



# Local Plan Committee Meeting

**Charter Hall, Colchester Leisure World,  
Colchester, CO1 1YH  
Monday, 17 February 2025 at 18:00**

**The Local Plan Committee** deals with the Council's responsibilities relating to the Local Plan.

## **Information for Members of the Public**

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For this meeting the Chair has extended the Have Your Say Arrangements so that 10 speakers may address the Committee.

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**COLCHESTER CITY COUNCIL**  
**Local Plan Committee**  
**Monday, 17 February 2025 at 18:00**

**The Local Plan Committee Members are:**

Councillor Tim Young	Chair
Councillor Michael Spindler	Deputy Chair
Councillor Alake-Akinyemi	
Councillor Barber	
Councillor Andrew Ellis	
Councillor Sean Kelly	
Councillor Richard Kirkby-Taylor	
Councillor Venessa Moffat	
Councillor Martin Parsons	
Councillor Fay Smalls	
Councillor Rhys Smithson	

**The Local Plan Committee Substitute Members are:**

Other than the Local Plan Committee members, all members of the Council who are not members of the Planning Committee.



# **AGENDA**

## **THE LIST OF ITEMS TO BE DISCUSSED AT THE MEETING**

### **(Part A - open to the public)**

**Members of the public may wish to note that Agenda items 1 to 5 are normally brief.**

#### **Live Broadcast**

Please follow this link to watch the meeting live on YouTube:

[\(107\) ColchesterCBC - YouTube](#)

#### **1 Welcome and Announcements**

The Chairman will welcome members of the public and Councillors and remind everyone to use microphones at all times when they are speaking. The Chairman will also explain action in the event of an emergency, mobile phones switched to silent, audio-recording of the meeting. Councillors who are members of the committee will introduce themselves.

#### **2 Substitutions**

Councillors will be asked to say if they are attending on behalf of a Committee member who is absent.

#### **3 Urgent Items**

The Chair will announce if there is any item not on the published agenda which will be considered because it is urgent and will explain the reason for the urgency.

#### **4 Declarations of Interest**

Councillors will be asked to say if there are any items on the agenda about which they have a disclosable pecuniary interest which would prevent them from participating in any discussion of the item or participating in any vote upon the item, or any other registerable interest or non-registerable interest.

#### **5 Minutes of Previous Meeting**

The Councillors will be invited to confirm that the minutes of the meeting held on 16 December 2024 are a correct record.

**2024-12-16 CCC Local Plan Committee Minutes**

7 - 14

**6 Have Your Say! (Hybrid Local Plan Committee Meetings)**

Up to 10 members of the public may make representations to Local Plan Committee on any item on the agenda or any other matter relating to the business of the Local Plan Committee. Please note that the Chair has extended the speaking arrangements to allow 10 speakers to address the Committee. Each representation may be no more than three minutes. Members of the public wishing to address the Local Plan Committee **must** register their wish to address the meeting by e-mailing [democratic.services@colchester.gov.uk](mailto:democratic.services@colchester.gov.uk) by 12.00 noon on the working day before the meeting (Friday 14 February 2025) and provide a copy of the representation you wish to make.

**7 Colchester Local Plan - Regulation 18 (Preferred Options Local Plan) 15 - 846**

The Local Plan Committee are asked to : agree the content of the Preferred Options Colchester Local Plan (Regulation 18) as appended to this report as Appendix B. To agree to the publication of the Preferred Options Colchester Local Plan for consultation for a period of 6 weeks to commence as soon as reasonably practical following the Committee meeting. To note the publication of the evidence documents listed and summarised in the report. For the Committee to delegate authority to Head of Planning and the Chair of the Local Plan Committee to make minor revisions to the Preferred Options Colchester Local Plan, including the policies maps, prior to publication.

**8 Exclusion of the Public (not Scrutiny or Executive)**

In accordance with Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 to exclude the public, including the press, from the meeting so that any items containing exempt information (for example confidential personal, financial or legal advice), in Part B of this agenda (printed on yellow paper) can be decided. (Exempt information is defined in Section 100I and Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972).

**Local Plan Committee Background Information Version 2 July 2022 847 - 852**

**Part B  
(not open to the public including the press)**

## LOCAL PLAN COMMITTEE

### 16 December 2024

<i>Present: -</i>	Cllrs T. Young (Chair) Alake-Akinyemi, Ellis, Kelly, Kirkby-Taylor, Moffat, Parsons, Smalls, Smithson ,M. Spindler
<i>Substitute Member: -</i>	None
<i>Also in Attendance: -</i>	Cllr Dave Harris Cllr Martyn Warnes Cllr William Sunnucks

#### 314. Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on the 5 November 2024 were confirmed as a true record subject to an amendment to minute 313, paragraph 2, so that the paragraph read as follows:

*“In response to a question from the Committee regarding the evidence from the Middlewick Campaign Group the Place Strategy Manager detailed that evidence could be included to ensure transparency”*

#### 315. Have Your Say!

Richard Martin addressed the Committee pursuant to provisions of Meeting Procedure Rule (5). The Committee heard that the in 2017 Middlewick Ranges had been unexpectedly added to the Local Plan and detailed that the Council did know that it was a valuable wildlife site and that previous ecological assessments should have put the emphasis against development and not for it. The speaker detailed that they and others had been criticised for distracting the Council’s work on the plan and outlined that the significant new data received had made their cause a very worthy endeavour. The Committee heard that one of the UK’s leading Mycologists had made an 800-mile round trip to survey the fungi and confirming that it met the SSSI designation. The speaker concluded by asking the Committee whether they would commit to publishing the interim independent ecology report as soon as its available and commit to due process to respect decision making principles.

The Chair responded that the process would be followed as detailed by the Joint Head of Planning at previous meetings and that the evidence would be made public as soon as it possibly could.

Richard Martin responded that the mycologist they spoke of made a second 800-mile round trip and without them it would not be known how special the Middlewick area was.

Martin Pugh addressed the Committee pursuant to provisions of Meeting Procedure Rule (5). The Committee heard that the Waxcap mushrooms were suited to the acid Grasslands on Middlewick and the number of species on site surpassed the SSSI designation with the list likely to expand with further evaluation of the site from Emma Williams. The Committee heard that the site had much to offer in terms of quality habitats and that it was being preserved. It was detailed that the letter from England was welcomed and detailed that the

friends of Middlewick offered collaboration on the site and questioned will the Council look into alternative sites and not delay in doing this if needed.

The Chair responded that the Council would look at all the evidence and that this would be made public as soon as it was possible.

Martin Pugh responded by asking for a response to the question regarding looking at alternative sites as the evidence had always shown that Middlewick was not deliverable and asked who the individuals were looking at the Bats evidence and Nightingale data.

Sandra Scott, Place Strategy Manager responded that the Ecologists looking at the invertebrates and botanical survey and that Natural England were also reviewing this but could not confirm the name of the individuals reviewing this.

Dr Jeremy Dagley addressed the Committee pursuant to provisions of Meeting Procedure Rule (5). The Committee heard that the current allocation of Middlewick had been made without gathering evidence, that the Mitigation Hierarchy had not been applied properly, that the mitigation proposed was not achievable and that the Stantec report contained fabricated data. The speaker detailed that the Middlewick had high strategic significance as defined in DEFRA's most recent guidance and detailed that Natural England's stance had changed noting its national significance and would lead to a strong objection from Natural England. The speaker detailed that the newest version of the NPPF (National Planning Policy Framework) detailed that the plans should identify map and safeguard components of local wildlife-rich habitats and wider ecological networks. The speaker concluded by detailing that the Essex Wildlife Trust stood ready to work with the Council, Councillors and MoD and Friends of Middlewick to plan Middlewick's positive future to contribute to an outstanding ecological network along the wildlife corridor of the Roman River Valley.

Sir Bob Russell addressed the Committee pursuant to provisions of Meeting Procedure Rule (5). The Committee heard that they endorsed the comments of the previous speakers and comments that outcomes were more important than process and if this were to be repeated with the knowledge now known, Councillors would have voted no to the Local Plan. The speaker detailed that Salary Brook and its consideration at the Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community Joint Committee was based on the link road that would now not be happening for 17 to 27 years. The Committee heard that the speaker did not trust the developers to screen the development. The Committee heard that the planning application at the ABRO development site had been opposed by 20 Councillors but had been trumped by the Planning Department. The speaker outlined their concerns regarding the possible changes to Planning Committees across England and the impact that this would have on Democracy whereby officers would make decisions instead of Members.

At the request of the Chair, Karen Syrett, Joint Head of Planning, responded to the points made by the Have Your Say Speaker. The Committee heard that a Policy Paper had been published that set out the proposed changes to Officer delegations for Planning decisions but this would not do away with Planning Committee's entirely as it included three alternative options. The Joint Head of Planning detailed that the issues regarding Salary Brook would be best raised at the Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community Joint Committee as the Local Plan Committee did not have oversight of this.

Sir Bob Russell responded that Councillors should be wary of the scenarios they could encounter with regards to changes to Planning Committee with Councillors having less say over what is happening in their area.

### **316. Monitoring Statement 2024**

Laura Goulding, Planning Policy Officer, presented the report to the Committee detailing that the monitoring period ran from 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024 and detailed that within this time frame the Local Plan Review had commenced its issues and options iterative consultation starting in Autumn 2023. It was reported that the Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community Development Plan Document submission consultation had commenced on the 15 May 2023 and had run for 6 weeks. With regards to development, it was detailed that 1098 New dwellings had been built in Colchester City and 275 Affordable Houses had been delivered including 231 new build units. Over this period 1,455 planning applications had been received, and the following Neighbourhood Plans had been adopted:

- Tiptree Neighbourhood Plan
- Copford with Easthorpe Neighbourhood Plan
- Myland and Braiswick Neighbourhood Plan

The Committee were asked to approve the 2024 Monitoring Update Report for Publication on the Council's website.

Members debated the report noting the contents and asked that the Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community Joint Committee meeting dates be reflected within the report.

*RESOLVED (UNANIMOUSLY)* That the Local Plan Committee approved the 2024 Monitoring Update Report's publication on the Council's website.

### **317. Infrastructure Funding Statement**

Councillor William Sunnucks addressed the Committee as a visiting Councillor. The speaker detailed that they were pleased to hear that the infrastructure audit was underway and that this would be a helpful tool in lobbying for Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) in the future as well as inform Section 106 negotiations and combating NIMBY's and developers. The Committee heard that there needed to be a top-down approach with the projects being split into the funding sources so that a healthy debate could take place about who will be paying for which elements especially with regards to the A120 and A12 and working with MPs to secure the funding. The speaker detailed that the report read more like a sustainability study and detailed that there needed to be specific details of what was needed.

The Joint Head of Planning, Karen Syrett, presented the report to the Committee detailing that through Section 106 the Council had secured £4,428,127.11 and that the Council had received £2,945,096.61 in the funding period of 1<sup>st</sup> April 2023 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024. It was detailed that the amount spent by the authority was £1,632,009.38 and the total allocated to projects but not spent during the reporting year was £2,216,243.59. The Committee heard that total amount of money under any planning obligations which was received before the reported date which had not been allocated was £8,133,697.08 and confirmed that 222 affordable units had been delivered via Section 106 Agreements in 2023-2024 compared to 74 units in 2022-2023. The Joint Head of Planning concluded by detailing that the no decision was required from the Committee as the report was for information only and needed to be published prior to the 31 December 2024.

In response to questions from the Committee the Joint Head of Planning detailed that mitigation and Section 106 contributions could only cover what was necessary and that with regards to leisure facilities, Leisure World was the only publicly available swimming pool and confirmed that these spends were monitored to ensure that they were appropriate.

Members debated the report and asked whether there was a set date that the water study would be ready as there was concern from Members regarding new developments and what would happen if the requirements could not be met from developer contributions. Further questions were raised regarding Ward Members signing off on Section 106 payments and what was the process for this.

At the request of the Chair the Joint Head of Planning responded and confirmed that there was no Ward Councillor sign off required and that the process involved the front loading of projects so that they can be added to applications wherever possible and appropriate. It was confirmed that spending over £250,000 needed sign off from the Cabinet Member. In response to a question from the Committee the Joint Head of Planning confirmed that Members were actively encouraged to put forward proposals that could be added to the programme and Parish Councils were involved in this process as well however once agreed the spending in the Section 106 was prescribed on what the money would be spent on.

### **318. Colchester Local Plan Review – Evidence Base Update**

Councillor Dave Harris addressed the Committee as a visiting Councillor. The speaker thanked the Officers for their work on the review and detailed that the Council was in the middle of the review process and commented on the Colchester Gazette article detailing that Natural England would be working with the Council and that there were indications that the Middlewick area would be protected. The speaker concluded by asking how this relationship with Natural England would be maintained going forward and what input they would have.

At the request of the Chair the Place Strategy Manager detailed that the Council would be accepting Natural England's offer to review the evidence and that the collaborative working would be continuing into the next stage of the Local Plan process where their offer would be reviewed.

In response to the Officer Councillor Harris queried how the housing that was allocated to Middlewick would be accommodated instead of on the site.

In response to Cllr Harris the Place Strategy Manager detailed that the Local Plan Review would take into account the whole City area and that would be considered in an evidence-based approach.

Councillor Martyn Warnes addressed the Committee as a visiting Councillor. The speaker detailed that Berechurch did not have a dedicated Community Centre and instead there were numerous Church Halls. It was requested that this was reviewed so that the community needs could be understood and met in the future. The Committee heard that there were improvements that could be made to the rail network specifically with regards to the Colchester Town station which would work alongside the Councils Climate Emergency declaration. Councillor Warnes concluded by detailing that the requirements for Middlewick should be measured against the core principles to achieve a biodiversity net gain and minimise the adverse effects on the land.

At the request of the Chair the Joint Head of Planning responded that the improvements at the Colchester Town Station could be looked into further and that the concerns regarding the community facilities in the Berechurch area were noted and will ask the Community Development team to get in touch so that these concerns could be factored in.



In response to the Officers, Councillor Warnes queried whether there were any requests for facilities that had yet to be accepted.

The Joint Head of Planning detailed that some projects had been put forward but were not acceptable in planning terms due to the statutory tests necessary for making the applications and projects acceptable.

Sandra Scott, Place Strategy Manager, presented the application to the Committee noting that it was appreciated that there were a large number of lengthy documents as well as technical reports detailing factual evidence. The Committee heard that the Local Housing needs assessment considered the overall need of the different groups in Colchester which worked out to be 1300 dwellings per annum. This assessment had been based on the current and future housing needs and included the mix, tenure split and the range of specialist housing needs as well as Gypsy and Traveller sites. It was noted that these were identified in appendix B which identified the overall need until 2041.

The Committee heard that the Infrastructure Audit and delivery plan key points were summarised in 5.20-5.26 of the report and that they identified the growth for the Local Plan period and confirmed that this would form part of the evidence base once it was published. It was noted that there were 37 different types of infrastructure that would be included in the report as well as a planned baseline position, where there were supply gaps, and the inclusion of stakeholder engagement which would inform stages 1 and 2 of the report. This would be considered with the mitigation requirements and retail and leisure study and commercial leisure sectors whose key points were included at 5.27-5.33 of the report. These looked at all the separate centres within Colchester regardless of scale and identifying the appropriate change and viability of functions whilst providing health checks. The report also included details of the Landscape assessments providing an up-to-date evidence base which would inform the baseline. It was detailed that the Strategic Land Availability Assessment was detailed within the report at 5.42 and confirmed that the methodology had been agreed in the previous year. Through this stage one assessment it had been found that 72% of those identified were suitable and details of these specific sites were detailed in appendix 1. The Place Strategy Manager concluded by detailing that as more information became available then this would be published and that the recommendation was to note the progress made on the evidence base and note the publication of the completed evidence documents referred to in section 5 of the report.

The Committee debated the report and raised questions regarding the infrastructure audit and detailed that there was concern regarding sewage capacity that would be included in the Water Cycle Study and how this would be looked at in terms of growth options being proposed and queried how this would be shown in the recommended plan.

At the request of the Chair, The Place Strategy Manager detailed that the evidence needed to be fully tested to understand the implications of the plan as the Water Cycle Study was only one part of the wider evidence base. It was confirmed that the water and sewage element would be included within the water cycle study which would be a statement at a point in time but would be looking at growth and the challenges thereafter. In response to a further question from the Committee the Place Strategy Manager confirmed that the Housing Numbers in the NPPF could not be delayed due to a lack of infrastructure.

In response to a question from the Committee the Place Strategy Manager confirmed that the report on Middlewick was expected in the upcoming week and confirmed that once this was available it would be published on the website.

Members debated the report on issues including: that the evidence base was a starting point which could be used as a guide for infrastructure through Section 106, CIL and wider government funding, especially as the A120 was a challenge in every option. Marks Tey was noted as requiring major investment to support the plan going forward as well as other utilities including wastewater and electricity in more rural areas such as Tiptree and Copford.

With regard to retail the report on retail and leisure trends and predicted supply and demand were noted. The landscape character assessment was described and confirmed it would help inform potential impacts from development proposals.

Members continued to debate the report on issues including: when the water cycle study would be completed, that the Government had promised the building of new reservoirs and queried whether they were considering one in the Colchester Area as it was projected there would be significant population growth. On page 592 the Committee queried the spare sewage capacity and detailed that West Mersea had been promised an upgrade that had not happened and currently meant that 3-4 tankers a day were removing waste and had meant that residents in East Mersea had not been able to sit in their back gardens because of the smell. Further to this it was detailed that there had been a 20cm rise in sea level since the 1953 floods and the land was sinking at a rate of 0.8mm a year leading to a more likely 1 in 10-year flood event.

At the request of the Chair the Place Strategy Manager responded that these points raised regarding flooding would be taken up with the consultants and the water cycle study would be available before the plans publication but could not confirm a definitive time on this and detailed that they were not aware of any conversations regarding new reservoirs.

Members discussed the measuring of average income per household and how on West Mersea this was below the normal average due to two thirds of the population being retired and as such this was interpreted that residents couldn't afford properties. It was queried whether this was the case in other wards.

At the request of the Chair the Place Strategy manager responded that they did not have the specialist knowledge with regards to the methodology regarding this scenario but accepted that there were certain factors that were skewing the relationship between income and home ownership however it was detailed that this would be set out in the guidance to follow. With regards to the question of where people had moved from to areas such as West Mersea the Council relied upon input from those contacted and if this information was not provided then it couldn't be recorded.

In response to the Have Your Say Speaker earlier in the meeting the Joint Head of Planning clarified that further that the Council's scheme of delegation for planning applications was held up as best practice to other Councils when conducting peer reviews and detailed that this would be sent round to all Members.

A short break was taken between 19:30 and 19:40.

Members queried p93 of the report where it detailed that 21,400 additional jobs would be created and whether this was in construction or lifetime of the plan. Further to this it was questioned whether the 877 additional affordable homes as listed on page 93 were in addition to current stock or included it.

At the request of the Chair the Place Strategy Manager responded that the figure of 21,400 jobs was looking at the calculation and population and what that could support as a crude calculation and detailed that there would be an employment land needs assessment. With



regard to the Affordable Housing this was confirmed as being additional to current stock and it was recognised that this would not all be developed but that the Council would be securing the maximum going forward and of the right mix with the starting point being the policies in the Local Plan.

Concern was raised that the proposed number of affordable homes would not meet the needs of the community and could lead to more people living in Housing Association's properties. Members discussed how the delivered dwellings total of 1098 and how a large number of these came from the University of Essex. It was queried if the University had not built the student accommodation whether the Council would have missed its housing target and how that number could be included in the numbers as it was not a formal dwelling.

The Joint Head of Planning confirmed that the Council would have missed the target if they had not been completed and detailed that the student accommodation flats were not considered a dwelling on a 1-1 base but that 2.46 student flats counted as 1 dwelling in the housing target.

Points were made regarding the long-term plans to ensure future generations using services in Colchester rather than further away and plans to improve transport to employment hubs. The Joint Head of Planning said that retaining affordable homes was key and detailed that there were plans to reform the Right to Buy housing scheme.

Members questioned whether the university accommodation had been delivered in one year and that there was concern regarding infrastructure in the rural parts of the City area including phone signal and how the proposals from National Grid were not shown in the documentation.

The Joint Head of Planning and Place Strategy Manager responded that the council monitored the completions of developments and that this had been completed in time for the relevant term. It was detailed that the infrastructure work said that more could be done for phone signal improvement and confirmed that there was not a reference to pylons in the information before the Committee.

Members questioned the use of "low income" in the report with regards to housing and how this was defined.

At the request of the Chair the Joint Head of Planning responded that the use of "low income" was a Government definition which disregarded all other factors as it was a benchmark level identified for the area.

Members debated the information noting that the Council had benefitted from the very high-density development at the University but this could not be relied upon again. Members discussed the table on p184 of the agenda regarding the proportion of people who were able to rent and buy property whilst living in the Private Rented sector. It was discussed that the table did display people who could buy and rent and showed that in the future people will not be able to rent or buy as detailed in the Council Tax support scheme. It was detailed that the Right to Buy discount had been returned to the pre 2012 levels and meant that there was an effective 14% discount. As such this meant that less people would be buying their homes and there would be no need to replace the ones that would have been bought. However, this was noted to also mean that the Council had less income to put into new homes and some of them were no longer viable and there was further work to be done. The debate concluded with it being noted that there had been a surge in fraudulent requests for the Right to Buy scheme.

*RESOLVED (UNANIMOUSLY)* That the Local Plan Committee noted the progress made on the evidence base to support the Colchester Local Plan Review and the publication of the completed evidence documents referred to in section 5 of the report.



## Local Plan Committee

Item  
**7**

17<sup>th</sup> February 2025

<b>Report of</b>	<b>Place Strategy Manager</b>	<b>Author</b>	<b>Sandra Scott</b>
			<b>☎ 01206 282975</b>
<b>Title</b>	<b>Colchester Local Plan – Regulation 18 (Preferred Options Local Plan)</b>		
<b>Wards affected</b>	All wards affected		

### 1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report provides Committee with an overview of the progress made on the Local Plan to date prior to public consultation under Regulation 18. The report sets out the Preferred Options in response to the evidence available to date, the latest legislative and NPPF requirements including in meeting the latest growth requirement. The Preferred Options Draft Colchester Local Plan presented to this Committee will enable the Council to proceed under Regulation 18 of The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 to consult with the communities and all statutory consultees to help inform the next stage in preparing a Plan for Submission to the Secretary of State for Independent Examination.

### 2. Recommended Decision

- 2.1 To agree to the content of the Preferred Options Colchester Local Plan (Regulation 18) as appended to this report as Appendix B.
- 2.2 To agree to the publication of the Preferred Options Colchester Local Plan for consultation for a period of 6 weeks to commence as soon reasonably practical following the Committee.
- 2.3 To note the publication of the evidence documents listed and summarised in this report.
- 2.4 For the Committee to delegate authority to Head of Planning and the Chair of Local Plan Committee to make minor revisions to the Preferred Options Colchester Local Plan, including the policies maps, prior to publication.

### 3. Reason for Recommended Decision

- 3.1 The Local Plan Committee oversees work on the Local Plan, and it is essential to ensure the Council's planning policies are up to date in order to provide a robust basis for guiding future growth and development across the Colchester City area.

#### 4. **Alternative Options**

- 4.1 The Committee could decide to make changes to the Preferred Options Local Plan, to delay publication of the Plan or not to proceed with this stage of plan making. However, all these alternative options are likely to leave the Council in a vulnerable position going forward with no clear steer for future growth and development, because the existing Local Plan policies will become out of date. The absence of an up-to-date plan makes the Council vulnerable to speculative development and undermines development management decision making. It could also lead to Government intervention.

#### 5. **Background Information**

- 5.1. A Local Plan is a statutory requirement as outlined in Section 19 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. The Local Plan contains policies to guide development by identifying a spatial strategy, site allocations for employment and housing development and supporting infrastructure. It also seeks to protect the environment, land, and buildings for certain uses to ensure delivery of sustainable communities. There is a statutory requirement for the Local Plan to be reviewed every 5 years, which in the case of Colchester means a review by February 2026. Failure to do so will place the Council at risk of speculative development as the currently adopted Local Plan may be considered to be out of date.
- 5.2. As agreed by Local Plan Committee in August 2023, the approach to the Issues and Options for the Colchester Local Plan has been developed on a thematic and iterative basis. The Committee were presented with regular updates on the progress made and feedback received on the Issues and Options. The resulting final composite report on Issues and Options was considered by Local Plan Committee 5 November 2024 and the Committee agreed to publish the collated Issues and Options report on the Council's website.
- 5.3. Local Plans are underpinned by a huge amount of evidence. One of the tests of soundness is that the plan must be 'justified', which means an appropriate strategy, taking into account the reasonable alternatives, and based on proportionate evidence.
- 5.4. The evidence to support the Preferred Options Local Plan is available on the [Council's website](#). Many Evidence Base Documents have been published over the last few months. All evidence will be available in advance of the Committee meeting, a complete list of evidence is appended to this report (Appendix A).
- 5.5. The nature of some of the evidence requires it to be prepared iteratively in response to emerging draft plan content, so these documents will be published to support the consultation on the Draft Plan on the [Council's website](#). A short summary of each of those evidence base documents is provided below.

#### **Strategic Land Availability Assessment Report – Stage Two**

- 5.6. The [Strategic Land Availability Assessment \(SLAA\): Site Assessments Stage 1 Report](#) provides a comprehensive overview of all the sites (those generated from the Call for Sites and Desktop Review) which have been assessed in accordance with the SLAA Methodology and sets out the outcomes of the SLAA Site Assessments

Stage 1. Following the SLAA Stage 1 Report, the SLAA Site Assessments Report Stage 2 provides an overview of the outcomes of the sites that have proceeded to Stage 2. All sites are considered against a range of constraints and their potential to be mitigated.

- 5.7. A total of 175 sites have been assessed as part of Stage 2, which includes sites for residential, commercial, mixed use, infrastructure and green infrastructure.
- 5.8. The initial assessment (Stage 1) is the only part of the SLAA where a site could be excluded from further assessment. The outcomes of the SLAA do not definitively allocate land for development but contribute to the evidence base and ensure that decisions regarding site allocations are backed by robust and objective evidence. The Stage 2 assessments can be seen in the appendix to the SLAA Stage 2 report.

### **Infrastructure Audit and Delivery Plan – Stage 3 Report**

- 5.9. The Infrastructure Audit Delivery Plan (IADP) Stage 1 and 2 identifies the baseline for 37 types of infrastructure. The report produced by AECOM in mid-late 2024 set out in detail the baseline position for each infrastructure type. It also reviewed the high-level spatial options consulted on by the Council as part of the Local Plan Issues and Options stage, in order to identify infrastructure implications of those options and inform the preferred options for the Regulation 18 Draft Local Plan. The Stage 3 IADP report (January 2025) has assessed an initial draft emerging development trajectory which identified a shortlist of potential allocations for further testing based on the preferred spatial strategy, following an assessment of sites through the Strategic Land Availability Assessment (SLAA) and against other available evidence. This considers the demand which potential planned growth will generate for each infrastructure type, and how infrastructure will be provided to meet this demand to 2041. It should be noted that the emerging development trajectory represents a scenario for the potential delivery of housing and employment land in Colchester which was produced in November 2024 to allow infrastructure implications to be tested. Further consideration and refinement has informed the allocations identified in this Preferred Options Plan.
- 5.10. Work on the IADP will continue as part of the consultation and a full Infrastructure Delivery Plan – Stage 4 of the IADP will be prepared to support the Regulation 19 Submission Draft Local Plan. This work will be used to further develop the Place policies to ensure that all policies include site specific infrastructure requirements where these are identified through the IADP.

### **Settlements Evidence – Part Two**

- 5.11. Part one of the Settlements Evidence set out a profile and summary of each of Colchester's settlements. The Part two report sets out the changes to the settlement boundary for each of the settlements. Changes to the settlement boundary reflect the proposed site allocations and ensure a defensible boundary, whilst recognising the need to facilitate some small-scale development in villages which will contribute towards the windfall allowance.

## **Heritage Impact Assessment (Stage 1)**

- 5.12. The SLAA assessments included Heritage assets as one of the criteria which will in part have informed an initial “short list” which were then subject to the methodology Place have applied in the stage 1 report.
- 5.13. This assessment has been undertaken by Place Services. It provides a high-level sift of the sites being considered for allocation to determine the need for, and level of, further any heritage impact assessment.
- 5.14. The approach to the sift comprised a desk-based assessment of each site to identify any heritage assets with the potential to be affected by the allocation and future development of the site. A 500m study area of each site was adopted, reduced to 250m for city centre sites surrounded by a high density of heritage assets.
- 5.15. Following the sift, three levels of further heritage impact assessment have been recommended depending on the potential impact of the allocation of the site on the historic environment:
- No further assessment: The allocation of these sites has been assessed to have no effect on the significance of any heritage assets.
  - Proforma Heritage Impact Assessment: A high-level heritage impact assessment in the form of a proforma is required to understand the contribution the site makes to the significance of nearby heritage assets and the potential effects of the site allocation on their significance.
  - Detailed Heritage Impact Assessment: A detailed heritage impact assessment is required to understand the contribution the site makes to the significance of nearby heritage assets and the potential effects of the site allocation on their significance due to the scale of the site and the proximity and/ or quantity of heritage assets affected.
- 5.16. The outcomes of the sift can be seen in the Heritage Impact Assessment Stage 1 report.
- 5.17. Further Assessments taking forward the Stage 1 requirements will be carried out to prepare a complete HIA to support all allocations included in the Regulation 19 Local Plan, to ensure requirements and guidance of Historic England are met at the time the Plan is submitted. This staged approach has agreement in principle form Historic England.

## **Water Cycle Study**

- 5.18. AECOM have been commissioned to prepare the Water Cycle Study as a joint commission with Tendring District Council. This follows good practice advice of the Environment Agency where water boundaries are shared.
- 5.19. The Water Cycle Study assesses the level of development planned for across Colchester with regard to water supply capacity, sewage capacity and any water quality issues or infrastructure upgrades that may be required, to identify any potential constraints to the water cycle which development may pose.



- 5.20. Outputs from the Water Cycle Study have included an initial wastewater capacity assessment to inform the emerging spatial strategy for growth, through identifying where wastewater treatment capacity could constrain higher levels of growth.
- 5.21. The WCS has identified Water Recycling Centres which are currently at capacity or may reach capacity later in the plan period. For site allocations within the WRC catchments where this applies, policy wording is provided to ensure this will be adequately addressed. This may include phasing to align with potential future investments, and changes to permits, or where appropriate other solutions to be explored. The evidence also supports a higher standard for water efficiency for use per person per day to help address capacity challenges.

### **Strategic Flood Risk Assessment**

- 5.22. AECOM have also been commissioned to prepare a Strategic Flood Risk Assessment to support the Local Plan. This study is being completed in two stages, and stage one is published to support the Preferred Options Plan.
- 5.23. A Strategic Flood Risk Assessment provides an overview of the risk of flooding from all sources across Colchester, taking into account the impacts of climate change and assesses the impact that land use changes and development in area could have on flood risk.
- 5.24. The Stage One Report includes policy recommendations that have been taken into account for policies particularly related to Flood Risk and Sustainable Urban Drainage. AECOM also undertook a desk based assessments of sites to help inform the Stage Two Report, any requirements for a Level 2 SRFA will be addressed to support the Regulation 19 Submission Plan.

### **Health and Wellbeing Evidence Base**

- 5.25. A local Health and Wellbeing Evidence base has been prepared collaboratively with the Health and Planning Subgroup (North East Essex Alliance). This identifies local health impacts where they are relevant to planning and has informed the policy approach to Health and Wellbeing. Policy wording reflects evidence particularly where planning can influence through placemaking and supporting environments which contribute to healthy places and healthy lifestyles. The Health Infrastructure evidence is covered in more detail as part of the IADP.

### **Transport Modelling and Assessment**

- 5.26. Transport work has been prepared to inform and support the Draft Local Plan by Jacobs through Essex Highways. This included updating the Colchester Transport model to a more up to date base line for considering the impacts and potential mitigation requirements of any proposed growth. The work has included early initial engagement with National Highways (NH) to reflect the importance and challenges related to the Strategic Network of the A12 and A120, with this to be ongoing. The scope of the work includes an assessment at Marks Tey in respect of the Strategic Road Network. In addition, evidence considers the needs and opportunities for

maximising sustainable modes of travel across the whole area and will include recommended approach and potential mitigation requirements where appropriate to support proposed development in the Draft Plan.

- 5.27. An Executive Summary summarises the work to date and the key findings, as well as explaining the next steps. The modelling work undertaken has considered the preferred allocations proposed in the Draft Plan. The initial outputs demonstrate the transport network can support the planned growth (for the whole plan area up to 2041), but mitigation will be required, to do nothing or BAU (Business as Usual) will not be acceptable. The Methodology / approach to mitigation to help address the capacity will be to seek to significantly reduce the need for journeys to be reliant on car trips from the new developments and also look to the wider existing network to support increased mode shift to sustainable travel modes. Whilst this will not negate the need for some highway capacity improvement works in places too, it accords with NPPF guidance and a more cost effective approach to addressing the capacity on the network. This will be reflected in the mitigation and inform the later stage of the IADP and the Viability testing. Liaison with NH has been carried out throughout this work and will continue as work progresses including their response to the modelling outputs. This will help inform the Sustainability Appraisal and the IADP, as well as viability testing to support the Regulation 19 plan as required. Policy wording in the Plan recognises the need for the Transport work, and IADP and Viability assessments to confirm acceptable solutions.

### **Local Wildlife Sites Review**

- 5.28. A focussed Local Wildlife Sites (LoWS) Review is underway. Not all LoWS within Colchester will form part of the review and the LoWS report will explain the rationale for the sites selected. The review will include a desktop and site survey assessment and will provide recommendations for any changes to the status of existing LoWS, any revisions to the boundaries of existing LoWS and any other areas of land that could be accorded LoWS status. Surveys will take place this spring and the LoWS Review will inform the submission Local Plan. Up to date information on the condition of habitats on LoWS will be important in guiding the prioritisation of biodiversity net gain measures.

### **Whole Plan Viability**

- 5.29. Newmark (Formally Gerald Eve) was commissioned to perform a Viability Assessment for the Local Plan Review. The primary aim of the commission is to produce an up-to-date viability assessment, which will form a robust and sound evidence base for the Local Plan Review.
- 5.30. This is a full viability assessment of the draft policies in the emerging Local Plan. The key context for the Local Plan Viability Assessment is that the Plan needs to be informed by a consideration of viability. The PPG states that:

“The role for viability assessment is primarily at the plan making stage. Viability assessment should not compromise sustainable development but should be used to ensure that policies are realistic, and that the total cumulative cost of all relevant policies will not undermine deliverability of the plan.”



- 5.31. The viability assessment is not intended to be a pass/fail test for a Local Plan, especially where key national and local imperatives exist to promote regeneration of brownfield land. The Plan must be positively prepared to contribute towards the achievement of sustainable development in a way that is aspirational but deliverable.
- 5.32. Colchester's market review indicates house prices in the borough exceed national averages but remain lower than the regional East of England average. The analysis considers both new build and second-hand property values, identifying distinct value zones. Value assumptions for various property types across different zones are based on historical data and current asking prices, though acknowledging these prices aren't always achieved.
- 5.33. The assessment reflects the range of values across Colchester and the different risks/costs associated with greenfield and brownfield development.
- 5.34. The initial finding indicate that the affordable housing policy does not create a significant viability issue.

### **Middlewick Ranges – ecology evidence**

- 5.35. The Middlewick Ranges botanical survey and interim invertebrates survey reports were published on the Council's website in December 2024. A final invertebrates survey report will be published later this year once the final surveys have been carried out and species identification has occurred. A site visit took Place in January 2025 with the Council's Ecologists and invited interested parties to explain the findings of the interims report. Natural England have provided a response to the Interim Reports stating:

*"We note that both reports highlight the presence of considerable ecological interest across the whole area, especially with regards the extent of the acid grassland communities to the north of the site, and the value of these areas for invertebrates. The long-standing value of the remainder of the site had been previously recognised by the Council. These reports further validate that view.*

*The independent assessments correspond to other information in the public domain which highlights the considerable ecological value of the whole site with regard to acid grassland, invertebrates, fungi, breeding birds and other notable species. We are aware that your Authority is in the process of reviewing and updating your Local Plan and will be assessing potential site allocations as part of that process.*

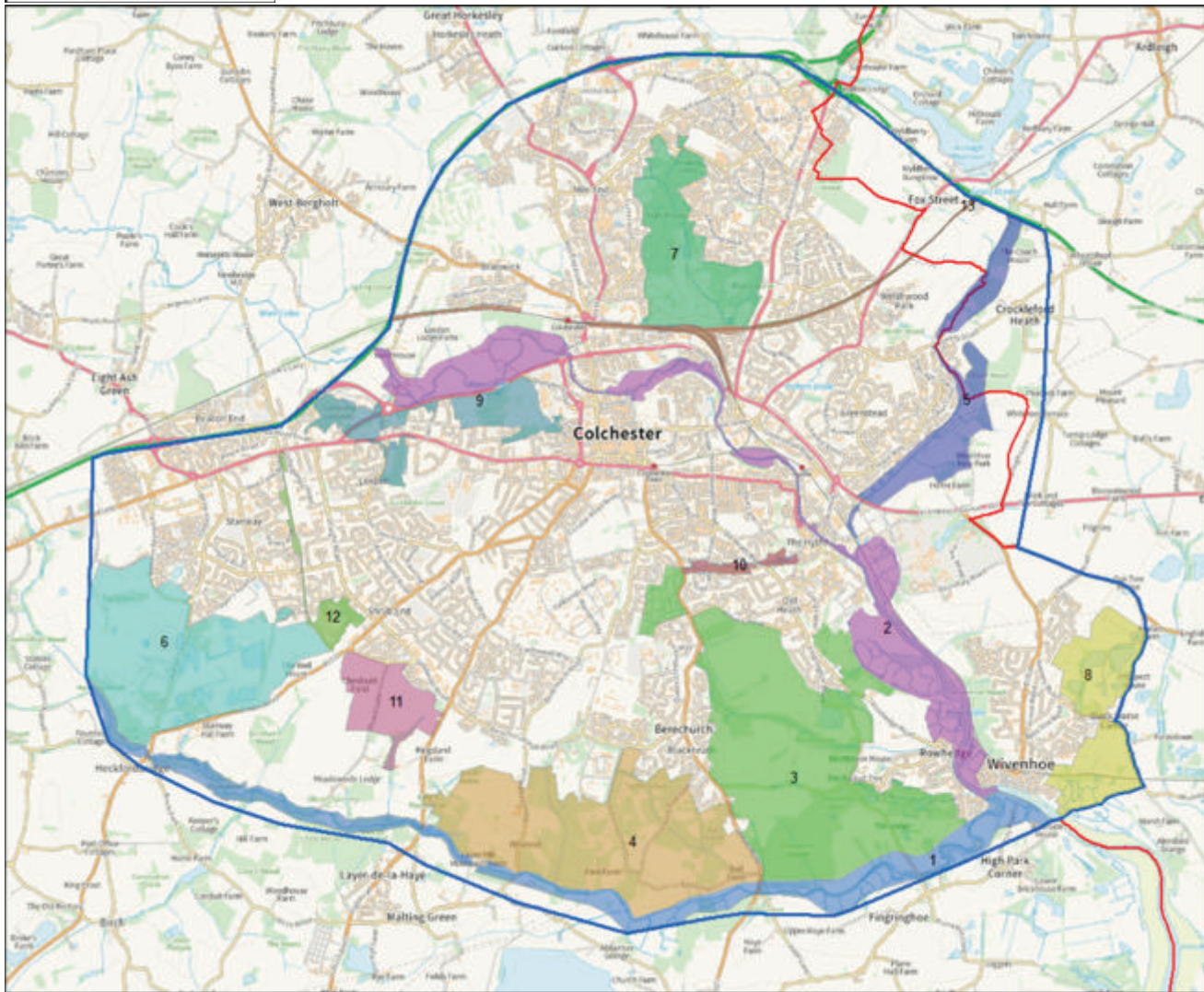
*Further to our advice, [Previously shared] and based on the suite of evidence now available, Natural England would strongly advise against the inclusion of Middlewick Ranges as a site allocation in the emerging revision of the Colchester Local Plan."*

### **Biodiversity Protection and BNG Study**

- 5.36. A summary of the site assessment stage of this study was reported to the Committee in December 2024. This study also includes a Strategic Biodiversity Assessment, which considers the principles that could underpin an approach to conserving and enhancing biodiversity. This strategic assessment is published in a separate report to the site assessments and has been published on the Council's website. The report

summarises the environmental characters of the city and describes the existing biodiversity resource in terms of habitats and species leading to some proposed priorities for the management, restoration and creation of habitats for the purpose of conserving and enhancing biodiversity. Where possible, the strategic assessment has been written to be consistent with, and refer to, the principles and objectives of the Essex Local Nature Recovery Strategy.

- 5.37. Areas across Colchester have been identified that are of most significance for the conservation of biodiversity. Within these areas, there are clusters of designated sites and, in some cases, older landscapes that aren't designated but that have the potential to make a significant contribution to biodiversity. These areas present the best opportunities for habitat creation and enhancement. The figure, below, illustrates these areas. Efforts have been made to map the boundaries of these areas in a reasonably accurate way that makes sense in relation to ecological and built environment features, but the boundaries should be seen as indicative and not definitive.



## The Colchester Local Plan Preferred Options Draft (Regulation 18)

### *The Context for the Plan*

5.38. It is a statutory requirement to review the Local Plan every 5 years and it is imperative that the Council maintains an up to date Local Plan. Changes to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the Government's intentions to reform the Planning system retain the pivotal role of Local Plans in guiding and supporting the delivery of growth across the Country. The ambitious growth targets set by the government are mandatory with the challenge set to Local Authorities to help deliver these through Local Plan making. The NPPF published in December 2024 provides

clarity on the transitional arrangements which apply according to the stage of Plan preparation. In the case of Colchester, the December 2024 NPPF will apply to the Local Plan preparation.

- 5.39. The plan making procedures and stages of preparation remain unchanged currently. The Local Development Scheme, agreed by this Committee in November 2024 indicates the progress and timing for the Colchester Local Plan preparation. This stage is a critical step on the way to preparing a new Plan for Colchester up to 2041. It sets out the Preferred Options in response to the evidence available to date, the latest legislative and NPPF requirements including in meeting the latest growth requirements. The Preferred Options Draft Colchester Local Plan presented to this Committee will enable the Council to proceed under Regulation 18 of The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 to consult with the communities and all statutory consultees to help inform the next stage in preparing a Plan for Submission to the Secretary of State for Independent Examination.
- 5.40. This stage presents an initial draft plan which reflects the evidence available to date. Some evidence will continue to be refined and emerge, not least to reflect consultation feedback. The Preferred Options Plan provides a set of proposed policies and allocations to meet the identified needs for homes and jobs (as set out below), which are recommended to be tested through consultation. It does not represent a Final Plan and it is recognised that further work is necessary to arrive at the final plan and the consultation on the Preferred Options Draft is part of that consideration. The procedures require this iterative approach to plan making to help reach the most effective, and justified plan by the time it is submitted for examination. The Preferred Options Draft Plan sets out a proposed approach for the purposes of consultation which is supported by available evidence.
- 5.41. Paragraph 32 of the NPPF confirms that evidence needs to be proportionate to the stage of plan making and plan preparation. Paragraph 28 of the NPPF recognises that the plans of infrastructure providers (and other authorities) come forward at different times and plan makers should come to an informed decision based on the evidence available at the time, rather than wait for a full set of evidence. As a Final Plan is prepared, so too can the evidence further advance. The timescale for progression of the Plan to Regulation 19 (Submission), examination and adoption are tight and any delay presents an unacceptable risk to maintaining an up to date local plan. The risks to the whole of the Colchester City area if this is not achieved is significant leaving the Authority open to undesirable speculative development.
- 5.42. During the preparation of the Draft Local Plan, engagement with neighbouring authorities, Essex County Council and other Statutory Bodies has been undertaken under the Council's to Duty to Co-operate.

### ***The Structure and Approach of the Plan***

- 5.43. In accordance with Section 19 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, the Colchester Local Plan is being reviewed to ensure an up-to-date Plan is maintained. It sets out a vision, strategy, and policies for planning and delivery across the City including the policy framework, site allocations and development management policies for the City up to 2041. Over the next 15 years, the City will



face many challenges, such as population growth and change, the climate emergency, evolving economic trends and the need for more sustainable and active travel opportunities. The Local Plan seeks to address these challenges to deliver the level of growth required to meet the needs of current and future generations whilst also protecting and enhancing the environment and people's quality of life.

- 5.44. The early work and engagement on the Plan and high level issues and options has informed the Vision for the Plan identified in the Preferred Options Plan as follows;

**Local Plan Vision:**

**Growth in Colchester is inevitable and brings with it change and opportunity. The Local Plan will embrace growth opportunities to meet the environmental, social and economic needs of the changing population and future generations. In doing so it will improve the quality of life for our communities, create a better environment and contribute to healthy lifestyles, by maximising the opportunities provided through well connected green networks. The Plan will also preserve and enhance Colchester's identity defined by its special diverse natural environment, green networks and waterways, prestigious heritage, varied arts and culture and welcoming inclusive, vibrant and healthy communities.**

- 5.45. Delivering this vision will embed health and wellbeing outcomes throughout the plan. The environmental opportunities that exist through enhancing green infrastructure and biodiversity, maximising active travel and sustainable connectivity; provision of the right types of homes and jobs in the right places to meet the needs of all; and timely provision of the physical and social infrastructure to support local communities, all contribute to creating a better environment and healthy, vibrant and inclusive communities.
- 5.46. The Plan is structured in three key sections setting out Strategic Policies, followed by theme-based development management policies and finally a section on Place providing the proposed site allocations for each settlement throughout the Colchester City Area. The Plan is written as concisely as possible with a brief explanation of the purpose of the policy and the justification, including reference to the context and evidence that supports each policy.
- 5.47. The Strategic Policies cover the key strategic themes of, Health and Wellbeing, Environment and Green Network, Spatial Strategy and Development in the Countryside, Provision for Homes and Jobs, Infrastructure and Connectivity, and Place Shaping Principles.
- 5.48. The thematic development management policies cover the Natural and Historic Environment, Green Network and Waterways, Landscape and Coast, Net Zero Homes and Buildings, Renewable Energy and Water, Economy, Housing Need and Standards, Community and Social Infrastructure, and Place and Connectivity.
- 5.49. The Place Section sets out the Policies by place where there are relevant proposals, broadly following the order of the Spatial Strategy.

### ***The Draft Strategy for Growth***

5.50. The preferred Strategy for Growth / Spatial Strategy has been developed through the Issues and Options engagement, consideration of evidence and initial sustainability appraisal assessment. It recognises the need to create a better environment, protecting character and assets whilst allowing sustainable growth to meet the needs and level of growth required as well as adequate supporting infrastructure. The Spatial Options which have been considered are:

- Continuing existing Spatial Strategy
- New Garden Community
- Garden Suburbs
- Intensification in the City Centre
- Transport Corridors
- Hubs and Spokes
- Environment Led

5.51. The preferred strategy takes forward the existing spatial strategy, also incorporating some of the strengths and positives from a number of the alternative options. These include:

- Focus on the existing urban area and intensification where appropriate largely within growth and opportunity areas;
- Significant scale of growth along transport corridors;
- Growth in the other settlements, including some of Colchester's smaller villages, to support communities and provide opportunities to sustain and enhance facilities and infrastructure;
- Ensure protection and enhancement of the most sensitive environments.

5.52. A Settlement Hierarchy reflecting the preferred spatial strategy is included in the Preferred Options Plan set out below.

## Settlement Hierarchy

<p><b>Colchester Urban Area</b> including City Centre</p>
<p><b>Growth and Opportunity Areas</b> Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community The Hythe Magdalen Street Marks Tey</p>
<p><b>Large Settlements</b> Tiptree West Mersea Wivenhoe</p>
<p><b>Medium Settlements</b> Abberton and Langenhoe Boxted Chappel and Wakes Colne Copford Dedham and Dedham Heath Eight Ash Green Fordham Great Horkesley Great Tey Langham Layer de la Haye Rowhedge West Bergholt</p>
<p><b>Small Settlements</b> Aldham Birch and Layer Breton Copford Green Easthorpe East Mersea Fingringhoe Great Wigborough Little Horkesley Messing Mount Bures Peldon Salcott Wormingford</p>
<p><b>Countryside</b></p>

## ***The Growth Challenge***

- 5.53. The Government published changes to the National Planning Policy Framework in December 2024. This includes the reintroduction of mandatory housing targets and revision to the Standard Method for calculating housing need. The requirement for Colchester is now confirmed as 1300 new dwellings per year. The Appendix to the Housing Needs Assessment (September 2024) refers to the figure of 1290 per annum which applied at the time of consultation on the changes to the NPPF. It is considered that the small increase of 10 homes per year between the consultation and the final figure has a nominal impact on the content of the evidence base as presented in the Housing Needs Assessment. For the Plan period up to 2041, the updated figure of 1,300 per year equates to an overall housing need of 20,800 homes.
- 5.54. In addition to provision for housing growth, alignment in provision for jobs is also required. The methodology for planning for employment growth is less rigid than that for housing. The Employment Land needs assessment has considered the approach, existing supply and demand to arrive at a need of 41.7 hectares of employment land up to 2041. This is based on the preferred scenario (Labour Supply) which is based on population projections, linked to housing growth projections. It represents an approach which seeks to maximise the opportunities for the economically active population in the Local Authority Area. This represents the most optimistic scenario for employment growth to align with wider corporate objectives for economic growth.
- 5.55. Meeting this level of growth up to 2041 is a significant challenge. The Preferred Options Plan puts forward proposed allocations for housing and employment to accommodate the required provision. The allocations proposed are in accordance with the spatial strategy and have been informed by the emerging evidence. Potential scenarios have been considered and tested against relevant evidence including, infrastructure, transport, flood risk and water resources and natural and historic environment. In addition, the Sustainability Appraisal and the Strategic Land Availability Assessment of the call for sites and the desktop sites have been considered. This provided a potential short list and scenarios for potential levels of growth in locations across Colchester. Further refinement of these scenarios based on the consideration of initial outputs from emerging evidence led to the selection of the Preferred Allocations set out in the Preferred Options Plan. Further testing of these options throughout the consultation and a comprehensive Infrastructure Delivery Plan and Whole Plan Viability Assessment will be prepared to support any revisions made to this for the Regulation 19 Submission Local Plan.
- 5.56. Each Allocation has a Place Policy which indicates an approximate number of dwellings proposed and any standard or specific policy requirements supported by the evidence. It is expected that these site-specific policies will be further refined through consultation feedback, from Parish and Town Councils in particular.
- 5.57. The work informing the preferred options allocations has also considered those allocations in the Adopted Local Plan which have not been delivered or supported by evidence to demonstrate sufficient progress on delivery. Where the assessment has confirmed the suitability to continue to be included in the Local Plan up to 2041, these have been reallocated, with policies supporting these reflecting the current evidence. This may result in changes to the housing numbers or specific requirements in some



cases. Those where new evidence no longer supports an allocation are not included in the Preferred Options Local Plan.

### The Preferred Options proposed for meeting the Growth

- 5.58. Policy ST5 in the Draft Preferred Options Plan confirms the Housing requirement as follows:

**The Council will plan, monitor and manage the delivery of at least 20,800 new homes in Colchester City between 2025 and 2041.**

**The annual housing requirement for Colchester is 1,300, as identified by the Standard Methodology.**

**Table ST5.1: Housing Supply**

The overall distribution of new housing proposed in the Preferred Options Plan is set

Housing Supply as at 31st December 2024	Net New Homes
Existing Commitments (sites with planning permission)	6,117
Tending Colchester Borders Garden Community (through the Development Plan Document)	1,700
Windfall Allowance	2,200
Local Plan Allocations	11,089
<b>TOTAL SUPPLY</b>	<b>21,106</b>

out in Table ST5.2 in the Draft Plan as shown in the extract below and the Policies Maps (Appendix B). An online interactive Policies map will be available for the consultation.

**Table ST5.2 Local Plan Housing Allocations**

Location	Number of New Homes	Policy Reference
Brittania Car Park	100	PP1
Vineyard Gate	100	PP2
Runwald St Car Park	40	PP3
Braiswick	30	PP4
Land at Chesterwell	50	PP5
Land at Colchester Station	250	PP6
Land off Bakers Lane	100	PP7
Land off Lakelands Crescent	5	PP8
Northeast Colchester	2,000	PP9
Land South of Berechurch Hall Road	875	PP10
Europit Site	40	PP11
Roberston Van Hire Site	6	PP12
146 Magdalen Street Site	15	PP13
Gas Works and Hythe Scrap Yard Site	200	PP14

<b>Location</b>	<b>Number of New Homes</b>	<b>Policy Reference</b>
Hawkins Road	50	PP15
Coal Yard site	50	PP16
King Edward Quay Opportunity Area	200	OA1
Land East of Hawkins Road Opportunity Area	150	OA2
Magdalen Street Opportunity Area	100	OA3
Land south of Marks Tey Village	1,500	PP17
Land North of A120, Marks Tey	1,000	PP18
Land North of Oak Road, Tiptree	600	PP19
Land at Bonnie Blue Oak, Tiptree	30	PP20
Highlands, Kelvedon Road, Tiptree	10	PP21
Former Telephone Exchange, Station Road, Tiptree	5	PP22
Land East Dawes Lane, West Mersea	300	PP23
Land Northwest of the Fire Station, Wivenhoe	175	PP24
View Park, Abberton and Langenhoe	50	PP25
Land North of Boxted Straight Road	150	PP26
Swan Grove, Chappel	35	PP27
Land West of Station Road, Wakes Colne	200	PP28
Land East of School Road, Copford	300	PP29
Land South of Long Road, Dedham	15	PP30
Land North of Halstead Road East of Wood Lane, Eight Ash Green	180	PP31
Land North of Halstead Road West of Fiddlers Wood, Eight Ash Green	250	PP32
Land East of Plummers, Fordham	25	PP33
Land North of Coach Road, Great Horkesley	400	PP34
The Old School, Great Horkesley	13	PP35
Land at Earls Colne Road, Great Tey	125	PP36
Land North of Park Lane, Langham	900	PP37

Location	Number of New Homes	Policy Reference
Land opposite Wick Road, Langham	10	PP38
Land at The Furze, Layer de la Haye	10	PP39
Land West of The Folley, Layer de la Haye	60	PP40
Rowhedge Business Park, Rowhedge	50	PP41
Land at White Hart Lane, West Bergholt	50	PP42
Land North of Colchester Road, West Bergholt	100	PP43
Land off Colchester Road, West Bergholt	100	PP44
Land off New Road, Aldham	15	PP45
Land at Birch Green, Birch	15	PP46
Land at Picketts Farm, Fingringhoe	5	PP47
Kelvedon Road, Messing	25	PP48
Land at St Ives Road, Peldon	25	PP49
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>11,089</b>	

- 5.60. In respect of provision for employment, the Preferred Options Local Plan recommends provision for at least 41.7 has of land for a range of employment types and job opportunities. The proposed allocations include those which are yet to be implemented and remain suitable from the Adopted Local Plan and additional allocations in accordance with the spatial strategy, to contribute to the future supply. The Table ST6.1 in policy ST6 is set out below and the sites are shown on the maps Appendix B. An online interactive Policies map will be available for the consultation.

**Table ST6.1: Local Plan Employment Provision**

Location	Employment Land (approx. ha)	Policy Reference
Land north of Axial Way, Northern Gateway, North Colchester	2.3ha	OA4
Colchester Business Park	2.4ha	PEP1
Knowledge Gateway	4.5ha	PEP2
Land South of Tollgate West	3.7ha	PEP3
Maldon Road	0.7ha	PEP4
Land south of A12 Marks Tey	16ha	PEP5
Anderson's Site, Marks Tey	3.2ha	PEP6
Highlands Nursery, Tiptree	1.1ha	PEP7

Location	Employment Land (approx. ha)	Policy Reference
Land South of Factory Hill, Tiptree	4.7ha	PEP8
Bullbanks Farm, Eight Ash Green	0.8ha	PEP9
Lodge Lane, Langham	1ha	PEP10
Land at Pattens Yard, West Bergholt	2.1ha	PEP11
Land at Wakes Hall Business Centre	0.9ha	PEP12
Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community	3.5ha	ST9

5.61. The tables above explain the proposed distribution of growth to meet the needs up to 2041. It is helpful to clarify a few key points relating to specific sites which have been considered through this process but not identified in the list of allocations above.

### **Middlewick Ranges**

5.62. The site at Middlewick Ranges is allocated in the Adopted Local Plan for up to 1000 homes. There is a very robust policy which recognises the need to consider the ecological value of the site. As part of the assessments and considerations to inform the Preferred Options Plan, additional ecological evidence has been produced which does not support an allocation of any scale at Middlewick. The extensive evidence, from a wide range of sources, including botanical and invertebrates surveys commissioned by the Council, has been reviewed, and shared with Natural England, whose response is referred to above. The Preferred Options Plan therefore does not propose to include Middlewick as an allocation for any housing development. Part of the site is proposed as a Local Green Space to help support the future safeguarding of the ecological value of the site and recognise that it is demonstrably special to the local community and holds a particular local significance. Middlewick is also included within the Southeast Plateau strategic biodiversity area. The Strategic Biodiversity Assessments states:

*“This is the largest remaining section of semi-natural habitat on the Colchester plateau, free from large-scale development or aggregate extraction because of its history of military ownership. It comprises a broad wedge of land reaching from the Roman River in the south most of the way to the city centre. The southern section slopes down towards the river, but most of this area is broadly level, bisected by the narrow valley of Birch Brook. This area is closely linked to the Roman River Valley (Area 1), River Colne (Area 2) and Friday Woods (Area 4), with which it shares a nationally important population of Nightingale. The Bourne Valley (Area 10) is just to the north.*

*The habitat is predominantly acid, or acidic neutral, grassland, some of which has been cultivated in the past and much of which is now managed agriculturally. The grasslands within the Co122 Middlewick Ranges are unimproved, and those on the valley slopes at the southern end of the area have a long history of grazing. Middlewick Ranges is known to support diverse grassland habitat with a significant diversity of invertebrates, including many that are nationally rare. The grasslands on*

*either side of Weir Lane sit within the strongest hedgerow network still present within the study area.”*

### ***Place Farm***

- 5.63. A site at Place Farm is allocated in the Adopted Local Plan for up to 30 dwellings. The Biodiversity Protection and BNG Study reported that development of this site would likely lead to significant harm to biodiversity as the site is within a LoWS, Priority Habitat, and close to the Upper Colne Marshes SSSI. Place Farm is included within the Southeast Plateau strategic biodiversity area.

### ***ABRO & St Botolphs Quarter***

- 5.64. The site known as ABRO, land north of Circular Road North / west of Flagstaff Road is allocated in the Adopted Local Plan for residential development and is supported by an adopted Supplementary Planning Document. The Preferred Options Plan includes this site as a commitment, even though it does not benefit from an extant planning permission. It is considered that in the light of recent planning decisions, there is an opportunity to consider further evidence to inform revisions to the site specific policy for the site to inform the Submission Draft Local Plan. This will enable the site allocation to be carried forward with a revised policy to reflect evidence and issues which now apply. This may include opportunities for improved connectivity, public open space, density and developer contributions, as well as other matters as considered appropriate.
- 5.65. The site known as St Botolphs Quarter previously benefitted from planning permission granted on appeal in 2019. The site in the city centre remains suitable for redevelopment and the opportunity exists to consider an updated site-specific policy reflecting the content of the City Centre Masterplan. This will form part of the Submission Draft Local Plan.

### ***Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community***

- 5.66. The Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community (TCBGC) is allocated through the North Essex Authorities Shared Strategic Section 1 Local Plan with detailed policies in the Development Plan Document which is anticipated to be adopted in Spring 2025. This Local Plan will not change any policy context for the TCBGC. However, the growth from the Garden Community goes beyond the adopted Local Plan period and therefore will contribute towards the supply for both housing and employment needs in Colchester up to 2041. An allowance for this is therefore referenced in the appropriate policies. It is also the case that the quantum of growth delivered in the TCBGC throughout the plan period up to 2041 will continue to count 50/50 towards Colchester and Tendring's needs. The policy approach set out in Policy ST9 of the draft plan is intended to be followed consistently by Tendring's Local Plan Review.

## **Wider Policies in the Preferred Option Local Plan**

5.67. As indicated above, the other content of the Plan includes Strategic Policies and Development Management Policies. These reflect evidence and the national policy position set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and Planning Policy Guidance (PPG). Some key policy changes to the adopted plan include:

- Policies on Environment in Section 4 cover the diverse countryside, coastline and historic environment across Colchester, including biodiversity, landscape character, archaeology and cultural heritage. They reflect the relevant evidence, the NPPF and the Governments Environmental Improvement Plan and the Draft Essex Local Nature Recovery Strategy. The requirement for Biodiversity Net Gain is in line with the statutory requirement of a minimum of 10%.
- Policies in Section 5 seek to protect and enhance the Green Network and Waterways, in line with the principles established and agreed as part of the Issues and Options Consultation. They also ensure adequate provision of alternative accessible greenspace to manage the impacts on the most sensitive environments.
- Policies in Section 6 reflect the updated Landscape Character Assessment evidence and continue established policy principles related to the Dedham Vale National Landscape and coastal areas.
- Policies on Net Zero Homes and Buildings, Water and Renewable Energy Section 7– proposed policies NZ1 and NZ2 on net zero buildings (in operation) and embodied carbon seek to ensure that all new homes and buildings achieve a consistent, clearly defined, net zero carbon (in operation) standard that aligns with local and national climate targets and delivers high quality, healthy, energy efficient, climate resilient homes and buildings; and tackle embodied carbon emissions from new build development. Policy NZ3 includes requirements on wastewater and water supply, which reflect best practice and the findings of the Colchester Water Cycle Study, requiring a reduced minimum standard of water consumption to address capacity and efficiency challenges of 80 litres per person per day.
- Housing Policies in Section 8 of the Preferred Options Plan reflect the Housing Needs evidence in terms of mix, affordable housing and housing for specialist groups as required in the National Planning Policy Framework. The Affordable Housing requirement remains at 30%.
- Policies in Section 9 relate to the Economy and provide clarity regarding the approach to economic development including protection of employment land, economic development in rural areas and agricultural development in rural areas. Policy E4 covers Retail and Centres which includes amendments to the centre hierarchy and a lower threshold requirement for Retail Impact Assessments to development is over 280sqm (or 350sqm gross) to ensure effective management of proposals which may have a detrimental impact on the role and function of the existing centres. The proposed amendments reflect the evidence and the NPPF. Policy E5 covers the expansion of the Zoo recognising the need to balance the opportunities associated with its retention and growth with the impacts on the wider environment including, transport, landscape and heritage.
- Policies in Section 10 cover community and social infrastructure provision and protection, continuing a similar approach to the Adopted Local Plan and



responding to the latest evidence available. Policies CS5 and CS6 relate to Tourism, Leisure and Arts and Caravan Parks.

- Policies in Section 11 cover a range of topics under Place and Connectivity. These include a new Policy on Healthier Food Environments which is referred to in the December 2024 NPPF and relates to health and wellbeing evidence. Policies also include Active and Sustainable travel and parking standards. Policies PC4-PC8 relate to design and place covering density, placemaking and amenity.

5.68. Section 12 of the Preferred Option Draft Plan contains Place Policies which set out more details by place on the proposed growth as indicated above.

### **Consultation on the Colchester Local Plan Preferred Options (Regulation 18)**

5.69. The Consultation is proposed to run for the statutory period of 6 weeks, commencing by the beginning of March 2025. Responses will be strongly encouraged via the consultation portal and the team are ready to advise and assist where necessary to support this. All stakeholders and all those registered on the Local Plan database will be notified by email (or letter) of the consultation. In response to some of the challenges faced in previous consultations, a number of different methods are proposed to seek better, wider and more effective engagement. These include:

- Website information including a video
- An online Virtual Exhibition which runs 24/7
- Face to Face events at Colchester Town Hall proposed on the following dates / times;

Friday 14th March 11am-6pm

Saturday 22 March 10.30am – 2.30pm

Thursday 27 March 11am-7.30pm

- Residents Panel
- Youth Panel
- Workshop with Colchester Sixth Form Students
- Engagement with Town and Parish Councils
- Copies of the Preferred Options Draft Local Plan will be available to view for those who are not able to access online at key accessible venues around Colchester City Centre and other locations in other communities (Libraries)
- Posters will be distributed to Town and Parish Councils and other local contacts to publicise the consultation and how to find out more and engage

### ***Sustainability Appraisal of the Colchester Local Plan Preferred Options (Regulation 18)***

5.70. Sustainability Appraisal (SA) is carried out alongside plan preparation and identifies the likely environmental, economic and social impacts of the plan, for policies individually and the whole plan cumulatively. It helps to ensure that the Local Plan will

promote sustainable development and highlights any adverse impacts, allowing consideration of appropriate avoidance or mitigation measures.

- 5.71. An appraisal was carried out of the spatial strategy options, referred to previously in this report. This helped Officers select the most sustainable and appropriate strategy for growth. Sites submitted as part of the call for sites and desktop sites were assessed using a GIS model. The outcomes of this assessment informed the selection of the preferred site allocations.
- 5.72. The SA findings set out in the draft SA report has helped to finalise the Preferred Options Plan. The draft report is appended to this committee report as Appendix C and final SA report will be published as part of the Preferred Options consultation.
- 5.73. The SA concluded that in general, the policies appraised have been found to have a wide range of minor positive and significant positive effects in relation to the SA objectives, although a number of potential minor and significant negative impacts have also been identified. Negative effects have largely been identified in relation to the substantial land take required to support the level of development over the plan period and the location of development in relation to sensitive environmental receptors. While the spatial strategy included in the Local Plan, focusses much of development over the plan period to the main urban area and large and medium settlement, some growth is also allowed for within some of the smaller settlements. Furthermore, much of the development beyond the urban area will be on greenfield land. This includes the development of the large-scale development at the Tendring Colchester Garden Community as well as further large scale sites at Marks Tey, Tiptree, and Langham. Furthermore, the District contains large areas of Grade 2 and Grade 3 agricultural soils and many of the sites proposed for allocation lie within these areas.
- 5.74. In considering the total effects of all of the draft Local Plan's policies and site allocations taken together, the SA found that significant positive effects are likely in relation to Housing, Economic Growth, Transport (combined with a minor negative effect), Community and Health and Wellbeing (combined with a minor negative effect), and Services and Facilities (combined with a minor negative effect) objectives. Significant negative effects were identified in relation to the biodiversity and geodiversity objective (combined with a minor positive effect). This is because development within the District, particularly in the south, has the potential for negative effects in relation to the Blackwater Estuary, Colne Estuary and Essex Estuaries nationally and internationally designated biodiversity sites. There are further areas of SSSIs to the south of the Colchester urban area (including Abberton Reservoir, Upper Colne Marshes and Roman River) and to the east of the urban area (Bullock Wood) as well as towards Marks Tey (Marks Tey Brickpit). However, the SA report recognises that the settlement hierarchy, set out in the spatial strategy, seeks to avoid and minimise adverse effects by allocating the lowest levels of growth to the areas of highest sensitivity in the City area. Growth in the southern parts of the area, close to biodiversity sites of international importance, is limited through the spatial strategy. The SA found that the plan makes substantial contributions to the protection, conservation, and/or enhancement of Colchester's green and open spaces and natural environment, including support for the delivery of the Essex Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS), and delivery of Suitable Alternative Natural Green Space (SANGs) to mitigate effects relating to the Colne and Blackwater Estuaries



Special Protection Areas (SPAs) and Essex Estuaries Special Area of Conservation (SAC).

- 5.75. SA is an iterative and integral part of plan making and will continue as part of the next stage of work as policies and site allocations are further considered and reviewed in the light of consultation comments and evidence, to prepare the Submission Local Plan.

***Habitats Regulations Assessment of the Colchester Local Plan Preferred Options (Regulation 18)***

- 5.76. A Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) has been carried out and the report will be published as part of the Preferred Options consultation. HRA refers to the several distinct stages of assessment which must be undertaken in accordance with the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended). HRA refers to the assessment of the potential effects of a development plan on sites afforded the highest level of protection in the UK: Special Protection Areas (SPAs) and Special Areas of Conservation (SACs).
- 5.77. The overall purpose of the HRA is to conclude whether or not a proposal or policy, or whole development plan would adversely affect the integrity of the Habitats Site in question. This is judged in terms of the implications of the plan for a site's 'qualifying features' (i.e. those Annex I habitats, Annex II species, and Annex I bird populations for which it has been designated). Significantly, HRA is based on the precautionary principle. Where uncertainty or doubt remains, an adverse effect should be assumed.
- 5.78. At the Screening stage, likely significant effects on Habitats Sites, either alone or in combination with other policies and proposals, were identified for policies likely to lead to the development of land. HRA Screening determined that impacts could result in a likely significant effect in relation to: Physical damage and loss (offsite functionally linked land only); Non-physical disturbance (offsite functionally linked land only); Air pollution (in relation to the Stour and Orwell Estuaries SPA and Ramsar site); Recreation; Water Quantity; and Water Quality.
- 5.79. The Appropriate Assessment stage identified whether the likely significant effects will, in light of mitigation and avoidance measures, result in adverse effects on integrity of the Habitats Sites either alone or in-combination with other plans or projects. The HRA recognises that policy protection measures are written into many of the Local Plan policies and the report refers to policies that provide a degree of safeguarding. For example, specific wording is provided in Policy EN1: Nature Conservation Designated Sites, which outlines protection for Habitats Sites and will ensure that no development is supported where there is potential for adverse effects to integrity to arise; and there are safeguarding measures in policies NZ3, ST2, GN1, GN5, LC3, E3, E5, CS5 and CS6.
- 5.80. The HRA concluded that mitigation is required for the Blackwater Estuary SPA and Ramsar site, Colne Estuary SPA and Ramsar site, Stour and Orwell Estuaries SPA and Ramsar site in relation to physical damage and loss and non-physical disturbance (offsite functionally linked land only). This mitigation is a requirement for wintering bird surveys for site allocations with high and moderate suitability to support qualifying bird species. This was a mitigation measure in the adopted Local Plan.

Mitigation for recreational disturbance will continue to be provided through the Essex Coast RAMS, as well as through open space provision.

- 5.81. HRA is an iterative process and as such is expected to be updated in light of newly available evidence and comments from key consultees. The evidence base of the Plan has emerged as the plan has developed and at the time of carrying out the HRA of the Preferred Options Plan, the Water Cycle Study was also in development. The Water Cycle Study will inform the HRA of the submission Local Plan. The HRA concluded that given the findings of Anglian Water's Water Resource Management Plan, no adverse effect on integrity is considered in relation to water supply. However, in the absence of an updated Water Cycle Study, and in line with a precautionary approach, a conclusion of no adverse effect on integrity cannot be reached in relation to the effect of water treatment and discharge, on Hamford Water SAC, SPA and Ramsar site or Stour and Orwell Estuaries SPA and Ramsar site. The Water Cycle Study will inform the assessment of water quality in the HRA of the submission Local Plan.
- 5.82. In the absence of Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT) modelling data and in line with a precautionary approach, a conclusion of no adverse effect on integrity cannot be reached in relation to the effect of air pollution on Stour and Orwell Estuaries SPA and Ramsar site. The conclusion cannot be reached due to the potential vehicle emissions from the A137. Therefore, further traffic modelling is required to inform the assessment of air pollution. This will be undertaken and inform the assessment of air pollution in the HRA of the submission Local Plan.
- 5.83. At the next stage of plan making, the HRA report will be updated to reflect the contents of the updated Local Plan, including specific site allocations. AADT traffic modelling data and information from the updated Water Cycle Study will be required to inform the HRA conclusions in relation to the potential for air pollution and water quality.

## **6. Equality, Diversity and Human Rights implications**

- 6.1 An Equality Impact Assessment has been prepared for the Adopted Local Plan, and is available to view by clicking on this link:

<https://cbccrmdata.blob.core.windows.net/noteattachment/Equality%20Impact%20Assessment%20June%202017.pdf>

## **7. Strategic Plan References**

- 7.1 The current Local Plan provides a key strategic delivery vehicle for many Strategic Objectives in the Council's Strategic Plan (April 2023-April 2026). In particular the following Strategic Objectives are particularly relevant; Respond to the Climate Emergency through policies which seek to conserve and enhance biodiversity; Improve health, wellbeing and happiness, through placemaking and provision of appropriate infrastructure; Deliver homes for those most in need, through housing targets, site allocations and policies providing for affordable housing and a mix of evidenced housing needs; and Grow our economy so everyone benefits, through policy seeking to provide and manage economic growth throughout existing and new communities.

## **8. Consultation**

- 8.1 Details of proposed engagement and consultation are set out above and will be undertaken in accordance with the Planning Regulations and Statement of Community Involvement.

## **9. Publicity Considerations**

- 9.1 Publication of the Local Plan is likely to generate considerable interest. It is recognised that delivering high levels of growth is challenging and will not always be welcomed. However, the need to address the housing crisis is more widely recognised and the importance of protecting and enhancing natural and historic assets is self-evident.
- 9.2 The Council has the ability to make decisions which will determine the future growth of the City. Failure to produce the Local Plan may result in those decisions being made by others.

## **10. Financial implications**

- 10.1 There is a significant financial implication in preparing a Local Plan. All evidence base documents that need to be prepared by consultants have an associated cost along with all consultation exercises and the eventual examination. An up-to-date local plan does however help avoid costly appeals.

## **11. Health, Wellbeing and Community Safety Implications**

- 11.1 There are no specific health, wellbeing and community safety implications. Officers are working with the North East Essex Health and Wellbeing Alliance to ensure that health and wellbeing is integrated into the Local Plan Review.

## **12. Health and Safety Implications**

- 12.1 No direct implications.

## **13. Risk Management Implications**

- 13.1 Maintaining an up to date Local Plan reduces the risk of planning appeals and government intervention.

## **14. Environmental and Sustainability Implications**

- 14.1 The Council has declared a Climate Emergency and has committed to being carbon neutral by 2030. The purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development as defined in the National Planning Policy Framework. Achieving sustainable development means that the planning system has three overarching objectives, which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways. These are economic, social, and environmental objectives.
- 14.2 The Local Plan Review will take account of any updated evidence and changes in legislation that help contribute towards achieving carbon neutral by 2030. Further consideration of future policy development on the environment, climate change, biodiversity, place making and active environments will seek opportunities towards Colchester becoming a greener city that is resilient to the climate change challenges.

## **Appendices**

### **A – List of Evidence**

### **B – Draft Preferred Options Colchester Local Plan (Regulation 18) including Policies Maps illustrating Policies in the Draft Preferred Options Colchester Local Plan (Regulation 18)**

### **C– Draft Sustainability Appraisal for the Draft Preferred Options Colchester Local Plan (Regulation 18)**

## APPENDIX A – Colchester Local Plan Evidence – February 2025

The table below lists the Evidence Base documents that support the Preferred Options Plan. Some documents have already been published on the website, while others will be made available as they are completed. The available documents can be viewed [here](#).

Document/Study	Date
Indoor and Built Sports Facilities – Needs Assessment	January 2023
Indoor and Built Sports Facilities – Final Strategy	January 2023
Planning for Health and Wellbeing	January 2025
Playing Pitch and Outdoor Sports Strategy – Assessment Report	March 2023
Open Space Report	April 2023
Planning Pitch and Outdoor Sport Strategy – Strategy & Action Plan	June 2023
Landscape Character Assessment	November 2024
Green Network and Waterways Guiding Principles	May 2024
Settlements Evidence Part Two	February 2025
Strategic Land Availability Assessment Stage 2	February 2025
Employment Land Needs Assessment / Study	February 2025
Level 1 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA)	February 2025
Emerging Allocations Biodiversity Assessment	November 2024
Strategic Biodiversity Assessment	January 2025
Middlewick Ranges Botanical Survey & interim Invertebrates Survey reports	December 2024
Essex Net Zero Homes and Buildings evidence	2023-2024
Sustainability Appraisal (SA)	February 2025
Habitats Regulations Assessments (HRA)	February 2025
Heritage Impact Assessment (Stage 1)	February 2025
Local Wildlife Sites Review	spring 2025
Colchester Surface Water Management Plan Technical Note	February 2025
Infrastructure Audit and Delivery Plan Stages 1 & 2	December 2024
Water Cycle Study – Technical Summary Report	February 2025

Initial Transport Modelling and Assessment Executive Summary Initial Transport Modelling and Assessment	February 2025
Whole Plan Viability	February 2025
Infrastructure Audit and Delivery Plan – Stage 3 Report	February 2025



# Colchester City Council Preferred Options Local Plan

## Regulation 18 Consultation

### 2025



**Colchester**  
Local Plan Review



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# 1. Introduction

- 1.1 Colchester is a diverse and growing City, with a vibrant centre, attractive villages and important distinctive landscapes. The Local Plan addresses the challenges of population growth and change, the climate emergency, evolving economic trends and the need for more sustainable and active travel opportunities 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, and policies for planning and delivery across the City including the policy framework, site allocations and development management policies for the City up to 2041.
- 1.3 The production of the Local Plan represents years of work, starting with extensive technical evidence, iterative themed public engagement, negotiation and co-operation from many partners and stakeholders including statutory consultees, developers, councillors and local residents.

## **Local Plan: The Process**

- 1.4 The City 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**

- 1.5 The Local Plan must reflect the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). This has several updates since it was first published in 2012. The NPPF published in December 2023 is the version which is relevant to this Plan. Further national guidance on planning policies is provided in Planning Practice Guidance (PPG). The NPPF establishes a presumption in favour of sustainable development, which applies to both plan making and decision taking. It is a statutory requirement for the Council to produce planning policies for the City. The policies must comply with national planning policy unless there is overwhelming evidence to demonstrate why this is not the case. The government sets out in paragraph 8 of the NPPF that the planning system should achieve sustainable development by achieving three overarching objectives:

a) an economic objective – to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure; and

b) a social objective – to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering well-designed, beautiful and safe places, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities' health, social and cultural well-being; and

c) an environmental objective – to protect and enhance our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, improving biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.

### **County Level Plans**

1.6 The following County level plans provide a relevant background to the Local Plan.

#### **Essex Minerals Local Plan**

1.7 Essex County Council is the Minerals Planning Authority (MPA) for Colchester, and is responsible for preparing planning policies, and also for assessing applications for mineral development. The Essex Minerals Local Plan (MLP) (2014) is a statutory Development Plan and should be read alongside the Colchester Local Plan. The role of the MLP is to identify sites for the extraction of sufficient quantities of mineral within Essex to facilitate development over the plan period (2014-2029). A MLP Review has commenced to replace the current Plan.

1.8 There are active quarry sites in Colchester as well as currently unworked sand and gravel and brick clay deposits which are subject to a Minerals Safeguarding policy within the MLP. The safeguarding policy requires the MPA – 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 apply within Colchester are highlighted on the relevant policies maps. Refer to the [Essex Mineral Local Plan](#) for information about potential Minerals Safeguarding Areas in parts of Colchester 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. Qualifying applications will be required to be accompanied by a Minerals Resource Assessment unless excluded by safeguarding policy.

1.9 The MLP also designates Mineral Consultation Areas at a distance of 250 metres around active quarries, mineral infrastructure and mineral deposits permitted for extraction. The MPA will be required to be consulted on all non-mineral related development within these areas, and all applications will require a Minerals Infrastructure Impact Assessment unless excluded by safeguarding policy.

#### **Essex and Southend-on-Sea Waste Local Plan**

1.10 Essex County Council is also the Waste Planning Authority (WPA) for Colchester, and is responsible for preparing planning policies, and also for assessing applications for waste development. The Essex and Southend-on-Sea Waste Local Plan (2017) (WLP) is a statutory Development Plan and should be read alongside the Colchester Local Plan. The role of the WLP is to identify sites for waste management to facilitate sustainable development over its Plan period.

1.11 The WLP sets out how Essex and Southend-on-Sea aim to manage waste and also seeks to deal with waste more sustainably, encouraging recycling and reducing reliance on landfill as well as safeguarding waste facilities. All applications within

250m of existing, permitted and allocated waste facilities are required to be submitted with a Waste Infrastructure Impact Assessment unless excluded by safeguarding policy.

### **Essex Local Transport Plan**

- 1.12 The Local Transport Act 2008 requires Essex County Council to develop a Local Transport Plan (LTP) that provides the overarching strategy and policy framework for transport across Essex, outlining the council's vision and focusing on key themes and outcomes to manage, operate and improve transportation networks and services. This requirement is addressed by the Essex Transport Strategy that was formally adopted by ECC in 2011.
- 1.13 Given policy evolution since the adoption of LTP3, due consideration should be given to more recent documents such as Net Zero: Making Essex Carbon Neutral and the Transport East Transport Strategy, to ensure that greater emphasis is placed upon sustainable development, the provision and use of sustainable transport, and the decarbonisation of the transport network.
- 1.14 ECC has commenced the process that will see the Essex Transport Strategy replaced by a new LTP to be published shortly. The strategic framework for LTP4 was consulted during summer 2024 and includes three outcome focussed themes:
- supporting people, health, wellbeing and independence
  - creating sustainable places and communities
  - connecting people and businesses

LTP4 will also contain a suite of Implementation Plans that will bring the Colchester Future Transport Strategy within the formal structure of the LTP.

- 1.15 Transport East is the Sub Regional National Transport Body for the East of England and has an adopted Transport Strategy. The strategy is aligned with the Essex LTP and is seeking to deliver four priorities:
- creating a net zero carbon transport network
  - connecting our growing towns and cities
  - energising our coastal and rural communities
  - unlocking global gateways.

### **Essex Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS)**

- 1.16 Introduced in the Environment Act 2021, the Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) is a statutory requirement. It is part of Nature Recovery Network (NRN), which is made up of 48 Local Nature Recovery Strategies. The primary purpose of the Essex LNRS is to find locations for the creation or improvement of habitat. It aims to identify the locations most likely to provide the greatest benefit for nature and the wider environment. Essex County Council are the Responsible Authority for delivering the LNRS for Greater Essex. The Essex LNRS will outline agreed biodiversity priorities for nature recovery in the county. It will also outline a series of proposed actions, known as potential measures, to achieve these priorities. The Essex LNRS will propose where actions could be carried out that will connect and expand existing spaces for nature.

- 1.17 Other strategies and guidance documents have a bearing on planning policy in Colchester and cover education, housing, and key infrastructure considerations such as early years and childcare, schools, social care and sustainable drainage. Separately, work is also undertaken jointly across Essex on a range of policy matters including on climate change, health and wellbeing and economic development, and as appropriate has been used to inform this plan.

### **City Strategies**

- 1.18 The Local Plan brings together the spatial elements of a number of key City strategies and provides a focus for future development.

### **Recycling and Waste Strategy for Colchester 2025-2040**

- 1.19 This Strategy outlines Colchester's plans to improve the way we manage waste over the next 15 years. It sets out the vision and aims of the Council in reducing waste, improving recycling and providing a simple-to-use service for our residents and businesses.

### **Three Year Plan 2023-2026: A City fit for the Future**

- 1.20 The strategy emphasises sustainability, inclusivity and innovation aiming to position Colchester as a thriving forward looking city where people want to live, work and visit.

### **Colchester Economic Development Strategy 2022 - 2025**

- 1.21 This strategy aims to position Colchester as a dynamic and sustainable city, balancing economic growth with social inclusivity and environmental responsibility.

### **Housing Strategy 2022-27**

- 1.22 This strategy was developed by the Housing Strategy Partnership, including Colchester City Council and its partners, sets out a vision where all residents have access to safe and affordable homes that promote health and equality within sustainable communities.

### **Environmental Sustainability Strategy**

- 1.23 This strategy brings together in one strategic document the issues around climate change; fuel poverty; depleting resources; energy security; as well as the environmental management of our own buildings, services and operations.

### **Colchester Future Transport Strategy (2022)**

- 1.24 This strategy was prepared in partnership with Essex County Council as the Highway Authority and sets out the overall approach to current transport issues and opportunities. It provides a strategy to improve health and wellbeing and tackle climate issues at the centre of transport planning and the projects and initiatives undertaken. The strategy will assist in supporting future allocation and bidding for funding for transport projects in the city and will be incorporated into the Implementation Plan as part of LTP4.

### **Duty to Co-operate**

- 1.25 In preparing the Local Plan, the Council 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 and Mid Suffolk, together with infrastructure providers including agencies responsible for transport, health and the environment.

### **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 the NPPF. The evidence gathered from the documents covering topics including housing, economy, natural and built environment, net zero carbon buildings, 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. This is a draft plan and as such evidence is not yet complete and will continue to evolve as work progresses on the plan. For example, in support of this Preferred Options plan, a stage 1 Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) was carried out. A stage 2 HIA will be required to support the submission plan. 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 Strategic Environmental Assessment. The Sustainability Appraisal tests the sustainability of the Plan options throughout the plan preparation process. It does this by considering how different policy choices perform against a range of sustainability objectives and assessment 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 measures that could help to minimise any negative impacts identified and maximise the sustainability of the Local Plan. A Sustainability Appraisal report is published alongside the Plan.

### **Habitat Regulations Assessment**

- 1.28 A Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) has been carried out and is published alongside the Plan. HRA refers to the several distinct stages of assessment which must be undertaken in accordance with the [Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 \(as amended\)](#). All plans and projects (including planning applications) which are not directly connected with, or necessary for, the conservation management of a habitat site, require consideration of whether the plan or project is likely to have significant effects (screening). Where the potential for likely significant effects cannot be excluded, the Council must make an appropriate assessment of the implications of the plan or project for that site, in view the site's



conservation objectives. The competent authority may agree to the plan or project only after having ruled out adverse effects on the integrity of the habitats site. Where an adverse effect on site integrity cannot be ruled out, and where there are no alternative solutions, the plan or project can only proceed if there are imperative reasons of over-riding public interest and if the necessary compensatory measures can be secured.

### **Development Plan**

1.29 The Development Plan Documents for Colchester will comprise:

- The Colchester City Local Plan setting out the overarching spatial vision for development of the City to 2041; strategic policies; detailed site allocations for housing and employment growth; and criteria based non-strategic policies. The Local Plan provides the planning framework for the other Documents listed below.
- Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community (Development Plan Document). A Joint Local Plan (Development Plan Document) with Tendring District Council which allocates land and includes policies for the design and development of a Garden Community on the Colchester-Tendring border. The DPD provides relevant policy guidance, and sets 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.
- Tiptree Jam Factory DPD 2013.

1.30 The Local Plan is accompanied by a number of other planning documents that provide further guidance and information:

- 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.

### **Preferred Options Plan**

1.31 This is the Council's draft Local Plan 2041 or the 'Preferred Options'. It is published for a 6-week period of public consultation in accordance with Regulation 18 of the

Town and Country Planning Regulations. All comments received within the consultation period will be considered and, where appropriate, changes will be made to the draft plan.

- 1.32 In this draft, a description of the purpose of the policy follows each of the draft policies along with details of the alternatives considered. Full details of the likely environmental, economic and social effects of each policy are included in the Sustainability Appraisal report, which is published in support of the draft Local Plan. The Local Plan is supported by an evidence base, which will continue to be updated as the plan progresses. All evidence base documents are available to view on the Council's website.

## 2. Vision and approach to Local Plan

### Approach to the Local Plan

- 2.1 Section 19(1A) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires local planning authorities to include in their Local Plans “policies designed to secure that the development and use of land in the local planning authority’s area contribute to the mitigation of, and adaptation to, climate change”.
- 2.2 The way places are planned, designed and built can have a significant influence over health and wellbeing. All development should be designed to provide opportunities for healthy lifestyles and contribute to the creation of healthier and inclusive communities and help to reduce health inequalities for people of all ages and abilities through placemaking. The Council will continue to work with partners and health providers to improve and promote healthier and active lifestyles for our residents and communities. Health and wellbeing outcomes are embedded throughout the policies in the Local Plan.
- 2.3 The Local Plan is holistic and integrated, it addresses the climate emergency, biodiversity and the environment, health and wellbeing and the cost of living crisis. All policies individually and cumulatively (the overall Local Plan) have been considered in this context.
- 2.4 The Environment Act 2021 puts the duty to enhance biodiversity into law. The Act establishes a strengthened biodiversity duty on public authorities, which states that public authorities must consider what they can do to conserve and enhance biodiversity.
- 2.5 Protecting and enhancing biodiversity, nature recovery and addressing the climate emergency are not stand-alone topics, they are intertwined and embedded in all aspects of planning. A key purpose of the new Local Plan to 2041 has been to enhance Colchester’s green network and waterways and incorporate the numerous themes of the ‘planning for a better environment’ agenda, such as air quality, biodiversity net gain, climate change adaptation and mitigation and net zero, flooding and coastal erosion, green and blue infrastructure, greenspace provision, Habitat Regulations, Local Nature Recovery Strategy, natural capital and environmental net gain, protected sites and species and water quality and resources.
- 2.6 The effects of climate change are already being experienced – more storms and heavy rainfall coupled with water stress, heatwaves and higher temperatures. It is right that the Local Plan includes policy requirements for net zero homes and buildings, and climate change adaptation.
- 2.7 Essex is the most water stressed county in the country. The situation is expected to get worse due to climate change, population growth and the need to restore, protect and enhance the natural environment. Although Essex is one of the driest places in the country, there are also areas at very high flood risk from the sea, rivers and rainfall. In addition to this, Essex water quality is below the national average as a

result of storm overflows discharging sewage into the water supply; pollution from fertilisers and poor livestock management; and runoff from construction and traffic.

- 2.8 The climate emergency and ecological emergency are closely related. As the climate changes, nature changes. The State of Nature Report 2023 says that the UK, like most other countries worldwide, has seen significant loss of its plants, animals and fungi. The UK is now one of the most nature-depleted countries on Earth. Across the UK, species studied have declined on average by 19% since 1970, nearly one in six species are threatened with extinction from Great Britain, and 151 of 10,008 species assessed have already become extinct since 1500.
- 2.9 The Local Plan has been prepared alongside the Essex Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS), which has provided evidence of the actions to reverse the current path of decline and bring about a recovery for nature. The LNRS identifies locations to create or improve habitat most likely to provide the greatest benefit for nature and the wider environment.
- 2.10 The Essex LNRS explains that 'Essex, like the whole of the UK, has suffered extreme biodiversity loss in the last 50 years, with many habitats and species now vulnerable or seriously threatened. Once common species in our county such as Turtle Doves, European Eels and Hedgehogs are now seriously depleted and at risk. Habitats are now left largely fragmented and isolated, causing significant declines in biodiversity and ecological quality. Human life, too, is affected by these changes.' The Local Plan 2041 aims to play a role in recovering nature throughout Colchester.
- 2.11 Nature contributes much value through natural capital. Ecosystem services provide a regulating, provisioning and cultural role. In the long term, the economic costs of not addressing the climate emergency and biodiversity loss, will be higher through loss of natural capital than the costs of addressing them now.
- 2.12 The Essex Climate Action Commission recognise that the natural world is our best ally in reversing climate change – it is key to absorbing and storing carbon. Risks from already changing weather systems: more flooding, over-heating, soil degradation, subsidence and water shortage can be tackled by making space for open spaces and nurturing our natural world. Through declaring a climate emergency, it has become a priority of Colchester City Council to spur urgent action to reduce our carbon footprint and promote sustainable urban environments and economies. This priority is incorporated throughout the Local Plan.
- 2.13 The green network is important for many reasons. The Essex LNRS includes a target to double the amount of natural greenspace in Essex. There is scientific research that demonstrates the positive impact that nature has on mental health and wellbeing. The green network (or open spaces) and waterways have long been recognised as an essential component of resilient, healthy and sustainable communities - communities that respond to the climate emergency, promote health and wellbeing and protect and help nature to recover.
- 2.14 Over the next 15 years, the City will face many challenges, such as population growth and change, the climate emergency, evolving economic trends and the need for more sustainable and active travel opportunities. The Local Plan seeks to

address these challenges to deliver the level of growth required to meet the needs of current and future generations whilst also protecting and enhancing the environment and people's quality of life. Colchester's Local Housing Needs Assessment (September 2024) confirms that it is necessary to use the Standard Methodology for calculating housing need. The updated method results in a need to plan for 1,300 new homes per year. This equates to 20,800 new homes over the plan period 2025 to 2041. A key challenge for the Local Plan is ensuring that enough land is allocated for residential uses to accommodate the predicted level of housing growth over the plan period. Colchester has a very good track record of regenerating previously developed land within its urban area and as a result the City has a limited and diminishing supply of brownfield sites that can contribute to accommodating new growth. Growth needs to be directed to the most sustainable locations, without adverse impacts on the environment and community and social infrastructure.

- 2.15 The NPPF provides overarching guidance on the Government's development aims and describes the Government's vision for building a strong, competitive economy. It emphasises that Local Plans and Employment Needs Assessments should present robust evidence to support clearly defined designations and allocations of land for employment uses. It sets out a series of recommendations which policymakers should follow to help create conditions in which businesses can invest. The Employment Land Needs Assessment demonstrates that Colchester is particularly connected with two other local authority areas: Braintree and Tendring. This is based on housing and property market areas, connectivity via the road and rail network, economic governance partnerships, and the local authorities representing key locations in relation to worker flows. By 2041, Colchester is expected to see an overall population increase of 17.3%, driven primarily by a rise in the 65 and over age group, driving an ageing population.
- 2.16 Additionally, there is expected to be growth in the working-age population, outpacing regional and national rates. This growth could increase labour supply, stimulate local businesses, and boost productivity as well as support infrastructure development, attract investment, and expand the pool of skilled workers. The ELNA looks at supply and demand based on the needs identified. The outcome of the comparison between employment land demand and available supply, based on the current portfolio of sites / allocations across the district, indicates that taking into account pipeline sites, there is insufficient supply available to meet projected demand in Colchester district over the plan period. Planning for additional employment land is therefore required, adding additional flexibility as not developments in the planning pipeline may not come forward as envisaged or be developed in different quantities by use class than has been consented. The Employment Study demand assessment estimates that there is a net additional demand for 41.7ha of employment land across Colchester over the plan period.
- 2.17 Implementation of the Local Plan will make significant contributions towards mitigating the challenges Colchester faces. Addressing the climate emergency, enabling nature recovery, and delivering healthy homes will help create a better environment and promote health and wellbeing - providing all policy requirements are implemented. The Local Plan is holistic – all policies are inter-related and together will make the biggest positive impact. Health and wellbeing and improving

quality of life will be woven throughout the Local Plan and considered as part of all proposals in Colchester. Through implementation of the Local Plan, healthy, vibrant and diverse places will be created that protect and enhance Colchester's special and diverse natural environment. Partnerships between the Council and other organisations and working with developers and the public will enable more positive outcomes. The approach taken in the Local Plan responds directly to the growing demands linked to the creating a better environment agenda enabling delivery on climate change, health and wellbeing, improving quality of life and biodiversity requirements as well as delivering growth requirements in a way which has planning for a better environment at the heart – a Local Plan that will benefit people, place and the planet.

## **Vision**

2.18 The purpose of the vision is to demonstrate the focus and direction of the Local Plan. The vision is important as a means of setting the wider context and detailing the Council's key aims and priorities over the plan period. The Vision, themes and objectives have been informed by outcomes of wide stakeholder engagement. They describe the future the Plan is seeking to create building on the strengths and opportunities identified. It is ambitious yet achievable.

2.19 The vision for the Colchester Local Plan is:

**Growth in Colchester is inevitable and brings with it change and opportunity. The Local Plan will embrace growth opportunities to meet the environmental, social and economic needs of the changing population and future generations. In doing so it will improve the quality of life for our communities, create a better environment and contribute to healthy lifestyles, by maximising the opportunities provided through well connected green networks. The Plan will also preserve and enhance Colchester's identity defined by its special diverse natural environment, green networks and waterways, prestigious heritage, varied arts and culture, and welcoming inclusive, vibrant and healthy communities.**

2.20 This will be achieved through provision of new open spaces, biodiversity net gain and the creation of wildlife corridors to create better connections between habitats. Colchester will have a real sense of community and be welcoming and inclusive - a destination of choice. Sustainable and inclusive communities will be created with a focus on diversity of place and valuing what is unique to Colchester – the countryside, coast and city. Communities will have a varied mix of housing to meet the needs of all, including social and lower income households; and a range of jobs, including careers, that support a strong local economy and reduce the need for residents to commute outside of Colchester. Colchester's distinctive arts, culture, heritage and tourism will improve the quality of life for residents, foster life-long learning and boost the local economy. There will be enhanced public transport corridors and routes and an increase in active travel, which will create better connections between places, reduce congestion, provide more travel choices and encourage active lifestyles. Infrastructure will be future proofed and delivered where



it is needed. Infrastructure will be innovative and able to respond to changes such as climate change.

2.21 The Local Plan takes inspiration from early engagement with a range of stakeholders identifying what is unique about Colchester and embraces the bold new approaches that will help achieve this vision. There are four themes, which are supported by objectives. The following visual and bullet points shows the interaction between the themes and objectives of the Local Plan vision. The themes are in the centre of the visual with the objectives surrounding them.



### Themes and Objectives

#### Healthy, vibrant and diverse places

- Protect, maintain and enhance the distinct character, heritage identity and setting of Colchester city.
- Protect stretches of undeveloped countryside, enhance the quality of natural environment creating net gains to biodiversity.
- Encourage the redevelopment of brownfield land.

- Support Colchester's tourism role through the provision of additional high-quality facilities.

### **Sustainable**

- Improve existing facilities, sustainable infrastructure, green water, wastewater, roads and schools.
- Access to high quality healthcare that is deliverable and where needed.
- Facilitate affordable clean secure energy through the delivery of sustainable energy to achieve radical reductions in greenhouse gas emissions.
- Ensure development helps Colchester to adapt and increase its resilience to the effects of climate change.
- Support the reduction of waste in line with the waste management hierarchy.

### **Welcoming inclusive communities**

- Deliver high value jobs for local people and support a stronger local economy
- Focus on art culture, heritage and tourism.
- Deliver high quality public realm and enhance infrastructure to attract inward investment.
- Varied mix of housing to meet the needs of all, including social and lower income households.

### **Well-connected**

- Better public transport corridors to reduce congestion and increase active travel making cycling and walking more attractive.
- Create communities which reduce the need to travel, particularly by car for most of their daily needs

### 3. Strategic Policies

3.1 In accordance with the NPPF paragraph 20, this plan includes Strategic Policies which set out an overall strategy for the pattern, scale and design quality of places and make sufficient provision for:

- a) homes (including affordable housing), employment, retail, leisure and other commercial development;
- b) 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);
- c) community facilities (such as health, education and cultural infrastructure); and
- d) conservation and enhancement of the natural, built and historic environment, including landscapes and green infrastructure, and planning measures to address climate change mitigation and adaptation.

3.2 Strategic Policies provide an overview that applies across the whole area, responding to the requirements of the NPPF and supported by more detailed topic and location specific policies. In addition, neighbourhood plans must be in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in any development plan that covers their area. For the purposes of neighbourhood planning these are the strategic policies which will apply as required by the NPPF. The relevant place policies will also apply to any neighbourhood plan prepared.

## **Policy ST1: Health and Wellbeing**

The way places are planned, designed and built can have a significant influence over health and wellbeing.

All development should be designed to provide opportunities for healthy lifestyles and contribute to the creation of healthier and inclusive communities and help to reduce health inequalities for people of all ages and abilities through placemaking.

The Council will continue to work with partners and health providers to improve and promote healthier and active lifestyles for our residents and communities.

Health and wellbeing outcomes are embedded throughout the policies in the Plan. To achieve healthy and inclusive communities, all new development should:

- a) Promote healthy neighbourhood design, providing opportunities for healthy lifestyles for all by creating well-designed, safe and accessible places.
- b) Provide healthy and affordable homes that meet the needs of the community.
- c) Provide easy access to natural environments including green and blue infrastructure and open spaces.
- d) Promote active and sustainable environments and encourage active travel.
- e) Promote a healthy food environment.
- f) Provide access for all to health facilities and services, a range of employment opportunities, and sport and recreation facilities.
- g) Seek environmental improvements, minimising exposure to potential sources of environmental harm including pollutants and noise and improving air quality.
- h) Minimise, manage and mitigate against the effects of climate change.

In addition, and where appropriate, new development should support the provision of healthcare infrastructure to accommodate needs, in accessible locations, in line with the requirements outlined in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan and set out in site allocation policies.

A Health Impact Assessment will be required for all residential development in excess of 50 units or non-residential development in excess of 1,000sqm and hot food takeaways and fast food outlets in accordance with Policy PC1, in order to demonstrate that the development would have an acceptable impact on health and wellbeing. The Council will require Health Impact Assessments to be prepared having regard to the most up to date advice and best practice for such assessments. The purpose of the Health Impact Assessment will be to identify the potential health consequences of a proposal.

The assessment should include recommendations on how positive health benefits can be maximised and how negative impacts on health and inequalities can be avoided or mitigated. Where a development has a significant adverse impact on health and wellbeing, the Council will require applicants to provide for the mitigation of such impacts. 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.

## **Justification**

### **Purpose of the policy**

- 3.3 The purpose of this strategic policy is to ensure that all proposals support the health and wellbeing of all our communities. In line with the NPPF, the policy aims to achieve healthy, inclusive and safe places, enabling and supporting healthy lives and reducing health inequalities.
- 3.4 The policy acknowledges the interconnection between health and wellbeing and the climate, the environment, and place-making and design. Healthy lifestyles can be supported and improved through high quality inclusive design and planning, providing healthy homes, increasing inclusivity and providing access to local services; encouraging access to natural environments and encouraging active travel to enable communities to be physically active; and promoting access to healthy food.
- 3.5 To ensure healthy and wellbeing is supported, promoted and improved through new development, and any impacts on health are identified, a Health Impact Assessment will be required in line with current best practice advice.

### **Alternative**

- 3.6 The alternative is to not include a policy on this subject matter and rely on the NPPF. However, national policy does not provide any local context or address the interconnection with other relevant policies in this Local Plan.

## **Policy ST2: Environment and the Green Network and Waterways**

All proposals must conserve and enhance Colchester's natural and historic environment, including the protection and enhancement of sites of international, national, regional, and local importance. The Council will safeguard the landscape character of Colchester as defined by the area's existing biodiversity, geology, green network and waterways, history, and archaeology. The Council will support the use of Natural England's Environmental Benefits from Nature tool.

Proposals must have regard to delivering the aims and objectives of the Essex Local Nature Recovery Strategy and Essex Coast Recreational disturbance Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy (RAMS) or any relevant successor documents. Proposals for habitat creation, enhancement and BNG should have regard to the Colchester City Strategic Biodiversity Assessment.

Strategic areas that present the best opportunities for habitat creation and enhancement aimed at improving biodiversity are shown on the policies maps as 'strategic biodiversity areas'. These strategic biodiversity areas will be protected, and support will be given to strengthening and enhancing connections between habitats to improve their contribution to the biodiversity network.

All major residential development proposals must have a Green Network and Waterways Plan (which could form part of the Design and Access Statement) setting out how the development meets the Council's Green Network and Waterways Guiding Principles. The Plan should include details of the timescale for the implementation of each aspect of the Plan within that phase of development and details of the quality standard of construction and maintenance.

Open spaces should be incorporated into other strategies and plans for the site, such as surface water management strategies, landscape, utilities, and biodiversity net gain to coordinate delivery, management and maintenance.

### **Justification**

#### **Purpose of the policy**

- 3.7 The purpose of this strategic policy is to ensure that all proposals conserve and enhance the natural and historic environment and that major residential proposals deliver contextually responsive, high quality open spaces. The key purpose of this strategic policy and indeed all policies in the Environment chapter, is to respond to the creating a better environment agenda by halting overall biodiversity loss, supporting healthy well-functioning ecosystems, and supporting and establishing coherent ecological networks, with more and better places for nature for the benefit of wildlife and people.
- 3.8 Planning reforms, the Environment Act, and the Environmental Improvement Plan, provide significant opportunities for planning to play a key role in creating a better environment for future generations. Responding to the increasing environmental agenda in plan making requires a coherent and streamlined approach which complements the complex environmental agenda requiring integrated, coordinated approaches to achieve multifunctional benefits from the use of land.



- 3.9 Nature in Essex has suffered significantly over the last century, and continues to suffer, from species loss, habitat loss and increased habitat erosion and fragmentation. There are multiple causes to this loss and increased isolation of habitats across the landscape, including land use change, invasive species, pollution, overexploitation and climate change. It is crucial that nature recovery is at the centre of future action for the environment, to create new habitats and recover and enhance space for nature that has been lost or degraded.
- 3.10 The Council is a 'Supporting Authority' in the Essex Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS). The role of LNRS' is to provide a county-wide, practical solution to driving action for nature recovery on the ground. The primary purpose of the Essex LNRS is to identify locations to create or improve habitat most likely to provide the greatest benefit for nature and the wider environment. The Council has had regard to the Essex LNRS throughout plan preparation.
- 3.11 The presence of clusters of designated sites and, in some cases, older landscapes that aren't designated but that have the potential to make a significant contribution to biodiversity, has been used to identify areas of significance for the conservation of biodiversity. These strategic biodiversity areas present the best opportunities for habitat creation and enhancement aimed at improving biodiversity. Each of the strategic biodiversity areas has an inherent degree of coherence and connectivity.
- 3.12 Enhancing ecological connections as a priority is aimed at improving the robustness of species populations by increasing gene flow between nearby populations, allowing colonisation of new sites, and facilitating re-colonisation of sites where populations may be lost by adverse impacts. With climate change impacting on environmental conditions in a profound way, these connections also offer a chance for species to find somewhere better suited to their needs if necessary.
- 3.13 Such connections also serve to improve the general ecological condition of the wider landscape, serving as a reservoir of biodiversity that can then permeate the whole landscape, including those areas of residential development to which they are connected.
- 3.14 Protecting, strengthening and enhancing habitats and corridors within the strategic biodiversity areas can be achieved through broadening connections and improving the condition of the habitats, as well as creating more links with nearby LoWS through the design of green infrastructure and mitigation habitats within development sites as well as through compensation measures and biodiversity net gain in the wider landscape.
- 3.15 The Local Plan evidence base includes evidence that is relevant to this strategic policy and the environment and sustainability policies that follow, such as the Habitats Regulations Assessment, Biodiversity Protection and BNG Study, Landscape Character Assessment, and Colchester's Green Network and Waterways Guiding Principles.

### **Alternative**

- 3.16 This alternative is to not require a green network and waterways plan and for proposals to follow the business-as-usual approach with a consequential continuity

of outcomes for ecology. However, this would fail to address the planning for a better environment agenda.

## **The Spatial Strategy**

- 3.17 The spatial strategy sets out the place-based approach for how growth will be guided across Colchester to 2041. This provides the framework for how the housing and employment needs will be met through allocations in the Local Plan, taking into account the unique characteristics of areas across the City.
- 3.18 The settlement hierarchy forms part of the spatial strategy. Growth will be allocated in accordance with the spatial strategy and settlement hierarchy. This recognises the relationship between the Urban Area of Colchester, growth and opportunity areas within and outside of the urban area (Marks Tey and TCBGC) and the larger settlements of, Tiptree, West Mersea and Wivenhoe. This also recognises the role that other settlements play in creating diverse places across Colchester, as well as the importance of the countryside that should be protected
- 3.19 In the first instance, development is directed to the City centre and the urban area of Colchester. This will enable greater use of brownfield sites to be realised and developments of a higher density. This approach is reflected in the NPPF.
- 3.20 The next tier in the settlement hierarchy is growth and opportunity areas. A number of sites are allocated for residential, employment / mixed use development within the urban area of the City. The Hythe which has seen significant changes over the years, notably through recently approved and built student accommodation is identified as an opportunity area where there are opportunities here for wider regeneration. This area is an established regeneration area that seeks to deliver sustainable, mixed-use neighbourhoods, identifying the River Colne as a feature and respecting the historic character of the area. Magdalen Street where regeneration could help deliver a new and improved gateway to the City Centre is also identified as an opportunity. There are a number of older commercial buildings suitable for reuse and or redevelopment to enhance this area. This tier in the hierarchy also includes the University of Essex, Knowledge Gateway and north Colchester.
- 3.21 Marks Tey is also identified in this tier as a growth area, recognising its potential opportunities for strategic scale growth and potential for improvements to infrastructure and placemaking. Its strategic location along with the benefits the train station brings, support the potential for expansion. However, there is also recognition that infrastructure improvements will be required in order to support development at the scale promoted. Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community (TCBGC) is established and defined in a separate Development Planning Document. It continues to form an integral part of how this area of North Essex will develop up to 2041 and beyond. In recognition of the contribution it will make to towards the supply in this plan period for Colchester it is defined as a growth area in the hierarchy.
- 3.22 Key transport corridors across Colchester have also been identified for their function and connectivity and potential to support growth. The role of larger settlements outside of the urban area is also recognised. These larger settlements have the most facilities, services and opportunities. These settlements also have some of the largest populations of Colchester. As such, it is proposed to group, Tiptree, Wivenhoe and West Mersea as the next tier within the hierarchy as large

settlements. Growth in these settlements not only reflects their size but also considers the opportunities and constraints that apply to each location.

- 3.23 Creating a distinction between the large, medium and small settlements enables small scale development, which has been identified as a desire in some of the small settlements through engagement undertaken as part of the Issues and Options. The settlement hierarchy identifies medium and small settlements where growth is allocated appropriate to the size of the settlement and its constraints. Growth is not directed to all of the smaller settlements as appropriate land for growth was not identified for every small settlement.
- 3.24 The spatial strategy also reflects sustainable development principles underpinned by the NPPF which seeks to ensure all development meets the three dimensions of sustainable development; social, economic and environmental sustainability. All development will need to be in accordance with the spatial strategy and should meet the three dimensions of sustainable development.
- 3.25 The key diagram illustrates the spatial strategy for this Plan.

### **Policy ST3: Spatial Strategy**

The Plan makes provision for growth and supporting infrastructure across the Colchester area to 2041. A sufficient number of homes have been provided in the plan to meet the overall housing requirement to 2041 as set out in Policy ST5.

Growth is directed across Colchester starting with the most sustainable and accessible locations in the urban area or close to, transport corridors and existing centres, where there tends to be a range of employment opportunities, facilities, services and travel choices for future communities.

Additionally, an appropriate level of growth is allocated within the large, medium and some small settlements, based on the opportunities and constraints of each settlement and informed by the wider evidence base. This can help support the long-term viability of services and facilities, which may otherwise be lost.

The growth needs of Colchester are balanced against the need to protect and enhance biodiversity, landscape and heritage. The highest areas of sensitivity are receiving the lowest levels of growth in this Local Plan. This approach also ensures that existing settlements maintain their distinctive character and role by avoiding harmful coalescence between them and through conserving their setting. New development 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 character of the City.

The Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community (TCBGC) and other large-scale developments will deliver substantial growth, enabling significant community benefits to be realised. Opportunities for growth along key transport corridors, particularly with access to the rail network are favoured subject to sufficient capacity on the network and/or appropriate mitigation to support any enhancement required.

The re-use of previously developed land and developments of higher densities (particularly in the Urban Area of Colchester) will be supported where this enables a more efficient use of land. Opportunity areas are therefore identified at the Hythe and Magdalen Street.

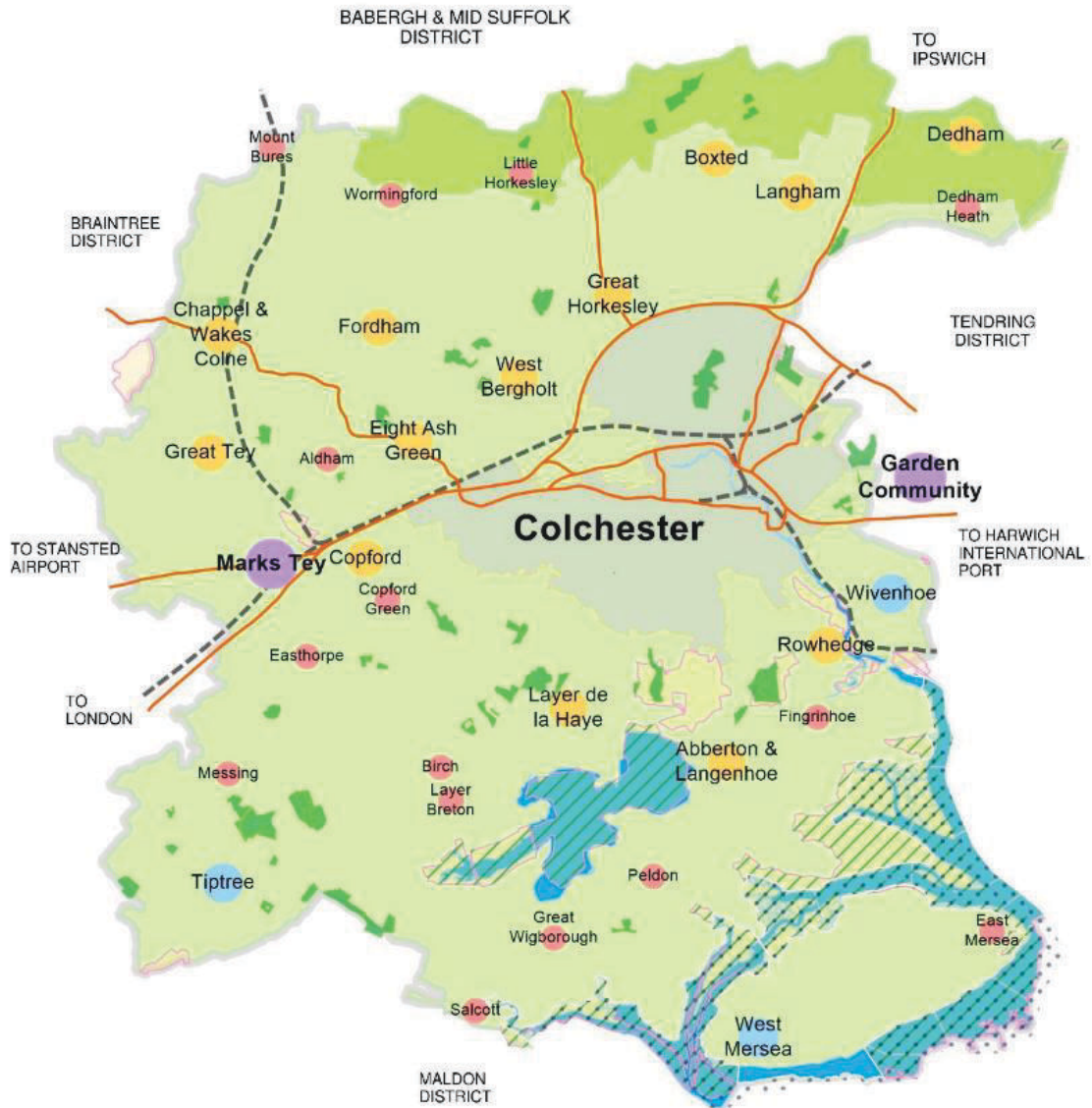
The primary focus for growth is made through the allocations identified in this Local Plan, together with the existing commitments and TCBGC as set out in Policy ST5. Allocations are made in accordance with the settlement hierarchy set out below. The settlement hierarchy groups areas across Colchester based on their sustainability merits, size, function, opportunities and the services provided in each locality.

## Settlement Hierarchy

<p><b>Colchester Urban Area</b> including City Centre</p>
<p><b>Growth and Opportunity Areas</b>          Hythe Opportunity Areas          Magdalen Street Opportunity Area          Marks Tey Growth Area          Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community Growth Area</p>
<p><b>Large Settlements</b>          Tiptree          West Mersea          Wivenhoe</p>
<p><b>Medium Settlements</b>          Abberton and Langenhoe          Boxted          Chappel and Wakes Colne          Copford          Dedham and Dedham Heath          Eight Ash Green          Fordham          Great Horkesley          Great Tey          Langham          Layer de la Haye          Rowhedge          West Bergholt</p>
<p><b>Small Settlements</b>          Aldham          Birch and Layer Breton          Copford Green          Easthorpe          East Mersea          Fingringhoe          Great Wigborough          Little Horkesley          Messing          Mount Bures          Peldon          Salcott          Wormingford</p>
<p><b>Countryside</b></p>

## KEY DIAGRAM





- Colchester City Council Boundary Area
- Colchester Urban Area
- Growth Areas
- Large Settlements
- Medium Settlements
- Small Settlements
- Ancient Woodland
- Major Roads
- Rail Line
- Special Area of Conservation
- Special Protection Area
- SSSI
- Waterways and Coastal Waters
- Dedham Vale National Landscapes

## **Justification**

### **Purpose of the policy**

- 3.26 The NPPF requires Strategic Policies in Local Plans to set out an overall strategy for the pattern, scale and design quality of places. Strategic Policies are required to provide a clear strategy for bringing sufficient land forward to address needs over the plan period, in line with the presumption for sustainable development. The Strategy must provide for social and economic needs, sufficient strategic and local infrastructure, whilst balancing the conservation and enhancement of the natural, built and historic environment, and address climate change, mitigation and adaptation.
- 3.27 The Spatial Strategy sets out the approach for how Colchester will develop to 2041. This informs where sites will be allocated for housing and economic growth, and where areas will be safeguarded and protected in this Preferred Options Local Plan.

### **Alternative**

3.28 The alternative spatial options considered were:

- Continuing existing Spatial Strategy
- New Garden Community
- Garden Suburbs
- Intensification in the City Centre
- Transport Corridors
- Hubs and Spokes
- Environment Led

3.29 The preferred spatial strategy draws together the positives from as many of the spatial options as possible, while ensuring the growth needs of Colchester are met. These include:

- Focus on the existing urban area and intensification where appropriate largely within growth and opportunity areas;
- Significant scale of growth along transport corridors;
- Growth in the other settlements, including some of Colchester's smaller villages, to support communities and provide opportunities to sustain and enhance facilities and infrastructure;
- Ensure protection and enhancement of the most sensitive environments

## **Policy ST4: Development in the Countryside**

**The Council will consider the requirement for new development within the countryside to meet identified development needs in accordance with Colchester's spatial strategy while supporting the vitality of rural communities. This will be balanced against ensuring development does not have an adverse impact on the different roles and relationships between settlements and their separate identities, 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.**

**Proposals must consider the role the landscape plays as an open buffer between settlements or areas of a settlement, and the resulting sense of separation and distinctive identity.**

**Within valued landscapes, development will only be permitted where it would not impact adversely and would protect and enhance the factors that contribute to valued landscapes.**

**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.**

**Where residential proposals are located outside defined settlement boundaries, there should be consideration of the physical and functional connection to the defined settlement in the first instance. Residential proposals in the countryside should conserve and enhance the character, quality and tranquillity of the landscape, and it must be proven that they will protect and reinforce the rural character of the areas where a development is proposed. Proposals 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. Opportunities to maximise access to sustainable modes of travel for future residents must be demonstrated.**

### **Justification**

#### **Purpose of the policy**

- 3.30 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 strategy (Policy ST3) directs development to the most sustainable locations across Colchester.

- 3.31 Areas outside of settlement boundaries are defined as 'Countryside'. Within the countryside, there are a number of very small villages and hamlets and isolated clusters of dwellings which lack any community facilities or access to services or public transport and rely on nearby larger settlements to meet their daily needs. It is essential that development is restricted in the countryside to protect landscape, character, quality and tranquillity.
- 3.32 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.
- 3.33 The NPPF includes examples of exceptions whereby proposals for isolated dwellings in the countryside may be acceptable. The Council'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.

**Alternative**

- 3.34 The alternative is to rely on national policy and guidance or the spatial strategy and housing allocations policies.

## **Provision for Homes and Jobs**

- 3.35 Paragraph 61 of the NPPF states that a key objective of the Government is to boost the supply of homes. It stresses the importance of providing a sufficient amount and variety of land which can come forward where it is needed. In accordance with Paragraph 62 of the NPPF the Council commissioned a Local Housing Needs Assessment which used the standard method as set out in national planning practice guidance (December 2024), to consider the overall need for housing in Colchester. This identifies the need for different types of homes, and needs of different groups within the local community. The Council has engaged with Tendring District throughout the plan making process as it shares a housing market area.
- 3.36 The Local Housing Needs Assessment September 2024 confirms that using the Standard Methodology for calculating housing need, there is a need for 1300 new homes per year. This equates to 20,800 new homes over the plan period to 2041. In accordance with the NPPF December 2024, this is a mandatory target which must be planned for.
- 3.37 In the last financial year (April 2023 to March 2024) 1,098 new homes were delivered in Colchester. There are also a number of sites that have already been granted planning permission or are committed and supported by with evidence to support their early delivery. These are forecast to deliver 6,117 new homes in the plan period as outlined in Policy ST5.
- 3.38 The Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community will deliver circa 7,500 new homes in the longer term. A total of 3,400 new homes will be delivered up to 2041, with the number of new homes to be divided equally between Tendring and Colchester. As a result, 1,700 new homes from the Garden Community will make a contribution to the housing needs of Colchester within the plan period.
- 3.39 Based on past delivery records, windfall sites will also make an important contribution to Colchester's housing need. Windfall sites are defined as sites that are not allocated in the Local Plan. Assessing past contributions from windfall sites in Colchester, has demonstrated that an average of 238 homes per annum have been delivered on windfall sites (from 2014/15 to 2023/24). As a result, a windfall allowance of 200 new homes a year for the later 11 years of the plan period is considered a robust and justified contribution to the overall housing supply. 2,200 homes are anticipated to be delivered through windfall sites by 2041
- 3.40 Taking all the above into account, during the remainder of the plan period, the Council need to plan for a minimum of 11,089 new homes in order to meet the housing needs for Colchester.
- 3.41 Colchester has an excellent track record of housing delivery. Since 2001/02 it has overseen the delivery of over 21,000 new homes at an average rate of 940 new homes per year. Over the previous plan period to date (2017 – 2024) the Council exceeded its cumulative housing target by almost 500 dwellings. Therefore, at the beginning of the new plan period the Council is not in a position where it needs to make up any previous shortfall in housing delivery.

- 3.42 The methodology for planning for employment growth is less rigid than that for housing, although the NPPF requires plans to identify a future supply of land which is suitable, available and achievable for economic development uses over the Local Plan period
- 3.43 The Employment Land needs assessment has considered the approach, existing supply and demand to arrive at a need of 41.7 hectares of employment land up to 2041. This is based on the preferred scenario (Labour Supply) which is based on population projections, linked to housing growth projections, it represents an approach which seeks to maximise the opportunities for the economically active population in the Local Authority Area. This represents the most optimistic scenario for employment growth to align with wider corporate objectives for economic growth.
- 3.44 The Employment Study identifies key sectors likely to influence demand for employment space over the plan period including the digital, creative and tech and financial and business service sectors, and key sectors likely to influence demand for industrial space include advanced manufacturing, construction, transport and logistics and green energy. Proposals which support these sectors will particularly be encouraged in line with the requirements of the Policy and are set out in the relevant Place Policy.

#### **Policy ST5: Colchester’s Housing Need**

**The Council will plan, monitor and manage the delivery of at least 20,800 new homes in Colchester City between 2025 and 2041.**

**The annual housing requirement for Colchester is 1,300, as identified by the Standard Methodology.**

**TableST5.1: Housing Supply**

<b>Housing Supply as at 31st December 2024</b>	<b>Net New Homes</b>
<b>Existing Commitments (sites with planning permission)</b>	<b>6,117</b>
<b>Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community</b>	<b>1,700</b>
<b>Windfall Allowance</b>	<b>2,200</b>
<b>Local Plan Allocations</b>	<b>11,089</b>
<b>TOTAL SUPPLY</b>	<b>21,106</b>

**The Council will maintain a sufficient supply of deliverable and developable sites to provide for at least five years’ worth of housing on a rolling basis, plus an appropriate buffer in accordance with national policy.**

**The overall distribution of new housing across Colchester is guided by Spatial Strategy (Policy ST3).**

**TABLE ST5.2 Local Plan Housing Allocations**



<b>Location</b>	<b>Number of New Homes</b>	<b>Policy Reference</b>
Brittania Car Park	100	PP1
Vineyard Gate	100	PP2
Runwald St Car Park	40	PP3
Braiswick	30	PP4
Land at Chesterwell	50	PP5
Land at Colchester Station	250	PP6
Land off Bakers Lane	100	PP7
Land off Lakelands Crescent	5	PP8
Northeast Colchester	2,000	PP9
Land South of Berechurch Hall Road	875	PP10
Europit Site	40	PP11
Land at Roberston Van Hire Site	6	PP12
146 Magdalen Street Site	15	PP13
Gas Works and Hythe Scrap Yard Site	200	PP14
Hawkins Road	50	PP15
Coal Yard site	50	PP16
King Edward Quay Opportunity Area	200	OA1
Land East of Hawkins Road Opportunity Area	150	OA2
Magdalen Street Opportunity Area	100	OA3
Land south of A12 & Marks Tey Village	1,500	PP17
Land North of A120, Marks Tey	1,000	PP18
Land North of Oak Road, Tiptree	600	PP19
Land at Bonnie Blue Oak, Tiptree	30	PP20
Highlands, Kelvedon Road, Tiptree	10	PP21
Former Telephone Exchange, Station Road, Tiptree	5	PP22
Land East of Dawes Lane, West Mersea	300	PP23
Land Northwest of the Fire Station, Wivenhoe	175	PP24
View Park, Abberton and Langenhoe	50	PP25
Land North of Boxted Straight Road	150	PP26
Swan Grove, Chappel	35	PP27

<b>Location</b>	<b>Number of New Homes</b>	<b>Policy Reference</b>
Land West of Station Road, Wakes Colne	200	PP28
Land East of School Road, Copford	300	PP29
Land South of Long Road, Dedham	15	PP30
Land North of Halstead Road East of Wood Lane, Eight Ash Green	180	PP31
Land North of Halstead Road West of Fiddlers Wood, Eight Ash Green	250	PP32
Land East of Plummers, Fordham	25	PP33
Land North of Coach Road, Great Horkesley	400	PP34
The Old School, Great Horkesley	13	PP35
Land at Earls Colne Road, Great Tey	125	PP36
Land North of Park Lane, Langham	900	PP37
Land opposite Wick Road, Langham	10	PP38
Land at The Furze, Layer de la Haye	10	PP39
Land West of The Folley, Layer de la Haye	60	PP40
Rowhedge Business Park, Rowhedge	50	PP41
Land at White Hart Lane, West Bergholt	50	PP42
Land North of Colchester Road, West Bergholt	100	PP43
Land off Colchester Road, West Bergholt	100	PP44
Land off New Road, Aldham	15	PP45
Land at Birch Green, Birch	15	PP46
Land at Picketts Farm, Fingringhoe	5	PP47
Kelvedon Road, Messing	25	PP48
Land at St Ives Road, Peldon	25	PP49
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>11,089</b>	

### **Justification**

## Purpose of the policy

- 3.45 To plan for Colchester's housing need, 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 NPPF requires policies to identify sufficient sites to deliver the required housing supply over the plan period. The housing land supply comprises existing commitments and new allocations.
- 3.46 Through the previous Local Plan, the principle of development of a Garden Community on the Tendring and Colchester border was established. Colchester City Council, Tendring District Council and Essex County Council have worked together to prepare a Development Plan Document which provides a framework to guide the development of the Garden Community. Circa 7,500 new homes will be delivered at the Garden Community, with delivery through the plan period contributing to Colchester's supply.
- 3.47 Existing commitments are residential sites with planning permission or where the granting of planning permission is considered to be imminent. Many of these sites, were allocated for residential use in the current Adopted Local Plan. Existing commitments also includes allocations from made Neighbourhood Plans
- 3.48 Due to historic trends of windfall within the City, the Council will be applying a windfall allowance in line with paragraph 71 of the NPPF. The Council's criteria for a site to be considered windfall is that it should not form part of a current allocation. There is no one approach to a windfall allowance methodology, but it is reasonable to consider past windfall rates as a basis for the expectation of the levels of windfall that will come forward in the future. This approach is widely used and can aid in considering the likely windfall that will come forward in the future.
- 3.49 Allocations are sites which are proposed for residential uses as part of the preparation of this Draft Local Plan. Colchester has a very good track record of regenerating previously developed land within its urban area and as a result the City has a limited and diminishing supply of brownfield sites that can contribute to accommodating new growth. Accordingly, allocations within this Draft Local Plan include a high level of new greenfield sites. These sites have been subject to thorough assessment to determine their sustainability and suitability for residential uses. The same assessment has been undertaken for allocations in the current Adopted Local Plan which have not yet been implemented. All proposed allocations have also been subject to discussions with stakeholders to ensure sites have been selected based on their availability, achievability and deliverability. It will be important as the plan progresses to ensure all allocations are developable, viable, suitable and available and can deliver policy compliant schemes.
- 3.50 The **Place Policies** in this Draft Local 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. Allocations will provide approximately 11089 new homes. All allocations are set out in their respective Place Policies.

3.51 Ensuring the quality of new housing development is of equal importance to ensuring its quantity. The Council will actively work with landowners, planning agents and housebuilders to bring forward those allocated sites that accord with the overall spatial strategy and relevant policies in the Plan.

**Alternative**

An alternative to this policy approach is the provision of a more dispersed pattern of new development. This option would spread the impact of new development more widely across Colchester but would be unlikely to secure key infrastructure, which is required to support sustainable growth and could therefore be expected to result in higher overall levels of growth in villages and within existing communities, highway congestion and restricted infrastructure. The distribution reflects the spatial strategy which considered a number of alternatives.

## **Policy ST6: Colchester's Employment Needs**

The Council will plan, monitor and manage the delivery of at least 41.7 ha of employment land in Colchester City to meet the projected demand up to 2041. Employment uses will be provided on a range of sites to ensure jobs are accessible to new and existing communities across Colchester.

**Table ST6.1: Local Plan Employment Provision**

<b>Location</b>	<b>Employment Land (approx. ha)</b>	<b>Policy Reference</b>
Land north of Axial Way, Northern Gateway, North Colchester	2.3ha	OA4
Colchester Business Park	2.4ha	PEP1
Knowledge Gateway	4.5ha	PEP2
Land South of Tollgate West	3.7ha	PEP3
Maldon Road	0.7ha	PEP4
Land south of A12 Marks Tey	16ha	PEP5
Anderson's Site, Marks Tey	3.2ha	PEP6
Highlands Nursery, Tiptree	1.1ha	PEP7
Land South of Factory Hill, Tiptree	4.7ha	PEP8
Bullbanks Farm, Eight Ash Green	0.8ha	PEP9
Lodge Lane, Langham	1ha	PEP10
Land at Pattens Yard, West Bergholt	2.1ha	PEP11
Land at Wakes Hall Business Centre	0.9ha	PEP12
Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community	3.5ha	ST9
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>46.9ha</b>	

Proposals for new employment uses within the existing and defined employment areas will be supported. Employment uses for the purposes of this policy are defined as Use Classes E(g), B2, and B8. Alternative economic class uses may contribute to the provision of jobs providing flexibility and securing delivery of additional jobs. Suitable alternative economic uses will be supported within existing and defined areas where they are in accordance with all relevant policies in the plan, including impact assessments where these alternative uses are for town centre uses and the threshold applies.

## **Justification**

### **Purpose of the policy**

- 3.52 The NPPF states that planning decisions should help create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt. They should support economic growth and productivity, taking into account both local business needs and wider opportunities for development. Decisions should also allow an area to build on its strengths, counter any weaknesses, and address any challenges in the future. Planning policies should set out a clear economic vision and strategy which positively and proactively encourages sustainable economic growth. The NPPF states that Councils should identify a future supply of land which is suitable, available and achievable for economic development uses over the Local Plan period.
- 3.53 To plan for Colchester's employment needs, the Council needs to ensure that enough land is allocated, and sufficient policy approaches adopted to deliver sustainable economic growth across Colchester. The Colchester Employment Land Needs Assessment (2024) provides an assessment of the balance of supply and demand in the context of changing employment needs, trends and challenges. The Employment Study demand assessment estimates that there is a net additional demand for 41.7ha of employment land across Colchester over the plan period.
- 3.54 The purpose of the policy is to ensure that land is allocated and safeguarded for employment purposes that meet the needs of Use Classes E(g), B2 and B8 as defined by the Use Classes Order 1987 (as amended), in sustainable locations and in line with recommendations set out in the Colchester Employment Land Needs Assessment. The policy identifies land that, in addition to existing approved permissions within the planning pipeline, will meet the projected demand for additional good quality, well-located employment sites. Some of these sites are employment allocations that have been carried forward from the adopted Local Plan or allocations contained in adopted Neighbourhood Plans.
- 3.55 The Place Employment Policies in this Draft Local 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. An Employment and Skills Plan will be required in line with ECC guidance. This must be prepared collaboratively with the Council and relevant stakeholders.
- 3.56 In addition to land allocated for employment uses as set out in Table ST6.1, employment uses will also be delivered through opportunity areas and mixed use and larger residential allocations as set out in the relevant Place Policy.
- 3.57 Existing fit for purpose employment sites are protected for employment uses through other policies in the plan including Policy E1.
- 3.58 Further detail on employment provision in the Colchester Tendring Borders Garden Community can be found in Policy ST9.

## **Alternative**



3.59 The alternative is to not allocate employment land in the plan or allocate other sites for employment uses. However, the NPPF requires Councils to identify a future supply of land for employment uses over the Local Plan period and this is therefore not considered a reasonable alternative. The sites identified have been assessed and represent land which is suitable, available and achievable for economic uses and which will contribute to employment supply.

## **Policy ST7: Infrastructure Delivery and Impact Mitigation**

All development must be supported by the provision of infrastructure, services and facilities that are identified as being needed to serve the needs arising from the development. Permission will only be granted if it can be demonstrated that there is sufficient and appropriate infrastructure capacity to support the development or that such capacity will be delivered by the proposal. It must further be demonstrated that all necessary infrastructure will be delivered at an appropriate time to meet the requirements of the development, and that such capacity will prove sustainable over time in physical and financial terms.

Where a development proposal requires additional infrastructure capacity to be deemed acceptable, mitigation measures must be agreed with the Council and the appropriate infrastructure provider. Such measures may include:

- a) Financial contributions towards new or expanded facilities and the maintenance thereof;
- b) on-site provision of new facilities (which may include building works);
- c) off-site capacity improvement works; and/or
- d) the provision of land.

Developers will be expected to contribute towards the delivery of relevant infrastructure as required and supported by up-to-date evidence from appropriate sources including the Infrastructure Audit Delivery Plan (IADP) and any subsequent updated evidence, along with information from local sources including parish and town councils. Developers will be required to either make direct provision or to contribute towards the provision of local and strategic infrastructure required by the development, either alone or cumulatively with other development.

This policy will apply to all development proposals. Location specific infrastructure requirements are also contained within the relevant site allocation policies.

New streets should seek to be built to adoptable design standards in adherence with current guidance and standards. Where streets are not built to an adoptable standard, there must be a substantive place making benefit.

At the time of adoption, every allocation will be considered to be viable, based on information provided to the Council. Where an applicant/developer is seeking an exception to this policy later in the plan period, it will only be considered whereby:

- a) 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; and
- b) It is proven that the public benefit of the development proceeding without full mitigation outweighs the collective harm; and
- c) 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
- d) Obligations are entered into by the developer that provide for appropriate mitigation in the event that viability improves prior to

**completion of the development. In such cases the Council may seek a staged review of the viability of a scheme with the aim of achieving policy compliance over time. This may include securing a review mechanism by legal agreement specifying trigger points for undertaking a review such as later phases of a scheme or reserved matters applications.**

**The Council will consider introducing a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) and will implement such for areas and/or development types where a viable charging schedule would best mitigate the impacts of growth. Section 106 will remain the appropriate mechanism for securing land and works, affordable housing and financial contributions where a sum for the necessary infrastructure is not secured via CIL.**

### **Justification**

#### **Purpose of the policy**

- 3.60 The sustainable delivery of new homes and jobs needs to be supported by the provision of appropriate new and upgraded infrastructure, including transport, community facilities and utilities. New development can place additional demand on existing infrastructure. Therefore, new development proposals must contribute to improvements in infrastructure to cater for the additional needs that they generate.
- 3.61 The NPPF requires that all plans should promote a sustainable pattern of development that seeks to 'align growth and infrastructure'. The NPPF requires that strategic policies should set out an overall strategy for the pattern, scale and design of places and 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); community facilities (such as health, education and cultural infrastructure); and green infrastructure. It also requires that plans should set out the contributions expected from development, including infrastructure.
- 3.62 The purpose of the policy is to ensure that provision of infrastructure is aligned with growth. The policy identifies infrastructure necessary to serve new development during the Plan period. Site allocation policies in the plan will identify essential site-specific infrastructure relevant to the allocation.
- 3.63 An Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) is being prepared to inform and support the Local Plan. This has been developed with infrastructure service providers and partner organisations to determine where additional infrastructure is necessary. The IDP will sit alongside the Plan and provide specific detail on the main items of infrastructure required, when they are likely to be required, and who will provide them. The IDP will be supplemented by updated evidence over the lifetime of the plan which will inform the infrastructure to be provided in relation to individual developments.
- 3.64 The broad categories of necessary infrastructure included in the IDP include:

- Social Infrastructure (Education, Early Years and Childcare, Sport and Leisure, Open Spaces, Green Infrastructure, Community Facilities, Primary Healthcare, Emergency Services, Health Services)
- Transport Infrastructure (Active Travel, Public Transport, Roads, Electric Vehicle infrastructure)
- Utilities, Waste and Water (Utilities, Telecommunications, Water, Wastewater, Flood Defence, Surface Water Management, Water Resource Management)

3.65 The Council will seek contributions from developers to fund new facilities and improvements to existing infrastructure and the environment where it is necessary to mitigate the impact of new development. Local communities should be involved in the setting of policies for contributions expected from new development and it is expected that policies in the Place section of this Plan will reflect that. The Local Plan has been informed by evidence of infrastructure and affordable housing need, and a proportionate assessment of viability that considers all relevant policies, and local and national standards. Accordingly, allocations will be made based on evidence that they are viable.

3.66 Planning obligations will be made through section 106 agreements and section 278 agreements. Contributions may also be made through the Community Infrastructure Levy (if adopted), which applies a standard charge to developers to fund supporting infrastructure such as transport, schools, community facilities and health facilities,

3.67 The Council continues to work with relevant government departments, infrastructure providers, developers and other partners to determine and facilitate the delivery of the wide range of infrastructure required to support development.

### **Alternative**

3.68 The alternative is to not include a policy on this subject matter and rely on the NPPF. However, national policy does not provide any local context, and this would risk required infrastructure improvements not being delivered.

## **Policy ST8: 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. Any adopted design documents must be taken into account.

All new development should reflect the following placemaking principles, where relevant:

- a) Protecting and enhancing the natural environment, ensuring that development is sustainable and minimises adverse impacts on biodiversity as well as incorporating biodiversity enhancement and net gain.
- b) Provide an integrated and connected green network of biodiverse public open spaces and waterways, thereby helping to alleviate recreational pressure on designated nature conservation sites.
- c) Support adaptation measures to address the impacts of climate change and ensure development is resilient to a changing climate.
- d) Include measures to address water efficiency and provision of appropriate water supply, wastewater and flood mitigation measures including the use of open space to provide biodiversity rich sustainable drainage solutions.
- e) Respond positively to local character and context to preserve and enhance the quality of existing places and their environs.
- f) Provide buildings that reinforce local distinctiveness and exhibit individual architectural quality within well-considered public and private realms.
- g) Protect and enhance assets of historical and natural value.
- h) Create well-connected places that prioritise the needs of pedestrians, cyclists and public transport services above use of the private car, providing opportunities for easy access to most daily needs without a car in a reasonable time. Where vehicular access is required, this must be provided with regard to highway safety and efficiency standards.
- i) Provide a mix of land uses, services and densities with well-defined public and private spaces to create sustainable well-designed neighbourhoods.
- j) Enhance the public realm through additional landscaping, street furniture and other distinctive features that help to create a sense of place.
- k) locate development in close proximity to existing and proposed public transport interchanges/connections, including the potential for Rapid Transit System and ensuring public transport is a convenient way of moving within a development, providing access to destinations further afield. This may include the potential for bus priority routes

- l) Provide streets and shared spaces that are accessible, overlooked and active and promote inclusive access and safety.**
- m) Include parking facilities that are well integrated as part of the overall design and are adaptable if levels of private car ownership fall.**
- n) Protect the amenity of existing and future residents and users with regard to noise, vibration, smell, light pollution, loss of light, overshadowing and overlooking.**

### **Justification**

#### **Purpose of the policy**

- 3.69 This placemaking policy is designed to guide the development of Colchester into a vibrant, sustainable, and inclusive community. It emphasises the importance of creating spaces that enhance social interaction, support local economies, and respect the unique character, natural environment and heritage of Colchester.
- 3.70 The vision is to cultivate well-designed, connected, and resilient communities throughout Colchester that promote wellbeing, inclusivity, and sustainability while reflecting the area's rich heritage and natural environment.

#### **Alternative**

- 3.71 The alternative is to rely on the National Design Guide and/or the Essex Design Guide.



## **Policy ST9: The Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community**

**Land identified in the Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community Development Plan Document and shown on the Policies Map is allocated for the development of the Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community.**

**The Development Plan Document (DPD) (adoption anticipated Spring 2025) allocates and protects land for the following uses:**

- a) delivery of circa 7,500 new homes with a range of shops, jobs, services and community facilities, including education and early years and childcare;**
- b) a new 'Salary Brook Country Park' incorporating land and woodland at and around the Salary Brook Local Nature Reserve in Colchester;**
- c) a 'Wivenhoe Strategic Green Gap' incorporating land north of Brightlingsea Road and west of Elmstead Road;**
- d) an 'Elmstead Strategic Green Gap' east of the new A120-A133 Link Road;**
- e) a Sports and Leisure Park to serve the local community and for the expansion of sports facilities for the University of Essex;**
- f) approximately 25 Hectares of employment land in the form of a new Business Park and a 'Knowledge-Based Employment' site;**
- g) provision for the Rapid Transit System;**
- h) an 18-pitch Gypsy and Traveller Site of; and**
- i) a Park and Choose Facility.**

**Proposals for development within the Site Allocation Boundary (as defined by the DPD Policies Map) will be determined in line with the policies and requirements set out in the Development Plan Document which itself will be the subject of a five-yearly review.**

**Decisions on planning applications for the Garden Community will be made by a Joint Committee containing representatives of Colchester City Council, Tendring District, Council and Essex County Council. Any proposed development within the Site Allocation Boundary that might prejudice the delivery or integrity of the Garden Community will be refused.**

**Within the Local Plan period up to 2041, the Garden Community is expected to deliver approximately 3400 of the total 7,500 homes – with development continuing longer-term, beyond 2041, to completion. For this Local Plan period up to 2041, market and affordable housing delivery and employment land delivery from the Garden Community, irrespective of its actual location, will be distributed equally between Tendring District Council and Colchester City Council for the purposes of meeting respective housing and employment land requirements. Delivery of employment provision will also contribute to the supply for each of the Authorities requirements. The delivery of 18 pitches for**

**Gypsies and Travellers will also count equally, 9 pitches each, towards Tendring District Council and Colchester City Council's respective requirements.**

**If, after taking into account its share of delivery from the Garden Community, if either of the authorities has a shortfall in delivery against the housing or Gypsy and Traveller pitch 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.**

**Throughout the delivery of the Garden Community, Colchester City Council, Tendring District Council, and Essex County Council will continue to work together with developers and transport providers to maximise the potential opportunities and the reach of the Rapid Transit System and associated transport provision to serve communities in Colchester and Tendring.**

**Policies SP8 and SP9 of the North Essex Authorities Shared Strategic Section One Plan (Adopted February 2021) appended to this Plan will be saved and continue to apply to the Garden Community where appropriate. All other policies are replaced.**

### **Justification**

#### **Purpose of the policy**

- 3.72 The Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community will be developed over the next thirty or so years. This community will eventually feature circa 7,500 homes, as well as employment spaces to accommodate new businesses and jobs.
- 3.73 The community will include all the services and facilities that people will need, including new nurseries, primary and secondary schools, health facilities, and community facilities, including sports and leisure. It will need to be carefully designed to fit in to the existing landscape, protecting the things that are important, whilst also providing new and improved green spaces, parks and areas for play.
- 3.74 The principal of the Garden Community is established through the Section 1 Local Plan and more detailed policies on the design and development of the Garden Community are included in the Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community Development Plan Document. This policy provides a summary of what will be included in the Garden Community and reference to housing numbers and the decision-making process.

#### **Alternative**

- 3.75 The alternative is not to include the policy and rely on the Development Plan Document.

## 4. 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 natural environment contributes to what is unique and special about Colchester. The countryside provides the attractive landscape setting that defines and characterises the villages and rural communities of Colchester. The countryside and coastal areas also provide important agricultural, tourism and recreational opportunities that support local economies and communities.
- 4.2 The policies in this chapter seek to protect Colchester's important natural and historic environment and go further than protection through requirements and support for enhancement and net gain. Additionally, they seek to ensure protection and management of water resources and the quality and the land and environment. These policies will contribute towards the theme in the vision of healthy, vibrant and diverse places by protecting, maintaining and enhancing the distinct character, heritage identity and setting of Colchester city and protecting stretches of undeveloped countryside, enhancing the quality of the natural environment creating net gains to biodiversity.
- 4.3 These policies are supported by the government's Environmental Improvement Plan and the creating a better environment agenda, which has been taken as the approach to the Local Plan; NPPF protection for the natural and historic environment; the draft Essex Local Nature Recovery Strategy and the evidence base including the Colchester Biodiversity Protection and BNG Study, Colchester Level 1 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment and Stage 1 Heritage Impact Assessment.

## **Policy EN1: Nature Conservation Designated Sites**

Development proposals that have adverse effects on the integrity of habitats sites or Sites of Special Scientific Interest, either alone or in-combination, will not be supported.

Contributions will be secured from qualifying residential development, within the Zones of Influence as defined in the adopted Essex Coast Recreational disturbance Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy (RAMS, or brand name Bird Aware Essex Coast), towards avoidance and mitigation measures identified in the adopted strategy and any updates to the strategy.

Reference to Bird Aware Essex Coast must be included on any signage or interpretation that relates to a Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) required in accordance with the Habitat Regulations Assessment. Signage and interpretation boards should explain the natural features of the open space and include places to rest within and throughout the SANG.

Nature-based welcome packs will be required for new homeowners for schemes of 100 or more dwellings.

### **Justification**

#### **Purpose of the policy**

- 4.4 The purpose of the policy is to protect designated nature conservation sites. The policy recognises and reflects the hierarchy of sites in accordance with the NPPF, which states that planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity or geological value and soils and requires Plans to distinguish between the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites. Compliance with the Essex Coast RAMS is included to ensure compliance with the Habitats Regulations.

#### **Alternative**

- 4.5 The alternative is to rely on protection through legislation, including the Habitats Regulations, and not include the policy. However, given the importance of nature conservation sites it is appropriate to include the policy.

## **Policy EN2: Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) and Environmental Net Gain**

**All development proposals must deliver a minimum of 10% biodiversity net gain (BNG) in accordance with legislation. Proposals for habitat creation, enhancement and BNG should have regard to the Colchester City Strategic Biodiversity Assessment.**

**All opportunities must be taken to maximise the delivery of onsite BNG. Alternative measures to delivering BNG should only be considered appropriate where it can be demonstrated that the required level of BNG cannot be achieved within the site.**

**The sites listed in this policy and shown on the policies maps are the Council's preferred offsite BNG sites. These sites will deliver the best gains for biodiversity and include a range of habitat types. The strategic significance of these sites is high. Where offsite BNG units are required to meet the minimum 10% BNG where 10% BNG cannot be delivered onsite, the Council recommends that applicants purchase units from the following strategic offsite BNG sites where available:**

- **Abbotts Hall, Great Wigborough**
- **Maydays Farm, Haycocks Lane, West Mersea**
- **Chipping Farm, Copford**
- **Brook Meadows, Tiptree**

**The Essex Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) contains strategic opportunity maps, which show the habitats and locations which have been identified as having 'strategic significance'. Only the LNRS strategic opportunities and the BNG sites listed in this policy can be assigned a score of 'high' in the strategic significance category in the Biodiversity Metric.**

**The Council will support development proposals that go beyond BNG and seek to demonstrate environmental net gain.**

### **Justification**

#### **Purpose of the policy**

- 4.6 The purpose of the policy is to encourage onsite BNG in the first instance and where this cannot be achieved, recommend purchasing units from the offsite BNG sites with strategic significance for biodiversity. The policy is clear on the habitats that can be assigned a score of 'high' in the strategic significance category in the Biodiversity Metric. The Biodiversity Protection and BNG Study (2024), part of the Local Plan evidence base, concluded that the potential BNG sites listed in the policy, all have a high strategic ranking. These sites, which were all submitted by landowners to the BNG call for sites, are the Council's preferred sites for offsite BNG and the sites the Council will recommend that applicants purchase units from where offsite units are required, once they are registered.
- 4.7 Abbotts Hall is a proposal from Essex Wildlife Trust. Proposed habitats include lowland mixed deciduous woodland, ponds, medium distinctiveness scrub, individual trees, species rich native hedgerow, grassland and ditches, saltmarsh. The creation of a BNG habitat bank at Abbotts Hall will contribute to the Trust's wider ambitions to rewild the site and establish a nature reserve, which will be open to the public in 2026. The site is strategically significantly, adjacent to SSSI and connected to other

coastal nature conservation sites including Old Hall Marshes and Copt Hall. There are opportunities for extensive habitat creation on formerly cultivated fields including grassland, wetland and woodland. Habitat creation measures should integrate with adjacent and nearby internationally designated sites and locally relevant species priorities, such as Nightingale and Turtle Dove.

- 4.8 Natural England consider that Maydays Farm would provide an excellent opportunity to create valuable habitat for wading birds and enhance habitat connectivity. The site is in a strategic location, adjacent to the Colne Estuary SSSI. The land is entirely below 5m AOD and adjacent to the Pyefleet Channel making it suitable for the creation of grazing marsh and associated freshwater habitats. It would also be suitable for the creation of intertidal habitats, although they are currently outside the remit of BNG.
- 4.9 Habitats at Chipping Farm currently include arable, hedgerows, ponds, woodland, scrub. Enhancement of existing habitats may be possible. The site is adjacent to LoWS Co35. Ground conditions may be suitable for the creation of a wide range of habitats within a landscape scale mosaic, including acid grassland. Existing woodlands on and adjacent to the site could be extended and buffered.
- 4.10 Brook Meadows is a LoWS and part of Inworth Grange Pits. This site has a recognised value as grassland habitat, but has not been managed favourably for nature conservation, with willow scrub invading. Regular management to control willow growth and improve the condition and diversity for the grassland would generate a gain for biodiversity. The site is wet in places and acidic, which should be reflected in site management plans.
- 4.11 Applicants should explore the best opportunities in the immediate proximity as a first option for achieving BNG, or any other environmental obligations. Depending on the location, that might be creating new green infrastructure, buffering an adjacent LoWS, enhancing a nearby LoWS or green space, planting street trees, or incorporating biodiverse roofs or other onsite measures. Consideration should be given to where the best gains can be achieved in each case and what measures would provide the most added value to the existing biodiversity resource of the area around the site.
- 4.12 Environmental net gain is supported and encouraged. Environmental net gain goes further than biodiversity net gain and results in gains to ecosystem services, which are services provided by the natural environment that benefit people. E.g. food, fibre and fuel provision, cultural services, regulation of the climate, the purification of air and water, flood protection, soil formation and nutrient cycling. Natural England has developed an Environmental Benefits from Nature Tool, which builds on the BNG Metric to measure environmental gain.

