOODS

All development proposals will be expected to incorporate safe and attractive walking and cycling routes on site and take opportunities to connect to the wider public rights of way, walking and cycling route networks in the parish.

As a minimum, development proposals involving new build should include walking and cycle routes as part of the layout and design ensuring these are accessible for people less able including those using wheelchairs, mobility scooters or prams.

Development proposals involving additional dwellings or additional employment/retail floor space which result in poor access to shops and services and do not utilise opportunities to improve pedestrian and cycle connectivity in the parish will be resisted.

In determining whether development proposals can be supported, the following will be key considerations:

Residential development proposals

1. Whether the proposed development would be within walking distance to existing shops and services, taking into account delays caused by barriers such as the trainlines, the A12 and lack of pedestrian bridges;

2. The extent to which the safety and quality of the walking and cycling environment provides real choice in terms of travel mode to shops and services in the plan area;

3. Whether the proposed development will assist in improving the walking and cycle connectivity of the parish;

4. The extent to which the proposed development utilises opportunities to improve connectivity; and

5. For larger schemes, the extent to which the proposed development improves overall connectivity and accessibility in the plan area, taking into account the list of priorities in Tables 6.1 and 6.2 that accompanies this policy.

Continues overleaf

POLICY MT02 – CREATING WALKING AND CYCLE FRIENDLY NEIGHBOURHOODS CONTINUED…

New shops and services

1. The accessibility of the proposed shop or service by plan area residents or potential customers travelling by public transport, on foot or by bike;

2. Whether the quality of the street scene environment in the immediate vicinity provides a pleasant environment for customers and workers travelling to the site and whether the proposed development sufficiently utilises opportunities to improve this environment;

3. Whether the street scene environment in the immediate vicinity provides an accessible environment for those with limited mobility or those with a push chair and whether the proposed development sufficiently utilises opportunities to improve this environment; and

4. For larger schemes, whether the proposed development improves the accessibility of shops and services in the plan area, taking into account the list of priorities in Table 6.2 that accompanies this policy.

Employment

1. The accessibility of the proposed employment use by plan area residents or potential employees travelling by public transport, on foot or by bike.

6.3 Policy MT03: A120 Coggeshall Road: A quality street for all

Context and Rationale

6.3.1 There is significant congestion experienced along the A120 through Marks Tey village and at the A120 interchange with the A12. As well as having negative environmental impacts on residents of the parish the congestion is also leading to delays on the wider strategic network. Enhancements to the A120 between the A12 and Braintree is a strategic priority for Essex County Council in the current Local Transport Plan (https://www.essexhighways.org/Transport-and-Roads/Highway-Schemes-and-Developments/Local-Transport-Plan.aspx)

6.3.2 ECC and partners continue to lobby for the dualling of the A120 between Braintree and Marks Tey at the earliest opportunity. The Government's Road Investment Strategy 2 (RIS2) announcement in March 2020 included commitment to progressing further development work on the A120 dualling and the scheme is due to be considered for inclusion in the RIS3 programme. The scheme is regarded by ECC as being 'shovel-ready' so as soon as funding is secured, the scheme is expected to commence.

6.3.3 The new A120 alignment planned by the County Council will alleviate congestion at the A120/A12 interchange and should also lead to some reductions in traffic along the A120 in the village. The County Council's favoured route (Route D) is only expected to deliver modest reductions

(compared to other route options) in traffic volumes along the A120 in Marks Tey[4]. The NP recognises that the proposed A120 improvements alone will not provide an opportunity for the A120 to become a local access route or deliver a more pleasant environment for residents. The Plan therefore identifies other opportunities for improvements to take place along the A120 which would increase pedestrian safety and access at key junctions. Such measures include:

Little Tey Gateway

1. Improvements at the A120/Church Lane junction to provide a welcoming gateway feature at the entrance to Little Tey to reduce traffic speeds, together with new pedestrian crossings and more accessible bus stops

Marks Tey Western Gateway

2. Provide a welcoming gateway at the entrance to Marks Tey to provide a sense of arrival and reduce traffic speeds. Here is an opportunity to introduce continuous footpaths and pedestrian crossings

A120 Coggeshall Road: A Quality Street for All (Coggeshall Road runs the length of the A120 from the west at the parish boundary with Great Tey Parish to the roundabout prior to Junction 25 of the A12).

1. Introducing a 20mph speed limit along the A120 in Marks Tey parish. Create more continuous footways, raised surfaces and pedestrian crossings, also segregated cycle facilities, tree and shrub planting
2. Narrowing the carriageway (through physical measures such as kerb build outs or achieve through different materials or carriageway markings)
3. List of potential environmental measures identified in the masterplanning support document and supported by the wider community during consultation which would help turn Coggeshall Road into a safe and attractive street for the parish. These are:

[4] See Figure 6 in the 2017 consultation document the A120 Braintree to A12 Consultation on Route Options 17 January to 14 March 2017

Coggeshall Road Environmental Enhancement Measures (See Map 6.1)

- Pedestrian crossing and environmental improvements across A120 at top of Jays Lane
- Pedestrian crossing and bus stop access across A120 at top of Ashbury Drive
- Pedestrian crossing and bus stop access across A120 at junction with Godmans Lane
- Motts Lane Junction; improved pedestrian access to the Red Lion PH across A120
- A separate cycle way along A120 (Coggeshall Road)
- Pedestrian crossing and bus stop access across A120 at top of Wilson's Lane
- Junction improvements, bus link and speed reduction measures along Great Tey Road/Coggeshall Road
- Junction improvements and bus stop link along the A120 at junction of Church Lane Little Tey/Coggeshall Road
- Speed reduction measures along A120 from Elm Lane to Church Lane Marks Tey
- Introduction of safe crossing facilities catering for all vulnerable road users including pedestrians, cyclists and equestrians

MT03 Policy Intent

6.3.4 All proposals coming forward in the parish, which are likely to lead to additional traffic movements along the Coggeshall Road as defined on Map 6.2 should be assessed in terms of any adverse impacts on the Coggeshall Road street scene environment and residential amenity.

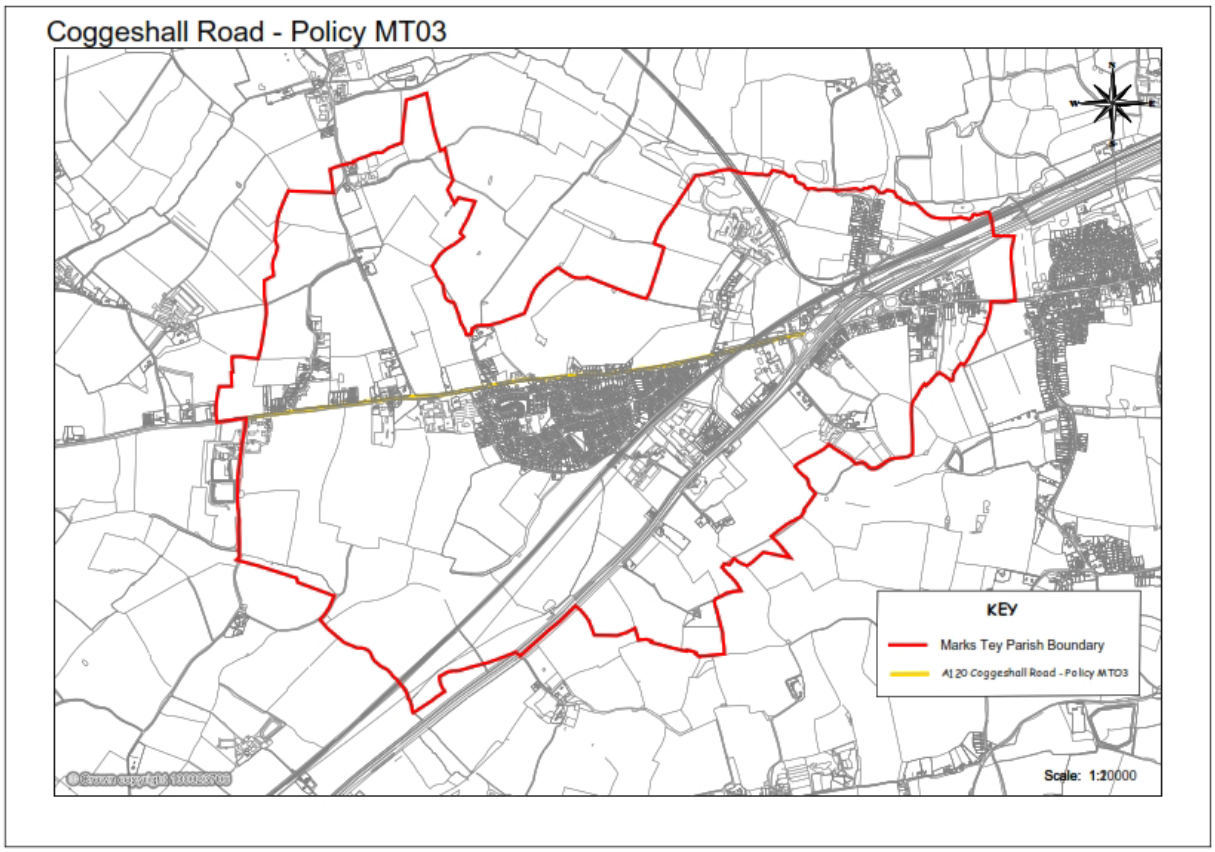
POLICY MT03 – A120 COGGESHALL ROAD: A QUALITY STREET FOR ALL

Development proposals coming forward in the parish which will lead to additional traffic movements along the Coggeshall Road, as marked on Map 6.2, shall be assessed in terms of their likely impact on residential amenity and on the Coggeshall Road street scene environment.

To be supported, development proposals must either:

- mitigate their impact through on-site measures or contribute towards the implementation of Coggeshall Road street scene enhancements (including the creation of enhanced gateways into the village along the A120) (see paragraph 6.3.3); or
- demonstrate that there will be no adverse impacts on the Coggeshall Road street scene environment as a result of the proposed scheme or that mitigation measures are otherwise not necessary as a result of the proposed development.

Map 6.2 – A120 Coggeshall Road



6.4 Increasing parking provision at the London Road parade

6.4.1 An important item under the theme of Getting Around is the need to improve car parking provision at the London Parade shops as well as improving the street scene environment at the London Road Parade as set out in Table 6.2 above. This is addressed in a planning policy later on in this chapter under Policy MT14 – London Road Centre.

SENSE OF PLACE

Core Objectives:

- **Maintain a Sense of Place**
- **Preserving and enhancing our designated and non-designated heritage assets.**

6.5.1 Marks Tey is defined as a rural community in the adopted Local Plan. Policy ENV2 – Rural Communities in the adopted Core Strategy for Colchester Borough states that:

- Appropriate development of infill sites and previously developed land within the settlement development boundaries of villages will be supported
- Design of new village development must be high quality in all respects, including design, sustainability and compatibility with the distinctive character of the locality.
- Outside village boundaries, the Borough Council will favourably consider sustainable rural business, leisure and tourism schemes that are of an appropriate scale and which help meet the local employment needs, minimise negative environmental impacts and harmonise with the local character and surrounding natural environment
- Development outside but contiguous to village settlement boundaries may be supported especially where it constitutes an exception to meet identified local affordable housing needs
- Villages are encouraged to plan for the specific needs of their communities by developing neighbourhood plans which provide locally determined policies on future development needs.

6.5.2 The approach taken in Policy ENV2 is supported by the Neighbourhood Plan. The policies in this chapter complement this policy by providing more detail on the approach to be taken in Marks Tey Parish

6.5.3 To maintain and strengthen sense of place in our parish we consider it important to:

- Maintain a visual and physical separation between Marks Tey and Little Tey
- Maintain the special rural character found in the hamlet of Little Tey
- Maintain or enhance the semi-rural character in Marks Tey
- As part of the above identify and protect other key characteristics unique to our parish

6.6 Policy MT04 – Village settlement boundaries

Policy Context and rationale

6.6.1 The adopted Local Plan for the parish defines five different village settlement boundaries which are listed below and illustrated on the map below:

- Marks Tey estate (largely made up of Little Marks Estate and Colne Park Estate with adjacent pockets of housing e.g along and off the Old London Road)
- Little Tey village
- A12 small residential area
- London Road Parade shops

- North Lane residential area

6.6.2 Due to the existing rural character of Little Tey and the separation of this hamlet from the rest of the parish, it is not considered appropriate for any development to come forward outside the existing village settlement boundary in Little Tey. As noted at other points in this plan (e.g., supporting text to Policy MT03) it is not a straightforward matter to leave this hamlet and access shops and services in Marks Tey; this is due to the heavy congestion along the A120 and the poor street scene environment making it an unpleasant journey by foot or bicycle. Therefore, despite its proximity to Marks Tey, the hamlet of Little Tey is very much separate and cut-off from the village.

6.6.3 Also of relevance here and noted in other places in the plan (see supporting text to Policy MT06), is the importance of keeping the countryside surrounding Little Tey protected from development. The Colchester Landscape Character Assessment published in 2005 and updated through the West Colchester Growth Area Option Environmental Audit (produced in 2015 by Chris Blandford Associates) concludes that most of the land between Marks Tey and Little Tey is considered to provide a high contribution to the physical and visual separation between the two settlements and it is considered desirable to safeguard this from inappropriate development.

6.6.4 Some development may be considered appropriate on the edge of the other settlement boundaries where development could bring specific benefits to the village such as improving pedestrian connectivity of the wider parish or meeting parish specific housing needs.

6.6.5 Chapter 4 of the Marks Tey Character Assessment supporting this plan provides further information on the character of the residential areas and how they relate to their wider countryside setting.

Policy Intent

6.6.6 We support appropriate development within the village settlement boundaries subject to the proposals meeting policies in this plan. Beyond these boundaries only development appropriate to countryside locations will be supported.

6.6.7 The term 'minor development' used in Policy MT04 means residential proposals for 9 or less homes or the site has an area less than 0.5 hectares. For non-residential development this means proposals less than 1,000 m^2 floor space or a site of less than 1 hectare.

6.6.8 Part 2 of the emerging Local Plan proposes to remove the settlement boundary around Little Tey. It is anticipated that Part 2 of the emerging Local Plan will be adopted soon. However, until this is implemented there is a need for the Marks Tey neighbourhood plan to fully recognise the status of the current settlement boundaries as shown in the current Local Plan. That is why the policy refers to Little Tey to ensure that the exemptions to edge of settlement development apply.

POLICY MT04 – VILLAGE SETTLEMENT BOUNDARIES

Development proposals will, in principle, be supported within the existing village settlement boundaries as defined in the Local Plan.

Proposals outside the village settlement boundaries will not be supported other than for:

- sensitively designed employment uses on the edge of the settlement boundaries (not including the Little Tey settlement boundary) where these will meet local business needs;
- recreational uses that will meet identified community need;
- appropriate countryside uses including essential utilities infrastructure; and
- in exceptional circumstances such as:
    - Sensitively designed small-scale minor development on the edge of the defined settlement boundary (not including Little Tey settlement boundary) where proposals will deliver high quality urban design and raise the standard of architecture, green infrastructure and design in the surroundings and meet other planning policies in this NP; or
    - Larger development schemes on the edge or well-related to the defined settlement boundary around Marks Tey village only (does not include the Little Tey settlement boundary) where proposals will deliver significant community benefits (see definition below) to the existing Marks Tey parish and which adopt innovative approaches to the construction of low carbon homes which demonstrate sustainable use of resources and high energy efficiency levels (for example construction to Passivhaus or similar standards).

Due to the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside surrounding the hamlet of Little Tey development outside the settlement will be resisted.

Development proposals in Marks Tey Parish coming forward as part of strategic development allocated in the Local Plan, or under the exceptional circumstances stated above, will only be supported subject to the following conditions:

- retaining or enhancing the visual and physical separation between Marks Tey and Little Tey;
- preserving or enhancing the special rural character of Little Tey;
- preserving or enhancing the semi-rural character of Marks Tey, having particular regard to the sensitive interface between the existing settlement edges and network of public footpaths into the wider countryside; and
- utilising opportunities to protect or enhance distinguishing features of the parish as described in the Marks Tey Character Assessment and illustrated on Figures 4.3 to 4.7 of this plan.

Continues overleaf

POLICY MT04 – VILLAGE SETTLEMENT BOUNDARIES CONTINUED…

Significant community benefits mean:

- delivering the priorities for pedestrian and cycle connectivity and for improving accessibility for those with restricted mobility (see Tables 6.1 and 6.2) where these will facilitate a significant improvement for Marks Tey residents and where these are planned in consultation with the applicable highways agency (National Highways and/or Essex County Council);
- delivering Coggeshall Road environmental enhancement measures (see paragraph 6.3.4 of the NP) where these will facilitate a significant improvement for Marks Tey residents and where these are planned in consultation with the applicable highways agency (National Highways and/or Essex County Council); and
- relieving vehicular pressure on residential areas in the plan area and aiding vehicular and pedestrian connectivity.

Policy MT05 - Local character and design

6.7.1 National policy asserts that neighbourhood plans can play an important role in identifying the special qualities of each area and explaining how this should be reflected in development.

6.7.2 The character assessment we have prepared has been submitted alongside this NP. It is also available to view at https://www.marksteyparish.org.uk/. The character assessment identifies qualities in the parish which we value. This includes our connection to the countryside, special views, the natural environment and some of our buildings which are of local historical importance. We wish to retain these positive aspects.

6.7.3 We also wish to strengthen our sense of place through providing a more welcoming sense of arrival at key places in the parish.

6.7.4 The character assessment resulted in the identification of 5 different character areas within the parish.

- Character Area 1 – Little Tey
- Character Area 2a – Long Green
- Character Area 2b – Potts Green
- Character Area 3a – Roman River
- Character Area 3b – The Village

6.7.5 The characteristics of each area is described for each of these areas covering layout, topography, spaces, roads/streets/routes, green and natural features, landmarks, buildings and details, streetscape features, land uses and views. The output from the work is summarised neatly in the 5 character area maps shown on Figures 4.2 to 4.7.

6.7.6 The Marks Tey Character Assessments was produced by parish residents working on behalf of the neighbourhood plan steering group. The work was extremely useful in helping the community identify what it is they value about their local area.

Out Design Urban Analysis

6.7.7 The approach taken on design in the NP as a whole, has also been informed by the Out Design Masterplanning document which provided its own urban design analysis of the plan area. In this process, Out Design used eight commonly recognised characteristics that successful places have in common (irrespective of architectural styles) set out in the Design Companion for Planning and Place Making (RIBA 2017). This document resulted in the following analysis.

1. **A distinctive sense of place**

   (A place with a distinct character and pattern of development, streets and spaces, roofscapes and building materials.)

Outcome: New development should strengthen Marks Tey's sense of identity, recognise its special qualities, and help to create a walkable, characterful village. Little Tey should remain as a distinct hamlet separate from Marks Tey.

2. A place that is easy to get around

(A place with convenient access where access to public transport is best; roads, footpaths and public spaces that are connected into well-used direct routes that lead to where people want to go.)

Outcome: New development should be served by high quality frequent public transport and walking and cycling facilities to provide an easy alternative to the private car. New streets should be designed to balance place and movement function and connect to existing streets providing direct and continuous links between homes, public transport and local amenities.

3. Being fit for purpose, accommodate uses well

(A place that works well for the people who live or work there, who use it and who pass by.)

Outcome: New homes and workplaces should be well built, fit for purpose and designed to be adaptable to different uses.

4. A place with successful public space

(A place where public and private spaces are clearly distinguished. With lively public spaces and routes that feel safe. Spaces should be well designed easy to maintain and suited to everyone's needs.)

Outcome: New development should retain historic landscapes and views and respect historic settlement boundaries. Open agricultural fields that provide clear separation between Marks Tey and the neighbouring settlement of Copford to the east and between Marks Tey and the hamlet of Little Tey to the west should be retained and strengthened through hedgerow protection and renewal. A variety of public spaces and play spaces should be integrated with new development. Large open spaces such as sport pitches may be located on the periphery of the settlement to help connect it to the wider countryside

5. A place that adapts to change

(Successful places have to adapt to social, economic and technological change. A place that can change easily is likely to have flexible uses, buildings and spaces that are capable of being adapted to a variety of uses.)

Outcome: Any new development should come forward in a manner which benefits existing residents and businesses. For Marks Tey a key challenge will be how new growth can help overcome existing severance. New infrastructure should come forward in advance of any new development.

6. An appealing place that is easy to understand

(A place where functional and aesthetic characteristics are closely related to one another.)

Outcome: New development should not just provide new homes but a balanced mix of homes, jobs and local retail and community infrastructure such as new health and education facilities. All new development should provide clear, easily navigable, safe and welcoming streets for all.

7. A place with a mix of uses & activities

(A place where the activities, occupations, businesses and operations carried out in a building or on a tract of land determine the life of the place.)

Outcome: Existing local businesses and skills should be retained and development brought forward in a manner that enables people to live and work in Marks Tey.

Outcome: New development should provide a complementary mix of uses including local shops, employment space and community amenities such as health, education and public open space.

8. Being efficient in how land and other resources are used

(A place where there is efficient use of resources including space, energy, materials and water and where development does not waste land, water or energy, or create unnecessary requirements for people to travel.)

Outcome: New development should facilitate public realm improvements within the neighbourhood centre. This would strengthen its role at the heart of the community, where people of all ages are able to come together, and enjoy the area.

Outcome: New development should provide a complementary mix of uses (including local shops, employment space, community amenities such as health, education and public open space) in a manner which reduces, rather than exacerbates, existing fragmentation of shops and services.

Policy MT05 – Local character and design

Context and rationale

6.7.8 The special qualities of the parish are illustrated partly by the character area maps shown in Figures 4.3 to 4.7 but the Character Assessment report describes in detail key defining characteristics. Appendix A to the Character Assessment provides information on existing buildings (and their features) which residents responded positively to as part of a consultation exercise in 2017.

6.7.9 A summary of the five character areas is provided below:

Little Tey

6.7.10 This area is one of a rural landscape with a very small and well-established community. The settlement at Little Tey is distinctly separate from the rest of Marks Tey.

6.7.11 The very busy A120 bisects the character area with the southern part comprising open countryside with the exception of industrial land uses at the corner of Elm Lane/A120 and Godbolt's Nursery on the A120. Residential development is focused in the linear hamlet of Little Tey to the north

of the A120 but there is also residential development fronting the A120 between Church Lane and Great Tey Road and, more sparsely, along Great Tey Road itself.

6.7.12 An important landmark in this area is St. James the Less Church, a Grade I listed building, together with its tranquil surroundings comprising the churchyard, Church Lane itself, the pond by the church and a tree and hedgerow lined ancient lane which leads from this point northwards to the village of Great Tey. Listed buildings here comprise four further Grade II listed buildings at the Old Rectory and the Knave's Farm. Further north where the road becomes Brook Road there is the Grade II* listed building called the Barn to South West of Little Tey House and the Grade II listed building Little Tey House itself.

6.7.13 Further detail is provided in the Character Assessment (see Chapter 4 Little Tey and see Appendix H for details on listed and non-listed buildings) and a summary of different elements is provided in the table below:

Table 6.4 – Summary characteristics for character area 1 – Little Tey

Characteristics	Character area details
Layout	Linear roads with ribbon residential development that is occasionally interrupted by expansive industrial and business sites.
Land uses	Farming, residential. Along the A120, small and large industrial sites and business centres.
Building scale appearance	Low level detached and semi-detached houses and bungalows built with many different materials.
Green features	A village pond by the church, grass verges, trees and hedgerows are all important to the rural character of the village.
Open space	No parks or children's play areas, but the churchyard is managed for the benefit of flora and fauna. A well established network of public footpaths north of the A120.
Landmarks	Grade 1 listed church of St. James the Less One Grade II* listed Barn to the south west of Little Tey Six Grade 2 listed houses Three Grade 2 listed barns

Long Green 2a

6.7.14 This character area provides the focus and heart of the Marks Tey community. A large proportion of the parish's dwellings are located here in the two housing estates Little Marks' estate and Colne Park estate. Older properties are located along Coggeshall Road. The character area also includes the St. Andrew's C of E School (opened in 1966) and Poplar Nurseries on the Coggeshall Road, a long-established business founded in 1938. The busy and often congested Coggeshall Road (part of the A120) runs east west through the middle of the character area. Open countryside lies to the north of

Coggeshall Road and beyond the residential estates in the south. Single track lanes made up of Jay's Lane, Long Green and Wilson's Lane provide a rural setting to the southern edge of the housing estates. The open countryside to the north of Coggeshall Road provides a rural setting to the north and a view towards the Grade 1 listed St Andrews Church located north east is a key contributor to sense of place.

6.7.15 Further detail is provided in the Character Assessment (see Chapter 4 Long Green) and a summary of different elements is provided in the table below:

Table 6.5 – Summary characteristics for character area 2a – Long Green

Characteristics	Character area details
Layout	One linear through road (A120) with ribbon residential development and some retail outlets. The estates have winding main roads with cul-de-sacs running off, typical of a 1970s building layout. The country lanes have grass verges and field hedges and ditches.
Land uses	Farming, residential, educational, retail and restaurant businesses.
Building scale appearance	All buildings are low level and houses do not exceed two floors in height. They are built with a variety of materials.
Green features	Ancient lanes, ponds, grass verges, hedges and mature trees are all important to the historic rural landscape.
Open space	A children's play area and seating enhance the open space next to the school, and an avenue of mature trees help improve the environment on Colne Park Estate. Within the estates, some grassed areas traversed by tarmac footpaths have potential for improvement. Where they remain, colourful front gardens enrich the whole area.
Landmarks	Six Grade II listed residential houses; One Grade II listed public house. The site of the former village green (at Long Green) is recorded as a monument (as a historic landscape feature: Monument number MCC9117) on the Historic Environment Record (HER) database and can be viewed here: https://colchesterheritage.co.uk/Monument/MCC9117

Potts Green 2b

6.7.16 This character area is located to the south of character area 2a – Long Green and to the south of the railway line. It is also in the most south easterly part of the NP area. It is sparsely populated with the majority of the land still being used for farming. The A12 bisects this character area and there are no crossing points across it for either vehicles or pedestrians.

6.7.17 Residential and employment land uses are located in the north east part of the character area between the railway line and the A12. Here, and running parallel with the A12 is the Old London Road, a service road for an industrial area to the north of the A12 and houses. The service road was the original A12 before the dual carriageway was built and opened in the late 1930s. There are houses located in linear format along one side of the service road (the A12 is on the other side). There is also a small crescent of houses located off the Old London Road, originally built to relocate residents who lost their

homes when the A12 was built. Behind this residential area, there is the vacant Anderson's employment site and to the west, an industrial site on Dobbies Lane owned by By-Pass Nurseries with a number of glass houses, now redundant, but once the homes to extensive seed production. Dobbies Lane itself is a rural lane providing an important pedestrian link to the pedestrian footbridge across the railway line and to the residential areas in character area 2.

6.7.18 This character area takes its name, Pott's Green from the former village green located on the southern side of the A12 at the end of Doggett's Lane.

6.7.19 Further detail is provided in the Character Assessment (see Chapter 4 Potts Green) and a summary of different elements is provided in the table below:

Table 6.6 – Summary characteristics for character area 2b – Potts Green

Characteristics	Character area details
Layout	One linear road (A12) bisects this area. There is a small amount of residential ribbon development on the north side of the A12 and scattered residential development to the south. There is one cul-de-sac with houses surrounding a small green area, and two country lanes.
Land uses	Predominantly agricultural, one industrial site, residential housing, and retail at Shell garage only
Building scale appearance	No residential building exceeds two storeys in height, and they are built with a variety of materials.
Green features	Ancient lanes, ponds, grass verges, hedges and mature trees are all important to the historic rural landscape and enhance the quality of life for the residents.
Open space	To the east, south and west the area has views of open countryside.
Landmarks	2 Grade II listed buildings The site of the former village green (at Potts Green) is recorded as a monument (as a historic landscape feature: Monument number MCC9116) on the Historic Environment Record (HER) database and can be viewed here: https://colchesterheritage.co.uk/Monument/MCC9116

Roman River

6.7.20 This character area is in the north eastern part of the plan area. It is located north of the east west London to Norwich Railway Line and the area is also bisected by the Marks Tey to Sudbury Railway Line. The latter creates a western part of the character area where Church Lane is and an eastern area where North Lane is.

6.7.21 As a whole the area is sparsely populated. There is linear residential development along North Lane and a few houses are scattered on Church Lane. In addition, there are four late 19th Century terraced cottages in the southern part of this Character Area on Coggeshall Road.

6.7.22 Church Lane itself is a tranquil place; the Grade I listed St Andrews Church is located halfway along it and at the end there is the Marks Tey Brick Pit SSSI beyond where the road comes to an end.

Both the Church and the Brick Pit are important local landmarks. The church is visibly striking, views of which can be enjoyed from the site of the Brick Pit, from the A120 in the south and from Little Tey.

6.7.23 North Lane provides access from the Coggeshall Road to Aldham and beyond. It is not a route without difficulties. It includes two important bridges; one over the Roman River at the northern extent of the character area (which is also an area susceptible to flooding) and one over the railway lines at the southern part of the character area. The Roman River bridge was replaced in May 2019 and the bridge over the railway line is very narrow making it difficult for two-way traffic to cross and presenting pedestrian safety issues as a result of this (see Figure 6.2).

6.7.24 Further detail is provided in the Character Assessment (see Chapter 4 Roman River) and a summary of different elements is provided in the table below:

Table 6.7 – Summary characteristics for character area 3a – Roman River

Characteristics	**Character area details**
Layout	A very small section of the A120 and two country lanes, with some residential development, are the only roads. A main line and branch line railway cross the area, 2 industrial areas
Land uses	Farming, worship, residential, small and large industrial areas.
Building scale appearance	Low level detached and semi-detached houses and bungalows built with many different materials.
Green features	The river area and SSSI. The fields, ancient hedgerows and trees.
Open space	No parks or play areas. Churchyard.
Landmarks	Grade I listed church of St. Andrews Grade II listed house Grade II listed scheduled monument at Marks Tey Brick Kilns War memorial

The Village

6.7.25 This character area is where you will find the shops, the railway station, hotel and over 50% of all businesses in Marks Tey Parish. The Village Character Area (see Map 4.7) is located south of the railway line and today, it is separated by the A12 from most of the dwellings in the parish.

6.7.26 The mainline railway first separated Marks Tey Village from other communities found at Long Green and Little Tey in 1843. Then, in the 1930s a number of houses and businesses were demolished to widen the main road to London. Later, in the 1960s, the Rectory Meadow (where the Marks Tey Cricket Club held their matches and school children played each day) and Station Road were lost completely to the construction of the dumbbell style Junction 25 to the A12 and the Stanway bypass.

6.7.27 Residential development is constructed in a linear layout along London Road, Mill Road and Old London Road. In addition, there are separate apartment complexes at the Old Rectory, north of the dumbbell style Junction 25, the Rookeries east of Junction 25 and Point Chase along the Old London Road, also east of Junction 25. As a whole, the residential areas are dispersed among other land uses, segregated by transport infrastructure and, taken as a whole, incoherent in style.

6.7.28 Despite the radical changes that have taken place to the transport infrastructure in this character area, London Road is still a hub of activity, and referred to by residents as the "The Village". Among the facilities found on London Road are a hotel with swimming pool and gym, a variety of shops, restaurants, fish and chips, Chinese take-away, post office, pharmacy, hairdressers and beautician, vehicle repair garage and a field used regularly for a car boot sale. A key challenge facing this area is:

- Addressing street scene amenity issues so as to increase accessibility to the shops and services for pedestrians, the mobility impaired as well as those accessing the area by vehicles and wishing to find an off-road parking space;
- Future change resulting from a planned relocation of Junction 25 - addressing the impact this may have on passing trade but also realising any opportunities created by this to create a better environment for residents and shoppers alike;
- Attracting visitors using Marks Tey railway station and residents north of the railway line who currently have to take a convoluted route to first cross the A120 and then use a pedestrian bridge which spans the A12.

6.7.29 Even as the busiest of Marks Tey character areas, the countryside is not far out of reach, and from the footpath beside the former Methodist Church along the Old London Road, a walk through the only wooded area in the parish will bring the walker to open farmland to enjoy the views.

6.7.30 Important landmarks in this area include the Marks Tey Hall, together with its associated buildings with moat and medieval fishpond, accessed south off Old London Road and formerly the hub of the community and formerly home to Marks Tey Lord of the Manor.

6.7.31 Further detail is provided in the Character Assessment (see Chapter 4 The Village) and a summary of different elements is provided in the table below:

Table 6.8 – Summary characteristics for character area 3b – The Village.

Characteristics	Character area details
Layout	An area dominated by a major trunk road and dumbbell junction. Residential areas are dispersed in amongst other land uses. Houses are built in ribbon development or in small cul-de-sacs off the main roads. Three apartment complex sites.
Land uses	Residential, educational, retail, post office, motoring service centre, railway station, hotel and leisure, community services, light industrial, restaurants, pharmacy and farming.
Building scale appearance	Features which are common to the majority of buildings is a low level built form built along consistent building lines, placed at the front of plots, but with buildings spanning several centuries there is not one style which characterises this character area.
Green features	Large mature trees, footpaths out to the open countryside in the south. Vegetated islands in amongst the road infrastructure.
Open space	Large recreation area with play area and sports fields.
Landmarks	Cemetery, moat, medieval fishpond, wooded area, ancient hedges and field boundaries. 3 Grade II listed buildings: - Marks Tey Hall - 16th Century Barn at Marks Tey Hall - The Villa 1 Grade II* listed building - 14th Century Barn at Marks Tey Hall Site of historic farmstead at No. 1 London Road (formerly Butcher's Farm) - Listed as Monument Record MCC9208 on the Historic Environment Record and can be viewed here: https://colchesterheritage.co.uk/Monument/MCC9208

Policy Intent

6.7.32 The purpose of Policy MT05 is to ensure that all development proposals that come forward in the parish are of high quality and contribute positively to the existing character of the built-up and rural environment. The policy has been directly informed by the Marks Tey Character Assessment. With respect to its approach on design, the NP as a whole, has also been informed by the Out Design Masterplanning document which provided its own urban design analysis of the plan area (as described above). The policy will apply to all proposals involving new build including extensions to existing residential or buildings in other uses. Expectations will be proportionate to the size of a proposed scheme.

6.7.33 Policy MT05 will apply against the context of national and strategic policy applicable to design. Applicable Local Plan policies are:

- Core Strategy Policy SD1: Sustainable Development Locations,
- Core Strategy Policy UR2: Built Design and Character,
- Development Policies Plan Policy DP1: Design and Amenity, and
- Emerging Local Plan Policy DM15: Design and Amenity.

6.7.34 Both the emerging and adopted Local Plan signposts the Essex Design Guide published by Essex County Council as being a useful source for detail on achieving appropriate design in new development and avoiding undesirable impacts. The value in Policy MT05 in this NP is its direct relevance to the plan area and the way in which it highlights existing characteristics of value and challenges in the plan area.

POLICY MT05 – LOCAL CHARACTER AND DESIGN

All development proposals should contribute in a positive way to the quality of the built environment and settings in the parish.

Development proposals must be the result of a design-led process with regards to a scheme's location, layout, design, choice of building materials and density.

To be supported, development proposals must also be sympathetic to the existing character and history of Marks Tey including its built environment (whereby nearly all buildings in the parish are low in height, built either to ribbon or estate style development on good sized plots, using mainly brick and timber with some plaster work) and landscape setting; details of which are provided in the Marks Tey Character Assessment (available to view alongside this Neighbourhood Plan).

Innovative approaches to design will be welcomed where this will add to the overall quality of the neighbourhood and parish for example via self build or custom build development.

Key considerations and recommendations for all schemes include:

For proposals in the Little Tey Character Area:

- Protect the tranquil and rural environment along Church Lane.
- All development to be in keeping with existing pattern of low density linear development.
- Protect the open landscape between Little Tey and Marks Tey.
- Mitigate the residential amenity and traffic management issues as a result of the busy and congested A120 as the principal access corridor.

For proposals in the Long Green Character Area:

- Be sympathetic to the existing character, comprising low density residential development, away from busy through-roads connected through network of green spaces and pedestrian friendly routes
- Retain or enhance the rural lanes which provide a rural setting to the residential areas and connectivity to the public rights of way
- Respect, and not adversely impact the open views looking northwards from the A120 towards the Grade I listed St. Andrews Church (located in Roman River Character area).
- Mitigate the residential amenity issues and poor street scene environment created through the busyness on the A120.

For proposals in the Potts Green Character Area:

- Retain or enhance the pedestrian links from Old London Road, up Dobbies Lane over the railway line to the Marks Tey estates.
- Mitigate the residential amenity issues created through the busyness of the A12.
- Retain or enhance connectivity to historic village green at Potts Green.

Continues overleaf

POLICY MT05 – LOCAL CHARACTER AND DESIGN CONTINUED…

For proposals in the Roman River:

- Conserve or enhance the Grade I listed St Andrews Church and its setting.
- Retain the strong sense of tranquillity along Church Lane.
- Adequately address the constraints on any development created by the narrow bridge on North Lane and areas of flood risk along the Roman River.

For Proposals in The Village:

- Conserve or enhance the Grade II listed Marks Tey Hall and its setting.
- Take opportunities to improve the street scene environment around the London Parade shops.
- Take opportunities to improve the connectivity between the areas currently segregated by the road infrastructure through measures which improve the attractiveness of pedestrian routes and create more direct routes.
- Retain existing and take opportunities to create new green infrastructure.
- Prioritise design and layout that increases coherence and strengthens sense of place.

Development proposals which adopt innovative approaches to the construction of low carbon homes and buildings which demonstrate sustainable use of resources and high energy efficiency levels (for example construction to Passivhaus or similar standards) will be welcomed.

6.8 Policy MT06 - Landscape character, views and setting

Context and rationale

6.8.1 There is a range of sources that provide information on the character of Marks Tey Landscape Character:

- Colchester Landscape Character Assessment published in 2005
- West Colchester Growth Area Option Environmental Audit. This was produced by Chris Blandford Associates in November 2015 to help inform the emerging Borough Plan.
- The Marks Tey Character Assessment produced by the NP steering group to inform this plan.

6.8.2 The West Colchester Growth Area Option Environmental Audit draws from previous landscape characterisation work in the proceeding Chris Blandford reports. Key conclusions from this work are:

- The landscape capacity of Marks Tey parish has limited ability to be able to accommodate development without degradation of landscape characteristics that are of local value. Mitigation and enhancement measures would be required where change does take place.
- Care should be taken to avoid loss of the woodlands and hedgerows/field boundaries that form screening elements in views from the edge of Marks Tey area.
- The arable fields between Copford and Marks Tey along the B1408 are considered to provide a high contribution to the physical and visual separation between the settlements.
- Most of the land between Marks Tey and Little Tey is considered to provide a high contribution to the physical and visual separation between the settlements. It is considered desirable to safeguard this from inappropriate development
- Most of the land between Marks Tey and Easthorpe is considered to provide a high contribution to the physical and visual separation between the settlements
- Existing landscape structure across the site should be retained and strengthened.
- Opportunities for development without impacting significantly on landscape character exist at:
    - The western end of Marks Tey, arable fields on either side of Dobbies Lane and their associated greenhouses are considered to have no more than a medium contribution to the sense of separation between Marks Tey and Easthorpe
    - The area of hardstanding south of the intersection of the A12 and A120 has a predominantly urban fringe character and makes a low contribution to sense of separation between the settlements. This also applies to the adjacent field which is enclosed by built development on three sides

6.8.3 As part of the Marks Tey Character Assessment work, the NP group has identified a range of locally important views looking out to the countryside from public spaces in the village, views looking out towards locally important heritage assets.

6.8.4 As illustrated in the table below, many of these views have also been assessed as part of the West Colchester Growth Area Option Environmental Audit undertaken to support the Borough's emerging spatial strategy in 2015.

Table 6.9 - Viewpoints identified in Marks Tey Character Assessment and West Colchester Growth Option Environment Audit, 2015

Locally Important Views	Viewpoint in the West Colchester Growth Area Option Environmental Audit 2015
View 1a) – Long Green This is a locally valued view shown on Map 4.4 from the railway line pedestrian bridge looking out towards Long Green. Key contributing features to sense of place and to be respected are: a) the site of the historic village green at Long Green. This is now listed as a monument and connects the listed buildings of "The Green" and "Samsons Cottage" and b) the locally valued landscape feature of Granger's Lane (a tree and hedgerow-lined ancient lane and (since April 2021) also a public right of way. View 1b) – looking south of railway line. This is a locally valued view shown on Map 4.5. A key contributing feature to sense of place and to be respected is the view of the Fields looking towards Potts Green & Easthorpe. These fields were once part of an area that was classed as the seed producing capital of the world. Resident quote during consultation work: *"A typical Essex landscape. Brilliant area for both train spotting and dog walking."*	Viewpoints 16a and 16b
View 2 – Wilsons Lane - footpath to Elm Lane (View from Wilsons Lane looking out over the footpath towards Elm Lane). This is a locally valued landscape view shown on map 4.4. The view is enjoyed from the public footpath across the fields from Wilsons Lane towards Elm Lane. Key contributing features to sense of place and to be respected are the open space and sky, alongside the hedges which line the fields which are all clearly marked on the 1843 Tithe Map. Resident quote during consultation work: *"We have always appreciated the view, the open space and sky. This is a very popular place."*	Viewpoint 15
View 3a)– Little Tey A wide landscape view looking, east and west from Church Lane.	View 10 is view from Little Tey looking east towards open countryside

Locally Important Views	Viewpoint in the West Colchester Growth Area Option Environmental Audit 2015
This is a locally valued landscape view shown on Map 4.3. The viewpoint is along Church Lane close to the car park (a little further north from View 3b (below). This is a landscape view looking westwards and eastwards. The key contributing feature to sense of place and to be respected is the vast open countryside, representing Little Tey's rural background. **View 3b)** – Little Tey towards St. James the Less Church A view taken on Church Lane looking towards the Grade Ilisted church This is a locally valued view towards an important heritage asset in the parish shown on Map 4.3. The key contributing features to sense of place and to be respected is the view of the Grade 1 listed St. James the Less Church, together with the characterful lane, the pond and trees which are all part of the setting of this important heritage asset. Resident quote during consultation work: "*This has been the focus of village life for centuries. A village view of a lovely historic church"*	
View 4 – Motts Lane bridleway A wide landscape view looking north, east and west from Mott's Lane Bridleway. This is a locally valued view across open landscape and also encompassing heritage assets. The view is shown on Map 4.4. Key contributing features to sense of place and to be respected are a) the Motts Lane bridleway itself b) views across the fields to a small copse which are enjoyed from the bridleway. c) views towards the three Tey Churches (Grade I listed St. James the Less, Grade I listed St Andrews Church and the Grade I listed St. Barnabas Church (located in Great Tey Parish https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1223408) Resident quote during consultation work: "*The three Tey churches viewed from one spot. Priceless."*	Not assessed
View 5 – St. Andrews Church from the A120 Coggeshall Road	Views 12, 13 and 14 look at views northwards from Coggeshall Road

Locally Important Views	**Viewpoint in the West Colchester Growth Area Option Environmental Audit 2015**
From Ashbury Drive roundabout on A120 looking north towards Aldham and towards the Grade 1 listed church This is a locally valued view towards open landscape and towards a key heritage asset, the Grade I listed St Andrews Church. Key contributing features to sense of place and to be respected are: a) the rolling countryside of Aldham, b) the Grade I listed St. Andrew's Church Marks Tey. c) the view of the Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) at the brickpit which is described as a unique site in the UK and one of 'World Heritage' importance. Resident quote during consultation work: *"Probably the most unspoilt and uplifting view in Marks Tey. It's an open view and probably the only one everyone can enjoy".*	where view 14 matches as the view towards St Andrews Church
View 6a –St. Andrews Church from road bridge This view is enjoyed from the road bridge that crosses over the railway line looking north towards the Grade 2 listed church. It is also enjoyed from trains pulling out of the station, just before going under the A120 road bridge. This is a locally valued view towards an important heritage asset in the parish, the Grade I listed St. Andrew's Church Key contributing features to sense of place and to be respected are the: a) Grade I listed St Andrews Church in the foreground b) the open rural landscape against which the church is framed and c) the rolling countryside of Aldham in the background Marks Tey. Resident quote during consultation: "*Beautiful view of the church with distant views of countryside and farming activity."*	Not assessed
View 7 – Aldham This view is enjoyed from the railway station footbridge looking north towards Aldham. This is a locally valued landscape view shown on Map 4.6. Key contributing features to sense of place and therefore to be respected are: a) the view northward to the Roman River Valley	Viewpoint 9

Locally Important Views	Viewpoint in the West Colchester Growth Area Option Environmental Audit 2015
b) the rolling countryside of Aldham c) the hedges which can be found on the 1843 title map	
View 8 - Roman River Valley This is a view looking east and west from the little bridge over the Roman River on North Lane. This is a locally valued landscape view shown on Map 4.6. Key contributing features to sense of place and therefore to be respected are the Roman River Valley and the farmland in which it is set.	Viewpoint 7
View 9 – Wooded area south of Methodist church This view is to the south of the Methodist Church looking south over wooded area. This is a locally valued landscape view shown on Map 4.7. A key contributing feature to sense of place and therefore to be respected is the wooded landscape. It is the last remaining wooded area in the parish. Resident quote during consultation "*This was an old orchard. It has wonderful drifts of snowdrops. A truly natural area"*	Outside scope of the West Colchester Growth Area Option Environmental Audit
View 10 – Marks Tey Hall This is a view from the public footpath looking west towards the Grade II listed building. This is a locally valued views towards a heritage feature, the Grade II listed Marks Tey Hall. Key contributing features to sense of place and therefore to be respected is Marks Tey Hall and its setting.	Not assessed
View 11 - Potts Green - site of village green This is a wide landscape view taken from the public footpath on Doggetts Lane towards the south overlooking the historic village green. This is a locally valued landscape view shown on Map 4.5. Key contributing features to sense of place and therefore to be respected are: a) the open views looking southeast across fields towards Easthorpe b) the site of the historic green itself c) the remaining hedges which can still be found on the 1843 tithe maps giving them ancient status.	Not assessed

6.8.5 Due to their contribution to establishing sense of place in the parish it is important that new development proposals coming forward do not adversely impact landscape character, views and setting. This does not necessarily mean disallowing anything within the view cones shown on Maps 4.3 to 4.7 but it means that special attention will need to be had to design and layout of developments which fall within those view cones. If a development proposal adversely impacts a view it will be resisted where harm to a view is determined to outweigh the public benefits.

Policy Intent

6.8.6 We wish to support proposals which maintain or enhance existing landscape character and views in Marks Tey parish.

POLICY MT06 – LANDSCAPE CHARACTER, VIEWS AND SETTING

Development proposals will be supported where they recognise, maintain and where possible enhance landscape character in Marks Tey parish.

Areas of open land which make a high contribution towards physical and visual separation between Marks Tey and Copford, between Marks Tey and Little Tey and between Marks Tey and Easthorpe shall be safeguarded from inappropriate development.

To be supported development proposals must

- retain open corridors which connect the built environment to the surrounding countryside; and
- maintain or enhance the setting of the following locally identified important views which contribute to sense of place in the parish (described in Table 6.9 and identified in Maps 4.3 to 4.7).

View 1a) – Long Green (See Map 4.4)
A view from the railway line pedestrian bridge looking out towards Long Green (a historic site of the village green)

View 1b) – Looking south of railway line. (See Map 4.5)

View 2 – Wilsons Lane - footpath to Elm Lane (See Map 4.4)
A view from Wilsons Lane looking out over the footpath towards Elm Lane

View 3a)– Little Tey (See Map 4.3)
A wide landscape view looking east and west

View 3b) – Little Tey Towards St. James the Less Church (See Map 4.3)
A view taken on Church Lane looking towards the Grade 1 listed church

View 4 – Motts Lane bridleway (see Map 4.4)
A wide landscape view looking north, east and west from Mott's Lane Bridleway

View 5 – St. Andrews Church from the A120 Coggeshall Road (see Map 4.4)
From Ashbury Drive roundabout on A120 looking north towards Aldham and towards the Grade 1 listed church

View 6a –St. Andrews Church from road bridge (See Map 4.6)
This view is enjoyed from the road bridge that crosses over the railway line looking north towards the Grade I listed church. It is also enjoyed from trains pulling out of the station, just before going under the A120 road bridge.

View 7 – Aldham (See Map 4.6)
This view is enjoyed from the railway station footbridge looking north towards Aldham

View 8 - Roman River Valley (See Map 4.6)
This is a view looking east and west from the little bridge over the Roman River on North Lane.

Continues overleaf

POLICY MT06 – LANDSCAPE CHARACTER, VIEWS AND SETTING CONTINUED:

View 9 – Wooded area south of Methodist church (see Map 4.7)
This view is to the south of the Methodist Church looking south over wooded area

View 10 – Marks Tey Hall (See Map 4.7)
This is a view from the public footpath looking west towards the Grade II listed building.

View 11 - Potts Green - site of village green (See Map 4.5)
This is a wide landscape view taken from the public footpath on Doggetts Lane towards the south overlooking the historic village green

6.9 Policy MT07 – Non-designated heritage assets

Policy context and rationale

6.9.1 There are 27 statutorily listed buildings within the parish. These are highly valued by the community of Marks Tey and are already protected under local plan and national planning policies. In addition to these there are other buildings which are of local historic importance and their preservation or enhancement is important to maintaining a sense of place in Marks Tey.

6.9.2 Information on buildings of local historic importance was collected as part of the Marks Tey character assessment work. The community were consulted on this during consultation undertaken in summer and autumn 2018. Please see Chapter 4 for further detail on these locally important buildings.

6.9.3 The Colchester Local List seeks to safeguard selected undesignated heritage assets that, although not suitable for designation nationally are valued by the local community and make a significant contribution to the heritage of Colchester and the surrounding villages. The selection criteria for the Local List was adopted in October 2019 and is available to view: https://colchesterheritage.co.uk/documents/2019-10-21_adopted.local.list.selection.criteria.pdf ..

Policy Intent

6.9.4 The Marks Tey community values its local heritage and we want to ensure that our locally interesting buildings and other heritage assets are not lost or re-developed in a way that would negatively impact on their architectural significance. We want to protect these non-designated heritage assets[5].

6.9.5 Policy MT07 is intended to apply to all buildings and structures listed in the policy as well as any additional assets in the parish that are included as part of a future Colchester Borough Council local list. It is intended that the list of non-designated heritage assets in Marks Tey will be reviewed as necessary as part of any future review of the Marks Tey Neighbourhood Plan.

[5] Old Rectory Court, Station Road is referred to as the Old Rectory in the Character Assessment and Church Farm House as Church Farm.

POLICY MT07 NON -DESIGNATED HERITAGE ASSETS

The following buildings and assets, as described in Appendix 3 to the Plan, have been identified as non-designated heritage assets.

Proposals should seek to conserve or enhance the significance of the heritage assets listed in this policy as well as any additional non-designated heritage assets which are located in the plan area and included in the most up to date Colchester Borough Local List.

Where proposals have any effect on a non-designated heritage asset, a balanced judgement will be applied having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.

Character Area 2a – Long Green:

1. White Essex weather boarded old farm cottages 91 and 93 Coggeshall Road
2. The Old Thatched Cottage 85 Coggeshall Road
3. 25 Coggeshall Road

Character Area 2b – Potts Green:

4. Hammer Farm House, Doggetts Lane
5. Site of former Potts Green

Character Area 3a – Roman River:

6. Church Farm House and outbuildings
7. Railway station (original building waiting room and section of original canopy)

Character Area 3b – the Village:

8. Old Rectory Court, Station Road
9. The Old Cottages, Old London Road
10. Former Methodist Church, London Road
11. Wynscroft, Number 1 London Road (previously known as Butcher's Cottage)

6.10 Policy MT08 – Rural lanes

Context and rationale

6.10.1 There are a number of rural lanes in the parish which are highly valued by local people. In a parish otherwise dominated by transport infrastructure corridors disrupting connectivity, these rural lanes provide vital access to the countryside in which the village is set. As well as having amenity value in themselves they also provide routes for non-motorised modes of transport helping to connect different parts of the parish.

6.10.2 Policy MT08 complements the landscape management guidelines (set out in the Colchester Borough Landscape Character Assessment published in 2005) for the character area in which Marks Tey falls (B2: Easthorpe Farmland Plateau) which includes the guideline to "conserve historic lanes and unimproved roadside verges"

6.10.3 The rural lanes are:

- Doggett's Lane. An ancient lane along which Potts Green is reached.
- Dobbies Lane allows residents to cross the railway bridge and walk from Marks Tey Estate to Marks Tey Village Hall
- Mott's Lane. This is a rural lane to the north of the A120. There is a public right of way which runs from the A120 junction along the length of Mott's Lane and a further public footpath which joins Mott's Lane from the west. There is no through route for motorised vehicles along Mott's Lane.
- An ancient green lane in Little Tey leading from the church to the old rectory situated on the Great Tey Road. The lane is classified as a Byway.
- Granger's Lane leading from Long Green to Broom's Farm. Appendix B to the Character Assessment provides a detailed description of this lane. The lane once formed part of a link road between two roads known to be Roman, Stane Street, (now A120) and the road to London (A12) although both these roads could have earlier origins and were upgraded by the Romans. This lane has as at 21 October 2020 become recognised as a formal public right of way through the Essex County Council Definitive Map Modification No. 677, Footpath 13, Marks Tey.

6.10.4 The green lane in Little Tey and Granger's Lane are particularly valued as having landscape and biodiversity value. They have been found through the character assessment work to be in a similar condition to what they have been in for several centuries with earth surfaces and a natural hedge on either side. They are mostly free from motorised vehicles with the exception of occasional farm vehicles in Little Tey.

6.10.5 Further information on these rural lanes can be found in Chapter 4 of the Character Assessment as well as Appendix B – Granger's Lane.

POLICY MT08 - RURAL LANES

The following rural lanes (as identified on Maps 4.3 to 4.7) are identified as Marks Tey Important Features of Local Value.

Their amenity value and biodiversity value shall be protected or enhanced.

- Dogget's Lane.
- Dobbies Lane
- Ancient Green Lane in Little Tey
- Granger's Lane leading from Long Green to Broom's Farm
- Motts Lane

Where development is proposed adjacent or close to these rural lanes it is expected that all opportunities will be taken to increase their amenity, landscape and biodiversity value (for example through providing additional access for non-motorised modes of transport to Dobbies Lane through Anderson's employment site).

A STRONGER COMMUNITY

Objective 4: Existing community facilities including open space will be protected and opportunities to improve existing provision will be realised

Context

6.11.1 As described in Chapter 2, the parish has a wide range of community facilities and a generous amount of formal amenity space. Due to its position on the A120 and the A12 junction 25, the parish has become a hub serving the communities beyond its boundaries. The village hall, for instance, is often hired out to community groups from outside the parish. The hall has been established since 1994 and, due to its size, variety of rooms, plentiful parking and a location close to the A12, has become a major venue on the west side of Colchester for a very wide range of voluntary groups and activities. Over recent years the hall has become a resource both for local people and others who live in Colchester and the surrounding villages and the playing field is popular with dog walkers, young families, skate boarders and local football teams.

6.11.2 Formal open space in the parish is limited to the recreation ground on the parish hall grounds and the open space at the heart of the Estate (which comprises Colne Park Estate to the west of Jay's Lane and Little Marks Estate to the east of Jay's Lane). The parish hall recreation ground is valued, due to its openness and accessibility, by many local families. During consultation work (see section 3) it was often identified as a positive attribute by the wider community (see section 3).

6.11.3 Notwithstanding this, the Out Design masterplanning support document notes its location and access as a shortcoming:

"... given its location, lack of prominence and indirect access, particularly for pedestrians, it can feel disconnected from other parts of the village."

6.11.4 Within the village settlement boundary of Marks Tey village, green infrastructure comprises the Parish Hall recreation grounds as well informal areas of green open space within Marks Tey housing estate and road side landscaping (e.g. near the A120/12 interchange). The five character area maps identify all areas of locally valued green space and these are described in the character assessment itself. Outside Marks Tey village, there is a richer and more varied source of green infrastructure that is enjoyed by parish residents. This includes local views of the countryside as illustrated on the Character Area maps, enjoyed from key points within the village but also from points on the rural footpath network (e.g., Long Green beyond the built-up areas, areas providing wildlife habitat including mature trees, hedgerows and the Brick Pit SSSI).

6.11.5 It is clear from the ongoing community engagement work from 2015 through to 2018 that access to green infrastructure (comprising the open countryside, features of wildlife value and open space) is a top priority for residents.

6.12 Policy MT09 – Local green spaces

Context and rationale

6.12.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) allows communities to designate areas as Local Green Space. Once designated, a Local Green Space is safeguarded as an open space and protected from development. A Local Green Space must meet the criteria set out in paragraph 102 of the NPPF. This states:

> *"The Local Green Space designation should only be used where the green space is:*
>
> - *In reasonably close proximity to the community it serves;*
> - *Demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance, for example because of its beauty, historic significance, recreational value (including as a playing field), tranquillity or richness of its wildlife; and*
> - *Local in character and is not an extensive tract of land."*

6.12.2 An assessment has been undertaken of the green spaces within the parish. This work has resulted in the identification of the following spaces as suitable Local Green Spaces.

- Colne Park Estate Play Area. This space is demonstrably special and holds a particular local significance due to its recreational value. Together with the recreation area (see below), the play area provides a green lung in the built-up area of the housing estate. This space has play equipment for younger children, together with seating and picnic benches.
- Colne Park Estate Recreation Area. This space is demonstrably special and holds a particularly local significance due to its recreational value. Together with the play area (see above), the recreation area provides a green lung in the built-up area of the housing estate. This space is a grassed area criss-crossed by paths enabling access from various points of the estate providing a break from traffic fumes for walkers, be they with dogs, children or on their won.
- Pond and Seating Area by Little Tey Church. This space is demonstrably special and holds a particular local significance due to its visual amenity, biodiversity amenity and the opportunity it provides for rest and contemplation in a tranquil location in the setting of the Grade I listed St. James the Less Church. With its seating area, the space is a landmark feature in Little Tey and provides amenity for both visitors and residents.
- Parish Hall Recreation Ground. This space is demonstrably special and holds a particular local significance due to its recreational value. The recreation ground is a centrally located area of outdoor recreation space providing a children's play space with play equipment, a skateboard park, a basketball court, and football pitches. The facilities are set in a large area of soft landscaping including trees and hedges.

Policy Intent

6.12.3 Because of their special value to the Marks Tey community, we wish to identify the following as Local Green Spaces

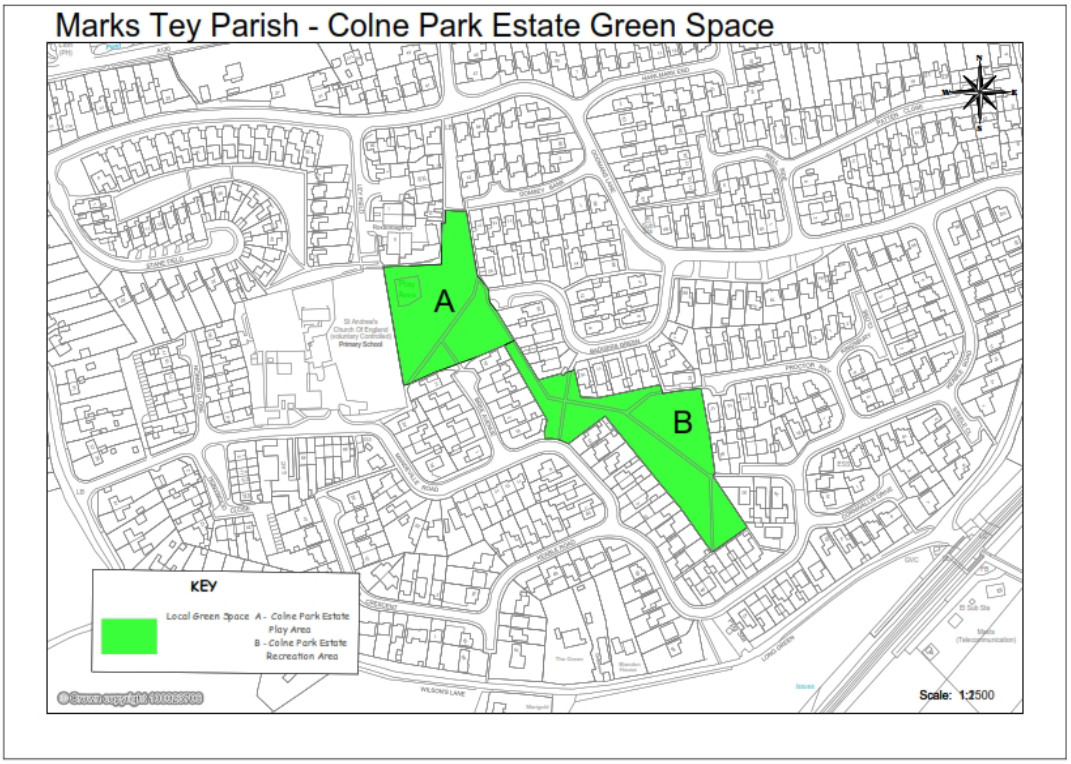
POLICY MT09 - LOCAL GREEN SPACES

The following green spaces, identified on Maps 6.3 – 6.5, are designated Local Green Spaces as defined in the National Planning Policy Framework.

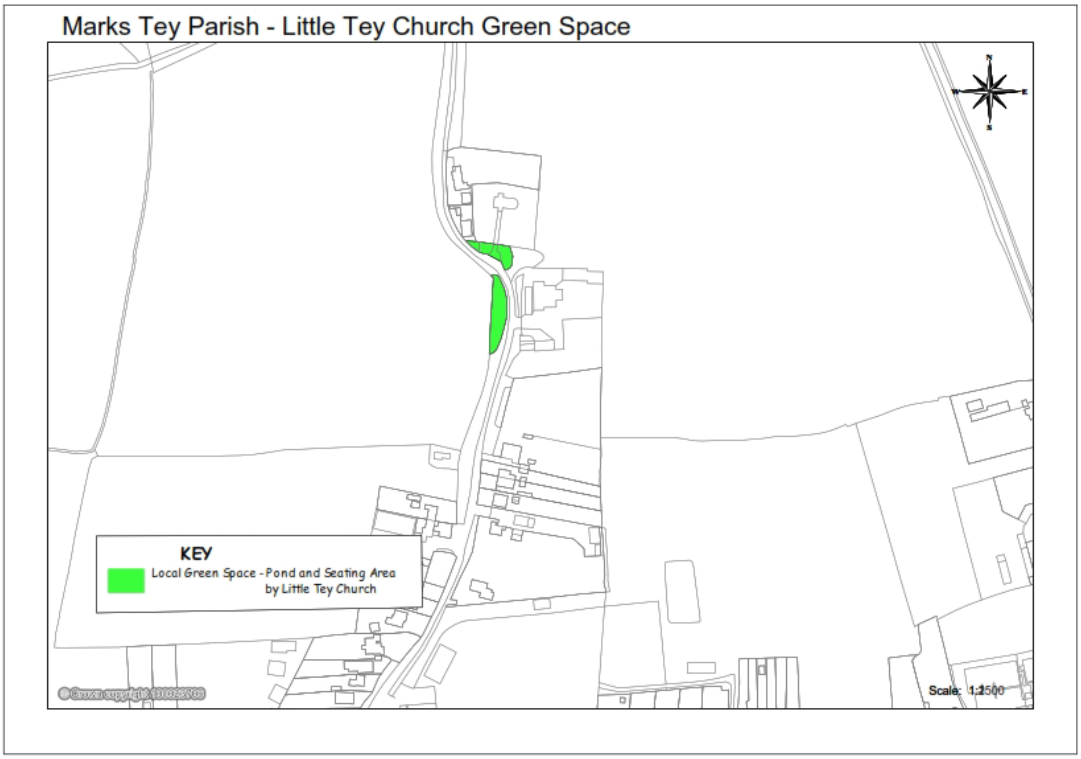
- Colne Park Estate Play Area
- Colne Park Estate Recreation Area
- Pond and Seating Area by Little Tey Church
- Parish Hall Recreation Ground

Proposals for any development on Local Green Spaces will be resisted other than in very special circumstances.

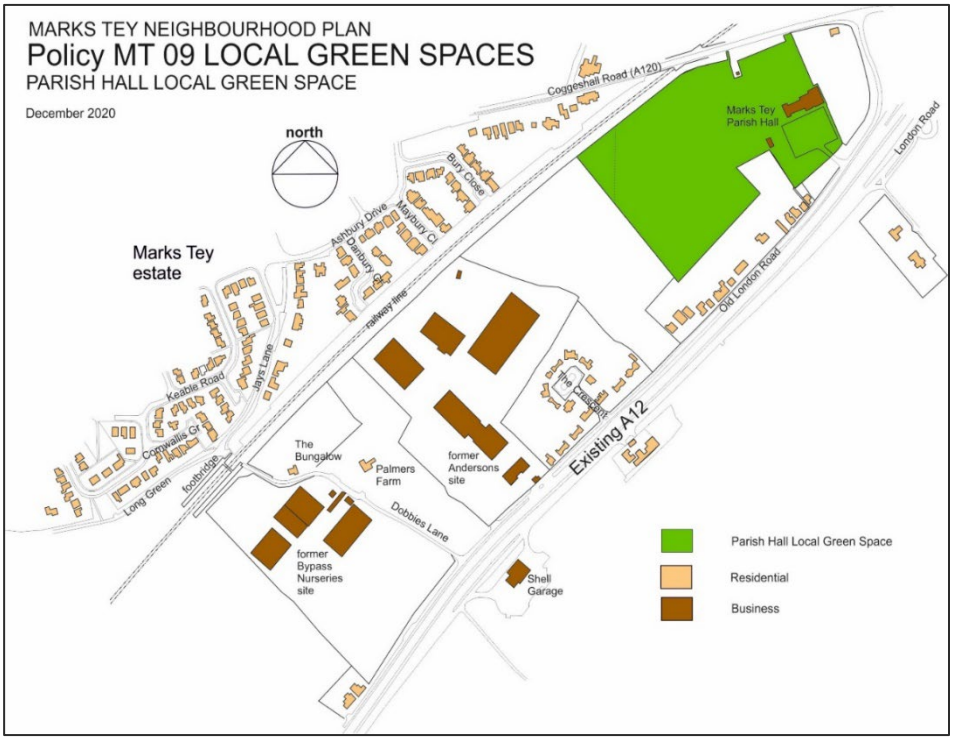
Map 6.3 Colne Park local green spaces



Map 6.4 Pond and seating area by Little Tey Church



Map 6.5 Marks Tey Parish Hall recreation ground local green space



6.13 Policy MT10 – Protecting and enhancing the quality and quantity of our green infrastructure

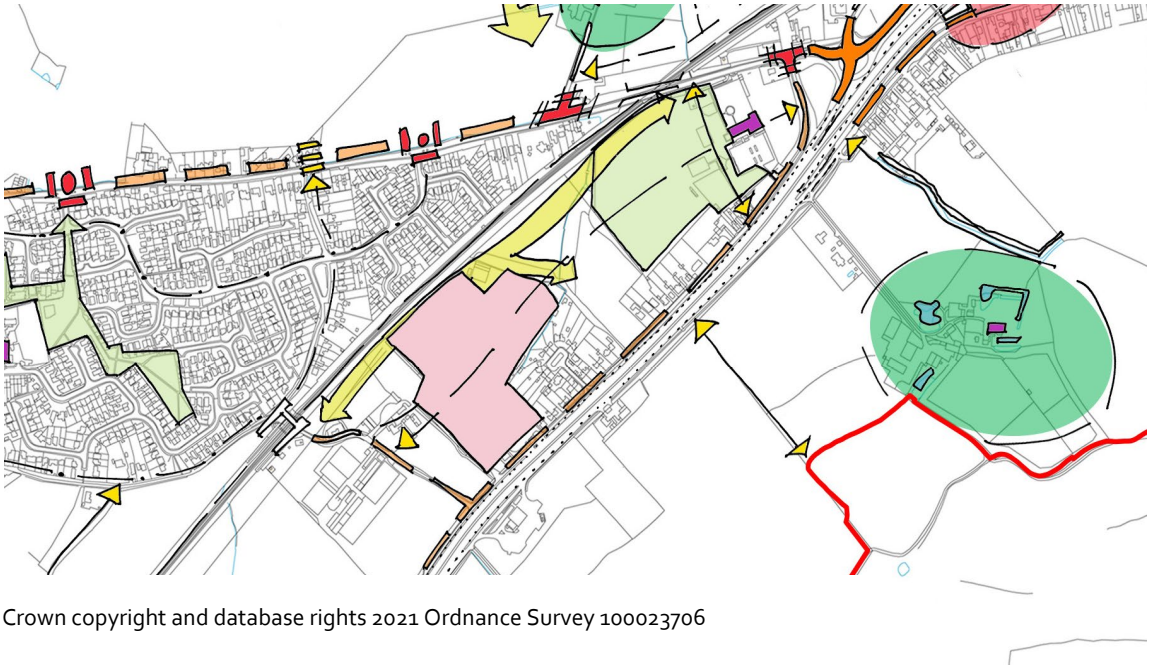
Context and rationale

6.13.1 The existing green infrastructure in the parish is highly valued but provision of green infrastructure within the built-up area is of limited quality and there is scope to improve this. The character assessment identifies opportunities to enhance existing green space in the parish including the rural lanes listed in Policy MT08 and the reinstatement of the historic green at Potts Green into a public open space. A number of opportunities have also been identified in the masterplanning support document on this:

Green Corridors:

- The Greens: the creation of a continuous, accessible green corridor to the west of Marks Tey incorporating Long Green and Potts Green. This aspiration is illustrated on the emerging framework plan in the Masterplanning support document (see Map 6.1 in this plan), an extract from which is provided below in Map 6.6, and would increase the amenity value considerably of the pedestrian route from the Parish Hall recreation ground through to Long Green (via the railway bridge). This route could also be accessed by commuters travelling by train.

Map 6.6: the creation of a continuous, accessible green corridor to the West of Marks Tey. Extract from Figure 5.3 Out Design Masterplanning Support document.



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- Roman River: the creation of a continuous accessible green corridor to the north of Marks Tey broadly following Roman River Corridor and the surrounding countryside to encourage active lifestyles. A potential new walking connection under the railway line north of Marks Tey station could be explored. The corridor would also function as a visual and physical separation from Copford. See Map 6.7 below.

Map 6.7: the creation of a continuous accessible green corridor to the north of Marks Tey broadly following the Roman River Corridor and the surrounding countryside to encourage active lifestyles. Extract from Figure 5.3 Out Design Masterplanning support document.



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The Parish Hall recreation grounds

- a landscaping strategy to better integrate play and sports facilities within the grounds
- the provision of better pedestrian access to the Parish Hall and improved cycle facilities
- the provision of habitat-rich tree and shrub planting.

Marks Estate public open space:

- introduce more habitat rich tree and shrub planting
- improve play provision

6.13.2 The Colchester Local Plan includes policy DP15 Retention of Open Space and Indoor Sports Facilities which protects existing open spaces as identified on the Borough proposals map, unless exceptional circumstances exist and alternative provision can be made.

Policy Intent

6.13.3 The purpose of the policy is to highlight the existing priorities and aspirations regarding future green infrastructure provision in the parish. All development proposals will be expected to contribute towards green infrastructure provision and this provision should accord with the priorities identified in this plan.

POLICY MT10 PROTECTING AND ENHANCING THE QUALITY AND QUANTITY OF OUR GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

New development proposals will be expected to contribute to the provision of green infrastructure in the parish in terms of both quality and/or quantity having regard to the following priorities and aspirations:

Priorities and aspirations regarding the creation of new green infrastructure:

i. Connecting and interlinking existing green infrastructure;
ii. The creation of new routes which link in with existing public rights of way network and offer enhanced access to the countryside;
iii. An aspiration to create a continuous, accessible green corridor to the West of Marks Tey incorporating historic landscapes of Long Green and Potts Green as indicated on Map 6.6;
iv. An aspiration to create a continuous accessible green corridor to the north of Marks Tey broadly following Roman River Corridor and the surrounding countryside as indicated in Map 6.7; and
v. Reinstating the historic Potts Green as a public open space.

Priorities and aspirations regarding improvements to the quality of existing green infrastructure:

vi. Improved landscaping scheme that benefits wildlife in the recreation ground;
vii. Improved pedestrian and cycle friendly access from residential areas to the recreation ground;
viii. Improved planting on the Marks Tey residential estates;
ix. Improved play facilities on the Marks Tey residential estates; and
x. Enhancements to the rural lanes identified in Policy MT08.

A HEALTHIER ENVIRONMENT

Objective: We wish to protect and foster the natural environment for the benefit of people, flora and wildlife

6.14 Policy MT11 – Protecting and enhancing our natural environment

Context and rationale

6.14.1 The parish is home to a variety of wildlife and habitats both in the countryside and within the village including in peoples' gardens. A search using the mapping tool at www.magic.gov.uk identifies nine areas of broadleaved deciduous woodland (a priority habitat for England), three additional areas of woodland and a range of bird life and mammals in the parish.

6.14.2 The first non-statutory wildlife sites in Colchester Borough were identified in 1991 by Essex Wildlife Trust following a county wide Phase 1 habitat survey. At the time they were known as Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC) and they were selected on the basis of being the most important wildlife habitats in the district, with the already nationally designated and legally protected Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) included within the network. They were reviewed again in 2008. In 2015, a further review was undertaken by Colchester focussing only on areas that are likely to come under pressure for development, and this included the Marks Tey NP area. The 2015 review did not result in any changes to the Marks Tey designated local wildlife sites which are still:

1. Little Tey Churchyard (reference C014).

2. Marks Tey Brick Pit (reference C031)

6.14.3 Additional information on local wildlife has been collected by the NP steering group. A hedgerow survey of Granger's Lane was undertaken in 2016 and 2017, the results of which are reported in Appendix B to the Marks Tey Character Assessment. Further information on wildlife in the parish is reported in Appendix C to the Marks Tey Character Assessment. This includes information collected as part of the RSPB Big Garden Birdwatch in January 2016 and Neighbourhood Plan consultation work undertaken in January 2017. The surveys revealed the presence of a wide variety of birdlife throughout the year and many small mammals including bats and amphibians.

6.14.4 The deciduous woodland behind the Methodist Church along the Old London Road is also identified as a locally important parish wildlife site since it is one of very few areas of deciduous woodland in the parish.

6.14.5 The existing flora and fauna in the parish is precious and highly valued by the community. The hedgerows running alongside the rural lanes, mature trees around the Brick Pit SSSI area and even tree planting at the A120 and A12 interchange are all highly precious environmental assets in a parish which continually is subjected to the noise, air, light and dust pollution generated by the three strategic transport corridors running through the parish.

6.14.6 A priority for the community is to protect the natural environment but also to improve the ways in which the natural environment can help to mitigate the negative impacts of urbanisation on the Marks Tey community.

6.14.7 Parts of the designated NP area for Marks Tey lie over source protection zones. Policy MT11 therefore requires development proposals on land that may be affected by contamination to be accompanied by a preliminary risk assessment so that any risk to water quality can be understood and addressed accordingly.

Policy Intent

6.14.8 We wish to protect our existing natural environment assets and we seek opportunities to increase these as part of any new development.

POLICY MT11- PROTECTING AND ENHANCING OUR NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

The sites identified on Maps 6.8 (a, b, c and d) and listed below have been identified by the local community as parish wildlife sites and as being important for purposes of maintaining and enhancing biodiversity in the parish. To be supported, development proposals adjacent or in close proximity to the wildlife sites must protect or enhance their biodiversity value.

- Little Tey Churchyard Local Wildlife Site
- Granger's Lane
- Marks Tey Brick Pit SSSI Local Wildlife Site
- Area of deciduous woodland behind the Methodist Church on Old London Road

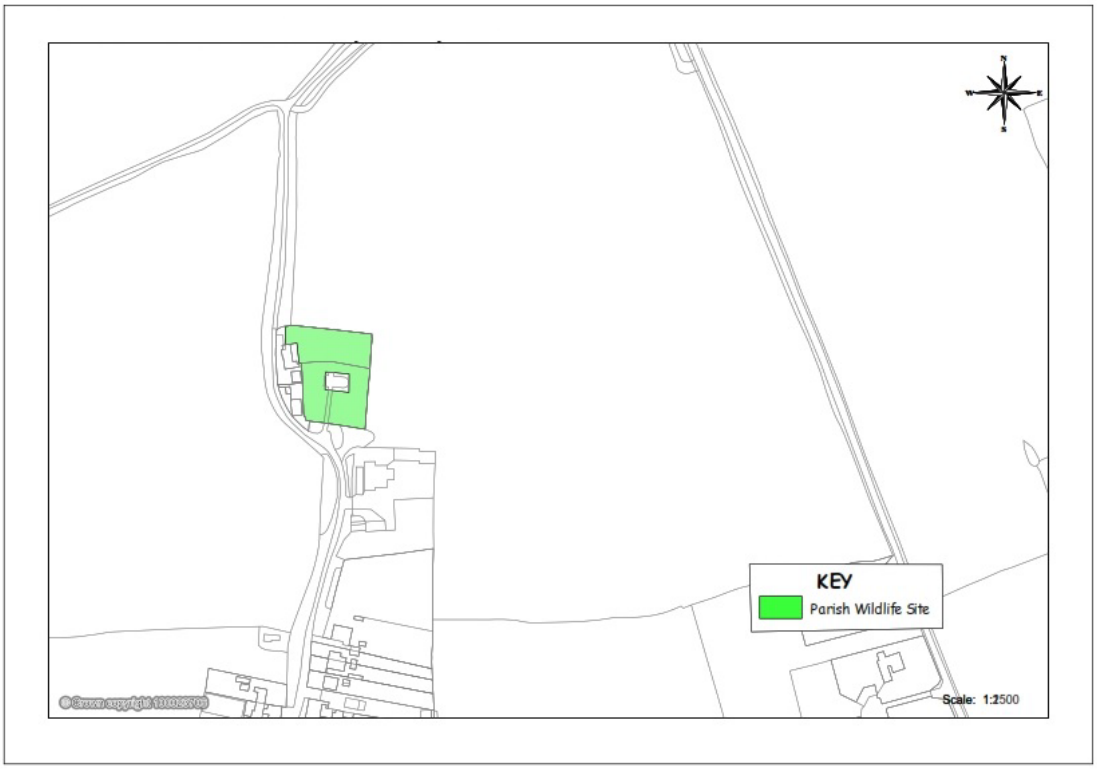
Other assets of biodiversity value in our parish are also precious including the Roman River, our ponds, hedgerows and trees including those indicated on the Character Assessment Character Area maps.

Development proposals will be expected to retain existing features of biodiversity value on site or likely to be affected by the development and provide a measurable net gain in biodiversity through for example:

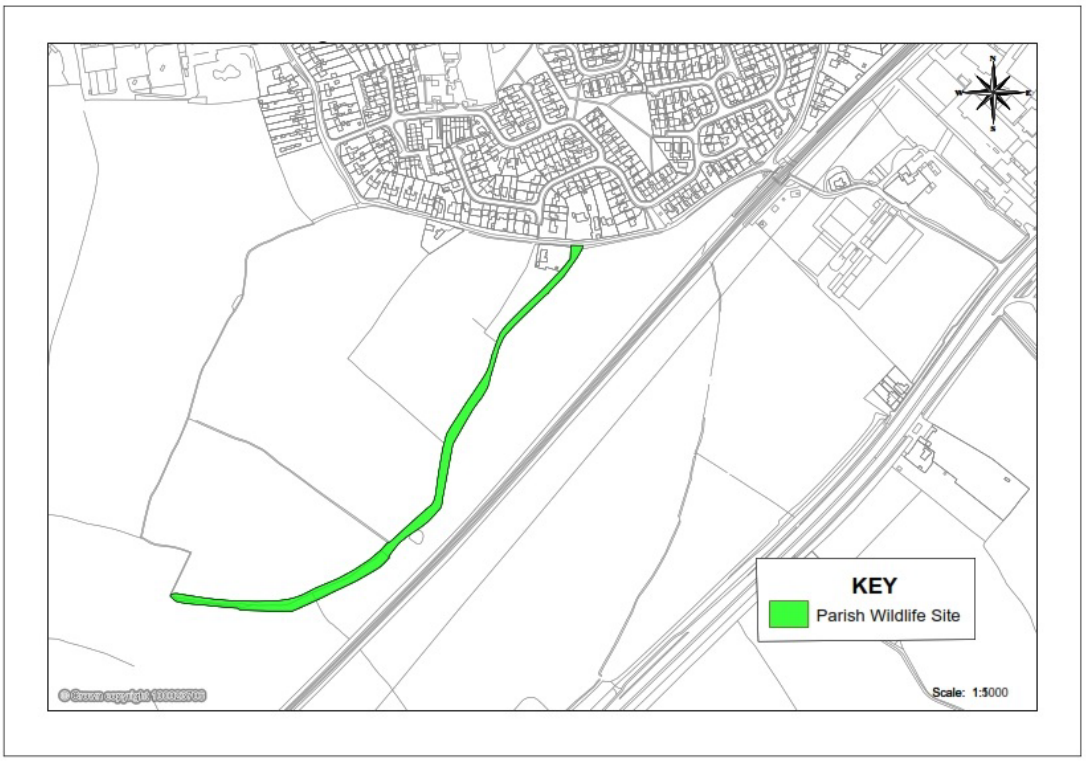
- The creation of new natural habitats;
- The planting of additional trees and hedgerows; and
- Creating new wildlife corridors linking up existing ones.

In the case of development proposals coming forward on land that may have been affected by contamination (for example, as a result of its previous use and that of the surrounding land or development that potentially may cause contamination), sufficient information should be provided with the planning application to satisfy the requirements of the NPPF for dealing with land contamination. This should take the form of a Preliminary Risk Assessment (including a desk top study, conceptual model and initial assessment of risk) and provide assurance that the risk to the water environment is fully understood and can be addressed through appropriate measures.

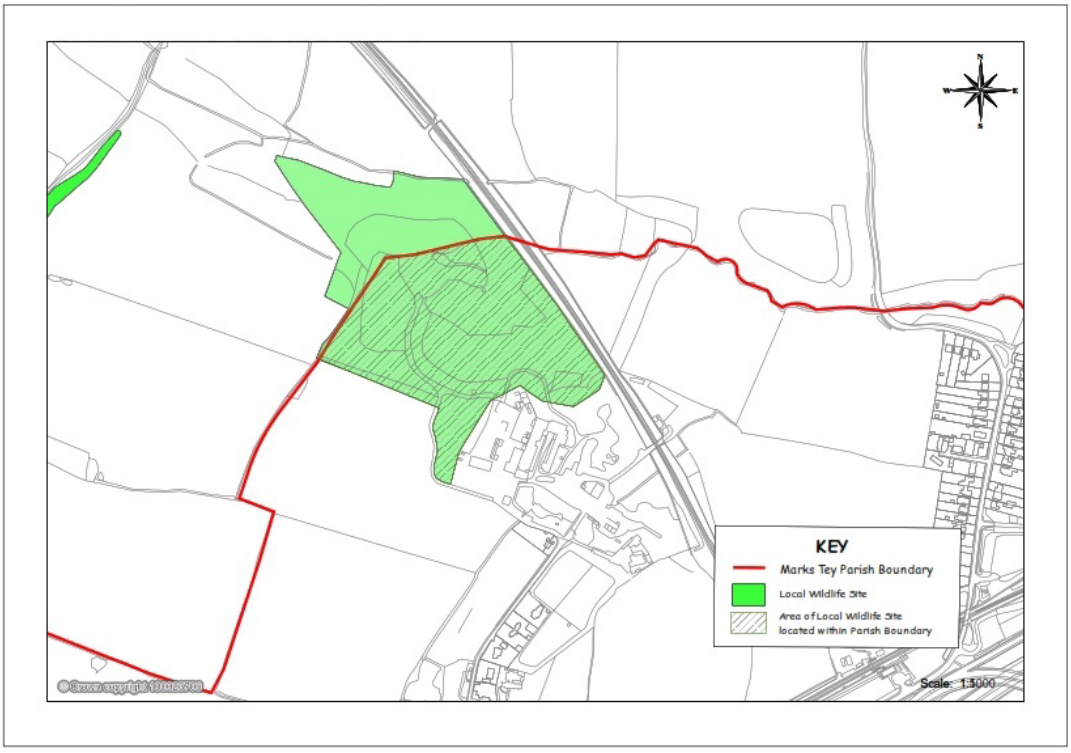
Map 6.8 a Parish Wildlife Site at Little Tey (also a Colchester Borough Local Wildlife Site)



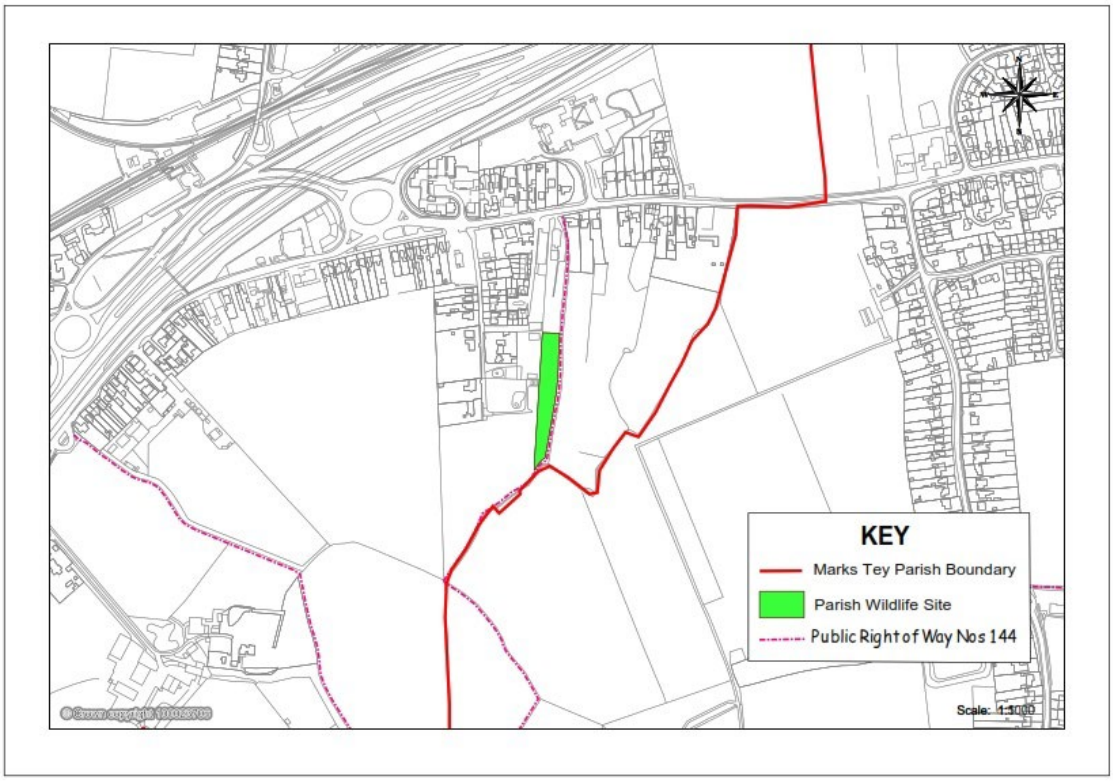
Map 6.8 b Parish Wildlife Site at Granger's Lane



Map 6.8 c Parish Wildlife Site at Marks Tey Brick Pit (part of Colchester Borough Local Wildlife Site)



Map 6.8 d Parish Wildlife Site. Woodland off Old London Road



6.15 Policy MT12- Essex Coast Recreational Disturbance Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy (RAMS)

6.15.1 Under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (commonly referred to as the Habitat Regulations) a Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) is required for land use plans and for planning applications, which are likely to have significant effects on a Habitat Site.

6.15.2 The Essex Coast is rich and diverse and has many European protected habitat sites (the Colne Estuary, the Blackwater Estuary, the Abberton Reservoir Estuary, the Essex Estuaries, and Stour and Orwell Estuaries). There are a number of Local Plans in preparation in Essex which seek to deliver a significant number of homes over the coming 15-20 years. These new homes have a potential to bring new visitors to sensitive coast areas, resulting in potential impacts on protected sites both individually and in combination through recreational disturbance. As a consequence, Natural England in September 2017 advised that 11 Districts/Boroughs Councils across Essex should jointly prepare an Essex Coast Recreational Disturbance Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy (RAMS). The strategy sets a strategic approach to identifying the scale of recreational disturbance to Special Protection Areas, Special Areas of Conservation and Ramsar sites along the Essex Coast and proposes measures to mitigate impacts.

6.15.3 The Essex Coast Recreational Disturbance Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy (RAMS) was adopted by the Borough Council in 2019 and a Supplementary Planning Document was adopted in August 2020 and covers the whole area of Marks Tey Parish. The RAMS comprises a package of strategic mitigation measures necessary to avoid the likely significant effects on the Essex Coast from the 'in-combination' impacts of residential development that is anticipated across Essex and particularly from recreational disturbance. All new planning consents for housing in the Neighbourhood Area will be required to pay the tariff in line with the RAMS and its supporting Supplementary Planning Document.

6.15.4 Although the preference of the Essex Authorities is for developers to make this financial contribution, the RAMS does allow for developers to instead carry out a project-level HRA and apply recreational disturbance avoidance and mitigation measures directly e.g., through provision of well-designed open space/green infrastructure. Thus, policy MT12 makes provision for this.

Policy Intent

6.15.5 The intent of Policy MT12 is to ensure that any additional dwellings coming forward in Marks Tey Parish make appropriate provision to avoid and/or mitigate recreational disturbance impacts on habitat sites either through direct financial contributions or exceptionally by direct measures.

POLICY MT12- ESSEX COAST RECREATIONAL DISTURBANCE AVOIDANCE AND MITIGATION STRATEGY (RAMS)

All residential development within the zones of influence of Habitat Sites will be required to make a financial contribution towards mitigation measures, as detailed in the Essex Coast RAMS, to avoid adverse in-combination recreational disturbance effects on Habitat Sites. In circumstances where the preferred approach of a developer contribution is not secured, residential development within the zones of influence will need to deliver all necessary measures (including strategic measures) in accordance with a project-level Habitats Regulations Assessment setting out how any recreational disturbance impacts will be avoided and/or mitigated in compliance with the Habitats Regulations Assessment and Habitats Directive.

6.16 Objective: Noise, air and light pollution will be effectively managed.

6.16.1 The transport infrastructure corridors that run through the parish have noise, air and light pollution impacts. These impacts are primarily experienced by residents when they are outside of the residential areas and at the shops or walking along the roads such as the A120 Coggeshall Road.

6.16.2 There are a number of Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs[6]) within Colchester but none in the Marks Tey NP area. However, there are three air quality monitoring points located on London Road (the A12) in the parish along the roadside and there are three air quality monitoring points located on the A120 in the parish. They are used to monitor nitrogen dioxide levels. Colchester Borough Council publishes air quality annual status reports and the most recent one published at the time of writing was in June 2019. This reports that in 2018, the borough recorded exceedances of the NO2 annual mean objective within three existing AQMAs at twelve sites in the borough. The nitrogen dioxide levels in Marks Tey parish did not exceed the annual mean air quality objective of 40µg/m^3. Importantly however, Highways England readings taken in 2017/18 show that one of their monitoring sites at London Road in Marks Tey does record levels of air pollution around 40 µg/m^3 and are the highest levels of air pollution compared to other monitoring stations on the A12 between Marks Tey and Chelmsford.

6.16.3 Should the A120 (and A12) realignments take place as planned by the County Council and National Highways, it is possible that the environment along the A120 will improve as a result of traffic movement reduction (particularly a reduction in HGV movements) in the section that runs through Marks Tey Village. However, it may increase along the A12 depending on which improvement route is chosen. For the benefits of this to be fully realised it is essential that environmental enhancement measures are implemented along the A120 including those listed in the supporting text to MT03

[6] Quality Management Areas (AQMAs) are declared when there is an exceedance or likely exceedance of an air quality objective.

6.16.4 Whilst there are no specific planning policies proposed here, this objective is met through Policy MT03 and Policy MT12 above.

HOUSING

Objective: New housing will include variety and choice and will meet existing local needs (in terms of type and tenure)

6.17 Policy MT13 – Housing mix and housing choice

Context and rationale:

Rural Community Profile for Marks Tey

6.17.1 The Rural Community Profile[7] for Marks Tey Parish brings together quantitative data for the plan area. The data is collected around the themes of social and cultural, equity and prosperity, economy, housing and the built environment, transport and connectivity, services, environmental and governance

6.17.2 Data relevant to housing needs is:

- There is a high proportion of married households
- There has been a decrease in population between the period 2008 and 2011
- There is higher than average proportion of economically active residents (those working or unemployed)
- There is a higher than average proportion of people in employment between ages 16 to 74
- 51% of dwellings are detached compared to national average of 22.3% (and Essex average of 30.4%) whereas only 2.9% of the dwellings are terraced compared to 24.5% nationally and 21.3% in Essex
- The vast majority of housing (80.6%) is owner occupied

Marks Tey Estate Agent Survey 2017

6.17.3 A survey of estate agents undertaken in July 2017 by the Marks Tey NP steering group which involved face to face interviews with Boydens, Elms Price and Haart found that

In terms of: • the **demand for housing in Marks Tey and Colchester as a whole**…
There is significant demand for housing of all types, whether it is for 1 bed flats, 3 bed detached or bigger.
• what **type of housing was being sought** in both areas…
The type of home sold is determined by price and mortgage availability. *People are willing to purchase 1 bed home with the view of trading up to a bigger property when their circumstances allow. Flats and smaller 2 or 3 bed houses were popular in Colchester town with 3 or 4 bed houses popular outside the town centre*

[7] Published by Rural Community Council of Essex (RCCE), OCSI and ACRE in 2013.

• where **the demand was coming from…**
Housing demand was split between those who lived in the area already and those who were coming into the Borough from outside. Boyden's put the split as 60% local and 40% outside for purchases whereas Elms Price and Haart put the split at 50% each. The eastern side of London such as Romford was mentioned as a place that many of the outside people coming into the borough were coming from. The drivers for the demand include schooling, travel links to London and house prices.
• why **people were coming to Colchester or Marks Tey…**
The estate agents felt that there was demand in Marks Tey just as much as Colchester although the most desired areas were Lexden and Stanway due to the catchment area of the local schools. *People were "forced/drawn" out of London to Colchester as there are new homes being built within budget of London workers or those selling London homes.*
• were **people wishing to buy or rent…**
Most of the demand for housing involved people wishing to purchase but there were areas around the university and the hospital where renting was popular due to the nature of the local employment, short term or fixed term contracts. The further away from these areas the renting demand was less although it was mentioned by all 3 estate agents that people would consider renting around some of the local schools so that their children could attend the school with the view of purchasing in the near term in that area or near that area. These rentals were not envisaged to be long term.
• time **on the Market…**
Haart and Elms Price put a few weeks on the time needed to sell a home, provided people were "realistic" on the value.

