

# **Local Development Framework Committee**

**Town Hall, Colchester  
1 February 2010 at 6.00pm**

The Local Development Framework Committee deals with the Council's responsibilities relating to the Local Development Framework.

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# Local Development Framework Committee

To deal with the Council's responsibilities relating to the Local Development Framework.

**COLCHESTER BOROUGH COUNCIL  
LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK COMMITTEE  
1 February 2010 at 6:00pm**

**Members**

Chairman : Councillor Nick Cope.  
Deputy Chairman : Councillor Martin Goss.  
Councillors Elizabeth Blundell, Robert Davidson,  
Christopher Garnett, Chris Hall, John Jowers and Kim Naish.

**Substitute Members** : All members of the Council who are not members of the Planning Committee.

**Agenda - Part A**

(open to the public including the media)

**Pages**

**1. Welcome and Announcements**

(a) The Chairman to welcome members of the public and Councillors and to remind all speakers of the requirement for microphones to be used at all times.

(b) At the Chairman's discretion, to announce information on:

- action in the event of an emergency;
- mobile phones switched off or to silent;
- location of toilets;
- introduction of members of the meeting.

**2. Substitutions**

Members may arrange for a substitute councillor to attend a meeting on their behalf, subject to prior notice being given. The attendance of substitute councillors must be recorded.

**3. Urgent Items**

To announce any items not on the agenda which the Chairman has agreed to consider because they are urgent and to give reasons for the urgency.

**4. Declarations of Interest**

The Chairman to invite Councillors to declare individually any personal interests they may have in the items on the agenda.

If the personal interest arises because of a Councillor's membership of



or position of control or management on:

- any body to which the Councillor has been appointed or nominated by the Council; or
- another public body

then the interest need only be declared if the Councillor intends to speak on that item.

If a Councillor declares a personal interest they must also consider whether they have a prejudicial interest. If they have a prejudicial interest they must leave the room for that item.

If a Councillor wishes to make representations on an item on which they have a prejudicial interest they may do so if members of the public are allowed to make representations. In such circumstances a Councillor must leave the room immediately once they have finished speaking.

An interest is considered to be prejudicial if a member of the public with knowledge of the relevant facts would reasonably regard it as so significant that it is likely to prejudice the Councillor's judgement of the public interest.

Councillors should consult paragraph 7 of the Meetings General Procedure Rules for further guidance.

## **5. Have Your Say!**

(a) The Chairman to invite members of the public to indicate if they wish to speak or present a petition at this meeting – either on an item on the agenda or on a general matter not on this agenda. You should indicate your wish to speak at this point if your name has not been noted by Council staff.

(b) The Chairman to invite contributions from members of the public who wish to Have Your Say! on a general matter not on this agenda.

## **6. Minutes**

**1 - 13**

To confirm as a correct record the minutes of the meetings held on 28 September 2009 and 12 November 2009.

## **7. Colchester North Station Master Plan - Supplementary Planning Document**

**14 - 70**

See report by the Head of Strategic Policy and Regeneration.

## **8. Draft Essex and South Suffolk Shoreline Management Plan**

**71 - 111**

**(SMP)**

See report by the Head of Strategic Policy and Regeneration.

## **9. Exclusion of the Public**

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 DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK COMMITTEE  
28 SEPTEMBER 2009**

*Present :-* Councillor Nick Cope (Chairman)  
Councillors Elizabeth Blundell, Robert Davidson,  
Christopher Garnett, Chris Hall, John Jowers and  
Kim Naish

*Substitute Member :-* Councillor Laura Sykes for Councillor Martin Goss

*Also in Attendance :-* Councillor Sonia Lewis  
Councillor Peter Chillingworth

## **11. Minutes**

The minutes of the meetings held on 22 June and 26 August 2009 were confirmed as a correct record subject to the following amendments:-

- 22 June 2009 – delete Councillor Davidson from the list of those present and add ‘Substitute Member:- Councillor Arnold for Councillor Davidson’;
- 26 August 2009 – Minute 9, Development Policies Submission Document - DP 23: Coastal Areas, amend Comment from Committee to read ‘This is a comprehensive overview but there are 15 million people within an hour of the coast.’

**Councillor John Jowers (in respect of being a member of Essex County Council, the East of England Regional Planning Panel, the Regional Flood Defence Committee and the Rural Commission) declared a personal interest in the following item pursuant to the provisions of Meetings General Procedure Rule 7(3)**

**Councillor Elizabeth Blundell, Councillor Robert Davidson, Councillor Christopher Garnett and Councillor Laura Sykes (in respect of their respective memberships of Copford and Easthorpe Parish Council, Winstred Hundred Parish Council, Langham Parish Council and Stanway Parish Council) declared a personal interest in the following item pursuant to the provisions of Meetings General Procedure Rule 7(3)**

## **12. East of England Plan Review to 2031**

The Committee considered a report by the Head of Strategic Policy and Regeneration on the consultation published by the East of England Regional Assembly (EERA) on housing and economic growth in the East of England up

to 2031. The report was accompanied by a briefing note on the implications of the consultation for Colchester.

Any responses received will be used by the EERA, along with other policy work, to develop a revised draft regional planning policy by March 2010. There would be a further public consultation on the draft plan before an examination in public in summer 2010. It was anticipated that the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government would finalise the revised East of England Plan in 2011.

Four scenarios had been produced which would form the basis for the revision of the policies within the East of England plan and cover the period 2011-2031, rather than 2001-2021 within the current plan.

Karen Syrett, Spatial Policy Manager and James Firth, Planning Policy Officer attended to assist the Committee in its deliberations.

The Committee made a number of comments and Karen Syrett, Spatial Policy Manager, and James Firth, Planning Policy Officer, responded as indicated:-

#### *Committee Comments*

- A public consultation event had taken place in Ipswich and it was understood that Essex County Council was intending to arrange for a similar event to take place in Colchester on 2 November 2009 and it was hoped details would be circulated when available;
- An additional 12,000 homes had already been delivered in Colchester, sound advice had been obtained and the major issues had been debated at full Council and outcomes had been agreed consensually;
- The approach Colchester had adopted in the past, in terms of gathering evidence and the submission of an informed response had proved beneficial in the past and would be useful to be repeated;
- The delivery of additional houses needed to be linked with additional jobs and additional infrastructure to match;
- The EERA would be disbanded on 31 March 2010 and it was not entirely clear what would happen to the Strategy after this date;
- Essex County Council be requested to give details of the Office of National Statistics data and this be circulated to members of the Committee for information.

Officer Response – it was the responsibility of EERA to make arrangements for the public consultation events. It was intended to wait before compiling a formal response to the consultation in November, in this way the views of other major consultees, such as Essex County Council, the Haven Gateway Partnership and Regional Cities East could be taken into account.

*RESOLVED* that –

- (i) The consultation on the East of England Plan Review to 2031 and details set out in the briefing note prepared by the Head of Strategic Policy and Regeneration be noted.
- (ii) That a consultation response be prepared and reported to Local Development Framework Committee in November 2009.

**Councillor John Jowers (in respect of being a member of Essex County Council, the East of England Regional Planning Panel, the Regional Flood Defence Committee and the Rural Commission) declared a personal interest in the following item pursuant to the provisions of Meetings General Procedure Rule 7(3)**

**Councillor Elizabeth Blundell, Councillor Robert Davidson, Councillor Christopher Garnett and Councillor Laura Sykes (in respect of their respective memberships of Copford and Easthorpe Parish Council, Winstred Hundred Parish Council, Langham Parish Council and Stanway Parish Council) declared a personal interest in the following item pursuant to the provisions of Meetings General Procedure Rule 7(3)**

### **13. Community Facilities Supplementary Planning Document**

The Committee considered a report by the Head of Strategic Policy and Regeneration requesting the adoption of the Community Facilities Supplementary Planning Document (SPD). Upon adoption, the SPD will become a material consideration in the determination of planning applications.

The Community Facilities SPD would add detail to the policies in the Core Strategy and Development Policies DPDs. In particular, Policy SD2 of the Core Strategy provided that new development would be required to provide the necessary community facilities, open space, transport infrastructure and other requirements to meet the community needs arising from a proposal. This policy was supported by SPDs on Open Space, Sport and Recreational Facilities and on Affordable Housing (being revised) and the Community Facilities SPD would be used in conjunction with these related SPDs. The Council's approach also included the review of relevant applications at a bi-monthly cross-departmental Development Team meeting which ensured a corporate and comprehensive approach was taken to requests for planning contributions. Policy DP3 in the Development Policies DPD provided that the Council would develop proposals to implement a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) which may in time lead to revisions in the Council's approach to

ensuring development contributes to the cost of ensuring adequate supporting infrastructure.

The Community Facilities SPD expanded upon higher level policy guidance by listing the types of facilities such as village halls and youth shelters that are considered to be community facilities. It then discussed how the Council would identify community facility needs, using a Community Facilities Audit. The SPD provided the formula that would be used to calculate the financial contribution required from all new residential developments towards community facilities. These contributions would be used for local facilities in the first instance, but where appropriate, contributions may be applied to facilities that were centrally located and/or which served residents on a borough wide basis. Contributions could be used for capital contributions and/or land for community facilities as well as for contributions to running costs for the first three years.

Karen Syrett, Spatial Policy Manager, Laura Chase, Planning Policy Manager and Bridget Tighe, Community Development Co-ordinator, attended to assist the Committee in its deliberations.

Councillor Chillingworth attended and, with the consent of the Chairman, addressed the Committee. He indicated his support for the SPD and explained that the Planning Committee members were concerned that the greatest proportion of Section 106 funds tended to be directed to the larger, high spending bodies. He was of the view that school facilities were not used to their optimum capacity and called on Essex County Council to encourage greater community use of local schools. In terms of the way in which community facilities contributions would be used, he considered that the arrangements adopted for leisure and open space facilities, whereby the views of ward councillors were taken into account, worked well and requested this was reproduced in respect of community facilities.

In response, the Community Development Co-ordinator welcomed the opportunity to involve ward councillors and offered to seek guidance from colleagues involved in the leisure and open space arrangements.

The Committee made a number of comments and Karen Syrett, Spatial Policy Manager, and Laura Chase, Planning Policy Manager, responded as indicated:-

#### *Committee Comments*

- The merits of using a formula similar to that adopted in respect of leisure and open space provision in order to hold back a proportion of the contributions to secure benefits for the Borough as a whole;
- The possibility of imposing a levy on the development of household

- extensions;
- The need for arrangements to be put in place to involve councillors in the process;
  - The possibility of 'loading' contributions towards those dwellings with the greater number of rooms;
  - The need for information to be provided with detailing for what the contributions would be used;
  - Questions regarding the bodies included in the lists of consultees and the relatively poor level of response;
  - The benefits of Parish Plans whereby consultation is undertaken to ascertain the type of facilities wanted by local residents;
  - The benefits of imposing trigger points in respect of larger developments in order to bring facilities on board in stages;
  - Concerns that valuable community development work involving partnerships may lead to loss of funding for the voluntary sector

Officer Response – Karen Syrett explained that Circular 05/05 provided for a viability criteria in respect of the imposition of a levy. She was of the view that its application to the development of household extensions would be deemed to be unreasonable. She agreed with the need to include ward councillors in the process along similar lines to that adopted for leisure and open space and offered to circulate revised information to provide for this arrangement. Karen also acknowledged the need to hold back a certain level of contribution for Borough wide use and confirmed that the list of consultees was a statutory one which included all neighbouring local authorities. She further offered to refer to colleagues in Development Control any shortfalls in the existing Section 106 trigger point regime.

*RESOLVED* that –

- (i) The Statement of Consultation resulting from the public consultation exercise on the Community Facilities Supplementary Planning Document be noted;
- (ii) Subject to the revision of the wording of Paragraph 9.3.2 to include the involvement of ward councillors in the process, the Community Facilities Supplementary Planning Document be adopted.

**Councillor John Jowers (in respect of being a member of Essex County Council, the East of England Regional Planning Panel, the Regional Flood Defence Committee and the Rural Commission) declared a personal interest in the following item pursuant to the provisions of Meetings General Procedure Rule 7(3)**

**Councillor Elizabeth Blundell, Councillor Robert Davidson, Councillor Christopher Garnett and Councillor Laura Sykes (in respect of their respective memberships of Copford and Easthorpe Parish Council, Winstred Hundred Parish Council, Langham Parish Council and Stanway Parish Council) declared a personal interest in the following item pursuant to the provisions of Meetings General Procedure Rule 7(3)**

#### **14. Backland and Infill Development Supplementary Planning Document**

The Committee considered a report by the Head of Strategic Policy and Regeneration seeking the Committee's agreement to adopt the Backland and Infill Development Supplementary Planning Document (SPD). Upon adoption, the SPD will become a material consideration in the determination of planning applications.

The Backland and Infill Development SPD provided further guidance on how these types of application would be assessed and added detail to policies in the Core Strategy, Saved Local Plan policies, and policies in the emerging Development Policies DPDs. Section 2 of the SPD outlined the policy framework that is relevant to the SPD. Design and amenity related policies would be the most relevant as the SPD sets out the specific design requirements for backland and infill schemes. National and regional policy would also be relevant and covered in Section 2 of the document. In accordance with this policy, the SPD aimed to ensure the design of schemes was appropriate to their context.

Section 3 of the SPD set out why such guidance was necessary and provided detail on some of the common problems with Backland and Infill Development. Section 4 provided clarity by setting out definitions for Backland and Infill Development to avoid confusion as to which schemes would be covered by the guidance.

The design process was outlined in Section 5. This section explained that the Design and Access Statement, an existing requirement for applications for residential development, would be used to assess the justification for the design of any submitted scheme. The importance of the character appraisal process was covered in the later part of this section. The detailed design requirements were set out in Section 6 of the SPD. This section used text and illustrations to explain how good design should be applied to backland and infill schemes.

Laura Chase, Planning Policy Manager, and James Firth, Planning Policy Officer, attended to assist the Committee in its deliberations.



Councillor Chillingworth attended and, with the consent of the Chairman, addressed the Committee. He welcomed the SPD on the basis that backland and infill development tended to be one of the most contentious issues considered by members of the Planning Committee. He referred to the statement in the report that, from April 2009, a charge would be imposed on pre-application discussions but that he understood that this had yet to be implemented.

The Committee made a number of comments and Laura Chase, Planning Policy Manager, and James Firth, Planning Policy Officer, responded as indicated:-

### *Committee Comments*

- The planning benefits in respect of the overall final outcome to be gained from pre-application discussions and the potential negative impact of the imposition of a charge;
- The importance of the statement contained in the detailed requirements section of the report ‘innovative layouts that utilise the space in an optimal way may be appropriate’;
- The possibility of using a rural Design Guide Supplement within the document;
- The importance and need for emphasis to be placed on the Daylight and Overshadowing information (sun path analysis) contained within the Detailed Requirements section of the report;
- The possibility of including the need for an application to make a positive contribution, by complementing or enhancing the environment, otherwise a refusal would be issued;
- The usefulness to both applicant and the Planning Committee members of compiling a Design and Access Statement including information to explain why a scheme should be permitted.

Officer Response – officers were moving to a more criteria based approach which placed the emphasis on developers to demonstrate how a scheme would work, whilst continuing to bear in mind the principles of the Core Strategy

*RESOLVED* that –

- (i) The Statement of Consultation resulting from the public consultation exercise on the Backland and Infill Development Supplementary Planning Document be noted;
- (ii) The Backland and Infill Development Supplementary Planning Document be adopted.

**LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK COMMITTEE  
12 NOVEMBER 2009**

*Present :-* Councillor Nick Cope (Chairman)  
Councillors Robert Davidson, Christopher Garnett,  
Martin Goss, John Jowers and Kim Naish

*Substitute Members :-* Councillor John Bouckley  
for Councillor Elizabeth Blundell  
Councillor Margaret Fisher  
for Councillor Chris Hall

## **15. Have Your Say!**

Mrs Louisa White addressed the Committee pursuant to the provisions of Meetings General Procedure Rule 5(3). She was concerned about Section 106 agreements and their success or otherwise to achieve benefits for those who lived in the area of the development which had incurred the obligation. She had recently attended the East of England Regional Assembly and was surprised that matters such as health and education in Colchester were the responsibility of the regional authority. She was concerned at the lack of facilities being provided through Section 106 agreements and considered that more emphasis was being given to the number of new houses built than to the facilities required by those who live in those houses. She cited a number of examples such as the lack of adequate road drainage in Mill Road.

Karen Syrett, Spatial Policy Manager, noted Mrs White's comments. Members of the Committee commented that there were two particular areas of flooding in Mill Road which were being investigated by Essex County Council. Reference was made to the limitations of the budget for infrastructure which includes schools and roads. The infrastructure budget for the region is 1/15<sup>th</sup> of what is required which results in many counties chasing after a limited pot of money.

**Councillor Margaret Fisher (in respect of her membership of Essex County Council) declared a personal interest in the following item pursuant to the provisions of Meetings General Procedure Rule 7(3)**

**Councillor John Jowers (in respect of his memberships of Essex County Council for which he is also the Cabinet member with responsibility for planning; the East of England Regional Planning Panel; the National Urban Design Commission; and the Essex Rural Communities Commission) declared a personal interest in the following item pursuant to the provisions**

## **of Meetings General Procedure Rule 7(3)**

### **16. East of England Plan Review to 2031 Consultation - Colchester Borough Council Response**

The Committee considered a report by the Head of Strategic Policy and Regeneration on the East of England Plan Review to 2031 Consultation together with a draft response from Colchester Borough Council appended to the report. Also circulated was the Essex Local Authorities' Joint Policy Response and reference was made to a response currently being drafted by the Haven Gateway Partnership.

James Firth, Planning Policy Officer; attended to assist the Committee in its deliberations. He explained that there were four Scenarios in the consultation document. Scenario 1 rolls forward the existing plan; Scenario 2 is based on the Regional Scale Settlement Study; Scenario 3 is the same as Scenario 1 but the distribution among authorities is based on the economic capacity to create jobs; and Scenario 4 is a Government projection of households and need based on demographics and migration trends. The increase for Colchester under Scenario 4 is significantly greater than any other borough in the Haven Gateway area, and although Colchester has been exceeding its targets in the current plan it was very unlikely that this would continue let alone increase. He commented that there was very little information provided in respect of job growth. A draft Colchester Borough Council response was appended to the report and the timetable for responding to the consultation was set out in paragraph 1.1.

Ian Vipond, Executive Director, attended to assist the Committee in its deliberations. He gave a brief interpretation of each of the Scenarios. Scenario 1 being a projection of the existing rate and is the highest rate of growth proposed in the last regional plan. Although this was a high rate to achieve, Colchester was over-achieving its current commitment prior to the recession; over a 20 year period there will be periods of higher and lower growth. To provide some guidance on the scale of development required, he explained that the roll forward figure of Scenarios 1 and 3 were approximately equivalent to building a town the size of Witham. Scenario 2 was equivalent to a town the size of Braintree, and Scenario 4 equivalent to a town the combined size of Braintree and Witham. He also requested that the Committee give authorisation to the Head of Strategic Policy and Regeneration to comment on and agree to the Joint Essex Districts response and a joint Haven Gateway response. This would be a useful signal that the authorities are working together to deal with the significant issues raised by the Regional Spatial Strategy.

Mrs White addressed the Committee pursuant to the provisions of Meetings General Procedure Rule 5(3) in support of a proper strategy to provide the appropriate level of new housing for Colchester. She stressed the importance of having options which include a quality of life for residents.

Members of the Committee discussed a number of issues including:-

- the Office of National Statistics (ONS) being the originator of the data used to develop the scenarios which had been undertaken by the National Housing Policy Advisory Unit (NHPAU), a non-mandated Quango responsible for the review of strategic housing;
- that Colchester has been recognised as a Key Centre for Development and Change (KCD), and more funding will go to areas with that status;
- that it was considered likely that Essex district authorities and Essex County Council would accept Scenario 1, even though it is a high rate of growth;
- that it was unlikely that a regional scale settlement as in Scenario 2 would be located in Colchester so that scenario may not be so much of a risk to accept;
- that the current population of Colchester would increase by more than 30,000 simply by the increase in births and the decrease in deaths, without taking account of any migration out of London which is another contributory factor for Colchester. This in itself would require a new housing increase of the level of Scenario 4;
- that it would be unwise to accept Scenario 4 without a reassurance that the provision of adequate road and other infrastructure should come with build;
- other issues and concerns mentioned were that new jobs should include those of a high level, there was a need for more affordable housing. Developments should be resident friendly, carbon neutral and there should be adequate water resources. In connection with water resources, a water cycle study for Haven Gateway had indicated that it was not the supply of water which was problematic but how to deal with the waste water;
- it was recognised that much of the infrastructure tended to go in late and the issue of how to build in the timely delivery of infrastructure may continue to be problematic in the future.

The Committee was mindful of the need to support one of the scenarios because if the Council accepted none of the scenarios, one would be imposed. Scenario 1 was supported on the basis that it was the minimum level of growth, taking into account the fact that Colchester has grown by 1,000 new dwellings per annum, faster than Chelmsford or Ipswich, and job numbers have also increased. Also by accepting a scenario the Council would ensure that Colchester would be included when the bids for funding

were being made.

*RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL* (MAJORITY voted FOR) that the consultation response to the East of England Plan Review to 2031 be approved.

*RESOLVED* (MAJORITY voted FOR) that –

- (a) The consultation response to the East of England Plan Review to 2031 be reported to the Strategic Overview and Scrutiny Panel for discussion.
- (b) The consultation response be provisionally submitted to the East of England Regional Assembly by the consultation deadline on 24 November 2009.
- (c) The Head of Strategic Policy and Regeneration be authorised comment on and agree to the Essex Local Authorities' Joint Policy Response and the Haven Gateway Final Response.

**Councillor Margaret Fisher (in respect of her membership of Essex County Council) declared a personal interest in the following item pursuant to the provisions of Meetings General Procedure Rule 7(3)**

**Councillor John Jowers (in respect of his memberships of Essex County Council for which he is also the Cabinet member with responsibility for planning; the East of England Regional Planning Panel; the National Urban Design Commission; and the Essex Rural Communities Commission) declared a personal interest in the following item pursuant to the provisions of Meetings General Procedure Rule 7(3)**

## **17. Parking Standards Supplementary Planning Document**

The Committee considered a report by the Head of Strategic Policy and Regeneration on a proposal to adopt the Essex County Council parking standards entitled Parking Standards, Design and Good Practice, as appended to the report.

Karen Syrett, Spatial Policy Manager, attended to assist the Committee in its deliberations. The previous Parking Standards Document was produced in 2001 with the principle of maximum standards. The intention of that standard had been to encourage alternative forms of travel but it had not achieved this outcome. In the light of a national change in policy in 2006, PPS3 (Housing) was published which supported the development of an approach specific to Essex. The new approach under consideration is a change to minimum

standards for residential developments, trip origins, and the retention of maximum standards for commercial, leisure and retail uses, trip destinations. The intention is to acknowledge the fact that limiting parking at trip origins does not necessarily discourage car ownership while retaining limited parking at trip destinations may encourage the use of alternative means of transport. It was suggested that the Parking Standards, Design and Good Practice is adopted and the SPD be amended accordingly which will add detail to the existing policy documents within the Local Development Framework.

Members of the Committee discussed a number of issues including:-

- the improvement that this new policy would have over the existing policy in respect of the increase in residential parking provision. However, the minimum car parking standards will reduce recreation and open space provision and the visitor parking allocation was considered too low;
- a recently completed development in Mile End has put in parking facilities which work well, even though there is just one space per property;
- there was a preference for the authority determining the level of parking at commercial premises judged on a case by case basis;
- Colchester General Hospital was currently using temporary parking at the stadium as there was not enough parking available at the hospital, in particular there was not enough parking at the changeover in shifts. There was a contrary view that there was no need for people to use the car to get to the hospital and the rail stations;
- the use of permeable material such as grass crete or cobbles for hard standing areas was supported to enable water to soak away;
- that use of available space on plots should be maximised to increase the higher standard.

Karen Syrett explained that the objective of the minimum residential and maximum commercial standards was to get cars at residential properties off the road whilst at the same time providing an incentive to encourage people to use alternative means of travel. Commercial destinations should be in sustainable locations; examples mentioned were Colchester General Hospital and out of town retail areas which are on quality bus routes. An advisory note could be sent to planning officers to ensure that the best use of space is made on building plots to try and increase the higher parking standard. The document makes reference to hospitals for which parking facilities are to be considered on a case by case basis. The document supplements policy and because it has been adopted by Essex County Council, there was no ability for the Committee to make further amendments; the Committee were being requested to determine whether or not to adopt it. The adoption of this document would supersede the previous policy. It is important that the Council adopts policies which are in line with national policies but in some cases planning officers would have some flexibility to decide what is appropriate for

each site.

*RESOLVED* (MAJORITY voted FOR) that the Parking Standards Supplementary Planning Document entitled Parking Standards, Design and Good Practice, be adopted.



## Local Development Framework Committee

Item

7

1 February 2010

<b>Report of</b>	<b>Head of Strategic Policy and Regeneration</b>	<b>Author</b>	<b>James Firth</b>
<b>Title</b>	<b>Colchester North Station Master Plan Supplementary Planning Document</b>		
<b>Wards affected</b>	Mile End, Castle		

**The Local Development Framework Committee is agreed that the draft Colchester North Station Master Plan Supplementary Planning Document be progressed to formal public consultation**

### 1. Decision(s) Required

- 1.1 To agree that the draft Colchester North Station Master Plan Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) be progressed to the formal public consultation stage prescribed by Regulation 17 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004.
- 1.2 To agree delegated authority to the Head of Strategic Policy and Regeneration to make minor amendments to the draft Supplementary Planning Document prior to the public consultation including the changes listed in section 6 of this report.

### 2. Reasons for Decision(s)

- 2.1 To enable Colchester to move forward with the production of the Local Development Framework directing future development in Colchester. The Colchester North Station Master Plan SPD will help guide future development in this area which is recognised as a key Urban Gateway in Colchester's Adopted Core Strategy
- 2.2 Due to the significance of the North Station Gateway to the Borough of Colchester and the importance of delivering improvements in the area it is considered appropriate to report the document to Local Development Framework Committee prior to public consultation rather than the usual Portfolio Holder approval process. Following the consultation, the document will be amended in response to comments where appropriate before being reported to the Local Development Framework Committee for adoption.

### 3. Alternative Options

- 3.1 The Committee could decide not to progress the document to consultation. This would result in no plan or strategy for the North Station area being released for consultation. The conflicting use of space and poor urban environment in the area would remain unaddressed problems may increase in intensity due to further growth. There would be no further opportunity for public comment on the ideas for the area. Opportunities presented by the areas good accessibility would also remain unfulfilled.



## **4. Supporting Information**

- 4.1 The North Station area of Colchester is recognised as a key Urban Gateway in Colchester's Adopted Core Strategy. The location benefits from high levels of accessibility and presents opportunities for redevelopment and improvement. Despite these benefits, the high levels of movement through the area mean there are currently high levels of traffic congestion, conflicting use of space in the area and a poor urban environment. The sense of arrival in Colchester and the legibility of links from the station, particularly towards the town centre, are also key areas for improvement. Producing a Supplementary Planning Document will help guide future development in the area as well as setting out Colchester Borough Council's aspirations for improvements to the public realm and streetscape.
- 4.2 A draft Supplementary Planning Document has now been produced. This is the result of a process involving stakeholder and member workshops, and an emerging ideas consultation in May 2009.
- 4.3 The draft Supplementary Planning Document is attached as an appendix to the report. Before being released for the consultation a number of minor changes are considered necessary. These are listed in section 6 of this report.
- 4.4 A map of the study area for the North Station Master Plan is provided on page 4 of the draft Supplementary Planning Document.

## **5. Proposals**

- 5.1 It is proposed that the Local Development Framework Committee agree that the draft Colchester North Station Master Plan Supplementary Planning Document be progressed to formal public consultation.
- 5.2 The Supplementary Planning Document is attached as an appendix to this report and includes the following key sections:
- Introduction, context, vision and objectives for the area
  - Analysis of the existing place
  - Details on the key urban design principles and good practice which should be applied in the area
  - Details on public consultation undertaken during the preparation of the document
  - The key parameters that all future development in the area should adhere to
  - Guidance for development proposals and public realm works in a number of key character areas
  - Details on the design of paving, street furniture and other streetscape features that should be used in the area
  - Information on possible approaches to delivery and implementation

## **6. Minor changes required before consultation**

- 6.1 The draft Supplementary Planning Document is attached as an appendix to this report. It is considered necessary to make a small number of changes to the document prior to it being released to consultation. These are listed below. It is proposed that these changes be made under delegated authority to the Head of Strategic Policy and Regeneration as set out in paragraph 1.2 of the proposed decision.

6.2 The key changes that are proposed prior to the public consultation are:

- Amend cover page to clarify the document is a consultation draft and include the Haven Gateway Partnership logo
- Amend wording concerning Sustainability Appraisal to clarify this is no longer a statutory requirement for Supplementary Planning Documents (Page 3, Section 1.4).
- Add titles to various diagrams to improve clarity
- Add text to clarify that diagrams on pages 11 to 18 are an analysis of the existing situation
- Improve formatting on pages 21 and 22
- Add an arrow to the diagrams on pages 23 and 25 to clarify the area in which land will be required to be safeguarded for a potential future vehicular link (as stated in the 7<sup>th</sup> bullet point on page 25)
- Add text to the start of section 6 (defining places) to clarify that the diagrams and illustrations are indicative of the aspirations for each area
- Add text to pages 28 to 39 to clarify the diagrams show potential improvements
- Add text to section 7.1 paving materials (page 42) to clarify that some textured paving is likely to be appropriate to assist those who are visually impaired.
- Amendments to clarify that arrangements for maintenance funding are yet to be agreed (section 8.1, page 45)
- Correct various grammar and typographical errors

## **7. Strategic Plan References**

7.1 Consulting on the North Station Master Plan will help the Council listen and respond to comments and concerns about the North Station area. The LDF helps facilitate the delivery of all the Council's priorities. The North Station Master Plan will help address the priorities Enabling Job Creation, Homes for all, Congestion busting, and Healthy living in particular.