### **Alternative**

- 4.13 The alternative is not to include a policy on BNG as it is a mandatory requirement and not recommend that applicants purchase offsite units from the strategic offsite



BNG sites listed in the policy, which evidence shows will result in the best gains for biodiversity.

### **Policy EN3: Biodiversity and Geodiversity**

Development proposals where the principal objective is to conserve or enhance biodiversity and geodiversity interests will be supported in principle providing appropriate ecological evidence supports these actions, and the proposals are expected to conserve or enhance biodiversity.

For all proposals, development will only be supported where it:

- a) In the case of major applications, is submitted with a completed Essex biodiversity validation checklist; and
- b) Is supported with appropriate ecological surveys by a suitably qualified person where necessary. Where a preliminary ecological appraisal indicates that further surveys are required to support a planning application, the results of all such surveys and associated details of necessary mitigation measures need to be submitted prior to determination; and
- c) In cases where there is reason to suspect the presence of a protected species (and impact to), or Species/Habitats of Principal Importance, or locally important Species/Habitats, applications should be accompanied by an ecological survey, carried out at the appropriate time of year and taking into account appropriate weather conditions, assessing their presence and, if present, the proposal must be sensitive to, and make provision for their needs; and
- d) Demonstrates that, in the design of the proposal, the mitigation hierarchy has been followed with respect to ecological impacts. Where impacts on habitats and species cannot be avoided, a clear explanation of why alternative sites are not feasible and what proposed mitigation measures are necessary to address all likely significant effects; and
- e) Incorporates and maximises opportunities for the preservation, restoration, enhancement, connectivity and creation of a mosaic of habitats in accordance with the Essex Local Nature Recovery Strategy; and
- f) Demonstrates that significant harm to brownfield sites of high biodiversity value is avoided and fragmentation of habitats is minimised; and
- g) Incorporates biodiversity enhancement measures (in addition to mandatory biodiversity net gain) such as the creating space for nature design principles included in the Biodiversity Supplementary Planning Document; and
- h) Focuses habitat creation and enhancement measures on the habitats that are already present in the area and retaining existing communities and species populations that have been recognised as having significance; and
- i) Where development is proposed adjacent to, or including, a LoWS, the creation of new habitat to buffer it should be a priority of design and masterplanning.

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 Principal Importance and local importance, will not be permitted unless:

- a) They cannot be located on alternative sites that would cause less harm; and
- b) The benefits of the development clearly outweigh the impacts on the features of the site and the wider network of natural habitats; and
- c) Satisfactory mitigation, or as a last resort, compensation measures are provided.

The Council will take a precautionary approach where insufficient information is provided about avoidance, mitigation and compensation measures and will require that this information is submitted prior to determination. Mitigation and compensation measures will be secured through planning conditions/obligations where necessary.

A Construction Environment Management Plan, which includes details of all necessary ecological mitigation measures including protection of retained habitats and requirements for ecological supervision during works on site using a suitably experienced Ecological Clerk of Works, will be required by condition where necessary.

Where external expertise is required to review and validate ecological survey reports, applicants may be requested to reimburse the Council, arrangements will be discussed at the pre-application stage and may be secured through a Planning Performance Agreement.

## **Justification**

### **Purpose of the policy**

- 4.14 The purpose of the policy is to ensure that the biodiversity value of all sites is understood and that applications are supported by appropriate ecological surveys which clearly identify likely impacts and any required mitigation and compensation measures. The policy recognises the importance of all sites, including local wildlife sites, and habitats and species of national (Priority habitats and species) and local importance. The policy requires that the mitigation hierarchy is followed, which is good practice. Biodiversity protection is a duty that public bodies, developers, landowners and society generally all share. The [Royal Society](#) states that “Biodiversity is essential for the processes that support all life on earth, including humans. Without a wide range of animals, plants and microorganisms, we cannot have the healthy ecosystems that we rely on to provide us with the air we breathe and the food we eat. And people also value nature itself.”

### **Alternative**

- 4.15 The alternative is to rely on protection through legislation and not include the policy. However, given the importance of biodiversity it is appropriate to include the policy.

## **Policy EN4: Irreplaceable Habitats**

**Proposals that would result in the loss of irreplaceable habitats [as defined in The Biodiversity Gain Requirements (Irreplaceable Habitat) Regulations 2024] will not be permitted unless there are wholly exceptional reasons and a suitable compensation strategy, to the satisfaction of the Council, exists.**

**Proposals predicted to result in adverse impacts upon irreplaceable habitats must be accompanied by detailed survey information and clear evidence to support the exceptional reasons that justify such a loss. The compensation strategy must include contribution to the enhancement and management of the habitat.**

**Proposals close to ancient woodland must include a buffer zone of at least 15 metres from the boundary of the woodland to avoid root damage. Where surveys show that other impacts are likely to extend beyond this distance, a larger buffer zone will be required.**

### **Justification**

#### **Purpose of the policy**

- 4.16 The purpose of the policy is to ensure the protection of irreplaceable habitats and that any loss is only allowed in exceptional circumstances and that where loss occurs, compensation is provided in accordance with NPPF paragraph 186(c), which states that development resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats (such as ancient woodland and ancient or veteran trees) should be refused. Ancient woodland and veteran trees serve as a rich cultural record of past management practices. A buffer zone around ancient woodland is important to avoid root damage. In some cases, such as where air pollution from a significant increase in traffic may adversely affect ancient woodland, a larger buffer zone may be appropriate.
- 4.17 The Woodland Trust wrote to all local planning authority Chief Executives in March 2024 to highlight current and new legal and policy obligations to protect ancient woodland and veteran trees from the threat of development. Ancient woodland is an irreplaceable resource of great importance for its wildlife, soils, recreation, cultural value, historical and archaeological significance, and the contribution it makes to our diverse landscapes. It is a scarce and threatened resource, covering only 2.5% of England's land area, and has a high level of protection in planning policy.

#### **Alternative**

- 4.18 The alternative is to rely on protection through legislation and not include the policy. However, given the importance of irreplaceable habitats it is appropriate to include the policy.

## **Policy EN5: New and Existing Trees**

Proposals for major development must consider the opportunities for new tree planting, including street trees, alongside and in addition to the requirement for an increase in tree canopy cover. Proposals should consider planting trees that, upon maturity, would be of a scale and form that have the potential to form positive focal points or a landmark.

Where new trees are proposed, consideration must be given to the possible conflict between new trees and built form and be compatible with highway considerations and parking areas. Tree species must reflect local conditions and management objectives of the specific site. The maintenance of new trees must be included within any landscape management plan and landscape maintenance schedule for the site for an agreed period of time to ensure establishment.

All new development should incorporate existing trees. Proposals should ensure that existing trees are not damaged and are retained wherever possible. Consideration must be given to the potential for future pressure to prune or fell existing trees and the design of development must mitigate this.

Tree survey information must be submitted with all planning applications where trees are present on site. The tree survey information must include protection, mitigation and management measures.

In some instances, trees can cause damage to property or infrastructure requiring significant pruning or even removal. In these cases, a fair and balanced judgement will be made based on the suitability and benefits of retaining a tree against the potential risks it may pose.

Where the loss of trees is essential to allow for appropriate development an appropriate species and number of replacement trees must be provided. Any replacement trees should be provided as close as possible to the new development and should be supported by a suitable management and maintenance scheme.

### **Justification**

#### **Purpose of the policy**

- 4.19 Trees make an important contribution to the character and quality of urban environments and can also help mitigate and adapt to climate change. The purpose of the policy is to ensure that existing trees are protected, with consideration given to potential for future pressure to prune or fell, and that opportunities are taken to plant new trees. The policy is in accordance with NPPF paragraph 136, which states: 'planning policies and decisions should ensure that new streets are tree-lined, that opportunities are taken to incorporate trees elsewhere in developments (such as parks and community orchards), that appropriate measures are in place to secure the long-term maintenance of newly-planted trees, and that existing trees are retained wherever possible.' Whilst the Local Plan includes a policy requirement to increase tree canopy cover, the focus of this policy is on planting new street trees, including trees that could become a focal point or landmark.

4.20 It is important to consider the maintenance issues associated with street tree planting and the need to 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 consistent with NPPF, paragraph 136. Regard should be had to the Essex Design Guide: [Highways Technical Manual - Planting in sight splays](#).

**Alternative**

4.21 The alternative is not to include the policy and rely on the protection of trees through the biodiversity policy and the planting of new trees through the requirement for an increase in tree canopy cover. However, this policy provides a focus on street trees and the role trees have as positive focal points or landmarks.

## **Policy EN6: Conserving and Enhancing the 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, locally significant buildings, non-heritage assets (including the setting of heritage assets) will only be permitted in wholly 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. Public benefits should clearly outweigh the harm in cases of substantial harm, this includes considering factors such as the optimisation of the assets viable use and the public interest in development. If development leads to less than substantial harm, this needs to be balanced against the public benefits of the proposal, focusing on the quality and public need of those benefits.**

**Development affecting the historic environment should conserve and enhance the significance of the heritage asset and any features of specific historic, archaeological, architectural or artistic interest. There should be importance attributed to preserving the setting of the heritage assets acknowledging the relationship between the asset and its surroundings. 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.**

**Within designated Conservation Areas, proposals must preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the area in accordance with the statutory duty to consider these aspects under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. Development should complement the form, materials, and architectural style of existing buildings and spaces. Demolition of unlisted buildings or structures within a Conservation Area will only be permitted where it can be demonstrated that the building or structure harms or contributes little to the character or appearance of the area. In all cases, detailed justification, including an assessment of alternatives, will be required. Applicants for proposals within Conservation Areas should engage with the local community and stakeholders, including local historical societies, to ensure that the local significance of the area is recognised and respected in any proposed development.**

**The adaptive reuse of heritage assets, including listed buildings, non-designated heritage assets, and buildings within Conservation Areas, is encouraged, provided that the proposed changes do not harm the significance of the asset. The preservation of key features, materials, and architectural elements should be a priority, and any alterations should be sympathetic to the asset's character.**

**In assessing proposals for development affecting heritage assets, consideration will be given to the broader public benefits that the development may bring, including providing access to heritage sites, educational**



**opportunities, and enhancing public understanding of Colchester's historic environment.**

**All development proposals should promote the adaptive reuse of buildings and the role of heritage in sustainable development (such as retrofitting for energy efficiency or considering climate change in heritage management). Heritage Impact Assessments will be required for proposals related to or impacting on the setting of heritage assets so that sufficient information is provided to understand the significance of the heritage assets and to assess the impacts of development on historic assets, together with any proposed mitigation measures.**

## **Justification**

### **Purpose of the policy**

- 4.22 The Council will conserve and where appropriate enhance the historic environment recognising the positive contribution made to the character and distinctiveness of Colchester through the diversity and quality of heritage assets. This includes wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits.
- 4.23 Colchester's importance as a historic City warrants a policy detailing and reinforcing the need to conserve and enhance the historic environment. The policy focuses on the protection and preservation of both designated and non-designated heritage assets, as outlined in the Council's Local List, which includes 715 recorded heritage assets. The goal is to prevent or minimise harm to these assets and to assess any potential harm in relation to the loss of their significance. In cases where harm is deemed unavoidable, efforts should be made to retain some element of significance. Additionally, the Council may refer to the NPPF when deciding whether an asset qualifies as a non-designated heritage asset for the purposes of a planning application.
- 4.24 The Council will promote heritage partnership agreements where appropriate, to support the long-term management and conservation of heritage assets, particularly those 'at risk' or in need of significant investment.
- 4.25 The Council will work proactively to identify heritage assets at risk of decay or neglect and will support initiatives aimed at securing their long-term survival. This may include offering advice on repair, restoration, or funding opportunities, in collaboration with heritage bodies such as Historic England.
- 4.26 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 Council will request the removal of the features that undermine the historic environment as part of any proposed development. The Council will request the provision of creative and accessible interpretations of heritage assets impacted by development.
- 4.27 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.

**Alternative**

4.28 The alternative is to rely on legislation and the NPPF and not include a policy. The NPPF requires local planning authorities to outline a strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment within their Local Plans. Failing to include a policy that provides a strategic approach would not be a viable alternative, as it would create inconsistency with the NPPF.

## **Policy EN7: Archaeology**

**All development proposals that may affect archaeological sites or areas of archaeological potential must include a desktop study and, where necessary, an archaeological field evaluation to assess the impact on below-ground heritage assets. A written scheme of investigation (WSI) will be required to outline the methodology for archaeological investigation, excavation, or preservation in situ, as appropriate.**

**In cases where archaeological remains are likely to be impacted, the preferred approach is to preserve the remains in situ. However, where this is not feasible, appropriate recording and excavation will be required before any development can proceed. Results of such investigations should be deposited with the Historic Environment Record (HER) and made publicly available.**

### **Justification**

#### **Purpose of the policy**

- 4.29 As with the Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment policy, the purpose of this policy is to conserve and where appropriate enhance the historic environment – specifically archaeological sites or areas, recognising the positive contribution made to the character and distinctiveness of Colchester.
- 4.30 The NPPF states that ‘where a site on which development is proposed includes, or has the potential to include, heritage assets with archaeological interest, local planning authorities should require developers to submit an appropriate desk-based assessment and, where necessary, a field evaluation’ (paragraph 207).

#### **Alternative**

- 4.31 The alternative is to include this in the Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment policy rather than having a stand-alone archaeology policy.

## **Policy EN8: Flood Risk and Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS)**

**Development should be directed away from land at risk of flooding in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework and Planning Practice Guidance.**

**Planning permission will only be granted where it has been demonstrated that:**

- a) the site will remain safe from all types of flooding throughout the lifetime of the development; and**
- b) flood risk will not increase on or off site as a result 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 buildings have been demolished within the functional floodplain (Flood Zone 3b) for a significant length of time (i.e. over a year), the land should be reverted back to functional floodplain and consequently, development should be avoided within these areas. Where a building(s) is already located in the functional floodplain, any proposals to regenerate or replace such building(s) must not increase the building footprint any greater than the existing footprint.**

**The Colchester Surface Water Management Plan identifies Critical Drainage Areas. New developments within Critical Drainage Areas will be required to provide or contribute towards the provision of flood mitigation options via CIL/S106 contributions, as identified in the Colchester Surface Water Management Plan (and its successor). This is to reduce or mitigate the risk of flooding to existing properties located within the Critical Drainage Area and to accommodate the drainage needs of new developments.**

**Where a site specific flood risk assessment is required in accordance with national policy this should be prepared in accordance with the Colchester Level 1 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment. A Sustainable Drainage Strategy should also be submitted as part of a planning application where a site specific flood risk assessment is required. Any Sustainable Drainage Strategy should be developed having regard to the latest guidance including the CIRIA SuDS Manual, Essex County Council SuDS Design Guide, Essex County Council Green Infrastructure Strategy and Colchester's Green Network and Waterways Guiding Principles (and their successors).**

**Where sites are at risk of groundwater flooding, construction phase groundwater monitoring during periods of high groundwater (October – March) should be included in the Flood Risk Assessment to inform the design and any mitigation measures, unless adequate justification can be provided by the applicant to exempt the proposed development from this requirement.**

**All new development will be required to incorporate water management measures to reduce surface water run-off and adverse impact to water quality, to ensure flood risk is not increased elsewhere. Nature-based solutions are a priority for flood and water management. Surface water should be managed in accordance with the drainage hierarchy and be managed close to its source, at the surface and mimic natural drainage as much as possible. All development proposals should incorporate Sustainable Drainage Systems and consider:**

- a) **Natural flood management at a catchment scale, including watercourses and coastal areas;**
- b) **Existing drainage features such as ditches and ponds to be retained and incorporated into developments proposals where possible;**
- c) **Developments close to rivers should consider the opportunity to improve and enhance the river environment;**
- d) **Prioritisation for soft landscaped features;**
- e) **Inclusion of grey and rain water reuse systems such as green roofs and water butts;**
- f) **Inclusion of multifunctional Sustainable Drainage Systems that enhance biodiversity and provide aesthetic and amenity value, and safe public access;**
- g) **Inclusion of permeable paving for driveways, paths and roads;**
- h) **The management and maintenance of all Sustainable Drainage Systems for the lifetime of the development including responsibility and that these remain economically proportionate.**

**Sustainable Drainage Systems should be designed to be multifunctional, however this should not undermine their function, and these features should not be considered as making a site's entire contribution for open space as required by Policy GN1.**

**Development must conserve and enhance the natural flood storage value of the water environment, including watercourse corridors and catchments. Proposals that open up culverted watercourses, where it is safe and practicable, will be supported.**

### **Justification**

#### **Purpose of the policy**

- 4.32 The overall aims of this policy are to steer development to land with the lowest risk from flooding and ensure its safety of the lifetime of the development. The policy is also seeking to ensure Sustainable Drainage Systems are designed and implemented to enable the management of surface water flood risk through nature based solutions which can also create and enhance green infrastructure.
- 4.33 The Colchester Level 1 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (January 2025), provided an overview of the risk of flooding from all sources across the Local Plan area, taking into account the impacts of climate change and land use changes. The Assessment also identifies opportunities to reduce the causes and impacts of floodings and a range of measures that could be considered as part of development to manage and mitigate flood risk.
- 4.34 The Colchester Surface Water Management Plan (SWMP) identifies 12 Critical Drainage Areas across Colchester. These delineate the areas where the impact of surface water flooding is expected to be greatest within Colchester. It is acknowledged that Critical Drainage Areas do not account for all the areas that could be affected by surface water flooding. It is therefore important that the policy seeks to reduce the risk from surface water flooding throughout the whole of the Local Plan area.

- 4.35 The Water Strategy for Essex 2024 outlines the current water challenges faced in Essex including future demand, access and provision of water resources, water quality, impacts from climate change including flood risk and water scarcity. The strategy identifies 30 actions that will contribute to addressing the water issues in Essex over the next five years, relating to the themes of reducing demand, change land use and developing alternative supply.
- 4.36 The use of Sustainable Drainage Systems to manage water run-off is 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, reducing the risk of overloading the system. Sustainable Drainage Systems can also improve water quality by enabling water treatment before water reaches its final outfall.
- 4.37 The design of Sustainable Drainage Systems should consider the Drainage Hierarchy, which seeks to manage water via infiltration in the first instance, with connection to a sewer being the last resort. New developments should look for ways to harvest rainwater for re-use and move away from the use of foul and combined sewers to discharge surface water.
- 4.38 The design of a Sustainable Drainage System should be considered early in the plan making process to enable the greatest benefits to be sought. Developers should enter into early discussions with the Environment Agency and Essex County Council (as Lead Local Flood Authority). This should also include consideration of maintenance and long term adoption responsibilities.
- 4.39 Conserving and enhancing the natural flood storage value of the water environment, including watercourse corridors and catchments, and opening up culverted watercourses, where it is safe and practicable, will support ecological improvements and create assets that are of benefit to local community, such as for recreation.

### **Alternatives**

- 4.40 The alternatives are to rely on national policy and guidance or retain the previous Local Plan Policies DM23 and DM24. However, this new policy is considered to be clearer than the adopted Local Plan policies.

## **Policy EN9: Pollution and Contaminated Land**

Proposals will be supported that do 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, light pollution, noise nuisance, surface / ground water sources or land pollution. High quality open spaces that meet the Council's Guiding Principles for the green network and waterways must be incorporated into development proposals to minimise environmental impacts and contribute to improved environmental quality through the consideration of the selection of species (e.g. trees) and planting design to address air quality, soil erosion, noise and light pollution.

Proposals that include outdoor lighting must follow best practice design principles to reduce light pollution and its impact on dark skies. Where a Lighting Plan is submitted in support of an application, it should contain information to show how the lighting is justified, what luminaires are used and where, how it complies with relevant standards and how it considers wider landscape and wildlife considerations.

Proposals for developments within designated Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs) or where development within a nearby locality may impact on an AQMA are required, firstly, 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 Council. Permission will only be granted where the Council is satisfied that after selection of appropriate mitigation the development will not have an unacceptable significant adverse impact on air quality and health and wellbeing.

Development proposals on or adjacent / in close proximity to contaminated land, or where there is reason to suspect contamination, must include a contamination risk assessment of the extent of contamination and any possible risks. Where necessary this should provide any additional environmental protection and mitigation measures, such as landfill gas and leachate migration management, post remediation and management regimes for former landfill sites. 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 designated as contaminated land under Part IIA of the Environmental Protection Act 1990.



## **Justification**

### **Purpose of the policy**

- 4.41 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 or eliminate the problem.
- 4.42 Paragraph 187(e) of the NPPF states that planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by: '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'. Criteria (f) states: 'remediating and mitigating despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated and unstable land, where appropriate'. Paragraph 201 recognises that the focus of planning policies and decisions should be on whether proposed development is an acceptable use of land, rather than the control of processes or emissions.

### **Alternative**

- 4.43 The alternative is to not include this policy and rely on legislation and the NPPF.

## 5. Green Network and Waterways

- 5.1 Green and blue infrastructure is the term frequently used in planning to describe the green network and waterways. However, green and blue infrastructure is not always understood by the public and so the Local Plan uses the term green network and waterways. To be clear, this encompasses the definition of green infrastructure in the NPPF, which is: *“A network of multi-functional green and blue spaces and other natural features, urban and rural, which is capable of delivering a wide range of environmental, economic, health and wellbeing benefits for nature, climate, local and wider communities and prosperity.”*
- 5.2 This chapter includes policies on open space. The definition of open space is wide ranging. The national planning practice guidance for open space, sports and recreation facilities states that open space includes all open space of public value and can take many forms, from formal sports pitches to open areas within a development, linear corridors and country parks. Open space can have an ecological and recreational value as well as being an important part of the landscape and setting of built development.
- 5.3 The green network and waterways are multifunctional and has many benefits across planning. The policies in this chapter will contribute towards all the themes in the vision and promote health and wellbeing. Policies will contribute towards creating healthy, vibrant and diverse places; climate change resilience and adaptation; the creation of welcoming, inclusive communities with high quality public realm; and the creation of well connected communities with reduced congestion and an increase in active travel.
- 5.4 Various Council teams have worked together to create Guiding Principles for Colchester City’s green network and waterways, which are reflected in this chapter. The Guiding Principles were developed through an audit of the city’s green network and waterways baseline; public engagement on the condition of the green network and waterways and opportunities to improve the network; and a review of Natural England’s Green Infrastructure Principles, Essex County Council’s Green Infrastructure Standards, the objectives of the Colchester Woodland and Biodiversity Project and open space and playing pitch strategies.

## **Policy GN1: Open Space and Green Network and Waterways Principles**

Major residential development proposals must demonstrate, in a Green Network and Waterways Plan, that new multifunctional open space(s) of a minimum size of 10% of the gross site area is included in the proposals and must meet any relevant criteria in site allocations policies, be informed by an appraisal of local context and have regard to the following guiding principles for open spaces:

- a) Are multifunctional and help to create greener, beautiful, healthier, and more prosperous neighbourhoods, with a thriving nature network;
- b) support sustainable drainage and help places adapt to climate change;
- c) Address gaps in provision to create a coherent green network;
- d) Connect as a living network for people and nature across multiple scales from the wider landscape to more local and neighbourhood scales;
- e) Include a varied mix of types and sizes that can provide a range of functions and benefits and, where appropriate, include street trees, shrubs, planters, green roofs and walls, small green spaces between buildings, gardens, 'play on the way' features/trails and the building blocks as described in the National Model Design Guide<sup>1</sup> ;
- f) Enable people to experience and connect with nature, and seek to offer access to good quality parks, green spaces, recreational, walking and cycling routes that are inclusive, safe, welcoming, well-managed, accessible and encourage active travel;
- g) Are designed to be accessible and inclusive to a wide range of ages and abilities appropriate to the nature and status of the site;
- h) Respond to the area's character so that it contributes to the conservation, enhancement and/or restoration of the historic environment and landscapes and creates new high-quality landscapes and a strong place identity to which local people feel connected;
- i) Demonstrate how the green space will be managed, maintained and monitored for a minimum of 30 years.

Where residential allocations are identified to provide for 'Enhanced Open Space' as indicated in the Place Policies (and shown on the Policies Map), substantively in excess of 10% of the allocation area must be provided as open space. This should include at least one area of strategic open space and multiple areas of less formal and more incidental open space.

### **Justification**

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<sup>1</sup> sustainable drainage systems, green and blue roofs, green walls, rain gardens, swales, features for species, trees in hard landscapes, street furniture and utility structures, traffic-free routes, allotments, orchards, private domestic gardens, green spaces (including parks and burial grounds), more natural spaces (including woodlands, grassland, scrub, and hedgerows), heritage features and the historic environment, blue spaces (including wetlands)

### **Purpose of the policy**

- 5.5 Open spaces are important for the health and wellbeing of communities and can deliver wider benefits such as benefits for nature and supporting efforts to address climate change. The purpose of the policy is to ensure the delivery of high-quality multifunctional open spaces that deliver multiple benefits and complies with the Council's Green Network and Waterways Guiding Principles (2024). The requirement for major applications to submit a Green Network and Waterways Plan will demonstrate compliance with this policy and other relevant policies. There are plentiful green and open spaces and waterways throughout Colchester with linkages, corridors, and connections between them. There are opportunities through the Council's various workstreams, including the Local Plan, and work of the Parks and Open Spaces team, to improve linkages, corridors and connections and follow Lawton's principles of bigger, better, more, and better connected.
- 5.6 The vision in Colchester's Green Network and Waterways Guiding Principles is that Colchester's special and diverse green network and waterways will form a coherent, high quality network providing connections for people and for wildlife. Colchester's green network will be multifunctional and provide benefits for nature, health and wellbeing, prosperity, water management and climate resilience. The existing network will be protected, developed, and enhanced and gaps in provision will be addressed. The Council will work to improve what we have where we can, to ensure that Colchester remains a sustainable, thriving, and greener city for future generations. Colchester is a unique place with a rich heritage and diverse environment and character that includes the city, countryside, and coast. The green network and waterways enables Colchester to be a healthy, vibrant, green and diverse place where people can live active lifestyles.

### **Alternative**

- 5.7 The alternative is to rely on Natural England's Green Infrastructure Principles and Standards (which are reflected in the policy) rather than producing a local vision, character description and set of guiding principles for Colchester's green network and waterways. These principles and the Essex GI Principles (endorsed by NE) are reflected in the policy and the Council has developed a vision and guiding principles specific to Colchester.

## **Policy GN2: Strategic Green Spaces and Nature Recovery**

**The Council will support the delivery of large scale strategic open spaces, habitat creation and restoration of wildlife rich habitats that delivers the strategic opportunities outlined in the Essex Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS). The Council will work with landowners and other stakeholders to support the delivery of the Essex LNRS.**

**All proposals should have regard to achieving the Essex LNRS principles for restoring and enhancing biodiverse and well-functioning ecological networks designed to deliver multiple benefits based on identified need and contribute towards creating and restoring habitats in strategic opportunity areas.**

**Proposals for a Roman River corridor nature recovery area, as shown on the policies map, will be supported. Any proposals within this area that are not principally related to nature recovery must demonstrate that they will not prevent nature recovery coming forward in the Strategic Opportunity Areas identified in the Essex LNRS and how they will contribute to delivering habitat creation in accordance with the Essex LNRS.**

### **Justification**

#### **Purpose of the policy**

- 5.8 The purpose of the policy is to support the delivery of the Essex LNRS and encourage delivery of the strategic opportunity areas. Nature in Essex has suffered significantly over the last century, and continues to suffer, from species loss, habitat loss and increased habitat fragmentation. It is crucial that nature recovery is at the centre of future action for the environment, to create new habitats and recover and enhance space for nature that has been lost or degraded. The role of LNRS is to provide a county-wide, practical solution to driving action for nature recovery on the ground. The primary purpose of the LNRS is to identify locations to create or improve habitat most likely to provide the greatest benefit for nature and the wider environment.
- 5.9 The LNRS includes areas of particular importance for biodiversity, which includes national conservation sites; local nature reserves; and other areas of particular importance for biodiversity. The key for nature recovery, and the essence of the LNRS, is to provide more space for nature and ensure it is better connected – ‘bigger, better and more joined up’, as Professor John Lawton has called it. The LNRS contains opportunity maps, showing where and how to deliver the Lawton principles for our most important habitats. The strategic creation opportunity maps highlight the top locations for nature recovery, indicating where efforts will be most beneficial for nature and the wider environment.
- 5.10 The Roman River corridor nature recovery area is specifically referred to in the policy and shown on the policies map. This area is identified in the draft Essex LNRS as a strategic opportunity area for woodland, grassland, freshwater standing water and freshwater river buffers. A proposal for a multi-parish nature green space / local nature recovery corridor was submitted to the Council by Aldham, Great Tey and Marks Tey Parish Councils as part of the Green Network and Waterways engagement. The corridor includes mature hedgerows and trees, pastureland,

floodplain, a reservoir and some arable land. Much of the Roman River is followed by a public right of way. Just to the north of the river is the 'Gainsborough Line', also a linear habitat, with trees the length of it. Marks Tey Brick Pit SSSI, local wildlife sites and ancient woodland are located within the proposed corridor. Marks Tey's Neighbourhood Plan includes a 'green corridor' which brings in the Roman River.

### **Alternative**

- 5.11 The alternative is to not include reference to the Essex LNRS. However, the LNRS is an important spatial plan for nature recovery and this policy is a mechanism of incorporating it into the Local Plan.

### **Policy GN3: Local Green Spaces**

The following areas, which are shown on the policies map, are designated as Local Green Space. These are green spaces that are demonstrably special to the local community and hold a particular local significance.

- a) Land at Middlewick Ranges
- b) Mount Bures village green

Local Green Spaces are also designated in neighbourhood plans and are shown on the policies map.

Proposals for development within Local Green Spaces will only be supported in very special circumstances and considered against policies for the Green Belt as set out in the NPPF.

### **Justification**

#### **Purpose of the policy**

- 5.12 The purpose of the policy is to designate green spaces of particular importance to communities as Local Green Space and comply with the requirements of NPPF paragraph 107. This affords a higher level of protection consistent with that for Green Belt (NPPF paragraph 108). It also draws attention to the local green spaces designated in some of Colchester's adopted neighbourhood plans

#### **Alternative**

- 5.13 The alternative is not to designate Local Green Spaces and not to refer to those Local Green Spaces that are designated through made neighbourhood plans. However, Local Green Spaces provide an additional level of protection for open spaces which are identified as being appropriate for these sites.



## **Policy GN4: Tree Canopy Cover**

**A Tree Canopy Cover Assessment will be required for all major applications. Development proposals should seek, where appropriate, to increase the level of canopy cover on site by a minimum of 10%.**

**For sites where the baseline canopy cover is below 10% of the total site area, applicants must secure a minimum canopy coverage of 10% across the site area.**

**New and existing trees must be incorporated into new developments and new streets should be tree lined.**

**Applicants must demonstrate that tree species and planting locations must be selected to enhance biodiversity, support ecosystem services, address environmental challenges, and be compatible with highway considerations.**

**Tree species must reflect local conditions and management objectives of the specific site. Native planting should be used but consideration given to the inclusion of some non-native non-invasive species that could be suited to changing, warmer conditions.**

**The maintenance of new trees must be included within any landscape management plan and landscape maintenance schedule for the site for an agreed period of time to ensure establishment.**

**In circumstances where any of these requirements is not possible or desirable, compensatory provision should be identified and secured through a legal obligation. Compensatory provision will need to be discussed with the case officer on a case-by-case basis and could include provision of an additional or larger open space or tree planting elsewhere.**

**The Council will support proposals that create pocket forests (also called Miyawaki forests) by planting native trees and shrubs together, to create a compact, biodiversity rich, and ultra-dense environment, where appropriate.**

### **Justification**

#### **Purpose of the policy**

- 5.14 The purpose of the policy is to secure an increase in tree canopy cover across Colchester. The importance of vegetation in towns and urban areas is long recognised; it provides shade, evaporative cooling, rainwater interception. It has an influence on other items such as air quality, energy use, biodiversity, and the reduction of the urban heat island effect. It also has positive impacts on human health and mental wellbeing.
- 5.15 The principal objective of the tree canopy cover assessment is to help understand the urban forest resource, specifically the amount of tree canopy that exists on an individual site at present. Canopy cover assessments provide a more accurate representation than simply counting the number of trees. Represented as a percentage of the area in total it is then much more accurate to show changes in the cover (increase or decrease).

## **Alternative**

- 5.16 The alternative is to require a higher level of tree canopy cover – 20%. The 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 that an average tree canopy cover of 20% should be set as the minimum standard for most UK towns and cities.

## **Policy GN5: Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace**

**Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) must be provided where the Habitat Regulations Assessment identifies a need for it to provide alternative greenspace to divert visitors from visiting sensitive sites such as the Colne and Blackwater Estuaries Special Protection Areas (SPAs) and Essex Estuaries Special Area of Conservation (SAC).**

**All SANGs that are required must meet the Natural England standard of 8 hectares per 1,000 head of new population and must comply with the latest Natural England SANG guidance.**

### **Justification**

#### **Purpose of the policy**

- 5.17 The purpose of the policy is to ensure that the provision of SANG follows Natural England's guidance and meets the Natural England standard of 8 hectares per 1000 head of new population. The role of SANG is to provide alternative green space to divert visitors from visiting habitats sites. SANG are intended to provide avoidance measures for the potential impact of residential development on habitats sites by preventing an increase in visitor pressure. The effectiveness of SANG as mitigation will depend upon the location and design.
- 5.18 Natural England has created SANG guidance for the Thames Basin Heaths Planning Zone, which is applicable to SANGs for other habitats sites. The policy requires compliance with this guidance and any future SANG guidance.

#### **Alternative**

- 5.19 The alternative is to include detailed criteria for the provision of SANGs rather than refer to the latest Natural England guidance. However, reference to the latest guidance ensures the policy remains up to date throughout the plan period.

## **Policy GN6: Retention of Open Space**

The Council will retain, protect and enhance existing open spaces and secure additional open spaces where deficiencies are identified.

Development, including change of use, of any existing or proposed open space (regardless of whether it is in private or public ownership), including allotments, will not be supported unless it can be demonstrated that:

- a) 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
- b) The proposal would not result in the loss of an area important for its amenity or contribution to the green network or to the character of the area in general.

Development proposals resulting in a loss of open space must additionally demonstrate that:

- c) There is an identified excess provision within the catchment of the facility and no likely shortfall is expected within the plan period; or
- d) 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 and will be delivered within an acceptable timeframe to be agreed with the Council.

In all cases, development will not be permitted that would result in any deficiencies in 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 Colchester's green network will not be permitted.

### **Justification**

#### **Purpose of the policy**

- 5.20 The purpose of the policy is to ensure the protection of existing and proposed open spaces. The policy sets out the criteria that must be met for proposals that would result in the loss of open space, consistent with paragraph 104 of the NPPF. The NPPF defines open space as 'any 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'.

## **Alternative**

5.21 The alternative is to rely on the more strategic policies in this section and the NPPF and not include a policy that includes criteria regarding loss of open space. However, it is considered that the detail in this policy is needed to be clear on how proposals involving the loss of open space will be considered.

## 6. Landscape and Coast

- 6.1 This chapter on Landscape and Coast outlines the importance of preserving and enhancing the natural environment, focusing on the landscapes and coastal zones that play a pivotal role in Colchester's ecological heritage and the wellbeing of our residents. These spaces not only provide vital habitats for wildlife and support biodiversity, but also serve as areas for recreation, relaxation, and connection with nature. By safeguarding these areas, we aim to maintain a balanced relationship between development and environmental stewardship, ensuring that Colchester's landscapes and coasts continue to enrich the lives of current and future generations while contributing to a sustainable, thriving community.
- 6.2 Colchester's landscapes and coastline is extremely diverse and important in terms of its natural and historic environment, including biodiversity, landscape character, archaeology and cultural heritage. The policies in this chapter aim to manage growth sustainably and ensure that the inherent character and qualities of the landscape can continue to be appreciated, guiding positive change that conserves, protects, enhances, restores, or creates local character.
- 6.3 Understanding the character of place and evaluating an area's defining characteristics is a key component in achieving the policy aims and ensuring that any change or development does not undermine features that are valued or characteristics in a particular landscape. The Colchester Landscape Character Assessment (LCA) (November 2024) is a comprehensive and up to date strategic-scale landscape evidence base to assist in the planning process. The LCA can be used to consider landscape character when considering any type of change and provides a framework for landscape studies, sensitivity assessments and baseline evidence for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessments. This includes opportunities for conserving existing character and strengthening and enhancing character, as well as opportunities to create new character. The study focuses entirely on rural and urban-fringe landscape and does not include the principal urban conurbations of Colchester, Tiptree, Wivenhoe and West Mersea.

## **Policy LC1: Landscape**

All proposals and associated land use change or land management must demonstrate that they are informed by, and are sympathetic to, the landscape character and qualities of the locality. A Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) is required for all major applications and must be prepared in accordance with Landscape Institute guidelines.

In considering development proposals, the Council will take every opportunity to reinforce, restore, conserve, strengthen or enhance, as appropriate, the landscape character of the area in which development is proposed, as well as opportunities to create new character.

Development must comply with all the following criteria:

- a) Development must safeguard or strengthen tranquillity, features and patterns that contribute to the landscape character and local distinctiveness of the area, protect rural openness and sense of place and protect natural landscape features where they make a contribution to the historic environment.
- b) The scale, design, materials and landscaping measures are appropriate and would lead to an enhancement of the character of the landscape.
- c) Proposals must consider ecological and geological features, identifying areas suitable for habitat creation, and incorporate measures in the landscape plan with details of management and maintenance.

All development should take into account the sensitivity of the particular landscape to accommodate change. Development, or associated land use change or land management, which does not significantly adversely affect the landscape character of an area, will normally be allowed. Development must have regard to the Colchester Landscape Character Assessment 2024 to identify the character areas and features of the affected landscape. Development must take into account the general guidelines and landscape character area specific guidelines.

The Council considers that landscape character areas with 'high' inherent value and sensitivity as per Appendix A of the Colchester Landscape Character Assessment 2024, are valued landscapes. Development within valued landscapes will only be permitted where it would protect and enhance the characteristics that contribute towards its character.

Development should avoid reduction of and encourage traditional farming practices (including traditional orchards), retaining and enhancing sense of place whilst recognising the need to adapt to and mitigate against the effects of climate change.

Development on Land classified as Agricultural Grade 1 (except for renewable energy projects) will not be permitted unless a landscape strategy, which would compensate for the loss or harm, is secured or where there are overriding public benefits arising from the development.

## **Justification**



### **Purpose of the policy**

- 6.4 The purpose of the policy is to guide development that is sympathetic to local character and the qualities of the landscape.
- 6.5 The Colchester Landscape Character Assessment (November 2024) provides a comprehensive and up to date strategic-scale landscape evidence base to assist in the planning process. The document can be used to consider landscape character when considering any type of change and provides a framework for landscape studies, sensitivity assessments and baseline evidence for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessments. This includes opportunities for conserving existing character and strengthening and enhancing character, as well as opportunities to create new character. The study focuses entirely on rural and urban-fringe landscape and does not include the principal urban conurbations of Colchester, Tiptree, Wivenhoe and West Mersea.
- 6.6 Paragraph 187 of the NPPF states: 'Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by...protecting and enhancing valued landscapes', The Council considers areas identified in Appendix A of the Colchester Landscape Character Assessment 2024 to be Valued Landscapes.

### **Alternative**

- 6.7 The alternative is to refer to landscape and the Colchester Landscape Character Assessment in the strategic environment policy and rely on legislation and good practice and not include this policy. However, this policy adds detail which will assist in protecting landscape character.

## **Policy LC2: Dedham Vale National Landscape**

**Development will only be supported within or on land within the setting of the Dedham Vale National Landscape that:**

- a) Makes a positive contribution to the purpose, natural beauty and special qualities of the National Landscape; and**
- b) Does not adversely affect the tranquillity and the National Landscapes good quality night/dark skies, taking account of guidance in The Dedham Vale National Landscape Lighting Design Guide 2023; and,**
- c) Does not adversely affect the character, quality views within, into and out of the National Landscape, and distinctiveness of the National Landscape or threaten public enjoyment of these areas, including by increased motorised vehicle movement; and**
- d) Supports the wider environmental, social and economic objectives as set out in the Management Plan 2021 -2026 for the Dedham Vale National Landscape and Stour Valley (and successor management plans).**
- e) Furthers the purpose of the National Landscape as per the legal test.**

**Applications for major development within or in close proximity to the boundary of the Dedham Vale National Landscape 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 Council will seek opportunities to mitigate the impact of features identified as having adverse impacts. Residual impacts may be offset by other mitigation within the National Landscape or contributions to the Stour Valley Environment Fund.**

**Proposals in or near the National Landscape must underground new infrastructure associated with electricity schemes or communication equipment to help protect the landscape qualities.**

### **Justification**

#### **Purpose of the policy**

- 6.8 National Landscapes (previously Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty) are designated by the Government for the purpose of ensuring that the natural beauty of the finest landscapes in England and Wales are conserved and enhanced. The purpose of this policy is to conserve and enhance the Dedham Vale National Landscape.**
- 6.9 In December 2023, a new duty came into force in Section 245 of the 'Levelling-up and Regeneration Act 2023' stating that 'relevant authorities must seek to further the purposes' of the designated landscape. This overrides and strengthens the previous duty to 'have regard' to the purposes.**
- 6.10 The Dedham Vale National Landscape has been designated for its national importance in terms of landscape quality, biodiversity and cultural heritage 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. The purpose of the policy is to ensure that proposals conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the national landscape. Potential impacts on the National Landscape will be considered in relation to their individual or cumulative, adverse impact on the landscape. As a typically rural landscape, the skies above are of regional importance to residents within and surrounding the landscape. It is important to protect skies that could qualify for International Dark-Sky Association (IDA) accreditation at a later date.

### **Alternative**

- 6.11 The alternative is to rely on legislation, good practice and the Management Plan 2021 -2026 for the Dedham Vale National Landscape and Stour Valley and not include this policy. However, this would not be consistent with the increased duty on all relevant authorities to 'further the purpose' of the National Landscape.

### **Policy LC3: Coastal Areas**

Planning proposals within Colchester's coastal, estuarine, intertidal and tidal environment, will need to accord with the South East Inshore Marine Plan (June 2021) and successor documents.

Within the Coastal Protection Belt, an integrated approach to coastal management will be promoted and development (with the exception of householder applications) will only be supported where it can be demonstrated that it:

- a) Requires a coastal location due to the nature of the use and is located within the developed area of the coast; and
- b) Is a land use type that is appropriate to the Flood Zone, will be safe from flooding and coastal erosion over its planned lifetime and will not have an unacceptable impact on coastal change; and
- c) Will be compatible with the surroundings in terms of use, location, scale and design, and not have a significant adverse impact on the landscape and seascape character of the coast, nature conservation designations, heritage assets, and maritime uses; and
- d) Will deliver or sustain social and economic sustainability benefits considered important to the wellbeing of the coastal communities; and
- e) Will not hinder access to and the maintenance of the King Charles III England Coast Path.

**Houseboats:** Proposals for new moorings for permanent residential houseboats will not be permitted in coastal areas, including Coast Road West Mersea, because of their landscape and environmental impact on designated habitats sites. 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 designated habitats (such as saltmarsh, mudflats and oyster beds) 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.

### **Justification**

#### **Purpose of the policy**

- 6.12 The purpose of this policy is to protect Colchester's rural and undeveloped coastline from inappropriate development that would adversely affect its rural, undeveloped and open character and irreplaceable assets and help protect the character of the Coastal Protection Belt by preventing urban sprawl into the more open and undeveloped stretches of Colchester's coastline. The policy recognises exceptions where development requires a coastal location or is needed to help sustain the socio-economic base of the coastal area or serves the needs of the local coastal community.

6.13 Colchester's coastline lies within the plan area of the South East (Inshore) Marine Plan<sup>2</sup> developed by the Marine Management Organisation (MMO) (June 2021). The South East Marine Plan introduces a more integrated approach to management, ensuring that the right activities happen in the right place and in the right way within the marine environment. The South East Marine Plan will help to enhance and protect the marine environment and achieve sustainable economic growth while respecting local communities both within and adjacent to the marine plan area.

6.14 The vision for the south east marine plan area in 2041 is:

'The south east marine plan area is distinctive for being a substantial maritime gateway to the world with locally and nationally important ports that are thriving. Prosperous ports, together with associated industries and shipping sectors, are contributing to the long-term economic growth and prosperity of the UK and south east coastal communities. The tidal rivers in the south east have been optimised for short sea shipping. The Tidal Thames facilitates more sustainable passenger and freight transport than before with improved access, infrastructure, local employment and air quality, benefitting the Greater Thames area. The valuable cultural heritage, environmental assets and seascape of the densely populated areas of the south east are more appreciated and resilient than ever before, including to the impacts of climate change and coastal change. The important role that marine and estuarine environments and their biodiversity play in mitigating climate change is realised. A profitable, sustainable fisheries sector is thriving in the south east. Decisions made in the south east marine plan area apply an ecosystem approach and natural capital framework. The environment is in a better state than before, and Good Environmental Status is achieved. Biodiversity is conserved, enhanced and restored through applying well-established principles of biodiversity gain and delivery of a well-managed, ecologically coherent network of marine protected areas. The South East Marine Plan promotes good governance and has solved challenges and conflicts in the crowded marine plan area through enabling plan-led decisions, taking account of cumulative effects and coordinating the co-existence of activities. Awareness of the marine plan and connectivity with the large number of consenting regimes and local planning authorities is high, especially in the densely populated London and Greater Thames Estuary area.'

### **Alternative**

6.15 The alternative is not to include a coastal areas policy and rely solely on the South East Marine Plan. However, the policy refers to the coastal protection belt and provides policy for the consideration of houseboat proposals.

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<sup>2</sup>[South East Inshore Marine Plan \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)

## 7. Net Zero Homes and Buildings, Renewable Energy and Water

- 7.1 Essex County Council has developed recommended planning policy for Local Planning Authorities in Greater Essex to embed in their Local Plans (and other associated planning documents) to ensure that all new homes and buildings achieve a consistent, clearly defined, net zero carbon (in operation) standard that aligns with local and national climate targets and delivers high quality, healthy, energy efficient, climate resilient homes and buildings; and tackle embodied carbon emissions from new build development.
- 7.2 These two recommended policies are included in this chapter. The policies are supported by evidence produced for Essex and provides the basis for a consistent policy approach towards Net Zero Carbon in operation for residential and non-residential development across Essex.
- 7.3 The evidence base defines net zero carbon development in a way which delivers net zero immediately, aligns with our climate targets, and reflects the approach taken by front runner authorities in England and leading industry-led initiatives. Building to the recommended net zero carbon (in operation) standard in Essex is shown in the evidence to be technically feasible, financially viable and legally justified.
- 7.4 This chapter also includes policies on wastewater and water supply and renewable energy, which reflect best practice and the findings of the Colchester Water Cycle Study.
- 7.5 This chapter will contribute towards the Sustainable theme of the vision by requiring greater standards for sustainable infrastructure and wastewater; facilitating affordable clean secure energy through the delivery of sustainable energy to achieve radical reductions in greenhouse gas emissions; and ensuring development helps Colchester to adapt and increase its resilience to the effects of climate change. Policies will create healthier homes and reduce fuel poverty, which are important considerations for health and wellbeing.

## **Policy NZ1: Net Zero Carbon Development (in operation)**

### **A) New build development (residential and non-residential)**

All new buildings must be designed and built to be Net Zero Carbon in operation. They must be ultra-low energy buildings, fossil fuel free, and generate renewable energy on-site to at least match predicted annual energy use.

All new buildings (1 dwelling and above for residential; 100m<sup>2</sup> floorspace and above for non-residential) are required to comply with requirements 1 to 5 as set out below:

#### **1. Requirement 1: Space heating demand limits**

- a) Residential buildings (apart from bungalows) and non-residential buildings must achieve a space heating demand of 15 kWh/m<sup>2</sup> GIA (gross internal floor area)/year or less.
- b) Bungalows must achieve a space heating demand of 20 kWh/m<sup>2</sup> GIA/year or less.

#### **2. Requirement 2: Fossil fuel free**

- a) No new buildings shall be connected to the gas grid; and
- b) Fossil fuels must not be used on-site to provide space heating, domestic hot water or cooking.

#### **3. Requirement 3: Energy Use Intensity (EUI) limits**

- a) Residential buildings (Use Class C3 and C4) must achieve an Energy Use Intensity (EUI) of no more than 35 kWh/m<sup>2</sup> GIA/yr.
- b) The following non-residential buildings must achieve an Energy Use Intensity (EUI) of no more than the following (where technically feasible) by building type or nearest equivalent:
  - Offices – 70 kWh/m<sup>2</sup> GIA/year
  - Schools – 65 kWh/m<sup>2</sup> GIA/year
  - Light Industrial – 35 kWh/m<sup>2</sup> GIA/year
- a) For other residential and non-residential buildings, that are not covered by a) and b) above, applicants should report their energy use intensity but are not required to comply with a certain limit.

#### **4. Requirement 4: On-site renewable energy generation**

Renewable energy must be generated on-site for all new developments by whichever of the following results in the greater amount of rooftop solar PV energy (electricity) generation:

- a) The amount of energy generated in a year should match or exceed the predicted annual energy use of the building, i.e. Renewable energy generation (kWh/m<sup>2</sup> /year) = or > predicted annual energy use (kWh/m<sup>2</sup> /year)\*; or
- b) the amount of energy generated in a year is:
  - at least 80 kWh/m<sup>2</sup> building footprint per year\* for all building types; and



- at least 120 kWh/m<sup>2</sup> building footprint per year\* for industrial buildings.

\*For development proposals where it is demonstrated to the satisfaction of the Council that meeting Requirement 4 is not technically feasible then renewable energy generation on-site should be maximised and the residual amount of renewable energy generation (equivalent to the shortfall in meeting the annual energy use of the building in kWh/year) must be offset by a financial contribution (to cover the administration, purchasing and installation of a solar PV renewable energy (electricity) system elsewhere in the plan area or county, which is able to generate a similar amount of energy) and be paid into the Council's offset fund.

The offset price is set at £1.35 per kWh or the most recent updated version and the contribution shall be calculated at the time of planning application determination.

#### 5. Requirement 5: As-built performance confirmation and in-use monitoring

- All developments must submit as-built performance information at completion and prior to occupation; and
- In-use energy monitoring is required on a minimum of 10% of dwellings for development proposals of 100 dwellings or more, for the first 5 years of operation.

#### Alternative routes to meeting policy requirements

Proposals that are built and certified to the Passivhaus Classic or higher PassivHaus standard are deemed to have met Requirements 1 and 3. Requirements 2, 4 and 5 must also be met to achieve policy compliance.

B) Extensions and Conversions Applications for residential extensions and conversions affecting existing buildings (but excluding Listed Buildings) are encouraged to meet the minimum standards approach fabric specifications set out in the table below and maximise renewable energy generation where practical and feasible.

Table 2 – Minimum Standards Approach Fabric Specifications (Domestic)

Residential Developments		Block of Flats Low Rise	Terrace / Semi- Detached House	Bungalow
Fabric	Floor U-value	0.08 – 0.10	0.08 – 0.10	0.08 – 0.10
	External Wall U-value	0.10 – 0.14	0.10 – 0.13	0.09 – 0.12
	Roof U-value	0.09 - 0.11	0.09 - 0.11	0.09 - 0.10
	Windows U-value	0.80 – 0.90	0.80 – 0.90	0.80 – 0.90
	Windows G-value	0.45 – 0.55	0.45 – 0.55	0.45 – 0.55
	External doors U-value	-	0.90 - 1.2	0.90 - 1.2
	Thermal bridging	0.04 W/m <sup>2</sup> K	0.04 W/m <sup>2</sup> K	0.04 W/m <sup>2</sup> K
	Air permeability	<1 ach	<1 ach	<1 ach

Source: Report 2: Essex Net Zero Policy – Policy Summary, Evidence and Validation Requirements (July 2023)

(Note that Table 2 is the source reference.)

#### Justification

## **Purpose of the policy**

- 7.6 The Building Regulations 2021 (including the proposed Future Homes Standard 2025) do not adequately address operational or embodied carbon emissions from new development. For example, operational carbon emissions come from two categories of energy use – regulated and unregulated. About 50% of a building’s total operational energy use comes from ‘unregulated’ uses, however Building Regulations does not address these uses. Furthermore, Building Regulations currently does not address embodied carbon emissions.
- 7.7 It therefore falls to the planning system to ensure new development addresses carbon emissions in operation (including those from both regulated and unregulated energy uses) and embodied carbon emissions, in a way that aligns with local and national climate targets and mitigates and adapts to climate change. This is supported through primary legislation and national policy which require local plans to include policies to secure development that mitigates and adapts to climate change. This will enable Councils to take a proactive approach to climate change which is in line with the objectives and provisions, and hence legally binding targets, of the Climate Change Act (NPPF, para 162, Footnote 61).
- 7.8 This policy and the embodied carbon policy that follows, were drafted by the Climate and Planning Unit (CaPU) at Essex County Council in collaboration with the Essex Authorities through the Essex Planning Officers Association. It is based on extensive [evidence](#) available that supports the development of ‘net zero’ planning policies in local plans in Essex. The evidence produced for Essex provides the basis for a consistent policy approach across Essex towards Net Zero Carbon in operation for residential and non-residential development.
- 7.9 The evidence base defines net zero carbon development in a way which delivers net zero (in operation) immediately, aligns with climate targets, and reflects the approach taken by frontrunner authorities in England and leading industry-led initiatives.
- 7.10 Building to the recommended net zero carbon (in operation) standard in Essex is shown in the evidence to be technically feasible, financially viable and legally justified. A new main document and a supporting document suggesting how Essex Net Zero specifications might be produced are now available. These have been produced to assist with the delivery of achieving net zero homes according to the Essex Net Zero Policy Position and can be found within the Essex Design Guide, [here](#).

## **Alternative**

- 7.11 The alternative is to rely on Building Regulations for minimum standards [which do not achieve truly net zero carbon and energy development (in operation)] and to not include the Essex Net Zero Policy developed collaboratively by the Essex Authorities led by the Climate and Planning Unit (at Essex County Council) through the Essex Planning Officers Association.

## **Policy NZ2: Net Zero Carbon Development – embodied carbon**

All development proposals must demonstrate the measures taken to minimise embodied carbon (subject to meeting Policy NZ1 requirements first) and how circular economy principles have been embedded into the design. In doing so:

- a) Priority should be given to re-using, renovating or retrofitting existing buildings and/or structures on a site and demolition will only be acceptable where justified to the satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority.
- b) Proposals for all new residential and non-residential buildings must demonstrate that upfront embodied carbon\* has been considered and reduced as far as possible through good design and material efficiency.
- c) New major developments, major retrofits and rebuild developments are required to achieve the following set limits for upfront embodied carbon and this should be demonstrated through an embodied carbon assessment using a nationally recognised methodology:
  - Low rise residential (up to 11m):  $\leq 500$  kgCO<sub>2</sub>e/m<sup>2</sup> (GIA\*\*);
  - Mid and high rise residential (over 11m) -  $\leq 500$  kgCO<sub>2</sub>e/m<sup>2</sup> (GIA) or follow NZCBS\*\*\* limits when available;
  - Non-domestic buildings: offices  $\leq 600$  kgCO<sub>2</sub>e/m<sup>2</sup> (GIA); education  $\leq 500$  kgCO<sub>2</sub>e/m<sup>2</sup> (GIA); and retail  $\leq 550$  kgCO<sub>2</sub>e/m<sup>2</sup> (GIA) or follow NZCBS limits when available; and
  - For building services, meet the global warming potential refrigerant limits set out in NZCBS when available.

*\*Upfront Embodied Carbon = emissions associated with the Building Life Cycle Stages A1-A5 and RIBA stages 2/3, 4 and 6)*

*\*\*GIA = Gross internal floor area*

*\*\*\*NZCBS = UK Net Zero Carbon Building Standards (pilot launched September 2024).*

### **Justification**

#### **Purpose of the policy**

7.12 Embodied carbon accounts for a significant proportion of a buildings' whole life carbon and addressing embodied carbon is important to meet local and national climate targets. Currently, embodied carbon is not covered by Building Regulations and there is no government policy requiring the assessment or control of embodied carbon emissions from buildings. The Environmental Audit Committee (EAC) reported to Parliament in 2022 on this issue. The EAC highlighted that as a result, no progress has been made in reducing these emissions within the built environment. They go on to advise that the UK is slipping behind comparator countries in Europe

in monitoring and controlling the embodied carbon in construction and that if this continues the UK will not meet net zero or its carbon budgets.

- 7.13 Councils are mandating Whole Life-Cycle Carbon (WLC) assessments of their own accord through the planning system. The EAC reported that evidence so far shows that the policy is achievable and is working, with few barriers to its introduction (EAC Report, Paragraph 73). The EAC encourages Councils to include embodied carbon assessments in their Local Plans ahead of the introduction of national planning requirements.
- 7.14 The Embodied Carbon Policy Study for Essex, published in June 2024 is available to view [here](#). The study provides the technical evidence base and cost analysis to support a recommended policy approach towards minimising carbon emissions that are embodied in the materials and construction of new homes and buildings.

### **Alternative**

- 7.15 The alternative is not to include any requirements for reducing the embodied carbon emissions from new development. However, this would fail to take into account the evidence in the Embodied Carbon Policy Study for Essex.

## **Policy NZ3: Wastewater and Water Supply**

The Council will work with Anglian Water, Affinity Water, the Environment Agency and developers to ensure that there is sufficient capacity in the water supply and wastewater infrastructure to serve new development.

Where necessary, improvements to water supply infrastructure, wastewater treatment and off-site drainage should be made ahead of the occupation of dwellings to ensure compliance with environmental legislation.

To achieve greater water efficiencies and support demand management, all new buildings must include water efficiency measures. Residential development will be required to meet the water efficiency standard of 80 litres per person per day. Proposals should submit a water efficiency calculator report to demonstrate compliance and include clear evidence on the approach to water conservation.

Residential proposals of 100 dwellings or more will be required to demonstrate that a full range of options to significantly reduce reliance on potable water demand, including water efficiency, rainwater harvesting and greywater recycling, has been fully explored and incorporated into the scheme.

Major non-residential development that requires significant non-domestic water use will be required to prepare a Water Resources Assessment and undertake early discussions with Anglian Water Services to ascertain water availability and feasibility of the scheme and demonstrate innovative solutions to reduce water demands.

Proposals within the catchments of the following Water Recycling Centres: Dedham, Fingringhoe, Great Tey, Langham and West Bergholt must demonstrate they have confirmed with Anglian Water Services that treatment capacity at the Water Recycling Centre (WRC) is available to serve the development at the point of anticipated connection and where appropriate phasing triggers to support development to be agreed.

Development within the Colchester WRC drainage catchment must discharge attenuated surface water to a receiving waterbody and not to the combined sewer network, unless it can be demonstrated that there is no other option.

Development within the drainage catchments of Copford, Tiptree and West Bergholt WRCs must not discharge surface water to the foul sewer network.

Land is allocated as an extension to Anglian Water Services Colchester Water Recycling Centre.

### **Justification**

#### **Purpose of the policy**

- 7.16 It is important for the Council to work with water companies, the Environment Agency and developers to ensure sufficient capacity and provision of an adequate water supply and foul drainage and wastewater treatment to deliver sustainable and resilient communities, whilst leaving water in the environment to support nature recovery. This will be particularly important as water supplies continue to be threatened by climate change and pressures from continuing growth and to ensure

compliance with the requirement of the Environment Act and Conservation of Habitat and Species Regulations. The extension to Colchester Water Recycling Centre will be important in providing increased capacity to treat wastewater demand as a result of growth within the Local Plan.

- 7.17 The WCS has found that in the catchments of the following WRCs Colchester, Copford, Tiptree and West Bergholt, additional connections to sewer systems which have existing capacity would result in sewer flooding risk or sewer overflow spill frequencies. Additional surface water into these sewer networks could exacerbate either of these issues. This can be addressed through potential solutions improving water efficiency targets to help extend capacity, phasing of development to align with future potential investment plans may also be appropriate to help with this issue over the plan period.
- 7.18 Development within the Colchester WRC drainage catchment must discharge attenuated surface water to a receiving waterbody and not to the combined sewer network, unless it can be demonstrated that there is no other option. Copford, Tiptree and West Bergholt WRCs have separated sewer systems (separate foul and surface water sewers). Development in these WRC drainage catchments must not be permitted to discharge surface water to the foul sewer network. Criteria covering this has been added to relevant Place policies.

#### **Alternative**

- 7.19 An alternative is not to require a higher water efficiency standard. However, evidence in the Water Cycle Study indicates that this standard is required to enable capacity at Water Recycling Centres over the plan period.



## **Policy NZ4: Renewable Energy**

Planning applications for renewable energy schemes in appropriate locations will be supported by the Council in principle. It is accepted that this may result in the loss of Best and Most Versatile Agricultural Land.

All applications for renewable energy schemes 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. Schemes should be considered in relation to impacts upon the historic environment. 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.

The mitigation measures identified in the Environmental Statement, required for large scale renewable energy schemes, must be incorporated into the design of the scheme or secured via condition.

To maximise environmental benefits, the Council encourages all solar farm proposals to deliver biodiversity net gain of at least 50% and an increase in tree canopy cover of at least 50%.

**Community Led Energy:** The positive benefits of community energy schemes will be a material consideration in assessing renewable energy development proposals. The preference is for schemes that are led by and directly meet the needs of local communities, in line with the hierarchy and project attributes below:

- a) Project part or fully owned by a local community group or social enterprise;
- b) Local community members have a governance stake in the project or organisation e.g. with voting rights.

The Council's Sustainability Checklist should be completed and submitted with all major planning applications to explain and evidence how the proposal complies with Local Plan policies and guidance that seek to improve the environmental sustainability of new development.

### **Justification**

#### **Purpose of the policy**

- 7.20 Renewable energy schemes play a major role in reducing carbon emissions across the city, contributing to the climate emergency and supporting the sustainable development objectives in the NPPF, and will be supported in principle. Whilst the climate emergency declaration of net zero emissions by 2030 relates to the Council as an organisation, the Council in declaring a climate emergency in July 2019,



acknowledged that urgent action is needed to limit the environmental impacts produced by the climate crisis.

- 7.21 Sustainability lies at the heart of planning (Sections 2 and 14 NPPF). The sustainability checklist will be used as a tool to provide an overview of how a scheme addresses different aspects of sustainability, although each application will be assessed on its own merit, taking account of local circumstances. The checklist does not replace other application submission requirements but aims to provide an overarching framework to help facilitate the assessment of different, often overlapping, strands of sustainability.

**Alternative**

- 7.22 The alternative is not to include the policy and rely on other policies when assessing renewable energy proposals such as transport and landscape policies. However, this policy adds further detail.

## 8. Homes

- 8.1 This chapter on Homes addresses the need for a balanced approach to meet the housing requirements of Colchester's growing community, in line with the NPPF. The aim is to create vibrant, inclusive neighbourhoods that support both the health and wellbeing of individuals and the long-term sustainability of the area, providing a range of high-quality, healthy homes that meet the diverse needs of residents.
- 8.2 The government sets housing targets for all local authorities to meet the national demand for additional homes. The Colchester Local Housing Needs Assessment 2024 has been used to inform the Local Plan policies and considers the overall need for housing in the city, as well as the need for different types of homes and the needs of different groups within the local community.
- 8.3 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 supported needs, students, service families, gypsy and travellers, those wishing to build their own home and low-income households.
- 8.4 There is an important relationship between housing diversity, density and the accessibility of the location. City 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 lower density development but should also still provide for small and low-income households.
- 8.5 The need for affordable housing is high across Colchester, as it is elsewhere in the Eastern region and nationally. The Council expects affordable housing to be delivered on site as part of the development proposal. Only in exceptional circumstances will delivery off site or a financial contribution be accepted.

## **Policy H1: Housing Mix**

**New residential developments should assist in the creation of sustainable and inclusive communities by providing an appropriate mix of dwellings in terms of size, type and tenure.**

**Residential development proposals will be supported where the housing mix is informed by the:**

- a) **Needs identified in the Colchester Local Housing Needs Assessment as set out below:**

	Market	Affordable Home Ownership	Affordable Housing (rented)	
			General Needs	Older Persons
<b>1 bedroom</b>	<b>4%</b>	<b>21%</b>	<b>21%</b>	<b>56%</b>
<b>2 bedroom</b>	<b>29%</b>	<b>44%</b>	<b>38%</b>	<b>44%</b>
<b>3 bedroom</b>	<b>44%</b>	<b>26%</b>	<b>33%</b>	
<b>4 bedroom</b>	<b>24%</b>	<b>8%</b>	<b>8%</b>	

- b) **existing housing stock in the local area and character of the local area to avoid over concentration of a single size of homes where this would undermine the achievement of creating mixed and balanced communities.**

**Where an alternative housing mix is proposed, it must be evidenced why this is considered a more appropriate mix. Viability will only be considered as a reason to vary the housing mix, where a planning application is supported by a viability assessment and independently assessed and agreed by the Council.**

**Neighbourhood Plans may set out a different approach to housing type and mix specific to the local area, where this is clearly demonstrated and supported by evidence.**

## **Justification**

### **Purpose of the policy**

8.6 The NPPF sets out the need to provide an appropriate mix of housing types for the local community. The Colchester Local Housing Needs Assessment has identified the need for a different housing mix dependent upon tenure. This takes into account future demographic changes, household changes and the ageing population. Regarding the affordable housing sector, regard has also been had to the current mix of housing by tenure and size requirements as identified on the Housing Register.

8.7 Overall, there is a particular need for 2 bedroom accommodation with varying proportions of 1, 3 and 4+ bedroom homes. For general rented affordable housing there is a clear need for a range of different sizes of homes.

8.8 The Council acknowledge that evidence is continually updated, and where there is more up to date evidence than the Colchester Local Housing Needs Assessment – September 2024 which has informed the housing mix set out in Policy H1, this updated evidence will be considered when provided to support a planning application on a case-by-case basis.

8.9 Where a Viability Assessment is submitted to vary the housing mix, in accordance with the NPPF, all viability assessments will be made publicly available via the Council's planning portal as part of the documents submitted in support of a planning application. The assessment will be scrutinised by the Council's approved viability assessor, at a cost to be borne by the applicant, and form part of the decision-making process in accordance with national planning policy and guidance.

### **Alternative**

8.10 The current Adopted Local Plan does not include a policy on housing mix. It is considered necessary to ensure residential development proposals reflect local needs. The alternative is to rely on national policy; however, this does not address the local needs identified in the latest Colchester Local Housing Needs Assessment.

## **Policy H2: Affordable Housing**

The Council is committed to improving housing affordability in Colchester.

30% of new dwellings should be provided as affordable housing for developments of:

- a) 10 or more dwellings or a site area of 0.5 ha or more in urban areas;
- b) 5 dwellings or more in designated rural areas.

Affordable dwellings should be delivered on site. In exceptional circumstances, off site provision or a financial contribution in lieu may be accepted. This will be determined on a case-by-case basis.

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.

The Colchester Local Housing Needs Assessment identifies a clear and acute need for social and affordable rented housing, this should be prioritised where delivery does not prejudice the overall delivery of affordable homes.

Proposals should be designed tenure blind, demonstrating no distinctly different design characteristics between affordable and market homes. To promote social cohesion, affordable housing provision should not dominate an area, road or building across the development.

In exceptional circumstances where high development costs undermine the viability of housing delivery, developers will be expected to demonstrate an alternative affordable housing provision.

For sites where an alternative level of affordable housing is proposed below the requirement, it will need to be supported by evidence in the form of a viability appraisal. In such cases the Council may seek a review of the viability of a scheme with the aim of achieving policy compliance over time. This may include securing a review mechanism by legal agreement specifying trigger points for undertaking a review such as later phases of a scheme or reserved matters applications with the aim of achieving policy compliance and improving the affordable housing contributions.

95% of affordable housing should meet Building Regulations 2015 Part M4 (2) accessible and adaptable standards (or its successor) and 5% of affordable homes to be Part M4 (3)(2)(b) wheelchair user standards (or its successor).

### **Rural Exception Sites**

Affordable housing development in villages will be supported on rural exception sites where:

- a) adjacent or continuous to village settlement boundaries or where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities,
- b) meeting a local need that is evidenced by an approved Local Housing Needs Survey by the relevant Town or Parish Council on behalf of their residents.

**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.**

### **Justification**

#### **Purpose of the policy**

- 8.11 The need for affordable housing is high across Colchester, as it is elsewhere in the Eastern region and nationally.
- 8.12 The Local Housing Needs Assessment (LHNA) has identified that the provision of new affordable housing is an important and pressing issue. The report has identified a need for 941 affordable homes per annum. (Based on the Standard method using 1290pa). This could increase slightly in light of increased annual target of 1300pa.
- 8.13 The whole plan Viability Assessment supports a target of 30% affordable housing in new developments.
- 8.14 The Council expects affordable housing to be delivered on site as part of the development proposal. Only in exceptional circumstances will delivery off site or a financial contribution be accepted. Further details about the delivery of affordable housing is contained in the LHNA and Supplementary Planning Document.
- 8.15 In instances where the level of affordable housing to be provided is disputed or challenged, the Council will expect developers to meet the Council's reasonable costs associated with viability appraisals. A review mechanism may be required in such cases in accordance with the National Planning Policy Guidance. Review mechanisms are not a tool to protect a return to the developer, but to strengthen local authorities' ability to seek compliance with relevant policies over the lifetime of the project.
- 8.16 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 Council 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.

### **Alternatives**

- 8.17 The alternatives are to retain Policy DM8 from the Adopted Local Plan or to rely on national policy which expects Local Plans to specify the type of affordable housing required. Neither are considered sufficient to address the affordable housing needs of Colchester.



### **Policy H3: Student Accommodation**

**Planning permission will be granted for purpose-built student accommodation where the proposal:**

- a) meets an identified need evidenced to the satisfaction of the Council;**
- b) provides a mix of cluster flats and studios;**
- c) is located in and around the University with access to public transport;**
- d) will not result in an excessive concentration of student accommodation in any one locality;**
- e) provides adequate amenity space.**

**A management and maintenance plan must be prepared for multi- occupancy buildings and implemented via planning conditions to ensure the future maintenance of the building and external spaces.**

**Purpose Built Student Accommodation should be designed flexibly to enable conversion to other residential uses, in the event that the need for student accommodation does not materialise.**

#### **Policy H4: Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs)**

Where planning permission is required for HMOs, proposals will be supported where:

- a) there is no adverse impact to the local character and amenity including to existing neighbours through excessive noise and disturbance;
- b) provide adequate amenity space;
- c) provide adequate refuse storage and services;
- d) provide an appropriate level of vehicle and cycle parking informed by the Essex Parking Guidance;
- e) the proposal will not result in HMOs disproportionately dominating an area which significantly alters the existing character; and
- f) the proposal is designed in accordance with the National Described Space Standards.

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.

## **Policy H5: Specialist Housing including Housing for an Aging Population**

The Council will support proposals for specialist and supported housing which includes the following:

- a) residential care homes,
- b) nursing homes
- c) extra care housing (as defined by C2 Use Class),
- d) retirement living or sheltered housing (housing with support)
- e) Supported living for people with disabilities or mental health needs);
- f) Other housing for people with care needs (as defined as C3(b) Use Class and other vulnerable people.

New development proposals for specialist and supported housing will be supported where:

- a) this is meeting an identified need (supported by evidence including the Local Housing Needs Assessment and Essex County Council Housing Lin Study);
- b) located within settlements;
- c) close to local facilities;
- d) are accessible by public transport where appropriate;
- e) integrate with the existing community;
- f) provide adequate amenity space;
- g) it can be demonstrated that the development has been designed to provide the most appropriate type and level of support to its intended residents;
- h) there is support from the relevant public services and agencies required to support the housing provision; and
- i) a business case demonstrates the long term viability of the business, where specific care needs are provided.

All proposals within the Colchester Urban Area for 500 dwellings or more, are expected to include a mix of housing to meet a range of needs. This should include housing for support (sheltered/retirement housing), housing with care or nursing and residential care homes.

Neighbourhood Plans should continue to identify opportunities for meeting specialist and supported housing needs and for accessible and adaptable general needs housing within the local communities.

The Council will also support development proposals for hospices through expansion of existing sites or development of new sites that are located within settlements.

80% of dwellings (in all tenures) should meet Building Regulations 2015 Part M4 (2) accessible and adaptable standards and 5% of all new market homes and 10% of all affordable homes should meet Building Regulations 2015 Part M4(3).

**Proposals to convert from the C3 to C2 use class, will only be supported where it is demonstrated this will not result in unacceptable or adverse harm to local amenity.**

## **Policy H6: Self and Custom Build**

**The Council will support proposals for self and custom build housing, to meet demand as indicated by registrations on the Council's self build register.**

**Development proposals of 150 dwellings or more, should provide serviced plots to deliver at least 2% of the total number of dwellings on site as self build or custom build homes, provided the Council's self build register identifies a need at the time an application is submitted. All plots must meet the definition of a serviced plot as per national policy.**

**Serviced Plots should be made available to households on the Self-Build Register for a period of 12 months. If after that time, plots have not been purchased or reserved by those on the Self Build Register, they may either remain on the open market as self-build or be built out as market housing.**

**The Council will also consider opportunities for self and custom build dwellings as part of development proposals on Council owned land.**

### **Justification**

#### **Purpose of policies H3, H4, H5 and H6**

- 8.18 The Council will seek to secure a range of different housing types and tenures on developments across Colchester 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 Local Housing Needs Assessment September 2024.
- 8.19 A specific housing needs assessment must be provided as part of any planning application to demonstrate the proposal is meeting an identified need.
- 8.20 Where a proposal is meeting a specific housing need, a planning condition or legal agreement will be imposed to secure this.
- 8.21 The University of Essex ambition is to grow the university to 20,000 students by 2028 and 30,000 students by 2035. Given the current pipeline provision of student accommodation through Halls of Residence (on campus), purpose built student accommodation and HMOs in Colchester, there are sufficient bedspaces available to meet the identified need to 2028.
- 8.22 The Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community Development Plan Document set out the expectations for new homes within the Garden Community, including student accommodation. This will ensure the future ambitions of the University of Essex to 2035 will be met. Therefore there is no unmet need for student accommodation during the plan period.
- 8.23 A house in multiple occupation (HMO) is a property rented out by at least 3 people who are not from 1 household but share facilities such as a bathroom and kitchen. This can also be referred to a house share.

- 8.24 The Council estimates there are approximately 2,000 HMOs across Colchester. These are an important housing type to offer choice to renters and provide an affordable option, particularly for students.
- 8.25 National policy is clear that the Government want more people to have the opportunity to build their own homes. Self and custom build projects are a way of achieving this. The Self and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015 places a duty on the Council to grant sufficient planning permissions to meet the demand identified on the Council's Self Build Register.
- 8.26 The NPPF defines an older person as people over or approaching retirement age whose housing needs can include accessible, adaptable general housing to retirement and specialist housing for those with support or care needs.
- 8.27 With an aging population, the overarching aim is for people to remain in their own homes for as long as possible. However, it is acknowledged that there may come a time when additional or specific needs can no longer be accommodated within a traditional setting. The Council is therefore supportive of development proposals which provide additional care needs and support.
- 8.28 The Local Housing Needs Assessment has identified the following specific housing needs for older and disabled persons in the plan period:
- 1,600 housing units with support (sheltered/retirement housing)
  - 1,000 housing units with care
  - 850 nursing and residential care bedspaces
  - 800 dwellings for wheelchair users (meeting building standard M4(3)).
- 8.29 When determining applications for specialist housing proposals, the Council will have regard to the latest available evidence on need including the Colchester Local Housing Needs Assessment and Essex County Council's Housing LIN Research on Specialist and Supported Housing and Accommodation Needs and Assessment. Additional information to consider includes the Essex County Council Developers Guide to Infrastructure Contributions for specific local and design requirements by cohorts of specialist and supported housing and market provision statements to establish the current level of provision.

### **Alternative**

- 8.30 The alternative is to set specific allocations for every type of specialist housing. This would increase levels of certainty that provision is made but would not allow for sufficient flexibility for categories such as housing for an aging population or self and custom build that could be provided in a range of and locations.

## **Policy H7: Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople**

The Council will identify sites to meet the established needs of gypsies, travellers and travelling showpeople.

There is an overall need for 15 pitches up to 2041, this includes 6 pitches for households who meet the planning definition and 9 pitches for undetermined households.

**Table H7.1: Gypsy and Travellers Housing Need 2024 to 2041**

	Year			
	2024 to 2028	2029 to 2033	2034 to 2038	2039 to 2041
Number of pitches	5	3	2	5

The Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community will provide a total of 18 pitches which will count equally (9 pitches respectively) towards Tendring and Colchester's need for Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation.

The remaining need of 6 pitches to 2041 will be met through:

- 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.
- Strategic allocations to be finalised through masterplanning.

In the event that delivery of the pitches as outlined above is delayed, proposals for new gypsy and travellers and travelling Showpeople sites will be considered on a case by case basis.

Proposals for new gypsy and travellers and travelling Showpeople sites will be supported where:

- a) meet an identified need;
- b) located within close proximity to existing settlements;
- c) located outside areas at high risk of flooding;
- d) provide access to a range of services such as shops, education, health and community facilities;
- e) provide adequate space for vehicles on site;
- f) have suitable and safe highways access;
- g) ensure the amenity of the Gypsy and Traveller community and the settled community is managed appropriately;
- h) have appropriate and sufficient drainage, water supply and other necessary utility services; and
- i) provides a connection to a main sewer system unless it is impractical to achieve.

Planning permission will be refused for the change of use of all Gypsy and Traveller sites or Travelling Showpeople pitches 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.**

### **Justification**

#### **Purpose of the policy**

- 8.31 The overarching aim of the National Planning Policy for Traveller Sites is to ensure fair and equal treatment of the travelling community, in a way that facilitates their traditional and nomadic way of life while respecting the interests of the settled community. As part of this, the Council is required to proactively plan to meet the housing needs of Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople in the District.
- 8.32 The Colchester Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment sets out the overall need of 15 pitches to 2041. Policy H7 identifies how these needs will be met across the plan area and plan period.
- 8.33 No current need has been identified for accommodation for travelling showpeople, however any need that arises over the life of the plan will also be addressed using the criteria based policy approach. There is also a need for 5 pitches for those who do not meet the planning definition of a Gypsy and Traveller, the criteria based policy approach will also be used in this instance.

#### **Alternative**

- 8.34 There is no alternative policy approach as providing for the housing needs of specific groups including gypsies, travellers and travelling showpeople is required by national policy.

## **Policy H8: Rural Workers Dwellings**

### **Permanent Rural Workers Dwellings**

Planning permission will be granted for new rural workers' dwellings as part of existing businesses where all of the following criteria are met:

- a) Evidence is provided to show that there is an essential functional need for a permanent dwelling;
- b) The need is related to a full-time worker who is primarily employed in a rural based business and a temporary rural workers dwelling has previously been granted or evidence is provided to justify why a temporary rural workers dwelling has not been required;
- c) The proposed dwelling is sensitively designed, landscaped and located to fit in with its surroundings and of a scale that reflects its functional role to support the rural business;
- d) 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;
- e) The functional need cannot be met by another suitable and available dwelling;
- f) Evidence is provided to show the reuse, extension or conversion of an existing building on site has been considered; and
- g) The proposed development is not located in a high flood risk area.

### **Temporary Rural Workers Dwellings**

Where a new dwelling is essential to support a new business, temporary accommodation in the form of a caravan/mobile home will be supported for a period of up to three years where all the following information is provided:

- a) Evidence of a firm intention and ability to develop the business;
- b) Demonstration that the business can sustain a full time worker;
- c) Evidence that the proposed business has been planned on a sound financial basis. The evidence should include a business plan of at least 3 years duration;
- d) Evidence to show that there is an essential functional need for a rural worker dwelling;
- e) The functional need could not be fulfilled by another existing dwelling, reuse, extension or conversion on an existing building on site or any other existing accommodation in the local area; and
- f) The proposed temporary accommodation is not located in a high flood risk area.

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.

Conditions will be attached to all permissions granted for new rural workers dwellings (permanent or temporary) 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 workers dwelling is no longer needed to support a rural business, applications to remove the occupancy restrictions will need 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 evidence demonstrating that:

- a) The property has been continuously marketed for rent and sale for at least 12 months to the satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority and advertised in that period at a price reflecting the occupancy condition
- b) confirmation of a lack of interest from marketing efforts; and
- c) The property has been offered both for sale and to rent on the same basis 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).

### **Justification**

#### **Purpose of the policy**

- 8.35 The NPPF states that one of the few circumstances where a new dwelling within the countryside may be justified is where there is an essential need for a rural worker to live permanently at or near their place of work in the countryside.
- 8.36 While the Council's preference is for such workers to live in nearby settlements 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. Such a need however must be essential to the successful operation of the rural business.
- 8.37 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.
- 8.38 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.

8.39 Nevertheless, the Council 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 Council 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. The Council will make a judgement on the adequacy of the marketing exercise on a case-by-case basis.

**Alternative**

8.40 The alternative is to not include a policy on this subject matter. However, national policy only refers to rural workers dwellings at a very high level and does not provide any local context to when a rural workers dwelling will be supported or when an existing dwelling is no longer a need for a rural worker.

## 9. Economy

- 9.1 National Planning Policy requires significant weight to be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity. It requires planning policies to address potential barriers to investment and identify strategic sites for development which meet anticipated needs over the plan period. Policies are also required to support a prosperous rural economy. The NPPF requires planning policies to support the role that town centres play at the heart of local communities.
- 9.2 This chapter covers a range of policies to enable Colchester to meet economic opportunities and challenges to 2041 and beyond and contribute towards the creation of mixed, balanced and sustainable communities. Policies cover Protection of Employment Land, Economic Development in Rural Areas and the Countryside, Agricultural Development and Diversification, Retail and Centres and land safeguarded for the potential expansion of Colchester Zoo. The overall employment need for Colchester for the plan period is set out in Policy ST6 in Chapter 3.
- 9.3 The policies in this chapter reflect local circumstances and are based on evidence gathered in the Employment Study (2024) and the Retail, Leisure and Town Centre Study (November 2024).
- 9.4 The policies in this chapter will contribute to the themes of the vision of ‘Welcoming inclusive communities’ and ‘Healthy Vibrant and Diverse Places’ by delivering high value jobs for local people, protecting and maintaining the distinct character, identity and setting of Colchester city and supporting Colchester’s tourism role through the provision of additional high-quality facilities.

## **Policy E1: Protection of Employment**

Land and premises currently in employment use, and employment provision as defined on the policies maps and listed in policy ST6, will be safeguarded primarily for class E(g), B2 and B8 Use Classes where appropriate to provide, protect and enhance employment provision in a range of locations across the Colchester area to enable balanced job and housing growth. Planning permission will be granted for the redevelopment or change of use for non-Class B or Class E(g) uses where:

- a) it can be demonstrated that there is no reasonable prospect of the site concerned being used for Class B2, B8 or E(g) class purposes. Evidence of marketing of the site / premises for at least 12 months will need to be submitted with the planning application which demonstrates, to the satisfaction of the Council, that genuine attempts to sell / let the site / premises for employment use and no alternative business / occupier has been found; and
- b) the supply, availability and variety of B or E(g) use class employment land is sufficient to meet identified needs for Colchester; and
- c) it can be demonstrated that the alternative use cannot be reasonably located elsewhere within the area it serves; and
- d) the proposal does not generate potential conflict with the existing proposed B or E(g) class uses / activities on the site; and
- e) the use will not give rise to unacceptable traffic generation, noise, smells or vehicle parking; and
- f) 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 employment areas, will be supported when proposals are promoted for improvements to existing operations or for new operations where the use and scale is appropriate and they comply with other relevant policies in the plan.**

### **Justification**

#### **Purpose of the policy**

- 9.5 The NPPF requires significant weight to be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity, taking into account both local business needs and wider opportunities for development.
- 9.6 Evidence in the Colchester Employment Study (2024) recommends safeguarding existing suitable employment sites to ensure there is a ready supply of premises and that the vacant land and intensification opportunities can potentially be realised. The Employment Study recognises however that protecting employment land requires a

flexible approach that considers the merits of each individual site, and which use it is best suited for.

- 9.7 The changes to the Use Classes Order in 2020 replaced the former class B1 with a new commercial, business and service use class E. This combines a variety of uses into a single use class. Class B2 and class B8 remained unchanged. These changes, along with others to permitted development rights allow more flexibility between the uses. Article 4 directions may be appropriate where it is necessary to restrict permitted development to protect the loss of offices in key locations.
- 9.8 The purpose of this policy is to protect and enhance employment land and premises in Colchester. The loss of employment land could adversely affect the Council's ability to meet its identified employment needs. Employment uses for the purposes of this policy are defined as Use Classes E(g), B2, and B8. Proposals which are not Class E(g), B2 and B8 uses will need to be accompanied by evidence to demonstrate there is no reasonable prospect of the site being used for those uses. The evidence required will depend on the scale of the proposal.
- 9.9 The Employment Study recommends that the Council support occupiers and landlords in addressing the retrofitting challenge to enable existing employment space to meet energy efficiency standards above those met by the existing stock.
- 9.10 This policy supports sustainable economic growth and balanced development by:
- Prioritising the retention of land and premises for employment purposes to meet current and future economic needs, ensuring a balanced approach to job creation and housing growth.
  - Promoting the renewal and improvement of older employment sites to support modern business needs and maximise their economic potential.
  - Allowing redevelopment or alternative uses of employment land where it is demonstrated that the site is no longer viable for employment purposes and there is no adverse impact on the supply, availability, or variety of employment land.
  - Ensuring that new or alternative uses of employment land do not conflict with existing or proposed employment uses, or cause adverse effects such as traffic congestion, noise, or environmental harm.
  - Facilitating economic development in a way that aligns with the needs of local communities and the overall goals of the Colchester area.
- 9.11 This policy aims to strike a balance between protecting vital employment land and accommodating necessary change, ensuring that Colchester's economic and community needs are met in a sustainable and dynamic way.

### **Alternative**

- 9.12 The alternative is to not include a policy to protect employment land. However, safeguarding sufficient and viable employment land is considered vital to supporting economic growth in Colchester. This is therefore not considered a reasonable alternative.



## **Policy E2: Economic Development in Rural Areas and the Countryside**

The Council will protect existing and proposed Employment 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 Colchester will be safeguarded for appropriate economic uses to ensure local residents have access to local job opportunities to reduce the need to travel. Proposals for alternative uses will be supported where they comply with other relevant policies in the plan.

Within allocated rural Employment Areas and on rural sites providing an economic function, the following uses are considered appropriate in principle:

- a) 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);
- b) Repair and storage of vehicles and vehicle parts, including cars, boats and caravans; and
- c) Other employment-generating uses, such as those related to rural 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 they are demonstrated to be beneficial 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 be of sympathetic design and 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 be supported where they are of an acceptable scale and meet a local employment need and a business need has been adequately demonstrated. The applicant will need to submit evidence, with the planning application, which demonstrates that there are no appropriate existing buildings, or employment land available in the locality of site/area. Proposals must minimise negative environmental impacts and harmonise with the local character and surrounding countryside where they are being proposed.

**(E) Expansion of an existing business:**

Proposals to expand an existing employment use into the countryside will be supported 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 an allocated or established Employment Area with available suitable vacant land.

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 the introduction of invasive species.

## **Justification**

### **Purpose of the policy**

- 9.13 The NPPF requires that planning policies support a prosperous rural economy by enabling sustainable growth and expansion of all types of businesses in rural areas, both through conversion of existing buildings and well-designed, new buildings.
- 9.14 The Employment Study (2024) recommends that the Council should support flexibility in the rural economy to respond to opportunities to re-use or adapt land and buildings no longer in productive agricultural use.
- 9.15 The purpose of this policy is to safeguard and promote employment in rural Colchester, ensuring their role in supporting the local economy and providing job opportunities for residents. By protecting existing and proposed employment sites, the policy aims to:

- Encourage sustainable economic activity by preserving land and premises designated for employment purposes in rural areas.
- Provide local job opportunities to rural residents, minimising the necessity for travel and contributing to a balanced, sustainable rural economy.
- Identify and support specific employment-generating activities including office functions, industrial processes, vehicle repair, and rural enterprise that are appropriate for rural contexts.
- Ensure that any new, converted, extended, or replaced buildings for employment use are designed and scaled to harmonise with the rural character, minimise environmental impact, and align with the principles of sustainability.
- Incorporate adequate safeguards to protect local landscapes, biodiversity, and heritage assets, ensuring that new developments enhance, rather than detract from, the rural environment.
- Support the expansion of existing businesses and the development of new rural employment buildings, provided they address demonstrated business needs, lack viable alternatives, and meet high environmental and design standards.

9.16 This policy emphasises the dual objectives of economic growth and environmental stewardship, creating a framework that supports rural enterprise while preserving Colchester's rural character and natural heritage.

#### **Alternative**

9.17 The alternative is not to include the policy and rely on national policy. However, national policy only refers to supporting a prosperous rural economy at a high level and does not provide any local context to considerations that should be considered. Therefore, this is not considered a reasonable alternative.

### **Policy E3: Agricultural Development and Diversification**

The Council 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 National Landscape will not be supported.

Proposals, apart from those for renewable energy generation, that have a materially negative impact or reduce the availability of Grade 1 or Grade 2 land for food growing use will not be supported unless it can be demonstrated that there is a justified need and a landscape strategy, which would compensate for the loss or harm, is secured or where there are overriding public benefits arising from the development

Proposals for farm diversification schemes will be supported where they meet the following criteria:

- a) 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
- b) The development is well-related to existing buildings if no suitable buildings are available for re-use; and
- c) The development is secondary to the main agricultural use of the farm; and
- d) The applicant can confirm in writing that 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 in accordance with policy LC1.

**New agricultural buildings requiring planning permission will be responsive to their setting and guided to locations on the farm where any impacts are capable of mitigation.**

### **Justification**

#### **Purpose of the policy**

- 9.18 The NPPF requires that planning policies support a prosperous rural economy by enabling the development and diversification of agricultural and other land-based rural businesses. The agricultural economy in Colchester is changing, as increasingly farmers are seeking to diversify in order to retain farming.
- 9.19 The Employment Study (2024) recommends that the Council should support flexibility in the rural economy to respond to opportunities to re-use or adapt land and buildings no longer in productive agricultural use. The Study acknowledges that the rural economy in Colchester could provide significant economic opportunities for local people but notes that policies to support economic opportunities should ensure the sustainability of the agricultural sector is not compromised.
- 9.20 This policy ensures that farm diversification supports the rural economy in a manner compatible with environmental preservation, agricultural sustainability, and the unique character of Colchester's rural landscapes.

#### **Alternative**

- 9.21 The alternative is not to include the policy and rely on national policy. However, national policy only refers to supporting a prosperous rural economy at a high level and does not provide any local context to considerations that should be considered. Therefore, this is not considered a reasonable alternative.

## **Policy E4: Retail and Centres**

### **Hierarchy of Centres**

The Council will continue to promote the role and function of its town, district and local centres to positively contribute towards their viability and vitality. In accordance with the NPPF, the hierarchy of centres in Colchester is defined below:

**Town Centre:** Colchester City Centre is at the top of the hierarchy, reflecting its role as the principal focus for shopping, services, culture, leisure and other commercial activity in Colchester.

**District Centres:** provide an important role principally serving the convenience-based needs of their local catchments.

- Highwoods
- Tollgate
- Turner Rise
- Tiptree
- West Mersea
- Wivenhoe

**Local Centres:** provide an essential role providing a range of small shops and services to meet the basic needs of local communities, serving a small catchment.

- Local centres defined on the Policies Map

### **Town Centres, District Centres and Primary Shopping Areas**

The Colchester Centre boundary is defined on the Policies Map and reflects the core city centre area defined in the Colchester City Centre Masterplan. A 'town centre first' approach will be adopted to ensure that larger scale development is focused on the city centre, helping to maintain its position at the top of the hierarchy. Policy CC1 requires development proposals within the City Centre to make a positive contribution to levels of footfall, activity and vibrancy and support the City Centres role and function as the cultural epicentre of Colchester.

The District Centres identified in the hierarchy, and as defined on the Policies Map, each have their own characteristics and functions serving the day-to-day needs of the local community as well as providing access to shops and services for neighbouring areas, but not to a comparable level with Colchester City Centre.

Primary Shopping Areas are defined and shown on the Policies Map for:

- Colchester City Centre
- Highwoods
- Tollgate
- Turner Rise

- Tiptree,
- West Mersea
- Wivenhoe

To ensure the vitality and viability of the centres identified in the hierarchy, these will be the preferred location for main town centre uses (as defined in the NPPF). Retail and other town centre uses will be directed towards these centres, in line with the ‘town centre first’ approach to continue to strengthen the role of Colchester City Centre in accordance with the hierarchy. Within the defined Primary Shopping Area boundary, support will be given to proposals for retail and other main town centre uses, and commercial, business and service uses falling within Use Class E. A balance between retail and complimentary town centre uses will be sought where appropriate to secure the vitality and viability of the primary shopping areas. Proposals which make a positive contribution to footfall and levels of activity throughout the day will be supported.

### **Sequential Test**

Proposals for main 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 Council 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 a - e below.

- 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 City Centre at the apex of the centre hierarchy, either individually or cumulatively with other committed proposals; and
- 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 vitality and enhances the diversity of the centre without changing the provision of the centre within the overall hierarchy; and
- 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
- The proposal would not have a significant adverse impact on the vitality and viability of Colchester City Centre and/or any other defined centre either individually or cumulatively with other committed proposals; and



- e) **The proposal would not have a significant adverse impact on committed and/or planned public or private investment in Colchester City Centre and/or any other defined centre either individually or cumulatively with other committed proposals.**

### **Impact Assessment**

**Proposals for retail and leisure development within edge-of-centre or out-of-centre locations which are not in accordance with this plan will require an impact assessment if the development is over 280sqm (or 350sqm gross). Impact assessments should be proportionate to the scale and nature of the retail and/or leisure development proposed. The scope of the assessment should be agreed with the Council.**

### **Local Centres**

**Local Centres, identified on the Policies Map, will be protected to provide shops and community services and facilities.**

**Proposals for change of use within designated local centres will need to demonstrate that it will enhance the retail offer, leisure or service role in providing for the day-to-day needs of the area and local community and improve the centres' vitality and viability.**

**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 active and sustainable travel.**

**New strategic residential sites should incorporate local centres at accessible locations within the site where appropriate to provide for the needs of new communities.**

### **Justification**

#### **Purpose of the policy**

- 9.22 National policy, set out in the NPPF states that planning policies and decisions should support the role that town centres play and should promote the long-term vitality and viability of centres. National policy, set out in the NPPF and PPG, provides advice on the hierarchy of centres.
- 9.23 The NPPF defines 'town centre' as the 'Area defined on the local authority's policies 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 city centres, town centres, district centres and local centres but exclude small parades of shops of purely neighbourhood

significance. Unless they are identified as centres in the development plan, existing out-of-centre developments, comprising or including main town centre uses, do not constitute town centres.’ Colchester City Centre is at the top of the centre hierarchy for Colchester, the reference to “town centre first” reflects the generic definition of “town centres” in the NPPF.

- 9.24 ‘Main town centre uses’ are defined in the NPPF as ‘Retail development (including warehouse clubs and factory outlet centres); leisure, entertainment and more intensive sport and recreation uses (including cinemas, restaurants, drive-through restaurants, bars and pubs, nightclubs, casinos, health and fitness centres, indoor bowling centres and bingo halls); offices; and arts, culture and tourism development (including theatres, museums, galleries and concert halls, hotels and conference facilities).’
- 9.25 The NPPF states that planning policies should ‘...define the extent of town centres and primary shopping areas and make clear the range of uses permitted in such locations.’ The extent of a centres primary shopping area determines whether a proposal should be considered in-centre, edge of centre or out of centre and is therefore key to the application of the sequential and impact tests set out in the NPPF. The purpose of this policy is to set the framework for supporting the role and function of centres in Colchester in providing services and facilities for the local communities. The Policies Map defines the extent of Colchester City Centre and the Primary Shopping Areas.
- 9.26 The Retail, Leisure and Town Centre Study (2024) recommends defining Colchester City Centre at the apex of the hierarchy of centres, reflecting its role as the principal focus for shopping, services, culture, leisure and other commercial activity in Colchester. The Centres of Tiptree, West Mersea, Wivenhoe, Tollgate, Turner Rise and Highwoods are varied in their scale and character but they each have an important role principally serving the convenience based needs of their local catchments and are therefore defined as District Centres in the policy.
- 9.27 The policy supports a positive approach to the Centres growth, management and adaption. It sets out how proposals outside the town, district and local centres will be considered.

### **Alternative**

- 9.28 The alternative is not to include the policy and rely on national policy. However, the designation of the centre hierarchy and extent of centres is required by national policy. Therefore, relying on national policy is not considered a reasonable alternative.

## **Policy E5: Colchester Zoo**

The Council recognises the importance of Colchester Zoo as a visitor attraction and as a contributor to the local economy. The Council will work in partnership with the Zoo to maximise the social and economic benefits associated with its operation and development while ensuring any development proposals have regard to the environmentally sensitive location.

The area shown on the policies map defined as the core zoo and expansion area will be safeguarded for potential further expansion of Colchester Zoo to provide additional facilities associated with the Zoo's vision for growth. Development for zoo purposes outside of the area defined will not be supported.

A comprehensive masterplanned approach to growth at the Zoo is required to ensure the Zoo's Vision for growth can be delivered with appropriate consideration and mitigation having regard to key considerations including:

- a) Impacts on the Scheduled Ancient Monument and archaeological resource within the site;
- b) Impacts on the landscape character and setting. Any application will need to demonstrate that the proposal will conserve and restore the wooded river valley landscape by managing and protecting ancient woodland, promoting natural regeneration to extend woodland areas where appropriate, and protecting and extending areas of lowland meadow on the valley floor;
- c) Impacts on biodiversity including Local Wildlife Sites;
- d) Impacts on the Highway network including the wider strategic and local network. A comprehensive transport assessment will be required and proposals will need to ensure any necessary highway improvements are secured and delivered before expansion takes place. Contributions towards improvements at the Maldon Road/Warren Lane junction will be required;
- e) Provision for safe access to the site via Maldon Road, existing public rights of way and accessibility by sustainable transport modes;
- f) Provision of a linked off-road cycle route should be provided linking the Zoo with Gosbecks Archaeological Park to facilitate sustainable modes of travel;
- g) Provision for an appropriate SuDS for managing surface water runoff within the overall design and layout of the site;
- h) The extent of any development ancillary to the zoo, such as additional retail, hotel, and food and drink outlets (defined as town centre uses) will need to be proportionate and related to the function of the zoo and assessed against potential cumulative impacts on the defined Centres where relevant thresholds are met (as defined in Policy E4).

All proposals for new development within the area defined on the policies map for Zoo expansion will need to be considered in the context of the Zoo's wider vision for growth to ensure possible cumulative impacts are appropriately considered and mitigated. Any proposals must comply with and not prejudice the delivery of the agreed masterplan. It will need to be demonstrated that any proposals, when considered both alone and in combination with other planned

development for the Zoo (whether such proposals currently benefit from planning consent or not), will not give rise to unacceptable impacts, including, but not necessarily limited to, the key considerations outlined above. Where possible adverse impacts are identified when considering any proposal, either alone or in combination with other planned development for the Zoo, adequate mitigation will need to be provided.

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 minerals extraction be proven at any time, the Council has no in principle objections to minerals workings in the area defined for zoo expansion, subject to adequate consideration of relevant impacts. Any such proposals would, however, be required to satisfactorily evidence that any minerals workings will not prejudice the future expansion of the Zoo

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.

### **Justification**

#### **Purpose of the policy**

- 9.29 Colchester Zoo is an important visitor attraction and has operated successfully in its current location for over 50 years. The Council recognises that tourist attractions require constant updating and the policy is intended to safeguard land for the potential further expansion of the zoo, whilst having regard to its sensitive location. Any proposals for expansion of the zoo will be required to be undertaken through a Masterplan approach.
- 9.30 It is recognised that the zoo attracts customers from a large geographical area and many visitors travel by car. Over the years the zoo has attracted more visitors and there have been unintended consequences on the local road network, resulting in unacceptable congestion at certain times. The current Maldon Road/Warren Lane junction layout presents challenges for traffic flow, safety and accessibility which will deteriorate further if it is expected to accommodate additional vehicular movements and improvements will therefore be required to support any expansion plans at the zoo.

## **Alternative**

9.31 The alternative is not to have a specific policy for the Zoo but this is undesirable as it would not allow site specific requirements to be set out. The Policy provides clarity and certainty for all parties.

## 10. Community and social infrastructure

10.1 Community and Social Infrastructure is needed to support existing and new communities. Appropriate provision, retention and management of the right social and community infrastructure in the right place makes a significant contribution to the Health and Wellbeing of our communities and creating and maintaining healthy places. In this chapter policies cover a range of social and community infrastructure including:

- Community Facilities
- Sports Provision
- Education
- Health Provision
- Emergency Services
- Cultural / Civic Provision

10.2 The policies within the Plan are designed to align with the Council's overarching vision of creating healthy, vibrant, and sustainable communities. This vision prioritises health and wellbeing, environmental protection, and inclusivity, ensuring that all proposals contribute positively to improving the quality of life for residents while safeguarding the city's unique natural and cultural assets.

10.3 The community and social infrastructure policies are designed to ensure the retention, enhancement, and provision of essential community infrastructure. The policies encompass a range of priorities, including the protection of existing community facilities, investment in education, and the development of sports, leisure, arts, and cultural opportunities. Recognising the importance of tourism and heritage, they also address the strategic management of caravan parks and other accommodations, which play a pivotal role in supporting the local economy. Together, these policies aim to foster a well-rounded, inclusive environment where residents and visitors alike can thrive.

## **Policy CS1: Retention of Community Facilities**

The Council will seek the retention of all existing community and social infrastructure including facilities and services and allocations/proposals 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 community / social infrastructure including community facilities, services, leisure or cultural activities that benefit the community, will only be supported in cases where the Council is satisfied that:

- a) An alternative, equivalent community facility to meet local needs is, or will be, provided in an equally or more accessible location within a minimum walking distance of the locality (800m or the minimum distance based on that appropriate for the facility being provided as set out in the relevant evidence); or
- b) It has been proven to the satisfaction of the Council that there is no longer a proven need for the community facility; and
- c) It has been proven to the satisfaction of the Council based on written evidence as detailed in a-c below, submitted with the Planning Application, that it would not be economically viable to retain the site/building for the existing or an alternative community use; and (in all cases)
- d) 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 Council in order to confirm that there is no interest for any community use and the site or building is genuinely redundant.

The evidence of the marketing requirements for (b) and (c) must provide;

- a) 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;
- b) Evidence should include sales literature, details of approaches, and details of offers; and
- c) 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.

Applicants proposing to redevelop or convert social and community facilities serving local communities will be expected to consult with those communities about the relative importance of the facilities which could be lost and submit evidence of that engagement with a planning application. This should also show evidence of consideration as to whether the community facility satisfactorily meets the needs of the local community, including any potential



**for combining or rationalising facilities where appropriate. This must be informed by the most up to date relevant evidence.**

## **Policy CS2: Enhancement of and Provision for Community Facilities**

**The provision and enhancement of community facilities and services will be supported where they contribute to the quality of community life and the maintenance of cohesive and sustainable communities.**

**Where necessary to mitigate the impacts of the development, the Council will require developers of residential schemes to provide or contribute towards the provision / enhancement of community facilities including education, to meet the needs of new and expanded communities and mitigate impacts on existing communities. These will be secured through the use of planning conditions and by Section 106 contributions or CIL/equivalent infrastructure levy. Contributions may be pooled towards larger community infrastructure projects to cumulatively contribute towards provision on a larger scale where a need has been identified.**

**Where existing facilities can be enhanced to serve new development, the Council 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.**

### **Policy CS3: 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 demonstrated to be redundant (supported by appropriate evidence which confirms the facility / site is genuinely 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. Proposals should be considered in relation to the scale and quality of any replacement facility and its location and accessibility within the area.**

**Where the proposal involves a state funded school which is seeking to relocate into new buildings or sell assets to fund improved education this will be supported in principle subject to meeting other relevant requirements of this plan.**

**The Council will respond positively to appropriate and well-designed applications regarding the creation of new school and education facilities. As expressed in the NPPF, the Council will use a presumption in favour of the development of schools and educational uses. The Council will engage in pre-application discussions with promoters to develop a collaborative approach to suitable applications.**

### **Justification**

#### **Purpose of the policies**

- 10.4 The purpose of these policies is to protect and enhance community facilities and services. Community facilities and services may include shops pubs, post offices, health care facilities, community centres, village halls, places of worship, cemeteries, schools and other educational establishments. This policy aims to safeguard, enhance, and promote the development of educational and community facilities to meet the evolving needs of local communities. It ensures that such facilities are prioritised, protected, and sustainably developed to support well-being, cohesion, and growth.
- 10.5 The retention of existing education facilities is an important objective of the Local Plan. The university, colleges, schools and early years provide education provision to the whole community and contribute significantly to the local economy.
- 10.6 The plan seeks to preserve these community assets and prevent unnecessary loss by supporting the retention of existing community facilities and infrastructure where they serve an identified local need whilst restricting the loss of facilities unless equivalent alternative provision is made in an accessible location, or evidence demonstrates that the facility is no longer needed or viable. Applicants would require robust evidence for proposing redevelopment or conversion of community facilities.

- 10.7 In accordance with the NPPF/PPG the plan also seeks to ensure that the impact of new development can be mitigated. Developers of residential schemes will be required to address the needs of expanding or new communities by contributing to or providing community facilities, including education, as part of their development plans.
- 10.8 New community facilities should be accessible by active and sustainable modes of transport. Public transport links should be close to the site and provide an adequate service. Any measures to reduce car dependency will be supported.
- 10.9 The policy seeks to secure funding for community infrastructure through planning conditions, Section 106 agreements, or Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) mechanisms, including pooling contributions for larger-scale projects where needed.
- 10.10 Essex County Council (ECC), as the Education Authority, is responsible for planning early years and school places. This involves identifying the demand for educational places and assessing any surpluses or shortages through a 10-Year Plan for School Places, which currently spans 2020 to 2029. Decisions regarding whether the change of use or redevelopment of independent schools is surplus to educational needs will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.
- 10.11 The policy framework prioritises the preservation, development, and enhancement of educational and community facilities. By aligning with national policy and fostering collaboration, it supports sustainable growth, ensures transparency in decision-making, and maintains the well-being and cohesion of local communities.

#### **Alternative**

- 10.12 The alternative is not to include the policies and rely on the NPPF.

## **Policy CS4: Sports Provision**

The Council will work with the Sports Delivery Group, Sports England, governing bodies and sports providers across the city to protect, enhance and deliver new and improved sports and leisure facilities to encourage active lifestyles and to increase participation in formal and informal recreation.

All outdoor sports facilities will be protected for sports use. Loss of outdoor sports facilities (including lapsed or disused facilities) will only be supported where at least one of the following criteria is met:

- a) a carefully quantified and documented assessment of current and future needs has demonstrated to the satisfaction of Sport England and the Council that there is an excess of playing field provision in the catchment, and the site has no special significance to the interests of sport;
- b) The proposed development is for ancillary facilities supporting the principal use of the site as a playing field and does not affect the quantity and quality of playing pitches or otherwise adversely affect their use;
- c) The playing field or fields to be lost as a result of the proposed development would be replaced, prior to the commencement of development, by a new playing field site or sites of equivalent or better quality and of equivalent or greater quantity in a suitable location and subject to equivalent or better management arrangements;
- d) The proposed development is for an indoor or outdoor facility for sport, the provision of which would be of sufficient benefit to the development of sport as to outweigh the detriment caused by the loss, or prejudice of use, of the area of playing field.

All major residential development proposals must assess the need for new sports provision including grass and 3G football pitches and cricket squares on an individual basis and utilise the findings of the Playing Pitch Strategy to determine needs. Any need generated by the development will need to be provided by the applicant to the satisfaction of the Council and Sports England. Where a housing development is not of a size to justify on-site sports provision, contributions will be required to improve existing sites or towards new facilities within the locality.

Where a development is of a size to justify on-site sports provision, discussions should take place with the Council to determine what should be provided and how it should be managed and maintained. All new sports facilities and pitches must have community use agreements in place.

## **Justification**

### **Purpose of the policy**

10.13 The Colchester Playing Pitch Strategy shows that all existing playing field and outdoor sport sites cannot be deemed surplus to requirements because of shortfalls now and in the future. As such, all provision requires protection or replacement until all identified shortfalls have been overcome. The purpose of the policy is to protect existing playing fields and sports sites and ensure new provision where it is required. There are a wide range of organisations currently delivering sport and leisure facilities within Colchester and the Sports Delivery Group has been established to ensure that the delivery of sports and leisure facilities is planned and delivered in a coherent way.

### **Alternative**

10.14 The alternative is not to include the policy.

## **Policy CS5: Tourism, Leisure, Arts, Culture and Heritage**

a) Development of 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 meeting other policy requirements and minimising their impact on, and demonstrating how the development will make a positive contribution to neighbouring areas, respect the settings of heritage assets and provide biodiversity enhancements (in addition to biodiversity net gain) and environmental net gain where appropriate. Any new large scale visitor attractions should be in line with the spatial strategy.

b) Proposals for tourism, leisure, arts, culture and heritage facilities should be appropriate in scale and function to the surrounding area and existing uses in the immediate vicinity; be accessible by a choice of means of transport and promote active travel; and not cause significant harm to the amenity of people living and working nearby.

c) Proposals in the countryside should help to support existing communities and facilities. Proposals must be compatible with the landscape character of the surrounding area and avoid causing undue harm to the open nature of the countryside and local wildlife sites. Where accessibility is poor, proposals should be small scale and/or involve the change of use of existing buildings or small-scale extension to existing tourist facilities.

d) Proposals that are likely to have an adverse impact on the integrity of habitats sites or the Dedham Vale National Landscape will not be supported.

e) In locations where residential use would be inappropriate, developments of visitor accommodation, where supported, 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.

### **Justification**

#### **Purpose of the policy**

10.15 Colchester has a rich historic environment and range of beautiful landscapes, which 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. The purpose of this policy is to provide support for the tourism sector whilst ensuring that proposals do not detract from the settings and features that make visitor destinations attractive and distinctive.

#### **Alternative**

10.16 The alternative is not to include the policy.



## **Policy CS6: Caravan Parks**

Development proposals at caravan parks, including change of use, intensification of an existing use, or change in activities on site will only be supported where they meet all the following criteria:

- a) **Anglian Water Services confirm that there is adequate wastewater treatment and sewage infrastructure capacity to serve the caravan park and avoid adverse impacts on water quality;**
- b) **Help protect the integrity of habitats sites and minimise disturbance to designated breeding and wintering species. Any future extensions to caravan parks by the coast will require their own Habitat Regulations Assessment, including appropriate assessment where necessary, and must demonstrate how any avoidance or mitigation measures identified in the appropriate assessment will be delivered;**
- c) **Minimise impact on the amenity of residents or businesses living or operating near the site;**
- d) **Are supported with a site-specific Flood Risk Assessment and Flood Management and Flood 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;**
- e) **Are supported by measures to promote sustainable and active travel for leisure;**
- f) **Any outdoor lighting proposed must follow dark sky lighting principles to ensure that lighting avoids light pollution, avoids any further reduction in tranquillity and protects landscape character and wildlife. Any lighting proposed should be justified, directed to where it is needed to avoid spill and comply with relevant standards and best practice from the Institute of Lighting Professionals and UK Dark Skies Partnership;**

Permission will not be granted for visitor accommodation at the caravan parks to be used as permanent residences. 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 residences.

### **Justification**

#### **Purpose of the policy**

10.17 The purpose of the policy is to provide criteria that will be used to assess the suitability of any new or extensions to existing or intensification of caravan parks. Other policies will be relevant including the coastal areas, landscape and tourism policies.

10.18 There are numerous caravan parks on Mersea Island. The Landscape Character Assessment notes that two of the key characteristics and sensitivities and value of the Mersea Island Coastal Farmland landscape character area are: 'a rural landscape albeit the sense of tranquillity is diminished in the vicinity of settlement

and the holiday caravan parks'; and 'a strong sense of remoteness and wildness along the coastal edges, with wide open views across marshes and mudflats towards the surrounding estuaries and channels and the sound of wind and birds'. Guidance for Development Management includes reducing lighting impacts and avoiding any further reduction in tranquillity around West Mersea and the holiday caravan parks.

10.19 The introduction of further lighting has the potential to increase light pollution, reduce dark skies, further reduce tranquillity and adversely affect landscape character and wildlife. The policy criteria for lighting will ensure that the impacts of any further lighting are understood and that lighting schemes are designed to respect the tranquillity of the area. The policy requires compliance with dark sky lighting principles. These principles were developed by DarkSky International. The principles for outdoor lighting are: useful, use light only if it is needed; targeted, direct light so it falls only where it is needed; low level, light should be no brighter than necessary; controlled, use light only when it is needed using controls such as timers or motion detectors; and warm-coloured lights where possible to limit the amount of shorter wavelength (blue-violet) light.

#### **Alternative**

10.20 The alternative is to rely on other relevant policies, such as tourism, biodiversity and flood risk policies, and not include a caravan park policy.

# 11.Place and Connectivity

- 11.1 Places that are sustainable, inclusive, attractive and safe contribute to the health and wellbeing of our communities. High quality placemaking and design therefore plays an essential role in making places healthier. Good design helps reduce and mitigate the impacts of climate change, promote healthier lifestyles and create safer and more accessible places for people to live in or use.
- 11.2 The quality of public realm plays a central role in creating well-connected, inclusive and safe places. The design of our neighbourhoods including in and around the home, public spaces and access to services, can influence physical activity levels, the food we eat, travel patterns, and health and wellbeing outcomes.
- 11.3 National planning policy requires planning policies to aim to achieve healthy, inclusive and safe places which promote social interaction, are safe and accessible, and enable and support healthy lives. This chapter covers a range of policies to achieve healthy, inclusive and safe places. Policies cover Healthier Food Environments, Active and Sustainable Travel, Parking Standards, Development Density, Domestic Development, Design and Amenity, Residential Schemes on Greenfield Sites and Private Amenity Space.
- 11.4 The policies in this chapter will contribute towards all the themes of the vision by creating healthy, vibrant and diverse places that are sustainable, inclusive and well connected.

## **Policy PC1: Healthier Food Environments**

New development should safeguard and, where appropriate, create or enhance the role of allotments, orchards, community gardens and food markets to promote healthy lifestyles by providing access to healthy, fresh and locally produced food, providing food growing opportunities and for exercise and recreation. Allotment provision must be well located to residential areas and community spaces, with suitable access arrangements for all.

Some locations are more suited than others for fast food outlets and takeaways. All proposals for these uses need to consider to the following factors, and should reflect the relevant evidence, to inform the planning decision:

- a) Proposals for hot food takeaways and fast-food outlets within 400m walking distance of the entrances/exits of a nursery, a primary school, a secondary school, a community college, playground or youth facilities and other places where children and young people frequent will be refused unless the location is within a designated centre; and
- b) Within designated centres, proposals for hot food takeaways and fast-food outlets will be supported unless there is evidence that the impacts of clustering or cumulative impact resulting from an over concentration of such uses is having an adverse impact on local health, pollution or anti-social behaviour; and
- c) In all other areas, proposals for hot food takeaways and fast-food outlets will require a Health Impact Assessment in order to appropriately consider the impacts of such uses on local health, pollution or anti-social behaviour. Where impacts are shown as having an adverse impact as a result of the proposal, or cumulative impacts on communities / catchments they are intended to serve, proposals will be refused unless they can be satisfactorily mitigated.

In cases applying to criteria b) and c), evidence will need to include indicators such as levels of obesity, areas of deprivation, or other health indications with a recognised link to healthy eating. Evidence demonstrating significant levels of adverse health impacts arising from air quality and pollution, and evidence of excessive anti-social behaviour in the immediate vicinity of the proposed use will also be relevant.

Where the Council are minded to approve proposals, conditions may be used to restrict the hours of operation where this is appropriate and supported by relevant evidence.

### **Justification**

#### **Purpose of the policy**

11.5 Planning has an important role in shaping healthy communities. Allotments and community gardens provide physical, mental and social health benefits as well as reducing household food costs.

11.6 Hot food takeaways can provide a service to local people and add to the vitality and viability of centres but can also have negative impacts on health and wellbeing. The Council will seek to prevent a concentration of hot food takeaways, especially in

areas where children and young people tend to spend time or congregate, to avoid clustering of such uses and to avoid adverse impacts on existing communities.

- 11.7 National Policy requires that local planning authorities should refuse applications for hot food takeaways and fast-food outlets within walking distance of schools and other places where young children and young people congregate, unless the location is within a designated town centre; or in locations where there is evidence that a concentration of such uses is having an adverse impact on local health, pollution or anti-social behaviour.

**Alternative**

- 11.8 The alternative is not to include a policy and rely on the retail policy. However national policy only provides a high level of detail in relation to local circumstances and the requirement for a Health Impact Assessment and this is therefore not considered a reasonable alternative.

## **Policy PC2: Active and Sustainable Travel**

All new development should be planned around a network of safe and accessible active travel routes, creating places that maximise opportunities for active and sustainable travel for all and support healthy and active lifestyles.

Proposals for development should:

- a) Give priority to the movement of people walking and cycling; and
- b) Create safe, secure, convenient, well designed and attractive layouts that are permeable for active travel modes, prioritise desire lines and are inclusive and accessible for all; and
- c) Support the provision of infrastructure to encourage active and sustainable modes of travel that are inclusive and accessible to all; and
- d) Ensure that cycling infrastructure is designed having regard to the latest best practice (LTN 1/20 or subsequent updated guidance); and
- e) Protect and enhance existing active and sustainable travel infrastructure including mobility hubs; and
- f) Link the development to the surrounding walking, cycling and public transport networks, having regard to the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan, and improve connectivity to adjoining areas and key destinations; and
- g) Facilitate access to high quality public transport infrastructure; and
- h) Promote the use of car clubs and provide the required infrastructure where appropriate; and
- i) Incorporate infrastructure provision for charging electric vehicles in line with the latest guidance and standards, and make provision for charging electric bicycles; and
- j) Accommodate the efficient delivery of goods and services; and
- k) Include school streets and zones around new education and childcare facilities.

All developments that generate significant amounts of movement will require a Transport Statement or Transport Assessment in line with thresholds set out in the latest Essex County Council guidance. The Transport Assessment or Statement must demonstrate how the development will encourage active and sustainable transport, demonstrating how opportunities for active and sustainable measures have been maximised, and mitigate traffic impacts in terms of capacity and safety.

All developments that generate significant amounts of movement will be required to produce a Travel Plan in line with thresholds and guidelines set out in Essex County Council published guidance. Any Travel Plan should include an Action Plan setting out specific actions, timelines and targets to be monitored and reviewed.

## **Justification**

## **Purpose of the policy**

- 11.9 Active and sustainable travel are key elements of sustainable development. Neighbourhoods with easy access to services by active modes of travel including walking and cycling can increase rates of physical activity. The purpose of this policy is to maximise opportunities for active and sustainable travel within new development.
- 11.10 National planning policy requires the planning system to focus significant development on locations which are or can be made sustainable, through limiting the need to travel and offering a genuine choice of transport modes. This can help to reduce congestion and emissions and improve air quality and public health.
- 11.11 The Colchester Active Travel SPD, adopted in December 2023, requires that the following elements are considered as part of any new development proposals: provision of good quality active travel infrastructure; improvements to existing infrastructure; and cycle parking. Guidance set out in the Active Travel SPD will also be taken into account in development proposals.
- 11.12 The NPPF states that planning policies should provide for attractive and well-designed walking and cycling networks with supporting facilities such as secure cycle parking. Connectivity via active and sustainable travel should be considered at the earliest stages of the design process.
- 11.13 Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans (LCWIPs), as set out in the Governments Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy, are a strategic approach to identifying cycling and walking improvements required at the local level. Essex County Council has prepared an LCWIP for Colchester, which identifies and prioritises cycling and walking improvements. This policy requires new development to link to the strategic LCWIP network and other existing walking and cycle routes where appropriate.

## **Alternatives**

11.14 The alternatives are to retain Policy DM21 from the Adopted Local Plan or to rely on national policy and guidance and not include a policy on active and sustainable travel. However, national policy and guidance does not provide detailed guidance on the provision of quality active travel infrastructure in new development.



### **Policy PC3: Parking Standards**

The Council will have regard to the parking standards set out in the Essex Planning Officers Association Parking Guidance (Parts 1 and 2) and any locally set parking guidance or subsequent updated guidance, when determining planning applications.

The amount of car parking should take account of the following factors:

- a) Levels of local accessibility.
- b) The size, type, tenure and location of any dwellings.
- c) The appropriate mix of parking types including opportunities for car sharing (e.g. unallocated, on-street, visitor, and car club parking).

A more flexible approach to the parking standards will only be considered if supported by evidence detailing the local circumstances that justify the approach.

Parking for staff, visitors and operational uses on non-residential development 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 and to support place making.

Secure cycle parking should be incorporated into all 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 should be incorporated into development proposals and located near the entrance to the building. All cycle parking should be designed in accordance with LTN 1/20 and the Essex Parking Guidance or subsequent updated guidance.

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 both city 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 car parking will also be considered to make efficient use of land, improve townscape and support regeneration.

The use of Park and Ride and Rapid Transit System will be encouraged for trips in the city centre and other major destinations along the route of the service.

### **Justification**

### **Purpose of the policy**

- 11.15 Parking directly and indirectly impacts on the environment, communities and the economy. 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. The purpose of the policy is to achieve an appropriate balance to help achieve a reduced reliance on the private car while making provision for travel by all modes in a way that does not prejudice the safety or the quality of new development.
- 11.16 The Essex Parking Guidance has been updated. The Guidance aims to support the assessment of planning applications by ensuring proposals include an appropriate level of cycle parking, car parking and electric vehicle parking provision, and that parking designs and arrangements operate effectively and safely. The updated parking standards reflect changes in national policy.
- 11.17 The revised Essex Parking Guidance recognises that the level of parking required for a development is dependant not only on the land use type, but also the level of connectivity to the site and it incorporates a zonal approach to parking standards recommending that a lower provision of vehicle parking may be appropriate in highly connected locations where there is good access to facilities via public transport, walking and cycling.
- 11.18 The Essex Parking Guidance is considered appropriate guidance to inform levels of parking and parking standards in Colchester. The Council however recognises that there needs to be flexibility to provide appropriate parking based on local circumstances.
- 11.19 The Active Travel SPD contains key principles to be considered for provision of cycle parking in new developments.

### **Alternative**

- 11.20 The alternative is to not have regard to the revised Essex Parking Guidance and set out detailed parking guidance within the Policy. Another option is to adopt the Essex Parking Standards and rely entirely on them.

## **Policy PC4: Development Density**

The Council will support development densities that make efficient use of land and relate to the specific opportunities and constraints of proposed development sites. The appropriateness of a development's density will be considered in the context of potential impacts on the residential amenity in the surrounding areas.

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:

- a) The character of the site and its immediate surroundings, as well as the wider locality, including where applicable the setting of designated heritage assets;
- b) The adequacy of the access and the local road network to accommodate the traffic likely to be generated by the proposed development (that has been supported by evidence) as well as the scope to enhance walking and cycling access to local amenities and public transport;
- c) The existing landscaping, trees and hedgerows on the site and the need for further landscaping;
- d) The provision of appropriate on-site amenities to serve the development in accordance with policy PC6 and any relevant adopted guidance including the provision of open space and sustainable drainage facilities where suitable;
- e) Ensuring any over provision of private space within a site is balanced with an overprovision of public space;
- f) Achieving higher net densities within sites with a view to prioritising the provision of publicly accessible spaces over the provision of private spaces. The provision of appropriate parking to serve the development in accordance with the relevant standards and policy PC3;
- g) An adequate standard of residential accommodation being provided for future occupants in accordance with policy PC5;
- h) An appropriate mix and type of housing as informed by the various housing policies;
- i) A strategy for BNG acknowledging that on site delivery may be difficult.

Developments with higher densities, that contrast with surrounding densities, will be supported where the wider development provides for public benefits in excess of standard policy requirements (e.g. >30% affordable housing, >10% POS, exemplar standard of design and placemaking). Benefits will need to outweigh any detrimental impacts arising from the increase in density and any resulting harm.

## **Justification**

## **Purpose of the policy**

- 11.21 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.
- 11.22 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 City 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.
- 11.23 However, it is important that the Council 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.
- 11.24 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.
- 11.25 In areas where there is a need for affordable homes, higher density development may be considered to increase the supply of housing. However, this must still be balanced with ensuring that the development is of high quality, with suitable infrastructure and amenities.
- 11.26 Comparing net and gross densities can highlight the efficiency of land use. Gross density helps address overall land-use balance in large-scale developments to ensure new developments align with broader spatial strategies. Net density focuses on maximising housing delivery on residential land.

## **Alternative**

- 11.27 The alternative is not to include the policy.

## **Policy PC5: Domestic Development**

### **Residential alterations, extensions and outbuildings**

**Residential alterations, extensions and outbuildings will be permitted, provided the proposal meets all the following criteria:**

- a) The proposal is compatible with the scale, appearance and character of the original dwelling including taking into account the cumulative impact of such development;**
- b) 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;**
- c) Proposals for extensions and outbuildings result in an appropriate composition, appearing well designed and retaining the legibility of the original dwelling in terms of design and setting;**
- d) 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; and**
- e) 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 all of the following criteria:**

- a) The proposal is physically attached or closely related to the main dwelling so that it cannot be subdivided from the main dwelling;**
- b) 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);**
- c) The proposal respects and enhances both the character of the original dwelling and the context of the surrounding area through high quality design; and**
- d) The proposal does not result in the loss of amenity to neighbouring properties.**

#### **Flat conversions**

**Proposals for the conversion and sub-division of existing residential premises 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.**

**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 all the following criteria:

- a) 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;
- b) Opportunities are taken for improving the character and quality of an area and the way it functions;
- c) Appropriate provision is made for parking, private amenity space, cycle storage and refuse storage facilities, in a visually acceptable manner;
- d) The internal layout minimises possible noise disturbance and/or overlooking to the immediate neighbours; and
- e) Overall, the proposal will not result in an unsatisfactory living environment for prospective occupiers.

### **Replacement dwellings in the countryside**

Replacement dwellings in the countryside within existing curtilages will be supported, provided the proposal meets the following criteria:

- a) It is on a one-for-one basis and the property to be demolished is a permanent lawful dwelling;
- b) 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;
- c) It is of a scale appropriate to the size of the existing plot;
- d) 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;
- e) 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
- f) The flood risk sequential test will have to be applied.

### **Justification**

#### **Purpose of the policy**

11.28 Permitted Development Rights enable some small-scale changes to domestic properties without requiring planning permission. However, there are a number of scenarios where planning permission is still required including residential alternations, extension and annexes and flat conversions. Domestic development proposals represent a large number of planning applications received by the Council.

11.29 This policy sets out the criteria which are to be applied when assessing these planning applications, alongside other relevant policies in this Draft Local Plan.



- 11.30 The Council wishes to retain and promote a balanced mix of dwelling types and sizes across Colchester 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.
- 11.31 The Council 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.
- 11.32 The Council recognises the important contribution flat conversions make to the provision of smaller and more affordable dwellings, 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.
- 11.33 This policy 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.
- 11.34 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. 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.
- 11.35 In order to protect the 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.

### **Alternative**

- 11.36 The alternative is to rely on national policy and guidance and not include a policy on domestic development. However, national policy and guidance does not provide specific detail on the types of development proposals addressed in this policy and could result in less than satisfactory domestic developments across Colchester. The policy ensures where planning permission is required outside the scope of permitted development rights (which does not require planning permission) this is carried out in a way which respects local areas and protects the needs of existing and future residents and neighbours.



## **Policy PC6: 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. Development proposals should reflect the local distinctiveness of Colchester and the immediate locality, contribute to placemaking, and support the transition to a low-carbon, inclusive and climate resilient future. 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 Council will use and/or promote a range of planning processes and tools to help achieve high quality design, including design codes. Ultimately, development proposals must demonstrate that they, and any ancillary activities associated with them, will:

- a) 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 enhance and integrate the existing built environment and other, heritage, biodiversity, arboricultural and landscape assets, including trees, hedgerows and watercourses, removing problems or barriers as part of the overall development process;
- b) Promote visually attractive, functional, coherent and distinctive environments to establish a strong sense of place for living, working and visiting, supported by high quality architecture and landscaping;
- c) Promote and sustain an appropriate mix and density of uses which are well located and integrated, optimise the efficient use of land (including sharing of land), contribute to inclusive communities, and support retail centres and active and sustainable transport networks;
- d) Provide attractive, well connected and legible streets and public spaces, which prioritise walking, cycling, public transport and community vitality, whilst adequately integrating safe vehicle access and encouraging vibrant community activity;
- e) Safeguard public and residential amenity, particularly with regard to privacy, overlooking, security, noise and disturbance, pollution (including light and odour pollution), and access to daylight and sunlight;
- f) Create a safe, resilient and secure environment, which supports community cohesion, resilience and pride of place, whilst reducing vulnerability to neglect or crime;
- g) 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 can accommodate evolving community needs and possible future development;

- h) Minimise carbon emissions and energy use through sustainable design solutions such as orientation, massing, natural ventilation and tree planting. Incorporate sustainable drainage systems and biodiversity enhancements to contribute to climate resilience;
- i) Incorporate an accessible refuse and recycling storage area, external drying areas and 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 placemaking;
- j) 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;
- k) Integrate principles of Active Design to encourage physical activity through layout, design and access to open spaces by providing facilities for walking, cycling and outdoor recreation;
- l) Incorporate 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;
- m) Consider flood risk at an early stage when deciding the layout and design of a site and take opportunities to make space for water;
- n) Where vehicular access is necessary, it shall be provided in a safe manner;
- o) Acceptable levels of daylight to all habitable rooms and no single aspect north-facing homes;
- p) Acceptable levels of privacy for rear-facing habitable rooms and sitting-out areas;
- q) All new build will be expected to comply with internal space standards demonstrated to be in accordance with the National Described Space Standards (DCLG, 2015) or any future replacement of this;
- r) 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.

Development proposals must demonstrate that they, and any ancillary activities associated with them will be in accordance with submitted Masterplans and Design Codes for strategic-scale developments, ensuring coordinated, high quality design outcomes. The Council may also implement Design Briefs and Design Codes for smaller developments.

### **Justification**

#### **Purpose of the policy**

11.37 Good design is integral to good planning and a fundamental requirement of the NPPF for achieving sustainable development. High quality design creates desirable, functional and efficient places, benefitting residents, businesses, and visitors while fostering improved amenities, inclusive communities, economic activity and reduced environmental impact. This is particularly critical for Colchester, where good design can generate local support for planned growth, complement the City's heritage assets and ensure regeneration activities leave a lasting placemaking legacy.

11.38 In Colchester, as elsewhere in the UK, there is a need to deliver high quality design, whilst still ensuring sustainable development is viable and deliverable. As a result, there requires clear and practical guidance that reflects best practices and provides flexibility to respond to site specific challenges and opportunities.

11.39 The promotion of design excellence in Colchester will be achieved through the adoption of effective processes, tools and guidance, including:

- Good design team selection, including ecologists and landscape architects, and encouraging early engagement through pre-application dialogue, planning performance agreements, consultation with key stakeholders and the community;
- Design guidance (e.g. masterplans, design codes, development briefs and neighbourhood plans) for priority growth and regeneration areas. These might be produced by the Council or other key stakeholders as appropriate;
- Site and context analysis required through analysis to identify opportunities and constraints, and the design response needed to enhance local character and address site specific needs;
- Alternative options to encourage the exploration of multiple design approaches to identify the best possible outcome;
- Independent Design Review for significant or complex proposals to provide objective, expert feedback on appropriate schemes;
- Supporting well designed self and community led development; and
- Ensuring applicants provide sufficient design material to allow accurate assessment of their proposals.

11.40 Requests by the Council for information in relation to applicant's design proposals will be reasonable and proportionate to the nature and scale of the proposal to avoid unnecessary burdens on applicants. Some of the adopted neighbourhood plans include design policies. 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.

### **Alternative**

11.41 The alternative is to rely on strategic Placemaking policy and not include this design policy.



## **Policy PC7: Residential Schemes on Greenfield Sites**

**Major residential developments on greenfield sites must comply with the following requirements:**

- a) The primary public open space should be located centrally within the site in order to optimise access for future residents. This space should not be dominated by adjacent parking provision.**
- b) Include informal areas of incidental public open space within the built up areas of the site, in addition to areas of more strategic or larger public open spaces. These areas should include both multifunctional green and blue infrastructure, which should consist of a network of integrated features.**
- c) Areas of public open space should be fronted by units in order to ensure good levels of activity and natural surveillance. Similarly, units should front boundaries with existing adjacent roads and countryside edges to avoid domination of the streetscape and wider landscape views by rear boundary treatments. The layout should also avoid these sensitive edges being dominated by parking and vehicular movements.**
- d) Built form should establish a site wide positive and coherent identity. This identity should respond to the sites context and reinforce or enhance the local vernacular. This can be achieved through a historic/traditional approach or through the adoption of a contemporary design solution; both options are valid, but whichever approach is adopted, the detailing must be of a high quality.**
- e) The layout of the development and positioning of elements of landscape and built environment should create a series of distinct spaces and take the opportunity to create character areas within the development. Character areas can be established through the hierarchy of streets, the grain of the development, the spatial enclosure of the street, the definition between the public and private domain as well as through landscaping, materials, and the design of the buildings. Distinct and legible character areas within the site should contribute to an overall distinct sense of place for the wider site.**
- f) A variety of vehicular parking treatments should be adopted across the site. Vehicular parking must be well-designed, landscaped and sensitively integrated into the built form so that it does not dominate the development or the street scene. Car parking areas should incorporate green infrastructure, including trees, to soften the visual impact of cars, help improve air quality and contribute to biodiversity enhancement. Car parking areas must be secure and overlooked.**
- g) A clear and legible street hierarchy should be established and reinforced utilising materiality, landscaping and spatial treatments.**
- h) Sites should support modal shift, incorporating prioritised routes and enhanced connectivity, both within and beyond the site for active**

travel modes, including through filtered permeability for vehicular movements.

- i) **Back to back distances should comply with adopted guidance to ensure appropriate levels of amenity for existing and future occupants. Where reduced provision is proposed this should be weighed against subsequent placemaking enhancements within the wider scheme.**
- j) **Focal/nodal buildings should be included to enhance legibility and wayfinding within the site.**
- k) **Brick walls should be used to enclose boundaries that address public/semi-public realm, including parking courts.**
- l) **Design features should be applied consistently across all elevations of built environment, variations in materiality, fenestration of detailing should respond to the composition of the architecture.**
- m) **Meter housing and service intakes, and rainwater goods, should be located out of public view or should be purposefully designed into the treatment of the building's façade, so as to not cause detriment to the standard of design achieved.**

## **Justification**

### **Purpose of the policy**

11.42 The purpose of this policy is to guide the design and layout of major residential developments on greenfield sites to ensure they are well-integrated, sustainable, and responsive to their context. It seeks to achieve the following:

- Ensure that public open spaces are centrally located and accessible, creating opportunities for recreation, social interaction, and community engagement while minimising disruption from parking and vehicular movement.
- Promote the incorporation of natural elements, such as planting and water features, into the urban fabric to enhance biodiversity, improve environmental quality, and support community well-being.
- Require buildings to front public spaces and boundaries to enhance safety, activity, and aesthetic integration with the surrounding environment.
- Encourage developments to establish a distinctive and high-quality identity that respects Colchester's architectural styles and vernacular, whether through traditional or contemporary design approaches.
- Foster a sense of place by creating distinct character areas within the site using thoughtful design elements, such as street hierarchy, landscaping, and architectural detailing, contributing to a unique and cohesive community identity.
- Promote well-integrated, landscaped parking areas that minimise visual impact, enhance air quality, and contribute to biodiversity while maintaining security and accessibility.
- Ensure developments feature clear street hierarchies and prioritise active travel routes, supporting modal shifts and enhanced connectivity within and beyond the site.

- Maintain appropriate separation distances and design layouts to balance amenity and placemaking considerations for current and future occupants.
- Include focal buildings and consistent architectural detailing to enhance legibility, orientation, and visual appeal across the site.
- Ensure functional elements like boundary treatments, meter housing, and rainwater goods are carefully integrated into the design to uphold overall quality and visual harmony.

11.43 Overall, this policy aims to ensure that new residential developments on greenfield sites are sustainable, attractive, and contribute positively to their surroundings and the wider community.

**Alternative**

11.44 The alternative is to rely on strategic Placemaking policy and not include this policy.



## **Policy PC8: Private Amenity Space**

All residential proposals must provide easy access to private amenity space and in the case of flats and maisonettes, 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 must be designed to a high standard to optimise its use and meet the recreational needs and promote health and wellbeing of residents. The siting, orientation, size and layout must create a secure and usable space that functions well, which has an inviting appearance for residents and is appropriate to the surrounding context. Environmental factors that may affect its usability such as sunlight and shade, noise, pollution and drainage must be considered. All private amenity spaces must be designed to avoid significant overlooking.

The following standards shall apply:

For houses:

- a) One or two bedroom houses – a minimum of 50m<sup>2</sup>
- b) Three bedroom houses – a minimum of 60m<sup>2</sup>
- c) Four bedroom houses – a minimum of 100m<sup>2</sup>

For flats and maisonettes:

- d) A minimum of 25m<sup>2</sup> 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 highly accessible and sustainable locations such as the city centre, where higher densities may be appropriate, reduced private amenity space for houses may be acceptable but a minimum of 25m<sup>2</sup> of useable private amenity space should be provided for every dwelling, either as gardens, balconies or roof gardens/terraces.

Communal private amenity space should have regard to the design criteria for private communal space included in the Essex Design Guide.

### **Justification**

#### **Purpose of policy**

11.45 All residential development must provide new residents with access to private and/or communal amenity space, in addition to public open space requirements. At least 25m<sup>2</sup> per dwelling of private/communal open space will be sought for flats and maisonettes, whilst houses should provide larger private gardens. The National

Design Guide recognises that well-designed homes and buildings include the provision of good quality external environments, promoting health and wellbeing; and relate positively to the private, shared and public spaces around them, contributing to social interaction and inclusion.

11.46 The Essex Design Guide has replaced previous guidance which specified a range of minimum garden sizes with guidelines emphasises a focus on small, walled outside yards of around 25m<sup>2</sup>. However, the Council considers that private amenity space is essential for the creation of good quality homes that promote health and wellbeing and will continue to apply a policy of minimum standards for private amenity space. Private amenity space can add significantly to the quality of life of residents of all ages through the provision of access to daylight, fresh air, space to dry washing, socialise, play, enjoy wildlife and a place to grow plants/vegetables.

**Alternative**

11.47 The alternative is not to include standards for private amenity space in the policy.

## 12. Place Policies

- 12.1 The policies contained within this chapter set out allocations for different areas of the City. The allocations contain site specific requirements based on the evidence available to date including for infrastructure and mitigation and management of any site constraints. These will be required in addition to general requirements for infrastructure contained in Policy ST7 and other requirements as relevant. Policy ST7 highlights general issues concerning infrastructure provision and developer contributions that affect proposals across the City 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
- 12.2 The Infrastructure Audit Delivery Plan (IADP) Stage 1 and 2 identifies the baseline for 37 types of infrastructure. The report produced by AECOM in mid-late 2024 set out in detail the baseline position for each infrastructure type. It also reviewed the high level spatial options consulted on by the Council as part of the Local Plan Issues and Options stage, in order to identify infrastructure implications of those options and inform the preferred options for the Regulation 18 Draft Local Plan. The Stage 3 IADP report (January 2025) has assessed an initial draft emerging development trajectory which identified a shortlist of potential allocations for further testing based on the preferred spatial strategy following an assessment of sites through the Strategic Land Availability Assessment (SLAA) and against other available evidence. This considers the demand which potential planned growth will generate for each infrastructure type, and how infrastructure will be provided to meet this demand to 2041. It should be noted that the emerging development trajectory represents a scenario for the potential delivery of housing and employment land in Colchester which was produced in November 2024 to allow infrastructure implications to be tested. Further consideration and refinement has informed the allocations identified in this Preferred Options Plan.
- 12.3 Work on the IADP will continue as part of the consultation and a full Infrastructure Delivery Plan – Stage 4 of the IADP will be prepared to support the Regulation 19 Submission Draft Local Plan. This work will be used to further develop the Place policies to ensure that all policies include site specific infrastructure requirements where these are identified through the IADP.
- 12.4 This chapter is broadly ordered in accordance with the settlement hierarchy. At the top of the hierarchy is the urban area of Colchester, including the City Centre, followed by Growth and Opportunity areas which includes the Hythe and Magdalen Street within the Urban area and Marks Tey and TCBGC.
- 12.5 Each settlement has a short introduction preceding the allocation policy. The Settlements evidence provides further information on each of the settlements including those which are not proposed to take any growth. Proposed changes to the settlement boundaries are explained in the Stage two Settlements Evidence.
- 12.6 Housing allocations made within this Local Plan allocate approximate housing numbers to individual sites, this is to allow flexibility within the detailed design of sites to facilitate achieving both the efficient use of land and an optimal standard of placemaking. Increased densities will not be supported at the expense of good

placemaking, proposals should be mindful of Policy H1: Housing Mix and Policy PC7: Residential Schemes on Greenfield Sites in this regard. All large scale allocations will require a comprehensive masterplan to be prepared and agreed with the Council.

## **Colchester**

12.7 Within Colchester urban area and city centre, there is a range of employment opportunities, facilities, services and travel choices for future communities. This is the most sustainable location, and growth is directed here in the first instance.

### **Policy CC1 City Centre**

The City Centre is defined by the boundary shown on the policies map and is the principal focus for retail, food and drink, cultural, leisure, community and other business uses in Colchester. As such the City Centre is at the top of the Centre Hierarchy as indicated in Policy E4. Development proposals within the City Centre will be supported where they make a positive contribution to levels of footfall, activity and vibrancy and support the City Centres role and function as the cultural epicentre of Colchester. Accordingly, proposals should be mindful to ensure high levels of equality and accessibility in contributing toward a provision that serves the wider population of Colchester in its entirety. All proposals must have regard to the City Centre Masterplan.

Within the City Centre, proposed uses should contribute toward creating a diverse mix of uses that support the vitality and viability of the centre. Proposed uses must provide active street frontages and ground floor uses should primarily fall within Use Class E (as defined by the Use Classes Order).

Proposals which complement the role and function of the City Centre will also be supported, where the proposed use would increase footfall and encourage visitors to enjoy the City Centre for longer by facilitating multiple user events/activities within the centre per visit. These include, (but are not limited to): residential, leisure and cultural uses, creche, day nursery, medical and health services, sport and recreation provision, open space, and offices, as well as retail and food and drink uses. Proposals that retain and enhance existing or deliver new elements of green infrastructure that provide benefits in terms of active travel, climate change resilience and/or habitat connectivity will be supported.

Within the Primary Shopping Area, the majority of street frontage should be dedicated to active retail frontages. Non-retail uses will be supported within the Primary Shopping Area where the proposed use will provide a service directly compatible with the function of the Primary Shopping Area and help to secure its long-term vitality and viability. Non-retail uses will not be supported where an over-concentration of said uses would detract from the established retail character in the locality, and such impacts should be considered accumulatively.

The role and benefit of upper floors to premises in the City Centre in providing residential uses is recognised, as is the role that residential development can play in the vitality of centres. As a result, in addition to the identified residential redevelopment sites allocated within the City Centre, proposals for residential development within the City Centre will be supported where they complement

**the mix of uses in the locality. Higher densities should be promoted and will be supported within the City Centre, where it can be demonstrated that any adverse impacts satisfactorily mitigated and can be outweighed by substantive public benefits. Residential uses should primarily be accommodated on upper floors and will not be supported on ground floor street frontages within the Primary Shopping Area.**

**Development proposals within the City Centre will be required to deliver the highest standard of design and placemaking, given the cultural significance of the City Centre and the emphasis this places on its streetscapes and public spaces. Proposals should secure improved streetscapes via minimising street clutter; use of high-quality materials; well-designed street furniture; public art and interpretation; retention of important spaces and key views; enhancement of street frontages; and use of sympathetic shopfronts and signage (in accordance with adopted guidance). Development proposals will need to not only protect and enhance the character of the conservation area, listed buildings, heritage assets and their setting including where appropriate the Scheduled Ancient Monument (Town Walls), but also must protect the City Centre's cultural significance, along with the distinct positive elements of its skyline.**

**In the longer term, as the catchment area population increases and new development proposals emerge, there may be additional demand for commercial leisure facilities, in which case any such provision should be directed to the 'town centres first' in accordance with the sequential approach to strengthen their diversity of uses and overall vitality.**

## **Policy PP1: Britannia Car Park, Colchester**

In addition to the infrastructure and mitigation requirements identified in Policy ST 7 and subject to compliance with all other relevant policies, development will be supported on land within the area identified on the policies map which provides:

- a) Approximately 100 new dwellings of a mix and type of housing to meet evidenced needs and be compatible with surrounding development;
- b) Proposals must have regard to the Britannia Yard Design Framework in the Colchester City Centre Masterplan SPD;
- c) Safe and suitable site access to required highway design standards and agreed with the Highway Authority and demonstration that proposal would not be detrimental to highway capacity and safety;
- d) Green infrastructure to support active travel and habitat connectivity in the urban area;
- e) Development will need to protect and enhance the setting of the Scheduled Ancient Monument. It must conserve, and where appropriate, enhance the City Centre Conservation Area and the significance of heritage assets (including any contribution made by their settings). Designated heritage assets close to the allocated site includes two conservation areas, 6 grade II listed buildings and a number of scheduled monuments including St Botolphs Priory as informed by the stage 1 HIA;
- f) Contributions towards flood risk solutions, in accordance with Policy EN8 and the Colchester Surface Water Management Plan recommendations for Critical Drainage Area COL 03 (Abbey Gate);
- g) Development must discharge attenuated surface water to a receiving waterbody and not to the combined sewer network, unless it can be demonstrated that there is no other option;
- h) Demonstrate adequate capacity for managing wastewater including proposed phasing requirements or alternative solutions to the satisfaction of the Council and Anglian Water;
- i) A range of measures in addition to prioritising SuDs (Policy EN8) and water efficiency measures to reduce the risk on impact on the WRC capacity as a result of planned growth including:
  - i) Removal of unrequired network flows;
  - ii) Targeted education to include new residents of the development;
  - iii) Reduction in the demand for potable water.



## **Policy PP2: Vineyard Gate, Colchester**

In addition to the infrastructure and mitigation requirements identified in Policy ST 7 and subject to compliance with all other relevant policies, development will be supported on land within the area identified on the policies map which provides:

- a) **Approximately 100 new dwellings of a mix and type of housing to meet evidenced needs and be compatible with surrounding development;**
- b) **Proposals must have regard to the Vineyard Gate Design Framework in the Colchester City Centre Masterplan SPD;**
- c) **Safe and suitable site access to the required highway design standards and vehicle access to be off Osborne Street and Stanwell Street to be agreed with the Highway Authority and demonstration that proposal would not be detrimental to highway capacity and safety;**
- d) **Provide pedestrian connections directly to / from Lion Walk;**
- e) **Green infrastructure to support habitat connectivity in the urban area;**
- f) **Development will need to protect and enhance the setting of the Scheduled Ancient Monument (Town Walls). It must conserve, and where appropriate, enhance the town centre conservation area and the significance of heritage assets (including any contribution made by their settings). Designated heritage assets close to the allocated site includes five scheduled Monuments and 98 listed buildings as informed by the stage 1 HIA;**
- g) **Contributions towards flood risk solutions, in accordance with Policy EN8 and the Colchester Surface Water Management Plan Recommendations for Critical Drainage Area CDA 03;**
- h) **Development must discharge attenuated surface water to a receiving waterbody and not to the combined sewer network, unless it can be demonstrated that there is no other option;**
- i) **Demonstrate adequate capacity for managing wastewater including proposed phasing requirements or alternative solutions to the satisfaction of the Council and Anglian Water;**
- j) **A range of measures in addition to prioritising SuDs (Policy EN8) and water efficiency measures to reduce the risk on impact on the WRC capacity as a result of planned growth including:**
  - i) **Removal of unrequired network flows;**
  - ii) **Targeted education to include new residents of the development;**
  - iii) **Reduction in the demand for potable water.**

### **Policy PP3: St Runwalds Street Car Park, Colchester**

In addition to the infrastructure and mitigation requirements identified in Policy ST 7 and subject to compliance with all other relevant policies, development will be supported on land within the area identified on the policies map which provides:

- a) **Approximately 40 new dwellings of a mix and type of housing to meet evidenced needs and be compatible with surrounding development;**
- b) **Proposals must have regard to the Colchester City Centre Masterplan SPD;**
- c) **Safe and suitable site access to required highway design standards and point of vehicle access to be agreed with the Highway Authority and demonstration that proposal would not be detrimental to highway capacity and safety;**
- d) **Green infrastructure to support habitat connectivity in the urban area;**
- e) **Development must conserve, and where appropriate, enhance the town centre conservation area and the significance of heritage assets (including any contribution made by their settings). The site sits within the Town Wall (Scheduled monument) with a huge number of Designated heritage assets surrounding the site as informed by the Stage 1 HIA.**
- f) **Development must discharge attenuated surface water to a receiving waterbody and not to the combined sewer network, unless it can be demonstrated that there is no other option.**
- g) **Demonstrate adequate capacity for managing wastewater including proposed phasing requirements or alternative solutions to the satisfaction of the Council and Anglian Water;**
- h) **A range of measures in addition to prioritising SuDs (Policy EN8) and water efficiency measures to reduce the risk on impact on the WRC capacity as a result of planned growth including:**
  - i) **Removal of unrequired network flows;**
  - ii) **Targeted education to include new residents of the development;**
  - iii) **Reduction in the demand for potable water.**

#### **Policy PP4: Braiswick, Colchester**

In addition to the infrastructure and mitigation requirements identified in Policy ST 7 and subject to compliance with all other relevant policies, development will be supported on land within the area identified on the policies map which provides:

- a) Approximately 30 new dwellings of a mix and type of housing to meet evidenced needs and be compatible with surrounding development;
- b) Safe and suitable site access to required highway design standards and point of vehicle access to be via the adjoining site with planning permission (part of the former overall allocation) to be agreed with the Highway Authority and demonstration that proposal would not be detrimental to highway capacity and safety;
- c) Provide a safe pedestrian connection to existing footway including via the adjoining site with planning permission (part of the former overall allocation);
- d) Include links for active travel connecting with Bakers Lane;
- e) Onsite biodiversity mitigation and BNG measures should focus on retaining and enhancing the condition of existing grassland and scrub;
- f) Development will need to protect and enhance the significance of heritage assets (including any contribution made by their settings). There are no Designated heritage assets within or close to the allocated site as informed by the stage 1 HIA.
- g) Development must discharge attenuated surface water to a receiving waterbody and not to the combined sewer network, unless it can be demonstrated that there is no other option.
- h) Demonstrate adequate capacity for managing wastewater including proposed phasing requirements or alternative solutions to the satisfaction of the Council and Anglian Water;
- i) A range of measures in addition to prioritising SuDs (Policy EN8) and water efficiency measures to reduce the risk on impact on the WRC capacity as a result of planned growth including:
  - i) Removal of unrequired network flows;
  - ii) Targeted education to include new residents of the development;
  - iii) Reduction in the demand for potable water.