Marks Tey NP questionnaire 2017

6.17.4 In January 2017, a 16-page householder questionnaire was sent out to all homes in the parish. Questions 12 to 17 of the questionnaire covered housing:

6.17.5 The survey received over 300 responses and proportionally there was a higher response rate from the over 55 age group (see survey). Key results from the survey were:

- There was agreement for a need for a range of property types (1- and 2-bedroom properties, 2- and 3-bedroom properties, 3- and 4-bedroom properties, bungalows, terraced properties, semi-detached properties, detached and retirement properties) but not for flats and apartments or 4 + bedroom properties.
- There was overall agreement that new properties should have a minimum garden size and that flats and apartments should have access to a shared garden space in addition to parking.
- The majority of respondents lived in 3-to-4-bedroom houses and 20% lived in bungalows

- Just under 20% said they would be looking to move in the next 5 years and 15% in the years following this.
- Of those looking to move, over 50% were looking for 1-2 bedroom properties, 30% for a 3-4 bedroom property. Over 40% were looking for a bungalow and just under 40% would look for a house.
- Ten per cent of respondents said they had family who had moved away from the parish because they were unable to find suitable accommodation

6.17.6 Existing dwelling stock mix, January 2017 survey results and the July 2017 estate agent survey provide a clear indication that there is a need to increase the number of houses in the plan area and that these should meet a variety of needs.

Borough-wide housing needs

6.17.7 Information on housing needs at a borough level is reported in the Strategic Housing Market Assessment published in December 2015 by consultants Planning and Development on the behalf of four local authority areas: Colchester Borough Council, Chelmsford City Council, Tendring District Council and Braintree District Council. This report works on the premise of a housing market area covering the geographical extent of all four local authority areas. The work concludes that there is an overall annual housing requirement of 920 in Colchester Borough during the period 2013 to 2037 and that 30% of these are needed as affordable homes. In terms of size, Table S.17 in the Executive Summary sets out the following annual housing requirements for new housing in Colchester borough during the period 2013 to 2037.

Table 6.10: Annual requirement for all new housing in Colchester, Source: Executive Summary of the Braintree, Chelmsford, Colchestr and Tendring Council's Housing Market Area, Planning and Development December 2015

	No of bedrooms			
	1	**2**	**3**	**4**
Market Housing	28	166	294	154
Shared Ownership	9	3	0	0
Affordable rent/social rent	81	86	62	37
Total	**118**	**255**	**356**	**191**

6.17.8 A logical conclusion from the various sources of evidence on housing needs in Marks Tey is that there is need for additional housing across all tenures. In terms of size, the predominant need is for 3- and 4-bedroom homes but within the affordable housing sector the predominant need is for additional 1- and 2-bedroom homes.

Innovative housing

6.17.9 There are examples of innovative housing in Marks Tey, for example Stanefield, built according to the Radburn approach (separation of pedestrian and vehicular movement) and Roxborough Close (see below under self-build). Innovative examples of housing design should be encouraged and expanded to include flexible and adaptable housing to meet future needs.

6.17.10 This includes homes that can be expanded or subdivided to suit changing needs but also homes that are built from the outset to be accessible and adaptable. Part M of the Building Regulations addresses access to and the use of buildings. The M4 (2) standard ensures that new dwellings are accessible and adaptable. To satisfy this standard, reasonable provision must be made for people to gain access to the dwelling and use the dwelling and its facilities. This provision must be sufficient to meet the needs of occupants with differing needs, including some older people and disabled people. The dwelling should allow adaptation to meet changing needs of the occupants over time. The M4(2) standard is not compulsory part of building regulations but can be required via a Local Plan policy where the evidence is in place to support such a need.

Meeting the demand for self and custom build homes

6.17.11 Paragraph 62 of the 2021 NPPF states that the needs of people wishing to commission or build their own homes should be assessed and considered in planning policies. As noted in the NPPF, under section 1 of the Self Build and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015, local authorities are required to keep a register of those seeking to acquire serviced plots in the area for their own self-build and custom house building. They are also subject to duties under sections 2 and 2A of the Act to have regard to this and to give enough suitable development permissions to meet the identified demand. Self and custom-build properties could provide market or affordable housing.

6.17.12 Colchester Borough maintain a self-build register. As at October 2019, borough officers report there were 188 individuals on the register and one group. In the submitted Local Plan, Policies SP7 - Development and Delivery of New Garden Communities in North Essex and SP9 – Colchester/Braintree Borders Garden Community establishes the principle of development including self and custom build homes. In part 2 of the submitted Local Plan, Policy DM10 Housing Density states the local planning authority will support proposals for self build or custom built homes.

6.17.13 Self and custom build housing is about people bringing forward homes they want to live in, having an input in the design and layout so that it is suitable for their needs. Custom build housing is a more consumer-friendly form of self-build where the developer provides serviced plots. Marks Tey parish already has a tradition of custom and self-build properties. In 1997, five bungalows were completed in Roxborough Close in Marks Tey parish which had been designed for and built by people with disabilities. The Walter Segal construction[8] method was used.

8 The Walter Segal self build approach to construction is uniquely organised so that anyone who can use basic tools such as a saw, hammer, drill/driver, tape measure, etc. can build a house

Policy Intent:

6.17.14 The purpose of this policy is to ensure that all residential development proposals are designed to meet identified local needs. Schemes of more than 3 units should include a mix of sizes. Schemes larger than this should include an element of smaller homes so as to ensure the provision of a wider choice and mix of homes in the parish.

6.17.15 The policy requires larger schemes to include serviced plots providing opportunities for self build or custom build. For the purpose of this policy a larger scheme includes schemes of 30 dwellings or more.

POLICY MT13 HOUSING MIX AND HOUSING CHOICE

New residential development proposals will be expected to provide a choice in terms of housing mix and tenure and the overall mix should reflect latest evidence on existing local needs. Special regard should be had for those looking for smaller properties which would be suitable for first time buyers as well as the growing older generation.

In order to achieve thriving and viable neighbourhoods, there should not be an overconcentration of any one type of housing in any one scheme and affordable housing should be designed as integral to the development as a whole.

Unless evidence is presented demonstrating no demand in the parish for self-build or custom build plots, larger schemes will be expected to include serviced plots providing opportunities for self-build or custom build. Where plots are made available and marketed at a reasonable price but not sold after one year, this requirement will lapse.

Innovative ways of providing housing solutions will be welcomed, particularly housing which allows for expansion and subdivision as needs change as well as housing which is built to the accessible and adaptable dwellings (M4(2) standard).

BUSINESS AND EMPLOYMENT

Objective: Businesses will continue to thrive in the parish

6.18.1 Marks Tey offers excellent road and rail connections (present and proposed schemes) for new business development and could easily be developed as hub location for new university, hospital, retail distribution centre, civil administration or emergency services facilities. This is supported by the high speed internet infrastructure on the A12. The NP is supportive of all existing businesses across the parish. As reflected in policies MT14 and MT15 below, the NP is, in principle, supportive of new business development along the A12 corridor. Business facilities alongside major trunk roads reduces noise, light and air pollution from roads affecting housing areas. New businesses would benefit from any new housing development nearby, offering local working and less commuting traffic.

6.19 Policy MT14 – London Road centre

Context and rationale

6.19.1 The London Road parade of shops is identified in the adopted Local Plan as a Neighbourhood Centre. Policy DP7 – Local Centres and Individual Shops safeguards the retail function of neighbourhood centres. This means that proposals leading to the loss of retail units in the London Road Parade will be resisted under existing policies. The shops here are much valued by Marks Tey residents as well as residents of neighbouring areas such as Aldham. The shop footfall benefits from passing A12 traffic, in particular because of the split junction (southbound traffic can conveniently leave the A12, stop at the shops, and re-join the A12 further down). This also means that traffic congestion around the shops can present a real health and safety hazard and it is important that vehicle dominance is reduced overall whilst parking provision is improved in a way which also improves pedestrian safety and accessibility. The re-routing of the A12 and/or the A120 may well have impact on the viability of the shops and the community would therefore support proposals that retain convenient access to Marks Tey shops from any new junction.

6.19.2 The area of London Road in front of and adjacent to the shops is generally of poor environmental quality and in need of improvement in terms of streetscape, landscape quality, parking, and access to the shops themselves. It is a significantly important area as it is one of the two main approaches to the village. Anybody approaching the village from the North will do so from the A12 or the London Road from Copford, both via the Prince of Wales roundabout. By either route, one is met by a blank brick wall with advertising and the noise and roar from the A12. This is offset to some extent by the cul-de-sac of housing created by a truncated piece of the London Road when the roundabout was created.

6.19.3 Once in front of the shops, there is a straight linear road that also serves as an acceleration lane to join the A12 south, with limited kerbside parking on the shop side. This parking is augmented with 12 public parking spaces on the car park to the former Food Store premises. The other side on the road has waiting restrictions which are largely ignored by HGVs visiting the food outlets and shops, and the ever-present A12 in a cutting to the side. The side of the A12 is well landscaped although much of this may

be lost with any expansion of the A12 as is currently planned. It is also littered with rubbish from passing motorists and the HGVs.

6.19.4 Access to this area is mainly vehicular, with pedestrian access from the bulk of the village by the small footbridge over the wide A12. The viability of the area comes largely via vehicles and its immediate access to junction 25 of the A12.

6.19.5 The Parish Council would very much like to see imaginative proposals that seek to:

- increase cross A12 pedestrian and cycling communications;
- increased contact between the shops, the station and the village;
- increased parking provision for the shops preferably in a discrete form;
- increase in the viability of the area possibly with housing associated with more retail; and
- improvements to the streetscape with quality physical improvements and softening with landscaping and trees.

6.19.6 In the above context, there has been some discussion of the idea of a 'green bridge', a widened, landscaped platform crossing the A12 from the shops. We will seek to secure this green bridge when the detail of the A12 strategic road improvements come forward. See Community Action 8 in Appendix 1 of this plan.

6.19.7 The NP group have looked at all the different land uses in and around the London Road centre. Appendix 2 to this NP shows the results of this assessment. This work has resulted in the drawing up of a map showing the variety of different land uses that are considered to make up the village centre uses in this part of Marks Tey parish. To reflect more accurately the variety of different village centre uses that Marks Tey residents may use when visiting this area, this boundary extends beyond the boundary defined in the Local Plan as the London Road Parade. This boundary is appropriate considering the changes made to the Use Classes Order[9] that introduced the new Use Class E which now provides one use class for shop use, financial and professional services, café/restaurants, office use and other commercial uses often associated with town centres.

Policy Intent

6.19.8 London Road parade is already protected by the adopted Local Plan. The purpose of this policy is to:

i. encourage new uses at the London Road Centre where these uses will help strengthen the commercial viability of the London Road Centre, thereby securing the provision of essential services (such as the post office) to parish residents.
ii. Encourage improvements to the accessibility of the London Road Centre shops particularly for pedestrians and cyclists. The pedestrian environment should be made safer and more

[9] Through the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2020

welcoming. In addition, we wish to increase the amount of off-street car parking that is available for customers to use.

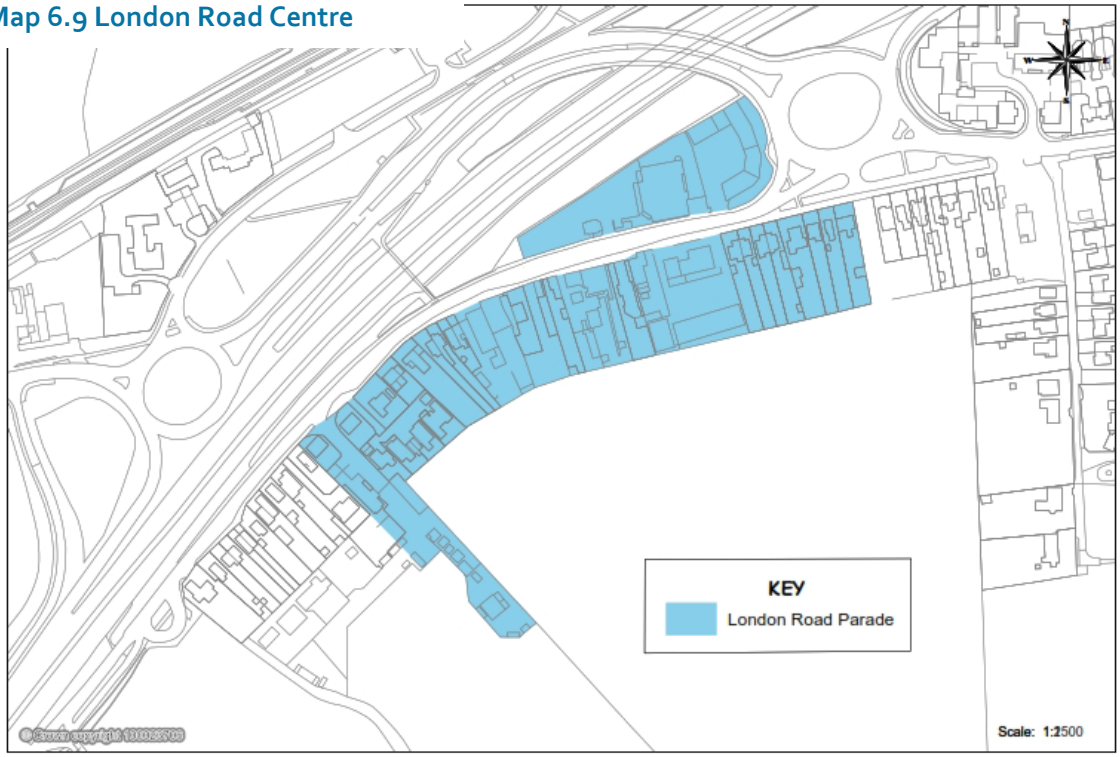
POLICY MT14 – LONDON ROAD CENTRE

To be supported, development proposals coming forward in the London Road Centre (as shown on Map 6.9) must:

- maintain or enhance the range of local shops, services and community facilities;
- utilise opportunities to enhance the street scene environment;
- provide for customer car parking where this is needed by the proposed scheme; and
- maintain or enhance residential amenity for existing and future residents (particularly in relation to car parking, noise and hours of operation)

Proposals which enhance the street scene environment for pedestrians for example through continuous footpaths, tree & shrub planting, new cycle facilities and street lighting will be particularly welcomed.

Map 6.9 London Road Centre



6.20 Policy MT15 Anderson employment site and former By-Pass Nurseries site

Context and rationale

6.20.1 The Anderson Employment site is identified as an employment zone in the adopted Local Plan (see Site Allocations DPD). The site allocations document comments that the following is required as part of any further development or extension of the site:

- Contributions to assist with any junction improvements required by Highways Agency and Essex County Council.
- Improvements / contributions towards public transport, cycling and walking links
- A Travel Plan
- Contributions to increase capacity of Copford Sewage Treatment Works.
- Retention of hedgerows
- Incorporation of SuDS scheme

6.20.2 Policy DP5 in the Development Policies DPD also applies to the Anderson's Employment site. Policy DP5 safeguards the land use on the site as an employment site. Emerging Policy SS11: Marks Tey in Section 2 of the Local Plan allocates the Anderson Employment site as a Local Economic Area. Emerging Policy SG4: Local Economic Areas safeguards the Anderson Employment site primarily for B class uses to provide, protect and enhance employment provision.

6.20.3 The Neighbourhood Plan supports the approach taken in the adopted and emerging Local Plan. As identified in the masterplanning emerging framework plan, there are specific benefits which new development at the Anderson Employment Site could bring for the parish; it provides the opportunity to deliver a much-needed pedestrian connection between the Parish Hall, Marks Tey station and the west of Marks Tey via the Dobbies Lane railway footbridge. If this site is redeveloped, it should allow the provision of a footway from the railway bridge at Dobbies Lane to the Parish Hall as detailed in Neighbourhood Plan Policy MT02.

6.20.4 The new footway connection is consistent with proposals set out in the Out Design masterplanning support document. This connection:

- would encourage active travel for residents and potential employees;
- should include a wide footpath and ideally a segregated cycle facility;
- should incorporate generous tree and shrub planting to connect the site into the surrounding landscape; and
- any new development should front onto and overlook the route to provide active surveillance.

6.20.5 The Parish Council will work with adjacent landowners to secure the remaining section needed to deliver the route to Dobbies Lane.

6.20.6 The existing site is being used by two or three companies including SIG Insulations.

6.20.7 The NP group is concerned with respect to the current substandard access to the A12 from the Old London Road. Highways England (now National Highways) shared these concerns. The NP would

not support any development proposals which would lead to increases in the use of the access from Old London Road to the A120. The NP therefore supports the allocation of additional employment uses at Anderson's employment site once the improvements to the A12 have taken place. The A12 Chelmsford to A120 widening schemes is a current project identified by National Highways and planned for commencement in 2023 – 24 and completion by 2027 – 28.

Policy Intent

6.20.8 The purpose of this policy is to highlight the development potential at the Anderson Employment site and to encourage new employment uses to come forward.

6.20.9 To reflect the capacity and deliverability of employment development at this site, the NP brings forward the Local Plan allocation to cover the existing Anderson Employment site as defined on Map 6.10.

6.20.10 Where required to make development viable, the NP allows a limited amount of residential development to come forward but only where this does not prejudice the primary function of the employment site. Any scheme must incorporate a wide footpath and ideally a segregated cycle facility providing access through the site from Marks Tey Parish Hall to west of Marks Tey

Former By-Pass Nurseries site:

6.20.11 The NP also safeguards the former By-Pass Nurseries site as a valued employment site. The site of the former By-Pass Nurseries is set within open countryside. In contrast to the adjacent Anderson employment site, it has an agricultural feel to it. The current lawful use on most of the site is as a sui generis nursery site. A smaller section of it has permission for B8 storage. Due to highways constraints and residential amenity issues, this is not considered an appropriate location for increased HGV transport movements. However, the NP supports the principle of employment uses here.

POLICY MT15 – ANDERSON EMPLOYMENT SITE AND FORMER BY-PASS NURSERIES SITE

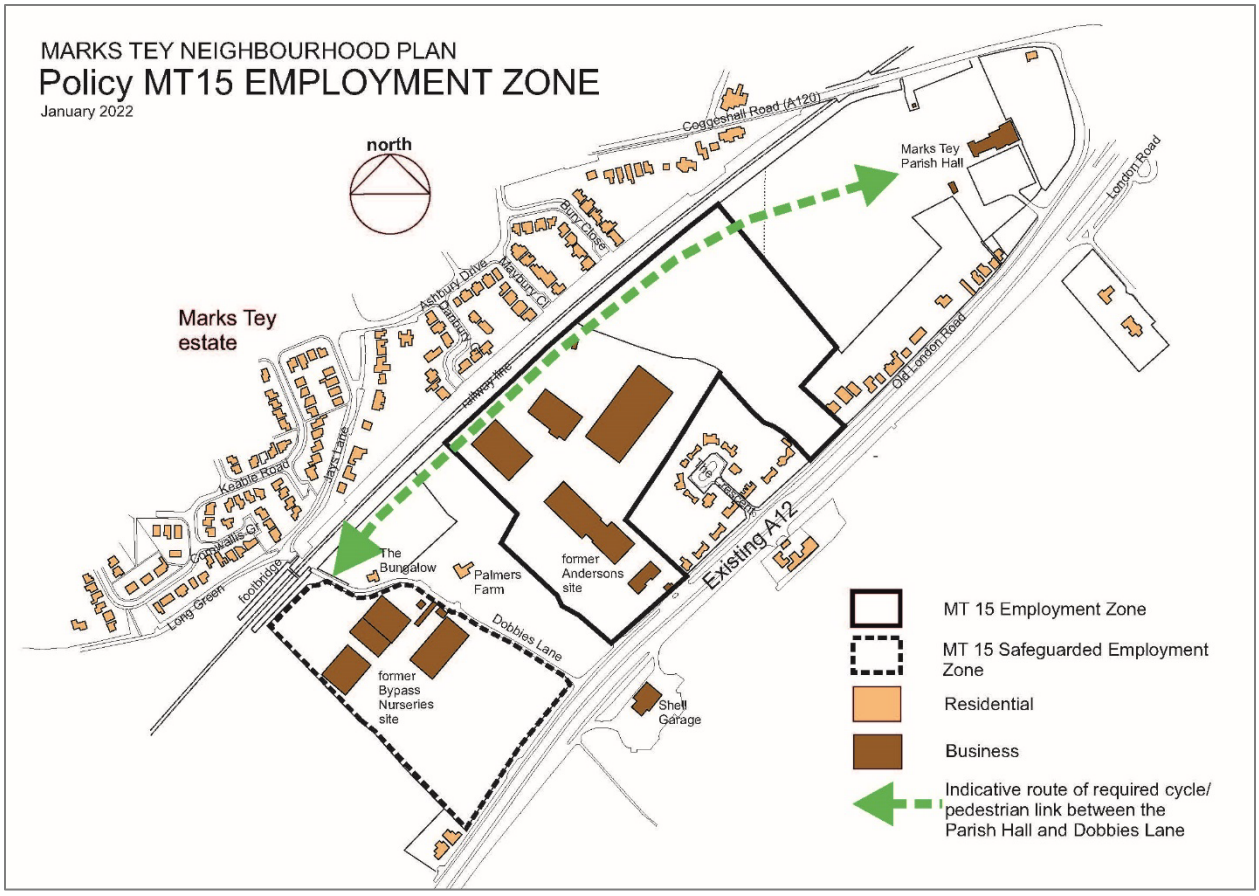
The Anderson Employment site shown on Map 6.10 is allocated for employment uses. Development is anticipated to come forward in 2028.

The following site-specific requirements apply:

- all schemes must maintain or enhance residential amenity for neighbouring houses or for future occupiers of any new residential development;
- all schemes must incorporate a new pedestrian and cycle way connection providing a safe and attractive route from Marks Tey Parish Hall through to Dobbies Lane;
- access to and from the site is via an improved direct access on to the A12 and once the planned improvements to the A12 by National Highways have been implemented and the adjacent existing road has been detrunked; and
- provision of a work-place travel plan in line with Essex County Council guidance

Subject to any scheme not prejudicing the primary function of the site as employment sites, limited residential development will be allowed where this is needed to make redevelopment of this site viable.

The adjacent former By-Pass Nurseries site shown on Map 6.10 is safeguarded for employment use subject to those uses being consistent with the existing edge of settlement rural location. All schemes must maintain or enhance residential amenity and landscape character.



Map 6.10 - Policy MT15 – Anderson employment site and former by-pass nurseries site

7.0 COMMUNITY PROJECTS

7.1 The neighbourhood plan work highlighted a number of issues, opportunities and challenges which could not be addressed through planning policies in the neighbourhood plan because they fell outside of the scope of a planning policy or because they fell outside the scope of a neighbourhood plan. One of the aspects which the NP steering group initially wanted to address through the NP was to steer the direction of development through the actual allocation of development sites to come forward during the plan period. However, we still don't know the routes of the A12 and A120 and without this certainty it would be premature to undertake this work.

7.2 Nine community actions are identified in Appendix 1 to establish areas of work which the Parish Council wishes to commit to as a way of complementing the NP vision, themes, objectives and policies.

APPENDIX ONE – COMMUNITY PROJECTS

Community Action 1 – A120 Improvements.

We will continue to campaign for a 20s plenty campaign on the A120 (Coggeshall Road) which runs through the village.

We will work with stakeholders and seek the implementation of environmental measures which would help make the A120 into a Quality Street for all.

Related policy link: MT03

Community Action 2 – Parish-wide street scene, pedestrian accessibility and environmental improvements.

We will work with stakeholders to seek improvements to the street scene, pedestrian accessibility and other environmental improvements parish-wide including the measures set out in Tables 6.1 and 6.2 of this plan.

Related policy link: MT01 and MT03

Community Action 3 – London Road Centre Improvements.

We will work with stakeholders including the landowners, county and borough councils and tenants to bring about shop front improvements, street scene improvements and increased off-street parking provision particularly seeking if it is possible to link this with station related car parking.

We will seek management arrangements to control HGV parking.

Related policy link: MT14

Community Action 4 – Marks Tey Station Better provision and management of parking.

We will seek increases in off street parking to serve our train station particularly in relation to Community Action 3.

We will work alongside stakeholders to develop a strategic long-term plan for the efficient provision of formal and managed station-related car parking as well as more informal station-related car parking.

Related policy link: MT01 and MT14

Community Action 5 – Marks Tey Station. Passenger accessibility to and through the station.

We will explore with other agencies to see if pedestrian access across North Lane rail bridge could be improved by working with RailTrack initiatives to enable disabled access through the station.

Related policy link: MT01

Community Action 6 – Reinstatement of Potts Green.

We will seek the reinstatement of Potts Green as a publicly accessible open space.

Related policy link: MT10 & MT07

Community Action 7 – Non designated heritage assets and the Borough's Local List

We will work with the borough and seek the inclusion of our locally important heritage assets onto the Borough Local List.

Related policy link: MT07

Community Action 8 – A12 and A120 strategic road improvements

The Parish Council will seek a partnership commitment with the National Highways and Essex County Council to significantly reduce traffic and congestion in the village while pursuing the A12 and A120 strategic improvements

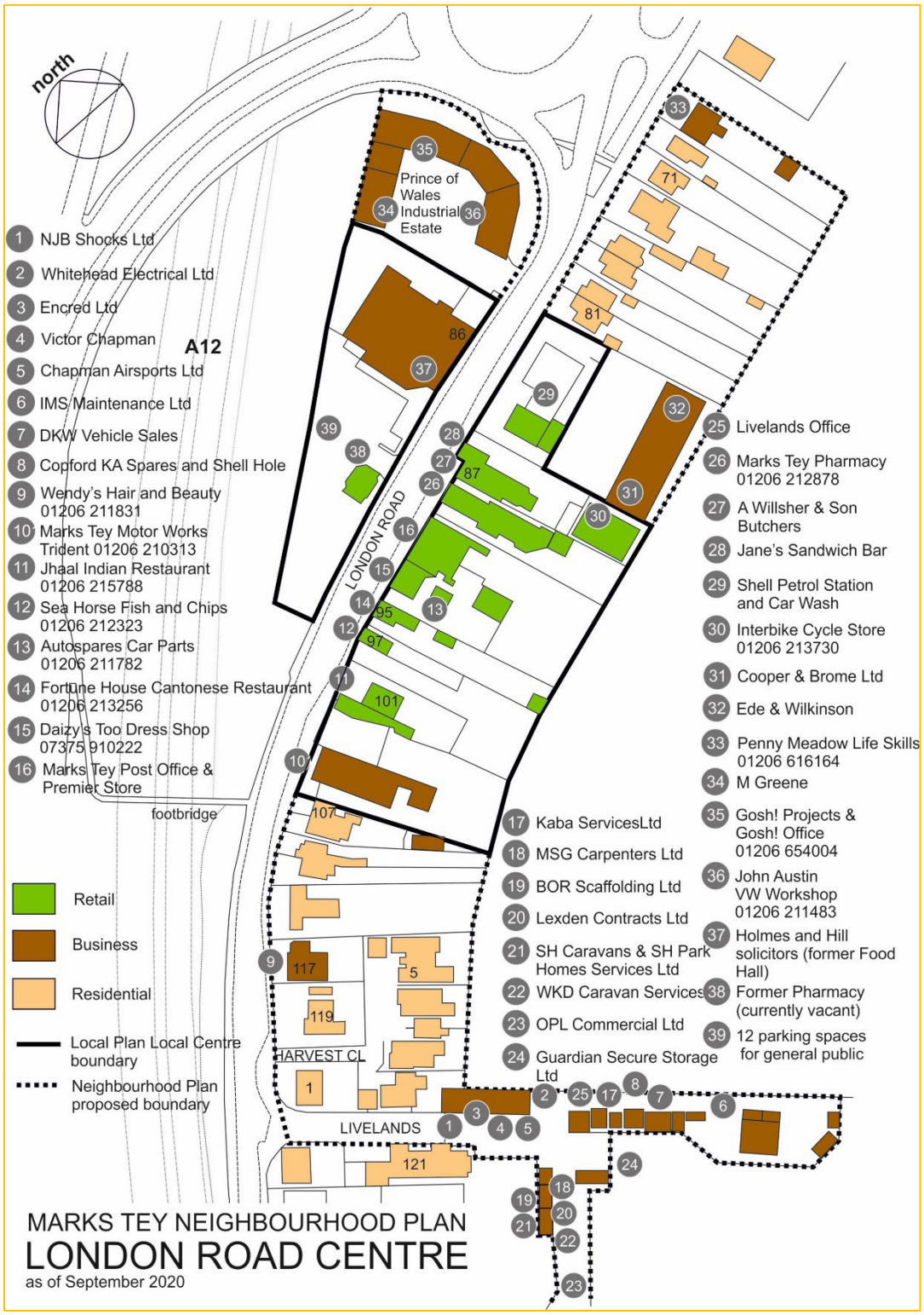
Related policy link: MT07

Community Action 9 – A new pedestrian and cycle route from the parish hall recreation ground to Dobbies Lane

Alongside Policy MT15 of this plan, the Parish Council will work with landowners and stakeholders to secure the delivery of the pedestrian/cycle route from the parish hall recreation ground to Dobbies Lane.

Related policy link: MT15

APPENDIX TWO – LONDON ROAD CENTRE



APPENDIX THREE – MARKS TEY NON-DESIGNATED HERITAGE ASSETS (AS IDENTIFIED IN POLICY MTO7)

1. White Essex weather boarded old farm cottages 91 to 93 Coggeshall Road



Location: 91 to 93 Coggeshall Road, shown as number 1 on Map 4.4 in this plan.

Description: Weather-boarded with slate roof semi-detached cottages. The building is marked on the 1843 tithe map of Marks Tey and of probable early 19th century date. The asset was made part of Colchester's Local List in August 2020.

Significance: Of local historic interest and association. It is a good example of a small workers cottage, once common on the Essex heaths but now rare.

2. The Old Thatched Cottage 85 Coggeshall Road



Location: 85 Coggeshall Road, shown as number 2 on Map 4.4 in this plan.

Description: Small timber-framed and thatched building, one-and-a half-storey with dormer windows. This asset was made part of Colchester's Local List in August 2020 and is considered as a potential candidate for national designation.

Significance: Of local historic interest. A surviving timber-framed building. It has been extended to the west in the 20th century but the style, form and construction of the building is easily identifiable.

3. 25 Coggeshall Road, Marks Tey



Location: 25 Coggeshall Road, shown as number 3 of Map 4.4 in this plan.

Description: Red brick bungalow dated to the early 1930s, built with bricks and roof tiles manufactured by Colliers Brickworks and with documentary evidence (1933) recording the building was designed by an Essex architect Edward Fincham. The asset was made part of Colchester's Local List in August 2020.

Significance: A building of local historic and association that is reasonably unaltered and the style, form and construction of the building is easily identifiable.

4. Hammer Farmhouse, Doggetts Lane, Potts Green, Marks Tey



Location: Hammer Farmhouse, Doggetts Lane, Potts Green. Shown as number 1 on Map 4.5 in this plan.

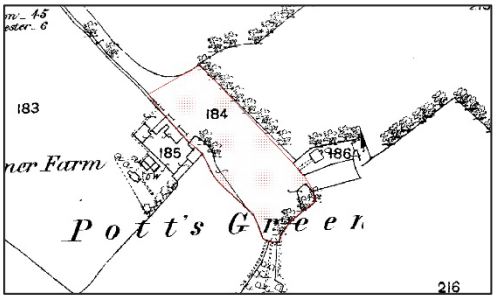
Description: Hammer Farmhouse is depicted on the 1843 Tithe Map as Doggetts (but this has changed to Hammer Farm by the First edition OS County Series of 1874-1887). The current two-storey dwelling is rendered on the ground floor and weather-boarded on the first, with a hipped, tiled roof. During renovations a well was discovered under the kitchen floor.

As at October 2021, this asset is not on the Colchester's Local List. The last assessment undertaken by Colchester Borough was in August 2020 and concluded that further information is required to assess this building.

Significance: Of local historic interest. It is a vernacular house contributing to the character of Potts Green. The building is a part of a historic farmstead which is recorded as a monument (MCC9213) on the Historic Environment Record (HER) database and can be viewed here: https://colchesterheritage.co.uk/Monument/MCC9213

5. Site of former Potts Green





Location: Potts Green, Marks Tey. Shown as "site of former village green" on Map 4.5 in this plan.

Description: Historic green shown on the 1777 Chapman & Andre Map (labelled as Pots Green), on the south side of and set back from London Road. The green is roughly rectangular in shape, c.0.5ha. in area. Doggets Hammer Farm (Grade II Listed; NLHE on. 1266767), is located on the green edge, dating from the 16th century.

The asset was made part of Colchester's Local List in August 2020.

Significance: Of local historic interest. The green is probably medieval (or early post-medieval) in origin, and the form of the green is easily identifiable in the landscape. The site of the former village green (at Potts Green) is recorded as a monument (as a historic landscape feature: Monument number MCC9116) on the Historic Environment Record (HER) database and can be viewed here: https://colchesterheritage.co.uk/Monument/MCC9116

6. Church Farm House and outbuildings



Location: Church Farm, Church Lane, Marks Tey. Shown as Shown as number 1 on Map 4.6 of this plan.

Description: Two-storey yellow brick dwelling, hipped, slate roof. Two canted (probably Edwardian) windows on the front (east) façade either side of a door with flat-roofed porch supported on two columns. Late 19th century, first appearing on the 1897-1904 OS 1:1250 County Series. The asset was made part of Colchester's Local List in August 2020.

Significance: Of local historic interest. Although altered with a conservatory and extension, the façade of the building is very attractive and the roof is unaltered and the style, form and construction of the building is easily identifiable.

The farmstead of which it is a part, is recorded as a monument on the Historic Environment Record (HER) database (Monument MCC9210) and can be viewed here: https://colchesterheritage.co.uk/Monument/MCC9210

7. Railway station (original building waiting room and section of original canopy)





Location: Marks Tey Railway Station, Marks Tey. Shown as number 2 on Map 4.6 of this plan.

Description: The original station at Marks Tey opened in 1843 as one of those on the Eastern Counties Railway (later the Great Eastern Railway) and the branch line (to the north) to Sudbury was built in 1849 (it was known as Marks Tey Junction until 1889). The opening of the Colne Valley and Halstead Railway off the Sudbury branch in 1860 and the extension of the branch beyond Sudbury via the Stour Valley Railway in 1865 to Cambridge added importance to Marks Tey as a junction, allowing through-trains from Colchester. The Sudbury to Cambridge link was closed in 1967 saw the end of through running.

The main station building was on the south 'up' side (platform 1), with a small waiting room on platform 2 (still present). Platform 1 had a canopy supported on cast iron pillars and part of the canopy still survives.

The signal box, located at the north end of platform 2, on the 'down' side, no longer survives. The track layout has been substantially reduced/rationalised. Likewise, the turntable (also on the 'down' side) no longer survives. The goods shed still survives, although altered. The asset was made part of Colchester's Local List in August 2020.

Significance: Of local historic interest and association. Platform 1 canopy and platforms 1 & 2 waiting rooms are surviving railway heritage assets.

8. Old **Rectory** Court, Station Road



Location: The Old Rectory, Rectory Court, Station Road, Marks Tey. Shown as number 1 on Map 4.7 in this plan.

Description: Former rectory built as the parsonage in the first half of the 18th century by William Bree, Vicar of Marks Tey 1722-1753. It was extended and converted into apartments in the 20th century. The asset was made part of Colchester's Local List in August 2020

Significance: Of local historic interest and association. Although it has been altered and extended to the rear, the building is largely unaltered and the style, form and construction of the building is easily identifiable.

The Old Cottages, Old London Road





Location: 180, 182 and 188 Old London Road, Marks Tey. Shown as number 2 on Map 4.7 of this plan.

Description: One-and-a half-storey timber-framed dwelling/s with dormer windows and peg-tile roof. The asset was made part of Colchester's Local List in August 2020 and is considered a potential candidate for national designation.

Significance: Of local historic interest. A row of surviving timber-framed building. Although the windows have been replaced (the original fenestration could be restored), the style, form and construction of the building is easily identifiable.

9. Former Methodist Church, London Road



Location: London Road, Marks Tey. Shown as number 4 on Map 4.7

Description: Methodist church constructed in 1902-3, gothic style, yellow brick with red brick detailing, slate roof. The asset was made part of Colchester's Local List in August 2020

Significance: Of local historic interest and association. It is a good example of its type, largely unaltered and the style, form and construction of the building is easily identifiable and has local historical association.

10. Wynscroft, Number 1 London Road (previously known as Butcher's Cottage)



Location: No. 1 London Road. Denoted with purple dot (monument) on Map 4.7 in this plan.

Description: One-and-a half-storey timber-framed dwelling with dormer windows and thatched roof; the west end is hipped the east end is gabled. The building is clearly marked on the 1843 tithe map of

Marks Tey. The asset was made part of Colchester's Local List in August 2020 and is considered a potential candidate for national designation.

Significance: Of local historic interest. It is a good timber-framed building and the style, form and construction of the building is easily identifiable (although there is a modern extension of the east end). The farmstead of which it is a part, is recorded as a monument on the Historic Environment Record (HER) database (Monument MCC9208) and can be viewed here: https://colchesterheritage.co.uk/Monument/MCC9208

Annex G

WEST BERGHOLT - NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN



The Neighbourhood Plan is intended to provide guidance to people who are thinking about proposed developments such as an alteration to an existing property.

Produced August 2019 Updated Oct 2024, VDS removed as supporting document

Thinking about the future

1 FOREWORD

A Neighbourhood Plan is a type of planning document, introduced in the Localism Act 2011, which allows local people to have a say in the future growth and development of their community. The West Bergholt Neighbourhood Plan sets out a number of policies all of which have the aim of preserving the unique characteristics of the parish, whilst welcoming improvements and change that will ensure the vibrancy of the community into the future. We are really pleased with the constructive feedback we received to our Regulation 14 draft of the Neighbourhood Plan and have directly incorporated many of the suggestions received. Policies cover the protection of the countryside and local amenities, support for local businesses and provision of new sustainable housing development. Although construction of homes is a controversial issue, we need new homes to contribute towards the wider need in the district and to ensure a supply of suitable affordable and marketable homes for local residents who wish to stay in the village close to family, friends or employment.

The Plan and its supporting background documents were prepared following significant public consultation by a Steering Group, reporting to West Bergholt Parish Council and consisting of:

- [redacted]

In addition, the following have made valuable contributions to the work of the Steering Group:

- [redacted], photographers [redacted] and the children of Heathlands School responsible for the individual policy chapter icons.

On behalf of the Parish of West Bergholt I would like to thank everyone who has been involved with the project. I would also like to thank the following for their assistance and support:

- [redacted] and colleagues at the RCCE; [redacted] Planning Consultant during the evidence gathering and analysis stage; [redacted] our Planning Consultant, for giving us the benefit of her vast knowledge and experience in planning and neighbourhood planning, and for extensive help and guidance with drafting documents and policies;
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- Colchester Borough Council officers and Councillors for guidance and encouragement, in particular [redacted] and Officers [redacted]

Finally, the Parish Council and the Steering Group would like to thank all those residents and those who work within the parish, and indeed those organisations who do not, who have participated in the public consultation events, responded to the surveys and shown support for the Neighbourhood Plan.

[redacted] Chair, Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group & West Bergholt Parish Council, November 2018

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5 INTRODUCTION

5.1 About Neighbourhood Plans

The Localism Act 2011 introduced a number of measures allowing communities to shape the future of their area and to deliver the sustainable development that they need. One of these measures is the Neighbourhood Plan. This is a new type of planning document, which can set policies for the use of land detailing the expectations of the community and the quality and type of development sought. A Neighbourhood Plan must comply with a higher-level planning policy at district, national and European level and must be based on evidence. Following community consultation, it will be examined by an independent examiner and must be approved by residents at a local referendum. The made or adopted plan will become part of the development plan for the local area and will be used in determining planning applications and appeals.

A Neighbourhood Plan cannot be used to stop development. There is a requirement for new homes nationally and every Neighbourhood Plan must plan for new growth.

West Bergholt Parish Council resolved to prepare a plan so that the community could work together to shape the future of the village and have a say about where new homes should go and what they should look like, how the local economy should be supported, how the countryside and open spaces of the village should be protected and how local facilities and infrastructure could be improved.

The Parish Council, although the sponsoring body for the Neighbourhood Plan, recognised that the wider community had to play a major role in producing the plan and so agreed that a Steering Group made up of Parish Council representatives and people from the community be set up to write the plan and consult upon it.

5.2 The purpose of a Neighbourhood Plan

A Neighbourhood Plan has a number of functions. In a strict planning sense, it relates to the use and development of land and, in this sense, its primary purpose is to help in deciding future land allocations for a variety of uses, notably, but not exclusively, housing and subsequently planning applications in the Plan Area. However, it is also an opportunity to cover in a holistic sense a great deal more. Communities have manifold needs and a Neighbourhood Plan allows these needs to be set out in a way that the community can plan for priorities that it feels need addressing, everything in fact from sport to transport! Thus, the Neighbourhood Plan for West Bergholt will be a successor to the current Parish Plan and will contain separately identified aspirations and ideas that go beyond the strict planning and development remit of the Neighbourhood Plan. These are called the Community Ambitions.

West Bergholt as a community resides in a locality which has a common cultural and historical heritage, shares common characteristics and interests and perceives itself distinct in many respects from the larger community of Colchester. The community's aspirations are to maintain and enhance its community feel and environment, its housing and businesses and the safety of the community, setting these out as Community Aspirations.

Localism provides the opportunity for local decisions to be made by local people. As long as it can be demonstrated that the Neighbourhood Plan is inclusive and deals with potential and planned growth, then there is no reason why it would not be agreeable to the community when submitted for referendum or by Colchester Borough Council, which must approve the plan.

The purpose of this document is therefore to:

- Set out a framework to guide residents, local authorities and developers on how the community wishes to manage and control future development in the Plan Area over the next 15 years, along with its facilities, services and environment;
- Record the historical and existing status and nature of the community and its environment;
- Establish an Action Plan that provides the community with a prioritised plan to improve its facilities, services and environment on a voluntary and assisted basis.

The Neighbourhood Plan therefore:

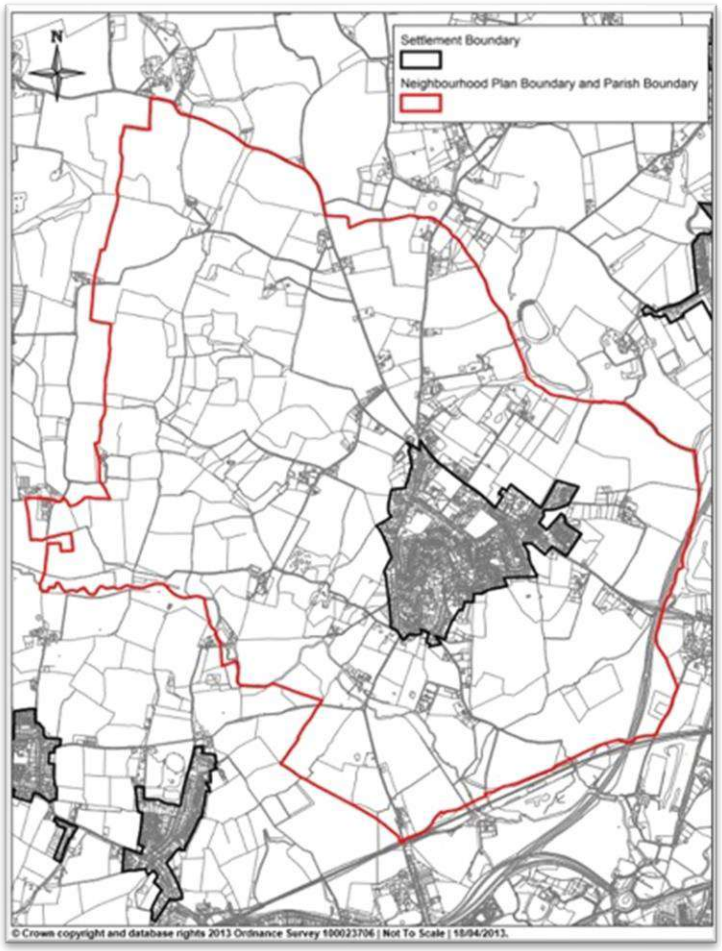
- Identifies the main community issues and objectives for West Bergholt as a whole;
- Makes proposals for the development and use of land and allocates land for specific purposes;
- Sets out the community's policies for the management of development;
- Provides an Action Plan that schedules a series of desired projects arising from the communities' vision for sustainable growth in their Neighbourhood Area;
- Documents the mechanisms for monitoring and the timescales for delivering the plan and its proposals.

5.2.1 The Neighbourhood Plan Period

The West Bergholt Neighbourhood Plan will be for the period from 2018 to 2033.

5.2.2 The Plan Area

Following an application to Colchester Borough Council to designate the parish of West Bergholt as a Neighbourhood Plan area, a statutory consultation was held in June 2013. No objections were forthcoming and the plan was confirmed and is shown adjacent:



Neighbourhood Plan Area

6 PREPARING THE PLAN

6.1 How the Plan was produced

The plan was a community-led affair but affiliated to the Parish Council who acted as its sponsor. The Neighbourhood Plan was informed by village workshops, community surveys and other parish meetings. The process was overseen by a Steering Group, made up of both residents and business owners within the parish of West Bergholt, who valued the opportunity to have a say in the future shape and development of their village.

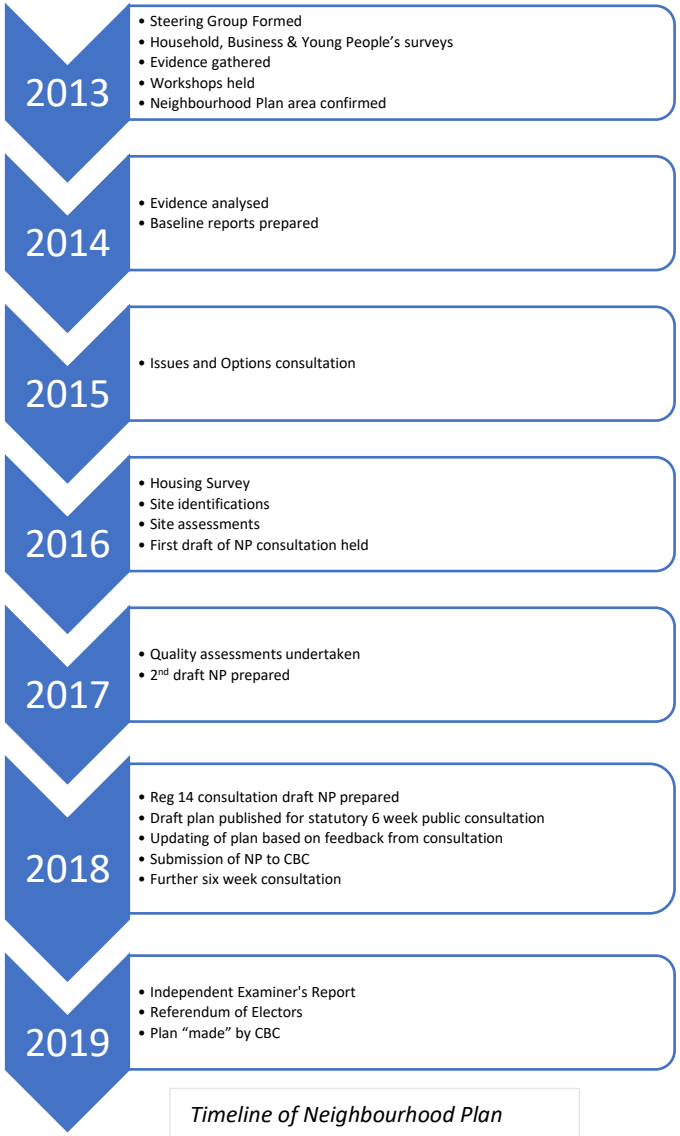
6.2 Legal Requirements

A Neighbourhood Plan must comply with a number of conditions, known as the Basic Conditions. These require that the Plan:

- has regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State;
- contributes towards the achievement of sustainable development;
- is in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in the development plan for the area;
- does not breach and is compatible with European Union (EU) obligations;
- is not likely to have a significant effect on a European site or a European offshore marine site, either alone or in combination with other plans or projects.

6.2.1 National Policies and Advice

The National Planning Policy Framework 2012 (NPPF) is the principal document in which national planning policies are contained.



Timeline of Neighbourhood Plan

Government guidance is provided on the Planning Practice Guidance website.

6.2.2 Sustainable Development

The NPPF sets out a presumption in favour of sustainable development. This means development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. There are three dimensions to sustainable development: economic, social and environmental.

6.2.3 Wider Policy Context for the area

West Bergholt sits within a number of other plan and service areas including:

- National Government which sets out Planning Policies & Frameworks and other matters including strategic infrastructure;
- Essex County Council which produces plans for a number of functions including minerals and waste, education, social services, highways and libraries;
- Colchester, which produces the Local Plan for the Borough area;
- Its own Parish Council, which has at its heart the representation of its community to other bodies, as well as specific localised functions covering open space, parish facilities such as community buildings and other facilities such as play and recreational activities;
- Service Specific Plans such as those set out by the Police and Fire Services and the National & Mental Health Services;
- Deregulated private bodies such as transport and utility bodies, which provide us with power, water and public transport services;
- Voluntary sector which comes in a variety of guises to fill gaps in the public and private sector.

The Neighbourhood Plan sets out to ascertain which areas would benefit from intervention and to sound its community out on areas where they think planning could be carried out at a local level.

6.2.4 Development Plans for the area

The development plan for the area consists of the Essex Minerals Local Plan 2014 and the Essex & Southend Waste Local Plan 2017, which currently provide the local planning policies which govern minerals and waste development in Essex. Colchester Borough Council have produced a set of adopted Development Plan Documents (DPD) that are referred to as the adopted Local Plan which guides future growth and development in the Borough up to 2021.

The DPD comprises the:

- Core Strategy (adopted 2008, amended 2014);
- Site Allocations DPD (adopted 2010);
- Development Policies DPD (adopted 2010, amended 2014);
- Proposals Maps (adopted 2010);
- Tiptree Jam Factory DPD (adopted 2013).

The biggest impact on local land use planning matters is Colchester's Local Plan. A new Local plan is in the process of being formulated to cover the period up to 2033. Our Neighbourhood Plan must be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the adopted Local Plan and it has also taken into account the direction of the emerging Local Plan, although the relationships with other service and planning bodies is in fact equally important.

6.2.5 EU obligations

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA)

A Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) screening determination was prepared for the Neighbourhood Plan, which concluded that the Neighbourhood Plan will not result in significant environmental effects and therefore a SEA is not needed. Natural England and Historic England agreed with the conclusion that SEA is not required.

However, towards the latter stages of the Neighbourhood Plan development the draft Essex Coast Recreational disturbance Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy (RAMS) was circulated to LPA Officers. Whilst the RAMS was in draft form, the Essex Coast RAMS set out Zones of Influence (ZoI), which have been agreed by Natural England. Residential development falling within the ZoI is likely to significantly affect Habitats sites through increased recreational disturbance in-combination with other plans and projects across Essex. The whole of Colchester Borough is within the ZoI, which means that all residential development in Colchester Borough is likely to significantly affect Habitats sites through increased recreational disturbance in-combination. The Neighbourhood Plan therefore needs to consider appropriate avoidance/ mitigation measures. Until recently this could be done through a screening opinion, and a HRA screening report was prepared for the Neighbourhood Plan concluding no likely significant effects. However, a recent decision from the European Court of Justice (People Over Wind and Sweetman) requires avoidance and mitigation measures to be considered in an appropriate assessment rather than a screening opinion.

The implications of this are that an appropriate assessment is required for the Neighbourhood Plan, even though the effects are in-combination and relatively minor when considering that the Neighbourhood Plan allocates land for 120 dwellings and West Bergholt is not adjacent to a Habitats site.

Changes were made to the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations in December 2018 making it clear that Neighbourhood Plans can have an appropriate assessment under the Habitats Directive and meet the basic condition of no likely significant effects on Habitats sites. An appropriate assessment was prepared for the Neighbourhood Plan. The SEA Directive states that SEA is mandatory if an appropriate assessment is required. Therefore, a SEA has been prepared for the Neighbourhood Plan.



6.2.6 Human Rights

The Neighbourhood Plan must comply with the Human Rights Act 1998 and be compatible with the rights protected by the European Convention of Human Rights, including those dealing with privacy, discrimination and property.

The *Basic Conditions Statement* explains in detail how the West Bergholt Neighbourhood Plan complies with the Basic Conditions and other legal requirements.

6.3 Consultation & Engagement

The Steering Group overseeing the development and assembly of the Neighbourhood Plan was keen to establish the following:

- Reaching the attention of as large an audience as possible;
- Providing regular opportunities to participate at key stages in the plan's production;

- Providing feedback opportunities;
- Giving information;
- Partnering with organisations which have a stake in the plan.

The group set out to do this via its meetings, workshops, surveys, exhibitions, face to face meetings and through a visible presence on the website, village notice boards and in the Village Bulletin. A full consultation and involvement summary are provided in the supporting documents.

6.3.1 Consultation: Baselining 'the current situation'

In 2013, workshops and surveys were undertaken to establish how people felt about the village and to establish key lines of enquiry. Surveys of households, businesses, schools and colleges were undertaken. Results are included in the supporting documents, but key points were recorded as follows:

In total, nearly 500 households representing over 1000 people responded to the various consultations.

Key issues identified were:

- Traffic issues and road maintenance - Road safety;
- More facilities for older children;
- Residents having a say in new development;
- Smaller starter or mixed-use developments favoured - Minimum possible new development favoured;
- Better provision of broadband;

Other points identified were:

- Strong degree of support for maintaining the identity of the village - Very strong support for preserving the environment;
- Residents feel safe in the village from crime or anti-social behaviour.

6.3.2 Consultation: Issues and Options

In April and May 2015, an Issues and Options exhibition and consultation were carried out. This took the information from the earlier surveys plus independent evidence from desktop research and played this out to the community through a range of scenarios and propositions. Results are included in the supporting documents, but key points were recorded as follows:

- 98% of residents thought it was very important or important to have a Neighbourhood Plan;
- 93% of respondents felt that giving residents a chance to influence and shape the plan and associated development was the most important reason to have one;
- Over 80% supported the vision for the plan;
- Support for the objectives, issues and proposals for the plan components were supported by well over 50% of residents;
- The option restricting the amount of housing to 100 units over the Neighbourhood Plan lifetime emerged as the clear favoured option.

6.3.3 Consultation: The Draft Outline Plan and Policies

In October 2016, a consultation on the draft plan and policies was undertaken.

Key points were as follows:

- 70-90%+ agreement on policies;
- Broad agreement to the location of new housing.

In 2018 the Neighbourhood Plan was issued in draft for a six-week consultation period in accord with Regulation 14. The responses from that consultation were duly considered and a Regulation 16 version of the Plan was submitted to Colchester Borough Council.

7 About West Bergholt

7.1 A Brief History of West Bergholt

West Bergholt is a small compact rural parish located to the north west of Colchester comprising an area of 929 hectares. Dating back to the 11th century the village was originally known as Bercolta, later recorded as Bergholt Sackville, after the Sackville family who held the main manor from the early 12th century to the 17th century. The village is recorded in the "Doomsday Book". It was finally named West Bergholt in the early 20th century to distinguish it from East Bergholt in Suffolk.

The landscape surrounding the village is attractive and undulating and is bounded to the south and west by the sloping valleys of the river Colne and St Botolph's Brook. The north and east are arable farmlands interspersed with small woodlands. Indeed, the name Bergholt is derived from the Anglo-Saxon terms 'beorg' meaning hill and 'holt' meaning wood. There are ten local wildlife sites of importance for nature conservation, including the famous Hillhouse Wood (owned and administered by the Woodland Trust) known to many as the 'Bluebell Wood'.

The village has 34 buildings listed for architectural merit. The only grade 1 listed building is the Church of St Mary in Hall Road, adjacent to Bergholt Hall. Now redundant, but still consecrated, the church is used for special services and village events. The building was originally Saxon in origin.

West Bergholt has evolved into its current form through circumstances to meet local needs and demands. Historical development has resulted in the broad shape of the village in terms of houses and amenities provided to meet the needs of residents, and this has largely determined the shape of the settlement boundary which has remained unaltered for many years.

The village has had a largely agricultural heritage and the population settled at approximately 1200 from 1801 to 1961. During the 1800's the village was home to Daniell's brewery which operated successfully until the 1950's. The new owner, Truman's, operated from the site until 1989, when it was developed into houses and flats.

7.2 Population

The village expanded significantly in the 1960's and 1970's and currently has a population of 3,344 residents and 1,363 households. The Parish has a large elderly population compared with Colchester Borough as a whole. In addition, it has a slightly larger population of those aged 5 to 17 years. Approximately 20% (675) of residents are of retirement age compared with 15% at Borough level and approximately 17% (574) are aged 5 –17 years. This compares with approximately 14% at Borough level.

7.3 Village Life

7.3.1 Village Society and Community Facilities

The village features the large 400 place Heathlands Primary School, Bluebells Pre-School and other child and baby care facilities. There is a Church of England, St Mary the Virgin, and an additional redundant church, St Mary's Old Church, used on special occasions. There is a doctors' surgery and a pharmacy in the village and the general hospital is about 3 miles away. The village voluntary Care Network has over 20 members who can be contacted for transport when required. There are two general stores, one incorporating a post office with access to banking facilities, a gift shop, hairdressers, and three Public Houses. There are other commercial outlets including a garage workshop, shops and business parks.

The venues available for hire for groups to meet include the Orpen Hall and the attached John Lampon Hall, where there is parking available. There is a Social Club attached to the Hall that is open in the evenings and weekends and available for the public to hire during the daytime. The Parish Church

also has meeting rooms for hire. All are well used. The Lorkin Daniell Field and Poor's Land are available for recreation and are often used by the local West Bergholt Football Club and the Bergholt Heath Youth Football Club respectively.

The Cricket Club has the use of a field off the main Colchester Road. There is a Multi-Use Games Area on the Lorkin Daniell Field which is available for hire for tennis and other sports. The Scout Hut is situated on the Heath by the primary school and is well used by different groups and activities. The green field areas can be made available for events. There are 3 areas of children's playground equipment and an area for 140 allotment plots.

7.3.2 Environment

The Parish has a wonderful mix of undulating farmland with the beautiful River Colne valley accessed by a network of public footpaths including public access to ancient woodland. The vast majority of the parish is rural with agriculture the dominant feature (both arable and dairy). Within the village, there are numerous ponds, open spaces and vegetation that complements the built environment. As a result of a good network of local roads and Public Rights of Way (PROW), there are numerous opportunities for the community to enjoy both local environments within the main village settlement and those close at hand in the surrounding countryside.

The rural landscape provides some accessible green space such as Hillhouse Wood and many PROW, including long distance paths such as the Essex Way. Also, within the settlement boundary is the Village Green (known as The Heath), pockets of smaller green space generally within housing areas (amenity greens), the churchyards and three ponds. The village does not have a formal public park or garden as such within its boundaries, however there are some older properties that have significant trees or hedgerows that contribute to the rural character and biodiversity value of parts of the village. A few trees are protected with Tree Preservation Orders. Hedgerows and verges within villages are generally not protected.

When considering the built environment although there is a mix of eclectic modern housing styles, the village has nevertheless a good range of older buildings of architectural value with many listed buildings including several of both architectural and historic importance.

The surveys conducted in compiling the Neighbourhood Plan overwhelmingly revealed that existing public open spaces and important landscape and wildlife areas were universally valued and as a result should be protected.

7.3.3 Housing and Planning

The growth in population in the late 1960s and in the 1980's was the result of new estates being constructed and a variety of styles mark this expansion such as those around Lexden Road, Mumford Road and Pirie Road, as well as the development on the former Truman's brewery site. More recently there have been smaller developments usually consisting of four or more bedroomed detached properties closely positioned on sites within the settlement boundary.

In preparing the Village Design Statement in 2011 the housing areas of the village were divided up into character areas to help distinguish the mixture of vernacular and modern housing styles and help assess the applicability of housing and extension proposals.

West Bergholt remains a highly desirable village in which to live. Being situated just outside and to the northwest of Colchester – Britain's *Oldest Recorded Town*, West Bergholt village is conveniently placed for those residents who work in Colchester and its close proximity to the A12 means that it is well placed for people who work in Ipswich or Chelmsford. Being only 2.5 miles from the main railway line into London has meant that West Bergholt has become an extremely desirable commuter location.

It was the land released for development in the 1960's, 1970's and 1980's that marked the most significant increase in housing numbers within the village. Due to the location of most of the new estates the village 'look and

feel' was maintained with some supporting improvements to facilities for the community. It has to be said though that the modern housing design was at odds with the older housing and although functional the design and style now looks dated and the housing no longer meets the needs of the Parish in terms of the mix of tenure and the lack of affordable housing.

The formal Settlement Boundary indicates the boundary inside which there is a presumption that development will be allowed (subject to planning permission). The opportunities for such development are reducing over time and therefore there is likely to be the need for some additional growth.

It is evident from the consultations undertaken so far, including the 2008 West Bergholt Parish Plan, that whilst some wish the village to stay exactly as it is without expansion, many more envisage a limited and appropriately planned increase in development providing the types and numbers of new housing to meet the needs of the Parish whilst maintaining the village character.

7.3.4 Business and Commerce

Nowadays, with the decline in agricultural employment, many residents commute to Colchester for work as well as travelling to towns such as Ipswich and Chelmsford because of the close proximity to the A12. It is also a desirable location for those commuting into London.

In most cases the commercial and employment areas have evolved over time. As well as two general stores (including a Post Office in the Co-op), a pharmacy, a hairdresser's, an accessories shop, three public houses and other commercial premises there are business parks located in Colchester Road, Nayland Road, Bourne Road, Fossetts Lane and at Armoury Farm. These house independent businesses as well as offering some office space. In addition, there are many small businesses which operate from people's homes. These all provide local employment whilst harmonising with village life.

7.3.5 Sports and Recreation

The village currently has use of the following building and land assets

- The Lorkin Daniell Playing Field and the Orpen Memorial Hall are village assets held in Trust and managed by the Parish Council as Sole Trustee. These assets are available for public use and hire.

Over the years the Parish Council in its capacity as Trustee for Charity land, has added to or enhanced the village hall buildings located in Lexden Road to meet the ever-increasing demands of a thriving and vibrant village. Booking demand for the village halls increases annually and these buildings are used at near full capacity. The expansion of the hall is essential if future demand over the next 15 years is to be met.

Other community buildings exist and are owned and maintained by organisations, each being largely self-financing. They include:

- St Mary's Hall – administered by the Church of England Church committee
- Scout Hut - administered by the Scout group but located on Trust land

Village open spaces held in trust and managed by the Parish Council include:

- Lorkin Daniell Playing Field
- Village Green – to the south of Heathlands School
- Poor's Land – to the north of Heathlands School
- The Allotments

The cricket pitch and club house are located on privately owned land and is managed by the Cricket Club

Recreational facilities, the current situation:

- The Lorkin Daniell Playing Field hosts:
    - A full-size adult football pitch
    - A club house and changing facilities
    - Training area for Bergholt Heath Youth Football Club

  - A children's play area
  - A Multi Use Games Area (MUGA) used for tennis, 5 aside football and basketball
  - Annual Village Fete

- Poor's Land provides a recreation area for:
  - Junior football
  - Dog walking
  - Heathlands School inc. sports day events
  - Annual Heathlands PTA fireworks display
  - Visiting mobile attractions - Circus etc.

7.3.6 Community Safety

Crime in West Bergholt is generally low but with the withdrawal of neighbourhood policing and regular PCSOs, crime has been rising. Current snapshots reveal the following incidence of crime and its composition:

Number of crimes: 3 per month

Typical composition: Theft from Vehicle, Burglary, Antisocial Behaviour

The parish has an active Neighbourhood Watch scheme in the village. As a result of neighbourhood policing changes there is no longer a regular mobile police presence where residents can seek advice or make their concerns known.

West Bergholt is served by the Local Community Meetings initiative (LCM) are multi agency problem solving groups, working alongside the local community to address crime, anti-social behaviour and quality of life issues.

The village has a very active Community Speed Watch group (CSW) with resource and equipment being shared with Eight Ash Green. The CSW group is recorded as being in the top five most active groups in Essex.

The village also has a Traffic Safety Group educating and reminding drivers on the importance of safer diving and careful parking.

Snow clearance volunteer teams are in place and the Parish Council maintain equipment and salt supplies for use by volunteers. An Emergency Plan for the village has been drawn up to support Colchester Borough and the emergency services.

7.3.7 Communication

Communication in this sense refers to the formal means of relaying information that the Parish Council needs to undertake, as well as informal ways to get messages across from differing interest groups within the village to the population. The key objective was supported by nearly 98% of the Neighbourhood Plan questionnaire respondents.

There are 4 main channels in which the village communicates;

- Face to face
- The quarterly Village Bulletin and the occasional Village Newsletter
- West Bergholt website
- Social media

The full Parish Council meets 10 times a year (excluding the months of August and December). There is always time set aside for villagers to air views, ask questions or make comments. The PC committees meet as frequently prior to the main meeting. Village residents are welcome to attend the "Environment", the "Premises" and the "Planning" committees.

The Co-op, pharmacy, pre-school and school are at the centre of village life and you will often see people informally meeting and passing the time with friends and family adding to the sense of community.

<u>Village Bulletin and Village Newsletters</u>

The Parish council supports the publication of a quarterly Village Bulletin which is delivered to all households. A brief, more up to date "Village Newsletter" is produced periodically when there is no Bulletin and displayed in the notice boards and on other sites around the village.

The Parish Council also maintains a number of notice boards which are kept up to date regularly. In addition, the church and school have their own newsletters.

West Bergholt Website

westbergholt.net – the website page for the village provides a calendar of events electronic copies of the bulletin, village updates, minutes of the council & committee meetings and details of the parish councillors.

Social media

A number of the clubs in West Bergholt have active websites. The majority of these sites have a good following. The village website is managed by a third party.

Facebook (note member numbers as of Nov 2018)

West Bergholt Neighbourhood Plan page (296 members)– this provides updates to the community and the progress around the plan

West Bergholt Hub and community page (3305 members) – this provides advice, adverts, questions and village updates.

West Bergholt and surroundings selling page (2708 members) - this provides a place for locals to see any second-hand goods.

West Bergholt latest news (580 members) – this provides local village updates

There are also a number of Facebook pages for the Cricket Club, Football Clubs, Parent and Toddler Group, Bergholt Youth Group and West Bergholt Pharmacy all totalling circa 850 members.

Twitter (note member numbers as of Nov 2018)

- West Bergholt PC (134 followers) – this provides latest news and updates
- West Bergholt CC (455 followers) – this provides updates for the cricket club
- West Bergholt FC (901 followers) – this provides updates for the football club

7.3.8 Transport and Highways

The village has generally good main (B1508) and minor road connections to the A12, Colchester town centre, the rail station, Tollgate retail area and towards Sudbury and the rural Essex-Suffolk border area.

Bus services are provided by two companies, Chambers, providing an hourly service to Colchester and Sudbury, and First Bus that operates a 30-minute frequency peak and daytime service to the town centre via the Rail Station. On Sundays the frequency of buses drops to two-hourly. School buses serve the main secondary schools whilst the voluntary Care Network helps patients attend clinics.

Information gathered during the Parish Plan established the following:

- General accessibility to a car: 92% have driving licences and 81% have access to a car

Typical usage of different modes of transport have been calculated from a travel diary survey conducted by Essex County Council some time ago. (ECC 2005)

Car	Bus	Train	Cycle	walk
86%	28%	23%	25%	64%

Popular destinations are: the rail station and adjacent retail park, town centre, the hospital, access to the A12 and the Stanway/Tollgate area for retail shopping.



8 VISION, AIMS AND FRAMEWORK FOR DEVELOPING OUR PLAN

8.1 A Vision for Our Parish and Village

The Neighbourhood Plan intends to influence the future for the better by the concerted actions of many agencies and organisations and to do so in harmony with the wider community in West Bergholt. This will have an impact on West Bergholt as a place and will similarly affect its community as individuals, families and groups of citizens. This is reflected in a vision statement which was tested out during consultation periods, with the majority of those providing feedback feeling it was appropriate for a plan lasting many years.

The West Bergholt Vision Statement:

"By 2033 West Bergholt will be a prosperous community which has taken control of its destiny through local decision-making; which has achieved a sustainable mix of development; and where the combination of the built and natural environment provides an attractive location for residents, businesses and visitors alike."

8.2 Our Aims

Our community, its residents, clubs, societies, organisations, businesses and individuals aspire for an ever-improved quality of life. These aspirations are many and varied. We have grouped the main aspects under the overarching aims, set out below:

Creating a sense of community:

To improve and extend opportunities for all age groups to interact and take part in a wide range of activities and improve communication between and across community groups.

Caring for our environment:

To maintain the distinctiveness of the parish and its identity by protecting the natural and built environment for the enjoyment of future generations and to explore opportunities to create new areas of accessible open space.

Enhancing and expanding community amenities:

To provide improved community facilities which support local groups especially in the areas of sport and recreation, community buildings, telecommunications and meeting areas.

Integrating sustainable communities throughout the parish:

To support limited expansion in the parish and involve the local community in all aspects of development and change, through consultation and active involvement to determine new housing needs, infrastructure needs, changes in land-use designation or husbandry.

8.3 Taking Action

This process of implementing our Neighbourhood Plan will be through the following:

- Seeking compliance with the Plan's Planning Policies;
- Seeking ways of implementing and funding infrastructure requirements to realise both the Planning Policies and Community Ambitions;
- Developing a holistic action plan, made up of Planning Policies and Community Ambitions.

9 Sustainable Growth; a Framework for the Future of West Bergholt

9.1 What do we mean by Sustainable Growth?

For most people sustainability relates to the use of the planet's resources and the impact this has on the natural environment and the resultant quality of life for its inhabitants. Whilst this remains undoubtedly true, sustainability in planning terms has widened to incorporate all the factors that sustain communities. These include:

- Environmental matters, the health and quality of our natural and built environments.
- Economic outlook, the opportunities to enable a prosperous community and enabling aspects such as access to jobs, ability to successfully trade and the necessary infrastructure to maintain prosperity.
- Social and community wellbeing, covering everything from our health to the ability of people to interact with their society.

In our Neighbourhood Plan we are taking a holistic view of our community and concentrating on what will be our needs going forward, not just our immediate requirements, but the needs of our children and even grandchildren. What sustains a community now cannot be assumed to be suitable for future generations.

Our Neighbourhood Plan draws together a number of community ambitions and planning polices to enable a sustainable approach to change and development and this is incorporated in an umbrella Sustainable Development Planning policy.

9.2 The Framework for Developing Our Plan

We have adopted a strategy to meet our vision and aims. In order to do this comprehensively a framework of eight working areas which map



directly or indirectly onto the aims has been assembled:

- Village Society and Community
- Environment
- Housing and Planning
- Business, Commerce and Employment
- Sports and Recreation
- Community Safety
- Communications
- Transport, Highways & Infrastructure

The scope of each identified working area includes planning and non-planning related matters. Not all of the activities relate to the development and use of land. Therefore, whilst each working area is presented in full here, non-planning issues are identified separately as community ambitions and distinguished from the planning policies later on in this document.

Village Society and Community Facilities:	*Scope*: To improve and extend opportunities for all age groups and the wider community to take part in a wide range of activities including as volunteers. Identifying vulnerable people in our society and ensuring they get the support they need to maintain a thriving community support network.
	Activities: Clubs, societies, volunteering and mechanisms to strengthen the community and look after the vulnerable. To provide improved community facilities which support local groups especially in the areas of community buildings, telecommunications and meeting areas.
Environment:	*Scope:* To maintain the distinctiveness of the parish and its identity by protecting the natural and built environment for the enjoyment of future generations and to explore opportunities to create new areas of recreational open space.
	Activities: The quality of our built and natural environment, its protection, enhancement and improvement.
Housing and Planning:	*Scope*: Support limited expansion in the parish and involve the local community in all aspects of development through consultation and active involvement to determine new housing needs.
	Activities: The quantity, quality, location and provision of new dwellings in the parish.
Business and Commerce:	*Scope*: Creating opportunities to work and trade locally.
	Activities: Seek to examine controlled expansion of existing employment opportunities or new opportunities if scope exists; maintain and, where practical, enhance the existing facilities of retail and eating and drinking.
Sport and Recreation:	*Scope*: Promoting increased opportunities to get active and participate in sport.
	Activities: Provide new areas of open space for formal and informal sport and recreation to promote healthy living and lifestyles.
Community Safety:	*Scope*: Create an environment which promotes a feeling of safety where the perception and incidence of crime is low and where the chance of being the victim of a traffic related accident is minimised.
	Activities: Dealing with perceived and real safety issues, whether criminal or traffic related and working with the police, the community at large and highway authority.
Communication:	*Scope*: Keeping the community informed through a wide range of media and promoting two-way dialogue and creating the opportunity for participation in democratic processes and decision making.
	Activities: To improve communications through a range of activities with our website and social media at its core to provide residents with a means to be consulted on village affairs.
Transport:	*Scope*: Moving around in the parish on foot, bike, horse, car or bus and ascertaining the wider infrastructure requirements.
	Activities: Maintain and improve existing accessibility by bus, walking and cycling. Introduce 20mph zones or streets. Improve maintenance of our highways, bridleways, pathways and verges. Investigate the infrastructure of power, water and drainage.

10 Future Development; Promoting Inclusive Growth

10.1 Addressing Our Children's Future

Currently West Bergholt benefits from a range of assets and an environment which suits many in the community, but the forward nature of our plan means we need to examine whether the "place" aspects and the "people" aspects are indeed well matched in the future. We have decided to do this by looking at the people aspects first, and to assist with this we have made some generalisations. No one family group or indeed single person household, has the same needs or characteristics but by looking at typical needs we can tease out at a strategic level the issues that need to be addressed.

To promote community wellbeing and village sustainability as a whole the needs of separate but often interlinked family types need to be identified.

The various family types are defined as;

- Younger & Developing Families - Early Years Play, Pre & Primary Schooling
- Developing Families with Teenagers
- Mature Families & Couples - Adult Households
- Single Adult Living
- Senior Years - Largely Retired Residents

We have further looked at the eight categories of our plan and made an assessment of the likely differing needs of each household type. This in turn gives an appreciation of the various facilities that will be needed in future years.

10.2 Matching Strategic Needs to Family Type Requirements

Presently West Bergholt has the assets needed to provide the facilities to support the current needs of the community. To a large degree this has come about as a direct result of the generosity and good planning by village benefactors. For example, Mr O.G. Orpen, (director of Daniell's brewery) whose estate paid for the village hall known as the Orpen Memorial Hall in 1938 and Mr T.D. Daniell who, in 1939, donated 4 acres adjacent to it for recreational use and now has an adult football pitch, tennis courts and children's play area. Similarly, the Poor's Land (c. 5 acres) and the village allotments (c. 6 acres) were donated by other benefactors.

Future benefactors with a willingness and financial ability to provide additional community assets such as those provided under the estates of Mr Orpen or Mr Daniell are most unlikely. In addition, other facilities such as the various housing stock, the transport services, our roads, footpaths and pavements, the shops and business facilities have largely been either market-led, developed over hundreds of years or planned centrally by upper tier bodies.

Given the above and the seemingly endless directions in which our plan could lead us across our eight categories, the strategic building blocks of our plan can emerge in a way that makes sense not only in their own right but which will best suit the needs of the community. This will help enable a sustainable outcome for all.

10.2.1 Younger and Developing Families – Early Years Play; Pre and Primary Schooling

Whilst the needs of this family group are currently adequately provided for through existing facilities in the village, some facilities are operating at maximum capacity. In particular, affordable housing for young families is scarce and as a result some may be forced to move away from the village even though other facilities such as the school would normally attract them.

Children's play areas are located at; The Lorkin Daniell Playing Field; Earle Havard Playpark by Pirie Road; Pocket Park by Maltings Park. All three play areas are constrained by limited space for future expansion in their current

form. Pre-school facilities are provided by Bluebells which almost fully occupies the Orpen and John Lampon Halls during the term time week days. A lack of storage space means that equipment used by this award-winning group needs to be moved on a daily basis and stored outside the Halls.

Heathlands Primary School was extended to provide 50 additional spaces in 2014 for the children of West Bergholt and neighbouring villages. It is assumed this expansion will meet the schooling needs for the next 15 years. However, no provision was made to ease the congestion caused by parents bringing their children to school by car.

Footways and cycle paths to and around the school are in need of improvement. A new footway on the south side of Colchester Road adjacent to the school would be highly beneficial to help promote walking to school and ease parking during school time. Dedicated cycle paths would help parents feel more confident in allowing their children to cycle to school.

Summary of future needs:

- Improved provision of affordable housing
- Expansion and updating of children's play facilities
- Measures to improve traffic safety around the school
- New footways and cycle paths to change means of travel to school

10.2.2 Developing Families with Teenagers

State-funded Secondary Schools, Grammar and Further Education Colleges, are available outside of the village with some public transport available to and from Colchester schools. There are independent schools in the local area but also a small number of parents organise transport to schools in areas such as Ipswich. A few teenagers do cycle to school during term time when light and weather permits although there are no dedicated cycle paths between West Bergholt and Colchester or Lexden. Various clubs and sporting activities are available for teenagers including football, cricket, tennis, scouts, girl guides, etc. Bergholt Youth Group (BYG) operates from within the village halls and weather permitting uses the Multi Use Games Area and Lorkin Daniell Playing Field. This group has nearly 100 members and meets fortnightly. Holding additional club nights depends on attracting a sufficient pool of volunteer helpers. A youth shelter was constructed on the Lorkin Daniell playing field by the Parish Council and Essex County Council in 2012 but there is a growing need and demand to provide a venue, such as a café, for young people to meet socially. Unfulfilled demand has existed over a number of years for a zip wire to be provided however lack of suitable space and funding has meant this has not come to fruition. Facilities for adults within this group are met through clubs and recreational pursuits in the village. Neither an indoor nor outdoor gymnasium exists in the village nor is there a swimming pool. Adequate number of pubs, and restaurants exist to meet the needs of the future.

Summary of future needs:

- Provision of a venue with the facility for young people to meet socially
- An expansion and upgrading of sports facilities and opportunities.

10.2.3 Mature Families and Couples, Adult Households

As West Bergholt is deemed a desirable place to live many younger adults continue to live in the village, sometimes with their parents, as they grow up and parents tend to stay in their family homes when children leave. For those wishing to downsize it is often not easy to find alternative suitable accommodation. Shops, a Post Office and pharmacy provide an invaluable service and residents consider themselves fortunate to have a well appreciated doctor's surgery. A pleasant environment is important to this group and so open spaces, including the allotments, walks and woods need to be well maintained. Facilities for adults within this group are met through clubs and recreational pursuits in the village but these need to be expanded and well publicised.

Summary of future needs:

- Maintain and develop the pleasant environment provided by the village open spaces.

- Improve sports facilities and encourage opportunities for involvement in a full range of activities

10.2.4 Single Adult Living

Some living accommodation exists to meet single adult requirements and is provided through flats and apartments in various locations including the Truman Building in Maltings Park. Many of the facilities needed for this group match those defined above, but, in particular, there is a need to encourage involvement in clubs, societies and sports activities. At present the village has adequate pubs and restaurants but an alternative venue for meeting socially, especially for single adults, would be desirable.

10.2.1.1 *Summary of future needs:*

- Encourage opportunities for involvement in a full range of activities
- Provision of a venue with a facility to meet socially

10.2.5 Senior Years, Largely Retired Residents

Whilst some property downsizing does occur, many in this category choose to remain in the original family home. Sometimes there is a reluctance to leave the home where the family grew up and in other cases there is a lack of suitable or affordable senior years housing. Bungalows are sought after and desirable throughout the village and often change hands very quickly. Other features in the village currently that are relevant to this group include:

- There is no sheltered accommodation within the village which houses a resident warden.
- Sufficient clubs and societies exist to meet most needs but may need to be better publicised.
- An adequate public transport system provides the means to shop in the town centre or to travel further afield if desired.
- A well-developed Care Network involving volunteers provides transport for those that need it, generally for medical appointments.
- A local doctors' surgery and pharmacy provides vital services for this group of residents.

As a caring society it is essential that vulnerable residents in this group, especially those without local family and friends, are supported. This will be achieved in an appropriate way through the various volunteer and professional groups which exist, and which would naturally come into contact with vulnerable people through their work programmes and initiatives.

Summary of future needs:

Make the village "senior friendly" both by providing a safe environment and sufficient well publicised recreational activities.

- Ensuring an adequate supply of appropriate accommodation
- Maintaining an efficient Care Network, well supported by volunteers
- Providing good appropriate communications with all senior citizens, especially the lonely and vulnerable.



Matching Strategic Needs to Family Type Requirements & Prioritisation

Category	Younger Families Pre school	Developing Families	Mature families	Single adult living	Senior Years (largely retired residents)
Village society & community	✓✓	✓✓✓	✓	✓	✓✓✓
Environment	✓	✓	✓✓✓	✓✓	✓✓
Housing & planning	✓✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓	✓✓✓
Business & commerce	✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓
Sports & recreation	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓	✓
Community Safety	✓✓✓	✓	✓	✓✓	✓✓
Communications	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓✓
Transport, highways & infrastructure	✓✓✓	✓✓	✓	✓	✓✓✓

✓✓✓ Highly relevant ✓✓ Moderately relevant ✓ Minor relevance

11 STATUTORY AND NON-STATUTORY ASPECTS

11.1 Components of the Neighbourhood Plan

It is realised that Neighbourhood Plans although part of the planning system must also inspire the wider community, and so each of our strategy elements has been examined in terms of how it affects three important aspects:

- Matters affecting land use: aspects of the plan which change "place" through new land uses are a statutory planning matter in the main and so these are shown on our plans and maps and articulated in each section.
- Matters which may or may not affect land use but which certainly require formal discussion are covered by the Planning Policies, again articulated in each section.
- Projects and Initiatives: those activities which are largely Community Ambitions are listed in each section separately.

This Neighbourhood Plan will thus contain development and use of land policies, but that, as part of that process and through engaging with the community, many other matters have emerged and these are captured as Community Ambitions.

11.2 How the Plan takes the strategy in action

In the chapters that follow each of the elements is examined to ascertain what Planning Policies are needed to guide either development proposals or what Community Ambitions are needed to bring about improvements to people or place aspects where the emphasis is what the community can achieve in concert with others rather than with developers.

In ascertaining the policy basis, the following thought process has been employed:

Stage	Output
One	What the base line situation is. This evidence base is crucial to understand the starting point for assessing needs. The evidence comes from a number of sources: • Databases, inventories and reports already in existence and readily available. • Surveys which have been undertaken during the Neighbourhood Plan's production, these may be factual or public perceptions.
Two*	With the evidence base established the Strategy then passes through the following stages: • Define issues & opportunities • Define options • Define priorities
Three	Produce a robust set of policies. There will be two types of policy • Planning Policy and/or • Community Ambition

** See SWOTs under each Policy section*

11.3 Sources of Information

The Plan is evidence led, through each stage. In order to signpost and document the route, the following reports and summaries are available in the Appendix 2 to the Neighbourhood Plan document. These are listed below under the same headings of the table:

Stage	Evidence
One: Baseline Information	West Bergholt Village Appraisal 1998
	Parish Plan 2008
	Village Design Statement 2009
	RCCE Community Profile of West Bergholt
	West Bergholt Position Statement
	Consultation Report 2018 (Baseline Surveys)
	Other useful background evidence
Two: Opportunities, Options and Priorities	Consultation Report 2018 (Issues and Options)
	West Bergholt Housing Needs Survey 2015
	Housing Sites Allocation Appraisal 2018
	Emerging Infrastructure Priorities
Three: Compliance and Policy Formulation	Consultation Report 2018 (Draft Neighbourhood Plan)
	Consultation Report for Reg 15/16 (incorporates responses to Reg 14 consultation) 2018
	Basic Condition Statement 2018

12 Policies and Community Ambitions

The Plan from here on in contains the detailed policies and community ambitions that will help to meet the community's vision for West Bergholt and address key issues that have been raised during consultation. Planning Policies relate to the use and development of land. Community Ambitions relate to the wider aspirations which the community can achieve through their own efforts.

The Planning Policies (in the blue tables) will be taken into account by the local planning authority, Colchester Borough Council and other decision makers when determining planning applications and appeals. Development proposals will also be determined with reference to national policy and the development plan. In addition, these Planning Policies will guide developers and prospective applicants.

The Community Ambitions (in the green tables) form the basis of a more community focused set of initiatives which will largely replace those in the Parish Plan.

Each chapter that follows is preceded by an introductory section, which outlines the background and intent of the policy and community ambition and refers to relevant evidence contained in the supporting documents and other evidence base material, which is listed in Appendix 2.

The website also provides copies of or links to the remaining evidence base documents or explains where they are available. In all of the analysis we have asked ourselves "Is what we have fit for the next 15 years?" To help with this a SWOT analysis has been undertaken.



13 VILLAGE SOCIETY & COMMUNITY FACILITIES

13.1 Objectives

- To improve and extend opportunities for all age groups and the wider community to take part in a wide range of activities.
- To identify vulnerable people or groups in our society and ensure they get the support they need.
- To promote and raise awareness of opportunities to increase participation and to maintain a thriving community support network.
- To improve facilities for the community.



13.2 Background & Intent

The village is the principal location for facilities for individuals, groups, clubs and societies to meet and take part in recreational and social activities. As a result, in part due to the generous benefactor- provided bequests in the early to mid-part of the 20th century. There have been an ample provision of meetings areas at the Orpen Memorial Hall Complex supported by those at local churches, as well as large areas of open space at the Lorkin Daniell Field, Poor's Land, Village Green and the Allotments. A large number of individuals and clubs and societies use these facilities on a regular basis.

However, in understanding the future requirements of the village and parish it has been instructive to understand pressures that are being felt and whether these assets are well placed to provide for the future particularly as the village expands. These pressures have emerged through examining various information sources and through surveys.

13.3 Evidence

13.1.2 *Community Buildings*

There is a large village hall complex available to hire which is managed in Trust by the Parish Council. Part of the building is licenced to West Bergholt Social Club open to all members of the community to join.

The halls and rooms are booked up weeks, if not months, in advance and for some uses such as indoor sports are not really adequate for all the purposes asked of it. There is neither a Parish Office nor Community Hub and therefore the village lacks a central point of contact and co-ordination thus relying on contact being made through email and suchlike. Elsewhere other meeting places are available to hire at the Scout Hut and Church Halls.

Feedback from surveys highlighted these limitations and there was support for expansion where this was affordable and practical.

To support further use by the community new or expanded facilities at the Orpen Memorial Hall complex will be required.

13.1.3 *Community Facilities*

Away from buildings there are the allotments, 3 play areas, two sports fields and a multi-use hard court area; the recreational areas are predominantly used for football and tennis. There are regular users of all these facilities which are very well established.



Overall there are currently plots for future allotment holders but little opportunity for further uses of the sports areas. This matter is picked up later in the document, however the feeling is that some consolidation is required to allow for informal use of open spaces as distinct from regular uses. Major drawback for sport includes the lack of changing facilities and toilets.

Of concern is also the rapidly diminishing space in the churchyard for burials and this is expected to become exhausted within two years.

13.1.4 *Community Activities*

There is a wide range of clubs, societies and interest groups and more being set up all the time. The main issue here is over-use of the hall facilities which is covered above. Although the clubs and societies cover children up to age 15 and middle and older age groups, there is a lack of activities for older teenagers and younger adults. Central to promotion of these activities is the use of information systems, electronic booking arrangements and the link up with the website and social media. As a further example of the pressure



on facilities the extensive use of the hall complex by the Bluebell Pre-school group is testament to the need to enable daytime activities to be catered for as the population ages and older residents endeavour to find places to meet up.

13.2 Protection of Community Facilities

Guidance regarding the information that should be provided within a combined Marketing Assessment and Viability Report to support proposals

where a change of use of land and buildings is proposed which would result in a loss of existing community uses.

In the event that community facilities become vacant and there is no realistic prospect of the premises being occupied for the existing, or an alternative community use, planning proposals for redevelopment or development requiring a change of use will not be supported unless accompanied by a combined Marketing Assessment and Viability Report undertaken by a professional agency with acknowledged experience and competency in marketing similar facilities. The combined Marketing Assessment and Viability Report should include:

- Viability evidence, demonstrating that the premise is no longer viable in its existing use (which considers the ability of the community use to continue to trade) and evidence which considers the ability of the site to accommodate an alternative cultural or leisure use, meeting the needs of the local area.
- A survey providing details of other local community uses in the Parish to determine whether there is a need in the neighbourhood area which could reasonably be accommodated in the existing premises, including details of consultation with public and community service providers to establish their needs and accommodation requirements.
- Copies of all marketing literature and details of individuals and organisations contacted regarding the availability of the premises; and
- Expressions of interest received, with full reasons given as to why any offer was not accepted.

The combined Marketing Assessment and Viability Report should demonstrate that;

- The property has been freely exposed to the market covering a continuous period of not less than 12 months; and that
- The site has been marketed at a realistic price or rent. (The sales price/rent should reflect rates generally paid by community groups or voluntary organisations within Colchester Borough Council's administrative area).

If requested, developers should be prepared to fund the entire costs associated with a peer review of any combined Marketing Assessment and Viability Report, by an independent valuer appointed by the Borough Council, at the Council's sole discretion, to independently assess the veracity of any combined Marketing Assessment and Viability Report submitted in support of such proposals.

For replacement facilities, applicants must demonstrate these are of the same standard or better than those lost, and that the new location will be easily reached by existing users of the facility.

13.3 Summary SWOT Analysis

Strengths	Weaknesses
• A great number of clubs and societies which cater for a wide range of interests. • A good community spirit which encourages residents to volunteer to support clubs and promote village activities. • A range of social opportunities for retired people • A thriving Youth Group for 10-14-year olds which meets fortnightly run by local volunteers. • An oversubscribed School and Pre-school • Local doctor's surgery • A well-supported variety of village shops including a hairdressers & Post Office. • Allotments right in the heart of the village.	• Meeting areas are nearly always fully booked some time in advance. • Poor or patchy broadband service. • Public toilet facilities lacking in the village. • No community focal point, coffee shop or informal meeting area. • Facilities for older children and young adults are lacking. • St Mary's churchyard almost full. • No Parish Council administration centre.

Opportunities	Threats
• Further development of community facilities at the Orpen Memorial Hall complex. • Provision of a centralised, coordinated booking system for rooms • Introduce enhanced and faster broadband service for the whole village. • Provision of a community focal point. • Toilet facilities for users of recreational areas. • A coffee shop. • Enlarged children's play areas e.g. adventure playground. • Provision of a new cemetery or burial ground. • Provide Parish Council administrative centre.	• Reduced village interaction and lack of village cohesion • Increasing social isolation particularly for certain age groups. • Closure of clubs and societies as a result of lack of volunteering. • Loss of key facilities to housing. • Lack of younger volunteers as a result of West Bergholt becoming more of a dormitory village.

13.4 The Plan's Approach

The Approach in the plan is threefold:

- to provide more buildings facilities;
- to investigate further activities for young adults;
- to seek to open a community centre not just for the Parish Council administration but also to allow an informal meeting area where residents and visitors can meet over coffee and where new facilities can be considered such as space for a community library etc.

As the objectives relate in part to the use and development of land and wider community aspirations both Planning Policies and Community Ambitions have been developed.

13.5 Policies and Community Ambitions

Policy No.	Village Society and Community Planning Policies
PP1: Protection of Community Facilities	All development proposals must ensure that they do not give rise to adverse impacts on the quality of life and wellbeing of the local community and provide enhancements wherever possible and, where appropriate, promote diversity and enhance community cohesion through the provision of new multiuse facilities or contributions to existing facilities. The loss of existing community buildings will be resisted unless it can be demonstrated through a combined Marketing Assessment and Viability Report demonstrating that the property has been marketed for not less than 12 months and confirming that there is no longer an effective demand for the existing use within the locality and there is no viable alternative community use for the site, meeting the needs of the local area.
PP2: New Community Facilities	Proposals that improve the quality and/or range of community facilities, particularly those for younger and older age groups, will be supported provided that the development is of a scale appropriate to the needs of the locality and is conveniently accessible for residents of the village. Provision for a parish office/community hub will be supported.

Ambition No.	Village Society and Community Ambitions
CA1: Community Buildings	In order to provide for the needs of the parish the village hall complex consisting of the Orpen and John Lampon Halls will be further enhanced as a community resource. Further community buildings may be considered should opportunities present themselves.
CA2: Societies & Clubs	Village societies, clubs and other community-based organisations will be actively promoted through a variety of communication channels. New community members will be informed how to participate in village and parish life through all available media channels, both electronic and print based.

14 ENVIRONMENT

14.1 Objectives

- To maintain the distinctiveness of the parish and its identity by protecting, conserving and enhancing the natural and built environment for the enjoyment of future generations.
- To explore opportunities to create new areas of open space.
- To integrate new areas of development into the environment in a way which complements the built and natural environment.

14.2 Background & Intent

Situated on the edge of the Colne valley on a hill rising from St Botolph's Brook, the Parish is part of an attractive landscape with a mixture of arable and dairy farms extending from the curtilage of the village itself. Within the village are areas of open and recreational space and allotments and although there is a mixture of urban form the village has a good proportion of historic and grade listed buildings. Both rural and urban environments throughout the parish are valued by our community. There is no doubt that the village and its setting within a very rural parish combined with its degree of separation from Colchester makes the area a very desirable place to live, resulting in pressure on the environment.

So, whereas the environment is generally well maintained there are aspects which need careful attention if future generations are to continue to enjoy it. These may be classified as areas where protection is needed, enhancements to quality of man-made and natural environments and accessibility to environments.

14.3 Evidence

14.3.1 *Open Spaces*

Open space in the parish is predominantly sited in the village where the recreational areas (when not used for sporting activities) are available for walking, jogging and exercising. There is a fragment of ancient heath in front of the village school as well. Due to the way that development has blended in with the environment these areas are attractively lined with mature hedges and tree planting, some of which are protected by Tree Preservation Orders (TPO) which overspills into neighbouring streets creating natural walking routes which reinforce the feeling of being in a rural are despite the expansion of the village to over 3000 inhabitants. The main issue over recent years is that the majority of the recent housing developments that have been built have not made provision for further open space. An aspect that was picked up in the Parish Plan was that biodiversity action plans are required for the open spaces and allotment areas and especially the Heath notwithstanding the need for these to continue to serve sports uses and cater for informal recreation.

14.3.2 *The Landscape Surrounding the Village*

The community surveys demonstrated a strong affection for the surrounding landscape, the high quality of which is demonstrated in the Indicative Views (Map CA7 and photos of views in Appendix 2C). For example, on the west and south-west approaches to the village, the topography changes and land slopes down to the Colne Valley which can be reached by numerous footpaths which are extensively used by residents. The area also contains Hillhouse Wood an area of ancient woodland purchased by the community for the Woodland Trust who maintain it with the assistance of a "Friends" group of local volunteers. Although the overall area has general protection by Colchester Borough Council countryside

policies, there is a need for a careful mix of improved access, good husbandry and only allowing development of a sympathetic type which respects this special landscape setting.



14.3.3 *Urban Character*

This plan has followed the advice provided by Historic England on their website concerning *Neighbourhood Planning and the Historic Environment* and the listed buildings are adequately protected by current planning legislation from either wholescale change or unsympathetic extensions.