## **8. Consultation**

8.1 A number of consultation events have already been undertaken during the production of the draft Supplementary Planning Document.

8.2 A stakeholder workshop was held in March 2009. This event was held at the Moot Hall and included landowners, community representatives, residents groups, and councillors, as well as County, Borough, and Parish Council officers. The workshop included presentations from the consultant team and the key issues raised at this event are detailed in section 4.2 (page 21) of the draft Supplementary Planning Document.

8.3 An emerging ideas public consultation was then held during May 2009. This consultation was carried out at a relatively early stage in the process and the responses to the consultation were used to guide the further development of the master plan proposals. Further details on this consultation and the responses received are included in section 4.7 (page 22) of the draft Supplementary Planning Document.

8.4 A full draft of the Supplementary Planning Document has now been produced and it is proposed that this is released for public consultation as required by Regulation 17 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004. The consultation period will last for between four and six weeks as required by the

Regulations. The consultation will include public events to promote the consultation and encourage responses. A Sustainability Appraisal has been produced and will be released alongside the document for consultation.

## **9. Publicity Considerations**

- 9.1 The consultation on the North Station Master Plan may generate some local publicity. The public consultation will be advertised by way of public notice as required by the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004. It is also intended that a press release will be issued to help promote the consultation and encourage responses.

## **10. Financial Implications**

- 10.1 Consultants have produced the draft Supplementary Planning Document in accordance with the commissioned brief. This work was funded by the Haven Gateway Partnership Growth Area Funding successfully awarded to the Council. If the consultation highlights a need to make significant changes to the document this may require the consultants to carry out additional work that was not included in the current brief. This may be at additional cost.
- 10.2 Producing a Supplementary Planning Document for this area is likely to assist the Council when requiring appropriate contributions towards infrastructure and other improvements by way of planning obligation.

## **11. Equality, Diversity and Human Rights Implications**

- 11.1 The consultation will be carried out in accordance with the Council's Statement of Community Involvement (SCI). This includes a range of consultation methods to enable as many people as possible to respond regardless of gender, gender reassignment, disability, sexual orientation, religion or belief, age and race/ethnicity.
- 11.2 A link to the Equality Impact Assessment for the Local Development Framework is provided on the LDF Committee webpage.

## **12. Community Safety Implications**

- 12.1 The SPD promotes high quality urban design which will have a positive impact on community safety. The urban design principles include the need to create a safe public realm and to develop convenient and safe routes through the area.

## **13. Health and Safety Implications**

- 13.1 The SPD aims to enhance the quality of the public realm through improved footpaths and direct crossings, in order to encourage walking and cycling, particularly between the town centre and station. Measures that support modal shift and improve safer use of the area by pedestrians and cyclists should have positive health and safety implications.

## **14. Risk Management Implications**

- 14.1 A decision to progress the SPD to consultation will ensure all residents and other stakeholders are able to comment on the emerging document.
- 14.2 A decision not to progress the document to consultation would mean the SPD could not be adopted under the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England)

Regulations 2004. The existing problems in the North Station area would remain unaddressed, and such a decision would risk the problems increasing in intensity in the future due to the impact of further growth.

## **Background Papers**

Colchester North Station Master Plan Supplementary Planning Document – Consultation Draft

Colchester North Station Master Plan  
Supplementary Planning Document  
July 2009



Terence O'Rourke



# Contents

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1.3 Design concepts	5.3 Movement parameters
1.4 Policy context	
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The study area in relation to the wider town



# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 The vision

The vision for the area is to create a welcoming "front door" to the town, set within a balanced mix of uses focused around four distinct places: North Station Gateway, Cowdray Centre, Turner Rise, and the existing traditional urban village on North Station Road.

The new spaces and new development will be a vibrant and exciting focus for the town, combining high quality urban design and leading edge sustainable development to create a link between the town centre and the existing and new areas of Colchester to the north.

In delivering the vision these proposals will;

- Key roads in the area create visual and physical barriers. The area needs legible connections with the historic town centre and key areas such as the Cowdray Centre.
- Identify potential development opportunities within the area and suggest appropriate development patterns to improve the mix of uses and employment opportunities within the area particularly with regard to the need to provide 40,000 sq.m of new office/employment floor space.
- Include new offices, new homes, station related retailing and new pedestrian/cycle links between the station and the town centre.
- Meet the operational rail, and integrated transport requirements in and around the station, improving modal interchange between rail and bus.
- Reduce the conflict between traffic and people, and create new areas of high quality public realm to provide greater legibility within the area.

- Create a new green link between High Woods Country Park and Castle Park.

- Create a vibrant diverse quarter by accommodating competing land uses which deliver the critical mass to ensure the long-term viability and economic sustainability of the development.

- Accommodate appropriate levels of car parking for station users whilst creating landmark spaces on the northern and southern sides of the station.

## 1.2 Masterplan objectives

In delivering this vision, the master plan will have regard to the following objectives:

- Creation of a positive sense of arrival in Colchester and a more appropriate sense of place at the station and on routes to and from the station.
- Delivery of a quality public realm and streetscape strategy to accompany the master plan.
- Promotion of suitable levels of compatible activities and uses.
- High levels of connectivity and legibility for sustainable routes through the area, routes towards housing and employment development, and in particular routes towards the town centre.
- Delivery of a quality transport interchange – incorporating actions and improvements from the Station Travel Plan.
- The potential for redevelopment of the station building, forecourt and change of use of land on the station site. Consideration should be given to mixed use developments that provide local facilities, contribute to sense of place, and create public spaces with extended hours of activity.

- Enhancement of sustainability through measures that support modal shift, pedestrian and cycle accessibility.

## 1.3 Design concepts

To deliver the vision and objectives, the master plan encompasses a number of key design concepts for the future of the North Station area. These include the following:

- A redesigned and enhanced **Station Gateway** which primarily focuses on the creation of a fully functioning double sided station. On the northern side this will include the redevelopment of the highly visible but unattractive Crowe House site, complemented by an enhanced Station Forecourt. On the southern side this will include a new Station Piazza with seamless public realm enhancements to Station Way and the Essex Hall roundabout area.
- Public realm enhancements and redevelopment opportunities along **North Station Road** including the replacement of the Albert roundabout with a junction to create direct crossings for pedestrians and cyclists. Realise the potential of key sites such as Digby and Fairfax.
- A redeveloped and fully integrated mixed use quarter on the **Cowdray Centre** site which will see improved connections to the station and a new greenspace linking Castle Park to High Woods Country Park. Development opportunities along Clarendon Way are also identified along with a new connection between the two areas.
- A range of possible interventions within the future strategy for the **Turner Rise** retail park including proposals for an integrated mixed use development which better serves the needs of the local community.





Together, these design concepts will have a number of additional benefits, including;

- Improved connections for neighbouring communities between their neighbourhoods and the town centre.
- Potential business and leisure visitors to the town will benefit from improved facilities on arrival and enhanced orientation within the rest of the city.
- The railway sector will benefit from a significantly improved station with better access from north and south of the town.

### 1.4 Policy context

It is intended that the North Station Master plan will be adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD). An SPD is prepared by a local authority to guide and enable development in areas which are likely to be the focus of change during the lifetime of the Local Development Plan. It is designed to provide a degree of certainty to both the local community and landholders and potential developers of the borough council's expectations for development.

The master plan conforms with and builds upon the approach of the council's Core Strategy especially with regard to the urban renaissance, public realm, and transport and accessibility policies.

The spatial strategy section of the Core Strategy sets out the objectives for the North Station area. Policy UR1 and table UR1 also detail the key projects to be delivered within the area. The status of urban gateways such as the North Station is covered by policy CE2a which makes clear it is a location suitable for high density, mixed-use development.

Colchester Station is recognised as a key urban gateway in Colchester's emerging Core Strategy. The location benefits from high levels of accessibility and presents opportunities for redevelopment and improvement. Despite these benefits, the high levels of movement through the area mean there is currently traffic congestion, conflicting use of space in the area and a poor urban environment. The sense of arrival in Colchester and the legibility of links from the station, particularly towards the town centre, are also key areas for improvement.

The boundary for the master plan will be formally defined in the Site Allocations DPD and is shown opposite.

The master plan has been produced to meet the timescales set out in the council's Local Development Scheme. The SPD also meets the requirements for Regulation 17 public participation under the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004 and for consultation as part of the council's Statement of Community Involvement. It is also a requirement that SPDs are subjected to sustainability appraisal (SA) incorporating the requirements of strategic environmental assessment (SEA). The SPD therefore meets the formal Regulation 17 on public participation and an SA/SEA has been carried out by Colchester Borough Council.

### 1.5 Consultation process

The process of creating a master plan for the North Station area has involved an extensive programme of consultation. This programme has sought to engage members of the public, landowners and

stakeholders, and elected members at key stages of the visioning process to ensure commitment, buy-in and feedback on the important steps made. The events undertaken are set out below:

#### Stakeholder presentation and workshop – April 2009

A stakeholder workshop was held in April of invited participants drawn from the key stakeholders, including landowners, community representatives, residents groups, and county, borough and parish officers to develop ideas and principles which should shape the future development of the area.

#### Exhibition of Emerging Ideas – May 2009

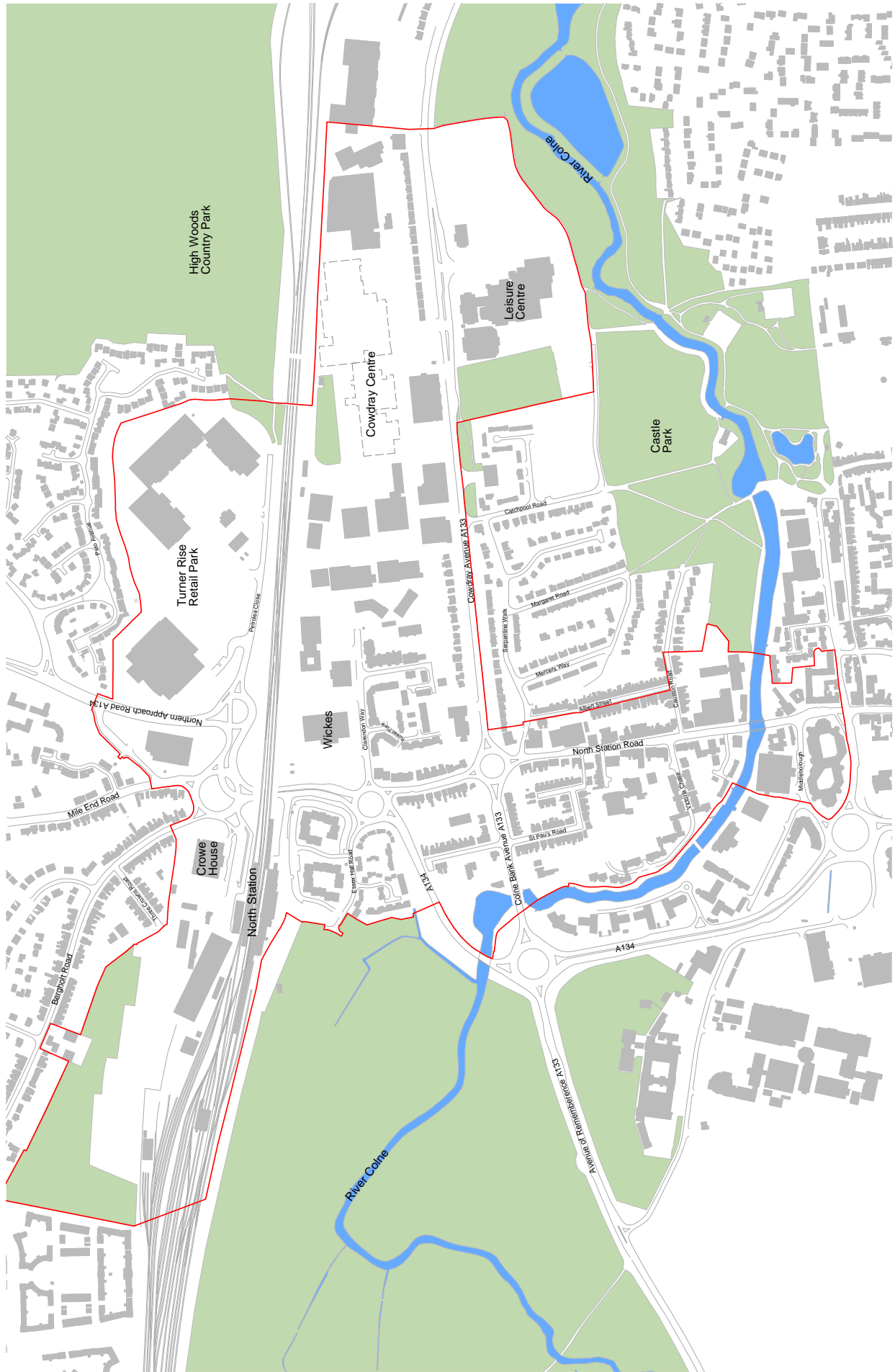
The emerging ideas were displayed on Friday 8 May 2009 at the Moot Hall, Town Hall, Colchester and on Saturday 9 May 2009 at Colchester Central Library. The exhibition was open from 10am to 4pm on both days and members of the consultant team and council officers were available to answer any questions. The events were advertised by way of press release and by direct invites to stakeholders who had previously expressed an interest.

The exhibition boards and questionnaire were also made available on the council's website at [www.colchester.gov.uk/ldf](http://www.colchester.gov.uk/ldf). Comments were requested by the 15 May 2009 to allow them to be considered when progressing the document.

Details of the responses from these events are set out in section 4 of this report.



Stakeholder workshop at the Moot Hall April 2009





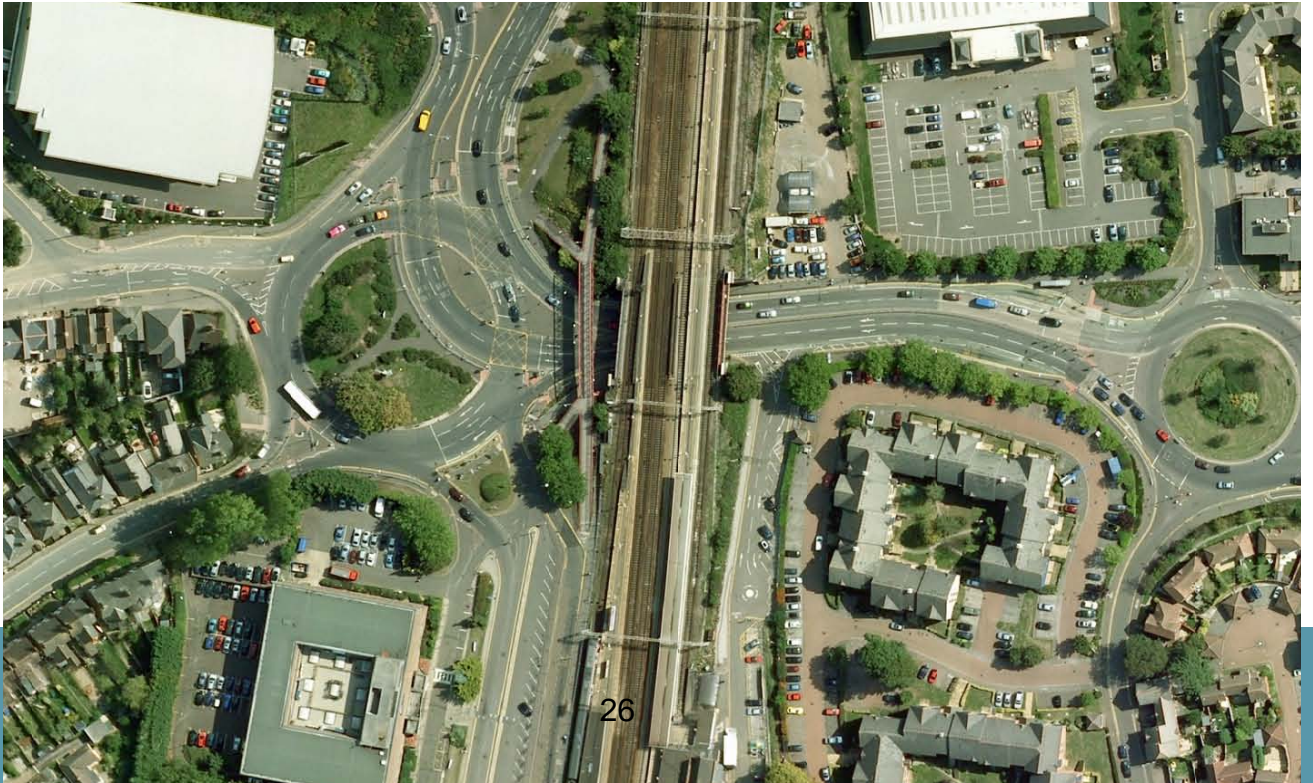
## 2. The existing place

### 2.1 Introduction

This chapter provides a detailed analysis of the study area through a series of themed analysis plans which begin with an analysis of the following areas:

- urban form
- open space
- townscape quality
- movement
- building heights
- land use
- land ownership.

As an introduction to this section we have also set out through text and illustrations a summary of the current "arrival experience" that visitors to Colchester have today.







1 Existing cycle parking is inadequate

2 Hostile subway linking district centre and country park

3 Existing entrance to Colchester Station

4 Poor quality surfacing on national network

5 Potential opportunity to visually register the station from the town centre

6 Existing car dominated district centre

7 Lack of surveillance encourages graffiti and anti-social activity

8 View of the shatter zone from pedestrian footbridge



## 2.2 History

North Station was built over half a mile from the northern town walls of the town, probably because of the political and cultural resistance to the 'iron horse' that would have prevailed at the time. When the railway did arrive in the mid-19th century this part of the town started to change significantly.

The Essex Hall Asylum was erected to the south of the station shortly after and following that the farmsteads adjacent to North Station Road gradually gave over to development. By the mid-20th century the urban link between the station and the Roman centre of Colchester was complete.

Development also extended along Colne Park Avenue, now the Avenue of Remembrance, and Cowdray Avenue, creating a population that could support what is now the urban village on North Station Road.

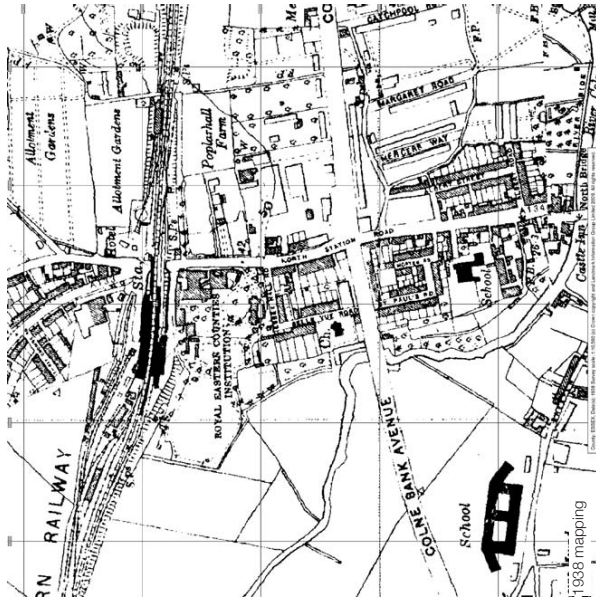
In addition to the highway interventions the urban form also altered dramatically in the late 20th century. Large retail and employment estates have emerged; the Cowdray Centre and Turner Rise Retail Park. These estates lack permeability, create barriers to movement, have poor

legibility, lack local distinctiveness and contrast considerably from the established urban form.

As a public transport gateway, the area creates a first impression of the town to visitors and as such is the "front door" which sets the scene for the town. One of the key challenges for the master plan will be to protect and enhance the positive features of the area whilst creating a dramatic uplift in the quality of the new urban form and public realm.

The historic maps opposite illustrate how the area has changed from 1875 to the present day.







### 2.3 The arrival experience

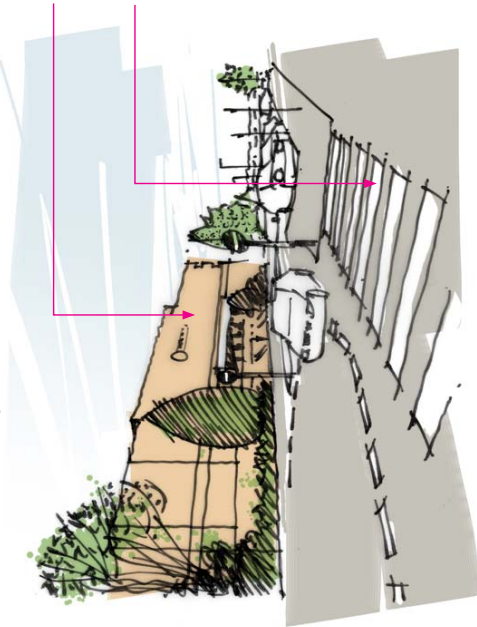
As with many of the UK's towns and cities, the construction of new roads left a legacy of a fragmented urban form and created a hostile pedestrian environment. North Station Road, Mile End Road and Northern Approach Road and the associated roundabouts were no exception. The contrast between Colchester's historic core and the area around the station could not be greater. Walking north from the town centre the human scale and locally distinctive character of the historic core starts to break down mid way along North Station Road. By the time one is in the vicinity of the station the environment is dominated by traffic and a confusing series of physical level changes around the bridge. The dual carriageway creates a strong barrier which must be traversed to get to the station.

2. Rail Bridge - smelly, noisy, dirty, hostile!



*This is a horrible way to approach the town centre. It feels unsafe during the day let alone at night!*

1. Station Gateway



*Crowe House is an unattractive building situated in a very prominent location, not much of a welcome!*

*This space is open and windswept, poor quality surface materials and not a great place to wait for a bus or to be picked up by a friend*

*Which way is it to the town centre? The signs in the station pointed me in this direction, but I don't know where to go now*

3. North Station Road (station end)



*Good sense of enclosure, human scale and registry of landmarks reassurance of probable town centre*

*Roundabout coming up - it looks difficult to negotiate and will divert me from my straight line route into town*

*Footpath widening, consistent quality of materials and directional signing needed*



4. North Station Road



Central tyre site could be redeveloped to provide a stronger sense of enclosure and a key landmark building on the route to town

Side street junctions need to be visually narrowed to reinforce primary route to the town centre

6. Middleborough



Quality of materials for footpaths needs improving to signify importance of this route to town  
Signing needs to be rationalised to be less incongruous in the street scene

Long term - seek to replace architecturally weak buildings with something more positive and welcoming

5. North Bridge



Footpaths need widening and bridge across the river needs celebrating

*I think I'm coming into the town centre!*

7. North Hill

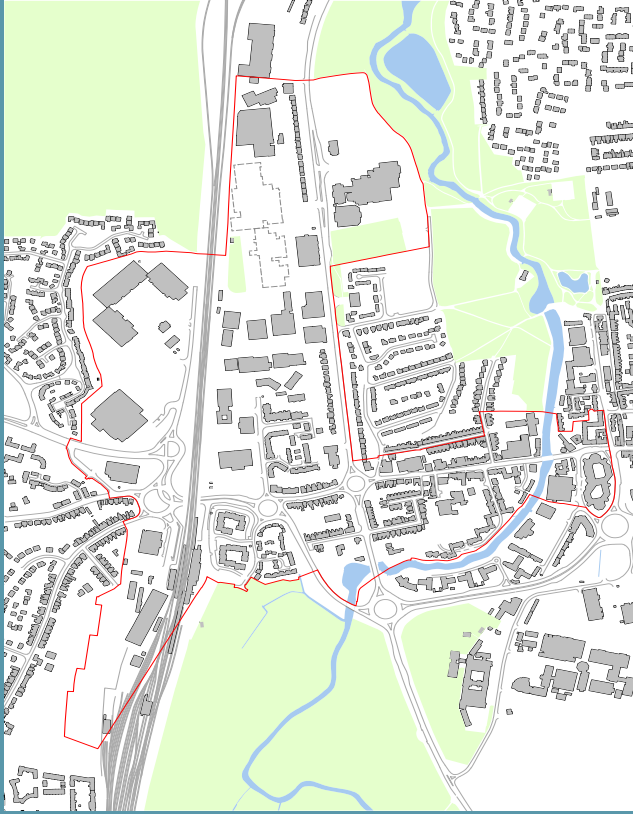


Strong sense of legibility, enclosure and expectation as street rises up to landmark church

Footpaths need widening and high quality surface materials needed for both footway and carriageway to help spatially unite the street

## 2.4 Base line analysis

Figure  
ground

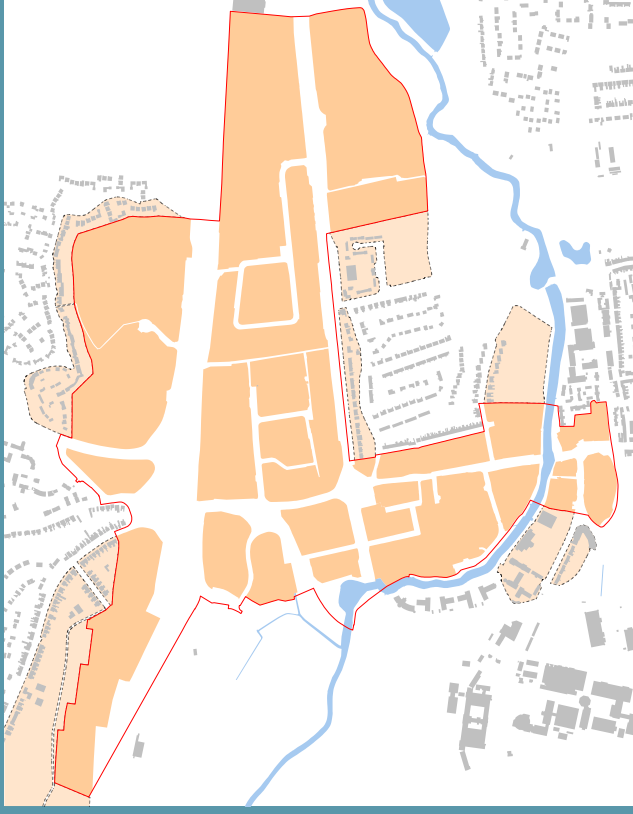


Built form  
 Space

The urban structure following North Station Road is intact providing a legible and traditional street scene. This form breaks down around the station, the Asda superstore and within the Cowdray industrial estate, creating an confusing urban form.

Site area	72.5ha
Building footprint	15.5ha
Building coverage	21%

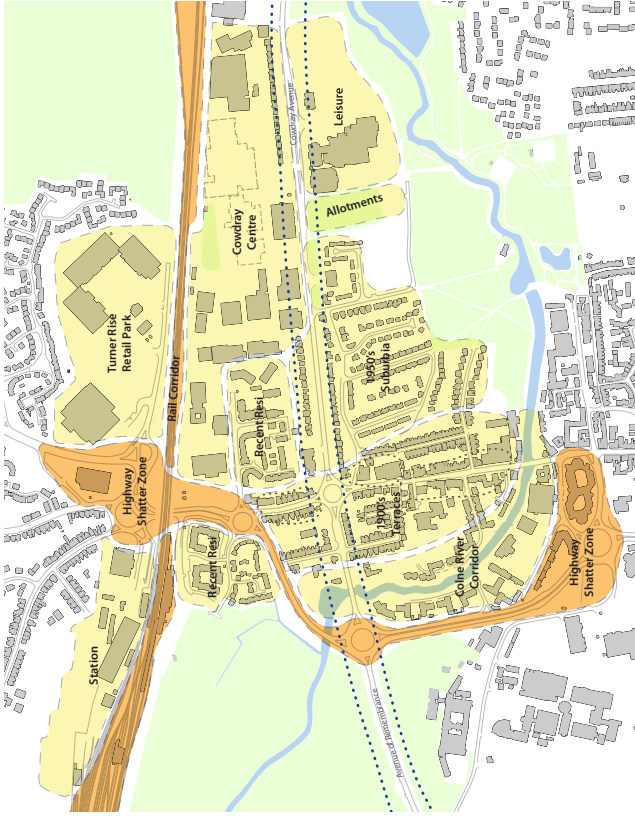
Block  
structure



Urban blocks  
within study area  
 Urban blocks  
outside study area

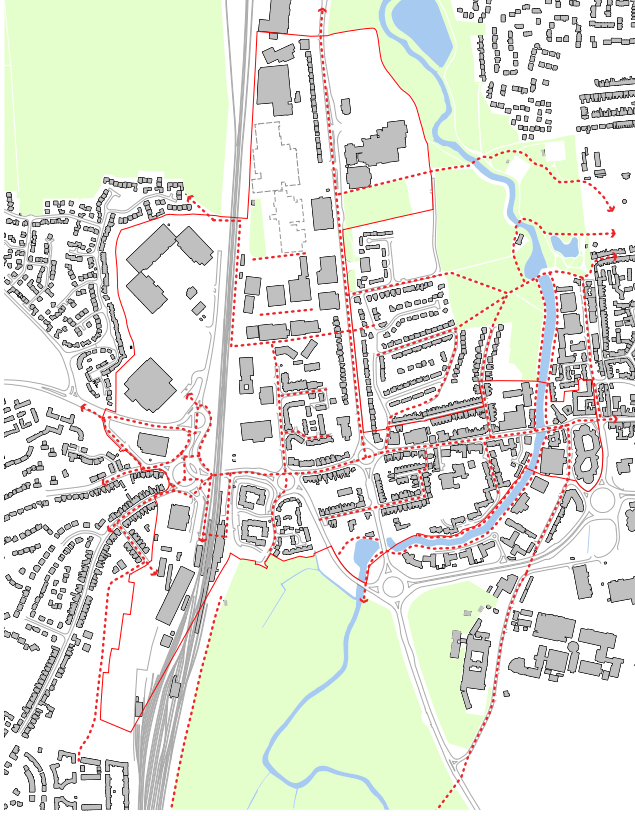
The block structure highlights the lack of links within the study area.