All development Proposals within Myland and Braiswick Neighbourhood Plan Area will also be determined against the policies in the Myland and Braiswick Neighbourhood Plan Review where relevant (adopted October 2023) where they are up to date and relevant.

## **Policy PP5: Land at Chesterwell, Colchester**

In addition to the infrastructure and mitigation requirements identified in Policy ST 7 and subject to compliance with all other relevant policies, development will be supported on land within the area identified on the policies map which provides:

- a) Approximately 50 new dwellings of a mix and type of housing to meet evidenced needs and which is compatible with surrounding development;
- b) Safe and suitable site access to required highway design standards and point of vehicle access to be agreed with the Highway Authority and demonstration that proposal would not be detrimental to highway capacity;
- c) Onsite BNG measures should be based around watercourse gain requirements. The previous line of the watercourse onsite could be restored. Consideration should be given to creating higher distinctiveness grassland in the north of the site.
- d) For the retention of mature trees and hedgerows within the site;
- e) Improved walking and cycle routes to surrounding development and the railway station, utilising and connecting to the Public Right of Way network where possible;
- f) 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 allocated site includes two Grade II listed buildings as informed by the stage 1 HIA.
- g) Development must discharge attenuated surface water to a receiving waterbody and not to the combined sewer network, unless it can be demonstrated that there is no other option.
- h) Demonstrate adequate capacity for managing wastewater including proposed phasing requirements or alternative solutions to the satisfaction of the Council and Anglian Water;
- i) A range of measures in addition to prioritising SuDs (Policy EN8) and water efficiency measures to reduce the risk on impact on the WRC capacity as a result of planned growth including:
  - i) Removal of unrequired network flows;
  - ii) Targeted education to include new residents of the development;
  - iii) Reduction in the demand for potable water.

All development Proposals within Myland and Braiswick Neighborhood Plan Area will also be determined against the policies in the Myland and Braiswick Neighbourhood Plan Review where relevant (adopted October 2023) where they are up to date and relevant.

## **Policy PP6: Land at Colchester Station, Colchester**

In addition to the infrastructure and mitigation requirements identified in Policy ST 7 and subject to compliance with all other relevant policies, development will be supported on land within the area identified on the policies map which provides:

- a) Approximately 250 new dwellings as part of a mixed-use scheme incorporating a mix and type of housing to meet evidenced needs which is compatible with surrounding development;
- b) Commercial floorspace to serve commuters and the surrounding community;
- c) Safe and suitable site access to required highway design standards and point of vehicle access to be agreed with the Highway Authority and demonstration that proposal would not be detrimental to highway capacity;
- d) Priority route for active travel through the site from east to west linking with existing active travel routes;
- e) Priority interchange facilities and shared mobility hub to support active travel modes;
- f) Enhancements to the station as a transport hub and the associated sense of arrival and enhanced public realm including considering the context and relationship of the built form to the wider landscape through townscape analysis;
- g) Consolidated parking provision for the station with any reduction in parking capacity to be supported by evidence;
- h) Servicing needs to avoid conflicts between pedestrian and car borne station users;
- i) Development must conserve, and where appropriate, enhance the significance of heritage assets (including any contribution made by their settings). Designated heritage assets in close proximity the allocated site includes a Conservation Area, one Grade II Listed Building and one Scheduled Monument as informed by the Stage 1 HIA;
- j) Solutions to address the risk of surface water and groundwater flooding across the entire site;
- k) Development must discharge attenuated surface water to a receiving waterbody and not to the combined sewer network, unless it can be demonstrated that there is no other option. Demonstrate adequate capacity for managing wastewater including proposed phasing requirements or alternative solutions to the satisfaction of the Council and Anglian Water;
- l) A range of measures in addition to prioritising SuDs (Policy EN8) and water efficiency measures to reduce the risk on impact on the WRC capacity as a result of planned growth including:
  - i) Removal of unrequired network flows;
  - ii) Targeted education to include new residents of the development;
  - iii) Reduction in the demand for potable water.
- m) Any site specific infrastructure requirements from the IDP (likely to include education provision, highway mitigation, water and wastewater and specific community / open space provision).

**All development Proposals within Myland and Braiswick Neighbourhood Plan Area will also be determined against the policies in the Myland and Braiswick Neighbourhood Plan Review where relevant (adopted October 2023) where they are up to date and relevant.**

## **Policy PP7: Land off Bakers Lane, Colchester**

In addition to the infrastructure and mitigation requirements identified in Policy ST 7 and subject to compliance with all other relevant policies, development will be supported on land within the area identified on the policies map which provides:

- a) Approximately 100 new dwellings of a mix and type of housing to meet evidenced needs which is compatible with surrounding development;
- b) Safe and suitable site access to required highway design standards and point of vehicular access to be agreed with the Highway Authority;
- c) Provide a safe pedestrian connection to an existing footway within close proximity to the site and ensure connectivity with existing Public Rights of Way;
- d) Onsite biodiversity mitigation and BNG measures should focus on retaining and enhancing the condition of existing grassland and scrub. Habitat creation measures should be maximised with regard to the adjacent strategic biodiversity area as defined on the policies map;
- e) Mature trees and hedgerows should be retained. Retain and create buffers around Co94 Lexden Dyke LoWS and Priority habitat. Onsite BNG measures should focus on buffering and expanding the LoWS and woodland habitat with new planting including structured edge habitat;
- f) Incorporate appropriate screening for the protection of landscape character;
- g) Support will be given to delivering standing freshwater habitat or grassland habitats to support the delivery of the strategic creation opportunities in the Essex LNRS;
- h) Development will need to protect and enhance the setting of the Scheduled Ancient Monument. It must conserve, and where appropriate, enhance the significance of heritage assets (including any contribution made by their settings). The site sits partially within a Scheduled Monument and significant buffer will be required. Other Designated heritage assets close to the allocated site includes two listed buildings as informed by the stage 1 HIA;
- i) Development must discharge attenuated surface water to a receiving waterbody and not to the combined sewer network, unless it can be demonstrated that there is no other option;
- j) Demonstrate adequate capacity for managing wastewater including proposed phasing requirements or alternative solutions to the satisfaction of the Council and Anglian Water;
- k) A range of measures in addition to prioritising SuDs (Policy EN8) and water efficiency measures to reduce the risk on impact on the WRC capacity as a result of planned growth including:
  - i) Removal of unrequired network flows;
  - ii) Targeted education to include new residents of the development;
  - iii) Reduction in the demand for potable water.



- I) Any site specific infrastructure requirements from the IDP (likely to include education provision, highway mitigation, water and wastewater and specific community / open space provision).**

**All development Proposals within Myland and Braiswick Neighbourhood Plan Area will also be determined against the policies in the Myland and Braiswick Neighbourhood Plan Review where relevant (adopted October 2023) where they are up to date and relevant.**

## **Northern Gateway**

The area known as Northern Gateway includes the recent development of the Colchester Sports Park and the leisure uses off Junction 28 of the A12.

The remaining areas of land which are part of Northern Gateway which are undeveloped are safeguarded for future development opportunities covered by Policy OA4 for a mix of uses including residential uses, open space and other commercial uses.

## **Policy OA4 Northern Gateway**

The area shown on the policies map comprising the former Rugby club and surrounding land will be safeguarded for the purposes identified below:

- a) Provision of approximately 650 new dwellings of a mix and type of housing to meet evidenced needs which is compatible with surrounding development;
- b) Provision for employment on land north of Axial Way as shown on the policies map allocated for employment, primarily for office use within E class;
- c) Open space provision as identified on the policies map;
- d) Provision for a range of other uses including but not limited to, housing for care, commercial, health care provision, energy infrastructure, employment generating uses and recreation / community provision;
- e) Provision for a new local centre to serve the new and existing local community, this may include provision of retail, commercial and community facilities at an appropriate scale, relevant to the role and function of a local centre and the communities it is intended to serve. Any retail / leisure uses within the local centre will be subject to the requirements of Policy E4 in respect of the sequential test and for proposals above 350sqm gross floorspace a retail impact assessment will also be required;
- f) Provision of a safe and suitable site access to required highway design standards via Axial Way to be agreed with the Highway Authority;
- g) Proposals within the area defined on the policies map as OA4 will also need to maximise opportunities for enhanced connectivity through green infrastructure and sustainable travel links. In particular opportunities to maximise the potential of the Rapid Transit System, the Park and Ride facility and other local links, including the Colchester Orbital;
- h) Development must discharge attenuated surface water to a receiving waterbody and not to the combined sewer network, unless it can be demonstrated that there is no other option;
- i) Demonstrate adequate capacity for managing wastewater including proposed phasing requirements or alternative solutions to the satisfaction of the Council and Anglian Water;

- j) A range of measures in addition to prioritising SuDs (Policy EN8) and water efficiency measures to reduce the risk on impact on the WRC capacity as a result of planned growth including:
  - i) Removal of unrequired network flows;**
  - ii) Targeted education to include new residents of the development;**
  - iii) Reduction in the demand for potable water.****
- k) Any site specific infrastructure requirements from the IDP (likely to include education provision, highway mitigation, water and wastewater and specific community / open space provision).**
- l) Development will need to protect and enhance the setting of the Scheduled Ancient Monument.**

**Land North of Axial Way, as shown on the policies map, is allocated for employment uses in accordance with Policy E1. The land will be safeguarded for employment uses, primarily for office use within E class.**

**Liaise with ECC as the Minerals and Waste Planning Authority on waste matters.**

**In addition to the infrastructure and mitigation requirements identified in Policy ST 7 and subject to compliance with all other policies, proposals for employment uses will be supported on land within the area identified on the policies map which accord with Policy E1 and provide:**

- a) Active travel links that maximise opportunities for enhanced connectivity to the surrounding area and opportunities to maximise the potential of the Rapid Transit System, the Park and Ride facility and other sustainable transport links;**
- b) Safe and suitable site access to required highway design standards and point of vehicle access to be agreed with the Highway Authority and demonstration that proposal would not be detrimental to highway capacity.**

**All development Proposals within Myland and Braiswick Neighbourhood Plan Area will also be determined against the policies in the Myland and Braiswick Neighbourhood Plan Review where relevant (adopted October 2023) where they are up to date and relevant.**

## **Policy PEP1 Colchester Business Park**

Land north of The Crescent, as shown on the policies map, is allocated for employment uses in accordance with Policy E1. In addition to the infrastructure and mitigation requirements identified in Policy ST 7 and subject to compliance with all other policies, proposals for employment uses will be supported on land within the area identified on the policies map which accord with Policy E1 and provides:

- a) Active travel links that maximise opportunities for enhanced connectivity to the surrounding area and opportunities to maximise the use of sustainable transport;
- b) Safe and suitable site access to required highway design standards and point of vehicle access to be agreed with the Highway Authority and demonstration that proposal would not be detrimental to highway capacity;
- c) Development will need to protect and enhance the setting of the Scheduled Ancient Monument;
- d) Development must discharge attenuated surface water to a receiving waterbody and not to the combined sewer network, unless it can be demonstrated that there is no other option;
- e) Demonstrate adequate capacity for managing wastewater including proposed phasing requirements or alternative solutions to the satisfaction of the Council and Anglian Water;
- f) A range of measures in addition to prioritising SuDs (Policy EN8) and water efficiency measures to reduce the risk on impact on the WRC capacity as a result of planned growth including:
  - i) Removal of unrequired network flows;
  - ii) Targeted education to include new residents of the development;
  - iii) Reduction in the demand for potable water.
- g) Liaise with ECC as the Minerals and Waste Planning Authority on waste matters.

All development Proposals within Myland and Braiswick Neighbourhood Plan Area will also be determined against the policies in the Myland and Braiswick Neighbourhood Plan Review where relevant (adopted October 2023) where they are up to date and relevant.

## **Policy PP8: Land at Lakelands Crescent, Colchester**

In addition to the infrastructure and mitigation requirements identified in Policy ST 7 and subject to compliance with all other relevant policies, development will be supported on land within the area identified on the policies map which provides:

- a) Approximately 5 new dwellings of a mix and type of housing to meet evidenced needs and be compatible with surrounding development;
- b) Safe and suitable site access to required highway design standards to be off Magpie Close, and agreed with the Highway Authority;
- c) Evidence that development adequately safeguards Stanway Pit Local Wildlife Site;
- d) 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 allocated site includes one Grade II listed building informed by the stage 1 HIA.
- e) Development must discharge attenuated surface water to a receiving waterbody and not to the combined sewer network, unless it can be demonstrated that there is no other option.
- f) Demonstrate adequate capacity for managing wastewater including proposed phasing requirements or alternative solutions to the satisfaction of the Council and Anglian Water;
- g) A range of measures in addition to prioritising SuDS (Policy EN8) and water efficiency measures to reduce the risk on impact on the WRC capacity as a result of planned growth including:
  - i) Removal of unrequired network flows;
  - ii) Targeted education to include new residents of the development;
  - iii) Reduction in the demand for potable water.

### **Policy PEP3 Land South of Tollgate West**

Land south of Tollgate West, as shown on the policies map, is safeguarded for employment uses in accordance with Policy E1.

#### **Justification**

##### **Purpose of the policy**

- 12.8 Planning permission for mixed use development was approved in 2023 which includes outline permission on part of the planning application site, and full planning permission for the erection of new buildings to accommodate flexible use classes E, B2, B8 and/or uses to allow for dark kitchen, laundrette, drinking establishments, take-aways &/or data centre on part of the planning application site which is the land safeguarded in Policy PEP3.

### **Policy PEP4 Maldon Road**

Land West of the Colchester Recycling Centre, as shown on the policies map, is allocated for employment uses in accordance with Policy E1. In addition to the infrastructure and mitigation requirements identified in Policy ST7 and subject to compliance with all other policies, proposals for employment uses and where appropriate opportunities for intensification of employment uses, will be supported on land within the area identified on the policies map which accord with Policy E1 and provides:

- a) Active travel links that maximise opportunities for enhanced connectivity to the surrounding area and opportunities to maximise the use of sustainable transport;
- b) Safe and suitable site access to required highway design standards and point of vehicle access to be agreed with the Highway Authority and demonstration that proposal would not be detrimental to highway capacity;
- c) Development must conserve, and where appropriate, enhance the significance of heritage assets (including any contribution made by their setting). Designated heritage assets close to the allocated site includes two Scheduled Monuments and three Grade II Listed buildings, as informed by the Stage 1 HIA;
- h) Demonstrate adequate capacity for managing wastewater including proposed phasing requirements or alternative solutions to the satisfaction of the Council and Anglian Water;
- i) A range of measures in addition to prioritising SuDS (Policy EN8) and water efficiency measures to reduce the risk on impact on the WRC capacity as a result of planned growth including:
  - i) Removal of unrequired network flows;
  - ii) Targeted education to include new residents of the development;
  - iii) Reduction in the demand for potable water.

- j) Liaise with ECC as the Minerals and Waste Planning Authority on waste matters given proximity to Shrub End Recycling Centre for Household Waste.**



## **Policy PP9: North-East Colchester**

In addition to the infrastructure and mitigation requirements identified in Policy ST 7 and subject to compliance with all other relevant policies, development will be supported on land within the area identified on the policies map which provides:

- a) A predominantly residential development including community infrastructure, strategic open space and approximately 2,000 new dwellings of a mix and type of housing to meet evidenced needs which is compatible with surrounding development;
- b) Safe and suitable site access to required highway design standards. The point of vehicular access is to be agreed with the Highway Authority and it will need to be demonstrated that the proposal would not be detrimental to highway capacity and safety;
- c) Provision of active and sustainable travel and passenger transport;
- d) Provision of a new local centre to serve the new and existing local community, this may include provision of retail, commercial and community facilities at an appropriate scale, relevant to the role and function of a local centre and the communities it is intended to serve.
- e) 'Enhanced Open Space' as shown on the Policies Map substantively in excess of 10% of the allocation area must be provided as open space. This should include at least one area of strategic open space and multiple areas of less formal and more incidental open space.
- f) As a strategic site, there is potential for a range of habitat creation measures which should be maximised with regard to the Salary Brook strategic biodiversity area as defined on the policies map. Onsite BNG measures should focus on woodland creation to expand and buffer the SSSI, enhanced connectivity through creation of a green corridor between designated sites, buffers to Welsh Wood and Wall's Wood LoWS, gain in watercourse units, and delivery of a range of habitat creation measures including acid grassland;
- g) Biodiversity mitigation measures must include a buffer to Bullock Wood SSSI, the size of the buffer must be informed by a survey. The watercourse within the site must be protected and buffered. Opportunities should be taken to secure improved management to the SSSI to include protection from recreational disturbance, and connections between the SSSI and Welsh Wood and Wall's Wood LoWS;
- h) Protection of water quality within Salary Brook water course and the conservation and enhancement of its biodiversity value;
- i) Adequate protection of the Ancient Woodland and retention of mature trees and hedgerows within the site;
- j) Tree screening, muted colours and non-reflective surfaces at the edge of the site to help provide mitigation and integration within the landscape;
- k) An active travel plan to be agreed with the Council which ensures site wide active travel connectivity including links beyond the site;
- l) Connectivity with existing Public Rights of Way including connection and enhancement to the Colchester Orbital and connections between the areas of woodland within and adjacent to the site;

- m) 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 allocated site includes four Grade II Listed Buildings as per the stage 1 HIA;
- n) Liaise with ECC as the Minerals and Waste Planning Authority on mineral and waste matters. 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 the scheme/masterplan as part of the phased delivery of non-mineral development;
- o) Development must discharge attenuated surface water to a receiving waterbody and not to the combined sewer network, unless it can be demonstrated that there is no other option;
- p) Demonstrate adequate capacity for managing wastewater including proposed phasing requirements or alternative solutions to the satisfaction of the Council and Anglian Water;
- q) A range of measures in addition to prioritising SuDs (Policy EN8) and water efficiency measures to reduce the risk on impact on the WRC capacity as a result of planned growth including:
  - i) Removal of unrequired network flows;
  - ii) Targeted education to include new residents of the development;
  - iii) Reduction in the demand for potable water.
- r) Any site specific infrastructure requirements from the IDP (to include education provision (2.1ha site for Primary school and Early Years), highway mitigation, water and wastewater and specific community / open space provision);
- s) 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.

Proposals for the allocated site will only be supported where they accord with a comprehensive masterplan in relation to the entire allocation, that has been agreed with the Council prior to submission of any planning application. The masterplan must be of sufficient detail to ensure optimal placemaking and housing delivery outcomes for the allocation and should be informed by an appropriate evidence base. The masterplan should be developed in collaboration with the Council, and relevant infrastructure providers, it should incorporate engagement with the local community and be informed by use of design review. Where appropriate and necessary, the masterplan shall be supported by parameter plans, design codes and/or guidance.

## **Policy PP10: Land South of Berechurch Hall Road, Colchester**

In addition to the infrastructure and mitigation requirements identified in Policy ST 7 and subject to compliance with all other relevant policies, development will be supported on land within the area identified on the policies map which provides:

- a) **Approximately 875 new dwellings of a mix and type of housing to meet evidenced needs and be compatible with surrounding development;**
- b) **Safe and suitable site access to required highway design standards via the adjoining development to be agreed with the Highway Authority. It will need to be demonstrated that the proposal would not be detrimental to highway capacity and safety;**  
**Provision of a new local centre to serve the new and existing local community, this may include provision of retail, commercial and community facilities at an appropriate scale, relevant to the role and function of a local centre and the communities it is intended to serve. The location of the centre should be informed by masterplanning and should recognise the need for a community centre in Berechurch;**
- c) **The development shall incorporate off road walking and cycling routes to enable connections to Gosbecks and Friday Woods and the existing Public Rights of Way network;**
- d) **Onsite BNG measures should focus on improving east to west connectivity between Gosbecks to the west and Friday Woods to the east, which are strategic priority areas for biodiversity, and have regard to the adjacent strategic biodiversity area as defined on the policies map;**
- e) **Measures to mitigate the impacts of recreational disturbance to the Roman River Valley SSSI;**
- f) **Enhancement of the quality and value of Camulodunum Way open space;**
- g) **Protection of existing tree belts and hedgerows to ensure that development is sensitively integrated into the landscape;**
- h) **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 allocated site includes a Scheduled Monument as informed by the Stage 1 HIA;**
- i) **Liaise with ECC as the Minerals and Waste Planning Authority on mineral and waste matters. 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 the scheme/masterplan as part of the phased delivery of non-mineral development;**
- j) **Development must discharge attenuated surface water to a receiving waterbody and not to the combined sewer network, unless it can be demonstrated that there is no other option;**
- k) **Demonstrate adequate capacity for managing wastewater including proposed phasing requirements or alternative solutions to the satisfaction of the Council and Anglian Water;**
- l) **A range of measures in addition to prioritising SuDs (Policy EN8) and water efficiency measures to reduce the risk on impact on the WRC capacity as a result of planned growth including:**

- i) Removal of unrequired network flows;
  - ii) Targeted education to include new residents of the development;
  - iii) Reduction in the demand for potable water.
- m) Any site specific infrastructure requirements from the IDP (likely to include education provision, highway mitigation, water and wastewater and specific community / open space provision);
- n) 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.

Proposals for the allocated site will only be supported where they accord with a comprehensive masterplan in relation to the entire allocation, that has been agreed with the Council prior to submission of any planning application. The masterplan must be of sufficient detail to ensure optimal placemaking and housing delivery outcomes for the allocation and should be informed by an appropriate evidence base. The masterplan should be developed in collaboration with the Council, and relevant infrastructure providers and through engagement with the local community and be informed by use of design review. Where appropriate and necessary the masterplan shall be supported by, parameter plans, design codes and/or guidance.

## **Policy PP11: Europit Site, Colchester**

In addition to the infrastructure and mitigation requirements identified in Policy ST 7 and subject to compliance with all other relevant policies, development will be supported on land within the area identified on the policies map which provides:

- a) Approximately 40 new dwellings of a mix and type of housing to meet evidenced needs and be compatible with surrounding development;
- b) Safe and suitable site access to required highway design standards and point of vehicle access to be agreed with the Highway Authority and demonstration that proposal would not be detrimental to highway capacity;
- c) Active travel links that maximise opportunities for enhanced connectivity to the surrounding area including the City Centre and Colchester Town Station and opportunities to maximise the use of sustainable transport;
- d) Development at densities appropriate to an urban area;
- e) A compatible mix of uses having regard to neighbouring amenity;
- f) 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 allocated site include two conservation areas, five listed buildings and three scheduled monuments as per the Stage 1 HIA;
- g) Contributions towards flood risk solutions, in accordance with Policy EN8 and the Colchester Surface Water Management Plan Recommendations for Critical Drainage Area CDA 03 - Abbey Gate;
- h) Development must discharge attenuated surface water to a receiving waterbody and not to the combined sewer network, unless it can be demonstrated that there is no other option;
- i) Demonstrate adequate capacity for managing wastewater including proposed phasing requirements or alternative solutions to the satisfaction of the Council and Anglian Water;
- j) A range of measures in addition to prioritising SuDs (Policy EN8) and water efficiency measures to reduce the risk on impact on the WRC capacity as a result of planned growth including:
  - i) Removal of unrequired network flows;
  - ii) Targeted education to include new residents of the development;
  - iii) Reduction in the demand for potable water.

## **Policy PP12: Land at Robertson Van Hire Site, Colchester**

In addition to the infrastructure and mitigation requirements identified in Policy ST 7 and subject to compliance with all other relevant policies, development will be supported on land within the area identified on the policies map which provides:

- a) Approximately 6 new dwellings of a mix and type of housing to meet evidenced needs and be compatible with surrounding development;
- b) Safe and suitable site access to required highway design standards and point of vehicle access to be agreed with the Highway Authority and demonstration that proposal would not be detrimental to highway capacity;
- c) Active travel links that maximise opportunities for enhanced connectivity to the surrounding area including the City Centre and railway stations and opportunities to maximise the use of sustainable transport;
- d) 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 allocated site includes two Conservation Areas, six Grade II listed buildings and a scheduled monument informed by the Stage 1 HIA;
- e) Contributions towards flood risk solutions, in accordance with Policy EN8 and the Colchester Surface Water Management Plan Recommendations for Critical Drainage Area CDA 03 - Abbey Gate.
- f) Development must discharge attenuated surface water to a receiving waterbody and not to the combined sewer network, unless it can be demonstrated that there is no other option;
- g) Demonstrate adequate capacity for managing wastewater including proposed phasing requirements or alternative solutions to the satisfaction of the Council and Anglian Water;
- h) A range of measures in addition to prioritising SuDs (Policy EN8) and water efficiency measures to reduce the risk on impact on the WRC capacity as a result of planned growth including:
  - i) Removal of unrequired network flows;
  - ii) Targeted education to include new residents of the development;
  - iii) Reduction in the demand for potable water.



## **Policy PP13: 146 Magdalen Street Site, Colchester**

In addition to the infrastructure and mitigation requirements identified in Policy ST 7 and subject to compliance with all other relevant policies, development will be supported on land within the area identified on the policies map which provides:

- a) Approximately 15 new dwellings of a mix and type of housing to meet evidenced needs and be compatible with surrounding development;
- b) Safe and suitable site access to required highway design standards and agreed with the Highway Authority. It will need to be demonstrated that the proposal would not be detrimental to highway capacity or safety;
- c) Active travel links that maximise opportunities for enhanced connectivity to the surrounding area including the city centre and railway stations and opportunities to maximise the use of sustainable transport;
- d) 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 allocated site includes a Conservation Area and four Grade II listed buildings as informed by the stage 1 HIA;
- e) Contributions towards flood risk solutions, in accordance with Policy EN8 and the Colchester Surface Water Management Plan Recommendations for Critical Drainage Area CDA 03 - Abbey Gate;
- f) Development must discharge attenuated surface water to a receiving waterbody and not to the combined sewer network, unless it can be demonstrated that there is no other option;
- g) Demonstrate adequate capacity for managing wastewater including proposed phasing requirements or alternative solutions to the satisfaction of the Council and Anglian Water;
- h) A range of measures in addition to prioritising SuDs (Policy EN8) and water efficiency measures to reduce the risk on impact on the WRC capacity as a result of planned growth including:
  - i) Removal of unrequired network flows;
  - ii) Targeted education to include new residents of the development;
  - iii) Reduction in the demand for potable water.



## **Policy PP14: Gas Works and Hythe Scrap Yard Site, Colchester**

In addition to the infrastructure and mitigation requirements identified in Policy ST 7 and subject to compliance with all other relevant policies, development will be supported on land within the area identified on the policies map which provides:

- a) Approximately 200 new dwellings of a mix and type of housing to meet evidenced needs and be compatible with surrounding development;
- b) Safe and suitable site access to required highway design standards and agreed with the Highway Authority. It will need to be demonstrated that the proposal would not be detrimental to highway capacity or safety;
- c) Active travel links that maximise opportunities for enhanced connectivity to the surrounding area including the city centre and railway stations and opportunities to maximise the use of sustainable transport;
- d) Development at densities appropriate to an urban area;
- e) A compatible mix of uses having regard to neighbouring amenity;
- f) Retention of wooded areas within the site;
- g) The developments should connect to PROW Colchester 144 and contributions may be sought to upgrade existing walking and cycling routes in the area;
- h) Contributions towards enhancement of the quality and value of Old Heath Recreation Ground;
- i) 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 allocated site includes one Grade II Listed Building and is in the landscape setting of Hythe Conservation Area as informed by the HIA;
- j) Residential development must not be located in the areas of the site that fall within flood zones 2 and 3;
- k) Contributions towards flood risk solutions, in accordance with Policy EN8 and the Colchester Surface Water Management Plan Recommendations for Critical Drainage Areas CDA 013 Hythe Quay and CDA 02 The Hythe;
- l) Development must discharge attenuated surface water to a receiving waterbody and not to the combined sewer network, unless it can be demonstrated that there is no other option;
- m) Demonstrate adequate capacity for managing wastewater including proposed phasing requirements or alternative solutions to the satisfaction of the Council and Anglian Water;
- n) A range of measures in addition to prioritising SuDs (Policy EN8) and water efficiency measures to reduce the risk on impact on the WRC capacity as a result of planned growth including:
  - i) Removal of unrequired network flows;
  - ii) Targeted education to include new residents of the development;
  - iii) Reduction in the demand for potable water.

- o) Any site specific infrastructure requirements from the IDP (likely to include education provision, highway mitigation, water and wastewater and specific community / open space provision).**

## **Policy PP15: Hawkins Road, Colchester**

In addition to the infrastructure and mitigation requirements identified in Policy ST 7 and subject to compliance with all other relevant policies, development will be supported on land within the area identified on the policies map which provides:

- a) **Approximately 50 new dwellings of a mix and type of housing to meet evidenced needs and be compatible with surrounding development;**
- b) **Safe and suitable site access to required highway design standards and agreed with the Highway Authority. It will need to be demonstrated that the proposal would not be detrimental to highway capacity or safety;**
- c) **Active travel links that maximise opportunities for enhanced connectivity to the surrounding area including the City Centre and railway stations and opportunities to maximise the use of sustainable transport;**
- d) **Development at densities appropriate to an urban area;**
- e) **A compatible mix of uses having regard to neighbouring amenity;**
- f) **Development must contribute to the restoration of the riverside footpath to deliver sufficient public realm enhancements appropriate to the local context, maximising the potential of the riverside location and improving the environment, through biodiversity improvements and the protection of water quality, increasing connectivity and providing convenient public access for pedestrians and cyclists;**
- g) **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 allocated site includes ten Grade II Listed Buildings and is adjacent to a Conservation Area as per the HIA;**
- h) **No residential development at ground floor level within flood zone 3;**
- i) **Contributions towards flood risk solutions, in accordance with Policy EN8 and the Colchester Surface Water Management Plan Recommendations for Critical Drainage Area CDA 08 - Parsons Heath.**
- j) **Development must discharge attenuated surface water to a receiving waterbody and not to the combined sewer network, unless it can be demonstrated that there is no other option.**
- k) **Demonstrate adequate capacity for managing wastewater including proposed phasing requirements or alternative solutions to the satisfaction of the Council and Anglian Water;**
- l) **A range of measures in addition to prioritising SuDs (Policy EN8) and water efficiency measures to reduce the risk on impact on the WRC capacity as a result of planned growth including:**
  - i) **Removal of unrequired network flows;**
  - ii) **Targeted education to include new residents of the development;**
  - iii) **Reduction in the demand for potable water.**

## **Policy PP16: Coal Yard Site, Colchester**

In addition to the infrastructure and mitigation requirements identified in Policy ST 7 and subject to compliance with all other relevant policies, development will be supported on land within the area identified on the policies map which provides:

- a) Approximately 50 new dwellings of a mix and type of housing to meet evidenced needs and be compatible with surrounding development;
- b) Safe and suitable site access to required highway design standards and agreed with the Highway Authority. It will need to be demonstrated that the proposal would not be detrimental to highway capacity or safety and that a safe and suitable site access could be provided off Hythe Station Road;
- c) Active travel links that maximise opportunities for enhanced connectivity to the surrounding area including the City Centre and railway stations and opportunities to maximise the use of sustainable transport;
- d) Development at densities appropriate to an urban area;
- e) A compatible mix of uses having regard to neighbouring amenity;
- f) 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 allocated site includes multiple Grade II Listed Buildings within a Conservation Area, with the site adjacent to the Conservation Area as per the Stage 1 HIA;
- g) Residential development must not be located in the areas of the site that fall within flood zones 2 and 3;
- h) Contributions towards flood risk solutions, in accordance with Policy EN8 and the Colchester Surface Water Management Plan Recommendations for Critical Drainage Area 08 Parsons Heath;
- i) Development must discharge attenuated surface water to a receiving waterbody and not to the combined sewer network, unless it can be demonstrated that there is no other option;
- j) Demonstrate adequate capacity for managing wastewater including proposed phasing requirements or alternative solutions to the satisfaction of the Council and Anglian Water;
- k) A range of measures in addition to prioritising SuDs (Policy EN8) and water efficiency measures to reduce the risk on impact on the WRC capacity as a result of planned growth including:
  - i) Removal of unrequired network flows;
  - ii) Targeted education to include new residents of the development;
  - iii) Reduction in the demand for potable water.

## **Growth and Opportunity Areas**

### **Hythe Opportunity Areas**

- 12.9 The Hythe area is a former commercial harbour which includes some rundown and underused industrial land. There has been change in this area over the last few years, through expansion of the University of Essex and student accommodation. The area is an established regeneration area that seeks to deliver sustainable, mixed-use neighbourhoods, identifying the River Colne as a feature and respecting the historic character of the area.
- 12.10 There is good access to Hythe Station and the Hythe is located close to the University of Essex and City Centre but is constrained by flooding due to its proximity to the River Colne.
- 12.11 A number of sites are allocated for residential development in this area (see policies PP14, PP15 and PP16). However, there are additional opportunities at the Hythe, through wider regeneration.
- 12.12 Regeneration will involve partnership working with public sector agencies, the local community and other key stakeholders including Community Land Trusts and the Hythe Task and Finish Group (responding to flooding issues in the area).

## **Policy OA1: King Edward Quay Opportunity Area**

Development will be encouraged and supported on land identified on the policies map for approximately 200 homes, where it contributes to achieving the following objectives:

- a) Comprehensive approach to regeneration to respond to constraints such as flood risk and land contamination;
- b) Development at densities appropriate to an urban area;
- c) Provide for a compatible mix of uses having regard to neighbouring amenity;
- d) Softening of the environment around the electricity substation to minimise its intrusive impact on the surrounding area;
- e) Enhance provision of green infrastructure to maximise potential opportunities for biodiversity and habitat creation, benefit nature conservation and landscape, enhance connectivity and establish new areas of open space for public enjoyment including an urban park to serve the community;
- f) Respond positively to the setting of the nearby Distillery Pond Conservation Area;
- g) Contribute towards flood risk solutions, in accordance with Policy EN8 and recommendations in the Surface Water Management Plan for Critical Drainage Areas 01 (Old Heath) and 02 (The Hythe);
- h) Proposals should consider the opportunity to improve and enhance the river environment and explore opportunities for river restoration, enhancement and provision of flood storage areas;
- i) Situate proposals for residential development away from land which is contaminated. Where necessary mitigation measures will be required to be agreed with the Council;
- j) Development must discharge attenuated surface water to a receiving waterbody and not to the combined sewer network, unless it can be demonstrated that there is no other option;
- k) Demonstrate adequate capacity for managing wastewater including proposed phasing requirements or alternative solutions to the satisfaction of the Council and Anglian Water;
- l) A range of measures in addition to prioritising SuDs (Policy EN8) and water efficiency measures to reduce the risk on impact on the WRC capacity as a result of planned growth including:
  - i) Removal of unrequired network flows;
  - ii) Targeted education to include new residents of the development;
  - iii) Reduction in the demand for potable water.
- m) Liaise with ECC as the Minerals and Waste Planning Authority on waste matters given proximity to Hythe WWTW and Haven Road Recycling Centre;
- n) Any site specific infrastructure requirements from the IDP (likely to include education provision, highway mitigation, water and wastewater and specific community / open space provision).

## **Policy OA2: Land East of Hawkins Road Opportunity Area**

Development will be encouraged and supported on land identified on the policies map of approximately 150 homes, where it contributes to achieving the following objectives:

- a) Comprehensive approach to regeneration to respond to constraints such as flood risk and land contamination;
- b) Development at densities appropriate to an urban area;
- c) Provide for a compatible mix of uses having regard to neighbouring amenity;
- d) Ensure new developments are responsive to the distinctive historic character of the area and reinforce the significance of the Hythe Conservation Area designation through the reuse of heritage assets. Designated heritage assets in the area include Hythe Conservation Area, and ten Grade II Listed Buildings as per the stage 1 HIA;
- e) Contribute towards flood risk solutions, in accordance with Policy EN9 and recommendations in the Surface Water Management Plan for Critical Drainage Area 08 (Parsons Heath);
- f) Proposals should consider the opportunity to improve and enhance the river environment and explore opportunities for river restoration, enhancement and provision of flood storage areas;
- g) Situate proposals for residential development away from land which is contaminated. Where necessary mitigation measures will be required to be agreed with the Council;
- h) Development must discharge attenuated surface water to a receiving waterbody and not to the combined sewer network, unless it can be demonstrated that there is no other option;
- i) Demonstrate adequate capacity for managing wastewater including proposed phasing requirements or alternative solutions to the satisfaction of the Council and Anglian Water;
- j) A range of measures in addition to prioritising SuDs (Policy EN8) and water efficiency measures to reduce the risk on impact on the WRC capacity as a result of planned growth including:
  - i) Removal of unrequired network flows;
  - ii) Targeted education to include new residents of the development;
  - iii) Reduction in the demand for potable water.
- k) Any site specific infrastructure requirements from the IDP (likely to include education provision, highway mitigation, water and wastewater and specific community / open space provision).



### **Magdalen Street – Opportunity Area**

- 12.13 Magdalen Street is a key gateway to Colchester City Centre. There are a number of older commercial buildings suitable for reuse and or redevelopment to enhance this area. The area has changed in recent years through the development of student accommodation and Aldi.
- 12.14 The area is located close to Colchester Town Station and future development is planned as a part of the Transforming the City Centre project, funded by the Town Deal and Levelling Up Funds. This includes improvements to the St Botolph junction to modernise the area creating a better balance between pedestrians, cyclists and motorists and improve the public space.

### **Policy OA3: Magdalen Street Opportunity Area**

Development will be encouraged and supported on land identified on the policies map for mixed-use proposals including approximately 100 homes, where it contributes to achieving the following objectives:

- a) A comprehensive approach to regeneration in accordance with the City Centre Masterplan (adopted January 2024) and Magdalen Street Development Brief (adopted February 2014);
- b) Development at densities appropriate to an urban area;
- c) Provision of parking appropriate to a City Centre location;
- d) Retention of existing businesses where possible or consider relocation where necessary;
- e) Provide for a compatible mix of uses having regard to neighbouring amenity;
- f) Provide pedestrian and cycle routes and connections to link to the City Centre and wider networks;
- g) Ensure new developments are responsive to the distinctive historic character of the area and reinforce the significance of the New Town Conservation Area designation through the reuse of heritage assets;
- h) Contribute towards flood risk solutions, in accordance with Policy EN8 and recommendations in the Surface Water Management Plan for Critical Drainage Area 03 (Abbey Gate);
- i) Development must discharge attenuated surface water to a receiving waterbody and not to the combined sewer network, unless it can be demonstrated that there is no other option;
- j) Demonstrate adequate capacity for managing wastewater including proposed phasing requirements or alternative solutions to the satisfaction of the Council and Anglian Water;
- k) A range of measures in addition to prioritising SuDs (Policy EN8) and water efficiency measures to reduce the risk on impact on the WRC capacity as a result of planned growth including:
  - i) Removal of unrequired network flows;
  - ii) Targeted education to include new residents of the development;
  - iii) Reduction in the demand for potable water.
- l) Any site specific infrastructure requirements from the IDP (likely to include education provision, highway mitigation, water and wastewater and specific community / open space provision).

## **University of Essex and Knowledge Gateway**

- 12.15 The Council recognises the value of the University of Essex and the Knowledge Gateway to Colchester City's economy and the vitality and viability of the city centre and will work in partnership to maximise the economic and social benefits associated with the University and Knowledge Gateway.

### **Policy PEP2 Knowledge Gateway**

The area shown on the policies map comprising the Knowledge Gateway will be safeguarded for employment purposes in accordance with Policy E1 to allow for provision of a range of additional jobs and to accommodate expansion of the existing research and technology uses.

Within this area the Council will continue to support the growth and retention of the Research Park, and where appropriate, opportunities for intensification of employment uses. 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 of Essex 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:

- a) 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;
- b) Provide the opportunity to maximise the sites potential for economic growth;
- c) 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;
- d) Do not generate potential conflict with the existing proposed E class uses and activities on the site.

In addition to the infrastructure and mitigation requirements identified in Policy ST7 and subject to compliance with all other policies, proposals for employment uses should provide:

- e) Active travel links that maximise opportunities for enhanced connectivity to the surrounding area including the Garden Community, University, City Centre and Hythe Station and opportunities to maximise the use of sustainable transport;
- f) Safe and suitable site access to required highway design standards and point of vehicle access to be agreed with the Highway Authority and demonstration that proposal would not be detrimental to highway capacity.

- g) 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 allocated site includes one Grade II, one Grade II\* Listed Buildings, one Scheduled Monument and One Registered Park and Garden as informed by the stage 1 HIA;**
- h) Consideration of how the value of Wivenhoe Park Local Wildlife Site might be enhanced, which could be through the provision of green infrastructure;**
- i) Development must not be located in the areas of the site that fall within flood zones 2 and 3.**

## **Policy UE1 University of Essex**

The area shown on the policies map is designated for University uses adjoining the Knowledge Gateway Employment Area and the Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community. Within this area, (in addition to opportunities provided through the Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community DPD and stated in policy ST9), development will be supported which enables significant expansion of the University of Essex as reflected in its current Strategic Plan 2019-28. Policy PEP2 and the Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community DPD seek to safeguard the retention and expansion of the Knowledge Gateway to allow for provision of a range for additional jobs and to accommodate expansion of the existing research and technology uses which build on the benefits of the University.

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 City Centre, Hythe railway station and surrounding area, the Knowledge Gateway and the proposed Garden Community to the East of Colchester including contributing to the Colchester 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. Consideration should be given to how the value of Wivenhoe Park Local Wildlife Site might be enhanced, which could be through the provision of green infrastructure.

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.

## **Marks Tey Growth Area**

- 12.16 Marks Tey is located at the junction of the A12 and A120. It is essentially a linear settlement that, while being sustainably located has been fragmented by the railway and A12/A120. It contains a good range of facilities which are located in different sections of the village; a railway station to the east providing an interchange between the mainline to London and branch services; a larger area of modern housing, a village hall, commercial areas and the primary school to the west and retail facilities to the south of the A12.
- 12.17 Large areas of land have previously been promoted for development in and around Marks Tey and there is an opportunity for Garden Village scale growth which could help reconnect the village. Its strategic location along with the benefits the train station brings, add weight to the potential for expansion. However, there is also recognition that infrastructure improvements will be required in order to support development at the scale promoted. Accordingly, the Plan allocates sites for housing which could deliver up to 2,500 new homes within the plan period, but on the proviso that it can be demonstrated that additional vehicular movements can be safely accommodated on the A12 and A120 without significantly increasing congestion.
- 12.18 Additional employment land is also allocated, recognising the areas potential given its location on the strategic road network and its position in relation to Stanstead to the west and the Haven ports to the west.
- 12.19 The policies below reflect the fact that it is not anticipated that all the growth promoted can be accommodated without significant upgrades to the A12 and A120. The Opportunity Area designation is intended to demonstrate that some development would be acceptable within the overall sites, subject to further evidence being agreed with the highway authority and National Highways.

## **Policy PP17: Land South of A12, Marks Tey Growth Area**

In addition to the infrastructure and mitigation requirements identified in Policy ST 7 and subject to compliance with all other relevant policies, development will be supported on land within the area identified on the policies map which provides:

- a) A mixed-use development including commercial uses and approximately 1,500 new dwellings of a mix and type of housing to meet evidenced needs and which is compatible with surrounding development;
- b) A mix of other uses which support a sustainable community appropriate to the scale of development including public open space to accommodate formal and informal sport and leisure, community facilities, local services and local centres;
- c) Substantively in excess of 10% of the allocation area must be provided as open space. This should include strategic open space in addition to multiple areas of less formal and more incidental open space;
- d) Safe and suitable site access to required highway design standards and point(s) of vehicle access to be agreed with the Highway Authority and demonstration that the proposal would not be detrimental to highway capacity or safety;
- e) Active travel links that maximise opportunities for enhanced connectivity within the site and to the surrounding area; and opportunities to maximise the use of sustainable transport including links to the railway station;
- f) Mature trees and hedgerows and grassland of medium or high distinctiveness within the site should be retained;
- g) As a strategic site, there is potential for a range of habitat creation measures which should be maximised. A core of onsite BNG measures should be located together to provide a substantive area for biodiversity, with associated connectivity through and beyond the site. The site is on chalky boulder clay, which should influence the design and creation of new habitats. Opportunities should be taken to maintain and enhance the known Great Crested Newt population over and above any mitigation requirements;
- h) Create woodland and standing freshwater habitat as identified as strategic creation opportunities in the Essex LNRS;
- i) Screening comprising locally appropriate tree belts, hedgerows and/or woodland will be required along the site boundaries to ensure that development is sensitively integrated into the landscape to reflect and reinforce rural character;
- j) Ensure connection within and throughout the site to Public Rights of Way to provide green infrastructure connections and recreational access to the countryside, including the creation of active travel connections to Copford Green;
- k) Development must conserve, and where appropriate, enhance the significance of heritage assets (including any contribution made by their settings). Designated heritage assets within the site include one Scheduled Monument, 1 Grade II\* Listed Building and two Grade II Listed Building. Designated Assets close to the allocated site includes



- six Grade II Listed Buildings, one Conservation Area and one Grade one Listed Building as per the stage 1 HIA;
- l) Liaise with ECC as the Minerals and Waste Planning Authority on mineral and waste matters. 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 the scheme/masterplan as part of the phased delivery of non-mineral development;
  - m) Demonstrate adequate capacity for managing wastewater including proposed phasing requirements or alternative solutions to the satisfaction of the Council and Anglian Water;
  - n) A range of measures in addition to prioritising SuDs (Policy EN8) and water efficiency measures to reduce the risk on impact on the WRC capacity as a result of planned growth including:
    - i) Removal of unrequired network flows;
    - ii) Targeted education to include new residents of the development;
    - iii) Reduction in the demand for potable water.
  - o) Development must not discharge surface water to the foul sewer network;
  - p) Any site specific infrastructure requirements from the IDP (to include education provision (2.1ha site for Primary and early Years Provision), highway mitigation, water and wastewater and specific community / open space provision);
  - q) 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.

Development proposals will only be supported where they accord with a comprehensive masterplan in relation to the entire site, that has been agreed with the Council prior to submission of any planning application. The masterplan must be of sufficient detail to ensure optimal placemaking and housing delivery outcomes for the allocation and should be informed by an appropriate evidence base. The masterplan should be developed in collaboration with the Council, and relevant infrastructure providers and through engagement with the local community. It should be informed by use of design review. Where appropriate and necessary the masterplan shall be supported by, parameter plans, design codes and/or guidance.

All development Proposals within Marks Tey parish will also be determined against the policies in the Marks Tey Neighbourhood Plan where relevant (adopted April 2022) where they are up to date and relevant.

## **Policy PP18: Land North of A120, Marks Tey Growth Area**

Land to the north of the A120 has been promoted for a Garden Village scale, mixed-use development, but the development potential within the plan period is limited because of infrastructure constraints. It will be important when planning for the first phase of development that the whole site area is masterplanned to ensure residential development is supported by infrastructure including schools, community facilities and open space.

In addition to the infrastructure and mitigation requirements identified in Policy ST 7 and subject to compliance with all other relevant policies, in particular those concerned with highway capacity, development will be supported on land to the south of the larger site identified on the policies map which provides within the plan period:

- a) Approximately 1,000 new dwellings of a mix and type of housing to meet evidenced needs which is compatible with surrounding development;
- b) A mix of other uses which support a sustainable community appropriate to the scale of development including public open space to accommodate formal and informal sport and leisure, community facilities, local services and local centres;
- c) Substantively in excess of 10% of the allocation area must be provided as open space. This should include strategic open space in addition to multiple areas of less formal and more incidental open space;
- d) Safe and suitable site access to required highway design standards. Point(s) of vehicular access will need to be agreed with the Highway Authority and it will be demonstrated that the proposal would not be detrimental to highway capacity or safety;
- e) Active travel links that maximise opportunities for enhanced connectivity within the site and to the surrounding area; and opportunities to maximise the use of sustainable transport, including links to the railway station;
- f) Mature trees and hedgerows should be retained. Ponds and woodland within the site must be retained and buffered. Onsite BNG measures should focus on creating a mosaic of grassland, scrub and trees and be located around existing ponds (including offsite ponds) and woodland;
- g) As a strategic site, there is potential for a range of habitat creation measures which should be maximised. A core of onsite BNG measures should be located together to provide a substantive area for biodiversity, with associated connectivity through and beyond the site. This core should include the corridor of the Roman River (enhanced to provide the required watercourse unit uplift), and LoWS Co27 and the woodland Priority Habitat, appropriately buffered and connected. Much of the site would be suitable for the creation of chalky boulder clay grassland;
- h) Support will be given to delivering standing freshwater habitat, woodland or grassland habitats within or adjacent to the site to support the delivery of the strategic creation opportunities in the Essex LNRS;

- i) Screening comprising locally appropriate tree belts, hedgerows and/or woodland will be required along the site boundaries to ensure that development is sensitively integrated into the landscape to reflect and reinforce rural character;
- j) Ensure connection within and throughout the site to Public Rights of Way to provide green infrastructure connections and recreational access to the countryside;
- k) Linkages to the proposal for a Roman River corridor nature recovery area, as shown on the policies map;
- l) 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 allocated site includes two Grade I and 27 Grade II Listed Buildings as informed by the Stage 1 HIA;
- m) Liaise with ECC as the Minerals and Waste Planning Authority on mineral and waste matters. 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 the scheme/masterplan as part of the phased delivery of non-mineral development. Undertake a Mineral Infrastructure Impact Assessment given the site's proximity to Marks Tey Brickworks;
- n) Demonstrate adequate capacity for managing wastewater including proposed phasing requirements or alternative solutions to the satisfaction of the Council and Anglian Water;
- o) A range of measures in addition to prioritising SuDs (Policy EN8) and water efficiency measures to reduce the risk on impact on the WRC capacity as a result of planned growth including:
  - i) Removal of unrequired network flows;
  - ii) Targeted education to include new residents of the development;
  - iii) Reduction in the demand for potable water.
- p) Development must not discharge surface water to the foul sewer network;
- q) Any site specific infrastructure requirements from the IDP (likely to include education provision, highway mitigation, water and wastewater and specific community / open space provision);
- r) 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.

Development proposals will only be supported where they accord with a comprehensive masterplan in relation to the entire site, that has been agreed with the Council prior to submission of any planning application. The masterplan must be of sufficient detail to ensure optimal placemaking and housing delivery outcomes for the allocation and should be informed by an appropriate evidence base. The masterplan should be developed in

**collaboration with the Council, and relevant infrastructure providers and through engagement with the local community. It should be informed by use of design review. Where appropriate and necessary the masterplan shall be supported by, parameter plans, design codes or guidance.**

**All development Proposals within Marks Tey parish will also be determined against the policies in the Marks Tey Neighbourhood Plan where relevant (adopted April 2022) where they are up to date and relevant.**

## **Policy PEP5 Land South of A12, Marks Tey**

Land south of the A12, Marks Tey, as shown on the policies map, is allocated for employment uses in accordance with Policy E1. In addition to the infrastructure and mitigation requirements identified in Policy ST 7 and subject to compliance with all other policies, proposals for employment uses will be supported on land within the area identified on the policies map which accord with Policy E1 and provide:

- a) Active travel links that maximise opportunities for enhanced connectivity to the surrounding area including existing and new communities and opportunities to maximise the use of sustainable transport;
- b) Safe and suitable site access to required highway design standards and point of vehicle access to be agreed with the Highway Authority and demonstration that proposal would not be detrimental to highway capacity.
- c) 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 boundary include one Scheduled Monument (moated site) and four Grade II Listed Buildings as informed by the stage 1 HIA;
- d) Demonstrate adequate capacity for managing wastewater including proposed phasing requirements or alternative solutions to the satisfaction of the Council and Anglian Water;
- e) A range of measures in addition to prioritising SuDs (Policy EN8) and water efficiency measures to reduce the risk on impact on the WRC capacity as a result of planned growth including:
  - i) Removal of unrequired network flows;
  - ii) Targeted education to include new residents of the development;
  - iii) Reduction in the demand for potable water.
- f) Development must not discharge surface water to the foul sewer network;
- g) 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.

All development Proposals within Marks Tey parish will also be determined against the policies in the Marks Tey Neighbourhood Plan where relevant (adopted April 2022) where they are up to date and relevant.

## **Policy PEP6 Anderson's Site, Marks Tey**

**Land at Anderson's Site, Marks Tey, as shown on the policies map, is safeguarded for employment uses in accordance with Policy E1.**

**All development Proposals within Marks Tey parish will also be determined against the policies in the Marks Tey Neighbourhood Plan where relevant (adopted April 2022) where they are up to date and relevant.**

### **Justification**

#### **Purpose of the policy**

12.20 Planning permission for commercial, business and service (Class E c and g), general industrial (Class B2) and storage and distribution (Class B8) purposes on the site which is the land safeguarded in Policy PEP6 was approved in 2023.

## **Large Settlements**

12.21 Colchester's large settlements have the most facilities, services, travel choices and opportunities. These settlements also have some of the largest populations of Colchester. However, in the case of West Mersea and Wivenhoe, these settlements have environmental constraints. Accordingly, the level of growth proposed in West Mersea and Wivenhoe is balanced with the environmental constraints.

### **Tiptree**

12.22 Tiptree is a large village located on the southwest boundary of Colchester. 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. Tiptree has a district centre with a high number of key services and community facilities. It is the only large village with a secondary school. A neighbourhood plan with site allocations was adopted in 2023. The vision of the neighbourhood plan is to deliver a link road in the north of Tiptree, reducing congestion throughout the village. This plan seeks to build on the work undertaken to inform the Neighbourhood Plan and ensure the vision can be achieved.



## **Policy PP19: Land North of Oak Road, Tiptree**

In addition to the infrastructure and mitigation requirements identified in Policy ST 7 and subject to compliance with all other relevant policies, development will be supported on land within the area identified on the policies map which provides:

- a) Approximately 600 new dwellings of a mix and type of housing to meet evidenced needs which is compatible with surrounding development;
- b) Safe and suitable site access to required highway design standards. The point of vehicular access to be agreed with the Highway Authority and demonstrated that the proposal would not be detrimental to highway capacity or safety;
- c) Development must secure the delivery of the northern link road between the B1022 (Colchester Road) and the B1023 (Kelvedon Road) within the geographical scope of the allocation in accordance with Policy TIP07 and the objectives of the Tiptree Neighbourhood Plan;
- d) Safe pedestrian access to ensure connectivity within and throughout the site to existing footways and any Public Rights of Way. Ensure provision of green infrastructure connections and recreational access to the countryside, also securing active travel links and connections to the settlement to the South;
- e) Consideration to be given to the inclusion of a mobility hub incorporating provision for bus layover, in the vicinity of the site allocated for health/community purposes.
- f) Retain and create buffers around Co13 Eden Wood LoWS, Co6 Inworth Wood LoWS and retain the internal network of Priority habitat hedgerows, including the 'green lane';
- g) Onsite BNG measures should include enhancement of the existing woodland (if possible) and their expansion to provide gain for any woodland Priority Habitat within the baseline. Other BNG measures should focus on maintaining and improving connectivity through and beyond the site, particularly between the LoWS. The site includes pockets of superficial sands and gravels, which could be particularly suitable for the creation of acid grassland or heathland;
- h) Create woodland, grassland and standing freshwater habitat as identified as strategic creation opportunities in the Essex LNRS;
- i) Delivery of a Tiptree Country Park of approximately 27 hectares as indicated on the policies map;
- j) Screening comprising locally appropriate hedgerows and/or woodland will be required along the site boundaries to ensure that development is sensitively integrated into the landscape to reflect and reinforce rural character;
- k) 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 allocated site includes a number of Grade II, one Grade II\* and one Grade I Listed Buildings as per the stage 1 HIA.
- l) Liaise with ECC as the Minerals and Waste Planning Authority on mineral and waste matters.

- m) Development must not discharge surface water to the foul sewer network.**
- n) Any site specific infrastructure requirements from the IDP (likely to include education provision, highway mitigation, water and wastewater and specific community, sport and open space provision). There is an expectation that the development will include the delivery of a health/community building on land set aside in earlier phases of the development and as articulated in the Tiptree NP.**
- o) 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.**

**Proposals for the allocated site will only be supported where they accord with a comprehensive masterplan in relation to the entire allocation, that has been agreed with the Council prior to submission of any planning application. The masterplan must be of sufficient detail to ensure optimal placemaking and housing delivery outcomes for the allocation and should be informed by an appropriate evidence base. The masterplan should be developed in collaboration with the Council and infrastructure providers, and through engagement with the local community. Where appropriate and necessary the masterplan shall be supported by, parameter plans, design codes and/or guidance.**

**All development Proposals within Tiptree Parish, will also be determined against the policies (including those concerned with design) in the Tiptree Neighbourhood Plan (Adopted May 2023) where they are up to date and relevant.**

## **Policy PP20: Land at Bonnie Blue Oak, Tiptree**

In addition to the infrastructure and mitigation requirements identified in Policy ST 7 and subject to compliance with all other relevant policies, development will be supported on land within the area identified on the policies map which provides:

- a) Approximately 30 new dwellings of a mix and type of housing to meet evidenced needs and be compatible with surrounding development;
- b) Safe and suitable site access to required highway design standards and point of vehicle access to be agreed with the Highway Authority and demonstration that proposal would not be detrimental to highway capacity or safety;
- c) Provide safe pedestrian access to ensure connectivity within and throughout the site to existing footways and any Public Rights of Way. Ensure provision of green infrastructure connections and recreational access to the countryside, also securing active travel links and connections to the settlement;
- d) Contributions are likely to be required towards site specific infrastructure identified in the IDP (likely to include education, highway mitigation, water and wastewater and specific community, sport and open space).
- e) Development must not discharge surface water to the foul sewer network.
- f) Onsite BNG measures should focus on enhancing the distinctiveness and condition of retained areas of grassland;
- g) 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 allocated site includes seven Grade II Listed Buildings as per the stage 1 HIA.

All development Proposals within Tiptree Parish, will also be determined against the policies in the Tiptree Neighbourhood Plan (Adopted May 2023) where they are up to date and relevant.

## **Policy PP21: Highlands, Kelvedon Road, Tiptree**

In addition to the infrastructure and mitigation requirements identified in Policy ST 7 and subject to compliance with all other relevant policies, development will be supported on land within the area identified on the policies map which provides:

- a) **Approximately 10 new dwellings of a mix and type of housing to meet evidenced needs and be compatible with surrounding development;**
- b) **Safe and suitable site access to required highway design standards and point of vehicle access to be agreed with the Highway Authority and demonstration that proposal would not be detrimental to highway capacity or safety;**
- c) **Provide safe pedestrian access to ensure connectivity within and throughout the site to existing footways and Public Rights of Way to provide green infrastructure connections and recreational access to the countryside, also securing active travel links and connections to the settlement;**
- d) **Any loss of hedgerow and grassland onsite must be mitigated;**
- e) **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 allocated site includes two Grade II Listed Buildings as informed by the stage 1 HIA;**
- f) **Development must not discharge surface water to the foul sewer network.**
- g) **Contributions are likely to be required towards site specific infrastructure identified in the IDP (likely to include education, highway mitigation, water and wastewater and specific community, sport and open space).**

**All development Proposals within Tiptree Parish, will also be determined against the policies in the Tiptree Neighbourhood Plan (Adopted May 2023) where they are up to date and relevant.**

## **Policy PP22: Telephone Exchange, Tiptree**

In addition to the infrastructure and mitigation requirements identified in Policy ST 7 and subject to compliance with all other relevant policies, development will be supported on land within the area identified on the policies map which provides:

- a) Approximately 5 new dwellings of a mix and type of housing to meet evidenced needs and be compatible with surrounding development;
- b) Safe and suitable site access to required highway design standards and point of vehicle access to be agreed with the Highway Authority and demonstration that proposal would not be detrimental to highway capacity;
- c) Provide safe pedestrian access to ensure connectivity within and throughout the site to existing footways and any Public Rights of Way. Ensure provision of green infrastructure connections and recreational access to the countryside, also securing active travel links and connections to the settlement;
- d) Onsite BNG measures should focus on small-scale grassland enhancement, hedge enhancement and tree planting;
- e) Development must not discharge surface water to the foul sewer network.
- f) 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 allocated site includes four Grade II Listed Buildings as informed by the Stage 1 HIA.

All development Proposals within Tiptree Parish, will also be determined against the policies in the Tiptree Neighbourhood Plan (Adopted May 2023) where they are up to date and relevant.

## **Policy PEP7 Highland Nursery, Tiptree**

Land at Highlands Nursery, is safeguarded for employment uses in accordance with the Tiptree Neighbourhood Plan. In addition to the infrastructure and mitigation requirements identified in Policy ST7 and subject to compliance with all other policies, proposals for employment uses will be supported on land within the area identified on the policies map which accord with Policy E1 and the Tiptree Neighbourhood Plan and provide:

- a) Active travel links that maximise opportunities for enhanced connectivity to the surrounding area and opportunities to maximise the use of sustainable transport;
- b) Safe and suitable site access to required highway design standards and point of vehicle access to be agreed with the Highway Authority and demonstration that proposal would not be detrimental to highway capacity;
- c) Development must not discharge surface water to the foul sewer network;
- d) 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 allocated site include the Grade II listed Building Hill Farmhouse.

All development Proposals within Tiptree Parish, will also be determined against the policies in the Tiptree Neighbourhood Plan (Adopted May 2023) where they are up to date and relevant.

## **Policy PEP8 Land South of Factory Hill, Tiptree**

Land South of Factory Hill, Tiptree, as shown on the policies map, is allocated for employment uses in accordance with Policy E1. In addition to the infrastructure and mitigation requirements identified in Policy ST 7 and subject to compliance with all other policies, proposals for employment uses will be supported on land within the area identified on the policies map which accord with Policy E1 and provide:

- a) **Active travel links to ensure connectivity between the site and existing footways and active travel routes, and to maximise opportunities for enhanced connectivity to the surrounding area to maximise the use of sustainable transport;**
- b) **Safe and suitable site access to required highway design standards and point of vehicle access to be agreed with the Highway Authority and demonstration that proposal would not be detrimental to highway capacity;**
- c) **Development must not discharge surface water to the foul sewer network;**
- d) **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 allocated site include five Grade II Listed Buildings as informed by the Stage 1 HIA;**
- e) **Protection and enhancement of the areas of Priority Habitat within the site;**
- f) **Retain the existing boundary hedgerows and vegetation to limit the potential for adverse impacts on the landscape setting.**

All development Proposals within Tiptree Parish, will also be determined against the policies in the Tiptree Neighbourhood Plan (Adopted May 2023) where they are up to date and relevant.



## **West Mersea**

12.23 West Mersea is a coastal town located on the confluence of the Colne and Blackwater Estuaries, approximately 15km from Colchester city centre. There are frequent bus routes serving the town to and from Colchester and serving the local secondary schools. West Mersea has numerous town centre and community uses both within the district centre and throughout the town, making it a sustainable settlement. However, it has environmental constraints with the Colne and Blackwater estuaries, which are designated at international level for nature conservation (the Colne and Blackwater Estuaries are Special Protection Areas and Ramsar sites and form part of the Essex Estuaries Special Area of Conservation). A balance is needed to allow some development in this sustainable settlement but to limit this to avoid adverse effects on the integrity of the Colne and Blackwater estuaries.

## **Policy PP23: Land East Dawes Lane, West Mersea**

In addition to the infrastructure and mitigation requirements identified in Policy ST 7 and subject to compliance with all other relevant policies, development will be supported on land within the area identified on the policies map which provides:

- a) Approximately 300 new dwellings of a mix and type of housing to meet evidenced needs and which is compatible with surrounding development;
- b) Safe and suitable site access to required highway design standards and a singular point of vehicular access to be agreed with the Highway Authority which demonstrates that the proposal would not be detrimental to highway capacity or safety;
- c) A safe pedestrian access to ensure connectivity within and throughout the site to existing footways and any Public Rights of Way. Ensure provision of green infrastructure connections and recreational access to the countryside, and The Glebe, also securing active travel links and connections to the settlement, including to the district centre;
- d) Screening comprising locally appropriate tree belts and/or hedgerows will be required along the site boundaries to ensure that development is sensitively integrated into the landscape to reflect and reinforce rural character;
- e) Enhanced provision of open space of at least 5 hectares must be provided within the site and this open space must link with the open space within the approved scheme at Dawes Lane and connect through to The Glebe as indicated on the policies map;
- f) Contributions towards the enhancement of the quality and value of The Glebe Sports Ground and facilities.
- g) Provision of allotments to be transferred to West Mersea Town Council to manage and maintain
- h) Native hedgerows and grassland within the site should be retained and enhanced with any loss of grassland compensated within the site. BNG measures should include enhancing retained grassland, establishing new grassland and native hedges, and new tree planting;
- i) Support will be given to delivering standing freshwater habitat within or adjacent to the site to support the delivery of the strategic creation opportunities in the Essex LNRS;
- j) 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 allocated site includes six Grade II Listed Buildings and one Scheduled Monument as informed by the stage 1 HIA;
- k) Demonstrate adequate capacity for managing wastewater including proposed phasing requirements or alternative solutions to the satisfaction of the Council and Anglian Water;

- l) A range of measures in addition to prioritising SuDs (Policy EN8) and water efficiency measures to reduce the risk on impact on the WRC capacity as a result of planned growth including:
  - i) Removal of unrequired network flows;**
  - ii) Targeted education to include new residents of the development;**
  - iii) Reduction in the demand for potable water.****
- m) Any site specific infrastructure requirements from the IDP (likely to include education provision, highway mitigation, water and wastewater and specific community / open space provision).**
- n) 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.**

**All development Proposals within West Mersea Parish, will also be determined against the policies in the West Mersea Neighbourhood Plan (adopted October 2019) Neighbourhood Plan where they are up to date and relevant.**

## **Wivenhoe**

12.24 Wivenhoe 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. There are also frequent bus services between Wivenhoe and Colchester, a cycle path between Wivenhoe and the University of Essex and the popular Wivenhoe Trail along the river to Colchester. However, there are a number of constraints which has influenced the amount of growth considered appropriate for Wivenhoe beyond 2033. Wivenhoe is bordered by the River Colne to the west and south. In addition to the physical boundary that the river presents, land falls within flood risk zone 3. There are a number of environmental designations surrounding Wivenhoe. The Upper Colne Marshes Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) lies to the west and south of Wivenhoe. The Colne Estuary Special Protection Area (SPA), Ramsar Site and SSSI and Essex Estuaries Special Area of Conservation (SAC) lie to the south-east of Wivenhoe. The Colne Local Nature Reserve and Local Wildlife Site runs adjacent to the built-up western boundary. The Coastal Protection Belt surrounds the west and south of Wivenhoe. Wivenhoe Gravel Pit SSSI lies to the north-east of Wivenhoe. A balance needs to be struck to allow some growth in this sustainable settlement which accords with the Spatial strategy and protection of sensitive environments.

## **Policy PP24: Land Northwest of the Fire Station, Wivenhoe**

In addition to the infrastructure and mitigation requirements identified in Policy ST 7 and subject to compliance with all other relevant policies, development will be supported on land within the area identified on the policies map which provides:

- a) Approximately 175 new dwellings of a mix and type of housing to meet evidenced needs and be compatible with surrounding development;
- b) Safe and suitable site access to required highway design standards and point of vehicle access to be via the adjoining Neighbourhood Plan allocation, to be agreed with the Highway Authority and demonstration that the proposal would not be detrimental to highway capacity or safety;
- c) Provide a safe pedestrian access to ensure connectivity within and throughout the site to existing footways and any Public Rights of Way. Ensure provision of green infrastructure connections and recreational access to the countryside, also securing active travel links and connections to the settlement;
- d) Contributions towards enhancement of the quality and value of King George V Playing Fields;
- e) Screening comprising locally appropriate tree belts and/or hedgerows will be required along the site boundaries to ensure that development is sensitively integrated into the landscape and to maintain settlement separation;
- f) Biodiversity enhancement measures should include enhancing hedgerow condition and establishing grassland habitats along road verges;
- g) 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 allocated site includes five Grade II Listed Buildings as informed by the stage 1 HIA;
- h) The total number of dwellings will be spread between this site and the area currently set aside for a care home as part of the neighbourhood plan allocation;
- i) A new community space must be included within the site and pedestrian access to the adjacent allotments must be created;
- j) Opportunities for undergrounding should be explored;
- k) Development must discharge attenuated surface water to a receiving waterbody and not to the combined sewer network, unless it can be demonstrated that there is no other option.
- l) Demonstrate adequate capacity for managing wastewater including proposed phasing requirements or alternative solutions to the satisfaction of the Council and Anglian Water;
- m) A range of measures in addition to prioritising SuDs (Policy EN8) and water efficiency measures to reduce the risk on impact on the WRC capacity as a result of planned growth including:
  - i) Removal of unrequired network flows;
  - ii) Targeted education to include new residents of the development;
  - iii) Reduction in the demand for potable water.

- n) Any site specific infrastructure requirements from the IDP (likely to include education provision, highway mitigation, water and wastewater and specific community / open space provision).
- o) 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.

All development Proposals within Wivenhoe Neighbourhood Plan Area, will also be determined against the policies in the Wivenhoe Neighbourhood Plan (Adopted May 2019) where they are up to date and relevant.

## **Medium Settlements**

12.25 Medium settlements include settlements with a range of community and social infrastructure but to a lesser extent than the infrastructure within the larger settlements. These medium settlements are capable of accommodating growth appropriate to the size, scale and infrastructure of the settlement.

## **Abberton and Langenhoe**

12.26 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.

## **Policy PP25: View Park, Abberton and Langenhoe**

**In addition to the infrastructure and mitigation requirements identified in Policy ST 7 and subject to compliance with all other relevant policies, development will be supported on land within the area identified on the policies map which provides:**

- a) Approximately 50 new dwellings of a mix and type of housing to meet evidenced needs and be compatible with surrounding development;**
- b) Safe and suitable site access to required highway design standards and point of vehicle access to be agreed with the Highway Authority and demonstration that proposal would not be detrimental to highway capacity or safety;**
- c) Provide a safe pedestrian access to ensure connectivity within and throughout the site to existing footways and any Public Rights of Way. Ensure provision of green infrastructure connections and recreational access to the countryside particularly to the north of the site, also securing active travel links and connections to the settlement;**
- d) Mature trees and hedgerows within the site should be retained;**
- e) Onsite BNG measures should focus on enhancing the condition of any higher distinctiveness grassland and enhancing the condition of hedgerows;**
- f) Screening comprising locally appropriate tree belts, hedgerows and/or woodland will be required along the site boundaries to ensure that development is sensitively integrated into the landscape to reflect and reinforce rural character;**
- g) 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 allocated site include nine Grade II Listed as informed by the stage 1 HIA;**
- h) Applicants must demonstrate they have confirmed with Anglian Water Services that treatment capacity at the Water Recycling Centre is available to serve the development at the point of anticipated**



connection and where appropriate agree to phasing triggers to support development.

- i) Demonstrate adequate capacity for managing wastewater including proposed phasing requirements or alternative solutions to the satisfaction of the Council and Anglian Water;
- j) A range of measures in addition to prioritising SuDs (Policy EN8) and water efficiency measures to reduce the risk on impact on the WRC capacity as a result of planned growth including:
  - i) Removal of unrequired network flows;
  - ii) Targeted education to include new residents of the development;
  - iii) Reduction in the demand for potable water.

## **Boxted**

12.27 Development in Boxted is currently concentrated within three distinct settlement areas: Boxted Cross, Workhouse Hill and an area to the south of the parish to the west of Straight Road. Development in Boxted Cross has grown in a linear manner around Straight Road/Carters Hill, Dedham Road/Cage Lane crossroads extending north eastwards as far as Cooks Lane. Boxted Cross is considered to be a sustainable location for growth as it is reasonably well served by a number of services and facilities.

### **Policy PP26: Land North of Boxted Straight Road, Boxted Cross**

In addition to the infrastructure and mitigation requirements identified in Policy ST 7 and subject to compliance with all other relevant policies, development will be supported on land within the area identified on the policies map which provides:

- a) **Approximately 150 new dwellings of a mix and type of housing to meet evidenced needs and be compatible with surrounding development;**
- b) **Safe and suitable site access to required highway design standards and point of vehicle access off Boxted Straight Road, to be agreed with the Highway Authority and demonstration that proposal would not be detrimental to highway capacity or safety;**
- c) **Provide a safe pedestrian access to ensure connectivity within and throughout the site to existing footways and any public rights of way. Ensure provision of green infrastructure connections and recreational access to the countryside, also securing active travel links and connections to the settlement;**
- d) **Onsite BNG measures should focus on buffering woodland Priority Habitat to the north of the site and woodland to the west. Soil conditions may favour the creation of higher distinctiveness grasslands;**
- e) **To conserve the local distinctiveness and rural setting of Boxted, the impact of development must be minimised through careful design, in terms of siting, form, scale, massing, materials including the local vernacular of colour buildings, weatherboarding and brick;**
- f) **Screening comprising locally appropriate tree belts, hedgerows and/or woodland will be required along the site boundaries to ensure that development is sensitively integrated into the landscape to reflect and reinforce rural character;**
- g) **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 allocated site includes one Grade I and seventeen Grade II Listed Buildings as informed by the stage 1 HIA;**
- h) **Applicants must demonstrate they have confirmed with Anglian Water Services that treatment capacity at the Water Recycling Centre is available to serve the development at the point of anticipated connection and where appropriate agree to phasing triggers to support development.**

- i) Demonstrate adequate capacity for managing wastewater including proposed phasing requirements or alternative solutions to the satisfaction of the Council and Anglian Water;**
- j) A range of measures in addition to prioritising SuDs (Policy EN8) and water efficiency measures to reduce the risk on impact on the WRC capacity as a result of planned growth including:
  - i) Removal of unrequired network flows;**
  - ii) Targeted education to include new residents of the development;**
  - iii) Reduction in the demand for potable water;****
- k) Any site specific infrastructure requirements from the IDP (likely to include education provision, highway mitigation, water and wastewater and specific community / open space provision);**
- l) 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.**

**All development Proposals within Boxted parish will also be determined against the policies in the Boxted Neighbourhood Plan Review (adopted December 2016) where they are up to date and relevant.**

## **Chappel and Wakes Colne**

12.28 Chappel and Wakes Colne are separate settlements but are located adjacent to one another and share services and facilities. Chappel has one core settlement area with three remote/dispersed small clusters of housing at Rose Green, Swan Street and Wakes Street. The core focus of Chappel is centred around the primary school. The settlement is defined to the east by the railway line, which is the operational Sudbury to Marks Tey branch line. Wakes Colne is the main settlement area with smaller dispersed clusters of housing around Inworth Lane and at Middle Green. The core focus of Wakes Colne is around the railway, defined to the east by the railway line, which is operational Sudbury to Marks Tey branch line. The railway station is also home to Chappel and Wakes Colne Railway Museum which hosts many events and houses a number of refurbished steam trains.

### **Policy PP27: Swan Grove, Chappel**

**In addition to the infrastructure and mitigation requirements identified in Policy ST 7 and subject to compliance with all other relevant policies, development will be supported on land within the area identified on the policies map which provides:**

- a) Approximately 35 new dwellings of a mix and type of housing to meet evidenced needs and be compatible with surrounding development;**
- b) Safe and suitable site access to required highway design standards. The point of vehicular access to be agreed with the Highway Authority and demonstrated that the proposal would not be detrimental to highway capacity or safety;**
- c) Provide a safe pedestrian access to ensure connectivity within and throughout the site to existing footways and any public rights of way. Ensure provision of green infrastructure connections and recreational access to the countryside, also securing active travel links and connections to the settlement;**
- d) Onsite BNG measures should focus on enhancing hedgerow condition, buffering Chappel Ponds and Millennium Green LoWS, and maintaining and strengthening ecological connectivity;**
- e) Screening comprising locally appropriate hedgerows and/or woodland will be required along the site boundaries to ensure that development is sensitively integrated into the landscape to reflect and reinforce rural character;**
- f) 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 allocated site includes a Conservation Area, Scheduled Monument, one Grade I, one Grade II\* and eight Grade II Listed Buildings within the Conservation Area and six further Grade II Listed Buildings outside of the Conservation Area as informed by the stage 1 HIA;**
- g) Demonstrate adequate capacity for managing wastewater including proposed phasing requirements or alternative solutions to the satisfaction of the Council and Anglian Water;**

- h) A range of measures in addition to prioritising SuDs (Policy EN8) and water efficiency measures to reduce the risk on impact on the WRC capacity as a result of planned growth including:**
  - i) Removal of unrequired network flows;**
  - ii) Targeted education to include new residents of the development;**
  - iii) Reduction in the demand for potable water.**

## **Policy PP28: Land West of Station Road, Wakes Colne**

In addition to the infrastructure and mitigation requirements identified in Policy ST 7 and subject to compliance with all other relevant policies, development will be supported on land within the area identified on the policies map which provides:

- a) **Approximately 200 new dwellings of a mix and type of housing to meet evidenced needs and be compatible with surrounding development;**
- b) **Safe and suitable site access to required highway design standards and point of vehicle access to be agreed with the Highway Authority and demonstration that proposal would not be detrimental to highway capacity or safety. This is to include provision of a link road between Station Road and the A1124 and stopping access along Station Road to through traffic;**
- c) **Creation of enhanced pedestrian priority route along the lower section of Station Road (where through traffic is restricted) to provide a safe route to the railway station;**
- d) **Provide a safe pedestrian access to ensure connectivity within and throughout the site to existing footways and any public rights of way, particularly to the southwest of the site. Ensure provision of green infrastructure connections and recreational access to the countryside, also securing active travel links and connections to the settlement;**
- e) **Mature trees and hedgerows within the site should be retained;**
- f) **Onsite BNG measures should focus on buffering and extending the adjacent Acorn Wood LoWS and strengthening north to south connectivity (this an important ecological corridor). The site is on the north valley slope of the Colne valley with patches of superficial sand and gravel deposits, which might make parts of it particularly suitable for grassland creation;**
- g) **Screening comprising locally appropriate hedgerows and/or woodland will be required along the site boundaries to ensure that development is sensitively integrated into the landscape to reflect and reinforce rural character;**
- h) **'Enhanced Open Space' substantively in excess of 10% of the allocation area must be provided as open space. This should include of approximately 8 hectares within the site to provide recreation, community and BNG uses;**
- i) **Support will be given to delivering standing freshwater, woodland or grassland habitat to support the delivery of the strategic creation opportunities in the Essex LNRS;**
- j) **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 allocated site includes A Conservation Area, eighteen Grade II, three Grade II\*, one Grade I Listed Building and one Scheduled Monument as informed by the stage 1 HIA;**
- k) **Demonstrate adequate capacity for managing wastewater including proposed phasing requirements or alternative solutions to the satisfaction of the Council and Anglian Water;**

- l) A range of measures in addition to prioritising SuDs (Policy EN8) and water efficiency measures to reduce the risk on impact on the WRC capacity as a result of planned growth including:
  - i) Removal of unrequired network flows;**
  - ii) Targeted education to include new residents of the development;**
  - iii) Reduction in the demand for potable water.****
- m) Any site specific infrastructure requirements from the IDP (likely to include education provision, highway mitigation, water and wastewater and specific community / open space provision).**



## **Policy PEP12 Land at Wakes Hall Business Centre**

Land at Wakes Hall Business Centre, as shown on the policies map, is allocated for employment uses in accordance with Policy E1. In addition to the infrastructure and mitigation requirements identified in Policy ST7 and subject to compliance with all other policies, proposals for employment uses will be supported on land within the area identified on the policies map which accord with Policy E1 and provide:

- a) Safe pedestrian access to ensure connectivity between the site and existing footways and to maximise opportunities for enhanced connectivity to the surrounding area;
- b) Safe and suitable site access to required highway design standards and point of vehicle access to be agreed with the Highway Authority and demonstration that proposal would not be detrimental to highway capacity;
- c) 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 allocated site includes Wakes Colne Conservation Area, seven Grade II and one Grade II\* Listed Building as informed by the stage 1 HIA;
- d) Promote the use of natural screening through the retention of existing trees and hedgerows and incorporation of new native features.
- e) Liaise with ECC as the Minerals and Waste Planning Authority on waste matters.

## **Copford**

12.29 The Parish of Copford with Easthorpe comprises three distinct villages: Copford, Easthorpe, and Copford Green, the latter being a designated conservation area and one of Colchester's small settlements. Development in Copford has grown in a linear manner along London Road, eastwards towards Stanway and westwards towards Marks Tey. Copford Church of England Primary School is located on Church Road between Copford and Copford Green. There is open space, a village hall, gift shop and pub within the parish and a number of local services including pubs, restaurants and a post office located along London Road in Stanway, just outside of the Copford parish boundary and in Marks Tey, which is approximately 1km from the centre of Copford.

### **Policy PP29: Land East of School Road, Copford**

**In addition to the infrastructure and mitigation requirements identified in Policy ST 7 and subject to compliance with all other relevant policies, development will be supported on land within the area identified on the policies map which provides:**

- a) Approximately 300 new dwellings of a mix and type of housing to meet evidenced needs and be compatible with surrounding development;**
- b) Safe and suitable site access to required highway design standards. The point of vehicular access is to be agreed with the Highway Authority and it will need to be demonstrated that the proposal would not be detrimental to highway capacity and safety;**
- c) Provide a safe pedestrian access to ensure connectivity within and throughout the site to existing footways and any public rights of way. Ensure provision of green infrastructure connections and recreational access to the countryside, also securing active travel links and connections to the settlement;**
- d) A replacement village hall must be delivered within the site, well connected to new homes and existing homes in Copford;**
- e) Provision for appropriate service and facilities / uses to create a local centre to serve the communities across the site as informed by the masterplanning;**
- f) Strategic open space to provide a naturally landscaped community space that is well connected to the wider network of public footpaths;**
- g) The adjacent Pits Wood LoWS (which consists of Ancient Wood Irreplaceable Habitat and Priority Habitat) must be buffered and protected from recreational pressure associated with new housing;**
- h) Onsite BNG measures should focus on creating a buffer with a mosaic of grassland, scrub and woodland habitats around the adjacent LoWS, which could be through creating additional woodland, scrub or grassland;**
- i) Screening comprising locally appropriate tree belts, hedgerows and/or woodland will be required along the site boundaries to ensure that development is sensitively integrated into the landscape to reflect and reinforce rural character;**

- j) Support will be given to delivering standing freshwater or woodland habitat to support the delivery of the strategic creation opportunities in the Essex LNRS;**
- k) 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 allocated site includes seven Grade II Listed Buildings and Copford Green Conservation area to the south as informed by the stage 1 HIA;**
- l) Liaise with ECC as the Minerals and Waste Planning Authority on waste matters;**
- m) Demonstrate adequate capacity for managing wastewater including proposed phasing requirements or alternative solutions to the satisfaction of the Council and Anglian Water;**
- n) A range of measures in addition to prioritising SuDs (Policy EN8) and water efficiency measures to reduce the risk on impact on the WRC capacity as a result of planned growth including:**
  - i) Removal of unrequired network flows;**
  - ii) Targeted education to include new residents of the development;**
  - iii) Reduction in the demand for potable water.**
- o) Development must not discharge surface water to the foul sewer network;**
- p) Any site specific infrastructure requirements from the IDP (likely to include education provision, highway mitigation, water and wastewater and specific community / open space provision);**
- q) 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.**

**Proposals for the allocated site will only be supported where they accord with a comprehensive masterplan in relation to the entire allocation, that has been agreed with the Council prior to submission of any planning application. The masterplan must be of sufficient detail to ensure optimal placemaking and housing delivery outcomes for the allocation and should be informed by an appropriate evidence base. The masterplan should be developed in collaboration with the Council, and relevant infrastructure providers through engagement with the local community and be informed by use of design review. Where appropriate and necessary the masterplan shall be supported by, parameter plans, design codes and/or guidance.**

**All development Proposals within Copford parish will also be determined against the policies in the Copford Neighbourhood Plan (adopted October 2023) where they are up to date and relevant.**

## **Dedham and Dedham Heath**

12.30 Most of the Dedham parish area falls within the Dedham Vale National Landscape (formerly AONB). The largest settlement within the parish is the main historic village of Dedham to the north. A smaller area of predominantly housing called Dedham Heath lies to the south and two smaller clusters of properties lie to the west and east of Dedham Heath known as Lamb Corner and Bargate Lane respectively. Dedham has a range of services and facilities, including its own primary school. Dedham Heath is located approx. 1km away and is on a bus route to Dedham.

### **Policy PP30: Land South of Long Road, Dedham**

**In addition to the infrastructure and mitigation requirements identified in Policy ST 7 and subject to compliance with all other relevant policies, development will be supported on land within the area identified on the policies map which provides:**

- a) Approximately 15 new dwellings of a mix and type of housing to meet evidenced needs and be compatible with surrounding development;**
- b) Safe and suitable site access to required highway design standards. The point of vehicular access is to be agreed with the Highway Authority and it will need to be demonstrated that the proposal would not be detrimental to highway capacity and safety;**
- c) Provide a safe pedestrian access to ensure connectivity within and throughout the site to existing footways and any public rights of way. Ensure provision of green infrastructure connections and recreational access to the countryside, also securing active travel links and connections to the settlement;**
- d) Mature trees and hedgerows within the site should be retained. Retained hedgerows must be outside of garden areas or will need to be compensated;**
- e) Onsite BNG measures should focus on retaining and enhancing the condition of grassland;**
- f) Screening comprising locally appropriate hedgerows and/or woodland will be required along the site boundaries to ensure that development is sensitively integrated into the landscape to reflect and reinforce rural character;**
- g) To conserve the local distinctiveness and rural setting of Dedham, the impact of development must be minimised through careful design, in terms of siting, form, scale, massing, materials including the local vernacular of colour buildings, weatherboarding and brick;**
- h) 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 allocated site includes seven Grade II Listed Buildings as informed by the stage 1 HIA;**
- i) Applicants must demonstrate they have confirmed with Anglian Water Services that treatment capacity at the Water Recycling Centre is available to serve the development at the point of anticipated connection and where appropriate agree to phasing triggers to support development.**

- j) Demonstrate adequate capacity for managing wastewater including proposed phasing requirements or alternative solutions to the satisfaction of the Council and Anglian Water;**
- k) A range of measures in addition to prioritising SuDs (Policy EN8) and water efficiency measures to reduce the risk on impact on the WRC capacity as a result of planned growth including:
  - i) Removal of unrequired network flows;**
  - ii) Targeted education to include new residents of the development;**
  - iii) Reduction in the demand for potable water.****

## **Eight Ash Green**

12.31 Eight Ash Green comprises three main areas of which two are considered sustainable and have a range of services and facilities: Eight Ash Green/Fordham Heath and Eight Ash Green /Choats Corner. Seven Star Green is not considered sustainable as it is located south of Halstead Road and is separated by this main road from the key facilities available in the village. Eight Ash Green is interspersed with open farmland and contains some small businesses premises. There are a number of local services including hairdressers, convenience store, petrol station, village hall, open spaces and primary school. Tollgate and Stane Park is located approximately 1.5km to the south-east.

### **Policy PP31: Land North of Halstead Road and East of Wood Lane, Eight Ash Green**

**In addition to the infrastructure and mitigation requirements identified in Policy ST 7 and subject to compliance with all other relevant policies, development will be supported on land within the area identified on the policies map which provides:**

- a) Approximately 180 new dwellings of a mix and type of housing to meet evidenced needs and be compatible with surrounding development;**
- b) Safe and suitable site access to required highway design standards. The point of vehicular access is to be agreed with the Highway Authority and it will need to be demonstrated that the proposal would not be detrimental to highway capacity and safety;**
- c) Provide a safe pedestrian access to ensure connectivity within and throughout the site to existing footways and any public rights of way. Ensure provision of green infrastructure connections and recreational access to the countryside, also securing active travel links and connections to the settlement and to Tollgate District Centre;**
- d) Biodiversity mitigation must include a buffer to the watercourse and to the adjacent ancient woodland to protect it from recreational and other disturbance;**
- e) Onsite BNG measures should focus on buffering the woodland and providing watercourse enhancements, with other medium distinctiveness habitat (e.g. other neutral grassland);**
- f) Support will be given to delivering grassland habitat within or adjacent to the site to support the delivery of the strategic creation opportunities in the Essex LNRS;**
- g) Screening comprising locally appropriate tree belts, hedgerows and/or woodland will be required along the site boundaries to ensure that development is sensitively integrated into the landscape to reflect and reinforce rural character;**
- h) 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 allocated site includes two Grade II Listed Buildings as informed by the stage 1 HIA;**
- i) Contributions towards the provision of a new village hall in Eight Ash Green;**

- j) Any site specific infrastructure requirements from the IDP (likely to include education provision, highway mitigation, water and wastewater and specific community / open space provision).**

**All development Proposals within Eight Ash Green parish, will also be determined against the policies in the Eight Ash Green Neighbourhood Plan (adopted December 2019) where they are up to date and relevant.**



**Policy PP32: Land North of Halstead Road and West of Fiddlers Wood Eight Ash Green**

In addition to the infrastructure and mitigation requirements identified in Policy ST 7 and subject to compliance with all other relevant policies, development will be supported on land within the area identified on the policies map which provides:

- a) Approximately 250 new dwellings of a mix and type of housing to meet evidenced needs and be compatible with surrounding development;
- b) Safe and suitable site access to required highway design standards. The point of vehicular access is to be agreed with the Highway Authority and it will need to be demonstrated that the proposal would not be detrimental to highway capacity and safety;
- c) Provide safe pedestrian access to ensure connectivity within and throughout the site to existing footways and any public rights of way. Ensure provision of green infrastructure connections and recreational access to the countryside, also securing active travel links and connections to the settlement and to Tollgate District Centre;
- d) The adjacent Fiddlers Wood Co43 LoWS (ancient woodland) must be safeguarded, buffered and protected from recreational pressure associated with new housing;
- e) Onsite BNG measures should focus on creating woodland, scrub and grassland habitats as buffers to the adjacent ancient woodland. New boundary hedgerows should be planted in gaps and the condition of existing hedgerows should be enhanced;
- f) Support will be given to delivering grassland or woodland habitat within or adjacent to the site to support the delivery of the strategic creation opportunities in the Essex LNRS;
- g) Screening comprising locally appropriate tree belts, hedgerows and/or woodland will be required along the site boundaries to ensure that development is sensitively integrated into the landscape to reflect and reinforce rural character;
- h) 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 allocated site includes three Grade II Listed Buildings as informed by the stage 1 HIA;
- i) Liaise with ECC as the Minerals and Waste Planning Authority on mineral and waste
- j) Contributions towards the provision of a new village hall in Eight Ash Green.
- k) Any site specific infrastructure requirements from the IDP (likely to include education provision, highway mitigation, water and wastewater and specific community / open space provision).
- l) 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.**

**All development Proposals within Eight Ash Green parish, will also be determined against the policies in the Eight Ash Green Neighbourhood Plan (adopted December 2019) where they are up to date and relevant.**

### **Policy PEP9 Bullbanks Farm, Eight Ash Green**

Land at Bullbanks Farm, Eight Ash Green, as shown on the policies map, is allocated for employment uses in accordance with Policy E1. In addition to the infrastructure and mitigation requirements identified in Policy ST 7 and subject to compliance with all other policies, proposals for employment uses will be supported on land within the area identified on the policies map which accord with Policy E1 and provide:

- a) Safe pedestrian access to ensure connectivity between the site and existing footways and to maximise opportunities for enhanced connectivity to the surrounding area;
- b) Safe and suitable site access to required highway design standards and point of vehicle access to be agreed with the Highway Authority and demonstration that proposal would not be detrimental to highway capacity;
- c) 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 allocated site includes two Grade II Listed Buildings as informed by the stage 1 HIA.

All development Proposals within Eight Ash Green parish, will also be determined against the policies in the Eight Ash Green Neighbourhood Plan (adopted December 2019) where they are up to date and relevant.

## **Fordham**

12.32 Fordham is a linear settlement with a core concentration of development which has evolved over time, including a number of small estate type developments. A primary school is situated at the southern end of the village just beyond the settlement boundary. The village hall is located within the core of the concentrated area of development and hosts a shop and post office at limited times during the week. Also within the village is a playing field and a community orchard maintained by the local community. A small cluster of dwellings to the north along Plummers Road is separated by the Grade II listed Moat Hall which is situated on a significant mature landscaped garden which adjoins an established community woodland managed by the Woodland Trust.

### **Policy PP33: Land East of Plummers, Fordham**

**In addition to the infrastructure and mitigation requirements identified in Policy ST 7 and subject to compliance with all other relevant policies, development will be supported on land within the area identified on the policies map which provides:**

- a) Approximately 25 new dwellings of a mix and type of housing to meet evidenced needs and be compatible with surrounding development;**
- b) Safe and suitable site access to required highway design standards. The point of vehicular access is to be through the existing site off Plummers Road (reserved as part of planning application), to be agreed with the Highway Authority and it will need to be demonstrated that the proposal would not be detrimental to highway capacity and safety;**
- c) Provide a safe pedestrian access to ensure connectivity within and throughout the site to existing footways and any public rights of way. Ensure provision of green infrastructure connections and recreational access to the countryside, also securing active travel links and connections to the settlement;**
- d) Screening comprising locally appropriate hedgerows and/or woodland will be required along the site boundaries to ensure that development is sensitively integrated into the landscape to reflect and reinforce rural character;**
- e) Support will be given to delivering woodland habitat within or adjacent to the site to support the delivery of the strategic creation opportunities in the Essex LNRS;**
- f) 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 allocated site includes fifteen Grade II Listed Buildings as informed by the stage 1 HIA.**

## Great Horkesley

12.33 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). More recently development has spread westwards along a number of roads off the main road. Land to the east of the main road has remained relatively free of development and is more open in character. 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 are a range of services and facilities within the village.

### **Policy PP34: Land North of Coach Road, Great Horkesley**

**In addition to the infrastructure and mitigation requirements identified in Policy ST 7 and subject to compliance with all other relevant policies, development will be supported on land within the area identified on the policies map which provides:**

- a) Approximately 400 new dwellings of a mix and type of housing to meet evidenced needs and be compatible with surrounding development;**
- b) Safe and suitable site access to required highway design standards. The point of vehicular access is to be via a single point of vehicle access off Coach Road to be agreed with the Highway Authority and it will need to be demonstrated that the proposal would not be detrimental to highway capacity and safety;**
- c) Provide a safe pedestrian access to ensure connectivity within and throughout the site to existing footways and any public rights of way, particularly to the South of Coach Road. Ensure provision of green infrastructure connections and recreational access to the countryside, also securing active travel links and connections to the settlement;**
- d) Active travel route including a pedestrian link to the existing village hall;**
- e) Retention of hedgerows within the site;**
- f) Support will be given to delivering standing freshwater, grassland or woodland habitat to support the delivery of the strategic creation opportunities in the Essex LNRS;**
- g) Screening comprising locally appropriate tree belts, hedgerows and/or woodland will be required along the site boundaries to ensure that development is sensitively integrated into the landscape to reflect and reinforce rural character;**
- h) Development must not discharge surface water to the foul sewer network;**
- i) Applicants must demonstrate they have confirmed with Anglian Water Services that treatment capacity at the Water Recycling Centre is available to serve the development at the point of anticipated connection and where appropriate agree to phasing triggers to support development;**

- j) Demonstrate adequate capacity for managing wastewater including proposed phasing requirements or alternative solutions to the satisfaction of the Council and Anglian Water;**
- k) A range of measures in addition to prioritising SuDs (Policy EN8) and water efficiency measures to reduce the risk on impact on the WRC capacity as a result of planned growth including:**
  - i) Removal of unrequired network flows;**
  - ii) Targeted education to include new residents of the development;**
  - iii) Reduction in the demand for potable water**
- l) 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 allocated site includes eight Grade II Listed Buildings and one scheduled monument as informed by the stage 1 HIA;**
- m) Contributions will be sought towards extending the village hall or other local community facilities to be informed by the Parish Council;**
- n) Any site specific infrastructure requirements from the IDP (likely to include education provision, highway mitigation, water and wastewater and specific community / open space provision).**

**Proposals for the allocated site will only be supported where they accord with a comprehensive masterplan in relation to the entire allocation, that has been agreed with the Council prior to submission of any planning application. The masterplan must be of sufficient detail to ensure optimal placemaking and housing delivery outcomes for the allocation and should be informed by an appropriate evidence base. The masterplan should be developed in collaboration with the Council, and relevant infrastructure providers through engagement with the local community and be informed by use of design review. Where appropriate and necessary the masterplan shall be supported by, parameter plans, design codes and/or guidance.**

## **Policy PP35: The Old School, Great Horkesley**

In addition to the infrastructure and mitigation requirements identified in Policy ST 7 and subject to compliance with all other relevant policies, development will be supported on land within the area identified on the policies map which provides:

- a) Approximately 13 new dwellings of a mix and type of housing to meet evidenced needs and be compatible with surrounding development;
- b) Safe and suitable site access to required highway design standards. The point of vehicular access off School Road to be agreed with the Highway Authority and it will need to be demonstrated that the proposal would not be detrimental to highway capacity and safety;
- c) Provide a safe pedestrian access to ensure connectivity within and throughout the site to existing footways and any public rights of way. Ensure provision of green infrastructure connections and recreational access to the countryside, also securing active travel links and connections to the settlement;
- d) Mature trees within the site should be retained and existing hedgerows should be retained and enhanced at the northern and eastern edges of site to provide screening;
- e) Development must not discharge surface water to the foul sewer network.
- f) Applicants must demonstrate they have confirmed with Anglian Water Services that treatment capacity at the Water Recycling Centre is available to serve the development at the point of anticipated connection and where appropriate agree to phasing triggers to support development.
- g) Demonstrate adequate capacity for managing wastewater including proposed phasing requirements or alternative solutions to the satisfaction of the Council and Anglian Water;
- h) A range of measures in addition to prioritising SuDs (Policy EN8) and water efficiency measures to reduce the risk on impact on the WRC capacity as a result of planned growth including:
  - i) Removal of unrequired network flows;
  - ii) Targeted education to include new residents of the development;
  - iii) Reduction in the demand for potable water.
- i) Development must conserve, and where appropriate, enhance the significance of heritage assets (including any contribution made by their settings). Designated heritage assets within the allocated site include two Grade II Listed Buildings. Assets close to the allocated site includes twelve Grade II Listed Buildings as informed by the stage 1 HIA.



## Great Tey

12.34 Great Tey is situated north of the Roman River and is surrounded by largely flat arable land. The parish of Great Tey is a small rural community that contains a few local amenities including a village pub, a school, and a Norman church. The community originally developed at the southern end, as evidenced by the Conservation Area, with a newer small estate to the north and ribbon development along the main road through the village between Little Tey and Chappel.

### **Policy PP36: Land at Earls Colne Road, Great Tey**

In addition to the infrastructure and mitigation requirements identified in Policy ST 7 and subject to compliance with all other relevant policies, development will be supported on land within the area identified on the policies map which provides:

- a) **Approximately 125 new dwellings of a mix and type of housing to meet evidenced needs and be compatible with surrounding development;**
- b) **Safe and suitable site access including junction visibility at Earls Colne Road / Chappel Road to required highway design standards and point of vehicle access off Earls Colne to be agreed with the Highway Authority and demonstration that proposal would not be detrimental to highway capacity or safety;**
- c) **Provide a safe pedestrian access to ensure connectivity within and throughout the site to existing footways and any public rights of way particularly to the north of Earls Colne Road. Ensure provision of green infrastructure connections and recreational access to the countryside, also securing active travel links and connections to the settlement;**
- d) **Onsite BNG measures should consider the creation of chalky boulder clay grassland as soil conditions may be suitable if nutrient status can be reduced;**
- e) **Support will be given to delivering standing freshwater or woodland habitat to support the delivery of the strategic creation opportunities in the Essex LNRS;**
- f) **Screening comprising locally appropriate tree belts, hedgerows and/or woodland will be required along the site boundaries to ensure that development is sensitively integrated into the landscape to reflect and reinforce rural character and protect the landscape quality and tranquillity around Great Tey;**
- g) **Respond to the historic settlement pattern and use materials which are appropriate to local landscape character including the local vernacular of weatherboarding and brick;**
- h) **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 allocated site includes eighteen Grade II and one Grade II\* Listed Building as informed by the stage 1 HIA;**
- i) **Applicants must demonstrate they have confirmed with Anglian Water Services that treatment capacity at the Water Recycling Centre is available to serve the development at the point of anticipated**

- connection and where appropriate agree to phasing triggers to support development;
- j) Liaise with ECC as the Minerals and Waste Planning Authority on mineral and waste;
  - k) Any site specific infrastructure requirements from the IDP (likely to include education provision, highway mitigation, water and wastewater and specific community / open space provision).
  - l) 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.

All development Proposals within Great Tey parish, will also be determined against the policies in the Great Tey Neighbourhood Plan (adopted October 2024) where they are up to date and relevant.

## Langham

12.35 Langham includes two areas of settlement, 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 with more recent development. Langham contains a public house, a community café, a community shop, community centre, recreation ground, a playground, football pitches and tennis courts. It lies close to the A12 trunk road and the Dedham Vale National Landscape is outside the settlement to the north and east.

### **Policy PP37: Land north of Park Lane, Langham**

**In addition to the infrastructure and mitigation requirements identified in Policy ST 7 and subject to compliance with all other relevant policies, development will be supported on land within the area identified on the policies map which provides:**

- a) **Approximately 900 new dwellings of a mix and type of housing to meet evidenced needs and be compatible with surrounding development;**
- b) **Safe and suitable site access to required highway design standards. The point of vehicular access is to be agreed with the Highway Authority and it will need to be demonstrated that the proposal would not be detrimental to highway capacity and safety;**
- c) **Impacts on the Strategic Road Network can be satisfactorily mitigated to the satisfaction of National Highways;**
- d) **Provide a safe pedestrian access to ensure connectivity within and throughout the site to existing footways and public rights of way. Ensure provision of green infrastructure connections and recreational access to the countryside, also securing active travel links and connections to the settlement;**
- e) **Applicants must demonstrate they have confirmed with Anglian Water Services that treatment capacity at the Water Recycling Centre is available to serve the development at the point of anticipated connection and where appropriate agree to phasing triggers to support development;**
- f) **Demonstrate adequate capacity for managing wastewater including proposed phasing requirements or alternative solutions to the satisfaction of the Council and Anglian Water;**
- g) **A range of measures in addition to prioritising SuDs (Policy EN8) and water efficiency measures to reduce the risk on impact on the WRC capacity as a result of planned growth including:**
  - i) **Removal of unrequired network flows;**
  - ii) **Targeted education to include new residents of the development;**
  - iii) **Reduction in the demand for potable water.**
- h) **Onsite BNG measures should include enhancement of existing hedgerows. Soil conditions may favour the creation of higher distinctiveness grasslands, including some of a calcareous character;**
- i) **Support will be given to delivering grassland habitat to support the delivery of the strategic creation opportunities in the Essex LNRS;**

- j) Screening comprising locally appropriate tree belts, hedgerows and/or woodland will be required along the site boundaries to ensure that development is sensitively integrated into the landscape to reflect and reinforce rural character;**
- k) 'Enhanced Open Space' as shown on the Policies Map substantively in excess of 10% of the allocation area must be provided as open space. This should include at least one area of strategic open space and multiple areas of less formal and more incidental open space.**
- l) Deliver a strategic open space centrally within the site to provide a naturally landscaped community space that is well connected to new and existing development;**
- m) 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 allocated site includes twenty-two Grade II Listed Buildings as informed by the stage 1 HIA.**
- n) Liaise with ECC as the Minerals and Waste Planning Authority on mineral and waste;**
- o) Any site specific infrastructure requirements from the IDP (likely to include education provision, highway mitigation, water and wastewater and specific community / open space provision).**
- p) 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.**

**Proposals for the allocated site will only be supported where they accord with a comprehensive masterplan in relation to the entire allocation, that has been agreed with the Council prior to submission of any planning application. The masterplan must be of sufficient detail to ensure optimal placemaking and housing delivery outcomes for the allocation and should be informed by an appropriate evidence base. The masterplan should be developed in collaboration with the Council, and relevant infrastructure providers through engagement with the local community and be informed by use of design review. Where appropriate and necessary the masterplan shall be supported by, parameter plans, design codes and/or guidance.**

## **Policy PP38: Land opposite Wick Road, Langham**

In addition to the infrastructure and mitigation requirements identified in Policy ST 7 and subject to compliance with all other relevant policies, development will be supported on land within the area identified on the policies map which provides:

- a) Approximately 10 new dwellings of a mix and type of housing to meet evidenced needs and be compatible with surrounding development;
- b) Safe and suitable site access to required highway design standards. The point of vehicular access is to be agreed with the Highway Authority and it will need to be demonstrated that the proposal would not be detrimental to highway capacity and safety;
- c) Provide a safe pedestrian access to ensure connectivity within and throughout the site to existing footways and any public rights of way. Ensure provision of green infrastructure connections and recreational access to the countryside, also securing active travel links and connections to the settlement ;
- d) Retention of Hedgerows within the site and must be outside of garden areas or will need to be compensated;
- e) Screening comprising locally appropriate tree belts, hedgerows and/or woodland will be required along the site boundaries to ensure that development is sensitively integrated into the landscape to reflect and reinforce rural character;
- f) Onsite BNG measures should focus on enhancing the distinctiveness and condition of retained areas of grassland and hedgerow;
- g) Applicants must demonstrate they have confirmed with Anglian Water Services that treatment capacity at the Water Recycling Centre is available to serve the development at the point of anticipated connection and where appropriate agree to phasing triggers to support development.
- h) Demonstrate adequate capacity for managing wastewater including proposed phasing requirements or alternative solutions to the satisfaction of the Council and Anglian Water;
- i) A range of measures in addition to prioritising SuDs (Policy EN8) and water efficiency measures to reduce the risk on impact on the WRC capacity as a result of planned growth including:
  - i) Removal of unrequired network flows;
  - ii) Targeted education to include new residents of the development;
  - iii) Reduction in the demand for potable water.
- j) 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 allocated site includes five Grade II Listed Buildings close to the south of the site as informed by the stage 1 HIA.

## **Policy PEP10 Lodge Lane, Langham**

**Land at Lodge Lane, as shown on the policies map, is safeguarded for employment uses in accordance with Policy E1.**

### **Justification**

#### **Purpose of the policy**

12.36 Planning permission for Outline consent for up to 3,000sqm of office floorspace was approved in 2020 on the site which is the land safeguarded in Policy PEP10 with subsequent Reserved Matters applications.

## **Layer de la Haye**

12.37 Development in Layer de la Haye is concentrated within two settlement areas: Layer village and Malting Green. The two areas are physically separated by a large grass sward known as Malting Green, a large part of which is a designated Local Wildlife Site (Co 93). It is also an important open space that plays an important function in defining the rural character of the existing two settlement areas. Layer de la Haye has a mix of community and social infrastructure including a primary school, GP surgery, shop, two pubs, village hall and open spaces.

### **Policy PP39: Land at The Furze, Layer de la Haye**

**In addition to the infrastructure and mitigation requirements identified in Policy ST 7 and subject to compliance with all other relevant policies, development will be supported on land within the area identified on the policies map which provides:**

- a) Approximately 10 new dwellings of a mix and type of housing to meet evidenced needs and be compatible with surrounding development;**
- b) Safe and suitable site access to required highway design standards. The point of vehicular access is to be agreed with the Highway Authority and it will need to be demonstrated that the proposal would not be detrimental to highway capacity and safety;**
- c) Provide a safe pedestrian access to ensure connectivity within and throughout the site to existing footways and any public rights of way. Ensure provision of green infrastructure connections and recreational access to the countryside, also securing active travel links and connections to the settlement;**
- d) Screening through the retention of existing hedgerows, trees and vegetation, particularly along The Folley at its eastern boundary to support the sensitive integration of the site into the existing landscape;**
- e) 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 allocated site includes seven Grade II and one Grade II\* Listed Buildings as informed by the stage 1 HIA.**



## **Policy PP40: Land West of The Folley, Layer de la Haye**

In addition to the infrastructure and mitigation requirements identified in Policy ST 7 and subject to compliance with all other relevant policies, development will be supported on land within the area identified on the policies map which provides:

- a) **Approximately 60 new dwellings of a mix and type of housing to meet evidenced needs and be compatible with surrounding development;**
- b) **Safe and suitable site access to required highway design standards. The point of vehicular access is to be agreed with the Highway Authority and it will need to be demonstrated that the proposal would not be detrimental to highway capacity and safety;**
- c) **Provide a safe pedestrian access to ensure connectivity within and throughout the site to existing footways and any public rights of way particularly to the East of the Folley. Ensure provision of green infrastructure connections and recreational access to the countryside, also securing active travel links and connections to the settlement;**
- d) **A suitable and safe active travel link between the site to the adjoining site with planning permission;**
- e) **Retention of mature trees and hedgerows within the site;**
- f) **Onsite BNG measures should focus on enhancing woodland and grassland habitat. The site is on superficial sands and gravels that should make the site suitable for the creation of Lowland Dry Acid Grassland if nutrient levels can be lowered;**
- g) **Screening comprising locally appropriate hedgerows and/or woodland will be required along the site boundaries to ensure that development is sensitively integrated into the landscape to reflect and reinforce rural character;**
- h) **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 allocated site includes eight Grade II Listed Buildings as informed by the stage 1 HIA.**

## **Rowhedge**

12.38 Rowhedge lies within the parish of East Donyland, which covers the south-east of Colchester. The settlement was historically centred around the shipbuilding and fishing industries of the River Colne. The village lies on the opposite bank of the river to Wivenhoe but despite its close proximity to the town, access is only available by road through Colchester. Rowhedge has good public transport and road links to Colchester and contains its own primary school, post office and recreational facilities.

### **Policy PP41: Rowhedge Business Park, Rowhedge**

**In addition to the infrastructure and mitigation requirements identified in Policy ST 7 and subject to compliance with all other relevant policies, development will be supported on land within the area identified on the policies map which provides:**

- a) Approximately 50 new dwellings of a mix and type of housing to meet evidenced needs and be compatible with surrounding development;**
- b) Safe and suitable site access to required highway design standards. The point of vehicular access is to be agreed with the Highway Authority and it will need to be demonstrated that the proposal would not be detrimental to highway capacity and safety;**
- c) Provide a safe pedestrian access to ensure connectivity within and throughout the site to existing footways and any public rights of way. Ensure provision of green infrastructure connections and recreational access to the countryside, also securing active travel links and connections to the settlement;**
- d) The area of woodland within the site will be safeguarded and retained as tree cover and open space;**
- e) Onsite BNG measures should focus on enhancing adjacent woodland and open mosaic condition;**
- f) Screening comprising locally appropriate hedgerows and/or woodland will be required along the site boundaries to ensure that development is sensitively integrated into the landscape to reflect and reinforce rural character;**
- g) 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 allocated site includes a Conservation Area, three Grade II Listed Buildings and a scheduled monument as informed by the stage 1 HIA;**
- h) Development must discharge attenuated surface water to a receiving waterbody and not to the combined sewer network, unless it can be demonstrated that there is no other option;**
- i) Demonstrate adequate capacity for managing wastewater including proposed phasing requirements or alternative solutions to the satisfaction of the Council and Anglian Water;**
- j) A range of measures in addition to prioritising SuDs (Policy EN8) and water efficiency measures to reduce the risk on impact on the WRC capacity as a result of planned growth including:
  - i) Removal of unrequired network flows;****

- ii) Targeted education to include new residents of the development;**
- iii) Reduction in the demand for potable water.**

## **West Bergholt**

12.39 West Bergholt is situated approximately 1km to the north-west of Colchester. The village is centered around a triangle of roads: the B1508 Colchester Road, Chappel Road and Lexden Road. West Bergholt is separated from Colchester by an area of open countryside and the valleys of St Botolph's Brook and the River Colne. The A12 bisects the open countryside between West Bergholt and Colchester. The majority of the more recent development has occurred on the northern side of Colchester Road.

### **Policy PP42: Land at White Hart Lane, West Bergholt**

**In addition to the infrastructure and mitigation requirements identified in Policy ST 7 and subject to compliance with all other relevant policies, development will be supported on land within the area identified on the policies map which provides:**

- a) Approximately 50 new dwellings of a mix and type of housing to meet evidenced needs and be compatible with surrounding development;**
- b) Safe and suitable site access to required highway design standards. The point of vehicular access to be off Colchester Road via the existing Neighbourhood Plan site allocation to be agreed with the Highway Authority and it will need to be demonstrated that the proposal would not be detrimental to highway capacity and safety;**
- c) Provide a safe pedestrian access to ensure connectivity within and throughout the site to existing footways and any public rights of way particularly to White Hart Lane and Manor Road. Ensure provision of green infrastructure connections and recreational access to the countryside, also securing active travel links and connections to the settlement;**
- d) Screening comprising locally appropriate hedgerows and/or woodland will be required along the site boundaries to ensure that development is sensitively integrated into the landscape to reflect and reinforce rural character;**
- e) Development must not discharge surface water to the foul sewer network;**
- f) Applicants must demonstrate they have confirmed with Anglian Water Services that treatment capacity at the Water Recycling Centre is available to serve the development at the point of anticipated connection and where appropriate agree to phasing triggers to support development;**
- g) Demonstrate adequate capacity for managing wastewater including proposed phasing requirements or alternative solutions to the satisfaction of the Council and Anglian Water;**
- h) A range of measures in addition to prioritising SuDs (Policy EN8) and water efficiency measures to reduce the risk on impact on the WRC capacity as a result of planned growth including:
  - i) Removal of unrequired network flows;**
  - ii) Targeted education to include new residents of the development;****

- iii) Reduction in the demand for potable water.
- i) 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 allocated site includes eight Grade II and one Grade I Listed Building as informed by the stage 1 HIA.

All development Proposals within West Bergholt parish, will also be determined against the policies in the West Bergholt Neighbourhood Plan (adopted October 2019) where they are up to date and relevant.

## **Policy PP43: Land North of Colchester Road, West Bergholt**

In addition to the infrastructure and mitigation requirements identified in Policy ST 7 and subject to compliance with all other relevant policies, development will be supported on land within the area identified on the policies map which provides:

- a) Approximately 100 new dwellings of a mix and type of housing to meet evidenced needs and be compatible with surrounding development;
- b) Safe and suitable site access to required highway design standards. The point of vehicular access is to be off William Sims Close to be agreed with the Highway Authority and it will need to be demonstrated that the proposal would not be detrimental to highway capacity and safety;
- c) Provide a safe pedestrian access to ensure connectivity within and throughout the site to existing footways and any public rights of way, particularly to the west and to Armoury Road to the east. Ensure provision of green infrastructure connections and recreational access to the countryside, also securing active travel links and connections to the settlement;
- d) Development must not discharge surface water to the foul sewer network;
- e) Applicants must demonstrate they have confirmed with Anglian Water Services that treatment capacity at the Water Recycling Centre is available to serve the development at the point of anticipated connection and where appropriate agree to phasing triggers to support development;
- f) Demonstrate adequate capacity for managing wastewater including proposed phasing requirements or alternative solutions to the satisfaction of the Council and Anglian Water;
- g) A range of measures in addition to prioritising SuDs (Policy EN8) and water efficiency measures to reduce the risk on impact on the WRC capacity as a result of planned growth including:
  - i) Removal of unrequired network flows;
  - ii) Targeted education to include new residents of the development;
  - iii) Reduction in the demand for potable water.
- h) Retention of native hedgerows within the site;
- i) Screening comprising locally appropriate tree belts, hedgerows and/or woodland will be required along the site boundaries to ensure that development is sensitively integrated into the landscape to reflect and reinforce rural character;
- j) 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 allocated site includes five Grade II Listed Buildings as informed by the stage 1 HIA;
- k) Any site specific infrastructure requirements from the IDP (likely to include education provision, highway mitigation, water and wastewater and specific community / open space provision).

**All development Proposals within West Bergholt parish, will also be determined against the policies in the West Bergholt Neighbourhood Plan (adopted October 2019) where they are up to date and relevant.**



## **Policy PP44: Land off Colchester Road, West Bergholt**

In addition to the infrastructure and mitigation requirements identified in Policy ST 7 and subject to compliance with all other relevant policies, development will be supported on land within the area identified on the policies map which provides:

- a) Approximately 100 new dwellings of a mix and type of housing to meet evidenced needs and be compatible with surrounding development;
- b) Safe and suitable site access to required highway design standards. The point of vehicular access is to be agreed with the Highway Authority and it will need to be demonstrated that the proposal would not be detrimental to highway capacity and safety;
- c) Provide a safe pedestrian access to ensure connectivity within and throughout the site to existing footways and any public rights of way. Ensure provision of green infrastructure connections and recreational access to the countryside, also securing active travel links and connections to the settlement;
- d) Development must ensure it does not harm the coalescence break which is defined in the West Bergholt Neighbourhood Plan and ensure appropriate mitigation and enhancement is provided as evidence through appropriate landscape character evidence to be agreed with the Council;
- e) Onsite BNG measures should focus on enhancing hedgerows and enhancing the condition and distinctiveness of grassland;
- f) Screening comprising locally appropriate hedgerows and/or woodland will be required along the site boundaries to ensure that development is sensitively integrated into the landscape to reflect and reinforce rural character;
- g) Development must not discharge surface water to the foul sewer network;
- h) Applicants must demonstrate they have confirmed with Anglian Water Services that treatment capacity at the Water Recycling Centre is available to serve the development at the point of anticipated connection and where appropriate agree to phasing triggers to support development;
- j) Demonstrate adequate capacity for managing wastewater including proposed phasing requirements or alternative solutions to the satisfaction of the Council and Anglian Water;
- k) A range of measures in addition to prioritising SuDs (Policy EN8) and water efficiency measures to reduce the risk on impact on the WRC capacity as a result of planned growth including:
  - i) Removal of unrequired network flows;
  - ii) Targeted education to include new residents of the development;
  - iii) Reduction in the demand for potable water;
- i) 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 allocated site includes six Grade II, one Grade II Listed Buildings and Scheduled Monument to the east as informed by the Stage 1 HIA;

- j) Any site specific infrastructure requirements from the IDP (likely to include education provision, highway mitigation, water and wastewater and specific community / open space provision).**

**All development Proposals within West Bergholt parish, will also be determined against the policies in the West Bergholt Neighbourhood Plan (adopted October 2019) where they are up to date and relevant.**

## **Policy PEP11 Land at Pattens Yard, West Bergholt**

Land at Pattens Yard, West Bergholt, as shown on the policies map, is allocated for employment uses in accordance with Policy E1. In addition to the infrastructure and mitigation requirements identified in Policy ST7 and subject to compliance with all other policies, proposals for employment uses will be supported on land within the area identified on the policies map which accord with Policy E1 and provide:

- a) Safe access to maximise opportunities for enhanced connectivity by sustainable modes to the surrounding area;
- b) Safe and suitable site access to required highway design standards. The point of vehicular access is to be agreed with the Highway Authority and it will need to be demonstrated that the proposal would not be detrimental to highway capacity and safety;
- c) 0.7ha of open space and/or green infrastructure;
- d) Screening from the wider landscape through the protection and enhancement of native trees and hedgerows;
- e) 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 allocated site includes six Grade II, one Grade II\* Listed Building and a Scheduled Monument just outside to the east as informed by the stage 1 HIA;
- f) Liaise with ECC as the Minerals and Waste Planning Authority on waste matters given proximity to Patterns Yard Inert Recycling Centre.

All development Proposals within West Bergholt parish, will also be determined against the policies in the West Bergholt Neighbourhood Plan (adopted October 2019) where they are up to date and relevant.

## **Small Settlements**

12.40 Small scale growth is proposed in some of Colchester's small settlements reflecting the size and level of community and social infrastructure.

### **Aldham**

12.41 Aldham is a nucleated settlement that has developed around the junction of Brook Road/New Road and Green Lane/Tey Road with more modern development to the north-east and south-east. Aldham is rural in character and is accessed by narrow country lanes but is close to the A12/A120 and A1124.

### **Policy PP45: Land off New Road, Aldham**

**In addition to the infrastructure and mitigation requirements identified in Policy ST 7 and subject to compliance with all other relevant policies, development will be supported on land within the area identified on the policies map which provides:**

- a) Approximately 15 new dwellings of a mix and type of housing to meet evidenced needs and be compatible with surrounding development;**
- b) Safe and suitable site access to required highway design standards. The point of vehicular access is to be agreed with the Highway Authority and it will need to be demonstrated that the proposal would not be detrimental to highway capacity and safety;**
- c) Provide a safe pedestrian access to ensure connectivity within and throughout the site to existing footways and any public rights of way. Ensure provision of green infrastructure connections and recreational access to the countryside, also securing active travel links and connections to the settlement;**
- d) Any loss of hedgerow to allow for suitable access must be compensated;**
- e) Screening comprising locally appropriate hedgerows and/or woodland will be required along the site boundaries to ensure that development is sensitively integrated into the landscape to reflect and reinforce rural character;**
- f) Development must respond to the historic settlement pattern and use materials which are appropriate to local landscape character including the local vernacular of weatherboarding and brick;**
- g) 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 allocated site includes four Grade II and one Grade II\* Listed Buildings as informed by the stage 1 HIA.**

## **Birch and Layer Breton**

- 12.42 Birch Green is the largest area of housing within the wider Birch parish area (with the smaller historic core of Birch to the north and a separate, isolated cluster of dwellings known as Hardy's Green to the north-west). Birch Green is broadly triangular in shape where development has filled the space between Birch Street, Mill Lane and Straight Way, with some development extending beyond Mill Lane and Birch Street to the north and Crayes Green to the south-east. Birch Green is rural in character, has limited connections to the strategic road network but has a few key services including its own primary school and village hall.
- 12.43 Layer Breton is a linear settlement that has developed over time as a form of ribbon development along Layer Breton Hill, which is a rural road that links Colchester with Tolleshunt D'Arcy via Birch. Layer Breton is rural in character, poorly connected to the strategic road network and is accessed by narrow country lanes.

### **Policy PP46: Land at Birch Green, Birch**

**In addition to the infrastructure and mitigation requirements identified in Policy ST 7 and subject to compliance with all other relevant policies, development will be supported on land within the area identified on the policies map which provides:**

- a) Approximately 15 new dwellings of a mix and type of housing to meet evidenced needs and be compatible with surrounding development;**
- b) Safe and suitable site access to required highway design standards. The point of vehicular access is to be agreed with the Highway Authority and it will need to be demonstrated that the proposal would not be detrimental to highway capacity and safety;**
- c) Provide a safe pedestrian access to ensure connectivity within and throughout the site to existing footways and any public rights of way. Ensure provision of green infrastructure connections and recreational access to the countryside, also securing active travel links and connections to the settlement;**
- d) 'Enhanced Open Space' as shown on the Policies Map substantively in excess of 10% of the allocation area must be provided as open space onsite and demonstrate how this can link to the adjacent open space to the north;**
- e) Screening comprising locally appropriate tree belts and/or hedgerows will be required along the site boundaries to ensure that development is sensitively integrated into the landscape to reflect and reinforce rural wooded character;**
- f) Grassland compensation and any mitigation set out in protected species surveys (there is a pond 25m east of the site) is required.**
- g) Biodiversity enhancement and BNG measures should include grassland and hedgerow enhancement and tree planting;**
- h) 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 allocated site includes nine Grade II Listed Buildings as informed by the stage 1 HIA.**



## **Fingringhoe**

12.44 Fingringhoe is essentially a linear settlement comprised of two main residential areas that have developed either side of the historic core of Fingringhoe, which contains a primary school, church and public house.

### **Policy PP47: Land at Picketts Farm, Fingringhoe**

**In addition to the infrastructure and mitigation requirements identified in Policy ST 7 and subject to compliance with all other relevant policies, development will be supported on land within the area identified on the policies map which provides:**

- a) Approximately 5 new dwellings of a mix and type of housing to meet evidenced needs and be compatible with surrounding development and contribute towards meeting the identified housing requirements in the Fingringhoe Housing Needs Survey;**
- b) Safe and suitable site access to required highway design standards. The point of vehicular access is to be agreed with the Highway Authority and it will need to be demonstrated that the proposal would not be detrimental to highway capacity and safety;**
- c) Provide a safe pedestrian access to ensure connectivity within and throughout the site to existing footways and any public rights of way. Ensure provision of green infrastructure connections and recreational access to the countryside, also securing active travel links and connections to the settlement;**
- d) Screening comprising locally appropriate tree belts and/or hedgerows will be required along the site boundaries to ensure that development is sensitively integrated into the landscape to reflect and reinforce rural character;**
- e) Grassland habitat should be created and the proposal should have regard to the Essex LNRS, which identifies a strategic opportunity for grassland habitat north of the site;**
- f) 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 allocated site includes one Conservation area, one Grade I and seven Grade II Listed Buildings as informed by the stage 1 HIA;**
- g) Applicants must demonstrate they have confirmed with Anglian Water Services that treatment capacity at the Water Recycling Centre is available to serve the development at the point of anticipated connection and where appropriate agree to phasing triggers to support development;**
- h) Demonstrate adequate capacity for managing wastewater including proposed phasing requirements or alternative solutions to the satisfaction of the Council and Anglian Water;**
- i) A range of measures in addition to prioritising SuDs (Policy EN8) and water efficiency measures to reduce the risk on impact on the WRC capacity as a result of planned growth including:
  - i) Removal of unrequired network flows;****



- ii) Targeted education to include new residents of the development;
- iii) Reduction in the demand for potable water.

## **Messing**

12.45 Messing is located north of Tiptree. Messing is very rural and historic in character and is accessed by narrow country lanes. It has limited services and facilities but it has a primary school.

### **Policy PP48: Kelvedon Road, Messing**

**In addition to the infrastructure and mitigation requirements identified in Policy ST 7 and subject to compliance with all other relevant policies, development will be supported on land within the area identified on the policies map which provides:**

- a) Approximately 25 new dwellings of a mix and type of housing to meet evidenced needs and be compatible with surrounding development;**
- b) Safe and suitable site access to required highway design standards. The point of vehicular access is to be off Kelvedon Road to be agreed with the Highway Authority and it will need to be demonstrated that the proposal would not be detrimental to highway capacity and safety;**
- c) Provide a safe pedestrian access to ensure connectivity within and throughout the site to existing footways and any public rights of way. Ensure provision of green infrastructure connections and recreational access to the countryside, also securing active travel links and connections to the settlement;**
- d) 'Enhanced Open Space' as shown on the Policies Map substantively in excess of 10% of the allocation area must be provided as open space. This should include a minimum of 1.7ha of public open space;**
- e) Support will be given to delivering standing freshwater habitat to support the delivery of the strategic creation opportunities in the Essex LNRS;**
- f) Screening comprising locally appropriate hedgerows and/or woodland will be required along the site boundaries to ensure that development is sensitively integrated into the landscape to reflect and reinforce rural character;**
- g) 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 allocated site includes one conservation area, one Grade II\*, sixteen Grade II Listed Buildings and one scheduled monument as informed by the stage 1 HIA;**
- h) Development must not discharge surface water to the foul sewer network;**
- i) 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.**



## **Peldon**

12.46 Housing in Peldon is laid out in a triangular pattern around three roads. The settlement boundary in Peldon currently comprises two roughly equivalent areas of housing on either side of two of the three roads. The triangular residential area is surrounded by arable farms. The village lies within the Coastal Protection Belt.

### **Policy PP49: Land at St Ives Road, Peldon**

**In addition to the infrastructure and mitigation requirements identified in Policy ST 7 and subject to compliance with all other relevant policies, development will be supported on land within the area identified on the policies map which provides:**

- a) Approximately 25 new dwellings of a mix and type of housing to meet evidenced needs and be compatible with surrounding development;**
- b) Safe and suitable site access to required highway design standards. The point of vehicular access is to off St Ives Road to be agreed with the Highway Authority and it will need to be demonstrated that the proposal would not be detrimental to highway capacity and safety;**
- c) Provide a safe pedestrian access to ensure connectivity within and throughout the site to existing footways and any public rights of way. Ensure provision of green infrastructure connections and recreational access to the countryside, also securing active travel links and connections to the settlement;**
- d) 'Enhanced Open Space' as shown on the Policies Map substantively in excess of 10% of the allocation area must be provided as open space. This should include a minimum of 0.6ha of open space within the site;**
- e) Mature trees and hedgerows within the site should be retained;**
- f) Screening comprising locally appropriate hedgerows and/or woodland will be required along the site boundaries to ensure that development is sensitively integrated into the landscape to reflect and reinforce rural character;**
- g) Respect the setting of and conserve the local distinctiveness of the Church of St Mary (Grade I Listed Building) at Peldon which forms a prominent landmark, visible from much of the surrounding landscape due to its location on a localised knoll;**
- h) 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 allocated site includes one Grade I, one Grade II\* and fifteen Grade II Listed Buildings as informed by the stage 1 HIA;**
- i) Applicants must demonstrate they have confirmed with Anglian Water Services that treatment capacity at the Water Recycling Centre is available to serve the development at the point of anticipated connection and where appropriate agree to phasing triggers to support development;**

- j) Demonstrate adequate capacity for managing wastewater including proposed phasing requirements or alternative solutions to the satisfaction of the Council and Anglian Water;**
- k) A range of measures in addition to prioritising SuDs (Policy EN8) and water efficiency measures to reduce the risk on impact on the WRC capacity as a result of planned growth including:
  - i) Removal of unrequired network flows;**
  - ii) Targeted education to include new residents of the development;**
  - iii) Reduction in the demand for potable water.****

# 13. Monitoring

13.1 The Local Plan is at an early stage in its development. As such, the monitoring measures that have been proposed in the Sustainability Appraisal (SA) report in relation to all of the SA objectives in the SA framework are set out below as the starting point for considering proposals to monitor the Plan. It may be appropriate to narrow down the monitoring framework to focus on a smaller number of the SA objectives for which significant (including uncertain) effects are identified as part of the iterative SA.

13.2 The monitoring framework reflects the indicators included in relation to the SA framework set out in the SA Scoping Report (2024) and reflects indicators received as part of consultation on the SA Scoping Report. The data used for monitoring in many cases will be provided by outside bodies. Information collected by other organisations (e.g. the Environment Agency) can also be used as a source of indicators.

SA Objective	Assessment criteria	Monitoring indicators
1. Provide a sufficient level of housing to meet the objectively assessed needs of the city to enable people to live in a decent, safe, and sustainable home which is affordable	<p>Will it deliver the number of houses needed to support the existing and growing population?</p> <p>Will it provide more affordable homes?</p> <p>Will it deliver a range of housing types and tenures including housing for students, gypsies and travellers, and the aging population?</p> <p>Will it deliver well designed and sustainable homes?</p>	<p>Housing completions per annum (net)</p> <p>Percentage of affordable housing units provided on qualifying sites</p> <p>Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople accommodation provision (net)</p> <p>Total Empty Properties (classified as empty for Council Tax purposes)</p> <p>Length of time Total Empty Properties have been empty</p> <p>Households on the Housing Register Homelessness households</p> <p>Households on the Housing Register Homelessness households</p>
2. Support the efficient use of land	<p>Will it lead to development on previously developed land?</p> <p>Will it minimise the loss of best and most versatile agricultural land?</p> <p>Will densities make efficient use of land?</p> <p>Will a mix of uses be provided?</p>	<p>Employment floorspace granted on previously developed land</p> <p>Monitor modal splits and self-containment via Census</p> <p>Take-up of Travel Plans</p>

<p>3. Achieve a prosperous and sustainable local economy that improves employment and training opportunities and supports the vitality/viability of centres</p>	<p>Will it improve the range of employment opportunities?</p> <p>Will it support the vitality and viability of town centres?</p> <p>Will it support skills and training and changing economies?</p> <p>Will it support tourism, including an understanding of heritage, and the arts?</p>	<p>Permissions granted for employment and leisure by type</p> <p>Economically active population</p> <p>Universal Credit (including Job Seekers Allowance)</p> <p>Economically inactive population</p> <p>Number of businesses (total)</p> <p>Visitor trips numbers</p> <p>Visitor spend/value</p> <p>Tourism related employment</p>
<p>4. Reduce the need to travel and promote sustainable and active transport options to reduce congestion</p>	<p>Will it provide good accessibility by a choice of modes of transport?</p> <p>Will it reduce the reliance on private vehicles?</p> <p>Will it enhance the active travel network?</p> <p>Will a mix of uses be provided?</p> <p>Will it increase development density in higher order service centres?</p> <p>Will the levels of sustainable and active travel increase?</p>	<p>Monitor modal splits and self-containment via Census</p> <p>To obtain an agreed Travel Plan for all major commercial/community developments</p> <p>Proportion of major housing developments with efficient, easy and affordable access to key services by public transport</p> <p>Bus patronage</p>
<p>5. Promote stronger, more resilient, inclusive communities; improve health and wellbeing; and reduce levels of deprivation</p>	<p>Will it reduce levels of crime, anti-social behaviour and the fear of crime?</p> <p>Will it reduce the proportion of people living in deprivation?</p> <p>Will it meet the needs of specific groups including those with protected characteristics?</p> <p>Will it increase access to open spaces, green infrastructure and recreational facilities, including access to nature?</p> <p>Will it encourage healthy lifestyles?</p> <p>Will it facilitate the integration of new neighbourhoods with existing neighbourhoods?</p>	<p>Key community infrastructure delivered through planning obligations</p> <p>Life expectancy</p> <p>Obesity rates</p>
<p>6. Provide access to services, facilities, and education</p>	<p>Will it support easy access to a range of high-quality services and facilities?</p> <p>Will it contribute to improving educational levels of the population of working age,</p>	<p>Key community infrastructure delivered through planning obligations</p> <p>Educational attainment</p>



	including by improving access to educational facilities?	Proportion of major housing developments with efficient, easy and affordable access to key services by public transport
7. Conserve and enhance the townscape character, and heritage and cultural assets	Will it conserve and enhance designated and non-designated heritage and cultural assets, including their setting and their contribution to wider local character and distinctiveness?	Recorded loss of Listed Buildings Grade I and II+ (by demolition), Scheduled Monuments or nationally important archaeological sites and assets on the Colchester Local List to development  Number of Listings on the Heritage at Risk Register  Number of Historic parks and Gardens Additions to Colchester's Local List  Number of Conservation Areas
8. Protect, conserve, enhance and restore biodiversity and promote and conserve geodiversity	Will it protect and enhance designated nature conservation assets?  Will it protect, enhance and restore biodiversity, including local wildlife sites?  Will it protect and enhance geodiversity?  Will it protect and enhance ecological networks, including opportunity areas identified through the Essex Local Nature Recovery Strategy?  Will it deliver environmental net gain?	Amount of development in designated areas  Number of planning applications approved contrary to advice given by the EA  Number and area of local nature reserves (LNRs) and local sites (LoWS) within Colchester  Condition of SSSIs  Compliance with Essex Coast RAMS (Recreational disturbance Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy)  Increase in open space  Biodiversity net gain habitat sites  Area of ancient woodland  Number of planning approvals that generated any adverse impacts on sites of acknowledged biodiversity importance.  Hectares of biodiversity habitat delivered through strategic site allocations.
9. Conserve and enhance the character and distinctiveness of the landscape	Will it maintain and enhance landscape character including the Dedham Vale National Landscape?  Will it improve the condition of parks and open spaces?  Will it maintain and enhance the character of settlements?	Amount of development in designated areas  Amount of new development in National Landscape with commentary on likely impact.

<p>10. Minimise greenhouse gas emissions and mitigate and adapt to the effects of climate change</p>	<p>Will it reduce greenhouse gas emissions?</p> <p>Will it plan and implement adaptation measures for the likely effects of climate change?</p> <p>Will it include energy efficiency measures?</p> <p>Will it reduce energy consumption?</p> <p>Will it support the delivery of renewable energy schemes?</p>	<p>Greenhouse Gas Emissions reporting Local Authority Carbon Management Plan</p> <p>Renewable energy installed by type</p>
<p>11. Manage and reduce flood risk from all sources</p>	<p>Will it limit the amount of development in areas of high flood risk and areas which may increase flood risk elsewhere?</p> <p>Will it promote the use of SuDS for flood resilience and improving water quality?</p>	<p>Number of major schemes incorporating water management schemes</p> <p>Recorded flood events</p>
<p>12. Reduce waste generation and increase levels of reuse and recycling</p>	<p>Will it reduce the amount of waste produced?</p> <p>Will it reduce the amount of waste sent to landfill?</p> <p>Will it reduce the amount of waste produced?</p> <p>Will it reduce the amount of waste sent to landfill?</p>	<p>Percentage of residual waste produced per household</p> <p>Percentage of household waste reused, recycled and composted</p>
<p>13. Protect and improve air quality</p>	<p>Will it improve air quality?</p> <p>Will it help to achieve the objectives of the Air Quality Management Areas?</p> <p>Will it reduce emissions of key pollutants?</p>	<p>Number of AQMAs</p> <p>Exceedances of air quality objectives</p>
<p>14. Protect the quality and quantity of water resources</p>	<p>Will it ensure there is sufficient water for the lifetime of the development in a changing climate without negatively impacting on the environment?</p> <p>Will it ensure there is sufficient wastewater treatment infrastructure and environmental capacity to accommodate the new development in a changing climate?</p>	<p>Number of major schemes incorporating water management schemes</p>



# 14. Appendices

## Appendix A - Superseded Policies and Documents

14.1 Colchester Local Plan Section 1 (February 2021) and Section 2 (July 2022) will be superseded by the Colchester Local Plan 2026 to 2041. The table below sets out the adopted Local Plan policies and the name of the relevant new policy. It also identifies any policies which are to be saved from the Section One Local P Lan.

Colchester Local Plan 2017 to 2033		Colchester Local Plan Review 2026 to 2041	
Existing Policy Reference	Existing Policy Name	New Policy Reference	New Policy Name
<b>Section 1</b>			
SP1	Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development		
SP2	Recreational disturbance Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy (RAMS)	EN1	Nature Conservation and Designated Sites
SP3	Spatial Strategy for North Essex	ST3 ST4	Spatial Strategy Development in the Countryside
SP4	Meeting Housing Needs	ST5	Colchester's Housing Need
SP5	Providing for Employment	ST6	Colchester's Employment Need
SP6	Infrastructure and Connectivity	ST7	Infrastructure Delivery and Impact Mitigation
SP7	Place Shaping Principles	ST8	Placemaking Principles
SP8	Development and Delivery of New Garden Community in North Essex		Saved
SP9	Tendring/Colchester Borders Garden Community		Saved

Colchester Local Plan 2017 to 2033		Colchester Local Plan Review 2026 to 2041	
Existing Policy Reference	Existing Policy Name	New Policy Reference	New Policy Name
<b>Section 2</b>			
SG1	Colchester's Spatial Strategy	ST3 ST4	Spatial Strategy Development in the Countryside
SG2	Housing Delivery	ST5	Colchester's Housing Need
SG3	Economic Growth Provision	ST6	Colchester's Employment Need
SG4	Local Economic Areas	E1 PEP1- PEP11	Protection of Employment
SG5	Centre Hierarchy	E4	Retail and Centres
SG6	Town Centre Uses	E4	Retail and Centres
SG6a	Local Centres	E4	Retail and Centres
SG7	Infrastructure Delivery and Impact Mitigation	ST7	Infrastructure Delivery and Impact Mitigation
SG8	Neighbourhood Plan		
ENV1	Environment	ST2 EN1 EN2 EN3 EN4	Environment and the Green Network Nature conservation designated sites Biodiversity net gain (BNG) and environmental net gain Biodiversity and geodiversity Irreplaceable habitats
ENV2	Coastal Areas	LC3	Coastal areas
ENV3	Green Infrastructure	GN1	Green Network and Waterways Principles

Colchester Local Plan 2017 to 2033		Colchester Local Plan Review 2026 to 2041	
Existing Policy Reference	Existing Policy Name	New Policy Reference	New Policy Name
ENV4	Dedham Vale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty	LC2	Dedham Vale National Landscape
ENV5	Pollution and Contaminated Land	EN9	Pollution and Contaminated Land
CC1	Climate Change	NZ1 GN4	Net Zero Carbon Development (in operation) Tree Canopy Cover
PP1	Generic Infrastructure and Mitigation Requirements	ST7	Infrastructure Delivery and Impact Mitigation
TC1	Town Centre Policy and Hierarchy	E4	Retail and Centres
TC2	Retail Frontages	E4	Retail and Centres
EC1	Knowledge gateway and University of Essex Strategic Economic Area	PEP2 UE1	Knowledge Gateway University of Essex
WC3	Colchester Zoo	E5	Colchester Zoo
SS12b	Coast Road West Mersea	LC3	Coastal Areas
SS12c	Mersea Island Caravan Parks	CS6	Caravan Parks
OV1	Development in Other Villages	ST3	Spatial Strategy
OV2	Countryside	ST4	Development in the Countryside
DM1	Health and Wellbeing	ST1 PC1	Health and Wellbeing Healthier Food Environments
DM2	Community Facilities	CS1 CS2	Retention of Community Facilities Enhancement and Provision for new Community Facilities
DM3	Education Provision	CS3	Education Provision

Colchester Local Plan 2017 to 2033		Colchester Local Plan Review 2026 to 2041	
Existing Policy Reference	Existing Policy Name	New Policy Reference	New Policy Name
DM4	Sports Provision	CS4	Sports Provision
DM5	Tourism, leisure, Culture and Heritage	CS5	Tourism, Leisure, Arts, Culture and Heritage
DM6	Economic Development in Rural Areas and the Countryside	E2	Economic Development in Rural Areas and the Countryside
DM7	Agricultural Development and Diversification	E3	Agricultural Development and Diversification
DM8	Affordable Housing	H2	Affordable Housing
DM9	Development Density	PC4	Development Density
DM10	Housing Diversity	H3 H4 H5 H6	Student Accommodation Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) Specialist Housing including Housing for an Aging Population Self and Custom Build
DM11	Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople	H7	Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople
DM12	Housing Standards	PC6 H5	Design and Amenity Specialist Housing including housing for an aging population
DM13	Domestic Development	PC5	Domestic Development
DM14	Rural Workers Dwellings	H8	Rural Workers Dwellings
DM15	Design and Amenity	PC6	Design and Amenity
DM16	Historic Environment	EN6 EN7	Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment Archaeology
DM17	Retention of Open Space	GN6	Retention of Open Space

Colchester Local Plan 2017 to 2033		Colchester Local Plan Review 2026 to 2041	
Existing Policy Reference	Existing Policy Name	New Policy Reference	New Policy Name
DM18	Provision of Open Space and Recreation Facilities	GN1	Green network and waterways principles
DM19	Private Amenity Space	PC8	Private amenity space
DM20	Promoting Sustainable Transport and Changing Travel Behaviour	PC2	Active and Sustainable Travel
DM21	Sustainable Access to development	PC2	Active and Sustainable Travel
DM22	Parking	PC3	Parking Standards
DM23	Flood Risk and Water Management	EN8	Flood Risk and Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS)
DM24	Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems	EN8	Flood Risk and Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS)
DM25	Renewable Energy, Water Waste and Recycling	NZ4	Renewable Energy
		NZ3	Wastewater and Water Supply
Place Policies		Place Policies PP1-PP49; OA1-OA4	



14.2 The following Supplementary Planning Documents and Guidance are superseded:

- Colne Harbour Masterplan – January 2008
- Colne Harbour Design Framework – January 2001
- Colne Harbour Public Space Design Guide
- Essex County Hospital Development Brief – December 2014
- Stanway Railway Sidings Development Brief – April 2011
- Stanway Southern Sites Access Development Brief – December 2013
- Garrison Masterplan – November 2002
- Sustainable Drainage Systems Design Guide – December 2014
- Planning Guidance Note on Air Quality – August 2012
- Sustainable Construction SPD

14.3 The following Supplementary Planning Documents and Guidance remain:

- Abro Development Brief - SPD
- Active Travel SPD
- Climate Change SPD
- Biodiversity SPD
- Affordable Housing SPD
- Backland and Infill SPD
- Essex Coast RAMS SPD
- North Colchester Growth Area SPD
- Provision of Community Facilities SPD
- Provision of Open Space, Sport and Recreational Facilities SPD
- Shopfront Design Guide SPD
- Street Services Delivery Strategy SPD
- Colchester City Centre Masterplan SPD
- Vehicle Parking Standards SPD – 2009
- Development and Public Rights of Way – Jan 2010
- Managing Archaeology in Development SPD – 2015
- External Materials Guide for New Development – July 2004
- Developing a Landscape for the Future – September 2013
- Magdalen Street Development Brief – February 2014
- Magdalen Street Sidings Development Brief – February 2014
- Planning for Broadband – February 2016
- Rural Workers Dwelling – Guidance Note for Applicants – August 2012
- Tollgate Vision July 2013

## 15. Glossary

**Adopted/Adoption** - The final confirmation of a plan's status by a local planning authority (LPA).

**Affordable Housing** – The Councils 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.

**Authority Monitoring Report (AMR)** – A report published annually by the Councils monitoring progress in delivering progress in Local Plan policies and allocations.

**Biodiversity Net Gain** - Biodiversity Net Gain is an approach to development that leaves biodiversity in a better state than before. The Environment Act contains a new biodiversity net gain condition for planning permissions. To meet this requirement biodiversity gains will need to be measured using a biodiversity metric.

**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 control 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.

**Boundary treatment** - How a building or development site relates to its boundary - open, closed, accessible, fence, landscaped etc.

**Carbon Positive** - Carbon positive moves beyond carbon zero by making additional 'positive' or 'net export' contributions by producing more energy on site than the building requires and feeding it back to the grid.

**Carbon sequestration** - Carbon sequestration is the process of storing carbon in a carbon pool. Carbon dioxide is naturally captured from the atmosphere through biological, chemical, and physical processes.

**Centre** - References to centres apply to city centres, town centres, district centres and local centres but exclude small parades of shops of purely neighbourhood significance. See definitions of local centres and district centres.

**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; and Places of worship.

**Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)** – A mechanism by which Councils 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.

**Conservation credits** – When a developer cannot achieve at least 10% biodiversity net gain on their development site following application of the mitigation hierarchy, they will have the option to purchase biodiversity units from an offsite habitat market. If units cannot be sourced from local habitat markets, developers will be able to purchase their required units (as credits) which will be invested in habitat creation.

**Critical drainage area** - A discrete geographic area (usually a hydrological catchment) where multiple or interlinked sources of flood risk cause flooding during a severe rainfall event thereby affecting people, property or local infrastructure.

**Design code** - A set of illustrated design requirements that provide specific, detailed parameters for the physical development of a site or area.

**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, 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. This includes the Essex Minerals Local Plan and the Essex and Southend-on-Sea Waste Local Plan.

**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 City Centre.

**Energy hierarchy** – The energy hierarchy is a classification of energy strategies, prioritised to assist progress towards a more sustainable energy system. The steps are: be lean, use less energy; be clean, supply energy efficiently; be green, use renewable energy; and offset.

**European Sites** - The European network of protected sites established under the Birds Directive and Habitats Directive (includes SPA, SAC, and Ramsar sites). See also habitats sites.

**Flood risk** - The level of flood risk is the product of the frequency or likelihood of the flood events and their consequences (such as loss, damage, harm, distress and disruption). Areas at risk of flooding are those at risk of flooding from any source, now or in the future. Flood risk also accounts for the interactions between these different flood sources.

**Flood zone** - Flood Zones show the probability of flooding, ignoring the presence of existing defences.

**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 Town and Country Planning Association 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 Community 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 and blue spaces and other natural features, urban and rural, which is capable of delivering a wide range of environmental, economic, health and wellbeing benefits for nature, climate, local and wider communities and prosperity.

**Green Network and Waterways** – The Council's name for green and blue infrastructure, named to be more easily understood by the public. It encompasses the definition of green infrastructure in the NPPF.

**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.

**Habitats site** - Any site which would be included within the definition at regulation 8 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 for the purpose of those regulations, including candidate Special Areas of Conservation, Sites of Community Importance, Special Areas of Conservation, Special Protection Areas and any relevant Marine Sites. Part of the 'national site network'.

**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](#).

**Local Wildlife Sites** – Habitats identified by Essex Wildlife Trust as important for the conservation of wildlife.

**Massing** - The combined effect of the arrangement, volume and shape of a building or group of buildings in relation to other buildings and spaces. This is also called bulk.

**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, nightclubs, casinos, health and fitness centres, indoor bowling centres, and bingo halls); offices; and arts, culture and tourism development (including theatres, museums, galleries and concert 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.

**Mitigation hierarchy** - The mitigation hierarchy is a widely used tool that guides users towards limiting as far as possible the negative impacts on biodiversity from development projects. As a priority, impacts on key habitats and features must be avoided wherever feasible. Then the design must minimise impacts, then remediate impacts, and as a last resort compensate for impacts.

**Mobility as a Service (MaaS)** - Integrates various forms of transport services into a single mobility service accessible on demand. A MaaS operator facilitates a diverse menu of transport options to meet a customer's request, be they public transport, ride-, car- or bike-sharing, taxi or car rental/lease, or a combination thereof.

**Modal Share** - A modal share is the percentage of travellers using a particular type of transportation.

**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.

**Natural surveillance** - Natural surveillance is an urban design, architecture and landscaping technique that seeks to deter crime with social and highly visible spaces. Natural surveillance is based on the theory that isolation makes crime both easier and more likely.

**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.

**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 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.

**Planning Practice Guidance** – Guidance and detail supporting the National Planning Policy Framework which is published online and regularly updated.

**Previously Developed Land** - see brownfield land above.

**Ramsar Site** – An area identified by international agreement on endangered habitats.

**Recreational disturbance Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy (RAMS)** – A tool used to manage and mitigate the adverse effects from increased recreational disturbance arising from new developments on European/ habitats Sites.

**Self-build and custom-build housing** – Housing built by an individual, a group of individuals, or persons working with or for them, to be occupied by that individual. Such housing can be either market or affordable housing. A legal definition, for the purpose of applying the Self-build and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015 (as amended), is contained in section 1(A1) and (A2) of that Act.

**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.

**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 to be of significant national value and interest to merit its conservation and management.

**Sound/Soundness** - To be considered sound, a Development Plan Document must be justified (founded on robust and credible evidence and be the most appropriate strategy) and effective (deliverable, flexible and able to be monitored).

**Special Area of Conservation (SAC)** - A site of European 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 Council 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 Council 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 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.

**Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA)** - A study prepared for the Councils 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 Housing Strategy.

**Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)** – A document produced by the Council 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.

**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 CO<sub>2</sub> emissions and carbon footprint 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 Drainage Systems (SuDS)** –Methods of management practices and control structures that are designed to drain surface water in a more sustainable manner than some conventional techniques.

**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.

**Swales** - Swales are shallow, broad and vegetated channels designed to store and/or convey water runoff and remove pollutants.

**Topography** - the physical features of an area of land, especially the position of its rivers, mountains.

**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 city centres, town centres, district centres and local centres but exclude small parades of shops.

**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, an E use refers to retail, restaurant, office, financial/professional services, indoor sports, medical and nursery and a C3 use would refer to a residential dwellings (houses, flats, apartments etc).