The village has the greatest concentration of housing in the parish and despite the rather unsympathetic non-indigenous styles which have appeared of late, many of the buildings are distinctive and have a definite Essex look due to the use of local materials and design. Local distinctiveness is an important part of Essex's heritage and this is greatly valued as indicated in the draft Neighbourhood Plan survey of 2016 when 88% of respondents supported the concept of declaring and protecting 'Character areas' from degradation. The Character area, "the Lanes", which has many of the older village buildings, is a prime example of where protection from unsympathetic development must be provided. (see Map PP5)

However, with regards to Heritage Assets, our Community Ambition CA4 is an aspiration that will be guided by the CBC Development Policy DP14: Historic Environment Assets and Core Strategy UR2.

In addition, various vernacular styles are discernible and have been included in the Village Design Statement. Developers are encouraged to respect these building styles, when designing new dwellings or when householders are considering extensions to their properties. Unfortunately, some developments, such as the Mumford and Pirie Road estates, have tended not to include adjacent enhancements to the streetscape which would include features such as seating and paved areas as well as tree planting and landscaping

14.3.4 *Informal Recreation*

Great use is made of the many footpaths leading from the village to all other parts of the parish, especially The Essex Way which in this part of Essex links the neighbouring parish area of Fordham to the west and Great Horkesley to the east. There is a general lack of bridleways and few dedicated cycle ways. It is an ambition to recreate the circular walking and cycling guides which help people navigate their way around the village to enjoy the many historic and attractive features that exist.

14.3.5 *Environmental Stewardship*

With the loss of certain public services which the community used to take for granted comes the need for environmental stewardship. The village has the services of three handymen who attend to vegetation management as well as picking up litter and making running repairs to communal gates and fencing. This is an ever-expanding area of the Parish Council's work and care will be needed with new development to ensure that future housing areas are afforded a similar level of stewardship. Funding these "village wardens" is a constant concern.

14.3.6 *Local Green Spaces and Green Infrastructure*

Local green spaces can help to provide social, economic and environmental benefits, indeed some of the community and environmental benefits of local green spaces in West Bergholt include:

- Providing such in the public realm, where social interaction can take place;
- Providing pitches and facilities for sports and physical activity;
- Providing habitats for wildlife and natural corridors;
- Providing flexible space for recreation and local cultural events;
- Providing an attractive setting and outlook for surrounding residential properties;
- Providing part of the character and setting of historic buildings.

Consistent with advice from the National Planning Policy Framework, the Local Green Spaces designated in this Plan comprise green space which is:

- in reasonably close proximity to the village;
- demonstrably special to the village and holds a particular local significance;
- local in character and is not an extensive tract of land.

The sites to be designated as Local Green Space, referenced as LGS, are as listed below and as shown on Map PP4:

LGS1 - Lorkin Daniell Field
LGS2 - Poor's Land

Green infrastructure is the network of green spaces, river systems and numerous other environmental features in the Parish that are also vital to the sustainability of West Bergholt. It includes the River Colne and St Botolph's Brook.

West Bergholt's green infrastructure also includes the play parks, the playing field and Poor's Land, large domestic gardens, the village green, woodland, scrub and heathland, wetlands, road corridors, pedestrian paths, rights of way, the allotments, cemeteries and churchyards, be they in private or public ownership and whether or not they are publicly accessible.

All green spaces and Local Green Spaces in the Parish form part of West Bergholt's green infrastructure.

However, to protect, enhance and increase the village's green infrastructure a separate policy will be developed, respecting the landscape, character and distinctiveness of West Bergholt, for the benefit of its people and wildlife.

14.3.7 *Local Wildlife Sites*

There are ten Local Wildlife Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation within the area which are protected within the local planning system. They are:

Co61 - Wood near Fordham Place
Co63 - Hillhouse Wood
Co65 - West Bergholt Wet Woods (including Aldercar Woods)
Co69 - Spring Wood
Co70 - Stitching Wood
Co71 - Grove Wood
Co72 - West Bergholt Hall Church
Co77 - West Bergholt Heath
Co79 - West Bergholt Church
Co87 - Spring Grove

14.3.8 *Essex Coast Recreational Disturbance Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy (RAMS)*

The Essex Coast is rich and diverse and has many European protected sites. There are a number of Local Plans in preparation in Essex which seek to deliver a significant number of homes over the coming 15-20 years. These new homes have a potential to bring new visitors to sensitive coast areas, resulting in potential impacts on protected sites both individually and in combination through recreational disturbance.

As a consequence, Natural England in September 2017 advised that 11 districts/boroughs Councils across Essex should jointly prepare an Essex Coast Recreational Disturbance Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy (RAMS). The strategy sets a strategic approach to identifying the scale of recreational disturbance to Special Protection Areas, Special Areas of Conservation and Ramsar sites along the Essex Coast and proposes measures to mitigate impacts.

14.3.9 *Flooding and Sustainable Urban Drainage (SUDs)*

The village of West Bergholt in its elevated position is within an area designated by the Environment Agency as Flood Zone 1, being an area with a low probability of flooding. The exception is to the south east and south west boundaries to the Parish, to the banks of the River Colne and St Botolph's Brook, which not by coincidence are in Flood Zone 3.

It is not thought that any development site will be situated in anything other than Flood Zone 1, however, if it was then it would require its own flood risk assessment.

Where appropriate, development sites will be expected to be provided with their own sustainable urban drainage system (SuDS) as an alternative way to manage surface water by reducing or delaying rainwater run-off.

They aim to mimic the way rainfall drains naturally rather than conventional piped methods, which can cause problems such as flooding, pollution or damage to the environment. SuDS is as a sustainable and natural way of controlling surface water run-off. Soakaways are commonly used SuDS features but so are permeable surfaces and filter drains, green roofs and swales integrating with the landscape design to add amenity for the community as well as aiding biodiversity.



14.4 Summary of SWOT

Strengths	Weaknesses
• Surrounded by open countryside. • Attractive open farmland • Protected woodland and trees. • The Colne Valley. • Rural open spaces. • Some historic and listed buildings. • Historic character areas in residential neighbourhoods. • Separation from Colchester's urban sprawl. • Area of wild heathland in the centre of the village. • Three ponds of differing ecological importance.	• Time consuming and professional management of rural areas and open spaces required. • Litter and fly-tipping. • Lack of bridleways. • Legacy of poor-quality urban planning of previous large developments. • Need for biodiversity action plans for open spaces. • Dog fouling.

Opportunities	Threats
• Increasing the available amount of public open space especially where new development is proposed. • Enhancing our environment through planting and urban realm improvements. • Protecting vulnerable environments through community action. • Improved access to rural environments through enhanced public rights of way (PROW). • Sympathetic management of open spaces to promote wildlife. • All planting programmes undertaken to enhance the natural & visual environment. • Developing relationships with local land & property owners to enhance the natural, visual environment (hedges & verges).	• Concern that future development proposals will adversely affect the urban and rural environments that we all enjoy. • Natural landscape may degrade over time if not managed. • Overdevelopment leading to lack of wildlife corridors in the village. • Invasive species-related diseases altering the landscape for the poorer.

14.5 The Plan's Approach

The approach to this area of the plan is very much seeking to ensure that new development is able to make a positive contribution to the environment either through its design or through planning contributions to the upkeep of the environment.

As the objectives relate in part to the use and development of land and wider community aspirations both Planning Policies and Community Ambitions have been developed.

14.6 Policies and Community Ambitions

Policy No.	Environment Planning Policies
PP3: Open Spaces	Development proposals that ensure new open spaces are intrinsic to their proposals and not designated as single purpose use but deliver multiple functions and benefits, which link to the green infrastructure network, through green corridors, cycle or footpaths and demonstrate environmental gains will be supported.
PP4: Local Green Spaces	The following areas designated as Local Green Space, are shown on Proposals Map PP4: LGS1 - Lorkin Daniell Field LGS2 - Poor's Land Proposals for any development on Local Green Spaces will be resisted other than in very special circumstances.
PP5: Character Area	The "Character Area" designated on Map PP5, which reflects the built local distinctiveness of Essex's heritage, will be protected from degradation. Development proposals will be expected to respect its features and character in relation to the scale, design and setting of any development.
PP6: Trees and Hedgerows	Development proposals which conserve trees and/or hedgerows will be supported. Where development proposals would necessitate the loss of such features, appropriate mitigation will be supported, subject to there being no protective designations in place.
PP7: Natural Environment	Development proposals which provide protection and where appropriate enhance biodiversity by: a) Protecting designated sites, protected species and ancient and species-rich hedgerows, grasslands and woodlands; and b) Preserving ecological networks, and the migration and transit of flora and fauna; and c) Protecting ancient trees or trees of arboricultural value, or ancient woodlands; and d) Promoting the mitigation, preservation, restoration and recreation of wildlife habitats, and the protection and recovery of priority species; and e) Providing a net gain in flora and fauna; and f) Adopting best practice in sustainable urban drainage with development proposals incorporating the provision of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) unless it can be demonstrated to be technically unfeasible, will be supported. Proposals which demonstrate that ecological considerations have been properly assessed in relation to likely impacts and where appropriate proportionate mitigation measures are agreed, will be supported.

Policy No.	Environment Planning Policies
PP8: Recreational disturbance Avoidance & Mitigation Strategy (RAMS)	All residential development within the zones of influence of Habitat Sites will be required to make a financial contribution towards mitigation measures, as detailed in the Essex Coast RAMS, to avoid adverse in-combination recreational disturbance effects on Habitat Sites. In the interim period, before the Essex Coast RAMS is completed, all residential development within the zones of influence will need to deliver all measures identified (including strategic measures) through project level HRAs, or otherwise, to mitigate any recreational disturbance impacts in compliance with the Habitat Regulations and Habitats Directive.

Ambition No.	Environment Community Ambitions
CA3: Streetscapes	Streetscapes will be enhanced through planting and good verge and hedge management.
CA4: Heritage Assets	Any changes to heritage assets will be expected to be carried out sympathetically so that their character and appearance is preserved or enhanced proportionally.
CA5: Green Infrastructure	New areas of green infrastructure will be incorporated within an appropriate maintenance plan. All areas of green infrastructure will be enhanced through a biodiversity plan which seeks to improve the conditions for wildlife.
CA6: Countryside Access	Access to the countryside will be improved through use of the existing public rights of way network
CA7: Indicative Views	The views indicated on Map CA7 provide examples of the quality of the natural environment around the Parish that are highly valued by the community and therefore will be protected and, wherever possible, enhanced.

15  HOUSING AND PLANNING

15.1 Objectives

- To support expansion to meet the identified needs of the parish.
- To involve the local community in all aspects of development planning through consultation and participation.
- To provide for a mixture of tenure type reflecting the housing needs of the community.
- To conserve and protect the existing character and environmental setting so that new development is satisfactorily integrated into its surroundings and new residents can take advantage of the characteristics of our location.

15.2 Background & Intent

West Bergholt is an attractive place to live due to the surrounding countryside combined with accessibility to larger towns, travel hubs and employment areas. There are many long-term residents of the village, including families going back several generations.

There is a growing elderly population and house prices are higher than the national average. Older residents do not wish to move from the village, but a number would like to move to smaller homes that are more suitable for their circumstances. As a result, some remain in larger homes that could be more suitable for family accommodation.

Housing is split between the original irregular pattern of housing in the Lanes area of the village with the newer styles of estate type development characteristic of the 1960's, 70's and 80's.

15.3 Evidence

15.3.1 *Tenure type and demand for housing*

There is a long-standing need for affordable housing for local people, particularly for young adults wishing to live independently and for young families.

Consultations have shown that residents want West Bergholt to remain a village and that its character should not be harmed by inappropriate new housing development, particularly that which might add to traffic and parking problems around the village.

Yet the majority of residents accept the need for new homes. There is a desire for a mixture of housing types, with highest support for small family homes for sale followed by affordable homes for local people to rent, and lowest support for large family homes for sale.

Residents state that good design is important and new houses should not have a harmful impact on existing homes.

Overall there are a number of aspects to consider here including tenure type, number of dwellings required, wider sustainability issues and pressure from outside the village. As the population gradually ages, there is a need for limited housing to support new families, either from within the village or from outside. This helps maintain the balance of the age pyramid. Secondly there is a need to identify the right balance of housing type, and thirdly because there is little room inside the current settlement boundary there is a need to consider changes to its boundary.

There are currently 1500 dwellings in the parish with planning permission in place for a handful more (Nov 2018). The majority of homes are owner occupied.

The Neighbourhood Plan seeks to ensure a supply of sufficient homes to meet local needs and contribute to the retention of a sustainable community. An appropriate housing mix must suit elderly residents as well as first time buyers and those needing affordable homes. Valued parts of the landscape will be protected by building as far as possible on brownfield sites or sites where development will not have a harmful impact on the countryside.

There is limited space for new development within the settlement boundary and many houses within the area have inadequate parking facilities, leading to on-street parking.

Residents value the countryside and wish to protect it from inappropriate development.

15.3.2 *Village Design Statement*

The Parish Council produced a Village Design Statement (VDS) in 2011 as a product of consultation with the community and as a derivative document of the successful Parish Plan. It demonstrated how, by employing best practice, it was possible to improve and create West Bergholt as a place of quality and identity. New buildings designed to the VDS contributed to the diversity and individuality of the village, while reflecting local heritage and character.

The VDS was then adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance by Colchester Borough Council and contained a detailed description of the existing character and main features of design in the village of West Bergholt and provided a guideline for how this should be respected in any new development whether it was for new buildings, extensions, alterations or changes of use.

The VDS contained 37 policies covering General Design, Sustainable Construction, Protecting Local Distinctiveness, Parking and General Streetscape Guidance with the most important strategic ones being incorporated within the general Housing Planning Policy PP10.

However, the VDS has now (2024) been removed as a supporting Neighbourhood Plan document as since 2019 Colchester City Council and national planning guidance is considered to have superseded its advice.

In addition to the VDS, the Neighbourhood Plan recognised the value of using the still widely accepted design standards, the Essex Design Guide and Building for Life 12 in shaping and assessing basic design principles to build better designed homes and neighbourhoods.

Indeed, the Neighbourhood Plan (2024) still considers both should be followed in designing homes for West Bergholt in their most current versions:

- The Essex Design Guide (EDG) has been digitally revamped to provide contemporary socio economic, environmental, and best practice guidance to interested parties in the provision of new housing.
- Building for Life 12 (noting that this has been updated as Building for a Healthy Life) is a design tool with 12 simple, easy to understand questions around which ideas can be shared and explored to help structure discussions about proposed new residential development between home builders, local authorities, communities and other stakeholders. It is ideal for facilitating local community participation in the place making process.

15.3.3 *West Bergholt's Distinctiveness*

Residents value the countryside around the village and the distinctiveness resulting from the effect of the separation created from other urban areas. In particular, the need to maintain this feeling of separation from the built-up area of Colchester was supported during the Neighbourhood Plan consultation surveys of 2013 and 2015.

Therefore, an ambition of West Bergholt's Neighbourhood Plan is to ensure West Bergholt's rural landscape, its separation from Colchester and its views over the Colne valley are protected by planning policies. A

coalescence policy is proposed (PP12) to prevent development starting to erode the "gap" between the village and the outskirts of Braiswick.

The justification for this policy is contained within two reports by Chris Blandford Associates who were appointed by Colchester Borough Council to produce them. The first is a report on Landscape Character Assessment produced in 2005 and the second is a report on Assessment of Open Countryside dated 2009. Both are cited as evidence in the publication draft of Colchester's new Local Plan.

The 2005 report describes the landscape character areas of the Borough through a series of designations. Of relevance here is reference A5 which is entitled A5 Colne Valley Slopes which is described as having a number of key characteristics described below (italics denote direct quotes)

- *Relatively steep v-shaped valley slopes facilitate attractive and open views across and along the River corridor;*
- *Principal road network consisting of narrow tree-lined (sometimes sunken) lanes traversing the valley sides to the north and south;*
- *A mosaic of medium to large-sized irregular and regular, predominantly arable fields with medium hedgerows containing semi-mature/ mature hedgerow trees;*
- *Some larger semi-enclosed arable fields and concentrations of smaller fields with intact hedge boundaries adjacent to settlements;*

The report further describes some Key Planning and Land Management Issues including:

- *Potential pressure from urban expansions on the edge of West Bergholt, Fordham, Wivenhoe and Colchester;*

Overall the report recommends that the appropriate Landscape Strategy Objective should be to *"Conserve and Enhance"* which the following Landscape Planning Guidelines:

- *Ensure any new small-scale development in, or on the edges of Fordham, Wivenhoe, West Bergholt and Colchester is of an appropriate scale, form and design and uses materials which respond to historic settlement pattern, landscape setting and locally distinctive building styles and materials;*
- *Ensure any new development on valley sides is small-scale, responds to historic settlement pattern, form and building materials;*
- *Maintain cross-valley views;*
- *Conserve views of the river and floodplain;*

In the second report Chris Blandford and Associates in section 4, builds on their earlier report on Land scape Character Assessment in 2005, and relevant sections of this report are summarised below (again italics denote direct quotes):

- Firstly, the Landscape Context:

"The medium to large-scale nucleated village of West Bergholt is situated approximately 1km to the north-west of Colchester, and the two settlements are separated by an area of open countryside (See Figure 4.1). To the south-east of this area, housing within Colchester protrudes westwards in a linear form along the B1508. Larger settled areas of Colchester lie adjacent to the A133, approximately 1.2km to the south of this built development protrusion. The A12 dual carriageway bisects the open countryside between West Bergholt and Colchester, passing north to south between the settlements broadly along the alignment of St. Botolph's Brook. The villages of Great Horkesley and Eight Ash Green are situated approximately 1.5km to the northeast and 1.35km to the south-west of West Bergholt, respectively."

- Secondly on the evaluation of countryside character and landscape quality, the report comments:

"When travelling westwards out of Colchester along the B1508, there is a distinct sense of leaving the settlement and entering a rural landscape on account of the woodland along the settlement edge and the subsequent

sudden descent from the plateau edge to a relatively open agricultural landscape. The lack of inter-visibility and general lack of intra-visibility between the settlements contributes to a strong sense of settlement separation. Vegetation plays a primary role in restricting visibility between West Bergholt and Colchester. The topographical variation and senses of distance and openness provided by the St. Botolph's Brook valley Increases the perception of settlement separation.

The contribution made by various areas of land between Colchester and West Bergholt to the separation of settlements has been assessed below according to whether they provide a high, medium, or low contribution."

These assessment findings concluded that the gap between West Bergholt and Colchester has a High Contribution, namely that:

"The locations of the two settlements close to the edges of the plateaux overlooking the St. Botolph's Brook valley are such that there is a relatively high potential for visual coalescence of settlements. Heading westwards out of Colchester along the B1508, there Is a fairly abrupt transition between the Colchester built-up area and the countryside beyond, with views of the countryside only opening up once past the tree belts alongside the A12.

There is an almost continuous belt of arable fields between the A12 and the south-eastern edge of West Bergholt. This belt of agricultural land, together with associated woodland, tree belts and hedgerows, provides a strong sense of rural character. The group of houses located some 300m west of the Colchester settlement edge are generally perceived as buildings in the open countryside on account of views obtained of nearby arable fields and their location away from Colchester on the far western side of St. Botolph's Brook valley. However, the presence of these houses set amongst trees on the valley side slopes does weaken the strength of rural character and the sense of having departed from Colchester for people travelling between the settlements.

It is the strong rural character of the land between these settlements, the topographical variation, the distinct sense of departure and arrival at the settlement edges and the lack of intra-visibility and inter-visibility between the settlements that results in this land having a high overall contribution to the separation of settlements."

- *Finally, the report concludes:*

"any new built development…….on the land as identified as providing a high contribution to the separation of settlements is likely to seriously undermine the sense of settlement separation and the strong rural character of this predominantly arable landscape. Any new development to the west of the A12 is likely to result in visual coalescence……..and would result in diminishing sense of leaving Colchester and entering West Bergholt……"

It is therefore considered that there is ample justification for PP12 to maintain the gap between West Bergholt and Colchester.

15.4 Summary of SWOT

Strengths	Weaknesses
• Character housing areas of a mixed style, age and tenure. • Popular facilities are conveniently located for existing housing. • Existing Village Design Statement. • Village separate from Colchester by natural and man-made boundaries. • All housing areas close to attractive landscapes. • Well established village character. • Green spaces well distributed amongst housing. • Active and experienced Parish Council Planning Committee. • Dedicated & committed Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group.	• Minimal opportunity for downsizing. • Limited opportunity for affordable housing. • Commuter village leading to overinflated property market. • Gentrification of the village affecting the availability of affordable homes.

Opportunities	Threats
• Mixture of development sites available for consideration. • Local landowners willing to contribute to the village. • Opportunity to influence own destiny with Neighbourhood Plan. • Opportunity to redress the balance of housing types. • Chance to develop housing stock for younger people. • Chance for older people to downsize and free up family properties.	• A tendency for new housing to be expensive, executive homes. • Land on all sides of the village vulnerable to speculative development. • Attractiveness of village leads to housing shortages. • Most new housing at inflated prices. • Most developments on small scale to avoid the requirement to build affordable homes.

15.4.1 *Identifying Housing Needs*

Colchester's adopted Core Strategy outlined that the Borough needs to allocate and build 19,000 homes between 2001 and 2023, an average of 830 homes a year. In line with national policy contained in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), the Council is required to ensure sufficient housing land is supplied to meet local housing needs.

The Council has developed a new Objectively Assessed Need (OAN) target for the submitted Emerging Local Plan of 920 houses a year which takes into account the requirements of the NPPF 2012; and will ensure the Borough provides a five-year supply of specific deliverable sites and identifies a supply of specific developable sites or broad locations for growth, for years 6-10 and, where possible, for years 11-15.

The target of 920 homes a year reflects a comprehensive evidence base which includes the following:

- Objectively Assessed Housing Need Study produced by Peter Brett Associates (PBA) in July 2015 and updated November 2016 for Braintree, Chelmsford, Colchester and Tendring Councils.
- Review of the Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) work in Chelmsford, Colchester, Braintree and Tendring to bring it into compliance with the NPPF and PPG - HDH Planning and Development Ltd, December 2015.

These figures reflect the OAN of 920 dwellings per annum which has been endorsed by the Local Plan Inspector (letter dated 27th June 2018). Accordingly, it is considered that the figure is fit for purpose despite the publication of the revised NPPF and PPG, updated population projections and the current consultation on the standard methodology.

Colchester Borough Council has determined the Objectively Assessed Need (OAN) for the district using projected growth figures provided by the Government and in its Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessment (HEDNA), CBC set an OAN figure for the district of 11,152. The emerging District Plan provides for 7,210 for existing commitments and 7,853 new allocations, totalling 15,063 over the Plan period.

A target for West Bergholt, (considered by Colchester Borough Council as a Sustainable Settlement as it has a sufficient population base and a range of community facilities and infrastructure to support appropriate growth), has been set in the emerging Neighbourhood Plan Policy SS15 in the publication draft Local Plan of 120 dwellings. This is higher than the 100 proposed during early consultation on the Neighbourhood Plan. The Neighbourhood Plan has sought to take account of the emerging Local Plan and its predicted levels of growth for the area.

15.4.2 *Housing Supply & Tenure Type*

The household Neighbourhood Plan Survey indicated over 40% preference for the following types of development:

- Starter/low cost homes for first time occupiers/young families
- Small, mixed group, developments
- Warden assisted or sheltered housing
- "Downsizing" housing

Following this, the 'Issues & Options' Questionnaire indicated support for around an additional 100 new dwellings, of which the majority would be 'of type, style and numbers deemed necessary to meet the Parish's needs.'

Then in November 2015, a full 'Housing Needs Survey' was commissioned from the Rural Community Council of Essex (RCCE). Their report indicated that 53 people had given details of different local accommodation required in the next five years and beyond. Whereas some of this could be provided by the commercial sector as houses to buy (34%), there remained a need for rental accommodation and shared ownership.

Furthermore, the timescales that this need was predicated on were:

- Next 5 years: 25 units 5 – 10 years: 28 units

The survey only covered up to 5 years or over. However, we may assume that local need would be similar between year 11 and year 15 of the plan making a total of around 75 homes needed to satisfy local need. Whereas this would accommodate local need it is reasonable to assume that some additional housing would be required from people wishing to move into the village – say a further 25 units making a total of 100 units over the 15-year lifetime of the plan. This is not inconsistent with the CBC policy SS15 and accords with the Issues and Options support by the results of village surveys. This equates to an average building rate of around 6 or 7 houses per annum.

15.4.3 *Housing Location*

A number of sites were assessed for their suitability and availability for housing development during the Plan period. The Report on the Assessment of Potential Housing Sites (see supporting documents in Appendix 2) explains the methodology used and sets out the individual assessments.

Initially with over 20 sites being put forward in the Local Plan "call for sites" there was a need to strategically sift the broad locations. Colchester Borough Council in their settlement boundary review and the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group both assessed sites being proposed. Three broad areas were considered and the section below is a summary of findings taken from Colchester Borough Council's Settlement Boundary Review.

- Area 1 Expansion to the north east of B1508 Colchester Road (within limits of existing built development boundaries opposite playing fields/Treble Tile pub).

Development in this area, within the limits of the existing built development to the north-west and south-east, would fill in gaps along Colchester Road. Development would be closest to the existing facilities and services in the village although there would need to be provision made for safe crossing of Colchester Road. Development in this location could also provide additional sports pitches in the same area as the existing Cricket Club Ground, with the potential to share some facilities.

- Area 2 Expansion to the south/south-east of West Bergholt

Development in this area could be considered to fill in gaps along the existing settlement boundary. For example, small areas of land with access off existing roads to the south of the village could be considered. However, due to identified constraints, larger scale expansion beyond the existing settlement boundary and built-up limits towards Colchester is not considered suitable.

- Area 3 Expansion to the west of West Bergholt

This area has been considered, similar to the areas above, as any potential development would be located around one of the three main roads in West Bergholt. Development to this side of West Bergholt would be within 400m of the main facilities in the village. However, it is not clear if access to the land is possible without taking access off Cooks Hall Road or Hall Road, which are both rural roads located at the southern and northern ends of the broad area of search.

Although the broad sifting of sites was helpful to determine an initial view, to assist a more definitive focus of where new housing might be developed, a number of principles have been devised in consultation with Colchester Borough Council, in that development:

- should only be considered if abutting the existing CBC Local Plan 'settlement boundary'.
- should not reduce the separation of the village from Colchester.
- should not encroach on (or visually affect) the 'area of the parish to the south east of the settlement boundary'.
- should be close to the main village amenities.
- should be able to contribute to addressing 'Transport, Highways and Infrastructure' needs.
- should be located such that any traffic impacts are satisfactory, or any adverse impacts are satisfactorily mitigated.
- may continue within the settlement boundary but only where a limited number of "windfall" sites present themselves.
- any development abutting the settlement boundary should provide for a mix of housing and incorporate areas of open space.
- Development should consist of smaller housing units which respect the identified needs of the community including affordable housing, housing for downsizing and starter housing.

These principles have been applied to the areas of development put forward to date as part of Colchester's Local Plan preparation and those

sites identified as the most appropriate taking all matters into account, including CBC and community surveys and the RCCE survey, it was decided to make the appropriate allocations on two sites, and those preferred for housing development are contained in two locations off of Colchester Road, one opposite the Poor's Land and the other opposite the Treble Tile Public House.

These sites are also deemed supported in Colchester Borough Council's emerging Local Plan and the paragraphs from the latest publication draft of the Local Plan are reproduced below:

- Para *14.223 There are a number of constraints which restrict the availability of sites suitable for development. To maintain the current settlement pattern, development will continue to be located around the three main roads with facilities located centrally where possible.*

- Para *14.224 There is currently limited inter-visibility between Colchester and West Bergholt. However, there is a relatively high potential for visual coalescence of settlements and any new built development on land to the south of the village may undermine the sense of settlement separation. Development to the south of the village towards Colchester on Colchester Road is therefore not considered suitable due to the high potential of visual coalescence.*

- Para *14.225 Development to the north of the village on Colchester Road/Nayland Road would extend new development away from existing key facilities and into open countryside, which is not considered sustainable.*

These sites are in the ownership of parties which have indicated their commitment to deliver housing and this is evidenced in the supporting documents (see Appendix 2).

Both sites are located in Flood Zone 1, an area with a low probability of flooding.

15.4.4 *Details of the Housing Sites*

The design and layout of the scheme should respect the semi-rural nature of the village in this location.

The site boundaries will generally follow the topography of the field boundaries.

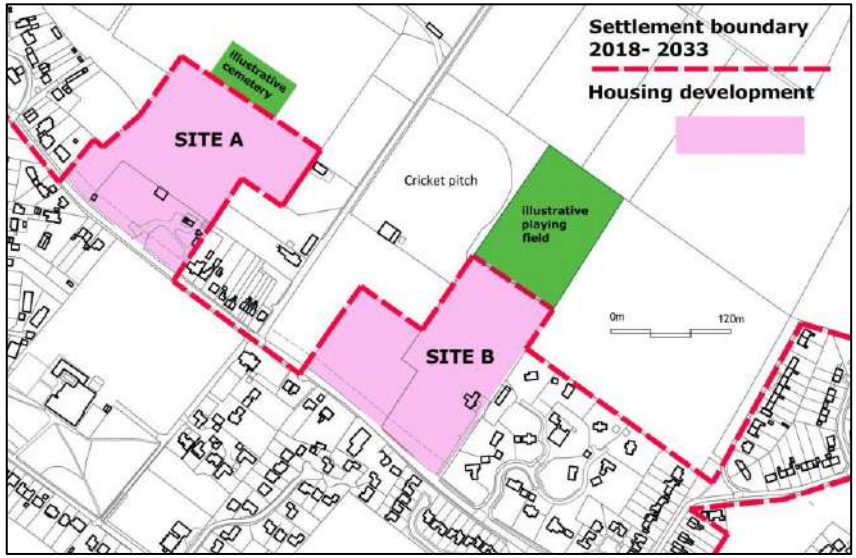
The density of the development should average about 25 dwellings per hectare to maintain the Parish's prevailing character and setting (including residential gardens), by delivering well-designed, attractive and healthy places to live in.

Further, the tenure mix as discussed in Chapter 10 reflects the need for space with those wishing to downsize preferring bungalows and a garden to



tend whilst younger families desire garden space for health and socialising. This is a chance to improve on the planning mistakes of the past.

The proposed sites are shown below in pink on Map PP9/2.



In common with the wider Colchester Borough area there Is a need for housing to be skewed towards the provision of 1 bed and 2 bed dwellings for housing market entrants and 3-bedroom family housing.

Given the locations one could expect new residents to be accessing the village amenities by foot, therefore appropriate treatment of Colchester Road will be essential, as will be good quality passenger waiting facilities for those wishing to travel to Colchester and towards Suffolk by bus.

Colchester Road is the main distributor road in the parish and traffic is signed to Colchester and Bures/Sudbury from either end of the parish approaches. The road carries an Annual Average Daily Traffic flow of some 4,500 vehicles. Average speeds are very high and speed surveys have recorded an average daily 85 percentile speed over 40mph in the vicinity of the junction with Nayland Road and approaching 40mph in the vicinity of the development sites.

Although the speed limit is 30mph there is only one roundabout controlled junction at Chapel Road with the remaining junctions being give way with priority for traffic on the B1508. Due to the function of the road and the configuration of its junctions there is little control of speeds in practice and the road also carries a fair degree of heavy goods vehicles and buses. Colchester Skip Hire for example (located in Wormingford) have a licence to recycle waste materials and one of their routes in the area sees skip lorries passing through the village. Although carefully controlled by planning regulations the presence of these vehicles causes concern to residents due to the size and noise from these vehicles. Bus traffic is regular and amounts to 4 services an hour during the working day. As there are no waiting restrictions the road also attracts parking especially at weekends, making visibility poor and creating a safety hazard for all. Lastly School Lane is a location where parents access the school approaches at dropping off and picking up time exacerbating localised congestion and parking matters.

These characteristics of the road have been cited many times by residents in the parish responding to both Parish Plan and Neighbourhood Plan surveys as warranting attention and discussions with the Highways Authority are under way to arrive at a means of controlling and reducing speeds. There is an active Traffic and Safety Group looking into a wide variety of speeding and traffic safety issues in the village.

Due the high recorded speeds and the desire to ensure good connectivity by sustainable modes and safe highway arrangements a number of improvements will be needed. This will include suitable safety and access arrangements which promote safe routes across the road towards the village and a means of calming traffic as it travels through the village on the B1508. A means of crossing Colchester Road safely is essential. New mini roundabouts at the junctions of the new development areas with Colchester Road, and a new zebra crossing sited to allow access to the rest of the village safely, including the nearby school, church and sports fields are a possibility although such measures will need to be discussed with the highway authority and the developer. It is expected that safe access and crossing facilities will be provided by the developer along with improvements to bus passenger waiting areas.

15.4.5 *Energy*

Whilst energy efficiency targets are set nationally in the Building Regulations, West Bergholt's Neighbourhood Plan will encourage developers to demonstrate how they have followed the 'energy hierarchy' in reducing energy demand before implementing renewable energy schemes or make the most of solar gain and passive cooling through the orientation, layout and design of the development.

Applicants must include a section in the design and access statement explaining how sustainability considerations have been incorporated into the development. Reference should be made to:

- How the design contributes to reducing energy use.
- Any renewable or low carbon energy technologies incorporated into the development.
- The provision of open space and the opportunities this provides for biodiversity, flood storage and people.
- Sustainable drainage systems.
- Sustainable waste management such as provision of space for recycling and composting.
- How the development promotes sustainable modes of travel.

There is much to be explored and many different ways in which the community could benefit from renewable energy using such as wind turbines, battery pods and community renewable heat initiatives. Whilst policies will be developed to encourage the use of cycling, walking and public transport - all forms of sustainable transport, the Neighbourhood Plan will also include a policy for the installation in new developments of an electrical infrastructure that will support as a minimum community charging points for electric vehicles.

15.5 The Plan's Approach

A number of policies allocates sites. Each of the site allocation policies have a number of criteria designed to ensure that new development reflects and respects the character of West Bergholt and to enable it to integrate into the prevailing character of the locality in which it is located as identified in the Village Design Statement which helps to identify the key characteristics of our parish.

These measures will help to ensure that a high standard of development and design is achieved in West Bergholt and will discourage development that looks out of place and is poorly integrated with its surroundings.

As the objectives relate in part to the use and development of land only, Planning Policies alone have been developed.

Commentary on policies

Policies below relate to sites at Sites A and B.

The site allocation policies, together with other Planning Policies, are intended to ensure that a high quality of design and a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings is achieved in line with this core planning principle in the NPPF.

15.5.1 *Affordable Housing*

New housing developments will be required to include at least 30 percent affordable homes.

15.5.2 *Planning Applications*

Any development proposals for sites allocated in this Plan will need to obtain planning permission from Colchester Borough Council, which will consider the application against its own policies and national policies together with the policies of this Plan.

In the design of sites A & B, consideration may be given to how adjacent land could at some future point be accessed to provide further land for subsequent housing needs in future Neighbourhood Plan publications.

15.6 Policies

Policy No.	Housing Planning Policies
PP9: Housing Sites	The settlement boundary is shown on Map PP9/1. The minimum number of dwellings to be provided over the Neighbourhood Plan period will be 120. These dwellings will be provided on Site A and Site B as shown on Map PP9/2. Development proposals on allocated housing sites should provide a mix of housing types and tenures to meet the demands of the local housing market and as appropriate the needs of West Bergholt and the wider Borough. Dwellings appropriate for first time buyers, homes for older people or small families will be supported. A mix of housing tenure will be encouraged. Subject to the viability, development proposals will be expected to deliver a proportion of affordable housing in accordance with adopted Strategic Borough wide policy. Landscaping will be an important and integral part of the design and layout of the scheme, including appropriate public open space. Principal roads will be designed to ensure that they are appropriate to the character of the area and to provide safe access for vehicles and pedestrian movement. Development proposals for Sites A and B with layouts designed to accommodate capacity for roads and utility services to contiguous backland to facilitate development beyond the Plan period will be supported. The provision of land for a cemetery and land to accommodate sports facilities adjacent to the cricket ground, shown for illustrative purposes on Map PP9/2 will be supported.
PP10: Design	All new development should be of a high-quality design and sustainable construction is encouraged. Account should be taken of the guidance and principles in the Neighbourhood Plan, which seeks to promote or reinforce local distinctiveness. In particular new development and any additions or extensions to existing dwellings will be expected to: • Have an acceptable visual impact on the valley sides; and • Give careful consideration to mitigating the impact on views across the village; and • Buildings must respect the character of and be in harmony with their surroundings in respect of plot width, layout, building lines, materials, height, proportion, scale and massing; and • Planning applications must show contextually the impact of their proposals on adjacent buildings by means of adequately detailed plans with accurate street elevations to avoid unacceptable adverse impact upon the amenities of the occupiers of nearby residential properties; and • Details of boundary walls, fences and gates shall reflect the character, design and materials of means of enclosure within the village to mitigate the impact of urbanisation.

Policy No.	Housing Planning Policies
PP11: Energy Hierarchy	Development proposals shall demonstrate how these have been prepared having regard to the energy hierarchy in reducing energy demand including the use of renewable energy and making the most of solar gain and passive cooling through the orientation, layout and design.
PP12: Coalescence	Development will not be supported in the area shown on Map PP12 if individually or cumulatively it would result in increasing the coalescence between West Bergholt village and Braiswick, reducing their separate identity by reducing the separation between these two settlements.
PP13: Highways Network	Proposals to develop Site A and Site B shown on Map PP9/2 and subject to speed reduction measures and accessibility improvements to be funded by the developers of Site A and Site B where appropriate, will be supported.

16 BUSINESS AND COMMERCE

16.1 Objectives

- To support local business and retain local employment.
- To encourage local employment opportunities through controlled expansion of existing employment located on, or adjacent to, the existing business parks.

16.2 Background & Intent

The main employment in the parish is a mixture of traditional farming activities and those which have evolved from diversification on existing and former farm sites; business parks which in the main consist of small multiple units of varying size and scale; more isolated businesses; healthcare; retail and leisure/entertainment and finally businesses run from home.

At the very beginning of the Neighbourhood Plan process, in 2013, the Steering Group felt it would be useful to garner the views of the community on a range of broad issues that might be relevant to the Plan. Questionnaires were produced to target residents, businesses and young people. Approximately half of the resident respondents felt that it would be helpful to encourage the controlled expansion of commercial areas to support local employment. In addition, 70% of the businesses felt that their current business premises were not going to meet their future growth needs and it was also commented on the existing need for more business units.

During 2015, the "issues and options" consultation saw 66% of respondents supporting the draft objective seeking to examine controlled expansion of existing employment opportunities etc. whilst the following draft Neighbourhood Plan survey in 2016 resulted in 92% of respondents supporting 'Any expansion of the existing business parks is to be sustainable, limited and appropriate for the location and associated infrastructure'.

The Neighbourhood Plan will therefore need to provide the opportunity for further employment which is likely to come from the business parks and a summary of these follows.

16.3 Evidence

16.3.1 *Pattens Yard Business Park - Nayland Road*

This is a long-established village business enterprise site, which provides mixed-use office space and storage type facilities. A number of business tenants operate from this site. The site lies on Nayland Road with little if any on-street parking occurring and vehicles are parked within the boundary of the business park. Site ownership changed in 2013 following planning and boundary rationalisation of the site. Conditions were placed on operating hours etc. at this time. In 2015 planning permission was granted for limited development of the buildings facing the entrance to the site which greatly enhanced the site appearance whilst providing expansion. This business park largely operates in harmony with the wider village community providing local mixed employment. The green space to the immediate west of the active building business area is under the same ownership. Agricultural and private land is evident on all sides to the west of Nayland Road. This site is capable of being expanded to increase and enhance village business opportunities.

16.3.2 *Armoury Farm Business Park – Armoury Road*

This is a well-established business park formed initially as a family business and has developed to accommodate mixed business types for more than 40 years. The only road to the site is Armoury Road, which starts at Colchester Road as a public road and it then becomes a private road (un-adopted by

the local authorities) at the north-east end to feed the business park and some residential housing. The condition of the private road is maintained through private investment. The site is surrounded by open space used for the stabling and exercise of horses to the west and farmland laid to crops to the north, east and south. Low-density residential homes form part of the main site with the nearest properties making use of the stable facilities. A number of small mixed and diverse businesses operate from within the industrial units located on this site. Lying to the north east of the village and on sloping ground towards the A12 this business park is capable of expansion without overly compromising the wellbeing of nearby residents. Some improvement to Armoury Road will be necessary if this site is expanded and any resulting increased traffic may have an impact on those residents that live in and off Armoury Road towards Colchester Road.

16.3.3 *Bourne Farm Business Park – Bourne Road*

A small but well-established business park located at the bottom of Bourne Road operated as a family business. The business park provides mixed business accommodation originally from a set of farm outbuildings, which have been renovated and updated over the years. Open space farmland surrounds the business park on three sides and expansion to the park in relation to open space available is possible. The area is located within the Colne Valley and any potential expansion must be considered in terms of erosion of the natural characteristics of the valley. The site lies on Bourne Road, which is fed by Chapel Lane, Queens Road and Newbridge Hill (Lexden Road). Bourne Road is an adopted road maintained by Essex County Council and in places it narrows significantly as it passes through the more densely residential areas to the west of the site towards the village core. If the site is to be considered for expansion, then traffic restrictions should be imposed for vehicular access to the site so as to retain the rural feel currently enjoyed by residents along Bourne Road. Bourne Road becomes a dead end from a private vehicle perspective once the road meets Bourne Farm. There is a public right of way footpath that continues from Bourne Farm towards Braiswick and the “Playgolf” golf course.

16.3.4 *Chancers Farm Business Park - Fossetts Lane*

This business park is a small modern conversion of former poultry sheds and provides mixed business accommodation. Open space farmland surrounds the business park on three sides and expansion to the park in relation to open space available is possible. The area is located within the Colne Valley and any potential expansion must be considered in terms of erosion of the natural characteristics of the valley. The site lies on Fossetts Lane, which is fed by Church Road and Mill Lane (in Fordham) and Rams Farm Road leading toward West Bergholt village. Fossetts Lane is an adopted road maintained by Essex County Council and is extremely narrow making the business park unsuitable for HGV access. If the site is to be considered for expansion, then usage must remain either service industry or light/specialized manufacturing, with minimal traffic movements in order to retain the rural feel currently enjoyed by residents. Although the site is in the parish adjacent fields to the west are in the neighbouring parish of Fordham.



16.3.5 *Other Employment Areas*

These are provided by:

- Village shops

- Pubs
- The Parish Council
- Churches
- The Hop House
- Various peripheral businesses inside and outside the village
- Farms

These commercial, retail and employment sites provide useful opportunities to work locally and any expansion plans will be viewed sympathetically on a case by case basis.

In particular every effort will be made to include these in advertising in the Village Bulletin and in the Business Directory on the village website.

In addition to the general support for controlled growth of business and employment opportunities as mentioned above, in the draft Neighbourhood plan survey of 2016 there was particular support for developing small scale business units in existing farm buildings.



Farm diversification sites will therefore be supported by Business and Commerce Planning Policy PP15 as a means of improving employment opportunities in the more rural areas. This policy is supplemental to Colchester Borough Council's Development Policy DP8: Agricultural Development and Diversification.

16.4 Summary of SWOT

Strengths	Weaknesses
• Good mix of employment in the parish, both modern and traditional. • Several small business park sites. • Reasonable road access to employment sites. • Three well-used village pubs. • Strong concentration of professional trades in the village. • Variety of shops. • Strong agricultural community.	• Lack of space for shops to expand. • Poor accessibility by public transport, cycling and walking to business parks. • Lack of dedicated parking at shops. • Limited retail facilities. • Lack of integration of business parks with the village. • Poor or patchy broadband. • Lack of employment areas zoned in the Local Plan as employment sites.

Opportunities	Threats
• All business parks have capability to expand. • Promotion of businesses through marketing and publicity. • New broadband connectivity. • Upgrading of business parks. • Further farm diversifications.	• Pub companies altering tenancy agreements and pubs subject to short term closures and long-term threat of redevelopment for housing. • Business parks being developed as housing sites. • High business rates.

16.5 The Plan's Approach

This will be to support appropriate expansion of the business parks and encourage and support individual businesses wherever possible.

As the objectives relate in part to the use and development of land only, Planning Policies alone have been developed.

16.6 Policies

Policy No.	Business, Commerce and Employment Planning Policies
PP14: Expansion of Employment Sites	Proposals to upgrade or extend existing employment sites will be supported provided that: • the impact on the amenities enjoyed by occupants of nearby properties is acceptable; and • they do not compromise the character of the area or openness of the countryside; and • where appropriate, they satisfactorily demonstrate expected traffic impact is acceptable in terms of highway safety and the amenity of nearby residents.
PP15: Farm Diversification	Development proposals for the diversification of farms will be supported where this enables production from the land to continue and where: • there are no significant negative effects upon the landscape; and • development does not result in unacceptable traffic by way of Heavy Goods Vehicles on rural roads; and • local employment is retained

17  SPORT AND RECREATION

17.1 Objectives

- Promote increased opportunities to get active and participate in sport and informal recreation.
- To develop our recreational facilities to meet the needs of an expanding population.
- To tailor facilities to the needs of all ages.
- To make best use of our sports and recreational facilities.
- To consider the need for new areas of land for organised sports.

17.2 Background & Intent

The formal sports and recreation facilities in West Bergholt are limited in the main to the village although there are plenty of opportunities for informal recreation through areas of open space and public rights of way which allow the public access to the countryside. There are also signed cycle routes in the area within easy access of the village. In the appraisal of this area of the plan it has become apparent that it is the open spaces in the village which are in danger of becoming inadequate to serve the needs of a growing population and one whose demographic is changing. Coupled with a need to allow people increased opportunities to improve their health and well-being the Neighbourhood Plan has identified the following areas where improvements are needed:

- Formal sports facilities
- Areas and management of open space

17.3 Evidence

17.3.1 *Lorkin Daniell Playing Field and Poor's Land*

The adult football pitch together with its associated clubhouse dominates the Lorkin Daniell playing field limiting realistic expansion and enhancement of the village hall footprint, children's playground, Multi Use Games Area (MUGA) and tennis facilities.

The people of our parish should have access to the very best affordable facilities both now and in the future. However, the location of the football pitch limits expansion and enhancement of family recreation and play facilities sited on the Lorkin Daniell Playing Field. West Bergholt Football Club has previously attempted to purchase land for a new site, and to enlarge and improve its clubhouse but has been unsuccessful due to the prohibitive cost.

There is a lack of informal recreational areas for ad hoc non-team-based sports use and too much emphasis on open spaces being used for football. Even for formal sports use there is a lack of good "clubhouse" facilities as demonstrated by their absence on the Poor's Land. Other drawbacks for these areas include: lack of a zip wire or teenage outdoor play areas and lack of an adventure playground for children past the age where they would enjoy the playground that exists. Although the MUGA is popular, the tennis courts are too few in number to form the basis for a tennis club which would need three courts to allow competitions and club tournaments.

Historically the Lorkin Daniel Field has been used by West Bergholt Football Club and the Poor's Land by Heathlands School and Bergholt Heath Youth Football Club, on an informal but mutually agreed basis. There is though, a perceived need to actively manage the use of the fields to improve their accessibility to other groups, e.g. fitness groups, family recreation/social

events, etc. and formal arrangements put in place to ensure, for instance, reinstatement of the fields by users after an event. This process has begun but a community policy is deemed needed to ensure this process continues, being one that requires that the fields are increasingly actively managed by the Parish Council as Trustees of the fields for the benefit of the community as a whole.

17.3.2 *Changing the emphasis of current sports areas and introducing new facilities*

It is evident that not everything can be accommodated on the current sites. It is therefore proposed to look for a further site so that there could be a differentiation between informal sport and children's play areas and the formal team sports. New sports areas and purpose-built facilities such as clubhouses and changing areas could be incorporated into a new site. The relocation of the football pitch and associated clubhouse to a consolidated and centralised team and dedicated recreational sports area, would benefit the entire community. This would release a significant part of the Lorkin Daniell Playing Field for improved child, teenage play and generalised recreation use. The Lorkin Daniell Playing Field and Poor's Land sites would then provide the opportunity for more planting and seating together with expanded provision of children's adventure play area equipment with zip-wires and similar provisions for older children. Although consultations will need to take place and funding sought, relocating the football pitch and clubhouse would open up the Lorkin Daniell Playing Field to more diverse family uses including providing space to expand the already heavily booked village halls as well as affording the MUGA additional space for an additional tennis court and the provision of an all-weather 5 aside football area. The children's play facilities could be vastly improved and expanded to appeal to children of all age groups.

Overall consolidation of sports and recreation areas to optimise usage would allow the following benefits to accrue:

- Teenage and child play and recreational facilities could be expanded across that part of the Lorkin Daniell Playing Field currently occupied by the adult football pitch, allowing potential enhancement of facilities similar to those provided in Marks Tey, Great Horkesley or the Maldon children activity centre.
- Expansion and enhancement of the village hall facilities would be possible which are currently limited and unlikely to meet demands for the next 15 years.
- Allow dedicated areas of the village hall complex for Pre-school activities.
- Allow more indoor club and pastime activities to operate from the village hall complex located centrally within the main village residential area.
- Allow expansion of the village halls car park to safely accommodate future needs for Pre-school and Heathlands School drop-offs, use of the MUGA or for car parking whilst adults and their children enjoy the child and teenage play facilities.
- Future proof team sport within the village. New and existing sport needs can be met through a purpose designed and designated area.
- The junior football team could be relocated subject to appropriate consultation to the new area releasing Poor's Land for more generalised recreational or school use activities as required. Poor's Land is held in Trust with the Parish Council as Sole Trustee.



17.4 Summary of SWOT

Strengths	Weaknesses
• Good recreational opportunities for popular organised sport. • Open spaces allow informal recreation. • Team sports and children's play areas provided. • Network of PROW and cycle routes. • Popular allotments based at central location in the village. • Variety of indoor recreation clubs for various ages. • Well-established team sports clubs for all ages. • Floodlight Multi Use Games Area based at village hall.	• Sporting areas often confined to single usage. • Sporting areas not available due to regular bookings. • Lack of changing and toilet facilities. • Poor vehicle access and parking inadequate at some sites. • Overuse of existing facilities leads to degradation.
• Hillhouse Wood recreational facilities in local woods	

Opportunities	Threats
• New development areas may allow further areas of open space and opportunities for further sports pitches. • Possibility of amalgamating formal sports in one area. • Reallocation of space in the Lorkin Daniell and Poor's Land sites for informal recreation. • Development of PROW and cycle routes. • Development of Bridleways. • Online booking system for floodlight MUGA. • Purpose-built changing & toilet facilities. • Parish Council uses expertise & contacts to support clubs with grants and managing the bureaucratic process.	• Lack of opportunities for all members of the community. • Lack of facilities leading to depleted health of the community. • Requirement to travel away from the parish for some sport and recreational facilities. • Lack of volunteers running sporting clubs. • Vandalism of facilities.

17.5 The Plan's Approach

As a fundamental first step towards future sustainable and planned village growth it is important to identify and reserve an area that can be dedicated exclusively for team or specialist sports. In meeting this objective any future potential housing and business development areas could be planned and implemented in a co-ordinated manner which would not compromise the

earmarked village recreational areas. Any land chosen should be capable of meeting the immediate needs of football clubs in the village and be enhanced in phases to meet future sporting needs. Taking into account the nature and gradient of land in and around the village, an appraisal of a number of different sites was undertake. The analysis appears in the evidence report of such in supporting documents (see Appendix 2).

As the objectives relate in part to the use and development of land and wider community aspirations both Planning Policies and Community Ambitions have been developed.

17.5.1 *Proposal for a site to the rear of Site B*

Map PP9/2 shows an ideal location for any future consolidated team ball sports. This land adjoins the settlement boundary, is adjacent to the Cricket Club and is used for arable farming. There are several advantages to this site

- Within easy reach of the main residential areas which is largely located to the south and east of the site with agricultural land lying to the north.
- Adjacent to the existing cricket club and pavilion.
- Space available for car parking.
- Site can be developed for sport in phases to meet evolving demand.
- Plenty of space to accommodate adult and junior football, rugby other team sports, practice facilities and teenage play facilities.

Therefore, when considering proposals for the development of Site B, consideration should be given to facilitating subsequent evolution of the sports area by ensuring that the layout of housing development should not fetter future development of this area, including the opportunity to deliver adequate access to it in the future.



17.6 Policies and Community Ambitions

Policy No.	Sport and Recreation Planning Policies
PP16: New Sports Facilities	Proposals for the development of Site B in accordance with Policy PP9 including sports facilities on land adjacent to the cricket club as illustrated on Map PP9/2, subject to viability will be supported.

Ambition No.	Sports and Recreation Community Ambitions
CA8: New Sports Areas	New sports activity areas will be developed as opportunities arise. Consolidation of sports activities may take place as a result.
CA9: Lorkin Daniell Field	The Lorkin Daniell Playing Field will be actively managed so as to allow improved access to recreational activities.
CA10: Poor's Land	The Poor's Land will be actively managed so as to allow improved access to recreational activities.
CA11: Consolidated Sports Areas	New consolidated sports activity areas will be expected to promote a wide variety of sports. Clubhouse facilities and parking must be provided, and the facility must have good accessibility to other parts of the village.

18 COMMUNITY SAFETY

18.1 Objectives

- To create an environment which promotes a feeling of safety where the perception and incidence of crime is low, by ensuring new developments are designed so as to reduce the incidences of crime and fear of crime.
- To see the traffic circulation and parking environment managed to minimise the chance of being the victim of a traffic-related accident.
- To help protect vulnerable members of the community from harm in and around the home and from inclement weather.

18.2 Background & Intent

Crime and fear of crime and the perceptions of safety on the streets in the parish is a constant concern although in recent years the anti-social aspects have reduced somewhat. This is very much an area demanding a multi-agency approach involving the police, emergency services and emergency planning officials together with village organisations and residents. Such an approach is also needed for promoting safety in the home especially in an area that has an increasing number of elderly residents who may be at risk of burglary, deception-type crime and even risk of fire.

18.3 Evidence

18.3.1 *Crime and Fear of Crime*

Whilst crime levels and the fears of crime are low there are hot spots of such within the village. Evidence of the crimes committed is noted on a monthly basis in the Parish Council minutes. There is a perception of a lack of police presence and as a result of neighbourhood policing changes there is no longer a regular mobile police presence where residents can seek advice or make their concerns known. The area has an emerging active Neighbourhood Watch scheme in the village.

West Bergholt is served by the Local Community Meetings initiative (LCM) and multi-agency problem solving groups, working alongside the local community to address crime, anti-social behaviour and quality of life issues.

A recent development which is being pursued is the recruiting of a Special Constable for the village who can deal with a variety of issues such as anti-social behaviour and traffic and parking offences.

However, building designs that seek to reduce the incidence of crime and fear of crime will be endorsed by the Parish Council, noting advice on how such can be achieved is available from the Design Council from their guide "Designing Out Crime" and other similar guides. All Design and Access statements should thus incorporate advice on how the issue of designing out crime has been addressed in preparing the proposed design.

18.3.2 *Community Safety*

An emergency plan for the village has been drawn up to support Colchester Borough and the emergency services. Snow clearance volunteer teams are in place and the Parish Council maintain equipment and salt supplies for use by volunteers.

18.3.3 *Road Safety*

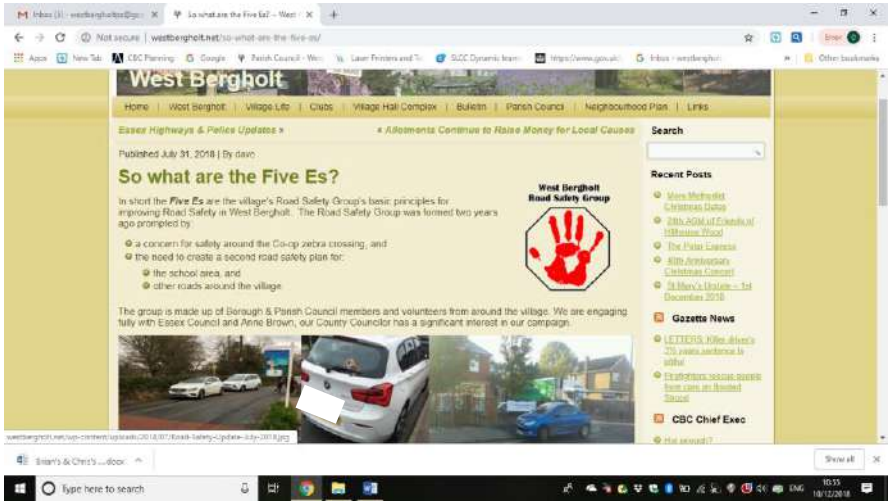
Traffic and road safety related matters are the chief concern of residents as evidenced by the public engagement and consultation exercises that have been carried out both for the Parish Plan and the Neighbourhood Plan.

The issues are classified as follows:

- Speeding in Chapel Road, Colchester Road and Lexden Road

- Parking and traffic issues in New Church Road
- Parking around the Co-op, New Church Road and School Lane
- Safety of school children and pedestrians and cyclists in the vicinity of the school and the Co-op

A Traffic Safety Group has been set up to understand and help towards finding solutions to the above issues. The Group has drawn up a Traffic Safety Plan for the village and which has a special focus on the 400-place school which causes general issues of safety for young students traveling to school but also an ever-growing problem of illegal, anti-social and dangerous parking at school drop off and pick up times. The focus is on a programme of Engagement, Encouragement, Education, Enforcement and Engineering. There are many initiatives under way across all of these fronts including the introduction of new 20mph speed limits and waiting restrictions. The group has been active recruiting a team of volunteer parking monitors to occasionally patrol a few areas in the village to curtail poor parking. There have also been a series of articles on the Parish website and local Facebook page, such as the one below.



A "sign the pledge" stall was also manned at the annual Village Fete where residents promised to drive carefully and park considerately. Regular liaison with Heathlands School takes place to help understand problems better, to help promote the School Travel Plan and to find initiatives to improve safety further.

The village has a very active Community Speed Watch group (CSW) with resource and equipment being shared with Eight Ash Green. The CSW group is recorded as being in the top five most active groups in Essex.

18.4 Summary of SWOT

Strengths	Weaknesses
• Relatively low levels of crime. • An existing traffic and safety group and strategy. • Snow-clearing volunteers. • Emergency Plan. • Community Speed Watch. • Parish Council able to respond to emergency with retained staff. • Facebook Hub a good warning mechanism. • Strong community spirit.	• Speeding and parking issues. • Large primary school results in many younger students walking around the village at peak time. • Oversubscribed school leads to increased parking pressures. • Lack of street lights may lead to a perceived feeling of vulnerability. • Lack of regular police presence. • Elderly population vulnerable to bogus callers and from dangers around the home and at times of inclement weather. • Trip hazards caused by poor footway condition.

Opportunities	Threats
• Traffic safety plan/20 mph zones and streets. • Special Constable Scheme. • Safety in the Home Fire Service Initiative. • Local Community Meetings • Online reporting tool • Neighbourhood Watch and possibility of using existing Safeland app.	• Escalating crime. • Traffic speed and volumes increasing due to expansion of village with attendant risk of serious accident. • Rural hinterland difficult to police. • Difficulty of recruiting volunteers. • Rural crime rapidly increasing.

18.5 The Plan's Approach

The Essex Neighbourhood Policing role is constantly changing. Police Community Support Officer (PCSO) roles have been cut. Dedicated PCSO's have to be 100% funded by the community. Alternate policing methods could be considered. Volunteer Special Constables are being recruited with full powers of arrest matching those of regular police officers. A further example of the volunteer sector meeting community needs of today and the future. Occasional antisocial behaviour occurs and local police presence would help control such behaviour. A Traffic Safety Plan (TSP) for the village which concentrates on the roads around the school and the junction of New Church Road and Chapel Road. Appropriate expansion of the TSP should be a consideration for all new building development sites.

As the objectives relate in part to the use and development of land and wider community aspirations both Planning and Community Ambitions have been developed.



18.6 Policies and Community Ambitions

Policy No.	Community Safety Planning Policies
PP17: Designing Out Crime	Where appropriate, development proposals which demonstrate that they have been designed to reduce the incidence of crime and fear of crime will be supported.
PP18: New Road Layouts	Development proposals incorporating the design of new road layouts that discourages indiscriminate parking and promotes a safe pedestrian and cycling environment, where appropriate will be supported.

Ambition No.	Community Safety Community Ambitions
CA12: Neighbourhood Watch	Neighbourhood Watch schemes including Speed Watch and Farm Watch will be encouraged and supported.
CA13: Road Safety	Road safety issues will be highlighted through regular monitoring of issues and plans of action developed with the relevant agencies. Particular attention will be paid to areas around the school, the Co-op and other areas of high pedestrian footfall.
CA14: Anti-social Behaviour	Anti-social and other behavioural issues will be monitored and reported to the authorities and measures developed with the Police and the Community Safety Partnership to reduce their incidence.
CA15: Crime	Crime and fear of crime will be monitored, and remedial actions discussed and devised with the police and other community safety groups.
CA16: 20mph Zones	Where new streets are proposed, these should be 20 mph speed limit zones

19 COMMUNICATION

19.1 Objectives

- To keep the community informed through a wide range of media.
- To promote a two-way dialogue through creating the opportunity for participation in democratic processes and decision making.
- To enable the community to participate in forums and discussion groups about issues at large in the parish.

19.2 Background & Intent

There are 4 main channels in which the village communicates;

- Face to face
- Village Bulletins and Newsletter form
- West Bergholt website
- Social media

Communication channels are constantly changing and methods can always be improved. Different age groups use different methods and the main concerns are:

- How to manage the communication channels?
- Which information to put out to achieve maximum exposure of issues and events?
- How to co-ordinate effort so that communication between different groups is put to best effect?

19.3 Evidence

19.3.1 *Democratic Aspects*

The Parish Council has its main meeting and its committees and sub-committees but is anxious to build on the task and finish groups and more permanent single-issue groups that it has started to spawn. Groups exist covering the annual village fete; the traffic and safety group; the village broadband group; the multi-games area users committee and of course the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group. The emphasis will be to support groups and drawn in volunteers who can act as a pool for other groups and societies to draw upon and to tap the huge resources and skills that exist within the community.

19.3.2 *The Village Bulletin*

The Parish Council supports the publication of a quarterly Village Bulletin which is delivered to all households. A brief, more up to date "Village Newsletter" is produced periodically when there is no Bulletin and displayed on the notice boards and available at other sites around the village. Feedback from the surveys suggested that the Bulletin is a much-loved publication which even with all the electronic mediums available people want to see continue. The main issues to combat are modernising the content, introducing more "newsy" material to dovetail with the retrospective nature of the reporting. The emphasis will be to supplement the current editor with an editorial team and some parish reporters.

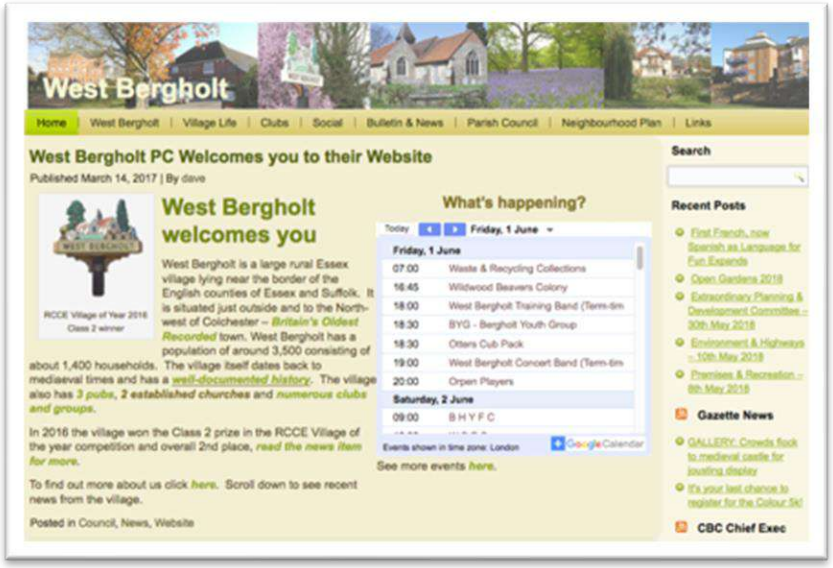
19.3.3 *Conventional Noticeboards*

The Parish Council also maintains a number of notice boards which are kept up to date regularly. In addition, the Church and School have their own newsletters. There is always a call for more noticeboards but although these

can be considered the immediate need is to better manage the ad-hoc posters and informal notices pinned to most telegraph poles in the village. Here it is proposed to better utilise purpose-built sign hangars at strategic locations to affix event-type community news items.

19.3.4 *West Bergholt Website*

westbergholt.net – the website page for the village provides a calendar of events, electronic copies of the bulletin, minutes of the council & committees, village updates and details of the parish councillors. Its strengths lie in its dedicated webmaster who posts news stories and relays smaller snippets of the same items to Facebook and Twitter. The website will continue to be updated and used for an increasing number of uses such



as village surveys and parish polls for example. One initiative from the past is being resurrected both electronically and in paper form, that of the Information Pack for new householders.

19.3.5 *Social Media*

There are a number of active sites for West Bergholt and the clubs that exist in the parish. The majority of the sites have a good number of followers. The issue here is how organisations can follow up comments many of which can be utilised to better effect by providing clarification on popular items such as planning issues, broadband updates and crime activity.

19.3.6 *Broadband*

Broadband services in the village are a mixed provision of wireless technology provided by County Broadband; fibre provided by Virgin; small areas fibred by BT, whilst most streets also allow connection through BT copper wiring. The result is unsatisfactory with many unmade roads not benefiting from Fibre at all and the wireless technology not providing speeds of superfast or ultrafast standards. The NPPF considers advanced, high quality communications infrastructure is essential for sustainable growth.

Therefore there is the need to ensure that digital connectivity is considered at the earliest possible opportunity when preparing development proposals to maximise the chances of new properties being connected to the high speed broadband network by encouraging developers to engage early with network providers, and specifically to take up Openreach's free service of providing a connectivity assessment prior to submitting a planning application. Openreach's connectivity assessment service is an optional service. It is desirable that developers take up this service in West Bergholt to optimise the delivery of broadband infrastructure. On sites less likely to be served by an adequate Openreach fibre network, developers will be encouraged to investigate other broadband provision such as satellite broadband or community-led schemes as part of their assessment. Applicants will be expected to submit a Broadband Statement with their planning application summarising the outcome of their early engagement with network providers and explaining how they intend to ensure satisfactory broadband provision in light of the findings, including a

"connectivity assessment" (provided at no cost by Openreach) of the anticipated broadband speeds and connectivity to a site at least 9 months before the first occupancy of the site to avoid the default to copper wire connectivity. The connectivity assessment will show:

1. if the development will be covered by the existing fibre broadband infrastructure,
2. if a developer contribution charge is applicable, and how much,
3. the forecasted range of ADSL (copper broadband) speed irrespective of Superfast fibre infrastructure availability, and
4. the lead-time to deliver fibre infrastructure if in exceptional cases this is greater than nine months.

The Parish Council will not expect the provision of superfast broadband where the costs would be disproportionate in relation to the development proposal. It may be in some cases that ducting or other equipment could be provided to make properties 'ready' for future improvements to the network if it is cost prohibitive for improvements to be made at the time of the planning application.

This policy will support and work in connection with the new Building Regulations (Part R – Electronic Communications) that came into effect in January 2017. The new regulations require in-building physical infrastructure to enable copper or fibre-optic cables or wireless devices capable of delivering broadband speeds greater than 30Mbps to be installed in new dwellings.

The development of high-speed broadband technology and other communications networks also plays a vital role in enhancing the provision of local community facilities and services.

19.4 Summary of SWOT

Strengths	Weaknesses
• Website. • Village Bulletin.	• Information can be poorly sequenced and communicated.

Strengths	Weaknesses
• Facebook Hub and Community and NP Groups. • PC meetings. • Working Groups which encourage community participation. • Notice boards. • Communications Officer at PC. • Annual Parish Meeting and village events. • Community information from the Police. • Safeland app. For traffic safety issues.	• Social media information based on opinion not facts. • Social media information not acted upon due to poor take up by various groups and ages. • Scattergun approach to information. • Data security. • Retention of useful information amongst special interest groups.

Opportunities	Threats
• Further use and development of website & social media. • Further Facebook Groups. • Use of Twitter, Instagram etc. • Making more specialised information available e.g. crime. • Create a village forum. • Information pack for new residents • Developing the potential of the Village Bulletin.	• Feeling that data is not used to good effect. • Hidden concerns only appearing within groups and not shared. • Suspicion. • Resentment of officialdom. • Poor participation in Council activities. • Socially isolated groups which do not use electronic media. • Threat of hacking. • Trolling threat on social media.

19.5 The Plan's Approach

We believe the various methods of communication we have in the village put us in a strong position for the future. The explosion of the internet and social media is growing year on year and our current platforms give us a great advantage to reach out to more locals. One critical point to reference is ensuring we have the right broadband capability and to ensure this is sustained and all areas covered.

As the objectives relate in part to the use and development of land and wider community aspirations both Planning Policies and Community Ambitions have been developed.

19.6 Policies and Community Ambitions

Policy No.	Communication Planning Policies
PP19: Communications Network	Proposals for new residential (sites of 2 dwellings or more) and commercial development will be supported which demonstrate how they will provide future occupiers with sufficient broadband connectivity including: a) demonstration of early engagement with infrastructure providers; and b) be accompanied by a 'Broadband Statement' that explains the current internet connectivity in the site's locality and the potential for the site to be provided with high speed broadband, including an assessment of the feasibility of providing fibre to the premises (FTTP) infrastructure; and c) make provision for new premises to be provided with high speed (superfast)[1] broadband, or if this is not feasible at the time of the application, undertake all reasonable actions to enable a superfast connection at a future date. The Parish Council will strongly support the provision of Fibre to the Premises (FTTP) infrastructure in all new built development on major development sites unless it can be demonstrated through the Broadband Statement that it is not feasible. The level of detail required in the Broadband Statement should be proportionate to the scale of the development proposal. [1]High speed or 'superfast' broadband is currently (at the time of this document's publication) defined by the UK Government as 24Mbps, and by Ofcom as 30Mbps. The definition of superfast is likely to evolve over the time period of this Local Plan, and a consideration of an up to date definition of 'superfast' will be made at the time of a planning application based on Government/Industry guidance.

Ambition No.	Communication Community Ambitions
CA17: Forum	A West Bergholt communications forum will be established consisting of a mixture of age groups and skills to help ensure all groups within the community are represented.
CA18: Village Bulletin	The Village Bulletin publication will continue to be reviewed, and improvements made.
CA19: Feedback	Communications will be consistent, and opportunities made available for residents to feed their thoughts back to other organisations.
CA20: Means of Communication	The website will be developed as the principal means of day to day communication and information although printed information will be maintained via the Village Bulletin, periodic newsletters and traditional noticeboards as demand requires.
CA21: Information Pack	All new householders will receive an Information Pack to introduce them to the facilities and organisations available in the village.

20  TRANSPORT

20.1 Objectives

- To make getting around the parish and elsewhere by foot, bicycle, car and bus simple, more convenient and safer.
- To ensure critical infrastructure is provided for new developments.
- To enable wider transport infrastructure to be improved upon, especially to calm traffic, control parking and improve walking and cycling.

20.2 Background & Intent

The village has generally good main (B1508) and minor road connections to the A12, Colchester town centre, the rail station, Tollgate retail area and towards Sudbury and the rural Essex-Suffolk border area.

Bus services are provided by two companies, Chambers, providing an hourly service to Colchester and Sudbury, and First Bus that operates a 30-minute frequency peak and daytime service to the town centre via the Rail Station. On Sundays the frequency of buses drops to two hourly. School buses serve the main secondary schools whilst the Care Network. and Community bus services offer a bookable service for those unable to use conventional public transport easily. Footways are generally provided adjacent to the majority of roads and the area is covered by 30mph speed restrictions. There are no cycle ways although a signed cycle route to the rail station using the main road has been provided in recent years and similarly the National Cycle Network route 13 skirts the village providing a means of accessing the wider countryside.

20.3 Evidence

20.3.1 *Connectivity and Traffic Management*

Connectivity is reasonably good for the village and indeed across the parish area, although the highway infrastructure is by no means modern. Thus, links to the south west to the A12 and to retail parks on the edge of Colchester is via a narrow and winding lane – Argents Lane or via another country lane leading to a level crossing. This route draws in traffic not only from the village but from across the parish and indeed north Colchester. Whilst there is no desire to see this route upgraded there is a feeling that heavy goods traffic could be more controlled and prohibited, save for access. The main route through the village also attracts its fair share of through traffic including skip lorries from a nearby recycling company in a neighbouring parish. Since this road is the one that passes the favoured areas of development there will be a need to introduce traffic regulating facilities such as crossings and perhaps mini roundabouts to “calm” traffic speeds and intensity. Elsewhere in the more residential areas there is a strongly supported desire to regulate parking and introduce 20 mph streets or preferably 20 mph zones.

20.3.2 *Highways*

The main concerns with the infrastructure, aside from traffic circulation is the fabric of the main routes and residential side streets which are beginning to show their age. The intention with this issue is to establish a better dialogue with the County Council to enable inspection and maintenance regimes to be better understood and to receive better notification of when repairs and surfacing programmes will be carried out.

20.3.3 *Bus Services*

The main bus service to the railway station and the town centre is at 30-minute frequencies and information about arrivals and departures in real time is now available via Smartphones. Coupled with services provided by the other operator, this means that there are 3 services per hour, dropping to 1 in the evenings and 1 every two hours on Sundays. This should do much to improve the perception of service frequency and reliability and increase the numbers using the bus. It is considered vital to get information on frequency and real-time information out to all households rather than hoping that this information will naturally be passed on. Such an initiative is vital to establish sustainable travel patterns in any new developments that are built. Through the plan's implementation it is intended to work with bus companies on a range of incentives to use the bus including multi-operator tickets, books of multi-journey tickets and reduced price for family travel.

20.3.4 *Cycling*

Cycling should be far more prevalent than it is. Journeys to the railway station at Colchester are less than 3 miles in length but without a dedicated cycle route. Similarly, whilst journeys across the parish rarely take more than 10 minutes, there are few existing specific cycle routes and none that create a quiet circular route for youngsters to safely learn cycle craft. In addition, for recreational or health pursuits, cycling in the parish can be an absolute delight when riding on mostly lightly trafficked roads with great views over the Colne Valley or across towards Suffolk and Constable Country. The issue is normally lack of information coupled with the natural fear of traffic. A cycle user group that extols the virtues of cycling for leisure or utility journeys and which also establishes where physical infrastructure such as cycle ways or parking facilities could be introduced, is a possibility.

20.3.5 *Walking*

There is a good provision of footways (pavements) and footpaths but some facilities are missing. These include footways in New Church road leading to the school and in Nayland Road leading to one of the employment zones at Patterns Yard. There is also a need for further crossings along Lexden Road and Colchester Road. Lastly, recreational walking guides would help publicise the public rights of way to the community to help encourage health and family circular walks.

20.4 Summary of SWOT

Strengths	Weaknesses
• Compact main village with good accessibility on foot to many services. • Reasonably frequent bus services. • A B road affording access to Colchester, rail station and A12. • Local taxi company located in the village. • Community and Care Network transport for mobility impaired residents.	• Inadequate on street real time information about bus service arrivals. • Lack of cycle ways and cycle parking. • Missing stretches of footway. • Poor residential road maintenance. • Lack of pedestrian crossings. • Poorly sited bus stops.

Opportunities	Threats
• Safe cycle ways. • Footways leading the school and to the rural outskirts of the village. • Traffic management improvements to reduce the dominant effect of traffic. • New development links to the school and village centre.	• Parking spill-over onto narrow streets. • Traffic dominated streets. • Speeding traffic. • Intimidating pedestrian and cycle environment. • Further degradation of highway assets including signing, road and footway condition and PROW.

• Encouragement to use improved bus service. • A village mini-bus for community use. • 20 mph zones or streets. • School travel plan and cycle training. • Bus services to the hospital. • Improved PROW signing and information.	• Damage caused by agricultural machinery.



20.5 The Plan's Approach

Although there has been some growth in the village there is nothing to suggest that major road infrastructure is required, rather it is likely to be the management of traffic and parking, together with the introduction of more bus services and the improvement of the walking and cycling environment that should be the focus.

As the objectives relate in part to the use and development of land and wider community aspirations both Planning Policies and Community Ambitions have been developed.

20.6 Policies and Community Ambitions

Policy No.	Transport, Highways & Infrastructure Planning Policies
PP20: Access	Development proposals demonstrating designs that incorporate safe pedestrian and vehicular access and adequate sight lines will be supported.
PP21: Traffic Congestion	Where development proposals are likely to add to traffic congestion in the village or encourage through or additional traffic on rural lanes causing significant harm, proposals that include sustainable measures to mitigate unacceptable traffic impact, or contribute funding towards appropriate sustainable village transport safety schemes, will be supported.
PP22: Cycle Storage	Development proposals for new developments incorporating designs to provide secure cycle storage and storage for mobility scooters where appropriate, minimising their visual impact through good design will be supported.
PP23: Sustainable Transport	Where appropriate and subject to viability, new development which offers contributions to encourage walking, cycling and public transport use, in mitigation commensurate with the scale and likely impact of the proposed development, will be supported.
PP24: Sustainable Transport Connections	Existing footpaths, cycleways and bridleways provide a high level of amenity value and will be protected. Development proposals which will enhance existing networks, create connections and provide new networks where appropriate, will be supported.

Ambition No.	Transport, Highways & Infrastructure Community Ambitions
CA22: Traffic Management	Traffic management will be introduced to control parking and to improve the environment for cycling and walking in residential streets.
CA23: Traffic Channeling	Traffic will be channeled towards principal roads, i.e. B1508 (Colchester Rd/Bures Rd), Lexden Rd, Chapel Rd, Argents Lane, Nayland Rd and Chitts Hill.
CA24: Cycling & Walking	Cycling and walking will be promoted and will be considered as part of all infrastructure projects.

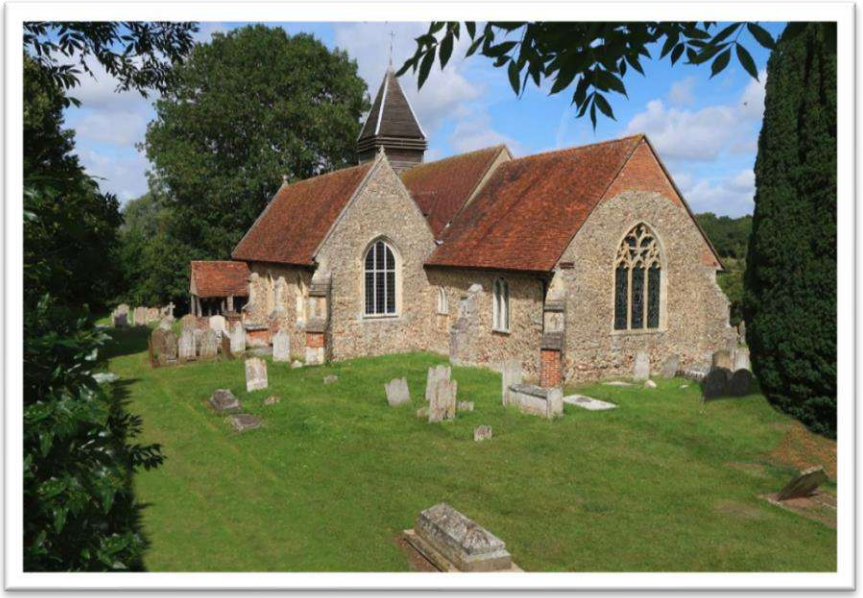
CA25: Bus Services	Parish bus services will be promoted, and improvements sought. New minibus services will be investigated and introduced where appropriate.
CA26: Highway Maintenance	A high standard of maintenance will be sought for roads and pavements, ditches & verges.
CA27: Infrastructure	Any planning applications for new development within the Neighbourhood Plan Area must demonstrate how they can contribute towards the delivery of infrastructure and other development projects prioritised by the community. This may be through planning conditions, via a section 106 agreement or through payment of any Community Infrastructure Levy.

21 Monitoring and Review

The Neighbourhood Plan is written to cover the period to 2033. It is recognised that planning is a dynamic process and over the lifetime of the Neighbourhood Plan, there may be a need to review the effectiveness of policies and the progress made on the Neighbourhood Plan's objectives. It is possible there may be changes as Colchester's Site Allocations process is not yet complete or adopted.

To ensure that the Plan continues to promote development and is appropriate for West Bergholt it will be reviewed by the Parish Council, or group specifically appointed for that purpose every five years, in conjunction with stakeholders and partners to include ECC, CBC and other specialist service providers.

An initial Action Plan has been produced and this is included in the supporting documents to the Plan (see Appendix 2); this is expected to evolve over the lifetime of the Plan. The initial ideas are based upon the many suggestions made by the community during the many consultations that have been held during the Plan's preparation. Additionally, an Infrastructure List has been assembled which potentially can be funded through new development, s106 or CIL contributions or other funding opportunities. This list is also in the supporting documents (see Appendix 2).



22 APPENDIX 1 – MAPS

Map PP4	Local Green Spaces
Map PP5	Character Area
Map CA7	Indicative Views
Map PP9/1	Settlement Boundary
Map PP9/2	Proposed Development Allocations
Map PP12	Coalescence

23 Appendix 2 – List of Supporting Documents

A	List of Planning Policies v.3 updated 2024
B	Schedule of Local Green Spaces v.2
C	Photos of views related to Map CA7 v.2
D	Deliverability letters relating to Sites A & B
E	Consultation Report on surveys carried out at key stages of the Neighbourhood Plan
F	CBC West Bergholt HRA Screening
G	CBC West Bergholt SEA Screening
H	Sports Site Analysis
I	Action Plan and List of Community Ambitions v.2
J	Infrastructure List
K	CBC Settlement Boundary Review
L	Report on the Assessment of Potential Housing Sites
M	West Bergholt Village Appraisal 1995
N	Parish Plan 2008
O	~~Village Design Statement 2011~~ removed as supporting document 2024
P	RCCE Community Profile of West Bergholt
Q	RCCE Housing Needs Survey
R	West Bergholt Position Statement
S	Consultation Statement 2018
T	Appendix D of Consultation Statement
U	Basic Conditions Statement 2018

Annex H

BOXTED PARISH PLAN

Incorporating

The VILLAGE DESIGN STATEMENT



St Peters Church was completed sometime between 1090 and 1130.



Boxted Hall, 11th Century - Doomsday



Rivers Hall, 11th century

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Introduction

1.0 Scope

This Village Design Statement covers the Parish of Boxted, an area of 3177 acres, the second largest parish in Essex. The population at the 2001 census was 1361.

1.1 The Statement's purpose is to:

Represent the views of the villagers.

Influence, but not prevent development.

Provide guidance to developers and property owners.

Protect rural locations, foot paths and bridle ways.

Protect and improve open spaces and the street scene.

Promote the use of sympathetic building designs and appropriate materials.

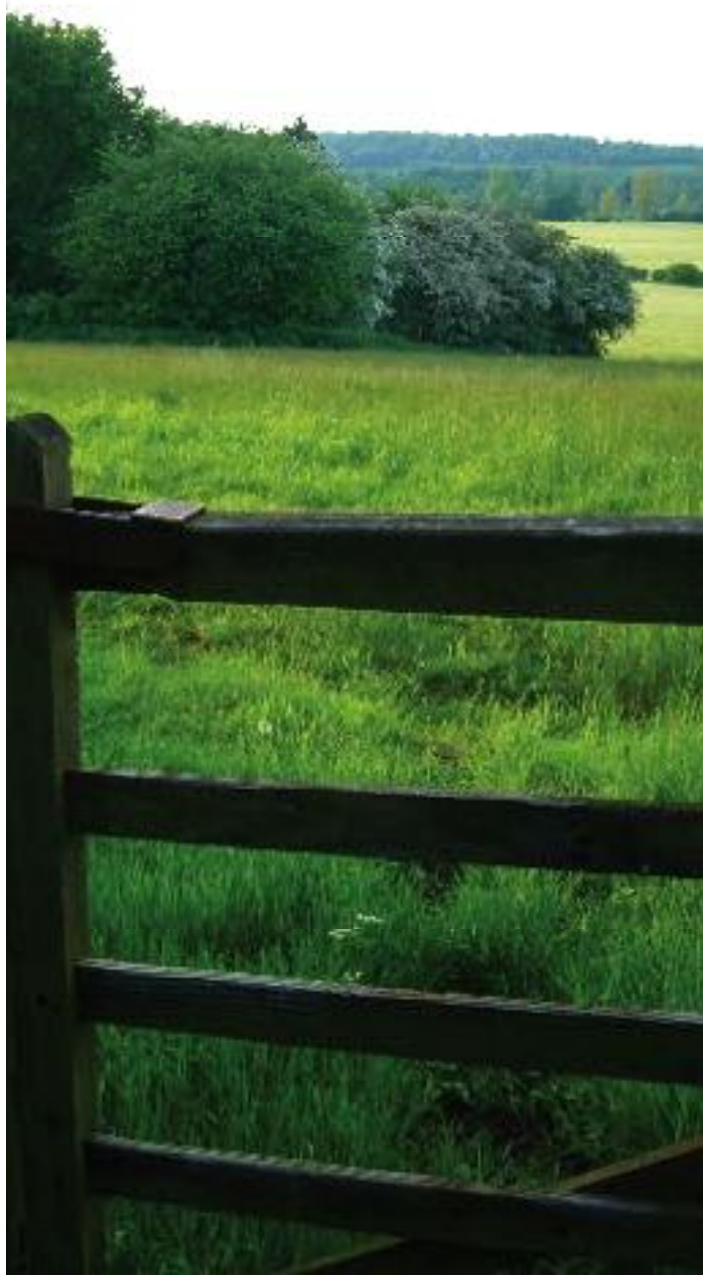
Ensure the preservation of what the villagers consider to be the valued qualities and character of the Parish.

To add to the quality of life of villagers.

Form part of the evidence base for the Local Development Framework for Colchester.

Finally, give guidance to Colchester Borough Council in the determination of planning applications in Boxted.

The authors of this Plan feel strongly that once the community has adopted this plan, CBC should formally adopt it as a planning Guidance Note. Once adopted, the VDS, reflecting Boxted residents' views, will be a material consideration when determining planning applications in the parish.



Much of Boxted still remains farm land.

1.2 What residents told us about Boxted

The VDS Committee organised a questionnaire, public information meetings and informal discussions. The most frequent "best" and "worst" comments are set out below.

What residents wanted:

Traditional two storey housing in keeping with surroundings

Traffic calming by means of "Slow Down" signs

Further improvements to footpaths along Straight Road

Off street parking

A shop/post office and a pub

Effective controls on existing industry

What residents did not want:

Apartments and flats

Social housing of any significance

New build housing in the Workhouse Hill and Boxted Church areas

Any more industry

Intrusive signage, lighting, gates and fences

Creeping urbanisation



Residents would like a shop/post office and a pub (The Wig & Fidgett closed in 2007).

1.3 Consultation

The initial meeting instigated by the Parish Council was held in August 2006 and a committee to act as the Steering Group was subsequently elected.

Regular meetings were held, and villagers advised of progress in the Village News section of the Essex County Standard.

A photographic survey and publicity display was held at the village Fete in July 2007 and the Village Design Questionnaire was distributed and collected by volunteers in late 2007. The response of over 60% was analysed, and this is the basis of the villagers' views represented in this document.

The first draft of the Statement was presented at the AGM in May 2008 and the draft circulated to Boxted Parish Council and Colchester Borough Council in November 2008, and again in March 2009. Comments were incorporated in the final report.

1.4 Planning Policy highlights

We have reviewed the following Colchester Borough Council (CBC) documents for policy details that have importance to Boxted.

There are a number of saved Local Plan policies that are relevant to the Boxted integrated Parish Plan and Village Design Statement. These include policies CO2 Dedham Vale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, C05 Habitats, CO7 Protected Lanes, EMP5 Isolated Industrial Complexes (Hill Farm Rural Business Site), EMP6 Boxted Straight Road Special Policy Area and UEA1 Character of Conservation Areas. Full details of these policies are set out in Appendix A

Over time Colchester's Adopted Local Plan (2004) will be replaced with a suite of new documents that will make up the Local Development Framework. The first of these, the Core Strategy has already been adopted following a public examination in 2008. The Core Strategy (CS) sets the strategic policy framework up to 2021 (2023 for housing) and the main policy areas in the CS of interest to Boxted are:

H1 – Housing Deliver & H2 Housing Density
Policy H1 states that the majority of the 19,000 new homes will be delivered in the 5 main Regeneration and Growth Areas identified around urban Colchester by 2023. Table H1 accompanying Policy H1 sets out housing provision for Colchester and the surrounding towns and villages and indicates that all the small villages and hamlets such as Boxted collectively will have to accommodate limited growth i.e. 435 homes by 2021.

Policy H2 states that the Council will seek housing densities that enhance local character and optimise the capacity of accessible locations. A context appraisal will identify the accessibility of an area and its local character which will help inform an appropriate density Table H2a shows that the indicative housing density for villages across the Borough which tend to be less accessible should be between 30 - 40 dwellings/hectare.

H3 – Housing Diversity
This policy's aim is to ensure that a range of housing types and tenures are delivered to create inclusive and sustainable communities. Policy H3 states that the mix of housing should be informed by an appraisal of community context and housing need. Table H3a identifies the mix of housing types to be delivered relative to accessibility. This suggests that areas such as Boxted where access is generally lower than urban Colchester is generally more suitable for houses rather than flats

H4 –Affordable Housing.
This states that the Council will be seeking to secure 35% of all new development as affordable housing. In villages affordable housing will be required to be delivered as part of housing developments of 3 or more dwellings. Developments below these



The fields of Old Farm, part of the "green break" between Boxted and Colchester.

thresholds will be expected to provide a financial contribution. In villages, affordable housing developments will be supported on rural exception sites adjacent to village settlement boundaries where a local need is demonstrated.

CE1 Centres & Employment Classification and Hierarchy; CE2a Local Centres & CE3 Employment Zones
The Core Strategy sets out a Centres & Employment Classification and Hierarchy. Policy CE1 supports the provision of small scale developments such as small shops, recreation and or tourism businesses in countryside locations which have low travel needs and low impacts and which support rural economies. Policy CE2c encourages the provision of local shops to meet local needs. A number of Local Employment Sites will be identified to support small and medium local and rural businesses that promote and provide rural enterprise and local employment as highlighted in Policy CE3.

Colchester Core Strategy Policy ENV1 states that

> "The Borough Council will conserve and enhance Colchester's natural and historic environment, countyside ...Developments that have an adverse impact on Dedham Vale AONB will not be supported. Unallocated green field land outside of settlement boundaries will be protected... development will be stictly controlled to conserve the environmental assets and open character".

Policy TA1 - Transport and Accessibility – the key aims are "to improve accessibility by enhancing sustainable transport links and encouraging development that reduces the need for travel."

Policy TA2 - Walking and Cycling - The key aims are "to promote walking and cycling ... and make them more attractive, direct and safe."

Policy TA 3 - Public Transport - "Demand responsive (bus) services will also be promoted to help rural communities access their needs."

Rural Communities- the Core Strategy PDP makes it clear that the villages in the Borough are unlikely to experience significant development during the Plan period.



Open stretches of countryside should be protected

Of major importance to our document is the restriction of unsuitable development beyond settlement boundaries to protect open stretches of countryside around and between settlements, prevent coalescence, retain settlement identity, and protect landscape character.

The Planning Policy highlights above are considered essential if Boxted is to be kept separate from Colchester, and village life preserved and enhanced. These principles as set out in the CS have been accepted as working assumptions through this document, and we hope that these aims will be kept at the forefront of CBC planning for the future of Boxted.

Colchester Borough Council is also currently preparing a new suite of Development Policies and Site Allocations Development Plan Documents as part of the LDF along with a new Proposals Map. The Development Policies will eventually replace the saved Local Plan policies once they have undergone an Examination in Public in the spring 2010 and formally adopted. The Council is also preparing new Supplementary Planning Documents for the Provision of Communities Facilities, Backland and Infill Development and Affordable Housing. Essex County Council is also revising the Car Parking standards. All these documents once formally adopted will make up the new LDF following formal adoption and will be relevant when determining planning applications affecting Boxted in the future. Appendix B sets out the Development Policies and shows which Saved Local Plan Policy they will replace.



Boxted is within the Dedham Vale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

1.5 Major Design Guidance

Village Design Statement.

The application of Local Plan Policies should not be relaxed. Any new development needs to be in accordance with Local Plan and Core Strategy (refer to table 1).

The A12 should be regarded as the barrier to development from Colchester, and only exceptional infill should be allowed, as outlined in the Core Strategy.

Any new build should be confined to the village envelope, but not within the conservation area surrounding the church, but possibly along Straight Road.

All new build should be in keeping with the immediate neighbourhood.

Housing should be a mix of detached or semi-detached and should not exceed 2 storeys. New build housing should be in keeping with their surroundings and use traditional high quality materials such as brick, tiles, and where appropriate, timber framing and cladding, but only where it is in keeping.

Off street parking should be provided.

Any development of the old school site adjacent to Boxted Church must be in keeping with the surroundings, be low density, not overlook or detract from the church and the area used for car parking for church users should be retained.

Any affordable housing should be limited in numbers and developed in keeping with surrounding properties.

Existing and new planning policies should be maintained and enforced to protect village life. Retrospective planning permissions should not be granted unless there is sufficient reason, and that reason is acceptable to Boxted Parish Council.

No expansion of existing businesses should be permitted unless there is a case for increased employment for villagers, some other community benefit is provided to the village and the business carries out an environmental impact assessment, which would be available to the public.

The Borough should ensure that Planning, Health and Safety and Environmental controls are enforced by them or other Agencies.

Agricultural land surrounding the village should be conserved from inappropriate development, or development that impacts negatively on the character and the local environment, in accordance with Policy ENV2.

Traffic calming should be improved along Straight Road and at the entrance to the village on Dedham Road by means of more prominent “Slow Down” signs, and a speed operated flashing sign at the Mill Road entry on Straight Road.

Parish Plan

A 7.5 tonne weight limit, except for access, should be imposed at the Straight Road/Queen’s Head Road junction and at the Gun Hill, Langham entry towards Boxted. The Parish Council, CBC and other bodies should work together to see if the Sports and Social Club could be redeveloped so as to incorporate an extended indoor and outdoor sports centre, the Pre-School and a licensed bar open and welcoming to all.

Encouragement should be given to anyone who wishes to open a village shop and/or post office, and also a pub, if they could be run as going concerns.

As set out in the Core Strategy, any new development within the village should contribute to the provision of community facilities, where a local need has been identified in the VDS/Parish Plan.



The rural tranquility of Boxted is much appreciated by villagers.

2. The Village

A BRIEF HISTORY

Boxted was and remains an agricultural area, and dates from pre-historic times. Over the millennia it has been settled by the Romans, Jutes, Saxons and Normans. Some evidence remains.

Agriculture continues to be an important part of Boxted life with fewer but larger farms. Arable and fruit farming predominates. Going back to the eleventh century, cultivation was centred to the northwest and north-east of the parish where the Boxted Hall and Rivers Hall estates came to exist. Clearing of woodland had begun by then and the area converted to heath by 1325 such that most of the area was available for farming. Mixed farming was carried out for the following few hundred years, much of it by tenanted farmers.