## Character areas



The study area has a range of character areas within it. These areas are defined by the built form and uses within them.

## Movement



The A133 creates a physical barrier to pedestrian, cycle and public transport movements between the railway station and the town centre.

The railway embankment severely restricts the opportunity for north-south movements within the whole of Colchester.

The raised position of the railway station relative to the approach routes creates additional access difficulties for pedestrians and cyclists.

The single point of vehicle access to both the railway station and district centre creates difficulties for public

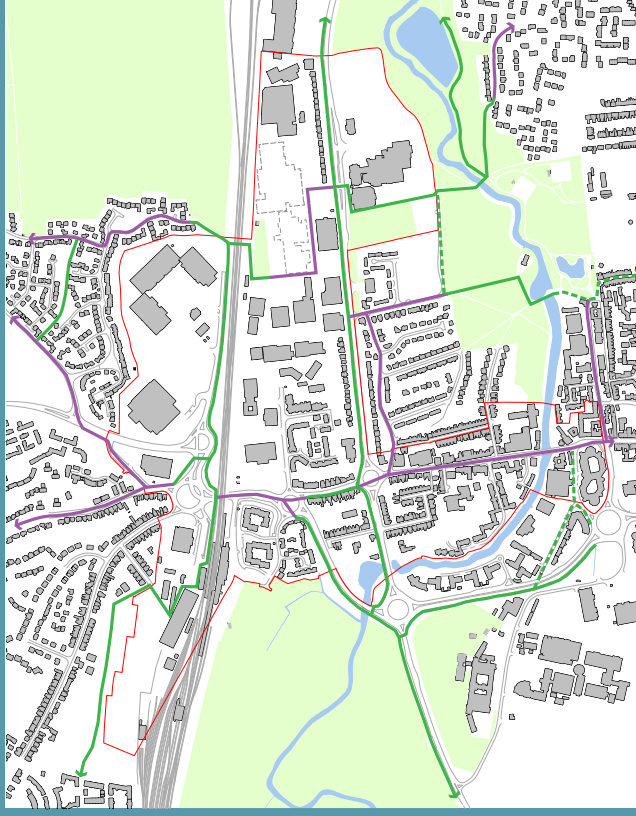
transport and increases junction congestion.



The uneven distribution of car parking contributes significantly to peak time congestion.



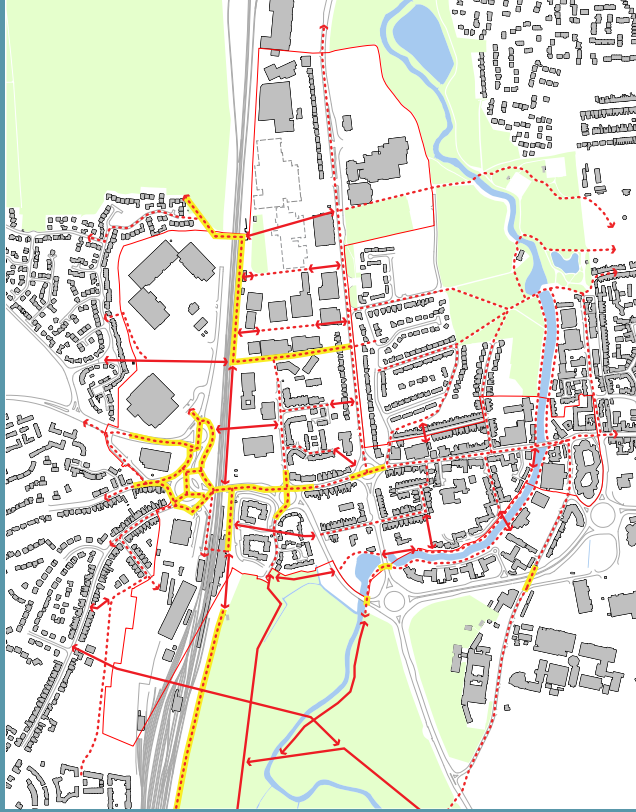
Pedestrian links




## Cycle routes



-  Off-road marked cycle route
-  Marked on-road cycle route
-  Advisory cycle route

## Missing links



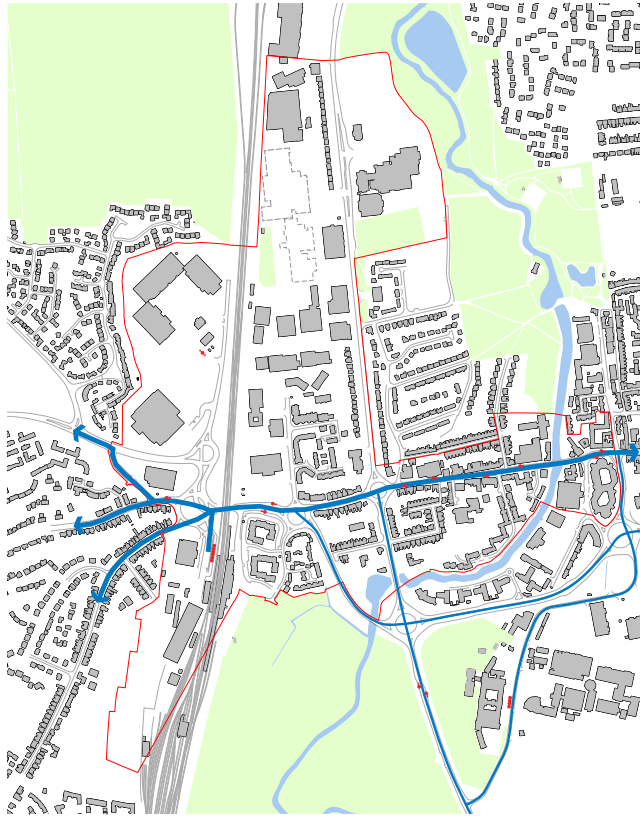
-  Pedestrian links
-  Hostile pedestrian links
-  Missing pedestrian links

Highway dominated areas, particularly near the station, create a number of hostile pedestrian routes. These poor quality environments break the continuity of positive sections of the main routes and add distance to journeys to detour round highway interventions.



In addition, there are many "missing links" within the network, routes that fail to connect result in a convoluted network lacking permeability. This is most prevalent in and around the Cowdray industrial estate.



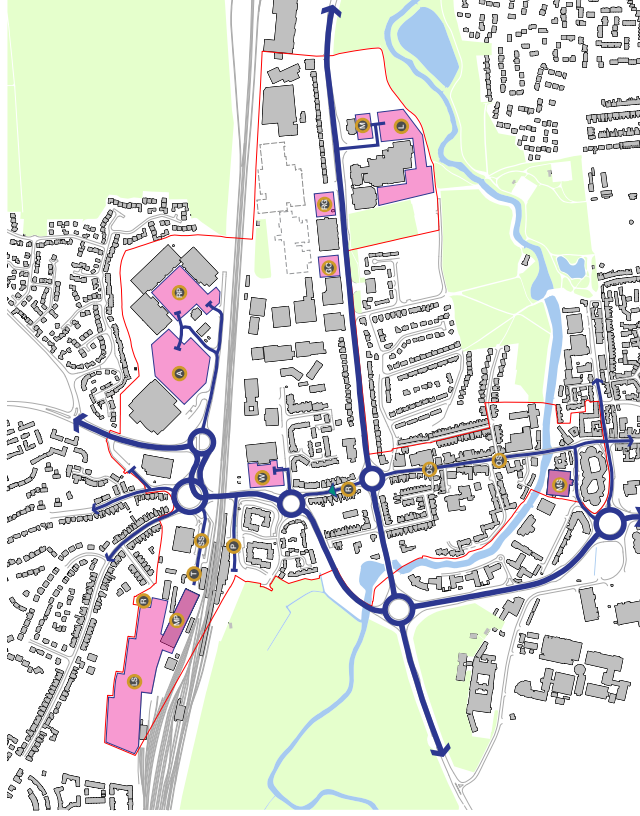
## Bus routes



The bus routes within the study area all run on the main north/south axis connecting the north of Colchester to the station and on to the town centre. These run at a high frequency with services at least every 20 minutes on all routes.



















-  Bus route
-  Bus stop and route direction

## Vehicle links

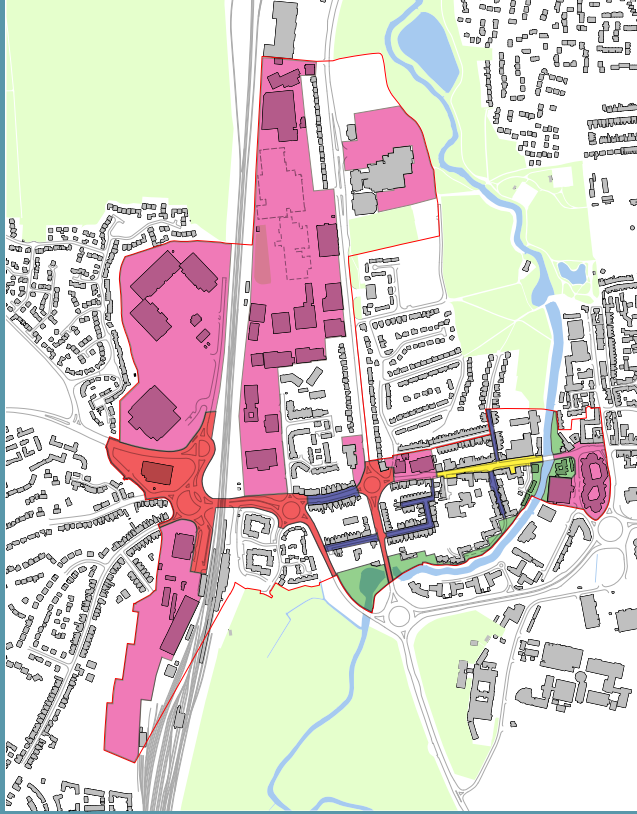


Vehicle links dominate the northern part of the study area. Several large roundabouts connecting the A133 (east-west link) and the A134 (northern approach road) provide good vehicle links through this part of Colchester but sever many pedestrian routes.

Parking is well utilised, particularly the station parking. However, these surface car parks have a significant land take and detract from the townscape quality. There is long term potential for redevelopment, with parking rationalised into multi-storey.

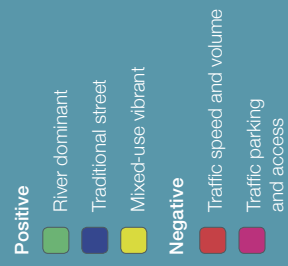
-  Strategic traffic link
-  Local traffic link
-  Car park
-  Multi-storey
-  On-street
-  Long stay
-  Short stay
-  Motorcycle parking
-  Asda short stay
-  Retail short stay
-  Wickes
-  Garden centre
-  Range
-  Leisure centre
-  McDonalds
-  Taxi rank (25 spaces)
-  Premium parking
-  Residents parking

## Street quality

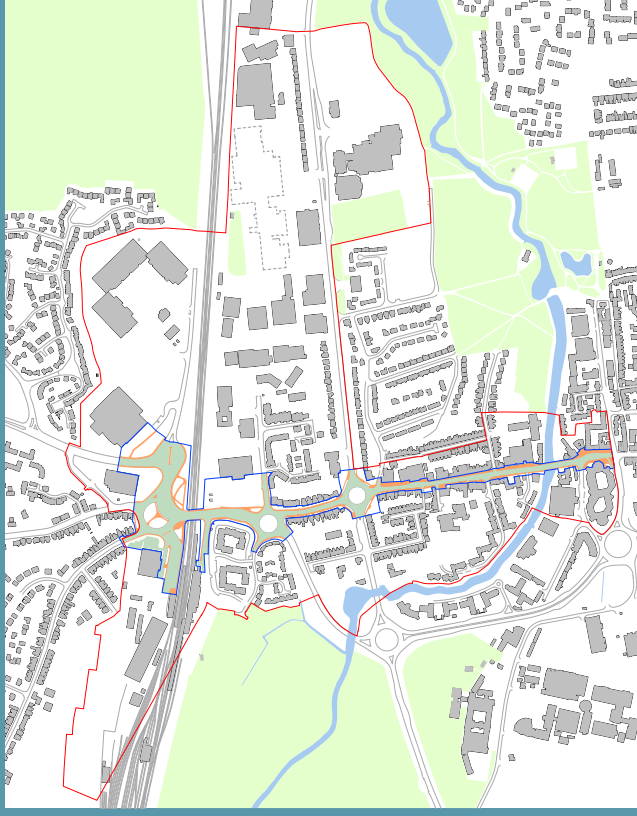


The diagram clearly shows the high proportion of negative environment within the study area. These areas are dominated by highway infrastructure and parking and have little cohesive urban form.

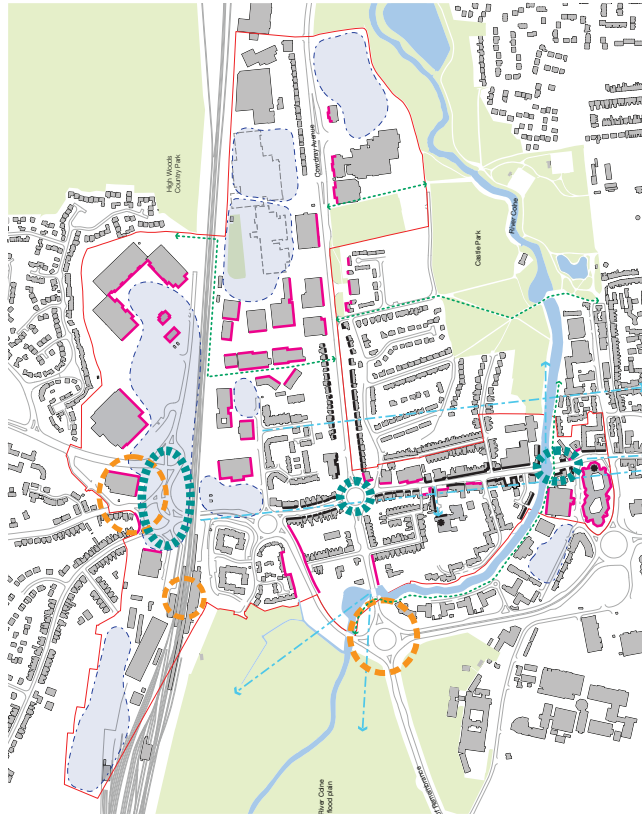
The diagram also highlights the key positive features, which are focused on the historic Victorian streets and along the river corridor.








## Public realm use



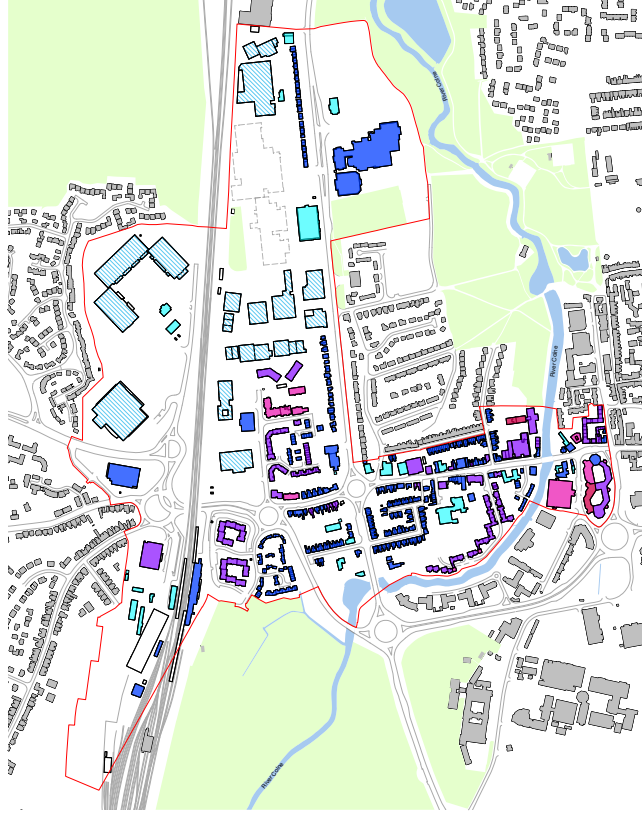
## Townscape qualities



The well defined streets with positive frontages that are along the majority of North Station Road and parts of Crowdray Avenue fall apart in the northern half of the site. These areas of weak or dead frontage and lack of other townscape qualities result in large areas of weak orientation.

-  Nodes
-  Gateway
-  Positive frontage
-  Weak / dead frontage
-  Area of weak orientation
-  Views
-  Key pedestrian links
-  Key building



## Building heights



The majority of the study area comprises two storey buildings, with recent flat/apartment developments, adjacent to the River Colne and near the station, rising to three storeys.

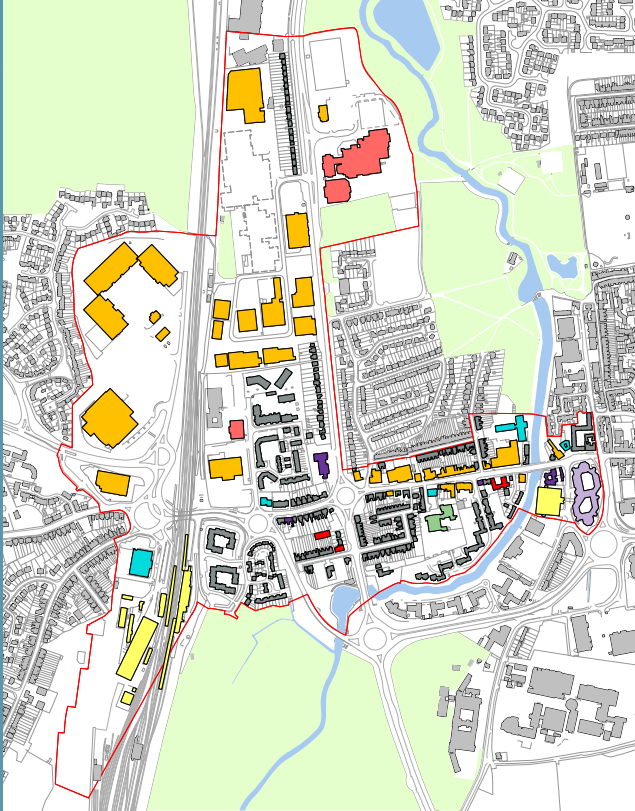
The few buildings exceeding three storeys offer little townscape value and are concentrated close to the river.

The "big box" retail and Cowdray industrial sheds create an area of single storey buildings with a height up to 7.5m, equivalent to approximately two and a half standard storey heights.

-  Single storey sheds (employment sheds up to 7.5m)
-  Single storey
-  Two storey
-  Three storey
-  Four storey
-  Five + storey



# Land Use

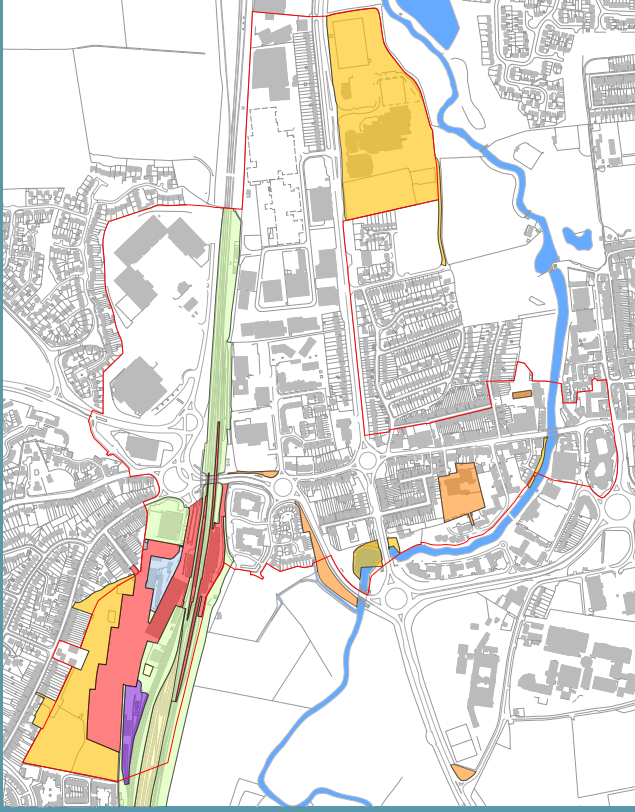


There is a good mix of uses within the study area, helping to create a vibrant area, particularly along the southern end of North Station Road.

The master plan can address the currently limited amount of office space, as well as providing a balance of other uses.

- Residential
- Retail
- Office
- Transport/multi-storey parking
- Leisure
- Religious/community
- Public house
- Civic
- School

# Land Ownership

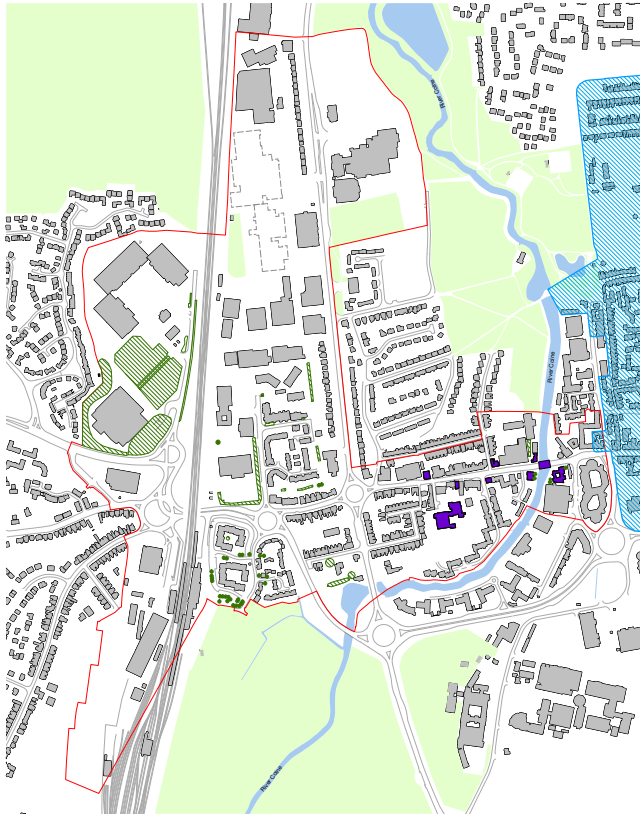


The plan shows the major land ownerships within the study area.

- Colchester Borough Council
- Essex County Council
- Station lease (National Express)
- Freehold ownership (Network Rail)
- BRIS core
- Maintenance depot



## Heritage

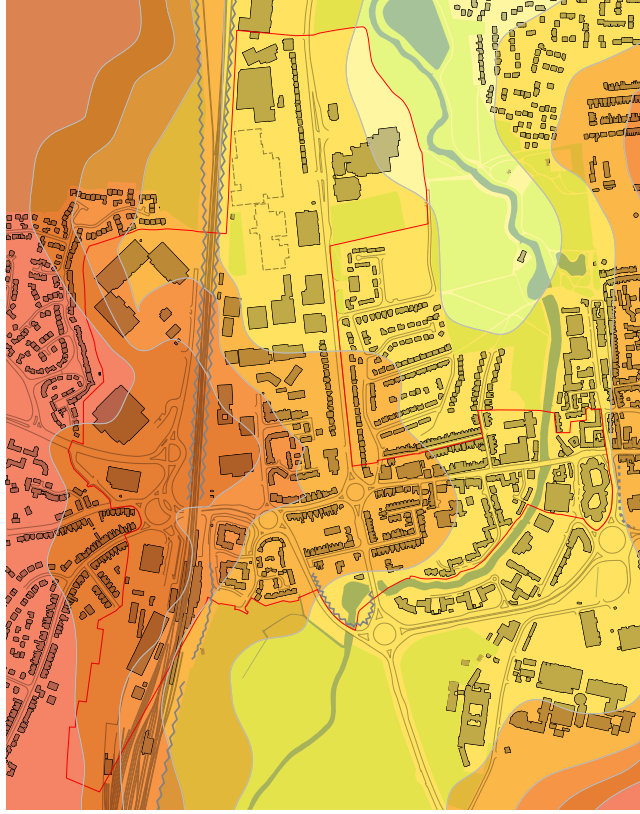


There are a limited number of listed buildings within the study area, all are grade II listed. The historic core of Colchester is covered by a conservation area that extends slightly into the study area.

Single and group tree preservation orders are focused towards the northern part of the study area. Most of the trees form garden boundaries or are car park planting; there are few noteworthy single trees.








-  Listed building
-  Group or single TPO
-  Conservation area

## Topography



The land north of the river, comprising most of the study area, rises gently and does not pose any significant impacts upon the site. In contrast, the land to the south of the river rises steeply allowing for long distance views across the study area.

Embankments and retaining walls alongside the railway and around the Asda retail park create some barriers to movement, as do highway embankments alongside some sections of the river.

-  3m
-  8m
-  13m
-  18m
-  23m
-  28m
-  Embankment/retaining wall

# 3. Urban Design Principles

## 3.3 Urban design principles

the master plan will require a plan geometry that ensures a natural flow of pedestrians into the North Station Road corridor. Best practice indicates that where possible roundabouts should be replaced by traffic light controlled crossings to facilitate improved pedestrian flows.

### Vitality

The new buildings that front these routes will have active frontages and a mix of uses so that the public realm formed by them is active during the day and well into the evening.

### Massing

Development should relate to the massing patterns existing in the area which vary from 2 and 3 storey residential development along the historic parts of North Station Road to taller buildings around the station in the north and Middleborough in the south.

### Enclosure

Continuity and enclosure and a safe public realm will also need to be provided by:

- Clearly demarcating public and private space.
- Positioning entrances so that they contribute to streets/spaces.

- Ensuring a correlation between pedestrian and cycle routes and overlooked areas with active frontages.

### 3.3.2 Efficient land use

#### Legibility

Repairing the urban fabric should assist in enhancing legibility through the study area by rediscovering the historic street pattern.

The development should be consistent with best practice in urban design and should deliver a regenerated area that achieves all of the following objectives:

#### 3.3.1 Place making

##### Locally distinctive

All new development should reinforce, and where necessary create a sense of place. The cue for this should be the distinctive character and context of Colchester through considered reference to the existing townscape quality of North Station Road. These intrinsic qualities should be sensitively interpreted within new development.

Development should respond to the existing architectural context and scale and in particular the qualities of variety, colour, and fine grain that characterise the best loved streets in the town centre.

##### Respect historic features

Key elements such as historic buildings, features and mature tree groups should be retained and where possible used to create focal points for new development.

##### Repair the urban fabric

New development should seek to repair the urban fabric at key locations along North Station Road and through comprehensive redevelopment of the Cowdray Centre and Turner Rise areas which have effectively been blown apart by car borne commercial development. New development should therefore be a seamless and intrinsic part of the town.

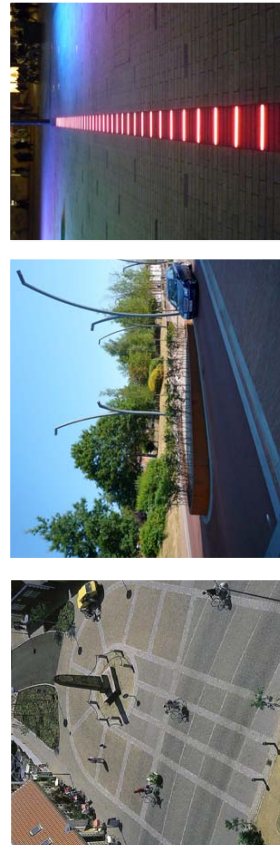
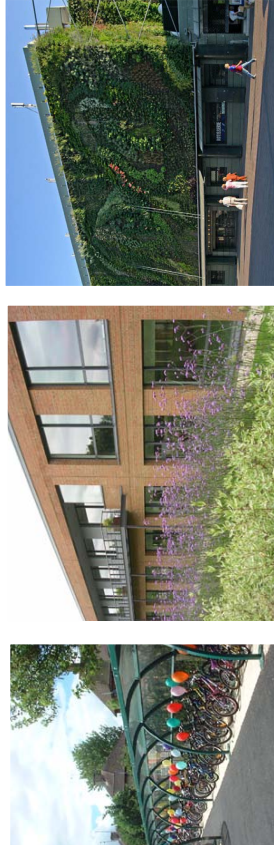
To ensure that new development is stitched appropriately into the prevailing urban form

### 3.1 Introduction

The following section has been developed to identify the fundamental urban design principles which must be adopted and satisfied in the development of the North Station area.

### 3.2 Key principles

- Create a positive sense of arrival at the station, providing a quality public transport interchange as part of the Station Gateway, improving the accessibility and function of the station.
- Support public transport and encourage more sustainable transport choices, particularly by commuters within the North Colchester Growth Area.
- Promote suitable levels of compatible land uses and activities, particularly with regard to the need to provide 40,000 sq.m of new office/employment floor space.
- Improve the quality of the public realm through improved footpaths and direct crossings, in order to encourage walking and cycling, particularly between the town centre and station.
- Identify potential development opportunities within the area and suggest appropriate development patterns to improve the mix of uses and employment opportunities within the area.
- Create a new green link between High Woods Country Park and Castle Park.





