

5 October 2015

Report of	Head of Commercial Services	Author	Jess Tipper 01206 508920
Title	Colchester's Archaeology and Development Strategy		
Wards affected	All		

<b>The Local Plan Committee is asked to adopt Colchester's Archaeology and Development Strategy to update the existing guidance</b>
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## 1. Decision(s) Required

- 1.1 To adopt technical planning guidance governing Archaeology and the Historic Environment in the form of *Colchester's Archaeology and Development Strategy*. This will supersede the existing guidance adopted in 2014.

## 2. Reasons for Decision

- 2.1 The appropriate assessment of the historic environment resource is a key part of the planning process and this guidance will ensure Members and customers are up to date with national policy and how it is interpreted at the local level in Colchester.
- 2.2 The Technical Guidance will ensure that applicants and developers have access to a clear and informative source of guidance as to what the Council requires in the assessment, investigation and conservation of the historic environment and archaeological remains.
- 2.3 The Technical Guidance is consistent with technical advice produced by local authorities across the country. The Guidance will ensure that the Council's approach towards the historic environment is consistent with the approach of other local authorities. This guidance will enable customers to self-serve and will help promote modal shift and the efficient use of resources.

## 3. Alternative Options

- 3.1 The Committee could decide not to adopt the Technical Guidance. Such a decision would result in applicants and developers not having clear guidance. This may have the effect of causing delays and inefficiency in the planning process.

## 4. Supporting Information

- 4.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) came into effect on 27<sup>th</sup> March 2012 and is a material consideration in planning decisions. It sets out the Government's planning policies on the conservation of the historic environment. In terms of the historic environment, the NPPF replaced *Planning Policy Statement 5: Planning for the Historic Environment* (March 2010).

- 4.2 Section 12 of the NPPF relates to the conservation and enhancement of the historic environment. The Framework confirms that heritage assets (including their setting) should be conserved in a manner proportionate to their significance.
- 4.3 The Technical Guidance will reinforce the Council's relevant local plan policies. The [Current Local Plan 2001-2021](#) sets out the strategic policies to deliver conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment.

The Core Strategy Policy ENV1 (Environment) confirms the Council will protect, conserve or enhance the interests of historic assets.

Development Plan Policy DP14 relates specifically to heritage assets in the planning process at a local strategic level. The Local Plan takes into account:

- The desirability of putting heritage assets to viable use, sustaining and enhancing their significance;
- The contribution that the historic environment makes to wider sustainability aims;
- The desirability of new development to contribute to local character;
- The opportunities to draw on the contribution that the historic environment makes on the character of place.

Development Plan Policies DP1, DP5, DP6, DP9, DP13, DP21, DP 22 and DP23 are also relevant to the historic environment, heritage assets and sustainable development.

## **5. Proposals**

- 5.1 It is proposed that the Technical Guidance is adopted as a material planning consideration which will guide applicants and developers through the planning process to ensure that they meet the requirements of the Council in the assessment, investigation and conservation of archaeological remains in a manner which is both compliant with national planning policy and the Council's relevant local plan policies. It will also ensure consistency with the approach of other Essex Councils.
- 5.2 The document summarises national and local policy relevant to archaeology and provides links to relevant information. It then goes on to explain how archaeological issues will be dealt with in the determination of planning applications, covering such issues as;
- how archaeological potential is identified;
  - the need for a heritage statement where an application has the potential to impact on a heritage asset;
  - requirements for archaeological evaluation (ie geophysical survey, topographic survey, fieldwalking and metal-detecting survey, palaeoenvironmental assessment and trial-trenching);
  - archaeological mitigation
  - building recording;
  - countryside and hedgerow advice;
  - guidance on places of worship;
  - provision for public benefit to publicise new finds
  - procedures for curation of archives;

## **6. Strategic Plan References**

- 6.1 The Strategic Plan Action Plan includes a commitment to make Colchester a vibrant, prosperous, thriving and welcoming place. Under the 'Vibrant' heading the plan states

we will “Make more of Colchester's great heritage and culture so that people can enjoy them and draw inspiration for their creative talents”.

- 6.2 The adoption of this Technical Guidance will help the Council achieve these objectives through promoting the heritage resource and making the efficient use of land in the Borough.

## **7. Consultation**

- 7.1 There is no requirement to consult on the adoption of this Technical Guidance.

## **8.0 Publicity Considerations**

- 8.1 It is considered unlikely that the adoption of the Technical Guidance will attract publicity.

## **9. Financial Implications**

- 9.1 There are no identified financial implications to the Council in adopting this Technical Guidance.

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

- 10.1 An Equality Impact Assessment has been prepared for the Local Plan and is available to view on the Colchester Borough Council website by following this pathway from the homepage: Council and Democracy > Policies, Strategies and Performance > Diversity and Equality > Equality Impact Assessments > Commercial Services > Local Plan.
- 10.2 There are no identified Human Rights implications.

## **11. Community Safety Implications**

- 11.1 None.

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

- 12.1 None

## **13. Risk Management Implications**

- 13.1 Ensuring members are fully briefed on planning decisions and relevant policies in the Local Plan that will help reduce the risk of inappropriate development being permitted.

## **14. Disclaimer**

- 14.1 The information in this report was, as far as is known, correct at the date of publication. Colchester Borough Council cannot accept responsibility for any error or omissions.

## **Appendices**

Appendix A – *Colchester's Archaeology and Development Strategy*.