Meanwhile most of the southern area of the parish remained heath (Boxted Heath) but there was usage for pasturing sheep and cattle and for obtaining turf and clay for cottage maintenance.

A significant development that continues to influence the agricultural structure of the village was the purchase in 1906 by the Salvation Army of Priory Farm and 400 acres of land, much of it former heath-land, for a land settlement scheme. These holdings had between 4½ and 7 acres of land and each was provided with a new (usually semi-detached) cottage. From the 1950's onwards, holdings were largely sold to the sitting tenants.

Meanwhile the mixed farming continued elsewhere and from the mid 1920's onwards, market gardening and fruit farming became established. Poultry houses were established and one such business continues in Straight Road. Hill House Farm specialised in fruit but the extensive orchards in the parish were largely replaced as a consequence of the Common Agricultural Policy.

An orchard mainly of walnut continues to exist between Straight Road and Wet Lane and the packing sheds associated with the



Most of the arable land in Boxted is listed grade 2.

Hill Farm operation now form the basis for the Boxted industrial area next to Hill House.

Village facilities are limited today; although there were 7 pubs the last, The Wig and Fidgett, closed in 2007. There is no shop or post office, the last having closed at the end of the 20th century.

Some commercial ventures have developed, mainly along Straight Road and at Boxted Cross industrial area. Most of the village is now housing, with a significant proportion of older residents.

2.1 Geography

The Village of Boxted lies 5 miles north of Colchester. The Parish covers 3177 acres and is bounded on the north by the River Stour, and to the south by Salary Brook, a tributary of the River Colne. The west and east boundaries lie against the parishes of Great Horkesley and Langham respectively.The overall key landscape characteristics of the area are:

- Sloping side to the Stour valley
- Farmland plateau
- Small Farmsteads and Halls
- Minor roads and narrow lanes
- Sense of tranquility away from road network

There are also Local Wildlife Sites (formally SINCS) of which the relevant are Boxted Great wood and Black Brook, between Boxted and Langham.

The entire land area within the parish boundary to the north of Mill Road and Chapel Road was within the now superceded Countryside Conservation area, including the area north of Church Road/Cooks Hill which comes within an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Countryside around villages is now protected by policy ENV1. There are relatively small but



Fig 1. Boxted lies about five miles north of Colchester.

important areas set aside for nature conservation, and Cage Lane is a Protected Lane of historic and/or landscape value.

The area close to Boxted Church overlooks the Stour Valley, a designated Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. This is an area that should be preserved.

The A12 dual carriageway forms a barrier to future expansion from Colchester towards Boxted, and this document will make clear our agreement with the Local Development Framework (LDF) that this barrier to large scale development should be maintained.

No major roads pass through the village. However the narrow roads, particularly Langham Road, Langham Lane, Straight Road and Queen's Head Road have become commuter "rat runs", and these routes are being increasingly used by HGVs which are too big for these old and narrow lanes.



The village Primary School at Boxted Cross.

The LDF makes a comment in the section titled "Road Network Improvements" concerning " right vehicles for the right roads", which is not the case at present. Currently we have "the wrong vehicles for the wrong roads"

2.2 Population centres

Boxted has two recognised village centres, Church Street and The Cross, in effect a crossroads. At The Cross or close by there is the school, Village Hall and Sports and Social Club, the last two located on King George's playing field.



Boxted Cross.

The areas along Straight Road, Dedham Road and near The Cross have significant housing, but little space remains for future development apart from infilling, unless agricultural land is developed or brown field sites redeveloped.

The area known as Boxted Church Street has limited housing stock and little prospect for development, apart from the limited disused primary school site. The Grade 1 Norman Church will impose restrictions on any development.

The areas comprising Wet Lane, Green Lane and Workhouse Hill have had some infill development, but there is again little room for more housing.

The remainder of the housing stock is spread across the village, and again there seems little space for future development unless brown field sites are used, or planning restrictions relaxed.

It is important that any future and very limited development be allowed only within the existing village envelope.



Boxted Church Street.

2.3 Boxted Parish with Village envelopes.

Colchester Local Plan 2004

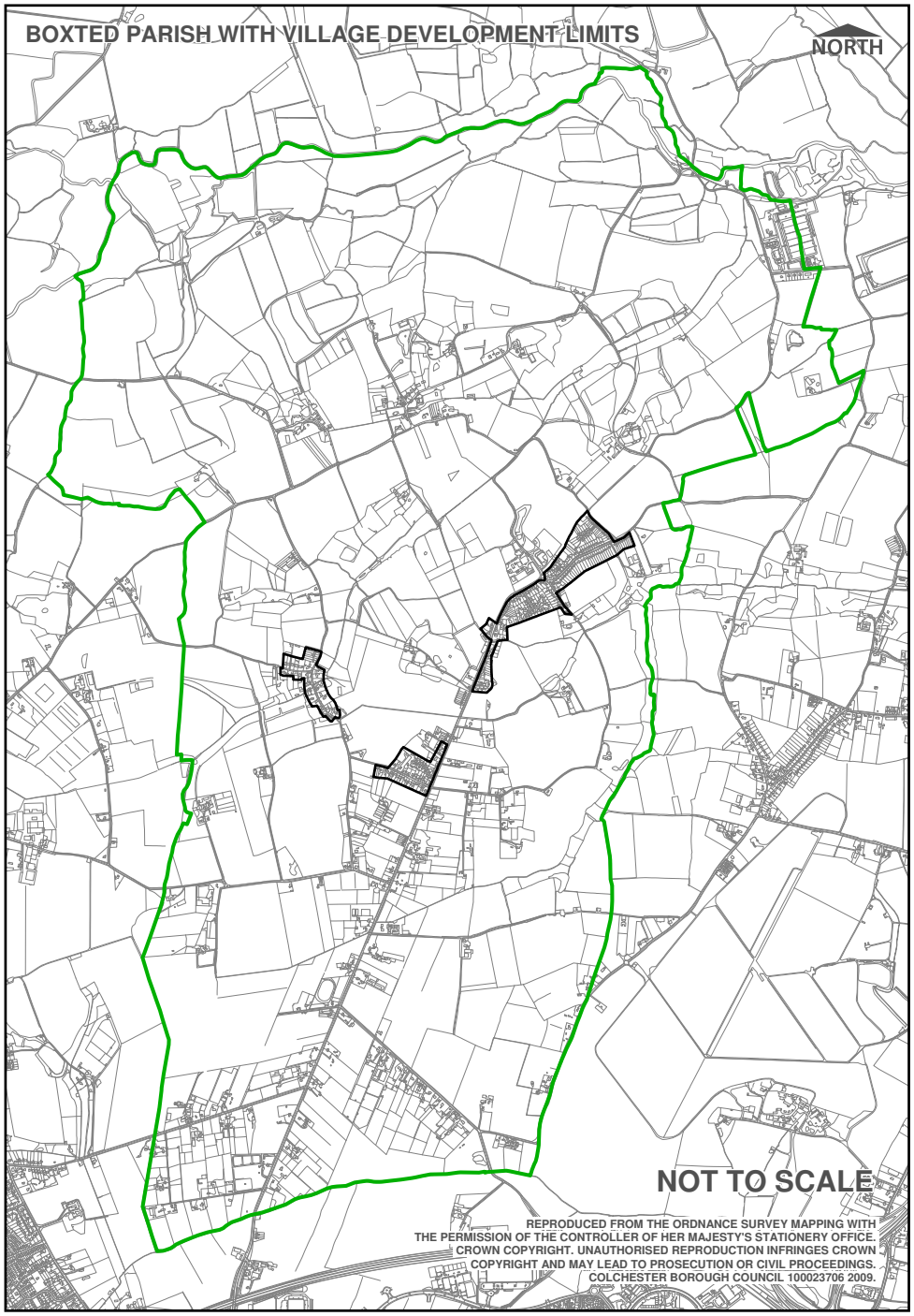


Fig. 2, Map of Village envelope

2.4 Colchester Planning Policy

Until recently the Adopted Review Colchester Local Plan 2004 set the Planning Policy framework to guide development across the Borough. Policies in the Adopted Local Plan affecting Boxted Parish were displayed to parish residents in the village hall at the 2007 summer fete and for several weeks after. Since 2004 following a national review of planning and the introduction of new legislation Colchester Borough Council started work on the development of a new Local Development Framework. The Core Strategy has been published following 3 stages of public consultation and was subject to an Examination in Public in 2008. It was adopted in December 2008 and sets the strategic planning framework for the Borough up to 2021. The Core Strategy contains a number of policies that relate particularly to rural communities and villages such as Boxted. In addition, a number of Adopted Local Plan policies have been saved and together these will be used in conjunction with new Core Strategy policies to determine planning applications in the future.

In outline the parish is split into three strictly defined envelopes (figure 2);

1) Properties having access from Workhouse Hill, Wet Lane and part of Green Lane;

2) Properties to the north and south of Boxted Cross with access from Straight Road and Dedham Road (two non-contiguous areas);

3) Properties surrounding St Peter's Church within the "Boxted Conservation Area".

The majority of properties with access from Straight Road south of Mill road/Chapel Road, plus those in Old House Lane, Queen's Head Road and Horkesley Road falls within the area currently classed as the Straight Road 'Special Policy Area.' The Hill Farm Business site also has a separate Rural Business Site Zoning. As discussed in section 1.4 these designations will be superceded by adopted Core Strategy policies and new Development Policies once these are also adopted.

Extracts from the above policies are set out in Appendix 1.

Colchester Borough Council is producing their new Local Development Policy. The Core Strategy has already been adopted following extensive public consultation and independent scrutiny at an Examination in Public in 2008. The LDF will plan, manage and monitor change future growth in the Borough up to 2021 (2023 for housing). The Core Strategy is available on the Council's website at www.colchester.goc.uk and contains proposals relating particularly to rural communities which include villages in the Borough like Boxted.

The Core Strategy document does contain specific references to development within the villages in policy ENV2 – Rural Communities as follows:

"The Borough Council will enhance the vitality of rural communities by supporting appropriate development of infill sites and previously developed land (PDL) within the settlement development boundaries of villages. The design and construction of new village development must be high quality in all respects, including design, sustainability and compatibility with the distinctive character of the locality. Development should also contribute to the local community through the provision of relevant community needs such as affordable housing, open space, local employment, and community facilities. Outside village boundaries, the Council will favourably consider small-scale rural business schemes that are appropriate to local employment needs, minimise negative environmental impacts, and harmonise with the local character and surrounding natural environment. Development outside but contiguous to village envelope boundaries may be supported where it constitutes an exception to meet identified local affordable housing needs. Towns and villages are encouraged to plan for the specific needs of their communities by developing Parish Plans and Village Design Statements for adoption as guidance."

Under the "Management Growth Pressures" section, the Core Strategy on Page 23 identifies the need to preserve countryside areas with strategic green gaps between settlements. Under "Improving Accessibility" it recognises the shortage of local shops etc. and the need for improved access via transport services.



Single track roads abound in Boxted

2.5 Building Styles and Designs

The village has no common architectural style or theme and has a wide variety of styles and designs of house building. These reflect the historical span of construction from Songers which originally dates from 1280 to current builds. Additionally there is considerable variety of size extending from the 3 storey flats as at White Arch Place to large manor houses such as Boxted Hall and Rivers Hall. Most housing is privately owned although there is social housing such as that in Straight Road and a few remaining properties in council ownership.

Most housing whether new or historic is of two storeys although



Songers Cottage (1280): the oldest timber-framed building in Essex.

in particular there are bungalows in Dedham Road (of council origin) and in Hobbs Drive. The character of the village is enhanced by a series of thatched cottages dotted around the village such as Songers in Cage Lane, also Medlars and Holly Cottage in Straight Road, a number of thatched cottages in Ellis Road and others along Church Street.

A number of historic houses such as Aubrey's Cottages are centred on the church in Church Street. The Wheelwright's House and the old bakery exist close to Boxted Cross and represent the second original focal area of the village. There are



The four cottages of Aubrey's are formed from 15th Century houses.

other interesting old properties scattered around the village such as Harbutts and Wenlocks in Cage Lane dating from Tudor times, Thatchers and Went (now the Thatched Cottage) in Mill Road, and Oak Cottage in Chapel Road. There are a number of large distinctive properties within the village boundary such as Cheshunts at the end of Church Street, Hill House on Carter's Hill, Boxted House and Pond House, all with their distinctive styles.

What was originally council housing was built post war near Boxted Cross and private housing was built such as in Hobbs Drive and East Side. These are typical urban-type twentieth century housing. More recently, building has been mainly in-fill such as on the car-park area of Boxted Cross Inn (now a private house) and along Straight Road.



Parsonage Farm on Carters Hill

2.6 Roads and ancillary furniture

The road network around and through Boxted is formed by the old country lanes which have changed little since being established for farm traffic.

The heavily used roads are Straight Road, Langham Road, Langham Lane and Queen's Head Road which form the access routes to Colchester, Dedham and to the A12 and A134 roads. As private car usage is so prevalent, due in part to the restricted bus service (see later), road usage is heavy at rush hour times. The roads are increasingly used as commuter rat runs to Severalls Business Park and to the Hospital.

Of further concern is the increasing use of the village's unsuitable roads by HGVs taking short cuts to and from the A12 to the A134. The re- development of the Hill Farm industrial area at The Cross will lead to further problems with access to the site via a difficult junction. The proximity of the primary school which at the start and finish of the school day has its own traffic and parking problems will be compounded by HGVs accessing the Hill Farm industrial site. Indeed the illuminated bollards in the middle of Carter's Hill at the junction with Straight Road have been regularly knocked over in recent months.



Boxted Straight Road connects Boxted Cross to Myland, Colchester.

The use of satellite navigation systems is routing HGVs down unsuitable lanes, some of which are very narrow or dead ends. This is causing damage to road surfaces and verges.

It will be interesting to see the effect on local roads of the new football stadium. Some parking restrictions are imposed on match days, but there is no doubt that traffic will increase on the Northern Approach Road and through Boxted until the proposed A 12 junction opens in perhaps 3 years time.

Speed limits, particularly on Straight Road are frequently ignored despite the 30 mph signage. However traffic calming by means of speed humps and significant extra signage is not considered suitable and would be detrimental to the appearance of the village. Of more benefit to the village, both in terms of form and function would be a speed operated warning sign at the entrance to the village on Straight Road, and a more frequent police presence.

Other signage around the village is considered adequate, and additional signage would be considered inappropriate and detract from a rural environment. What would be considered of great benefit are restrictions on vehicles over 7.5 tonnes except for access, and the appropriate signage on access routes.

There is little street lighting in the village, but there is little appetite from the residents for any increase in street lighting. Any suggestion of this nature is likely to be resisted by residents.

Road maintenance could be improved, as potholes and other damage wait for some considerable time after identification until repair.

2.7 Transportation

The bus service serving the village is run by Network Colchester and Hedingham Omnibuses who between them provide 4 weekday services into Colchester, and 3 return services, the last being at 1740. On Saturday there is a service at 1015 and a return at 1135. On Sundays and every evening there are no services. Residents must use cars or taxis.

It is worth noting that few buses have facilities for the disabled or for mothers with prams, nor are there raised kerbs to allow for easier access by the disabled. The bus service does however run to Colchester General Hospital and via Mill Road surgery in Mile End.

It is understood that discussions have taken place within a bus users' forum about how to increase the service frequency, but it is difficult to justify on the grounds of passenger numbers. However, this report considers that it would be worthwhile exploring some increase in frequency by the increased use of ECC subsidy, or re-routing existing services from Dedham or Nayland through Boxted.

So far as private car travel is concerned, it is difficult to see any voluntary reduction in car usage for access to the Town, the train station and for general travel unless public transport is improved. With so much private car usage, it is important that adequate off road car parking facilities are provided in any new housing development.

2.8 Footpath protection

The footpath system within the Parish is adequate, well used by visitors and local people and well maintained on the whole by landowners. Hedge and undergrowth trimming, the marking of paths and signage maintenance are up kept in the main. Local landowners should be encouraged to continue this practise publicising their much needed co-operation in the husbandry of our rural areas for use by the public. The renowned Essex Way passes through the Boxted Church area and skirts around the Cooks Hill and Rivers Hall areas on its way to Dedham and beyond. The tracery of footpaths takes in varied landscapes including fine rural views, rolling countryside, orchard walks and woodlands. Many paths are within the Dedham Vale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and offer both the occasional and serious walker a variety of peaceful walks, many unspoilt by traffic and the noise of suburbia. Any further expansion within the parish should take into account the importance of quiet areas and disruption to the public footpath system should be strongly discouraged.



The Essex Way footpath across Boxted Hall Farm.

The footpaths within the Parish should be promoted as a source of exercise and enjoyment for all who wish to use them. We are lucky to possess within our parish what is becoming a scarcer amenity as communities expand.

Whilst the network of footpaths is thriving and varied there is cause for concern regarding the lack of bridleways. There is a substantial and growing population of private horse owners and livery businesses within the parish. This important and necessary part of the rural community is served by few bridleways within the parish. In effect this means that a large amount of horse movements are carried out on the public highway.

Whilst the conduct of both riders and motorists is generally of a high standard the potential for accidents is always present. Any future development within the parish should include accommodation for equestrian rights of way wherever possible as an increase in local traffic volume by its very nature increases the risk of serious harm to horse, rider and drivers.

2.9 Wild life preservation

The Essex/Suffolk borders are "blessed" with a variety of habitats supporting a varied population of wildlife from reptiles and amphibians to large mammals.

Hares abound in the areas of arable agriculture and muntjac and



Arable agriculture and woodland fringes in Boxted.

roe deer are frequently spotted in the woodland fringes.

Many species of woodland and farmland birds are common throughout the parish from the yellowhammer and skylark to sparrowhawks and buzzards. The many lakes and streams support a healthy mix of waterfowl and aquatic life from frogs and toads to grebes and herons. The increasingly rare and threatened water vole is to be found within the parish.

There are numerous waters that can be fished, both coarse and fly. There are also well established game shoots operating such as that run by the Rivers Hall estate.
These country sports organisations in combination with the farming and equestrian community and also institutions such as the Dedham Vale Conservation Society maintain a balanced and thriving eco system that is imperative to the well being of the natural wildlife found within Boxted. Any potential development should be in tune with current eco systems and not under any circumstances be permitted to cause any damage or degeneration to our valuable natural resources.

2.10 Business and Industry

Industry in Boxted is focussed along Straight Road where small concerns have a variety of yards and sites. These have long standing temporary planning permissions, but their appearance leaves much to be desired, particularly those with scrap cars, tyres and so forth.

At the Cross, the old produce packing sheds which became a small business centre with a variety of trades has closed for redevelopment as a modern small industrial centre. This site is known as Hill Farm Rural Business site. Most of the old sheds have been demolished, and at the time of writing, there is no news of the type of tenant for the future.

The new units were granted planning permission under planning policy EMP5, part of which says that "the uses and/or development shall be compatible with the character and scale of any nearby settlement and the surrounding rural areas". We have reservations about the height and scale of the permitted new buildings, and with traffic using the site.

The old units caused problems with access for HGVs as the estate entrance is opposite the primary school, and there are additional access problems and accident hazards at the junction with Straight Road/ Dedham Road.

Small industrial businesses such as skip hire and soil supply are located off Straight Road, and while these have temporary planning consents, the location is unsuitable for what in the main are potentially polluting operations in a rural area. In

addition, following the closure of the old units at Hill Farm, more small businesses have relocated to this site.
Indeed, a severe fire occurred in the summer of 2008 in old tyres and LPG cylinders left on land behind the Chapel. It is to the detriment of the village environment if waste materials and scrap vehicles are left to accumulate without appropriate controls being enforced on the operators of the site or the land owners.

Policy EMP6 currently relates to the Straight Road Special Policy Area. This imposes conditions on renewal of temporary permissions and for new permissions - see Appendix for more detail. The villagers wish to see policy EMP6 (while still current) and any new replacement Development Policies covering Rural Employment once adopted, strictly enforced, unless there are significant benefits to the village.

There are agricultural businesses off Straight Road, where there is a chicken rearing shed, and near the A134 a vegetable packing operation. Small garden centre type businesses are located along Straight Road and Horkesley Road.

It is clear that the centre of industry for North Colchester is on Severalls Park and Axial Way where new development of industrial sheds is taking place. Whilst this report accepts that there is a need for local employment, and it is not possible nor sensible to revoke planning permissions for existing businesses. Any further industrial development in Boxted should be avoided or be in accordance with Core Strategy Policy CE3 and future employment policies that are relevant to rural areas.

Any permitted redevelopment must be carefully designed so as to fit the scale of the village and should not form an overbearing landmark. Existing businesses should be encouraged, or enforcement action should be taken, to ensure that their activities are not in breach of Planning, Health and Safety and Environmental Regulations.

2.11 Agriculture and Horticulture

Today almost all the agricultural land in the Boxted parish is listed in general as grade 2. There is some grade 1 land in the south-west area of the parish and there is a small amount of grade 3 on the north-east side but the pockets are not easily identifiable. Currently a significant proportion of the agricultural land continues to be planted in rotation. Sugar beet is grown extensively and is cycled in particular with wheat or barley. Potatoes, onions and certain other crops such as kale are also grown. Sheep are fattened seasonally and Pond House Farm has introduced alpaca. There has been a noticeable increase recently in the fencing in of paddocks for horses. A small amount of horticulture remains in the Straight Road area, mostly under glass, and there is a certain amount of fruit such as strawberries and raspberries grown in the same general area.



The Walnut orchard planted in the 1920's is still harvested annually.

2.12 Community Facilities

Boxted has few facilities and is reliant on Colchester Town, Mile End, Highwoods and neighbouring villages for shopping, medical facilities and so forth. The nearest shop is the community run shop in Langham, at least 2 km walk.

In Boxted there is no pub, no shop and an infrequent bus service to Colchester.

The only village facilities are the church and the chapel; the Village Hall, the Sports and Social Club and the Pre school

which are located on King George's playing field; the Royal British Legion social club; and the primary school at the Cross.

The Village Hall is a facility available to all residents and others for hire for a variety of functions and events. The Hall was upgraded in 2007/8 with help from a grant from the Parish Council and Cory Trust. It is used in the main by older residents who attend a number of clubs.



The Village Hall at Boxted Cross by the playing field.

There are further clubs available in Langham, but these are a car ride distant. It is regrettable that there are no youth or children's clubs in Boxted.
The two churches, St Peter's at Boxted Church Street, and Boxted Methodist Chapel in Chapel Road provide religious services and are well attended. It is the intention that St Peter's with St Mary's Langham will provide a youth worker in 2009. The Church and the Chapel play an important part in village life.

The British Legion occupies an old Nissen hut on Straight Road and membership is available to all. Its future may be in some doubt when the lease expires in 2013

The Pre school acts as a feeder to the Primary school and is located in old worn out huts. Retention of the pre school is considered essential to village development, as is the primary school, so as to encourage young families to come to and live in Boxted.

The Parish Council plays an active part in fostering, so far as it can, community life. It maintains the playing field and is looking to replace the deteriorating Pre school building.

It is also considering the future of the rather tired Sports and Social Club. The aim is to provide a wider range of interests, rather than what is perceived to be a "boys sports club". It would be of great benefit to the village if any redevelopment was to cater for a variety of indoor and outdoor sports and activities, the Pre-school, a youth club (if volunteer helpers could be found) and a more congenial licensed bar. This scheme would broaden the interest and use of the building.

There should be an integrated development to co-ordinate the play school group, pre school and the primary school, perhaps on one site if the Sports and Social Club redevelopment does not proceed on a sufficient scale. The primary school has a new building on a site with room for expansion.

The mobile library calls once every two weeks and is a worthwhile facility, particularly for older residents who find it difficult travelling to the main library in the Town centre.



The Methodist Chapel in Chapel Road.

Sadly there are no other community facilities. There are no medical or dental practises. Residents must travel to Mile End, Dedham or Nayland to see a doctor, so retention and if possible, improvement of the bus service should be seen as a priority for older residents.

A village shop and a pub would add significantly to village life, but they would have to be run on a going concern basis.



A view of the countryside near Cheshunts.

3. Future Development

3.1 Future Housing Development

Policy H4 in the Core Strategy states that:

"THE BOROUGH COUNCIL is committed to improving housing affordability in Colchester. The Council will be seeking to secure 35% of new dwellings (including conversions) to be provided as affordable housing (normally on site), as follows:

- In Colchester Town and Stanway, Tiptree, Wivenhoe and West Mersea, affordable housing will be required on housing developments for 10 or more dwellings.
- In the other villages, affordable housing will be required on housing developments for 3 or more dwellings.
- An equivalent financial contribution will also be sought for developments below these thresholds.

In exceptional circumstances, where high developments costs undermine the viability of housing delivery on brownfield sites, developers will be expected to demonstrate an alternative affordable housing provision.

Affordable housing development in the villages of rural Colchester Borough will be supported on rural exception sites contiguous with the existing village envelopes, provided a local need is demonstrated by the Parish Council on behalf of their residents.

The Council will require developments to integrate affordable housing and market, with a consistent standard of quality design and public spaces, to create mixed and sustainable communities."

Nevertheless, the Colchester Core Strategy document suggests that villages are not likely to see significant housing development up to 2023. Although 705 homes are likely to be developed in rural communities throughout the Borough, 650 had been completed or approved by 2006 including 150 in the neighbouring village of Great Horkesley. This compares with a projection of 19,000 homes to be built in Colchester between 2001 and 2023. It perhaps should be noted that between 2000 and 2006, 31% of dwellings were bungalows or maisonettes and that permissions and projections are based on the continued demand for high density urban developments. There is little or no support for high density development in Boxted.

The residents of Boxted are anxious that any future housing is in keeping with the surrounding properties, in general reflecting the immediate neighbourhood. Tiled or slate roofs are strongly preferred and there is enthusiasm to preserve the thatched roofing of those thatched cottages in existence. Brick walls are generally preferred, also rendered walls; timber-clad walls are not popular among residents. Nevertheless, an overall mix of styles is acceptable. Residents are particularly reluctant to see any changes or new build in the Conservation Area surrounding the church. Here the old school site is for sale and is next to the Grade 1 listed church. Access to the site is via a narrow lane which runs between the church yard and the grave yard. The site is in the AONB, and close to the Essex Way. The school car park is particularly useful for church services, weddings, funerals etc, as without it, there would be severe parking problems on surrounding roads.

Change of usage is not popular generally anywhere in the village, and particularly any changes from domestic to commercial use should be refused.

The residents wish the building of apartments and flats to be avoided or restricted. There is overwhelming support for any new housing to be detached or semi-detached. Although there is good support for affordable housing, both social housing and a retirement village are not considered desirable.

It is preferred that new housing should be on brown-field sites

and should be within the village envelope. There is least opposition to housing along Straight road.

Guidance

The relevant policies in the Adopted Review Local Plan and the Core Strategy should not be relaxed.

The A12 should be regarded as the barrier to development from Colchester, and only exceptional infill be allowed, as outlined in the CS.

All new build should be in keeping with the immediate neighbourhood and should respect the existing settlement pattern and densities.

Any new build should be confined to the village envelope, not within the conservation area surrounding the church, but possibly along Straight Road.

Housing should be detached or semi-detached and should not exceed 2 storeys. A mix of bungalows, semi-detached and detached housing is preferred. New build housing should be in keeping with surroundings and use traditional high quality materials. Off street parking should be provided

Any development of the old school site adjacent to Boxted Church must be in keeping with the surroundings, be low density, not overlook or detract from the church and the area used for car parking for church users should be retained.

Any affordable housing should be limited in numbers and developed in keeping with surroundings.

High density housing should be avoided.

3.2 Roads, signage and footpaths

Residents have considerable concerns about village roads, particularly traffic densities and speeding. Villagers do not wish to see a plethora of new signs, extra lighting or ostentatious traffic calming measures.

They are appreciative of the new pavement which goes from East Side to the old Wig and Fidgett, but there still remain long stretches of Straight Road which are hazardous to pedestrians. There is a concern regarding the mix of horse and rider with traffic along Straight Road and Langham Road, which are used by rapidly moving traffic. There are few if any bridle ways, and it would provide a safer and more enjoyable route if more bridle ways were available.

Guidance

Traffic calming should be improved along Straight Road and at the entrance to the village on Dedham Road by means of more prominent Slow Down signs, and a speed operated flashing sign at the Mill Road entry on Straight Road.

A 7.5 tonne weight limit, except for access, should be imposed at the Straight Road/Queen's Head Road junction and at the Gun Hill, Langham entry towards Boxted.

A footpath/ pavement should be provided from the Wig and Fidgett to the Mill Road/Chapel Road junction.

All footpaths should be maintained for country walkers. Land owners should continue to be encouraged to keep verges and overhanging vegetation cut back to maintain easy access.

Land owners should be encouraged to provide bridle ways for horse and rider use.

3.3 Business and Industry

It is clear from the questionnaire that there is considerable opposition to expansion of industry within Boxted and opposition to change of use of agricultural land. With the new industrial park at Axial Way there seems a better alternative to any further industrial development in Boxted.

Turning now to existing businesses along Straight Road, some of these present a poor picture with the storage of scrap tyres and cars, and some are waste handling operations.

Whilst it is accepted that the existing planning permissions cannot be withdrawn, we do agree with the Borough policies relating to Hill Farm and the Straight Road Special Policy area. Any future Employment Development Policies should provide a similar level of protection against inappropriate industrial expansion in and around Boxted.

GUIDANCE

Existing planning policies are fully supported by villagers, and should be maintained and enforced to protect village life. Retrospective planning permission should not be granted. In general terms, any new businesses should be directed to the designated employment zone on the Straight Road.

No expansion of existing businesses should be permitted unless there is a case for increased employment for villagers, some other community benefit is provided to the village and the business carries out an environmental impact assessment, which would be available to the public.

The Borough should ensure that Planning, Health and Safety and Environmental controls are enforced by them or other Agencies to avoid any similar repeat of the fire fueled by dumped tyres in Chapel Road.

/...

/...

Hill Farm industrial site should be monitored to ensure that all asbestos materials are safely removed in accordance with the Asbestos Regulations. Traffic flows should be monitored to ensure that the safety of school children, pedestrians etc is not endangered by traffic entering and leaving the site. No hazardous trades such as waste handling should be allowed on the site.

Screening of empoyment sites using mature trees and hedges should be a condition of any planning approval so as to retain the rural character of Boxted.

3.4 Transportation

A key element of villagers' concerns is the limited bus service in terms of frequency.

In view of what is perceived by villagers as a lack of Council focus on Boxted, it is considered that a more frequent bus service could only be achieved by increased Council subsidy, or by rerouting existing services.

GUIDANCE

An increase in bus frequency should be explored either by re-routing and extending existing services, or by subsidy from the Borough.

Any new development must be accessible by public transport.

It is also important that any new development be accessible by public transport in order to reduce car usage.

3.5 Agriculture and Horticulture

As has been mentioned in section 1.3, areas of Boxted parish have been very specifically delineated and these already considerably define the nature of the countryside area. Perhaps most notable is that a large area of Boxted, an area to the north, falls within the Dedham Vale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. As indicated in section 1.3, all of Boxted Church Street lies within the area, as also does the area of Boxted Hall farm lying north of Church Road. The southern edge is defined by Cook's Hill and a section of Dedham Road, and then includes all the area of the parish going north to the Stour.

Any development in this area which is likely to have an adverse impact will be subject to special scrutiny by CBC. Development thought to be adverse will be acceptable only where an overriding national need can be demonstrated and there are no acceptable alternative sites.

An area to the south, covering most of the parish, borders the Dedham Vale area. CBC will give special protection from any development likely to be prejudicial to its natural, social or cultural resources.

There is also a Boxted Straight Road Special Policy area designated by the council in terms of employment conditions. This will not allow new permissions but renewal of temporary permissions will usually be allowed. This should preserve the special nature of the area already indicated in its history. In contrast, the original area of buildings once associated with fruit packing at Hill Farm is now designated as an employment zone outside any main urban area, and small scale development may be permitted in accordance with the scale and character of the local area.

There are a number of specified Local Wildlife Sites in the parish. These are usually wooded and are rather scattered.

In general, it is Council policy not to permit loss of the best and most versatile land, defined as grades 1, 2 3a, unless there is an overriding need for development and lower grade land is not available. This covers the remaining areas of the parish.

Villagers strongly believe that protecting the surrounding countryside and landscape from inappropriate development is vital to ensure that the rural character of Boxted is protected, and its bio diversity is not affected.

GUIDELINE

From the responses of the questionnaire it is clear that the agricultural surroundings of the village are appreciated and their general nature should be preserved particularly in accordance with CS Policy ENV1.

3.6 Village Services

Boxted has few services, and some that exist are under pressure, such as the Sports and Social Club, Pre-School and the British Legion. There is no pub, and few places where the villagers can meet.

The Pre-School building and the Sports and Social Club are deteriorating, and the future of the British Legion is in some doubt when its lease expires. It is a worry that some of the few remaining community facilities that Boxted possesses are under some threat.

It would be of considerable benefit to the community if a social centre, attractive to more residents, could be established. Colchester Borough Council should offer all support to Boxted Parish Council.

Guidance

The Parish Council, CBC and other bodies should work together to see if the Sports and Social Club could be redeveloped so as to incorporate an extended indoor and outdoor sports centre, the Pre-School and a licensed bar open and welcoming to all.

Encouragement should be given to anyone who wishes to open a village shop and/or post office, and also a pub, if they could be run as going concerns.

As set out in the Core Strategy Policies SD2 and SD3, any new development within the village should be required to make a significant contribution to support either the provision of new facilities, or the upgrade of existing facilities to meet local needs.



Villagers strongly believe it is "...vital to ensure the rural character of Boxted is protected"

Extracts from Policies and proposals within the Adopted Review Colchester Borough Local Plan 2004.

Dedham Vale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (CO2)
Development in or likely to have an adverse impact on the Dedham Vale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty will be subject to special scrutiny. Where such development could have an adverse impact, directly or indirectly, on the area, it will be acceptable only where an overriding national need for the development in that particular location can be demonstrated and there is a lack of acceptable alternative sites.

Where development proceeds because of an overriding national requirement, removal and restoration of the site will be required in the event of redundancy at a later date.

Habitats for CO5
Development that would adversely affect wildlife habitats of international or national importance will not be permitted unless the reasons for the development clearly outweigh the nature conservation value of the site itself and the international or national policy to safeguard the network of such sites.

Development and land use changes likely to have an adverse effect upon the following sites listed below will not be approved unless it can be clearly demonstrated that there are reasons for the proposal which outweigh the need to safeguard the substantive nature conservation interest in the site. Where development is permitted and is likely to cause damage, such damage will be kept to a minimum. Where this is not possible, appropriate mitigating measures will be sought before planning permission is granted. The creation of new habitats will be required as early as possible in the development process, and in some cases this may be before development commences. Such measures will include the creation of habitats of equal quality elsewhere within the site or the Borough as a whole. Where these measures are not possible, planning permission will be refused.

Local Nature Reserves or potential Local Nature Reserves;
Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation;
Regionally Important Geological/Geomorphological Sites;

Existing woodlands and hedgerows, particularly those in the Inventory of Ancient Woodlands;

Habitats identified as declining in the Essex Biodiversity Action Plan;

Important hedgerows;

Wetlands, water meadows and ponds;

Unimproved grasslands.

Cage Lane Protection

(CO7) Protected Lanes of historic and/or landscape value shown on the Proposals Map will be protected from development that would adversely affect their physical appearance or would give rise to a material increase in the amount of traffic using them.

Isolated Industrial Complexes (Hill Farm Rural Business Site)

(EMP5) Development on Existing Free-standing Rural Business Sites. Any expansion and consolidation of appropriate existing authorised uses, and any new uses as may be approved on the Rural Business Sites listed below, will:

(a) only be within the areas defined on the inset maps:

(i) Hill Farm, Boxted;

(b) The use(s) and/or development shall be compatible with the character and scale of any nearby settlement and the surrounding rural areas.

Boxted Straight Road – Special Policy Area

(EMP6) Within the area around Boxted Straight Road, as defined on the Proposals Map, the following principles will apply:

(a) Renewal of temporary permission will be granted subject to: any consent being made personal to the applicant;

there being no current or likely future planning problems; environmental benefits being secured.

(b) Temporary permissions will not be renewed where unacceptable problems exist and where these cannot be overcome by condition and/or planning agreements;

(c) No further permission on new sites or the expansion/consolidation on existing ones will be granted.

Conservation Area (Boxted)

(UEA1) Within Conservation Areas, all those buildings, open spaces, trees, views and other aspects of the environment which go to make up the character or appearance of such places will be protected.

Development considered detrimental to the setting of Conservation Areas will be refused.

Acknowledgements

We wish to thank Boxted Parish Council and RCCE for their financial help and advice, and Colchester Borough Council for reviewing the draft and accepting the findings for incorporation in the planning process.

We also thank the villagers who have taken the time to participate one way or another in this Plan, without them, there would be no Plan.

Our thanks go to Hugh Large who set and printed the document.

Finally, thanks go to [redacted], Chairman, [redacted], Treasurer and [redacted], Secretary, and the other Plan members who stayed to the end.

Bibliography

References:
Colchester Borough Council, Core Strategy 2008.
Adopted Review Colchester Borough Local Plan, March 2004
http://www.colchester/ www.Colchester gov.uk Core Strategy v2: 12/11/07.

Boxted – Portrait of an English Village, Douglas Carter, 2006.

Table 1 – Local Plan and Core Strategy policies relevant to Boxted's Village Design Statement

Issue:	*Local Plan policies:*	*Core Strategy policies:*
Overall Development Control	DC1 Overall Development Control Policy	SD1 Sustainable Development Locations
Built Conservation Areas	UEA1 Character of Conservation Areas UEA11 Design UEA12 Design Character	UR2 Built Design & Character
Countryside/Environment (including landscape, settlement pattern as well as biodiversity, archaeology, ?)	C01 Rural Resources CO5 Nature Conservation (Habitats) CO7 Protected Lanes	Superseded by policy ENV1 (Environment) ENV1 ENV1
Dedham Vale AONB	CO2 Dedham Vale AONB	ENV1
Affordable Housing	H5 Affordable Housing - Rural Exceptions	H4 Affordable Housing
Rural Communities	CF1 Infrastructure and Community Facilities Provision CF4 Retention of key Community Facilities	Superseded by SD2 (Delivering Facilities and Infrastructure) SD3 Community Facilities
Rural Employment	CO10 Agricultural Diversification EMP4 Employment Uses in the Countryside EMP6 Boxted Straight Road EMP7 Development of Existing employment sites in the c/side	CE1 Centres & Employment Classification and Hierarchy CE3 Employment Zones
Transport	T5 Public Transport T7 Traffic Management Schemes	TA1 Accessibility & Changing Travel Behaviour
Parking	Policy T10 obsolete now and covered by T9 Parking outside Colchester	TA5 Parking

Appendix B.

Saved Local Plan Policies to be superceded by the Development Policies DPD

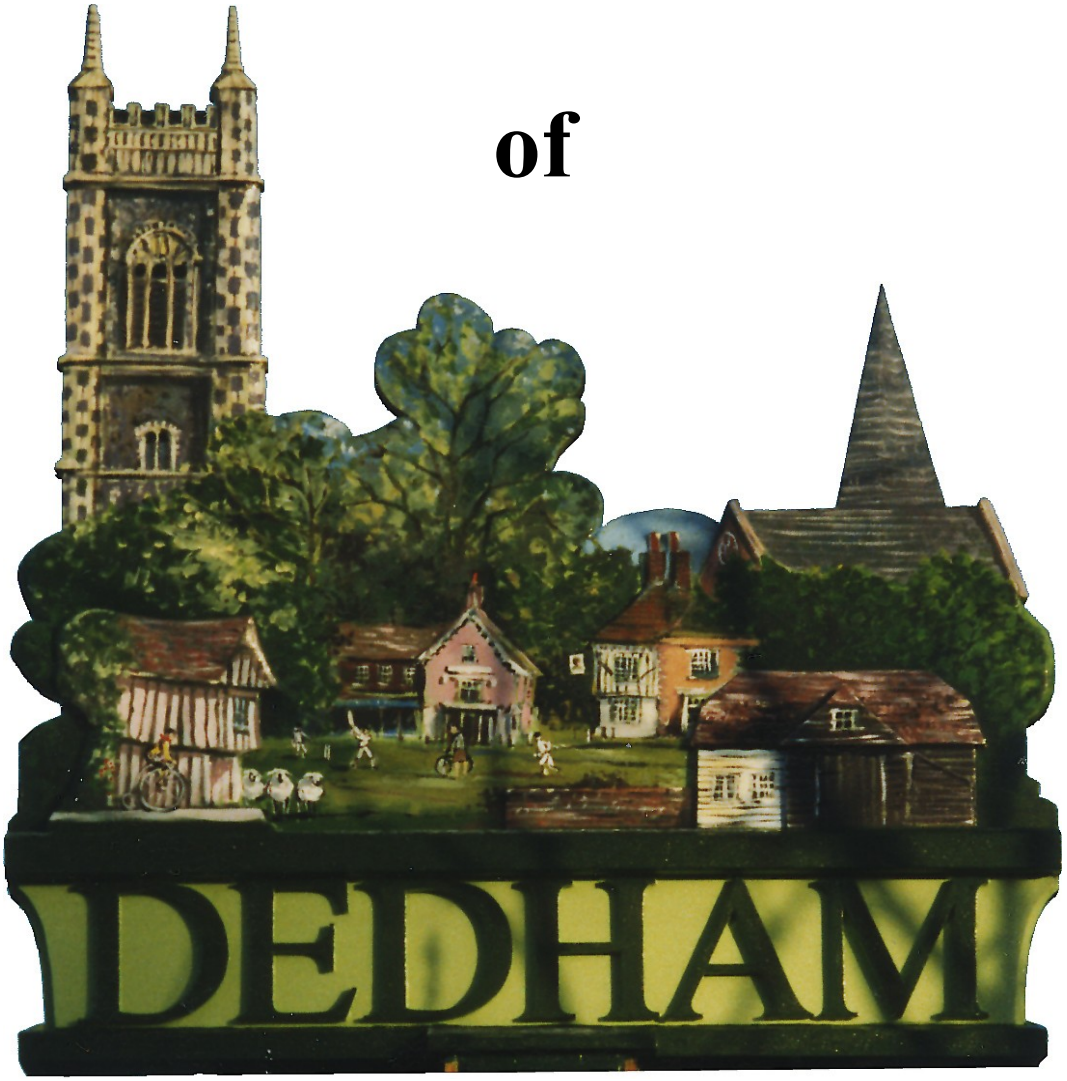
Saved Local Plan Policy	Development Policy
CO7 Protected Lanes	Superseded by DP21 (Nature Conservation and Protected Lanes).
UEA1 Conservation Areas	Superseded by DP14 (Historic Environment).
CO2 Dedham Vale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty	Superseded by DP22 (Dedham Vale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty).
CO3 Countryside Conservation Areas	The evidence base has been updated by a Landscape Character Assessment which is referred to in Core Strategy Policy ENV1. Policy CO1 is superseded by this updated evidence base, DP21 (Nature Conservation and Protected Lanes) and DP14 (Historic Environment Assets).
CO5 Nature Conservation (Habitats)	Superseded by DP21 (Nature Conservation and Protected Lanes).
CO7 Protected Lanes	Superseded by DP21 (Nature Conservation and Protected Lanes).
EMP5 Rural Business Sites	Superseded by DP5 (Appropriate Employment Uses and Protection of Employment Land and Existing Businesses.
EMP6 Boxted Straight Road	Superseded by DP5 (Appropriate Employment Uses and Protection of Employment Land and Existing Businesses).

** Development Policies will not supercede the saved Local Plan policies until they can be formally adopted following an EIP in 2010*

Annex I

The Parish

of



VILLAGE DESIGN STATEMENT

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INTRODUCTION

The purpose of the Village Design Statement
This Village Design Statement is a record of how the inhabitants of the Parish of Dedham saw their village in 2006, with some background on how it came to be the way it is. It also expresses the views of the community on the sort of changes it would accept, or indeed welcome, whilst spelling out the areas where changes would not be wanted. The aim is not to fossilise the village but to give guidance on how to control and channel change so as to benefit the community in the future.

Dedham is a parish of some 1,850 souls living in some 850 dwellings of which 106 are listed buildings. The village comprises two Conservation Areas, Dedham and Stratford St Mary (Dedham), the old Council Estate, the hamlets of Lamb Corner, Dedham Heath and Bargate Lane/ Long Road East surrounded by rural **A**reas of **O**utstanding **N**atural **B**eauty (**AONB**).

The way the Village Design Statement was developed
A small Steering Group, consisting of the Officers of the Dedham Village Design Statement Association, Chairman, Secretary/Diary Keeper and Treasurer, together with the Village Liaison member, the Parish Council Liaison member and two events organisers, led the consultative process which started with an afternoon Workshop at the village school and a Photographic Workshop Day, both organised and led by the Rural Community Council of Essex. These enjoyable workshops were followed by an exhibition of the school children's work and comments together with the photographs taken, the comments made and the conclusions of the participants of the Photographic Day. This was followed two months later by an exhibition of the areas to be covered in the statement and some of the materials available to assist those writing the reports.

A design statement team was then formed from those interested in writing the various reports needed to produce the statement, meetings were arranged with various interested parties and short questionnaires were designed to find the opinions of various groups in the village.

All this information was used to write a first draft statement which was presented to the village for comment. A questionnaire was then prepared and delivered to every home in the village. The feedback was incorporated into the draft which was then formally presented to the Parish Council for comment.

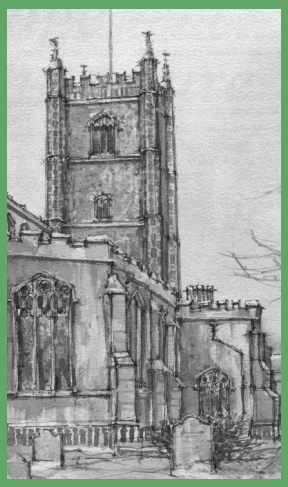
Again the feedback was incorporated into the Design Statement and the document was prepared for consultations with the Colchester Borough Council. The 'final' draft was presented to the village at a special exhibition after which the document was updated in line with the comments received. The final Village Design Statement was agreed with the Parish and Borough Councils.

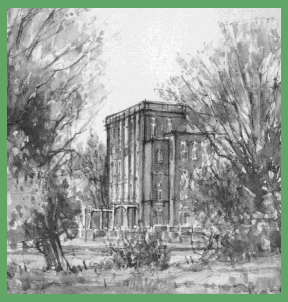
The Topics Covered
The Village Design Statement sets out views on the appearance of the village and surrounding countryside, new housing development, changes to existing houses, street signs and lighting, public transport, traffic and parking, industry, highways and footpaths.

How the Village Design Statement will be used
The Design Statement has been endorsed by the Dedham Parish Council and has been accepted by Colchester Borough Council as a **Planning Guidance Note** . It is therefore to be used as reference when developing local plans or considering individual planning applications in the village, where it will provide a tier of local involvement complementary to the council planning activities.

How information was collected Please see **Consultation Process**







THE VILLAGE

Historic Background

Although there is some evidence of Bronze Age, Iron Age and Roman presence in the vicinity, the first known settlement at Dedham is the Saxon manor recorded in Domesday Book. From Norman times this was held by absentee French landlords until, in the fourteenth century, it reverted to the Crown. By the end of the fifteenth century, when wealthy clothiers financed the building of the present church, Dedham had become a thriving industrial town. During the seventeenth century the wool trade was in serious decline but the town's importance as a centre for local trade was increased by its ecclesiastical significance. A lectureship had been set up around 1577 to preach the 'pure' word of God in this Puritan area and the lecture coinciding with the weekly market drew audiences from miles around. The Grammar School, where the celebrated painter John Constable was later a pupil, was founded at about the same time. This established Dedham's educational reputation and for the next four centuries its various schools contributed greatly to the town's prosperity. In the eighteenth century both the Grammar and English (elementary) Schools were rebuilt in the then fashionable red brick, many of the late medieval timber-framed houses were fronted and the community acquired its own new Assembly Rooms. However by the closing years of the nineteenth century the market town had dwindled to a village and was once again in decline when the first visitors and day trippers began to arrive, attracted to the landscape which had become famous as 'Constable Country'. Its special qualities were recognised when it was designated an **A**rea of **O**utstanding **N**atural **B**eauty in 1970. Tourism continued to increase throughout the twentieth century, especially with the arrival of mass car ownership from the 1950s onwards.





Guidelines

The preservation of the AONB (Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty) should be paramount in all planning considerations.

The geological structure of the parish should be considered when planning applications are intended.



Flint Echinoids found in Gravels (a) Micraster (b) Echinocorys





Geographical Description

On the Suffolk/Essex border the **"** undulating slopes fall gently to the slow-flowing, meandering River Stour and in its hedged water meadows, copses and riverbank willows, the landscape is perhaps the epitome of the farmed English countryside." There is "an extraordinary range of different spatial scales and special features giving rise to distinctive landscape characters – rolling fields on the valley slopes, lush and sheltered valley floor meadows and open marshes," copses and wooded areas. The pastoral scenes are world famous as the settings used by the artist John Constable and picturesque Dedham nestles into this landscape on the South bank of the Stour at one of its crossing points. "Because much of East Anglia's traditional grasslands have already been drained and ploughed for arable farming, the hedgerows and wildflower meadows" of the parish "are among some of England's most precious and vulnerable pastoral landscapes and the countryside is enhanced by narrow lanes". *

The parish lies almost midway between Colchester, Essex, itself an historic town, and Ipswich, Suffolk. The close proximity of the tidal estuary at Cattawade and the all-season crossing point on the Stour, first by ford and then by bridge, had many influences on the development of Dedham as a settlement and later as a wool town. The tidal river was not only a means of transport but also explains the large areas of marshland, some of which became water meadows with the creation of tidal barriers and the construction of locks associated with the Stour navigation (1705 Act of Parliament).

Geology

The Dedham Vale was most probably formed when the ice sheet of the Second Glacial (Maximum Glaciation) began melting. This ice sheet reached almost to London. The melting led to the deposition of the boulder clay which covers most of East Anglia. It also led to the creation of fast flowing rivers which caused the formation of V-shaped valleys and also side valleys such as those which can be seen to the south of the Vale. The rivers transported fossils derived from the London clay (laid down in the lower-Eocene deposits 50 mya), such as shark teeth and flint echinoids from the upper-Cretaceous deposits (80mya-***m****illion* ***y****ears* ***a****go!*)

The ending of the Second Glacial Period was followed by a Mediterranean type climate. The melting ice sheets reduced the weight of the ice on the land, which then began to rise up, and also led to rising sea levels. Dedham Vale was on the most southern edge of the ice sheet where the ice was at its thinnest so here the land began to sink as land to the north and west became elevated. The sinking of the land plus the rising sea levels flooded the valley With the valley flooded, wave action led to further deposition of sands and gravels and further erosion of the London clay.

**Quotations in this paragraph are from Countryside Commission website documents.*



At the end of this inter-glacial period cooling of the climate led to a third glacial period which, as it was not so severe, allowed melt waters from the ice sheets to deposit further layers of gravels and sands in the valley. In amongst these sands and gravels flint sponges and echinoids from the chalk can be found.

At the end of this period we enter another inter-glacial period called the Ipswichian. The melting ice sheets caused rising sea levels and again the sea flooded the lower valley depositing a shallow mud/silt layer which created a wide shallow estuary similar to that seen at Manningtree today. It is possible that at this time the first stone age men came to the valley, as many tools have been found throughout the area.

A final glacial period led to lowering sea levels creating a series of raised beaches on the south side of the valley. One of these beaches can actually be walked on if you take the footpath to Manningtree Station following the National Trust signs. From this footpath it is also possible to see another raised beach by looking south towards Manningtree Road. This is more visible during winter months when foliage has died down. As the sea retreated, fresh water began to dominate the valley and eventually formed the flood plain we see today. The river is still changing.

At the end of this period of glaciation came the present inter-glacial period. It is believed that Bronze Age man settled in the valley around this time as there was a known settlement in the Dedham area. At a later date the Romans also came to Dedham.

The underlying geology of Dedham has been proven on the valley floor through boreholes but as yet there is not a definitive geological map covering the Dedham area and may not be until 2010. Consultation with the map for the Ipswich area can be used as the underlying formations are very similar.

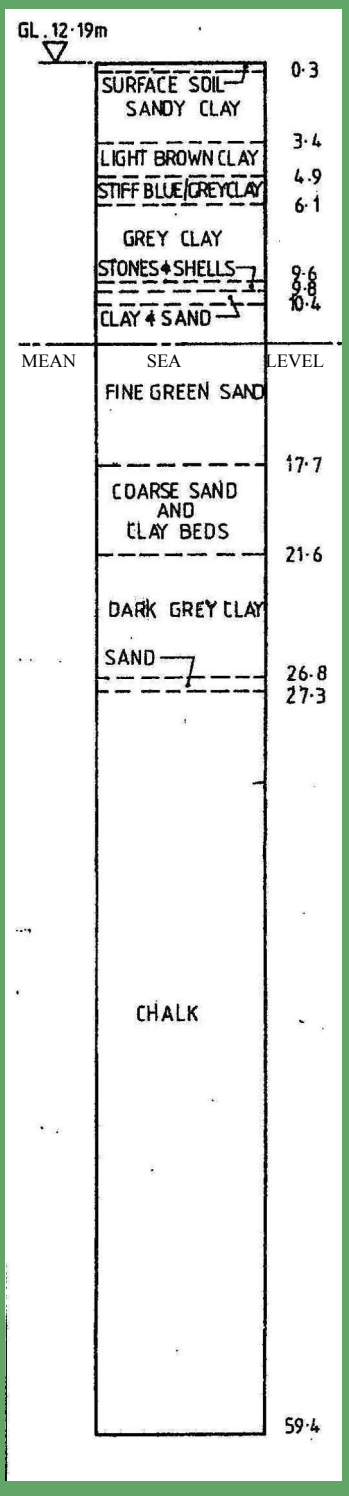
The adjacent sketch of the stratagraphic log for the floor of the valley shows the underlying deposit to be cretaceous chalk capped with discrete layers of clays and sand.

The overburden is similar to that covering the rest of East Anglia. Termed drift deposits, they consist of glacial and alluvial deposits laid down during the Ice Ages, the last being the Ipswichian. These deposits are a mixed bag of clays, sands and gravels, often occurring as lenses rather than as discrete layers. Wet weather will often result in standing water where the clay is close to or at the surface, which is an indication of a clay layer or lens.

Much of Dedham is covered by drift deposits and until the definitive geological map for Colchester area, which will include Dedham, has been produced, it would be prudent to consult the Ipswich area map and perhaps do a test borehole before applying for planning permission.

Guidelines

The geology of the area has governed the development of the parish and is fundamental to the characteristics of the area. The greatest care should be taken with any changes proposed to them.



Guidelines

The open spaces between settlements must be maintained thus keeping the rural nature of the village and protecting the AONB.

Any new development should include appropriate open spaces.

Careful planting and landscaping should complement existing trees which should be preserved wherever possible.

Existing hedgerows field boundaries and woodlands should be preserved.

Buildings of historic or architectural interest throughout the parish should be given special attention.

Future development needs to provide for village people. Limited affordable housing for local needs and bungalow and cottage style housing for local down-sizing, should be preferred to executive dwellings and the conversion of cottages to substantial houses.

All new development should respect the integrity of the parish in terms of scale, design and materials used.

Development should remain within the existing envelopes.

VILLAGE ENVELOPES

The parish of Dedham has distinct and varied village envelopes separated by open spaces. Each area has its own distinctive characteristics and method of development. Also, there are communities, not within the designated envelopes, that have their own style and character.

Major change, in what must have been a fairly stable, pastoral and agrarian landscape, came with the development of a large woollen industry. This became an important economic and social influence on Dedham. The structure of the woollen industry in Dedham was the primary factor in the settlement pattern which evolved with the substantial houses and business premises of prosperous clothiers and the cottages of the outworkers who carries out a wide variety of processes in their own homes. The economic and political changes in the 17thcentury left this cottage industry extremely weak and unable to support the population.

Naturally, agriculture, both arable and pastoral, continued to be important but much of the added-value of primary industry was generated elsewhere. The arrival of the canal era, providing a cheap and reliable method of transportation, brought expanded industry to Dedham with milling, boat building and repair and bargees to man the craft which plied the waters of East Anglia round to the Thames and up the Stour all the way to the then great milling and cereal centre of Sudbury. With the advent of the Railway Age the canals and navigable rivers rapidly became uncompetitive and ceased to have commercial relevance. A fall in wheat prices in the 1870s caused a planned railway to not be completed. Unfortunately for employment prospects, Dedham was not well placed to benefit from either mainline or local rail services. The mainline junction at Manningtree serviced the port of Harwich and the mainline to Ipswich and Norwich. Dedham's proximity to Manningtree did, however, have a major impact on settlement patterns in later years.

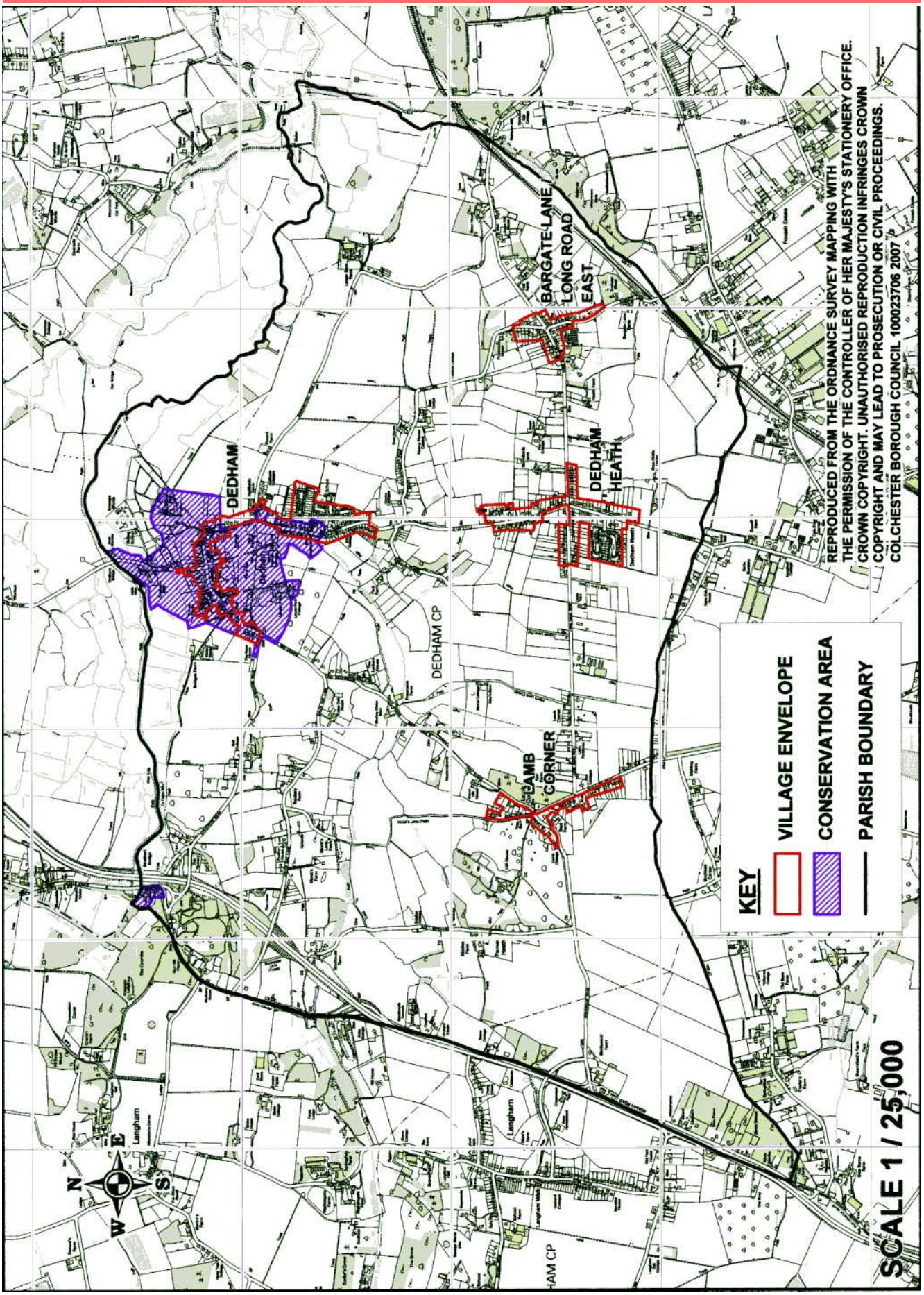
Mechanisation, large farm units, low agricultural wages and the draw of the towns, for both social and financial reasons, have been evident in Dedham, as have the influences of commuting to better paid jobs in Chelmsford, London and Norwich. A new social mix of relatively wealthy families and people who have retired, together with a demand for second homes, and substantial extensions and rebuilds, has put increasing pressure on the housing stocks of cottages, flats and bungalows, leading to a shortage of affordable housing and employment opportunities for local young people.

This long history of social, political and economic change is reflected in the domestic and commercial structure of Dedham's settlement patterns and the changes which continue to take place in response.

The historic core of the Parish is sited just above the flood plain with the river crossing near the confluence of the Black Brook and the Stour. Beyond this concentration of older buildings, which reflect the prosperity of Dedham as a small industrial town based on the wool trade, there are many listed buildings outside the centre of the village which have agricultural origins or parkland settings.

As well as these larger houses, further dwellings are scattered throughout the parish with concentrations at the junctions of Coopers Lane and East Lane, Bargate Lane and Long Road East, at Dedham Heath and at Lamb Corner. Three of these were formerly outlying hamlets with their own shops. In addition, The Heath had its own school, which was licensed for church services and is now a dwelling, and towards Bargate Lane there is a chapel. To the south-east of the village there are two pre- and two post-Second World War Housing developments.

VILLAGE ENVELOPES
Conservation Areas & Parish Boundary



Guidelines

Materials used for repairs and extensions should be chosen from the traditional range found in the historic core of the village. Shop fronts and fascias should be of traditional design, material and colour.

Replacement buildings, and any new building, should be on a scale that does not intrude upon the surrounding environment.

Chimneys form an important part of the roof lines and street scene. They should be retained and kept as clear of aerial clutter as possible.

Satellite dishes should be mounted out of sight in gardens , preferably not on the buildings.

Solar panels and other eco-friendly equipment mounted on roofs should not be visually intrusive.

Replacement rain water goods should reflect the original.



Historic Centre—The Dedham Conservation Area

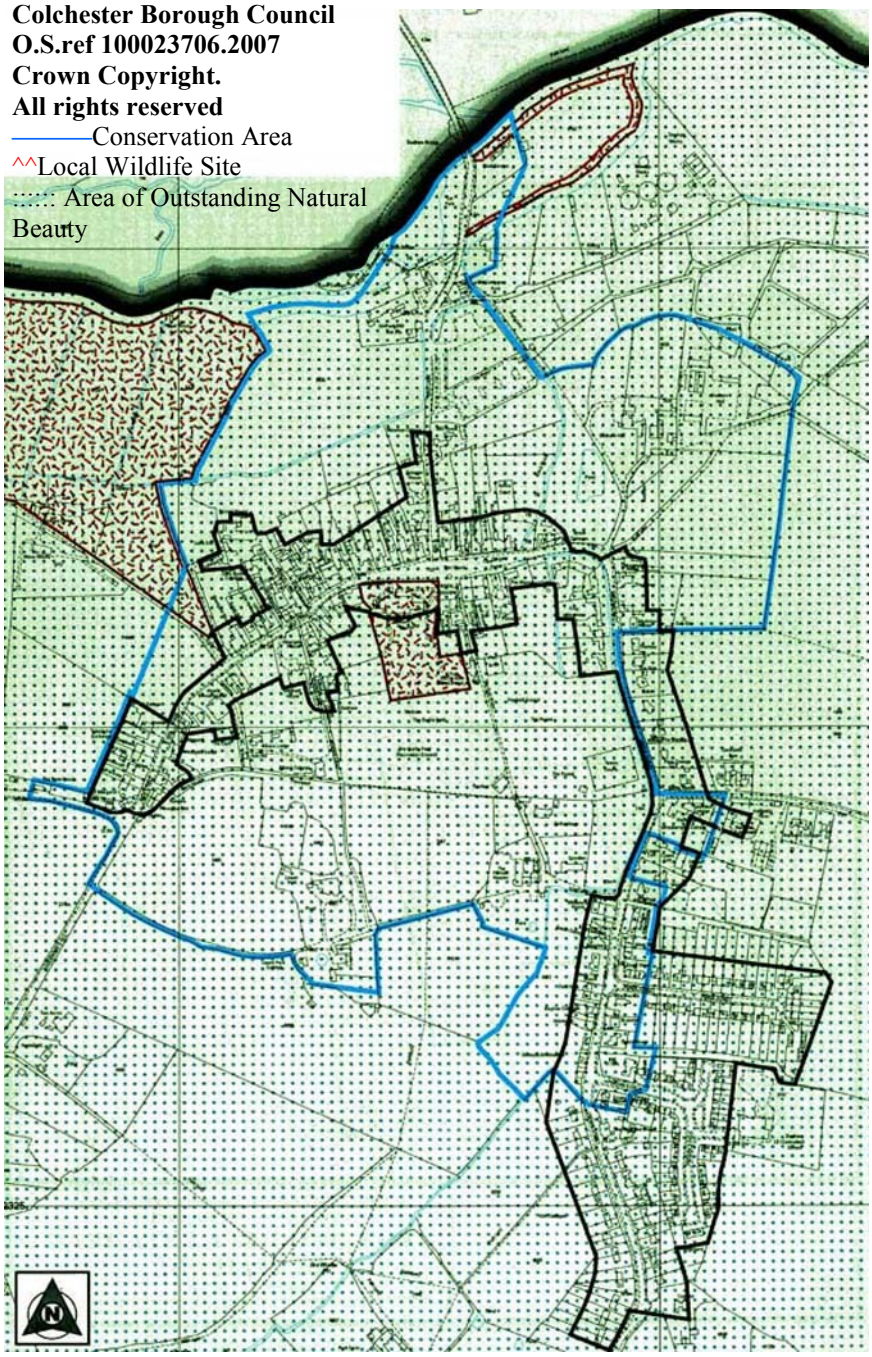
Historical Development

The Dedham Conservation Area consists of the High Street, widening at its eastern end to include Royal Square, and the lanes leading south towards the playing fields and north in the direction of the River Stour. It also includes Brook Street, Crown Street and the start of the Stratford and Manningtree Roads. There is an exceptionally high standard of architecture in this historic heart of the parish, which has an unusually large number of listed buildings. These include numerous surviving late medieval houses, often refronted in the eighteenth or early nineteenth centuries. The earliest buildings date from c.1500, sometimes incorporating fourteenth-century work. They include a number of merchant's houses, (e.g. the Sun Inn), Southfields (the residence and business premises of a wealthy clothier) and the Church of St Mary (c.1491-1520) financed from the profits of the flourishing wool trade. The church was built with rendered walls of flint-rubble and brick, stone dressings, flushwork decoration and a handsome flint-faced tower above a vaulted passageway. The houses dating from this period were timber-framed with wattle-and-daub infill and had jettied upper storeys, most of which have subsequently been underbuilt. Some of the largest have been divided up: the Essex Rose Tea House and the Co-op Grocery were originally one building, as were the Marlborough Head and Loom House.

Timber-framed houses continued to be built during the seventeenth century (e.g. the Old Exchange and the Merchant Weaver's House) but the High Street was transformed during the Georgian period, when its importance as a centre for education brought renewed prosperity. The most architecturally distinguished eighteenth-century buildings are the Old Grammar School with Well House (which formed part of it), stylishly rebuilt in brick c.1730, and the elaborate street front of Sherman's (the English or Writing School) by the same master mason around the same date. New red brick houses (e.g. Ivy House and Westgate House) were built and many of the late medieval houses in the High Street were brought up to date during this period by the addition of new fronts in brick or plaster with sash windows, classical doorcases and panelled doors. Some were given completely redesigned formal street elevations (e.g. the Merchant Weaver's House and Loom House), while others retained their original form with plaster covering most or all of their timber framing (e.g. the Old Exchange). Some of the houses were used as business premises and had shop windows, many of which have survived. There are smaller houses and cottages throughout the village dating from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, including a number in red brick with gambrel roofs.

During the nineteenth century several houses were built in the then fashionable white brick with slate roofs (e.g. Dedham House, c.1825). Some of the larger houses of this period (e.g. Lower Park) involved extensive alteration and additions to earlier houses. The Vicarage (by M.G. Thomson, 1815) was extended twice in the course of the nineteenth century. Stucco continued to be used but red brick buildings predominated, becoming more elaborate, as the century progressed, with the use of polychrome brickwork and ornamental features such as trelliswork porches or decorative bargeboards. These include the Congregational Church (1871), now the Dedham Arts Centre, and the Boys' Elementary School in Crown Street (1882), converted to a private house c.1980. Substantial red brick houses built in the mid to late nineteenth century include Princel House and Hallfields.





The period between the two World Wars saw a considerable increase in housing, including bungalows at the western end of the High Street, houses and bungalows on the eastern side of Brook Street and several larger houses (e.g. the Beech House and the Croft). Dedham architect Raymond Erith (1904-73) built Great House (1937) and a number of smaller houses and cottages after the war, including 1-3 Frog Meadow, Brook Street (1967-72). His partner Quinlan Terry (b.1937) completed this row with 4-7 Frog Meadow (1977-79) and built three small houses in Princel Lane (1981) A row of shops on the north side of the High Street was burnt down in 1976 and replaced with three attached houses. Three single-storey dwellings were built in Princel Mews behind them in 1986. In the 1980s the Mill, which had been rebuilt after a fire in 1908, closed for business and was converted into flats, severing the last connection with Dedham's history as a milling and industrial centre. A very few new houses in traditional styles (e.g. Crown House and Spindles) were built in the later twentieth and early twenty-first century, generally to replace undistinguished modern predecessors.

Guidelines

Restoring, refurbishment and minor alterations should be done in original materials. Modern concrete tiles, imitation slate, etc are not acceptable.

Where lighting to a roof space is needed on a front elevation dormer windows should be used and these should be no higher than the pitch of the main roof. In exceptional cases, Conservation Area Type roof lights may be used.









Guidelines

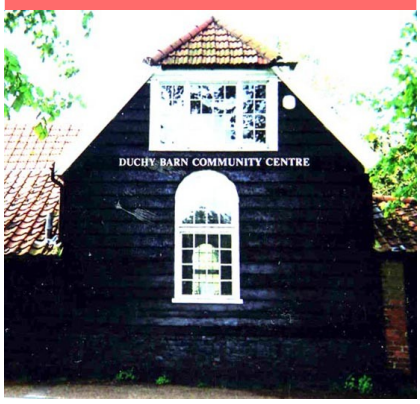


Great care should be taken to preserve the character of the Conservation Area and to maintain the amenities it contains.





For Listed Buildings see Appendix 1.





Public Buildings

Dedham's earliest building still in public use is the parish Church of St Mary the Virgin, completed in the early sixteenth century. Eighteenth-century public buildings in Dedham's Conservation Area include the red brick former Work-house (now Whitmore Place, 1725-30) and the elegant Assembly Rooms (for-merly known as the Hewitt Hall) established by 1745, a classical design with stucco over a timber frame. There are two sets of early nineteenth-century brick almshouses in Crown Street (Dunton's, rebuilt 1806 and Barfield's 1834). The stone war memorial in the form of a market cross (designed by the architect W.D.Caroe, 1857-1938) was erected in 1921. The Duchy Barn was adapted for use as a sports pavilion before 1914. A new sports pavilion was built on the Duchy Field in the 1970s and extended in the early 1990s. The Duchy barn has remained in public use since then, currently as a community centre used by the youth club and other local groups. A weatherboarded tennis pavilion was built in the 1990s. Further brick almshouses were built in School Lane in 1990 on the site of the former National School (1825), which was de-molished after the Church of England Primary School moved to Parson's Field in 1973. Outside the Conservation Area, Castle House on Castle Hill, former home of the artist Sir Alfred Munnings PRA (1888-1958) opened to the public in 1961 as a museum devoted to a permanent exhibition of his works.









Crown Street, Forge Street & Parson's Field

Immediately adjoining the Dedham Conservation Area is the modern residential area of Crown Street, Forge Street and Parson's Field. Almost all these homes were originally built as council houses but many are now privately owned.

Several phases of council housing were built here, to the south-east of the Conservation Area, in the course of the twentieth century. Crownfields (1920-21) along the eastern side of Crown Street was followed, before the Second World War, by Kiln Cottages opposite. Forge Street dates from c.1950 and Parson's Field begun c.1965 was completed with the construction of a new Primary School in 1973 (capacity in 2006 210 children). After the sale of council houses to private owners in the 1980s, low-cost housing was built in the Manningtree Road in 1992 and (in combination with a new surgery) in 2006, when further affordable accommodation was also built to the south of Dunton's Almhouses in Crown Street. There remains a small stock of council owned flats and houses which are let to people on the Borough housing list. A need for starter homes for rent or part ownership continues to exist.

The Residential Estate sits quietly in its environment with the roof lines below, and blending into, the tree lines.



Guidelines

Housing Association purchase of remaining Council Properties should be considered and encouraged.

A scheme to retain these properties permanently for first time buyers and key workers should be a priority.



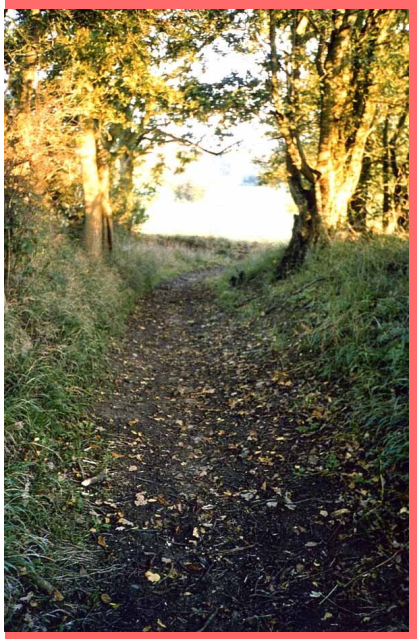
Extensions, restorations and any form of development in this area should carefully consider its proximity to the Conservation Area, the effects of the proposal on the AONB and traffic on the area.



A slow increase in the provision of Housing Association and similar affordable houses should be encouraged in response to demonstrable need. These should be in small groups similar to those already in existence.

Guidelines

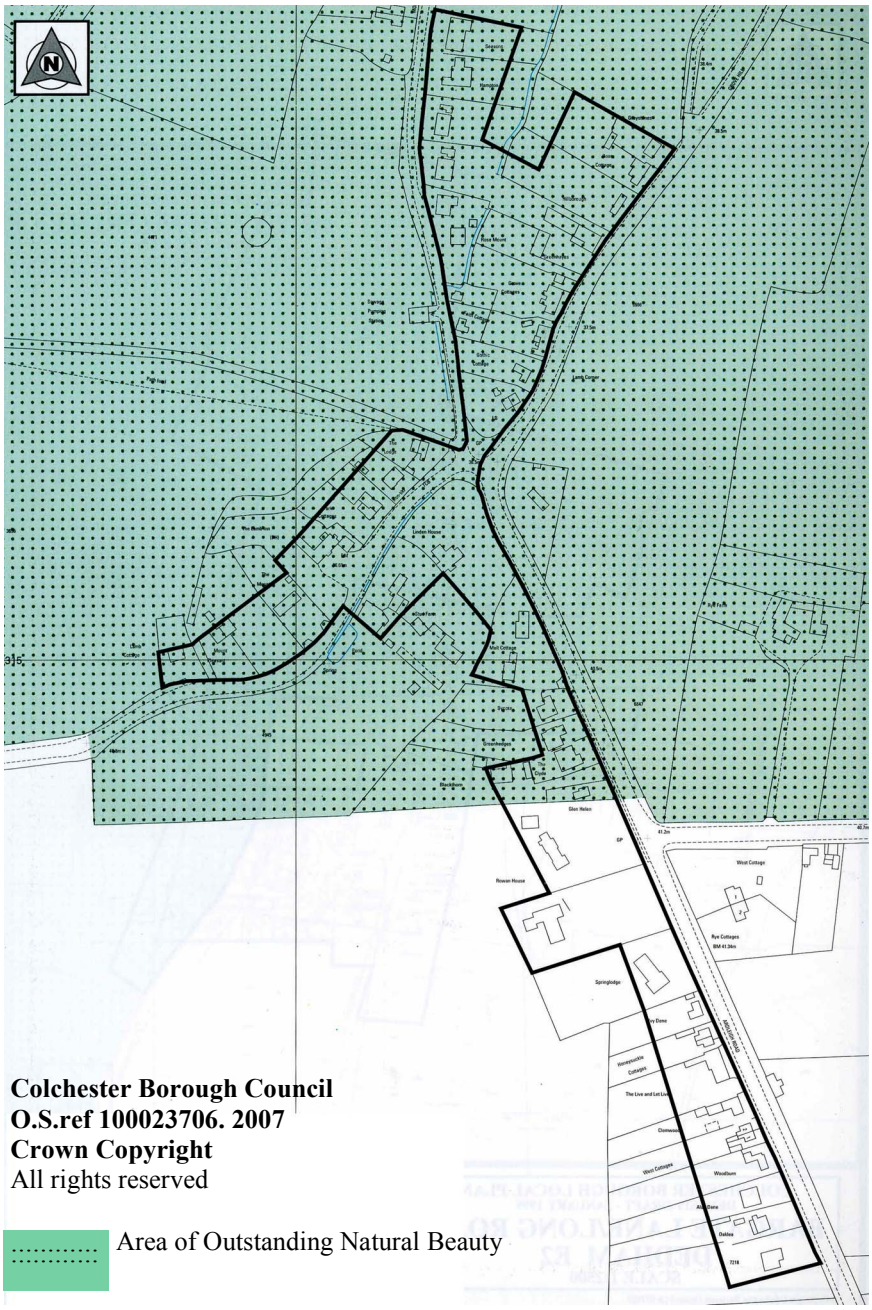
It would be detrimental to, and would alter the character of, the hamlet, if additional housing were allowed along the roads in this area.



Every effort should be made to preserve Monks Lane as a safe and beautiful walk.



Lamb Corner



Colchester Borough Council
O.S.ref 100023706. 2007
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Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

Situated where a star of roads meet, more than a mile from the High Street of Dedham, Lamb Corner is a hamlet which grew up round a spring and a fifteenth century inn, The Lamb, which is now a private home, and a ribbon of development mostly along the west side of Ardleigh Road to the parish boundary. At one time the community was almost self sufficient with three shops, two of which survived until the 1950s, and two inns, the second one being The Live and Let Live on the Ardleigh Road. There is a group of thatched cottages, probably contemporary with The Lamb, a sprinkling of eighteenth century houses, some nineteenth century homes and several built in the twentieth century, three by Dedham architect Raymond Erith.



Guidelines

The planting of hedgerows along Birchwood Road should be encouraged.



Hill House, though outside the village envelope of Lamb Corner, is very much part of the hamlet and has had its influence upon it. Early on in its life, Hill House was a farm house with land running from the A12 to the west and towards the High Street of Dedham and the Black Brook to the east. The land is good grazing with arable fields across the Birchwood Road. Circa 1760 the owner, who had moved to Dedham in order to send her son to the Grammar School, enlarged the house and put in French windows, which were fashionable at the time. There were various cottages belonging to the estate, which do fall inside the envelope, including identical pairs of cottages at Lamb Corner (1 & 2 Park Cottages) and at Boxhouse Lane (1 & 2 Chestnut Cottages), a pair of cottages in Monks Lane and a pair of lodges at Lamb Corner which were extended and modernised in the 1990s.



The land immediately around the house was made into gardens about 1820 and many of the trees near the house date from then. There are four oak trees on the estate which are believed to be well over four hundred years old. During the hurricane of 1987 over three hundred trees were lost. Since then there has been extensive planting of oaks, limes, beeches and hawthorns which all helps to encourage wild life including foxes, badgers, rabbits, many different song birds, different kinds of woodpecker, pheasants, partridges and very occasionally a snipe or muntjak.







Guidelines

Infill buildings should echo the size and height of adjacent buildings so that older buildings are not dominated or obscured.

Frequent spaces should be retained between groups of buildings, particularly in Long Road, to retain access to the views across the Vale.

The geology of the land should be taken into consideration in any future development.

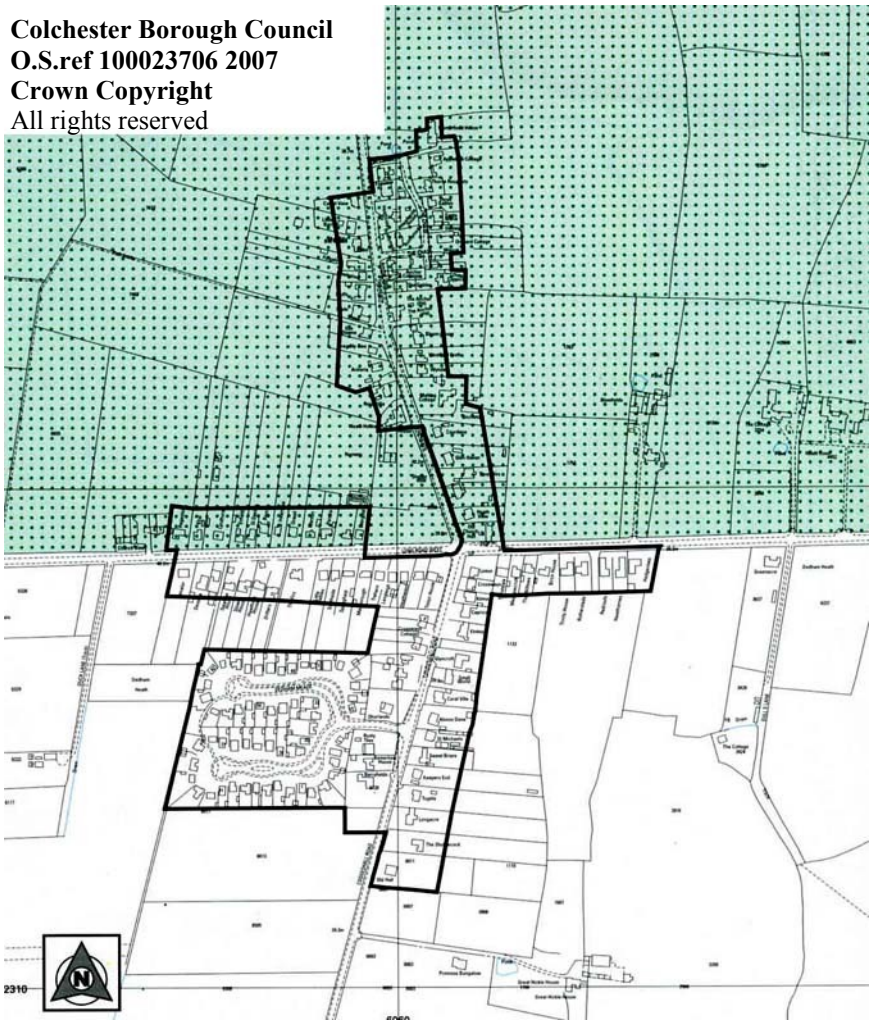






Dedham Heath

Colchester Borough Council
O.S.ref 100023706 2007
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Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

The area known as Dedham Heath lies on the southern border of the parish, one and a quarter miles from the High Street, and runs along part of **Long Road East and West,** crossed by **The Heath and Coggeshall Road.** The Long Road, flat and straight along the top of the ride, dates from 1800, when rectangular plots on either side were allocated to those who had lost grazing rights on common land as a result of the Enclosure Act. Until just after the Second World War this part of the parish was sparsely populated and early maps show a large area of heath land along the roads.

The Heath was part of the way up from the valley floor. The houses in this road and Anchor Lane grew up around and behind the Anchor Public House which was recently demolished. Small groups of dwellings tucked away behind high hedges are inconspicuous Today, most of the fields behind Anchor Lane, and The Heath, up to Long Road, are used for equestrian purposes, and several loose boxes have been built on these fields. Also, at the busy crossroads a hamlet grew up at the top of The Heath with a school and shop. The school and shop are now private properties.



During the last century the hamlet expanded along Long Road and Coggeshall Road with smallholdings and small farms. Many of these are still agricultural businesses. In the 1950s and 60s 'in-fill' houses and bungalows were built and between 1970 and 74 an estate of 57 homes was built off the Coggeshall Road (Dedham Meade). Great care was taken with the planning of this development. Mature trees were retained and protected and there was additional landscaping. The homes are constructed of red brick or render with pantile roofs. There is carefully considered street lighting and there are no overhead utility cables. There is approximately a 50/50 mix of houses and bungalows providing homes with from one to five bedrooms. All properties have off street parking and garages. Great Crested Newts are believed to be breeding in a long established pond in Dedham Meade. These amphibians are an endangered species.

In recent years a number of dwellings have been extended. Bungalows have become houses and old cottages have doubled in size. Modernisation, refurbishment and enlargement of properties has caused changes in the street scene as hedges have been removed and ditches filled in. This has given rise to standing water on those occasions when rainfall is unusually heavy. Further increases in density and, or, house extensions could put a strain on the existing main drains in extreme circumstances.

It is important that the balance of homes for first time buyers, families and the elderly is maintained, respecting the original intentions of the development.



Guidelines

No further development, extensions or renovations involving an increase in size should take place in the near future without detailed consideration.

Serious consideration should be given to encouraging the reinstatement of the old water drainage ditches.

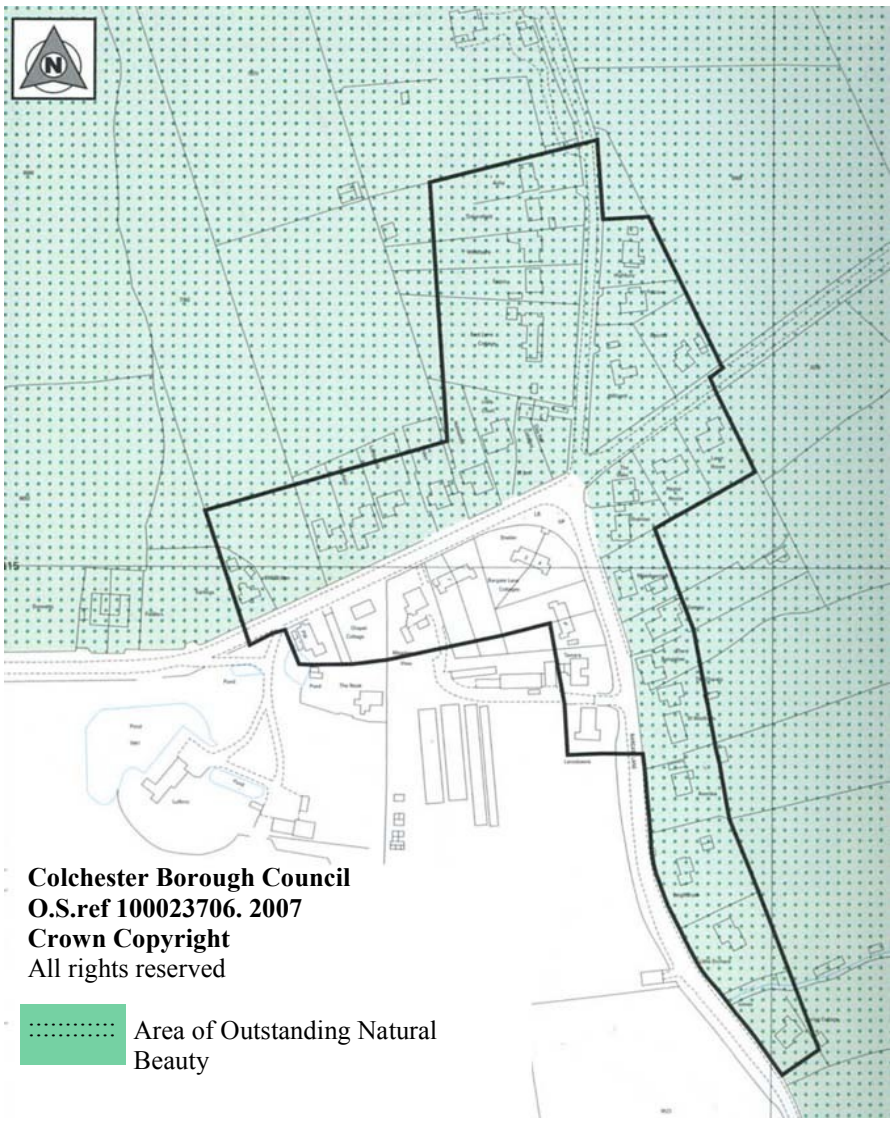
Careful consideration should be given to any applications for developments near the pond in Dedham Meade where an endangered species is believed to be breeding.

Guidelines

The present balance of old/ new, large/small properties should be maintained so that the original character of the hamlet is eroded no further and the village stock of cottages and bungalows is retained.

Every effort should be made to preserve the remaining gaps between groups of dwellings so that the AONB can be enjoyed by all.

Bargate Lane/Long Road East



This hamlet is at the junction of **Bargate Lane, East Lane and Long Road East** and is surrounded by farmland with open views across the Vale. Up until the 1930s the history of this settlement was much the same as that of Dedham Heath. In recent years there has been a lot of infilling and the building of extensions and large new houses that has changed the character of the settlement.

The hamlet, which grew up around the cross roads, is about 2.5 miles south-east of the High Street. For some years it supported a shop, on the corner of Long Road and Bargate Lane, which closed in the early 1960s, and the old Methodist Chapel in Long Road is still in regular use. Some Council Housing was built opposite the shop in the 1920s.









The original cottages and farm houses have been renovated and extended or demolished and replaced by houses of large proportions or by two quite substantial dwellings on the plot. Meadows adjacent to the lanes have been built on and many breath-taking views lost. Infilling has been intense though some parts have been maintained especially along Long Road where the old farm houses lie well back from the road.

The trees and hedges along the verges, together with Birketts Wood and the spinneys around Frostwood and the Chapel, are important parts of the Vale landscape.

Guidelines

Every effort should be made to preserve hedgerows and trees, both along the verges and across the fields. The Dedham Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty is at its most stunning when viewed from this area.

GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR ALL AREAS

The preservation of the rural environment is essential throughout the parish. Care should be taken to avoid the urbanisation of the area and to maintain the quiet idyll.

Affordable housing should be located throughout the parish, in small groups as at present. Care should be taken to blend their architecture into their surroundings. Serious consideration should be given to the acquisition of Council House stocks .

Starter homes and down sizing cottages and bungalows should be built in preference to further large or extended developments.

Any buildings, alterations or additions should respect the local vernacular and the scale of neighbouring properties, use materials sympathetic to the environment and retain all roadside hedges and trees.

Small houses, cottages and bungalows which have not been enlarged should be retained throughout the parish in order to ensure a balanced housing stock.

Good landscaping around extensions & developments should be given careful consideration.

Guidelines



The guide lines listed for the Dedham Conservation Area should apply to the Stratford St Mary Conservation Area, Dedham.

Existing distant and near vistas of the village and the Vale should be protected and where appropriate enhanced for the enjoyment of all.

Communities outside the envelopes.

Stratford St Mary Conservation Area, Dedham

There is a small Conservation Area in the far north west corner of the parish on its borders with Langham (in the borough of Colchester and county of Essex) and Stratford St Mary (in the borough of Babergh in the County of Suffolk). It comprises the area around Le Talbooth Restaurant and the Kennels, Wilderness House and Woodside. It was given its name in order to separate it from the main Conservation Area around the High Street



In the open spaces between the village envelopes there are several small communities. They are in harmony with their environment and are very individual in character. At **East Lane** a group of mostly period properties, including some former alms houses, nestle around Castle House, whose land is covenanted to the National Trust. A similar group surrounded by land owned by the Trust can be found by the Maison Talbooth in the **Stratford Road.**





Coopers Lane and **Coles Oak Lane** both run out into farmland giving rise to outstanding views between the houses, which are shielded from view by rural hedging. Coopers Lane is a cul-de-sac. Coles Oak Lane runs along the ridge between the River Stour and the Black Brook, crossing the A12 and ending in a stretch with protected verges. Coles Oak Lane has an area with an **Article 4 Direction.** (Land adjacent to Boxhouse Lane, the A12 and Coles Oak Lane).



Extensions to gardens

Dwellings surrounded by agricultural land occasionally apply for planning permission to extend their gardens into the farmland adjacent to their properties. This urbanises the farmland resulting in a loss of countryside. Sometimes this also involves extending outside a village envelope.

Guidelines

These small communities should not be expanded and their rural tranquillity should be maintained.

Application for planning permission, for a development of any size on the land adjacent to the A12 and Boxhouse Farm should be opposed.



Change of use of agricultural land to garden use should only take place where there is no adverse impact on the surroundings and where there is no loss of good agricultural land.

Such change of use should not interfere with an agricultural enterprise.

Any grant for change of use should not set a precedent for other similar situations.

Guidelines

There should be no development on the open spaces in the Dedham Conservation Area or immediately adjacent to them.

Encroachment by car parking into the parish's open spaces should be resisted.

A planting scheme for replacing important mature trees, as they reach the end of their lives, should be produced and implemented.

Wherever possible trees should be planted to maintain the manner in which the buildings of Dedham are screened from sight.

A survey of the trees in the parish should be undertaken as soon as possible. Where appropriate, Tree Preservation Orders should be applied for.

Copses, spinneys and woodland should also be noted with the intention of applying Tree Preservation Orders to them.

It is important that any increased playing field facilities should not detract from the tranquillity and appearance of the area. Further floodlighting should be resisted.

OPEN SPACES



In and around the Dedham Conservation Area

there are vitally important open spaces which add considerably to its charm and rural character. The churchyard surrounds the parish church, while to its south lie the recreation ground and playing fields and beyond them Lower Park. This extends as far as the boundary of Moorats Park (National Trust land), so that parkland on either side of Shoebridge Hill flanks the western approach to the village. At the western end of the High Street a meadow belonging to Tendring Hundred Water Works adjoins the open fields of Bridges Farm, a property of the National Trust. An old orchard and wild flower meadow to the south of the High Street adjoins the grounds of Dedham House. At the corner of Brook Street there is a field, next to Muniment House, where the path to Flatford leads out of the village and beside it is a meadow with a pond belonging to Dedham Hall. Between the village and the river there is a meadow to the west of Mill Lane. Another field next to the sports ground lies between the tennis courts and the lane leading to Southfields. From there a long meadow, which runs southwards behind the houses on the western side of Crown Street, is bordered by the Black Brook. These green spaces, giving views from the Conservation Area into open countryside**,** are an essential part of the beauty of the village. Trees are of the greatest importance in these areas, as throughout the parish. There are many mature trees in significant positions, for example those in the church yard.





Outside the Dedham Conservation Area there are small play areas at Dedham Heath and Parson's Field. Virtually the whole parish lies within the A.O.N.B.



The Stratford St Mary Conservation Area

(Parish of Dedham)

This tiny Conservation area which borders the River Stour looks across water meadows and into ancient woodlands. Despite the proximity of the A12 and dominance of The Talbooth Restaurant, it maintains an appearance of peace and tranquillity.



Guidelines

Everything possible should be done to preserve the views in Constable's paintings.