The master plan also seeks to create distinct character areas (or sub-areas) with their own local identity. In this regard, there are three distinct character areas which may influence approaches adopted:

#### Cowdray Centre

The Cowdray Centre is currently a mix of employment and retail uses separated by the postindustrial vacant land created by the demolition of the old factory buildings. The opportunity at the Cowdray Centre is to create a truly mixed use area which comprises commercial, residential and public open space uses.

#### North Station Road

The traditional urban village that is situated on either side of North Station Road has a distinctive character that should only be enhanced through sensitive infill development. The highest quality development will be essential because most of the opportunities within this area are on high profile sites located at corners or along key frontages.

#### Turner Rise

Turner Rise is a typical retail park dominated by large buildings set within extensive areas of surface car parking. The lack of enclosure in particular leads to a fractured urban form which often feels windswept and open to the elements. This, combined with limited ground floor activity and a predominance of 'backs' of buildings, leads to a soulless, car borne development often hostile to pedestrians. The challenge for the master plan will be to create a more civilised development form which starts to create an attractive district centre which serves local neighbourhoods and engenders access by foot and cycle as well as by car.

Legibility can also be enabled through creating new landmarks that aid orientation between the development and the wider town; these may be quite subtle, and rely on the locating of buildings as much as their scale.

Given the gateway aspirations, it will be important to design the new station on the north side as a landmark building with high standards of environmental sustainability. This is a great opportunity for Colchester to send positive messages to the outside world through not only a well-designed piece of town but also through a new landmark building.

#### Creating an efficient interchange

The existing uses such as car parking, public waiting areas and railway maintenance create a uniquely functional but confused and unattractive character area around the station. The aim for this area should be to create an attractive place of arrival where there is a clear division between the public realm and the functional semi-private parking and maintenance areas associated with the station.

A sensitive redevelopment of the Crowe House site along with enhancements to key spaces around station and greater use of the southern side of the station should assist in redefining clear roles for these key areas and creating distinct destination.

### 3.3.3 Sustainability

#### Appropriate land use and densities

Increasing the number of people who work within close proximity of the railway station should be a key principle of the master plan. Higher development densities particularly of employment buildings around the station will be a key mechanism for achieving this particularly with regard to the

need to provide 40,000 sq.m of new office/employment floor space. A key opportunity in this regard will be the redevelopment of Crowe House.

#### Public transport

Support public transport and encourage more sustainable transport choices, particularly by commuters within the North Colchester Growth Area.

#### Resource efficiency

Reduce resource use in building construction and operation by implementing the following measures where possible:

- Designing for passive energy efficiency.
- Minimum 3 star rating in accordance with the Code for Sustainable Homes for residential development.
- Non-residential a minimum of BREEAM 'Very Good'.
- Designing compact building forms that respond to solar orientation.
- Designing to maximise natural ventilation and light.
- Designing for low heat demand.
- Providing a sustainable urban drainage system and/or grey water recycling.
- Re-using existing buildings and infrastructure.
- Creating comfortable and legible pedestrian and cycle routes to and from North Station
- Providing cycle facilities, including adequate cycle parking at the station and all other developments.
- Providing good access for buses and business.





## 4. Consultation

### 4.1 Introduction

The process of creating a master plan for the North Station area has involved an extensive programme of consultation. This programme has sought to engage members of the public, landowners and stakeholders, and councillors at key stages of the visioning process to ensure commitment, buy-in and feedback on the important steps made. This section describes the results of the stakeholder workshop undertaken in April 2009.

A stakeholder workshop was held at the Moot Hall of invited participants drawn from the key stakeholders, including landowners, community representatives, residents groups, and county, borough and parish officers to develop ideas and principles which should shape the future development of the area.

The workshop began with presentations from the consulting team on the appraisal stage of the project and a summary of comparative studies of shared space schemes throughout Europe. The presentations culminated in a review of recent station redevelopment schemes in the UK and the Netherlands.

### 4.2 Key themes

The key themes arising from the workshop groups were the need to:

- Prioritise public transport, pedestrians and cycle routes
- Improve connectivity and permeability
- Improve legibility (particularly the route between the station and town centre)
- Simplify/soften/humanise existing road junctions
- Rationalise parking
- Improvement in the environment at key spaces

The following summarises the key points raised in greater detail and with reference to particular parts of the study area. These were the key points raised and there was not necessarily a consensus on every issue.

### 4.3 Station Area

**Consolidation/rationalisation of the existing parking within the station area.**

- Move parking closer to the station
- Improve the parking environment with landscaping
- New uses in the released space could include residential, business or extension to the park.

**Make better use of the south side of the railway and historic station building**

- Use the south side station for pedestrian/cyclist and drop off area only.

**Improve the quality of the link between the south side of the railway and North Station Road**

Improvements to the north station forecourt.

- Re-working the forecourt area to improve the relationship between the current uses i.e. bus stops, taxi stands, pedestrian/cycle links and access to the car park.

- Make pedestrian improvements and the car sub-servient.

**Improve the link and connectivity between the south side of the station and North Station Road, particularly for pedestrians and cyclists.**

- Possibly with a new bridge

### 4.4 North Station Road & Station Roundabout

**Soften/simplify and "humanise" the road arrangement of the station/Asda roundabouts.**

- Ensure the road capacity remains the same

**North Station Road High Street has a good existing character and only needs "small scale" changes/improvements.**

- Possibly shared surface or "pedestrian feel".
- Highlight this as the route from the station to the town centre

**The area between Essex Hall Roundabout and the railway line should be pedestrian cycle friendly and easy to cross to access the bus stops.**

- Remove railings and provide crossing points near the access point to the south side of the station

**The Albert roundabout should be made more pedestrian/cycle friendly.**



**Enhance and improve the existing pedestrian links east from North Station Road linking through to Castle Park.**

-Create frontage at the Wickes site to improve this section of the street.

**4.5 Turner Rise Retail Park & Cowdray Centre**

**Improve connectivity through the Cowdray Centre with new links and existing links improved. These should link to the footpath/cycle ways that connect to Castle Park and on to the town centre.**

-Additional link across the railway line to the retail park.

**Turner Rise Retail Park could become an 'Eco' business or mixed use centre, possibly an extension of the Cowdray Centre.**

-Concern that the retail parking is currently being used by rail passengers

**4.6 General comments**

**Links along the river are important to pedestrian and cyclists. Lots of students use this route.**

-Myland Parish lacks a centre that provides small "local" shops and community facilities. Could these facilities be accommodated?

**Bus/public transport should have priority access along North Station Road.**

-Cymbeline Meadows and the recreation grounds adjacent to the station should not be built on.

**Continuity of materials across development areas.**

**4.7 Public Consultation**

The consultation on the North Station emerging ideas was carried out during May 2008.

This consultation was carried out at a relatively early stage in the process and presented emerging ideas for the area. The responses of the consultation were used to further guide the master plan proposals.

The emerging ideas were displayed on Friday 8 May 2009 at the Moot Hall, Town Hall, Colchester and on Saturday 9 May at

Colchester Central Library. The exhibition was open from 10am to 4pm on both days and members of the consultant team and council officers were available to answer any questions. The events were advertised by way of press release and by direct invites to stakeholders who had previously expressed an interest.

The exhibition boards and questionnaire were also made available on the Council's website at [www.colchester.gov.uk/ldf](http://www.colchester.gov.uk/ldf). It was requested that comments be submitted by the 15 May 2009 to allow

them to be considered when progressing the document.

A total of 51 responses were received to the consultation. Most of these used the official questionnaire and a few respondents chose to provide more detailed comments by email or letter. A response in a report style format was also received from the Mile End Village Design Statement group.

The following tables summarise the questions with the most yes or no answers. Responses have only been counted as

a 'yes' or 'no' when the respondent has clearly expressed this.

A summary table for all questions can be found in the appendix of this document.

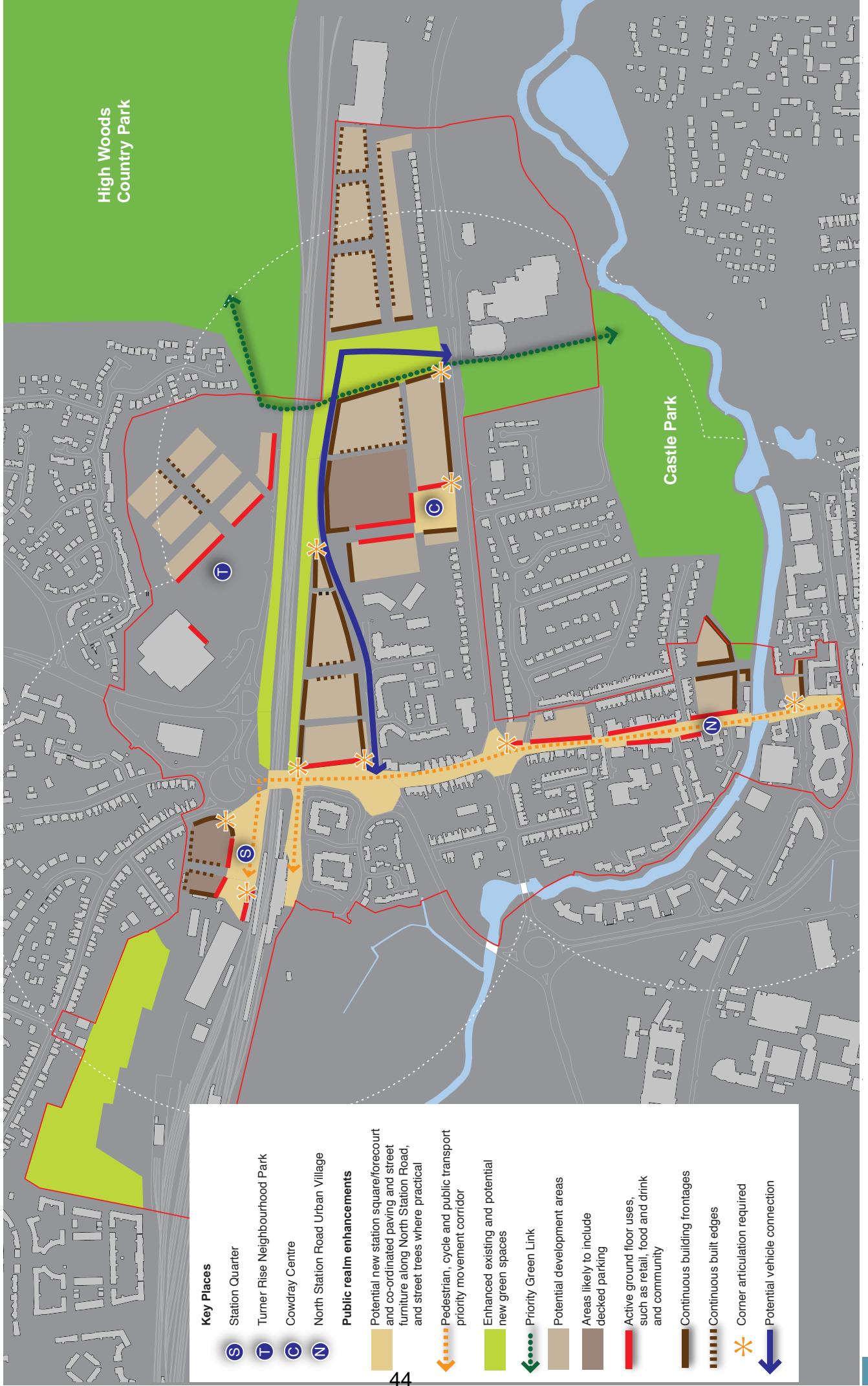
**Most popular ideas**

	Yes	No
Do you support the idea of introducing street trees where practical along the street?	37	0
Do you support the provision of start-up units or units for smaller businesses in this area?	33	3
Do you support the provision of improved walking and cycling 'green links' through this area? Are the links in the correct places?	33	1
Do you agree that it should be a priority to create a 'green link' between Castle Park and High Woods Country Park?	31	2
Do you agree with the provision of more direct crossings for pedestrians and cyclists?	29	6
Do you support the idea of allowing cafes and restaurants to temporarily put out tables and chairs to help enliven the social life of the street?	29	4
Do you agree that paving should seek to unite the spaces between buildings, helping to slow traffic speeds and create a better environment?	27	2
Do you agree that some on-street parking should be maintained to assist local businesses?	26	7
Do you agree with the objective of slowing traffic speed to improve safer use of the area by pedestrians and cyclists?	24	4
Do you support an improved road link towards to the station?	24	3

**Least popular ideas**

	Yes	No
Do you prefer the idea of keeping the current roundabout layouts but seeking to include bus priority measures?	13	17
Do you support bus priority measures at North Station given that this will reduce road space available to cars?	19	15
Do you support the idea of replacing the roundabouts with junctions to give maximum benefits to pedestrians, cyclists and buses whilst maintaining acceptable traffic flows?	12	14
Do you agree that Turner Rise in the longer term could be a good place for a new neighbourhood of family housing?	9	13
Do you agree with the widening of footpaths and reduction of road widths to minimum levels to improve pedestrian mobility?	20	11
Do you agree that it is important to create new streets with some on-street parking, but not overly dominated by parked cars?	14	10
Do you support more active uses at the Station such as offices, shops, cafes or restaurants?	22	9
Do you agree that promoting public transport, walking and cycling is the only realistic way to tackle congestion and emissions in the area? Are there any other ways of addressing the problems of the North Station roundabout?	11	9
Do you agree that the levels of parking at the station should be maintained in the short-term? Do you support a phased reduction in station parking after the opening of the northern Park and Ride site?	11	8
Do you agree that some on-street parking should be maintained to assist local businesses?	26	7





High Woods  
Country Park

Castle Park

**Key Places**

- S** Station Quarter
- T** Turner Rise Neighbourhood Park
- C** Cowdray Centre
- N** North Station Road Urban Village

**Public realm enhancements**

Potential new station square/forecourt and co-ordinated paving and street furniture along North Station Road, and street trees where practical

Enhanced existing and potential new green spaces

Potential development areas

Areas likely to include decked parking

Active ground floor uses, such as retail, food and drink and community

Continuous building frontages

Continuous built edges

Corner articulation required

Potential vehicle connection

## 5. Masterplan parameters

### 5.1 Introduction

Once adopted the framework will be used by the council to guide future development and to direct consideration of planning applications. The masterplan parameters are the key plans that all future developers of the site should adhere to. They set out the essential urban design strategy elements of the master plan and the key elements of urban form, open space, movement strategy and land use that developers must provide. However, given that development will take place over several years it is likely that some variations will need to be made to this document to reflect changing circumstances or guidance. Therefore, a degree of flexibility should be maintained to accommodate any necessary changes. Any applications that vary from the approved master plan will be assessed on their individual merits giving consideration for the reasons for any variations.

The urban form should create a strong sense of place and require a high quality of development, which responds to the existing site characteristics. Urban design considerations have driven the overall structure of the master plan and the rationale for these features as shown in the master plan are set out below.

### 5.2 Development parameters

Key priorities to be considered are:

- A hierarchy of streets and spaces, which encourage low speeds (20mph, where appropriate) and continuous flow through the area.
- Buildings should face the street and have clear pedestrian entrances from the street.
- New and enhanced green spaces

including a possible green link between Castle Park and High Woods Country Park.

- New streets to include on-street parking, where appropriate.
- New development to either meet or exceed the highest standards of resource efficiency at the time of construction (currently Code for Sustainable Homes Level 3, or BREEAM Very Good.
- A distinct character to new development appropriate to the buildings' function and location within the area.
- An enhanced public realm from the station along North Station Road to North Hill, with a co-ordinated palette of tonal materials, street furniture and lighting to highlight the importance of this key north-south street.
- The provision of active ground floor uses such as cafes, restaurants, local and convenience retailing and community facilities to reinforce the legibility of key places.
- Parking for large trip-generating uses such as the station, the Asda superstore and new retail/leisure developments at the Cowdray Centre could be decked and hidden by new development.



### 5.3 Movement parameters

Highway capacity through the area is principally controlled by the limited space available under the railway bridge. Therefore, measures to increase travel choices by public transport, cycling and walking need to be prioritised.

Key priorities to be considered are:

- Provision of bus priority measures to link up with the proposed Northern Transit Corridor.
- Relocation of pedestrian and cycle crossings onto direct desire lines to encourage walking and cycling.
- An enhanced station forecourt to improve accessibility to public transport and taxis.
- Increased secure cycle parking provision at the station.
- Streets and spaces which encourage low speeds (20mph, where appropriate) and continuous flow.
- Provision of good access for the mobility impaired.
- Safeguard land under the railway for a possible future vehicular link between Cowdray Centre and Turner Rise.
- Improve public access to the station building and car parks, whilst securing access to associated railway operational functions.







## 6. Defining places

The masterplan has defined four inter-related character areas, which will form the basis for guiding the future development of enhanced places within the framework area. These places are:

- Station Gateway
- North Station Road Urban Village
- Cowdray Centre
- Turner Rise

The following section provides guidance for development proposals and public realm works for each of the character areas.



## 6.1 Station Gateway

The principal aspiration for the station gateway is to develop a welcoming “front door” to the town of Colchester at the principal rail station of the town. The key objectives are to improve the public realm, and set down guidance for the redevelopment of the Crowe House site to deliver a mixed-use, office based development.

The principal urban design objectives are to:

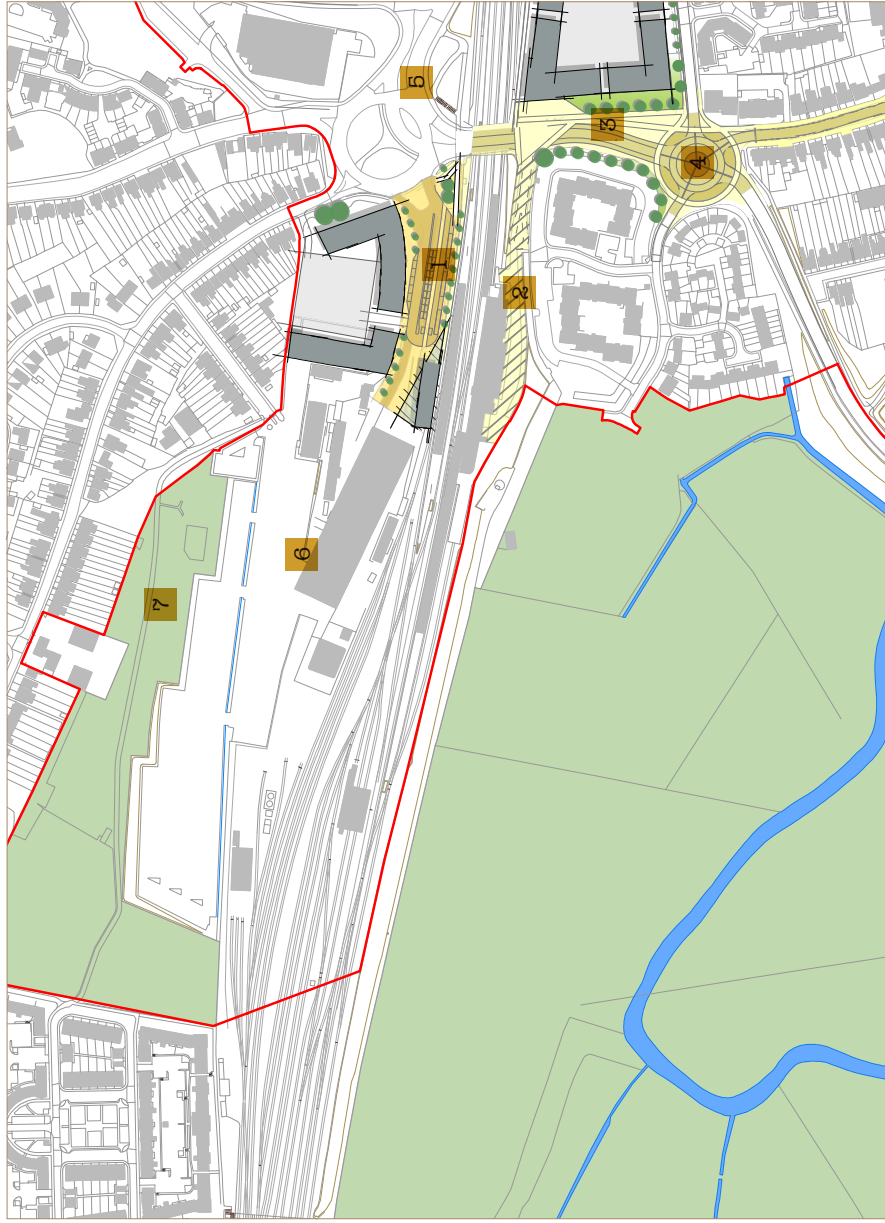
- Create a positive sense of arrival at the station, providing a quality public transport interchange as part of the Station Gateway, improving the accessibility and function of the station.
- Improve accessibility for walking, cycling, taxis and public transport across and between the station/Asda and Essex Hall roundabouts.
- Create a shared space piazza on the south side of the station with a direct pedestrian crossing provided at the junction with Station Way, or provide a new pedestrian/cycle bridge over Station Way.
- Develop a new business quarter to meet part of the 40 000sq.m need identified in the council’s Core Strategy.
- Rationalise or reduce parking to match new demand following the opening of a northern park & ride site, to assist modal shift.
- Bus priority measures on Station Way, including the potential for enhanced stops on-street and the provision of new bus shelters.
- Redeveloping Crowe House could create a positive landmark building with active uses on the ground-floor opening onto a sunny, south-facing terrace.

- Improve signing and information at the station to help orientate visitors to the town. The Station Gateway is made up of five elements:

- Station Forecourt and Crowe House
- Station Piazza
- Station Way
- Essex Hall junction
- Station/Asda junction

Station Forecourt and Station Piazza are self-contained spaces directly related to the station building. Station Way, Essex Hall Junction and the Station Asda junction play a wider role than simply serving the station, and proposals in these areas will need to identify the likely impacts on the wider movement network within Colchester.

Station Forecourt



Green line with dots: Pedestrian and cycle route

Red line with dots: Primary footfall

1 Station Forecourt

2 Station Piazza

3 Station Way

4 Essex Hall junction

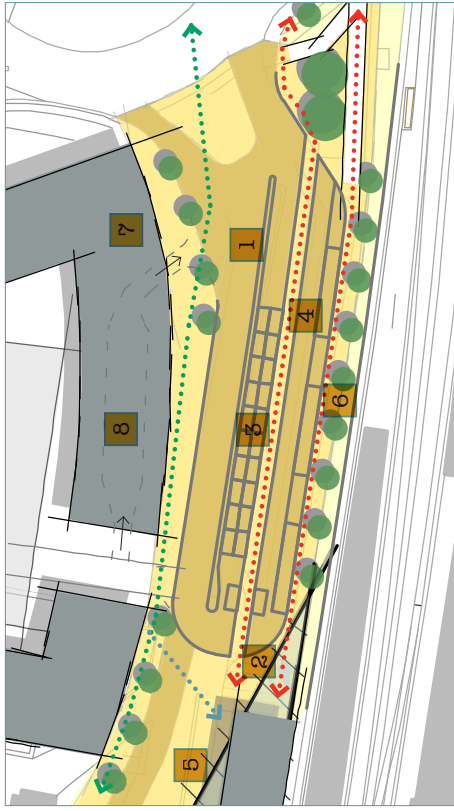
5 Station Asda junction

6 Station car park

7 Bergholt Road Recreation Ground



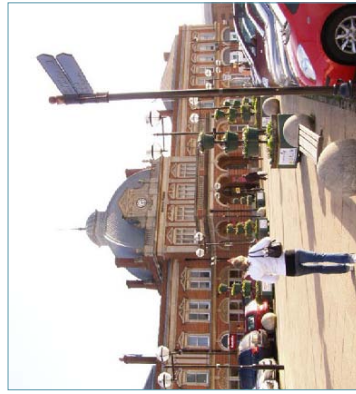
Station Forecourt



50 Pedestrian and cycle route

Primary footfall

- 1 Existing forecourt re-surfaced using large element paving stones for pedestrian areas and small element imprinted macadam for vehicular areas.
- 2 Orientation space for passengers exiting the station could be enhanced by a glazed canopy shelter structure to increase passenger comfort
- 3 Relocated taxi stands
- 4 Clear and direct pedestrian route through the station forecourt
- 5 Area to include provision of cycle storage
- 6 Existing bus stops enhanced with glazed shelter structure.
- 7 New mixed-use office building defining northern edge of forecourt including active uses at ground-floor such as cafes and possibly a small convenience store
- 8 Undercroft station drop-off, pick-up point, taking advantage of the rise in levels and maximising the station forecourt space



A clear and direct pedestrian route through a station forecourt

## 6.1 Station Gateway

### Station Forecourt and Crowe House

The station forecourt needs to become not only an efficient transition point between modes of transport, but also needs to be seen as a public square, a new public space in its own right within the town.

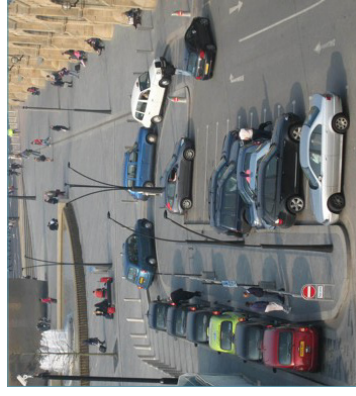
Future redevelopment at Crowe House will need to demonstrate its contribution to enriching and enlivening the station forecourt. The architecture of the building will provide the most significant opportunity for the delivery of a welcoming “front door” to the town, providing the principal landmark to define the Station Gateway.



Impression of the new forecourt for illustrative purposes only

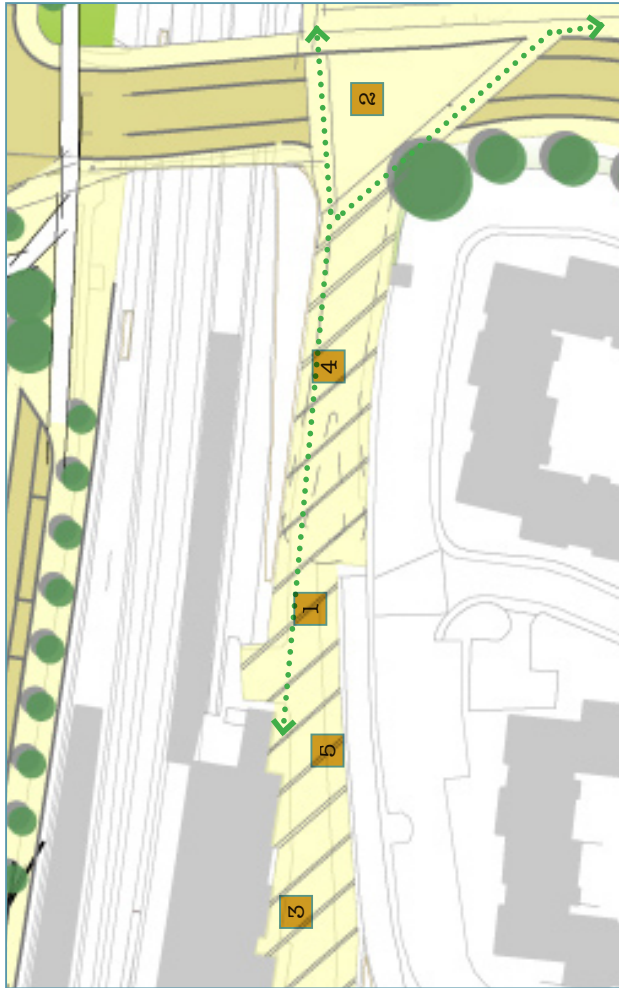


Covered cycle stands



A well organised taxi-rank

Station Piazza



Impression of the new forecourt for illustrative purposes only



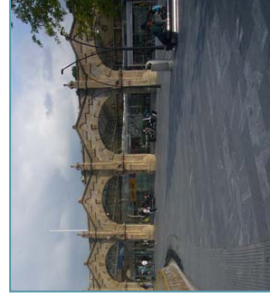
➤ Pedestrian and cycle route

➤ Primary footfall

- 1 New paved piazza to act as a shared space which displays clear visual priority to pedestrians. The paving design should combine the use of both large and small element paving
- 2 Paving design carried across the junction with Station Way creating a clear visual dominance of the primacy of the route to and from the station
- 3 Paving design should seek to have a relationship to key elements of the architectural facade of the station building. Parking could be relocated to the north side.
- 4 Taxi pick up and drop off only (no waiting) could be provided if junction becomes signal controlled for all way working
- 5 Area to include provision for increased cycle storage

### Station Piazza

Create a shared space piazza on the south side of the station with a direct pedestrian crossing provided at the junction with Station Way. Vehicular access would be maintained.