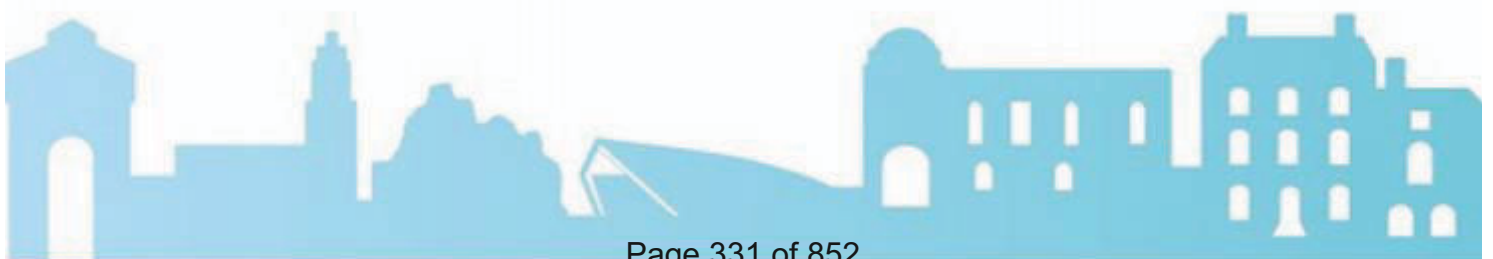
# Colchester City Council Preferred Options Local Plan Policies Maps

## Regulation 18 Consultation

### 2025



**Colchester**  
Local Plan Review



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### Key to Policies Maps

Place Policy Reference where applicable

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CC1, PP1-16, OA1-4, PEP1-4, UE1

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Marks Tey

PP17-18, PEP5-6

### Large Settlements

Tiptree

PP19-21, PEP7-8

West Mersea

PP 23

Wivenhoe

PP24

### Medium Settlements

Abberton & Langenhoe

PP25

Boxted

PP26

Chappel & Wakes Colne

PP27-28, PEP12

Copford

PP29

Dedham

Eight Ash Green

PP31-32, PEP9

Fordham

PP38

Great Horkesley

PP34-35

Great Tey

PP36

Langham

PP37-38, PEP10

Layer de la Haye

PP40

Rowhedge

PP41

West Bergholt

PP42-44, PEP11

### Small Settlements

Aldham

PP45

Birch

PP46

Copford Green

Dedham Heath

PP30

East Mersea

Easthorpe

Fingringhoe

PP47

Great Wigborough

Layer Breton

Little Horkesley

Messing

PP48

Mount Bures










































Peldon

PP49

Salcott

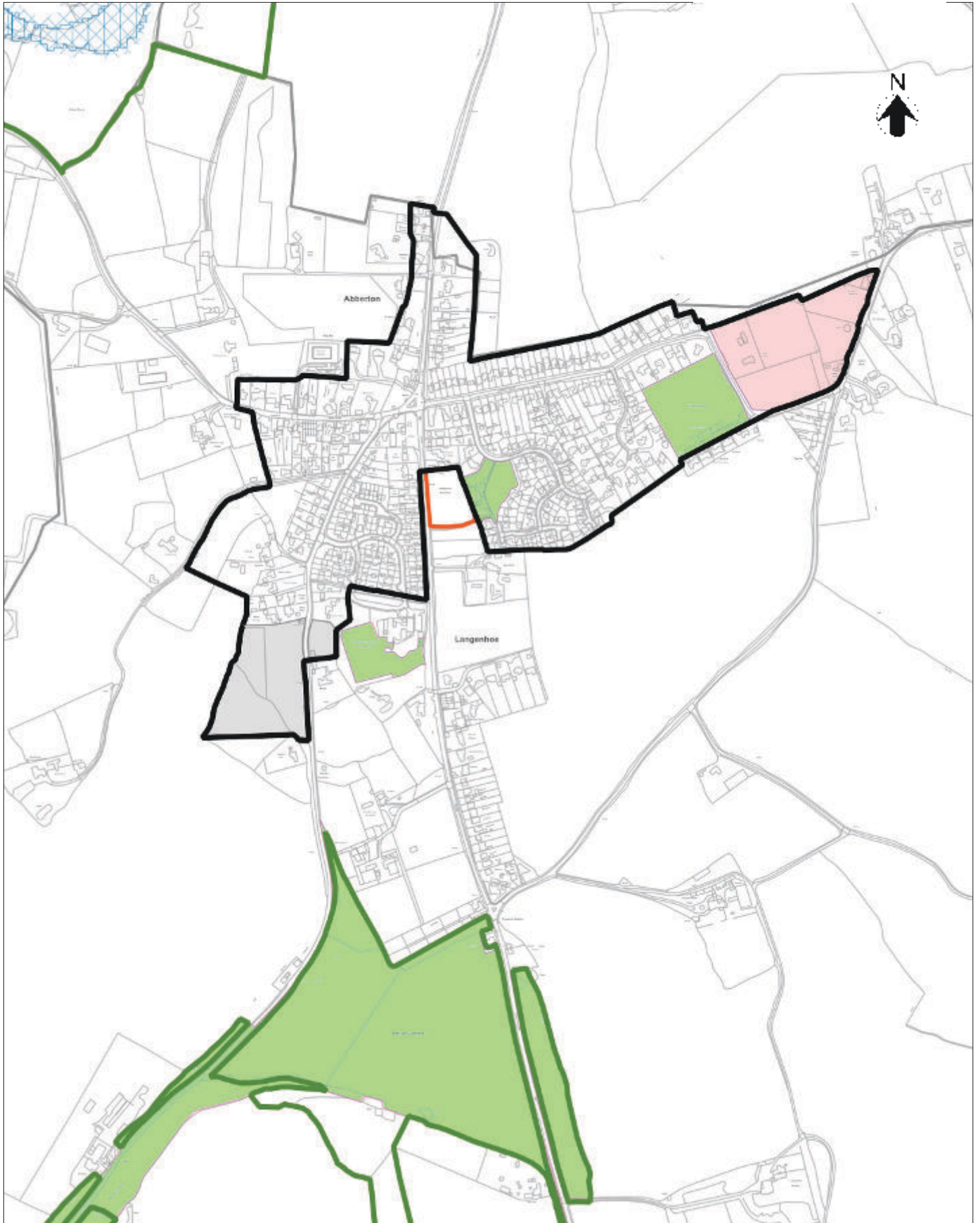
Wormingford

## KEY

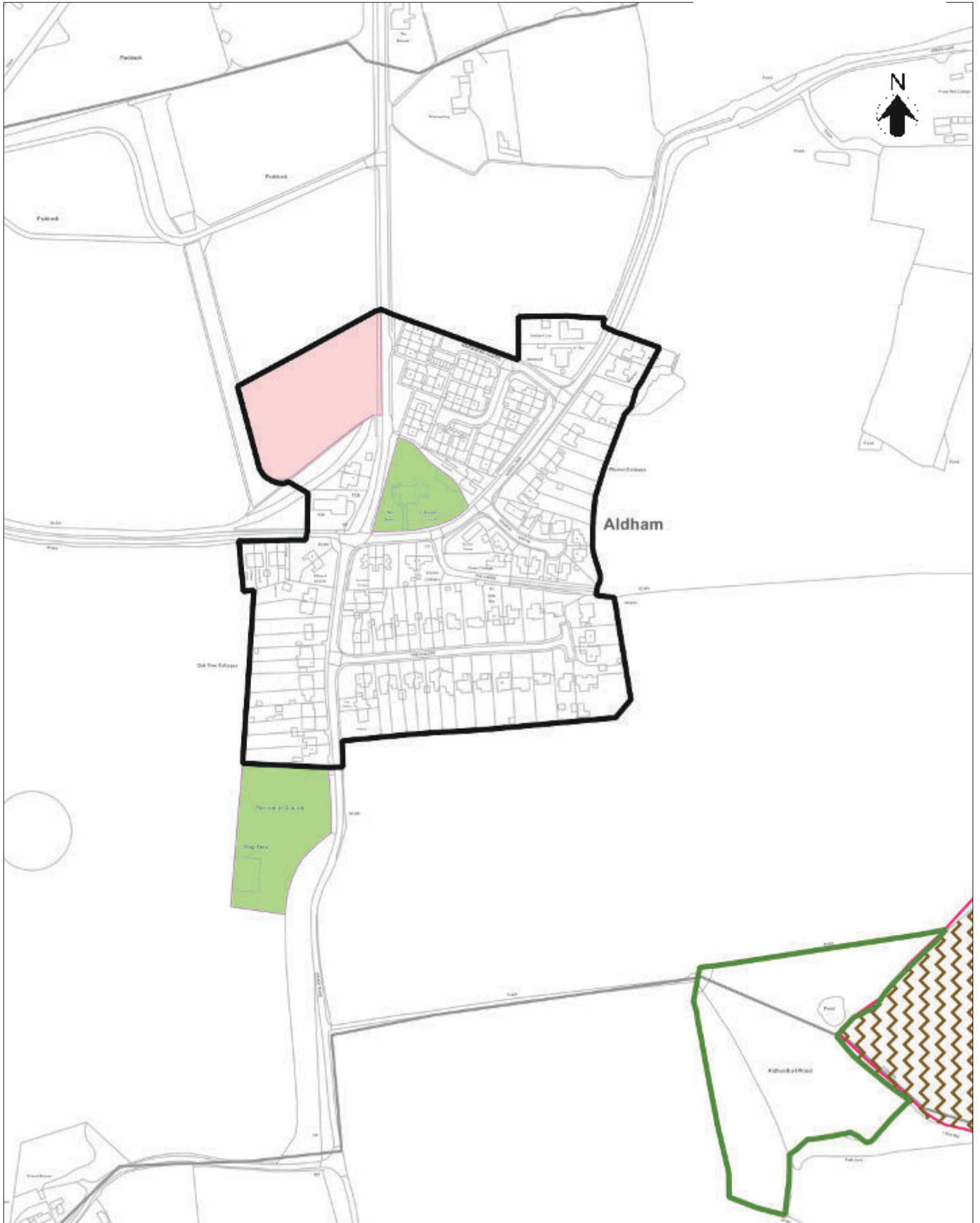
	Colchester Administrative Boundary
	Preferred Options Settlement Boundary
	Garden Community Boundary
	Local Wildlife Site
	University Uses
	Infrastructure
	Core City Centre Boundary
	City Centre Primary Shopping Area
	Colchester Orbital
	Marks Tey Growth Area
	Enhanced Open Space Provision
	Conservation Area
	Gypsy & Traveller Sites
	District Centre
	Local Centre
	Strategic Offsite BNG
	Zoological Park Expansion
	Zoological Park
	Neighbourhood Plan Area
	Northern Gateway Opportunity Area
	Northern Gateway Mixed Use
	Allotments
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	Local Green Space
	Local Nature Reserve
	Regionally Important Geographical Sites
	Registered Parks and Gardens
	Caravan Parks
	Special Protection Area
	Special Area of Conservation
	Site Special Scientific Interest
	Flood Zone 2
	Flood Zone 3
	Preferred Options Employment Allocations
	Preferred Options Residential Allocations
	Committments & Neighbourhood Plan Allocations
	Open Space
	Local Landscape Character Assessment
	Dedham Vale National Landscape
	Ramsar



# ABBERTON & LANGENHOE



# ALDHAM

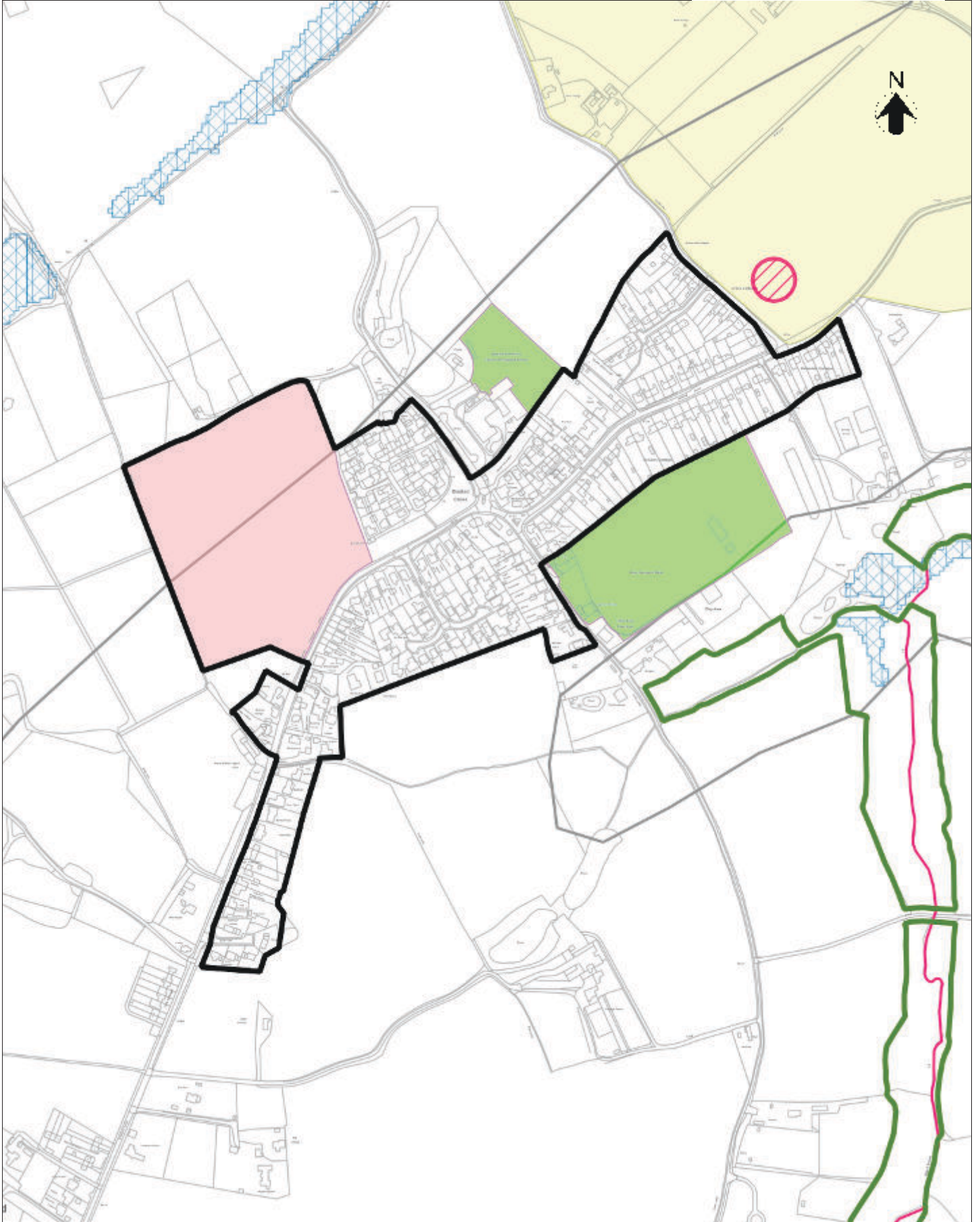




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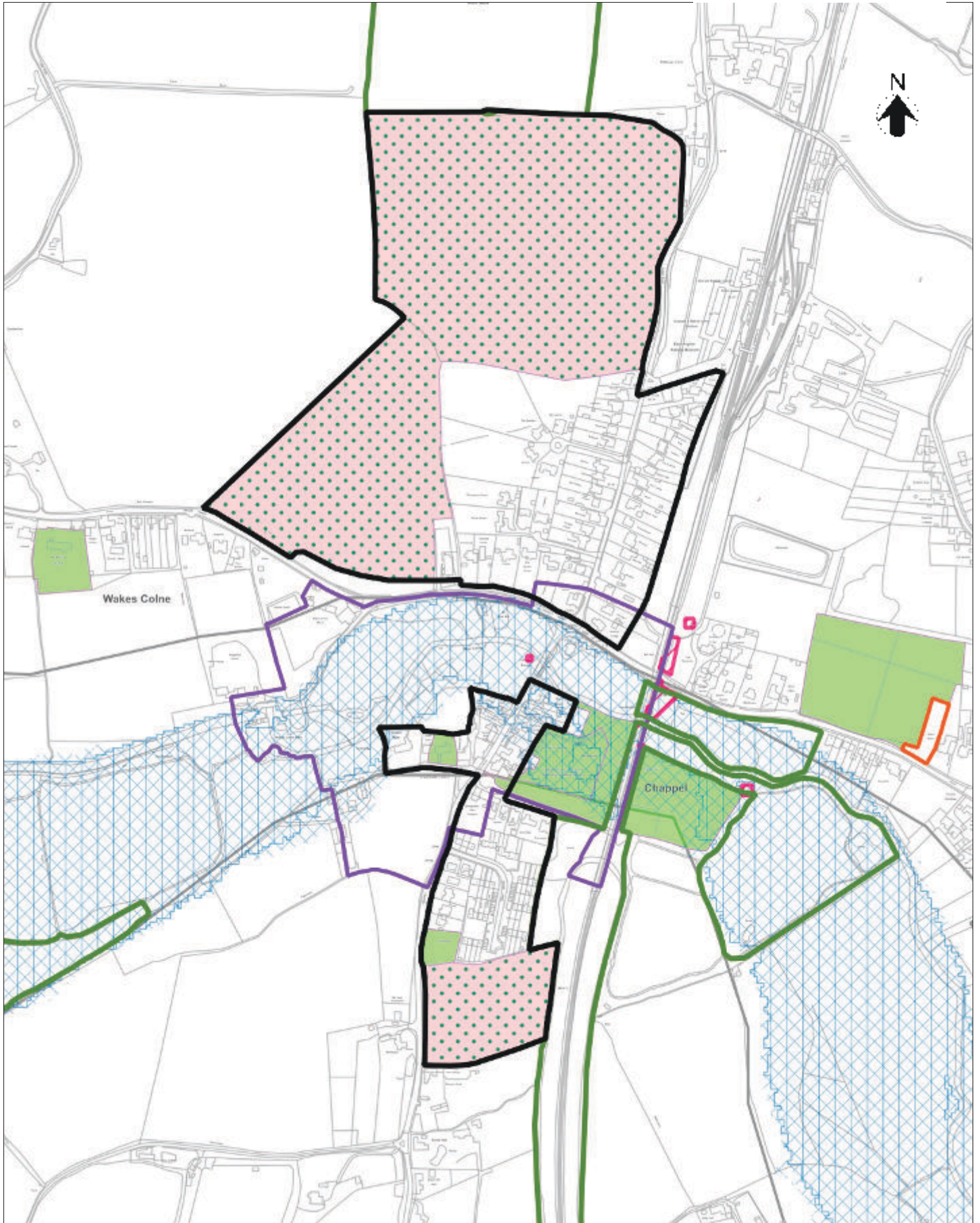


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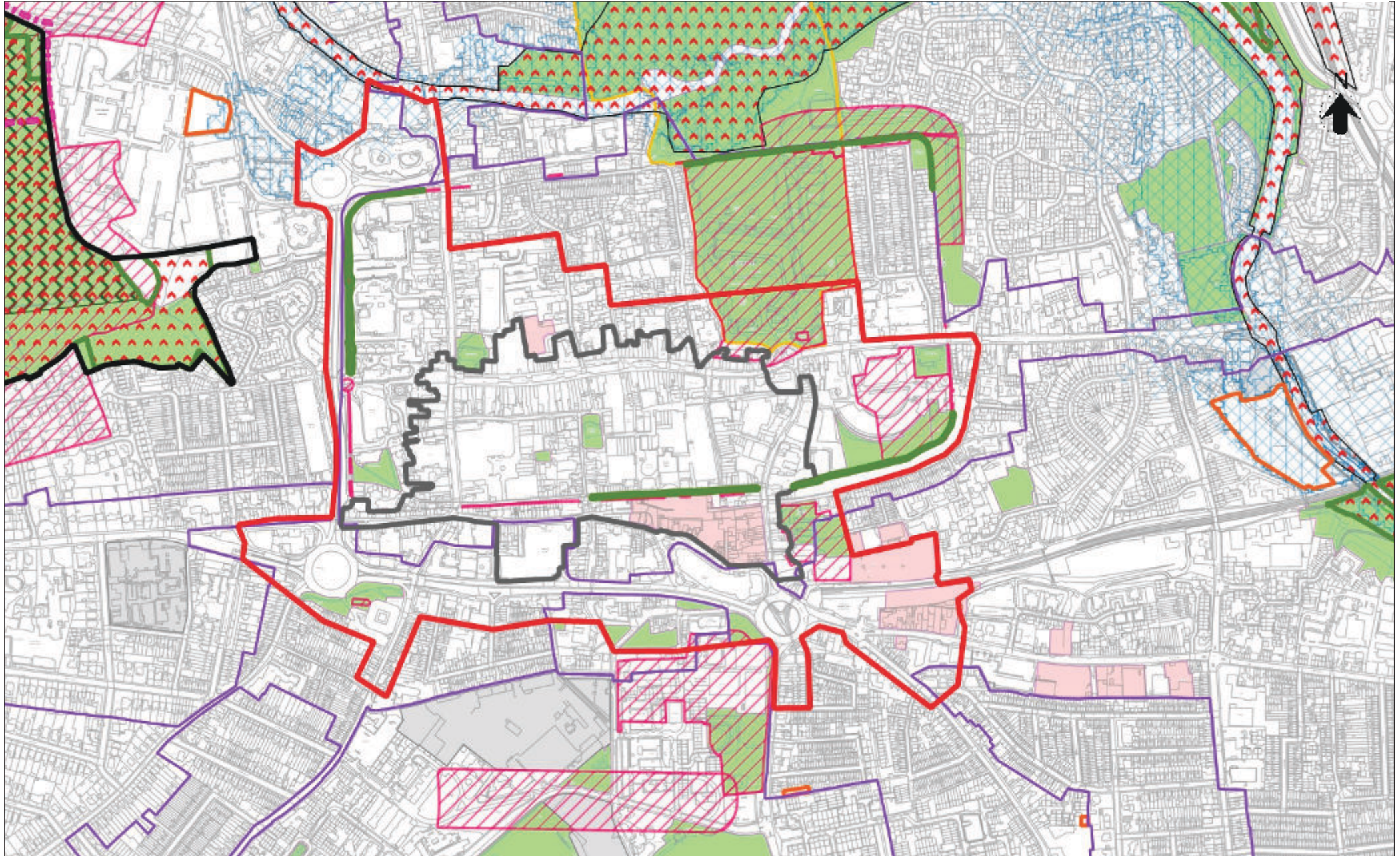


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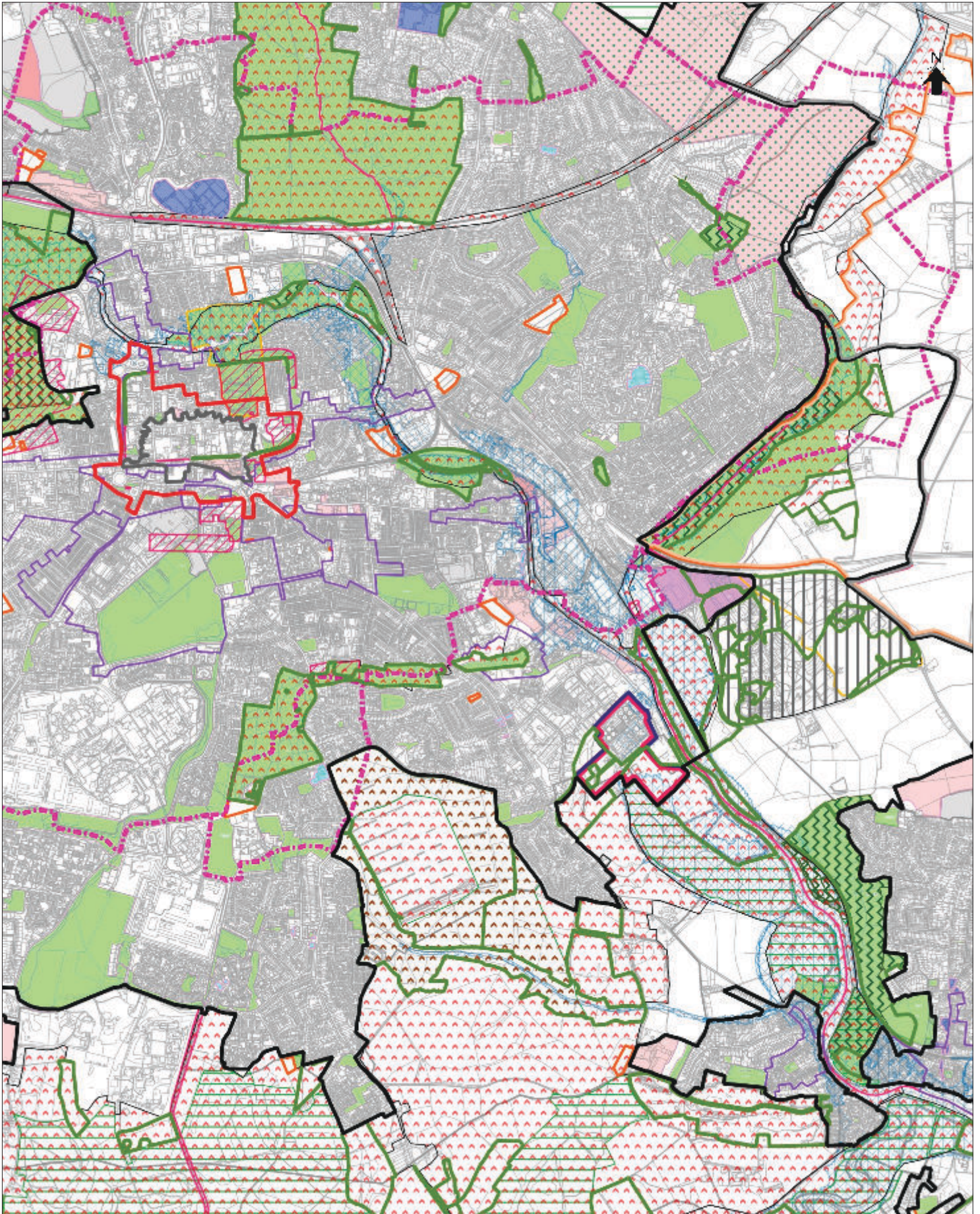




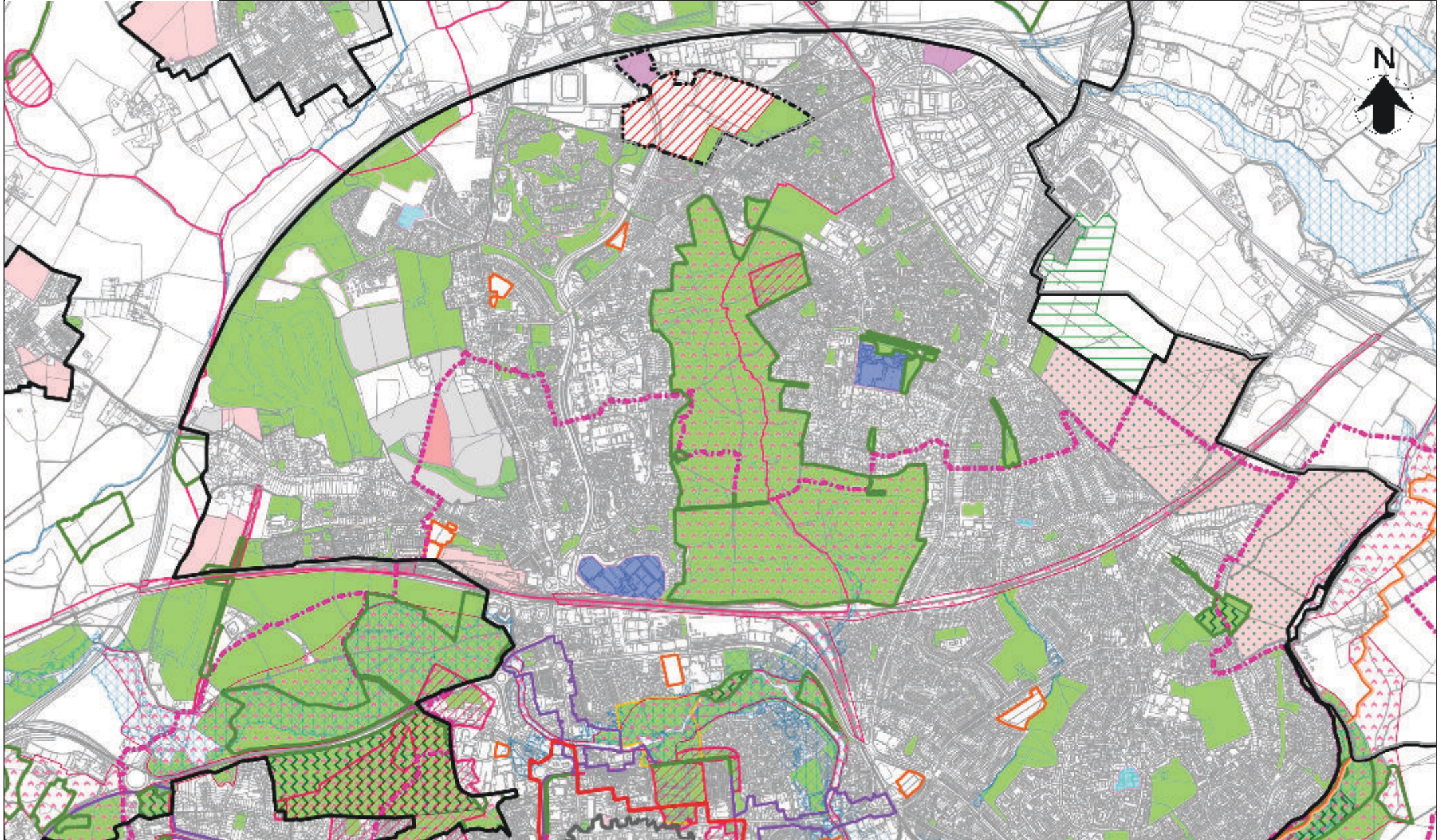
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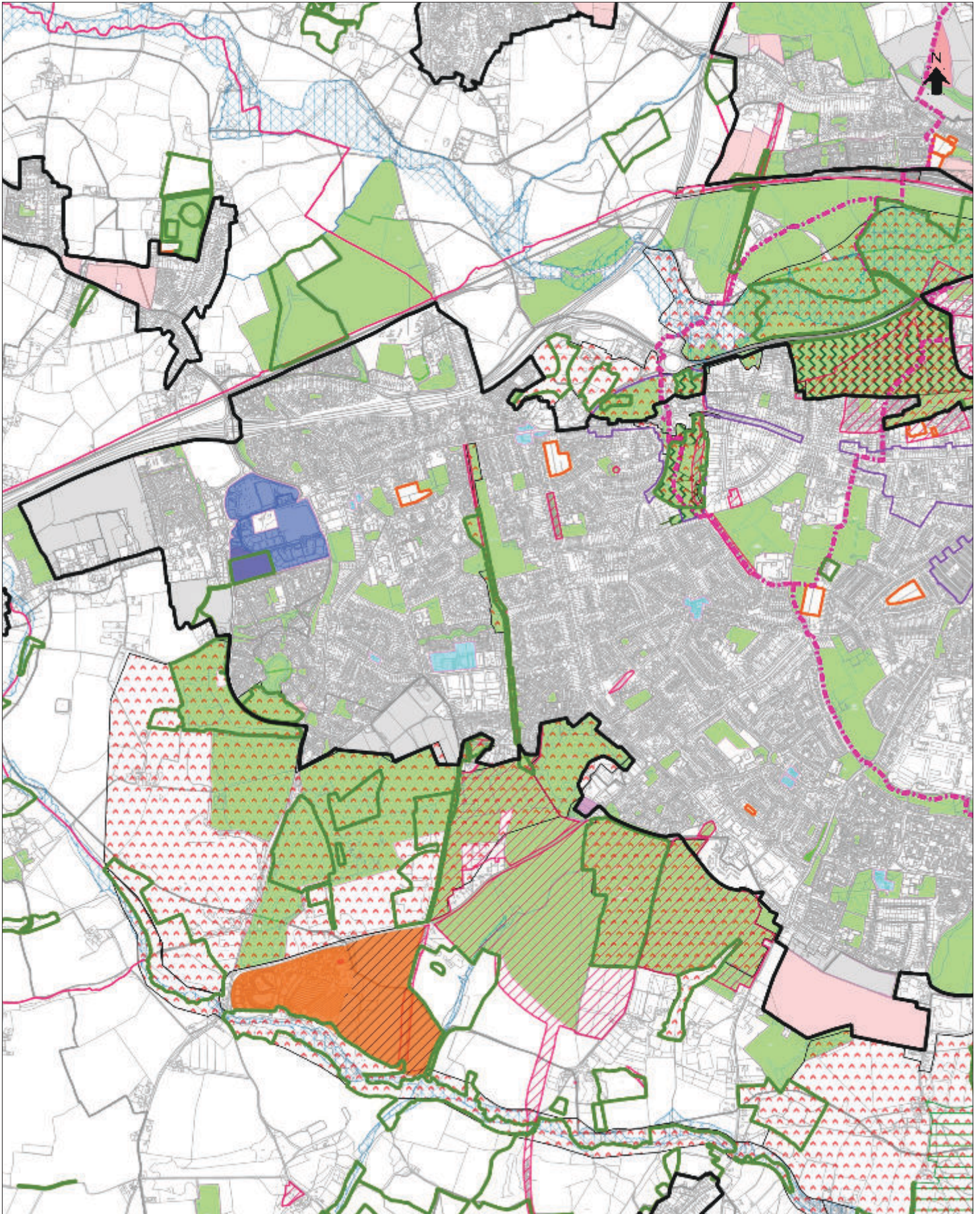






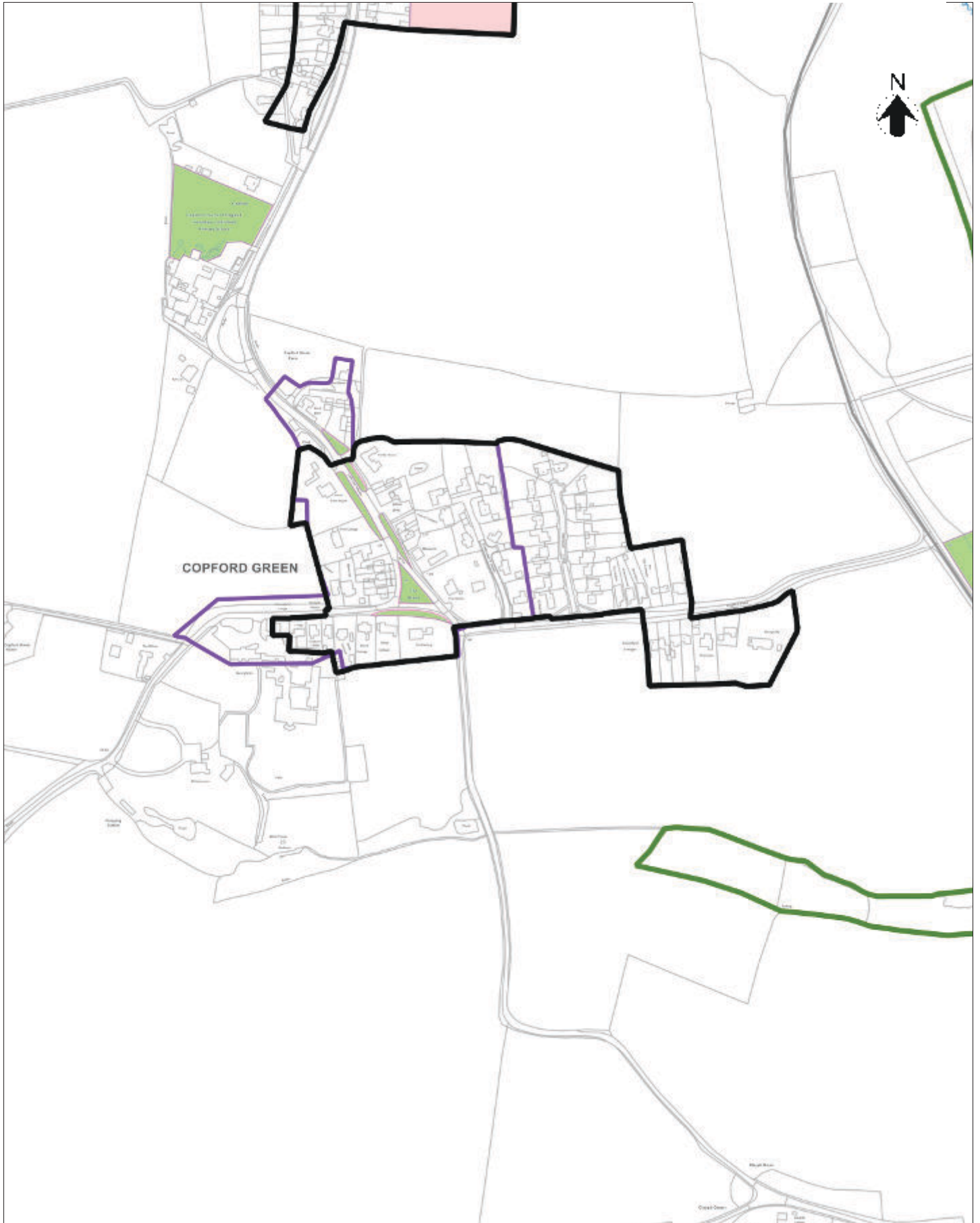




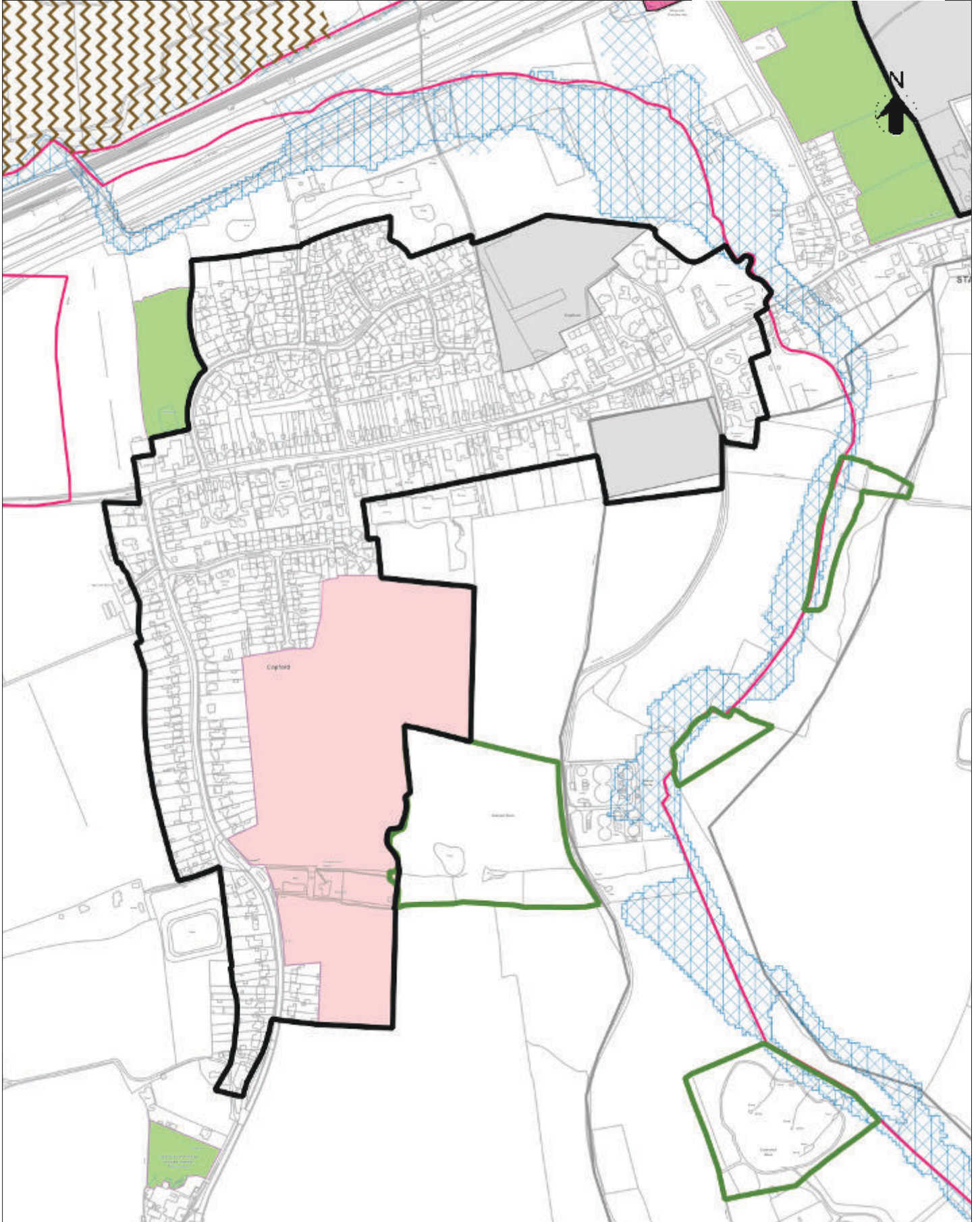




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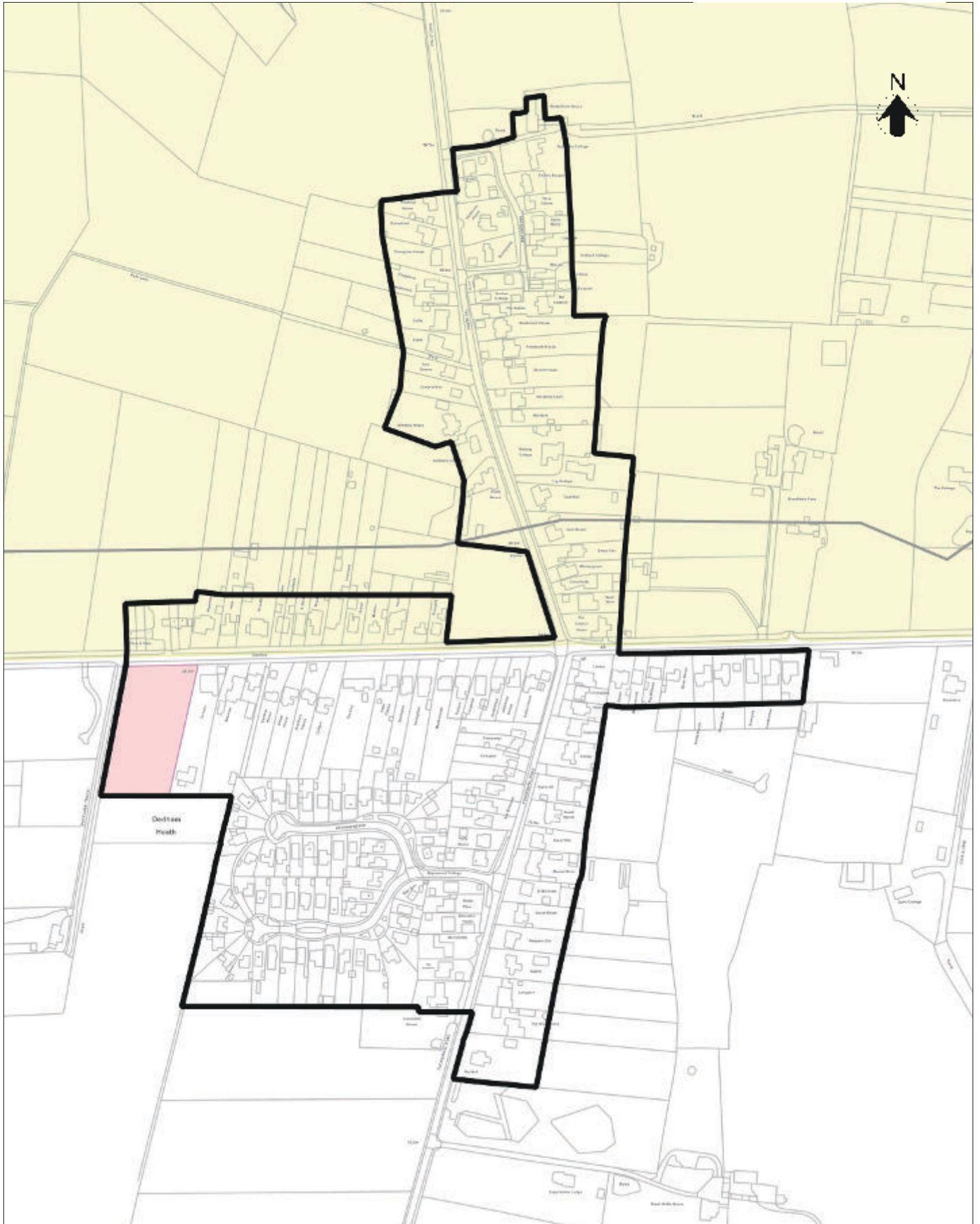


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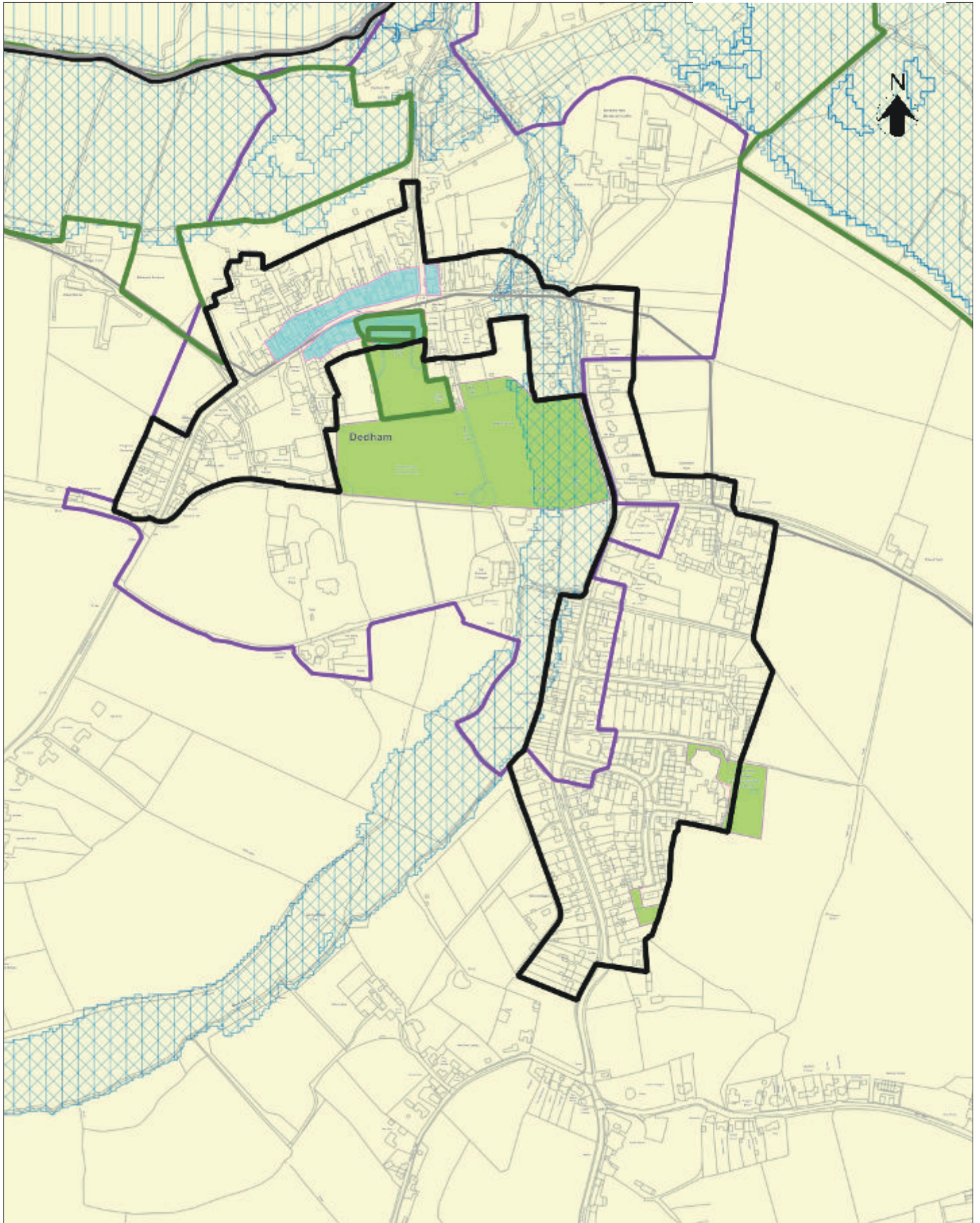


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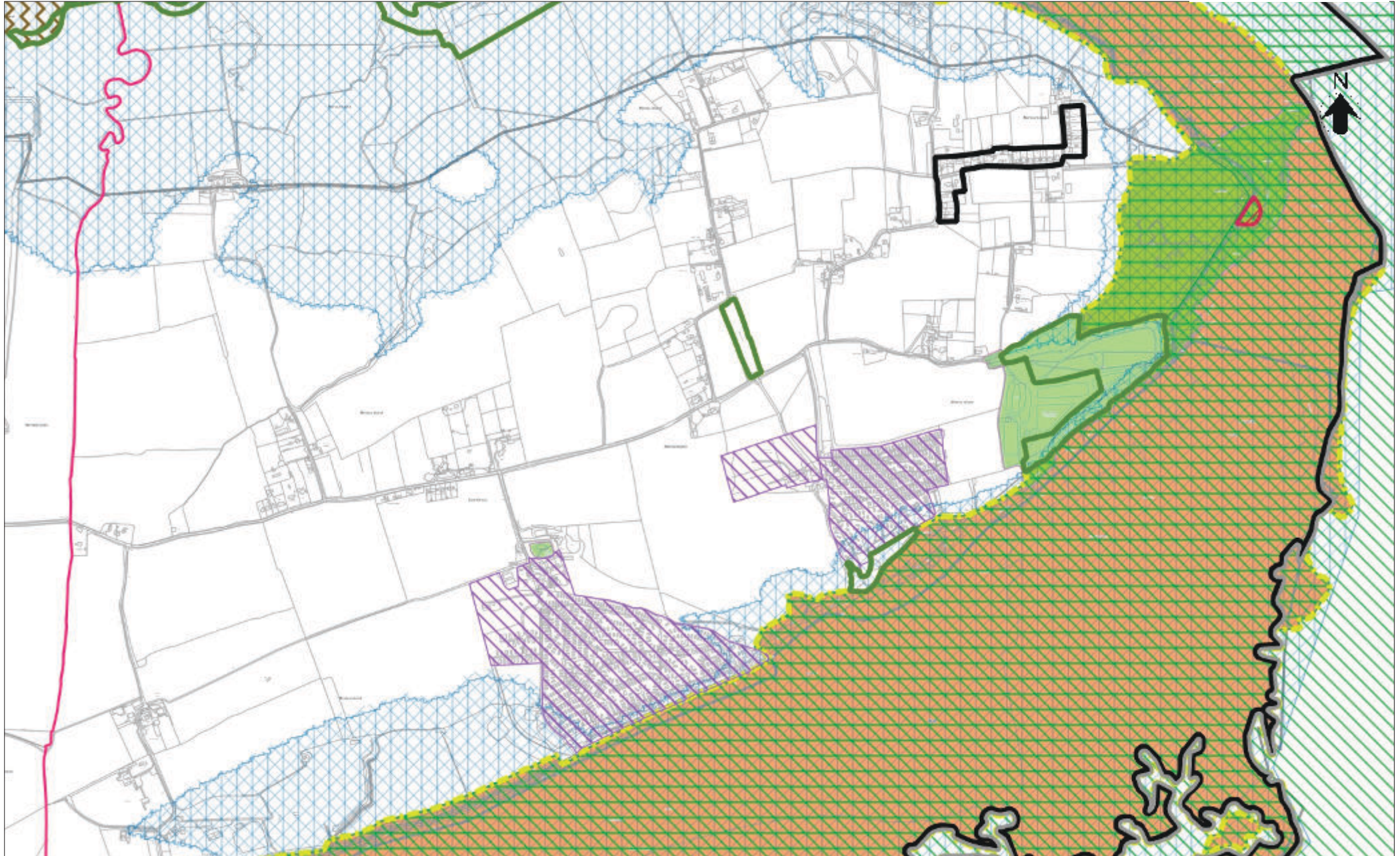


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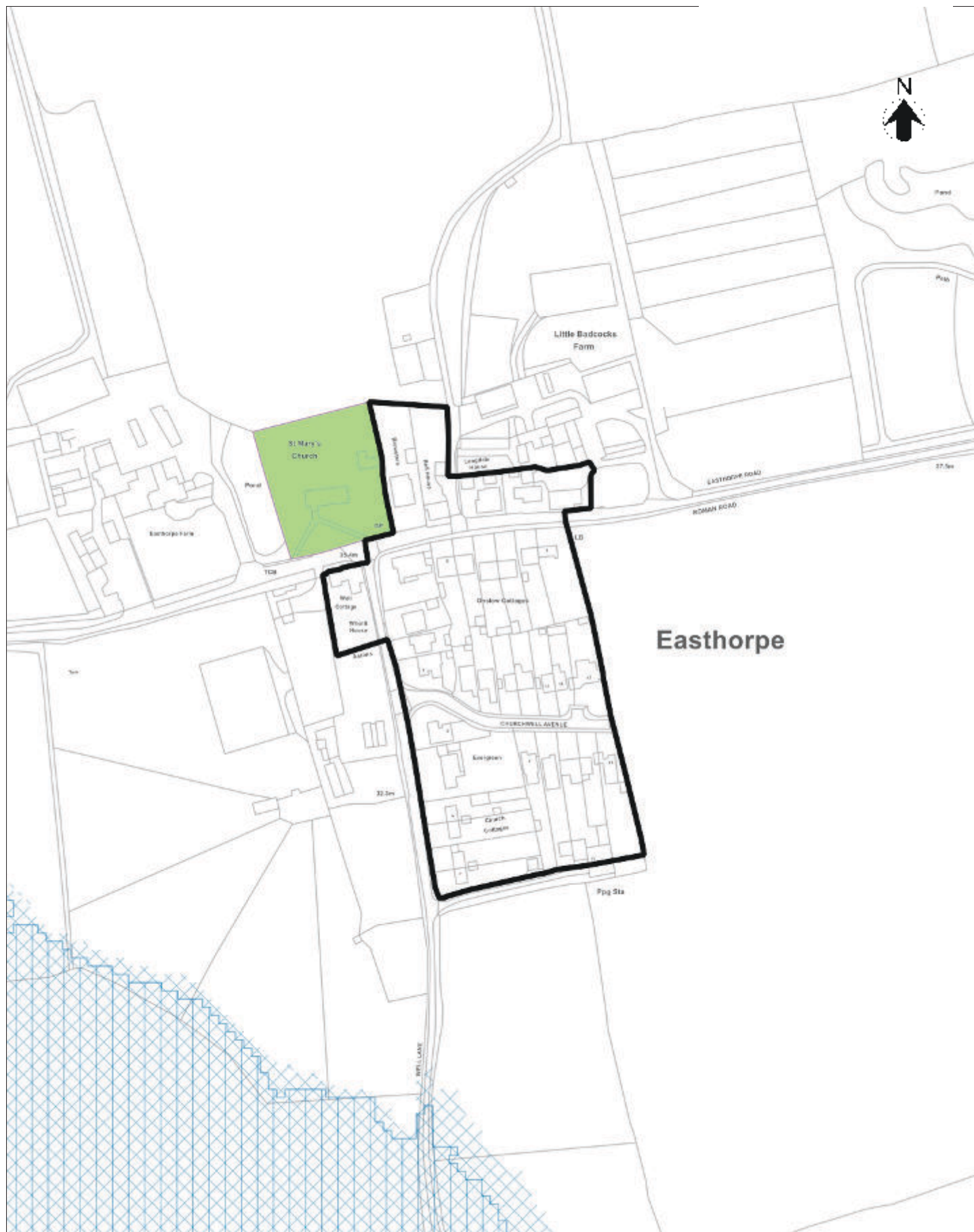
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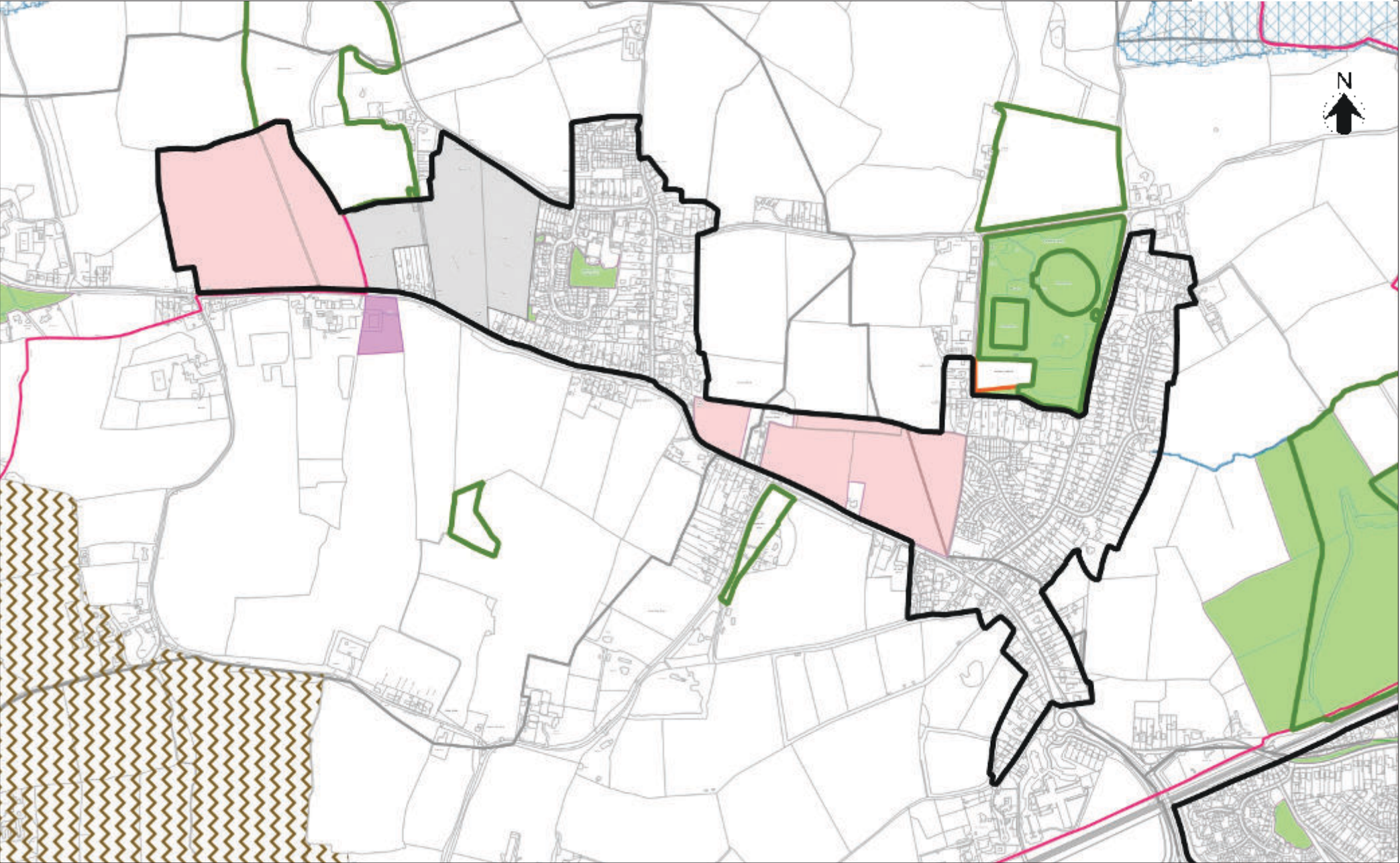
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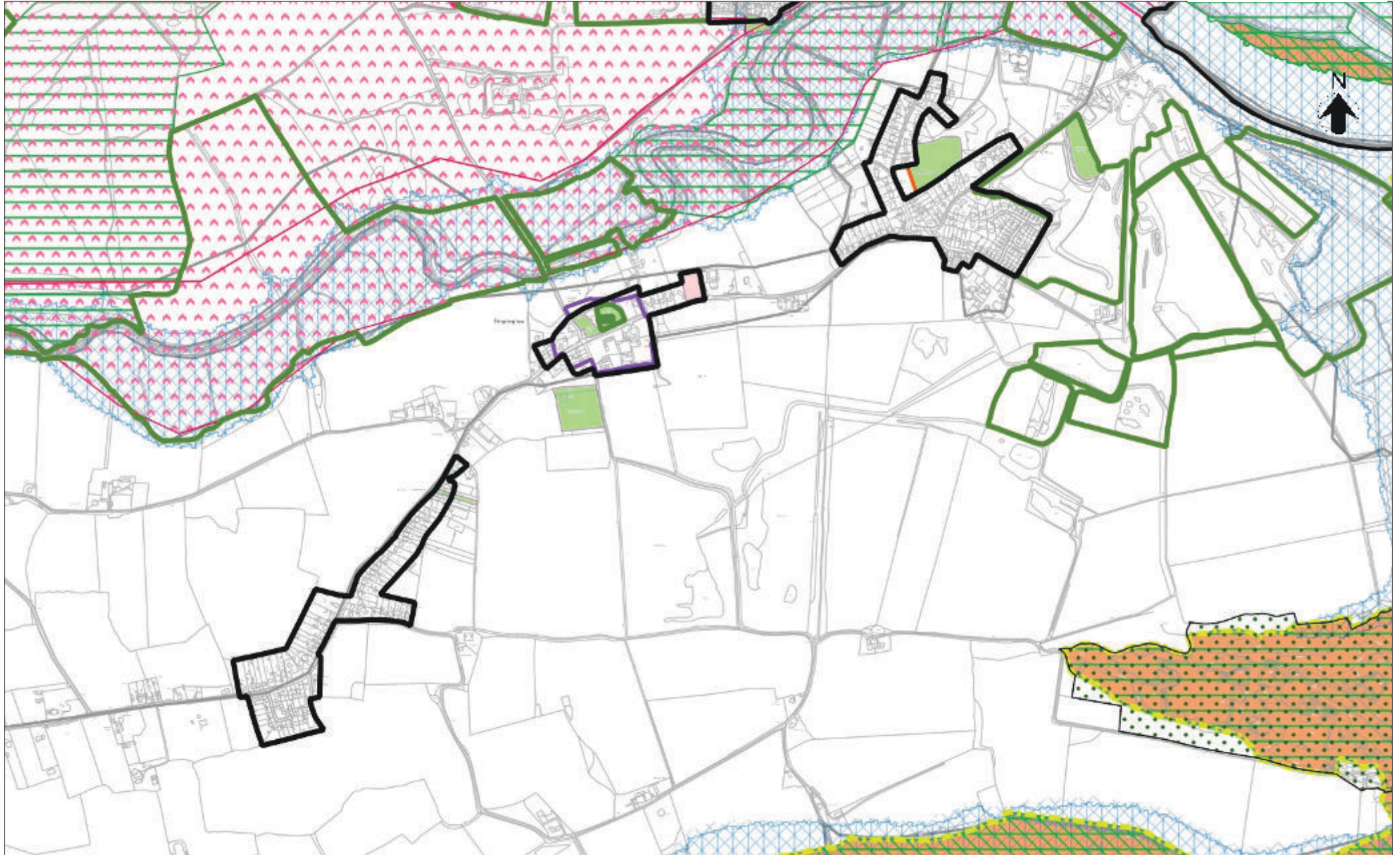


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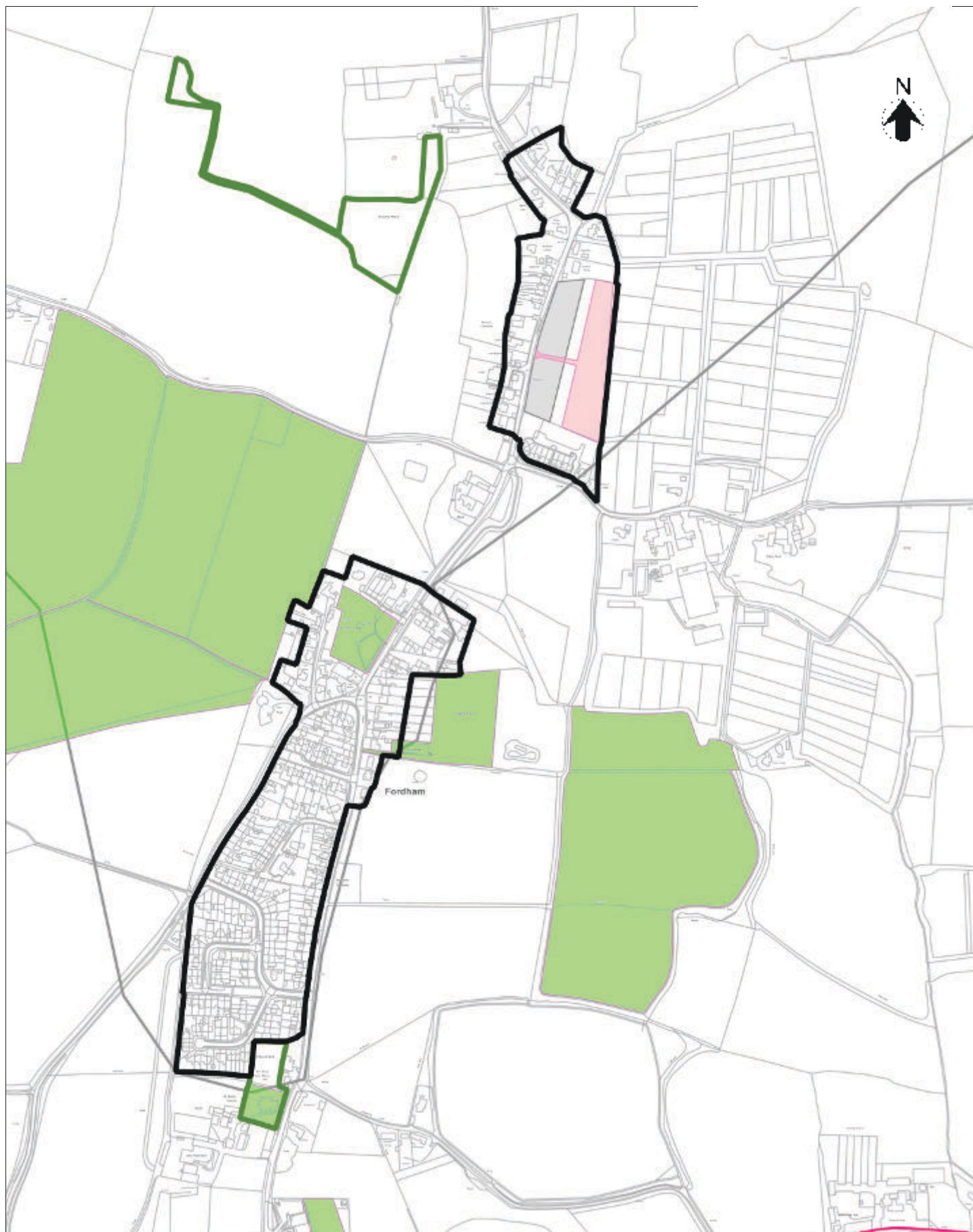


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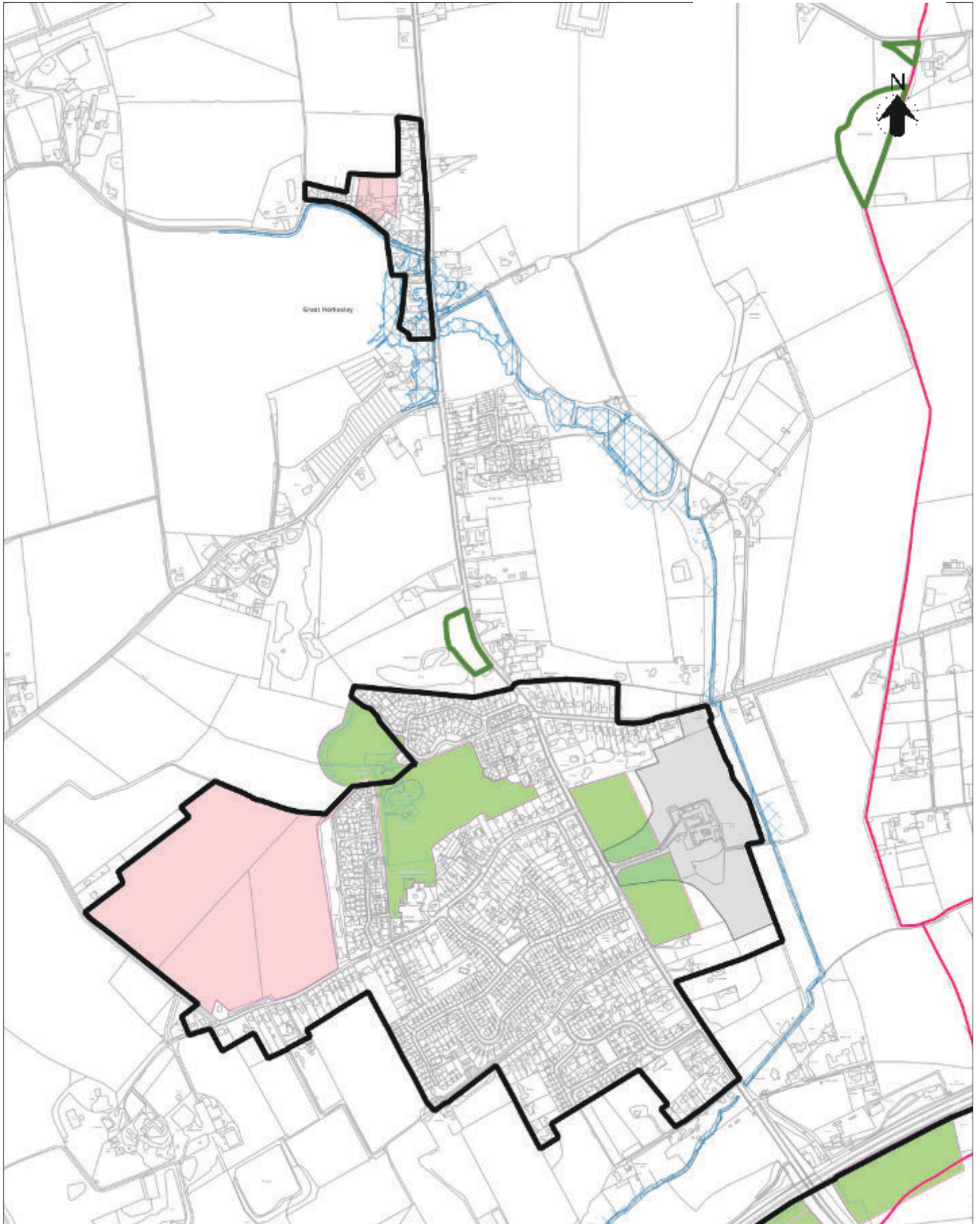




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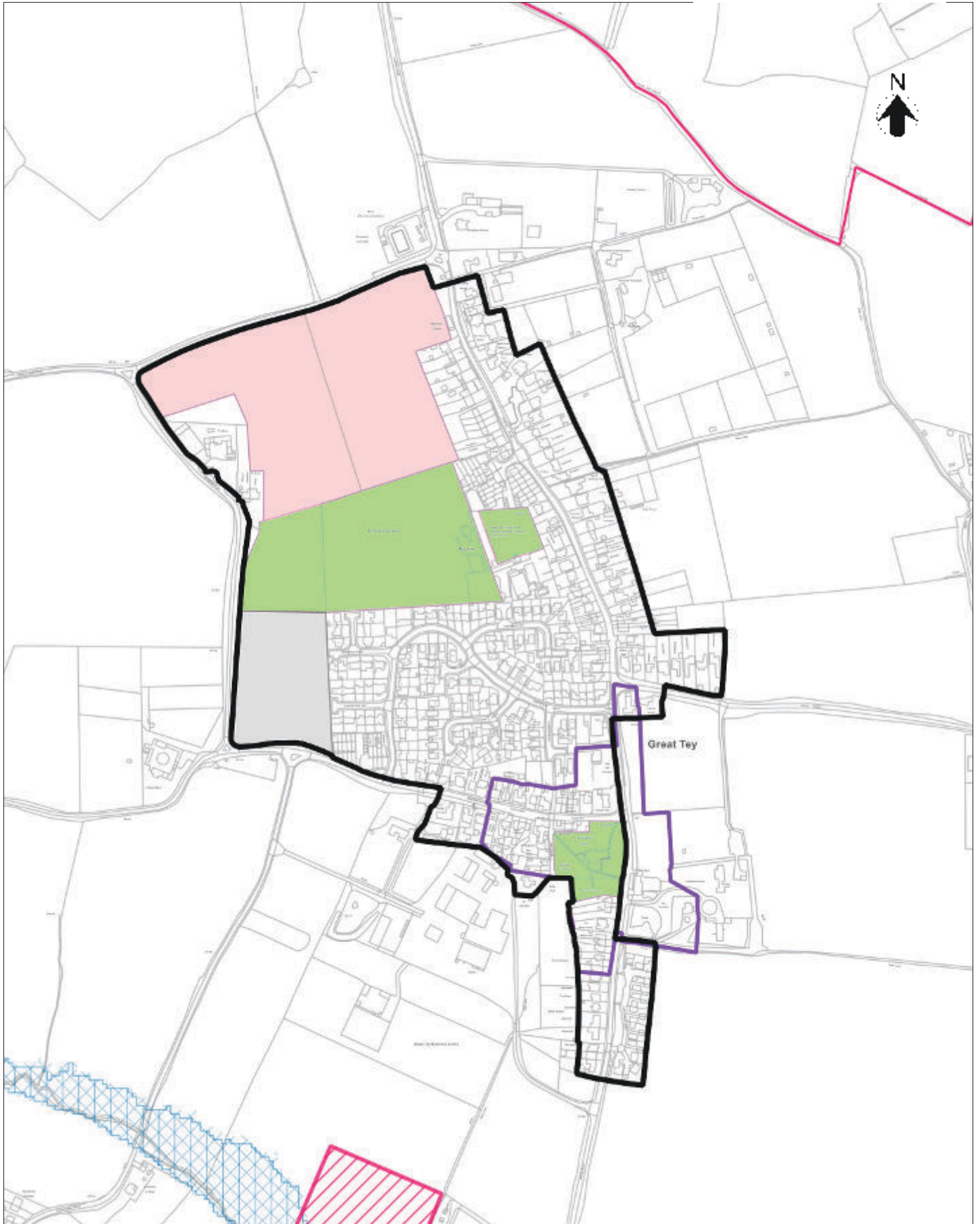


# GREAT HORKESLEY

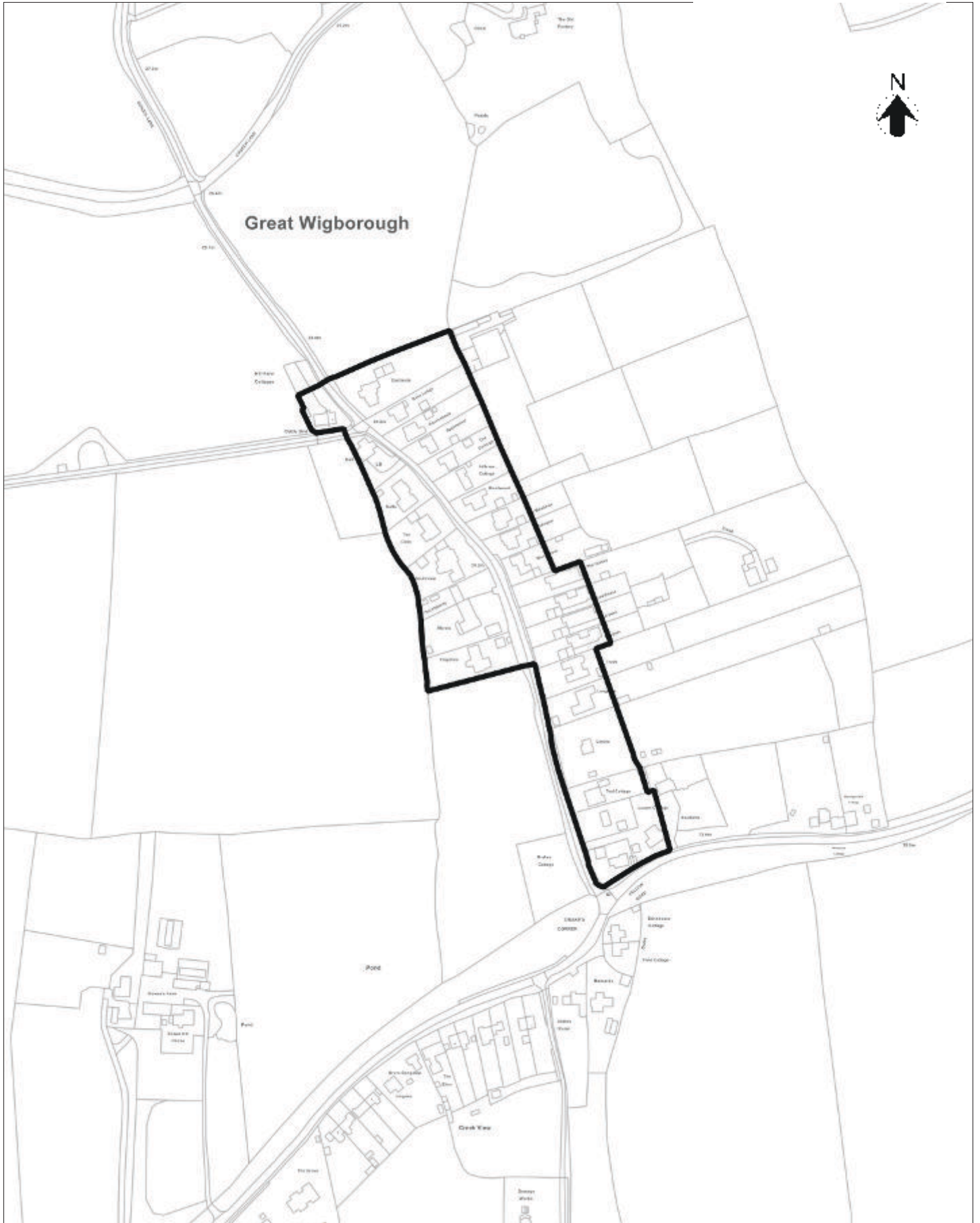




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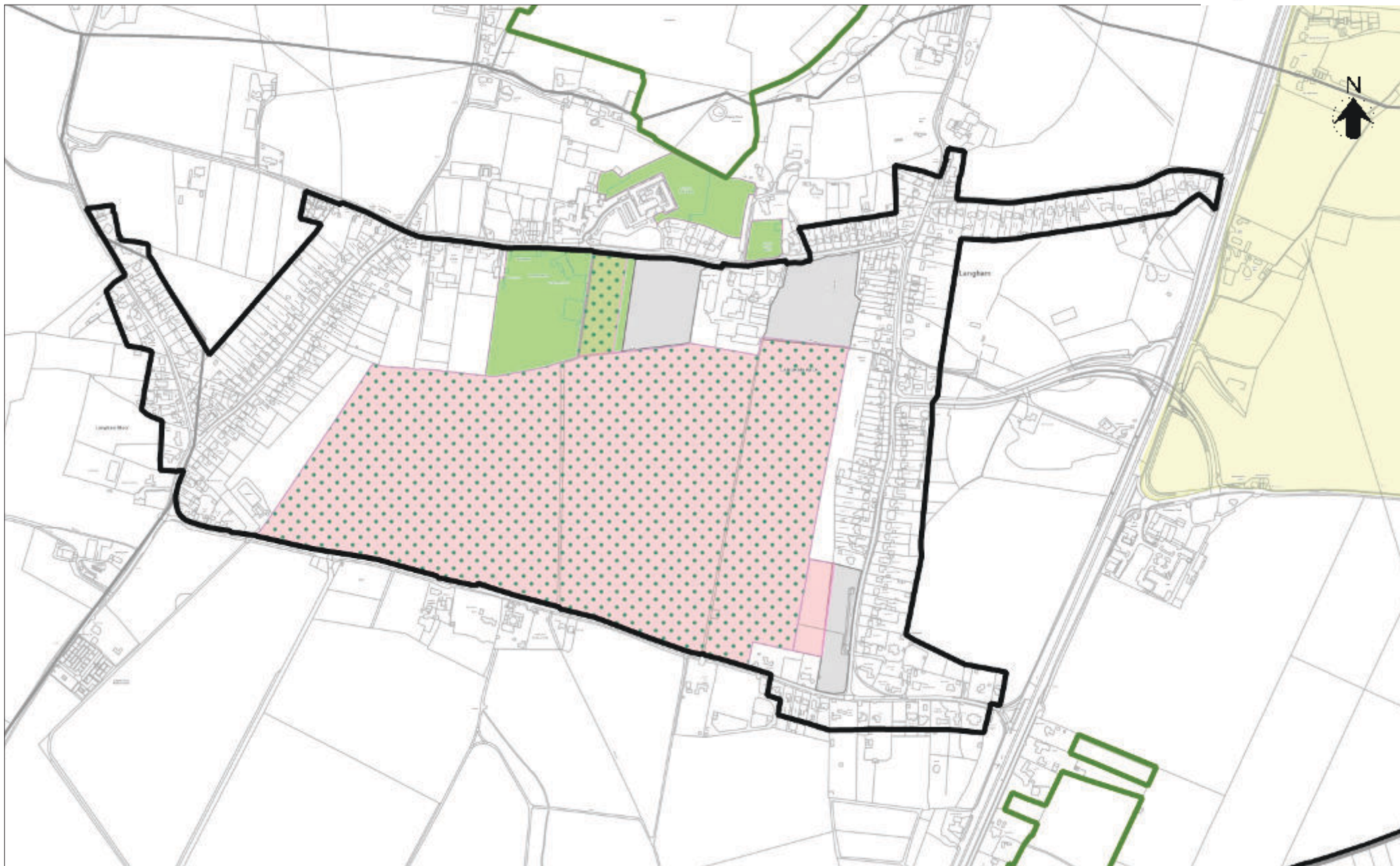


# GREAT WIGBOROUGH

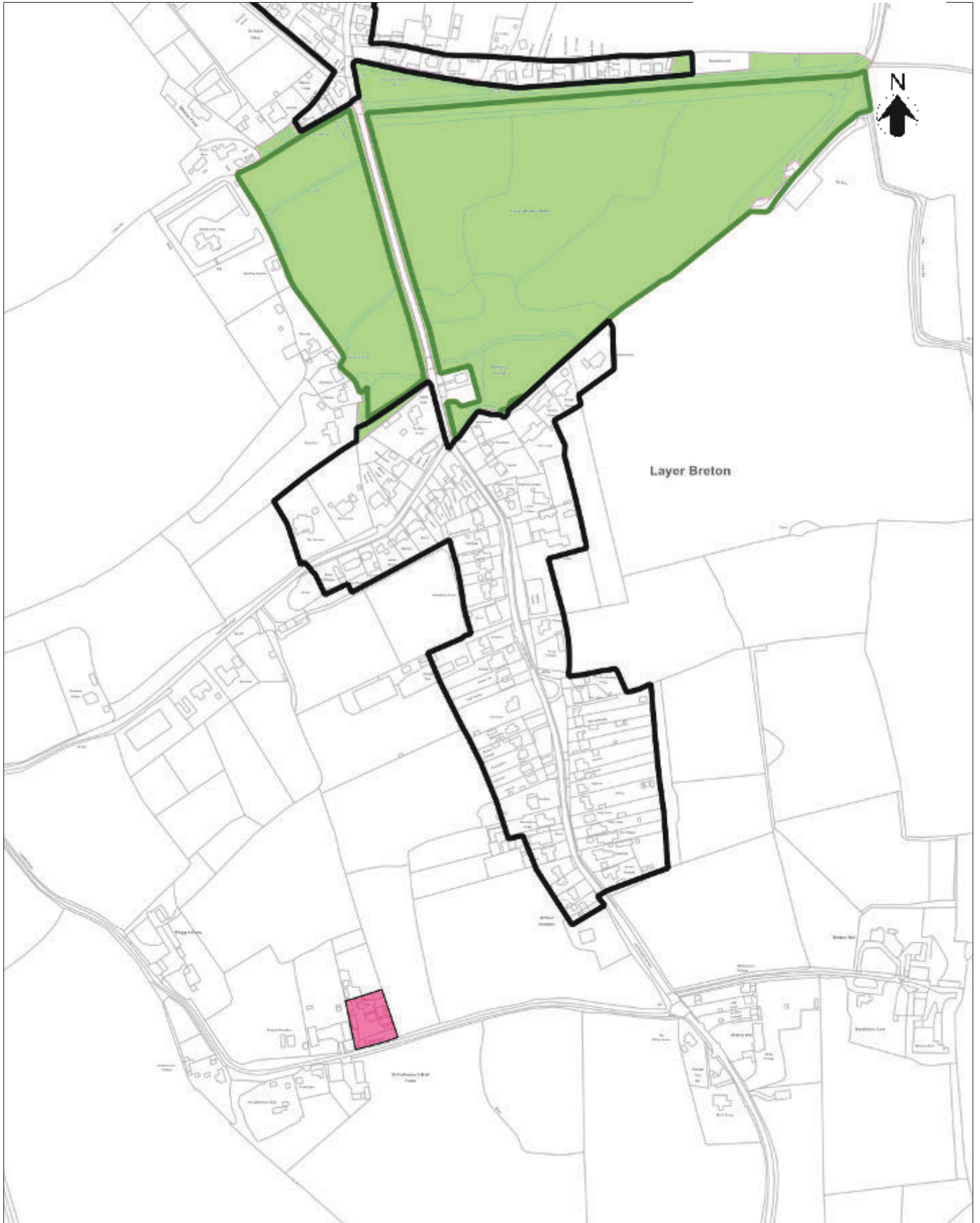




# LANGHAM

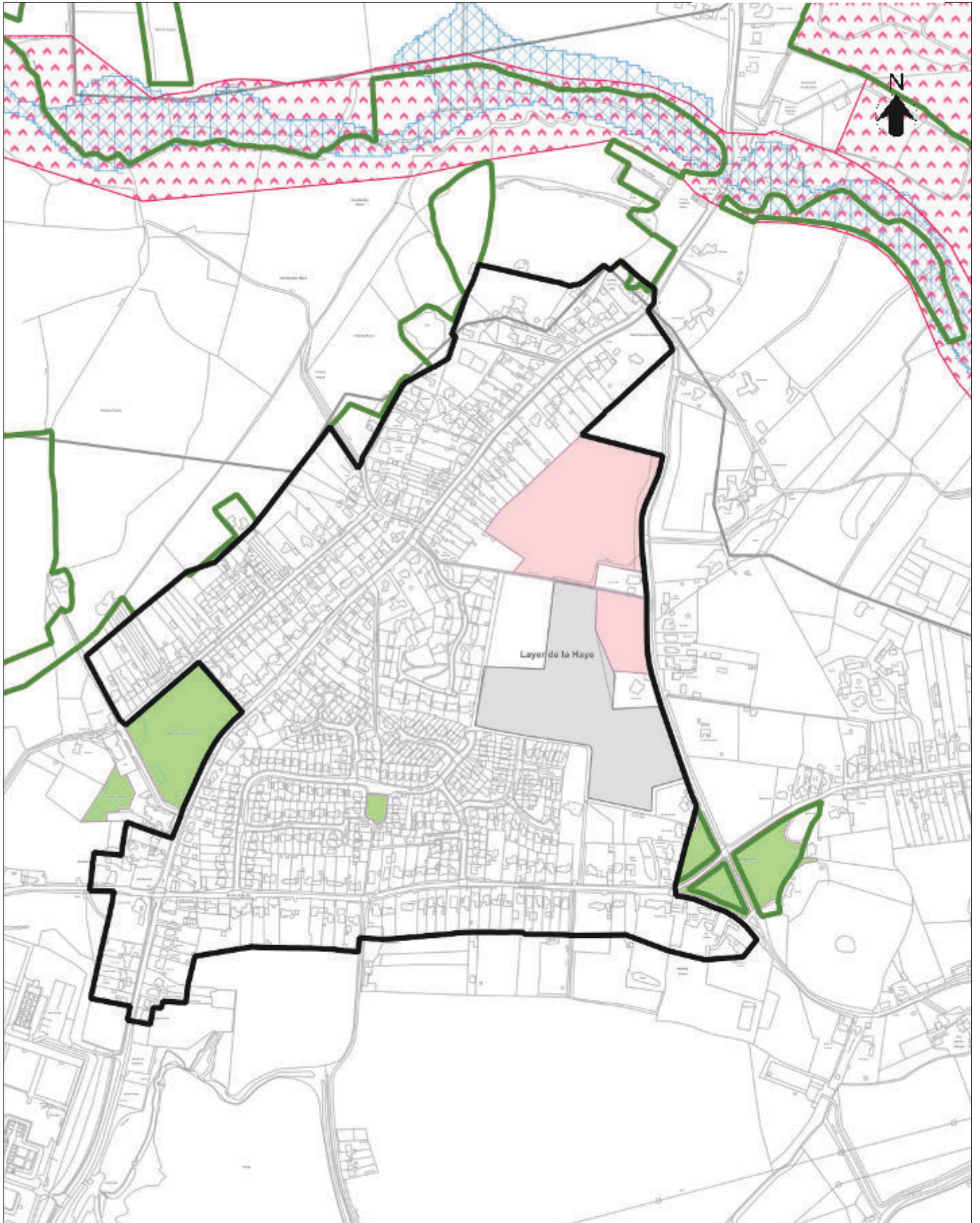


# LAYER BRETON

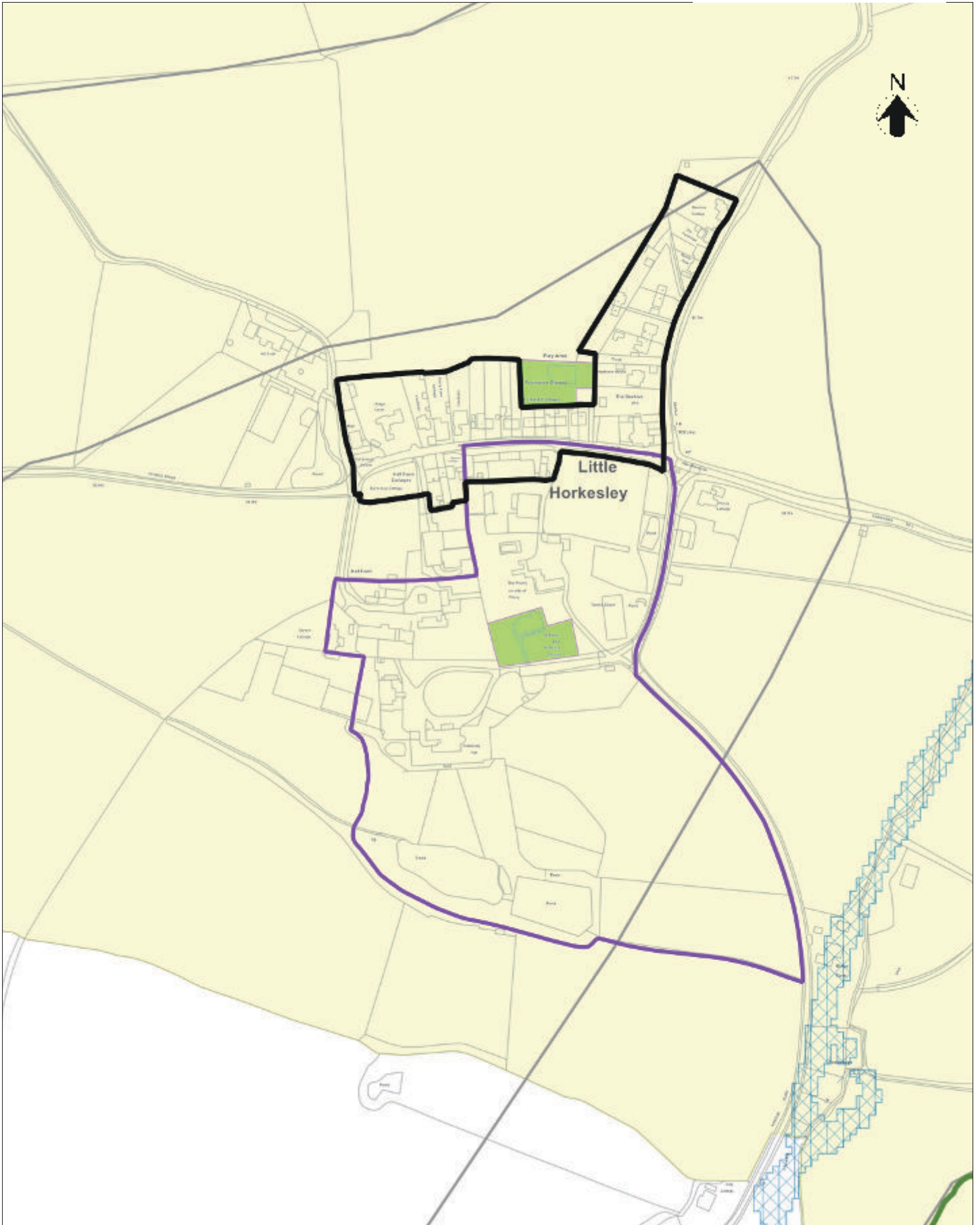




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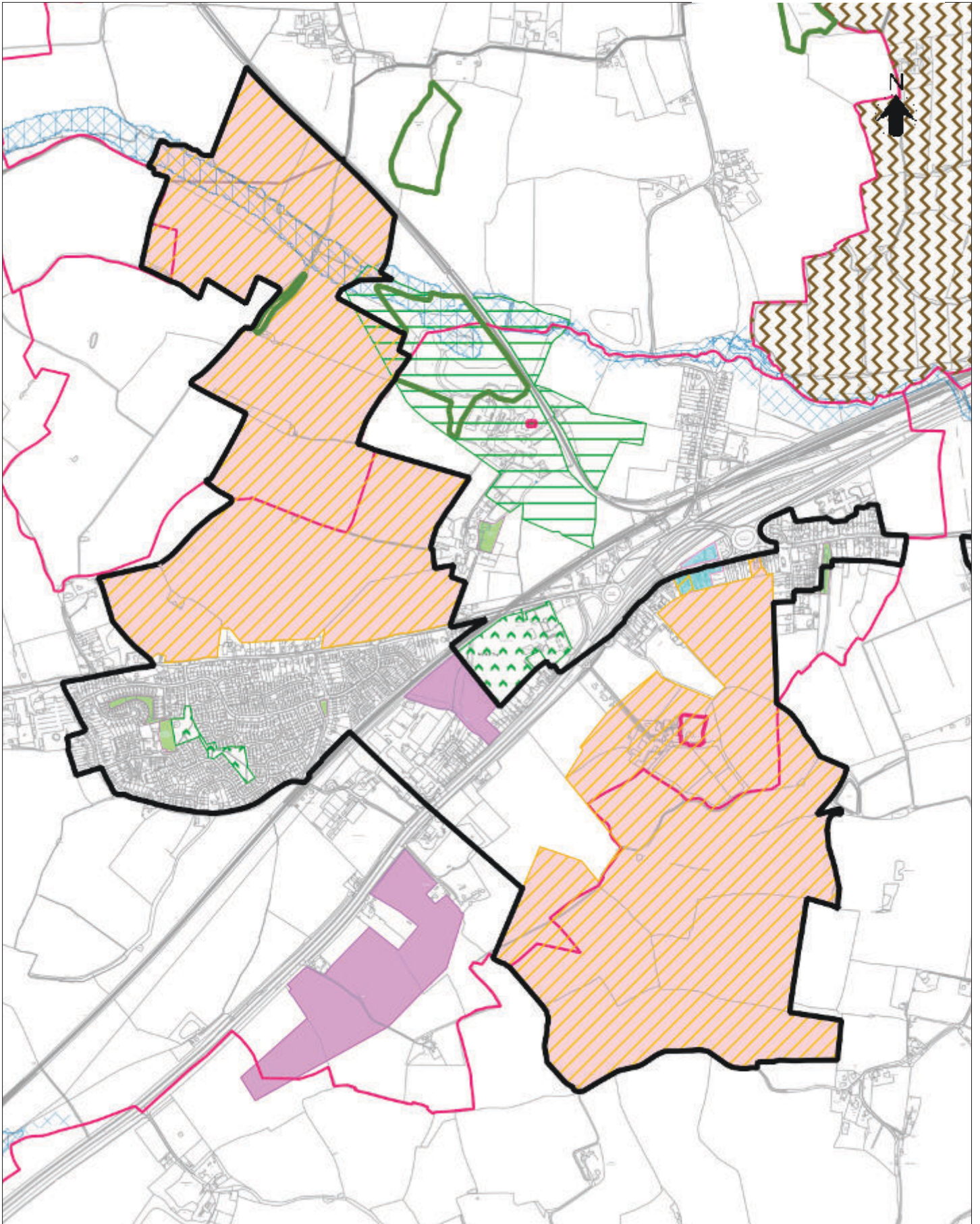


# LITTLE HORESLEY



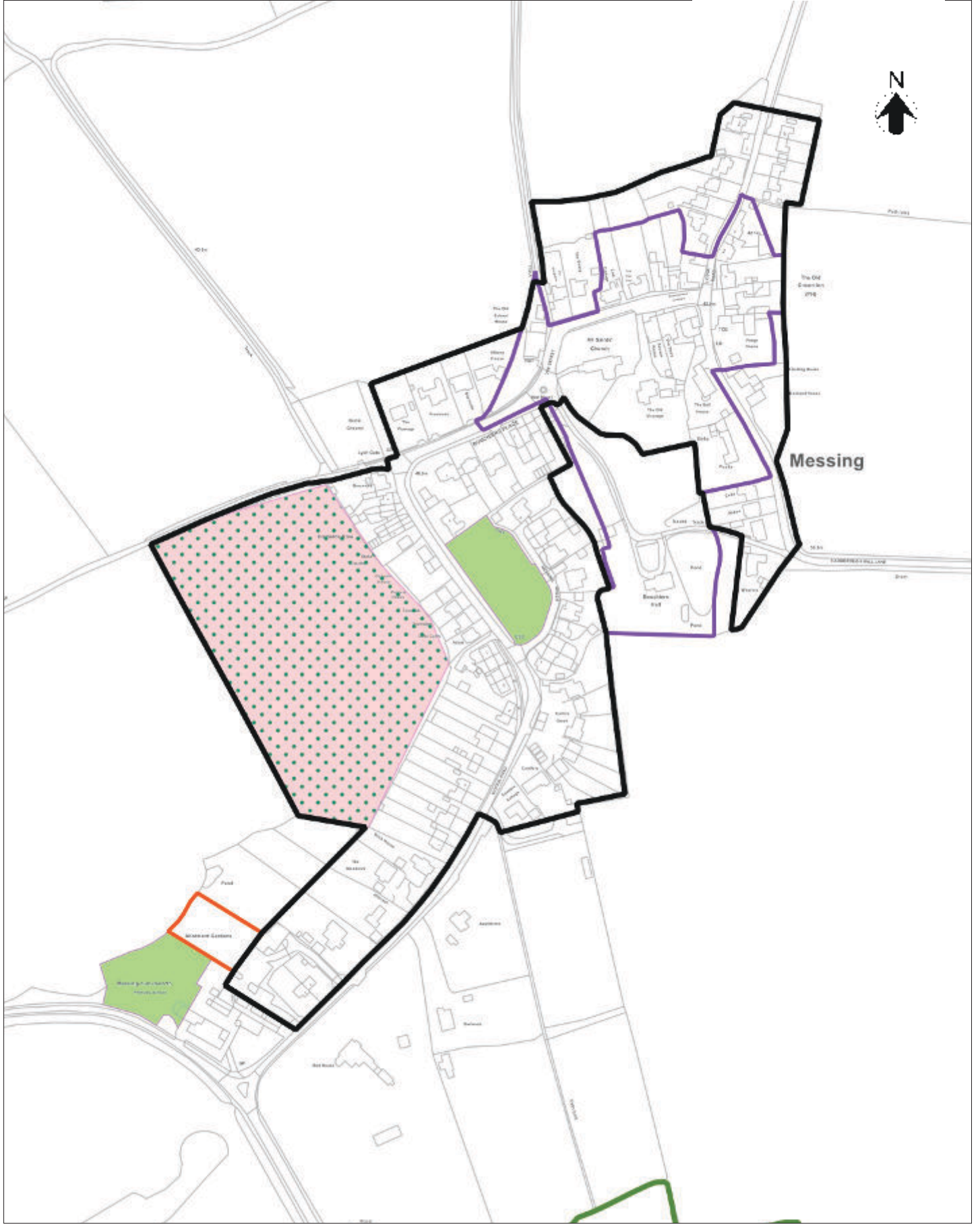


# MARKS TEY

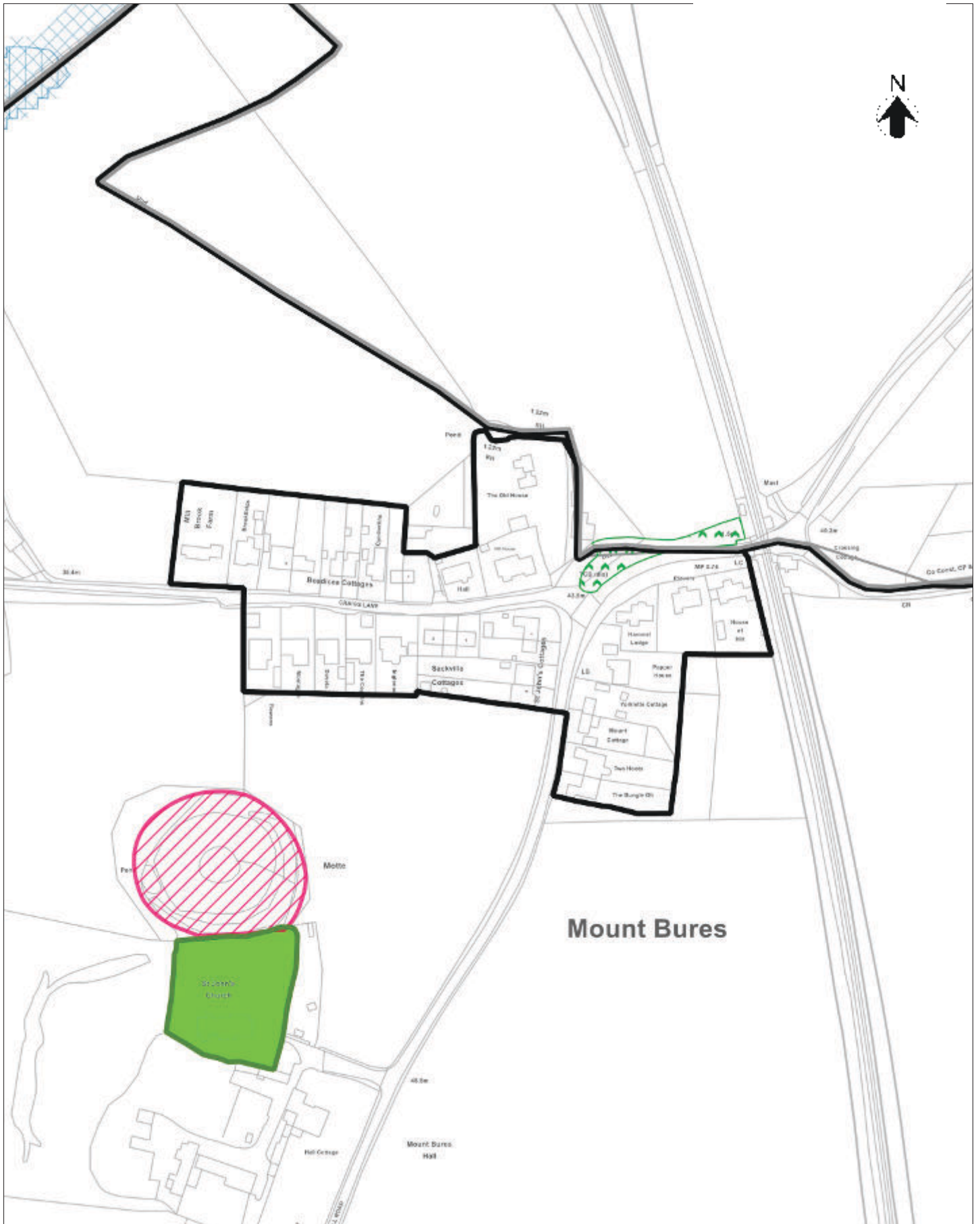




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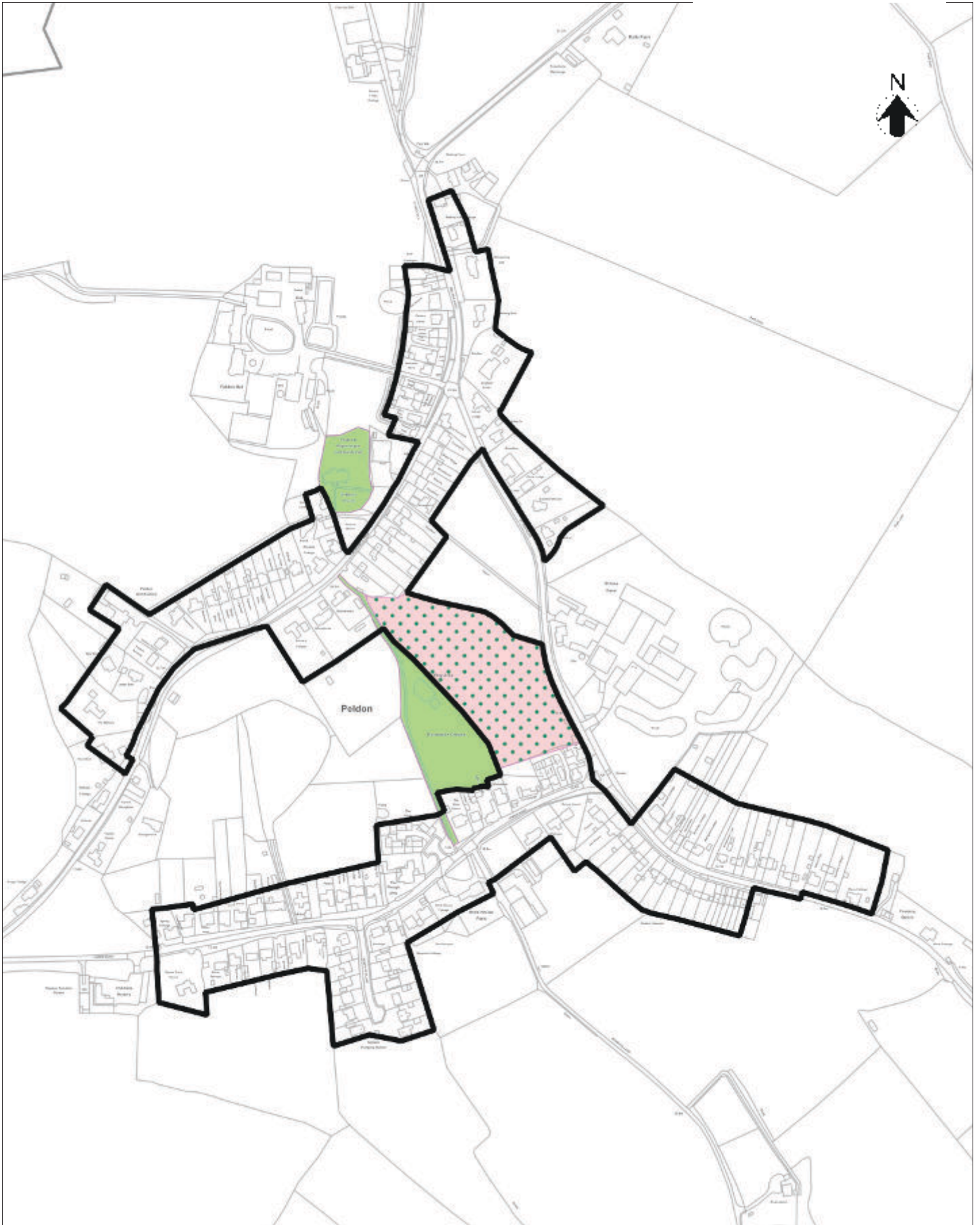


# MOUNT BURES



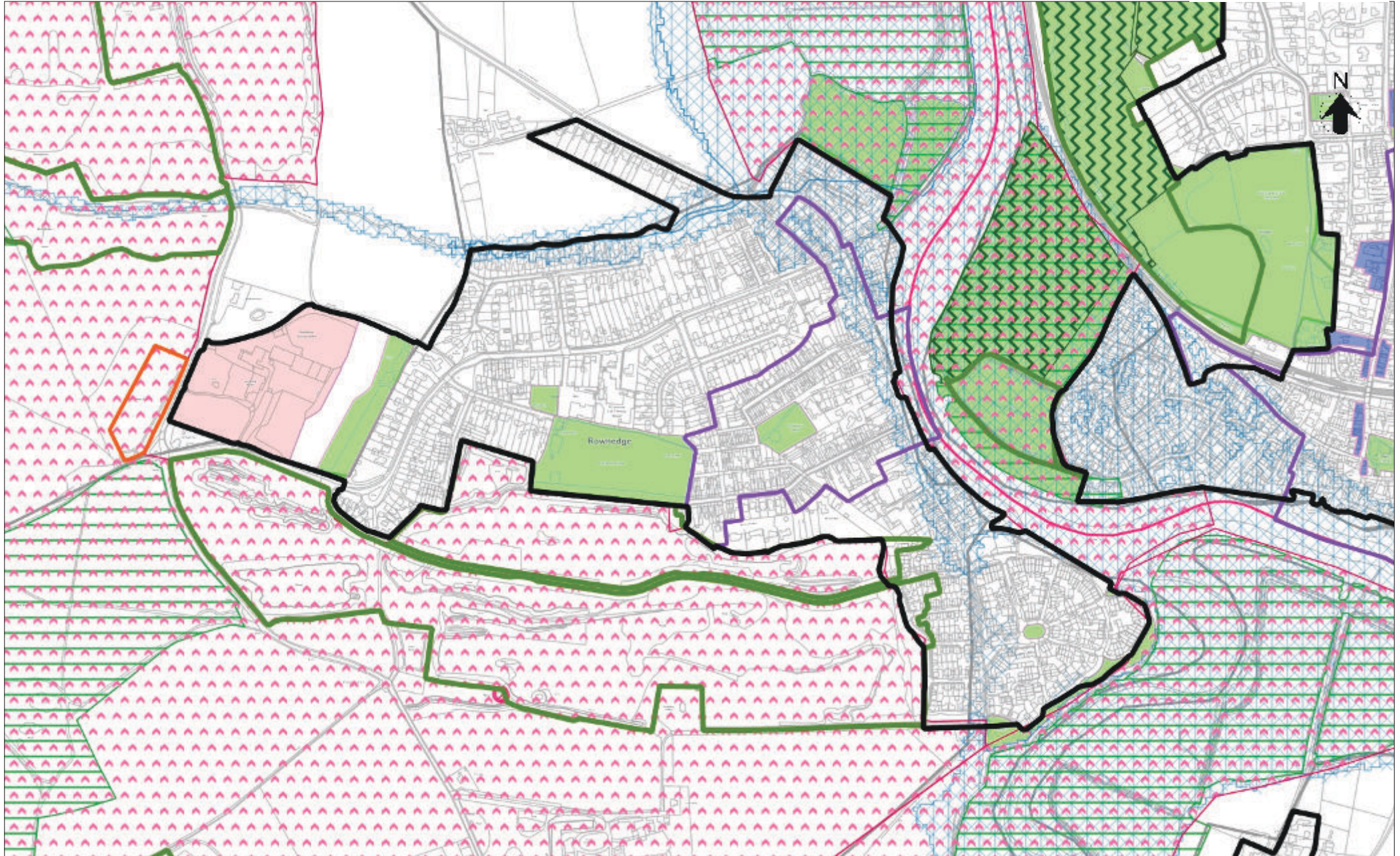


# PELDON



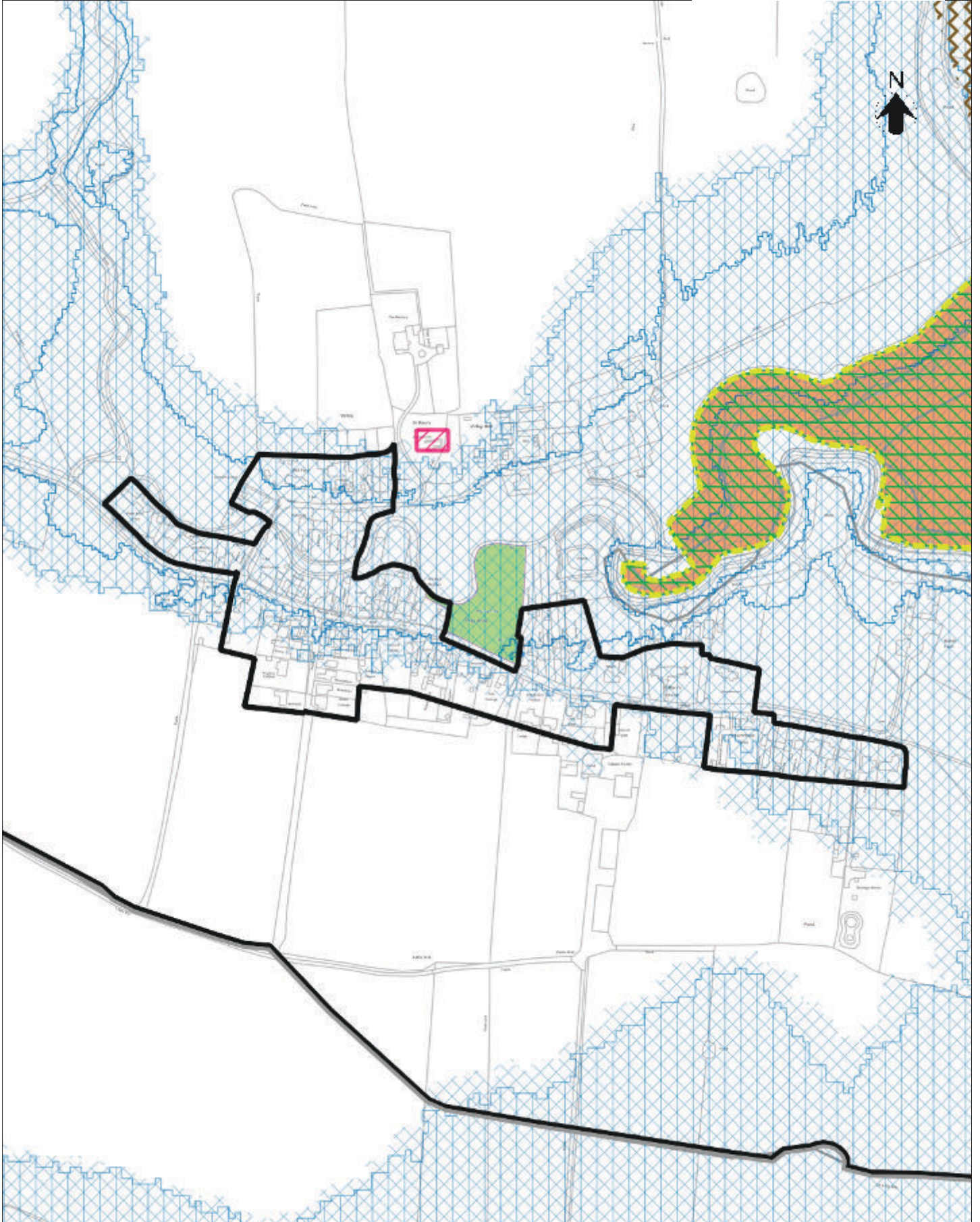


# ROWHEDGE



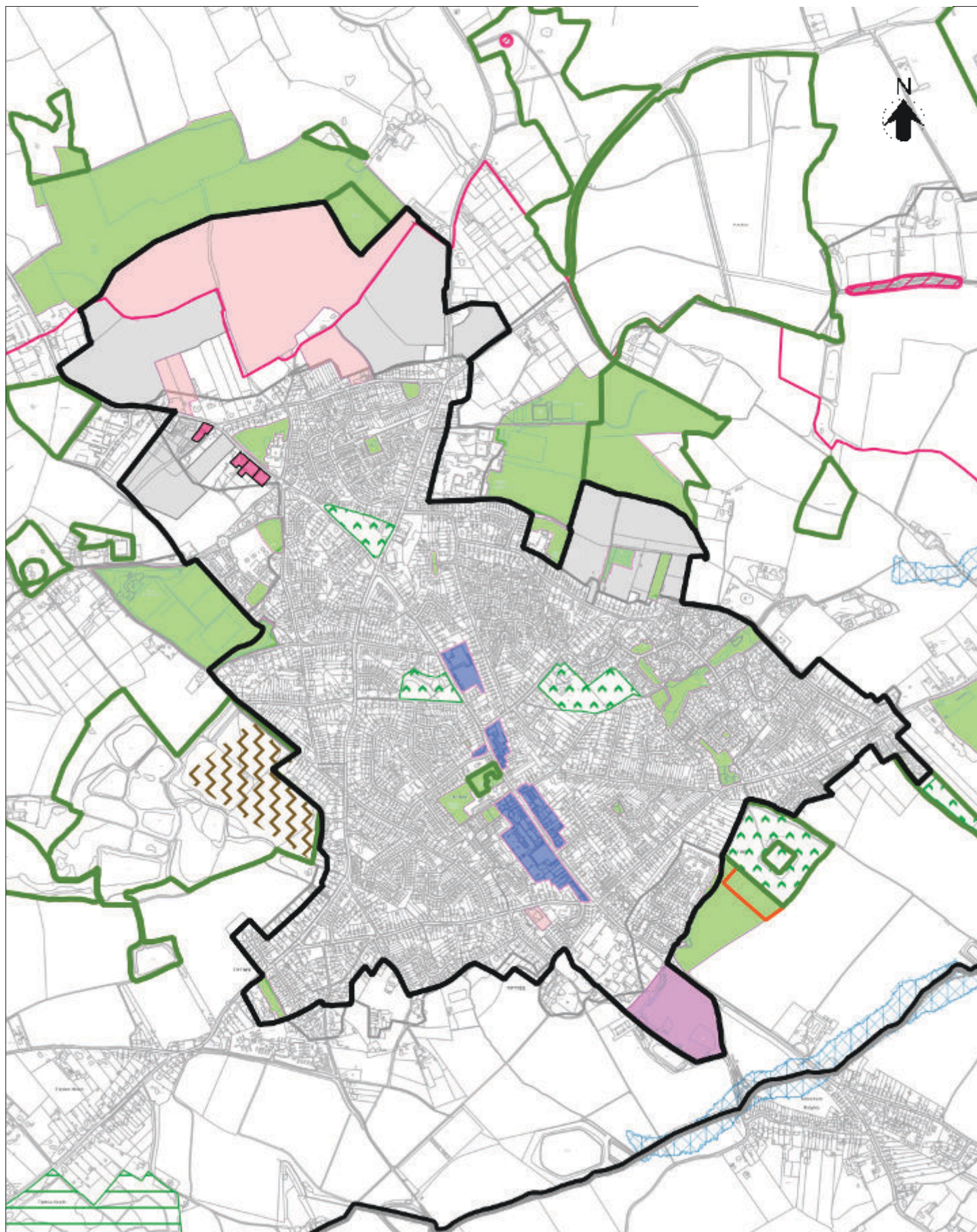


# SALCOTT



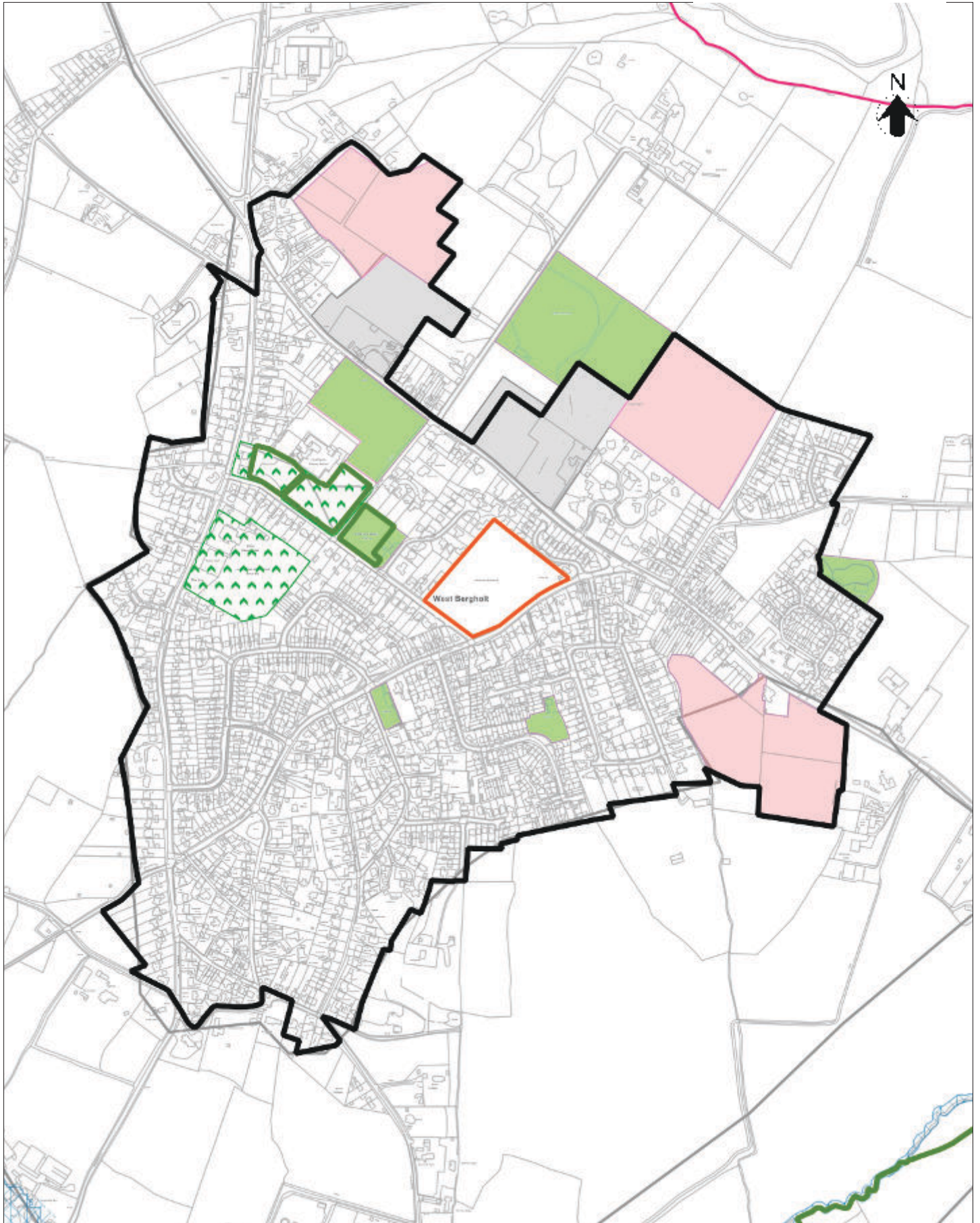


# TIPTREE





# WEST BERGHOLT



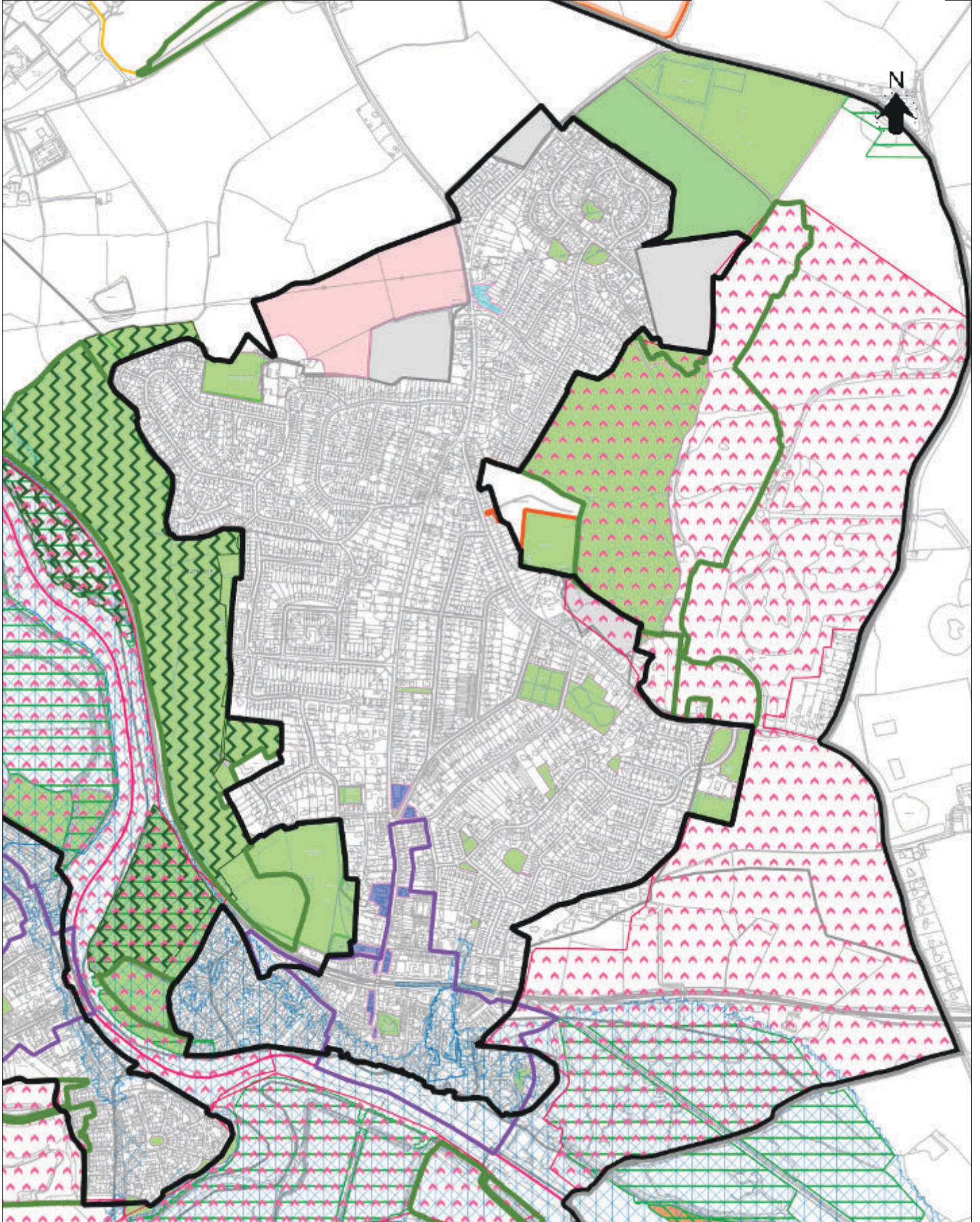


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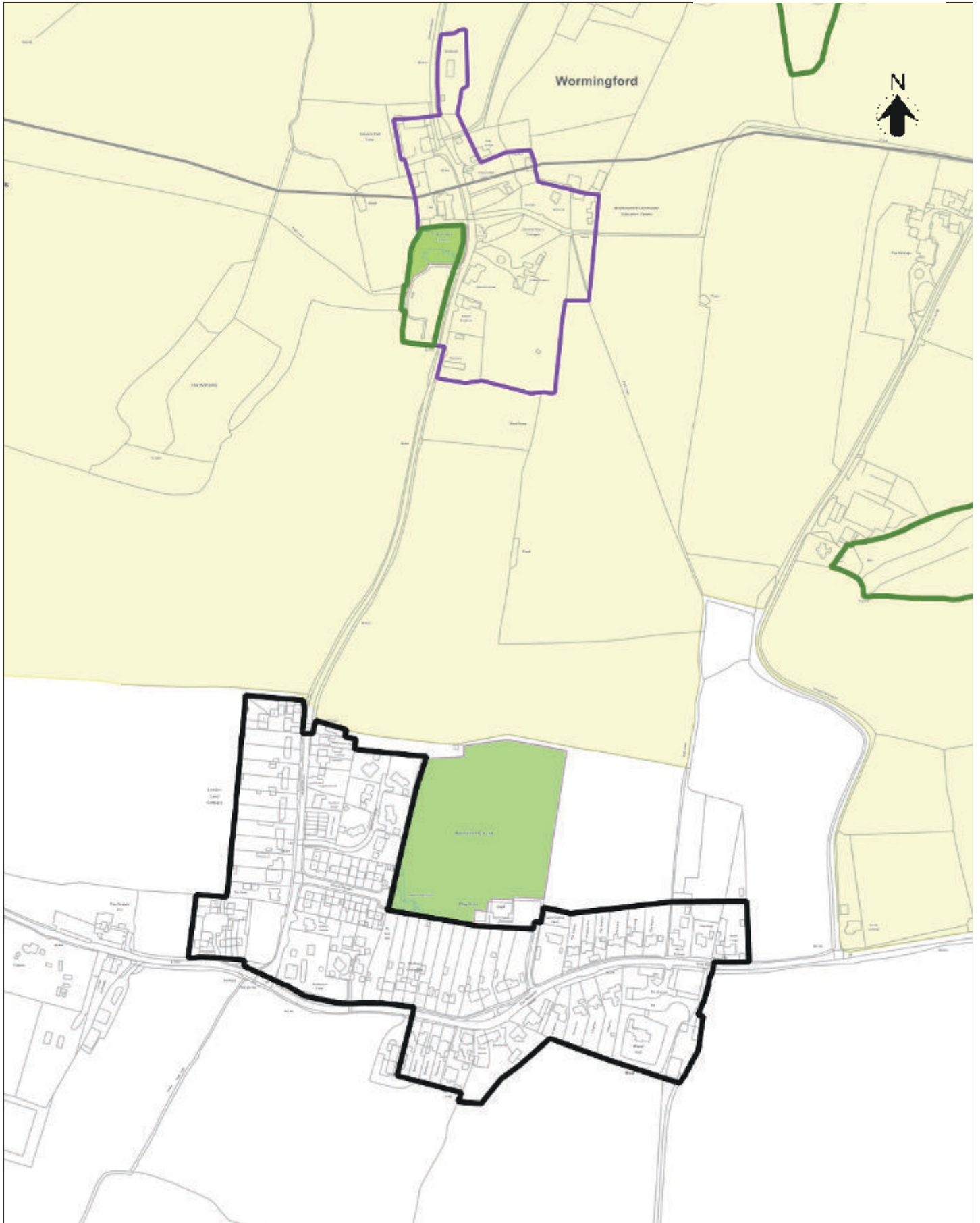


# WIVENHOE





# WORMINGFORD







# Colchester Preferred Options Local Plan

## Sustainability Appraisal Report

### Colchester City Council

**Draft report**

Prepared by LUC

February 2025

Version	Status	Prepared	Checked	Approved	Date
1	Draft report	R Myerscough L Haddad K Moroney	K Moroney J Pearson		04/02/2025
2					
3					



**Land Use Consultants Limited**

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# Chapter 1

## Introduction

**1.1** Colchester City Council commissioned LUC in March 2024 to provide critical friend support to support the Council in its preparation of a Sustainability Appraisal (SA) Scoping Report for the emerging Colchester Local Plan. As part of this commission, LUC was also tasked with the preparation of the full SA Report for the Local Plan once the scoping stage was completed.

**1.2** This report relates to the Colchester Preferred Options (Regulation 18) Local Plan and it should be read in conjunction with that document.

## The plan area

**1.3** Colchester City lies within the county of Essex in the south of England (see Figure 1.1). The District covers approximately 32,400 hectares and borders Suffolk in the north, along with three Essex districts – Tendring in the east, Braintree in the west and Maldon in the south west. At its centre is the town of Colchester, surrounded by villages and smaller towns of distinct and complementary character. Some are in the Dedham Vale, a designated area of outstanding natural beauty.

**1.4** The City's largest towns are Wivenhoe, Tiptree and West Mersea. The island of Mersea is at the south of the District, and it forms its principal coastal area. The centre of Colchester, broadly defined by the area within the Roman city walls, is a focal point for the whole city – containing one of the Eastern region's busiest shopping destinations, as well as many major cultural experiences and leisure attractions.

Figure 1.1: Location of Colchester

## Outline of the Plan and its objectives

**1.5** The current development plan for Colchester comprises:

- Section 1 Local Plan (adopted February 2021)
- Section 2 Local Plan (adopted July 2022)
- Essex Mineral Local Plan (2014)
- Essex and Southend-on-Sea Waste Local Plan (2017)

**1.6** Neighbourhood Plans are also ‘made’ in Colchester for:

- Copford with Easthorpe;
- Great Tey;
- Myland and Braiswick;
- Boxted;
- Wivenhoe;
- West Bergholt;
- Eight Ash Green;
- Marks Tey;
- West Mersea; and
- Tiptree.

**1.7** Furthermore, work is presently ongoing in relation to the preparation of a Neighbourhood Plan for Great Horkesley with work on a Neighbourhood Plan for Messing and Stanway abandoned.

**1.8** The Section 1 Plan was prepared jointly by Colchester Borough Council, Tendring District Council, and Braintree District Council – the ‘local planning



authorities' (LPAs) collectively known as the 'North Essex Authorities' to form the first part of each of the authorities' respective Local Plans. The Section 1 Plan is designed to articulate a spatial portrait of the North Essex area, including its main settlements and strategic infrastructure, as a framework for accommodating future planned growth. It also provides a strategic vision for how planned growth in North Essex will be realised. The Section 2 Plan provides the policy framework, site allocations and development management policies for Colchester City up to 2033.

**1.9** The Section 1 Plan requires a Development Plan Document (DPD) to be produced to provide more detail in relation to the development of the Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community (TCBGC) land for which is allocated partly in Colchester and partly in Tendring. This is being produced jointly with Tendring District Council and is overseen by a Joint Committee. In September 2023 TCBGC DPD was submitted to the Secretary of State for independent examination.

**1.10** Although the current Local Plan was adopted relatively recently, an early review is taking place to ensure that it remains up to date and can meet future development needs. The new Local Plan will include policies and allocations for Colchester, covering the plan period 2025 to 2041.

## Local Plan Review outline

**1.11** The green network and waterways and the 'creating a better environment' agenda formed the starting point and key purpose of the Local Plan Review. The approach is to protect and enhance the green network and waterways through the Local Plan Review. This approach responds directly to the growing demands linked to the green agenda enabling delivery on climate change, health and wellbeing and biodiversity requirements as well as delivering growth requirements in a way which has planning for a better environment at the heart.

**1.12** The plan will aim to deliver allocations to meet Colchester's growth needs. New housing allocations will facilitate new green spaces, biodiversity net gain

and wider environmental enhancements and under this approach the Council can prioritise allocating sites that will create a better environment. Focussing on enhancing the green network and the best outcomes in terms of biodiversity net gain will help to justify the selection of housing sites. The provision of environmental benefits and green spaces has always been a recognised “trade-off” for development. The difference that the Council are suggesting through the Local Plan Review, is that the approach starts from identifying the optimum opportunities for the environmental enhancements through green network and biodiversity net gain which provide benefits to local communities, health and wellbeing, wildlife and climate change and link that to the strategy for development to enable its delivery and provide the best outcomes for place making.

**1.13** Colchester City Council produced its Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report for the Local Plan Review in May 2024. The consultation bodies were consulted on the scoping report for a 5-week period ending in May 2024

**1.14** The Colchester City Preferred Options (Regulation 18) Local Plan comprises the following main components:

- Local Plan Vision and Objectives.
- Strategic policies addressing overarching key issues of relevance to the District, including setting the spatial strategy for the plan area as well as the overall level of housing and employment growth to be delivered for the plan period.
- More specific topic-based policies set out to guide development in the District, across a number of themes. The policies included are set out below the following headings:
  - Environment
  - Green network and waterways
  - Landscape and coast
  - Net zero homes and buildings, renewable energy, water and waste
  - Homes

- Economy
- Community and social infrastructure
- Place and connectivity
- A number of policies are also included to allocate and safeguard sites to meet the growth needs of the District. This includes a number of sites that have been carried forward from the adopted Local Plan and a number of new sites that are needed to deliver the spatial strategy. These policies are presented by the settlements at which the land in question is found.

## Sustainability Appraisal and Strategic Environmental Assessment

**1.15** Under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, SA is mandatory for Development Plan Documents. For these documents it is also necessary to conduct an environmental assessment in accordance with The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (SI 2004/1633), as amended by The Environmental Assessments and Miscellaneous Planning (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2018 (SI 2018/1232). As set out in the explanatory Memorandum accompanying the Brexit amendments [See [reference 1](#)], they are necessary to ensure that the law functions correctly following the UK's exit from the EU. No substantive changes are being made by this instrument to the way the SEA regime operates. Therefore, the SEA regulations remain in force and it is a legal requirement for the Colchester Local Plan to be subject to SA and SEA throughout its preparation.

**1.16** The Levelling Up and Regeneration Act (2023) received royal assent in October 2023 and sets out the direction for planning, making provisions to support the levelling-up agenda. As part of this, it seeks to streamline the planning process, including through a reform of existing EU-generated systems of SA/SEA, Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) and Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA), which will eventually be replaced by a simpler process known as 'Environmental Outcomes Reports'. However, secondary legislation is

required to introduce the new regime and at present the requirement to undertake SEA remains in force.

**1.17** SA and SEA are tools used at the plan-making stage to assess the likely effects of the plan when judged against reasonable alternatives. SEA considers only the environmental effects of a plan, while SA considers the plan's wider economic and social effects in addition to its potential environmental impacts. SA should meet all of the requirements of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004, so a separate SEA should not be required.

**1.18** An approach that satisfies both the requirements for SA and SEA using a single appraisal process is advocated in the Government's Planning Practice Guidance (PPG). This is the process that is being undertaken by Colchester City Council. From here on, the term 'SA' should therefore be taken to mean 'SA incorporating the requirements of the SEA Regulations'.

**1.19** The SA process comprises a number of stages as, shown below:

- Stage A: Setting the context and objectives, establishing the baseline and deciding on the scope.
- Stage B: Developing and refining options and assessing effects.
- Stage C: Preparing the SA Report.
- Stage D: Consulting on the Local Plan and the SA Report.
- Stage E: Monitoring the significant effects of implementing the Local Plan.

## **Requirements of the SEA Regulations and where they are met in this report**

**1.20** The relevant sections of the SA Report that are considered to meet the SEA Regulations requirements are signposted below. This information will be

included in the SA Report at each stage of the SA to show how the requirements of the SEA Regulations have been met through the SA process.

## Preparation of an environmental report

**1.21** Preparation of an environmental report in which the likely significant effects on the environment of implementing the plan or programme, and reasonable alternatives taking into account the objectives and geographical scope of the plan or programme, are identified, described and evaluated (Reg. 12). The information to be given is (Schedule 2):

- a) An outline of the contents, main objectives of the plan or programme, and relationship with other relevant plans and programmes.
  - Covered in Chapter 1, Chapter 3 and Appendix B of this SA Report.
- b) The relevant aspects of the current state of the environment and the likely evolution thereof without implementation of the plan or programme.
  - Covered in Chapter 3 and Appendix C of this SA Report.
- c) The environmental characteristics of areas likely to be significantly affected.
  - Covered in Chapter 3 and Appendix C of this SA Report.
- d) Any existing environmental problems which are relevant to the plan or programme including, in particular, those relating to any areas of a particular environmental importance, such as areas designated pursuant to Directives 79/409/EEC and 92/43/EEC.
  - Covered in Chapter 3 and Appendix C of this SA Report.
- e) The environmental protection, objectives, established at international, community or national level, which are relevant to the plan or programme and the way those objectives and any environmental, considerations have been taken into account during its preparation.
  - Covered in Chapter 3 and Appendix B of this SA Report.



- f) The likely significant effects on the environment, including on issues such as biodiversity, population, human health, fauna, flora, soil, water, air, climatic factors, material assets, cultural heritage including architectural and archaeological heritage, landscape and the interrelationship between the above factors. (Footnote: These effects should include secondary, cumulative, synergistic, short, medium and long-term permanent and temporary, positive and negative effects.)
  - Covered in Chapter 4 to Chapter 6 of this SA Report.
- g) The measures envisaged to prevent, reduce and as fully possible offset any significant adverse effects on the environment of implementing the plan or programme.
  - Covered in Chapter 4 to Chapter 6 of this SA Report.
- h) An outline of the reasons for selecting the alternatives dealt with, and a description of how the assessment was undertaken including any difficulties (such as technical deficiencies or lack of know-how) encountered in compiling the required information.
  - Covered in Chapter 2 of this SA Report.
- i) A description of measures envisaged concerning monitoring in accordance with Reg. 17.
  - Covered in Chapter 7 of this SA Report.
- j) A non-technical summary of the information provided under the above headings.
  - A separate non-technical summary document will be prepared to accompany the SA Report for the Regulation 19 Local Plan.
- The report shall include the information that may reasonably be required taking into account current knowledge and methods of assessment, the contents and level of detail in the plan or programme, its stage in the decision-making process and the extent to which certain matters are more appropriately assessed at different levels in that process to avoid duplication of the assessment (Reg. 12(3)).
  - Addressed throughout this SA Report.

## Consultation requirements

- When deciding on the scope and level of detail of the information that must be included in the environmental report, the responsible Authority shall consult the consultation bodies. (Reg. 12(5)).
  - Focussed consultation on the scope and level of detail of the SA was carried out with the Environment Agency, Historic England, and Natural England for a 5 week period from April to May 2024.
- Every draft plan or programme for which an environmental report has been prepared in accordance with regulation 12 and its accompanying report (“the relevant documents”) shall be made available for the purposes of consultation in accordance with the following provisions of this regulation.
- As soon as reasonably practical after the preparation of the relevant documents, the responsible Authority shall:
  - Send a copy of those documents to each consultation body;
  - Take such steps as it considers appropriate to bring the preparation of the relevant documents to the attention of the persons who, in the Authority’s opinion, are affected or likely to be affected by, or have an interest in the decisions involved in the assessment and adoption of the plan or programme concerned, required under the Environmental assessment of Plans and Programmes Directive (“the public consultees”); and
  - Inform the public consultees of:

(i) The address of the website at which the relevant documents may be viewed and downloaded free of charge;

(ii) The fact that a copy of the relevant documents may be obtained by email from the responsible authority;

(iii) The fact that a copy of the relevant documents may be obtained by post from the responsible authority, provided that it is reasonably practicable for the authority to provide a copy by post;

(iv) The address, email address and telephone number for the purpose of requesting a copy of the relevant documents either by email or by post;

(v) Whether a charge will be made for copies of the relevant documents provided by post and the amount of any charge; and

(vi) The telephone number which can be used to contact the responsible authority for enquiries in relation to the relevant documents.

- The period referred to in paragraph (2) (d) must be of such length as will ensure that the consultation bodies and the public consultees are given an effective opportunity to express their opinion on the relevant documents. (Reg. 13 (1), (2), and (3)).
  - Consultation on the draft Local Plan document is taking place between **XX and XX 2025**. The consultation documents are accompanied by this SA Report.
  - Where a responsible Authority, other than the Secretary of State, is of the opinion that a plan or programme for which it is the responsible Authority is likely to have significant effects on the environment of a Member State, it shall, as soon as reasonably practicable after forming that opinion:
    - Notify the Secretary of State of its opinion and of the reasons for it; and
- Supply the Secretary of State with a copy of the plan or programme concerned, and of the accompanying environmental report. (Reg. 14 (1)).
  - The Local Plan is not expected to have significant effects on other EU Member States.

## Taking the environmental report and the results of the consultations into account in decision-making (Reg. 16)

### Provision of information on the decision

- As soon as reasonably practicable after the adoption of a plan or programme for which an environmental assessment has been carried out under these Regulations, the responsible Authority shall:
  - Publish the plan or programme, as adopted, its accompanying environmental report and a statement containing the particulars specified in paragraph (4) (“the relevant adoption documents”) on a public website at which the documents may be viewed and downloaded free of charge;
  - Provide a copy of the relevant adoption documents by email to any person who requests a copy, as soon as reasonably practicable after receipt of that person’s request;
  - Provide one copy of the relevant adoption documents by post to any person who requests a copy, as soon as reasonably practicable after receipt of that person’s request, unless it is not reasonably practicable to provide a copy by post for reasons connected to the effects of coronavirus, including restrictions on movement; and
  - Make available a telephone number for the public to make enquiries in relation to the relevant adoption documents. (Reg. 16 (1)).
  - To be addressed after the Local Plan is adopted.
- As soon as reasonably practicable after the adoption of a plan or programme:
  - The responsible Authority shall inform (i) the consultation bodies; (ii) the persons who, in relation to the plan or programme, were public consultees for the purposes of regulation 13; and (iii) where the responsible Authority is not the Secretary of state, the Secretary of

State, that the plan or programme has been adopted, and a statement containing the following particulars:

- How environmental considerations have been integrated into the plan or programme;
  - –How the environmental report has been taken into account;
  - –How opinions expressed in response to: (i) the invitation in regulation 13(2)(d); (ii) action taken by the responsible Authority in accordance with regulation 13(4), have been taken into account;
  - –How the results of any consultations entered into under regulation 14(4) have been taken into account;
  - –The reasons for choosing the plan or programme as adopted, in the light of the other reasonable alternatives dealt with; and
  - –The measures that are to be taken to monitor the significant environmental effects of the implementation of the plan or programme.
- To be addressed after the Local Plan is adopted.

## Monitoring

- The responsible Authority shall monitor the significant effects of the implementation of each plan or programme with the purpose of identifying unforeseen adverse effects at an early stage and being able to undertake appropriate remedial action. (Reg. 17(1)).
- To be addressed after the Local Plan is adopted. Chapter 7 proposes a number of monitoring indicators.

## Quality assurance

- Environmental reports should be of a sufficient standard to meet the requirements of the SEA Regulations.



- This report has been produced in line with current guidance and good practice for SEA/SA and this section demonstrates where the requirements of the SEA Regulations have been met.

## Structure of the SA Report

**1.22** This chapter describes the background to the production of the Colchester Local Plan, an overview of the contents of the plan and the requirement to undertake SA. The remainder of this SA Report is structured into the following sections:

- Chapter 2 describes the approach that is being taken to the SA of the Colchester Local Plan.
- Chapter 3 describes the relationship between the Colchester Local Plan and other relevant plans, policies and programmes; summarises the social, economic and environmental characteristics of Colchester and identifies the key sustainability issues.
- Chapter 4 presents the SA findings for options for the distribution of growth in Colchester and the site options the Council has considered as part of the plan making process.
- Chapter 5 presents the SA findings for the various elements of the draft Local Plan, including the spatial strategy, various topic-based policies and site allocation policies.
- Chapter 6 presents the cumulative effects of the Local Plan draft policies and proposed site allocations.
- Chapter 7 presents proposed monitoring indicators for the potential effects of the Local Plan.
- Chapter 8 describes the next steps to be undertaken for the plan and the SA.
- Appendix A presents the consultation comments received in relation to the SA scoping work completed to date and explains how they have been addressed.

## Chapter 1 Introduction

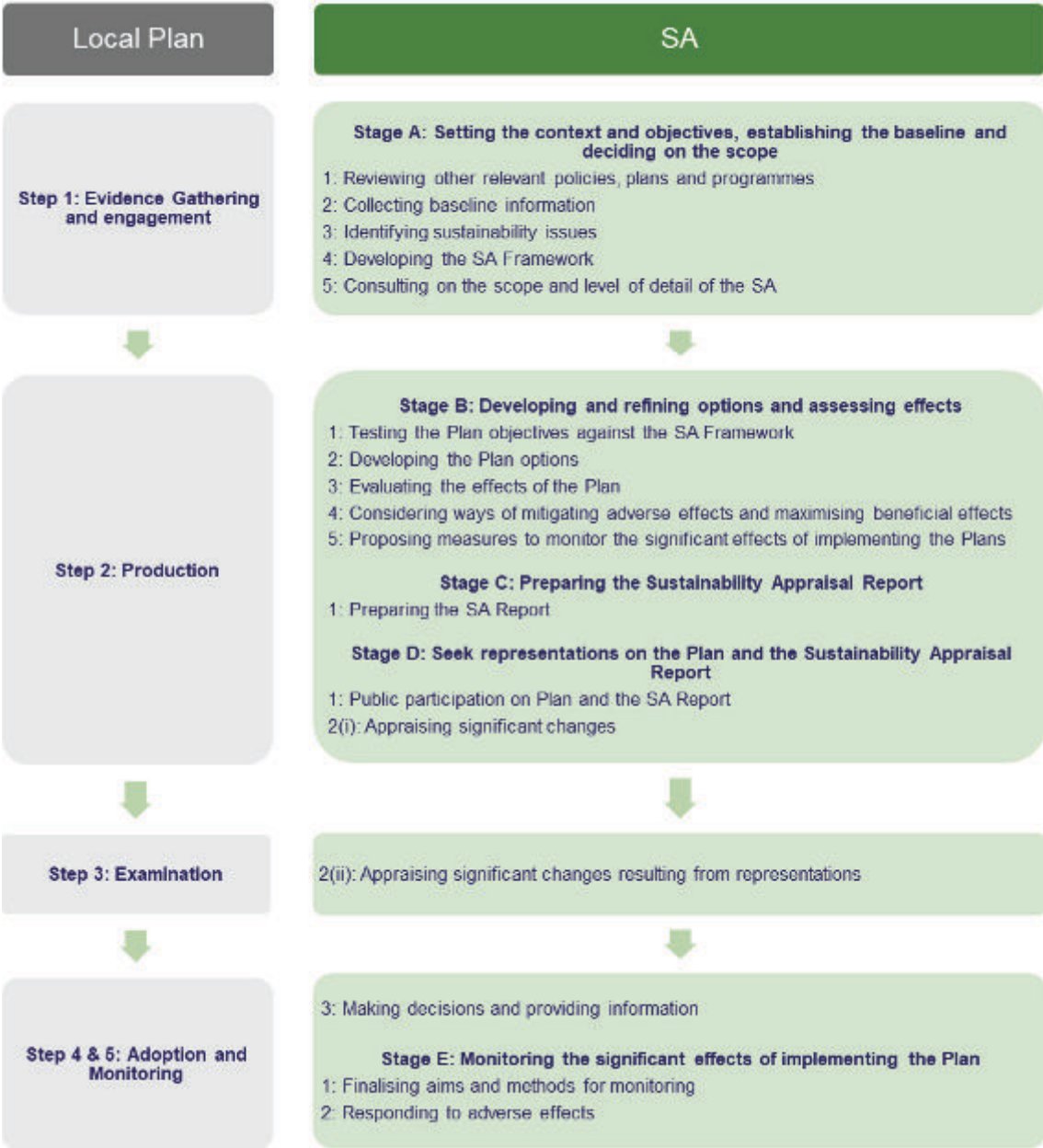
- Appendix B presents a review of relevant plans, policies and programmes.
- Appendix C presents baseline sustainability information for Colchester.
- Appendix D presents the site assessment criteria used to appraise the site options considered for the draft Local Plan.
- Appendix E presents the audit trail table of decision making for each of the site options considered for potential allocation in the plan.

## Chapter 2

# Methodology

**2.1** In addition to complying with legal requirements, the approach being taken to the SA of the Colchester Local Plan Review is based on current good practice and the guidance on SA/SEA set out in the Government's Planning Practice Guidance. This calls for SA to be carried out as an integral part of the plan-making process and Figure 2.1 sets out the main stages of the plan-making process and shows how these correspond to the SA process.

Figure 2.1: Corresponding stages in plan-making and SA



2.2 The sections below describe the approach that has been taken to the SA of the Colchester Local Plan Review to date and provide information on the subsequent stages of the process.

## SA Stage A: Scoping

**2.3** The scoping stage of SA involves understanding the social, economic and environmental baseline for the plan area as well as the sustainability policy context and key sustainability issues and using these to inform the appraisal framework. The Scoping Report (2024) was prepared in-house by the Colchester City Council planning team. LUC provided critical friend support to the Council's team as the report was prepared to ensure that the requirements of the SEA Regulations were fully met and best practice was exercised.

**2.4** Details of the main components of the scoping stage are set out below. Each component was initially presented in the Scoping Report prepared by the Council team in April 2024 and was subsequently updated as part of the preparation of this report by the LUC SA team.

### Review other relevant policies, plans and programmes to establish policy context

**2.5** The Local Plan is not prepared in isolation; rather it is prepared within the context of other policies, plans and programmes. The SEA Regulations require the Environmental Report to describe the relationship of the plan with other relevant plans and programmes. It should also be consistent with environmental protection legislation and support attainment of sustainability objectives that have been established at the international, national, and regional/sub-regional levels.

**2.6** A review was therefore undertaken of other policies, plans, and programmes at the international, national, regional and sub-regional levels that were considered to be relevant to the scope of the Local Plan. The review is presented in Appendix B.