The guidelines for the Dedham Conservation Area apply to The Stratford St Mary Conservation Area, Dedham. (*Please also see under HIGHWAYS A12)*

Guidelines

Diversification on National Trust land should be appropriate to the environment in change of use, materials and scale.



National Trust land

The National Trust owns about 200 hectares (500 acres) of land in the Dedham Vale and many buildings of varying historical significance. Much of the land and buildings are leased to tenants who manage it as part of their businesses. There is some "in hand" land which is either managed directly by the National Trust, or let on annual grazing licences. They also have protective covenants over a further 170 hectares (424 acres) of mostly farm and woodland.

Within the parish of Dedham the land holding is as follows:-

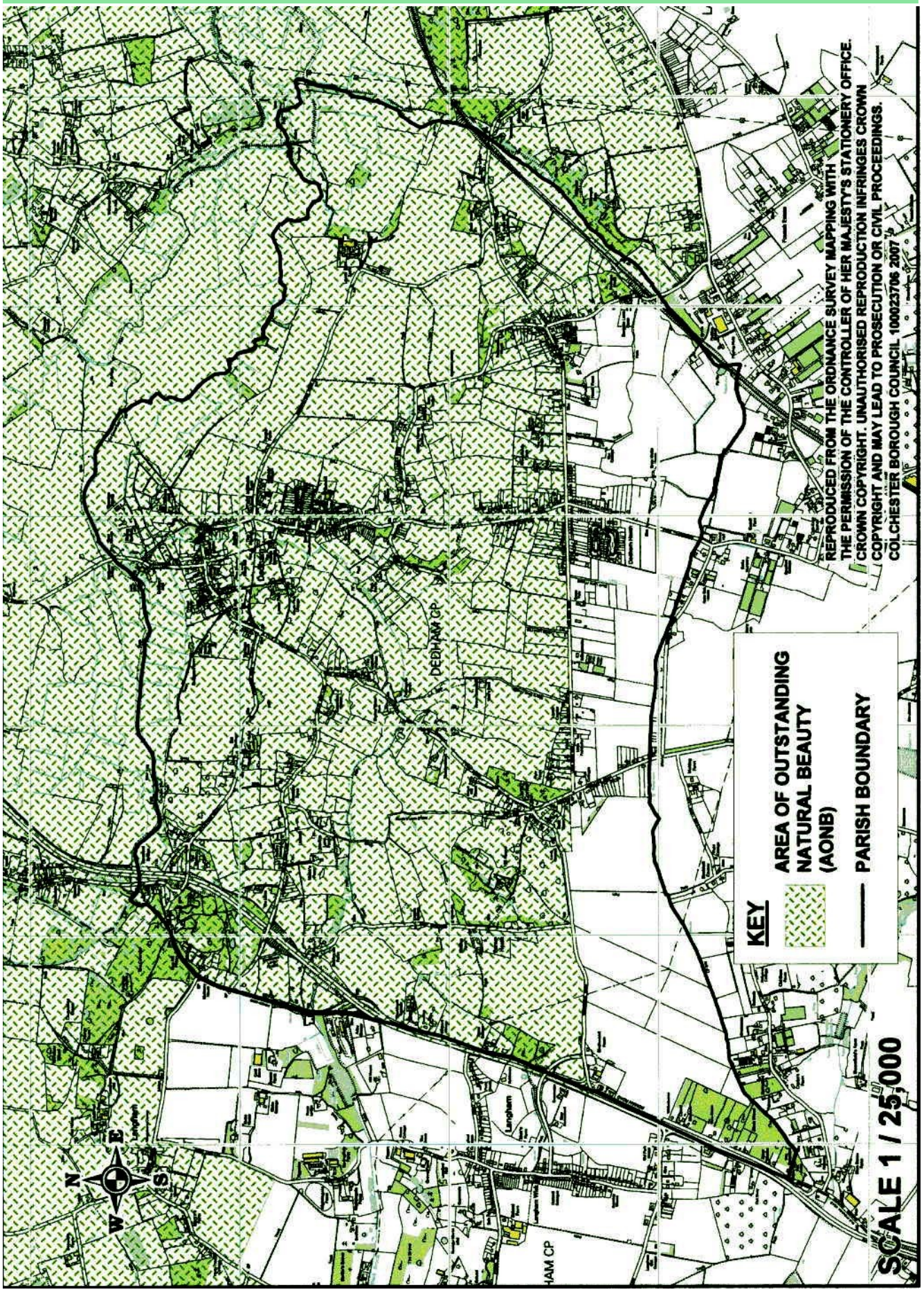
Lower Barn & Dedham Hall grazing land 75.1 ha
Bridges Farm arable and grazing land 39 ha with farm buildings, 2 fields
Byres and the historically significant Erith Boathouse
Moorats Park grazing land 11.84 ha
Grade 1 listed Sherman's
Covenants over land surrounding Castle House 17 ha

The general presumption is that grazing land will continue to be grazed and arable will continue to be actively farmed. Hedges, parkland and woodland will be managed by traditional means which will include coppicing, trimming, planting and occasional felling of trees. The traditional late nineteenth-early twentieth century field byres and the boathouse at Bridges Farm will be maintained as these are of landscape significance.

There may be minor changes driven by future trends in agriculture etc these could include:-

Differing intensity of grazing because of future difficulty in attracting graziers
Changes to the crop regimes, for example oil crops may prove to be more profitable in future years, or change of arable to grassland
Re-planting hedges in locations where historical evidence shows they have been removed
Planting additional trees of appropriate species within existing hedgerows and parklands
Loss of trees due to contagious disease such as willow watermark and alder phytophera

OPEN SPACES
Showing the A.O.N.B,



Guidelines

The maintenance and protection of the AONB is paramount in all considerations of development in the area.

The scale and landscaping of development around the edge of the AONB should be carefully designed to provide screening and avoid spoiling of the sky line.

The AONB should remain free of lighting that affects the night sky.

The River Stour forms a tranquil, natural and refreshing back drop to Dedham and is enjoyed by many, both local residents and visitors alike. Proposals to commercialise and hence destroy this haven of peace should be vigorously opposed.







The Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

The Dedham Vale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (90 square kilometres) was designated on 26th February 1970 and is particularly precious because it is the fourth smallest in England. It lies within the counties of Essex & Suffolk and is included in the Suffolk River Valleys ESA (**E**nvironmentally **S**ensitive **A**rea). The part that is within the parish of Dedham is within the Borough of Colchester. It is considered to be an exceptional example of a lowland river valley.

The River Stour, which runs through the AONB, is an historic navigation with boating and angling interests. It is an intrinsic part of the rural scene is affectionately known as "Constable Country".

Because many of East Anglia's traditional grasslands have already been drained and ploughed for arable farming, the hedgerows and wildflower meadows of the Dedham Vale are among some of England's most precious and vulnerable pastoral landscapes and the countryside is enhanced by narrow lanes and characteristic timber-framed and thatched houses. The area continues to be essentially a farming area, although there is now a significant and growing proportion of residents commuting to Ipswich, Colchester and London.

The beauty of the area, combined with its associations with John Constable, Sir Alfred Munnings and other artists, draws tourists to the area. Many visitors come to walk in the Vale which, within the parish, has nearly 50 footpaths, including part of the Essex Way, covering a total distance of over 20 kilometres. The responsibility for maintenance and improvement of the footpaths in the parish is shared between the Parish, Colchester Borough and Essex County Councils. The pressure of tourism is rarely intolerable but any considerable increase would be seriously detrimental both to the visitor experience and to the everyday life of the residents. Tourism is localised and forms an important part of the economy of Dedham.

Through DEFRA's (**De**partment of **F**ood & **R**ural **A**ffairs) Agri-environmental Stewardship scheme farmers and land owners are encouraged to restore, conserve, create and enhance the landscape features and semi-natural habitats, all of which are important to ensure the characteristic appearance of the valley is not lost.

Local Wildlife Sites

(Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation*, SINCs*)

There are a number of wildlife sites in the parish. They are areas that are considered to be important for nature conservation and though not protected by government legislation they are part of the Colchester Borough Council policy documents. There are 7 such areas within Dedham. All are inside the AONB and two within the Dedham Conservation Area, plus an ancient woodland. Some of the land is in the care of the National Trust.

Amongst the areas designated Local Wildlife Sites are alluvial floodplain pastures with good flora including Marsh Bedstraw, Water Horsetail, Meadow Sweet, Purple Loosetrife and Greater Pond Sedge. An interesting invertebrate fauna is associated with this habitat. The banks of the River Stour support diverse flora some of which are becoming increasingly scarce. These include some of the species mentioned above plus Hemp Agrimony, Reed Sweet Grass and Marsh Woundwort.

Special Roadside Verge

A stretch of the Manningtree Road, from Lower Barn Farm towards Pound Farm, has been assigned special status in recognition of its general floristic interest.

Countryside Conservation Area

The Parish of Dedham lies within a designated Countryside Area.

*Site of Special Scientific Interest (*SSSI)

In the far North East corner of the parish is a SSSI, part of the Cattawade Marshes.



Guidelines

Care should be taken to maintain these areas and protect them against incursion.



Every effort should be made to protect the roadside verges of the parish.

Extreme care should be taken to respect and manage positively the Site of Special Scientific Interest.



Further information about these sites can be obtained on application to the Natural History department of Colchester Borough Council

Guidelines

Conservation Areas

High quality maintenance of the buildings in the Conservation Area should be encouraged by every possible means.

Replacements, alterations and additions should receive careful scrutiny. They should be designed to the highest standards, drawing on the local vernacular and using traditional materials in a traditional way in keeping with the other historic buildings in the area.

Shop fronts and fascias should be of traditional design, material and colour and in harmony with the host building.

General

Any new building should be on a scale that does not intrude upon the surrounding environment.

Matching bricks, render or appropriate materials should be used for extensions.

Where there is a specific threat to the character of an area, an Article 4 Direction can and should be sought in order to remove permitted development rights for the carrying on of specific types of development.
(See Glossary)



THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

Buildings

The Dedham Conservation Area has a number of buildings of considerable architectural significance and a great many others of unusually high quality, which together form a well-balanced and harmonious whole. With the exception of the Parish Church, the Assembly Rooms, the former Congregational Chapel and the converted Mill, the buildings consist of houses and shops ranging from one and a half to three storeys high. Many are timber-framed with later brick fronts.

Similar buildings of architectural significance can be found in the hamlets of Lamb Corner, Dedham Heath and Bargate/East Lane and throughout the parish. Lamb Corner (see under village envelopes) has a characteristic style, though this is lost as the hamlet extends down the Ardleigh Road. Dedham Heath has two distinctive areas which have been successfully melded together. Renovation, extensions and rebuilding have been kept on a scale that has *just* avoided seriously changing the character of the Heath. Bargate/East Lane has suffered the loss of its characteristic of a rural hamlet nestling on the slopes of the AONB. Urban style development on plots previously occupied by cottages, bungalows and small holdings has abused the Borough's "one-and-a-half storeys high " policy and changed the area in a manner detrimental to the remaining rural buildings. The area has now acquired a slightly muddled appearance with loss of views across the Vale.

Outside the village envelopes there is some "ribbon" development. Long Road runs east to west along the southern boundary of the AONB. Starting at the east end of the road, there is a very small group of buildings at the junction with Jupes Hill, then open land until it forms part of the Bargate/East Lane envelope. Small farm houses and some larger properties are sprinkled on either side of the road until it approaches the Dedham Heath envelope of which it is a part. Between Dedham Heath and Lamb Corner there is a mixture of open fields, small groups of cottages, a group of affordable houses built in 1996, and an increasing number of large renovations/rebuilds and some infilling.

Coles Oak Lane runs from its junction with Shoebridge Hill & Colchester Road, parallel to Stratford Road, through to Blackbrook Hill along the ridge between the Stour and Black Brook valleys. Buildings are spaced widely apart in general, and a rural feeling is maintained with large gaps and fine vistas. However, the fashion for executive style "security gates" has changed the appearance of the lane with the loss of hedgerows.

The Stratford St Mary Conservation Area also has some fine listed buildings.

Materials

Most of the brick found in the Conservation Areas is red but Suffolk whites are also used and there are a few examples of nineteenth-century polychromatic brickwork. Timber framing is normally rendered but in some cases the timbers are exposed. Plaster rendering is normally painted or lime washed, sometimes in colours. There is very little traditional pargetting but on the side of the Merchant Weaver's House, (the butchers shop), there is a most unusual survival based on Borromini's design for the coffering of the dome of the Church of S.Carlo alle Quattro Fontane (1638) in Rome. Much more common is the practice of imitating ashlar (dressed stone) blocks by incising horizontal and vertical lines in the plaster when wet. Weatherboarding, either painted or tarred, is sometimes found in the parish but it is limited to cottages and outbuildings.

In other parts of the parish new building has been in various materials with some buildings following the principles of the Essex Design Guide by employing different materials within each building or group. Most of the large executive dwellings have been finished in render, painted cream, whilst brick of various colours, though usually red, has been used for smaller properties.



Roofs

In the Conservation Area roofs are either pitched, hipped or gambrel, sometimes with fine late medieval or seventeenth-century chimney stacks. Dormers with pitched or flat roofs are common with an occasional lead-covered semicircular example. The materials used are plain peg tiles or pantiles in red clay (very occasionally glazed black) or slates (natural not artificial). Many roofs have bargeboards, generally plain but sometimes decoratively carved. A few thatched roofs survive in the parish. A monopitch "hen-coop" roof is found on only one modern building and flat roofs are limited to small extensions, outhouses and garages. These strike a discordant note in the Conservation Area and are completely alien to the vernacular. Rainwater goods, always painted either white or more often a dark colour such as green or black, are normally made of cast iron; gutters are half-round or ogival in shape and downpipes are round in section. There are numerous television aerials but no visually intrusive satellite dishes.





Guidelines

Conservation Areas

Where ever possible traditional lime-wash for plastered walls should be used in preference to modern commercial paints.

Where authentic old pargetting survives it should be conserved. Modern imitations, which tend to be feeble or over-elaborate, should be resisted.

Incised lines in rendering, imitating blocks of ashlar masonry, are a distinctive and attractive traditional feature which should be preserved. When replastering takes place, these lines should always be reinstated exactly as existing.

Tiles, slates and roof finishes should be natural rather than artificial and any new or replaced roof should use them. Concrete tiles are inadmissible.

Thatched roofs should be carefully maintained and when renewal is necessary, traditional thatching should be used.

New or replaced roofs should retain the existing height and pitch.

Bargeboards should always be retained.

Chimneys should not be removed as they are an important part of the roof line.

Guidelines

Conservation Areas

Changes to existing doors and windows should only be allowed in exceptional cases.

Replacement doors and windows should retain the character of the building. UPVC doors and windows are normally unacceptable.

Carefully designed secondary glazing is considered to be more appropriate than double glazing. However advanced technology, combined with careful consideration of the original, may produce double glazing that is acceptable.

Refurbishment often reveals the original windows of medieval houses modernised by Georgian and Victorian builders. Whilst they may be left exposed, for interest, on the inside, the architecture is compromised if they are left exposed outside.

General

The pattern and style of windows and doors in extensions to properties should complement the existing structures.

In semi-detached and terraced houses, windows and doors should aim to retain cohesion and unity in the design of the whole building.

Doors & Windows

The impact of doors and windows on the appearance of a building is critical. With the exception of listed buildings, changes to windows and doors are, usually, not controlled by planning legislation or policies. However, it is essential that, wherever it is located, the style of the host dwelling and its setting are respected.



Doors in the Conservation Areas are made of wood, normally painted and of panelled construction with moulded architraves. Sometimes they have glass panes in the upper part. Front doors generally have door cases and occasionally a glazed fanlight. Hoods are common, a few with pediments and there are a number of nineteenth-century porches with classical columns. Lesser doors, like garden gates, are often made of vertical planks, ledged and braced.



Windows are rectangular or occasionally round-headed. They are mainly wooden and painted but there are also iron casements, some with leaded lights. There are sash windows with a wide variety of glazing bars, all of them with mouldings. There are a few windows with single or large panes of glass. Sashes are side hung or vertically sliding with counterweights in sash boxes. Some, unusually, are designed to slide horizontally. In buildings which are rendered, the windows are normally set flush with or slightly let into the wall surface, often with narrow wooden pentices or, in recent years, overlapping lead strips to throw the rain off. Bay windows are found in the area, often on houses which were previously used as shops.



Boundaries

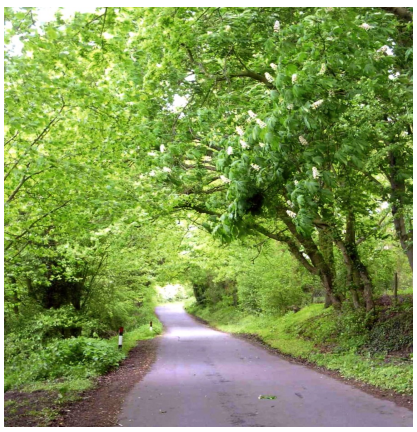


Throughout the parish, a wide variety of materials is used for boundaries to properties ranging from modern concrete to period railings, often with matching gates and lantern supports. Farm land and open spaces are, generally, bound by hedges and trees, often with adjacent ditches. In recent times there has been a proliferation of "bollards" along roads and lanes where the verges have been, or are considered to be, in danger of damage from vehicles unable to remain, or careless of remaining, on the highway. These vehicles tend to be lorries and the damage to the verges can be considerable.

In the **Conservation Areas,** railings, brick walls and wooden fencing and palings are dominant and are an important feature of the overall street scenes.

In the area adjacent to the Dedham Conservation Area, Forge Street, Parson's Field and Crown Street, materials used for marking boundaries are varied. In Forge Street some boundaries have been removed to give access to hard standing where a front garden had been. Parson's Field has an open plan style to the front of the properties giving a pleasant feeling of space. In Crown Street steep inclines have required a varied treatment.

Long Road, which joins the following envelopes to each other is mostly bound by trees and hedges. At either end the trees arch over the lane producing tunnels of greenery which are characteristic of lanes entering the parish. Recently, stretches of this hedging have been removed introducing an urban feel to this important part of the AONB.





Guidelines

Native plant species should be used for all hedges; hawthorn, blackthorn, hazel, dog rose, holly & beech etc. Quick growing species such as *macrocarpa* or *leylandii cyprus* should be firmly restricted.

All boundaries should be carefully maintained, especially trees and hedges, with replanting where areas have been removed.

Old brick boundary walls should be retained. New ones should be built in traditional manner. Particular care should be taken over bonding, corners, joints and capping (no expansion joints).

Wherever reasonable, the removal of boundaries to facilitate off-street parking should be discouraged.







Guidelines

Large and elaborate gates, walls and fences are not in keeping with the AONB and the rural nature of the parish.

Where appropriate, hedges and shrubberies should be encouraged to reduce the impact of new buildings and extensions.

Wood should be used for supports of close boarded fences, post & rail, post & chain etc in preference to concrete.

Where "bollards" are agreed to be necessary, they should be of natural materials and discreet.







At **Dedham Heath** the "open plan" design of the front gardens of Dedham Meade give the small estate a good feeling of space whilst maintaining the rural environment. The boundaries on Coggeshall Road, The Heath and Long Road, East and West, are largely hedges. Some of these have been rooted out in recent times giving certain areas an urban aspect at odds with the rural situation.

Bargate Lane/Long Road East, has a mixed style of boundary with hedging dominant. Where it has been removed the line of the lane is rudely interrupted and the characteristic "green lane" is momentarily lost. Many properties have found it necessary to protect their boundary with "bollards". When of regular spacing, artificial design and painted white these can be intrusive. Natural rocks, reasonable sized boulders or logs blend into the rural scene more easily, as do wooden post and chain.

Boundaries at **Lamb Corner** are a mix of styles and materials with a large proportion of hedging which helps the new extensions and buildings blend into the hamlet. Although much of Lamb Corner is situated on the B1029, these hedges help maintain the rural feel of the area.

Boundaries around the village envelopes and open spaces within them are almost totally of trees and hedges, many of which are of great age. These lead out into the surrounding fields and lanes which are well known for their beauty and form part of the Dedham Vale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.





Garages & Driveways



A variety of materials is used for the building of garages, hard standing and driveways in the parish. The material selected can greatly enhance or detract from the appearance of the dwelling and the street scene.

In most cases, both freestanding and attached garages are built of brick or wood, but there are some built of concrete and other materials. Roofs are usually pitched, covered with clay tiles or slates in keeping with the properties to which they belong. However there are some with felt roof covering or other materials. Doors are usually made of wood or often in the case of up-and-over doors metal. Both types can be painted. Most garages are sited level with or behind the building line but many of the newer dwellings in the parish have their garages in a prominent position in front of the building making them intrude into the street scene Away from the Conservation Areas, where houses have large plots, the "Heritage" style of garaging has been much favoured. These usually provide closed and open protection and occasionally log stores and loft space above .

Driveways are surfaced in a wide variety of materials, ranging from gravel and shingle, occasionally brick and frequently tarmac, concrete slab or impressed patterned concrete. Again, the materials used have a considerable impact on the property and the street scene.

Security & Convenience lights

More and more homes are considering it necessary to have security lights and other lighting around the outside of their homes. These lights are often very bright and can be intrusive to neighbours. They can also affect passers-by, especially motorists. High intensity automatically operated security lights are found to be a nuisance to neighbours and others where they are incorrectly positioned and/or are of great intensity. Where care has been taken only to illuminate the walls of a dwelling, and/or the area immediately adjacent to them, with lights of appropriate strength, size and design, these automatic systems can avoid being triggered by passing bats and neighbours cats whilst still fulfilling their purpose.

Guidelines

New garages should be unobtrusive, match the materials of the host dwelling and surroundings and should not be built in front of the building line. The local environment should always be taken into consideration.

Large areas of hard standing in front of dwellings should be avoided or at least interspersed with planting.

Driveways and hard standing should be in materials that accord with the dwelling and the neighbouring driveways.

Gravel, shingle or clay paving bricks should be used for driveways in the Conservation Area. Elsewhere the rural environment and Dedham's position in the AONB should be taken into account when choosing materials for driveways. The concreting of verges is inappropriate and should be avoided.

The choice of security and other lighting should be considerately located and their size, design and strength should illuminate only private areas and not obtrude on the appearance of the building.

Buildings should not be continuously floodlit throughout the night unless exceptional circumstances exist.

Guidelines

Street furniture, such as benches and litter bins etc should be of a design that blends well with the rural environment. Where existing street furniture is replaced this should be taken into account. However a uniform urban approach to such items is not considered necessary or appropriate.

The design of street furniture throughout the parish should be carefully considered, of high quality and in keeping with the surroundings.

The proliferation of bollards is not to be encouraged. However where they are thought to be essential they should be kept to the minimum and should be of a similar design to those already *in situ*.

The style of letter boxes and telephone boxes at present in the parish should be maintained and retained.



Street Furniture

Seats, bins, bollards,cycle racks.

Seats In the Conservation Areas there are many hardwood/cast iron seats which blend into their settings. The ones in Royal Square and outside the Pharmacy are well used and more would be welcome. Likewise those along the path across the Drift provide useful resting places, as do those in the children's play area and the churchyard. Outside the Dedham Conservation Area there are seats overlooking the Vale and water meadows from the Stratford Road. A small "viewing area" exists there with room to just pull a car off the lane. This is well used and could possibly be improved.

Although there are seats at The Heath crossroads, Coles Oak Lane and in Crown Street, there are many places throughout the parish where a seat would be welcome for rest and the enjoyment of the AONB.

Bins The litter bins provided throughout the Dedham Conservation Area and most of the parish are of a good size and blend into the street scene or landscape. Their design prohibits the natural instincts of birds and animals alike. The open topped concrete bucket shaped bin at the seats in the Stratford Road is not in keeping with is position.

"**Poop" bins** are of an inconspicuous design**.** On the playing fields they provide a useful reminder to owners that they are exercising their animals on playing fields for children and sportsmen. These bins can fill up quickly and are often smelly. Certain positions around the fields are more used than others. These bins are also to be found around the parish though possibly more are needed.

Bollards It has been necessary to erect bollards in the High Street. The design of these has been carefully chosen to blend in with the street scene whilst achieving their object. *Also see boundaries*

Cycle racks There is a cycle rack provided by the Borough Council on the corner of Royal Square and the High Street.

Letter and telephone boxes, notice boards and bus shelters

Letter Boxes The parish is well served with letter boxes all of which are of a traditional design**.** The letter box outside the Post Office is a free standing cast iron one. Elsewhere in the parish there is a wall mounted iron post box at Castle House, one built into a brick pier at Coles Oak Lane and the others (5) are of the rural "box on a post" design.

Telephone boxes At Royal Square, in the Conservation Area, there is a highly architectural cast-iron telephone box with a domed roof and small panes, designed by Giles Gilbert Scott in the 1920s. This is an important feature of the area. More modern "glass" boxes are to be found at Forge Street and Dedham Heath and Lamb Corner.

Notice boards There are several notice boards for public use in the village In general they are of wooden construction in a simple design. There is one in each village envelope plus one in Royal Square. There are also church notice boards and a Parish Council board. They are usually sited with one or more of the above.

Bus shelters There are four bus shelters in the parish. The shelter at The Heath is a wooden structure on a brick base, the one at the Lamb Corner end of Long Road West is of timber cladding and the one on the bend in Crown Street is of brick. These have a rural appearance; however the brick built one on the A12 is more urban and suffers from graffiti.





Lighting

With the exception of Mill Lane there is no street lighting within the Conservation Area. Most houses have porch lights and some have exterior light (please see Security Lighting page 31) The Church and the Assembly Rooms both have outside lights and the public houses have lighted windows, lights above their entrances and light to illuminate their inn signs. A variety of shop windows along the High Street are lit up at night. The Co-op light illuminates Royal Square. Mill Lane has some discreet lighting provided by Victorian style street lights and the car park has lighting provided by intrusive concrete, high modern lights which are thought inappropriate to their position. As a result the historic centre is randomly but adequately lit.

Elsewhere in the parish there is no street lighting except in Parson's Field and Dedham Meade where lighting is from tall concrete lamp posts providing yellow light.

The absence of the clutter of lamp standards and the lack of light pollution to blot out the beauty of the night sky add greatly to the unspoilt atmosphere and attractive appearance of the parish.

Guidelines

Any attempts at replacing the Royal Square telephone box or the present letter boxes with items of a more modern material or design should be resisted.

A programme of replacing the orange street lighting with lower standards, projecting white light downwards only, should be put in place. These should be of a style more considerate of the AONB.

Urgent plans should be put in place to replace the inappropriate lights in the Mill Lane car park with ones that are suitable to their sensitive surroundings. Where down-lights are used in parking areas these should be hooded to avoid light pollution.

Both external and internal illuminated commercial signs should be discouraged.

External lights (e.g. on public houses, restaurants etc) should be shielded and directional and the light they shed should be a warm white rather than orange.

Every action possible should be taken to minimise the effect of "Skyglow" on the area. Low intensity lighting should be encouraged.

High intensity automatically operated security lights can be a serious nuisance. The installed lighting should illuminate private areas only.

Guidelines

A review of all signs in the parish should be carried out, with a view to ensuring that their location, design and size intrude as little as possible on the street scene and the rural aspect of the area .

Discussions should take place with the Highways Department to see how far the signs needed for the correct use of the highways can be organised and tempered to fit their siting more considerately and in a manner that better reflects the department's authority.

Traffic calming measures should be appropriate to the AONB.

The possibility of signs designating the hamlets of Lamb Corner, Dedham Heath and Bargate Lane/ Long Road East should be considered.



A review of the positioning of no-parking restriction signs should be encouraged.





Signage—footpath, traffic, business and tourist.

Highways Sign congestion is present throughout the parish and although it is appreciated that some directional and general highways signing is essential, there is a strong feeling that these, and other signs, should be kept to a minimum. Dedham is unique in the county of Essex as an historic town that became a distinctive village, set in a nationally special Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The proliferation, in recent years, of signs designed for urban areas, plonked without consideration into this environment has produced unacceptable violation of that which Conservation Areas and the AONB were designed to protect.

Speed restrictions etc These signs appear to have got out of hand. Some poles have so many instructions attached to them that motorists cause obstruction if they try to read them all. It is appreciated that these signs are necessary but a more imaginative organisation of them is needed.

Street Names The new signs are clear and of a simple and neat design, making them easily seen and read. A consistency of height above the ground makes them more easily found by road users.

Parking restriction signs. These are mostly in the Dedham Conservation Area. When introduced these signs appeared to be placed at a consistent height above the road and were easily seen. Many of those in the High Street have recently been raised to 6 feet or so above the road and are no longer easily visible to a driver parking a vehicle. The poles used to hold them aloft are intrusive on the street scene, have not always been considerately positioned and are liable to be walked into.

Footpaths please see page 41 under Highways

"Poop" signs Where these are attached to the parking poles in the High Street they are too high to be noticed and are therefore ineffectual. A return to the old positions, or similar, of the parking signs would bring the "poop" signs closer to the problem.











Direction signs and their posts There is a variety of materials used for these signs, wood, metal and concrete. The plain, white painted wooden design with black lettering is greatly preferred to the concrete variety which is not in keeping with the environment.

Tourist attractions There is a signpost at Royal Square, of black metal with gold lettering, that indicates the way to the Sir Alfred Munnings Museum and other places of note. One or two more of this style of sign post would be welcomed by visitors to the parish. There are also "brown signs" in the parish which are a source of discussion.

Commercial signs In the High Street commercial signs are generally required to have advertisement consent. There are a few hanging signs in the High Street which are unlit and fairly discreet "A" boards are used by some business as are blackboards propped against buildings and in some cases these become a danger to the public. Outside the conservation area where there are many home-based businesses, advertising boards at the boundaries or at the front of the houses are not appropriate for residential areas.



Guidelines

A design of directional post that would be consistent throughout the AONB should be considered.

Tourist signs in the parish should be discreet and of the same style as that in Royal Square.

Signs promoting tourism should be very carefully considered as visitor numbers can exceed the parish's parking facilities and also spoil that which the visitors have come to enjoy.



The size and colour of hanging signs should not be unduly assertive.

Consideration should be given to the proliferation of blackboards .

Guidelines

The tangles of overhead cables in the Forge Street/ Crown Street area should be laid underground as soon as possible, as should those at either end of the High Street.

Telecommunication masts should continue to be resisted inside and close to the AONB.

Wherever possible, satellite dishes should be placed where their visible impact is minimised.

Gas and oil tanks should be landscaped in order to reduce their visual impact .

Gas boiler vents should be unobtrusive and on walls adjacent to public footpaths they should be sited well above head height.

Inside the Conservation Areas or wherever a listed building is involved, solar panels should not be visually intrusive. Throughout the parish due care should be taken with regard to the reflective powers of panels.

Renewable energy projects should not compromise the objectives of the AONB (which is the fourth smallest in the country) .

Should it be found necessary for the protection of public areas to install CCTV cameras, they should be carefully located so that they do not intrude on the street scene.

Utilities – poles, overhead cables, communication masts and dishes, gas and oil tanks and bottle banks.



Telegraph and electricity poles and overhead cables in the open countryside of the Vale are or are in the process of being laid underground. This is most welcome and their removal from view has greatly enhance the AONB. In the built environment there are some pockets where overhead cables remain and are extremely detrimental to the street scene, especially in and near the Conservation Area.

Telecommunication masts and dishes Applications for telecommunication masts have been made on a number of occasions. There is one mast in the corner of the parish close by the A12 on Gun Hill. Other applications have been refused. Telecommunication masts are felt to be inappropriate in the AONB or around its perimeter.
The placing of satellite dishes on listed buildings requires planning permission. The attachment of dishes to these buildings appears out of character and in most cases the dish has been placed successfully in the garden of the property. Elsewhere satellite dishes on buildings are often very noticeable and look out of place in an AONB.

Gas and oil tanks are often sited on the boundaries of properties, possibly to facilitate filling. When landscaped they have little or no impact on the environment.

There is a **bottle bank** in the Mill Lane car park which is well used.

Eco-friendly utilities

There are very few solar panels and no wind turbines in the parish at the moment. However Government pressure may make it necessary for the parish to have considered guidelines for their future use.
Dedham lies almost totally within the Dedham Vale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, which is considered equally with the National Parks. Within its boundaries it also has a substantial Conservation Area and some 104 listed buildings.
Some **solar systems** tend to have very high reflective surfaces which can be detrimental to the enjoyment of the rural scene because the sun's reflected rays can have " blinding" effects and can be seen from considerable distances.
Wind Turbines These are considered to be extremely intrusive to any landscape.

CCTV cameras. These are slowly appearing in the Conservation Area where at present they are very discreet.

Parking



There is car parking in the Dedham Conservation Area in part of Royal Square, at the large free car park in Mill Lane, which takes coaches and cars and is well landscaped, and in the smaller one beside the Mill Pool, which is less formal . There is two-hour waiting in the High Street, and part of Royal Square. The Assembly Rooms have a small amount of dedicated parking. Outside the Dedham Conservation Area the Sir Alfred Munnings' Art Museum also has dedicated parking for both coaches and cars. These provisions are adequate for all normal circumstances. The Medical Centre in Manningtree Road also has its own parking facilities. On festival occasions small fields close to the High Street are sometimes used to provide for the extra traffic.
There is a small parking area, for deliveries and the disabled, next to the Sports Pavilion on the Playing fields. Applications for extending this parking area have been made.

Near the school There are severe problems in the Parson's Field area due to parents dropping and picking up school children. This spills over into Crown Street where serious situations are caused for road users. The marking of most of Parson's Field with yellow lines has not solved the problem.

Extra **Residential** off-street parking is being provided by the removal of boundaries and the laying of hard standing on front gardens. This is mostly in areas where there is very restricted on-street parking available. This does affect the rural appearance of the area.

New buildings or change of use without adequate provision for parking is detrimental to the amenity of visitors and residents alike.

Commercial Car parks for office and craft unit developments in and outside the Conservation Area are adequate but where they are not screened from view, they should be landscaped to reduce their impact on their surrounding.

Guidelines

No application for new building or change of use for an existing one should be granted unless adequate provision is made for parking.

Further incursions onto the playing fields for parking should be vigorously opposed.

Urgent consideration should be given to the problem of pick up/put down points for the school.

Where hard standing is the only answer, it should be landscaped to reduce its impact.

Car parks attached to commercial developments should be landscaped to reduce their impact on the AONB.

Guidelines

Steps should be taken to engage the County Council in discussions regarding the classification of the "green lanes" of the parish as lanes with protected verges. In the light of the size of modern transport and delivery vehicles, urgent consideration should be given to the B1029 regarding its suitability for articulated and multi-axled vehicles.

Coaches should use the B1029 to the Mill Lane car park and not enter the village beyond that point, or from any other direction, as Mill Lane can not accommodate them without endangering property, pedestrians and other road users.

Quiet road surfacing, bunding and hedge and tree planning should be used to reduce the traffic noise on the A12 through the AONB.

Any attempt to light or widen this stretch of the A12 should be vigorously opposed.

Discussions should take place between Essex and Suffolk County Councils to place weight restrictions for vehicles using the B1029 with a sign on the A12 and wherever else is thought necessary.

Awareness of Suffolk County Council's proposals for Dedham Road is of paramount importance and friendly discussions should always be sought.

HIGHWAYS



The A12 cuts through the Dedham Vale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and to a large extent forms the Western boundary of the parish. It runs on an embankment across the valley floor and is a source of intrusive traffic noise for a considerable distance, on occasion to the heart of the parish. Long stretches of it have little or no protective hedge to disperse the sound.

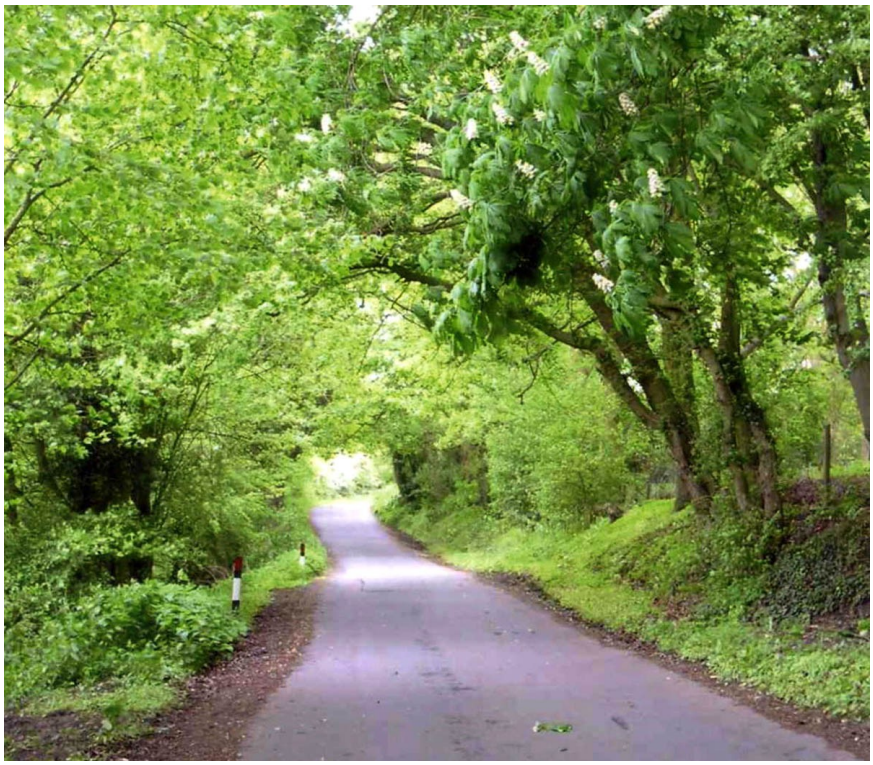
The B1029 runs from the A12 at Stratford St Mary in Suffolk, down Dedham Road to the County and parish boundary, where it becomes Mill Lane. It then turns at a difficult junction and runs down the High Street and out of the parish towards Ardleigh and finally Brightlingsea. It is used as a short cut by heavy goods vehicles between the A12 and A137, A133 and A120. Mill Lane is quite narrow, without pavement in parts, and with Mill House jutting out into the highway. It is unsuitable for heavy vehicles and pedestrians walking from and to the car park are very vulnerable. Similarly the High Street is not suitable for the passage of heavy vehicles.

Dedham Road, although in Suffolk and the parish of Stratford St Mary, is a tree-lined "green lane" characteristic of most of the lanes leading immediately into Dedham. It winds across the floor of the valley until it reaches Dedham Bridge over the River Stour and spills straight into the Conservation Area of Dedham Although this is a B road, it is a characteristic "green lane" of the area and an important visual entrance to the parish.





Roads and Lanes There are only minor roads in the parish. Many are narrow and passing is difficult especially when either or both vehicles are not normal sized cars. Some are single tracked with passing places, where speeding vehicles are hazardous for horses, cyclists, pedestrians and other vehicles. An outstanding characteristic of the parish is the large number of "green lanes", many of which have trees arching over head and varied beautiful hedges giving shelter to a wide variety of flora and fauna. The road side of the Manningtree Road, from Lower Barn Farm towards Dedham village for 100 yards or so, is designated a Local Wildlife Area. Coles Oak Lane between the A12 and Blackbrook Hill has **protected verges**.
There are no **cycle ways** in the parish although there are often cyclists enjoying the environment. Although the lanes are often narrow careful and considerate cyclists encounter few problems as traffic is usually considerate.



Guidelines

KERBING
If *kerbstones in the Conservation Areas* need replacing, stone or granite should be used to match the existing kerbs. Concrete kerbs are not appropriate.

***Outside the Conservation Areas* natural materials should be preferred as concrete is felt to be inappropriate in the AONB.**

***"Drop kerbs"* to facilitate disabled crossing of roads should take access into consideration.**

PAVEMENTS & ROADS
Replacement surfacing should be sympathetic to those existing in terms of colour and texture.

CYCLE WAYS
Most roads and lanes in the parish are considered to be too narrow for specially segregated cycle lanes and in their present state offer a rural compromise through the parish.

"GREEN LANES" In this document a "green lane" is a highway bordered and overhung by trees and hedges to give the appearance of a tunnel. They are felt to be a major and treasured characteristic of the parish.

Guidelines

Help with trying to gain protection for lanes such as Monks Lane should be sought from the Council for the Protection of Rural Essex and the Green Lanes Environmental Action Movement (a nationwide pressure group including Parish Councils, patron the Duke of Edinburgh, with over 100 MPs and members of the House of Lords).

The Police should be requested to use their existing powers to charge drivers who cause damage or who are breaking other laws pertaining to Byways designated for public use.

Orders forbidding the recreational use of vulnerable lanes and byways by motorised vehicles should be made and enforced.



Public Byways ***The definition of a Public Byway is "a right of way for vehicular traffic, but one mainly used by walkers and riders".*** There is only one Byway within the parish and that is Monks Lane which runs from Lamb Corner to Coles Oak Lane. This is an ancient lane, the central section of which has reverted to a footpath. At either end it has been tarmacadamed to give vehicular access both to the dwellings sited along the Coles Oak Lane end, where it terminates at some hard standing opposite Monks Lane Farm and at the Lamb Corner extreme where it stops abruptly beyond the cottages.

The lane runs northwards from its southern end, changing rapidly into an area of outstanding peace, natural charm and beauty. The hedgerows are ancient and the lane becomes very narrow and twisty with steep banks on either side. These characteristics draw many to walk its length and it forms an essential part of the Dedham Vale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. However this tranquillity is disturbed by motorised vehicles using the lane in a detrimental manner causing danger to pedestrian and equine users. When this happens before or after heavy rainfall the lane is very severely damaged and rutted, making it unusable or physically hazardous for pedestrians or horses. After drying out these very seep ruts leave the lane in a dangerous condition and ruin the enjoyment of the majority. They also make a delightful lane completely inaccessible for the disabled.

This new "off-road" sport, of driving voraciously along un-surfaced public byways, with its attendant danger to other users, was not foreseen when Monks Lane was classified as a Byway in order that farm vehicles might gain access to the fields. Motor vehicles, walkers and riders simply do not mix on extremely narrow footpaths in highly sensitive and scenic area.

Bridleways There are no Bridleways in the parish. Facilities for hacking have been provided at Lower Barn Farm as part of an equestrian business—The Dedham Riding Club.



Guidelines

Where, in exceptional circumstances, it is found necessary to surface a footpath, natural materials should always be used.





Footpaths *(see Apendix2)* The parish is criss-crossed by 38 footpaths, all of a very rural nature, giving walkers magnificent views of the countryside within the AONB and beyond. These paths are used by the community and visitors alike both for dog walking and recreation.

The Essex Way crosses the parish from East to West. Crossing the parish boundary near Langham, it follows path 15 to the High Street, passes along the High Street to the Playing fields on the far side of which it joins footpath 22. This joins footpath 21 to Coopers Lane. The Essex Way then goes along Coopers Lane to Footpath 38 and on to Castle Hill. It crosses the hill and continues on Footpath 36 to East Lane and then onto Footpath 37, over the railway line where it leaves the parish. In Dedham The Essex Way is of particular scenic value.

Signs marking the footpaths are on the whole clear and consistent with those throughout the Vale as a programme of replacement is in progress

For some time now, **stiles** in need of repair or replacement have been replaced with "kissing" gates. There is an "objective" in place to see all stiles replaced by gates eventually. This will make the enjoyment of the Vale available to most, including the disabled.

Guidelines

Applications for change of use for properties in the High Street from retail to residential should be refused save in very special cases.

Everything should be done to keep the quantity and diversity of retail outlets available in Dedham High Street.

Change of use from retail to office or professional services should be carefully monitored and managed to keep an active and lively High Street.









COMMERCE

Inside the Conservation Areas
The High Street, Royal Square & Brook Street



Retail outlets & Services

Given the historic importance of Dedham as an early centre of the woollen trade, as a town for the local agricultural community and as a major religious and educational centre, it is not surprising that this town that grew into a village has, for most of its recorded history, had a flourishing commercial life. Over time there has been a wide variety of retail outlets and for several centuries the weekly Tuesday market occupied the wide street between the Sun Hotel and the Marlborough Head Hotel. For a parish of its size, Dedham is fortunate in having retained a good variety of shops and businesses providing for both residents and visitors.

Over the centuries there have been many changes in both the number and nature of the retail premises in Dedham. However, in spite of these changes, there has continued to be a hard core of outlets which together create a viable shopping centre, where many residents and near neighbours from surrounding villages and hamlets can do most of their 'normal' shopping. There are some 30 outlets in the Dedham Arts Centre and High Street ranging from basic items such as food and drink, to more specialist outlets selling clothes, beauty treatments, flowers, gifts, books, a garage, pharmacy and post office and a wide range of professional services including architects, estate agents, property developers, picture restorer and artists, banking facilities and a dentist.

There is, however, a critical interdependence between many of these core outlets. The removal of one or more of the most-used shops would have a very damaging, and possibly fatal, impact on Dedham as a small but integrated shopping centre.

Residents are aware of the greater variety and keen pricing of the large out-of-town shopping centres but many prefer the convenience, friendliness, professionalism and aesthetic pleasure of the Dedham outlets, as do many visitors. Many Dedham residents do not enjoy the luxury of choice. Those without cars and those with limited mobility rely on some or all of the Dedham shops. Rural bus services tend to be infrequent and often inconveniently timed and thus do not offer a practical alternative to shopping in the High Street.

Hotels, Public Houses & Restaurants

There is also quite a wide variety of premises which cater for residents and visitors by providing anything from a cup of tea or light snack to a three or four course meal and accommodation. There are, for example, three public houses in the historic centre, two of which, the Sun and the Marlborough Head, occupy historic buildings in the High Street. the other, the Rose and Crown, is close to the residential estates on and around Crown Street. The Essex Rose Tea House offers light menus for coffee, lunch and tea. Dedham Hall off Brook Street incorporates the Fountain House Restaurant and also offers residential and non-residential painting courses and holiday lets. The Boathouse Restaurant, created from the old boathouse beside Dedham bridge, is contiguous with a new boathouse which offers boats and canoes for hire and light refreshments. Changing public tastes and requirements have caused investment in improving and maintaining many of these premises. In most cases this has been achieved without detriment to the character of the built environment and has contributed to the vitality of the parish.

The Arts

Dedham's high density of listed buildings, its highly praised Conservation Area and the surrounding Dedham Vale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty all make the parish a centre of artistic endeavour. The views that inspired John Constable, Sir Alfred Munnings (whose art museum is in Castle House) and many others before, in between and since, can still be enjoyed. Art exhibitions are frequently held in galleries and other buildings and painting courses take place during the summer. The Church and Assembly Rooms are often used for dramatic performances and concerts.

The Dedham commercial trading pattern combines a reasonably balanced mix of outlets for daily shopping for residents of the parish and adjacent villages and hamlets, with outlets which depend largely on visitors for their viability. Some of the tourist-orientated outlets, however, rely significantly on local custom, particularly in mid-week. Dedham is very unusual in managing to retain all these facilities which contribute greatly to the character of the parish. Without them the village would lose its vitality as have so many other beautiful villages in Essex and throughout East Anglia.

Outside the historic centre Milsoms Hotels operate the well-known restaurant on the Stour, Le Talbooth, (inside the Stratford St Mary Conservation Area), the Maison Talbooth Hotel and Milsoms, a bistro pub with rooms, close by. *(See also page 45)*





Guidelines

Care should be taken to see that listed buildings owned by absentee landlords are kept in a state of good repair. Such owners should be made fully aware of their duty of care towards a listed building and action should be taken at the first signs of neglect.







Guidelines

Diversification should be achieved with minimum visual impact on the Vale.

Every effort should be made to landscape diversifications into their surrounding AONB.

Materials used in the AONB should be carefully chosen to blend into the surroundings.

Where used in open surroundings, Essex clapboard should be made of wood and painted black, not white, to minimise impact on the scene.

The posting of advertising for home-based businesses in residential areas should be discouraged.

Where diversification is likely to cause increased traffic, great care should be taken to protect the verges and maintain the extremely rural atmosphere of the lanes in the parish.



Outside the Conservation Areas



The parish has a very comprehensive spread of home-based service businesses ranging from basic household and gardening, through various tradesmen, design and repair services, alternative medicine and homecare, a full range of professional services, antiques agents and boarding kennels. The attraction of the village and of the AONB to visitors supports a thriving Bed & Breakfast industry.

To the north of the High Street and Dedham Conservation Area is the River Stour which, with the Old River, forms the northern boundary of the parish and also forms the county boundary. The flood plain is farm land and in recent years some diversification has taken place. At Dedham Hall Farm change of use has taken place to allow diversification to holiday lets, offices and a rare breeds centre. Towards the eastern end, around Lower Barn Farm there have been changes of use from agricultural to 6 miles of horse rides (all off road) and some farm buildings have been converted into to offices and craft workshops.

In the block of land bounded by the Manningtree Road, the parish boundary and Castle Hill & Coggeshall Road, much of the land is now grazed by horses, giving rise to a consideration of re-instating a riding school. At the junction of East Lane with Castle Hill the Sir Alfred Munnings Art Museum occupies Castle House, a listed building with extensive grounds, which draws many visitors to the area during the summer months.

Moving west, the land between Long Road West and the Conservation Area is agricultural; however south of Long Road West there are two caravan sites and a large, specialist commercial nursery.





In the far south-west corner of the parish, next to the A12, a farm has diversified to include a small light industrial estate (possibly with offices) and a petrol station. A 90 bed hotel, and a banqueting hall with spa have been proposed. While not far away, heading north, on the other side of the A12, agricultural land has been given change of use to a 42 (due to increase to 54) bed Nursing Home for elderly and mentally infirm patients. A nearby house has been purchased with the intention of providing residential care. In the same area there is a small light industrial estate and a scrap yard with a Certificate of Established Use. These are all on the edge of the Dedham Vale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. There have been proposals for a green/woodland burial ground overlooking the Stour.



Milsom Hotels & Restaurants have a group of establishments in the north-west corner of the parish, comprising Le Talbooth, an internationally known restaurant in a 16th century building next to the river (which is within the Stratford St Mary Conservation Area, Dedham), Maison Talbooth, a Victorian country house hotel, and Milsoms, a modern gastrobar in a Victorian Building.

The farmlands wrap around the Conservation Areas and the three outlying hamlets of Dedham Heath, Lamb Corner and Bargate Lane and are an important characteristic of the parish and the Dedham Vale AONB.

Guidelines

The adaptation of suitable, redundant, traditional, agricultural buildings for commercial use should be encouraged. Conversion to residential use should generally be resisted.

The introduction of stables, loose boxes and equestrian facilities, such as a riding-school, should be controlled to ensure that they are in sympathy with the surrounding landscape and buildings. Great attention should be paid to the siting, design and materials used.

Any change of use in the Gun Hill area should be very carefully considered in conjunction with the needs and views of the local community.

The environmental impact of any commercial development within the AONB should be considered extremely carefully.

The AONB is extremely precious and should not be exploited.

Guidelines

The integrity of the AONB should be protected at all times.

Every effort should be made to manage the land in such a way as to protect the grazing as far as possible and to safeguard this rare and historic landscape.

New uses for farm buildings should be appropriate to the agricultural environment and refurbishment should be in materials that take full consideration of the delicate balance of the AONB.









COUNTRYSIDE



The river and water meadows

Much wildlife is attracted and sustained by the natural and undeveloped state of the land forming the Dedham Vale. Willows lining the river banks give that special Wind-in-the-Willows effect whilst the water meadows remain rich green with the benefits of grazing livestock. Dedham's close proximity to the Stour estuary also encourages many wildfowl including, in the winter months, migratory birds feeding on the fields.

The grazing and farming

The predominance of meadowland with its natural boundaries of hedgerows and trees is especially significant to the character of the area. The grazing of these fields is important to the lush green appearance of the Vale as without this husbandry it would very soon return to scrubland and thistle, although, of course this would have been the type of terrain present several centuries ago. In addition to grazing, the farming of arable fields, together with haying of meadowland, reflects beautifully the nature of the Vale. The changes in colour that crops bring to the landscape and the activities of harvest time are all important events in the Dedham Calendar. There is also a significant horse population to be seen grazing throughout the area, particularly on the upper slopes of the Dedham Vale. Horses play a key role in the Dedham picture ensuring the fields get grazed and encouraging the haying of some meadows for winter feed.

Skyline & views

As well as the magnificent and ancient church tower, the skyline is marked with formations of trees and hedging from almost every direction. The mixed nature of the land, trees and hedgerows makes a vital contribution to the overall views and character of the gentle landscape around Dedham. The pockets of simple green pasture contrast with the groups of trees and hedgerows and they soften the landscape giving the area its simple, untainted and unique natural landscape. The countryside experiences wonderful expanses of sky, culminating in frequent stunning sunrises, sunsets and rainbows. The views of the valley into and out of Dedham remain completely unspoilt giving a wonderful feeling of space.

Natural wildlife

The fields have a wealth of mature native trees and many small pockets of woodland and areas of spinney, which encourage rooks and woodpeckers. The area has a very high water table with a network of ditches throughout the fields. The meadows encourage insects and field mice, which in turn encourage other wildlife. The rotation of arable, grazing and hay together with the right balance of fallow fields provides excellent habitat for wildlife and encourages wild flowers and foliage. The kestrel and owl live here, ground nesting birds like the skylark and pheasant are undisturbed and house martins return to feed on the insects. The terrain is varied and interesting with plenty of molehills and rabbit warrens. Some fields left fallow provide wonderful conditions for the adder and happy breeding grounds for foxes.

Country roads, lanes & footpaths

The leafy canopies and hedgerows of the Dedham roads bring a very beautiful charm to the countryside and the natural verges harmonise with the countryside. These country roads, particularly towards the top and ridge of the Vale, have some stunning viewing points and their rare character must be protected. A well maintained network of public footpaths with “kissing gates” connects with these roads and lanes. Part of the Essex Way runs through the area and it is important that signs are kept in character with the countryside and presented in a friendly manner, encouraging regard for the precious landscape.

Guidelines

Development within the AONB should be severely restricted and only take place in small units and after very careful consideration.

Diversification should be in keeping with the AONB.

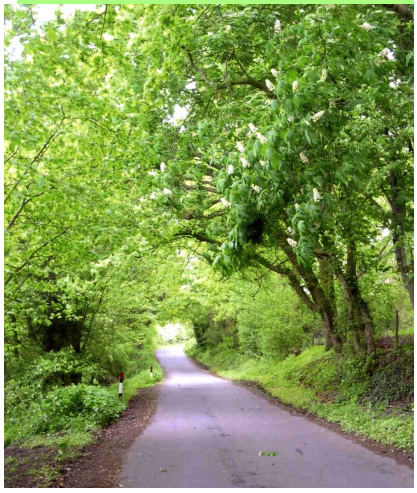
Responsibility for maintaining ditches should be made clear & utility companies should take care to retain the natural verges and ditches.

Woodlands, spinneys and hedgerows should be preserved and where possible planting programmes should be encouraged.

Every effort should be made to maintain the balance of trees, hedgerows and green, natural meadows.







Guidelines

A survey of the trees in the parish should be undertaken as soon as possible. Where appropriate Tree Preservation Orders should be applied for. Listing of these trees, together with the positions of copses, spinneys and woodland, should be compiled to avoid the loss of mature trees and hedges.

Tree Preservation Orders should be placed on suitable trees BEFORE they become endangered.



TREES & WOODLAND

The parish of Dedham lies on the floor and southern slopes of the Dedham Vale. Shrouded by trees to such an extent that from outside the parish the only suggestion of habitation is the top of the church tower showing just above the tree line. From whichever side the parish is viewed, the hedges and trees give the area the look and feeling of woodlands and the overall peace that is part of such an idyll. All entries to the parish involve passing along "green lanes" with trees forming overhead arches and gaps in the hedgerows through which the beauties of the landscape, associated with John Constable and his paintings, can be enjoyed.

Throughout the parish there are many extremely old trees which, thanks to a certain amount of good luck and careful maintenance, survive in relatively good health. These trees, in general, are listed having had **T**ree **P**reservation **O**rders (**TPO**) placed upon them, while trees in the Conservation Area are automatically afforded protection. In recent years a number of new copses, spinneys and woodlands have been planted. These have been carefully planned and are part of ongoing programmes.

A Tree Preservation Order is an order made by a local planning authority, which in general makes it an offence to cut down, top, lop, uproot, wilfully damage or wilfully destroy a tree without the planning authority's permission. These orders can be and are placed on trees, bushes or shrubs and can cover anything from a single tree to woodlands.



The planting of indigenous species throughout the parish, should be encouraged, especially along boundaries, where it is particularly important.





Trees within the Conservation Areas.

There are many mature trees within the Conservation Area, as many of the gardens have been *in situ* for hundreds of years. The playing fields, churchyard and gardens between the High Street and the River Stour provide strong tree cover which includes beech, chestnut, mulberry, lime, yew, sycamore, holly, a architectural Cypress *Australis* and many mature decorative trees such as magnolia and fruit trees which are rare survivals. Dedham is well known for its magnificent Wisteria *Senensis*, many of which can be seen in the High Street. The 1970s saw the introduction of occasional "hedges" of Leylandii which appear at odds with their surroundings. Owners pay great attention to the care of their trees.

Within the Conservation Areas, subject to some exceptions (including very small trees and ones that are dead or dangerous), trees are protected and treated in a similar manner to those covered by TPOs. The council has to be notified before any major work or tree pruning can be done. A tree, or shrub, measuring 7.5cms in diameter at a position 1.5 metres above the ground, needs permission for pruning or felling.

Trees outside the Conservation Areas

The lanes in the rest of the parish are mostly lined with mature hedges which are kept in good order by those responsible for them. These hedges have many trees within them, from young saplings to mature specimens which form arches over the lanes giving the parish one of its major characteristics. The farmland is criss-crossed with hedges, many also containing trees. There are several small woodlands, copses, and spinneys, both mature and newly planted, which are carefully managed. At Dedham Heath the trees in Dedham Meade are protected by Tree Preservation Orders in order to retain the rural feel of the area.

Some hedgerows and their attendant trees have been grubbed out to facilitate wider access to properties. This has caused destruction to the "green lanes" of which they are an integral part.

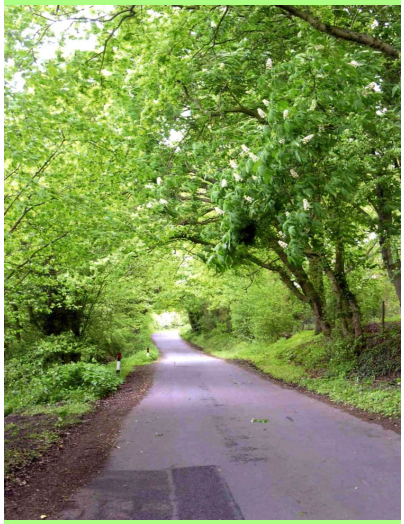
Trees on farmland, private estates and the National Trust land

A great deal of replacement and new planting has been done in these areas. Specimen trees, copses and small woodlands form part of continuous planning schemes in all these areas. These schemes are carefully considered and managed.

Guidelines

Where it has been necessary to remove hedges to facilitate works of some kind they should be replanted with suitable species. Boundary hedges and hedge trees are an important part of the rural character of the lanes in the parish and should be preserved in all cases.





Appendix 1 LISTED BUILDINGS

Where a name has been changed, the name at the time of listing is given in ***italics in brackets***.

In the Dedham Conservation Area

Brook Street

North side	Brook Cottages	II
East side	Dedham Hall	II
	Muniment House	II
	Limetree House *(The Limes)*	II

Colchester Road

East side	Lower Park	II
	Park House, Lower Park *(Coachhouse to south of Lower Park)*	II
	Garden wall, south of Coachhouse	II

Crown Street

East side	Barfield's Almshouses	II
West side	Whitmore House & Weavershed House *(Weavershed House)*	II
	Sceoppa House & Dydda House *(Block to south-east of Weavershed House, Whitmore Place)*	II
	Holly Tree House	II
	Baytree Cottages	II
	Dunton's Almhouses	II

The Drift

West Side	Southfields	I

High Street, including Royal Square

North side	No 1 High Street	II*
(East to West)	Brook House	II*
	Dalebrook House	II*
	Gould House	II*
	Nos 5 & 6 (Little Georgian House & Sheldrakes)	II*
	Marlborough Head Inn & Loom House	II*
	Essex Rose Tea House & Co-operative Grocery	II*
	Ivy House	II*
	Shermans	I
	Pharmacy (& Post Office) Nos 1-3 Brannam Court & Old Tallow Factory *(House & shop west of Shermans)*	II*

High Street continued:-

	The Sun Inn	II*
	Merchant Weaver's House *(Crofters & Evans & Sons)*	II
	Shakespeare House	II*
	The Compasses & Dedham Bookshop	II
	Dedham Gourmet & Old Bakery Cottage *(Vale Bakery)*	II*
	The Old Exchange	II
	1-3 Threadneedle Street & Smith's Estate Agents *(House & shop west of The Old Exchange)*	NG
	Little House	II
	Great House	II
	Westgate House	II
South side *(East to West)*	Lindsay House *(The Manse west of Congregational Chapel)*	II
	K6 telephone kiosk	II
	Village Pump & railed enclosure	II
	Old Grammar School & Well House	I
	Memorial Cross	II
	Duchy House	II
	Churchgate House	II
	Parish Church of St Mary	I
	The Vicarage	II
	Abbotts Estate Agents & Just for You *(Shop west of Vicarage)*	II
	Dairy House	II
	London House	II
	The Old Post Office *(Dedham Post Office)*	II
	The Chocolate House *(Shead & Dines)*	II
	Assembly Rooms *(Hewitt Memorial Hall)*	II
	Wheelwrights	II
	Pennypot Cottage & Ramplings	II
	Dedham House *(see also School Lane)*	II



Mill Lane

East side	Mill House	II
West side	Meadow Cottage *(The Haywain)*	II
	The Octagon *(Octagon House)*	II
	Marlborough Head Inn	II*
	(see also High Street, Royal Square)	

Princel Lane

East side	Little Netherhall	
	(Princel Lane Cottages)	II
West side	Littlegarth Cottages	II

School Lane

East side	The Old Post House	
	(Hammond Builders)	II
	Old School House	II
	South Cottage	II
West side	Dedham House, ***(see High Street)***	
	Garden wall & railings to front of Dedham House	II
	Outhouse at rear, south-east of Dedham House	II
	Garden wall to east of Dedham House	II

In the Stratford St Mary Conservation Area, Dedham

Gun Hill

North side	Le Talbooth	II*
	The Kennels	
	(Gun Hill Cottages 1 & 2)	II
	Wilderness House	
	(The Wilderness)	II

continued overleaf



LISTED BUILDINGS Continued

Outside the Conservation Areas

Anchor Lane *(The Chase)*
East side Winterflood House II
Appletree Cottage II

Bargate Lane
West side Bargates Farmhouse II

Boxhouse Lane
East side Boxhouse Farmhouse II

Coggeshall Road
East side Old Hall II

Coles Oak Lane
North side Upper Park II
Rookery Farmhouse II
South side Monks Farmhouse II

Cooper's Lane
East side Nos 12 & 12a *(No 12)* II

East Lane
North side Knights Manor II*
South side Castle House II
Garden wall of Castle House on north & west sides II

Grove Hill
North-west side
Shelley Glebe Barn II
Grove Cottage II
The Cottage II
South-east side
Brook Farmhouse II
The Grove II
The Coach House
(Stable block to North East of The Grove) II

Gulls Lane
Southern End
Meadow Cottage II

Gun Hill
South side Mulberry House II
The Rookery ***(See Stratford Road)***

The Heath
East side Malting Cottage II
Old Church House
(former school) II
Appletree Cottage
(see Anchor Lane)

Lamb Corner
East side The Thatched Cottage II
West side Hill House
Lamb House (*The Lamb Inn)* II
Mount Pleasant II

Long Road East
North side Earlings II
Heath Court II
South side Jupes Hill House II
Hill Farmhouse II
Lufkins Farmhouse II

Long Road West
North side Rye Farmhouse II*
South side Beech Cottage & Toad Cottage
(Nos 1 & 2 Beech Cottages) II

Manningtree Road
North side Pound Farm II

Monk's Lane
Southern end, east side
Faith Cottage II

Stratford Road
North side Bell Cottage II
Dalethorpe,
Middle Dalethorpe
& Dalethorpe End II
South side The Rookery
(before A12 was built entrance was on Gun Hill) II

If your premises is listed you should contact the Borough Conservation Department to discuss your need for Listed Building Consent for any alteration to your property. This could include the colour you paint your property.

Appendix 2

FOOTPATHS

Number	*Route*
1	Boxhouse Farm (west direction) — Blackbrook Hill (crossingA12)
2	Boxhouse Farm (east) — Coles Oak Lane
3	Boxhouse Lane 100yds south of Boxhouse Farm –west, Bottom Grove Hill
4	Boxhouse Lane 300 yds north of junction with Birchwood—west to A12
5	Boxhouse Lane 200 yds north of junction with Birchwood—east to Lamb Corner(through grounds of Hill House)
8	Birchwood Road 300 yds west of Lamb Corner—south to Birchhall Corner, Malting Farm Lane
12	Long Road West 300 yds east of Ardleigh Road—south to Hunters Chase, next to Original Landscape Designs
13	Long Road West 350 yds east of Ardleigh Road—north (on Louse Lane) to end of Coopers Lane
14	Louse Lane (FP13) 200 yds north Long Road West—east to site of TheAnchor, The Heath
15	High Street nearly opposite The Assembly Rooms—east to Milsoms
16	Dedham Hall—north to Dedham Mill
17	Brook Street junction with High Street—north-east to river and on to Flatford
18	Brook Street (side of Mortimer House) — east via Farm towards Manningtree
19	Mill Hill (Mill Cottage) — north to Flatford (crossing FP18)
20	Brook Farm, bottom Grove Hill towards Sports Pavilion, Dedham Sports field ending FP22
21	Shoebridge Hill (Ardleigh Road) 50 yds north-west Coles Oak Lane—south-west towards Coopers Lane
22	End of FP20 onwards to Sports Pavilion
23	Black Brook next to Park Farm, Coopers Lane—to FP22
24	Black Brook towards gate in field and junction FP25
25	Opposite Rose & Crown, Crown Street, — to junction FP21 near Coopers Lane
26	Coles Oak Lane (100 yds west of junction Monks Lane) — north to Stratford Road 9100 yds south-east of Milsoms.
27	Coles Oak Lane 50 yds east of junction Monks Lane—north to Atratford Road 300 yds south-east of Milsoms
28	Coles Oak Lane 50 yds east of junction Monks Lane—east to Stratford Road 200 yds from junction High Street
29	Crown Street (opposite Southfields-The Drift) —-south-east to East Lane and on to the bottom Jupes Hill
30	East House, East Lane—north to junction FP29
31	Junction FP30—north to Manningtree Road
32	East Lane 100 yds east of Castle House—north to junction FP29
35	Junction end FP32/junction FP29—north to Pound Farm, Manningtree Road
36	Winterflood House, Castle Hill—east to East Lane (bend on hill)
37	East Lane, top of hill (100 yds to junction Long Road East) - south– east to railway line and beyond (crossing Long Road East)
38	Brook Farm, bottom of Grove Hill—east to end of Coopers Lane by Hunters Moon—to Castle Hill
40	50 yds stretch between bend halfway along FP39 and intersection FP
41	Bargate Lane (immediately north of railway) west 200 yds turn north 300 yds to Long Road East
42	Foxash Farm (Harwich Road) —north-west—then Gull's Lane to Long Road East
43	Mays Lane, Long Road West 250 yds east of Ardleigh Road—north to Brook Farm bottom Grove Hill
45	Opposite end of Stratford Road/High Street—east to Sports Pavilion
46	High Street next to Old Post Office—south to FP45
47	Lamb Corner—(north Monks Lane) to Coles Oak Lane

For detailed maps showing the above footpaths, please contact:-

John Osborn 01206 322 157 or Eve Jones 01206 322 068

A FEW POINTERS TO HELP YOU ASSESS PROPOSED CHANGES TO YOUR PROPERTY

If you are considering extending or changing your property, in any way, (building a new garage, adding a porch or conservatory, making use of your loft space by adding dormers or roof lights, changing or adding any external features) the following steps may help you achieve a good result.

Have a good look at the guidelines in the Dedham Village Design Statement.

Look at your property, from some distance, and note the characteristics of the area, making special note of any distinctive features. Make a separate list of any recent and/or out of character features that make your premises stand out against the surrounding properties and/or landscape. Taking photographs can be a help with this.

Now stand right in front of your property and do the same again but look at the details of windows, doors, eaves, etc.

Repeat this process for each elevation or aspect of your property.

Next, check whether, the changes you propose are in line with the Village Design Statement guidelines, will assist in removing any uncharacteristic features you have noted, will have any impact on your surrounding and that of your neighbours.

Finally, **GO TO COLCHESTER BOROUGH COUNCIL PLANNING DEPARTMENT, YOUR BUILDER OR ARCHITECT** and ask whether they agree with your Design Assessment or can suggest any improvements to it.

If you **live in a listed building, consult the Borough Conservation Officer** and discuss your ideas before you submit an application for Listed Building Consent.

The Council has numerous leaflets, or advisory notes on their website, giving guidelines to their planning policies which can be very useful when considering making a planning application..

Simplicity of design is nearly always a good starting point.

NB These definitions are solely for guidance. The Dedham Parish Council & Colchester Borough Council should always be contacted for legal definition and requirements

GLOSSARY

Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty A.O.N.B. The Dedham Vale has been designated an A.O.N.B. for its landscape and scenic beauty. The prime aim of the designation is the conservation and enhancement of the natural beauty of the area including land form, geology, plants and animals, landscape and the rich history of human settlement over the centuries. A secondary aim is to meet the need for quiet enjoyment of the countryside having regard for the interests of those who live and work in it.

Article 4 Direction Where there is a specific threat to the character of an area an Article 4 Direction can be made. This removes permitted development rights for the carrying on of specific types of development.

Change of Use Every property has a designated use. To change that use you need Change of Use Permission.

Conservation Areas are "areas of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance" and were created by the Civic Amenities Act 1967. Maps of the areas can be seen at the Borough Council Offices and show individual buildings. Development in Conservation Areas is dealt with through the ordinary planning application process but a Conservation Area Consent is likely to be needed if demolition is involved.

Countryside Conservation Area This is an area, within Colchester Borough Council, considered to be of the greatest importance for its rural resources. It is given protection from any development likely to be prejudicial to its natural, social, and cultural resource.

Listed Buildings, as a generalisation, need permission for changes inside and outside. They come in 3 grades, 1 (2%), 2* (4%) and 2 (94%). Again generalising, all buildings before 1700 and still recognisably so, are listed, as are most built between 1700 and 1840, although there is a degree of selection applied. After 1840 much greater selection is made and for those buildings less than 30 years old listing only occurs when they are of outstanding quality and under threat. A copy of the statutory list for Dedham can be seen, free of charge, at the Council Offices. The list gives the address and a brief description to help identification. Listing protects the whole building inside and out, even those parts that are not specifically mentioned in the brief description. The protection extends to attached and sometimes adjacent buildings if erected before 1st July 1948. About 2.5% of buildings in Britain are listed by the Department of National Heritage as being of special architectural or historic interest.

Listed Building Consent is quite different from Planning Permission and can be required in circumstances where the latter is not required. It is needed if the proposed work affects the "special interest" of a building. This can include stone cleaning, re-thatching, even painting.

Local Wildlife Site (formerly known as Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation, SINCs)
A site within Colchester Borough Council thought to be of local wildlife interest.

Protected Verges are areas of road side protected for their plants and wildlife.

Site of Special Scientific Interest S.S.S.I. are designated for their natural wild life.

Tree Preservation Orders are made by the local planning authority and make it an offence to cut down, lop, top, uproot and wilfully damage or destroy a tree without the planning authority's permission. Trees within a Conservation Area are automatically covered by **T.P.Os.** *(see page 48)*

Village Envelopes are areas within a village where development can take place, subject to Local Authority policies.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We have the entire community to thank for all the help we have been given in preparing the Dedham Village Design Statement. However there are some who we should mention specially.

The **Rural Community Council of Essex** who managed the workshop at the Dedham Primary School and the Photographic Workshop Day.

The **Dedham Parish Council**, especially our liaison officers from their Planning Committee.

The **Dedham Vale AONB & Stour Valley Project**, especially [redacted] for the immense enthusiasm, good nature and sheer hard work he put into starting us off and [redacted] who has given us a great deal of help in completing the statement.

We are also immensely grateful for the wisdom and help given to us by members of the planning, policy making and various conservation departments of **Colchester Borough Council**. We would also like to acknowledge the interest shown by our Ward Councillor [redacted].

Lastly, our thanks to the **East of England Regional Authority** for their encouragement and clarification of Government guidance documents.

Financially we are indebted to:-
The Dedham Parish Council for getting us started.
The Dedham Vale A.O.N.B. Sustainable Development Fund for continuous funding.
Financial input by members of the community has been substantial.

Thanks also to those who **research**ed subjects for us and/or helped **write** the statement.

Most of the **photographs** come from those taken at the Photographic Workshop Day plus a few taken to illustrate a special point. However we are grateful to the **Dedham Vale AONB & Stour Valley Project** for the use of those on pages 3, 35 & 51 to **Tendring Hundred Water Services** for the diagram on page 5, **The Rural Community Council of Essex** for the photograph on page 59 and to [redacted] (Colchester 503855) for the view of the High Street on page 42.

The **drawings** on pages 2&3 are by [redacted] and the drawing on page 59 was done by **a child at Dedham Primary School** on the RCCE Workshop Afternoon.

Our thanks to the **Village Design Statements throughout England,** that preceded us, for giving us some sound ideas.

The Dedham Village Design Statement Association Steering Group were:-
[redacted] & a member of the Parish Council Planning Committee.

The Design Statement Team were:-
[redacted], the High Street Retailers, the Farmers & Land Owners, and at various times countless others.

THANK YOU

CONSULTATION PROCESS

For some 8-10 months various associations and societies within the parish held discussions to find a way to protect the High Street shops for the future of Dedham. It became clear that a Village Design Statement was the only way to achieve this aim. Cllr [redacted] (Ward Councillor on Colchester Borough Council) became involved and a questionnaire was sent to every home as part of the Parish Magazine.

2004 **November 4th** A well attended public meeting was held in the Assembly Rooms hosted by Cllr Garnett. A presentation on Village Design Statements was given by the **R**ural **C**ommunity **C**ouncil for **E**ssex together with the Dedham Vale & Stour Valley Project. A list of volunteers was collected.

2005 **January 5th** **A** " Leading Committee" was formed to plan the initial consultations.
February 1st First of several meetings to plan the Photographic Workshop and School Workshop.
May 10th Year 5 **Primary School Workshop** run by RCCE.
May 14th **Photographic Workshop Day** based in the Assembly Rooms, run by RCCE.
May 24th Meeting called and run by RCCE in Assembly Rooms, to draw up a constitution and elect a Steering Group. The agenda was not completed.
July 17th **Public exhibition** of pictures taken and work done on the Photographic Workshop day followed by a public meeting, called and run by the "Leading Committee", to accept a constitution for **The Dedham Village Design Statement Association** and elect officers and members of the Steering Group.
August 29th Repeat of 17th July **exhibition** (with further statements) in the Duchy Barn.
September 4th **Public exhibition** of topics to be covered held in the Assembly Rooms.
October 27th Meeting of volunteers at Loom House to allocate subjects.
November 3rd Meeting with Farmers and Landowners at Loom House.

2006 **6th May** **Mini questionnaires** delivered to Youth Club, Senior citizens and Clubs & Societies.
September 2nd **Questionnaire** delivered to every home in the parish
September 23rd **Public Exhibition** of "First Draft" of the statement followed by AGM of the Association in the Duchy Barn.
September 30th Questionnaires returned.

2007 **April 24th** Draft checked by Steering Group.
April 27, 28 &29th **Draft Design Statement** checked by contributors.
31st May Draft discussed with Parish Council Planning Committee. Accepted by PC June 13th.
June 13th Draft discussed with an officer of Colchester Borough Council Planning Department.
June 18th Draft discussed with a member of Dedham Vale & Stour Valley Project team.
July 3rd Draft discussed with a member of Colchester Borough Council Planning Policy Department.
July 25th Discussion of conservation issues with a member of Colchester Borough Council Conservation Department.
September 22nd **Final Public exhibition of Design Statement** held in the Duchy Barn followed by AGM of Association.
October Dedham Village Design Statement submitted and accepted by Colchester Borough Council as a **Planning Guidance Note**.
November 24th **Launch of Statement from Royal Square**.

Events have been advertised in the Parish Magazine and local paper, by posters on all parish boards and in shop and house windows in the High Street. Two events also had flyers delivered by volunteers to most homes in the parish.

Where several months elapsed between events, a notice of what was happening was put in the news section of the Parish Magazine.

An enormous amount of information and opinion has been collected from informal conversations with interested villagers from all parts of the parish, some having been approached because of their specific knowledge.

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Photographic Workshop Day

The Dedham Village Design Statement has been produced by the Dedham Village Design Statement Association after community consultations (please see Consultation Process) using information and photographs provided by the community.

Age 10yrs

I like Dedham because.....



Where copyright is due to professional bodies acknowledgement has been made under

Acknowledgements.

Copyright for the Statement rests with the Dedham Parish Council.

Dedham Primary School Workshop Afternoon

UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES MAY COPIES OF THIS STATEMENT BE SOLD.

"……we went through the beautiful street of Dedham,
where we stopped and looked at its great church……
My new home, Castle House…...was near a perfect river and village ……"
Sir Alfred Munnings 1951/2 Copyright Castle House Trust



Alfred James Munnings (1878-1959) ***A Barge on the Stour at Dedham***
Copyright Castle House Trust

"By reason of the variety and excellence of its ancient buildings, harmoniously grouped and representative of many periods, the village street has few rivals in England. Dedham itself and the famous landscape enhance one another and thus together form a perfect and unspoiled whole."
Marshall Sisson 1946

"There is nothing at Dedham to hurt the eye" **Nikolaus Pevsner 1954**

Change is constant.
The way we embrace it defines the future.

Annex J

Eight Ash Green

VILLAGE DESIGN STATEMENT



Village Design Statement



Which way should we go?
(Modified Signpost)

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1. Introduction

Welcome to the Eight Ash Green (EAG) Village Design Statement (VDS) which covers the Civil Parish of EAG and includes Fordham Heath, Daisy Green, Lexden Heath and Seven Star Green.

The VDS Group would like to say "Thank you" for your support and help in producing this Statement which we hope accurately reflects the views and opinions as expressed *by you* both in the questionnaires you completed and in the attendance at the various village meetings and exhibitions.

The VDS also includes a note setting out the Character of the Village (Section 9) as well as a diagram of the village, maps and photographs so that the reader gets a clear idea of what EAG feels and looks like.

During the whole time members of the VDS Group have been working on the Statement on your behalf, they have had three key thoughts or questions in their mind:-

- How can the essential character of the village be preserved in any future developments that are acceptable to the community?
- How can the VDS support the overwhelming desire as expressed in the Parish Plan, to maintain the tranquil, rural feel of the village?
- What *practical* and *helpful* guidance can be given to those who intend to build or extend their properties that help to care for and enhance the appearance of the village?

We hope that you find this document helpful, both at an individual level and collectively as a community, and that it is something you will refer to as and when necessary. If you have any comments or suggestions, please send an email to www.eightashgreen.com

[redacted] [redacted]

Chair of the Eight Ash Green Village Design Statement Group
July 2013

Chair of the Eight Ash Green Parish Council
July 2013

2. Executive Summary

At the annual village festival in July 2011, we launched the EAG Parish Plan which included an Action Plan that set out a number of issues that the people living in EAG thought should be tackled, such as improving the broadband speed in the village.

The Parish Plan also made it quite clear that we enjoy living in a lovely rural setting in a beautiful part of the country which we want to see protected, preserved and improved for the future, both for ourselves and for our children. We do not want to see our village become an urban sprawl - we really value our village way of life which is relatively crime free, a safe place to live and has the Jewel in the Crown that is the Heath. Section 10 describes the protection afforded to both Fordham Heath (VG187) and Seven Star/Daisy Green (VG188). This position has been definitively reinforced by the responses to the VDS questionnaire distributed in July 2012 as set out in the VDS Technical Report which can be found on the village website.

Whilst a Parish Plan identifies a number of *actions* that need to be achieved, the purpose of a VDS is to *describe the character* of a village, (see Section 9) supported by a number of Design Guidelines that aim to help to care for and enhance the appearance of a locality.

Despite having thirteen listed buildings (see the map on page 30 and Annex C), ours is a relatively new village, so what you will find as you read the VDS, is that the majority of the Design Guidelines are of what might be called “generic” ones ie. that are applicable to the village as a whole. This recognises that whilst we have fourteen distinct Defined Settlement Areas (see Section 11), that describe what may be found in each area in terms of housing and infrastructure, only a few Design Guidelines lend themselves to being applicable to a particular Defined Settlement Area eg the Design Guideline, “The Heath and associated wild meadow areas should be preserved so as to protect the rural nature and feel of the village” is clearly only relevant to Area 2 – “The Heath”.

What lies behind the Design Guidelines set out in this VDS is that both the feel and look of EAG are very important to the people who live in the village – they do not want to live in an urban area - they value its current rural aspect and outlook. The various Design Guidelines provide a clear set of statements that give a clear expression to their wishes about the future of the village of EAG.

The significance of the VDS is set out in Section 3 (What is a VDS?), paragraph 2 in particular, Section 4 (The VDS and its Planning Status), and how it is linked to the national perspective - Annex B.

Because the VDS is a very important document, we are distributing a hard copy to every household in the village as well as placing it on the village website. At some stage, it will probably affect most people who live here, whether you intend to extend your house, the type of hedging/screening you may wish to plant or if you intend to replace or widen the material covering your front drive for example. Planners and developers will also be able to see what developments you want to see happening in the village in the years to come, or not as the case may be.

We commend this VDS to you.



Cooks Hall Lane and the Heath

3. What is a Village Design Statement?



Eight Ash Green is a beautiful, sought after area, for all of the right reasons. Long may it last. *



30 mph speed repeaters throughout the village are needed.*



Preservation of greenfield areas and wildlife habitat is essential.*

*** Comments from the VDS questionnaire**

A VDS is a publicly available guide that identifies the characteristics of a village, which are valued by the people who live there. It provides guidelines on how the characteristics should be respected in any future building work, as well as practical ways to care for and enhance the appearance of a locality. The aim is to focus on best practice both in terms of design and quality which are acceptable to the community, so that any new development is in keeping with the existing character of the village. A VDS does not address the principle of *whether* any development should take place, but rather *what it should look like,* if it does. The aim is to help promote sustainable development by way of sympathetic designs and use of the appropriate materials.

A VDS can be a positive influence on future development by having a real impact on the design of any new buildings and other infrastructure such as extensions, new porches, changes to windows etc to help ensure they are in harmony with their setting thus making a positive contribution to the immediate environment. Planning applications stand a greater chance of success if they adhere to the guidelines set out in this document. The Parish Council would encourage people/developers to discuss their proposals before submitting a planning application, although the Parish Council is able to give advice at any stage of the process.

There are three key points to bear in mind. First, a VDS is about managing change in a way that reflects the views and wishes of those living in a village – not preventing it. Second, the clue is in the title – it is a **Statement** about what we, the villagers would like to see happening should any building work occur where we are living. Third, a VDS gives local people a recognised voice in the planning system rather than having to rely on protest to make their views heard.

4. The Village Design Statement and its Planning Status

All significant development requires planning permission and each application is considered against the Colchester Borough Council's (CBC) main statutory planning document, the Local Plan. The Local Plan provides strategy and policies to guide development in Colchester to 2021 (2023 for housing).

The Local Plan comprises a number of inter-related documents. In Colchester's case the Local Plan is made up from the Core Strategy (adopted December 2008), which sets out the long-term vision for the Borough and the objectives and strategic policies to deliver that vision, the Development Policies Development Plan Document (adopted October 2010), the Site Allocations Development Plan Document (adopted October 2010) and the Proposals Map. Together these documents set out the policy framework to guide future development across the Borough. It is against this framework that the VDS has been prepared.

The development decision making process is informed by all the documents that contribute to the LDF as well as by national policies. This includes, for example:-

- The Core Strategy adopted by CBC in 2008.
- The relevant Development Policies set out by CBC as part of their LDF (see Annex A) which the EAG VDS Group has considered in putting this Village Design Statement together.
- Any Neighbourhood Plans drawn up by communities that set out a development vision about how local communities want their local area to develop in the future.
- A National Planning Policy Framework was published by the Government in 2012 and Annex B sets out the key points that are relevant to the production of our VDS.

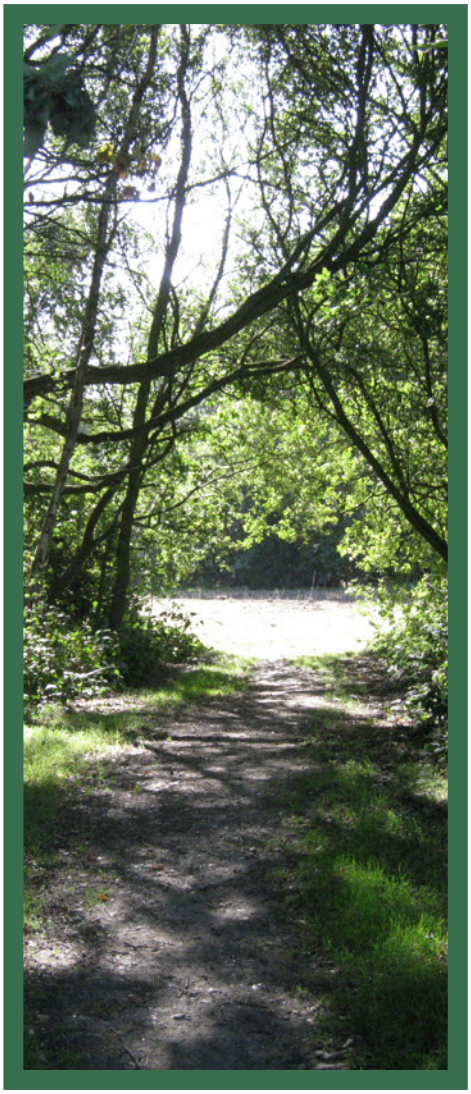
Although a VDS is not a statutory planning tool, it does have a formal status in the planning system administered by both the Parish and Borough Councils. If approved for use as a material consideration, a VDS can:-

- Give designers and developers positive guidance on acceptable design from the community's point of view which can help avoid conflict later on.
- Improve design in rural areas by being applied consistently in the development control process. It becomes part of the planning process for planning applications and therefore could help local planning authorities accept/reject planning applications on the grounds of design.
- Help protect visually important buildings and open spaces.



The Heath

5. Development and preparation of the VDS



The Heath

The VDS was developed by a small team that first produced the Parish Plan for the village which was published on the EAG Website in 2011.

The main activities included:

- Speaking to both [redacted] at the Rural Community Council of Essex (RCCE) as well as Beverley McClean at (CBC), all of whom provided some excellent advice and guidance.
- Making use of the RCCE VDS Guidance Pack.
- Looking at the VDS produced by other villages.
- Making contact with Heather Hann at the EAG Village school to obtain her help and support - see Section 12.
- Preparation - distribution - analysis of the village questionnaire.
- Hosting a number of village meetings/exhibitions.
- Keeping the village informed of progress by way of the Village Newsletter.
- Obtaining agreement of both the Parish Council and CBC to publish the VDS.

This has been a lengthy process taking just over two years to come to fruition.

6. Relevant findings from the EAG Parish Plan

Although increased levels of housing are not proposed on a significant scale for EAG, residents were able to express their views in the Parish Plan questionnaire about the nature and type of housing which may be permitted in future. At present the village has a variety of housing types as set out in Section 11 below ranging from distinctive and individualistic housing stock to newer estates of the 1960s and 1970s for example, which have significantly changed the scale of the settlement.

The Planning section of the Parish Plan questionnaire was answered by a large number of the respondents indicating its importance to people within the village. The majority of respondents, to the question about the location of any new housing development, suggested that no additional sites should be allocated. Of those who did accept that some development might have to take place, the centre of the village was favoured. When questioned about the type of housing that should be permitted, if at all, favour was expressed for smaller starter homes and 2-4 bed family housing.

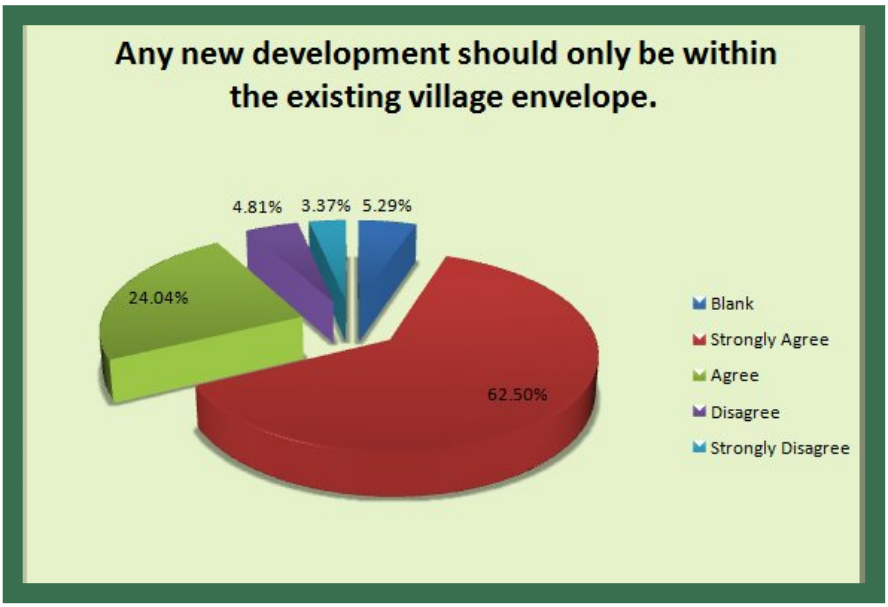
The results are available on the EAG parish website.

7. Consultation

Following on from the Parish Plan, which included the results from a detailed questionnaire, a further questionnaire was distributed which was firmly focused on the design issues that were not covered in the previous one. A full Technical Report was made from the results from this latest survey and it was published on the village website in November 2012. These results are used in this document to provide the Design Guidelines, reflecting the wishes of the inhabitants of the village. This VDS will provide advice for Local and County planners and of course the residents, regarding how we would like the village to look now and in the future.

The most important points made are included in this Section. However the full analysis may be seen on the village website (www.eightashgreen.com) following the links to the Village Design Statement.

The questionnaire was divided into eight Sections, seven dealing with separate groupings of questions and an eighth for comments not covered in the other sections:-

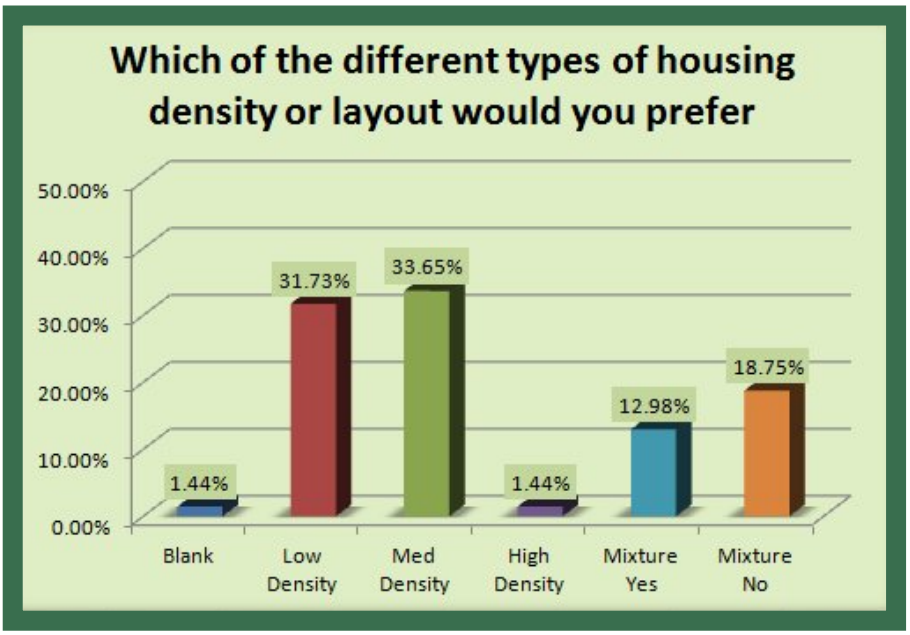


Section 1 - **Housing (General)** - A majority (86%) would like to see any development limited to within the village envelope, a map of which can be found in the Parish Plan. Most thought that a very small addition to the village would be acceptable if planned as infill, individual plots, or a small development of 2-5 houses, where appropriate.

Section 2 - **Infill of one or two houses and or extensions** - The majority would like new development or extensions to be sympathetic to nearby buildings, following the skyline, not blocking out neighbours light, and with private parking on the property.



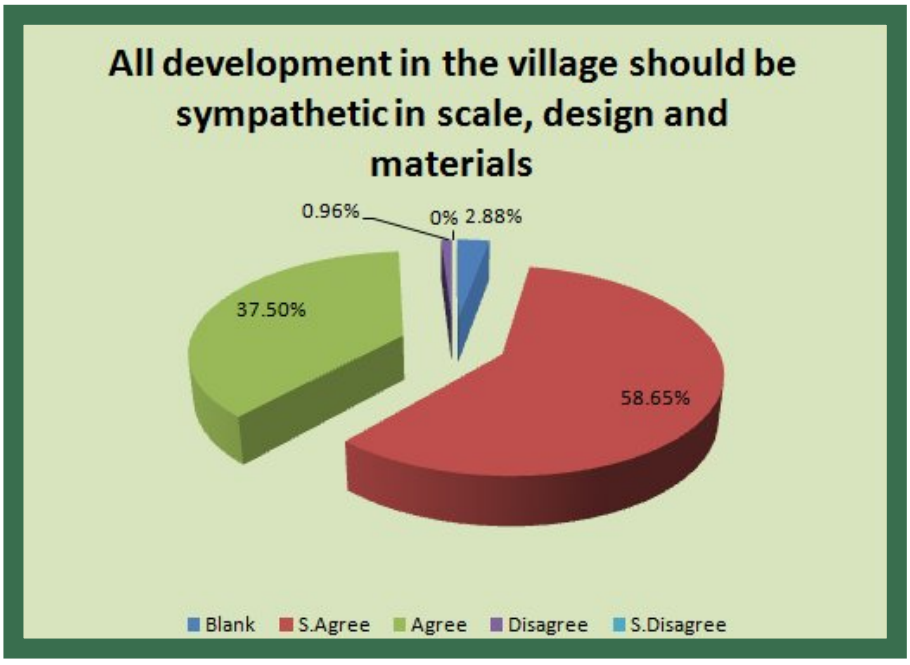
7. Consultation



Section 3 - **Estates and Developments** - Low or medium density developments would be acceptable providing garden sizes were considered to be in proportion with the proposed housing.

Section 4 - **Sustainability and external features** - The majority are in favour of sustainable developments and solar panels but not wind power in any of its forms.

Section 5 - **Design and materials** - A very high proportion of those filling in the questionnaire would like the style of new development to fit in with surrounding properties.



7. Consultation

Section 6 - **Environment and open spaces** - A high majority would like to see the village remain as it is with regard to the open spaces and environment. The gaps between the village and adjacent villages should be maintained with the Heath, and our open spaces protected.