High quality uniform paving material emphasises the historic facade a station



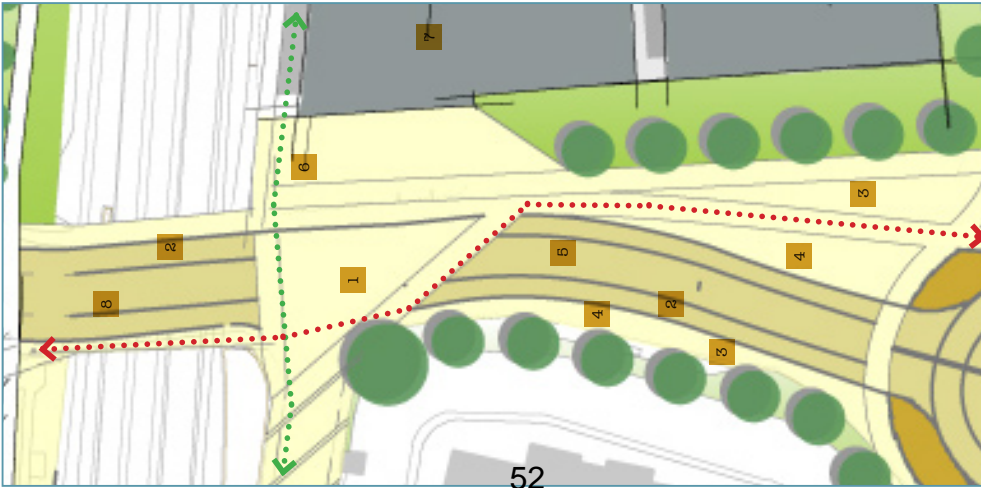
Using high quality paving materials signifies to the user the importance of the approach to the station



Increased cycle parking



Station Way

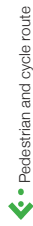


- Pedestrian and cycle route
- Primary footfall

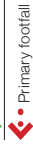
### Station Way

Enhancements to this key thoroughfare with an emphasis on a new paving design that unifies the space and improves the situation for pedestrians in particular.

Bus priority measures on Station Way, including the potential for enhanced stops on-street and the provision of new bus shelters.



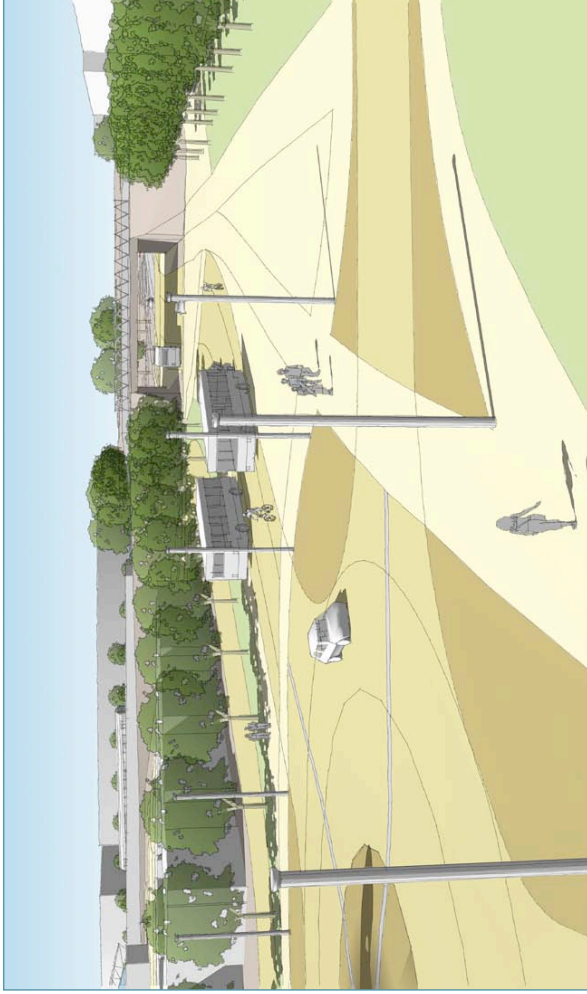
Pedestrian and cycle route



Primary footfall

- 1** Paving design carried across the junction with Station Piazza creating a clear visual dominance of the primacy of the route to and from the station
- 2** Provision of bus lanes north and south bound along Station Way (subject to capacity testing by Essex County Council)
- 3** Widened footpaths to encourage walking and improved pedestrian crossings across Station Way on desire lines
- 4** Provision of glazed bus shelters to aid passenger comfort
- 5** Small element paving or imprinted macadam used for highway surfacing to change the visual perspective of the street to drivers
- 6** New cycle and footpath connection to and from Cowdray Centre
- 7** New building visible from Station Piazza to aid legibility of the route to the town centre (subject to underground services check)
- 8** Improve lighting levels under the rail bridge to remove the impression of a "black hole"

Indicative view looking north along Station Way for illustrative purposes only



"See-through" bus shelters help to maintain clear sight-lines for pedestrians.

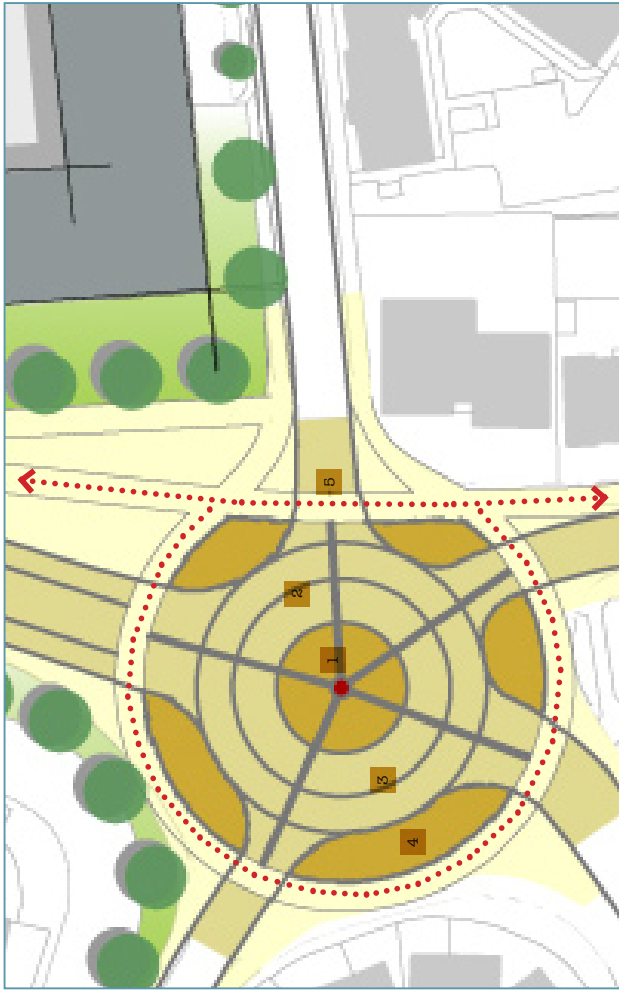


Different materials used in the carriageway signal a different type of space to drivers.



Lighting as art work used to improve the experience of using an underpass.

Essex Hall junction



Green diamond: Pedestrian and cycle route

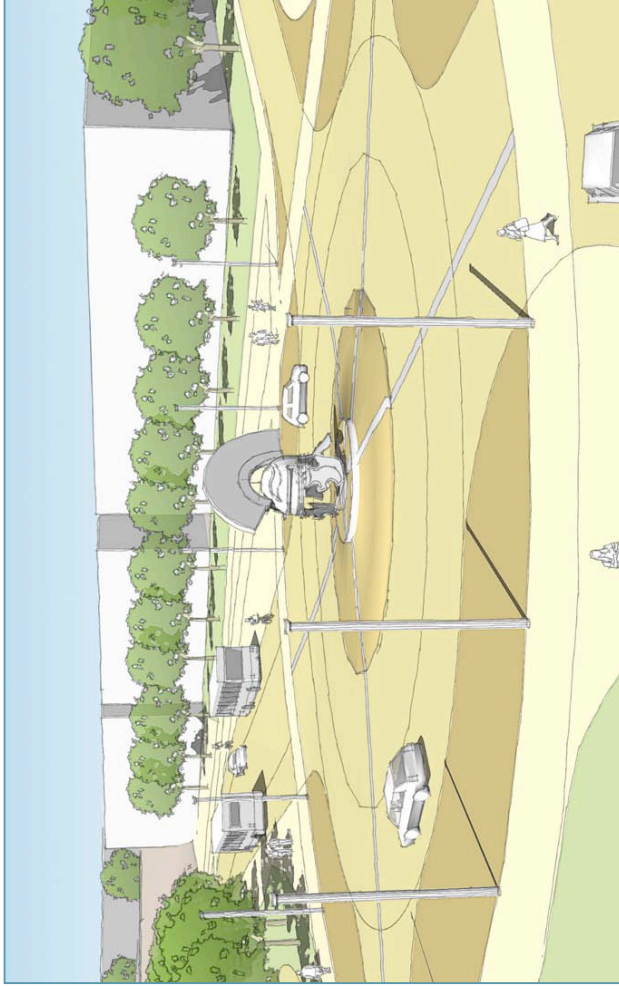
Red diamond: Primary footfall

- 1 Possible public art feature sculpture
- 2 Roundabout reduced in scale
- 3 Vehicle space reduced to minimum standards, and surface materials changed to reduce the spatial dominance of the roadspace
- 4 Rollover kerb edge to overrun areas to allow turning by very large vehicles
- 5 Footpath re-aligned to follow visual desire line along North Station Road
- 6 Improved pedestrian crossing facilities

### Essex Hall junction

A reduction in the scale of the roundabout with vehicle space reduced to minimum standards providing more space for pedestrians and cyclists.

Impression of the revised junction for illustrative purposes only



Sharing the space leads to slower speeds and safer crossings.



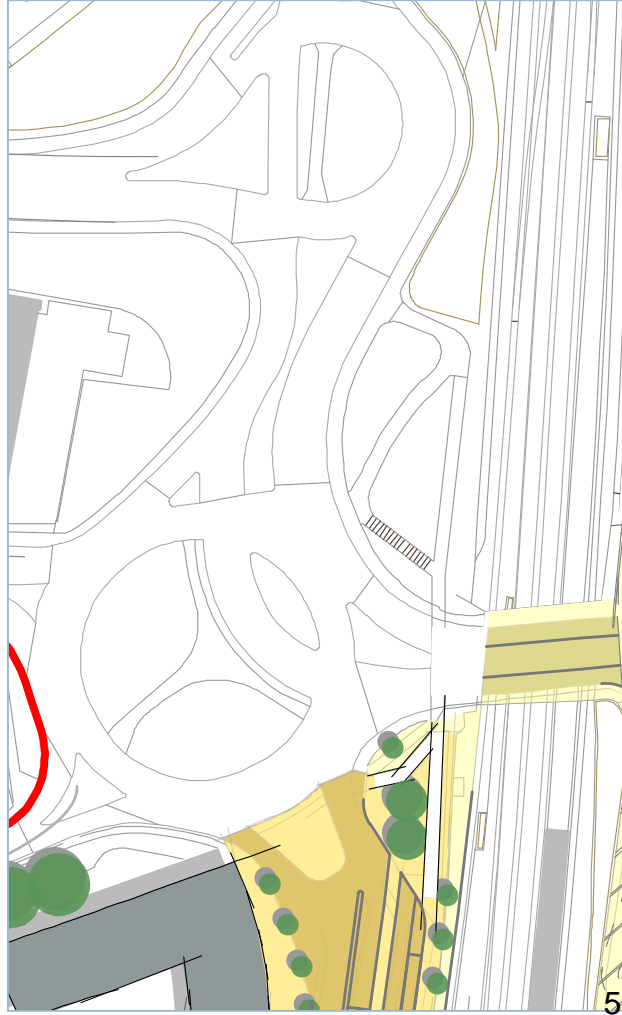
Seek to unite key spaces rather than segregate them into roads and footpaths.



Consistent surfacing helps to reinforce pedestrian priority.

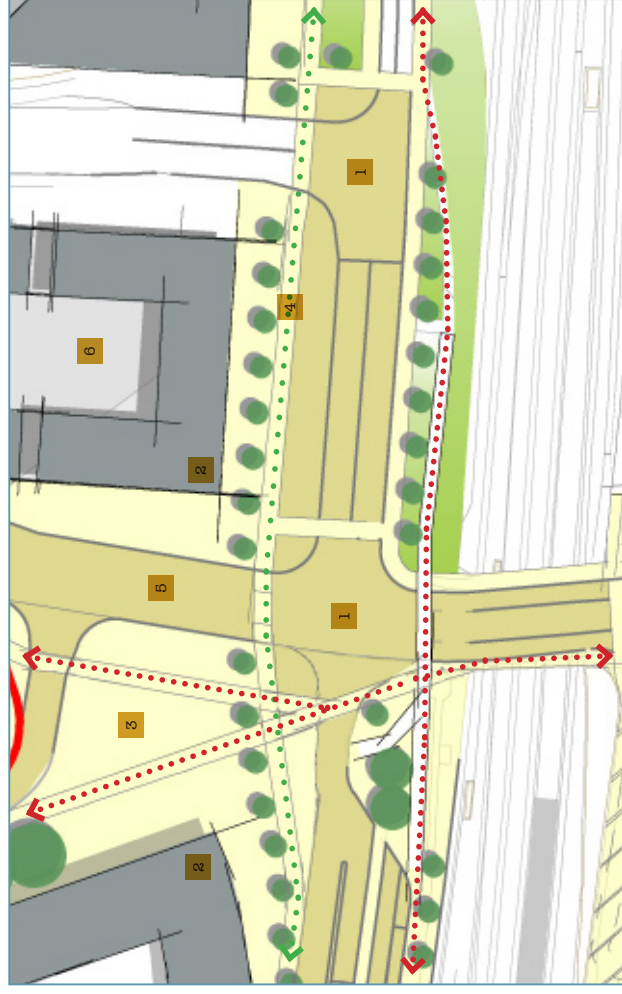


Station/Asda junction existing layout



54

Station/Asda junction possible alternative



**Station/Asda junction (possible alternative)**

Improve accessibility for walking, cycling, taxis and public transport across and between the station/Asda and Essex Hall roundabouts.

● Pedestrian and cycle route

◀ Primary footfall

- 1 Replacement of roundabouts by signal controlled junctions with pedestrian/cycle phasing to promote better pedestrian and cycle access
- 2 Corner building landmark opportunity
- 3 New square acting as the natural funnel for pedestrian movements from Mile End Road and Bergholt Road under the railway bridge
- 4 New cycle and footpath connection, to and from Station, and Turner Rise/High Woods Country Park
- 5 Bus lanes provided north and southbound to link to Bruff Close. This could be combined with transporter controls at the station junction to provide bus priority at peak times
- 6 Any redevelopment of the storage company site must create a strong street edge to the street, improving the quality of space and contributing to a legible urban identity at this key gateway



Cleaner greener vehicles encourage bus use.



Employment opportunities.



Slowing vehicular speed encourages cycling.



## 6.2 North Station Road Urban Village

The principal aspiration for North Station Road is to support and enhance the vibrancy of this walkable urban village, which is the focus for the day to day needs of its immediate community, but also offers opportunities for those passing to and from the town centre and the station.

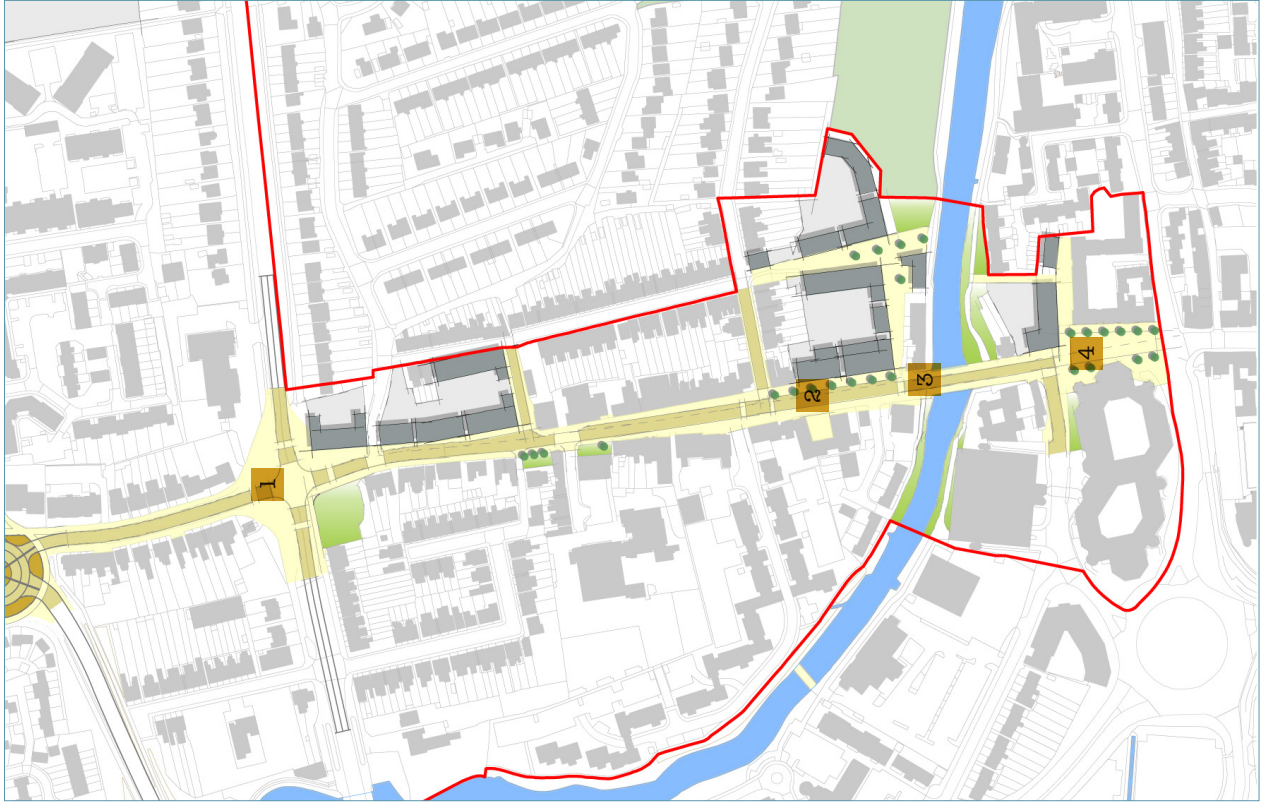
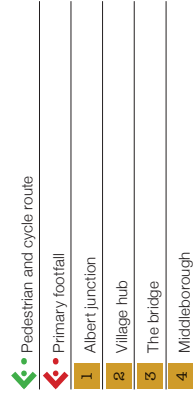
The principal urban design objectives along North Station Road are to:

- Provide bus priority measures which make North Station Road part of the North Transit Corridor.
- Replace the Albert roundabout with a junction to create direct crossings for pedestrians and cyclists.
- Widen footpaths by reducing carriageway to minimum widths to improve pedestrian mobility and provide temporary space for cafe tables, florists etc, to attract passing trade.
- Retain on-street parking to assist passing trade opportunities for local shops.
- Complete the riverside footpath on the north side of the bridge.
- Introduce street trees to help disguise poor buildings, emphasise good spaces and provide a link to the passing of the seasons.
- Ensure that any future redevelopment creates a positive edge to the street with main accesses from the street.
- Reconfigure the Middleborough “gyratory” to create a positive entrance to the street from North Hill.

- Introduce a co-ordinated suite of street furniture (bollards, litter bins, seats and lighting) to help reinforce the identity of the street and to co-ordinate with the Town Centre street furniture.
- Use a consistent palette of tonal paving materials to help unify the appearance of the street.

The street is influenced by four sub spaces

- Albert junction
- Village Hub
- The bridge
- Middleborough



North Station Road (north)

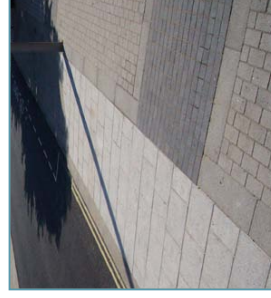


- Pedestrian and cycle route
- Primary footfall
- 1** Narrow carriageway to allow widening of footpath. Maintain on-street parking on west side and retain bus only lane southbound
- 2** Replace roundabout with signal controlled junction to allow direct pedestrian crossing on north-south and east-west pedestrian desire lines
- 3** Improve green space around War Memorial
- 4** Future redevelopment must provide a strong corner building
- 5** Junction to Serpentine Way should be reconfigured to remove the 'bell mouth', physically and visually creating pedestrian priority in a north-south direction
- 6** Future redevelopment must provide a strong street edge facing North Station Road
- 7** Future redevelopment must provide a strong street edge facing Albert Road
- 8** Pocket park including rest stop seating with trees to define missing built edge to street
- 9** Create visual pinch point outside Globe Hotel to reinforce quality marker building and slow traffic outside exit from primary school
- 10** Narrow carriageway to minimum standard. Provide short stay on-street parking to east side

Impression of the revised junction for illustrative purposes only



Tonal paving of different sizes helps to unify streets which have a variety of building styles and spatial functions.

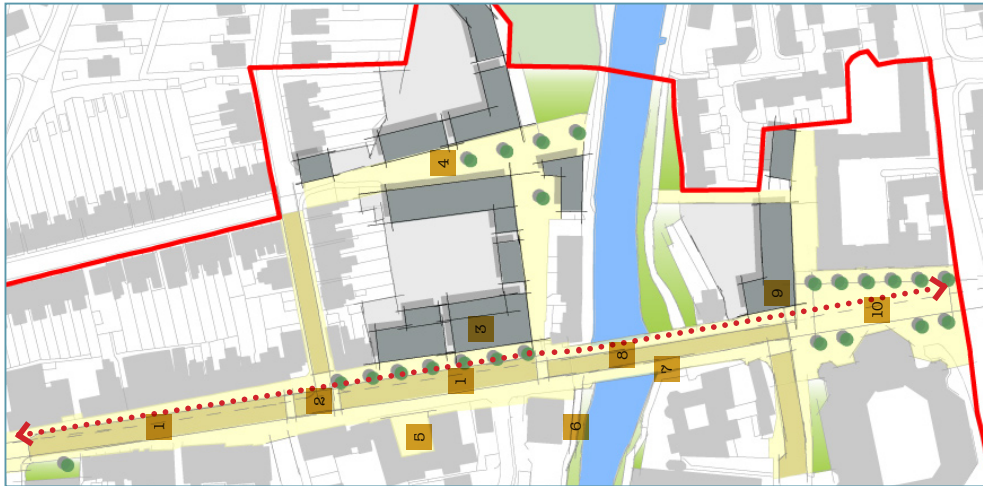


A small amount of increased space goes a long way to improving the pedestrians' impression of their immediate environment.



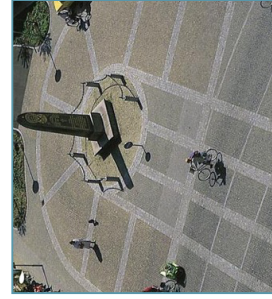
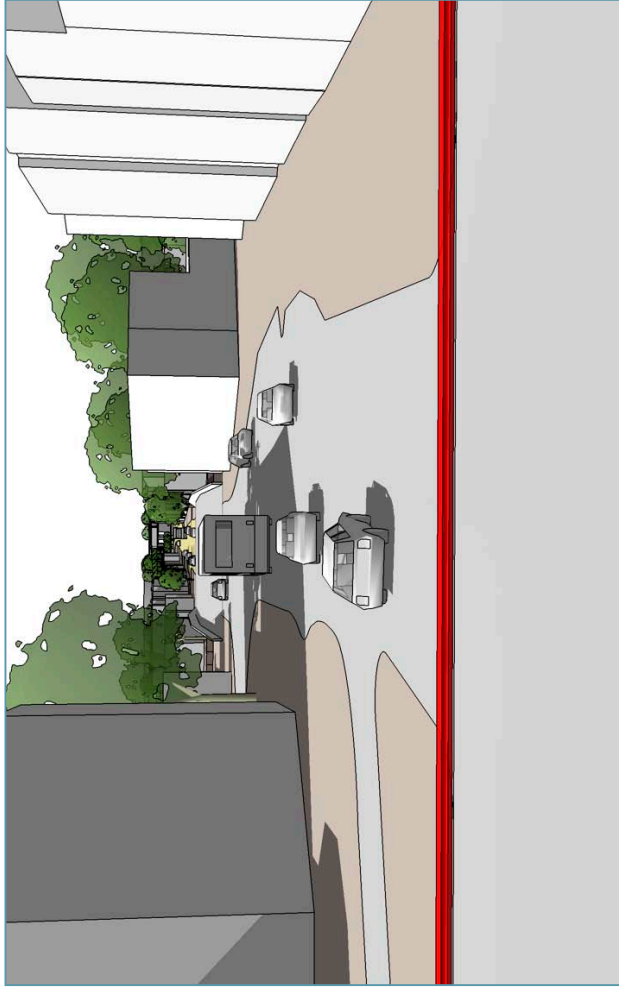
Footpaths should be comfortable to walk on and use high quality materials to reflect the importance of the route.

North Station Road (south)



- Pedestrian and cycle route
- Primary footprint
- 1** Narrow carriageway to allow widening of footpath. Maintain short stay on-street parking on east side to help support local businesses
- 2** Junction with Causton Road and Victoria Chase should be reconfigured to remove the 'bell mouth', physically and visually maintaining pedestrian priority in a north-south direction
- 3** Potential future redevelopment must provide a strong street edge facing North Station Road and define a built edge continuation to Albert Street
- 4** Potential future redevelopment of Digby and Fairfax Houses must define a built edge continuation to Albert Street linking through to the riverside walk
- 5** Create a simple cobbled square to reinforce the quality of the existing building and explore the potential to provide a more active/social use of the space
- 6** Seek to provide missing pedestrian link to riverside walkway (north side)
- 7** Explore the feasibility of a direct connection to the bridge crossing from the riverside walkway (south side)
- 8** Widen footpaths across the bridge to improve the quality of this transitional point along the street
- 9** Future redevelopment must provide a strong corner building given the prominence of this corner when viewed from North Hill
- 10** Reconfigure Middleborough and change surface materials to create a space as a high quality entrance from North Hill

Impression of the revised junction for illustrative purposes only



Seek to unite key spaces rather than segregate them into roads and footpaths.



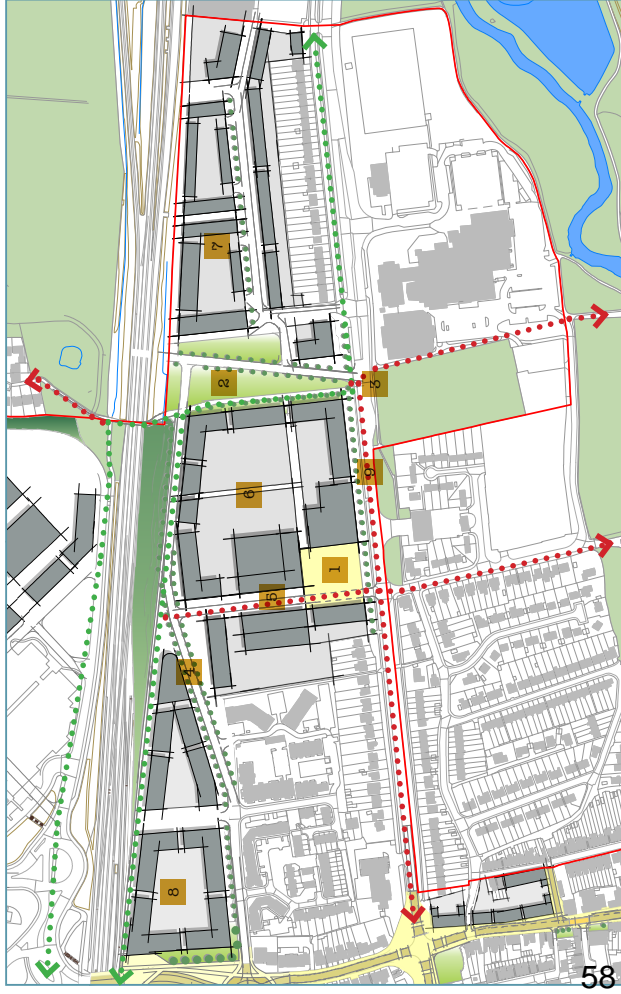
On-street parking assists passing trade for local shops.



Street trees can help to humanise streets and provide a link to the seasons.



Cowdray Centre



58

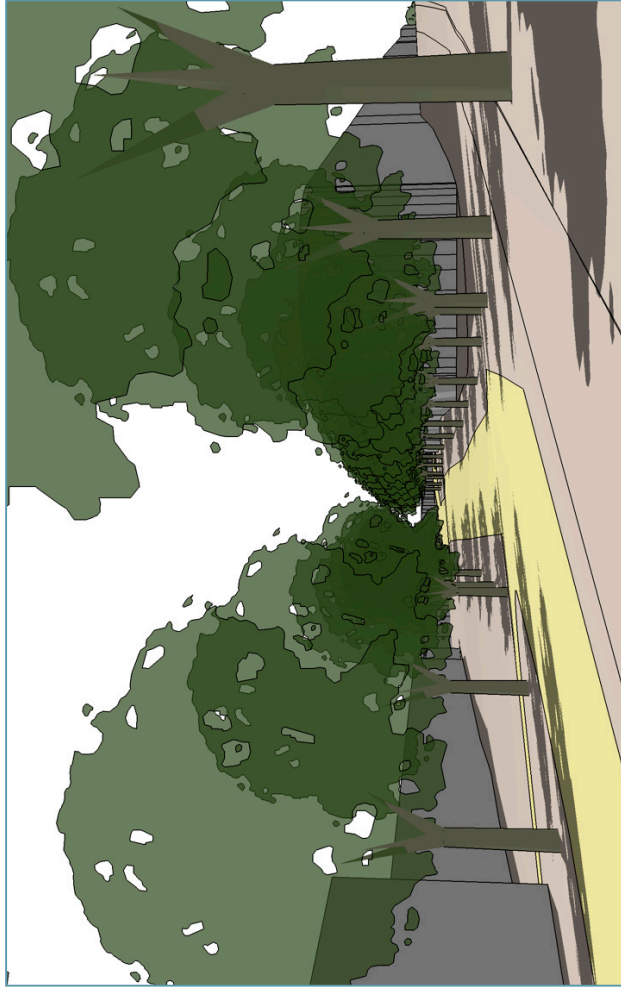
● Pedestrian and cycle route

◆ Primary footfall

- 1 Cowdray Square opening onto Cowdray Avenue to provide a setting for new community, retail and leisure uses
- 2 Cowdray Green acting as a linking green space between Castle Park and High Woods Country Park, including provision of a direct approach to an enhanced pedestrian subway
- 3 Relocated junction with signal controlled access to and from the Leisure Centre and Castle Park
- 4 Clarendon Boulevard creates a new linking street between Essex Hall and Cowdray Avenue providing a high quality and accessible business address

- 5 Potential exists for a mixed-use retail and commercial street linking between the proposed square and boulevard
- 6 Customer and business parking located in a parking court linked to the square
- 7 Location for business incubation units
- 8 Future redevelopment of this area would be suitable for office/business uses (subject to underground services check) given good proximity to rail and bus routes
- 9 Redevelopment provides the opportunity to recreate a strong street tree line along this section of Cowdray Avenue

Impression of proposed Clarendon Boulevard for illustrative purposes only



### 6.3 Cowdray Centre

Provide a new business and employment-focused development supported by local retail and leisure activities, such as a new hotel associated with a new square on Cowdray Avenue.