## Collect baseline information to establish sustainability context

**2.7** Information on existing environmental, social and economic conditions in the plan area provides the baseline against which the plan's effects can be assessed in the SA and monitored during the plan's implementation.

**2.8** Baseline information can also be combined with an understanding of drivers of change that are likely to persist regardless of the local plan to understand the likely future sustainability conditions in the absence of the local plan.

**2.9** The SEA Regulations require the Environmental Report to describe relevant aspects of the current state of the environment and how they are likely to evolve without the plan. An understanding of this likely future, together with the assessed effects of the plan itself, additionally allows the SA to report on cumulative effects, another requirement of the SEA Regulations.

**2.10** The SEA Regulations require assessment of effects in relation to the following 'SEA topics': biodiversity, population, fauna, flora, soil, water, air, climatic factors, material assets, cultural heritage (including architectural and archaeological heritage), landscape, and the inter-relationship between these. Baseline information was therefore collected in relation to the SEA topics and additional sustainability topics were also addressed, covering broader socio-economic issues such as housing, access to services, crime and safety, education and employment. This reflects the integrated approach that is being taken to the SA and SEA processes. Baseline information for the City has been updated as part of the preparation of this iteration of the SA Report and is presented in Appendix C.

## Identify sustainability issues

**2.11** The baseline information also allows the identification of existing sustainability issues, including problems, as required by the SEA Regulations.

**2.12** Sustainability issues and their likely evolution without the Local Plan Review are detailed in Appendix C and summarised in Chapter 3.

## Develop the SA framework

**2.13** The relevant sustainability objectives identified by the review of international, national and regional policies, plans, and programmes as well as those applicable to Colchester were considered alongside the key sustainability issues facing the City, identified by the collection and review of baseline information. This review work helped to inform the development of a set of sustainability objectives (the 'SA framework') against which the effects of the plan would be assessed. These objectives also take into account the types of issues that are capable of being affected by the land use planning system.

**2.14** Development of the SA framework is not a requirement of the SEA Regulations but is a recognised way in which the likely sustainability effects of a plan can be transparently and consistently described, analysed and compared. The SA framework comprises a series of sustainability objectives and supporting criteria that are used to guide the appraisal of the policies and proposals within a plan. The SA framework that has been used in this way throughout the plan-making process is presented in Chapter 3.

## Development of the site assessment criteria

**2.15** To ensure consistency and transparency when assessing the likely sustainability effects of development site options considered for allocation in the Local Plan Review, the SA framework is supported by a set of site assessment

criteria. These criteria set out clear, mostly spatial, parameters within which defined effects would be recorded, based on factors such as the distance of site options from sensitive environmental receptors (e.g. designated biodiversity sites or areas of higher landscape sensitivity) and distance to key services and facilities (e.g. service centres or public transport links). More detail on the criteria used in the SA is provided in Appendix D of this SA Report. The criteria were applied through the use of a Geographical Information System (GIS) and appropriate digital data.

## Consult on the scope and level of detail of the SA

**2.16** Public and stakeholder participation is an important element of the SA and wider plan-making processes. It helps to ensure that the SA Report is robust and has due regard for all appropriate information that will support the plan in making a contribution to sustainable development.

**2.17** The SEA Regulations require the statutory consultation bodies (the Environment Agency, Historic England, and Natural England) to be consulted “when deciding on the scope and level of detail of the information that must be included” in the SA Report. The scope and level of detail of the SA is governed by the SA framework and the statutory consultees have therefore been consulted on this when it was developed as part of the scoping process for the SA Report [[See reference 2](#)]. This consultation on the SA Scoping Report was undertaken for a five week period ending in May 2024.

**2.18** Appendix A lists the comments that were received on the SA during this period of consultation and describes how each one has been addressed. In light of the comments received, a number of amendments were made to the review of policies, plans, and programmes, the baseline information, key sustainability issues and the SA framework.

## SA Stage B: Developing and refining options and assessing effects

**2.19** Developing options for a plan is an iterative process, usually involving a number of consultations with the public and stakeholders. Consultation responses and the SA can help to identify where there may be other 'reasonable alternatives' to the options being considered for a plan.

**2.20** In relation to the SA Report, Part 3 of the SEA Regulations 12 (2) requires that:

"The report must identify, describe and evaluate the likely significant effects on the environment of—

(a) implementing the plan or programme; and

(b) reasonable alternatives, taking into account the objectives and the geographical scope of the plan or programme."

**2.21** Schedule 2 (h) of the SEA Regulations requires that the Environmental Report includes a description of:

"(h) an outline of the reasons for selecting the alternatives dealt with."

**2.22** The SEA Regulations require that the alternative policies and site allocations considered for inclusion in a plan that must be subject to SA are 'reasonable', therefore alternatives that are not reasonable do not need to be subject to appraisal. Examples of unreasonable alternatives could include policy

options that do not meet the objectives of the plan or national policy (e.g. the NPPF) or site allocation options that are unavailable or undeliverable.

**2.23** The SA findings are not the only factors taken into account when determining a preferred option to take forward in a plan. Indeed, there will often be an equal number of positive or negative effects identified by the SA for each option, such that it is not possible to rank them based on sustainability performance in order to select a preferred option. Factors such as public opinion, deliverability and conformity with national policy will also be taken into account by plan-makers when selecting preferred options for their plan.

**2.24** The following sections describe the process that was followed in identifying and appraising options for the Local Plan. The alternative options were identified by the Council based on the most up-to-date evidence. The stages of options development and accompanying SA to date are outlined below.

## Reasons for selecting the alternatives dealt with

### Options for the spatial distribution of growth in the District

**2.25** The Colchester City Council Paper Spatial Strategy Approach and Options (Spring 2024) set out the options for the spatial distribution of growth (i.e. the spatial strategy) in Colchester. The paper clarifies that the Local Plan will need to use the green network and waterways and the 'creating a better environment' agenda as the starting point and key purpose of the Local Plan Review as agreed by Local Plan Committee in October 2023. The challenges identified as part of the identifying of relevant options included preventing coalescence of settlements and the protection of rural character, whilst allowing villages to grow sustainability to meet local needs for housing, employment and infrastructure.



**2.26** The Council considered that there are different approaches which may represent a spatial pattern which may have different spatial options within them, or as a combination of one or more approach. Whilst it is important to keep the options realistic and relatable, it is helpful to understand the spatial approaches at a high level informing the options themselves.

As such officers developed seven spatial strategy approaches. These are:

- Substantial Growth – Garden Communities and Suburbs
- Hubs and Spokes Model
- Environment Led
- Transport Corridors
- Expand and Regeneration of Colchester Urban Area
- Proportionate Growth
- Community Gain

**2.27** Officers used the spatial strategy approaches set out above to develop seven spatial strategy options for Colchester. These were developed taking into account the emerging evidence base and early engagement undertaken as part of the Issues an Options for the Colchester Local Plan Review. Some of these options combine more than one of the approaches above. The spatial strategy options currently are:

- Option 1: Continuing existing Spatial Strategy
- Option 2: New Garden Community
- Option 3: Garden Suburbs
- Option 4: Intensification in the City Centre
- Option 5: Transport Corridors
- Option 6: Hubs and Spokes
- Option 7: Environment Led

**2.28** Each of the options includes the Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community which is addressing the longer term needs for both Colchester and Tendring. Further detail about each of the spatial strategy options considered is set out in Chapter 4 which includes their detailed appraisal.

**2.29** The preferred spatial strategy has been developed through the work on the Issues and Options engagement, and consideration of evidence and initial sustainability appraisal assessment. It recognises the need to create a better environment, protecting character and assets whilst allowing sustainable growth to meet the needs and level of growth required as well as adequate supporting infrastructure.

**2.30** Considering the site assessment undertaken by officers through the SLAA, the findings of the SA in relation to the reasonable alternative spatial strategy options and site options and the other elements of the evidence base for the Local Plan the Council decided to progress with a spatial strategy that most reflects Option 1: Continuing existing Spatial Strategy. The preferred spatial strategy takes forward the existing spatial strategy, also incorporating some of the strengths and positives from a number of the alternative options. These include;

- Focus on the existing urban area and intensification where appropriate largely within growth and opportunity areas;
- Significant scale of growth along transport corridors;
- Growth in the other settlements, including some of Colchester's smaller villages, to support communities and provide opportunities to sustain and enhance facilities and infrastructure; and
- Ensure protection and enhancement of the most sensitive environments.

**2.31** The level of housing and employment growth tested through the SA is based on the level identified through the Standard Methodology calculation for the District as evidenced through the Housing Needs Assessment [\[See reference 3\]](#) and the Employment Land Study [\[See reference 4\]](#) for the District. No further levels of growth have been tested given.

2.32 XXX

## Options for potential site allocations

**2.33** The Council undertook a Strategic Land Availability Assessment (SLAA) and part of the preparation of the draft Local Plan. Its purpose is to identify what land is capable of being developed and to assess the constraints and opportunities of developing that land.

**2.34** In line with the PPG, the SLAA considered sites capable of delivering 5 or more dwellings or economic development on sites of 0.25ha (or 500m<sup>2</sup> floor space) and above. The first stage of identifying the site options to be considered for the Local Plan was a desktop review of:

- Existing housing and economic development allocations and development briefs not yet with planning permission;
- Sites considered through previous SLAAs;
- Planning Permissions for housing and economic development that are unimplemented and those that been refused or withdrawn (in relation to spatial strategy) where decision issued after October 2017;
- Land in the local authority's ownership;
- Surplus and likely to become surplus public sector land;
- Sites with permission in principle or identified brownfield land;
- Vacant and derelict land and buildings;
- Additional opportunities for unestablished uses (e.g., making productive use of under-utilised facilities such as garage blocks);
- Business requirements and aspirations;
- Site in rural locations;
- Large scale redevelopment and redesign of existing residential or economic areas;

- Sites in adjoining villages and rural exception sites;
- Potential urban extensions and new free standing settlements; and
- Existing green space.

**2.35** In addition to the desk top review, the Council also issued a Call for Sites to enable people to promote sites for consideration and assessment. A Call for Sites was launched in Autumn 2023, closing on 5 January 2024.

**2.36** Sites identified from these sources were then subject to an initial survey of constraints. This determined where a site should progress to the next stage of assessment of the SLAA, taking into account national policy and designations. Sites were considered in relation to the following high level 'show stopper' constraints. Whether the site is:

- Physically isolated in the open countryside;
- Located wholly within flood zone 3;
- Located wholly within a National Landscape, SSSI, SAC, SPA, Scheduled Monument, ancient woodland or Ramsar site; or
- Accessible by vehicle from the public highway.

**2.37** Following the initial survey (Stage 1), the remaining SLAA sites proceeded to the full Stage 2 site assessment. These sites were considered against a range of constraints and their potential to be mitigated to assess where are potentially available, suitable, and deliverable. The initial survey (Stage 1) is the only part of the SLAA where a site could be excluded from further assessment and as such all sites that passed the Stage 1 assessment were subject to appraisal through the SA.

**2.38** These sites were initially appraised in September 2024. Following this the Council provided LUC with a list of new/amended site boundaries and changes to the site capacities in addition to the sites already appraised in the SA process up to September 2024. These changes were provided by the Council for a number of reasons including to:

- Remove potentially sensitive areas of the site;
- Include additional areas of the site to ensure development is accessible and viable;
- Merge sites where they were could viably be delivered together; and
- Reflect additional areas of land promoted following the closing of the call for sites.

**2.39** To ensure all reasonable alternatives have been given equal consideration, the appraisal of the options was updated in December 2024 to consider all new and amended sites provided after September 2024.

**2.40** An overview of how the sites proposed for allocation in the draft Local Plan is set out by the various parts of the District below.

## Colchester

**2.41** Within Colchester urban area and city centre, there is a range of employment opportunities, facilities, services, open space and sustainable travel choices for existing and future communities. This is the most sustainable location, and growth is directed here in the first instance.

**2.42** The Preferred Options Local Plan includes allocations to deliver substantial growth in the Colchester urban area with requirements for masterplanning on larger sites to ensure good placemaking.

## City Centre

**2.43** The Council adopted a Colchester City Centre Masterplan in January 2024. The Masterplan is about building on existing strengths and transforming the City Centre while conserving its proud heritage. The goal is greater prosperity, a better quality of life for all, and providing more choices for getting



into and around the city. The Masterplan includes many things for people who already live, work and travel through the city centre today, it is very much about creating a city centre for the future. It looks to the needs of young people today, for our children, and our children's children.

### North Colchester

**2.44** North Colchester has seen significant change in recent years, this has included the opening of the A12 junction 28 and the Northern Approaches Road (Via Urbis Romanae) and the development of the Northern Gateway sports and leisure park, and Severalls and Chesterwell urban extensions. There is good open space provision and links between open spaces, which should be improved with development. Colchester Business Park and other employment uses are located in North Colchester. There is potential for development in the North-East to benefit from the development of the Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community with links to the University of Essex. Whilst part of the Northern Gateway development has occurred north of the A12, the A12 continues to act as a strong boundary. North-west Colchester includes large areas of protected open space and areas at high risk of flooding. Parts of the north of Colchester city (Plains Farm) are within Tendring district.

### South Colchester

**2.45** South Colchester is home to the Garrison. Colchester became a garrison 2000 years ago, and today its military tradition is part of Colchester's outlook and character. Colchester has been a modern Garrison Town for the past 165 years. For the past 21 years, it has been home to 16 Air Assault Brigade, the UK's rapid response force. There are higher levels of deprivation than other parts of the city district (46.3% of households in Old Heath and Hythe and 43.6% of households in Berechurch are not deprived in any dimension compared to 48.4% for the England average) and less variety of community and social infrastructure than others parts of the city. The 10 Year Plan for primary schools indicates that there is some capacity in schools over the next 5-year period There is additional capacity of 60 places per year within existing

accommodation of the schools in City southeast (Berechurch). Within South Colchester is the largest remaining section of semi-natural habitat on the Colchester plateau, free from large-scale development or aggregate extraction because of its history of military ownership. It comprises a broad wedge of land reaching from the Roman River in the south most of the way to the city centre. The southern section slopes down towards the river, but most of this area is broadly level, bisected by the narrow valley of Birch Brook.

### West Colchester

**2.46** West Colchester has seen significant change in recent years. This has included urban extensions to Stanway delivering a significant amount of new housing, a new primary school (Lakelands) and Stane Park retail centre. Like North Colchester, the A12 continues to act as a strong boundary. The railway also provides a strong boundary to the north. The A12 and railway line continues to define the northern boundary of West Colchester. The 10 Year Plan for primary schools indicates that there is additional capacity of 45 places per year within existing accommodation of the schools in City southwest (Stanway). There is generally good open space provision and links between open spaces, which should be improved with development but with gaps to the west of the area.

## Growth and Opportunity Areas

**2.47** The Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community, Marks Tey and other large-scale developments will deliver substantial growth, enabling significant community benefits to be realised. Opportunities for growth along key transport corridors, particularly with access to the rail network are favoured subject to sufficient capacity on the network and/or appropriate mitigation to support any enhancement required.

## Hythe Opportunity Areas

**2.48** The Hythe area is a former commercial harbour which includes some rundown and underused industrial land. There has been change in this area over the last few years, through expansion of the University of Essex and student accommodation. The area is an established regeneration area that seeks to deliver sustainable, mixed-use neighbourhoods, identifying the River Colne as a feature and respecting the historic character of the area.

**2.49** There is good access to Hythe Station and the Hythe is located close to the University of Essex and City Centre but is constrained by flooding due to its proximity to the River Colne.

**2.50** A number of sites are allocated for residential development in this area (see policies PP14, PP15 and PP16). However, there are additional opportunities at the Hythe, through wider regeneration.

**2.51** Regeneration will involve partnership working with public sector agencies, the local community and other key stakeholders including Community Land Trusts and the Hythe Task and Finish Group (responding to flooding issues in the area).

## Magdalen Street Opportunity Area

**2.52** Magdalen Street is a key gateway to Colchester City Centre. There are a number of older commercial buildings suitable for reuse and or redevelopment to enhance this area. The area has changed in recent years through the development of student accommodation and Aldi.

**2.53** The area is located close to Colchester Town Station and future development is planned as a part of the Transforming the City Centre project, funded by the Town Deal and Levelling Up Funds. This includes improvements

to the St Botolph junction to modernise the area creating a better balance between pedestrians, cyclists and motorists and improve the public space.

## Marks Tey Growth Area

**2.54** Marks Tey is located at the junction of the A12 and A120. It is essentially a linear settlement that, while being sustainably located has been fragmented by the railway and A12/A120. It contains a good range of facilities which are located in different sections of the village; a railway station to the east providing an interchange between the mainline to London and branch services; a larger area of modern housing, village hall, commercial areas and the primary school to the west and retail facilities to the south of the A12.

**2.55** Large areas of land have previously been promoted for development in and around Marks Tey and there is an opportunity for growth to help reconnect the village. Its strategic location along with the benefits the train station brings, add weight to the potential for expansion. However, there is also recognition that infrastructure improvements will be required in order to support development at the scale promoted. Accordingly, the Plan allocates sites for housing which could deliver up to 2500 new homes within the plan period, but on the proviso that it can be demonstrated that additional vehicular movements can be safely accommodated on the A12 and A120 without adding to congestion.

**2.56** Additional employment land is also allocated, recognising the areas potential given its location on the strategic road network and its position in relation to Stansted to the west and the Haven ports to the west.

**2.57** The policies reflect the fact that it is not anticipated that all the growth promoted can be accommodated without significant upgrades to the A12 and A120. The Growth Area designation is intended to demonstrate that some development would be acceptable within the overall sites, subject to further evidence

## Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community Growth Area

**2.58** Whilst the Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community is not being tested as part of the SA and Plan, it is a Growth Area within Colchester's settlement hierarchy.

**2.59** The principles of the Garden Community are established through the Section 1 Local Plan and more detailed policies on the design and development of the Garden Community are included in the Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community Development Plan Document. Policy ST9 of the Preferred Options Plan provides a summary of what will be included in the Garden Community with reference to housing numbers, employment provision and the decision-making process.

## Large Settlements

**2.60** Colchester's large settlements have the most facilities, services, travel choices and opportunities. These settlements also have some of the largest populations of Colchester. However, in the case of West Mersea and Wivenhoe, these settlements have more environmental constraints. Accordingly, the level of growth proposed in West Mersea and Wivenhoe is balanced with the environmental constraints.

## Tiptree

**2.61** Tiptree is a large village located on the southwest boundary of Colchester. 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. Tiptree has a district centre with a high number of key services and community facilities. It is the only large village with a secondary school. A neighbourhood plan with site allocations was adopted in 2023. The vision of the neighbourhood plan is to

deliver a link road in the north of Tiptree, reducing congestion throughout the village. This plan seeks to build on the work undertaken to inform the Neighbourhood Plan and ensure the vision can be achieved.

### West Mersea

**2.62** West Mersea is a small coastal town located on the confluence of the Colne and Blackwater Estuaries approximately 15km from Colchester city centre. There are frequent bus routes serving the town to and from Colchester and serving the local secondary schools. West Mersea has numerous town centre and community uses both within the district centre and throughout the town, making it a sustainable settlement. However, it has environmental constraints with the Colne and Blackwater estuaries, which are designated at international level for nature conservation (the Colne and Blackwater Estuaries are Special Protection Areas and Ramsar sites and form part of the Essex Estuaries Special Area of Conservation). A balance is needed to allow some development in this sustainable settlement but to limit this to avoid adverse effects on the integrity of the Colne and Blackwater estuaries.

### Wivenhoe

**2.63** Wivenhoe 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. There are also frequent bus services between Wivenhoe and Colchester, a cycle path between Wivenhoe and the University of Essex and the popular Wivenhoe Trail along the river to Colchester. However, there are a number of constraints which has influenced the amount of growth considered appropriate for Wivenhoe beyond 2033. Wivenhoe is bordered by the River Colne to the west and south. In addition to the physical boundary that the river presents, land falls within flood risk zone 3. There are a number of environmental designations surrounding Wivenhoe. The Upper Colne Marshes Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) lies to the west and south of Wivenhoe. The Colne Estuary Special Protection Area (SPA), Ramsar Site and SSSI and Essex Estuaries Special Area of Conservation



(SAC) lie to the south-east of Wivenhoe. The Colne Local Nature Reserve and Local Wildlife Site runs adjacent to the built-up western boundary. The Coastal Protection Belt surrounds the west and south of Wivenhoe. Wivenhoe Gravel Pit SSSI lies to the north-east of Wivenhoe.

## Medium Settlements

**2.64** Medium settlements include settlements with a range of community and social infrastructure but to a lesser extent than the infrastructure within the larger settlements. These medium settlements are capable of accommodating growth appropriate to the size, environmental constraints and scale and infrastructure of the settlement.

### Abberton and Langenhoe

**2.65** 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.

### Boxted

**2.66** Development in Boxted is currently concentrated within three distinct settlement areas: Boxted Cross, Workhouse Hill and an area to the south of the parish to the west of Straight Road. Development in Boxted Cross has grown in a linear manner around Straight Road/Carters Hill, Dedham Road/Cage Lane crossroads extending north eastwards as far as Cooks Lane. Boxted Cross is considered to be a sustainable location for growth as it is reasonably well served by a number of services and facilities.

## Chappel and Wakes Colne

**2.67** Chappel and Wakes Colne are separate settlements but are located adjacent to one another and share services and facilities. Chappel has one core settlement area with three remote/dispersed small clusters of housing at Rose Green, Swan Street and Wakes Street. The core focus of Chapel is centred around the primary school. The settlement is defined to the east by the railway line, which is the operational Sudbury to Marks Tey branch line. Wakes Colne is the main settlement area with smaller dispersed clusters of housing around Inworth Lane and at Middle Green. The core focus of Wakes Colne is around the railway, defined to the east by the railway line, which is operational Sudbury to Marks Tey branch line. The railway station is also home to Chappel and Wakes Colne Railway Museum which hosts many events and houses a number of refurbished steam trains.

## Copford

**2.68** Development in Copford has grown in a linear manner along London Road, eastwards towards Stanway and westwards towards Marks Tey. Copford Green is located to the south of Copford and is one of Colchester's small settlements.

## Dedham and Dedham Heath

**2.69** Most of the Dedham parish area falls within the Dedham Vale National Landscape (formerly AONB). The largest settlement within the parish is the main historic village of Dedham to the north. A smaller area of predominantly housing called Dedham Heath lies to the south and two smaller clusters of properties lie to the west and east of Dedham Heath known as Lamb Corner and Bargate Lane respectively. Dedham has a range of services and facilities, including its own primary school. Dedham Heath is located approx. 1km away and is on a bus route to Dedham.

## Eight Ash Green

**2.70** Eight Ash Green comprises three main areas of which two are considered sustainable and have a range of services and facilities: Eight Ash Green/Fordham Heath and Eight Ash Green /Choats Corner. Seven Star Green is not considered sustainable as it is located south of Halstead Road and is separated by this main road from the key facilities available in the village.

## Fordham

**2.71** Fordham is a linear settlement with a core concentration of development which has evolved over time, including a number of small estate type developments. A primary school is situated at the southern end of the village just beyond the settlement boundary. The village hall and a convenience shop / post office are located within the core of the concentrated area of development. Also within the village is a playing field and a community orchard maintained by the local community. A small cluster of dwellings to the north along Plummers Road is separated by the Grade II listed Moat Hall which is situated on a significant mature landscaped garden which adjoins an established community woodland managed by the Woodland Trust.

## Great Horkesley

**2.72** 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). More recently development has spread westwards along a number of roads off the main road. Land to the east of the main road has remained relatively free of development and is more open in character. 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 are a range of services and facilities within the village.

## Great Tey

**2.73** Great Tey is situated north of the Roman River and is surrounded by largely flat arable land. The parish of Great Tey is a small rural community that contains a few local amenities including a village pub, a school, and a Norman church. The community originally developed at the southern end, as evidenced by the Conservation Area, with a newer small estate to the north and ribbon development along the main road through the village between Little Tey and Chappel.

## Langham

**2.74** Langham includes two areas of settlement, Langham Moor and St. Margaret's Cross, linked by School Road. Langham is located close to the A12, and the spatial strategy includes opportunities for growth along key transport corridors. A former WWII airfield lies between the two areas. The village contains a mixture of historic properties and farmhouses with more recent development. Langham contains a public house, a community café, a community shop, community centre, recreation ground, a playground, football pitches and tennis courts.

## Layer de la Haye

**2.75** Development in Layer de la Haye is concentrated within two settlement areas: Layer village and Malting Green. The two areas are physically separated by a large grass sward known as Malting Green, a large part of which is a designated Local Wildlife Site (Co 93). It is also an important open space that plays an important function in defining the rural character of the existing two settlement areas.

## Rowhedge

**2.76** Rowhedge lies within the parish of East Donyland, which covers the south-east of Colchester. The settlement was historically centred around the shipbuilding and fishing industries of the River Colne. The village lies on the opposite bank of the river to Wivenhoe but despite its close proximity to the town, access is only available by road through Colchester. Rowhedge has good public transport and road links to Colchester and contains its own primary school, post office and recreational facilities.

## West Bergholt

**2.77** West Bergholt is situated approximately 1km to the north-west of Colchester. The village is centered around a triangle of roads: the B1508 Colchester Road, Chapel Road and Lexden Road. West Bergholt is separated from Colchester by an area of open countryside and the valleys of St Botolph's Brook and the River Colne. The A12 bisects the open countryside between West Bergholt and Colchester. The majority of the more recent development has occurred on the northern side of Colchester Road.

## Small Settlements

**2.78** Small scale growth is proposed in some of Colchester's small settlements reflecting the size and level of community and social infrastructure and environmental constraints.

## Aldham

**2.79** Aldham is a nucleated settlement that has developed around the junction of Brook Road/New Road and Green Lane/Tey Road with more modern development to the north-east and south-east. Aldham is rural in character and is accessed by narrow country lanes but is close to the A12/A120 and A1124.

## Birch and Layer Breton

**2.80** Birch Green is the largest area of housing within the wider Birch parish area (with the smaller historic core of Birch to the north and a separate, isolated cluster of dwellings known as Hardy's Green to the north-west). Birch Green is broadly triangular in shape where development has filled the space between Birch Street, Mill Lane and Straight Way, with some development extending beyond Mill Lane and Birch Street to the north and Crayes Green to the south-east. Birch Green is rural in character, has limited connections to the strategic road network but has a few key services including its own primary school and village hall.

## Fingringhoe

**2.81** Fingringhoe is essentially a linear settlement comprised of two main residential areas that have developed either side of the historic core of Fingringhoe, which contains a primary school, church and public house.

## Messing

**2.82** Messing is located north of Tiptree. Messing is very rural and historic in character and is accessed by narrow country lanes. It has limited services and facilities, but it has a primary school.

## Peldon

**2.83** Housing in Peldon is laid out in a triangular pattern around three roads. The settlement boundary in Peldon currently comprises two roughly equivalent areas of housing on either side of two of the three roads. The triangular residential area is surrounded by arable farms. The village lies within the Coastal Protection Belt.



2.84 XXX

## Appraisal methodology

**2.85** The draft policies and sites included in the draft Local Plan as well as all reasonable alternatives were appraised against the SA objectives in the SA framework (see Chapter 3). This included the appraisal of a number of options for the spatial distribution of development in the plan area as well as the preferred approach to development taken forward in the draft Local Plan. Symbols were attributed to each element of the plan to indicate its likely effects on each SA objective, as shown in Table 2.1. The colours used to display the range of the effects were chosen to allow as many people as possible to read and understand the outputs of the assessment work. This includes people with visual impairments such as colour blindness.

**2.86** The dividing line in making a decision about the significance of an effect is often quite small. Where either (++) or (--) has been used to distinguish significant effects from more minor effects (+ or -), this is because the effect of an option or policy on the SA objective in question is considered to be of such magnitude that it will have a noticeable and measurable effect, taking into account other factors that may influence the achievement of that objective.

**2.87** For the appraisal work undertaken at the site options stage of the SA, most potential effects of site options were subject to a degree of uncertainty, e.g. due to the particular development design and site layout that could come forward. That uncertainty was generally only made explicit in the effects scores if factors such as the site design or layout could have such an effect as to substantially mitigate any adverse effects or substantially negate any beneficial effects that might otherwise occur. In such instances, the positive or negative effect recorded to reflect the distance of a site from a nearby sensitive receptor or service or facility is partially uncertain. This is shown by presenting the relevant effect (e.g. +, ++, - or --) combined with an uncertain effect (i.e. ?). The effect is colour coded as per the potential positive, negligible or negative effect (green, blue, orange, etc.). In some instances, the level of uncertainty was so great that

it was not possible to come to a judgement on the likely effect, in which case the score is shown as “?”.

**2.88** Where uncertainty was recorded in relation to any of the SA objectives for the options appraised, the reasons for this were explained in the findings.

**Table 2.1: Key to symbols and colour coding used in the SA**

Symbol and Colour Coding	Description
++	Significant positive effect likely.
++/-	Mixed significant positive and minor negative effects likely.
+	Minor positive effect likely.
+/-	Mixed minor effects likely.
++/--	Mixed significant effects likely.
-	Minor negative effect likely.
--/+	Mixed significant negative and minor positive effects likely.
--	Significant negative effect likely.
0	Negligible effect likely.
?	Likely effect uncertain.

## Site assessment criteria

**2.89** SA inevitably relies on an element of subjective judgement. However, in order to ensure consistency and transparency in the appraisal of the site options, a detailed set of criteria was developed and applied. These criteria set out clear, mostly spatial, parameters within which defined effects would be recorded, based on factors such as the distance of site options from sensitive

environmental receptors (e.g. designated biodiversity sites or areas of higher landscape sensitivity) and distance to key services and facilities (e.g. service centres or public transport links). The assumptions are presented in Appendix D of this SA Report. They were applied through the use of a Geographical Information System (GIS) and appropriate digital data.

## **SA Stage C: Preparing the Sustainability Appraisal report**

**2.90** This SA Report describes the process that has been undertaken to date in carrying out the appraisal of the Colchester Local Plan.

**2.91** The SA Report sets out the findings of the appraisal of the draft Local Plan Review objectives, policies, site allocations and proposed distribution of growth in the plan area, as well as the appraisal findings for the reasonable alternatives considered. Likely significant effects, both positive and negative, have been presented, taking into account the likely secondary, cumulative, synergistic, short, medium and long-term and permanent and temporary effects.

**2.92** These findings are set out in Chapter 4 to Chapter 6 of this SA Report.

## **SA Stage D: Consultation on the Local Plan and the SA Report**

**2.93** Information about consultation on the SA that has already taken place at earlier stages of plan-making has been provided above.

**2.94** Colchester City Council is now inviting comments on the Regulation 18 Local Plan and this SA Report, both of which are being published on the

Council's website. Consultation comments on this SA Report will be taken into account in the remaining stages of the SA.

## SA Stage E: Monitoring implementation of the Local Plan

**2.95** Recommendations for monitoring the likely significant social, environmental and economic effects of implementing the Colchester Local Plan Review are presented in Chapter 7.

### Difficulties and data limitations

**2.96** The SEA Regulations, Schedule 2(8) require the Environmental Report to include:

“...a description of how the assessment was undertaken including any difficulties (such as technical deficiencies or lack of know-how) encountered in compiling the required information.”

**2.97** A number of difficulties and limitations arose in the course of the site assessment work carried out to date and these are outlined below.

- There was a need to appraise a large number of site options, creating the potential for inconsistency. In order to provide consistency, detailed site assessment criteria relating to each of the SA objectives were developed and applied during the appraisal of site options (as described above).
- Heritage impact assessment work was only available to inform the appraisal of the site options taken forward for potential allocation in the plan. This approach is considered proportionate to the level of detail

required for the SA. All site options were initially considered in relation to their proximity heritage assets.

- The assumptions presented in Appendix C of this report include a number of distance-based criteria used to determine the likely effects of site options. Walking distances within these criteria were based on 'desired', 'acceptable' and 'preferred maximum' walking distances described in the publication 'Guidelines for Providing for Journeys on Foot' (Institution of Highways and Transport, 2000). Walking distances have been taken from the site edge to ensure consistency. Professional judgement was used to vary these standard distances in relation to certain services and facilities, for example, the distance used for railway stations was longer than the distance used for bus stops, reflecting the fact that individuals are likely to be prepared to walk greater distances to larger scale facilities; similarly secondary schools were assigned a longer walking distance than primary schools, reflecting the fact that older children should be capable of walking a longer distance and secondary schools are generally larger institutions with larger catchment areas than primary schools.
- All walking distances were measured on a straight line basis. In light of the relatively short distances being considered and the fact that digital data was not available to indicate the likely access points of services and facilities or the likely entry and exit points from the development site options, measurement of routes via the rights of way network was not carried out.
- Straight line distance-based criteria were used to define zones of influence within which varying levels of harm to environmental receptors were assumed to exist. In reality, the risk of harmful effects will sometimes depend on non-linear pathways (such as watercourses for water pollution effects) and will depend on the particular vulnerabilities of specific receptors. Nevertheless, the criteria used are considered to provide a consistent and robust approach to assessing the likely sustainability effects of site options that is proportionate to the level of detail of a Local Plan.
- Where site allocations were close to the Colchester City boundary, the spatial analysis was potentially affected by the fact that some spatial data required for proximity-based assessments were not available for all or part

of neighbouring districts. At all locations in Colchester and its immediate surroundings, data that is available at a national level (for example, railway stations and biodiversity designations) was drawn upon to inform the appraisal work. However, data relating to services and facilities was only available for the City only (i.e. for areas within the boundaries of Colchester only) and this is noted as a limitation.

- The level of detail of the site options appraisal work was commensurate with the level of detail of the Local Plan document. As such, more detailed aspects of the local environment were not investigated for each site option. For example, in relation to potential effects of the site options on biodiversity assets, the assessment was based on proximity to designated biodiversity sites, protected habitats and water courses. Other types of environmental receptor, such as non-designated sites, were not considered. This approach was considered to be robust, proportionate to the level of detail of a Local Plan, and the best way of ensuring a consistent level of detail in each site appraisal. Issues such as potential impacts on non-designated environmental receptors would be considered further as part of the planning application stage for sites allocated in the plan.
- The available GIS data for agricultural land classification did not distinguish between Grade 3a (considered to be best and most versatile agricultural land) and 3b (not considered to be best and most versatile agricultural land). Therefore, the potential for loss of any category of Grade 3 soils was considered on an equal footing. This provided a precautionary approach to the potential loss of higher value soils.
- The emerging Local Plan proposes a number of changes to the boundaries of Local Centres and District Centres in the District as well as to Colchester City Centre. The changes include the expansion of the area covered by Colchester City Centre and designation of a new Tollgate District Centre, a new Turner Rise District Centre and a new Highwoods District Centre. The boundaries of Tiptree District Centre, Wivenhoe District, Chesterwell Plaza Local Centre and Mersea Road Local Centre are also proposed for amendments. The site options appraisal work was updated to reflect the amended centre boundaries given that these



boundaries reflect the on-the-ground situation in relation to existing concentrated provisions of retail and other services and facilities.

# Chapter 3

## Sustainability context

### Introduction

**3.1** Schedule 2 of the SEA Regulations requires information on the following (numbering relates to the items listed in Schedule 2 of the Regulations):

1. “an outline of the contents and main objectives of the Plan and its relationship with other relevant plans or programmes” and
5. “the environmental protection objectives established at International, Community or Member State level, which are relevant to the plan and the way those objectives and any environmental considerations have been taken into account during its preparation”.

**3.2** An outline of the draft Local Plan Review was provided in Chapter 1 and further detail is provided in relation to individual policies in Chapter 5.

**3.3** The requirement to describe environmental protection objectives and how these have been taken into account is addressed in this chapter and more detail is provided for international and national plans and programmes of most relevance in Appendix B.

## Relationship with other relevant plans or programmes

**3.4** The Local Plan is not prepared in isolation and must be in conformity with a range of international, national and sub-national plans and programmes. The document needs to be consistent with international and national guidance and strategic planning policies and should contribute to the goals of a wide range of other programmes and strategies, such as those relating to social policy, culture and heritage. It must also conform to environmental protection legislation and the sustainability objectives established at an international, national and regional level. It should be noted that the policy context is inherently uncertain as the current framework outlined here is likely to change in response to a number of key factors:

- **Brexit** – Following the United Kingdom’s (UK) departure from the European Union (EU) on 31 January 2020, it entered a transition period which ended on 31 December 2020. Directly applicable EU law now no longer applies to the UK and the UK is free to repeal EU law that has been transposed into UK law. Where EU law has been transposed into UK law and not repealed, the relevant UK legislation is still referred to in this report.
- **Slow economic growth in the UK economy** – The Office for Budget Responsibility (OBR) reported that the economy stagnated in 2023, with growth of just over 1% expected in 2024, rising to 2% in 2025 [See [reference 5](#)]. The potential implications for planning and development potentially include Government spending cuts impacting on support available for services and facilities and new infrastructure.
- **COVID-19** – The COVID-19 pandemic has led to far-reaching changes to society in the UK and around the world. Which of these changes will continue in the long term is unknown and will depend on a variety of factors. Potential implications for planning and development include Government measures to re-start the economy via support for housebuilding and infrastructure development; changes to permitted development rights; increased remote working and reduced commuting

and related congestion and air pollution; increased prioritisation of walking and cycling over public transport; and increasing pressure to ensure satisfactory living standards are set and enforced.

- The Levelling Up and Regeneration Act – The Act received royal assent in October 2023 and sets out the direction for planning, making provisions to support the levelling-up agenda. As part of this, it seeks to streamline the planning process, including through a reform of existing EU-generated systems of SA/SEA, HRA and Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA), which will eventually be replaced by a simpler process known as 'Environmental Outcomes Reports'. However, secondary legislation is required to introduce the new regime and at present the requirement to undertake SEA remains in force.

**3.5** It is also likely that UK and sub-national climate change policy will change as public awareness and prioritisation of the threat of climate change grows, as illustrated by the increasing number of local authorities, including Colchester City Council, that have declared a climate emergency.

## International

**3.6** At the international level, there is a wide range of plans and programmes which act to inform and shape national level legislation. Planning policy in England at a national and local level (i.e. the NPPF and Local Plan) should be aware of and in conformity with the relevant legislation. The main sustainability objectives of international plans and programmes which are of most relevance for the Local Plan and the SA are provided in Appendix B.

## National

**3.7** There is an extensive range of national policies, plans and programmes that are of relevance to the Local Plan and SA process. A pragmatic and proportionate approach has been taken with regards to the identification of key

national policies, plans and programmes, focusing on those that are of most relevance. A summary of the main objectives of the NPPF and Planning Practice Guidance of relevance to the Local Plan and SA is provided below. In addition, the main sustainability objectives of other national plans and programmes which are of most relevance for the Local Plan and SA are provided in Appendix B.

## The National Planning Policy Framework and Planning Practice Guidance

**3.8** The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) [See reference 6] is the overarching planning framework which provides national planning policy and principles for the planning system in England. The NPPF was originally published in March 2012 and has since been updated and revised several times. The most recent update to the NPPF was in December 2024 [See reference 7].

**3.9** The three overarching objectives of the planning system are set out in paragraph 8 of the NPPF, which should be pursued in mutually supportive ways so that net gains are achieved across each of the different objectives:

- “an economic objective – to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure;
- a social objective – to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering well-designed, beautiful and safe places, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities’ health, social and cultural wellbeing; and
- an environmental objective – to protect and enhance our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, improving

biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.”

**3.10** The new Local Plan must be consistent with the requirements of the NPPF, which states:

“Succinct and up-to-date plans should provide a positive vision for the future of each area; a framework for addressing housing needs and other economic, social and environmental priorities; and a platform for local people to shape their surroundings”.

**3.11** A local planning authority is also required to have regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State when preparing a Local Plan [\[See reference 8\]](#).

**3.12** Paragraph 20 of the NPPF states the need for strategic policies in plan making, which set out the overall strategy for the pattern, scale and design quality of places (to ensure outcomes support beauty and placemaking), making sufficient provision for:

- “a) homes (including affordable housing), employment, retail, leisure and other commercial development;
- b) 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);
- c) community facilities (such as health, education and cultural infrastructure); and
- d) conservation and enhancement of the natural, built and historic environment, including landscapes and green infrastructure, and planning measures to address climate change mitigation and adaptation.”



**3.13** The National Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) [See reference 9] provides guidance for how the Government’s planning policies for England are expected to be applied. Sitting alongside the NPPF, it provides an online resource that is updated on a regular basis for the benefit of planning practitioners.

**3.14** The overarching nature of the NPPF means that its implications for the SA relate to multiple topics which this report seeks to address. Considering the importance of the NPPF to the English planning system, the relevance of the Framework and its implications for the plan making process and the SA is provided in more detail below. Sustainability topics are separated under environmental, social and economic below. Consideration of issues often cut across topics. This is reflected in the grouping of environmental and social issues together under one heading. The summary provided below is not absolutely comprehensive and the NPPF is intended to be read and applied as a whole during plan making.

## Environmental and social considerations

### Climate change

**3.15** Climate change adaption and mitigation, energy efficiency and waste minimisation measures for new development including through the promotion of renewable energy schemes are supported through the NPPF. One of the core planning principles is to “support the transition to net zero by 2050 and take full account of all climate impacts including overheating, water scarcity, storm and flood risks and coastal change. It should help to: shape places in ways that contribute to radical reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, minimise vulnerability and improve resilience; encourage the reuse of existing resources, including the conversion of existing buildings; and support renewable and low carbon energy and associated infrastructure”. Furthermore, local planning authorities should adopt a proactive approach to mitigate and adapt to climate change, taking full account of flood risk, coastal change, water supply,

biodiversity and landscapes, and the risk of overheating and drought from rising temperatures.

**3.16** Although Local Plans can no longer require levels of the Code for Sustainable Homes, they can promote the Home Quality Mark to support residents in understanding the quality and performance of new build homes and can also set targets for developers to provide for a given percentage of energy used by a new development to come from on-site renewable or low carbon technologies. Revisions were made to the Building Regulations 2022 [See reference 10], setting minimum energy efficiency standards which are increasing the performance values of properties. From 15<sup>th</sup> June 2022, all new build homes are required to produce at least 31% less carbon emissions. Local Plan policies can further support the development of renewable energy technologies where appropriate, in line with climate change mitigation strategies and targets. The UK Green Building Council has produced a resource pack which is designed to help local authorities improve the sustainability of new homes. The New Homes Policy Playbook [See reference 11] sets out minimum requirements for sustainability in new homes that local authorities should introduce, as well as proposed stretching requirements should local authorities wish to go further. For non-residential uses BREEAM assessments can be used by local authorities to ensure buildings meet sustainability objectives. Policies in the new Local Plan can also support design choices that achieve development that is better adapted to the effects of climate including through the incorporation of green infrastructure. The SA can consider the contribution the alternatives make in terms of climate change mitigation as well as climate change adaptation.

## Population and health and wellbeing

**3.17** In relation to health and wellbeing, healthy, inclusive and safe places which promote social interaction, are safe and accessible, and enable and support healthy lives are supported through the Framework. The Framework highlights that the Building for a Healthy Life design toolkit [See reference 12] can be used by local authorities to assist in the creation of places that are better for people and nature.

**3.18** One of the core planning principles is to “take into account and support the delivery of local strategies to improve health, social and cultural wellbeing for all sections of the community”. It is identified in the document that “a network of high quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and recreation is important for the health and wellbeing of communities”. Furthermore, the retention and enhancement of accessible local services and community facilities, such as local shops, meeting places, sports, cultural venues, public houses and places of worship is supported. Importantly, Local Plans should also “contain policies to optimise the use of land in their area and meet as much of the identified need for housing as possible”. Additionally, larger scale developments such as new settlements or significant extensions to existing villages and towns are required by the NPPF to be guided by policies set within a vision that looks at least 30 years ahead [See reference 13]. The need for policies to be reflective of this longer time period is to take account of the likely timescale for delivery.

**3.19** The delivery of new housing is considered to support local communities by meeting housing needs and addressing shortages. The new Colchester Local Plan can have a significant influence on addressing inequalities including those relating to health and will need to consider the appropriate siting of new development, particularly large development sites that are likely to include new service and facility provisions. The Local Plan can ensure that new development is located in areas which can improve accessibility for existing as well as new residents and ensure that future development does not exacerbate existing inequalities. The SA process can support the identification and refinement of options that can contribute to reducing inequalities and support the development of policy approaches that cumulatively improve the wellbeing of local communities.

## Biodiversity

The NPPF sets out the approach Local Plans should have in relation to biodiversity and states that plans should “identify, map and safeguard components of local wildlife-rich habitats and wider ecological networks, including the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites of importance for biodiversity; wildlife corridors and stepping stones that connect

them; and areas identified by national and local partnerships for habitat management, enhancement, restoration or creation”. Plans should also promote conservation, restoration and enhancement of priority habitats and species, ecological networks and measurable net gains for biodiversity. A strategic approach to maintaining and enhancing networks of habitats and green infrastructure is to be supported through planning policies.

**3.20** The Colchester Local Plan should seek to maximise any opportunities arising for local economies, communities and health as well as biodiversity. This should be inclusive of approaches which are supportive of enhancing designated sites as well as the connectivity of green infrastructure and promoting the achievement of biodiversity net gain. The SA process should support the identification and maximisation of potential benefits through the consideration of alternatives and assessment of both negative and positive significant effects.

## Landscape

**3.21** In relation to landscape, the NPPF sets the planning principles of recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside as well as protecting and enhancing valued landscapes. Reference is included with regards to this purpose at National Parks, The Broads and National Landscapes **[See reference 14]**.

**3.22** The Local Plan should be supportive of an approach to development which would protect the landscape character of Colchester and its surrounds, including that of the Dedham Vale National Landscape. Where appropriate it should also seek to protect the identity of the Colchester's settlements. The SA should identify those alternatives which contribute positively to landscape and townscape character.

## Historic environment

**3.23** The NPPF states that in relation to the historic environment plans should “set out a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment, including heritage assets most at risk through neglect, decay or other threats”. Where appropriate, plans should seek to sustain and enhance the significance of heritage assets and local character and distinctiveness, while viable uses of assets should be considered. Plans should take into account the wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits that conservation of the historic environment can bring. They should also consider the contribution the historic environment can make to the character of a place.

**3.24** The new Local Plan can offer enhanced protection for designated and non-designated heritage assets and their settings, including any potential archaeological finds in line with heritage protection and enhancement plans. The SA has a role to play by identifying which alternatives could offer opportunities to secure the protection and enhancement of assets as well as those which might have significant impacts in terms of their appropriate use and setting.

## Pollution and flooding

**3.25** The NPPF states that new and existing development should be prevented from contributing to, being put at an unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by, pollutions including water pollution and air quality. Inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding should be avoided. Plans should take a proactive approach to mitigating and adapting to climate change, taking into account implications for water supply. Furthermore, strategic policies should set out an overall strategy for the pattern, scale and quality of development, and make sufficient provision of infrastructure for water supply and wastewater.

**3.26** The new Colchester Local Plan presents an opportunity to consider incorporating targets for water efficiency and the level of water consumption and grey water recycling in any new development. Appropriate levels of

infrastructure should be supported to address water supply and the management of wastewater. The use of water in Colchester needs to be considered in light of the increased level of water stress the region is currently experiencing. The Local Plan also can ensure that development is sited away from areas of adverse air quality (including AQMAs), high flood probability and that appropriate water drainage is in place in line with flood risk strategies. The SA process should seek to identify and address potential negative effects on air quality, flooding and the water environment, including implications relating to wastewater.

## **Soils and minerals**

**3.27** The NPPF states that the planning system should protect and enhance soils in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or quality, while also encouraging the reuse of previously developed land. Furthermore, planning policies should provide for the extraction of mineral resources of local and national importance.

**3.28** The new Local Plan can seek to ensure the appropriate protection of soil quality, including best and most versatile agricultural land. Further to this, the Local Plan should ensure that new development does not conflict with current mineral operations, as well as long-term mineral resource plans. The SA process should inform the development of the new Local Plan by helping to identify alternatives which would avoid areas of highest soil quality and best and most versatile agricultural land, as well as those that would promote the use of brownfield land.



## Economic considerations

### Economic growth

**3.29** The Framework sets out that in terms of economic growth the role of the planning system is to contribute towards building a “strong, responsive and competitive economy” by ensuring that sufficient land of the right type is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth and innovation. There is also a requirement for the planning system to identify and coordinate the provision of infrastructure. Furthermore, planning policies should address the specific locational requirements of different sectors.

**3.30** Local planning authorities should incorporate planning policies which “support the role that town centres play at the heart of local communities, by taking a positive approach to their growth, management and adaptation”. Local Plans are required to “set out a clear economic vision and strategy which positively and proactively encourages sustainable economic growth, having regard to the national industrial strategy and any relevant Local Industrial Strategies and other local policies for economic development and regeneration”.

**3.31** The new Local Plan should seek to maximise the potential benefits of nearby strategic growth, whilst at the same time ensuring the vitality and viability of smaller localised economies. Ensuring that services and facilities within the Borough’s centres are maintained and enhanced is also important and will also provide support for local communities. The SA process can support the development of the new Local Plan to ensure that its policies are considerate of impacts on the economy in Colchester. The process can also be used to demonstrate that impacts on the viability of the Borough’s settlements have been considered.

## Transport

**3.32** The NPPF encourages local planning authorities to consider transport issues from the earliest stages of plan making so that: opportunities to promote sustainable transport are identified and pursued; the environmental impacts of traffic and transport infrastructure can be identified and assessed; and opportunities from existing or proposed transport infrastructure and changing transport technology and usage are realised. The framework also states that the planning system should actively manage growth patterns in support of these objectives.

**3.33** Growth will inevitably increase traffic on the roads which also has implications for air quality and carbon emissions, and the new Local Plan and SA process can seek to minimise effects of this nature through appropriately siting new development, identifying where mitigation may be needed and requiring the necessary transport provisions and contributions from new development. The Local Plan, as supported by the SA, should seek to identify opportunities to maximise the potential for alternative modes of transport to the car and reduce the need to travel, therefore reducing emissions, through the consideration of alternatives and assessment of significant effects. This includes potential opportunities that may arise as a result of the delivery of new infrastructure.

## Other national policies, plans and programmes

**3.34** Numerous other policies, plans and programmes (PPPs) at a national level are of relevance to the preparation of the Colchester Local Plan and the SA. Unlike the NPPF, most of the documents are focussed on a specific topic area which the SA will consider. There will be some overlap between SA topics covered by these plans and programmes where those documents contain more overarching objectives. However, the plans and programmes considered of most relevance to the SA have been grouped by the topics they most directly

seek to address, and the sections below each topic heading summarise the implications of the national PPPs for the Local Plan and the SA.

## Climate Change Adaption and Mitigation, Energy Efficiency and Waste Minimisation

**3.35** The relevant national PPPs under this topic are:

- Carbon Budget Delivery Plan (2023)
- Powering up Britain (2023)
- The Environment Improvement Plan (2023)
- British Energy Security Strategy (2022)
- UK Climate Change Risk Assessment (2022)
- The Environment Act (2021)
- The Net Zero Strategy: Build Back Greener (2021)
- The Industrial Decarbonisation Strategy (2021)
- The Heat and Buildings Strategy (2021)
- The UK Hydrogen Strategy (2021)
- Energy Performance of Buildings Regulations (2021)
- Waste Management Plan for England (2021)
- National Infrastructure Strategy: Fairer, faster greener (2020)
- The Energy White Paper: Powering our net zero future (2020)
- Sixth Carbon Budget (Climate Change Committee, 2020)
- Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management: Policy Statement (2020)
- The National Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Strategy for England (2020)

- The Waste (Circular Economy) (Amendment) Regulations (2020)
- Net Zero – The UK’s contribution to stopping global warming (2019)
- The Flood and Water Management Act 2010 and The Flood and Water Regulations (2019)
- Climate Change Act (2008) and Climate Change Act 2009 (2050 Target Amendment) Order (2019)
- The National Adaptation Programme and the Third Strategy for Climate Adaptation Reporting: Making the country resilient to a changing climate (2018)
- Our Waste, Our Resources: A strategy for England (2018)
- The Clean Growth Strategy (2017)
- National Planning Policy for Waste (NPPW) (2014)
- Planning and Energy Act (2008)

## Implications for the Local Plan and SA

**3.36** The Local Plan should consider setting out policies to achieve climate change and adaptation while also encouraging development that would help to minimise carbon emissions.

**3.37** The Local Plan should help to ensure that new development is energy efficient and promotes the use of sustainable construction methods and materials, as well as reduce their carbon emissions. The Local Plan should also ensure that risk from all sources of flooding as a result of climate change is managed effectively and should ensure that development is resilient to future flooding. This should include the Local Plan setting out approaches to encourage the appropriate use of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) to minimise flood risk. The Local Plan should also consider the handling of waste in line with the waste hierarchy.

**3.38** In addition, the Local Plan should seek to allocate development in areas where sustainable transport patterns can be best achieved and encourage development to make use of more sustainable sources of energy, potentially through the allocation of sites that would support infrastructure for renewable energy generation

**3.39** The SA is able to respond to this through the inclusion of SA objectives relating to the mitigation of climate change and adaptation to climate change, sustainable construction, waste management, flooding and sustainable transport.

## Health and wellbeing

**3.40** The relevant national PPPs under this topic are:

- Green Infrastructure Framework (2023)
- White Paper Levelling Up the United Kingdom (2022)
- A fairer private rented sector White Paper (2022)
- National Design Guide (2021)
- The Environment Act (2021)
- The State of the Environment: Health, People and the Environment (2021)
- Build Back Better: Our Plan for Health and Social Care (2021)
- COVID-19 Mental Health and Wellbeing Recovery Action Plan (2021)
- Using the planning system to promote healthy weight environments (2020)  
Addendum (2021)
- The Charter for Social Housing Residents: Social Housing White Paper (2020)
- Public Health England, PHE Strategy (2020-25)
- Homes England Strategic Plan (2023 to 2028)

- Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (2024)
- Technical Housing Standards – Nationally Described Space Standard (2015)
- Environmental Noise Regulations (2006)

## Implications for the Local Plan and SA

**3.41** The Local Plan needs to consider the requirements for infrastructure as this has the potential to have a significant impact on the environment, and it should be prepared to ensure that the population has access to sustainable low carbon infrastructure and services and facilities and that there is sufficient capacity within them to serve the increased population. This should include healthcare, education and open space.

**3.42** Local Plans offer the opportunity to maximise the wellbeing benefits of well designed local green spaces. The Local Plan should help to ensure that the provision of open space and green infrastructure is of sufficient quality as well as being sufficient in quantity to meet the needs of the plan area. Incorporated in the plan area in an appropriate manner these types of provisions will encourage healthy and active lifestyles, create fairer, safer and more inclusive communities, and improve the sustainable transport network including active travel networks.

**3.43** The provision of an appropriate level of housing over the plan period will help address issues of disparity in terms of access to decent housing. The provision of new housing should be considerate of local needs with regards to housing size, tenure and type, including the needs of Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople.

**3.44** The SA is able to respond to this through the inclusion of SA objectives relating to health and wellbeing, social inclusion, housing and sustainable transport.



## Environment (biodiversity/geodiversity, landscape and soils)

**3.45** The relevant national PPPs under this topic are:

- The Environment Improvement Plan (2023)
- Working with Nature (2022)
- Establishing the Best Available Techniques for the UK (UK BAT) (2022)
- The Environment Act (2021)
- The Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations (2019)
- Environmental Damage (Prevention and Remediation) Regulations (2015)
- Defra right of way circular (01/09) (2011)
- Countryside and Rights of Way Act (2010)
- Safeguarding our Soils – A Strategy for England (2009)
- Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (2006)
- Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981) (as amended)
- National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act (1949)

### Implications for the Local Plan and SA

**3.46** The Local Plan should be prepared to limit the potential for adverse impacts on biodiversity and geodiversity as well as important landscapes (including those that are designated) and higher value soils. The Local Plan should help to ensure that ecological features and biodiversity are managed in an appropriate manner, protected and enhanced and that opportunities for habitat restoration or creation are encouraged. The Local Plan should also help to ensure that environmental pollution is minimised in order to protect land and soils and ensure the efficient extraction of minerals. The Local Plan should also

help to ensure that designated and valued landscapes are protected and enhanced, and that development should be sympathetic to local character and history including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting.

**3.47** The plan should also take into account non-designated landscapes identified as particularly sensitive to development and non-designated habitats which form part of wider ecological network. The Local Plan also presents opportunities to promote the achievement of net gain in biodiversity.

**3.48** In terms of the location of development, the Local Plan can encourage the re-use of brownfield land and protect more valuable agricultural soils from development. The allocation of new sites for development and updated planning policy can also be used to achieve better habitat connectivity through the provision of new green infrastructure and the requirement for biodiversity net gain.

**3.49** The SA is able to respond to this through the inclusion of SA objectives relating to the protection and enhancement of biodiversity, character of landscapes and townscapes, green infrastructure and contaminated land.

## Historic environment

**3.50** The relevant national PPPs under this topic are:

- Historic England Corporate Plan (2023-26)
- Heritage Statement (2017)
- Sustainability Appraisal and Strategy Environmental Assessment: Historic England Advice Note 8 (2016)
- Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act (1990)
- Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act (1979)
- Historic Buildings and Ancient Monuments Act (1953)

## Implications for the Local Plan and SA

**3.51** The potential impact of new development on the historic environment, including local character as well as designated and non-designated heritage assets and their respective settings, should inform the preparation of the Local Plan. The Local Plan should set out a positive strategy for conserving, enhancing and enjoying heritage assets and their settings, including wider historic townscapes and landscapes. The Local Plan can help to realise the wider benefits of historic environment enhancements which include contributions to wellbeing and the economy. Particular regard may be given to protecting heritage assets which have been identified as being 'at risk' (both at the national and local levels). Local planning authorities should consider setting out approaches in their Local Plans to address these issues and site options should be considered with regard for related issues.

**3.52** The SA is able to respond to this through the inclusion of SA objectives relating to the historic environment and the character of landscapes and townscapes.

## Water and air

**3.53** The relevant national PPPs under this topic are:

- The air quality strategy for England (2023)
- Environment Act (2021)
- National Chalk Streams Strategy Chalk Stream Strategy (2021)
- Meeting our future water needs: a national framework for water resources (2020)
- Environmental Noise Regulations (2018)
- Water Supply (Water Quality) Regulations 2018

- Water Environment (Water Framework Directive) (England and Wales) Regulations (2017)
- Environmental Permitting Regulations (2016)
- Nitrate Pollution Prevention Regulations (2015)
- Air Quality Standards Regulations (2010)
- Flood and Water Management Act (2010)
- Groundwater (England and Wales) Regulations (2009)
- Flood Risk Regulations (2009)
- Urban Waste Water Treatment Regulations (2003)
- Environmental Protection Act (1990)

### Implications for the Local Plan and SA

**3.54** Local planning authorities should consider setting out approaches in their Local Plans to promote the efficient use of water and limit all types of pollution including water and air pollution. They should also seek to limit pressure on the wastewater treatment (WwT) infrastructure and water supply. The allocation of sites for development should take account of areas which are of highest sensitivity in relation to these issues, including Source Protection Zones (SPZs) and Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs). To limit the potential for air quality issues to be intensified as development is delivered over the plan period, local planning authorities should consider setting out approaches in their Local Plan to factor in the contribution that specific site options can make to achieving modal shift and limiting the need for residents to travel.

**3.55** The SA is able to respond to this through the inclusion of SA objectives relating to air pollution, water quality and waste management.

## Economic growth

**3.56** The relevant national PPPs under this topic are:

- Draft Invest 2035: the UK's modern industrial strategy (2024)
- The Growth Plan (2022)
- Build Back Better: Our Plan for Growth (2021)
- Agricultural Transition Plan (2021 to 2024)
- Agriculture Act (2020)
- UK Industrial Strategy: Building a Britain fit for the future (2018)
- National Infrastructure Delivery Plan (2016-2021)

## Implications for the Local Plan and SA

**3.57** The Local Plan should allocate land to support the projected level of economic growth required over the plan period. Furthermore, the Local Plan should set out policies to promote sustainable economic and employment growth to benefit all members of the community and reduce disparity in the plan area. This should include support for the infrastructure required for the economy to function successfully. Policies should also be included in the Local Plan to promote the viability of Town centres as well as local centres. Employment sites should be located to enable local people to be able to access the new employment opportunities.

**3.58** The SA is able to respond to this through the inclusion of SA objectives relating to economic growth and employment.

## Transport

**3.59** The relevant national PPPs under this topic are:

- Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy Report to Parliament (2022)
- Decarbonising Transport: A Better, Greener Britain (2021)
- Transport Investment Strategy (2017)
- Highways England Sustainable Development Strategy and Action Plan (2017)

## Implications for the Local Plan and SA

**3.60** The potential for reducing the need to travel, limiting congestion and associated benefits for air quality and climate change as well as public health should inform the preparation of the policies for the Local Plan and its site allocations. The Local Plan should also encourage walking and cycling as alternative modes of transport by providing safe and attractive walking and cycling infrastructure, as well as recognise the multiple benefits they bring in terms of physical and mental health, reducing carbon emissions and reducing air pollution. Furthermore, the selection of site options for development should be informed by issues such as the potential for access to new and existing public transport nodes and active transport routes as well as specific highways capacity issues. The selection of individual site options should also be informed by their proximity to essential services and facilities and jobs which is likely to influence the need for residents to regularly travel long distances.

**3.61** The SA is able to respond to this through the inclusion of SA objectives relating to the mitigation of climate change, improving air quality, public health and wellbeing, and the provision of sustainable transport.

## Sub-national policy context

**3.62** Below the national level there are further plans and programmes which are of relevance for the Local Plan and SA process. These plans and programmes sit mostly at the sub-regional level:



- Essex County Council (2024) Consultation Draft Essex Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS)
- Essex County Council (2023) Housing strategy 2021 to 2025
- Essex County Council (2023) Essex Skills Plan
- Essex County Council (2022) Strategy for Levelling up Essex
- Essex County Council (2023) Essex Climate Action Plan (2021–2025)
- Essex County Council (2011) Essex Transport Strategy and emerging Essex Local Transport Plan

**3.63** At the local level Colchester has adopted a Three-Year Plan 2023-26 to respond to the challenges of the City. The plan focusses on key topic areas of climate change, service provision, health and wellbeing, housing, economy and heritage and culture. The Council has also adopted a Climate Emergency Action Plan 2024-2027 (2024), Economic Strategy 2022-2025 (2022), Future Transport Strategy (2022) (in conjunction with Essex County Council and Essex Highways) and Housing Strategy 2022-27 (2022).

**3.64** Development in the District will not be delivered in isolation from those areas around it. Given the interconnection between Colchester and the surrounding areas there is potential for cross-boundary and in-combination effects where development is proposed through development plans in neighbouring authorities. As such, a summary of the plans for local authority areas that surround the District is provided in Appendix B.

## Baseline information

**3.65** Baseline information provides the context for assessing the sustainability of the Local. It also provides the basis for identifying trends, predicting the likely effects of these documents and monitoring its outcomes. The requirements for baseline data vary widely, but it must be relevant to environmental, social and economic issues, be sensitive to change and should ideally relate to records which are sufficient to identify trends.

**3.66** Schedule 2 of the SEA Regulations requires data to be gathered on biodiversity, population, human health, flora, fauna, soil, water, air, climatic factors, material assets, cultural heritage including architectural and archaeological heritage, landscape and the inter-relationship between the above factors. As an integrated SA and SEA is being carried out, baseline information relating to other sustainability topics has also been included; for example, information about housing, education, transport, energy, waste and economic growth. As with the review of relevant plans, policies and programmes, a small number of amendments have been made to the baseline information since it was originally presented in the SA Scoping Report in 2024 in order to update it, drawing on the most recent evidence sources. The updated baseline information is presented in Appendix C.

## Key sustainability issues and likely evolution without the plan

**3.67** Key sustainability issues for Colchester were identified in the SA Scoping Report for the Local Plan, that was subject to consultation with the three statutory consultees up to May 2024. The key issues identified through the analysis of the baseline, policy context and the consultation workshop with stakeholders are summarised in below.

**3.68** It is also a requirement of the SEA Directive that consideration is given to the likely evolution of the environment in the plan area (in this case Colchester City) if the new Local Plan was not to be implemented. This analysis is also presented in relation to each of the key sustainability issues below.

**3.69** The analysis below shows that, in general, the current trends in relation to the various social, economic and environmental issues affecting Colchester would be more likely to continue without the implementation of the new Local Plan, although the policies in the adopted Colchester Local Plan Review would still go some way towards addressing many of the issues. In most cases, the new Local Plan offers opportunities to directly and strongly affect existing trends

in a positive way, through an up-to-date plan which reflects the requirements of the NPPF.

## Population, Health and Wellbeing

**3.70** The provision of housing to meet local needs is an issue. This includes meeting the demand in terms of number of houses and types of housing needed. Meeting the demand for affordable housing, including allocation of sites for gypsies and travellers, will also need to be considered and met. Local Plans must set the objectively assessed need for housing using the standard methodology. Co-ordinated, planned development is more likely to lead to balanced economic and residential growth in a properly integrated fashion with new infrastructure including transport improvements but also environmental, community and cultural improvements. Local Plans provide a coherent plan and spatial strategy, without an up to date local plan, the provision of housing is less controlled.

**3.71** As projections indicate an aging population the impact of smaller, older households on services and housing will need to be managed. It is important to recognise and manage the other potential impacts that an aging population may have on the Colchester community. These will include a greater stress on health services, on the local economy and on other key services such as retail, education, public transport, leisure, and tourism. It is likely that many of these impacts can be positive if planned for and managed correctly. Without a local plan, the necessary infrastructure to serve new development would not be forthcoming and the benefits of an aging population may not be realised. The Infrastructure Delivery Plan Update (2021) demonstrates the high cost of providing comprehensive infrastructure to support the allocations identified in the adopted Local Plan. Planning policies can include policy safeguards requiring necessary infrastructure as part of development.

**3.72** As Colchester has a large rural area, rural isolation can be an issue, and this is linked to the issue of an aging population. Rural areas often have limited services and facilities, including limited broadband. This, coupled with poor

public transport links, can prevent those without access to a car accessing the facilities they need. With an increase in home working since the pandemic, good internet coverage is essential. Without a Local Plan, the necessary infrastructure, including digital infrastructure, to serve new development would not be forthcoming.

**3.73** Ensuring that school places, including early years, are available in the right locations and at the right time is a key issue. It is also important to ensure that there is good accessibility to schools by sustainable modes of transport. Without a local plan, the provision of school places will not be considered in the context of a spatial strategy and the phasing of new homes.

**3.74** Access to recreation, leisure and green infrastructure is as important as access to formal health facilities like hospitals, doctor's surgeries and NHS dentists in promoting healthy lifestyles. Health and wellbeing should be a golden thread running through the plan. The approach to the Local Plan Review is to plan for a better environment and enhance the green infrastructure network. Without this forming the backbone of the local plan, green infrastructure will not be looked at strategically and opportunities to enhance the green infrastructure network through new open spaces and connections where they are needed, will be missed.

**3.75** There are pockets of deprivation and within these areas health and educational attainment are poorer than other areas in Colchester (Greenstead, St. Anne and St. John's, Shrub End, Berechurch are within the 10% most deprived under the Education, Skills and Training domain in the English Indices of Multiple Deprivation). There is opportunity for the local plan to help address this, including by supporting regeneration and infrastructure provision in areas of greatest need. Without a Local Plan, deprivation, and the consequences of this, such as poor educational attainment, could worsen.

## Economy

**3.76** It will be important to match the population growth with an appropriate level of economic growth.

**3.77** Ensuring a range of job opportunities, including careers as opposed to jobs, is an important issue and can be addressed by understanding employment issues and needs and reflecting these through employment policies. This could include safeguarding employment sites, which could not be done without a Local Plan.

**3.78** Town centre uses are directed to Colchester City Centre in the first instance. If Colchester's district centres continue to expand and are not planned in appropriate manner, this could have an adverse impact on the vitality and viability of the city centre. The continued economic and cultural vibrancy of the city centre lies in reconnecting it to the surrounding neighbourhoods and improving choice in transport modes including the walking and cycling experience of routes to the mainline rail station, the Roman Circus and the Hythe and University campus in particular. Whilst there is a city centre SPD, Local Plan town centre policies will have more weight and certainty of implementation.

**3.79** Creative industries are a priority growth area for Colchester and should be considered as part of employment policies. Without a Local Plan, opportunities to consider the growth of creative industries through planning will be missed.

**3.80** As a significant part of Colchester City is rural, there is a need to support the revitalisation and diversification of the rural economy. Without a Local Plan, the Council can only be reactive. A new Local Plan, allows the Council to positively consider the revitalisation and diversification of the rural economy in a more coherent manner.

## Transport and Accessibility

**3.81** One of the biggest challenges to Colchester's future development is traffic growth and the dominance of the car as the main mode of travel. Around 48% of people in Colchester drive to work. It is essential that improved transportation and active travel links are an integral part of the Local Plan to reduce congestion into and around Colchester. It is noted that numerous routes that serve the centre of the City currently experience high levels of traffic congestion. It will be particularly important to improve and maintain Colchester's transportation infrastructure so that the city can continue to attract businesses, retailers, tourists, and home buyers, therefore boosting the local economy. Planning law requires that applications for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Local Plans provide certainty to those involved in the development of land. Without a Local Plan, a policy vacuum would exist that would lead to planning by appeal. Through the adoption of a new Local Plan development that reduces the need to travel and provides opportunities for active travel and public transport through its location and the infrastructure it provides can be promoted. a

## Air, Land and Water Quality

**3.82** Two historic AQMAs in Colchester have been revoked (AQMA 2, East Street and AQMA 4, Lucy Lane North) due to improved air quality. The remaining AQMA has been reduced to encompass only non-compliant areas: Brook Street, Osborne Street, St Johns Street and Mersea Road. Whilst air quality in Colchester has improved, air quality is an issue that should be considered as part of the plan. This could be through a spatial strategy that reduces the need to travel, supports improved walking and cycling networks and avoids development that places sensitive receptors close to existing air pollution hotspots/ emitters. Without a Local Plan, there will not be a spatial strategy and opportunities to improve air quality through planning are less likely to be achieved.



**3.83** Pluvial flooding can occur as a result of severe storms, which create run-off volumes that temporarily exceed the natural or urbanised sewer and drainage capacities, creating flash flooding. This is likely to increase as a result of higher intensity rainfall, more frequent winter storms and increased urban development. Sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) manage the flow of surface water and are required for development. The new Local Plan can include policy requirements for SuDS, including ensuring these deliver multiple benefits. Furthermore, the location of development to avoid areas of highest flood risk (from the sea and rivers as well as from ground water and surface water) and areas which may result in increased flood risk in other parts of the District can be best achieved through a coordinated approach to the distribution of development in the new Local Plan.

**3.84** Water resources (including supply and quality) is another important issue that is becoming under greater pressure and scrutiny and will need to be considered as part of a Water Cycle Study to support plan preparation. Without the benefits of an up-to-date Local Plan, supported by a Water Cycle Study, it will be more difficult to manage the effects of development on flood risk, water resources and water quality. A Water Cycle Study will help ensure that all site allocations will not have an impact on the water environment or water infrastructure. The study looks at water strategically in the context of the overall amount and location of development included in the Local Plan. The local plan can include policy safeguards to ensure that any requirements in relation to water are included in relevant policies.

## Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation

**3.85** The UK has committed to being net zero carbon by 2050 and the Council declared a climate emergency in 2019 with a commitment to achieve carbon neutrality for Council services by 2030. Working towards carbon neutrality is a key sustainability issue for the plan area, as is adapting to a changing climate. Climate change is one of the most pressing issues that we face internationally, and the Local Plan can play its part in helping to mitigate and adapt to the effects of climate change. For example, through policies that direct development to accessible locations that reduce the need to travel, a requirement for net zero

buildings, and the provision of open space and tree planting (and other elements of green infrastructure) to help with adaptation to a warming climate. Without a Local Plan the Council can only encourage these measures, while the preparation of evidence-based policies can set out requirements developments will be required to meet.

**3.86** Climate change is increasing the magnitude and frequency of intense rainfall events that cause flooding and the risk of flooding from the River Colne is also heightened by increased winter precipitation. Colchester has grown up around the River Colne and there is a risk of flooding from a number of sources: fluvial, tidal and pluvial. The River Colne is fluvial in the upper reaches and tidally influenced in the lower reaches, extending as far upstream as East Mill. There are four major tributaries and many creeks and brooks in the tidally influenced region of the river. Tidal flood risk is concentrated along the coastal frontage adjacent to Mersea Island, which is low lying. Tidal flood sources are the most dominant in Colchester and tidal flooding can result from a storm surge, high spring tides or both events combined over defended and undefended land. The Environment Agency are updating their flood risk mapping (expected spring 2025) and this will form important evidence for the local plan that will direct site allocations.

**3.87** Climate change is leading to more frequent droughts, with consequent reduced water availability. The Environment Agency has identified that the catchment area of Anglian Water Services, which provides water (and wastewater treatment) to the City, is seriously water stressed. A Water Cycle Study will be needed as evidence to support the Local Plan.

**3.88** As explained in the previous section, without the benefits of an up-to-date Local Plan, supported by a Water Cycle Study, it will be more difficult to manage the effects of development on flood risk, water resources and water quality. A Water Cycle Study will help ensure that all site allocations will not have an impact on the water environment or water infrastructure. Further evidence for Local Plan will include a Strategic Flood Risk Assessment that will look at the risk of flooding over the long term, including the likely impact of climate change. The new Local Plan will also help to ensure that the distribution of growth over the plan period is directed to areas that are less at risk of

flooding and will not result in increased flood risk at other locations. This approach to new growth should consider the potential effects of climate change on flood risk in the plan area and its surroundings.

## Biodiversity

**3.89** Maintaining and enhancing the natural and built environment of the City is very important to its residents and communities. Nationally there is growing recognition of the importance of the natural environment, including green infrastructure, and the wider benefits this has on people and the economy. Responding to the increasing environmental agenda in plan making requires a more coherent and streamlined approach to developing policy objectives in relation to the environment. New development in Colchester has the potential to lead to adverse effects on the integrity of Colne Estuary, Blackwater Estuary and Abberton Reservoir SPAs and Ramsar sites as well as the Essex Estuaries SAC and likely significant effects will need to be avoided or mitigated through policy safeguards. A Local Plan allows for the appropriate selection of sites and carefully tailored site-specific measures to mitigate effects and protect and enhance the natural environment. It can also support a locally specifically approach to the achievement of biodiversity net gain. With the population increasing, pressure on wildlife areas such as through habitat loss, fragmentation and disturbance including as a result of recreation, is likely to be exacerbated. Without an up-to-date Local Plan, there is also less opportunity to adopt a co-ordinated, spatial approach to the development of green infrastructure, i.e., open green spaces/green networks for recreation, walking and cycling networks, and wildlife.

## Historic Environment

**3.90** Colchester has a rich historical heritage, which is important to residents, visitors and employers. In 2023 there were nine entries on the Essex Heritage at Risk Register. The Local Plan should conserve existing assets and their settings and could look at opportunities to address existing problems through

policies and allocations that avoid harm to heritage assets. The Local Plan can also support the bringing of heritage assets back into viable and suitable use. Without a Local Plan including a positive strategy for the conservation of the historic environment, there is a risk that there would be increased harm to the historic environment through the lack of a clear and up-to-date local planning framework.

## Landscape

**3.91** It will be important to ensure that Colchester does not lose its identity as it continues to grow and new development and infrastructure is required to support this growth. New communities should be well integrated within the City and wider landscape. These aims should be balanced with Colchester's city status and making the most of this and meeting the needs of residents.

**3.92** Protecting the setting of the Dedham Vale National Landscape and considering valued and more sensitive landscapes will be of importance. A Local Plan allows for carefully tailored site-specific measures to protect, mitigate and enhance the natural environment, including landscape setting. It allows for the consideration of site allocations with a lesser impact on landscape character and allows the Council to consider and define valued landscapes. This will help prevent an ad hoc approach to growth which might otherwise result in piecemeal development and erosion of landscape setting and the character of settlements.

## The SA Framework

**3.93** As described in the methodology chapter, the relevant objectives established via the review of plans, policies, and programmes and the key sustainability issues identified by the baseline review informed development of a framework of sustainability objectives, the SA framework, against which the plan has been assessed. For each of the sustainability objectives a number of appraisal questions are included to act as prompts when considering the

potential effects of an option in relation to that objective. It should be noted that appraisal questions are not exhaustive and not all appraisal questions will be relevant to each element of the plan that is appraised. The SA framework is presented below.

**3.94** A small number of changes have been made to some of the appraisal questions in the SA framework since it was presented in the Scoping Report, in response to comments received during the Scoping consultation – the detailed comments and associated changes are set out in Appendix A.

**3.95** In summary, in response to the comment received from Natural England, SA objective 8: Biodiversity and its associated appraisal questions now refer to restoring biodiversity and geodiversity in addition to protecting and enhancing related assets. The update to the wording of the objective and appraisal questions has been made to better align with national planning policy.

**SA Objective 1: Provide a sufficient level of housing to meet the objectively assessed needs of the city to enable people to live in a decent, safe, and sustainable home which is affordable**

### **Appraisal Questions – Will the Local Plan/policy...?**

- Deliver the number of houses needed to support the existing and growing population?
- Provide more affordable homes?
- Deliver a range of housing types and tenures including housing for students, gypsies and travellers, and the aging population?
- Deliver well designed and sustainable homes?

## Relevant SEA Topics Covered

- Population
- Material Assets

## SA Objective 2: Support the efficient use of land

### Appraisal Questions – Will the Local Plan/policy...?

- Lead to development on previously developed land?
- Minimise the loss of best and most versatile agricultural land?
- Will densities make efficient use of land?
- Will a mix of uses be provided?

## Relevant SEA Topics Covered

- Material assets
- Landscape
- Soil



SA Objective 3: Achieve a prosperous and sustainable local economy that improves employment and training opportunities and supports the vitality/viability of centres

### Appraisal Questions – Will the Local Plan/policy...?

- Improve the range of employment opportunities?
- Support the vitality and viability of town centres?
- Support skills and training and changing economies?
- Support tourism, including an understanding of heritage, and the arts?

### Relevant SEA Topics Covered

- Material assets
- Population
- Human health
- Cultural heritage

SA Objective 4: Reduce the need to travel and promote sustainable and active transport options to reduce congestion

### Appraisal Questions – Will the Local Plan/policy...?

- Provide good accessibility by a choice of modes of transport?
- Reduce the reliance on private vehicles?
- Enhance the active travel network?
- Will a mix of uses be provided?
- Increase development density in higher order service centres?
- Will the levels of sustainable and active travel increase?

### Relevant SEA Topics Covered

- Population
- Human health
- Climatic factors
- Air

SA Objective 5: Promote stronger, more resilient, inclusive communities; improve health and wellbeing; and reduce levels of deprivation

### Appraisal Questions – Will the Local Plan/policy...?

- Reduce levels of crime, anti-social behaviour and the fear of crime?
- Reduce the proportion of people living in deprivation?
- Meet the needs of specific groups including those with protected characteristics?
- Increase access to open spaces, green infrastructure and recreational facilities, including access to nature?
- Encourage healthy lifestyles?
- Facilitate the integration of new neighbourhoods with existing neighbourhoods?

### Relevant SEA Topics Covered

- Population
- Human health

## SA Objective 6: Provide access to services, facilities, and education

### Appraisal Questions – Will the Local Plan/policy...?

- Support easy access to a range of high-quality services and facilities?
- Contribute to improving educational levels of the population of working age, including by improving access to educational facilities?

### Relevant SEA Topics Covered

- Population
- Human health

## SA Objective 7: Conserve and enhance the townscape character, and heritage and cultural assets

### Appraisal Questions – Will the Local Plan/policy...?

- Conserve and enhance designated and non-designated heritage and cultural assets, including their setting and their contribution to wider local character and distinctiveness?

## Relevant SEA Topics Covered

- Cultural heritage including architectural and archaeological heritage

SA Objective 8: Protect, conserve, enhance and restore biodiversity and promote and conserve geodiversity

## Appraisal Questions – Will the Local Plan/policy...?

- Protect, enhance and restore designated nature conservation assets?
- Protect, enhance and restore biodiversity, including local wildlife sites?
- Protect, enhance and restore geodiversity?
- Protect, enhance and restore ecological networks, including opportunity areas identified through the Essex Local Nature Recovery Strategy?
- Deliver environmental net gain?

## Relevant SEA Topics Covered

- Biodiversity, flora and fauna
- Soil
- Water

## SA Objective 9: Conserve and enhance the character and distinctiveness of the landscape

### Appraisal Questions – Will the Local Plan/policy...?

- Maintain and enhance landscape character including the Dedham Vale National Landscape?
- Improve the condition of parks and open spaces?
- Maintain and enhance the character of settlements?

### Relevant SEA Topics Covered

- Landscape

## SA Objective 10: Minimise greenhouse gas emissions and mitigate and adapt to the effects of climate change

### Appraisal Questions – Will the Local Plan/policy...?

- Reduce greenhouse gas emissions?
- Plan and implement adaptation measures for the likely effects of climate change?
- Include energy efficiency measures?
- Reduce energy consumption?



- Support the delivery of renewable energy schemes?

## **Relevant SEA Topics Covered**

- Water
- Air
- Climatic factors

**SA Objective 11: Manage and reduce flood risk from all sources**

## **Appraisal Questions – Will the Local Plan/policy...?**

- Limit the amount of development in areas of high flood risk and areas which may increase flood risk elsewhere?
- Promote the use of SuDS for flood resilience and improving water quality?

## **Relevant SEA Topics Covered**

- Water
- Climatic Factors

## SA Objective 12: Reduce waste generation and increase levels of reuse and recycling

### Appraisal Questions – Will the Local Plan/policy...?

- Reduce the amount of waste produced?
- Reduce the amount of waste sent to landfill?
- Reduce the amount of waste produced?
- Reduce the amount of waste sent to landfill?

### Relevant SEA Topics Covered

- Material Assets

## SA Objective 13: Protect and improve air quality

### Appraisal Questions – Will the Local Plan/policy...?

- Improve air quality?
- Help to achieve the objectives of the Air Quality Management Areas?
- Reduce emissions of key pollutants?

### Relevant SEA Topics Covered

- Air

## SA Objective 14: Protect the quality and quantity of water resources

### Appraisal Questions – Will the Local Plan/policy...?

- Ensure there is sufficient water for the lifetime of the development in a changing climate without negatively impacting on the environment?
- Ensure there is sufficient wastewater treatment infrastructure and environmental capacity to accommodate the new development in a changing climate?

### Relevant SEA Topics Covered

- Water
- Climatic Factors

## Chapter 4

# Appraisal findings for options for distribution of growth in Colchester and site options

**4.1** This chapter sets out the appraisal findings for the options considered for the distribution of growth in Colchester (i.e. the spatial strategy options) followed by the findings for the site options identified as reasonable alternatives identified by the Council for potential allocation in the Local Plan.

**4.2** The appraisal findings for both the options for distribution of growth and the site options were provided to the Council in advance of preparation of the draft Local Plan. The findings for the findings for the distribution of growth options were provided in August 2024. The findings for the site options were initially provided in September 2024 and were subsequently updated to consider new and amended site options in December 2024. These findings have informed the preparation of the draft Local Plan.

## Approach to appraisal of spatial strategy options

**4.3** As identified in more detail in Chapter 2 of this report, as part of the development of the spatial strategy options, Council officers considered seven reasonable alternative spatial strategy approaches. In line with the government's PPG, these options were designed to be sufficiently distinct to highlight the different sustainability implications of each, so that meaningful comparisons could be made. In designing the preferred spatial strategy, officers considered these options in light of the SA findings for each and whether one or a combination of them should be taken forward as the preferred spatial strategy.

## **Chapter 4** Appraisal findings for options for distribution of growth in Colchester and site options

**4.4** Once the Council had identified the overarching spatial strategy approaches to be appraised, these were then described in more detail as the seven spatial strategy options below.

**4.5** All spatial strategy options include the Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community, which is addressing the longer term needs for both Colchester and Tendring, since the principle for this has already been established in the adopted, joint Strategic Section 1 Local Plan. The exact amount of growth to be provided in Colchester to 2041 had not been established at the point the appraisal of spatial strategy options was undertaken. However, all the spatial strategy options have been included on the basis each are capable of accommodating Colchester's required level of housing growth.

**4.6** A description of each of the spatial strategy options is provided below.

### **Option 1: Continuing existing spatial strategy**

**4.7** Continuing existing spatial strategy focusing growth at the most accessible and sustainable locations. This includes growth within the Urban Area of Colchester and a variety of settlements, including development of a new settlement through the Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community.

**4.8** The spatial hierarchy focuses growth in the urban area of Colchester. The second tier includes 'Sustainable Settlements' across Colchester where appropriate growth is planned for. This second tier also includes the Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community. The third tier is settlements termed "other villages" where limited growth is supported. The fourth and final tier is the Countryside of Colchester where development will only be supported in exceptional circumstances.

## Option 2: New Garden Community

**4.9** Alongside the Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community, significant growth would be located at a new Garden Community at Marks Tey. There would likely be a number of public gains through significant growth such as provision of new infrastructure. This would be a long term strategy for growth; therefore, growth would also need to be located in other locations across the City. This option would include growth within the Urban Area of Colchester and proportional growth in other existing settlements and villages across the city.

**4.10** This would consider growth to the north of Colchester beyond the A12, to the east around St Johns and Bullocks Wood, to the south around Berechurch and towards Layer de la Haye and to the west towards Copford and Marks Tey. Regeneration areas could be identified within the Urban Area of Colchester, including the City Centre and Hythe.

## Option 3: Garden Suburbs

**4.11** Alongside the Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community, smaller scale new communities would be developed as Garden Suburbs. These could be distributed across the City including within the Urban Area of Colchester to the south and east and around Marks Tey/Copford, Tiptree and Messing.

**4.12** This option would include growth within the Urban Area of Colchester and proportional growth in other existing settlements and villages across the city.

## Option 4: Intensification in the City Centre

**4.13** This option would look to regenerate and intensify development within the City Centre. Developments would be of a higher density and would change the skyline of the City Centre.



## **Chapter 4** Appraisal findings for options for distribution of growth in Colchester and site options

**4.14** This option would include proportional growth in other existing settlements and villages across the city.

### **Option 5: Transport Corridors**

**4.15** This option would seek to focus growth in key transport corridors. These corridors may be directly from or to Colchester City Centre and will include a range of transport modes including rail (Marks Tey, Wivenhoe, Hythe, Chappel and Wakes Colne, Colchester Town and Colchester) and road, including the A12 to the north and around the new junction 24. These may follow the Garden Town and Villages concept.

**4.16** There is also potential for a transport corridor to include the route of the Rapid Transit System (RTS).

**4.17** This option would include growth within the Urban Area of Colchester and proportional growth in other existing settlements and villages across the city.

**4.18** This would consider growth to the north of Colchester beyond the A12, to the east around St Johns and Bullocks Wood, to the south around Berechurch and towards Layer de la Haye and to the west towards Copford and Marks Tey. Regeneration areas could be identified within the Urban Area of Colchester, including the City Centre and Hythe.

### **Option 6: Hubs and Spokes**

**4.19** A number of hubs and spokes will be identified across Colchester, with a higher level of growth attributed to the hub and smaller growth in the spokes. There is a total of nine hubs across Colchester and these are Tiptree, West Mersea, Rowhedge, Eight Ash green, Marks Tey, Chappel, Great Horkesley, Layer de a la Haye and West Bergholt. Nineteen spokes are associated with the hubs. This model would need to evolve further as the evidence base emerges.

**4.20** This option would also include growth within the Urban Area of Colchester. It may also include proportional growth in other existing settlements and villages across the city, which are not identified as hubs or spokes. Although Wivenhoe is one of the largest hubs within the Colchester City area, the spokes associated with this hub are located within Tendring and therefore it has not been included within this option.

## Option 7: Environment led

**4.21** An environment led Spatial Strategy would seek to limit growth in those locations which are most significantly constrained by environmental designations such as Dedham and Mersea and other locations within or close to the highest level of environmental designation such as the European Habitats sites, SSSIs and National Landscapes.

**4.22** Locations which are of environmental value for their landscape or biodiversity through lower tier designations could support growth with the priority focus to deliver significant enhancements and environmental gains to the area such as through a Country Park. This could include South Colchester and other locations including Tiptree. The focus for selecting the full range of settlements to accommodate growth would be informed by evidence identifying the locations which would benefit most from enhanced green infrastructure for environmental, amenity and health and wellbeing benefits delivering enhanced provision where the most significant gaps in such provision is currently.

**4.23** Based on the current network and the most significant gaps in provision identified through the Open Spaces Report are West and South Colchester. This option may include proportional growth in other existing settlements and villages away from the settlements most significantly environmentally constrained.

## Appraisal findings for the spatial strategy options

**4.24** The expected sustainability effects of the seven spatial strategy options for the distribution of growth are described below by SA objective. A summary of the effects is provided in Table 4.1 below. For each SA objective the appraisal is introduced setting out any relevant spatially specific considerations for the topic area (e.g. is any area part of the plan area particularly constrained or does it provide opportunities for achieving positive effects). Given that the Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community is included as a constant in each option considered, the expected effects of its development are addressed in this introduction section to each SA objective. The detailed appraisal that follows focusses on the differences between the likely effects of the options considered.

Table 4.1: Summary of likely sustainability effects of each of the spatial strategy options

SA objective	Option 1: Existing Spatial Strategy	Option 2: New Garden Community	Option 3: Garden Suburbs	Option 4: City Centre Intensificatio n	Option 5: Transport Corridors	Option 6: Hubs And Spokes	Option 7: Environment Led
SA1: Housing	++/-	++/-?	++/-	+/-	++/-	++/-	+/-?
SA2: Efficient use of land	+/-?	--/+?	-?	+/-?	+/-?	--?	+/-?
SA3: Economic growth	++	++/-	+/-	++/-	++	+/-	+/-
SA4: Transport	++/-	+/-?	--/+	++/-?	++/-	+/-	++/-?
SA5: Community and health and wellbeing	++	++/-?	--/+	++/--?	++/-	--/+	++/-
SA6: Services and facilities	++/-	++/-?	+/-	++/-	++/-	+/-	--/+
SA7: Historic environment	--?	-?	-?	--?	--?	--?	-?
SA8: Biodiversity and geodiversity	--?	--?	--?	-?	--?	--?	+/-?
SA9: Landscape	--?	-?	-?	-?	--?	--?	+/-?
SA10: Climate change	+	++	+	+	+	0	+

**Chapter 4** Appraisal findings for options for distribution of growth in Colchester and site options

SA objective	Option 1: Existing Spatial Strategy	Option 2: New Garden Community	Option 3: Garden Suburbs	Option 4: City Centre Intensificatio n	Option 5: Transport Corridors	Option 6: Hubs And Spokes	Option 7: Environment Led
SA11: Flood risk	-	-	-	-	-	-	+/-
SA12: Waste	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
SA13: Air quality	++/-	+/-?	--/+	++/--?	++/-	+/-	++/-?
SA14: Water	-?	-	-	-	-	-	-

## SA objective 1: Provide a sufficient level of housing to meet the objectively assessed needs of the city to enable people to live in a decent, safe, and sustainable home which is affordable

**4.25** All spatial strategy options are assumed to meet the identified housing need for Colchester, including needs for different groups within the community. This includes affordable housing, as well as housing for families with children, older people, students, people with disability, service families, gypsy and travellers, people who rent their homes and people wishing to commission or build their own homes.

**4.26** In terms of access to housing in Colchester, the Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) 2019 identifies that Colchester City contains some LSOAs that are within the 10% most deprived in terms of barriers to housing and services. There are also LSOAs within the rural wards of Rural North, Marks Tey and Layer and Mersea and Pyefleet that perform similarly in the IMD 2019.

**4.27** While it does not fall within a more deprived LSOA in terms of barriers to housing and services, the Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community would make a substantial contribution to the housing need of the plan area.

### Option 1: Continuing existing Spatial Strategy

**4.28** Option 1 proposes the most growth within the Urban Area of Colchester and a variety of second tier 'Sustainable Settlements'. Option 1 would broaden the type and tenure of houses in Colchester City, thereby helping to address access to housing in an area of need. While this option would allow for housing provision in the Sustainable Settlements in rural wards where there is similar need for housing, beyond these settlements, it would only support limited



housing growth within rural areas. Overall, a mixed significant positive and minor negative effect is expected.

## Option 2: New Garden Community

**4.29** Option 2 proposes a significant level of growth through the development of a new Garden Community at Marks Tey. Land to the immediate north of Marks Tey is identified as within the 10% most deprived in terms of barriers to housing and services in the IMD2019. This option also offers the opportunity to develop regeneration areas within the Urban Area of Colchester which is likely to allow for the delivery of homes in areas of most need. Proportional growth would occur within the other settlements of the plan area. As such, this option is unlikely to address issues of access to housing to a significant degree beyond the new Garden Community and the Urban Area of Colchester. Overall, a mixed significant positive and minor negative effect is expected. The new Garden Community could potentially have a long lead in time for development and therefore it may be difficult to maintain a supply of homes within the short to medium term. The overall mixed effect is therefore uncertain.

## Option 3: Garden Suburbs

**4.30** Option 3 supports the growth of smaller scale new communities known as Garden Suburbs, including growth within the Urban Area of Colchester and proportional growth in other existing settlements and villages. Option 3 would help to broaden the type and tenure of housing across the City. The development of smaller scale Garden Suburbs is likely to have shorter lead in times than large strategic sites and deliver housing at a faster rate. It could also help to address barriers to housing at a wider range of locations including areas of greatest need. However, growth within the lower tier settlements is to be proportional to the size of the settlement, meaning that as through Option 2, the scale of development is expected to be relatively limited. Overall, a mixed significant positive and minor negative effect is expected.

## Option 4: Intensification in the City Centre

**4.31** Option 4 concentrates growth within the City Centre with proportional growth to be provided in other existing settlements and villages. The regeneration of the City Centre could support development within areas where there is an identified need. This option would not achieve a wide distribution of growth with the majority of development proposed within the City Centre. Therefore, areas of greatest need outside of this location are considered less likely to feel the benefits of new housing growth. In addition, proposing high density development within the city centre could limit the type and tenure of housing provided. Through this option, challenges relating to the delivery of a high level of housing within the City Centre and the availability of land for development may result. Overall, a mixed minor positive and minor negative effect is expected.

## Option 5: Transport Corridors

**4.32** This option will provide much of the growth over the plan period within the Urban Area of Colchester and proportional development in other existing settlements and villages across Colchester. It is likely to support the regeneration of areas within the Urban Area of Colchester where there is identified need for housing delivery. However, limited growth is expected within the more rural areas and lower tier settlements, including where there is a further identified need for new housing. Overall, a mixed significant positive and minor negative effect is expected.

## Option 6: Hubs and Spokes

**4.33** Option 6 proposes the majority of growth at the Hub settlements which include Tiptree, West Mersea, Rowhedge, Eight Ash Green, Marks Tey, Chappel, Great Horkesley, Layer de a la Haye and West Bergholt. Housing at Marks Tey, Great Horkesley and Layer de a la Haye could help to address access to housing in areas of greatest need in the wards of Rural North and

Marks Tey and Layer. A more limited amount of development would be delivered at the small Spoke settlements in more rural locations. Growth would also be provided within the Urban Area of Colchester where there is an identified need for housing. A proportional level of growth will be supported within other settlements and villages that are not Hubs and Spokes, which is likely to limit growth beyond the Hub locations. Overall, a mixed significant positive and minor negative effect is expected.

## Option 7: Environment Led

**4.34** This option would limit growth in locations which are most significantly constrained by environmental designations. There is a high concentration of European designations including SSSI and SPAs to the south of Colchester City. Growth is likely to be more concentrated to the north and central/east of Colchester where there are few environmental designations. This option could limit the distribution of growth across Colchester, with settlements away from environmental designations to accommodate only proportional levels of growth meaning relatively limited growth is likely within the lower tier settlements. This option is expected to help address the housing need in some parts of the Urban Area but would be less likely to support housing delivery in rural locations. Overall a mixed minor positive and minor negative effect is expected. While all options are expected to deliver the required level of housing for the plan area, limiting growth in areas with environmental sensitivity and where there is potential to enhance green infrastructure could result in increased challenges in delivery and therefore the mixed effect is partly uncertain.

## SA objective 2: Efficient use of land

**4.35** Providing development in the District to meet the housing needs over the plan period is likely to result in substantial greenfield land take. This could include some higher value agricultural soils (within Colchester this includes soils of Grade 3 or Grade 2 value which range from 'moderate' to 'very good' quality). Colchester primarily comprises of Grade 2 and Grade 3 agricultural land to the north and west of the City. There are areas of urban land and Non-agricultural

land to the east of the City. The 'Best and Most Versatile' agricultural land referred to in the NPPF is defined as Grades 1 to 3a but GIS data was not available for the District to sub-divide areas of Grade 3 land into Grades 3a and 3b. Therefore, the overall effect for all options is partly uncertain.

**4.36** Through all options development at the Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community would involve substantial greenfield land take, much of which is Grade 3 agricultural land and a small area of Grade 1 land within Colchester.

## Option 1: Continuing existing Spatial Strategy

**4.37** Option 1 will likely involve the development of areas of greenfield land within the Urban Area of Colchester with development to the north of the City likely to result in the loss of land of at least Grade 3 agricultural value. Any development to the south of Colchester City may fall within the large areas of land classified as urban, non-agricultural or Grade 4 agricultural land. Within the Urban Area there is increased potential for regeneration and the reuse of brownfield land. Appropriate levels of growth would occur at Sustainable Settlements. Many of these settlements contain or are close to areas of Grade 3 or Grade 2 agricultural land, although it is notable that at Wivenhoe, West Mersea, Layer-de-la-Haye and Tiptree there are substantial areas of urban, non-agricultural or Grade 4 agricultural land meaning that the loss of higher value agricultural to new development might be limited. Only limited growth is supported in other villages which is likely to limit cumulative loss of more rural greenfield land. Overall, a mixed minor positive and minor negative effect is expected.

## Option 2: New Garden Community

**4.38** Through this option a significant level of growth would occur at Marks Tey through a new Garden Community. Marks Tey falls on land mostly classified as Grade 2 agricultural land with some areas of Grade 3 land to the south.

Furthermore, the development of a new garden community will result in significant loss of greenfield land. This option would also include growth within the Urban Area of Colchester allowing for regeneration and use of brownfield land to be achieved and proportional growth in other existing settlements. Growth is expected to the south of the City at Layer de la Haye and Berechurch which include areas Grade 4 agricultural land and non-agricultural land. Therefore, a mixed minor positive and significant negative effect is expected.

### Option 3: Garden Suburbs

**4.39** Option 3 proposes the development of smaller scale new communities across the City. This could include growth to the Urban Area of Colchester to the south and east and around Marks Tey/Copford, Tiptree and Messing and proportional growth in other existing settlements and villages. Option 3 could result in the significant take up of greenfield land particularly around Marks Tey, Copford, Tiptree and Messing. With the exception of Tiptree, development at these settlements is likely to involve the loss of areas of Grade 3 or higher value agricultural land. Furthermore, there are significant areas of Grade 2 and 3 agricultural land to the east of the City. There is potential for development to the south of the City to make use of Grade 4 agricultural, non-agricultural or urban land. However, given the spread of development to a range of Garden Suburbs, the potential to achieve substantial regeneration and re-use of brownfield land through this option is considered to be relatively limited. Overall a minor negative effect is expected.

### Option 4: Intensification in the City Centre

**4.40** Option 4 supports high density development and regeneration within the City Centre. This option would do the most to support more efficient use of land including the potential re-use of brownfield land in the most developed area of Colchester. Proportional growth is proposed within other existing settlements and villages across the City which could result in some further development of greenfield and higher grade agricultural land. Given that much of greenfield land within the plan area consists of Grade 2 or 3 Agricultural land then there is the

potential for loss of high value agricultural land. Overall a mixed significant positive and minor negative effect is expected.

## Option 5: Transport Corridors

**4.41** Option 5 supports development along key transport corridors which could include within the Urban Area of Colchester, Marks Tey, Wivenhoe, Hythe, Chappel and Wakes Colne. Development around these areas will likely result in the loss of greenfield land which mainly consists of Grade 2 and 3 agricultural land. However, it is notable that there are areas of urban, non-agricultural and Grade 4 agricultural land towards Wivenhoe. Furthermore, development in the Urban Area is likely to support regeneration and the re-use of brownfield land. Development may also occur along the A12 to the north of Colchester and to the west at new junction 24 both of which fall on mostly greenfield, Grade 2 and 3 agricultural land. Overall a mixed minor positive and minor negative effect is expected.

## Option 6: Hubs and Spokes

**4.42** Option 6 proposes the majority of growth at the Hub settlements which include Tiptree, West Mersea, Rowhedge, Eight Ash Green, Marks Tey, Chappel, Great Horkesley, Layer de a la Haye and West Bergholt. The majority of these Hubs fall within Grade 2 or 3 agricultural land, the notable exceptions being Tiptree, West Mersea and Rowhedge which contain or are at the edge of urban, non-agricultural or Grade 4 agricultural land. The Spokes are smaller settlements that all fall within Grade 2 or 3 agricultural land. Growth is also proposed within the Urban Area of Colchester which largely falls on land classified as urban or non-agricultural land. However, given the focus of growth towards the Hub and Spokes, this option is considered less likely to achieve regeneration of the City Centre and surroundings and is likely to result in significant loss of greenfield land. Overall a significant negative effect is expected.



## Option 7: Environment Led

**4.43** Option 7 aims to propose growth away from areas that are constrained by environmental designations and taking into account areas where green infrastructure might be enhanced. By directing much of the growth away from areas that are constrained by environmental designations, this option will potentially limit the loss of undeveloped greenfield land. Development will also be directed to areas that are likely to benefit from enhancements to green infrastructure. This could have a positive effect on the enhancements to soils in the plan area. Option 7 could help to avoid the use of the best quality soils within the plan area with much of the growth to be provided to provided in the south and areas such as Tiptree, with both areas containing swathes of Grade 4, non-agricultural or urban land. However, the scale of growth required is likely to result in loss of substantial areas of greenfield land. Overall a mixed minor negative and minor positive effect is expected.

### SA objective 3: Achieve a prosperous and sustainable local economy that improves employment and training opportunities and supports the vitality/viability of centres

**4.44** Colchester Town Centre sits at the top of the hierarchy of centres in Colchester, followed by a number of District and then Local Centres. The Primary and Secondary Shopping Areas also lie within the centre of the town. This area is the principal comparison goods shopping destination in the District. The area to the north of the main Urban Area is designated as the North Colchester and Severalls Strategic Economic Area while a further Knowledge Gateway and University of Essex Strategic Economic Area is designated to the east of the City. Stanway Strategic Economic Area is located to the west of the main Urban Area. These areas represent the best employment sites in the District. There are several Local Economic Areas across the Urban Area and also within a number of the Sustainable Settlements, including Marks Tey,

Langham, Tiptree and West Mersea. Furthermore, the District's rich historic environment and range of landscapes provides the basis for an important tourism sector which creates jobs in the area.

**4.45** The Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community lies adjacent to the Urban Area as well as the Knowledge Gateway and University of Essex Strategic Economic Area. From this location residents will likely have good access to jobs and there is potential to achieve synergies between the Garden Community and University area depending on the uses incorporated.

## **Option 1: Continuing existing Spatial Strategy**

**4.46** Option 1 supports the highest proportion of growth at the most sustainable and accessible locations within Colchester, including within the Urban Area of Colchester and the Sustainable Settlements. Proposing the majority of growth within the Urban Area of Colchester and the Sustainable Settlements will provide residents with good access to a wide range of employment opportunities and will also help to support the main Town Centre as well as a number of District and Local Centres in these areas. This will also limit the need to travel further to access jobs for many residents, potentially helping to limit congestion which might otherwise affect economic growth. Overall a significant positive effect is expected.

## **Option 2: New Garden Community**

**4.47** Option 2 proposes a significant amount of growth at a new Garden Community at Marks Tey. Option 2 would also include growth within the Urban Area of Colchester and proportional growth in other existing settlements and villages across Colchester. The Garden Community at Marks Tey is located close to an existing Local Employment Area which might be expanded upon to provide residents with good access to employment opportunities. The provision of an additional Garden Community in the District is also likely to support the creation of a new centre which could be a further focus for economic growth in

the area. The Garden Community location is also well related to the Stanway Strategic Economic Area. Development within the Urban Area of Colchester will also help support the viability of Colchester Town Centre. However, by limiting the level of growth at the Sustainable Settlements, this option is considered less likely to support economic growth and the viability of centres across a wider range of potentially suitable locations. This could result in increased need for some residents in more rural locations having to travel longer distances for work given the potential for economic stagnation. Overall, a mixed significant positive and minor negative effect is expected.

### **Option 3: Garden Suburbs**

**4.48** Option 3 proposes the development of smaller scale new communities across the City. This could include growth to the Urban Area of Colchester to the south and east and around Marks Tey/Copford, Tiptree and Messing and proportional growth in other existing settlements and villages. The spread of development to a wider range of smaller Garden Suburb locations at the edge of the City could see some residents have to travel longer distances for work resulting in some increase in congestion and is less likely to support the Town Centre. This is particularly likely to be the case where sites are to the south where they are less well related to a Strategic Employment Area, although development to the east could benefit from access to the University of Essex Strategic Economic Area. Most locations at the settlement edge would benefit from access to a Local Employment Area. Overall a mixed minor positive and minor negative effect is expected.

### **Option 4: Intensification in the City Centre**

**4.49** Option 4 proposes the majority of the growth within Colchester City Centre and aims to regenerate and intensify development at this location. The role of Colchester City as the main economic centre could be built upon through this option by providing new residents with good access to the Town Centre and a wide variety of employment opportunities by sustainable transport. Many new residents would also be well related to the District and Local Centres within the

main Urban Area. This option also could help to reduce the need for new residents to travel to access jobs. However, an over reliance on one location as the centre for economic growth could result in a substantial increase in in commuting with impacts relating to commuting unless suitable mitigation schemes were delivered. The potential for over reliance on the City Centre as the location for growth could also result in stagnation of economic growth at other locations. Overall a mixed significant positive and minor negative effect is expected.

## Option 5: Transport Corridors

**4.50** Option 5 supports development along key transport corridors which could include within the Urban Area of Colchester, Marks Tey, Wivenhoe, Hythe, Chappel and Wakes Colne. Focusing growth along the key transport corridors will likely provide easier access to the Urban Area which offers a range of employment opportunities and is also likely to support the viability of the Town Centre and range of District and Local Centres within this area. Furthermore, if the Garden Town and Villages concept is followed at new developments then this could lead to employment provision alongside residential development. The provision of development at locations that benefit from sustainable transport links could support its viability which may make the area more attractive to new residents and also investors. Overall a significant positive effect is expected.

## Option 6: Hubs and Spokes

**4.51** Option 6 proposes the majority of growth at the Hub settlements which include Tiptree, West Mersea, Rowhedge, Eight Ash Green, Marks Tey, Chappel, Great Horkesley, Layer de a la Haye and West Bergholt. A smaller level of growth will be directed to the Spokes which are smaller settlements. While this option would deliver some growth at the Urban Area, the focus is at the Hubs which are located outside of this location and therefore this element of growth is less likely to support the viability of the Town Centre. Rowhedge, Great Horkesley, Eight Ash Green and Marks Tey are relatively well related to Strategic Employment Areas, while some other the other Hub locations benefit

from Local Employment Areas. In general, the Spokes have more limited access to employment areas. Overall, a mixed minor positive and minor negative effect is expected in relation to SA3: Economic Growth.

## Option 7: Environment Led

**4.52** Option 7 aims to limit growth in locations which are significantly strained by environmental designations. It will also deliver growth in locations that would benefit from green infrastructure enhancement. The west and south of Colchester was identified as having significant gaps in green infrastructure provision. However, with the exception of some of the land to the south west around Tiptree, the south of the District is relatively constrained by biodiversity designations limiting the potential for growth in these areas. To the south, environmental sensitivities may be overcome through the delivery of new Country Park land alongside new homes. The main Urban Area and areas to the north, west and east are less constrained by these types of designations. Growth within the Urban Area of Colchester would support the viability of the Town Centre and District and Local Centres within this area and would also ensure that residential growth is located close to employment opportunities. Development to the north, west and east of the main Urban Area could benefit from access to the Strategic Employment Areas at the settlement edge. At Tiptree residents would be less well related to the more substantial employment areas, however, a Local Employment Area is found in this area. Overall a mixed minor positive and minor negative effect is expected.

## SA objective 4: Reduce the need to travel and promote sustainable and active transport options to reduce congestion

**4.53** Colchester is connected to a comprehensive network of major roads via the A12 and A120, which provide routes to London, the M25, Harlow and Cambridge. Parts of the A12 carry over 90,000 vehicles a day. Transportation

provision in the City also includes six railway stations, bus routes that serve the main Sustainable Settlements and several cycle trails including National Cycle Network routes 1, 13 and 51. The main Urban Area will also benefit from planned Rapid Transit System (RTS) that will run from the A12 Park and Ride to the University of Essex and Tendring-Colchester Garden Community.

**4.54** According to the 2021 census, sustainable travel options including trains, buses, cycling and walking account for only 16.4% of journeys to work in the District. The proportion of journeys to work made by car (47.4%) is higher than the national level (44.5%) [\[See reference 15\]](#).

**4.55** Transport-related social exclusion (TRSE) relates to areas within which transport issues have a fundamental impact on everyday life, and limit the ability to fulfil everyday needs. In Colchester, 33,129 residents (17.0%) live in neighbourhoods with a high risk of TRSE, compared with 18.0% of residents across England. Neighbourhoods with the highest vulnerability within Colchester exist in the south of Colchester Urban Area, surrounding the area of Berechurch. There are also a number of vulnerable areas in the Greenstead area in the east of the Urban Area.

**4.56** The Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community lies adjacent to the Urban Area as well as the Knowledge Gateway and University of Essex Strategic Economic Area. It is also relatively well related to a number of local centres within the Urban Area. This location is to be served by the RTS. The new Garden Community is expected to be of a scale to incorporate new service provision and achieve a degree of self-containment in the longer term. As such there may be reduced need to travel from this location and residents may be encouraged to make use of sustainable modes where there is a need to travel. These benefits will depend in part on the phase of new infrastructure at the Garden Community.



## Option 1: Continuing existing Spatial Strategy

**4.57** Option 1 supports the highest proportion of growth at the most sustainable and accessible locations within Colchester, including within the Urban Area of Colchester and the Sustainable Settlements. Providing for a distribution of growth across a range of more sustainable locations is likely to support good access to a wide range of services and facilities, jobs and public transport options. This could help promote travel by alternative modes and support the viability of public transport. Development within the Urban Area could also help to ensure the viability of the RTS and address TRSE within the Berechurch and Greenstead. Growth at the Sustainable Settlements is likely to help build on service provision at these locations and allow for increased self-containment. Limited growth is to be provided at the smaller settlements. This level of growth is likely to help prevent the stagnation of service provision at these locations, however, some residents may need to travel longer to access jobs or more specialist services. Overall a mixed significant positive and minor negative effect is expected.

## Option 2: New Garden Community

**4.58** Option 2 proposes a significant amount of growth at a new Garden Community at Marks Tey. Option 2 would also include growth within the Urban Area of Colchester and proportional growth in other existing settlements and villages across Colchester. The level of development proposed at the new Garden Community is likely to allow for the provision of a sustainable and more self-contained settlement where services and facilities are accessible by non-car modes. However, it may be that a high level of self-containment can only be fully achieved in the longer term, given that some infrastructure may not be in place for early occupants of the site. It is likely that development of the new settlement could result in increased need to travel by car to access some services and facilities, particularly in the short term. Development within the Urban Area is likely to provide residents with good access to a range of services and facilities, jobs and sustainable transport. This is likely to help encourage more trips to be made by sustainable transport and support the viability of public

transport services. However, limiting the level of growth at the Sustainable Settlements, through this option is considered less likely to support the viability of service provision and the sustainable growth of these settlements and could result in a longer term need to travel from these locations. Overall a mixed minor positive and minor negative effect is expected. The effect is uncertain given that the potential to support self-containment at the new Garden Community is partly unknown.

### **Option 3: Garden Suburbs**

**4.59** Option 3 proposes the development of smaller scale new communities across the City. This includes growth within the Urban Area of Colchester to the south and east and around Marks Tey/Copford, Tiptree and Messing. It is notable that of these settlements Messing, sits below the Sustainable Settlements of the District, in the settlement hierarchy, illustrating its lack of service provision. While new Garden Suburbs will support the delivery of new infrastructure in Colchester, the scale of growth at a given location is unlikely to support a similar level of infrastructure provision as likely achieved at a new Garden Community. As such, this option would be less likely to promote self-containment at new development locations and many residents would be dependent upon the proximity of the new development to existing services and facilities. Given that Option 3 would result in a spread of growth in areas throughout Colchester, within and outside of the City, some residents would be more likely to make use of the private vehicle for the longer journeys to certain provisions. Furthermore, the distribution of development across a number of locations is less likely to support the viability of public transport in the District. Overall a mixed minor positive and significant negative effect is expected.

### **Option 4: Intensification in the City Centre**

**4.60** Option 4 concentrates much of the growth for the District within the City Centre and with proportional levels of growth directed to the other existing settlements and villages. Option 4 would therefore provide opportunities to strengthen the role of Colchester city as the main service provider in the plan

area. It would also provide increased opportunities for residents to work locally or commute by train or bus. This could support the viability of public transport networks in the Urban Area, including the new RTS. This may help to address TRSE in the Urban Area. However, the higher number of new residents located within the City could put more pressure on existing services and facilities, which could result in overburdening and impact travel habits. There is also potential for increased congestion where appropriate mitigation is not delivered. By limited growth at other locations in the District, this option presents increased risk in relation to the stagnation of existing services beyond the main Urban Area. This is particularly the case at the Sustainable Settlements which play an important role for service provision in the more rural locations away from the City. Overall a mixed significant positive and minor negative effect is expected. The effect is uncertain given that it be influenced by the achievement of appropriate transport mitigation.

## Option 5: Transport Corridors

**4.61** Option 5 supports development along key transport corridors which could include within the Urban Area of Colchester, Marks Tey, Wivenhoe, Hythe, Chappel and Wakes Colne all of which benefit from nearby access to a railway station. Growth along key transport corridors will increase access to sustainable transport modes, particularly to public transport such as bus, rail and the RTS. Focusing development along these corridors may also create opportunities to improve public transport and accessibility in Colchester's most TRSE vulnerable areas in the Urban Areas. However, it will also involve increased development towards more important elements of road network as a whole, with good use made of the District's access to the A12 to the north and around junction 24. Development at the A12 to the north of the plan area would benefit from reasonable access to the edge of Colchester although it would be some way from the town centre, while development towards junction 24 would be relatively close to Tiptree. The proximity of these locations to the strategic road network may encourage the use of private vehicles. Overall a mixed significant positive and minor negative effect is expected.

## Option 6: Hubs and Spokes

**4.62** Option 6 proposes the majority of growth at the Hub settlements which include Tiptree, West Mersea, Rowhedge, Eight Ash Green, Marks Tey, Chappel, Great Horkesley, Layer de a la Haye and West Bergholt. A smaller level of growth will be directed to the Spokes which are smaller settlements in more rural locations. A proportional level of growth will be supported within other settlements and villages that are not Hubs and Spokes with some growth also occurring in the Urban Area. As such development is to be focussed at the Hubs and Spokes over the Urban Area. While some of the Hubs benefit from some services and facilities and strong public transport links (for example Marks Tey and Chappel both have a railway station and primary schools but no doctor's surgery) the range of services is more limited than within the Urban Area. This approach will support the longer term sustainability of the Hub settlements and could limit the potential for congestion within the Urban Area. However, residents from some Hubs and those at the Spoke settlements may have to travel regularly to access certain more specialist facilities with many trips likely to be made by private vehicle. Overall a mixed minor positive and minor negative effect is expected.

## Option 7: Environment Led

**4.63** Option 7 would limit growth in locations which are significantly constrained by environmental designations. It would also deliver growth in locations that would benefit from green infrastructure enhancement, including to the west and south of Colchester. However, with the exception of some of the land to the south west around Tiptree, the south of the District is relatively constrained by biodiversity designations limiting the potential for growth in these areas. The environmental value of this southern part of the plan area may be protected through the incorporation of a new Country Park alongside new homes. Development in the Urban Area and locations relatively well related to the Urban Area, rather than in smaller settlements is likely to promote travel by public and active transport given the shorter journey times to services and facilities and jobs. This approach will also help to address TRSE within the

Urban Area. However, the focus of the much of the growth in and around the Urban Area may result in localised congestion. Furthermore, while proportional growth in the other settlements of the plan area will help to prevent stagnation of services and facilities this more limited level of growth is less likely to support long term sustainable growth and could result in an over reliance on service provision in the Urban Area increasing the number of journeys towards this location from other settlements. Overall a mixed significant positive and minor negative is expected. The effect is uncertain given that appropriate mitigation may help to limit the potential for congestion within the Urban Area.

## SA objective 5: Promote stronger, more resilient, inclusive communities; improve health and wellbeing; and reduce levels of deprivation

**4.64** Providing development which can incorporate areas of open space which allow for informal interaction between residents is likely to help support community cohesion in Colchester. The development of new, large scale sites may, however, disrupt existing community networks although at larger and/or longer-established settlements, these networks may be more resilient to change. Furthermore, the delivery of development that supports new service provision is likely to help address deprivation in the plan area and meet the needs of specific groups in the District including those with protected characteristics, such as age (older and younger residents), disability, race etc. The location of new development is less likely to affect crime and fear of crime as this will be influenced more by policy requirements relating to design of new developments.

**4.65** The City is relatively prosperous, ranking 181 out of 317 districts on the IMD 2019 (rank 1 being the most deprived). Out of the 105 LSOAs in the City, 27 are within the top 40% most deprived LSOAs in the country. Within the exception of one LSOA within the Tiptree ward, these LSOAs are concentrated in the Urban Area within the wards of Berechurch, Greenstead, New Town & Christ Church, Old Heath & The Hythe and St Anne's & St John's. Colchester

has one LSOA in the 10% most deprived in the country, that falls within the Greenstead ward.

**4.66** The Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community is expected to be of a scale to support substantial infrastructure provision to benefit health and wellbeing of new residents. It may also benefit those in the surrounding areas, including in the ward of Greenstead given its location at Colchester's settlement edge. There is potential for the large scale of growth to result in some issues relating to place making as the new community is established. The phasing of new infrastructure will greatly influence the ability of the new community to be delivered successfully.

## **Option 1: Continuing existing Spatial Strategy**

**4.67** Option 1 supports the highest proportion of growth at the most sustainable and accessible locations within Colchester, including within the Urban Area of Colchester and the Sustainable Settlements. Many of the areas with the highest level of deprivation lie within the Urban Area of Colchester. By focusing much of the development within the Urban Area over the plan period this option is expected to help address identified issues of deprivation. The Urban Area also benefits from the best access to service provision (including GPs and hospitals) and established community networks at this location are potentially more resilient to change. Furthermore, existing open spaces are interspersed across the Urban Area. Providing a relatively high level of growth within the second tier Sustainable Settlements is likely to support their longer term viability as service providers and prevent an over reliance on the Urban Area for access to services. These locations benefit from good access to certain services (although it is noted that some settlements lack healthcare provisions) or a key transport hub. Residents at these locations may need to travel to access healthcare provisions but will likely be able to use public transport to reach them. At these less developed locations, the open countryside may be more readily accessible for recreation. Overall a significant positive effect is expected.



## Option 2: New Garden Community

**4.68** The new Garden Community at Marks Tey is expected to support the provision of new infrastructure to support health and wellbeing in the plan area. Marks Tey is moderately deprived, containing land that falls within the 50% most deprived in the country. It is acknowledged, however, that the delivery of a new Garden Community would have to overcome issues of place making. This option also supports growth within the Urban Area of Colchester and proportional growth in other existing settlements and villages across the City. Growth within the Urban Area is likely to help address deprivation through regeneration within those areas most affected in Colchester; i.e. the south, east and central areas of the City. This approach will also make good use of the existing healthcare and recreation infrastructure in the plan area. Delivering only a limited amount of growth within the Sustainable Settlements in Colchester is less likely to support the long term viability of services at these locations and may result in an over reliance on the Urban Area for service provision at some settlements. Overall a mixed significant positive and minor negative effect is expected. The effect is uncertain given that the success of the Garden Community will depend on partly the phasing of new infrastructure alongside housing delivery.

## Option 3: Garden Suburbs

**4.69** Option 3 focuses on the development of a number of smaller scale new communities as Garden Suburbs. The Garden Suburbs will be distributed across the Urban Area of Colchester to the south and east and around Marks Tey/Copford, Tiptree and Messing. The Garden Suburbs elements of this option will help to address deprivation within areas most affected in the Urban Area. However, by including a number of locations for growth, the scale of infrastructure that would be achieved is unlikely to be equivalent to what a new Garden Community could deliver. The relatively high level of growth at the Garden Suburbs could, however, contribute to place making issues across a number of locations. Furthermore, this option would limit development at the Sustainable Settlements beyond Marks Tey/Copford, and Tiptree, thereby

potentially resulting in an over reliance on existing services and overburdening within the Urban Area. Overall a mixed minor positive and significant negative effect is expected.

## Option 4: Intensification in the City Centre

**4.70** Option 4 proposes the majority of the growth within Colchester City Centre and aims to regenerate and intensify development at this location. This option would therefore perform well in terms of addressing the high levels of deprivation in and around the City Centre particularly within the wards of Castle and New Town and Christ Church. In addition, focusing development within Colchester City Centre will provide new residents with good access to a wide range of facilities including recreation, GPs and hospitals. However, delivering higher densities of development in the City Centre would need to ensure that access to open space in this part of the plan area is not adversely affected. This option proposes a low level of growth across Colchester outside of the City Centre, thereby potentially limiting the delivery of new viable healthcare infrastructure at other locations and increasing reliance and potentially overburdening on service provision in the Urban Area. Overall a mixed significant positive and significant negative effect is expected. The effect is uncertain given that there is potential for loss of existing open space in the City Centre through the delivery of higher densities of development.

## Option 5: Transport Corridors

**4.71** Option 5 focuses growth along the key transport corridors including rail, bus and road (notably the A12 to the north of the City and the new junction 24). Areas for growth would include Marks Tey, Copford, Layer de la Haye, Wivenhoe, Hythe, Chappel, Wakes Colne and Colchester town. Within the Colchester Urban Area a number of locations for regeneration are included which is likely to help address existing issues in areas of greatest deprivation. Focusing growth around key sustainable transport corridors could improve access to healthcare services for all members of the community, including those without access to a private vehicle. Through this option, elements of growth

may follow the Garden Town and Villages Concept which is likely to support the delivery of new infrastructure alongside new homes to support health and wellbeing in the plan area. This option would only provide proportional growth within settlements beyond those along the key transport corridors in Colchester. This includes a number of Sustainable Settlements (notably this includes Dedham, West Bergholt, West Mersea and Tiptree all of which benefit from existing healthcare facilities as well as at least a primary school) where existing service provision might otherwise be built upon to benefit new and existing residents. Overall a mixed significant positive and minor negative effect is expected.

## Option 6: Hubs and Spokes

**4.72** Option 6 proposes the majority of growth at the Hub settlements which include Tiptree, West Mersea, Rowhedge, Eight Ash Green, Marks Tey, Chappel, Great Horkesley, Layer de la Haye and West Bergholt. A smaller amount of growth will be directed to the Spokes which are smaller settlements in more rural locations. A proportional level of growth will be supported within other settlements and villages that are not Hubs and Spokes with some growth also occurring in the Urban Area. As such development is to be focussed at the Hubs and Spokes over the Urban Area. Only some of the Hubs benefit from healthcare facilities including West Bergholt, Layer de la Haye, Rowhedge, West Mersea and Tiptree. Furthermore, while residents at the Spokes will benefit from good access to the open countryside, the range of services at these locations is particularly limited. The small size and more limited service provision at these settlements could mean more substantial growth may disrupt existing local community networks. This option would also do little to address deprivation within the most affected areas within Colchester. It would also fail to make good use of the range of services and facilities in the Colchester Urban Area. Overall a mixed minor positive and significant negative effect is expected.

## Option 7: Environment Led

**4.73** Option 7 would limit growth in locations which are significantly constrained by environmental designations. It would also deliver growth in locations that would benefit from green infrastructure enhancement, including to the west and south of Colchester. However, with the exception of some of the land to the south west around Tiptree, the south of the District is relatively constrained by biodiversity designations limiting the potential for growth in these areas. To the south, environmental sensitivities may be overcome by the delivery of new Country Park land, which would improve access to opportunities for recreation for residents in Colchester. Development in the Urban Area and locations relatively well related to the Urban Area is likely to help address deprivations towards Colchester City Centre and will also make good use of the existing services at this location. There is some potential for service provision at these locations to become overburdened given the focus of growth over the inclusion of a wider range of Sustainable Settlements. This approach also fails to distribute development to build upon existing healthcare provision within the larger settlements beyond the Urban Area (with the exception of Tiptree) which might otherwise benefit a substantial number of existing residents. Overall a mixed significant positive and minor negative effect is expected.

## SA objective 6: Provide access to services, facilities, and education

**4.74** The widest range of services and facilities in the plan area are found in the Colchester Urban Area. This area includes the main town centre as well as a number of District and Local Centres as the main focus for retail provision and other types of services. A small number of Local and District Centres are found in the Sustainable Settlements of Dedham Marks Tey/Copford, Tiptree, West Mersea and Wivenhoe. outside of the Urban Area. Furthermore, while many of the Sustainable Settlements benefit from a primary school, beyond the Urban Area, only Tiptree provides access to a secondary school. The only university facilities in the plan area are found at the University of Essex Colchester Campus, to the east of the City. In addition to this, only some of the Sustainable

Settlements provide access to healthcare facilities. These settlements are Wivenhoe, West Mersea, Layer-de-la-Haye, Tiptree and Dedham.

**4.75** The Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community is expected to be of a scale to support new service provision. New service provision is also likely to benefit those in the surrounding areas, given its location at Colchester's settlement edge. The location of the new community at the settlement edge where there will be connections to the new RTS will also provide residents will good access to services within the exiting Urban Area of Colchester.

## Option 1: Continuing existing Spatial Strategy

**4.76** Option 1 supports the highest proportion of growth at the most sustainable and accessible locations within Colchester, including within the Urban Area of Colchester and the Sustainable Settlements. This approach is expected to provide most residents with good access to a range of services and facilities at multiple locations in the plan area. It will also help to support the viability of the centres in Colchester. Providing a relatively high level of growth within the second tier Sustainable Settlements is likely to support the viability of services at these locations. However, more specialist provisions will likely only be accessible within the Urban Area. Furthermore, as with all options considered, there is also potential for the scale of growth across the plan area to result in some overburdening of existing services and facilities, including schools and healthcare. Suitable service provision will be required alongside the new growth delivered. Overall a mixed significant positive and minor negative effect is expected.

## Option 2: New Garden Community

**4.77** Option 2 would result in a high proportion of housing development occurring at the new Marks Tey Gaden Community. The high level of development concentrated to one location is likely to support substantial new service, however, this might only be achieved in the longer term. New residents

may need to travel to access some services, particularly in the short term. Residents at this location will benefit from access to some existing services and facilities in Marks Tey which includes a local centre, a primary school and railway station. This option also supports growth within the Urban Area of Colchester and proportional growth in other existing settlements and villages across the City. Within the Urban Area residents are likely to benefit from good access to the existing Town, District and Local Centres as well as a range of services and facilities. The relatively limited level of development to be provided at the Sustainable Settlements in Colchester could, however, reduce the potential for sustainable service growth in other locations in the plan area. Overall a mixed significant positive and minor negative is expected. The mixed effect is uncertain given that the access to services from the new Garden Community will depend largely on the phasing of new infrastructure.

### **Option 3: Garden Suburbs**

**4.78** Option 3 focuses on the development of a number of smaller scale new communities as Garden Suburbs. The Garden Suburbs will be distributed across the Urban Area of Colchester to the south and east and around Marks Tey/Copford, Tiptree and Messing. New Garden Suburbs are likely to support new service provision, however, the small scale of growth achieved is likely to support a lower level of provision than what might be achieved through a new Garden Community. The location of the Garden Suburbs to the south and east of the Urban Area is likely to provide relatively good access to existing services including the University, however, there is potential for cumulative impacts relating to overburdening of these existing services. Furthermore, while new residents at Marks Tey/Copford and Messing would have relatively good access to services and transport links, at Messing the existing provision is more modest. This option fails to make good use of the range of Sustainable Settlements where existing service provision might be built upon to benefit residents at a range of locations. Overall a mixed minor positive and minor negative is expected.



## Option 4: Intensification in the City Centre

**4.79** A higher level of new housing at Colchester City Centre would increase the number of residents benefiting from easy access to the main town centre and wide range of existing services. It will also help to support future service provision in a location where a high number of residents can benefit from them. However, the high level of growth concentrated to this location could result in overburdening of services and facilities. This option proposes a low level of growth across Colchester outside of the City Centre, thereby potentially limiting the delivery of new services at the Sustainable Settlements that might otherwise benefit a relatively large number of new residents. Overall a mixed significant positive and minor negative effect is expected.

## Option 5: Transport Corridors

**4.80** Option 5 focuses growth along the key transport corridors including rail, bus and road (notably the A12 to the north of the City and the new junction 24). Areas for growth would include Marks Tey, Copford, Layer de la Haye, Wivenhoe, Hythe, Chappel, Wakes Colne and Colchester town. All of the Sustainable Settlements included for growth contain a primary school, however, only Wivenhoe and Layer de la Haye also include healthcare facilities. There is potential for travel by sustainable modes from these locations to access other services, particularly at Chappel, Wivenhoe and Marks Tey which benefit from a railway station. This option would only provide proportional growth within settlements beyond those along the key transport corridors. This includes a number of Sustainable Settlements (notably this includes Dedham, West Bergholt, West Mersea and Tiptree all of which benefit from existing healthcare facilities as well as at least a primary school) where existing service provision might otherwise be built upon to benefit new and existing residents. Overall a mixed significant positive and minor negative effect is expected.

## Option 6: Hubs and Spokes

**4.81** Option 6 proposes the majority of growth at the Hub settlements which include Tiptree, West Mersea, Rowhedge, Eight Ash Green, Marks Tey, Chappel, Great Horkesley, Layer de la Haye and West Bergholt. A smaller amount of growth will be directed to the Spokes which are smaller settlements in more rural locations. A proportional level of growth will be supported within other settlements and villages that are not Hubs and Spokes with some growth also occurring in the Urban Area. As such development is to be focussed at the Hubs and Spokes over the Urban Area. Only some of the Hubs benefit from both healthcare and school facilities, including West Bergholt, Layer de la Haye, Rowhedge, West Mersea and Tiptree. Furthermore, residents at these locations and particularly at the Spokes will need to travel to access a wider range of services. It is noted that from some of these locations, trips could be made by sustainable modes, including by rail from Chappel and Marks Tey. This option fails to make good use of the range of services and facilities in the Colchester Urban Area. Overall a mixed minor positive and significant negative effect is expected.

## Option 7: Environment Led

**4.82** Option 7 would limit growth in locations which are significantly constrained by environmental designations. It would also deliver growth in locations that would benefit from green infrastructure enhancement, including to the west and south of Colchester. However, with the exception of some of the land to the south west around Tiptree, the south of the District is relatively constrained by biodiversity designations limiting the potential for growth in these areas. To the south, environmental sensitivities may be overcome by the delivery of new Country Park land. Development in the Urban Area and locations relatively well related to the Urban Area is likely to provide access to the town, District and Local Centres and make good use of the existing services at this location. There is some potential for service provision at these locations to become overburdened given the focus of growth over the inclusion of a wider range of Sustainable Settlements. This approach also fails to distribute development to

build upon existing services within the larger settlements beyond the Urban Area (with the exception of Tiptree) which might otherwise benefit a substantial number of existing residents. Overall a mixed significant positive and minor negative effect is expected.

## SA objective 7: Conserve and enhance the townscape character, and heritage and cultural assets

**4.83** The plan area boasts some 24 Conservation Areas, 1,560 listed buildings and 4 Scheduled Monuments. Much of the City Centre is covered by Conservation Areas containing numerous Listed Buildings. A number of the larger settlements beyond the Urban Area are also covered by Conservation Areas The Urban Area also includes a Registered Park (Colchester Castle Park) with Wivenhoe Registered Park lie to the east towards the university campus. The other Registered Park in the plan area lies to the north east of Tiptree.

**4.84** It should be noted that the effects recorded for all options is partly uncertain given that appropriate design of new development may help to avoid and mitigate adverse effects and in some cases may support improvements in the settings of heritage assets.

**4.85** The development of the Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community has the potential to adversely affect the setting of the Wivenhoe Registered Park and a number of Listed Buildings within its boundaries. These heritage assets lie to the south of the A133.

### Option 1: Continuing existing Spatial Strategy

**4.86** Option 1 supports the highest proportion of growth at the most sustainable and accessible locations within Colchester, including within the Urban Area of

Colchester and the Sustainable Settlements. Development within the Urban Area beyond the town centre has potential for limited adverse impacts on heritage areas given their relatively sparse distribution in these areas. Furthermore, these areas are likely to be less sensitive to change given their relatively developed nature, particularly when compared to less developed locations. Development directed towards the Sustainable Settlements, however, may have adverse impacts on a number of Conservation Areas that are designated at these settlements. Overall a significant negative effect is expected.

## Option 2: New Garden Community

**4.87** Option 2 proposes a significant level of growth through the development of a new Garden Community at Marks Tey. Compared to other settlements in Colchester District, Marks Tey is relatively unconstrained in terms of the historic environment. It does not include a Conservation Area, although there are a number of Listed Buildings and two Scheduled Monuments at or close to the settlement. While there is potential for adverse impacts upon the setting of these assets, the design of the new Garden Community development also has potential to result in improvements to setting. Option 2 also supports growth within the Urban Area of Colchester, including the opportunity to develop regeneration areas within the Urban Area. Development within the Urban Area beyond the town centre has potential for limited adverse impacts on heritage areas given their relatively sparse distribution in these areas. Furthermore, these areas are likely to be less sensitive to change given their relatively developed nature, particularly when compared to less developed locations. The regeneration of urban locations may also support improvements in setting. Overall a minor negative effect is expected.

## Option 3: Garden Suburbs

**4.88** Option 3 focuses on the development of a number of smaller scale new communities as Garden Suburbs. The Garden Suburbs will be distributed across the Urban Area of Colchester to the south and east and around Marks

Tey/Copford, Tiptree and Messing. Development within the Urban Area beyond the town centre has potential for limited adverse impacts on heritage areas given their relatively sparse distribution in these areas. Furthermore, these areas are likely to be less sensitive to change given their relatively developed nature, particularly when compared to less developed locations. Development at Marks Tey/Copford and Tiptree may also be delivered to avoid heritage assets, given that some areas at the settlement edges are less constrained. However, much of Messing is covered by a Conservation Area with many Listed Buildings also present. Overall a minor negative effect is expected.

## Option 4: Intensification in the City Centre

**4.89** Through Option 4, the higher level of development and intensification of development in the City Centre is likely to result in substantial changes to the skyline at this location. The City Centre is covered by a number of Conservation Areas with a number of Listed Buildings, Scheduled Monuments and Colchester Castle Registered Park also present. Intensification of development at this location could therefore have adverse impacts on the settings of a number of heritage assets. This option would, however, limit the amount of development which otherwise would be distributed more widely to the smaller settlements in the District where development could have more substantial impacts given the less developed nature of some of these locations. Overall a significant negative effect is expected.

## Option 5: Transport Corridors

**4.90** Option 5 focuses growth along the key transport corridors including rail, bus and road (notably the A12 to the north of the City and the new junction 24). Areas for growth would include Marks Tey, Copford, Layer de la Haye, Wivenhoe, Hythe, Chappel, Wakes Colne and Colchester City. Development could therefore occur in both urban and more rural areas. Within the Urban Area this includes more central locations for regeneration which are potentially more sensitive in terms of the historic environment and within the wider Urban Area which are likely to be less sensitive in this regard. Of the settlements

identified for growth beyond the Urban Area, parts of Wivenhoe and Chappel are covered by Conservation Areas with concentrations of Listed Buildings in these areas making them potentially sensitive to development. Furthermore, development within Hythe has the potential to impact upon the setting of Hythe and Distillery Pond Conservation Areas. Overall a significant negative effect is expected.

## Option 6: Hubs and Spokes

**4.91** Option 6 proposes the majority of growth at the Hub settlements which include Tiptree, West Mersea, Rowhedge, Eight Ash Green, Marks Tey, Chappel, Great Horkesley, Layer de la Haye and West Bergholt. A smaller amount of growth will be directed to the Spokes which are smaller settlements in more rural locations. Development is effectively to be focussed at the Hubs and Spokes over the Urban Area. Of the Hub settlements, Rowhedge and Chappel are particularly constrained in terms of the historic environment with much of these areas covered by Conservation Areas. Furthermore, the western edge of West Mersea is also covered by a Conservation Area. Development at the Spoke settlements has potential for more substantial impacts on existing townscape given their presently less developed nature. Many of the Spokes including Messing, Fingringhoe, Fordham, Great Tey, Copford and Copford Green, Boxted, Little Horkesley, Birch and Wormingford contain either a Conservation Area or a relatively high number of Listed Buildings. Overall a significant negative effect is expected.

## Option 7: Environment Led

**4.92** Option 7 would limit growth in locations which are significantly constrained by environmental designations. It would also deliver growth in locations that would benefit from green infrastructure enhancement, including to the west and south of Colchester District. However, with the exception of some of the land to the south west around Tiptree, the south of the District is relatively constrained by biodiversity designations limiting the potential for growth in these areas. To the south, environmental sensitivities may be overcome by the delivery of new



Country Park land. Given the spread of environmental assets in the plan area, this option could involve some level of growth in the more central areas where there is a higher concentration of heritage assets. However, the focussing of much of the new development within the Urban Area and to the northern settlement edge there is potential to achieve the growth needed while limiting adverse impacts on more sensitive heritage assets at the more rural settlements. Furthermore, the delivery of green infrastructure enhancements could benefit the setting of assets in the plan area. The potential for positive effects will, however, be influenced by the design of any enhancements which is not yet known. Overall a minor negative effect is expected.

## SA objective 8: Protect, conserve, and enhance biodiversity and promote and conserve geodiversity

**4.93** Colchester has a rich biodiversity with many sites designated for their nature conservation interest. The south and south east of the plan area contain a more substantial proportion of the designated sites. Much of the coastline is designated under international notifications including the Essex Estuaries Special Area of Conservation (SAC), Blackwater Estuary Special Protection Area (SPA), Colne Estuary SPA and Abberton Reservoir SPA. Furthermore, the Blackwater, Crouch, Roach and Colne Estuaries Marine Conservation Zone (MCZ) covers the coastline and part of the River Colne towards the Urban Area. There is also one National Nature Reserve (Colne Estuary NNR) and eight Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) notified in Colchester. Beyond those located in the south of the District, SSSIs are located to the north east of the Urban Area (Bullock Wood), close to Marks Tey (Marks Tey Brickpit) and Tiptree (Tiptree Heath), around 2.0km to the east of Dedham and around 1.5km to the west of Chappel (Chalkney Wood). There are also around 170 Local Wildlife Sites that are disturbed more evenly across the plan area.

**4.94** It is expected that all options will have negative effects as a result of habitat loss and severance through land take as well as disturbance through

construction and as new homes and businesses are occupied. The effects of all options are partly uncertain given that the design of new development may incorporate mitigations and enhancements that support benefits relating to habitat provision.

**4.95** The Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community contains a number of locally designated biodiversity sites (Salary Brook, Thousand Acres and Home Wood). It is also close to a number of additional local designations to the south of the A133. There is potential for development to result in adverse effects on these locally important habitat sites.

## Option 1: Continuing existing Spatial Strategy

**4.96** Option 1 supports the high proportion of growth at the most sustainable and accessible locations within the District, including within the Urban Area of Colchester and the Sustainable Settlements. Through this option development at the Sustainable Settlements of Tiptree, Marks Tey, West Mersea and Rowhedge, Wivenhoe and Layer de la Haye has potential to adversely affect biodiversity sites of national significance or higher. Development to the north west edge of the Urban Area also has potential to adversely affect Bullock Wood SSSI. The Urban Area also contains and is close to a number of locally designated assets as well as areas of ancient woodland. The focus through this option on presently more developed locations may help to limit the disturbance of ecological assets at less developed locations. In addition, in these locations there may be greater potential to make use of brownfield sites which have already been developed, although these locations may contain habitats of importance for invertebrates. Overall a significant negative effect is expected.

## Option 2: New Garden Community

**4.97** Option 2 proposes a significant level of growth through the development of a new Garden Community at Marks Tey. This element of growth has potential to adversely affect Marks Tey Brickpit SSSI given its close proximity to the

settlement. The potential for adverse effects is considered to be substantial given the loss of a large area of greenfield land at a single location, although the incorporation of new green infrastructure at the site may help to mitigate adverse effects. This option also sets out growth for the Urban Area, with development being considered towards Bullock Wood where a SSSI is designated. Growth in the Urban Area may make use of brownfield sites, but it is noted that these may have value for particular species and also that there are several locally designated sites declared in this area. Furthermore, development towards Layer de la Haye has the potential to impact upon Abberton Reservoir SSSI and Ramsar site and Roman River SSSI as well as a number of locally designated sites. Overall a significant negative effect is expected.

### **Option 3: Garden Suburbs**

**4.98** Option 3 focuses on the development of a number of smaller scale new communities as Garden Suburbs. The Garden Suburbs will be distributed across the Urban Area of Colchester to the south and east and around Marks Tey/Copford, Tiptree and Messing. While development within the Urban Area may help to limit the need for growth in less developed and more sensitive areas of Colchester District, the south and east of the Urban Area is close to a number of SSSIs such as the River Colne, Roman River and Bullock Wood. This part of the District also contains numerous locally designated sites. Furthermore, the inclusion of development towards Marks Tey/Copford, Tiptree and Messing has the potential to adversely affect the Marks Tey Brickwords and Tiptree SSSIs as well as several local designations. Overall a significant negative effect is expected.

### **Option 4: Intensification in the City Centre**

**4.99** By delivering most development through the intensification of the City Centre, Option 4 would provide less development at the smaller settlements and villages in rural areas. It is likely that through a focus on intensification in the City Centre this option which could help to reduce the need for greenfield land and disturbance of more sensitive habitats take in the plan area.

Furthermore, regeneration across multiple sites in the City Centre may provide opportunities for incorporation of substantial connected green infrastructure enhancements. However, this will be dependent upon the specific design of new development which is not yet known. By increasing the level of development at Colchester City Centre, this option could also increase the potential for impacts on the sites of ecological importance inside and adjacent to this location, including in relation to a range of locally designated sites. Overall a minor negative effect is expected.

## Option 5: Transport Corridors

**4.100** Option 5 focuses growth along the key transport corridors including rail, bus and road (notably the A12 to the north of the City and the new junction 24). Areas for growth would include Marks Tey, Copford, Layer de la Haye, Wivenhoe, Hythe, Chappel, Wakes Colne and Colchester City. Development towards Marks Tey, Copford, Layer de la Haye, Wivenhoe, Chappel and Wakes Colne has potential to adversely affect designated sites of at least national importance given their relatively proximity. Furthermore, development provided within the Urban Area has potential for adverse impacts on a range of local assets. However, development to the north of the Urban Area and to a lesser extent at the new junction 24 of the A12 would be relatively free of biodiversity constraints. Overall a significant negative effect is expected.

## Option 6: Hubs and Spokes

**4.101** Option 6 proposes the majority of growth at the Hub settlements which include Tiptree, West Mersea, Rowhedge, Eight Ash Green, Marks Tey, Chappel, Great Horkesley, Layer de la Haye and West Bergholt. A smaller amount of growth will be directed to the Spokes which are smaller settlements in more rural locations. There is potential for biodiversity designations of national significance or higher to be adversely affected by development at the settlements of Tiptree, West Mersea, Rowhedge, Marks Tey, Chappel and Layer de la Haye. Potentially of most note is the location of West Mersaea and Wivenhoe and to a lesser extent Layer de la Haye close to land designated as

SPAs, SACs and Ramsar sites. Through the inclusion of Spoke settlements, this option would also deliver across the more rural locations with potential to result in adverse impacts in areas which were previously relatively undisturbed for biodiversity. Disturbance of wider ecological networks in the plan area may occur as rural greenfield land is developed. Overall a significant negative effect is expected.

## Option 7: Environment Led

**4.102** Option 7 would limit growth in locations which are significantly constrained by environmental designations. It would also deliver growth in locations that would benefit from green infrastructure enhancement, including to the west and south of Colchester District. However, with the exception of some of the land to the south west around Tiptree, the south of the District is relatively constrained by biodiversity designations limiting the potential for growth in these areas. To the south, environmental sensitivities may be overcome by the delivery of new Country Park land. By definition, Option 7 would support the protection of Colchester's natural environment and biodiversity by avoiding the more sensitive locations in the plan area. However, adverse effects are still likely as greenfield land is required for development, construction occurs and new homes and businesses are occupied. The provision of green infrastructure enhancements as well as a new Country Park is likely to benefit habitat provision and connectivity in the District. Overall a mixed minor positive and minor negative effect is expected.

## SA objective 9: Conserve and enhance the character and distinctiveness of the landscape

**4.103** The plan area contains the Dedham Vale National Landscape to the north. Within Colchester District, the National Landscape extends to cover the villages of Dedham and Little Horkesley and part of Dedham Heath.

**4.104** All options could have negative effects as a result of greenfield land take and new developments impacting upon the established character of the plan area. The effects of all options are partly uncertain given that the design of new development may incorporate mitigations and enhancements that support improvements in character and landscape setting.

**4.105** The Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community would result in a substantial greenfield land take at a single location in the plan area. This could disrupt existing character at this location. However, there is potential for appropriate design measures and the incorporation of green infrastructure to support an improved relationship between the settlement edge and the surrounding countryside.

## **Option 1: Continuing existing Spatial Strategy**

**4.106** Option 1 supports the highest proportion of growth at the most sustainable and accessible locations within Colchester District, including within the Urban Area of Colchester and the Sustainable Settlements. Focusing much of the new development in the Urban Area which is already built up is likely to limit the potential for additional impacts on more sensitive elements of landscape character particularly when compared to the more rural and less built-up areas of Colchester District. There is potential for new development at the Colchester Urban Area to impact upon the existing townscape, however, delivering development through a coordinated approach in this area may also help to improve the relationship between the settlement edge and the surrounding countryside through appropriate landscaping and green infrastructure proposals. While the Sustainable Settlements are smaller and potentially more susceptible to changes in landscape character, as second tier settlements they represent some of the more developed locations in the District. However, this option includes a relatively high level of growth at Dedham which falls within the National Landscape as well Langham and Boxted which are adjacent to this designation. As such, this option could have adverse impacts on this nationally important landscape. Therefore, a significant negative effect is expected.



## Option 2: New Garden Community

**4.107** Option 2 proposes a significant level of growth through the development of a new Garden Community at Marks Tey. The focus of a large amount of development to a single location will result in substantial greenfield land take with potential for disruption of existing landscape character. However, there is potential for the incorporation of substantial green infrastructure and landscaping at the new settlement to help mitigate adverse effects relating to landscape character. Option 2 also supports growth within the Urban Area of Colchester at which the developed nature of this area makes it potentially less sensitive to change. While there is some potential for impacts relating to townscape in these locations, there is also potential for new growth to contribute to an improved relationship between the settlement edge and surrounding countryside. Overall a minor negative effect is expected.

## Option 3: Garden Suburbs

**4.108** Option 3 focuses on the development of a number of smaller scale new communities as Garden Suburbs. The Garden Suburbs will be distributed across the Urban Area of Colchester to the south and east and around Marks Tey/Copford, Tiptree and Messing. The focus of a large amount of development to Garden Suburbs will require substantial greenfield land. The new Garden Suburbs could therefore result in substantial disruption to the existing landscape character at a number of locations. Where these developments are delivered at the existing settlement edge of the Colchester Urban Area there may be some potential for improving the relationship between this area and the surrounding countryside. The smaller size of the settlements of Marks Tey/Copford, Tiptree and Messing may mean these locations are more sensitive to change if accommodating substantial housing growth through a new Garden Suburb. Overall a minor negative effect is expected.

## Option 4: Intensification in the City Centre

**4.109** Option 4 concentrates growth within the City Centre thereby limiting the need for development within the more rural and smaller settlements in the plan area. Focusing much of the new development at Colchester City Centre which is already built up is likely to result in changes to the townscape at this location given the need for higher densities of development and taller buildings. Furthermore, the achievement of higher densities of development could result in loss of open spaces that contribute to local character. However, this option will limit the potential for impacts on landscape character in less developed and potentially more sensitive locations in the District. Overall a minor negative effect is expected.

## Option 5: Transport Corridors

**4.110** Option 5 focuses growth along the key transport corridors including rail, bus and road (notably the A12 to the north of the City and the new junction 24). Areas for growth would include Marks Tey, Copford, Layer de la Haye, Wivenhoe, Hythe, Chappel, Wakes Colne and Colchester City. This option is likely to result in some development within or adjacent to the Urban Area where there are strong transport links. These locations are likely to be less sensitive to change given their more developed nature and there may be opportunities for improving the relationship between the settlement edge and surrounding countryside. The settlements likely to accommodate growth beyond the Urban Area are relatively developed. However, where a higher level of growth occurs at these locations there is potential for more substantial impacts on local landscape character given that they are less developed than the Urban Area. Furthermore, development to the north of Colchester District at the A12 has the potential to impact upon the setting of the Dedham Vale National Landscape dependent upon its precise location and the land take involved all this route. Overall a significant negative effect is expected.

## Option 6: Hubs and Spokes

**4.111** Option 6 proposes the majority of growth at the Hub settlements which include Tiptree, West Mersea, Rowhedge, Eight Ash Green, Marks Tey, Chappel, Great Horkesley, Layer de la Haye and West Bergholt. A smaller amount of growth will be directed to the Spokes which are smaller settlements in more rural locations. It is expected that growth at many of these locations would involve greenfield land take and changes in landscape character at relatively undisturbed locations. While many of the Hub settlements are relatively developed, they are likely to be more sensitive to new development than the Urban Area given their less developed nature. Furthermore, the Hub settlement Great Horkesley and the Spokes of Little Horkesley, Boxted and Wormingford are located within or close to the Dedham Vale National Landscape with potential for development to result in harm to the area's special landscape character. Overall a significant negative effect is expected.

## Option 7: Environment Led

**4.112** Option 7 would limit growth in locations which are significantly constrained by environmental designations. It would also deliver growth in locations that would benefit from green infrastructure enhancement, including to the west and south of Colchester District. However, with the exception of some of the land to the south west around Tiptree, the south of the District is relatively constrained by biodiversity designations limiting the potential for growth in these areas. To the south, environmental sensitivities may be overcome by the delivery of new Country Park land. This approach is likely to result in less development in rural and potentially more sensitive locations. It will also help to conserve environmental features that contribute to landscape character in the District. A substantial proportion of development is expected occur in the Urban Area, which given its more developed nature is less likely to be sensitive to change with potential for improvements in the relationship between this area and the surrounding countryside where development incorporates appropriate landscaping. In addition, the green infrastructure enhancements and Country Park included through this option would likely enhance landscape character in

Colchester District. However, this option is still expected to result in some change to local landscape setting as a result of the greenfield land take required for new development. Overall a mixed minor positive and minor negative is expected.