Section 7 - **Business and employment** - More research on local business may be needed to establish whether land/premises are required and where the village might want them.

Section 8 - Most of the comments made in the questionnaire, which are relevant to the planning process, and thus the VDS, are covered by the answers to the relevant questions. Other comments which refer to the beauty, situation and general look of the village are either set out below or are used as quotes throughout this document.

Keep the Heath free of any type of building or development
Keep the green wedge around the village

I think there should be affordable housing built for local people who cannot afford to buy in the village.

It is VERY important to retain the "Rural" feel.

I think it is key to maintain the village feel and atmosphere whilst allowing some modest development over the 15 year period
I think it is essential to keep the green wedge between us and Stanway on both sides of the dual carriageway

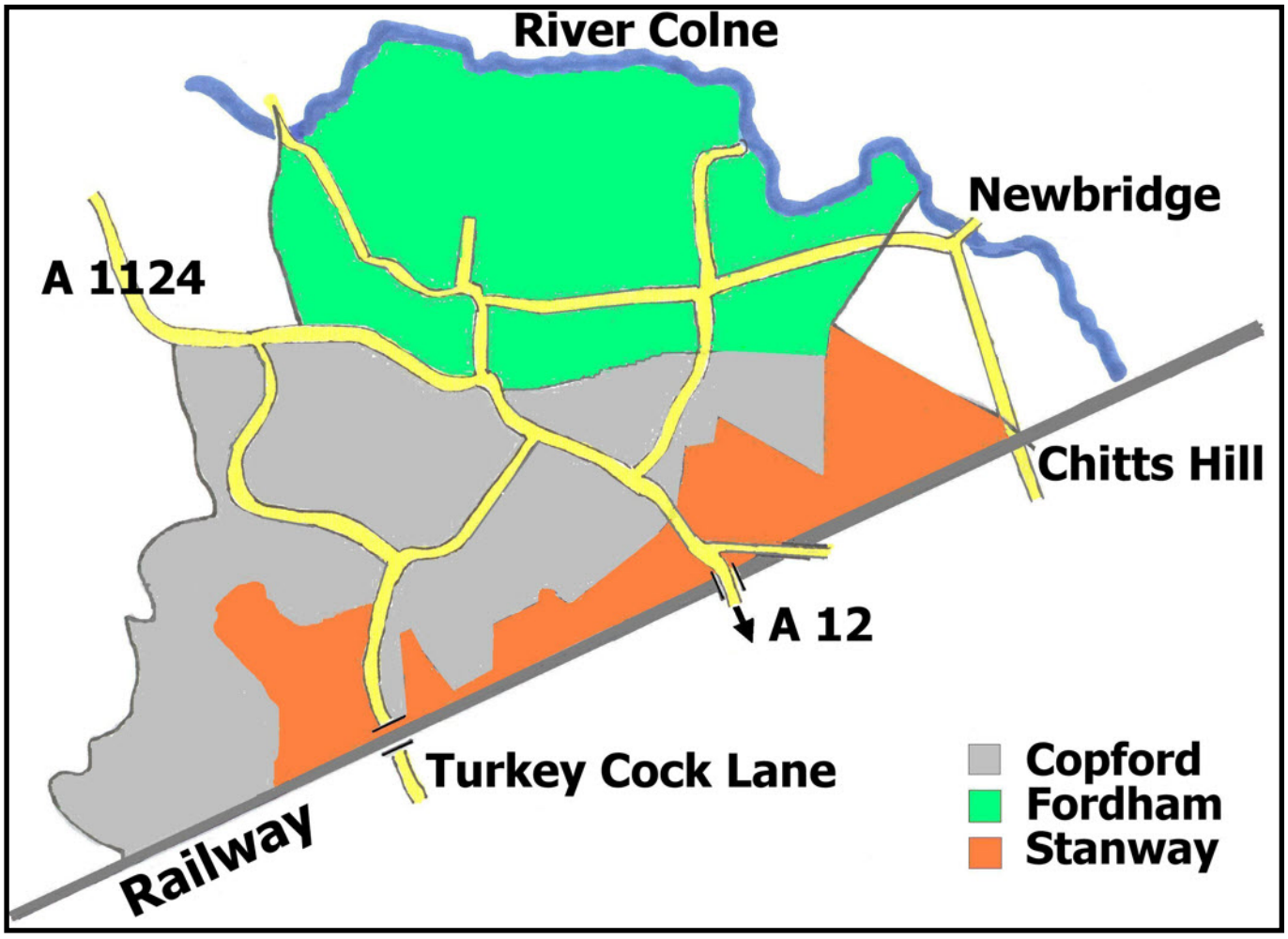
Some types of contemporary design can compliment traditional design and can add interest to the village scape. Eight Ash Green is not a village that expresses a 'heritage style' that justifies the degree of protection as say, Finchingfield, and disparate architecture would therefore not necessarily offend.

A delightful village - let's keep it that way - resident of 72 years.

8. History of our Village

In 1467 there was evidence of woodland clearance for the development of small hamlets in this part of North Essex with names such as Copford Green, Daisy Green, Gallows Green and Alevenasshes appearing. Alevenasshes means 11 ashes and is thought to be the first mention of EAG. The hamlet of EAG was centred around a small green and pond opposite the site of the then Brick and Tile which itself was in existence by 1754 but closed in 2011. Very little evidence of the pond and green still remains and today the village is without a natural centre, unlike so many older villages. EAG has long been a settlement area with prime agricultural land. A fine example of a Neolithic polished flint axe was found in a field behind the Cricketers (on edge of Fordham Heath) in 1968 together with other flints of a similar honey colour.

The parish of EAG came into existence in 1947 taking land from the surrounding parishes - from Fordham 641 acres, Copford 844 acres, Stanway 125 acres and Aldham 4 acres. At this time the population was 660 and people were mainly involved in agriculture or local trades. There were scattered farms and cottages with two main dwelling areas around Fordham Heath and at the crossroads by the Brick and Tile where an ancient road (Blind Lane) from Copford to West Bergholt crossed the Halstead Road. There were also a few cottages by Seven Star Green and Daisy Green had one 18th century farmhouse (Willow Farm) and cottages built to accommodate workers on the new railway line. Sally's Cottage was once the home of the local hare catcher ('sally' being the name for 'hare'). Seven Star Green and Daisy Green were given to EAG Parish Council in 1973 by deed of gift from the lord of the manor of Copford.



8. History of our Village

The 36 acre Fordham Heath was first recorded in 1391 as 'le hathe' and was granted by an Act of Parliament to the parish of EAG in 1965. The Heath was well grazed by cattle, horses, donkeys, sheep and goats. During the First World War it was given over to a camp for the Somerset Yeomanry and in the Second World War it was ploughed up to help food production. The Chapman and Andre map of 1777 shows the outline of the Heath much as it is today. In days gone by, an old well at the top of the northern slope provided a constant supply of pure water for villagers living around the Heath. Water was also collected from small wells in private gardens and there was a well in the Choats Wood area. Various farmhouses were built around the heath (Crook's Farm, Gatehouse Farm, Heathside Farm, Burnthouse Farm and White House Farm) and gradually private dwellings were built along Spring Lane, Huxtables Lane and at the top of Cooks Mill Lane. There has been a public house on the east side of the heath for many years, originally The Star but now The Cricketers. There was also a small beer house on the edge of the heath at the junction of Huxtables Lane and Spring Lane called The Half Moon. This is now a private house.

Agriculture has always been the main means of employment in EAG and the surrounding area. Most farms concentrated on arable farming with some livestock but with the agricultural depression in the late 19th and early 20th centuries farmers diversified into seed and fruit growing and poultry farming. 75% of men in the area were directly employed in agriculture or closely related trades in 1851. Some men would have been employed in the two watermills on the edge of the village area - Cooks Mill and Argents Mill and local women would have been able to boost their family income by spinning for the cloth weavers in Colchester town until this trade disappeared around the middle to the end of the nineteenth century. There was a windmill in Huxtables Lane on the south side of Fordham Heath until the end of the nineteenth century. This produced flour and would have given employment to one or two people.

Today the village consists of an ancient Heath surrounded by residential development and a few retail outlets. It is separated from nearby villages by farmland and near to the A12 in Turkey Cock Lane there are a total of 12 commercial enterprises, with about 6 commercial units at Fiddlers Farm.
EAG is sited close to the modern A12 dual carriageway that runs from London to Great Yarmouth in Norfolk. The Romans built a paved road from London to Colchester, later known as the Great Essex Road and the current A12 route closely follows this Roman highway. The village is also intersected by the A1124, the old Colchester to Cambridge turnpike road. Both the A12 and A1124 are busy roads and traffic flows impact on the village, but it is still possible to enjoy peace and quiet in the side roads.

Over the years a ribbon development has appeared alongside the A1124 divided in the middle of the village by arable fields and Seven Star Green. Housing has also been built along the road to Fordham and around the access road to Fordham Heath (Spring Lane). There was major development in the 1970s with Fiddlers Folly and the new school building to the west of the village and Heathfields and The Walk developments off Spring Lane to the south. Since then there has been very little new build apart from a small development on the A1124 near the church in 2010 and 3 infills of approximately 5 dwellings each, off Wood Lane. The population in 2013 is 1,800 with some 750 dwellings. Many residents work in the surrounding large towns of Colchester, Chelmsford and Ipswich, and still more travel to London for work.

There are 13 Grade 2 listed buildings in the parish of EAG – listed in Annex C. Most of these buildings are on the outskirts of the parish and were originally in Copford, Stanway or Fordham. The oldest surviving house is Abbotts Hall circa 1500. It was a huge manor described as having land in Stanway, Fordham, Copford and Lexden, so must have spread over most of Eight Ash Green at one time. It is now a special school with an intake of 44 pupils. Bulbanks Farm on the Halstead Road to the east of the village was associated with the Bolebek family in the 13th and 14th century and was part of Little Fordham Manor held by St John's Abbey in Colchester.

The church of All Saints on the Halstead Road (A1124) was built of locally made brick in 1866 to serve the then northern part of the parish of Copford. It is now jointly administered with the church in Fordham. A 1879 map of Fordham shows a 'primitive Methodists Church' in Huxtables Lane on the corner of Fordham Heath. The Methodist Church is now in a more modern building on the Halstead Road, built in 1932 with extensions in 1975 and 1986. In 1875 a school opened on the corner of Halstead Road and Spring Lane. This moved to land by the church in 1926 and to its present building in Fiddlers Folly in 1976.

9. The Character of our Village

As can be seen from the History of the Village, EAG is a relatively young village in its own right, having only been established since the 1940s. Nevertheless, it does have its own character of a small rural village, mostly modern but with some much older housing, with a population of about 1,800 people living in some 750 houses. EAG stretches just over 3 kilometres from east to west and just over two kilometres maximum from north to south. It rises some 40 metres above sea level, occupying the high ground to the south of the beautiful Colne Valley which contains the ancient Essex Way National Trail. At its heart, EAG boasts one of the best preserved pieces of ancient heathland in the County.

Whilst the village as a separate entity does not have a long pedigree, it does contain thirteen Grade 2 Listed Buildings that are spread out across the village, five of which can be found in Turkey Cock Lane on the south side of EAG. The earliest of the Listed Buildings dates from around 1500. Further details can be found in Annex C. However, Eight Ash Green is not a village that expresses a clear and distinct “heritage style” that justifies the degree of protection as say Finchingfield in Essex does.

Like a number of villages in East Anglia, EAG sits astride a busy main road or thoroughfare – the A1124 – which is based on the old Colchester to Cambridge Turnpike. It is located close to the A12 – the main route from London to East Anglia and about three miles to the West from the garrison town of Colchester which has a population of some 180,000 people. Despite its close proximity to what is a major town, EAG remains in a rural setting that combines agricultural land and buildings, housing of various types and ages, open fields and heath, woods and hedgerows. It is not therefore a suburb of Colchester being clearly separated both in geographical terms (much to the satisfaction of residents) and by the attitude of the villagers – “I moved to Eight Ash Green because I wanted to live in a village and not an urban sprawl”.

It could be said that EAG is not a real village as it simply consists of a number of separate settlements with no central “heart” that have only been combined together for administrative convenience. This argument is perhaps supported by the fact that the two main areas of housing in the East and West of the village are separated by a large open space of fields used for agriculture. However, the other side of the argument is that the “gaps” that exist actually enhance the rural feel typical of a village with plenty of light, open spaces, combined with agricultural aspects and spectacular views of the countryside. It is a village in the true sense of the word – not everywhere is or looks the same.

At first sight, EAG may appear to be disjointed with a number of different parts, but a clear example of people identifying themselves as “EAG villagers” came in 2006/2007 when a proposal to build a Park and Ride scheme in the village brought a huge response to the plans, not just from those immediately affected in Areas 1 and 3 (see Section 11 below) but also from those in the more “remote” parts such as the Defined Settlement Areas 11 and 12 for example. The whole village came together as one to protest and make their feelings known.

EAG has a number of localities which clearly have their own identity and these are set out below as “Defined Settlement Areas”.



The Brick and Tile, Spring Lane as it used to be

10. The Village Greens

Eight Ash Green is very fortunate in having two areas of registered Village Green, Fordham Heath (VG 187) and Seven Star/Daisy Green (VG 188), which are both an important medieval legacy. VG 187 and 188 are registered under the same Act of Parliament, the Commons Registration Act 1965. VG188 was sold for £1 to the Parish Council in 1973 by the Lord of the Manor of Copford and was registered in 1981. In the case of Fordham Heath, the Commons Commissioner directed the Registration Authority to register the Parish Council as owner and registration was confirmed for the various parts of the Heath between 1973 and 1979.

Both areas are covered by the same 1947 Scheme of Management under the Commons Act 1899 and by the same 1948 Bye laws made pursuant to the Scheme of Management which are currently displayed on the Heath and Seven Star Green. The Scheme of Management requires that the natural aspects or features of the common must be preserved, free access to all parts be maintained and prohibits any kind of building without specific Secretary of State consent.

Both of the registered Village Greens are therefore owned and managed by the Parish Council. The original maps, *at the time of registration*, of the Registered Village Greens (VG 187 and VG 188) can be found in this section. In the case of VG 188, the map shows that all the verges along both Seven Star Green and Daisy Green to the junction with Foxes Lane Corner are included within VG188 and are therefore covered by legislation relating to Town and Village Greens referred to above.

Village Greens are also protected by Planning Policy – Development Policy DP15 'Retention of Open Space and Indoor Sports Facilities' (see Annex A), states that ... "development that would result in the loss of any small incidental areas of open space, not specifically identified on the Proposals Map but which contribute to the character of existing residential neighbourhoods, and any registered common, heathland or village green or which contribute to green infrastructure will not be permitted".

In addition a good part of the Daisy Green highway is designated as Protected Lane. This designation originated in the 1970s under a County Council programme to identify highways needing protection but has since been included in the adopted proposals map and in LDF Development Policy 21 'Nature Conservation and Protected Lanes, (see Annex A) which says '*Protected Lanes of historic and/or landscape value shown on the Proposals Map will be protected from development that would adversely affect their physical appearance or* would give rise to a *material increase in the amount of traffic'.* Supporting paragraph 9.21 which follows Policy DP15 explains that:

"The County Council has identified certain lanes that have historic, landscape and biodiversity value which *need to be retained and enhanced through appropriate and sensitive management measures".*



View from the Heath over the Colne Valley

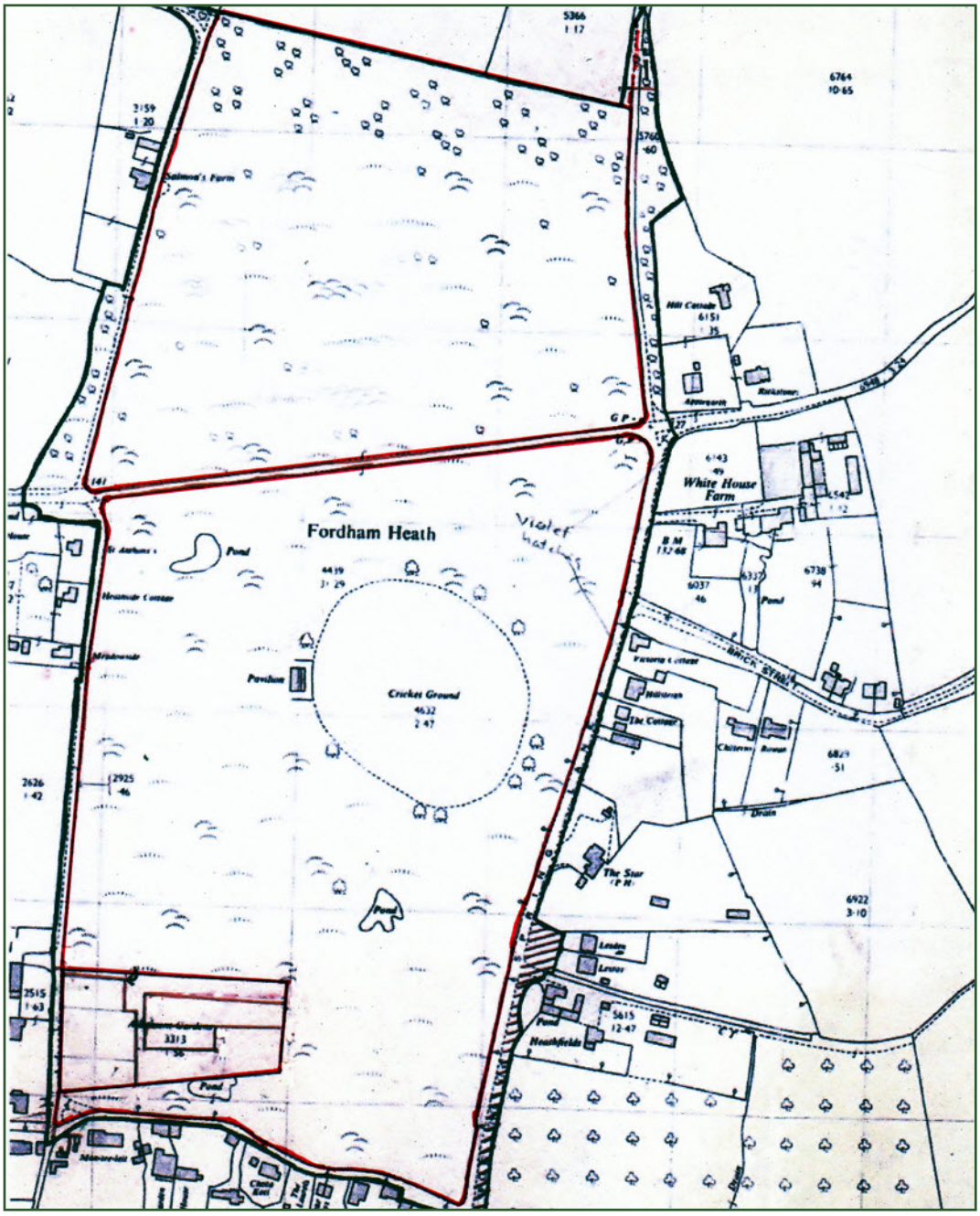
Eight Ash Green

10. The Village Greens

VG 187

THE HEATH

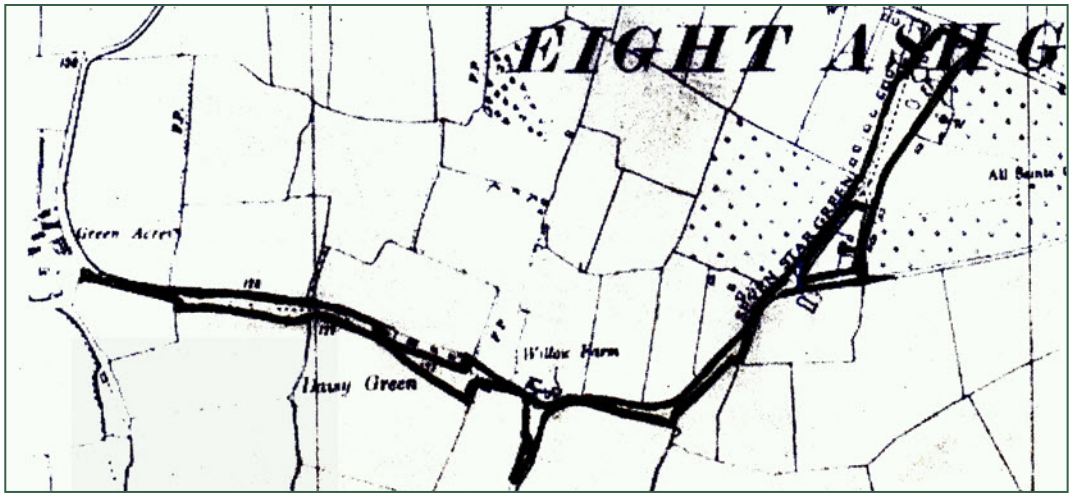
(Enclosed in Red)



VG 188

SEVEN STAR GREEN AND DAISY GREEN

(Enclosed in Black)



II. Defined Settlement Areas of our Village

Please refer to the Map in Annex E for the boundaries of the Defined Settlement Areas

Area 1



Area 1 - Searle Way, Heathfields, The Rise, The Walk, Spring Lane.

This part of EAG containing Searle Way, Heathfields, the Rise, and the Walk consists mainly of two storey houses built in the 1970s with some bungalows, all of which have open fronted gardens and either single or double garages. They are of brick construction and tiled roofs with some houses having different types of cladding such as black painted wood, tiles, UPVC or slates. Windows are either of wood or UPVC construction. Drives are a mixture of concrete or block paving. The tarmac or concrete roads are wide enough for cars to be parked along at least one side so that traffic can pass and there are pavements on both sides of the road. All three parts contain street lighting. There is no "through route" via Heathfields/Searle Way and The Walk/The Rise – they all end in cul de sacs. This Area represents part of the planned development of housing stock in the village and is one of the four main residential areas – the others being in Areas 7, 8, and 9. Area 1 also includes the southern end of Spring Lane where the housing stock consists of both houses and bungalows of both modern and older designs. The village hall, which was formerly an army hut at Matching Green, is located in Spring Lane and was moved to its present site in 1948. Pavements can be found on both sides of the tarmac road for the majority of its length and it has street lights as well. Spring Lane has a 30mph speed limit which is often ignored and it forms part of the "rush hour" rat run from people living in West Bergholt who wish to gain access to the A12 without going through Colchester.

Area 2



Area 2 - The Heath and Brick Street

The Parish Plan described the Heath (VD187), which is owned and managed by the Parish Council, as the "Jewel in the Crown" of the village which is in that part of the village known as Fordham Heath. It consists of an ancient common, bordered by houses or bungalows on three sides and a wood to the North. The Heath also contains allotments, a small wood, sports pitches and a cricket pavilion. The Heath is very popular with dog walkers. Accommodation is a mixture of older and newer houses and bungalows with either tiled or slate roofs. The boundary is marked by a tarmac road to the north and east which has one bus stop by the village pub "The Cricketers" and by a bridle path to the west and an old tarmac road to the south, both of which are marked as having "restricted access". There are no pavements surrounding the Heath, and only limited street lighting. A variety of footpaths lead off the Heath.

The northern end of Spring Lane is included in Area 2 with the housing on the eastern side of the Heath enjoying large front gardens, often with a view of the Heath. Construction of the houses is brick although a number have been rendered. On the eastern edge of Area 2 Brick Street is a short cul de sac with a narrow tarmac road bounded on both sides by a mixture of large, individually built houses, semi-detached properties and much older cottages. The footpath at the end of the street leads downhill into open country at first and then into a wooded area near Stanway.

11. Defined Settlement Areas of our Village

Please refer to the Map in Annex E for the boundaries of the Defined Settlement Areas

Area 3 - Halstead Road Central

The main part of this Area consists of a ribbon development along the A1124 Colchester to Halstead road which is the main arterial tarmac route through the village. It contains the village sign for drivers coming from the south/A12 and is a very busy road with a 30 mph speed limit and street lighting. It has a pavement on both sides. Housing is of varying dates and styles with a mix of slate roofs or tiles and either brick, rendered, or UPVC facias. Most of the front gardens have either a hedge or a low wall, ie they are not "open plan". The area contains a car sales showroom, the village church, a Methodist chapel, a scout hut, a care home, a post box, and two bus stops as well as the only pedestrian crossing in the village. Parking is dangerous given both the narrowness of the road at this point and the fact that it comprises a very busy main road, often frequented by heavy lorries. Area 3 contains one Listed Building - Bakery Cottage.

Area 3



Area 4 - Old Halstead Road

This consists of a ribbon development from EAG leading towards Stanway and Colchester, and alongside the A1124, now split by the new Halstead Road (A1124). Houses and bungalows of varying dates and styles mainly have slate roofs and the gardens have hedges, fencing, or walls at the front, ie they are not "open plan". The tarmac road has a 30mph speed limit and there is no street lighting. However the dual carriageway which bisects this settlement area has street lighting. Parking occurs in the old road that forms a lay-by in front of the bungalows, in front of the Holiday Inn and near to the exit on to the A1124. There is a private dental practice and a beauticians in this area. Area 4 contains one Listed Building - Brick Stables House.

Area 4



Area 5 - Abbots Lane

This is a small cul de sac with a narrow tarmac road that does not cater for parking. It does not have any street lighting, nor are there any pavements. It contains low density 1950s housing of brick construction, some of which have been rendered, mainly with slate roofs, and front gardens have hedges, fencing, or walls, ie they are not "open plan". At the beginning of the lane there is the Holiday Inn Hotel with its leisure club. Part way along the left hand side of the lane, it has a duck pond, a footpath running off and at the bottom end, there is both the "Doucecroft" Autism Anglia special school sited in Abbots Hall and the cattery, "Little Maltings Feline Lodge". Area 5 contains one Listed Building - Abbots Hall.

Area 5



11. Defined Settlement Areas of our Village

Please refer to the Map in Annex E for the boundaries of the Defined Settlement Areas

Area 6



Area 6 - Seven Star Green and Turkey Cock Lane

Directly opposite the agricultural fields that physically separate or divide the eastern and western parts of the village, first Seven Star Green (VG188) and then Turkey Cock Lane can be found to the south of the A1124. They lie along a rather narrow tarmac road with a 30 mph speed limit where unwary drivers encounter a number of blind bends along the route that ends at Copford. In Seven Star Green, there is are a small number of low density 1960s-1980s housing including bungalows with a mixture of either brick or coloured rendering sitting on good size plots. These are mainly to be found on the western side of the road opposite ancient common land containing hedges and trees which has grassland that has remained uncultivated for hundreds of years and is home to some 125 different species of wildflowers. This area also has quite a substantial pond given to the EAG Parish Council in 1947 by the Lord of the Manor of Copford and is home to dragonflies and moorhens which nest on its edge. The EAG Village Sign is located in Seven Star Green sitting alongside the A1124. No pavements are to be found here, rather grass verges hold sway. There is only one street lamp and one listed building – Malting House. Further along the road, Turkey Cock Lane contains a number of substantial properties sitting on large individual plots. Grass verges run along the whole length with no street lights in place. Towards the end, there is a garden centre “Barnplants” as well as a craft and gift centre “Black Barn”.

Area 7



Area 7 - Wood Lane and roads off

Wood Lane is a wide tarmac road mainly consisting of 1950s ribbon, low density housing and bungalows, some of which have solar panels on what are mainly slate roofs. There are three private roads running off Wood Lane and these contain modern 1990s housing, often of considerable size on individual plots. Pavements can be found partly on the eastern side and all along the western side. There are double yellow lines to the southern end of Wood Lane adjacent to the main A1124. Wood Lane, which has street lighting, is a busy feeder road through to Fordham and other locations north of EAG. It has a 30mph speed limit.

Area 8



Area 8 - Porters Lane and Porters Close

Originally, this contained 1950s brick built municipal housing with a few two storey flats which have slate roofs, with open gardens to the front and large gardens to the rear but much is now in private ownership. They all have UPVC windows. There is no “through route” via either of these roads. Pavements can be found along both sides of what are either a tarmac (PL) or concrete road (PC). Double yellow lines can be found at the entrance of Porters Lane. Street lighting is limited. Area 8 contains one Listed Building - Little Porters.

Area 9



Area 9 - Fiddlers Folly

This development is made up of 1970s high density municipal housing, laid out in accordance with the Essex Design Guide which does not provide for any garages on the individual or joint plots. It is a cul de sac. The houses, a few of which have satellite dishes, have slate roofs and most of them have black painted wood cladding. They all have UPVC windows. It has a good network of pavements on both sides of the tarmac road with street lighting and the village school is located at the entrance to the Folly. There is a 30mph speed limit. There is much more of an “urban” or enclosed feel to this development than the other built up areas in the village.

11. Defined Settlement Areas of our Village

Please refer to the Map in Annex E for the boundaries of the Defined Settlement Areas

Area 10 - Halstead Road West

This area is represented by spacious ribbon developments from the 1930s to the 1970s with some infill, sitting mainly alongside the northern side of the A1124. Street lighting can be found along the whole route from the centre of the village up until the 30mph speed limit sign and the village sign for drivers coming from the west from Halstead. The houses have a mixture of slate and tiled roofs and the front gardens have hedges, fencing, or walls, ie they are not "open plan". Houses are either of brick or rendering. Bulbanks Farm, a general store, a fish and chip shop, a hairdresser, a post box, and a garage can be found in this area. Pavements exist on the northern side of the road. Parking is possible but very difficult given it is along a very busy main road, often frequented by heavy lorries.

Area 10



Area 11 - Foxes Lane

There is a small group of large 1970s houses plus some much older properties, all with tiled roofs and some weatherboarding, located right on the border of the Parish of Aldham. Foxes Corner sits on the southern side of the A1124. The tarmac road is very narrow making parking impossible. There is no street lighting but there is a pavement on the northern side of the A1124. Foxes Corner feels quite isolated from the rest of the village being at the very far western edge of EAG. Area 11 contains two listed buildings - Green Acres and Mantills Farmhouse.

Area 11



Area 12 - Daisy Green

Daisy Green (VG188) is possibly the most rural location in the village with a small ribbon development of mixed date Victorian cottages, with slate roofs on one side of a parish green along a narrow, bumpy tarmac road. There are no pavements or street lighting. Daisy Green contains three ponds. Area 12 contains one Listed Building - Chippetts Farmhouse.

Area 12



Area 13 - Moat Farm Commercial

This is a group of commercial units located on Kemps Farm and Moat Farm. Area13 contains four Listed Buildings - Coach House, Kemps Farmhouse, Lampitts Farmhouse, and Moat Farmhouse.
More detailed descriptions of the Businesses in the village are to be found in Section 15.

Area 13



Area 14 - Fiddlers Farm Commercial

This is a group of commercial units on Fiddlers Farm. Area 14 contains one Listed building - Fiddlers Farmhouse.
More detailed descriptions of the Businesses in the village are to be found in Section 15.

Area 14



12. Environment



EAG sits 40 metres above sea level in the gently rolling countryside of North Essex some 3 miles west of the ancient town of Colchester on the gravel and boulder clay slopes to the south of the wide valley of the River Colne. About 50 million years ago London clay was deposited over the area by rivers flowing to the sea. It is thought that the River Thames originally flowed through North Essex just south of Colchester leaving deposits of gravel and stones. The surface geology of the area consists mostly of a thin layer of sands, gravels and clays left by glaciers and rivers during the Ice Age.



The EAG village site is reasonably flat apart from the gentle slope down to the Colne Valley in the north. It is bounded by the main London to Norwich railway line and the A12 London to Yarmouth road to the south and the busy A1124 road to Halstead runs through the village. Fordham Heath, one of the few pieces of preserved ancient heath land in Essex, sits at the heart of the village and consists of an upper and lower heath extending to some 36 acres. The upper heath has two ponds and is surrounded on three sides by houses and bungalows with the village public house, The Cricketers, nestling attractively on one side. Heath Road runs along the fourth side and divides the upper heath from the lower area further down the slope. The lower heath consists of managed scrubland and footpaths with fields leased to a local farmer. A footpath alongside the fields leads to a small pond.

As well as Fordham Heath there are other open areas in the village. There are two major housing areas and these are divided by farmed fields. There are also two large greens to the west, Seven Star Green (which has its own pond) and Daisy Green (which has three ponds).



EAG has three small wooded areas – Fiddlers Wood and Choats Wood to the northwest and a small wooded area behind the church. In addition the whole of Daisy Green from Foxes Corner to Turkey Cock Lane and much of the Seven Star Green is heavily treed on the area of the registered village green. There is a more substantial wooded area to the east. This is Iron Latch Wood which is ancient woodland containing the Iron Latch Nature Reserve. This is a 10.5 acre reserve consisting of a flower-rich meadow and four acres of woodland. It is quite wet in parts with a good selection of trees, especially ash. Nightingales nest in the coppiced woodland and hedgerows and also in the trees on the old gravel workings.

The open spaces mentioned are all designated Local Wildlife Sites (LWS) too which gives them some protection under the current Colchester Local Plan documents. The following are LWS Fordham Heath (CO60), Fiddlers Wood (CO 43), Seven Star Green (Co 55), and Iron Latch (CO68) and finally Daisy Green Grove which is LWS (CO 47).

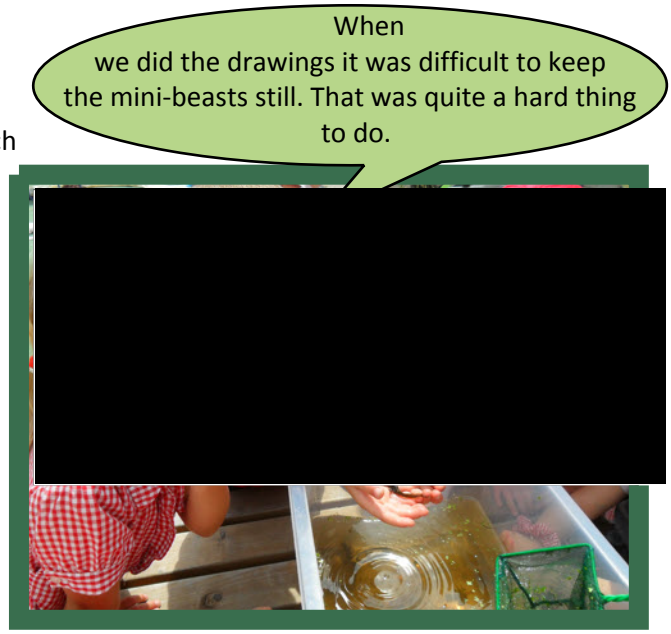
Village Design Statement

EAG primary school wildlife project

To a large extent, a VDS is all about what people believe their village should look like in terms of building design and infrastructure. However, to place that in its proper perspective it needs to be considered in the wider context of the village and its surroundings. With that in mind, the VDS Group approached [redacted], Head of the village primary school and invited the pupils to undertake a wildlife project that would be featured in the VDS. A number of meetings were held with both the Head and the School Council and the results below reflect what the school undertook to do as part of a "Wildlife Project". The school decided to adopt the theme of "mini-beasts" as the focus for their work and all the material is contained in the school website.

Their project took place over the summer of 2012 and involved the children producing:-

- Pencil drawings [redacted]
- Paintings.
- Some excellent fact files on a number of species such as ladybirds [redacted] – wasps [redacted] – centipedes [redacted] for example. These cover a physical description, habitat, diet, predators, and lifespan or lifecycle.
- Tally charts with and bar graphs [redacted].
- This was supplemented by a number of photographs, some of which are featured in this VDS.



Examples of what the pupils found include:-

- On 2nd July 2012, [redacted] found 2 ladybird larvae, 5 spiders, 12 woodlice ("I didn't think I would find 12 wood lice" she noted down), 4 slugs, 1 earwig, and 2 greenfly.
- On 10th July 2012, [redacted] found 9 ants, 3 slugs/snails, 2 spiders, 1 worm, 3 earwigs, and 2 woodlice.
- On 10th July 2012, [redacted] found 2 ladybird larvae, 5 spiders, 12 woodlice, 4 slugs, 2 earwigs, and 1 ant.

All this indicates a healthy habitat for the smaller species we share the village with and it demonstrates that we are not alone in this part of the world. Congratulations to all those who took part.

The children clearly enjoyed taking part as is shown by the quotes set out below:-

"I looked under lots of things to find my minbeasts. I think they love the dark under stones and leaves."

"I found lots in our bug hotel. The spiders loved it and the woodlice, although the ants preferred other areas of the school grounds."



"I really enjoyed finding out about their habitats, diets and what liked to eat them!"

"I loved being able to choose the art materials we could use. Some of us chose chalk or crayon. I chose charcoal because I wanted to show movement in my drawing."

13. Access to, through and within EAG

The village road system is still much as it was 200 years ago, comprising a junction of the Colchester to Cambridge Turnpike with the Copford to Fordham and West Bergholt roads. These days long distance traffic has been discouraged from using what was designated as the A604 Halstead Road by its downgrading to the A1124. However, the road is still busy and speeding can be a problem on this and several other roads around the village. The only regular traffic congestion is during the morning and evening rush hours at the southern ends of Spring Lane and Wood Lane. The village is largely untroubled by parking problems. However, the loss of parking at the old Brick and Tile has caused some problems and inconsiderate parking of commuters travelling to Chelmsford and London who leave their cars and vans in the lay-by near to the Holiday Inn, is an on-going concern for the immediate residents.

The condition of our roads seems dependent on our weather and the County Council finances of the day. Following two or three bad winters, roads are left with many potholes. Our pavements are generally of a good standard although the less frequently used tend to become overgrown. There have been calls for a new pavement to run along Heath Road which would overcome the problem of pedestrians having to walk in the road. In addition, concern has been expressed about the pavement that runs along the busy A1124 – see Action Plan No 5 of the Parish Plan.

The street furniture in EAG is, on the whole, well maintained by the various authorities and around the village the countryside rights of way are signposted and maintained to a high standard. Our bus service, whilst infrequent, is normally reliable. A special bus service has been introduced to take shoppers to the Sainsbury supermarket located a short distance across the A12 in Stanway, which has proved to be a great success.



Halstead Road West - Then and Now



14. Recreation, Social and Education

Our Village is privileged to have a wonderful heath where the majority of our outdoor social activities occur these include football, cricket with its pitch and pavilion, the annual Village Festival, walking and horse riding, and is extensively used by dog walkers. The upper heath is also home to the only allotment site in the village and this is in an area marked as 'for the poor of the parish' on the 1839 tithe map.



The village hall (right) provides a warm friendly indoor facility to host events as diverse as Voting to Line Dancing, Zumba, the Village Youth Club, Christadelphians Bible class, pilates, and the men's darts and snooker club.

The Methodist Chapel and Church on the A1124 provide for the religious needs of Eight Ash Green and Fordham Heath. Alongside the Church is the Scout Hut and it is hoped that this will be replaced in the near future with a modern building to cater for the needs of this successful group.

"The Cricketers", our one remaining pub, caters for all tastes and the warming fire is an added bonus in the colder months. It hosts regular events such as the VW Club, Harley Davidson Club, quiz nights and daisy beaders as well as the meetings of the Parish Plan and VDS Group.

15. Business



Moat Farm Industrial Units



The Cricketers



The Black Barn

Being a relatively small village set in a rural area, it is not surprising that EAG does not have any large businesses located in the parish. It does, however, contain a number of small businesses which are scattered across the patch - the village quarterly newsletter reflects the wide range of businesses to be found in the village. These are in both commercial premises, farms or are based in people's houses. The village is not a significant centre of employment. The majority of people of working age have jobs outside the village, which is well connected to major employment centres of Colchester, Ipswich, and Chelmsford.

In the past, employment in farming and agricultural trades predominated but this has reduced significantly over the years as other forms of business in the Colchester area have developed coupled with the availability and growth of personal transport allowing people to travel more widely for employment other that just in EAG. However, as an employment activity, farming still contributes significantly to the appearance of our parish

There are some 60 known enterprises operating in the village. Most are carried out in locations dotted around the village:-

- Holiday Inn hotel and sports centre in the east of the village.
- An informal cluster of shops and service station at Wood Corner.
- The Cricketers near to The Heath.
- Various farm shops.
- A Garden Centre.
- Businesses operating as ancillary activity at residential properties.
- Moat Farm Commercial Area – Defined Settlement Area 13 (see Annex E).
- Fiddlers Farm Commercial area – Defined Settlement Area 14 (see Annex E).

Area 13 includes some 12 businesses at Moat Farm, 2 businesses at Lampitts Farm, and 3 at Kemps Farm: ranging from a seed company, specialist retail, engineering and metal fabrication & hydrophonics. Only half the Moat Farm area is currently used for commercial purposes, thus there is ample room for expansion. Access is generally via London Road, Stanway rather than through the village. The type of buildings ranges from modern, purpose built brick built premises and driveway at Kemps Farm to barns and other wooden buildings located in Moat Farm. The companies at Moat Farm share the land with some old, broken down Nissen huts, vegetation that has gone wild and sand, which is not very attractive and access at the site is via an old concrete road that is in a poor state of repair.

15. Business

Area 14 includes some 6 businesses at Fiddlers Farm: ranging from car body repairs and re-spraying, miscellaneous commercial, to equestrian activities. Again there is ample space for further expansion. Access is via Mill Lane to Fordham, or via Wood Lane to the A1124.

The other locality in the village that has a cluster of businesses is at the southern end of Wood Lane – Defined Settlement Area 10 (see Annex E) and Halstead Road West. Here one can find a hairdresser, a fish and chip shop, a petrol station and vehicle repair shop, a farm, and a general store. All of these are small businesses, in purpose built premises, where a small number of people work, either full or part time.

With regard to vehicular access for business, only the A1124 is large enough to provide safe, secure access for HGVs for example. Many of the other roads in the village are narrow and winding eg the road down Turkey Cock Lane leading to Moat Farm, and so do not provide the capacity to carry either a large or an increased number of vehicles or HGVs such as container lorries. This suggests EAG does not lend itself to having further light or even heavy industrial development apart from Areas 13 and 14 providing access is from outside of the village rather than through it. This is perhaps why a majority of residents who responded to the questionnaire felt there is an adequate amount of land available in the village for business premises.

Whilst a growth in business activity can be a force for good in the community by providing employment and prosperity, a balance needs to be struck with having additional traffic coming into the village with its attendant problems of volume, noise, smell/odours, air, available parking, and light pollution. Are the roads designed to cope with the needs of modern traffic with bigger and bigger vehicles and cars for example? Damage is already being caused to verges and hedges as well as the roads themselves eg the northern end of Wood Lane is suffering from HGVs taking a short cut through to Wormingford and other places, with the drains under the road, cracking up under the weight and volume of vehicles.



The Bungalow Stores and Amour Boutique



The Esso Garage and Autoaid



The Holiday Inn

16. The Future

Having read through both the VDS and the Parish Plan, there can be no doubt about what the people who live in EAG want:-

- The village to remain as it is – a nice quiet and safe place to live in with its rural aspect and setting to be preserved
- IF any development is to take place (and there is far from universal acceptance that this should happen), then only a very limited number of houses should be built and they should be in keeping with the other types and sizes of nearby residences
- Any building should be within the village envelope, ie no expansion outside of that

The VDS is aimed primarily at a number of different groups, first and foremost, the residents of the village but also planners, developers, architects and builders. Naturally, the Parish Council, who owns the VDS, is a key constituent alongside CBC and at a macro level, Essex County Council.

For the residents, if you are considering alterations to the exterior of your property, you should take this VDS into account and consider how you can incorporate the various Design Guidelines into your plans. Whatever the changes, they will affect the building and its surroundings. They might well also affect the look of the Defined Settlement Area you live in. So please make your own assessment of the impact of the intended change and ask yourself the following:-

- What are the distinctive features of where I live and the immediate area?
- Are any of the proposals out of character with the property, the adjacent properties and the Design Guidelines in this Statement?
- Do the proposals complement or enhance the character of the immediate area?
- What might I need to discuss with the Parish Council on an informal basis before submitting a formal planning application? See Section 3 above.
- If you are in any doubt, consult an architect or obtain some other form of professional advice.

Given that new technologies or procedures seem to be introduced almost on an everyday basis, there will no doubt be some the VDS group may not have even thought about, asked your opinion about or addressed in this VDS. There are two points to bear in mind here. First, the introduction and perhaps adoption in the future of any new technologies should be in keeping with the **spirit** of this Statement and second, as we said in the Parish Plan, this VDS is intended to be a “living” document that will need revisiting on a regular basis, ie it is not cast in tablets of stone for ever.

17. Acknowledgements and Contact Points

- [redacted] at the Rural Community Council of Essex
- [redacted] at Colchester Borough Council
- [redacted] and pupils of the EAG Village school
- Members of the EAG VDS Group
- The villagers of EAG for their support, advice, and comments
- [redacted] - Diagrams of the village
- [redacted] - Town Planning Advisor

ANNEX A

Eight Ash Green

Colchester Borough Council Relevant Core Strategy and Development Policies

Core Strategy Policies

Sustainable Development

SD1 Sustainable Development Locations
SD2 Delivering Facilities and Infrastructure
SD3 Community Facilities

Centres and Employment

CE1 Centres and Employment Classification and Hierarchy
CE3 Employment Zones

Housing

H1 Housing Delivery
H2 Housing Density
H3 Housing Diversity
H4 Affordable Housing
UR2 Build Design and Character

Public Realm

PR1 Open Space
PR2 People Friendly Streets

Transport and Accessibility

TA1 Accessibility and Changing Travel Behaviour
TA2 Walking and Cycling
TA3 Public Transport
TA4 Roads and Traffic
TA5 Parking

Environment and Rural Communities

ENV1 Environment
ENV2 Rural Communities

Energy, Resources, Waste, Water and Recycling

ER1 Energy, Resource, Waste, Water and Recycling

Development Policies

Sustainable Development

DP1 Design and Amenity
DP2 Health Assessments
DP4 Community Facilities

Centres and Employment

DP5 Appropriate Employment Uses and Protection of Employment
DP6 Land and Existing Businesses
DP7 Local Centres and Individual Shops
DP8 Agricultural Development and Diversification
DP9 Employment Uses in the Countryside
DP10 Tourism, Leisure and Culture

Housing

DP11 Flat conversions
DP12 Dwelling Standards
DP13 Dwelling Alterations, Extensions and Replacement Dwellings

Public Realm

DP15 Retention of Open Space and Indoor Sports Facilities
DP16 Private Amenity Space and Open Space Provision for New Residential Development

Transport and Accessibility

DP17 Accessibility and Access
DP18 Transport Infrastructure Proposals
DP19 Parking Standards

Environment and Rural Communities

DP20 Flood Risk and Management of Surface Water Drainage
DP21 Nature Conservation and Protected Lanes
DP24 Equestrian Activities

Energy, Resources, Waste, Water and Recycling

DP25 Renewable Energy

ANNEX B

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) – points relevant to a Village Design Statement (VDS)

Purpose of this note
It is not the purpose of this note to summarise all of the issues set out in the full 59 page NPPF. Rather it extracts or quotes a number of points taken from the NPPF that seem to be relevant to our VDS.

Background

The NPPF, published in 2012 sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. It provides a framework within which local people and their accountable councils can produce their own distinctive plans which reflect the needs and priorities of their communities.

Achieving sustainable development

- *"... creating a high quality built environment..."*
- *"... well designed buildings and places can improve the lives of people and communities..."*
- *"...replacing poor design with better design..."*
- *"...widening the choice of high quality homes..."*

Core planning principles

- *"...empowering local people to shape their surroundings with succinct plans setting out a positive vision for the future of the area..."*
- *"...always seek to secure high quality design and a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings..."*
- *"...recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside and supporting thriving local communities..."*
- *"...contribute to conserving and enhancing the natural environment..."*

Supporting a prosperous rural economy

- *"...support sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business and enterprise in rural areas, both through conversion of existing buildings and well designed new buildings..."*
- *"...promote the retention and development of local services and community facilities in villages such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship..."*

Supporting high quality communications infrastructure

- *"...existing masts, buildings and other structures should be used unless the need for a new site has been justified. Where new sites are required, equipment should be sympathetically designed and camouflaged where appropriate..."*

ANNEX B

Delivering a wide choice of high quality homes

- *"...plan for a mix of housing based on current and future demographic trends..."*
- *"...local planning authorities should consider the case for setting out policies to resist inappropriate development of residential gardens, eg where development would cause harm to the local area..."*
- *"...to promote sustainable development in rural areas, housing should be located where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of local communities..."*

Requiring good design

- *"...respond to local character and history and reflect the identity of local surroundings and materials, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation..."*
- *"...are visually attractive as a result of good architecture and appropriate landscaping..."*
- *"design policies should avoid unnecessary prescription or detail and should concentrate on guiding the overall scale, density, massing, height, landscape, layout, materials and access of new development in relation to neighbouring buildings and the local area more generally..."*
- *"planning policies and decisions should not attempt to impose architectural styles or particular tastes and they should not stifle innovation, originality or initiative....It is, however, proper to seek or promote or reinforce local distinctiveness..."*
- *"...permission should be refused for development of poor design that fails to take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area..."*

Promoting healthy communities

- *"...access to high quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and recreation can make an important contribution to the health and wellbeing of local communities..."*
- *"...existing open space....including playing fields, should not be built on unless:*
    - *an assessment clearly shows the land to be surplus to requirements*
    - *the loss (of land) would be replaced by the equivalent or better provision ...in a suitable location..."*
- *"...planning policies should protect and enhance public rights of way and access..."*

Conserving and enhancing the natural environment

- *"...the planning system should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:*
    - *protecting and enhancing valued landscapes*
    - *Contributing to the Government's commitment to halt overall decline in biodiversity"*

ANNEX C

Listed Buildings in EAG

No	Name	Grade	Location	Age	Date Listed	English Heritage Building ID
1	Abbots Hall	2	Abbots Lane	Circa 1500	23/6/1952	417617
2	Bakery Cottage	2	A1124, EAG	17th C	27/1/1982	417652
3	Brick Stables House	2	Halstead Road	16th C	27/1/1982	417692
4	Chippetts Farmhouse	2	Chippetts Lane	Late 16th C	27/1/1982	417644
5	Coach House	2	Turkey Cock Lane	18th C	27/1/1982	417698
6	Fiddlers Farmhouse	2	Fiddlers Hill	Circa 1900	27/1/1982	417649
7	Green Acres	2	Foxes Lane	16th C	27/1/1982	417650
8	Kemps Farmhouse	2	Turkey Cock Lane	17th C	27/1/1982	417696
9	Lampitts Farmhouse	2	Turkey Cock Lane	Circa 1560 & 17th C	27/1/1982	417697
10	Little Porters	2	Porters Lane	17th C	27/1/1982	417693
11	Malting House	2	Turkey Cock Lane	18th C	27/1/1982	417694
12	Mantills Farmhouse	2	Foxes Lane	17th C	27/1/1982	417651
13	Moat Farmhouse	2	Turkey Cock Lane	Circa 1690	27/1/1982	417695

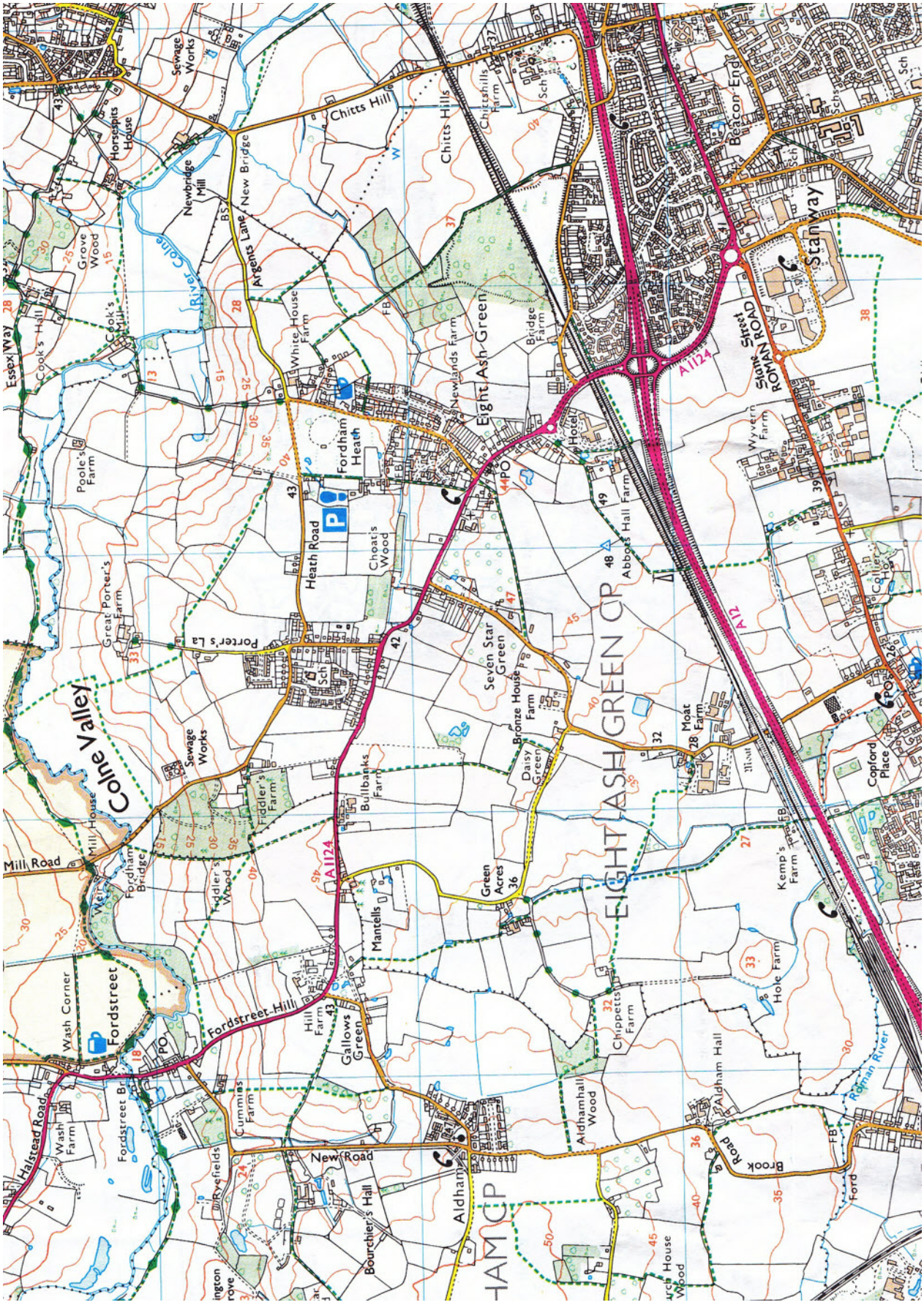
Further details can be found at
http://www.britishlistedbuildings.co.uk/england/essex/eight+ash+green

Eight Ash Green

ANNEX D



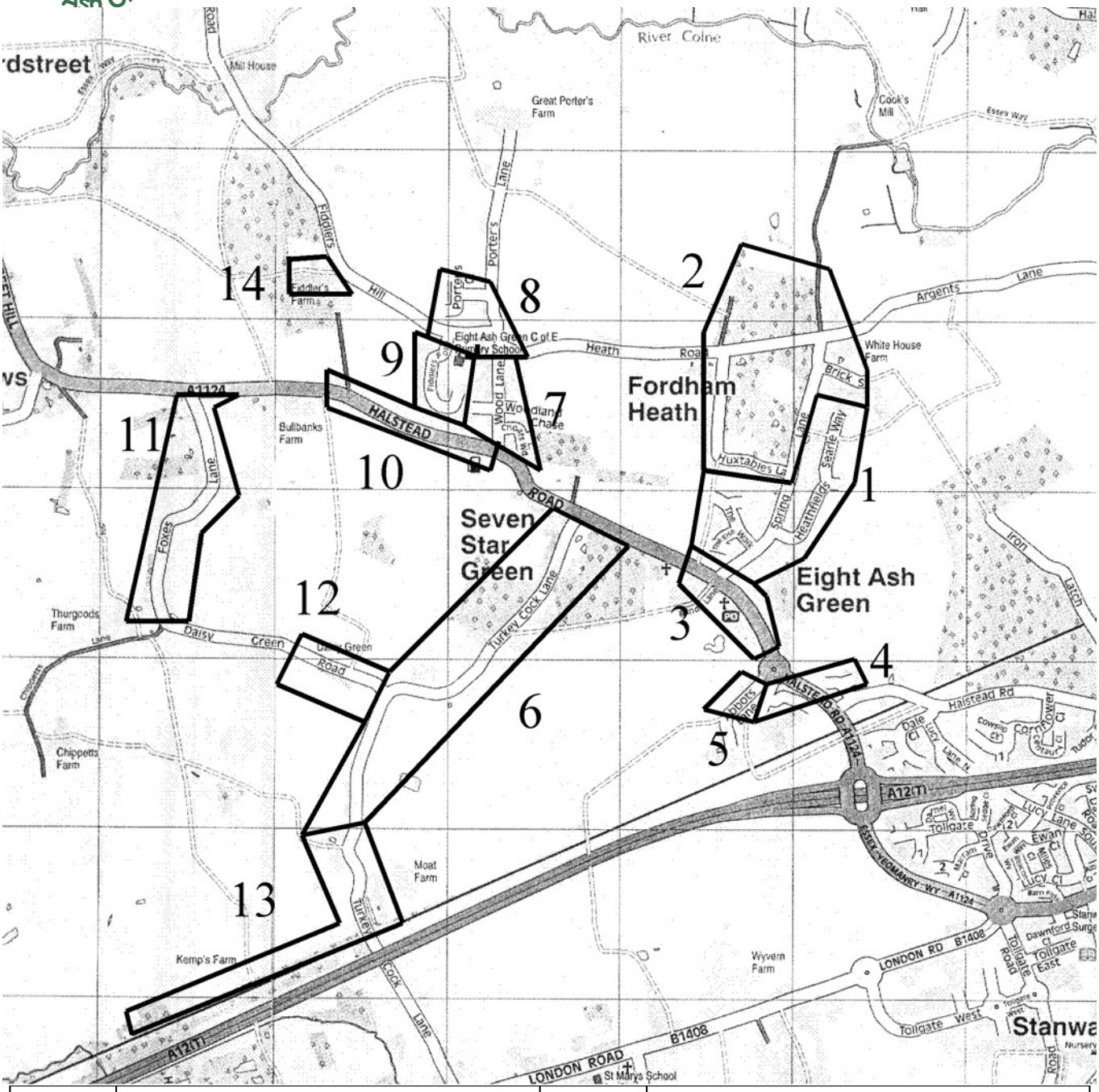
ANNEX D



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ANNEX E

Map of the Defined Settlement Areas



VDS Area Number	Area Covered	VDS Area Number	Area Covered
1	Searle Way, Heathfields, The Rise, The Walk, Spring Lane	8	Porters Lane and Porters Close
2	The Heath, Brick Street	9	Fiddlers Folly
3	Halstead Road (Central)	10	Halstead Road West
4	Old Halstead Road	11	Foxes Lane
5	Abbots Lane	12	Daisy Green
6	Seven Star Green, Turkey Cock Lane	13	Moat Farm (Commercial)
7	Wood Lane and roads off	14	Fiddlers Farm (Commercial)

ANNEX F

Design Guidance Statements

These lists of DGs should not be regarded as being in a priority order

DG Nº	Generic Design Guideline
DG 1	Infills, renovations and extensions to houses in the village should be constructed using sympathetic designs and materials.
DG 2	The expectation is that any new building should take place within the existing village envelope, apart from rural exceptions sites for the delivery of affordable or local needs housing.
DG 3	The expectation is that any new developments be small (2-5 houses) and of low/medium density with sufficient land/gardens and their own, personal off street parking.
DG 4	New developments, infills, and extensions should not significantly alter the existing skyline of EAG.
DG 5	New developments, infills, and extensions should not overlook or block light from adjacent properties.
DG 6	Any new houses or flat developments should be limited to 2 storeys, in keeping with the existing character of EAG, with a 10m limit for industrial units.
DG 7	Solar panels should be supported on new developments and existing properties where installations comply with current regulations and do not detract from the street scene or local character.
DG 8	Wind farms, should be resisted in the countryside surrounding EAG.
DG 9	New building should be designed to be efficient in terms of materials used and to make full use of modern technologies and designs.
DG 10	The installation of air conditioning units, heat pumps and other such technology should be placed out of sight from the front of the properties/buildings away from public view where possible.
DG 11	Permanent roadside advertising should only be permitted where it is well designed and of a style appropriate for a rural location.
DG 12	Street signage should be kept to a minimum, however most of the village would like to see more speed limit repeaters.
DG 13	The existing, open green spaces that separate EAG from Stanway, Copford and Fordham should be preserved so as to protect the rural nature and feel of the village.
DG 14	The existing open spaces and trees throughout the whole village should be preserved so as to protect the rural nature and feel of the village.
DG 15	The Fordham Heath (VG187) and Seven Star/Daisy Green (VG188) Local Nature Reserves and associated wild meadow areas should be retained as valuable green spaces in the village.
DG 16	The Colne Valley to the north of the village should be preserved so as to protect the rural nature and feel of the village.
DG 17	The Iron Latch and other nature reserves should be preserved so as to protect the rural nature and feel of the village.
DG 18	The public Rights of Way network should be protected and where appropriate, enhanced.
DG 19	The village does not support developments such as a Park and Ride scheme within the Parish boundaries.

ANNEX F

DG Nº	Generic Design Guideline
DG 20	Consideration should be given to increasing the number of allotment plots in the village, where a need can be demonstrated.
DG 21	Consideration should be given to increasing the sport and recreational areas, where it might be appropriate to do so but protecting the rural nature of the village and the Heath.
DG 22	Future commercial developments in the village should in the first instance, utilise existing buildings/brown field sites and be well screened to help protect the rural character. Where they have the potential to impact on residential amenities they should if possible be located away from residential areas.
DG 23	Small businesses that directly support the residents of the village such as a post office, newsagent, cafe should be located close to residential areas but the size, construction and materials should be in keeping with their surroundings.
DG 24	Ditches should be well maintained to encourage wildlife and minimise drainage and flooding problems in line with CBC policy.
DG 25	All future developments by utility companies should be sympathetically designed and camouflaged/hidden where appropriate. Utility companies should be encouraged to place all their future services/cabling underground.
DG 26	A 20mph neighbourhood area speed limit should be implemented throughout the village, with the exception of the A1124. Any development close to Spring Lane and Wood Lane junctions should include traffic calming measures.
DG 27	Native plant species should be used for all hedges; hawthorn, blackthorn, hazel, dog rose, holly and beech etc. Quick growing species such as macrocarpa or leylandii cyprus should be firmly restricted.
DG 28	All boundaries of fields and gardens should be carefully maintained, especially trees and hedges, with replanting with native species where areas have been removed
DG 29	Where appropriate, hedges and shrubberies should be encouraged to reduce the impact of new buildings and extensions.
DG 30	Wherever reasonable, the removal of boundaries to facilitate off-street parking should be discouraged.
DG 31	Old brick boundary walls should be retained. New ones should be built in traditional manner. Particular care should be taken over bonding, corners, joints and capping (no expansion joints).
DG 32	New development involving surfacing of drives should use permeable materials to help manage any potential flood risk in the village.
DG 33	Should any further housing be constructed in the village, it should be of similar size, type, layout and materials to those found in Heathfields, eg to include open front gardens, personal off road driveways for two cars per household and roads of similar width and construction.

ANNEX F

DG Nº	Design Guidelines that only apply to Specific Defined Settlement Areas
	DSA 1 – Searle Way, Heathfields, The Rise, The Walk and Spring Lane
DG 34	Should any external changes be made to the Village Hall such as a complete rebuild, the outer fabric should be of an unpainted, natural brick construction, no more than 2 storeys high, with a slate roof and the car park resurfaced with a water permeable material.
	DSA 2 – The Heath and Brick Street
DG 35	The Heath and associated wild meadow areas should be protected against any inappropriate development either on or adjacent to the Heath.
DG 36	The bridleway on the west of the Heath should be maintained.
DG 37	Should a pavement be constructed along Heath Road (see Action Plan No 5 in the Parish Plan), the preference would be for it to be on the south side and to be in keeping with its surroundings and it should not have an urban feel or aspect.
	DSA 3 – Halstead Road Central
DG 38	The village would support the introduction of a sympathetically designed mini-roundabout at the junction of the A1124 and Spring Lane to ensure fair access for those drivers wishing to turn right at what is a very busy junction.
	DSA 4 – Old Halstead Road
DG 39	While the presumption is against development on the green wedges (Policy DG2 & DG13), should any future development be permitted on the field at Grid TL 945 253 (adjacent to the Holiday Inn) , the development should primarily be starter homes of not more than 2 storeys in height, with each dwelling benefiting from its own dedicated off-street parking
DG 40	Should any development take place in the field at GRID TL 945 253, in view of the potential increase in traffic, on-going access to the site should take account of a) the safety of residents and any children who either live in or visit the existing housing that runs along the road which is parallel to the A1124 and b) the ability of emergency vehicles to proceed safely taking account of any parked vehicles.
	DSA 5 – Abbots Lane
DG 41	So as to maintain a truly rural feel to Abbots Lane, the strong preference would be not to introduce any street lights, yellow lines, pavements or other form/type of “urban” infrastructure.
DG 42	The duck pond is a unique feature of the village and so no development shall be permitted to encroach onto, or otherwise reduce the location of, depth to or area of the pond.
DG 43	The village would like to see the grass verges along Abbots Lane being preserved and maintained.

ANNEX F

DG Nº	Design Guidelines that only apply to Specific Defined Settlement Areas
	DSA 6 – Seven Star Green and Turkey Cock Lane
DG 44	The open nature of Seven Star Green which is a Registered Village Green (VG 188) should be protected against inappropriate development and vehicular traffic.
DG 45	So as to maintain a truly rural feel to Seven Star Green and Turkey Cock Lane, street lights, yellow lines, pavements or other form/type of "urban" infrastructure should not be introduced.
DG 46	The "open" nature of Seven Star Green particularly with its uninterrupted views across open fields to the North across the A1124 should be preserved and maintained.
DG 47	The village would like to see the grass verges along Seven Star Green (registered Village Green VG188) and Turkey Cock Lane being preserved and maintained.
	DSA 7 – Wood Lane and roads off
DG 48	The village would support the introduction of a sympathetically designed mini-roundabout at the junction of the A1124 and Wood Lane to ensure fair access for those drivers wishing to turn right at what is a very busy junction.
DG 49	The village would like to see the grass verges on the Heath side of Wood Lane being preserved and maintained.
DG 50	The open fields to the east of DSA 7 and to the west of DSA 1 and 2 should not be built on so as to preserve the open aspect of the village, much valued by the villagers.
	DSA 8 – Porters Lane and Porters Close
DG 51	Planting of deciduous trees along the pavements in both Porters Lane and Porters Close would help enhance the rural aspect of this part of the village.
	DSA 9 – Fiddlers Folly
DG 52	The footways throughout Fiddlers Folly shall be maintained and no developments may encroach thereupon.
DG 53	Car parking space is at a premium in Fiddlers Folly, therefore no development should be permitted to encroach onto, or otherwise reduce the area of car parking space currently provided within the development.
	DSA 10 – Halstead Road West
DG 54	The "open" nature of this DSA with its views across open fields both to the north and the south should be preserved and maintained.
	DSA 11 – Foxes Lane
DG 55	So as to maintain the truly rural feel to Foxes Lane, street lights, yellow lines, pavements or other form/type of "urban" infrastructure should not be introduced. Foxes lane is also a Designated Protected Lane as per DP policy 21. (See Annex A)
DG 56	In view of the very narrow road in Foxes Lane, any future housing development must make provision for its own dedicated off street parking in line with approved parking standards or at least two vehicles.
DG 57	The village would like to see the grass verges along Foxes Lane being preserved and maintained.
DG 58	Any future upgrading or improvement to the narrow road in Foxes Lane should be undertaken with a view to maintaining the rural aspect of this part of the village. Foxes Lane is also a Designated Protected Lane as per DP policy21. (See Annex A)

ANNEX F

DG Nº	Design Guidelines that only apply to Specific Defined Settlement Areas
	DSA 12 – Daisy Green
DG 59	So as to maintain the truly rural feel to Daisy Green, street lights, yellow lines, pavements or other form/type of "urban" infrastructure should not be introduced.
DG 60	The Village would like to see the grass verges along Daisy Green being preserved and maintained. Daisy Green Road is wholly within the Registered Village Green V188 and so all verges, trees and green areas fall under the protection accorded to Registered Village Greens.
DG 61	Any future upgrading or improvement to the narrow, bumpy road in Daisy Green should be undertaken with a view to maintaining the most rural aspect of this part of the village.
	DSA 13 – Moat Farm Commercial
DG 62	Whilst recognising the welcome, commercial aspect this DSA contributes to the village, encouragement should be given to improve and support the provision of a rural setting to the commercial premises. Should any new development take place, planting of deciduous trees, laying down of grass areas, improving the quality of the access road surface and the provision of outdoor facilities for staff such as benches should be considered.
DG 63	Encouragement should be given to the provision of bird boxes on the sides of new commercial premises.
	DSA 14 – Fiddlers Farm Commercial
DG 64	The wooded area at Grid TL 931 265 should be preserved so as to protect the rural nature and feel of the village.
DG 65	Whilst recognising the welcome, commercial aspect this DSA contributes to the village, encouragement should be given to improve and support the provision of a rural setting to the commercial premises. Should any new development take place, planting of deciduous trees, laying down of grass areas, improving the quality of the access road surface and the provision of outdoor facilities for staff such as benches should be considered.
	Additional Segmentation Area surrounding the schools (Holy Trinity and Doucecroft)
DG 66	No further development shall be permitted at a school unless it has implemented a traffic plan to protect the safety of its children on the approach roads. Specifically, the Traffic Plan shall implement the County Council Parking Standards 2009 for user Class D1 (Education–primary/secondary): Vehicles 1 space per 15 pupils.)
DG 67	No further development should be permitted at Doucecroft school until traffic orders have been introduced to ensure that parking in Abbotts Lane does not obstruct access to the school by the emergency services.
DG 68	Due to the substantial number of HGV vehicles using the unclassified local road between Fordham Heath and Fordham in the vicinity of Holy Trinity School, Fiddlers Folley, no further development shall be permitted at the school until traffic calming chicanes have been implement on both sides of the local road and its junction with Fiddlers Folly.

ANNEX G

Members of the EAG VDS Group



Chairman
Secretary
Group Member
Press Officer
Treasurer


Eight Ash Green

Annex K



VDS

VILLAGE DESIGN STATEMENT

LANGHAM VILLAGE DESIGN STATEMENT

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1. Acknowledgements
2. Practical Uses of the VDS
3. Listed Buildings
4. Footpath List
5. Footpath Map
6. Local Map

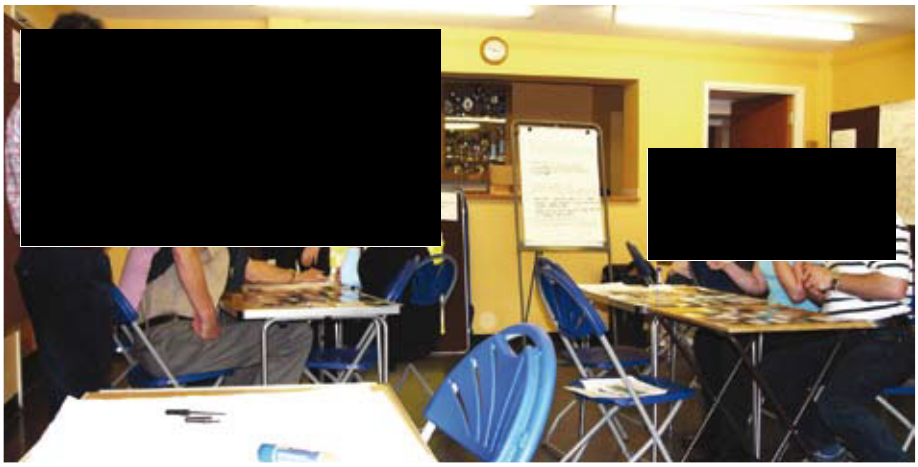
Introduction

A Village Design Statement (VDS) is a community prepared assessment of a village's character and qualities. It focuses on those elements that make it special to its inhabitants and which create a sense of being different from the surrounding areas. For a village to be a community, it must be a dynamic society, which involves embracing change. However, it is vitally important to determine which changes will strengthen, rather than diminish, the sense of community which is so important to the continuation of a real village society. The VDS is, therefore, designed to identify which changes will be acceptable to the current residents with this aim in mind.

This VDS relates to the whole parish of Langham, although the focus is generally on those areas which contain the bulk of the population. It aims to provide guidance and recommendations to property owners and developers on future changes in the parish, focusing on those which would be welcome, as well as those aspects which should be conserved and protected. It also offers guidance to Council officers and Members in the determination of planning applications.

The project was initiated by Langham Parish Council. The first meeting was arranged in October 2005 and a committee was elected. The committee organised 24 volunteers to visit all parts of the village to survey and note suitable items, with photographs, for a presentation to the whole village in an exhibition. After a number of workshops, the first exhibition took place in May 2006 when invitations to comment on all aspects of the life of the village were made.

Two carefully prepared questionnaires, one for adults and one for young people, were issued and over 60% were returned. There was a strong and constructive response from the younger element of the village. A review was carried out at the VDS Annual General Meeting in December 2006 so that any further comments by parishioners could be considered by the VDS committee. A second exhibition was held in late May 2006. The draft statement was presented to the Parish Council in May 2007 and subsequently to the Colchester Borough Council in June 2007. The VDS was updated using further comments received. Copies are being provided to every household in the village. An acknowledgement of those who have contributed in many different ways is at Appendix 1.





The VDS has been based very much on the questionnaire responses, but as time has gone by, there have been new developments which are reflected here. More changes will come in the future and we want the VDS to be an ongoing process whose objective is to involve all those who wish to participate in the development of our village. The Parish Council strongly support this view and will do all they can to encourage it.

Langham and its history 4

The parish of Langham lies about 6 miles north of Colchester. The river Stour forms the northern boundary of the long, roughly rectangular, parish; the Salary Brook, the southern boundary with Mile End in Colchester. The western boundary with Boxted follows field boundaries and a section of the Black Brook, a tributary of the Stour. The eastern boundary with Dedham and Ardleigh broadly follows the old main road from Colchester to Ipswich. (see map in appendices for details)

The land rises sharply about 30 metres from the Stour valley to the ridge at Langham Hall and the church. The rest of the parish forms a slightly rising and undulating plateau, cut into two distinct parts by the small but steep valley of the Black Brook, running west to east across its centre.

The past

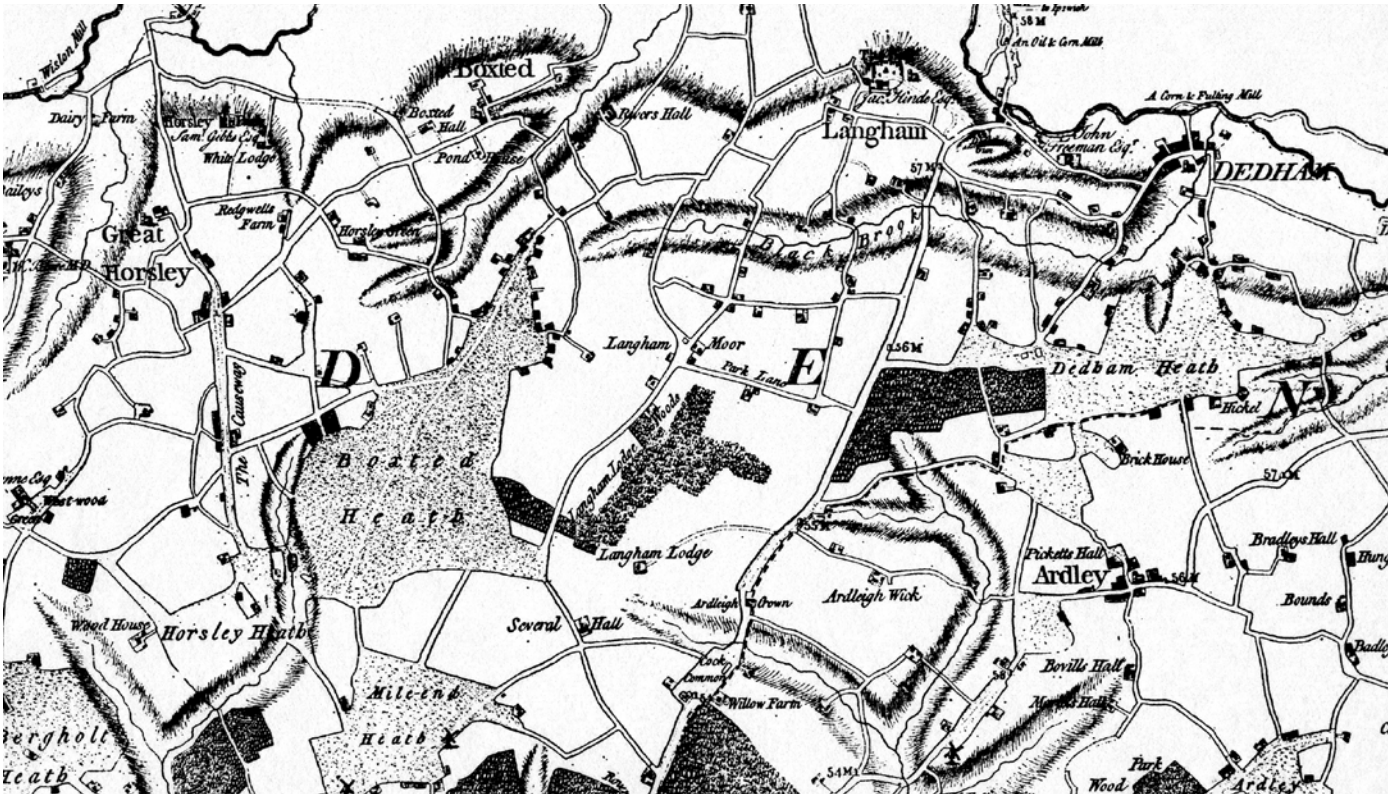
The manor of Langham is mentioned in Domesday Book, when it was in the possession of Walter Tirel, who subsequently killed King William Rufus. Eventually, the manor passed to the Crown and Henry VIII gave it successively to three of his queens.

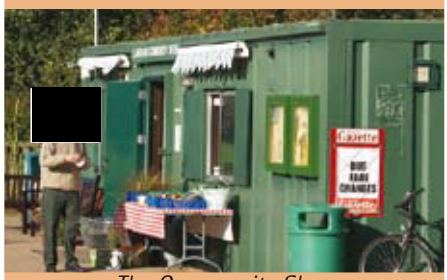
Before then, there is significant evidence of Neolithic settlement and Roman remains, particularly the sites of a number of Neolithic barrows and a Roman farmstead. Initial habitation and subsequent development seems to have begun in the north, on the site of the current Hall and church. Farming began here and then moved south, pausing for a while at the dividing line of the Black Brook. In the Middle Ages, the land south of Park Lane was a Royal Forest, which meant that it was the last area to be farmed.

The resulting pattern of settlement has created a number of widely spread residential areas within the village, of which Whalebone Corner/the Hall in the north, Moor Road and Chapel Road in the west and St. Margaret's Cross were perhaps the earliest. However, by the nineteenth century, it seems clear that the commercial centre of the village was along School Road and Constable's picture of Langham church gives some idea of the environment at that time.

The overall pattern of development is one of a largely agricultural community, broadening out into cloth manufacturing in the thirteenth century, which contributed greatly to prosperity until it died out in the eighteenth century. In addition, the usual skills and trades required by the inhabitants of such a community were developed, but not to any great extent. Langham did not attract industry or social development of great note during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

Langham and environs c1771

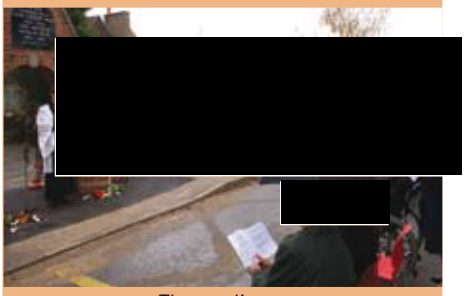




The Community Shop



The Rector dedicates War Memorial



The audience



The Shepherd and Dog

The centre of Langham looking from Wick Road towards Moor Road and showing Park Lane to the left and School Road to the right

The present

The result of this pattern is a dispersed village, with no single centre of population. Instead, habitation is dispersed throughout most of the parish and there are still significant areas of agricultural land. Perhaps the most obvious feature is the large piece of arable land in the central area bounded by School Road, Wick Road, Park Lane and Moor Road. This large open space, in what might otherwise be the centre of the village, gives it its unique character and is highly valued by all residents, particularly the young people.

In terms of current land usage, there are light industrial areas at Lodge Lane, Gun Hill and School Road, but the remaining land use is agricultural or residential.

Its current population is about 1000, spread through some 450 households. The majority of the population works in the service industries, either in Colchester, Ipswich or London. There is, however, a larger than proportionate retired population, who are very active. This, together with the young people, creates a sense of activity during the working day which may be absent in other villages.

Perhaps because of this, and despite the commuting nature of the workforce, there is a very strong community spirit. The destruction by fire of the old village hall in 1985 resulted in a determination to create a new and superior Community Centre, which continues successfully to this day. It currently provides facilities for a number of village associations, including Scouts and Brownies, and the Langham Pre-School. More recently, the Community Centre facilities have been expanded by the provision of tennis courts by the Langham Tennis Club, and a Millennium Garden created by the local Women's Institute.

Similarly, the closure of the only village shop in 2003 was met by a determination to create a community shop, staffed entirely by volunteers, which has now celebrated its third anniversary.

The local primary school (dating from 1850) is another centre of community life, taking as it does most of the primary age children in the village. At its entrance is the village War Memorial, which has recently been rebuilt. Over 150 people turned up to participate in its rededication by the Rector of Langham.

Naturally, the village pub, the Shepherd and Dog, is also an important asset to the community.



The core of the village 6

The central part of the village consists of the rough rectangle formed by School Road, Moor Road, Wick Road and Park Lane. Together with Perry Lane, Chapel Road and the High Street, this area contains the majority of the village's population, as well as the schools, Community Centre, recreation ground, children's play area and football pitches, pub and community shop.

One of the three industrial areas in the parish is also based here and contains engineering and plant hire businesses. The site, on School Road, was thought to be acceptable but no further industrial development should take place there. There are current traffic problems with heavy vehicles which need to be resolved. The increased heavy goods traffic going to this site is proving a problem for road safety, given its proximity to the primary school and the lack of pavements on both sides of the road.

There are several mediaeval houses along School Road, but they are interspersed with more modern buildings and the nineteenth-century mansion which is now Homestead School. Moor Road and Wick Road consist mainly of more recent building, with a few older properties, but are much more built up, to the point where few additional houses could be built in them. The same is true of Chapel Road, although there is some space outside the village envelope. Perry Lane is largely built along one side only, the other currently being agricultural land. Park Lane is less developed, especially in its central part.

Recent development in this area has taken the form of infilling, rather than large developments and most new houses have been in local styles and in keeping with the rest of the village. It is clear from the answers to the questionnaires that this is what the great majority of the respondents would prefer and that they would be strongly opposed to ribbon development along those roads with major open spaces.

Top:
Heavy vehicles in the village

Bottom left:
The children's play area

Bottom right:
Mediaeval houses on School Road







The northern sector 7





The northern sector of the parish incorporates the floor and southern side of the Stour Valley, together with extensive farmlands. Its boundary to the east follows the line of the old A12 and to the west it incorporates the Low Lift Water Works. Its southern boundary is the Black Brook.

The northern part of this sector is an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), which inspired John Constable and appeared in many of his pictures. Much of this historic landscape, consisting of meadows and arable land, is largely unchanged since Constable's time, as may be seen from his paintings, although the recent formation of a wildlife lake and small mixed wood on old meadow land enhances the present views.

The twelfth-century Parish Church of St. Mary and the Langham Hall Estate are set in exquisite surroundings on the ridge above the Stour valley side, adjacent to the Essex Way, a walking path which follows the route of a mediaeval track way through the Essex forests. Around the Hall and Church is a mixture of grazing, parkland and farmland, together with wildlife enclosures on the Langham Hall Estate, which add to the beauty of the area.

Farmhouses and agricultural buildings are dotted around, together with cottages purpose built for Water Works employees in the 1930s, at the time of construction of the Works, reservoir and pumping station.

Further south is an area of good arable and grazing land, with a large number of springs, brought about by its geological formation. Whilst not designated as an AONB, it has many key features of its neighbouring region. The extensive orchards of the early twentieth century have been replaced by more open farmland, giving the area a distinctly rural aspect, with extensive hedging, two-way tracks and single narrow roads.

Housing density throughout this sector is very low, consisting mainly of seventeenth and eighteenth-century properties, together with other detached more modern properties in a range of styles, principally situated along the Dedham-Boxted Road. The only industry here is a small distribution depot on this road and a small industrial area off Gun Hill. The Black Brook valley divides this area from the rest of the village and its peaceful seclusion provides a varied and well distributed wildlife habitat. This area in particular illustrates the liking expressed by the young people of Langham for a rural peaceful environment.

Top: *A part of the Essex Way*

Middle: *Aerial view of the Water works*

Right: *The parish church*



The Black Brook valley 8

The Black Brook Valley itself is within the Colchester Conservation Area and forms a very picturesque area, well known and loved by local residents.

Accessed by winding lanes, with several popular footpaths running through the valley, the area contains Hornestreetfield, a conservation area owned and managed by a consortium of village residents, Hobday Wood, a privately owned arboretum, and other wooded land and fields which encourage wildlife. A variety of farm and other housing from the sixteenth to twentieth centuries is located here, with an unobtrusive sewerage plant situated in the valley.



Left: The Black Brook

Bottom: Pond at Hornestreet Field



The southern farmlands 9







Top: *Swans*

Middle: *Yellow wagtails pay a visit*

Bottom: *Hundred Lane*

Right *Aerial view of the southern farmlands, showing the old runway and Moor Road at the top.*

Almost one third of the area of the parish consists of the area south of Park Lane. This is largely arable farm land with very few houses. It forms a very important "green break" between the village and the town of Colchester. It also contains the remains of the Second World War Boxted Airfield and the industrial area at Lodge Lane. (See below).

Before 1940 this area consisted of many small fields with hedges; however, the hedges were removed during the construction of the airfield. After the war, the majority of the area reverted to farmland and was laid to orchard, with a few hedges and lines of trees planted along the edge of the old runways, which soften the appearance of the plateau and give it a distinctive character.

It contains two small reservoirs, which are used for irrigation purposes, but also effectively serve as a small nature reserve. Swans have nested there, they are home to coots, moorhens and a variety of ducks (mallard, tufted, widgeon and shoveller) and in the summer, attract the comparatively rare yellow wagtail. The surrounding woodland conceals roe deer and foxes. The remaining arable land supports a wide range of birds, including many Skylarks. A recent change of ownership has resulted in more intensive farming, which has reduced the areas available for wild animals, making it all the more important to retain the unspoilt areas which remain.

At the western edge of this area, forming part of the parish boundary is the early phase of the Black Brook, before it turns through 90° and flows through Langham, cutting the parish in half. The bed of the valley varies in character from areas where it is wide to areas where there are steep banks and the bed is narrow.

The wide areas make an excellent site for growing cricket bat willow as there is good soil above a water retaining base of clay. Areas where the valley is steep and the bed of the river has been left for many years form a rare habitat called 'alder carr'. This forms where there is poor drainage and trees in a narrow valley fall, partially blocking the river, and so an area of waterlogged land develops. One of the only trees which can survive in waterlogged soil is the alder and so an alder carr habitat develops. A good example of the habitat is at the bottom of Hundred Lane, the bridleway which joins Langham and Boxted. Wet woodland, of which alder carr is a major constituent, is a target habitat for the Forestry Commission and the Biodiversity Action Plan and as such there are national and local targets for its conservation and restoration.



Lodge Lane and the Airfield area 10

During the Second World War, an airfield was constructed on land south of Park Lane (and a little to the north) for the use of the US Army Air Force. Three Groups, all with outstanding records, used the airfield, which was known as Boxted to avoid confusion with a similar airfield at Langham in Norfolk. Runways and taxiways are still evident and there are still a few Nissen huts. A memorial to the airmen who served there is at the edge of the airfield and serves as a focal point for commemorative ceremonies. Buildings on the airfield are not listed and a number of Nissen huts were dismantled in early 2007. The original Operations Room is still extant.



Top: *Nissen huts on the old airfield*

Bottom: *The Lodge Lane Business Park*

To the south of the Airfield, in the area bordering Lodge Lane, are a number of residential and business premises, some of which are still housed in the wartime airfield buildings. Other business premises have been designed in a barn style, in keeping with the environment; the remaining wartime buildings are of significant historic interest, as is Langham Lodge, a Grade II listed building. Old Ipswich Road, to the east of the A12 trunk road, which ends as a cul-de-sac, marks the border of Langham and Ardleigh and contains a range of properties, mostly set in their own grounds. A small number of properties and a hotel are situated within Langham to the east of the A12. Vehicular access to Langham from this area is only possible by using the A12.







Top: *Timber framed thatched cottage*

Middle: *Homestead School*

Bottom: *Moor Road*

Langham is characterised by a rich variety of property, deriving from its long history.

St. Mary's Church, dating from the twelfth century, is mainly pebble rubble with iron pudding-stone and dressings of oolite and limestone. The nearby listed Langham Hall is a grand, Georgian two-storey, six-bay house with more recent estate houses of red brick and flint; Church Farm House is sixteenth century, timber framed and plastered. Other property in the area is largely seventeenth and eighteenth century, with mainly detached twentieth-century housing situated along the Dedham-Boxted road.

About 10% of the buildings in Langham are listed. A list is provided at Appendix 3.

The development of buildings in the village has been influenced by its situation as a farming community and the growth of small hamlets (e.g. Langham Moor, St Margaret's Cross, and Blacksmith's Corner) at road junctions. A range of very picturesque timber-framed thatched and tiled cottages and farmhouses from the sixteenth century and earlier, are located in various parts of the village, interspersed with twentieth-century housing. Some of the earlier properties are listed as of special historical interest; others wait to be so listed.

Nineteenth-century property development is limited, one major exception being the Oaks, now Homestead School, a large mansion in the early Victorian style.

Two significant twentieth-century developments with characteristic building styles in Langham are the Water Works, designed in the Art Deco style of the 1930s and Boxted Airfield, built during the Second World War, with Nissen huts and other buildings for service personnel. There is also a small amount of largely semi-detached local authority housing from this period.

Post-war residential development in Langham has largely consisted of detached houses and bungalows, located in a line alongside the roads, which allows many properties a view of open farmland to the rear. The styles of property are in keeping with the period of construction, mainly faced in brick, with design developing from the open, functional appearance of the 1960s to the more vernacular style of the 1970s and 1980s. The growth of car ownership has required garaging for properties, some of which have been constructed directly in front of properties, which may adversely affect their aspect.



Building Styles and Designs 12

It is clear that, in the last twenty years, significant efforts have been made to design and construct both residential and commercial property which is sympathetic to and in keeping with the local character of the village. Barn-style commercial property has been constructed on what used to be Boxted Airfield and most recently built houses have imitated rural styles of property (barns, farmhouses and Suffolk cottages in Wick Road and Park Lane, for example). Other new build properties have been constructed in Regency, Georgian and other styles aimed at harmonising with the established buildings in the village.

With the growth in property values has come a growth in the number of planning applications for extensions and additions to property in the Parish. Given the diversity of style, age and construction of houses, many applications clearly take into consideration the existing features in order to enhance and improve the appearance of each property. However, there are examples of extensions which, because of insufficient attention given to scale, design or materials, have a detrimental effect on the appearance and character of the property and others in the surrounding area.

The variety of buildings from different eras means that no single style predominates in the village. This diversity contributes significantly to its character, which is to be welcomed and protected.







Recommendations

1. New housing development should be sympathetic in scale, design and materials to surrounding buildings.
2. Any new development should make provision for sufficient off-street parking.
3. Buildings which are not currently listed, including those on the old airfield, which fit the English Heritage criteria for listing, should be considered for listing.
4. Design harmony and diversity should be aimed for, depending upon the particular circumstances of any prospective development.
5. Extensions should enhance, improve and be sympathetic to the character of the existing property and planning applications should be decided appropriately.
6. Property boundaries in the form of hedging, fencing and brick walls are part of the distinctive character of Langham and should be encouraged.



Top: *Some Pargetting*

Middle: *A variety of roofing materials*

Bottom: *A gabled roof*

As may be seen, the buildings in Langham are very diverse in age, style and construction. Roofs are thatch, tile or slate, whilst exteriors are brick, render or weatherboard. Despite the variety, the overall aspect of the buildings in different areas of the village is in harmony with each other. The range of surfaces, including brick, plaster, weatherboard and pargetting provide a pleasing contrast and it can be preferable to have contrasting materials on separate properties rather than a poor match.

Roof design and materials have an important bearing on the appearance of buildings in Langham. Most have pitched roofs with tile or slate fixings whereas some older properties are thatched. In some cases, flat and "lean to" roofs tend to detract from the overall appearance of the buildings, particularly where they form part of an extension to the building.





Recommendations

1. Roof design and materials should be in keeping with the age, style and construction of the building.
2. Materials should be to blend as far as is possible with the existing building and its immediate neighbours in order to maintain both harmony and diversity of styles.

Windows and Doors 14

Together with the basic building materials, the style and appearance of an area is set by the combination of windows and doors and by the pargetting of rendered buildings.

Windows are a key design feature and different types of building, whether timber framed, Georgian, Victorian, Modernist, or post-Modernist are frequently defined by their window styles. Sympathetic treatment of existing buildings to a new use can provide a good blend of the old and new.

Doors and doorways provide focal points for many buildings and their scale, design and materials often characterise their era. It is possible for renovations to be undertaken to these elements with insufficient attention to the materials used or style of building. The use of inappropriate materials and design may have a detrimental effect not only on the integrity of the property itself, but also on the harmony of the immediate neighbourhood. An example is the replacement of a flat bay Victorian terrace window with a Georgian-style bay window. Similarly, doors and entrances may be relocated or inappropriate materials used with replacement doors. However, it is not necessary always to use traditional materials to provide the same overall effect. For example, Upvc windows and doors are acceptable providing that the original design characteristics are retained.





Top: *Interesting doors*

Bottom: *Sympathetic windows*

Recommendation

1. Consideration should be given to the use of appropriate design and materials in the replacement or renovation of windows and doors.

Because of the village's proximity to Colchester and the A12, its roads are increasingly used as "rat runs" in the rush hours and heavy vehicles use them to change direction on the A12. Speeds are often excessive and Park Lane, Moor Road, School Road and Wick Road all suffer in this respect. Despite this, there was no great support for changes in either the extent or the level of speed limits and it is likely that the recent deployment of Community Speed Watch teams will have more effect than either.





Top: *Community Speed Watch team*

Bottom: *Congestion!*

Nor was there any great support for traffic calming measures, although practical safety measures were strongly supported. Improving visibility through proper maintenance of hedges and verges and providing more passing places on narrow roads are examples. In addition, heavy lorries are wearing away the edges of many village roads and making driving hazardous. Action needs to be taken both to prevent this and also to conduct proper repairs, rather than the present patching.

Young people were if anything more concerned about road safety and more inclined to support measures to slow traffic, no doubt because they spend more of their journeys outside the cocoon of the car. They were also keen to see more pavements in the village.