Provide a positive green link between Castle Park and High Woods Country Park.



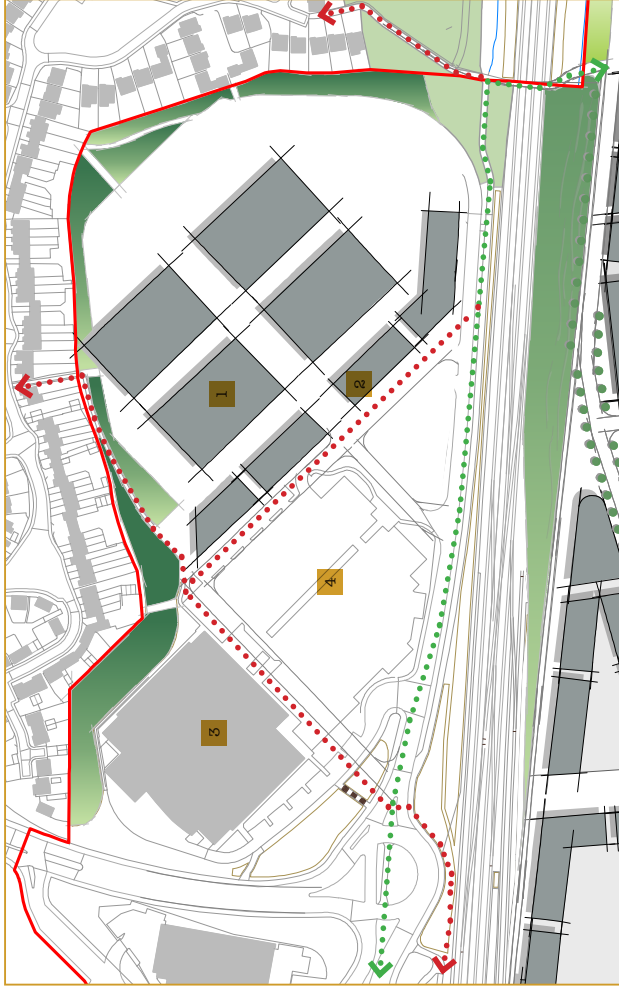
A mixed-use retail office and leisure development which should be encouraged around Cowdray Square



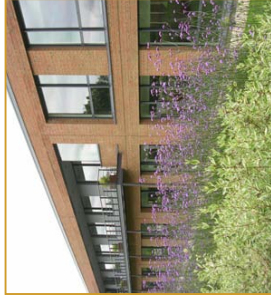
Business incubation units are designed to create a supportive environment for business to develop and succeed, helping local job creation

## 6.4 Turner Rise

Create a remodelled commercial development with a mix of small and larger units.



- Pedestrian and cycle route
- Primary footfall
- 1** Employment and business use within large flexible units. Suitable for accommodating a variety of business units
- 2** Mixed use buildings with ground floor retail reduce the impact of large warehouse units behind
- 3** Existing Asda superstore
- 4** Existing Asda superstore car-parking is retained



Landscaping should be incorporated into the design of the employment area

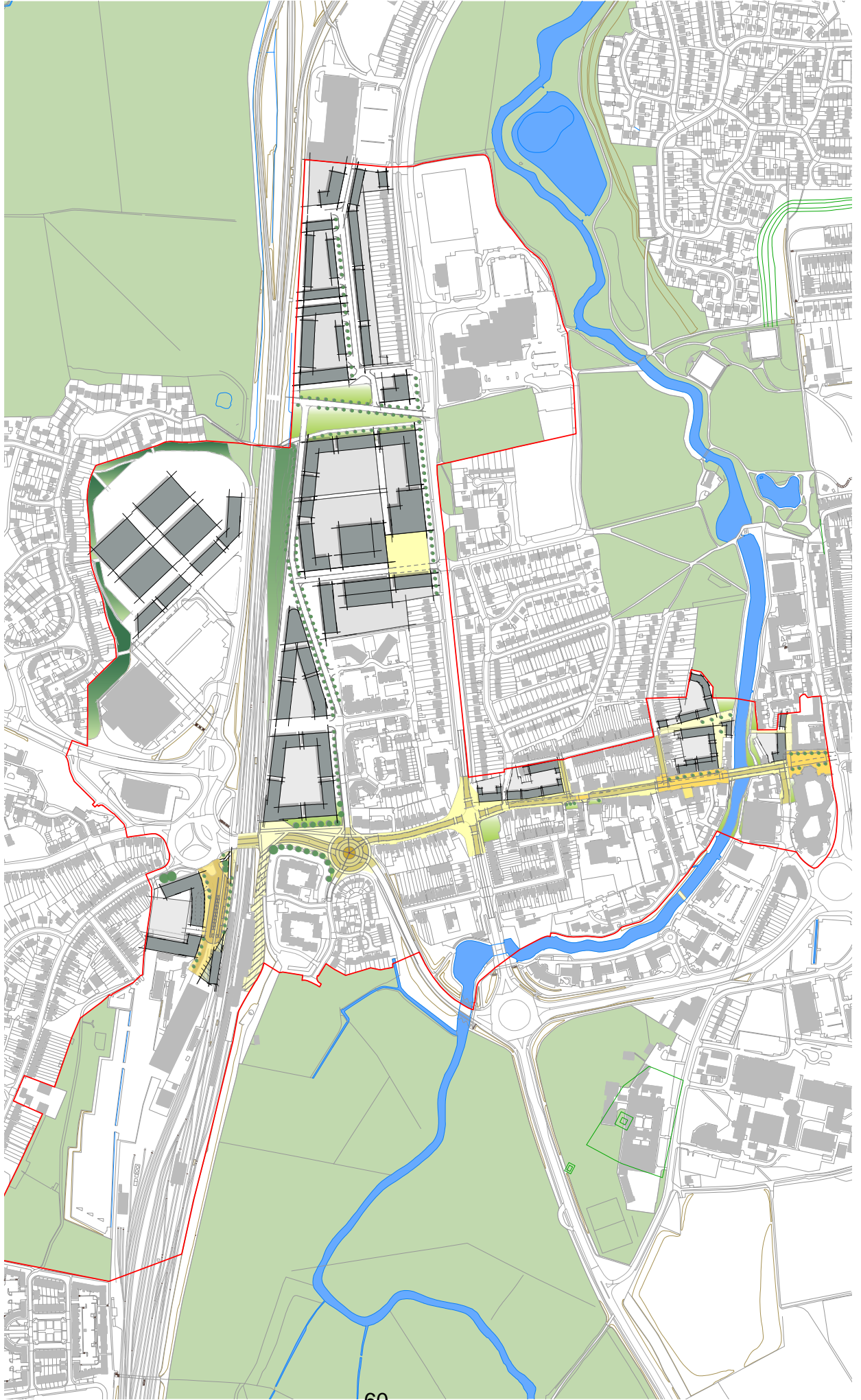


The design of new employment units should be a key consideration

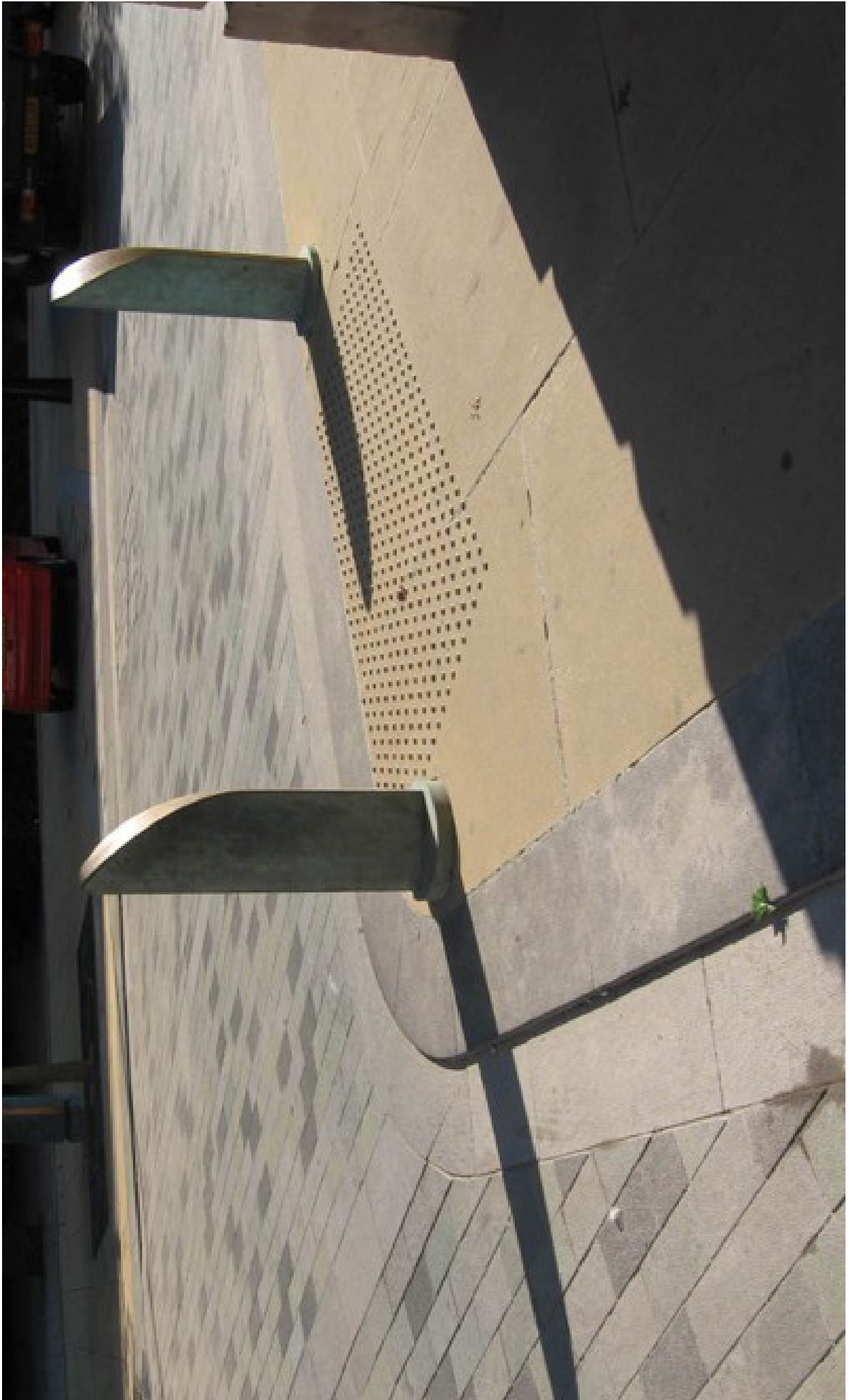


Starter units could be incorporated into the employment units









## 7. Detailing the place

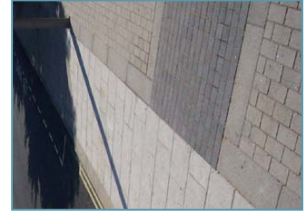
This section looks at the different elements that make up the public realm and seeks to set a performance specification that future detail design proposals should consider at the outset.

## 7.1 Paving materials

Paving, both within the street and around the station must provide an even and comfortable walking surface. Larger size paving slabs should be used for footpaths. Smooth surfaces, rather than overly textured surfaces should be used as these are more comfortable for walking on, and are also easier for those pushing prams, and for users of wheelchairs and mobility scooters.

A palette of consistent paving materials should be used from the station along North Station Road to clearly define the importance of this route. Paving should be of neutral tones and uniform in its application, with visual variety provided by the bonded pattern of different paving unit sizes. This is particularly important in defining the character of North Station Road as the principal route between the town centre and the station. This consistency of approach will help to unify the public realm.

Heavily trafficked areas, and areas where large vehicles, such as buses, are likely to need to perform turning manoeuvres, such as at junctions, roundabouts or the station forecourt, should be surfaced in macadam. A variety of imprinted macadam are available which avoid the need to use standard blacktop. An imprinted sett, or small paver unit would be most appropriate. Imprinted macadam are particular relevant where raised tables and overrun areas are required, as they can withstand the wear from vehicles better than clay or concrete pavers. Coloured macadam should be avoided. Less heavily trafficked areas and on-street parking can be successfully surfaced using small element pavers.



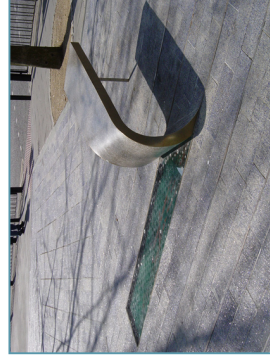
## 7.2 Street furniture

Street furniture should be co-ordinated and consistent from the station along North Station Road. The overall approach should be one of restraint, seeking to reduce to the absolute minimum the introduction of elements which might compromise ease of pedestrian movement, or the visual integrity of the street as a whole.

Litter bins should be placed close to the points where people are likely to be stationary for temporary periods, such as at pedestrian crossings as this is the place that litter is often dropped, and close to public seating. Bins should also be placed close to convenience stores, and fast food restaurants.

Bench type seats should be placed along the street to provide rest stops, which are particularly welcomed by the elderly and less able bodied, particularly when carrying a

significant number of shopping bags, which could be expected given the location of local shops and the Asda superstore. Seats with backs should only be placed in locations where it is not possible for someone sitting on the seat to be approached directly from behind. Timber seats should in general be avoided in high use urban situations. If timber is used for seating then it will be necessary to make sure that vulnerable edges are protected from vandalism, particularly from people using skateboards or bikes running along the edges of the seat.





### 7.3 Street Lighting & CCTV

Street lighting falls into two categories; functional and aesthetic. Functional lighting needs to provide a level of background lighting which provides safe movement at night for pedestrians, cyclists and drivers. Lighting should ideally be unobtrusive during daylight hours, and wherever practical the first choice should be illumination off-building. In general, where this is not possible lighting columns should be placed as close to the building face as possible to visually reduce the impact within the overall street. Where this is not possible and columns are placed in more visually obtrusive situations they should be used to attach directional and informational signing to reduce the incidence of free-standing columns.

Aesthetic lighting would generally be used as part of place-making to re-inforce the identity of key spaces. Its role is additional to the

functional lighting requirement. Locations such as the Station forecourt and piazza, as well as the Essex Hall junction, Middleborough and the bridge over the River Colne should be considered for inclusion of aesthetic lighting within the detailed redesign for these spaces.

#### CCTV

The location of CCTV cameras is dictated by the need to provide the best possible coverage of the street. Similarly to street lighting, in the first instance CCTV cameras should be placed on buildings. When this is not feasible opportunity should be taken to attach directional and informational signing to reduce the incidence of free-standing columns within the streetscene.



### 7.4 Directional signing

The primary requirement for directional signing is the need for it to be clear and legible to the pedestrian. To encourage walking the distance to key places such as the station and the town centre should be expressed in terms of minutes taken, rather than distance as this relates more directly to the decisions people make as to what constitutes a reasonable distance to walk. Directional signing needs to be sited at points where members of the public are likely to need to make key decisions, such as immediately upon exiting the north and south sides of the station, before the pedestrian bridge over station way, at the junction of station piazza and station way, at the Essex Hall and Albert junctions, at the river crossing, and at the junction with North Hill. At all of these locations the direction to the town centre and the station should be signed. At different points along North Station Road other attractions will

also need signing, such as Asda, the Leisure Centre, High Woods Country Park, local shops, Riverside Walk, and Castle Park. If a plan is used as part of the directional signing it is vital that it is relevant to someone who is completely unfamiliar with the place. Consideration should be given to presenting the information organised in the direction a person is looking, rather than in the convention of north at the top of the plan, as many find that approach much easier to understand. All plans must have a "you are here" nomenclature. A symbol of a landmark, such as Jumbo the water tower could be used to mark the town centre, as this is a significant building that can be seen from the station, and along North Station Road, which will help to confirm to the unfamiliar that they are heading in the right direction.



## 7.5 Street trees

The planting of trees within the street scene is very important as trees represent a scale when mature comparable to individual buildings.

Trees have an important role not only in providing a link to the seasons, but also through the ability to help improve air quality and mitigate wind speed.

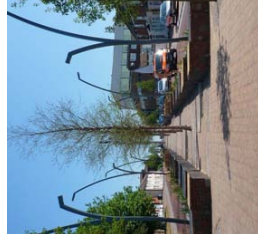
At the Station Gateway, potential redevelopment of the Crowe House site would afford the opportunity for trees to be planted to define, along with the building, the northern edge of the forecourt. This would also improve the attractiveness of the space between the trees and the building to be used for active uses, such as a café, which could then have outside seating to help visually enrich the area.

Along North Station Road street trees should be used to define key spaces, such as outside the shops, and at Middleborough. At other points along the street, trees could be used to help reduce the impact of sections of the

street with particularly poor building facades, thereby helping to reinforce the quality building frontages that exist along the street. Street trees should also be used to sub-divide runs of on street parking. Opportunity also exists to include tree planting in association with a couple of small pocket parks near the junction with John Harper Street.

At Cowdray Centre two specific opportunities exist to plant street trees; along the proposed Clarendon Boulevard and Cowdray Avenue.

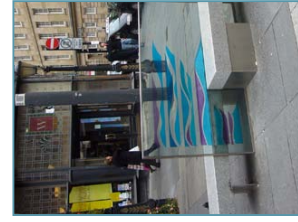
As a new section of street Clarendon Boulevard must be designed from the outset to deliver a repeated line of trees to both sides of the route, of a consistent species to create a strong tree dominant link to Cowdray Green. Potential redevelopment of buildings facing Cowdray Avenue and the creation of Cowdray Square must take the opportunity to increase tree planting along the northern edge of the avenue.



## 7.6 Public art

For public art to be successful within public realm works it needs to be considered as an integral part of the design team from the outset. Consideration needs to be given to the type and number of artists that would work on the project. The work of artists on the project should be set within an overall theme for the area, in order to create a link which ties all of the artworks, great and small together. The principal route from the station to the town is a suitable candidate for the development of a thematic approach. Colchester is Britain's oldest recorded town and clearly has a long and rich history, which can provide opportunities for thematic artworks. Travelling by train is very much based on the organisation and predictability of time. Indeed it was the very arrival of the railways that led to the standardising of time. A key organising theme therefore could be a contemporary exploration

of time and space, revealing elements of the town's rich history along the route. This should be expressed both through larger scale commissions at the station forecourt and Essex Hall junctions, and at a small scale, as motifs or appropriate quotations set within paving or in the design of a suite of bespoke street furniture.





## 8. Delivering the place

### 8.1 Funding

The master plan is a tool to inform development proposals that come forward within the study, as and when funding is in place. The guidelines and principles will structure the form of development on sites that come forward for re-development and help promote the regeneration of the North Station area. It is therefore important that the master plan should not be seen as a development proposal itself.

#### Section 106

It is envisaged that private developers will privately fund the majority of development sites. Contributions from developers through negotiations on Section 106 Agreements will be sought by Colchester Borough Council on individual development sites. However, the negotiations of the Agreements should ensure that the viability, deliverability and design of proposals are not compromised, or prevent sites not being brought forward.

The proposed public realm improvements will be beneficial to all the identified development sites and key to their potential success. As such, public realm requirements can be secured through these Agreements. Due to the extent of improvements proposed it will be necessary for Colchester Borough Council to prioritise the works. The three key areas for improvements are listed below. Public realm improvements will include a range of works including items outlined in chapter 7.

- Station Gateway
- North Station Road urban village
- Essex Hall Roundabout

#### Essex County Highways

Essex County Highway will be a key partner and may generate funding for the highway improvements and on-going maintenance.

#### EEDA

The regional development agency (EEDA) or HCA are potential development partners for the projects being considered. These organisations could play a key role and provide 'gap funding', that cannot be met from elsewhere in order to deliver schemes.

#### Colchester Borough Council

Funding may be available from the Council's budget to aid the deliverability of the public realm improvements and the maintenance of the improved public realm will be through allocations of the borough council.

### 8.2 Phasing

The master plan aims to allow development to come forward over time, with each site within the regeneration area not solely dependent on another. This flexible approach to the master plan does not restrict individual sites, should developer will and funding be in place. Therefore, outlining a fixed phasing program for the North Station area is unnecessary.

The large scale proposed public realm improvements are unlikely to be deliverable in full in the short term and therefore will require a phased delivery. The council's goals and aspirations for sites within the North Station area should dictate which of the improvements should be prioritised, as discussed above.

## Glossary of Terms

<p><b>Area appraisal</b></p> <p>An assessment of an area's land uses, built and natural environment, and social and physical characteristics.</p> <p><b>Block</b></p> <p>The area bounded by a set of streets and undivided by any other significant streets.</p> <p><b>Building element</b></p> <p>A feature (such as a door, window or cornice) that contributes to the overall design of a building.</p> <p><b>Building line</b></p> <p>The line formed by the frontages of buildings along a street. The building line can be shown on a plan or section.</p> <p><b>Built environment</b></p> <p>The entire ensemble of buildings, neighbourhoods and cities with their infrastructure.</p> <p><b>Built form</b></p> <p>Buildings and structures.</p> <p><b>Character assessment</b></p> <p>An area appraisal emphasising historical and cultural associations</p> <p><b>Conservation area</b></p> <p>One designated by a local authority under the Town and Country Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as possessing special architectural or historical interest. The council will seek to preserve or enhance the character and appearance of such areas.</p> <p><b>Context (or site and area) appraisal</b></p> <p>A detailed analysis of the features of a site or area (including land uses, built and natural environment, and social and physical characteristics) which serves as the basis for an urban design framework, development brief, design guide, or other policy or guidance.</p> <p><b>Context</b></p> <p>The setting of a site or area.</p>	<p><b>Density</b></p> <p>The mass or floorspace of a building or buildings in relation to an area of land. Density can be expressed in terms of plot ratio (for commercial development); homes or habitable rooms per hectare (for residential development); site coverage plus the number of floors or a maximum building height; space standards; or a combination of these.</p> <p><b>Design code</b></p> <p>A document (usually with detailed drawings or diagrams) setting out with some precision the design and planning principles that will apply to development in a particular place.</p> <p><b>Design guidance</b></p> <p>A generic term for documents providing guidance on how development can be carried out in accordance with the planning and design policies of a local authority or other organisation.</p> <p><b>Design principle</b></p> <p>An expression of one of the basic design ideas at the heart of an urban design framework, design guide, development brief or design code. Each such planning tool should have its own set of design principles.</p> <p><b>Development</b></p> <p>Statutorily defined under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as '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'. Most forms of development require planning permission.</p> <p><b>Elevation</b></p> <p>(i) An external face of a building. (ii) A diagrammatic drawing of this. (iii) The height of a site above sea level.</p> <p><b>Enclosure</b></p> <p>The use of buildings to create a sense of defined space.</p> <p><b>Energy efficiency</b></p> <p>The result of minimising the use of energy through the way in which buildings are constructed and arranged on site.</p>	<p><b>Figure ground</b></p> <p>A plan that clearly shows the relationship between buildings (usually shown in black) and streets, squares and open spaces (usually shown in white).</p> <p><b>Fine grain</b></p> <p>The quality of an area's layout of building blocks and plots having small and frequent subdivisions.</p> <p><b>Form</b></p> <p>The layout (structure and urban grain), density, scale (height and massing), appearance, (materials and details) and landscape of development.</p> <p><b>Illustrative sketch</b></p> <p>A drawing of building forms and spaces which is intended to guide whomsoever will later prepare the actual design.</p> <p><b>Landmark</b></p> <p>A building or structure that stands out from the background buildings.</p> <p><b>Landscape</b></p> <p>The appearance of land, including its shape, form, colours and elements, the way these (including those of streets) components combine in a way that is distinctive to particular localities, the way they are perceived, and an area's cultural and historical associations.</p> <p><b>Layout</b></p> <p>The way buildings, routes and open spaces are placed in relation to each other.</p> <p><b>Legibility</b></p> <p>The degree to which a place can be easily understood by its users and the clarity of the image it presents to the wider world.</p> <p><b>Local distinctiveness</b></p> <p>The positive features of a place and its communities which contribute to its special character and sense of place.</p> <p><b>Massing</b></p> <p>The combined effect of the arrangement, volume and shape of a building or group of buildings. Also called bulk.</p>	<p><b>Mixed uses</b></p> <p>A mix of complementary uses within a building, on a site or within a particular area. 'Horizontal' mixed uses are side by side, usually in different buildings. 'Vertical' mixed uses are on different floors of the same building.</p> <p><b>Movement</b></p> <p>People and vehicles going to and passing through buildings, places and spaces.</p> <p><b>Natural surveillance (or supervision)</b></p> <p>The discouragement of wrong-doing by the presence of passers-by or the ability of people to see out of windows. Also known as passive surveillance (or supervision).</p> <p><b>Node</b></p> <p>A place where activity and routes are concentrated.</p> <p><b>Permeability</b></p> <p>The degree to which a place has a variety of pleasant, convenient and safe routes through it.</p> <p><b>Public realm</b></p> <p>The parts of a village, town or city (whether publicly or privately owned) that are available, without charge, for everyone to use or see, including streets, squares and parks. Also called public domain.</p> <p><b>Scale</b></p> <p>The size of a building in relation to its surroundings, or the size of parts of a building or its details, particularly in relation to the size of a person.</p> <p><b>Street furniture</b></p> <p>Structures in and adjacent to the highway which contribute to the street scene, such as bus shelters, litter bins, seating, lighting and signs.</p> <p><b>Topography</b></p> <p>A description or representation of artificial or natural features on or of the ground.</p> <p><b>Urban design</b></p> <p>The art of making places. Urban design involves the design of buildings, groups of buildings, spaces and landscapes, in villages, towns and cities, and the establishment of frameworks and processes that facilitate successful development.</p>	<p><b>Urban grain</b></p> <p>The pattern of the arrangement and size of buildings and their plots in a settlement; and the degree to which an area's pattern of street-blocks and street junctions is respectively small and frequent; or large and infrequent.</p> <p><b>Vernacular</b></p> <p>The way in which ordinary buildings were built in a particular place before local styles, techniques and materials were superseded by imports.</p> <p><b>Visual clutter</b></p> <p>The uncoordinated arrangement of street furniture, signs and other features.</p>
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# Appendix

## Public consultation response summary

The table provides a summary of all questions asked during the public consultation.

	Yes	No
<b>Board 2 - Making Places</b>		
Do you think the priorities would help create a welcoming "front door" to Colchester? Are there any particularly good ideas from elsewhere that you would like to see adopted in Colchester?	12	1
<b>Board 3 - Planning Priorities</b>		
Do you think the priorities would help create a welcoming "front door" to Colchester? Are there any particularly good ideas from elsewhere that you would like to see adopted in Colchester?	9	3
Do you agree with the broad mix of uses shown and their location?	8	3
Do you agree that it should be a priority to create a 'green link' between Castle Park and High Woods Country Park?	31	2
Do you agree that it is important to create new streets with some on-street parking, but not overly dominated by parked cars?	14	10
<b>Board 4 - Movement Priorities</b>		
Do you agree that promoting public transport, walking and cycling is the only realistic way to tackle congestion and emissions in the area? Are there any other ways of addressing the problems of the North Station roundabout?	11	9
Do you support bus priority measures at North Station given that this will reduce road space available to cars?	19	15
Do you support priority being given to pedestrians and cyclists at junctions and crossings, even though this could slow vehicle speeds?	22	5
Do you think access to the station should prioritise more sustainable types of transport such as walking, cycling, buses and taxis? If so are there any specific measures that you would suggest?	19	6
Do you agree with the objective of slowing traffic speed to improve safer use of the area by pedestrians and cyclists?	24	4
Do you agree with the key routes for movement identified in the diagrams? Are there any other routes that should be developed?	9	2
<b>Board 5 - North Station Gateway</b>		
Do you support the idea of replacing the roundabouts with junctions to give maximum benefits to pedestrians, cyclists and buses whilst maintaining acceptable traffic flows?	12	14
Do you prefer the idea of keeping the current roundabout layouts but seeking to include bus priority measures?	13	17
Do you agree that the levels of parking at the station should be maintained in the short-term? Do you support a phased reduction in station parking after the opening of the northern Park and Ride site?	11	8
Do you support more active uses at the Station such as offices, shops, cafes or restaurants?	22	9
Do you think the ideas for the station forecourt would help create a better place and improve accessibility? Are there any issues that need further consideration?	11	2
Do you support development on the station site if it leads to improvements to the recreation ground?	16	7
<b>Board 6 - North Station Road</b>		
Do you agree that paving should seek to unite the spaces between buildings, helping to slow traffic speeds and create a better environment?	27	2
Do you agree with the provision of more direct crossings for pedestrians and cyclists?	29	6
Do you agree with the widening of footpaths and reduction of road widths to minimum levels to improve pedestrian mobility?	20	11
Do you agree that some on-street parking should be maintained to assist local businesses?	26	7
Do you support the idea of introducing street trees where practical along the street?	37	0
Do you support the idea of allowing cafes and restaurants to temporarily put out tables and chairs to help enliven the social life of the street?	29	4
<b>Board 7 - Cowdray Centre and Turner Rise</b>		
Do you agree that the Cowdray Centre should be a focus for retail and leisure activities?	21	5
Do you support the provision of start-up units or units for smaller businesses in this area?	33	3
Do you support an improved road link towards to the station?	24	3
Do you support the provision of improved walking and cycling 'green links' through this area? Are the links in the correct places?	33	1
Do you agree that Turner Rise in the longer term could be a good place for a new neighbourhood of family housing?	9	13







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1 February 2010

<b>Report of</b>	<b>Head of Strategic Policy and Regeneration</b>	<b>Author</b>	<b>Beverley McClean 282480</b>
<b>Title</b>	<b>Draft Essex and South Suffolk Shoreline Management Plan (SMP)</b>		
<b>Wards affected</b>	<b>All wards</b>		

**The Local Development Framework Committee is asked to endorse the draft Essex and South Suffolk Shoreline Management Plan prior to formal public consultation by the Environment Agency**

## 1. Decision(s) Required

- 1.1 This report is being presented to seek Member endorsement for the draft Essex and South Suffolk SMP to be issued for public consultation.