## SA objective 10: Minimise greenhouse gas emissions and mitigate and adapt to the effects of climate change

**4.113** To avoid duplication, the appraisal of the options in relation to SA objective 10 does not consider the potential to reduce the need to travel and associated carbon emissions as this is covered through SA objective 4: transport.

**4.114** Addressing climate change adaptation as new development is delivered over the plan period is most likely to be influenced by design measures incorporated to address the hotter, drier summers and warmer, wetter winters predicted for the UK. This might include enabling passive cooling, draught proofing and supporting natural shading, as well as promoting flood resilience. These measures will be supported through policy requirements in the Local Plan and not the location of new development, which is the focus of the options considered for growth in the District. Climate change adaptation may, however, also be influenced by the incorporation of green infrastructure as development is delivered. It is expected that all development will provide some opportunities to incorporate green infrastructure, however more substantial and coordinated provision may be achievable at large-scale sites. Furthermore, large scale developments may also present increased potential for new low carbon energy infrastructure (such as district heating and combined heat and power (CHP)) to be provided and for a high number of homes to be connected.

**4.115** The Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community is expected to be of a scale to support substantial infrastructure delivery. This may include measures to support climate change mitigation and adaptation.

## Option 1: Continuing existing Spatial Strategy

**4.116** Option 1 supports the highest proportion of growth at the most sustainable and accessible locations within Colchester District, including within the Urban Area of Colchester and the Sustainable Settlements. New development provided at the Urban Area could potentially support connections to district heating or CHP for a large number of existing residents where proposals include these types of provisions. There is more limited scope for these types of benefits at the Sustainable Settlements given the fewer numbers of residents at these locations. Benefits will depend largely on the infrastructure new schemes can deliver. Furthermore, by focussing much of the new development over the plan period at the Urban Area, Option 1 may provide opportunities for the incorporation of large-scale green infrastructure through a coordinated approach to support to climate change adaptation. Overall a minor positive effect is expected.

## Option 2: New Garden Community

**4.117** Option 2 proposes a significant level of growth through the development of a new Garden Community at Marks Tey. The scale of growth to be delivered at the new Garden Community could support the delivery of infrastructure for and connections to district heating and CHP. The large size of the site may also support the delivery of infrastructure for generating electricity from low carbon sources. The scale of development to be delivered at this location could support the delivery of a large scale green infrastructure provision. The development provided towards the Urban Area could support benefits relating to climate change mitigation and adaptation for a large number of existing residents where developments achieve new infrastructure provision. Overall a significant positive effect is expected.

## Option 3: Garden Suburbs

**4.118** Option 3 focuses on the development of a number of smaller scale new communities as Garden Suburbs. The Garden Suburbs will be distributed across the Urban Area of Colchester to the south and east and around Marks Tey/Copford, Tiptree and Messing. The scale of growth to be delivered at the Garden Suburbs would be more limited than what is achieved at a new Garden Community. As such while this option would support development that aligns with the Garden Town concepts, the scale of any new infrastructure delivered and benefits relating to climate change mitigation and adaptation, is likely to be more limited. As the new Garden Suburbs would likely be delivered within the Urban Area or towards relatively large settlements beyond this location, there is potential for the existing development to benefit from new infrastructure provided in terms of both climate change mitigation (connections to new district heating schemes or CHP) and adaptation (new green infrastructure). Overall a minor positive effect is expected.

## Option 4: Intensification in the City Centre

**4.119** Option 4 proposes the majority of the growth within Colchester City Centre and aims to regenerate and intensify development at this location. Development focussed at the City Centre in a coordinated manner through Option 4 could support the provision of infrastructure for and connections to district heating and CHP. The relatively high level of development at Colchester City Centre could also result in a large number of homes benefiting from large scale green infrastructure provision. Furthermore, infrastructure provision at this location could benefit numerous existing residents in the surrounding Urban Area. Overall a minor positive effect is expected. The effect is partly uncertain given that the need to achieve higher densities of development could reduce the potential to incorporate substantial infrastructure provision.



## Option 5: Transport Corridors

**4.120** Option 5 focuses growth along the key transport corridors including rail, bus and road (notably the A12 to the north of the City and the new junction 24). Areas for growth would include Marks Tey, Copford, Layer de la Haye, Wivenhoe, Hythe, Chappel, Wakes Colne and Colchester City. This option does not include an obvious focus for large scale development that might otherwise support substantial new infrastructure provision in the District. However, where the delivery of new development provides the opportunity to incorporate new low carbon infrastructure (such as district heating and CHP) and coordinated large scale green infrastructure many of the locations included for growth are likely to allow for numerous new homes to experience benefits. Overall a minor positive effect is expected.

## Option 6: Hubs and Spokes

**4.121** Option 6 proposes the majority of growth at the Hub settlements which include Tiptree, West Mersea, Rowhedge, Eight Ash Green, Marks Tey, Chappel, Great Horkesley, Layer de la Haye and West Bergholt. A smaller amount of growth will be directed to the Spokes which are smaller settlements in more rural locations. This option does not include an obvious focus for new large scale growth. As such the incorporation of new infrastructure to support climate change mitigation and adaptation is considered to be more difficult to achieve. Furthermore, where the delivery of new development provides the opportunity to incorporate new infrastructure (such as district heating and CHP) and green infrastructure the focus away from the Urban Area will likely mean fewer residents will benefit from the provision. Overall a negligible effect is expected.

## Option 7: Environment Led

**4.122** Option 7 would limit growth in locations which are significantly constrained by environmental designations. It would also deliver growth in

locations that would benefit from green infrastructure enhancement, including to the west and south of Colchester District. However, with the exception of some of the land to the south west around Tiptree, the south of the District is relatively constrained by biodiversity designations limiting the potential for growth in these areas. To the south, environmental sensitivities may be overcome by the delivery of new Country Park land. Option 7 does not include an obvious growth point to focus large scale development at. However, this is likely to result much of the new development being delivered in or adjacent to the Urban Area given its less constrained nature. Through this approach, new infrastructure supported is likely to benefit many existing residents in presently developed locations. Furthermore, this option is likely to benefit climate adaptation in the District by supporting the protection of sites of environmental importance as well as the delivery of land for a Country Parks and green infrastructure. Overall a minor positive effect is expected.

## SA objective 11: Manage and reduce flood risk from all sources

**4.123** Colchester District is crossed by a number of water courses around which areas of Flood Zones 2 and 3 are present. This includes the River Colne which flows through a number of settlements including Wakes Colne, Chappel, Colchester City, Rowhedge and Wivenhoe where areas of higher flow risk are present. Other fluvial flood risk areas identified in the City are associated with the River Stour, Layer Brook and Roman River. The presence of these water courses result in areas of flood risk within Dedham, to the north and east of Great Horskesley, to the north of Marks Tey/Copford, to the north of Layer de la Haye and to the south and west of West Mersea. There are also areas at risk of surface water flooding interspersed across the plan area.

**4.124** New development is likely to include measures that will help to mitigate flood risk as it is delivered, for example through the incorporation of SuDS. However, this will depend on the design of any new development which is not known at this stage.

**4.125** The Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community is bordered by an area of Flood Zone 2 and 3 associated with Salary Brook. The large area incorporated within the area of search for the Garden Community is likely to mean that the areas of most risk can be avoided and that appropriate mitigation can be delivered.

## Option 1: Continuing existing Spatial Strategy

**4.126** Option 1 supports the highest proportion of growth at the most sustainable and accessible locations within Colchester District, including within the Urban Area of Colchester and the Sustainable Settlements. Development within the Urban Area may be able to benefit from an increased potential to re-use brownfield land given the more developed nature of this area. This approach may help to limit flood risk as development occurs as the proliferation of impermeable surfaces is limited. However, in the Urban Area development may fall within Flood Zone 2 or 3 associated with the River Colne. In addition, development at a number of the Sustainable Settlements could fall within Flood Zone 2 or 3. Overall a minor negative effect is expected.

## Option 2: New Garden Community

**4.127** Option 2 proposes a significant level of growth through the development of a new Garden Community at Marks Tey. There is a small area of Flood Zone 2 or 3 along the Roman River to the north of the settlement. The potential for new development to be adversely affected by flood risk from this source will depend on its precise location and design. Furthermore, development of this large scale would result in substantial growth in impermeable surfaces in a single location which could have implications for the infiltration of surface water. While it is recognised that suitable mitigation might be achieved, the detailed design of any scheme for this location is not yet known. Option 2 also supports growth within the Urban Area of Colchester where there is greater potential for the reuse of previously developed sites but development could be vulnerable to flood risk from the River Colne dependent on its precise location. Overall a minor negative effect is expected.

## Option 3: Garden Suburbs

**4.128** Option 3 focuses on the development of a number of smaller scale new communities as Garden Suburbs. The Garden Suburbs will be distributed across the Urban Area of Colchester to the south and east and around Marks Tey/Copford, Tiptree and Messing. Option 3 also supports growth within the Urban Area of Colchester and proportional growth in other existing settlements and villages across the plan area. This option has potential to result in some growth occurring in areas of Flood Zone 2 and 3 within the Urban Area or at its edge as Garden Suburbs. Furthermore, development at Marks Tey/Copford could be affected by flood risk associated with Roman River. Overall a minor negative effect is expected.

## Option 4: Intensification in the City Centre

**4.129** Option 4 would result in the highest proportion of housing growth being delivered at Colchester City Centre. The high level of existing development at this location could mean there is increased potential for re-use of brownfield land through this option, which may help to limit increases in impermeable surfaces and flood risk as development occurs. However, there are areas of Flood Zone 2 and 3 along the length of the River Colne which passes to the north of the main town centre meaning developments at this location may be affected by flood risk. Overall a minor negative effect is expected.

## Option 5: Transport Corridors

**4.130** Option 5 focuses growth along the key transport corridors including rail, bus and road (notably the A12 to the north of the City and the new junction 24). Areas for growth would include Marks Tey, Copford, Layer de la Haye, Wivenhoe, Hythe, Chappel, Wakes Colne and Colchester City. This option includes a number of locations potential vulnerable to flood risk associated with water courses in the plan area. This includes land in or surrounding the settlements of Marks Tey, Copford, Layer de la Haye, Wivenhoe, Chappel and

Wakes Colne as well as land within the Urban Area given the presence of the River Colne. Overall a minor negative effect is expected.

## Option 6: Hubs and Spokes

**4.131** Option 6 proposes the majority of growth at the Hub settlements which include Tiptree, West Mersea, Rowhedge, Eight Ash Green, Marks Tey, Chappel, Great Horkesley, Layer de la Haye and West Bergholt. A smaller amount of growth will be directed to the Spokes which are smaller settlements in more rural locations. The Hub settlements set out through this option include a number at which areas of Flood Zone 2 and 3 are located. These are West Mersea, Rowhedge, Marks Tey, Chappel, Great Horkesley, Layer de la Haye and West Bergholt. Including a smaller amount of growth at the Spoke settlements could result in new residents at settlements such as Easthorpe, Fingringhoe and Peldon being affected by areas of Flood Zone 2 and 3 given their proximity to these settlements. Overall a minor negative effect is expected.

## Option 7: Environment Led

**4.132** This option would limit growth in locations which are most significantly constrained by environmental designations. It would also deliver growth in locations that would benefit from green infrastructure enhancement, including to the west and south of Colchester District. However, with the exception of some of the land to the south west around Tiptree, the south of the District is relatively constrained by biodiversity designations limiting the potential for growth in these areas. To the south, environmental sensitivities may be overcome by the delivery of new Country Park land. This option is likely to result in more development in the Urban Area with increased potential for re-use of brownfield land and limiting proliferation of impermeable surfaces and associated risk of surface water flooding. However, within the Urban Area development could be affected by flood risk associated with the River Colne. Furthermore, at the southern settlement edge there are areas of flood risk associated with Roman River and at the eastern settlement edge there is potential for development to be adversely affected by flood risk associated with Salary Brook. Given that

Option 7 supports enhancement of green infrastructure, it could achieve flood risk mitigation in the plan area. Overall a mixed minor positive and minor negative effect is expected.

## SA objective 12: Reduce waste generation and increase levels of reuse and recycling

**4.133** New development as part of all the spatial strategy options will result in the generation of waste, both from construction and as sites become operational. This includes the Garden Community options considered. Although these elements are much more substantial in size, they are expected to result in a proportionate level of waste when compared to other elements of growth considered through the spatial strategy options. The generation of waste is unlikely to be substantially influenced by the overall spatial strategy. It is expected that all new development could be suitably served through the extension of existing kerbside collection services. Where are opportunities to bring brownfield land back into use there is potential for existing materials and buildings back into use. However, this has already been considered through the appraisal of the options in relation to SA objective 2: efficient use of land. Therefore, minor negative effects are expected for all options.

## SA objective 13: Protect and improve air quality

**4.134** The effects expected for the spatial strategy options in relation to SA objective 13 are influenced by those identified in relation to SA objective 4: transport. These effects are not repeated in detail at this point. The effects expected in relation to SA objective 13 also consider the location of air quality management areas (AQMAs) in Colchester District.

**4.135** Three AQMAs have been declared in the centre of Colchester City along Brook Street, Mersea Road and Osborne Street and St John's Street.



**4.136** The Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community presents an opportunity to deliver substantial new infrastructure supporting a degree of self-containment at the site and potentially in the surrounding areas. It is also to benefit from connections from the new RTS thereby limiting the need for new residents to travel by private vehicle. Furthermore, its location some distance from the AQMAs in the City means that its development is unlikely to contribute greatly to increased air pollution in these areas.

## Option 1: Continuing existing Spatial Strategy

**4.137** Option 1 supports the highest proportion of growth at the most sustainable and accessible locations within Colchester District, including within the Urban Area of Colchester and the Sustainable Settlements. As per the effects reported for SA objective 4: transport, this option is likely to provide many residents with good access to a strong service and job offer, as well as transport links, and could help reduce the need to travel longer distances and contribute to improved air quality in the plan area. Development within the Urban Area, however, could contribute to the exacerbation of air pollution within the city centre's AQMAs. Overall a mixed significant positive and minor negative is expected.

## Option 2: New Garden Community

**4.138** Option 2 proposes a significant level of growth through the development of a new Garden Community at Marks Tey. As reported in relation to SA objective 4: transport this may support the creation of a self-contained community from which there is reduced need to travel. However, it may be that the realisation of a more self-contained development can only be fully achieved in the longer term, given that some infrastructure may not be in place for early occupants of the site to benefit from. This option also includes development at the Urban Area at which residents will have good access to service provision and jobs but there is increased potential for travel within the City's AQMAs. This option also fails include substantial growth at the Sustainable Settlements at which the existing service provision might be built upon to limit the need for

residents in these locations to have to travel longer distances from on a regular basis. Overall, a mixed minor positive and minor negative effect is expected. Given that effects are reliant on the potential to achieve self-containment at the new Garden Community in the short term, the effect is partly uncertain.

### **Option 3: Garden Suburbs**

**4.139** Option 3 proposes the development of smaller scale new communities across the City. This includes growth within the Urban Area of Colchester to the south and east and around Marks Tey/Copford, Tiptree and Messing. As reported in relation to SA objective 4: transport, new Garden Suburbs could support more limited infrastructure provision than what might be achieved at new Garden Community developments and therefore a more limited level of self-containment is likely. The Garden Suburb locations are likely to be spread within and outside the Urban Area, with residents benefitting from variable access to services and facilities and jobs. Some of these locations may result in increased levels of traffic within the City's AQMAs. Overall a mixed minor positive and significant negative effect is expected.

### **Option 4: Intensification in the City Centre**

**4.140** Option 4 concentrates much of the growth for the District within the City Centre and with proportional levels of growth directed to the other existing settlements and villages. As reported in relation to SA objective 4: transport, it would likely provide opportunities to strengthen the role of Colchester City as the main service provider in the plan area and could provide increased opportunities for residents to work locally or commute by train or bus. However, this approach could increase the over reliance on the City Centre for certain provisions and result in longer term reduced sustainability of the other settlements in the plana area and overburdening of services in the Urban Area. Furthermore, as this option would result in highest level of development at the City Centre it is likely to have adverse impacts in terms of traffic and congestion and exacerbation of air pollution within the City's AQMAs,. Overall a mixed significant positive and significant negative is expected. The effect is partly

uncertain given that appropriate transport mitigation may help to address congestion and increased air pollution in the City Centre.

## Option 5: Transport Corridors

**4.141** Option 5 supports development along key transport corridors which could include within the Urban Area of Colchester, Marks Tey, Wivenhoe, Hythe, Chappel and Wakes Colne all of which benefit from nearby access to a railway station. Growth along key transport corridors will increase access to sustainable transport modes, particularly to public transport such as bus, rail and the RTS. However, as reported in relation to SA objective 4: transport, this option would also include some locations which are notable in terms of the good access they provide to the strategic road network over access to public transport (the A12 and new junction 24). From the locations high numbers of journeys may be made by private vehicle. Furthermore, the delivery of growth within the Urban Area where public transport provision is strong is likely to result in some exacerbation of air pollution in the City's AQMAs. Therefore, a mixed significant positive and minor negative effect is expected.

## Option 6: Hubs and Spokes

**4.142** Option 6 proposes the majority of growth at the Hub settlements which include Tiptree, West Mersea, Rowhedge, Eight Ash Green, Marks Tey, Chappel, Great Horkesley, Layer de a la Haye and West Bergholt. A smaller level of growth will be directed to the Spokes which are smaller settlements in more rural locations. A proportional level of growth will be supported within other settlements and villages that are not Hubs and Spokes with some growth also occurring in the Urban Area. As reported in relation to SA objective 4: transport, while this option is likely to support the sustainability of larger settlements beyond the Urban Area, it is likely to result in some increase in the numbers of trips being made by private vehicle in Colchester District. This is likely because some Hubs and most Spokes will not provide residents with access to the required range of services and facilities and jobs. This increase in trips made by private vehicle will contribute to air pollution in the plan area.

Given that this option would deliver only a limited level of growth in the Urban Area, it is unlikely to contribute substantially to air pollution in the City's AQMAs. Overall a mixed minor positive and minor negative effect is expected.

## Option 7: Environment Led

**4.143** Option 7 would limit growth in locations which are significantly constrained by environmental designations. It would also deliver growth in locations that would benefit from green infrastructure enhancement, including to the west and south of Colchester District. However, with the exception of some of the land to the south west around Tiptree, the south of the District is relatively constrained by biodiversity designations limiting the potential for growth in these areas. The environmental value of this southern part of the plan area may be protected through the incorporation of a new Country Park alongside new homes. This option is expected to limit the distribution of growth within Colchester City with a focus on the Urban Area and areas adjacent. As reported in relation to SA objective 4: transport, there is also the potential for limited growth within the lower tier settlements through this option, which result in many new residents having good access to a range of services and facilities and jobs. However, it could also result in over reliance on the Urban Area for services and the stagnation of services beyond this area. This approach could contribute to increased travel and congestion in this part of the plan area. Furthermore, development in the Urban Area could result in some exacerbation of air pollution within the City's AQMAs. Overall a mixed significant positive and minor negative is expected. The effect is partly uncertain given that the potential for congestion in the Urban Area may be addressed through appropriate mitigation.

## SA objective 14: Protect the quality and quantity of water resources

**4.144** The main rivers in Colchester District are the River Colne, River Stour, Layer Brook and Roman River. Water quality is an issue within the District with many of the watercourses in moderate and poor ecological status and all of the

watercourses failing to achieve good chemical status. The main reasons for not achieving good status is due to impacts relating to agriculture and rural land management, the water industry, urban and transport, local and central government, and industry.

**4.145** The majority of Colchester District (including the Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community) is covered by SPZ 3. There are very small pockets of the Urban Area that are covered by SPZ 1 which are more sensitive in terms of the potential for impacts on groundwater resources. However, these areas are of a size that would only cover a small number of homes. There are further areas of SPZ 1 as well as areas of Zone 2 along the border between Colchester District and Babergh. This includes land close to the settlement of Dedham and the villages of Mount Bures, Wormingford, Little Horkesley and Boxted Cross. The only settlements that fall outside of a SPZ are West Mersea and part of Tiptree. Given the spread of development proposed through the options considered it is likely that all would have a minor negative effect in relation to the potential for contamination of groundwater resources. Option 1 could result in growth within the SPZ at Dedham as a Sustainable Settlement which could have further adverse effects. However, the distribution of growth to a wider number of settlements through this option is likely to limit the potential for a significant effect. Uncertainty is recorded for this effect dependent upon the precise amount and location of new development at Dedham.

## Summary

### Identifying the best performing options

**4.146** Of the options considered, Option 1: Continuing existing Spatial Strategy is expected to perform the most favourably in relation to the greatest number of sustainability objectives. This option is expected have the joint most significant positive effects (six, including mixed effects) alongside Option 5: Transport Corridors. However, Option 1 outperforms Option 5 given that it has more significant positive effects without any combined negative effects (two) than Option 5. However, this does not necessarily mean that Option 1 is the 'best'

option since there are almost always trade-offs between different aspects of sustainability and the Council may wish to prioritise some over others.

## Positive effects expected for the best performing option

**4.147** Under Option 1, the continuation of the existing Spatial Strategy will continue to make good use of the Urban Area while also providing a suitable level of growth within the second tier settlements (i.e. the Sustainable Settlements). As such it will help to address issues of deprivation relating to barriers to housing and services (SA objective 1: housing) where the IMD 2019 identifies that parts of the Urban Area fall within the 10% most deprived in the country. Including a distribution of development to the Sustainable Settlements will help to address similar issues within the Rural North, Marks Tey and Layer and Mersea and Pyefleet wards, all of which also include LSOAs that fall within the 10% most deprived in the countryside.

**4.148** Furthermore, the continued focus of much of the development at the Urban Area will provide new residents with good access to the important employment areas and sustainable transport links which is likely to help attract inward investment (SA objective 3: economic growth). There is also potential to support the viability of sustainable transport services including the RTS in the Urban Area (SA objective 4: transport). Unlike some of the other options considered (notably Options 2: New Garden Community, 3: Garden Suburbs, 4: Intensification in the City Centre and 7: Environment-led), Option 1 would also support continued sustainable growth and the potential for suitable expansion of services provision and some job creation to support local populations within the Sustainable Settlements. It is expected that this approach will help to limit the potential for high levels of travel from these settlements as well as over reliance on the Urban Area which might otherwise result in overburdening of services and facilities (SA objectives 5: community health and wellbeing and 6: services and facilities) as well as congestion in this part of the plan area and intensification of air pollution (SA objective 13: air quality) within the AQMAs in the City Centre.



## Negative effects expected for the best performing option

**4.149** It is noted that several significant negative effects are recorded for Option 1. The adverse effects expected largely reflect the relatively large amount of development that will be required to meet the needs of Colchester District. The significant effects recorded for this option reflect the potential for impacts on heritage assets across the plan area (SA objective 7: historic environment), greenfield land take and loss and disturbance of habitats (SA objective 8: biodiversity and geodiversity). Through this option development is also likely to occur within more rural parts of the plan area and in areas that may affect the setting of the Dedham Vale National Landscape (SA objective 9: landscape).

**4.150** Considering this option at a strategic scale, this mostly reflects the distribution of heritage assets, biodiversity assets and value landscape features close to some of the Sustainable Settlements. There is likely to be potential to limit these effects by providing lower levels of development at particularly sensitive locations. For example, this includes Dedham which lies within the National Landscape and West Mersea which lies close to several internationally important biodiversity designations. Furthermore, it may be that when considering specific site options for development in more detail, less sensitive locations for development can be found at these settlements.

## Consideration of Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community

**4.151** As with all other options considered, the Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community is included in Option 1 to the east of the Urban Area. This element of growth is of a scale to support substantial infrastructure provision to benefit new residents and support a degree of self-containment. Its location at the settlement edge means the infrastructure delivered could benefit residents in the Urban Area, including within Greenstead which contains an LSOA within the 10% most deprived in the country. Depending on the final uses provided at the site, there is also potential for the new Garden Community to achieve

synergies with the Knowledge Gateway and University of Essex Strategic Economic Area which it is adjacent to, thereby supporting economic growth.

## Identifying the least well performing options

**4.152** Of the options considered, Option 6: Hubs and Spokes (five significant effects) followed by Option 3: Garden Suburbs (four significant effects) perform less favourably. For Option 6 this partly reflects the location of Hub and Spoke settlements assigned for growth in areas of sensitivity in terms of heritage assets (SA objective 7: historic environment), environmental designations (SA objective 8: biodiversity and geodiversity) and landscape importance including the National Landscape (SA objective 9: landscape). This option would also fail to make best use of the Urban Area and increase reliance on the smaller Hub and Spoke settlements in the plan area. While a level of development would be provided at the Urban Area, it would be more limited than through some of the other options. Some new residents would be located at settlements at which development is likely to occur on higher value agricultural soils (SA objective 2: efficient use of land) as well as at which their healthcare needs are less likely to be met with no healthcare facilities provided nearby (SA objective 5: community and health and wellbeing).

**4.153** While Option 3 would achieve the delivery of a number of growth points as Garden Suburbs, the scale of growth at each location would be much more limited than what is achieved at a new Garden Community. Therefore, the new infrastructure and level of self-containment achieved at each location is expected to be much less than what might be achieved at a Garden Community. Converse to Option 6, Option 3 would also direct a limited amount of development to the Sustainable Settlements, increasing reliance on the Urban Area (with some growth at this location provided as Garden Suburbs to the south and east) as the main service provider with potential for increased travel to this location resulting in congestion and air pollution (SA objectives 4: transport and 13: air quality). This approach is also unlikely to support sustainable service growth to benefit the health and wellbeing of a substantial number of residents in the Sustainable Settlements (SA objective 5: community and health and wellbeing).

## Consideration of benefits of the other options

**4.154** Significant positive effects alone are recorded for Options 2: New Garden Community and 5: Transport Corridors for SA objectives 10: climate change and 3: economic growth, respectively. There may be potential for some of the benefits of these options to be taken forward in the final spatial strategy that the Council decides on. The delivery of a new Garden Community growth point through Option 2 could achieve critical mass to support the delivery of substantial new infrastructure, including that which could support climate change mitigation in the plan area (SA objective 10 Climate change). This could take the form of infrastructure to support the generation of energy from low carbon sources and that needed for CHP and district heating. Option 1 already includes the Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community which has the potential to achieve similar benefits. The potential benefits of including an additional Garden Community in the plan area would need to be weighed against the potential difficulties of start up, delivery, appropriate phasing of new infrastructure and longer term issues of place making.

**4.155** Option 5: Transport Corridors could achieve benefits relating to economic growth given its support for development in areas that have best access to transport corridors, which is likely to make the plan area more attractive to new residents as well as investors. This option includes development at strategically important roads through the District, including the A12 to the north of the Urban Area and at the new junction 24. While development at these locations could increase private car travel, unless substantial mitigation was achieved, there is potential to support economic growth (SA objective 3: economic growth) along the strategic road network and close to existing areas of importance for the economy in Colchester District.

The SA also reports that Option 7: Environment Led has potential to achieve benefits over and above those expected for Option 1, that might be incorporated to some extent as part of the preferred approach. This option seeks to avoid areas most constrained by environmental designations and is likely to limit the potential for impacts on biodiversity sites of international importance and the Dedham National Landscape. This approach would need to be considered

alongside the need to deliver appropriate levels of growth in the Sustainable Settlements to support service provision and long term viability at these locations. Most notably this includes at the settlements of Dedham and West Mersea which are relatively constrained in terms of important environmental features but perform important functions for their populations. Furthermore, this option is the only for a positive effect is recorded in relation to SA objectives 8: biodiversity and geodiversity, 9: landscape and 11: flood risk. This partly reflects the approach of avoiding areas of most environmental importance and also the potential to deliver development and green infrastructure enhancements where deficiencies in provision are presently identified. Through Option 7 could include the delivery of a new Country Park in the south of the District. This approach would help to address green infrastructure deficiencies as well as being likely to support habitat connectivity and improvements in local landscape setting.

## Approach to appraisal of site options

**4.156** The process for the identification of the reasonable alternative site options has been explained in Chapter 2 alongside explanation of the reasons for selecting the other alternatives for the plan appraised by the SA. Each site option was appraised using the detailed assessment criteria and associated assumptions set out in Appendix D. The site assessment work to date has been undertaken at a level of detail that is proportionate to the level of detail of the Local Plan stage. If additional relevant evidence becomes available at later stages of plan-making, the SA will draw on this as appropriate.

**4.157** All of the individual site options were appraised on a 'policy-off' basis. This is to say, the appraisal has been undertaken based on the principle of development for the specified use within a defined site boundary and without taking into account opportunities to mitigate potential negative effects by, for example, providing new social infrastructure, by development design that seeks to minimise effects, or by site layouts that avoid sensitive environmental receptors within the site boundary. This serves to highlight potential effects on the environment and potential gaps in existing services, facilities and sustainable transport links. It also provides a more consistent basis for assessment than reliance on indicative site masterplans or offers of

infrastructure provision that some site promoters may have made, given that this information was not available for all site options. Consideration by the SA of any proposed site layouts would also be inappropriately detailed; the level of detail of the appraisal work undertaken reflects the relatively high level of a Local Plan.

**4.158** The site assessment scores for site options were revisited for sites included as proposed allocations in the draft Local Plan, to reflect the plan's site-specific policy requirements. This work is presented in Chapter 5. The assessment of the plan as a whole is also included in this report (see Chapter 6), to take account of the mitigation offered by development management policies and regulatory mechanisms external to the plan.

**4.159** The appraisal of the site options in this chapter also includes recommendations about potential approaches to mitigation that the Council might take to avoid the adverse effects identified for the SA objectives where relevant.

## Appraisal findings for site options

**4.160** The sites that are considered by the Council to be reasonable alternatives are listed in Table 4.2, Table 4.3 and Table 4.4 by unique site identification number. Several of the site IDs include the suffix 'a' or 'b'. This indicates where the Council provided an amendment to the site boundary or capacity of a site option already considered in the SA process up to September 2024. To ensure all reasonable alternatives have been given equal consideration, the appraisal of the options considered after September 2024 were included in the updated appraisal findings completed in December 2024 and the findings for these sites are presented alongside the sites initially provided for appraisal. The tables included later in this chapter set a summary of the likely effects of the site options in relation to each of the SA objectives.

**4.161** These tables are followed by a description the sustainability findings for each SA objective. Where differing approaches have been taken for the

appraisal of residential, mixed use and employment sites options, this has been explained. Maps setting out the location of each site option are presented in Figures 4.1 to Figure 4.2x below Table 4.2, Table 4.3 and Table 4.4.



Table 4.2: Summary of sustainability effects of residential site options

Site ID	Site Name	SA 1	SA 2	SA 3	SA 4	SA 5	SA 6	SA 7	SA 8	SA 9	SA 10	SA 11	SA 12	SA 13	SA 14
10082	North Station Car Park	+	++	+	++	+	+	0?	-	0?	N/A	0	N/A	-	--
10082a	Land at Colchester Station	++	++	+	++	+	+	-?	-	0?	N/A	0	N/A	-	--
10090	Land North Halstead Road	++	--	-	-	+	-	-?	-	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10121	Land at Birch Green	+	--	-	+	+	-	--?	-	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10122	The Old School	+	++	-	-	-	--	--?	-	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10122a	The Old School	+	++	-	-	-	--	--?	-	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10123	Site west of Chappel Hill	+	--	-	+	+	-	--?	-	--?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10125	Cedar Brook Field	+	--	-	-	+	-	--?	-	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10132	Brook Meadows	++	--	+	+	+	+	0?	--	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10154	Colchester Willow Ground	+	-	0	++	+	++	--?	--	0?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10165	Land North of Woolmer Green	++	--	-	-	+	-	--?	--	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10171	Land Adjacent to 124 School Road	+	--	-	-	+	-	--?	-	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-

**Chapter 4** Appraisal findings for options for distribution of growth in Colchester and site options

Site ID	Site Name	SA 1	SA 2	SA 3	SA 4	SA 5	SA 6	SA 7	SA 8	SA 9	SA 10	SA 11	SA 12	SA 13	SA 14
10173	Liveland	+	++	-	+	0	-	--?	--	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	--
10177	Sawdon	+	--	-	-	-	--	--?	--	--?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10178	Land South of Colchester Road	++	--	-	+	+	-	--?	-	--?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10179	Sawdon - Kemps Farm	+	--	-	-	-	--	--?	--	--?	N/A	--	N/A	-	-
10181	Peldon Hall Farm	+	--	-	-	+	--	--?	--	--?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10185	Land west of Langham Lane	+	--	-	+	+	--	--?	-	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10196	Land South of Halstead Road Site 1	+	--	-	+	-	-	--?	-	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10197	Land south of Halstead Road Site 2	++	--	-	+	+	-	--?	-	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10208	Land North of Halstead Road	++	--	-	+	+	-	--?	-	--?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10211	Land east of Fingringhoe Road	++	--	-	-	+	-	-?	--	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	--
10225	Site adjoining Clay Barn	+	--	-	--	+	--	0?	--	--?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10226	Land East of School Road	++	--	-	-	0	-	-?	-	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10226a	Land East of School Road	+	--	-	-	0	-	-?	-	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10228	Land adjacent Lower Road	+	--	-	-	+	--	--?	--	--?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-

**Chapter 4** Appraisal findings for options for distribution of growth in Colchester and site options

Site ID	Site Name	SA 1	SA 2	SA 3	SA 4	SA 5	SA 6	SA 7	SA 8	SA 9	SA 10	SA 11	SA 12	SA 13	SA 14
10229	Land north of Colchester Road	++	--	-	+	+	-	-?	-	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10231	Land north of Colchester Road	+	++	-	-	+	-	--?	-	--?	N/A	0	N/A	-	0
10233	Land at Oxley House	+	--	-	-	+	-	--?	--	--?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10239	Gosbecks Business Park	+	++	--	+	+	+	--?	-	0?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10244	Land adjacent New Park Cottage	+	-	-	-	+	+	-?	-	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10245	Land northwest of Harwich Road	++	--	-	-	0	-	--?	--	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10248	Land north west Colne Bank Avenue	++	--	-	++	+	++	--?	--	--?	N/A	--	N/A	-	--
10253	Ship Inn Field	+	--	-	-	+	-	-?	--	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10254	Apex Lodge	+	--	-	-	+	-	--?	-	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10255	Green Farm House	+	--	-	-	+	-	--?	-	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10256	Buildings Farm	++	--	0	+	+	+	0?	--	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10256a	Buildings Farm	++	--	0	+	+	+	0?	--	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10257	Woodlands Farm	++	--	-	-	+	-	--?	--	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	--

**Chapter 4** Appraisal findings for options for distribution of growth in Colchester and site options

Site ID	Site Name	SA 1	SA 2	SA 3	SA 4	SA 5	SA 6	SA 7	SA 8	SA 9	SA 10	SA 11	SA 12	SA 13	SA 14
10258	Black Brook Farm	++	--	-	-	+	-	--?	--	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	--
10259	Land north of Woodlands	+	--	-	-	-	--	--?	-	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10260	Land adjacent Elms Farm House	++	--	-	-	+	+	--?	--	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10261	Land adjacent Bonnie Blue Oak,	+	-	-	-	+	+	--?	-	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	0
10262	Highlands	+	++	-	-	+	+	--?	-	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	0
10264	Land south of Halstead Road	++	--	-	+	+	-	--?	-	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10265	Land at Moat Road	+	--	-	+	+	--	--?	-	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10266	Land South Malting Green Road	+	--	-	-	+	-	-?	--	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10267	Tey Gardens	++	++	-	-	-	-	--?	-	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	--
10291	Land opposite Wick Road	+	--	-	-	+	-	--?	-	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10479	Folkard Gardens	+	--	-	-	+	-	--?	-	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10486	Land north of Maldon Road,	++	--	-	-	+	+	-?	--	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10492	Land adjacent Rectory Road	++	--	-	-	+	-	--?	--	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-

**Chapter 4** Appraisal findings for options for distribution of growth in Colchester and site options

Site ID	Site Name	SA 1	SA 2	SA 3	SA 4	SA 5	SA 6	SA 7	SA 8	SA 9	SA 10	SA 11	SA 12	SA 13	SA 14
10508	Land East of Plummers Road	+	--	-	+	+	--	--?	-	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10510	Land to the East of Nayland Road	++	--	-	-	+	-	--?	--	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	--
10511	Land west Hall Road	+	++	-	-	+	+	0?	--	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	0
10514	Land west and east of North Lane	++	--	-	+	0	--	--?	--	-?	N/A	-	N/A	-	--
10515	Land east of Layer Road	+	--	-	+	-	-	--?	-	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10520	Land South West Tiptree	++	--	-	-	+	+	--?	--	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10522	Land adjacent 57 Rowhedge Road	+	-	-	+	+	-	0?	--	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10526	Land between White Hart Lane & Manor Road	++	--	-	-	+	-	--?	-	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10531	Land north of Church Road	+	--	-	-	+	-	--?	-	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10532	Land east of Factory Hill	+	--	-	-	+	+	-?	-	-?	N/A	-	N/A	-	0
10534	Land East of Factory Hill	++	--	-	+	+	+	--?	-	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10535	Land off New Road	+	--	-	-	+	--	--?	0	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10535a	Land off New Road	+	--	-	-	+	--	--?	0	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-

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Site ID	Site Name	SA 1	SA 2	SA 3	SA 4	SA 5	SA 6	SA 7	SA 8	SA 9	SA 10	SA 11	SA 12	SA 13	SA 14
10536	Land southwest of Halstead Road	+	--	-	+	+	-	-?	-	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10538	Land south of Church Road	+	--	-	-	+	-	--?	-	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10547	Land south Long Road West	+	--	-	-	-	--	0?	-	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10548	Land east of Hall Road	+	--	-	-	0	--	-?	--	--?	N/A	0	N/A	-	--
10567	Land west of The Causeway	+	--	-	-	+	-	--?	-	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10569	Land East of Brook Road	+	--	-	-	+	-	--?	-	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10571	Bumblebee Farm	+	--	-	-	+	--	--?	--	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10587	Land north of Halstead Road	+	--	-	+	+	-	-?	-	--?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10594	Wivenhoe Quarry	++	--	+	+	+	-	--?	--	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	--
10600	Picketts	+	--	-	-	+	-	--?	--	--?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10611	Land East of School Road	+	--	-	-	0	-	-?	-	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10616	Land north of Bromley Road	++	--	-	+	+	+	0?	--	--?	N/A	0	N/A	-	--
10616a	Welshwood Park	++	--	-	+	+	-	0?	--	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	--
10616b	Land north of Bromley Road	++	--	-	+	+	+	0?	--	--?	N/A	0	N/A	-	--
10617	Lakelands Crescent	++	--	0	+	-	+	0?	--	0?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-



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Site ID	Site Name	SA 1	SA 2	SA 3	SA 4	SA 5	SA 6	SA 7	SA 8	SA 9	SA 10	SA 11	SA 12	SA 13	SA 14
10617a	Lakelands Crescent	+	--	0	+	-	+	0?	-	0?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10618	View Park	+	--	-	-	+	-	--?	-	--?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10618a	View Park	+	--	-	-	+	-	--?	-	--?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10622	Land East of Mersea Road	++	--	-	-	+	-	--?	--	--?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10627	Land east Dawes Lane	++	--	-	-	+	--	--?	-	--?	N/A	0	N/A	-	0
10627a	Land east Dawes Lane	++	--	-	-	+	--	--?	-	--?	N/A	0	N/A	-	0
10629	Place Farm	++	-	--	+	+	-	-?	--	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10629a	Place Farm	+	-	-	+	-	-	0?	--	0?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10634	Land at Kelvedon Road	+	--	-	-	+	-	-?	0	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10649	Land west of Station Road	++	--	-	+	+	-	--?	-	--?	N/A	0	N/A	-	--
10652	Land north A1124	+	--	-	+	0	-	--?	-	--?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10656	Land north of Halstead Road	++	--	-	+	+	-	--?	--	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10656a	Land north of Halstead Road	++	--	-	+	+	-	--?	--	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10657	Land North Oak Road	++	--	-	-	+	+	--?	--	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10664	Land north of Park Lane	++	--	-	+	+	-	--?	-	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10665	Land east of Wick Road	++	--	-	+	0	-	--?	-	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10666	Land south School Road	++	--	-	+	+	-	--?	-	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-

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Site ID	Site Name	SA 1	SA 2	SA 3	SA 4	SA 5	SA 6	SA 7	SA 8	SA 9	SA 10	SA 11	SA 12	SA 13	SA 14
10673	Land south Mersea Road	++	--	-	-	+	--	--?	--	--?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10675	Land south East Road	++	--	-	-	+	--	-?	--	--?	N/A	0	N/A	-	0
10676	Land North Boxted Straight Road	++	--	-	-	+	-	--?	-	--?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10682	Land to the east of Cross Lane	++	--	-	-	+	--	-?	-	--?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10686	Land at Earls Colne Road	++	--	-	-	+	-	--?	0	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10687	Land south of Berechurch Hall Road	++	--	-	+	+	-	--?	--	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	--
10687a	Land south of Berechurch Hall Road	++	--	-	+	+	-	--?	--	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	--
10691	Land North of Coach Road	++	--	-	-	+	-	--?	-	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	--
10745	102 East Road West Mersea	+	-	-	-	+	--	--?	0	--?	N/A	0	N/A	-	0
10746	The Car Boot field	++	--	-	+	0	--	--?	--	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10747a	Tey Green	++	--	-	+	-	-	--?	--	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	--
10747b	Land North of A120, Marks Tey	++	--	-	+	+	-	--?	--	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-

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Site ID	Site Name	SA 1	SA 2	SA 3	SA 4	SA 5	SA 6	SA 7	SA 8	SA 9	SA 10	SA 11	SA 12	SA 13	SA 14
10748	Land off Colchester Road	++	--	-	-	+	-	--?	-	--?	N/A	0	N/A	-	0
10749	Land off Colchester Road	++	--	-	+	+	-	--?	-	--?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10750	Land off Rowhedge Road	++	--	-	+	+	-	--?	--	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10751	Land off Croquet Gardens	++	-	+	+	+	-	-?	--	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	--
10752	Land west Oxley Parker Drive	+	--	-	+	+	+	0?	-	0?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10752a	Land west Oxley Parker Drive	+	--	-	+	+	+	0?	-	0?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10755	Land North of the Fire Station	++	--	-	+	+	-	-?	--	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10755a	Land North of the Fire Station	++	--	-	+	+	-	-?	--	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10756	Land East of Colchester Road	++	--	-	+	+	-	-?	--	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10757	Land West of Colchester Road	++	--	-	+	+	-	--?	--	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10758	Land west The Folley	+	--	-	-	+	-	-?	-	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10759	The Furze	+	--	-	-	+	-	0?	-	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10760	Land south of Halstead Road	++	--	-	-	+	-	--?	--	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-

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Site ID	Site Name	SA 1	SA 2	SA 3	SA 4	SA 5	SA 6	SA 7	SA 8	SA 9	SA 10	SA 11	SA 12	SA 13	SA 14
10761	Land off Bakers Lane	++	--	0	+	+	-	--?	--	--?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10762	Land North Grove Road	++	--	-	-	+	+	0?	-	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	--
10764	Former Aldham Playing Field	+	--	-	-	0	--	-?	-	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10765	Land North London Road	+	--	-	+	-	--	--?	--	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10765a	Land North London Road	+	--	-	+	0	--	--?	--	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10766	The Willows	++	--	-	+	-	--	-?	--	-?	N/A	--	N/A	-	--
10767	Land North East of Coach Road	++	--	-	-	+	-	--?	-	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10768	Land South of Armoury Road	++	--	-	+	+	-	--?	-	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	--
10769	Land North Armoury Road	+	--	-	+	+	-	-?	-	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10777	Land West Queen Street	+	++	-	++	+	+	--?	-	0?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10778	The Roman Circus Quarter	++	-	+	++	+	+	--?	-	0?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10928	Land adjacent Traveller Site	+	--	-	+	0	--	-?	-	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10934	Geantree	++	--	-	-	+	-	--?	--	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	--

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Site ID	Site Name	SA 1	SA 2	SA 3	SA 4	SA 5	SA 6	SA 7	SA 8	SA 9	SA 10	SA 11	SA 12	SA 13	SA 14
10935	Land north of Ivy Lodge Road	+	--	-	-	+	-	-?	-	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10941	Land accessible via Chesterwell (Colchester Golf Club Site 2)	++	--	+	++	+	+	-?	-	0?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10946	BT Site	+	++	-	+	+	-	0?	-	0?	N/A	--	N/A	-	-
10947	BT Repeater Station	+	++	-	++	+	+	--?	-	0?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10950a	Vineyard Street Development	++	++	-	++	+	++	--?	-	0?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10951	St Runwald Car Park	+	++	-	++	+	+	--?	-	0?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10952	Braiswick	++	--	0	+	+	-	-?	--	0?	N/A	-	N/A	-	--
10952a	Braiswick	+	--	0	+	+	-	-?	--	0?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10953	Middlewick	++	-	-	+	+	+	-?	--	0?	N/A	0	N/A	-	--
10953a	Middlewick	++	-	-	+	+	+	-?	--	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	--
10954	Barrington Road/Bourne Road	+	++	+	+	+	+	-?	-	0?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10956	Rowhedge Business Park	++	++	-	-	+	-	--?	--	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10956a	Rowhedge Business Park	++	++	-	-	+	-	--?	--	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10957	Highlands Nursery	++	--	-	-	+	+	--?	-	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	0

**Chapter 4** Appraisal findings for options for distribution of growth in Colchester and site options

Site ID	Site Name	SA 1	SA 2	SA 3	SA 4	SA 5	SA 6	SA 7	SA 8	SA 9	SA 10	SA 11	SA 12	SA 13	SA 14
10960	Land North Colchester Road	+	--	-	+	+	-	--?	-	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10961	Land Adjacent Halstead Road	+	--	-	+	+	-	--?	-	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10963	Chapmans Farm,	+	++	-	+	+	+	0?	-	0?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10968	Land of Stanway Western Bypass	++	--	+	+	+	+	--?	--	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10970	Gosbecks	+	--	-	+	-	+	--?	--	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10972	Spring Lane Nursery	+	--	-	+	+	-	--?	--	--?	N/A	--	N/A	-	--
10973	Whitehall Industrial Estate	+	-	--	+	-	+	-?	--	0?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10976	Britannia Car Park	+	++	-	++	+	+	--?	-	0?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10979a	Gas Works Site & Allotment	++	++	-	++	+	+	--?	--	0?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10980a	Land West of Hawkins Road	+	++	-	++	+	-	--?	-	0?	N/A	--	N/A	-	-
10981a	Land East of Hawkins Road	++	++	-	++	+	-	--?	-	0?	N/A	--	N/A	-	-
10984	Europit & Magdalen Garage Site	+	++	-	++	+	+	--?	-	0?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10985	83-102 Magdalen Street	+	++	-	++	+	+	--?	0	0?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-



**Chapter 4** Appraisal findings for options for distribution of growth in Colchester and site options

Site ID	Site Name	SA 1	SA 2	SA 3	SA 4	SA 5	SA 6	SA 7	SA 8	SA 9	SA 10	SA 11	SA 12	SA 13	SA 14
10986	146 Magdalen Street	+	++	-	++	+	+	--?	0	0?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10987	Ford Car Showroom	+	++	-	++	+	+	--?	0	0?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10987a	Ford Car Showroom	++	++	0	++	+	+	--?	0	0?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10988	Robertson Van Hire	+	++	-	++	+	+	--?	-	0?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10991	Former Telephone Exchange	+	++	0	-	+	+	-?	-	0?	N/A	0	N/A	-	0
10994a	King Edward Quay Industrial Park	++	++	-	++	+	-	--?	--	0?	N/A	--	N/A	-	--
10995	West Bergholt Allocations	+	--	-	-	+	-	-?	-	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10996	Former Lookers Garage	+	++	-	++	+	+	--?	0	0?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
11008	Land West Severalls Lane	++	--	-	+	+	-	-?	-	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
11113	Swan Grove	+	--	-	+	+	-	--?	-	--?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-

**Table 4.3: Summary of sustainability effects of mixed use site options**

Site ID	Site Name	SA 1	SA 2	SA 3	SA 4	SA 5	SA 6	SA 7	SA 8	SA 9	SA 10	SA 11	SA 12	SA 13	SA 14
10251	Stanway Nurseries	+?	++	-	+	-	--	--?	--	-?	N/A	--	N/A	-	--

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Site ID	Site Name	SA 1	SA 2	SA 3	SA 4	SA 5	SA 6	SA 7	SA 8	SA 9	SA 10	SA 11	SA 12	SA 13	SA 14
10621	Land at St Ives Road	+?	--	-	-	+	--	--?	--	--?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10635	Land north/south Accommodation Road	+?	--	-	+	+	-	--?	-	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	--
10685	Land North Boxted Straight Road	+?	--	-	-	+	-	--?	-	--?	N/A	0	N/A	-	--
10690	Land South of Marks Tey Village	+?	--	-	+	+	-	--?	--	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	--
10747	Tey Green	+?	--	-	+	-	-	--?	--	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	--
10846	Land North of Marks Tey Railway Station	+?	--	-	+	+	--	--?	--	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	--
10927	Seven Saints Farm	+?	--	-	+	-	-	--?	--	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	--
10929	Cuckoo Farm Arts Studios	+?	--	-	+	+	-	-?	0	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10950	Vineyard Gate Development	+?	++	-	++	+	++	--?	-	0?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10969	The Crescent	+?	--	-	+	+	-	0?	--	0?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10975	Former Fieldgate Site	+?	++	-	+	+	-	0?	--	0?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10977	Fomer Coldoc Site	+?	++	-	++	+	-	-?	--	0?	N/A	-	N/A	-	-
10978	Scrapyards	+?	++	-	++	+	+	--?	--	0?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10979	Gas Works Site,	+?	++	-	++	+	+	-?	--	0?	N/A	-	N/A	-	-
10980	Land West of Hawkins Road	+?	++	-	++	+	-	--?	-	0?	N/A	--	N/A	-	-
10981	Land East of Hawkins Road	+?	++	-	++	+	-	--?	-	0?	N/A	--	N/A	-	-
10982	Derelict Coal Yard Site	+?	++	-	++	+	-	--?	-	0?	N/A	-	N/A	-	-

**Chapter 4** Appraisal findings for options for distribution of growth in Colchester and site options

Site ID	Site Name	SA 1	SA 2	SA 3	SA 4	SA 5	SA 6	SA 7	SA 8	SA 9	SA 10	SA 11	SA 12	SA 13	SA 14
10994	King Edward Quay Industrial Park	+?	++	-	++	+	-	--?	--	0?	N/A	--	N/A	-	--
10997	Former Coldoc Site 2	+?	++	-	+	+	-	-?	--	0?	N/A	-	N/A	-	-

**Table 4.4: Summary of sustainability effects of employment site options**

**Chapter 4** Appraisal findings for options for distribution of growth in Colchester and site options

Site ID	Site Name	SA 1	SA 2	SA 3	SA 4	SA 5	SA 6	SA 7	SA 8	SA 9	SA 10	SA 11	SA 12	SA 13	SA 14
10175	Haycocks Yard	N/A	++	-	-	+	-	--?	-	--?	N/A	0	N/A	-	0
10230	Land south of Doggetts Lane Service Station	N/A	--	-	-	+	-	--?	-	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10239a	Land North of Maldon Road, Colchester	N/A	--	0	+	+	-	--	-	0?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10488	Bullbanks Farm	N/A	++	-	-	+	-	--?	-	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10527	Land south of Factory Hill	N/A	--	+	-	+	+	-?	--	0?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10566	Oakview Landscapes Ltd, Pattens Yard,	N/A	--	-	-	+	-	--?	-	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10623	Land north and south of Dobbies Lane	N/A	++	0	-	+	-	--?	-	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10632	Land south of Tower Business Park	N/A	--	-	+	+	-	0?	-	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	0
10647	Wakes Hall Business Centre	N/A	--	-	-	+	-	--?	--	--?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10663	Land off Newpots Lane	N/A	--	-	-	+	-	--?	--	--?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10671	Land south A12	N/A	--	0	-	+	-	--?	0	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10677	Land South of the A12	N/A	--	0	-	+	-	--?	-	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10969a	Colchester Business Park, The Crescent	N/A	--	-	+	+	-	0?	--	0?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
11006	Land south Cycle Racing Facility	N/A	--	-	+	+	-	-?	0	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-

**Chapter 4** Appraisal findings for options for distribution of growth in Colchester and site options

11007	Site East of P&R	N/A	--	-	+	-	-	-?	0	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
11016	Colchester Water Recycling Centre	N/A	++	+	+	+	-	0?	--	--?	N/A	-	N/A	-	++/--



## SA objective 1: Provide a sufficient level of housing to meet the objectively assessed needs of the city to enable people to live in a decent, safe, and sustainable home which is affordable

**4.162** The ability of site options to support the delivery of new homes in the plan area has been considered in relation to their respective sizes, with larger sites likely to deliver a higher number of homes. At the early stage of plan making when the site appraisal was initially undertaken, the Council had not considered an appropriate level of housing for each site. Some site promoters suggested an amount of housing for their respective sites and in some cases, this was supported by a concept vision, which included other uses such as green space. However, the same level of detail was not provided by all site promoters. To ensure that all reasonable site alternatives are appraised consistently and to the same level of detail the Council worked up the assumption of delivering 30 dwellings per hectare as an appropriate density for sites in the District. This density has been applied to the residential site options.

**4.163** Around 50% of the residential sites are expected to have a significant positive effect in relation to SA objective 1 given that they have potential to deliver 100 homes or more. The remaining residential sites are expected to have a minor positive effect given that they have potential to deliver less than 100 homes.

**4.164** For all mixed use site options the positive effect recorded is minor. While some of the mixed use sites are relatively large, there is uncertainty about the proportion of these sites that would accommodate housing and other uses. Adopting a precautionary approach a minor positive effect has been recorded in relation to SA objective 1. The effects recorded for these two types of site options are partly uncertain given that precise number of homes to be delivered is unknown at this stage.

**4.165** This SA objective has been scoped out the of the appraisal of employment site options considering the types of uses that would be provided at these sites.

## SA objective 2: Support the efficient use of land

**4.166** The NPPF supports the redevelopment of previously developed land, stating that strategic policies should make as much use as possible of previously developed or 'brownfield' land. The SA considered whether each site option is mostly greenfield or mostly brownfield.

**4.167** National planning policy also places an emphasis on the conservation of best and most versatile agricultural land. The SA considered whether each site contains higher value agricultural soils (i.e. Grade 3 soils or higher).

**4.168** Significant negative effects were identified for the majority of all site types; this majority is made up of around 70% of residential site options, 70% of employment site options and 50% of mixed use site options. The majority of the land within these sites is greenfield. Around half of all of these sites comprise at least 25% Grade 3 or higher agricultural soils. This includes around 50% of residential sites, nine employment sites (10239a, 10230, 10527, 10566, 10647, 10671, 10969a, 11006 and 11007) and six mixed use sites (10635, 10685, 10690, 10747, 10846, and 10969). A minor negative effect is expected for only around 5% of all site options, all of which were considered for residential use. These sites are mostly greenfield but contain mostly urban, non-agricultural or Grade 4 agricultural land. Around 20% of residential site options, 50% of mixed use sites and 30% of employment sites are expected to have a significant positive effect given that they comprise mostly brownfield land. Many of the sites that are mostly brownfield land lie within the developed Colchester urban area and other established towns such as Marks Tey and Tiptree.

## Mitigation

**4.169** It is unlikely that all adverse effects can be mitigated given the likely requirement for greenfield land to support residential and employment growth over the plan period. There is some brownfield land in the District and where it is safe, viable and sustainable (taking into account other SA objectives), the redevelopment of previously developed land should be prioritised. The development of higher value agricultural land (particularly Grades 1 and 2) should be avoided. It is notable that the District contains large swathes of Grade 2 soils to the north and west of Colchester City towards Marks Tey as well as surrounding Tiptree. It may prove difficult to entirely avoid these areas while promoting sustainable distributions of development.

### SA objective 3: Achieve a prosperous and sustainable local economy that improves employment and training opportunities and supports the vitality/viability of centres

**4.170** Potential negative effects were identified where the allocation of a residential or mixed use site would lead to loss of an existing employment use at the site or part or all of an existing employment area. Residential and mixed use sites were also considered in relation to their location in areas where residents could access jobs. This element of the appraisal reflected sites' location in more deprived areas nationally in relation to the 'employment' domain of the Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) and the concentration of jobs in that area. Employment and mixed use sites are considered to support the provision of jobs in the plan area, with larger employment sites considered to perform most positively in this regard. The appraisal also reflects the potential for all site types to support the viability and growth of town centre locations given that their proximity to these locations could result in increased footfall to these locations.

**4.171** Around 15% of the residential sites have been identified as being in employment use or containing a substantial amount of land (at least 25% of the site) that lies within an employment area. Only three of the residential sites (10239, 10629 and 10973, all of which are in employment use or contain part of an employment area) are expected to have a significant negative effect in relation to SA objective 3. These three sites are located towards the south western and south eastern edges of the Colchester urban area. Some of these sites are also within areas that are within the 20% most deprived nationally as per the 'employment' domain of the IMD or within areas that are in 80-100 percentile in the District for density of jobs. Around 90% of the residential sites are expected to have a minor negative effect in relation to this SA objective. Many of these sites fall within the 20% most deprived nationally areas for the 'employment' domain of the IMD or within areas that do not benefit from high concentrations of jobs. There are relatively large swathes of land from the western edge of the Colchester urban area towards Marks Tey and from the north east of the Colchester urban area towards Langford where the concentration of jobs is noted to be particularly poor compared to other parts of the District. Only six residential site options (10082, 10082a, 10132, 10594, 10751 and 10778) are likely to have a minor positive effect in relation to SA objective 3. These sites lie within the areas with the highest concentration of job provision in Colchester District or in the case of 10778 lie within 400m of Colchester town centre. The sites in question lie within Colchester City (three sites), Wivenhoe (two sites) and Tiptree.

**4.172** All of 20 of the mixed use site options are expected to have a minor negative effect in relation to SA objective 3. Twelve of these mixed use sites have been identified as being in employment use or containing a substantial area of an employment area. While none of these sites lie in area in the 20% most deprived nationally areas for the 'employment' domain of the IMD, several (10950, 10978 and 10979) fall within the 20-40% most deprived nationally. Furthermore, 13 of the sites fall within the 80-100 percentile in the District for jobs' density. The majority of the mixed use site options are also not well related to town centre locations in Colchester District, the notable exception being site 10950 which is located at the edge of Colchester town centre.

**4.173** Ten of the employment sites (10175, 10230, 10488, 10566, 10632, 10647, 10663, 10969a, 11006 and 11007) are expected to have a minor negative effect in relation to this SA objective. While all employment sites considered are expected to support job creation in the District, most of these sites are smaller than 3ha with more limited potential for the provision of jobs. Furthermore, none of these ten sites are located within a more deprived areas as per of the 'employment' domain of the IMD and they are not well related to a town centre location. Only employment sites 10527 and 11016 are expected to have a minor positive effect in relation to SA objective 3. Site 11016 is notable in that it is considered for infrastructure to support sewerage and water supply undertakings and has some potential to support job creation. It lies in Colchester City within an area in the 20% most deprived nationally areas for the 'employment' domain of the IMD and therefore could support job creation in an area of most need. The effect for the remaining four employment sites (10239a, 10623, 10671 and 10677) is negligible.

## Mitigation

**4.174** The potential negative effects identified by the SA of residential site options could be avoided by ensuring that any site selected for change of use from employment to residential is surplus to local requirements for the particular type of employment space that is currently supported. Furthermore, these types of sites can be provided in locations where residents have good access to town centre locations to support the viability of these locations without resulting in loss of viable town centre uses.

## SA objective 4. Reduce the need to travel and promote sustainable and active transport options to reduce congestion

**4.175** The potential to limit travel by private vehicle as new development occurs in the plan area, will partly depend on ensuring sites have good access to public

transport. Access to employment and essential services and facilities will also influence the potential for modal shift, however, these issues has been considered separately through SA objectives 3: employment, 5: health and wellbeing and 6: services and facilities. The appraisal of site options in relation to SA objective 4 has considered the potential for residents and site users to make use of more sustainable modes of transport, including public transport and cycle. The Colchester urban area benefits from three existing railway stations and there are further stations at Wivenhoe, Marks Tey and Chappel. There is a relatively strong network of bus stops across the plan area, most notably within the Colchester urban area and along the road network towards Tey Marks, and within West Mersea, Tiptree and Wivenhoe. There is a planned route for a new rapid transit system in Colchester which will travel from the A12 Park and Ride to the University of Essex and new Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community on the A133. The Colchester urban area also provides access to a network of cycle routes and the National Cycle Network passes into the District towards Langham, Mount Bures and Tiptree.

**4.176** Given the widespread coverage of bus services throughout many parts of the District, almost all site options are located close (within at least 1km) to a bus stop. The exception are residential sites 10225 (located outside of Abberton) and 10762 (located at Tiptree) and employment site 10647 (located outside of Chappel). Furthermore, residential site option 10225 is the only site for which a significant negative effect is recorded in relation to SA objective 4.

**4.177** A minor negative effect is expected in relation to this SA objective for around 40% of the residential site options as well as around 10% of the mixed use site options and around 70% of employment site options. The majority of these sites are well related to bus stops but are located some distance from the nearest railway station and cycle path.

**4.178** Around 40% of the residential site options, 50% of the mixed use site options and almost 30% of employment site options are expected to have a minor positive effect in relation to SA objective 4. A significant positive effect is recorded for only around 10% of residential site options and 40% of mixed use site options. These site options are all located in the Colchester urban area,



reflecting the stronger access to rail services and existing dedicated cycle routes, as well as bus services in this part of the District.

## Mitigation

**4.179** Avoiding the allocation of site options in the areas that are less well served by public transport would help to reduce the adverse effects identified in relation to this SA objective. The main developed area of Colchester City contains three railway stations as well as a high concentration of bus stops and the new RTS. However, the centre of the City is also subject to high levels of congestion. Where there is a need to allocate sites in areas which are currently poorly served by public transport, there is potential to mitigate negative effects through the delivery of new public transport and active travel connections, in advance of or early in the delivery of development. It may be that in some instances existing connections might be extended and/or enhanced to help promote good levels of uptake of bus use as well as cycling and walking. Ensuring that new residents have good access to nearby essential services and facilities and jobs through the considering of existing provisions and the potential to provide new services and facilities and employment alongside the delivery of new homes will also help to reduce the need for residents to travel longer distances on a regular basis as. This is more likely to be a viable approach where a larger scale of growth is provided.

## SA objective 5: Promote stronger, more resilient, inclusive communities; improve health and wellbeing; and, reduce levels of deprivation

**4.180** Site options were appraised against SA objective 5 in relation to the potential to improved public health in the District, including by providing residents with good access to facilities that would support this aim. For all site types this was undertaken through appraisal criteria relating to access to open space and public rights of way (PRoWs). The appraisal also considered the

potential for regeneration to address deprivation in the plan area with positive effects recorded for all site options where they fall within more deprived areas, as indicated by the IMD. For residential and mixed use site options only, the objective also considered access to GP surgeries. The appraisal for all site types took into account the potential for loss of existing services and facilities where these types of features lie within site boundaries. Given the likely occupation of residential and mixed use sites at night and the sensitivity of these site types to disturbance, the appraisal of these site types considered their location in relation to sources of noise (i.e. roads and rail) and odour (i.e. facilities related to waste management).

**4.181** The majority of the site options appraised are expected to have minor positive effect in relation to SA objective 5. Most of these sites are well related to areas of open space and PRowS but many are less well related to GP surgeries. This includes around 80% residential site options, 85% of mixed use site options and 90% of employment site options. There are areas of the District that fall within the 10% and 20% most deprived in the country as per the findings of the IMD. None of the site options appraised lie within the 10% most deprived areas. However, several sites within the Colchester urban area towards the parishes of Heath and the Hythe, Berechurch and New Town and Christ Church lie within the 20% most deprived areas. It is expected that development of these sites could contribute to regeneration of areas of most need and help to address deprivation in Colchester District.

**4.182** A minor negative effect is expected in relation to this SA objective for 10% of the residential site options, around 15% of the mixed use site options and just under 10% of the employment site options. This includes several sites (10251, 10617, 10617a 10970 and 11007) that take in all or part of an open space. Furthermore, many of the residential and mixed use site options for which a minor negative effect is expected lie close to roads or railway lines at which high levels of noise are regularly experienced or close to an existing odour producing site. It is notable that a railway line passes through Tey Marks/Copford and Colchester City and is a source of noise pollution in the District. Furthermore, the A12 is another source of noise pollution and this route also passes close to Tey Marks/Copford and to the north of the Colchester urban area. The potential disturbance of residents contributes to the relatively

poor effects recorded for some of the sites within Tey Marks/Copford, in particular. Furthermore, several of the residential and mixed use site options that are expected to have a minor negative effect in relation to SA objective 5, are located close to odour producing sites. This includes a number of sites at Tey Marks/Copford that are close to Colne Skips waste site and Copford WWTW and three sites at the edge of the Colchester urban area (10617, 10617a and 10927) that are close to either a landfill site and non-hazardous materials recycling / recovery facility. For the remaining residential site options a negligible effect is expected.

## Mitigation

**4.183** Some of the potential negative effects identified by the SA of residential site options could be avoided by selecting sites outside of areas affected by noise pollution and odour, such as close to the District's main roads and rail lines and waste management facilities. Noise pollution generally reduces very quickly with increasing distance from the source, therefore on large site allocations it may be possible to avoid effects through appropriate site layouts. Furthermore, the design of sites to incorporate trees and shrubs may allow for natural barriers to noise. Site options that include existing open space may be avoided or be designed to ensure that the existing open space is retained and enhanced unless there is an identified surplus in the area or a suitable and accessible replacement would be provided. Developing sites with additional green space and active travel routes alongside development, where this is currently lacking, would help to improve positive effects of site allocations on health and wellbeing more widely. Providing green space may also provide space for the community food growing, thereby helping to support both active lifestyles and better access to healthy foods in the District.

**4.184** As noted in relation to the potential for mitigation for the adverse effects recorded for SA objectives 4, incorporating new services and facilities and jobs alongside residential development is likely to result in a higher proportion of trips being made by active and public modes of transport. As such this approach is likely to benefit public health by building physical activity into the daily lives of the District's residents.

## SA objective 6: Provide access to services, facilities and education

**4.185** Site options were appraised in terms of their likelihood of providing good access essential services and facilities and education. For all site types, the town, district and local centres of the District were used as a proxy to consider where a range of services and facilities might be accessed. For residential site and mixed use options consideration was also given to the potential for residents of sites to easily access primary and secondary schools. The appraisal also took into account, the potential for loss of existing services and facilities where these types of features lie within site boundaries.

**4.186** A significant positive effect is expected in relation to SA objective 6 for only four site options; two residential sites (10154 and 10248) and one mixed use site (10950 and 10950a). These sites are located close to Colchester town centre as well as primary schools and secondary schools within the Colchester urban area. A minor positive effect is expected for around 25% of residential site options and 10% of mixed use site options. The vast majority of these sites provide good access to a primary school. However, around half are less well related to a secondary school and over half do not benefit from good access to a town centre location. It should be noted that these sites include residential site option 10778 which takes in St John's Green Primary School and this facility could be lost if new residential development was to occur. The residential and mixed use site options that are expected to have minor positive effect in relation to SA objective 6 are mostly located within the Colchester urban area and Tiptree. Colchester contains the main town centre of the District, a district centre and several local centres, while Tiptree benefits from a district centre as well as several primary schools and secondary school. Only one employment site is expected to have a minor positive effect in relation to this SA objective. Site 10527 in Tiptree is the only employment site considered, that would provide good access to a district centre in the plan area.

**4.187** Around 20% of the residential site options and 15% of the mixed use site options are expected to have a significant negative effect in relation to SA

objective 6. Many of these sites are located at more rural locations or smaller settlements where no schools or town centre locations are present, for example sites at Peldon, East Mersea, Great Wigborough and Aldham. There are other sites of this type that are located at more sizeable settlements but still outside of reasonable walking distance from the nearest school and town centre location. This includes several sites at West Mersea, Eighth Ash Green, Fordham, Great Horkesey Marks Tey/Copford all of which include a primary school but no secondary school and several of which include a district or local centre. A minor negative effect is expected for around 55% of the residential site options and 70% of the mixed use site options. This is also the case for around 90% of the employment site options.

## Mitigation

**4.188** The potential negative effects identified by the SA for the residential site options could be avoided by adopting a similar mitigation strategy as that outlined in relation to SA objective 4. That is to say, sites that are poorly served by sustainable transport and less well related to existing services and facilities should be considered as being less appropriate for allocation. The planning and early delivery of new and enhancement of existing public transport and active travel routes would provide benefits in terms of residents' access to services and facilities and jobs. Similar benefits are likely where new services and facilities and employment can be delivered alongside housing growth in the plan area.

## SA objective 7: Conserve and enhance the townscape character, and heritage and cultural assets

**4.189** The potential for impacts upon the District's historic environment has been considered at the strategic level in relation to the proximity of site options to designated heritage assets. Given the potential for effects to be transmitted

across a greater distance in less developed areas where there are less likely to be intervening structures, the threshold distance applied for effects is greater outside of the existing settlements in the plan area. All effects recorded are partly uncertain at this stage given the absence of a heritage impact assessment. The heritage impact assessment will inform the appraisal of the sites selected for allocation in the plan.

**4.190** The majority of site options are expected to have negative effects in relation to SA objective 7. This reflects the distribution of designated heritage assets across much of the plan area. Many of the larger settlements in the District including Colchester City, Wivenhoe, Tiptree and West Mersea contain Conservation Areas. For around 65% of the residential site options, 70% of the mixed use site options and 65% of the employment site options, the negative effect is expected to be significant. These sites lie within a settlement and are within 100m of a designated heritage asset or lie outside of a settlement and are within 500m of a designated heritage asset. Around 20% of the residential site options, 20% of mixed use site options and 20% of employment site options are expected to have a negligible effect in relation to SA objective 7. Several of these sites are located beyond settlement boundary of Tiptree, while some are within the Colchester urban area away from its central core which contains a higher concentration of designated heritage assets including Listed Buildings. The remaining site options are expected to have a negligible effect in relation to SA objective 7 given that they are beyond the threshold distances considered in relation to the potential for the transmission of effects relating to heritage assets.

## Mitigation

**4.191** Avoidance of allocating site options whose development could result in harm to the significance of heritage assets, including their setting, would provide the best mitigation in relation to this SA objective. All site options are considered through a proximity based approach in relation to potential effects. Commissioning more detailed heritage assessment work will go some way to identifying the sites at which there is potentially greatest risk and a strategy to



**4.192** avoid, and where necessary, mitigate these risks. Where there is a requirement to provide development in the most sensitive areas when considering the sustainability merits of the site options considered, it may be possible to avoid significant negative effects via site-specific requirements in relation to site layout and development design.

## SA objective 8: Protect, conserve, and enhance biodiversity and promote and conserve geodiversity

**4.193** Development sites that are close to an internationally, nationally or locally designated conservation site have the potential to affect the biodiversity or geodiversity of those sites/features, e.g. through habitat damage/loss, fragmentation, disturbance to species, air pollution, or increased recreation pressure. Conversely, there may be opportunities to promote habitat connectivity if new developments include green infrastructure. While proximity to designated sites provides an indication of the potential for an adverse effect, appropriate mitigation may avoid adverse effects and may even result in beneficial effects. In addition, the potential impacts on biodiversity present on each wildlife site, or undesignated habitats and species adjacent to the potential development sites, cannot be determined at this strategic level of assessment. This should be determined once more specific proposals are developed and submitted as part of a planning application.

**4.194** Around 40% of the residential site options are expected to result in a significant negative effect and around 50% are expected to result in a minor negative effect. Sites were mainly identified as having significant negative effects because they intersect with a locally designated wildlife site, ancient woodland, or priority habitat. It is notable that significant negative effects have been identified for some of the residential sites at Tiptree, Peldon, West Mersea, East Mersea, Abberton, Marks Tey, Wivenhoe and the south western and north western edges of the Colchester urban area. This reflects the proximity of these areas to international or national biodiversity sites including

Colne Estuary, Blackwater Estuary, Essex Estuaries, Abberton Reservoir, Tiptree Heath, Bullock Wood and Marks Tey Brickpit. A negligible effect is expected for only ten of the residential site options (10535, 10535a, 10634, 10686, 10745, 10985, 10986, 10987, 10987a and 10996). These sites are located towards the centre of Colchester City (three sites) as well as at Messing, Aldham and Great Tey.

**4.195** Of the employment site options appraised, four sites are expected to have a significant negative effect in relation to SA objective 8. These sites are located towards Tiptree (10527), Chappel (10647), Peldon (10663) and at the north edge of the Colchester urban area (10969a). Around 50% of the employment site options are expected to have minor negative effects and the remaining three sites are expected to have negligible effects. The three sites for which a negligible effect is expected are located at the northern edge of the Colchester urban area (11006 and 11007) and towards Mark Tey (10671).

**4.196** Negative effects are expected for all but one mixed use site (10929 at the north edge of the Colchester urban area for which a negligible effect is expected), with approximately 65% of these types of sites expected to have a significant negative effect in relation to SA objective 8. This includes a number of mixed use sites at Marks Tey, the development of which have potential to result in adverse effects on Marks Tey Brickpit SSSI given the proximity of this designation. For the remaining 30% of mixed use site options, a minor negative effect is expected.

## Mitigation

**4.197** If any of the site options that are close to or overlap with an internationally, nationally or locally designated wildlife site are taken forward for allocation, the Council should carefully consider whether (in some cases minor) changes to development site boundaries are required to ensure compliance with statutory and NPPF requirements for biodiversity conservation. In terms of the other negative effects identified by the appraisal of site options, the Council should consider more detailed investigation of these potential effects and if the

sites are taken forward as allocations, ensure that appropriate site-specific mitigation is specified within policies to avoid negative effects on sites/areas of high biodiversity value and safeguard ecological networks. Additionally, Local Plan policy should be put in place to ensure biodiversity net gain is achieved on each development site or losses are offset elsewhere within the District where this is not feasible. The allocation of development sites may present opportunities to promote green infrastructure connectivity in the plan area and promote the objectives of the Essex LNRS.

## SA objective 9: Conserve and enhance the character and distinctiveness of the landscape

**4.198** The Council commissioned a Landscape Character Assessment [[See reference 16](#)] which included a high-level rating of areas for inherent landscape value and sensitivities. The plan area was sub-divided into various Landscape Character Areas (LCAs) and each LCA was rated high, medium or low for these measures. Given their developed nature, the settlements of Colchester City, Wivenhoe, Tiptree and West Mersea are not covered in the Landscape Character Assessment. The landscape sensitivity of these areas is considered to be low. This work was used to consider the potential sensitivity of each site option to development. Areas of high inherent value and increased sensitivity lie to the north of the plan area towards the Dedham Vale National Landscape, to the west of Colchester City extending to cover the settlement of Chappel and areas to the south west and south west of the City extending around parts of Wivenhoe and West Mersea. The remaining areas of the District are assessed as having medium value. Given the largely unknown nature of any design that might be implemented at the site options being assessed, all effects recorded for this SA objective are uncertain.

**4.199** Around 20% of the residential sites lie in LCAs with high value and therefore uncertain significant negative effects have been recorded in relation to SA objective 9. This is also the case for around 10% of mixed use sites and 30% of the employment sites. Furthermore, 60% of the residential sites, 35% of the mixed use sites and 65% of the employment sites lie within LCAs with

medium value. Uncertain minor negative effects have been identified for these site options. The remaining sites lie within the settlement boundaries of Colchester City, and Tiptree. The potential for impacts on sensitive landscapes is considered more limited at these locations and therefore uncertain negligible effects have been recorded. This is the case for around 20% of the residential sites, 55% of the mixed use sites and 10% of the employment sites. The majority of these sites are located within the Colchester City developed area, with only two (10527 for employment use and 10991 for residential use) lying within Tiptree).

## Mitigation

**4.200** Avoiding allocating sites within areas of highest landscape sensitivity to development would provide the best mitigation in relation to this SA objective. In areas of medium and higher landscape value and sensitivity areas, Local Plan policy requirements for development site layouts and development design that seek to reduce adverse effects on the landscape could be implemented to mitigate potential negative effects. These requirements may be more applicable in the north of the District given that it includes part of Dedham Vale National Landscape.

## SA objective 10: Minimise greenhouse gas emissions and mitigate and adapt to the effects of climate change

**4.201** SA objective 10 was scoped out of the appraisal of site options. This SA objective is mostly likely to be influenced by the design of developments to mitigate the effects of climate change and creation and enhancement of green and blue infrastructure. These factors do not depend on the location of the site and will be taken into account by the SA through the appraisal of development management policies and site-specific requirements set out in allocation policies.

## SA objective 11: Manage and reduce flood risk from all sources

**4.202** Development on greenfield land would increase the area of impermeable surfaces and could therefore increase overall flood risk, particularly where the sites are within high risk flood zones. The Government's Planning Practice Guidance identifies residential properties as a 'more vulnerable use' that is suitable in Flood Zones 1 and 2 but would require an exception test in Flood Zone 3a and is unsuitable in Flood Zone 3b. Adopting a precautionary approach, the SA has recorded similarly adverse effects for all site types (i.e. residential, mixed use and employment) if 25% or more of the site is within Flood Zone 2 (minor negative) or Flood Zone 3 (significant negative).

**4.203** Surface water flooding occurs when intense rainfall overwhelms drainage systems. The SA has considered the potential for sites to be affected by this source of flood risk, with adverse effects recorded where at least 25% of a site option lies on land within a 1 in 100 year risk (minor negative effect) of flooding or 1 in 30 year (significant negative effect) risk of flooding. Other aspects of the Local Plan affecting flood risk will be assessed via the SA of development management policies, for example requirements to incorporate SuDS, or site-specific policies, for example requirements for flood-resilient design.

**4.204** The majority of site options were appraised as having negligible effects in relation to SA objective 11 as they do not fall within Flood Zone 2 or 3 and less than 25% of the site has a 1 in 30 year or 1 in 100 year risk of surface water flooding. Significant negative effects are expected in relation to SA objective 11 for eight residential site options (10179, 10248, 10776, 10946, 10972, 10980a, 10981a and 10994a) and minor negative effects are expected for three residential site options (10514, 10532 and 10952). Many of these sites are located close to the River Colne in Colchester and Roman River in Marks Tey where areas of Flood Zone 2 and 3 are present. While residential site options 10532 and 10952, are relatively free of areas of Flood Zone 2 and 3, the minor negative effect identified for these sites in relation to SA objective 11 reflects their location on land with a 1 in 100 year risk of surface water flooding.

**4.205** Four of the mixed use sites are expected have a significant negative effect (10251, 10980, 10981 and 10994) and a further four sites are expected to have a minor negative effect (10977, 10979, 10982 and 10997) in relation to this SA objective. The majority of these sites are located in the Colchester urban area close to the River Colne where there are areas of Flood Zone 2 and 3. The exception to this is site 10766 which includes land that is within Flood Zone 3 associated with the Roman River towards Tey Marks. Of employment site options appraised, only one site (11016) is expected to have a minor negative effect given that it lies within it lies close to the River Colne within Flood Zone 2 at the south eastern edge of the Colchester urban area. None of the employment sites are expected to have a significant negative effect in relation to SA objective 11.

## Mitigation

**4.206** The potential negative effects identified by the SA of site options would be most effectively avoided by not allocating sites within the relevant areas of higher flood risk, where appropriate in accordance with the sequential and exception tests. Where site options only partially overlay such areas, the Council could consider whether boundaries of site options could be redrawn or sites masterplanned so as to avoid development of areas with higher flood risk. The incorporation of green spaces and SuDS into the design of new developments to reduce the risk of flooding could also help to mitigate flood risk.

## SA objective 12: Reduce waste generation and increase levels of reuse and recycling

**4.207** SA objective 12 was scoped out of the appraisal of site options. This SA objective is mostly likely to be influenced by sustainable design practices and construction techniques which could help to promote more sustainable of resources. The location of sites is also not likely to have an effect on the recovery, re-use or recycling of waste materials, or the demand for recycled



material. The SA will take account of the plan's support for this objective through the appraisal of its development management policies.

## SA objective 13: Protect and improve air quality

**4.208** Colchester District contains three Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs). These areas are located towards the town centre on Brook Street, Mersea Road and Osbourne Street and St John's and Street. Development within or on roads that are linked to these areas has the potential to subject new residents to higher levels of air pollution and also to intensify existing issues of air pollution in the District as residents are required to travel to and from their properties. Concentrations of NO<sub>2</sub>, PM<sub>10</sub> and PM<sub>2.5</sub> are mapped for the plan area showing that the lowest concentration of pollutants are displayed to the south in the area surrounding West Mersea and East Mersea and the highest concentrations of pollutant are present mostly towards Marks Tey/Copford, the northern edge of the Colchester urban area and sections of the A12 between these two locations. The highest levels of pollution at these parts of the District include areas subject to NO<sub>2</sub> concentrations of 20 µg/m<sup>3</sup>, areas subject to PM<sub>10</sub> concentrations of 20 µg/m<sup>3</sup> and areas subject to PM<sub>2.5</sub> concentrations of 12 µg/m<sup>3</sup>. It is also notable that an area towards Colchester City Centre is subject to NO<sub>2</sub> concentrations of 19 µg/m<sup>3</sup>. However, no part of the District is subject to concentrations of any of these pollutants at levels above the 2021 WHO air quality guidelines and the higher pollution levels allowed under the UK's national air quality objectives.

**4.209** All site options are expected to have a minor negative effect in relation to SA objective 13. All site options fall within an area within which the PM<sub>2.5</sub> concentrations are between 5 and 20 µg/m<sup>3</sup>. The majority of site options (around 85% of residential site options, 95% of mixed use site options and 85% of employment site options) fall within an area within which the PM<sub>10</sub> concentrations are between 15 and 40 µg/m<sup>3</sup>. Furthermore, the majority of site options (around 55% of residential site options, 90% of mixed use site options and 60% of employment site options) fall within an area within which the NO<sub>2</sub> concentrations are between 10 and 40 µg/m<sup>3</sup>. These points considered, none of the sites lie within areas that exceed concentrations of these pollutants set

out in the 2021 WHO air quality guidelines or the higher pollution levels allowed under the UK's national air quality objectives.

**4.210** Eleven site options have been identified as being within or linked by the road network to one of the AQMAs towards the centre of the Colchester urban area. These residential (10777, 10778, 10950a, 10976, 10984, 10985, 10986, 10987, 10987a and 10988) and mixed use site options (10950) have potential to expose residents and other site users to higher levels of pollution and/or to contribute to additional trips within the District's AQMAs which may intensify existing air pollution.

## Mitigation

**4.211** The potential negative effects identified by the SA of site options could be reduced by adopting a similar mitigation strategy as that outlined in relation to SA objective 4. That is to say, sites that are poorly served by sustainable transport or key services should be considered as being less appropriate for allocation. Where such sites are allocated, negative effects could be mitigated by ensuring that public transport and active travel connections were created or enhanced as appropriate, in advance of or early in the delivery of housing development. There is further potential to reduce the need for residents to have to regularly travel longer distances by car where new services and facilities and employment are provided alongside housing. The potential to allocate sites for development should be considered in relation to areas which experience higher levels of air pollution. Residential development and other sensitive uses are considered to be less suitable in areas that experience high levels of pollution. Furthermore, the selection of site allocations and design of developments should be considered in relation to the potential to limit the number of residents located within AQMAs and to limit the need for vehicular travel through such areas.

## SA objective 14: Protect the quality and quantity of water resources

**4.212** Eastern England is classified as severely water stressed which will mean ensuring water supply for residents and businesses in the District will prove challenging over the plan period. However, the effects of development on water resources were not appraised on a site by site basis; support of the Local Plan for water efficient design of new development will be considered in the SA of development management policies. Effects of development on water quality will partly depend on adoption of good practice site layout and construction techniques as well as the inclusion of appropriate sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) within the design. These factors will also be considered in the SA of development management policies. In addition, development could affect surface water quality due to additional discharges of wastewater, for example because there is insufficient treatment capacity at the local wastewater treatment works (WwTWs) or because of nutrient enrichment issues in the receiving waters. These issues are generally managed at the catchment scale and will be considered by the SA of the spatial strategy and policies on the amount of development to be delivered rather than for individual site options.

**4.213** Development could affect the quality of drinking water resources during construction or occupation. SPZs are areas designated to protect groundwater sources used for public drinking water supply. They relate to the risk of contamination of the water source from various activities. The potential risk increases as the distance between the source of contamination and the groundwater abstraction point decreases. These zones cover the majority of Colchester District with the exception of its south edge including West Mersea, East Mersea and parts of Tiptree.

**4.214** As the majority of the District falls within an SPZ (zone 3), only 14 site options are expected to have negligible effects in relation to SA objective 14. This includes several residential sites in West Mersea, East Mersea and Tiptree (10231, 10261, 10262, 10511, 10532, 10627, 10627a, 10675, 10745, 10748, 10957 and 10991) and two employment sites (10175 in West Mersea and

10632 in Tiptree). Significant negative effects have been identified for 38 site options where they contain a watercourse or waterbody. Development at these sites could contribute to water pollution within these receptors through run off as construction occurs. These sites are distributed across the District, with notable clusters found in Marks Tey and the north and south of the Colchester urban area.

**4.215** Site 11016 is one of the options that is expected to have a significant negative effect in relation to SA objective 14 given that it lies within SPZ 3 and contains a small waterbody. However, while it is noted that the development of the site could contribute to the contamination of local water resources including the waterbody within the site, particularly during construction, the site is being considered for infrastructure that would support the water supply and management of wastewater in the District. Therefore, an overall mixed significant positive and significant negative effect is expected for this site option in relation to SA objective 14.

## Mitigation

**4.216** Priority should be given to allocating sites that are outside of relevant water resource protection zones to help protect water quality in the District. Regardless, some development is likely to be required within these zones given their coverage of most of Colchester and pressure from development, population growth and climate change is likely to exacerbate the deterioration of water sources as a result of pollution from nitrates, chemicals or micro-organisms. The Council should work with the Environment Agency and water companies to understand the particular water resource protection objectives for which these zones have been designated and to ensure that Local Plan policies for sites allocated within the zones place appropriate requirements on development to avoid contributing to drinking water protection objectives. Furthermore, where sites are allocated to include water courses or waterbodies construction activities at sites should be required to limit the potential for pollution from run off and other pathways.

Figure 4.1 etc.

# Chapter 5

## Appraisal findings for topic-based policies in the Local Plan

**5.1** This chapter presents the appraisal findings for various components in the Local Plan. The appraisal of the topic based policies (including the spatial strategy policy for the distribution of development in the District and other strategic policies) is presented first, followed by the appraisal of the site allocation and safeguarding land policies included in the draft Local Plan. The appraisal work is presented to follow the order of the policies as they are included in the Local Plan.

**5.2** The appraisal of the topic based policies has been grouped by topic area. For each group of policies, a summary table of the likely sustainability effects is presented with a discussion of the effects below that table.

**5.3** Given the large number of policies subject to appraisal, the description of effects is mostly limited to positive or negative effects identified. Where negligible effects have been identified, the reasoning for these effects have not been explained. The exception to this is where the SA objective for which a negligible effect is identified overlaps with the theme of the policy and therefore further explanation is needed.

**5.4** As part of the appraisal of each policy consideration has been given to how the positive effects identified might be strengthened and the negative effects mitigated. These recommendations are presented after the discussion of the expected effects for each group of policies.



# Vision, themes and objectives

## Vision

**5.5** The vision sets out the Local Plan’s focus and direction. The achievement of the vision for the plan is supported by several objectives that are grouped below the following themes:

- Healthy, vibrant and diverse places
- Sustainable
- Welcoming inclusive communities
- Well connected

**5.6** The vision and supporting themes and objectives are positive and aspirational in nature and as such no likely negative effects are identified. It is expected that most weight will be given to the more detailed policies included in the plan when deciding on planning applications and therefore no significant effects have identified.

**5.7** The likely effects of the vision for Colchester are presented in Table 5.1 and are described below the table.

**Table 5.1: Summary of SA findings for the vision**

SA objective	Vision
SA1: Housing	+
SA2: Efficient use of land	0
SA3: Economic growth	+
SA4: Transport	+

SA objective	Vision
SA5: Community and health and wellbeing	+
SA6: Services and facilities	+
SA7: Historic environment	+
SA8: Biodiversity and geodiversity	+
SA9: Landscape	+
SA10: Climate change	+
SA11: Flood risk	+
SA12: Waste	0
SA13: Air quality	+
SA14: Water	0

**5.8** The vision seeks to deliver a varied mix of housing to meet the needs of all, including social and lower income households and as such, a minor positive effect is expected in relation to **SA objective 1: Housing**.

**5.9** The vision sets out ambitions to deliver a range of jobs, including careers, that support a strong local economy and as such, a minor positive effect is expected in relation to **SA objective 3: Economic growth**.

**5.10** It also seeks to deliver better public transport corridors and routes and an increase in active travel as well as reduce reliance on the private car and the need for residents to commute outside of Colchester. This will support better connections between places, help to reduce congestion and emissions, provide more travel choices and encourage more active lifestyles. The vision also directly promotes improved health and wellbeing and quality of life, while seeking to foster sustainable and inclusive communities. Furthermore, it outlines that new development should minimise carbon emissions and infrastructure delivered over the plan period should be able to respond to climate change which is likely to include increased risk of flooding. As such, a

minor positive effect is likely in relation to **SA objectives 4: Transport, 5: Community health and wellbeing, 10: Climate change, 11: Flood risk and 13: Air quality.**

**5.11** The increased connectivity supported by the vision is likely to increase access to services and facilities. In addition, the vision seeks to promote life-long learning which will help to support educational attainment and as such, a minor positive effect is expected in relation to **SA objective 6: Services and facilities.**

**5.12** Ambitions to safeguard Colchester's unique heritage and landscapes are also provided for in the vision text. Therefore, a minor positive effect is expected in relation to **SA objectives 7: Historic environment and 9: Landscape.**

**5.13** The vision seeks to increase nature, wildlife and green spaces and protect and enhance Colchester's special and diverse natural environment. This will be achieved through provision of new open spaces, biodiversity net gain at new developments and the creation of wildlife corridors to support better connections between habitats. A minor positive effect is therefore expected in relation to **SA objective 8: Biodiversity and geodiversity.**

## Themes and objectives

**5.14** The likely effects of the themes and objectives for Colchester are summarised in Table 5.2 and are described below the table.

**Table 5.2: Summary of SA findings for the Local Plan themes and objectives**

SA objective	Theme 1: Healthy Vibrant and diverse places	Theme 2: Sustainable	Theme 3: Welcoming inclusive communities	Theme 4: Well connected
SA1: Housing	0	0	++	0
SA2: Efficient use of land	0	0	0	0
SA3: Economic growth	0	0	++	0
SA4: Transport	0	0	0	++
SA5: Community and health and wellbeing	0	+	+	+
SA6: Services and facilities	+	+	0	0
SA7: Historic environment	+	0	0	0
SA8: Biodiversity and geodiversity	++	0	0	0
SA9: Landscape	+	0	0	0
SA10: Climate change	0	++	0	+
SA11: Flood risk	0	+	0	0
SA12: Waste	0	0	0	0
SA13: Air quality	0	+	0	+
SA14: Water	0	+	0	0

## Theme 1: Healthy Vibrant and diverse places

**5.15** Theme 1 aims to protect stretches of undeveloped countryside, enhance the quality of natural environment creating net gains to biodiversity and as such, a significant positive effect is expected in relation to **SA objective 8: Biodiversity and geodiversity**.

**5.16** A minor positive effect is expected for theme 1 in relation to **SA objective 6: Services and facilities** as it aims to support Colchester's tourism role through the provision of additional high-quality facilities.

**5.17** In addition, a minor positive effect is expected in relation to **SA objective 7: Historic environment** and **SA objective 9: Landscape**. Theme 1 sets out ambitions to protect, maintain and enhance the distinct character, heritage identity and setting of Colchester city.

## Theme 2: Sustainable

**5.18** Theme 2 aims to deliver sustainable energy to achieve radical reductions in greenhouse gas emissions. It also seeks to ensure development helps Colchester to adapt and increase resilience to the effects of climate change. These aims will help Colchester to both minimise greenhouse gas emissions and adapt to the effects of climate change. Therefore, a significant positive effect is expected in relation to **SA objective 10: Climate change** and a minor positive effect is expected and **SA objective 13: Air quality**. Given that improved levels of climate change resilience is likely to help reduce the risk of flooding in the District, a minor positive effect is recorded in relation to **SA objective 11: Flood risk**.

**5.19** A minor positive effect is expected for theme 2 in relation to **SA objective 5: Community health and wellbeing** as it aims to ensure access to high quality healthcare that is deliverable and where needed. This theme will also support integration in the plan area.

**5.20** In addition, a minor positive effect is expected in relation to **SA objective 6: Services and facilities** given that theme 2 sets out ambitions to improve existing facilities, roads and schools, which would increase access to services, facilities, and education.

**5.21** A minor positive effect is also expected for theme 2 in relation to **SA objective 14: Water** as it aims to improve infrastructure for wastewater.

### **Theme 3: Welcoming inclusive communities**

**5.22** A significant positive effect is expected for theme 3 in relation to **SA objective 1: Housing** given that it aims to deliver a varied mix of housing to meet the needs of all, including social and lower income households.

**5.23** Objective 3 also aims to deliver high value jobs for locals and deliver high quality public realm and enhance infrastructure to attract inward investment. This will help enhance Colchester's economy and therefore a significant positive effect is also expected in relation to **SA objective 3: Economic growth**.

**5.24** A minor positive effect is recorded in relation to **SA objective 5: Community health and wellbeing**. This theme will help to ensure that residents can benefit from appropriate access to high quality housing as well as jobs. This is expected to support community integration in the area.

### **Theme 4: Well connected**

**5.25** Theme 4 aims to deliver better public transport corridors to reduce congestion and increase active travel making cycling and walking more attractive. This will help reduce congestion and vehicular emissions and support healthier lifestyle choices in Colchester. Therefore, a significant positive effect is expected for theme 4 in relation to **SA objective 4: Transport**. A minor positive effect is expected in relation to **SA objectives 5: Community health and wellbeing, 10: Climate change** and **13: Air quality**.



## Recommendations

- The vision, themes and objectives could include text to support the efficient use of natural resources, including land resources in Colchester. Most notably this could include encouraging the redevelopment of brownfield land. This could sit under the 'healthy, vibrant and diverse places' theme.
- The vision, themes and objectives could include text to support the reduction of waste in line with the waste management hierarchy. This could include through support for recycling of construction materials at new developments. This could sit under the 'sustainable' theme.

## Strategic policies

**5.26** This section presents the appraisal the strategic polices included in the plan. Given the importance of the strategic policies for the interpretation of the Local Plan and the level detail included in each policy, most of the strategic policies have been appraised individually. Where this is not the case and the appraisal of individual strategic policies has been combined, this is explained in the report.

### Policy ST1: Health and wellbeing

**5.27** Policy ST1 is set out to support the achievement of healthy lifestyles and inclusive communities through new developments. This is to include through the requirement for major larger developments to be supported by a Health Impact Assessment.

**Table 5.3: Likely sustainability effects for Policy ST1**

SA Objective	Policy ST1
SA1: Housing	+
SA2: Efficient use of land	0
SA3: Economic growth	+
SA4: Transport	+
SA5: Community and health and wellbeing	++
SA6: Services and facilities	+
SA7: Historic environment	0
SA8: Biodiversity and geodiversity	+
SA9: Landscape	+
SA10: Climate change	+
SA11: Flood risk	+
SA12: Waste	0
SA13: Air quality	+
SA14: Water	+

**5.28** Given that Policy ST1 supports the provision of healthy and affordable homes to meet the needs of the community and good access to a range of employment opportunities, a minor positive effect is expected in relation to **SA objectives 1: Housing** and **3: Economic growth**. Policy ST1 is supportive of the creation of accessible places and the provision of healthcare facilities in accessible locations. This approach is likely to help reduce the need to travel longer distances in the plan area and therefore a minor positive effect is expected in relation to **SA objective 4: Transport** as well as **SA objective 6: Services and facilities**.

**5.29** Policy ST1 includes a range of requirements for developments to minimise the potential for adverse effects relating to public health (such as the avoidance of pollution) and promoting positive outcomes. In line with the policy, development should contribute to healthy lifestyles and help to reduce health inequalities, including by supporting the provision of healthcare infrastructure. The policy also includes a specific requirement for larger developments to be supported by Health Impact Assessments. An overall significant positive effect is therefore expected for the policy in relation to **SA objective 5: Community and health and wellbeing**.

**5.30** The policy also requires that development should provide access to natural environments including green and blue infrastructure. It is expected that the incorporation of green and blue infrastructure at new developments would have a range of benefits. This is likely to include habitat provision, protection and enhancement of landscape character, and mitigation of the effects of climate change, including increased flood risk. Therefore, a minor positive effect is expected for **SA objectives 8: Biodiversity and geodiversity, 9: Landscape, 10: Climate change and 11: Flood risk**. The policy also requires that developments should support environmental improvements which is likely to help reduce air and water pollution in Colchester and therefore a minor positive effect is recorded in relation to **SA objectives 13: Air quality and 14: Water**.

## Policy ST2: Environment and the green network and waterways

**5.31** Policy ST2 addresses the conservation and enhancement of Colchester's natural and historic environment, including in relation to green infrastructure, open space, biodiversity and landscape.

**Table 5.4: Likely sustainability effects for Policy ST2**

SA Objective	Policy ST2
SA1: Housing	-?
SA2: Efficient use of land	0
SA3: Economic growth	-?
SA4: Transport	0
SA5: Community and health and wellbeing	+
SA6: Services and facilities	0
SA7: Historic environment	+
SA8: Biodiversity and geodiversity	++
SA9: Landscape	++
SA10: Climate change	+
SA11: Flood risk	+
SA12: Waste	0
SA13: Air quality	+
SA14: Water	+

**5.32** The requirements of Policy ST2 for the protection of natural features and for developments to be supported by a green network and waterways plan may mean certain schemes are not considered viable in the District. This reflects the distribution across the plan area of biodiversity assets that will need to be protected. As such a minor negative effect is recorded for the policy in relation to **SA objectives 1: Housing** and **3: Economic growth**. The negative effect is uncertain for both SA objectives given that the policy is unlikely to make all proposals unviable and is unlikely to result in the housing and employment requirements for the District not being met.

**5.33** The promotion of the green network in line with Policy ST2 is likely to result in a range of benefits relating to allowing space for recreation and supporting resilience to climate change, including by providing space for the safe infiltration of surface water. As such a minor positive effect is expected for the policy in relation to **SA objectives 5: Community and health and wellbeing, 10: Climate change** and **11: Flood risk**.

**5.34** A significant positive effect has been recorded for the policy in relation to **SA objectives 8: Biodiversity and geodiversity** and **9: Landscape** given that it requires the protection of the natural environment (including designated sites) and landscape character as well as stating that major residential proposals should be supported by green network and waterways plans. The latter requirement will support the integrated provision of green infrastructure, with benefits likely in terms of habitat provision and visual amenity.

**5.35** The promotion of the green network in the District is also likely to benefit local air quality by providing features that will act as barriers to and help to absorb of pollution. Furthermore, the incorporating of waterways at new developments is likely to support the natural functioning of watercourses and water bodies to protect local water quality. Therefore, a minor positive effect is also recorded for the policy in relation to **SA objectives 13: Air quality** and **14: Water**. A positive effect is also expected for **SA objective 7: Historic environment** given that the policy also requires that proposals conserve and enhance the historic environment. The effect is minor given that the policy text does not set out detailed criteria to help achieve this aim.

## Policy ST3: Spatial strategy

**5.36** Policy ST3 sets out the spatial distribution of growth for the plan area. The majority of development is to be delivered within the urban area or close to existing centres and also includes substantial development at the Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community. The policy also sets out the settlement hierarchy for plan area by which the allocations have been made.

**5.37** The appraisal of the spatial strategy options considered by the Council are presented in Chapter 4 of this report. The preferred spatial strategy taken forward through Policy ST3 best aligns with Option 1: Continuing existing Spatial Strategy but also incorporates elements of the other options considered.

**Table 5.5: Likely sustainability effects for Policy ST3**

SA Objective	Policy ST3
SA1: Housing	++
SA2: Efficient use of land	--/+
SA3: Economic growth	++/-
SA4: Transport	++/-
SA5: Community and health and wellbeing	++/-
SA6: Services and facilities	++/-
SA7: Historic environment	--/+
SA8: Biodiversity and geodiversity	--/+
SA9: Landscape	--/+
SA10: Climate change	+/-
SA11: Flood risk	-
SA12: Waste	-
SA13: Air quality	++/-
SA14: Water	-?

**5.38** Policy ST3 sets out that the required level of development will be delivered in Colchester to meet the local housing needs up to 2041. The 1,300 homes to be delivered every year up to the end of plan period aligns with the Standard Methodology calculation for the District, as well as the findings of the Housing Needs Assessment [See reference 17] undertaken in support of the Local



Plan. While much of the growth is focussed to the main urban area, growth is also allowed for within some of the smaller settlements to reflect their existing service provision and contains and to support their long-term viability. This approach will help meet housing needs across much of the plan area. As such a significant positive effect is expected for Policy ST3 in relation to **SA objective 1: Housing**.

**5.39** The delivery of development to meet the needs of the District will require substantial greenfield land take. There will be opportunities for the re-use of brownfield land and intensification of the existing densities within the urban area and this approach is supported through Policy ST3. However, many of the sites proposed for allocation and existing commitments take in greenfield land. This includes the development of the large scale development at the Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community. Furthermore, the District contains large areas of Grade 2 and Grade 3 agricultural soils and many of the sites proposed for allocation lie within these areas. As such an overall mixed minor positive and significant negative effect is expected in relation to **SA objective 2: Efficient use of land**.

**5.40** The approach of the spatial strategy is to direct much of the development to the most sustainable and accessible locations in the urban area and close to existing centres. These locations benefit from the largest concentrations of existing employment opportunities and development here will also support the viability of the town, district and local centres in Colchester. The spatial strategy also proposes the allocation of new and safeguards existing employment land in areas of existing employment provision, most notably within the urban area as well as the large and medium settlements. The provision of employment development in these locations will support access to jobs for a large proportion of the population and will also support the self-containment of many locations in terms of the potential to access nearby employment opportunities. However, the sites proposed for residential allocation include a small number within the lower order settlements such as the small settlements of Aldham, Fingringhoe, Peldon and Messing. At these locations residents will most likely have to travel longer distances to access employment. As such an overall mixed significant positive and minor negative effect is recorded in relation to **SA objective 3: Economic growth**.

**5.41** The approach of providing much of the development over the plan period within the urban area and higher order settlements is likely to promote increased levels of self-containment and walking and cycling in Colchester as new residents are located close to employment and services and facilities. Furthermore, these areas benefit from the strongest existing sustainable transport provisions with the proposed allocation sites include all reasonably well related to existing bus stops. The incorporation of large scale development, such as the Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community will support new infrastructure and service provision to further promote self-containment in the District. The strategy favours opportunities for development along key transport corridors, particularly those with access to the rail network which is likely to help limit congestion in the plan area. However, it is notable that the centre of Colchester City suffers from existing congestion and the focus of growth within the urban area may increase the number of trips made to this location. Furthermore, the overall scale of growth required by the spatial strategy is likely to result in an increased number of trips being made regularly in the District. There is potential for impacts relating to congestion in the urban area to be mitigated by the existing stronger sustainable transport measures at this location, including Colchester Town and Hythe Railway Stations and the emerging Rapid Transport System. As such an overall mixed significant positive and minor negative effect is recorded in relation to **SA objective 4: Transport**.

**5.42** The urban area and higher order settlements benefit from the best access to healthcare provision in the plan area. This includes Colchester Hospital within the urban area. Many of the proposed residential site allocations are located within settlements that benefit from access to a GP surgery. The exceptions to this are mostly smaller sites at Boxted, Copford, Langham, Great Horkeley (although this settlement is relatively close to Cambain Fairview Hospital at the northern edge of the urban area), Fingringhoe, Abberton, Layer Breton, Messing, Aldham, Great Tey, Fordham and Chappel. Development at Marks Tey would also not be close to any existing healthcare centre but the scale of development could support the delivery of new facilities of this nature. It is also expected that the Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community would incorporate new healthcare services. Furthermore, all of the sites proposed for allocation provide good access to existing open spaces. The allocation of Land North of Oak Road in Tiptree would provide a new country park of a size that

could benefit new and existing residents in the surroundings. The proposed allocations include a small number of sites that could be adversely affected by noise pollution. Most notably this includes the larger site allocations along the A12 and A120 within Marks Tey. A small number of proposed allocations also lie close to facilities responsible for odours in the District. It may be possible that the design and layout of development could be achieved to avoid adverse effects relating to these issues. Furthermore, some of the proposed allocations towards the centre of the Colchester urban area fall within the 20% most deprived areas in the country. This approach to development is likely to support a degree of regeneration and may help to alleviate the underlying issues of deprivation. As such an overall mixed significant positive and minor negative effect is recorded in relation to **SA objective 5: Community and health and wellbeing**.

**5.43** Similar to the effects reported in relation to SA objective 5, the higher order settlements in the plan area benefit from the access to the widest range of services and facilities in Colchester District. As such delivering much of the development of the plan period at these locations will help to ensure that residents can access a suitable range of services and facilities. Residential development delivered within the existing urban area will help ensure the viability of the town, district and local centres and the services at these locations, however, there is some potential for overburdening to result. While many of the proposed residential allocations are not close to secondary schools, all are located at settlements with primary schools, with the exception of Peldon. Furthermore, in addition to the Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community, some of the proposed residential site allocations (most notably the larger sites at Marks Tey and the Land at Park Lane in Langham) are of a size that could support the delivery of new school facilities. As such an overall mixed significant positive and minor negative effect is recorded in relation to **SA objective 6: Services and facilities**.

**5.44** Colchester District includes numerous heritage assets whose settings are likely to be sensitive to change particularly given the scale of growth required by the spatial strategy. The spatial strategy states that development will be required to respect the built environment and preserve or enhance the historic environment, with specific safeguards relating to this topic set out in the relevant

theme based policy and the policies allocating sites for development. The centre of Colchester urban area is covered by a number of Conservation Areas which include numerous Listed Buildings and most of Colchester Castle Park Registered Park and Garden. While new development may present opportunities for enhancement, particularly where sensitive regeneration occurs, the delivery of much of the growth over the plan period in this area may result in substantial adverse impacts. Furthermore, providing some development within the smaller settlements in the plan area may result in growth in areas more sensitive to change. At these locations it is anticipated that effects relating to setting could be transmitted over longer distances given the lower density of existing development. As such an overall mixed minor positive and significant negative effect is recorded in relation to **SA objective 7: Historic environment.**

**5.45** The District contains a number of important biodiversity assets. The south of Colchester is particularly sensitive given the presence of the Blackwater Estuary, Colne Estuary and Essex Estuaries nationally and internationally designated biodiversity sites. There are further areas of SSSIs to the south of the Colchester urban area (including Abberton Reservoir, Upper Colne Marshes and Roman River) and to the east of the urban area (Bullock Wood) as well as towards Marks Tey (Marks Tey Brickpit). The spatial strategy states that development over the plan period should preserve and enhance biodiversity in the plan area. Furthermore, providing much of the growth over the plan period within or adjacent to the existing urban area and the larger existing settlements is likely to help limit the potential for development at locations that are presently less disturbed in terms of biodiversity. There is also potential for the provision of the new country park as part of the allocation of Land North of Oak Road in Tiptree to support new habitat provision. However, it is notable that at the proposed allocation North East Colchester would be adjacent to Bullock Wood SSSI and the relatively large amount of development proposed for Marks Tey would be relatively close to Marks Tey Brickpit SSSI. Furthermore, while development within the potentially sensitive south of the District is limited by the spatial strategy, it includes development at Mersea at Dawes Lane and two further relatively small sites at Abberton and Peldon. As such an overall mixed minor positive and significant negative effect is recorded in relation to **SA objective 8: Biodiversity and geodiversity**

**5.46** Colchester benefits from areas of high value landscape including parts of the Dedham Vale National Landscape to the north. The drafting of the Local Plan has been supported by the preparation of landscape assessment work that considers the sensitivity and inherent value of the District's landscape. The majority of development over the plan period is set out within the urban area where there may be potential for regeneration to support enhancement of the townscape as well as within areas of medium landscape sensitivity. The spatial strategy is clear that the areas of highest sensitivity will accommodate the lowest level of growth to help ensure the distinctive character of settlements and avoid their coalescence. Furthermore, the provision of the new country park as part of the allocation of Land North of Oak Road in Tiptree could support landscape improvements in this part of Colchester. However, the overall scale of development required over the plan period is likely to result in substantial change to the District, which could have impacts for local character. Furthermore, the spatial strategy includes some proposed allocations at settlements which include land of high sensitivity such as at Chappel, Fringinghoe, Abberton, Peldon and West Mersea. As such an overall mixed minor positive and significant negative effect is recorded in relation to **SA objective 9: Landscape**.

**5.47** As discussed in relation to SA objective 4, the spatial strategy could result in variable impacts on transport. This is expected given the relatively large amount of growth to be delivered that will invariably result in increasing numbers of journeys being made in the plan area but also reflects the approach of focussing much of the growth required towards the urban area and more sustainable settlements and supporting increased self-containment in the District. Impacts relating to climate change will also be influenced by design choices at new developments, such as the delivery of more energy efficient buildings and the incorporation of renewable energy infrastructure and green infrastructure. These impacts are less likely to be influenced by the spatial strategy for the plan area. As such the effects reported relate mostly to transport in the plan area and associated carbon emissions and the need to power an increasing number of homes and businesses in Colchester as they are occupied. As such an overall mixed minor positive and minor negative effect is expected in relation to **SA objective 10: Climate change**.

**5.48** Increases in impermeable surfaces in the District through substantial greenfield development is likely to contribute to flood risk as natural drainage patterns are disrupted. While there are areas of higher flood risk present in the District, including those associated with its main water courses such as the Roman River and River Colne and its tributaries as well as the coast, the proposed allocations are located mostly outside of these areas. Furthermore, most proposed allocations do not include large areas of land affected by surface water flood risk. The design of developments to include green infrastructure and SuDS will help to further mitigate flood risk as new development occurs. As such an overall minor negative effect is expected in relation to **SA objective 11: Flood risk.**

**5.49** The scale of development over the plan period will result in increases in waste produced in the District. However, it is not expected that the spatial distribution of development will contribute to the level of waste produced or the achievement of higher rates of recycling. Furthermore, it is expected that new development will benefit from kerbside pick up of waste and recycling. As such an overall minor negative effect is expected in relation to **SA objective 12: Waste.**

**5.50** Impacts relating to air quality in Colchester will be greatly affected by the potential to reduce trips made by private vehicle. As such, they are expected to be broadly in line with those reported for SA objective 4. However, development within the centre of the urban area should be considered in relation to its potential to contribute further to air pollution within the AQMAs declared along Brook Street, Mersea Road and Osbourne Street and St John's Street, in addition to the potential for increases in existing levels of congestion within the centre. A small number of allocations are proposed along routes that link to these existing AQMAs. As noted in relation to SA objective 4, this part of the District also benefits from the best service provision and sustainable transport links which is likely to increase the potential for trips by active and sustainable modes and could help to mitigate the potential for increases in air pollution. As such an overall mixed significant positive and minor negative effect is expected in relation to **SA objective 13: Air quality**



**5.51** The District is reported to currently be seriously water stressed. Development in the plan area will contribute to increased pressures on resources, however, there is potential for this to be addressed through water efficiency measures at new developments and the delivery of infrastructure to support water supply. The Revised draft Water Resources Management Plan 2024 sets out measures to ensure that water supply is maintained in the wider area. It is not expected that the spatial distribution of growth in the plan area will greatly impact the use of water resources in Colchester. However, it is notable that the plan includes land proposed for allocation for the extension of the Anglian Water Services Colchester Water Recycling Centre which will support water treatment and mitigate adverse impacts on water quality. This point considered, the proposed allocations lie mostly within an area of SPZ 3 that covers all but the most southerly parts of the District. Therefore, there is potential for activities associated with the construction and occupation of new developments to contribute to contamination of water resources. As such an overall minor negative effect is expected in relation to **SA objective 14: Water**.

## Policy ST4: Development in the countryside

**5.52** Policy ST4 is set out to support a limited amount in the countryside where it is required to meet the needs of rural communities. However, the approach supported will not allow for development that adversely affects the roles of existing settlements in the plan area.

**Table 5.6: Likely sustainability effects for Policy ST4**

SA Objective	Policy ST4
SA1: Housing	+
SA2: Efficient use of land	0
SA3: Economic growth	+
SA4: Transport	+

SA Objective	Policy ST4
SA5: Community and health and wellbeing	+
SA6: Services and facilities	+
SA7: Historic environment	+
SA8: Biodiversity and geodiversity	0
SA9: Landscape	++
SA10: Climate change	+
SA11: Flood risk	+
SA12: Waste	0
SA13: Air quality	+
SA14: Water	0

**5.53** Policy ST3 is supportive of residential and employment development that could help meet the needs of those in more rural communities. A minor positive effect is therefore expected in relation to **SA objective 1: Housing** and **3: Economic growth**. The policy is clear that residents will be required to have access to sustainable modes of travel and a minor positive effect is also recorded in relation to **SA objective 4: Transport**. The support provided in the policy for the continued functioning of rural communities means a minor positive effect is also expected in relation to **SA objective 5: Community and health and wellbeing**.

**5.54** It is stated in the policy that where developments are proposed outside of settlement boundaries there should first be consideration of the physical and functional connection to the existing settlement. This is likely to help ensure the first consideration of sites that are more accessible to service and facilities and therefore a minor positive effect is expected in relation to **SA objective 6: Services and facilities**. Ensuring new developments are accessible to public transport services and services and facilities is likely to help limit any increased contribution to carbon emissions or air pollution. As such a minor positive effect

is recorded for the policy in relation to **SA objectives 10: Climate change and 13: Air quality**.

**5.55** It is likely that the approach of supporting the existing roles of settlements in the plan area and their character and separate identities, as well as the valued landscapes in Colchester will greatly benefit the existing landscape character of the District. Therefore, a significant positive effect is recorded in relation to **SA objective 9: Landscape**. This approach is also likely to help protect setting of heritage assets in Colchester that is provided by the existing countryside and therefore a minor positive effect is expected in relation to **SA objective 7: Historic environment**.

## Policies ST5: Colchester’s housing need and ST6: Colchester’s employment need

**5.56** Policies ST5 and ST6 provide for a level of housing and employment land that will meet local needs up to 2041. In addition to setting the overall level of housing and employment development for Colchester, the policies list the site allocations included for development in the plan. The appraisal of Policies ST5 and ST6 at this point of the report considers the overall level of development included.

**5.57** The appraisal of the spatial distribution of development has been considered through the appraisal of Policy ST3: Spatial strategy and each of the site allocations set out in the plan has also been subject to separate appraisal later in this report.

**Table 5.7: Likely sustainability effects for Policies ST5 and ST6**

SA Objective	Policy ST5	Policy ST6
SA1: Housing	++	0

SA Objective	Policy ST5	Policy ST6
SA2: Efficient use of land	--	--
SA3: Economic growth	+	++
SA4: Transport	+/-?	+/-?
SA5: Community and health and wellbeing	+/-?	+
SA6: Services and facilities	+/-?	0
SA7: Historic environment	-?	-?
SA8: Biodiversity and geodiversity	-?	-?
SA9: Landscape	-?	-?
SA10: Climate change	+/-?	+/-?
SA11: Flood risk	-?	-?
SA12: Waste	-	-
SA13: Air quality	+/-?	+/-?
SA14: Water	-	-

**5.58** Policy ST5 is set out to meet the housing needs of the District between 2025 and 2041, requiring the provision of at least 20,640 homes over this period. The provision of this number of homes is expected to support the provision of a suitable mix of housing types (including more affordable dwellings) that will help meet the needs of local people and help to address housing affordability in the District. Therefore, a significant positive effect is expected for Policy ST5 in relation to **SA objective 1: Housing**. It is likely that the scale of housing delivered will support job creation in the construction sector and related industries and therefore a minor positive effect is expected for Policy ST5 in relation to **SA objective 3: Economic growth**. For Policy ST6, the positive effect recorded is significant. This reflects the inclusion in the policy of a level of employment land that will meet the needs of the District up to 2041.

**5.59** Considering the level of development set out through Policies ST5 and ST6, a substantial amount of greenfield land take will be required over the plan period. Given the composition of soils in Colchester District, which comprise mostly Grade 2 and Grade 3 quality, development is likely to result in loss or sterilisation of higher value agricultural lands in the District. Therefore, a significant negative effect is expected in relation to **SA objective 2: Efficient use of land** for both policies.

**5.60** The scale of residential growth set out through Policy ST5 will also support access to a high quality of housing for many residents and will contribute to their physical and mental wellbeing. Policy ST6 is likely to benefit resident's mental wellbeing by ensuring that they can access employment opportunities. A minor positive effect is therefore expected for both policies in relation to **SA objective 5: Community and health and wellbeing**. This is combined with an uncertain minor negative effect for Policy ST5, given that the scale of residential growth could result in some overburdening of existing healthcare facilities. It is noted that the scale of development is likely to support the delivery of new services that would help mitigate capacity issues. The scale of development set out through Policy ST5 is also likely to contribute to the potential for overburdening and delivery of existing and new services and facilities beyond those that relate to healthcare. Furthermore, as capacity issues result at services and facilities and new provisions are made, there is potential for increased need for travel as well as the development of more self-contained places. Similarly, the provision of employment land will likely contribute to increased numbers of journeys being made in some parts of Colchester, but will, in some locations, will contribute to self-containment. Therefore, an uncertain mixed minor positive and minor negative effect is recorded for **SA objectives 4: Transport** and **6: Services and facilities** for Policies ST5 and ST6. Effects relating to carbon emissions and air pollution align with those identified for transport given the large proportion of emissions that this activity accounts for. As such an uncertain mixed minor positive and minor negative effect is expected for Policies ST5 and ST6 in relation to **SA objectives 10: Climate change** and **13: Air quality**.

**5.61** While the specific locations for growth are not considered through the appraisal of Policies ST5 and ST6 it is considered likely that the scale of growth delivered across the District will result in adverse impacts in terms of the

settings of heritage assets, habitat space and landscape character. Therefore, a minor negative effect is expected for **SA objectives 7: Historic environment, 8: Biodiversity and geodiversity** and **9: Landscape** for both policies. The effects are uncertain given that there is potential for the designs of proposals to incorporate mitigation and potential provide opportunities for enhancement.

**5.62** Potential effects relating to flood risk will depend in part on the specific location in relation to fluvial and coastal flood risk and design of development to incorporate sustainable drainage. However, where the large amount of development set out through Policies ST5 and ST6 would result in a substantial increase in impermeable surfaces, it is likely to contribute to an increase in flood risk. Therefore, an uncertain minor negative effect is recorded for both policies in relation to **SA objective 11: Flood risk**. The scale of development will require substantial amounts of natural resources (including water) and produce large amounts of waste. There is potential for the delivery of development to align with waste hierarchy thereby limiting the amount of waste that is not re-used or recycled, however, it is unreasonable to expect that waste generation will be entirely avoided. As such a minor negative effect is expected for the Policies ST5 and ST6 in relation to **SA objectives 12: Waste** and **14: Water**.

## Policy ST7: Infrastructure

**5.63** Policy ST7 requires that new developments in Colchester are supported by the provision of infrastructure, services and facilities. Sufficient and appropriate infrastructure capacity is required for new growth to be supported by the Council.

**Table 5.8: Likely sustainability effects for Policy ST7**

SA Objective	Policy ST7
SA1: Housing	0
SA2: Efficient use of land	0



SA Objective	Policy ST7
SA3: Economic growth	+
SA4: Transport	++
SA5: Community and health and wellbeing	++
SA6: Services and facilities	++
SA7: Historic environment	0
SA8: Biodiversity and geodiversity	+
SA9: Landscape	+
SA10: Climate change	+
SA11: Flood risk	+
SA12: Waste	+
SA13: Air quality	+
SA14: Water	++

**5.64** Ensuring that congestion is mitigated as much as possible will be essential to ensuring economic growth and job creation in the District. While the provision of new road infrastructure in line with the requirements of Policy ST7 may result in some level induced demand, it is expected that making these provisions alongside active travel infrastructure will help to alleviate congestion in Colchester. As such a minor positive effect is recorded in relation to **SA objective 3: Economic growth**.

**5.65** Policy ST7 will help to ensure that residents have good access to a range of services and facilities and essential infrastructure in the District. This is likely to include healthcare services and open spaces that would benefit the health and wellbeing of residents. These provisions are also likely to support self containment in Colchester and will reduce the need for many residents to have to travel longer distances on a regular basis. The close proximity of residents to services and facilities may also encourage trips to be made by active modes

which could further benefit public health in Colchester. Therefore, significant positive effects are expected in relation to **SA objectives 4: Transport, 5: Community and health and wellbeing** and **6: Services and facilities**. The potential to reduce a reliance on travel by private vehicles could have benefits for local air quality and therefore a minor positive effect is also expected in relation to **SA objective 13: Air quality**.

**5.66** The whole of the East of England is designated as being in serious water stress. The provision of infrastructure to support the treatment and efficient transportation of water resources will be essential to ensure residents have access to the required level of water for drinking and other uses. Given that Policy ST7 will support the provision of this infrastructure, a significant positive effect is recorded in relation to **SA objective 14: Water**.

**5.67** New infrastructure provided in the plan area is likely to include green infrastructure. These types of provision are likely to support habitat creation and could benefit local landscape character. Therefore, a minor positive effect is also recorded in relation to **SA objectives 8: Biodiversity and geodiversity** and **9: Landscape**. Green infrastructure provision is also likely to support climate change resilience, including in relation to any increase in flood risk and therefore a minor positive effect is expected in relation to **SA objective 10: Climate change** and **11: Flood risk**. In line with Policy ST7, new developments are also likely to be required to contribute to flood defences and other flood related infrastructure where the needed is identified.

**5.68** The provision of new infrastructure and securing related contributions in Colchester will also support waste management functions by funding new infrastructure where it is needed. As such a minor positive effect is also expected for Policy ST7 in relation to **SA objective 12: Waste**.

## Policy ST8: Place shaping principles

**5.69** Policy ST8 sets out a several high level and wide ranging design related principles that development proposals in the District will be required to meet.

**Table 5.9: Likely sustainability effects for Policy ST8**

SA Objective	Policy ST8
SA1: Housing	+
SA2: Efficient use of land	+
SA3: Economic growth	+
SA4: Transport	+
SA5: Community and health and wellbeing	+
SA6: Services and facilities	+
SA7: Historic environment	+
SA8: Biodiversity and geodiversity	+
SA9: Landscape	+
SA10: Climate change	+
SA11: Flood risk	+
SA12: Waste	0
SA13: Air quality	+
SA14: Water	+

**5.70** Policy ST8 sets out requirements that address the majority of the SA objectives against which it has been appraised. The policy sets out that amenity of existing and future residents should be protected in relation to a range of issues as new development occurs. Therefore, a minor positive effect is recorded in relation to **SA objective 1: Housing**.

**5.71** The policy also requires that neighbourhoods are designed to provide a mix of land uses, services and densities. This requirement will support efficient land use in Colchester. It is also likely to ensure good access to services in the plan area thereby contributing to self-containment and reduced need to travel.

Therefore, a minor positive effect is expected in relation to **SA objectives 2: Efficient use of land, 4: Transport and 6: Services and facilities**. The incorporation of services and facilities (including healthcare) and open spaces, in line with the policy approach is likely to have a minor positive effect in relation to **SA objective 5: Community and health and wellbeing**.

**5.72** The requirement in the policy for development to protect and enhance historic assets, the natural environment and local character means that a minor positive effect is also recorded in relation to **SA objective 7: Historic environment, 8: Biodiversity and geodiversity and 9: Landscape**. Furthermore, as part of its support the natural environment, Policy ST8 requires development to support connection of a green network of biodiverse public open spaces and waterways. This approach is likely to support climate resilience, reduce flood risk and improve the functioning of natural watercourses. Therefore, a minor positive effect is expected in relation to **SA objectives 10: Climate change, 11: Flood risk and 14: Water**. Through the incorporation of green infrastructure and reducing the need to travel in Colchester, Policy ST8 is likely to act to provide barriers to air pollution and reduce any contribution made by vehicular traffic. Therefore, a minor positive effect is recorded in relation to **SA objective 13: Air quality**.

## Policy ST9: Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community

**5.73** The Tendring Colchester Border Garden Community was initially allocated as a defined broad location in the adopted Section 1 Colchester Local Plan. Further detail about how the Garden Community should be developed is set out in the Garden Community Development Plan Document (DPD) which sets out the vision, key policies, and a preferred masterplan layout option for the area. The DPD was submitted for examination in September 2023.

**5.74** The location for development, at the border with Tendring to the north east of the University of Essex Colchester Campus, has been tested extensive through the adopted Local Plan and DPD plan making processes. It is not the

purpose of this report to revisit that work in detail. Instead, the appraisal presented here focusses on the environmental sensitivities of the area considered for development through Policy ST9 and the specific requirements set out in that policy, including the uses to be delivered within the Garden Community area.

**Table 5.10: Likely sustainability effects for Policy ST9**

SA Objective	Policy ST9
SA1: Housing	++
SA2: Efficient use of land	--
SA3: Economic growth	++
SA4: Transport	++/-
SA5: Community and health and wellbeing	+/-
SA6: Services and facilities	++
SA7: Historic environment	-?
SA8: Biodiversity and geodiversity	+/-?
SA9: Landscape	++/-?
SA10: Climate change	+/-
SA11: Flood risk	+/-
SA12: Waste	0
SA13: Air quality	+/-
SA14: Water	-

**5.75** The policy requires the delivery of around 7,500 new homes and an 18-pitch Gypsy and Traveller Site. Furthermore, if the housing delivery target for the Garden Community for Colchester or Tendring is not met, the policy is clear that this shortfall should be met elsewhere in the respective plan areas. These

requirements will help ensure that the Garden Community makes a substantial contribution to housing need within both Colchester and Tendring and therefore a significant positive effect is recorded in relation to **SA objective 1: Housing**.

**5.76** The land set out for development is predominantly greenfield. Much of the site comprises grade 1 agricultural land (excellent quality) with areas of grade 2 (very good) and 3 (good to moderate) interspersed. The development of the site is therefore expected to result in the loss of access to a substantial area of higher value agricultural land. A significant negative effect is expected for the policy in relation to **SA objective 2: efficient use of land**.

**5.77** In addition to any contribution the development of the site will make to the local economy in terms of construction related job creation, the policy also requires that the site incorporates a new Business Park and a 'Knowledge-Based Employment' site. In total 25ha of employment land is to be delivered. A significant positive effect is therefore recorded for the policy in relation to **SA objective 3: Economic growth**.

**5.78** The delivery of a development of such a substantial size will result in an increase in journeys being made in the area. The policy requires the provision of a range of services and facilities, including substantial sustainable transport improvements (such as the Rapid Transit System and park and choose facility) that will help instil self-containment at the site and reduce the need to travel by car. A mixed significant positive and a minor negative effect is expected for the policy in relation to **SA objective 4: Transport**.

**5.79** The range of services and facilities to be provided at the site include a new sports and leisure park and green spaces. These are likely to benefit health and wellbeing at the site. However, the policy does not require that the development provides any new healthcare facilities or contributes towards existing facilities in the area. Furthermore, the proximity of the northern and southern boundaries of the site to the A120 and A133 means that new residents may be adversely affected by noise pollution. A mixed minor positive and minor negative effect is expected for the policy in relation to **SA objective 5: Community and health and wellbeing**.



**5.80** The policy states that the range of services and provisions to be delivered include shops, community facilities and education. The delivery of the site is therefore expected to benefit residents at the site and in the surrounding areas in terms of access to local services. A significant positive effect is expected for the policy in relation to **SA objective 6: Services and facilities**.

**5.81** Development of land at the site has potential to adversely affect the setting of several listed buildings towards Crockleford Heath; Grade II Listed Allen's Farmhouse to the north east and Wivenhoe Registered Park to the south west. The policy requires the incorporation of greenspace which could help to mitigate adverse effects, however, there is no specific requirement for development to address the sensitivities of the site in relation to the historic environment. As such, an uncertain minor negative effect is expected in relation to **SA objective 7: Historic environment**.

**5.82** The site was assessed as having potential for adverse impacts on European sites without considering any mitigation requirements in the plan as part of the HRA work for the DPD. However, the Appropriate Assessment was able to conclude that no adverse effects are expected on the integrity of any European sites, for the DPD alone or in combination with other plans and projects. The site also contains several areas of ancient woodland, Salary Brook Local Nature Reserve and a number of Local Wildlife Sites to the west. There is potential for development to result in habitat loss, fragmentation and disturbance. The policy requirement for the incorporation of the Local Nature Reserve and surrounding woodland as part of a new Salary Brook Country Park, will help to mitigate the adverse effects relating to this designated site and promote habitat connectivity in the area. Overall, a mixed uncertain minor positive and minor negative effect is expected in relation to **SA objective 8: Biodiversity**.

**5.83** The loss of an extensive area of existing open countryside to the east of the settlement of Colchester could have substantial implications for its setting and the wider landscape character. The site was assessed as having high to moderate landscape value and much of the area displays a degree of landscape sensitivity [[See reference 18](#)]. The policy requires that in addition to the delivery of the new country park, development achieves two new strategic

gap areas. This requirement is likely to help mitigate the loss of open land within the countryside. It could also benefit the transition from the urban area to the countryside. As such a mixed uncertain significant positive and minor negative effect is expected in relation to **SA objective 9: Landscape**.

**5.84** The incorporation of green spaces at the site will help promote climate change resilience, including adaptation to flood risk. The site contains some small areas of surface water flood risk and ground water flood risk. There are also areas of higher flood risk along Salary Brook, although development would not occur within this part of the site. Regardless, the development of such a substantial area of greenfield land will increase the area of impermeable surfaces and could disrupt some established natural drainage patterns. A mixed minor positive and minor negative effect is therefore recorded for **SA objectives 10: Climate change** and **11: Flood risk**.

**5.85** The scale of development at the site will undoubtedly contribute to increased traffic and air pollution in the area. However, the new services provided at the site, including sustainable transport measures will help to address these issues and may support improvements in air quality in the surroundings as existing residents may be able to make use of new public transport services provided. Overall, a mixed a minor positive and minor negative effect is expected for **SA objective 13: Air quality**.

**5.86** The Garden Community lies within a SPZ. As such there is potential for construction activities to result in contamination of groundwater resources at this location. The policy does not address water resources and overall, a minor negative effect is recorded in relation to **SA objective 14: Water**.

## Recommendations

**5.87** It is recognised that many of the any of the adverse effects identified as part of the appraisal of Policy ST9 would be addressed by the detailed masterplanning of the Garden Community site and the requirements of the related DPD currently at examination. Several recommendations are suggested

to potentially enhance the positive effects and mitigate the negative effect identified:

- Policy ST9 could be strengthened by promoting the achievement of water efficiency measures onsite including by requiring development to align with the water hierarchy.
- Policy ST9 could be strengthened by requiring that development at the site makes provision for the infrastructure required from the early stages of occupation.
- Policy ST9 could be strengthened by requiring that development incorporates suitable buffering and screening to the A120 and A133 to protect residential amenity and limit the potential for noise pollution.
- Policy ST9 could be strengthened by requiring that development at the site incorporates a suitable mix of housing to respond to local needs.
- Policy ST9 could be strengthened by requiring that development is delivered to expressly address the sensitivities of the site in relation to landscape character and the historic environment. The site has high to moderate landscape value and there is potential for adverse impacts on listed buildings towards Crockleford Heath.

## Environment

### Policies EN1, EN2, EN3, EN4, EN5, EN6, EN7, EN8 and EN9

**5.88** The group of policies appraised in this section is as follows:

- Policy EN1 - Nature conservation designated sites
- Policy EN2 - Biodiversity net gain (BNG) and environmental net gain
- Policy EN3 - Biodiversity and geodiversity

- Policy EN4 - Irreplaceable habitats
- Policy EN5 - New and existing trees
- Policy EN6 - Conserving and enhancing the historic environment
- Policy EN7 - Archaeology
- Policy EN8 - Flood risk and sustainable drainage systems (SuDS)
- Policy EN9 - Pollution and contaminated land

**5.89** These policies seek to promote sustainable development by prioritising biodiversity, heritage conservation, and environmental protection. They include requirements for a 10% biodiversity net gain, to safeguard habitats and trees, address flood risks with nature-based drainage systems, and manage pollution and land contamination. Development is also required by this group of policies to protect heritage and archaeological assets. .

**Table 5.11: Likely sustainability effects for the environment policies**

SA Objectives	EN1	EN2	EN3	EN4	EN5	EN6	EN7	EN8	EN9
SA1: Housing	-?	-?	-?	-?	-?	-?	-?	-?	-?
SA2: Efficient use of land	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+
SA3: Economic growth	-?	-?	-?	-?	-?	-?	-?	-?	-?
SA4: Transport	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SA5: Community and health and wellbeing	+	+	+	+	0	0	0	0	+
SA6: Services and facilities	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SA7: Historic environment	0	0	0	0	0	++	++	0	0

SA Objectives	EN1	EN2	EN3	EN4	EN5	EN6	EN7	EN8	EN9
SA8: Biodiversity and geodiversity	++	++	++	++	++	0	0	+	++
SA9: Landscape	+	+	+	+	+	0	0	0	+
SA10: Climate change	+	+	+	+	+	+	0	0	+
SA11: Flood risk	+	+	+	+	+	0	0	++	+
SA12: Waste	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SA13: Air quality	+	+	+	+	+	0	0	0	++
SA14: Water	+	+	+	+	+	0	0	++	+

**5.90** A minor negative effect is expected for all policies considered in this section in relation to **SA objective 1: Housing** and **SA objective 3: Economic growth**. All policies may impact the potential for residential and/or economic development, by restricting locations that are considered acceptable in planning terms and by setting out requirements to meet BNG. However, it is considered unlikely that the housing and/or employment needs of the District would not be met as a result of these requirements and therefore the minor effect recorded for all policies is uncertain.

**5.91** While none of the policies appraised directly seek to promote the re-use of previously developed land in Colchester, Policy EN9: Pollution and contaminated land states that developments on contaminated land may be required to be supported by remedial works. As such the policy is likely to support the remediation of contaminated sites in the District and a more efficient use of land resources. A minor positive effect is therefore recorded in relation to **SA objective 2: Efficient use of land**.

**5.92** Allowing for appropriate interactions between residents and nature is likely to support improved wellbeing among the population. Policies EN1: Nature conservation designated sites, EN2 Biodiversity net gain and environmental net gain, EN3: Biodiversity and geodiversity, EN4: Irreplaceable habitats and EN5:

New and existing trees support the conservation and/or enhancement of natural assets and biodiversity and a minor positive effect is recorded for these policies in relation to **SA objective 5: Community and health and wellbeing**. Policy EN9 will support the mitigation of pollution in Colchester, including air, light and noise pollution, which will protect resident's health and wellbeing and therefore a minor positive effect is also recorded for this policy in relation to SA objective 5.

**5.93** A significant positive effect is expected for Policy EN6: Conserving and enhancing the historic environment and Policy EN7: Archaeology in relation to **SA objective 7: Historic environment**. The identified effects reflect the role of the policies appraised in directly addressing the protection of the heritage assets and archaeology that comprise important parts of the historic environment, as well as their respective settings.

**5.94** Policies EN1, EN2, EN3, EN4, EN5 and EN9 all make extensive provision for the protection, conservation, and enhancement of Colchester's biodiversity, geodiversity, green spaces and natural environment. This includes through the protection of its designated biodiversity sites, the promotion of BNG, mitigation of pollution and the conservation of irreplaceable habitats including ancient woodland as well as enhancing the tree canopy in Colchester. As such, these policies are expected to have a significant positive effect in relation to **SA objective 8: Biodiversity and geodiversity**. Policy EN8: Flood risk and sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) is expected to have a minor positive effect in relation to this SA objective as it requires that all development proposals should consider measures which will aid in protecting and/or enhancing biodiversity including natural flood management at a catchment scale and existing drainage features such as ditches and ponds.

**5.95** It is likely that the preservation and enhancement of natural features in the District will also contribute positively to its character and landscape setting. As such a minor positive effect is recorded for policies EN1, EN2, EN3, EN4 and EN5 in relation to **SA objective 9: Landscape**. Through Policy EN5 this includes encouraging tree planting that form positive focal points or a landmark. Policy EN9 is also expected to have a minor positive effect in relation to this SA objective. This reflects the policy's requirements for developments to contribute



to improved environmental quality in relation to the selection of species and planting design and to reduce light pollution and impact on dark skies.

**5.96** A minor positive effect is also expected for policies EN1, EN2, EN3, EN4 and EN5 in relation to **SA objective 10: Climate change** given the potential for the conservation and restoration of natural assets to help mitigate climate change and its impacts. Various elements of green infrastructure and planting may support carbon sequestration and help create more climate resilient environments. Policies EN6 and EN9 are also expected to have a minor positive effect in relation to SA objective 10. Policy EN6 outlines that all development proposals should promote the adaptive reuse of buildings and the role of heritage in sustainable development such as retrofitting for energy efficiency or considering climate change in heritage management. Policy EN9 protects air quality by requiring developments to minimise emissions and to incorporate green spaces with planting which could support the carbon sequestration as well as the potential for improved climate change resilience.

**5.97** A significant positive effect is expected for Policy EN8 in relation to **SA objectives 11: Flood risk** and **14: Water**. This policy will support the positive management of flood risk and water resources including through the requirement for SuDS in new developments. The policy also includes requirements for developments to avoid flood-prone areas and not to increase flood risk on or off-site, as well as promoting proposals that include measures to enhance the flood resilience of new or renovated buildings. Given the potential for natural features (such as trees and naturally functioning water bodies) to contribute to reductions in flood risk and the natural filtration of water resources, a minor positive effect is recorded for policies EN1, EN2, EN3, EN4 and EN5 in relation to SA objectives 11 and 14. In addition, Policy EN9 will aid in mitigating water pollution including in relation to the contamination of flood waters. A minor positive effect is therefore also expected for Policy EN9 in relation to SA objectives 11 and 14.

**5.98** A significant positive effect is expected for Policy EN9 in relation to **SA objective 13: Air quality**. This policy seeks to protect air quality by requiring developments to minimise emissions, include mitigation in Air Quality Management Areas, and incorporate green spaces with planting to reduce

pollution. The preservation of existing and incorporation of new natural features and elements of green infrastructure is likely to support the creation of natural barriers to air pollution and promote the absorption of these types of pollutants. Therefore, a minor positive effect is expected in relation to SA objective 13 for Policies EN1, EN2, EN3, EN4 and EN5.

## Recommendations

- Policy EN2 could be strengthened by being clear that alternative measures to delivering biodiversity net gain through compensation should only be considered appropriate where it can be demonstrated that the required level of biodiversity net gain cannot be achieved within a site.
- Policy EN5 could be strengthened by requiring that where the loss of trees is essential to allow for appropriate development an appropriate species and number of replacement trees is provided for. Any replacement trees should be provided as close as possible to the new development and should be supported by a suitable management and maintenance scheme.
- Policy EN8 could be strengthened by requiring that development conserves and enhances the natural flood storage value of the water environment, including watercourse corridors and catchments. The policy could also promote development that opens up culverted watercourses, where it is safe and practicable. This approach could be used to support ecological improvements and create assets that are of benefit to local community, such as recreation.

## Green network and waterways

### Policies GN1, GN2, GN3, GN4, GN5, and GN6

**5.99** The group of policies appraised in this section is as follows:

- Policy GN1 - Green network and waterways principles

- Policy GN2 - Strategic green spaces and nature recovery
- Policy GN3 - Local green spaces
- Policy GN4 - Tree canopy cover
- Policy GN5 - Suitable alternative natural greenspace
- Policy GN6 - Retention of open space

**5.100** As part of the drafting of this section of the Local Plan, the Council also considered the following reasonable alternative policy option, which is appraised alongside the policies listed above:

- Reasonable alternative (RA): The incorporation of a coalescence break to maintain the individual character of settlements and ensure that settlements maintain their separate identity. Planning permission would only to be granted within such areas where it can be demonstrated that the identity of and separation between settlements would be maintained.

**5.101** This group of policies sets the approach to the protection and enhancement of green and blue infrastructure in Colchester. Key measures include creating new and protection existing multifunctional open spaces as part of the approach to supporting nature recovery, increasing tree cover in the District and providing suitable alternative natural greenspaces (SANGs) in relation to nearby international biodiversity designations.

**Table 5.12: Likely sustainability effects for the green network and waterways policies**

SA objectives	GN1	GN2	GN3	GN4	GN5	GN6	RA
SA1: Housing	0	0	-?	0	0	-?	-?
SA2: Efficient use of land	0	0	0	0	0	0	+
SA3: Economic growth	0	0	-?	0	0	-?	-?

SA objectives	GN1	GN2	GN3	GN4	GN5	GN6	RA
SA4: Transport	+	0	0	0	0	0	+/-
SA5: Community and health and wellbeing	++	+	++	0	+	++	0
SA6: Services and facilities	0	0	0	0	0	0	+/-
SA7: Historic environment	+	0	0	0	0	0	0
SA8: Biodiversity and geodiversity	++	++	++	++	++	++	+
SA9: Landscape	+	+	+	+	0	+	++
SA10: Climate change	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
SA11: Flood risk	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
SA12: Waste	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SA13: Air quality	+	+	+	+	+	+	+/-
SA14: Water	+	+	+	+	+	+	+

**5.102** Although they will support the long term wellbeing of the District, it is likely that Policies GN3: Local green spaces and GN6: Retention of open space will result in certain areas being considered unsuitable for development in planning terms. Given the requirement set out in these policies for the retention of local green spaces and other types of open spaces a minor negative effect is therefore recorded for these policies in relation to **SA objectives 1: Housing and 3: Economic growth**. The reasonable alternative approach of incorporating a coalescence break around settlements in Colchester would also act to limit the delivery of housing and economic development in certain locations. Therefore, a minor negative effect is recorded for this reasonable alternative option in relation to SA objectives 1 and 3. The negative effect

recorded in relation to SA objectives 1 and 3 for these policies and options is partly uncertain given that it is likely that the developments needs of Colchester could be met at other locations in the plan area. However, the approach of designating a coalescence break in Colchester is likely to help promote a more compact form of development that may encourage the recycling of brownfield land within settlements and therefore a minor positive effect is expected in relation to **SA objective 2: Efficient use of land.**

**5.103** The approach of declaring a coalescence break could result in reduced need to travel for some residents as more compact forms of development result. However, there is likely to be instances where development is required to ‘jump’ the coalescence break to the next settlement which would result in some residents having to travel longer distances to certain services and facilities. Therefore, a mixed minor positive and minor negative effect is expected for this reasonable alternative in relation to **SA objective 4: Transport.** The same effect is reported for this option in relation to **SA objective 6: Services and facilities.** A minor positive effect is recorded for Policy GN1: Green network and waterways principles in relation to SA objective 4 given that this policy requires major developments to incorporate safe and inclusive walking and cycling routes.

**5.104** A significant positive effect is expected for Policies GN1: Green network and waterways principles, GN3: Local green spaces and GN6: Retention of open space in relation to **SA objective 5: Community health and wellbeing.** This reflects the requirements in these policies for developments to protect and/or provide new open spaces, green infrastructure and natural assets. Through Policy GN3 this includes the protection of green spaces identified to be of importance to local people. These types of provisions will support resident’s access to nature and promote increased levels of recreational activity and more active and healthy lifestyles. Policies GN2: Strategic green spaces and nature recovery and GN5: Suitable alternative natural greenspace also will contribute to increasing access to green spaces and nature. Given that the focus of these policies relates mostly to the protection of biodiversity in the plan area, the benefits to local health are considered to be less direct than those supported through Policies GN1, GN3 and GN6. Therefore, the positive effect recorded in relation to SA objective 5 is minor.

**5.105** A significant positive effect is expected for Policy GN1: Green Network and Waterways Principles, Policy GN2: Strategic Green Spaces and Nature Recovery, Policy GN3: Local Green Spaces, Policy GN4: Tree Canopy Cover, Policy GN5: Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace and Policy GN6: Retention of Open Space in relation to **SA objective 8: Biodiversity and geodiversity**. These policies make substantial contributions to the protection, conservation, and/or enhancement of Colchester's green and open spaces and natural environment. Importantly, this includes in relation to support for the green network in Colchester (Policy GN1), support for the delivery of Essex LNRS (Policy GN2) and the delivery of suitable SANGs to mitigate effects relating to the Colne and Blackwater Estuaries SPAs and Essex Estuaries SAC (Policy GN5). It is likely that the reasonable alternative of incorporating a coalescence break would also have benefits for biodiversity in the plan area by limiting growth outside the main settlements thereby helping to preserve many of the more undisturbed, rural areas. A minor positive effect is therefore recorded for SA objective 8 for this option.

**5.106** The provision of green space in the plan area will not always correlate with benefits for the historic environment. However, Policy GN1 is expected to have a minor positive effect in relation to **SA objective 7: Historic environment**. This policy specifically requires that development responds to an area's character so that it contributes to the conservation, enhancement and/or restoration of the historic environment and landscapes and that development creates new high-quality landscapes. Given the support set out in the policy for landscape character, a minor positive effect is also expected in relation to **SA objective 9: Landscape**.

**5.107** Providing a coalescence break in Colchester could have a significant positive effect in relation to SA objective 9: landscape given that it would help to protect the separate identity of the District's settlements. It is expected that the provision of large scale strategic open spaces will contribute to the distinct character of Colchester and therefore a minor positive effect is expected for Policy GN2 in relation to SA objective 9. Furthermore, Local Green Spaces in Colchester contribute to the character of the plan area and its settlements and therefore a minor positive effect is expected for Policy GN3 in relation to SA objective 9. Policy GN4 is also expected to have a minor positive regarding this



SA objective given that it promotes tree management which is sensitive to Colchester's landscape character, including through requiring that maintenance of new trees is included within any landscape management plan and landscape maintenance schedule for development sites. A minor positive effect is recorded for Policy GN6 in relation to SA objective 9 as it does not permit development that would result in the loss of any small incidental areas of open space that contribute to amenity value and the character of existing residential neighbourhoods.

**5.108** A minor positive effect is expected for all policies appraised in this section in relation to **SA objective 10: Climate change**. The policies in this section will help to conserve, manage and restore elements of green infrastructure and natural assets in Colchester. This is likely to help promote climate change mitigation and adaptation. The option of providing a coalescence break would also likely contribute to climate change adaptation by maintaining areas of undeveloped land that would support climate change resilience. Part of the resilience promoted by all policies and options considered relate to the preservation of green spaces at which surface waters can safely infiltrate. Therefore, all policies and options considered are also expected to have a minor positive effect in relation to **SA objective 11: Flood risk**. For Policy GN4 this includes the beneficial role trees can play in terms of slowing down the flow of rainwater and absorption.

**5.109** A similar minor positive effect is recorded for all policies and options in relation to **SA objectives 13: Air quality** and **14: Water**. This reflects the potential for green infrastructure and nature features within undeveloped green spaces to absorb or act as barriers to air pollutants. It also reflects the potential for these types of areas to allow for the safe infiltration of surface water and to support natural drainage processes in the District. The minor positive effect recorded in relation to SA objective 14 for Policies GN1 and GN2 considers the policy support included for green network and waterway plans which is likely to promote connections between green assets as well as the support for proposals for a Roman River corridor nature recovery area. For the option of incorporating a coalescence break in Colchester a minor negative effect is recorded in combination with the minor positive effect for SA objective 13. An overall mixed effect is recorded for this SA objective given that where development is required

to 'jump' the coalescence break, some residents may have to drive further to access certain provision and this would contribute to air pollution in the plan area.

## Recommendations

- Policy GN4 could be strengthened by supporting the provision of tree lined streets within developments. It could also require that new trees provided at developments are native species. Where tree loss or damage is essential at development sites, the policy could require that replacement trees are delivered as close as possible to the site and that those provided achieve a suitable level of compensation in terms of number and species.
- Policy GN6 could be strengthened by requiring that any alternative provision to mitigate the loss of any open space should be delivered within an acceptable timeframe.

## Landscape and coast

### Policies LC1, LC2 and LC3

**5.110** The group of policies appraised in this section is as follows:

- Policy LC1 - Landscape
- Policy LC2 - Dedham Vale National Landscape
- Policy LC3 - Coastal areas

**5.111** These policies are set out to help ensure that new development respects and enhances the District's landscapes and distinct character, with stricter protections applied to valued areas such as the Dedham Vale National Landscape and coastal zones.

**Table 5.13: Likely sustainability effects for the landscape and coast policies**

SA objective	LC1	LC2	LC3
SA1: Housing	-?	-?	-?
SA2: Efficient use of land	+?	0	0
SA3: Economic growth	-?	+/-?	-?
SA4: Transport	0	0	0
SA5: Community and health and wellbeing	0	0	+
SA6: Services and facilities	0	0	0
SA7: Historic environment	0	0	+
SA8: Biodiversity and geodiversity	+	+	+
SA9: Landscape	++	++	++
SA10: Climate change	+	0	+
SA11: Flood risk	0	0	+
SA12: Waste	0	0	0
SA13: Air quality	0	0	0
SA14: Water	0	0	+

**5.112** An uncertain minor negative effect is expected for Policies LC1: Landscape, LC2: Dedham Vale National Landscape and LC3: Coastal areas in relation to **SA objective 1: Housing** and **SA objective 3: Economic growth**. Each of these policies set out requirements that could limit residential and economic development in certain parts of Colchester. Most notably this includes in areas identified as having higher landscape sensitivity, within the National Landscape and within the Coastal Protection Belt. In addition, Policy LC3 specifically states that new moorings for permanent

residential houseboats will not be supported. The negative effect recorded for these three SA objectives is partly uncertain given that it is likely that suitable sites to achieve the required levels of growth for the District are likely to be identified at other locations in Colchester. For Policies LC2 and LC3 the negative effect is recorded in combination with a minor positive effect for SA objective 3. This reflects the requirement of these policies for development to support the wider environmental, social and economic objectives of the National Landscape Management Plan and to deliver economic sustainability benefits for the wellbeing of the coastal communities.

**5.113** A minor positive effect is expected for Policy LC1 in relation to **SA objective 2: Efficient use of land**. This policy requires that, with the exception of renewable energy projects, all development on agricultural grade 1 soils will not be permitted unless a landscape strategy is secured or where there are overriding public benefits arising from the development. This approach would aid in minimising the loss of best and most versatile agricultural land.

**5.114** A minor positive effect is expected for Policy LC3 in relation to **SA objective 5: Community and health and wellbeing**. The policy includes safeguards in relation to access to the King Charles III England Coast Path. This is likely to support recreational and health benefits for local people.

**5.115** All three policies are expected to result in a minor positive effect in relation to **SA objective 7: Historic environment**. These policies will help to conserve and enhance landscape character that contributes to the setting of heritage assets. This includes within the National Landscape and the coastal areas of the District.

**5.116** A minor positive effect is also expected for Policies LC1, LC2 and LC3 in relation to **SA objective 8: Biodiversity and geodiversity**. This reflects the potential for each of the policies to protect existing undeveloped green space and natural features that contribute to Colchester's biodiversity and important habitats. In particular, Policy LC1 requires that proposals must consider ecological and geological features and identify areas suitable for habitat creation. It is also notable that Policy LC3 restricts harmful development in

sensitive coastal areas and seeks to protect designated habitats in relation to proposals for moorings for permanent residential houseboats.