Parking does not appear to be a major issue in general terms, although there are undoubtedly certain points of difficulty, where people park on verges and pavements. As on similar subjects, the status quo seemed to have most support. People in general liked the appearance of the village as it is and did not want to spoil it with yellow lines, different road surface colouring, traffic calming, pedestrian crossings or street lighting. Areas for improvement clearly included better maintenance of roadside ditches and drains and the reduction of noise from the A12.There was also strong support for the harmonisation of the design of street signs throughout the village.

Recommendations

1. Practical measures to improve road safety, including cutting back hedges and verges, should be introduced wherever possible and given priority over physical traffic calming.
2. Consideration should be given to improving areas for parking at those places where demand leads to parking on pavements and verges.
3. Street sign design should be harmonised.
4. The County Council should address the problem of deterioration of rural road surfaces caused by heavy traffic.
5. Additional pavements should be constructed at particularly dangerous sites.

Footpath Protection 16

There is an extensive network of footpaths through out the village, many of which are well used. It is clear from responses to the survey that villagers value the countryside and their access to it. A list of footpaths and a map is at Appendix 4.





Issues relating to footpaths fall into one of three areas: protection, publicity and maintenance. The Parish Council already undertakes a role in the first area, although statutory responsibility lies with the County Council. It would probably also be concerned with the second, particularly the strongly supported suggestion that a village map showing footpaths and points of interest should be put on public display. This has now been done, but further efforts, such as a printed version, would no doubt be welcomed. As for maintenance, this seems to be left to voluntary efforts or the goodwill of individual landowners. The latter more than fulfil their statutory obligations in some areas of the parish, but this is not the case in others. Greater coordination of these efforts could pay considerable dividends in the form of useable footpaths around the year.

Recommendation

1. The Parish Council should further publicise the footpath network and actively ensure maintenance of footpaths in the future.

Wildlife Preservation



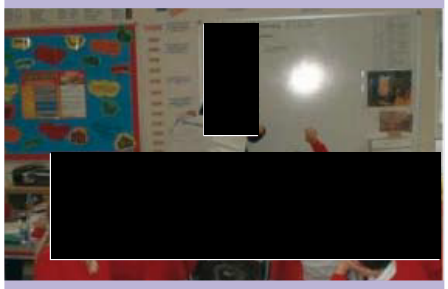


Wildlife abounds in the village and is seen as an important part of the benefits of living here. The idea that projects which create more natural habitats for wildlife should be supported received very strong support. Inevitably, however, there are balances to be sought between increased wildlife and farming practices. Hens and foxes, to quote an obvious example, do not mix well. If the current situation is to be improved upon, or even maintained (there are areas where farming is becoming more intensive), there is a need for some body to take an overview and coordinate action. This may be the Parish Council or some ad hoc body.

Recommendation

1. The protection and stimulation of wildlife habitats should be encouraged throughout the parish.







Top: *A young person's view of Langham*

Middle: *Class discussion*

Bottom: *The 'pod' where the older youngsters meet*

Amongst the children and young people working with the committee there was general appreciation about being consulted and included in the village design statement process and several expressed interest in being further involved in village consultations.

The Youth Questionnaire secured a response rate of almost 80%. Some of the questions were general and replicated those in the adult questionnaire, but others were specific to the concerns of young people. Of the latter, the main thrust of the responses was that there were not enough facilities in the village for their social and recreational needs. When asked about specific facilities, there was strong support for a public swimming pool and an all-weather sports pitch.

On the more general questions, the responses tended to mirror those of the adult questionnaire, except in the area of road safety, where they were more conscious of the dangers presented by speeding vehicles.

In terms of specific youth concerns, the youth responses identified that there were generally adequate facilities and activities for children, but inadequate provision for the social and recreational needs of young people in the village. Both children and young people's feedback comments identified improving sports facilities through provision of outdoor facilities; a skate park, all weather pitch/ multi-sport pitch, additional tennis courts, netball and basketball equipment. Comments and suggestions for indoor facilities ranged from additional clubs; gym, judo, dance, through to a sports centre with squash courts, multi-sport courts and a swimming pool. There was a noteworthy statement, and a 91.5% agreement, that the Community Centre clock should always display the correct time. The children and young people's comments identified there was need for a youth centre/ club to provide indoor facilities and other activities in order to meet up with friends and mix with other children and young people.

The youth responses to more general questions concerning the current and future situation in Langham mirrored those of the adult questionnaire. In particular the retention of trees, woodland, farmland, rivers, reservoirs and open spaces were valued by over 90% of the youth respondents as significantly important to the appearance and character of the village. This was echoed in the children's many comments about 'open space', 'makes you feel in the country' & 'nice to walk in the country'.

The Boxted World War II airfield was identified by children and young people as in need of protection as a place of historic and present day importance for present and future generations. Many references to the Boxted World War II Airfield described it as 'historical' & 'part of our history'.

The children and young people also expressed the opinion that the appearance of existing buildings should be used as a measure for any future development in the village, and that all development should be kept to a minimum.

The youth responses made specific reference to matters of health and safety. Road safety was the main issue with children and young people expressing concern that traffic exceeded the speed limit of 30mph in the village. Therefore they did not feel safe when riding their bicycles around Langham or when having to walk along roads without pavements. Other issues identified related to the need for additional litter bins and dog waste bins, and designation of official bus stops.

Perhaps the most important aspect of a VDS is to give guidance to those proposing major developments in the village. Langham is not a large village, and it lacks many of the facilities which greater size would bring – more shops, entertainment, doctors' surgery etc.

The very clear message from the questionnaire was that the overwhelming majority of the villagers were content with things broadly as they were.

There was a widely expressed view that the number of new houses to be built over the next 15 years should not exceed a relatively small number. Almost 60% of respondents put this number at 25, with a further 18% being prepared to go to 50 and 15% wanting no new houses at all. Only 6% of respondents were prepared to go further than 50.

The responses from the young people mirrored this wish to stay small.

Similarly, there was strong support (92%) for expanding the development line (at present tightly drawn around the village) only if any expansion was in keeping with the surrounding area. In terms of the size of development, there was strong opposition to anything greater than clusters of 5, and the preference of the majority would be for individual dwellings.

There was less agreement about the types of dwelling, but strong support for accommodation for first time buyers, the elderly and families. Relatively recent examples of such housing already exist in the village. Executive housing and housing for rental were less popular.

Over 80% of the respondents to the main questionnaire expressed the view that Langham had sufficient facilities for its inhabitants and that it wished to maintain its current character as a village, separated from Colchester by significant areas of countryside.

The countryside as such is clearly an important issue for the inhabitants of Langham, and especially for the young people.

There is a strong feeling that the large expanses of agricultural land so close to the main centres of population, as well as the more scenic areas, are a vital part of the village's character and need to be preserved. Easy access is important, as is the creation of more wildlife areas. The community effort to create Hornstreetfield shows what can be done, and some local landowners have shown how the encouragement of wildlife can be combined with modern farming practice. This approach should be congratulated and encouraged.



Ploughing

Recommendations

1. The essentially rural character of the parish should be maintained and enhanced
2. Village buildings, special sites and trees should be reviewed to identify those worthy of protection.
3. There may be a case for new single dwellings in the parish, although the numbers built by 2021 should be strictly limited.
4. Recent development has taken the form of infilling, rather than large developments and most new houses have been in a vernacular style and in keeping with the rest of the village. It is clear that this is what the great majority of the respondents would prefer and that they would be strongly opposed to ribbon development along those roads with major open spaces and to any large scale development.
5. The current industrial site on School Road was judged to be just acceptable, but no further industrial development should take place there. Care needs to be taken with any new industrial site to avoid the traffic problems created on School Road. Large scale development should not be allowed.
6. Footpaths and bridleways should always be kept clear and accessible and should be developed and promoted for local recreational use.
7. It is important that hedgerows and green verges are preserved.
8. There was very strong support for the creation of more natural habitats for wildlife and the retention of farmland features and woodland.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Firstly, our thanks and appreciation go to all the residents of Langham for their contribution to the contents of the Langham Village Design Statement. In this respect, it is the product of the whole community.

In particular we should like to mention the unstinting help provided by the following organisations and individuals:

The Langham Parish Council, for its continuing support.

The Dedham Vale AONB & Stour Valley Project, especially Matt Hullis for his enthusiastic and practical guidance in launching the project successfully.

The Rural Community Council of Essex, and in particular Stella Meesters, for all their assistance as facilitators of the various events and for their guidance and help at different stages of the project.

The Officers of Colchester Borough Council for the benefit of their experience. Our Ward Councillor Christopher Garnett has been an excellent source of advice as the project has progressed.

Completed Essex Village Design Statements served as continuing sources of inspiration in the preparation of the Langham publication.

Such a project cannot succeed without financial support and we are indebted to:

The Langham Parish Council for its assistance with graphic design.
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In addition, we are very grateful for the contributions, in cash or kind, from many members of the community.

Committee

[redacted]

Chairman
Secretary
Treasurer

HOW TO MAKE PRACTICAL USE OF THE VILLAGE DESIGN STATEMENT (VDS)

Study the VDS thoroughly, especially the recommendations, photographs, maps and illustrations.

Look at the whole of your property and compare it to those close by. Do they all fit together or are there particular characteristic or distinguishing features. What aspects of your property make it individual and stand out from other properties or landscape features?

Now check the specific details of your property, including the doors, windows and frames, eaves, construction materials etc.

Review the setting of your property, including the use of boundary materials, such as hedges, garden features etc. and its position in relation to other properties.

If you consider making any changes to your property, check to see how far any proposed changes will harmonise with the recommendations of the VDS. This will allow you to review any elements which may be uncharacteristic or out of keeping with your neighbourhood.

Next, you should consult the Colchester Borough Council Planning Department, your Architect and Builder and discuss your Design Assessment with them. This will allow them to comment and suggest any improvements. Planning information is readily available on the Colchester Borough Council website: www.colchester.gov.uk . The Council also has various leaflets and advisory notes which will assist in the consideration of any application for planning consent.

For listed buildings, it is advisable to consult the Borough Conservation Officer before submitting an application for Listed Building Consent. Similarly, if you consider your property fulfils the criteria for listing, you should contact English Heritage in the first instance, which is responsible for listings.

LANGHAM'S LISTED BUILDINGS – OFFICIAL LIST

Dedham Road and to the north of it
1. Church of St. Mary
2. School north west of Church of St. Mary
3. Church Farmhouse (formerly listed as Constable Cottage)
4. The Hall
5. Barn west of The Hall
6. Barn north west of The Hall
7. Langham Hall Farmhouse
8. The Old House
9. Holly Tree Cottage
10. Walnut Tree Cottage
11. Highfield Cottage (now sub-divided)
12. Old Whalebone Cottage (a sub-division of Highfield Cottage)
13. Whalebone House
14. Pond Villa
15. Redhouse
16. Broomhouse
17. Ewen's Farmhouse
18. Valley House

Chapel Road
1. Yew Tree Cottage

Greyhound Hill
1. Wyborne
2. Mount Pleasant

Grove Hill
1. Pungford Cottages
2. Langford Hall
3. Grove Cottage

Langham Lane
1. Maltings Farmhouse
2. Maltings Farm Cottage

Lodge Lane
1. Langham Lodge

Moor Road
1. Bumblebee Cottage (formerly listed as Munson's Cottage)
2. Chaplins Farmhouse
3. Adelphi Cottages (Nos. 1 & 2)
4. Moor Cottages (Nos. 1 & 2)

Old Ipswich Road
1. Thorpe Ley

Old Mill Road
1. Mill Farmhouse
2. The Fens

Park Lane

1. Langham Oak Cottage (formerly known as Thatched Cottage)
2. Floral Dene
3. Old Park House (formerly known as New House)
4. Mantons
5. Pond Farm Cottage
6. Park Lane Farmhouse

Rectory Road

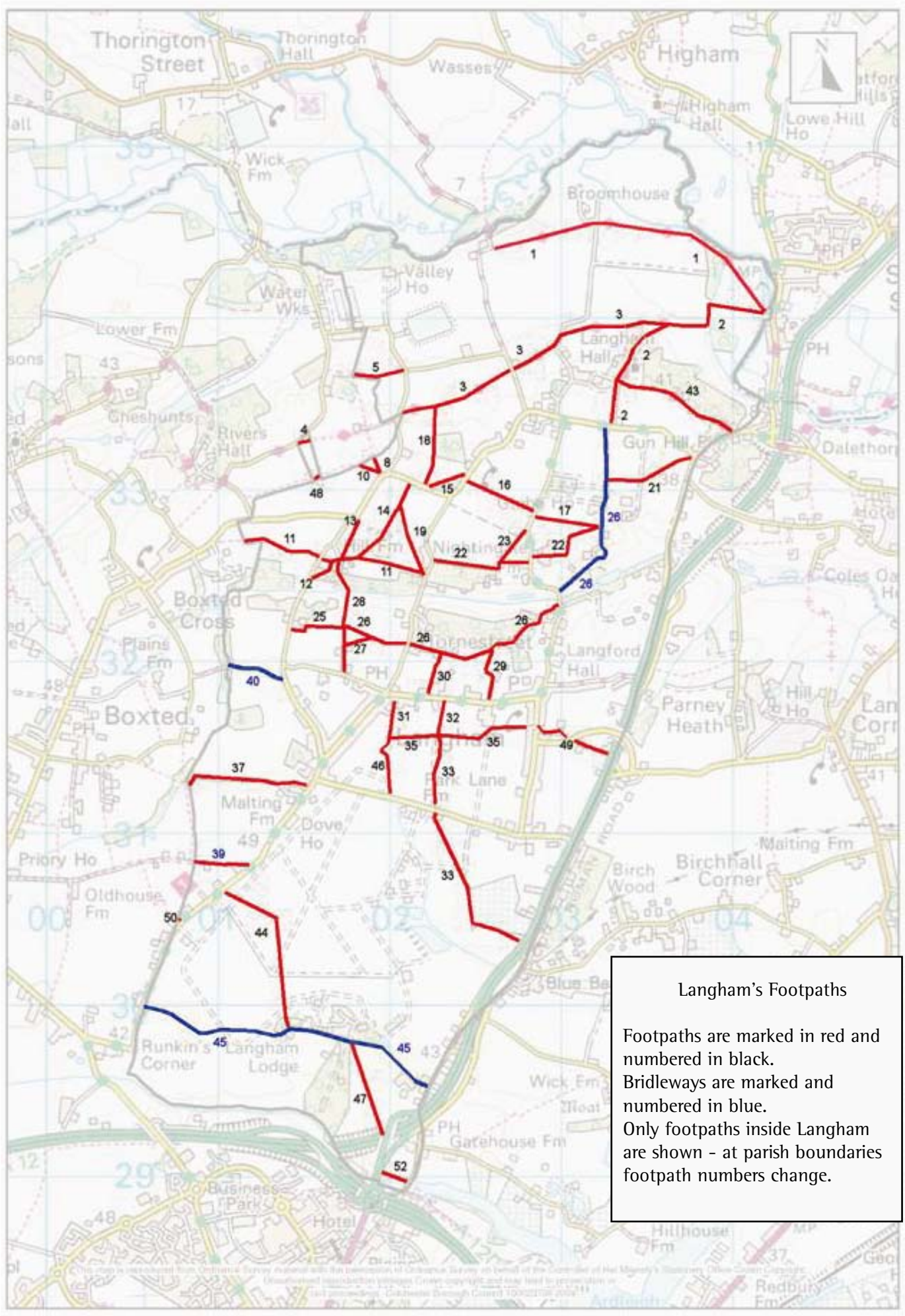
1. Forge Cottage
2. Smithy south of and adjoining Forge Cottage
3. Glebe Farmhouse
4. Barn east of Glebe Farmhouse
5. Glebe House (Old Rectory)

School Road

1. Tudor Cottage Farm
2. Lyme Cottage
3. Bakers
4. Little Oaks Barn
5. School Farmhouse (Nos. 1 & 2)
6. Keepers Cottage

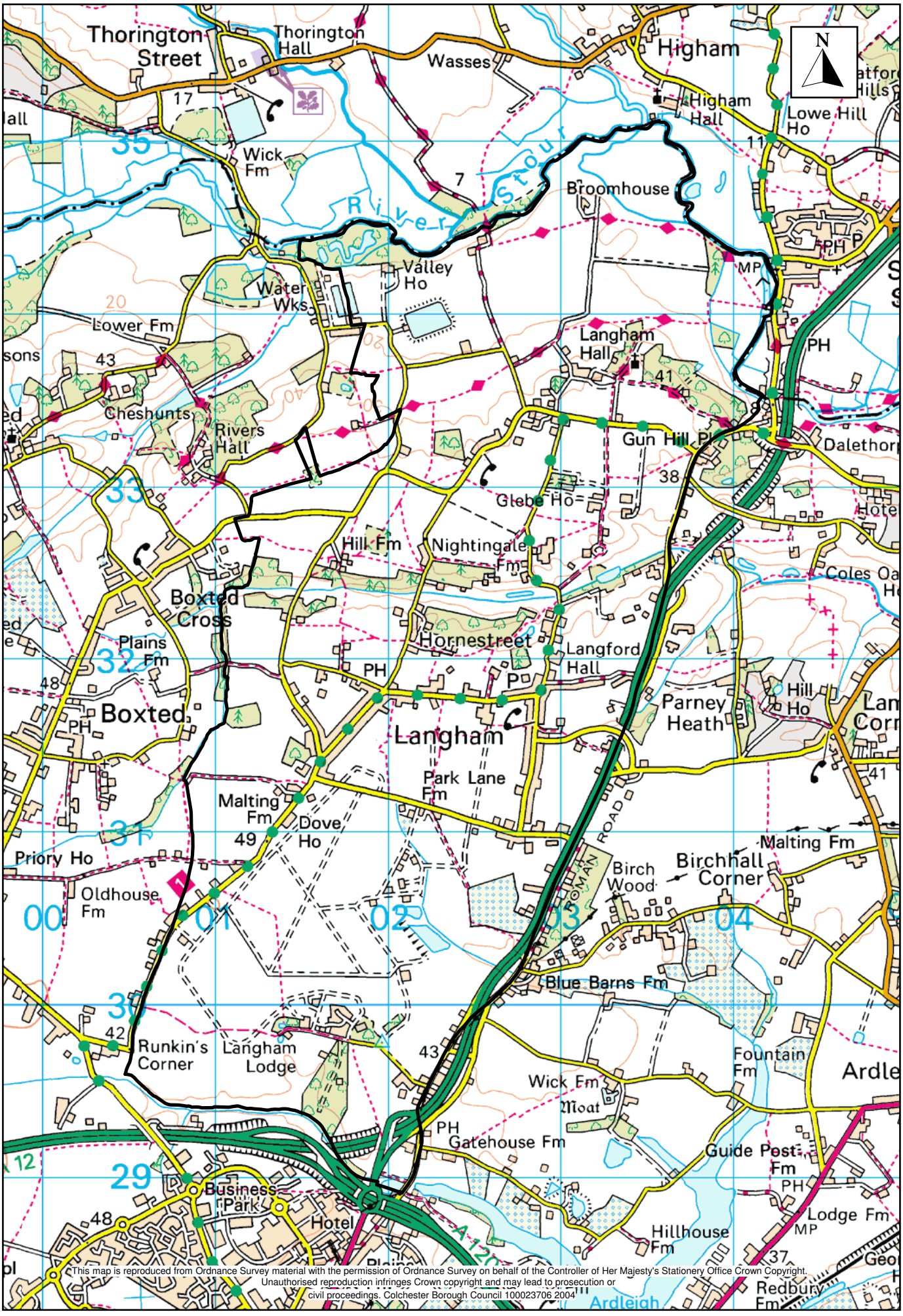
FOOTPATH LIST

1 Stour Valley – Low Lift – Stratford Mill
2 Stratford Mill – Langham Church – Dedham Rd
3 Stour Valley side –past Primrose Wood - towards Alderton's Cottages
4 Fragment – Sky Hall Hill
5 Continues line of the road past Docura's Farm
6 **
7 **
8 Off Dedham Rd – towards Plumb's Farm
9 **
10 Off Dedham Rd – meets fragment 48 (east-west path)
11 Greyhound Hill –Hill Farm – west-east to Boxted
12 Old Mill Rd – Hill Farm
13 Hill Fm – junction of Dedham Rd/Old Mill Rd
14 Hill Fm – Dedham Rd
15 Dedham Rd – cuts corner of Greyhound Hill junction
16 Dedham Rd - Rectory Rd
17 Rectory Rd – Glebe Farm bridleway
18 Dedham Rd – north-south path- connects to FP3
19 Connects with FP14 to Greyhound Hill
20 Bridleway – Grove Hill at Back Brook – Dedham Road (lodge)
21 From bridleway 20 – junction of Dedham Rd and Gun Hill
22 Nightingale Hill – Bridleway 20 – recently diverted
23 Driveway – connects FP22 and Rectory Road
24 **
25 Old Mill Rd – Greyhound Hill – recently diverted
26 From FP 26 east-west route- Hornestreet – Black Brook at Grove Hill
27 Bardle's Barn (off High St) – FP26
28 High St – Hill Farm
29 School Rd – north-south – past Keeper's Cottage – to FP26
30 School Rd – Community Wood
31 School Rd – FP FP35
32 Recreation Ground - joins FP's 33 and 35
33 Continues FP32 south to Park Lane
34 **
35 Joins FP31 and 46 – alongside Recreation Ground – Wick Rd
36 **
37 Langham Lane – Matings Farm – Black Brook
38 **
39 Bridleway – Oathouse Lane
40 Bridleway – Hundred Lane – Chapel Rd- Black Brook
41 **
42 **
43 Church – East Lodge (Gun Hill)
44 Langham Lane – airfield – Lodge Lane
45 Bridleway – Lodge Lane - Langham Lane
46 Park Lane – north end meets with FP's 31 & 35
47 Lodge Lane – flyover A12 link road
48 Fragment in Langham of east-west path on the side of the Stour Valley
49 Wick Rd – Birchfield R – A12
50 Off Langham Lane
51 **
52 Ramada Hotel – Ardleigh Reservoir



Langham's Footpaths

Footpaths are marked in red and numbered in black.
Bridleways are marked and numbered in blue.
Only footpaths inside Langham are shown - at parish boundaries footpath numbers change.



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Annex L



Little Horkesley Village Design Statement

A Village Design Statement (VDS) is an assessment of a village's character and qualities, prepared by the villagers and formally accepted by the Borough Council. It identifies what the villagers value about their area, and what they consider are the important character and features to be retained as part of any new development.

It is intended to provide local information about the village, its environs and the wishes of its population and should complement national and local planning policies when any development is planned in the village.

A VDS provides guidance and recommendations to property owners and developers on future changes - large and small - in the village. It also provides additional information and guidance to Borough Council officers and Members considering planning applications.

VILLAGE DESIGN STATEMENT PROCESS

The production of a VDS for Little Horkesley was initiated by the Parish Council in 2009 when a team of volunteers was recruited to act as a VDS Steering Committee.

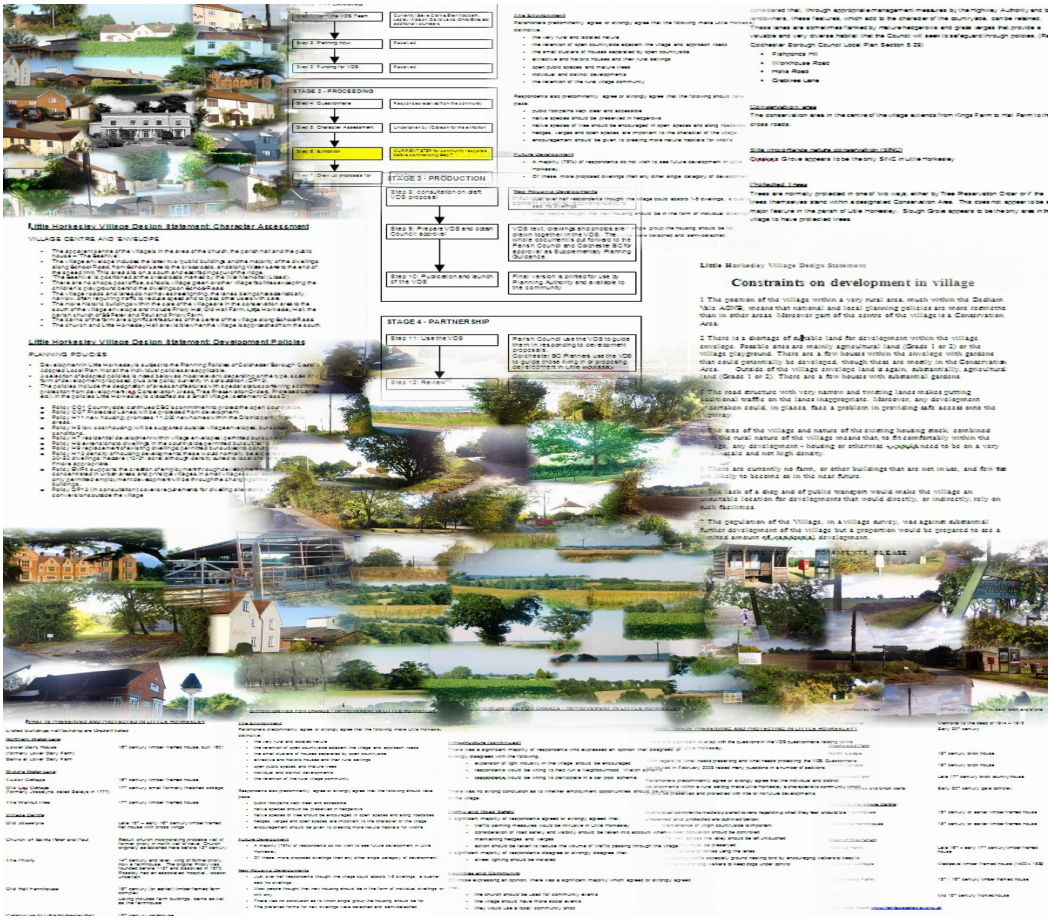
The first stage was the production of a questionnaire asking opinions about a wide range of matters affecting the character and qualities of the village. This was distributed to all adults in the village in the Spring of 2009 and 59 replies; representing 34% of the then adult population were received. Due to the very small population of the village and with no school in Little Horkesley the questionnaire did not include questions specifically for the children of the parish.

The results of this survey were presented to the village in a public exhibition and meeting in April 2009. Feedback and further comments were elicited and the VDS Steering Committee was endorsed and asked to continue work.

The next step was the production by the Steering Committee and other volunteers of an assessment of the buildings, landscape, roads and constraints on development in the village, taking into account the results of the survey and subsequent feedback. This material, along with the history of the village, was presented to the village in a public exhibition held over a weekend in October 2009.

Again feedback was encouraged. The amended assessment was then used as the basis for a first draft VDS, circulated to the entire village in May 2010 for additional comments.

A final draft was submitted to Colchester Borough Council in July 2010.



Examples of the displays at the public exhibition

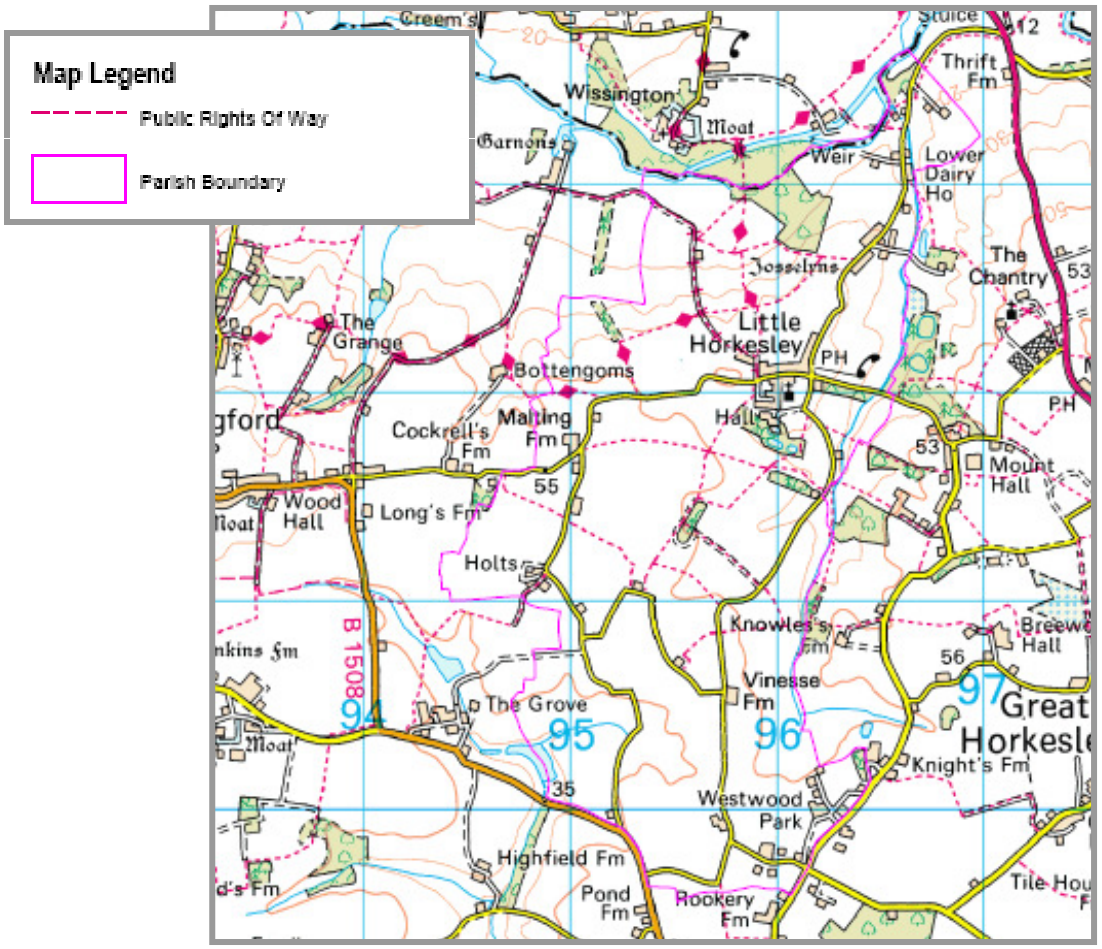
Once formally adopted as guidance the VDS will be provided to all households and businesses in the village. It will also be available on Colchester Borough's website (www.colchester.gov.uk)

The VDS is not intended as a static document; it will be reviewed by the Parish Council at three year intervals or earlier in the event of changes to national planning guidance and relevant local planning policies for Colchester Borough.

The recommendations in the following sections should be read in the context of Colchester Borough Council planning policies.

INTRODUCTION

Little Horkesley is one of the smallest villages in north Essex, some 6 miles north west of Colchester, bordering on Suffolk to the north.



Colchester

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23/07/2010

Not to scale

The majority of the parish is on the higher ground to the south of the River Stour and stretches down the slopes to this river plain and to subsidiary valleys. Partly within the Dedham Vale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, the countryside of the parish is characterised by the broad, open river valley of the Stour to the north, the narrower valleys of its tributaries to east and south west and the relatively flat hill tops matching those of the upper ground

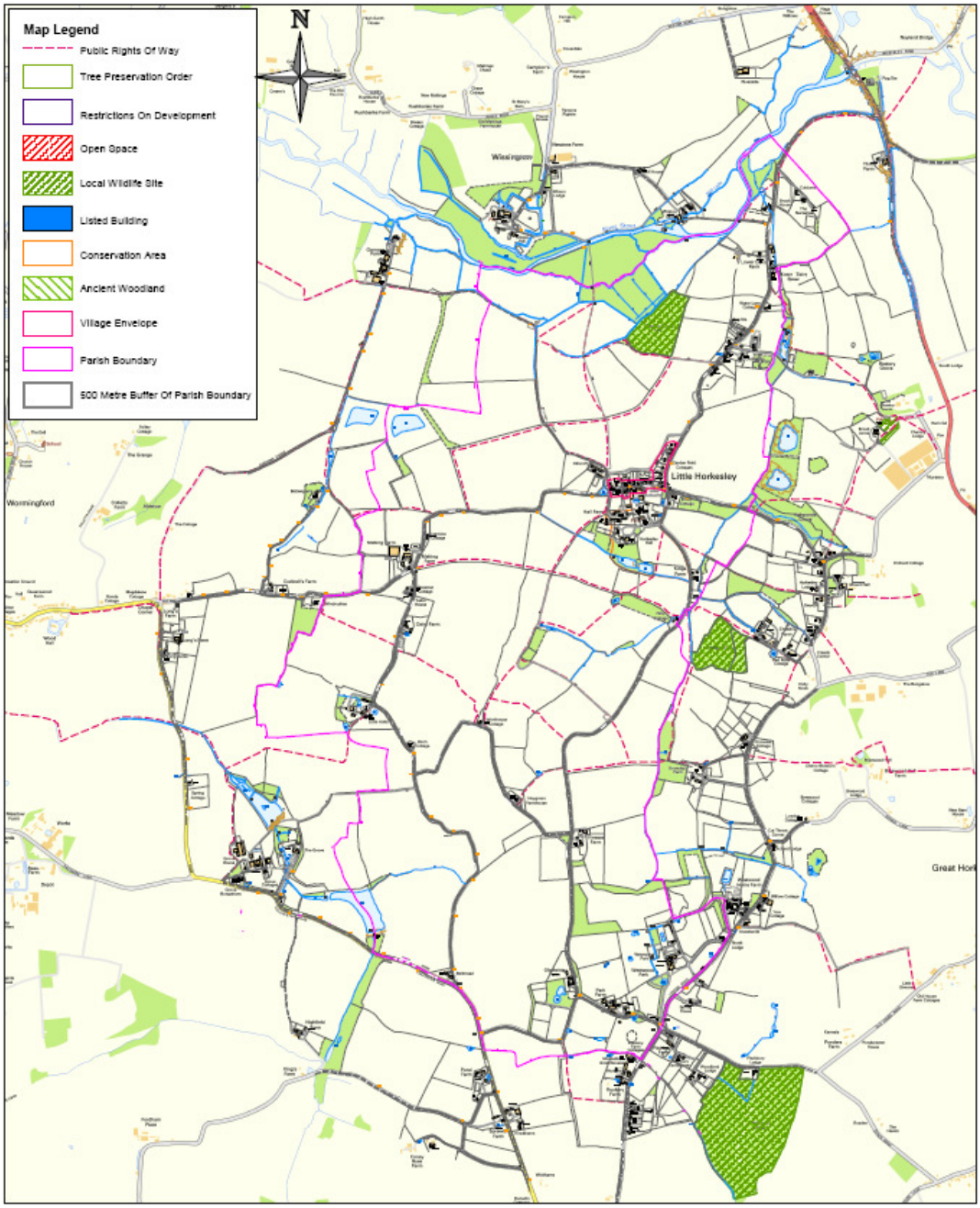
The rolling nature of the land provides views to and from the village across these valleys. There are small woods and many of the country lanes retain their hedgerows on one or both sides, although removal of hedgerows has increased the openness of the views in the east to and from the village. The land use is of mixed agriculture with a proportion of the pastoral land used for paddocks and stabling as well as for cattle grazing. The countryside has a relatively high density of footpaths compared to adjacent areas. These paths connect between outlying former agricultural dwellings and the winding country lanes and include parts of the Stour Valley Path.







Little Horkesley Parish Map



Colchester

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Not to scale

The apparent centre of the village is in the area of the Church, the Village Hall and the public house – 'The Beehive'. Other village community facilities include the playground and the mobile police unit which visits the village on a fortnightly basis. There is insufficient capacity to support any other permanent community facilities.

The defined 'village envelope' is very small and includes the latter two 'public' buildings and the majority of the dwellings along School Road, from School Lane to the crossroads, and along Water Lane to the end of the speed limit. This core area sits on a south and east facing spur of land to the south of the Stour Valley. The Beehive is positioned at the crossroads marked by the War Memorial (Listed). An area of Little Horkesley village is designated as a Conservation Area where building renovations or alterations are governed by tight planning control. Outside the designated Conservation Area are buildings with similarly interesting or important architectural features: the VDS recommendations regarding development proposals shall also be applied to these buildings.

Plan of the Centre of the Village



Colchester

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23/07/2010
Not to scale



There are no longer any shops, post office, schools, village green or other village facilities excepting the children's playground behind the dwellings on School Road. There are few other open spaces available to the public: the graveyard to the Church is officially counted as open space and there is a small green sward/ parking area adjacent the Village Hall.

The village roads and lanes do not have street lighting, the lanes being characteristically narrow, often requiring traffic to reduce speed and to pass other users with care, even within the core of the village.

There are fewer than 75 dwellings, some in small clusters in and around the centre of the village, the rest spread through out the area. The population is stable with around 150-160 adults plus a variable number of children. The vast bulk of the parish is fields.

HISTORY OF LITTLE HORKESLEY

The name Horkesley was first recorded in 1130. It combines 'ley' meaning a woodland clearance with a word meaning either dirty or a temporary shelter.

At the time of the Doomsday Book, Little Horkesley was a sub manor of Nayland. In 1129 the Cluniac priory was founded and although it was small (only 2-4 monks) it must have been an important part of the community up to Dissolution in 1586. The parish has always been dominated by agriculture. It had been well wooded but the woods were consistently being cleared from Saxon times onward. In 1086 there were 4 ploughs in the parish, and by 1266 the arable area had increased at the expense of woodland. In the seventeenth century new field names such as Upper, Middle, and Nether Stubbs (referring to the felled stumps) indicate continued clearance. Little Horkesley today is left with one old wood, Creeks Grove, of under 20 acres in total.

Settlement was dictated by the agricultural necessity of the time. In 1377, 78 people paid Poll tax to Richard II – to qualify you had to be over 16 years old. Most of the settlement we know of at this time was around the church, which had been built in 12th century on the hilltop close to the Priory, and the medieval manor was most probably on the site of the current Old Hall Farm.

In later periods settlement spread out over the parish. It took the form of dispersed farms, many of which are still in existence, and small green side settlements. In Little Horkesley we had the small settlement of Hay Green, first noted in 1329. It was still in existence at the beginning of the twentieth century and said to be able to produce two cricket teams, though now only Workhouse Cottage is still standing, and otherwise just the remains of the

tofts in the adjoining fields and some old plum trees in the wood indicate past habitation. Westwood Tye, another green settlement right on the border with Great Horkesley, gave its name to Westwood Park.

By 1778 there were 30 houses recorded in the parish, including the new hall built in 1710 on the site of the current Horkesley Hall. In 1801 201 people lived in the parish. The population peaked in 1861 with 253. Six farms were recorded at that time with over 50 acres. It was still an agricultural parish with a dispersed settlement pattern.

At the end of the nineteenth century and during the twentieth century the pattern changed. There was an obvious need for housing, and the Government built a large number of council houses in School Road and Water Lane. These concentrated the main settlement of Little Horkesley along these two lanes.

In 1870 the school house was built with accommodation for 72 children. The school continued until 1936 when there were only 12 children attending and it was closed. The Beehive pub was first recorded in 1859 and for a short time in the nineteenth century there was a beerhouse in the cellars of the old Horkesley Hall, and also there was a beerhouse in the Walnut Tree on Water Lane.

On the 21st September 1940 both the Beehive and the church were hit by bombs dropped by returning German aircraft. The pub was rebuilt in 1954 and the church in 1958.





The parish remains a small rural settlement and is lucky to still have 5 working farms.











BUILDING STYLES AND DESIGNS

Little Horkesley's history as an agricultural area, away from the main road to Colchester, is reflected in the Parish's limited range and scale of building development, even during the 20th century and the early part of the 21st century.



The older remaining properties typically reflect their relatively high status, from Little Horkesley Hall to King's Farmhouse, Old Hall Farm to Lower Dairy House, and Westwood Park to Old Josselyns. A later addition to this group

is the new country house, also called Josselyns, designed by architect Raymond Erith. There are 24 Listed Buildings (including the Church and the War Memorial) the majority of which are timber framed farm houses, cottages or agricultural barns; see Appendix 1. The earliest of these may have elements originating in the 15th century (Holts, King's Farmhouse, Gladwins) although most date from the 16th, 17th or 18th centuries. There are reputed to be 14th century elements of the former priory in the listed house – "The Priory" - next to the Church.

One of the finest examples of the higher status houses is "Old Josselyns" on Water Lane. The house has had many extensions added to its original hall house through the centuries, with much of the frame exposed, interesting projecting windows and the whole capped with plain clay tile roofs in gabled and hipped forms.







Other timber framed farm houses are also noteworthy, including the attractively fenestrated and sloping frame of King's Farmhouse on Vinesse Road. Upper Dairy Farm, Holts, Old Hall Farm and Lower Dairy House are also interesting timber framed buildings, the latter demonstrating its original status by its finely carved frame showing a local dragon and the date of the former farmhouse – 1601.

The grandest residences are Little Horkesley Hall – an 18th century classical house set in a landscaped valley including two lakes in the valley below – and Westwood Park, a brick country house originating in the late 17th century and with matching brick gatehouses. This is now the estate office for the Westwood Park Centre for Business





The later buildings in the Parish – nearly all dwellings – are usually of simple pitched roof form, predominantly two storey, although there is a group of single storey houses on School Road built in the mid-20th century. A few individual houses have been added to the Parish from time to time but there have been few periods of significant expansion of the village; there are no housing estates. A few small groups of houses – mainly by the Council - were

built during the 20th century; ‘Baileys Cottages’ mid way along Water Lane, the semi-detached houses on Water Lane in the core of the village and the School Road group noted above.











The ‘public’ buildings in the Parish are few; the former school (now the Village Hall) in School Lane, the Church of Saints Peter and Paul in the centre of the village and the public house – “The Beehive” at the village crossroads. The two latter were re-built after their destruction by landmine during the Second World War. The church is of relatively simple architectural form on the plan of the medieval church. It has a rendered and crenellated

square tower, with stone dressings to openings and long-and-short work to corners. The nave, aisle and chancel have copper roofs and are rendered similarly to the tower, with simple fenestration of hooded stone lights plus stone-dressed piers.







The older buildings are roofed in plain clay tiles, clay pantiles or thatch. Later houses use slates, concrete tiles or artificial slates. The external walls of dwellings are usually finished externally in render without the timber frame exposed, in local orangey-red brick or are 'half-timbered' (the older properties).

The older agricultural buildings are clad in timber boarding and also have red plain clay tiles or more modern sheet cladding and roofing materials where re-roofed. Later farm buildings typically use profiled steel or asbestos cement sheet roofing and cladding. Some farms (e.g. Malting Farm) and larger houses (e.g. Hillcroft) have single storey outer ranges built with plain clay tiled pitched roofs, brick walls or timber boarded frames to match the main building. The local palette of external materials therefore reflects the vernacular architecture of the area.

There is a wide range of windows and doors used, from the classically proportioned sash windows of Little Horkesley Hall, to the mullioned oak windows fitting the timber frame of King's Farmhouse and the modern 'standard' timber casement windows and later PVCu replacements on many of the 20th century houses. Apart from the front entrance portico to the 18th century brick and stone Little Horkesley Hall and the brick detailing of Westwood Park, most buildings' front entrances are unremarkable.

There is a range of property frontages within the village including hedges fences and brick walls with no single form predominating











RECOMMENDATIONS

- new developments should only take place within the Village Envelope
- any development should reflect the characteristics of the village; its rural and isolated nature, open countryside adjacent the village, the open spaces and mature trees, small clusters of housing separated by countryside, the historic country houses and their rural settings.
- any development should be sympathetic - in style, scale, mass and design – with adjacent properties
- any development (including extensions) should generally be limited to 2 storeys, use matching materials, and respect the established building line
- new residential developments should be detached or semi-detached
- conversions of agricultural buildings are preferred to be to residential use. The conversions should retain the character of the original building.
- traditional roofing materials should be used (e.g. plain clay tiles, pantiles, slates, as appropriate) where these are the dominant materials used on existing buildings
- the playground should be retained as an area of Public Open Space and should not be built upon

ROADS AND TRAFFIC

The road users in the village are a mix of:

- private cars, both local and longer distance traffic using the lanes as a rat run to the A12 south of Colchester;

- farm equipment - from the farms in the village, but also from a major farm on the other side of the A134 farming land on the other side of the village;
- horse trailers, general delivery and other large vehicles;
- cyclists - from the village and also from further away;
- horse riders - including from the various commercial stables in the village;
- walkers - local and also from further away.

All the roads in the village are narrow country lanes, mostly single track.

There are some limited stretches where two cars may pass comfortably but only one very small stretch in the middle of the village where two larger vehicles can pass. Otherwise, informal passing places are used. There are three Protected Lanes - Workhouse Rd, Holts Rd and Crabtree Lane

There are no roadside footpaths and the verges, where they exist, are largely unsuitable for walking on. Pedestrians necessarily use the road.







The increase in traffic and particularly of larger vehicles in the village - farm vehicles and others - combined with an increase in drivers unused to the lanes mean that verges are constantly being eroded.







This brings additional problems - ruined drainage systems leading to flooding, mud on the road and potholes. Moreover the post and chain fences around two small greens are damaged frequently.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- parking should always be off-road or where this cannot be accommodated comply with Essex County Council Parking Standards.
- development that would increase the traffic passing through the village should be resisted. There is a preference for measures which reduce traffic through the village.
- measures that urbanise the roads, such as road calming measures, street furniture, lighting, paving, etc, should be avoided.
- consideration should be given to extending the speed limits.
- consideration should be given to road safety when maintaining hedges and verges.
- the County Council should address the problem of deterioration of rural road surfaces caused by heavy traffic

FOOTPATHS

There are no roadside footpaths, but there is an extensive network of footpaths and bridle paths throughout the area of the village crossing fields

and into copses, both within and outside of the AONB.



RECOMMENDATIONS

- the Parish Council should actively encourage landowners to maintain footpaths in good order, liaising with Essex County Council where needed.

THE VILLAGERS' VIEWS

The following is based on the results of the survey of the village conducted in Spring 2009. As with many surveys, results can appear to be, and in some

cases are, contradictory. In 2007 there was also a survey of the needs of children in the parish;

It was very clear from the survey that the vast majority of adult residents of the village value highly its very rural, underdeveloped and quiet nature and nearly 80% said they did not want any future development in Little Horkesley.

If there is to be development, the consensus was that between one and five houses, preferably individual houses or in small clusters and/or as infill would be acceptable. Detached or semi-detached houses were preferred with families, followed by first time buyers and then accommodation for the elderly as the target occupants. People with local connections were considered desirable. New houses should be within the village envelope, sympathetic in scale, massing, character and design, and with provision for off-street parking. Any redundant farm buildings should be converted to residential use in preference to anything else, with a minority preferring light industrial use.

In principle, more local employment was welcomed by just over half the respondents. However, a similar proportion said they were not aware of employers/employment opportunities within the village despite 11 separate such opportunities being cited by others. Moreover there was little support for developing facilities to provide employment with light industry, office and non-residential institutions being the sectors that gained limited support.

RECOMMENDATION

- the village's rural character and quality should be maintained

The state of the roads and the volume of traffic in the village were significant concerns. The majority wished to see existing speed limits extended and action taken to reduce the volume of traffic passing through the village.

However, a large majority considered that traffic calming measures would be intrusive on the environment. Virtually no one wanted street lighting. Both of these views are consistent with the desire to maintain a rural feel to the village. It was thought important, however, that road safety and visibility be taken into account when maintaining hedges and verges.

A significant proportion cites walking as a village-based recreation. Indeed, everyone who stated an opinion feels that it is important for footpaths to be kept in good order. In addition, groups of ramblers are frequently to be seen. Horse riders, many from commercial stables in the village, use the bridle paths as well as the lanes.

Whilst a significant majority said a bus service should be considered, almost two thirds then went on to say that they would use it rarely or never and only a tiny proportion would expect to use a bus service more than weekly.

A significant majority claimed they would use a community shop if there were one, with a sizeable minority saying they would volunteer to run one.

FUTURE DEVELOPMENT

The conclusions drawn from the analysis of Little Horkesley village questionnaire (see “Villagers’ Views”) indicate that there are unlikely to be

any areas in the Parish where a significant scale of development is either suitable or desirable. There was a strong preference (75%) for no further development in the village.

Should development be proposed then just over half of the population thought it would be expected to be small scale (1-5 dwellings). Most people thought that new housing should be single dwellings or infill.

Any development, whether new building or extensions/ alterations to existing buildings, was strongly preferred to be sympathetic in scale, design and materials to the adjacent properties. Parking should be off-street. Where buildings are proposed to be extended the extensions should be in keeping with the scale, design and materials of the main building, and use traditional roofing materials. Any conversion of agricultural buildings to residential use should retain the character of the original buildings.

The population expressed a strong preference to safeguard the characteristics of the village. These characteristics include its rural and isolated nature, the open countryside adjacent the village and its approach roads, the open spaces and mature trees, the extensive footpath network, the small clusters of houses separated by open countryside, the attractive and historic houses and their rural settings.

APPENDIX 1: LISTED BUILDINGS IN LITTLE HORKESLEY

- The Priory
- Barn north of Priory House
- Little Horkesley Hall
- Gatehouse to Little Horkesley Hall
- Church of Saints Peter and Paul
- Old Hall Farmhouse
- Barn west of Old Hall Farmhouse
- Barn north of barn west of Old Hall Farmhouse
- War Memorial
- Old Josselyns, Water Lane
- Tudor Cottage, Water Lane
- Lower Dairy House, Water Lane
- Barns north of Lower Dairy House, Water Lane
- The Walnut Tree, Water Lane
- Kings Farmhouse, Vinesse Road
- Old Barn Cottage
- Gladwins Farmhouse, Vinesse Road
- Westwood Park
- North Lodge and South Lodge, Westwood Park
- Entrance Gates and brick walls, Westwood Park
- Malting Farm
- Chestnut Cottage, Holt's Road
- Upper Dairy Farm, Holt's Road
- Holts Farmhouse

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Little Horkesley Village Design Statement has been produced with the inputs of many individuals. The VDS Steering Committee is extremely grateful for the contributions of those individuals, including the following;

- Colchester Borough Council Planning Department staff and officers, including Beverley McClean
- Rural Community Council of Essex; Clare Nagle and Sarah Sapsford
- Little Horkesley Parish Council
- Local businesses
- The Parishioners of Little Horkesley

We would also like to thank ITV/ Rural Action East for providing/ arranging financial support

Annex M



Village Design Statements *are intended to provide design guidance to people who are thinking about proposed developments such as an alteration to an existing property, the construction of new dwellings or commercial premises, or even the provision of street furniture.*

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Plan of Village : *Showing Village Envelope, TPOs, Listed Buildings, Open Spaces and Restricted Development areas* *Page 26*

CBC Planning Policy and Design Guidance *Page 29*

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WHAT IS A VILLAGE DESIGN STATEMENT?

A Village Design Statement (VDS) gives a detailed description of the existing character and main features of design in the village and guidelines for how this should be respected in any new development. The VDS is a result of consultation and the conclusion of the Village Plan. This statement describes how the residents of West Bergholt would like new development - including new buildings, changes of use, alterations or improvements to buildings or the landscape - to contribute to the unique character of the village.

Approach

The VDS follows the guidance produced by the Rural Community Council for Essex (RCCE), including the setting up of a workshop to look at village character. More detail of the process is given in the appendices. As West Bergholt has already produced a Parish Plan in 2009 the VDS also draws on background material and community needs assessment carried out through the parish planning process as well as additional consultation specific to the VDS.



The Old Brewery



St Mary's Old Church



Bergholt Hall

FINDINGS OF THE PARISH PLAN

Introduction

A Parish Plan covering the village was produced in 2009. The plan was the subject of extensive consultations and engagement with residents and businesses. The Plan has a number of component parts comprising:

- Social and Community
- Environment
- Village Amenities
- Shops and Facilities
- Housing and Planning
- Community Safety
- Transport
- Democracy

The Housing and Planning component of the plan explored the housing type and level of development in the village and whether residents feel that further expansion is desirable. Although increased levels of housing are not proposed on a significant scale, residents were able to express their concern about the nature and type of any housing which may be permitted in the future. The village has a variety of housing types ranging from the traditional heartland of the village with its distinctive and individualistic housing stock to the newer estates of the 1960's and 1970's which significantly changed the scale of the settlement. The local housing association Colne Valley Housing has provided some housing for rent in recent times, but overall provision of social housing is a declining feature of dwelling provision in the village.

Survey Questions

The most relevant surveys to this part of the plan are the household survey and the survey issued to clubs and organisations. All had questions relating to these areas of interest and the response was sufficient to have statistical significance.

Main findings from the surveys

Future Village Expansion

Residents overwhelmingly rejected any prospect of increased level of housing with 91% of households not wishing to see increased levels of housing. Clubs and organisations also felt that larger scale development was not desirable.

Type of future housing provision

If new development is permitted in the future households favoured the provision of warden controlled homes for the elderly, small family homes and retirement homes. Organisations mirrored this response and added that there is also a shortage of affordable housing for younger people and families who are inevitably forced to move elsewhere for housing.

Top issues to take forward

The top five areas to take forward from this area of the plan were established through the survey of priorities held in spring 2008

- Poor quality planning in the village
- No additional significant levels of new housing for the village, especially estate type development
- Some controls over infilling
- Need for small family housing
- Provide housing for older residents
- Affordable housing

The VDS addresses poor quality design the remaining points will be addressed in subsequent forward planning type documents which the Parish Council intends to produce where these are not already covered by Colchester Borough Council's general planning documents.

Other concerns

Concerns raised in the surveys were mainly centred on the degree of infilling which has occurred, the pressure that additional housing places on infrastructure such as the school and transport services. Other comments were received relating to the poor unsympathetic type of housing which infilling can result in and an overall lack of quality planning.

PROCESS OF PRODUCING THE VILLAGE DESIGN STATEMENT

The VDS was produced following the guidelines published by the Rural Community Council for Essex (RCCE). These guidelines suggest that the planning and design stages of undertaking a VDS follow the following steps:

1. Stage 1: Planning: form a design team; arrange planning input; review existing information

2. Stage 2: Proceeding: organise workshop; complete character assessment; hold exhibition; draw up proposals

3. Stage 3: Production: consultation; seek approval for SPG; publication and launch of the document

4. Stage 4: Partnership: use of the VDS and review

The VDS was prepared over a period of 18 months and the team overseeing the work comprised members of the Planning and Development Committee from the Parish Council together with members of the Parish Plan Group. Advice and support was provided by both Colchester Borough Council and Essex County Council, whilst the historic record and evolution of the village was sourced from a village character appraisal originally produced in the 1980's. This work was supplemented by a village walkabout and photographic record was undertaken to supplement the earlier sourced information.

Consultation activities were undertaken in a number of ways. A village workshop was held in December 2009 whilst the draft findings were exhibited at the Annual Parish Meeting held in May 2010. The Village Bulletin was used to advertise the activities and reported progress on the plan's evolution during 2009 and 2010.

The final draft plan has been sent to Colchester Borough Council (CBC) for adoption as supplemental planning guidance (or equivalent) as part of the Local Development Framework suite of documents.

USE OF THE VILLAGE DESIGN STATEMENT

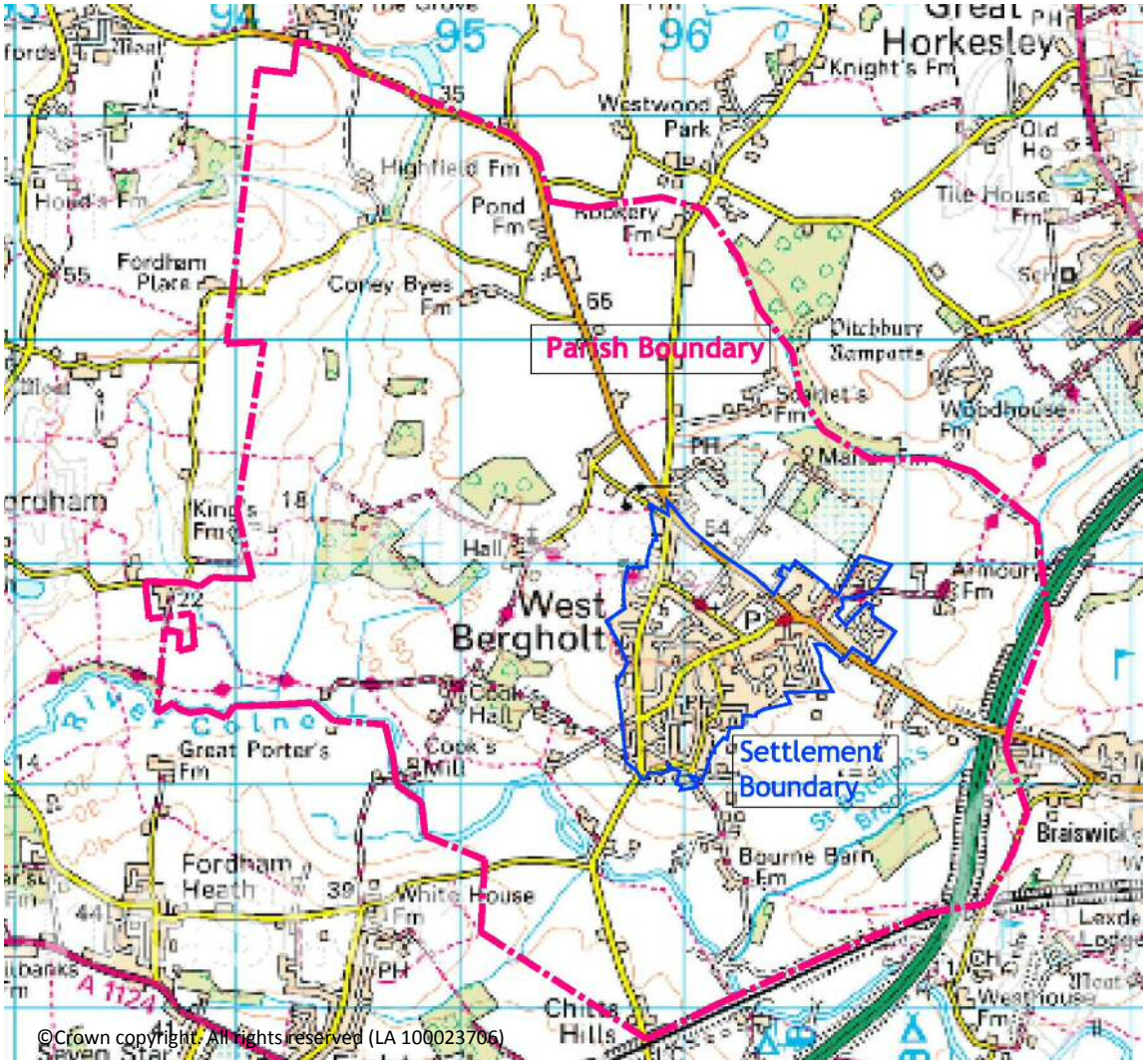
The VDS once accepted by CBC as a guidance document will be a publicly available document and its contents will carry weight when planning applications are determined by the local authority. Naturally the Parish Council will use the document in reviewing planning applications sent to it by Colchester Borough Council. When applications are recommended for refusal the VDS policies will be quoted as material reasons for objections to applications.

Planning applications stand a greater chance of success if they adhere to the guidelines set out in this document. The Planning and Development Committee meets regularly every month, and it is intended that the VDS be made available to those seeking planning permission by the Parish Council. The Parish Council welcomes pre-application discussions and is happy to give advice at any stage of a planning application.



Parish consultation

MAP OF WEST BERGHOLT



Ordnance Survey Plan showing **Parish Boundary** and **Settlement Boundary**

HISTORY AND DEVELOPMENT OF WEST BERGHOLT

The parish of West Bergholt comprises 929 ha. immediately north-west of Colchester. The land rises gently from under 20 m. along the Colne and St. Botolph's brook to 50 m. on a broad plateau stretching northwards towards Great and Little Horkesley. On the west the land falls to under 20 m. in the valley of the Pulton or Polton brook, a tributary of the Colne.



West Bergholt School



Queen's Head Pond



Westwood House

West Bergholt's name can be traced right back to the 11th Century. The name Bergholt means 'hill-wood' and derives from beorg (hill) and holt (wood). The "West" was added to distinguish it from the Suffolk village of East Bergholt.

West Bergholt rises out of the Colne Valley which lies to the south of the village. People have long settled here, as evidenced by prehistoric remains including flints and axes having been found in the parish as well as later bronze-age and iron-age remains. Coins, pottery fragments and building material show that the parish was also inhabited during Roman times.

Bergholt Hall occupies the site of the main manor in the parish. After the Sackville family sold the manor it passed through the hands of many families until inherited by the Round family. The current building is a Georgian house of three storeys with an attractive facade.

There were several other manors in the parish in the early medieval period, but they were apparently amalgamated in the 14th and 15th centuries to form the combined manor of Cooks Hall with Beaumonds. Cooks Hall is located south south-west of the church. The back wing is late 16th or early 17th century whilst the main block was built in the 18th century.

The oldest building in West Bergholt is St Mary's Old Church which is Saxon in origin and was heavily re-modelled in the late 13th and 14th centuries, with the addition of the squared chancel and south aisle. The church was declared redundant in 1976 following a gradual transfer to a new church (St Mary the Virgin) built in the village and consecrated in 1904. In 1977 the Redundant Churches Fund decided to restore the building and hold occasional services. Whilst the area around St Mary's Old Church and Bergholt Hall would have originally constituted the heart of the local community, it is now isolated physically from the nucleus of the village.

In the middle ages a large area in the centre of the parish was a heath. Much settlement was scattered around the roads and greens facing the heath which was mainly used for common grazing. From the 16th century onwards parts of the heath began to be enclosed in a piecemeal fashion and used for other activities such as farming, brick making, and residential development.

A brewery became established in the early 19th century and expanded under the ownership of the Daniell family. The brewery built and owned many houses for its workers and the settlement began to coalesce into a larger nucleated village. When the nearby heath was finally enclosed in 1865 parts of it quickly became built up in order to house workers from the expanding brewery and other workers from Colchester. Brewing operations ended in 1959 but the site was used for new offices and a bottling plant and did not finally close until 1982. Many of the old Brewery buildings have since been converted to flats, houses and offices, whilst additional housing has been built to the rear. Long standing residents of the parish can probably remember a busy Truman Brewery employing many local people and providing homes on Colchester Road for them. Their roles were as varied as administration, assembly line and draymen whose job included attending fine shire horses which were often used to deliver beer to the three pubs in the village. There are also memories of a small off sales 'snug' to the left hand side of the Queen's Head for workers as well as of the original post office in Chapel Road where you could buy sweets from one side and stamps from the other. As you would expect, times have changed, Truman's has long since closed and we have a well-stocked good sized Co-op which includes the post office. We also have a pharmacist, a second general store and newsagent and a doctors' surgery.



The Old Church


Bridge over Colne on Chitts Hill

West Bergholt also is the home for Armoury Farm which houses several small industrial units and offices which include accountants, vehicle repairs, marquee hire and upholsterers to name a few. Other businesses in the village include children's day nursery, car sales and service, B&B, Hairdressers, local and national taxi service, finance and numerous other small operations providing services to the public and much needed local employment. Other village businesses at one time included seven retail village stores. The original butchers (Elmer's), Mascalls (Later VG Stores and now the pharmacist), the paper shop (Now Ash's) Browns on Colchester Road, The home and garden Store on Chapel Road for DIY enthusiasts, Lazaros on Lexden Rd and Cuckoo's store in Queens Road where one could take an empty bottle and get it refilled with draft vinegar! Some may remember the Doctors' surgery on Lexden Road which was actually part of Dr Henderson's house and prior to the hairdressers opening, the Walls ice cream depot in Chapel Road, which is where several Wall's ice cream vans were stored and their drivers would report.

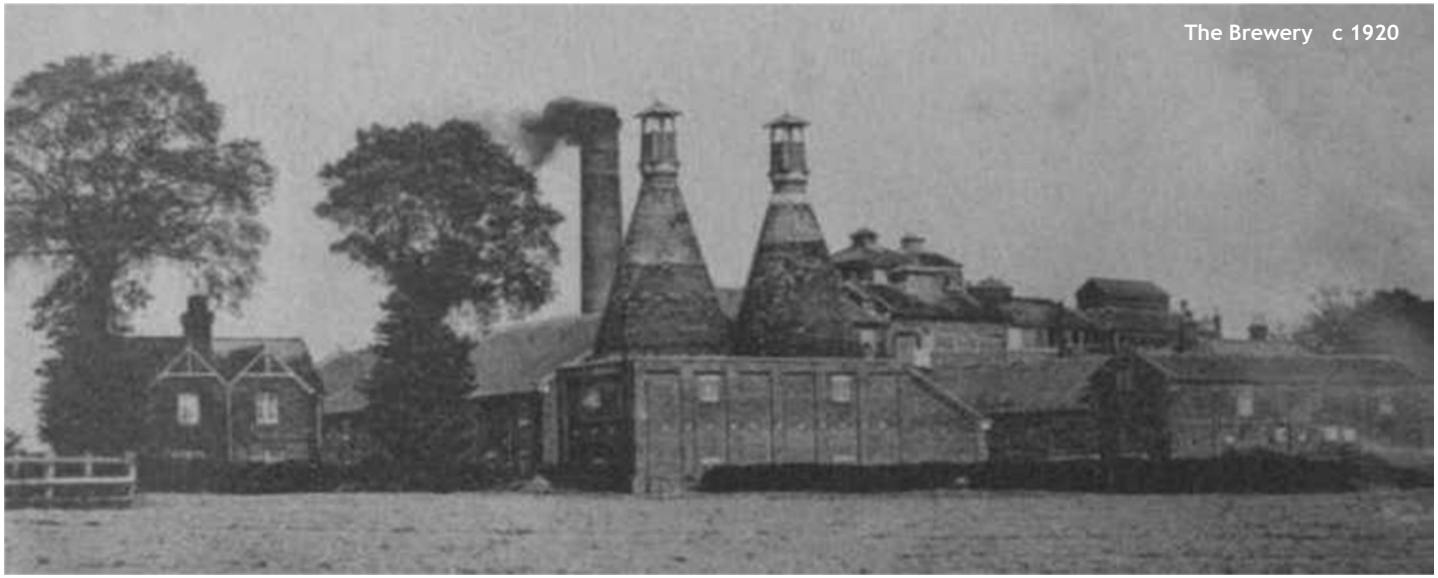


High Road (now 10 Colchester Road)

INDUSTRY AND COMMERCE IN WEST BERGHOLT.

Within the village we have two general stores, including a post office in the Co-op. There is also a hairdresser, three public houses and the mobile library visits once a fortnight and stops at several key positions round the village. 52 businesses were identified as operating from the village as part of our "Business Questionnaire" and we wanted to find out how well these local trades were being used.
Other than the agricultural and associated activities around the fringes of the village, there are no medium to large industries following the closure of the Truman Brewery. Compact clusters of small commercial units occur at a few locations such as Armoury Farm and Bourne Road. Due to the nature of the roads that serve such places, and for other associated reasons, their significant expansion would be resisted.
Similarly, there would generally be strong resistance to any proposals to cease the use of commercial premises in favour of residential use. In addition, the introduction of a large retailer, or similar concern, which would seriously affect the viability of many of the existing businesses, would also be resisted.

Many of the small businesses, including those working from home, are adversely affected by the poor broadband speeds currently being provided. There is therefore a propensity to favour proposals to achieve a solution although this must be balanced with a policy of resisting proposals for inappropriately sited telecommunication masts.



The Brewery c 1920

THE VDS AND ITS PLANNING STATUS

Introduction

All significant development requires planning permission and each submission is considered against the Borough Council's main statutory planning instrument, the Local Development Framework (LDF). The LDF is a development plan comprising a series of planning documents setting out Colchester Borough Council's vision about how the Borough should develop up to 2021. It includes various specific policies, land-use allocations and maps in order to guide development to the right places and avoid inappropriate development from taking place. It is itself governed by regional and national government policies regarding issues like housing numbers, sustainability, environmental protection and transport. The Core Strategy sets out the strategic policies to guide development while land use allocations are discussed in detail in the Site Allocations Development Plan Document (DPD) and shown graphically on the Proposals Map. Detailed policies to guide development are set out in the Development Policies DPD. They also produce very detailed Development Briefs to guide development at a site level. The production of all the LDF documents is governed by national planning guidance covering issues like housing provision, sustainability, environmental protection and transport. A new National Planning Policy Framework is currently being prepared and it will be important that the VDS conforms to this national guidance as well as local planning policies.

Once accepted as guidance by Colchester Borough Council, the VDS will be a public document and, although unlike the LDF it is not a statutory planning tool, once adopted as guidance it will carry weight in their determination of planning applications. Therefore anyone can increase the likelihood that their proposals will receive support from the Parish Council if they follow the guidance within the Village Design Statement.

Background

In December 2008 Colchester Borough Council adopted the Core Strategy document which provides the overarching strategy and policy direction for the growth of the Borough up to 2021. Additional policies and documents supporting the Core Strategy have been adopted. CBC prepared new Site Allocations and Development Policies Development Plan Documents following the adoption of the Core Strategy. These two documents were examined by an independent planning inspector and were adopted in October 2010.

Supplementary Planning Guidance

One such development has been the adoption of Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) such as 'Affordable Housing'. Some of this guidance is starting to be superseded by Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD) as part of the Local Development Framework.

CBC has now adopted Supplementary Planning Documents to complement the LDF. There are planning documents for: Backland and Infill, Community Facilities, Vehicle Parking Standards, Sustainable Construction Open Space, Sport and Recreation, Extending your House.

The allocation of residential development in West Bergholt over the plan period of 2001-21 is for an additional 50 dwellings, with currently around 35 having already been built.



Examples of recent new housing built since 2001

Core Strategy policy H4 Affordable Housing, provides that in the villages, affordable housing will be required on housing developments for 3 or more dwellings. '*Affordable housing development in the villages of rural Colchester Borough will be supported on rural exception sites contiguous with village settlement boundaries, provided a local need is demonstrated by the Parish Council on behalf of their residents.*'

Sustainable development

The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 sets out for the first time the duty of planning authorities towards sustainability. National policy guidance PPS1 'Delivering sustainable development', PPS22 and the Code for Sustainable Homes set out further detail and national policy (such as PPS22 '*Renewable Energy')*.

LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AND SETTING

West Bergholt is on the perimeter of the Colne Valley character area (as defined in the County Council's Landscape Character Assessment). This character area includes the landscape of the tributary, St Botolph's Brook, which runs to the south east of the village.

The landform of the Colne is a shallow valley, with gentle to moderate sloping valley sides and a narrow valley floor. The soils tend to be loamy with arable farming dominating the valley sides but occasional pasture still occurring on the valley bottom. The field sizes are generally larger on the valley sides than on the valley floor. Hedgerow loss has occurred but where these remain, especially along the lanes, and coupled with occasional small mixed woodlands, it gives the setting of West Bergholt a surprisingly woody feel, especially when viewed across the valley from the lanes to Chitts Hill, Fordham Heath and Eight Ash Green. The views are more suburban when seen across the A12 from Braiswick, and when walking on public rights of way close to the village itself. The condition of the landscape (hedgerow network, small woodlands etc.) is generally moderately good.

The valley landscape is highly sensitive to most development because of the long views across the Colne River from the opposite valley side. As West Bergholt sits on the edge of this landscape in a prominent position overlooking the valley, any development at its margins is likely to have an effect on the valley. **Any development that would cause a negative impact on the valley sides (DG1)**, or result in loss of traditional hedgerows, small woodlands and copses, or other landscape features should be resisted.





Pictures showing long views from village

The Village Settlement Boundary of West Bergholt excludes Scarletts, Hall Road cottages, the Crescent and White Hart Lane at the north of the village. Manor Road and Manor Farm are also outside the boundary to the east, but The Lodge development, Bradbrook Cottages on Armoury Road and Maltings Park Road development are within it. The boundary then wraps round the south of the village, hugging the built up area and runs up the west side at the back of the houses in Lexden Road up to Hall Road.





Pictures showing long views in the vicinity of the village

The landscape to the north and east of the village forms part of the North Colchester Farmlands. This is a more flat, open, farmed landscape with regular fields and wide views due to more isolated woodlands and a lack of hedgerows and hedgerow trees. It is a substantially arable landscape but with remnant orchards providing variety at Manor Farm. Horse-grazing close to the village can cause a cluttered appearance to the rural landscape due to the subdivision of fields by varied fencing. The more open character of this landscape makes it susceptible to significant impacts from large-scale or inappropriate development at the village margins. **Remaining hedgerows, native trees and small copses should be retained in the landscape (DG2)** and landowners encouraged to enhance these where possible close to the village boundaries in order to conserve its rural character.

DESIGN GUIDANCE FOR NEW DEVELOPMENTS AND HOUSE EXTENSIONS

STATEMENT/GUIDANCE

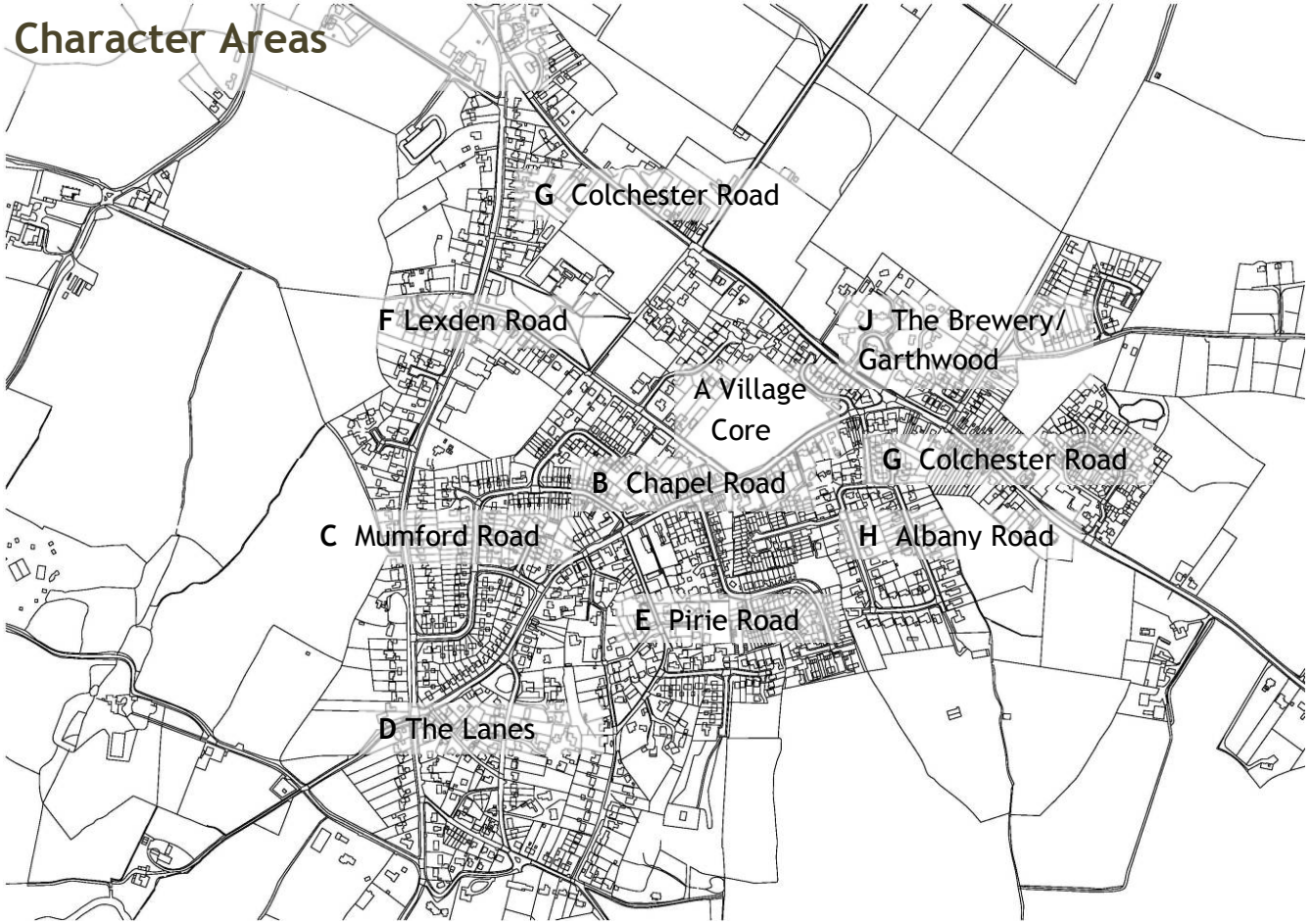
Much recent new housing development has concentrated on producing houses as consumer products with little or no attention paid to the quality of the environment that results. The Parish Council wishes to maintain our community, based on local services and good design, therefore this Guide demonstrates how, by employing best practice it is possible to improve and create West Bergholt as a place of quality and identity. New buildings should contribute to the diversity and individuality of the village, while reflecting local heritage and character. Some recent new developments of unsympathetic design scale and materials should not set a precedent for future development.

General Design – **All proposed new build and extensions must enhance the area and make a positive architectural contribution (DG3)**
When considering garden amenity, *The Essex Design Guide* and the *Core Strategy* set out minimum sizes for gardens. The Development Policies DPD also contains a policy covering minimum garden sizes**. Backland and infill proposals will be strongly resisted (DG4); garden sizes may need to be substantially larger than these minimum standards in order that garden sizes reflect the size and shape of gardens in the area (DG5).** Gardens must provide useable private space. Gardens provide other functions that the Council considers important; they allow the infiltration of water into the ground reducing the amount of surface water run off a site produces. Trees, shrubs and hedges can add to the biodiversity of an area. Where a garden is rich in biodiversity an assessment will be required to assess its value. If there are protected species on or adjacent to the site an ecological survey will be required.

Sustainable Construction. The incorporation of new technologies and energy saving techniques into a new building can dramatically reduce CO2 emissions and the carbon footprint of a dwelling. Initiatives include grey water recycling systems, solar panels, home recycling and ground water heating systems. Full details can be found on the CBC web site **Sustainable Construction SPD (DG6)** see link for further information - www.colchester.gov.uk/servedoc.asp?doc_id=15864

Protecting Local Distinctiveness
Why should new housing look the same whether it's in the Cotswolds, Cumbria, or Essex? The answer of course is that it shouldn't. Settlements and buildings in Essex are distinctive from village to village and certainly have a definite Essex look through the use of local materials and design. Built local distinctiveness is a part of Essex's heritage that is greatly valued by residents and visitors. So how should we protect it? The scope of the VDS includes the whole of the parish of West Bergholt (see map on page 8). West Bergholt lies in an attractive rural setting situated 3 miles north-west of Colchester. The generally flat landscape is bounded to the south and east by the

sloping valleys of the River Colne and St Botolph's Brook. To the north and east are arable farmlands interspersed with small woodlands. The village is a largely compact settlement with a population of about 3300 persons.



As part of the community engagement to develop the Village Design Statement the workshop identified different zones or character areas within the village.

The zones identified were:

A Village Core (New Church Road, Lorkin Daniell Field, The school, The Heath and Poor's Land, the allotments, St Mary's)

B Chapel Road (retail/commercial)

C Mumford Road (C20th planned residential)

D The 'Lanes' (Spring Lane, The Avenue, Bourne Road, Queen's Road, Chapel Lane, Valley View (organic residential)

E Pirie Road, Valley Crescent (C20th planned residential)

F Lexden Road (linear residential on village edge mainly individual houses)

G Colchester Road (mixed residential on village edge)

H Albany Road (mixed residential on village edge mainly individual properties)

J The Brewery/ Garthwood (planned development of 1980)

There are several designated Open Spaces within the parish including the Lorkin Daniell Field, the allotments and the Poor's Field. Local Wildlife Sites include the heath, the redundant St Mary's churchyard, St Mary the Virgin's Churchyard, Hillhouse Wood, Spring Wood and

Grove Wood. The village has 34 buildings listed for their architectural merit. The only Grade 1 listed building is the Church of St Mary in Hall Road (the building was originally Saxon in origin). Other listed buildings of note are Cooks Hall (grade 2*) in Cooks Hall Road, Horsepits Farmhouse (Grade 2*) in Cooks Hall Road and The White Hart Public House, Nayland Road (Grade 2).

The majority of housing development in Colchester will be located within regeneration or growth areas in and around Colchester Town, but broad greenfield locations have also been identified for additional housing provision. The North Growth Area lies just on the other side of the A12 from the parish. It will accommodate a total of 6,200 homes, including an extension of 2,200 new houses on greenfield land north of the golf club in Braiswick. The Core Strategy identifies that "Separation will be maintained between Colchester and adjoining settlements in order to protect village identity."

Design Guidelines

Buildings must be in harmony with the surroundings in respect of materials, colour, texture, proportion and scale (DG7). There is a fine balance between preservation and progress. **Planning applications must show contextually the impact of their proposals on adjacent building by means of adequately detailed plans with accurate street elevations (DG8).**

Building materials - All materials should be selected from those traditionally used within the village (DG9) for both maintenance and new build (extensions and new properties). Clay peg tiles, soft Essex red bricks and soft wood window-framing are more harmonious than harsh modern materials. Account must be taken of any surrounding or adjacent buildings when selecting materials. This includes ironmongery, meter boxes and rainwater fittings. Areas of impervious asphalt should be rejected in favour of free draining and aesthetically more pleasing blocks or cobbles.

Infill Development - should conform to the adopted Backland and Infill Development SPD available from CBC. **It should reinforce the uniformity of the street by reflecting the scale, mass, height, form, materials, fenestration and architectural details of its neighbours (DG10).** This is important in reinforcing local character and ensuring the context of the street scene is not adversely affected. Where existing development is of a poor design /materials new infill development will be expected to improve the character of the area.

Plot Width – Plots must be of sufficient width to allow buildings to be sited with adequate separation between dwellings. **The width of the remaining and the new plot should be similar to that prevailing in the immediate area (DG11).** New dwellings must have similar spacing between buildings to that commonly found on the street frontage. Where houses are terraced the new development should normally adjoin the adjacent property(s).

Building line – where the prevailing depth of existing dwellings is a feature of the area **new development should respect that building line (DG12)**

Building height – new buildings should reflect the height of existing buildings. Where existing buildings are of a uniform height, **new buildings should respect that height. (DG13)**

Dormers - in new and existing housing often result from an attempt to provide habitable accomodation within the roof space; this makes them over-dominant in composition. **Dormers should be used sparingly and be subservient in nature. (DG14)**





General Design Guidance for new buildings

- **DG15** Infill developments should be modest in proportions and in scale with surrounding properties. They should not dominate their surroundings. Their architectural style and finishes should be compatible and vernacular any infill should comply with Infill SPD
- **DG16** Roof-scape is an important aspect of the village especially in the centre. New or replaced roofs should retain the existing height and pitch
- **DG17** External finishes should be in keeping with the traditional colours and materials in the village.
- **DG18** Development undertaken should be in keeping with the planned nature of existing buildings
- **DG19** Careful consideration should be given to the impact of construction on views across the village
- **DG20** Rainwater goods shall be black and indicated on submitted elevations. All new service intakes to dwellings apart from gas and electricity to be run internally and not visible on the exterior All soil and waste plumbing shall be run internally and shall not be visible to the exterior
- **DG21** Balanced flue outlets from central heating boilers and other gas appliances shall not be positioned on street elevations

- **DG22** Eaves to all roofs shall be open with exposed rafter feet rather than boxed
- **DG23** Details of all boundary walls, fences and gates around the site shall be as submitted drawing
- **DG24** Any new agricultural buildings should be designed and sited to minimise the effect on the landscape.

General Design Guidance for extensions, alterations and change of use to existing buildings

- **DG25** Original materials or materials which are sympathetic to the existing buildings should be used
- **DG26** Details such as windows, doors and roof pitches should reflect those of the original building
- **DG27** Careful consideration should be given to the visual impact of extensions and particularly conservatories, when they are visible either from the street or from public thoroughfares such as footpaths, bridleways etc.
- **DG28** There should be no unacceptable adverse impact upon the amenities of adjoining residential properties. Wherever possible mature trees and shrubs should be conserved
- **DG29** New buildings, in any area, should respect the scale and design of adjacent buildings. Extensions should be subservient to the original building
- **DG30** Building details such as doors, windows and roof pitches should be designed with regard to buildings existing in the vicinity
- **DG31** Highly reflective solar panels shouldn't be installed if they have a visual impact on neighbouring properties or the roof-scape of the village
- **DG32** Modern additions such as satellite dishes, wind turbines and flues should be concealed from public view
- **DG 33** Alternative use of agricultural buildings must not have any adverse effect or cause any disturbance to any adjacent property. Buildings must be suitable for conversion



New contemporary dwelling



Former Truman's Brewery, now apartments

Conclusion

This document tries to identify what is special, unique and distinctive about the character of the parish. It aims to provide design guidance to influence change and improve the physical qualities. West Bergholt is a diverse village, it has a special character that could so easily be destroyed by gradual erosion of its key features. The village is an eclectic mix of properties from the old to the brand new, spanning nearly a thousand years and contains a pleasing mix of open spaces and beautiful views. **The Parish Council will challenge any overtly incongruous development which changes this equilibrium. (DG34)**

TRANSPORT, HIGHWAYS, FOOTPATHS AND VILLAGE STREETS

Wider Transport Links and Access

West Bergholt is easily accessible from the main urban area of Colchester being situated on the B1508 which connects the main routes in the town at Colchester North Station roundabout with the village from the south-west and leads north -west towards Sudbury. Various lower standard minor roads connect the village to Eight Ash Green, Great Horkesley and Stanway. The A12 lies on the outskirts of the village. Various bus services connect the village with Colchester and Sudbury. The village is totally covered by a 30mph speed restriction.

Entrances to the Village and Village Distributor Roads

The village lies in the main to the west of the main B class road (Colchester Road) although important development areas lie on its south – eastern approach, including the sympathetically redeveloped former brewery complex, now a mixed development of flats and housing. Two of the approaches to the village are uphill and present the most interesting prospects, namely from Colchester and Lexden. The approach from the north-west is unremarkable and fairly anonymous. All approaches have recently benefitted from the introduction of distinctive village entrance signing.

The main entrance to the village is via the mini-roundabout at Chapel Road; here an attractive area of open space provides the backdrop for the village sign. A further access point is the Lexden Road, junction with Colchester Road, although this area is presented as a slightly nondescript staggered crossroads.

The main distributor roads in the village are Lexden Road and Chapel Road. These roads serve the school, village shops and connect with routes leading away from the village. Chapel Road is the main community road and contains a zebra crossing and parking areas for the village shops.

All road and additional points of access to new development within the Parish Boundary must be low key and in keeping with Essex Design Guide and be of the highest quality materials

Village Streets

Away from main and distributor roads, the streets in the village are a mixture of modern residential roads (often with concrete surfaces and adjacent areas of verge and pavement) and older original village streets generally lacking adjacent pavements; some of these are unmade private streets. The village has a number of feature trees some with Tree Preservation Orders protecting them from removal or severe pruning.

Parking

Parking in the village is generally off-road in drives and garages, off-road communal parking is provided at the Village pubs and shops; occasional lay-bys have been provided in newer areas of development. For residential uses specifically, a minimum of 1 car parking space should be provided for each 1-bedroom dwelling or 2.25 car parking spaces for each dwelling of 2 or more bedrooms to allow for visitors. Cycle parking will be required for all developments. Provision must also be made for disabled and motorcycle parking. New garages must be in accordance with ECC policy, a single garage must be minimum of 3.00m x 7.00m clear internal. **New parking in directly front of property should be avoided unless existing (DG35). Car parking standards to comply with ECC standards 2010 (DG36).**

Utilities

Street lighting is at a minimum in the village helping to preserve vistas of the night sky and also the rural character. Utility plant is mainly provided underground although the main routes have overground cabling for telecommunications.

Footpaths

Numerous footpaths and alleyways feature in the village street scene and link the village to adjacent villages and the open countryside. Prominent amongst these is the Essex Way, an 81 mile long distance way-marked footpath, extending from Epping to Harwich.

Appraisal

The street scene in the village is in the main unremarkable, particularly in the newer areas of development which present a bland prospect of homogenous concrete roads with front garden herbage and generally off road parking. The older streets however are more attractive and have an abundance of trees and hedges and generally present a pleasing aspect. Good examples are found in New Church Road with its towering lime trees, and in the unplanned pattern of meandering streets between Queen's Road, Chapel Lane and Lexden Road. Village entrances are understated and the main route through the village does little to reduce speeding traffic, and emphasises the through nature of the road at the expense of the village access points.

Design Matters

Opportunities for improving the streetscape lie in a mixture of hard and soft landscaping. Desirable improvements and maintenance and enhancement matters are presented below:

General Streetscape Guidance(DG37)

- The main road entrances to the village should be carefully designed to make them more distinctive as well as helping to slow traffic; they should continue to incorporate 'gating', with appropriate planting; In particular the entrance to the village from the north west should be made more distinctive incorporating a change to the junction design if applicable;
- Planting trees in more modern roads where opportunities allow should be undertaken;

- Sympathetic traffic calming and pedestrian priority areas to emphasise the importance of local places particularly where the community congregates;

- Provision of seating should be undertaken at prominent areas;

- Replacement of ubiquitous street furniture and signing with materials more sympathetic to the village scene;

- A 20mph zone should be provided to incorporate the area of Lexden Road from the Orpen Hall approaches to the Scout Hut; in School Lane, New Church Road and that part of Chapel Lane from Albany Road to Mumford Road;

- Colchester Road as the through main route should be systematically altered at its village junction points to reduce speed and create opportunities for pedestrians and cyclists to negotiate crossing and turning into the road;

- Maintenance of 1960's concrete roads is gradually giving rise for concern. A high quality standard of maintenance would be provided to avoid the hotchpotch of repairs which may result otherwise;

- Lighting should be limited to the minimum required for security and working purposes and should minimise pollution from glow and spillage;

- Utility companies should be obliged to inter their equipment and services underground and communication masts must be sited sympathetically in conjunction with the Parish Council;

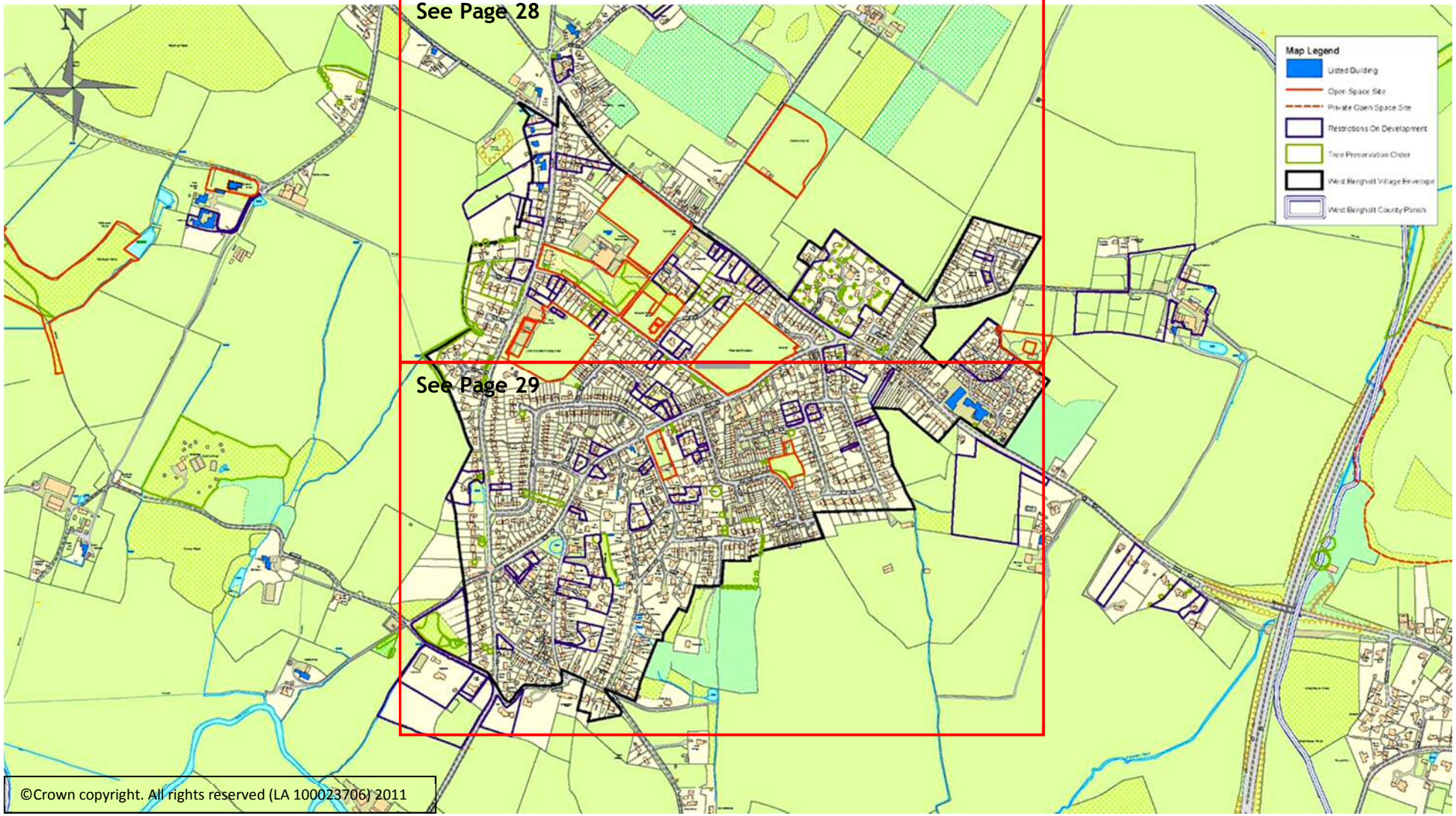
- Maintenance of hedges and trees should be carried out to an agreed regime with care taken to preserve historic features;
- TPOs should be respected and opportunities to add to this stock investigated;

- Bus stop areas should be encouraged to provide shelter, seating, passenger information, a vehicle clearway order and a litter bin;

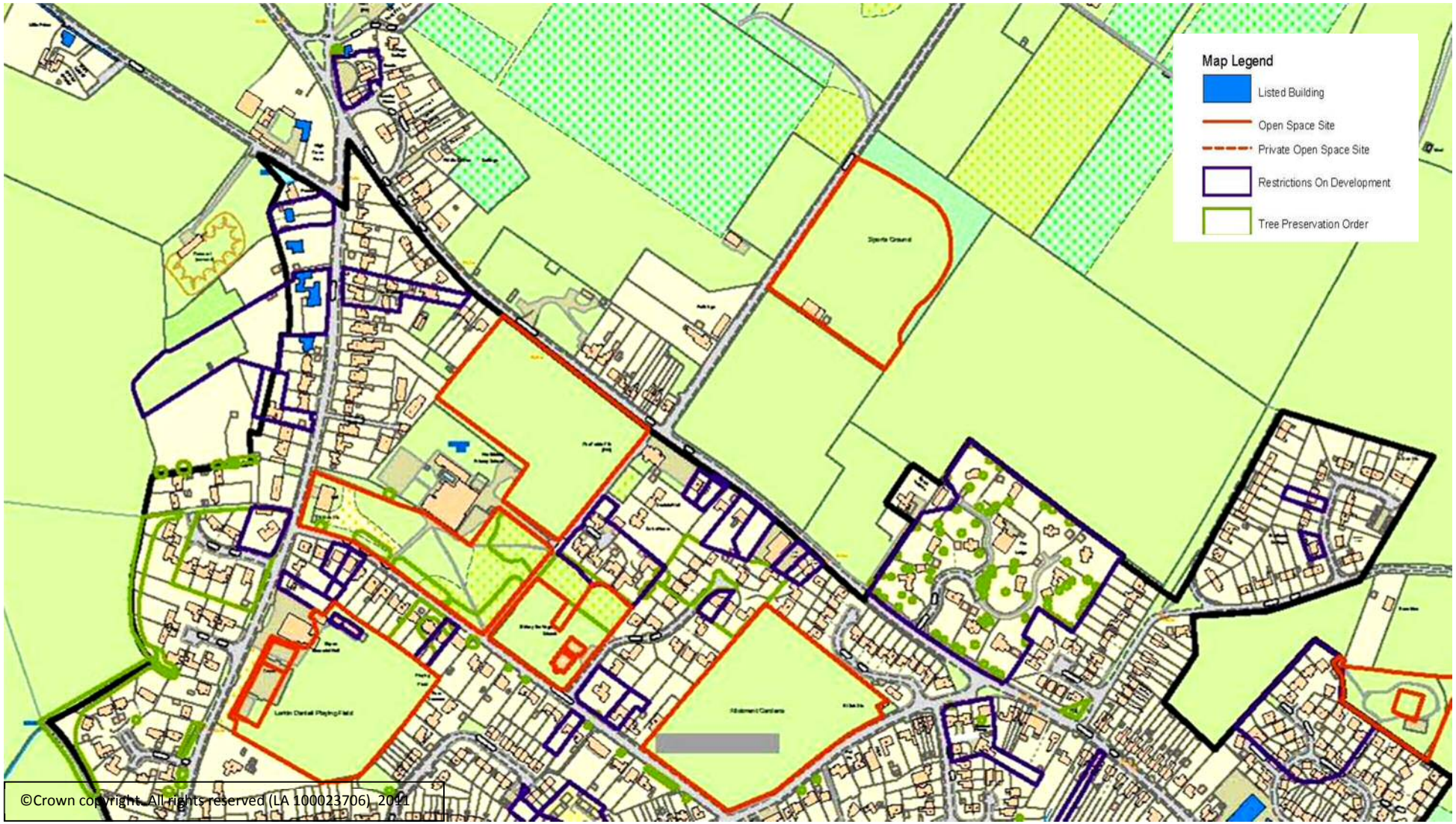
- Diversion or extinguishment of public rights of way, where it would adversely affect the use and appearance of the countryside, should be strongly discouraged;

- The Parish Council in conjunction with the Highway Authority and conservation societies should be encouraged to maintain footpaths and keep them clear of obstruction, signing treatments should be improved.