## 2. Reasons for Decision

- 2.1 The Environment Agency as lead authority for the Shoreline Management Plan project is keen to secure partner support for the Essex and South Suffolk SMP prior to it being released for public consultation in March 2010.
- 2.2 It is considered appropriate to report the document to the Local Development Framework Committee prior to public consultation for information. This discussion will help inform the Council's response during the formal public consultation. Following the consultation, the document will be amended by the Environment Agency and a final SMP for Essex and South Suffolk published towards the end of 2010.

## 3. Alternative Options

- 3.1 The alternative is for LDF Committee members not to endorse the release of the SMP document. However, as this is a document published by the Environment Agency and covering a wide geographic area it is likely that the document will still be released for formal consultation.

## 4. Supporting Information

- 4.1 A Shoreline Management Plan is a high-level policy document that aims to identify the best ways to manage flood and erosion risk to people and the developed, historic and natural environment over a 100 year period, to 2105, divided into following three time periods;
- epoch 1 (short term): now till 2025;
  - epoch 2 (medium term): 2025 – 2055;
  - epoch 3 (long term): 2055 – 2105.

The SMP sets high level policies, which are then implemented through delivery and subsequently by projects and actions.

- 4.2 A programme is underway to revise all the 1<sup>st</sup> round Shoreline Management Plans which were prepared for the entire length of the coastline of England and Wales approximately 10 years ago. Work commenced on a revised Shoreline Management Plan covering Essex and South Suffolk in 2008. The project area covers approximately 550km of coastline extending from Landguard Point (the eastern boundary of the port of Felixstowe) in Suffolk to Two Tree Island (just west of Southend) in the south of Essex.
- 4.3 The keys aims of the draft Essex and South Suffolk Shoreline Management Plan are to:
- set out the risks from flooding and erosion to people and the developed, historic and natural environment
  - identify a management policy for the shoreline that achieves the best possible and achievable balance of all the different interests around the shoreline, over the next 100 years, and
  - meet international and national nature conservation obligations.
- 4.4 The SMP although a non statutory document is important for identifying potential long term sustainable shoreline management options for the coast in Essex and South Suffolk. SMP's can therefore be a useful source of information in the LDF process by helping shape planning policy and influencing how land is allocated. The draft SMP forms part of the evidence base for the Borough's Local Development Framework in particular the Site Allocations Development Policy Document (DPD) and the Development Policies DPD which were submitted to the Planning Inspectorate in November 2009 prior to public examination and adoption in 2010.

The draft executive summary of the Essex and South Suffolk Shoreline Management Plan (V1.7) is attached as Appendix 1. Appendix 2 explains the methodology used to select the preferred shoreline management options.

## 5. Proposals

- 5.1 Following detailed assessment 5 potential Managed Re-alignment sites have been identified within Colchester Borough; two along the Colne Estuary (D6b & D8a) and three on Mersea Island (E1, E2 & E4a).

**Table 1. Management Unit D – Colne Estuary**

Policy Development Zone		Policy Plan			Explanation
		Now - 2025	2025 - 2055	2055 - 2105	
D6b	B1029 to Wivenhoe	HtL	MR2	HtL	Managed realignment by breach of the existing defence, while continuing flood defence to the railway line.
D7	Colne Barrier	HtL	HtL	HtL	The current line will be held throughout all Epochs.
D8a	Inner Colne west bank	HtL	MR2	NAI	Managed realignment by breach of the existing defence. No defence needed after that.
D8b	Fingringhoe and Langenhoe	HtL	HtL	HtL	The current line will be held throughout all Epochs. The currently undefended sections will remain undefended.
D8c	Langenhoe hall Marsh	HtL	HtL	HtL	The current line will be held throughout all Epochs.

Key

HtL – Hold the Line, MR1 – Managed Realignment - Allow local and limited intervention  
 MR2 – Managed Realignment - Breach of frontline defence after building landward defence  
 NAI – No Active Intervention

- 5.2 The preferred management approach for the Colne Estuary is to sustain and support the viability of communities, tourism and commercial activities while creating new intertidal habitats and focusing flood risk management on frontages where it is most needed. The policy to achieve this will involve the maintenance of flood defence to the majority of the defended land, including all dwellings and key infrastructure at risk of flooding, combined with a gradual increase of natural processes by realigning defences that are under pressure, and/or where the value of the protected features is unlikely to justify continued maintenance.
- 5.3 The frontages where the existing flood defences will continue to be held (Hold the Line) within the Borough at their current alignment are Colne Barrier (D7), Fingringhoe and Langenhoe (D8b) and Langenhoehall Marsh (D8c). For all defended frontages, detailed analysis beyond the SMP will be needed to determine the appropriate standard of protection.
- 5.4 Site (D6b) at Wivenhoe and site (D8a) at the Inner Colne west bank (in the vicinity of Ballast Quay) have been put forward as potential Managed Re-alignment sites beyond 2025 even though the defences are not necessarily under pressure. Hold the Line is not considered suitable as the defences do not protect any dwellings or significant infrastructure. The economic assessment carried out as part of the project concluded that it is unlikely that continued maintenance can be justified on economic grounds. The gravel pits on the west bank are reaching the end of their productive life. While No Active Intervention is regarded as a fall-back position, it is being argued that it would be preferable to take a pro-active and managed approach at this location, in order to create intertidal habitats and the associated socio-economic benefits. It should be noted that Managed Realignment would have a significant impact on the historic environment, particularly the well-preserved grazing marsh on the east bank. The banks that connect the Colne Barrier to high ground on both banks are part of Policy Development Zone (PDZ) D7, which has a Hold the Line policy.
- 5.5 Realignment for the 2 proposed managed realignment sites within the Colne Management Unit are all proposed for epoch 2 (2025 -2055). This is necessary to enable any affected communities or businesses to adapt.
- 5.6 There are a number of short frontages where No Active Intervention will be continued. These are at locations within the PDZs at St Osyth, Alresford and Fingringhoe where there are currently no defences.



5.7 Table 2 Management Unit E – Mersea

Policy Development Zone		Policy Plan			
		Now - 2025	2025 - 2055	2055 - 2105	Explanation
E1	Landward Frontage	HtL	HtL	MR2	Managed realignment by breach of the existing defence while continuing flood defence to the dwellings and roads.
E2	Seaward frontage between North Barn and West Mersea	HtL	MR2	HtL	Managed realignment by breach of the existing defence while continuing flood defence to the dwellings, roads and sewage works.
E3	West Mersea	HtL	HtL	HtL	The current line will be held throughout all Epochs. The currently undefended sections will remain undefended. The standard of protection will be maintained or upgraded.
E4a	North Mersea (Strood Channel)	HtL	MR2	HtL	Managed realignment by breach of the existing defence while continuing flood defence to the dwellings and roads. The standard of protection will be maintained or upgraded.
E4b	Pyefleet Inner Channel	HtL	HtL	HtL	The current line will be held throughout all Epochs.

- 5.8 The preferred management approach for Mersea Island is to sustain and support the viability of communities, tourism and commercial activities while creating new intertidal habitats and focusing flood and erosion risk management on frontages where it is most needed. The policy to achieve this will involve maintaining flood and erosion defence to all dwellings, key infrastructure and tourism facilities at risk of flooding and erosion, combined with a gradual increase of natural processes by realigning defences that are under pressure.
- 5.9 The frontages where the existing flood and erosion defences will continue to be held at their current alignment (Hold the Line) are West Mersea (E3), Pyefleet Inner Channel (E4b) and parts of the sea facing frontage between West and East Mersea. Detailed analysis beyond the SMP will be needed to determine the appropriate standard of protection.
- 5.10 Managed re-alignment is being proposed at East Mersea seaward frontage (E2), Maydays and Reeveshall marshes (E1) and landward of the Strood Channel (E4a) beyond 2025. Here the defences are under pressure, and realignment would create a more sustainable situation by reducing the pressure on defences and moving towards a more natural coastline with increased areas of intertidal habitat.
- 5.11 Under this proposal all dwellings and infrastructure would remain protected, achieved by moving some of the defences to a more sustainable sheltered position, possibly in the form of counterwalls. The realignments will come at the expense of grade 3 and 4 agricultural land and a golf course. This loss of agricultural land is recognised as a potentially serious issue in light of current food security issues nationally. Proposals will affect freshwater habitats (non-designated), but they will also create new intertidal habitats. They will have some impact on historic assets, particularly in Maydays and Reeveshall marshes, which will require mitigation by design and recording as part of implementation of the Plan. There are also footpaths on top of all the sea banks which would have to be breached however it recognised that these will need to be sustained, for example through re-routing. The impact of the proposed realignments on tourism and recreation (including sailing and the youth camp) and on oyster fisheries (particularly in Pyefleet channel, E1) is difficult to quantify at this stage. Realignment can have both negative and positive impacts and these will need assessment during project appraisal and scheme development. This would be carried out with full stakeholder involvement

prior to any work commencing. Please note the proposal to implement a managed re-alignment scheme at E1 may be subject to change and discussions are still on going between landowners and the Environment Agency.

- 5.12 The current No Active Intervention approach will be continued for sections of West Mersea (landwards of Cobmarsh Island).
- 5.13 None of the proposed managed re-alignment schemes would be implemented until Epoch 2 (2025 -2055) or Epoch 3. (2055-2105). This would be necessary to enable communities and any affected businesses to adapt. It is also important to note that at this stage all the sites identified are only potential Managed Re-alignment sites and could not be progressed without full cooperation from landowners.
- 5.14 Coastal processes are leading to a loss of habitats, some of which are protected under international law. Some of the Managed Retreat proposals in the draft SMP may compound the loss of these designated habitats. Where proposed managed re-alignment leads to the loss of protected sites (intertidal or freshwater) there is a legal requirement to replace these under the Habitats Regulations 1994 (Habitats and Birds Directive) To assess the wider social, economic and environmental impacts of the draft SMP, a separate Sustainability Appraisal (SA), Strategic Environmental Assessment, Appropriate Assessment and Water Framework Directive (WFD) Assessment have been completed as part of this process. The outputs from the SA and WFD assessment have been provided as separate appendices to the main Shoreline Management Plan.
- 5.15 Coastal processes, changing climatic conditions and declining national flood defence budgets are making it necessary to consider how the coastline in Essex and South Suffolk can be best managed in the future. The preferred management options being proposed in the draft Essex and South Suffolk Shoreline Management Plan have been developed using the most current and robust scientific data which has involved extensive stakeholder involvement and is considered to represent the most sustainable shoreline management policies over the next 100 years. For these reasons the it is considered appropriate to release the document for public consultation.

## **6. Strategic Plan References**

- 6.1 The Essex and South Suffolk Shoreline Management Plan supports the Community Safety aspirations in the Strategic Plan by reducing flood risk to people and property and enabling communities to adapt positively to changing climatic conditions.

## **7. Consultation**

- 7.1 There has been ongoing public consultation with a wide range of stakeholders during the development of the Essex & South Suffolk SMP. This has been essential due to the potential economic, social and environmental impacts that SMP proposals could have on communities, businesses, coastal user groups and the environment along the Essex and South Suffolk coastline. Themed groups representing all parties with an interest in the Essex and South Suffolk coast were invited to key stakeholders meetings on 15 June 2009 and 6 November 2009. The Environment Agency also held drop in sessions across the wider project area where members of the public could learn more about the SMP process. In Colchester these sessions were held at West Mersea and at the Hythe in Colchester during April 2009. A meeting was also held for planners and emergency planners in May 2009 to explore the role of SMP's in the Local Development Framework process. Comments and feedback provided at these various events have helped influence the development of the draft SMP to date.

7.2 The Environment Agency will lead future consultation. Drop in sessions are planned during March to May 2010. In the Borough these sessions have been scheduled to take place at Marks Tey on 11 March 2010, 20 March 2010 at West Mersea and 14 May 2010 at Wivenhoe. Comments received during the public consultation which runs from 15<sup>th</sup> March 2010 to 18 June 2010, will help shape the final Essex and South Suffolk Shoreline Management Plan. Once complete the final Essex and South Suffolk SMP will be scrutinised by a Quality Review Group to ensure that correct processes have been followed during development of the document and by the Regional Flood Defence Committee who will agree proposed policies in the SMP. Once clear of this process the SMP will be signed off by Regional Director of the Environment Agency.

## **8. Publicity Considerations**

8.1 The consultation on the Essex and South Suffolk SMP may generate some local publicity. The draft document has however been prepared with full stakeholder involvement from the start of the project. The collaborative approach taken will hopefully have increased awareness about the issues that need to be addressed along the Essex and South Suffolk Coast, provided opportunities to identify areas of conflict early in the process and also provided a forum for identifying solutions.

## **9. Financial Implications**

9.1 None

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

10.1 The Draft Essex and South Suffolk SMP has been developed in accordance with the SMP National Guidance. The document has been developed with full stakeholder engagement to ensure that all interested parties have been able to influence proposals put forward in the SMP.

10.2 An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) to support the draft SMP for Essex and South Suffolk is being prepared by the Environment Agency, the lead authority for the SMP. Also as this document will form part of Colchester's LDF evidence base a link to the Equality Impact Assessment for the Local Development Framework is also relevant and is provided on the Local Development Framework Committee webpage.

10.3 None of the proposals in the draft Essex and South Suffolk SMP will proceed without the landowners agreement.

## **11. Community Safety Implications**

11.1 None

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

12.1 None

## **13. Risk Management Implications**

13.1 A decision to progress the draft Essex and South SMP to consultation stage will ensure that all residents and stakeholders will have the opportunity to comment and influence the content of the document and the long term management of the coastline in the Borough.

## Background Papers

None





**Essex and South Suffolk Shoreline Management Plan**  
**Colne Point to Bradwell**  
Non technical summary of draft plan

18 January 2009  
Draft 1.3

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We have developed the SMP based on a set of principles agreed by all the organisations involved in the process. Some of these principles can be, by their nature, contradictory. This reality is one of the main challenges of shoreline management. It is unlikely, perhaps impossible, to fully achieve all these principles. So instead the SMP aims to provide the best achievable balance between the principles in the short, medium and long term. As a whole, this set of principles represents the balance of values to which the SMP aspires. The order of the principles does not indicate the order of importance.

1. To develop policies appropriate to the diverse character of the Essex and South Suffolk coast and its dynamic interaction of land and sea
2. To balance flood and erosion management with the assets and benefits that it protects
3. To seek opportunities for managing the shoreline through natural coastal processes and take full account of longshore and cross-shore impacts
4. To develop policies that are resilient against future changes and associated uncertainty
5. To provide time and information for communities, individuals and partner organisations to adapt to any anticipated coastal change
6. To support communities and sustainable development for the people living around the Essex and South Suffolk shoreline by managing the risk to community activities and infrastructure
7. To support and promote the social and economic values of the Essex and South Suffolk coast to wider society
8. To support conservation and enhancement of biodiversity and geodiversity
9. To contribute to maintaining and enhancing the evolving character of the coastal landscape
10. To support protection and promotion of the historic environment and its value for the heritage, culture and economy of the area
11. To support and enhance people's enjoyment of the coast by maintaining and enhancing access



## Introduction

### What this booklet tells you:

This booklet tells you about the draft Shoreline Management Plan (SMP) for the coast and estuaries between Colne Point and Bradwell, and how you can comment on the draft policies.

This is one of three booklets about the Essex and South Suffolk Shoreline Management Plan; the other two cover the areas from Felixstowe Port to Colne Point, and from Bradwell to Southend-on-Sea. The final Essex and South Suffolk Shoreline Management Plan (SMP) will be a high-level policy document in which the organisations that manage the shoreline set their long term plan. This document is about the draft SMP. It presents the suggested plan based on a full appraisal of options against a wide range of criteria. Details of the timetable for producing the final plan appear on page 3.

This document aims to:

- inform, and get responses from, interested groups or individuals on our understanding of why and how coastal flooding and erosion might occur, and their effects on people, their use of the land and the environment
- obtain your views on the approach for managing the Essex and South Suffolk shoreline in the short, medium and long term.

In particular, we would like your comments on:

- the intent of management that we propose for each length of the coast
- the draft Strategic Environmental Assessment that we have prepared alongside the SMP. This is also out for consultation and is included as appendix L to the draft SMP.

You have until 18 June 2010 to return your comments. A copy of the full draft SMP is on the CD inside the back cover of this summary document. If you would rather look at a paper copy, you can view copies at:

Essex County Council  
County Hall  
Market Road  
Chelmsford  
CM1 1QH

Environment Agency  
Iceni House  
Cobham Road  
Ipswich  
IP3 9JD

Environment Agency  
Rivers House  
Threshelfords Business Park  
Inworth Road  
Feering, Colchester  
CO5 9SE

Environment Agency  
Brook End Road  
Chelmsford  
CM2 6NZ

If you would like a paper copy to keep, please e-mail  
Essex\_SMP@environment-agency.gov.uk or by phoning the Environment  
Agency's National Customer Contact Centre on 08708 506 506 Monday to  
Friday 8am to 6pm.

### What is a Shoreline Management Plan (SMP)?

A Shoreline Management Plan is a plan for managing flood and erosion risk for a particular stretch of shoreline, looking at the short, medium and long term.

SMPs identify the best ways to manage coastal flood and erosion risk to people and the developed, historic and natural environment. They also identify opportunities where shoreline management can work with others to make improvements. The outcome of the SMP will be the intent of management for the shoreline that achieves the best possible balance of all values and features.

Approximately 10 years ago a first round of SMPs was completed for the entire length of the coastline of England and Wales. These first round SMPs are now being reviewed to take into account updated information and changing circumstances.

The Plan describes the intent of shoreline management for the short term (up to 2025), the medium term (2026 – 2055) and the long term (2056 to 2105). The intent for the medium and long term sets a vision for the future, but is based on our current knowledge and understanding. That is why SMPs are reviewed every five to 10 years.

The Environment Agency manages most of the flood defences between Colne Point and Bradwell. There are also a number of erosion defences managed by Local Authorities, such as Maldon District Council (for the defences in Maldon), Tendring District Council (for the defences in Brightlingsea) and Colchester Borough Council (for the defences around Mersea Island). There are also isolated lengths of coast managed by other stakeholders, such as the Ministry of Defence and private landowners.

These organisations and the Environment Agency have worked in partnership with all organisations that have an interest and responsibility around the shoreline: the other local authorities, Natural England and other relevant organisations. This is because there are strong interactions: shoreline management can influence coastal land use and the coastal environment, but it can also be influenced by these factors. This is why these Plans need to be developed in partnership.

### What is the Draft SMP Stage?

During this stage we prepare our draft plan and consult the public.

The Draft SMP aims to present:

- An overview of the SMP area, focusing on everything that matters for shoreline management. This concerns technical elements such as the defences and the coastal processes. But equally important are the 'softer' elements: how do people use the land and the sea around the shoreline, what is the value of the area for wildlife and its historic value, what is the role of the shoreline in the landscape, and how do all these aspects interact. We have translated this into the set of principles shown at the beginning of this document, which form the basis of the Plan.
- An explanation of the role that shoreline management plays in this area. What would happen if we stop managing the shoreline, and what will happen if we continue to manage it as we currently do? If we understand this, then we can identify the 'big decisions' that this SMP needs to make.
- The plan itself: how do we intend to manage the shoreline in the short, medium and long term, what do we aim to achieve and what are the wider implications?

Timetable for Essex and South Suffolk SMP

<b>SMP Stage</b>	<b>Details</b>	<b>Timing</b>
Preparation of the draft Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scoping</li> <li>• Assessments to support policy development</li> <li>• Policy development</li> </ul>	June 2008 to March 2010
Public Consultation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consult with all people and organisations who have an interest</li> </ul>	15 March to 18 June 2010
Final SMP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review and incorporate consultation responses.</li> <li>• Prepare Action Plan.</li> <li>• Produce Final SMP.</li> </ul>	June to September 2010
Plan dissemination		September 2010 onwards
Monitor and review		Ongoing



## **Project Area Overview**

The SMP area is located in the east of England. This booklet covers the area from Colne Point to Bradwell. This includes the north and south banks of the River Blackwater up to the weirs at Beeleigh falls, Maldon, Mersea Island, and the River Colne up to the Colne barrier at Wivenhoe.

In total it includes over 80km of coast and estuary banks. Most of the shoreline is made up of embankments that protect low-lying land against flooding, with the exception of the Mersea Island area and stretches in Maldon and Brightlingsea where the land is generally higher and defended against coastal erosion.

The Blackwater estuary is the largest estuary in Essex north of the Thames and is one of the largest estuarine complexes in East Anglia. Both the Blackwater and Colne estuaries and the channels around Mersea Island are surrounded by low-lying land and are used for a wide range of activities. They also provide an important habitat for a range of birds, invertebrates and plants.

### How the coast and the estuaries work...

The coastal and estuarine processes in the area are complex and operate at various scales. At the largest scale, waves approaching the coast from the north-east move sediment around. This causes sediment build up at some locations, but sediment loss at others. The impact of the waves is strongly felt at the mouth of the estuaries and the tidal flows also play a part in removal and redistribution of sediment. At the medium scale, the area can be divided into three 'Management Units (MUs)'.

Here we introduce and explain some of the key coastal and estuary processes in the Essex and South Suffolk SMP area. These have played an important role in developing the plan.

### **Intertidal areas**

An estuary is the section of a river where it is flowing into the sea and is influenced by the tides. Estuary banks are typically wide flat areas consisting of mud and silt that are sometimes dry, and sometimes under water. Similar areas are also found along parts of the open coast, for example in front of Dengie and Foulness. This area is called the 'intertidal area', and it is made up of mudflats and saltmarshes. The intertidal area is important because it stops waves reaching flood and erosion defences, and it is a habitat for many rare plants and animals.

### **Coastal squeeze**

Since the last Ice Age, around 12,000 years ago, the land in the East of England has been sinking slowly, while sea levels have generally been rising. This process is expected to continue and may be speeding up. The natural response of intertidal areas is a gradual move in a landward direction. The estuaries and coastline in the Essex and South Suffolk SMP2 area are constrained by the high ground and by man-made flood defences. This means that the saltmarshes and mudflats cannot move in a landward direction: they do lose area from their seaward edge, but they don't gain area on their landward edge. This is called 'coastal squeeze'. It puts pressure on the flood defences, which become more difficult to maintain, and it leads to loss of important habitats.

### **Estuary processes**

At the outer and middle reaches of the estuaries erosion of the saltmarsh edge takes place. These sections are exposed to pressures from waves and tidal flows. Some of the sediment eroded from the outer and middle reaches is transported by the tides into the inner estuary where siltation is taking place. As sea level rises and tidal flows speed up there would be more erosion and coastal squeeze of saltmarsh in estuaries.

Where the estuary is constrained, the flood banks are under pressure. An intervention to widen the estuary on one bank loosens the constraint, so it will reduce the pressure on the opposite bank of the estuary.

On the other hand: widening the estuary in the upstream reaches can have a negative effect further out. It increases the tidal prism (the volume of water flowing in and out of the estuary with each tide). This means that more water has to pass through the outer reaches, and this can increase the pressure on the banks.

### **Open coast processes**

There are a number of exposed coastal frontages in the SMP area. These frontages experience the full force of waves approaching from the north-east. The wave energy moves sediment around the coast. Sediment tends to build up in certain areas where the energy is less. There can also be a loss of sediment where the energy is greater. This loss of sediment causes a loss of beaches, saltmarshes and mudflats and can cause undermining of the coastal and flood defences.

The Management Units have played an important part in the development of this draft Plan. Their extent and main characteristics are as follows.

**Management Unit D (Colne Estuary):** from Point Clear on the east bank of the River Colne up to Colne Barrier, and back downstream along the north bank of Pyefleet channel, up to the Strood road crossing to Mersea Island. This MU is a combination of an open coast and estuary frontage. The mouth of the River Colne is open coast and is exposed to waves, whereas the Colne Estuary itself and the channels are sheltered, but affected by the tides. In front of the defences there are saltmarshes and mudflats. Monitoring has shown that the total area of saltmarsh in the estuary is reducing, and that this process has recently been speeding up. In combination with channel movement this is putting pressure on the defences along the middle and lower Colne, Flag Creek and the Pyefleet channel.

**INSERT PHOTO OF COLNE**

**Management Unit E (Mersea Island):** this MU covers Mersea Island, which consists of London clay. The south-east side of the island is an open coast frontage. It has a low cliff and steep natural slope with two local areas of low-lying land. In front of the cliff and slope is a wide area of intertidal flats (Mersea flats) made of shingle, sand and mud. There are varying types of defences around the island, such as concrete sea walls, promenades, wave return walls and beach control structures such as timber and concrete groynes and breakwaters. These protect the isolated sections of low-lying land from flooding and the higher ground from erosion. Erosion is caused by wave and tidal energy. There is a general lack of sediment in the area, and this is made worse by the presence of coastal and flood defences. This puts pressure on the defences around much of the island.



**Management Unit F (Blackwater Estuary):** from Strood road crossing up the Blackwater to Maldon, and then back along the south bank to Bradwell Waterside. The Blackwater Estuary is one of the largest estuary complexes in East Anglia. This MU is a combination of open coast and estuary. The

mouth of the River Blackwater is open coast and is exposed to waves, whereas the Blackwater Estuary itself is sheltered but affected by the tides. In front of the defences there are saltmarshes and mudflats. Monitoring has shown that the total area of saltmarsh in the estuary is reducing, but the rate at which it is reducing has recently been decreasing. This is because the estuary is less constrained than other estuaries along the Essex coastline and the four managed realignments undertaken at Northey, Orplands, Tollesbury and Abbots Hall have further loosened the constraint, relieving some of the pressure from the estuary on the shoreline.



Blackwater Estuary

**@INSERT FIGURE SHOWING LOCATION OF MUs D, E, AND F**

### **Figure 1: Management Units in Colne Estuary, Mersea Island and Blackwater Estuary SMP**

....and why it is a special place.

The estuaries and their tidal dynamics determine the character of all three Management Units (Colne, Mersea Island and Blackwater). The estuary landscape sets the scene for a combination of river-based activities, agriculture in the low-lying defended areas and important habitats on both sides of the defences.

There are various settlements on or near the shoreline, with their communities, range of public services, infrastructure and historic buildings and sites. Large parts of the defended areas are important for agriculture. The rivers are used for both commercial and recreational activities. The intertidal area supports an important shellfisheries industry, particularly at Mersea Island. People come to the area for wildlife-related tourism – mainly birdwatching. They are also drawn to the area for the recreation opportunities it provides, such as outdoor pursuits, country parks and nature reserves and the Mersea vineyard. As a result there are a number of camping and caravanning sites. The area is also particularly important for



the Ministry of Defence who use the low-lying marshes at Wick Marsh, Lagenhoe Marsh and Fingrinhoe Marsh as a firing range. There is also a nuclear power station at Bradwell which is being decommissioned, but the site is a candidate for the development of a new nuclear plant.

At the same time, the Colne, Mersea Island and Blackwater have unique environments. The intertidal mud flats are home to a rich variety of animals and plants, which form a complex and unique system. A large number of invertebrates and shellfish live in the mud flats, and these provide food for geese, waders and ducks throughout the year. The saltmarshes, grazing marshes, sand and shingle spits, disused gravel pits and reed beds also support a wide and diverse range of nationally scarce plants, flora, fauna, invertebrates and migratory and wintering birds. This environment is protected by a range of national and international designations. The foreshore areas in this frontage are also important due their geology.

### **The Role of Shoreline Management: Finding the right balance**

In the SMP we have looked at how the shoreline would respond to different management options and how these would affect the values and features that are characteristic for the Essex and South Suffolk SMP area, such as communities, agricultural land, tourism facilities and intertidal habitats.

We have assessed these impacts against a set of policy appraisal criteria. These criteria were developed for each Management Unit based on the principles for shoreline management in Essex and South Suffolk as listed at the front of this document. The text box below illustrates how we have done this.

Here we illustrate examples of the policy appraisal criteria, how they are linked to the general principles for shoreline management and how they have been assessed (indicators). Full details are provided in the main SMP document.