**5.117** A significant positive effect is expected for Policies LC1, LC2 and LC3 in relation to **SA objective 9: Landscape**. All three policies include extensive provisions for conserving and enhancing the distinctive landscapes of Colchester. This includes in relation to ensuring that developments are compatible in terms of use, location, scale and design, and will not have a significant adverse impact on the established landscape and seascape character and the safeguarding or strengthening of tranquillity. Furthermore, Policy LC1 is clear that within areas identified as having 'high' inherent value and sensitivity developments should contribute positively to the established characteristics of the area. The protection of the purpose, natural beauty and special qualities of the National Landscape including its dark skies, is set out through Policy LC2. Development within the Coastal Protection Belt area of the District is restricted by Policy LC2.

**5.118** Policies LC1 and LC3 are expected to have a minor positive effect in relation to **SA objective 10: Climate change**. Policy LC1 requires that development should avoid reduction of and encourage traditional farming practices, including traditional orchards, whilst recognising the need to adapt to and mitigate against the effects of climate change. Policy LC3 minimises greenhouse gas emissions and supports climate change adaptation by protecting carbon-sequestering habitats like saltmarshes and promoting sustainable, climate-resilient coastal development. It also seeks to ensure that proposals are appropriate for their location and level of flood risk present.

**5.119** Given the benefits of Policy LC3 in relation to promoting resilience to flooding risk and achieving sustainable coastal management, a minor positive effect is also expected in relation to **SA objectives 11: Flood risk** and **14: Water**.

## Recommendations

- Policy LC2 could be strengthened by placing a greater emphasis on protecting landscape character in relation to its existing rural openness and sense of place. Furthermore, emphasis could be placed on protecting natural landscape features where they make a contribution to the historic environment.
- Policy LC3 could be strengthened to be clear that potential impacts on the National Landscape will be considered in relation to their individual or cumulative, adverse impact on the landscape.

## Net zero homes and buildings, renewable energy, water and waste

### Policies NZ1, NZ2, NZ3 and NZ4

**5.120** The group of policies appraised in this section is as follows:

- Policy NZ1 - Net zero carbon development (in operation)
- Policy NZ2 - Net zero carbon development – embodied carbon
- Policy NZ3 - Wastewater and water supply
- Policy NZ4 - Renewable energy

**5.121** These policies drive net zero carbon development by requiring energy-efficient, fossil-fuel-free buildings with on-site renewable energy, minimising embodied carbon through sustainable design and materials, ensuring water efficiency and infrastructure improvements, and supporting renewable energy projects that enhance biodiversity and minimise environmental impacts.

**5.122** Policy NZ3 includes the allocation of land for the extension of the Anglian Water Services Colchester Water Recycling Centre. The equivalent site option



is appraised alongside the other site options considered for the plan in Chapter 4 as site 11016. The detailed sustainability findings for this site option are not repeated here. Policy NZ3 does not include any requirements relating to mitigation or enhancement that development of the site should meet and as such the effects reported for the site option 11016 remain unchanged. Changes in effects relate only to where Policy NZ3 sets out requirements relating to water supply and wastewater for development across the District. As such the text below the table focusses on these effects for Policy NZ3.

**Table 5.14: Likely sustainability effects for the net zero homes and buildings, renewable energy, water and waste policies**

SA objective	NZ1	NZ2	NZ3	NZ4
SA1: Housing	+	0	0	0
SA2: Efficient use of land	0	++	++	-
SA3: Economic growth	0	0	+	0
SA4: Transport	0	0	+	+
SA5: Community and health and wellbeing	+	0	+	+
SA6: Services and facilities	0	0	-	0
SA7: Historic environment	0	0	0?	+/-?
SA8: Biodiversity and geodiversity	0	0	--	+/-?
SA9: Landscape	0	0	--?	+/-?
SA10: Climate change	++	++	++	++
SA11: Flood risk	0	0	+/-	0
SA12: Waste	0	+	0	0

SA objective	NZ1	NZ2	NZ3	NZ4
SA13: Air quality	+	+	-	+
SA14: Water	0	0	++/--	0

**5.123** Supporting higher standards of energy efficiency in new homes in Colchester is likely to contribute to an improved standard of housing stock in the plan area and will also help limit the potential for fuel poverty given that energy bills of residents are likely to be reduced. Therefore, Policy NZ1: Net zero carbon development (in operation) is expected to have a minor positive effect in relation to **SA objectives 1: Housing** and **5: Community and health and wellbeing**. Policy NZ4: Renewable energy requires that developments for renewable energy limit increases in ambient noise which is expected to benefit public health. This policy is therefore also expected to have a minor positive effect in relation to SA objective 5.

**5.124** A significant positive effect is expected for Policy NZ2: Net zero carbon development – embodied carbon in relation to **SA objective 2: Efficient use of land**. This policy supports development which re-uses, renovates or retrofits existing buildings and/or structures. However, a minor negative effect is expected for Policy NZ4 in relation to this SA objective. The policy text sets out support for renewable energy developments in suitable locations, even if this would involve using Best and Most Versatile Agricultural Land. Given the likely potential to reduce waste through the approach of Policy NZ2, a minor positive effect is recorded for this policy in relation to **SA objective 12: Waste**.

**5.125** The requirement for renewable energy schemes to be supported by a transport assessment is likely to help limit the potential for congestion and safety issues as these types of schemes are constructed, operated and decommissioned. Therefore, a minor positive effect is expected for Policy NZ4 in relation to **SA objective 4: Transport**.

**5.126** A mixed minor positive and uncertain minor negative effect is expected for Policy NZ4 in relation to **SA objectives 7: Historic environment, 8: Biodiversity and geodiversity** and **9: Landscape**. The development of

renewable energy schemes is given strong support through this policy and development of this nature may result in harm to Colchester's historic environment, natural assets and landscape or the setting within which they lie. It is noted that the potential for impacts will depend on development location. However, the policy encourages all solar farm proposals to deliver biodiversity net gain of at least 50% and an increase in tree canopy cover of at least 50%, which will enhance Colchester's biodiversity. Furthermore, visual impacts should be met through good design, careful siting and layout and landscaping measures.

**5.127** All four policies are likely to have a significant positive effect in relation to **SA objective 10: Climate change**. This reflects the potential for the policies to reduce energy demands and carbon emissions associated with the operation of developments (Policy NZ1) as well as in relation to their construction and preparation and transport of the resources required (Policy NZ2). Policy NZ3: Wastewater and water supply will help to ensure that energy inputs required for the processing of wastewater and drinking water are limited as much as possible and will also ensure that infrastructure required to meet these demands is in place. The District is in serious water stress and water efficiency measures will be required to ensure long term climate resilience. Policy NZ4 will support the delivery of renewable energy developments in suitable locations, to meet the District's energy demands from more sustainable sources. These four policies could also contribute to improved air quality by reducing energy demands and limit dust from some proposals where it is possible to limit demolition and make use of existing structures. Therefore, a minor positive effect is identified for Policies NZ1, NZ2, NZ3 and NZ4 in relation to **SA objective 13: Air quality**.

**5.128** Given that Policy NZ3 requires that off-site drainage is secured before the occupation of dwellings, a minor positive effect is recorded for this policy in relation to **SA objective 11: Flood risk**. This positive effect is recorded with a minor negative effect as part of an overall mixed effect, given that the land proposed for allocation for the extension of the water recycling centre contains areas of higher flood risk.

**5.129** A significant positive effect is expected for Policy NZ3 in relation to **SA objective 14: Water**. The requirements of the policy relating to the management of water resources including innovative solutions such as rainwater harvesting and greywater recycling for new developments will aid in ensuring there is sufficient water for the lifetime of a development. The positive effect is combined with a significant effect given that the site for the extension of the water recycling centre takes in land within an SPZ and part of a water body. As such there is potential for construction activities to result in contamination of water resources in the District.

## Recommendations

- Policy NZ2 could be clear that embodied carbon relates to all emissions in producing and handling materials for developments and as such development should seek to minimise impacts arising from their sourcing, manufacture, construction, and end of life demolition and disposal. The policy could also be strengthened by promoting development that minimises and designs-out construction and end-of-life waste. Furthermore, where demolition is required as part of a scheme the policy could be clear that demolition activities should seek to maximise the materials recovered for reuse and recycling.
- Policy NZ4 could be strengthened by specifically requiring that renewable energy schemes should be considered in relation to impacts upon the historic environment.

## Homes

### Policies H1, H2, H3, H4, H5, H6, H7 and H8

**5.130** The group of policies appraised in this section is as follows:

- Policy H1 – Housing Mix

- Policy H2 - Affordable housing
- Policy H3 - Student accommodation
- Policy H4 - Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs)
- Policy H5 - Housing for an ageing population
- Policy H6 - Self and custom build
- Policy H7 - Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople
- Policy H8 - Rural workers dwellings

**5.131** These policies aim to meet the diverse housing needs of the community. They include the approach for and required level of affordable housing, support for specialist and accessible homes, and for self-build and rural workers' dwellings tied to local businesses. The policy text set out also addresses student accommodation, HMOs and Gypsy and Traveller sites, with criteria included to ensure appropriate location of development, community cohesion, and access necessary facilities.

**Table 5.15: Likely sustainability effects for the homes policies**

SA objective	H1	H2	H3	H4	H5	H6	H7	H8
SA1: Housing	++	++ ?	++	++	++	++	++	++
SA2: Efficient use of land	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+
SA3: Economic growth	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+
SA4: Transport	0	+/-	+	+	+	0	+	+/-
SA5: Community and health and wellbeing	++	++	+	+	++	0	++	0
SA6: Services and facilities	0	+/-	0	0	+	0	+	-
SA7: Historic environment	0	+/-	0	0	0	0	0	-

SA objective	H1	H2	H3	H4	H5	H6	H7	H8
SA8: Biodiversity and geodiversity	0	+/-	0	0	0	0	0	-
SA9: Landscape	+	+/-	0	+	0	0	0	+/-
SA10: Climate change	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SA11: Flood risk	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	+
SA12: Waste	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SA13: Air quality	0	+/-	+	+	+	0	+	+/-
SA14: Water	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	0

**5.132** A significant positive effect is identified for Policy H1: Housing Mix, Policy H2: Affordable housing, Policy H3: Student Accommodation, Policy H4: Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs), Policy H5: Housing for an Ageing Population, Policy H6: Self and Custom Build, Policy H7: Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople and Policy H8: Rural workers dwellings in relation to **SA objective 1: Housing**. It is expected that these policies will help ensure the delivery of a range of high quality, sustainable and appropriate residential properties in Colchester. This includes the provision of a mix of homes (Policy H1) that meet the identified needs of Colchester, in terms of type, size, tenure and affordability. The needs of the ageing population are specific addressed through Policy H5, while Policy H7 seeks to address the accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers. For Policy H3 and H4 the positive effect partly reflects the policy approach of preventing an overconcentration of student dwellings or HMOs and avoiding harm to the amenity of other residential dwellings. The significant positive effect recorded for Policy H2 is partly uncertain given that the requirement to provide 30% of new dwellings on large sites as affordable housing may make some potential schemes unviable.

**5.133** Policy H8 requires that developments for new rural workers' dwellings should consider the potential for the reuse, extension or conversion of an existing building on site in the first place. This is likely to help promote the reuse



of existing buildings in Colchester and therefore a minor positive effect is recorded in relation to **SA objective 2: Efficient use of land**.

**5.134** A minor positive effect is expected for Policy H8 in relation to **SA objective 3: Economic growth** given that it supports the development of dwellings for rural workers. It is expected that this type of provision will support the operation of certain rural businesses and could protect some job opportunities in Colchester.

**5.135** A significant positive effect is expected for Policies H1, H2, H5 and H7 in relation to **SA objective 5: Community and health and wellbeing**. Policy H1 supports the creation of mixed and balanced communities through the provision of an appropriate mix of housing. Policy H2 requires that 95% of affordable housing should meet Building Regulations relating to accessible and adaptable standards and that 5% should meet wheelchair user standards, which is likely to help meet the needs of people with disabilities. Furthermore, the requirement in this policy for affordable home to designed to have the same characteristics as market homes is likely to support community cohesion in the District. The requirements of Policy H5 support the development of housing to meet the needs of Colchester's ageing population including those with disabilities. Policy H7 supports the development of housing for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople in Colchester, including support for development that provides access to a range of services such as health and community facilities. In addition, both Policy H5 and H7 will help to meet the needs of specific groups in Colchester and support their integration into the community, including those with protected characteristics. Policies H3 and H4 will meet the specific needs of younger people in Colchester, while also preventing an overconcentration of student dwellings or HMOs that might otherwise result, or appear to result in amenity issues, thereby hampering community integration. A minor positive effect is recorded for these two policies in relation to SA objective 5.

**5.136** Policies H3 and H5 require that developments for student accommodation and specialist housing should provide access to public transport modes which is likely to promote travel by more sustainable modes. This is also the case for Policy H4 which requires HMO developments to provide an appropriate level of cycle parking. These requirements will aid in

reducing reliance on private vehicles in Colchester and could support improved air quality. Policy H7 and H8 will have similar benefits given that they support Gypsy and Traveller accommodation and rural workers dwellings where they have good access to services and facilities and existing businesses that residents will need to regularly travel to. Therefore, a minor positive effect is expected for Policies H3, H4, H5, H7 and H8 in relation to **SA objectives 4: Transport** and **13: Air quality**. For Policy H8 the positive effect is recorded in combination with minor negative effect given that rural workers are likely to have to travel regularly from new accommodation in more isolated locations to access services and facilities. Policy H2 supports the delivery of affordable homes on rural exception sites at the settlement edge or where it would maintain the vitality of rural communities. There is some potential that developments might be provided in less accessible locations, however developments provided directly adjacent to the settlement edge may support increased travel by sustainable modes. An overall mixed minor positive and minor negative effect is therefore expected for this policy in relation to SA objectives 4 and 13.

**5.137** This approach to Policy H2 is likely to result in variable access to services and facilities and therefore a mixed minor positive and minor negative effect is also recorded in relation to **SA objective 6: Services and facilities**. The approach of Policies H5 and H7 is expected to have a minor positive effect in relation to this SA objective. Policy H5 includes requirements for developments for specialist accommodation to be located close to local facilities. Furthermore, Policy H7 includes requirements for development for Gypsy and Traveller accommodation to be located close to existing settlements and to provide access to a range of services such as shops and education facilities. Given that Policy H8 allows for dwellings to accommodate rural workers, it is likely that residents at these sites will be housed in more isolated locations which are not well related to a suitable range of services and facilities. Therefore, a minor negative effect is expected for this policy in relation to SA objective 6.

**5.138** The delivery of development in more rural locations could result in impacts on presently less developed and undisturbed parts of Colchester. These areas may be more sensitive in terms of the setting they provide for heritage assets as well as their value for ecology and landscape character. As

such a mixed minor positive and minor negative effect is expected for Policy H2 and a minor negative effect is expected for Policy H8 in relation to **SA objectives 7: Historic environment, 8: Biodiversity and geodiversity and 9: Landscape**. Given that Policy H8 requires that proposed permanent rural workers dwellings are sensitively designed and landscaped, the minor negative effect recorded for SA objective 9 is combined with a minor positive effect. A minor positive effect is also expected for Policy H1 and H4 in relation to **SA objective 9: Landscape**. Policy H1 requires consideration of the existing housing stock and character of the local area when considering new proposals to avoid over concentration of a single size of homes. Policy H4 requires that developments for HMOs ensure there is no adverse impact on local character.

**5.139** Policies H7 and H8 are both expected to have a minor positive effect in relation to **SA objective 11: Flood risk**. Both policies require development to be located outside areas at high risk of flooding, thereby mitigating the potential for flood risk to development for accommodation for Gypsies and Travellers and rural workers.

**5.140** A minor positive effect is expected for Policy H7 in relation to **SA objective 14: Water** as it requires development to have appropriate and sufficient drainage, water supply and other necessary utility services. It is expected that these requirements will help to ensure that there is sufficient water for the lifetime of the development as well as sufficient provision of wastewater treatment infrastructure.

## Recommendations

- Policy H3 could be strengthened by incorporating requirements for student accommodation to support the net zero and climate resilient ambitions of the Council.
- Policy H4 could be strengthened by requiring that HMOs do not contribute to excessive noise and disturbance to residents, impacts on existing levels of street parking or issues relating to refuse or recycling. HMO development should also not reduce the choice of housing in a given area. It may be appropriate to incorporate thresholds to limit the proportion of

HMOs present in a given area. HMOs play an important role in offering accommodation choices for a range of users. However, it can contribute to or be perceived to contribute to a range of amenity issues and reduce housing choice in a given area where overconcentration results. The policy could be drafted to address these issues in a manner direct manner.

## Economy

### Policies E1, E2, E3, E4 and E5

**5.141** The group of policies appraised in this section is as follows:

- Policy E1 - Protection of employment
- Policy E2 - Economic development in rural areas and the countryside
- Policy E3 - Agricultural development and diversification
- Policy E4 - Retail and centres
- Policy E5 - Colchester Zoo

**5.142** These policies address the protection of existing employment areas in the District, the safeguarding of economic uses in rural areas, the diversification of the rural economy and the hierarchy of centres in Colchester. Policy is also included to safeguard Colchester Zoo as a contributor to the local economy.

**Table 5.16: Likely sustainability effects for the economy policies**

SA Objective	E1	E2	E3	E4	E5
SA1: Housing	0	0	0	0	0

SA Objective	E1	E2	E3	E4	E5
SA2: Efficient use of land	+	+	+	+	--
SA3: Economic growth	++	+	+	++	+
SA4: Transport	+	+/-	+/-	+	+
SA5: Community and health and wellbeing	0	+	0	+	0
SA6: Services and facilities	0	0	0	++	+
SA7: Historic environment	0	+/-	+/-	+/-?	-
SA8: Biodiversity and geodiversity	0	+/-	+/-	0	-
SA9: Landscape	0	+/-	+/-	0	-
SA10: Climate change	0	0	0	0	0
SA11: Flood risk	0	0	0	0	0
SA12: Waste	0	+	0	0	0
SA13: Air quality	+	+/-	+/-	+/-	+
SA14: Water	0	0	0	0	-

**5.143** Policies E1: Protection of employment, E2: Economic development in rural areas and the countryside and E3: Agricultural development and diversification are expected to help promote the efficient use of existing employment land and extension of these sites for suitable uses. While there could be some use of greenfield land, the areas in question are mostly developed and the development of presently undeveloped areas is likely to be minor. These policies also include support for types of development that should bring sites into use where they are presently disused or underused. This

includes through appropriate conversion or extension. Furthermore, Policy E3 specifically requires that developments for agricultural diversification should not impact the availability of Grade 1 or Grade 2 agricultural soils. A minor positive effect is therefore expected for these three policies in relation to **SA objective 2: Efficient use of land**. Policy E4: Retail and centres is also expected to have a minor positive given that it supports larger scale development within the city centre where there are likely to be opportunities to support the redevelopment of brownfield sites. However, a mixed significant negative and minor positive effect is recorded for Policy E5: Colchester Zoo in relation to SA objective 2. This reflects the location of the Colchester Zoo site on Grade 2 and Grade 3 agricultural soils that could be lost to development through an extension of the site. It also reflects the requirement in the policy for proposals to be supported by a Minerals Resource Assessment which is likely to help ensure access to viable mineral resources and promote more efficient use of land and natural resources.

**5.144** All policies in this section support the growth of the local economy and access to jobs. For Policies E2 and E4 the positive effect recorded in relation to **SA objective 3: Economic growth** is likely to be significant given the importance of safeguarding demonstrably viable employment locations and the town centres for sustainable economic growth and employment provision over the plan period. The positive effects recorded for Policies E2, E3 and E5 are likely to be minor. Allowing for rural economic growth and agricultural diversification will support access to jobs for residents in less developed areas, while support for the longer development of the zoo will provide jobs that benefit a certain section of the local community. Protecting the town, district and local centres in Colchester will also benefit residents in terms of the range of services and facilities they can make use of at more accessible locations. Therefore, a significant positive effect is also expected in relation to **SA objective 6: Services and facilities** for Policy E4. A minor positive effect is expected for Policy E5 in relation to SA objective 6 given that the land safeguarded at the zoo site could provide some future retail uses but that this is to be considered in relation to the potential impacts on existing centres in Colchester.

**5.145** Safeguarding an appropriate level of employment land in areas where residents can access them will help to reduce the need for long distance



commuting, including to locations outside of Colchester. As such, a minor positive effect is recorded in relation to **SA objective 4: Transport** for Policies E1, E2 and E3. While it will be important for employment development to be provided in the less developed areas of the District, allowing for development in rural locations could see some increase in commuting to areas that are not well served by sustainable transport and therefore a combined minor negative effect is recorded in relation to SA objective 4 for Policies E2 and E3. Policy E4 is likely to have a minor positive effect in relation to SA objective 4. This reflects the highly accessible nature of town centre locations and the requirement for proposals to avoid impacts relating to traffic. A minor positive effect is also recorded in relation to SA objective 4 for Policy E5 given the relatively accessible location of Colchester Zoo close to multiple bus stops and a cycle route and the requirement of the policy to consider highways impacts and the potential for improvements to sustainable transport including a new off road cycle route.

**5.146** The effects recorded for the policies in relation to **SA objective 13: Air quality** broadly reflect those recorded for transport. Where there is potential for traffic to increase, air pollution may result from vehicular emission. The exception to this is for Policy E4. While promoting the function of the town centre locations as a focus for retail, services and commercial activities is likely to result in some trips being made by active and sustainable modes, these areas also include or are close to AQMAs and travel within these areas could intensify existing air quality issues and result in some residents being exposed to pollutants. Therefore, a mixed minor positive and minor negative effect is recorded for Policy E4 in relation to SA objective 13.

**5.147** The maintenance of local employment opportunities will be important to help maintain more rural communities in Colchester. As such a minor positive effect is recorded for Policy E2 in relation to **SA objective 5: Community and health and wellbeing**. Policy E4 is also expected to have a minor positive effect in relation to this SA objective given that it will help to ensure essential provisions are focussed mostly to areas that are highly accessible to a large number of residents.

**5.148** More rural locations in Colchester are likely to be more sensitive to changes of use and extension or expansions of existing employment provisions, considering their less developed and less disturbed nature. As such there is potential for adverse impacts on the settings of heritage assets, ecology and landscape character through Policies E2 and E3. The overall effect for these policies in relation to **SA objectives 7: Historic environment, 8: Biodiversity and geodiversity** and **9: Landscape** are mixed minor positive and minor negative. This reflects the requirement in Policy E2 for developments to minimise negative environmental impacts and harmonise with the local character and in Policy E3 for development to avoid impacts on habitats sites and the National Landscape. Development within the town centre locations is considered less likely to adversely affect biodiversity assets and landscape character. However, there is potential for impacts on the relatively high concentration of heritage assets within the developed areas of the District. This includes the numerous Conservation Areas towards the centre of the City as well as Colchester Castle Registered Park and Garden. Policy E4 requires that developments at centre locations should not detrimentally affect character which is likely to provide some mitigation in relation to setting of heritage assets. Overall the effect recorded in relation to SA objective 7 for this policy is mixed minor positive and minor negative. The Colchester Zoo site is potentially sensitive in relation to heritage, biodiversity and landscape given its location adjacent to a Scheduled Monument and Local Wildlife Sites on multiple boundaries and its presence within areas of high and medium landscape sensitivity. While Policy E5 requires mitigation in relation to these issues, a residual minor negative effect is expected for the policy in relation to SA objectives 7, 8 and 9 given its sensitivity adjacent to heritage and biodiversity assets and the inclusion of land that is of high landscape sensitivity within its boundaries.

**5.149** The Colchester Zoo site is mostly free from flood risk however there are areas of flood zone 2 and 3 at its eastern boundary. Policy E5 requires development of the site to be supported by the incorporation of SUDs and therefore a negligible effect is recorded for the policy in relation to **SA objective 10: Flood risk**.

**5.150** By and large it is not expected that the policies assessed would promote recycling of waste at new economic growth in the District. The exception to this is Policy E2 which requires that planning applications close to a habitats site should provide mechanisms to prevent flying tipping. As such a minor positive effects is recorded for this policy in relation to **SA objective 12: Waste**.

**5.151** Given that Policy E5 could lead to future development within the Colchester Zoo site which lies within a SPZ there is potential for this policy to contribute to the contamination of water resources in the District. Therefore, a minor negative effect is recorded for the policy in relation to **SA objective 14: Water**.

## Recommendations

- Policy E4 could be strengthened by requiring that proposals within the City Centre are considerate of the settings of the many heritage assets at this location. There is also potential for housing provided above retail in the centre to contribute to housing delivery in the plan area while ensuring that there are no detrimental impacts on shopping areas and retail provision. Furthermore, the evening and night economy and hospitality can make a contribution to the economic function of town centre locations. Policy E4 could also promote centre locations as providing the focus for such uses while ensuring that they are neighbourly and respect the character and existing amenity of the areas within which they are to be provided.

## Community and social infrastructure

### Policies CS1, CS2, CS3, CS4, CS5 and CS6

**5.152** The group of policies appraised in this section is as follows:

- Policy CS1 - Retention of community facilities
- Policy CS2 - Enhancement of and provision for community facilities

- Policy CS3 - Education provision
- Policy CS4 - Sports provision
- Policy CS5 - Tourism, leisure, arts, culture and heritage
- Policy CS6 - Caravan parks

**5.153** These policies address the retention and provision of new social facilities and infrastructure in Colchester. This includes facilities and infrastructure relating to education, sport, tourism and leisure.

**Table 5.17: Likely sustainability effects for the community and social infrastructure policies**

SA Objectives	CS1	CS2	CS3	CS4	CS5	CS6
SA1: Housing	0	0	0	0	0	0
SA2: Efficient use of land	+	+	+	0	+	0
SA3: Economic growth	0	0	0	0	+	0
SA4: Transport	+	+	+	+	+	+
SA5: Community and health and wellbeing	++	++	+	++	+	+
SA6: Services and facilities	++	++	++	+	0	0
SA7: Historic environment	0	0	0	0	+	+
SA8: Biodiversity and geodiversity	0	0	0	0	+	+
SA9: Landscape	0	0	0	0	+	+
SA10: Climate change	0	0	0	+	0	+
SA11: Flood risk	0	0	0	+	0	+
SA12: Waste	0	0	0	0	0	0

SA Objectives	CS1	CS2	CS3	CS4	CS5	CS6
SA13: Air quality	0	0	0	0	0	0
SA14: Water	0	0	0	+	0	+

**5.154** It is likely that Policies CS1: Retention of community facilities, CS2: Enhancement of and provision for community facilities, CS3: Education provision and CS5: Tourism, leisure, arts, culture and heritage will benefit **SA objective 2: Efficient use of land**. Policies CS1 and CS3 allow for the combining, rationalising and re-development of existing facilities (including school facilities) where a suitable alternative provision is made. Similarly, Policy CS2 allows for the enhancement of existing community facilities to be considered instead of delivering a new facility. Proposal for tourism development should be small scale and/or involve change of use or small scale extension of existing facilities in line with Policy CS5: Tourism, leisure, arts, culture and heritage. It is considered that these types of approaches could help limit the need for development on greenfield land in Colchester.

**5.155** By supporting the development of visitor attractions and visitor accommodation, Policy CS5 will support economic growth in tourism in the District. Therefore, a minor positive effect is expected for this policy in relation to **SA objective 3: Economic growth**.

**5.156** Providing residents with nearby access to services they will need to use on a regular basis is likely to help reduce the need to travel. A minor positive effect is therefore expected for Policies CS1: Retention of community facilities, CS2: Enhancement of and provision for community facilities, CS3: Education provision and CS4: Sports provision in relation to **SA Objective 4: Transport**. A minor positive effect is also expected for Policies CS5: Tourism, leisure, arts, culture and heritage and CS6: Caravan parks given that they require that development for tourism and caravan parks should promote active travel.

**5.157** Policies CS1, CS2, CS3 and CS4 are expected to have a positive effect in relation to **SA objectives 5: Community and health and wellbeing** and **6: Services and facilities** given that they support the provision of new or retention

of existing essential social infrastructure. Policies CS1 and CS2 will help to ensure that residents benefit from necessary community services and facilities that will benefit community integration in Colchester and therefore the positive effect recorded for SA objectives 5 and 6 is significant. Education provision is considered an essential service to ensure the successful functioning of the District and therefore the positive effect recorded for Policy CS3 in relation to SA objective 6 is also significant. The positive effect recorded for Policy CS4 in relation to SA objective 5 is also significant given the value of access to sports facilities for health and wellbeing. Policies CS5 and CS6 are likely to have a minor positive effect in relation to SA objective 5 given that they require that these types of development minimise impact on the amenity of nearby residents which is likely to help protect public health.

**5.158** Policies CS5 and CS6 require that tourism facilities and caravan parks are of an appropriate scale to the surrounding area and compatible with the landscape character. In addition to benefitting landscape character, these elements of the policies are expected to help protect the setting of heritage assets in the District. As such a minor positive effect is expected in relation to **SA objectives 7: Historic environment** and **9: Landscape**. Furthermore, Policy CS5 seeks to directly protect the Dedham National Landscape and Policy CS6 includes a specific requirement for development to avoid light pollution which would likely have further benefits for landscape character in Colchester.

**5.159** Development for tourism must also not result in undue harm to local wildlife sites as set under Policy CS5. Therefore, a minor positive effect is recorded for this policy in relation to **SA objective 8: Biodiversity and geodiversity**. Policy CS6 is also expected to have a minor positive effect in relation to this SA objective given that it requires development for caravan parks to protect the integrity of habitats sites.

**5.160** The incorporation of outdoor sports facilities (specifically playing pitches) provides space for safe infiltration of surface water thereby supporting some degree of resilience to the effects of climate change. Therefore, Policy CS4 is likely to have a minor positive effect in relation to **SA objectives 10: Climate change** and **11: Flood risk**. Policy CS6 is also expected to have a minor positive effect in relation to these SA objectives given that it requires



developments for caravan parks to be supported by a site-specific Flood Risk Assessment and Flood Management and Flood Evacuation Plan.

**5.161** Allowing for infiltration of surface water supports the natural water cycle. Therefore, Policy CS4 is also expected to have a minor positive effect in relation to **SA objective 14: Water**. Proposals at caravan parks are required by Policy CS6 to be supported by information from Anglian Water to confirm that there is adequate wastewater treatment and sewage infrastructure which is likely to help prevent the deterioration of water quality in the area as new development is occupied. Therefore, a minor positive effect is expected for this policy in relation to SA objective 14.

## Recommendations

- Policy CS3 could be clear that the serving of the community by an alternative provision of school facilities should be considered in relation to the scale and quality of any replacement facility and its location and accessibility within the area.
- Policy CS5 could specifically require developments to respect the settings of heritage assets. Furthermore, this policy currently requires that facilities are accessible by a choice of means of transport but it could also be strengthened by providing support for facilities that encourage travel by public and active modes.

## Place and connectivity

### Policies PC1, PC2, PC3, PC4, PC5, PC6, PC7 and PC8

**5.162** The group of policies appraised in this section is as follows:

- Policy PC1 - Healthier food environments

- Policy PC2 - Active and sustainable travel
- Policy PC3 - Parking standards
- Policy PC4 - Development density
- Policy PC5 - Domestic development
- Policy PC6 - Design and amenity
- Policy PC7 - Residential schemes on greenfield sites
- Policy PC8 - Private amenity space

**5.163** These policies focus on creating sustainable, healthy communities by promoting active travel, access to fresh food and high-quality design. They also seek to ensure improved connectivity in the District, as well as more efficient land use, and the integration of public and private spaces. These approaches are framed by the design aims of supporting wellbeing, environmental sustainability, and local character.

**Table 5.18: Likely sustainability effects for the place and connectivity policies**

SA objective	PC1	PC2	PC3	PC4	PC5	PC6	PC7	PC8
SA1: Housing	0	0	0	+	+	+	0	0
SA2: Efficient use of land	0	0	+	++	0	+	0	0
SA3: Economic growth	0	0	+	0	0	+	0	0
SA4: Transport	+	++	++/-	+	+	+	+	0
SA5: Community and health and wellbeing	++	++	0	+	0	+	+	+
SA6: Services and facilities	0	+	+	+	+	+	+	0

SA objective	PC1	PC2	PC3	PC4	PC5	PC6	PC7	PC8
SA7: Historic environment	0	0	0	+	+	+	0	0
SA8: Biodiversity and geodiversity	+	0	0	+	0	+	+	0
SA9: Landscape	0	0	0	+	++	++	+	+
SA10: Climate change	+	+	+	0	0	+	+	0
SA11: Flood risk	+	0	0	+	0	+	+	0
SA12: Waste	0	0	0	0	0	+	0	0
SA13: Air quality	+	+	+	0	0	+	+	0
SA14: Water	+	0	0	0	0	+	+	0

**5.164** Policy PC4: Development density requires residential developments to have regard to appropriate density and massing standards, in the context of providing an appropriate mix and type of housing. As such a minor positive effect is recorded for this policy in relation to **SA objective 1: Housing**. Furthermore, Policies PC5: Domestic development and PC6: Design and amenity set out criteria to help ensure that developments (including domestic development such as alterations and extensions) are of a suitable quality and should prevent the potential for impacts on the residential amenity of properties in the surroundings. Therefore, a minor positive effect is also recorded for these two policies in relation to SA objective 1.

**5.165** Policy PC4 is expected to have a significant positive effect in relation to **SA objective 2: Efficient use of land** given that it supports development densities that would promote more efficient use of land resources in the District. Policies PC3: Parking standards and PC6: Design and amenity are expected to have a minor positive effect in relation to this SA objective. Policy PC3 requires that where possible large car parks should result in more compact forms of development which uses less land and that redevelopment of existing car parking should be considered to make efficient use of land. Policy PC6 requires that development proposals promote and sustain an appropriate mix and

density of uses that optimise the efficient use of land. While Policy PC7: Residential schemes on greenfield sites sets out requirements for the development that would occur on greenfield sites, it does not promote this type of development that might otherwise result in loss of higher value soils and therefore a negligible effect is expected in relation to SA objective 2.

**5.166** A minor positive effect is expected for Policies PC3 and PC6 in relation to **SA objective 3: Economic growth**. Policy PC3 outlines that redevelopment of existing car parking will be considered where there could be improvements to townscape and to support regeneration, thereby supporting revitalisation of town centre locations. High-quality, context-sensitive design that enhances local distinctiveness and supports vibrant, mixed-use developments is encouraged through Policy PC6 which could also support economic growth in the District. Furthermore, development is required by the policy to demonstrate economic as well as social and environmental sustainability.

**5.167** A significant positive effect is expected for Policy PC2: Active and sustainable travel in relation to **SA objective 4: Transport** given that it promotes the use and development of active and sustainable travel modes in Colchester. This includes by requiring that development should support the provision of new and the protection of existing infrastructure to encourage active and sustainable modes of travel. Policy PC3 is expected to have a mixed significant positive and minor negative effect in relation to this SA objective. This policy supports a reduced need to travel by private vehicle by encouraging the delivery of secure cycle parking, park-and-ride schemes, and integrating parking management into Travel Plans to foster sustainable transport use. However, its allowance for new and expanded car parking risks perpetuating car dependency. Policies PC1: Healthier food environments, PC4: Development density, PC5: Domestic development, PC6: Design and amenity and PC7: Residential schemes on greenfield sites all are expected to have a minor positive effect in relation to this SA objective. These policies are expected to support reduced travel demand (including relating to food miles) and promote sustainable, active transport by encouraging high-density, well-designed developments where walking, cycling, and public transport are prioritised. They include requirements which emphasise accessible layouts, active travel routes, and integrated green infrastructure.

**5.168** Policy PC1 and PC2 are both expected to have a significant positive effect in relation to **SA objective 5: Community health and wellbeing**. The positive effect recorded reflects the promotion of stronger, more resilient, and inclusive communities in the policy text. This includes through enhancing access to healthy food (and reducing access to less healthy foods) and encouraging use of active travel that can contribute to positive health outcomes. Policies PC4: Development density, PC6: Density and amenity, PC7: Residential schemes on greenfield land, and PC8: Private amenity space are all expected to have a minor positive effect in relation to this SA objective. It is expected that these policies will help encourage the creation of well-designed, higher-density developments that prioritise sustainability, active travel, and access to local amenities. They will also help to provide good access to high quality green spaces and private and communal amenity areas, while also supporting community cohesion and protecting the residential amenity of those living in the District.

**5.169** A minor positive effect is expected for policies PC2, PC3, PC4, PC5, PC6 and PC7 in relation to **SA objective 6: Services and facilities**. While these policies do not support the provision of new services or the protection of existing services in Colchester, they are likely to support access to these types of provisions. Policy PC2 ensures that developments are well-linked to public transport and active travel networks, facilitating easy access to education and other services. Policy PC3 ensures that appropriate car parking is delivered in line with the adopted standards and cycling parking is suitably incorporated. Policy PC4 encourages higher-density developments that are strategically located to enhance access to local services. Policy PC5 ensures that residential developments, particularly alterations and extensions, maintain compatibility with the local context, including proximity to services and schools, promoting accessibility for residents. Policy PC6 requires that developments achieve well connected streets within which sustainable modes are prioritised. Policy PC7 sets out that residential developments should contribute to permeability for vehicles and prioritise sustainable transport.

**5.170** A minor positive effect is expected for Policies PC4, PC5 and PC6 in relation to **SA objective 7: Historic environment**. Development is required by Policy PC4 to have regard to the character of the surrounding area, including

heritage assets. Furthermore, Policy PC5 is set out to ensure that residential alterations consider the original building's scale and design, thereby helping to protect the existing townscape and the setting of heritage assets in the surroundings. The requirement for developments to achieve a high-quality of design is also set out through Policy PC6, in relation to the provision of context-sensitive design that integrates well with the existing built environment.

**5.171** Policies PC1, PC4, PC6 and PC7 are expected to have a minor positive effect in relation to **SA objective 8: Biodiversity and geodiversity**. Support for the provision of community gardens and allotments is set out through Policy PC1, which is likely to help enhance local ecosystems. Policy PC4 prioritises green spaces and connectivity in high-density developments, thereby contributing to habitat provision and connectivity in more developed areas of Colchester. Developments designed to incorporate trees and landscaping are supported by Policy PC6, while Policy PC7 ensures greenfield developments integrate green and blue infrastructure.

**5.172** A significant positive effect is expected for Policy PC5 in relation to **SA objective 9: Landscape** given that it will help ensure that residential alterations, extensions, and outbuildings respect the character of the original dwelling and its surroundings. This policy also seeks to prevent over-development in the countryside. A significant positive effect is also recorded for Policy PC6 in relation to SA objective 9. This policy requires that developments achieve a high quality of design and reflect the local distinctiveness of Colchester, while contributing to placemaking. Policies PC4, PC7, and PC8 are expected to have a minor positive effect in relation to SA objective 9. Policy PC4 ensures that development densities respect the local landscape character and maintain the balance between built form and green space. Policy PC7 supports the creation of distinct spaces and character areas within developments. Furthermore, Policy PC8 is set out to ensure that the appearance of private amenity spaces is appropriate to the surrounding context.

**5.173** The requirements included in Policies PC1, PC2, PC3 and PC4 are expected to result in a minor positive effect in relation to **SA objectives 10: Climate change** and **13: Air quality**. These benefits relate to the reduced potential for vehicular travel and associated carbon emissions and pollution,



achieved by directly supporting more sustainable modes of transport and higher densities of development from which services and facilities will be more accessible. It is notable that the positive effect recorded for Policy PC1 relates to the potential to reduce food miles by supporting opportunities for local food growing. A minor positive effect is also recorded in relation to SA objectives 10 and 13 for Policy PC6 given that it prioritises energy-efficient design and climate resilience through sustainable solutions such as natural ventilation and tree planting. The promotion of green infrastructure at car parking for residential developments on greenfield sites through Policy PC6 is likely to promote the incorporation of climate change resilience and natural barriers to air pollution. Therefore, a minor positive effect is also expected for this policy in relation to SA objectives 10 and 13.

**5.174** The potential to reduce flood risk through the incorporation of elements green infrastructure and adhering to the sequential approach to flood risk is set out through Policies PC1, PC5, PC6 and PC7. As such a minor positive effect is expected in relation to **SA objective 11: Flood risk** for all four policies. The safeguarding of allotments and other areas for food growing through Policy PC1, is likely to prevent the loss of green infrastructure assets to allow for the permeation of surface water to reduce flood risk in Colchester. Policy PC5 requires replacement dwellings in the countryside to be supported by the flood risk sequential approach, while Policy PC6 emphasises the importance of integrating green infrastructure to support the creation of climate-resilient places which will include increased adaptation to flood risk. The requirement for the incorporation of green infrastructure set out through Policy PC7 is limited to car parking areas at residential developments, but could still have some benefits in terms of reducing local flood risk. Given the benefits that green infrastructure can achieve in relation to water quality through support for natural infiltration processes, a minor positive effect is also recorded for Policies PC1, PC6 and PC7 in relation to **SA objective 14: Water**.

**5.175** Support for the incorporation of accessible refuse and recycling storage areas in new development is provided for through Policy PC6. As such a minor positive effect is recorded for this policy in relation to **SA objective 12: Waste**.

## Recommendations

- Policy PC1 could be strengthened by specifically requiring that developments do not result in loss of or loss of access to existing allotments orchards and community gardens. The policy currently notes the benefits of these types of sites in relation to health. It could also note their benefits in relation to biodiversity and climate change resilience.
- Policy PC2 could be strengthened by setting out an approach that not only supports the provision of infrastructure for active and sustainable modes of transport but also encourages provisions that will support the use of these features by a range of users, including those with disabilities and older people. Sustainable and active transport modes and routes could be supported by the incorporation of features such as weatherproof shelters, benches, digital displays and appropriate signage.
- Policy PC4 could be strengthened by being providing clarity that the appropriateness of a development's density will be considered in the context of potential impacts on the residential amenity in the surrounding areas.

## Place Policies

**5.176** This section presents the appraisal of the policies that allocate sites or safeguard land in Colchester under the Place Policies heading in the draft Local Plan. The SA presents the appraisal of all sites included in the plan. This takes in all sites allocated and land safeguarded by the emerging Local Plan. All policies included in this section of the plan (including those relating to sites that benefit from planning permission or those that do not) are appraised. Maps showing the location of each of the site allocations are presented in Figures 5.1a and 5.1b, later in this section.

**5.177** All sites that are proposed for allocation have been appraised based on the appraisal of the equivalent site option as set out in Chapter 4. The first column in the appraisal matrix for each site presents the likely sustainability effects for the allocation without any mitigation or enhancement that might be

required through the specific policy that allocates it (i.e. a 'policy-off' appraisal). Given that principle of development at safeguarded land locations is not set out through the plan, a policy-off appraisal has not been undertaken for these policies. A proportionate approach has been taken for the appraisal of these policies. The appraisal work for these policies has considered the principle of safeguarding and general sensitivities of the locations in question. The appraisals of the policies have been grouped by the area which they relate to; in the Colchester City these are the relevant wards, Gateway or Opportunity Areas and beyond the City, the other settlements in the District. In some instances the appraisal of has been included separately where the detail of the policy warrants a standalone appraisal or where the land to which the policy applied is not close to any other land addressed by a policy in the Place section of the plan. By and large the appraisal of the policies is presented to align with the order of the policies in the Local Plan document.

**5.178** Where area-specific allocation policies in the Local Plan include requirements for mitigation and/or enhancement, this has been reflected in the 'policy-on appraisal' column of the appraisal matrix for each site. The effects of other policies in the Local Plan are not included in the appraisals of individual site allocations; instead, the effects of the Plan as a whole are considered in the 'Cumulative effects' chapter.

**5.179** The text below each table setting out the likely sustainability effects for the sites considered in this chapter, presents details of where the related site allocation policies could potentially mitigate negative effects and strengthen positive effects of development at the site. The text below each table focusses on describing where potential changes to the effects for the SA objectives could result when considering the policy requirements. The same approach to the scoping out of SA objectives is followed through from the 'policy-off' appraisal of site options. That is to say, effects are not presented for SA objectives 10: climate change and 12: waste. This is described in more detail in Chapter 4.

**5.180** It should be noted that the appraisal in the 'policy-on appraisal' column for SA objective 8: Biodiversity reflects the Emerging Allocations Biodiversity Assessment [See reference 19] commissioned by the Council; this was not considered by the GIS based analysis of site options, the findings of which are

presented in Chapter 4. While all site options were considered 'policy-off' in relation to their potential impacts on biodiversity assets, in line with the site assessment criteria, the additional biodiversity assessment work was only reflected in the appraisal of the site taken forward for allocation. The Biodiversity Assessment provides information about the potential for harm to result from development within a site categorising it as 'little/no harm, 'harm' or 'significant harm'. Where this detail is provided, a precautionary approach has been taken to any adjustment of effects. Where the Biodiversity Assessment identifies any additional sensitivities at a site (e.g. the potential for significant harm to result to biodiversity assets) the magnitude of the negative effect for SA objective has been increased. The decision has been made not to downgrade any negative effects where the Biodiversity Assessment findings identify the likelihood of little/no harm but biodiversity assets lie within the distance thresholds considered for the appraisal of sites through the SA in line with the precautionary approach. There is potential for the development of sites to contribute to ecological impacts as a result of construction and occupation that would be transmitted beyond the site boundaries and its immediate vicinity. The policy-on appraisal for SA objective 8 also reflects any mitigation provided by requirements in the relevant site policy.

**5.181** On the whole for many of the sites, the majority of effects recorded in relation to the SA objectives through the 'policy-off' appraisal remained relevant after considering the site specific policy text. However, in some cases the mitigation and enhancement requirements set out through the site specific policies result in some reduction in negative effects and strengthening of positive effects. When appraising the site allocation policies, significant positive effects were identified only where the policy would give rise to substantial improvements relating to the relevant SA objective, for example provision of substantial new services or a public/active transport improvement (e.g. a new park and ride scheme). Where the policy-off appraisal of sites considered proximity to sensitive receptors (notably SA objectives 7: historic environment, 8: biodiversity, 9: landscape and 11: flood risk), a precautionary approach was taken to the assignment of any positive effects resulting from requirements included in the policy. In general, 'policy-on' positive effects were not recorded in relation to heritage, given the sensitivities of the historic environment and the requirement for a qualitative assessment of this topic by a suitably qualified

professional. Where there could be improvements to landscape as a result of improvements to settlement edge or transitions to the countryside positive effects were recorded.

**5.182** Significant negative effects identified by the policy-off site appraisals continued to be identified if no mitigation directly addressing the reason for that significant effect is included in the site allocation policy.

## Colchester City Centre

■ Policy CC1: City Centre

Sets out Colchester City Centre as the primary focus for retail, food and drink, cultural, leisure, community and other business uses.

**Table 5.19: Summary of SA findings**

SA objectives	Policy CC1
SA1: Housing	+
SA2: Efficient use of land	+
SA3: Economic growth	++
SA4: Transport	++
SA5: Community and health and wellbeing	++
SA6: Services and facilities	++
SA7: Historic environment	+
SA8: Biodiversity and geodiversity	0
SA9: Landscape	+
SA10: Climate change	+

SA objectives	Policy CC1
SA11: Flood risk	0
SA12: Waste	0
SA13: Air quality	+
SA14: Water	0

**5.183** Policy CC1 does not set out land proposed to be allocated or safeguarded in the plan area. Instead, it sets out that developments will be supported where they make a positive contribution to levels of footfall, activity and vibrancy and support the City Centre’s role and function. Given that the policy recognises the role of upper floors in terms of residential provision it is expected to complement the larger proposed housing allocations included in the plan area in terms of contribution to local housing needs and therefore a minor positive effect is expected in relation to **SA objective 1: Housing**.

**5.184** The policy supports higher densities of development within the City Centre which is likely to help contribute to a more efficient land use in Colchester. Therefore, a minor positive effect is expected in relation to **SA objective 2: Efficient use of land**.

**5.185** The City Centre is set out by Policy CC1 as the focus for business uses and requires that the mix of uses provided in this area supports the vitality and viability of the centre. It also seeks to ensure functioning of the Primary Shopping Area. As such it is likely that the policy will support the City Centre as a location where economic growth and job centre occurs at a location that is accessible to a large number of residents. Therefore, a significant positive effect is expected in relation to **SA objective 3: Economic growth**.

**5.186** Within the City Centre proposals that complement the role and function of the centre are also supported by the policy. This includes a range of services and facilities that would support the integration of residents in the District. Parts of the City Centre include LSOAs that are within the 20% most deprived in the country and new development towards these locations (including new service



provision and economic growth) could help to address issues associated with existing deprivation. Given that the City Centre is amongst the most accessible in the District, this approach is likely to support access to a range of services for many residents. It is likely that many of the residents will be able to make use of sustainable and active modes to access the jobs and services provided at these allocations. Therefore, a significant positive effect is also recorded for the policy in relation to **SA objectives 4: Transport, 5: Community and health and wellbeing** and **6: Services and facilities**.

**5.187** The City Centre includes numerous heritage assets including parts of several Conservation Areas and Listed Buildings. As such there is potential for adverse effects as development occurs. However, the policy does not set out a specific level of development for the area. Furthermore, it requires that development should protect the character of heritage assets and their setting, the City Centre's cultural significance, along with the distinct positive elements of its skyline. A minor positive effect is therefore recorded for **SA objective 7: Historic environment**. A minor positive effect is also expected for the policy in relation to **SA objective 9: Landscape** given that it also requires development to secure improved streetscapes retaining important spaces and key views and to enhance street frontages.

**5.188** The town centre first approach set out through the policy which will help focus some economic growth and service provision in more accessible locations of the District, is expected to help limit the need for some residents to travel regularly by private vehicle. Therefore, there is potential carbon emissions and air pollutants associated with travel to be reduced. While it is noted that there AQMAs located within and towards the City Centre, the policy does not set out a specific level of development for this location that might otherwise result in increased traffic and air pollution within these areas. Overall, a minor positive effect is expected in relation to **SA objectives 10: Climate change** and **13: Air quality** for Policy CC1.

# Recommendations

- The policy could be strengthened by including support for proposals in the City Centre that retain and enhance existing or deliver new elements of green infrastructure that provide benefits in terms of climate change resilience and/or habitat connectivity.

## Castle

- Policy PP1: Britannia Car Park, Colchester

Proposed for allocation for approximately 100 homes

*This site is carried forward from the adopted Local Plan*

- Policy PP2: Vineyard Gate, Colchester

Proposed for allocation for approximately 100 homes

*This site is carried forward from the adopted Local Plan*

- Policy PP3: Runwald Street Car Park, Colchester

Proposed for allocation for approximately 40 homes

*This site is carried forward from the adopted Local Plan*

**Table 5.20: Summary of SA findings**

SA objectives	Site 10976	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP1	Site 10950a	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP2	Site 10951	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP3
SA1: Housing	++	++	+	++	+	+
SA2: Efficient use of land	++	++	++	++	++	++
SA3: Economic growth	-	-	-	-	-	-
SA4: Transport	++	++	++	++	++	++
SA5: Community and health and wellbeing	+	+	+	+	+	+
SA6: Services and facilities	+	+	++	++	+	+
SA7: Historic environment	--?	-?	--?	-?	--?	-?
SA8: Biodiversity and geodiversity	-	-	-	-	-	-
SA9: Landscape	0?	0?	0?	0?	0?	0?
SA10: Climate change	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
SA11: Flood risk	0	+	0	+	0	0
SA12: Waste	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
SA13: Air quality	-	-	-	-	-	-
SA14: Water	-	-	-	-	-	-

**5.189** Site 10950a has been appraised as having a minor positive effect in relation to **SA objective 1: Housing** through the policy-off appraisal given that it was considered to have capacity for less than 100 homes when considered at that stage. The relevant site allocation policy (PP2) confirms the site capacity as 100 homes and therefore an improved significant positive effect is recorded for this policy in relation to SA objective 1. No change is reported in relation to this SA objective for Policies PP1 and PP3 given that the housing capacity for both sites remained unchanged.

**5.190** Policy PP2 requires that development at the site provides pedestrian connections directly to / from Lion Walk. A significant positive effect is identified for site 10950a in relation to **SA objective 4: Transport** without considering any requirements included in the policy given that it is close to Colchester Town Railway Station and is also within 300m of a bus stop and 200m of a cycle route. The policy requirements may help to encourage travel by active modes, and there is potential for the significant positive effect is recorded for the site in relation to SA objective 4 to be strengthened. No requirements relating to sustainable or active travel are included in Policies PP1 and PP3 and therefore the significant positive effect recorded in relation to SA objective 4 for the related proposed allocation sites wholly reflects the good level of access they provide existing sustainable transport links.

**5.191** An uncertain significant negative effect is expected for the policy-off appraisal of sites 10976, 10950a and 10951 in relation to **SA objective 7: Historic environment** as these three sites are close to or overlap designated historic assets including Colchester Area 1 Conservation Area and numerous Listed Buildings and Ancient Monuments. Policies PP1 and PP2 requires development to conserve, and where appropriate, enhance the town centre conservation area and the significance of heritage assets and nearby Scheduled Monuments. Furthermore, Policy PP3 requires development to conserve, and where appropriate, enhance the significance of other nearby heritage assets. Given the requirements of the policies, an improved uncertain minor negative effect is recorded for Policies PP1, PP2 and PP3 in relation to SA objective 7. The residual negative effect for the policies is recorded to note the potential sensitivities of the locations.

**5.192** Sites 10976, 10950a, and 10951, are all relatively close to areas of priority habitat. The Biodiversity Assessment identified that the development of sites 10976, 10950a and 10951 would result in little/no harm given that they have limited natural habitat. This is reflected in the minor negative effect received in the policy-off appraisal in relation to **SA objective 8: Biodiversity and geodiversity**. Policies PP1, PP2 and PP3 do not include requirements that could help to promote biodiversity at the proposed site allocations and no change is expected in relation to the effect recorded for SA objective 8.

**5.193** All three of the sites fall outside of Flood Zones 2 and 3 and mostly lie outside of higher risk surface water flood areas. An improved minor positive effect is expected for Policy PP1 and Policy PP2 in relation to **SA objective 11: Flood risk** given both policies require development to provide contributions towards flood risk solutions, which will help to reduce flood risk at the site and surroundings. The policy-off negligible effect recorded in relation to SA objective 11 remains applicable for Policy PP3 given that the policy text does not include similar levels of requirements relating to mitigating flood risk.

**5.194** The sites lie within SPZ 3. As such, a minor negative effect has been recorded policy-off in relation to **SA objective 14: Water**. Policies PP1, PP2 and PP3 require the development of these sites to demonstrate adequate wastewater management capacity. However, the requirements included will not address the potential for contamination of water resources during construction. As such the minor negative effect recorded in relation to SA objective 14 remains applicable.

## Recommendations

- While the development sites do not contain high value habitats Policies PP1, PP2 and PP3 could promote the incorporation of new elements of green infrastructure to support habitat connectivity in the urban area.

## Mile End and Castle (including area extending beyond wards within Colchester Urban Area)

- Policy PP4: Braiswick, Colchester

Proposed for allocation for approximately 30 homes

*This site is carried forward from the adopted Local Plan*

- Policy PP5: Land at Chesterwell, Colchester

Proposed for allocation for approximately 50 homes

- Policy PP6: Land at Colchester Station, Colchester

Proposed for allocation for approximately 250 homes as part of a mixed-use scheme including commercial floorspace

- Policy PP7: Land off Bakers Lane, Colchester

Proposed for allocation for approximately 100 homes



Table 5.21: Summary of SA findings

SA objectives	Site 10952a	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP4	Site 10941	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP5	Site 10082a	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP6	Site 10761	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP7
SA1: Housing	+	+	++	+	++	++	++	++
SA2: Efficient use of land	--	--	--	--	++	++	--	--
SA3: Economic growth	0	0	0	0	+	+	0	0
SA4: Transport	+	+	++	++	++	++	+	+
SA5: Community and health and wellbeing	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
SA6: Services and facilities	-	-	-	-	+	+	-	-
SA7: Historic environment	-?	0?	-?	0?	-?	0?	--?	-?
SA8: Biodiversity and geodiversity	--	-	-	0	-	-	--	-

**Chapter 5** Appraisal findings for topic-based policies in the Local Plan

SA objectives	Site 10952a	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP4	Site 10941	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP5	Site 10082a	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP6	Site 10761	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP7
SA9: Landscape	0?	0?	0?	0?	0?	0?	--?	-?
SA10: Climate change	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
SA11: Flood risk	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SA12: Waste	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
SA13: Air quality	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
SA14: Water	-	-	-	0	--	--	-	-

**5.195** Site 10941 has been appraised as having a significant positive effect through the policy-off appraisal work undertaken in relation to **SA objective 1: Housing**. This reflects the capacity of over 100 homes that the site was considered for at that stage of appraisal. Given that Policy PP5 confirms the site's capacity as 50 homes an updated minor positive effect is expected in relation to SA objective 1. The effect recorded for Policies PP4, PP6 and PP7 reflects the originally tested site capacities and no change is recorded in relation to the effect reported for SA objective 1.

**5.196** A minor positive effect is expected for the policy-off appraisal of site 10082a in relation to **SA objective 3: Economic growth** as the site is located in a LSOA that is in the top 20% of LSOAs in district for jobs density and is less than 200m from Turner Rise District Centre and therefore has good access to both jobs and a town centre location which is likely to support the viability of this centre. Policy PP6 requires the development of the site to incorporate commercial floorspace to serve commuters and surrounding community, which is likely to strengthen the benefits of the site in relation to economic growth. However, the scale of commercial growth at the site is not considered to be of a scale to warrant the identification of a significant effect and therefore the minor positive effect remains applicable for Policy PP6 in relation to SA objective 3. Policies PP4, PP5 and PP7 do not include requirements that would support access to employment or economic growth in Colchester and therefore no changes are reported in relation to the effects reported in relation to SA objective 3.

**5.197** Sites 10082a and 10941 are located close Colchester Town Railway Station as well existing bus stops and cycleways. Sites 10761 and 10952a are less well related to the railway station but are close to bus stops and cycleways. Furthermore, Policies PP4, PP5, PP6 and PP7 all include requirements which promote active travel, including provision of safe pedestrian connections, connectivity to PRowWs and links for active travel. Policy PP6 includes the most substantial requirements including the provision of a mobility hub to support active travel modes and enhancements to the existing station facilities. A minor positive effect is identified for sites 10761 and 10952a in relation to **SA objective 4: Transport** without considering any requirements included in the

policy. The policy requirements may help to encourage travel by active modes; however, they are not of a scale to warrant a significant positive effect being recorded. Therefore, a minor positive effect is recorded for Policies PP4 and PP7 in relation to SA objective 4. The requirements of Policies PP7 and particularly PP6 are expected to help strengthen the significant positive effect already recorded for the equivalent site options in relation to SA objective 4. The requirements set out in Policy PP6 could support increased travel by sustainable at the site and also in the supporting area through its support for improved station facilities.

**5.198** An uncertain significant negative effect is expected for the policy-off appraisal of site 10761 in relation to **SA objective 7: Historic environment**. Sites 10082a, 10952a and 10941 are expected to have an uncertain minor negative effect in relation to SA objective 7. The effects recorded reflect the relatively close proximity of these sites to designated heritage assets, with site 10761 noted to be particularly close to the Scheduled Monument Moat Farm Dyke at its eastern boundary. Policies PP4, PP5, PP6 and PP7 include requirements that development must conserve, and where appropriate, enhance the significance of heritage assets close to their site. Policy PP7 includes specific requirements for development to protect and enhance the setting of the Scheduled Monument. Given the requirements of the policies, an improved uncertain minor negative effect is recorded for Policy PP7 in relation to SA objective 7 and an improved uncertain negligible effect is recorded for Policies PP4, PP5 and PP6. The residual negative effect for Policy PP7 is recorded to note the potential sensitivities of this location.

**5.199** Sites 10761 and 10952a were both appraised policy-off as containing areas of priority habitat, while site 10761 also contains part of Lexden Dyke Local Wildlife Site. Furthermore, sites 10082a and 10941 are within 250m of several areas of priority habitat. The Biodiversity Assessment sets out that development within sites 10761 and 10952a has potential to adversely affect biodiversity assets while development within sites 10082 and 10941 is likely to result in little/no harm to biodiversity assets. This is reflected in the significant negative effect recorded in relation to **SA objective 8: Biodiversity and geodiversity** in the policy-off appraisal of sites 10761 and 10952a. A minor negative effect is expected for the policy-off appraisal of sites 10082a and

10941 given their proximity to areas of priority habitat. However, Policies PP4, PP5 and PP7 require development at the site to incorporate ecological mitigation measures. Policies PP4 and PP7 require the retention and enhancement of the condition of the existing grassland and scrub. Policy PP7 also requires that development adequately safeguards the Local Wildlife Site which intersects site 10761. Furthermore, Policy PP5 requires the retention of mature trees and hedgerows, creation of higher distinctiveness grassland and watercourse gain requirements. These requirements will help promote the protection of biodiversity at the sites and therefore an improved minor negative effect is recorded for Policies PP4 and PP7 in relation to SA objective 8 and an improved negligible effect is expected for Policy PP5. The residual negative effect for Policy PP4 and PP7 is recorded to note the potential sensitivities of the locations. No requirements relating to biodiversity are set out in Policy PP6 and therefore no change is reported in relation to SA objective 8 with the minor negative effect remaining applicable.

**5.200** The majority of the sites considered lie within the western extent of the developed urban area. As such their development is unlikely to have substantial impacts on landscape setting and a negligible effect has been recorded in relation to **SA objective 9: Landscape**. The exception to this is site 10761 which lies on land identified as having high inherent landscape value. As such the development of this site was appraised policy-off as likely to have an uncertain significant negative effect in relation to SA objective 9. Policy PP7 requires development at the site to retain mature trees and hedgerows which is likely to help support the integration of development into the wider landscape setting. Therefore, an improve uncertain minor negative effect is expected for Policy PP7 in relation to SA objective 9.

**5.201** The sites lie within SPZ 3. Furthermore, site 10082a includes a watercourse. As such, a minor negative effect has been recorded policy-off for sites 10761, 10941 and 10952a in relation to **SA objective 14: Water** and a significant negative effect has been recorded for site 10082a. Policies PP4, PP5, PP6 and PP7 require the development of these sites to demonstrate adequate wastewater management capacity. However, the requirements included will not address the potential for contamination of water resources during construction. As such the minor negative effect recorded in relation to SA

objective 14 for sites 10761, 10941 and 10952a and the significant negative effect recorded for site 10082a remains applicable.

## Recommendations

- Policy PP7 proposes the allocation of land located within an area identified as having high inherent landscape value in the Landscape Character Assessment work undertaken in support of the plan. While the policy requires the retention of mature trees and hedgerows it could be strengthened to include further requirements relating to the incorporation of appropriate screening and the protection of landscape character.

## Northern Gateway

- Policy OA4: Northern Gateway

Land north of Axial Way safeguarded for employment and land to the south of the Axial Way safeguarded for approximately 650 homes, a new local centre, commercial and health care provision and energy infrastructure

*This site benefits from existing planning permission*

**Table 5.22: Summary of SA findings**

SA objectives	Policy OA4
SA1: Housing	++
SA2: Efficient use of land	--
SA3: Economic growth	+
SA4: Transport	++
SA5: Community and health and wellbeing	++



SA objectives	Policy OA4
SA6: Services and facilities	+
SA7: Historic environment	0?
SA8: Biodiversity and geodiversity	0
SA9: Landscape	0?
SA10: Climate change	+?
SA11: Flood risk	0
SA12: Waste	0
SA13: Air quality	0
SA14: Water	-

**5.202** The policy states that the land within the Northern Gateway is to be safeguarded to provide approximately 650 homes and housing for care. As such the policy could make a substantial contribution to housing need in Colchester and contribute to housing for those with specific needs and a significant positive effect is expected in relation to **SA objective 1: Housing**.

**5.203** While the policy only requires that the land in question is safeguarded, it takes in Grade 2 agricultural soils which would be lost if development eventually occurs at the site. As such a significant negative effect is recorded in relation to **SA objective 2: Efficient use of land**.

**5.204** The safeguarding of land at the site also allows for employment provision on the land north of Axial Way. Given the contribution the site could make to local economic growth, a minor positive effect is expected in relation to **SA objective 3: economic growth**.

**5.205** The land safeguarded is well related to existing bus stops and cycle routes but not a railway station. The provision of residential land alongside employment land and other new services could help to promote self-

containment at this location in the District. Furthermore, the policy requires that development at the site should maximise opportunities relating to the Rapid Transit System, the Park and Ride facility and other local links. Overall, a significant positive effect is expected in relation to **SA objective 4: Transport**.

**5.206** The land safeguarded is relatively close to The Headway Centre healthcare facility as well as existing a number of open spaces. The service provision to be delivered at the site includes new healthcare and new open space. Overall, given the improved access that the site could provide to open space and healthcare facilities for new and existing residents, a significant positive effect is likely in relation to **SA objective 5: Community and health and wellbeing**.

**5.207** The land safeguarded is relatively well related to an existing primary school (Camulos Academy) but is not close to any secondary school or existing town centre locations. The safeguarding of the site supports the provision of a new local centre and new community facilities. Policy OA4 is therefore likely to support long term improvements to service provision in this area and a minor positive effect is expected in relation to **SA objective 6: Services and facilities**.

**5.208** The policy does not include any substantial requirements relating to heritage assets, ecology or landscape character. Given that the site is not close to any heritage assets or biodiversity designations and falls on land within the developed area of Colchester that is surrounded by existing employment development, a negligible effect is expected in relation to **SA objectives 7: Historic environment, 8: Biodiversity and geodiversity and 9: Landscape**. Given that effects relating to the historic environment and landscape will depend large on the design of any development at the site, the effects are partly uncertain.

**5.209** The policy states that the land safeguarded could incorporate new energy infrastructure. This type of provision is likely to support the energy security of the District and where infrastructure for renewable energy is delivered it is likely

to support a transition to cleaner forms of energy. As such an uncertain minor positive effect is expected in relation to **SA objective 10: Climate change**.

**5.210** The land in question is mostly unaffected by flood risk and does not lie close to an AQMA. As such a negligible effect is expected in relation to **SA objectives 11: Flood risk** and **13: Air quality**. The safeguarding of the site is also not expected to affect waste management in the District and a negligible effect is therefore also recorded in relation to **SA objective 12: Waste**.

**5.211** The land safeguarded lies within SPZ 3. Should development occur at this location, there is potential for contamination of local water resources and therefore a minor negative effect is expected in relation to **SA objective 14: Water**.

## Recommendations

- No recommendations are included.

## Highwoods

- Policy PEP1: Colchester Business Park

Proposed for allocation for employment uses

*This site is carried forward from the adopted Local Plan*

**Table 5.23: Summary of SA findings**

SA objectives	Site 10969a	Site considering mitigation in Policy PEP1
SA1: Housing	N/A	N/A

SA objectives	Site 10969a	Site considering mitigation in Policy PEP1
SA2: Efficient use of land	--	--
SA3: Economic growth	+	+
SA4: Transport	+	+
SA5: Community and health and wellbeing	+	+
SA6: Services and facilities	-	-
SA7: Historic environment	0?	0?
SA8: Biodiversity and geodiversity	--	--
SA9: Landscape	0?	0?
SA10: Climate change	N/A	N/A
SA11: Flood risk	0	0
SA12: Waste	N/A	N/A
SA13: Air quality	-	-
SA14: Water	-	-

**5.212** The policy requires that the site is developed for employment to incorporate active travel links that maximise opportunities for enhanced connectivity with the surroundings and for sustainable transport. This requirement is likely to support increased use of more sustainable and alternative modes of transport in the area. The site is close to existing bus stops and a cycle route accessible at The Crescent. However, the requirements of policy are not considered to be substantial enough to warrant a significant positive effect being identified in relation to **SA objective 4: Transport** and therefore no change is recorded in relation to minor positive effect previously identified.

**5.213** The site lies within SPZ 3. As such, a minor negative effect has been recorded policy-off for the site in relation to **SA objective 14: Water**. Policy PEP1 requires the development of the site to demonstrate adequate wastewater management capacity. However, the requirements included will not address the potential for contamination of water resources during construction. As such the minor negative effect recorded in relation to SA objective 14 remains applicable.

## Recommendations

- The policy could be strengthened by requiring the incorporation of green infrastructure. This could help to support nearby areas of priority habitat.

## Stanway

- Policy PP8: Land at Lakelands Crescent, Colchester

Proposed for allocation for approximately 5 new dwellings

- Policy PEP3: Tollgate West

Land safeguarded for employment uses

*This land benefits from planning permission*

- Policy PEP4: Maldon Road

Proposed for allocation for employment uses

*This site is carried forward from the adopted Local Plan*

**Table 5.10: Summary of SA findings**

SA objectives	Site 10617a	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP8	Policy PEP3	Site 10239a	Site considering mitigation in Policy PEP4
SA1: Housing	+	+	N/A	N/A	N/A
SA2: Efficient use of land	--	--	--	--	--
SA3: Economic growth	0	0	+	0	0
SA4: Transport	+	+	+	+	+
SA5: Community and health and wellbeing	-	-	+	+	+
SA6: Services and facilities	+	+	+	-	-
SA7: Historic environment	0?	0?	--?	--?	--?
SA8: Biodiversity and geodiversity	-	0	--	-	-
SA9: Landscape	0?	0?	0?	0?	0?



SA objectives	Site 10617a	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP8	Policy PEP3	Site 10239a	Site considering mitigation in Policy PEP4
SA10: Climate change	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
SA11: Flood risk	0	0	0	0	0
SA12: Waste	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
SA13: Air quality	-	-	-	-	-
SA14: Water	-	-	-	-	-

**5.214** Policy PEP3 requires that land at Tollgate West is safeguarded for employment uses in accordance with Policy E1. Given the requirement of the policy and the likelihood that the site would contribute to economic growth and access to jobs in Colchester a minor positive effect is recorded in relation to **SA objective 3: Economic growth**. The other policies appraised in this section do not include policy requirements that will support further economic growth in Colchester and as such the effects recorded in relation to SA objective 3 reflect their location in relation to access to jobs (for Policy PP8 only), the amount of employment land that would be provided (for Policy PEP4 only) and access to town centre locations.

**5.215** Sites 10617a and 10239a are required by Policies PP8 and PEP4 to provide safe and suitable site access to required highway design standards and demonstrate that the proposal would not be detrimental to highway capacity. Policy PEP4 includes the additional requirement for the provision of active travel links that maximise opportunities for enhanced connectivity to the surrounding area and opportunities to maximise the use of sustainable transport. Site 10239a is relatively close to existing bus stops along Straight Road and adjacent to part of the National Cycle Network. The requirements of the policy

are not considered to be of a scale to result in an improvement to the minor positive effect already recorded in relation to **SA objective 4: Transport**. Whilst the range of transport benefits that are promoted by the relevant site allocation policy (PP8) are of a lesser scale than those required by Policy PEP4, the minor positive effect identified for site 10617a also remains applicable. No policy requirements relating to sustainable transport are set out in Policy PEP3. The land safeguarded for employment uses is close to a bus stop and a cycleway but not a railway station and as such a minor positive effect is recorded in relation to SA objective 4.

**5.216** None of the policies appraised in this section address health and wellbeing or access to services and facilities. The land safeguarded by Policy PEP3 for employment uses is close to existing areas of open space and PRoWs. It also lies within Tollgate District Centre and could potentially contribute to the successful functioning of this location when it is built out. Therefore, Policy PEP3 is likely to have a minor positive effect in relation to **SA objectives 5: Community and health and wellbeing** and **6: Services and facilities**. The appraisal of Policies PP8 and PEP4 reflect the findings of the policy-off appraisal work for the sites proposed for allocation.

**5.217** The development of site 10617a is required by Policy PP8 to conserve, and where appropriate, enhance the significance of heritage assets (including any contribution made by their settings). The site is not within close proximity to any designated heritage assets (the closest being within 400m at Grade II Listed Building White House) and therefore the uncertain negligible effect recorded in relation to **SA objective 7: Historic environment** remains applicable. No policy requirements relating to the historic environment are set out through Policies PEP3 or PEP4. The areas of land proposed for safeguarding and allocation lie close to Grade II Listed Building Foakes and Brickwall Farmhouse as well as a Scheduled Monument (Gosbecks Iron Age and Romano-British site), respectively. Therefore, an uncertain significant negative effect is identified for both policies in relation to SA objective 7.

**5.218** Site 10617a is adjacent to the Stanway Pit Local Wildlife Site. The Biodiversity Assessment identified that the development of the site has the potential to result in harm in relation to nearby biodiversity assets. This is

reflected in the minor negative effect recorded for the policy-off appraisal in relation to **SA objective 8: Biodiversity**. The requirements of Policy PP8 includes the adequate safeguarding of Stanway Pit Local Wildlife Site. An improved negligible effect is therefore recorded in relation to SA objective 8. The other policies considered do not address the potential for effects relating to biodiversity assets. The land proposed for allocation by Policy PEP4 is close to areas of priority habitat and Gosbecks's Park Local Wildlife Site. The Biodiversity Assessment identifies that development at the site would have little/no harm on biodiversity assets and assesses habitats in the surrounding area as having little value. Overall a minor negative effect is recorded for Policy PEP4 in relation to SA objective 8. The land safeguarded by Policy PEP3 contains another section of Stanway Pit Local Wildlife Site and as such a significant negative effect is recorded for this policy in relation to SA objective 8.

**5.219** The sites and land set out in the policies appraised lie within SPZ 3. As such, a minor negative effect has been recorded policy-off for the site in relation to SA objective 14: Water. Policy PP8 requires the development of the site at Lakelands Crescent to demonstrate adequate wastewater management capacity. However, the requirements included will not address the potential for contamination of water resources during construction. As such the minor negative effect recorded in relation to SA objective 14 remains applicable.

## Recommendations

- Policies PEP3 and PEP4 could acknowledge the proximity of historic assets and require development to both protect and enhance the historic environment.
- Policy PEP3 could be drafted to acknowledge the presence of part of Stanway Pit Local Wildlife Site within the site and require that its development safeguard its biodiversity value. It is acknowledged that the land set out through Policy PEP3 benefits from planning permission and that the sensitivities of the location will have been addressed as part of the development planning process.

## St Anne’s and St John’s and Greenstead

■ Policy PP9: North East Colchester

Proposed for allocation for approximately 2,000 homes and commercial uses

The land proposed for allocation was appraised policy-off as sites 10616a, 10616b and 10256a.

**Table 5.24: Summary of SA findings**

SA objectives	Site 10616a	Site 10616b	Site 10256a	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP9
SA1: Housing	++	++	++	++
SA2: Efficient use of land	--	--	--	--
SA3: Economic growth	-	-	-	+
SA4: Transport	+	+	+	+
SA5: Community and health and wellbeing	+	+	+	+
SA6: Services and facilities	-	+	+	+
SA7: Historic environment	0?	0?	0?	0?

SA objectives	Site 10616a	Site 10616b	Site 10256a	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP9
SA8: Biodiversity and geodiversity	--	--	--	-
SA9: Landscape	-?	--?	-?	-?
SA10: Climate change	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
SA11: Flood risk	0	0	0	0
SA12: Waste	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
SA13: Air quality	-	-	-	-
SA14: Water	--	--	-	--

**5.220** Policy PP9 requires the development of the site to be supported by a Minerals Resource Assessment. This requirement is likely to help support more efficient use of land and natural resources by preventing the loss of access to viable minerals in the plan area. However, the policy would not mitigate the loss of greenfield land and Grade 2 and Grade 3 agricultural soils that lie within the site. As such the significant negative effect recorded for the site in relation to **SA objective 2: Efficient use of land** remains applicable.

**5.221** The site is relatively isolated from existing centres. It is to be developed to deliver 2,000 homes as well as some commercial uses. The mix of uses provided at the site could support some degree of self-containment in the area as well as access to jobs for those at the site and in the surroundings. Given the potential to provide access to employment opportunities at the site and to contribute to Colchester’s economy, an improved minor positive effect is recorded in relation to **SA objective 3: Economic growth**.

**5.222** The site is within close proximity to multiple bus stops as well as cycling routes, indicating good sustainable transport connectivity, although the site is

located some distance from a railway station. Policy PP9 requires the development of the site to provide safe and suitable site access and active and sustainable travel and passenger transport which could help limit the potential for congestion in the area. Furthermore, the policy requires the site to ensure connectivity with existing PRoWs, including the Colchester Orbital. The policy also stipulates that an active travel plan will be agreed with the Local Planning Authority, which will ensure site-wide active travel connectivity including links beyond the site. These requirements may help to encourage travel by active modes but are not of scale to warrant the identification of a significant positive effect, and as such, the minor positive effect received in the policy-off appraisal in relation to **SA objective 4: Transport**, remains applicable.

**5.223** The site is located within accessible walking distance of a primary and secondary school, although is located some distance from Colchester City Centre. Policy PP9 requires provision for appropriate service use and facilities, and commercial uses to create Local Centres to serve the communities across the site. Furthermore, the development should meet any site specific requirements of the IDP, which is expected to include education provision. The specific details of these provisions at the site will be guided by a comprehensive Masterplan, which will ensure that services and facilities are well-integrated into the overall development, and are accessible to all residents. As such, given that the development of the site would support service provision but the development would continue to be some distance from the City Centre, the minor positive effect received in the policy-off appraisal in relation to **SA objective 6: Services and facilities**, remains applicable.

**5.224** Although the site is not within close proximity to Listed Buildings, Policy PP9 requires development to conserve, and where appropriate, enhance the significance of heritage assets, including any contribution made by their settings. While this mitigation is acknowledged, development is not expected to enhance the setting of any heritage assets and the uncertain negligible effect received in the policy-off appraisal in relation to **SA objective 7: Historic environment**, remains applicable.

**5.225** The site is adjacent to areas of priority habitat and Bullock Wood SSSI, as well as Welsh Wood Local Wildlife Site and Local Nature Reserve and is



close to Salary Brook Local Wildlife Site and this is reflected in the significant negative effect received in the policy-off appraisal in relation to **SA objective 8: Biodiversity and geodiversity**. The Biodiversity Assessment undertaken in support of the Local Plan, identifies the potential for high harm in relation to these the Local Wildlife Sites and low harm in relation to the SSSI. Policy PP9 provides mitigation for potential impacts by requiring development of the site to achieve biodiversity net gain of at least 15%. Onsite biodiversity net gain measures will focus on woodland creation to expand and buffer the SSSI, enhanced connectivity through creation of a green corridor between designated sites, buffers to Welsh Wood and Wall's Wood Local Wildlife Sites. As such an improved minor negative effect is expected for the site allocated through Policy PP9 in relation to SA objective 8.

**5.226** The site is located within an area identified as having high and medium inherent landscape value in the Landscape Character Assessment work undertaken in support of the plan. The policy-off appraisal is therefore recorded as an uncertain significant negative effect in relation to **SA objective 9: Landscape**. Policy PP9 requires that screening measures will be required at the edge of the site to provide mitigation and integration within the landscape. Additionally, the protection of ancient woodland adjacent to the site and retention of mature trees and hedgerows within the site will help to ensure that development is sensitively integrated to reflect and reinforce the area's character, tranquillity, and visual quality. As such, given the mitigation set out in the policy, an improved uncertain minor negative effect is recorded in relation to SA objective 9.

## Recommendations

- The site is located within SPZ 3. Salary Brook is also adjacent to the east of the site. Policy PP9 could be drafted to ensure the protection of water quality within this water course and that its biodiversity value is conserved and enhanced.

## Berechurch

■ Policy PP10: Land South of Berechurch Hall Road, Colchester

Proposed for allocation for approximately 875 homes

**Table 5.25: Summary of SA findings**

SA objectives	Site 10687	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP10
SA1: Housing	++	++
SA2: Efficient use of land	--	--
SA3: Economic growth	-	-
SA4: Transport	+	+
SA5: Community and health and wellbeing	+	+
SA6: Services and facilities	-	+
SA7: Historic environment	--?	-?
SA8: Biodiversity and geodiversity	--	-
SA9: Landscape	-?	-?
SA10: Climate change	N/A	N/A
SA11: Flood risk	0	0
SA12: Waste	N/A	N/A
SA13: Air quality	-	-
SA14: Water	--	--

**5.227** Policy PP10 requires the development of site 10687 to be supported by a Minerals Resource Assessment. This requirement is likely to help support more efficient use of land and natural resources by preventing the loss of access to viable minerals in the plan area. However, the policy would not mitigate the loss of greenfield land and Grade 2 and Grade 3 agricultural soils within the site. As such the significant negative effect recorded for the site in relation to **SA objective 2: Efficient use of land** remains applicable.

**5.228** Site 10687 is within close proximity to multiple bus stops, and a cycling route, although is located some distance from the closest railway station. Policy PP10 requires the development of site 10687 to provide safe and suitable site access, which could help limit the potential for congestion in the area. Furthermore, the policy requires that pedestrian access is achieved within and throughout the site to existing footpaths and PRowS. These requirements may help to encourage travel by active modes, but they are not of a scale to warrant the identification of significant positive effect and as such, the minor positive effect received in the policy-off appraisal in relation to **SA objective 4: Transport**, remains applicable.

**5.229** The site is close to existing open space as well as a PRow which could support higher levels of physical activity among new residents. However, the site is not close to an existing healthcare facility and an overall minor positive effect was recorded in relation to **SA objective 5: Community and Health and wellbeing** for the policy-off appraisal. The policy requires that the development provides for the enhancement of the quality and value of Camulodunum Way open space which is located to the north of the site. This requirement could enhance the open space accessible to residents in the area but would not address the lack of immediate access to a healthcare facility and therefore the minor positive effect remains applicable.

**5.230** Site 10687 is within close proximity to an existing primary school, although is located some distance from the closest secondary school and the nearest Town, District or Local Centre. This is reflected in the minor negative effect recorded for the policy-off appraisal in relation to **SA objective 6: Services and facilities**. Policy PP10 however, seeks to address this through the provision of appropriate service uses / facilities to create a new Local

Centre(s), which will serve the communities across the site. Furthermore, the development of the site should meet the infrastructure requirements of the IDP, which are expected to include education provision. Given the requirements of the policy, an improved minor positive effect is recorded in relation to SA objective 6 for the site.

**5.231** The site is required by Policy PP10 to conserve, and where appropriate, enhance the significance of heritage assets (including any contribution made by their settings). The site is within 100m of a Scheduled Monument and therefore an uncertain significant negative effect has been recorded for the site policy-off in relation to **SA objective 7: Historic environment**. Given the requirements of the policy, which include requirements relating to the nearby Scheduled Monument, an improved uncertain minor negative effect is recorded in relation to SA objective 7. The residual negative effect is recorded to note the potential sensitivities of the location.

**5.232** The requirement of Policy PP10 to provide green infrastructure is set out in the text to maximise benefits for biodiversity and habitat creation and to benefit landscape. Site 10687 lies relatively close to the Roman River SSSI which is to the south east, meaning development on the site could potentially impact this sensitive area. The site is also within close proximity to a number of Local Wildlife Sites. However, the Biodiversity Assessment concluded that the site itself has limited natural value with development likely to have little/no harm on biodiversity. Given the proximity of biodiversity sites a significant negative effect was recorded for the policy-off appraisal in relation to **SA objective 8: Biodiversity**. The policy directly addresses the mitigation of effects relating to these biodiversity assets, requiring the development of the site to provide measures to mitigate the impacts of recreational disturbance to the Roman River Valley SSSI and stating that onsite biodiversity net gain measures should focus on improving east to west connectivity between Gosbecks to the west and Friday Woods to the east. As such an improved minor negative effect is expected for the site allocated through Policy PP10 in relation to SA objective 8.

## Recommendations

- Policy PP10 could acknowledge the location of site 10687 within an area identified as having medium inherent landscape value in the Landscape Character Assessment work undertaken in support of the plan. The policy text could include screening measures, such as the protection of existing tree belts, and hedgerow to ensure that development is sensitively integrated into the landscape. This could include those at the southern boundary of the site as well as the boundaries towards the west by Layer Road and towards the east at Bounstead Road.

## New Town and Christchurch

- Policy PP11: Europit Site, Colchester

Proposed for allocation for approximately 40 homes

*This site is carried forward from the adopted Local Plan*

- Policy PP12: Robertsons Van Hire Site, Colchester

Proposed for allocation for approximately 6 homes

*This site is carried forward from the adopted Local Plan*

- Policy PP13: 146 Magdalen Street Site, Colchester

Proposed for allocation for approximately 15 homes

*This site is carried forward from the adopted Local Plan*

**Table 5.26: Summary of SA findings**

SA objectives	Site 10984	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP11	Site 10988	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP12	Site 10986	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP13
SA1: Housing	+	+	+	+	+	+
SA2: Efficient use of land	++	++	++	++	++	++
SA3: Economic growth	-	-	-	-	-	-
SA4: Transport	++	++	++	++	++	++
SA5: Community and health and wellbeing	+	+	+	+	+	+
SA6: Services and facilities	+	+	+	+	+	+
SA7: Historic environment	--?	-?	--?	-?	--?	-?
SA8: Biodiversity and geodiversity	-	-	-	-	0	0
SA9: Landscape	0?	0?	0?	0?	0?	0?
SA10: Climate change	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
SA11: Flood risk	0	+	0	+	0	+
SA12: Waste	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
SA13: Air quality	0	0	0	0	0	0
SA14: Water	-	-	-	-	-	-

**5.233** A significant positive effect is expected for all three policies in relation to **SA objective 2: Efficient use of land** given that the locations set out for allocation are predominantly brownfield land. Furthermore, Policy PP11 sets out



the requirement for development to achieve densities appropriate to an urban area, which is likely to support more efficient use of land in this part of the urban area. As such there is potential for this policy to strengthen the significant positive effect recorded in relation to SA objective 2.

**5.234** Policies PP11, PP12 and PP13 require development to provide active travel links that maximise opportunities for enhanced connectivity to the surrounding area including the city centre and railway stations and opportunities to maximise the use of sustainable transport. A significant positive effect is identified for sites 10984, 10988 and 10986 in relation to **SA objective 4: Transport** without considering any requirements included in the policies given their close proximity to Colchester Town Railway Station, numerous bus stops and cycleways. The policy requirements could help to strengthen the significant positive effect identified.

**5.235** An uncertain significant negative effect is expected for the policy-off appraisal of sites 10984, 10988 and 10986 in relation to **SA objective 7: Historic environment**. The negative effect reflects the close proximity of these sites to numerous designated heritage assets including the Colchester Area 1 and New Town Conservation Areas and several Listed Buildings. Policies PP11, PP12 and PP13 include requirements that development must conserve, and where appropriate, enhance the significance of nearby heritage assets. Given the requirements of the policies, an improved uncertain minor negative effect is recorded for Policies PP11, PP12 and PP13 in relation to SA objective 7. The residual negative effect for the policies is recorded to note the potential sensitivities of the locations proposed for allocation.

**5.236** None of the policies appraised in this section include requirements that are likely to help mitigate impacts relating to biodiversity and as such their appraisal is based entirely upon their policy-off appraisal. Sites 10984 and 10988 which are proposed for allocation through Policies PP11 and PP12 are located within 250m of Colchester Roman Wall Local Wildlife Site. The Biodiversity Assessment identified that the development of sites 10984 and 10988 would result in little/no harm given that these sites have limited natural habitat. Site 10986 is not assessed in the Biodiversity Assessment, however the Site 10986 does not lie close to any biodiversity assets. The closest biodiversity

feature is Colchester Roman Wall Local Wildlife Site which is within 350m to the north west. There is substantial existing development between the site 10986 and this feature. As such a minor negative effect is recorded for Policies PP11 and PP12 in relation to **SA objective 8: Biodiversity and geodiversity** and a negligible effect is recorded for Policy PP13 in relation to this SA objective.

**5.237** All three of the sites fall outside of Flood Zones 2 and 3 and mostly lie outside of higher risk surface water flood areas. An improved minor positive effect is expected for Policies PP11, PP12 and PP13 in relation to **SA objective 11: Flood risk** given they require development to provide contributions towards flood risk solutions, which will help to reduce flood risk at the site and surroundings.

**5.238** The sites lie within SPZ 3. As such, a minor negative effect has been recorded policy-off in relation to **SA objective 14: Water**. Policies PP11, PP12 and PP13 require the development of these sites to demonstrate adequate wastewater management capacity. However, the requirements included will not address the potential for contamination of water resources during construction. As such the minor negative effect recorded in relation to SA objective 14 remains applicable.

## Recommendations

- No recommendations are proposed.

## Old Heath and the Heath

- Policy PP14: Gas Works and Hythe Scrap Yard Site, Colchester

Proposed for allocation for approximately 200 homes

*This site is carried forward from the adopted Local Plan*

- Policy PP15: Hawkins Road, Colchester

Proposed for allocation for approximately 50 homes

*This site is carried forward from the adopted Local Plan*

■ Policy PP16: Coal Yard Site, Colchester

Proposed for allocation for approximately 50 homes

*This site is carried forward from the adopted Local Plan*

**Table 5.27: Summary of SA findings**

SA objectives	Site 10979	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP14	Site 10980 a	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP15	Site 10982	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP16
SA1: Housing	++	++	+	+	+	+
SA2: Efficient use of land	++	++	++	++	++	++
SA3: Economic growth	-	-	-	-	-	-
SA4: Transport	++	++	++	++	++	++
SA5: Community and health and wellbeing	+	+	+	+	+	+
SA6: Services and facilities	+	+	-	-	-	-
SA7: Historic environment	--?	-	--?	-	--?	-
SA8: Biodiversity and geodiversity	--	-	-	-	-	0

SA objectives	Site 10979	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP14	Site 10980 a	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP15	Site 10982	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP16
SA9: Landscape	0?	0?	0?	0?	0?	0?
SA10: Climate change	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
SA11: Flood risk	0	+	--	+/-	-	+
SA12: Waste	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
SA13: Air quality	-	-	-	-	-	-
SA14: Water	-	-	-	-	-	-

**5.239** A significant positive effect is expected for Policies PP14, PP15 and PP16 in relation to **SA objective 2: Efficient use of land** given that the land proposed for allocation comprises brownfield land. Policies PP14, PP15 and PP16 set out requirements for development to be at densities appropriate to an urban area. Given that the policies could help support increased densities in the urban area, there is potential for the significant positive effect expected in relation to SA objective 2 to be strengthened.

**5.240** Policies PP14, PP15 and PP16 require development to provide active travel links that maximise opportunities for enhanced connectivity to the surrounding area including the city centre and railway stations and opportunities to maximise the use of sustainable transport. In addition, Policy PP14 requires development to be connected to PRow Colchester 144 and Policy PP15 requires development to contribute to the restoration of the riverside footpath to provide convenient public access for pedestrians and cyclists. A significant positive effect is identified for sites 10979, 10980a and 10982 in relation to **SA objective 4: Transport** without considering any requirements included in the policy given that they are all close to Hythe Railway Station, numerous bus stops and cycleway. There is potential for the policy requirements set out to

strengthen the significant positive effect already identified in relation to SA objective 4.

**5.241** Policy PP14 is likely to support the health and wellbeing of residents given that it requires contributions towards enhancement of the quality and value of Old Heath Recreation Ground. The minor positive effect recorded for the policy-off appraisal of site 10979 in relation to **SA objective 5: Community health and wellbeing** reflects its close proximity to areas of open space and PRow as well as a GP surgery. The development of this site could support regeneration within an area of relatively high deprivation, however it could also result in residents being affected by odours given its location within 250m of a Safeguarding Area of a waste management facility. The requirements of the policy will benefit residents at the site and surroundings in terms of their access to open space and recreation. However, it will not address the potential for odour to affect residents at the site and therefore the minor positive effect is recorded in relation to SA objective 5 remains applicable. No requirements are set out in Policy PP15 and PP16 and therefore the policy-off minor positive effect recorded for SA objective 5 given the location of these sites close to areas of open space and PRow, but less well related to the nearest healthcare facility, remains applicable. It is also notable that the proposed allocation set out through Policy PP16 includes land that could be affected by noise pollution associated with the railway line to the east.

**5.242** An uncertain significant negative effect is expected for the policy-off appraisal of sites 10979, site 10980a and site 10982 in relation to **SA objective 7: Historic environment** given that they are close to several designated heritage assets, including Hythe Conservation Area which is adjacent to the west. Policies PP14, PP15 and PP16 include requirements that development must conserve, and where appropriate, enhance the significance of heritage assets close to the site. Given the requirements of the policies, an improved uncertain minor negative effect is recorded for Policies PP14, PP15 and PP16 in relation to SA objective 7. The residual negative effect for the policies is recorded to note the potential sensitivities of the locations proposed for allocation.

**5.243** Site 10979 intersects with a deciduous woodland priority habitat and lies within 1km of Upper Colne Marches SSSI. The Biodiversity Assessment sets out that the site has no significant habitat value, and development is unlikely to result in harm to biodiversity assets. Adopting a precautionary approach a significant negative effect is expected for the policy-off appraisal of site 10979 in relation to **SA objective 8: Biodiversity and geodiversity** given that includes areas of priority habitat. A minor negative effect is expected for the policy-off appraisal of sites 10980a and 10982 as they are close to several priority habitats including a mudflats habitat adjacent to the west. Site 10982 is also close to The Moors Local Wildlife Site. The Biodiversity Assessment identified that development at these sites is likely to have little/no harm to biodiversity assets given although both sites are adjacent to the River Colne, there is limited natural habitat within their boundaries. Policies PP14 and PP15 require development to incorporate ecological mitigation measures. Policy PP14 requires development to retain wooded areas and Policy PP15 requires development to improve the environment while contributing to the restoration of the riverside footpath. Given the policy requirements set out, a minor negative effect is considered applicable for Policies PP14 and PP15 in relation to SA objective 8. Policy PP16 does not set out requirements relating to the natural environment and therefore no change is expected in relation to the minor negative effect recorded policy-off in relation to SA objective 8.

**5.244** A minor positive effect is expected for Policies PP14, PP15 and PP16 in relation to **SA objective 11: Flood risk** as these policies require development to provide contributions towards flood risk solutions, which will help to reduce flood risk at the site in the surrounding areas. A significant negative effect is expected for the policy-off appraisal of site 10980a as it partially lies within Flood Zone 3 and wholly within Flood Zone 2. In addition, a minor negative effect is expected for the policy-off appraisal of site 10982 as it includes a small area of Flood Zone 3 and lies wholly within Flood Zone 2. Site 10979 includes only a small area of Flood Zones 2 and 3 at its northern boundary. Policies PP14 and PP16 both also require that residential development must not be located in the areas of the site that fall within Flood Zones 2 or 3. The requirements of these policies are expected to mitigate flood risk within the site and no negative effect is recorded in relation to SA objective 11. For Policy PP15 a minor negative effect remains applicable given the relatively high flood

risk at the site proposed for allocation. This is part of a mixed minor positive and minor negative effect given the requirement to contribute to flood risk solutions.

**5.245** The sites lie within SPZ 3 and are also close to the River Colne. As such, given the potential for contamination of water resources, including within the nearby river, a minor negative effect has been recorded policy-off in relation to **SA objective 14: Water**. Policies PP14, PP15 and PP16 require the development of these sites to demonstrate adequate wastewater management capacity. However, the requirements included will not address the potential for contamination of water resources during construction. As such the minor negative effect recorded in relation to SA objective 14 remains applicable.

## Recommendations

- Policy PP15 allocates land adjacent to the River Colne. The policy could be strengthened by requiring development to support biodiversity improvements and the protection of water quality in relation to the river corridor.
- Policy PP15 allocated land that is partly within Flood Zone 3. The policy could require development to be situated within areas of lower flood risk or include more substantial requirements relating to mitigating flood risk.

## Hythe Opportunity Areas

- Policy OA1: King Edward Quay Opportunity Area

Proposed for allocation for approximately 200 homes

*This site is carried forward from the adopted Local Plan*

- Policy OA2: Hawkins Road Opportunity Area

Proposed for allocation for approximately 150 homes

*This site is carried forward from the adopted Local Plan*



**Table 5.28: Summary of SA findings**

SA objectives	Site 10994a	Site considering mitigation in Policy OA1	Site 10981a	Site considering mitigation in Policy OA2
SA1: Housing	++	++	++	++
SA2: Efficient use of land	++	++	++	++
SA3: Economic growth	-	-	-	-
SA4: Transport	++	++	++	++
SA5: Community and health and wellbeing	+	+	+	+
SA6: Services and facilities	-	-	-	-
SA7: Historic environment	--?	--?	--?	-?
SA8: Biodiversity and geodiversity	--	--	-	-
SA9: Landscape	0?	0?	0?	0?
SA10: Climate change	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
SA11: Flood risk	--	+/-	--	+/-
SA12: Waste	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
SA13: Air quality	-	-	-	-
SA14: Water	--	-	-	-

**5.246** Policy OA1 requires that the development of the King Edward Quay Opportunity Area (site 10994a) supports the use of residential moorings by boats of acceptable quality. The site has been appraised as having a significant

positive effect in relation to **SA objective 1: Housing** given its relatively large capacity for housing. This requirement of the policy may strengthen the positive effect already identified by supporting the provision of additional, alternative forms of accommodation that are of an appropriate standard for local people.

**5.247** A significant positive effect is expected for Policies OA1 and OA2 in relation to **SA objective 2: Efficient use of land** given that the land proposed for allocation comprises brownfield land. The policies set out requirements for development to be at densities appropriate to an urban area. Given that the policies could help support increased densities in the urban area, there is potential for the significant positive effect expected in relation to SA objective 2 to be strengthened.

**5.248** Policies OA1 and OA2 require that development of sites 10994a and 10981a provides for a compatible mix of uses having regard to neighbouring amenity. Furthermore, proposals for residential development should be located away from land which is contaminated. These requirements are likely to help protect the health and wellbeing of new residents. Policy OA1 includes the additional requirement for green infrastructure to be provided at site 10994a which should include the provision of an urban park. The policy-off appraisal of site 10994a considers its location close to the safeguarding area for a non-hazardous waste transfer site and the potential for adverse effects relating to odour. While Policy OA1 would promote a range of benefits relating to health and wellbeing, it does not directly address this issue and therefore a significant positive effect for **SA objective 5: Community and health and wellbeing** is not considered appropriate and the minor positive effect remains applicable. While site 10981a has not been appraised as likely to be affected by odour, the range of benefits that are promoted by the relevant site allocation policy (OA2) are of a lesser scale than those required by Policy OA1. Therefore, the minor positive effect identified policy-off for the site, also remains applicable.

**5.249** Site 10981a is required by Policy OA2 to be developed to respond to the distinctive historic character of the area and reinforce the significance of the Hythe Conservation Area. The site is adjacent to the Hythe Conservation Area, which contains a number of Listed Buildings and therefore an uncertain significant negative effect has been recorded for the site policy-off. Given the

requirements of the policy, an improved uncertain minor negative effect is recorded in relation to **SA objective 7: Historic environment** for the site. The residual negative effect is recorded to note the potential sensitivities of the location. No requirements relating to the conservation of the historic environment are included in Policy OA1 and therefore the uncertain significant negative effect identified in relation to SA objective 7 remains applicable. This reflects the site's close proximity to Distillery Pond Conservation Area.

**5.250** The requirement of Policy OA1 to provide green infrastructure is set out in the text to maximise benefits for biodiversity and habitat creation and to benefit landscape. Site 10994a lies within 1km of Upper Colne Marshes SSSI and is also close to areas of priority habitat. This is reflected in the significant negative effect recorded for the policy-off appraisal in relation to **SA objective 8: Biodiversity**. While the policy does not directly address the mitigation of effects relating to these biodiversity assets, the provision of a new urban park could help to promote habitat connectivity and limit the potential for recreational pressures on existing habitats in the surroundings. As such an improved minor negative effect is expected for the site allocated through Policy OA1 in relation to SA objective 8. The site lies within the developed area of Colchester and therefore was not identified as having medium or high inherent landscape value in the Landscape Character Assessment work undertaken in support of the plan. The policy-off appraisal of site 10994a was therefore recorded as uncertain negligible. The delivery of a new urban park could have some benefits for the character of the area. However, this provision is likely to be limited to benefits for the immediate surroundings and is not considered to be of a scale to warrant the identification of a positive effect in relation to **SA objective 9: Landscape**. Therefore, the uncertain negligible effect remains applicable. Policy OA2 does not include requirements that would address ecology or landscape character and therefore no change is reported in relation to the effects recorded for SA objectives 8 and 9.

**5.251** Much of sites 10994a and 10981a lie within flood zone 3. As such a significant negative effect has been recorded policy-off for both sites in relation to **SA objective 11: Flood risk**. The development of the sites is required by Policies OA1 and OA2 to respond to flood risk constraints of the area and to contribute towards flood risk solutions. As such an improved mixed minor

positive and minor negative effect is recorded in relation to SA objective 11. The mixed effect acknowledges the mitigation required but also the potential vulnerability of the sites in relation to flooding.

## Recommendations

- Policy OA1 could be drafted to specifically require development to ensure that the development of site 10994a protects water quality within the nearby River Colne as construction occurs and the site is occupied.
- Policy OA1 could acknowledge the proximity of site 10994a to Distillery Pond Conservation Area which is within 90m to the south west. The policy text could require development to respond positively to the setting of the Conservation Area.

## Magdalen Street - Opportunity Area

- Policy OA3: Magdalen Street Opportunity Area

Proposed for allocation for approximately 100 homes

*This site is carried forward from the adopted Local Plan*

**Table 5.29: Summary of SA findings**

SA objectives	Site 10987a	Site considering mitigation in Policy OA3
SA1: Housing	++	++
SA2: Efficient use of land	++	++
SA3: Economic growth	0	+

SA objectives	Site 10987a	Site considering mitigation in Policy OA3
SA4: Transport	++	++
SA5: Community and health and wellbeing	+	+
SA6: Services and facilities	+	+
SA7: Historic environment	--?	-?
SA8: Biodiversity and geodiversity	0	0
SA9: Landscape	0?	0?
SA10: Climate change	N/A	N/A
SA11: Flood risk	0	+
SA12: Waste	N/A	N/A
SA13: Air quality	-	-
SA14: Water	-	-

**5.252** A significant positive effect is expected for Policy OA3 in relation to **SA objective 2: Efficient use of land** given that the land proposed for allocation comprises brownfield land. Policy OA3 set out requirements for development to be at densities appropriate to an urban area. Given that the policy could help support increased densities in the urban area, there is potential for the significant positive effect expected in relation to SA objective 2 to be strengthened.

**5.253** Site 10987a is identified as containing an employment generating use. However, Policy OA3 requires that development retains existing businesses where possible or considers relocation where necessary which is likely to mitigate any adverse impacts relating to access to jobs in the area. The site is also close Colchester City Centre. Overall given the potential to mitigate

existing employment generating uses at the site, a minor positive effect is expected in relation to **SA objective 3: Economic growth**.

**5.254** Policy OA3 requires development to provide pedestrian and cycle routes and connections to link to the City Centre and wider networks. A significant positive effect is identified for sites 10987a in relation to **SA objective 4: Transport** without considering any requirements included in the policy given that it is close to Colchester Town Railway Station, numerous bus stops and a cycleway. There is potential for the policy requirements set out to strengthen the significant positive effect already identified in relation to SA objective 4.

**5.255** Policy OA3 requires that development of site 10987a provides for a compatible mix of uses having regard to neighbouring amenity. These requirements are likely to help protect the health and wellbeing of new residents. Site 10987a is located in close proximity to an area of open space, PRowS and a healthcare facility at Wimpole Road, however, it is within an area affected by noise pollution associated with the A134. Policy OA3 could help to protect the amenity and health and wellbeing of nearby residents, but it does not directly address the issue of noise pollution. It is not considered that the requirements would result in further benefits relating to the health and wellbeing of new residents and therefore the minor positive effect recorded in relation to **SA objective 5: Community and health and wellbeing** remain applicable.

**5.256** The site is located within accessible walking distance of a primary school and Colchester City Centre. It is less well related to the nearest secondary school. Policy OA3 requires the development to meet any site specific requirements of the IDP, which is expected to include education provision. The requirements of the policy could support improved service provision in the area. However, given that the specific requirement is not set out in the policy text and that any provision could be limited to contributions towards new school facilities, it is not considered appropriate to record a significant positive effect in relation to access to services. Therefore, the minor positive effect recorded in the policy-off appraisal in relation to **SA objective 6: Services and facilities**, remains applicable.

**5.257** Site 10987a is required by Policy OA3 to be developed to respond to the distinctive historic character of the area and reinforce the significance of the New Town Conservation Area. The site is adjacent to the New Town Conservation Area, which contains a number of Listed Buildings and therefore an uncertain significant negative effect has been recorded for the site policy-off. Given the requirements of the policy, an improved uncertain minor negative effect is recorded in relation to **SA objective 7: Historic environment** for the site. The residual negative effect is recorded to note the potential sensitivities of the location.

**5.258** Site 10987a is not close to any internationally, nationally, or locally designated sites. The Biodiversity Assessment identified that the development of the site would result in little/no harm given that the site itself lacks natural habitat. This is reflected in the negligible effect received in the policy-off appraisal in relation to **SA objective 8: Biodiversity and geodiversity**. The policy does not include requirements that would support improvements in the ecological value of the area and as such the negligible effect remains applicable.

**5.259** Much of site 10987a is not within Flood Zone 2 or 3 or an area at risk of surface water flooding. As such a negligible effect has been recorded policy-off for the site in relation to **SA objective 11: Flood risk**. The development of the site is required by Policies OA3 to contribute towards flood risk solutions. As such, given that the policy could support reduced flood risks in the wider area, an improved minor positive effect is recorded in relation to SA objective 11.

**5.260** The site lies within SPZ 3. As such, given the potential for contamination of water resources a minor negative effect has been recorded policy-off in relation to **SA objective 14: Water**. Policy OA3 requires the development of the site to demonstrate adequate wastewater management capacity. However, the requirements included will not address the potential for contamination of water resources during construction. As such the minor negative effect recorded in relation to SA objective 14 remains applicable.



## Recommendations

- No recommendations are proposed.

## Knowledge Gateway

- Policy PEP2: Knowledge Gateway

Land safeguarded for employment purposes

*This site is carried forward from the adopted Local Plan*

**Table 5.30: Summary of SA findings**

SA objectives	Policy PEP2
SA1: Housing	0
SA2: Efficient use of land	+
SA3: Economic growth	++
SA4: Transport	+
SA5: Community and health and wellbeing	+
SA6: Services and facilities	+/-
SA7: Historic environment	-?
SA8: Biodiversity and geodiversity	-
SA9: Landscape	0?
SA10: Climate change	0
SA11: Flood risk	0
SA12: Waste	0

SA objectives	Policy PEP2
SA13: Air quality	0
SA14: Water	-

**5.261** The land safeguarded for employment purposes at the Knowledge Gateway is mostly developed. Should any further development occur within the safeguarded area it is likely to involve the replacement or extension of existing buildings. As such the policy supports more efficient land use in Colchester and a minor positive effect is expected in relation to **SA objective 2: Efficient use of land**.

**5.262** The safeguarding of the site is set out in Policy OA4 to support additional jobs and expansion of the existing research and technology use. The retention of the land in employment use is likely to support employment opportunities in Colchester, including those in higher value sectors. As such a significant positive effect is likely in relation to **SA objective 3: Economic growth**. Growth in higher paying jobs is likely to be further supported by development of research associated with the university which is also set out in the policy. This approach is likely to have additional benefits in relation to the university and could support its longer sustainability as a facility that benefits local people. A minor positive effect is therefore recorded in relation to **SA objectives 5: Community and health and wellbeing** and **6: Services and facilities**. The effect recorded also reflects the proximity of the site to a small number of areas of open space and the University Health Centre that employees at the site could make use of. For SA objective 6 the minor positive effect is combined with a minor negative effect given that the site is located some distance from the nearest existing local centre where additional services and facilities might be accessible.

**5.263** The safeguarded land is located adjacent to several bus stops and is served by a number of local cycle routes. It is also located relatively close to Hythe Railway Station. The policy requires that proposals for employment should provide active travel links with improved links to the surrounding area including the nearby garden community, university, city centre and Hythe

Railway Station. A minor positive effect is expected in relation to **SA objective 4: Transport**.

**5.264** The land safeguarded is adjacent to the Wivenhoe Park Register Park and close to a Schedule Monument (Group of barrows at Annan Road). Should any extension or expansion of buildings at the site occur, there is potential for impacts on the settings of these heritage assets and a minor negative effect is recorded in relation to **SA objective 7: Historic environment**. The land contains part of Wivenhoe Park Local Wildlife Site and University Marshes Local Wildlife Site is nearby. It is within the settlement boundary of Colchester and any changes to the employment uses at the site are likely to have more limited impacts on biodiversity assets and landscape setting given the existing levels of development present. A minor negative effect is recorded in relation to **SA objective 8: Biodiversity** to reflect the potential sensitivities of the land and a negligible effect is recorded in relation to SA objective 9: Landscape given the currently developed nature of the area. The effect recorded for SA objectives 7 and 9 are uncertain given that impacts on setting will depend in part on the specific design of any proposals for the land.

**5.265** Given that the land safeguarded falls within SPZ 3 there is potential for any new proposals to result in detrimental impacts on local water resources. There, a minor negative effect is expected for the policy in relation to **SA objective 14: Water**.

## Recommendations

- The policy could be strengthened by requiring that proposals at Knowledge Gateway to have regard to the Wivenhoe Local Wildlife Site and how its value might be enhanced. This could include through requirements for new green infrastructure to be delivered within the area.

## University of Essex

- Policy UE1: University of Essex

Land designated for university uses

**Table 5.31: Summary of SA findings**

SA objectives	Policy UE1
SA1: Housing	0
SA2: Efficient use of land	+/-
SA3: Economic growth	+
SA4: Transport	+
SA5: Community and health and wellbeing	+
SA6: Services and facilities	++
SA7: Historic environment	0?
SA8: Biodiversity and geodiversity	-
SA9: Landscape	-?
SA10: Climate change	0
SA11: Flood risk	0
SA12: Waste	0
SA13: Air quality	0
SA14: Water	-

**5.266** Policy UE1 designates land adjoining the Knowledge Gateway Employment Area and Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community for university uses. The policy covers the existing area of the university site and it does not allocate or safeguard land at this location for a specific use. Instead it sets out criteria that development at the location should meet if it is to be supported at this location.

**5.267** Development at the area could involve extensions of existing buildings and reuse of brownfield land. However, given that the area also contains sub-areas of Grade 3 agricultural land, an overall mixed minor positive and minor negative effect is expected in relation to **SA objective 2: Efficient use of land**.

**5.268** It is expected that the provision of additional university uses within the area will support opportunities for research and development in Colchester and there is potential for synergy with the nearby Knowledge Gateway location. Therefore, a minor positive effect is expected for the policy in relation to **SA objective 3: Economic growth**.

**5.269** The area is close to existing bus stops and cycle routes and is relatively close to Hythe Railway Station. Furthermore, the policy requires that any development at the site should seek to incorporate active travel links and improve connections to the surrounding area. As such a minor positive effect is recorded in relation to **SA objective 4: Transport**. The requirement in the policy for development to contribute to infrastructure in line with evidence in the IDP is likely to help mitigate impacts relating to transport as the university grows. These requirements will also support the provision of new social infrastructure to support new growth in the area and therefore a minor positive effect is also recorded for **SA objective 5: Community and health and wellbeing**.

**5.270** Given that the policy supports the provision of new uses for university purposes, a significant positive effects is recorded in relation to **SA objective 6: Services and facilities**. This reflects the benefits expected for access to education in the area.

**5.271** The university site contains the Grade II listed Wivenhoe House and Registered Park and Garden. It also lies within an area of medium landscape sensitivity. The policy requires that development has regard to the preservation and enhancement of the Registered Park and Garden but does not directly address landscape setting. As such a negligible effect is recorded in relation to **SA objective 7: Historic environment** and a minor negative effect is recorded in relation to **SA objective 9: Landscape**. Both effects are uncertain given that

they will depend largely on the design of any schemes that come forward at this location. The university area also contains Wivenhoe Local Wildlife Site. While the policy does not set out a specific level of development at the site, there is potential for expansion or extension of existing uses to result in adverse effects on this designation and a minor negative effect is recorded in relation to **SA objective 8: Biodiversity**.

**5.272** The area also contains part of SPZ 3. There is potential for construction activities associated with new university uses at the site to result in contamination of local water resources and therefore a minor negative effect is expected in relation to **SA objective 14: Water**.

## Recommendations

- The policy could be strengthened by requiring that proposals at university area to have regard to the Wivenhoe Local Wildlife Site and how its value might be enhanced. This could include through requirements for new green infrastructure to be delivered within the area.

## Marks Tey

- Policy PP17: Land South of A12, Marks Tey

Proposed for allocation for approximately 1,500 homes and commercial uses

- Policy PP18: Land North of A120, Marks Tey

Proposed for allocation for approximately 1,000 homes and commercial uses

- Policy PEP5: Marks Tey

Allocated for employment uses

■ Policy PEP6: Anderson's Site, Marks Tey

Safeguarded for employment uses

*This site benefits from existing planning permission*



Table 5.32: Summary of SA findings

SA objectives	Site 10690	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP17	Site 10747b	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP18	Site 10671	Site considering mitigation in Policy PEP5	Policy PEP6
SA1: Housing	+?	++	++	++	N/A	N/A	N/A
SA2: Efficient use of land	--	--	--	--	--	--	+
SA3: Economic growth	-	-	-	-	0	+	+
SA4: Transport	+	+	+	+	-	0	+
SA5: Community and health and wellbeing	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
SA6: Services and facilities	-	+	-	+	-	-	-
SA7: Historic environment	--?	-?	--?	-?	--?	--?	--?
SA8: Biodiversity and geodiversity	--	-	--	-	0	0	0

**Chapter 5** Appraisal findings for topic-based policies in the Local Plan

SA objectives	Site 10690	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP17	Site 10747b	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP18	Site 10671	Site considering mitigation in Policy PEP5	Policy PEP6
SA9: Landscape	-?	0?	-?	0?	-?	-?	-?
SA10: Climate change	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
SA11: Flood risk	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SA12: Waste	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
SA13: Air quality	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
SA14: Water	--	--	-	-	-	-	0

**5.273** The policy-off appraisal of site 10690 considered the delivery of a mix of uses including new homes, at this site. At that stage of appraisal, the expected number of homes to be delivered at the site was unknown. As such an uncertain minor positive effect was recorded in relation to **SA objective 1: Housing**. This effect is updated to significant positive when considered the text set out in Policy PP17 which requires that around 1,500 dwellings are delivered at the site.

**5.274** Policies PP17 and PP18, requires the development of sites 10690 and 10747b, to be supported by a Minerals Resource Assessment. This requirement is likely to help support more efficient use of land and natural resources by preventing the loss of access to viable minerals in the plan area. However, the policy would not mitigate the loss of greenfield land and Grade 2 and Grade 3 agricultural soils within the sites in question. Furthermore, Policies PEP5 and PEP6 do not include requirements that would help to address the protection of land resources in Colchester. As such the significant negative effect recorded policy off for sites 10690, 10747b, and 10671 in relation to **SA objective 2: Efficient use of land** remains applicable. Policy PEP6 is also expected to result in significant negative effect given that the safeguarding of this land for future employment uses could result in loss of Grade 2 agricultural soils at this location.

**5.275** Policy PEP5 allocates new land in Marks Tey for employment uses that would benefit the local community in terms of access to jobs. Furthermore, land is safeguarded for employment uses at Anderson's Site also in Marks Tey through Policy PEP6. As such, a minor positive effect is expected in relation to both policies for **SA objective 3: Economic growth**.

**5.276** Sites 10690, and 10747b are close to multiple bus stops as well as a railway station, although the sites are located some distance from cycling routes. Site 10671 is within close proximity of a railway station, although it is located some distance from a bus stop and cycling route. Policies PP17, PP18 and PEP5 require the development of the sites to provide safe and suitable site access, which could help limit the potential for congestion in the area. All three

policies also support the incorporation of sustainable travel links to enhance connectivity with the surrounding area. The residential site allocation policies (PP17 and PP18) require development to ensure connections within the sites and to existing PRoWs, including links to the railway station. Furthermore, Policy PP17 specifically promotes active travel connections to Copford Green. These requirements may help to encourage travel by sustainable and active modes. However, they are not considered to be of a scale to warrant the identification of significant positive effect in relation to **SA objective 4: Transport**. As such the minor positive effect received in the policy-off appraisal in relation to SA objective 4, remains applicable for Policies PP17 and PP18. An improved negligible effect is expected for Policy PEP5. While Policy PEP6 does not include any requirements relating to sustainable or active travel, the safeguarding of land for future employment uses at Anderson's Site could help to encourage travel by sustainable modes given the relatively good access from the site to bus stops and Marks Tey Train Station. A minor positive effect is therefore expected for this policy in relation to SA objective 4.

**5.277** Sites 10671, 10690 and 10747b are within close proximity to areas of public open space as well as a PRoW. However, Marks Tey does not contain a healthcare facility meaning residents at this location would have to travel to access this type of facility. The residential site allocation policies (PP17 and PP18) support opportunities to access facilities for recreation by requiring that residential development includes safe pedestrian access connecting to the site to existing footways and PRoWs. These requirements are likely to help protect and enhance the health and wellbeing of new residents in relation to recreation, but do not seek to address the lack of healthcare provision in the area. Policies PP17 and PP18 could also support improved service provision and community integration given that development is required to contain a mix of uses which support the creation of a sustainable community and should meet any infrastructure requirements identified by the IDP. The development of the land allocated by these two policies is also required to incorporate new local centres. Given that Policies PP17 and PP18 do not directly address access to healthcare, the minor positive effect recorded in relation to **SA objective 5: Community and health and wellbeing**, remains applicable. This is also the case for Policy PEP5 given that this policy also does not directly address health related issues. Policy PEP6 is expected to have a similar minor positive effect

given that the safeguarding policy does not include any requirements relating to healthcare or recreation and could support employment development in an area where residents could access to open space and PRowS during break times for recreational activities.

**5.278** While the residential sites allocated through Policies PP17 and PP18 are not well related to the larger town centre locations in Colchester (but are relatively close to Marks Tey Local Centre) and provide good access to existing primary schools but not a secondary school, the policy requirements are likely to help improve service provision accessible from these locations. Therefore, the minor negative effect recorded through the policy-off appraisal is improved to a minor positive effect in relation to **SA objective 6: Services and facilities**. Given that the employment related Policies PEP5 and PEP6 would allocate or safeguard land for employment uses where it is located more than 400m from the relatively limited service offer at Marks Tey Local Centre, a minor negative effect is recorded in relation to SA objective 6. The effect recorded also reflect the policy wording included which does not address service provision in the plan area.

**5.279** Although it is not constrained by a Conservation Area, Marks Tey contains several Listed Buildings. All of the areas identified for allocation or safeguarding are close to assets of this nature. Policies PP17 and PP18 require the development of the sites in question to conserve, and where appropriate, enhance the significance of heritage assets. Given the requirements included, an improved uncertain minor negative effect is recorded in relation to **SA objective 7: Historic environment** for Policies PP17 and PP18. The residual negative effect is recorded to note the potential sensitivities of the location. An uncertain significant negative effect is recorded for Policies PEP5 and PEP6 in relation to SA objective 7 given that the areas allocated and safeguarded could result in employment development in locations close to heritage assets and no mitigation is required by the relevant policy text.

**5.280** Site 10690 contains an area of priority habitat. Site 10747b is adjacent to areas of priority habitat and is close to a Local Wildlife Site and is within 250m of Marks Tey Brickpit SSSI. The Biodiversity Assessment identified that the development of both sites has the potential to result in harm in relation to

nearby biodiversity assets. This is reflected in the significant negative effect received in the policy-off appraisal in relation to **SA objective 8: Biodiversity and geodiversity**. Policies PP17 and PP18 requires the achievement of biodiversity net gain including through the potential for habitat creation, identifying important habitats and species that should be protected and enhanced at both locations. As such an improved minor negative effect is expected in relation to SA objective 8 for Policies PP17 and PP18. The potential for delivering additional employment uses in Marks Tey could have some implications for biodiversity assets in the area. However, the land proposed for allocation and safeguarding through Policies PEP5 and PEP6 is some distance from the nearest identified ecological features. While neither policy seeks to mitigate effects relating to biodiversity, a negligible effect is expected for both policies in relation to SA objective 8.

**5.281** Land at Marks Tey is located within an area identified as having medium inherent landscape value in the Landscape Character Assessment work undertaken in support of the plan. The policy-off appraisal is therefore recorded as an uncertain minor negative effect for all sites within the settlement in relation to **SA objective 9: Landscape**. Policies PP17 and PP18 require that locally appropriate screening is incorporated along site boundaries. These measures are required by the policy to ensure that the development is sensitively integrated into the landscape to reflect and reinforce the area's character, tranquillity, and visual quality. As such, given the mitigation set out in the policies, an improved uncertain negligible effect is recorded in relation to SA objective 9. Given the relatively sensitivity of the landscape at the locations allocated and safeguarded for employment uses through Policies PEP5 and PEP6 and the lack of mitigation required by these policies in relation to this issue, an un uncertain minor negative effect is recorded in relation to SA objective 9.

**5.282** All land at Marks Tey lies within SPZ 3. Furthermore, residential site option 10690 contain parts of waterbody which could be affected by run off as construction occurs and site option 10747 is located relatively close to this type of feature. As such, a significant negative effect has been recorded policy-off for site 10690 and a minor negative effect has been recorded for the policy-off appraisal of site 10747 in relation to **SA objective 14: Water**. Policies PP17

and PP18 require the development of sites to demonstrate adequate wastewater management capacity. However, the requirements included will not address the potential for contamination of water resources during construction. As such the significant and minor negative effect recorded in relation to SA objective 14 remains applicable for these policies. Policy PEP5 and PEP6 do not include any requirements that would help address water resources in the area. Given that at both locations, employment development could occur within areas of SPZ 3, a minor negative effect is recorded in relation to SA objective 14.

## Recommendations

- Policies PEP5 and PEP6 allocate and safeguard land for employment uses that would be located close to a Listed Building. The policy text for these policies could require the development of the site to conserve, and where appropriate, enhance the significance of heritage assets (including any contribution made by their settings). It is recognised that the conditions associated with the planning permission for the development of the land identified in relation to Policy PEP6 is likely to help mitigate a range of effects relating to the potential development of this land.

## Tiptree

- Policy PP19: Land North of Oak Road, Tiptree

Proposed for allocation for approximately 600 homes

- Policy PP20: Land at Bonnie Blue Oak, Tiptree

Proposed for allocation for approximately 30 homes

- Policy PP21: Highlands, Kelvedon Road, Tiptree

Proposed for allocation for approximately 10 homes



- Policy PP22: Telephone Exchange, Tiptree

Proposed for allocation for approximately 5 homes

- Policy PEP7: Highland Nursery, Tiptree

Safeguarded for employment uses in accordance with the adopted Tiptree Neighbourhood Plan

- Policy PEP8: Land South of Factory Hill, Tiptree

Proposed for allocation for employment uses

*This site is carried forward from the adopted Local Plan*

Table 5.33: Summary of SA findings

SA objectives	Site 10657	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP19	Site 10261	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP20	Site 10262	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP21	Site 10991	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP22	Policy PEP7	10527	Site considering mitigation in Policy PEP8
SA1: Housing	++	++	+	+	+	+	+	+	N/A	N/A	N/A
SA2: Efficient use of land	--	--	-	-	++	++	++	++	--	--	--
SA3: Economic growth	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0	+	+	+
SA4: Transport	-	+/-	-	0	-	0	-	0	0	-	0
SA5: Community and health and wellbeing	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+

**Chapter 5** Appraisal findings for topic-based policies in the Local Plan

SA objectives	Site 10657	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP19	Site 10261	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP20	Site 10262	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP21	Site 10991	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP22	Policy PEP7	10527	Site considering mitigation in Policy PEP8
SA6: Services and facilities	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	-	+	+
SA7: Historic environment	--?	-?	--?	-?	--?	-?	-?	0	-?	-?	-?
SA8: Biodiversity and geodiversity	--	+	-	0	-	0	-	0	-	--	--
SA9: Landscape	-?	+	-?	-?	-?	-?	0?	0?	-?	0?	0?
SA10: Climate change	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
SA11: Flood risk	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

**Chapter 5** Appraisal findings for topic-based policies in the Local Plan

SA objectives	Site 10657	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP19	Site 10261	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP20	Site 10262	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP21	Site 10991	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP22	Policy PEP7	10527	Site considering mitigation in Policy PEP8
SA12: Waste	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
SA13: Air quality	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	-	-
SA14: Water	-	-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	-	-

**5.283** The safeguarding of land for employment uses at Highlands Nursery through Policy PEP7 in accordance with the adopted Tiptree Neighbourhood Plan would likely result in the loss of greenfield land which contains Grade 3 agricultural soils. Given that the Local Plan policy does not seek to address the efficient use of land resources at the site, a significant negative effect is expected for this policy in relation to **SA objective 2: Efficient use of land**. The remaining policies appraised in this section also do not consider the potential to promote more efficient use of land resources as part of development and therefore the effects recorded reflect those reported for the policy-off appraisal of the associated site options.

**5.284** Only policies PEP7 and PEP8 relate to the potential delivery of employment uses in the District. Through Policy PEP7 the Land at Highlands Nursery is safeguarded for employment in the Local Plan in accordance with the adopted Tiptree Neighbourhood Plan. Policy PEP8 allocates land South of Factory Hill also for employment uses. Given the relatively small nature of both areas of land, the positive effect expected in relation to **SA objective 3: Economic growth** is minor. The effect expected for Policies PP19, PP20, PP21 and PP22 reflects the policy-off appraisal of the associated sites given that the policy text included does not seek to address economic growth in the plan area.

**5.285** Sites 10657, 10261, 10262, 10991, and 10527 are all within close proximity to multiple bus stops, although each site is located some distance from the closest railway station and cycling route. The requirement included in Policies PP19, PP20, PP21, PP22, PEP7, and PEP8 for development to provide safe and suitable site access, could help limit the potential for congestion in the area as development occurs and is occupied. Furthermore, all policies promote the incorporation of active travel links to enhance connectivity to the surrounding area. These requirements may help to encourage travel by active modes and therefore an improved negligible effect is recorded for Policies PP20, PP21, PP22 and PEP8 in relation to **SA objective 4: Transport**. For Policy PP19 the improved effect is reported as minor positive given the policy requirement for development to secure a new link road. The effect is combined with a minor negative given that while this improvement is likely to help address congestion in the area, it will do little to encourage travel by active

modes. While Policy PEP7 has not been appraised policy-off, the land safeguarded is well related to existing bus stops but is not close to a railway station or PRoW. Given the existing accessibility of this safeguarded site and the requirements included in the policy text, an overall negligible effect is recorded in relation to Policy PEP7 for SA objective 4.

**5.286** Policies PP19, PP20, PP21, and PP22 require residential development to include safe pedestrian access to ensure connectivity within and throughout the site to existing footways and any PRoWs. The policies also stipulate that development must incorporate green infrastructure, ensure recreational access to the countryside, and establish active travel links to the nearby settlement. These requirements are likely to support the health and wellbeing of new residents in terms of access to recreation. Policy PP19 also requires the delivery a Tiptree Country Park of approximately 27ha. As such the requirements of Policy PP19 are likely to have benefits that exceed those reported for the other policies appraised in this section. However, with the exception of the site allocated through Policy PP22, all residential sites are not located close to a healthcare facility. Given that access to healthcare facilities is not addressed in relation to any of the residential site allocation policies for Tiptree a significant positive effect is not considered appropriate for **SA objective 5: Community and health and wellbeing**. As such no change is expected to the minor positive effect recorded for Policies PP19, PP20, PP21 and PP22. The employment land safeguarded and allocated through Policies PEP7 and PEP8 support active travel routes as part of any new employment growth. However, these policies do not address access to open space that might otherwise support improved recreational access for employees at these locations. As such a minor positive effect is recorded for Policies PEP7 and PEP8 in relation to SA objective 5.

**5.287** Site 10657 is located close to both a primary and secondary school, although is some distance from the town centre. Policy PP19 requires the delivery of a link road within the site to connect the B1022 and B1023 which could support improved access to local services and facilities. Furthermore, this policy requires that development of the site should meet the specific infrastructure requirements of the IDP which could support education provision in the area. The policy requirements are not considered to be of the scale to

warrant a significant positive effect and therefore the minor positive effect identified through the policy-off appraisal of the site in relation to **SA objective 6: Services and facilities** remains applicable. The remaining residential site allocation policies appraised in this section (PP20, PP21 and PP22) do not include requirements that would support improved service provision in the area and therefore the policy-off appraisal remains applicable. The appraisal of Policies PEP7 and PEP8 also reflect the proximity of the land safeguarded and allocated for employment uses to town centre locations with no relevant requirements included in the policy text. Given that the land safeguarded through Policy PEP7 is not well related to Tiptree District Centre but that the land allocated through Policy PEP8 is within 300m of that centre, a minor negative and minor positive effect is recorded in relation to SA objective 6 for these policies, respectively.

**5.288** Sites 10657, 10261, and 10262 are located close to a number of Listed Buildings at the northern edge of Tiptree and therefore an uncertain significant negative effect has been recorded for the policy-off appraisal of these sites. Policies PP19, PP20 and PP21 which allocate these sites set out that development should conserve and enhance the significance of heritage assets. Site 10991 is located within the southern boundary of Tiptree and is approximately 150m from two Grade II Listed Buildings and an uncertain minor negative effect has been recorded for the policy-off appraisal of this site. Policy PP22 includes similar requirements for development to conserve and enhance the significance of heritage assets. Given the requirements of each policy, an improved effect is recorded in relation to **SA objective 7: Historic environment** for each allocation. As such an uncertain minor negative effect is recorded for Policies PP19, PP20 and PP21 and an uncertain negligible effect is recorded for Policy PP22 in relation to SA objective 7. The residual negative effect recorded for Policies PP19, PP20 and PP21 acknowledges the potential sensitivities of each location in relation to the historic environment. Policies PEP7 and PEP8 safeguard and allocate land for employment uses that could also have implications for the historic environment. Land is safeguarded for employment uses beyond the northern boundary of Tiptree by Policy PEP7. There is potential for impacts on Hill Farmhouse Grade II Listed Building that is adjacent to this land. Policy PEP8 allocates land at the south boundary of Tiptree that is within 110m of a Grade II Listed Building. Given that no mitigation



is required by the policies identifying the land in question for safeguarding or allocation, an uncertain minor negative effect is recorded for both policies.

**5.289** Sites 10261, 10262 and 10991 are close to areas of priority habitat. The Biodiversity Assessment identified that there is potential for development of site 10262 to result in harm to biodiversity assets in the area, while the development of sites 10261 and 10991 is likely to result in little/no harm, particularly given that the habitats in question are considered to be in poor-moderate or poor condition. This is reflected in the minor negative effect recorded for the policy-off appraisal of these three sites in relation to **SA objective 8: Biodiversity**. Site 10657 contains a large element of the Eden Wood Local Wildlife Site and overlaps a portion of the Inworth Wood Local Wildlife Site. This site also contains an area of priority habitat hedgerows. The Biodiversity Assessment identified that there is potential for development of site 10657 to result in harm to biodiversity assets in the area. The priority habitats within and adjacent to the site are recorded to be in moderate condition. This is reflected in the significant negative effect recorded for the policy-off appraisal of the site in relation to SA objective 8. Policies PP19, PP20 and PP22 emphasise the achievement of onsite biodiversity net gain and include mitigation that relates to the specific habitats identified within the land set out by these policies (e.g. grassland, woodland and hedgerows). Furthermore, Policy PP19 requires that the development of the site is to incorporate a new country park which is likely to help support new habitat provision in the area. Policy PP21 does not include reference to biodiversity net gain but requires that development should mitigate loss of hedgerows and grassland. As such an improved effect is expected for each policy in relation to SA objective 8, with a negligible effect recorded for Policies PP20, PP21 and PP22. For Policy PP19 a minor positive effect is recorded. While this site has increased sensitivities given that it includes land within a Local Wildlife Site, the delivery of the new country park at this location is expected to have substantial benefits for ecology in the area. Policies PEP7 and PEP8 safeguard or allocate land for employment uses that could have impacts on biodiversity assets. The land safeguarded by Policy PEP7 lies close to Perry's Wood Local Wildlife Sites and the land allocated by Policy PEP8 includes an area of priority habitat. The Biodiversity Assessment identifies the potential for development at land allocated by Policy PEP8 to have significant harm on biodiversity assets. Given that no mitigation is set out in the policies

relating to these two areas of land, the effect recorded is based entirely on the sensitivity of these areas of land. As such a minor negative effect and significant negative effect is recorded in relation to SA objective 8 for Policies PEP7 and PEP8, respective.

**5.290** The land surrounding Tiptree is identified as having medium inherent landscape value in the Landscape Character Assessment work undertaken in support of the plan. As such the residential sites proposed for allocation that lie beyond the settlement boundary (10261, 10262 and 10657) are identified through the policy-off appraisal as having an uncertain minor negative effect in relation to **SA objective 9: Landscape**. Policy PP19 stipulates that screening measures comprising locally appropriate hedgerows, and/or woodland will be required along site boundaries. Furthermore, the development of the site to incorporate a new country park could provide opportunities for improving the transition of the settlement edge to the countryside. As such, given the mitigation set out in the policy, an improved uncertain minor positive effect is recorded in relation to SA objective 9 for Policy PP19. The other policies proposing residential allocations in this section (PP20, PP21 and PP22) do not include requirements that would benefit the local landscape. As such an uncertain minor negative effect remains applicable for Policies PP20 and PP21. A negligible effect is recorded for Policies PP22 as it lies within the boundary of Tiptree. Policies PEP7 and PEP8 set out employment land for safeguarding and allocation beyond the northern boundary of Tiptree and within its southern boundary, respectively. As such an uncertain minor negative effect and uncertain negligible effect is recorded for Policies PEP7 and PEP8, respectively, in relation to SA objective 8.

## Recommendations

- Policy PEP7 safeguards land for employment uses in line with the adopted Tiptree Neighbourhood Plan. The Neighbourhood plan will help to address the sensitivities of the site should the safeguarded land progress towards development. However, the site is adjacent to the Grade II listed Building Hill Farmhouse and the policy could help to mitigate adverse effects relating to this heritage asset by requiring that its setting is appropriately considered in relation to its conservation and enhancement.

- Policy PEP8 proposed land for allocation that includes areas of priority habitat. The policy could be strengthened by requiring development to protect and enhance these areas.
- The land proposed for allocation through Policy PEP8 form part of the existing settlement edge and development could be required by the policy to maintain the existing boundary hedgerows and vegetation to limit the potential for adverse impacts on the landscape setting.

## West Mersea

- Policy PP23Land East Dawes Lane, West Mersea

Proposed for allocation for approximately 300 homes

**Table 5.34: Summary of SA findings**

SA objectives	Site 10627a	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP23
SA1: Housing	++	++
SA2: Efficient use of land	--	--
SA3: Economic growth	-	-
SA4: Transport	-	0
SA5: Community and health and wellbeing	+	+
SA6: Services and facilities	--	--
SA7: Historic environment	--?	-?
SA8: Biodiversity and geodiversity	-	0

SA objectives	Site 10627a	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP23
SA9: Landscape	--?	-?
SA10: Climate change	N/A	N/A
SA11: Flood risk	0	0
SA12: Waste	N/A	N/A
SA13: Air quality	-	-
SA14: Water	0	0

**5.291** The policy requires that development at the site provides safe pedestrian access to ensure connectivity within and throughout the site to existing footways and public rights of way as well as the provision of green infrastructure connections and securing active travel links and connections to the settlement. A minor negative effect is identified for the site in relation to **SA objective 4: Transport** without considering any requirements included in the policy given that the site is some distance from both a railway station and cycle route but is within 300m or less of a bus stop. The policy requirements may help to encourage travel by active modes; however, they are not of a scale to warrant a positive effect being recorded. Therefore, an improved negligible effect is recorded for the site in relation to SA objective 4.

**5.292** The policy is likely to support the health and wellbeing of residents given that it requires the provision of open space of at least 5ha within the site. The minor positive effect recorded for the policy-off appraisal of site 10627a in relation to **SA objective 5: Community health and wellbeing** reflects its close proximity to areas of open space and a PRow, but also its location some distance from the nearest GP surgery. While the requirements of the policy will not address access to healthcare facilities from the site it will benefit residents at the site and surroundings in terms of their access to open space and therefore an improved minor positive effect is recorded in relation to SA objective 5.

**5.293** Development at the site has potential to harm the setting of a Listed Building that lies within 100m of its southern boundary. Policy PP23 includes requirements that development must conserve, and where appropriate, enhance the significance of heritage assets close to the site. Given the requirements of the policy, an improved uncertain minor negative effect is recorded in relation to **SA objective 7: Historic environment** for the site. The residual negative effect is recorded to note the potential sensitivities of the location.

**5.294** Site 10627a is within 1km of Blackwater Estuary SPA, Ramsar and SSSI. The Biodiversity Assessment identified that the development of the site would result in little/no harm given that the site itself has limited natural habitat. The minor negative effect recorded for the policy-off appraisal in relation to **SA objective 8: Biodiversity and geodiversity** reflects the proximity of the site to nationally designated biodiversity sites. Development at the site could potentially result in disturbance and other forms of degradation of habitats at Blackwater Estuary. However, Policy PP23 requires development at the site to incorporate several ecological mitigation measures including enhancement of retained grassland, delivering of standing freshwater habitat to support the Essex LRNS and requirements for development to avoid impacts on overwintering birds. These requirements will help promote the protection of biodiversity at the site and therefore an improved negligible effect is recorded in relation to SA objective 8.

**5.295** Site 10627a is located within an area identified as having high inherent landscape value in the Landscape Character Assessment work undertaken in support of the plan. The policy-off appraisal of the site has therefore been recorded as an uncertain significant negative effect in relation to **SA objective 9: Landscape**. Policy PP23 includes requirements that development must include screening comprising locally appropriate tree belts and/or hedgerows to ensure that development is sensitively integrated into the landscape and reflects and reinforces rural character. As such, given the mitigation set out in the policy, an improved uncertain minor negative effect is recorded in relation to SA objective 9.

## Recommendations

- The site is located on the settlement edge some distance from the nearest district centre and services and facilities at this location. Policy PP23 could include requirements for improved links to the district centre, including by public transport and active travel.

## Wivenhoe

- Policy PP24: Land North West of the Fire Station, Wivenhoe

Proposed for allocation for approximately 175 homes

**Table 5.35: Summary of SA findings**

SA objectives	Site 10755a	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP24
SA1: Housing	++	++
SA2: Efficient use of land	--	--
SA3: Economic growth	-	-
SA4: Transport	+	+
SA5: Community and health and wellbeing	+	+
SA6: Services and facilities	-	0
SA7: Historic environment	-?	0?
SA8: Biodiversity and geodiversity	--	-
SA9: Landscape	-?	0?

SA objectives	Site 10755a	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP24
SA10: Climate change	N/A	N/A
SA11: Flood risk	0	0
SA12: Waste	N/A	N/A
SA13: Air quality	-	-
SA14: Water	-	-

**5.296** The policy requires that development at the site provides safe pedestrian access to ensure connectivity within and throughout the site to existing footways and public rights of way as well as securing active travel links and connections to the settlement of Wivenhoe. A minor positive effect is identified for the site in relation to **SA objective 4: Transport** without considering any requirements included in the policy given that the site is some distance from a railway station but is within 300m or less of a bus stop and 800m or less of a cycle route. The policy requirements may help to encourage travel by active modes. However, they are not of a scale to warrant a significant positive effect being recorded. Therefore, a minor positive effect is recorded for the site in relation to SA objective 4.

**5.297** The policy is likely to support the health and wellbeing of residents and community integration given that it requires the provision of a new community space and pedestrian access to the adjacent allotments. The minor positive effect recorded for the policy-off appraisal of site 10755a in relation to **SA objective 5: Community health and wellbeing** reflects its close proximity to areas of open space and a PRoW, but also its location some distance from the nearest GP surgery. While the requirements of the policy will benefit residents at the site and surroundings in terms of their access to open space and other facilities that support wellbeing. However, it does not address access to healthcare facilities from the site and therefore the minor positive effect recorded in relation to SA objective 5 remains applicable.



**5.298** The development of the site is required by Policy PP24 to meet any site specific requirements of the IDP, which is expected to include education provision. The site is located close to a primary school and local centre but some distance from the nearest secondary school and higher order centre. As such, given that the development of the site would support service provision, an improved negligible effect is recorded for Policy PP24 in relation to **SA objective 6: Services and facilities**.

**5.299** The development of the site has potential to harm the setting of the several designation heritage assets which lie 101-250m from the site. Policy PP24 includes requirements that development must conserve, and where appropriate, enhance the significance of heritage assets close to the site. Given the requirements of the policy, an improved uncertain negligible effect is recorded in relation to **SA objective 7: Historic environment**.

**5.300** Site 10755a is within 600m of Upper Colne Marshes SSSI and is also within 250m of Colne Local Nature Reserve and areas of priority habitat. The Biodiversity Assessment identified that the development of the site would result in little/no harm given that the site itself has limited natural habitat. However, as the site is close to a nationally and locally designated biodiversity site, a significant negative effect is expected for the policy-off appraisal of site 10755a in relation to **SA objective 8: Biodiversity and geodiversity**. Policy PP24 requires development at the site to provide tree belts and/or hedgerows to screen the site and to enhance hedgerow condition and establish grassland habitats along road verges. Considering the policy requirements and the findings of the Biodiversity Assessment, an improved minor negative effect is expected for Policy PP24 in relation to SA objective 8.

**5.301** Site 10755a is located within an area identified as having medium inherent landscape value in the Landscape Character Assessment work undertaken in support of the plan. The policy-off appraisal of the site has therefore been recorded as an uncertain minor negative effect in relation to **SA objective 9: Landscape**. Given the screening requirements set out in Policy PP24, an improved uncertain negligible effect is recorded in relation to SA objective 9.

**5.302** The site lies within SPZ 3. As such, a minor negative effect has been recorded policy-off for the site in relation to **SA objective 14: Water**. Policy PP24 requires the development of the site to demonstrate adequate wastewater management capacity. However, the requirements included will not address the potential for contamination of water resources during construction. As such the minor negative effect recorded in relation to SA objective 14 remains applicable.

## Recommendations

- No recommendations are proposed.

## Abberton and Langenhoe

- Policy PP25: View Park, Abberton and Langenhoe

Proposed for allocation for approximately 50 homes

**Table 5.36: Summary of SA findings**

SA objectives	Site 10618a	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP25
SA1: Housing	+	+
SA2: Efficient use of land	--	--
SA3: Economic growth	-	-
SA4: Transport	-	0
SA5: Community and health and wellbeing	+	+
SA6: Services and facilities	-	-

SA objectives	Site 10618a	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP25
SA7: Historic environment	--?	-?
SA8: Biodiversity and geodiversity	-	0
SA9: Landscape	--?	-?
SA10: Climate change	N/A	N/A
SA11: Flood risk	0	0
SA12: Waste	N/A	N/A
SA13: Air quality	-	-
SA14: Water	-	-

**5.303** The policy requires that development at the site provides safe pedestrian access to ensure connectivity within and throughout the site to existing footways and public rights of way as well as the provision connections and securing active travel links and connections to the settlement of Abberton and Lagenhoe. A minor negative effect is identified for the site in relation to **SA objective 4: Transport** without considering any requirements included in the policy given that the site is some distance from both a railway station and cycle route but is within 300m or less of a bus stop. The policy requirements may help to encourage travel by active modes; however, they are not of a scale to warrant a positive effect being recorded. Therefore, an improved negligible effect is recorded for the site in relation to SA objective 4.

**5.304** The policy is likely to support the health and wellbeing of residents given that it requires the provision of green infrastructure connections and recreational access to the countryside. The minor positive effect recorded for the policy-off appraisal of site 10618a in relation to **SA objective 5: Community health and wellbeing** reflects its close proximity to areas of open space and a PRoW, but also its location some distance from the nearest GP surgery. While the requirements of the policy will not address access to healthcare facilities from

the site it will benefit residents at the site and surroundings in terms of their access to open space. However, the improvements are not considered to be of a scale to warrant a significant positive effect being identified and therefore no change is recorded in relation to the minor positive effect expected for SA objective 5.

**5.305** Development at the site has potential to harm the setting of the several historic assets (including Grade II Listed Buildings Tudhoe House and Gun House) which lie less than 100m from the site. Policy PP25 includes requirements that development must conserve, and where appropriate, enhance the significance of heritage assets close to the site. Given the requirements of the policy, an improved uncertain minor negative effect is recorded in relation to **SA objective 7: Historic environment** for the site. The residual negative effect is recorded to note the potential sensitivities of the location.

**5.306** Site 10618a is adjacent of several areas of priority habitat (traditional orchards). The Biodiversity Assessment identified that the development of the site would result in little/no harm given that the site itself has limited natural habitat, given that it includes grassland which is in poor condition and hedgerows in moderate condition. Considering the proximity of the site to priority habitats to the east and the findings of the Biodiversity Assessment, a minor negative effect is expected for the policy-off appraisal of site 10618a in relation to **SA objective 8: Biodiversity and geodiversity**. Development at the site could potentially result in disturbance and other forms of degradation of habitats at the sites in question. However, Policy PP25 requires development at the site to achieve biodiversity net gain and to incorporate several ecological mitigation measures including enhancement of higher distinctiveness grassland and retention of mature trees and hedgerows. These requirements will help promote the protection of biodiversity at the site and therefore an improved negligible effect is recorded in relation to SA objective 8.

**5.307** Site 10618a is located within an area identified as having high inherent landscape value in the Landscape Character Assessment work undertaken in support of the plan. The policy-off appraisal of the site was therefore recorded as an uncertain significant negative effect in relation to **SA objective 9:**

**Landscape.** Policy PP25 includes requirements that development must incorporate screening comprising locally appropriate tree belts and/or hedgerows to ensure that development is sensitively integrated into the landscape. As such, given the mitigation set out in the policy, an improved uncertain minor negative effect is recorded in relation to SA objective 9.

**5.308** The site lies within SPZ 3. As such, a minor negative effect has been recorded policy-off for the site in relation to **SA objective 14: Water**. Policy PP25 requires the development of the site to demonstrate adequate wastewater management capacity. However, the requirements included will not address the potential for contamination of water resources during construction. As such the minor negative effect recorded in relation to SA objective 14 remains applicable.

## Recommendations

- No recommendations are proposed.

## Boxted

- Policy PP26: Land North of Boxted Straight Road, Boxted Cross

Proposed for allocation for approximately 150 homes

**Table 5.37: Summary of SA findings**

SA objectives	Site 10676	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP26
SA1: Housing	++	++
SA2: Efficient use of land	--	--

SA objectives	Site 10676	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP26
SA3: Economic growth	-	-
SA4: Transport	-	0
SA5: Community and health and wellbeing	+	+
SA6: Services and facilities	-	0
SA7: Historic environment	--?	-?
SA8: Biodiversity and geodiversity	-	0
SA9: Landscape	--?	--?
SA10: Climate change	N/A	N/A
SA11: Flood risk	0	0
SA12: Waste	N/A	N/A
SA13: Air quality	-	-
SA14: Water	-	-

**5.309** The policy requires that development at the site provides safe pedestrian access to ensure connectivity within and throughout the site to existing footways and public rights of way as well as the securing of active travel links and connections to the settlement of Boxted. A minor negative effect is identified for the site in relation to **SA objective 4: Transport** without considering any requirements included in the policy given that it is some distance from both a railway station and cycle route but is within 300m or less of a bus stop. The policy requirements may help to encourage travel by active modes; however, they are not of a scale to warrant a positive effect being recorded. Therefore, an improved negligible effect is recorded for Policy PP26 in relation to SA objective 4.

**5.310** The policy is likely to support the health and wellbeing of residents given that it requires the provision of green infrastructure connections and recreational access to the countryside. The minor positive effect recorded for the policy-off appraisal of site 10676 in relation to **SA objective 5: Community health and wellbeing** reflects its close proximity to areas of open space and a PRoW, but also its location some distance from the nearest GP surgery. The requirements of the policy will benefit residents at the site and surroundings in terms of their ability access to opportunities for recreation. However, it does not address the ability of residents in the area to access healthcare facilities and therefore the minor positive effect recorded in relation to SA objective 5 remains applicable for Policy PP26.

**5.311** The development of the site is required by Policy PP26 to meet any site specific requirements of the IDP, which is expected to include education provision. The site is located close to a primary school but some distance from the nearest secondary school and town, district or local centre. As such, given that the development of the site would support service provision, an improved negligible effect is recorded for Policy PP24 in relation to **SA objective 6: Services and facilities**.

**5.312** Development at the site has potential to harm the setting of the several historic assets which are adjacent to the site to the south, including Grade II Listed Buildings Wheelwrights House, Box Cottage and Medlars. Policy PP26 includes requirements that development must conserve, and where appropriate, enhance the significance of heritage assets close to the site. Given the requirements of the policy, an improved uncertain minor negative effect is recorded in relation to **SA objective 7: Historic environment** for the site. The residual negative effect is recorded to note the potential sensitivities of the location.

**5.313** Site 10676 is within 250m of several areas of priority habitat such as an area of deciduous woodland adjacent to the north and a traditional orchard to the west within 100m. However, the Biodiversity Assessment concluded that the site itself has limited natural value with development likely to have little/no harm on biodiversity asset. Given the proximity of areas of priority habitat which might be affected by development, a minor negative effect was recorded for the



policy-off appraisal in relation to **SA objective 8: Biodiversity and geodiversity**. However, Policy PP26 requires development at the site to achieve biodiversity net gain including through providing buffering to the woodland priority habitat and potentially creating areas of higher distinctiveness grasslands. These requirements will help promote the protection of biodiversity at the site and therefore an improved negligible effect is recorded in relation to SA objective 8.

**5.314** The site lies within SPZ 3. As such, a minor negative effect has been recorded policy-off for the site in relation to **SA objective 14: Water**. Policy PP26 requires the development of the site to demonstrate adequate wastewater management capacity. However, the requirements included will not address the potential for contamination of water resources during construction. As such the minor negative effect recorded in relation to SA objective 14 remains applicable.

## Recommendations

- No recommendations are proposed.

## Chappel and Wakes Colne

- Policy PP27: Swan Grove, Chappel

Proposed for allocation for approximately 35 homes

*This site is carried forward from the adopted Local Plan*

- Policy PP28: Land West of Station Road, Wakes Colne

Proposed for allocation for approximately 200 homes

- Policy PEP12: Land at Wakes Hall Business Centre

Proposed for allocation for employment uses

Table 5.38: Summary of SA findings

SA objectives	Site 11113	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP27	Site 10649	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP28	Site 10647	Site considering mitigation in Policy PEP12
SA1: Housing	+	+	++	++	N/A	N/A
SA2: Efficient use of land	--	--	--	--	--	--
SA3: Economic growth	-	-	-	-	-	-
SA4: Transport	+	+	+	++	-	-
SA5: Community and health and wellbeing	+	+	+	+	+	+
SA6: Services and facilities	-	-	-	-	-	-
SA7: Historic environment	--?	-?	--?	-?	--?	--?
SA8: Biodiversity and geodiversity	-	0	-	0	-	-

SA objectives	Site 11113	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP27	Site 10649	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP28	Site 10647	Site considering mitigation in Policy PEP12
SA9: Landscape	--?	-?	--?	-?	--?	--?
SA10: Climate change	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
SA11: Flood risk	0	0	0	0	0	0
SA12: Waste	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
SA13: Air quality	-	-	-	-	-	-
SA14: Water	-	0	--	-	-	-

**5.315** Sites 10647, 10649 and 11113 are all located relatively close to Chappel and Wakes Colne Railway Station, with site 10649 located within 100m of the station. There are multiple bus stops within 300m of sites 11113 and 10649, however site 10647 is not located close existing bus stops. All three sites are located some distance from the nearest cycle route. The requirement included in Policies PP27, PP28 and PEP12 for development to provide safe and suitable site access, could help limit the potential for congestion in the area. Furthermore, Policies PP27 and PP28 include additional requirements for pedestrian access to be achieved within and throughout the development sites to existing footpaths and PRoWs and that active travel links and connections should be secured to the nearby settlement. Policy PP28, specifically, requires site 10649 to include a link road between Station Road and the A1124, restrict through-traffic on Station Road, and create a pedestrian priority route along its lower section for safe access to the railway station. The more substantial requirements set out through Policy PP27 and particularly Policy PP28, given the potential to support increased connectivity to the railway station, are

expected to help encourage travel by active modes. An improved significant positive is therefore recorded for Policy PP28 in relation to **SA objective 4: Transport**. The requirements set out through Policy PP27 are not considered substantial enough for a significant positive effect to be recorded and therefore the effect recorded in relation to SA objective 4 remains minor positive. The requirements of set out through Policy PEP12 are not expected to greatly encourage travel by sustainable modes and therefore the minor negative effect recorded in relation to SA objective 4 also remains applicable.