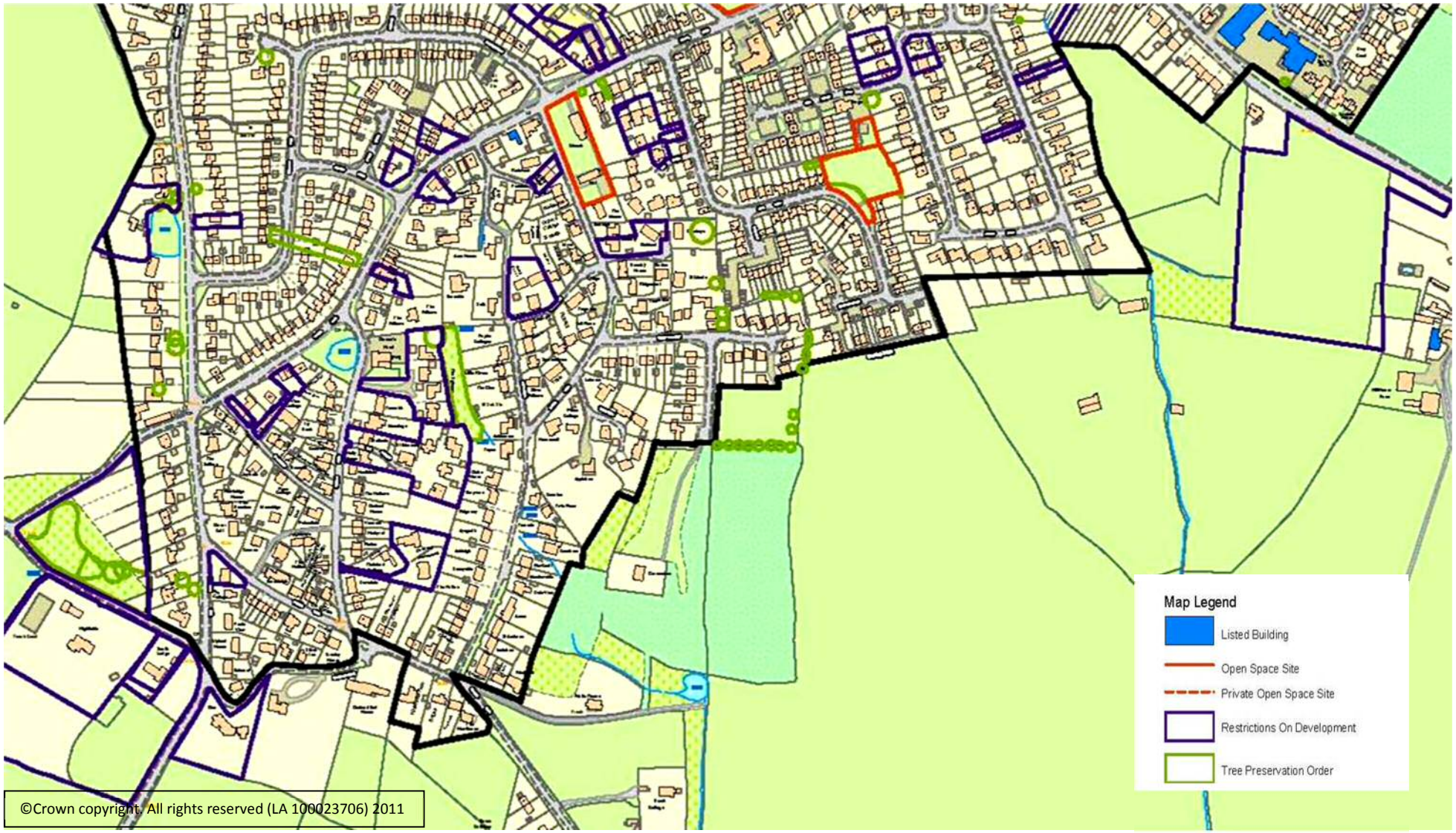
OS PLAN OF VILLAGE



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CBC RELEVANT DEVELOPMENT POLICIES

Sustainable Development
DP1 Design and Amenity
DP4 Community Facilities
Centres and Employment
DP5 Appropriate Employment Uses and Protection of Employment Land and Existing Businesses
DP7 Local Centres and Individual Shops
DP8 Agricultural Development and Diversification
DP9 Employment Uses in the Countryside
DP10 Tourism, Leisure and Culture
Housing
DP11 Flat Conversions
DP12 Dwelling Standards
DP13 Dwelling Alterations, Extensions and Replacement Dwellings
Public Realm
DP15 Retention of Open Space and Indoor Sports Facilities
DP16 Private Amenity Space and Open Space Provision for New Residential Development
Transport and Accessibility
DP17 Accessibility and Access
DP19 Parking Standards
Environment and Rural Communities
DP20 Management of Surface Water Drainage
DP21 Nature Conservation and Protected Lanes
DP24 Equestrian Activities
Energy, Resources, Waste, Water and Recycling
DP25 Renewable Energy
PPS7 (Sustainable Development in Rural Areas) provides guidance on the ways of supporting the changing nature of agriculture

CBC RELEVANT CORE STRATEGY POLICIES

SD3 Community Facilities,
H1- H4 which covers housing provision, housing density, housing diversity and Affordable Housing
CE1 & table CE1a- Centres and Employment Classification and Hierarchy
PR1 – Open Space
TA 3 Public Transport
TA 4 – Roads and Traffic
TA 5 – Parking
Env1 – Environment
ENV2 – Rural Communities
ER1 - Energy, Resources, Waste, Water and Recycling

Summary of Planning Guidance in the document and as approved by the Parish Council

DG1	Any development that would cause a negative impact on the valley sides will be resisted by the Parish council	March 2011
DG2	Where it is a planning issue any remaining hedgerows, native trees and small copses should be retained in the new landscape plans	March 2011
DG3	General Design – all proposed new build and extensions must enhance the area and make a positive architectural contribution	March 2011
DG4	Back land and infill proposals will be resisted except in exceptional cases, nuisance of adjacent dwellings will be considered	March 2011
DG5	Garden sizes may need to be substantially larger than these minimum standards in order that garden sizes reflect the size and shape of gardens in the area	March 2011
DG6	CBC Sustainable Construction SPD	March 2011
DG7	Buildings must be in harmony with the surroundings in respect of materials, colour, texture, proportion and scale	March 2011
DG8	Planning applications must show contextually the impact of their proposals on adjacent building by means of adequately detailed plans with accurate street elevations	March 2011
DG9	Building materials - all materials should be selected from those traditionally used within the village.	March 2011
DG10	Any infill development should reflect the character of the surrounding area and protect the amenity of neighbours. It should reinforce the uniformity of the street by reflecting the scale, mass, height, form, materials, fenestration and architectural details of its neighbours	March 2011
DG11	The width of new building plots should be similar to that prevailing in the immediate area	March 2011
DG12	New development should respect existing building lines of adjacent properties	March 2011
DG13	New buildings should respect the height of buildings immediately adjacent	March 2011
DG14	Dormers should be used sparingly and be subservient in nature	March 2011
DG15	Infill - developments should be modest in proportion and in scale with surrounding properties. They should not dominate. Their architectural style and finishes should be compatible and vernacular. Any infill should comply with Infill SPD	March 2011
DG16	Roof scape is an important aspect of the village especially in the centre. New or replaced roofs should retain the existing height and pitch	March 2011
DG17	External finishes should be in keeping with the traditional colours and materials in the village	March 2011
DG18	Development undertaken should be in keeping with the planned nature of existing buildings	March 2011
DG19	Careful consideration should be given to the impact of construction on views across the village	March 2011
DG20	Rainwater goods shall be black and indicated on submitted elevations. All new service intakes to dwellings apart from gas and electricity to be run internally and not visible on the exterior. All soil and waste plumbing shall be run internally and shall not be visible to the exterior	March 2011
DG21	Balanced flue outlets from central heating boilers and other gas appliances shall not be positioned on street elevations	March 2011
DG22	Eaves to all roofs shall be open with exposed rafter feet rather than boxed	March 2011

DG23	Details of all boundary walls, fences and gates around the site shall be as submitted drawing but should not lead to urbanisation	March 2011
DG24	Any new agricultural buildings should be designed and sited to minimise the effect on the landscape	March 2011
DG25	Original materials or materials which are sympathetic to the existing buildings should be used	March 2011
DG26	Details such as windows, doors and roof pitches should reflect those of the original building	March 2011
DG27	Careful consideration should be given to the visual impact of extensions and particularly conservatories, when they are visible either from the street or from public thoroughfares such as footpaths, bridleways etc.	March 2011
DG28	There should be no unacceptable adverse impact upon the amenities of adjoining residential properties. Wherever possible mature trees and shrubs should be conserved	March 2011
DG29	New buildings, in any area, should respect the scale and design of adjacent buildings. Extensions should be subservient to the original building.	March 2011
DG30	Building details such as doors, windows and roof pitches should be designed with regard to buildings existing in the vicinity	March 2011
DG31	Highly reflective solar panels should be installed if they have a visual impact on neighbouring properties or the roof scape of the village	March 2011
DG32	Modern additions such as satellite dishes, wind turbines and flues should be concealed from public view	March 2011
DG33	Alternative use of agricultural buildings must not have any adverse effect or cause any disturbance to any adjacent property. Buildings must be suitable for conversion	March 2011
DG34	The village is an eclectic mix of properties from the old to the brand new, spanning nearly a thousand years and contains a pleasing mix of open spaces and beautiful views. The Parish Council will challenge any overtly incongruous development which changes this equilibrium	March 2011
DG35	New parking directly in front of property should be avoided	March 2011
DG36	Car parking standards to comply with ECC standards 2010	March 2011
DG 37	General street-scape Guidance	March 2011

VDS COMMITTEE

Bob Tyrrell Parish Councillor and Chair of VDS Committee

I wish to thank the following members of the VDS Committee and Parish Plan for all their assistance in preparing this document

Andrew Savage	Parish Councillor
Chris Stevenson	Parish Councillor and Parish Plan
Harry Stone	Parish Councillor and Parish Plan
Gunter Klaphake	Parish Plan
Catherine Bailey	Parish Plan
Peter Sleigh	Parish Councillor

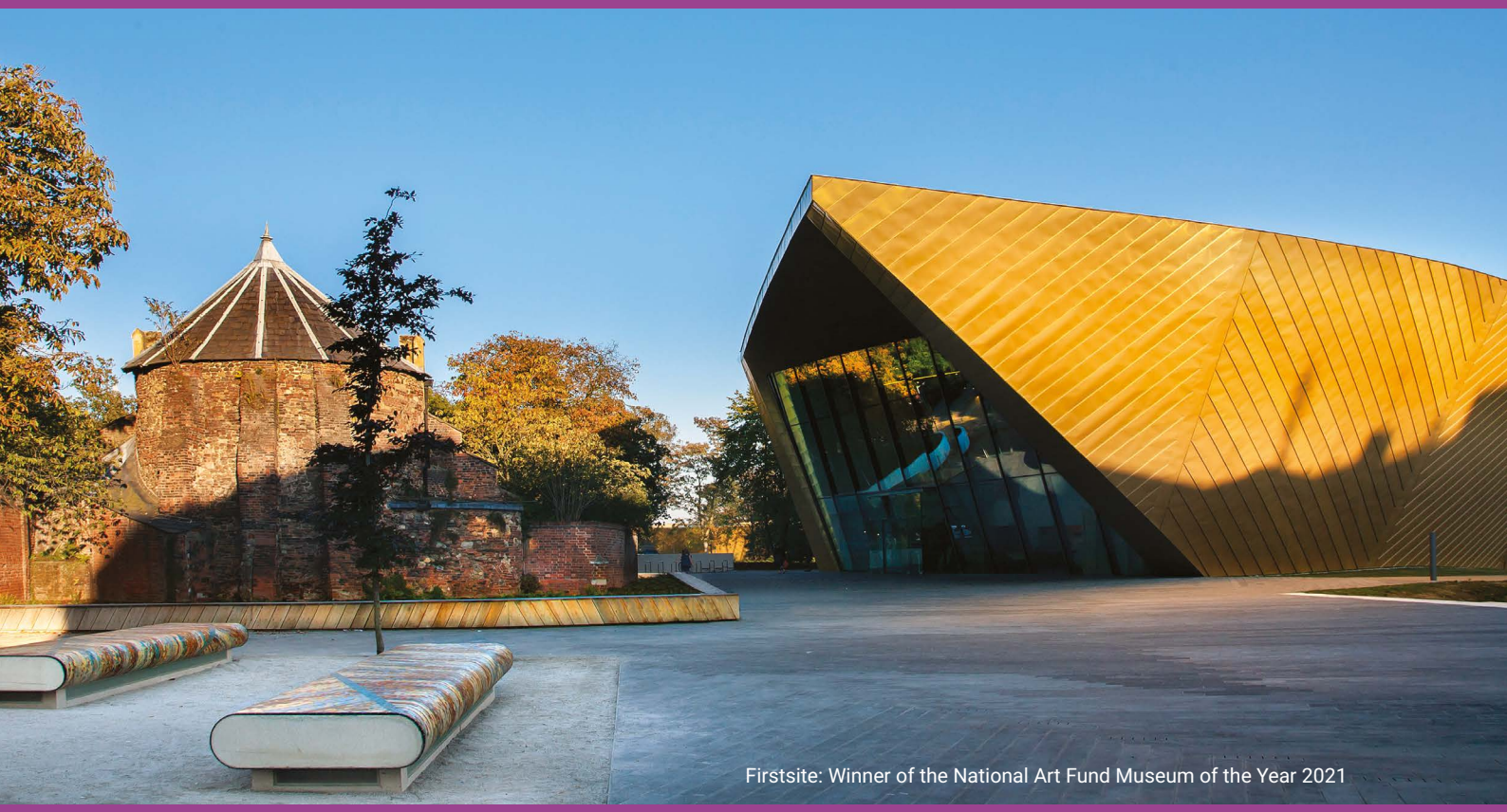
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Annex N

COLCHESTER'S

ECONOMIC STRATEGY

Colchester: unlocking our city's potential



Firstsite: Winner of the National Art Fund Museum of the Year 2021

2022-25

Colchester City Council

Colchester
Ultra Ready for Business

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Preface

Councillor David King
Leader, Colchester Borough Council

With Colchester being honoured with City Status by Her Majesty, The Queen, as part of her Platinum Jubilee celebrations, Colchester's new Economic Strategy has never been more relevant or timely.
Colchester is a hot-spot for innovation and investment. Employment levels are high, and businesses have proved their resilience. However, the combined impacts of the pandemic, the UK's departure from the EU, the situation in Ukraine and climate change are presenting unprecedented challenges. For some sectors such as health and care it is a time of opportunity, albeit with severe constraints, for others in sectors like retail, tourism, leisure, and hospitality, it continues to be a time of great challenge. This strategy has been developed over a period of economic turbulence. The challenge for the Council and its partners will be to be sufficiently nimble to address fast emerging issues and to take advantage of new opportunities.

I believe that a period of rapid economic and social change drives technological innovation. Indeed, we are seeing the growing importance of artificial intelligence and the data-driven economy, and the skills needed to support and develop it. The need for 'cleaner growth' is increasingly critical to manage and reduce our impacts on the environment as we work towards Net Zero. Social and demographic change is driving demand for new goods and services delivered in revolutionary ways and in Colchester, significant population and housing growth are demanding more jobs, more skills, and more businesses to create an expanding economy to match.
While painting a picture of opportunity and potential, I also recognise that the combination of these strategic risks combines with underlying long-term economic trends which are disrupting existing jobs and business models, creating a sea-change in how our small enterprises do business, challenging their resilience and capacity.

This Economic Strategy charts a medium-term course to take Colchester's economy forward in partnership into recovery:

- putting it in the best possible position to survive and thrive
- enabling Colchester to compete for future talent, investment, and influence; and taking a more holistic approach to
- improving people's lives and prospects through better skills, jobs, health and transport choices; and more effective digital connectivity so that economic growth is more inclusive.

Recovery can be realised by helping entrepreneurs to achieve their ambitions, creating more and better job opportunities, developing skills, attracting investment, and providing transport and digital infrastructure to help businesses to thrive.
Our partnerships and relationships are stronger now, sharpened through the crises of the past two years. There is a mutual understanding and insight which is deeper than before, one which will provide a firmer footing as we face the challenge of recovery together.

In addition, we'll be working with other major institutions (know an 'Anchors'), which are also invested in Colchester and the wellbeing of our community, to help make the economy inclusive for everyone and to champion the Real Living Wage.

Executive Summary

A **strong economy** is vital for Colchester. Vital to provide residents with the jobs, income, health, and purpose they need; to allow businesses to flourish; to provide the infrastructure a growing place relies on; and to keep our borough vibrant, and attractive.

The Government's Levelling Up agenda places a renewed emphasis on inclusive economic growth so that existing inequalities are reduced. It also includes new possibilities for devolved power which we will want to harness for Colchester's benefit.

This Strategy sets out the role Colchester City Council and our partners will play in ensuring our economy includes everyone and to championing the Real Living Wage. It:

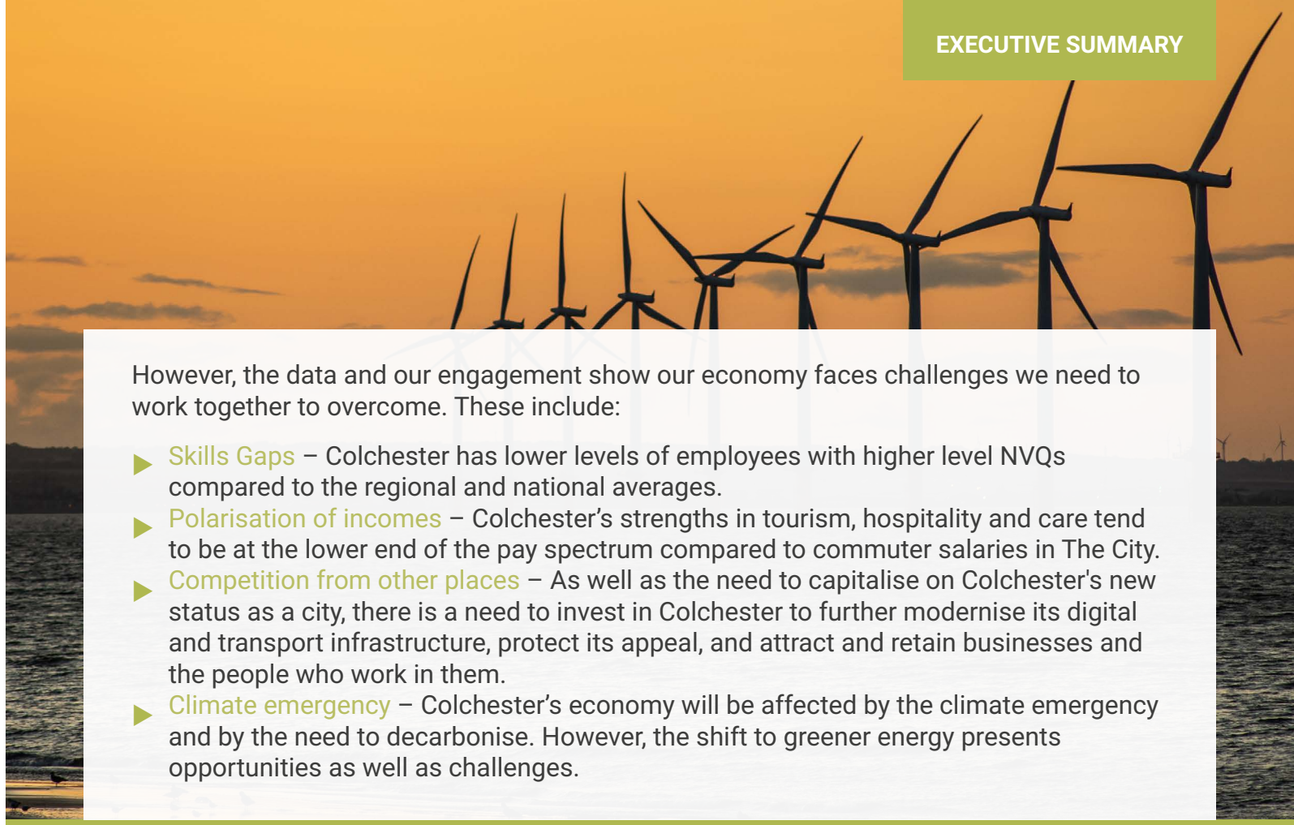
- Highlights the key assets and challenges of Colchester's economy
- Sets out our vision and priorities, along with principal objectives.
- Explains the thinking behind some of our aspirations
- Provides case studies to illustrate the type of work we will encourage to achieve our priorities
- Highlights the factors that influence us
- Describes how we will work with partners



Colchester's economy is dominated by **small and micro businesses** representing 93% of businesses in the Borough. The core sectors creating jobs and growth in Colchester are **tourism, advanced manufacturing, financial services, and retail.** Growth sectors include **creative/digital/tech, care, green energy, and construction**.

Colchester is characterised by its:

- Business diversity – no one sector or employer dominates the Colchester economy.
- Quality of place – Colchester has a rich mix of heritage, museums, galleries, open spaces and leisure choices.
- Growth potential – By 2030 the Borough's population is projected to be over 214,000.
- Business resilience – Colchester's businesses demonstrated impressive adaptability during the crisis phase of the pandemic.
- Connectedness – Key partners work together in established relationships to capitalise on economic opportunities
- Strong infrastructure investment – Good road and public transport links are complimented by Ultrafast Broadband and 5G
- Ambition - Colchester is keen to realise its potential as a city to live, work, study, visit and do business.



However, the data and our engagement show our economy faces challenges we need to work together to overcome. These include:

- Skills Gaps – Colchester has lower levels of employees with higher level NVQs compared to the regional and national averages.
- Polarisation of incomes – Colchester's strengths in tourism, hospitality and care tend to be at the lower end of the pay spectrum compared to commuter salaries in The City.
- Competition from other places – As well as the need to capitalise on Colchester's new status as a city, there is a need to invest in Colchester to further modernise its digital and transport infrastructure, protect its appeal, and attract and retain businesses and the people who work in them.
- Climate emergency – Colchester's economy will be affected by the climate emergency and by the need to decarbonise. However, the shift to greener energy presents opportunities as well as challenges.

We have adopted a new vision and four priorities for Colchester:

Colchester: unlocking our city's potential

PEOPLE:

We support inclusive economic growth by encouraging business innovation, helping build the skills the local workforce will need to take advantage of future opportunities, and championing the Real Living Wage.

- Identify and facilitate opportunities to promote innovation and new businesses.
- Work with partners and stakeholders to address skills shortages.
- Tackle inequalities by enabling local people to access and develop new skills.
- Sustain the local economy with high quality business support, information and guidance.
- Aspire to develop a higher wage economy.

PLACE:

We use our resources, knowledge, assets and connections to leverage inward investment in the City, and facilitate improved infrastructure, including digital infrastructure.

- Identify and secure funding to enhance Colchester and boost the economy.
- Identify and pursue projects which support key sector development.
- Support and encourage inward investment.
- Develop a new Digital Strategy as a competitive edge and to enhance skills.
- Understand the future infrastructure needs of a fast-growing place.

PARTNERSHIPS:

We engage widely with partners and anchor institutions at the local, regional, national and international level to help Colchester capitalise on new opportunities for economic growth, jobs and infrastructure.

- Engage with partners to promote Colchester's economic interests.
- Support the work of partners in offering business support to enable recovery and growth.
- Help develop a more connected and influential place.
- Mobilise the role of Anchor Institutions in community wealth building.

PLANET:

We work with partners to improve the environment of our place, accelerate the decarbonisation of Colchester economy and reduce the environmental impact of business activities.

- Support initiatives to enhance the quality of the environment.
- Help local businesses reduce their carbon emissions.
- Support development of local green technology businesses.
- Identify new economic opportunities from the emerging 'green economy' businesses.



What is Inclusive Economic Growth?

‘Inclusive Economic Growth’ is rising prosperity that includes everyone, that reduces inequalities, and is sustainable. We will work to achieve more inclusive growth in all our work. It takes a more holistic approach to improving people's lives because a fairer economy is a stronger economy which narrows inequalities.

Following the adoption of this strategy, we will develop annual action plans to ensure our work is directed to achieve our priorities.

We have not developed this strategy in a vacuum. Instead, we are actively involved in partnerships covering a wide range of issues, both economic and social, and have developed mature relationships with partner agencies. As a result, we have developed this strategy:

- By engaging with a local business, and with local and regional stakeholders
- Based on evidence emerging from relevant statistics and reports
- To align with the priorities of our neighbours and partners

Our engagement has taken the form of surveys of local businesses, 1-to-1 conversations, and engagement workshops. This has allowed us to test current thinking, explore opportunities and challenges, and identify possible priorities. It has confirmed that a new strategy is timely, and our enabling approach is appropriate.

More than 500 businesses responded to our surveys; and consultation workshops included representatives from the BEST Growth Hub, Colbea, Colchester BID, Essex County Council, Essex University, and Let’s Do Business plus other Council teams, including Amphora Trading, Business Rates, Communications, Housing, Licensing, Planning, and Climate Change.

Themes which were stressed during these engagement workshops included the positive mindsets of most businesses, the skills challenge and how it differs between sectors, the importance of inclusive economic growth, the need for translation and support with the ‘green challenge’, and the support for working together to attract new investment. Analysis of partner strategies also confirms these general themes to be reflective of current key issues and thinking.

The typical comments from the consultations below coalesce around emerging priority areas.

“Businesses are facing unprecedented pressures. They need hand-holding if they are to go greener, they can’t do it by themselves.”

“There’s a lot of people moving sectors right now. We are facing real difficulties recruiting and retaining staff. Skills development and keeping those skills in the business is a real priority for us now as we can’t buy new people in as easily as before.”

“The pandemic has really brought home that business is about people and trust. It has brought home how vital partnerships are in delivering our own ambitions. We need to create, sustain and build on that virtuous circle.”

“The past 18 months has shown how Colchester is out-performing other places. We need to capitalise on this. Everything is here to make that happen now. We should be more confident about that.”



The oyster fisheries at Mersea supply demand from around the world.



Colchester's Economic Context

Colchester's economic assets

Our appreciation of the key assets of Colchester's economy has informed our choice of priorities. By recognising these and building on them we can amplify our impact. Colchester's key assets include:

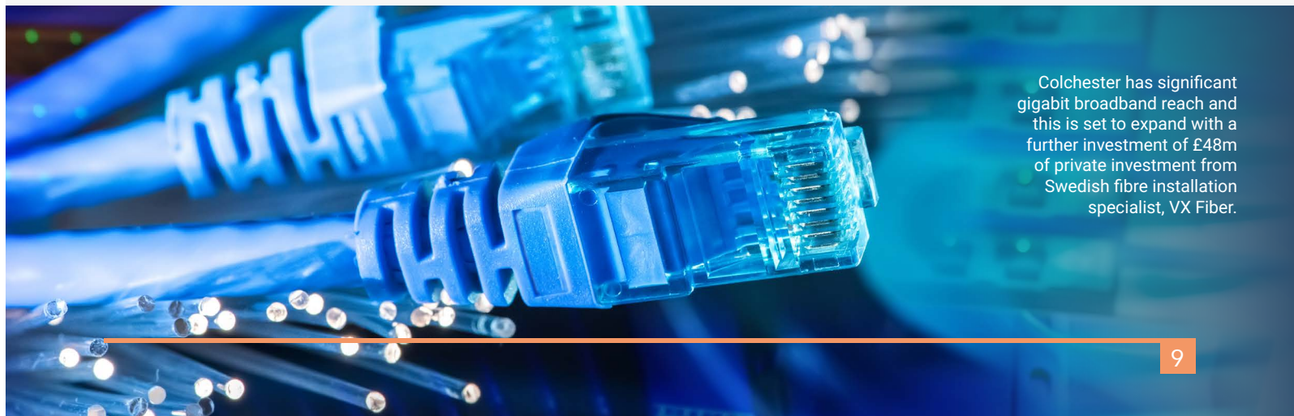
Construction is one of Colchester's core economic sectors and one where skills are in great demand.

- **BUSINESS DIVERSITY** – no one sector or employer dominates the Colchester economy. 93% of Colchester's businesses are micro/small. This has helped Colchester to weather economic shocks such as the financial crisis of 2008/9.
- **QUALITY OF PLACE** – Colchester has a rich mix of heritage and archaeology, award-winning parks and open spaces including the Dedham Vale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, unique communities such as Mersea Island plus nationally recognised cultural offers at Firstsite and the Mercury Theatre. Colchester Borough is truly unique and offers a high quality of life. Colchester and the surrounding area are increasingly appreciated by visitors. Recent years have seen an additional 6 new hotels expanding visitor choice and changing Colchester from a daytrip to a short-break destination. Visitor figures demonstrate its increasing popularity: 6.6m trips were taken in the Borough in 2019 and the visitor economy was worth some £394m and supported more than 5400 jobs.
- **GROWTH POTENTIAL** – By 2030 the Borough's population is projected to be over 214,000. That's higher than the current populations of Norwich and Aberdeen. This growth presents economic opportunities, especially for key sectors like construction. The Borough has been open to growth and attracted an estimated £336m investment between 2014-2021.

- **BUSINESS RESILIENCE** – Colchester's business community demonstrated impressive adaptability during the crisis phase of the pandemic. Businesses, joined together, supported each other, and pivoted business models to online and home deliveries, often within days.
- **CONNECTEDNESS** – The pandemic has drawn the key players in Colchester together like never before. Established relationships have bene built on trust, with a willingness to work together showing results such as the £19.2m Town Deal regeneration programme. Colchester works together in partnerships which deliver meaningful connections into their respective networks. We look forward to continuing to work with We Are Colchester, the University of Essex, Colbea, the Our Colchester BID, the Chamber of Commerce and Federation of Small Businesses to maximise the economic value from these connections.
- **INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENT** - with good road and public transport links, a strong transport investment pipeline plus a £48m further rollout of Ultrafast Broadband and 5G Colchester will be able to compete effectively, inspiring innovation, delivering more tech jobs and enabling people to improve their IT skills and employability prospects.
- **AMBITION** - Colchester is keen to realise its potential as a city to live, work, study, visit and do business. and work with our anchor institutions to make the economy inclusive for everyone and to champion the Real Living Wage.



Artist's impression of St Nicholas Square regeneration project in Colchester town centre, encouraging dwell time and improving the experience of the town.



Colchester has significant gigabit broadband reach and this is set to expand with a further investment of £48m of private investment from Swedish fibre installation specialist, VX Fiber.



The reimagined £11m Mercury Theatre which reopened during 2021 providing a welcome boost to the town centre following multiple pandemic lockdowns.

Confidence in Colchester: Recent Investments

supporting growth and core sectors through inward investment. Bringing more businesses, more jobs and more choice to Colchester.

Colchester is an **investment hot-spot**. Between 2015 and 2021 £333.8m has been invested by the private and public sector. They brought new jobs, new opportunities for learning, added choice, improved quality of the experience of Colchester and made it even more investable. The previous Colchester Economic Growth Strategy 2015-21 identified 8 core and growth sectors in Colchester's economy. This table identifies headline projects which have been delivered in this time period to showcase how these sectors have been supported, often with inward investment.

1 TOURISM, HOSPITALITY & LEISURE – INVESTING IN BRITAIN'S OLDEST RECORDED TOWN AND FIRST CITY

£86.4m which brought a redisplayed Castle Museum, 6 new/refurbished hotels, David Lloyd Leisure and new Sports Centre and cycle circuit at Northern Gateway and the reimagined Mercury Theatre.

2 CREATIVE, DIGITAL AND TECH

The **£2.6m** Creative Business Centre was opened in the former old Police Station in Queen Street. It is operated by SPACE Studios and offers workspace for over 40 businesses.

3 HEALTH AND CARE

Partnerships have been formed to explore the potential around this sector. Given the ageing population in north Essex there is potential for more technological solutions to be explored. This is a long running project with high aspiration which will continue into the next iteration of the strategy.

4 SUSTAINABLE ENERGY FOR HOMES AND BUSINESSES AT THE NORTHERN GATEWAY

Our flagship Government funded **£3.5m** energy project sees the construction of a carbon-cutting, District Heat Network at Colchester Northern Gateway to supply heat and hot water to the developments' homes and businesses.

Reducing our carbon emissions is an important part of meeting climate change goals and the Heat Network will significantly reduce carbon emissions caused by heating homes and offices and will generate a source of hot water to replace boilers in the new homes being built.

It also means better value for households as district heat networks offer competitive and stable energy prices over the long term.

5 SUPPORTING RETAIL

Town Centre transformation – **£55.1m** which delivered the new Fenwick store, the new Primark store, Ultrafast gigabit broadband, upgrade of Priory Street car park, a new public space around The Mercury Theatre and 9 'Parklet' wooden seats in the High Street and other projects in the pipeline.

New retail routes to market and skills development – working in partnership with other local authorities the Council commissioned Click it Local to work with the Our Colchester BID and local independent retailers to extend their skills to offer their products online free of charge through a universal shopping basket like Amazon. It has also helped new home-based businesses to test effective routes to market giving them the best possible start.

New Retail beyond the Town Centre offering shopping choice for a growing population **£72m** new retail centre at Stane Park, Stanway.



The £12m Innovation Centre at the University of Essex, providing work and collaboration space for 50 tech companies.

6 CONSTRUCTION

The majority of these projects support the construction sector and its lengthy supply chains, including many local businesses. In addition, there was:

- New Office Spaces for start-up and young businesses **£7.3m** which delivered Amphora I and II in Sheepen Road and the Creative Business Centre at 37 Queen Street.
- Investment in the Student Experience at the University of Essex and Colchester Institute – a strong skills pipeline for Colchester **£85.5m** which delivered a new STEM Centre at both institutions, the Essex Business School and Silberrad Student Centre at the University and a new Care Skills Centre at the Institute.
- New Businesses Encouraged to locate University at The Knowledge Gateway to capitalise on a global academic talent pool **£27m** which brought Parkside Office spaces and the Innovation Centre.



Replenishh is part of the Rapid Electronics group and is playing a vital role in supporting the Electronic Vehicles industry to build the UK's EV charging network.

7 FINANCIAL SERVICES

The lack of high quality office space was identified as a need in the previous strategy. This was partly addressed with the construction of two office builds constructed by the Council's sister company, Colchester Amphora Trading Ltd, which both support the financial services sector. Birkett Long LLP now operates from the prestigious **£2.7m** Amphora Place shortly followed by insurance merger Aston Lark's neighbouring **£2m** office space.

8 ADVANCED MANUFACTURING

Very specialist and a mature sector in Colchester. The Ultrafast broadband digital infrastructure project supports the growth of this sector.

These major investments in Colchester over the past four years has come from both public and private investors. Their investment has: driven economic growth delivering significant numbers of new jobs, raised the ceiling value of commercial rents, improved the image and reputation of Colchester and has made it a better place to live, work, study, visit and do business.

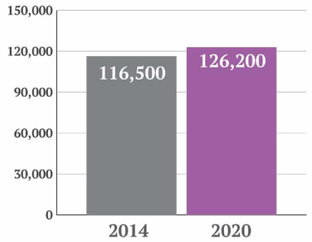
The forward pipeline is positive too with 2022 promising to deliver **more multi-million pound projects** including:

- the expansion of Ultrafast Broadband,
- a new teaching and business facility at Colchester Hospital,
- further expansion of the Parkside Office Village at the University of Essex,
- various projects commencing from the £19.2m Town Deal programme,
- and the installation of a 5G network.

Colchester's Economic Profile

WORKING AGE POPULATION

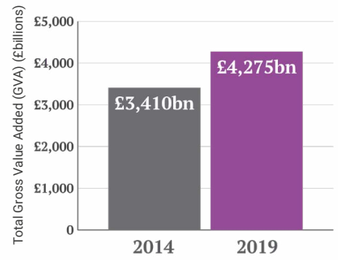
The working age population has grown by 8.3% over this time. It's also clear that considerable growth is taking place beyond the working age population, particularly in the older age groups.



Source: Nomis ONS

GROSS VALUE ADDED (GVA)

A measure of the Borough's total productivity. From 2014 to 2019 the Borough's GVA or productivity rose by 25.4%.



Source: EEFM

INDICES OF MULTIPLE DEPRIVATION

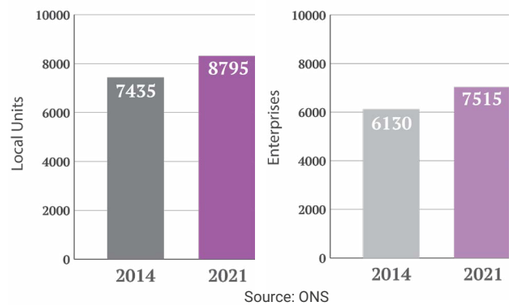
The Indices provide a set of relative measures of deprivation for small local areas with an average of approximately 1,500 residents or 650 households across England. Colchester is characterised as having relatively low levels of deprivation.



Source: Department of Housing Communities and Local Government, 2019

NUMBER OF BUSINESSES

The difference between local units and enterprises can be explained by chain businesses. Tesco for instance is one business (enterprise) but has multiple units in Colchester (local units). There was an 18.3% increase in the number of local units over this period compared with a 22.6% increase in the number of enterprises.



Source: ONS



The Business School at the University of Essex, providing highly skilled graduates into the workforce and helping companies through Knowledge Transfer Partnerships.



Woods Air Movement is a global player in building ventilation, fire safety and bespoke industrial projects.

Colchester's Economic Challenges



Our priorities will address the principal challenges the data and our engagement have highlighted. They are:

▶ SKILLS GAPS Colchester has lower levels of employees with higher level NVQs compared to the regional and national averages. Apprenticeships numbers are also falling. In addition, 17 neighbourhoods in Colchester are among the most deprived 40% in England for education, skills and training. Yet local employers have an increasing need for skilled employees who can adapt and flex as the needs of businesses change.

There is a rapidly increasing need for improved digital and tech skills, health and care skills and the need for innovation in delivering them. Colchester's strength in the creative industries combined with multi-million-pound investments in providing digital infrastructure and £1m training facilities at the former Wilson Marriage Centre provide a strong foundation to develop and retain these key skills.

▶ POLARISATION OF INCOMES The tourism, hospitality and care sectors which are strong in Colchester, tend to be lower paid compared to the higher paid work available to commuters to London. However, Colchester has an opportunity to attract more higher paid work through its investment in digital infrastructure and innovation in training opportunities. Projects such as the conversion of the old Bus Depot in St Botolph's Street into a £5.6m Digital Hub are intended to put Colchester on the leading edge of Artificial Intelligence, Augmented Reality and Virtual Reality technologies.

▶ COMPETITION FROM OTHER PLACES As well as the need to capitalise on Colchester's new status as a city, there is a need to invest in Colchester to further modernise its digital and transport infrastructure, provide more homes for a growing population, protect its appeal as a great place to live and work, and attract and retain businesses. Colchester is a strategic location for business in the region. Significantly, it also has well-located land available which adds to the inward investment offer. However, businesses are facing difficult decisions to keep their business viable and to navigate their way through this challenging economic climate.

▶ CLIMATE EMERGENCY Businesses are facing the increasingly urgent need to meet the challenges of the climate emergency. The adaptations required to meet targets to decarbonise, as to capitalise on the opportunities these present, create a need for specialist business support. The Government's Ten Point Plan aims to support up to 250,000 jobs by 2030 for engineers, fitters, construction workers and many others engaged in supporting clean energy so there are significant skills gaps here too. The Government has announced over £5 billion to support a green recovery and enable the UK to meet the overall Government commitment to reach net zero emissions by 2050. Local consultation found businesses need help adapting top this agenda.

This Strategy acknowledges new economic realities at play. These compliment and challenge the traditional economy of companies and firms producing goods and services, employing people and needing skills, space, and land to do so:

- **Circular Economy** of recycling and upcycling
- **Sharing Economy** where purchase of new is replaced by the renting/ sharing/bartering and swapping of existing products
- **Local Economies:** economic impact of working from home, the potential for developing 'The 20 Minute Neighbourhood'
- **Online Economy** - last mile deliveries and 'Lockdown Entrepreneurialism'
- **The Gig Economy** - Traditional 9-5 jobs are declining and those that had them are leaving the labour market. Now we have the gig economy and portfolio incomes, especially for younger people. Previous strategies emphasised core and growth sectors. However, The Pandemic has affected people; their ability to work, work productively and their future prospects across gender and age bands – so the socio-economic dimension needs to be included as does social value.
- **New forms of community power**, ownership and influence alongside the traditional private and public sector approach. Social entrepreneurship would include Community Interest Companies CICs, Social Enterprises VCSEs, Foundation Trusts – new forms of supply of products and services to meet demand from the community and beyond.



Colchester's e-cargo bikes capitalising on the rising demand for home deliveries and helping local independent businesses and the environment at the same time.

Our Strategy

AN OVERARCHING VISION FOR COLCHESTER HAS BEEN ADOPTED:

Colchester: unlocking our city's potential

FOUR PRIORITIES HAVE BEEN ADOPTED:

PEOPLE:

We support inclusive economic growth by encouraging business innovation, helping build the skills the local workforce will need to take advantage of future opportunities, and championing the Real Living Wage

Where we will

- Identify and facilitate opportunities to promote innovation and new businesses.
- Work with partners and stakeholders to address skills shortages.
- Tackle inequalities by enabling local people to access and develop new skills.
- Sustain the local economy with high quality business support, information and guidance.
- Aspire to develop a higher wage economy.
- Capitalise on Colchester's new status as a city.
- Understand the future infrastructure needs of a fast-growing place.

PARTNERSHIPS:

We engage widely with partners and anchor institutions at the local, regional, national and international level to help Colchester capitalise on new opportunities for economic growth, jobs and infrastructure.

Where we will

- Engage with partners to promote Colchester's economic interests.
- Support the work of partners in offering business support to enable recovery and growth.
- Help develop a more connected and influential place.
- Mobilise the role of Anchor Institutions in community wealth building.

PLACE:

We use our resources, knowledge, assets and connections to leverage inward investment in the City, and facilitate improved infrastructure, including digital infrastructure.

Where we will

- Identify and secure funding to enhance Colchester and boost the economy.
- Identify and pursue projects which support key sector development.
- Support and encourage inward investment.
- Develop a new Digital Strategy as a competitive edge and to enhance skills.

PLANET:

We work with partners to improve the environment of our place, accelerate the decarbonisation of Colchester economy and reduce the environmental impact of business activities.

Where we will

- Support initiatives to enhance the quality of the environment.
- Help local businesses reduce their carbon emissions.
- Support development of local green technology businesses.
- Identify new economic opportunities from the emerging 'green economy'.



By adopting this strategy we seek to:

- **Address the key challenges Colchester's economy faces**
- **Build on the strengths and assets of Colchester's economy and its new status as a city**
- **Harmonise our work with partners and their strategies**
- **Help positively shape our Place**
- **Capitalise on the new opportunities for devolution contained in the Levelling Up White Paper**
- **Help businesses play their role**
- **Mobilise the opportunity around Colchester's anchor institutions**
- **Aspire to a higher wage economy**
- **Understand the future infrastructure needs of a fast growing place**

PEOPLE

"There's a lot of people moving sectors right now. We are facing real difficulties recruiting and retaining staff. Skills development and keeping those skills in the business is a real priority for us now as we can't buy new people in as easily as before."

PRIORITY

We support inclusive economic growth by **encouraging** business innovation, helping build the skills the local workforce will need to take advantage of future opportunities, and championing the Real Living Wage.

OBJECTIVES

- Identify and facilitate opportunities to promote innovation amongst local businesses and to attract cutting-edge businesses to the borough.
- Work with partners and stakeholders to develop a Skills Programme which will link the needs of businesses with the improved skills of local people.
- Sustain the local economy by retaining and developing existing businesses with high quality business support: information, advice and guidance.
- Tackle inequalities by enabling local people to access and develop new skills.
- Aspire to develop a higher wage economy.

CASE STUDY | THE COLCHESTER AMBASSADORS' GROUP

The Colchester Ambassadors' Group are a group of inspirational business people who run many of the borough's key organisations and share a vision and passion for the Borough. With members from industry together with representatives from education, the group is well-placed to understand the importance of acquiring and retaining skills in the workplace. This has been brought into sharp focus recently as the labour market is experiencing major supply issues as people move sectors, there are difficulties in recruitment and retention and new ways of working are demanding rapidly changing skill sets.

The Ambassadors' Group is working with Colchester Borough Council and its partners to establish strengths and existing work programmes which support the local skills pipeline. The task now is to identify a series of local actions which will meet the requirements of the imminent Skills and Post-16 Education legislation. It is hoped that this work will make it easier for local businesses to access the talent they need to recover and survive and improve local people's lives through improving their skills and prospects.

PLACE

The past 18 months has shown how Colchester is out-performing other places. We need to capitalise on this. Everything is here to make that happen now. We should be more confident about that.

PRIORITY

We use our resources, knowledge, assets and connections to leverage **inward investment** in the City, and facilitate **improved** infrastructure, including digital infrastructure.

OBJECTIVES

- Identify and secure funding to enhance our place and boost the economy (such as the Shared Prosperity Fund)
- Identifying and pursuing projects which support key sectors in the economy to emerge, develop and grow
- Support initiatives to encourage inward investment, especially on designated available land
- Work with partners to develop a new Digital Strategy which delivers competitive infrastructure to enable the growth of our borough and enables the development of digital skills of people within the workforce
- Capitalise on Colchester's new status as a city
- Understand the future infrastructure needs of a fast-growing place



Wivenhoe House Hotel: home to The Edge Hotel School, developing future leaders of the hospitality industry by offering valuable, practical experience of running a 4* country house hotel whilst studying for a Degree

CASE STUDY | THE TOWN DEAL REGENERATION PROGRAMME

March 2021 saw Colchester awarded £19.2m from the Government's Town Deal regeneration fund. The bid was led by We Are Colchester, a group of local stakeholders and partners who worked with Colchester Borough Council to identify where the need was and develop a series of projects for the funding to address those needs.

Colchester's Digital Strategy was launched in 2017 with an ambition to further its economic growth plans through improving connectivity. The Strategy set out its intention to become the best-connected place in the Eastern region making it a magnet for creative, digital, technology and IT businesses. Capable of competing with the better-known tech clusters around the UK like Edinburgh, Cambridge and Bristol.

The Town Deal funding has a project stream which will deliver:

- **Queen Street Digital Working hub** – which will provide high quality, local workspace on the site of the old Bus Depot in Queen Street. This will help to nurture local talent and put Colchester on the international map for leading tech, digital and creative businesses.
- **Wilson Marriage Centre** – will be redeveloped as a digital skills hub.This will support training, development, provide access to digital facilities and offer community activities. This will give adults across Colchester increased opportunities to re-skill and re-train so as to be better able to meet the needs of local employers.
- **5G provision** – this massive leap in technological capability delivered through mobile phones will transform our lives even further. This investment will give Colchester a competitive advantage, encouraging employers into the town, new businesses to be set up and enabling existing businesses to exploit new business opportunities.

These projects will transform places in and around Colchester by making them more accessible, more supportive of their communities and make Colchester a place known for its leadership in digital connectivity.

PARTNERSHIPS

"The pandemic has really brought home that business is about people and trust. It has brought home how vital partnerships are in delivering our own ambitions. We need to create, sustain and build on that virtuous circle."

PRIORITY

We engage widely with **partners and anchor institutions** at the local, regional, national and international level to help Colchester capitalise on new opportunities for economic growth, jobs and infrastructure.

OBJECTIVES

- Engage with partners and anchor institutions such as ECC, NEEB, the University of Essex and the NHS to promote Colchester's economic interests in their work
- Support the work of local partners to ensure that information, advice, and guidance for the Borough's businesses is sustained to enable economic recovery and growth
- Help develop a more connected and influential place
- Mobilise the role of Anchor Institutions in community wealth building

CASE STUDY | THE OUR COLCHESTER BID LEISURE RECOVERY STRATEGY

The Our Colchester Business Improvement District (BID) is a business-led partnership that enables coordinated investment in the management and marketing of a defined area. In Colchester's case it is the town centre and the BID has a membership of around 500 businesses. Recognising that the town centre has a 24-hour economy and the impact that the Pandemic is having on tourism, leisure and hospitality businesses, the BID led on the development of a Leisure Recovery Strategy.

The Strategy is based on based on research with residents, visitors, students, businesses, public bodies, voluntary organisations and other valued stakeholders. The plan includes core strategies, objectives, actions and progress indicators to support the recovery of the town's leisure sector over the next 5-10 years.

Plans are taking shape as the Strategy is in the final stages of formation but it's clear that many businesses will need business support to stabilise and navigate into recovery.

Connections are being made so that duplication of effort is spotted and stopped, ensuring that the right experience and advice is given at the right time. When combined with the ability to come together and mobilise quickly to apply for funding the essence of partnership working is at its most effective.

It is hoped that these interventions will help leisure businesses to take their place in Colchester's leisure economy, offering customers a wide choice of places to go, things to see and do which are such asset to the people who live, work and visit the Borough.

PLANET

"Businesses are facing unprecedented pressures. They need hand-holding if they are to go greener, they can't do it by themselves."

PRIORITY

We work with partners to improve the **environment** of our place and accelerate the **decarbonisation** of Colchester economy.

OBJECTIVES

- Support initiatives to enhance the quality of our environment
- Work with partners to support businesses to reduce their carbon emissions to achieve net zero goals
- Support the development of green technology businesses in the borough
- Identify new economic opportunities from the emerging 'green economy'

CASE STUDY | THE RACE TO NET ZERO BUSINESS SUPPORT PROGRAMME

November 2021 saw the UK host COP26 – The 26th Conference of Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change. World leaders met negotiate international agreements to limit greenhouse gas emissions and global warming. But what can be done at local level?

Businesses are aware of the need for change and many are willing to make changes but Covid impacts are dominant currently and for many sectors it's about survival at the moment. Chains and large companies arguably have more capacity and are actively working for change than SMEs through their **Environmental and Social Governance policies** (ESG). But the majority of Colchester's businesses are small and micro enterprises who need support if they are to make meaningful change.

Colbea, the **Colchester Business Enterprise Agency**, has 40 years' experience in providing business support to Colchester businesses.

It is a well-respected organisation which has risen to the challenge of providing high quality business support, funded by CBC, over the past year. It has made a positive difference to Colchester's economic response to the pandemic and now it has the opportunity to do the same for green growth by providing a local business support programme which will take our SME business base through a targeted programme of positive environmental impact transition. It is hoped that this programme will enable local businesses to understand the scope of action needed, identify costs and savings associated with those actions, discover opportunities for new/adapted products and services and target those markets which need them. Ultimately, reducing their environmental impacts across the board including waste, energy, materials, supply chain contributions, contract procurement competitiveness and carbon emissions in the race to Net Zero.

A DEEPER DIVE INTO SOME ECONOMIC ASPIRATIONS FOR COLCHESTER



Aspirations for a Higher-Wage Economy

The Minimum Wage came into effect in 1988. It is a legal requirement for those aged under 23. For those aged over 23 the National Living Wage applies. However, in recent years the concept of the Real Living Wage has emerged. This is an independent calculation of the cost of living based on a basket of household goods and services.

We recognise that employers are facing unprecedented cost pressures at the moment, but our ambition for Colchester is for a higher wage economy where all employers *that can afford to do so*, pay the Real Living Wage as a minimum.

Research from The Living Wage Foundation shows that adopting the Real Living Wage:

- improves company reputation
- enhances attractiveness when recruiting, especially in a competitive market
- increases motivation and staff retention
- is a point of difference from the competition
- improves relations between management and staff



The Importance of Anchor Institutions in the Colchester Economy

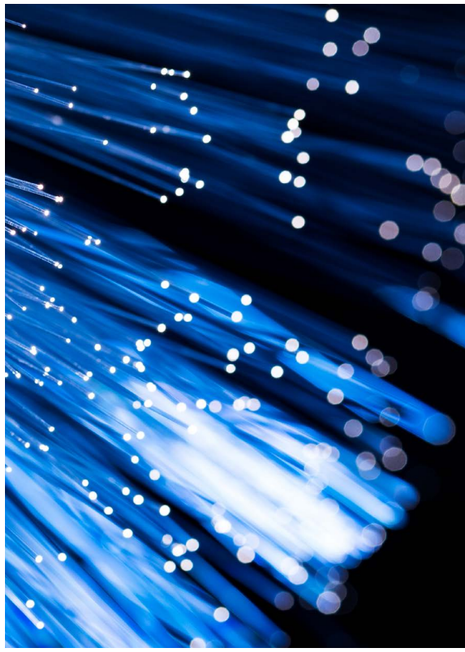
Anchor Institutions are large, non-profit organisations which are the foundation of the local economy. Examples include local Councils, Universities and schools which have fixed assets, often employ local people and need substantial budgets to operate.

Anchor Institutions have a practical and leadership role in community wealth building through their procurement policies to benefit local businesses and places. They could redirect flows of wealth into locally rooted businesses which share the wealth they create with their employees, communities and consumers.

Understanding the Future Infrastructure Needs of a Fast-Growing Place

The importance of infrastructure is highlighted in national planning policy and needs to meet the requirements set out in the National Planning Policy Framework and Planning Practice Guidance. This states that there's a need to engage with infrastructure providers and that plans should make sufficient provision for infrastructure for transport, telecommunications, security, waste management, water supply, wastewater, flood risk and coastal change management, and the provision of minerals and energy (including heat) and community facilities (such as health, education and cultural infrastructure) and emergency services.

Colchester City Council will be undertaking an audit of infrastructure provision and identifying gaps in provision. This will help the Council and other stakeholders to understand and prioritise the allocation of resources, deliver services in future and prepare investment plans. It will also support future bids for funding.

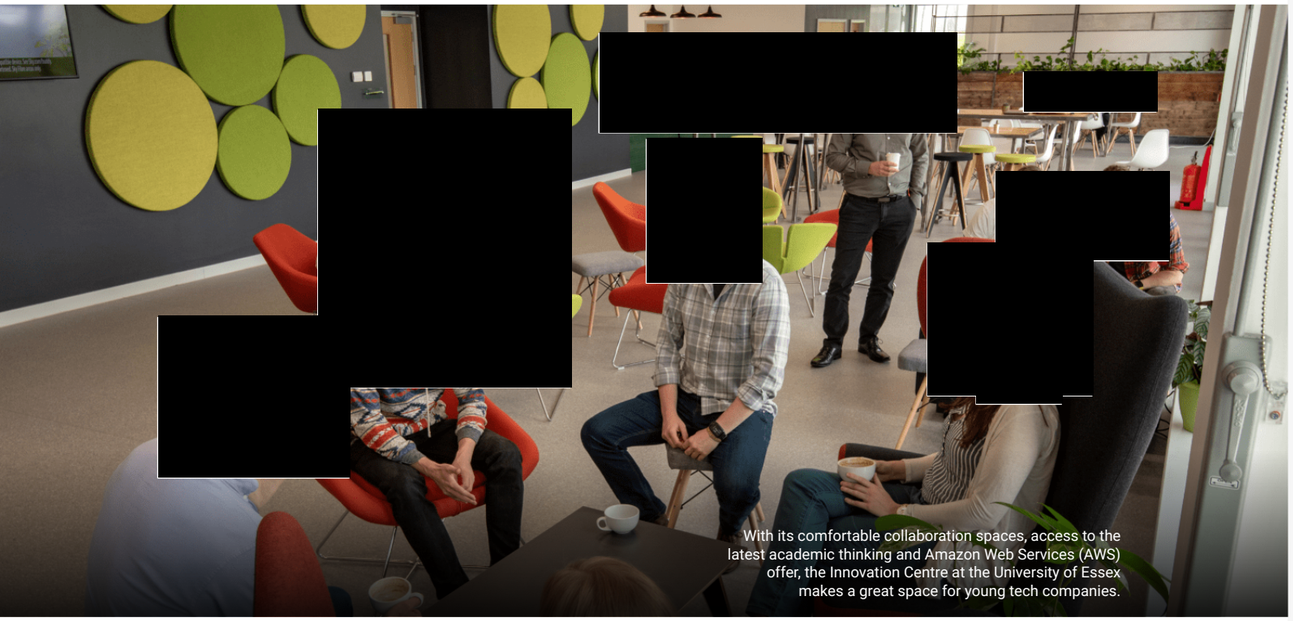


How We Work

Influences, Drivers and Partnerships

We work with partners from local to national and align with their strategies to achieve the **best for Colchester**. We use these strategies to help identify opportunities to attract investment for Colchester, often in the form of grants such as from the **Government's Towns' Fund.**

Nationally **the Government** plans to support economic growth through significant investment in infrastructure, skills and innovation and to 'level-up' (Build Back Better).



With its comfortable collaboration spaces, access to the latest academic thinking and Amazon Web Services (AWS) offer, the Innovation Centre at the University of Essex makes a great space for young tech companies.

Regionally, we work with the **South East Local Enterprise Partnership** (SELEP). This is one of 38 LEPs, established to provide the vision to drive sustainable private sector-led growth and job creation. LEPS were set up by the Government to be the key body determining strategic economic priorities while making investments and delivering activities to drive growth and create jobs.

Working Together for a Faster, Smarter and More Sustainable Economic Recovery

We are an active member of the **North Essex Economic Board** (NEEB). The NEEB is a partnership covering Braintree, Chelmsford, Colchester, Maldon, Tendring and Uttlesford districts, and Essex County Council. It aims to ensure the area can rise to the economic challenges and opportunities we face. Spanning 2020 to 2040, NEEB's ambitious strategy is the first bespoke economic strategy covering North Essex. Through the NEEB we have pooled resources to offer increased business support and skills training.

North Essex Economic Strategy 2019

Essex County Council (ECC) aims to stimulate growth in Essex over the next 15 years through its new Sector Strategy

ECC Sector Strategy

It aims to:

- Make Essex a centre of **innovation** and **entrepreneurial** spirit where the benefits of this growth are felt within the county
- Create an **Economy for Everyone** - ensuring every resident of Essex has the opportunity to gain the skills and experience to succeed in the future economy regardless of their background and identity
- Shape an **Economy Fit for the Future** – centring green growth as intrinsic to all future growth to ensure we meet our target for a net-zero county by 2035

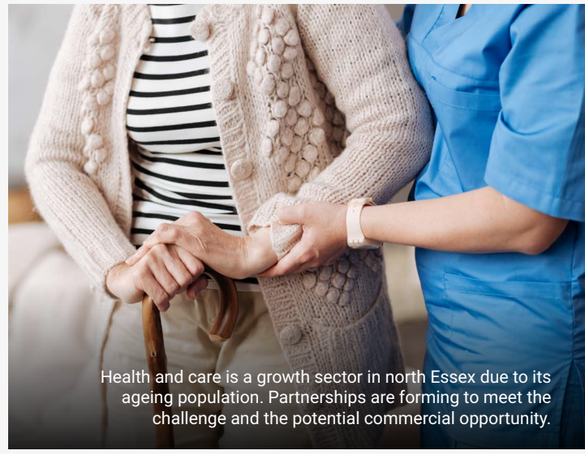
It identifies:

- **Enabler Sectors** - construction and digital
- **Heartbeat Sectors** - care, ageing population
- **Moonshot Stars** - predictors for growth: advanced engineering, manufacturing, space
- **Investment and market opportunities** what contributes to our district goals
- **Catalysts and caveats** - indirect benefits and supply chain impacts

Colchester Borough Council's Strategic Plan 2020-2023



Drone technology being used to monitor crop production to help farmers increase yields.



Health and care is a growth sector in north Essex due to its ageing population. Partnerships are forming to meet the challenge and the potential commercial opportunity.

The Council's key goals are:

- Tackling the climate challenge and leading sustainability
- Creating safe, healthy, and active communities
- Delivering homes for people who need them
- Growing a fair economy so everyone benefits
- Celebrating our heritage and culture
- Achievements and next steps

The strategy has been developed in partnership with stakeholders. As well as setting out our priorities, it is intended to offer a framework for partners to inform decisions and investments.

This strategy forms part of a web of strategies and programmes which all contribute to driving economic and community development. For example, actions to address specific issues in the Tourism and Hospitality Sector are threaded through the Cultural Strategy, the Leisure Recovery Strategy, the BID's emerging Retail Strategy, the emerging Inclusion and Diversity Strategy, the Town Deal Investment Programme and our Levelling Up Fund bid.

Other contributing strategies and plans:

The Our Colchester BID – town centre promotion, business support and lobbying including the Leisure Recovery Strategy.

Colbea Business Plan – business support, advice and guidance, preparing companies to become greener, preparing companies for procurement opportunities, skills and employability training.

We Are Colchester Town Deal Investment Plan – place shaping and skills.

The South East Local Enterprise Partnership (SELEP) – is a partnership for growth between business, government, and education.

The BEST Growth Hub - Growth Hubs are government-funded, which enables them to provide support that is free at the point of delivery. BEST is the Growth Hub for Essed and works closely with Colbea to support local businesses.

Local Transport Strategy – ability to get to work or study.

Anchor institutions – are typically large, usually non-profit, public sector organisations whose long-term sustainability is tied to the wellbeing of the communities they serve. Anchor institutions can be galvanised to maximise economic benefit locally: jobs, skills, supply chains, procurement.

Essex County Council Everyone's Essex Plan and South East Local Economic Partnership Skills Strategy – integration and development in association with Colbea and employers.

North Essex Economic Board Strategy / Success Essex Prosperity and Productivity Plan

Haven Gateway Partnership vision and objectives

The Colchester Ambassadors' Group

University of Essex – international ambitions, talent retention opportunity, business development aspect through knowledge transfer partnerships.

Colchester Institute – skills pipeline for key sectors.

Essex Chambers of Commerce

Federation of Small Business

ECC Joint Health & Wellbeing Strategy – This public health strategy prioritises work that empowers people's ability to work.

Essex Employers Family Friendly Charter. This charter commits organisations to develop and agree principles that govern effective family friendly employment practice across the county. Signatories will gain a charter-mark to them promote family friendly practice in the employment market and wider supply chains.

COLCHESTER BOROUGH COUNCIL STRATEGIES, PLANS AND POLICIES

Climate Emergency strategy and action plan

Communities Can community enabling strategy.

North Essex Parking Partnership Positive Parking Strategy – affects Colchester's competitiveness as a place to shop, visit and work.

Asset Management Strategy – strategic land purchase for commercial (employment) use

Housing and Homelessness Strategy – security of tenure is a key factor in ability to work. Pandemic rent arrears and debt will increase poverty.

Cultural Strategy – importance in place shaping, image and reputation as well as quality of life in attracting families to invest their lives here (920 new homes a year), a different take on inward investment but arguably still valid.

Colchester's Digital Strategy - its impact on place competitiveness, new products, new markets, ability to work from home – inward investment opportunity.

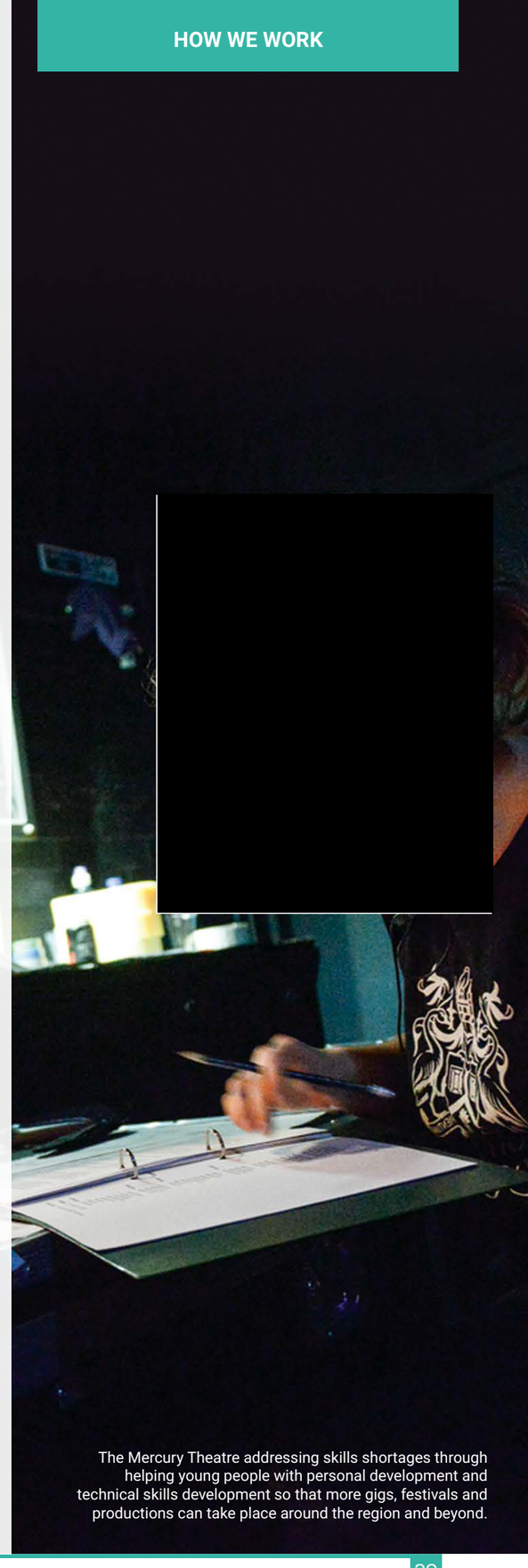
Licensing Policy – affects business.

Waste Vision and Strategy – affects businesses

COMMUNITY

Community Wealth Building: to include the One Colchester strategy, the Livewell Campaign, the Suffolk and North Essex ICS Integrated Care System work, CBC's Greenspace Strategy for social prescribing and economic and social wellbeing.

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The Mercury Theatre addressing skills shortages through helping young people with personal development and technical skills development so that more gigs, festivals and productions can take place around the region and beyond.

Our Approach

At a time of limited resource for local government, we want to have as big a positive impact on Colchester's economy as possible. **We are open-minded to new opportunities, but our work is evidence driven**. We seek to make much more happen than we could directly do ourselves by working as envisaged in the Council's Communities Can approach:

- Constantly scanning the horizon to understand local need and what opportunities exist.
- Developing strong relationships to allow us to collaborate with others productively.
- Participating in effective partnerships to amplify the effect of our efforts.
- Encouraging partners to play to their strengths.
- Focusing on the borough's strengths rather than deficits to capitalise on opportunities.
- Using existing assets to leverage new investment, and
- Concentrating on our role as catalyst and facilitator rather than trying to 'do' everything ourselves.
- Understanding infrastructure needs around active travel, Ultrafast gigabit broadband infrastructure, 5G WiFi and the connectivity platforms required.



WHAT WE DO

- Influence
- Collaborate
- Partner
- Research
- Facilitate
- Catalyse
- Invest

In particular, we have developed strong and trusting relationships with local agencies such as the **BID** and **Colbea**; are active members of effective partnerships such as **One Colchester**, **We Are Colchester**, and the **North Essex Economic Board** (NEEB); and are strengthening existing ties by agreeing shared priorities such as with our anchor institutions and particularly with the **University of Essex** through a new Civic-University Agreement.

CASE STUDY | THE NORTH ESSEX ECONOMIC BOARD (NEEB)

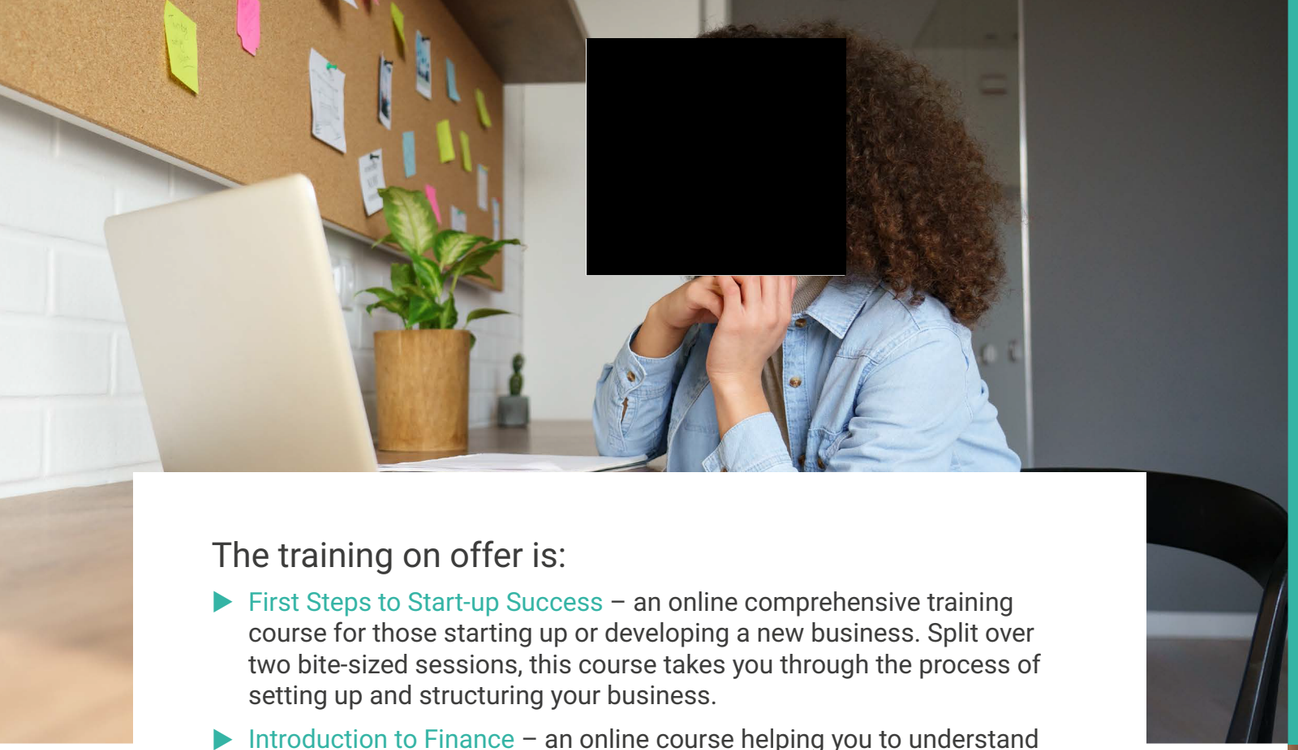
– bridging the span between Government and District Councils through helping businesses when they need it most

Over recent years several councils across north Essex have been working increasingly closer together and never more so than during the Pandemic.

A strategic view was taken across the north Essex business landscape as Government grants came in during 2020/21. Realising that there would be a need to support businesses indirectly as they emerged into recovery, 10% of each district's grant fund was pooled to procure a variety of business support contracts across north Essex.

Each was put out to competitive tender and the Colchester Business Enterprise Agency (Colbea) was awarded five of these contracts. Ashleigh Seymour-Rutherford, Colbea Chief Executive, said: "Working with local councils to provide the best outcome for their businesses and residents is what we do best". "Colbea is delighted to be delivering a well-rounded and extensive suite of support and advice for new and growing business; we recognise that behind every business is a person needing the tools to succeed and we provide the space to work learn and grow."





The training on offer is:

- First Steps to Start-up Success – an online comprehensive training course for those starting up or developing a new business. Split over two bite-sized sessions, this course takes you through the process of setting up and structuring your business.
- Introduction to Finance – an online course helping you to understand the fundamentals of finance and tax within your business.
- Digital Skills – six online sessions covering social media, project management, online sales, and your website.
- Cyber Security – an online session helping to protect you and your business from cyber threats and online fraud.
- Import / Export Training – six training courses available for those companies who are looking to start importing/exporting, or who are already in the industry and would like to enhance their skills.
- Net Zero Business Support Programme – offering a programme of business support activities to help SMEs across north Essex understand and lower their carbon emissions.

Most courses will be repeated throughout the year, so even the busiest schedules can be accommodated. Further information on all the courses will be available on the Colbea website: colbea.co.uk/business-training

To complement the training courses, one-to-one advice sessions for those looking to start a business are also available with Colbea's expert advisors, as well as more specialised advice for the import/export sector.

Cllr Tom Cunningham, from the North Essex Economic Board, encourages businesses to sign-up for the support.

"We are collectively funding this support because we know firms have had a tough time over the past two years, and the business landscape is ever changing," Cllr Cunningham said. ***"There is so much opportunity in our growing area that we want to support local small and medium enterprises to really make the most of that – and what better way than to sharpen your skills and offer through this support."***

The North Essex Economic Board is also funding a skills programme, to ensure businesses can attract the right people to work for them, and other business support such as specialist sessions on key sectors.

Implementation and monitoring

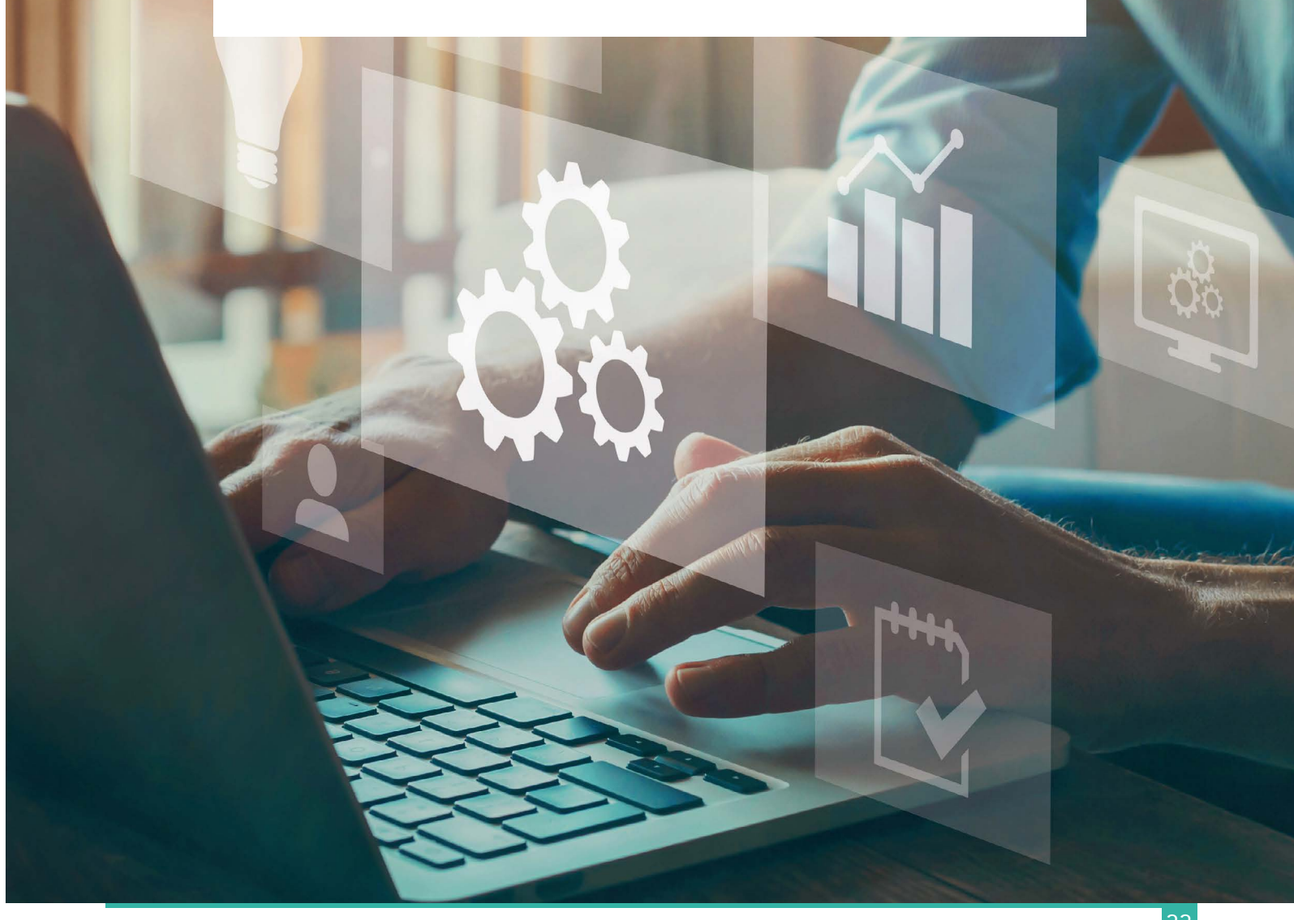
This **Economic Strategy** has a life span of **three years** and sets out our **high-level priorities**. Each year we will produce an action plan to detail how we will work to achieve these priorities.

We will use existing partnerships as well as convening project groups to pursue specific actions.

Particular **monitoring** arrangements are in place for some projects (such as for the Town Deal) and we will use these to monitor and report progress on them. Many of these are inclusive partnerships such as **We are Colchester**.

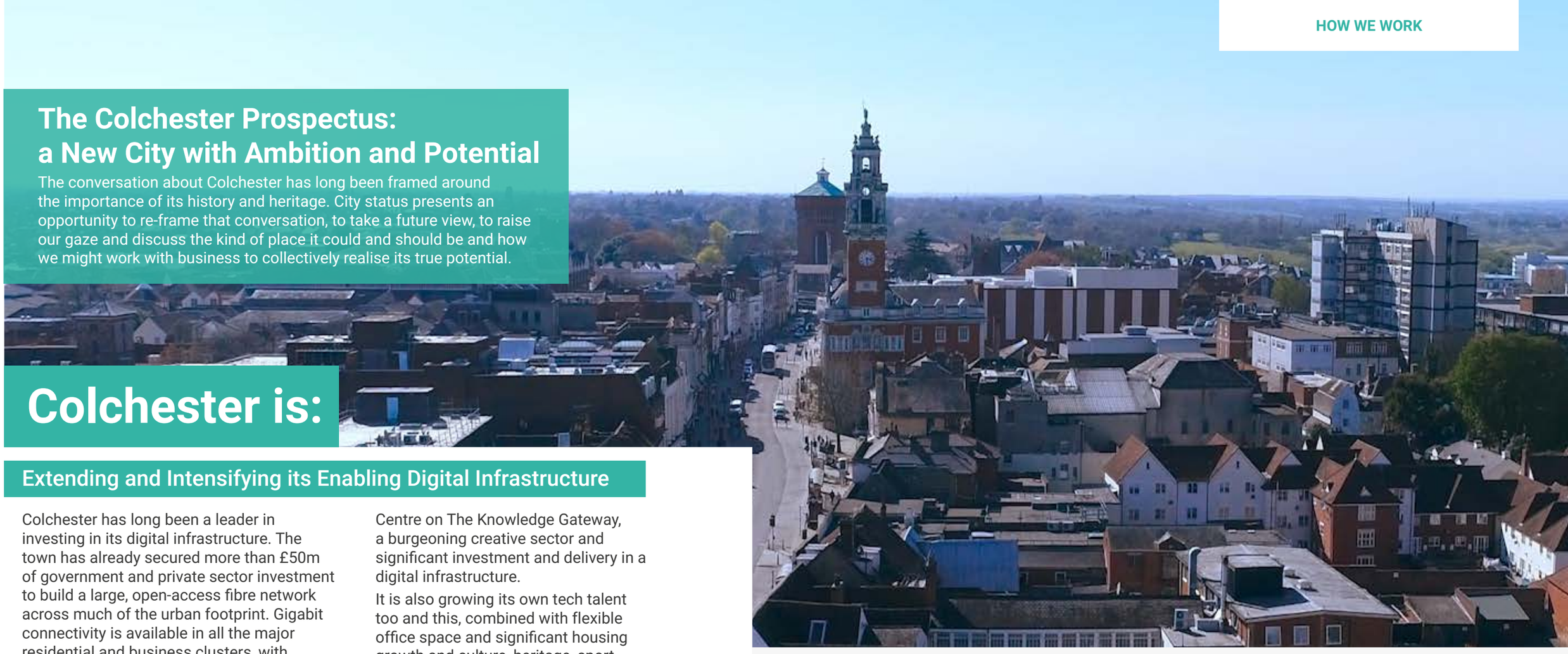
We will **support** annual surveys of local businesses to add local intelligence to quantitative economic data to understand emerging need, opportunities as well as the impact of our work.

On top of this we will **report progress** against each year's actions plan to senior managers and to the relevant Portfolio Holder.



The Colchester Prospectus: a New City with Ambition and Potential

The conversation about Colchester has long been framed around the importance of its history and heritage. City status presents an opportunity to re-frame that conversation, to take a future view, to raise our gaze and discuss the kind of place it could and should be and how we might work with business to collectively realise its true potential.



Colchester is:

Extending and Intensifying its Enabling Digital Infrastructure

Colchester has long been a leader in investing in its digital infrastructure. The town has already secured more than £50m of government and private sector investment to build a large, open-access fibre network across much of the urban footprint. Gigabit connectivity is available in all the major residential and business clusters, with planned expansion closely interlinked with the exciting 5G and AR/VR programmes now taking shape.

Tim Robinson, Chief Executive of TechEast, the regional body responsible for accelerating growth of the digital and tech economy, said: *"Year after year 'team Colchester' is adding strategic new elements to its digital tech infrastructure and its new Angel network is already playing a key role in dealflow. As befits one of the UK's newest cities the range of digital skills support, startup incubators and plans for cross-sector innovation hubs is impressive and creates the conditions for the next wave of startups to form and then scale".*

Taking a view across these projects it's easy to see that Colchester has many of the ingredients fundamental to a tech cluster. A strong University majoring in computer science, data analytics, business leadership, incubation facilities at the Innovation Centre on The Knowledge Gateway, a burgeoning creative sector and significant investment and delivery in a digital infrastructure.

It is also growing its own tech talent too and this, combined with flexible office space and significant housing growth and culture, heritage, sport leisure, shops, cafes, restaurants and bars and easy access to the coast and countryside, makes a compelling Colchester prospectus to attract further inward investment from all kinds of technology firms.

Such improved connectivity will enable the Internet of Things - devices and appliances connected together, 5G will bring much faster and more capable WiFi, improved cybersecurity, enable Blockchain technology development and sector specific tech developments.

But in the tech world it's often a break-through product which defines a link with its location. By nurturing and enabling tech start-ups and facilitating growth, skills and digital infrastructure Colchester is putting itself in a very strong position to become better known as a 'tech city.'

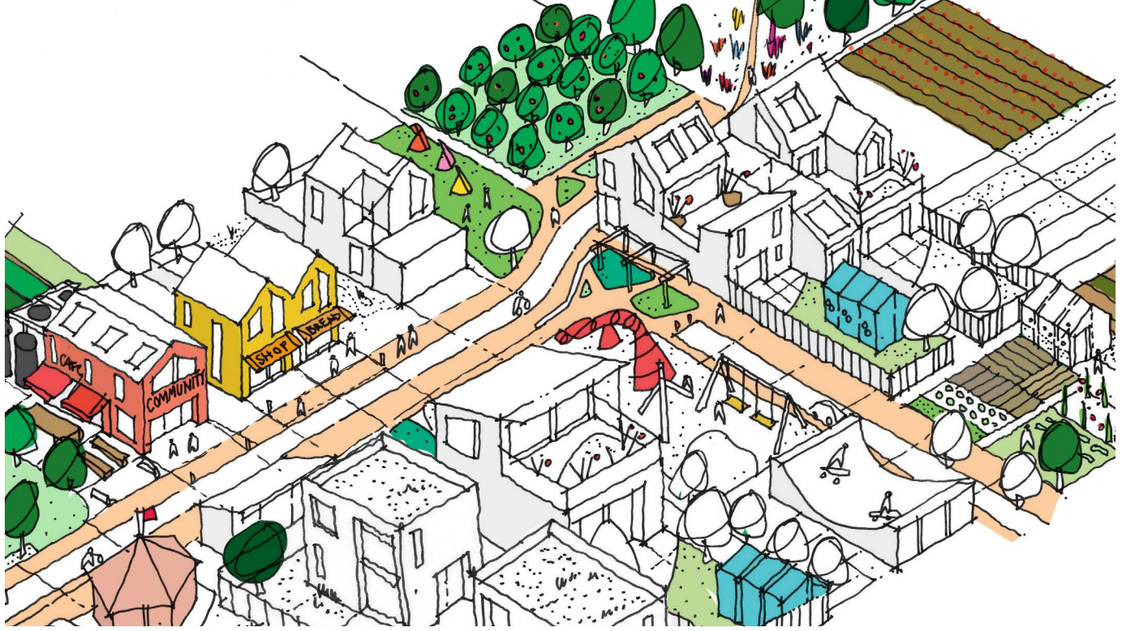
An Investment Hot-Spot

Between 2015-21 an estimated £333.8m had been invested in Colchester by the private and public sector. They brought new jobs, new opportunities for learning, added choice, improved quality of the experience of living, working, studying and visiting Colchester and made it even more investable.

Confidence continues. June 2022 saw the announcement that Colchester would be the global base for the new The AIXR Centre for Immersive Innovation. This new centre will be built on the site of the former bus depot in Queen Street. It will become a world focus for all immersive innovations – the Metaverse

Formed in Colchester by Daniel Colaianni, who studied at the University of Essex, AIXR is an internationally respected voice in the immersive industry. It is associated with global tech giants like Google, Microsoft, Oculus, hp, and Nvidia. Its purpose is to educate the world about XR – extended reality (an umbrella term for all immersive technologies), and what it can do for business.

The new centre will see Colchester as a global focus for all immersive Innovations in the XR industry and will form AIXR's base of international operations, institutionalising the technology for decades to come. It will be one central location, open to all within the community who want to learn about XR, grow within XR and connect with the most passionate people within the immersive world.



Designing New Places Offering a Blank Canvas for Business

The Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community (TCBGC) is a joint project between Tendring District Council, Colchester Borough Council and Essex County Council. Given the national shortage of housing, Garden Communities are planned new communities designed to meet anticipated local growth, which will be a sustainable and attractive place to live, work and visit. The TCBGC is based on the Garden Community principles.

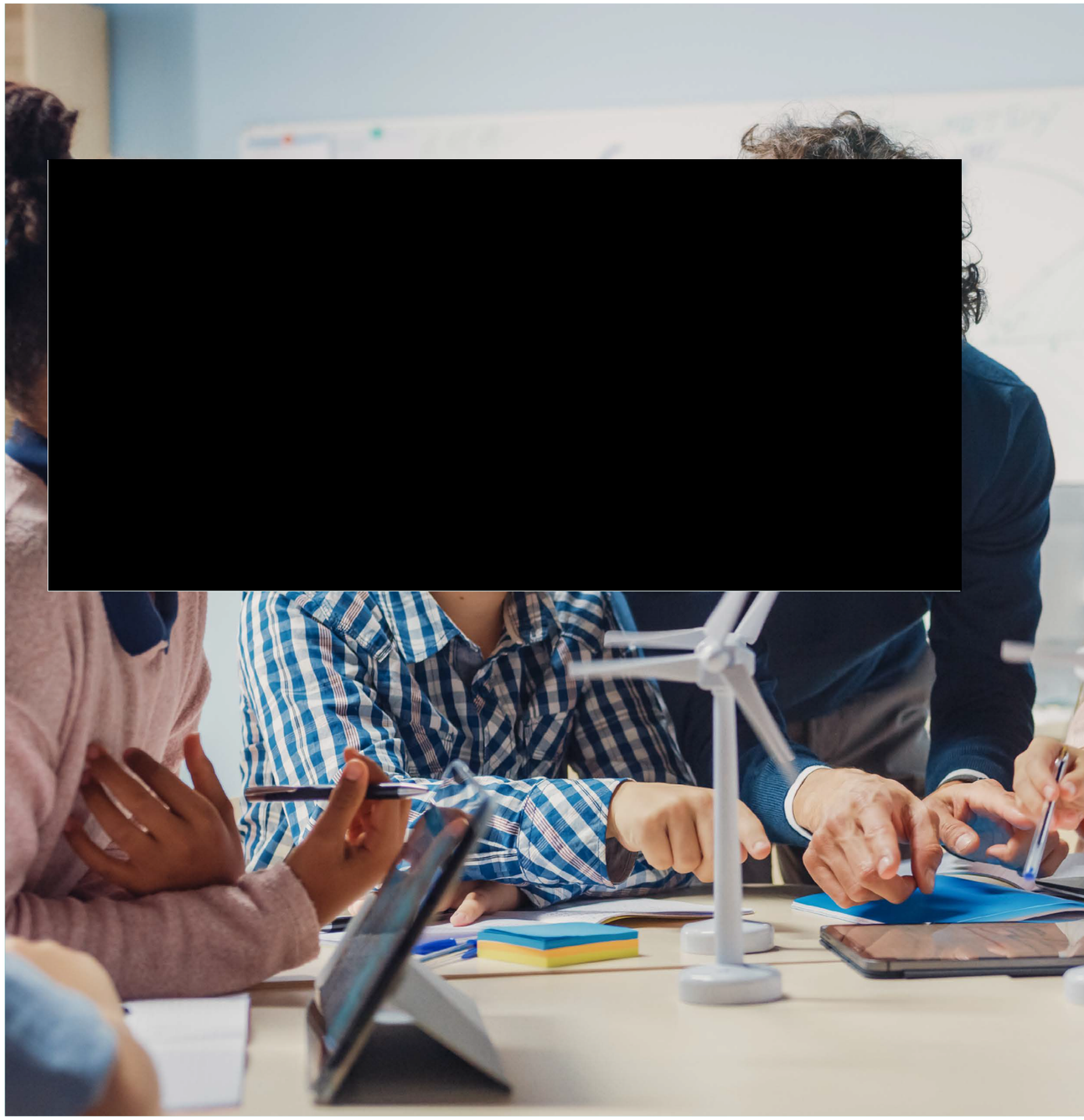
The Garden Community will be delivered through a genuine partnership approach between the public and private sectors, where risk and reward are shared and community empowerment enabled. The plan is for 7,500 – 9,000 homes (to be built over many years out to the 2050s), and is part of a long-term vision of Colchester and Tendring in partnership with Essex County Council to help meet the future growth of the area in a more strategic way.

A new Garden Community provides the opportunity to develop a community of sufficient scale to deliver and be served by new schools, health facilities, and job opportunities with good public transport links to existing town centres and employment areas.

The Covid-19 pandemic has introduced fundamental shifts to working patterns that can be expected to result in lasting increases to home working and the need for supporting services in nearby centres. The Garden Community model is well-suited to support these new ways of working and we will provide high speed and reliable broadband to enable this.

The Garden Community is also well located, with the University of Essex nearby as well as international gateways with Stansted Airport and the ports at Harwich and Felixstowe along the A120 corridor. The TCBGC includes an allocation of 25 hectares of employment land and economic assessments have shown the equivalent of one job per new home built in the Garden Community is achievable. The ‘one job per household’ refers to both jobs within the Garden Community itself and within a sustainable commuting distance, so the employment area is wider than just the Garden Community.

And with new growth locations at the University of Essex's Parkside development at The Knowledge Gateway and at Colchester's Northern Gateway with easy access to the A12 trunk road and multiple opportunities to develop in the city centre, Colchester offers great choice for business location.





Building New Homes for a Growing Population

Colchester's ambition continues around housing and has seen more new housing completions than any other of the 13 Local Authorities in Essex.

Colchester's build rate reflects the Council's willingness to work with developers to bring schemes forward. This growth will continue with a further 920 new homes a year being built out to 2033.

But it's not all about the numbers. There is a concern also to ensure quality of place so that communities can emerge and develop solid foundations too. With an Adopted Local Plan, a visionary approach to developing the new Tendring/ Colchester Borders Garden Community and a commitment to developing affordable housing and a high quality of life, Colchester offers a strong housing offer for people to invest their lives here.

Investing in Skills Development

Colchester is working with partners in education and business to help build the skills the local workforce needs to take advantage of personal opportunities in the future and to enable businesses to compete effectively.

A known gap nationally is IT and Digital Skills and Colchester will be delivering a new:

- Digital Working Hub and grow-on space for the creative industries at the new AIXR Centre for Immersive Innovation in the old bus depot in Queen Street
- Digital Skills Hub - developing the Wilson Marriage Centre to offer improved and transformed digital adult learning opportunities
- A range of projects funded by the Shared Prosperity Fund to address sectoral skills needs

As well as offering a series of management and business training through the Colchester Business Enterprise Agency it is hoped that this will help to:

- Upgrade skill levels
- Offer more career choice for local people
- Provide a supply of talent to local businesses
- Raise wage levels in the local economy
- Enable local businesses to innovate and compete for business



Increasing Business Support

Developing new spaces for businesses to grow to retain skills and talent to help businesses face the challenge and opportunity of growth, especially in the creative and digital sector. The new AIXR Centre for Immersive Innovation in Queen Street will also offer larger spaces for business as well as access to latest technologies.

The Colchester Business Enterprise Agency and other support organisations are working to enable businesses to access information, advice and guidance in ever new ways to enable businesses to survive, recover and compete effectively.

Improving Transportation Links

Unlocking the full economic potential of transport corridors to improve access into and out of London.

- A120 Haven Gateway - London Stansted Airport - Harwich
- A12 Brentwood - Chelmsford - Colchester
- Great Eastern Mainline Rail improvements

Find out more about how Colchester can help your business to meet your aspirations.
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