Principle/Criteria	Indicator
To balance flood and erosion management with the assets and benefits that it protects	
Level of flood and erosion risk to people and property	Number of properties within the tidal floodzone or at risk from erosion compared to the current number
To provide time and information for communities, individuals and partner organisations to adapt to any anticipated coastal change	
Adequacy of time available for adaptation for communities, individuals and partner organisations	Time (in epochs) available for each required process of adaptation, depending on the policy option.
To support conservation and enhancement of biodiversity and geodiversity	
Impact on the achievement of management objectives for designated sites, keeping them in favourable condition	Area of designated land lost/gained per epoch and scenario.

Based on this, we have identified that the SMP has to deal with the following 'big decisions' for shoreline management:

1. For the coastal defences that protect the **seaside towns** (such as West Mersea) against erosion, the question is how to sustain the vital role of the seafront for the towns' character and economy. Holding the existing alignment protects existing features, but it can be difficult and it can have a negative impact on the beach and elsewhere along the shoreline.
2. For defences that protect any **settlements** or **important infrastructure** it is not realistic to stop defending against tidal flooding. For these defences, the 'big decision' is not whether, but how to achieve continued defence against flooding. The best solution could be to hold the existing line, but it could also be to move the defences landward.
3. For all other flood defences, the SMP does have to ask the question whether continued defence is the best solution in the face of **increasing pressures** and the negative impacts of **coastal squeeze**. Do the benefits that the defences bring outweigh their negative impacts and the effort and costs needed to sustain them?

These decisions have to take into account a range of factors:

- Some of the defences are under significant pressure. This can be from eroding channels, particularly where the estuaries' natural development has been constrained in the past by land reclamation. Pressure can also come from waves where the foreshore is eroding. These pressures can lead to undermining of the defences and are likely to increase as a result of climate change. In such cases, holding the existing defence line will be difficult.
- Loss of foreshore does not only threaten the flood defences, it can also threaten the environment by reducing the area and quality of intertidal habitats. Much of the intertidal area is protected by international designations and adds value to the local economy (even though it is very difficult to quantify this value). Moving the defence landward could create new intertidal areas to replace the ones under threat.
- The defended areas have important values, even if they don't include settlements or key infrastructure. This includes agriculture, access to the shoreline and historic assets. They also contain important freshwater habitats, some of which also have international designations and add value to the local economy (however difficult to quantify). In some cases, the functioning of the freshwater habitats depends on the intertidal habitats, and vice versa.

Finally, the SMP looks at the long term, but we only have limited knowledge about future developments. This is the case for the coastal processes, but also for the value that society will place on the different features of the area. The SMP needs to make sure that the plan is both robust and flexible in the face of these uncertainties.

These considerations have steered the development of the Shoreline Management Plan. For each of the Management Units, options that represent the various sides of the arguments have been developed, including the provision of time for adaptation to large changes.

## Summary of the draft plan: Continuing to defend communities and giving more room to natural processes

The overall plan for managing the Essex and South Suffolk shoreline is

- to keep protecting all dwellings and key infrastructure against flooding and erosion;
- to protect all other values of the defended land as much as possible and for as long as possible, but where this is not possible, to provide sufficient time to adapt;
- to realign vulnerable flood defences that are currently under pressure from natural coastal processes to a more landward alignment to create a more sustainable approach to managing flood risk and natural processes.
- to identify where important intertidal and freshwater habitats may be under pressure and to consider where they need to be located and managed for future generations;
- to continue to allow natural shoreline development where possible, but enable local and sensible intervention where needed.

For most of the **currently defended** coast and estuaries, the intent is to continue to hold the existing line of flood and coastal defences throughout the short, medium and long term.

For a number of frontages however, the SMP process has identified that the defences are under pressure from eroding channels or from wave attack, typically in the middle and outer reaches of the estuaries and channels and the open coast frontage of Mersea Island. This pressure is likely to increase with climate change and sea level rise. For these frontages a change of policy is desirable, by realigning the defences to a more landward, more sustainable location (while continuing to protect all dwellings and key infrastructure). However, there are defences under pressure where realignment is not seen as a realistic option because of overriding constraints. This can be because existing land use is too important and needs the existing alignments. There are also cases where the defence itself, or the area behind it, contains contaminated land, which is likely to make realignment unviable. The SMP's Action Plan will include a study to assess the economic feasibility of realigning the seabanks and dealing with the contamination, for input into the next SMP review.

There are also 2 frontages in the middle estuary of the Colne where Managed Realignment is the proposed option even if the defences are not necessarily under pressure. These are frontages where the defences don't protect any dwellings or significant infrastructure which means that continued maintenance is not viable. Realignment is a more positive approach than abandoning the defences as it will create intertidal habitats and the associated socio-economic benefits. EU-funded research has concluded that managed realignment sites have wider benefits than simply habitat creation



or serving flood risk management. The economic value of these wider benefits is still difficult to quantify.

This approach has identified a list of 31 policy development zones where the SMP proposes managed realignment for flood defence frontages. In total, this is approximately 20 per cent of the total shoreline length in the SMP area, or 4.5 per cent of the area of the existing floodzone. Of these, there are 15 in the area from Colne Point to Bradwell: 1 in epoch 1, 8 in epoch 2 and 4 in epoch 3. The proposed timing of the realignments (short, medium or long term) aims to ensure that there is sufficient time for adaptation of all people, businesses and organisations affected, including mitigation of impacts. It should be noted that the epochs for realignment will be further considered during Key Stakeholders Group meetings and public consultation. Some epochs of realignment may be re-considered and changed.

As stated before, where these defences currently protect dwellings or key infrastructure, the location of the new alignments will ensure continued protection. The realignments will increase the role of natural processes and create new intertidal habitat, but they will come at the expense of current land use. This consists partly of agricultural land, and partly of freshwater habitats. Any change of defence alignment will have to include provisions to maintain access to the shoreline, but may also create opportunities to improve access. In principle, managed realignment reduces flood risk to landowners. This is because the new defence lines will be less exposed to waves and channel movement, and because they will typically be built on a higher ground level. The design of the defences, beyond the SMP, will ensure an appropriate standard of protection.

There are a number of frontages, typically where flood defences protect larger settlements, where the SMP's intent is to maintain or upgrade the standard of protection, including taking into account impacts of climate change. For the other frontages, the broad scale analysis of the SMP is not sufficient to determine the appropriate standard of protection: more detailed analysis beyond the SMP is required. The SMP's Action Plan will identify the timing, roles and responsibilities for this.

There are a few frontages that are **currently undefended** (on the Blackwater and on Mersea Island), the intent is continue this approach throughout the short, medium and long term.

In general, it is important to note that developments on the medium and long term are difficult to predict. The SMP's Action Plan will identify the monitoring and research that are needed to inform the planned review of the SMP in 5 to 10 years time.

Where the Shoreline Management Plan proposes managed realignment of flood defences, the ambition of the partner authorities is to implement this policy with full landowner agreement. This also means that all landowners

are allowed to hold their own defence line in the meantime if they choose. New guidance has been developed at a national level (asset maintenance policy) and practical local guidance is available to landowners wishing to maintain their own defences within the plan frontage. Should everyone wish to hold the line there will be consequences for the erosion and subsequent loss of local intertidal habitats through coastal squeeze. The Environment Agency is tasked with finding replacement habitat on behalf of landowners wishing to hold the line.

Therefore the Shoreline Management Plan will have to comply with the legal requirement from the Habitats Regulations to mitigate or compensate for intertidal habitat loss caused by coastal squeeze (as discussed in the Appropriate Assessment of **Appendix M**).

In order for landowners, operating authorities or the Environment Agency to gain flood defence and coastal protection consents some managed realignment of the coast is required to offset the coastal squeeze issue. As a result the partner authorities have worked and will continue to work with landowners to achieve the targets set by the Habitats Regulations. However, this will be based on the willingness of landowners to enter managed realignment schemes. At this time we have identified the most vulnerable locations around the coast as potential managed realignment projects. A situation could arise in the future where it is not possible to create sufficient intertidal habitat within the existing arrangements. The Essex and South Suffolk SMP identifies this as a potential risk that needs to be addressed at a national level and through further engagement with landowners locally after finalisation of the SMP.

## **The Shoreline Management Plan in more detail**

This section describes the draft Plan in some more detail, using maps to illustrate what the shoreline would look like on the short, medium and long term.

### Management Unit D: Colne Estuary

The overall intent of management for the Colne Estuary is to sustain and support the viability of communities, tourism and commercial activities while creating new intertidal habitats and focusing flood risk management on frontages where it is most needed. The policy to achieve this intent is to maintain flood defence to the majority of the defended land, including all dwellings and key infrastructure at risk of flooding, combined with a gradual increase of natural processes by realigning defences that are under pressure, and / or where the value of the protected features is unlikely to justify continued maintenance.

The frontages where the existing flood defences will continue to be held at their current alignment are Brightlingsea, South of Wivenhoe, Colne Barrier, Fingringhoe and Langenhoe and Langenhoehall Marsh.

However, at St Osyth Creek, Flag Creek and West Marsh the defences are under pressure. Landward realignment at these frontages would create a more sustainable situation by reducing the pressure on defences and moving towards a more natural estuary and creek development with increase of tidal prism and intertidal area. All dwellings and infrastructure will remain protected, which will require moving some of the defences to a more sustainable sheltered position, possibly in the form of counterwalls. The realignments will come at the expense of grade 3 and 4 agricultural land. They will affect partly designated freshwater habitats, particularly at St. Osyth, but they will also create new intertidal habitats. They could have a significant impact on historic assets, at St Osyth Creek and West Marsh, but particularly along Flag Creek (D2), which will require mitigation by design and recording as part of implementation of the Plan. There are footpaths on top of the banks at Point Clear and at West Marsh; these will need to be sustained, either through re-routing or building the means to cross the breaches. The impact of the proposed realignments on tourism and recreation (including sailing) and on oyster fisheries is difficult to quantify, and realignments can have both negative and positive impacts. These impacts will be taken into account during project appraisal and scheme development, which will be carried out with full stakeholder involvement before any works start.

At Wivenhoe and Inner Colne west bank (PDZ D6b and D8a) the defences are not necessarily under pressure. However, as they don't protect any dwellings or significant infrastructure, it is unlikely that continued maintenance is justified. Note that the gravel pits on the west bank are

reaching the end of their productive life. No Active Intervention is a fall-back position, but it would be preferable to take a pro-active and managed approach, in order to create intertidal habitats and the associated socio-economic benefits. It has to be noted that Managed Realignment would have a significant impact on the historic environment, particularly the well-preserved grazing marsh on the east bank. The banks that connect the Colne Barrier to high ground on both banks are part of PDZ D7, which has a Hold the Line policy.

The realignments are all proposed for epoch 2.

For all defended frontages, detailed analysis beyond the SMP is needed to determine the appropriate standard of protection.

There are a number of short frontages where the current No Active Intervention approach will be continued; these are within the PDZs at St Osyth, Alresford and Fingringhoe.

@include policy maps (current plus 3 epochs) on facing page



## Summary of Specific Policies

Policy Development Zone	Policy Plan			Explanation
	Now - 2025	2025 - 2055	2055 - 2105	
<b>D1a Stone Point</b>				
National SMP policy	Hold the Line	Hold the Line	Hold the Line	The current line will be held throughout all Epochs.
<b>D1b Point Clear to St Osyth Creek</b>				
National SMP policy	Hold the Line	Managed Realignment	Hold the Line	Managed realignment by breach of the existing defence while continuing flood defence to the dwellings, roads and caravan park. The currently undefended section will remain undefended.
<b>D2 Along the southern bank of Flag Creek</b>				
National SMP policy	Hold the Line	Managed Realignment	Hold the Line	Managed realignment by breach of the existing defence while continuing flood defence to the dwellings and road.
<b>D3 Flag Creek to northern bank to Brightlingsea</b>				
National SMP policy	Hold the Line	Managed Realignment	Hold the Line	Managed realignment by breach of the existing defence while continuing flood defence to the dwellings and road.
<b>D4 Brightlingsea</b>				
National SMP policy	Hold the Line	Hold the Line	Hold the Line	The current line will be held throughout all Epochs.
<b>D5 Westmarsh Point to where the frontage meets the B1029</b>				

Policy Development Zone	Policy Plan			
	Now - 2025	2025 - 2055	2055 - 2105	Explanation
National SMP policy	Hold the Line	Managed Realignment	Hold the Line	Managed realignment by breach of the existing defence while continuing flood defence to the dwellings, the road and the freshwater habitats.
<b>D6a South of Wivenhoe</b>				
National SMP policy	Hold the Line	Hold the Line	Hold the Line	The current line will be held throughout all Epochs.
<b>D6b B1029 to Wivenhoe</b>				
National SMP policy	Hold the Line	Managed Realignment	Hold the Line	Managed realignment by breach of the existing defence, while continuing flood defence to the railway line.
<b>D7 Colne Barrier</b>				
National SMP policy	Hold the Line	Hold the Line	Hold the Line	The current line will be held throughout all Epochs. @tbc if we can say the SoP will be maintained / upgraded
<b>D8a Inner Colne west bank</b>				
National SMP policy	Hold the Line	Managed Realignment	NAI	Managed realignment by breach of the existing defence. No defence needed after that.
<b>D8b Fingringhoe and Langenhoe</b>				
National SMP policy	Hold the Line	Hold the Line	Hold the Line	The current line will be held throughout all Epochs. The currently undefended sections will remain undefended.
<b>D8c Langenhoehall Marsh</b>				
National SMP policy	Hold the Line	Hold the Line	Hold the Line	The current line will be held throughout all Epochs.

## Management Unit E: Mersea Island

The overall intent of management for Mersea Island is to sustain and support the viability of communities, tourism and commercial activities while creating new intertidal habitats and focusing flood and erosion risk management on frontages where it is most needed. The policy to achieve this intent is to maintain flood and erosion defence to all dwellings, key infrastructure and tourism facilities at risk of flooding and erosion, combined with a gradual increase of natural processes by realigning defences that are under pressure.

The frontages where the existing flood and erosion defences will continue to be held at their current alignment are West Mersea, Pyefleet Inner Channel and parts of the sea facing frontage between West and East Mersea.

However, at East Mersea seaward frontage, Maydays and Reeveshall marshes and landward of the Strood Channel the defences are under pressure, and a landward realignment would create a more sustainable situation by reducing the pressure on defences and moving towards a more natural coast with increase of tidal prism and intertidal area. All dwellings and infrastructure would remain protected, which will require moving some of the defences to a more sustainable sheltered position, possibly in the form of counterwalls. The realignments will come at the expense of grade 3 and 4 agricultural land and a golf course. They will affect freshwater habitats (non-designated), but they will also create new intertidal habitats. They will have some impact on historic assets, particularly in Maydays and Reeveshall marshes, which will require mitigation by design and recording as part of implementation of the Plan. There are footpaths on top of all the sea banks to be breached; these will need to be sustained, either through re-routing or building the means to cross the breaches. The impact of the proposed realignments on tourism and recreation (including sailing and the youth camp) and on oyster fisheries (particularly in Pyefleet channel) is difficult to quantify, and realignments can have both negative and positive impacts. These impacts will be taken into account during project appraisal and scheme development, which will be carried out with full stakeholder involvement before any works start.

Realignment is proposed for the Seaward frontage between North Barn and West Mersea, North Mersea (Strood Channel) in epoch 2 and Mersea eastern landward frontage in epoch 3.

For West Mersea and North Mersea, the SMP's broad scale economic analysis supports an intent to maintain or upgrade the standard of protection, including compensation for climate change. For all the other defended frontages, detailed analysis beyond the SMP is needed to determine the appropriate standard of protection.

The current No Active Intervention approach will be continued for sections of West Mersea (landwards of Cobmarsh Island).

@include policy maps (current plus 3 epochs) on facing page

## Summary of Specific Policies

Policy Development Zone	Policy Plan			Explanation
	Now - 2025	2025 - 2055	2055 - 2105	
<b>E1 Landward Frontage</b>				
National SMP policy	Hold the Line	Hold the Line	Managed Realignment	Managed realignment by breach of the existing defence while continuing flood defence to the dwellings and roads. Pending site visit SB – to be confirmed
<b>E2 Seaward frontage between North Barn and West Mersea</b>				
National SMP policy	Hold the Line	Managed Realignment	Hold the Line	Managed realignment by breach of the existing defence while continuing flood defence to the dwellings, roads and sewage works.
<b>E3 West Mersea</b>				
National SMP policy	Hold the Line	Hold the Line	Hold the Line	The current line will be held throughout all Epochs. The currently undefended sections will remain undefended. The standard of protection will be maintained or upgraded.
<b>E4a North Mersea (Strood Channel)</b>				
National SMP policy	Hold the Line	Managed Realignment	Hold the Line	Managed realignment by breach of the existing defence while continuing flood defence to the dwellings and roads. The standard of protection will be maintained or upgraded.
<b>E4b Pyefleet Inner Channel</b>				
National SMP policy	Hold the Line	Hold the Line	Hold the Line	The current line will be held throughout all Epochs.



## Management Unit F: Blackwater Estuary

The overall intent of management for the Blackwater Estuary is to sustain and support the viability of communities, tourism and commercial activities while creating new intertidal habitats and focusing flood and erosion risk management on frontages where it is most needed. The policy to achieve this intent is to maintain flood and erosion defence to all dwellings, key infrastructure and tourism facilities at risk of flooding and erosion, combined with a gradual increase of natural processes by realigning defences that are under pressure.

The frontages where the existing flood defences will continue to be held at their current alignment include the Strood, Salcott Creek, sections of Tollesbury, Goldhanger, Heybridge, Maldon Inner estuary, South Maldon, sections of Mayland Creek, St. Lawrence and sections of Bradwell Creek. For Northey Island, the intent is to allow the private defence undertaker to hold the line or to pursue the limited realignment that they are considering.

However, at Salcott Channel, Steeple, St. Lawrence and Tollesbury Wick Marshes the defences are under pressure. Landward realignment at these frontages would create a more sustainable situation by reducing the pressure on defences and moving towards a more natural estuary and creek development with increase of tidal prism and intertidal area. All dwellings and infrastructure will remain protected, which will require moving some of the defences to a more sustainable sheltered position, possibly in the form of counterwalls. The realignments will come at the expense of grade 2, 3, 4 and 5 agricultural land, campsites and caravan parks. They will affect partly designated freshwater habitats, including Old Hall Marshes and Tollesbury Wick, but they will also create new intertidal habitats. They could have significant impact on historic assets, particularly in the proposed sites between Tollesbury and Mersea Island, which will require mitigation by design and recording as part of implementation of the Plan. There are footpaths on top of the banks at most proposed sites; these will need to be sustained, either through re-routing or building the means to cross the breaches. The impact of the proposed realignments on tourism and recreation, on oyster fisheries and on moorings and marinas is difficult to quantify, and realignments can have both negative and positive impacts. These impacts will be taken into account during project appraisal and scheme development, which will be carried out with full stakeholder involvement before any works start.

For PDZ F14, realignment is proposed in Epoch 1. Realignment is proposed for Old Hall Marshes, Tollesbury Wick Marshes and Steeple in Epoch 3.

There are seven frontages for which the SMP's broad scale economic analysis supports an intent to maintain or upgrade the standard of protection, including compensation for climate change. These are Goldhanger to

Heybridge, Heybridge Basin, Maldon Inner estuary, South Maldon, Maylandsea, St. Lawrence and St. Lawrence to Bradwell-on-Sea. For all the other defended frontages, detailed analysis beyond the SMP is needed to determine the appropriate standard of protection.

The current No Active Intervention approach will be continued for the Abbott's Hall area and for sections of Mayland Creek, Bradwell Creek and Wigborough

The St. Lawrence to Bradwell-on-Sea frontage is currently proposed as a realignment site within the Orplands Project.

@include policy maps (current plus 3 epochs) on facing page

## Summary of Specific Policies

Policy Development Zone	Policy Plan		
	Now - 2025	2025 - 2055	2055 - 2105
<b>F1 Strood to Salcott-cum Virley</b>			
National SMP policy	Hold the Line	Hold the Line	Hold the Line
The current line will be held throughout all Epochs.			
<b>F2 Salcott Creek</b>			
National SMP policy	Hold the Line	Hold the Line	Hold the Line
The current line will be held throughout all Epochs.			
<b>F3 South bank of the Salcott Channel to Tollesbury Fleet</b>			
National SMP policy	Hold the Line	Hold the Line	Managed Realignment
Managed realignment by breach of the existing defence while continuing flood defence to the dwellings, roads and sewage works.			
<b>F4 Tollesbury</b>			
National SMP policy	Hold the Line	Hold the Line	Hold the Line
The current line will be held throughout all Epochs.			
<b>F5 Tollesbury Wick Marshes to Goldhanger</b>			
National SMP policy	Hold the Line	Hold the Line	Managed Realignment
Managed realignment by breach of the existing defence while continuing flood defence to the dwellings, roads and sewage works.			
<b>F6 Goldhanger to Heybridge</b>			
National SMP policy	Hold the Line	Hold the Line	Hold the Line
The current line will be held throughout all Epochs. The standard of protection will be maintained or upgraded.			
<b>F7 Heybridge Basin</b>			

Policy Development Zone	Policy Plan			
	Now - 2025	2025 - 2055	2055 - 2105	Explanation
National SMP policy	Hold the Line	Hold the Line	Hold the Line	The current line will be held throughout all Epochs. The standard of protection will be maintained or upgraded.
<b>F8 Maldon Inner estuary</b>				
National SMP policy	Hold the Line	Hold the Line	Hold the Line	The current line will be held throughout all Epochs. The standard of protection will be maintained or upgraded.
<b>F9 South Maldon</b>				
National SMP policy	Hold the Line	Hold the Line	Hold the Line	The current line will be held throughout all Epochs. The standard of protection will be maintained or upgraded.
<b>F9a Mundon Point</b>				
National SMP policy	Hold the Line	Hold the Line	Hold the Line	The current line will be held for Epoch 1, after which redrawn of maintenance will take place.
<b>F9b Northey Island</b>				
National SMP policy	Hold the Line	Hold the Line	Hold the Line	The private flood defence owner will be allowed to hold the line.
<b>F10 Maylandsea</b>				
National SMP policy	Hold the Line	Hold the Line	Hold the Line	The current line will be held throughout all Epochs. The standard of protection will be maintained or upgraded.
<b>F11a Mayland Creek west</b>				
National SMP policy	Hold the Line	Hold the Line	Hold the Line	The current line will be held throughout all Epochs.
<b>F11b Mayland Creek</b>				

Policy Development Zone	Policy Plan			
	Now - 2025	2025 - 2055	2055 - 2105	Explanation
National SMP policy	NAI	NAI	NAI	No erosion expected, therefore no defences needed.
<b>F11c Mayland Creek east</b>				
National SMP policy	Hold the Line	Hold the Line	Hold the Line	The current line will be held throughout all Epochs.
<b>F12 Steeple</b>				
National SMP policy	Hold the Line	Hold the Line	Managed Realignment	Managed realignment by breach of the existing defence while continuing flood defence to the dwellings, roads and sewage works.
<b>F13 St. Lawrence</b>				
National SMP policy	Hold the Line	Hold the Line	Hold the Line	The current line will be held throughout all Epochs. The standard of protection will be maintained or upgraded.
<b>F14 St. Lawrence to Bradwell-on-Sea</b>				
National SMP policy	Managed Realignment	Hold the Line	Hold the Line	Managed realignment by breach of the existing defence while continuing flood defence to the dwellings, roads and Leisure Park. The standard of protection will be maintained or upgraded.
<b>F15 Bradwell Creek</b>				
National SMP policy	Hold the Line	Hold the Line	Hold the Line	The current line will be held throughout all Epochs. The currently undefended section will remain undefended.



## Next Steps

We will assess all feedback to the Draft SMP and take it into account in the finalisation of the Plan, working with representatives and elected members from all partner authorities. The final SMP will then be submitted to all partner authorities for formal ratification or adoption. From that point on, the SMP will be the basis for the management of the shoreline, and a source of information for all organisations and people with an interest in the shoreline.

The final Shoreline Management Plan will contain an Action Plan. This sets out what the Environment Agency, the Local Authorities and all other partner organisations need to do to implement the plan. The actions will cover the development of flood and erosion defence strategies and schemes, typically led by the Environment Agency or coastal local authorities. But it will also include actions on the Local Authorities, for example to incorporate the plan into the land use planning system or support adaptation of affected people, businesses and organisations. And there will be actions on English Heritage and Natural England to fill gaps in the knowledge of historic and natural features with an impact on shoreline management. There is a range of existing partnerships, such as for the management of the estuaries and coastal areas and for the AONB, which will also have an important role in the implementation of the SMP and its action plan.

The Action Plan will be set up for use as a living document, to enable management of the actions in the period up to the next SMP review, which is expected in 5 to 10 years time.

Typical actions that we expect to include in the Action Plan are as follows:

- Next steps for implementation of short term policies (especially where different from current policy): any further studies needed to confirm the policy; interaction with land use planning; scheme development; working with landowners and other stakeholders.
- Specific need for study of refuse filled walls or other contamination issues to determine feasibility of realignment.
- Monitoring and study to improve knowledge of estuary and coastal development to inform SMP3 policy development. This includes the development of intertidal habitats (quantity and quality).
- Actions with involvement from the planning authorities to prepare land use adaptation needed as a result of proposed medium- and long-term policies.
- The SMP identifies the need for a national approach to caravan parks behind coastal and estuary defences. The Action Plan needs to identify the steps needed to achieve this.
- SMP3, to review the plan in light of new knowledge and possibly new priorities.

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## Appendix 2

### Methodology used to identify preferred management options for the Essex and South Suffolk SMP

The draft Essex and South Suffolk Shoreline Management Plan includes a set of management options for different sections of coastline in the Borough to protect people, buildings and the wider environment from flood risk and erosion over the next 100 years. These were selected using the following methodology.

Initially the project area was divided into the 10 large scale Management Units. The Management Units of relevance to this committee are (D) Colne and (E) Mersea Island.

To identify potential management options initially two extreme policy options were considered at the broad Management Unit Scale; No Active Intervention and With Present Management.

The **No Active Intervention (NAI)** scenario assumes that defences will no longer be maintained and will therefore fail gradually over time. NAI does not, however, involve actively removing any existing defences, so for a time, the defences will provide some residual protection while they are failing.

The **With Present Management (WPM)** scenario assumes that all current frontline defences are maintained to provide the same level of protection as they currently do including keeping up with the effects of climate change.

At the Management Unit assessment the key differences between the two scenarios were clear. With Present Management would continue to sustain land use in the defended areas with all the associated benefits, but this approach could cause squeeze of the intertidal area and could become more and more difficult in the future.

No Active Intervention would require significant adaptation of society, at a local and regional scale and would cause an unmanaged increase in flood and erosion risk and loss of land and assets. For this reason the No Active Intervention option was not considered to be realistic.

The MU scale assessment showed that continuing to hold the existing alignment met short term aspirations for managing existing land use and infrastructure and protecting the most people and property and concluded that for many areas, this could be the right solution. The report however did indicate that over time there would be an increasing negative impact on the seaward assets of the Essex and South Suffolk coast which are very important for the local economy and society as well as for the environment both locally, regionally and nationally and identified that for some frontages a change of management approach would be needed to address this issue and to enable important features and assets to be protected. The assessment concluded that any change in management would have to happen in a managed way to allow communities to adapt.

Coastal processes data and coastal defence data about the residual life of built defences (without future maintenance by the Environment Agency) was used to

identify areas along the South Suffolk and Essex coast where defences were under pressure from either coastal processes including climate change impacts and where there were issues regarding their long term sustainability.

The 10 Management Units were divided into smaller scale Policy Development Zones to enable more detailed and refined shoreline management policy options to be assessed. A total of 103 Policy Development Zones were identified across the project area.

Each PDZ was assessed and scored against one or more of the policy options set out below.

- **Hold the line (HtL)** – holding the defence line where it is now.
- **Advance the line (AtL)** – building new defences seaward of the existing defence line.
- **Managed realignment (MR)** – allowing or enabling the shoreline to move, with associated management to control or limit the effect on land use and environment. This can take various forms, all characterised by managing change, either technically, for land use or for the environment.  
For the Essex and South Suffolk SMP, two distinct types of Managed Realignment are relevant: MR1 allows local and limited intervention to limit the risks, as long as negative impacts are minimised. MR2 -breach of the frontline defence after building a new landward defence line (possibly through regulated tidal exchange)
- **No active intervention (NAI)** – no further investment in coastal defences or operations.

They were also scored against the 11 social, economic and environmental principles and criteria. These were worked up in conjunction with project partners, representatives of the Elected Members Forum and with stakeholders involved in the SMP process. This enabled a policy decision to be identified for each Policy Development Zone over the next 100 years. In some cases the assessment concluded that current policy was suitable over the longer term but for other frontages it became clear that a change in policy was necessary.

For most of the project area the three most appropriate management options were considered to be Hold the Line, Management Realignment or No Active Intervention and even then the latter was considered to be only really appropriate in areas which were currently undefended. Only two areas outside the Borough have been identified where Advance the Line was considered suitable.

This secondary detailed assessment concluded for the key settlements and areas where important economic assets and infrastructure had been identified that the preferred policy would be Hold the Line over the life time of the plan period. For the remaining Policy Development Zones, the assessment concluded that a new approach was needed and a total of 31 potential managed re-alignment sites were identified across the wider project area.

Coastal processes were the primary driver used to identify the most appropriate management options for the PDZs, and the frontages put forward as potential

managed realignment sites were those sites where scientific data has showed them to be under pressure and at risk. The economic feasibility of implementing the preferred management options over the longer term however was also an important secondary consideration therefore all the sites proposed for Hold the Line and Managed Realignment were subject to a further financial assessment to test their economically viability.

The findings of the assessment is discussed in the LDF Committee report.