**5.316** All three sites are located close to public open space and PRoWs. While site 10649 is close to the railway line, less than 25% of its area is affected by noise from this source and sites 11113 and 10647 are affected by this issue. However, Chappel is not located close to an existing healthcare facility and new residents at sites 11113 and 10649 would have to travel some distance to access this type of facility. Policies PP27 and PP28 require residential development to include safe pedestrian access connecting to existing footways and PRoWs and to incorporate green infrastructure and ensure recreational access to the countryside. Policy PP28 requires that green infrastructure delivered at that site should amount to approximately 8ha to provide open space, recreation and community uses. These requirements are likely to help encourage physical activity among new residents. However, there is no requirement in either policy to address the lack of access to healthcare facilities in the area. As such the policy requirements are not considered substantial enough to warrant a significant positive effect and therefore the minor positive effect remains applicable in relation to **SA objective 5: Community and health and wellbeing** for Policies PP27 and PP28. Policy PEP12 seeks to ensure the safe development of land at Wakes Hall Business Centre for employment and does not address issues relating to health and wellbeing. Therefore, the minor positive effect previously recorded in relation to SA objective 4 also remains applicable for this policy.

**5.317** All of the sites proposed for allocation at Chappel are located close to designated heritage assets. Sites 10649 and 11113 are located adjacent to the Chappel Conservation Area which also contains numerous Listed Buildings, while site 10647 is located close to several Grade II Listed Buildings. As such, an uncertain significant negative effect has been recorded for the policy-off

appraisal of all sites in relation to **SA objective 7: Historic environment**. Policies PP27 and PP28 require the development of sites to conserve, and where appropriate, enhance the significance of heritage assets. Given the requirements of the policies, an improved uncertain minor negative effect is recorded in relation to SA objective 7 for Policies PP27 and PP28. The residual negative effect is recorded to note the potential sensitivities of the location. Policy PEP12 does not include any requirement for development to address the sensitivities of the historic setting of the area and therefore the uncertain significant negative effect recorded in relation to SA objective 7 as part of the policy-off appraisal, remains applicable.

**5.318** Site 10649 is adjacent to the Acorn Wood Local Wildlife Site, while sites 10647 and 11113 are within close proximity to priority habitats. Site 1113 is also close to Chappel Ponds and Millennium Green Local Wildlife Site. The Biodiversity Assessment identifies that there is potential for development of sites 10647 and 10649 to result in harm to biodiversity assets in the area. The Assessment states that development is likely to result in little/no harm to biodiversity assets, however it notes the proximity of Chappel Ponds and Millennium Green Local Wildlife Site. This is reflected in the minor negative effect recorded for the policy-off appraisal of each site in relation to **SA objective 8: Biodiversity**. The requirement of Policies PP27 and PP28 to provide green infrastructure is set out in the text to maximise benefits for biodiversity and habitat creation and to benefit landscape. Furthermore, Policy PP27 requires that onsite biodiversity net gain measures should focus on enhancing hedgerow condition, buffering Chappel Ponds and Millennium Green Local Wildlife Site, and maintaining and strengthening ecological connectivity. Policy PP28 requires onsite biodiversity net gain measures to buffer and extend Acord Wood Local Wildlife Site, improve north-south connectivity, and also seeks to establish standing freshwater or woodland habitats in line with the Essex LNRS. These measures are likely to help protect and enhance local biodiversity. As such, an improved minor positive effect is expected for Policies PP27 and PP28 in relation to SA objective 8. Policy PEP12 does not include any requirement for development to address the protection of biodiversity assets in the area and therefore the minor negative effect recorded in relation to SA objective 8 remains applicable.

**5.319** Much of sites 11113, 10649 and 10647 are located within an area identified as having high inherent landscape value in the Landscape Character Assessment work undertaken in support of the plan. The policy-off appraisal for these sites was therefore recorded as an uncertain significant negative effect in relation to **SA objective 9: Landscape**. Policies PP27 and PP28 stipulate that screening measures, such as tree belts, hedgerow, and/or woodland will be required along site boundaries. These measures are required by the policy to ensure that the development is sensitively integrated into the landscape to reflect and reinforce the area's character, tranquillity, and visual quality. As such, given the mitigation set out in the policy, an improved uncertain minor negative effect is recorded in relation to SA objective 9. The residual negative effect is recorded to note the potential sensitivities of the location. Policy PEP13 does not include requirements that would help to address the potential for development to adversely affect the high landscape value of the area and therefore the uncertain significant negative effect recorded in relation to SA objective 9 for Policy PEP13 remains applicable.

**5.320** Sites 10647, 10649 and 11113 lie within SPZ 3. Site 11113 lies close to a waterbody and site 10649 includes part of a waterbody. As such, a minor negative effect has been recorded for the policy-off appraisal of sites 10647 and 11113 in relation to **SA objective 14: Water** and a significant negative effect is recorded for site 10649. Policies PP27 and PP28 require the development of sites to demonstrate adequate wastewater management capacity, However, the requirements included will not address the potential for contamination of water resources during construction. As such the significant and minor negative effect recorded in relation to SA objective 14 remains applicable for these policies. Policy PEP12 does not include any requirements that would help address water resources in the area and therefore the minor negative effect previously recorded in relation to SA objective 14 also remains applicable.

## Recommendations

- Policy PEP12 could require the development of employment uses at the site to consider the setting of nearby heritage assets given that it lies within 100m of several Grade II Listed Buildings.

- Policy PEP12 could require the development of employment uses to achieve onsite biodiversity net gain to improve habitat quality and connectivity. This is particularly relevant given its proximity to the areas of deciduous woodland priority habitat to the north west.
- Policy PEP12 allocates land that is located within an area identified as having high inherent landscape value in the Landscape Character Assessment work. The policy could include specific reference to mitigation measures, such as requiring development of the site to promote the use of natural screening including through the retention of existing trees and hedgerows and supporting the incorporation of new native features of this type tree.

## Copford and Copford Green

- Policy PP29: Land East of School Road, Copford

Proposed for allocation for approximately 300 homes

The land proposed for allocation was appraised policy-off as sites 10226 and 10611.

**Table 5.39: Summary of SA findings**

SA objectives	Site 10226	Site 10611	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP29
SA1: Housing	++	+	++
SA2: Efficient use of land	--	--	--
SA3: Economic growth	-	-	-



SA objectives	Site 10226	Site 10611	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP29
SA4: Transport	-	-	0
SA5: Community and health and wellbeing	0	0	+
SA6: Services and facilities	-	-	0
SA7: Historic environment	-?	-?	0?
SA8: Biodiversity and geodiversity	-	-	0
SA9: Landscape	-?	-?	0?
SA10: Climate change	N/A	N/A	N/A
SA11: Flood risk	0	0	0
SA12: Waste	N/A	N/A	N/A
SA13: Air quality	-	-	-
SA14: Water	-	-	0

**5.321** Policy PP29 requires that the development of site 10226 and 10611 should be supported by a Minerals Resource Assessment. This requirement is likely to help support more efficient use of land and natural resources by preventing the loss of access to viable minerals in the plan area. However, the policy would not mitigate the loss of greenfield land and Grade 2 and 3 agricultural soils within the site. As such the significant negative effect recorded for the site in relation to **SA objective 2: Efficient use of land** remains applicable.

**5.322** Sites 10226 and 10611 are located some distance from the nearest railway station and cycling route, although there are multiple bus stops within 300 metres of the sites. The requirement included in Policy PP29 for

development to provide safe and suitable site access, could help limit the potential for congestion in the area. Furthermore, the policy requires that pedestrian access is achieved within and throughout the site to existing footpaths and PRowS and that active travel links and connections are provided to the settlement. These requirements may help to encourage travel by active modes and therefore, an improved negligible effect is recorded for the site in relation to **SA objective 4: Transport**.

**5.323** Sites 10226 and 10611 are within close proximity to a play space, and other areas of public open space. The sites are also adjacent to a PRow. Policy PP29 support these opportunities by requiring that residential development includes safe pedestrian access connecting to the site to existing footways and PRowS. The policy also stipulates that development must incorporate green infrastructure, ensure recreational access to the countryside, and establish active travel links to the nearby settlement. These requirements are likely to help protect and enhance the health and wellbeing of new residents particularly given its close proximity to both an existing area of open space and PRow. However, the sites are not located close to an existing healthcare facility. The policy does not directly address this issue, however it requires the delivery of a replacement village hall within the sites, which is likely to support community integration. Additionally, provision for appropriate services, facilities, and uses to create a Local Centre will be integrated into the masterplanning process. This Local Centre could help meet some of the community needs, such as local retail and some additional social amenities. However, although the site is relatively close to an existing primary school in Copford, there is no existing secondary school or town centre location within the settlement. As such, given the policy requirements, an improved minor positive effect is recorded for in relation to **SA objective 5: Community and health and wellbeing**, whilst an improved negligible effect is recorded in relation to **SA objective 6: Services and facilities**.

**5.324** The land proposed for allocation lies within 250m of a number of Grade II Listed Buildings, and as such, an uncertain minor negative effect has been recorded for the policy-off appraisal in relation to **SA objective 7: Historic environment**. Policy PP29 requires development to conserve, and where appropriate, enhance the significance of heritage assets, noting the assets in

close proximity. Given the requirements of the policy, an improved uncertain negligible negative effect is recorded in relation to SA objective 7 for the sites.

**5.325** Land within the proposed site allocation boundary is adjacent to Pits Wood Local Wildlife Site, which consists of ancient woodland and priority habitat. The Biodiversity Assessment noted that the development of site 10226 could result in medium harm in relation to the Local Wildlife Site, with site 10611 identified as likely to result in low harm in relation to biodiversity assets. This is reflected in the minor negative effect recorded for the policy-off appraisal in relation to **SA objective 8: Biodiversity**. Policy PP29 promotes biodiversity net gain by requiring the creation of a buffer zone around the Local Wildlife Site, incorporating a mix of grassland, scrub, and woodland habitats. This buffer is likely to help protect the Local Wildlife Site from recreational pressures associated with the new housing, safeguarding the biodiversity of the area. The policy also seeks to deliver a strategic open space to provide a naturally landscaped community space that is well connected to the wider network of public footpaths. These measures are likely to help contribute to habitat connectivity. As such, an improved negligible effect is expected for the site allocated through Policy PP29 in relation to SA objective 8.

**5.326** Much of sites 10226 and 10611 are located within an area identified as having medium inherent landscape value in the Landscape Character Assessment work undertaken in support of the plan. The policy-off appraisal for both sites was therefore recorded as an uncertain minor negative effect in relation to **SA objective 9: Landscape**. Policy PP29 requires that screening measures, such as tree belts, hedgerow, and/or woodland will be required along site boundaries. These measures are required by the policy to ensure that the development is sensitively integrated into the landscape to reflect and reinforce the area's character, tranquillity, and visual quality. As such, given the mitigation set out in the policy, an improved uncertain negligible effect is recorded in relation to SA objective 9.

## Recommendations

- No recommendations are included.

## Dedham and Dedham Heath

■ Policy PP30: Land South of Long Road, Dedham

Proposed for allocation for approximately 15 homes

**Table 5.40: Summary of SA findings**

SA objectives	Site 10547	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP30
SA1: Housing	+	+
SA2: Efficient use of land	--	--
SA3: Economic growth	-	-
SA4: Transport	-	0
SA5: Community and health and wellbeing	-	0
SA6: Services and facilities	--	--
SA7: Historic environment	0?	0?
SA8: Biodiversity and geodiversity	-	0
SA9: Landscape	-?	0?
SA10: Climate change	N/A	N/A
SA11: Flood risk	0	0
SA12: Waste	N/A	N/A
SA13: Air quality	-	-
SA14: Water	-	-

**5.327** Site 10547 proposed for allocation is located within close proximity of some bus stops. However, it is not within close proximity of a railway station or cycle route. As such, a minor negative effect is recorded for the policy-off appraisal of the site in relation to **SA objective 4: Transport**. However, Policy PP30 requires development at the site to provide safe and suitable site access, which could help limit the potential for congestion in the area. Additionally, the policy requires pedestrian access to ensure connectivity within and throughout the site to existing footways and public rights of way as well as the provision of green infrastructure connections and securing active travel links and connections to the settlement. These policy requirements may help to encourage travel by sustainable and active modes; however, they are not of a scale to warrant a positive effect being recorded. Therefore, an improved negligible effect is recorded for the site in relation to SA objective 4.

**5.328** A minor negative effect is expected for the policy-off appraisal of site 10547 in relation to **SA objective 5: Community health and wellbeing**. This reflects the site's close proximity to a PRoW and its position away from areas of noise pollution and odour producing uses. However, the site is not within close proximity of a GP surgery or open space. Policy PP30 promotes access to safe and active travel routes, the provision of green infrastructure connections and recreational access to the countryside. This will help address issues in access to open space and therefore Policy PP30 is expected to have an improved negligible effect in relation to SA objective 5. However, it is acknowledged that the measures set out in the policy will not address access to healthcare facilities.

**5.329** Site 10547 is not within close proximity of historic assets. Therefore, an uncertain negligible effect has been recorded for the site policy-off. Policy PP30 requires development to conserve, and where appropriate, enhance the significance of heritage assets close to the site. However, as there are no historic assets close to the site, the effect for Policy PP30 is also expected to be uncertain negligible in relation to **SA objective 7: Historic environment**.

**5.330** Site 10547 is within 250m of some Priority Habitats. The Biodiversity Assessment identified that development of the site would result in little/no harm on biodiversity given that the site itself has limited natural habitat value and is

also isolated. However, since the site is within close proximity of Priority Habitats, a minor negative effect was recorded for the policy-off appraisal in relation to **SA objective 8: Biodiversity and geodiversity**. Policy PP30 does not directly address the mitigation of effects relating to these biodiversity assets. Instead, it requires onsite BNG measures to focus on retaining and enhancing the condition of grassland, the retention of mature trees and hedgerows within the site, in addition to the provision of hedgerows and/or woodland along the site boundaries. As such, an improved uncertain negligible effect is expected for the site allocated through Policy PP30 in relation to SA objective 8.

**5.331** Site 10547 is located within an area identified as having medium inherent landscape value in the Landscape Character Assessment work undertaken in support of the plan. The policy-off appraisal of the site is therefore recorded as an uncertain minor negative effect in relation to **SA objective 9: Landscape**. However, Policy PP30 stipulates that screening measures comprising locally appropriate hedgerows and/or woodland will be required along site boundaries. These measures will help to ensure that development is sensitively integrated into the landscape, to reflect and reinforce the rural character of the area. As such, given the mitigation set out in the policy, an improved uncertain negligible effect is recorded in relation to SA objective 9.

**5.332** Site 10547 lies within SPZ 3. As such, a minor negative effect has been recorded policy-off for the site in relation to **SA objective 14: Water**. Policy PP30 requires development of site 10547 to demonstrate adequate wastewater management capacity. However, the requirements included will not address the potential for contamination of water resources during construction. As such, a minor negative effect is recorded in relation to SA objective 14.

## Recommendations

- The site is located on the settlement edge some distance from the nearest district centre and services and facilities at this location. Policy PP30 could include requirements for improved links to the district centre, including by public transport and active travel.

## Eight Ash Green

- Policy PP31: Land North of Halstead Road East of Wood Lane, Eight Ash Green

Proposed for allocation for approximately 180 homes

- Policy PP32: Land North of Halstead Road West of Fiddlers Wood Eight Ash Green

Proposed for allocation for approximately 250 homes

- Policy PEP9: Bullbanks Farm, Eight Ash Green

Proposed for allocation for employment

**Table 5.41: Summary of SA findings**

SA objectives	Site 10090	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP31	Site 10656	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP32	Site 10488	Site considering mitigation in Policy PEP9
SA1: Housing	++	++	++	++	N/A	N/A
SA2: Efficient use of land	--	--	--	--	++	++
SA3: Economic growth	-	-	-	-	-	-
SA4: Transport	-	0	+	+	-	0
SA5: Community and	+	++	+	++	+	+



SA objectives	Site 10090	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP31	Site 10656	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP32	Site 10488	Site considering mitigation in Policy PEP9
health and wellbeing						
SA6: Services and facilities	-	-	-	-	-	-
SA7: Historic environment	-?	0?	--?	-?	--?	--?
SA8: Biodiversity and geodiversity	-	0	--	-	-	-
SA9: Landscape	-?	0?	-?	0?	-?	-?
SA10: Climate change	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
SA11: Flood risk	0	0	0	0	0	0
SA12: Waste	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
SA13: Air quality	-	-	-	-	-	-
SA14: Water	-	-	-	-	-	-

**5.333** Sites 10090, 10656 and 10488 proposed for allocation are located within close proximity of bus stops (particularly site 10656). However, they are not within close proximity of railway stations or cycle routes. As such, minor negative effects are recorded for the policy-off appraisals of sites 10090 and 10488 in relation to **SA objective 4: Transport**, while a minor positive effect is recorded for the policy-off appraisal of site 10656. Policies PP31, PP32 and PEP9 require development to provide safe and suitable site access, which could help limit the potential for congestion in the area. Additionally, policies PP31 and PP32 require pedestrian access to ensure connectivity within and

throughout the sites (10090 and 10656 respectively) to existing footways and public rights of way, as well as the provision of green infrastructure connections and securing active travel links and connections to the settlement. Policy PEP9 requires pedestrian access to ensure connectivity between the site (10488) and existing footways, and to maximise opportunities for enhanced connectivity to the surrounding area. These policy requirements may help to encourage travel by sustainable and active modes; however, they are not of a scale to warrant a positive effect being recorded for PP31 (10090) and PEP09 (10488). Therefore, an improved negligible effect is recorded for both site allocation policies in relation to SA objective 4. As PP32 (10656) already receives a minor positive effect, this remains the same.

**5.334** Minor positive effects are expected for the policy-off appraisals of sites 10090, 10656 and 10488 in relation to **SA objective 5: Community health and wellbeing**. In terms of the residential sites (10090 and 10656), this reflects their proximity to areas of open space and PRowS, and their position away from areas of odour producing uses. However, they are not within close proximity of GP surgeries and experience some noise pollution. For the employment site (10488), this reflects the employment site's proximity to areas of open space and PRowS. Policies PP31, PP32 and PEP9 promote access to safe and active travel routes, while policies PP31 and PP32 also support the provision of green infrastructure connections and recreational access to the countryside. Policies PP31 and PP32 also support contributions towards the provision of a new village hall in Eight Ash Green, and any other site specific infrastructure requirements from the IDP. Therefore, policies PP31 and PP32 are both expected to have significant positive effects in relation to SA objective 5, while policy PEP9 is expected to have a minor positive effect. It is acknowledged that the measures set out in policies PP31 and PP32 will not address the issue of access to healthcare facilities and noise pollution.

**5.335** Sites 10656 (within a settlement) and 10488 (outside of a settlement) are within 100m and 500m of an historic asset, respectively, while site 10090 (within a settlement) is within 101-250m of an historic asset. Therefore, uncertain significant negative effects have been recorded for sites 10656 and 10488 policy-off, while an uncertain minor negative effect has been recorded for site 10090 policy-off. Policies PP31 and PP32 require development to conserve,

and where appropriate, enhance the significance of nearby heritage assets. Given the requirements of these two policies, an improved uncertain minor negative effect and an improved uncertain negligible effect for sites 10656 and 10090, respectively, are recorded in relation to **SA objective 7: Historic environment**. The uncertain significant negative effect site 10488 is expected to have remains, as no mitigation is provided in PEP09 regarding the historic environment.

**5.336** Site 10656 contains a Priority Habitat (deciduous woodland) and is within 250m of other Priority Habitats. Site 10090 is also within 250m of Priority Habitats. All three sites (10090, 10656 and 10488) are within 250m of a Local Wildlife Site, while site 10090 is also within 250m of an area of ancient woodland. The Biodiversity Assessment identified that there is potential for development at all three sites to result in harm to biodiversity assets in the area, albeit low. Given each site's proximity to the aforementioned sites, a significant negative effect was recorded for the policy-off appraisal of site 10656 in relation to **SA objective 8: Biodiversity and geodiversity**, while minor negative effects were recorded for the policy-off appraisals of sites 10090 and 10488. Policies PP31 and PP32 require onsite BNG measures and the delivery of grassland or woodland habitats within or adjacent to sites 10090 and 10656, in addition to tree belts, hedgerows and/or areas of woodland. Further to this, policy PP31 (site 10090) requires biodiversity mitigation to include a buffer to the watercourse and to the adjacent ancient woodland to protect it from recreational and other disturbance, while policy PP32 (site 10656) requires the adjacent Local Wildlife Site to be safeguarded, buffered and protected from recreational pressure associated with new housing. Given the requirements of these two policies, an improved minor negative effect and an improved negligible effect for sites 10656 and 10090 are recorded in relation to SA objective 8, respectively. The minor negative effect site 10488 is expected to have remains, as no mitigation is provided in policy PEP09 regarding biodiversity.

**5.337** Sites 10090, 10656 and 10488 are located within areas identified as having medium inherent landscape value in the Landscape Character Assessment work undertaken in support of the plan. The policy-off appraisals of the sites are therefore recorded as uncertain minor negative effects in relation to **SA objective 9: Landscape**. Policies PP31 and PP32 stipulate that

screening measures comprising locally appropriate tree belts, hedgerows and/or woodland will be required along site boundaries. These measures will help to ensure that development of sites 10090 and 10656 are sensitively integrated into the landscape, to reflect and reinforce the existing rural character of the area. As such, given the mitigation set out in the policies, improved uncertain negligible effects are recorded for PP31 and PP32 in relation to SA objective 9. The uncertain minor negative effect site 10488 is expected to have remains, as no mitigation is provided in PEP09 regarding the landscape.

## Recommendations

- All of the sites are located some distance from the nearest town, district or local centre. However, Eight Ash Green is relatively well related to Tollgate District Centre and the range of services and facilities at this location. Policies PP31, PP32 and PEP9 could include requirements for improved links towards the district centre, including by public transport and active travel.

## Fordham

- Policy PP33: Land East of Plummers, Fordham

Proposed for allocation for approximately 25 homes

**Table 5.42: Summary of SA findings**

SA objectives	Site 10508	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP33
SA1: Housing	+	+
SA2: Efficient use of land	--	--

SA objectives	Site 10508	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP33
SA3: Economic growth	-	-
SA4: Transport	+	+
SA5: Community and health and wellbeing	+	+
SA6: Services and facilities	--	--
SA7: Historic environment	--?	-?
SA8: Biodiversity and geodiversity	-	0
SA9: Landscape	-?	0?
SA10: Climate change	N/A	N/A
SA11: Flood risk	0	0
SA12: Waste	N/A	N/A
SA13: Air quality	-	-
SA14: Water	-	-

**5.338** Policy PP33 requires that development at the site provides safe pedestrian access to ensure connectivity within and throughout the site to existing footways and public rights of way as well as securing active travel links and connections to the settlement of Fordham. A minor positive effect is identified for the site in relation to **SA objective 4: Transport** without considering any requirements included in the policy given that the site is some distance from a railway station but is within 301-600m of a bus stop and 200m of a cycleway. The policy requirements may help to encourage travel by active modes in the area. However, they are not of a scale to warrant a significant positive effect being recorded. Therefore, the minor positive effect recorded for the site in relation to SA objective 4, remains applicable.

**5.339** The policy is likely to support the health and wellbeing of residents given that it requires the provision of green infrastructure connections and recreational access to the countryside. The minor positive effect recorded for the policy-off appraisal of site 10508 in relation to **SA objective 5: Community health and wellbeing** reflects its close proximity to areas of open space and a PRoW, but also its location some distance from the nearest GP surgery. While requirement of the policy will benefit residents at the site and surroundings in terms of their access to open space, it will not address access to healthcare facilities from the site. As such the minor positive effect recorded for the site in relation to SA objective 5 remains applicable.

**5.340** Development at the site has potential to harm the setting of the several designated heritage assets including Grade II Listed Buildings Plummers Farmhouse and Thrifts Cottage which lie less than 100m from the site. Policy PP33 includes requirements that development must conserve, and where appropriate, enhance the significance of heritage assets close to the site. Given the requirements of the policy, an improved uncertain minor negative effect is recorded in relation to **SA objective 7: Historic environment** for Policy P33. The residual uncertain negative effect is recorded to note the potential sensitivities of the location.

**5.341** Site 10508 is within 250m of a number of priority habitats and Rectory Wood Local Wildlife Site. The Biodiversity Assessment identified that the development of the site would result in little/no harm given that the site itself has limited natural habitat. As such a minor negative effect is expected for the policy-off appraisal of site 10508 in relation to **SA objective 8: Biodiversity and geodiversity**. Policy PP33 requires development at the site to incorporate several ecological mitigation measures including provision of woodland habitat within or adjacent to the site to support the delivery of strategic creation opportunities in the Essex LNRS. These requirements will help promote the protection of biodiversity at the site and therefore an improved negligible effect is recorded in relation to SA objective 8.

**5.342** The site is located within an area identified as having medium inherent landscape value in the Landscape Character Assessment work undertaken in support of the plan. The policy-off appraisal of the site was therefore recorded

as an uncertain minor negative effect in relation to **SA objective 9: Landscape**. Policy PP33 includes requirements that development must include screening comprising locally appropriate hedgerows and/or woodland to ensure that development is sensitively integrated into the landscape to reflect and reinforce rural character. As such, given the mitigation set out in the policy, an improved uncertain negligible effect is recorded in relation to SA objective 9.

## Recommendations

- No recommendations are proposed.

## Great Horkesley

- Policy PP34: Land North of Coach Road, Great Horkesley

Proposed allocation for approximately 400 homes

The land proposed for allocation was appraised policy-off as sites 10691 and 10767.

- Policy PP35: The Old School, Great Horkesley

Proposed allocation for approximately 12 homes

*This site is carried forward from the adopted Local Plan*



**Table 5.43: Summary of SA findings**

SA objectives	Site 10691	Site 10767	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP34	Site 10122	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP35
SA1: Housing	++	++	++	+	+
SA2: Efficient use of land	--	--	--	++	++
SA3: Economic growth	-	-	-	-	-
SA4: Transport	-	-	0	-	0
SA5: Community and health and wellbeing	+	+	+	-	0
SA6: Services and facilities	-	-	-	--	--
SA7: Historic environment	--?	--?	-?	--?	-?
SA8: Biodiversity and geodiversity	-	-	0	-	0
SA9: Landscape	-?	-?	0?	-?	-?
SA10: Climate change	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

SA objectives	Site 10691	Site 10767	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP34	Site 10122	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP35
SA11: Flood risk	0	0	0	0	0
SA12: Waste	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
SA13: Air quality	-	-	-	-	-
SA14: Water	--	-	-	-	-

**5.343** Sites 10691, 10767, and 10122 are located some distance from the nearest railway station and cycling route, although there are multiple bus stops within 300m. The requirements included in Policies PP34 and PP35 for development to provide safe and suitable site access, could help limit the potential for congestion in the area. Furthermore, both policies require pedestrian access to be achieved within and throughout the respective sites to existing footpaths and PRowS and for development to secure active travel links and connections to the settlement of Great Horkesley. These requirements may help to encourage travel by active modes. Therefore, an improved negligible effect is recorded for Policies PP34 and PP35 in relation to **SA objective 4: Transport**.

**5.344** Policies PP34 and PP35 require residential developments to provide safe pedestrian access connecting the site to existing footways and PRowS, with PP34 emphasising connections south of Coach Road and links to the existing village hall. Both policies also stipulate that development must incorporate green infrastructure, ensure recreational access to the countryside, and establish active travel links to the nearby settlement, and in the case of Policy PP34, to the existing Village Hall. However, the policy-off appraisal identified that site 10122 lacks nearby access to exiting open space, and all sites are not well related to a healthcare facility. While Policies PP34 and PP35 are likely to support health and wellbeing benefits in relation to access to open space and

other community facilities, they do not directly address access to healthcare. As such the minor positive effect identified through the policy-off appraisal for Policy PP34 remains applicable in relation to **SA Objective 5: Community and health and wellbeing** and an improved negligible effect is recorded in relation to this SA objective for Policy PP35.

**5.345** The requirement to conserve and, where appropriate, enhance the significance of nearby heritage assets is set out in Policies PP34 and PP35. Site 10691 is adjacent to a Grade II Listed Building and close to a Scheduled Monument. Site 10767 is also close to a Scheduled Monument and includes Grade II Listed Building (Woodhouse Farmhouse) within its boundaries. Similarly, site 10122 contains two Grade II Listed Buildings (Church of England School and School House) and has several others nearby. As such, an uncertain significant negative effect has been recorded for all sites in relation to **SA Objective 7: Historic environment**. Given that both sites proposed for allocation include heritage assets, it is likely to be difficult to fully mitigate adverse effects relating to integrity and setting. Therefore, a residual uncertain minor negative effect remains in relation to SA Objective 7 for Policies PP34 and PP35.

**5.346** All sites are within close proximity to areas of priority habitats. The Biodiversity Assets identifies that the development of the each of the sites would result in little/no harm with the areas in question of limited natural habitat value. This is reflected in the minor negative effect recorded for the policy-off appraisals in relation to **SA objective 8: Biodiversity**. Policy PP34 requires the retention of hedgerows within the site, and establishment of standing freshwater, grassland or woodland habitats to align with the Essex LNRS, while Policy PP35 supports the retention of mature trees within the site. These measures are likely to help protect and enhance local biodiversity, and contribute to habitat connectivity. As such, considering the proximity of the sites to priority habitats but their assessed limited habitat and the mitigation required in the policy text, an improved negligible effect is expected for Policies PP34 and Policy PP35 in relation to SA objective 8.

**5.347** All of the land allocated by Policies PP34 and PP35 falls within an area identified as having medium inherent landscape value in the Landscape

Character Assessment work undertaken in support of the plan. The policy-off appraisal of the sites in question has therefore been recorded as an uncertain minor negative effect in relation to **SA objective 9: Landscape**. Policy PP34 stipulates that screening measures, such as tree belts, hedgerow, and/or woodland will be required along site boundaries. These measures are required by the policy to ensure that the development is sensitively integrated into the landscape to reflect and reinforce the area's character, tranquillity, and visual quality. As such, given the mitigation set out in the policy, an improved uncertain negligible effect is recorded in relation to SA objective 9. Policy PP35 supports the retention of mature trees on the site, which could have some landscape benefits. However, unlike Policy PP34, Policy PP35 does not include additional mitigation measures such as screening measures at the site boundaries to further address potential impacts on landscape character. Therefore, the uncertain minor negative effect for Policy PP35 recorded in relation to SA Objective 9 remains unchanged.

**5.348** The land allocated by Policies PP34 and PP35 lies within SPZ 3. The land allocated by Policy PP34 is also adjacent to a water body. As such, a minor negative effect has been recorded policy-off for both proposed allocations in relation to **SA objective 14: Water**. Both policies require the development of the site to demonstrate adequate wastewater management capacity. However, the requirements included will not address the potential for contamination of water resources during construction. As such the minor negative effect recorded in relation to SA objective 14 remains applicable.

## Recommendations

- Both policies could include reference to the heritage assets within their boundaries and the need to ensure the protection of the assets in question and their respective settings. Where viable, the heritage assets should be brought back into appropriate use.
- Policy PP35 could include text to require mitigation measures relating to landscape such as screening through the protection and enhancement of existing hedgerows and mature trees at the northern and eastern edges of site.

## Great Tey

■ Policy PP36: Land at Earls Colne Road, Great Tey

Proposed for allocation for approximately 125 homes

**Table 5.44: Summary of SA findings**

SA objectives	Site 10686	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP36
SA1: Housing	++	++
SA2: Efficient use of land	--	--
SA3: Economic growth	-	-
SA4: Transport	-	0
SA5: Community and health and wellbeing	+	+
SA6: Services and facilities	-	-
SA7: Historic environment	--?	-?
SA8: Biodiversity and geodiversity	0	+
SA9: Landscape	-?	0
SA10: Climate change	N/A	N/A
SA11: Flood risk	0	0
SA12: Waste	N/A	N/A
SA13: Air quality	-	-
SA14: Water	-	-

**5.349** Site 10686 is located some distance from the nearest railway station and cycling route, although there are multiple bus stops within 300 metres. The requirement included in Policy PP36 for development to provide safe and suitable site access, could help limit the potential for congestion in the area. Furthermore, the policy requires that pedestrian access is achieved within and throughout the site to existing footpaths and PRoWs. These requirements may help to encourage travel by active modes; however, they are not of a scale to warrant a positive effect being recorded. Therefore, an improved negligible effect is recorded for the site in relation to **SA objective 4: Transport**.

**5.350** Policy PP36 requires residential development to include safe pedestrian access connecting to the site to existing footways and PROWs, especially north of Earls Colne Road. The policy also stipulates that development must incorporate green infrastructure, ensure recreational access to the countryside, and establish active travel links to the nearby settlement. These requirements are likely to help protect and enhance the health and wellbeing of new residents particularly given its close proximity to both an existing area of open space and PRoW. However, the site is located over 1,200 metres from the nearest GP surgery. While Policy PP36 would promote a range of benefits relating to health and wellbeing, it does not directly address this issue and therefore a significant positive effect for **SA objective 5: Community and health and wellbeing** is not considered appropriate and the minor positive effect remains applicable.

**5.351** Site 10686 is required by Policy PP36 to be developed to respond to the historic settlement pattern of the area, including through use of materials which are appropriate to the local landscape character. Policy PP36 also requires the site to conserve, and where appropriate, enhance the significance of heritage assets. The site is within 250 metres of two Grade II listed buildings, and within 325 metres of the Great Tey Conservation Area. As such, an uncertain significant negative effect has been recorded for the site policy-off. Given the requirements of the policy, an improved uncertain minor negative effect is recorded in relation to **SA objective 7: Historic environment** for the site. The residual negative effect is recorded to note the potential sensitivities of the location.

**5.352** The site is not within close proximity of any international, national or local biodiversity and geodiversity assets. Furthermore, the site was assessed as having limited natural habitat value in the Biodiversity Assessment work and likely to result in little/no harm to biodiversity should it be developed. This is reflected in the negligible effect recorded for the policy-off appraisal in relation to **SA objective 8: Biodiversity**. Policy PP36 encourages onsite biodiversity net gain measures and the establishment of standing freshwater or woodland habitats to align with the Essex LNRS. These measures are likely to help enhance local biodiversity, and contribute to habitat connectivity. As such, an improved minor positive effect is expected for the site allocated through Policy PP36 in relation to SA objective 8.

**5.353** Much of site 10686 is located within an area identified as having medium inherent landscape value in the Landscape Character Assessment work undertaken in support of the plan. The policy-off appraisal of site 10686 was therefore recorded as an uncertain minor negative effect in relation to **SA objective 9: Landscape**. Policy PP36 stipulates that screening measures, such as tree belts, hedgerow, and/or woodland will be required along site boundaries. These measures are required by the policy to ensure that the development is sensitively integrated into the landscape to reflect and reinforce the area's character, tranquillity, and visual quality. As such, given the mitigation set out in the policy, an improved uncertain negligible effect is recorded in relation to SA objective 9.

## Recommendations

- Policy PP36 could acknowledge the proximity of site 10686 to the Great Tey Conservation Area, which is within 325m to the south. The policy text could require development to respond positively to the setting of the Conservation Area.

## Langham

- Policy PP37: Land north of Park Lane, Langham



Proposed for allocation for approximately 900 homes

- Policy PP38: Land opposite Wick Road, Langham

Proposed for allocation for approximately 10 homes

- Policy PEP10: Lodge Lane, Langham

Safeguarded for employment uses

*This land benefits from existing planning permission.*

**Table 5.45: Summary of SA findings**

SA objectives	Site 10664	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP37	Site 10291	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP38	Policy PEP10
SA1: Housing	++	++	+	+	N/A
SA2: Efficient use of land	--	--/+	--	--/+	--
SA3: Economic growth	-	-	-	-	++
SA4: Transport	+	+	-	0	--
SA5: Community and health and wellbeing	+	+	+	+	-
SA6: Services and facilities	-	0	-	-	-
SA7: Historic environment	--?	-?	--?	-?	--?
SA8: Biodiversity and geodiversity	-	0	-	0	--
SA9: Landscape	-?	0?	-?	-?	-?

SA objectives	Site 10664	Site consider mitigation in Policy PP37	Site 10291	Site consider mitigation in Policy PP38	Policy PEP10
SA10: Climate change	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
SA11: Flood risk	0	0	0	0	0
SA12: Waste	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
SA13: Air quality	-	-	-	-	-
SA14: Water	-	-	-	-	-

**5.354** A significant negative effect is expected for the policy-off appraisal of sites 10664 and 10291 in relation to **SA objective 2: Efficient use of land**. This reflects the sites' location on greenfield land and soils of Grade 2 agricultural value. Development within these sites would result in inefficient use of land, including development of best and most versatile agricultural land. The land proposed for safeguarding for employment uses by Policy PEP10 also comprises Grade 2 agricultural soils and a significant negative effect is also recorded for this policy.

**5.355** Policy PEP10 outlines that land at Lodge Lane is safeguarded for employment uses. This will support the long term viability of Colchester's economy and therefore a minor positive effect is expected for Policy PEP10 in relation to **SA objective 3: Economic growth**. The minor negative effect recorded for Policies PP37 and PP38 in relation to SA objective 3 reflects the policy-off appraisal given that no requirements relating to employment provision are set in the policy text in question. These sites are located some distance from the nearest town centre location and in an area where there is a low concentration of existing jobs.

**5.356** Policies PP37 and PP38 require that development provides safe pedestrian access to ensure connectivity within and throughout the

development sites to existing footways, as well as active travel links and connections to the settlement of Langham. A minor negative effect is identified for site 10291 in relation to **SA objective 4: Transport** without considering any requirements included given that it is not close to a railway station or a cycleway, but is within 300m of a bus stop. A minor positive effect is identified for site 10664 in relation to SA objective 4 through the policy-off appraisal work given that it is some distance from a railway station but is within 300m of a bus stop and 200m of a cycleway. The policy requirements may help to encourage travel by active modes at both locations, and an improved negligible effect is recorded for Policy PP38. However, the policy requirements set out are not considered strong enough to warrant a significant positive in relation to SA objective 4 and therefore the minor positive effect remains applicable for Policy PP37. Policy PEP10 does not address the potential to promote sustainable travel from the land safeguarded. A significant negative effect is expected for this policy in relation to SA objective 4 given that the land safeguarded is located some distance from the nearest railway station, bus stop and cycleway.

**5.357** Policies PP37 and PP38 are likely to support the health and wellbeing of residents given that they require the provision of green infrastructure connections and recreational access to the countryside. Policy PP7 also requires the delivery of a new strategic open space to serve as a community space. The minor positive effect recorded for the policy-off appraisal of sites 10664 and 10291 in relation to **SA objective 5: Community health and wellbeing** reflects their close proximity to areas of open space and PRow, but also their location some distance from healthcare facilities. For site 10664 the effect also reflects the potential for loss of part of an existing open space as a result of development within its boundaries. While the requirements of the policies will benefit residents at the site and surroundings in terms of their access to open space and community space and they will not support improved access to healthcare facilities in the area. As such the minor positive effect remains applicable for Policies PP37 and PP38 in relation to SA objective 5. Policy PEP10 does not address issues relating to health and wellbeing or community integration. A minor negative effect is expected for this policy in relation to SA objective 5 given that the land safeguarded is located some distance from the nearest area of open space but is located close to a PRow.

**5.358** Langham includes a primary school but is some distance from the nearest secondary school and town, district or local centre. The development of site 10664 is required by Policy PP37 to meet any site specific requirements of the IDP, which is expected to include education provision. As such, given that the development of the site would support service provision in the area, an improved negligible effect is recorded for Policy PP37 in relation to **SA objective 6: Services and facilities**. There is no text included in Policy PP38 to address service provision in the area and therefore minor negative effect recorded in relation to SA objective 6 reflects the location of site 10291 some distance from the nearest secondary school and town centre location. Similarly, Policy PEP10 does not include text to address service provision in the area and its lack of access to nearby services and facilities at town centre locations means that a minor negative effect is recorded in relation to SA objective 6.

**5.359** An uncertain significant negative effect is expected for the policy-off appraisal of sites 10664 and 10291 in relation to **SA objective 7: Historic environment** given that these sites are within 100m of designated heritage assets within Langham, including Grade II Listed Buildings School Farmhouse, Pond Farm Cottage and Mantons. Policies PP37 and PP38 include requirements for development to conserve, and where appropriate, enhance the significance of nearby heritage assets. Given the requirements set out, an improved uncertain minor negative effect is recorded for Policies PP37 and PP38 in relation to SA objective 7. The residual negative effect recorded for these policies denotes the potential sensitivities of the locations. The land safeguarded for employment uses through Policy PEP10 lies within 500m of Grade II Listed Building Langham Lodge. Given that the land in question lies outside of the settlement of Langham, development at the site has potential to result in effects on setting that would be transmitted across a relatively large distance. The policy does not seek to address the potential for effects relating to the historic environment and therefore an uncertain significant negative effect is expected in relation to SA objective 7.

**5.360** Sites 10664 and 10291 are both within 250m of areas of priority habitat such as deciduous woodland and traditional orchard. Site 10664 is also within 250m of Black Brook Local Wildlife Site. The Biodiversity Assessment identified that development of these sites would result in little/no harm to biodiversity

assets given that they have limited natural habitat. A minor negative effect is expected for the policy-off appraisal of both sites in relation to **SA objective 8: Biodiversity and geodiversity**. Policies PP28 and PP28 require development to incorporate several ecological mitigation measures, including the retention and enhancement of hedgerows and trees and creation and/or enhancement of grassland habitats. The text set out through Policy PP27 requires the delivery of this type of habitat to support the achievement of the Essex LNRS. These requirements will help protect biodiversity and therefore an improved negligible effect is recorded for Policies PP37 and PP38 in relation to SA objective 8. The land safeguarding for employment uses contains an area of priority habitat and is also relatively close to Kiln Wood Local Wildlife Site. As such, given that this policy does not include requirements that would support mitigation in relation to the natural environment, a significant negative effect is expected in relation to SA objective 8.

**5.361** The land at Langham lies within an area identified as having medium inherent landscape value in the Landscape Character Assessment work undertaken in support of the plan. As such there is potential for development at this location to result in impacts on more valuable landscapes in Colchester. Policy PP37 includes requirements that development must incorporate screening comprising locally appropriate tree belts, hedgerows and/or woodland to ensure that development is sensitively integrated into the landscape to reflect and reinforce rural character. As such, given the mitigation set out in the policy, an improved uncertain negligible effect is recorded for this policy in relation to **SA objective 9: Landscape**. Policies PP38 and PEP10 do not include requirements that would substantially mitigate impacts relating to landscape character and therefore an uncertain minor negative effect is expected for both policies in relation to SA objective 9.

**5.362** Langham lies entirely within SPZ 3. Furthermore, site 10664 and the land safeguard for employment through Policy PEP10 is relatively close to a waterbody. Policies PP37 and PP38 require that the development of the sites in question to demonstrate adequate wastewater management capacity. However, the requirements included will not address the potential for contamination of water resources during construction. Policy PEP10 does not include any requirements relating to the protection of water resources. As such, a minor

negative effect is recorded all three policies in relation to **SA objective 14: Water**.

## Recommendations

- The land safeguarded for employment uses by Policy PEP10 is relatively sensitive in terms of the historic environment and ecology. Furthermore, the land is relatively isolated in terms of its access to sustainable transport links. The policy could require development to incorporate natural screening to help limit the potential for impacts relating to the historic environment and landscape setting. Furthermore, the development of the site could be required to protect and enhance green infrastructure to support the priority habitat within the site. It is recognised that the conditions associated with the planning permission for the development of the land identified in relation to Policy PEP10 is likely to help mitigate a range of effects relating to the potential development of this land.

## Layer de la Haye

- Policy PP39: Land at The Furze, Layer de la Haye

Proposed for allocation for approximately 10 homes

- Policy PP40: Land West of The Folley, Layer de la Haye

Proposed for allocation for approximately 60 homes

**Table 5.46: Summary of SA findings**

SA objectives	Site 10759	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP39	Site 10758	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP40
SA1: Housing	+	+	+	+
SA2: Efficient use of land	--	--	--	--
SA3: Economic growth	-	-	-	-
SA4: Transport	-	0	-	0
SA5: Community and health and wellbeing	+	+	+	+
SA6: Services and facilities	-	-	-	-
SA7: Historic environment	0?	0?	-?	0?
SA8: Biodiversity and geodiversity	-	-	-	0
SA9: Landscape	-?	-?	-?	0?
SA10: Climate change	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
SA11: Flood risk	0	0	0	0
SA12: Waste	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
SA13: Air quality	-	-	-	-
SA14: Water	-	-	-	-



**5.363** Both sites proposed for allocation are located some distance from the nearest railway station. Site 10759 is also not close to a cycle route, while site 10758 is within 600m of a cycle route. There are multiple bus stops within 300m of both sites. As such, a minor negative effect is recorded for the policy-off appraisal of both sites in relation to **SA objective 4: Transport**. However, Policies PP39 and PP40 require development at both sites to provide safe and suitable site access, which could help limit the potential for congestion in the area. Additionally, the policies require that pedestrian access is achieved within and throughout the sites to existing footpaths and PRowS. Furthermore, the development of the sites should secure active travel links and connections to the settlement of Layer de Haye. These requirements are likely to encourage connectivity and safety for new residents and help to encourage travel by active modes. However, given the relatively limited existing transport provisions at both sites, the requirements set out in the policies are not of a scale to warrant a positive effect being recorded. Therefore, an improved negligible effect is recorded for Policies PP39 and PP40 in relation to SA objective 4.

**5.364** A minor positive effect is expected for the policy-off appraisal of sites 10759 and 10758 in relation to **SA objective 5: Community health and wellbeing**. This reflects the sites' close proximity to areas of public open space, and a PRow and their position away from areas of noise pollution and odour producing uses. Both sites are also relatively well related to Malting Green Surgery at Malting Green Road. Policies PP39 and PP40 promote access to and provision of safe and active travel routes, the provision of green infrastructure connections and recreational access to the countryside. While these requirements are likely to help support the health and wellbeing of new residents, they are not considered to be of a scale to warrant a significant positive effect being recorded in relation to SA objective 5. Policy PP39 and PP40 are therefore both expected to have a minor positive effect in relation to this SA objective.

**5.365** Site 10759 is not located close to any designated heritage assets, while site 10758 is located within 250m of a Grade II Listed Building to the north. This is reflected in an uncertain negligible and uncertain minor negative effect recorded in relation to **SA objective 7: Historic environment**, for sites 10759 and 10758, respectively. Policies PP39 and PP40 requires the development of

sites 10759 and 10758 to conserve, and where appropriate, enhance the significance of nearby heritage assets. Given the requirements of the policy, an improved uncertain negligible effect is recorded in relation to SA objective 7 for Policy PP40. No change is recorded for the effect for Policy PP39 given the location of the proposed allocation further away from heritage assets in Layer de la Haye.

**5.366** Sites 10759 and 10758 are both located within 250m of areas of priority habitat. The Biodiversity Assessment identified that the development of both sites has the potential to result in harm in relation to nearby biodiversity assets. This is reflected in the minor negative effect recorded for the policy-off appraisal in relation to **SA objective 8: Biodiversity**. No requirements are included in Policy PP39 that are likely to address biodiversity at the site and therefore no change in effect is reported in relation to SA objective. Policy PP40 requires development to achieve onsite biodiversity net gain measures, the retention of mature trees and hedgerows within the site, and the consideration of the creation of Lowland Dry Acid Grassland at the site. These measures are likely to help protect local biodiversity, and contribute to habitat connectivity. As such, an improved negligible effect is expected for the site allocated through Policy PP40 in relation to SA objective 8.

**5.367** Much of sites 10759 and 10758 are located within an area identified as having medium inherent landscape value in the Landscape Character Assessment work undertaken in support of the plan. The policy-off appraisal of both sites is therefore recorded as an uncertain minor negative effect in relation to **SA objective 9: Landscape**. Policy PP39 does not include requirements that could help to address impacts relating to landscape character in the area and as such the minor negative effect previously identified in relation to SA objective 9 remains unchanged. However, Policy PP40 requires that screening measures comprising locally appropriate hedgerows and/or woodland are to be achieved along the site boundaries, and that mature trees and hedgerows are retained within the site. These measures will help to ensure that development of site 10758 is sensitively integrated into the landscape, to reflect and reinforce existing character. As such, given the mitigation set out in the policy, an improved uncertain negligible effect is recorded for Policy PP40 in relation to SA objective 9.

## Recommendations

- Policy PP39 could include text regarding mitigation measures such as screening through the retention of existing hedgerows, trees and vegetation, particularly along The Folley at its eastern boundary. This would help to support the sensitive integration of the site into the existing landscape.

## Rowhedge

- Policy PP41: Rowhedge Business Park, Rowhedge

Proposed for allocation for approximately 50 homes

*This site is carried forward from the adopted Local Plan*

**Table 5.47: Summary of SA findings**

SA objectives	Site 10956	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP41
SA1: Housing	++	+
SA2: Efficient use of land	++?	++?
SA3: Economic growth	-	-
SA4: Transport	-	0
SA5: Community and health and wellbeing	+	+
SA6: Services and facilities	-	-
SA7: Historic environment	--?	-?

SA objectives	Site 10956	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP41
SA8: Biodiversity and geodiversity	--	-
SA9: Landscape	-?	0?
SA10: Climate change	N/A	N/A
SA11: Flood risk	0	0
SA12: Waste	N/A	N/A
SA13: Air quality	-	-
SA14: Water	-	0

**5.368** The site was considered policy-off as having capacity for more than 100 homes and as such a significant positive effect was recorded. The developable area of the site has subsequently been reviewed and the site capacity set out in Policy PP41 is 50 homes. As such a revised minor positive effect is recorded for Policy PP41 in relation to **SA objective 1: Housing**.

**5.369** Site 10956 is not located close to a railway station or a cycle route, but it is within close proximity of several bus stops. As such, a policy-off minor negative effect is recorded for the site in relation to **SA objective 4: Transport**. However, Policy PP41 requires development to provide safe and suitable site access, which could help limit the potential for congestion in the area. Additionally, the policy stipulates that pedestrian access must be achieved within and throughout the site to existing footpaths and PRoWs and that active travel links and connections should be provided to the settlement of Rowhedge. These requirements are likely to encourage travel by active modes; however, they are not of a scale to warrant a positive effect being recorded. Therefore, an improved negligible effect is recorded for Policy PP41 in relation to SA objective 4.

**5.370** A minor positive effect is expected for the policy-off appraisal of site 10956 in relation to **SA objective 5: Community health and wellbeing** given that it is adjacent to areas of open space, and a PRow and is also relatively close to Rowhedge Surgery along Rectory Road. Policy PP41 supports this positive effect by promoting active travel routes and requiring the provision of green infrastructure connections and recreational access to the countryside. These requirements are likely to help protect and enhance the health and wellbeing of new residents. However, they are not considered to be of a scale to warrant the identification of a significant positive effect. As such no change is expected in relation to the minor positive effect recorded in relation to SA objective 5.

**5.371** Site 10956 is adjacent to a Listed Building, and within 500 metres of the Rowhedge Conservation Area. Therefore, an uncertain significant negative effect has been recorded for the site policy-off. Policy PP41 requires development to conserve, and where appropriate, enhance the significance of nearby heritage assets, including that of the Conservation Area. Given the requirements of the policy, an improved uncertain minor negative effect is recorded in relation to **SA objective 7: Historic environment** for the site. The residual negative effect is recorded to note the potential sensitivities of the location.

**5.372** Site 10956 contains part of an area of priority habitat, is adjacent to Rowhedge Pits Local Wildlife Site and is close to the Roman River SSSI. The Biodiversity Assessment identifies that there is potential for development to result in harm to biodiversity assets in the area, although it is noted that the priority habitat within the site may already be in poor to moderate condition. This is reflected in the significant negative effect recorded for the policy-off appraisal in relation to **SA objective 8: Biodiversity**. Policy PP41 does not directly address the mitigation of effects relating to these biodiversity assets. However, it requires development to safeguard woodland, retain existing tree cover and open space, and requires that onsite biodiversity net gain measures are focussed on enhancing the adjacent woodland and improving open mosaic habitats to support ecological resilience. As such an improved minor negative effect is expected for the site allocated through Policy PP41 in relation to SA objective 8.

**5.373** Site 10956 is located within an area identified as having medium inherent landscape value in the Landscape Character Assessment work undertaken in support of the plan. The policy-off appraisal of the site is therefore recorded as uncertain minor negative effect in relation to **SA objective 9: Landscape**. However, Policy PP41 stipulates that screening measures comprising locally appropriate hedgerows and/or woodland will be required along site boundaries, and that trees will be retained within the site. These measures will help to ensure that development of site 10956 is sensitively integrated into the landscape, to reflect and reinforce the existing character. As such, given the mitigation set out in the policy, an improved uncertain negligible effect is recorded for site 10956 in relation to SA objective 9.

**5.374** Site 10956 lies within SPZ 3, and is adjacent to a watercourse. As such, a minor negative effect has been recorded policy-off for the site in relation to **SA objective 14: Water**. Policy PP41 requires the development of the site to demonstrate adequate wastewater management capacity. However, the requirements included will not address the potential for contamination of water resources during construction. As such the minor negative effect recorded in relation to SA objective 14 remains applicable.

## Recommendations

- No recommendations are proposed.

## West Bergholt

- Policy PP42: Land at White Hart Lane, West Bergholt

Proposed for allocation for approximately 50 homes

- Policy PP43: Land North of Colchester Road, West Bergholt

Proposed for allocation for approximately 100 homes

- Policy PP44: Land off Colchester Road, West Bergholt

Proposed for allocation for approximately 100 homes

- Policy PEP11: Land at Patterns Yard, West Bergholt

Proposed for allocation for employment



Table 5.48: Summary of SA findings

SA objectives	Site 10526	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP42	Site 10229	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP43	Site 10749	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP44	Site 10566	Site considering mitigation in Policy PEP11
SA1: Housing	+	+	++	++	++	++	N/A	N/A
SA2: Efficient use of land	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
SA3: Economic growth	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
SA4: Transport	-	0	+	+	+	+	-	0
SA5: Community and health and wellbeing	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
SA6: Services and facilities	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
SA7: Historic environment	--?	-?	-?	0?	--?	-?	--?	--?
SA8: Biodiversity and geodiversity	-	0	-	0	-	0	-	0
SA9: Landscape	-?	0?	-?	0?	--?	-?	-?	-?

**Chapter 5** Appraisal findings for topic-based policies in the Local Plan

SA objectives	Site 10526	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP42	Site 10229	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP43	Site 10749	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP44	Site 10566	Site considering mitigation in Policy PEP11
SA10: Climate change	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
SA11: Flood risk	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SA12: Waste	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
SA13: Air quality	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
SA14: Water	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

**5.375** Sites 10526, 10229, 10749 and 10566 proposed for allocation are located within close proximity of bus stops, with sites 10229 and 10749 also located within close proximity of a cycle route. None of the sites are within close proximity of a railway station. As such, minor positive effects are recorded for the policy-off appraisals of sites 10229 and 10749, while minor negative effects are recorded for the policy-off appraisals of sites 10526 and 10566. Policies PP42, PP43, PP44 and PEP11 require development to provide safe and suitable site access, which could help limit the potential for congestion in the area. Additionally, Policies PP42, PP43 and PP44 require pedestrian access to ensure connectivity within and throughout the sites to existing footways and public rights of way, as well as the provision of green infrastructure connections and securing active travel links and connections to the settlement. Policy PEP11 supports the provision of 0.7ha of open space and/or green infrastructure, which could incorporate active travel routes. These policy requirements may help to encourage travel by sustainable and active modes; however, they are not of a scale to warrant a positive effect being recorded for policies PP42 (10526) and PEP11 (10566). Therefore, an improved negligible effect is recorded for Policies PP42 and PEP11 in relation to **SA objective 4: Transport**. As policies PP43 (10229) and PP44 (10749) already receive minor positive effects, these remain the same.

**5.376** Minor positive effects are expected for the policy-off appraisals of sites 10526, 10229, 10749 and 10566 in relation to **SA objective 5: Community health and wellbeing**. In terms of the residential sites (10526, 10229 and 10749), this reflects their proximity to areas of open space, PRoWs, GP surgeries (particularly 10229 and 10749) and their position away from areas of noise and odour producing uses. For the employment site (10566), this reflects the employment site's proximity to areas of open space and PRoWs. Policies PP42, PP43, PP44 and PEP11 promote access to safe and active travel routes, while Policies PP42, PP43 and PP44 also support the provision of green infrastructure connections and recreational access to the countryside. Policies PP43 and PP44 also require any site specific infrastructure requirements from the IDP. Policy PEP11 supports the provision of 0.7ha of open space and/or green infrastructure, which could incorporate active travel routes. Therefore,

improved minor positive effects are recorded for Policies PP42, PP43, PP44 and PEP11 in relation to SA objective 5.

**5.377** Sites 10526 (within a settlement) and 10749 (within a settlement) are within 100m of an historic asset, while site 10229 (within a settlement) is within 250m of an historic asset. The employment site, 10566 (outside of a settlement), is within 500m of an historic asset. Therefore, an uncertain significant negative effect has been recorded for sites 10526, 10749 and 10566 policy-off in relation to **SA objective 7: Historic environment**, while an uncertain minor negative effect has been recorded for site 10229 policy-off. Policies PP42, PP43 and PP44 require development to conserve, and where appropriate, enhance the significance of nearby heritage assets. Given the requirements of these three policies, improved an uncertain minor negative effect is expected for sites 10526 and 10749, while an improved uncertain negligible effect is expected for site 10229 in relation to SA objective 7. The uncertain significant negative effect site 10566 is expected to have remains, as no mitigation is provided in Policy PEP11 regarding the historic environment.

**5.378** Sites 10526, 10229, 10749 and 10566 are within 250m of priority habitats. The Biodiversity Assessment identified that the development of sites 10526, 10229 and 10566 would result in little/no harm, while the development of site 10749 would result in low harm. Given each site's proximity to priority habitats, a minor negative effect has been recorded for the policy-off appraisal of these sites in relation to **SA objective 8: Biodiversity and geodiversity**. However, Policies PP42, PP43 and PP44 require tree belts, hedgerows and/or woodland along the site boundaries, in addition to green infrastructure provision. Policy PP44 requires onsite biodiversity net gain measures to focus on hedgerows and enhancing the condition and distinctiveness of grassland, while Policy PEP11 requires the provision 0.7ha of open space and/or green infrastructure. Given the requirements of these policies, an improved negligible effect is expected for all four sites.

**5.379** Sites 10526, 10229 and 10566 are located within areas identified as having medium inherent landscape value in the Landscape Character Assessment work undertaken in support of the plan, while site 10749 is located in an area with high inherent landscape value. The policy-off appraisal of sites

10526, 10229 and 10566 was therefore recorded as uncertain minor negative in relation to **SA objective 9: Landscape**, while site 10749 was recorded as uncertain significant negative. Policies PP42, PP43 and PP44 stipulate that screening measures comprising locally appropriate tree belts, hedgerows and/or woodland will be required along site boundaries, with Policy PP44 also requiring no harm to the coalescence break defined in the West Bergholt Neighbourhood Plan. These measures will help to ensure that development is sensitively integrated into the landscape, to reflect and reinforce the existing rural character of the area. As such, given the mitigation set out in the policies, an improved uncertain negligible effect is recorded for Policies PP42 and PP43, while an improved uncertain minor negative effect is recorded for Policy PP44 in relation to SA objective 9. The uncertain minor negative effect site 10566 is expected to remain, as no mitigation is provided in Policy PEP11 regarding the landscape, although the provision of open space and/or green infrastructure may help protect the landscape.

**5.380** A minor negative effect is expected for the policy-off appraisal of sites 10526, 10229, 10749 and 10566 in relation to **SA objective 14: Water** as the sites are located within SPZ 3. However, Policies PP42, PP43 and PP44 require development to demonstrate adequate wastewater management capacity. These requirements are not expected to address the potential for contamination of water resources during construction. As such, the minor negative effect recorded in relation to SA objective 14 remains applicable.

## Recommendations

- Policy PEP11 could be strengthened by including wording regarding the protection and enhancement of the historic environment, and townscape. It could also require that development is delivered to incorporate appropriate screening through the protection and enhancement of native trees and/or hedgerows to ensure screening from the wider landscape.

## Aldham

- Policy PP45: Land off New Road, Aldham

Proposed for allocation for approximately 15 homes

**Table 5.49: Summary of SA findings**

SA objectives	Site 10535a	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP45
SA1: Housing	+	+
SA2: Efficient use of land	--	--
SA3: Economic growth	-	-
SA4: Transport	-	0
SA5: Community and health and wellbeing	+	+
SA6: Services and facilities	--	--
SA7: Historic environment	--?	-?
SA8: Biodiversity and geodiversity	0	0
SA9: Landscape	-?	0?
SA10: Climate change	N/A	N/A
SA11: Flood risk	0	0
SA12: Waste	N/A	N/A
SA13: Air quality	-	-
SA14: Water	-	-

**5.381** Site 10535a is located some distance from the nearest railway station and cycling route, although there are multiple bus stops within 300 metres. The requirement included in Policy PP45 for development of the site to provide safe and suitable access, could help limit the potential for congestion in the area. Furthermore, the policy requires that pedestrian access is achieved within and throughout the site to existing footpaths and PRoWs and that active travel links and connections are provided to the settlement of Aldham. These requirements may help to encourage travel by active modes. Therefore, an improved negligible effect is recorded for the site in relation to **SA objective 4: Transport.**

**5.382** A minor positive effect is expected for the policy-off appraisal of site 10535a in relation to **SA objective 5: Community health and wellbeing** given that it is within close proximity of a green space (at St Margaret's Church), and within walking distance of a PRoW. The effect recorded also reflects the location of the site some distance from the nearest healthcare facility but also areas affected by noise pollution and odours. Policy PP45 is likely to support the positive effect by promoting access to and provision of safe and active travel routes, green infrastructure connections and recreational access to the countryside. However, the policy does not directly address access to healthcare. Therefore, no change is recorded for Policy PP45 for minor positive effect previously recorded in relation to SA objective 5.

**5.383** The site is close to Grade II\* Listed Building Church of St Margaret and St Catherine as well as a number of Grade II Listed Buildings, and as such a uncertain significant negative effect is expected for the policy-off appraisal in relation to **SA objective 7: Historic environment.** Policy PP45 requires the site to be developed to conserve, and where appropriate, enhance the significance of heritage assets. Given the requirements of the policy, an improved uncertain minor negative effect is recorded in relation to SA objective 7 for the site. The residual negative effect is recorded to note the potential sensitivities of the location.

**5.384** The site is not within close proximity of any international, national or local biodiversity and geodiversity assets. The Biodiversity Assessment identifies that the site has limited natural habitat value and its development would result in



little/no harm. This is reflected in the negligible effect recorded for the policy-off appraisal in relation to **SA objective 8: Biodiversity**. Policy PP45 stipulates that any loss of hedgerows to allow for suitable access must be compensated for. Further to this, the provision of green infrastructure connections could benefit biodiversity by supporting habitat connectivity. However, the requirements outlined in the policy are not sufficient enough to warrant the identification of a positive effect in relation to SA objective 8. As such the negligible effect remains applicable.

**5.385** Site 10535a is located within an area identified as having medium inherent landscape value in the Landscape Character Assessment work undertaken in support of the plan. The policy-off appraisal of the site is therefore recorded as an uncertain minor negative effect in relation to **SA objective 9: Landscape**. However, Policy PP45 stipulates that screening measures comprising locally appropriate hedgerows and/or woodland will be required along site boundaries and that development should respond to the historic settlement pattern and use materials which are appropriate to local landscape character. These measures will help to ensure that development of site 10535a is sensitively integrated into the landscape, to reflect and reinforce rural character. As such, given the mitigation set out in the policy, an improved uncertain negligible effect is recorded for site 10535a in relation to SA objective 9.

## Recommendations

- No recommendations are included.

## Birch and Layer Breton

- Policy PP46: Land at Birch Green, Birch

Proposed for allocation for approximately 15 homes

**Table 5.9: Summary of SA findings**

SA objectives	Site 10121	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP46
SA1: Housing	+	+
SA2: Efficient use of land	--	--
SA3: Economic growth	-	-
SA4: Transport	+	+
SA5: Community and health and wellbeing	+	+
SA6: Services and facilities	-	-
SA7: Historic environment	--?	-?
SA8: Biodiversity and geodiversity	-	0
SA9: Landscape	-?	0?
SA10: Climate change	N/A	N/A
SA11: Flood risk	0	0
SA12: Waste	N/A	N/A
SA13: Air quality	-	-
SA14: Water	-	-

**5.386** The development site 10121 is required by Policy PP46 to secure active travel links and connections to the settlement of Birch Green. As such there is potential for the policy to support increases in travel by active modes in the area. The site is relatively close to existing bus stops along Birch Street and part of the National Cycle Network but is not close a railway station. The requirements of the policy are not considered to be of a scale to result in an

improvement to the minor positive effect already recorded in relation to **SA objective 4: Transport**.

**5.387** Policy PP46 requires that the development of site 10121 provides an area of open space onsite and links from this new area to the existing open space to the north. Furthermore, development should also ensure provision of green infrastructure connections and recreational access to the countryside. These requirements are likely to help promote the health and wellbeing of new residents. While Policy PP46 includes a range of benefits relating to health and wellbeing, the policy would not address the lack of access to a healthcare facility at the settlement. As such a significant positive effect for **SA objective 5: Community and health and wellbeing** is not considered appropriate and the minor positive effect remains applicable.

**5.388** The development of site 10121 is required by Policy PP46 to conserve, and where appropriate, enhance the significance of heritage assets (including any contribution made by their settings). The site is within close proximity to Mill House and Whitecroft Grade II Listed Buildings and therefore an uncertain significant negative effect has been recorded for the site policy-off. Given the requirements of the policy, an improved uncertain minor negative effect is recorded in relation to **SA objective 7: Historic environment** for the site. The residual negative effect is recorded to note the potential sensitivities of the location.

**5.389** Site 10121 lies adjacent to an area of priority habitat to the east and relatively close to a Layer Breton Heath Local Wildlife Site to the south east. The Biodiversity Assessment identified that the development of the site would result in little/no harm given that natural habitat with the site noted to be of limited ecological value. This is reflected in the minor negative effect recorded for the policy-off appraisal in relation to **SA objective 8: Biodiversity**. Given that the policy sets out the requirement for mitigation including grassland compensation and any mitigation set out in protected species surveys as well as BNG measures such as tree planting, an improved negligible effect is recorded in relation to **SA objective 8**.

**5.390** The site lies within a more rural area of Colchester at the relatively small settlement of Birch Green. It lies on land identified as having a medium landscape value in the Landscape Character Assessment work undertaken in support of the plan. The policy-off appraisal of site 10121 in relation to **SA objective 9: Landscape** was therefore recorded as uncertain minor negative. The requirement of the policy for screening comprising locally appropriate tree belts and/or hedgerows to ensure that development is sensitively integrated is likely to help mitigate adverse impacts on the immediate surroundings. Therefore, an improved uncertain negligible effect is recorded in relation to SA objective 9.

## Recommendations

- No recommendations are proposed.

## Fingringhoe

- Policy PP47: Land at Picketts Farm, Fingringhoe

Proposed for allocation for approximately 5 homes

**Table 5.50: Summary of SA findings**

SA objectives	Site 10600	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP47
SA1: Housing	+	+
SA2: Efficient use of land	--	--
SA3: Economic growth	-	-
SA4: Transport	-	0

SA objectives	Site 10600	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP47
SA5: Community and health and wellbeing	+	+
SA6: Services and facilities	-	-
SA7: Historic environment	--?	-?
SA8: Biodiversity and geodiversity	--	-
SA9: Landscape	--?	-?
SA10: Climate change	N/A	N/A
SA11: Flood risk	0	0
SA12: Waste	N/A	N/A
SA13: Air quality	-	-
SA14: Water	-	-

**5.391** Site 10600 proposed for allocation is located within close proximity of some bus stops. However, it is not within close proximity of a railway station or cycle route. As such, a minor negative effect is recorded for the policy-off appraisal of the site in relation to **SA objective 4: Transport**. However, Policy PP47 requires development at the site to provide safe and suitable site access, which could help limit the potential for congestion in the area. Additionally, the policy requires pedestrian access to ensure connectivity within and throughout the site to existing footways and public rights of way, as well as the provision of green infrastructure connections and securing active travel links and connections to the settlement. These policy requirements may help to encourage travel by sustainable and active modes; however, they are not of a scale to warrant a positive effect being recorded. Therefore, an improved negligible effect is recorded for the site in relation to SA objective 4.

**5.392** A minor positive effect is expected for the policy-off appraisal of site 10600 in relation to **SA objective 5: Community health and wellbeing**. This

reflects the site's close proximity to areas of public open space and a PRow, and its position away from areas of noise pollution and odour producing uses. However, the site is not within close proximity of a GP surgery, which could limit people's access to healthcare. Policy PP47 promotes access to safe and active travel routes, the provision of green infrastructure connections and recreational access to the countryside. While these requirements are likely to help support the health and wellbeing of new residents, they are not considered to be of a scale to warrant a significant positive effect being recorded in relation to SA objective 5. Policy PP47 is therefore expected to have a minor positive effect in relation to this SA objective.

**5.393** Site 10600 is within 500m of Fingringhoe Conservation Area, which contains a number of listed buildings. Therefore, an uncertain significant negative effect has been recorded for the site policy-off. Policy PP47 requires development to conserve, and where appropriate, enhance the significance of nearby heritage assets. Given the requirements of the policy, an improved uncertain minor negative effect is recorded in relation to **SA objective 7: Historic environment** for the site. The residual negative effect is recorded to note the potential sensitivities of the location.

**5.394** Site 10600 is within 250m of the Upper Colne Marshes SSSI, Local Wildlife Sites and Priority Habitats. However, the Biodiversity Assessment concluded that the site itself has limited natural value with development likely to have little/no harm on biodiversity. Given the site's proximity to the aforementioned sites, a significant negative effect was recorded for the policy-off appraisal in relation to **SA objective 8: Biodiversity and geodiversity**. Policy PP47 requires the creation of a grassland habitat with regard given to the Essex Local Nature Recovery Strategy, which identifies a strategic opportunity for grassland habitat north of the site. Policy PP47 also supports the provision of tree belts and hedgerows along the site boundaries. The creation of a grassland habitat will contribute towards habitat connectivity, but not necessarily mitigate any adverse effects development might have on the nearby biodiversity assets. Overall, therefore, a minor negative effect is expected for the site allocated through Policy PP47 in relation to SA objective 8.

**5.395** Site 10600 is located within an area identified as having high inherent landscape value in the Landscape Character Assessment work undertaken in support of the plan. The policy-off appraisal of the site is therefore recorded as an uncertain significant negative effect in relation to **SA objective 9: Landscape**. However, Policy PP47 stipulates that screening measures comprising locally appropriate tree belts and/or hedgerows will be required along site boundaries. This measure, in addition to the creation of a grassland habitat, will help to ensure that development of site 10600 is sensitively integrated into the landscape, to reflect and reinforce the existing rural character of the area. As such, given the mitigation set out in the policy, an improved uncertain minor negative effect is recorded for site 10600 in relation to SA objective 9.

**5.396** Site 10600 lies within SPZ 3. As such, a minor negative effect has been recorded policy-off for the site in relation to **SA objective 14: Water**. Policy PP47 requires development of site 10600 to demonstrate adequate wastewater management capacity. However, the requirements included will not address the potential for contamination of water resources during construction. As such, a minor negative effect is recorded in relation to SA objective 14.

## Recommendations

- No recommendations are proposed.

## Messing

- Policy PP48: Kelvedon Road, Messing

Proposed for allocation for approximately 25 homes



**Table 5.51: Summary of SA findings**

SA objectives	Site 10634	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP48
SA1: Housing	+	+
SA2: Efficient use of land	--	--
SA3: Economic growth	-	-
SA4: Transport	-	0
SA5: Community and health and wellbeing	+	+
SA6: Services and facilities	-	-
SA7: Historic environment	-?	0?
SA8: Biodiversity and geodiversity	0	0
SA9: Landscape	-?	0?
SA10: Climate change	N/A	N/A
SA11: Flood risk	0	0
SA12: Waste	N/A	N/A
SA13: Air quality	0	0
SA14: Water	-	-

**5.397** Site 10634 is located some distance from a railway station, and cycling route, although it is close to multiple bus stops. As such, a minor negative effect is recorded policy-off for the site in relation to **SA objective 4: Transport**. However, Policy PP48 requires development to provide safe and suitable site access, which could help limit the potential for congestion in the area. Additionally, the policy stipulates that pedestrian access must be achieved within and throughout the site to existing footpaths and PRoWs and that active travel links and connections should be made to the settlement of Messing.

These requirements are likely to help encourage travel by active modes. Therefore, an improved negligible effect is recorded for Policy PP48 in relation to SA objective 4.

**5.398** A minor positive effect is expected for the policy-off appraisal of site 10634 in relation to **SA objective 5: Community health and wellbeing** given that it is adjacent to areas of open space (including an area of allotments), and a PRoW. The effect recorded also reflects the site's location some distance from the nearest healthcare facility and outside of areas affected by noise pollution and odours. Policy PP48 supports the potential benefits associated with the site's location by promoting access to and provision of safe and active travel routes, the provision of green infrastructure connections and recreational access to the countryside. Furthermore, the development of the site is required to incorporate a minimum of 1.7ha of public open space. These requirements are likely to support the health and wellbeing of new residents. However, given that the policy requirements would not address access to healthcare facilities from the site, the minor positive effect previously identified in relation to SA objective 5, remains applicable.

**5.399** Site 10634 is within 250m of the Messing Conservation Area and this is reflected in the minor negative effect previously recorded for the site in relation to **SA objective 7: Historic environment** in the policy-off appraisal. Policy PP48 requires development to conserve, and where appropriate, enhance the significance of heritage assets. Given the requirements of the policy, an improved uncertain negligible negative effect is recorded in relation to SA objective 7 for Policy PP48.

**5.400** The site is not close to any biodiversity assets or sites. The Biodiversity Assessment identifies that its development would result in little/no harm to biodiversity assets given that it has limited natural habitat value. As such a negligible effect is recorded for the site through its policy-off appraisal, in relation to **SA objective 8: Biodiversity**. The policy includes requirements for the development of the site to support the establishment of standing freshwater habitats, which align with opportunities outlined in the Essex LNRS. The requirements are not considered substantial enough to warrant the identification

of a positive effect and therefore the negligible effect remains applicable in relation to SA objective 8.

**5.401** Site 10634 is located within an area identified as having medium inherent landscape value in the Landscape Character Assessment work undertaken in support of the plan. The policy-off appraisal of the site is therefore recorded as an uncertain minor negative effect in relation to **SA objective 9: Landscape**. However, Policy PP45 requires that screening measures comprising locally appropriate hedgerows and/or woodland will be required along site boundaries. These measures will help to ensure that development of site 10634 is sensitively integrated into the landscape, to reflect and reinforce rural character. As such, given the mitigation set out in the policy, an improved uncertain negligible effect is recorded for Policy PP48 in relation to SA objective 9.

## Recommendations

- No recommendations proposed.

## Peldon

- Policy PP49: Land at St Ives Road, Peldon

Proposed for allocation for approximately 25 homes

**Table 5.52: Summary of SA findings**

SA objectives	Site 10621	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP49
SA1: Housing	+	+
SA2: Efficient use of land	--	--

SA objectives	Site 10621	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP49
SA3: Economic growth	-	-
SA4: Transport	-	0
SA5: Community and health and wellbeing	+	+
SA6: Services and facilities	--	--
SA7: Historic environment	--?	-?
SA8: Biodiversity and geodiversity	--	--
SA9: Landscape	--?	-?
SA10: Climate change	N/A	N/A
SA11: Flood risk	0	0
SA12: Waste	N/A	N/A
SA13: Air quality	-	-
SA14: Water	-	-

**5.402** Site 10621 proposed for allocation is located within close proximity of some bus stops. However, it is not within close proximity of a railway station or cycle route. As such, a minor negative effect is recorded for the policy-off appraisal of the site in relation to **SA objective 4: Transport**. However, Policy PP49 requires development at the site to provide safe and suitable site access, which could help limit the potential for congestion in the area. Additionally, the policy requires pedestrian access to ensure connectivity within and throughout the site to existing footways and public rights of way, as well as the provision of green infrastructure connections and securing active travel links and connections to the settlement. These policy requirements may help to encourage travel by sustainable and active modes; however, they are not of a

scale to warrant a positive effect being recorded. Therefore, an improved negligible effect is recorded for the site in relation to SA objective 4.

**5.403** A minor positive effect is expected for the policy-off appraisal of site 10621 in relation to **SA objective 5: Community health and wellbeing**. This reflects the site's close proximity to areas of public open space and a PRoW, and its position away from areas of noise pollution and odour producing uses. However, the site is not within close proximity of a GP surgery, which could limit people's access to healthcare. Policy PP49 promotes access to safe and active travel routes, the provision of green infrastructure connections and recreational access to the countryside. Moreover, it supports the provision of up to 0.6ha of open space within the site. While these requirements will not address access to healthcare facilities from the site, they will benefit residents at the site and surroundings in terms of their access to open space and therefore Policy PP49 is expected to have a minor positive effect in relation to SA objective 5.

**5.404** Site 10621 is within 100m of several Listed Buildings. Therefore, an uncertain significant negative effect has been recorded for the site policy-off. Policy PP49 requires development to conserve, and where appropriate, enhance the significance of nearby heritage assets. Further to this, it requires development to respect the setting of and conserve the local distinctiveness of the Church of St Mary at Peldon, which forms a prominent landmark and is visible from much of the surrounding landscape. Given the requirements of the policy, an improved uncertain minor negative effect is recorded in relation to **SA objective 7: Historic environment** for the site. The residual negative effect is recorded to note the potential sensitivities of the location.

**5.405** Site 10621 is within 1km of the Blackwater Estuary SSSI and 250m of a number of Priority Habitats. The Biodiversity Assessment identifies that there is potential for development to result in medium harm to nearby biodiversity assets, as well as impact established grassland and native hedgerows with trees on site. This is reflected in the significant negative effect recorded for the policy-off appraisal in relation to **SA objective 8: Biodiversity and geodiversity**. Policy PP49 does not directly address the mitigation of effects relating to these biodiversity assets. Instead, it requires development to retain mature trees and hedgerows within the site, in addition to the provision of

hedgerows and/or woodland along site boundaries. These requirements are not expected to be sufficient enough to alter the site's policy-off effect. Therefore, overall, Policy PP49 is expected to have a significant negative effect in relation to SA objective 8.

**5.406** Site 10621 is located within an area identified as having high inherent landscape value in the Landscape Character Assessment work undertaken in support of the plan. The policy-off appraisal of the site is therefore recorded as an uncertain significant negative effect in relation to **SA objective 9: Landscape**. However, Policy PP49 stipulates that screening measures comprising locally appropriate hedgerows and/or woodland will be required along site boundaries. This measure, in addition to the creation of a new open space within the site, will help to ensure that development of site 10621 is sensitively integrated into the landscape, to reflect and reinforce the rural character of the area. As such, given the mitigation set out in the policy, an improved uncertain minor negative effect is recorded for site 10621 in relation to SA objective 9.

**5.407** Site 10621 lies within SPZ 3 and is within close proximity of some water bodies. As such, a minor negative effect has been recorded policy-off for the site in relation to **SA objective 14: Water**. Policy PP49 requires the development of the site to demonstrate adequate wastewater management capacity. However, the requirements included will not address the potential for contamination of water resources during construction. As such, the minor negative effect recorded in relation to SA objective 14 remains applicable.

## Recommendations

- The location of the site at the smaller settlement of Peldon means that residents at the site will lack immediate access to a range of services and facilities. Policy PP49 could include requirements for improved links to larger settlements in the plan area, including by public transport and active travel.

# Chapter 6

## Cumulative effects

**6.1** The cumulative effects assessment considers the total effects of the policies and site allocations in the draft Local Plan document taken as a whole on each of the SA objectives. A summary of the likely sustainability effects of these is presented in Table 6.1 below. The effects of each individual policy (including the site allocation policies) set out in the plan are presented in Table 6.2 later in the section.

**Table 6.1: Cumulative effects of the draft Colchester Local Plan**

SA objective	Cumulative effect of Local Plan policies
SA1: Housing	++
SA2: Efficient use of land	+/-
SA3: Economic growth	++
SA4: Transport	++/-
SA5: Community and health and wellbeing	++/-
SA6: Services and facilities	++/-
SA7: Historic environment	+/-?
SA8: Biodiversity and geodiversity	--/+
SA9: Landscape	+/-?
SA10: Climate change	+/-
SA11: Flood risk	+/-
SA12: Waste	+



SA objective	Cumulative effect of Local Plan policies
SA13: Air quality	+/-
SA14: Water	+/-

## Total effects of policies in the draft Local Plan document

SA objective 1: Provide a sufficient level of housing to meet the objectively assessed needs of the city to enable people to live in a decent, safe, and sustainable home which is affordable

**6.2** In line with Policy ST5: Colchester’s housing need, the draft Local Plan requires the delivery of at least 20,800 new homes up to 2041, equating to an annual average of 1,300 dwellings, which will meet the housing need in Colchester City. This figure aligns with the Housing Needs Assessment [See reference 20] undertaken in support of the Local Plan. The overall distribution of new housing across Colchester is guided by the spatial strategy (Policy ST3), which focuses development within the urban area and also includes substantial development at the Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community. Further development is allowed for at the large and medium settlements. Limited amounts of development are to be delivered within the small settlements, which could support home ownership for local people at these locations. While meeting the housing need in Colchester, the Local Plan will also help to provide a mix of housing sizes types and tenures in line with Policy H2: Housing mix. The delivery of affordable homes in Colchester will be of particular importance, where average house prices have increased in recent years. Policy H2: Affordable housing, requires larger developments to deliver 30% affordable housing. The provision of specialist housing (such as housing for older people)

and custom and self-build housing is supported through Policies H5: Specialist housing including housing for an aging population and H6: Self and custom build. Furthermore, the specific housing needs of Gypsies, Travellers, and Travelling Showpeople is addressed through Policy H7. This policy sets out that permissions will be granted to meet the need of approximately 15 pitches between 2025 and 2041. The policy also sets out a number of criteria that this type of development should meet to ensure that accommodation encourages social inclusion and sustainable patterns of living including by providing good access to local services. The criteria will ensure that the accommodation provided is of a suitable quality to ensure good health and wellbeing.

**6.3** It is important to note that there is some potential tension between the policies in the Local Plan that support new housing development and those that seek to protect and enhance the natural and built environment, such as Policies EN1: Nature conservation designated sites, and LC1: Landscape. However, it is expected that such measures will serve to direct growth to the most appropriate locations within the Local Plan area and will not prevent the delivery of the required level of development over the plan period.

**6.4 Overall, a cumulative significant positive effect is expected in relation to SA objective 1: Housing.**

## SA objective 2: Support the efficient use of land

**6.5** The plan area largely comprises large swathes of Grade 2 and Grade 3 agricultural land to the west and urban land and non-agricultural land to the east, around the City of Colchester. The spatial strategy (Policy ST3) directs much of the development required to the urban area and the larger settlements that sit directly below this in the settlement hierarchy and supports the re-use of previously developed land. However, large amounts of development are also directed to greenfield sites that comprise best and most versatile agricultural land, particularly to the north and west of the main urban area. It is notable that the Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community comprises a large greenfield site that takes in areas of Grade 1 and Grade 2 agricultural soils.

**6.6** Given the scale of growth required over the plan period the loss of greenfield land that comprises best and most versatile agricultural land is unlikely to be fully mitigated in Colchester. It is noted that the development principles included under the spatial strategy for the District set out that the highest areas of sensitivity will receive the lowest levels of growth in the Local Plan, which could limit the loss of higher value soils. This approach could be strengthened through the inclusion of Policy PC4: Development density, which requires development densities to make efficient use of land. Further to this, Policy ENV9: Pollution and contaminated land states that developments on contaminated land may be required to be supported by remedial works. This policy is likely to support to a more efficient use of land resources, allowing for polluted land to be brought safely back into use.

**6.7 Overall, a cumulative mixed minor positive and minor negative effect is expected in relation to SA objective 2: Efficient use of land.**

### SA objective 3: Achieve a prosperous and sustainable local economy that improves employment and training opportunities and supports the vitality/viability of centres

**6.8** Through Policy ST6: Colchester's employment needs, the draft Local Plan sets out the delivery of at least 41.7ha of employment land. This will be achieved through existing and new allocations together with existing planning permissions up to 2041 and will contribute significantly towards job creation and economic growth. The amount of employment land set out in the plan aligns with the evidence of the Employment Study [\[See reference 21\]](#). Land allocated and safeguarded for employment is largely focussed within the urban area and the large settlements in the settlement hierarchy including Tiptree and Marks Tey. These are locations at which a high number of residents will be able to access new employment opportunities including by sustainable modes of transport. The plan also includes some employment land at the medium settlements of Chappel and Wakes Colne, Eight Ash Green, Langham and

West Begholt to safeguard and allow for small expansions at these locations that will support access to jobs away from the urban area. Importantly, the Local Plan also recognises the importance of key employment supporting sites such as the Knowledge Gateway (Policy PEP3) and Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community (Policy ST9) as well as the nearby University of Essex as supporting research and learning in Colchester (Policy UE1). These elements of the plan are expected to be particularly important in terms of supporting a range of highly skilled job opportunities and driving innovation.

**6.9** The plan's sets out the overarching approach to the protection and enhancement of employment provision in a range of locations across the Colchester area through Policy E1: Protection of employment. Further to this, Policy E4: Retail and centres is included in the plan to protect and strengthen the vitality and vibrancy of the town, district, and local centres, that complement the job offer at key employment sites in the plan area. Growth of the tourist and visitor economy is supported in the Local Plan through Policy CS5: Tourism, leisure, arts, culture and heritage. The Local Plan also includes policies to provide for rural economic growth (Policy E2) as well as diversification at these locations (Policy E3), ensuring that an appropriate level of growth is allowed for in the less developed parts of Colchester.

**6.10 Overall, a cumulative significant positive effect is expected in relation to SA objective 3: Economic growth.**

## **SA objective 4: Reduce the need to travel and promote sustainable and active transport options to reduce congestion**

**6.11** The amount of development proposed in the Local Plan will likely result in an increase in the numbers of private vehicles on the road as new homes are occupied, particularly given the current reliance on the car as the primary mode of travel in Colchester. There is also potential for the existing issue of congestion in and around the centre of the Colchester urban area to continue

and potentially increase as development in this area continues. However, the spatial strategy (Policy ST3) seeks to direct growth to the most sustainable locations which is likely to help reduce the need for new residents to have to travel longer distances. Within the urban area the sites proposed for allocation will benefit from good access to regular bus services. The sites proposed for allocations towards the city centre, as well as those within the Hythe Opportunity Area and Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community will also benefit from access to existing railway stations and the new RTS. Furthermore, while the spatial strategy includes a level of growth within the small settlements to prevent their stagnation, from which there could be increased need to travel, the distribution of growth also seeks to make good use of railway stations beyond the urban area. This includes the substantial growth to be provided at Marks Tey as well as growth at Chappel and Wakes Colne, both of which benefit from rail links. The scale of employment growth to be delivered over the plan period and its focus mostly towards the urban area and broadly to align with areas of higher housing growth, will also help reduce the need for out commuting from the plan area. It is expected that the inclusion of larger sites for allocation through the plan will support new service provision that will reduce the need to travel for new residents and those in the surrounding areas. Most notably this includes the large scale sites at the Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community, north east of Colchester, Park Lane Langham and north of Tiptree as well as the sites to the north and south of Marks Tey that will support new infrastructure delivery in line with the evidence of the IDP.

**6.12** Further to this, the Local Plan includes a number of policies that seek to encourage modal shift and increase levels of sustainable transport use and will help to mitigate the increasing population and need for this population to travel. This includes Policy PC2: Active and sustainable travel, which requires development to create places that maximise opportunities for active and sustainable travel for all. This policy requires that development supports the provision of infrastructure to encourage more sustainable modes of travel.

**6.13 Overall, a cumulative mixed significant positive and minor negative effect is expected in relation to SA Objective 4: Transport.**

## SA objective 5: Promote stronger, more resilient, inclusive communities; improve health and wellbeing; and reduce levels of deprivation

**6.14** By directing growth to align with the settlement hierarchy, the spatial strategy (Policy ST3) is likely to help ensure that many new residents have good access to healthcare facilities. These areas also have best access to services and facilities that could help promote community integration. However, it is noted that the scale of development could result in some overburdening of existing provisions. Furthermore, a limited amount of development is directed towards the smaller settlements at which there are no access healthcare facilities, although residents at these locations could benefit from good access to the countryside. The distribution of the A-roads and railway lines in the plan area also means that some of the sites proposed for allocation for residential use could result in residents being exposed to higher levels of noise pollution. This particularly the case for some of the sites set out for allocation at Marks Tey, Eight Ash Green and Braiswick given the location of the A12, A120 and A1124 roads close to or through these settlements. The potential for new residents to be adversely affected by odours is less of an issue in Colchester. Only the proposed residential allocation to the north of the A120 at Marks Tey lies close to a potential source of odours.

**6.15** The potential for increased pressures on healthcare infrastructure, is addressed in the Local Plan by prioritising the retention and delivery of new essential social and healthcare infrastructure. Policy ST1: Health and wellbeing is set out to ensure that residents benefit from a healthy built environment within which there is good access to health facilities and services, open space and a healthy food environment. This policy also includes a specific requirement for larger developments to be supported by Health Impact Assessments. Furthermore, Policies CS1: Retention of community facilities and CS2: Enhancement of and provision for community facilities will help ensure that social infrastructure needed to support healthy lifestyles and social inclusion are retained and improved in Colchester. Sources of pollution that might adversely affect the local population (such as air, light, noise and water) are required to

avoided or mitigated through Policy ENV9: Pollution and contaminated land. The plan also seeks to ensure that residents can access healthier food options and can make use of active travels of travel that could support improved levels of public health. These aims are addressed directly through Policies PC1: Healthier food environments and PC2: Active and sustainable travel. Several sites proposed for allocation in the plan are of the scale to support substantial service provision to support health and wellbeing and integration. This includes the Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community, north east of Colchester, Park Lane Langham and north of Tiptree sites as well as the sites to the north and south of Marks Tey. The site at Tiptree, includes the delivery of a new country park which could supplement the benefits of new service provision in the area.

**6.16 Overall, a cumulative mixed significant positive and minor negative effect is expected in relation to SA objective 5: Community and Health and Wellbeing.**

## SA objective 6: Provide access to services, facilities, and education

**6.17** The spatial strategy (Policy ST3) focuses development towards the higher order settlements, which are typically well-connected by public transport and have services and facilities located within convenient walking distance. Development at these locations will also support the viability of town centre locations and existing services in the these areas. Furthermore, while many of the proposed residential allocations are not close to secondary schools, all are located at settlements with primary schools, with the exception of Peldon. However, as reported in relation to SA objective 5 the relatively large amount of development set out in plan, including a focus on the urban area, could put increased pressure on local services and facilities. Additionally, the limited level of growth within more rural locations will mean that some residents are likely to have to travel longer distances to access certain types of services and facilities. However, the focus of large amounts of growth at sites including the Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community, north east of Colchester, Park Lane



Langham and north of Tiptree as well as the sites to the north and south of Marks Tey is expected to support new service provision in Colchester and in some cases the delivery of new local centres.

**6.18** The Local Plan makes provision for new infrastructure delivery through Policy ST7: Infrastructure and connectivity, which stipulates that development must be supported by provision of infrastructure, services and facilities that are identified as being needed to serve the needs arising from the development. Policies CS1: Retention of community facilities and CS2: Enhancement of and provision for community facilities will help ensure that new development in the plan area is supported by the required level of social infrastructure. Furthermore, Policy CS3: Education provision addresses the provision and retention of education in the District.

**6.19 Overall, a cumulative significant positive and minor negative effect is expected in relation to SA Objective 6: Services and Facilities.**

## SA objective 7: Conserve and enhance the townscape character, and heritage and cultural assets

**6.20** Colchester has a rich and diverse history, and as such it benefits from an abundance of heritage assets. This includes several assets that are on the Heritage at Risk Register. Some of the larger settlements in the District, including Colchester City, Wivenhoe and West Mersea, are partially covered by Conservation Areas. The urban area benefits from numerous Listed Buildings and Scheduled Monuments, some of which are associated with the area's Roman past. Due to the extent of designated heritage assets across the Local Plan area, the vast majority of site allocations proposed are located within close proximity to at least one designated heritage asset. This indicates the potential for development to cause harm to the significance of heritage assets and their respective settings.

**6.21** Policy ST8: Place shaping principles sets out the design requirements that developments should reflect, including the protection of historic assets and responding to established character and is expected to help mitigate these risks. The strategic approach to ensuring the positive contribution of development to the District's historic environment is set out under Policy EN6: Conserving and enhancing the historic environment. This policy outlines measures that will help ensure the protection of different types of heritage assets and supports the appropriate adaptive reuse of assets. Additionally, Policy EN7: Archaeology provides guidance on safeguarding archaeological resources and ensuring their preservation during development. Other Local Plan policies that will help to address the conservation of heritage assets indirectly, include design related policies such as Policies PC4: Development density, PC5: Domestic development and PC6: Design and amenity. These policies include further principles relating to the design of developments to help protect existing character in Colchester. Further to this, all of the proposed site allocations which are located within close proximity to a heritage asset have been informed by the undertaking of heritage impact assessment work and are required to conserve, and where appropriate, enhance the significance of heritage assets. This should help to mitigate the potential negative effects of new development on cultural heritage.

**6.22 Overall, a mixed minor positive and minor negative effect is expected in relation to SA objective 7: Historic environment. The effect is uncertain given that effects will be influenced in part by the design of specific development proposals which are yet to come forward.**

## SA objective 8: Protect, conserve, enhance and restore biodiversity and promote and conserve geodiversity

**6.23** Colchester is contains or is close to numerous sensitive biodiversity and geodiversity assets. Much of the coastline is designated under international notifications including the Essex Estuaries SAC, the Blackwater Estuary SPA,

the Colne Estuary SPA and Abberton Reservoir SPA. These SAC and SPAs are notified as Ramsar sites under the Ramsar Convention. Furthermore, the Stour and Orwell Estuary SPA and Ramsar site lies to the north east of the plan area boundary and Hamford Water SAC, SPA and Ramsar lies within 14km of the plan area to the east close to Walton-on-the-Naze. There is also one NNR (Colne Estuary), and nine SSSIs within the plan area, namely Marks Tey Brickpit, Upper Colne Marshes, Roman River, Abberton Reservoir, Blackwater Estuary, Tiptree Heath, Bullock Wood, Cattawade Marshes and Wivenhoe Gravel Pit. Given how constrained Colchester is, there is potential for adverse impacts as a result of the development of many of the residential and employment sites proposed for allocation in the Local Plan. Many of these sites lie close to areas of priority habitats and/or Local Wildlife Sites. However, many of the site allocation policies include mitigation measures, primarily the requirement to achieve biodiversity net gain and/or the provision of green infrastructure to maximise benefits for biodiversity and habitat creation. The sites allocated near internationally and nationally designated areas, including those set out through Policies PP9: North-East Colchester, PP10: Land South of Berechurch Hall Road, Colchester, PP18: Land North of A120, Marks Tey and PP41: Rowhedge Business Park, Rowhedge are of particular importance in terms of the potential for adverse effects on important ecological assets. These sites are close to parts of Bullock Wood SSSI, Roman River SSSI and Marks Tey Brickpit SSSI. Given their sensitive ecological contexts, the policies allocating these sites incorporate specific mitigation measures to address potential environmental impacts. The land proposed for allocation at Tiptree through Policy PP19 could support ecological improvements in the south west of the plan area given that it would include the delivery of a sizeable new country park.

**6.24** In addition, the Local Plan includes policies against which development proposals will be decided upon and are likely to help mitigate adverse effects and to bring about some enhancements to the District's ecological networks. The development principles set out under Policy ST8: Place shaping principles require development to protect and enhance the natural environment. The overarching approach to protecting and enhancing biodiversity and geodiversity assets and the wider natural environment is set out under Policy EN3: Biodiversity and geodiversity, which requires developments to avoid harm to

key species and designated sites. The approach to achieving a more connected and multifunctional network of green and blue infrastructure is set out under Policy GN1: Green network and waterways principles, while Policy EN2: Biodiversity net gain (BNG) and environmental net gain includes the approach to achieving environmental gains. In addition, the creation and enhancement of the green infrastructure network and elements that could complement the wider network in Colchester is supported through Policies GN3: Local green spaces, GN4: Tree canopy cover and GN6: Retention of open space. Furthermore, the approach to preventing harm to internationally important biodiversity sites in Colchester through the provision of alternative greenspace to divert visitors is set out through Policy GN5: Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace.

**6.25** Alongside the SA, a separate HRA of the Local Plan has been undertaken to consider the potential for the Local Plan to impact upon internationally designated biodiversity sites. The Appropriate Assessment undertaken as part of the HRA could not conclude that there would be no adverse effects on integrity of Stour and Orwell Estuaries SPA and Ramsar as a result of potential air pollution impacts resulting from the A137. It was concluded that traffic modelling would be required of the A137 to inform the assessment of air pollution. Additionally, it could not be concluded that there would be no adverse effects on integrity of Hamford Water SAC, SPA and Ramsar or Stour and Orwell Estuaries SPA and Ramsar as a result of potential water quality issues, in the absence of information from the updated Water Cycle Study.

**6.26 Overall, a mixed minor positive and significant negative effect is expected in relation to SA objective 8: Biodiversity and geodiversity.**

## SA objective 9: Conserve and enhance the character and distinctiveness of the landscape

**6.27** The Local Plan seeks to deliver a relatively high number of new homes in Colchester, which could have adverse impacts on the character and quality of the landscape, particularly given the greenfield land take required. It is noted that the Local Plan also provides opportunities to achieve enhancements

through high quality and appropriately located new development which may benefit the landscape. The Local Plan spatial strategy (Policy ST3) directs much of the growth to less sensitive locations within the more developed urban area and large and medium settlements. The approach is set out to avoid coalescence between existing settlements in Colchester and to conserve their settings. However, many of sites proposed for allocation are located on greenfield land with a medium inherent landscape value and these locations have a moderate sensitivity to development. A smaller number of sites are located on land with high inherent landscape value, including areas close to Dedham Vale, a designated National Landscape. Additional sites proposed for allocation in areas of higher value landscape include those to the west of the urban area towards Chappel and Wakes Colne and those to the south of the urban towards Abberton, Peldon and West Mersea. The inclusion of appropriate mitigation measures will be of particularly importance when considering proposals for these sites. Most sites included for allocation in the plan incorporate provisions to minimise impacts on landscape character, including screening measures such as locally appropriate tree belts, hedgerows and/or woodland along site boundaries.

**6.28** The Local Plan also includes policy that specifically aims to conserve and enhance the quality and character of the landscape, namely Policy LC1: Landscape. In addition, Policy LC2: Dedham Vale National Landscape ensures the protection of the purpose, natural beauty, and special qualities of the National Landscape. The protection of important elements of the coastal landscape and seascape is set out through Policy LC3: Coastal areas. A number of additional policies in the plan (e.g. PC6: Design and amenity and ST8: Place shaping principles) support high quality design within developments which will further help to enhance the local landscape as well as the existing townscapes and established character.

**6.29 Overall, a cumulative mixed minor positive and minor negative effect is expected in relation to SA objective 8: Landscape. The effect is uncertain given that effects will be influenced in part by the design of specific development proposals which are yet to come forward.**

## SA objective 10: Minimise greenhouse gas emissions

**6.30** The analysis of this SA objective does not repeat the discussion of greenhouse gas emissions associated with travel. Instead, this issue is covered in more detail under SA objective 4: Transport. The policies in the plan are drafted to respond to the locally declared climate emergency, and the District's aim of becoming carbon neutral by 2030. The spatial strategy for the District (Policy SP3), which guides the distribution of growth focuses on directing the most development to the most sustainable and accessible urban areas. In summary, the overall level of growth set out is likely to increase emissions associated with transport as well as construction and the occupation of new homes and businesses, however the distribution of growth to the most sustainable locations and large scale growth points would help to mitigate increases associated with transport. Furthermore, the large scale sites included for development, such as the Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community, the north east of Colchester, Park Lane Langham and north of Tiptree sites as well as the sites to the north and south of Marks Tey may provide increased potential for new low carbon energy infrastructure (such as district heating and combined heat and power (CHP)) to be provided and for a high number of homes to be connected.

**6.31** The plan includes numerous policies that are set out to mitigate and adapt to the effects of climate change. In particular, Policies NZ1: Net zero carbon development (in operation) and NZ2: Net zero carbon development – embodied carbon require the development of energy-efficient, fossil-fuel free buildings, at which embodied carbon has been minimised through the incorporation of sustainable design and materials. Furthermore, support for the transition away from fossil-fuel powered energy is set out through Policy NZ4: Renewable energy. The plan includes further mitigation through a number of policies that support the use of sustainable materials and the creation of green infrastructure and natural spaces, which is likely to encourage reduction and sequestration of emissions as well as climate resilience. These policies include Policies ST2: Environment and the green network and waterways, GN3: Local green spaces, and PC6: Design and amenity. Through the inclusion of land for the extension

of the Anglian Water Services Colchester Water Recycling Centre (Policy NZ3: Wastewater and water supply), the plan also supports efficient resource use while ensuring that necessary infrastructure is in place to help support increased water efficiency and address water stress in the District. This policy also sets out the overarching approach to ensuring that the District has the required capacity in water supply and wastewater infrastructure to serve new development. The issue of water supply is expected to be of increasing concern in Colchester in light of climate change as the plan period progresses.

**6.32 Overall, a cumulative mixed minor positive and minor negative effect is expected in relation to SA objective 10: Climate change.**

## SA objective 11: Manage and reduce flood risk from all sources

**6.33** The District includes several areas of higher flood risk (Flood Zones 2 and 3) associated with the River Colne, River Stour, Layer Brook, and Roman River and the tributaries of these water courses. These areas take in parts of the south of the District and parts of urban area where the River Colne flows towards Chappel and Wakes Colne. Parts of the District's northern boundary is formed by the River Stour and there are areas of higher flood risk in these locations. Tidal flood risk is a concern along the coastal frontage adjacent to Mersea Island. Furthermore, there are areas of higher surface water flooding risk distributed across the District. The overall scale of development set out in the Local Plan could increase the risk of flooding in the area, as greenfield land take results in increases in impermeable surfaces. However, very few of the sites proposed for allocation include a substantial area of land affected by Flood Zones 2 and/or 3. These are the sites set through Policies PP15: Hawkins Road, Colchester, OA1: King Edward Quay Opportunity Area and OA2: Land East of Hawkins Road Opportunity Area. The SFRA undertaken in support of the Local Plan identifies that in addition to these sites, the site proposed for allocation through Policy PP14: Gas Works and Hythe Scrap Yard Site lies within an area of increased flood risk. At least 5% of this site is located within



Flood Zone 3b. However, the site allocation policies for areas at risk of flooding contain mitigation to minimise flood risk.

**6.34** The development principles set out in Policy ST8: Place shaping principles require that development proposals should address issues of flooding and surface water. Furthermore, development management policies are included in the Local Plan to directly address flood risk in the plan area. Policy EN8: Flood risk and sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) supports the positive management of flood risk and water resources including through the requirement for SuDS in new developments. This policy also includes requirements for developments to avoid flood-prone areas and not to increase flood risk on or off-site, as well as promoting proposals that include measures to enhance the flood resilience of new or renovated buildings. In addition, a number of policies support the enhancement and creation of green infrastructure and relates features, in particular Policies EN3: Biodiversity and geodiversity, EN5: New and existing trees and GN1: Green Network and Waterways Principles. These policies have the potential to indirectly contribute to reductions in flood risk by promoting the natural filtration of water resources and incorporation of features that will slow the flow of rainwater, absorb rainwater and reduce erosion.

**6.35 Overall, a cumulative mixed minor positive and minor negative effect is expected in relation to SA objective 11: Flood risk.**

## SA objective 12: Reduce waste generation and increase levels of reuse and recycling

**6.36** The overall scale of housing and employment growth proposed through the Colchester Local Plan will require substantial amounts of natural resources (including water) and inevitably result in an increase in waste generated within Colchester. The allocation of land for the extension of the Anglian Water Services Colchester Water Recycling Centre will directly help to address the management of wastewater in Colchester as development occurs. However, beyond this allocation, the Local Plan will have limited implications for waste

management. The effects of development in terms of minimising waste and managing it in a sustainable manner will depend on factors such as the incorporation of waste management systems and recycling infrastructure at developments, rather than on the location of sites proposed for allocation.

**6.37** The Colchester Local Plan includes policy that will help reduce waste generation at new developments through Policy NZ2: Net zero carbon development – embodied carbon, which is expected to encourage the re-use, refurbishment and recycling of existing materials as part of construction. Furthermore, the requirement for new developments to provide refuse and recycling storage area is set out through Policy PC6: Design and amenity. Policy ST7: Infrastructure and connectivity does not specifically refer to waste, but it is assumed that the provision of new infrastructure and developer contributions will support waste management functions in the plan area.

**6.38 Overall, a cumulative minor positive effect is expected in relation to SA objective 12: Waste.**

## SA objective 13: Protect and improve air quality

**6.39** The analysis of this SA objective does not repeat the discussion of air pollution associated with travel. Instead, this issue is covered in more detail under SA objective 4: Transport. The spatial strategy for the District (Policy SP3), which guides the distribution of growth focuses on directing the most development to the most sustainable and accessible urban areas. In summary, the overall level of growth set out is likely to increase air pollution associated with transport as well as construction and the occupation of new homes and businesses, however the distribution of growth to the most sustainable locations and large scale growth points would help to mitigate increases associated with transport. The District contains three AQMAs that are focussed towards the centre of the urban area where there are also noted to be issues related to congestion. While the spatial strategy presents opportunities to reduce the need to travel in the plan area and the uptake of electric and more efficient vehicles will help reduce air pollution from cars, there is potential for growth focussed

within the urban area to contribute to the intensification existing air quality issues at the AQMAs.

**6.40** Policy ENV9: Pollution and contaminated land directly seeks to address the issue of air quality in the plan area. Developments should not result in unacceptable risks to public health due to a number of sources of pollution, including air pollution. This policy also seeks to address developments that would occur in AQMAs, requiring that these types of proposal should be located so that emissions are reduced. The Local Plan also includes several policies that seek to promote sustainable and active travel in the plan area. Most importantly this includes Policy PC2: Active and sustainable travel which seeks to ensure that development is planned around a network of safe and accessible active travel routes to create places that maximise opportunities for active and sustainable travel for all. Furthermore, the principles guiding new developments set out through Policy PC6: Design and amenity require that developments provide attractive, well connected and legible streets, which prioritise walking, cycling and public transport.

**6.41 Overall, a cumulative mixed minor positive and minor negative effect is expected in relation to SA objective 13: Air quality.**

## SA objective 14: Protect the quality and quantity of water resources

**6.42** SPZs are identified to areas of higher risk in terms of safeguard drinking water quality. The areas relate to the risk of contamination of water resources as a result of various activities. The majority of Colchester is covered by areas of SPZ with the exception of its southern edge, including West Mersea, East Mersea and parts of Tiptree. Most of the plan area falls within SPZ 3, the least sensitive of the zones designated by the Environment Agency with very small areas of SPZ 1 within the urban area and areas of SPZ 2 along the District's northern boundary. Furthermore, Eastern England is classified as severely water stressed. Therefore, ensuring that there is enough water to serve residents and businesses in the District will be challenging during the plan

period. Most sites included for allocation in the plan are located within SPZ 3, with some also located close to watercourses and/or water bodies, with increased potential for contamination of water resources through run off as construction and site occupation occurs.

**6.43** The Local Plan includes a number of policies that aim to protect and improve water quality in Colchester. Policy NZ3: Wastewater and water supply states that the Council will work with suppliers and developers to ensure that there is sufficient capacity in the water supply and wastewater infrastructure to serve new development. This policy also allocates land to allow for the extension of the Anglian Water Services Colchester Water Recycling Centre, which is expected to help address water stress in the area. Further to this, the policy supports the sustainable management of water resources, including promoting more innovative solutions such as rainwater harvesting and greywater recycling at new developments which will aid in ensuring there is sufficient water for the lifetime of a development. The development principles included under Policy ST8: Place shaping principles also prioritise measures to address water efficiency and the provision of appropriate water and wastewater and flood mitigation measures in new development. Furthermore, Policy EN8: Flood risk and sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) supports the positive management of flood risk and water resources, including the requirement for SuDS in new developments. The potential for pollution that affects surface or ground water sources is addressed through Policy ENV9: Pollution and Contaminated Land.

**6.44 As such, a cumulative mixed minor positive and minor negative effect is expected in relation to SA objective 14: Water.**

Table 6.2: Total effects of policies included in the Colchester Borough Local Plan document

Policies	SA1	SA 2	SA 3	SA 4	SA 5	SA 6	SA 7	SA 8	SA 9	SA 10	SA 11	SA 12	SA 13	SA 14
Vision	+	0	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	0	+	0
Theme 1	0	0	0	0	0	+	+	++	+	0	0	0	0	0
Theme 2	0	0	0	0	+	+	0	0	0	0	++	+	0	+
Theme 3	++	0	++	0	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Theme 4	0	0	0	++	+	0	0	0	0	+	0	0	+	0
ST1	+	0	+	+	++	+	0	+	+	+	+	0	+	+
ST2	-?	0	-?	0	+	0	+	++	++	+	+	0	+	+
ST3	++	--/+	++/-	++/-	++/-	++/-	--/+	--/+	--/+	+/-	-	-	++/-	-?
ST4	+	0	+	+	+	+	+	0	++	+	+	0	+	0
ST5	++	--	+	+/-?	+/-?	+/-?	-?	-?	-?	+/-?	-?	-	+/-?	-
ST6	0	--	++	+/-?	+	0	-?	-?	-?	+/-?	-?	-	+/-?	-
ST7	0	0	+	++	++	++	0	+	+	+	+	+	+	++

Chapter 6 Cumulative effects

Policies	SA1	SA 2	SA 3	SA 4	SA 5	SA 6	SA 7	SA 8	SA 9	SA 10	SA 11	SA 12	SA 13	SA 14
ST8	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	0	+	+
ST9	++	--	++	++/-	+/-	++	-?	+/-?	++/-?	+/-	+/-	0	+/-	-
EN1	-?	0	-?	0	+	0	0	++	+	+	+	0	+	+
EN2	-?	0	-?	0	+	0	0	++	+	+	+	0	+	+
EN3	-?	0	-?	0	+	0	0	++	+	+	+	0	+	+
EN4	-?	0	-?	0	+	0	0	++	+	+	+	0	+	+
EN5	-?	0	-?	0	0	0	0	++	+	+	+	0	+	+
EN6	-?	0	-?	0	0	0	++	0	0	+	0	0	0	0
EN7	-?	0	-?	0	0	0	++	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
EN8	-?	0	-?	0	0	0	0	+	0	0	++	0	0	++
EN9	-?	+	-?	0	+	0	0	++	+	+	+	0	++	+
GN1	0	0	0	+	++	0	+	++	+	+	+	0	+	+
GN2	0	0	0	0	+	0	0	++	+	+	+	0	+	+
GN3	-?	0	-?	0	++	0	0	++	+	+	+	0	+	+
GN4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	++	+	+	+	0	+	+

Chapter 6 Cumulative effects

Policies	SA1	SA 2	SA 3	SA 4	SA 5	SA 6	SA 7	SA 8	SA 9	SA 10	SA 11	SA 12	SA 13	SA 14
GN5	0	0	0	0	+	0	0	++	0	+	+	0	+	+
GN6	-?	0	-?	0	++	0	0	++	+	+	+	0	+	+
RA	-?	+	-?	+/-	0	+/-	0	+	++	+	+	0	+/-	+
LC1	-?	+	-?	0	0	0	0	+	++	+	0	0	0	0
LC2	-?	0	+/-?	0	0	0	0	+	++	0	0	0	0	0
LC3	-?	0	-?	0	+	0	+	+	++	+	+	0	0	+
NZ1	+	0	0	0	+	0	0	0	0	++	0	0	+	0
NZ2	0	++	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	++	0	+	+	0
NZ3	0	++	+	+	+	-	0?	--	--?	++	+/-	0	-	++/--
NZ4	0	-	0	+	+	0	+/-?	+/-?	+/-?	++	0	0	+	0
H1	++	0	0	0	++	0	0	0	+	0	0	0	0	0
H2	+++?	0	0	+/-	++	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	0	0	0	+/-	0
H3	++	0	0	+	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	0
H4	++	0	0	+	+	0	0	0	+	0	0	0	+	0
H5	++	0	0	+	++	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	0



Chapter 6 Cumulative effects

Policies	SA1	SA 2	SA 3	SA 4	SA 5	SA 6	SA 7	SA 8	SA 9	SA 10	SA 11	SA 12	SA 13	SA 14
H6	++	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
H7	++	0	0	+	++	+	0	0	0	0	+	0	0	+
H8	++	+	+	+/-	0	-	-	-	+/-	0	+	0	+/-	0
E1	0	+	++	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	0
E2	0	+	+	+/-	+	0	+/-	+/-	+/-	0	0	+	+/-	0
E3	0	+	+	+/-	0	0	+/-	+/-	+/-	0	0	0	+/-	0
E4	0	+	++	+	+	++	+/-?	0	0	0	0	0	+/-	0
E5	0	--	+	+	0	+	-	-	-	0	0	0	+	-
CS1	0	+	0	+	++	++	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
CS2	0	+	0	+	++	++	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
CS3	0	+	0	+	+	++	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
CS4	0	0	0	+	++	+	0	0	0	+	+	0	0	+
CS5	0	+	+	+	+	0	+	+	+	0	0	0	0	0
CS6	0	0	0	+	+	0	+	+	+	+	+	0	0	+
PC1	0	0	0	+	++	0	0	+	0	+	+	0	+	+

Chapter 6 Cumulative effects

Policies	SA1	SA 2	SA 3	SA 4	SA 5	SA 6	SA 7	SA 8	SA 9	SA 10	SA 11	SA 12	SA 13	SA 14
PC2	0	0	0	++	++	+	0	0	0	+	0	0	+	0
PC3	0	+	+	++/-	0	+	0	0	0	+	0	0	+	0
PC4	+	++	0	+	+	+	+	+	+	0	+	0	0	0
PC5	+	0	0	+	0	+	+	0	++	0	0	0	0	0
PC6	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	++	+	+	+	+	+
PC7	0	0	0	+	+	+	0	+	+	+	+	0	+	+
PC8	0	0	0	0	+	0	0	0	+	0	0	0	0	0
CC1	+	+	++	++	++	++	+	0	+	+	0	0	+	0
PP1	++	++	-	++	+	+	-?	-	0?	N/A	+	N/A	-	-
PP2	++	++	-	++	+	++	-?	-	0?	N/A	+	N/A	-	-
PP3	+	++	-	++	+	+	-?	-	0?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
PP4	+	--	0	+	+	-	0?	-	0?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
PP5	+	--	0	++	+	-	0?	0	0?	N/A	0	N/A	-	0
PP6	++	++	+	++	+	+	0?	-	0?	N/A	0	N/A	-	--
PP7	++	--	0	+	+	-	-?	-	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-

Chapter 6 Cumulative effects

Policies	SA1	SA 2	SA 3	SA 4	SA 5	SA 6	SA 7	SA 8	SA 9	SA 10	SA 11	SA 12	SA 13	SA 14
OA4	++	--	+	++	++	+	0?	0	0?	+	0	0	0	-
PEP1	N/A	--	+	+	+	-	0?	--	0?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
PP8	+	--	0	+	-	+	0?	0	0?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
PEP3	N/A	--	+	+	+	+	--?	--	0?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
PEP4	N/A	--	0	+	+	-	--	-	0?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
PP9	++	--	+	+	+	+	0?	-	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	--
PP10	++	--	-	+	+	+	-?	-	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	--
PP11	+	++	-	++	+	+	-?	-	0?	N/A	+	N/A	0	-
PP12	+	++	-	++	+	+	-?	-	0?	N/A	+	N/A	0	-
PP13	+	++	-	++	+	+	-?	-	0?	N/A	+	N/A	0	-
PP14	++	++	-	++	+	+	-	-	0?	N/A	+	N/A	-	-
PP15	+	++	-	++	+	-	-	-	0?	N/A	+/-	N/A	-	-
PP16	+	++	-	++	+	-	-	0	0?	N/A	+	N/A	-	-
OA1	++	++	-	++	+	-	--?	--	0?	N/A	+/-	N/A	-	-
OA2	++	++	-	++	+	-	-?	-	0?	N/A	+/-	N/A	-	-

Chapter 6 Cumulative effects

Policies	SA1	SA 2	SA 3	SA 4	SA 5	SA 6	SA 7	SA 8	SA 9	SA 10	SA 11	SA 12	SA 13	SA 14
OA3	++	++	+	++	+	+	-?	0	0?	N/A	+	N/A	-	-
PEP2	0	+	++	+	+	+/-	-?	-	0?	0	0	0	0	-
UE1	0	+/-	+	+	+	++	0?	-	-?	0	0	0	0	-
PP17	++	--	-	+	+	+	-?	-	0?	N/A	0	N/A	-	--
PP18	++	--	-	+	+	+	-?	-	0?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
PEP5	N/A	--	+	0	+	-	--?	0	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
PEP6	N/A	+	+	+	+	-	--?	0	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	0
PP19	++	--	-	+/-	+	+	-?	+	+	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
PP20	+	-	-	0	+	+	-?	0	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	0
PP21	+	++	-	0	+	+	-?	0	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	0
PP22	+	++	0	0	+	+	0	0	0?	N/A	0	N/A	-	0
PEP7	N/A	--	+	0	+	-	-?	-	-?	N/A	0	N/A	0	0
PEP8	N/A	--	+	0	+	+	-?	--	0?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
PP23	++	--	-	0	+	--	-?	0	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	0
PP24	++	--	-	+	+	0	0?	-	0?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-

Chapter 6 Cumulative effects

Policies	SA1	SA 2	SA 3	SA 4	SA 5	SA 6	SA 7	SA 8	SA 9	SA 10	SA 11	SA 12	SA 13	SA 14
PP25	+	--	-	0	+	-	-?	0	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
PP26	++	--	-	0	+	0	-?	0	--?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
PP27	+	--	-	+	+	-	-?	0	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	0
PP28	++	--	-	++	+	-	-?	0	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
PEP12	N/A	--	-	-	+	-	--?	-	--?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
PP29	++	--	-	0	+	0	0?	0	0?	N/A	0	N/A	-	0
PP30	+	--	-	0	0	--	0?	0	0?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
PP31	++	--	-	0	++	-	0?	0	0?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
PP32	++	--	-	+	++	-	-?	-	0?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
PEP9	N/A	++	-	0	+	-	--?	-	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
PP33	+	--	-	+	+	--	-?	0	0?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
PP34	++	--	-	0	+	-	-?	0	0?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
PP35	+	++	-	0	0	--	-?	0	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
PP36	++	--	-	0	+	-	-?	-	0	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
PP37	++	--/+	-	+	+	0	-?	0	0?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-

Chapter 6 Cumulative effects

Policies	SA1	SA 2	SA 3	SA 4	SA 5	SA 6	SA 7	SA 8	SA 9	SA 10	SA 11	SA 12	SA 13	SA 14
PP38	+	--/+	-	0	+	-	-?	0	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
PEP10	N/A	--	++	--	-	-	--?	--	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
PP39	+	--	-	0	+	-	0?	-	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
PP40	+	--	-	0	+	-	0?	0	0?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
PP41	+	++?	-	0	+	-	-?	-	0?	N/A	0	N/A	-	0
PP42	+	--	-	0	+	-	-?	0	0?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
PP43	++	--	-	+	+	-	0?	0	0?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
PP44	++	--	-	+	+	-	-?	0	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
PEP11	N/A	--	-	0	+	-	--?	0	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
PP45	+	--	-	0	+	--	-?	0	0?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
PP46	+	--	-	+	+	-	-?	0	0?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
PP47	+	--	-	0	+	-	-?	-	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
PP48	+	--	-	0	+	-	0?	0	0?	N/A	0	N/A	0	-
PP49	+	--	-	0	+	--	-?	--	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-





## Cumulative effects with development proposed by other relevant plans and projects

**6.45** Development proposed in the Local Plan will not be delivered in isolation from development proposals in plans covering the surrounding areas. This section outlines the development proposed by the Local Plans of the four neighbouring authorities which may combine with the Colchester Local Plan to produce cumulative effects

### Surrounding development plans

**6.46** Colchester District is adjoined by the neighbouring districts of Maldon, Braintree, Babergh and Tendring. The main development proposed by the respective Local Plans is summarised below.

#### Maldon

**6.47** Maldon District Council adopted their Local Development Plan in July 2017. The Local Development Plan makes provision for a minimum of 4,650 dwellings between 2014 and 2029 (310 per annum) and the creation of 2,000 net additional jobs by 2029. This growth will be focused within the South Maldon Garden Suburb, North Heybridge Garden Suburb and strategic allocations at the settlements of Maldon, Heybridge and Burnham-on-Crouch, in addition to a proportion of new development directed to the rural villages. The creation of new jobs will be achieved through the regeneration, modernisation and expansion of existing employment sites, and through the provision for new employment sites at South Maldon Garden Suburb and some of the strategic

allocations. These locations are not within close proximity of Colchester District, and so any effects between the two plans will be limited.

**6.48** Maldon District Council approved its new Local Development Scheme in October 2024 and is currently working on a Local Development Plan Review. Adoption of the Local Development Plan Review is anticipated in Summer 2026.

## Braintree

**6.49** Braintree District Council's Local Plan provides a vision/planning framework for how the District will develop and grow up to 2033. The Plan is in two sections:

- Section 1 is the strategic plan for North Essex and was adopted in February 2021. It is shared with Colchester City Council and Tendring District Council and covers all three authorities.
- Section 2 contains policies, maps and sites for development, and was adopted in July 2022.

### Section 1

**6.50** Section 1 supports the development of 43,720 new homes in North Essex in the period 2013-2033, 14,320 of which will be in Braintree (716 per annum), 18,400 in Colchester (920 per annum) and 11,000 in Tendring (550 per annum). It also supports 54.9ha (baseline) / 93.3ha (higher growth scenario) of employment land to 2033. Some of this growth will be focused at the Colchester Tendring Borders Garden Community.

### Section 2

**6.51** Section 2 sets out the spatial strategy for Braintree District and directs most development to the towns of Braintree, Witham and the A12/Great Eastern

Mainline corridor, in addition to Halstead followed by the key service villages. The town of Halstead and some key service villages (Earls Colne, Coggeshall and Kelvedon with Feering) where development is allocated are located near the boundary Braintree District shares within Colchester District and so could cumulatively contribute towards housing delivery and economic growth. Development at Halstead and these key service villages is likely to result in an increase in journeys into and out of Colchester District, cumulatively contributing towards greenhouse gas emissions and air pollution.

**6.52** Braintree District Council is currently working on a Local Plan Review, with adoption anticipated in December 2026.

## **Babergh**

**6.53** Babergh District Council has been working with Mid-Suffolk District Council on a Joint Local Plan. Part 1 of the Joint Local Plan was adopted in November 2023 and will guide development in the Districts until 2037. In Babergh District, the Joint Local Plan Part 1 seeks to deliver a minimum of 7,904 net additional dwellings (416 dwellings per annum) and 190ha employment land over the Plan period. Although the spatial distribution for housing allocations will be determined in the Joint Local Plan Part 2, the proposed employment land is primarily concentrated in the central area of the District. Therefore, it is not near the boundary Babergh District shares with Colchester District and so any effects between the two Plans will be limited.

**6.54** Following publication of the Government's new National Planning Policy Framework in December 2024, the Councils are now proceeding with a full Joint Local Plan review rather than a Joint Local Part 2 Plan. The Councils is expected to publish a new Local Development Scheme to set out the timetable for the preparation of the new plan by March 2025.

## Tendring

**6.55** Tendring District Council's Local Plan is also in two sections. They share the Section 1 Local Plan (adopted February 2021) with Colchester and Braintree (see above). Their Section 2 Local Plan (adopted January 2022) sets out specific policies relating to Tendring District.

### Section 2

**6.56** Section 2 sets out the spatial strategy for Tendring District and directs most development to the settlements of Clacton-on-Sea, and Harwich and Dovercourt, in addition to the Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community. This is followed by some smaller urban settlements. A significant amount of development is proposed along the boundary Tendring District shares with Colchester District, at the Colchester Tendring Borders Garden Community. This strategic site allocation would cumulatively contribute towards housing and employment growth between the two districts. However, it could have adverse effects on both Districts through an increase in the number of cars in the area and associated air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions, in addition to disturbance to the natural and built environment.

**6.57** Tendring District Council is currently working on a Local Plan Review. The Local Development Scheme sets out that the Local Plan is expected to be adopted in early 2026.

# Chapter 7

## Monitoring

7.1 The SEA Regulations require that:

“the responsible authority shall monitor the significant environmental effects of the implementation of each plan or programme with the purpose of identifying unforeseen adverse effects at an early stage and being able to undertake appropriate remedial action” and that the environmental report should provide information on “a description of the measures envisaged concerning monitoring”.

7.2 Monitoring proposals should be designed to provide information that can be used to highlight specific issues and significant effects, and which could help decision-making.

7.3 Monitoring should be focused on the significant sustainability effects that may give rise to irreversible damage (with a view to identifying trends before such damage is caused) and on the significant effects where there is uncertainty in the SA and where monitoring would enable preventative or mitigation measures to be taken.

7.4 The new Colchester Local Plan is at an early stage in its development. As such, monitoring measures have been proposed in this SA report in relation to all of the SA objectives in the SA framework. As the new Local Plan is progressed further and the likely significant effects are identified with more certainty, it may be appropriate to narrow down the monitoring framework to focus on a smaller number of the SA objectives for which significant (including uncertain) effects are identified.

**7.5** The suggested indicators for monitoring the potential sustainability effects of implementing the new Local Plan are set out below. As this stage, the monitoring framework reflects the indicators included in relation to the SA framework set out in the SA Scoping Report (2024). It also reflects indicators received as part of consultation on the SA Scoping Report.

**7.6** The data used for monitoring in many cases will be provided by outside bodies. Information collected by other organisations (e.g. the Environment Agency) can also be used as a source of indicators. It is therefore recommended that the Council continues the dialogue with statutory environmental consultees and other stakeholders that has already commenced and works with them to agree the relevant sustainability effects to be monitored and to obtain information that is appropriate, up to date and reliable.

## Proposed monitoring framework for the Colchester Local Plan

SA objective 1: Provide a sufficient level of housing to meet the objectively assessed needs of the city to enable people to live in a decent, safe, and sustainable home which is affordable

### Proposed monitoring indicators

- Housing completions per annum (net)
- Percentage of affordable housing units provided on qualifying sites
- Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople accommodation provision (net)
- Total Empty Properties (classified as empty for Council Tax purposes)

- Length of time Total Empty Properties have been empty
- Households on the Housing Register Homelessness households
- Households on the Housing Register Homelessness households

## SA objective 2: Support the efficient use of land

### Proposed monitoring indicators

- Employment floorspace granted on previously developed land
- Monitor modal splits and self-containment via Census
- Take-up of Travel Plans

## SA objective 3: Achieve a prosperous and sustainable local economy that improves employment and training opportunities and supports the vitality/viability of centres

### Proposed monitoring indicators

- Permissions granted for employment and leisure by type
- Economically active population
- Universal Credit (including Job Seekers Allowance)
- Economically inactive population
- Number of businesses (total)
- Visitor trips numbers
- Visitor spend/value



- Tourism related employment

SA objective 4: Reduce the need to travel and promote sustainable and active transport options to reduce congestion

### Proposed monitoring indicators

- Monitor modal splits and self-containment via Census
- To obtain an agreed Travel Plan for all major commercial/community developments
- Proportion of major housing developments with efficient, easy and affordable access to key services by public transport
- Bus patronage

SA objective 5: Promote stronger, more resilient, inclusive communities; improve health and wellbeing; and reduce levels of deprivation

### Proposed monitoring indicators

- Key community infrastructure delivered through planning obligations
- Life expectancy
- Obesity rates
- Percentage of the city's population having access to a natural greenspace within 400 metres of their home.
- Length of greenways constructed.

- Hectares of accessible open space per 1,000 population.

## SA objective 6: Provide access to services, facilities, and education

### Proposed monitoring indicators

- Key community infrastructure delivered through planning obligations
- Educational attainment
- Proportion of major housing developments with efficient, easy and affordable access to key services by public transport

## SA objective 7: Conserve and enhance the townscape character, and heritage and cultural assets

### Proposed monitoring indicators

- Recorded loss of Listed Buildings Grade I and II+ (by demolition), Scheduled Monuments or nationally important archaeological sites and assets on the Colchester Local List to development
- Number of Listings on the Heritage at Risk Register
- Number of Historic parks and Gardens Additions to Colchester's Local List
- Number of Conservation Areas

## SA objective 8: Protect, conserve, enhance and restore biodiversity and promote and conserve geodiversity

### Proposed monitoring indicators

- Amount of development in designated areas
- Number of planning applications approved contrary to advice given by the EA
- Number and area of local nature reserves (LNRs) and local sites (LoWS) within Colchester
- Condition of SSSIs
- Compliance with Essex Coast RAMS (Recreational disturbance Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy)
- Increase in open space
- Biodiversity net gain habitat sites
- Area of ancient woodland
- Number of planning approvals that generated any adverse impacts on sites of acknowledged biodiversity importance.
- Percentage of major developments generating overall biodiversity enhancement.
- Hectares of biodiversity habitat delivered through strategic site allocations.

## SA objective 9: Conserve and enhance the character and distinctiveness of the landscape

### Proposed monitoring indicators

- Amount of development in designated areas
- Amount of new development in National Landscape with commentary on likely impact.

## SA objective 10: Minimise greenhouse gas emissions and mitigate and adapt to the effects of climate change

### Proposed monitoring indicators

- Greenhouse Gas Emissions reporting Local Authority Carbon Management Plan
- Renewable energy installed by type

## SA objective 11: Manage and reduce flood risk from all sources

### Proposed monitoring indicators

- Number of major schemes incorporating water management schemes
- Recorded flood events

## SA objective 12: Reduce waste generation and increase levels of reuse and recycling

### Proposed monitoring indicators

- Percentage of residual waste produced per household
- Percentage of household waste reused, recycled and composted

## SA objective 13: Protect and improve air quality

### Proposed monitoring indicators

- Number of AQMAs
- Exceedances of air quality objectives

## SA objective 14: Protect the quality and quantity of water resources

### Proposed monitoring indicators

- Number of major schemes incorporating water management schemes

## Chapter 8

# Conclusions and next steps

**8.1** This document has considered the sustainability implications of the policies and proposed site allocations set out in the Colchester Preferred Options (Regulation 18) Local Plan. These have been subject to assessment against SA objectives developed at the scoping stages of the SA process.

**8.2** In general, the policies appraised have been found to have a wide range of minor positive and significant positive effects in relation to the SA objectives, although a number of potential minor and significant negative impacts have also been identified. Negative effects have largely been identified in relation to the substantial land take required to support the level of development over the plan period and the location of development in relation to sensitive environmental receptors. While the spatial strategy included in the Local Plan, focusses much of development over the plan period to the main urban area and large and medium settlement, some growth is also allowed for within some of the smaller settlements. Furthermore, much of the development beyond the urban area will be on greenfield land. This includes the development of the large scale development at the Tendring Colchester Garden Community as well as further large scale sites at Marks Tey, Tiptree, and Langham. Furthermore, the District contains large areas of Grade 2 and Grade 3 agricultural soils and many of the sites proposed for allocation lie within these areas.

**8.3** Development within the District, particularly in the south, has the potential for negative effects in relation to the Blackwater Estuary, Colne Estuary and Essex Estuaries nationally and internationally designated biodiversity sites. There are further areas of SSSIs to the south of the Colchester urban area (including Abberton Reservoir, Upper Colne Marshes and Roman River) and to the east of the urban area (Bullock Wood) as well as towards Marks Tey (Marks Tey Brickpit). While the spatial strategy limits development to the south of the District, it includes development at Mersea at Dawes Lane and two further relatively small sites at Abberton and Peldon. There are numerous heritage assets dispersed across the District, and as such there is also potential for

adverse effects relating to the historic environment. The centre of Colchester urban area, to which the spatial strategy allocates a relatively large amount of growth, is covered by a number of Conservation Areas which include numerous Listed Buildings and much of Colchester Castle Park Registered Park and Garden. Furthermore, the overall level of growth set out in the plan area also has the potential to intensify the issue of water stress which the District presently faces, particularly in light of the effects of climate change. Extensive greenfield development may also increase flood risk by disrupting natural drainage. It is notable, however, that while some areas, including those towards the Roman River, River Colne, and the coast, are more flood-prone, the spatial strategy allocates most development outside high-risk flood zones, reducing the potential for flooding events.

**8.4** The spatial strategy directs much of the development within the main urban area, and large settlements, as guided by the settlement hierarchy, as well as the creation of the Tendring Colchester Garden Community, which is set to deliver 1,700 of the at least 20,800 new homes required by the draft Local Plan up to 2041. This approach will make good use of existing services and facilities in the large settlements and areas that allow for access to jobs. Large scale, mixed use and residential sites are included at or as extensions to urban area, as well as the large and medium settlements, including Tiptree, Marks Tey and Langham. These large scale allocations will support housing delivery to benefit the affordability of housing and are of a sufficient scale to support the incorporation of new services and facilities to benefit existing and new residents. Growth is also allowed for within some of the smaller settlements to reflect their existing service provision and constraints, to support their long term viability. The draft Local Plan also sets out the required amount of accommodation to be provided over the plan period for Gypsies and Travellers. Furthermore, the plan includes policy to achieve the delivery of affordable, specialist and custom and self-build housing. These policies will help to provide accommodation for those who might otherwise be under represented in the housing market.

**8.5** The approach of the spatial strategy to direct much of the development to the most sustainable and accessible locations will also provide many residents with good access to employment and support the viability of the town, district



and local centres in Colchester. The plan sets out the allocation and safeguarding of existing employment land to support access to jobs and the self-containment of many locations. Economic growth in Colchester will be further supported by land allocated within the Knowledge Gateway and research led at the University of Essex campus with potential for synergies to be achieved with the employment uses provided at the new Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community site. In rural areas, growth will be more limited, however, some small scale economic development is allowed for through the plan to support local rural economies and maintain community vitality.

**8.6** The plan also includes policies to conserve and enhance the District's key landscape and biodiversity assets, in light of the potential impacts that could arise from the planned growth. In particular, the settlement hierarchy set out the spatial strategy seeks to avoid and minimise adverse effects by allocating the lowest levels of growth to the areas of highest sensitivity in the District. Growth in the southern parts of the District, close to biodiversity sites of international importance, is limited through the spatial strategy. This approach will also ensure that the settlements maintain their distinctive character and role with only a small number of sites proposed for allocation within the areas of highest landscape value in Colchester. There is also potential for the provision of a new country park as part of the allocation of Land North of Oak Road in Tiptree to support new habitat provision and improvements in landscape setting. The plan also make substantial contributions to the protection, conservation, and/or enhancement of Colchester's green and open spaces and natural environment, including support for the delivery of the Essex LNRS, and delivery of suitable SANGs to mitigate effects relating to the Colne and Blackwater Estuaries SPAs and Essex Estuaries SAC. Specific policy text is included to ensure the protection of the purpose, natural beauty, and special qualities of the Dedham Vale National Landscape.

**8.7** It is expected that the policies set out in the plan to achieve higher levels of travel by sustainable modes will also help to minimise negative impacts on air quality and help to mitigate climate change. This will be of particular importance towards the Colchester Urban Area, and higher order settlements. There is already increased potential to encourage travel by sustainable modes at these

locations given the wide range of services and facilities and public transport options that are easily accessible. Additionally, the incorporation of large scale development, such as the Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community will support new infrastructure and service provision to further promote self-containment in the District. The approach set out in the spatial strategy, which supports the undertaking of a higher proportion of journeys by sustainable modes, will also help to address the exist issues of congestion and air pollution in the urban area.

**8.8** The policies in the Local Plan are framed by and support the Council’s ambition of achieving carbon neutrality by 2030. The plan includes requirements for development proposals to address the impact of climate change and support the incorporation of infrastructure necessary for renewable energy. Additionally, the allocation of land for the extension of the Anglian Water Services Colchester Water Recycling Centre, will support wastewater management in light of the water stress in the area. Given the District’s serious water stress, this policy will be of particular importance in terms of promoting long-term climate resilience given its approach to promoting increased water efficiency. Mitigation is also set out through a number of policies that support the use of sustainable materials, reduced levels of embodied carbon and the creation of green infrastructure and natural green spaces, which could support a reduction in emissions and resilience to the effects of climate change.

**8.9** In considering the total effects of all of the draft Local Plan’s policies and site allocations together, the SA found that significant positive effects are likely in relation to:

- SA objective 1: Housing;
- SA objective 3: Economic growth;
- SA objective 4: Transport (combined with a minor negative effect);
- SA objective 5: Community and health and wellbeing (combined with a minor negative effect); and
- SA objective 6: Services and facilities (combined with a minor negative effect).

**8.10** Significant negative effects were identified for the draft Local Plan in relation to:

- SA objective 8: Biodiversity and geodiversity (combined with a minor positive effect)

## Next steps

**8.11** This SA Report will be available for consultation alongside the Colchester Preferred Options (Regulation 18) Local Plan document in spring 2025. The consultation responses on the Preferred Options document and this SA report will be taken into account in the next stage of the plan preparation.

LUC

February 2025

# References

- 1 Explanatory Memorandum to the Environmental Assessments and Miscellaneous Planning (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2018 No. 1232
- 2 This original scoping process is described in the SA Scoping Report prepared by the Council in spring 2024.
- 3 Icení (2024) Colchester Local Housing Needs Assessment
- 4 AECOM (2024) Colchester Employment Land Study
- 5 Office for Budget Responsibility (2024) Economic and fiscal outlook – October 2024 [online]. Available at: <https://obr.uk/efo/economic-and-fiscal-outlook-october-2024/#chapter-1>
- 6 Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (2024). National Planning Policy Framework [online]. Available at: <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/675abd214cbda57cacd3476e/NPPF-December-2024.pdf>
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- 9 Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities and Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (2016, updated 2024) Planning Practice Guidance [online]. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/planning-practice-guidance>
- 10 Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (2022) Building Regulations in England: circular 01/2022 [online]. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/building-regulations-in-england-circular-012022>

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- 11 UK Green Building Council (2021). The New Homes Policy Playbook [pdf]. Available at: <https://ukgbc.s3.eu-west-2.amazonaws.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/05144257/New-Homes-Policy-Playbook-January-2021.pdf>
- 12 Homes England (2020). Building for a Healthy Life [pdf]. Available at: [https://www.udg.org.uk/sites/default/files/publications/files/14JULY20%20BFL%202020%20Brochure\\_3.pdf](https://www.udg.org.uk/sites/default/files/publications/files/14JULY20%20BFL%202020%20Brochure_3.pdf)
- 13 The updated PPG clarifies that this requirement of the NPPF is to be applied “where most of the development arising from larger scale developments proposed in the plan will be delivered well beyond the plan period, and where delivery of those developments extends 30 years or longer from the start of the plan period”. Furthermore, where this requirement applies “the authority will need to ensure that their vision reflects the long-term nature of their strategy for the plan or those larger scale developments. It is not anticipated that such visions would require evidence in addition to that already produced to support the plan”.
- 14 National Landscapes were previously titled Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs) in the UK.
- 15 ONS (n.d) Custom area profile: Colchester [online] Available at: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/visualisations/customprofiles/build/#E07000071>
- 16 LUC (2024) Colchester Landscape Character Assessment
- 17 Icení (2024) Colchester Local Housing Needs Assessment
- 18 Prior + Partners (2021) Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community Masterplan: Baseline Report
- 19 Place Services (2024) Colchester City Council Emerging Allocations Biodiversity Assessment
- 20 Icení (2024) Colchester Local Housing Needs Assessment
- 21 AECOM (2024) Colchester Employment Land Study

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# Report produced by LUC

## **Bristol**

12th Floor, Beacon Tower, Colston Street, Bristol BS1 4XE  
0117 929 1997  
bristol@landuse.co.uk

## **Cardiff**

16A, 15th Floor, Brunel House, 2 Fitzalan Rd, Cardiff CF24 0EB  
0292 032 9006  
cardiff@landuse.co.uk

## **Edinburgh**

Atholl Exchange, 6 Canning Street, Edinburgh EH3 8EG  
0131 202 1616  
edinburgh@landuse.co.uk

## **Glasgow**

37 Otago Street, Glasgow G12 8JJ  
0141 334 9595  
glasgow@landuse.co.uk

## **London**

250 Waterloo Road, London SE1 8RD  
020 7383 5784  
london@landuse.co.uk

## **Manchester**

6th Floor, 55 King Street, Manchester M2 4LQ  
0161 537 5960  
manchester@landuse.co.uk

## **Sheffield**

32 Eyre Street, Sheffield, S1 4QZ  
0114 392 2366  
sheffield@landuse.co.uk

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## **Local Plan Committee - Background Information**

### **What is a Local Plan?**

A Local Plan is the strategy for the future development of a local area, drawn up by the Local Planning Authority (LPA) in consultation with the community. The Local Plan sets out the vision, objectives, spatial strategy and planning policies for the entire Colchester Borough. A Local Plan provides the overall framework for the borough in terms of employment and housing growth, infrastructure needs and identifying areas that require protection i.e., open space and community uses. The plan making process includes several rounds of public consultation with local communities, stakeholders and statutory consultees.

The Local Plan usually covers a 15-year period and identifies how communities will develop over the lifetime of the Plan.

In law, this is described as the Development Plan Documents adopted under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. A Local Plan must be prepared in accordance with national policy and guidance.

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states at paragraph 15 that *“The planning system should be genuinely plan-led. Succinct and up to date plans should provide a vision for the future of each area, a framework for addressing housing needs and other economic, social and environmental priorities; and a platform for local people to shape their surroundings”*.

Planning involves making decisions about the future of our cities, towns and countryside. This is vital to balance our desire to develop the areas where we live and work with ensuring the surrounding environment is not negatively affected for everyone. It includes considering the sustainable needs of future communities.

Independent Planning Inspectors must examine all Local Plans that local authorities in England prepare. This examination is the last stage of the process for producing a Local Plan. The process should have fully involved everyone who has an interest in the document, and they should have had the chance to comment.

### **Why is a Local Plan important?**

A Local Plan is a statutory requirement as outlined in Section 19 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

The Local Plan contains policies to guide development by identifying a spatial strategy, site allocations for employment and housing development and protecting the environment, land and buildings for certain uses to ensure delivery of sustainable communities.

Without a Local Plan to identify where and how the borough should develop, planning applications are determined in accordance with national policy which does not provide

the local context of Colchester. Without a Local Plan, the borough would be at significant risk from speculative development. A Local Plan provides certainty of where development can be delivered sustainably across the Borough.

### **What is a Neighbourhood Plan?**

The Localism Act 2012 devolved greater powers to neighbourhoods and gives local communities more control over housing and planning decisions.

A Neighbourhood Plan is a planning document that communities can put together to set out how they would like their town, parish or village to develop over the next 15 years. The Neighbourhood Plan is prepared by the local community for a designated neighbourhood area, usually this is undertaken by the Parish/Town Council or a Neighbourhood Plan Development Forum can be established for areas without a parish/town council.

A Neighbourhood Plan enables communities to identify where new homes and other developments can be built and enables them to have their say on what those new buildings should look like and what infrastructure should be provided. This provides local people the ability to plan for the types of development to meet their community's needs.

A Neighbourhood Plan must undergo a number of formal processes to ensure it is robust and well-evidenced. This includes two formal consultation periods, independent examination and a public referendum.

A Neighbourhood Plan is subject to examination where the Examiner must determine if the Neighbourhood Plan complies with the Basic Conditions as set out in the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended). Following an Examination, the Neighbourhood Plan must be subject to a referendum. In order for the Neighbourhood Plan to pass a referendum and be 'made' (adopted) the majority of voters (more than 50%) must be in favour of the Neighbourhood Plan.

If a Neighbourhood Plan passes the referendum, this becomes part of the Statutory Development Plan for that area. Where a Neighbourhood Plan has been 'made', both the Neighbourhood Plan and Local Plan are used when determining planning applications alongside national policy.

## **What is included in the Development Plan for Colchester?**

The Development Plan is a suite of documents that set out the LPAs policies and proposals for the development and use of land and buildings in the authority's area. This includes Local Plans, Neighbourhood Plans and is defined in section 38 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

Within Colchester Borough this currently includes:

- Section 1 Local Plan (adopted February 2021);
- Section 2 Local Plan (adopted July 2022);
- Tiptree Jam Factory DPD (adopted 2013);
- Neighbourhood Plans.

Section 1 of the Colchester Local Plan sets out the overarching strategy for future growth across Braintree, Colchester and Tendring, including the Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community as well as including policies setting the overall housing and employment requirements for North Essex up to 2033. Section 2 provides the policy framework, site allocations and development management policies for Colchester Borough up to 2033.

In Partnership with Tendring District Council, a Development Plan Document (DPD) is being prepared to further guide development on the Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community. This process is being governed by the Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community Joint Committee.

There has been considerable neighbourhood planning activity within Colchester with seven 'made' (adopted) Neighbourhood Plans across the borough. These are:

- Myland and Braiswick
- Boxted
- Wivenhoe
- West Bergholt
- Eight Ash Green
- Marks Tey and
- West Mersea

Four further Neighbourhood plans are at various stages of the plan making process. These include Copford with Easthorpe, Great Horkesley, Great Tey and Tiptree.

For minerals and waste matters, Essex County Council are the authority responsible for production of the Waste and Minerals Local Plans, which forms part of the Colchester Development Plan. At present the adopted plans for Essex are:

- Essex Minerals Local Plan (2014)
- Essex and Southend-on-Sea Waste Local Plan (2017)

## **What is included within the Development Framework for Colchester?**

The Local Development Framework (LDF) is a non-statutory term used to describe a folder of documents, which includes all the local planning authority's local development documents. A Local Development Framework is comprised of:

### **1. Development Plan**

Currently for Colchester this includes:

- Section 1 Local Plan (adopted February 2021)
- Section 2 Local Plan (adopted July 2022)
- Neighbourhood Plans (Myland and Braiswick, Boxted, Wivenhoe, West Bergholt, Eight Ash Green, Marks Tey and West Mersea)
- Essex Minerals Local Plan (2014)
- Essex and Southend-on-Sea Waste Local Plan (2017)

### **2. Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD)**

An SPD is 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, Sports and Recreational Facilities. An SPD is subject to a formal consultation period and then is used as a material consideration when determining planning applications.

Currently for Colchester these are:

- Essex Coast Recreational Disturbance Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy (RAMS) – August 2020
- Affordable Housing – August 2011
- Backland and Infill – December 2010
- Better Town Centre – December 2012
- Cycling Delivery Strategy – January 2012
- Provision of Community Facilities – July 2013
- Provision of Open Space, Sport and Recreational Facilities – July 2006, updated April 2019
- Shopfront Design Guide – June 2011
- Street Services Delivery Strategy – October 2012 revised February 2016
- Sustainable Design and Construction – June 2011
- Sustainable Drainage Systems Design Guide – April 2015
- Vehicle Parking Standards – September 2009
- ABRO Development Brief SPD (December 2021)
- Archaeology and Planning (2015)

A number of these will be reviewed and updated along with new SPDs to be compliment with new policies in the Adopted Local Plan.

### **3. Local Development Scheme (LDS)**

The LDS is a project plan for a three-year period for the production of all documents that will comprise the Development Plan. It identifies each Local Development Plan Document and establishes a timescale for preparing each.

### **4. Authority Monitoring Report (AMR)**

The AMR is a report published annually by the LPA, monitoring progress in delivering the Local Plan policies and allocations. The report covers the financial year from 1 April to 31 March and for Colchester is published in December.

### **5. Statement of Community Involvement (SCI)**

The SCI sets out the standards that the Local Planning Authority (LPA) 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. The SCI also outlines how the LPA intends to achieve those standards. The SCI itself, is not a development plan document, but is subject to independent examination. A consultation statement showing how the LPA complies with its SCI should accompany all Local Development Plan documents.

### **What are housing targets and why do we have them?**

The Government have committed to delivering 300,000 new homes per year across England to significantly boost the supply of homes.

A Local Plan identifies the minimum number of homes needed through policies which are informed by a local housing need assessment produced in accordance with the Standard Methodology as outlined in national planning guidance, unless exceptional circumstances justify an alternative approach. The Standard Method was introduced through the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) in 2019.

For Colchester, the minimum housing requirement has been established in the Section 1 Local Plan. Policy SP4 set out the minimum housing requirement figure for Colchester as 920 dwellings per annum and 18,400 new homes over the period 2013 to 2033. This number was based on the previous assessment method outlined in the NPPF 2012 known as the Objectively Assessed Need. The Local Plan has been examined in accordance with the transitional arrangements outlined in the NPPF 2019, which requires examination of the Plan under the NPPF 2012.

The Council are required to identify and update annually a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide a minimum of five years' worth of housing against their housing requirement figure as set out in the Local Plan, this is often referred to as the five year housing land supply (5YHLS).

The Council publish annually a Housing Land Supply Statement. This sets out Colchester's housing land supply position over a five-year period from 1 April of each year and explains how this position complies with the requirements of national policy and guidance. The Statement is prepared by the LPA with engagement from developers and agents regarding expected delivery of new homes.

### **What happens if the borough does not meet their housing target?**

If an LPA cannot demonstrate a five-year supply of housing, national planning policy takes precedence over the Local Plan. The '*presumption in favour of sustainable development*' as outlined in national policy (NPPF paragraph 11d) will be triggered.

This means that if a planning application is considered to deliver sustainable development, then planning permission should be granted, even if the site is not identified for development in the Local Plan. In effect, the Council would have little control over where new homes are built and would be required to approve planning applications for sites that they may not have chosen for development. Many authorities can reject these schemes, but the decision can be overturned, and planning permission granted on appeal.